
World Watch Research

Maldives: Persecution Dynamics

November 2024



OpenDoors

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

Open Doors International / World Watch Research

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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

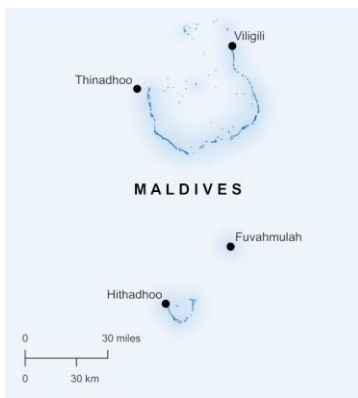
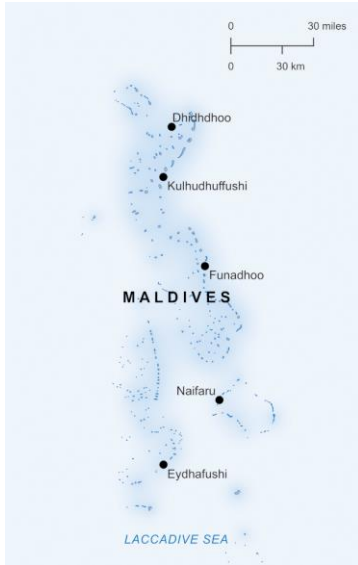
The WWL 2025 reporting period was 1 October 2023 - 30 September 2024.

Brief country details

In the table below, the number of Christians shown is an Open Doors (OD) estimate.

Maldives: Population (UN estimate for 2024)	Christians	Chr%
518,000	hundreds	OD estimate

Map of country



Dominant persecution engines and drivers

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

The Maldives has one of the highest population densities worldwide, especially on its main island, Malé. The close-knit, homogeneous communities serve as natural watchdogs for any deviation of its members, which naturally includes religious choice. Being a citizen of the Maldives means being a Muslim. Conversion to Christianity can thus easily result in being reported to Muslim leaders or the authorities. Apart from the conservative Islamic attitudes of the general population, the Maldives also struggles with radicalized segments of society, some of them battle-hardened from fighting in places like Syria.

There are no official churches in the Maldives and religious freedom does not exist, except in a very limited way for expatriate Christians who are so strictly monitored and intimidated that they hardly dare to meet even behind closed doors. Most of them come from India and Sri Lanka and work in the tourist sector which is the country's main source of income.

The WWL 2025 reporting period started with presidential elections in October 2023, which were politically volatile. In the second half of the reporting period things calmed down, when in April 2024 President Muizzu's party and his allies won a super-majority in parliament. As so often, defending Islam remained the top political priority and expatriates can easily find themselves used as scapegoats. This environment requires expatriate Christians to be cautious and permanently aware of their vulnerable position within the country's socio-political landscape.

Summary of international obligations and rights violations

Maldives 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 \(CRC\)](#)

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

- If their new faith is discovered, Christian converts are stripped of their citizenship, isolated from the society and punished with loss of state benefits for violating Sharia (ICCPR Arts. 18 and 26)
- Non-Muslims living in or visiting the country are prohibited from openly expressing their religious beliefs, especially with Maldivians (ICCPR Arts. 18 and 19)
- There are no churches in Maldives and any non-Muslim rite is prohibited (ICCPR Arts. 18 and 21)
- Christian expatriates' private worship meetings are strictly monitored and controlled by the authorities (ICCPR Art. 17)
- Christian women are harassed or face violence if they do not abide by traditional Islamic dress code (ICCPR Art. 18 and CEDAW Art. 2)

Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period

- **27 March 2024:** Two German tourists were [held in custody for 10 days](#) after they had distributed parts of the Bible in Dhivehi on the main island of Hulhumale (Sun Online, 29 March 2024).

No details of further incidents can be published due to security concerns.

Specific examples of positive developments

None

Christian communities and how they are affected

- **Communities of expatriate Christians:** Expatriate Christians often come from India, Sri Lanka or Bangladesh. These communities are monitored closely, but most of them can unofficially gather for worship (e.g., in embassies) provided they meet quietly and stay strictly among themselves. Expatriate Christians do not have any contact with indigenous converts from Islam. The November 2022 decree by the Islamic Ministry (see below: *Trends Summary #2*) suggests an increased scrutiny and control of expatriate workers.
- **Historical Christian communities:** There are no historical churches in the Maldives.
- **Converts to Christianity:** Christians with a Muslim background face by far the highest persecution as - officially - they do not exist in the country. It is understood that every Maldivian must be Muslim and anyone leaving Islam will lose his or her citizenship and bring shame upon their family.
- **Non-traditional Christian communities:** These do not exist in the Maldives.

Areas where Christians face most difficulties

Most persecution takes place outside of the islands reserved for international tourists.

Position on the World Watch List

Maldives: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2025	78	16
WWL 2024	78	18
WWL 2023	77	15
WWL 2022	77	16
WWL 2021	77	15

In WWL 2025, the overall score remained the same as in the previous reporting period - 78 points. The level of pressure on Christians continued to be extremely high and the very low violence score remained under one point. Converts have literally no space at all to live out their Christian faith and expatriate Christians (mostly involved in the tourist industry) lack possibilities for worshipping together without fearing arrest and deportation: No official churches exist. Under the newly elected president (October 2023) and government (April 2024) there have so far been no improvements for the situation of Christians and other religious minorities.

