

# GLOBAL TORTURE INDEX 2025: TOGO 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 Togo 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.

## COLLABORATING ORGANISATIONS IN TOGO:

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**Le Collectif des Associations  
Contre l'Impunité au Togo  
(CACIT)**

**Centre de Documentation et  
de Formation sur les Droits de  
l'Homme (CDFDH)**

## AT A GLANCE

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Togo's human rights record remains under regional and international scrutiny. Throughout the country, the use of torture to extract confessions or intimidate political opponents remains widespread—particularly during demonstrations, arrests, and in police custody. The country has been condemned multiple times by the Court of Justice of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for such practices. For 2025, the Index classifies Togo as facing a **considerable** risk of torture and ill-treatment, based on data collected in 2023 and 2024.

Implementation of the law criminalising torture is limited due to a lack of training for officials, the weakness of the judicial system and the fear of reprisals against victims. **To date, there have been no criminal convictions at national level for acts of torture, despite dozens of complaints filed by civil society organisations.** While the Criminal Code was revised in 2015 to define and criminalise torture in accordance with the Convention against Torture (CAT), the Code of Criminal Procedure, which dates from 1984, has still not been brought into line with this reform. Despite a revision process being initiated over ten years ago, the text has yet to be adopted. This shortcoming deprives the judicial system of the tools needed to fully guarantee the rights of victims and the defence, and is delaying the introduction of alternatives to prosecution and pre-trial detention.

Togo's prisons hold on average more than twice their planned capacity and have a pre-trial detention rate of 70.9% (as a proportion of the total prison population), **making Togo one of the countries most affected by prison overcrowding in the world.** This situation has resulted in inhumane conditions at detention centres, particularly in the civil prison in Lomé, which the United Nations Committee against Torture recommended be closed definitively in 2019, which has not happened. The [National Torture Prevention Mechanism](#) set up in 2019, attached to the National Human Rights Commission, carries out regular and unannounced visits to places of detention, but lacks the resources, transparency and guarantees of independence to effectively fulfil its mandate.

Civic space in Togo has become increasingly restricted following the implementation of [laws restricting freedom of assembly and association](#) since 2019. This restriction has increased following the adoption of a constitutional reform leading to a change of political regime and a new Republic in 2024. In the wake of this, civil society organisations and opposition political parties have faced bans on demonstrations and meetings, as well as [arrests](#) and [convictions](#).

Although the new Constitution, which came into force on 6 May 2025, provides for the creation of administrative courts with a Council of State, the operability of these courts remains a major challenge.

# GENERAL INFORMATION



**Type of government:**  
Republic, parliamentary system



**United Nations Convention Against Torture:**  
Ratified



**OPCAT ratification:**  
Ratified



**Population:**  
9 671 861



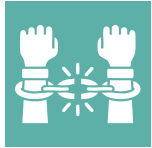
**People deprived of liberty:**  
6,949



**Prison population (per 100,000 of national population):**  
71.8



**Pre-trial detainees / remand prisoners (percentage of prison population):**  
70.9



**Documented Detained Human Rights Defenders:**  
Lack of Data



**Alerts Issued by the Observatory for Human Rights Defenders in 2024:**  
9



**Prison Occupancy level:**  
222%



**Homicide rate (per 100.000 people):**  
9

## THEMATIC PILLAR OVERVIEW



### I. POLITICAL COMMITMENT

**INDEX SCORE: MODERATE RISK**

Whilst Togo ratified the Convention against Torture in 1987; there is no national policy to combat torture and other forms of ill-treatment.

Since Togo's review by the United Nations Committee against Torture (CAT) in 2019, several recommendations have been partially implemented. In particular, the country has finalised the establishment of a [national mechanism for the prevention of torture](#), which is now fully operational and carries out regular preventive visits to places of deprivation of liberty.

At the same time, Togo has adopted a new [Code of Judicial Organisation](#), which has led to a major reform of the judicial system, including the creation of military courts to try members of the security forces accused of acts of torture. Efforts have also been made to improve detention conditions for minors, particularly in the Lomé and Kara regions, where dedicated facilities are being equipped or renovated.

