

2.1.3. Kogi

2.1.3. Kogi

Kogi state is comprised of the following 21 LGAs: Adavi, Ajaokuta, Ankpa, Bassa, Dekina, Ibaji, Idah, Igalamela-Odolu, Ijumu, Kabba/Bunu, Kogi, Lokoja, Mopa-Muro, Ofu, Ogori/Magongo, Okehi, Okene, Olamaboro, Omala, Yagba East, Yagba West.375 The capital city is Lokoja. 376

The main ethnic groups are Igala (including the Ogugu subgroup), Ebira, and Okun. Other minorities include Bassa, Nupe (mainly in Lokoja), Gwari, Kakanda, Oworo, Ogori Magongo and the Eggan community.377

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 4 466 801 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.378

a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section 1.1 Main Actors.

According to a report by Nextier, 68 kidnap victims were recorded in Kogi in 2024,379 while according to SBM Intelligence, 80 people were kidnapped in 2024.380 Kidnappers often demanded ransom.381 Data from the Nigeria Risk Index, cited by a June 2025 article by The Journal Nigeria ranked Kogi state 'among the top five states affected by kidnapping nationwide.' 382 Cases of kidnapping were for example reported in February,383 August,384 November,385 and December 2024,386 and in February,387 March,388 April,389 and May 2025.390 In May 2025, the Punch Newspaper reported that Kogi was affected by a 'spate of kidnappings' in the previous weeks.391

According to an April 2025 article by Nigerian newspaper The Sun, 57 people were killed by bandits, herders or criminal groups between November 2024 and April 2025.392 Deadly attacks by bandits were for example reported in January and April 2024,393 and in January 2025.394 Violence linked to conflicts between herders and farmers included incidents in April 2024 in Omala LGA395 and in November 2024 in Ijumu LGA.396

SBM Intelligence noted in July 2025 that Kogi was affected by gang activity, describing the state as 'notable hotspot' within the North-Central zone.397

In October 2024, a lawmaker pointed to an inter-tribal crisis that had broken out in 2016 in Bassa LGA, mentioning that several persons were killed by unknown gunmen, including in October 2024.398

b) Security incidents and impact on the population

In the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 115 security incidents in Kogi state, which resulted in 98 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 30 were coded as battles, 8 as riots and 77 as incidents of violence against civilians.[399]

Imported image pandoc_image_5.png

Figure 7: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Kogi state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.[400]

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 20 LGAs of the state, with the highest numbers documented in Lokoja (25 incidents), Yagba West (15 incidents), Kabba (14 incidents), Ofu (9 incidents), Adavi, Dekina and Omala LGAs (6 incidents each). No incidents were recorded in one LGA (Ogori). According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups and Kogi communal militias (coded as either 'Actor1' or 'Actor2') were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.[401]

Conflict-related infrastructure damage - Farm produce was destroyed in attacks by bandits in April 2024[402] and in November 2024 armed men damaged a power transformer in Obajana.[403] A February 2025 article by the Daily Post mentions the destruction of property in the conflict between communities in Bassa LGA.[404]

Road security - As noted in section 2.1.2 FCT Abuja, the Abuja-Lokoja Highway was 'long plagued by violent crime, kidnappings, and fear'. The most affected areas in Kogi state 'included the Kwaita-Chikara-Omoko-Idu-Gegu-Orehi-Ochonyi-Akpogu and Koton Karfe communities' and 'Chikara-Sharp Bend, Aseni, Ahoko-Adabo, and the Orehi/Achabo axis.' The article however noted that 'recent reports indicate a significant reduction in criminal activities' along the route, credited 'to increased patrols led by the Nigerian army and other security agencies.' However, certain sections of the road continued to suffer from potholes, poor lighting, and deserted checkpoints, which were frequently used as ambush spots.[405] In July 2025, for example, kidnappings were reported along Egume-Ankpa expressway.[406]

Displacement, movement and return - As of February 2025, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Kogi state at 20 793[407] compared to 24 576 as of November 2024.[408] IOM lists disaster (90 %) and farmer-herder clashes (9 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.[409]

No information could be found on returns in Kogi state during the reference period.

c) State response in maintaining law and order

In December 2024, the Kogi State Command of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps concluded the training of 262 of its personnel, 'in response to escalating security challenges and the need to safeguard critical infrastructure.'[410] In June 2024, the state government planned the recruitment of 50 hunters in each of the state's 21 LGAs and cited 'a shortage of security personnel' and the necessity 'to curb crime and criminality in the state' as reasons for the proposed recruitment.[411] In December 2024, the state government reported that in 2024, it

had deployed 3 000 security personnel throughout the 21 LGAs to combat banditry and other forms of crime.412 In October 2024, a forward operational base of the Nigerian Army in Egbe began operations as part of efforts ‘to stem kidnapping, banditry and other criminal activities in the border community.’413 According to a June 2025 media article, the base, strategically located ‘at the crossroads of Kogi, Kwara, Ekiti, Osun, and Niger states’ provided ‘rapid-response capability and a permanent military presence to deter criminal elements exploiting the remote forested terrains of the region.’414

Media reported the rescue of kidnapped victims415 and the foiling of kidnappings.416 In June 2025, the Kogi Government launched a crackdown on kidnappers, arresting 26 suspects.417

