

**Government Defence
Integrity Index**



**COUNTRY
BRIEF**

GHANA

2025





GHANA

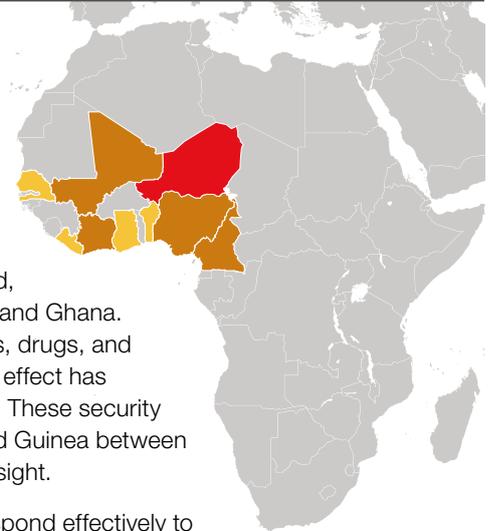
Against a backdrop of successive coups across West Africa,¹ Ghana continues to stand out as a stable and electorally competitive democracy. The peaceful transition following the December 2024 general elections reaffirmed the country's record of democratic continuity. Although political rights and civil liberties remain broadly protected, pressures persist around governance effectiveness, inequality, incidents of intimidation and constraints on expression.^{2,3} At the same time, Northern Ghana has become increasingly vulnerable to cross-border infiltration by violent extremist groups operating from Burkina Faso and Mali.⁴ In recent years, Ghana's engagement with regional security frameworks has come under strain: the Accra Initiative, a key platform for coastal-Sahel cooperation, has become largely inactive, and the withdrawal of key Sahel states from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in early 2025 has reduced the effectiveness of collective security arrangements.⁵ Economically, Ghana is navigating severe fiscal constraints following years of macroeconomic imbalance and debt distress. Under a renewed International Monetary Fund

(IMF) supported programme, the 2025 budget commits to sharp spending cuts and consolidation, amid rising external debt-servicing costs.⁶ Within this context, Ghana faces high corruption risks in the defence sector, with critical and very high risks in operations, procurement and finance. Although Ghana benefits from a moderate rule-of-law environment with active legislative scrutiny, defence committee oversight, and established procurement procedures, these controls are outweighed by broader vulnerabilities across the sector. Weak implementation of anti-corruption policies, uneven transparency, limited disclosure on secret spending, personnel structures, and national security contracts significantly elevate overall exposure to corruption.

Member of Open Government Partnership	Yes
UN Convention Against Corruption	Ratified in 2007
Arms Trade Treaty	Ratified in 2015

WEST AFRICA

The security environment in West Africa has deteriorated markedly over the past decade, driven by the expansion of jihadist insurgencies, political instability, and transnational organised crime. Armed groups such as Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) and Islamic State Sahel Province (ISSP) have generated unprecedented violence, with the Sahel now accounting for nearly half of global terrorism-related deaths. These violent extremist groups have expanded southward, placing increasing pressure on coastal states including Benin, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana. Insecurity is further compounded by piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, trafficking in arms, drugs, and natural resources, and climate-related competition over resources. The cumulative effect has worsened the humanitarian crisis and widespread displacement across the region. These security challenges have unfolded alongside military coups in Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Guinea between 2020 and 2023, which have further weakened civilian control and democratic oversight.



Weak defence sector governance has significantly undermined states' ability to respond effectively to these threats. Defence institutions across West Africa remain characterised by limited transparency, weak accountability, and entrenched defence exceptionalism. Parliamentary oversight is constrained by executive dominance, and limited technical capacity, reducing civilian control over defence policy, budgets, and procurement. Limited budget transparency has weakened accountability and fuelled public mistrust. Simultaneously, non-transparent and discretionary procurement systems have increased corruption risks, distorted capability development, and diverted resources away from operational needs. While most states in the sub-region have ratified the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), uneven implementation has arguably continued to expose defence sectors to corruption (risks), undermining the effectiveness and sustainability of security responses.

1 Raga, S., Lemma, A. and Keane, J., "Spillover effects of the Sahel conflict on selected West African countries," ODI Emerging analysis, London, ODI, 2023.
 2 BTI Transformation Index, Ghana Country Report 2024.
 3 Freedom in the World 2025, Freedom House, Ghana.
 4 The Soufan Center, "Jihadist Spillover Impact and Deteriorating Security in Coastal West Africa," November 20, 2024.
 5 Sampson Kwarkye, "Could old alliances bridge West Africa's security cooperation gaps?," Institute for Security Studies, July 23, 2025.
 6 Christian Akorlie, "Ghana to implement economic 'shock therapy' to reduce debt," Reuters, March 11, 2025.