Persecution engines

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

Islamic oppression (Very strong)

The Maldives claims to be an exclusively Muslim nation. The Constitution and laws require all citizens to be Muslims and all candidates for elected office to follow Sunni Islam. The propagation of any

religion other than Islam is a criminal offence ([US State Department, IRFR 2023 Maldives](#)). Every Maldivian government thus sees itself as a protector of Islam and watches over a set of laws that effectively prohibits a Maldivian from leaving Islam and converting to another religion. To be Maldivian is equated to being Muslim. The official view is that there are no Maldivian Christians, only expatriate Christians. Under a previous government, the Ministry of Islamic Affairs had published a policy paper in April 2018 dealing (among other topics) with the question of [apostates](#) (Maldives Independent, 11 April 2018), stating that apostasy can never be tolerated. Around the same time, the Minister of Defense stated in all due clarity that he would [never allow freedom of religion](#) in the Maldives since it is a "country with moderate Islamic values" (Maldives Independent, 15 April 2018). Islam pervades all areas of society, which is very close-knit. Local community and family members will apply severe pressure on anyone showing even vague interest in non-Islamic ideas. At the same time, Maldivian society is said to be taking on a more 'Arabized' style of Islam (see the observation made by a country expert quoted below in *Trends Summary #1*).

Dictatorial paranoia (Medium)

Once a party gains control of the executive or legislative branches (or both), the impulse to consolidate power grows strong. The new PNC government of 2024 under President Muizzu is no exception and no relaxation of restrictions on Freedom of religion can be expected. The Constitution states that individuals have a right to freedom of thought and expression but only if this is "not contrary to the tenets of Islam." The "protection of religion" is purely understood to mean the protection of Islam and includes requiring imams to use government-approved sermons in Friday services, with the government owning and controlling all mosques, including their maintenance and funding. In 2021, the penal code was amended to expand the definition of "criticizing Islam" ([US State Department, IRFR 2023 Maldives](#)). Expatriates, converts and media outlets thus practice self-censorship on matters relating to Islam due to fears of accusations being made against them of their being "anti-Islamic", "irreligious" or "western agents". In 2018, the then-President Yameen claimed that international (i.e., Western) pressure and opposition forces were attempting to make the Maldives less than [100% Islamic](#) (Maldives Independent, 3 July 2018).

Organized corruption and crime (Medium)

Corruption is rampant from the highest levels of government on down. An [April 2024 appointment](#) by President Muizzu raised eyebrows when former Supreme Court judge took up the position of Legal Counsel at the President's Office (The Edition, 24 April 2024): Abdulla Didi had been dismissed from his judicial position following evidence connecting him to a large bribery case, which remains ongoing. Throughout society, almost anything can be accomplished through sufficient bribes, favors and/or threats. Contracts and other agreements can be broken at whim and government officials are known to hire street-gang youth to do dirty work for them (e.g., roughing people up, committing property crimes against designated targets, selling contraband to raise cash). It is common knowledge that certain gangs have been [in alliance with politicians](#) (HRW, 28 January 2019), parties and security forces in the past, especially in the run-up to elections, and have been used for the [violent intimidation](#) of dissidents (HRW, 25 June 2020). Before the 2016 Anti-Defamation Law was repealed in 2018, whistleblowers and journalists reporting on corruption had been jailed or forced into exile over their activities.

A country expert states that radical Islamic groups that want to ferret out Christians and atheists also have connections to gangs and corrupt police networks and that radicalized gangs were likely to target anyone not deemed sufficiently Muslim. In May 2022, Maldives Police Service reported that [44 gangs](#) were active in Malé, the capital city, of which nine were believed to be extremely dangerous (Raajje, 28 May 2022). The report stated that 2,800 individuals across the country, including 60 minors, had been identified as being involved.

Drivers of persecution

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

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

Drivers of Islamic oppression

- **Government officials / political parties (Very strong/Strong):** The government of the Maldives insists that the country has to be run according to conservative Islamic tenets and that all citizens have to be Muslim ("100% Islam"). This is a fundamental issue which the new government is not going to try to change. There have even been calls to remove "secularists" from the government. Labeling someone as an "unbeliever" or as "irreligious" is a safe way of dealing with political opponents or inconvenient groups like journalists. As one country expert said: "All officials want to be seen as strong defenders of Sunni Islam, while at the same time they decry Islamic extremism." Religious freedom does not exist, except in a very limited way for expatriate Christians who are so strictly monitored and intimidated that they hardly dare to meet even behind closed doors. But all Christians know the rules and stay within the narrow framework set by the law.
- **Non-Christian religious leaders (Very strong):** Radical Islamic preachers and clerics, often influenced through periods of studies in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, exert strong socio-religious control over their followers and are also influencing others with their radical views of Islam, making it impossible for Christians - especially converts - to show their faith due to the fear of monitoring and of being handed over to the authorities. These Islamic leaders also exert a certain amount of influence over the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and were instrumental in calling for the [shutdown](#) of the NGO Maldivian Democracy Network (Amnesty International, 5 November 2019).
- **Extended family and normal citizens (Very strong):** If converts are discovered, family and local communities are sure to become drivers of persecution. Even the mere interest in Christianity leads to social ostracism and pressure from family, friends and neighbors. Society is closely-knit and Malé is a city with the one of the highest population densities in the world. Such factors serve to make these drivers strongly felt, as is the fact that less populated atolls are not easy to leave, which results in high social control as well. A relatively recent tool for extending the pressure (on Christians and others) has been found in social media. This is increasingly being used by family members and citizens against deviating views.
- **Organized crime cartels (Medium):** Whereas most gangs are not particularly interested in religious questions and are far more focused on making money and being able to exert power through brute force, some are motivated by religion, too, and seek to root out any non-Islamic behavior.

