
World Watch Research

Colombia: Persecution Dynamics

December 2024



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World Watch List 2025 – Top 50

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

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

World Watch List 2025 – Ranks 51-78

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

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

Copyright, sources and definitions

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

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

These documents are the property of World Watch Research (WWR), the research department of Open Doors International. They include data and analysis based around Open Doors World Watch List (WWL) and statistical information on world religions, Christian denominations and people groups prepared by the World Christian Database (WCD). Highlighted links in the text can be found written out in full at the end of each document under the heading “External links”. These documents may be used and distributed free of charge, but please always acknowledge the source as: © Open Doors International.

The definition of persecution used in WWL analysis is: “Any hostility experienced as a result of one’s identification with Christ. This can include hostile attitudes, words and actions towards Christians”. This broad definition includes (but is not limited to) restrictions, pressure, discrimination, opposition, disinformation, injustice, intimidation, mistreatment, marginalization, oppression, intolerance, infringement, violation, ostracism, hostilities, harassment, abuse, violence, ethnic cleansing and genocide.

The latest update of WWL Methodology can be found on the research pages of the Open Doors website: <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/wwl-documentation/>.

Reporting period

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

Brief country details

Colombia: Population (UN estimate for 2024)	Christians	Chr%
52,341,000	49,693,000	94.9

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

Colombia: Religious context	Number of adherents	%
Christians	49,693,000	94.9
Muslim	28,000	0.1
Hindu	13,700	0.0
Buddhist	2,300	0.0
Ethnic religionist	337,000	0.6
Jewish	5,000	0.0
Bahai	86,300	0.2
Atheist	138,000	0.3
Agnostic	1,525,000	2.9
Other	512,700	1.0
<i>OTHER includes Chinese folk, New religionist, Sikh, Spiritist, Taoist, Confucianist, Jain, Shintoist, Zoroastrian.</i>		

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

Map of country



Dominant persecution engines and drivers

Colombia: Main Persecution engines	Main drivers
Organized corruption and crime	Revolutionaries or paramilitary groups, Organized crime cartels or networks, Government officials, Political parties
Clan oppression	Ethnic group leaders, Non-Christian religious leaders, Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs, One's own (extended) family, Revolutionaries or paramilitary groups, Organized crime cartels or networks, Government officials
Secular intolerance	Government officials, Ideological pressure groups, Political parties

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

Brief description of the persecution situation

Efforts to achieve peace in the country have been undermined by the persistent conflict between criminal groups and government forces. The promises made by President Gustavo Petro's administration (in office since August 2022) have yet to materialize, as criminal groups continue to maintain territorial control over large parts of the country, and violence remains pervasive. Temporary ceasefires have proven ineffective, as they have failed to include all armed groups (which continued their violent activities). Additionally, there is insufficient protection for stakeholders supporting peace processes, and previously signed peace agreements have not been effectively implemented. This is the context, in which church leaders continue to be threatened, harassed, extorted, and even murdered by non-state actors (such as guerrillas and other criminal groups), especially in rural and other neglected areas. In most cases, this violence was the direct result of Christians being involved in such activities as:

- Speaking publicly about the ongoing corruption and violence;
- Working in defense of human and environmental rights;
- Working among youth;
- Assisting in the country's peace-process;
- Opposing criminal activities in sermons;
- Any kind of action defying the de facto authority of local criminal groups or perceived as endangering their illegal activities.

Further, in some indigenous communities, there is hostility towards Christian preachers and indigenous converts, who, as a result, face imprisonment, physical abuse, denial of basic rights, and are often hindered from making use of their ancestral territory, among other forms of punishment.

In addition, as a result of growing radical secularism, there is increasing intolerance towards Christian views in the public sphere, especially about issues concerning life, family, marriage and religious liberty. Christians speaking in public about their beliefs are sometimes targeted for supposedly being discriminatory or promoters of hate-speech. For this reason, some of them choose to self-censor in order to avoid becoming targets.

Summary of international obligations and rights violations

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

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

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

- Christians are targeted by militias for expressing their faith (ICCPR Art. 18)
- Christian children are harassed because of their parents' faith (ICCPR Art. 18 and CRC Art. 14)
- Christians face restrictions in employment in the public sector and experience discrimination in the private sector (ICCPR Arts. 25 and 26, and ICESCR Art. 6)
- Christians face harassment and violence if they discuss their faith or engage in proselytization (ICCPR Arts. 18 and 19)

Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period

June 2024 – Valle del Cauca: According to Open Doors research, a pastor was detained and beaten by illegal groups when he returned from training given by a Christian organization. On the way back, armed men intimidated him and stole the engine of his boat.

June 2024 – Norte de Santander: Roman Catholic priest Ramón Montejo was [murdered](#) by two men who stabbed him while he was on his way to carry out his pastoral duties. After a struggle, they ran him over with his own vehicle, leaving his body abandoned on the road. The priest was a delegate of the diocesan commission for reconciliation and peace, and he also provided humanitarian services in support of peace in the region, which led him to be involved in several releases of kidnapped people in the Catatumbo region (Swissinfo, 4 June 2024).

April 2024 – Bolívar: The judge, Ramiro Flórez, who is also a pastor, was disqualified for 15 years from holding any public office. In 2020, he [refused](#) to marry two women, arguing personal objections of conscience and citing his Christian principles. Although the couple were given the option of having their union registered with another judge, they refused. As a result, a long judicial process began against Ramiro Flórez which ended in April 2024 with the decision of dismissal and disqualification by the National Judicial Discipline Commission (El Universal, 26 April 2024).

- **March 2024 – Cesar:** According to Open Doors research, indigenous community leaders ordered a week's imprisonment for four Christians who had attended the evangelical church located in the municipality. During some days of imprisonment, they were denied food to intimidate them into renouncing their faith. These Christians have also been harassed by the community because they are accused of being the cause of the impoverishment of the land and are treated as criminals.

Specific examples of positive developments

- **July 2024:** The Catholic Church continues to [participate](#) in an accompanying role as witness (along with the United Nations) in negotiations between the Colombian government and the ELN guerrilla group (ADN Celam, 30 June 2024).
- **May 2024:** The government has shown [willingness](#) to collaborate with evangelical groups in Colombia in order to facilitate the implementation of Christian social programs throughout the country (Revista HyC, 10 May 2024).
- **May 2024:** Even though there are still challenges to be resolved, government authorities continue to [make efforts](#) to implement the Public Policy on Religious Freedom and Cults in various regions of the country in order to promote and guarantee the right to religious freedom (Mininterior, 24 May 2024).

The main Christian denomination in Colombia is the Roman Catholic Church, representing 88.8% of all Christians according to WCD 2024 estimates. Protestant church groups continue to show growth and become more visible and influential, particularly where so-called 'Mega-churches' with congregations of thousands have become established in many major cities.

Christian communities and how they are affected

Communities of expatriate Christians

Expatriate Christians are not forced into isolation. These communities are therefore not scored as a separate category in WWL analysis.

Historical Christian communities

This category consists mainly of Roman Catholic churches and small Orthodox and Protestant communities. These groups are in danger of attacks in areas controlled by drug cartels and by other forms of organized crime and guerrillas. They also struggle with the increasing religious intolerance in society and its increasing rejection of faith-based views in public debate, not to mention the obstacles and risks of church-work within indigenous communities (particularly as experienced by Protestant Christians). In sporadic cases, some Protestant groups face opposition from historical churches (such as the Catholic Church), as part of the dynamic of the Persecution engine *Christian denominational protectionism*.

Converts

For Colombia, this category includes converts within indigenous communities and converts to Christianity from guerrilla groups and criminal organizations. Especially in the indigenous context, converts are victims of harassment, expulsion, death-threats and other physical and psychological forms of violence for abandoning the majority belief-system within the community to which they belong. Converts are also affected by criminal networks in the same way as Christians belonging to Historical and Non-traditional Christian communities, especially if they are former members of illegal groups.

Non-traditional Christian communities

This category is mainly made up of Evangelical, Baptist and Pentecostal congregations. They are also affected by the pressure and violence exerted by organized criminal groups and guerrillas, in the same way as Historical Christian communities. Although the government has recognized their important role in the implementation of the FARC peace agreement and its humanitarian assistance in neglected areas, these denominations do not receive the same government benefits granted to the country's historical churches and those churches which have signed a covenant with the state. In addition, where they try to participate in the political sphere, they face severe opposition from secularist pressure groups. They are not free to work within indigenous communities and face risk when doing so. They are also most likely to face rejection - particularly in rural areas - where a dominant church denomination is already firmly established.

