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Research

## Togo: Full Country Dossier

February 2022



**OpenDoors**

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

Open Doors International / World Watch Research

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[research@od.org](mailto:research@od.org)

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# Introduction

## World Watch List 2022

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021	Total Score WWL 2020	Total Score WWL 2019	Total Score WWL 2018
1	Afghanistan	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	15.0	98	94	93	94	93
2	North Korea	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	13.1	96	94	94	94	94
3	Somalia	16.5	16.7	16.6	16.6	16.6	8.5	91	92	92	91	91
4	Libya	15.6	15.5	15.9	16.2	16.3	11.5	91	92	90	87	86
5	Yemen	16.7	16.6	16.5	16.7	16.7	5.2	88	87	85	86	85
6	Eritrea	14.6	14.9	15.5	15.9	15.6	11.1	88	88	87	86	86
7	Nigeria	13.8	13.8	14.3	14.5	14.4	16.7	87	85	80	80	77
8	Pakistan	13.6	14.0	15.1	14.9	13.1	16.7	87	88	88	87	86
9	Iran	14.5	14.6	13.6	15.8	16.5	10.4	85	86	85	85	85
10	India	12.7	12.7	12.9	14.7	13.3	15.6	82	83	83	83	81
11	Saudi Arabia	15.1	15.1	15.0	15.9	16.7	3.1	81	78	79	77	79
12	Myanmar	12.4	11.5	13.8	13.4	13.1	14.8	79	74	73	71	65
13	Sudan	13.4	13.4	14.3	13.6	15.7	8.5	79	79	85	87	87
14	Iraq	14.0	14.6	14.0	14.8	13.9	6.9	78	82	76	79	86
15	Syria	12.9	13.8	13.5	14.3	13.9	9.3	78	81	82	82	76
16	Maldives	15.4	15.3	13.7	15.8	16.5	0.4	77	77	78	78	78
17	China	12.6	9.8	12.2	14.4	15.5	11.1	76	74	70	65	57
18	Qatar	14.2	14.1	11.1	13.0	14.3	7.2	74	67	66	62	63
19	Vietnam	11.3	9.7	12.7	14.1	14.5	8.7	71	72	72	70	69
20	Egypt	12.7	13.2	11.5	12.7	10.8	10.0	71	75	76	76	70
21	Uzbekistan	14.9	12.7	14.1	11.8	15.6	1.7	71	71	73	74	73
22	Algeria	14.0	14.0	11.1	13.4	14.1	4.1	71	70	73	70	58
23	Mauritania	14.3	13.9	13.1	14.0	14.1	0.9	70	71	68	67	57
24	Mali	9.4	8.2	13.9	10.3	12.8	15.0	70	67	66	68	59
25	Turkmenistan	14.5	11.3	13.6	13.3	15.7	0.6	69	70	70	69	68
26	Laos	12.0	10.3	13.2	13.3	14.1	5.9	69	71	72	71	67
27	Morocco	13.1	13.8	10.8	12.8	14.2	3.9	69	67	66	63	51
28	Indonesia	11.3	11.5	11.5	11.0	9.6	13.5	68	63	60	65	59
29	Bangladesh	11.8	10.7	12.9	11.3	10.2	11.3	68	67	63	58	58
30	Colombia	11.5	8.8	13.1	11.0	9.9	13.3	68	67	62	58	56
31	CAR	9.0	8.6	13.6	9.6	11.4	15.6	68	66	68	70	61
32	Burkina Faso	9.4	9.7	12.0	9.6	12.1	14.8	68	67	66	48	-
33	Niger	9.4	9.5	13.9	7.2	12.8	14.8	68	62	60	52	45
34	Bhutan	13.4	12.4	11.7	13.7	13.8	1.7	67	64	61	64	62
35	Tunisia	11.9	12.7	10.6	11.3	13.4	6.5	66	67	64	63	62
36	Oman	13.8	14.0	10.3	13.2	13.4	1.5	66	63	62	59	57
37	Cuba	12.3	8.1	12.6	13.2	14.0	5.9	66	62	52	49	49
38	Ethiopia	9.9	10.3	13.1	10.3	12.3	9.8	66	65	63	65	62
39	Jordan	12.9	14.0	11.0	12.3	12.5	3.0	66	64	64	65	66
40	DRC	8.0	7.9	12.6	9.7	12.0	15.6	66	64	56	55	33
41	Mozambique	9.3	8.5	11.3	7.9	12.5	15.6	65	63	43	43	-
42	Turkey	12.6	11.5	11.4	13.2	11.6	4.6	65	69	63	66	62
43	Mexico	10.3	8.3	12.5	10.8	10.3	12.6	65	64	60	61	59
44	Cameroon	8.8	7.6	12.6	7.2	13.1	15.4	65	64	60	54	38
45	Tajikistan	13.8	12.3	12.0	12.6	13.2	0.7	65	66	65	65	65
46	Brunei	14.8	14.5	10.3	11.0	13.2	0.6	64	64	63	63	64
47	Kazakhstan	13.4	11.6	11.1	12.6	13.5	1.7	64	64	64	63	63
48	Nepal	12.4	9.8	9.9	13.6	12.7	5.2	64	66	64	64	64
49	Kuwait	13.5	13.7	9.8	12.3	13.1	1.1	64	63	62	60	61
50	Malaysia	12.5	14.3	11.5	11.6	10.2	3.3	63	63	62	60	65

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021	Total Score WWL 2020	Total Score WWL 2019	Total Score WWL 2018
51	Kenya	11.7	9.2	11.4	8.0	11.5	11.1	63	62	61	61	62
52	Sri Lanka	12.9	9.9	11.4	11.3	9.4	7.8	63	62	65	58	57
53	Comoros	12.7	11.1	11.2	12.4	14.2	0.9	63	62	57	56	56
54	UAE	13.4	13.6	10.1	11.8	12.2	1.3	62	62	60	58	58
55	Tanzania	9.3	10.8	10.3	8.6	8.7	13.7	61	58	55	52	53
56	Azerbaijan	13.1	9.9	9.3	11.0	13.4	3.3	60	56	57	57	57
57	Palestinian Territories	13.0	13.4	9.8	10.2	12.0	0.9	59	58	60	57	60
58	Djibouti	12.3	12.3	11.1	10.0	12.2	0.7	59	56	56	56	56
59	Kyrgyzstan	12.9	10.1	11.1	10.4	12.0	1.5	58	58	57	56	54
60	Bahrain	12.5	13.2	9.1	11.1	10.2	0.9	57	56	55	55	57
61	Nicaragua	9.1	5.6	11.1	11.8	11.3	7.6	56	51	41	41	-
62	Russian Federation	12.3	8.0	10.2	10.6	12.3	2.2	56	57	60	60	51
63	Chad	11.5	8.2	10.2	9.6	10.3	5.6	55	53	56	48	40
64	Burundi	7.6	7.8	9.7	9.2	9.6	8.1	52	48	48	43	-
65	Venezuela	5.6	4.5	11.2	9.4	11.1	9.6	51	39	42	41	34
66	Angola	6.8	6.7	8.1	10.1	11.4	7.8	51	46	43	42	-
67	Rwanda	8.1	5.5	6.7	10.3	10.1	9.3	50	42	42	41	-
68	Honduras	7.2	5.1	10.5	7.7	9.2	8.7	48	46	39	38	-
69	Uganda	8.1	4.6	7.4	6.7	9.1	11.7	48	47	48	47	46
70	El Salvador	7.7	4.6	10.7	5.7	9.1	7.2	45	42	38	30	-
71	Togo	9.2	6.7	9.3	7.1	9.8	2.4	44	43	41	42	-
72	Gambia	8.3	8.2	8.7	8.3	8.8	1.7	44	43	43	43	-
73	Guinea	10.3	7.5	8.3	7.0	8.1	2.0	43	47	45	46	-
74	South Sudan	5.7	0.9	7.0	6.3	7.8	15.0	43	43	44	44	-
75	Ivory Coast	9.8	8.6	8.2	5.5	7.9	2.0	42	42	42	43	-
76	Israel	9.8	8.4	5.6	6.6	6.6	4.3	41	40	38	39	40