Drivers of Dictatorial paranoia

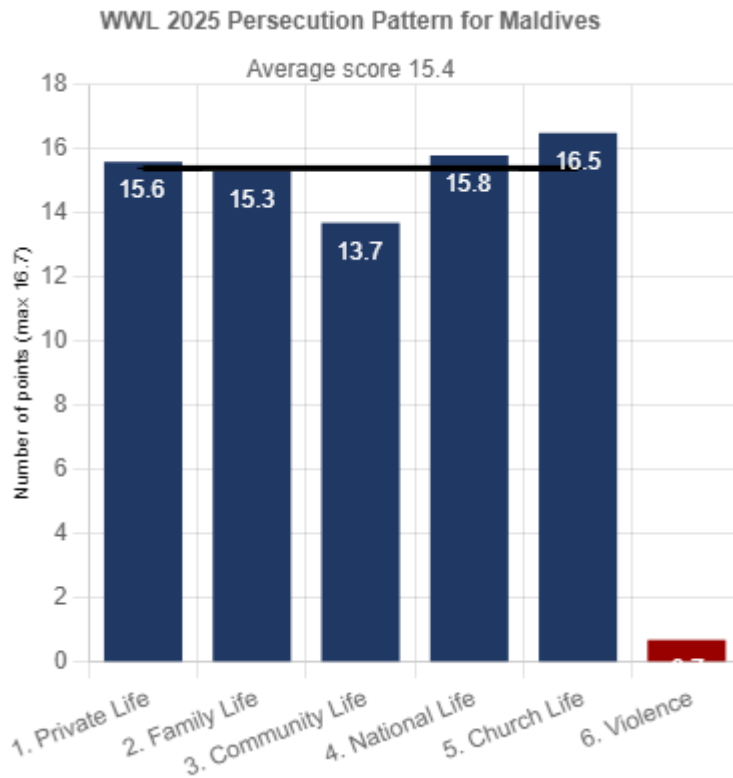
- **Government officials / Political parties (Strong / Medium):** Politics in the Maldives has a history of being dominated by strongmen, who have clung to power by all means. In the past, civil servants and authorities have often insulted political opponents by calling them "un-Islamic" and a threat to the very identity of the country. Indeed they will pick on any individual or minority seen as deviating from the norm. It is too early to say whether this will also be the case for the new 2024 government and ruling party (PNC) until it gets its feet under the table.
- **Non-Christian religious leaders (Medium):** Islamic leaders may not necessarily be interested in one political party or in one particular politician staying in power, but they are definitely interested in preserving the status quo. If this means supporting the authoritarian measures of a particular leader or party, they will do it.

- **Organized crime cartels (Medium):** As already stated above, in order to protect their illicit activities, gangs will support the power-brokers they need. The Maldives has a long history of ties between gangs, politics and religion.

Drivers of Organized corruption and crime

- **Government officials and political parties (Medium/Medium):** Officials from at least the pre-November 2018 government and various political parties allegedly made use of gangs as they saw the need for it and such connections were of mutual benefit.
- **Organized crime cartels (Medium):** Radical Muslims have been known to link up with gangs and use them to ferret out Christians and atheists or anyone suspected of non-Muslim activity. Gangs can skillfully adapt their operations and it remains to be seen how they will adapt to life under President Muizzu and his ruling PNC party in 2024 and beyond.

The Persecution pattern



The WWL 2025 Persecution pattern for the Maldives shows:

- Pressure on Christians in the Maldives is extremely high in nearly all spheres of life, causing the average pressure to be at the extreme level of 15.4 points out of a maximum of 16.7 points.
- Pressure is strongest in the *Church sphere*, where it almost reached the maximum score, reflecting that no Christian meetings are officially possible. Even many expatriate Christians prefer not to organize meetings out of fear of repercussions. Scores in the *National, Family and Private spheres* are also at an extreme level. Pressure on converts is especially acute in the *Private and Family spheres*. As regards the *National sphere*, all politicians relentlessly claim that they are keeping the Maldives 100% Muslim, leaving effectively no space for any deviation.

- The score for violence against Christians remains below one point (0.7 of a point), confirming that persecution has never been violent in the Maldives.

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://opendoorsanalytical.org/world-watch-list-documentation/>, password: freedom).

Pressure in Block 1 / Private sphere

Block 1.3: It has been dangerous to privately own or keep Christian materials. (4.00 points)

Converts to Christianity need to hide their faith as much as possible, which means that any Bible or other Christian materials have to be hidden carefully and can only be read in secret to avoid detection from other family members. If discovered, the possession of such literature could result in imprisonment, even if it is only stored on electronic devices. Even for expatriate workers who are Christians, it is risky to have Christian materials in their possession (especially if these are in the native Dhivehi language or in large quantities) as the authorities will suspect they are being used to evangelize the local population. In general, tourists are allowed to bring their personal Bible into the country.

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.). (4.00 points)

Neither converts nor expatriate workers in the Maldives who are Christians can safely post Christian content on social media. Expatriates risk losing their job and facing deportation if they openly write about Christian faith in a social media blog. The risks for Maldivian converts would be higher (i.e., potentially leading to charges of apostasy).

