

Country: Benin

Years: 1960-1962

Head of government: Hubert Maga

Ideology:

Description: World Statesmen (2019) and Rulers (2019) identify Christophe Soglo instead of Hubert Maga as head of government on December 31, 1963. HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Maga as head of government, and identifies Maga's affiliation as RDD. Perspective Monde (2020) corroborates Maga's party affiliation as RDD. World Statesmen (2020) identifies Maga's party affiliation as PDU in 1960 and RDD in 1961-1962. Nohlen (1999) states that from 1958 to 1972 "persistent competition between three political forces (not diverging political or ideological agendas) led to the permanent exclusion of one party and ideological deadlock" (79). Lentz (1994: 86) writes, "[Maga's] first administration was marred by fiscal irresponsibility, including the construction of an extravagant presidential palace. Maga's regime was beset with protests, primarily from student and trade union groups in southern Dahomey." Lentz also refers to "the independent government of President Hubert Maga." Rulers (2020) writes, "Maga, whose aide-de-camp was then the young Lt. Mathieu Kérékou, was toppled in 1963 by a military coup following a workers' strike and street demonstrations. The government had just decided to reduce public service workers salaries by 10% to enable it cope with the first financial crisis it had to deal with. It was later understood that Maga's political rivals, eager to capture power, had manipulated the trade unions to usurp power." Decalo and Hounnikpo (2012: 247) write, "One of the few educated men in the north at the time, Maga represented his region in the first Conseil Général (1947-1952) and became a member of Dahomey's first political party, the Union Progressiste Dahoméenne (UPD). Encouraged by Roger Péperty, the French administrator in the north, Maga in 1950-1951 bolted the UPD, organized his Bariba support behind the Groupement Ethnique du Nord (GEN), and won the second French National Assembly seat then allocated to Dahomey. He served as deputy between 1951 and 1958, and president of the new Mouvement Démocratique Dahoméen (MDD) (later Reassement Démocratique Dahoméen, RDD), allied to the Indépendants d'Outre-Mer faction." The authors (74-75) also write, "The development of regionalist sentiments in the north, the historic Nikki-Parajou friction, and a distrust of the Yoruba have catapulted to national prominence such regional leaders as Hubert Maga..." Finally, Decalo and Hounnikpo (2012: 7) write, "The easygoing nonideological tempo of the 1960s—when bread-and-butter issues had provided the background for power clashes—had slowly given way to more highly ideologically charged rhetoric among trade

unionists, politicized youth, and the army's junior officers," towards the early 1970s. On the other hand, the authors (9) also write, prior to Kerekou's regime, "... during the preceding civilian era, unionists, intellectuals, and youth had provided a vocal Left opposition to every regime."

Year: 1963

Head of government: Christophe Soglo

Ideology:

World Statesmen (2019) and Rulers (2019) identify Christophe Soglo instead of Hubert Maga as head of government on December 31, 1963. HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Soglo's party as none. Gazibo (2012: 12) writes, "From 1960 to 1972, Benin had the most vibrant civil society in francophone Africa, and unions and other associations of different types were very active on the political stage. For example, the first military intervention led by General Christophe Soglo was carried out following mass mobilization by civil society demanding a coup." Decalo and Hounnikpo (2012: 7) write, "The easygoing nonideological tempo of the 1960s—when bread-and-butter issues had provided the background for power clashes—had slowly given way to more highly ideologically charged rhetoric among trade unionists, politicized youth, and the army's junior officers," towards the early 1970s. On the other hand, the authors (9) also write, prior to Kerekou's regime, "... during the preceding civilian era, unionists, intellectuals, and youth had provided a vocal Left opposition to every regime."

Years: 1964

Head of government: Sourou Migan Apithy

Ideology:

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Apithy's party as none. Perspective Monde (2020) identifies Apithy's party as PDD (Parti Démocratique Dahoméen). World Statesmen (2020) corroborates party affiliation as PDD. Decalo and Hounnikpo (2012: 7) write, "The easygoing nonideological tempo of the 1960s—when bread-and-butter issues had provided the background for power clashes—had slowly given way to more highly ideologically charged rhetoric among trade unionists, politicized youth, and the army's junior officers," towards the early 1970s. On the other hand, the authors (9) also write, prior to Kerekou's regime, "... during the preceding civilian era, unionists, intellectuals, and youth had provided a vocal Left opposition to every regime."

