

World
Watch
Research

Guinea: Full Country Dossier

March 2024



OpenDoors

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

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Introduction

World Watch List 2024

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

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

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Sources and definitions

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

WWL 2024 Situation in brief / Guinea

Brief country details

Guinea: Population (UN estimate for 2023)	Christians	Chr%
14,239,000	486,000	3.4

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

Map of country



Guinea: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2024	52	69
WWL 2023	48	71
WWL 2022	43	73
WWL 2021	47	66
WWL 2020	45	64

Dominant persecution engines and drivers

Guinea: Main Persecution engines	Main drivers
Islamic oppression	Non-Christian religious leaders, Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs, One's own (extended) family
Ethno-religious hostility	Ethnic group leaders
Clan oppression	Ethnic group leaders
Dictatorial paranoia	Government officials
Organized corruption and crime	Organized crime cartels or networks

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

Brief description of the persecution situation

In some parts of the country, converts from Islam are not free to live their faith and must try to remain anonymous most of the time. In such a context, it is not possible for a convert to be seen with a Bible or anything that is likely to demonstrate his Christian faith. In animist and Muslim areas, the baptism of converts can expect to be opposed by family members.

In parts of the country where the influence of Islamic militants is being felt, converts from Islam are confronted with harassment and the threat of death. Hostility is also faced by converts coming from African traditional religions. When Christians refuse to participate in traditional rites, the community puts pressure on them. This situation is occurring regularly in Middle Guinea (Fouta Djallon) and also in Labé. Christians there are considered aliens within the community.

It is sometimes very difficult to obtain legal status or registration for churches because local administrators are reluctant to cooperate with Christians. (The Alliance of Churches is helping to make things easier for churches in this respect.) This seems to be a problem mainly for convert groups and Pentecostal churches. There are some cases of impediments to the construction of churches in certain villages in Forested Guinea and in the area of Kankan and Labé.

Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period

- Christians are often compelled to participate in traditional religious ceremonies in certain regions.
- Land-grabbing has become a significant issue affecting churches, with disputes often arising both with Muslims and animists over land ownership.
- Young female converts to Christianity are frequently coerced into forced marriages against their will.
- The process for registering new churches has been cumbersome and fraught with obstacles, making it challenging for Christian communities to establish new places of worship.

- Christian pastors are subject to physical attacks, particularly from animists who view them as destroying their traditional beliefs.
The government imposes strict guidelines on religious activities, including specifying what can be discussed during Sunday sermons, further limiting the freedom of the Christian community.

Specific examples of positive developments

None

WWL 2024: Keys to understanding / Guinea

Links for general background information

Name	Quote Reference	Link	Last accessed on
Amnesty International 202/23 Guinea country report	AI Guinea 2022	https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/west-and-central-africa/guinea/report-guinea/	18 September 2023
BBC News Guinea profile - updated 14 April 2023	BBC Guinea profile	https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13442051	18 September 2023
Bertelsmann Transformation Index Guinea report 2022	BTI Guinea Report 2022	https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report/GIN	18 September 2023
Crisis24 Guinea report (Garda World)	Crisis24 Guinea report	https://crisis24.garda.com/insights-intelligence/intelligence/country-reports/guinea	18 September 2023
Economist Intelligence Unit 2022 - Guinea summary	EIU 2022 Guinea summary	https://country.eiu.com/guinea	18 September 2023
FFP's Fragile States Index 2023 – Guinea	FSI 2023 Guinea	https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/	18 September 2023
Freedom House's 2023 Democracy index – covering 29 countries (Guinea not included)	Democracy index 2023	https://freedomhouse.org/countries/nations-transit/scores	18 September 2023
Freedom House's Freedom on the Net 2023 report – covering 70 countries (Guinea not included)	Freedom on the Net 2023	https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-net/scores	
Freedom House's Global Freedom index 2023 Guinea	Global Freedom Index 2023 Guinea	https://freedomhouse.org/country/guinea/freedom-world/2023	18 September 2023
Georgetown's Women, Peace and Security Index 2021/2022 – Guinea	GIWPS 2021 Guinea	https://giwps.georgetown.edu/country/guinea/	18 September 2023
Girls Not Brides Guinea report	Girls Not Brides Guinea	https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-atlas/regions-and-countries/guinea/	18 September 2023
Human Rights Watch - Guinea not included in World Report 2023	HRW 2023 Guinea summary	https://www.hrw.org/africa/guinea	18 September 2023
Internet World Stats 2023 Guinea	IWS 2023 Guinea	https://www.internetworldstats.com/africa.htm#gn	18 September 2023
RSF's 2023 World Press Freedom Index – Guinea	World Press Freedom 2023 Guinea	https://rsf.org/en/guinea	18 September 2023
Transparency International's 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index – Guinea	CPI 2023 Guinea	https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023/index/gin	22 March 2024
UNDP Human Development Report Guinea - data updates as of 13 March 2024	UNDP HDR Guinea	https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/GIN	22 March 2024
US State Department's 2022 International Religious Freedom Report Guinea	IRFR 2022 Guinea	https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-report-on-international-religious-freedom/guinea/	18 September 2023
USCIRF 2023 country reports – covering 17 CPC / 11 SWL (Guinea not included)	USCIRF 2023	https://www.uscifr.gov/countries	
World Bank Guinea data – 2021	World Bank Guinea data	https://databank.worldbank.org/views/reports/reportwidget.aspx?Report_Name=CountryProfileId=b450fd57tbar=ydd=yinf=nzm=nco untry=GIN	18 September 2023
World Bank Guinea overview – update 29 September 2023	World Bank Guinea overview	https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/guinea/overview	22 March 2024
World Bank Macro Poverty Outlook Guinea - April 2023	Macro Poverty Outlook 2023 Guinea	https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/bae48ff2f2efc5a869546775b3f010735-0500062021/related/mpo-gjn.pdf	18 September 2023
World Factbook Guinea - update 8 March 2024	World Factbook Guinea	https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/guinea/	22 March 2024

Recent history

Guinea was one of the first African countries to gain independence from European colonial powers, becoming independent from France in 1958. Sékou Touré, who led the movement for independence, became the first president of the country and followed a policy of socialism and close contact with Russia and China. He established a single-party dictatorship favoring socialist policies and was proclaimed president for life. All political opposition to the regime was brutally suppressed. There was no free media and many journalists who attempted to criticize the government were arrested or forced into exile. (Source: [State University](#), last accessed 18 September 2023)

The government then followed a program called ‘radical Africanization’ in which the country attempted to isolate itself from its colonial past by rejecting Western values. President Touré failed in his attempt to replace French with African dialect and French continued to be the dominant language in the country. Due to Touré's policy of Africanization and socialism, Guinea became one of the most isolated countries in Africa. The government continued its socialist policy by expropriating land from tribal chiefs.

In 1984 Touré died of heart failure and Prime Minister Louis Beavogui replaced him as interim president. However, Colonel Lansana Conté overthrew the government in a bloodless coup before Beavogui took power. Conté reversed most of Touré's policies, but even though the new regime was less oppressive than its predecessor and promised numerous reforms, Conté's control was still tight. He remained in power until his death in 2008. Moussa Camara then took power through a coup right after the death of Conté. Political unrest followed this coup, forcing Camara to hold democratic elections in 2010. In the same year, Alpha Condé became the first democratically elected president of Guinea.

