
World Watch Research

United Arab Emirates: Persecution Dynamics

March 2025



OpenDoors

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

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March 2025

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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

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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

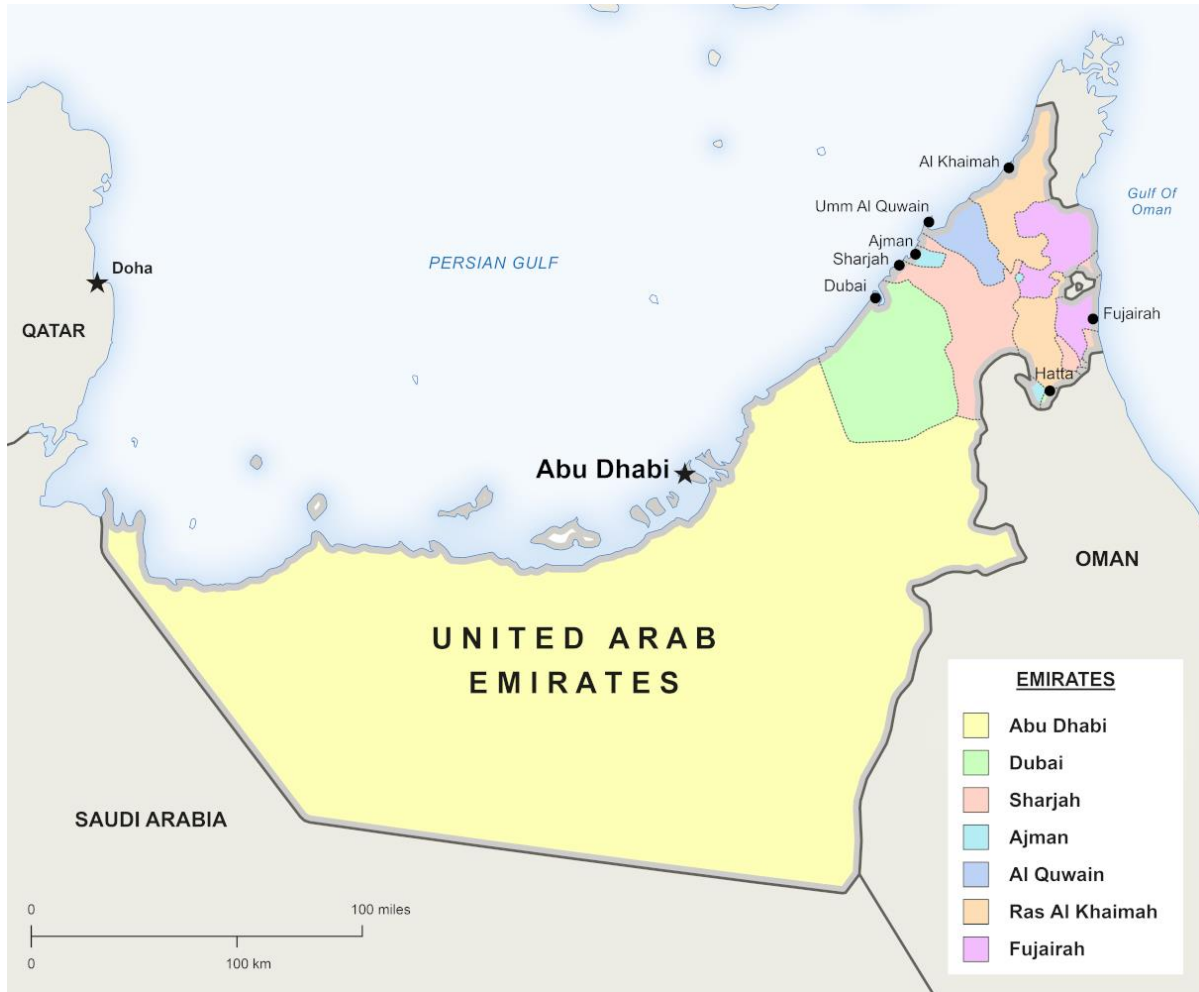
United Arab Emirates: Population (UN estimate for 2024)

9,592,000

United Arab Emirates: Religious context	Number of adherents	%
Christians	1,241,000	12.9
Muslim	7,144,000	74.5
Hindu	592,000	6.2
Buddhist	307,000	3.2
Ethnic religionist	0	0.0
Jewish	0	0.0
Bahai	46,800	0.5
Atheist	14,600	0.2
Agnostic	127,000	1.3
Other	119,000	1.2
<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

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

Christian expatriates are free to worship in private or in the designated church compounds, but the government does not allow them to evangelize or pray in public. Because Emirati society is conservative, Christians exercise self-restraint in public. Local Emirati converts from Islam endure the most persecution as they face pressure from family members and the local community to recant their Christian faith. Expatriate Muslims converting to Christianity experience similar levels of pressure as in their home countries, as they are often living within their own national or ethnic communities. Because of the potentially severe consequences, it is almost impossible for converts to reveal their conversion, which is why there are hardly any reports of converts being killed or harmed for their faith.

Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period

- Converts from Islam to Christianity, both Emirati nationals and foreign workers, face high pressure from their (extended) families, employers and society. If their conversion becomes known, they face losing inheritance and parental rights, being forced to marry, losing their jobs or being placed under pressure to work without pay. As a result, many seek to relocate to another country.
- Christian migrant workers, especially those working as domestic staff in Emirati and expatriate homes, remained vulnerable to abuse. Although not primarily faith-related, many Christian domestic migrant workers, almost all of whom are female, experience abuse.

Specific examples of positive developments

- The UAE's hosting of Roman Catholic Pope Francis in February 2019 was a helpful step towards future tolerance of Christianity in the country. Although well outside recent WWL reporting periods, this visit has positively affected religious affairs since then. The Pope also [signed](#) a document on 'Human Fraternity' together with the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, the most prestigious seat of Sunni Islamic learning (The Guardian, 4 February 2019).
- Following the visit of the Pope and the signing of the Document on Human Fraternity, a new interfaith complex has been built in Abu Dhabi ([Gulf News, 1 March 2023](#)). The 'Abrahamic Family House' consists of a mosque, a synagogue and a church ([For Human Fraternity, accessed 24 August 2023](#)).
- Since the visit of the Pope, a further new church building has been inaugurated. In December 2021, the Roman Catholic St. John the Baptist church was opened in Al Ruwais, in the southern Al-Dhafra region. The church was built on a plot of land in the Al-Ruwais residential complex donated by Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed ([Arab News, 16 December 2021](#)).
- In line with the Document on Human Fraternity and other activities, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed to make interfaith dialogue officially part of the COP28, the global climate conference which was held in Dubai in December 2023 ([Vatican News, 2 August 2023](#)). Subsequently, the first ever Faith pavilion was established with the formal involvement of the Vatican. The aim of the dialogue was to discuss how religious communities could be involved in the subject of 'climate change' ([COP28, 3 December 2023](#)).
- Interfaith efforts have continued since, with a weeklong program on religious coexistence taking place at the Abrahamic Family House in Abu Dhabi in February 2025 ([La Croix International, 20 February 2025](#)).

There are approximately 40 church buildings in the country and some of the main recognized churches have more than fifty different church groups under their wings. However, the number of church groups operating outside the recognized church buildings in the Emirate of Dubai alone is probably higher than 150. The number of existing churches is clearly not large enough to cater for demand. They also have to be careful in their contact with the Muslim population, especially because anything which could be construed as proselytizing Muslims is strictly prohibited. Churches have to be careful about accepting converts into their congregations and often apply strict self-censorship in this area.

As mentioned by the US State Department ([IRFR 2023](#)): "According to local observers, Abu Dhabi Police directed private security personnel at several camps for laborers to surveil gatherings of laborers and report if they discussed security, social, and religion-related concerns."

Christian communities and how they are affected

Of the four WWL categories of Christianity, two exist in UAE and are affected by persecution:

Communities of expatriate Christians: The majority of Christians in UAE belong to this category. They enjoy some freedom but also face certain restrictions. African and Asian expatriates do not have as much freedom as Western ones, but do have more freedom than converts (see below), as long as they do not evangelize Muslims. The churches in the UAE are mostly built close together on a church compound and often lack space, especially since it has become harder to use non-designated buildings like hotels and schools for gatherings in the Emirate of Dubai, which was tolerated until recently. Although the ruling Emirati families donated land for church construction, it remains difficult to officially establish new churches. Religious organizations are not required to register with the government, but there is a lack of clear legal designation, which results in an ambiguous legal status for many groups. This creates difficulties in carrying out administrative functions such as banking and signing leases.

Historical Christian communities: There are no historical Christian communities in UAE (other than expatriate ones covered in the first category above.)

Converts to Christianity: Converts from Islam to Christianity are the most vulnerable Christian group in the country. They are under severe pressure from relatives, family and Muslim society due to the Islamic government, law and culture.

Non-traditional Christian communities: There are no non-traditional Christian communities in UAE (other than expatriate ones covered in the first category above).

Areas where Christians face most difficulties

The Emirates of Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah host most of the Christians living in the UAE and apply similar levels of restrictions on Christians and churches. They also leave expatriate Christians relatively free to practice their faith. The other four states of the UAE are less populated and have a higher ratio of Emiratis; as a result these states are more conservative. For instance, the Emirates of Ajman and Umm Al Quwain are the only emirates without designated church buildings.

Pressure on converts from Islam to Christianity mostly depends on the community which they are part of, rather than the geographical area they are living (see below: *Persecution engines*).

Position on the World Watch List

United Arab Emirates: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2025	61	60
WWL 2024	61	57
WWL 2023	62	54
WWL 2022	62	54
WWL 2021	62	53

In WWL 2025, the score for UAE remained at 61 points, dropping from rank 57 to 60 and staying again outside of the WWL Top 50. The average pressure on Christians remained at a very high level (12.0 points), while the violence score dropped very slightly from 0.7 points to 0.6 points. Although the Emirates improved in terms of acceptance and tolerance towards Christianity (and other non-Muslim religions), the country increased its monitoring of Christians and churches alike, including advanced surveillance techniques. Pressure remained especially high for converts from Islam to Christianity, with expatriate Christians remaining free to worship in private or in the designated church compounds, but not being allowed to evangelize or pray in public.