Areas where Christians face most difficulties

- **Concerning Organized corruption and crime:** According to the violence data gathered by organizations such as PARES and JUSTAPAZ and the reports from Open Doors researchers, Christians experience high levels of pressure and violence from criminal organizations and illegal armed groups in the following areas: Antioquia, Arauca, Atlántico, Bolívar, Caquetá, Casanare, Cauca, Cesar, Chocó, Córdoba, Guaviare, Huila, Magdalena, Meta, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Putumayo, Santander, Sucre, Tolima, Valle del Cauca, Vichada.
- **Concerning Clan oppression:** Especially in indigenous communities* with the most traditional customs and, in consequence, with less acceptance of other (Christian) rites than those of their own ethnicity, those who abandon the religious practices of the tribe face persecution. In Colombia there are 115 indigenous groups, of which 22 were recently included in the last [census](#) carried out in 2018 (DANE Informacion para todos, 16 September 2019). These native peoples are located in the 32 departments of the country. According to Open Doors researchers, indigenous Christians face the highest levels of discrimination, intolerance and violence in Arauca, Boyacá, Cauca, Cesar, Chocó, Huila, Magdalena, Norte de Santander.
- **Concerning Secular intolerance:** This engine of persecution depends on the public policies implemented by the national government and on social attitudes within society, mainly encouraged by intolerant groups with ideologies often opposing Christianity. Secular intolerance is present throughout the country, especially in urban areas such as Antioquia, Bogotá, Bolívar, Boyacá, Caldas, Cauca, Cundinamarca, Huila, Nariño, Quindío, Risaralda, Santander, Tolima and Valle.

* A special note about 'non-accepted forms of Christianity' in indigenous communities

Within some indigenous communities, the religious factor is an important component of their culture and identity and shapes their relationships with other people and even natural resources. As in many indigenous communities in Latin America, the religious practices are mostly related to syncretistic practices adapted from Roman Catholic rites. In some cases, they identify themselves as Catholics and indigenous leaders tend to be more receptive to the presence of Roman Catholic members than with Christians from other denominations. In many other cases, the spirituality of the ethnic group includes rites related to animism and takes on a hostile stand against local Christians. However, in all these cases, any type of preaching or religious activity requires permission from the leaders. Anything going

against the customs of the ethnic group will be punished. Due to the general acceptance of Catholic traditions inside indigenous communities, most 'non-accepted forms of Christianity' are of Protestant or Evangelical origin.

In indigenous communities, Christians face opposition where they reject the religious practices and customs of the ethnic group to which they belong, especially if they are related with animism rites. This has led to indigenous leaders often seeing Christian influences from outside as a destabilizing element. Since ethnic leaders are those who administer justice in their territories, religious freedom of indigenous people is not duly guaranteed by local (state) authorities where it concerns a religion differing from the community one. Therefore - and only with regard to indigenous people - those adhering to 'non-accepted forms of Christianity' refer in this country dossier to those Christians who refuse to follow the ancestral or traditional beliefs of the ethnic group to which they belong because it contradicts their faith. Thus, when syncretistic religious customs related to Roman Catholic rites (or ancestral religious customs that worship nature) are practiced in the indigenous community or participation in and attendance at animism rituals is required, they refuse to participate and consequently face hostility and rejection. The victims of hostile acts are believers and their families, including children, who can become victims of discrimination even in their schools. (See below: *Clan oppression*)

Christian Solidarity Worldwide notes that most of the ongoing violations of FoRB taking place in indigenous communities can be directly linked to the 1998 Constitutional Court decision, Ruling SU-510, which gave primacy to the collective cultural right to protect traditions and culture over individual rights, specifically the right to FoRB. According to CSW, this decision was referenced especially by indigenous leaders who held the stance that nontraditional religions should not be allowed on indigenous lands. CSW mentions that indigenous individuals of religious minority groups experienced varying forms of discrimination by Indigenous community members and leaders and there are occasions when indigenous Protestant Christians faced threats, harassment, bullying, arbitrary detention and torture from their fellow indigenous community based on their religious beliefs, driving them to flee their communities (CSW, 7 December 2022). Although the reporting period of that document covers periods in 2021 and 2022, the situation still continues in some Indigenous communities in the country, as confirmed by Open Doors research.

Additionally, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) mentioned that in the case of indigenous peoples and people of African descent, violence by non-state armed groups and criminal organizations, including disregard for their authorities, displacement and territorial dispossession, affect their physical and cultural survival. These groups force them to become associated with illicit economies and impose restrictions on their customs, forcing them to abandon the ancestral practices that underpin their well-being, cultural identity and autonomy (Reliefweb, 6 March 2023). According to Open Doors research, this also affects multiple dimensions of their religious freedom.

Position on the World Watch List

Colombia: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2025	66	46
WWL 2024	68	34
WWL 2023	71	22
WWL 2022	68	30
WWL 2021	67	30

The lower score in WWL 2025 was primarily due to a decrease in the violence score, which fell from 14.1 points in WWL 2024 to 12.6 points, owing to fewer recorded cases of Christians killed for faith-related reasons during a period marked by the initiation and subsequent failure of negotiations between the main guerrilla groups and the government. There were also reductions in the *Private, Family, and Community spheres of life*, attributed to fewer recorded incidents specifically related to the *Clan Oppression engine*, although the persecution dynamics remain a considerable challenge due to the rejection of certain forms of Christianity in indigenous communities. Thus, although the overall score has dropped, the levels of violence and intolerance (including those stemming from secular groups and interdenominational conflicts) affecting Christians in the country have not significantly changed.

Persecution engines

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

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

Organized corruption and crime (Strong)

The Corruption Perception Index ([CPI 2023](#)) ranks Colombia #87 out of 180, with a 41/100 score (0 = highly corrupt and 100 = zero corruption). Despite the initial efforts in the implementation of the FARC Peace Agreement in 2016 and other more recent efforts to reach peace agreements with [ELN](#) (Reuters, 26 September 2024) and other "[Illegal Armed Groups](#)" (Reuters, 31 March 2024), criminal groups, such as drug cartels and guerrilla factions, continue to consolidate their power and fight for control over entire regions to conduct their illegal activities. This situation has become particularly evident in areas such as the Pacific coast and Colombia's border with Venezuela, where illicit markets related to smuggling, illegal crops, drug trafficking and illegal mining are being disputed by several criminal groups attempting to control these areas. This has caused a worsening of the general humanitarian and security situation and has led to both church leaders and Christian groups being victims of systematic monitoring, abduction, threats, extortion, forced displacement and killings, as well as there being attacks against public Christian properties and direct threats against pastors' children (concerning rape or forced recruitment). These measures are especially addressed to Christians who actively oppose criminal activity, speak out defending human rights, preach to combatants and civilians, carry out prayer activities in particularly violent areas, or who are known to discourage young people from joining criminal groups.

Criminal groups also retaliate against former guerrilla members who abandon crime as a result of their conversion to Christian faith. The strengthening of criminal networks and their active presence in many areas of the country has allowed them to continue to be the de facto authorities in areas of the country where state activity is virtually non-existent. Many impose curfews and other measures in the territories under their control. Also, the high levels of corruption allow them to act with impunity which means they continue to threaten the peace. For instance, criminal groups put pressure on churches and church leaders to show support for certain political candidates during the elections, or to participate in marches either supporting or opposing their political interests.

Criminal groups have also increased church monitoring to make sure anything that could harm their interests is prohibited. They also increased their harassment of Christians considered to be police informers or involved with other rival criminal groups. If Christians refuse to follow criminal group orders, they are perceived as a threat. During the WWL 2025 reporting period, Christians faced attempts as extortion, harassment, surveillance, interrogation, restrictions on movement, death-threats, in-country and out of country forced displacement, attacks on both private property and church buildings, abduction and killings.

While indigenous communities are often the most affected by organized crime since their territory is frequently co-opted by drug traffickers and guerrillas, some indigenous leaders rely on criminal groups to intimidate indigenous Christian converts and thus force them to return to the community's syncretistic religious practices. Further, the level of violence in such places is also very high as a result of clashes between government troops and criminal groups and due to fighting between different criminal groups.

Clan oppression (Medium)

Religion is an important component of indigenous culture and identity. The communities' religion is often based around syncretistic practices adapted from animist rituals and Roman Catholic rites. Any

type of preaching or religious activity requires permission from the leaders and anything going against the customs of the ethnic group will be seen as a threat and punished. Such punishments (especially of converts to 'non-accepted forms of Christianity'), which may also involve their families, can include imprisonment, imposition of fines, physical abuse, denying access to basic services and goods, employment discrimination and confiscation of property, among other things. Obtaining protection from the government in these circumstances is difficult; state access to rural areas is often not possible and this has reinforced the concept of indigenous autonomy and the power of local leaders.

Secular intolerance (Medium)

The religious sector is considered an important element in supporting the implementation of the FARC peace agreement, negotiations with other guerrilla groups and social and humanitarian assistance during emergency situations in the country. But increasingly, Christians face verbal attacks, social hostility and discrimination due to intolerance towards faith-based beliefs and practices. A strict interpretation of state secularism frequently places religious freedom and the right of conscience at odds with the right to non-discrimination. Society and institutions reject Christian professionals' assertion of the right to conscientious objection. There is also pressure to remove from public office any officials who openly defend their Christian faith or affinity towards a specific church. Christian participation in the political sphere of the country has been discouraged as a result.