GHANA

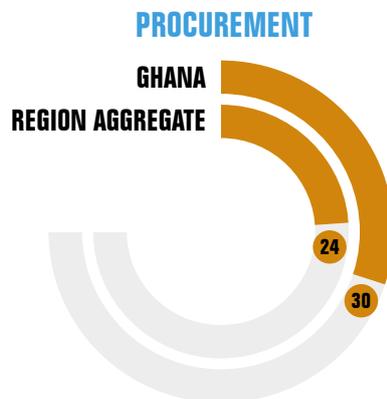
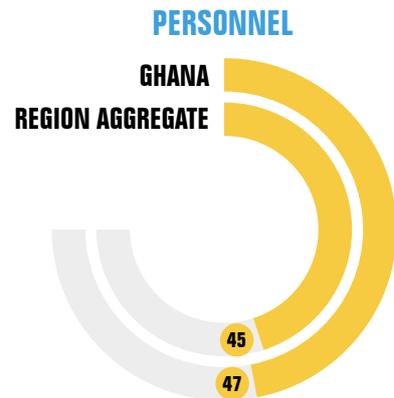
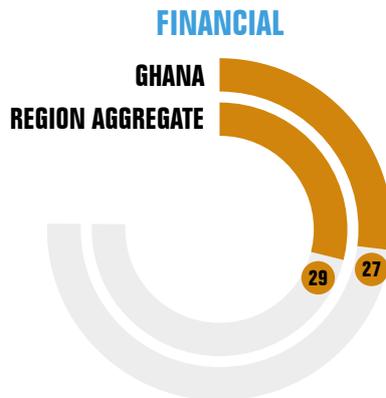
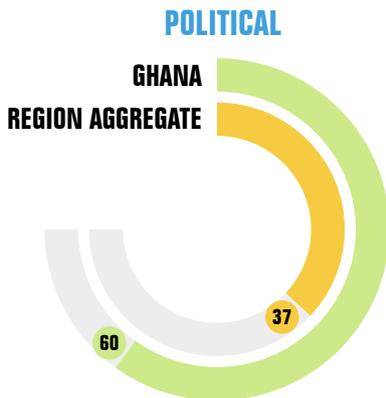
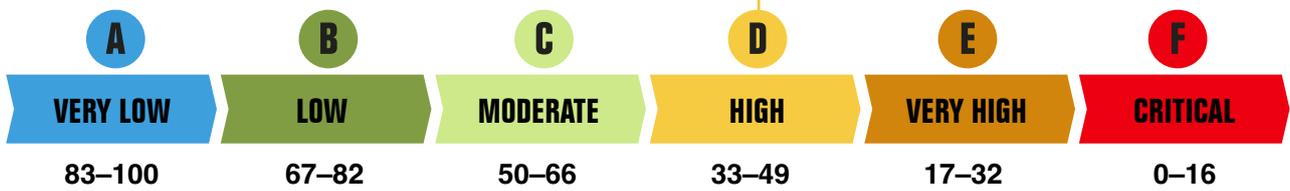
RISK COMPARISON

The Government Defence Integrity Index (GDI) assesses five key risk areas: political, financial, personnel, operational, and procurement. This section compares Ghana's performance in each area with the regional average (Sub-Saharan Africa).

HIGH RISK

D

33





PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT

Legislative oversight of budget (Open Budget Survey, 2023)	19/100
Military expenditure as a share of government spending (SIPRI, 2024)	1.76%
Committee members with defence expertise (%)	Data is not publicly available.
# of meetings/year	Data is not publicly available.
Last review of defence policy/strategy	2020

In Ghana’s presidential system, checks and balances are formally well established; however, executive dominance remains pronounced in practice. Although Parliament has reviewed major defence and security legislation such as the Securities and Intelligence Agencies Bill (2020),⁷ oversight is constrained by strong majority-party discipline. Where the governing party holds a dominant majority, legislators often align closely with executive positions.⁸

Ghana’s defence sector shows moderate political and policymaking corruption risks. While formal provisions enable parliamentary scrutiny of defence policy, practical independence remains limited. Parliament debates defence budgets for approval, but strong executive influence persists within the hybrid political system. Majority-party alignment frequently shapes outcomes, and there are occasional reports of lobbying to secure legislative support for government actions.⁹ Although the military does not appear to directly interfere in legislative processes, executive dominance continues to limit the scope for independent scrutiny. The Defence and Interior Committee has some capacity to influence policy planning, budget debates, and arms procurement, but high parliamentary turnover and limited defence-specific expertise weaken sustained scrutiny.¹⁰