Condé went on to win the next 2015 election also and has held power until the September 2021 coup (see below). On 5 February 2018, the first [local elections](#) were held since the end of military dictatorship (France24, 5 February 2018). There had been an eight-year delay due allegedly to a lack of funds, political infighting and the 2013–2016 Ebola crisis. Guinea was scheduled to hold its legislative elections and a constitutional referendum (boycotted by the opposition) on 1 March 2020, but two days beforehand, a further delay was announced. The presidential election was conducted on [18 October 2020](#) and incumbent President Condé won a third term (BBC News, 24 October 2020). That was followed by post-election violence and repression of human rights, as reported by [Human Rights Watch](#) (HRW news, 19 November 2020).

The September 2021 coup

In September 2021, a video appeared on national TV showing President Condé under arrest, surrounded by soldiers claiming to have [dissolved the government and the constitution](#), and to have closed all land and air borders. According to a BBC report on 7 September 2021, the leader of the coup, Colonel Mamady Doumbouya, said a new union government would be formed within a short timespan. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, ECOWAS, and the African Union condemned the coup. The coup leaders claimed that "the army had [little choice but to seize power](#) because of the rampant corruption, disregard for human rights and economic mismanagement" (BBC News 1 October 2021). Reports indicated that the people in the country welcomed the coup while ECOWAS and the AU suspended the country's membership.

Guinea's interim president, Colonel Doumbouya announced that the country would return to civilian rule after a 39-month transition period. He also promised that no-one taking part in the interim government, including himself, would be allowed to stand in future elections to determine the next civilian government (BBC News, 1 May 2022). The National Transitional Council voted on 11 May 2022 for a transitional period of 36 months, reducing by three months the preferred timescale expressed earlier by Colonel Doumbouya. ECOWAS has however noted that Guinea would face economic sanctions unless the country speeds up its proposed three-year transition back to democracy.

In summary, Guinea's history has been marked by coups, corruption and ethnic tension. Although the country transitioned to civilian rule in 2010 after a 2008 military takeover and long-standing authoritarian governance, the subsequent decade has been far from stable. Ethnic divisions have deepened, corruption has remained pervasive, and any form of dissent has been swiftly and often brutally suppressed by security forces. The September 2021 coup has only added to the instability: Since seizing power, the coup leaders have postponed the return to civilian rule, incarcerated critics, and used excessive force to quell public protests.

Political and legal landscape

As recounted above, In September 2021, the civilian government was overthrown in a coup led by Lieutenant Colonel Mamady Doumbouya, the head of the special forces. The 2020 Constitution was suspended and the National Assembly dissolved. On 2 May 2022, the coup leaders [announced](#) that its transition back to civilian rule would probably take more than three years (Reuters, 3 May 2022), longer than ECOWAS had demanded from the coup leaders. In this toxic and undemocratic atmosphere, all rights are under strict limitations. For Christians, freedom of expression or assembly as well as the freedom to exercise their freedom of religion to its fullest extent remain curtailed.

2010 - 2021

Guinea returned to civilian rule in 2010, following a 2008 military coup and decades of authoritarian governance. The 2010 Constitution stated that the country follows a presidential system. The president is elected every five years and is only allowed to run for two terms. Guinea follows a unicameral legislature system with the National Assembly as its body. The National Assembly consists of 114 members. Local elections were held in February 2018 where mayors and communal leaders were elected, and heads of districts were appointed.

In March 2020, President Alpha Condé won approval of a new Constitution that allowed him to seek a third term in office over the objections of opposition groups. In reaction to President Condé's intention to run for a third term in the October 2020 elections, unrest broke out. According to Human Rights Watch:

- [HRW, 10 April 2020](#): A coalition of civil society groups, labor unions, and political parties has organized regular protests since October 2019 and boycotted the referendum on the new Constitution. The government's response to these protests was brutal, with the authorities responding to these protests with intimidation, threats, violence against protesters and the arrest of opposition leaders.
- [HRW, 19 February 2020](#): Between October 2019 and January 2020, at least 30 people were killed. Following the referendum on the new Constitution, security forces violently cracked down on opposition supporters killing at least 8 people and leaving 20 others injured.

According to [France 24 \(24 March 2020\)](#):

- In March 2020, several people were killed in southern Guinea in an outbreak of violence in Nzerekore, the West African state's second-largest city after the country's contested constitutional referendum. At least 32 people were killed in the runup to the referendum and another 14 more were reported to be killed in the capital Conakry on the polling day

itself. There were also reported violent incidents, including attacks on churches and mosques. At least one Protestant church was reported burnt down and the assailants also burned down houses.

As stated above, the 2020 Constitution was suspended in the 2021 coup when the armed forces took over control of the country.

In Freedom House's Freedom in the World 2023, Guinea is rated as 'not free' with a score of 30/100. The report outlines the actions taken by the junta in Guinea during 2022. In January 2022, transitional President Mamady Doumbouya formed an 81-member National Transitional Council (CNT) tasked with creating a new Constitution and ushering in constitutional governance. However, no electoral framework has been put in place, and elections remain unscheduled. By May 2022, the junta-controlled government had effectively prohibited public protests. Despite this, the National Front for the Defense of the Constitution (FNDC) persisted in organizing large-scale protests advocating for a swift return to civilian rule, even in the face of aggressive suppression by security forces. In August 2022, the government officially disbanded the FNDC, arresting multiple leaders and functionaries.

[ARTICLE 19](#) issued a scathing statement in May 2023, forcefully condemning the fatal violence against protesters and the culture of impunity that persists in Guinea. On 10 May 2023, during a demonstration in Conakry, security forces resorted to force. Forces Vives de Guinée, a coalition uniting opposition parties, unions and NGOs, had called for these demonstrations. They demanded the release of political prisoners and the commencement of dialogue in line with the conditions approved by ECOWAS. However, the peaceful intent of the demonstrations was shattered by violent incidents erupting in multiple neighborhoods on 9 May 2023, causing a high number of casualties. In their statement released on 10 May 2023, the Forces Vives de Guinée reported that 7 people had been killed, 32 were injured by gunfire, and over 56 were arrested. The Guinean authorities dismissed these numbers as fictitious.

Religious landscape

Guinea: Religious context	Number of adherents	%
Christians	486,000	3.4
Muslim	12,424,000	87.3
Hindu	0	0.0
Buddhist	12,500	0.1
Ethno-religionist	1,291,000	9.1
Jewish	0	0.0
Bahai	340	0.0

(Table continued below)

Guinea: Religious context	Number of adherents	%
Atheist	3,800	0.0
Agnostic	21,900	0.2
Other	0	0.0
<i>OTHER includes Chinese folk, New religionist, Sikh, Spiritist, Taoist, Confucianist, Jain, Shintoist, Zoroastrian.</i>		

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

Muslims (mostly Sunni) are dominant in almost all regions of the country. Most Christians (predominantly Roman Catholic) live in the cities, such as Conakry. Both Muslims and Christians are known to mix their faith with various traditional African religious practices.

The Soninke merchants from Ghana were responsible for the spread of Islam throughout Guinea during the 11th century. The northern part of the country was part of the great Mali Empire during the 13th and 14th centuries. Most of the indigenous tribes converted to Islam during this period. French missionaries were the first Europeans who brought Christianity to the country.

After independence in 1958, the Sékou Touré government followed a policy of socialism and secularism. The regime attempted to reduce the influence of various powerful Islamic and religious figures and also closed down the French Catholic schools and expelled most of the French missionaries from the country. The consecutive regimes that followed Touré attempted to lessen government control in religious affairs and promote tolerance among the different religious groups.

