



**Government Defence  
Integrity Index**



**COUNTRY  
BRIEF**

# CÔTE D'IVOIRE

## 2025





# CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Côte d'Ivoire's 2016 constitutional reform exposed the fragility of the country's democratic institutions. Since then, democratic backsliding has deepened, with President Ouattara's recent re-election to a fourth term further clouding the future of democratic governance.<sup>1 2</sup> The 2025 elections were more peaceful than the violence-marred 2020 polls, which saw an opposition boycott and allegations of fraud. However, President Ouattara's victory remains controversial due to the exclusion of two key opponents and low voter turnout.<sup>3</sup> Since the beginning of its mandate that started in 2011, the Ouattara government has been somewhat successful at stabilising the political and security situation, but the country is now facing security threats from terrorism and violent crime, especially in specific border regions. The northern border with Mali and Burkina Faso faces a high risk of terrorist attacks and kidnappings by groups affiliated with Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), both active in the Sahel region. Economically, Cote d'Ivoire

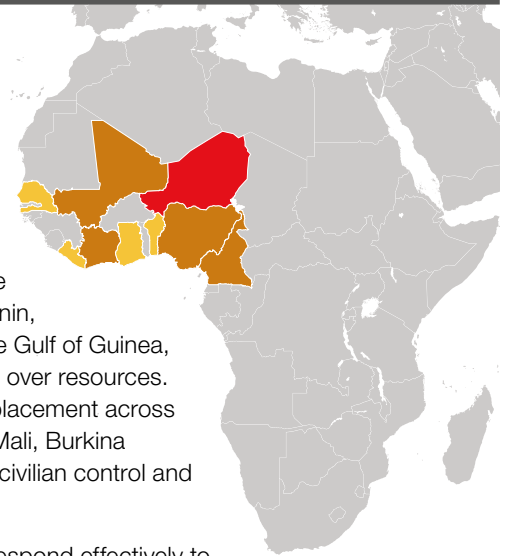
has sustained one of the fastest growth rates in Sub-Saharan Africa for more than a decade.<sup>4 5</sup>

Despite Ouattara's anti-corruption pledges, Ivorians' long history with political-military conflict has allowed corruption and impunity to become widespread.<sup>6</sup> The 2025 Government Defence Integrity Index (GDI) found high risks in the country's defence and security sector. Parliamentary and audit scrutiny is weak, financial information is opaque, and procurement lacks external oversight. Personnel systems show some strengths, but whistleblowing, ethics enforcement, and operational anti-corruption measures are underdeveloped, leaving significant risks across governance, finance, operations, and procurement.

<b>Member of Open Government Partnership</b>	Yes
<b>UN Convention Against Corruption</b>	Ratified in 2007
<b>Arms Trade Treaty</b>	Ratified in 2015

## WEST AFRICA

The security environment in West Africa has deteriorated markedly over the past decade, driven by the expansion of jihadist insurgencies, political instability, and transnational organised crime. Armed groups such as Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) and Islamic State Sahel Province (ISSP) have generated unprecedented violence, with the Sahel now accounting for nearly half of global terrorism-related deaths. These violent extremist groups have expanded southward, placing increasing pressure on coastal states including Benin, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana. Insecurity is further compounded by piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, trafficking in arms, drugs, and natural resources, and climate-related competition over resources. The cumulative effect has worsened the humanitarian crisis and widespread displacement across the region. These security challenges have unfolded alongside military coups in Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Guinea between 2020 and 2023, which have further weakened civilian control and democratic oversight.



Weak defence sector governance has significantly undermined states' ability to respond effectively to these threats. Defence institutions across West Africa remain characterised by limited transparency, weak accountability, and entrenched defence exceptionalism. Parliamentary oversight is constrained by executive dominance, and limited technical capacity, reducing civilian control over defence policy, budgets, and procurement. Limited budget transparency has weakened accountability and fuelled public mistrust. Simultaneously, non-transparent and discretionary procurement systems have increased corruption risks, distorted capability development, and diverted resources away from operational needs. While most states in the sub-region have ratified the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), uneven implementation has arguably continued to expose defence sectors to corruption (risks), undermining the effectiveness and sustainability of security responses.

