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World Watch Research

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# Kuwait: Persecution Dynamics

February 2025



**OpenDoors**

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

Open Doors International / World Watch Research

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# Contents

World Watch List 2025 – Top 50.....	2
World Watch List 2025 – Ranks 51-78 .....	4
Copyright, sources and definitions .....	5
Reporting period .....	5
Brief country details.....	5
Map of country .....	6
Dominant persecution engines and drivers.....	7
Brief description of the persecution situation.....	7
Summary of international obligations and rights violations.....	7
Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period .....	8
Christian communities and how they are affected.....	8
Areas where Christians face most difficulties.....	9
Position on the World Watch List .....	9
Persecution engines.....	10
Drivers of persecution.....	12
The Persecution pattern .....	14
Pressure in the 5 spheres of life.....	15
Violence .....	20
5 Year trends.....	23
Gender-specific religious persecution / Female .....	24
Gender-specific religious persecution / Male.....	25
Persecution of other religious minorities .....	25
Trends Summary .....	26
Further useful reports.....	27
External Links .....	27

## World Watch List 2025 – Top 50

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2025	Total Score WWL 2024	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021
1	North Korea	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	14.4	98	96	98	96	94
2	Somalia	16.5	16.7	16.6	16.6	16.7	11.1	94	93	92	91	92
3	Yemen	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	10.6	94	89	89	88	87
4	Libya	16.0	16.2	15.9	16.2	16.4	10.6	91	91	88	91	92
5	Sudan	14.1	14.2	15.5	14.9	15.3	16.1	90	87	83	79	79
6	Eritrea	14.6	14.9	15.5	15.9	15.9	12.2	89	89	89	88	88
7	Nigeria	13.5	13.9	14.6	14.9	14.5	16.7	88	88	88	87	85
8	Pakistan	13.6	13.9	15.0	15.0	12.9	16.7	87	87	86	87	88
9	Iran	15.0	14.6	13.5	15.9	16.5	10.9	86	86	86	85	86
10	Afghanistan	15.6	15.9	15.9	16.4	16.7	5.0	85	84	84	98	94
11	India	12.2	12.9	13.3	14.9	13.9	16.5	84	83	82	82	83
12	Saudi Arabia	15.2	15.3	14.8	15.8	16.6	3.3	81	81	80	81	78
13	Myanmar	12.6	11.1	13.5	14.1	12.9	16.5	81	79	80	79	74
14	Mali	11.1	10.1	14.7	13.0	15.2	15.6	80	79	76	70	67
15	China	13.2	10.1	12.8	14.6	16.1	11.1	78	78	77	76	74
16	Maldives	15.6	15.3	13.7	15.8	16.5	0.7	78	78	77	77	77
17	Iraq	14.2	14.4	14.3	14.8	13.9	6.1	78	79	76	78	82
18	Syria	13.5	14.4	13.9	14.4	14.3	7.0	78	81	80	78	81
19	Algeria	14.7	14.3	11.5	14.7	16.0	6.3	77	79	73	71	70
20	Burkina Faso	11.7	9.7	13.2	11.5	14.0	15.6	76	75	71	68	67
21	Morocco	13.2	13.8	11.6	12.9	14.3	8.3	74	71	69	69	67
22	Laos	11.8	10.7	13.5	14.1	13.9	9.8	74	75	68	69	71
23	Mauritania	14.6	14.2	13.8	14.2	14.2	2.8	74	72	72	70	71
24	Bangladesh	12.4	10.6	12.7	11.3	10.4	16.1	74	71	69	68	67
25	Uzbekistan	14.6	12.7	13.5	12.4	15.5	4.4	73	71	71	71	71
26	Cuba	13.2	8.5	13.9	13.3	15.1	9.1	73	73	70	66	62
27	CAR	10.3	8.6	13.9	9.6	14.0	15.6	72	70	70	68	66
28	Niger	9.4	9.6	14.5	7.7	14.6	15.7	72	70	70	68	62

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2025	Total Score WWL 2024	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021
29	Turkmenistan	14.3	12.3	13.6	13.9	15.3	1.5	71	70	70	69	70
30	Nicaragua	12.4	7.6	13.7	13.3	14.1	9.6	71	70	65	56	51
31	Mexico	11.7	9.0	12.5	11.8	11.0	14.6	71	68	67	65	64
32	Oman	14.5	14.1	10.9	13.8	14.1	3.0	70	69	65	66	63
33	Ethiopia	9.9	9.7	12.6	10.4	12.1	15.6	70	69	66	66	65
34	Tunisia	12.4	13.2	10.1	12.6	13.8	8.1	70	69	67	66	67
35	DRC	8.0	7.9	12.6	10.8	14.5	16.1	70	67	67	66	64
36	Bhutan	13.2	13.2	12.3	14.1	14.2	2.2	69	68	66	67	64
37	Mozambique	9.3	8.5	13.9	8.4	12.5	15.9	68	68	68	65	63
38	Kazakhstan	13.3	11.6	12.2	12.8	14.2	4.3	68	65	65	64	64
39	Tajikistan	14.1	12.7	12.7	13.2	13.7	1.9	68	66	66	65	66
40	Egypt	12.7	13.7	12.1	12.4	10.9	6.3	68	68	68	71	75
41	Qatar	14.2	14.2	10.5	13.2	14.4	0.7	67	67	68	74	67
42	Comoros	12.7	14.0	11.2	12.4	14.2	2.6	67	66	66	63	62
43	Cameroon	8.8	7.6	12.6	8.4	13.1	16.1	67	66	65	65	64
44	Vietnam	10.8	9.5	12.2	14.1	14.1	5.9	67	68	70	71	72
45	Turkey	13.0	11.7	11.7	13.2	11.5	5.4	67	64	66	65	69
46	Colombia	11.0	7.9	12.7	11.5	10.5	12.6	66	68	71	68	67
47	Kyrgyzstan	13.5	10.3	11.7	11.4	12.4	6.9	66	59	59	58	58
48	Brunei	14.8	14.8	10.8	10.8	14.0	0.6	66	66	65	64	64
49	Chad	11.0	8.2	10.2	9.9	10.3	15.9	65	61	58	55	53
50	Jordan	12.9	14.3	10.4	12.2	12.8	2.4	65	65	65	66	64

