

World
Watch
Research

WWL 2026

Compilation of all main documents

(Excluding country dossiers)

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OpenDoors

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

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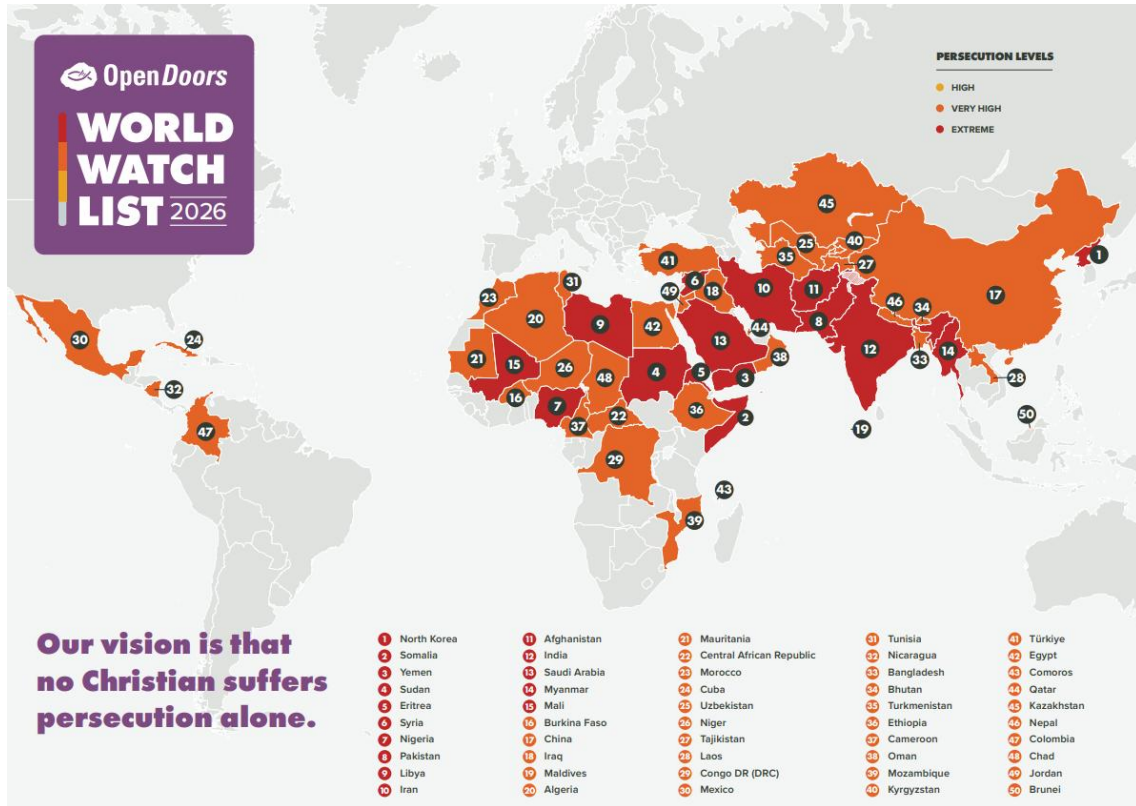
1. Brief notes on methodology, sources, definitions and copyright

- The WWL 2026 reporting period was 1 October 2024 - 30 September 2025.
- The latest update of WWL Methodology, WWL documentation and the Top 50 Country Dossiers can be found on the [Research and Reports](https://www.opendoors.org/research-reports/)¹ pages of www.opendoors.org.
- The collation of data and analysis presented by Open Doors in this document includes statistical information prepared by the World Christian Database (WCD): *Zurlo G A, ed., World Christian Database (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed April 2025)*.
- 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.
- This document is the property of World Watch Research (WWR), the research department of Open Doors International. It may be used and distributed free of charge, but please always acknowledge the source as: © Open Doors International.

¹ <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/>

2. WWL 2026: Map and table of scores and ranks

The Top 50 WWL 2026 country rankings are marked on the map below.



The WWL 2026 table of scores and ranks below has been divided up into three groups: Countries where Christians face extremely high (81-100 points – marked in red), very high (61-80 points – marked in orange) and high levels of persecution (41-60 points – marked in yellow – although only those scoring 50 or more points are presented here). For each country, the levels of pressure in the 5 Spheres of life and the violence score can be seen. A comparison is made with the total scores and ranks of WWL 2025. The final column on the right shows the actual (i.e., unrounded) increase or decrease in the number of points compared to WWL 2025.

1) Countries where Christians face extremely high persecution

WWL 2026 Rank	Country	1. Private Life	2. Family Life	3. Community Life	4. National Life	5. Church Life	6. Violence Score	Total WWL 2026 Score	WWL 2025 Rank	Total WWL 2025 Score	WWL 2026 - WWL 2025
1	North Korea	16.667	16.667	16.667	16.667	16.667	13.889	97	1	98	-0.5
2	Somalia	16.667	16.667	16.667	16.667	16.667	11.111	94	2	94	0.4
3	Yemen	16.667	16.667	16.667	16.667	16.667	9.815	93	3	94	-0.7
4	Sudan	14.062	14.183	15.451	15.972	16.094	16.667	92	5	90	2.4
5	Eritrea	14.583	14.904	15.465	15.885	15.899	13.333	90	6	89	1.1
6	Syria	14.583	14.583	14.263	15.104	14.909	16.111	90	18	78	12.0
7	Nigeria	13.542	14.103	14.583	14.909	14.792	16.667	89	7	88	0.6
8	Pakistan	13.438	13.862	14.984	15.039	12.969	16.296	87	8	87	-0.6
9	Libya	16.042	15.865	15.946	16.211	16.354	6.111	87	4	91	-4.8
10	Iran	14.896	14.583	13.462	15.951	16.51	11.111	87	9	86	0.2
11	Afghanistan	15.625	16.506	15.865	16.406	16.667	4.815	86	10	85	0.5
12	India	12.396	13.141	13.221	15.104	13.646	16.111	84	11	84	-0.1
13	Saudi Arabia	15.208	15.451	14.904	15.82	16.612	4.259	82	12	81	1.2
14	Myanmar	12.708	11.458	13.221	14.258	12.969	16.296	81	13	81	0.2
15	Mali	11.146	10.069	14.663	12.986	15.241	16.667	81	14	80	1.1

2) Countries where Christians face very high persecution

WWL 2026 Rank	Country	1. Private Life	2. Family Life	3. Community Life	4. National Life	5. Church Life	6. Violence Score	Total WWL 2026 Score	WWL 2025 Rank	Total WWL 2025 Score	WWL 2026 - WWL 2025
16	Burkina Faso	11.667	9.722	13.542	13.802	14.896	16.111	80	20	76	4.1
17	China	13.438	9.549	12.981	15.833	16.118	11.111	79	15	78	1.1
18	Iraq	14.167	14.423	14.343	14.909	13.906	7.222	79	17	78	1.4
19	Maldives	15.833	15.625	14.343	15.486	16.536	0.741	79	16	78	0.8
20	Algeria	14.688	14.497	12.179	14.931	16.094	4.815	77	19	77	-0.3
21	Mauritania	14.688	14.299	13.862	14.306	15.26	3.148	76	23	74	1.9
22	Central African Republic	10.312	8.594	13.889	12.431	14.035	16.111	75	27	72	3.4
23	Morocco	13.229	13.802	11.298	12.917	14.375	9.259	75	21	74	0.7
24	Cuba	13.229	8.654	13.862	13.346	15.052	9.259	73	26	73	0.4
25	Uzbekistan	14.583	12.66	13.622	12.435	15.573	3.704	73	25	73	-0.6
26	Niger	9.375	9.615	14.479	7.664	14.641	16.296	72	28	72	0.6
27	Tajikistan	14.375	12.821	12.901	13.607	14.635	3.333	72	39	68	3.5
28	Laos	11.979	10.897	13.381	13.997	13.906	7.407	72	22	74	-2.1
29	Congo DR (DRC)	8.021	7.86	13.889	11.111	14.525	16.111	72	35	70	1.7
30	Mexico	11.667	8.974	12.5	11.849	11.042	15.37	71	31	71	0.7
31	Tunisia	12.396	13.194	10.096	12.778	14.167	8.704	71	34	70	1.2
32	Nicaragua	12.604	7.692	13.702	13.411	14.167	9.074	71	30	71	-0.2
33	Bangladesh	12.604	10.657	12.901	10.742	10.885	12.778	71	24	74	-3.0
34	Bhutan	13.229	13.141	12.26	14.128	14.271	3.519	71	36	69	1.3
35	Turkmenistan	14.375	12.5	13.622	13.932	15.365	0.741	71	29	71	-0.4
36	Ethiopia	9.896	9.696	12.58	10.417	12.083	15.556	70	33	70	0.0
37	Cameroon	8.75	7.612	12.587	11.849	13.31	16.111	70	43	67	3.6
38	Oman	14.479	14.062	10.897	13.997	14.375	2.222	70	32	70	-0.2

WWL 2026 Rank	Country	1. Private Life	2. Family Life	3. Community Life	4. National Life	5. Church Life	6. Violence Score	Total WWL 2026 Score	WWL 2025 Rank	Total WWL 2025 Score	WWL 2026 - WWL 2025
39	Mozambique	9.271	8.507	13.889	8.403	12.5	16.111	69	37	68	0.2
40	Kyrgyzstan	13.542	10.337	11.939	11.914	12.865	7.593	68	47	66	1.9
41	Turkey	13.021	11.699	11.699	13.281	11.719	6.667	68	45	67	1.6
42	Egypt	12.812	13.702	12.099	12.565	10.938	5.741	68	40	68	-0.3
43	Comoros	12.708	13.976	11.218	12.431	14.167	3.148	68	42	67	0.6
44	Qatar	14.167	14.236	10.497	13.216	14.375	0.926	67	41	67	0.2
45	Kazakhstan	13.438	11.699	12.179	12.826	13.802	2.778	67	38	68	-1.7
46	Nepal	12.396	11.458	9.615	13.346	12.188	7.593	67	54	63	3.4
47	Colombia	11.042	7.692	12.74	11.523	10.521	12.778	66	46	66	0.0
48	Chad	11.042	8.173	10.176	9.896	10.26	16.111	66	49	65	0.2
49	Jordan	12.917	14.263	10.417	12.174	12.76	2.778	65	50	65	0.3
50	Brunei	14.792	15.144	10.737	9.831	14.01	0.741	65	48	66	-0.6
51	Malaysia	12.708	13.782	11.699	12.435	10.312	4.074	65	51	65	0.2
52	Azerbaijan	13.333	10.176	9.615	12.044	13.75	5.926	65	52	65	0.3
53	Tanzania	9.271	10.764	10.256	10.625	11.354	12.037	64	55	63	1.3
54	Kenya	10	8.814	11.372	7.986	10.729	14.815	64	53	64	-0.5
55	Vietnam	10.833	9.696	11.699	14.514	14.323	2.593	64	44	67	-2.9
56	Russian Federation	12.5	8.173	12.099	13.086	14.271	3.333	63	56	63	0.6
57	United Arab Emirates	13.333	13.368	9.455	11.263	12.884	2.222	63	60	61	1.8
58	Djibouti	12.292	12.587	12.674	10.091	12.135	2.037	62	57	61	0.4
59	Indonesia	10.521	11.378	10.657	11.133	9.948	8.148	62	59	61	0.6
60	Kuwait	13.125	13.628	9.375	11.979	12.171	0.926	61	58	61	0.0

3) Countries where Christians face high levels of persecution

WWL 2026 Rank	Country	1. Private Life	2. Family Life	3. Community Life	4. National Life	5. Church Life	6. Violence Score	Total WWL 2026 Score	WWL 2025 Rank	Total WWL 2025 Score	WWL 2026 - WWL 2025
61	Burundi	7.708	7.692	9.722	9.375	9.427	16.481	60	63	59	1.5
62	Rwanda	9.375	7.726	9.375	11.328	12.969	9.444	60	64	58	2.2
63	Palestinian Territories	13.125	13.281	10.256	10.677	12.135	0	59	62	60	-0.2
64	South Sudan	5.729	4.427	10.256	10.278	11.458	16.111	58	76	47	11.3
65	Sri Lanka	12.292	8.654	9.696	9.831	7.813	7.778	56	61	60	-4.4
66	Togo	9.167	7.051	10.89	7.083	11.732	9.444	55	66	54	1.2
67	Guinea	10.312	7.452	10.417	8.333	10.469	8.148	55	68	54	1.4
68	Bahrain	11.979	13.194	8.574	11.263	8.49	0.556	54	67	54	0.0
69	Venezuela	6.875	4.407	11.538	10.482	11.51	9.074	54	71	52	1.8
70	Angola	6.875	6.731	8.093	11.538	11.562	8.889	54	70	53	0.9
71	Ukraine	7.917	5.849	8.574	12.37	13.854	4.444	53	69	53	0.2
72	Uganda	8.646	5.609	8.013	6.706	9.01	15	53	72	52	1.0
73	Ivory Coast	11.979	6.49	8.654	5.924	8.021	10.926	52	73	51	1.3
74	Honduras	7.917	4.728	11.619	7.292	9.896	10.37	52	65	55	-2.9
75	Gambia	9.792	9.535	9.776	8.75	8.906	3.704	50	75	48	3.0

3. WWL 2026 Executive Summary

(This Executive Summary is taken – in slightly adapted form – from: “Striking at the Foundations: World Watch List International Advocacy Report 2026” available at: <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/about/advocacy/reports/>)

1. More than 388 million Christians face high levels of persecution and discrimination for their faith. In Open Doors’ World Watch List top 50 countries alone, 315 million Christians face very high or extreme levels of persecution and discrimination for their faith.
2. Of the 4,849 Christians killed worldwide during the World Watch List 2026 reporting period because of their Christian identity, 3,490 of them were in Nigeria – an increase from 3,100 in the previous year. Militant violence in sub-Saharan Africa has led to the deaths of thousands of Christians and has displaced many more. This extreme violence is enabled by a lack of capacity by national governments to protect their own citizens – whether in the context of civil war or against armed militants.
3. Attacks on Christian leaders have been reported in many countries, for instance in Latin America. Despite many Latin American countries being majority Christian, Christian leaders can be targeted, either by an authoritarian state such as Nicaragua seeking to silence dissent, or by armed groups seeking control, as in Colombia.
4. Again, a repeated theme has been the targeting of recent converts. Families, communities and local and national authorities place particular pressure on Christian converts in order to force them back into their original faith. Female converts, for example, can suffer domestic abuse or imprisonment, while local and national governments sometimes prohibit conversion, as in India and Iran.
5. In some contexts, Christians are targeted through attacks on their ability to meet together, as governments simply shut down local Christian gatherings. This year’s World Watch List continues to report on the impact of such closures in Algeria and in other parts of North Africa, as well as China. Such actions drive Christians into isolation.