The suspended Constitution explicitly upholds the principles of freedom of religion and separation of religion and state and provides the right of persons to practice their religion openly without interference. However, the government attempts to restrict the influence of certain Islamist groups through its Secretariat of Religious Affairs (SRA). In 2019, [SRA inspectors](#) were present at most church and mosque religious services to monitor the content of sermons preached (US State Department, IRFR 2019 Guinea).

Most Christians and Muslims live side by side without major problems. However, there have been some violent incidents concerning property disputes, conversions from Islam to Christianity and marriage between Muslims and Christians.

Economic landscape

According to [Forbes](#) (accessed 18 September 2023):

- Guinea "possesses the world's largest reserves of bauxite and largest untapped high-grade iron ore reserves, as well as gold and diamonds. In addition, Guinea has fertile soil, ample rainfall, and is the source of several West African rivers, including the Senegal, Niger, and Gambia. Guinea's hydro potential is enormous, and the country could be a major exporter of electricity. The country also has tremendous agriculture potential. Gold, bauxite, and diamonds are Guinea's main exports." However, Guinea is one of the least developed countries in the world with over 40% of the population living below the poverty line in some

areas.

According to World Bank's Macro Poverty Outlook 2023 - Guinea:

- **Economic growth:** From 2018 to 2022, economic growth in the country was robust, averaging 5.2%, or 2.6% per capita, primarily fueled by the mining sector, which includes bauxite and gold. This strong performance also contributed to maintaining low fiscal deficits, which averaged around 1.5%. However, the mining sector's limited integration with the broader economy, particularly in terms of employment opportunities, means that this economic growth has not led to a corresponding reduction in poverty or equitable prosperity for all.
- **Inflation:** Inflation is anticipated to remain elevated but is projected to gradually decrease to around 10% in 2023. It is then expected to average out at approximately 9% for the years 2024-2025. While the forecast suggests a slow easing of inflationary pressures, the rates remain relatively high, indicating that cost of living concerns are likely to persist. This could continue to have a broad impact on purchasing power and economic stability. Policy measures will likely need to be implemented or continued to manage and further reduce the inflation rate.
- **Fiscal deficit:** The rate of extreme poverty, which stands at an estimated 15.8% in 2023, is projected to decrease to 14.6% by the year 2025. This suggests a moderately positive outlook, indicating that efforts to combat poverty may be yielding some success. However, the decline is relatively marginal, and there is still a significant portion of the population living in conditions of extreme poverty. Continued and more aggressive efforts will be necessary to bring about a substantial reduction in poverty rates. The fiscal deficit, including grants, contracted to 0.9% of GDP in 2022, down from 1.8% in 2021. This reduction was primarily due to a decrease in current expenditures and energy subsidies, which more than offset a rise in capital expenditures. Tax revenues slipped by a percentage point, dropping to 11% of GDP, largely attributed to inefficient tax administration and underperforming mining revenue relative to the sector's value-added contribution. Subsidies for electricity and petrol remained elevated, accounting for 4% of GDP. While low electricity tariffs and increased hydropower generation contributed to this, petrol pump prices did see a mid-year hike.
- **Poverty:** The national poverty rate saw a decline from 48.5% in 2014 to 43.7% in the period between 2018 and 2019. However, the growth elasticity of poverty during this period was a mere 0.47, indicating that economic growth had a limited impact on poverty reduction. Further compounding the issue, consumption growth for the bottom 40% of the population was negative, suggesting that the economic growth was not pro-poor or inclusive. In 2018, approximately 32% of the population experienced deprivation in access to essential services such as education, healthcare and basic infrastructure. A rapid phone survey conducted in September-October 2022 highlighted the external pressures affecting the country. The survey reported that 9% of households were unable to access needed medicines, a scarcity attributed to the ripple effects of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This indicates that global events are also affecting the domestic accessibility to essential goods and services, thereby exacerbating existing vulnerabilities.

According to [Africa Development Bank](#) accessed 18 September 2023):

- **Economic outlook:** The Real GDP of the economy is forecasted to expand by 5.5% in 2023 and 5.6% in 2024, primarily driven by sectors such as mining, energy, and infrastructure investment. On the inflation front, the rate is expected to decrease to 11.2% in 2023 and 9.9% in 2024. This decline in inflation is anticipated due to easing tensions following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which had previously disrupted imports of essential agricultural inputs like fertilizers and seeds. Additionally, improved supply chains for imported consumer goods and machinery are also expected to contribute to lower inflation.

According to Heritage Foundation's [2023 Index of Economic Freedom](#):

- Guinea's economic landscape in 2023 presents a mixed picture, as reflected by its economic freedom score of 53.2. This places the country at 129th globally in terms of economic freedom, a drop of 1.0 point from the previous year. In the context of Sub-Saharan Africa, Guinea ranks 25th out of 47 countries, underscoring that its economic performance is below the global average.
- Several challenges have continued to hinder economic growth and prosperity in the country. Notably, political instability and a weak rule of law serve as major constraints to sustainable economic development. The lack of robust enforcement of property rights and pervasive corruption have contributed to the proliferation of the informal sector, further eroding the tax base and hampering regulation.
- The judiciary's susceptibility to political influence has also cast a shadow over the business environment, making it less attractive for both domestic and foreign investment. The fragility of the economy is exacerbated by the dominance of state-controlled enterprises in crucial sectors, which tends to stifle competition and innovation, thus limiting the scope for economic diversification and growth.

Social and cultural landscape

According to the World Factbook Guinea and UNDP Human Development Report Guinea:

- **Main ethnic groups:** Fulani (Peuhl) 33.4%, Malinke 29.4%, Susu 21.2%, Guerze 7.8%, Kissi 6.2%, Toma 1.6%, other/foreign 0.4% (2018 est.)
- **Main languages:** French (official), Pular, Maninka, Susu, other native languages
- **Median age:** 18.0 years
- **Urban population:** 36.5%
- **Expected years of schooling:** 9.4 years
- **Literacy rate, adult (ages 15 and older):** 32.0%
- **Employment to population ratio (ages 15 and older):** 58.9%
- **Unemployment, total:** 4.3% of labor force
- **Unemployment, youth (ages 15-24):** 5.3%
- **Human Development Index (HDI) score and ranking:** Guinea is ranked #178 out of 189 countries with a value of 0.477 points
- **Average life expectancy at birth:** 61.6 years
- **Gender Development Index (GDI):** 0.817
- **Gender Inequality Index (GII):** No data

According to [Study.com/Guinea Ethnic Groups](https://www.study.com/Guinea-Ethnic-Groups) (last accessed 18 September 2023):

- Guinea "has vast natural mineral wealth, yet the population is impoverished. This can be attributed to instability between the various ethnic groups that inhabit the country. Ethnic tensions between these groups have kept Guinea in a state of near-constant instability. With the Fulani at 40%, Malinké at 30%, and Soussou at 20%, ethnic groups make up approximately 90% of the population. Guinea is home to another 21 distinct ethnicities comprising 10% of the overall population. Despite great similarities in culture and belief, the ethnic groups within Guinea, due to a weak and corrupt government, often work to address grievances between one another using traditional ethnic reprisals."

It is well-known that tribal relations play an important role in politics. For example, ousted President Condé was supported by his ethnic group, the Malinke, whereas most of the groups opposing him were from the Fulani.

