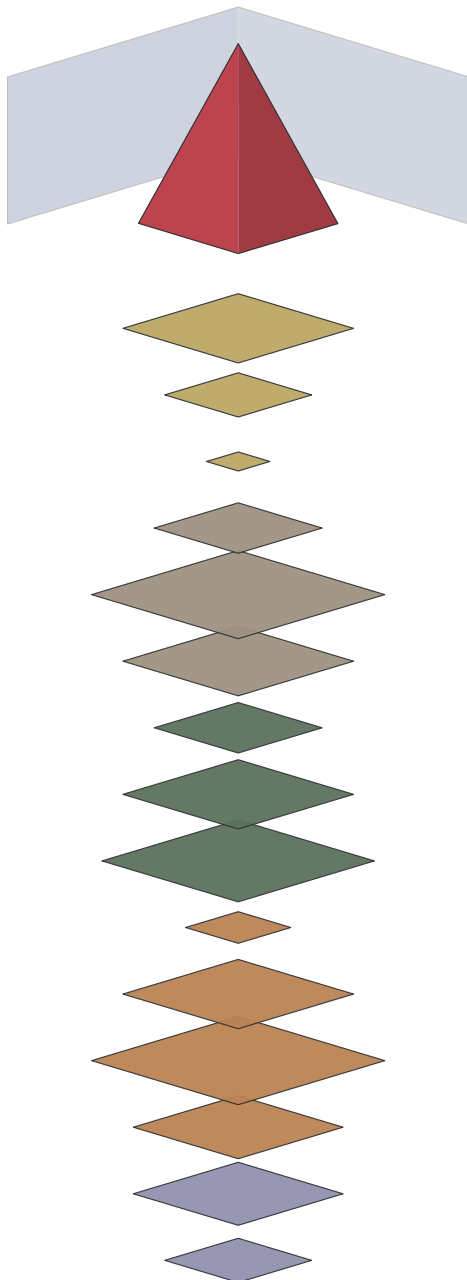


 **TOGO**



 **5.23
CRIMINALITY SCORE**

27th of 54 African countries
10th of 15 West African countries

 **CRIMINAL MARKETS 4.77**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	5.5
HUMAN SMUGGLING	3.5
EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETEERING	1.5
ARMS TRAFFICKING	4
TRADE IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS	7
ILLICIT TRADE IN EXCISABLE GOODS	5.5
FLORA CRIMES	4
FAUNA CRIMES	5.5
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	6.5
HEROIN TRADE	2.5
COCAINE TRADE	5.5
CANNABIS TRADE	7
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	5
CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES	5
FINANCIAL CRIMES	3.5

 **CRIMINAL ACTORS 5.7**

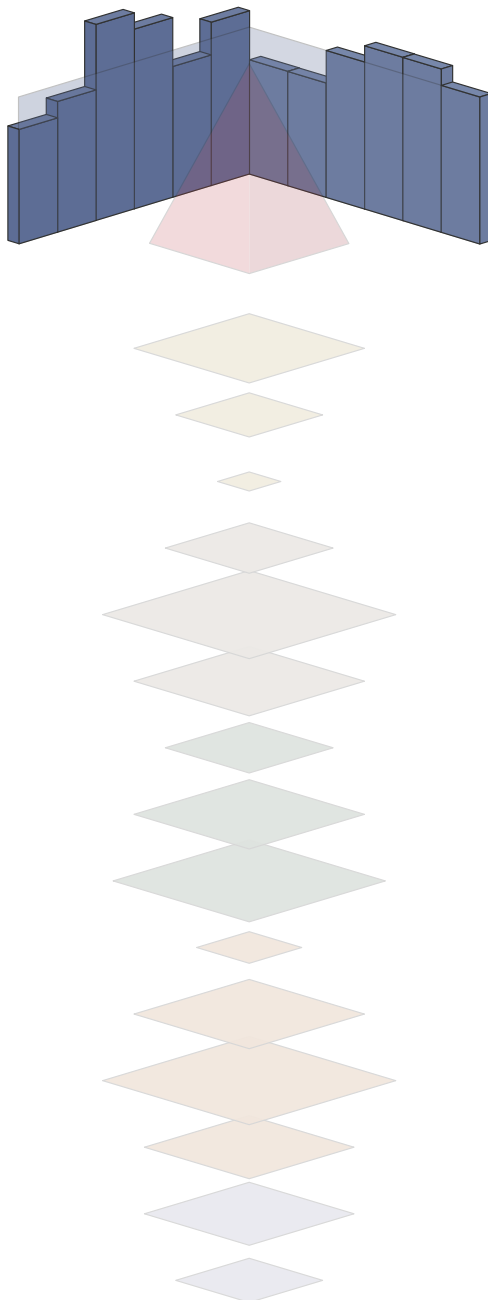
MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	1
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	7
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	7.5
FOREIGN ACTORS	7
PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS	7