However, despite these advances, **Togo has only implemented some of the recommendations made by the Committee in 2019.** In particular, it has still to adopt a new Code of Criminal Procedure, an essential tool for strengthening the rights of people deprived of their liberty. Furthermore, the authorities have not systematically released people held in abusive pre-trial detention, nor have they given clear and systematic instructions to all the security forces on the absolute prohibition of torture. Finally, the civil prison in Lomé is still in operation, despite its deplorable detention conditions due to extreme overcrowding.

Between 2021 and 2025, the Togolese Republic was condemned on six occasions by the ECOWAS Court of Justice for acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment perpetrated by its agents against a total of 29 victims. However, none of these decisions has been effectively implemented with a view to guaranteeing reparations for the victims.

Finally, whilst Togo has ratified most international human rights treaties, it has yet to ratify the 1998 Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court.



## II. ENDING POLICE BRUTALITY AND INSTITUTIONAL VIOLENCE

INDEX SCORE: HIGH RISK

Torture and ill-treatment are widespread in police stations and gendarmerie brigades, particularly within the '*Geôles of the Service central de recherches et d'investigations criminelles*' (prisons of the Central Criminal Investigation and Research Service). **During the arrest of suspects, psychological pressure is generally exerted by law enforcement officers, who sometimes commit acts of torture.** Gatherings and demonstrations are very often dispersed or forcefully quelled by the police. Abuses generally go unpunished as the police rarely initiate disciplinary proceedings in the event of allegations of torture or ill-treatment. Impunity also results from the absence of any external police monitoring and control mechanism. These violations also affect children, who are frequently subjected to violent physical abuse by law enforcement officers at the time of their arrest or while in police custody. Between 2019 and 2022, **77 allegations of physical abuse in police custody were documented.**

Legal safeguards during arrest and detention, such as notification of rights, access to a lawyer and immediate medical examination are not expressly guaranteed by the current Code of Criminal Procedure. Torture or other physical and psychological ill-treatment is often used by officers to extract confessions, which are then used as incriminating evidence in court proceedings.

Enforced disappearances are committed in the context of the fight against terrorism and violent extremism in the Savanes region in the north of the country, which has been in an emergency security situation since June 2022. Since then, **at least 7 cases of disappearances committed by the authorities or non-state groups have been recorded by civil society organisations.** In this region, the Fula people, a marginalised ethnic minority suspected of collaborating with armed groups, are more likely to be subjected to [discriminatory treatment](#).



## III. FREEDOM FROM TORTURE WHILE DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY

INDEX SCORE: HIGH RISK

Most of the country's prisons are blighted by conditions of detention that are tantamount to ill-treatment and could even be described as torture, according to the United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture. In 2025, the prison population stood at 6,949, with an official capacity of 3,129, **representing a prison overcrowding rate of more than 222%.** The overcrowding is particularly due to the limited use of alternatives to detention and the failure to comply with the maximum length of pre-trial detention. This extreme overcrowding forces detainees into a crouched position known as the '*chappement position*', which causes numerous injuries to the feet and knees and leads to inter-prisoner violence.

The law governing the prison system in Togo dates from 1933. The prison administration therefore lacks a modern legal, institutional and operational framework. It lacks the human and financial resources to meet the basic needs of prisoners, including adequate food. Staff often place prisoners in dark or constantly lit cells and use corporal punishment to punish them. **There is no legislation on the maximum duration of solitary confinement.** Prisoners very rarely have access to a lawyer and to free and adequate medical assistance.

The separation of pre-trial prisoners from convicted ones is not respected in most prisons in Togo, with the exception of the civil prison in Kpalimé, where the categorical separation between remand prisoners, accused persons and convicted prisoners is respected. There is no reintegration policy for convicted prisoners, including minors. Women rarely benefit from hygiene products and health care adapted to their needs. Although legislation provides for alternatives to detention for minors<sup>1</sup>, these are very rarely used in practice. **Children are often subjected to violent corporal punishment and humiliation**, as well as solitary confinement for disciplinary reasons, sometimes for several weeks, in violation of international standards.

The National Preventive Mechanism performs its function of monitoring places of detention in coordination with civil society organisations working in the prison environment, but it does not make the conclusions of its visits public.



## IV. ENDING IMPUNITY

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**INDEX SCORE: VERY HIGH RISK**

In Togo, cases of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment **go largely unpunished**. Despite [condemnations](#) by international bodies, there is no information on the measures taken by the Togolese justice system to punish the perpetrators of torture and ill-treatment. The failure to open investigations into the events that took place between 2009 and 2012, a period during which many acts of torture were allegedly committed, in particular by agents of the National Intelligence Agency, as well as the events linked to the post-election violence in 2005, contributes to the climate of impunity.

