

2.18.3. Law enforcement

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The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) is the principal law enforcement agency in the country; it is deployed in all 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory.849 The NPF is under the Ministry of Police Affairs.850 Police abuse is investigated by a number of agencies within the force:

- the Police Public Complaints Committee (PPCC), which investigates complaints of human rights abuses by police officers and forwards reports to the Police Service Commission for appropriate disciplinary action;851
- the Police Complaint Response Unit (CRU), which receives and resolves complaints against police officers including cases of abuse, corruption, and unethical behaviour;852 and
- the Force Criminal Investigation Department (FCID), which investigates and prosecutes 'serious and complex criminal cases', including those involving misconduct within the force.853

The NPF has between 370 000 and 400 000 police officers, which is considered well below the UN recommended number for the size of the population.854 According to the Inspector General of the Police, the NPF needs at least 190 000 additional officers, although the proper number for 'effective policing' is around 2.5 million personnel.855

Sources reported the existence of quasi-security forces which have become the *de facto* security providers in a number of states.856 These groups are generally composed of members from the same geographic area or ethnic community, and in some instances benefit from state facilitation, while operating with minimal accountability and near impunity.857 Groups include the Yan Sakai, in Zamfara; the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), in the North-East; and Lakurawa, in North-West.858 For more information see EUAA COI Report – Nigeria Security Situation, November 2025.

While the government has attempted to reduce corruption in public institutions, the problem remains 'pervasive', particularly in the security sector.859 There are allegations of extortion and bribe-taking within the police force.860 The police has also been accused of using excessive force against participants in anti-government demonstrations861 (for more information see 2.7. Protesters). The military has been accused of extrajudicial killings, torture, and other abuses,

including during counterinsurgency efforts in the north and operations against separatist movements in the South-East[862] (for more information see EUAA COI Report – Nigeria Security Situation, November 2025; 2.13. Perceived Boko Haram members or supporters and 2.9. Members and perceived supporters of political parties and separatist movements).

Nigerian newspaper Premium Times reported that a 2024 survey[863] among workers in the criminal justice system, on compliance with the Administration of Criminal Justice Act, found the following:

- compliance with the Act regarding arrest procedures: 'compliance' (54.5 %), 'non-compliance' (18.9 %), 'indifference' (26.7 %);
- treatment of defendants and accused individuals: 'respectful' (50.2 %), 'disrespectful' (40.1 %);
- compliance on provisions for obtaining confessions: 'mostly compliant' (43.4 %), 'rare or total non-compliance' (37.8 %);
- about 67 % of respondents indicated that Nigeria's police lack 'modern investigative methods'; and
- about 56 % identified corruption among investigators and prosecutors as 'one of the most critical problems with the criminal justice system's performance'.[864]

Sources indicated that the Nigerian Police have inadequate infrastructure, personnel, and resources,[865] and that law enforcement agencies, in general, 'still rely on outdated tools, undermining their ability to gather and preserve evidence effectively'.[866]

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The survey was carried out by the CLEEN Foundation and consisted of the interview of 1 658 workers in the criminal justice system, including the police, judiciary, and correctional services, in Edo, Delta, Bauchi, Sokoto, Katsina, Jigawa, Kwara, and Cross River states. Premium Times, Study highlights inadequate compliance with Nigeria's criminal justice act, 13 December 2024, url. CLEEN Foundation is an NGO that promotes public safety, security and accessible justice through research, legislative advocacy, and publications, in partnership with government, civil society and the private sector. CLEEN Foundation, Overview, n.d., url

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