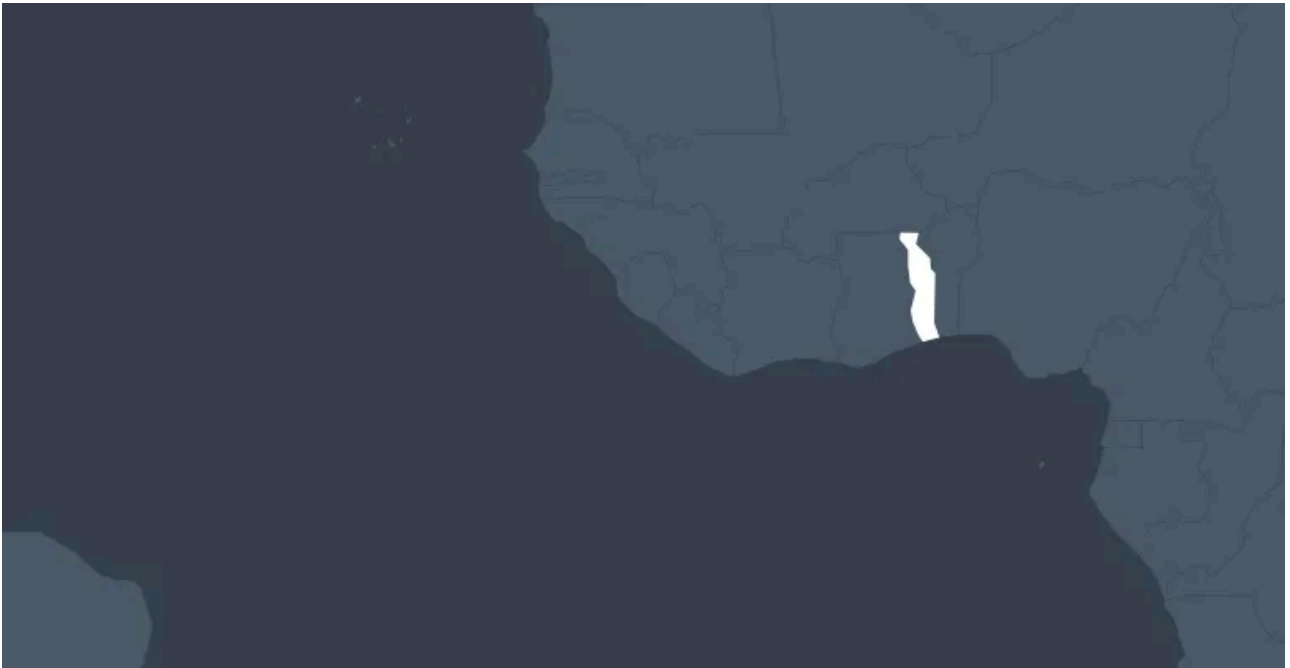


Freedom in the World 2025



header1 Overview

While regular multiparty elections have taken place since 1992, the late Gnassingbé Eyadéma and his son, Faure Gnassingbé, have controlled Togolese politics since a 1963 coup. Gnassingbé maintains control in part through a security apparatus dominated by his ethnic group, malapportioned election districts that benefit the ruling party, co-optation of opposition parties, and opportunistic changes to the constitutional and legal framework. Opposition calls for reform have been harshly repressed.

header2 Key Developments in 2024

- In March and April, the National Assembly—whose original term had expired—voted to adopt constitutional revisions that effectively shifted the country from a presidential to a parliamentary system, with a largely ceremonial head of state who would be elected by

lawmakers for up to two four-year terms, and an empowered prime minister with no term limits. The terms of the National Assembly were extended from five to six years. President Gnassingbé, who signed the revision legislation in early May, was widely expected to move to the premier’s post when his term expired in 2025. The process by which the revisions were drafted and enacted was widely criticized for its haste, opacity, and apparent violation of the existing constitution’s requirement for a referendum on any changes to the president’s term and mode of election. Security forces banned and dispersed attempts by the opposition and civil society to organize press conferences, meetings, and protests to denounce the changes.