 **4.5
RESILIENCE SCORE**





TOGO






4.5 RESILIENCE SCORE

19th of 54 African countries
7th of 15 West African countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	3.5
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	4
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	6
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	5.5
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	4
LAW ENFORCEMENT	5
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	3.5
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	3.5
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	4.5
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	5
PREVENTION	5
NON-STATE ACTORS	4.5



5.23 CRIMINALITY SCORE

 CRIMINAL MARKETS	4.77
 CRIMINAL ACTORS	5.7



CRIMINALITY

Criminal Markets

PEOPLE

Human trafficking remains a significant issue in Togo, with the country serving as a source, transit point, and, to a lesser extent, destination for women and children subjected to forced labour and sexual exploitation. Internal trafficking is more prevalent than transnational trafficking, with children being the primary victims. Local actors are involved, and criminal networks are in some cases loosely structured. Children are commonly trafficked for exploitation in the agriculture and mining sectors, while women are trafficked for sexual exploitation within Togo and occasionally to other African countries. Togolese boys are frequently trafficked across borders for forced labour in agriculture and construction. Marginalized communities in the north of Togo are increasingly vulnerable to exploitation, particularly as violent extremist groups expand into the region. Victims are often promised prosperity and well-being but end up being coerced into forced marriages and exploited further. Government-led awareness campaigns have helped decrease the trafficking trend, however, especially in Lomé. Victims trafficked along the Abidjan–Lagos route transit Lomé. While various local human trafficking networks exist within Togo, transnational trafficking predominantly follows this route.

Togo's status as a visa-free country within the ECOWAS diminishes the prevalence of intra-regional human smuggling. The services of smugglers are sometimes purchased for journeys seeking to leave the ECOWAS region. The involvement of criminal actors primarily includes initial contact, facilitating payments during the journey, and connecting smugglers with communities along the route. High unemployment rates, and challenging living conditions have driven many Togolese people, particularly young people, to seek better opportunities abroad. Many Togolese youths have migrated irregularly to work in the construction industry in countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Gabon, Libya, and Equatorial Guinea. Others have embarked on perilous journeys through Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, Algeria, and Libya to reach Europe.

Extortion and protection racketeering are deemed to be insignificant in Togo with only sporadic incidents being reported.

TRADE

Togo is not among the major hubs for arms trafficking in the region. However, arms trafficking shares common routes with transnational human and drug trafficking, and weapons and drugs are often seized from the same illegal shipments. Several Togolese-registered vessels have been implicated in international arms trafficking, among other illicit activities, such as cocaine and human smuggling. Togo has experienced increasing armed attacks by suspected violent extremist groups in the north of the country, including improvised explosive device attacks. These armed actors are likely based in Burkina Faso, crossing the porous borders into Togo to conduct attacks.