Persecution engines

United Arab Emirates: Persecution engines	Abbreviation	Level of influence
Islamic oppression	IO	Medium
Religious nationalism	RN	Not at all
Ethno-religious hostility	ERH	Not at all
Clan oppression	CO	Medium
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 (Medium) / Clan oppression (Medium)

Islam dominates private and public life, as well as political discourse in the seven emirates. Consequently, all citizens are understood to be Muslim. The law does not recognize conversion from Islam to Christianity. Christian converts from a Muslim background are at times compelled to appear to be Muslims and hide their faith. Tribalism is very much mixed with Islam and hence leaving Islam is interpreted as betraying one’s wider family. 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. Besides this, some ethnic Arabs regard foreign Christians as a threat to their religion, culture and language.

Different levels of persecution exist for converts from Islam to Christianity. Those from an Emirati background face highest levels of pressure. For converts from Islam with other backgrounds (such as those originating from Pakistan, Indonesia, Sudan, Mali as well as other Asian, African or Arab countries), much depends on the response within their surrounding community in the UAE. As long as they do not create unrest, they have less to fear from the UAE government, although their Emirati employers could end their contracts, which would result in deportation if they were unable to 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 the UAE. For expatriates, conversion to Christianity is sometimes easier than in their home country, because family and relatives are far away and social pressure is possibly less acute.

Dictatorial paranoia (Medium)

The UAE is not a democracy. The country is ruled by a dynasty that does not recognize various fundamental human rights. The rulers exert pressure on society and do not allow any dissent. Since the Persecution engines *Islamic oppression* and *Dictatorial paranoia* overlap to a certain degree, the government also shows characteristics of *Islamic oppression* by limiting the rights of Christians compared to Muslims, especially regarding church life.

Drivers of persecution

United Arab Emirates: Drivers of persecution	IO	RN	ERH	CO	CDP	CPCO	SI	DPA	OCC
	MEDIUM			MEDIUM			MEDIUM		
Government officials	Medium				Medium				
Ethnic group leaders	Weak								
Non-Christian religious leaders	Weak								

(table continues below)

United Arab Emirates: Drivers of persecution	IO	RN	ERH	CO	CDP	CPCO	SI	DPA	OCC
	MEDIUM			MEDIUM			MEDIUM		
Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs	Medium			Medium					
One's own (extended) family	Strong			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. For more information see WWL Methodology.

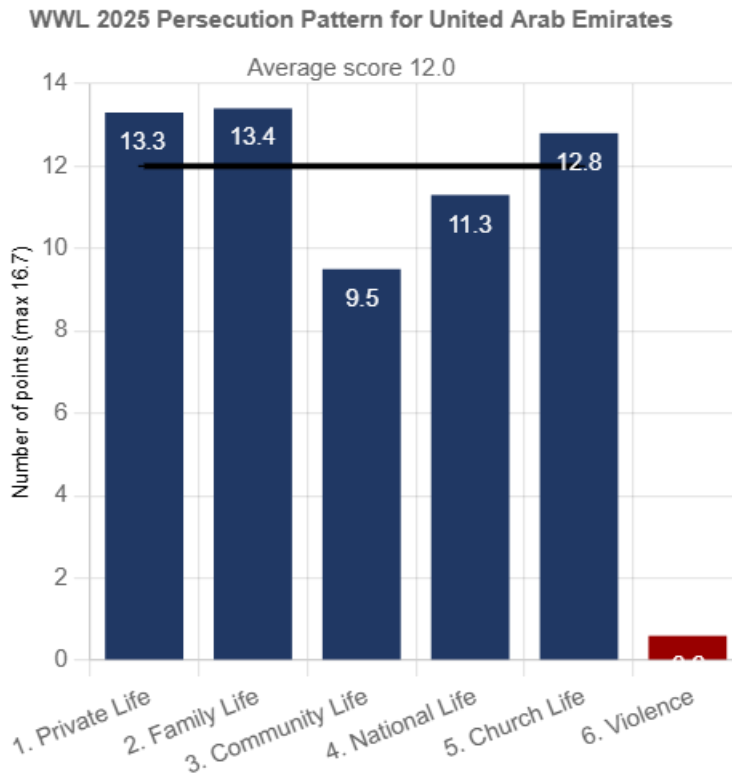
Drivers of Islamic oppression / Clan oppression

- **Extended family (Strong / Medium):** 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. Converts face the risk of being ostracized by their families and they might even be killed for shaming the family name.
- **Government officials (Medium):** The government will act against any Christians attempting to speak openly about their faith, since proselytizing is illegal and punishable under the law. According to the US State Department ([IRFR 2023 UAE](#)): "The law does not directly prohibit Muslims from converting to other religions; but the penal code's blasphemy provisions punish behavior viewed as contemptuous of the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad or offensive to Islamic teachings."
- **Citizens (people from society in general) (Medium / Medium):** Conservative Islamic society is the biggest threat to Christians in UAE. Emiratis expect Islamic governance from their rulers, with Sharia law being the [principal source of legislation](#) (UAE Constitution 1971/2004).