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## Sources and definitions

- This country report is a collation of data and analysis based around Open Doors World Watch List (WWL) and includes statistical information on world religions, Christian denominations and people groups prepared by the World Christian Database (WCD).
- Highlighted links in the text can be found written out in full at the conclusion of each main section under the heading “External links”. In order to reduce the length of these reference sections, a table containing links to regularly used sources can be found at the beginning of the “Keys to Understanding” chapter under the heading “Links for general background information”. Where one of these sources has been quoted in the dossier text, a quote reference is supplied as indicated in the second column of the table.
- The WWL 2022 reporting period was 1 October 2020 - 30 September 2021.
- The definition of persecution used in WWL analysis is: “Any hostility experienced as a result of one’s identification with Christ. This can include hostile attitudes, words and actions towards Christians”. This broad definition includes (but is not limited to) restrictions, pressure, discrimination, opposition, disinformation, injustice, intimidation, mistreatment, marginalization, oppression, intolerance, infringement, violation, ostracism, hostilities, harassment, abuse, violence, ethnic cleansing and genocide.
- The latest update of WWL Methodology including appendices can be found on the [World Watch List Documentation](#) page of the Open Doors Analytical website (password: freedom).

## Effect on data-gathering during COVID-19 pandemic

In the WWL 2022 reporting period, travel restrictions and other measures introduced by the governments of various countries to combat the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic did cause delays and create the need for restructuring grass-roots research in some cases. Through the agile cooperation of In-country networks, Open Doors country researchers, External experts, WWR analysts and an increased use of technological options, Open Doors is confident that – as in the previous reporting period – WWL 2022 scoring, analysis and documentation has maintained required levels of quality and reliability.

## External Links - Introduction

- Sources and definitions: World Watch List Documentation - <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/world-watch-list-documentation/>

## WWL 2022 Situation in brief / Togo

### Brief country details

Togo: Population (UN estimate for 2021)	Christians	Chr%
8,585,000	4,132,000	48.1

Data source: Johnson T M and Zurlo G A, eds, World Christian Database (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed April 2021)

Togo: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2022	44	71
WWL 2021	43	71
WWL 2020	41	73
WWL 2019	42	70
WWL 2018	-	-

Ranks are shown above whenever the country scored 41 points or more in the WWL 2018-2022 reporting periods

## Dominant persecution engines and drivers

Togo: Main Persecution engines	Main drivers
Islamic oppression	Non-Christian religious leaders, Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs, One's own (extended) family
Dictatorial paranoia	Government officials
Clan oppression	Ethnic group leaders, Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs
Organized corruption and crime	Organized crime cartels or networks

*Engines and Drivers are listed in order of strength. Only Very strong / Strong / Medium are shown here.*

### Brief description of the persecution situation

The challenges that Christians face in the country can be summarized as follows: i) Some government officials abuse their power and curtail the rights of Christians; ii) There are also problems that emanate from the followers of voodoo and other African traditional belief systems (*Clan oppression*); iii) Evangelicals who evangelize among Muslims face significant difficulties and converts from Islam face serious opposition. iv) There are also criminal networks in the country that create another layer of persecution. In all four circumstances mentioned above, Christians face pressure in different forms.

### Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period

- Christians are harassed in their community to abide by dress codes.
- Converts are forced to attend voodoo ceremony.
- Converts are expelled from homes.

# WWL 2022: Keys to understanding / Togo

## Links for general background information

Name	Quote Reference	Link	Last accessed on
Amnesty International country report	AI 2021	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/west-and-central-africa/togo/">https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/west-and-central-africa/togo/</a>	17 September 2021
BBC News country profile	BBC country profile	<a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14106781">https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14106781</a>	17 September 2021
Bertelsmann Transformation Index 2020	BTI 2020	<a href="https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-dashboard/TGO">https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-dashboard/TGO</a>	17 September 2021
CIA World Factbook	CIA Factbook	<a href="https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/togo/">https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/togo/</a>	17 September 2021
Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index 2020	EIU 2020	<a href="https://pages.eiu.com/rs/753-RIQ-438/images/democracy-index-2020.pdf">https://pages.eiu.com/rs/753-RIQ-438/images/democracy-index-2020.pdf</a>	17 September 2021
FFP's Fragile States Index 2021	FSI 2021	<a href="https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/">https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/</a>	17 September 2021
Freedom House's 2021 Democracy index (Not included)	Freedom House/Democracy 2021	<a href="https://freedomhouse.org/countries/nations-transit/scores">https://freedomhouse.org/countries/nations-transit/scores</a>	
Freedom House's 2021 Global Freedom index	Freedom House/Global Freedom 2021	<a href="https://freedomhouse.org/country/togo/freedom-world/2021">https://freedomhouse.org/country/togo/freedom-world/2021</a>	17 September 2021
Freedom House's Freedom on the Net 2020 report (Not included)	Freedom House/Internet Freedom 2020	<a href="https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-net/scores">https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-net/scores</a>	
Garda World country report	Garda World	<a href="https://www.garda.com/crisis24/country-reports/togo">https://www.garda.com/crisis24/country-reports/togo</a>	17 September 2021
Human Rights Watch World Report 2021 (Not included)	HRW 2021	<a href="https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021">https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021</a>	
Internet World Stats 2021	IWS 2021	<a href="https://www.internetworldstats.com/africa.htm#tg">https://www.internetworldstats.com/africa.htm#tg</a>	17 September 2021
RSF's 2020 World Press Freedom Index	World Press Freedom 2020	<a href="https://rsf.org/en/togo">https://rsf.org/en/togo</a>	17 September 2021
Transparency International's 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index	CPI 2020	<a href="https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/tgo">https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/tgo</a>	17 September 2021
UNDP's Global Human Development Indicators	HDI 2020	<a href="http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/TGO">http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/TGO</a>	17 September 2021
US State Department's 2020 International Religious Freedom country reports	IRFR 2020	<a href="https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-report-on-international-religious-freedom/togo/">https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-report-on-international-religious-freedom/togo/</a>	17 September 2021
USCIRF 2021 country reports (Not included)	USCIRF 2021	<a href="https://www.uscifr.gov/countries">https://www.uscifr.gov/countries</a>	
World Bank country report	World Bank	<a href="https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/togo">https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/togo</a>	17 September 2021

## Recent history

In 1885 Togo became a German colony. Germans lost Togoland to British and French forces in 1914. In 1922, the western part of the country was officially administered by Britain and the eastern part by France.

The country became an independent nation in 1960 with Sylvanus Olympio as the first president. However, the situation was unstable. In January 1963, Olympio was assassinated in the first successful army coup in post-WW2 Sub-Saharan Africa. In 1967, Gnassingbe Eyadema seized power in a bloodless coup and ruled with an iron fist. When he died in 2005, his son, Faure Gnassingbe Eyadema, was appointed by the army to assume power. Although presidential elections were staged and won by Faure in 2005, 2010, 2015 and 2020, all were criticized for not being fair and free.

## Political and legal landscape

Togo's political landscape revolves around the founders of the country. Two men, Gnassingbe Eyadema and his son Faure have dominated Togolese politics for most of Togo's existence as an independent state. Gnassingbe Eyadema became the President of Togo through a coup in 1963 and remained at the helm till he died in 2005. After seizing power, he turned Togo into a one-party state and continued without even a pretense of democracy until 1992. In 1991, he was forced to reintroduce multi-party elections, bowing to the prevailing international and regional trend of democratization. However, the democratic transition in Togo has proved to be very

shallow and Gnassingbe Eyadema stayed in power by manipulating elections and severely restricting civil and political rights.

