

World
Watch
Research

Democratic Republic of the Congo: Full Country Dossier

January 2022



OpenDoors

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

Open Doors International / World Watch Research

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Woman in DRC (c) Alamy

Introduction

World Watch List 2022

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021	Total Score WWL 2020	Total Score WWL 2019	Total Score WWL 2018
1	Afghanistan	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	15.0	98	94	93	94	93
2	North Korea	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	13.1	96	94	94	94	94
3	Somalia	16.5	16.7	16.6	16.6	16.6	8.5	91	92	92	91	91
4	Libya	15.6	15.5	15.9	16.2	16.3	11.5	91	92	90	87	86
5	Yemen	16.7	16.6	16.5	16.7	16.7	5.2	88	87	85	86	85
6	Eritrea	14.6	14.9	15.5	15.9	15.6	11.1	88	88	87	86	86
7	Nigeria	13.8	13.8	14.3	14.5	14.4	16.7	87	85	80	80	77
8	Pakistan	13.6	14.0	15.1	14.9	13.1	16.7	87	88	88	87	86
9	Iran	14.5	14.6	13.6	15.8	16.5	10.4	85	86	85	85	85
10	India	12.7	12.7	12.9	14.7	13.3	15.6	82	83	83	83	81
11	Saudi Arabia	15.1	15.1	15.0	15.9	16.7	3.1	81	78	79	77	79
12	Myanmar	12.4	11.5	13.8	13.4	13.1	14.8	79	74	73	71	65
13	Sudan	13.4	13.4	14.3	13.6	15.7	8.5	79	79	85	87	87
14	Iraq	14.0	14.6	14.0	14.8	13.9	6.9	78	82	76	79	86
15	Syria	12.9	13.8	13.5	14.3	13.9	9.3	78	81	82	82	76
16	Maldives	15.4	15.3	13.7	15.8	16.5	0.4	77	77	78	78	78
17	China	12.6	9.8	12.2	14.4	15.5	11.1	76	74	70	65	57
18	Qatar	14.2	14.1	11.1	13.0	14.3	7.2	74	67	66	62	63
19	Vietnam	11.3	9.7	12.7	14.1	14.5	8.7	71	72	72	70	69
20	Egypt	12.7	13.2	11.5	12.7	10.8	10.0	71	75	76	76	70
21	Uzbekistan	14.9	12.7	14.1	11.8	15.6	1.7	71	71	73	74	73
22	Algeria	14.0	14.0	11.1	13.4	14.1	4.1	71	70	73	70	58
23	Mauritania	14.3	13.9	13.1	14.0	14.1	0.9	70	71	68	67	57
24	Mali	9.4	8.2	13.9	10.3	12.8	15.0	70	67	66	68	59
25	Turkmenistan	14.5	11.3	13.6	13.3	15.7	0.6	69	70	70	69	68
26	Laos	12.0	10.3	13.2	13.3	14.1	5.9	69	71	72	71	67
27	Morocco	13.1	13.8	10.8	12.8	14.2	3.9	69	67	66	63	51
28	Indonesia	11.3	11.5	11.5	11.0	9.6	13.5	68	63	60	65	59
29	Bangladesh	11.8	10.7	12.9	11.3	10.2	11.3	68	67	63	58	58
30	Colombia	11.5	8.8	13.1	11.0	9.9	13.3	68	67	62	58	56
31	CAR	9.0	8.6	13.6	9.6	11.4	15.6	68	66	68	70	61
32	Burkina Faso	9.4	9.7	12.0	9.6	12.1	14.8	68	67	66	48	-
33	Niger	9.4	9.5	13.9	7.2	12.8	14.8	68	62	60	52	45
34	Bhutan	13.4	12.4	11.7	13.7	13.8	1.7	67	64	61	64	62
35	Tunisia	11.9	12.7	10.6	11.3	13.4	6.5	66	67	64	63	62
36	Oman	13.8	14.0	10.3	13.2	13.4	1.5	66	63	62	59	57
37	Cuba	12.3	8.1	12.6	13.2	14.0	5.9	66	62	52	49	49
38	Ethiopia	9.9	10.3	13.1	10.3	12.3	9.8	66	65	63	65	62
39	Jordan	12.9	14.0	11.0	12.3	12.5	3.0	66	64	64	65	66
40	DRC	8.0	7.9	12.6	9.7	12.0	15.6	66	64	56	55	33
41	Mozambique	9.3	8.5	11.3	7.9	12.5	15.6	65	63	43	43	-
42	Turkey	12.6	11.5	11.4	13.2	11.6	4.6	65	69	63	66	62
43	Mexico	10.3	8.3	12.5	10.8	10.3	12.6	65	64	60	61	59
44	Cameroon	8.8	7.6	12.6	7.2	13.1	15.4	65	64	60	54	38
45	Tajikistan	13.8	12.3	12.0	12.6	13.2	0.7	65	66	65	65	65
46	Brunei	14.8	14.5	10.3	11.0	13.2	0.6	64	64	63	63	64
47	Kazakhstan	13.4	11.6	11.1	12.6	13.5	1.7	64	64	64	63	63
48	Nepal	12.4	9.8	9.9	13.6	12.7	5.2	64	66	64	64	64
49	Kuwait	13.5	13.7	9.8	12.3	13.1	1.1	64	63	62	60	61
50	Malaysia	12.5	14.3	11.5	11.6	10.2	3.3	63	63	62	60	65

Rank	Country	Private life	Family life	Community life	National life	Church life	Violence	Total Score WWL 2022	Total Score WWL 2021	Total Score WWL 2020	Total Score WWL 2019	Total Score WWL 2018
51	Kenya	11.7	9.2	11.4	8.0	11.5	11.1	63	62	61	61	62
52	Sri Lanka	12.9	9.9	11.4	11.3	9.4	7.8	63	62	65	58	57
53	Comoros	12.7	11.1	11.2	12.4	14.2	0.9	63	62	57	56	56
54	UAE	13.4	13.6	10.1	11.8	12.2	1.3	62	62	60	58	58
55	Tanzania	9.3	10.8	10.3	8.6	8.7	13.7	61	58	55	52	53
56	Azerbaijan	13.1	9.9	9.3	11.0	13.4	3.3	60	56	57	57	57
57	Palestinian Territories	13.0	13.4	9.8	10.2	12.0	0.9	59	58	60	57	60
58	Djibouti	12.3	12.3	11.1	10.0	12.2	0.7	59	56	56	56	56
59	Kyrgyzstan	12.9	10.1	11.1	10.4	12.0	1.5	58	58	57	56	54
60	Bahrain	12.5	13.2	9.1	11.1	10.2	0.9	57	56	55	55	57
61	Nicaragua	9.1	5.6	11.1	11.8	11.3	7.6	56	51	41	41	-
62	Russian Federation	12.3	8.0	10.2	10.6	12.3	2.2	56	57	60	60	51
63	Chad	11.5	8.2	10.2	9.6	10.3	5.6	55	53	56	48	40
64	Burundi	7.6	7.8	9.7	9.2	9.6	8.1	52	48	48	43	-
65	Venezuela	5.6	4.5	11.2	9.4	11.1	9.6	51	39	42	41	34
66	Angola	6.8	6.7	8.1	10.1	11.4	7.8	51	46	43	42	-
67	Rwanda	8.1	5.5	6.7	10.3	10.1	9.3	50	42	42	41	-
68	Honduras	7.2	5.1	10.5	7.7	9.2	8.7	48	46	39	38	-
69	Uganda	8.1	4.6	7.4	6.7	9.1	11.7	48	47	48	47	46
70	El Salvador	7.7	4.6	10.7	5.7	9.1	7.2	45	42	38	30	-
71	Togo	9.2	6.7	9.3	7.1	9.8	2.4	44	43	41	42	-
72	Gambia	8.3	8.2	8.7	8.3	8.8	1.7	44	43	43	43	-
73	Guinea	10.3	7.5	8.3	7.0	8.1	2.0	43	47	45	46	-
74	South Sudan	5.7	0.9	7.0	6.3	7.8	15.0	43	43	44	44	-
75	Ivory Coast	9.8	8.6	8.2	5.5	7.9	2.0	42	42	42	43	-
76	Israel	9.8	8.4	5.6	6.6	6.6	4.3	41	40	38	39	40

Copyright note

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Sources and definitions

- This country report is a collation of data and analysis based around Open Doors World Watch List (WWL) and includes statistical information on world religions, Christian denominations and people groups prepared by the World Christian Database (WCD).
- Highlighted links in the text can be found written out in full at the conclusion of each main section under the heading “External links”. In order to reduce the length of these reference sections, a table containing links to regularly used sources can be found at the beginning of the “Keys to Understanding” chapter under the heading “Links for general background information”. Where one of these sources has been quoted in the dossier text, a quote reference is supplied as indicated in the second column of the table.
- The WWL 2022 reporting period was 01 October 2020 - 30 September 2021.
- 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 including appendices can be found on the [World Watch List Documentation](#) page of the Open Doors Analytical website (password: freedom).