- 375

  Nigeria, Kogi State Government, Structure, n.d., url

- 376

  Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kogi, n.d., url

- 377

  Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kogi, n.d., url

- 378

  UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, url

- 379

  Nextier, Mutations of Terror and Conflicts. 2025 Security and Conflict Outlook in Nigeria, February 2025, url, p. 31

- 380

  SBM Intelligence, Kogi’s logistical nightmares, 29 January 2025, url

- 381

  SBM Intelligence, Grim Reaping: Economics of Nigeria’s Kidnap Industry–A 2024 Update, August 2024, url, p. 4; Journal Nigeria (The), Kogi’s Rising Kidnap Crisis: After ₦10m Ransom, Retired Army Major Found Dead in Forest, 9 June 2025, url

- 382

  Journal Nigeria (The), Kogi’s Rising Kidnap Crisis: After ₦10m Ransom, Retired Army Major Found Dead in Forest, 9 June 2025, url

- 383

Punch, Police comb Kogi forest as gunmen abduct 14 Abuja-bound travellers, 6 February 2024, url

- 384

  Daily Post, Yuletide: Nigerians jittery over incessant kidnappings on highways, 12 December 2024, url

- 385

  Daily Post, Deputy Superintendent of Corrections, 15 others kidnapped, 25 November 2024, url; Daily Post, Yuletide: Nigerians jittery over incessant kidnappings on highways, 12 December 2024, url

- 386

  Vanguard, Gunmen kidnap councillor, eight others in Kogi, 4 December 2024, url

- 387

  Daily Post, Yuletide: Nigerians jittery over incessant kidnappings on highways, 12 December 2024, url

- 388

  Daily Trust, Gunmen invade Kogi community, abduct timber contractor, 5 others, 29 March 2025, url; Daily Post, Bandits kill two vigilantes, kidnap woman in Kogi, 24 March 2025, url

- 389

  Daily Trust, Kidnappers on the prowl in Kogi, amputate victims' limbs, 26 May 2025, url

- 390

  Channels TV, Gunmen Abduct 76-Year-Old Retired Major In Kogi, 22 May 2025, url; Channels TV, Gunmen Attack Kogi Community Again, Abduct Four Persons, 21 May 2025, url; Punch, Kogi community thrown into confusion as gunmen storm palace, abduct monarch, 15 May 2025, url

- 391

  Punch, Kogi: Experts blame open borders for rising insecurity in N'Central state, 12 May 2025, url

- 392

  Sun (The) Nigeria, Banditry: 578 massacred in North Central states in 6 months, 26 April 2025, url

- 393

Vanguard, Kogi attack: Community leader calls for military base, as death toll rises to 25, 6 April 2024, url

- 394

Kogi Reports, Bandits Attack Ambulance, Kill Undertaker in Kogi, 28 January 2025, url

- 395

TRT Global, Nigeria herder-farmer clashes leave 21 dead, 5 April 2024, url

- 396

Daily Trust, Herder cuts farmer’s hand in Kogi community, 7 November 2024, url

- 397

SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, July 2025, url, p. 16

- 398

Guardian (The) Nigeria, Kogi Assembly laments insecurity in Bassa LG, 30 October 2024, url

- 399

EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, url

- 400

EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, url

- 401

EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, url

- 402

Vanguard, Kogi attack: Community leader calls for military base, as death toll rises to 25, 6 April 2024, url

- 403

Punch, Armed men damage power transformer in Kogi, 13 November 2024, url

- 404

Daily Post, Kogi Assembly committee brokers peace to end Bassa Kwomu-Egbira Mozum crisis, 21 February 2025, url

- 405

  Abuja Inquirer (The), Abuja-Lokoja Highway: A renewed success story of security, community initiatives, 25 May 2025, url

- 406

  Zagazola, Nine kidnapped passengers rescued in Kogi, 13 July 2025, url

- 407

  As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 1 August 2025, url

- 408

  IOM, Nigeria — North-Central and North-West — Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, url, p. 6

- 409

  IOM, Nigeria — North-Central and North-West — Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, url, p. 10

- 410

  Punch, Training imperative due to security threats, says Kogi NSCDC commandant, 17 May 2025, url

- 411

  Daily Trust, Insecurity: Kogi Gov’t to recruit over 1000 hunters, 19 June 2024, url

- 412

  Punch, Kogi engages 3,000 security guards to tackle banditry, 24 December 2024, url

- 413

  Daily Trust, Army Takes Control of Operational Base in Kogi Community, 12 October 2024, url

- 414

  Vanguard, Senator Sunday Karimi builds military operating base in Kogi, 14 June 2025, url

- 415

Channels TV, Police Rescue 28 Kidnap Victims, Arrest 10, 20 May 2025, url; Channels TV, Police, Army, Fulani Vigilantes Rescue Three Kidnap Victims In Kogi Forest Raid, 19 May 2025, url; Daily Post, 31 rescued, 7 still missing after night kidnap on Kogi highway, 9 May 2025, url; Daily Post, Hunters rescue 5 kidnap victims, gun down bandit in Kogi, 16 March 2025, url; Daily Post, Police neutralise eight bandits, arrest rescue 207 abducted children, 20 January 2025, url; Daily Trust, Remaining abducted Kogi varsity students freed, 2 June 2024, url

- 416

  Vanguard, Kogi Police foil kidnap of passengers along Obajana-Oshokoshoko road, arrest 2, 25 June 2025, url

- 417

  Kogi State Government, Insecurity: Kogi Government Launches Major Crackdown on Kidnappers, Arrests 26 Suspects, 17 June 2025, url

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu