
World Watch Research

Mexico: Persecution Dynamics

December 2024



OpenDoors

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

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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

Mexico: Population (UN estimate for 2024)	Christians	Chr%
129,388,000	123,265,000	95.3

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

Mexico: Religious context	Number of adherents	%
Christians	123,265,000	95.3
Muslim	128,000	0.1
Hindu	12,400	0.0
Buddhist	31,800	0.0
Ethnic religionist	1,348,000	1.0
Jewish	39,300	0.0
Bahai	47,100	0.0
Atheist	147,000	0.1
Agnostic	4,330,000	3.3
Other	39,300	0.0
<i>OTHER includes Chinese folk, New religionist, Sikh, Spiritist, Taoist, Confucianist, Jain, Shintoist, Zoroastrian.</i>		

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

Map of country



Dominant persecution engines and drivers

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

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

Brief description of the persecution situation

The increased presence of several criminal groups and their struggle for territorial control has caused Christians and church leaders living in affected areas to face the constant risk of being targeted. This occurs whenever Christians are perceived as being a threat to criminal operations or have disregarded criminal group demands. In indigenous communities, those who decide to abandon the community religious beliefs (often syncretistic practices related to Catholicism) face rejection and punishments

such as fines, incarceration and forced displacement, without any proper investigation and support from state authorities. Hostility towards the presence of Christian faith and values in the public arena is becoming more evident, especially when Christians express traditional faith-based opinions on marriage, family and life issues. Public expressions of Christian faith face strict legal scrutiny.

Summary of international obligations and rights violations

Mexico 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)

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

- Christian converts from indigenous communities experience pressure and violence from their family and community to renounce their faith (ICCPR Art. 18)
- Christian children from indigenous communities are harassed because of their parents' faith (ICCPR Art. 18 and CRC Art. 14)
- Christian leaders are monitored and their activities actively watched (ICCPR Art. 17)
- Christian female converts from indigenous communities are at risk of forced marriage (ICCPR Art. 23; CEDAW Art. 16 and ICESCR Art. 10)

Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period

- **May 2024, Chiapas:** Mexico has experienced high levels of violence throughout 2024, including targeted attacks against Christians that led to the [closure](#) of at least 120 churches in February (El sol de Mexico, 17 February 2024). On 13 May 2024, a catechist aspiring to become a deacon and his family—including his sister-in-law, who was also a children's catechist—were [murdered](#) by members of a criminal cell of the Jalisco New Generation Cartel. The attack was prompted by the catechist's refusal to collaborate with the cartel and his calls during church services for the Catholic congregation to reject the group's illegal activities, which the cartel interpreted as an act of betrayal. After being killed, their bodies were burned along with their home (Infobae, 16 May 2024).
- **March 2024:** Protesters participating in marches on International Women's Day [vandalized](#) churches in various states (Aciprensa, 9 March 2024): In Oaxaca, participants tore down fences that had been erected to protect the Cathedral. In Durango, a statue of Saint John Paul II, located outside a church, was defaced. In Leon there were confrontations between protesters and religious groups, eggs were thrown at the facade of León cathedral. In Monterrey there were confrontations between protesters and people protecting the Cathedral. In Puebla, demonstrators daubed paint on the walls of the Puebla Cathedral. In Mexico City, feminist

groups knocked down the fence installed by the authorities to protect the Metropolitan Cathedral. They threw fireworks at the police and in the direction of the Cathedral. In other states, such as Aguascalientes, some Christians reported that they were threatened and insulted by feminist groups (Facebook, 8 March 2024).

- **November 2023, Oaxaca:** In San Juan la Lana (Tuxtepec), four evangelical Christians in an indigenous community were arrested and threatened with eviction.

Specific examples of positive developments

- **April 2024:** Amid growing insecurity in the country, the government has initiated a series of dialogues with religious leaders to address violence, especially in regions affected by organized crime (Washington Post, 3 April 2024). While these efforts are isolated and not part of a consolidated national strategy, they are a first step in addressing the problem that impacts many religious leaders and communities in the country.
- **March 2024:** Claudia Sheinbaum, the newly elected Mexican president, signed the National Commitment for Peace prepared by the Mexican Episcopal Conference (CEM) in March 2024 (LA Times, 11 March 2024). Despite Sheinbaum's disagreements with the diagnosis and some proposals in the document, the CEM welcomed openness to dialogue.

Christian communities and how they are affected

Communities of expatriate Christians

Expatriate Christians are not forced into isolation. This category is therefore not scored in WWL analysis.

Historical Christian communities

The Roman Catholic Church (which is the largest denomination) and small Orthodox, Presbyterian and Anglican communities make up this category. Catholic churches are particularly affected by the activities of criminal gangs and the corruption of local authorities who contribute directly or indirectly to illegal activities, which could include violence targeting church leaders. It is mostly Protestants from this category who suffer from the effects of *Clan oppression* (mostly blended with *Christian denominational protectionism*) when they live in indigenous territories where the practice of their faith is not tolerated and they are a minority religious community. Throughout Mexico, churches in this category struggle with the growth of *Secular intolerance*, especially where attempts are made to prevent their faith-based opinions being heard in the public sphere or public debate, and places of worship are vandalized by radical ideological groups. In the past reporting period, particularly the Catholic Church within this category has been the target of abuse by the government when it has defended the most vulnerable or has criticized the government for ignoring democratic practices and respect for human rights. This is being monitored as part of the dynamic of *Dictatorial paranoia*.

Converts

This category includes converts from historical Christian communities, converts from a criminal (mafia) background and Christians who have abandoned the religious practices of their indigenous community. Those ethnic rites could be ancestral or syncretistic (mostly related to the Roman Catholic faith). Indigenous converts are put under high pressure to abandon their new faith and may face

threats of violence, arrest and even expulsion. Additionally, with the increasing levels of violence in the country, it has become more apparent that individuals who leave criminal groups after adopting the Christian faith often face hostility and violence aimed at discouraging their continued conversion. In other areas of the country, mostly rural areas closer to indigenous communities, cross-denominational converts are sometimes a targeted of hostilities when their new form of faith is not accepted by their families or neighbors.

Non-traditional Christian communities

Evangelicals, Pentecostals and the Renewalist movement - especially where they are involved in advocacy activities in some indigenous communities - suffer retaliation from community members who refuse to accept the presence of other religious groups. In areas co-opted by organized crime, they also suffer the risk of being put under pressure or attacked for their active evangelism. They face criticism and threats for defending their faith-based opinions in the public arena.

Areas where Christians face most difficulties

Main areas for Organized corruption and crime

Criminal networks have expanded across Mexican territory, no longer limited to the so-called "[narco-states](#)" (NPR, 05 September 2024). According to national media, [175 criminal groups](#) are actively present in at least 81% of the national territory, some with nationwide operations and others with a more localized presence (Infobae, 23 April 2024). Additionally, the [U.S. Congressional Research Service](#) reports that there is at least one cartel operating in every state (CRS, 7 June 2022).

Main areas for Secular intolerance

Christians throughout the country are affected by national laws underpinning a radical view of Church-State separation and non-discrimination. However, the vandalism of church buildings and the intolerance towards Christians sharing faith-based views on contentious issues are particularly high in states such as Aguascalientes, Baja California, Campeche, Colima, Jalisco, Guanajuato, Morelos, Mexico City, Mexico State, Nuevo León, Oaxaca, Quintana Roo, Yucatán and Veracruz.

Main areas for Clan oppression - with a special note about 'non-accepted forms of Christianity' in indigenous communities

The violation of rights of Christians inside indigenous communities occurs particularly in the southern zone, i.e. in Chiapas, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Nayarit, Oaxaca, Puebla, Yucatán, and Zacatecas.

