



Home Office

**Border &
Immigration Agency**

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN INFORMATION KEY DOCUMENTS

TOGO

5 FEBRUARY 2008

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Preface

- i This Country of Origin Information Key Documents (COI Key Documents) on Togo has been produced by COI Service, Border and Immigration Agency (BIA), for use by officials involved in the asylum/human rights determination process. It provides general background information about the issues most commonly raised in asylum/human rights claims made in the United Kingdom. The COI Key Documents includes information available up to 5 February 2008.
- ii The COI Key Documents is an indexed list of key reports, papers and articles produced by a wide range of recognised external information sources. It does not contain any BIA opinion or policy.
- iii For BIA users, the COI Key Documents provides direct electronic access to each source referred to in the document, via a link on the source numbers in the index and list of sources. For the benefit of external users, the relevant web link has also been included, together with the date that the link was accessed.
- iv As noted above, the documents identified concentrate mainly on human rights issues. By way of introduction, brief background information on Togo is also provided. Please note, this background material is not intended to provide a summary of the material contained in the documents listed.
- v This COI Key Documents and the documents listed are publicly disclosable.
- vi Any comments regarding this COI Key Documents or suggestions for additional source material are very welcome and should be submitted to COI Service as below.

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ADVISORY PANEL ON COUNTRY INFORMATION

- vii The independent Advisory Panel on Country Information (APCI) was established in 2003 to make recommendations to the Home Secretary about the content of the BIA's country of origin information material. The APCI welcomes all feedback on the BIA's Key Documents, COI Reports and other country of origin information material. Information about the Panel's work can be found on its website at www.apci.org.uk

- viii In the course of its work, the APCI reviews the content of selected BIA COI documents and makes recommendations specific to those documents and of a more general nature. The APCI may or may not have reviewed this particular document. At the following link is a list of the COI Key Documents, COI Reports and other documents which have, to date, been reviewed by the APCI: www.apci.org.uk/reviewed-documents.html
- ix Please note: It is not the function of the APCI to endorse any BIA material or procedures. Some of the material examined by the Panel relates to countries designated or proposed for designation for the Non-Suspensive Appeals (NSA) list. In such cases, the Panel's work should not be taken to imply any endorsement of the decision or proposal to designate a particular country for NSA, nor of the NSA process itself.

Advisory Panel on Country Information:

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Website: www.apci.org.uk

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Background information on Togo

Full Country Name: Republic of Togo

Area: 56,500 sq miles

Population: 4.7 million

Capital City: Lomé; Population: 500,000

People: Ewe, Dagomba and Kabye are the main ethnic groups.

Language(s): French is the official language. Kabbye and Ewe are the most widely spoken of the African languages.

Religion(s): Christianity, Islam and indigenous beliefs are all practised.

Currency: CFA Franc

Head of State: President Faure Gnassingbe

Prime Minister: Kolam Mally

Membership of international groupings/organisations: Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), African Union (AU), the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC). (Foreign and Commonwealth Office Country Profile dated 4 January 2008) [4a]

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GEOGRAPHY

The Togolese Republic lies in West Africa, forming a narrow strip stretching north from a coastline of about 50 km (30 miles) on the Gulf of Guinea. It is bordered by Ghana to the west, by Benin to the east, and by Burkina Faso to the north. The climate in the coastal area is hot and humid, with an average annual temperature of 27°C (81°F), rainfall in this zone averages 875 mm (34.4 ins) per year, and is heaviest during May–October. Precipitation in the central region is heaviest in May–June and in October, and in the north, where the average annual temperature is 30°C (86°F), there is a rainy season from July–September. The official languages are French, Kabbye and Ewe. About one-half of the population follows animist beliefs, while about 35% are Christians and 15% Muslims. The national flag (approximate proportions 3 by 5) has five equal horizontal stripes, alternately green and yellow, with a square red canton, containing a five-pointed white star, in the upper hoist. The capital is Lomé. (Europa World - Location, Climate, Language, Religion, Flag, Capital) [1]

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MAP



RECENT HISTORY

Current day Togo was, from 1894, part of the German protectorate of Togoland. In 1919, the French took over the eastern part of Togoland under a League of Nations Mandate. The British took over the western part. In 1956, in a UN organised plebiscite, the majority of the population of British Togoland chose to merge with the neighbouring Gold Coast colony. The following year that region became part of the newly independent state of Ghana. French Togoland voted in 1956 to become part of the French Community. In 1960 the territory voted in favour of independence, which was granted in 1960. Sylvanus Olympio, the leader of the Comite d'Unite Togolaise,

became President.