Years: 1965-1966

Head of government: Christophe Soglo

Ideology:

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Soglo's party as none. Gazibo (2012: 12) writes, "From 1960 to 1972, Benin had the most vibrant civil society in francophone Africa, and unions and other associations of different types were very active on the political stage. For example, the first military intervention led by General Christophe Soglo was carried out following mass mobilization by civil society demanding a coup." Decalo and Hounnikpo (2012: 7) write, "The easygoing nonideological tempo of the 1960s—when bread-and-butter issues had provided the background for power clashes—had slowly given way to more highly ideologically charged rhetoric among trade unionists, politicized youth, and the army's junior officers," towards the early 1970s. On the other hand, the authors (9) also write, prior to Kerekou's regime, "... during the preceding civilian era, unionists, intellectuals, and youth had provided a vocal Left opposition to every regime."

Years: 1967

Head of government: Alphonse Amadou Alley

Ideology:

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Alley's party as none. Political Handbook of the World (2018-2019) writes, "Another military coup, led by Major Maurice KOUANDÉTÉ on December 17, 1967, ousted Soglo and established an interim regime under Lt. Col. Alphonse ALLEY." Decalo and Hounnikpo (2012: 122) describe the context for the 1967 coup, writing, "The group [of militant officers and noncommissioned officers led by Kouandété] was disgruntled with the growing politicized and lax style of the regime of General Christophe Soglo, his ineffectiveness in coping with the country's problems, and seeping corruption. Probably most rankling was the growing unrest in the urban centers at Soglo's austerity programs that were compromising the prestige of the armed forces as a whole. The spark that ignited the coup was the government's indecisiveness in first issuing Decree No. 36 that banned trade union rights—only to rescind the decree a few days later under the threat of a general strike." Decalo and Hounnikpo (2012: 7) write, "The easygoing nonideological tempo of the 1960s—when bread-and-butter issues had provided the background for power clashes—had slowly given way to more highly ideologically charged rhetoric among trade unionists, politicized youth, and the army's junior officers," towards the early 1970s. On the other hand, the authors (9) also write, prior to Kerekou's regime, "... during the preceding civilian era, unionists, intellectuals, and youth had provided a vocal Left opposition to every regime."

Years: 1968

Head of government: Emile Derlin Henri Zinsou

Ideology:

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Zinsou's party as none. Lentz (1994: 88) writes, "Zinsou was secretary-general of the Dahomean Progressive party from 1958." Decalo and Houngnikpo (2012: 293) write, "The Union pour le Renouveau du Dahomey (URD) established in May 1969 to support the regime of President Émile-Derlin Zinsou." Decalo and Houngnikpo (2012: 7) write, "The easygoing nonideological tempo of the 1960s—when bread-and-butter issues had provided the background for power clashes—had slowly given way to more highly ideologically charged rhetoric among trade unionists, politicized youth, and the army's junior officers," towards the early 1970s. On the other hand, the authors (9) also write, prior to Kerekou's regime, "... during the preceding civilian era, unionists, intellectuals, and youth had provided a vocal Left opposition to every regime."

Years: 1969

Head of government: Paul-Emile de Souza

Ideology:

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Souza's party as none. Decalo and Houngnikpo (2012: 7) write, "The easygoing nonideological tempo of the 1960s—when bread-and-butter issues had provided the background for power clashes—had slowly given way to more highly ideologically charged rhetoric among trade unionists, politicized youth, and the army's junior officers," towards the early 1970s. On the other hand, the authors (9) also write, prior to Kerekou's regime, "... during the preceding civilian era, unionists, intellectuals, and youth had provided a vocal Left opposition to every regime."

