

COUNTRY PROFILE

General presentation

Cote d'Ivoire, located in West Africa, stretches over 322,462 km² and counts about 17 millions inhabitants. The main cities are:

- Abidjan, the economic capital, with more than 5 million inhabitants;
- Yamoussoukro, the political capital, with more than 100,000 inhabitants;
- Bouaké, the 2nd big city, with more than 350,000 inhabitants.



Political context

Since its accession in independence on August 07th, 1960, Cote d'Ivoire positioned as a country comparatively prosperous, politically stable and open on the external world, any things which made it a hub of development in Africa in the south of Sahara.

However, sociopolitical troubles occurred since December, 1999, troubles increased by the armed crisis triggered off in September, 2002. Nevertheless, Cote d'Ivoire got involved in a process of normalization which knew a notable acceleration with the signature in March, 2007 of the political agreement of Ouagadougou.

The regional administration expanded throughout the national territory, the demobilization of ex-belligerents began on December 22nd, 2007, and the electoral process is launched to lead to general elections by the end of June, 2008.

Economic and commercial trumps

Cote d'Ivoire is classified in countries with intermediate income. The country is the world leading cocoa producer, with about 1.3 million tons a year. It is a country with free market economy. The business environment is governed by national and regional instruments (which the treaty of OHADA), with an incentive code of investments.

The Harbour of Abidjan (2nd harbour of Africa and first in terms of gantry cranes) and the one of San Pedro make Cote d'Ivoire the front-door of the markets of UEMOA of which it contributes for more than 40 % to the GDP. The country also distinguishes itself by intense commerce with all continents: Europe (52 %), Africa (27.4 %), the United States (11.2 %), and Asia (6 %). The balance of trade sees in general a surplus, due to the dominance of exports (cocoa, 61%; oil products, 17.5%; wood, 10%) over imports (oil products, 24.1%; machineries, electrical equipments and of transport, foodstuff and pharmaceuticals).

Cultural and tourist trumps

The Ivorian coastal region offers numerous beaches, with quality hotels. Three golf courses meeting international standards exist in Abidjan (South), Yamoussoukro (center) and San Pedro (South West).

Top hotel facilities in Abidjan and Yamoussoukro favour business tourism and congress.

Cultural charms of traditional heritage deserve the detour (yams' fest, Abissa, Popo carnival, etc). Any visitor should try the aloko (chips of plantain) and the attiéké, the most typical and the most popular culinary specialities of Cote d'Ivoire.