Effect on data-gathering during COVID-19 pandemic

In the WWL 2022 reporting period, travel restrictions and other measures introduced by the governments of various countries to combat the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic did cause delays and create the need for restructuring grass-roots research in some cases. Through the agile cooperation of In-country networks, Open Doors country researchers, External experts, WWR analysts and an increased use of technological options, Open Doors is confident that – as in the previous reporting period – WWL 2022 scoring, analysis and documentation has maintained required levels of quality and reliability.

External Links - Introduction

- Sources and definitions: World Watch List Documentation - <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/world-watch-list-documentation/>

WWL 2022 Situation in brief / DRC

Brief country details

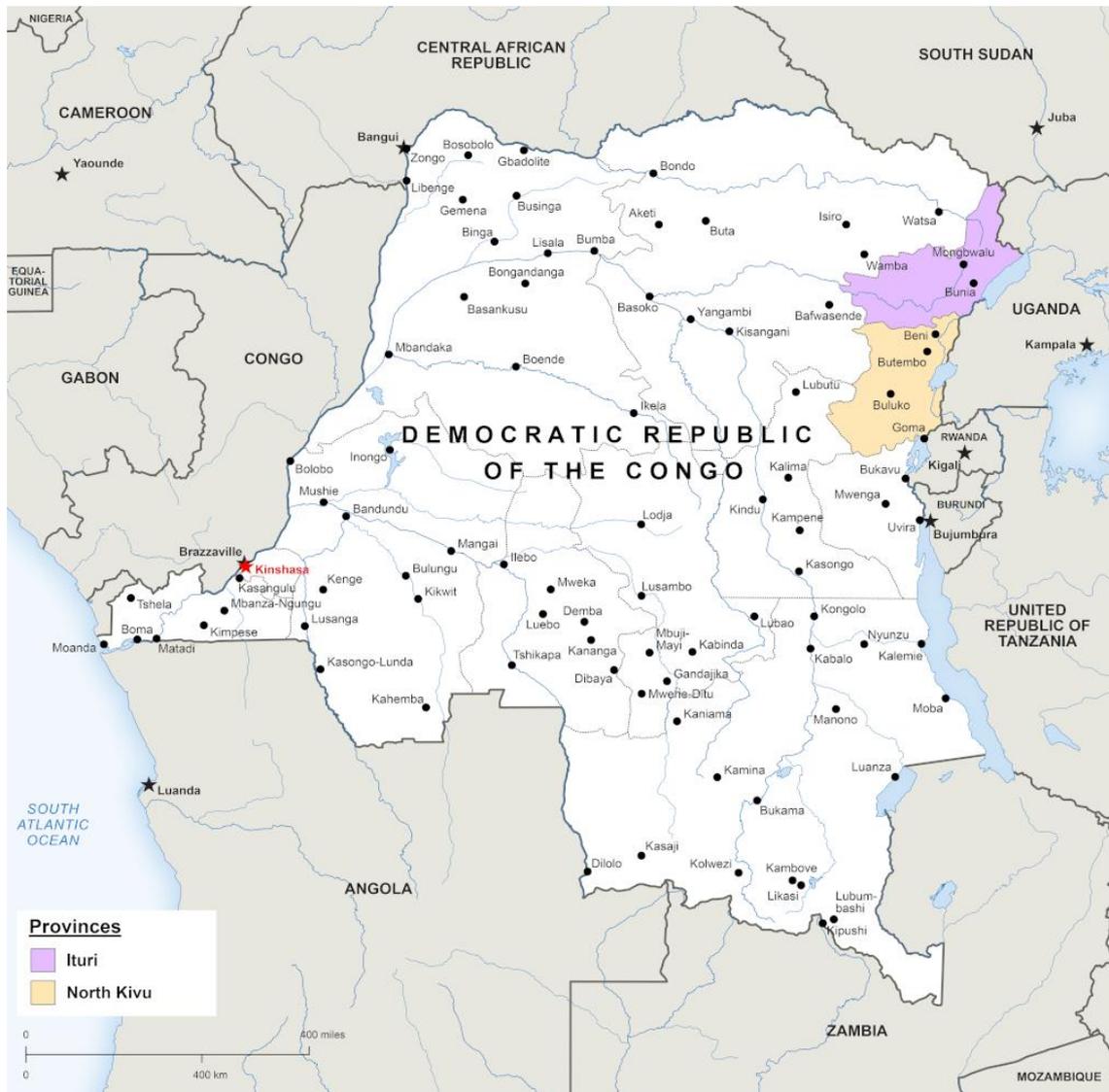
Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC): Population (UN estimate for 2021)	Christians	Chr%
92,336,000	87,845,000	95.1

Data source: Johnson T M and Zurlo G A, eds, World Christian Database (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed April 2021)

DRC: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2022	66	40
WWL 2021	64	40
WWL 2020	56	57
WWL 2019	55	54
WWL 2018	33	-

Ranks are shown above whenever the country scored 41 points or more in the WWL 2018-2022 reporting periods

Map of country



Brief description of the persecution situation

The Islamist group “Alliance for Democratic Forces” (ADF-NALU) is responsible for the persecution of Christians in North Kivu, in the eastern part of the country, attacking Christians and churches. In the family sphere, converts both from Islam and from indigenous religions face pressure to take part in non-Christian religious activities and ceremonies. Representatives of the Catholic Church, who publicly urged the government to abide by the constitutionally mandated electoral deadlines, reported that they had experienced verbal harassment and interference based on their advocacy.

Summary of international obligations and rights violations

DRC 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)

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

- Christian converts are ostracized and threatened with divorce and loss of inheritance (ICCPR Art. 18)
- Christian female converts run the risk of being abducted and forcibly married to Muslim men (ICCPR Art. 23; CEDAW Art. 16 and ICESCR Art. 10)
- Perpetrators of violence against Christians are sometimes left unpunished (ICCPR Art. 2)
- Christian children can be forced to learn Islamic scriptures (ICCPR Art. 18 and CRC Art. 14)

Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period

- **20 November - 3 December 2020:** ADF militants killed at least 30 Christians, mostly Anglicans, in five villages in North Kivu Province. Fourteen Christians were admitted to hospital in a critical condition with injuries including severe wounds to the head, legs, arms and hands. At least 15 people were abducted from two of the churches ([VirtueOnline, 3 December 2020](#)).
- **4 January 2021:** An estimated 22 civilians were killed in an overnight raid on the village of Mwenda, in the Beni region of North Kivu Province. Just days before, on 31 December 2020, ADF militants killed another 25 people in the village of Tingwe, in the same region ([DW, 6 January 2021](#)).
- **14 February 2021:** Suspected Islamists killed three soldiers and 13 civilians and burned down a Catholic church in a Sunday raid on Ndalya village, Ituri Province ([Reuters, 15 February 2021](#)).

Specific examples of positive developments

The designation of the ADF as a foreign terrorist organization by the US State Department will at least make the issue of Christians suffering in the region more global in terms of media coverage.

External Links - Situation in brief

- 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: VirtueOnline, 3 December 2020 - <https://virtueonline.org/anglicans-raped-and-killed-democratic-republic-congo>
- Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period: DW, 6 January 2021 - <https://www.dw.com/en/dr-congo-at-least-20-killed-in-raid-on-village/a-56138421>
- Specific examples of violations of rights in the reporting period: Reuters, 15 February 2021 - <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-congo-security-idUSKBN2AF0R9>