The counterfeit goods trade, particularly of medical products, is widespread and growing in Lomé. In addition to counterfeit medical products, the illicit trade in legitimate medical products is also pervasive. The capital's port serves as a major entry point for illicit medical products originating primarily from Asia. These medicines often enter Togo under false transit labels, intended for neighbouring countries, but end up leaking into illicit supply chains within the country. While a significant portion of trafficked medical products come from Nigeria, substantial volumes also enter from Ghana. The market for counterfeit goods extends beyond medicines, with local markets trading various products. Togolese traders in Asigamé specialize in textiles, including items sourced from Europe and the US. Cheap, counterfeit wax fabrics from China have flooded the market recently, putting more pressure on the local textile trade. Due to changing import regulations in Nigeria, many shipments destined for Lomé are smuggled through that country, further facilitating the flow of counterfeit goods.

Cigarette trafficking is prevalent in Togo, with the majority originating from China and entering the country through the Port of Lomé. These cigarettes often arrive under transit regimes, bypassing checks by port officials, which facilitates their diversion from legal supply chains. The consumption of illegal tobacco predominantly occurs within low-income and rural areas. The illicit market extends to goods such as motorcycle and vehicle parts, with cross-border trade being common with neighbouring countries such as Ghana, Benin, and Burkina Faso. However, much of this trade occurs within the informal economy rather than organized criminal markets. Togo has implemented a reliable track and trace system, resulting in a significant increase in excise tax revenue.



ENVIRONMENT

Togo's forest cover has significantly decreased. More than half of its forests have been lost in the last two decades, leaving only a small percentage of land forested. The main factors contributing to this degradation are the growing demand for agricultural land, illegal logging for firewood and charcoal production (urban areas being heavily reliant on these resources for cooking), and unsustainable logging practices. Togo experienced a surge in rosewood logging during the 2010s, but this activity has significantly reduced, with China reporting minimal rosewood imports from the country in recent years. The decline may be attributed to a decrease in Togo's rosewood stocks as much as the 10-year moratorium imposed by the government to address illegal and excessive logging of the endangered species.

Wildlife trafficking, particularly of elephant ivory and pangolins, remains a persistent issue in Togo. The country is a transit zone for illegal wildlife products owing to the accessibility of its ports and its inadequate law enforcement. Lomé is a hub for the illicit trade of ivory, sourced mainly from Central African countries such as the Republic of the Congo and Gabon. Local criminal networks, which are often connected to larger networks within the country, are involved in trafficking large quantities of ivory each month, utilizing land routes and buses for transportation. Additionally, the illegal trade of pangolins is prevalent, with the meat and scales of the animal being sold in clandestine markets.

Non-renewable resource crime in Togo primarily involves oil smuggling. Previously gold was smuggled into Togo for export due to the country's low taxes on gold, however this has not been documented in recent years. Significant volumes of oil and fuel have been smuggled from northern Ghana to northern Togo in recent years, including during COVID-19 related border closures. Criminal networks involved in oil trafficking also commonly smuggle chemical fertilizer. Aného, a town near the Benin border, is a major entry point for fuel smuggled from Benin and Nigeria. While land routes were favoured previously, increased law enforcement efforts have seen much smuggling activity shifted to waterways, with small boats known as pirogues being used for fuel transportation via the Mono River along the Beninese border.

DRUGS

Togo remains a transit point for the heroin trade, with the drug being smuggled into the country from South Asia or Latin America and then transported to Europe.

Foreign nationals, mainly from Nigeria and Lebanon, with suspected ties to high-ranking state officials, have been implicated in facilitating the trade.

Togo is also a significant transit country for cocaine trafficking, with the drug passing through its borders from various countries en route to Europe. The vast majority of volumes transiting Togo enter the country through maritime trafficking routes. The Port of Lomé plays a crucial role in this illicit activity, with cocaine often being concealed within legitimate cargo and then divided for further trafficking using various transportation routes. Some high-level state officials are suspected to provide protection to the trade. Cocaine consumption within Togo is limited, and typically associated with tourism and affluent nationals.

Where cannabis is concerned, well-established drug trafficking networks move the drug within Togo and through the country's porous borders. While some cannabis is cultivated in Togo, it is also trafficked into the country over the border from Ghana, a major cultivator.

