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Universal and compulsory birth registration

Is birth registration service available to all children without any discrimination?

YES

Section 5 of Law 2024/16 of 23 December 2024 Organize the Civil Registration System in Cameroon (Law 2024/16) The State shall guarantee equal access to civil status public service by nationals as well as aliens residing or established in Cameroon for the declaration, recording and transcription of vital events, the establishment and issuance of civil status certificates.

Is birth and death registration compulsory by law?

YES

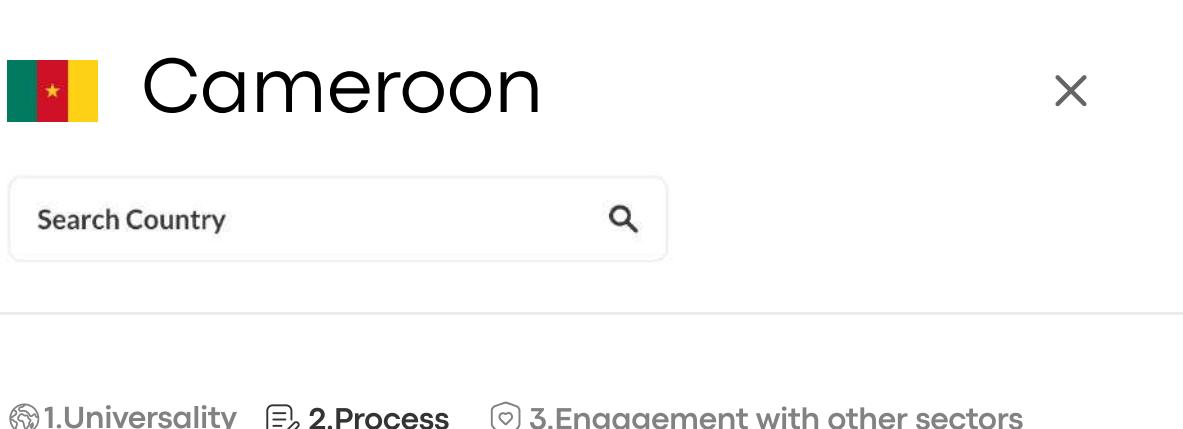
Section 6(1) of Law 2024/16. The declaration of vital events that occur on the Cameroonian territory shall be compulsory. The declaration of vital events by Cameroonians that occur abroad shall also be compulsory.

Unique Identification Number (UIN)

YES

Is a UIN number issued during birth registration?

Section 37 of Law 2024/16. birth certificate shall include UIN where applicable. Section 81(1) An alphanumeric code known as "Unique Personal Identification Number" abbreviated as "UPIN" shall be generated and assigned to each person when their birth is recorded in the national civil status database. Section 81(2) A Unique Personal Identification Number shall be progressively assigned to any person with a hard-copy birth certificate, where such certificate was drawn up prior to the national civil status database.



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Child (Act, Regulations, Birth Registration form and Death registration form)

Name

YES

Section 37. See Law 2024/16.

The birth certificate shall contain the following entries:

- the words Republic of Cameroon, the motto, the region and division in which the main civil status centre is located and, for the secondary or specialized civil status centre, the main civil registration centre of the area;
- the name and code of the main, secondary or specialized civil status centre and, where applicable, that of the main civil status centre of the area;
- the unique personal identifier number, where applicable;
- the child's full name, sex, date and place of birth;
- the full name, age, nationality, occupation, domicile or residence of the child's mother and father, where applicable;
- documents proving the nationality of the child's father and mother and references of such documents;
- the full names and signatures of the civil status registrar and secretary;
- the date of birth declaration, the date of receipt of the request from the State Counsel, or the execution copy of the judgment;
- the name of the declarant, the health facility, the traditional ruler, the State Counsel, or the President of the Court of First Instance;
- the date of recording of the declaration;
- the date of signature of the certificate.

Date of Birth

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Sex

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Place of Birth

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

National ID/UID

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Ethnicity

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Religion

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Caste/Tribe

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Mother

Name

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Date of Birth

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Sex

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Place of Birth

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

National ID/UID

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Ethnicity

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Religion

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Caste/Tribe

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Father

Name

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Date of Birth

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Sex

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Place of Birth

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

National ID/UID

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Ethnicity

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Religion

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Caste/Tribe

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Informants (who are mandated to sign the birth registration form)

Only Father

NO

Section 11(1) of Law 2024/16. A birth shall be declared by the father or mother of the child, or any person having knowledge of it, if it takes place in the community. Section 11(4) In the case of a birth in prison, the person in charge of the prison, or failing that, the doctor, health care worker or prison staff who attended the birth must report the birth within 30 (thirty) days of the birth. Law 2024/16.

