

World
Watch
Research

Lebanon: Full Country Dossier

May 2024



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Contents

Introduction	3
World Watch List 2024.....	3
Copyright note.....	4
Sources and definitions.....	4
WWL 2024 Situation in brief / Lebanon	5
Brief country details	5
Map of country.....	5
Dominant persecution engines and drivers	6
Brief description of the persecution situation	6
Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period	6
Specific examples of positive developments	6
External Links - Situation in brief	6
WWL 2024: Keys to understanding / Lebanon	7
Recent history	7
Political and legal landscape	8
Religious landscape	9
Economic landscape.....	10
Social and cultural landscape.....	11
Technological landscape	12
Security situation	12
Trends analysis	13
External Links - Keys to understanding	14
WWL 2024: Church information / Lebanon.....	15
Christian origins.....	15
Church spectrum today.....	16
Areas where Christians face most difficulties	16
Christian communities and how they are affected	17
WWL 2024: Persecution Dynamics / Lebanon	18
Reporting period	18
Position on the World Watch List	18
Persecution engines	19
Drivers of persecution.....	20
The Persecution pattern.....	21

Pressure in the 5 spheres of life.....	22
Violence.....	27
5 Year trends	29
Gender-specific religious persecution / Female	31
Gender-specific religious persecution / Male	33
Persecution of other religious minorities.....	33
Future outlook.....	34
External Links - Persecution Dynamics.....	34
Further useful reports.....	35

Introduction

World Watch List 2024

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2024	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021	Total Score WWL 2020
1	North Korea	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	12.8	96	98	96	94	94
2	Somalia	16.5	16.7	16.6	16.6	16.6	10.6	93	92	91	92	92
3	Libya	15.9	16.0	15.9	16.1	16.4	10.2	91	88	91	92	90
4	Eritrea	14.6	14.9	15.5	15.9	15.7	12.8	89	89	88	88	87
5	Yemen	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	5.9	89	89	88	87	85
6	Nigeria	13.5	13.9	14.5	14.9	14.4	16.7	88	88	87	85	80
7	Pakistan	13.2	13.9	15.0	15.1	13.1	16.7	87	86	87	88	88
8	Sudan	14.1	14.2	14.9	14.9	15.5	13.3	87	83	79	79	85
9	Iran	15.0	14.6	13.5	15.8	16.5	10.9	86	86	85	86	85
10	Afghanistan	15.7	15.9	15.2	16.3	16.6	4.6	84	84	98	94	93
11	India	12.2	12.6	13.3	14.8	13.2	16.5	83	82	82	83	83
12	Syria	13.4	14.3	13.9	14.3	14.2	11.1	81	80	78	81	82
13	Saudi Arabia	15.2	15.3	14.8	15.7	16.6	3.3	81	80	81	78	79
14	Mali	11.1	10.1	14.7	12.8	15.1	15.6	79	76	70	67	66
15	Algeria	14.4	14.1	11.5	14.0	15.6	9.8	79	73	71	70	73
16	Iraq	14.2	14.4	14.0	14.8	13.9	7.8	79	76	78	82	76
17	Myanmar	12.2	10.6	13.4	13.7	13.0	16.1	79	80	79	74	73
18	Maldives	15.6	15.5	13.6	16.0	16.4	0.9	78	77	77	77	78
19	China	13.0	10.0	12.8	14.6	16.0	11.1	78	77	76	74	70
20	Burkina Faso	11.7	9.7	13.2	11.5	13.8	15.6	75	71	68	67	66
21	Laos	11.6	10.6	13.2	14.3	14.0	11.3	75	68	69	71	72
22	Cuba	13.2	8.7	13.8	13.3	15.1	8.7	73	70	66	62	52
23	Mauritania	14.6	14.2	13.8	14.2	14.2	1.3	72	72	70	71	68
24	Morocco	13.2	13.8	11.7	12.8	14.4	5.4	71	69	69	67	66
25	Uzbekistan	14.6	12.7	13.9	12.6	15.5	1.7	71	71	71	71	73
26	Bangladesh	12.4	10.6	12.5	10.8	10.4	14.1	71	69	68	67	63
27	Niger	9.4	9.6	14.5	7.7	13.1	15.9	70	70	68	62	60
28	CAR	10.3	8.6	13.9	9.6	12.2	15.6	70	70	68	66	68
29	Turkmenistan	14.2	12.3	13.6	13.9	15.5	0.6	70	70	69	70	70
30	Nicaragua	12.1	7.6	13.2	13.2	14.1	9.6	70	65	56	51	41
31	Oman	14.3	14.0	10.6	13.3	14.0	3.1	69	65	66	63	62
32	Ethiopia	9.9	9.7	12.6	10.4	12.1	14.4	69	66	66	65	63
33	Tunisia	12.3	13.2	10.2	12.4	13.8	6.9	69	67	66	67	64
34	Colombia	11.1	8.6	12.9	11.3	10.4	14.1	68	71	68	67	62
35	Vietnam	11.3	9.4	12.4	13.8	14.2	7.2	68	70	71	72	72
36	Bhutan	13.1	12.1	12.4	14.1	14.3	2.2	68	66	67	64	61
37	Mexico	11.5	8.5	12.5	11.1	10.6	14.1	68	67	65	64	60
38	Egypt	12.5	13.7	11.4	11.9	10.9	7.8	68	68	71	75	76
39	Mozambique	9.3	8.5	13.9	8.4	12.5	15.0	68	68	65	63	43
40	Qatar	14.2	14.2	10.5	13.2	14.4	0.6	67	68	74	67	66
41	DRC	8.0	7.9	12.6	9.7	13.0	15.9	67	67	66	64	56
42	Indonesia	10.9	12.3	11.5	10.2	9.7	11.5	66	68	68	63	60
43	Cameroon	8.8	7.6	12.6	8.0	13.1	15.9	66	65	65	64	60
44	Brunei	15.0	14.7	10.0	10.8	14.1	1.3	66	65	64	64	63
45	Comoros	12.7	14.0	11.2	12.4	14.2	1.1	66	66	63	62	57
46	Tajikistan	13.8	12.6	12.3	12.9	13.4	0.6	66	66	65	66	65
47	Kazakhstan	13.3	11.8	12.1	12.8	14.3	1.1	65	65	64	64	64
48	Jordan	12.9	14.2	10.5	12.4	12.8	2.2	65	65	66	64	64
49	Malaysia	13.0	14.1	11.5	12.2	11.1	2.4	64	66	63	63	62
50	Turkey	13.0	11.5	11.6	13.2	11.4	3.1	64	66	65	69	63

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2024	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021	Total Score WWL 2020
51	Kenya	10.3	9.2	11.4	8.0	11.5	12.4	63	64	63	62	61
52	Tanzania	9.3	10.8	10.3	8.6	8.7	14.4	62	63	61	58	55
53	Nepal	12.1	10.4	9.5	13.2	12.3	4.4	62	61	64	66	64
54	Kuwait	13.1	13.6	9.4	12.0	12.2	0.9	61	64	64	63	62
55	Djibouti	12.3	12.6	12.7	10.1	12.3	1.1	61	60	59	56	56
56	Chad	11.6	8.2	10.2	10.2	10.3	10.6	61	58	55	53	56
57	UAE	13.3	13.4	9.5	11.3	12.8	0.7	61	62	62	62	60
58	Sri Lanka	12.9	9.2	10.8	11.5	9.7	5.9	60	57	63	62	65
59	Azerbaijan	13.2	9.9	9.6	11.9	13.6	1.7	60	59	60	56	57
60	Palestinian Territories	13.1	13.3	9.7	10.7	12.1	0.9	60	60	59	58	60
61	Kyrgyzstan	13.2	10.3	11.3	10.5	12.2	1.3	59	59	58	58	57
62	Russian Federation	12.7	7.7	10.6	12.8	12.9	1.7	58	57	56	57	60
63	Rwanda	9.4	7.7	9.0	10.4	11.7	9.4	58	57	50	42	42
64	Burundi	7.6	7.8	9.4	9.8	9.7	12.8	57	55	52	48	48
65	Bahrain	12.0	13.2	8.6	11.3	8.5	1.1	55	55	57	56	55
66	Honduras	7.9	4.7	12.2	7.3	9.9	12.6	55	53	48	46	39
67	Venezuela	6.0	4.4	11.1	10.0	10.8	10.7	53	56	51	39	42
68	Togo	9.2	6.7	9.3	7.1	11.0	8.9	52	49	44	43	41
69	Guinea	10.3	7.5	8.3	8.3	10.5	7.2	52	48	43	47	45
70	Uganda	8.1	5.0	7.4	6.7	8.8	15.9	52	51	48	47	48
71	Angola	6.8	6.7	8.1	11.5	11.4	7.2	52	52	51	46	43
72	Lebanon	11.0	10.2	7.0	6.1	6.6	7.2	48	40	35	34	35
73	Gambia	8.3	8.2	8.9	8.8	8.9	3.7	47	44	44	43	43
74	South Sudan	5.7	4.4	7.0	6.3	7.6	15.6	46	46	43	43	44
75	Belarus	9.6	3.8	5.8	9.7	13.3	3.3	46	43	33	30	28
76	Ivory Coast	12.0	6.5	8.7	5.9	8.0	3.3	44	44	42	42	42
77	Ukraine	5.5	4.8	8.0	11.6	11.6	2.8	44	37	37	34	33
78	Israel	9.8	8.6	5.8	6.3	6.9	6.7	44	38	41	40	38

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Sources and definitions

- This country report is a collation of data and analysis based around Open Doors World Watch List (WWL) and includes statistical information on world religions, Christian denominations and people groups prepared by the World Christian Database (WCD).
- Highlighted links in the text can be found written out in full at the conclusion of each main section under the heading “External links”. In order to reduce the length of these reference sections, a table containing links to regularly used sources can be found at the beginning of the “Keys to Understanding” chapter under the heading “Links for general background information”. Where one of these sources has been quoted in the dossier text, a quote reference is supplied as indicated in the second column of the table.
- The WWL 2024 reporting period was 1 October 2022 - 30 September 2023.
- The definition of persecution used in WWL analysis is: “Any hostility experienced as a result of one’s identification with Christ. This can include hostile attitudes, words and actions towards Christians”. This broad definition includes (but is not limited to) restrictions, pressure, discrimination, opposition, disinformation, injustice, intimidation, mistreatment, marginalization, oppression, intolerance, infringement, violation, ostracism, hostilities, harassment, abuse, violence, ethnic cleansing and genocide.
- The latest update of WWL Methodology can be found on the research pages of the Open Doors website: <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/wwl-documentation/> and on the Open Doors Analytical website (password: freedom): <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/world-watch-list-documentation/>.