WWL 2022: Keys to understanding / Democratic Republic of the Congo

Links for general background information

Name	Quote Reference	Link	Last accessed on
Amnesty International country report	AI 2021	https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/africa/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/	5 August 2021
BBC News country profile	BBC country profile	https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13283212	5 August 2021
Bertelsmann Transformation Index 2020	BTI 2020	https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-dashboard-COD.html	5 August 2021
CIA World Factbook	CIA Factbook	https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/congo-democratic-republic-of-the/	5 August 2021
Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index 2020	EIU 2020	https://pages.eiu.com/rs/753-RIQ-438/images/democracy-index-2020.pdf	5 August 2021
FFP's Fragile States Index 2021	FSI 2021	https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/	5 August 2021
Freedom House's 2021 Democracy index (DRC is not included)	Freedom House/Democracy 2021	https://freedomhouse.org/countries/nations-transit/scores	
Freedom House's 2021 Global Freedom index	Freedom House/Global Freedom 2021	https://freedomhouse.org/country/democratic-republic-congo/freedom-world/2021	5 August 2021
Freedom House's Freedom on the Net 2020 report (DRC is not included)	Freedom House/Internet Freedom 2020	https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-net/scores	5 August 2021
Garda World country report	Garda World	https://www.garda.com/crisis24/country-reports/dr-congo	5 August 2021
Human Rights Watch World Report 2021	HRW 2021	https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/democratic-republic-congo	5 August 2021
Internet World Stats 2021	IWS 2021	https://www.internetworldstats.com/africa.htm#cd	5 August 2021
RSF's 2020 World Press Freedom Index	World Press Freedom 2020	https://rsf.org/en/democratic-republic-congo	5 August 2021
Transparency International's 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index	CPI 2020	https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/cod	5 August 2021
UNDP's Global Human Development Indicators	HDI	http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD	5 August 2021
US State Department's 2020 International Religious Freedom country reports	IRFR 2020	https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-report-on-international-religious-freedom/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/	5 August 2021
USCIRF 2021 country reports (DRC is not included)	USCIRF 2021	https://www.uscifr.gov/countries	
World Bank country report	World Bank	https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/drc	5 August 2021

Recent history

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was a Belgian colony, which, along with other African countries, declared independence in 1960. However, civil war followed and the secession of some provinces which led to a fragmentation of the country. The country was caught up in a [proxy war](#) between the West (headed by the USA) and the Soviet Union (Source: US State Department, Office of Historian, accessed 9 September 2020). The election of Joseph Kasavubu as president and Patrice Lumumba as prime minister did not bring peace and the latter was arrested and [killed](#) on 17 January 1961 (The Guardian, 17 January 2011).

On 24 November 1965, Mobutu seized power with the help of the CIA and created an environment where only one party could flourish, namely the Popular Revolutionary Movement. The Constitution gave him unlimited power, he accumulated great wealth and supported guerrilla fighters in neighboring countries such as Angola. The rule of Mobutu was not unchallenged. Riots, protests and guerrilla fighters supported by Angola put pressure on Mobutu.

In 1994, the World Bank declared the country bankrupt. The 1994 atrocities in Rwanda had a spillover effect. Finally, with mainly Tutsi soldiers trained by Rwanda and Uganda, Laurent Kabila overthrew Mobutu in 1997. Kabila was assassinated by his own bodyguard and was replaced by his son, Joseph Kabila, who was in power until January 2019.

The wars in DRC returned to the spotlight in 2003 when the president of the country requested the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate the [crimes](#) committed by various rebel groups (ICC Press Release, 19 April 2004). After an extensive investigation the Court indicted Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, Germain Katanga, Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui, Bosco Ntaganda, Callixte Mbarushimana, and Sylvestre Mudacumura.

The situation in DRC has been exacerbated by the continual interference of neighboring countries. According to a report by [The Guardian](#) on 18 October 2012, the United Nations officially stated that the Rwandan defense minister was the de facto leader of rebels in DRC. Later UN reports (in 2014) also implicated Uganda and Burundi.

After years of speculation, President Kabila decided to [step down](#) and not run for a third term in the presidential elections held in December 2018 (France 24, 8 August 2018). [Newly elected President](#) Felix Tshisekedi was sworn in as successor to Joseph Kabila in January 2019 in the country's first transfer of power via democratic election in 59 years of independence. The country's electoral commission declared him winner despite credible evidence of election fraud (The Guardian, 24 January 2019).

In WWL 2022, the global community has closely observed the ideology and activities of the ADF and consequently the US State Department designated the ADF as a foreign terrorist organization.

Political and legal landscape

DRC is a unitary multiparty republic with two legislative houses - the Senate with 108 members and the National Assembly with 500 members. The president is the head of state and the prime minister is head of the government. With 26 justices, the Supreme Court is the highest judicial organ in the country, while the country also has a Constitutional Court with nine judges.

Although President Kabila's term in office ended in 2016, the country failed to hold elections, which caused great tension. Presidential elections did not take place until December 2018 (without President Kabila running for a third term). Under Kabila, political corruption, weak rule of law and violence remained prevalent. According to Reporters Without Borders [2017 Freedom of the Press Index](#), threats, physical attacks, abductions, arrests, and cases of prolonged detention targeting journalists were almost never investigated. Under Kabila's presidency, at least 11 journalists were murdered without consequence for the perpetrators.

In its [2019 Human Rights Report](#), the US State Department summarized the abysmal human rights condition in the country as follows:

- “Unlawful or arbitrary killings, including extrajudicial killings by the government; forced disappearances by the government; torture by government; arbitrary detention by the government; harsh and life-threatening prison conditions; political prisoners; arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy; serious problems with the independence of the judiciary; the worst forms of restrictions on free expression, the press, and the internet, including violence, threats of violence, or unjustified arrests of journalists, censorship, internet blackouts, and criminal libel; interference with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of association; some restrictions on citizens’ right to change their government through democratic means; serious acts of corruption by the government; trafficking in persons; violence against women and children due in substantial part to government negligence.”

According to the Human Rights Watch [2019 World Report](#):

- On 24 January 2019 Felix Tshisekedi was sworn in as president following a long-delayed and disputed national election, marred by widespread irregularities, voter suppression, violence, and interference from armed groups. More than a million Congolese were unable to vote because voting in three areas was postponed to March 2019, due to security concerns and an outbreak of Ebola in the eastern region. The president promised Guarantee to each citizen the respect of their fundamental rights and end all forms of discrimination, promising that his government will prioritize an effective and determined fight against corruption, impunity, bad governance, and tribalism. Hence, he released most political prisoners and activists detained during the country’s protracted political crisis, and those living in exile were allowed to return home.

However, the election of the new president has not reduced tensions. According to International Crisis Group’s (ICG) [January 2020 Global Overview](#):

- "Fighting escalated in Ituri province in northeast between security forces and armed groups, militia attacks on civilians surged in Beni territory, North Kivu late January, and tensions persisted between President Tshisekedi and allies of former President Kabila. In Ituri, clashes between security forces and armed group Cooperative for Development of Congo (CODECO) in Djugu and Mahagi territories 1-22 January left at least 43 dead."

According to the Human Rights Watch (HRW 2021):

- "Dozens of people who criticized government policies, including on social media, were intimidated and threatened, beaten, arrested, and in some cases prosecuted. Particularly targeted by authorities across the country, journalists faced threats and harassment, and some broadcast programs or outlets were shut down upon instructions from officials. ... Human rights defenders faced threats, intimidation, arbitrary arrest, and detention from both state authorities and armed groups."

The legal landscape of the DRC is restrictive towards women and girls in several regards; in particular, many harmful practices relating to marriage remain pervasive. These include child marriage, polygamy and levirate marriages ([OECD, 2019](#)). As highlighted in an [ACHPR report \(2015\)](#), men are often pressured into practicing polygamy to demonstrate their power. Child marriage is high - in spite of the legal age of marriage being set at 18 (Law 2016-008, Art. 352, 2016) - with 37% of girls and 6% of boys marrying by the age of 18 ([Girls Not Brides, 2020](#)). Whilst sexual violence and rape are outlawed, there is insufficient legislation addressing domestic violence ([OECD, 2019](#)). Men and women have equal rights in relation to divorce and child guardianship, although in the event of a divorce, a woman must repay the dowry she received at the point of marriage (Family Code, 1987).

Religious landscape

Democratic Republic of the Congo: Religious context	Number of adherents	%
Christians	87,845,000	95.1
Muslim	1,339,000	1.5
Hindu	130,000	0.1
Buddhist	4,900	0.0
Ethno-religionist	2,240,000	2.4
Jewish	400	0.0
Bahai	376,000	0.4
Atheist	18,400	0.0
Agnostic	376,000	0.4
Other	7,500	0.0
<i>OTHER includes Chinese folk, New religionist, Sikh, Spiritist, Taoist, Confucianist, Jain, Shintoist, Zoroastrian.</i>		

Data source: Johnson T M and Zurlo G A, eds, *World Christian Database* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed April 2021)

A significant number of people mix Christianity with a traditional belief system. Some Evangelical groups reject that practice which can cause tension. Geographically, there are no specific areas where religious affiliation is concentrated.

Economic landscape

According to World Bank:

- **Economic growth:** DRC's economic growth decelerated from its pre-COVID level of 4.4% in 2019, to an estimated 0.8% in 2020. Growth was driven by the extractives sector which, helped by robust demand from China, expanded by 6.9% in 2020 (compared to 1% in 2019). Meanwhile, non-mining sectors contracted by 1.6% (vs. growth of 5.7% in 2019) due to pandemic-related mobility restrictions, weaker trading activities and constrained govern-

ment spending.

- **Fiscal deficit:** In an effort to respond to the pandemic, the government faced substantial spending pressure while revenue declined due to reduced economic activity and extended fiscal relief measures. As a result, the fiscal deficit worsened to 1.9% of GDP in 2020.
- **Current account deficit:** The current account deficit widened to 4.0% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2020 and was only partly financed by capital inflows which led to a decline in international reserves.
- **Inflation:** 4.6% in 2019, down from 7.2% in 2018.

DRC is one of the richest countries in Africa in terms of minerals and natural resources. It has vast deposits of industrial diamonds, cobalt and copper. The country also has one of the largest forest reserves in Africa. In the Congo River - the biggest river in Africa - it has half of the hydroelectric potential of the continent. The country has been struggling with inflation and decelerating economic growth. This was mainly due to declining prices and shrinking global demand for raw materials such as copper and cobalt which account for 80% of DRC's export revenue. The national currency is expected to continue its decline against the dollar as the rate of inflation increases.

According to World Bank's [2020 Macro Poverty Outlook](#) (for Sub-Saharan Africa):

- **Economic output:** "Economic growth decelerated to 0.8 percent in 2020 from 4.4 percent in 2019 as non-mining sectors contracted by 1.6 percent (2019: 5.7 percent growth) due to mobility restrictions, weaker trading activities and constrained government spending. Economic growth is projected to slightly recover to 2.5 percent in 2021 before accelerating to 4.1 percent in 2023, closer to its pre-COVID level. The non-extractive sector should resume growth in 2021 as pandemic-related disruptions progressively fade and production normalizes. The mining sector is expected to expand further in 2021 and pick up pace in 2022."
- **Poverty:** According to the latest survey conducted in 2012, nearly 77% of the population lived with less than \$1.9 per day. The latest projections put poverty at around 72% of the total population in 2019. The country remains the country with the largest number of extreme poor in Sub-Saharan Africa. "Extreme poverty rate is projected to increase by 1.0 percentage point by 2022, the high population growth being expected to offset partially economic growth, which would be also adversely affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic."

Heritage Foundation's [2021 Index of Economic Freedom](#) score and rank: 49.0 points, rank 165.

Within the DRC, women and girls are predominately economically dependent on their families. Despite having equal inheritance rights under law, customary and traditional practices continue to deny women their due inheritance ([OECD, 2019](#)). The DRC performs poorly on Georgetown's Women, Peace and Security Index, which is heavily due to poor rates of financial inclusion for women, although this has improved in recent years ([Georgetown, 2021/22](#)). Representing a positive trend however, it was in the top ten countries where financial inclusion had risen the most during the reporting period. According to the UNDP's HDI 2020, the female labor force participation is 60.7% (compared to 66.3% for men). Despite this relatively

high participation rate for women, it is usual that men are the head of the household and in charge of financial decisions ([OECD, 2019](#)).

Social and cultural landscape

DRC is the biggest country in the Great Lakes region. It was part of the old Kongo Kingdom and has more than 200 ethnic groups. It shares borders with Congo Brazzaville, Angola, Zambia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Burundi, Uganda, South Sudan, and the Central African Republic (CAR). DRC is the fourth most populous country in Africa.

According to the UNDP's HDI 2020 and CIA Factbook:

- **Main ethnic groups:** Mongo, Luba, Kongo (all Bantu), and the Mangbetu-Azande (Hamitic) which make up about 45% of the total population
- **Main languages:** French (official), Lingala (a lingua franca trade language), Kingwana (a dialect of Kiswahili or Swahili), Kikongo, Tshiluba
- **Urban population:** 45% of the total population
- **Rate of urbanization:** 4.33% (2020-2025 est.)
- **Population growth rate:** 3.16 % (2021 est.)
- **Median age:** 17.0 years
- **Expected years of schooling:** 9.7 years
- **Literacy rate, adult (15 years and older):** 77.0%
- **Employment population ratio (15 years and older):** 60.8%
- **Unemployment, total (% of labor force):** 4.2%
- **Unemployment, youth (ages 15-24):** 8.0%

According to the [UNHCR 2020 March 2020 update](#):

- **Refugees/IDPs:** Waves of unrest displaced an estimated 5 million people between 2017 and 2019 namely in the Kasai, Tanganyika, Ituri and Kivu regions. Hundreds of thousands have fled to Angola, Zambia, and other neighboring countries. Over 918,000 DRC refugees and asylum-seekers were being hosted in African countries (as of 20 February 2020). There were 5.01 million IDPs in DRC between October 2017 and September 2019. There were almost 524,000 refugees and 3,188 asylum-seekers in the DRC as of 31 January 2020.

According to World Bank's [2020 Macro Poverty Outlook](#) (for Sub-Saharan Africa):

- **Social and human indicators:** Despite some improvements, social and human indicators are weak: in 2018, the infant mortality of 68.2 per 1000 live births is higher than the sub-Saharan average of 52.7, while the country is ranked 146th out of 157 countries in the Human Capital Index (HCI) with a score of 0.37%. About 43% of households have access to drinking water (69% in urban areas, 23% in rural areas) and only 20% have access to sanitation. DRC's fertility rate (6.1 children per woman) is higher than the Sub-Saharan average which is 4.8.

According to the UNDP's HDI 2020:

- **Human Development Index:** With a score of 0.480, DRC ranks 175th out of 189 countries
- **Life expectancy at birth:** 60.7 years
- **Gender Development index (GDI):** 0.845
- **Gender Inequality index (GII):** 0.617

As highlighted in a [2019 OECD report](#), daughters are often viewed as temporary members of the family unit, as they can be wedded off. This notion also continues into marriage; it is common for a deceased husband's family to take all of his wealth and property, leaving her and her children destitute. This exemplifies the underlying social and cultural norms in the DRC that discriminate against women. In light of these norms, female converts can be married off to an older Muslim with relative ease. Within such marriages, women and girls are commonly exposed to domestic violence and sexual violence; it is generally accepted by both men and women that a woman's failings in marriage (e.g. burning a meal or refusing sex) is a legitimate reason for domestic violence ([UK Home Office, 2018](#)). Within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, domestic violence has reportedly worsened ([GNWP, 22 February 2021](#)).

Technological landscape

According to Internet World Stats (IWS 2021) and World Bank:

- **Internet usage:** 17.7% of the population – survey date: June 2021
- **Facebook usage:** 4.9% of the population – survey date: June 2021
- **Mobile subscriptions (per 100 people):** 43.4

Statistics on internet usage and mobile phone ownership by gender are lacking. An indication of the existence of a gender gap in relation to technology access is provided by a [2019 study by Napoleon Cat](#) which revealed that 65.2% of Facebook users were men, compared to 34.8% of women.

Although DRC is one of the wealthiest countries in Africa in terms of natural resources, internal conflicts (since independence) have made progress illusive. Corporations and neighboring countries have been fueling the conflict (mineral-related) and, at one point, Uganda and Rwanda sent in troops. As a result, the country has failed to live up to its potential: Infrastructure is poor, educational facilities are not well-equipped; hospitals and clinics lack professional staff and medical equipment.

Security situation

The crisis in DRC started more than 50 years ago and has continued in the WWL 2022 reporting period. The conflict in the eastern part of the country continues to derail the peace process. Foreign countries like Rwanda have also been interfering in the country and making the situation worse. Much of the violence in North Kivu, Kisangani and in Kasai has an ethnic dimension. DRC has great ethnic diversity, some estimating the total number of ethnic groups as being as high as 450. However, the most serious threat of all is that the eastern part of the country has become a safe haven for the Islamist group "Allied Democratic Forces" (ADF-NALU), which is seeking to create an Islamic state in Uganda and has been targeting churches and Christians in

north-eastern DRC for several years, ever since their attempt to overthrow the Ugandan government failed.

Human Rights Watch (HRW 2021) also underscored the enormous challenge that the country faces: “More than 130 armed groups were active in eastern Congo’s North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri provinces, attacking civilians. The groups included the mainly ethnic Lendu association of militia Cooperative for the Development of Congo (CODECO); the largely Ugandan Allied Democratic Forces (ADF); the Nduma Defense of Congo-Renové (NDC-R); the largely Rwandan Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and allied Congolese Nyatura groups; the Mazembe and Yakutumba Mai Mai groups; and several Burundian armed groups. Many of their commanders have been implicated in war crimes, including ethnic massacres, rape, forced recruitment of children, and pillage.”

According to [Kivu Security Tracker](#) reports: “Conflict and insecurity continued to plague populations in the eastern Congo in 2020. Amidst a global pandemic draining humanitarian funding – only 34% of requested annual aid had reached the Congo in 2020 – conflict continues to simmer, with a record high of 5.5 million displaced across the country. Recent Kivu Security Tracker data also indicates a steep rise in killings, violent deaths and other forms of violence since the end of 2019, compared to previous years.”