Only Mother

NO

Section 11(1) of Law 2024/16. A birth shall be declared by the father or mother of the child, or any person having knowledge of it, if it takes place in the community. Section 11(4) In the case of a birth in prison, the person in charge of the prison, or failing that, the doctor, health care worker or prison staff who attended the birth must report the birth within 30 (thirty) days of the birth. Law 2024/16.

Both Parents

NO

Section 11(1) of Law 2024/16. A birth shall be declared by the father or mother of the child, or any person having knowledge of it, if it takes place in the community. Section 11(4) In the case of a birth in prison, the person in charge of the prison, or failing that, the doctor, health care worker or prison staff who attended the birth must report the birth within 30 (thirty) days of the birth. Law 2024/16.

Any Parent

YES

Section 11(1) of Law 2024/16. A birth shall be declared by the father or mother of the child, or any person having knowledge of it, if it takes place in the community. Section 11(4) In the case of a birth in prison, the person in charge of the prison, or failing that, the doctor, health care worker or prison staff who attended the birth must report the birth within 30 (thirty) days of the birth. Law 2024/16.

Others

YES

Section 11(1) of Law 2024/16. A birth shall be declared by the father or mother of the child, or any person having knowledge of it, if it takes place in the community. Section 11(4) In the case of a birth in prison, the person in charge of the prison, or failing that, the doctor, health care worker or prison staff who attended the birth must report the birth within 30 (thirty) days of the birth. Law 2024/16.

Reporting Period

Normal reporting period

90 days

Section 10(1) of Law 2024/16. Birth shall be declared to the civil status registrar of the place of birth within 90 (ninety) days of such birth. Note that it is 12 months for children born outside of Cameroon - Loi n° 2011/011 du 6 mai 2011 modifiant et complétant certaines dispositions de l'ordonnance N° 81-002 du 29 juin 1988 portant organisation de l'état civil et diverses dispositions relatives à l'état des personnes physiques Art "c" - et diverses dispositions relatives à l'étranger dans ces pays. (nouveau) Les nationaux nés ou résidant à l'étranger dans ces pays, dépouvus de centres camerounais d'état civil et se trouvant dans l'impossibilité de se faire établir un acte d'état civil dans ledit pays doivent, dans un délai de douze (12) mois à compter de leur retour au Cameroun et à peine de forclusion, déclarer les naissances, mariages, ou décès de leurs enfants, parents ou personnes à charge auprès du centre d'état civil de leur résidence actuelle au Cameroun ou, le cas échéant de leur lieu de naissance sur présentation de pièces justificatives. A défaut de celles-ci, les actes d'état civil sont reconstitués conformément aux articles 23 et suivants ci-dessous.

Father

Name

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Date of Birth

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Sex

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Place of Birth

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

National ID/UID

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Ethnicity

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Religion

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Caste/Tribe

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Mother

Name

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Date of Birth

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Sex

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Place of Birth

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

National ID/UID

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Ethnicity

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Religion

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Caste/Tribe

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Father

Name

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Date of Birth

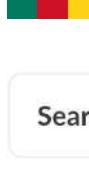
YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.

Sex

YES

Section 37 of Law 2024/16.



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Health sector notification, declaration, registration and certification

Notification

NO

Section 11(2) of Law 2024/16. If the child is born in a public or private health facility, the person in charge of the said facility or, failing that, the physician or any health professional who attended the birth, shall be required to declare the birth within 30 (thirty) days.

Declaration

30 days

YES

Section 11(2) of Law 2024/16. If the child is born in a public or private health facility, the person in charge of the said facility or, failing that, the physician or any health professional who attended the birth, shall be required to declare the birth within 30 (thirty) days.

Registration

YES

Section 87(1) of Law 2024/16. Specialized civil status centres attached to a main centre may be set up, by order of the Minister in charge of civil status, within first, second, third or fourth category health facilities as defined in the health organisation. (2) The specialized civil status centres referred to in (1) above shall be competent only to register births and deaths occurring within such facilities and to draw up corresponding civil status certificates.

Certification

YES

Section 87(1) of Law 2024/16. Specialized civil status centres attached to a main centre may be set up, by order of the Minister in charge of civil status, within first, second, third or fourth category health facilities as defined in the health organisation. (2) The specialized civil status centres referred to in (1) above shall be competent only to register births and deaths occurring within such facilities and to draw up corresponding civil status certificates.

Education sector notification, declaration, registration and certification, any other link

Notification

NO

It seems that the law is silent on this matter based on publicly available information.

Declaration

NO

It seems that the law is silent on this matter based on publicly available information.

Registration

NO

It seems that the law is silent on this matter based on publicly available information.

However, the President has the possibility to decree others such as Diplomatic missions or during war as civil registry functions.