## World Watch List 2025 – Ranks 51-78

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2025	Total Score WWL 2024	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021
51	Malaysia	12.8	13.7	11.7	12.4	11.2	3.0	65	64	66	63	63
52	Azerbaijan	13.3	10.2	9.6	12.2	13.7	5.6	65	60	59	60	56
53	Kenya	10.3	9.2	11.4	8.0	11.5	13.9	64	63	64	63	62
54	Nepal	12.2	10.6	9.5	12.6	12.3	5.9	63	62	61	64	66
55	Tanzania	9.3	10.8	10.3	8.6	8.7	15.4	63	62	63	61	58
56	Russian Federation	12.7	7.9	10.7	13.1	14.1	4.4	63	58	57	56	57
57	Djibouti	12.3	12.6	12.7	10.1	12.1	1.7	61	61	60	59	56
58	Kuwait	13.1	13.6	9.4	12.0	12.2	0.9	61	61	64	64	63
59	Indonesia	10.9	11.9	10.9	11.6	10.2	5.7	61	66	68	68	63
60	UAE	13.3	13.4	9.5	11.3	12.8	0.6	61	61	62	62	62
61	Sri Lanka	12.7	8.7	11.5	11.5	8.5	7.6	60	60	57	63	62
62	Palestinian Territories	13.1	13.3	10.3	10.7	12.1	0.2	60	60	60	59	58
63	Burundi	7.6	7.8	9.4	9.8	9.7	14.6	59	57	55	52	48
64	Rwanda	9.4	7.7	9.0	10.4	12.1	9.4	58	58	57	50	42
65	Honduras	7.9	4.7	11.7	7.3	9.9	13.1	55	55	53	48	46
66	Togo	9.2	6.7	10.4	7.1	11.5	9.3	54	52	49	44	43
67	Bahrain	12.0	13.2	8.6	11.3	8.5	0.6	54	55	55	57	56
68	Guinea	10.3	7.5	8.3	8.3	10.5	8.9	54	52	48	43	47
69	Ukraine	6.8	5.0	7.8	12.5	13.5	7.2	53	44	37	37	34
70	Angola	6.8	6.7	8.1	11.5	11.4	8.3	53	52	52	51	46
71	Venezuela	6.3	4.4	11.1	10.0	10.8	9.6	52	53	56	51	39
72	Uganda	8.1	5.0	7.4	6.7	8.8	16.1	52	52	51	48	47
73	Ivory Coast	12.0	6.5	8.7	5.9	8.0	9.6	51	44	44	42	42
74	Lebanon	11.5	10.1	7.0	6.2	6.7	7.2	49	48	40	35	34
75	Gambia	8.3	8.2	8.9	8.8	8.9	4.4	48	47	44	44	43
76	South Sudan	5.7	4.4	7.0	6.3	8.1	15.6	47	46	46	43	43

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2025	Total Score WWL 2024	Total Score WWL 2023	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021
77	Belarus	9.9	3.7	5.0	10.8	14.1	3.1	47	46	43	33	30
78	Philippines	9.2	6.6	6.6	6.1	5.7	8.5	43	40	32	34	26

## Copyright, sources and definitions

World Watch Research has divided up the previously named Full Country Dossier into two separate documents:

- [Background country information](#) (published annually in summer)
- [Persecution dynamics](#) (published annually in January/February).

These documents are the property of World Watch Research (WWR), the research department of Open Doors International. They include data and analysis based around Open Doors World Watch List (WWL) and 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 end of each document under the heading “External links”. These documents may be used and distributed free of charge, but please always acknowledge the source as: © Open Doors International.

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/>.

## Reporting period

The WWL 2025 reporting period was 1 October 2023 - 30 September 2024.

## Brief country details

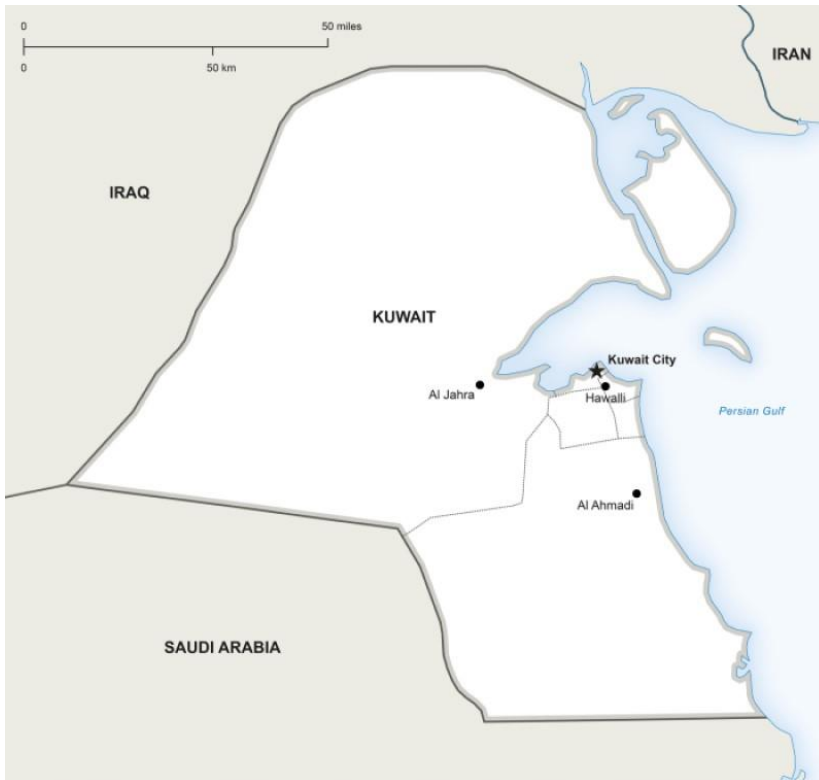
Kuwait: Population (UN estimate for 2024)	Christians	Chr%
4,349,000	629,000	14.5

*Zurlo G A and Johnson T M, eds., World Christian Database, Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed May 2024*

Kuwait: Religious context	Number of adherents	%
Christians	629,000	14.5
Muslim	3,404,000	78.3
Hindu	216,000	5.0
Buddhist	0	0.0
Ethnic religionist	0	0.0
Jewish	0	0.0
Bahai	23,100	0.5
Atheist	2,200	0.1
Agnostic	57,700	1.3
Other	17,400	0.4
<i>OTHER includes Chinese folk, New religionist, Sikh, Spiritist, Taoist, Confucianist, Jain, Shintoist, Zoroastrian.</i>		

Zurlo G A and Johnson T M, eds., *World Christian Database*, Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed May 2024

## Map of country



## Dominant persecution engines and drivers

Kuwait: Main Persecution engines	Main drivers
Islamic oppression	Government officials, One's own (extended) family, Political parties, Ethnic group leaders, Non-Christian religious leaders, Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs
Clan oppression	One's own (extended) family, Ethnic group leaders, Non-Christian religious leaders, Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs
Dictatorial paranoia	Government officials

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

## Brief description of the persecution situation

Most Christians in Kuwait are migrants, in addition to a tiny community of non-convert native Kuwaiti Christians. A third group consists of converts from Islam to Christianity. Expatriate Christians can use designated compounds registered for worship, but these are very small for the number of people gathering and this can lead to tension between the different Christian groups. Obtaining property for gathering for worship is extremely difficult, although informal gatherings do take place. In addition, proselytizing is strictly forbidden and will lead to expulsion from the country.

Kuwaiti converts from Islam bear the brunt of persecution as they face pressure from both family members and the local community to recant their Christian faith. They risk discrimination, harassment, the monitoring of their activities by the police, and intimidation by vigilante groups. Moreover, conversion from Islam to another faith is not officially recognized and is likely to lead to legal problems in personal status and property matters. Expatriate Muslims converting to Christianity experience pressure similar to that in their home countries, as they are often living within their own national or ethnic communities. Because of the potentially severe consequences, it is very difficult for converts to reveal their conversion, which is why there are hardly any reports of Christians being killed or harmed for their faith.