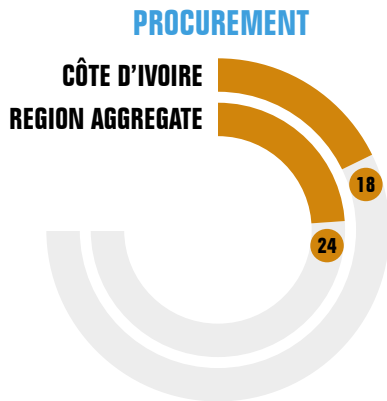
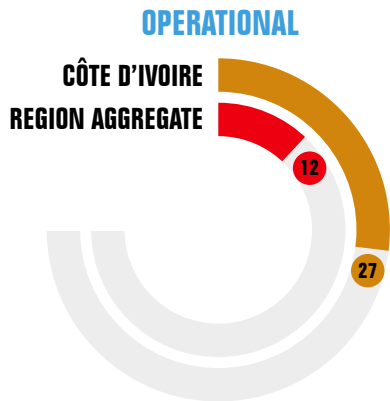
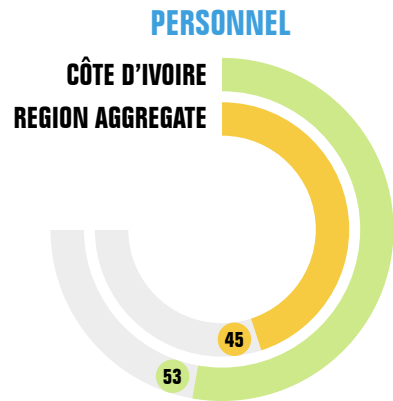
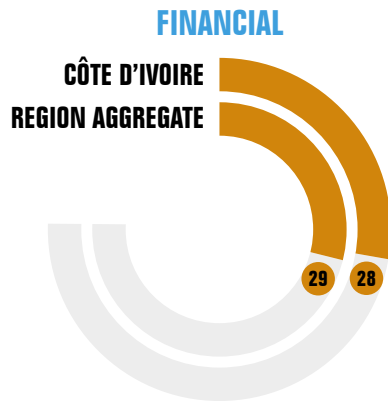
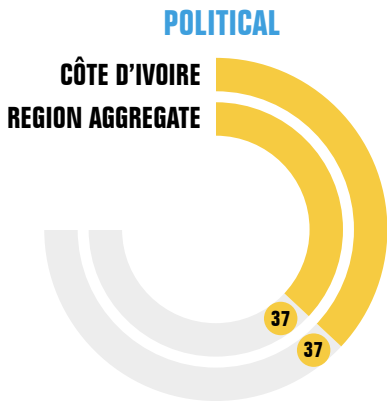
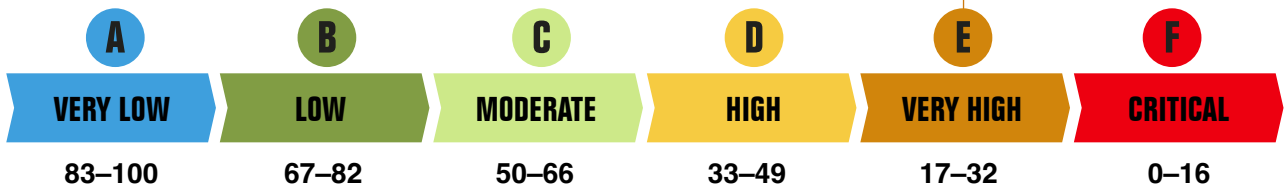
1 Human Rights Watch, "Côte d'Ivoire: Events of 2016", in *World Report 2017* (2017).  
2 BTI 2024, "Côte d'Ivoire Country Report".  
3 BBC, "Ivory Coast president, 83, secures fourth term after two rivals barred", October 27, 2025.  
4 World Bank, "Country Overview: Cote d'Ivoire", 2024.  
5 BTI 2024 "Côte d'Ivoire Country Report".  
6 Amnesty International, "Côte d'Ivoire: Authorities Must Respect Human Rights and Protect the Side of Anti-Corruption", February 20, 2024.