Within indigenous communities, the religious factor is an important component of their culture and identity and shapes their relationships with other people and even natural resources. As in many indigenous communities in Latin America, the religious practices are mostly related to syncretistic practices adapted from Roman Catholic rites. In some cases, they identify themselves as Catholics and indigenous leaders tend to be more receptive to the presence of Roman Catholic members than with Christians from other denominations. However, any type of preaching or religious activity requires permission from the leaders. Anything going against the customs of the ethnic group will be [punished](#) (Evangelico Digital, 24 August 2022). Due to the general acceptance of Catholic traditions inside indigenous communities, most 'non-accepted forms of Christianity' are of Protestant or Evangelical origin.

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

Christians of 'non-accepted church groups' in localities such as [Oaxaca](#) (La Jornada, 4 January 2022), [Chiapas](#) (El Heraldo de Chiapas, 16 February 2022) and [Hidalgo](#) (DiarioVialibre, 24 April 2024), who refused to profess the same faith as the community in which they lived, were harassed, fined, arrested and expelled from their homes, without there being any effective intervention by the government authorities. In 2023, there was, for instance, a violent [attack](#) on a woman which was linked to her membership of a religious minority in her community (Forbinfull, 17 April 2023). In such cases, 'non-accepted Christians' frequently fail to receive any proper guarantee of their rights when they ask for state intervention. This is either due to a [lack of interest](#) (Forbinfull, 2 May 2024) on the part of the state authorities or due to a [false interpretation](#) of what indigenous autonomy entails (Cronica, 15 June 2022).

The US State Department mentioned (in [IRFR 2022 Mexico](#)) that the General Directorate for Religious Affairs investigated five cases related to religious freedom that took place in Oaxaca, Chiapas and Querétaro. Most of these cases involved members of minority religious groups who stated that members of the majority religious community where they lived had deprived them of the right to basic services and reported facing psychological threats. Citing CSW, the report notes that vulnerable religious communities described high levels of impunity for state officials and a lack of protections granted by these officials, who, they said, often sided with members of majority religious groups.

However, some steps have been taken at the legislative level to prevent this kind of conduct. In September 2022, the Oaxaca State Congress [approved](#) the reform of the State Penal Code, regarding the crime of discrimination, which includes as punishable conduct "imposing activities, quotas, charges, services or punishments as a sanction for not professing a specific religion or creed" (OJS, 21 November 2022). Nonetheless, efforts are still needed to make the reform truly effective in practice. Thus, due to the continual reports of hostility being shown towards religious minorities, it is essential that similar measures are introduced in other states of the country and that affirmative actions be put into practice by government authorities to guarantee the exercise of religious freedom in those circumstances. At the moment, the autonomy enjoyed by indigenous communities is often used as a justification for the inefficiency in resolving this type of conflict.

Position on the World Watch List

Mexico: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2025	71	31
WWL 2024	68	37
WWL 2023	67	38
WWL 2022	65	43
WWL 2021	64	37

Mexico's overall score rose by 3 points (after rounding decimals), driven by increases in both violence (gaining 0.5 points to reach the extreme level of 14.6 points) and pressure, with notable rises in all spheres of life except *Community life*. These increases can be primarily attributed to the social control imposed by organized crime across all states of the federation, particularly in the run-up to the elections in June 2024. This environment even led to WWL 2025 recording the highest number of Christians killed for faith-related reasons. When the Church is seen as a destabilizing factor for criminal activities, it becomes more vulnerable to being a frequent target of these groups. Additionally, the country continues to report concerning levels of rejection of religious minorities within indigenous communities, compounded by displays of secular intolerance towards the Church's biblical teaching in other contexts.

Persecution engines

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

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

Organized corruption and crime (Strong)

Transparency International ([CPI 2023](#)) ranked Mexico 126th (31 points) out of 180 countries for corruption. With the sustained increase in violence during AMLO's administration, his term in government has been classified as the [most violent](#) in history (Forbes, 1 October 2024), especially due to the high levels of [political violence](#) (Wilson Center, 13 March 2024). Once again, the government's strategy of attempting to control violence by military force proved ineffective. The high levels of impunity and corruption have led commentators to call Mexico a "[narco-state](#)" (Fox Business, 26 November 2024). Many criminal groups are not only active in controlling communities but have also established networks in [various other states](#) as well and have built up an active presence throughout the country (Insight Crime, 19 January 2024). The main criminal groups have also [diversified](#) their illicit activities to expand their scope of action (USA Today, 5 July 2024), having [capitalized](#) on the crisis generated by the COVID-19 pandemic (CRS, 14 October, 2021). These factors mean that there is continual warfare between groups, causing a [spiral](#) of violence (Crisis Group, 24 May 2024). Some communities have formed [self-defense groups](#) (Le Grand Continent, 17 April 2023) to keep criminal groups and corrupt police officers away; however, many regard these as criminal groups as well.

Christians, who preach about sin and social justice, who inform the authorities of illegal operations, who act as human rights defenders, or who are involved in providing humanitarian assistance to the neediest, are considered a threat to the interests of criminal groups. They can quickly become targets for all sorts of reprisals, attacks, surveillance, extortion, break-ins and robberies of their places of worship and homes, death threats, kidnapping attempts, and even killings. In addition, in recent years, criminal groups have been showing an increasing level of cruelty when [acting](#) against church leaders (MSN News, 9 October 2022).

Clan oppression (Strong)

Given the indigenous autonomy recognized by the state as a community right, state intervention is minimal. Within these communities, ethnic leaders attempt to impose a lifestyle regulated by their ancestral or syncretistic customs (often involving Catholic rites); if these ethnic customs are rejected (for instance by Protestant Christians) it is considered a serious attack on the indigenous community's way of life. Especially converts from indigenous religions face pressure to renounce their new Christian faith through forced displacement, fines, isolation, the blocking of basic community services, imprisonment, beatings and the destruction of Christian property.

Through the State Commission on Human Rights, measures have been taken to guarantee the safety of indigenous Christians who belong to church groups not accepted under the majority indigenous peoples criteria. However, cases have not always been followed up satisfactorily and often, the authorities do not view cases as being a violation of the right to religious liberty but consider them instead to be a minor internal conflict about political or personal differences.

Clan oppression is often linked to the Persecution engine *Christian denominational protectionism* where indigenous community leaders (sometimes supported by State officers) seek to defend a syncretistic form of Roman Catholicism and try to impose it on all members of their community, allegedly to defend their faith.

Secular intolerance (Medium)

Ideological pressure groups and some government authorities seek to promote a secularist agenda which aims to restrict the participation of Christians in the public sphere and promote self-censorship, especially when they hold positions of public office. Christians experience increasing societal intolerance for expressing faith-based beliefs, including at work or school, in topics related to the defense of sanctity of life and marriage. Vandalism of church property is also on the increase, yet the authorities rarely carry out in-depth investigations, not considering it a “real problem”.