Block 1.5: It has been risky for Christians to display Christian images or symbols. (4.00 points)

It is dangerous for converts to display anything that would reveal their conversion to Christian faith as this would potentially lead to charges of apostasy. Expatriates are also required to keep a low profile and not display anything provoking irritation to surrounding Muslims. Basically, anything cross-shaped - even the trademark of a Swiss army penknife - will be understood as 'anti-Islamic' and lead to trouble with the local community and authorities.

Block 1.6: It has been risky for Christians to access Christian radio or TV, or Christian material on the Internet. (3.50 points)

Converts risk serious consequences if they are discovered accessing Christian material on the Internet, radio or TV. Discovery could lead leading to charges of apostasy. For expatriate workers and families, however, accessing Christian content is only a risk if they share what they access. In November 2021, there was a court order for all local Internet service providers to [block access](#) to websites, social media pages, YouTube channels, and online applications that targeted citizens of the country 'with the intention of spreading religions other than Islam' (PSM News, 30 November 2021).

Pressure in Block 2 / Family sphere

Block 2.4: Christian baptisms have been hindered. (4.00 points)

Both law and society prohibit any religion other than Islam being practiced publicly. Thus, Christian baptism can only be conducted in secret, at great risk. This is particularly the case for converts but also affects expatriates.

Block 2.9: Children of Christians have been harassed or discriminated against because of their parents' faith. (4.00 points)

The Constitution states in Article 36 (c): "Education shall strive to inculcate obedience to Islam, love for Islam". Children of parents suspected of having Christian faith, whether they belong to Maldivian or expatriate families, face ridicule and will often be made to feel like outsiders. For expatriate children, the discrimination is caused by a mixture of faith and race.

Block 2.11: Spouses of converts have been put under pressure (successfully or unsuccessfully) by others to divorce. (3.50 points)

The divorce rate in the Maldives has been the highest in the world for many years and so is a common feature of Maldivian life (Advokatsmart, [Global Divorce Statistics of 2024](#)). Divorce is therefore one of the first things that a Muslim spouse will do if it emerges that their partner has become a Christian. They will not need much pressure from their 'shamed' family to do this and divorce the apostate as soon as possible.

Block 2.13: Christians have lost their inheritance rights because of their conversion to Christianity or (if a person already was a Christian) other types of Christianity. (3.25 points)

Once a Maldivian is discovered to have converted to Christianity, the 'shamed' family (or families in the case of a marriage) will do their utmost to distance themselves from the apostate. The convert will most likely be divorced as soon as possible and lose both custody of any children and all inheritance rights.

Pressure in Block 3 / Community sphere

Block 3.2: Christians have been monitored by their local communities or by private groups (this includes reporting to police, being shadowed, telephone lines listened to, emails read/censored, etc.). (4.00 points)

Maldivian society is close-knit and local communities keep a watchful eye on what their fellow Maldivians are up to. Nationals suspected of being interested in Christian faith have been reported to the police by their relatives and have had their contacts, email and phone-traffic monitored by the authorities. Expatriates privately meeting up for Christian worship are also aware of the dangers of CCTV installations and neighbors observing their movements, especially since an [Immigration Watch Platform](#) was launched on 17 July 2024 (Plus, 28 August 2024).

Block 3.7: Christians have been pressured by their community to renounce their faith. (4.00 points)

Both government and citizens have the responsibility that no one in the community falls away from Islam. The pressure on a known convert to recant will be considerable, usually involving beatings and

imprisonment. Expatriates also experience pressure, though usually through friends and colleagues. This is also encouraged by the media: On 21 July 2024, Sun Online listed [39 expatriates who had embraced Islam](#) in the period January-June 2024. If this becomes a trend, the authorities might consider greater investment in 'Islamizing' the foreign workforce.

Block 3.10: Christians have been discriminated against in public or private employment for faith-related reasons. (4.00 points)

Nationals suspected of embracing Christian faith risk social ostracism, including loss of employment. Expatriate Christians always have to be careful how they conduct themselves. If they are suspected of opposing Islam by talking about their faith with colleagues, they risk detention, losing their job and being deported. Work opportunities are anyway becoming increasingly limited for expatriates: According to Sun Online reporting on 27 July 2024, President Muizzu plans to have [only Maldivian teachers](#) working in the education system from September 2024 onwards.

Block 3.9: Christians have faced disadvantages in their education at any level for faith-related reasons (e.g. restrictions of access to education). (3.75 points)

It is so serious when a Maldivian becomes a Christian that he/she can even lose their citizenship; children of nationals suspected of being Christian will, at the very least, be shunned and harassed at school. As for expatriate schoolchildren, unless their parents can afford a private boarding school abroad, they have to put up with the fact that school-life is programmed to inculcate love for Islam. Christians in that system are bound to be regarded as misfits and marginalized.

Pressure in Block 4 / National sphere

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

For Maldivian citizens, there is no freedom of religion in the sense of Article 18. Only foreign tourists and residents are free to practice their religion in private. The Maldives takes pride in its Constitution which designates Sunni Islam as the official state religion and refers to the country as 100% Muslim. It provides for limitations on rights and freedoms "to protect and maintain the tenets of Islam". It is a criminal offence to criticize Islam or propagate any other religion: Penalties range from house-arrest to imprisonment of up to five years, depending on the gravity of the offense. If the offenders are foreigners, they will usually be deported, as was the case in March 2024, when two tourists were [arrested](#) and then deported after they had been discovered distributing Bible pamphlets in Dhivehi on the main island of Hulhumale (Sun Online, 29 March 2024).

Block 4.8: Christians have been hindered in expressing their views or opinions in public. (4.00 points)

Any opinions that could be understood to oppose the standard view of Islam (even voices of Islamic moderation) are subject to harsh criticism and, in the past, even violence. The 1994 Religious Unity Law is still valid and includes clauses against anti-Islamic comments. Christians are forced to self-censor and not mention faith-based views in public.

Block 4.10: Media reporting has been incorrect or biased against Christians. (4.00 points)

The media is mostly focused on matters concerning Islam and rarely mentions Christianity or any other religion; if other religions are ever mentioned, the reports are almost never presented in a positive way or accurately. Government media all toe the Islamic party line, and independent media have been targeted with harassment and intimidation if they present a different view. The [2024 Press Freedom Index](#) published by Reporters Without Borders shows Maldives in ongoing decline, from a high of #72 out of 180 countries in 2021, to #87 in 2022, to #100 in 2023, to the current position of #106.

A particularly insightful example of how the media portray Christian faith as a threat can be seen in the reaction to the Jesus Film in Dhivehi which circulated in the Internet from 2019 onwards. Media depicted this sort of [Christian mission](#) as a concerted public danger with a lot of money behind it, targeting children in particular. Articles in many newspapers, published over several days, put pressure on the police to stop this sort of Christian activity and to find out who was responsible for airing the film (Sun Online, 13 November 2021).

Block 4.13: Christians have been accused of blasphemy or insulting the majority religion, either by state authorities or by pressure groups. (4.00 points)

Anything potentially putting Islam in a bad light can lead to such accusations. Any national who expresses a Christian viewpoint would be considered to be blaspheming. The most recent high profile cases concerned non-Christians but showed what happens as a result (e.g., arrest and disappearing) when one is accused of insulting Islam in the Maldives. Christians practice self-censorship to avoid being treated in a similar fashion.

Pressure in Block 5 / Church sphere**Block 5.1: Church activities have been monitored, hindered, disturbed, or obstructed. (4.00 points)**

The law prohibits the establishment of places of worship for non-Islamic religious groups. If expatriate Christians met for worship publicly, they would be guilty of expressing religious beliefs other than Islam and face fines, imprisonment of up to five years or house arrest and deportation. Small meetings in private residences are noted by neighbors, but as long as no Maldivians join the services and no neighbors complain, no action is taken against them. However, nothing similar is possible for Maldivian converts, who remain completely obstructed.

Block 5.6: Work among youth in particular has been restricted. (4.00 points)

Any form of Christian ministry, whether for youth or adults, cannot be officially carried out as it would be viewed as disrupting religious unity and thus be subject to criminal penalty.

Block 5.11: Pastors or other Christian leaders (or their family members) have been special targets of harassment for faith-related reasons. (4.00 points)

Due to the Maldives' strict anti-proselytization laws, any form of Christian teaching, preaching, or sharing of the faith is considered illegal. The government closely monitors individuals suspected of engaging in missionary work, and this scrutiny often extends to their families. Deportation is the usual punishment for expatriates found responsible for such activity. Also, if the immigration authorities

suspect that an individual arriving in the country is a missionary or Christian leader of some sort, the officials are likely to carry out detailed interrogation and deny them entry into the country.

Block 5.14: Openly selling or distributing Bibles (or other Christian materials) has been hindered. (4.00 points)

Selling or distributing Bibles and Christian literature in the Maldives is understood as an attack on Islam and counts as a criminal offence. Although not a recent case, the Maldives Custom Service stated on 6 July 2021 that there had been a concerted effort to spread Christian faith in the Maldives in 2021 through a letter-campaign in which Christian literature in Dhivehi was mailed to various Maldivian institutions, companies and individuals in the country ([US State Department, IRFR 2021 Maldives](#)).

Violence

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

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

Possible reasons for this may be:

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

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

- *Some incidents never reach the public consciousness, because no one really knows about it; or the incident is simply not considered worth reporting; or media coverage is deliberately blocked or distorted; or media coverage is not deliberately blocked, but the information somehow gets lost; or the incidents are deliberately not reported widely for security reasons (e.g. for the protection of local church leaders).*
- *In situations where Christians have been discriminated against for many years, armed conflict can make them additionally vulnerable. Christians killed in areas where fighting regularly takes place are unlikely to be reported separately. Examples in recent years have been Sudan, Syria and Myanmar.*
- *Christians who die through the deprivation of basic necessities such as clean water and medical care (due to long-term discrimination) are unlikely to be reported separately. Christians are not always killed directly; they can be so squeezed by regulations and other oppressive factors that they die – not at once, but in the course of years. This often includes the deprivation of basic necessities such as clean water and medical care, or exclusion from government assisted socio-economic development projects. These numbers could be immense.*

3. The use of symbolic numbers:

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

4. The symbol “x” in the table:

- This denotes a known number which cannot be published due to security concerns.

Maldives: Violence scores per Block 6 question in questionnaire	WWL 2025	WWL 2024
6.1 How many Christians have been killed for faith-related reasons (including state sanctioned executions)?	x	x
6.2 How many churches or public Christian properties (schools, hospitals, cemeteries, etc.) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.3 How many Christians have been detained for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.4 How many Christians have been sentenced to jail, labor camp, sent to psychiatric hospital as punishment, or similar things for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.5 How many Christians have been abducted for faith-related reasons (including Christians missing in a persecution context)?	x	x
6.6 How many Christians have been raped or otherwise sexually harassed for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.7 How many cases have there been of forced marriages of Christians to non-Christians?	x	x
6.8 How many Christians have been otherwise physically or mentally abused for faith-related reasons (including beatings and death threats)?	x	x
6.9 How many houses of Christians or other property (excluding shops) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.10 How many shops or businesses of Christians have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.11 How many Christians have been forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons?	x	x
6.12 How many Christians have been forced to leave the country for faith-related reasons?	x	x

The score for violence targeting Christians in WWL 2025 was 0.7 points. For security reasons, no details about the incidents can be published.