Technological landscape

Sources give varying figures when it comes to the status of technology in Guinea. According to Internet World Stats (IWS 2023 Guinea):

- **Internet users:** 18.6% of the total population (survey date: December 2021)
- **Facebook users:** 17.8% penetration rate (survey date: January 2022)

According to [DataReportal](#) reporting on digital adoption and use in Guinea in early 2024 (published on 23 February 2024):

- **Internet users:** Internet penetration rate of 33.9%
- **Social media users:** 18.1% of the total population
- **Active cellular mobile connections:** 97.5% of the population

According to [BuddeComm Research](#) (Last updated 13 March 2024):

- "Fixed broadband services are still very limited and expensive, though there have been some positive developments in recent years. A National Backbone Network was completed in mid-2020, connecting administrative centres across the country, and in 2022 the length of the fibre network was increased by about 26%. A new infrastructure provider, Guinéenne de Fibre Optique, was licensed in March 2023 to provide interconnection services and fibre transport to operators on a wholesale basis, and this is expected to lead to reduced access prices for end-users. The government also secured a \$60 million loan from the World Bank to improve internet infrastructure, which will help reduce the digital divide and improve network capacity."

Security situation

Since gaining independence, Guinea has been plagued by political instability, marked by military coups, authoritarian governance and civil unrest. The most recent coup in September 2021, which ousted President Condé, ushered in a new era of heightened autocratic rule. This regime has not only been suppressing political opposition through arrests but has also employed lethal force against protestors. The situation reached a grim milestone in May 2023, when a crackdown

on demonstrations in Conakry led to the killing of seven protestors and left numerous others injured. This violent response by security forces has heightened the climate of fear and intimidation, making it risky for anyone to openly criticize the government.

Even sectors unrelated to politics are feeling the pressure; for instance, football players who participated in the African Cup of Nations 2022 were chastised by the coup leader for not winning the trophy. This intensifying oppressive environment poses threats not only to political dissenters but also to religious minorities like Christians, who find themselves increasingly vulnerable in this fraught landscape.

Trends analysis

1) Army leaders' consolidation of power is stifling democratic progress

Guinea's journey towards a more democratic society, initiated after the 2010 elections, has been fraught with obstacles, including ethnic divisions and a fragile economy. The 2021 coup orchestrated by the armed forces showcased their unwillingness to relinquish power. The situation escalated in May 2022 when the army openly declared that a return to civilian rule could take more than three years. An eventual two-year timetable was agreed upon, beginning on 1 January 2023. However, the army has been consolidating its power, with recent crackdowns and killings in May 2023 revealing an even more ruthless disposition towards dissent. This authoritarian trajectory undermines hopes for democratic consolidation and heightens ethnic tensions, putting the country's fragile unity at risk.

2) Regional Islamic militancy and strict government controls eat away at religious tolerance

The precarious political climate not only endangers democratic values but also strains Guinea's relative religious tolerance. The rise of Islamic militancy in the surrounding region casts a long shadow over the country's future, particularly threatening its Christian minority. Furthermore, the government has imposed strict controls on Friday sermons in mosques, potentially aggravating Muslim communities and adding another layer of tension. The tight grip which the army and government have on religious discourse could fan the flames of Islamic extremism, making it an even more dangerous environment for Christians and other religious minorities.

3) Ethnic tensions remain an ever-present challenge

The longstanding issue of ethnic division remains unresolved and continues to be a major challenge for Guinea, even as the army leaders tighten their grip on power. As the democratic space shrinks, these tensions are likely to escalate, creating an unstable environment that could be exploited by various actors, including radical Islamic elements. With the army becoming more ruthless in its consolidation of power, the risk of these divisions turning into full-blown conflict becomes increasingly likely.

External Links - Keys to understanding

- Recent history: State University - <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/576/Guinea-HISTORY-BACKGROUND.html%20>
- Recent history: local elections - <https://www.france24.com/en/20180205-guinea-opposition-cries-foul-long-awaited-local-elections>

- Recent history: 18 October 2020 - <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54657359>
- Recent history: Human Rights Watch - <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/11/19/guinea-post-election-violence-repression>
- Recent history: dissolved the government and the constitution - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-58461436>
- Recent history: little choice but to seize power - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-58461971>
- Political and legal landscape: announced - <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/guineas-coup-leader-proposes-3-year-transition-back-civilian-rule-2022-05-01/>
- Political and legal landscape: HRW, 10 April 2020 - <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/10/guinea-violence-during-referendum>
- Political and legal landscape: HRW, 19 February 2020 - <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/02/19/guinea-fear-further-crackdown-constitutional-poll-nears>
- Political and legal landscape: France 24 (24 March 2020): - <https://www.france24.com/en/20200324-several-dead-in-unrest-in-southern-guinea>
- Political and legal landscape: ARTICLE 19 - <https://www.article19.org/resources/guinea-pattern-of-bloody-crackdown-on-protesters-must-end/>
- Religious landscape description: SRA inspectors - <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/GUINEA-2019-INTERNATIONAL-RELIGIOUS-FREEDOM-REPORT.pdf>
- Economic landscape: Forbes - <https://www.forbes.com/places/guinea/?sh=2e6c21b114f3>
- Economic landscape: Africa - <https://www.afdb.org/en/countries/west-africa/guinea/guinea-economic-outlook>
- Economic landscape: Devel - <https://www.afdb.org/en/countries/west-africa/guinea/guinea-economic-outlook>
- Economic landscape: opment - <https://www.afdb.org/en/countries/west-africa/guinea/guinea-economic-outlook>
- Economic landscape: Bank - <https://www.afdb.org/en/countries/west-africa/guinea/guinea-economic-outlook>
- Economic landscape: 2023 Index of Economic Freedom - <https://www.heritage.org/index/country/guinea>
- Social and cultural landscape: Study.com/Guinea Ethnic Groups - <https://study.com/academy/lesson/guinea-ethnic-groups.html>
- Technological landscape: DataReportal - <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-guinea>
- Technological landscape: BuddeComm Research - <https://www.budde.com.au/Research/Guinea-Telecoms-Mobile-and-Broadband-Statistics-and-Analyses>

WWL 2024: Church information / Guinea

Christian origins

Christianity in Guinea has more than 500 years of history.

The Soninke merchants from Ghana were responsible for the spread of Islam throughout Guinea during the 11th century. The northern part of the country was part of the great Mali Empire during the 13th and 14th centuries. Most of the indigenous tribes converted to Islam during this period. French missionaries were the first Europeans who brought Christianity to the country.

The Portuguese arrived along the coast in 1462, but their main interest was in setting up a trading center and not in spreading Roman Catholicism. No effort was made to evangelize in the country until 1877. From 1877 onwards, Roman Catholic missionaries began to arrive. Protestants did not enter the country until 1918. After independence from France in 1958, the Sékou Touré government followed a policy of socialism and secularism. The regime attempted to reduce Western influence, closed the French Catholic schools down and expelled most of the French missionaries from the country.

(Source: Melton J G and Baumann M: *Religions of The World - A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Beliefs and Practices*, 2nd Edition 2010, pp.1280-1281.)