6. Several countries in which Christians suffer high or extreme levels of persecution lie within conflict zones or in areas of great strategic significance. East Africa, bordering the Red Sea, is a key example. The region contains three of the countries in the top ten.
7. In some regions of the world, the longstanding presence of the Christian church leaves it dangerously exposed. Syria is a key example as it has climbed back into the top ten due to an increase in violence. The Christian population is concentrated in big cities and other locations that have been battlegrounds for strategic control of the country. Their churches are well known and despite a much-diminished population, Christian communities are large enough to be visible and are therefore targeted.

4. WWL 2026 Summary of Trends

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Syria

A surge of violence returns the country to the top 10, and the Christian population continues to diminish.

A year ago, Syria’s score was 78; this year it is 90, its highest ever. The 12-point jump is among the largest single-year increases registered by any country under the World Watch List methodology in place since 2014. The country ranks No. 6, up from No. 18 in 2025. It is the only newcomer to the Top 10.

The biggest reason was a sharp, 9-point increase in the score for violence. It was 7.0 in 2025 and rose to 16.1 in 2026. The maximum score possible is 16.7.

During the first 20 years of the World Watch List, Syria generally ranked near the bottom. It jumped up the list's rankings in 2013, reflecting the fact that the Islamic State group had, in 2012, established strongholds in the country's eastern regions. For four years Syria's violence score remained at extremely high levels, and the country vaulted into top 10.

After 2017, Syria's score and ranking drifted generally downward. Then in December 2024, the Assad regime fell, the jihadist group *Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham*, or HTS, took control of the government, and the situation for Christians once again changed dramatically.

That same month, in the city of Hama in Syria's midsection, unidentified gunmen attacked the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, destroying church property and religious symbols, and desecrating the graves in a nearby Christian cemetery. It was part of wider pattern of violence in Hama and beyond that would register in Syria's World Watch List score for 2026.

The resurgent violence included attacks on churches and an increase in the number of Christians killed. In June 2025, a suicide attack during services at Mar Elias Greek Orthodox Church in Damascus killed 22 Christians, wounded 63 and caused severe damage to the historic church building. The Syrian government attributed the attack to an IS cell.

For the 12-month period that ended 30 September, 2025, World Watch Research verified that at least 27 Syrian Christians were killed because of their faith, though the true number likely is greater. In the previous 12 months, the total was zero. This, combined with an increase in attacks on churches and forced closures of Christian schools, explains the sharp rise in the country's violence score in 2026.

The attack in Damascus prompted many Christians to stop attending church and churches to curtail their activities for security reasons. Anxiety about the potential for further attacks, and the rise of Islamic radicalism in the country, has driven believers to hide Christian symbols and avoid public displays of their faith.

Violence is not the only source of increasing pressure on Christians. The March 2025 interim constitution centralizes power in the president and establishes Islamic jurisprudence as the main source of legislation. Yet at this still-early post-Assad stage, political power remains fragmented, and the widespread disorder leaves room for radical and militant actors to target Christians, which has resulted in increasing pressure in other areas of Christian life aside from violence.

How is all this playing out? It depends on the region, where the situation on the ground for Christians varies. An important consideration is that Christian populations have been concentrated in big cities and other locations that have been important to the battles for strategic control of Syria. Pressure is greatest in Idlib and some other northern zones under the influence of IS cells and the Turkish military, which have controlled some border areas for 10 years. For the few Christians who have not already left these places, fear prevails.

Pressure is high in central Syria, such as Homs and the Wadi al-Nasara area, due to inadequate security and intimidation by extremists. And also in Syria's two largest cities, Damascus and Aleppo, where churches are under constant surveillance and endure bureaucratic delays affecting activities or renovations. Loudspeaker-equipped vehicles roam the Christian neighborhoods of Damascus, exhorting residents to convert to Islam. Churches have been posted with leaflets demanding conversion or payment of the jizya — a tax on non-Muslims to purchase their safety.

Kurdish rule in the far northeast, around the cities of Al-Hasakah and Qamishli, has maintained relatively safe — though not violence-free — conditions for Christians. Smaller Christian communities on the coast are moderately vulnerable to social pressure.

No matter where they live, however, Christians feel the impact of HTS rule. The law gives little recognition to Baptist, Evangelical and Pentecostal congregations, exposing them to significant pressure because of the popular perception that they evangelize Muslims and are sympathetic to the West. The historical Orthodox Church is not free of risk, either, because of its perceived ties to the previous regime.

Meanwhile, education is being reformed according to Islamic ideology, eliminating pre-Islamic history, removing female figures, and incorporating Quranic interpretations that, for example, describe Jews and Christians as “those who are damned and have gone astray.”

Even in the Kurd-administered areas where Christians generally enjoy more tolerant communal relations, authorities closed 14 private Christian schools for refusing a new Kurdish curriculum, leaving thousands of Christian children without education, and closing off their avenues to Syrian universities throughout the country.

Additional pressures such as these are reflected in Syria's score on the World Watch List. The subcategory scores that measure persecution felt in private life, the family, and as a citizen of Syria, are at their highest levels ever, helping to push its total score to its new record. (See table below for definitions)

Dwindling Christian population

It has been more than 10 years since the Islamic State group burst forth from eastern Syria and surged unchallenged across northern Iraq. Many thousands of Christians fled IS' take-no-prisoners advance, into Türkiye and into the autonomous Kurdistan region in northeast Iraq. The population of Christians in Syria and Iraq took a precipitous drop.

It is difficult to know exactly how many Christians remain, not only in Syria and Iraq, but throughout the Levant and the Holy Lands in the West Bank and Jordan, the cradle of Christianity — to say nothing of Gaza. Syria has not conducted a thorough census in more than 20 years. The World Christian Database, whose population figures are referenced by the World Watch List, is one reputable source of data but no single method has yet captured an exact accounting of the Christian population.

What’s left are eyewitness accounts, the testimony of church leaders and other Christians who remain in the region, and information shared with Open Doors by trusted partners. All of them report significant Christian departures. In Bethlehem, where ongoing Christian emigration already has put the viability of the remaining Christian community at risk, tens of families have left since Israel went to war against Hamas in Gaza more than two years ago, according to Open Doors sources. In Taybeh, north of Jerusalem, sources report multiple incidents of violence by Jewish radicals in the most recent year, and that the number of Christians now is 1,250, down from 1,500.

OD estimates about 300,000 Christians remain in Syria today — hundreds of thousands fewer than 10 years ago.

Their dwindling number leaves them more exposed. In the many areas where state-provided security is absent, Syrians may fall back upon tribal affiliations for some measure of protection. This is not an option for native Christian families, who generally have not belonged to tribes. Nor is it available to most converts, who are more likely to have a clan background, which is unlikely to come to their aid if their Christian faith were revealed. Throughout the country tribalism, intertwined with Islam, considers conversion from Islam to Christianity treason, leading to fierce opposition from families and local leaders.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Violence against Christians increases; weak governments leave Christians exposed in lawless zones

Overview of the scores

The Christian context in Syria is compelling, but the sheer scale of Christians across the 14 Sub-Saharan African countries on the World Watch List is orders of magnitude greater. Nigeria is the 6th-most populous country in the world; Ethiopia is 11th; together they are larger than the United States. These 14 countries comprise more than 721 million people, nearly half of whom identify as Christian. One of every 8 Christians on planet Earth lives in the 14 Sub-Saharan countries that appear on the 2026 World Watch List.

Over time, a growing number of countries across this vast region have gradually moved onto, and up, the World Watch List:

Sub-Saharan countries on the World Watch list	10 years ago	2026
Number	12	14
Number among the top 10	3	4
Average score	68	78

The primary reason for this persistent drift toward the top of the World Watch List has been an increase in the levels of violence:

Sub-Saharan Countries on the World Watch List	10 years ago	2026
Total of violence scores	12 countries Violence score max. = 16.7 $12 \times 16.7 = 200.4$ 98.71 (49% of max. possible)	14 countries Violence score max. = 16.7 $14 \times 16.7 = 233.8$ 206.12 (88% of max. possible)
Average violence score (max. = 16.7)	8.2	14.7
Number whose violence scores are among the 20 highest	6	12

To put a point on it: In 2026, there are only three countries on the list with the maximum 16.7 score for violence. All of them are sub-Saharan: Sudan, Nigeria, and Mali.

Nigeria's violence score has been at the highest possible for eight consecutive years, and nine of the past 11. Each year, thousands of Nigerian Christians are killed because of their faith, according to World Watch Research. Each year, the number may rise or fall by a thousand or more, but it remains such a great number that it no longer changes the country's violence score: Maximum.

With violence scores in Sub-Saharan Africa already at or near the ceiling, movement in the other categories of Christian life has become more noticeable. From 2025 to 2026, the combined total scores for the 14 sub-Saharan countries on the World Watch List increased by 19 points. More than half of that increase was produced by an increase in the pressure on Christians in their *national life* (See [table below](#) for definitions). Significant score increases for this category were concentrated almost entirely in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and the Central African Republic, and to a lesser extent, Sudan.

The same pattern is even more pronounced when we take a moment to expand the view and consider the wider Sub-Saharan region.

A decade ago, 13 Sub-Saharan countries had a score of at least 50. This year, there are 26. Of those 26 countries, 12 don't score high enough to be included on the 2026 World Watch List. What is happening in those 12 countries, which are in the same region?

In the most recent year, their combined total scores increased by 24 points. Nearly all of that increase was registered not only in the sphere of national life, but also church life and, most especially, community life. The intensifying of these effects was most acute in South Sudan.

By comparison, the combined total scores of the 14 Sub-Saharan countries that are included in the World Watch List increased by 20 points.

To sum it up: The persecution scores among Sub-Saharan countries have been increasing for a long time, pushing more of them closer to the World Watch List, onto the World Watch List, and even into the top 10.

The trend among these 14 countries, then, is defined not so much by a recent trauma of the kind unfolding in Syria, or by sudden new developments, as it is by the persistent metastasis of old, broad forces that affect, collectively, one-eighth of the world's Christian population.

Many of these forces are blind: poverty, weak governance, foreign influence, ethnic identity, food scarcity, and the competition for land driven by climate change. They negatively impact people of all faiths and none. In some of the more than 40 countries spanning Sub-Saharan Africa, Christians are free to worship and do not experience the level of hostilities evident in countries that are on the World Watch List. Even within some countries on the list, there are large numbers of Christians who live in relative tranquility compared to their compatriots.

Yet the research behind the World Watch List reveals a common thread. The strands of the thread include a weakened condition of the state; institutions that are failing or tightly constricted; and the collapse of the rule of law and basic governance so complete that Christians often have no meaningful legal recourse. All of it creates a vacuum that draws in opportunists, mainly armed Islamic militants, who operate with impunity.

Instability and insurgency

Among the 14 Sub-Saharan countries on the 2026 World Watch List, five have endured the overthrow of their government in the past five years. Two have suspended their constitutions, including Niger, where the military threw out the government in 2023. A third country, Eritrea, ruled by the same totalitarian regime since its founding, has not implemented a constitution it drafted 28 years ago. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the constitution is 10 years old, the government turned back a takeover attempt just two years ago. Instability permeates the region.

Armed conflicts are grinding in Sudan, the DRC, Somalia, Central African Republic, and Mozambique. Chad, already contending with the jihadist Boko Haram insurgency within its borders, is surrounded by conflict spilling over from neighboring countries, especially Sudan, where the civil war is moving into its third year.

Sudanese Christians are caught in the crossfire, targeted by both the Army and the opposing Rapid Support Forces, each of which is attempting to establish Islamic credentials to gain support among the overwhelmingly Muslim population.

For Sudan's Christians, it hardly matters who has the upper hand. In the two years that the RSF held the capital, Khartoum, it destroyed the Gereif West Bible School, the Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church, the Anglican Cathedral in Khartoum, and the Evangelical Church in Omdurman, among other Christian landmarks. The Sudanese Armed Forces drove the RSF out of the capital in March 2025 amid joyous declarations of liberation, only to bulldoze a Pentecostal church complex in July.

In Khartoum and beyond, hundreds of churches have been damaged, religious gatherings disrupted, and faith leaders detained. Christians face widespread discrimination in education, employment, and access to courts. Sudan's Christians have been targeted in conflict zones such as the Nuba Mountains, and the Darfur and Blue Nile regions. In January 2025, the United States accused the RSF of genocide.

The war has continued to drive Sudan's place on the World Watch List upward, to No. 4 in 2026. Its score since the war's onset has increased by 5 points, and the main reason is the increase in violence directed toward Christians, many of whom have taken their place among the 9.6 million internally displaced Sudanese — a number roughly equivalent to the populations of Bangkok or Greater London.