5 Year trends

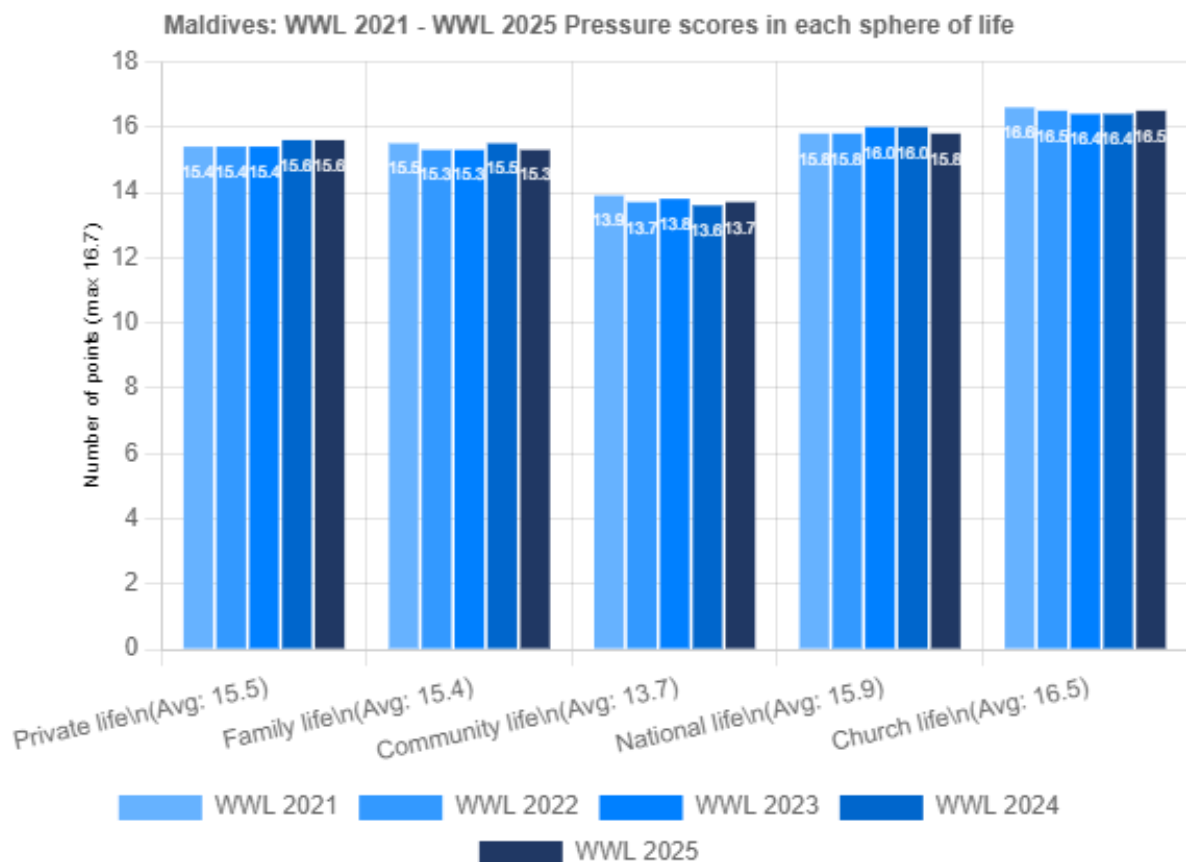
The following three charts show the levels of pressure and violence faced by Christians in the country over the last five WWL reporting periods.

5 Year trends: Average pressure

Maldives: WWL 2021 - WWL 2025	Average pressure over 5 Spheres of life
2025	15.4
2024	15.4
2023	15.4
2022	15.3
2021	15.4