Synthetic drugs such as methamphetamine, tramadol, and diazepam are frequently being consumed and traded in Togo. Some tramadol shipments from Asia enter the Port of Lomé before being transported to the Sahel region.

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

According to national police, cybercrime activity has increased rapidly in Togo over the past few years, with the COVID-19 pandemic creating even more opportunities for this type of crime. The Togolese government has been accused of using spyware to monitor mobile phone activity and gain access to sensitive information and hardware, including the phone cameras and microphones, stored files, and conversations of activists, individuals from the political opposition, and journalists.

FINANCIAL CRIMES

Financial crime, especially in the form of tax evasion, poses a significant challenge to Togo's economy. Annually, the country loses millions of dollars as a result of tax optimization strategies employed by multinational corporations to minimize their tax obligations. Most of these tax losses are attributed to large foreign companies taking advantage of profit shifting to tax havens. In addition, private tax evasion, whereby wealthy Togolese individuals hide undeclared assets and income abroad, further contributes to the country's financial losses. Politically exposed persons continue to wield influence in the allocation of inflated



public procurement contracts, often bypassing proper procedures. The lack of proper customer due diligence procedures, inadequate regulatory compliance, and the absence of compliance supervision create an environment conducive to bank fraud in the country.

Criminal Actors

While there is no concrete evidence of the presence of mafia-style groups operating in Togo, smaller criminal networks have continued to carry out illicit activities in various sectors over the past few years. These networks are involved in smuggling, contraband sales, the trafficking of narcotics, the illegal wildlife trade, and money laundering. Although many of these criminal networks are local and operate in alliances with larger criminal organizations based in neighbouring countries or abroad, they are believed to have strong connections with state authorities. International drug trafficking is primarily conducted by expansive foreign criminal networks, whereas local networks focus on the production and distribution of synthetic drugs. The most active foreign criminal actors in Togo are from Latin America, Nigeria, and Lebanon, although China is significantly involved in pangolin trafficking.

Since the end of 2021, Togo has experienced an increasing number of attacks, on both military positions and civilians, carried out by suspected violent extremist groups in

the north of the country. Northern Togo, particularly the border town of Cinkassé, is densely bisected by smuggling and trafficking routes. While the links between violent extremist groups and trafficking activities in these northern areas remain nebulous, precedent from elsewhere in the region suggests that armed groups likely operate as consumers of illicit supply chains, and may forge relationships with smuggling networks over time.

Informal institutions co-exist alongside formal public administration in the country, creating a parallel structure that fosters an environment conducive to corrupt practices among state-embedded actors. High-level state representatives have been implicated in various illicit activities, including corruption, drug trafficking, and money laundering. Corruption is deeply rooted in both the public and private sectors, which is a major obstacle to investment and economic development. Moreover, owing to poor administration in the Togolese business environment, there may be opportunities for corruption for private sector actors, even though much economic activity is driven into the informal sector. The Port of Lomé is Togo's primary conduit for the illicit economy, and while some of its operations are state-owned, most are handled by private companies, including all container facilities, which reduces oversight capacity and transparency of port operations.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Political and administrative governance in Togo has made significant progress, with the adoption of several new laws and policies. The dematerialization of administrative procedures holds promise for reducing corruption in the public sector, and the e-government project has made state services accessible online. Local governance has been strengthened by the establishment of a more objective system for determining the number of councillors per region. New laws covering public access to information and public procurement are meant to improve transparency and accountability in public administration. The country has also adopted a national strategy for corruption, which aims to strengthen the legal and institutional framework, citizen participation, and integrity in public administration. However, limited

resources to address corruption among government officials and security forces remain a challenge.