WWL 2024 Situation in brief / Lebanon

Brief country details

Lebanon: Population (UN estimate for 2023)	Christians	Chr%
6,585,000	2,234,000	33.9

Data source: Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, eds., *World Christian Database* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed March 2023)

Map of country



Lebanon: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2024	48	72
WWL 2023	40	-
WWL 2022	35	-
WWL 2021	34	-
WWL 2020	35	-

Dominant persecution engines and drivers

Lebanon:	
Main Persecution engines	Main drivers
Islamic oppression	Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs, One's own (extended) family
Clan oppression	One's own (extended) family

Engines and Drivers are listed in order of strength. Only Very strong / Strong / Medium are shown here.

Brief description of the persecution situation

Lebanon has traditionally served as a safe haven for diverse religious and ethnic groups, with Christians generally enjoying a relatively high level of religious freedom. However, the Christian population has declined and there is fear that their political influence is decreasing since the country's demographics have changed so much over the last five years. Although historical Christian communities remain firmly entrenched in Lebanese society, opposition is often based on territorial or political factors rather than religion. In recent years, however, Christian communities bordering Muslim-majority areas have become targets of aggression, and Christian charities providing aid to Syrian refugees have faced opposition. Furthermore, 2023 saw a notable increase in attacks on Christian holy sites. In addition, Christians from non-traditional denominations in Lebanon sometimes face criticism from the historical Christian communities and pressure from non-Christian groups, especially if they are seen as proselytizers. Converts to Christianity from Muslim or Druze backgrounds often encounter the most resistance, including potential violence, especially from their own families and local communities.

Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period

- Hundreds of Christians were injured while defending their villages against Shiite Muslim mobs attacking their communities.
- **31 March 2023:** A Maronite Christian cemetery was attacked and vandalized in the southern city of Saida. Several tombs were damaged.
- **12 May 2023:** A Christian cemetery was attacked in Deir al Ahmar in the east of Lebanon (Bekaa valley).

Specific examples of positive developments

13 March 2022: An interfaith meeting for Christian and Muslim leaders was held in Tripoli to emphasize the importance of solidarity. According to the US State Department ([IRFR 2022 Lebanon](#)): The president of the Lebanese Society for the Good of You and Me who organized the meeting emphasized that "interfaith dialogue between Muslims and Christians was not an option but a necessity and called for strengthening relationships between the religious communities."

External Links - Situation in brief

- Specific examples of positive developments: IRFR 2022 Lebanon - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-report-on-international-religious-freedom/lebanon/>

WWL 2024: Keys to understanding / Lebanon

Recent history

Founded in 1920, Lebanon emerged as a modern-day state when, under a League of Nations mandate, France created Greater Lebanon, which later became a republic in 1926 and gained independence in 1943.

Since the Christian population formed a majority of 51% in the 1932 census, apart from control of the presidency, they were also given command of the armed forces and a majority in parliament. However, the relatively poorer Muslim population grew faster than the richer Christian community, who were also emigrating in large numbers. Soon it became evident that Christians held a disproportionate amount of power. Tensions and dissatisfaction arose as years passed without a new census being carried out. Eventually this sparked the Lebanese Civil War which took place from 1975 to 1990.

Another important factor in the outbreak and continuation of the Lebanese Civil War was the presence of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in Lebanon and its involvement in the conflict. The PLO's presence in Lebanon, especially in the south, led to tensions with Israel and internal conflicts between the various Lebanese factions. Other underlying causes were the complex religious and political relations in Lebanon and the interference of neighboring countries such as Israel and Syria in Lebanese affairs. In 1989 the Taif Agreement was concluded which included an equal division of parliamentary seats between Christians and Muslims (50:50), decreased the power of the Maronite president and enhanced the influence of the Sunni prime minister. Today Christians make up an estimated 33.9% of the total population (WCD, accessed March 2023). Muslim groups have been demanding a new census for years, which could lead to demands for a new power-sharing arrangement.

The start of the 21st century was marked by political instability and tension between Lebanon and neighboring Syria and Israel, including a 34-day war with Israel in 2006 due to a conflict with the Iran-backed, Shiite militant group Hezbollah. The political affiliate of this Shiite group has considerable influence in the Lebanese government. Overspill from the civil war in Syria has further incited religious tensions and led to clashes between Sunni Muslims and Alawites and also Lebanese government forces. Proxy wars are being fought in the country between Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria and Israel, adding to the country's political instability.

Key developments in recent years include significant political and economic turmoil since 2019, which has led to continued challenges for the country. The explosion at the port of Beirut in August 2020 together with the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown, the widespread government corruption and dramatic falls in the value of the currency have had major consequences for the Lebanese people, politics and economy, leading to the collapse of the government. The war in Ukraine worsened Lebanon's economic crisis in March 2022 and April 2022 saw a bread crisis due to shortage of grain. Parliamentary elections in May 2022 resulted in no clear winner, contributing to ongoing economic instability. In June 2022, President Aoun invited Prime Minister Najib Mikati to form a new government but this proved difficult. President Michel

Aoun's term of office expired in October 2022 and (as of March 2024) the presidency has since been vacant, while Prime Minister Mikati continues to govern as interim administrator.

In 2023, the ongoing economic crisis led to regular protests, in addition to the presidential vacuum and rising tensions between Hezbollah and Israel. In August 2023, clashes between Christian and Shia groups occurred in a predominantly Maronite Christian village near Beirut over a vehicle allegedly carrying Hezbollah ammunition, sparking a gunfight that left a resident and a Hezbollah member dead. In September 2023, fighting between Palestinian armed factions in a southern refugee camp intensified, leading to deaths, destruction of hundreds of homes and displacement of several hundreds of families. Starting in parallel with the Israel-Hamas war in October 2023, deadly border clashes took place between Hezbollah and Israel, which have increased in frequency and intensity into the first months of 2024, increasing the risk of an expanded regional conflict. As a result of daily rocket fire along the Israel-Lebanon border, thousands of Christians have been displaced, with up to 90% of the population in southern Christian villages leaving their homes. The ongoing war in Gaza cast a shadow over Christmas celebrations in the border villages of southern Lebanon. Local church leaders are concerned that another war would pose a major threat to the historical Christian presence in the area.

Political and legal landscape

The political and legal landscape in Lebanon is complex and deeply rooted in sectarianism and historical conflicts.

Political landscape

Lebanon's political system is based on a power-sharing structure among eighteen religious groups, which guarantees representation in the government, armed forces and civil service. The key government posts of president, prime minister and chairman are divided between a Maronite Christian, a Sunni Muslim and a Shia Muslim, respectively. These posts along with other seats in government are filled by representatives belonging to the religious groups who played a major role in the civil war. This political system has led to a weak, corrupt and patronage-based government, where loyalty and power take precedence over competence. Despite attempts to reform the system through the 1989 Taif Agreement, which aimed to limit sectarian divisions, these changes were never fully implemented due to resistance from Lebanese elites who benefit from the existing power structure. Lebanon's political history has been marked by a civil war from 1975 to 1990, Israeli invasions, Syrian occupation and ongoing protests. A particularly problematic factor is also the widespread corruption, with ruling political parties looking to state institutions as a source of revenue. Hezbollah, a powerful armed group in Lebanon, for instance, uses its influence to secure resources and financing. The country's economic crisis has caused corruption to worsen, with all political parties manipulating resources such as gasoline and energy for their gain.

Legal landscape

Lebanon has a well-developed legal system based on French concepts. As can be seen on the [government website](#) (accessed April 2024), the judiciary consists of several courts, including courts of appeal, a Court of Cassation and First Degree courts, in addition to religious courts that deal with personal status issues. Despite this legal framework, vendettas and acts of revenge

still persist in 'resolving' disputes outside the formal legal system. Overall, Lebanon's political and legal landscape is deeply intertwined with sectarian divisions, historical conflicts and widespread corruption, posing significant challenges to governance, accountability and the rule of law in the country.

[Middle East Concern](#) (accessed April 2024) describes the legal landscape regarding religious freedom in Lebanon as follows:

- "Lebanon's constitution affirms the principle of non-discrimination, requires that the State respects all religions and creeds, and guarantees the free exercise of religious rites provided that public order is not disturbed. The constitution provides for the proportionate distribution of political power among recognized groups according to a system which provides equal representation for Christian and Muslim communities. Each recognized religious group administers its own court system with jurisdiction over family law matters. Citizens may change their official religious registration to any of the 18 recognized religions by applying to the head of the religious group they wish to join. Personal status law is governed by a confessional system under which inter-confessional marriages cannot be conducted in Lebanon (though are recognized if conducted abroad). In February 2009 the Interior Minister confirmed that citizens have the right to remove references to their religion on Civil Registry Records, allowing for civil marriages. Although a small number of civil weddings have subsequently been conducted, there is fierce opposition from religious authorities (Muslim and Christian)."

Religious landscape

Lebanon: Religious context	Number of adherents	%
Christians	2,234,000	33.9
Muslim	3,949,000	60.0
Hindu	10,400	0.2
Buddhist	135,000	2.1
Ethno-religionist	0	0.0
Jewish	100	0.0
Bahai	6,100	0.1
Atheist	52,000	0.8
Agnostic	194,000	2.9
Other	4,900	0.1
<i>OTHER includes Chinese folk, New religionist, Sikh, Spiritist, Taoist, Confucianist, Jain, Shintoist, Zoroastrian.</i>		

Data source: Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, eds., *World Christian Database* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed March 2023)

According to WCD 2023 statistics, 60% of the population is Muslim and 33.9% Christian. Muslims are almost evenly divided between Sunnis and Shiites, including smaller percentages of Alawites and Ismailis.

[Middle East Concern](#) (accessed April 2024) reports:

- "The ethnic and religious balance of the population is a sensitive issue and no official census has been conducted since 1932, so there is no official data on the relative percentages of the different groups. It is estimated that Christians constitute 30%-35% of Lebanese nationals within Lebanon (the Lebanese diaspora, larger than the population within Lebanon, includes a greater percentage of Christians). Registered Christian churches are Catholic (Maronite, Chaldean, Greek, Latin, Armenian and Syriac), Greek Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox (Armenian Apostolic, Syriac and Coptic), Syriac Church of the East and Protestant."