Internal oversight mechanisms show similar mixed performance. The Office of the Inspector General of the Ghana Armed Forces marks progress on integrity oversight, but its location within the military chain of command limits its operational independence.¹¹ The independent Audit Service reviews defence expenditures and proactively publishes reports, though these tend to present summary findings with limited detail on defence spending.¹²

FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY

Defence-related access to information response rates	1) % granted full or partial access: Data is not publicly available.
	2) # subject to backlog: Data is not publicly available.
Defence-related complaints to ombudsman/commissioner #	Data is not publicly available.
Does the commissioner have authority over the MoD?	Data is not publicly available.
Audit reports on defence (2020-2025) #	None
Open Budget Index (IBP,2023)	46/100
World Press Freedom Index (RSF, 2025)	52nd out of 180.

Although publication of the national budget and Medium-Term Expenditure Framework has improved, and annual expenditure data is made available; transparency gaps remain substantial. Explanations for over or under-spending are not provided and classified,¹³ or off-budget expenditures lie entirely outside public reporting,¹⁴ limiting transparency in the sector and scrutiny. Key details on asset disposal and valuation are opaque, and reports of unclear terms in the sale of military lands have raised accountability concerns.¹⁵ Secret spending for classified operations and special projects bypasses both parliamentary and public oversight.¹⁶ Access to information under the Right to Information Act (2019) and the Security and Intelligence Agencies Act (2020) is also heavily restricted for defence and intelligence, leaving minimal space for independent review.

Further vulnerabilities arise from defence-linked commercial activities, particularly within the Defence Industries Holding Company Limited, where beneficial ownership and financial reporting are undisclosed,¹⁷ heightening the risk of conflict of interest and misuse of funds.

7 Ghana News Agency, "Parliament Passes Armed Forces Amendment Bill 2022," July 29, 2023.
8 BTI Transformation Index, Ghana Country Report 2024.
9 Rasheed Draman, "Weakening Parliamentary Oversight, Increasing Corruption: Ghana," Studies in Public Choice, in: Rick Stapenhurst & Rasheed Draman & Brooke Larson & Anthony Staddon (ed.), Anti-Corruption Evidence, chapter 0, 2020, pages 51-67, Springer.
10 Good Governance Africa, "The 'falling of mighty oaks': Examining the plausible implications of the loss of experienced parliamentarians on the work of Ghana's 9th Parliament," February 2024.
11 Interview with Senior Officer of the Ghana Armed Forces, Accra, June 20, 2024. Government Defence Integrity Index.
12 Report of The Auditor-General on The Public Accounts of Ghana - Ministries, Departments and Other Agencies (MDAs) For the Year Ended 31 December 2022, Ghana Audit Service.
13 Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) for 2024-2027. Ministry of Defence.
14 Interview with Staff of the Research Department of Ministry of Defence, Accra, June 20, 2024. Government Defence Integrity Index.
15 The Herald, "CDS & Army Commander's official residence sold," November 22, 2023
16 Interview with Member of Parliament, Accra, August 20, 2024. Government Defence Integrity Index.
17 Interview with Staff of the Research Department of Ministry of Defence, Accra, June 20, 2024. Government Defence Integrity Index.



PERSONNEL ETHICS FRAMEWORK

Whistleblowing legislation	The Whistleblowers Act - Act 720 (2006), and Whistleblowers Amendment Act (2023)
# defence-sector whistleblower cases	None
# Code of conduct violations	Military: Data is not publicly available. Civilian: Data is not publicly available.
Financial disclosure system	# submitted: None. # of violations: None.

Ghana’s defence personnel system involves high corruption risks. While disciplinary systems and ethical codes are well established, transparency, consistent enforcement, and proactive integrity measures remain weak, resulting in a mixed risk profile. Sanctions have been applied in recent years,^{18 19} but enforcement remains uneven, investigations lack transparency, and outcomes are rarely disclosed. Whistleblower protections are legally established, yet awareness is low, implementation inconsistent, and internal reporting is widely perceived as disloyalty, limiting their practical value.²⁰

Appointment and promotion processes follow formal procedures but lack transparency and external oversight, undermining confidence in merit-based advancement.²¹ Basic personnel data remain opaque, with outdated troop figures and concerns over “ghost soldiers” and payroll discrepancies in peacekeeping deployments.²² External scrutiny remains limited.