The DRC has endured more than five decades of conflict involving more than 120 militias and armed groups. Yet the country, 95 percent Christian and the largest by land area in Sub-Saharan Africa, did not appear on the World Watch List until 2021. A major reason is the emergence of the anti-government Allied Democratic Forces, linked to the Islamic State group since 2018, which has targeted Christian communities in eastern DRC, especially North Kivu, Ituri, and parts of South Kivu. A July 2025 ADF attack on Christian worshippers at a midnight vigil in Komanda killed at least 38 people. Fast-growing Baptist and Pentecostal churches are easy targets, and Christians in these regions wearing crosses or other religious symbols risk being killed on sight.

A resurgence of the M23 rebel group, reportedly backed by neighboring Rwanda, has only worsened conditions. M23 territorial gains around the border city of Goma in 2024–2025 has exacerbated instability for Christians. The DRC is ranked No. 29 with a score of 72, both the highest ever, yet its place on the list also is the continuation of a steady three-year climb. The forces working against Christians in this region are not new.

In Somalia, a resurgent Al-Shabaab, an al-Qaeda affiliate, is exploiting the fragmentation and tensions between the central government and regional states. This power vacuum has allowed the militant group to reclaim territory, particularly in the south near the Kenyan border, where the risk to Christians is most acute. All registered churches have been closed or destroyed. Converts from Islam are seen as traitors to clan and identity, often resulting in community-driven violence, including public execution as warnings to others. Christian survival depends on total secrecy, limited to the most private inner life. Parents confront an impossible dilemma: protect their children by concealing faith or risk losing them to indoctrination or retaliation. Only North Korea is more hostile to Christians; Somalia is ranked No. 2 on the World Watch List for the fourth consecutive year and has been among the top 3 since 2017.

A 2019 peace settlement among 14 armed groups inside the Central African Republic collapsed almost immediately, and since then, the militant factions have carved up control of the country, where the central government has little control outside the capital, Bangui. The militants benefit from the flow of fighters and weapons crisscrossing CAR to the five bordering countries that themselves are in active conflict. Accordingly, CAR's World Watch List score has increased by 9 points since 2021, reflecting the increase in violence but especially the increased pressure on Christian participation in *church life* and *national life* (See [table below](#) for definitions). Complicating matters are external actors such as Rwanda, the Russian mercenary Wagner Group

(rebranded locally as “Africa Corps”), and the Chadian military, each of which has increased its presence. Some rebel factions are now aligned with foreign agendas, including calls for an Islamic state, further destabilizing the situation in the majority-Christian country.

For nearly a decade the Cabo Delgado province of northern Mozambique has endured a violent insurgency led by the Islamic State-affiliated al-Sunnah wa Jama’ah, also known as Islamic State–Mozambique, which has explicitly targeted Christian communities. In July 2025, extremists entered Intutupue village and beheaded five Christians, accusing them of refusing to submit to jihadist rule. The attackers declared the killings a warning to other Christian communities in Cabo Delgado.

The militant presence is less concentrated in central Mozambique, but spillover violence and radicalization from Cabo Delgado have begun to affect Christian communities in isolated rural areas.

Nigeria

Nigeria simultaneously fits into the wider patterns of Christian persecution throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, and stands apart from it. The most populous African nation, home to the continent’s largest Christian population, it has always been included on the World Watch List, and has ranked in the Top 10 since 2021. Under the list’s methodology in place since 2014, Nigeria’s score has increased 27 percent. Since 2021 it is up nearly 5 percent, reaching 89 points in 2026, the highest ever. Nigeria is not confronting a direct frontal assault on its government, but it remains, mostly in its northern states but increasingly in the South, beset by a severe combination of ethno-religious hostility, Islamic militancy, weak governance, and organized crime.

What happens to Christians in Nigeria drives much of the global discourse about religious persecution more generally. Exhibit A: U.S. President Donald Trump’s November 2025 statement of outrage about — and hint of military action over — the large number of Nigerian Christians who are killed each year because of their faith.

Nigeria profoundly resonates around the world largely because it continues to be the global epicenter of deadly violence against Christians. Of the 4,849 Christians killed worldwide because of their Christian identity during the World Watch List 2026 period, 3,490 of them were Nigerian — an increase from 3,100 in the previous year. In just one incident, in June 2025, the Christian farming community of Yelwata in Benue state came under a 4-hour attack by Muslim ethnic Fulani militants who shot or burned to death 258 people, mostly women and children.

The Observatory for Religious Freedom in Africa, which tracks religiously-motivated violence and pressure in Sub-Saharan Africa, [noted in May 2025](#) that Nigeria is experiencing a convergence of threats from existing and newly emerging Islamic terror groups, including a resurgence of Fulani ethnic militia attacks in the country’s Middle Belt. To the northwest, the *Lakurawa* employs sophisticated weaponry to advance an radical Islamic agenda that is affiliated with *Jama’at Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin*, an expansionist *al-Qaeda* insurgency. Reports emerged in 2025 of a new group, *Mahmuda*, reported to be affiliated with the Islamic State group, attacking rural communities in the West. The Observatory reported that *Ansaru* terror cells are setting up operations in Kogi state, squarely between Nigeria’s capital, Abuja, and its heavily

Christian South.

In the Northeast, Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province in 2025 launched attacks on military facilities, demonstrating improving tactical capabilities. “Their ability to challenge the Nigerian military directly represents a significant shift in the security landscape,” the Observatory noted.

Entering his 3rd year in office in mid-2025, Nigerian President Bola Tinubu remained unsuccessful in his declared intent to take decisive action against violence in the country. About 3.4 million Nigerians remain internally displaced. Christians in camps in the Northeast report discrimination in aid distribution. In central and southern areas, most displaced Christians who had been driven out of their communities by armed attackers reported feeling safer in camps, but a significant number reported they feared their attackers would pursue and find them.

In contrast to Nigeria, huge Ethiopia appears to be a picture of stasis — another year of the same pressures upon the country’s 81 million Christians. Ethiopia’s World Watch List score, 70 points, is unchanged from a year ago. The scores in the six spheres of Christian life that make up the total — all exactly the same.

Yet behind those unchanging numbers is one of the most complex and volatile political landscapes in Africa. Identity politics, historical grievances, and contested narratives of nationhood fuel deep-rooted fragility and violent conflict. While some tensions take on religious overtones, the most destabilizing dynamics arise from disputes over governance structures, collective memory, territorial autonomy, and the nature of the Ethiopian state itself.

Ethiopia is unique among Sub-Saharan countries on the World Watch List because hardline elements within the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, historically linked to state power, is a prominent source of pressure on other Christians. Evangelicals and Protestants are often depicted as unpatriotic. Pentecostal and Baptist churches face significant hostility at the local level.

Other dynamics are more like the wider pattern in Sub-Saharan Africa. Despite a 2022 peace agreement that formally ended Ethiopia’s two-year civil war, the root causes remain unresolved, the truce has failed to yield lasting normalization, and violence in the Amhara and Oromia regions has intensified. In 2025, armed groups burned, demolished, or looted at least 25 churches in those regions. Worshipers were assaulted, religious materials destroyed, and entire congregations scattered. Christians were accused of refusing to support the militants.

Radical Islam is increasing its influence in the majority-Christian nation. In Muslim-majority regions such as Somali and parts of Oromia, Christian converts suffer mob attacks, church burnings, and systemic discrimination.

Weak government, lawless zones

The collapse of law and order in Ethiopia's conflict areas has made Christians easier targets. The same can be seen across most Sub-Saharan countries on the World Watch List: The breakdown of state authority has created lawless zones where crime and jihadist violence often go hand-in-hand. Criminals prey on Christians, often providing Islamic militant groups funds they put toward expanding their violent campaigns. Among the 14 Sub-Saharan countries on the World Watch List, six of them list *Islamic oppression* and *organized corruption and crime* as the two most important sources of Christian persecution. In four more counties, *Islamic oppression* and *organized corruption and crime* register, respectively, as the No. 1 and No. 3 sources of persecution.

Whether criminals and jihadists act for their own purposes or in ways that blend into each other, what they have in common is the assurance they are unlikely to face government consequences.

There was little response from the Nigerian military, for example, to the June 25 Fulani attack in Benue state.

In the Agadez region of Niger, armed militants abducted two Christian-linked humanitarian workers for ransom or religious coercion in 2025. Austrian development worker Eva Gretzmacher was kidnapped in January, followed by Swiss aid worker Claudia Abbt in April.

According to local researchers, amid the vast ungoverned spaces and porous borders of northern Mali armed extremist groups killed at least 10 Christians in small villages for refusing to comply with demands to abandon their faith or to support insurgents.

The longstanding absence of state authority in CAR has left Christians trapped between state failure and militant hostility. Continued clashes between government forces and rebel groups in 2025 resulted in casualties and widespread displacement. Armed groups increasingly targeted churches and Christian property in 2025. In areas controlled by jihadist groups, women and girls faced heightened risks of violence, including abductions, forced marriages and sexual exploitation.

In Burkina Faso, all the elements — instability, the collapse of state authority, the rise of jihadist insurgencies, crime — come together emphatically. The government was overthrown, twice, in 2022, and the constitution has been suspended ever since. State authority has collapsed in the North and East, where jihadist groups such as *Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin* and *Islamic State in the Greater Sahara* operate freely, burning churches, killing clergy, and enforcing strict Islamic codes. Ten percent of the country's population is displaced. On the World Watch List, Burkina Faso's violence score is near maximum.

Where they are unchecked by state authority, jihadists infiltrate local economies, trafficking weapons, minerals, and people. Accountability is lost in a fog of bribery and collusion among officials, security forces, and business networks. Christians are frequently extorted, abducted, or targeted for economic gain. Churches are raided or taxed.

Burkina Faso's total score in 2026 reached 80 points and its rank rose to 16th, both the highest ever. The two strongest sources of persecution were, as elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa, *Islamic oppression* and *organized corruption and crime*.

Oppressive government

There are places in Sub-Saharan Africa where Christian life is dominated not by armed insurgent conflict aimed at them, but by the repression of an authoritarian state. In 2025, security forces of Eritrea confiscated dozens of Christian-owned properties, including house churches, schools, small businesses, and community centers, accusing congregations of operating “illegally” or being influenced by foreign agendas. In a country where the regime equates religious independence with political dissent, non-traditional Christian groups such as Evangelical, Pentecostal, and Baptist churches are unrecognized by the state and face the harshest repression.

There is nothing new about this. Eritrea has never held an election. Independent media is banned. It is a militarized state where national service is mandatory and indefinite. Christians face a devastating dilemma: endure persecution and forced conscription at home, or flee through routes marked by trafficking, torture, and danger. Eritrea is one of the world’s most suffocating societies for Christians. Ranked No. 5 on World Watch List, its score has been steady in recent years, at 88, 89, and in 2026, touching a new high of 90.

The island country of Comoros, the smallest of the 14 sub-Saharan countries on the World Watch List and ranking toward the bottom, also has had a steady score for several years. Violence is well under control, but to inoculate itself against the spread of Islamic militancy, the government wields a heavy hand that disproportionately affects Christians. Open worship is banned, house churches are illegal, and Christian literature is restricted. Anti-proselytization laws are selectively applied. Baptists and Evangelicals face legal penalties for evangelism.

The global monitoring group Freedom House, which annually assigns a “Freedom in the World Score” to 180 countries, gave the 14 Sub-Saharan countries on the World Watch List an average rating 21 out of 100, which it regards as “not free,” meaning an ongoing repression of political rights and civil liberties.

Paradoxically, the highest rating among the group, a lukewarm 44, went to Nigeria, which is both one of the largest democracies in the world and also the most violent state for Christians, illustrating just how layered and complex the situation in Sub-Saharan Africa is. Persecution almost never stands alone; it operates inside a wider suffocation of rights. The problem is vast because it is enabled and reinforced by the collapse of freedoms: limits on association, censored media, weak courts, surveillance, and a steadily shrinking public sphere.

Driven to Isolation

Surveillance and heavy regulation splinter Christian fellowship and push churches underground

A close inspection of the 2026 World Watch List will reveal, among some countries, something subtle but real: a Church that is being driven to isolation less by violence and more by pressures in the other areas of Christian life. One example is Algeria.

On the surface, Algeria's total score — 77 points — remained the same in 2026. Beneath the surface, however, Algeria's score *shifted*. The first part of the shift was a decrease in the score for violence. One element of the violence score is the number of churches that are forcibly closed — and in Algeria, all Protestant churches had already been closed. Result: A drop in the violence score, and a Protestant church driven underground.

The second part of the shift was an increase in the persecution detected in other spheres of Christian life, especially *community life and national life*. (See [table below](#) for definitions).

The suffocation of Christian life in Algeria is not something that has been happening only in the most recent year. Since 2021, Algeria's total score has increased by seven points; only 10 percent of that increase has been due to violence; the rest has been driven by score increases in other spheres of Christian life, most especially in *national life and church life*.

The roots of this trend reach back to an even earlier time. The Algerian government formally recognized the Evangelical Protestant Church of Algeria in 1974, but in the more than 50 years since, authorities have not approved any of its requests for registration. A 2013 law required the church to re-apply for its non-government organization status, but the application has never been taken up, leaving the church in legal limbo.

More recently, state pressure on Protestant Christians in Algeria has intensified. In the most recent year, authorities increasingly targeted the church's online presence. In December 2024 it shut down a Christian Facebook group with more than 50,000 followers. Authorities have kept previously closed churches shut and ordered others to cease activities. As a result, all 47 churches comprising the Evangelical Protestant Church of Algeria have halted their activities, as have other independent churches. World Watch Research estimates more than 75 percent of Algerian Christians have lost their connection to fellowship. At the risk of prison time, those Christians who do gather now meet secretly in private homes or business properties.