Olympio was killed in 1963 in a military coup led by then Sergeant Etienne Gnassingbe Eyadema. Eyadema invited Olympio's brother-in-law Nicolas Grunitzky to form a civilian government. However, the military refused to allow a multiparty political system to develop, and Eyadema eventually took full power in 1967, creating a one party state under a new political party, the Rassemblement du Peuple Togolais, (RPT) in 1969.

Eyadema's rule was dictatorial. All independent political activity was repressed. In 1977, Gilchrist Olympio, the son of the first President, was accused of being behind an attempted invasion from neighbouring Ghana. Plots to overthrow Eyadema throughout the 1970s and 80s, whether real or not, served as a pretext for further repression of opposition activity and purges within the army. (Foreign and Commonwealth Office Country Profile, History, dated 4 January 2008) [4a]

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RECENT EVENTS AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

On February 4 2005 Eyadema died. The military took over and installed Eyadema's son Faure Gnassingbe in power. After protests from the African Union and the regional body ECOWAS, Gnassingbe stood down. (Foreign and Commonwealth Office Country Profile, Politics, dated 4 January 2008) [4a] On the day that he stood down as president he was adopted as the candidate for the ruling party, the Rassemblement du peuple Togolais (RPT), in the forthcoming presidential elections. (Europa World) [1] Violent protests surrounded the elections, and these protests grew when the results were announced: Gnassingbe won 60% of the vote while main opposition candidate Bob Akitani received 38%. On May 4, Gnassingbe was sworn into office. In June, Gnassingbe appointed opposition leader Edem Kodjo as prime minister. In Aug. 2006, the government and six political parties signed an agreement calling for the creation of a transitional government that would include opposition parties. (Infoplease) [3] National Assembly elections were held on 14 October 2007. The President's party, the RTP, won 50 of the 81 seats. The opposition leader Gilchrist Olympio contested the credibility of the results, but observers, including the 94 strong EU observation team, pronounced themselves satisfied. (Foreign and Commonwealth Office Country Profile, Politics, dated 4 January 2008) [4a]

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ECONOMY

Basic Economic Facts

GDP: US\$2.0bn (2005)

Annual Growth: 1.6% (2005)

Inflation: 6.8% (2005)

Main economic sectors: Agriculture (cocoa, cotton, coffee), phosphate, re-exports.

Major trading partners: The EU (principally France and the Netherlands), China, Ghana, and other Francophone West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso).

Exchange rate: 1 Euro = 655.957 FCFA

(Foreign and Commonwealth Office Country Profile, Economy, dated 29 January 2007) [4a]

Togo's economy has been damaged by its long-term isolation from international donors, and its small industrial sector is in long term decline. Agriculture, phosphate mining and revenues and employment from the international port have provided the country with the means to survive. The port's activity has increased since the troubles in Cote d'Ivoire, and 're-export' (processing incoming goods for export within the sub-region) is now the largest export sector. However, the cotton sector has been damaged by mismanagement and low international prices.

The parastatal in charge of the phosphate sector was put into private management in 2001, but the state took back management control in 2003. The volumes of phosphates mined have declined in recent years, mainly due to depletion of readily accessible reserves. Privatisations in the banking and telecoms sector are stalled. It is hoped that the West Africa Gas pipeline project, which will supply Togo with Gas from Nigeria, will make energy cheaper and help to alleviate Togo's balance of payments problems. (Foreign and Commonwealth Office Country Profile, Politics, dated 4 January 2008) [4a]

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HUMAN RIGHTS

The United States State Department (USSD) 2006 Country Report on Togo stated:

“Togo, with a population of 5.5 million, is a republic governed by President Faure Gnassingbe, who was declared president in April 2005 in an election marred by severe irregularities. President Gnassingbe replaced his father, former president Gnassingbe Eyadema, who died in February 2005 after 38 years in power. Eyadema and his party Rally of the Togolese People (RPT), strongly backed by the armed forces, dominated politics and maintained firm control over all levels of the country's highly centralized government until his death. The civilian authorities generally did not maintain effective control of the security forces”. [2a]

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office country profile, updated 8 January 2008, notes that “Togo's Human Rights record under Eyadema was appalling, as documented in dozens of reports from international organisations and NGOs. The security forces, especially the army, which is largely staffed with Eyadema loyalists from the north, were responsible for most of the abuses. There are current concerns over violence around the April 2005 elections, which have resulted in around 30,000 Togolese seeking refugee in neighbouring Ghana and Benin. The UN has appointed a special rapporteur to enquire into these events, with whom the new Togolese government has cooperated well. On 17 December 2007, Prime Minister Mally announced that he intended to set up a commission to look at past instances of political violence.” [4a]

The USSD 2006 report went on to say that “The human rights situation in the country improved; however, serious human rights problems continued, including:

- Inability of citizens to change their government
- Beatings and abuse of detainees
- Government impunity

- Harsh prison conditions
- Arbitrary and secret arrests and detention
- Lengthy pre-trial detention
- Executive control of the judiciary
- Frequent infringement of citizens' privacy rights
- Severe restrictions on the press, including closing media outlets
- Restrictions on freedom of assembly and movement
- Harassment of human rights workers
- Female genital mutilation (FGM) and violence against women
- Discrimination against women and ethnic minorities
- Trafficking in persons, especially children
- Child labour
- Lack of worker's rights in export procession zones (EPZs)" [2a]

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Index to key source documents

(KB users - click source number to access document directly)

KEY FACTS AND GEOGRAPHY	[1a]	Europa World Online, Location, Climate, Language, Religion, Flag, Capital http://www.europaworld.com/pub/
	[1b]	Europa World Online, Country Statistics http://www.europaworld.com/pub/
	[2a]	United States Department of State, Report on Human Rights Practices – 2006: Togo, 6 March 2007 http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61597.htm
	[2c]	United States Department of State, Background Note: Togo, last updated January 2008 http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5430.htm
	[3a]	Infoplease, Togo http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0108038.html
	[4a]	Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Country Profile: Togo, last reviewed on 4 January 2008 http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029394365&a=KCountrypProfile&aid=1030618268787
	[7a]	BBC, Country Profile: Togo, last updated on 13 October 2007 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1064470.stm
	[10a]	Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), The World Factbook, Togo, (last updated on 24 January 2008) https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/to.html
	[32c]	IRIN, Togolese Republic: Humanitarian Country Profile, August 2007 http://www.irinnews.org/country.aspx?CountryCode=TG&RegionCode=WA
MAPS	[3a]	Infoplease, Togolese Republic http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0108038.html
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	[4a]	Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Country Profile: Togo, last reviewed on 4 January 2008 http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Servlet?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029394365&a=KCountryProfile&aid=1030618268787
	[5a]	Human Rights Watch: Africa – Togo http://hrw.org/doc/?t=africa_pub&c=togo
	[26a]	Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2007: Togo http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2007
	[32c]	Humanitarian Country Profile, August 2007 http://www.irinnews.org/country.aspx?CountryCode=TG&RegionCode=WA
	[38a]	University of Minnesota, Human Rights Library: The Status of Human Rights Organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa: Togo http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/africa/togo.htm
HUMAN RIGHTS – SPECIFIC ISSUES:		
(IN ADDITION TO GENERAL REPORTS ABOVE, INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING ISSUES IS PROVIDED IN THE DOCUMENTS LISTED BELOW)		
CHILDREN	[1d]	Europa World Online, Education http://www.europaworld.com/pub/
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	[2d]	United States Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report, September 2006 http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/82807.htm
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	[5b]	Human Rights Watch, Domestic Workers Abused Worldwide, 26 July 2006 http://hrw.org/doc?t=africa&c=togo
	[15a]	Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, Global Report 2004: Togo http://www.child-soldiers.org/document_get.php?id=800
	[19a]	Information about Street Children – Togo http://www.streetchildren.org.uk/reports/Information%20about%20Street%20Children%20in%20Togo.doc
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