Church spectrum today

Guinea: Church networks	Christians	%
Orthodox	0	0.0
Catholic	324,000	66.7
Protestant	59,700	12.3
Independent	82,200	16.9
Unaffiliated	26,600	5.5
Doubly-affiliated Christians	-6,400	-1.3
Total	486,100	100.0
<i>(Any deviation from the total number of Christians stated above is due to the rounding of decimals)</i>		
Evangelical movement	63,000	13.0
Renewalist movement	127,000	26.1

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

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

Christian denominations in the country include Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists, and several evangelical groups. Christians are concentrated in large cities and are also present in significant numbers in eastern Forested Guinea.

Areas where Christians face most difficulties

Christians face persecution in most parts of the country. In rural areas, where many people mix Islam with the indigenous belief system, hostility can be stronger. Persecution is frequent in Middle, Upper and Forested Guinea where the influence of *Islamic oppression* is more strongly felt.

Christian communities and how they are affected

Communities of expatriate Christians: Expatriate Christians are not involuntarily isolated in Guinea and so are not counted as a separate WWL category for scoring and analysis.

Historical Christian communities: Roman Catholic, Anglican and various Protestant churches have existed in Guinea for hundreds of years and they are at times consulted by the government

and given recognition, particularly in religious affairs. The Roman Catholic Church has been given many advantages within the government compared to other denominations.

Converts to Christianity: Christians with Muslim or Animist background face serious problems. In all areas of the country, there are occasions where converts are killed, receive death-threats and/or are forced to leave their homes. Particularly in areas such as the Fouta-Djalon region, converts from Islam are not free to live their faith and must keep a low profile, not doing anything in public to demonstrate their Christian faith. In large cities, the pressure Christians face is commonly in relation to housing, where conservative Muslims are likely to prevent them from renting homes.

Non-traditional Christian communities: Baptist, Evangelical and Pentecostal groups are active in Guinea and some face pressure similar to converts. They also experience difficulties in finding places for worship and face hostility from radical Islamic groups in certain areas. Pressure is strongest when Christians in this category engage in evangelism or work with converts to Christianity.

WWL 2024: Persecution Dynamics / Guinea

Reporting period

1 October 2022 - 30 September 2023

Position on the World Watch List

Guinea: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2024	52	69
WWL 2023	48	71
WWL 2022	43	73
WWL 2021	47	66
WWL 2020	45	64

In WWL 2024, Guinea's total score increased by four points, following a five-point increase in WWL 2023, mainly due to a rise in violence scores. The score for violence rose from 3.0 points in WWL 2023 to 7.2 points. The average pressure on Christians in Guinea remained at 9.0 points, similar to WWL 2023. Like several other African countries, Guinea, with an 87.3% Muslim population (according to WCD 2023 figures), is grappling with the rise of radical Islamic groups intolerant of other religions, including Christianity. Currently, persecution in Guinea is primarily driven by family and local community dynamics, with Middle, Upper, and Forested Guinea experiencing particularly pronounced influence from *Islamic oppression*.

Persecution engines

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

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.

Dictatorial paranoia (Medium)

The atmosphere for religious freedom, including for Christians, remains strained under the military government's watchful eye. Churches must pass through a bureaucratic maze for attaining approval and continuing recognition. Every six months, churches are required to submit activity reports to the government, a stipulation that fosters an environment of unease and potential self-censorship among Christian communities.

Islamic oppression (Medium)

Discrimination against Christians manifests in various ways, such as unequal allocation of land for church construction and limited promotion opportunities in government posts. Converts from Islam to Christianity face especially harsh pressures, including social ostracization and, in some cases, losing custody of their children, particularly in Muslim-majority areas like the Fouta-Djalou region. Governmental entities, notably the Ministry for Islamic Affairs, have been noted to support this form of oppression. The rise of radical Islamic groups further threatens religious freedom, adding another layer of concern for the Christian minority.

Clan oppression (Medium) blended with Ethno-religious hostility (Medium)

Ethnic identity remains a potent force in Guinea, often mingling with religious affiliation to produce a complex landscape of social dynamics. Christians converting from animist traditional beliefs can face severe repercussions, including ostracization from their communities. Moreover, ethnic clashes sometimes involve attacks against groups where Christians are predominant, adding to the apprehensions faced by Christian communities in the country.

Organized corruption and crime (Medium)

Corruption remains a stumbling block for governance in Guinea, as evidenced by its low ranking in Transparency International's CPI 2022. This systemic corruption impacts Christians indirectly by eroding the rule of law, making it difficult for them to seek justice in cases of persecution or discrimination. The involvement of high-level officials in corruption scandals, such as the [mining industry case](#) in Switzerland (Reuters, 4 April 2023), highlights the extent of the problem and also casts doubt on the current regime's willingness or ability to address issues affecting vulnerable groups, including Christians.

Drivers of persecution

Guinea: Drivers of persecution	IO	RN	ERH	CO	CDP	CPCO	SI	DPA	OCC
	MEDIUM		MEDIUM	MEDIUM	WEAK			MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Government officials								Medium	
Ethnic group leaders			Medium	Medium					
Non-Christian religious leaders	Medium								
Religious leaders of other churches					Weak				
Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs	Medium								
One's own (extended) family	Medium								
Organized crime cartels or networks									Medium

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

Drivers of Dictatorial paranoia

- Government officials (Medium):** Recent developments in Guinea's political landscape have tilted the country into a more authoritarian regime. Previously rated as 'partly free' by Freedom House since 2010, the country's status declined to 'not free' following the military coup in September 2021. This highlights the military government's increasing need to control civil society, including religious organizations. The government enforces complicated registration rules aimed at suppressing the activities of minority religious groups, including Christians. These layers of control suggest that the government is also trying to win local favor by restricting religious minorities, thereby consolidating its power and curbing any form of dissent.

Drivers of Islamic oppression

- **Family members (Medium):** Familial ties play a crucial role in the persecution of Christians, especially converts from Islam. Within the family structure, a Christian convert is often exposed to ostracization, social ridicule and even economic sanctions.
- **Non-Christian religious leaders (Medium):** Radical imams and other Islamic religious figures contribute to an atmosphere of intolerance. Incendiary sermons that stoke hatred against Christians are not uncommon, further polarizing communities along religious lines.
- **Ordinary citizens (Medium):** The wider Islamic community also partakes in this form of persecution, shunning those who convert from Islam to Christianity. This social exclusion manifests in various ways, including in employment, education, and day-to-day social interactions.

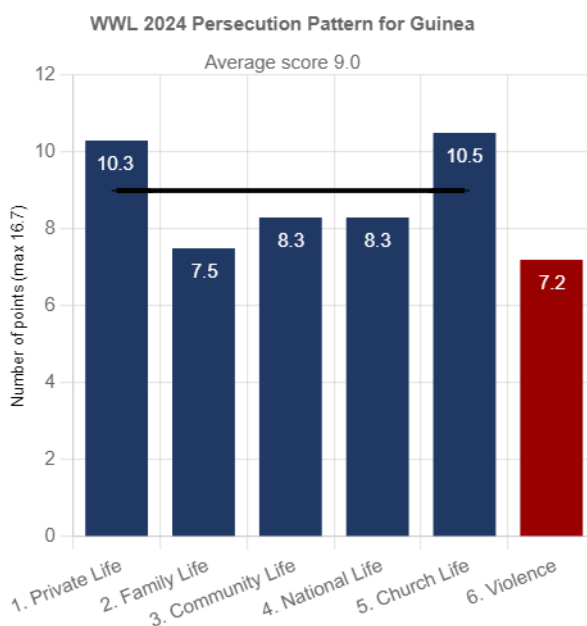
Drivers of Clan oppression / Ethno-religious hostility

- **Clan leaders (Medium):** In areas like Forested Guinea, clan leaders and Zogos play a significant role in maintaining traditional practices. They wield considerable influence and have been known to use it to prevent Christians from building churches, particularly in villages in the Macenta region. Christians are also compelled to participate in indigenous rituals and celebrations, which often conflict with their beliefs.