According to the US State Department ([IRFR 2022 Lebanon](#)), which drew information from Statistics Lebanon, 5.5% percent of the population is Druze.

Economic landscape

According to the CIA [World Factbook Lebanon](#) (accessed April 2024):

- **Real GDP (purchasing power parity):** \$72.631 billion (2021 est.)
- **Real GDP per capita:** \$13,000 (2021 est.)
- **Real GDP growth rate:** -7% (2021 est.)
- **Inflation rate (consumer prices):** 171.21% (2022 est.);
- **Labor force:** 1.813 million (2022 est.)
- **Unemployment rate:** 11.75% (2022 est.) However, according to [International Labor Organization estimates](#) cited in an article by Credit Libanais on 23 February 2024, the many crises in the country has caused Lebanon's unemployment rate to rise from 11.4% in 2019 to 29.6% in 2022. Unemployment among young people (between 15 and 24 years old) even reached the highest level in the Arab world at 47.8% in 2022.

In an article published on 13 February 2024, the [Center for Preventive Action](#) states:

- "The culmination of several factors, including widespread government corruption, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Beirut port explosion, have led to the worst financial crisis in the small country's history. After Prime Minister Najib Mikati announced that Lebanon would default on its Eurobond debt for the first time, the Lebanese currency began to plummet in valuation, leading to hyperinflation. In April 2023, Lebanese inflation hit a high at almost 270 percent, reducing to 254 percent in June 2023. Despite being pegged to the United States Dollar at a rate of £L1507.5 per dollar since 1997, the Lebanese pound reached a new low of more than £L100,000 per dollar in March 2023."
- "In 2022, the Lebanese government and the IMF came to a staff-level agreement that would provide billions in [economic assistance](#) (IMF, 7 April 2022). The deal, however, is contingent on implementing several complex economic reforms that would increase financial and political transparency in Lebanon. While the government has been slow to implement reforms, more than 80 percent of the population lives in [multidimensional poverty](#) (UN

News, 3 September 2021). Following the conclusion of President Michel Aoun's term, the government has been unable to elect a new president, leaving the country in a political and economic vacuum."

Social and cultural landscape

Socially, Lebanon is one of the most pluriform countries in the Middle East with a wide range of social and cultural expressions. Lebanese culture is a fusion of traditions, customs and practices that reflect the country's diverse heritage and dynamic society. Youth culture is particularly innovative in Lebanon and Lebanon has a rich history of supplying intellectual institutions and has a wide array of printing houses that supply educational resources and books for the region. However, the current socio-economic crisis and subsequent economic instability, poverty and unemployment have widened the wealth gap and affected access to basic needs such as food, healthcare and education.

According to the CIA [World Factbook Lebanon](#) (accessed April 2024):

- **Main ethnic groups:** Arab 95%, Armenian 4%, other 1%
- **Main language:** Arabic (official), French, English, Armenian
- **Urban population:** 89.4% of total population (2023)
- **Literacy rate:** 95.1%
- **Population median age:** 35.1 years (2023)
- **Population below poverty line:** 27.4% (2011 est.). However, according to [UN News, 3 September 2021](#), the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) "found that between 2019 and 2020, the headcount poverty rate had already jumped from 28% to 55%. According to the last update, the multidimensional poverty rate in Lebanon has nearly doubled from 42% in 2019, to 82% in 2021."

Note 1: Many Christian Lebanese do not identify as Arab but rather as descendants of the ancient Canaanites and prefer to be called Phoenicians.

Note 2: Population figures do not include Lebanon's sizable Syrian and Palestinian refugee populations.

According to [UNDP Human Development Report Lebanon](#) (updated 13 March 2024):

- **HDI score and ranking:** Lebanon's HDI value has been on the decrease since 2018. "Between 2005 and 2022, Lebanon's HDI value changed from 0,710 to 0,723, a change of 1.8 percent. Between 2005 and 2022, Lebanon's life expectancy at birth changed by -1,9 years, expected years of schooling changed by 1,8 years and mean years of schooling changed by 0,6 years. Lebanon's GNI per capita changed by about -13.4 percent between 2005 and 2022." Despite this, Lebanon is still in the 'High' human development category — holding position 109 out of 193 countries and territories.

According to [UNHCR Lebanon](#) (accessed April 2024):

- **Refugees:** Facing the worst socio-economic crisis in decades, Lebanon is also home to the world's highest number of refugees per capita. An estimated 1.5 million refugees come

from Syria and there are 13,715 refugees from other nations. 90% of Syrian refugees live in extreme poverty. Finally, about 250,000 Palestinian refugees have been living in the country for decades, 45% of whom live in twelve camps spread across the country.

Technological landscape

- **Internet usage:** 90.1% penetration rate ([Datareportal, Digital 2024 Lebanon, 23 February 2024](#))
- **Facebook usage:** 98% penetration rate - Women: 47.5%; Men: 52.5% ([Napoleon Cat](#), March 2024).

According to [World Bank Lebanon data](#) (accessed April 2024):

- **Mobile phone subscriptions:** 76.7 per hundred people (2021)

According to [BuddeComm Research](#) (publication date: April 2024):

- "Lebanon's economic crisis has had a dire effect on the country's telecom services. Although some progress has been made with developing 5G, the poor economic conditions have contributed to an erratic electricity supply and a lack of fuel to maintain generators. This has meant that internet services to areas of the country are cut on a regular basis, frustrating all those who depend on stable connectivity, and stalling business growth."

According to [Freedom on the Net report 2023 Lebanon](#):

- Freedom house categorizes Lebanon as 'partly free'.
- "Internet freedom in Lebanon remains tenuous, and the ongoing economic crisis has created major financial obstacles for internet service providers (ISPs) and users alike. A recent crackdown on government criticism resulted in several high-profile online journalists and activists being summoned for investigation by the Cybercrimes Bureau. While few websites are blocked and the online ecosystem is relatively diverse, online users are increasingly self-censoring their political speech."
- "With support from Iran, Hezbollah's 'electronic army' continues to launch online disinformation campaigns and frequently harasses those who criticize the group or its policies."

Disinformation via online media is an issue across the political and religious spectrum; many Lebanese citizens regard only a few media outlets as being trustworthy.

Security situation

In recent years sectarian violence has increased. The balance of religious denominations in society has changed through the increasing number of (mainly Sunni Muslim) Syrian and Palestinian refugees entering the country. Shiite Hezbollah's participation in the fighting in Syria has further inflamed sectarian tensions.

Cases of sectarian violence have been observed, with Shia groups invading neighboring predominantly Christian localities, exposing residents to acts of terror. These acts include the desecration of religious symbols, such as breaking or damaging statues of Jesus and saints. In

addition, intimidation tactics are used, such as firing guns into the air or exploding non-lethal sound bombs. Furthermore, Syrian mobs residing in nearby refugee camps have reportedly attempted to raid predominantly Christian areas, with the apparent intention of carrying out robbery. However, it is important to note that the motives behind such attacks are not always clearcut. According to a local source, Shia groups appear to be acting strategically, with the aim of spreading fear among Christians and perpetuating a state of intimidation.

According to [Crisis24's Lebanon Country Report](#) (accessed April 2024):

- Deep-seated sectarian divisions between the country's Christian, Sunni Muslim, and Shi'a Muslim communities have raised concerns about the prospect of wider conflict in Lebanon. Hezbollah, which sees itself as a resistance movement against Israel, holds significant independent political and military power but has also been designated a terrorist organization by Western states and the Arab League.
- Conflict in neighboring Syria is a threat to Lebanon's stability. The Israel-Hamas conflict remains a risk, particularly as Hezbollah becomes increasingly assertive in its actions against Israel. Multiple militant groups, including the Islamic State group (IS), retain a presence and limited capability to stage attacks in Lebanon.
- Protests frequently occur over various socio-economic grievances. Large-scale anti-government unrest broke out in October 2019 in response to proposed tax increases, resulting in the resignation of then-Prime Minister Saad Hariri. Demonstrations persist nationwide as protesters continue to demand the resignation of Lebanon's entire ruling elite and an overhaul of the confessional government structure; protesters claim that this system has only benefitted political elites and encourages a lack of accountability. It is not uncommon for Lebanon to be without a fully functioning government.

Trends analysis

1) The Christian influence is diminishing

Due to the ongoing economic crisis, more and more Christians are choosing to leave the country. With their numbers reducing, the Christian population risks losing privileges and influence in national life. However, Christians in Lebanon are known to be resilient. Attacks on churches and Christian properties have also been increasing.

2) Hezbollah's power has grown

Hezbollah managed to maintain and expand its power in 2023, while the Christian political scene is stagnating. As an Islamic radical group, their continued existence in power poses a potential threat to the Christian presence in Lebanon.

3) Collapse of basic services and growing poverty

The social dynamics in Lebanon are affected by increasing unemployment, social dislocation and a sense of insecurity among the population. The collapse of basic services and growing poverty have led to vulnerability and deprivation within society.