## RISK COMPARISON

The Government Defence Integrity Index (GDI) assesses five key risk areas: political, financial, personnel, operational, and procurement. This section compares Côte d'Ivoire's performance in each area with the regional average (Sub-Saharan Africa).

**VERY HIGH RISK**





## PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT

Legislative oversight of budget (Open Budget Survey, 2023)	39/100
Military expenditure as a share of government spending (SIPRI, 2024)	3.66%
Committee members with defence expertise (%)	Data is not publicly available.
# of meetings/year	Data is not publicly available.
Last review of defence policy/strategy	Strategy is not publicly available.

Côte d'Ivoire has a strongly presidential system dominated by President Alassane Ouattara and the ruling Rally of Houphouëtists for Democracy and Peace (RHDP), which has been in power since 2011. Constitutional reforms adopted in 2016 reset presidential term limits and expanded presidential powers, enabling Ouattara to secure a third term in 2020.<sup>7</sup> The Ivorian Parliament has formal rights and mechanisms to effectively control defence policy and budgets, although not defence procurement - but in practice its influence is limited due in part to the executive dominance over the sector.<sup>8</sup> Political risks remain high in the defence sector despite good practices in place including the government engagement in public debate and response to organised crime.

Similarly, the Special Committee on Security and Defence can examine bills and proposals relating to national defence and the armed forces but not matters linked to defence procurement, and its members have relative expertise on the sector.<sup>9 10</sup> However, in practice, the committee does not exercise any short- or long-term scrutiny of the defence policy.<sup>11</sup>

In terms of internal audit, there is no evidence that the General Inspectorate and General Control of Defence Administration and Finance effectively scrutinise the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) expenditure. As for the external audit, the Court of Auditors conducts budget performance audits and publishes reports on budget execution that include defence expenditure but there is no evidence that recommendations are considered by the government or MOD.<sup>12</sup>

## FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY

Defence-related access to information response rates	1) % granted full or partial access: Data is not publicly available.
	2) # subject to backlog: Data is not publicly available.
Defence-related complaints to ombudsman/commissioner #	Data is not publicly available.
Does the commissioner have authority over the MoD?	Data is not publicly available.
Audit reports on defence (2020-2025) #	None
Open Budget Index (IBP, 2023)	54/100
World Press Freedom Index (RSF, 2025)	64th out of 180.

Financial risks remain very high in the country and despite increasing defence spending, the defence budget is not published.<sup>13</sup> Actual defence expenditure is included in budget implementation reports, but the level of details is also minimal.<sup>14</sup> Off-budget spending are prohibited save some exceptional circumstances but they are not recorded when they occur.<sup>15</sup> All MOD sources of incomes are published but there is no evidence of any type of public or institutional control of non-governmental sources of income.

There is legal framework governing public access to information, which applies to the defence sector. However, in practice, access remains narrow, as most defence-related information is classified as *secret-défense* or confidential, restricting external scrutiny.<sup>16</sup>

Defence institutions are legally barred from owning commercial companies, except for a newly acquired hotel in 2025.<sup>17</sup> No audit or publicly available audit report has been identified for this venture. Military and civil service personnel are also prohibited from engaging in private commercial activities, and only a few isolated cases have been reported in recent years.<sup>18 19</sup>

7 AP News, "Ivory Coast's incumbent leader Ouattara is sworn in for a fourth term", December 8, 2025.

8 Constitution of Côte d'Ivoire, as amended on 19 March 2020 (Articles 116 and 117).

9 Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, "Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly", July 27, 2024.

10 Interview with a member of the National Assembly, 28 November 2024. Government Defence Integrity Index.

11 Interview with a senator from the Security and Defence Committee of the National Assembly and Senate, 28 November 2024. Government Defence Integrity Index.