When Eyadema died after ruling Togo for almost four decades, his son Faure became president with the army's backing in violation of the constitutional rules concerning succession to the presidency. Although Faure briefly stepped down from the presidency to placate the ire of the international community about his unconstitutional assumption of power, he was returned to the presidency in short order by holding presidential elections almost three years ahead of schedule. Faure has relaxed the iron grip of his father to some extent, but Togo still remains an autocracy. Thanks to constitutional amendments passed during his father's rule, Faure ran and won his third election in 2015. President Faure tried to soften the autocratic image of the system by forming a national unity government in 2010. However, the repressive and autocratic nature of the regime has continued, backed by the army which is dominated by Gnassingbe's Kabyé ethnic group.

Starting in August 2017, thousands of people took to the streets [demanding](#) that the president step aside in the biggest challenge to his family's power since the death of his father in 2005 (Al-Jazeera, 9 September 2017). Parliamentary elections on 20 December 2018 were [boycotted](#) by 14 opposition parties (The Economist, 5 January 2019). In February 2020, incumbent President Gnassingbe was declared victor in the country's presidential elections. The opposition candidate (Kodjo) and supporters claimed the election was rigged and a planned [protest march](#) was suppressed by security forces, with Kodjo and retired Archbishop Fanoko Kpodzro placed under house arrest (Crux, 4 March 2020).

Under the country's current law, Gnassingbe could remain in office until 2030. The Constitution of the country is not being respected as pointed out in Freedom House/Global Freedom 2021 (A2): "The constitution calls for a bicameral legislature, but the Senate has never been established. Members of the current 91-seat National Assembly, which exercises all legislative powers, were elected for five-year terms through proportional representation in multimember districts."

For many years, there were no local elections. For the first time in 32 years, local elections were held in June 2019 and the ruling Union pour la République (UNIR) won the majority of seats, securing 878 of the 1,490 seats. The Alliance nationale pour le changement got the second-highest number of seats (132), followed by the opposition coalition C14 (131 seats).

According to Amnesty International (AI 2021):

- Freedom of expression is guaranteed by law. However, criticism of the government is often not tolerated and the authorities continued to restrict the right to freedom of expression. For example: "In January 2020, the new Press and Communication Code allowed for journalists to be punished with hefty fines for insulting the President, MPs, and government members. The internet was also shut down in February on polling day. Meanwhile, the electronic communications of human rights defenders, activists and others were put under surveillance."

- “The authorities continued to crack down on dissent, particularly against members of the opposition. For instance Brigitte Kafui Adjamagbo and Gérard Yaovi Djossou, members of a coalition of opposition parties and civil society organizations, were arrested by police in November and charged with 'criminal conspiracy' and 'undermining the internal security of the state' in connection with protests against the presidential election results and harassment of opponents. They were released conditionally after around three weeks in detention. The presidential contender, Agbéyomé Kodjo, who declared himself President after the elections, was charged with 'disturbing public order' and 'undermining internal state security' after he called on the army to mobilize against the government. He was detained for three days and placed under judicial supervision upon his release. His supporters also faced arrest and persecution.”

According to Freedom House/Global Freedom 2021:

- Togo is classified as a 'partly free' country with a score of 43.
- Religious freedom is constitutionally protected and generally respected in practice, but there were approximately 900 applications by religious groups pending at the beginning of 2019.
- The government also continues to curtail freedom of assembly and peaceful demonstration citing different laws. For instance: A 2015 revision of the criminal code penalized participation in and organization of protests that had not gone through the necessary administrative procedures. In August 2019, the parliament approved legislation that imposed new limits on the timing and location of public demonstrations. The law also allowed the authorities to restrict protests based on the availability of security personnel.

## Religious landscape

<b>Togo: Religious context</b>	<b>Number of adherents</b>	<b>%</b>
Christians	4,132,000	48.1
Muslim	1,589,000	18.5
Hindu	0	0.0
Buddhist	0	0.0
Ethno-religionist	2,800,000	32.6
Jewish	0	0.0
Bahai	40,900	0.5
Atheist	1,900	0.0

Agnostic	17,800	0.2
Other	3,300	0.0
<i>OTHER includes Chinese folk, New religionist, Sikh, Spiritist, Taoist, Confucianist, Jain, Shintoist, Zoroastrian.</i>		

Data source: Johnson T M and Zurlo G A, eds, *World Christian Database* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed April 2021)

Togo is one of the few African countries where traditional religious groups are still dominant in most parts of the country. However, the number of ethno-religionists have greatly decreased in the last years and many people combine traditional rites and customs with Christianity or Islam.

Christians live mainly in the south, while Muslims are predominately in the central and northern regions.

The law does not recognize specific religions, but the government in practice recognizes Catholicism, Protestantism and Islam with their religious holidays observed as national holidays and with religious leaders of these groups invited to government events. The law requires all other religious groups, including indigenous groups, to register as religious associations. Official recognition as a religious association provides these groups the same rights as those afforded to the three recognized religions, including import duty exemptions for humanitarian and development projects. Registration is not obligatory, but unregistered groups do not receive import duty exemptions or additional government benefits such as government-provided teachers for private schools.

## Economic landscape

According to World Bank's [Macro Poverty Outlook](#) 2021 (for Sub-Saharan Africa):

- **Economic growth:** Growth was robust between 2017 and 2019, averaging 5 percent (2.4% in per capita terms). However in 2020, growth decelerated sharply to 0.7% (-1.7% in per capita terms), as private consumption fell from a decline in household incomes and business activities due to the implementation of COVID-19 protocols. Real GDP is projected to grow by 3.4% (1 percent in per capita terms) in 2021, rising to 5.0% in 2023.
- **Inflation:** Inflation rose from 0.7% in 2019 to 1.8% in 2020, driven by higher food prices from supply chain disruptions.
- **Imports/Exports:** Due to lower exports and higher imports of health products to combat COVID-19, external current account deficit widened to 3.7% in 2020. The current account deficit is projected to improve slightly from 3.7% of GDP to 3.6% of GDP in 2021, as recovering export growth outstrips rising import demand.
- **Poverty:** The poverty rate (using the national poverty line) was 45.7% in 2019, suggesting a continued decrease. However, extreme poverty rate (measured by \$1.9 in 2011 PPP) is estimated to have increased to 46.3 percent in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Poverty worsened mainly in urban areas from job losses and increases in prices of basic consumption goods. "Extreme poverty is projected to decline to 43.3 percent by 2022 ...

[but] the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are likely to slow the pace of poverty reduction, by reducing remittances, increasing prices of basic goods and services, and lowering the income of the poorest and most vulnerable, particularly those working in agriculture, tourism, and other related sectors.”

- **COVID-19 impact:** “Togo’s strong growth momentum was halted by COVID-19. The pandemic also exacerbated structural constraints that hinder economic growth and economic transformation. Other risks included increased political uncertainty, heightened insecurity in neighboring countries and banking sector vulnerability. Also, travel restrictions negatively impacted tourism, while the agriculture sector remained resilient, as the government provided subsidized agriculture inputs. Public debt as a percentage of GDP increased to 57.5% in 2020. Furthermore, the fiscal deficit widened to 6.1% of GDP in 2020, reflecting a significant contraction of government revenues, as economic activity declined and due to tax breaks for firms, and a sharp increase in expenditures to address the COVID-19 crisis and promote economic recovery. The path to an inclusive and sustained post-COVID-19 recovery remains uncertain and depends on the depth and the duration of the pandemic. While the rollout of vaccines and a recovering of global economy could help GDP expand, several downside risks remain (including virus mutation and rising security risks in neighboring countries), which could weigh on investment, trade, and public finances.

According to the CIA Factbook:

- About 57.6% of the population in Togo lives in rural areas and agriculture is the mainstay of the Togolese industry, providing employment for around 60% of the labor force. Cotton, cocoa, coffee beans and peanuts are among the cash crops that are exported by Togo. In addition, Togo also produces marble and limestone.
- Besides agriculture, mining and construction are also important sectors of the Togolese economy. Togo has one of the largest phosphate reserves in the world and exports it to the international market. Besides its mineral and agricultural exports, the export of poached ivory from neighboring countries is also something that Togo is well known for. Armed criminal gangs kill elephants for tusks and rhino for their horns, before shipping them to Asia for use in ornaments and folk medicine.