## Summary of international obligations and rights violations

Kuwait has committed to respect and protect fundamental rights in the following international treaties:

1. [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights \(ICCPR\)](#)
2. [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights \(ICESCR\)](#)
3. [Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment \(CAT\)](#)
4. [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\)](#)
5. [Convention on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#)



Kuwait is not fulfilling its international obligations by regularly violating or failing to protect the following rights of Christians:

- Christian converts experience pressure from their family and community to renounce their faith (ICCPR Art. 18)
- Children of Christian converts are automatically registered as Muslim (ICCPR Art. 18 and CRC Art. 14)
- Christians are harassed in the workplace and face discrimination because of their faith (ICCPR Art. 26)
- Ownership and consultation of religious literature is severely restricted beyond international permitted limitations (ICCPR Arts. 18 and 19)
- Christians and their activities are monitored by the authorities and surrounding community (ICCPR Art. 17)
- Churches face several obstacles to obtain permits for the construction of new buildings (ICCPR Arts. 21 and 26)

## Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period

- It is not uncommon for Kuwaiti converts from Islam to Christianity to seek refuge outside the country after their conversion because of family, societal and government pressure. This is a clear indication of the existing very high levels of pressure.
- Several Filipino domestic workers from a Christian background have been murdered in Kuwait in recent years ([Arab News, 28 January 2023](#)), but faith-related violent incidents against Christians are rarely reported. Incidents where Christian migrant workers are targeted probably go unreported because it is in nobody's interest to go public with any details (see below: *Violence, Christians attacked*).

## Christian communities and how they are affected

Of the four WWL categories of Christianity, two are present in Kuwait:

***Communities of expatriate Christians:*** Of the total number of Christians in Kuwait, the majority of them are foreign workers. They are relatively free to worship. However, the existing places for meeting are very small for the number of people gathering. It is extremely difficult to obtain property for worship purposes.

According to the US State Department ([IRFR 2023 Kuwait](#)), there are seven officially recognized Christian denominations:

- The National Evangelical Church (Protestant)
- Roman Catholic
- Greek Catholic (Melkite)
- Coptic Orthodox
- Armenian Orthodox
- Greek Orthodox
- Anglican Church

The government allows some expatriate Christian groups to operate in rented villas, private homes, or the facilities of licensed churches. They can conduct worship services without government interference provided they do not disturb neighbors or violate laws regarding assembly and proselytizing.

**Historical Christian communities:** There is a small number of non-convert native Kuwaiti Christians residing in the country. There are reported to be 8 extended Christian families and a total number of not more than 275 Christians ([Al-Jazeera, 3 March 2018](#)). These do not exist as a separate category for scoring in WWL analysis; they are included in the category for expatriates above.

**Converts to Christianity:** Converts from Islam to Christianity face daunting challenges in many forms. The main drivers of persecution are family, community members, radical Muslims and, to a lesser extent, the authorities. They risk discrimination, harassment, monitoring by police and all sorts of intimidation. Moreover, a change of faith (away from Islam) is not officially recognized and is likely to lead to legal problems in personal status and property matters.

**Non-traditional Christian communities:** These do not exist as a separate category for scoring in WWL analysis; they are included in the category for expatriates above.

## Areas where Christians face most difficulties

Kuwait is a very small country with the capital (Kuwait City) being the center of all activities. The risks that Christians face - especially converts from Islam to Christianity - depend on the sort of community Christians are part of, rather than the geographical area where they live. Kuwaiti converts face the highest risks as Kuwaitis are mostly conservative and family ties are strong. Western Christian expatriates are most often free to practice their beliefs, as long as they refrain from proselytizing. Non-Western Christians with lower levels of skills are more likely to face discrimination and abuse, especially female domestic workers. Many of these are from the Philippines. It is a matter of debate to what extent their non-Muslim faith adds to their vulnerability in the case of abuse.

## Position on the World Watch List

Kuwait: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2025	61	58
WWL 2024	61	54
WWL 2023	64	52
WWL 2022	64	49
WWL 2021	63	48

Both average pressure and the violence score remained the same as in WWL 2024. The very high levels of pressure prevent Christians, both expatriate and converts from Islam alike, from crossing written and unwritten boundaries, leading to low levels of incidents.

## Persecution engines

Kuwait: 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	Strong
Christian denominational protectionism	CDP	Not at all
Communist and post-Communist oppression	CPCO	Not at all
Secular intolerance	SI	Not at all
Dictatorial paranoia	DPA	Medium
Organized corruption and crime	OCC	Not at all

*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)

As in many countries in the region, *Islamic oppression* is the main engine behind the persecution of Christians in Kuwait. It is operating strongly at both national and local community levels. Society is generally conservative – with the laws and Constitution also affirming the conservative and Islamic nature of society. According to the Constitution, Islam is the state religion and Islamic law (Sharia) is an important source for legislation. The government requires Islamic religious instruction for all pupils in state and private schools. Teaching Christianity in state-run high schools is prohibited, even to legally recognized Christian groups.

A significant part of Kuwaiti society harbors radical Islamic convictions and in the past a Kuwaiti Member of Parliament has advocated for the removal of all churches from the country. Some Kuwaiti citizens are known to have fought for the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria. In recent years, tolerance towards non-Muslim residents has come under further pressure due to increasing nationalist sentiment aimed against expatriates in the country. In addition, although political parties do not exist as such, a significant number of parliamentarians are believed to be aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood.

Converts from Islam to Christianity, particularly those with a Kuwaiti background, face the highest levels of pressure. For converts from Pakistan or the Levant (e.g. Jordan, Lebanon, the Palestinian Territories and Syria, among other countries), much depends on the response within their surrounding community in Kuwait. As long as they do not create unrest, they have less to fear from the Kuwaiti government, although their Kuwaiti employers may decide to end their work contract, which could result in deportation if they cannot find another job. Within those expatriate communities, the consequences for converts depend more on the cultural norms from their home country, than on the

cultural practices of Kuwait. For expatriates, conversion to Christianity is sometimes easier than in their home country, because family and relatives are often far away and social pressure is less stringent.

While the country tries to be open and modern, a strict interpretation of Islam continues to have its grip on society. Society and government enforce conservative Islamic customs in public, e.g., by enforcing public dress codes, prohibiting the drinking of alcohol, by limiting the freedom of expression (i.e., criticism of Islam) and by allowing other religions only to worship in private.

### **Clan oppression (Strong)**

Typical for this Persecution engine are situations in which age-old norms and values shaped in a tribal context (such as family honor) are forced upon Christians. In the case of Kuwait, *Clan oppression* is clearly mixed with Islam. This particularly affects converts from Islam to Christianity, especially Kuwaiti converts, because of their strong family ties. Turning away from Islam is not only regarded as religious betrayal, but also as betrayal of the family and tribe. Converts are seen as disrespecting their own fathers and grandfathers, a disloyalty which is socially unacceptable. In general, families put strong social pressure on converts to make them return to Islam, leave the region or to be silent about their new faith. In many cases, converts are alienated from their families as a result of their conversion.

### **Dictatorial paranoia (Medium)**

The government of Kuwait is restrictive in many ways. *Dictatorial paranoia* is behind most of the government restrictions on civil and political freedoms, as the country's ruling family does not want their hegemony threatened. Freedom of expression, freedom of press and freedom of association are thus restricted. Freedom of Religion and Belief also remains restricted in order to maintain public peace and ease radicals' and citizens' concerns about upholding Islamic values. This naturally also affects Christians and churches in the country. Although the country has one of the strongest parliaments in the region, the ruling royal Sunni family still dictates everyday life.