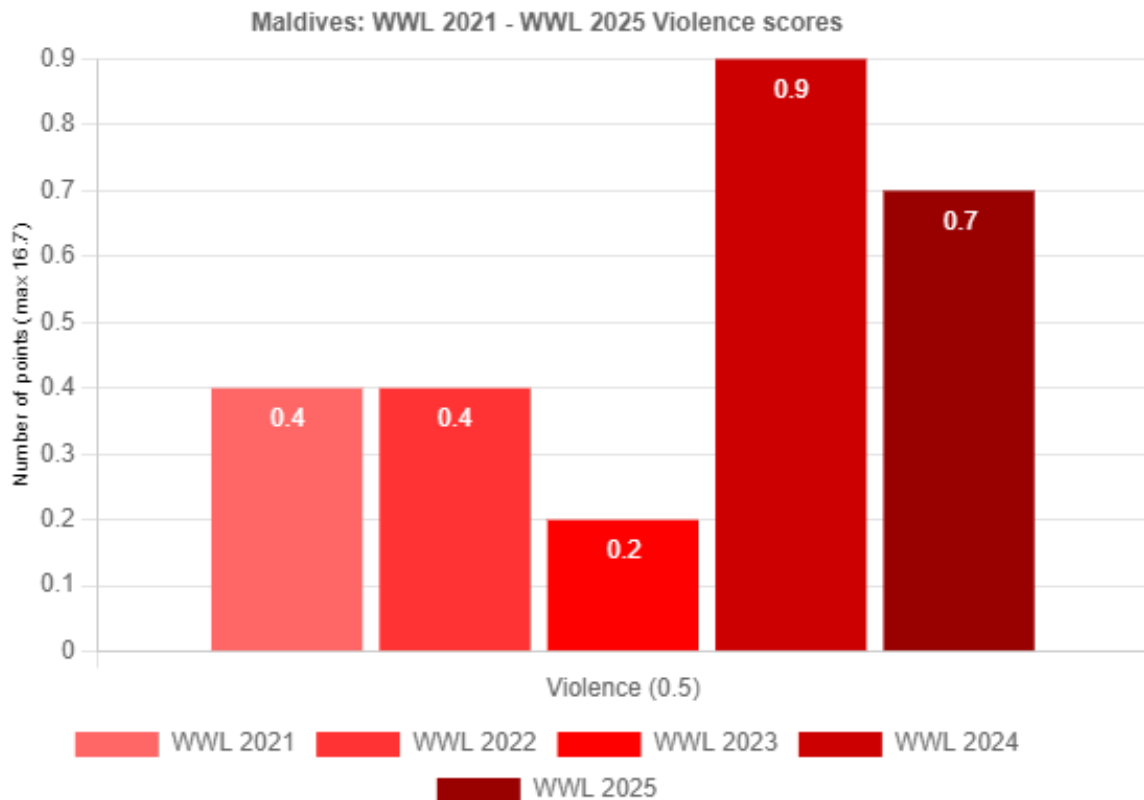
The table above shows that the average score for pressure on Christians has been stable at the extreme level of 15.3/15.4 points.

5 Year trends: Pressure in each sphere of life



The chart above shows the levels of pressure on Christians in individual *spheres of life* over the last five WWL reporting periods. The scores have not altered much over the years and have remained at very high and extreme levels. In *National Life*, the scores reflect the effects of *Dictatorial paranoia*, whereas the other spheres reflect more the effects of *Islamic oppression*, although the motives are often difficult to separate in practice. The near maximum scores in the *Church sphere* stand out, reflecting the fact that no visible churches are allowed and that any form of church life is severely restricted for expatriates and made virtually impossible for converts.

5 Year trends: Violence against Christians



As can be seen in the chart above, persecution has never been very violent in the Maldives, and the violence score has remained below the level of one point over the five-year period. For security reasons, no details concerning the scores can be provided.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Female

Maldives	Female Pressure Points Most frequently recorded PPs: WWL 2019 - WWL 2024
	Enforced religious dress code Forced marriage Violence – physical Violence – psychological Violence – sexual Violence – Verbal

Given the extremely strict interpretation of Islam in the Maldives, Christian male and female converts must be secret believers to avoid severe persecution. If a Maldivian woman or girl is discovered to be a Christian, she risks being pressured into marriage and exposed to domestic violence in an attempt to force her to reject her new-found faith. NGOs have reported ongoing community pressure on women to wear Islamic clothing and harassment of women who choose not to do so ([US Department of State IRFR 2021](#), p.12). A country expert explained that “there is still freedom legally for nationals to dress in various ways, although adult women who do not use a head covering are now rare and likely subject to increased pressure to conform.

Despite the closely-knit social control on the islands, abuse, rape and sexual harassment are still a risk in a culture that generally excuses gender-based violence within the home. Reports also note that the COVID-19 lockdown was a contributing factor to a spike in violence ([HRW 2022](#), country chapter Maldives). The threat of sexual and physical abuse can be used as a tool of religious persecution against Christian women. Forced marriage is also a risk, with a country expert explaining the dynamic: “Forced marriage [is used] as a means to bring the woman back to the fold.”

Gender-specific religious persecution / Male

Maldives	Male Pressure Points Most frequently recorded PPs: WWL 2019 - WWL 2024
	Violence - physical Violence - psychological

Being a Christian convert in the Maldives is so dangerous for both men and women that husbands, wives and children may not even know of each other's faith. The inability to meet as a community creates instability in the family and restricts access to Christian support, mentoring and training. If a Maldivian is found to be a secret Christian believer, he is likely to face bodily harm, harassment, threats and possibly government imprisonment (although there have been no such cases in recent years). In light of this pressure, many have chosen to leave the country and live abroad, when possible

financially. If imprisoned, the wider family will suffer financially and emotionally, and children are likely to be bullied at school.

Persecution of other religious minorities

Anyone giving evidence of support for any religion or philosophy besides Islam (e.g., Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism or [atheism](#)) will be persecuted in the same way as Christians and most of them prefer to go into exile rather than face imprisonment or even death (Humanists International, 8 October 2020).

The [US State Department IRFR 2023 Maldives](#) states:

- Most foreign workers are Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish or Christian.
- Propagation of any religion other than Islam is a criminal offense, punishable by two to five years in prison or house arrest ... The law states: "Non-Muslims living in or visiting the country are prohibited from openly expressing their religious beliefs, holding public congregations to conduct religious activities, or involving Maldivians in such activities." By law, those expressing religious beliefs other than Islam face imprisonment or house arrest of up to five years, fines ranging from 5,000 to 20,000 rufiyaa (\$325 to \$1,300), and deportation.
- Even people deemed insufficiently Muslim are at the risk of being persecuted: "NGOs reported the government continued to fail to take action against online death threats and attacks against persons perceived to be critical of Islam. Threats included calls to implement sharia penalties for those who criticize Islam and references to persons perceived as criticizing Islam as being 'western agents'. In December [2023], multiple individuals posted numerous threatening messages against a public servant after social media posts claimed the individual had mocked the Prophet Muhammad."