External Links - Keys to understanding

- Political and legal landscape: government website - <https://www.justice.gov.lb/index.php/court-details/30/1>
- Political and legal landscape: Middle East Concern - <https://www.meconcern.org/countries/lebanon/>
- Religious landscape description: Middle East Concern - <http://meconcern.org/countries/lebanon/>
- Religious landscape description: IRFR 2022 Lebanon - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-report-on-international-religious-freedom/lebanon/>
- Economic landscape: World Factbook Lebanon - <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/lebanon/>
- Economic landscape: International Labor Organization estimates - <https://economics.creditlibanais.com/Article/212053#en>
- Economic landscape: Center for Preventive Action - <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/political-instability-lebanon>
- Economic landscape: economic assistance - <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2022/04/07/pr22108-imf-reaches-agreement-on-economic-policies-with-lebanon-for-a-four-year-fund-facility>
- Economic landscape: multidimensional poverty - <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/09/1099102>
- Social and cultural landscape: World Factbook Lebanon - <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/lebanon/>
- Social and cultural landscape: UN News, 3 September 2021 - <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/09/1099102>
- Social and cultural landscape: UNDP Human Development Report Lebanon - <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/LBN>
- Social and cultural landscape: UNHCR Lebanon - <https://www.unhcr.org/countries/lebanon>
- Technological landscape: Datareportal, Digital 2024 Lebanon, 23 February 2024 - <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-lebanon>
- Technological landscape: Napoleon Cat, March 2024 - <https://napoleoncat.com/stats/social-media-users-in-lebanon/2024/#section-facebook>
- Technological landscape: World Bank Lebanon data - https://databank.worldbank.org/views/reports/reportwidget.aspx?Report_Name=CountryProfile&id=b450fd57&tbar=y&dd=y&inf=n&zm=n&country=LBN
- Technological landscape: BuddeComm Research - <https://www.budde.com.au/Research/Lebanon-Telecoms-Mobile-and-Broadband-Statistics-and-Analyses>
- Technological landscape: - <https://www.budde.com.au/Research/Lebanon-Telecoms-Mobile-and-Broadband-Statistics-and-Analyses>
- Technological landscape: Freedom on the Net report 2023 Lebanon - <https://freedomhouse.org/country/lebanon/freedom-net/2023>
- Security situation: Crisis24's Lebanon Country Report - <https://crisis24.garda.com/insights-intelligence/intelligence/country-reports/lebanon>

WWL 2024: Church information / Lebanon

Christian origins

According to the Book of Acts in the Bible's New Testament, the Christian missionary Paul visited Christians in Tyre and Sidon, which means that Lebanon has had a Christian presence from the beginnings of Christianity in the 1st century AD. In spite of this, noticeable growth only began when monks from the Monastery of Maron in Syria began a settlement of hermits near Byblos in the 4th century AD. More Maronites fled from Syria to the safe mountains of Lebanon after experiencing major persecution from the Byzantine armies (because Maronites were perceived to be heretics) and from Arab armies who had conquered Syria and Lebanon in 636 AD, paving the way for Islam.

By the 8th century, the Maronites in their isolated mountain of Lebanon, formed a separate Church family, with their own patriarchs and with some unique theological traits.

When the Roman Catholic crusaders landed in Lebanon, they were greeted as liberators and brothers by the Maronites. The ties between Rome and the Maronites became ever closer and from the 16th century onwards, the number of Roman Catholic missionaries in the country increased. At a synod in 1736, most outstanding issues between Rome and the 13 Maronite bishops were resolved, and the Maronite Church formally united with Rome.

In 1860, an estimated 10,000 Maronites were killed by Druze, and their villages and churches razed. France sent an army to defend the Maronites and since then the role of the French in Lebanon grew significantly (including in church matters).

In 1823, work by Syrian Mission in Syria and Lebanon began in Beirut. The Syrian Mission had a printing house in Beirut, a hospital in Tripoli, and many primary and secondary schools. They also founded the Syrian Protestant College in 1862. The Van Dyck Arabic translation of the Bible (in 1865) was another important success. In 1848, the Syrian Mission opened its first Protestant congregation in Beirut led by an indigenous pastor. By 1908 there were 2,744 members in these Protestant churches in Lebanon and Syria combined; the impact of the mission work in society was clearly more impressive than the numbers in the pews.

Hunger, poverty and problems with the Druze made many Christians emigrate to the Americas before World War I. The Ottoman rule over Lebanon during the World War was devastating. Of a population of 450,000, 100,000 people lost their lives, mostly due to starvation and disease. Many Christians escaped by emigration. At the same time, thousands of Armenian escapees from the Turkish genocide found safe haven in Lebanon.

The modern state of Lebanon was established by France in 1920. In a National Pact, it was agreed that the President of the Republic shall always be a Maronite. In 1941, Lebanon proclaimed its independence and French troops left in 1946. The civil war in Lebanon (1975-1990) convinced 100,000s of Christians to emigrate. They had formed a majority in Lebanon in 1946; by 2023 their numbers had dwindled to 30-35%.

Church spectrum today

Lebanon: Church networks	Christians	%
Orthodox	363,000	16.2
Catholic	1,826,000	81.7
Protestant	29,200	1.3
Independent	22,200	1.0
Unaffiliated	13,100	0.6
Doubly-affiliated Christians	-19,200	-0.9
Total	2,234,300	100.0
<i>(Any deviation from the total number of Christians stated above is due to the rounding of decimals)</i>		
Evangelical movement	19,600	0.9
Renewalist movement	66,200	3.0

Data source: Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, eds., *World Christian Database* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed March 2023)

Orthodox: Eastern (Chalcedonian), Oriental (Pre-Chalcedonian, Non-Chalcedonian, Monophysite), Nestorian (Assyrian), and non-historical Orthodox. **Roman Catholics:** All Christians in communion with the Church of Rome. **Protestants:** Christians in churches originating in or in communion with the Western world's 16th-century Protestant Reformation. Includes Anglicans, Lutherans and Baptists (any of whom may be Charismatic) and denominational Pentecostals, but not Independent traditions such as Independent Baptists nor independent Charismatics. **Independents:** Christians who do not identify with the major Christian traditions (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant). **Unaffiliated Christians:** Persons professing publicly to be Christians but who are not affiliated to churches. **Doubly-affiliated Christians:** Persons affiliated to or claimed by 2 denominations at once. **Evangelical movement:** Churches, denominations, and individuals who identify themselves as evangelicals by membership in denominations linked to evangelical alliances (e.g., World Evangelical Alliance) or by self-identification in polls. **Renewalist movement:** Church members involved in Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal.

Areas where Christians face most difficulties

Christians in Lebanon live throughout the country, with concentrations in certain regions in the north and center of the country. Most Christians in Lebanon traditionally live in the mountainous region of Mount Lebanon, which extends from the eastern Mediterranean to the Bekaa Valley in the east of the country. Within Mount Lebanon, towns such as Jounieh, Jbeil (Byblos) and Broummana have a significant Christian presence. In addition, there are also strong Christian communities in the capital Beirut and its suburbs, especially in areas such as Ashrafieh. Finally, there are Christians in the far south of the country in predominantly Christian villages along the border with Israel.

Christians face the most faith-related opposition in predominantly conservative or radical Islamic areas, such as Tripoli, Bekaa Valley (particularly where Syrian refugee camps are located), South Beirut (such as the Shia suburb of Sin El Fil), Palestinian refugee camps (close to Tripoli and Beirut), and Hezbollah controlled areas south and east of the Bekaa Valley.

Christian communities and how they are affected

Communities of expatriate Christians

Expatriate Christians are not involuntarily isolated in Lebanon and are therefore not included as a separate category for WWL analysis.

Historical Christian communities

The majority of Christians in Lebanon belong either to the Maronite or the Greek Orthodox communities. The largest Christian group is the Maronite community which, while maintaining affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church for centuries, has its own patriarch, liturgy and ecclesiastical traditions. The Greek Orthodox community is the second largest Christian group. Other historical Christian communities with official recognition include Catholic (Chaldean, Greek, Latin, Armenian and Syriac), Oriental Orthodox (Armenian Apostolic, Syriac and Coptic), Syriac Church of the East. These communities generally enjoy very considerable freedom and good standing within society, including a level of political representation and power that exceeds what would apply based on demographics (a formula which reflects greater numbers historically, and also traditionally greater economic influence). There are occasional security vulnerabilities - though these would typically be more political than religious. The main fears reflect the demographic shrinking of these communities with an accompanying fear that it may become increasingly difficult to maintain long-standing levels of influence - especially in light of the growing strength of Shia communities and, in particular, the influence of Hezbollah. Also, in recent years, Christian communities living in areas bordering the predominantly Muslim population have increasingly become targets of aggression, such as mob attacks, robbery, theft and rape. In addition, Christian charities affiliated with historic churches that provide assistance to Muslim Syrian refugees have also faced opposition. Furthermore, the year 2023 witnessed a notable increase in attacks on Christian holy sites, including shrines and churches.

Converts to Christianity

Converts to Christianity from Muslim or Druze backgrounds typically face the most resistance because of their faith, which can include violence, especially from their families or local communities. However, in addition to Islamic groups, opposition to converts can also come from Christian sources. Also there are complications for converts wanting to marry Christians from the historic Christian community since only religious marriages can be performed in Lebanon, not civil ones. This means that the bride and groom must both belong to the same religion or one of them needs to convert to the other's religion. From about 2013 onwards, Lebanese churches have experienced an influx of Syrian refugee converts, who are likely to face opposition if their faith is known. If their conversion becomes public knowledge, it could mean that their families abroad would stop sending them money; it could mean husbands leaving their wives; or it may just be that they would have to face social scorn.

Additionally, there are also converts from Iraq and Lebanon itself, including those from elsewhere in the region taking refuge from persecution. Converts from Islam are primarily from Shiite families and there are also growing numbers of Druze background believers. In general, Lebanon is a diverse country with many Christian-dominated areas and converts to Christianity

rarely face death or extreme persecution. An exception is the Bekaa Valley where converts from Islam (and those who minister among them) can face violent opposition. In addition, cases of young converts facing violent hostility at the hands of their families are also increasing in other areas of Lebanon, according to local youth ministries.

Non-traditional Christian communities

This category includes Evangelicals, Baptists, Pentecostals and Seventh-day Adventists. Most of them belong to the Supreme Council of Evangelicals, which serves as an umbrella for many Evangelical churches and through which they have equivalent status to other traditions/denominations. Evangelicals have one seat in Parliament and they have their own ecclesiastical court. Some small groups choose not to register with the Supreme Council or may have been refused recognition on doctrinal grounds. In practice, there are very few real issues apart from some restrictions for unrecognized groups, preventing them from acquiring authority to conduct marriages. In spite of having a significant degree of freedom, they are sometimes viewed with disdain by those belonging to historical Christian communities, since they often do not have large church buildings, their church services are not liturgical and they do not pray to (or appear to respect) Church saints or the Virgin Mary. They face greater pressure in society because they are more likely to be perceived as proselytizing. Outside Beirut, particularly in the Christian area between Beirut and Byblos, it is very hard for a non-traditional Christian community to get a license for church building projects. A number of non-traditional Christian communities are active in ministering to converts from Islam in the Bekaa Valley, which can lead to violent persecution.