Within this context of fragility and insecurity, women and girls remain especially vulnerable to incidences of sexual and gender-based violence at the hands of armed groups ([UNHR, 2020](#); [Georgetown, 2019/20](#)). As recognized in a [2020 Institute for Development Studies report](#), the justice system is fragile. Women who report sexual violence encounter major obstacles in attaining justice and high levels of impunity: “[T]his reinforces the pre-existing norms and patterns of discrimination against women, both inside and outside of the conflict.”

In light of these threats, efforts have been made to engage more women in the peace-building process, in recognition of the positive role that they could play ([OCHA, May 2019](#); [DRC, 2021](#)). Men and boys are vulnerable to forced recruitment into militias, as well as abductions and killings. Pastors in particular are targeted by jihadists.

Trends analysis

1) The government that replaced Kabila has brought little change

In the past, the Kabila government denied citizens' basic rights of freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of association and other fundamental human rights. The change of president and new government (since December 2018) has not brought significant changes - there is still a lack of rule of law and lack of security and corruption is still rampant. The overall situation in DRC remains very precarious.

2) The fact that the country is very rich in minerals is negatively impacting the country's stability

Rebel groups are financing their war campaigns by selling minerals vital for international electronic companies on the black market.

3) The fragility of the security situation could seriously affect Christians

The fragility of the security and political situation could expose Christians to increasing levels of violent persecution and provide the ADF-NALU with an opportunity to expand. The fighting between different armed groups is likely to continue and increase.

4) ADF growing in influence and impact on Christians

ADF has been growing while the international community has been paying attention to other groups. The Islamic militant group, which has been designated a terrorist group by the [US State Department](#) (Media note, 10 March 2021) has been involved in many atrocities which have been documented by human rights groups. For instance: In March 2021, [ADF killed](#) more than 20 people (Al-Jazeera, 31 March 2021). This problem will likely continue and Christians in the region will be seriously affected. Its impact is also being felt in Uganda where it has carried out suicide bombings.

External Links - Keys to understanding

- Recent history: proxy war - <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/congo-decolonization>
- Recent history: killed - <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2011/jan/17/patrice-lumumba-50th-anniversary-assassination>
- Recent history: crimes - https://www.icc-cpi.int/en_menus/icc/press%20and%20media/press%20releases/2004/Pages/prosecutor%20receives%20referral%20of%20the%20situation%20in%20the%20democratic%20republic%20of%20congo.aspx
- Recent history: The Guardian - <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/oct/17/rwanda-minister-leader-congo-rebels-kabarebe>
- Recent history: step down - <https://www.france24.com/en/eye-africa/20180808-2018-08-08-2146-eye-africa>
- Recent history: Newly elected President - <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/24/tshisekedi-calls-for-a-congo-for-all-after-disputed-election>
- Political and legal landscape: 2017 Freedom of the Press Index - <https://rsf.org/en/democratic-republic-congo>
- Political and legal landscape: 2019 Human Rights Report, - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/>
- Political and legal landscape: 2019 World Report - <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2020/country-chapters/democratic-republic-congo>
- Political and legal landscape: January 2020 Global Overview - <https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch/february-alerts-and-january-trends-2020#democratic-republic-of-congo>
- Political and legal landscape: (OECD, 2019) - <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/CD.pdf>
- Political and legal landscape: ACHPR report (2015) - <https://www.achpr.org/states/detail?id=14>
- Political and legal landscape: Girls Not Brides, 2020 - <https://atlas.girlsnotbrides.org/map/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/>
- Political and legal landscape: OECD, 2019 - <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/CD.pdf>
- Economic landscape: 2020 Macro Poverty Outlook - <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/720441492455091991/mpo-ssa.pdf>
- Economic landscape: 2021 Index of Economic Freedom - <https://www.heritage.org/index/country/democraticrepubliccongo>
- Economic landscape: OECD, 2019 - <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/CD.pdf>
- Economic landscape: Georgetown, 2021/22 - <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/WPS-Index-2021.pdf>

- Economic landscape: OECD, 2019 - <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/CD.pdf>
- Social and cultural landscape: UNHCR 2020 March 2020 update - <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/dr-congo-emergency.html>
- Social and cultural landscape: 2020 Macro Poverty Outlook - <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/720441492455091991/mpo-ssa.pdf>
- Social and cultural landscape: 2019 OECD report - <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/CD.pdf>
- Social and cultural landscape: UK Home Office, 2018 - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742590/DRC_GBV._2018.v2_ext__003_.pdf
- Social and cultural landscape: GNWP, 22 February 2021 - <https://gnwp.org/wp-content/uploads/DRC-COVID-19-Profile.pdf>
- Technological landscape: 2019 study by Napoleon Cat - <https://napoleoncat.com/stats/facebook-users-in-dr-congo/2019/03>
- Security situation: Kivu Security Tracker - <https://kivusecurity.org/reports>
- Security situation: UNHR, 2020 - <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25928&LangID=E>
- Security situation: Georgetown, 2019/20 - <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/WPS-Index-2019-20-Report.pdf>
- Security situation: 2020 Institute for Development Studies report - https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/20.500.12413/15887/931_Supporting_Survivors_of_Sexual_Violence.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
- Security situation: OCHA, May 2019; - <https://reliefweb.int/report/democratic-republic-congo/amplifying-drc-women-s-leadership-peace-processes>
- Security situation: DRC, (2021). - <https://www.international-alert.org/projects/women-citizenship-and-peacebuilding-drc>
- Trends analysis: US State Department - <https://www.state.gov/state-department-terrorist-designations-of-isis-affiliates-and-leaders-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo-and-mozambique/>
- Trends analysis: ADF killed - <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/3/31/suspected-adf-militia-kill-23-in-new-eastern-dr-congo-massacre>

WWL 2022: Church information / Democratic Republic of the Congo

Christian origins

Christianity has a long history in DRC and can be traced back to 1491 when Roman Catholic priests arrived after Portuguese merchants had discovered the Congo River in 1482. However, as the main focus was the slave trade, Christian mission did not go deep inside the country. Not until the 19th century could Christianity become properly established.

- Catholic missionaries arrived in 1865. King Leopold II of Belgium was keen on establishing Belgium as a colonial power and helped missionaries by giving them land grants.
- Protestants entered the country in 1878 when British Baptists built their own mission stations along the Congo River.
- In 1891, Presbyterians came from the USA.
- In 1915 Pentecostals arrived from the UK. These were followed by Mennonites, Seventh-day Adventists and other denominations.

Church spectrum today

Democratic Republic of the Congo: Church networks	Christians	%
Orthodox	31,800	0.0
Catholic	50,665,000	57.7
Protestant	17,168,000	19.5
Independent	24,682,000	28.1
Unaffiliated	500,000	0.6
Doubly-affiliated Christians	-5,202,000	-5.9
Total	87,844,800	100.0
<i>(Any deviation from the total number of Christians stated above is due to the rounding of decimals)</i>		
Evangelical movement	6,235,000	7.1
Renewalist movement	28,865,000	32.9

Data source: Johnson T M and Zurlo G A, eds, World Christian Database (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed April 2021)

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

WWL 2022: Persecution Dynamics / Democratic Republic of the Congo

Reporting period

1 October 2020 - 30 September 2021

Position on the World Watch List

DRC: World Watch List	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2022	66	40
WWL 2021	64	40
WWL 2020	56	57
WWL 2019	55	54
WWL 2018	33	-

Ranks are shown above whenever the country scored 41 points or more in the WWL 2018-2022 reporting periods

The increase in two points in WWL 2022 is the result of the expansion of the Islamic militant group ADF in the country. This expansion did not lead to an immediate increase in violence against Christians (in fact, the violence score decreased by 0.5 point, although remaining at an extreme level), but it has led to a marked increase in pressure in three *spheres of life*. It has to be underlined that in WWL 2021 the overall score increased by 8 points, which was due to extreme lawlessness and failure of institutions in many parts of the country. The extreme levels of violence have a rippling effect causing a rise in pressure.

In the WWL 2022 reporting period, Jihadist ADF caused much suffering in society, and for the Christian population in particular. Armed groups also influenced the content of church leaders' sermons. Rape, sexual slavery, forced marriage and kidnapping have been common in the areas controlled or affected by ADF. In general terms, Christians also face restrictions from the government in many ways - including restrictions in free expression, licensing and operating in the country freely. It is a combination of these factors that has led to the increase in the overall score.

Persecution engines

DRC: 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	Medium
Christian denominational protectionism	CDP	Weak
Communist and post - Communist oppression	CPCO	Not at all
Secular intolerance	SI	Not at all
Dictatorial paranoia	DPA	Medium
Organized corruption and crime	OCC	Very 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.