According to Heritage Foundation's [2021 Index of Economic Freedom](#):

- Togo scored 57.5 points, making it the 113th freest country in the 2021 index. Togo is ranked 18th among 47 countries in the Sub-Saharan region.

## Social and cultural landscape

According to [UNDP's full 2020 report](#) (page 343 onwards) and the CIA Factbook:

- **Main ethnic groups:** Adja-Ewe/Mina 42.4%, Kabye/Tem 25.9%, Para-Gourma/Akan 17.1%, Akposso/Akebu 4.1%, Ana-lfe 3.2%, other Togolese 1.7%, foreigners 5.2%, no response 4% (2013-14 est.)
- **Main languages:** French (official language of commerce), Dagomba, Ewe, Kabye, Mina
- **Urban population:** 43.4% of the total population (2021)
- **Rate of urbanization:** 3.6% annual rate of change (2020-2025 est.)

- **Population growth rate:** 2.51% (2021 est.)
- **Median age:** 20 years
- **Expected years of schooling:** 12.7 years
- **Literacy rate, adult (ages 15 and older):** 63.7%
- **Employment to population ratio (ages 15 and older):** 76.0%
- **Unemployment, total:** 2.0% of labor force
- **Unemployment, youth (ages 15-24):** 3.5%

According to UNDP's Human Development Indicators (HDI 2020):

- **Human Development Index (HDI) score and rank:** Togo is ranked 167th with a score of 0.515 points
- **Life expectancy at birth:** 61.0 years
- **Gender Development Index (GDI):** 0.822
- **Gender inequality index (GII):** 0.573

## Technological landscape

According to Internet World Stats (IWS 2021):

- **Internet usage:** 11.9% of the population – survey date: December 2020
- **Facebook usage:** 10.1% penetration rate – survey date: December 2020

According to World Bank (country profile):

- **Mobile phone subscriptions:** 77 per 100 people

As stated in a [World Bank Blog](#) dated 25 November 2020:

- "According to World Bank Group estimates, universal and affordable access to the Internet will increase GDP growth in Africa by 2 percentage points per year and would boost employment opportunities, regardless of education level, between 6.9% and 13%. In addition, the adoption and use of digital technologies would improve the efficiency and quality of public services and enhance transparency and accountability. Currently, however, the penetration rate of mobile broadband is 20%, placing Togo in 28th place in Sub-Saharan Africa, while 3G and 4G cover only 65% and 10% of the population, respectively. Moreover, the country is among the African countries where Internet connection is the most expensive. For example, the cost charged to Togolese cell phone users for data is twice as high as in countries such as Rwanda and three to seven times higher than in Tunisia, Morocco or Botswana."

## Security situation

Although the country appears more or less stable at present, the fact that it shares a border with Burkina Faso means that there is a potential for Islamic militant attacks. The following two areas were also listed as being potentially dangerous by the [US State Department](#) Travel Advisory in June 2021:

- Areas north of Kande - due to possible Islamic militant violence.

- The cities of Sokodé, Bafilo, and Mango - due to civil unrest.

Since violent Islamic militants are known to target Christians in particular, the Christian population in the north of Kande is especially vulnerable.

## Trends analysis

### 1) Political stability depends on the success of reforms

Faure Gnassingbé assumed the position of president in 2005 when his father died in office, who had ruled the country since 1967. He has introduced some economic reforms in a bid to quell public discontent. However, unless he can complement his economic reform policy with political reforms, political stability in the country is at risk in the long-term. In 2017 and 2018 demonstrations were held demanding reforms and at times protestors were killed. [In May 2019](#), parliament enacted a law allowing the incumbent president to potentially stay in power until 2020 'extending his family's rule to 63 years' (Reuters, 9 May 2019). In February 2020, he won re-election amid accusations of fraud from the opposition. This one-family presidency could lead to a political and economic crisis - especially post-COVID-19. Since the country borders Burkina Faso where violent Islamic militants are known to be active, any crisis in the country could expose its population (particularly Christians) to jihadist attacks. This is why [Togolese troops](#) are currently heavily present along the border with Burkina Faso (The Defense Post, 21 May 2020).

## External Links - Keys to understanding

- Political and legal landscape: demanding - <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/09/urges-togo-respond-protesters-expectations-170909053453123.html?xif=>
- Political and legal landscape: boycotted - <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2019/01/05/togos-president-suffers-an-electoral-setback>
- Political and legal landscape: protest march - <https://cruxnow.com/church-in-africa/2020/03/togos-president-re-elected-according-to-official-final-results/>
- Economic landscape: Macro Poverty Outlook - <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/bcbb8499f7037137142af9a4af52326c-0350082021/original/mpo-ssa.pdf>
- Economic landscape: 2021 Index of Economic Freedom - <https://www.heritage.org/index/country/togo?version=1132>
- Social and cultural landscape: UNDP's full 2020 report - <http://www.hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2020.pdf>
- Technological landscape: World Bank Blog - <https://blogs.worldbank.org/african/togo-could-more-digitalization-be-solution>
- Security situation: US State Department - <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/togo-travel-advisory.html>
- Trends analysis: In May 2019 - <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-togo-politics/togo-term-limit-law-allows-president-10-more-years-of-rule-idUKKCN1SF1PX>
- Trends analysis: Togolese troops - <https://www.thedefensepost.com/2020/05/21/togo-jihadist-war/>

## WWL 2022: Church information / Togo

### Christian origins

The Portuguese were present in the coastal area of Togo from the 16th century onwards, but there was no real attempt at introducing Christianity until German mission work began around 1847. In 1871, the Roman Catholic Church established its first mission in the country. In 1886, the Society of African Missions was established. From 1884/5 until 1918, German Catholic priests were particularly active. Following the defeat of Germany in the First World War, the German presence was expelled. Churches from the USA first entered the country with the arrival of the Assemblies of God in 1937.

### Church spectrum today

Togo: Church networks	Christians	%
Orthodox	0	0.0
Catholic	2,359,000	57.1
Protestant	1,133,000	27.4
Independent	269,000	6.5
Unaffiliated	440,000	10.6
Doubly-affiliated Christians	-68,900	-1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,132,100</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>(Any deviation from the total number of Christians stated above is due to the rounding of decimals)</i>		
Evangelical movement	600,000	14.5
Renewalist movement	1,003,000	24.3

Data source: Johnson T M and Zurlo G A, eds, *World Christian Database* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed April 2021)

**Orthodox:** Eastern (Chalcedonian), Oriental (Pre-Chalcedonian, Non-Chalcedonian, Monophysite), Nestorian (Assyrian), and non-historical Orthodox. **Roman Catholics:** All Christians in communion with the Church of Rome. **Protestants:** Christians in churches originating in or in communion with the Western world's 16th-century Protestant Reformation. Includes Anglicans, Lutherans and Baptists (any of whom may be Charismatic) and denominational Pentecostals, but not Independent traditions such as Independent Baptists nor independent Charismatics. **Independents:** Christians who do not identify with the major Christian traditions (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant). **Unaffiliated Christians:** Persons professing publicly to be Christians but who are not affiliated to churches. **Doubly-affiliated Christians:** Persons affiliated to or claimed by 2 denominations at once. **Evangelical movement:** Churches, denominations, and individuals who identify themselves as evangelicals by membership in denominations linked to evangelical alliances (e.g., World Evangelical Alliance) or by self-identification in polls. **Renewalist movement:** Church members involved in Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal.

The Roman Catholic Church is the largest church denomination. Protestant groups include Methodists, Lutherans, Assemblies of God and Seventh-day Adventist. In terms of geography, Christians are mainly to be found in the southern part of the country, while Muslims dominate the central and the northern parts of the country.