See Loi n° 2011/01 du 6 mai 2011 modifiant et complétant certaines dispositions de l'ordonnance N° 81-002 du 29 juin 1988 portant organisation de l'état civil et diverses dispositions relatives à l'état des personnes physiques Art. 7 - (nouveau) (1) Les délégués du gouvernement auprès des communautés urbaines et leurs adjoints, les maires et leurs adjoints, les chefs de missions diplomatiques ou de postes consulaires ainsi que les diplomates en assurant l'intérim, sont officiers d'état civil.

(2) Le président de la République peut par décret, instituer d'autres officiers d'état civil parmi les diplomates en service dans une mission diplomatique ou dans un poste consulaire.

(3) En cas de guerre ou de grave calamité, le Président de la République peut, par décret instituer d'autres officiers d'état civil. Ledit décret fixe les modalités d'exercice de leurs attributions.

(4) En cas de constitution d'une délégation spéciale dans une commune et jusqu'à la reconstitution du conseil municipal, le président et le vice-président de ladite délégation remplissent les fonctions d'officiers d'état civil.

Certification

YES

It seems that the law is silent on this matter based on publicly available information.

However, the President has the possibility to decree others such as Diplomatic missions or during war as civil registry functions.

See Loi n° 2011/01 du 6 mai 2011 modifiant et complétant certaines dispositions de l'ordonnance N° 81-002 du 29 juin 1988 portant organisation de l'état civil et diverses dispositions relatives à l'état des personnes physiques Art. 7 - (nouveau) (1) Les délégués du gouvernement auprès des communautés urbaines et leurs adjoints, les maires et leurs adjoints, les chefs de missions diplomatiques ou de postes consulaires ainsi que les diplomates en assurant l'intérim, sont officiers d'état civil.

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Preserving information

YES

Section 71 of Law 2024/16. Each civil status register shall be available from 1 January of each year and kept in 3 (three) counterfoiled copies, marked and initialled by the territorially competent President of the Court of First Instance.

Section 77(3) of Law 2024/16. The national civil status database shall be kept under the control and supervision of the Ministry in charge of Justice, under the terms and conditions laid down by regulation.

Accessing information

YES

Section 79 of Law 2024/16. The conditions and procedures regarding access to data in the national civil status database and the production, issuance and certification of copies and extracts of civil status certificates from national civil status database shall be laid down by regulation.

Reconstruction of lost, missing or damaged birth records

NO

See Sections 56-58 Law 2024/16.

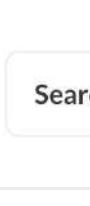
Section 56(1) of Law 2024/16. In the event of war, armed conflict, natural disaster or any other serious emergency, and Sections 58 and 61 below notwithstanding, births, marriages and deaths which occur in the affected parts of the country may be registered beyond the the prescribed time limit and civil status certificates reconstituted through administrative procedures.

Section 57(1) of Law 2024/16. Persons who are internally displaced by war, armed conflict, natural disaster or any other emergency may, through application submitted to the territorially competent State Counsel in the new place of residence or their host locality, request for late registration of vital events concerning them or the reconstitution of their civil status certificates.

Section 58 (1) of Law 2024/16. The civil status registrar may rectify or reconstitute civil status documents and record declarations of vital events...

Section 56(1) In the event of war, armed conflict, natural disaster or any other serious emergency, and Sections 58 and 61 below notwithstanding, births, marriages and deaths which occur in the affected parts of the country may be registered beyond the the prescribed time limit and civil status certificates reconstituted through administrative procedures. Law 2024/16

LAW 2024/16



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For children who are abandoned

YES

Section 15(1) of Law 2024/16. Whoever finds an abandoned child must immediately inform the nearest police or gendarmerie station, the nearest health centre, the social affairs service, the family service or the child protection service (2) The criminal investigation officer, the head of the health centre, the head of the social affairs service, the family service or the child protection service, as the case may be, shall draw up a report stating, besides the date, time, place and circumstances of the discovery, the sex and apparent age of the child, which must be confirmed by a doctor, any information that may help identify the child and the identity of the person who found the child. Law 2024/16

For adopted children

name of biological mother

YES

Art. 364 Civil Code (...) Il est fait mention de l'adoption et des nouveaux nom et prénoms de l'adopté en marge de l'acte de naissance de ce dernier. https://national.trree.org/fileadmin/user_upload/cameroun/Code-Civil-Camerounais.pdf

Section 69(2) of Law 2024/16. Birth registers shall also be used to register adoptions ...