Islamic oppression (Very strong)

This Persecution engine is particularly present in North Kivu and it is seen mainly in the activities of militant Islamic groups, especially ADF-NALU. The ideological influence of this group is affecting society and ordinary people in those parts of the country who are predominantly Muslim, thus further increasing the likelihood of Christians being persecuted, especially converts.

Organized corruption and crime (Very strong)

Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI 2020) puts the country at rank 170 (out of 198 countries) with a score of 18 out of 100. Corruption (and impunity for corrupt activities) is rampant in both the public and private sectors. It particularly affects the Christian community which opposes it since it is a form of injustice and contradicts Christian principles of faith.

Dictatorial paranoia (Medium)

DRC has suffered enormously under different regimes. Joseph Kabila postponed elections for two years without legal grounds. His supporters and security apparatus targeted Christians who voiced their discontent with his rule. The incumbent president, Felix Tshisekedi, came to power in December 2018 with a promise of cleaning up the mess and taking the country forward, However, so far there are no tangible reforms taking place that can save the population from the savage attack of rebel groups in the country and reduce the level of persecution targeting Christians. Corruption remains rampant and the security apparatus remains unaccountable for their actions.

Clan oppression (Medium)

Much of the violence in North Kivu, Kisangani and in Kasai also bears an ethnic dimension. This is still the case, but was particularly evident in the WWL 2018 reporting period when the Bana Mura militia carried out well-planned attacks (at times led by national army officers) aimed at eliminating the Luba and Luala populations. Some of the attacks targeted churches. This has continued in all following WWL reporting periods, including WWL 2022.

Drivers of persecution

DRC: Drivers of persecution	IO	RN	ERH	CO	CDP	CPCO	SI	DPA	OCC
	VERY STRONG		-	MEDIUM	WEAK			MEDIUM	VERY STRONG
Government officials								Medium	
Ethnic group leaders			-	Medium					
Religious leaders of other churches					Weak				
Violent religious groups	Very strong								Very strong
Citizens (people from the broader society), including mobs				Weak	Weak				
One's own (extended) family				Weak	Weak				

DRC: Drivers of persecution	IO	RN	ERH	CO	CDP	CPCO	SI	DPA	OCC
	VERY STRONG		-	MEDIUM	WEAK			MEDIUM	VERY STRONG
Revolutionaries or paramilitary groups									Strong
Organized crime cartels or networks									Very strong

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

- **Violent religious groups (Very strong):** The main drivers of *Islamic oppression* in the DRC are violent religious groups as well as ordinary people who are influenced by radical Islamic ideology. The ADF-NALU is responsible for the persecution of Christians in North Kivu, in the eastern part of the country. This group has violently attacked Christians and churches. Ordinary people influenced by militant brands of Islam especially persecute Christians with a Muslim background (i.e. converts). However, it is important to note that this is the reality only in a small portion of the DRC and in most parts of the country *Islamic oppression* is not a Persecution engine that has any significant presence.

Drivers of Dictatorial paranoia

- **Government officials (Medium):** There are several drivers of *Dictatorial paranoia* in the DRC. Chief among these drivers is (now ex-)President Kabila and his allies who were determined to stay in power at all costs, but also includes supporters, political parties and militant groups affiliated with Kabila directly or indirectly. Due to the role that the Roman Catholic Church has tried to play in resolving the political and constitutional crises (caused by the ex-president delaying presidential elections), some have perceived Christians as being allied with the opposition. As a result, churches have faced pressure from the supporters and allies of the (ex-)president.

Drivers of organized corruption and crime

Since DRC is one of the most corrupt nations in Africa, this Persecution engine has several strong drivers:

- **Violent religious groups (Strong):** Militant Islamic groups also participate in illegal mining. Research carried out by the [Institute for Security Studies](#) (ISS) in 2016 states: "The smuggling of DRC's natural resources is linked to the conflict in the region, warning that al-Shabaab remains sufficiently resourced to fund its activities despite efforts by African Union Mission in Somalia and the United Nations to cut off its channels of funding" (The East African, 25 March 2016).

- **Organized crime networks (Strong):** The crime and corruption related to the [mining industry](#) in DRC are profound (Raconteur, 4 June 2019). One of the wealthiest nations in Africa with massive natural resources, DRC has seen numerous violent clashes and violations of human rights. Organized crime networks have become adept at smuggling minerals out of the country via a variety of routes.
- **Paramilitary groups (Strong):** DRC has numerous paramilitary and rebel groups that show disregard for civilian lives. These include M23, Mai-Mai, National Forces of Liberation, RUD-Urunana, Nyatura, FDLR, Mai Mai Sheka, Mai Mai Yakutumba, Raia Mutomboki, FNI, FRPI, FPJC, Mai-Mai Simba, UPC, Forces for Renewal, Mai Mai Kata Katanga, Mai Mai Gédéon, CORAK and CPK. These and other groups are creating an environment of lawlessness; they are illegally smuggling mining produce and they are merciless to those who oppose them. Christians in DRC who speak out against this practice experience severe reprisals.
- **Government officials (Medium):** Government representatives often embezzle public money and do not protect civilians from persecution. Those who attack Christians often enjoy impunity due to corruption.

Drivers of clan oppression

- **Ethnic leaders (Medium):** In conflicts that pit ethnic groups against one another and in which ethnically and regionally based armed groups are active, Christians are targeted for various reasons. For instance, some ethnic and militant leaders belong to cults or adhere to indigenous traditional belief systems that generate hostility towards Christians.

Areas where Christians face most difficulties

Christians face difficulties from Islamic militants who are particularly active in North Kivu, in the eastern part of the country.

Christian communities and how they are affected

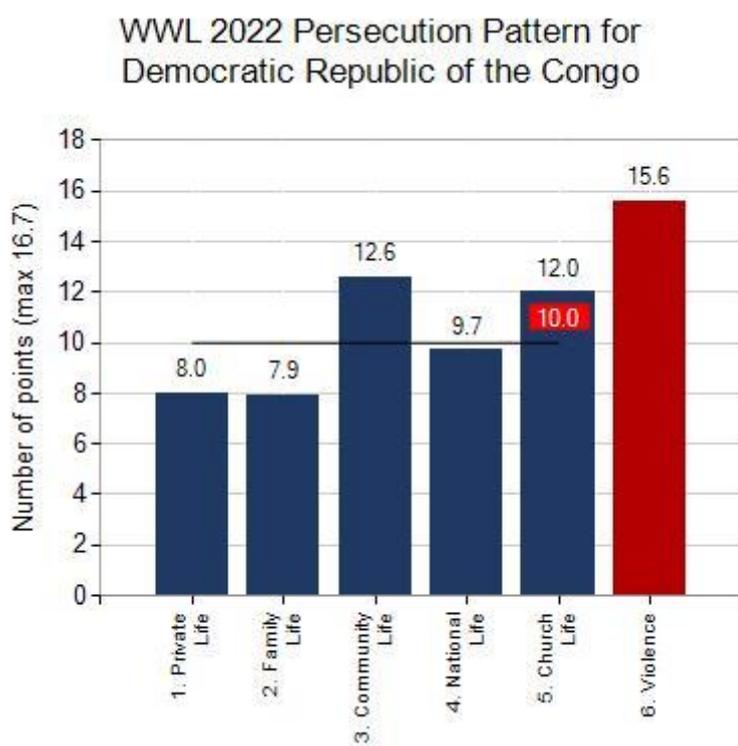
Communities of expatriate Christians: Expatriate Christians in DRC are not forced into isolation from other Christians. This category is therefore not included in the WWL analysis for scoring.

Historical Christian communities: This category includes Roman Catholic churches and various Protestant denominations. They are present throughout the country and are exposed to persecution from armed groups. During times of political unrest, attacks on church properties and intimidation of church leaders is common. From Kinshasa, the capital, to the central Kasai Province and, more recently, the eastern North Kivu Province, churches, convents and Catholic schools have been vandalized and looted by armed groups of youths or militiamen. The Islamist ADF-NALU have targeted Christians in the north-eastern region for several years, ever since their attempt to overthrow the Ugandan government failed.

Converts: Converts to Christianity (especially from Islam) can be found throughout the North Kivu Province in particular. Although there are Christians with a Muslim background in other parts of the country too, the latter are relatively less exposed to persecution and pressure from family and community in comparison. To a lesser extent, converts from African traditional religions to Christianity also face pressure.

Non-traditional Christian communities: Baptists, Pentecostal churches and similar groups have faced persecution principally from the Islamist ADF-NALU. Although these non-traditional Christian groups are in the minority they are growing rapidly compared to other Christian denominations. They face discrimination and persecution from members of the dominant historical Christian groups and Islamist groups in the Muslim-dominated part of the country. The ongoing conflict also affects this group of Christians as it does for all citizens in the country.