WWL 2024: Persecution Dynamics / Lebanon

Reporting period

1 October 2022 - 30 September 2023

Position on the World Watch List

Lebanon: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2024	48	72
WWL 2023	40	-
WWL 2022	35	-
WWL 2021	34	-
WWL 2020	35	-

In WWL 2024 Lebanon became a new entry to the category of countries scoring 41 points and over: Pressure was highest in the *Private and Family spheres of life*, a typical pattern where *Islamic oppression* and *Clan oppression* are the main Persecution engines. A large part of the violence score (7.2 points, up from 2.6 points in WWL 2023) were 8 attacks on church property, mostly by Muslim refugees from Syria. Pressure has increased in general as an effect of the

growing number of attacks on predominantly Christian villages by young Syrian refugees. In addition, Hezbollah's increasing influence plays an important role in the pressure Lebanese Christians experience in their daily lives, especially in areas under Hezbollah's control.

Persecution engines

Lebanon: Persecution engines	Abbreviation	Level of influence
Islamic oppression	IO	Strong
Religious nationalism	RN	Not at all
Ethno-religious hostility	ERH	Not at all
Clan oppression	CO	Medium
Christian denominational protectionism	CDP	Weak
Communist and post-Communist oppression	CPCO	Not at all
Secular intolerance	SI	Not at all
Dictatorial paranoia	DPA	Very weak
Organized corruption and crime	OCC	Weak

The scale for the level of influence of Persecution engines in society is: Not at all / Very weak / Weak / Medium / Strong / Very strong. For more information see WWL Methodology.

Islamic oppression (Strong):

Islamic oppression mainly affects converts from Islam to Christianity, especially in predominantly Muslim areas. If a Muslim decides to become a Christian, that person (depending on whether his/her family is progressive or conservative) will face persecution and pressure to return to Islam. As an engine of persecution, Islamic oppression is most intense among Syrian refugees who have converted from Islam to Christianity, especially in the Beqaa Valley. Although fundamentalism is less strong in urban areas, various Islamist factions are perceived to try to dominate Lebanon, especially in the Shia regions, where Hezbollah exercises its power through violence and intimidation. Hezbollah has a strong hold on Lebanon, both through its Shia supporters and through the government and parliament. As a result, indigenous Christian communities in traditionally Christian areas feel increasingly pressured at a political level. In addition to Hezbollah, there is a mostly moderate Sunni community, of which some parts can be extremist, especially in areas where IS ideologies are embraced. The proximity of IS strongholds in Syria makes extremism in Lebanon difficult to combat.

Lebanon's democratic system and power-sharing formula are intended to prevent one religion from dominating the other. In practice, it proves to be a challenge to balance the different religious actors: in WWL2024, with the increasing number of attacks on churches and other Christian buildings, but also on Christian villages, - especially by young Syrian refugees - the power of this persecution engine grew from 'Medium' to 'Strong'.

Clan oppression (Medium):

Islamic communities in Lebanon - especially Shia - are characterized by strong clan and tribal ties, where the traditions and norms of the clan can be more important than national law. As a persecution engine, clan oppression is therefore mixed with Islamic oppression, with Christians with a Muslim or Druze background being most affected. Within these clans, converting to Christianity is seen as a betrayal of group identity, often resulting in converts being excluded from basic amenities and social services, and sometimes even facing harassment, abuse or forced displacement. This clan-based persecution is especially strong in the cities outside Beirut where tribal identities are dominant, such as in Tripoli, the Beqaa Valley and the southern regions. For Syrian Muslim refugees who became Christians, the clan mentality is even stronger, meaning they can experience severe oppression from their wider family or clan.

Drivers of persecution

Lebanon: Drivers of persecution	IO	RN	ERH	CO	CDP	CPCO	SI	DPA	OCC
	STRONG	-	-	MEDIUM	WEAK	-	-	VERY WEAK	WEAK
Government officials	Weak	-	-	-	Very weak	-	-	Weak	Weak
Ethnic group leaders	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-Christian religious leaders	Very weak	-	-	Very weak	-	-	-	Very weak	-
Religious leaders of other churches	-	-	-	-	Weak	-	-	-	-
Violent religious groups	Weak	-	-	-	-	-	-	Weak	Very weak
Ideological pressure groups	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs	Medium	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Medium
One's own (extended) family	Medium	-	-	Medium	-	-	-	-	-
Political parties	Weak	-	-	-	-	-	-	Weak	Weak
Revolutionaries or paramilitary groups	Weak	-	-	-	-	-	-	Weak	Weak
Organized crime cartels or networks	Very weak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Very weak
Multilateral organizations (e.g. UN, OIC etc.) and embassies	Very weak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

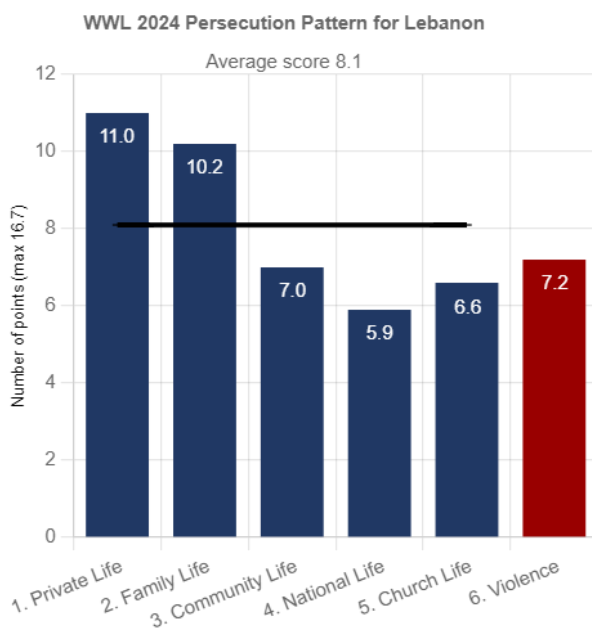
The scale for the level of influence of Drivers of persecution in society is: Not at all / Very weak / Weak / Medium / Strong / Very strong. Please note that "-" denotes "not at all". For more information see WWL Methodology.

Drivers of Islamic oppression (blended with Clan oppression):

- **Extended family (Medium):** This mainly concerns Christians with a different religious background, such as people from a Muslim or Druze family. Once their conversion is known, Muslim families will attempt to get their members to return to Islam in a variety of ways, including threats, physical and verbal abuse, divorce, withdrawal of inheritance or guardianship. In particular, Syrian refugees who have converted to Christianity have faced hostility from their families and stigmatization as well as exclusion from the local community. There have been incidents where the families of Syrian converts have informed militant Islamic groups (e.g. Hezbollah) to pressure converts to recant their faith using violent methods. In religious groups such as Druze, converted people are usually no longer considered a Druze and are declared outsiders, which brings social disgrace to the person.
- **Citizens (Medium):** Converts from Islam or the Druze faith can experience pressure not only from their family when their new faith is known, but also from the community and they can become victims of physical harm, intimidation and community ostracization.

Cases of sectarian violence have been reported, with Shia groups invading neighboring predominantly Christian localities, exposing residents to acts of aggression. These acts include the desecration of religious symbols, such as damaging religious statues. In addition, intimidation tactics are used, such as firing guns into the air or using sound bombs. Furthermore, Syrian mobs residing in nearby refugee camps have reportedly entered predominantly Christian areas, possibly with the intention of carrying out robbery. However, it is important to note that the motives behind such raids are not always clearcut. According to a local source, Shia groups appear to be taking such actions strategically, with the aim of spreading fear among Christians and perpetuating a state of intimidation.

The Persecution pattern



The WWL 2024 Persecution pattern for Lebanon shows:

- The average pressure on Christians is fairly high at a level of 8.1 points.
- Pressure is highest in the *Private* and *Family spheres of life*, mostly affecting converts to Christianity.
- Violence against Christians is very high at a level of 7.2 points. This mainly concerns community violence against predominantly Christian villages and vandalism of Christian buildings and church property.

Pressure in the 5 spheres of life

In each of the five spheres of life discussed below, four questions have been selected from the WWL 2024 questionnaire for brief commentary and explanation. The selection usually (but not always) reflects the highest scoring elements. In some cases, an additional paragraph per sphere is included to give further information deemed important. (To see how individual questions are scored on a scale of 0-4 points, please see the “WWL Scoring example” in the WWL Methodology, available at: <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/world-watch-list-documentation/>, password: freedom).

Pressure in Block 1 / Private sphere

Block 1.1: Conversion has been opposed, forbidden, or punishable, including conversion from one type of Christianity to another. (3.00 points)

Although conversion is legally possible in Lebanon, converts to Christianity from groups that forbid conversion (Sunni Muslims, Shia Muslims, Druze, Alawites) would face persecution from immediate relatives or their extended family/community. They are at risk of being ostracized or kidnapped and in some parts of the country, especially in the Bekaa Valley, female converts can be subjected to honor killings. The intensity of persecution varies depending on the area and family in question.

Block 1.8: It has been risky for Christians to speak about their faith with those other than immediate family (extended family, others). (3.00 points)

For most Muslim converts, it is risky to talk about their faith with their extended family and wider community. Often, the immediate family members will try to hide this from the extended family and from the clan since leaving Islam damages the honor of the family. One convert said he received death threats from his radical Islamic family and is at risk of physical abuse if his faith becomes known. If a convert publicly declares his or her faith, any member of the clan has the unofficial right to kill this person in defense of Islam. In Druze communities a convert can also expect resistance, but violence is usually not resorted to. As for Christians switching from one church to another, for example a person from a family belonging to a historical Christian community switching to a non-traditional evangelical church, this can lead to psychological pressure or even physical violence, but more often the 'church-changer' will be silenced and expelled from the area.

Block 1.5: It has been risky for Christians to display Christian images or symbols. (2.75 points)

For converts from Islam it is risky to display Christian images or symbols, so most will not do this. To avoid trouble, non-convert Christians also avoid wearing or displaying Christian symbols

when in an area where radical Muslims live. For example, a few years ago in Tripoli a car window was smashed because of a picture of the Virgin Mary in the car. Religious symbols are an essential part of sectarianism that is deeply rooted in society. However, many young people reportedly choose not to wear such symbols because they do not want to alienate their Muslim friends.

Block 1.9: It has been risky for Christians to meet with other Christians. (2.75 points)

For converts in strictly Islamic areas, meeting up with other Christians can be risky. There have been several incidents where converts have faced opposition for trying to meet other Christians, especially in these areas. Most converts therefore meet other Christians secretly elsewhere.