Drivers of Organized corruption and crime

- **Organized crime cartels or networks (Medium):** Corruption remains endemic in Guinea, affecting not just governance but also the daily lives of ordinary citizens. Christians find themselves entangled in this web, as they are often required to pay bribes to navigate through bureaucratic and legal challenges. This form of corruption undermines their freedom and makes them vulnerable to further exploitation and discrimination.

The Persecution pattern



The WWL 2024 Persecution pattern for Guinea shows:

- The average pressure on Christians in Guinea is at 9.0 points, similar to WWL 2023.
- The *Church sphere* score is the highest with 10.5 points, followed by the *Private sphere* with a score of 10.3 points. The *Family sphere* scores the lowest with 7.5 points.
- The score for violence is 7.2 points, a rise from 3.0 points in WWL 2023.

Pressure in the 5 spheres of life

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

Pressure in Block 1 / Private sphere

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

In regions dominated by Muslim and Indigenous believers, Christians, especially those with a Muslim background, face significant risks when discussing their faith with individuals beyond immediate family. Converts from Islam, constrained by the need to remain undiscovered, risk their religious identity being revealed by such discussions, the consequences of which may be expulsion from the community or attack.

Block 1.1: Conversion has been opposed, forbidden, or punishable, including conversion from one type of Christianity to another. (2.75 points)

Conversion is a significant issue in the community, impacting both those from Muslim backgrounds and practitioners of indigenous African religions (ATR). Converts risk losing various rights and may face attacks or expulsion as a result of their decision to change their faith.

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.). (2.75 points)

Expressing one's Christian faith, particularly for converts, is risky as it invites not only potential attacks from individuals, including youth and officials, but also opposition from their own families who may disapprove of their conversion.

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

In many areas, openly displaying Christian symbols is fraught with risk, particularly for converts, as it invites hostility from family and community members as well as officials.

Block 1.7: It has been risky for Christians to speak about their faith with immediate family members. (2.75 points)

In Muslim and ATR (African Traditional Religion) families alike, Christians face heightened risks when sharing their faith within their families. They risk being expelled from their families or even

forced to revert to Islam or ATR. Families may also deny them access to food and basic needs, exacerbating their vulnerability within the household.

Pressure in Block 2 / Family sphere

Block 2.7: Parents have been hindered in raising their children according to their Christian beliefs. (2.50 points)

Christian parents may encounter severe challenges in raising their children according to their faith, especially if they are converts who come from Muslim or animist families.

Block 2.8: Christian children have been pressured into attending anti-Christian or majority religion teaching at any level of education. (2.50 points)

Limited options for Christian schools in various parts of the country expose Christian children to curricula that contradict their faith. In some regions, animist or Muslim family members may enforce attendance at Islamic or traditional animist educational settings for children who have embraced Christianity.

Block 2.9: Children of Christians have been harassed or discriminated against because of their parents' faith. (2.25 points)

Children of Christian parents often encounter serious challenges due to their parents' faith; this is particularly the case for children of church leaders. They may face mobbing and biased treatment in educational settings, for instance.

Block 2.11: Spouses of converts have been put under pressure (successfully or unsuccessfully) by others to divorce. (1.75 points)

Societal and familial pressure placed on individuals converting to Christianity often result in the breakdown of marital relationships. Female converts, in particular, face pressure to divorce by their spouses when their conversion is discovered.

Pressure in Block 3 / Community sphere

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

Christians face daily challenges at the workplace, for instance, where they may encounter discrimination or pressure to conform to Islamic and indigenous norms. Similarly, when accessing community resources or land for grazing, Christians may face harassment or threats for not adhering to requirements enforced by the dominant religious groups.

Block 3.4: Christians have been hindered in sharing community resources because of their faith (e.g. clean drinking water). (2.75 points)

An example of this problem can be found in areas like Guinea Forestière, where resource allocation is influenced by religious considerations, with Muslim leaders favoring the Muslim

population. This leaves Christians disadvantaged in accessing basic necessities.

Block 3.6: Christians have been hindered in participating in communal institutions, forums, etc., for faith-related reasons. (2.75 points)

Christians, especially outside the capital city, face significant marginalization in participating in communal events. Meetings are often structured to disadvantage Christians, with those not adhering to local dressing codes being excluded, a situation that is even tougher for converts.

Block 3.9: Christians have faced disadvantages in their education at any level for faith-related reasons (e.g. restrictions of access to education). (2.75 points)

Due to the dominant Muslim population in the country, state school curricula and classes promote non-Christian content and values, leaving Christian children with limited alternatives. Additionally, Christians seldom receive encouragement within the school system, as Muslim teachers will tend to favor Muslim students.

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

In regions dominated by Muslims and the indigenous belief system, Christians encounter discrimination in both public and private employment, with this practice increasingly becoming normalized. Institutions affiliated with the Fund of the Islamic Development Bank are reported to openly discriminate against Christians, pressuring them to renounce their faith in exchange for career advancements. Direct conversations with locals confirm the prevalence of this issue, emphasizing the challenges Christians face in securing fair employment opportunities in these areas.

Pressure in Block 4 / National sphere

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

Christian civil society organizations and political parties, rooted in their Christian convictions, encounter hindrances and prohibitions in various regions. These challenges are exacerbated by limited human rights freedom in the country, contributing to difficulties in expressing dissent against government practices.

Block 4.11: Christians have been subjected to smear campaigns or hate speech. (3.50 points)

The media landscape, dominated by Muslims controlling outlets, perpetuates inaccuracies and bias against Christians and results in prioritizing Islamic narratives, overshadowing Christian initiatives and downplaying their contributions. This skewed representation influences public perception and potentially fuels religious tensions.

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

Christians encounter hindrances in expressing their views, especially in Muslim-dominated regions, where societal norms impede open dialogue. Converts face a higher likelihood of hindrance, particularly in remote areas. The suppression of Christians' freedom to express their views underscores the challenges of fostering open dialogue and religious tolerance, emphasizing the importance of initiatives to promote freedom of expression.

Block 4.5: Christians have been discriminated against when engaging with the authorities (local administration, government, army, etc.) for faith-related reasons. (2.75 points)

In regions where Muslim dominance and the influence of indigenous beliefs prevail, Christians face discrimination when engaging with authorities, impacting professional advancement and opportunities compared to their Muslim counterparts. This widespread bias is particularly noteworthy in matters of promotion and positions of responsibility within the local administration, government and the armed forces. Addressing these challenges requires initiatives promoting inclusivity, fair representation, and religious tolerance within the country's administrative and governmental structures.

Pressure in Block 5 / Church sphere

Block 5.20: It has been risky for churches or Christian organizations to speak out against instigators of persecution. (4.00 points)

Speaking out against instigators of persecution poses a significant risk for churches and Christian organizations, particularly when the perpetrators hold influential positions within Muslim and animist communities. Advocating for religious freedom carries with it the potential danger of increasing the hostility faced by churches or Christian organizations.