# WWL 2022: Persecution Dynamics / Togo

## Reporting period

1 October 2020 - 30 September 2021

## Position on the World Watch List

Togo: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2022	44	71
WWL 2021	43	71
WWL 2020	41	73
WWL 2019	42	70
WWL 2018	-	-

Ranks are shown above whenever the country scored 41 points or more in the WWL 2018-2022 reporting periods

With 44 points, Togo scored 1 point more than in WWL 2021. The challenges that Christians face in the country are mainly the result of government officials abusing their power and curtailing the rights of Christians. However, there are also challenges posed by the fact that the effects of *Clan oppression* and *Islamic oppression* are becoming more visible. There have also been disputes between different Christian churches in the country; Evangelicals, who evangelize among Muslims, have been facing particular difficulties. Converts from Islam and traditional religious groups face serious opposition. Finally, what is particularly worrying is that Togo is a likely target country for jihadist expansion both in terms of ideology and operation.

## Persecution engines

Togo: Persecution engines	Abbreviation	Level of influence
Islamic oppression	IO	Medium
Religious nationalism	RN	Not at all
Ethno-religious hostility	ERH	Not at all
Clan oppression	CO	Medium
Christian denominational protectionism	CDP	Weak
Communist and post - Communist oppression	CPCO	Not at all
Secular intolerance	SI	Not at all
Dictatorial paranoia	DPA	Medium
Organized corruption and crime	OCC	Medium

*The scale for the level of influence of Persecution engines in society is: Not at all / Very weak / Weak / Medium / Strong / Very strong. For more information see WWL Methodology.*

### **Islamic oppression (Medium)**

This Persecution engine is common in the northern part of the country where Muslims are dominant. Christians living in these areas face various forms of discrimination and obstruction in their daily lives. The most severe form of persecution affects converts from Islam. Muslims who convert to Christianity usually try to keep this decision a secret; they also worship in secret and cannot openly profess their faith for fear of stigmatization and persecution. If their conversion is discovered, they are often expelled from their families or communities. Although there has not been any major attack by Islamic militants, Christians do not feel safe as there are radical Islamic groups operating in the wider West African region.

### **Clan oppression (Medium)**

Over 30% of Togolese practice a form of ancestral worship often called Voodoo and is associated with tribal animism and is most common in the eastern and southern regions of the country. Voodoo is a West African traditional religion found in Togo, Benin, and Ghana. The dominance of Voodoo as a religion has greatly decreased through time. However, many Christians and Muslims mix Voodoo traditions with their understanding of Christianity or Islam. Traditional ethnic leaders oppose both conversions to Christianity and any Christian groups who are not prepared to mix ethnic practices with their Christian faith.

### **Dictatorial paranoia (Medium)**

It is reported that President Gnassingbe Eyadema killed more than 15,000 people during his dictatorship. His son, Faure Gnassingbe, succeeded him as president immediately after his death in 2005. Faure's regime has been accused of being dictatorial and corrupt by a range of national and international organizations. The country has held a series of rigged elections since 2005 in which Faure won each with an absolute majority. Moreover, the Faure regime has been accused of multiple unlawful arrests and the persecution of opposition groups.

### **Organized corruption and crime (Medium)**

Togo ranked 134 out of 180 countries, according to Transparency International (CPI 2020). Corruption exists both within the state structure and in society. The Eyadema family has been ruling the country for more than five decades and has been accused of being involved in multiple illegal activities.

## Drivers of persecution

<b>Togo:</b> <b>Drivers of persecution</b>	<b>IO</b>	<b>RN</b>	<b>ERH</b>	<b>CO</b>	<b>CDP</b>	<b>CPCO</b>	<b>SI</b>	<b>DPA</b>	<b>OCC</b>
	MEDIUM			MEDIUM				MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Government officials								Medium	
Ethnic group leaders				Medium					
Non-Christian religious leaders	Medium								
Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs	Medium			Medium					
One's own (extended) family	Medium								
Organized crime cartels or networks									Medium

The scale for the level of influence of Drivers of persecution in society is: Not at all / Very weak / Weak / Medium / Strong / Very strong. Please note that "-" denotes "not at all". For more information see WWL Methodology.

### Drivers of Islamic oppression

- **Non-Christian religious leaders (Medium):** Some Islamic teachers (including imams and sheiks) are teaching anti-Christian sentiment. This has resulted in discrimination, harassment and obstruction of daily Christian life.
- **Family (Medium):** Extended family members have been the source of persecution for converts with a Muslim background, especially in the Muslim-dominated parts of the country.
- **Citizens (Medium):** At the community level, ordinary citizens and mobs also target Christians, particularly in Muslim dominated areas.

### Drivers of Clan oppression

- **Ethnic group leaders (Medium):** These groups are responsible for the persecution of Christians who oppose various traditional beliefs. Traditional Voodoo priests are very critical of some Evangelicals.
- **Citizens (Medium):** Some Voodoo leaders encourage local youth to target Christians who evangelize.

### Drivers of Dictatorial paranoia

- **Government officials (Medium):** The government demonstrates its despotism by persecuting Christians who oppose its political policies. Those churches who speak against some injustices by the government will struggle to get land and permits to build churches.

### Drivers of Organized corruption and crime

- **Criminal networks (Medium):** Criminal networks in the country have many forms. Some are in government positions facilitating corruption. Some facilitate the market for poaching. Christians who speak out against such practices face reprisals.

### Areas where Christians face most difficulties

The northern part of the country and areas where Voodoo is very prominent are the main hotspots.

### Christian communities and how they are affected

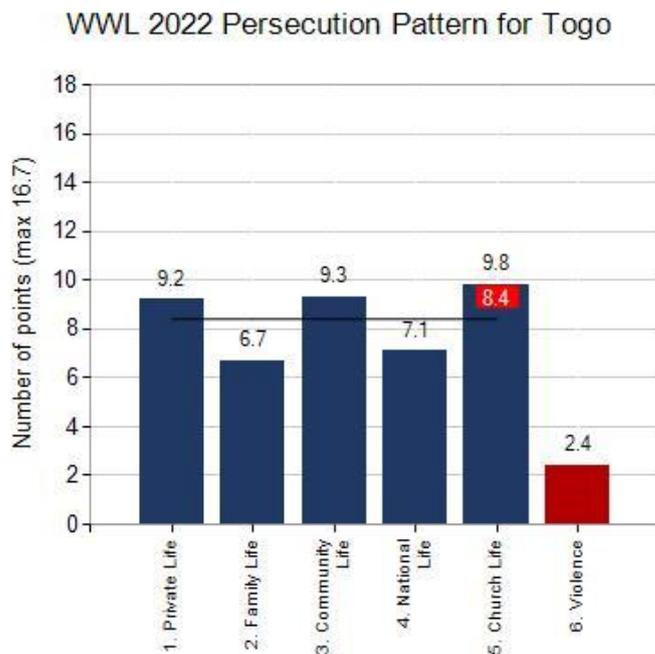
**Communities of expatriate Christians:** The many foreign Christians in the country are not isolated and can worship side by side with other Christian communities. They are therefore not scored as a separate category in WWL analysis.

**Historical Christian communities:** The dominant historical Christian groups (such as the Roman Catholic churches) do not face any major problems compared to other Christian groups in the country.

**Converts:** These are converts from Islam or traditional African religions (ATR). Converts from Islam face the most severe persecution in Togo and are forced to practice their Christian faith in secret.

**Non-traditional Christian communities:** The Christians in this category - who often belong to Pentecostal groups - tend to be active in outreach and evangelism and often face more difficulties than Christians belonging to the historical churches.

### The Persecution pattern



The WWL 2022 Persecution pattern for Togo shows:

- The average pressure on Christians is at a level of 8.4 points.
- Pressure is highest in the *Church (9.8)*, *Community (9.3)* and *Private spheres (9.2)*.
- The level of violence is low (2.4 points).

