

# Togo



## Where is Togo?

The Togolese Republic, often known as Togo, is a country in West Africa, bordered by Ghana to the west, Benin to the east and Burkina Faso to the north. It extends south to the Gulf of Guinea, on which the capital Lomé is located.



## What is the climate like?

The climate is generally tropical. In the south there are two rainy seasons (April—July and October—November). Here the maximum temperature is about 27°C. In the north it is drier with rain from April to August. It is also hotter with temperatures reaching 35°C.



## Education

In Togo, education is compulsory for 6 years and 83.4% of boys and 71.6% of girls are enrolled in primary school. In the UK, 98.7% of boys and girls go to primary school. Despite this being quite good for Togo, the drop-out rate is high and the education system has suffered from teacher shortages. There is also variable educational quality across the country between rural and urban areas.

## Quick Facts

- Population: 6.7 million (UK 2009: 61.8 million)
- Area: 57,000 square km (UK: 242,900 square km)
- Life expectancy (years): 56.6 (men), 60.9 (women)
- Major language: French
- Major Religion: Christian and Muslim and 51% follow traditional beliefs.
- Average income: £150 per year

## People and Culture

In Togo there are about 40 different ethnic groups. The most numerous are the Ewe in the south (46%), although along the south coastline they account for 21% of the population. The Kotokoli and Tchamba live in the centre of the country and the Kabyé in the north (22%). The official language is French. Kabyé and Ewe are the most widely spoken African languages.



Woman with water on her head, Tchangui Villiage, Togo



Boukari Mooli Processing Soya Bean Paste

## Poverty

- This small, sub-Saharan economy is heavily dependent on both commercial and subsistence agriculture, which provides employment for 65% of the labour force. Some basic foodstuffs must still be imported. .
- Over 60% of the population survive below the poverty line and 14% experience acute malnutrition, about double the rate of neighbouring countries.
- The north of the country is threatened by desertification owing to slash-and-burn agriculture and the extensive use of wood for fuel. .
- Prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Togo is reported to be 3.3% but is believed by experts to be higher .
- The main health problems include tuberculosis and especially malaria which claims 20-25% of all deaths occurring in the country, more even than AIDS

## Did you know?

- Togo is an Ewe word (pronounced Ev'hé) meaning "lake" or "lagoon."
- Fufu is a very famous Togolese food. The noise made by the pounding of fufu is one of the most familiar sounds in Togo.
- Maize is the most widely eaten food in Togo.
- Togo is a leading world producer of phosphates, which are by far the country's most significant mineral product.
- 'Thunderstones' (large rocks shaped like eggs) and cowrie shells were both formerly used as legal tender.

## Self Help Africa in Togo

- Increasing family food production through improved agricultural practices, livestock management and tree planting
- Improving access to clean water
- Increasing household incomes and access to basic necessities through business skills training
- Raising awareness of how HIV/AIDS is contracted and spread, linking with national and local organisations
- Forming and supporting Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to sustain project benefits