Drivers of Dictatorial paranoia

- **Government officials (Medium):** The UAE government does not allow criticism, especially not from (foreign) Christians. According to Freedom House's [Freedom in the World 2024 UAE](#): "The civil liberties of both citizens and noncitizens, who make up an overwhelming majority of the population, are subject to significant restrictions. ... A number of laws give authorities broad discretion to punish individuals' speech on sensitive topics. A 2014 counterterrorism law prescribes punishments including the death penalty for offenses like "undermining national security" and possession of material that opposes or denigrates Islam. ... A new cybercrime law that took effect in 2022 ... bans any material that could harm state interests or public confidence in state institutions, among other provisions, and assigns penalties of up to life in prison for use of the internet to oppose the existing system of government. A new penal code that also took effect in 2022 contains similarly expansive prohibitions on speech including false news, defamation, and criticism of the state and its symbols. These and other criminal laws have been actively enforced, including against ordinary social media users."

The Persecution pattern



The WWL 2025 Persecution pattern for UAE shows:

- The average pressure on Christians was at a very high level (12.0 points), the same as in WWL 2024.
- Although all spheres of life show high and very high levels of pressure, pressure is highest in the *Family, Private* and *Church spheres*. This reflects on the one hand the difficult situation for convert Christians who face very high pressure from their (extended) family. On the other hand, church life is difficult for both convert and expatriate Christians, as proselytizing and integrating converts from a Muslim background are socially unacceptable.
- The score for violence decreased from 0.7 of a point in WWL 2024 to 0.6 of a point in WWL 2025. The very low level of violence against Christians is typical for a Gulf country. The government does not have to act against Christians as the pressure from society is very high and Christians practice self-restraint. It is also probable that violence has been under-reported.

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 1.1: Conversion has been opposed, forbidden, or punishable, including conversion from one type of Christianity to another. (3.50 points)

Emirati Christians face very high pressure and their number is subsequently very low. The rejection of conversion is rooted in the apostasy provisions of Islamic law and as such represents a permanent background pressure. For non-Emirati converts, the pressure depends on their community and the presence of family members, which often apply the same cultural norms as in their home country. Because family members are often far away in the home country, some converts have more freedom in the UAE than in their home country. Nevertheless, they still face a lot of pressure in most cases. It is for example not unlikely that they would be fired by their employers if their new faith were to become known; which means that they would have to leave the country if unable to find another job.

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.). (3.50 points)

This is mainly a risk for converts from Islam to Christianity as revealing their faith publicly could lead to negative repercussions from disapproving family or community members. Expatriate Christians are free to express their faith online, but cannot openly be involved in proselytization.

Block 1.5: It has been risky for Christians to display Christian images or symbols. (3.25 points)

Converts to Christianity face the biggest risks, as displaying Christian symbols could lead to discovery of their faith and subsequent repercussions. For most expatriate Christians, the private display of religious symbols (e.g. as jewelry), is not problematic - although many would choose to do so discreetly out of respect for the local culture.

Block 1.8: It has been risky for Christians to speak about their faith with those other than immediate family (extended family, others). (3.25 points)

The main source of pressure for Christians with a Muslim background is from family and community. Most indigenous Christians exercise extreme caution in discussing issues of faith with family and community members. The government prohibits proselytizing for any religion other than Islam; this means all categories of Christian have to be careful when discussing faith with Emirati citizens or other Muslims. Opposing or criticizing Islam is also prohibited by law, so choosing the right wording is important when discussing issues of faith.

Block 1 - Additional information

Due to the serious social discrimination of converts from Islam to Christianity, openly possessing Christian materials is dangerous especially for Muslims who might be considering converting or who have already converted but have not risked being identified as Christian for safety reasons.

Pressure in Block 2 / Family sphere

Block 2.2: Registering the birth, wedding, death, etc. of Christians has been hindered or made impossible. (3.50 points)

There is no recognition of conversion, hence it is impossible for converts to have and register a Christian marriage, nor can their children be registered as Christians or be given Christian names.

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

Islamic education is compulsory for all students within state schools and for Muslim students within the private school sector. This means that children of converts have to attend Islamic education. No alternative religious education is provided in state schools for non-Muslims. Private schools can apply for authorization to provide non-Islamic religious education to non-Muslim students. Most expatriate children attend private schools, in which they are exempted from Islamic instruction. However, those who cannot afford private education do have to attend Islamic classes in the state schools. Asking for an exemption, if granted, could lead to social exclusion by others.

Block 2.4: Christian baptisms have been hindered. (3.25 points)

For expatriate Christians, churches are free to conduct baptisms. For a Christian believer from a Muslim background, baptisms have to be conducted in secret. Baptism is the ultimate proof of conversion and this definite change of religion is a very sensitive issue, especially for Emirati converts. Foreign expatriate converts might have more freedom, depending on the community they are part of; nonetheless, for converts from some Muslim countries baptism is as dangerous as for Emirati converts.

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)

The loss of inheritance is a real risk for converts from an Islamic background, as family members commonly punish them in this way. Sharia law is applied in inheritance cases, which means that a non-Muslim cannot inherit from a Muslim. However, converts from an expatriate background can request to apply the laws of their home country (which may also apply Sharia law in the case of a Muslim country).

Block 2 - Additional information

The *Family sphere of life* scores the highest levels of pressure, which is particularly evident in cases revolving around marriage, child-upbringing, inheritance and child custody. Mixed marriage is only legal between a Muslim man and a non-Muslim woman. In the event of divorce, the law grants custody of any children of non-Muslim women who do not convert to Islam to the Muslim father. By law, a non-Muslim woman who fails to convert to Islam is also ineligible for naturalization as a citizen and cannot inherit her husband's property unless named as a beneficiary in his will.