## Pressure in the 5 spheres of life

*In each of the five spheres of life discussed below, four questions have been selected from the WWL 2022 questionnaire for brief commentary and explanation. The selection usually (but not always) reflects the highest scoring elements. In some cases, an additional paragraph per sphere is included to give further information deemed important. (To see how individual questions are scored on a scale of 0-4 points, please see the “WWL Scoring example” in the WWL Methodology, available at: <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/world-watch-list-documentation/>, password: freedom).*

### Pressure in Block 1 / Private sphere

**Block 1.4: It has been risky for Christians to reveal their faith in written forms of personal expression (including expressions in blogs and Facebook etc.). (2.75 points)**

The demography of Togo shows that even though Christians are the majority, there are significant number of people (over 35%) that adhere to traditional religion (ATR). Furthermore, there are over 14% Sunni Muslims in the country. Roman Catholics also suppress those who leave the Roman Catholic Church and join the evangelicals. In this context, converts are not free to live out their Christian faith since they are monitored by their family members and relatives. They find themselves at risk when they reveal their faith in written form of communication. In some areas, this can create risky situations for non-convert Christians too, especially in areas where Islam is dominant or where indigenous traditional belief is common.

**Block 1.5: It has been risky for Christians to display Christian images or symbols. (2.75 points)**

Convert Christians in the Muslim dominated areas are affected by this. Also, life for members of the small non-traditional Christian groups and for Christians living in the Muslim-dominated or Voodoo-dominated parts can also be difficult in this respect. Many will avoid displaying Christian symbols, as a result. This is particularly true in the central and northern parts of the country where the Muslim population is relatively large.

**Block 1.1: Conversion has been opposed, forbidden, or punishable, including conversion from one type of Christianity to another. (2.50 points)**

The Constitution and other laws of the land protect personal rights to convert to another religion. However, converts from Islam or traditional belief systems face obstacles since their conversion will not be accepted. For fear of their conversion being discovered, converts read the Bible and worship in hiding. This is also the case for those who change church affiliation (i.e. leave the catholic church for another denomination) as well as for people who leave Islam or ATR to join Christianity.

**Block 1.2: It has been risky for Christians to conduct acts of Christian worship by themselves (e.g. prayer, Bible reading, etc.). (2.50 points)**

Christian converts (not only from Islam) often worship in hiding to avoid being stigmatized and persecuted by their families when praying, reading the Bible and singing Christian songs. Location also plays a key role: In the southern part of the country, those who decide to leave Catholic church and join an evangelical group face problems from members of their previous church affiliation, while in central and the northern areas, the issue mainly involves Animists and Muslims.

## Pressure in Block 2 / Family sphere

**Block 2.3: Christians have been hindered in celebrating a Christian wedding for faith-related reasons. (2.50 points)**

During the WWL 2022 reporting period, this problem has been observed, particularly in Muslim dominated areas. Muslim parents never want their daughters to get married to Christians, of whatever category. Voodoo groups also at times make wedding celebrations difficult for Christians (as do some Christian groups where weddings involve converts).

**Block 2.5: Burials of Christians have been hindered or coercively performed with non-Christian rites. (2.00 points)**

For converts from traditional voodoo and Islam, burial rituals follow the traditional and not that of Christians in many cases. Christians struggle to get land for burial places. This is especially true for areas where Animists and Muslims are the majority (as is the case in the northern and central parts of the country).

**Block 2.7: Parents have been hindered in raising their children according to their Christian beliefs. (2.00 points)**

Christians living in Muslim-dominated parts of the country are sometimes prevented from bringing up their children according to their faith and convictions. This particularly affects converts from Islam. Non-traditional Christian groups often suffer a similar fate at the hands of the dominant historical Christian communities. The responsible engine, drivers, frequency and intensity vary according to location.

**Block 2.8: Christian children have been pressured into attending anti-Christian or majority religion teaching at any level of education. (1.75 points)**

At some schools and universities, Evangelical children have been humiliated, mocked and insulted by teachers and fellow students for their parents' faith. This problem has caused Christian children to avoid going to schools in areas where there is no alternative.

## Pressure in Block 3 / Community sphere

**Block 3.1: Christians have been harassed, threatened or obstructed in their daily lives for faith-related reasons (e.g. for not meeting majority religion or traditional dress codes, beard codes etc.). (3.00 points)**

These are the most common forms of persecution in the *Community sphere of life*: Constant threats and harassment (and can also include Christians persecuting Christians). In many areas where Christians are a minority, the life of Christians is monitored by others in the neighborhood. This occurs more commonly in the north and central parts of the country.

**Block 3.2: Christians have been monitored by their local communities or by private groups (this includes reporting to police, being shadowed, telephone lines listened to, emails read/censored, etc.). (2.75 points)**

Churches in residential areas face some level of hostilities from residents claiming that the church worship is too loud, especially at night. As a way of getting their activities curtailed, residents often report churches to the Directorate of Religious Affairs over this issue. Local communities and authorities sometimes also monitor the activities of convert Christians. During WWL 2022, this has been frequently noticed in the central and northern part of the country.

**Block 3.5: Christians have been put under pressure to take part in non-Christian religious ceremonies or community events. (2.75 points)**

There are many traditional ceremonies throughout Togo. Converts or any Christians living in the animist areas are regularly forced to attend and participate in those rites. Converts from Islam are also expected to join in Ramadan. What makes it worse is that even some Christians practice both Voodoo and Christianity and they put pressure on those who refuse to combine Voodoo and Christian faith.

**Block 3.6: Christians have been hindered in participating in communal institutions, forums, etc., for faith-related reasons. (2.75 points)**

This block question goes hand in hand with others. A Christian from a church under surveillance is unlikely to be able to participate in communal institutions without any problems. Non-traditional Christian groups are also known to be obstructed by the majority of historical Christian denominations.

## Pressure in Block 4 / National sphere

**Block 4.5: Christians have been discriminated against when engaging with the authorities (local administration, government, army, etc.) for faith-related reasons. (3.00 points)**

This depends on the location. In the northern and central part of the country where Animists and Muslims are the majority, locals who are in power also belong to those faiths. That means Christians often face discrimination when they engage with these people. In some situations, it has serious impact and some have had to migrate south to search for better opportunities where the majority are Christians.

**Block 4.6: Christians have been barred from public office, or has promotion been hindered for faith-related reasons. (3.00 points)**

In the government, ministerial departments and other areas of administration, Evangelical Christians have regularly not been selected for promotion. In the northern and central parts of the country, all categories of Christian face serious problems in this respect. In the south, it affects more of the Evangelicals because a) some of the officials are from the Catholic church and b) the government does not like outspoken Evangelicals.

**Block 4.8: Christians have been hindered in expressing their views or opinions in public. (3.00 points)**

Non-convert Christians can generally express their opinions or views freely. But converts from Animism or Islam cannot ever risk expressing their views or opinions in public. This is particularly dangerous in the northern part of the country where the Muslim community is dominant.

**Block 4.14: Those who caused harm to Christians have deliberately been left unpunished. (2.75 points)**

Animist or Muslim persecutors of Christians are nearly always left unpunished. This is due to the mixture of Persecution engines in a given location. This frequently happens in the central and northern part of the country. Some people damage churches by throwing rocks and bully the children of Christian families, for instance. They do this with absolute impunity.

## Pressure in Block 5 / Church sphere

**Block 5.2: It has been difficult to get registration or legal status for churches at any level of government. (4.00 points)**

During the WWL 2022 reporting period, no single registration was issued. Authorizations and registrations have stopped being issued since 2013. Many churches and Christian organizations are thus working illegally and are vulnerable to any decision from the government to close or limit their activities. There are currently hundreds of applications for registration pending at the Ministry of Territorial Administration. The US State Department (IRFR 2020) reported that "the government did not act on approximately 900 pending registration applications from religious groups or accept new applications."