Pressure in Block 2 / Family sphere

Block 2.4: Christian baptisms have been hindered. (3.00 points)

Baptism is often perceived as the final sign that a person has changed their religion; for this reason the convert's previous faith community will strongly oppose it. Some converts reported being threatened, others were locked up in their homes, and still others' spouses threatened to divorce them if they were baptized. For this reason, converts generally do not let their families know that they are going to be baptized. In general, churches have no problem to baptize believers with a non-Christian background and legally it is also possible.

Block 2.12: Christian spouses of non-Christians have been excluded from the right or opportunity to claim custody of the children in divorce cases. (3.00 points)

Once a spouse leaves Islam, he or she loses the right to custody of any children under Islamic law, regardless of whether or not a divorce occurs. Female converts seem particularly vulnerable in this regard as these issues are settled by an Islamic court, where - as in most other religious courts - men have the upper hand. However, these incidents are uncommon, possibly since women delay divorce for fear of losing custody of their children. This is confirmed in research carried out by [Human Rights Watch](#). In addition in such cases, children will be assigned to their father rather than to the mother who has converted (HRW, 19 January 2015).

Block 2.13: Christians have lost their inheritance rights because of their conversion to Christianity or (if a person already was a Christian) other types of Christianity. (3.00 points)

Muslims who leave Islam may lose their inheritance rights under Islamic law, as applied in Lebanon, as Sharia law allocates inheritance to Muslims only. This means that Muslims who become Christians risk losing their inheritance if their faith has become known. However, it varies per family whether this actually happens.

Block 2.7: Parents have been hindered in raising their children according to their Christian beliefs. (2.75 points)

In Lebanon, the wider family participates in the upbringing of children. For example, a convert couple might be asked by their wider family to take their children to a Muslim school or to participate in Muslim holidays. Although no one has a say in how people practice their faith in

their private homes, it is often the case that, especially for converts to Christianity, their original communities look down on their conversion and therefore sometimes the children of converts can be bullied or excluded if their parents' faith is known.

Pressure in Block 3 / Community sphere

Block 3.1: Christians have been harassed, threatened or obstructed in their daily lives for faith-related reasons (e.g. for not meeting majority religion or traditional dress codes, beard codes etc.). (2.75 points)

In recent years, Christian communities have increasingly become targets of acts of aggression such as robbery, theft and rape. According to a country expert, this mainly takes place in majority Christian areas bordering predominantly Sunni and Shiite areas by Shiite gangs or by some Syrians living and working in Lebanon. There is also alleged involvement of some Palestinians from nearby refugee camps. Christian women in these areas may be harassed by conservative Muslim men because of their non-Islamic clothing style. Christians from a Muslim background do not usually reveal their faith and often continue to adhere to Islamic dress codes etc.. If they do make their faith known, they risk verbal and physical abuse, especially from family.

Block 3.7: Christians have been pressured by their community to renounce their faith. (2.75 points)

If their new faith has become known, converts from non-Christian backgrounds (especially those who have a conservative religious background) may face pressure to recant. This is in accordance with provisions of Islamic law regarding apostasy, which state that an apostate must be given the opportunity to recant. The conversion of a family member to Christianity can be seen as a stain on the honor of the entire family. Many have faced physical, emotional and psychological violence and threats of violence from family members and religious leaders. For this reason, most of them do not tell their community about their conversion.

Block 3.10: Christians have been discriminated against in public or private employment for faith-related reasons. (2.75 points)

Christians may face discrimination in finding jobs in both government services and private companies, for example in sectors favored by certain political parties, such as Hezbollah, or religious groups. Lebanon has a system where political parties allocate jobs based on religion, which makes it more likely for adherents of large religious groups to be hired than those belonging to smaller groups, such as some Christian denominations. In addition, both government and private institutions in Lebanon have been criticized for favoring relatives and friends in job allocation, which may mean that certain groups, such as Christians, are less likely to find work. Although discrimination against Christians in the labor market is not solely related to their faith, it can still occur due to political, religious and social factors that intersect with their religious identity. It is important to note that this kind of discrimination also happens to Muslims and other religious minorities in the country. Finally, Christians with a Muslim or Druze background are at risk of losing their jobs if their faith is known, especially if they live in predominantly Muslim or Druze areas.

Block 3.2: Christians have been monitored by their local communities or by private groups (this includes reporting to police, being shadowed, telephone lines listened to, emails read/censored, etc.). (2.50 points)

In some individual cases, the family or community will monitor a convert if they suspect he or she is trying to spread Christianity. Sometimes this is accompanied by violent threats. Scrutiny can be especially intense for Christians from a Muslim (or Druze) background and who live in rural, conservative, non-Christian areas. Lebanon's General Security also carries out broad surveillance operations covering all communities, mainly focused on counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism. According to a country expert, the government perceives evangelicals as pro-Israel and monitors them for this reason. There are also anecdotal examples of Hezbollah security services monitoring foreign and Christian groups in areas they control.

Pressure in Block 4 / National sphere

Block 4.12: Christians, churches or Christian organizations have been hindered in publicly displaying religious symbols. (2.50 points)

Churches in conservative, non-Christian areas often choose not to display religious symbols and iconography to avoid disrupting the community in which they are located. In 2021, clashes between Shia and Christian villages in Hezbollah-controlled territory in southern Lebanon, mainly related to fuel shortages, left six people injured and Christian religious symbols were attacked by Shia armed elements. In December 2019 and 2020, Christmas trees were burned in Dinniyeh, a Muslim town in northern Lebanon. Also in Tripoli, Christmas trees were burned in December 2019 and more recently in December 2023. Finally, various Christian symbols or shrines in public spaces were also destroyed at other times in 2023.

Block 4.14: Those who caused harm to Christians have deliberately been left unpunished. (2.50 points)

In general, law enforcement officials in Lebanon try to act with justice to the best of their ability. However, when those who commit violence in Lebanon are supported by corrupt political parties, law enforcement officials are generally unable to provide just treatment. For example, Christians in Lebanon have faced persecution and harm, with some perpetrators deliberately going unpunished. Hezbollah, an influential group in Lebanon, has been involved in damaging Christian areas, leading to fears of persecution and a possible mass exodus of Christians from the country. Most vulnerable in this regard are Christians who have converted from Islam and whose faith has become known, especially those in conservative majority-Muslim areas such as those controlled by Hezbollah or Palestinian camps that largely run their own affairs, including the legal system. In such places, converts are unlikely to see just treatment being meted out for the perpetrators of violence against them. Violence committed by family members would also be treated as a domestic matter and not be investigated by the authorities.

Block 4.11: Christians have been subjected to smear campaigns or hate speech. (2.25 points)

On social media there are regular attacks and use of hate speech against Christians for political reasons or for their alleged decadent life style, but sometimes Christian doctrines and beliefs

are also attacked. Some sheikhs are also reported to have said hateful things in their speeches in the mosque, which were heard through the minaret loudspeakers by the various communities, but this does not usually find its way into public media. There are also radical Islamic organizations in Lebanon that openly refer to Christians as 'apostates', especially in some of the more conservative areas in and around the city of Tripoli, in the Bekaa Valley and in some Palestinian refugee camps. Lebanese authorities, including a significant number of Christians, monitor these groups for signs of violent activity.

Block 4.4: Christians have been hindered in travelling for faith-related reasons. (1.75 points)

Christians with a Muslim background sometimes face family pressure, including travel restrictions to keep control of their movements. This can be done by confiscating passports or other travel documents. In some cases, the authorities have been alerted by families who have then imposed a formal travel ban so that the Christian would be stopped at the point of exit.

Pressure in Block 5 / Church sphere

Block 5.14: Openly selling or distributing Bibles (or other Christian materials) has been hindered. (3.00 points)

In strictly Muslim areas and outside the major cities, distributing Bibles or other Christian material would be hindered but this is not forbidden by law. It would be frowned upon as a deliberate act to raise the level of religious tensions in the country. Church teams have sometimes been prevented from distributing Christian material during outreach visits to more conservative religious areas.

Block 5.5: Churches have been hindered from organizing Christian activities outside church buildings. (2.50 points)

In big cities, churches are generally free to organize Christian activities outside church buildings. However, non-traditional Christian activity outside the big cities and Christian activities in Muslim areas are not likely to be accepted, especially if they might be considered denigratory to other religions. While evangelism is permitted, certain evangelistic approaches may fall foul of the penal code provisions. In practice, this is not perceived to be a significant area of restriction by most churches.

Block 5.7: Churches have been hindered from openly integrating converts. (2.50 points)

While conversion from one religion to another is legally permitted and there is no ban on integrating converts with an Islamic or Druze background into churches, some members of the church have come under attack by the convert's family or by the wider community if they have been involved in the conversion. Conversions are especially complicated because of the history of the civil war: Many Druze live in areas that once belonged to Christians and some Druze do not trust Christians because of the massacres committed against the Druze community during the civil war by right-wing armed Christian militias. There are similar stories between Muslims and Christians. Although the integration of converts is generally not problematic, most churches exercise some caution to avoid provoking a hostile public reaction and accusations. In mainly conservative, non-Christian areas, religious fanatics have tried to prevent converts from attend-

ing churches and in some places, such as Tripoli, they have occasionally succeeded.

Block 5.11: Pastors or other Christian leaders (or their family members) have been special targets of harassment for faith-related reasons. (2.50 points)

In particular, Christian leaders who are active in ministry among Muslims or whose churches are attended by Muslims are at risk of threats from fanatical Muslims, which can also affect their families. Occasionally, Christian clerics in some conservative Islamic areas are subjected to threats from radical Islamic organizations such as the Islamic State group and al-Qaeda-affiliated or inspired groups. In addition, clerics are at risk when they make public statements on issues in the country, such as the Patriarch of Antioch and the Levant, Al Rahi; a dismantled bomb was found in February 2023 with his title on it after he expressed support for army raids on (majority Shiite) areas where drug cartels are located.

Political motives can also play a role in restricting Christian leaders, such as in the summer of 2022 when Archbishop El-Hajj was arrested after his visit to the Maronite Lebanese community in Israel. The archbishop regularly visits this community and has permission for the visit to Israel, which is officially still at war with Lebanon. However, Lebanese border and port security is broadly thought to be influenced by Hezbollah, whom the Archbishop regularly criticizes, and as such this arrest is considered by Lebanese Maronite Christians as a way to intimidate opponents of Hezbollah. A country expert believes that such government-backed actions against Christian leaders demonstrate Iran's strong control over the Lebanese government and its intention to use Lebanon as a satellite state.