Drivers of persecution

Mexico:	IO	RN	ERH	CO	CDP	CPCO	SI	DPA	OCC
Drivers of Persecution	-	-	-	STRONG	WEAK	-	MEDIUM	VERY WEAK	STRONG
Government officials	-	-	-	Medium	Very weak	-	Medium	Very weak	Medium
Ethnic group leaders	-	-	-	Strong	-	-	-	-	Very weak
Non-Christian religious leaders	-	-	-	Strong	-	-	-	-	Very weak
Religious leaders of other churches	-	-	-	Weak	Very weak	-	Very weak	-	-
Violent religious groups	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ideological pressure groups	-	-	-	-	-	-	Medium	-	-
Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs	-	-	-	Strong	Weak	-	Weak	-	Weak
One's own (extended) family	-	-	-	Strong	Weak	-	Very weak	-	Weak
Political parties	-	-	-	-	-	-	Medium	Very weak	Medium
Revolutionaries or paramilitary groups	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Weak

Mexico:	IO	RN	ERH	CO	CDP	CPCO	SI	DPA	OCC
Drivers of Persecution	-	-	-	STRONG	WEAK	-	MEDIUM	VERY WEAK	STRONG
Organized crime cartels or networks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Very weak	Strong
Multilateral organizations (e.g. UN, OIC etc.) and embassies	-	-	-	-	-	-	Very weak	-	-

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

Drivers of Organized corruption and crime

- **Organized crime cartels or networks (Strong):** There are numerous violent criminal organizations operating in Mexico. Criminal gangs attack church leaders who voice opposition to their illegal activities or who influence people not to get involved with them. These groups threaten the personal safety of church leaders, attack church buildings, and even cause damage to the private property of Christians. Indigenous communities are one of the most affected targets since their territories are usually the ideal location for drug traffickers.
- **Government officials (Medium):** Corrupt officials at various levels allow criminal activity to take place with impunity which encourages a further increase in criminal operations and violence. Christians who go to the authorities to denounce criminal groups or seek protection, sometimes find themselves as victims of immediate reprisals. Consistently in recent years, criminal groups have expanded their influence, and most authorities fail to provide effective protection for Christians, church leaders, and their places of worship, as many officials do not recognize them as specific targets of organized crime.
- **Political parties (Medium):** Corruption among politicians helps promote the cover-up of criminal group activities. Politicians' decisions have reinforced impunity, allowing organized crime cartels to continue with their illegal activities and exert pressure and violence against Christians in the most neglected areas of the country. In addition, criminal groups' interests were the cause of high levels of violence during the electoral period. Indeed, some politicians are, at least in part, supported by 'narco-finance'. This is another reason why organized crime has been able to expand.

Drivers of Clan oppression

- **Ethnic group leaders (Strong):** Ethnic leaders and indigenous religious authorities oppose any religious activity contrary to the community's religious rites, that are sometimes a form of Roman Catholicism merged with ancestral customs. Conversion to and practice of a non-accepted Christian faith is thus regarded as a betrayal and an affront to the entire indigenous culture that

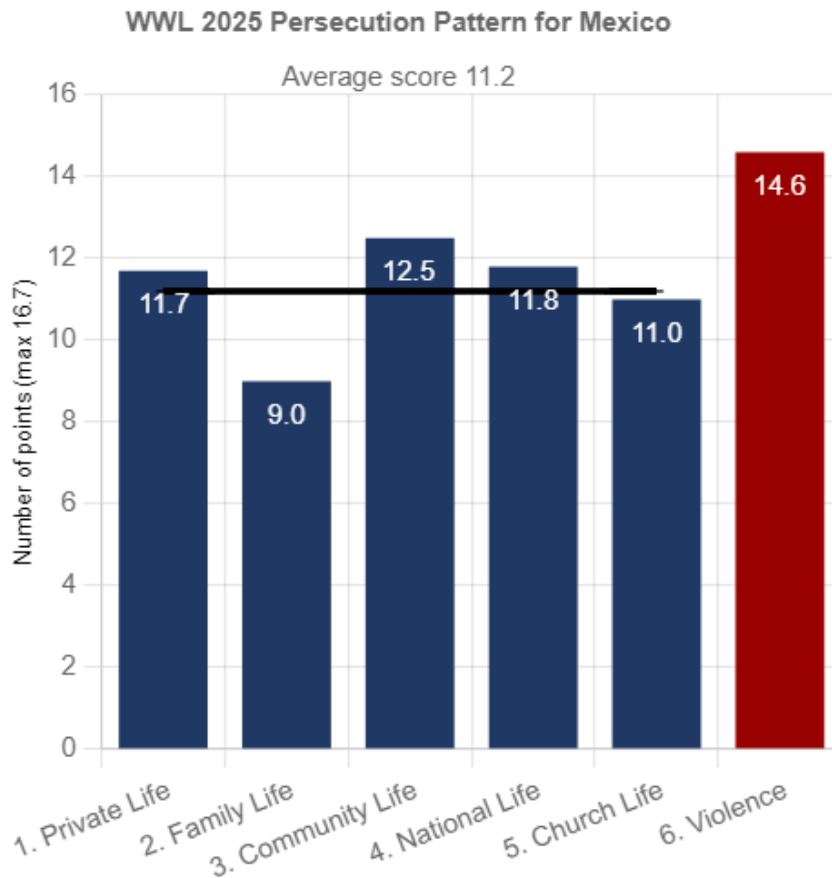
must be dealt with severely.

- ***Non-Christian religious leaders (Strong):*** Indigenous religious leaders who follow ancestral beliefs are the most respected members of the community. Their authority is considered divine - they are often shamans - and are the main inciters to eradicate any manifestation of a different faith in order not to alter the balance of community life and not to betray the gods they worship.
- ***One's own (extended) family (Strong):*** Loyalty to the indigenous community is expected to have a higher priority than loyalty to one's family. Thus, any family member abandoning the religious ancestral or syncretistic practices of the community to become a Christian is liable to face rejection from their wider family, either out of fear or loyalty to their ethnic group and culture.
- ***Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs (Strong):*** Members of indigenous communities will denounce Christian practices and harass Christian converts as part of their loyalty to their ethnic group. They feel obliged to protect community stability as being in the best interest of their ethnic group.
- ***Government officials (Medium):*** Government officials at the municipal and state level do not usually interfere when Christians are mistreated in autonomous indigenous communities. On the contrary, given the institutional weakness of the state, their aim is to reinforce indigenous autonomy instead of promoting its development within the framework of the international obligations to which the Mexican state has committed itself, especially with regard to religious freedom. When government officials do get involved, the measures taken are most usually ineffective and fail to protect the Christians' right to religious freedom. Their involvement is usually to support the indigenous authorities with a view to generating political empathy and signaling their respect of indigenous rights.

Drivers of Secular intolerance

- ***Ideological pressure groups (Medium):*** Christians who speak publicly on issues concerning family, marriage and religious liberty often face harassment from these groups. Church leaders, Christian activists and parents have also been threatened with legal action by these groups when they teach/defend traditional Christian values concerning sexuality. Such threats violate a parent's right to educate their child in line with their own beliefs. It has also become a common tactic for pressure groups to vandalize churches as part of their demonstrations.
- ***Government officials (Medium):*** Some municipal, state and federal authorities are in alliance with ideological pressure groups and try to implement a legal framework of restrictions and censorship, especially targeting Christians and Christian organizations, to protect Church-State separation. Also, when approving regulations in favor of secularist group interests, the authorities often ignore petitions made by Christian groups aiming to safeguard the religious freedom and other related rights (as freedom of expression) of those involved.
- ***Political parties (Medium):*** Some members of the political parties, including MORENA (the ruling political party which initially acted favorably towards various Christian denominations), have promoted initiatives to censor faith-based views in the public sphere, particularly on issues involving the right to life, marriage, parental rights and the right to freedom of religion or belief. Some have even tried to impose sanctions on Christians in their party ranks.

The Persecution pattern



The WWL 2025 Persecution pattern for Mexico shows:

- The average pressure on Christians in Mexico remained at a very high level (11.2 points), a slight increase in comparison to WWL 2024 (10.8 points). This was mainly due to the continued pressure caused by expanding criminal group control, added to the growing influence of indigenous communities and political pressure groups.
- All spheres of life scored at least 9.0 points or above. Pressure is highest in *Community life* (12.5 points) and *National life* (11.8). This reflects the fact that, in many areas of the country, the de-facto authorities are the criminal leaders and they impose their own rules over the population (via intimidation) and in indigenous areas, ethnic leaders are protected to act independently of state jurisdiction.
- The score for violence is extremely high (14.6 points), an increase of 0.5 points in comparison to WWL 2024. The level of violence against Christian communities and individuals continues to be of very serious concern especially due to the levels of cruelty demonstrated by criminal groups. There was an increase in the number of Christian killings, church buildings and Christian private property attacked, forced displacement, detentions and abductions targeting Christians for faith-related reasons.