Block 5.2: It has been difficult to get registration or legal status for churches at any level of government. (3.50 points)

Obtaining registration or legal status for churches has been challenging across the country, affecting all Christian groups, especially converts and non-traditional, predominantly Pentecostal, churches. The obstacles in obtaining legal status often arise from the reluctance of local authorities, including governors, who do not want to see Christianity growing in the country. Acknowledging these challenges, the Alliance of Churches actively works to facilitate the process, aiming to ease the difficulties encountered by churches in obtaining legal recognition.

Block 5.4: Churches have been hindered from organizing Christian activities inside their place of worship. (3.50 points)

In regions dominated by Islam and animism, churches encounter challenges and fear hindrance in organizing Christian activities inside their places of worship, especially in areas influenced by indigenous religious beliefs and secret societies like Poro and Sande. Authorities, including village heads and religious leaders, obstruct Christian activities, often driven by traditional cere-

monies and practices. This pervasive fear and resistance to Christian gatherings underscore the complex dynamics of religious tolerance and freedom in these regions, emphasizing the need for protective measures to safeguard the practice of Christianity.

Block 5.8: Christian preaching, teaching and/or published materials have been monitored. (3.50 points)

Especially in areas affected by radical Islamic influence, there is a tendency for Christian preaching, teaching, and published materials to be monitored, often facilitated by local citizens acting as monitors on behalf of the government.

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.

Guinea: Violence scores per Block 6 question in questionnaire	WWL 2024	WWL 2023
6.1 How many Christians have been killed for faith-related reasons (including state sanctioned executions)?	0	0
6.2 How many churches or public Christian properties (schools, hospitals, cemeteries, etc.) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	10 *	1
6.3 How many Christians have been detained for faith-related reasons?	0	0
6.4 How many Christians have been sentenced to jail, labor camp, sent to psychiatric hospital as punishment, or similar things for faith-related reasons?	0	0
6.5 How many Christians have been abducted for faith-related reasons (including Christians missing in a persecution context)?	0	0
6.6 How many Christians have been raped or otherwise sexually harassed for faith-related reasons?	0	0
6.7 How many cases have there been of forced marriages of Christians to non-Christians?	10 *	1
6.8 How many Christians have been otherwise physically or mentally abused for faith-related reasons (including beatings and death threats)?	100 *	10 *
6.9 How many houses of Christians or other property (excluding shops) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	0	10 *
6.10 How many shops or businesses of Christians have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	0	10 *
6.11 How many Christians have been forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons?	10 *	10 *
6.12 How many Christians have been forced to leave the country for faith-related reasons?	0	0

5 Year trends

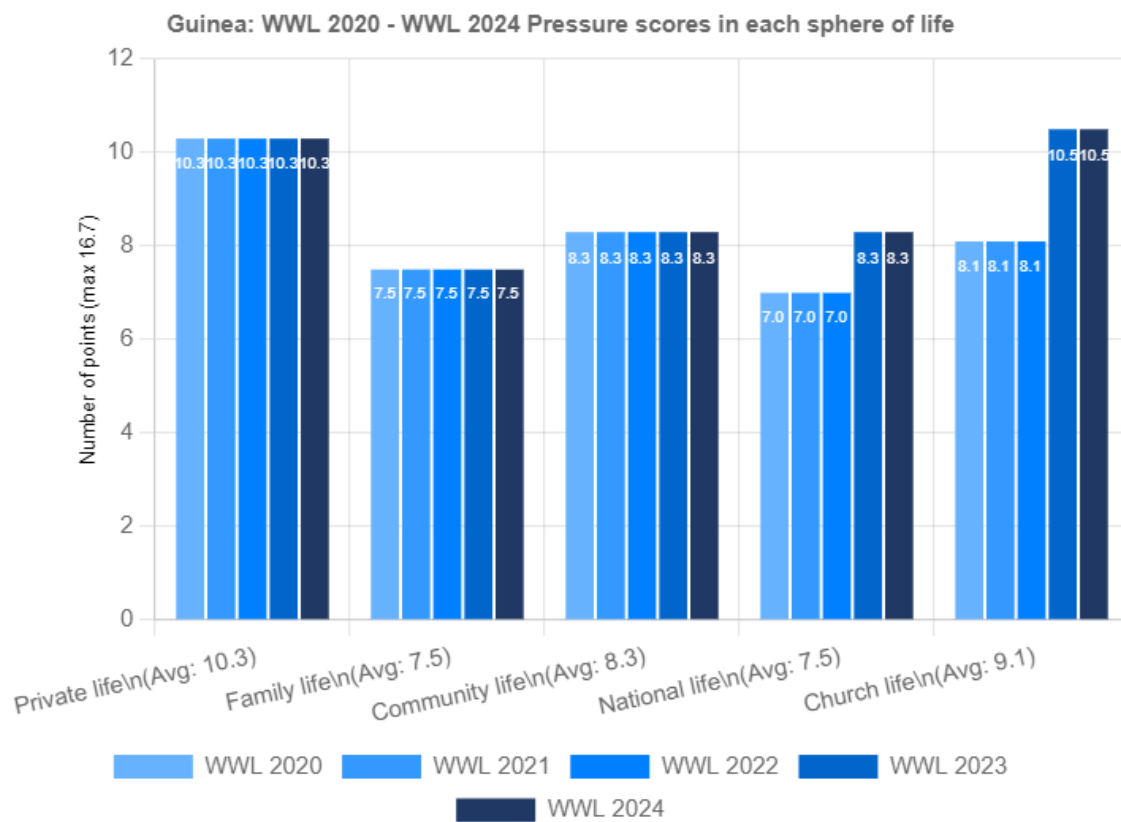
The following three charts show the levels of pressure and violence faced by Christians in the country over the last five WWL reporting periods.

5 Year trends: Average pressure

As can be seen in the table below, in the WWL 2020 - WWL 2022 reporting periods, the average pressure on Christians remained constant at a level of 8.2 points; it has now stabilized at a higher level (9.0 points).

Guinea: WWL 2020 - WWL 2024	Average pressure over 5 Spheres of life
2024	9.0
2023	9.0
2022	8.2
2021	8.2
2020	8.2