## Drivers of persecution

Kuwait: Drivers of persecution	IO	RN	ERH	CO	CDP	CPCO	SI	DPA	OCC
	<b>STRONG</b>			<b>STRONG</b>				<b>MEDIUM</b>	
Government officials	Strong							Medium	
Ethnic group leaders	Medium			Medium					
Non-Christian religious leaders	Medium			Medium					
Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs	Medium			Medium					
One's own (extended) family	Strong			Strong					
Political parties	Medium								

*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

- **Extended family (Strong):** Although clearly mixed with issues of family honor, strongly held Islamic convictions are a significant reason for families to target family members who convert to Christianity. Conversion from Islam to Christianity is socially unacceptable in Kuwait. Families will most certainly expel converts from their home, as they see conversion not merely as being an attack on Islam, but also on the family honor.
- **Government officials (Strong):** Although there is no criminal penalty for conversion, it is socially unacceptable and a change of faith (away from Islam) is not officially recognized. Some Kuwaiti Christians (mostly converts from Islam to Christianity) have been interrogated by government officials, ordered to stop meeting, and have faced threats of losing their jobs and homes. Conversion is likely to lead to legal problems in personal status matters. For example, fathers who leave Islam are likely to lose custody of their children. Foreign Christians have to practice their faith carefully as the government will act against any Christian who makes an attempt to speak about the Christian faith publicly; proselytizing is illegal and punishable under the law. Christian expatriate workers have been interrogated and instructed not to share their faith, or risk losing their visas. No Christians have been officially prosecuted for proselytizing, but some have been expelled from the country without due process in recent years.
- **Non-Christian religious leaders (Medium):** The fear of hostile pronouncements or actions by Islamic leaders contributes to the high degree of caution converts feel compelled to exercise.

- **Citizens (people from the broader society) (Medium):** Conservative Islamic society is a significant driver of pressure against Christians in Kuwait. Employees are bound by contract to their employers and thus vulnerable to their bosses' demands. The latter can easily discriminate, humiliate or abuse expatriate Christians, especially the poor and low-skilled workers from Southeast Asia and North Africa. Expatriate Christians also face discrimination or mistreatment by their fellow Muslim expatriates in some cases.
- **Ethnic group leaders (Medium):** Family and tribal heads will make sure that Islam is respected within their tribe or extended family. They will put pressure on family members to force converts to recant their faith.
- **Political parties (Medium):** Kuwait has one of the strongest parliaments in the Middle East. Some of the elected politicians are hardline Islamists and openly encourage the government to take action against Christians, especially converts.

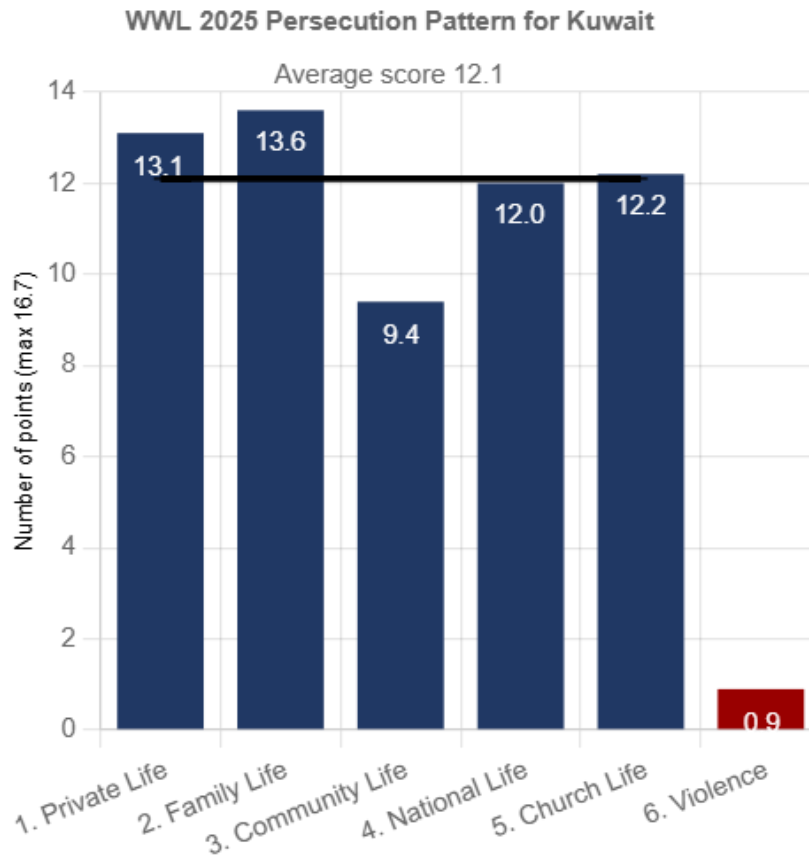
### Drivers of Clan oppression

- **One's own (extended) family (Strong):** Although it is clear that the Islamic punishment for apostasy - capital punishment - is a key element in the reasons to persecute a convert family member, this cannot be viewed separately from the concept of 'family honor'. Age old norms (such as protecting family honor) are still intact. Conversion from Islam to Christianity is the betrayal of everything a conservative Muslim family stands for and brings shame upon the family name. Converts face the risk of being ostracized by their families and might even be killed for shaming their families.
- **Ethnic group leaders (Medium):** Tribal and family heads will make sure that the honor of their group is not 'defiled' by a member that converts from Islam to Christianity, which is felt as a great disgrace.
- **Non-Christian religious leaders (Medium):** Local imams will encourage the upholding of cultural norms, which are intertwined with Islamic principles.
- **Citizens (people from the broader society) (Medium):** Tribalism still has a widespread influence within Kuwaiti society and the social standing of tribe and family is very important to Kuwaitis. Thus, there is social pressure to keep up societal norms in order not to shame the good name of the tribe and family.

### Drivers of Dictatorial paranoia

- **Government officials (Medium):** The Kuwaiti government does not allow any criticism of state affairs, including how it manages religious affairs. The country is well policed, with the security forces monitoring activities in the country closely. Expatriates speaking out against the government will most probably be deported. Freedom House ([Freedom in the World 2024 Kuwait](#)) states that journalists and social media users whose articles insult the Emir face prosecution and prison sentences.

## The Persecution pattern



The WWL 2025 Persecution pattern for Kuwait shows:

- The average pressure on Christians is at a very high level (12.1 points), remaining at the same level as in WWL 2024.
- Pressure is highest in the *Family* and *Private spheres of life*, with very high levels also in the *National* and *Church* spheres of life. This reflects on the one hand the difficult situation for convert Christians who face very high pressure from their (extended) family and cannot have an official Christian marriage or Christian funeral. On the other hand, church life is difficult for both converts and expatriate Christians, as proselytizing and integrating converts from a Muslim background are socially unacceptable.
- The score for violence remained at 0.9 in WWL 2025. Kuwait is a typical Gulf country in that very high levels of pressure ensure that almost nobody 'crosses the line' and experiences violence.