Years: 1970-1971

Head of government: Hubert Maga

Ideology:

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Maga's party as RDD. World Statesmen (2020) and Perspective Monde (2020) corroborate Maga's party affiliation as RDD. However, World Statesmen also states that RDD existed between 1957 and 1965. Nohlen (1999) states that from 1958 to 1972 "persistent competition between three political forces (not diverging political or ideological agendas) led to the permanent exclusion of one party and ideological deadlock" (79). Lentz (1994: 86) writes, "[Maga's] first administration was marred by fiscal irresponsibility, including the construction of an extravagant presidential palace. Maga's regime was beset with protests, primarily from student and trade union groups in southern Dahomey." Lentz also refers to "the independent government of

President Hubert Maga.” Decalo and Hounnikpo (2012: 247) write, “One of the few educated men in the north at the time, Maga represented his region in the first Conseil Général (1947-1952) and became a member of Dahomey’s first political party, the Union Progressiste Dahoméenne (UPD). Encouraged by Roger Péperty, the French administrator in the north, Maga in 1950-1951 bolted the UPD, organized his Bariba support behind the Groupement Ethnique du Nord (GEN), and won the second French National Assembly seat then allocated to Dahomey. He served as deputy between 1951 and 1958, and president of the new Mouvement Démocratique Dahoméen (MDD) (later Reassemblément Démocratique Dahoméen, RDD), allied to the Indépendants d’Outre-Mer faction.” The authors (74-75) also write, “The development of regionalist sentiments in the north, the historic Nikki-Parajou friction, and a distrust of the Yoruba have catapulted to national prominence such regional leaders as Hubert Maga...” Finally, Decalo and Hounnikpo (2012: 7) write, “The easygoing nonideological tempo of the 1960s—when bread-and-butter issues had provided the background for power clashes—had slowly given way to more highly ideologically charged rhetoric among trade unionists, politicized youth, and the army’s junior officers,” towards the early 1970s. On the other hand, the authors (9) also write, prior to Kérékou’s regime, “... during the preceding civilian era, unionists, intellectuals, and youth had provided a vocal Left opposition to every regime.”

Years: 1972-1990

Head of government: Mathieu Kérékou

Ideology: Left

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Kérékou’s affiliation as PRPB. DPI identifies PRPB’s ideology as left. Political Handbook of the World (2005-2006) elaborates, writing “the government convened an unprecedented joint session of the PRPB Central Committee, the National Revolutionary Assembly Standing Committee, and the National Executive Council (cabinet) that on December 7, 1989, followed the lead of Eastern-bloc countries by abandoning formal adherence to Marxism-Leninism”. Lansford (2017) adds that Kérékou was a leftist, writing “On December 3, 1974, President Kérékou declared that Dahomey was to become a “Marxist-Leninist state.” Murray (1992) writes “Since 1975, Benin has officially transcended both regionalism and ‘bourgeois mentality’ by the adoption of Marxism-Leninism and the creation of the Benin People’s Revolutionary Party (BPRP), led by the head of state, Colonel Kérékou”. World Statesman (2019) writes: “PRPB = Parti de la Révolution Populaire du Bénin... Benin People's Revolutionary Party, Marxist-Leninist communist, abandons Marxism 8 Dec 1989”. Manzano (2017) identifies ideology as leftist. In V-Party (2020), 4 experts identify PRPB’s ideology as “Left” (-2.698) in 1975,

1979, and 1984, and 5 experts identify PRPB's ideology as "Left" (-2.698) in 1989.

Years: 1991-1995

Head of government: Nicephore Dieudonne Soglo

Ideology: Right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Soglo's party as PRB. DPI identifies PRB's ideology as left. Political Handbook of the World does not provide any information to corroborate DPI's coding. The PRB is also known as the Renaissance Party when translated into English (*Parti de la renaissance du Bénin*) or the Benin Rebirth Party. According to the BBC, in 1995 the "pro-Soglo liberal Renaissance Party" formed the new government of the country. World Statesman (2019) denotes the PRB as "liberal". Ihonvbere and Mbaku (2003) write "Soglo's centrist *Parti de la Renaissance du Benin* (PRB) is the second largest party in the National Assembly after... 1996". The Journal of Democracy (2015) identifies "the liberal opposition Benin Rebirth Party" in the April 26, 2015 elections. Political Handbook of the World (2015) states that PRB eventually became part of the Build the Nation Union, writing, "Meanwhile, the major opposition parties (the PRD, PSD, RB, and MADEP) aligned as the so-called Group of Four (G4), which subsequently became the core of the Build the Nation Union for the 2011 elections." In the Global Party Survey 2019, 3 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of UN as 7.0. In V-Party (2020), 5 experts identify PRB's ideology as "Center-right" (1.249) in 1995.