12 Court of Auditors, "Report on the Implementation of the 2023 Finance Act".

13 Ministry of Finance and Budget, "Finance Act 2025", January 2025.

14 Ministry of Budget and State Portfolio of Côte d'Ivoire. "Presentation report on the settlement law for the year 2023. Abidjan: Directorate General of Budget and Finance 2024".

15 Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, "Organic Law No. 2014-336 of 5 June 2014 on Finance Laws".

16 Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, "Law No. 2013-867 of 23 December 2013 on access to information of public interest".

17 Koaci, "The unique features of the Hôtel des Armées inaugurated, according to the Ministry of Defence", February 28, 2025.

18 Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, "General status of the Ivorian civil service of 23 November 2023".

19 Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, "Military Code, Annexes to the Decree No. 96-574 OF 31 July 1996 Governing Service and general discipline of the national armed forces".



## PERSONNEL ETHICS FRAMEWORK

Whistleblowing legislation	None
# defence-sector whistleblower cases	None
# Code of conduct violations	Military: Data is not publicly available. Civilian: Data is not publicly available
Financial disclosure system	# submitted: None. # of violations: None.

Personnel risks in Côte d'Ivoire's defence sector are moderate, supported by a transparent payment system and relatively strong safeguards against facilitation payments. Legal sanctions for bribery are in place and cases are regularly investigated and disciplined. However, whistleblower protections remain insufficient. Côte d'Ivoire lacks specific legislation for whistleblowers, and existing legislation do not explicitly cover whistleblowing, nor is reporting encouraged within the Ministry of Defence or the armed forces.<sup>20</sup>

Positively, there is no evidence of ghost soldiers in the past five years, but official personnel figures are not published. While formal recruitment processes exist for senior officers, external oversight is minimal and the President retains full authority over top-level appointments.<sup>21 22 23</sup> Annual anti-corruption training is provided across ranks, contributing to awareness-raising and prevention.<sup>24</sup>

A Military Service Code outlines rules on conflicts of interest but does not explicitly address corruption.<sup>25</sup> Violations are investigated, indicating some level of enforcement. A Code of Ethics also applies to civilian staff and mentions corruption,<sup>26</sup> but there is insufficient evidence to determine how effectively it is implemented.

## OPERATIONS

Total armed forces personnel (World Bank, 2020)	27,000
Troops deployed on operations #	181 (as of 31 May 2025)

Since early 2025, the Ivorian Armed Forces (FACI) has been undergoing a significant transition, taking full control of national security and defence operations following the withdrawal of French forces, while simultaneously being deployed internally to secure upcoming elections.<sup>27</sup> Corruption risks linked to military operations remain very high in Côte d'Ivoire's defence sector. The country does not yet have a military doctrine that treats corruption as a strategic operational concern, and no dedicated anti-corruption training is provided to personnel prior to deployment.

Nonetheless, Côte d'Ivoire has taken steps to integrate corruption considerations into the planning of certain military operations, recognising it as a potential operational obstacle. Basic checks are carried out during operations, and both army and gendarmerie inspection services are deployed in the field. However, these mechanisms remain broad in scope, and no specialised personnel are assigned to regularly monitor corruption risks, limiting their overall effectiveness.<sup>28</sup>

20 PPLAAF, "Côte d'Ivoire, Whistleblowers in Côte d'Ivoire: overview of the legal framework and practices". December 2023.

21 Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, "Law No. 2016-1109 (on the Military Service Code) of 16 February 2016 contains provisions relating to the promotion system for military personnel".

22 Ministry of Defence. "Circular 333/23 on the conditions for promotion by seniority and selection based on seniority and choice of officers and non-commissioned officers of the armed forces of Côte d'Ivoire for the year 2024".

23 Interview with a retired senior officer, January 17, 2025. Government Defence Integrity Index.

24 Ibid.

25 Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, "Law No. 2016-1109 on the Military Service Code", Official Journal, February 16, 2016.