Adding to the sense of isolation is the fact that most Algerian Christians are converts from Islam, who face strong opposition from families and communities, especially in rural, conservative, and Arab regions. Though Islamic militants lack broad support from Algerians, the government avoids challenging the religious convictions of the overwhelmingly Muslim population. The Israel-Gaza war has only intensified anti-Western — and, consequently, anti-Christian — biases.

To the west of Algeria in Mauritania, and to its east in Tunisia, similar dynamics are at work, to a somewhat lesser extent. Though violence in Mauritania is on the rise, it is the other five spheres of Christian life in that country that are mostly responsible for the country's 2-point increase in score in 2026.

The Mauritanian government strictly opposes proselytizing and hostility towards converts from Islam to Christianity is high. Abandoning Islam is punishable by death, and though the penalty is largely symbolic, it has a chilling effect. Pressure on church life, especially on converts, is increasing greatly, forcing the church to operate very carefully.

Since Tunisia's return to authoritarian leadership in 2021, security services have intensified surveillance of Tunisian Christians. In the most recent World Watch List period they took the unprecedented step of arresting several foreign Christians and searching their homes. Authorities increasingly linked their campaign against undocumented Sub-Saharan African Christian migrants to foreign Christians, bringing "human trafficking" charges as a pretext.

Several church gatherings of both Tunisian and Sub-Saharan African Christians were raided or forced to stop meeting. This has heightened pressure on Tunisian converts to Christianity, who already feel compelled by social hostility to conceal their faith. Fear of exposure has left many struggling with isolation and limited community support. The result is that scores in Tunisia's *national life* and *church life* spheres are on the rise, together accounting for slightly more than half of the 1-point increase in the county's total score in 2026.

A continent away, the trend toward Christian isolation also is playing out in China, though it is a vastly different country with very different tools at its disposal. China's World Watch List score rose to a record 79 points in 2026, but violence was not responsible for any of that increase. Instead, it was a surge in the score in the *national life* category that made the difference. In September 2025, the government published "Regulations on the Online Behavior of Religious Clergy," a list of 18 rules that, among other things, require religious leaders to support the Chinese Communist Party, to "guide religions to adapt to socialist society," and to preach only on licensed websites. The rules forbid the use of "religious topics and content to attract attention," and outreach to youth. No fundraising. No use of live video on social-media apps. No Bible apps or distribution of religious publications. No talk about "healing."

Regulations like these, implemented in a strict and uniform manner, are making it increasingly difficult for churches to avoid having to fall in line with official Communist ideology.

The online rules implemented in 2025 fit into a string of Chinese regulations implemented since 2018 that govern internet use, social media, non-government organizations, and religious venues. Official recognition is granted only to churches belonging to government-sanctioned collectives — Protestant churches in the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, and Catholic parishes within the Patriotic Catholic Association. Under the pressure, illegal independent house churches — which in recent memory met in large gatherings in commercial spaces — have splintered into small private home meetings of 10-20 people in covert locations with minimal pastoral leadership. Unregistered church pastors increasingly face accusations of economic crimes and fraud for collecting offerings, or "picking quarrels and provoking trouble."

Finally, a quick look beyond the 50 countries on the World Watch List reveals that Vietnam, ranked 55th, also fits into the pattern. Its total score decreased in 2026, entirely because of a drop in its violence score. Meanwhile, the scores in Vietnam's *private life*, *national life* and *church life* categories increased.

Pressure in Vietnam has been increasing for several years. In 2021 the government moved oversight of religious affairs into the Interior Ministry, the state's core security apparatus. A 2023 government report, while not official policy, served to marginalize independent churches. A 2024 decree imposed stricter regulations, requiring detailed reporting of church personnel, finances, and activities.

Overall, the trend in Vietnam points to tighter bureaucratic and legal control over religious life. Authorities now have broader powers to suspend religious gatherings for vaguely defined violations, with particularly harsh consequences for ethnic minority Christians such as the Montagnards and Hmong, who experience compounded vulnerability due to their faith and ethnic identity.

*Explanations of spheres of Christian life

Source: World Watch List methodology

Sphere	Definition	A small sample of questions used by World Watch Research
Private Life	<p>The inner life of a Christian, the <i>forum internum</i>, the freedom of thought and conscience.</p> <p>Guiding question “How free has a Christian been to relate to God one-on-one in his/her own space?” This is not limited to the private home but can also apply to prison or a walk in the woods, etc. This is irrespective of who the agent challenging this freedom might be.</p>	<p>Has conversion been opposed, forbidden, or punishable, including conversion from one type of Christianity to another?</p> <p>Has it been risky for Christians to conduct acts of Christian worship by themselves (e.g., prayer, Bible reading, etc.)?</p> <p>Has it been risky for Christians to display Christian images or Symbols?</p> <p>Has it been risky for Christians to speak about their faith with Immediate family members?</p>
Family Life	<p>Pertaining to the nuclear and extended family of a Christian.</p> <p>Guiding questions “How free has a Christian been to live his/her Christian convictions within the circle of the family, and how free have Christian families been to conduct their family life in a Christian way?”</p> <p>“How much have Christians been discriminated against, harassed or in any other way persecuted by their own families?”</p>	<p>Has registering the birth, wedding, death, etc. of Christians been hindered or made Impossible?</p> <p>Have burials of Christians been hindered or coercively performed with non-Christian rites?</p> <p>Have parents been hindered in raising their children according to their Christian beliefs?</p> <p>Have spouses of converts been put under pressure (successfully or unsuccessfully) by others to divorce?</p>

<p>Community Life</p>	<p>The interaction of Christians with their respective local communities beyond the family level and within the local level, including the workplace, business, health care, education, and local public life and civic order.</p> <p>Guiding question “How free have Christians been individually and collectively to live out their Christian convictions within the local community (beyond church life), and how much pressure has the community put on Christians by acts of discrimination, harassment or any other form of persecution?”</p>	<p>Have Christians been harassed, threatened, or obstructed in their daily lives for faith-related reasons (e.g., for not meeting majority religion or traditional dress codes, beard codes etc.)?</p> <p>Have Christians been hindered in sharing community resources because of their faith (e.g., clean drinking water)?</p> <p>Have Christians had less access to health care because of their faith?</p> <p>Have Christians been hindered in the operation of their businesses for faith-related reasons (e.g., access to loans, subsidies, government contracts, client boycotts)?</p>
<p>National Life</p>	<p>The interaction between Christians and the nation they live in. This includes rights and laws, the justice system, national public administration, and public life.</p> <p>Guiding question “How free have Christians been individually and collectively to live their Christian convictions beyond their local community, and how much pressure has the legal system put on Christians, and how much pressure have agents of supra-local national life put on Christians by acts of misinformation, discrimination, harassment or any other form of persecution?”</p>	<p>Does the Constitution or basic national or state law limit freedom of religion as formulated in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?</p> <p>Have Christians been barred from public office, or has promotion been hindered for faith-related reasons?</p> <p>Have Christians been hindered in expressing their views or opinions in public?</p> <p>Have Christians been subject to smear campaigns or hate speech?</p> <p>Have Christians accused in court been deprived of equal treatment?</p>

<p>Church Life</p>	<p>The collective exercise by Christians of freedom of thought and conscience, particularly with regards to uniting with fellow Christians in worship, life, service, and public expression of their faith without undue interference. It also pertains to properties held or used by Christians for these purposes.</p> <p>Guiding question “How have restrictions, discrimination, harassment or other forms of persecution infringed upon these rights and this collective life of Christian churches, organizations and institutions?”</p>	<p>Have activities of churches been monitored, hindered, disturbed, or obstructed?</p> <p>Have churches been hindered from organizing Christian activities inside/outside their place of worship?</p> <p>Have churches been hindered from openly integrating converts?</p> <p>Have pastors or other Christian leaders, or their family members, been special targets of harassment for faith-related reasons?</p> <p>Have churches been hindered in establishing, managing, maintaining, and conducting schools, or charitable, humanitarian, medical, social or cultural organizations, institutions, and associations?</p>
<p>Violence</p>	<p>The deprivation of physical freedom or as bodily harm to Christians or damage to their property. It includes severe threats.</p> <p>Guiding question “How many cases of such violence have there been?”</p>	<p>How many Christians have been killed for faith-related reasons?</p> <p>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?</p> <p>How many Christians have been abducted for faith-related reasons?</p> <p>How many Christians have been forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons?</p>

Some Good News

▷ In **Bangladesh** there was relative calm in the most recent reporting period, after the unrest that led to the overthrow of the Prime Minister in August 2024. This meant the violence score for Bangladesh, which was nearing maximum a year ago, dropped by 20 percent on the 2026 World Watch List. Following the unrest in which the Christian minority was significantly affected, the leader of the interim government, Muhammad Yunus, has made a number of public statements about the importance of religious freedom. His advocacy, however, faces a test in next month's scheduled elections, which may reveal a growing Islamic influence and potentially lead to further restrictions and persecution.

▷ In **Mexico** and **Colombia**, there is growing recognition – from media, civil society, and some state actors – of the specific risks faced by religious leaders in areas affected by organized crime and armed groups. This has elevated the visibility of Christian vulnerability among the public. In **Nicaragua** and **Cuba**, where the main pressure comes from state authorities, international monitoring of violations of religious freedom, and advocacy for the affected churches and religious leaders, has clearly intensified, keeping these concerns on the global agenda. Across all four countries, churches continue to show remarkable resilience and creativity in adapting their ministries and community work so they can keep serving vulnerable populations despite a very restrictive environment.

▷ More than eight years after pastor Raymond Koh was kidnapped from his car, a court in **Malaysia** ordered the government to re-open its investigation into his disappearance.

Koh's wife, Susanna, sued the Malaysian government and several senior police officers in 2020 for negligence in the investigation. In November 2025 — just outside the 2026 World Watch List research window — the High Court in Kuala Lumpur ruled that one or more police officials were involved in the abduction, misused their power, and acted “oppressively and arbitrarily.” It ordered the Malaysian government to pay a trust in Susanna Koh's name an amount equivalent to U.S. \$2,400 for every day her husband has been missing — a fine that amounted to more than \$7.4 million at the time of the ruling.

Pastor Koh has not been seen since the February 2017 abduction in the suburb of Kelana Jaya just outside of the Malaysian capital. The judge ordered the police to reopen their investigation into the case and provide reports to the Attorney General on their progress every two months.

▷ Outside the top 50 countries on the World Watch List, **Sri Lanka** has dropped 4 points and four places to rank 65th in 2026, mostly due to a drop in the scores in the *community life* and *national life* spheres. The NPP government under President Dissanayake (elected in 2024) does not give priority to any one religious group, which has led to an improvement in the treatment of Christians. Discriminatory practices from government agents has reduced, and access to justice has become increasingly possible. At the family level, meanwhile, there has been little change in negative attitudes toward conversion; the score in the *private* life sphere remains very high.

5. WWL 2026: Country religious statistics

Open Doors estimates for the number of Christians have been used for 12 countries. In all other cases, WCD estimates have been used (Zurlo G A, ed., World Christian Database, Leiden/Boston, Brill, accessed April 2025). The red shading highlights countries scoring 81-100 points in WWL 2025, the orange highlights the score-range 61-80 points and the yellow 50-59 points.

WWL 2026 Top 50 alphabetical

WWL 2026 Rank	Country	Total population (UN 2024 estimate as compiled by WCD; accessed April 2025)	Number of Christians (WCD, accessed April 2025)	Number of Christians (OD estimate)
11	Afghanistan	44,516,000		thousands
20	Algeria	46,922,000	156,000	
33	Bangladesh	176,422,000		950,000
34	Bhutan	797,000	19,300	
50	Brunei	459,000	53,000	
16	Burkina Faso	24,437,000	6,124,000	
37	Cameroon	30,151,000	17,443,000	
22	Central African Republic	6,097,000	4,470,000	
48	Chad	19,426,000	5,998,000	
17	China	1,424,382,000		96,700,000
47	Colombia	52,611,000	49,876,000	
43	Comoros	883,000	4,600	
29	Congo DR (DRC)	109,076,000	104,159,000	
24	Cuba	11,153,000	6,874,000	
42	Egypt	116,275,000	10,184,000	
5	Eritrea	3,890,000	1,713,000	
36	Ethiopia	132,939,000	81,388,000	
12	India	1,454,607,000	72,326,000	
10	Iran	90,411,000		800,000
18	Iraq	47,550,000		187,000
49	Jordan	11,442,000		170,000
45	Kazakhstan	20,056,000	3,594,000	

40	Kyrgyzstan	6,943,000	207,000	
28	Laos	7,838,000	219,000	
9	Libya	7,038,000	36,300	
19	Maldives	515,000		hundreds
15	Mali	24,759,000	867,000	
21	Mauritania	5,128,000	11,100	
30	Mexico	130,301,000	124,066,000	
23	Morocco	38,571,000	37,400	
39	Mozambique	35,835,000	19,937,000	
14	Myanmar	55,337,000	4,632,000	
46	Nepal	31,577,000	1,480,000	
32	Nicaragua	7,237,000	6,832,000	
26	Niger	29,316,000	74,900	
7	Nigeria	234,574,000	107,275,000	
1	North Korea	26,320,000		400,000
38	Oman	4,781,000	191,000	
8	Pakistan	249,949,000	4,785,000	
44	Qatar	2,757,000	390,000	
13	Saudi Arabia	37,990,000	2,295,000	
2	Somalia	19,282,000		hundreds
4	Sudan	50,615,000	2,201,000	
6	Syria	25,427,000		300,000
27	Tajikistan	10,517,000	55,000	
31	Tunisia	12,666,000	23,000	
41	Turkey	86,696,000	251,000	
35	Turkmenistan	6,677,000	95,000	
25	Uzbekistan	36,159,000	395,000	
3	Yemen	36,000,000		a small number

WWL 2026 Ranks 51 - 75 alphabetical

WWL 2026 Rank	Country	Total population (UN 2024 estimate as compiled by WCD; accessed April 2025)	Number of Christians (WCD, accessed April 2025)	Number of Christians (OD estimate)
70	Angola	38,943,000	35,666,000	
52	Azerbaijan	10,510,000	231,000	
68	Bahrain	1,512,000	184,000	
61	Burundi	13,948,000	13,066,000	
58	Djibouti	1,168,000	12,200	
75	Gambia	2,911,000	138,000	
67	Guinea	14,873,000	502,000	
74	Honduras	10,924,000	10,403,000	
59	Indonesia	282,004,000	36,181,000	
73	Ivory Coast	30,344,000	11,497,000	
54	Kenya	57,324,000	45,590,000	
60	Kuwait	4,387,000	672,000	
51	Malaysia	35,028,000	3,222,000	
63	Palestinian Territories	5,621,000	42,100	
56	Russian Federation	143,494,000	117,816,000	
62	Rwanda	14,737,000	13,423,000	
64	South Sudan	11,473,000	6,991,000	
65	Sri Lanka	22,000,000		2,027,000
53	Tanzania	71,428,000	38,468,000	
66	Togo	9,470,000	4,696,000	
72	Uganda	51,285,000	42,889,000	
71	Ukraine	38,759,000	33,069,000	
57	United Arab Emirates	9,665,000	1,243,000	
69	Venezuela	29,926,000	27,304,000	
55	Vietnam	100,104,000	9,476,000	

6. WWL 2026: Total number of persecuted Christians and derived statements

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1) Advice for communication

When the number of Christians living in situations of persecution or discrimination is estimated for all countries that have scored 41 points or more, it comes to 388.9 million. For the WWL 2026 Top 50 countries, it comes to 315.7 million. For communication purposes and to take account of the margin of uncertainty, the total number has been rounded off to 388 million and 315 million.