Pressure in the 5 spheres of life

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

Pressure in Block 1 / Private sphere

Block 1.4: It has been risky for Christians to reveal their faith in written forms of personal expression (including expressions in blogs and Facebook etc.). (3.25 points)

In indigenous communities, particularly in the southern regions, oral testimony remains the primary means of transmitting faith. However, Christians from non-accepted church groups face punishment by ethnic leaders if they attempt to share their beliefs in written form. Such actions are perceived as a betrayal of indigenous unity and identity and as a challenge to the authority and legitimacy of community leaders.

Social media has increasingly become a platform for Christians, particularly in the run-up to national elections, to promote their faith, reject violence perpetrated by criminal groups, and encourage leaving criminal lifestyles. These activities, often quoting church leaders, have made both the individuals and the leaders more vulnerable to attacks, a trend particularly observed in the northern states.

Christians who express faith-based views on topics such as family, marriage, and the sanctity of life on social media often face criticism, mockery and reprisals. Those who support political leaders defending Christian values are similarly affected. Politicians who share their Christian beliefs on personal social media accounts risk severe criticism from other parties, pressure groups, and social media users. They may be accused of violating the principles of the secular state, even when not acting in their official capacities.

Additionally, instances of inter-denominational intolerance on social media are emerging. Some users, leveraging the anonymity of these platforms, post aggressive reactions to content shared by members of church groups they disapprove of.

Block 1.8: It has been risky for Christians to speak about their faith with those other than immediate family (extended family, others). (3.00 points)

In some indigenous communities, loyalty to the community religion or fear of losing membership benefits often outweighs family ties. Family members may denounce relatives who do not adhere to ancestral or syncretistic customs, reporting them to ethnic leaders for punishment. This is particularly true for members of 'non-accepted' Christian groups, a dynamic commonly observed in Oaxaca, Chiapas, Guerrero, Hidalgo, and Jalisco.

In rural areas near indigenous communities, *Christian denominational protectionism* also becomes visible in the form of rejection by relatives when individuals abandon the family's traditional faith, often Roman Catholicism. Similarly, family members involved in criminal groups may react violently toward relatives who convert to Christianity and leave criminal activities, citing concerns about information leaks or exposure of local group identities.

Criminal groups maintain significant control over individuals they perceive as threats to their stability, posing a persistent challenge to human security across the country. Additionally, rising religious intolerance has led some family members who oppose faith-based values to discourage relatives from openly expressing their beliefs, sometimes resorting to acts of violence.

Block 1.9: It has been risky for Christians to meet with other Christians. (3.00 points)

In indigenous communities, small groups of Christians who do not follow the religious practices of their ethnicity often meet in secret or outside the community. Their gatherings are considered acts of religious proselytism and, if discovered, can result in imprisonment or forced displacement for contradicting community traditions. Any social interaction among "non-accepted" Christians is closely monitored by indigenous authorities, and in some cases, they are required to pay arbitrary fines or participate in ethnic religious festivals as a condition for being allowed to meet.

In many areas of the country, criminal groups act as de facto authorities, controlling social life within their territories, including all forms of gatherings. While state policies may permit social activities, these can be arbitrarily restricted or disrupted by orders from criminal groups. This often affects Christian activists, whose meetings are viewed with suspicion and considered acts of defiance against the authority of the dominant criminal group.

Block 1.3: It has been dangerous to privately own or keep Christian materials. (2.75 points)

If a 'non-accepted' Christian faith is rejected within an indigenous community, the possession of materials such as a Bible or devotional books is also rejected. Out of loyalty to the community, immediate family members in indigenous communities may report converts to indigenous leaders if they find such materials, leading to punishment. According to sources, in some communities in Chiapas, possessing Christian materials risks their destruction and may result in fines for the owner.

Pressure in Block 2 / Family sphere

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

Within indigenous communities, education is aimed at maintaining the cultural identity of the ethnic group and therefore ethnic and other non-Christian rites are a compulsory part of the school curriculum also for children from Christian families. If Christian parents oppose their children receiving this type of education, the whole family will suffer difficulties and acts of punishment from the community authorities.

Throughout the country, Christian schoolchildren have to be taught and examined on matters of sexuality, promotion of indigenous religious customs and pre-Hispanic practices, as part of state-approved compulsory education. This endangers the parents' right to educate their child in line with their own faith-based values because such content in the curriculum is known to contradict traditional Christian faith and values.

In some rural Catholic schools, even those run by the state, students are occasionally put under pressure to participate in Catholic forms of worship such as festivals for saints.

Block 2.10: Christian spouses and/or children of Christians have been subject to separation for prolonged periods of time by circumstances relating to persecution. (3.50 points)

When Christians from 'non-accepted' church groups are expelled from an indigenous community or imprisoned, they are necessarily separated from their family. There are also cases in which children are separated from their Christian family, to prevent them being raised as Christian believers.

Organized crime is also a cause of separation within families. This occurs when the danger of attack by criminal groups is so high that some Christian family members are forced to look for a safe place to live elsewhere, sometimes leaving their families behind. Some may even try to flee the country.

Block 2.7: Parents have been hindered in raising their children according to their Christian beliefs. (3.25 points)

Within indigenous communities, Christian parents are usually prohibited from passing on their Christian faith to their children, since this would allegedly cause damage to the child's 'indigenous identity' and alter the spiritual balance of the community. Ethnic leaders apply pressure to make all residents in the indigenous community comply.

Due to the expansion and strengthening of criminal groups, the recruitment of minors has skyrocketed; children have been used to transport drugs in food and medicine, participate in extortion and contract killing activities and to join self-defense groups. When criminal groups recruit Christian children and young adults to participate in criminal activities, Christian parents face harsh intimidation if they oppose this and have no effective way to stop it.

In matters relating to sexual education, by following pressure group guidelines for curriculum content, the state authorities have limited the rights of Christian parents to bring up their children according to their beliefs. Despite the fact that this situation had been denounced by civil society and there was a court order not to distribute school books that included such pressure group content on sexual matters, the Ministry of Public Education has nevertheless distributed them as compulsory education content, annulling - in practice - the judicial protection that the parents had received. This limitation of rights is particularly pronounced in Baja California Sur, Colima, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Mexico City, Oaxaca, Puebla, Yucatan, Zacatecas and Mexico state.

Block 2.9: Children of Christians have been harassed or discriminated against because of their parents' faith. (3.25 points)

In indigenous communities, children of Christian parents are put under pressure to abandon their faith. Sometimes they are made to leave their Christian family and live with relatives who adhere to indigenous religious rites. The children may also be excluded from community activities and services as a way of punishing their Christian parents. Elsewhere, one of the main ways Christian children are harassed is by denying them the chance of further education in indigenous schools. In other parts of the country (non-indigenous areas), Christian children might be rejected by extended families, teachers and classmates because their parents do not belong to the majority denomination.

Criminal groups are also known to harass the children of Christians as a way of putting pressure on their parents to stop their Christian activities in the area. The harassment and mistreatment of

Christian children can also be motivated by criminal groups targeting them for sexual abuse, recruitment, or kidnapping for human trafficking.

In schools, many Christian children face hostility and bullying, especially in schools, as part of the increasing rejection of faith-based views in the public sphere. This has also been the case with the use of social media, and has occurred where children have mentioned their Christian faith.

Pressure in Block 3 / Community sphere

Block 3.12: Christians have been fined for faith-related reasons (e.g. jizya tax, community tax, protection money). (3.50 points)

Indigenous community leaders impose fines on Christians who refuse to participate in the community's religious practices (related to ancestral/Catholic syncretism). These fines can be imposed more than once to the same person or family and they often exceed the amount of money that an indigenous Christian can pay, due to their poor living conditions and because they have already lost some economic benefits as punishment for their faith.