Trends Summary

1) President Muizzu is firmly in power and confidently balancing geopolitical realities

Since April 2024, President Muizzu's party (PNC) and his allies have enjoyed a super-majority in parliament. The move away from India, first made concrete in President Muizzu's 2023 announcement that foreign military forces were to [withdraw](#) from the country (AP News, 17 November 2023), has since been softened by the president's visits to India in December 2023 and October 2024 to arrange both funding and free trade agreements. The much expected tilt towards China has thus been held in balance, with Muizzu only meeting Xi Jinping in January 2024. As in previous years, this geopolitical balancing act has no effect on issues concerning religion. As far as the "protection of Islam" is concerned, it is only to be expected that the new government will play the same tunes as before. One country expert pointed out where the challenges for Christians and other religious minorities now lie: "Continuing a trend in the social and religious milieu, the country has seen a growing slow shift toward a more Arabized form of Islam, with more use of Arabic language and doing things in a more Arabic way. As a result, there is less expression of unique island culture, less opportunity to be themselves, with more pressure to copy Arab-style Islam. This goes with a slow growing shift to being more Islamic as a nation."

2) With a brand new US embassy, the Maldives is now more permanently in the international spotlight

In September 2023, the USA [opened an embassy](#) in the Maldives (News Drum, 7 September 2023), which means that the country will be more permanently in the international spotlight. Nevertheless, this potential increase in international interest does not mean that freedom of religion in the country will increase as a result. Under the watchful eyes of the Maldivian authorities, who detained two European tourists in March 2024 for distributing Bible tracts, neither expatriate nor indigenous Christians can expect any meaningful relief. The Maldives will stay '100% Islamic' and this means that Christian activities have to remain unseen and under the radar.

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: held in custody for 10 days - <https://en.sun.mv/88464>
- Persecution engines description: US State Department, IRFR 2023 Maldives - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-report-on-international-religious-freedom/maldives/>
- Persecution engines description: apostates - <http://maldivesindependent.com/society/apostates-jihadists-and-extremists-face-tough-new-punishments-137396>
- Persecution engines description: never allow freedom of religion - <http://maldivesindependent.com/society/will-not-allow-religious-freedom-in-maldives-says-defence-minister-137455>
- Persecution engines description: US State Department, IRFR 2023 Maldives - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-report-on-international-religious-freedom/maldives/>
- Persecution engines description: 100% Islamic - <https://maldivesindependent.com/politics/islam-infrastructure-and-foreign-pressure-maldives-president-on-campaign-trail-139123>
- Persecution engines description: April 2024 appointment - <https://edition.mv/news/33031>
- Persecution engines description: in alliance with politicians - <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/01/28/expressing-religious-views-risky-maldives>
- Persecution engines description: violent intimidation - <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/06/25/maldives-extremist-groups-threaten-rights-activists>
- Persecution engines description: 44 gangs - <https://raajje.mv/118423>
- Drivers of persecution description: shutdown - <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/11/maldives-ngo-closure-shows-repression-hasnt-gone-away/>

- Block 1.6: It has been risky for Christians to access Christian radio or TV, or Christian material on the Internet. (3.50 points): block access - <https://psmnews.mv/en/95405>
- Block 2.11: Spouses of converts have been put under pressure (successfully or unsuccessfully) by others to divorce. (3.50 points): Global Divorce Statistics of 2024 - <https://www.advokatsmart.no/news/global-divorce-statistics>
- Block 3.2: Christians have been monitored by their local communities or by private groups (this includes reporting to police, being shadowed, telephone lines listened to, emails read/censored, etc.). (4.00 points): Immigration Watch Platform - <https://www.plus.mv/english/immigration-deports-over-3000-expats-since-muizzu-took-office/>
- Block 3.7: Christians have been pressured by their community to renounce their faith. (4.00 points): 39 expatriates who had embraced Islam - <https://en.sun.mv/90733>
- Block 3.10: Christians have been discriminated against in public or private employment for faith-related reasons. (4.00 points): only Maldivian teachers - <https://en.sun.mv/90851>
- Block 4.1: The Constitution (or comparable national or state law) limits freedom of religion as formulated in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (4.00 points): arrested - <https://en.sun.mv/88464>
- Block 4.10: Media reporting has been incorrect or biased against Christians. (4.00 points): 2024 Press Freedom Index - <https://rsf.org/en/country/maldives>
- Block 4.10: Media reporting has been incorrect or biased against Christians. (4.00 points): Christian mission - <https://en.sun.mv/70389>
- Block 5.14: Openly selling or distributing Bibles (or other Christian materials) has been hindered. (4.00 points): US State Department, IRFR 2021 Maldives - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-report-on-international-religious-freedom/maldives/>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: US Department of State IRFR 2021 - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-report-on-international-religious-freedom/maldives/>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: HRW - <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2022/country-chapters/maldives#bdef21>
- Persecution of other religious minorities: atheism - <https://freethoughtreport.com/countries/asia-southern-asia/maldives/>
- Persecution of other religious minorities: US State Department IRFR 2023 Maldives - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-report-on-international-religious-freedom/maldives/>
- Trends Summary: withdraw - <https://apnews.com/article/maldives-new-president-muizzu-india-china-8cfb1c345a1c5199e285dc1ff89253c3>
- Trends Summary: opened an embassy - <https://www.newsdrum.in/international/us-embassy-opens-in-maldives-with-first-resident-ambassador>