Drivers of persecution

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

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

Drivers of Organized corruption and crime

- Organized crime cartels or networks (Strong):** There is a strong link between crime cartels and revolutionary and paramilitary groups; their motives for targeting Christians are very similar and they act mainly in rural areas where the presence of the state authorities is weak. These groups

(Gulf Clan, Black Eagles, Los Rastrojos, Los Paisas, Caparrapos, La Constru, Los Costeños, the Border Command and many others) fight each other for territorial control and target Christians and Christian organizations who carry out activities such as preaching against crime and injustice, promoting peace and working in support of the FARC peace agreement, advocating for indigenous people's rights, and helping against drug addiction, among other humanitarian-related activities. More recently, Christians have been targeted when they try to provide humanitarian aid to the most vulnerable sectors of society and refuse to support the illegal interests of criminal groups. Christians are especially viewed as a threat when they defy criminal group orders.

- **Revolutionaries or paramilitary groups (Strong):** These groups (such as FARC dissidents, the ELN and the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia) closely monitor church activities and impose restrictions on them. They threaten, displace and attack Christians for working in support of the FARC peace agreement, for promoting human rights and opposing violence, for assisting displaced persons, for helping with land restitution claims, for not following orders about coca cultivation, for encouraging the participation in elections in favor of those who defend Christian values, and for refusing to comply with orders to participate in anti-government demonstrations. These groups accuse Christians of betrayal if they are perceived to be involved with the government or with rival criminal groups and aim to discourage any growth of local churches.
- **Government officials (Medium):** Many government officials have directly and indirectly allowed criminal action to take place against Christian leaders and churches in areas under criminal group control, especially where the authorities are in collusion with organized crime cartels and other criminal groups. The authorities' indifference towards the hostilities faced by Christians in this context is at times openly denounced by Christian leaders, but the fear of reprisals generally leads to self-censorship.
- **Political parties (Medium):** Corruption among members of the political class helps promote the cover-up of criminal group activities and they have also been hindering progress in the implementation of the FARC Peace Agreement. Their decisions reinforce impunity, allowing organized crime cartels to continue with their illegal activities and exert violence against Christians in the most neglected areas of the country. Furthermore, in local elections, criminal groups use violence and intimidation to influence the 'Christian vote' to help achieve party goals.

Drivers of Clan oppression

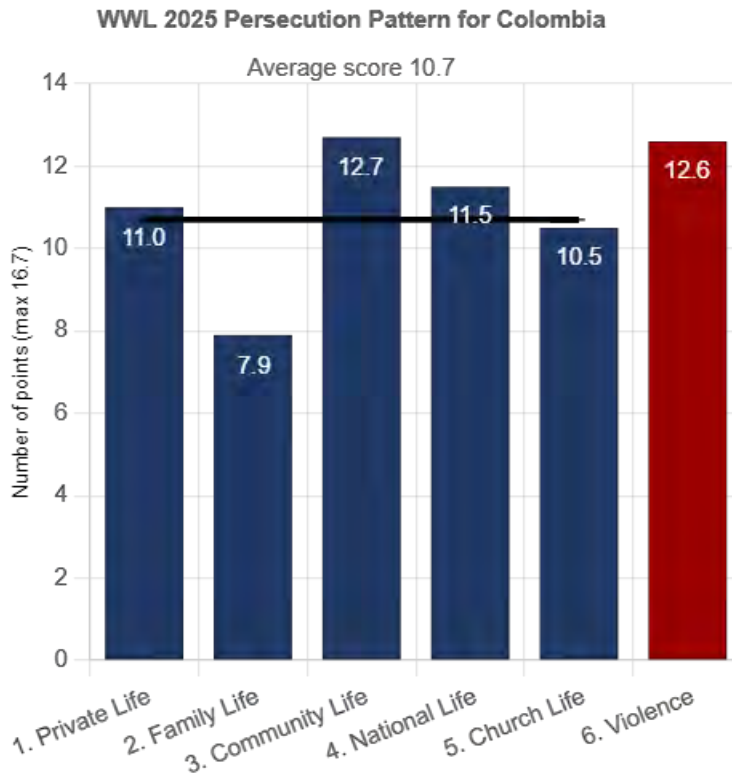
- **Ethnic group leaders (Strong):** These leaders remain loyal to their traditional beliefs and are likely to oppose anyone spreading non-accepted forms of Christian faith in the indigenous communities. Restrictions take the form of constant monitoring, cutting basic services, arrests, threats, violence and of reporting Christians to the ethnic religious authorities.
- **Non-Christian religious leaders (Strong):** Shamanism, ethno-religions and similar cults, although not strictly classified as religions, are manifestations of a kind of 'spirituality' that reject Christianity. In some indigenous communities, adherents will attempt to impede Christian activities and force Christians to be part of their ancestral ceremonies. Pressure increases whenever there are restrictions imposed on travel, since many adherents of 'non-accepted forms of Christianity' then find themselves isolated and almost totally at the mercy of the indigenous authorities.

- **One's own (extended) family (Medium):** Belonging to the indigenous community is expected to have a higher priority than family ties, thus any family member abandoning the religious syncretistic practices of the community to become an adherent of a 'non-accepted form of Christianity' is liable to be labeled a traitor and face rejection from their wider family.
- **Citizens (Medium):** Members of indigenous communities must be faithful to the tribe and their customs. Therefore, they are bound to denounce any practice that may hinder the stability of the community, including the activities of converts to a 'non-accepted form of Christianity'.
- **Government officials (Medium):** The authorities collaborate by either allowing or ignoring discrimination and violence aimed at Christians who refuse to follow the syncretistic practices of the indigenous communities. The authorities regard some Christian leaders as enemies of the cultural identity of the ethnic group and in consequence, as a threat to the preservation of indigenous customs.
- **Revolutionary or paramilitary groups (Medium):** Although ethnic groups are also victims of paramilitary groups at times, there are nevertheless occasions when guerrillas have teamed up with indigenous leaders to harass converts to a 'non-accepted form of Christianity'. This cooperation aims to defend ethnic group leaders' interests and to force - most often by violent means - those Christians to stop practicing their non-accepted faith in the community.
- **Organized crime cartels or networks (Medium):** Organized crime cartels have sometimes acted in complicity with indigenous leaders to intimidate adherents of a 'non-accepted form of Christianity' in the communities. Such cooperation aims to defend ethnic group leaders' interests and to put those adherents under strict control, thus preventing them from spreading their Christian faith inside the community.

Drivers of Secular intolerance

- **Ideological pressure groups (Medium):** These groups harass, ridicule and censor Christians when the latter express faith-based points of views that disagree with their interests. This is particularly the case if they are public officials who wish to uphold their Christian beliefs or doctors claiming the right to conscientious objection. Also, they have carried out violent demonstrations outside churches as a way of showing their rejection of faith-based views on the issue of abortion. Some of these groups are pushing for new mandatory content and school activities on issues of sexuality in school curricula which override parents' rights concerning the education of their children according to their own faith-based values.
- **Government officials (Medium):** It is common that state authorities, including some ministries and some judges at local and national court level, support the interests of political pressure groups in opposing any presence of faith-based views in public debate. As a result, the judicial authorities tend not to give Christians the same protection and equal opportunities allotted to other groups when it comes to protecting the right to freedom of expression.
- **Political parties (Medium):** Some political parties demand radical Church-State separation with no participation of Christians in the political arena. As a result, they actively hinder political initiatives coming from Christian politicians or politicians supported by Christian groups. They also promote non-discrimination initiatives that potentially undermine the free expression of Christian citizens.

The Persecution pattern



The WWL 2025 Persecution pattern for Colombia shows:

- The average pressure on Christians in Colombia remains at a very high level, but dropped slightly from 10.9 points in WWL 2024 to 10.7 points in WWL 2025. This was due to slight reductions in almost all *spheres of life* caused by less pressure from rebels in negotiation with the government and by a lower record of incidents related to *Clan oppression*.
- All *spheres of life* scored 7.9 points or above (out of a maximum of 16.7 points), with pressure highest in the *Community sphere of life* (12.7 points) due to the influence of various criminal groups in many parts of the country.
- The score for violence remained extremely high, though falling from 14.1 points in WWL 2024 to 12.6 points in WWL 2025. Violent incidents in the categories of killings, attacks on public and private Christian properties, death threats and physical abuse, continued to plague Colombian society.

Pressure in the 5 spheres of life

In each of the five spheres of life discussed below, four questions have been selected from the WWL 2025 questionnaire for brief commentary and explanation. The selection usually (but not always) reflects the highest scoring elements. In some cases, an additional paragraph per sphere is included to give further information deemed important. To see how individual questions are scored on a scale of 0-4 points, please see the “WWL Scoring example” in the WWL Methodology, available at: <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/wwl-documentation/>.