Years: 1996-2005

Head of government: Mathieu Kerekou

Ideology: Left

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Kerekou's affiliation as FARD. Lansford writes that Kerekou was a leftist in his first term, writing, "On December 3, 1974, President Kérékou declared that Dahomey was to become a 'Marxist-Leninist state.'" World Statesmen (2020) identifies Kerekou's party as FARD (*Front d'Action pour le Renouveau et le Développement/Action Front for Renewal and Development*) and identifies the party as centrist. However, World Statesmen also identifies Kerekou's party affiliation as PRPB in his first term, writing, "PRPB = *Parti de la Révolution Populaire du Bénin*... Benin People's Revolutionary Party, Marxist-Leninist communist, abandons Marxism 8 Dec 1989". Perspective monde (2020) also identifies Kerekou's party affiliation as FARD from 2001 to 2006. Manzano (2017) identifies ideology as leftist in his first term. Murray (1992) writes, "Since 1975, Benin has officially transcended both regionalism and 'bourgeois mentality' by the adoption of Marxism-Leninism and

the creation of the Benin People's Revolutionary Party (BPRP), led by the head of state, Colonel Kérékou". Derbyshire and Derbyshire (2016: 111) identifies FARD as "left of center." In V-Party (2020), 5 experts identify FARD's ideology as "Center" (0.022) in 1995 and 1999. In V-Party (2020), 5 experts identify "a high level of visible disagreement" in FARD in 1995 and 1999.

Years: 2006-2015

Head of government: Thomas Yayi Boni

Ideology: Right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Boni's affiliation as non-party. Britannica explains that Boni was "focused on economic development as well as the elimination of government corruption" and is a "former chief executive of the West African Development Bank." Britannica also writes, "Legislative elections were held the next month, with parties that supported Yayi, including the Cauri Forces for an Emerging Benin (Forces Cauris pour un Bénin Émergent; FCBE) coalition, winning a majority of the seats." In the Global Party Survey 2019, 3 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of FCBE as 7.0. Decalo and Hounnikpo (2012: 367) write, "Running as an independent candidate supported by a coalition of both political movements and small parties, Boni Yayi's landslide victory shows the extent to which the 'system Mathieu Kérékou' under the rule of his predecessor had become unpopular." Kérékou is coded as leftist. Decalo and Hounnikpo (2012: xxxv) describe FCBE as "a coalition of parties closely linked to President Boni Yayi." Kapstein (2009: 120) writes, "Far-reaching political changes since 1990, however, have played a crucial role in Africa's capitalist revolution. With the tragic exception of Zimbabwe, one finds widespread progress alongside the economic transformation... Citizens are also demanding more competent leaders who are capable of governing modern societies integrated into a global economy. For example, after being democratically elected in 2006, the president of Benin, Thomas Yayi Boni, emphasized that his cabinet would consist of 'technocrats,' recruited from universities and development banks." Bleck and van de Walle (2011: 1129) write, "Finally, an important fifth factor that shapes the political rhetoric and strategies of political parties in the sub-region is their general lack of popularity and low legitimacy, a striking finding of attitudinal surveys such as the Afrobarometer, in which citizens have expressed distrust of political parties, and their strong preference for consensual politics over partisanship... Politicians including Yayi Boni in Benin or Amadou Toumani Touré in Mali have won campaigns running as independents and advocating national consensus. Once in power, these same politicians have criticized partisanship as a way to manage opposition." Kabre et al. (2017) write, about Yayi Boni, "Originally from northern Benin and a Muslim, this 'third man' campaigned

on a broad platform, with special focus on women (promising to guarantee 40% of ministerial portfolio to women if elected) and youth (promising better education). He can be described as a quite consensual candidate.”