- In the April legislative elections, which had been postponed from December 2023 and were held just days after the adoption of the revised constitution, the ruling Union for the Republic (UNIR) party won 108 of 113 seats in the National Assembly. Having boycotted the 2018 elections, major opposition parties mobilized for the 2024 contest, but they captured only five seats spread across four parties; only 19 percent of the new legislature’s seats were held by women. The opposition and some local observers alleged election irregularities and fraud, while the Roman Catholic Church was banned from participation in election monitoring.
- Members of regional councils were elected for the first time in April, concurrently with the National Assembly elections. The UNIR won 137 out of 179 seats, according to final results from the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI). Under the revised constitution, two-thirds of a new Senate would be elected by regional and municipal councilors, and the remaining third would be appointed by the more powerful prime minister, known as the president of the Council of Ministers. The Senate was expected to be established in 2025.
- The authorities took a number of steps to suppress critical media coverage during the year. In March, the publishing director of *La Dépêche* was detained for two weeks on charges including defamation and incitement for a story about the murder trial of an army officer, and the newspaper was suspended for three months. In April, a French journalist was arrested, abused in custody, sentenced to a suspended six-month jail term for illegal entry, and expelled; the accreditation process for all foreign journalists was then suspended for two months. In July, the media regulator imposed a three-month suspension on a Radio Victoire FM program after it interviewed an exiled opposition leader. Separately, *L’Alternative*, a respected newspaper that was shut down in 2023 when its publisher and editor fled the country to avoid prison sentences, relaunched in March as a website based in France and Senegal, with some journalists in Togo.

This report has been abridged for Freedom in the World 2025 due to [ongoing budget constraints](#). Freedom in the World is entirely funded by nongovernmental sources such as private foundations, corporations, and individuals like you. Please consider making a [donation](#) to support future editions of this vital resource.

For additional background information, see last year’s [full report](#).

PR Political Rights

A Electoral Process

A1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Was the current head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections?

1.001
4.004

A2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?

2.002
4.004

A3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies?

0.000
4.004

Score Change: The score declined from 1 to 0 because major constitutional revisions were adopted, by a legislature with an expired term, through a swift and opaque process that appeared to violate requirements set by the existing constitution.

B Political Pluralism and Participation

B1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system free of undue obstacles to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?

2.002
4.004

B2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there a realistic opportunity for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections?

1.001
4.004

B3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are the people's political choices free from domination by forces that are external to the political sphere, or by political forces that employ extrapolitical means?

1.001
4.004

B4 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do various segments of the population (including ethnic, racial, religious, gender, LGBT+, and other relevant groups) have full political rights and electoral opportunities?

2.002
4.004

C Functioning of Government

C1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government?

2.002
4.004

C2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are safeguards against official corruption strong and effective?

1.001 4.004

C3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Does the government operate with openness and transparency?

2.002 4.004

CL Civil Liberties

D Freedom of Expression and Belief

D1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are there free and independent media? | 2.002 4.004

D2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are individuals free to practice and express their religious faith or nonbelief in public and private? | 3.003 4.004

D3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there academic freedom, and is the educational system free from extensive political indoctrination? | 2.002 4.004

D4 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are individuals free to express their personal views on political or other sensitive topics without fear of surveillance or retribution? | 2.002 4.004

E Associational and Organizational Rights

E1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there freedom of assembly? | 1.001 4.004

E2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations, particularly those that are engaged in human rights– and governance-related work? | 2.002 4.004

E3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there freedom for trade unions and similar professional or labor organizations? | 2.002 4.004

F Rule of Law

F1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there an independent judiciary? | 2.002 4.004

F2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Does due process prevail in civil and criminal matters? | 1.001 4.004

F3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there protection from the illegitimate use of physical force and freedom from war and insurgencies?	2.002 4.004
F4 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts	

Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population?	1.001 4.004
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G Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights

G1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy freedom of movement, including the ability to change their place of residence, employment, or education?	2.002 4.004
G2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts	

Are individuals able to exercise the right to own property and establish private businesses without undue interference from state or nonstate actors?	2.002 4.004
G3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts	

Do individuals enjoy personal social freedoms, including choice of marriage partner and size of family, protection from domestic violence, and control over appearance?	1.001 4.004
G4 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts	

Do individuals enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from economic exploitation?	2.002 4.004
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