The Persecution pattern



The WWL 2022 Persecution pattern for DRC shows:

- The average pressure on Christians in DRC is high at 10.0 an increase of 0.4 from WWL 2021 where it was at 9.6.
- As far as pressure is concerned, the *Community sphere* scores highest with 12.6 points, followed by the *Church sphere* (12.0 points). This reflects the fact that the main challenges faced by Christians are the problems that Islamic militants pose especially in the eastern part of the country where churches have been under repeated attack.
- The score for violence is at an extreme level 15.6 (decreasing from 16.1 points in WWL 2021). This is largely due to the killings by Islamic militants and other militant groups.

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 2021 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 1.4: It has been risky for Christians to reveal their faith in written forms of personal expression (including expressions in blogs and Facebook etc.). (3.00 points)

DRC is a very complex country that has many dynamics. A variety of armed groups, corruption and lack of good governance have plunged the country into chaos for over 50 years. In the areas controlled by the ADF, it is virtually impossible to express one's faith as the jihadist groups are known to go from home to home in villages to find out who said what, especially if an expression of faith is done in the context of condemning the actions of Islamic militants. In addition, inter-denominational converts also face pressure from their family or community. In this case those who would leave a Catholic church and join an evangelical congregation would be discriminated against and put under pressure. In the context of the lack of freedom of expression in the country, any Christian who expresses his Christian faith in a way which could be seen as opposing the action of the government, would be put under pressure from the government.

Block 1.5: It has been risky for Christians to display Christian images or symbols. (2.50 points)

This issue is present in the country where jihadist groups are active. There have been reports that the ADF militants have been singling out those wearing Christian symbols for killing. ADF fighters often visit villages and search house to house and at times carry out rape and burn down whole villages. Those who are seen with Christian symbols face serious problems at the hands of these jihadists.

Block 1.7: It has been risky for Christians to speak about their faith with immediate family members. (2.25 points)

Religion defines relationships. In a communal society, any change from the established pattern in the community can rouse hostility. Converts from Islam to Christianity (and interdenominational converts) face this issue in particular. They can be expelled from their homes.

Block 1.9: It has been risky for Christians to meet with other Christians. (2.25 points)

Meeting in areas controlled by armed groups is extremely risky and can lead to abduction or killing. It is thus not advisable for Christians to meet up.

Pressure in Block 2 / Family sphere

Block 2.11: Spouses of converts have been put under pressure (successfully or unsuccessfully) by others to divorce. (2.75 points)

Religion plays a key role in deciding who should or should not get married to whom. The pressure to divorce comes in the following context:

i) In Catholic families, if one person of a married couple becomes an evangelical Christian and joins a Protestant church, this would lead to pressure from the family to divorce that person. This is done in a bid to suppress inter-denominational conversions. It is a form of punishment for the convert family as well as a lesson for others.

ii) In the northern part of the country where the Muslim population is concentrated, the pressure to divorce a convert to Christianity is also an issue. This occurs particularly due to the resentment among Muslims leaders who say that 'Christian leaders are intentionally excluding them from national religious dialogue.'

iii) In the ADF areas, the pressure to divorce a convert comes because the community fears that ADF jihadists might learn of the convert's new faith and can come and attack the community.

Block 2.3: Christians have been hindered in celebrating a Christian wedding for faith-related reasons. (2.50 points)

Due to the presence of jihadists in the eastern part of the country, any Christian celebrations can be dangerous. Christian couples also face the challenge of performing certain cultural rituals and customs. Interdenominational marriages may be hindered by family members of a couple planning to get married.

Block 2.8: Christian children have been pressured into attending anti-Christian or majority religion teaching at any level of education. (2.25 points)

In ADF controlled areas, Christians are under pressure to abandon going to school because ADF militants can show up and abduct or at times force them to learn Islamic scriptures. Also, the Catholic Church plays a key role in the education sector in DRC and runs many elementary schools and high schools. Non-Catholics who attend Catholic schools are forced to take part in Catholic services and receive Catholic teaching. A country expert states that "in some places, those who decline to participate face the prospect of expulsion". In places where there is no alternative education system, this is an issue of life and death. The poor are the most affected in this regard.

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. (2.00 points)

There is a cultural element to inheritance, which becomes more complicated when religion is added. Christians in the context of cross-denominational conversion and converts from a Muslim background often face the prospect of losing inheritance. Leaving the religion of their families is tantamount to forfeiting the right to inherit. Women are affected by this in particular.

Pressure in Block 3 / Community sphere

Block 3.1: Christians have been harassed, threatened or obstructed in their daily lives for faith-related reasons (e.g. for not meeting majority religion or traditional dress codes, beard codes etc.). (3.50 points)

Obstruction, threatening behaviors and constant well-designed plans to target Christians in their daily lives can be observed in DRC in many ways and forms. For instance, Christian businesses

have been deliberately ruined by armed groups and by ADF. In some areas, education is becoming difficult to access for Christians and there is also monitoring of what teachers teach. Travelling can also be very difficult for Christians.

Block 3.3: Christians have been under threat of abduction and/or forced marriage. (3.25 points)

This has to be seen in the context of the lack of rule of law in the country and the existence of many armed groups especially in the eastern part of the country, where the abduction of girls by armed groups is quite frequent. This is particularly true for Christian girls. Many are then forced into marriage with group members.

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.). (3.00 points)

In areas under the influence of militants (including ADF), Christians have to make sure that they do not speak against injustice, violence or Islamic militants. If they do, they will face serious problems. For example, urging your congregation to reject involvement with armed groups would invite attack. Those who speak against violence may well be abducted or silenced by other means. As a result, church leaders struggle to speak out against injustice and corruption.

Block 3.9: Christians have faced disadvantages in their education at any level for faith-related reasons (e.g. restrictions of access to education). (3.00 points)

In the eastern part of the country, Christians would be at a disadvantage in their education because of the violence that often targets Christians. Displacement and insecurity make it difficult for pupils and students to pursue their education properly. In general, the education system is highly influenced by the Catholic Church and that is not necessarily to the benefit of other Christian denominations, even though providing education is a positive thing in a country where social services are very poor.

Pressure in Block 4 / National sphere

Block 4.14: Those who caused harm to Christians have deliberately been left unpunished. (3.75 points)

In many circumstances, there are no attempts to bring the perpetrators of violence against Christians to justice. This may be due to corruption or complicity, or lack of willingness on the part of the authorities.

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

The law provides for freedom of speech and of the press; however, the transitional government restricted these rights in practice and continued to violate press freedom. In addition, when Christians speak out against corruption, greed and injustice, they risk being abducted or facing some other form of attack. The government is also restricting freedom of religion (interference);

and also does not protect Christians from those who violate their freedom of expression (duty to protect).

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)

Civil society freedom is restricted in many ways. First, due to the levels of violence and insecurity in certain regions, Christian civil society organizations have been hindered in their activities. Secondly, the government keeps organizations that are known for being critical of the government under surveillance and hinders their activities.

Block 4.12: Christians, churches or Christian organizations have been hindered in publicly displaying religious symbols. (3.00 points)

DRC is known for its chaos and endless armed conflicts for over 50 years. In some of the areas where jihadists and militias operate, it is risky to display Christian symbols, such as a cross, since that can provoke attack. This particularly affects church leaders, who are a particular target for attack, especially when they are known to reject violence and the activities of armed groups.

Pressure in Block 5 / Church sphere

Block 5.1: Church activities have been monitored, hindered, disturbed, or obstructed. (3.50 points)

Church activities have been disturbed and obstructed by the continuous acts of violence perpetrated by armed groups. Their attacks have left many villages and churches empty. The government also monitors churches, especially those that are seen as being 'unfriendly' to the president. As reported by the US State Department ([IRFR 2019](#)): "Antigovernment militia members targeted churches and church property in the North Kivu and Ituri Provinces, where armed groups remain active."

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

The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) failed once again to issue registration permits for church groups in the WWL 2022 reporting period. The US State Department (IRFR 2020) reports: "The MOJ again did not issue any final registration permits for religious groups, and had not done so since 2014."

Block 5.5: Churches have been hindered from organizing Christian activities outside church buildings. (3.50 points)

In some parts of country, the government has been hostile to church activities, alleging that such activities could lead to public disorder. The reality is that the government is not open to freedom of association and freedom of the press and religion. The government also wants to make sure that those activities do not turn into a form of anti-government protest.

In the northern part of the country, the separatist religious movement, Bundu Dia Kongo (Gathering of Kongo – BDK), exists and has created yet another dimension which the Church can easily get caught up in when government forces and BDK armed groups clash.