In practice, victims are reluctant to lodge a complaint due to the lack of protection against reprisals. Those who do file complaints may be subjected to threats and intimidation, as may their lawyers. Since 2012, CACIT-Togo has **brought more than 32 complaints concerning allegations of torture committed by police officers during police custody** before the criminal courts. To date, none of these complaints have been investigated. The budget and human resources of the public prosecutor's office are insufficient to investigate allegations of torture, and the state has not adopted guidelines in line with international standards for actors in the criminal justice system to document acts of torture.

In trials, the offence of torture is very rarely upheld by the courts, with offences being reclassified as misdemeanours with less severe penalties. Thus, to date, there has been **no public conviction at national level for acts of torture**. However, in its decision of 4 February 2025, which [convicted GOMA Abdoul Aziz, a human rights defender who was the victim of torture, and more than a dozen others](#), the Lomé Assize Court rejected evidence obtained under torture for the first time during the preliminary investigation. Nevertheless, no investigation has been conducted into the allegations of torture.



## V. VICTIM'S RIGHTS

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**INDEX SCORE: CONSIDERABLE RISK**

The Togolese state system is marked by major shortcomings in terms of protection, support and reparations for victims, particularly vulnerable people, who are generally left to fend for themselves.

**During legal proceedings, victims, their relatives and witnesses rarely receive specific support.** Victims often undergo traumatic examinations, without sufficient access to psychological assistance. They have no guarantees against double victimisation, and their privacy and safety are not adequately protected.

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<sup>1</sup> Article 322 of the Children's Code.

Togolese law does not allow victims to seek redress outside criminal proceedings, and free legal aid remains very limited. **There is no national reparation fund for victims, nor any effective mechanisms for compensating them for the harm they have suffered, whether financial, moral or medical.** Similarly, there are no public institutions or structured, state-funded aid programmes responsible for the assistance, readaptation and rehabilitation of victims. Although there is a High Commission for Reconciliation and the Strengthening of National Unity (HCRRUN), which is responsible for compensating victims, its mandate is limited to events between 1958 and 2005.



## VI. PROTECTION FOR ALL

### INDEX SCORE: CONSIDERABLE RISK

The rights of vulnerable people in Togo continue to raise concern. **In 2022, 2,818 people, including 2,408 women, were victims of gender-based violence (GBV) in the country.** In addition, voluntary interruption of pregnancy without justification is still criminalised and access to abortion is limited in practice. While female genital mutilation is prohibited by law, the practice has not yet been eradicated. However, the government's efforts to combat GBV should be noted, in particular [the creation in 2021 of listening centres](#) in ten localities to provide medical, psychosocial and legal care for victims, the introduction of hotlines and the validation [of a national protocol](#) for the care of victims in 2023.

With regard to children in conflict with the law, the creation in 2020 of two *Centres d'Accès au Droit et à la Justice pour les Enfants* (Access Centres for Children's Rights and Justice—CADJE) in Lomé and Kara has made it possible to improve their care by offering spaces better suited to their reintegration. **Despite this, the situation of children in conflict with the law continues to give cause for concern,** particularly due to a repressive approach to juvenile crime, characterised by almost systematic incarceration, which is sometimes extended beyond the legal limits, from six to nine months or even more than a year. **Some children are detained even though they have not reached the minimum age of criminal responsibility,** set at fourteen. Others are held in adult prisons and exposed to the inhumane conditions there. Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment inflicted on children, whether in detention or in police custody, remain very common. Detention conditions in juvenile wards are also characterised by limited access to adequate food and hygiene, including at the CADJE in Lomé, and by a lack of access to healthcare and educational activities. In some juvenile wards, dormitories are in a very dilapidated state, with no bedding, ventilation or toilets.

LGBTQIA+ people face serious discrimination: same-sex relationships are criminalised, transgender identity has no legal recognition, and forced conversion therapies and other treatments are still practised.

Finally, people accused of terrorism or extremism face serious violations of their fundamental rights: arbitrary detentions, torture and other ill-treatment, as well as abusive extensions of police custody without the control of a judge and lack of access to a lawyer. The lack of a clear definition of 'extremism' encourages abuses against political opponents and activists.