Criminal gangs extort protection money from church leaders and other Christians to allow them to conduct their Christian activities (or even just daily life, in some instances) unmolested. Extortion continues to be the most frequent method for groups to show their control over an area. People have no other choice but to pay, fearing violent reprisals if they refuse.

Block 3.2: Christians have been monitored by their local communities or by private groups (this includes reporting to police, being shadowed, telephone lines listened to, emails read/censored, etc.). (3.25 points)

Monitoring by ethnic leaders and criminal groups continues unabated, leading to very high levels of violence targeting Christian leaders in particular.

Within indigenous communities, 'non-accepted' Christians are monitored daily to prevent them from sharing their Christian faith with others. In areas dominated by organized crime, Christians are seen as the ones who challenge gang control and are closely monitored by criminals in case they inform the authorities or media about criminal operations. This is especially the case when former gang members have converted to Christianity.

Additionally, according to in-country sources, some Christian university students have been victims of monitoring and surveillance by pressure groups with the purpose of harassing and intimidating them and looking for opportunities to accuse them of hate speech and discrimination when they defend traditional biblical values regarding life, marriage and family.

Block 3.11: Christians have been hindered in the operation of their businesses for faith-related reasons (e.g. access to loans, subsidies, government contracts, client boycotts). (3.25 points)

As a form of punishment, indigenous leaders prohibit community members from employing or making contracts with Christians belonging to 'non-accepted' church groups. The leaders make sure that buyers and suppliers (especially of agricultural goods) do not give them the same prices for their crops as for other members of the community. This is deliberate economic manipulation to discourage their faith; they are even denied the financial subsidy all members of the community are supposed to

receive by right. Also, client boycotts and obstacles to accessing loans are further examples of action against non-accepted Christians.

If the local authorities are in collusion with criminal groups, Christians who oppose the presence of organized crime in their communities tend to have greater difficulties in obtaining permits for operating their businesses. Organized boycotting is also common. In addition, many local businesses are forced to sell their products at reduced prices to criminal groups, so that the latter can then distribute and re-sell them at higher prices. Christians who refuse to cooperate face threats and violence.

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

Ethnic leaders make use of community jurisdictional and control mechanisms to keep track of 'non-accepted' Christian activities within indigenous communities. The purpose is to discourage such Christians from preaching and practicing their faith and to prevent them from converting others.

In other areas, drug cartels require Christians to periodically report to them to find out if any church activities represent a danger to their operations. These groups are also interested in Christian activities to see where there may be the possibility of economic benefit. Criminal groups have commonly intimidated people to obtain information about donations and other goods obtained by churches or Christian groups. In some cases, attempts are made to intimidate church leaders and members of local churches into becoming informers for these groups.

Pressure in Block 4 / National sphere

Block 4.1: The Constitution (or comparable national or state law) limits freedom of religion as formulated in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (3.50 points)

Article 24 of the Constitution more or less follows the provisions of Article 18 of the UDHR. However, the Constitution goes on to list certain restrictions concerning the manifesting and teaching of one's own religion as well as promoting its observance in a political context (i.e., contravening the principle of Church-State separation) or where it could be understood to include proselytism or the attempt to interfere in political decision-making. There are also legislative restrictions regarding the upholding of Church doctrine when it comes to dealing with cases of gender dysphoria. These excessive limitations - especially for church leaders - interfere in the exercise of religious freedom and violate the UDHR guarantees.

Block 4.8: Christians have been hindered in expressing their views or opinions in public. (3.50 points)

Within indigenous communities, due to their refusal to follow the traditional religion, Christians from 'non-accepted' church groups are considered to have lost the right to address or to express themselves before the community, even if the issue under debate is not necessarily linked to church matters.

Christians who denounce criminal activities in public frequently become victims of threats or attacks both by criminal groups but also by corrupt officials colluding with them. High levels of violence and citizen insecurity directly impact self-censorship to express claims, complaints or criticism both towards the authorities and towards the perpetrators of these crimes.

Faith-based opinions made by church leaders when participating in public debate are most often considered an attack on the secular principles of the state. Christian leaders and Christians holding a public office who express faith-based views about issues relating to family and marriage in the public sphere, face hostility and state sanctions. In 2022, two bishops were found guilty of making public statements which were judged as interfering with the upcoming elections. In the past reporting period (WWL 2024), a Christian activist, civil society leader and former Mexican Congressman, Rodrigo Iván Cortés, was convicted of “gender-based political violence,” including digital violence, for social media posts on Twitter and Facebook referring to transgender-identifying Mexican Congressional representative, Salma Luévano, as a “man who self-ascribes as a woman”. Such high-profile cases contribute to the climate of self-censorship and have a chilling effect on the Christian population.

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)

Any kind of political party based on a specific religious belief is not allowed. Given the levels of corruption, state authorities allow criminal groups - directly or indirectly - to hinder the activities of civil society organizations, especially where Christians are working with young people in drug and crime prevention programs or with migrants. The projects, statements and publications of faith-based charities are continually scrutinized by activists seeking to take legal action, should there be evidence of discrimination or promotion of hate-speech.

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

Since the state has given autonomy and self-determination to indigenous communities, indigenous populations establish and regulate their own norms of coexistence. Hence, ethnic leaders, as the main authorities in indigenous communities, allow pressure and violence to be used against Christians who oppose community customs. If the state authorities are informed of such incidents, the conflict is most often dismissed as a private dispute or a minor cultural issue and is not treated as being a serious restriction of religious freedom.

In other contexts, the investigation of criminal cases is often delayed where Christians are involved as victims or where Christian property has been damaged. This is frequently due to corruption and collusion between the authorities and criminal networks.

Where Christian leaders have been discriminated against or attacked with offensive language in public due to their faith-based views, the justice system has not taken action to stop this. Where churches and church property have been vandalized by aggressive pressure groups, state authorities have not taken effective action to help prevent such violent acts being repeated in the future.

Pressure in Block 5 / Church sphere

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

Christians within indigenous communities who belong to a 'non-accepted' church group, cannot conduct their own worship services; it is forbidden. If the members of the community or the authorities discover their house-church activities, they are punished, sometimes even imprisoned.

As a result of insecurity in areas co-opted by criminal groups, churches have often been forced to re-schedule their service times. Killings, abductions, threats, robberies inside places of worship and the interruption of church activities occurred frequently in WWL 2025.

As part of their public demonstrations, pressure groups have at times disrupted church services, attacking worshippers and shouting slogans denigrating faith-based views. Sometimes, churches prefer to re-schedule their activities to avoid any confrontation with such ideological groups.

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

Within indigenous communities, any preaching or teaching that contradicts the ancestral or syncretistic practices of the ethnic group is forbidden.

Criminal groups have targeted church leaders who speak out against corruption, violence, and crime or advocate for democratic elections, indigenous rights, or migrant protection. The rise in monitoring and retaliatory actions by these groups is closely tied to the levels of violence documented during WWL 2025. Although the Church has led recent truces and negotiations to curb social violence, these efforts have proved temporary. Criminal groups maintain constant surveillance over influential local figures, including church leaders, as part of their strategy to enforce social control through fear and intimidation.

Christian leaders experience many restrictions in political debate and their comments are constantly under scrutiny for discriminatory content. Some churches have even been accused by ex-president AMLO of supporting his political opponents; church leaders have also been insulted by him when they have complained of being victims of organized crime.

Additionally, with the implementation of certain legislative reforms aimed at combating discrimination, there is systematic monitoring of church teaching on family, marriage and sexuality. Pressure groups actively conduct this surveillance to identify potential legal violations, which could lead to court cases or, at the very least, significant criticism in the media.

