

Understanding business institutions

The government of Cameroon has been working very hard to ameliorate the business environment in the country. They have put in place laws that will make Cameroon an attractive and convincing destination for investors. There are many institutions that have been put in place to enforce these laws in order to provide a sustainable environment for those who want to start up businesses.

Once you plan to setup a business in Cameroon, you need to know first the formalities needed as well as the institutions concerned. There are some businesses that you will need special authorization from specific institutions or ministries before engaging.

Starting a Business in Cameroon - What It Takes

Doing business in Cameroon is not difficult as the world is saying. The problem is choosing the right agencies or consultants to help you start your business. According to the [Ease of Doing Business ranking](#), Cameroon ranks 163 out of 190 economies. The ranking has improved from 166 in 2016 to 163 in 2017 with an average of 165.80 between 2008 to 2017.

The Ease of Doing business index helps to rank countries in the world against each other on the the bases of whether the regulatory environment is conducive enough for business operations to be carried out as well as the protection of property rights.

Starting a Business in Cameroon

Starting a company in Cameroon is easier than what is said. As I said above, it depends on the agent or consultant you meet. At times it becomes easier when you meet a business development agent who will walk you through the various stages. Most of them understand the terrain and can help you reduce the cost of registering a company in Cameroon. [Our business development agents](#) can help you carry such activities with ease helping you to save some amount of money which would have been wasted on unscrupulous agents.

Registering a Business in Cameroon

Registering a business in Cameroon can depend a lot on the region or city where you want to register. Many of the agents don't know this or know and hide it from their clients. For instance, to register a business in Douala will be more expensive than registering elsewhere in the country. But do you know that you can register your business anywhere in Cameroon and still carry out activities at your preferred location? Yeah, it is easy especially as taxes can now be paid online.

Registering a business in the two English speaking regions can be easy and cheap for business people who want to install in Cameroon. I am not saying you should not do so in other regions. What I am saying here is simple. The marketing forces of demand and supply helps in regulating such a situation.

In the English speaking part of Cameroon, they have the Common Law practice whereby all Lawyers are automatically Notary Publics. This is different in the

French speaking part where Notary Publics are actually appointed by the government. With this, the number of notary publics in the English speaking regions are more leading to a high supply of their services which lowers their prices. That is why it may be cheap registering a company in that part of the country. Their fees are cheaper than those in Douala in particular.

The Necessity of Agents & Consultants

However, what you need to know is that new entrants to the Cameroonian market will need to engage with local representatives who will provide them the necessary assistance and guidance on the Cameroon business environment. [AfriStartup](#) can guide people interested in doing business in Cameroon understand the business environment, obtain market information as well as identify customers. Starting a business in Cameroon can be a challenge but with our help, you can conquer these challenges with ease.

Procedures of Registering a Company in Cameroon

For you to do business in Cameroon, you need to get your company registered. For a limited liability company (Sociétés à Responsabilité Limitée (SARL) [SARL]), the paid-in minimum capital requirement is XAF100,000 approximately 190 US Dollars. Incorporation can be done by one or more natural persons as well as corporate bodies.

Also, a Limited Liability company registered in Cameroon can be managed by one or more managers. The manager(s) can be a non-shareholder or drawn from the list of shareholders.

For you to register a business in Cameroon, you need to know the various tax and business licenses that are necessary and obligatory. What you need to do will be that:

- You have to register the company in the Trade and Personal Property Credit Register (RCCM)
- You need to obtain a business license which is generally called '*Patent*'. This is gotten from the Taxation Department yearly by paying an annual fee. New companies may apply for an exoneration from "*Patent*" if they wish. This is renewable once
- You also need to obtain a tax identification number from the Department of Taxation
- You need to register your employees alongside the company at the National Social Insurance Fund, CNPS as well as the Labour Office

In Cameroon, with the help of the Center for Business Creation Formalities (One-stop Shop), which are based in major cities to facilitate the creation process of businesses, it's possible to create a company within 72 hours. To be very sure, we always tell our clients one week because the 72 hours excludes the time you have to compile all the documents needed.

Documents Required to Create a Company in Cameroon

The following documents need to be deposited by the company's agent:

- Company Memorandum and Articles of Association. This must carry fiscal stamps of the current year on each page. It costs XAF1000 per page.
- Business premise location plan (this will help the company to be exonerated from paying the 'Patent' if they wish)
- Non-conviction certificates for both nationals and foreigners who are shareholders
- A sworn declaration or criminal record for those who will manage the company's
- Photocopy of marriage certificates in the case there is any
- A declaration of regularity and conformity drawn up by a public notary and duly signed by shareholders. If not available, a notarial statement of subscription and payment can be used

After all the above has been fulfilled, the incorporation of the company has to be published in any of the authorized newspapers.

Social Insurance Registration

The entrepreneur or business owner will have to register the company and its employees at the National Social Insurance Fund, CNPS (Caisse Nationale de Prévoyance Sociale). This enables them to acquire the social insurance registration number. The following is needed to have your company registered in the books of the National Social Insurance Fund (NSIF):

- Tax Payer Identification Number

- Company registration certificate
- Company's location map

If you want to know more about the tax code for Cameroon and other necessary documents, [you can download the 2018 Cameroon General Tax Code and other official documents](#) you may need.

Note that this article will be updated anytime there will be any changes. Don't hesitate to [get in touch with us](#) if you need any other information. Meanwhile you can drop a comment for discussion in the comment box below.

The first institution we are going to talk about is the Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Promotion Agency which has one-stop shops all over the 10 regions in Cameroon that helps in the creation and management of businesses.

Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Promotion Agency

Small business creation in Cameroon has now become very easy. Many reforms have been taken by the government of Cameroon to ease the creation of businesses. An example is the various Formality Centers for Enterprise Creation. The Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Promotion Agency was created on April 13 2010 to help in providing services that help in the creation and development of small and medium-sized enterprises in Cameroon. Their aim is to bring in as many informal businesses into the formal sector as well as make them more efficient, competitive, innovative and responsible.

There are ten support centers for Formality Centers for Enterprise Creation located in the various regional headquarters except for the South West Region

which is located in the Fako Divisional headquarter of Limbe. They are usually called the One-stop shop for the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises in Cameroon. Check below the list of One-stop shops for business creation in Cameroon and their locations:

1. **Bamenda:** Located opposite CRTV Up-Station
2. **Bafoussam:** Located at the 4th inter-ministerial building opposite the Mifi SDO's office
3. **Bertoua:** Behind the Regional Delegation of the Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
4. **Douala:** Besides Hotel Beau Séjour
5. **Ebolowa:** Located at Carrefour du Monument des Armées
6. **Garoua:** Located besides the Regional Delegation of the Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
7. **Limbe:** Located at Mile 4 Bonadikombo, besides the Handicraft Village
8. **Maroua:** Located in the town centre at Carrefour Para
9. **Ngaoundéré:** Located opposite the Gare Marchandise
10. **Yaounde:** Located besides the National Radio Station

At these One-stop Shops, you can register a sole-proprietorship business and a private limited company. You can check on the necessary documents and procedure to register a sole-proprietor business in Cameroon. Do you want to

register a limited liability company in Cameroon? See the necessary documents you have to obtain. Don't hesitate to get in touch with us if you need any help. Meanwhile we can help you to carry on with the registration process.

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