## 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 2025 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://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/wwl-documentation/>.*

### Pressure in Block 1 / Private sphere

#### ***Block 1.3: It has been dangerous to privately own or keep Christian materials. (3.50 points)***

This mainly affects converts from Islam to Christianity. Kuwaiti converts are likely to face strong family pressure if the Bible or other Christian material is discovered in their possession. Technological solutions provide a way to circumvent familial monitoring (e.g. Bible app, websites), but would be taken as proof of apostasy if discovered. Although apostasy is legally not prohibited, families and communities are likely to punish a convert for their conversion. The risk for expatriate converts from Islam to Christianity largely depends on the community they are part of, but in principle discovery could lead to (increased) abuse or even deportation.

#### ***Block 1.7: It has been risky for Christians to speak about their faith with immediate family members. (3.50 points)***

The (extended) family are the primary driver of persecution for Kuwaiti converts. High levels of family pressure make it difficult for most Kuwaiti converts to discuss their new faith with family members. The pressure on expatriate converts is largely depending on their community of origin with whom they are residing in the country. In some cases, pressure on expatriate converts is less than in their home countries, because their family members are often not residing with them.

#### ***Block 1.1: Conversion has been opposed, forbidden, or punishable, including conversion from one type of Christianity to another. (3.25 points)***

In a conservative and tribal society that regards leaving Islam as a betrayal of family values, conversion to Christianity always brings difficulties. As a result, even though the law does not formally prohibit conversion, both society and government put hurdles in the way for people who convert.

#### ***Block 1.4: It has been risky for Christians to reveal their faith in written forms of personal expression (including expressions in blogs and Facebook etc.). (3.25 points)***

Converts from Islam to Christianity face the highest risk as posting faith-related items online could lead to discovery of their conversion or expose them to social harassment. Expatriate Christians cannot openly proselytize or criticize Islam online without consequences, either.

#### ***Block 1 - Additional information***

All (religious) literature deemed offensive towards Islam is forbidden. Converts living with their family (both nuclear and extended) have difficulty worshipping or owning Christian materials as they have to be careful that they are not discovered.



## Pressure in Block 2 / Family sphere

### ***Block 2.1: Babies and children of Christians have automatically been registered under the state or majority religion. (3.50 points)***

All children born to Kuwaitis are considered to be Muslim. This principle also applies to the children of Kuwaiti converts.

### ***Block 2.3: Christians have been hindered in celebrating a Christian wedding for faith-related reasons. (3.50 points)***

A female Kuwaiti Christian from a Muslim background is only permitted by law to marry a man also born Muslim, while a man would have freedom to marry a non-Muslim - but in both cases Islamic procedures apply. Hence, celebrating the marriage between an expatriate or non-convert Kuwaiti Christian and a Kuwaiti convert in a church would be impossible.

### ***Block 2.4: Christian baptisms have been hindered. (3.50 points)***

Baptisms of converts must be conducted discreetly as open baptism might attract severe abuse and harassment from family members as well as from the community at large. In addition, a baptism of a convert is clear sign that proselytism has taken place. Hence, for churches the baptism of converts remains a very sensitive topic and can never be carried out in public.

### ***Block 2.8: Christian children have been pressured into attending anti-Christian or majority religion teaching at any level of education. (3.50 points)***

Children from Kuwait's (non-convert) indigenous Christian communities do not have access to Christian education within the state school system but must attend classes for Islamic instruction. Private schools, including those serving the expatriate communities, must adhere to government guidelines on curriculum content and must provide Islamic instruction. Although expatriate Christian children cannot receive Christian religious education within the school system, they can be exempted from Islamic religious education.

### ***Block 2 - Additional information***

Particularly converts from Islam face serious challenges living as a Christian family. The prevailing circumstances in the country also put significant restrictions on expatriate Christian families. Both have to behave carefully in public. Speaking about their beliefs is difficult and does entail risks, because proselytizing in any way is strictly forbidden. Besides this, converts bear the brunt of persecution in the family sphere. Deceased converts are often buried according to Islamic rites in Muslim cemeteries, and there are very limited facilities for expatriate Christians. The law also puts restrictions on marriage - a Muslim female may not marry a non-Muslim man unless he converts to Islam. In addition, the law states that a marriage between a Muslim and someone who renounces his or her Islamic faith is void. These laws have a significant implication on questions of child-custody and inheritance as well.

## Pressure in Block 3 / Community sphere

***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.). (3.25 points)***

Christians are in general monitored not only by the government but also by society, who will inform the security services if they are aware of any 'suspicious circumstances'. Especially expatriates suspected of evangelism will be followed by the security services.

***Block 3.7: Christians have been pressured by their community to renounce their faith. (3.25 points)***

There is always pressure on converts to renounce Christianity, also at the community level. Known converts will be ostracized, probably lose their job and will not be seen as being part of the community anymore.

***Block 3.5: Christians have been put under pressure to take part in non-Christian religious ceremonies or community events. (3.00 points)***

During the month of Ramadan, Christians struggle to cope with the de facto requirement to fast imposed by the government and community. In addition, converts from Islam to Christianity will have to take part in all Islamic religious ceremonies in order to keep their new faith a secret.

***Block 3.10: Christians have been discriminated against in public or private employment for faith-related reasons. (3.00 points)***

Known Kuwaiti converts would definitely be discriminated against and have great difficulty in finding employment. It is also an accepted fact that Christian expatriate workers can experience discrimination on the work-floor. Their Christian faith is an extra vulnerability in this regard, although racism also often plays a very negative role.

### ***Block 3 - Additional information***

In Kuwaiti communities, Christians are seen as foreigners (and infidels) and are sometimes directly or indirectly prevented from participating in community activities. Education is another area where Christians face challenges. The government requires Islamic religious instruction in state schools for all students and also in private schools that have one or more Muslim students. But the law prohibits organized religious education for faiths other than Islam in state-run schools ([Humanist International, 30 November 2020](#)).

## Pressure in Block 4 / National sphere

***Block 4.1: The Constitution (or comparable national or state law) limits freedom of religion as formulated in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (4.00 points)***

The [Constitution](#) declares that Islam is the state religion. The freedom of religion enshrined in the Constitution does not meet international standards fully as it focuses purely on the observance of religious rites, which are not allowed to conflict with Kuwaiti (i.e., Islamic) morals - see Article 35. The Constitution does not guarantee the freedom to convert from Islam to Christianity.

***Block 4.2: Officials have refused to recognize an individual's conversion as recorded in government administration systems, identify cards (etc.). (3.50 points)***

No convert from a Muslim background would apply to have their conversion officially recognized because they know that this cannot be granted (based on apostasy provisions of Islamic law) and because to make such an application would expose them to the authorities and so be dangerous.

***Block 4.8: Christians have been hindered in expressing their views or opinions in public. (3.50 points)***

All Christians will try to keep a low profile in order to avoid pressure. Criticizing the Kuwaiti government or Islam is not acceptable and would very likely lead to deportation for expatriate migrants. Thus, for example, speaking about social justice from a Christian perspective can only be done with great sensitivity.

***Block 4.9: Christian civil society organizations or political parties have been hindered in their functioning or forbidden because of their Christian convictions. (3.50 points)***

Only Christian organizations with a clear benefit for Kuwaiti society, such as a hospital, will be welcomed. It is impossible to establish a Christian organization with the intention of proselytizing; any organization with a clear Christian profile would be under constant suspicion and opposed.