Pressure in Block 1 / Private sphere

Block 1.9: It has been risky for Christians to meet with other Christians. (3.25 points)

For Christians to meet up with fellow believers is particularly risky in indigenous communities or in territory controlled by organized crime. If they do, they are quickly accused of not following community norms or of not complying with curfews or other rules imposed by criminal groups and of conspiring against the ethnic or criminal leaders. This includes meetings which are not for worship purposes. Due to the humanitarian and security crisis existing in the country's Pacific Coast, control and monitoring increased there, making it even more difficult for Christians to be in contact with each other and it is necessary to ask permission from criminal leaders in order to be able to meet with other Christians.

Block 1.4: It has been risky for Christians to reveal their faith in written forms of personal expression (including expressions in blogs and Facebook etc.). (3.00 points)

Christians face various levels of risk. Where organized crime is dominant, it is highly risky for anyone to make a public call for peace or for resisting involvement in criminal activities. Any kind of communication or publication is monitored and easily identified by criminal groups. This is always a particular concern, especially during electoral periods or when national security issues are discussed on social media. Criminal groups attack Christians who do not support their demands or refuse to endorse their political standpoint. Christians may also face hostilities from ideological pressure groups when they defend their faith-based opinions online.

Block 1.8: It has been risky for Christians to speak about their faith with those other than immediate family (extended family, others). (2.75 points)

In the indigenous community worldview, the concept of loyalty to one's ethnicity prevails over family ties. Thus, a member of a family who converts to Christianity or belongs to a 'non-accepted form of Christianity' will normally be rejected by the extended family and accused before the ethnic leaders. The same goes for areas dominated by criminal groups, especially when a family member's faith clearly opposes the criminal activities of local groups. Similarly, there were some situations where the new Protestant faith of a family member was not accepted by his/her wider Roman Catholic family, particularly those living in rural areas of the country.

In the context of growing hostility towards faith-based views on such issues as abortion, family and marriage etc., a Christian may find that he/she has no freedom to discuss such issues outside the immediate family.

Block 1.6: It has been risky for Christians to access Christian radio or TV, or Christian material on the Internet. (2.50 points)

In some indigenous communities (e.g., in Norte de Santander and Chocó), access to Christian media is difficult. When it is possible and an adherent of a 'non-accepted form of Christianity' uses it to spread the Christian faith, he will be punished by the ethnic leaders because it could influence other indigenous members to convert. In some areas co-opted by criminal groups, accessing or using Christian material with content that could affect the interests of these groups (e.g., denunciations of illegal activities or encouragement for conversion to Christianity) will be punished, as the promotion or dissemination of values contrary to their interests is considered a direct threat to their 'authority'.

In these cases, Christian content is considered harmful for criminal groups exerting their authority in an area, especially books which present Jesus as a solution for the problem of violence.

Pressure in Block 2 / Family sphere

Block 2.8: Christian children have been pressured into attending anti-Christian or majority religion teaching at any level of education. (3.25 points)

In areas such as Antioquia, Arauca, Cesar, Guaviare, Chocó, Norte de Santander, Valle del Cauca and Nariño in which the social control exercised by criminal groups is evident, they also influence educational content taught in schools (especially in rural areas) with the purpose of indoctrinating students to facilitate the recruiting of minors. Christian children cannot refuse to receive this type of content in schools without facing reprisals against them and their families.

In indigenous communities, schools have become a source of pressure for those adhering to 'non-accepted forms of Christianity'. Since the educational legislation of 1994, the Associations of Traditional Indigenous Authorities (AATIs) were granted full authority to emphasize ethnic education with an animist worldview, thus frequently contradicting biblical values. Indigenous Christian families struggle with this difficult situation and often choose not to send their children to school, which clearly limits their future possibilities. Also, such parents could become involved in legal proceedings that would cause them to temporarily or permanently lose legal custody of their children.

Elsewhere in Colombia, the content approved for education bears a significant secularist influence and promotes attitudes that consider religious beliefs to be discriminatory, intolerant and unwelcome in the public sphere. Pressure is exerted on Christian children to learn through the “Coexistence Manual” about concepts which go against their Christian faith and values. Examples of such concepts are: “Recreational sexuality”, “sexual orientation”, “gender identity”, “sexual diversity”, “sexual and reproductive duties ” (a term that includes abortion), as well as “freely choosing a sexual partner”. Children who want to continue their studies successfully are forced to participate in such classes. Also, state schools do not always provide alternative religious classes for those Christians that are not Catholic. To obtain good grades, sometimes non-Catholic schoolchildren are obliged to join in Catholic activities organized by the school and are required to learn Catholic doctrine.

Block 2.10: Christian spouses and/or children of Christians have been subject to separation for prolonged periods of time by circumstances relating to persecution. (3.25 points)

Adherents of a 'non-accepted form of Christianity' who have been expelled from indigenous communities are often forced into separation from their families (wives and children) as a punishment for not giving up their faith. There are even cases, as mentioned above, in which children are separated from their families to prevent them from being raised as Christian believers. There have been sporadic cases where the pressure to comply with non-Christian activities and rituals has led some parents to send their children away to relatives where there is more freedom for Christians not belonging to the traditional faith of the community and where they could receive a more neutral education. This hinders the continuity and growth in faith while also increasing the vulnerability of younger individuals to both the influence of community authorities and the risks of recruitment by criminal groups operating in the area.

The number of IDPs in the country remains high due to violence in the growing number of areas controlled by criminal and guerrilla groups. In such areas, the dominant criminal group has the authority to decide who can live in their zone; as a consequence, those Christians who are not welcome in the community have been forced (via threats or direct orders) to leave their families and be involuntarily separated from them for long periods. In addition, Christians are sometimes forced to leave their homes in order to protect their children from being recruited by criminal groups, but this has been made especially difficult by the restrictions on travel imposed by such groups. This ongoing threat to personal integrity and freedom leads to both internal displacement and the need to flee the country. Criminal groups' allied factions across the country extend the risk of persecution, while rival groups may label displaced individuals as "informants," further endangering them at their destination.

Block 2.7: Parents have been hindered in raising their children according to their Christian beliefs. (3.00 points)

In order to prevent any 'destabilization of indigenous identity', ethnic leaders often threaten parents belonging to a 'non-accepted form of Christianity' and try to prevent them from passing on their faith to their children. Christian parents are frequently put under pressure to ensure that ancestral traditions are maintained through teaching about animism, charms and shamanism.

In some areas controlled by criminal networks, Christian parents face important challenges to prevent their children from being indoctrinated or recruited by ELN, dissident FARC guerrillas and other criminal groups because any opposition could lead to their assassination or expulsion from their land and homes. The intention of these groups is to influence the youth so that a criminal attitude becomes embedded in society. The forced recruitment of children increased noticeably during the last few WWL reporting periods.

Elsewhere in Colombia, parents face difficulties raising their children according to Christian convictions because of the promotion of compulsory sexual education in schools which in many aspects goes against traditional Christian teaching. The Constitutional Court has already ruled that school regulations must respect gender identity issues and the chosen sexual orientation of their students; this can jeopardize the whole ethos of Christian denominational schools and the right of parents to raise their children according to their convictions. This can be especially challenging in cities such as Bucaramanga, Cali, Medellín, Cartagena, Villavicencio, Santa Marta, Barranquilla and Bogotá. Even when parents choose a Christian school for their children, neither the institution nor the parents can legally prevent the promotion of content that contradicts their religious beliefs.

Block 2.9: Children of Christians have been harassed or discriminated against because of their parents' faith. (3.00 points)

Children of Christian indigenous parents often face pressure in an attempt to make them reject their parent's faith. Sometimes these children are excluded from community activities, are mocked, threatened with forced marriage and mistreated to prevent them from spreading any 'non-accepted Christian' influence. This both discourages possible new conversions and puts pressure on parents to renounce their Christian faith. Sometimes the pressure becomes so great that the family feels forced to leave the area.

In areas controlled by organized crime, illegal armed groups often recruit children, with Christian children being particularly targeted to pressure families into ceasing their Christian activities and complying with local criminal authorities. This harassment includes coercion into illegal activities, intimidation to discourage church attendance and parental obedience, and efforts to undermine the church's influence. Such intimidation frequently forces Christian families to relocate.

Elsewhere in Colombia (especially in urban areas), due to the growth of intolerance towards faith-based views in society, some Christian children are mocked when they defend faith-based point of views regarding abortion, family, marriage and sexuality in classes, and refuse to participate in activities supporting the interests of political pressure groups. Also, in some rural areas, there are sporadic cases where non-Catholic children are discriminated against by being given lower marks than they deserve because they belong to a non-Catholic denomination.

Pressure in Block 3 / Community sphere

Block 3.4: Christians been hindered in sharing community resources because of their faith (e.g. clean drinking water). (3.25 points)

In some indigenous communities, those following 'non-accepted forms of Christianity' are not regarded as being true members of the ethnic group, they are not part of the community census and are excluded from basic resources (often including access to clean water and health facilities) or from financial benefits (even those granted by state), as a way to pressurize them into stopping their activities. This happens, for instance, in Boyacá, Cauca, Cesar Chocó, Huila and Magdalena. The travel restrictions imposed by some criminal groups has made it even more difficult for Christians to go and request basic resources from neighboring communities.

