

Cote d'Ivoire Business Forecast Report Q2 2014

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Abstracts

Core Views

Côte d'Ivoire's economy will continue to expand rapidly over the coming years, with real GDP growth averaging 8.9% annually between 2014 and 2018. High public investment and a buoyant consumer segment will be the main drivers of growth, while ongoing reforms to the business climate should see foreign investment continue to accelerate.

The combination of stagnating cocoa production and soaring demand for consumer and capital goods imports will see Côte d'Ivoire maintain a moderate current account shortfall over the coming years. Robust FDI inflows, however, should ensure that the deficit is adequately covered.

The government has put political reconciliation at the top of the agenda in 2014. While this, together with the more conciliatory rhetoric seen from both sides of late, is an encouraging sign, we believe that meaningful progress on this front is unlikely over the near term.

Major Forecast Changes

A historical revision made by the UN's statistical authorities to Côte d'Ivoire's 2012 headline GDP figure, from 9.8% to 8.6%, has had modest knock-on effects for our short-term growth projections. We are now predicting real GDP growth of 8.7% in 2014 compared with 8.2% previously.

Key Risks To Outlook

The country's positive economic prospects remain heavily contingent on political



stability, and any notable deterioration in this area would pose a major threat to the nation's recovery. Political tensions remain high, and BMI does not believe that any substantial progress towards integrating opposition supporters into the political process is likely in the short term.

The economy's reliance on cocoa exports means that poor weather could seriously damage exports. Conversely, if global cocoa prices push higher than we are currently predicting, this would put upward pressure on our outlook for exports.



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The Ouattara administration has put political reconciliation at the top of the agenda in Côte d'Ivoire in 2014. While this, together with the more conciliatory rhetoric seen from both sides of late, is an encouraging sign, we believe that meaningful progress on this front is unlikely over the near term. In light of this, we expect economic policy successes to continue to overshadow political ones.

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Post-Conflict Challenges To Linger

While the establishment of a cohesive national government has set the stage for an impressive economic recovery in Côte d'Ivoire, the country's political system remains brittle and ethnic tensions are easily inflamed. In our core scenario, BMI predicts that Alassane Ouattara's government will be only partially successful in addressing the country's political, security, and social challenges and that tensions will remain high over the coming years. A more stable outcome is possible, though highly unlikely, while we ascribe a 10-20% probability to a repeat of the 2010-2011 political crisis between now and 2020.

CHAPTER 2: ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

SWOT Analysis BMI Economic Risk Ratings Economic Activity Economic Growth To Remain Strong In 2014 We believe that Côte d'Ivoire's economy will continue to grow rapidly over the coming years, with real GDP growth averaging 8.9% between 2014 and 2018. High public investment and a buoyant consumer segment will be the main drivers of growth, while



ongoing reforms to the business climate should see foreign investment accelerate, particularly into the agribusiness, mining and oil sectors.

Table: ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

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Higher Cocoa Prices Sweeten Outlook For Current Account

Côte d'Ivoire's current account deficit will narrow from an estimated 2.9% of GDP in

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The combination of stagnating cocoa production and soaring import demand will,

however, see the country maintain a moderate current account shortfall over the coming years.

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