There are two different laws that could apply for adoptions depending on whether it is the french or english-speaking territory <https://thelawbrigade.com/family-law/a-critical-analysis-of-adoption-law-in-cameroun/> A 2020 article states the following "The situation in Anglophone Cameroon concerning the substantive law on adoption is therefore not very clear. There is no substantive law on adoption.[xxv] Given this lacuna in the law, the judges tend to decide adoption cases based on English law. Full adoption is therefore recognized following substantive English law. The exact English statute governing adoption is however left to be decided by the presiding judge in any given adoption matter before the courts, creating a situation of imprecision. The courts have taken the cue and followed the precedent of the Court of Appeal in the case of Bernard Fonlon V. Judith Fonlon & Others.[xxvi] In that case the Court of Appeal overruled the High Court decision declining jurisdiction in matters of adoption, for want of any substantive law. The Court of Appeal relied on the 1958 English Adoption Act and dismissed the appeal for non-fulfilment of the requirements of section 3(1) of the said Act concerning consent. The Court based its decision on Section 10 of the Southern Cameroons High Court Law 1955, although as has been criticized[xxvii], that provision refers to procedural and not substantive law.

Court judgments granting adoption have consistently followed this precedent and applied the 1958 English Adoption Act and subsequent statutes on adoption. Adoption cases are brought to court based on Section 18 (1) (b) (New) of Law N° 2011/027 of 14th December 2011 on Judicial organization which provides: "The High Court shall have jurisdiction to hear and determine suits and proceedings relating to status of persons; civil status, marriage, divorce, affiliation, adoption and inheritance." [xxviii] The judges equally cite Section 10 of the Southern Cameroons High Court Law 1955 as enabling them to make use of English law; more particularly, post 1900 statutes. In England and Wales, a legal adoption is affected by an "adoption order" made by a competent court on an application by person(s) wishing to adopt a child. In the case of Ngam Theresia Lum V. The State of Cameroon, Esther Bei Muchoh & Neh Muchoh Adeline,[xxix] the judge in making the adoption order, relied on the provisions of the 1958 English Adoption Act as read with section 21 of the CRC and Section 24 of the ACRWC. On the other hand, in the case of Dr. Diggelmann Martin V The People of Cameroon & Tabi Rachel Anderson,[xxx] the presiding judge rather relied on the provisions of the English Adoption Act 2002 as well as the provisions of the United Nations CRC and the ACRWC. We can therefore see that there it is not clear, which English statute should be applicable in adoption cases in the English common law courts of the two English-speaking regions. According to section 50 of the 2002 Adoption and Children Act; an adoptive parent must be at least 21 years of age (a parent adopting his or her own child with their partner need only be 18 years of age). The 2002 Act governs specific aspects of adoption, its effects on succession rights, and the agencies involved that are peculiar to England. One therefore wonders, which sections of the Act that the judge refers to in his judgment. This just goes to illustrate the state of confusion in the adoption laws of Anglophone Cameroon. According to the 1975 Children Act, only children under 18 can be adopted and the applicant or joint applicants must be at least twenty-one years of age. [xxxi]

name of biological father

YES

Art. 364 Civil Code (...) Il est fait mention de l'adoption et des nouveaux nom et prénoms de l'adopté en marge de l'acte de naissance de ce dernier. https://national.trree.org/fileadmin/user_upload/cameroun/Code-Civil-Camerounais.pdf

Section 69(2) of Law 2024/16. Birth registers shall also be used to register adoptions ...

name of adoptive father

NO

Section 11(1) of Law 2024/16. A birth shall be declared by the father or mother of the child, or any person having knowledge of it, if it takes place in the community. Section 11(4) In the case of a birth in prison, the person in charge of the prison, or failing that, the doctor, health care worker or prison staff who attended the birth must report the birth within 30 (thirty) days of the birth.

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Do the names of both sets of parents appear on the birth certificate?

NO

Section 69(2) of Law 2024/16. Birth registers shall also be used to register adoptions ...

For children born through surrogacy

NO

name of biological mother /donor of egg

NO

Section 11(1) of Law 2024/16. A birth shall be declared by the father or mother of the child, or any person having knowledge of it, if it takes place in the community. Section 11(4) In the case of a birth in prison, the person in charge of the prison, or failing that, the doctor, health care worker or prison staff who attended the birth must report the birth within 30 (thirty) days of the birth.

name of biological father /donor of sperm

NO

Section 11(1) of Law 2024/16. A birth shall be declared by the father or mother of the child, or any person having knowledge of it, if it takes place in the community. Section 11(4) In the case of a birth in prison, the person in charge of the prison, or failing that, the doctor, health care worker or prison staff who attended the birth must report the birth within 30 (thirty) days of the birth.

What other details are recorded in a birth registration form?

NO

For children born to single/unwed mothers

NO

Can birth be registered without the name of the father?

YES

Section 11(1) Law 2024/16. A birth shall be declared by the father or mother of the child, or any person having knowledge of it, if it takes place in the community. Section 11(4) In the case of a birth in prison, the person in charge of the prison, or failing that, the doctor, health care worker or prison staff who attended the birth must report the birth within 30 (thirty) days of the birth.

Section 69(2) of Law 2024/16. Birth registers shall also be used to register adoptions ...