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.). (3.50 points)

There is a high level of surveillance in the UAE, making it likely that individual Christians are being monitored. There is a high awareness among Christians that their (online) activities are under observation. This awareness causes Christians to self-censor and adapt their behavior, especially converts and those among the expatriate Christians who are keen to share their faith.

Block 3.5: Christians have been put under pressure to take part in non-Christian religious ceremonies or community events. (3.25 points)

Christian converts from a Muslim background will routinely be expected to participate in Islamic practices and traditions, especially relating to the family sphere. The month of Ramadan is the main religious event affecting all Christians in this regard. While non-Muslims are allowed to eat or drink in certain restaurants, malls and hotels, Christian migrant workers, especially those working in lower paid jobs, have to abstain from eating or drinking during the day.

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

If converts from a Muslim background are discovered, they will be placed under pressure by their specific communities to recant their faith and return to Islam. They are likely to be ostracized by society if their Christian faith is known. The level of pressure converts face depends on their surrounding community. Emirati converts will face the highest pressure, while non-Emirati converts will have to deal with the cultural norms of their particular community. However, because many are far away from home and do not want to cause unrest (which could easily lead to deportation by the authorities), reactions can be less harsh than in the home countries.

Block 3.13: Christians have been interrogated or compelled to report to the local vigilante/police for faith-related reasons. (3.25 points)

High levels of surveillance make most Christians careful in sharing their faith. Emirati authorities will question those who are suspected of proselytizing. In the recent past, several Christians have been deported from the country following accusations of proselytism. Usually, despite the long-term prison sentences codified in the penal code, accused Christians will not be sentenced and imprisoned. The government is very sensitive regarding its international reputation and will not risk being accused of religious persecution. However, this is especially applicable to Christians from a Western background. Christians from a non-Western background are less protected and at a higher risk of mistreatment.

Block 3 - Additional information

For Christians in the UAE, community life can be difficult, especially for converts from Islam to Christianity. However, one's ethnic background can be just as important as one's religious convictions, since racial prejudices and racism are prevalent in the country.

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. (3.75 points)

The Constitution of the UAE enshrines Islam as the religion of the State and Islamic law as a principal source of legislation. It upholds the freedom to perform religious ceremonies in accordance with established customs, provided that religious practice is consistent with public order and morality (which means that Islam or Islamic tenets cannot be criticized). Blasphemy and defamation of all religions are prohibited, but only Islamic proselytism is permitted. Under applicable Islamic law, Muslims are prohibited from changing their religion. In addition, Islamic personal status laws apply for Emirati citizens, including a prohibition on Muslim women marrying non-Muslims.

Block 4.8: Christians have been hindered in expressing their views or opinions in public. (3.75 points)

The UAE is not a democracy and the government suppresses all dissent. Most Christians in the UAE exercise precautionary 'self-censorship' and avoid provocation. Particularly in relation to criticism of Islam or discussion on topics of faith. The government will deport those who create 'unrest' in their view.

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

Conversion from Islam to Christianity is forbidden. The UAE government cannot accept conversion away from Islam and thus will refuse to officially recognize any such conversion by an Emirati citizen. This does not apply to converts from an expatriate background, as they are foreigners and have to deal with the policies of their own governments.

Block 4.12: Christians, churches or Christian organizations have been hindered in publicly displaying religious symbols. (3.50 points)

Most recognized churches are cautious about displaying symbols, notices and other signs publicly, and would avoid provocative messaging. Unwanted attention from the authorities can lead to repercussions such as losing approval for holding church services or making it much more difficult to obtain visas for church leaders in the future. Non-recognized churches, and especially those with converts among them, exercise even more caution.

Block 4 - Additional information

Within the *National sphere of life*, it is also the case that converts from Islam to Christianity face most pressure. Known Emirati converts will most likely face discrimination when engaging with government officials, will lose access to government jobs and, if not fired, will likely miss out on any form of promotion. Because of the close ties between tribes, families and government, they are also likely to lose their business contacts and contracts, if they are running a business.

Pressure in Block 5 / Church sphere

Block 5.1: Church activities have been monitored, hindered, disturbed, or obstructed. (3.50 points)

There is routine monitoring of church compounds, sometimes in visible ways. It is understood that this is primarily intended for the protection of the churches and the churches are grateful for this protection. Nevertheless, the surveillance can also be used negatively (for example to identify whether Muslims are attending church activities). In 2018, the Community Development Authority of Dubai (CDA) undertook a campaign to enforce laws prohibiting religious gatherings in unauthorized places more strictly. This measure was primarily intended to control possible radical Muslim or political groups. However, because the authorities became aware of the very large number of Christian groups in Dubai meeting in schools, hotels and other places of gathering, this move by the CDA had a significant impact. Many of these groups have had to cease their activities.

Block 5.7: Churches have been hindered from openly integrating converts. (3.50 points)

For expatriate churches, proselytism and accepting converts from Islam to Christianity in their midst are by far the most sensitive issues with regard to the Emirate government and society. Relationships with the government are generally good, but only as long as the churches stay away from the convert community. In practice, this means that the convert community has to operate on its own; often without much-needed (spiritual) guidance.