In other areas, criminal groups have prevented Christians from receiving government aid or humanitarian aid from other civil society actors and have accused Christians of being informers. This is particularly the case in Antioquia, Cauca, Chocó, Meta, Nariño and Valle del Cauca. Criminal groups have directly blamed Christians for passing on sensitive information to other groups when obtaining food (such as fish or crops). Criminal groups are keen to ensure that Christian leaders in particular remain loyal to their authority and regularly threaten them with attack, abduction or death should they not be compliant. Also, as a way of intimidating churches, criminal groups sometimes cut off the electricity and water supplies to hinder religious activities.

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

Given the importance of community life within ethnic groups, Christians are expected to participate in community events and to take part in religious festivities in indigenous communities. If they refuse, they are viewed as traitors and punished (this has happened, for example, in indigenous communities in Arauca, Boyaca, Cauca, Choco, Cesar and Magdalena). Punishments vary, but often include imprisonment, beatings, forced labor, isolation and displacement. By not attending community rituals, Christians have sometimes been blamed for natural disasters that occur. There is also evidence that, in some indigenous territories, the traditional authorities have forged alliances with armed groups to ensure full participation in ceremonies and activities.

Although criminal groups do not hold their own religious ceremonies or organize community events as such, leaders of such groups can call on the community to make announcements, impose 'new rules, or force them to participate in armed training (as has occurred in Guaviare). When Christians refuse obedience, they risk receiving heavy fines and increased threats of displacement and loss of property.

Elsewhere in Colombia, there were cases reported of Christian workers being placed under pressure by their companies to ignore their traditional Christian values and participate in activities promoting the interests of certain political pressure groups.

Block 3.12: Christians have been fined for faith-related reasons (e.g. jizya tax, community tax, protection money). (3.25 points)

In some cases, Indigenous authorities use a system of fines (either in the form of money or harvest products) for Christians who refuse to participate in community practices and festivities which go against their Christian faith (such as ancestral traditions or even certain festivities based on Catholic rites). Sometimes, when ethnic groups collude with criminals, the fines or quotas are substantially higher for such adherents of 'non-accepted forms of Christianity'.

In a broader context, criminal groups demand protection money, sometimes in the form of quotas (or even vaccines) from pastors, priests, and other Christians in exchange for not exercising violence against them and for allowing them to continue their religious duties. Since several years, life in most of the rural areas of the country is de-facto under the control of criminal groups. The situation is even more difficult where territory is in dispute between various criminal groups and all of them demanded quotas to finance their illicit activities; such quotas could include the recruitment of children. The regions Antioquia, Arauca, Bolívar, Caquetá, Cauca, Choco, Guaviare, Meta, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Putumayo and Valle del Cauca were greatly affected by this.

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

In order to limit Christian activities, ethnic leaders make use of monitoring and control mechanisms within the indigenous communities. Thus, adherents of 'non-accepted forms of Christianity' have faced continual interrogation when they refuse to participate in (or make payments for) community activities or when they carry out any kind of activity related to a faith different from the one followed by the community.

In areas where there is hardly any state authority in existence, criminal groups have become the de facto local authorities. In this capacity, they often carried out interrogations to force Christians to inform them about their activities, to look for possible alliances with them, and to obtain information about the movements of other groups, including the security forces. Due to corruption networks, it is possible that in some cases, state officers collaborate with criminal groups and carry out the interrogation of Christians considered to be suspicious.

Pressure in Block 4 / National sphere

Block 4.14: Those who caused harm to Christians have deliberately been left unpunished. (3.50 points)

In some indigenous communities, the discrimination and mistreatment of adherents of 'non-accepted forms of Christianity' go unpunished because the ethnic and religious leaders act as both instigators and judiciary. The affected Christians are left unprotected.

Elsewhere, impunity is a widespread phenomenon due to links between criminal leaders and corrupt officials. If a criminal investigation is carried out, the authorities often fail to take into account that Christians are much more vulnerable to criminal attack where their religious convictions are considered a threat by criminal groups and where their refusal to obey criminal orders increases their risk of being attacked. It is also the fear of possible reprisals which discourages Christians from seeking help from the state authorities.

Also, in contexts relating to radical secularism, signs of intolerance that trigger attacks against churches and Christians have not been properly investigated by state authorities. In some cases, Christians are being punished instead of being considered victims. Thus, the mistreatment of and discrimination against Christians has become normal practice and is not regarded by the authorities as something that needs to be held in check.

Block 4.4: Christians have been hindered in travelling for faith-related reasons. (3.25 points)

Given the position of authority that both indigenous leaders and criminal leaders enjoy in their areas of influence, they control entry and exit from their territories as it suits their interests. Thus, in some indigenous communities, entry and exit is restricted as a form of punishment for those adhering to 'non-accepted forms of Christianity', placing them in a position of risk when they meet with other Christians in areas outside the community. Often, the uncertainty of not being able to return to their homes and of possibly losing contact with their families hinders the faith of new converts, as does the lack of contact with faith communities in neighboring territories.

Particularly in areas like Antioquia, Bolívar, Cauca, Caquetá, Chocó, Guaviare, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Putumayo, Valle del Cauca criminal leaders prevent Christians (especially church leaders) from travelling. The movement of Christians is seen as being potentially damaging to local illegal interests and because Christians on the move are suspected of acting as informers for the state authorities or other rival groups.

Block 4.8: Christians have been hindered in expressing their views or opinions in public. (3.25 points)

According to indigenous customs, anyone whose faith differs from the community faith has no right to express their views and opinions in public. The reason is that such people might encourage other indigenous people to follow their religious convictions. The voice of Christians is vetoed since their opinions are assumed to always have a religious motivation, even when the matter of debate is not necessarily linked to church or faith matters.

Also, Christians in areas co-opted by a criminal group or guerrillas are not free to express any faith-based opinions which contradict the group's philosophy or which concern the implementation of the FARC peace agreement, peace negotiations with other criminal groups, human rights or environmental

issues. The Christian message is thus severely restricted. Since criminal leaders use church informers (e.g., in Antioquia, Cauca, Chocó, Meta and Norte de Santander), sometimes Christians do not feel safe to share their political opinions with others inside churches, let alone in the wider community.

As a sign of growing intolerance at the national level, Christians have experienced pressure in both traditional media and social media networks when expressing their faith-based views on issues including abortion, family, marriage, sexuality and parental rights. This situation is provoking a self-censorship among Christians.

Block 4.9: Christian civil society organizations or political parties have been hindered in their functioning or forbidden because of their Christian convictions. (3.25 points)

Given the levels of corruption, state authorities allow criminal groups - directly or indirectly - to hinder the activities of civil society organizations, especially those working with young people in drug and crime prevention programs or with migrants. The work done by Christian civil society organizations in those areas is seen as competing with the criminal groups dominating the area and as a form of defiance of their authority. The local dominant criminal group wants to be the only one who can give permission to carry out projects, meetings, or activities in the area under its control. This also represents a challenge to the functioning of Christian political parties not allied with the dominant criminal groups in such areas.

Additionally, given the autonomy of indigenous leaders to prevent the emergence and development of organizations that they do not consider aligned with their traditions, it makes sense for them at times to avoid giving any form of support to politicians of Christian faith.

Faith-based organizations are also continually scrutinized by pressure groups and risk lawsuits if an organization's projects, statements and publications are seen as opposing the group's interests or are seen as breaching the principle of Church-State separation.

Pressure in Block 5 / Church sphere

Block 5.8: Christian preaching, teaching and/or published materials have been monitored. (3.25 points)

In rural areas controlled by criminal groups (such as in Antioquia, Arauca, Cauca, Cesar, Chocó, Guaviare, Meta, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Valle del Cauca, and others), intense surveillance of all preaching and church activities is carried out, including any Christian materials used or distributed. The infiltration of churches by informers (members of criminal groups or their relatives) is common practice and their purpose is to report anything opposing the local criminal group's interests. Pastors must also be very careful with the information stored on their cell phones since it is common practice for armed groups to require Christians to disclose at checkpoints all contacts, messages and other information stored on their mobile phones. It is becoming increasingly difficult for churches in areas dominated by one or more criminal groups because the prohibitions are constantly being increased. Any preaching mentioning social issues can also lead to serious consequences.

Regarding indigenous communities, any preaching carried out by 'non-accepted Christian groups' will be reported and punished according to ancestral customs. Also, in rural areas, there are sporadic cases where the preaching of minority churches is monitored by the largest one (usually by Roman Catholic

believers). One intention of such monitoring is to discourage anyone from joining a different church or denomination.

In cities like Bogota, Cali and Cartagena, there is increasing social scrutiny by pressure groups of Christian preaching related to the defense of marriage and family and the way churches seek involvement in the public sphere.