Block 5.11: Pastors or other Christian leaders (or their family members) have been special targets of harassment for faith-related reasons. (3.50 points)

Within indigenous communities, those considered to be leaders of 'non-accepted' Christian groups are particularly targeted for harassment and some types of violence, mainly arrest and forced internal displacement, along with their families.

In areas controlled by criminal groups, Christian leaders and/or their family members are the most frequent victims of the imposition of taxes, abductions, fines or extortion. Christians, especially those with leadership roles in society, the defense of human rights, migrants, indigenous communities or anti-corruption programs, have been threatened and assassinated. Acts of intimidation and harassment target nuns, Christian activists and church leaders (both Protestant and Catholic) in an attempt to discourage church work in areas dominated by organized crime. The level of brutality towards the Church has reached such a high level that criminal groups will even [cut off a Catholic priest's fingers](#) (which are used for blessing) as a kind of 'war trophy' which is then used for rising to a higher rank in the criminal organization (California Catholic Daily, 5 October 2022). As reported by the

US State Department ([IRFR 2023 Mexico](#)): “Observers said religious leaders were often involved in politics and social activism and were thus more vulnerable to generalized violence.”

Church leaders often face harassment when they express faith-based views in public on issues involving the right to life, marriage, parental rights and the right to freedom of religion or belief.

Block 5.20: It has been risky for churches or Christian organizations to speak out against instigators of persecution. (3.50 points)

In indigenous communities, Christians belonging to 'non-accepted' church groups who speak out against their oppressors face threats, forced displacement and arrest, among other measures. The possibility of reporting incidents is very limited, and when it is possible, the government authorities reduce religious persecution to the level of personal or political conflict.

In areas where organized crime is dominant, when Christians denounce their aggressors, criminal groups often respond with violent reprisals, as evidenced by the high number of church leaders killed during the WWL 2025 reporting period. The risk for Christians increases where the authorities act in collusion with criminal groups and in cases where calls to action by Church leaders have prompted signs of hostility from the government.

Elsewhere in society, when Christians complain to the authorities about the defamations they face, the authorities usually focus their attention on guaranteeing the freedom of expression of the perpetrators and not on the religious freedom being restricted for those affected.

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.

Mexico: 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)?	24	13
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?	193	78
6.3 How many Christians have been detained for faith-related reasons?	28	10
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)?	116	10
6.6 How many Christians have been raped or otherwise sexually harassed for faith-related reasons?	0	7
6.7 How many cases have there been of forced marriages of Christians to non-Christians?	0	0
6.8 How many Christians have been otherwise physically or mentally abused for faith-related reasons (including beatings and death threats)?	230	100 *
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?	50	6

Mexico: Violence scores per Block 6 question in questionnaire	WWL 2025	WWL 2024
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?	1	0
6.11 How many Christians have been forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons?	852	74
6.12 How many Christians have been forced to leave the country for faith-related reasons?	11	0

During the WWL 2025 reporting period, violence reached record levels across several categories:

- **Christians killed (24):** This reporting period recorded the highest number of Christian killings in the country's WWL history. The victims were predominantly leaders from various denominations (Catholic and Evangelical) who were murdered by criminal groups in retaliation for continuing their pastoral work despite threats.
- **Churches attacked (193):** For WWL 2025, the number of Christian buildings attacked more than doubled compared to the previous reporting period. Most cases involved criminal groups targeting churches as an effective method of intimidating Christians and asserting territorial dominance. The number also includes incidents where pressure groups vandalized churches as part of their 'advocacy' for women's rights.
- **Christians abducted (116):** The number of abductions rose significantly compared to the 10 incidents recorded in the previous reporting period. Most cases involved church leaders, including pastors, priests, missionaries and catechists, who were targeted by groups involved in organized crime due to their social influence, which was perceived as a threat to criminal interests.
- **Christians forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country (852):** Some incidents involved Christians being expelled from indigenous communities for refusing to renounce their faith. However, most cases were related to Christians fleeing their homes due to the high levels of violence directed at them and their families by criminal groups, often targeting them specifically because of their faith.

5 Year trends

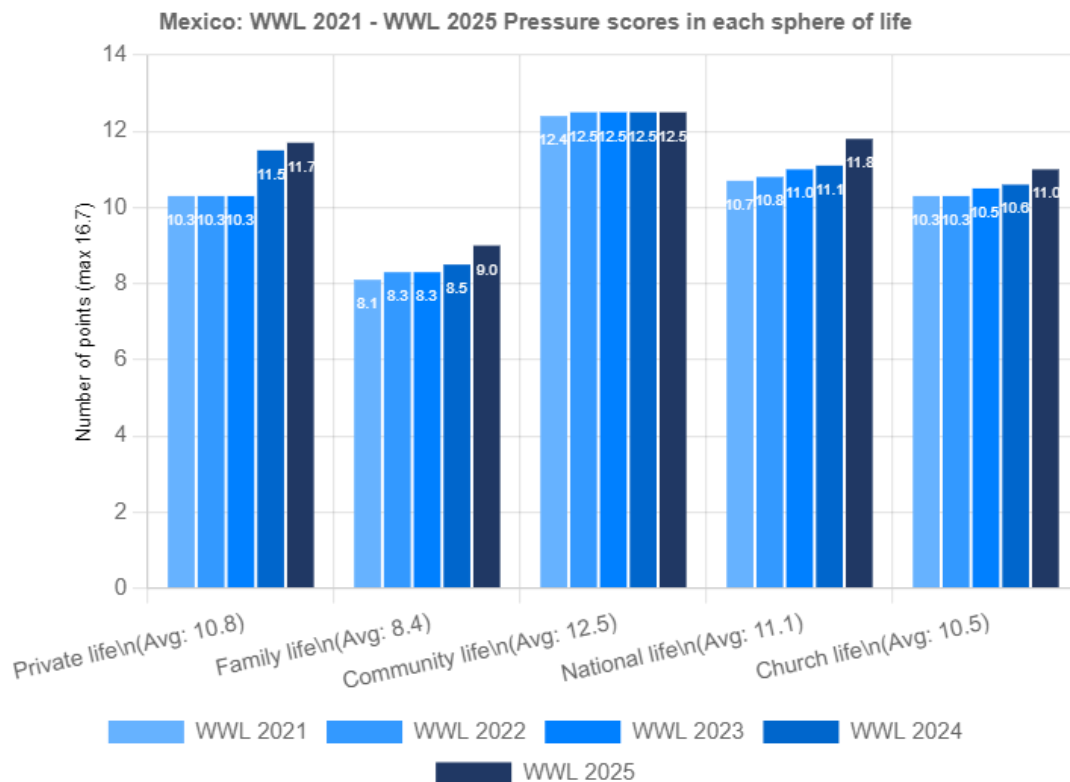
The following three charts show the levels of pressure and violence faced by Christians in the country over the last five WWL reporting periods.

5 Year trends: Average pressure

Mexico: WWL 2021 - WWL 2025	Average pressure over 5 Spheres of life
2025	11.2
2024	10.8
2023	10.5
2022	10.4
2021	10.4

The table above shows that the average pressure on Christians was stable around the 10.4-10.5 point mark in WWL 2021-WWL 2023. However, overall, the trend has been for the score to gradually rise which reflects how corruption networks, impunity and ineffective government authorities at many levels have caused serious Christian vulnerability and empowered non-state actors (criminal, indigenous and radical ideological groups) as the main drivers of persecution in the country.

