

# Togo

## General statistics

Population: 10,057,975 (2009)  
Area: 245,857 km<sup>2</sup>  
Independence: 2 October 1958 (France)  
Capital: Conakry  
Government: Presidential republic  
Administrative language: French  
Currency: Guinean franc (GNF)  
GDP: 10.516 billion  
GDP per capita: 991 USD  
Calling code: + 224  
Motto: Travail, Justice, Solidarité (Work, Justice, Solidarity)  
Anthem: For Liberté (freedom)



## History

During the period from the 11th century to the 16th century, various tribes entered the region from all directions: the Ewé potentially from modern day Benin; and the Mina and Guin potentially from Ghana. Most settled in coastal areas.

The slave trade began in the 16th century, for the next two hundred years, the coastal region was a major trading center for Europeans in search of slaves, earning Togo and the surrounding region the name "The Slave Coast".

In an 1884 treaty signed at Togoville under the King Mlapa III, Germany declared a protectorate over a stretch of territory along the coast and gradually extended its control inland. In 1905, this became the German colony of Togoland. After the German defeat during World War I in August 1914 at the hands of British troops (coming from the Gold Coast) and French troops (coming from Dahomey), Togoland became two League of Nations mandates, administered by the Britain and France. After World War II, these mandates became UN Trust Territories. The residents of British Togoland voted to join the Gold Coast as part of the new independent nation of Ghana in 1957, and French Togoland became an autonomous republic within the French Union in 1959.

Independence came in 1960 under Sylvanus Olympio. He was assassinated in a military coup on 13 January 1963 by a group of soldiers under the direction of Sergeant Etienne Eyadema Gnassingbe. Opposition leader Nicolas Grunitzky was appointed president by the "Insurrection Committee", headed by Emmanuel Bodjollé. However, on 13 January 1967, Eyadema Gnassingbe overthrew Grunitzky in a bloodless coup and assumed the presidency, which he held from that date until his sudden death on 5 February 2005. Eyadema Gnassingbe died in early 2005 after 38 years in power, as Africa's longest-sitting dictator. The military's immediate but short-lived installation of his son, Faure Gnassingbé, as president provoked widespread international condemnation, except from France. However, some

democratically elected African leaders such as Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal and Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, supported that move, thereby creating a rift within the African Union. Faure Gnassingbé stood down and called elections which he won two months later. The opposition claimed that the election was fraudulent. The developments of 2005 led to renewed questions about a commitment to democracy made by Togo in 2004 in a bid to normalise ties with the European Union, which cut off aid in 1993 over the country's human rights record. Moreover, up to 400 people were killed in the political violence surrounding the presidential poll, according to the United Nations. Around 40,000 Togolese fled to neighbouring countries.

## **Climate**

The climate is generally tropical with average temperatures ranging from 27.5 °C (81.5 °F) on the coast to about 30 °C (86 °F) in the northernmost regions, with a dry climate and characteristics of a tropical savanna. To the south there are two seasons of rain (the first between April and July and the second between September and November), even though the average rainfall is not very high.