

# GLOBAL TORTURE INDEX 2025: KYRGYZSTAN FACTSHEET

## OVERALL GLOBAL TORTURE INDEX SCORE:

**CONSIDERABLE RISK**

The Global Torture Index 2025 is the first analysis designed to assess the risk of torture and ill-treatment across 26 countries worldwide. This 2025 factsheet for Kyrgyzstan includes an analysis of the country's overall performance, a breakdown by thematic pillars, and key recommendations for driving meaningful change in the fight against torture and the promotion of human rights.

## AT A GLANCE

---

Kyrgyzstan's human rights landscape remains deeply troubled by systemic failures in preventing torture and ill-treatment and a lack of progress in implementing reforms. For 2025, the Global Torture Index classifies the country as facing a **considerable risk** of torture and ill-treatment, based on data collected in 2023 and 2024.












Despite international obligations, the country's domestic legal framework falls short in several key areas. The definition of torture in the Criminal Code is incomplete, limiting accountability to only a subset of officials and allowing many potential perpetrators to evade responsibility. According to statistical data from the General Prosecutor's Office of the Kyrgyz Republic, in 2022, there were 178 registered complaints of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment (CIDTP). In 2023, there were 126 complaints. However, despite the decrease in the practice of torture, there is still a trend of inefficiency in responding to and investigating torture allegations. In 2022, 84% of complainants were denied an independent investigation—a staggering figure that illustrates the widespread culture of impunity. This lack of effective accountability is compounded by procedural delays, where evidence often disappears during prolonged preliminary investigations, and obstructive practices hinder the work of the National Centre for the Prevention of Torture.

Detention conditions in Kyrgyzstan further exacerbate human rights violations. Many temporary detention centres (IVSs) do not meet basic standards: 85% lack toilets in cells, and, in some centres, detainees sleep on the floor or on makeshift bunks due to the absence of beds. Medical examinations upon being detained are frequently inadequate, with 90% of the required medical forms only partially completed, and in numerous cases, no detainee medical examination is conducted.

In 2023, the National Centre for the Prevention of Torture recorded around 59 allegations of torture, a figure that, even with a slight decrease from previous years, clearly underscores the systemic nature of the problem. The majority of cases (58%) involved beatings with hands and feet, while 13% of complaints mentioned the use of a plastic bag or gas mask to suffocate the victim.

Adding to these challenges, in recent years, the government has created a hostile environment for civil society. The recent adoption and [signing of the "Foreign Representatives" law](#) has further restricted civic space, stigmatising NGOs that receive foreign funding by labelling them as 'foreign agents.' This law not only imposes heavy administrative burdens, but also creates an atmosphere of distrust and fear among civil society actors, hampering their ability to promote public participation, transparency, accountability and good governance. Recent years have also been marked by an increased number of cases of harassment and persecution of independent lawyers, journalists and human rights defenders. As investigations into allegations of torture are largely ineffective, these systemic deficiencies contribute to a culture of impunity, leaving victims and their families with limited avenues for redress. Finally, despite the approval of action [plans in late 2022 and mid-2024](#) to combat torture and ill-treatment, concrete implementation of these measures remains limited, with most recommendations from international bodies unfulfilled.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

						
<b>Type of government:</b> Parliamentary Republic	<b>United Nations Convention Against Torture:</b> Ratified	<b>OPCAT ratification:</b> Ratified	<b>Population:</b> 7.3 million	<b>People deprived of liberty:</b> 7,728	<b>Prison population (per 100,000 of national population):</b> 1125	<b>Pre-trial detainees / remand prisoners (percentage of prison population):</b> 20.5%
						
<b>Documented Detained Human Rights Defenders:</b> No Data	<b>Alerts Issued by the Observatory for Human Rights Defenders in 2024:</b> 7	<b>Prison Occupancy level:</b> 61.8%	<b>Homicide rate (per 100.000 people):</b> 2.2			

## THEMATIC PILLAR OVERVIEW



### I. POLITICAL COMMITMENT

**INDEX SCORE: MODERATE RISK**

Kyrgyzstan's political commitment to preventing torture is severely undermined by gaps in both legislation and state practice. The Criminal Code's definition of torture is incomplete, limiting accountability to only certain officials and allowing many potential perpetrators to evade responsibility. For example, Article 137 of the Criminal Code is incomplete and criminal legislation allows presidential pardons for torture. Moreover, the State has not accepted the competence of the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT) for individual complaints pursuant to Article 22 of the UN CAT. There is little to no dialogue between government authorities and civil society regarding the implementation of the [CAT's Concluding Observations](#). There is also a lack of sufficient state support for the National Centre for the Prevention of Torture (NCPT). The institution urgently needs additional staff and effective procedures to investigate and address any obstructions that hinder its work. The CAT has recommended amending the Criminal Code to hold individuals criminally liable for obstructing the NCPT. However, this measure remains unimplemented, allowing obstructions to continue, such as the denial of access to preventive visit groups.