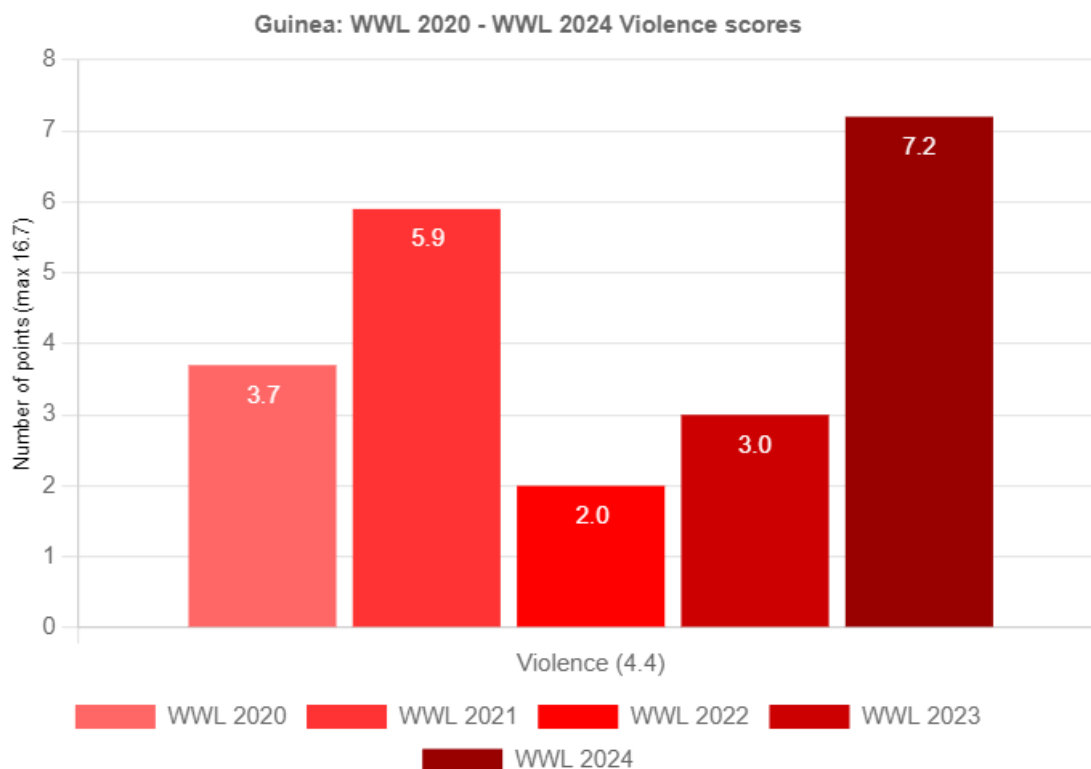
5 Year trends: Pressure in each sphere of life



As the graph above shows, the scores in the *Private sphere of life* are the highest, with a five year average of 10.3 points, followed by the *Church sphere* with 9.1 points. This reflects how converts from ATR or a Muslim background face the most difficulties in their daily life. The scores in all spheres have been very stable, but sharp increases occurred in *Church life* and *National life* in WWL 2023 which has now stabilized at the same level in WWL 2024.

5 Year trends: Violence against Christians

The average level of violence against Christians and their churches and property scored 4.4 points over the past five reporting periods. The highest score so far was in the WWL 2024 reporting period (7.2 points).



Gender-specific religious persecution / Female

Group	Female Pressure Points
Economic	Denied inheritance or possessions; Discrimination/harassment via education
Political and Legal	Denied access to Christian religious materials, teachings and rites; Denied access to social community/networks; Denied custody of children; Forced divorce; Forced marriage
Security	Abduction; Forced out of home – expulsion; Forced to flee town/country; Incarceration by family (house arrest); Violence – physical
Social and Cultural	Enforced religious dress code; Violence – psychological
Technological	-

In Guinea, female converts to Christianity are especially vulnerable to persecution. They are at risk of being abducted, isolated and cut off from their family. They might additionally be physically beaten, removed from school, placed under house arrest or, in some instances, be forced out of the family home. With the same intent, others are forcibly married to Muslims, particularly in Islamic strongholds such as Labe and Fouta. According to a country expert, forced

marriages, in part, stem from deeply held views that “a woman's salvation depends heavily on her degree of total submission to her husband” and “the practice of total submission to one's parents.” If already married, female converts face the possibility of being divorced by their husband and being denied custody of their children. Considering such pressure, many converts are economically vulnerable and emotionally damaged. Occasionally converts flee their homes, and indeed Guinea, for safety.

Christian women are also affected by cultural and tribal norms; the women's secret society, [Sande](#), for example, shuns Christian women who have chosen not to join the society on faith-related grounds (Britannica, “Sande: African Secret Society”). A source revealed: “Our people, especially young people, are forced to participate in female circumcision.”

Daughters of pastors are also targeted by Muslims for the purpose of marriage. While a Muslim woman cannot marry a Christian man (making female converts further vulnerable to forced marriage to a Muslim), a Muslim man can marry a Christian woman. Indeed, he is encouraged to do so in order to spread Islam.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Male

Group	Male Pressure Points
Economic	Economic harassment via business/job/work access
Political and Legal	Denied access to social community/networks; Denied custody of children; Forced divorce
Security	Forced out of home – expulsion; Violence – physical
Social and Cultural	Violence – psychological; Violence – Verbal
Technological	-

Converts to Christianity face the greatest challenges for their faith, often being condemned by their families, harshly threatened and forced from their homes and towns. Some can be whipped, which brings great shame upon them, as well as their wives. In instances where the husband flees his home to escape such pressure, his wife and children are left in an economically vulnerable position.

Additionally, In the same way that Christian women in Guinea face pressure from the female secret-society, Sande, men face persecution from the male secret-society, the [Poro](#) (Britannica, accessed 4 January 2023). Non-members are excluded and looked down upon.

According to reports, there is a growing repression of church activities and increased surveillance of church leaders; the majority of whom are male. A country expert explains: “In the Middle and Upper Guinea regions, Christians are repeatedly prevented from organizing Christian activities outside. The Secretariat General of Religious Affairs (SRA) continues to issue weekly themes for inclusion in Sunday sermons in churches. Many church leaders think such monitoring serves mainly to silence any government criticism taking place in churches.” The families of Christian leaders are also harassed in schools and public places, a source revealed.

Church leaders are under pressure to support the government publicly. In some areas, Christians - especially the youth - also face severe pressure to conform to societal beliefs.

Persecution of other religious minorities

There are small communities of Bahai and Jehovah's Witnesses in Guinea. They have no official recognition from the government.

Future outlook

The outlook for Christians as viewed through the lens of:

Dictatorial paranoia

The political instability marked by the 2021 coup has created a climate of *Dictatorial paranoia* that is detrimental to religious freedom, including for Christians. While the army's consolidation of power could potentially decrease organized corruption, there is no guarantee that military leaders will refrain from engaging in corrupt activities. This power consolidation introduces another layer of uncertainty to the already precarious position of the small Christian minority in Guinea. Although the junta promised a transition to civilian rule, delays and potential complications put Christians in a vulnerable position as the regime becomes more unpredictable and possibly more oppressive.

Islamic oppression

The rise of radical Islam poses another layer of concern. With Islamic militancy on the rise in the region, Christians face heightened risks, particularly in areas dominated by Islamic communities. Saudi-backed Wahhabi groups may remain a minority, but the general atmosphere is one where *Islamic oppression* could become increasingly severe. The ongoing political crisis could also provide an opportunity for radical Islamic groups to extend their influence.

Clan oppression and Ethno-religious hostility

Traditional African religions also contribute to the challenges facing Christians, particularly when it comes to evangelizing. Attacks on Christian converts and ridicule of Christian preaching could escalate, especially in the Forested Guinea region. If Christians are allowed to evangelize freely, this form of oppression might decrease over time, but the current political and social climate makes this an unlikely scenario in the short term.

Organized corruption and crime

Guinea remains a hotspot for *Organized corruption and crime*, which could affect Christians more profoundly in the future. Despite the potential for the military's consolidation of power to lessen organized corruption, there's the risk that the army itself could engage in such activities, thus exacerbating the situation. High-level government officials have been implicated in corruption cases, and organized criminal activity, including that of drug cartels, seems to be influencing even the political landscape of neighboring countries. This grim outlook indicates that the impact of organized crime on Christians could become even more pronounced, further undermining religious freedom and personal safety.

External Links - Persecution Dynamics

- Persecution engines description: mining industry case - <https://www.reuters.com/business/swiss-court-upholds-corruption-ruling-against-mining-magnate-steinmetz-2023-04-04/>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: Sande - <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Sande>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Male description: Poro - <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Poro>

Further useful reports

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

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

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

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