### ***Block 4 - Additional information***

There are laws against proselytizing, and the government enforces them. The government also endorses a policy of funding and supporting Sunni Islam by financing Sunni mosques, imams and Sunni Islamic teaching and education. Although Kuwait does hold democratic elections, running for a public office as a non-Muslim is unthinkable. Several radical Islamic groups (as well as conservative hardline members of parliament) wish to get rid of all non-Muslim influences, such as the expatriate celebration of Christmas.

## Pressure in Block 5 / Church sphere

### ***Block 5.14: Openly selling or distributing Bibles (or other Christian materials) has been hindered. (3.75 points)***

The selling of Christian materials is only permitted at outlets within a registered church compound. The free distribution of Christian materials is not permitted outside church compounds as this would be considered to be an act of proselytization. In practice, most Christians would exercise caution in distributing Christian materials, effectively exercising self-censorship. In previous years, the distribution of Christian material has led to the deportation of the expatriate offender.

### ***Block 5.20: It has been risky for churches or Christian organizations to speak out against instigators of persecution. (3.75 points)***

Criticism of Islam or the government is unacceptable and would most likely lead to deportation in the case of an expatriate Christian, including clergymen. In general, the expatriate community is not viewed as being part of Kuwaiti society, even if an expatriate was born and raised in Kuwait. They are considered guests and any criticism of Kuwaiti society would at best be seen as impolite; however, it would more likely lead to a backlash, which could result in one's residence permit being revoked, followed by deportation.

### ***Block 5.3: Christian communities have been hindered in building or renovating church buildings or in claiming historical religious premises and places of worship which had been taken from them earlier. (3.50 points)***

The church compounds in Kuwait are usually too small to host all worshippers and church buildings are often used by multiple congregations. Requests to expand church buildings or build new ones generally remain unanswered by the government. Hence, many congregations have to meet in house churches or other facilities because of the lack of church space. In general, because of an increasing anti-expatriate environment, it is unlikely this situation will improve anytime soon.

### ***Block 5.7: Churches have been hindered from openly integrating converts. (3.25 points)***

The government has prohibited non-Muslim missionaries from working in the country and from proselytizing Muslims. Openly integrating converts within church communities would be seen as a clear sign that proselytizing is taking place.

### ***Block 5 - Additional information***

Church life in Kuwait is restricted. For example, to purchase a plot of land to build a church, the buyer must be a citizen of Kuwait. For converts to go and buy land for church construction would be very dangerous as this would expose their conversion to the general public. It is not uncommon that churches applying for licenses to build new places of worship have had to wait years for approval. A country researcher noted: "Most of the recognized Christian churches considered their existing facilities inadequate to serve their communities and faced significant problems in obtaining proper approvals from municipal councils to construct new facilities.

Municipal authorities obstructed religious gatherings in private spaces and pressured landlords who had leased property to unlicensed churches." Besides the difficulties in obtaining church facilities,

publishing religious material is also limited to one's own church congregation. The government allows churches to import religious materials, but under the condition its content does not insult Islam. Signs and symbols on the outside of church buildings are forbidden.

## 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 WWL chooses to be cautious because the real number is uncertain.*

### **4. The symbol “x” in the table:**

- *This usually denotes a known number which is not to be published due to security concerns. In the table below, “x” may also denote “0”.*

Kuwait: Violence scores per Block 6 question in questionnaire	WWL 2025	WWL 2024
6.1 How many Christians have been killed for faith-related reasons (including state sanctioned executions)?	x	x
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?	x	x
6.3 How many Christians have been detained for faith-related reasons?	x	x
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?	x	x
6.5 How many Christians have been abducted for faith-related reasons (including Christians missing in a persecution context)?	x	x
6.6 How many Christians have been raped or otherwise sexually harassed for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.7 How many cases have there been of forced marriages of Christians to non-Christians?	x	x
6.8 How many Christians have been otherwise physically or mentally abused for faith-related reasons (including beatings and death threats)?	x	x
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?	x	x
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?	x	x
6.11 How many Christians have been forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.12 How many Christians have been forced to leave the country for faith-related reasons?	x	x

**Christians attacked**

Given the high number of Christian expatriates in the country, conservative estimates agree that at least 10 Christian domestic workers were abused in the WWL 2025 reporting period, with their faith being one of the factors making them more vulnerable.

It is widely known that house-maids working in the domestic sphere are vulnerable to incidents of abuse. However, statistics are scarce (see note below) as almost all persons, organizations and states

involved have no interest in revealing the true situation: Kuwait needs the domestic staff to work in households, but has a shame culture and does not want a bad reputation. Also, the home countries of the housemaids need the money coming in from the thousands of migrants working in the Gulf states and do not want to put their economic interests at stake. However, Philippine President Duterte did impose a temporary travel ban to Kuwait after the body of a Philippine maid was found in the [freezer](#) of a Kuwaiti home in February 2018 (Gulf News, 16 February 2018). Following two other murders, another travel ban was temporarily imposed in 2020. Yet, gruesome killings of domestic workers continue in Kuwait ([Arab News, 28 January 2023](#)). These few reported killings probably represent the tip of the iceberg as far as the abuse of domestic workers is concerned.

The employers of abused house-maids are either the perpetrators of the abuse themselves or have no real interest in their well-being. The housemaids themselves are often ashamed because of the abuse and do not want to be seen as 'dirty', whether in Kuwait itself or by their family at home. In addition, many provide a very much needed source of income for their families in their home countries. The home families are proud of the work being done in Kuwait, and the housemaid does not want to disappoint her family. Therefore, statistics and evidence of sexual abuse are very difficult to provide. It is also difficult to prove that any abuse is due to the housemaid being a non-Muslim.

#### **Note on the scarcity of statistics**

It could be that thousands of expatriate Christians face abuse, but there is the problem of serious underreporting. The victim will usually want to keep his or her job and other actors (like the government) are not interested in recording such occurrences. It is also usually difficult to discern whether or not mistreatment was due to a worker's Christian faith. Despite promises to improve labor conditions, thousands of migrant workers continue to suffer from labor abuses in Gulf countries, according to a Qatar report by Amnesty International ([AI, "All Work No Pay", 2019](#)). Qatar is a neighboring country to Kuwait, in which expatriates have to work in similar conditions. In an earlier Qatar report ([AI, "My Sleep Is My Break", 2014](#)), Amnesty International highlighted practices of (sexual) abuse of especially female migrant workers, many of whom are Christian. The conclusions were confirmed again in a 2020 report on the plight of domestic workers in Qatar ([AI, "Why do you want to rest?", 2020](#)).