Block 5.2: It has been difficult to get registration or legal status for churches at any level of government. (3.25 points)

A new Houses of Worship Law was introduced in May 2024. It centralizes the oversight of non-Muslim gatherings across all seven emirates under the Ministry of Community Development's purview, but each Emirate retains licensing authority. Previously, each Emirate determined its own procedures for handling applications by religious organizations to form legally recognized entities. The new law might help to overcome bureaucratic hurdles, but it at the same time increases and centralizes control over the churches. It imposes strict regulations, including significant fines for failing to report received donations or organizing conferences without prior approval. Notably, the law also prohibits registered religious entities from organizing conferences abroad. Proselytizing also remains strictly prohibited. The practical implications of the new Houses of Worship Law on existing practices remain to be determined.

In general, a church needs a physical church building to obtain recognition. However, only rarely are new building permits granted. Any group wanting a degree of recognition must therefore apply to one of the already established churches to come under their umbrella. Some of the recognized churches have more than fifty different churches under their wings. It happens sometimes that recognized churches refuse to sponsor new congregations, if they fear that a newcomer is too outspoken or might cause problems in other ways. This creates an additional challenge, since leaders of church groups in most cases must have a visa sponsored by one of the recognized church entities. However, as long as a registered church has capacity, there does not seem to be any restrictions on who else a registered church may sponsor. Even the numbers of visas granted for church leaders is generous, although bureaucratic hurdles remain.

Block 5.14: Openly selling or distributing Bibles (or other Christian materials) has been hindered. (3.25 points)

Bibles and Christian materials can be sold and distributed inside the designated church compounds; however, such materials cannot generally be sold or distributed outside the church compounds, e.g., in bookstores, where making Christian literature available would be considered proselytizing. Church compounds are only located in urban areas resulting in restricted access for Christians residing in rural areas. Emirati and expatriate Muslims theoretically could access the church compounds; however, societal repercussions and the threat of government surveillance make this unlikely to happen.

Block 5 - Additional information

The lack of church buildings (forcing many fellowships to share a church building with more than fifty other groups in some cases, or to use a conference room in a hotel or other gathering hall) is one of the biggest problems faced by the expatriate church communities. Churches cannot buy land themselves and have to request the government to allocate a plot of land to them. Permission to build churches is granted at times, but the process remains lengthy and difficult. The Christian communities in the UAE are very active and having many churches might make the Emiratis feel uncomfortable as they perceive churches as a threat to the Islamic character of the country.

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.

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”.

United Arab Emirates: 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

(table continues below)

United Arab Emirates: Violence scores per Block 6 question in questionnaire	WWL 2025	WWL 2024
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:** It is widely known that house-maids working in the domestic sphere are vulnerable to incidents of abuse. However, statistics are scarce as almost all persons, organizations and states involved have no interest in revealing the true situation: The UAE 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 house-maids 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 (although Philippine President Duterte imposed a temporary travel ban to Kuwait in 2018 after the body of a Philippine maid was found in a freezer there).

The employers of abused house-maids are either the perpetrators of the abuse themselves or have no real interest in their well-being. The house-maids themselves are often ashamed because of the abuse and do not want to be seen as "dirty", whether in the UAE 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 the UAE, and the house-maid does not want to disappoint her family. Therefore, verifiable statistics and evidence of abuse are very difficult to provide. It is also difficult to prove that any abuse is due to the house-maid being a non-Muslim. Nevertheless, given the high number of Christian expatriates in the country, conservative estimates agree that at least 10 Christian house-maids were abused in the WWL 2025 reporting period, with their faith being one of the factors making them more vulnerable.

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.