WWL 2026	Total number of Christians	Rounded off for communication purposes
All countries scoring 41 points or more	388,877,500	388 M
Top 50 countries	315,731,650	315 M
Ranks 51 to 81	73,145,825	73 M

Please use the following statement for WWL 2026 communication to the general public (Please note that the qualifier “more than” is necessary, because the estimates were limited to countries that scored 41 points or more in WWL 2026. There are other countries that did not score 41 points but where there are groups of Christians that live in comparably difficult situations):

- **“More than 388 million Christians face high levels of persecution and discrimination for their faith.”**
- **“In Open Doors’ World Watch List top 50 countries alone, 315 million Christians face very high or extreme levels of persecution and discrimination for their faith.”**

That means:

Worldwide - 1 in 7
In Africa - 1 in 5
In Asia – 2 in 5
In Latin America – 1 in 12

See sections 3 and 4 below for more information concerning the “one in ...” statements.

2) Explanation for the use of the qualifier “high”

In WWL-Methodology, “high” levels of persecution or discrimination occur when the score-range is 41 to 60 points. Above this there are two other categories: “very high” (61-80 points) and “extreme” (81-100 points). All countries that scored at least 41 points were taken into account for estimating the number of persecuted Christians in the world. To define the number of persecuted Christians in each of those countries, the level of persecution or discrimination was estimated for regions within that country, based on the overall country questionnaire. It would have been better if a questionnaire were completed for each region separately, but that would simply involve too much work. If the estimate of the level of persecution or discrimination for a specific region within the country came within the range of “high” and above, the Christian population in that region was counted as persecuted Christians. The total of such regions made up the number of persecuted Christians in that country. Alternatively, if in a country there were serious differences in persecution or discrimination of different Categories of Christianity or even Christian denominations, the number of most affected category or denomination would be chosen, and sometimes reduced by a certain percentage.

In [WWL-Methodology](#) (Complete World Watch List Methodology, updated October 2025, page 57), “high” is generally defined as “where living as a Christian means that although there may be a tolerated church which enjoys some freedom, in practice prominent Christians are targeted, churches themselves are subject to significant restrictions, and the culture remains largely hostile to a Christian presence in such areas as education and employment.” It can also be that there is a lot of violence targeting Christians and churches, while the overall pressure is still limited.

Thus, it does not mean that all Christians in those situations are directly facing high levels of persecution. It means they are living in regions within their countries (or are part of Christian denominations) where the seriousness of the persecution situation is estimated to be ‘high’ (or higher).

Again, please do not take out the qualifier “high”. This is crucial, since there are other definitions of persecution that would give a considerably higher figure.

3) The basis for statements derived from the 388 million number

This document now further elaborates upon the meaning of the “388 million in the world” number. The basis for the statements to follow can be found in the table below:

WWL 2026	Total population	Total no. of Christians	No. of persecuted Christians	1 in x Christians persecuted	WWL 2025	WWL 2025
					No. of persecuted Christians	1 in x Christians persecuted
AFRICA	1,530,031,000	749,354,000	150,769,800	5.0	145,846,400	5.0
ASIA	4,816,249,000	412,712,000	181,259,500	2.3	189,977,200	2.2
EUROPE	741,045,000	549,301,000	5,164,800	106.0	7,152,000	79.0
LATIN AMERICA	674,862,000	617,974,000	51,683,300	12.0	39,151,000	15.7
NORTHERN AMERICA	383,161,000	271,613,000		N/A		N/A
OCEANIA	46,639,000	30,228,000		N/A		N/A
TOTAL	8,191,988,000	2,631,182,000	388,877,400	6.8	380,854,700	6.9

4) Statements derived from the 388 million number

The following statements include the number of persecuted Christians in all countries scoring at least 41 points:

“One in every 7 Christians live in situations of at least ‘high’ levels of persecution or discrimination for their faith.”

(In WWL 2025 this was 1/7; in WWL 2024 this was 1/7; in WWL 2023 1/7; in WWL 2022: 1/7; in WWL 2021: 1/8; in WWL 2020: 1/8; in WWL 2019: 1/9)

And:

“In Africa one in every 5 Christians live in situations of at least ‘high’ levels of persecution or discrimination for their faith.”

(In WWL 2025 this was 1/5; in WWL 2024 this was 1/5; in WWL 2023 1/5; in WWL 2022: 1/5; in WWL 2021: 1/6; in WWL 2020: 1/5; in WWL 2019: 1/6)

“In Asia two in every 5 Christians live in situations of at least ‘high’ levels of persecution or discrimination for their faith.”

(In WWL 2025 this was 2/5; in WWL 2024 this was 2/5; in WWL 2023 2/5; in WWL 2022: 2/5; in WWL 2021: 2/5; in WWL 2020: 2/5; in WWL 2019: 1/3)

“In Latin America one in every 12 Christians live in situations of at least ‘high’ levels of persecution or discrimination for their faith.”

(In WWL 2025 this was 1/16; in WWL 2024 this was 1/16; in WWL 2023 1/15; in WWL 2022: 1/15; in WWL 2021: 1/12; in WWL 2020: 1/21; in WWL 2019: 1/21)

Please note: It is not possible to provide a public version of the breakdown of the numbers of persecuted Christians per country due to this being sensitive information.

7. WWL 2026 Article on violence

Data on violence perpetrated against Christians in all countries scoring 41+ points in the reporting period 1 October 2024 – 30 September 2025

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6.10	47
6.11	48
6.12	50

1. Summary data of Questionnaire Block 6 questions and WWL comparisons

In the overview table below it can be seen how the destructive impact of violence against Christians in the WWL 2026 reporting period compares to foregoing WWLs. Please also note that - as in all WWL reporting periods - the violence data reported and included below is an absolute minimum figure. In reality, it is very likely that the numbers were higher than those listed here.

2.

Questions Block 6 Violence	WWL 2026	WWL 2025	WWL 2024	WWL 2023	WWL 2022	WWL 2021	WWL 2020	WWL 2019	WWL 2018
6.1 Christians killed for faith-related reasons	4,849	4,476	4,998	5,621	5,898	4,761	2,983	4,305	3,066
6.2 Churches or public Christian properties attacked	3,632	7,679	14,766	2,110	5,110	4,488	9,488	1,847	793
6.3 and 6.4 Christians detained without trial, arrested, sentenced and imprisoned	4,712	4,744	4,125	4,542	6,175	4,277	4,811	3,150	1,905
6.5 Christians abducted	3,302	3,775	3,906	5,259	3,829	1,710	1,052		
6.6 and 6.7 Christians raped or otherwise sexually harassed, or forced to marry non-Christians	5,202	3,944	3,231	2,843					

Questions Block 6 Violence	WWL 2026	WWL 2025	WWL 2024	WWL 2023	WWL 2022	WWL 2021	WWL 2020	WWL 2019	WWL 2018
6.8 Christians otherwise physically or mentally abused (including beatings and death threats)	67,843	54,780	42,849	29,411					
6.9 and 6.10 Houses, shops, businesses or other property of Christians attacked	25,794	28,368	27,171	6,757					
6.11 and 6.12 Christians forced to leave their homes, go into hiding in-country or leave the country	224,129	209,771	295,120	139,307					

2. Summary statements focusing on all WWL 2026 violence data

The statements below are based on the tables giving detailed violence data per country in Section 4 of this document. Besides the actual recorded numbers, it is important to note that several 'symbolic numbers' (10*, 100*, 1000*, 10,000* or 100,000*) were used. Nearly all totals have some symbolic numbers included, as the tables in Section 4 show. It follows that the numbers presented are (much) lower than in reality.

- **The total number of Christians killed for their faith increased from 4,476 cases in WWL 2025 to 4,849 in the WWL 2026 reporting period.**

- **The total number of churches or public Christian properties attacked in differing forms of severity, decreased from 7,679 cases in WWL 2025 to 3,632 in the WWL 2026 reporting period.**
- **The total number of Christians detained for their faith decreased from 3,604 cases in WWL 2025 to 3,414 in the WWL 2026 reporting period.**
- **The total number of Christians sentenced for their faith increased from 1,140 cases in WWL 2025 to 1,298 cases in the WWL 2026 reporting period.**
- **The total number of Christians abducted for faith-related reasons decreased from 3,775 cases in WWL 2025 to 3,302 in the WWL 2026 reporting period.**
- **The number of cases of Christians raped or otherwise sexually harassed for faith-related reasons increased from 3,123 cases in WWL 2025 to 4,055 in the WWL 2026 reporting period.** Reporting was particularly difficult because of issues of trauma and cultural tabus.
- **The same applies for cases of forced marriages of Christians to non-Christians: The number increased from 821 cases in WWL 2025 to 1,147 in the WWL 2026 reporting period.**
- **The number of cases of Christians who have been otherwise physically or mentally abused for faith-related reasons (including beatings and death threats) increased from 54,780 cases in WWL 2025 to 67,843 in the WWL 2026 reporting period.** The high level of insecurity and fear caused by the incessant flow of attacks on Christians and Christian communities by Islamic extremists and other radical religious groups in many Sub-Saharan and Asian countries, is not included in this number.
- **There were 20,084 cases of houses of Christians or other property (excluding shops) attacked in WWL 2025. This number decreased to 17,609 in the WWL 2026 reporting period.**
- **There were also cases of shops or businesses of Christians being attacked: The number decreased from 8,284 cases in WWL 2025 to 8,185 in the WWL 2026 reporting period.**
- **Because of violence – and also pressure (especially where converts had to leave their homes and communities) – the number of Christians forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons increased from 183,709 cases in WWL 2025 to 201,427 in the WWL 2026 reporting period.**
- **Sometimes there was no choice for Christians but to leave their country because of persecution. The number of Christians forced to leave their country for faith-related**

reasons decreased from 26,062 cases in WWL 2025 to 22,702 in the WWL 2026 reporting period.

3. Introductory notes concerning detailed violence data per country

The WWL 2026 data presented in this document is based wherever possible on direct counting. In several cases, where it is very hard to know exact numbers and it is clear from indirect sources that there have been violent incidents occurring against Christians, numbers have been otherwise defined. See the discussion below. In such cases, the World Watch Research team has always estimated conservatively.

The tables presented below do not pretend to give a complete picture. The exact details of what is happening to Christians in a country are difficult to obtain: For instance, especially in countries where there is conflict or violence or a high level of secrecy, the media are often seriously curtailed by the regime or influenced by social actors. Please see the WWL 2026 Top 50 Country Dossiers for more details. These are made publicly available in mid-January 2026 on the Open Doors website: <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/>.

The data on violence presented is for all countries scoring 41 or more points in the WWL 2026 reporting period. There may be cases of violence in countries scoring 40 points or less, but these are not included here. For each question in Block 6, country data is shown. However, mainly for security reasons, there are a number of countries where the data on violence is presented but the names of those countries are not individually revealed. The data for these countries is indicated with “NN”. (This also includes those countries scoring more than 41 points but less than 50 in WWL 2026 analysis.)

In the tables below, the column with the heading “Symbolic Round Number” indicates with the word ‘TRUE’ where a symbolic round number has been used; this is because the number of cases has been impossible to count exactly. Possible symbolic round numbers are 10, 100, 1000, 10,000 or 100,000. A symbolic number of 10 could in reality be (much) more than 10, but the real number is uncertain; the same applies for the other symbolic numbers.

A further disclaimer: Even where it was possible to count exact numbers, it has to be understood that what has been counted is very often the absolute minimum. Much violence against Christians goes unnoticed and/or unreported.