Years: 2016-2019

Head of government: Patrice Athanase Guillaume Talon

Ideology: Right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS does not identify head of government. Perspective Monde (2019) identifies Talon’s party as independent, writing “Patrice Talon... Indépendant [independent]”. Roberts (2019) identifies the political parties aligned with Talon, writing, “Their leaders—Adrien Houngbédji of the Democratic Renewal Party and Bruno Amoussou from the Social Democratic Party—helped form a new Bloc of the Presidential Majority to support Talon after his 2016 election.” Roberts also writes, “Two new parties supporting Talon were created in December: the Progressive Union, led by [Bruno] Amoussou, and the Republican Bloc, led by Minister [Abdoulaye] Bio-Tchane.” Derbyshire and Derbyshire (2016: 111) identify the Party for Democratic Renewal (PRD) as “left of center” and the Social Democratic Party (PSO) as “centre left.” Shlager and Weisblatt (2006: 135) write, “Social Democratic Party (Parti social-démocrate; PSD) The PSD has been an important supporter of President Mathieu Kérékou. Its candidate in the 2001 presidential elections, Bruno Amoussou, was a minister in the Kérékou government at the time.” Kérékou is coded as leftist. Political Handbook of the World (2015) also writes that after the first round of presidential balloting in 1996, “Houngbédji and Amoussou, the third- and fourth-place finishers, respectively, subsequently urged their followers to support Kérékou.” However, Political Handbook writes that both Houngbédji and Amoussou became part of the Build the Nation Union (*Union fait la Nation*—UN), writing, “Formed by the following parties as an opposition coalition committed to toppling the Yayi administration... *Leaders*: Adrien HOUNGBÉDJI (2011 presidential candidate), Bruno AMOUSSOU.” In the Global Party Survey 2019, 3 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of UN as 7.0 and its average divided-united (0-10) score as 3.0. Political Handbook also identifies Abdoulaye Bio-Tchane as the leader of the Alliance for a Triumphant Benin (*Alliance pour un Bénin Triomphant*—ABT) in 2015. In the Global Party Survey 2019, 3 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of ABT as 8.0 and its average divided-united (0-10) score as 8.0. *The Statesman’s Yearbook* (2020) states, “Patrice Talon became president of Benin on 20 March 2016. Having amassed a fortune from the cotton industry, he was a close ally of former president Yayi Boni (who was in power from 2006-16) before being accused in 2012 of plotting a coup. He was pardoned in 2014.” Banégas (2014) elaborates, writing, “The President [Yayi Boni] has

directly attacked his closest (former) financial backers, although the economic and political rationality of this is not entirely clear... The violence of the attacks against the Talon group and the arrests for ‘corruption’ can be seen as political signals designed to bring into line allies that have become too independent and to remind everyone that in Benin, probably more so than elsewhere, it is still the state that ‘makes’ bosses and fortunes.” Bourguignon and Platteau (2019: 11) write, “[Talon’s] capture of the cotton industry then proceeded with the creation of ginning factories initially operated by the national company SONAPRA, at the time it was dismantled in 2008. The former operation owed much to the support he offered to the election of President Soglo in 1991, and the latter to President Yayi in 2006. Later, thanks to his support of the re-election of Yayi in 2011, he was also able to secure the control of the Programme of Verification of Imports (PVI), an agency that assesses the value of imported goods... A conflict with President Yayi shortly after his re-election led to the PVI license and part of the ginning factories being taken away from Talon’s control, in a move to renationalize the ginning and commercialization of cotton. It is probably this conflict that gave Talon the incentive to stand as a candidate in the 2016 election.” Bertelsmann Stiftung (2020) writes, “... Benin’s political economy shows little signs of effective transformation toward a socially sustainable market economy despite President Talon’s ambitions... The Talon administration seems intent on pursuing further privatizations with greater effectiveness via Public Private Partnership... At the moment, Talon seems to think that a state can be administered as a private enterprise.” Talon’s presidential agenda, the Government’s Action Program (PAG), developed for 2016-2021, states, “Initiating structural economic change... The programme will therefore introduce necessary structural reforms to strengthen the public finance management system and revitalize the business environment... Stricter controls on public spending, reform of the revenue-collection department, and a new environment conducive to economic dynamism will all help increase domestic resources... This will notably result in the adoption of a unified regulatory framework for public-private partnership operations... tax arrangements favouring private investment... mechanisms to promote competition in key sectors of the economy will be put into place.”

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