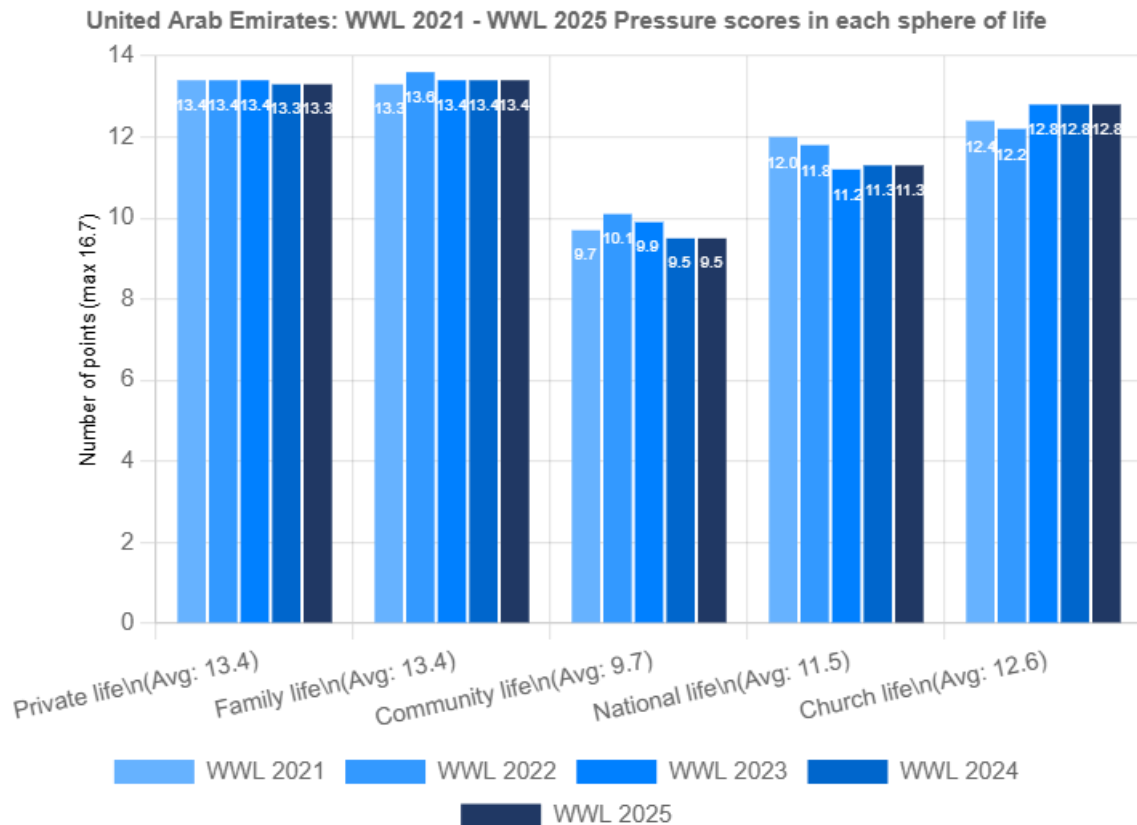
5 Year trends: Average pressure

The table below, depicting average pressure, shows that the overall level of pressure on Christians has remained at a very high level with very slight differences year on year. For the last five reporting periods, average pressure has consistently scored between 12.0 and 12.2 points. This is a reflection of the fact that the situation for converts in particular remains very difficult.

UAE: WWL 2021 - WWL 2025	Average pressure over 5 Spheres of life
2025	12.0
2024	12.0
2023	12.1
2022	12.2
2021	12.2

5 Year trends: Pressure in each sphere of life

As can be viewed in the blue chart below, reported pressure levels have seen variations year on year, but - within each *sphere of life* - have remained largely at the same level. The overall higher scoring *Private* and *Family spheres of life* reflect the difficulty for (Emirati) converts to Christianity to live out their faith.



5 Year trends: Violence against Christians



As can be seen in the red chart above, the number of violent incidents recorded in the last five reporting periods has been very low. This pattern of very low levels of violence is typical for a Gulf country where very high levels of pressure ensure that almost nobody 'crosses the line'. However, due to the restricted nature of society, it is also possible that the number of incidents is underreported.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Female

In general, women are vulnerable in the UAE, as domestic violence and marital rape are permitted without legal consequence ([HRW 2023, UAE country chapter](#)). The Georgetown Women, Peace and Security Index notes legal gender discrimination present; although the UAE has the best legal score in the MENA region, the region is the worst performing globally ([GIWPS UAE profile](#), accessed 10 March 2025). Tribal society regards women as 'inferior' members of society in need of male guardianship and this also affects the level of persecution experienced by female converts from Islam to Christianity. As described by a country expert, women have "less privileges and rights than the men in this patriarchal society, and may be questioned more if they engage in activities outside their home."

A female convert to Christianity will face immense pressure from her family to force her to convert back to Islam. If she does not, an imam may be called in to convince her of her sin, she could be placed under house-arrest, beaten or coerced into marriage with a Muslim. Even if a Christian man were willing to marry her, women who come from a Muslim background are legally restricted from marrying a non-Muslim (James Berry, 5 February 2017, '[Overview of Mixed Marriages and the Law in the UAE](#)'). Furthermore, a Christian man and a convert woman cannot simply have a Christian wedding ceremony outside the law. Since Islam does not consider marriage between a non-Muslim man and a Muslim woman valid, both parties to such a union could be subject to arrest, trial and imprisonment on

grounds of engaging in an extramarital relationship, which carries a minimum of one year in prison. Furthermore, for Christian women who are married to a Muslim man, the law grants custody of children of non-Muslim women to the Muslim father in the event of a divorce.

House-maids working in the UAE often face sexual harassment or slave-like treatment. The ill-treatment of migrant workers, including sexual abuse, has become a high-profile issue at the international level. Although not primarily faith-related, many Christian domestic migrant workers, almost all of whom are female, experience (sexual) abuse.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Male

In the UAE, men who convert to Christianity have been abandoned by their families and treated as shameful social outcasts. A convert is likely to lose custody of his children and his wife may divorce him. Familial rejection is not only an emotional blow felt by converts, it also represents a loss of social standing. As a country expert explains: “If shame is brought on the family by the husband, it can affect the entire family. Wives may be pressured to divorce a Christian husband, which can destroy the family unit.”

Without the financial support of their families or the necessary connections to find or maintain a job, it can be extremely difficult to find employment in this network-based society. This can also lead to men being pressured into participating in non-Christian religious events, counter to his beliefs, in order to remain employed and keep social status. A country expert stated that “men are expected to attend Friday prayers and participate in public religious events (prayer, Eid) ... they are questioned by family/community if they don’t.” This has major implications for all his family members since men are traditionally the family providers. Furthermore, without family and the accompanying social status, a man will be unable to find a family willing to give their daughter permission to marry him. Such pressure can cause some men to leave the UAE in search of greater freedom.