4. Detailed WWL 2026 Block 6 violence data per country

6.1	How many Christians have been killed for faith-related reasons (including state sanctioned executions)? TOTAL: 4,849
-----	--

From high to low:

Country	Question Number	Number	Symbolic Round Number
Nigeria	6.1	3490	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.1	339	
Burkina Faso	6.1	150	
NN	6.1	100	TRUE
Central African Republic	6.1	100	TRUE
Cameroon	6.1	100	TRUE
Myanmar	6.1	99	
Mozambique	6.1	88	
Chad	6.1	47	
Ethiopia	6.1	40	
Mexico	6.1	39	
Syria	6.1	27	
Pakistan	6.1	24	
Sudan	6.1	23	
Niger	6.1	22	
NN	6.1	20	
South Sudan	6.1	19	
Uganda	6.1	17	
India	6.1	16	
Mali	6.1	15	
Kenya	6.1	11	
Burundi	6.1	11	
NN	6.1	10	TRUE
Eritrea	6.1	10	TRUE
Colombia	6.1	8	
Togo	6.1	5	
Iraq	6.1	3	
Bangladesh	6.1	3	
Tanzania	6.1	3	
Honduras	6.1	3	
NN	6.1	2	
Egypt	6.1	1	
Jordan	6.1	1	
Indonesia	6.1	1	

Venezuela	6.1	1
Ivory Coast	6.1	1
TOTAL		4849

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? TOTAL: 3,632
-----	--

From high to low:

Country	Question Number	Number	Symbolic Round Number
Nigeria	6.2	1000	TRUE
China	6.2	1000	TRUE
Niger	6.2	109	
Sudan	6.2	100	TRUE
Syria	6.2	100	TRUE
Burkina Faso	6.2	100	TRUE
Central African Republic	6.2	100	TRUE
Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.2	100	TRUE
Burundi	6.2	100	TRUE
Rwanda	6.2	100	TRUE
Angola	6.2	100	TRUE
India	6.2	82	
Nicaragua	6.2	55	
Mozambique	6.2	49	
Mexico	6.2	40	
South Sudan	6.2	36	
Myanmar	6.2	35	
Iran	6.2	28	
Colombia	6.2	22	
Ethiopia	6.2	18	
Indonesia	6.2	18	
Cuba	6.2	17	
Uganda	6.2	16	
Tanzania	6.2	15	
Kenya	6.2	15	
Venezuela	6.2	14	
Honduras	6.2	14	
Pakistan	6.2	12	
Sri Lanka	6.2	12	
Morocco	6.2	11	
NN	6.2	10	TRUE
Mali	6.2	10	TRUE

Bangladesh	6.2	10	
Cameroon	6.2	10	TRUE
Kyrgyzstan	6.2	10	TRUE
Nepal	6.2	10	TRUE
Chad	6.2	10	TRUE
Azerbaijan	6.2	10	TRUE
Guinea	6.2	10	TRUE
Ivory Coast	6.2	10	TRUE
NN	6.2	10	TRUE
NN	6.2	10	TRUE
NN	6.2	8	
Laos	6.2	8	
Tunisia	6.2	8	
Turkey	6.2	8	
Eritrea	6.2	6	
NN	6.2	5	
Togo	6.2	5	
Ukraine	6.2	5	
NN	6.2	5	
NN	6.2	5	
NN	6.2	4	
NN	6.2	3	
Tajikistan	6.2	3	
Comoros	6.2	3	
Gambia	6.2	3	
Libya	6.2	2	
NN	6.2	2	
Uzbekistan	6.2	2	
Egypt	6.2	2	
Russian Federation	6.2	2	
NN	6.2	1	
Iraq	6.2	1	
Algeria	6.2	1	
NN	6.2	1	
United Arab Emirates	6.2	1	
TOTAL		3632	

6.3	<p>How many Christians have been detained without trial for faith-related reasons?</p> <p>TOTAL: 3,414</p>
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From high to low:

From high to low:

Country	Question Number	Number	Symbolic Round Number
India	6.3	1622	
Eritrea	6.3	300	
Iran	6.3	281	
Myanmar	6.3	129	
NN	6.3	100	TRUE
Sudan	6.3	100	TRUE
China	6.3	100	TRUE
Central African Republic	6.3	100	TRUE
Tanzania	6.3	64	
Cuba	6.3	56	
Bangladesh	6.3	27	
Egypt	6.3	27	
Ukraine	6.3	26	
Nepal	6.3	25	
Algeria	6.3	23	
Laos	6.3	23	
Morocco	6.3	22	
Russian Federation	6.3	18	
NN	6.3	17	
Tunisia	6.3	14	
United Arab Emirates	6.3	14	
South Sudan	6.3	14	
Nicaragua	6.3	13	
Venezuela	6.3	13	
NN	6.3	12	
Pakistan	6.3	11	
Mexico	6.3	11	
Kazakhstan	6.3	11	
NN	6.3	11	
NN	6.3	10	TRUE
Syria	6.3	10	TRUE
Nigeria	6.3	10	TRUE
Mali	6.3	10	TRUE
Burkina Faso	6.3	10	TRUE
Iraq	6.3	10	TRUE
Uzbekistan	6.3	10	TRUE

Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.3	10	TRUE
Ethiopia	6.3	10	TRUE
Cameroon	6.3	10	TRUE
Mozambique	6.3	10	TRUE
Chad	6.3	10	TRUE
Burundi	6.3	10	TRUE
Rwanda	6.3	10	TRUE
Angola	6.3	10	TRUE
Uganda	6.3	10	TRUE
Libya	6.3	9	
Niger	6.3	7	
Kyrgyzstan	6.3	7	
NN	6.3	6	
NN	6.3	6	
Tajikistan	6.3	5	
Vietnam	6.3	5	
Ivory Coast	6.3	5	
NN	6.3	4	
Djibouti	6.3	3	
Turkey	6.3	2	
Comoros	6.3	2	
Indonesia	6.3	2	
Guinea	6.3	2	
Kuwait	6.3	1	
Sri Lanka	6.3	1	
Togo	6.3	1	
NN	6.3	1	
NN	6.3	1	
TOTAL		3414	

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? TOTAL: 1,298
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From high to low:

Country	Question Number	Number	Symbolic Round Number
India	6.4	570	
Bangladesh	6.4	202	
NN	6.4	100	TRUE
Eritrea	6.4	100	TRUE
China	6.4	100	TRUE
Iran	6.4	64	
Russian Federation	6.4	32	

Cuba	6.4	20	
Libya	6.4	17	
Sudan	6.4	10	TRUE
Nigeria	6.4	10	TRUE
Mali	6.4	10	TRUE
Nicaragua	6.4	7	
NN	6.4	6	
NN	6.4	6	
Algeria	6.4	5	
Niger	6.4	5	
Laos	6.4	4	
Tanzania	6.4	4	
Mexico	6.4	3	
Burundi	6.4	3	
NN	6.4	2	
Myanmar	6.4	2	
Tunisia	6.4	2	
Vietnam	6.4	2	
Ukraine	6.4	2	
NN	6.4	2	
Pakistan	6.4	1	
NN	6.4	1	
Kyrgyzstan	6.4	1	
Turkey	6.4	1	
Egypt	6.4	1	
Nepal	6.4	1	
Colombia	6.4	1	
Venezuela	6.4	1	
TOTAL		1298	

6.5	How many Christians have been abducted for faith-related reasons (including Christians missing in a persecution context)? TOTAL: 3,302
-----	---

From high to low:

Country	Question Number	Number	Symbolic Round Number
Nigeria	6.5	2293	
Sudan	6.5	100	TRUE
Mali	6.5	100	TRUE
Central African Republic	6.5	100	TRUE
Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.5	100	TRUE

Cameroon	6.5	100	TRUE
Mozambique	6.5	100	TRUE
Myanmar	6.5	70	
NN	6.5	50	
Mexico	6.5	26	
Ethiopia	6.5	16	
Pakistan	6.5	12	
NN	6.5	10	TRUE
NN	6.5	10	TRUE
Eritrea	6.5	10	TRUE
Syria	6.5	10	TRUE
Libya	6.5	10	TRUE
Iran	6.5	10	TRUE
NN	6.5	10	TRUE
Burkina Faso	6.5	10	TRUE
China	6.5	10	TRUE
Iraq	6.5	10	TRUE
Niger	6.5	10	TRUE
Bangladesh	6.5	10	TRUE
Chad	6.5	10	TRUE
Tanzania	6.5	10	TRUE
Burundi	6.5	10	TRUE
South Sudan	6.5	10	TRUE
Togo	6.5	10	TRUE
Ivory Coast	6.5	10	TRUE
Kenya	6.5	9	
Colombia	6.5	8	
Morocco	6.5	6	
Uganda	6.5	6	
India	6.5	5	
Uzbekistan	6.5	5	
Tajikistan	6.5	5	
Venezuela	6.5	5	
Honduras	6.5	4	
Tunisia	6.5	2	
TOTAL		3302	

6.6	<p>How many Christians have been raped or otherwise sexually harassed for faith-related reasons?</p> <p>TOTAL: 4,055</p>
-----	---

From high to low:

Country	Question Number	Number	Symbolic Round Number
Nigeria	6.6	1000	TRUE
Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.6	1000	TRUE
Syria	6.6	500	
NN	6.6	100	TRUE
Sudan	6.6	100	TRUE
Pakistan	6.6	100	TRUE
NN	6.6	100	TRUE
Myanmar	6.6	100	TRUE
Central African Republic	6.6	100	TRUE
Niger	6.6	100	TRUE
Ethiopia	6.6	100	TRUE
Cameroon	6.6	100	TRUE
Mozambique	6.6	100	TRUE
Chad	6.6	100	TRUE
South Sudan	6.6	100	TRUE
Mali	6.6	26	
India	6.6	22	
Iran	6.6	12	
Morocco	6.6	11	
NN	6.6	10	TRUE
NN	6.6	10	TRUE
Eritrea	6.6	10	TRUE
Libya	6.6	10	TRUE
NN	6.6	10	TRUE
Burkina Faso	6.6	10	TRUE
China	6.6	10	TRUE
Iraq	6.6	10	TRUE
Algeria	6.6	10	TRUE
Tunisia	6.6	10	TRUE
Bangladesh	6.6	10	TRUE
Egypt	6.6	10	TRUE
Comoros	6.6	10	TRUE
Kazakhstan	6.6	10	TRUE
Jordan	6.6	10	TRUE
Tanzania	6.6	10	TRUE
Kenya	6.6	10	TRUE
Djibouti	6.6	10	TRUE
Burundi	6.6	10	TRUE

Rwanda	6.6	10	TRUE
Togo	6.6	10	TRUE
Guinea	6.6	10	TRUE
Ivory Coast	6.6	10	TRUE
Gambia	6.6	10	TRUE
NN	6.6	10	TRUE
NN	6.6	10	TRUE
Colombia	6.6	8	
Uganda	6.6	6	
Cuba	6.6	4	
Mexico	6.6	2	
Honduras	6.6	2	
Uzbekistan	6.6	1	
Kyrgyzstan	6.6	1	
TOTAL		4055	

6.7	<p>How many cases have there been of forced marriages of Christians to non-Christians?</p> <p>TOTAL: 1,147</p>
-----	---

From high to low:

Country	Question Number	Number	Symbolic Round Number
Nigeria	6.7	100	TRUE
Pakistan	6.7	100	TRUE
Central African Republic	6.7	100	TRUE
Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.7	100	TRUE
Cameroon	6.7	100	TRUE
Mozambique	6.7	100	TRUE
Chad	6.7	100	TRUE
South Sudan	6.7	100	TRUE
Iran	6.7	30	
India	6.7	11	
NN	6.7	10	TRUE
NN	6.7	10	TRUE
Sudan	6.7	10	TRUE
Eritrea	6.7	10	TRUE
Syria	6.7	10	TRUE
NN	6.7	10	TRUE
Mali	6.7	10	TRUE
Burkina Faso	6.7	10	TRUE
China	6.7	10	TRUE
Iraq	6.7	10	TRUE

Algeria	6.7	10	TRUE
Niger	6.7	10	TRUE
Bangladesh	6.7	10	TRUE
Ethiopia	6.7	10	TRUE
Kazakhstan	6.7	10	TRUE
Tanzania	6.7	10	TRUE
Kenya	6.7	10	TRUE
Burundi	6.7	10	TRUE
Rwanda	6.7	10	TRUE
Togo	6.7	10	TRUE
Guinea	6.7	10	TRUE
Angola	6.7	10	TRUE
Ivory Coast	6.7	10	TRUE
Gambia	6.7	10	TRUE
NN	6.7	10	TRUE
NN	6.7	10	TRUE
NN	6.7	10	TRUE
Sri Lanka	6.7	8	
Uganda	6.7	5	
Libya	6.7	4	
Morocco	6.7	3	
Myanmar	6.7	2	
Tunisia	6.7	2	
Egypt	6.7	2	
Comoros	6.7	2	
Brunei	6.7	2	
NN	6.7	1	
NN	6.7	1	
Uzbekistan	6.7	1	
Qatar	6.7	1	
Nepal	6.7	1	
Djibouti	6.7	1	
TOTAL		1147	

6.8	<p>How many Christians have been otherwise physically or mentally abused for faith-related reasons (including beatings and death threats)? (Under mental abuse we only include death threats.)</p> <p>TOTAL: 67,843</p>
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From high to low:

Country	Question Number	Number	Symbolic Round Number
Nigeria	6.8	10000	TRUE
Pakistan	6.8	10000	TRUE
India	6.8	10000	TRUE
Myanmar	6.8	10000	TRUE
Niger	6.8	10000	TRUE
Ethiopia	6.8	3927	
NN	6.8	1000	TRUE
Sudan	6.8	1000	TRUE
Eritrea	6.8	1000	TRUE
Mali	6.8	1000	TRUE
Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.8	1000	TRUE
Bangladesh	6.8	1000	TRUE
Mozambique	6.8	1000	TRUE
Chad	6.8	1000	TRUE
Tanzania	6.8	1000	TRUE
South Sudan	6.8	1000	TRUE
Iran	6.8	487	
Togo	6.8	392	
Vietnam	6.8	200	
Mexico	6.8	163	
Ivory Coast	6.8	103	
Syria	6.8	100	TRUE
Libya	6.8	100	TRUE
NN	6.8	100	TRUE
Burkina Faso	6.8	100	TRUE
China	6.8	100	TRUE
Iraq	6.8	100	TRUE
Central African Republic	6.8	100	TRUE
Cameroon	6.8	100	TRUE
Colombia	6.8	100	TRUE
Kenya	6.8	100	TRUE
Burundi	6.8	100	TRUE
Rwanda	6.8	100	TRUE
Guinea	6.8	100	TRUE
Angola	6.8	100	TRUE