Block 5.11: Pastors or other Christian leaders (or their family members) have been special targets of harassment for faith-related reasons. (3.25 points)

Christian leaders and their families who belong to 'non-accepted Christian groups' are particularly targeted for harassment in indigenous communities. They are often shunned by their community and made to live in very poor conditions. When they share their faith, they are accused of attacking the identity and stability of the dominant ethnic group.

In territories co-opted by criminal groups, Christian leaders and their families are frequently victims of fines, threats and travel restrictions, especially if their activities are related to the defense of human rights, environmental issues, work with young people, strengthening civil society organizations, the implementation of the FARC peace agreement and peace negotiations with other armed groups, assistance for internally displaced persons, assistance with land restitution claims, discouraging coca cultivation and the refusal to collaborate with criminal groups. Since church leaders are often notable public figures, attacks on them are an effective way of intimidating the whole population living in a particular area. Pastors' children also tend to be a favored target, for instance for human trafficking, forced recruitment or rape to discourage pastors from continuing their church ministry.

In urban areas, verbal attacks are common where church leaders defend Bible-based views on topics relating to marriage, family, the sanctity of life, and the presence of the Church in the public sphere. When there are elections in the country, they also regularly face hostile criticism when commenting on political initiatives and promoting Christian values.

Block 5.18: Churches have been hindered in establishing, managing, maintaining and conducting schools, or charitable, humanitarian, medical, social or cultural organizations, institutions and associations. (3.25 points)

In general, Christian organizations are not allowed to operate in indigenous communities. In those communities, Christian indigenous schools, health centers and related projects are forbidden both by indigenous authorities and by the Colombian government because they are considered to be a threat to the indigenous culture. Those Christians promoting such projects face reprisals from the ethnic leaders - including the use of violence. Church-affiliated organizations involved in youthwork and the rehabilitation of young drug-addicts are frequently targeted by criminal groups (since they see such programs as a threat to their interests). Also, due to the high level of insecurity and violence in the border areas, some Christian organizations have been unable to carry out humanitarian assistance for migrants (especially for those coming from Venezuela).

Elsewhere, educational institutions run by churches or other Christian organizations are sometimes under pressure - via threats of closure or fines - to accept the guidelines established by the Ministry of Education in matters relating to sexual education. Faith-based organizations concerned with issues surrounding abortion, family life and marriage have often faced hostile opposition from militant

pressure groups. The pressure is so great that many organizations working in the educational field now prefer not to be linked to churches.

Block 5.20: It has been risky for churches or Christian organizations to speak out against instigators of persecution. (3.25 points)

Despite some efforts by the central government to promote a culture of respect for religious liberty, non-state actors impede churches and Christian organizations from getting due protection when speaking out against the persecution they experience. In indigenous communities, anyone from 'non-accepted Christian groups' who speaks out against their oppressors, faces threats, beatings, forced displacement, loss of property and arrest, among other measures. It is difficult to report incidents to state authorities and obtain legal justice as ancestral identity rights are given priority over matters of religious freedom.

In areas where organized crime is extremely active, when Christians denounce their aggressors and seek state protection, criminal groups often respond with violent reprisals, discouraging any similar future attempts.

Elsewhere in society, it is becoming more frequent that when Christians are victims of acts of intolerance carried out by pressure groups, government officials pay little attention to their reports, claiming that hostile opposition to religion is part of the right to freedom of expression. Radical groups also vandalize church buildings, which generates economic damage and demoralizes Christian communities.

Violence

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

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

Possible reasons for this may be:

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

2. Other incidents go unreported for the following possible reasons:

- *Some incidents never reach the public consciousness, because no one really knows about it; or the incident is simply not considered worth reporting; or media coverage is deliberately blocked or distorted; or media coverage is not deliberately blocked, but the information somehow gets lost; or the incidents are deliberately not reported widely for security reasons (e.g. for the protection of local church leaders).*
- *In situations where Christians have been discriminated against for many years, armed conflict can make them additionally vulnerable. Christians killed in areas where fighting regularly takes place are unlikely to be reported separately. Examples in recent years have been Sudan, Syria and Myanmar.*

- *Christians who die through the deprivation of basic necessities such as clean water and medical care (due to long-term discrimination) are unlikely to be reported separately. Christians are not always killed directly; they can be so squeezed by regulations and other oppressive factors that they die – not at once, but in the course of years. This often includes the deprivation of basic necessities such as clean water and medical care, or exclusion from government assisted socio-economic development projects. These numbers could be immense.*

3. The use of symbolic numbers:

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

Colombia: Violence scores per Block 6 question in questionnaire	WWL 2025	WWL 2024
6.1 How many Christians have been killed for faith-related reasons (including state sanctioned executions)?	6	16
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?	46	42
6.3 How many Christians have been detained for faith-related reasons?	7	3
6.4 How many Christians have been sentenced to jail, labor camp, sent to psychiatric hospital as punishment, or similar things for faith-related reasons?	0	0
6.5 How many Christians have been abducted for faith-related reasons (including Christians missing in a persecution context)?	8	8
6.6 How many Christians have been raped or otherwise sexually harassed for faith-related reasons?	5	1
6.7 How many cases have there been of forced marriages of Christians to non-Christians?	0	0
6.8 How many Christians have been otherwise physically or mentally abused for faith-related reasons (including beatings and death threats)?	121	100 *

Colombia: Violence scores per Block 6 question in questionnaire	WWL 2025	WWL 2024
6.9 How many houses of Christians or other property (excluding shops) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	18	44
6.10 How many shops or businesses of Christians have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	3	0
6.11 How many Christians have been forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons?	262	100 *
6.12 How many Christians have been forced to leave the country for faith-related reasons?	22	2

In the WWL 2025 reporting period, violent incidents against Christians for faith-related reasons remained at an extremely high level.

- **Christians killed (6):** Although there were fewer killings recorded in the WWL 2025 reporting period compared to WWL 2024, this category is representative of the seriousness of the persecution situation in the country and reflects the high risk faced by church leaders mostly working in areas dominated by criminal groups and being attacked by them.
- **Churches attacked (46):** Most of the cases were related to attacks perpetrated by criminal groups as a way to intimidate Christians and pressurize them into adhering to their rules. Also, there were some incidents where militant pressure groups vandalized churches as part of their advocacy for women's rights.
- **Christians abducted (8):** Part of the violence perpetrated by armed groups in the country is kidnapping. The incidents recorded here are of church leaders being victims of organized crime when their social influence was perceived as being a threat to the illicit interests of those groups.
- **Christian forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country (100*):** In the WWL 2025 reporting period, most of the incidents involved Christians fleeing their homes due to the high levels of violence perpetrated against them (including their children) by criminal groups. There were also some reports of indigenous Christians being displaced due to pressure from their ethnic group.

5 Year trends

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

5 Year trends: Average pressure

Colombia: WWL 2021 - WWL 2025	Average pressure over 5 Spheres of life
2025	10.7
2024	10.9
2023	11.1
2022	10.9
2021	10.7

The table above indicates a consistent rise in the average pressure on Christians from WWL 2021 to WWL 2023, driven by the increased control of armed groups in more rural areas of the country. However, since WWL 2024, there has been a slight decrease, attributed to reduced pressure (also induced by fewer reports of violence) in certain regions. This is largely due to some - ultimately unsuccessful - efforts to establish peace negotiations between the ELN and the Colombian government, as well as being due to the prevailing culture of terror in areas controlled by criminal groups, which instills significant fear among victims, discouraging them from reporting or denouncing incidents. Additionally, fewer incidents linked to *Clan Oppression* and *Christian Denominational Protectionism* drivers in certain areas contributed to this decline.