26 Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, "Draft law on the Code of Ethics for Public Officials", 2012.

27 APA News, "44,000 Ivorian troops deployed ahead of parliamentary polls", November 28, 2025.

28 Interview with a general officer of Armed Forces of Cote d'Ivoire, January 13, 2025. Abidjan. Government Defence Integrity Index.



## DEFENCE PROCUREMENT

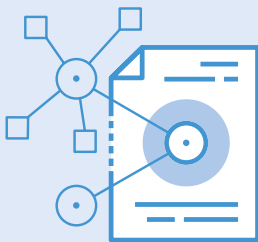
Military expenditure (US\$ mil) (SIPRI, 2024)	\$658.4
Open competition in defence procurement (%)	Data is not publicly available.
Main defence exports – to (SIPRI, 2020-24)	N/A
Main defence imports – from (SIPRI, 2020-24)	Israel (26%) China (22%) South Africa (15%) Turkiye (15%) France (7.4%)

Despite growing security demands and renewed efforts to strengthen military capacity, Côte d'Ivoire's defence procurement framework remains highly vulnerable to corruption and political interference. Defence procurements are excluded from public procurement rules by Article 7 of the public procurement code. Thus, the procurement cycle in this area remains completely opaque.<sup>29</sup> Oversight of defence procurement is limited, as the President dominates procurement decisions.<sup>30</sup>

Defence procurement planning exists through programming laws, although the last plan published was for 2016-2020.<sup>31</sup> Discussion on the draft military programming law for

2026-2030 has been mentioned, emphasising the need to strengthen the armed forces' capacity to address security challenges, particularly sub-regional terrorism and illegal gold mining.<sup>32</sup> There is thus little visibility on planned purchases and no clear procurement requirements based on national strategic priorities. In practice, defence procurement remains a mixture of planning and opportunism with some political influence noted in procurement decisions. Moreover, very few defence contracts are awarded through open competition.<sup>33</sup>

Côte d'Ivoire has also been seeking to diversify from its historical supplier, France, seeking new military cooperation with China, Turkey and Israel.<sup>34 35 36</sup>



GDI data collection for **Côte d'Ivoire** was conducted from November 2024 to August 2025.

29 Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, "Ordinance No. 2019-679 of 24 July 2019 on the Public Procurement Code".

30 Interview with a senior officer of the General Inspectorate of the Armed Forces, January 13, 2025. Abidjan. Government Defence Integrity Index.

31 Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, "Law No. 2016-10 of 13 January 2016 on military programming for the years 2016 to 2020", Official Journal of Côte d'Ivoire.

32 AIP, "Côte d'Ivoire-AIP/ The Minister of Defence announces a military programming law for 2026-2030 in response to terrorist challenges", December 12, 2025 .

33 Interview with a retired colonel, December 12, 2024. Government Defence Integrity Index.

34 Le Mandat Express, "Defence: Côte d'Ivoire strengthens military cooperation with Turkey to counter security threats." May 7, 2025. December 4, 2025.

35 Africa Intelligence, "Abidjan joue les équilibristes pour financer ses achats d'armement" [Abidjan walks a tightrope to finance its arms purchases], June 26, 2024.

36 Koaci, "Les armées ivoirienne et américaine renforcent leur dialogue stratégique sur les questions de sécurité régionale et la coopération militaire", [Ivorian and US armies to strengthen strategic dialogue on regional security issues and military cooperation], January 2026.