## 5 Year trends

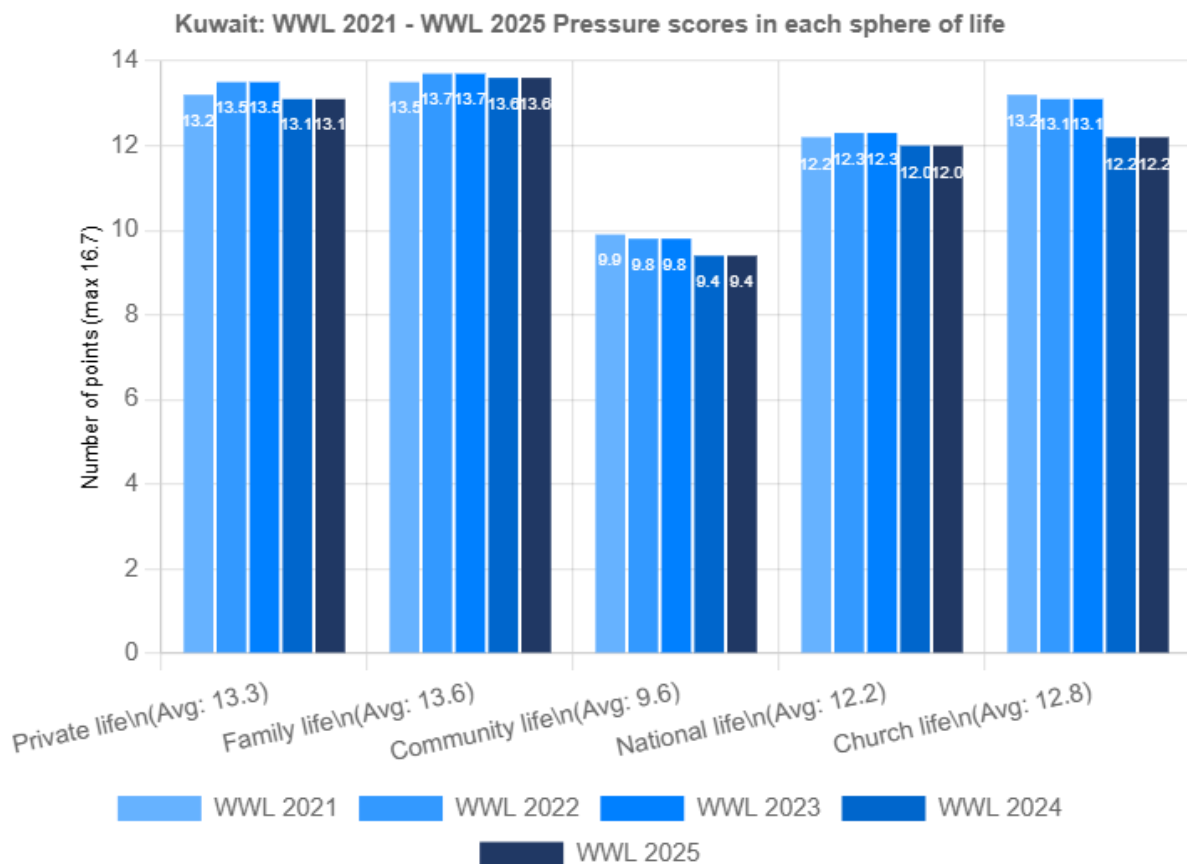
The following three charts show the levels of pressure and violence faced by Christians in the country over the last five WWL reporting periods.

### 5 Year trends: Average pressure

Kuwait: WWL 2021 - WWL 2025	Average pressure over 5 Spheres of life
2025	12.1
2024	12.1
2023	12.5
2022	12.5
2021	12.4

The average pressure on Christians has remained within the range of 12.1 - 12.5 points.

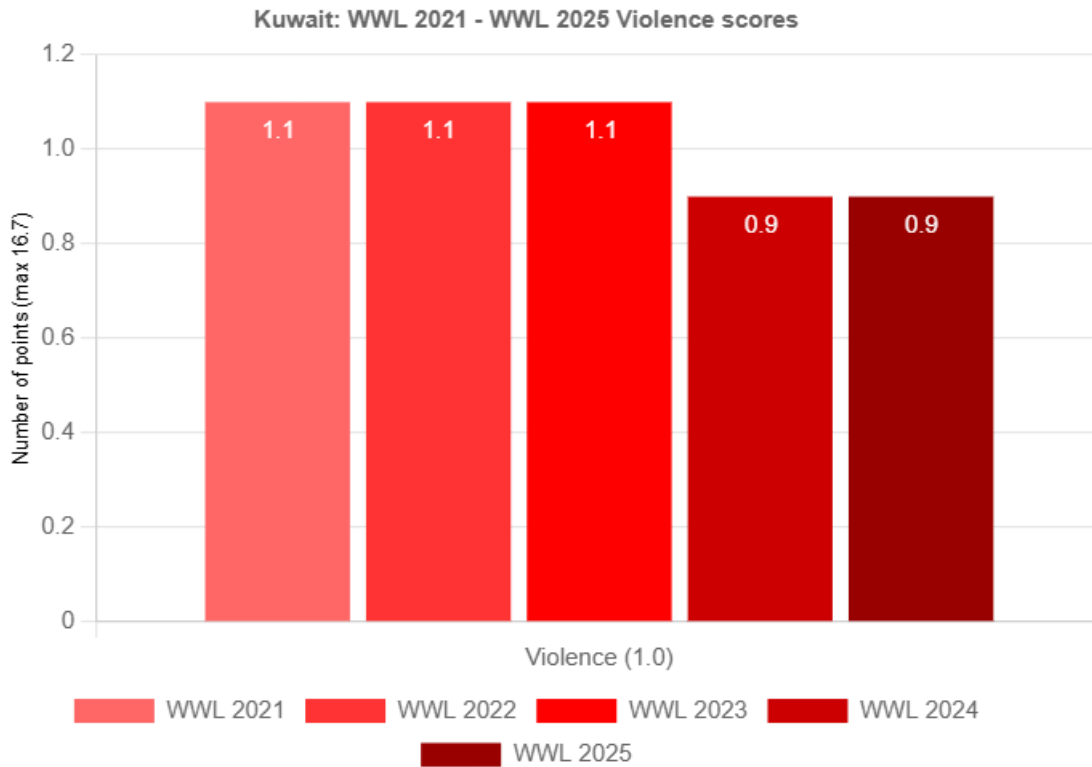
### 5 Year trends: Pressure in each sphere of life





Pressure in all *spheres of life* has been more or less stable over the last five reporting periods, with slightly lower levels of pressure being reported for WWL 2024 and WWL 2025. Especially the *Church sphere of life* has seen some improvements, although the score remained at a very high level.

### 5 Year trends: Violence against Christians



The number of violent incidents recorded in Kuwait has not changed dramatically over the years and the score appears to have stabilized at a very low level. It is the very high levels of pressure which prevent Christians, both expatriate and converts alike, from crossing written and unwritten boundaries, leading to low levels of violent incidents.

### Gender-specific religious persecution / Female

Many of the foreign domestic maids in Kuwait are Christian. This is significant in a country where the foreign population outnumbers the indigenous population. According to Kuwaiti delegates attending a [CEDAW review](#) in 2017, the ill-treatment of migrant workers, including sexual abuse, is a major issue. A country expert comments that these women are at a “heightened risk to domestic abuse and sexual assault”. As stated above (see: *Violence, Christians attacked*), statistics on the issue are scarce, as employers of abused maids or the perpetrators of the abuse have no interest in reporting, and the maids themselves are often ashamed because of the abuse and do not want to be known as being 'dirty'. The ill treatment of migrant workers, including sexual abuse, has become an internationally high-profile issue. Although not primarily faith-related, many Christian domestic migrant workers, almost all of whom are female, experience sexual abuse.

According to [Chatham House](#), the passing of a family protection law in 2020 was “a major step forward for a country which has long suffered from high levels of domestic abuse” (Chatham House, 16

September 2020). Time is needed to see how effective the implementation of this law proves to be in practice. Meanwhile, women are particularly vulnerable, as seen in the case of five Kuwaiti sisters (including two minors) who were forced to flee to Turkey to escape domestic violence and sexual abuse ([Al-Monitor](#), 19 January 2023).