Violence

Violence is defined in WWL Methodology as the deprivation of physical freedom or as bodily harm to Christians or damage to their property. It includes severe threats (mental abuse). The table is based on reported cases as much as possible, but since many incidents go unreported, the numbers must be understood as being minimum figures. The following points should be considered when using the data provided in the Block 6 table:

1. Some incidents go unreported because the Christians involved choose not to speak about the hostility being faced

Possible reasons for this may be:

- *Doing so would expose them to more attacks. For example, if a family member is killed because of his/her faith, the survivors might decide to keep silent about the circumstances of the killing to avoid provoking any further attacks.*
- *In some circumstances, the reticence to pass on information may be due to the danger of exposure caused by converts returning to their previous faith.*
- *If persecution is related to sexual violence - due to stigma, survivors often do not tell even their closest relatives.*
- *In some cultural settings, if your loved one is killed, you might be under the obligation to take revenge. Christians not wishing to do that, may decide to keep quiet about it.*

2. Other incidents go unreported for the following possible reasons

- *Some incidents never reach the public consciousness, because no one really knows about it; or the incident is simply not considered worth reporting; or media coverage is deliberately blocked or distorted; or media coverage is not deliberately blocked, but the information somehow gets lost; or the incidents are deliberately not reported widely for security reasons (e.g. for the protection of local church leaders).*

- *In situations where Christians have been discriminated against for many years, armed conflict can make them additionally vulnerable. Christians killed in areas where fighting regularly takes place are unlikely to be reported separately. Examples in recent years have been Sudan, Syria and Myanmar.*
- *Christians who die through the deprivation of basic necessities such as clean water and medical care (due to long-term discrimination) are unlikely to be reported separately. Christians are not always killed directly; they can be so squeezed by regulations and other oppressive factors that they die – not at once, but in the course of years. This often includes the deprivation of basic necessities such as clean water and medical care, or exclusion from government assisted socio-economic development projects. These numbers could be immense.*

3. The use of symbolic numbers

In cases where it has been impossible to count exactly, a symbolic round figure (10, 100* etc.) is given and indicated with an asterisk. A symbolic number of 10* could in reality even be 100 or more but the real number is uncertain. A symbolic number of 100* could go well over 1000 but the real number is uncertain. A symbolic number of 1,000* could go well over 10,000 but, again, the real number is uncertain. The same applies for symbolic numbers 10,000*, 100,000* and 1,000,000*: Each could indicate much higher numbers, but WWR chooses to be cautious because the real number is uncertain.*

Lebanon: Violence scores per Block 6 question in questionnaire	WWL 2024	WWL 2023
6.1 How many Christians have been killed for faith-related reasons (including state sanctioned executions)?	1	0
6.2 How many churches or public Christian properties (schools, hospitals, cemeteries, etc.) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	8	0
6.3 How many Christians have been detained for faith-related reasons?	0	0
6.4 How many Christians have been sentenced to jail, labor camp, sent to psychiatric hospital as punishment, or similar things for faith-related reasons?	0	0
6.5 How many Christians have been abducted for faith-related reasons (including Christians missing in a persecution context)?	0	1
6.6 How many Christians have been raped or otherwise sexually harassed for faith-related reasons?	0	0
6.7 How many cases have there been of forced marriages of Christians to non-Christians?	0	10
6.8 How many Christians have been otherwise physically or mentally abused for faith-related reasons (including beatings and death threats)?	300	10
6.9 How many houses of Christians or other property (excluding shops) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	10 *	10 *
6.10 How many shops or businesses of Christians have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	10 *	50
6.11 How many Christians have been forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons?	3	1
6.12 How many Christians have been forced to leave the country for faith-related reasons?	1	0

In the WWL 2024 reporting period:

- **Churches and Christian buildings attacked:** Shrines, churches and other Christian religious properties were seriously damaged, which appears to be an escalating trend. The churches have been the target of raids, in some cases the attack is not intended as robbery, but is aimed at causing damage and leaving behind anti-Christian or offensive messages. There were at least eight such cases of vandalism. (For some examples, see above: *Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period.*)
- **Christians attacked:** Hundreds of Christian men were injured while defending their villages from Shia Muslim mobs that attacked their villages. Some of them needed hospital care. Converts to Christianity are also exposed to physical abuse and death threats.
- **Christian properties attacked:** During clashes between Islamic mobs and Christian men, shops are often attacked. Reportedly, attackers often destroy shop-fronts as they leave the area.

5 Year trends

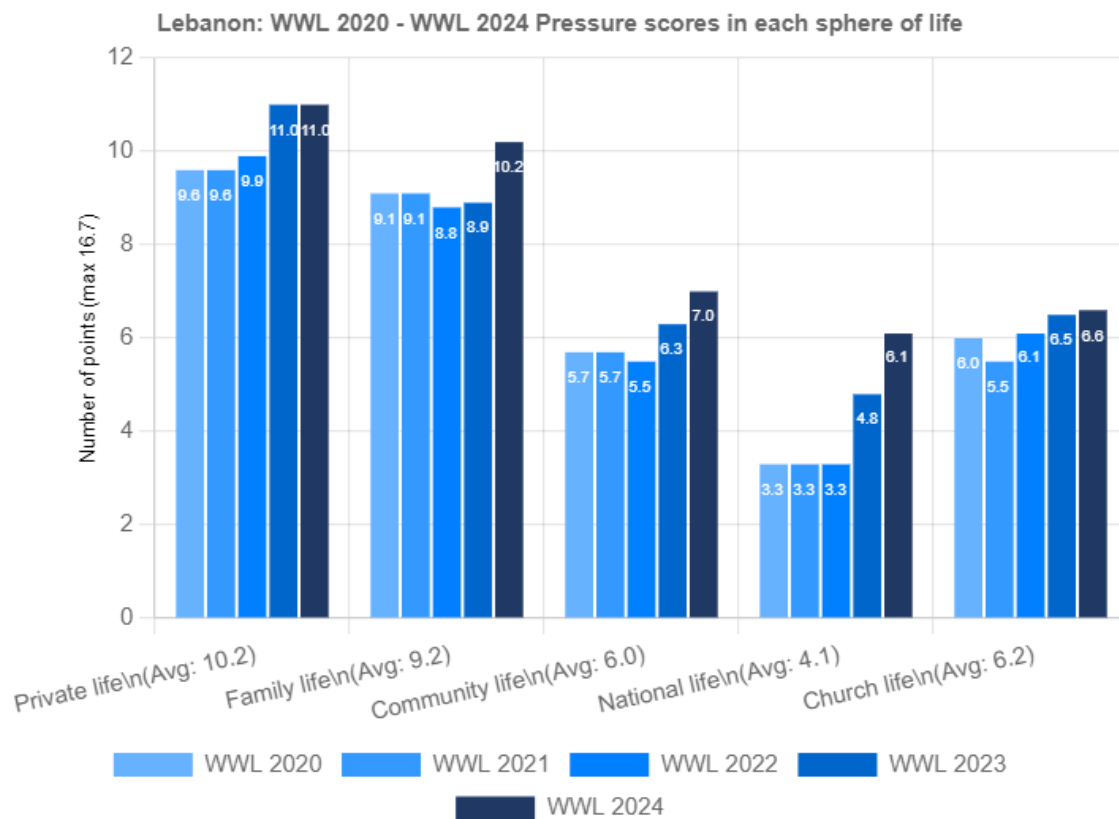
The following three charts show the levels of pressure and violence faced by Christians in the country over the last five WWL reporting periods.

5 Year trends: Average pressure

Lebanon: WWL 2020 - WWL 2024	Average pressure over 5 Spheres of life
2024	8.2
2023	7.5
2022	6.7
2021	6.6
2020	6.7

After remaining stable at a similar level in WWL 2020-2022, previous years, average pressure over the five Spheres of Life increased significantly as of WWL 2023 and WWL 2024, partly due to the increased influence of Hezbollah.

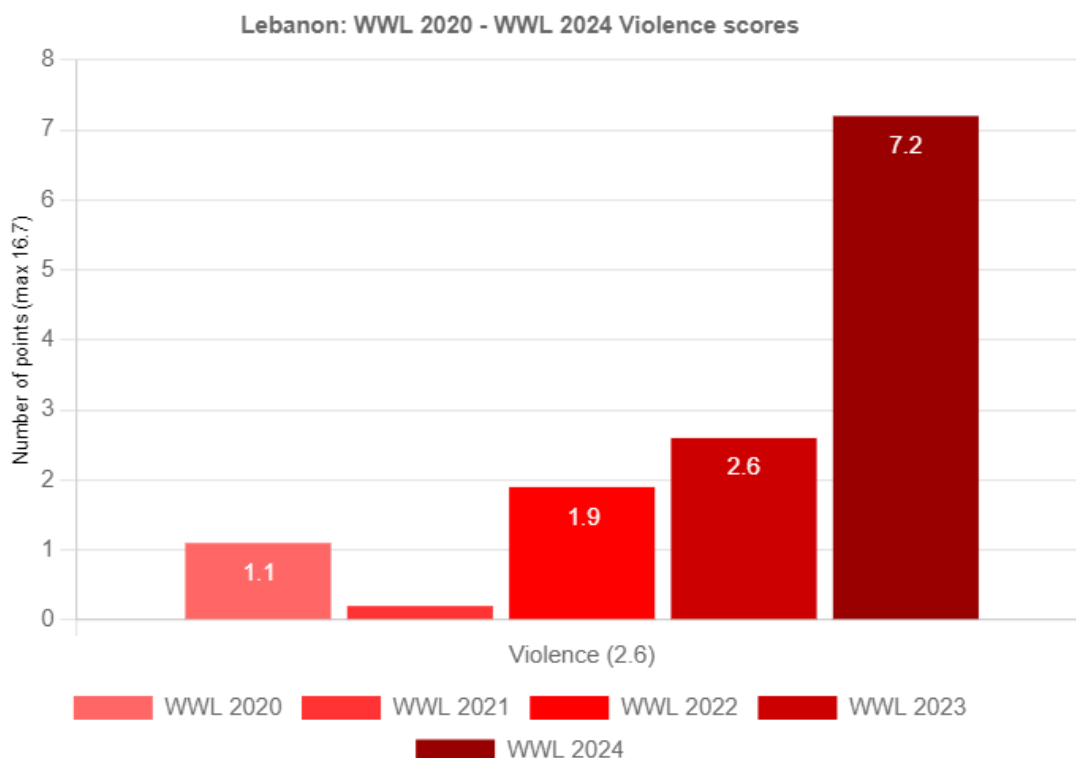
5 Year trends: Pressure in each sphere of life



Pressure has been highest in the *Private* and *Family spheres of life*, a typical pattern where *Islamic oppression* and *Clan oppression* are the main Persecution engines. Across all Spheres of Life, we see an increase in pressure especially in WWL 2024 and to some extent in WWL 2023 as well. It is striking that the increase is particularly high in the *Family* and *National spheres of life*. For the *Family sphere*, the increase was mainly due to technical (methodological) reasons: For instance, church-changers were no longer included in the calculation of the score for converts to align the scoring with the approach used for the rest of the region. As for the increase in the *National sphere*, this is due both to more information becoming available and also to a real growth in pressure from the rise in the influence of Hezbollah, especially in the areas under their control.