# CÔTE D'IVOIRE 2025 GDI SCORECARD

	Grade	Score
<b>POLITICAL RISK</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>37</b>
Q1 Legislative Scrutiny	C	58
Q2 Defence Committee	E	17
Q3 Defence Policy Debate	E	25
Q4 CSO Engagement	D	33
Q5 Conventions: UNCAC / OECD	B	75
Q6 Public Debate	C	50
Q7 Anticorruption Policy	C	50
Q8 Compliance and Ethics Units	D	33
Q9 Public Trust in Institutions	NA	
Q10 Risk Assessments	F	0
Q11 Acquisition Planning	F	0
Q12 Budget Transparency & Detail	B	75
Q13 Budget Scrutiny	C	63
Q14 Budget Availability	E	25
Q15 Defence Income	D	33
Q16 Internal Audit	F	6
Q17 External Audit	C	50
Q18 Natural Resources	D	35
Q19 Organised Crime Links	C	63
Q20 Organised Crime Policing	C	50
Q21 Intelligence Services Oversight	F	0
Q22 Intelligence Services Recruitment	F	0
Q23 Export Controls (ATT)	A	100
Q76 Lobbying	F	0
<b>FINANCIAL RISK</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>28</b>
Q24 Asset Disposal Controls	E	17
Q25 Asset Disposal Scrutiny	F	0
Q26 Secret Spending	F	0
Q27 Legislative Access to Information	F	0
Q28 Secret Program Auditing	F	0
Q29 Off-budget Spending	C	50
Q30 Access to Information	C	50
Q31 Beneficial Ownership	B	75
Q32 Military-Owned Business Scrutiny	E	25
Q33 Unauthorised Private Enterprise	B	75
Q77 Defence Spending	E	19
<b>PERSONNEL RISK</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>53</b>
Q34 Public Commitment to Integrity	D	42
Q35 Disciplinary Measures for Personnel	A	88
Q36 Whistleblowing	F	13
Q37 High-risk Positions	E	17
Q38 Numbers of Personnel	D	33
Q39 Pay Rates and Allowances	F	0
Q40 Payment System	A	100
Q41 Objective Appointments	D	42
Q42 Objective Promotions	C	56
Q43 Bribery to Avoid Conscription	NA	
Q44 Bribery for Preferred Postings	A	100
Q45 Chains of Command and Payment	B	75
Q46 Military Code of Conduct	B	69
Q47 Civilian Code of Conduct	NEI	
Q48 Anticorruption Training	B	75
Q49 Corruption Prosecutions	D	33
Q50 Facilitation Payments	C	50

**OVERALL COUNTRY SCORE**

**VERU HIGH RISK**

**E**

**32**

## RISK GRADE

<b>A</b>	<b>83–100</b>	<b>VERY LOW RISK</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>67–82</b>	<b>LOW RISK</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>50–66</b>	<b>MODERATE RISK</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>33–49</b>	<b>HIGH RISK</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>17–32</b>	<b>VERY HIGH RISK</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>0–16</b>	<b>CRITICAL RISK</b>

	Grade	Score
<b>OPERATIONAL RISK</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>27</b>
Q51 Military Doctrine	F	0
Q52 Operational Training	E	25
Q53 Forward Planning	B	75
Q54 Corruption Monitoring in Operations	F	8
Q55 Controls in Contracting	E	25
Q56 Private Military Contractors	NS	

	Grade	Score
<b>PROCUREMENT RISK</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>18</b>
Q57 Procurement Legislation	F	0
Q58 Procurement Cycle	E	17
Q59 Procurement Oversight Mechanisms	F	8
Q60 Potential Purchases Disclosed	E	25
Q61 Actual Purchases Disclosed	F	13
Q62 Business Compliance Standards	E	25
Q63 Procurement Requirements	D	42
Q64 Competition in Procurement	F	0
Q65 Tender Board Controls	D	38
Q66 Anti-Collusion Controls	D	33
Q67 Contract Award / Delivery	D	38
Q68 Complaint Mechanisms	D	42
Q69 Supplier Sanctions	D	38
Q70 Offset Contracts	F	0
Q71 Offset Contract Monitoring	F	0
Q72 Offset Competition	F	0
Q73 Agents and Intermediaries	F	0
Q74 Financing Packages	F	0
Q75 Political Pressure in Acquisitions	NS	

## KEY

- NEI** Not enough information to score indicator
- NS** Indicator is not scored for any country
- NA** Not applicable

# GDI

## Government Defence Integrity Index



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