## VII. RIGHT TO DEFEND AND CIVIC SPACE

### INDEX SCORE: CONSIDERABLE RISK

Civil society organisations and human rights defenders (HRDs) operate in an increasingly restrictive environment. The registration of civil society organisations is opaque, slow and subject to authorisation without recourse. Without a receipt, they cannot operate legally, severely limiting their activities in the country.

Although freedom of peaceful assembly is guaranteed by the Togolese Constitution, a [legislative amendment in 2019 restricted the freedom to demonstrate](#). Further restrictions were imposed in 2020 under the public health emergency during the Covid-19 pandemic, and again in 2022 under the emergency security situation in the north of the country. **Since October 2022, at least 24 incidents of restrictions on freedom of peaceful assembly have been recorded**, including bans on meetings, which have been denounced by the [African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights](#) and [several United Nations special rapporteurs](#).

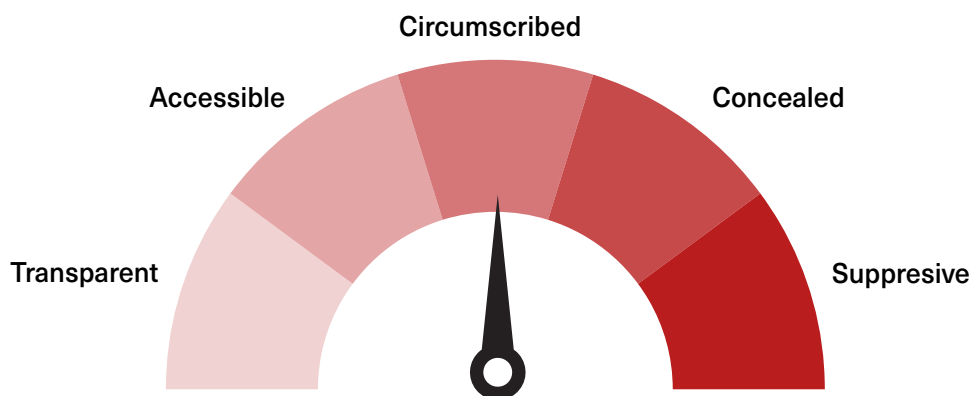
HRDs are very often the victims of arbitrary arrests, physical violence and judicial harassment that pushes them into self-censorship. **Between August 2017 and October 2022, at least 546 human rights defenders, journalists and political activists were arrested** because of their opinions. In 2024, over [92 political prisoners](#) were detained for taking part in opposition demonstrations or expressing opinions critical of the government. Between November 2023 and August 2024, the CDFDH documented five cases of activists and journalists convicted of press offences as a result of critical comments or information disseminated on social networks.

## TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

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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.

Togo's rating is **circumscribed** based on our assessment of the current level of transparency and access to information.



# ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE IN TOGO: KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Adopt without delay a new Code of Criminal Procedure to guarantee the rights of individuals deprived of their liberty; facilitate the implementation of alternative measures to imprisonment aimed at reducing prison overcrowding; ensure the inadmissibility of confessions obtained under torture.
2. Ensure that complaints of torture and ill-treatment are subject to prompt and impartial investigations, with the findings made public as soon as possible. Include provisions in the new Code of Criminal Procedure that establish clear steps for investigating allegations of torture. Ratify the Rome Statute (1998) of the International Criminal Court.
3. Adopt legislation on the prison system aimed at comprehensively reforming the penitentiary sector and effectuate the immediate and permanent closure of Lomé Civil Prison, in accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations Committee against Torture. Ensure unrestricted access to prisons for NGOs, the National Preventive Mechanism and international experts, to enable independent and regular monitoring.
4. Strengthen the capacity of security and defence forces to uphold the absolute prohibition of torture and ensure that the National Human Rights Commission, acting as the national preventive mechanism, is adequately resourced to monitor and protect the rights of persons deprived of their liberty. Ensure that conditions of detention comply with international standards.
5. Promptly revise legislation on freedom of assembly and peaceful public demonstrations to bring it into line with international standards and prevent abuse by reviewing police practices. Require all law enforcement officers involved in public order operations to wear a visible identification number at all times. Immediately release all protesters and human rights defenders who have been unlawfully arrested and detained.



## 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

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