

COUNTRY PROFILE

Quarterly update

July 2016



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

NIGER

Introduction

The main objective of this document is to provide an update to the 2015 Niger Country Profile, with a particular focus on the recently released annual data for 2015.

Recent developments: Key highlights

- The first round of the presidential and legislative elections took place on 21 and 22 February 2016. Voter turnout was high, at 66.75 per cent. President Mahamadou Issoufou was elected for a second term, winning 92.49 per cent of votes in the second round. The second round, which took place on 20 March 2016, was boycotted by the opposition.
- In June, the Niger began drafting a number of key planning documents, including a sustainable development and inclusive growth strategy called Vision 2035 and a national development plan covering the period 2017-2021, which are expected to be unveiled in December 2016.
- Since the start of the year, the security situation in the Niger has been dominated by the resurgence of terrorist attacks carried out by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad area, close to the borders of Cameroon and Nigeria, and the resulting humanitarian crisis following the massive displacement of people in the Nguigmi, Bosso and Diffa regions.

Economic performance

Economic growth: In 2015, economic growth slowed to 3.5 per cent, against 7 per cent in 2014, 5.3 per cent in 2013 and 11.8 per cent in 2012. The economy depends on the performance of the primary sector, which accounted for 41.3 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2015, and to a lesser extent the tertiary sector, which accounted for 36.4 per cent in the same year.

Fiscal policy and debt policy: In 2015, budgetary revenues were forecast to account for the equivalent of 18.1 per cent of GDP, against 32.2 per cent for total expenditure, leaving an overall deficit (grants included) of -8.7 per cent of GDP. The Government is taking a cautious approach to debt management, as evidenced by the establishment of an interministerial committee whose role is to ensure the sustainability of the country's debt and evaluate the terms and conditions of non-concessional loans and loans from non-traditional partners.

Inflation and monetary policy: Since 2010, inflation in the Niger has been kept below 3 per cent, the target set by the Commission of the West African Economic and Monetary Union. In 2015, inflation stood at 1 per cent, thanks to moderate prices for imports and local grains and various social measures taken by the State, including the distribution of free food for the country's poorest and the sale of grains at moderate prices.

Current account: In 2015, the current account deficit stood at 22.7 per cent of GDP, up from 18.5 per cent in 2014, as a result of a 4.3 per cent increase in imports (which accounted for the equivalent of 43.3 per cent of GDP in 2015) and a 13 per cent drop in exports (20.6 per cent of GDP). The Niger's main exports are uranium, oil, gas, gold, agricultural products and livestock. Europe is the country's top export destination.

Social developments

Poverty: According to the National Institute of Statistics, the poverty rate in 2014 was 45.1 per cent. Income inequality has fallen, resulting in a decrease in the Gini index, which fell from 50.5 per cent in 2007 to 31.2 per cent in 2011.

Health: Good progress has been made in terms of reducing child mortality. Infant mortality fell from 123 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1992 to 51 in 2015, while child mortality fell from 318 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1992 to 126 in 2015. Maternal mortality has also fallen, from 700 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 520 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2015.

Education: There has been some improvement in the education sector, with net enrolment rising from 18 per cent in 1992 to 63.4 per cent in 2015. However, in 2015, only 75.2 per cent of children enrolled in primary school completed their primary schooling. Moreover, only 44.2 per cent of those aged 15-24 are literate.

Economic performance

Macroeconomic performance	Value	Year
GDP, current prices (billions of CFA francs)	4241.5	2015
Real GDP growth rate (%)	3.5	2015
Inflation rate (%)	1	2015

Fiscal policy (billions of CFA francs)	Value	Year
Total revenue and grants	1,000	2015
of which: tax revenue	685	2015
of which: non-tax revenue	82	2015
Total expenditure and net lending	1,368	2015
of which: current expenditure	660	2015
of which: salaries and wages	250	2015
Investment	708	2015
Debt servicing	-	2015
Total balance including grants	-368	2015
Total balance excluding grants	-601	2015

Monetary policy	Value	Year
Minimum bid rate (%)	2.5	2015
Marginal lending rate (%)	3.5	2015
Interbank rate (%)	4.9	2015
Average borrowing rate (%)	6.09	2015
Average loan rate (%)	5.01	2015

Current account (billions of CFA francs)	Value	Year
Trade balance	-565	2015
Exports (FOB)	603	2015
Imports (FOB)	1,168	2015
Current account	-963	2015

Capital and financial accounts (billions of CFA francs)	Value	Year
Foreign direct investment	301	2015
Private capital flows	21	2015
Capital account	148	2015
Financial account	543	2015

Social developments

Demography	Value	Year
Population (millions)	19.9	2015
Annual average population growth (%)	3.9	2015

Poverty and employment	Value	Year
Poverty rate (%)	45.1	2014
Unemployment rate (%)	15.9	2006

Health	Value	Year
Infant mortality rate (‰)	51	2015
Child mortality rate (‰)	126	2015

Education	Value	Year
Gross enrolment rate in primary education (%)	82	2013
Adult illiteracy rate (%)	30.4	2010

References

Banque centrale des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (2015). *Rapport sur les conditions de banque*.

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