**Block 5.1: Church activities have been monitored, hindered, disturbed, or obstructed. (3.25 points)**

There are occasions where radical Muslims or Animist youth disrupt church activities in communities with a strong Islamic or Animist presence. This is even the case in Lome, the capital. There have been many complaints about noise made by church groups in the central and northern parts of the country. Churches are being monitored to see who is going there and what is being talked about. There is always the suspicion that they could be promoting hatred towards Animist and Islamic groups.

**Block 5.3: Christian communities have been hindered in building or renovating church buildings or in claiming historical religious premises and places of worship which had been taken from them earlier. (3.25 points)**

Churches have been unable to rent houses from Muslims. Also, Christian communities cannot obtain land for church-building without great difficulty and often their plans are completely refused by the local authorities. This is also linked to the issue of monitoring and lack of registration. During the WWL 2022 reporting period, it was still the case that Christians were denied licenses to build or renovate their churches.

**Block 5.4: Churches have been hindered from organizing Christian activities inside their place of worship. (3.25 points)**

There have been many occasions where the police were called out to stop Christian activities (often due to complaints about noise-levels). Certain Christian groups have also made complaints against other Christian groups' activities. Even though the leaders of the various religious groups try to diffuse issues, the grassroots members and some ultraconservatives do not want to see any other form of faith operating in their neighborhood.

## Violence

*Violence is defined in WWL Methodology as the deprivation of physical freedom or as bodily harm to Christians or damage to their property. It includes severe threats (mental abuse). The table is based on reported cases as much as possible, but since many incidents go unreported, the numbers must be understood as being minimum figures. The following 5 points should be considered when using the data provided in the Block 6 table:*

**1. Some incidents go unreported because the Christians involved choose not to speak about the hostility being faced. Possible reasons for this may be:**

- *Doing so would expose them to more attacks. For example, if a family member is killed because of his/her faith, the survivors might decide to keep silent about the circumstances of the killing to avoid provoking any further attacks.*
- *In some circumstances, the reticence to pass on information may be due to the danger of exposure caused by converts returning to their previous faith.*
- *If persecution is related to sexual violence - due to stigma, survivors often do not tell even their closest relatives.*
- *In some cultural settings, if your loved one is killed, you might be under the obligation to take revenge. Christians not wishing to do that, may decide to keep quiet about it.*

**2. Other incidents go unreported for the following possible reasons:**

- *Some incidents never reach the public consciousness, because no one really knows about it; or the incident is simply not considered worth reporting; or media coverage is deliberately blocked or distorted; or media coverage is not deliberately blocked, but the information somehow gets lost; or the incidents are deliberately not reported widely for security reasons (e.g. for the protection of local church leaders).*
- *In situations where Christians have been discriminated against for many years, armed conflict can make them additionally vulnerable. Christians killed in areas where fighting regularly takes place are unlikely to be reported separately. Examples in recent years have been Sudan, Syria and Myanmar.*
- *Christians who die through the deprivation of basic necessities such as clean water and medical care (due to long-term discrimination) are unlikely to be reported separately. Christians are not always killed directly; they can be so squeezed by regulations and other oppressive factors that they die – not at once, but in the course of years. This often includes the deprivation of basic necessities such as clean water and medical care, or exclusion from government assisted socio-economic development projects. These numbers could be immense.*

**3. For further discussion** (with a focus on the complexity of assessing the numbers of Christians killed for their faith) please see World Watch Monitor's article dated 13 November 2013 available at:

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2013/11/number-of-christian-martyrs-continues-to-cause-debate/>.

**4. The use of symbolic numbers:** In cases where it has been impossible to count exactly, a symbolic round figure (10\*, 100\* etc.) is given and indicated with an asterisk. A symbolic number of 10\* could in reality even be 100 or more but the real number is uncertain. A symbolic number of 100\* could go well over 1000 but the real number is uncertain. A symbolic number of 1,000\* could go well over 10,000 but, again, the real number is uncertain. The same applies for symbolic numbers 10,000\*, 100,000\* and 1,000,000\*: Each could indicate much higher numbers, but WWR chooses to be cautious because the real number is uncertain.

**5. The symbol "x" in the table:** This denotes a known number which cannot be published due to security concerns.

Togo: Violence Block question		WWL 2022	WWL 2021
6.1	How many Christians have been killed for faith-related reasons (including state sanctioned executions)?	0	0
6.2	How many churches or Christian buildings (schools, hospitals, cemeteries, etc.) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	0	0
6.3	How many Christians have been detained for faith-related reasons?	0	0
6.4	How many Christians have been sentenced to jail, labor camp, sent to psychiatric hospital as punishment, or similar things for faith-related reasons?	0	0
6.5	How many Christians have been abducted for faith-related reasons (including Christians missing in a persecution context)?	0	0
6.6	How many Christians have been raped or otherwise sexually harassed for faith-related reasons?	0	0
6.7	How many cases have there been of forced marriages of Christians to non-Christians?	10 *	1
6.8	How many Christians have been otherwise physically or mentally abused for faith-related reasons (including beatings and death threats)?	10 *	10
6.9	How many houses of Christians or other property (excluding shops) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	1	0
6.10	How many shops or businesses of Christians have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	10 *	0
6.11	How many Christians have been forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons?	10 *	0
6.12	How many Christians have been forced to leave the country for faith-related reasons?	0	0

## 5 Year trends

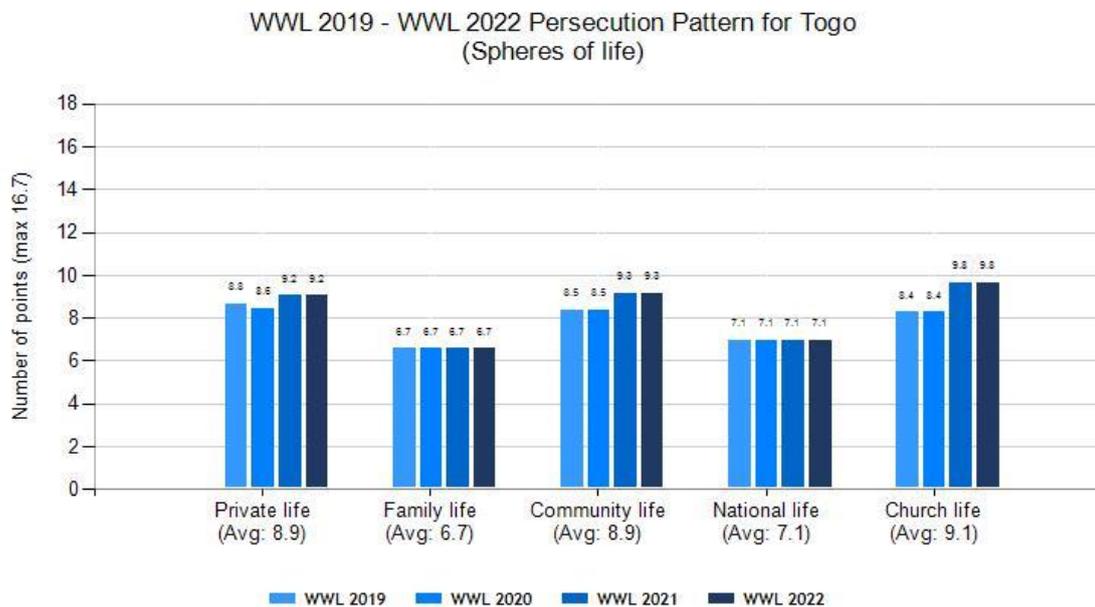
The following three charts show the levels of pressure and violence faced by Christians in the country over the last five WWL reporting periods.