5 Year trends: Pressure in each sphere of life



Over the last five WWL reporting periods, pressure has increased in *all spheres of life*. The most significant rise in pressure occurred in Private life, but pressure has always been highest (and most stable) in *Community life*. This is the result of the deterioration in the security situation due to the strengthening and diversification of social control exercised by criminal groups throughout the national territory, combined with the inability of the government to respond with effective measures to the extremely high levels of violence in the country. It is also influenced by the higher levels of pressure faced by Christians belonging to 'non-accepted' church groups in indigenous communities and by the increased hostility towards public expressions of Christian faith, especially concerning topics of national interest.

5 Year trends: Violence against Christians



Over the past five WWL reporting periods, violence scores in Mexico have consistently remained at an extreme level, peaking in WWL 2025. These levels are largely influenced by the capacity and commitment of authorities to address the primary driver of persecution - criminal groups. In the last three reporting periods, the violence score increased notably as criminal networks expanded and consolidated their control over most of the country, viewing the Church as a threat to their illicit activities amid ongoing political instability and ineffective governance.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Female

Mexico	Female Pressure Points Most frequently recorded PPs: WWL 2019 - WWL 2024
	Abduction Forced marriage Trafficking Violence – death Violence – physical Violence – psychological Violence – sexual

Within the context of a country friendly to Christianity, the persecution facing Christian women in Mexico usually overlaps with other exacerbating factors, focusing mostly on indigenous communities and in regions dominated by organized crime. Christian converts from indigenous communities face significant hostility, including being forced to marry non-Christian indigenous men; tribal authorities consider this a way of pressurizing them to renounce their faith.

Criminal gangs represent the other primary threat to women and girls. Since Mexico is among the countries with [highest rates](#) of human trafficking in the world, women are easy targets for recruitment for abduction and sexual slavery, most commonly by illegal armed groups (US Department of State, “2022 Trafficking in Persons Report: Mexico”). A country expert describes a story of a pastor’s daughter being kidnapped by drug traffickers who demanded that the pastor pay her ransom. On realizing that he could not pay them, they turned to the congregation, forcing them to pay for her release. Blackmail and threats of abduction and harm are not uncommon. In recent years, sexual crimes, including femicide, against girls have increased and impunity rates continue to hover around 95% ([El Pais, 25 November 2023](#)).

While many of the perpetrators of these attacks are violent abusive men who are not linked to criminal groups, the “war on drugs” has exacerbated the conditions under which gender-based violence takes place. The Mexican government has deployed the armed forces to take on criminal organizations. In turn, women have been caught in the crossfire.

Nearly half of all women in the country have been sexually assaulted over the course of their lifetimes. In 2021 alone, almost one in five women was exposed to sexual violence. Between 2007 and 2021, the number of women reported to have “disappeared” increased by a factor of fifteen and the number of femicides (i.e., killing women because of their gender) almost tripled ([CNB, last accessed 14 December 2024](#)). Women are frequently blamed for the violence subjected on them. It is understood that it is a woman’s job to keep herself safe; forcing many to give up their freedom of movement and to stay at home.

Criminal leaders target children of Christian homes, because their attitude of obedience is presumed, making it easier to instruct and indoctrinate them. Those who resist face threats against their own lives as well as those of their families, motivating internal forced displacement. One country expert asserted: “It cannot be ruled out that Christian parents have been victims of this situation, despite their attempt to prevent their daughters from being kidnapped or receiving money for a forced

marriage, especially in a context of abandonment by state authorities and de facto submission, both to the power of the indigenous community and to the criminal groups that operate in those areas.” Some women and girls are also targets of abductions and killings since they are considered targets of criminal groups for their relationship with the cartel enemies. Forced marriages for women in general are not as common as in previous years, but cases continue to occur for a range of different groups, especially if it involves a commercial interest, whether with businessmen in the area or with drug or smuggling groups.

Additionally, the fact that women are forced to maintain a relationship with members of criminal groups leads to an inevitable threatening of their Christian faith and that of the family; in many cases this dynamic leads to their separation and breakdown. An expert stated that women recruited into criminal gangs are subjected to “packing drugs, distributing, cleaning houses or making food or serving as sexual slaves.” Those who convert to Christianity and desert such groups are likely to find that their families face punishment in the form of violence or the threat of violence. These dynamics perpetuate cycles of violence, insecurity and socio-economic issues for women and girl.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Male

Mexico	Male Pressure Points Most frequently recorded PPs: WWL 2019 - WWL 2024
	Abduction Forced to flee town/country Imprisonment by government Military/militia conscription/service against conscience Violence – death Violence – physical Violence – psychological Violence – Verbal

Within the context of ongoing violence and organized crime, young men and boys are more likely to be killed in Mexico than women ([Vision for Humanity](#), 2022 Mexico Peace Index, p.28). While there is no law which makes Christian men and boys particularly vulnerable to hostility on grounds of faith, in the areas controlled by criminal groups or drug cartels, young men are exposed to indoctrination and forced recruitment into these groups. Some young men accept this as an inescapable destiny due to their economic and social circumstance. Those who do not accept it - whether for reasons of Christian faith or otherwise – face threats and potential abduction and killing. Families, too, are bribed and intimidated to force their children to obey the gangs. The Jalisco Nueva Generacion Cartel (CJNG), the Gulf Cartel (CDG), and Los Zetas are among the main criminal organizations notorious for recruiting children and adolescents ([CFR, 7 September 2022](#)).

The impact of the forced recruitment of Christian men and boys is far-reaching. As a country expert comments: “The drug trafficker harasses, above all, the children of pastors or Christians with more commitment in the faith community, to recruit them or as a way of pressuring their parents to stop their Christian activities in the area.” Men in Mexico generally face intense pressure and violence as the heads of families and leaders of churches. Threatening the male head intimidates the wider

families and communities. When armed criminal groups wish churches to cease functioning or to limit their activities, the threats are often aimed first at the religious leader of the church. In recent years there have been several examples of priests and pastors being beaten, kidnapped for ransom, and killed. Church leaders are also the most frequent victims of fines and extortion since it is believed that they must have access to church funds. Leaders are also targeted in order to prevent them from conducting positive work within the community or speaking out against illegal activity. Religious leaders and their families face harassment from the community in general, such as damage to their property, restrictions on access to schools for their children, theft of resources, threats, beatings and ridicule. In indigenous communities, local authorities know that without a leader, the local Christian community is most likely to return to the majority religion.

Church leaders also face severe travel restrictions, especially traversing territories controlled by different cartels. A country expert shared: “Priests and pastors must be extremely careful when traveling, not only with respect to the permission of the area leader, but also take into account the time and manner of travel, to avoid being a victim of episodes of violence.” Converts from an indigenous background (ancestral rites or syncretistic practices related to Catholic Church) face particular pressure; they may be beaten, harassed and ejected from the community. A country expert described a situation whereby a young man was falsely accused and jailed for running someone over. The accusation was fabricated by the communal authorities simply because he was a Christian. The level of pressure and violence increases if the convert is deemed to be a Christian leader since such leaders are presumed to be inciters of rebellion and potential propagators of the Christian faith.

Persecution of other religious minorities

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

- Jewish community representatives who evaluated online antisemitic messages, symbols, and language from October 7 to December 27 [2023] found that 22 percent of the conversations about Jewish people had antisemitic undertones, a 6 percent increase from January 1 to September 30, reportedly related to the Hamas terrorist attack against Israel on October 7 and the ensuing Israeli response. The messages included debates about antisemitism versus anti-Zionism, a comparison to the Jewish Holocaust, and the use of religious stereotypes to refer to persons of Jewish origin. From October 7 to December 27, the Jewish Central Committee of Mexico detected 38 antisemitic graffiti in Mexico City and others in the states of Guadalajara, Oaxaca, Queretaro, and Morela, as well as a significant increase in antisemitic caricatures published in the press.

According to [La Verdad Juárez, 30 May 2024](#):

- Evamaría Lozanos, a Muslim, reported that the offices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SRE) in Chihuahua denied her the possibility of taking a photo with her hijab. They told her that it was not possible because it was prohibited by the regulations. The Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation is currently reviewing the case.