Migrant Christian men can also face challenges, such not being allowed to conduct any acts of worship within living quarters.

Persecution of other religious minorities

Among expatriate communities, many other religious minority communities enjoy a similar level of freedom to Christians, for instance Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism.

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

- "Jewish community leaders reported a rise in antisemitic incidents on social media and in schools following the October 7 Hamas attacks. Jewish community leaders said religious services open to the public in Dubai were suspended as of October 7 out of an abundance of caution."
- "Private and government-run radio and television stations frequently broadcast Islamic programming, including sermons and lectures; they did not feature similar content for other religious groups."

Trends Summary

1) Political stability is expected to continue

Looking to the future, political stability can be expected as the Emirati rulers support one another. National elections do not exist and political parties are forbidden, which prevents citizens from changing their government. Government posts are mainly filled through tribal loyalties and economic power. There are some calls for greater political representation but these demands are not entertained by the rulers. For now, most of the population does not seem to be very involved in politics – the elections for the legislative institution FNC have since 2006 seen low turnouts especially in the largest and richest emirates. A generous distribution of wealth seems to appease the population at the moment, although the historically poorer northern states with their demand for political change do pose a certain risk. However, the UAE government is beginning to take on austerity measures as hydrocarbons are gradually being phased out, which might cause unrest among the Emiratis. 'Emiratization' is also needed to lower the dependency on foreign workers. In addition, the significant youth population, combined with a process of globalization which loosens the state's monopoly over information, are possible signs that the UAE might need to react to calls for more democracy in the future.

2) The UAE presents itself as a progressive Islamic nation

The UAE continues to enjoy stability within an increasingly turbulent regional context. It remains to be seen whether the UAE's more assertive posturing in the region (e.g. in respect to Libya, Yemen, Somalia, etc.) will lead to a bolstering of the UAE's influence as a progressive Islamic nation, or whether such forays will prove unsuccessful and therefore damaging to the 'brand' of Islam the UAE is seeking to portray. If unsuccessful, or if it gets bogged down in regional conflicts, the UAE could potentially face growing domestic discontent, and possibly the emergence and growing influence of more conservative religious factions - though this does not seem a very probable prospect at present. The need to attract further international investment and tourism is likely to ensure a continued openness to (and tolerance of) diversity.

3) Christians remain an accepted part of society - except for converts from Islam to Christianity

Although thousands of expatriates (including many Christians) had to leave the country as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Christian presence in the UAE is likely to remain significant in the foreseeable future. The country remains in need of expatriate workers for both low and high skilled positions. Despite the government's efforts to replace foreign workers with Emirati nationals, especially in the private sector, it is unlikely that these efforts will effect the Christian presence in the country in the short-term. However, the outlook for converts from Islam to Christianity, especially Emirati converts, remains grim in the short-term. It is unlikely that the government will give them more freedom or that Emirati society will start accepting them. However, the government's promotion of tolerance, including the Abraham Accords with Israel, might lead to more acceptance of religious diversity (among the Emiratis) in the long-term.

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/>
- Specific examples of positive developments: signed - <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/feb/04/pope-and-grand-imam-sign-historic-pledge-of-fraternity-in-uae>
- Specific examples of positive developments: Gulf News, 1 March 2023 - <https://gulfnews.com/uae/abrahamic-family-house-what-to-know-as-the-complex-opens-to-all-visitors-offers-guided-tours-1.94167149>
- Specific examples of positive developments: For Human Fraternity, accessed 24 August 2023 - <https://www.forhumanfraternity.org/abrahamic-family-house/>
- Specific examples of positive developments: Arab News, 16 December 2021 - <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1988146/middle-east>
- Specific examples of positive developments: Vatican News, 2 August 2023 - <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/world/news/2023-08/uae-and-committee-for-human-fraternity-sign-mou-ahead-of-cop28.html>
- Specific examples of positive developments: COP28, 3 December 2023 - <https://www.cop28.com/en/news/2023/12/World-religious-leaders-come-together-to-mark-inauguration>
- Specific examples of positive developments: La Croix International, 20 February 2025 - <https://international.la-croix.com/religion/interfaith-course-in-uae-offers-model-for-religious-coexistence>
- Church spectrum today - additional information: IRFR 2023 - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-report-on-international-religious-freedom/united-arab-emirates/>
- Drivers of persecution description: IRFR 2023 UAE - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-report-on-international-religious-freedom/united-arab-emirates/>
- Drivers of persecution description: principal source of legislation - https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/United_Arab_Emirates_2004.pdf
- Drivers of persecution description: Freedom in the World 2024 UAE - <https://freedomhouse.org/country/united-arab-emirates/freedom-world/2024>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: HRW 2023, UAE country chapter) - <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/united-arab-emirates>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: GIWPS UAE profile - <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/country/united-arab-emirates/>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: Overview of Mixed Marriages and the Law in the UAE - <https://jamesberrylaw.com/article-details/1194/overview-of-mixed-marriages-and-the-law-in-the-uae>
- Persecution of other religious minorities: IRFR 2023 UAE - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-report-on-international-religious-freedom/united-arab-emirates/>