Togo is an active participant when it comes to international cooperation in matters of regional security, and has ratified all the main international instruments against organized crime and terrorism. Although Togo has a framework for the exchange of information with foreign customs and tax authorities, it has yet to approach its foreign counterparts in the fight against money laundering and tax evasion. The country has put in place a legal framework to combat organized crime and corruption, initiating various institutions and task forces, such as the financial intelligence unit, anti-trafficking units, and a high authority for the fight against corruption. The country has also developed laws and policies in the field of digital security, although the effective enforcement



of these laws needs improvement. Although Togo has implemented frameworks to fight illegal trafficking and organized crime, including a National Ivory Action Plan, the penalties for environmental crimes are still weak.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Togo has made improvements to the legal and institutional structures put in place to combat organized crime, with the support of international organizations and governments. A new judicial organization law has been introduced, which includes the establishment of high courts in each administrative region, as well as judges and chambers for the enforcement of sentences. The law also introduced two-tiered jurisdiction in criminal matters and administrative chambers at the high court level. The recent implementation of an automated criminal record system has expedited the judicial process in the country. This development allows online applications, payments and processing, which streamlines the efficiency of the judicial system. However, the judicial system still lacks the human, financial, and material resources necessary to ensure independence and transparency. In addition, sentences are almost always far too lenient to act as a deterrent and corruption still hampers Togo's criminal justice system, particularly in the security forces and judiciary. Togolese prisons are overcrowded and provide inadequate food and medical care, leading to the prevalence of what should be preventable or curable diseases among inmates. The Togolese government periodically releases prisoners to address overcrowding, but the process is not transparent.

Togo has shown efforts to increase the number of police units across the country, largely in response to the growing security threats in the north, highlighting the government's recognition that security and law enforcement forces must be strengthened. However, Togo's law enforcement agencies face challenges, because of insufficient training. Human trafficking remains a problem, with the involvement of government officials and security forces complicating law enforcement processes.

Togo's stability, peacefulness, and territorial integrity have long been recognized, leading to the establishment of various regional institutions and banks in the country. However, despite the country's recent efforts to enhance military presence in the north, attacks by violent extremist actors from the Sahel region are increasing and pose a serious risk.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Togo has strengthened its measures for anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism, setting up various institutional structures. There have also been improvements in the number and quality of suspicious transaction reports. However, the country still needs to enhance its capacity to enforce policies and legal frameworks and the effectiveness of its risk-based approach. There is also the need to create police units and courts dedicated exclusively to money laundering and terrorism financing, and to improve seizure and confiscation capabilities. International cooperation, including that of France, is pushing to create awareness and disseminate the skills necessary to enforce the law effectively.

Additionally, Togo has implemented reforms aimed at improving the business climate in the country, including the adoption of laws to regulate competition, the reduction of procedures and costs for company creation, the establishment of one-stop-shops, and the digitization of various procedures. The government has also ratified several treaties to harmonize business law and encourage the adoption of modern, common rules allowing recourse to arbitration for the settlement of contractual disputes. However, economic freedom in Togo remains only partially liberal, and there are still administrative and political barriers to the growth of private direct investments. Even when private investments are allowed, there are risks posed to the economic regulatory capacity owing to weak administrative and judicial transparency and corruption.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Togo has taken steps to strengthen its victim protection capacity by adopting a legal aid law to provide better access to justice for economically disadvantaged people. However, overall victim protection levels are still insufficient. While some children who are victims of human trafficking have access to shelters, most adult victims lack this access. Additionally, there is no psychological support for adult victims, who are sent to humanitarian centres that lack the specialization to deal with trauma.

The government of Togo has taken steps to curtail human trafficking, including training for law enforcement officials and enhanced border management. Furthermore, the government has created a programme to assist military forces in combating terrorism and illicit trafficking, particularly in porous border areas. The government has also launched public awareness campaigns to



educate citizens on the dangers of human trafficking, and forced marriage has reportedly declined as a result of sensitization campaigns.

Despite having several laws that ostensibly safeguard freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, Togo remains among the worst in West Africa with regards to media freedom, with law enforcement officers engaging in violence and intimidation to discourage press coverage of opposition protests. In addition, legal action has been taken against journalists reporting on government corruption, and there is no law to protect whistle-blowers, hindering media involvement in anti-corruption efforts. The country also has a decree that regulates cooperation between NGOs and the government, requiring NGOs to align their work with government priorities and notify local officials of their activities.