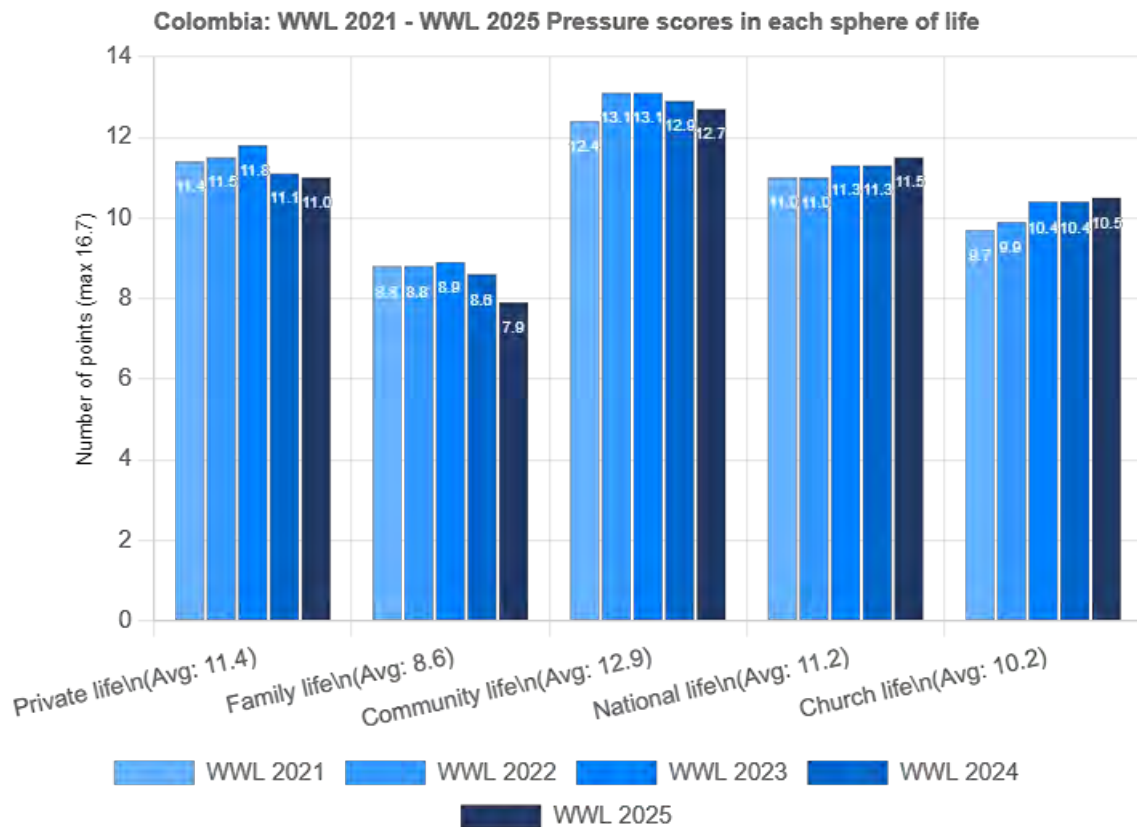
Overall, Christians continue to be perceived as adversaries to criminal interests, with the growing control of armed groups increasingly restricting both the daily operations of churches and the free practice of faith.

5 Year trends: Pressure in each sphere of life

As can be seen in the diagram below, during the 2021–2023 WWL reporting periods, the general trend showed rising pressure on Christians. However, in the two most recent periods, pressure slightly decreased in the spheres of *Private, Family, and Community life*, attributed to a lower incidence of persecution related to *Clan Oppression* and *Christian Denominational Protectionism* engines in some areas. Despite this, an upward trend is evident in the spheres of *National* and *Church* life.

The graph illustrates the challenges faced by Christians and religious leaders in freely expressing their faith in daily life, primarily due to interference from non-state actors. This interference stems from high levels of insecurity caused by criminal groups in areas with minimal state presence, the re-establishment of FARC fighting units, and the emergence of newer criminal organizations and guerrilla groups competing for territorial control. These groups have exploited the social and political instability to consolidate their presence and assert de facto authority. Furthermore, the rising pressure has been

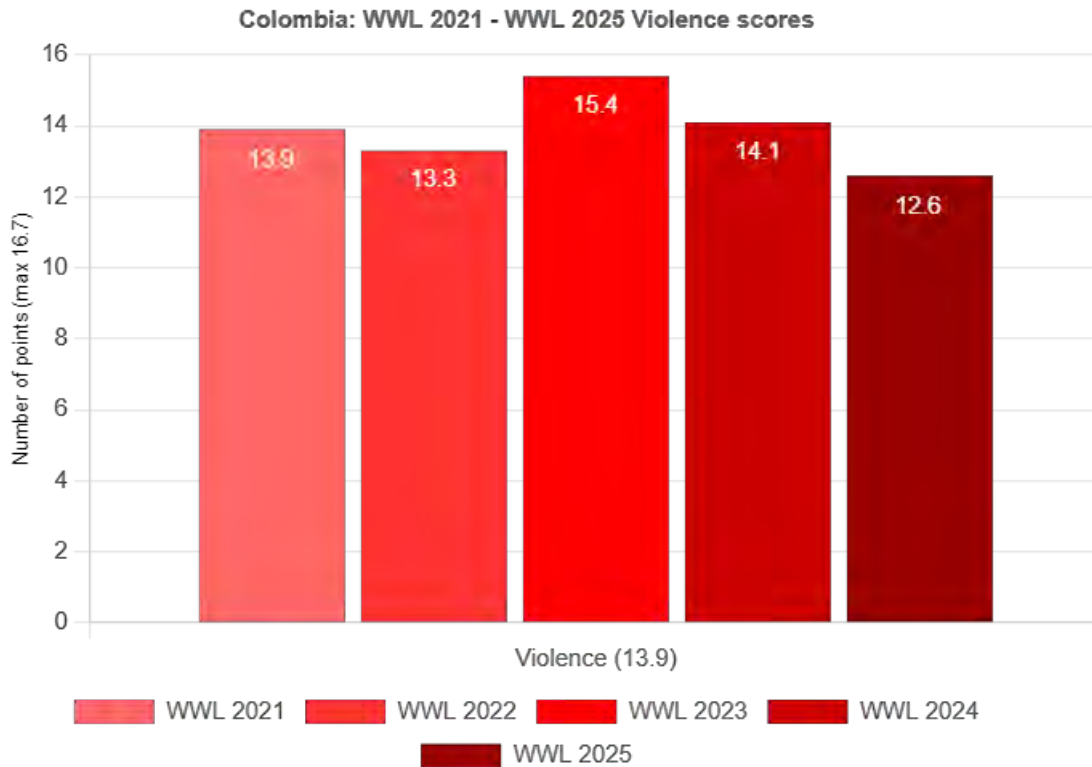
exacerbated by increasing hostility, both in society and among some government authorities, towards public expressions of Christian faith. The *Secular intolerance* engine is thus increasing in influence.



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5 Year trends: Violence against Christians



The chart above shows that the scores for violence have consistently been at an extreme level, with the highest peak in WWL 2023. These extreme levels are the result of:

- i. The delays and failures in the complex implementation of the FARC peace agreement and the lack of concrete results in negotiations with other armed groups;
- ii. The expansion and consolidation of criminal and guerilla groups in ever larger areas of the country, taking advantage of the climate of social and political instability to strengthen their presence and de facto authority;
- iii. The violent repression of Christian converts in indigenous communities.

It is highly probable that many incidents targeting Christians were not reported out of fear of reprisals.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Female

Colombia	Female Pressure Points Most frequently recorded PPs: WWL 2019 - WWL 2024
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abduction Forced marriage Targeted Seduction Trafficking Violence – physical Violence – psychological Violence – sexual Violence – Verbal

More than seven years after the 2016 FARC peace agreement, violence remains rife in Colombia; cases of abduction and sexual violence against women, especially outspoken female leaders, continues in rural areas where armed groups use these as a weapon of war to generate fear and silence entire regions ([Human Rights Watch, 2023](#)). Across the country, feminicide rates remain alarmingly high with the death of 410 women in 2023 ([Colombia Feminicide Report](#), Observatorio Colombiano de Femicidios, 2023). Women belonging to indigenous and Afro-Colombia ethnic groups are [disproportionately affected](#) by conflict-related violence (ONU Mujeres, Colombia, accessed 6 December 2024).

Women are sometimes pressured into cooking for armed groups, and in some cases, church leaders are forced to visit the camps to pray for the commanders' wives, with the uncertainty of whether they will return home.

On occasion, Christian women may be promised in marriage to non-Christian men in order to eradicate their faith, or be abandoned by their husbands, separated from their children, threatened, ridiculed and ostracized by the community. This exposes them to forced displacement where they are vulnerable to criminal groups, trafficking and sexual exploitation. In areas under criminal control, the guerrilla indoctrination of children also affects Christian girls, since they not only have to accept the violent ideologies imposed despite their faith, but their vulnerability exposes them to becoming victims of abduction, rape, sexual harassment and trafficking. Such criminal activity worsened during the pandemic, and spiked rates of forced recruitment and forced prostitution were observed ([USDS, 2022 Trafficking in Person Report: Colombia, 2022](#)).

In gang-held territories, some girls are 'bought' from their parents or brothers on pain of death. Other young Christian girls are targeted for seduction, with criminal group leaders gifting items such as motorcycles or expensive cell phones. This phenomenon commonly affects Christian families who are put under enormous pressure to surrender their young women, targeted for their perceived purity and obedience, to cartel leaders for sexual purposes – or even marriage. This serves to both satisfy the sexual desires of the criminal commanders, as well as to put pressure on believers and silence the work of churches. "It has been found that illegal armed groups are showing a tendency to recruit children of Christians because they consider them more vulnerable, innocent, and, in the case of girls,

purer (virgins),” a country expert explains. When the girls refuse, they either resort to violent threats or abduction and forced marriage; “... the forced union between an adolescent and a member of criminal groups is not always presented in the form of 'marriage', but rather due to violence that characterizes their actions, they simply separate a girl or adolescent from their home and force her to live with them, as if they had married,” another expert asserts.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Male

Colombia	Male Pressure Points Most frequently recorded PPs: WWL 2019 - WWL 2024
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abduction Discrimination/harassment via education Economic harassment via fines Forced out of home – expulsion Forced to flee town/country Military/militia conscription/service against conscience Trafficking Violence – death Violence – physical Violence – psychological Violence – Verbal

Christian men face a higher level of threats and violence in regions of armed conflict, partly because they represent the head of the family (or of the church, if they are pastors or priests). As the providers for the family, men face being extorted to provide finances for armed groups, and often their sources of income (for example boat engines or arable land) are destroyed or appropriated by militia, leading to economic difficulty and debt. Non-church leaders face the risk of being killed, while pastors or priests may be physically assaulted, kidnapped, extorted for financial gain, forced to leave their regions, or even killed. Exemplifying these dangers, in March 2021, the Bishop of Buenaventura reported that armed groups had threatened him with a bomb-attack for denouncing the high levels of violence and drug trafficking in the region ([Verdad en Libertad](#), 8 February 2022). This is one of many such cases.