OPERATIONS

Total armed forces personnel (World Bank, 2020)	16,000
Troops deployed on operations #	2,636 (as of 31 October 2025): 707 in South Sudan (UNMISS); 862 in Lebanon (UNIFIL); 637 in Abyei (UNISFA).

Ghana continues to be a significant contributor to international and regional military operations, particularly through United Nations (UN) peacekeeping and other deployments. As of late 2024, Ghana ranked among the top troop-contributing countries to UN peace operations, with over 2,600 personnel serving across multiple missions worldwide.²³

Operations present critical corruption risks for Ghana and the area with the lowest performance in the assessment. Despite the Armed Forces’ extensive domestic and international deployments, the defence sector lacks an operational anti-corruption framework: corruption prevention is not integrated into doctrine, planning, or pre-deployment training, and there are no standing mechanisms to monitor integrity risks in operations, procurement, or logistics.²⁴ Existing safeguards are largely ad hoc and externally driven, applied mainly to meet UN or partner requirements rather than embedded in national practice.²⁵ The absence of corruption-focused monitoring and a regulatory framework for private military contractors further heightens vulnerability to misconduct, resource misuse, and opaque decision-making, leaving operational environments highly vulnerable to misconduct, misuse of resources, and opaque decision-making.

18 Nana Agyeman, “Wa Military abuse: 86 soldiers sanctioned,” Graphic Online, July 9, 2021.
 19 Ghana News Agency, “CDD-Ghana appalled by conduct of the military officers in Ashaiman,” July 22, 2024.
 20 PPLAAF. Platform to Protect Whistleblowers in Africa, “Whistleblowers in Ghana: overview of the legal framework and practices,” December 2023.
 21 Ghana Armed Forces Website and media outlets, “General Opong-Peprah grabs first-ever 4-star general promotion,” January 5, 2025.
 22 The Herald, “ECOWAS Auditors Swoop on Ghana Armed Forces ... As Ghost Soldiers Swell its books on Peacekeeping Mission,” November 14, 2022.
 23 United Nations, “Minurso’s Peacekeepers: National Day Of Ghana,” March 6, 2024.
 24 Interview with Senior Officer of the Ghana Armed Forces, Accra, June 23, 2024. Government Defence Integrity Index.
 25 Interview with Staff of the Research Department of Ministry of Defence, Accra, August 8, 2024. Government Defence Integrity Index.



DEFENCE PROCUREMENT

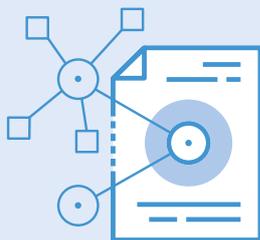
Military expenditure (US\$ mil) (SIPRI, 2024)	\$268.7
Open competition in defence procurement (%)	Data is not publicly available.
Main defence exports – to (SIPRI, 2020-24)	N/A
Main defence imports – from (SIPRI, 2020-24)	Singapore (52%); Turkiye (14%); Japan (11%); United Kingdom (6.4%); United States (4.8%)

Procurement decision-making has been vulnerable to political and senior military influence, particularly in high-value acquisitions where transparency is limited. The Airbus aircraft acquisition case highlights how opaque procedures and perceived political involvement can affect defence procurement processes, even in the absence of substantiated findings of wrongdoing following official investigations.²⁶

Ghana's defence procurement system combines formal structure with significant transparency gaps that reflect in an area with high corruption risks. The Ministry of Defence operates under the Public Procurement Act 2003 (Act 663) and guided by the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework. However, confidentiality provisions under Section 32(A) allow extensive non-disclosure of acquisition plans and contracts. While oversight by the Public Procurement

Authority and the Parliamentary Select Committee on Defence and Interior exists, implementation is inconsistent, and political interference is a concern.²⁷ Recent corruption scandals on procurement show high-level influence and opaque processes have shaped past defence acquisitions, despite subsequent investigations clearing implicated individuals.

Open competition is the exception rather than the rule: both major and minor defence procurements are routinely awarded through sole sourcing, often justified by specialised military requirements.²⁸ Planned purchases are not disclosed transparently, and the National Security Strategy provides limited guidance on procurement needs or alignment with defence spending.



GDI data collection for **Ghana** was conducted from May 2024 to August 2025.