The pressure in *Private life* increased significantly in WWL 2023, mainly because more information became available about the situation in radical Islamic areas. The score remained stable at a high level in WWL 2024. As far as the *Community sphere of life* is concerned, a notable increase in pressure was observed in WWL 2024 as compared to the previous year, again this was due to more information being available. Finally, in the *Church sphere*, the increase in pressure developed more gradually (after a drop in WWL 2021), also due to more information becoming available.

5 Year trends: Violence against Christians



While scores for Violence against Christians in WWL 2020-2023 ranged from very low to low on a largely upward trend, WWL 2024's score nearly tripled compared to the previous year's score. The main reason for this very high score of 7.2 points were the (at least) eight reported attacks on church property, which is unprecedented in post-civil war Lebanon.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Female

Group	Female Pressure Points
Economic	-
Political and Legal	Denied custody of children; Forced marriage
Security	Incarceration by family (house arrest); Violence – sexual
Social and Cultural	-
Technological	-

Although some parts of Lebanese society are ostensibly very progressive, in more traditional sections of society women are more vulnerable than men due to persisting discriminatory attitudes, enduring patriarchal systems, and economic challenges - though there is little evidence that Christian women suffer disproportionately compared to other women. The country's economic crisis, worsening poverty and corruption, and political uncertainty has exacerbated inequality and reinforced potential routes of persecution for the most vulnerable in society.

For those who face pressure on account of their faith within family and community, women are likely to have fewer options for challenge or escape because of the greater degree of societal control they typically face. It should be noted that discriminatory attitudes can also be prevalent within Christian communities. The combination of instability and inequality has perpetuated a low-level hostility towards women that causes discrimination, violence, and in extreme cases, femicide. Domestic violence, including killings, in Lebanese households is increasing ([The Guardian, 27 February 2023](#)). As of March 2024, Lebanon has a caretaker cabinet with limited powers and no president; accordingly the political work that needs to be done at a national level to create real change for women in Lebanon is largely out of reach.

Female converts who come from conservative Muslim backgrounds are sometimes forced into marrying non-Christians in the hopes that this would help them go back to their religious roots. While this has not been documented in the 2024 reporting period, this remains a live risk, especially among refugee communities. Lebanese women and girls who convert to Christianity face may additionally face beatings to force them to renounce their faith. Sometimes, they are locked up in their homes until they renounce or run away. A country expert states: “I think the predicament of female believers from a Muslim background in Lebanon is worse than that of the males, as males generally have more freedom.” Christian women and girls with a Muslim background are particularly vulnerable to persecution for their faith from their Muslim family and local community. Female Syrian refugees also run the risk of sexual harassment and domestic violence.

While only a tiny minority, female converts in Lebanon face complex legal and personal restrictions that limit their freedoms and decision making. Various religion-based personal status laws are discriminatory against women and allow religious courts to control matters related to marriage, divorce and children. For example, Shia, Sunni and Druze religious laws generally state that, in the event of divorce, the child’s age should determine with whom they reside, rather than by what is best for the child ([HRW, 19 January 2015](#)). This means that custody over younger children is more likely to be given to their mothers, but Christian converts who have been divorced due to their faith are likely to lose custody of older children. For women legally able to obtain a divorce, concerns about having their children reside with them often make female converts unable or unwilling to pursue a divorce.

Furthermore, under all personal status laws, a woman can be found legally recalcitrant (disobedient) if she leaves the marital home or does not cohabit with her husband. This means that a court can restrict women’s access to divorce and deny them financial rights or custody of their children ([HRW, 18 July 2023](#)). This can trap Christian converts and prevent women who may wish to file for divorce from leaving the home. If a mother is Christian and her husband is Muslim, then their children will be registered as Muslim. In some instances, where the Muslim mother converts to Christianity and the father does not, the father might take the children away from the mother to raise them separately. Also, the involved families may press for a divorce on account of the wife’s faith and it is very likely that custody of any children will be granted to the husband or to other Muslim family-members (regardless of the ages of the children). For this reason, some convert mothers have had to flee from their Muslim husbands with the children.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Male

Group	Male Pressure Points
Economic	-
Political and Legal	-
Security	Violence – physical
Social and Cultural	-
Technological	-

Lebanon has continued to grapple with an acute economic and financial crisis that has impoverished most of the population since 2019. Lebanon is currently experiencing alarming levels of poverty and food insecurity caused by a decline in economic activity, political instability, and rising costs of living. This has created an environment of fragility and uncertainty for Christians living in the country ([IMF Press Release, 21 September 2022](#)); [International Crisis Group, 27 January 2022](#); [TRF News, 1 August 2022](#)).

Christians make up a rapidly declining proportion of the religious groups in the country, with Islam totaling an estimated 69% of the total population ([US State Department, IRFR 2022 Lebanon](#)). Over the years, Christians in Lebanon have faced multiple attacks as the country has increasingly become controlled by Hezbollah militants. There have also been Islamist-inspired suicide attacks against Christians ([BBC News, 27 June 2016](#)).

Male converts (and Christian men in general) face high levels of physical violence from Muslim mobs. Many Muslim converts are subject to beating, humiliation or confinement by their parents.

Persecution of other religious minorities

Although no religious minorities have been specifically targeted for severe persecution in Lebanon, groups such as Jehovah Witnesses, Jews and Bahai are not legally recognized as a religious community. To ensure that their marriage and other personal status documents remain legally valid, many choose to register as one of the recognized religious movements. For example, many adherents of Bahai register as Shiites for personal status purposes.

The numerically very small Jewish community faces significant pressure, including continued government refusal to change the name of their officially recognized council from the Israelite Communal Council to Jewish Community Council. According to the [World Jewish Congress](#) (WJC, accessed April 2024), Jews in Lebanon are unable to openly practice their faith due to the current political situation.

In 2011, a parking lot, a petrol station and shops were built on the grounds of the Jewish cemetery in Tripoli without consultation. The US Department of State ([IRFR 2022 Lebanon](#)) provides the following update: "The Jewish Community Council's 2011 lawsuit against individuals who constructed buildings in the Jewish cemetery in Tripoli continued, pending additional analysis of the site initially ordered by a court in 2017. The lawsuit remained unresolv-

ed at year's end [2022]."

Members of other religious groups are usually expatriates and may face severe violations of human rights based primarily on nationality and social status rather than on religion. There have been several documented cases of physical, sexual, legal and psychological abuse against domestic and some other migrant workers.

Future outlook

The outlook for Christians viewed through the lens of:

- **Islamic oppression:** The economic crisis and emigration patterns among Christian families may further reduce the size of the Christian population. This can lead to a brain drain and changing demographic balance that both reduces the influence of their community and causes their future development to stagnate or even diminish. This can lead to increased pressure from Islam on the Christian community, including higher levels of discrimination. The economic instability and social inequality that can arise from this can lead to increasing tension between Muslims and Christians, putting even more pressure on the Christian minority. With the decline in their share of the total population share and their economic position, Christians in Lebanon may also lose political influence. The stronger influence of Islamic political factions can have a negative impact on the rights and freedoms of Christians. These developments are likely to further strengthen the desire among Christians to emigrate, further fueling their marginalization. Finally, Lebanon is vulnerable to developments in the region, such as the war in Gaza that started in October 2023 and has also led to mutual attacks between Hezbollah and Israel. This could lead to rising sectarian tensions and radicalization, putting further pressure on the Christian community in Lebanon.
- **Clan oppression:** Since this Persecution engine is blended with *Islamic oppression* in Lebanon and mostly affects Christians with a Muslim background, a strengthening of the latter persecution engine is likely to intensify *Clan oppression* as well.

External Links - Persecution Dynamics

- Block 2.12: Christian spouses of non-Christians have been excluded from the right or opportunity to claim custody of the children in divorce cases. (3.00 points): Human Rights Watch. - <https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/01/19/unequal-and-unprotected/womens-rights-under-lebanese-personal-status-laws>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: (The Guardian, 27 February 2023). - <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/feb/27/lebanon-women-dying-partners-domestic-abuse>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: (HRW, 19 January 2015) - <https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/01/19/unequal-and-unprotected/womens-rights-under-lebanese-personal-status-laws>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: (HRW, 18 July 2023) - https://www.hrw.org/report/2023/07/18/trapped/how-male-guardianship-policies-restrict-womens-travel-and-mobility-middle#_ftn236
- Gender-specific religious persecution Male description: (IMF Press Release, 21 September 2022); - <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2022/09/21/pr22314-lebanon-imf-staff-concludes-visit-to-lebanon>

- Gender-specific religious persecution Male description: International Crisis Group, 27 January 2022 - <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/east-mediterranean-mena/lebanon/lebanon-fending-threats-within-and-without>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Male description: TRF News, 1 August 2022). - <https://news.trust.org/item/20220729103557-qbwyl>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Male description: US State Department, IRFR 2022 Lebanon - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-report-on-international-religious-freedom/lebanon/#:~:text=The%20country%20has%20not%20conducted,percent%20Alawites%20and%20Islam%20combined>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Male description: (BBC News, 27 June 2016) - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-36637378>
- Persecution of other religious minorities: World Jewish Congress - <http://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/about/communities/LB>
- Persecution of other religious minorities: IRFR 2022 Lebanon - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-report-on-international-religious-freedom/lebanon/#>

Further useful reports

A selection of in-depth reports and smaller articles are available on the Research & Reports pages of the Open Doors website:

- <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/>.

As in earlier years, these are also available on the Open Doors Analytical website (password: freedom):

- <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/?s=Lebanon>
- <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/reports/>.