Within some indigenous communities in particular, converts to non-accepted forms of Christianity face extreme pressure. They may be beaten, harassed, threatened or sent away to do forced labor in a different territory. "Indigenous converts must live in absolute secrecy because if they join churches or make their faith public, they are at risk of being tortured, expelled, incarcerated, and even their families may run the same risk," an expert explains.

Christian men and boys are also exposed to abduction, forced recruitment and violence at the hands of criminal armed groups. As a country expert explains, “children of Christian parents can be harassed with proposals to join the ranks of armed groups. Armed groups are present in public places and schools, this is part of a strategy to indoctrinate children and try to include them as members of the group ... this pressure on Christian children is also a way of putting pressure on Christian parents for the pastoral work they carry out.” They are subject to indoctrination and mandatory participation in

the activities of these groups which may include perpetrating abductions, surveillance activities, sexual abuse, killings and trafficking. Not only is there a high risk of recruitment for combat purposes, but also “for the transport of illicit substances and weapons,” an expert explains. “In most cases, armed groups convince children by offering them money or food, taking advantage of their socio-economic conditions related to poverty, inequality and lack of opportunities.” As stated in a 2022 BBC report: “According to Colombia's transitional justice court, more than 18,000 children are thought to have been forced to join the FARC guerrillas over a 20-year period” ([BBC News, 5 August 2022](#)).

In light of threats and reprisals, many see forced recruitment as an “inescapable destiny,” one expert explains. Even if the children are able to escape the clutches of these gangs, they will face life-long threats from former gang-members and risk abduction in the future. The forced recruitment of Christian men and boys also impacts women and the strength of the family unit, as the mother must raise children alone and survive economically. As an expert shares: “This type of situation fosters structural poverty in areas under the control of organized crime and due to the need to provide basic goods to the family, children must leave the school, which makes it much easier to convince them to continue the criminal life.”

Persecution of other religious minorities

According to the US State Department (IRFR 2023 Colombia):

- "A Bucaramanga police officer and follower of LaVeyan Satanism filed a lawsuit for the right to keep his hair long in accordance with a provision of the LeVeyan Bible, which he said encourages followers to do so. In October, the 10th Administrative Court of Bucaramanga denied the suit, concluding that freedom of expression cannot always be protected and cited a related regulation on uniforms."
- "President Petro used social media numerous times following Hamas' terrorist attack against Israel. He compared the actions of the Israeli government to the Nazi regime. The CJCC strongly criticized President Petro's social media postings for failing to denounce the Hamas attack and called the comparison with the Nazi regime 'disgraceful.'" (See Infobae report below.)
- "Following the Hamas terrorist attack on Israel, the CJCC reported an increase in antisemitic comments and calls for the expulsion of Jews via social media. Unknown individuals painted antisemitic graffiti in multiple locations around Bogota including outside the Israeli and US embassies. On October 17, two individuals attempted to break into Bogota's Abou Bakr Alsiddiq Mosque and caused minor damage to the building's exterior. Witnesses said the perpetrators demanded Muslims leave the country because they were 'only here to cause problems'."

According to [Infobae](#) (21 September 2024): In September 2024, the US Special Envoy for Monitoring and Combating Antisemitism denounced on the social media platform X that Colombian President Gustavo Petro's rhetoric normalizes antisemitism. In response, the president himself took to the same platform to deny being antisemitic, stating his opposition to Israeli government actions in Gaza and drawing a controversial comparison to Nazism.

Trends Summary

1) Weak state institutions contribute to the worsening of violence in the country

Criminal groups with a vast presence in the country benefit from the fragility of state institutions and their failure to stop the violence that has been perpetrated for decades in the country. This situation contributes, on the one hand, to the distrust and discontent of citizens of their authorities, which leaves them at the mercy of criminal structures with territorial control in areas where state authorities have almost no presence or control; and on the other hand, criminal groups make use of the continuing lawlessness and impunity to expand their areas of operation. The churches' work among the most needy in society have made Christians particularly vulnerable when they are perceived as challenging the authority and territorial domination of criminal groups which control many parts of the country. This happens even when church leaders simply call for peace.

2) The state does not adequately guarantee the rights of the indigenous population

The deterioration of the national situation has a direct impact on the most vulnerable sectors of the population, such as the autonomous indigenous communities. However, their problems and needs tend to be hidden; they are vulnerable to criminal violence, especially due to their geographical location. Due to the staunch defense of ethnic group customs and the threats made by local criminal groups, in some indigenous communities, Christian activities and church work can be very difficult and dangerous, with little or no protection being provided by the state authorities. This is especially the case for “non-accepted Christians” since there are no legal guarantees that recognize these Christians as indigenous members.

3) Less tolerance for Christian expressions of faith

With institutions and authorities in society increasingly perceived as lacking legitimacy, hostility towards manifestations of Christian faith and the defense of traditional Christian teaching has increased, especially in the public sphere. Although expressions of intolerance sometimes include vandalism against Christian buildings motivated by militant pressure groups, the pressure shown through seemingly subtle acts becomes more frequent and more dangerous due to their long-term influence on the way Christians and church leaders act in society. Intolerance towards faith-based political participation and towards public expressions of traditional Christian faith in general is increasing and provoking self-censorship, especially in discussions concerning issues such as abortion, marriage, family and religious freedom.

Further useful reports

Further background information per country and a selection of in-depth reports and smaller articles are available on the Research & Reports pages of the Open Doors website:

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

External Links

- Copyright, sources and definitions: Background country information - <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/wwl-background/>
- Summary of international obligations and rights violations: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>
- Summary of international obligations and rights violations: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cescr.aspx>
- Summary of international obligations and rights violations: Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cat.aspx>
- Summary of international obligations and rights violations: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women - <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>
- Summary of international obligations and rights violations: Convention on the Rights of the Child - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>
- Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period: murdered - <https://www.swissinfo.ch/spa/condenacion-asesinato-de-sacerdote-en-colombia-a-plena-luz-del-d%C3%ADa-para-robarle-su-veh%C3%ADculo/79772880>
- Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period: refused - <https://www.eluniversal.com.co/cartagena/2024/04/26/cristianos-protestan-contra-destitucion-de-juez-que-se-nego-a-casar-a-dos-mujeres/>
- Specific examples of positive developments: participate - <https://adn.celam.org/iglesia-colombiana-hace-un-llamado-urgente-para-restablecer-las-mesas-de-dialogo-y-se-de-un-cese-al-fuego-total/>
- Specific examples of positive developments: willingness - <https://www.revistahyc.com/2024/05/10/cedecol-y-gobierno-de-colombia-consolidan-su-agenda-de-trabajo/>
- Specific examples of positive developments: make efforts - <https://www.mininterior.gov.co/noticias/comunicado-a-la-opinion-publica-11/>
- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: census - <https://www.dane.gov.co/files/investigaciones/boletines/grupos-etnicos/presentacion-grupos-etnicos-2019.pdf>
- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: most of the ongoing violations of FoRB - <https://www.csw.org.uk/2022/12/07/report/5882/article.htm>
- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: Reliefweb, 6 March 2023 - <https://reliefweb.int/report/colombia/situation-human-rights-colombia-report-united-nations-high-commissioner-human-rights-ahrc5225-unofficial-english-version>
- Persecution engines description: CPI 2023 - <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023/index/col>
- Persecution engines description: ELN - <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/colombia-government-calls-off-peace-talks-with-eln-rebels-2024-09-19/>
- Persecution engines description: Illegal Armed Groups - <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/colombia-talks-with-emc-armed-group-crisis-analysts-say-2024-03-21/>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: Human Rights Watch - <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/colombia>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: Colombia Femicide Report - <https://observatoriofemicidioscolombia.org/index.php/reportes>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: disproportionately affected - <https://colombia.unwomen.org/es/ONU-mujeres-en-colombia/las-mujeres-en-colombia>
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- Persecution of other religious minorities: Infobae - <https://www.infobae.com/colombia/2024/09/21/embajadora-contra-antisemitismo-de-ee-uu-acusa-a-petro-de-esparcir-una-retorica-antisemita-el-le-contesto/>