26 Corruption Tracker, "Airbus: Ghana Aircraft Deals," Published on January 13, 2022 (updated December 10, 2024).

27 Interview with Staff of the Public Procurement Authority, Accra, August 20, 2024. Government Defence Integrity Index.

28 Interview with Senior Officer of the Ghana Armed Forces, Accra, August 9, 2024. Government Defence Integrity Index.



GHANA 2025 GDI SCORECARD

	Grade	Score
POLITICAL RISK	C	60
Q1 Legislative Scrutiny	A	83
Q2 Defence Committee	A	92
Q3 Defence Policy Debate	C	56
Q4 CSO Engagement	D	42
Q5 Conventions: UNCAC / OECD	B	75
Q6 Public Debate	A	88
Q7 Anticorruption Policy	C	63
Q8 Compliance and Ethics Units	B	75
Q9 Public Trust in Institutions	NS	
Q10 Risk Assessments	E	25
Q11 Acquisition Planning	B	75
Q12 Budget Transparency & Detail	C	63
Q13 Budget Scrutiny	C	63
Q14 Budget Availability	A	83
Q15 Defence Income	D	33
Q16 Internal Audit	A	88
Q17 External Audit	C	63
Q18 Natural Resources	C	58
Q19 Organised Crime Links	F	13
Q20 Organised Crime Policing	A	83
Q21 Intelligence Services Oversight	D	38
Q22 Intelligence Services Recruitment	E	25
Q23 Export Controls (ATT)	A	88
Q76 Lobbying	F	0
FINANCIAL RISK	E	27
Q24 Asset Disposal Controls	E	25
Q25 Asset Disposal Scrutiny	D	33
Q26 Secret Spending	F	0
Q27 Legislative Access to Information	F	0
Q28 Secret Program Auditing	E	25
Q29 Off-budget Spending	D	33
Q30 Access to Information	E	25
Q31 Beneficial Ownership	E	25
Q32 Military-Owned Business Scrutiny	E	25
Q33 Unauthorised Private Enterprise	D	38
Q77 Defence Spending	C	63
PERSONNEL RISK	D	47
Q34 Public Commitment to Integrity	B	75
Q35 Disciplinary Measures for Personnel	A	88
Q36 Whistleblowing	D	42
Q37 High-risk Positions	F	8
Q38 Numbers of Personnel	F	0
Q39 Pay Rates and Allowances	F	0
Q40 Payment System	C	50
Q41 Objective Appointments	D	33
Q42 Objective Promotions	E	31
Q43 Bribery to Avoid Conscription	NA	
Q44 Bribery for Preferred Postings	A	83
Q45 Chains of Command and Payment	A	100
Q46 Military Code of Conduct	B	69
Q47 Civilian Code of Conduct	C	63
Q48 Anticorruption Training	F	0
Q49 Corruption Prosecutions	D	42
Q50 Facilitation Payments	B	67

**OVERALL
COUNTRY
SCORE**

HIGH RISK



RISK GRADE

A	83–100	VERY LOW RISK
B	67–82	LOW RISK
C	50–66	MODERATE RISK
D	33–49	HIGH RISK
E	17–32	VERY HIGH RISK
F	0–16	CRITICAL RISK

	Grade	Score
OPERATIONAL RISK	F	4
Q51 Military Doctrine	F	0
Q52 Operational Training	F	0
Q53 Forward Planning	F	13
Q54 Corruption Monitoring in Operations	F	8
Q55 Controls in Contracting	F	0
Q56 Private Military Contractors	NS	

	Grade	Score
PROCUREMENT RISK	E	30
Q57 Procurement Legislation	C	50
Q58 Procurement Cycle	D	33
Q59 Procurement Oversight Mechanisms	C	50
Q60 Potential Purchases Disclosed	F	13
Q61 Actual Purchases Disclosed	E	25
Q62 Business Compliance Standards	C	63
Q63 Procurement Requirements	E	25
Q64 Competition in Procurement	F	13
Q65 Tender Board Controls	E	25
Q66 Anti-Collusion Controls	E	31
Q67 Contract Award / Delivery	D	38
Q68 Complaint Mechanisms	D	42
Q69 Supplier Sanctions	B	75
Q70 Offset Contracts	F	0
Q71 Offset Contract Monitoring	F	0
Q72 Offset Competition	F	0
Q73 Agents and Intermediaries	F	0
Q74 Financing Packages	C	50
Q75 Political Pressure in Acquisitions	NS	

KEY

- NEI** Not enough information to score indicator
- NS** Indicator is not scored for any country
- NA** Not applicable

GDI

Government Defence Integrity Index



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