Female Kuwaiti Christian converts will encounter severe family pressure to reject their new faith. They may be put under house arrest, pressurized to marry a Muslim or sexually harassed. In a previous WWL reporting period, a country expert recounted the case of an indigenous female Christian convert who shared about her faith with her family; she was threatened and forced to flee the country as she “felt like her life was in danger”. Women may be threatened with the possibility of honor killings to restore the honor of the family following her conversion. If already married, female converts are vulnerable to being divorced by their husbands. Perhaps the most difficult law for Christian converts hoping to establish their own Christian household is that women from a Muslim background are restricted by [law](#) from marrying a non-Muslim (LOC, Prohibition of Interfaith Marriage, September 2015, p.12). Any children resulting from such a marriage would be denied Kuwaiti citizenship, which a country expert describes as “a significant loss of prospects for the child,” and functions as another pressure to dissuade Kuwaiti female converts from marrying a believer.

## Gender-specific religious persecution / Male

Among the small number of Kuwaiti Muslim converts to Christianity, most pressure comes from family and community – this would typically be felt most keenly by women and girls, followed by younger men and then older men, reflecting levels of status and freedom generally within the culture. In Kuwait, men who convert to Christianity fear the rejection of their immediate and extended families and the repercussions that would have on their livelihood. In this Islamic society, male converts are likely to be ostracized by their families, simultaneously losing their respect and their financial support. Often, this means that Christian men or boys are forced to leave the family home. Without family support, it is difficult for men to find or keep their job and marrying becomes almost impossible. Christian men are especially subject to discrimination and hostilities on the work-floor. The isolation of conversion is further amplified by the difficulty that converts from a Muslim background have in forming sustainable church groups.

## Persecution of other religious minorities

Not only Christians have to face the sometimes oppressive hand of the government, other minorities (such as the Shia community) also experience discrimination and have to operate carefully. Although the sizeable Shia community has traditionally enjoyed greater levels of acceptance in Kuwait than in some other countries in the region, there are still restrictions on its religious freedom; this is primarily due to political changes concerning Kuwait's relationship to Saudi Arabia and Iran. However, these dynamics have so far not been strong, as Kuwait tries to maintain a neutral stance at the international level.

Religious groups such as Hindus, Buddhists and Sikhs are relatively free to practice their faith in private, although they lack facilities to worship. Conservative groups within parliament view all non-Muslim religious activities with suspicion and regularly oppose them.

According to the US State Department ([IRFR 2023 Kuwait](#)):

- "Members of non-Abrahamic faiths and non-registered churches continued to state they remained free to practice their religion in private but faced harassment and potential prosecution if they disturbed their neighbors or violated laws regarding assembly and proselytizing. They ... avoided conflict with authorities by not proselytizing or disparaging the government or other faiths. ... they did not publicly advertise religious events or gatherings to avoid bringing unwanted attention to their organizations both from the public and from government authorities. ... Members of non-Abrahamic faiths and unregistered churches said they experienced difficulties in celebrating major religious or life events. Many members said they lacked adequate facilities but noted clerical support for prayers, blessings of births and marriages, and conducting proper death rituals is available. In many cases, members of these religious groups stated they resolved conflicts, such as child separation issues in divorce, marital status, or inheritance, within their communities rather than in the courts, where they would be subject to sharia."

## Trends Summary

### **1) Although Kuwaiti society is rooted in conservative Islam, there are liberal influences emerging**

The conservative nature of society has produced an environment which is basically hostile to convert Christians from a Muslim background. The government is likely to allow this to continue (so long as it does not feel challenged in its administration of power) in order to appease the radical Islamic groups in society. However, there is also a growing influence of more liberal youth, especially coming from the large numbers of Kuwaitis who have studied abroad. This is encouraging for the Christian communities who are hopeful that the degree of acceptance will continue and be reinforced - but there is still a long way to go before the right to change one's religion is granted or respected. Converts with a Muslim background will continue to face pressure.

### **2) Despite the liberal influences, Islamist-aligned MPs still have support**

Because of the governments failure to address public concerns, including allegations of corruption by members of the royal family, Kuwaiti voters are increasingly looking to the opposition, including Islamists, for a solution. Although political parties are forbidden and alliances are not always clear, the number of Islamist-aligned MPs steadily increased in the last decade, although they lost some seats in recent elections. It is feared that their influence will lead to calls for a stricter imposition of Islamic norms, including dress codes and gender segregation, although a proposed 'values document' received strong criticism ([Kuwait Times](#), 11 September 2022). In such a society there would likely be less respect for Freedom of Religion and Belief, thus affecting Christians in the country.

### **3) Despite growing nationalist rhetoric, foreign Christian workers are likely to continue coming to the country regardless of the existing pressure**

Despite regional and local turmoil (such as the tensions between Iran and Israel and the USA and the continuing political impasse between parliament and government), Kuwait has been politically quite stable during the WWL 2025 reporting period and there has been no significant rise in levels of pressure on Christians. The nationalist and anti-expatriate rhetoric used by parliamentarians has led to measures to limit the rights of expatriates residing in Kuwait ([Gulf International Forum, 4 January](#)

2022), but as long as the country maintains its openness to the world economy, Christian workers are likely to continue coming to the country.

## Further useful reports

Further background information per country and 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/wwl-background/>
- <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/>.

## External Links

- Copyright, sources and definitions: Background country information - <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/wwl-background/>
- Copyright, sources and definitions: Persecution dynamics - <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/country-dossiers/>
- Summary of international obligations and rights violations: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>
- Summary of international obligations and rights violations: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cescr.aspx>
- Summary of international obligations and rights violations: Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cat.aspx>
- Summary of international obligations and rights violations: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women - <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>
- Summary of international obligations and rights violations: Convention on the Rights of the Child - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>
- Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period: Arab News, 28 January 2023 - <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2240296/world>
- Christian communities and how they are affected: IRFR 2023 Kuwait - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-report-on-international-religious-freedom/kuwait/>
- Christian communities and how they are affected: Al-Jazeera, 3 March 2018 - <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/3/3/father-emmanuel-and-the-christians-of-kuwait>
- Drivers of persecution description: Freedom in the World 2024 Kuwait - <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kuwait/freedom-world/2024>
- Pressure in Block 3 / Community sphere: Humanist International, 30 November 2020 - <https://fot.humanists.international/countries/asia-western-asia/kuwait/>
- Block 4.1: The Constitution (or comparable national or state law) limits freedom of religion as formulated in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (4.00 points): Constitution - [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Kuwait\\_1992.pdf?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Kuwait_1992.pdf?lang=en)
- Violence / Block 6 - commentary: freezer - <https://gulfnnews.com/world/asia/philippines/family-grieves-philippine-maid-found-dead-in-kuwait-freezer-1.2174514>
- Violence / Block 6 - commentary: Arab News, 28 January 2023 - <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2240296/world>
- Violence / Block 6 - commentary: AI, "All Work No Pay", 2019 - <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde22/0793/2019/en/>
- Violence / Block 6 - commentary: AI, "My Sleep Is My Break", 2014 - [https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/qatar\\_my\\_sleep\\_is\\_my\\_break\\_final.pdf](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/qatar_my_sleep_is_my_break_final.pdf)
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