## II. ENDING POLICE BRUTALITY AND INSTITUTIONAL VIOLENCE

---

**INDEX SCORE: CONSIDERABLE RISK**

Despite having some legal provisions intended to regulate the use of force by law enforcement, Kyrgyzstan continues to witness regular instances of excessive and often brutal police violence. The [latest CAT report](#) indicates that evidence obtained through torture is not routinely excluded from investigations and that many arrests lack proper documentation, leading to an under-investigation of incidents involving excessive use of force.

According to the report of the [National Centre for the Prevention of Torture of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2023](#), the number of allegations of torture received by the National Centre in 2023 decreased slightly compared to the figures for 2021 and 2022. Nevertheless, it is clear that 59 allegations of torture per year (taking into account the latency rate of this crime) is a large enough figure to indicate the systemic nature of torture. The most common method of torture remains the infliction of physical suffering by beating with hands and feet (58%). Thirteen percent of victims stated that a plastic bag or gas mask was used to suffocate them during torture, and four complainants reported the use of a stun gun. The lack of standardised, human rights-based training for both police and military personnel results in practices that are inconsistent with international norms.



## III. FREEDOM FROM TORTURE WHILE DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY

---

**INDEX SCORE: HIGH RISK**

Detention conditions in Kyrgyzstan are seriously inadequate and contribute significantly to the vulnerability of detainees. In many IVSs, essential facilities such as [toilets are absent in 85% of cells](#), and detainees often sleep on the floor or on makeshift bunks due to a lack of beds. 90% of required medical examination forms are inadequately completed, and in some centres, no proper medical examinations are conducted upon arrival. Moreover, procedural safeguards during the first hours of detention are frequently neglected: detainees rarely have timely access to a lawyer or a family member, and the right to challenge the legality of detention within 48 hours is seldom upheld. Additionally, inconsistent recording of injuries and the lack of accessible, independent complaint channels create an environment where abuse and torture go unreported. The systemic neglect of detainees' welfare calls for immediate reforms to detention standards and oversight mechanisms.



## IV. ENDING IMPUNITY

---

**INDEX SCORE: HIGH RISK**

A pervasive culture of impunity continues to plague Kyrgyzstan's justice system, particularly concerning allegations of torture and other cruel treatment. Approximately [84% of reported cases do not result in criminal proceedings](#), illustrating a systemic failure in holding perpetrators accountable. Prolonged preliminary investigations often lead to the disappearance of vital evidence, further obstructing effective prosecution efforts. Moreover, certain practices, such as denying access to independent monitors and the National Centre for the Prevention of Torture, further impedes justice. When criminal cases are initiated, they are rarely filed under the specific charge of 'torture', but instead under related offences like 'abuse of office' or 'exceeding authority', thus diminishing the gravity of the crimes. The legal system also permits pardons for convicted torturers, which undermines deterrence and accountability. The combination of delayed investigations, insufficient legal mechanisms and administrative barriers perpetuates impunity, leaving victims without redress and allowing perpetrators to continue abusing without fear of punishment.



## V. VICTIM'S RIGHTS

---

**INDEX SCORE: VERY HIGH RISK**

Kyrgyzstan's legal framework fails to adequately protect and provide redress for victims of torture and ill-treatment. Victims often find themselves without effective judicial remedies. For example, in many cases, the absence of timely and thorough investigations has led to the disappearance of evidence during prolonged preliminary inquiries, leaving victims without an opportunity to obtain compensation or rehabilitation. In addition, when courts do award damages for moral harm, the amounts (often around 200,000 to 300,000 Kyrgyz Soms) are criticised as being insufficient given the severity of the abuse. There is also a notable lack of state-funded mechanisms dedicated specifically to the rehabilitation of torture survivors, forcing victims to rely on under-resourced civil society services. Victims' rights to justice, reparation and effective rehabilitation remain largely unfulfilled.



## VI. PROTECTION FOR ALL

---

**INDEX SCORE: CONSIDERABLE RISK**

In Kyrgyzstan, there are significant challenges due to systemic gaps in data and legal safeguards. Public statistics on intimate partner violence and femicide are notably lacking, impeding effective policy responses and support measures for affected populations. Additionally, existing anti-terrorist and anti-extremism laws do not include robust protections against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, nor do they explicitly safeguard the principle of non-refoulement during asylum proceedings. This gap has been highlighted in the 2021 CAT Concluding Observations in the case of Bobomurod Abdullaev, Murat Tungishbaev and Orkhan Inandi. The Committee expressed deep concern that current legislative provisions may lead to violations of non-refoulement, emphasising that instead of protecting vulnerable individuals during asylum proceedings, the laws permit their removal.



