

CAMEROON

Date of Elections: June 7, 1970

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of the Federal State of the Cameroon, the Federal National Assembly, comprises 50 members elected for 5 years in each Federal State, in proportion to its respective population. East Cameroon is represented by 40 deputies and West Cameroon by 10.

The June 1970 elections were held at the termination of the preceding legislature whose normal date of expiry of April 25, 1969 had been extended by 15 months.

Electoral System

All Cameroonian citizens, of either sex, who have reached the age of 21, and have not been disqualified by law, are entitled to vote. The law denies voting rights to persons convicted, undischarged bankrupts and the mentally deficient; it also forbids persons convicted of attempts against the security of the State from being placed on electoral lists for a period of 10 years after the conviction.

In order to be placed on the electoral list of a constituency, each citizen must have his permanent residence, or have lived for at least 6 months, in that constituency. Electoral lists are permanent and are revised annually throughout the Cameroonian territory.

All electors of either sex, at least 23 years old by the date of the election, who are able to read and write French or English, are eligible for the Federal National Assembly.

However, a certain number of senior officials, members of the armed forces, magistrates and clerks of courts and tribunals are not eligible for election while they hold their official positions nor for 6 months after they have retired from their posts. Moreover, the function of a deputy's mandate is incompatible with ministerial duties for the government of a Federal State.

Each of the 6 administrative regions of the Cameroon is one constituency. The electoral lists put up in each constituency must comprise a number of candidates equal to the number of seats to be filled. The deputies are elected by majority uninominal ballot, without preferential vote or vote-splitting.

By-elections are held when at least 2 vacancies occur during a legislature.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

When the first Federal Assembly was set up, in April 1960, the Cameroonian Union (UC) undertook, under the leadership of President Ahidjo, the task of

assembling all other parties under its banner to form a large united national party.

In April 1964, during the legislative elections, the Cameroonian Union, favoured by the majority uninominal ballot, had already won, without difficulty, all the mandates attributed to the East Cameroon, while its ally, the Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP) had obtained an identical result in West Cameroon.

The goal that the UC had set itself was attained on September 1, 1966, with the birth of the Cameroon National Union (UNC), following the fusion of the KNDP and the UC and, later, agreements between the leaders of the other political parties then in existence.

The Cameroon National Union was consequently the only political party to present lists on June 7, 1970. The candidates who, during the electoral campaign, emphasized the need to continue the work of building the nation carried out over the preceding 11 years under President Ahidjo, met with enormous success on election day — as is confirmed by the statistics given below.

Statistics

1. *Results of the Elections*

Number of registered voters	3,049,073
Voters	2,928,884 (99.3 %)
Void or blank ballot papers	52,295
<i>Votes for candidates of the Cameroonian</i>	
<i>National Union.</i>	2,876,589

2. *Distribution of Deputies according to Professional Category*

Teachers	20
Notables10
Civil servants, clerks, officials of the central administration	5
Male nurses	3
Public works contractors	3
Businessmen	2
Customs officials	2
Trade merchants	2
Pharmacist1
Journalist1
Co-operative advisor1

3. *Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

Men	48
Women	2
	50

4. *Average Age: 40*