### 5 Year trends: Average pressure

Togo: WWL 2018 - WWL 2022 Persecution Pattern history	Average pressure over 5 Spheres of life
2022	8.4
2021	8.4
2020	7.9
2019	7.9
2018	-

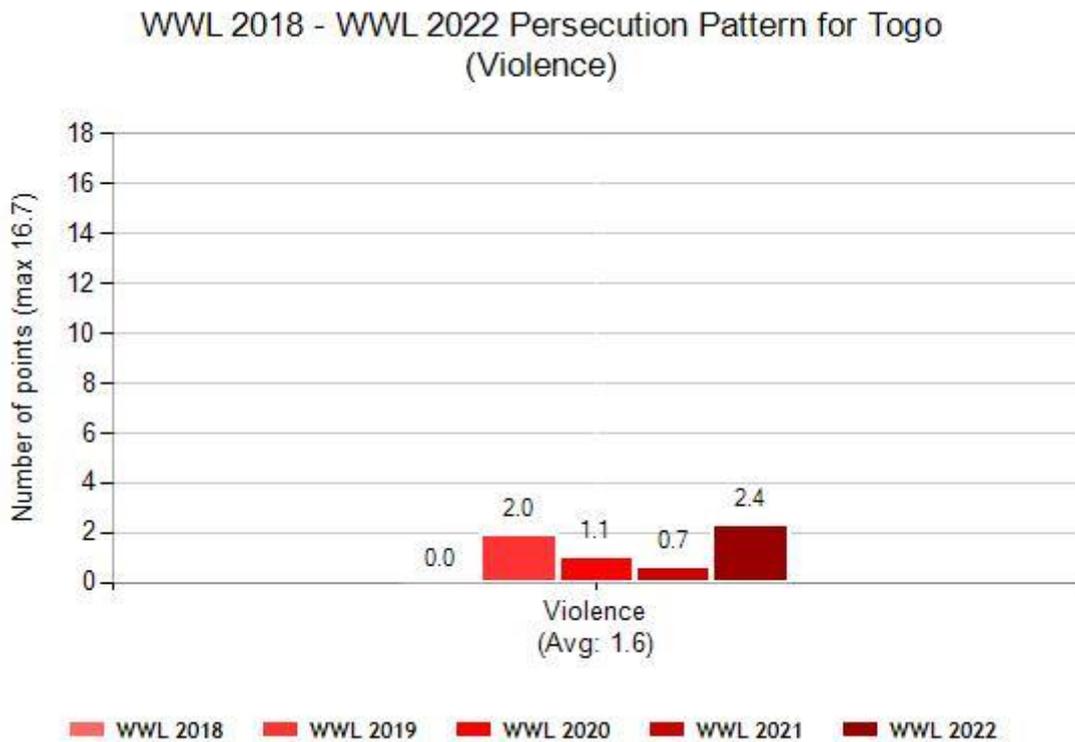
The table above shows that the level of average pressure on Christians ranges from 'fairly high' (7.9 points) to 'high' (8.4 points).

### 5 Year trends: Pressure in each sphere of life



The chart above shows the levels of pressure in the different *spheres of life* over the past four years. While levels remained stable in *Family* and *National life*, there has been an increase in pressure in the *Church*, *Community* and *Private spheres of life* since WWL 2021.

## 5 Year trends: Violence against Christians



The chart above shows that the score for violence has been fluctuating at 'low' and 'very low' levels over the past four WWL reporting periods. The highest level was reached in WWL 2022 (2.4 points).

## Gender-specific religious persecution / Female

Group	Female Pressure Points
Economic	Denied inheritance or possessions; Discrimination/harassment via education
Political and Legal	Denied custody of children; Forced divorce; Forced marriage
Security	Abduction; Forced to flee town/country; Incarceration by family (house arrest); Trafficking; Violence – physical; Violence – sexual
Social and Cultural	Denied access to social community/networks; Enforced religious dress code; Violence – psychological
Technological	-

As is the case for men, women and girls in Togo may find themselves involved against their will in traditional rites and practices, such as Voodoo or 'generation parties', depending on the communities in which they live.

Converts from Muslim and Traditional African Religion backgrounds face additional challenges for their faith. Forced marriage is a common method of preventing female converts from leaving their parent’s religion. Some Muslim families have deliberately forced their daughters to marry a strict Muslim husband to prevent them from living as practicing Christians. They are prevented from marrying another Christian of their choice, as the family will oppose the marriage based on religion. Animist parents have been known to act similarly.

Female converts also characteristically face physical beatings, abandonment, sexual abuse including rape, verbal abuse, disinheritance, eviction and threats. If already married, significant pressure is also applied on their spouse to divorce them and refuse the convert custody of their children. It often occurs that an unmarried convert is forced to accept a marriage arranged by her parents to a non-Christian. If she refuses, this may lead to her being abducted and forcibly taken to the home of the intended man. Despite Togolese law stipulating that both parties must consent to marriage, forced marriages such as these [continue to take place](#) in several communities (OECD, 2019, “Social Institutions and Gender Index: Togo”). In extreme cases, forms of sexual slavery have been reported.

Church leaders and pastors encourage new converts to keep their distance from their families in the light of these harsh responses. Christian women who leave Catholicism can also face many of the aforementioned forms of pressure.

## Gender-specific religious persecution / Male

Group	Male Pressure Points
Economic	Discrimination/harassment via education
Political and Legal	-
Security	Military/militia conscription/service against conscience; Violence – physical
Social and Cultural	Denied access to social community/networks; Denied food or water; Violence – psychological; Violence – Verbal
Technological	-

Christian men and boys can be affected by cultural traditions such as Voodoo, which sometimes results in traditional practices inflicting suffering on children. This is particularly prevalent in rural areas. They can also be forcibly recruited by criminal gangs for drug trafficking. The harshest persecution is experienced by converts. Male Christians from a Muslim or Animist background can face physical abuse, verbal harassment, rejection, disinheritance, reduced food, threats and stigma because of their faith. Reports further indicate that Christians may be denied property lettings for a business, or made unemployed in favor of a Muslim employee. Male converts come under harsh scrutiny in their local communities and can face intimidation and threats on a daily basis.

## Persecution of other religious minorities

Most Togolese are followers either of Christianity, ATR or Islam. Followers of other religions are very few and are in most cases foreign citizens. There were no reports about Muslims or adherents of Animism experiencing any significant problems due to their faith.

## Future outlook

The outlook for Christians as viewed through the lens of:

### Islamic oppression

West Africa has become a hotspot of radicalization and Islamic militancy. Experts believe that what is happening in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger could soon engulf the entire region; it is only a matter of time. Since Togo borders Burkina Faso, a country that has been struggling to contain the impact of violent Islamic militancy, it is possible that this impact will be increasingly felt in Togo. Furthermore, many Muslims from Nigeria are targeting Evangelicals for attacks, especially in Lome. What we have seen in WWL 2022 is that there is deep fear among governments in the region that the jihadist movement is expanding towards the coast.

### Clan oppression

Togo has over 40 different ethnic groups and a significant portion of the country's population still adheres to traditional belief systems. In many instances, Evangelicals doing mission work among Animists face serious opposition. This is likely to continue in the future.

### Dictatorial paranoia

This Persecution engine has been operating for decades. The ruling party has been harassing and silencing those who oppose it. Freedom House/Global Freedom 2020 reports:

- "While regular multiparty elections haven't taken place since 1992, Togo's politics have been controlled since 1963 by the late Gnassingbé Eyadéma and his son, current president Faure Gnassingbé. Advantages including security services dominated by the president's ethnic group and malapportioned election districts have helped Gnassingbé and his party retain power. Opposition calls for constitutional and electoral reforms have been harshly repressed."

There is no indication that this will change soon. Thus, Christians who want to speak out against injustice in the country will keep facing persecution.

### Organized corruption and crime

Togo has shown no improvement in terms of corruption. In fact, it is one of the countries where the situation is deteriorating according to Transparency International. Nepotism and blatant bribery are widespread. This means Christians who want to take their case to the court will not get a fair hearing. Those speaking out against persecution or injustice in general are likely to continue facing intimidation and similar attempts at silencing them.

## External Links - Persecution Dynamics

- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: continue to take place - <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/TG.pdf>

## Further useful reports

A selection of in-depth reports and smaller articles are available on World Watch Research's Open Doors Analytical website (password: freedom) and on the World Watch Monitor website:

- <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/reports/>
- <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/?s=Togo>
- <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/countries/Togo>