Trends Summary

1) Extremely high rates of criminal violence also experienced by churches

The political-electoral context shows just how weak the state apparatus has become in combatting criminal violence and recovering control of the large territories currently controlled by criminal groups. The absence of effective, long-term state policies has allowed the spread of criminal influence in almost all areas of the country. Corruption networks have made the widespread impunity of criminal groups possible and have caused extremely high rates of violence to become part of normal life for Mexican citizens. In this context, the voice of the Church demanding justice and supporting the most vulnerable in society is seen as a threat to criminal control, leading to frequent targeting for attack. Church social programs are also often seen as criticism of the state authorities' lack of attention to combating organized crime.

2) Religious freedom in indigenous communities is not protected

In some communities, especially in the south of the country, when indigenous people adopt Christianity and give up their ancestral or syncretistic customs (which are at times linked to Catholicism) they encounter violent hostility. It is common for state authorities to defend their inaction and lack of assistance out of respect for the preservation of indigenous autonomy and cultural uniqueness. If solutions are proposed by government authorities, these tend to be so superficial that they fail to provide an effective way of guaranteeing the full exercise of the right to religious freedom of Christian minorities within indigenous communities.

3) Secularism is becoming more aggressive in Mexican society

National legislation that supports an extreme interpretation of non-discrimination and Church-State separation is having an impact on Christians across the nation, especially in the context of state elections. Acts of violence against church property have been committed as a form of intimidation and hostility towards Christians who publicly express their views on controversial matters based on Biblical principles. During 2023 and 2024, Christian leaders' voices in the public realm were silenced by the use of legal and administrative measures. It is becoming increasingly evident that extremist ideologies that encourage intolerance against religious viewpoints being stated in public are becoming increasingly influential and as a result, many Christians end up self-censoring, especially where such topics as the defense of life, marriage, parental rights and family are concerned.

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/>.
- <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Latin-America-Organized-corruption-and-crime-2018.pdf>

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: closure - <https://www.elsoldemexico.com.mx/republica/sociedad/cierran-mas-de-100-tempos-evangelicos-en-chiapas-por-ola-de-violencia-11457136.html>
- Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period: murdered - <https://www.infobae.com/mexico/2024/05/16/masacre-en-chicomuselo-confirman-que-hay-miembros-de-la-iglesia-entre-las-11-victimas/%20>
- Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period: vandalized - <https://www.aciprensa.com/noticias/103488/8m-en-mexico-iglesias-catolicas-fueron-pintadas-y-encendieron-fogatas-afuera-de-catedral-de-mexico>
- Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period: threatened and insulted - <https://www.facebook.com/EIOfDeAguascalientes/posts/pfbid021K7uWKgaTgciTbKmMEk5QAIxqFcJWp5ti3sXf4nocRoYwYWwJ6a2qitfqz53d4AI>
- Specific examples of positive developments: dialogues - <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/04/03/mexico-catholic-church-cartels-security/>
- Specific examples of positive developments: signed - <https://www.latimes.com/espanol/mexico/articulo/2024-03-11/ante-violencia-en-mexico-candidatos-presidenciales-se-comprometen-por-la-paz-con-lideres-religiosos>
- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: narco-states - <https://www.npr.org/2024/09/05/nx-s1-5082314/these-days-very-few-parts-of-mexico-are-immune-from-narco-related-violence>
- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: 175 criminal groups - <https://www.infobae.com/mexico/2024/04/23/narcomapa-2024-que-carteles-tienen-mayor-presencia-en-mexico/>
- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: U.S. Congressional Research Service - <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/R41576.pdf>
- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: punished - <https://www.evangelicodigital.com/latinoamerica/24061/mexico-mas-de-30000-chiapanechos-han-sido-expulsados-por-intolerancia-religiosa>
- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: Oaxaca - <https://www.jornada.com.mx/notas/2022/01/04/estados/por-diferencias-religiosas-retienen-en-san-pedro-chimaltepec-oaxaca-a-3-personas/>
- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: Chiapas - <https://www.elheraldodechiapas.com.mx/local/municipios/evangelicos-desplazados-exigen-que-sean-reubicados-en-san-cristobal-7871040.html>
- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: Hidalgo - <https://diariovialibre.com.mx/intolerancia-religiosa-en-la-huasteca-corren-a-evangelistas>
- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: attack - <https://forbinfull.org/2023/04/17/after-a-brutal-attack-on-one-of-their-own-a-religious-minority-community-in-mexico-is-waiting-for-justice-and-religious-freedom/>
- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: lack of interest - <https://forbinfull.org/2024/05/02/139-protestant-christians-are-now-living-in-auditorium-because-the-mexican-government-has-not-done-its-job/>
- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: false interpretation - <https://www.cronica.com.mx/opinion/perdimos.html>

- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: IRFR 2022 Mexico - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-report-on-international-religious-freedom/mexico/>
- Areas where Christians face most difficulties: approved - <https://ojs.uc.cl/index.php/bjur/article/view/55637/44987>
- Persecution engines description: CPI 2023 - <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023/index/mex>
- Persecution engines description: most violent - <https://forbes.com.mx/sexenio-de-amlo-acumulo-records-de-violencia-coparmex/>
- Persecution engines description: political violence - <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/political-violence-mexicos-2024-elections-organized-crime-involvement>
- Persecution engines description: narco-state - <https://www.foxbusiness.com/video/6365219423112>
- Persecution engines description: various other states - <https://insightcrime.org/mexico-organized-crime-news/mexico/>
- Persecution engines description: diversified - <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2024/07/05/mexican-cartels-diversify-fuel-tortillas-piso/74286304007/>
- Persecution engines description: capitalized - <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IN/IN11535>
- Persecution engines description: spiral - <https://www.crisisgroup.org/latin-america-caribbean/mexico/106-generals-labyrinth-crime-and-military-mexico>
- Persecution engines description: self-defense groups - <https://legrandcontinent.eu/es/2023/04/17/organizar-la-violencia-el-poder-de-los-grupos-de-autodefensa-en-mexico/>
- Persecution engines description: acting - <https://www.msn.com/es-mx/noticias/mundo/sin-temor-a-dios-lanzan-s-o-s-para-frenar-violencia-contra-sacerdotes/ar-AA12M1Bb>
- Block 5.11: Pastors or other Christian leaders (or their family members) have been special targets of harassment for faith-related reasons. (3.50 points): n cut off a Catholic priest's fingers - <https://www.cal-catholic.com/mexico-most-dangerous-country-in-world-for-priests/>
- Block 5.11: Pastors or other Christian leaders (or their family members) have been special targets of harassment for faith-related reasons. (3.50 points): IRFR 2023 Mexico - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-report-on-international-religious-freedom/mexico/>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: highest rates - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-trafficking-in-persons-report/mexico/>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: El Pais, 25 November 2023 - <https://english.elpais.com/international/2023-11-25/more-than-3000-women-are-murdered-in-mexico-each-year-how-violence-affects-the-youngest-victims.html>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: CNB, last accessed 14 December 2024 - <https://versionpublicarmpdno.segob.gob.mx/Dashboard/Index>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Male description: Vision for Humanity - <https://www.visionofhumanity.org/maps/mexico-peace-index/#/>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Male description: CFR, 7 September 2022 - <https://www.cfr.org/background/mexicos-long-war-drugs-crime-and-cartels>
- Persecution of other religious minorities: IRFR 2023 Mexico - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-report-on-international-religious-freedom/mexico/>
- Persecution of other religious minorities: La Verdad Juárez, 30 May 2024 - <https://laverdadjuarez.com/2024/05/30/le-niegan-uso-de-velo-en-pasaporte-mexicano-la-suprema-corte-ya-analiza-el-caso/>