## VII. RIGHT TO DEFEND AND CIVIC SPACE

---

**INDEX SCORE: CONSIDERABLE RISK**

The shrinking civic space in Kyrgyzstan severely limits the ability of human rights defenders and civil society organisations to monitor and report on torture and abuses by state authorities. Recent legislative developments, such as the adoption of the 'Foreign Representatives' law, impose a stigmatising label on NGOs that receive foreign funding. This law requires such organisations to register as 'foreign representatives,' subjecting them to heavy reporting requirements, inspections and financial controls. This creates an atmosphere of fear and self-censorship among civil society actors. This has led to many NGOs either ceasing or limiting their activities.

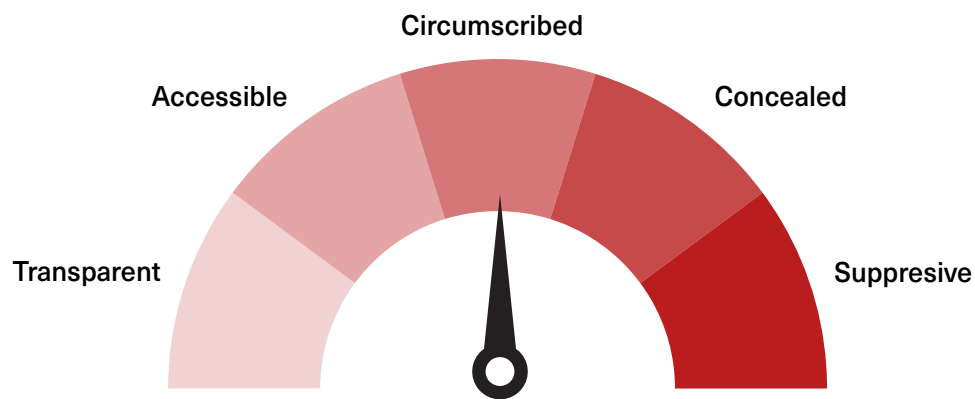
The lack of effective legal remedies and protection mechanisms for human rights defenders makes them vulnerable to harassment. Makhabat Tazhibek Kyzy, director of Temirov Live, was sentenced to prison on baseless charges of inciting mass unrest following her arrest in January 2024. She has reportedly endured harassment, intimidation and repeated death threats from a fellow detainee. In addition, the award-winning investigative outlet Kloop Media faced a decision to be liquidated. The case against Kloop Media was initiated in August 2023 through a lawsuit filed by the Bishkek City Prosecutor's Office. The lawsuit alleged that Kloop Media had engaged in 'sharp criticism of the government,' citing several articles deemed excessively critical of the Kyrgyz government's policies and the actions of state and municipal bodies.

# TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

---

The Global Torture Index rates the access to information and transparency available in each country when measuring and assessing the risks of torture and ill-treatment. It considers the availability of information, as well as the obstacles faced by civil society organisations in collecting data and their ability to access it. Data access must be guaranteed in every society, both in law and in practice, to ensure state transparency and accountability. It enables organisations, journalists and individuals to request information on public bodies, protocols, and statistics on human rights violations. This indicator reflects the challenges in accessing information within a country, with each country and territory assigned a rating as Suppressive, Concealed, Circumscribed, Accessible or Transparent.

Kyrgyzstan's score is **circumscribed** based on our evaluation of its current level of transparency and access to information.



# ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE IN KYRGYZSTAN: KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

---

The Index includes 5 recommendations for [Kyrgyzstan](#), taken from the [Index webpage](#), which will serve as references in upcoming editions to monitor achievements within the anti-torture movement.

1. Take decisive measures to implement the rulings of UN human rights treaty bodies that have found Kyrgyzstan in violation of the right to freedom from torture and cruel treatment. Acknowledge the Committee against Torture's authority to hear complaints from individuals in Kyrgyzstan alleging violations of the Convention.
2. Amend Article 137 of the Criminal Code to expand the definition of torture, ensuring that not only public officials but all individuals acting in an official capacity can be held accountable under the law.
3. Repeal the 'foreign representatives' law and guarantee the right to freedom of association in the country. Halt the intimidation campaign against Kloop Media and release journalist Makahbbat Tazhibek Kyzy.
4. Establish a rehabilitation centre offering comprehensive and free services to victims of torture and ill-treatment, as well as their families. Alternatively, allocate funding to support rehabilitation programmes provided by relevant civil society organisations.
5. Strengthen initiatives to improve conditions in places of deprivation of liberty, ensuring they respect the dignity of those detained and comply with international standards.



## FURTHER RESOURCES

For further information, the complete 2025 Torture Index—including detailed data visualisations, FAQs, the methodology, and more—can be accessed on our website: <https://www.omct.org/en/global-torture-index>. Should you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at [tortureindex@omct.org](mailto:tortureindex@omct.org).

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SUPPORT

This project is made possible through the generous support of our donors.

For a full list of contributors and partners, please visit:

<https://www.omct.org/en/global-torture-index>



## FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

We invite you to explore the data and share your thoughts on social media using #GlobalTortureIndex. Join us in spreading awareness by engaging with the data and sharing your country's standing to drive meaningful conversation. Your participation is essential in raising awareness and fostering positive change.

### CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