Uganda	6.8	100	TRUE
Honduras	6.8	100	
NN	6.8	100	TRUE
NN	6.8	100	
Laos	6.8	90	
Indonesia	6.8	74	
NN	6.8	73	
Venezuela	6.8	54	
Morocco	6.8	48	
Uzbekistan	6.8	36	
Tajikistan	6.8	36	
Sri Lanka	6.8	33	
Kazakhstan	6.8	29	
NN	6.8	25	
Tunisia	6.8	19	
Algeria	6.8	15	
Egypt	6.8	14	
Cuba	6.8	13	
NN	6.8	11	
NN	6.8	10	TRUE
NN	6.8	10	TRUE
NN	6.8	10	TRUE
NN	6.8	10	TRUE
Nicaragua	6.8	10	TRUE
NN	6.8	10	TRUE
Turkmenistan	6.8	10	TRUE
NN	6.8	10	TRUE
Turkey	6.8	10	TRUE
Qatar	6.8	10	TRUE
Nepal	6.8	10	TRUE
Jordan	6.8	10	TRUE
United Arab Emirates	6.8	10	TRUE
Kuwait	6.8	10	TRUE
Bahrain	6.8	10	TRUE
Gambia	6.8	10	TRUE
NN	6.8	10	TRUE
NN	6.8	10	TRUE
Brunei	6.8	5	
Azerbaijan	6.8	4	
Russian Federation	6.8	3	
Djibouti	6.8	3	
Ukraine	6.8	3	
Kyrgyzstan	6.8	2	
NN	6.8	1	
TOTAL		67843	

6.9	<p>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?</p> <p>TOTAL: 17,609</p>
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From high to low:

Country	Question Number	Number	Symbolic Round Number
Nigeria	6.9	10000	TRUE
Sudan	6.9	1000	TRUE
Myanmar	6.9	1000	TRUE
Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.9	1000	TRUE
Cameroon	6.9	1000	TRUE
Mozambique	6.9	1000	TRUE
South Sudan	6.9	1000	TRUE
Niger	6.9	400	
India	6.9	281	
Mali	6.9	100	TRUE
Burkina Faso	6.9	100	TRUE
Central African Republic	6.9	100	TRUE
Chad	6.9	100	TRUE
Kenya	6.9	100	TRUE
Ethiopia	6.9	55	
Iran	6.9	35	
NN	6.9	30	
Bangladesh	6.9	25	
Mexico	6.9	22	
Egypt	6.9	22	
Algeria	6.9	15	
Laos	6.9	13	
Nicaragua	6.9	11	
NN	6.9	10	TRUE
Syria	6.9	10	TRUE
Pakistan	6.9	10	TRUE
Libya	6.9	10	
China	6.9	10	TRUE
Iraq	6.9	10	TRUE
Tanzania	6.9	10	TRUE
Burundi	6.9	10	TRUE
Rwanda	6.9	10	TRUE
Angola	6.9	10	TRUE
Ivory Coast	6.9	10	TRUE
NN	6.9	10	TRUE
NN	6.9	10	TRUE
NN	6.9	10	TRUE

Togo	6.9	9
Morocco	6.9	7
Uganda	6.9	7
Uzbekistan	6.9	5
Venezuela	6.9	5
Cuba	6.9	4
Colombia	6.9	4
Indonesia	6.9	4
Honduras	6.9	4
Sri Lanka	6.9	3
Tunisia	6.9	2
Vietnam	6.9	2
NN	6.9	1
Comoros	6.9	1
Russian Federation	6.9	1
Djibouti	6.9	1
TOTAL		17609

6.10	<p>How many shops or businesses of Christians have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?</p> <p>TOTAL: 8,185</p>
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From high to low:

Country	Question Number	Number	Symbolic Round Number
Sudan	6.10	1000	TRUE
Nigeria	6.10	1000	TRUE
Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.10	1000	TRUE
Cameroon	6.10	1000	TRUE
Mozambique	6.10	1000	TRUE
Chad	6.10	1000	TRUE
South Sudan	6.10	1000	TRUE
Niger	6.10	250	
India	6.10	164	
Syria	6.10	100	TRUE
Myanmar	6.10	100	TRUE
Mali	6.10	100	TRUE
Burkina Faso	6.10	100	TRUE
Central African Republic	6.10	100	TRUE
Iran	6.10	55	
Ethiopia	6.10	26	
NN	6.10	10	TRUE
Pakistan	6.10	10	TRUE
China	6.10	10	TRUE
Iraq	6.10	10	TRUE

Bangladesh	6.10	10	TRUE
Tanzania	6.10	10	TRUE
Kenya	6.10	10	TRUE
Burundi	6.10	10	TRUE
Rwanda	6.10	10	TRUE
Togo	6.10	10	TRUE
Angola	6.10	10	TRUE
Ivory Coast	6.10	10	TRUE
NN	6.10	10	TRUE
NN	6.10	10	TRUE
NN	6.10	10	TRUE
Libya	6.10	9	
Uganda	6.10	6	
Mexico	6.10	5	
Nicaragua	6.10	5	
Cuba	6.10	3	
Laos	6.10	2	
Egypt	6.10	2	
Vietnam	6.10	2	
Honduras	6.10	2	
NN	6.10	1	
Russian Federation	6.10	1	
Djibouti	6.10	1	
Venezuela	6.10	1	
TOTAL		8185	

6.11	How many Christians have been forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons? TOTAL: 201,427
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From high to low:

Country	Question Number	Number	Symbolic Round Number
Nigeria	6.11	100000	TRUE
Myanmar	6.11	25000	
Burkina Faso	6.11	10000	TRUE
Central African Republic	6.11	10000	TRUE
Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.11	10000	TRUE
Cameroon	6.11	10000	TRUE
Mozambique	6.11	10000	TRUE
South Sudan	6.11	10000	TRUE
India	6.11	9251	
Niger	6.11	1280	
Sudan	6.11	1000	TRUE
Mali	6.11	1000	TRUE
Ethiopia	6.11	1000	TRUE

Chad	6.11	1000	TRUE
Nepal	6.11	176	
Mexico	6.11	138	
Laos	6.11	129	
NN	6.11	100	TRUE
Eritrea	6.11	100	TRUE
Syria	6.11	100	TRUE
Pakistan	6.11	100	TRUE
Iran	6.11	100	TRUE
NN	6.11	100	TRUE
Bangladesh	6.11	100	TRUE
Colombia	6.11	100	TRUE
Kenya	6.11	71	
Togo	6.11	64	
Ivory Coast	6.11	46	
Nicaragua	6.11	45	
Morocco	6.11	42	
Uganda	6.11	35	
Kyrgyzstan	6.11	30	
Kazakhstan	6.11	29	
Sri Lanka	6.11	25	
Tunisia	6.11	21	
Vietnam	6.11	20	
Libya	6.11	18	
Honduras	6.11	13	
Indonesia	6.11	12	
NN	6.11	10	TRUE
NN	6.11	10	TRUE
NN	6.11	10	TRUE
China	6.11	10	TRUE
Iraq	6.11	10	TRUE
Algeria	6.11	10	TRUE
NN	6.11	10	TRUE
Turkey	6.11	10	TRUE
Egypt	6.11	10	TRUE
Jordan	6.11	10	TRUE
Tanzania	6.11	10	TRUE
Burundi	6.11	10	TRUE
Rwanda	6.11	10	TRUE
Guinea	6.11	10	TRUE
Angola	6.11	10	TRUE
NN	6.11	10	TRUE
Venezuela	6.11	7	
Cuba	6.11	5	
Uzbekistan	6.11	3	
NN	6.11	2	

Gambia	6.11	2
Qatar	6.11	1
Djibouti	6.11	1
Ukraine	6.11	1
TOTAL		201427

6.12	How many Christians have been forced to leave the country for faith-related reasons? TOTAL: 22,702
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From high to low:

Country	Question Number	Number	Symbolic Round Number
Nigeria	6.12	10000	TRUE
Myanmar	6.12	1500	
Sudan	6.12	1000	TRUE
Eritrea	6.12	1000	TRUE
Syria	6.12	1000	TRUE
Iran	6.12	1000	TRUE
Mali	6.12	1000	TRUE
Burkina Faso	6.12	1000	TRUE
Central African Republic	6.12	1000	TRUE
Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.12	1000	TRUE
Cameroon	6.12	1000	TRUE
South Sudan	6.12	1000	TRUE
NN	6.12	121	
Pakistan	6.12	100	TRUE
NN	6.12	100	TRUE
China	6.12	100	TRUE
Niger	6.12	100	TRUE
Bangladesh	6.12	100	TRUE
Mozambique	6.12	100	TRUE
Turkey	6.12	100	TRUE
Chad	6.12	100	TRUE
Nicaragua	6.12	55	
NN	6.12	20	
Libya	6.12	17	
Algeria	6.12	15	
United Arab Emirates	6.12	14	
Honduras	6.12	12	
NN	6.12	10	TRUE
NN	6.12	10	TRUE
NN	6.12	10	TRUE
Iraq	6.12	10	TRUE
Cuba	6.12	10	

Tunisia	6.12	10	
Jordan	6.12	10	TRUE
Burundi	6.12	10	TRUE
Ivory Coast	6.12	10	TRUE
Tajikistan	6.12	7	
Mexico	6.12	7	
Colombia	6.12	7	
Uganda	6.12	7	
Venezuela	6.12	6	
Morocco	6.12	5	
Kyrgyzstan	6.12	5	
Egypt	6.12	5	
Russian Federation	6.12	2	
India	6.12	1	
Turkmenistan	6.12	1	
NN	6.12	1	
Indonesia	6.12	1	
Kuwait	6.12	1	
Sri Lanka	6.12	1	
Ukraine	6.12	1	
TOTAL		22702	

8. WWL 2026 Pressure score comparisons

The pressure score comparisons presented below are for all countries which scored 50 points or more in their overall score in WWL 2026. The columns on the right give a comparison to the total pressure scores in WWL 2025.

WWL 2026 Rank	Country	1. Private Life Score	2. Family Life Score	3. Community Life Score	4. National Life Score	5. Church Life Score	WWL 2026 Total Pressure		WWL 2025 Total Pressure
1	North Korea	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	83.3	North Korea	83.3
2	Somalia	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	83.3	Somalia	83.0
3	Yemen	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	83.3	Yemen	83.3
11	Afghanistan	15.6	16.5	15.9	16.4	16.7	81.1	Afghanistan	80.4
9	Libya	16.0	15.9	15.9	16.2	16.4	80.4	Libya	80.7
13	Saudi Arabia	15.2	15.5	14.9	15.8	16.6	78.0	Saudi Arabia	77.7
19	Maldives	15.8	15.6	14.3	15.5	16.5	77.8	Maldives	77.1
5	Eritrea	14.6	14.9	15.5	15.9	15.9	76.7	Eritrea	76.7
4	Sudan	14.1	14.2	15.5	16.0	16.1	75.8	Sudan	73.9
10	Iran	14.9	14.6	13.5	16.0	16.5	75.4	Iran	75.4
6	Syria	14.6	14.6	14.3	15.1	14.9	73.4	Syria	70.5
21	Mauritania	14.7	14.3	13.9	14.3	15.3	72.4	Mauritania	70.9
20	Algeria	14.7	14.5	12.2	14.9	16.1	72.4	Algeria	71.2
7	Nigeria	13.5	14.1	14.6	14.9	14.8	71.9	Nigeria	71.4
18	Iraq	14.2	14.4	14.3	14.9	13.9	71.7	Iraq	71.5
8	Pakistan	13.4	13.9	15.0	15.0	13.0	70.3	Pakistan	70.5
35	Turkmenistan	14.4	12.5	13.6	13.9	15.4	69.8	Turkmenistan	69.4
25	Uzbekistan	14.6	12.7	13.6	12.4	15.6	68.9	Uzbekistan	68.7
27	Tajikistan	14.4	12.8	12.9	13.6	14.6	68.3	Tajikistan	66.4
17	China	13.4	9.5	13.0	15.8	16.1	67.9	China	66.8
38	Oman	14.5	14.1	10.9	14.0	14.4	67.8	Oman	67.3
12	India	12.4	13.1	13.2	15.1	13.6	67.5	India	67.2
34	Bhutan	13.2	13.1	12.3	14.1	14.3	67.0	Bhutan	67.0
44	Qatar	14.2	14.2	10.5	13.2	14.4	66.5	Qatar	66.5
23	Morocco	13.2	13.8	11.3	12.9	14.4	65.6	Morocco	65.9
14	Myanmar	12.7	11.5	13.2	14.3	13.0	64.6	Myanmar	64.2
50	Brunei	14.8	15.1	10.7	9.8	14.0	64.5	Brunei	65.3
43	Comoros	12.7	14.0	11.2	12.4	14.2	64.5	Comoros	64.5
28	Laos	12.0	10.9	13.4	14.0	13.9	64.2	Laos	63.9
24	Cuba	13.2	8.7	13.9	13.3	15.1	64.1	Cuba	64.0
15	Mali	11.1	10.1	14.7	13.0	15.2	64.1	Mali	64.1
45	Kazakhstan	13.4	11.7	12.2	12.8	13.8	63.9	Kazakhstan	64.1
16	Burkina Faso	11.7	9.7	13.5	13.8	14.9	63.6	Burkina Faso	60.1
31	Tunisia	12.4	13.2	10.1	12.8	14.2	62.6	Tunisia	62.0
49	Jordan	12.9	14.3	10.4	12.2	12.8	62.5	Jordan	62.6
42	Egypt	12.8	13.7	12.1	12.6	10.9	62.1	Egypt	61.9
32	Nicaragua	12.6	7.7	13.7	13.4	14.2	61.6	Nicaragua	61.2
41	Turkey	13.0	11.7	11.7	13.3	11.7	61.4	Turkey	61.1
55	Vietnam	10.8	9.7	11.7	14.5	14.3	61.1	Vietnam	60.7
51	Malaysia	12.7	13.8	11.7	12.4	10.3	60.9	Malaysia	61.8
40	Kyrgyzstan	13.5	10.3	11.9	11.9	12.9	60.6	Kyrgyzstan	59.4
57	United Arab Emirates	13.3	13.4	9.5	11.3	12.9	60.3	United Arab Emirates	60.2
60	Kuwait	13.1	13.6	9.4	12.0	12.2	60.3	Kuwait	60.3
56	Russian Federation	12.5	8.2	12.1	13.1	14.3	60.1	Russian Federation	58.4
58	Djibouti	12.3	12.6	12.7	10.1	12.1	59.8	Djibouti	59.8
63	Palestinian Territories	13.1	13.3	10.3	10.7	12.1	59.5	Palestinian Territories	59.5
22	Central African Republic	10.3	8.6	13.9	12.4	14.0	59.3	Central African Republic	56.4
46	Nepal	12.4	11.5	9.6	13.3	12.2	59.0	Nepal	57.3
52	Azerbaijan	13.3	10.2	9.6	12.0	13.8	58.9	Azerbaijan	59.0
33	Bangladesh	12.6	10.7	12.9	10.7	10.9	57.8	Bangladesh	57.5
30	Mexico	11.7	9.0	12.5	11.8	11.0	56.0	Mexico	56.0
26	Niger	9.4	9.6	14.5	7.7	14.6	55.8	Niger	55.8
29	Congo DR (DRC)	8.0	7.9	13.9	11.1	14.5	55.4	Congo DR (DRC)	53.8
36	Ethiopia	9.9	9.7	12.6	10.4	12.1	54.7	Ethiopia	54.7
37	Cameroon	8.8	7.6	12.6	11.8	13.3	54.1	Cameroon	50.5
59	Indonesia	10.5	11.4	10.7	11.1	9.9	53.6	Indonesia	55.4
47	Colombia	11.0	7.7	12.7	11.5	10.5	53.5	Colombia	53.7
68	Bahrain	12.0	13.2	8.6	11.3	8.5	53.5	Bahrain	53.6
39	Mozambique	9.3	8.5	13.9	8.4	12.5	52.6	Mozambique	52.6
53	Tanzania	9.3	10.8	10.3	10.6	11.4	52.3	Tanzania	47.6
62	Rwanda	9.4	7.7	9.4	11.3	13.0	50.8	Rwanda	48.6
48	Chad	11.0	8.2	10.2	9.9	10.3	49.5	Chad	49.5
54	Kenya	10.0	8.8	11.4	8.0	10.7	48.9	Kenya	50.3
71	Ukraine	7.9	5.8	8.6	12.4	13.9	48.6	Ukraine	45.6
65	Sri Lanka	12.3	8.7	9.7	9.8	7.8	48.3	Sri Lanka	52.9
67	Guinea	10.3	7.5	10.4	8.3	10.5	47.0	Guinea	44.9
75	Gambia	9.8	9.5	9.8	8.8	8.9	46.8	Gambia	43.1
66	Togo	9.2	7.1	10.9	7.1	11.7	45.9	Togo	44.9
69	Venezuela	6.9	4.4	11.5	10.5	11.5	44.8	Venezuela	42.5
70	Angola	6.9	6.7	8.1	11.5	11.6	44.8	Angola	44.5
61	Burundi	7.7	7.7	9.7	9.4	9.4	43.9	Burundi	44.3
64	South Sudan	5.7	4.4	10.3	10.3	11.5	42.1	South Sudan	30.9
74	Honduras	7.9	4.7	11.6	7.3	9.9	41.5	Honduras	41.6
73	Ivory Coast	12.0	6.5	8.7	5.9	8.0	41.1	Ivory Coast	41.1
72	Uganda	8.6	5.6	8.0	6.7	9.0	38.0	Uganda	35.9

9. WWL 2026 Violence score comparisons

The comparisons of the scores for violence against Christians presented below are for all countries which scored 50 points or more in their overall score in WWL 2026. The columns on the right give a comparison to the total violence scores in WWL 2025. The column on the far right shows the actual difference in violence score.

WWL 2026 Rank	Country	Region	Sub-region	WWL 2026 Violence Score		WWL 2025 Violence score	WWL 2026 - WWL 2025
4	Sudan	Africa	Northern Africa	16.7	Sudan	16.1	0.6
7	Nigeria	Africa	Western Africa	16.7	Nigeria	16.7	0.0
15	Mali	Africa	Western Africa	16.7	Mali	15.6	1.1
61	Burundi	Africa	Eastern Africa	16.5	Burundi	14.6	1.9
8	Pakistan	Asia	South Asia	16.3	Pakistan	16.7	-0.4
14	Myanmar	Asia	South-eastern Asia	16.3	Myanmar	16.5	-0.2
26	Niger	Africa	Western Africa	16.3	Niger	15.7	0.6
6	Syria	Asia	Western Asia	16.1	Syria	7.0	9.1
12	India	Asia	South Asia	16.1	India	16.5	-0.4
16	Burkina Faso	Africa	Western Africa	16.1	Burkina Faso	15.6	0.6
22	Central African Republic	Africa	Middle Africa	16.1	Central African Rep	15.6	0.6
29	Congo DR (DRC)	Africa	Middle Africa	16.1	Congo DR (DRC)	16.1	0.0
37	Cameroon	Africa	Middle Africa	16.1	Cameroon	16.1	0.0
39	Mozambique	Africa	Eastern Africa	16.1	Mozambique	15.9	0.2
48	Chad	Africa	Middle Africa	16.1	Chad	15.9	0.2
64	South Sudan	Africa	Eastern Africa	16.1	South Sudan	15.6	0.6
36	Ethiopia	Africa	Eastern Africa	15.6	Ethiopia	15.6	0.0
30	Mexico	Latin America	Central America	15.4	Mexico	14.6	0.7
72	Uganda	Africa	Eastern Africa	15.0	Uganda	16.1	-1.1
54	Kenya	Africa	Eastern Africa	14.8	Kenya	13.9	0.9
1	North Korea	Asia	Eastern Asia	13.9	North Korea	14.4	-0.6
5	Eritrea	Africa	Eastern Africa	13.3	Eritrea	12.2	1.1
33	Bangladesh	Asia	South Asia	12.8	Bangladesh	16.1	-3.3
47	Colombia	Latin America	South America	12.8	Colombia	12.6	0.2
53	Tanzania	Africa	Eastern Africa	12.0	Tanzania	15.4	-3.3
2	Somalia	Africa	Eastern Africa	11.1	Somalia	11.1	0.0
10	Iran	Asia	South Asia	11.1	Iran	10.9	0.2
17	China	Asia	Eastern Asia	11.1	China	11.1	0.0
73	Ivory Coast	Africa	Western Africa	10.9	Ivory Coast	9.6	1.3
74	Honduras	Latin America	Central America	10.4	Honduras	13.1	-2.8
3	Yemen	Asia	Western Asia	9.8	Yemen	10.6	-0.7
62	Rwanda	Africa	Eastern Africa	9.4	Rwanda	9.4	0.0
66	Togo	Africa	Western Africa	9.4	Togo	9.3	0.2
23	Morocco	Africa	Northern Africa	9.3	Morocco	8.3	0.9
24	Cuba	Latin America	Caribbean	9.3	Cuba	9.1	0.2
32	Nicaragua	Latin America	Central America	9.1	Nicaragua	9.6	-0.6
69	Venezuela	Latin America	South America	9.1	Venezuela	9.6	-0.6
70	Angola	Africa	Middle Africa	8.9	Angola	8.3	0.6
31	Tunisia	Africa	Northern Africa	8.7	Tunisia	8.1	0.6
59	Indonesia	Asia	South-eastern Asia	8.1	Indonesia	5.7	2.4
67	Guinea	Africa	Western Africa	8.1	Guinea	8.9	-0.7
65	Sri Lanka	Asia	South Asia	7.8	Sri Lanka	7.6	0.2
40	Kyrgyzstan	Asia	Central Asia	7.6	Kyrgyzstan	6.9	0.7
46	Nepal	Asia	South Asia	7.6	Nepal	5.9	1.7
28	Laos	Asia	South-eastern Asia	7.4	Laos	9.8	-2.4
18	Iraq	Asia	Western Asia	7.2	Iraq	6.1	1.1
41	Turkey	Asia	Western Asia	6.7	Turkey	1.3	5.4
9	Libya	Africa	Northern Africa	6.1	Libya	10.6	-4.5
52	Azerbaijan	Asia	Western Asia	5.9	Azerbaijan	5.6	0.4
42	Egypt	Africa	Northern Africa	5.7	Egypt	6.3	-0.6
11	Afghanistan	Asia	South Asia	4.8	Afghanistan	5.0	-0.2
20	Algeria	Africa	Northern Africa	4.8	Algeria	6.3	-1.5
71	Ukraine	Europe	Eastern Europe	4.4	Ukraine	7.2	-2.8
13	Saudi Arabia	Asia	Western Asia	4.3	Saudi Arabia	3.3	0.9
51	Malaysia	Asia	South-eastern Asia	4.1	Malaysia	3.0	1.1
	Philippines	Asia	South-eastern Asia	4.1	Philippines	8.5	-4.4
25	Uzbekistan	Asia	Central Asia	3.7	Uzbekistan	4.4	-0.7
75	Gambia	Africa	Western Africa	3.7	Gambia	4.4	-0.7
34	Bhutan	Asia	South Asia	3.5	Bhutan	2.2	1.3
27	Tajikistan	Asia	Central Asia	3.3	Tajikistan	1.9	1.5
56	Russian Federation	Europe	Eastern Europe	3.3	Russian Federation	4.4	-1.1
21	Mauritania	Africa	Western Africa	3.1	Mauritania	2.8	0.4
43	Comoros	Africa	Eastern Africa	3.1	Comoros	2.6	0.6
45	Kazakhstan	Asia	Central Asia	2.8	Kazakhstan	4.3	-1.5
49	Jordan	Asia	Western Asia	2.8	Jordan	2.4	0.4
55	Vietnam	Asia	South-eastern Asia	2.6	Vietnam	5.9	-3.3
38	Oman	Asia	Western Asia	2.2	Oman	3.0	-0.7
57	United Arab Emirates	Asia	Western Asia	2.2	United Arab Emirates	0.6	1.7
58	Djibouti	Africa	Eastern Africa	2.0	Djibouti	1.7	0.4
44	Qatar	Asia	Western Asia	0.9	Qatar	0.7	0.2
60	Kuwait	Asia	Western Asia	0.9	Kuwait	0.9	0.0
19	Maldives	Asia	South Asia	0.7	Maldives	0.7	0.0
35	Turkmenistan	Asia	Central Asia	0.7	Turkmenistan	1.5	-0.7
50	Brunei	Asia	South-eastern Asia	0.7	Brunei	0.6	0.2
68	Bahrain	Asia	Western Asia	0.6	Bahrain	0.6	0.0
63	Palestinian Territories	Asia	Western Asia	0.0	Palestinian Territor	0.2	-0.2

10. WWL 2026: Audit Statement from IIRF



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Audit Statement

on the outcomes of the Open Doors World Watch List 2026

Wednesday, 14 January 2026

The audit of the 2026 World Watch List (WWL), conducted by the International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF) for the 12th consecutive year, confirms that the World Watch Research team of Open Doors International has broadly maintained its adherence to quality standards in the execution of the 2026 WWL exercise.

The audit, conducted in two parts, first examined the correct application of the WWL methodology. The findings show that, across the audited countries, the WWL 2026 largely complies with the methodological requirements of the exercise, drawing on diverse sources and, in many cases, adequately substantiating its conclusions. At the same time, in some large and complex contexts, the auditors noted areas where transparency and consistency in the application of the methodology could be further strengthened.

The second part of the audit evaluated whether the scores and write-ups accurately reflected the country situations based on the auditors' knowledge and expertise. The overall conclusion is that WWL 2026 generally provides a credible and realistic account of the discrimination and persecution faced by Christians, while also revealing specific areas where greater clarity on regional differences and on the distinction between social and structural factors in score justifications would be beneficial. The areas for improvement identified in this audit do not fundamentally undermine the integrity of the 2026 WWL exercise, but point to opportunities for refinement in future cycles.

A team of five scholars with active expertise in religious freedom across the audited regions and countries carried out the audit. To ensure a comprehensive evaluation, a selection of large countries from the WWL Top 50 was chosen, some of which had been audited in earlier years but not recently. The audit encompassed the work of both junior and senior World Watch Research persecution analysts.

The audit focused on how the existing WWL methodology was applied during the 2026 reporting cycle and did not evaluate or revise the methodology itself. Audit materials included final questionnaires (along with underlying questionnaires completed by external experts, field researchers and field contributors) and accompanying country dossiers. Any other statements, documents or interpretations from Open Doors International or its affiliates related to the WWL 2026 publication were outside the audit's scope.

A detailed audit report, including recommendations for potential improvements, has been submitted to World Watch Research and will be reviewed with the persecution analysts.



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