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

In areas where armed groups are active, churches are being monitored. The government also monitors what churches are teaching. This is a part of a wider issue regarding freedom of association and assembly.

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 5 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. For further discussion (with a focus on the complexity of assessing the numbers of Christians killed for their faith) please see World Watch Monitor's article dated 13 November 2013 available at:

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2013/11/number-of-christian-martyrs-continues-to-cause-debate/>.

4. 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.*

5. The symbol "x" in the table: *This denotes a known number which cannot be published due to security concerns.*

DRC: Violence Block question	WWL 2022	WWL 2021
6.1 How many Christians have been killed for faith-related reasons (including state sanctioned executions)?	100 *	460
6.2 How many churches or Christian buildings (schools, hospitals, cemeteries, etc.) have been attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons?	10 *	100*
6.3 How many Christians have been detained for faith-related reasons?	0	0
6.4 How many Christians have been sentenced to jail, labor camp, sent to psychiatric hospital as punishment, or similar things for faith-related reasons?	0	10*
6.5 How many Christians have been abducted for faith-related reasons (including Christians missing in a persecution context)?	134	250
6.6 How many Christians have been raped or otherwise sexually harassed for faith-related reasons?	100 *	100*
6.7 How many cases have there been of forced marriages of Christians to non-Christians?	100 *	100*
6.8 How many Christians have been otherwise physically or mentally abused for faith-related reasons (including beatings and death threats)?	100 *	1000*
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?	100 *	1000*
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?	100 *	100*
6.11 How many Christians have been forced to leave their homes or go into hiding in-country for faith-related reasons?	1000 *	1000*
6.12 How many Christians have been forced to leave the country for faith-related reasons?	10 *	1000*

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

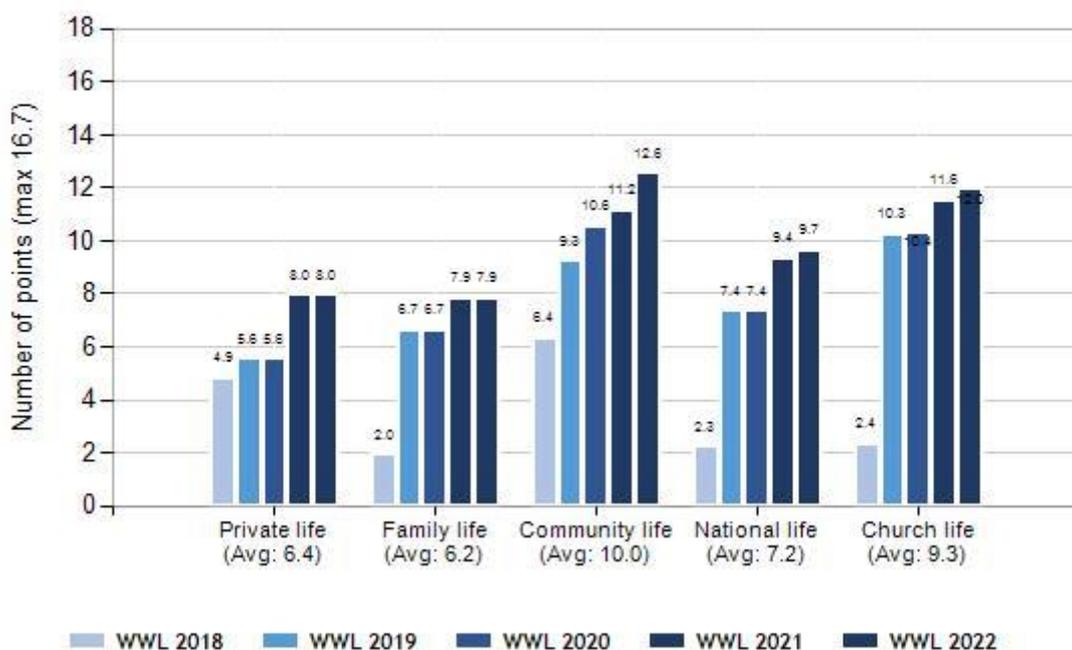
The table below shows that over the last 5 WWL reporting periods the level of average pressure has increased steadily from 3.6 points in WWL 2018 to 10.0 points in WWL 2022.

DRC: WWL 2018 - WWL 2022 Persecution Pattern history	Average pressure over 5 Spheres of life
2022	10.0
2021	9.6
2020	8.1
2019	7.8
2018	3.6

5 Year trends: Pressure in each sphere of life

The chart below shows that the highest levels of pressure are to be found in the *Community* and *Church spheres of life*, with averages of 10.0 and 9.3 points respectively. This is a reflection of how Christians and churches are being put under pressure by armed groups and Islamic militants in the eastern part of the country.

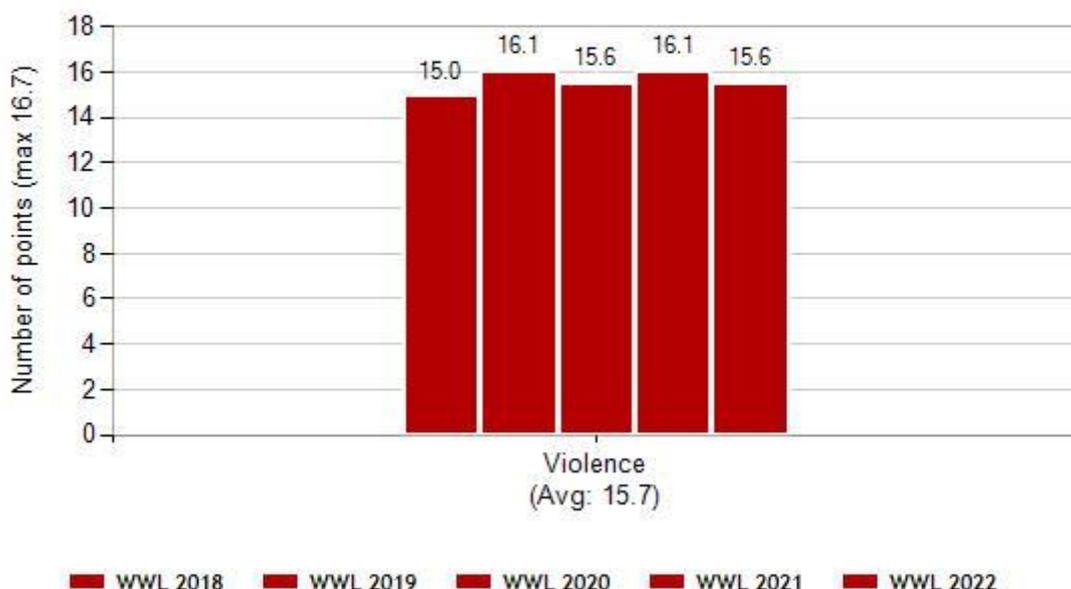
WWL 2018 - WWL 2022 Persecution Pattern for Democratic Republic of the Congo (Spheres of life)



5 Year trends: Violence against Christians

The chart below shows that the scores for violence have been at an extreme level (consistently 15.0 points or above) in all the recorded reporting periods. This reflects the severity of violence against Christians in the eastern part of the country.

WWL 2018 - WWL 2022 Persecution Pattern for Democratic Republic of the Congo (Violence)



Gender-specific religious persecution / Female

Group	Female Pressure Points
Economic	Denied inheritance or possessions
Political and Legal	Denied access to Christian religious materials, teachings and rites; Denied custody of children; Forced divorce; Forced marriage
Security	Abduction; Trafficking; Violence – physical; Violence – sexual
Social and Cultural	Violence – psychological
Technological	-

The Democratic Republic of Congo is a complicated country, politically, socially and economically. Women across several areas of DRC, particularly those dominated by Islam, are commonly treated as inferior. This has an impact on their experience of much of life for girls. For married women, this can play out in Christians being denied access to their children, or commonly – if widowed – being denied access to their inheritance.

In addition to this discrimination, Congolese Christian women are vulnerable to abduction, rape, trafficking, and sexual slavery, especially by Islamist group ADF. A country expert summarizes the situation as follows: “Christians living in areas where Islamic militia operate are under a threat of abduction. The ADF for example kidnaps women, rapes them, and forces them to marry soldiers within their ranks.” Many Christian women who face this are reportedly kept as a kind

of 'trophy'. Christian women – particularly converts – may be forcibly married, forcibly impregnated or forcibly divorced. These forced marriages are often early marriages, as sources report that elderly Muslim men often prefer young Christian girls. Child marriage rates are high in the DRC, with some [37% of girls](#) marrying before they turn 18 (Girls Not Brides).

Kidnappings and instances of rape most commonly occur at the hands of armed groups in the north-eastern regions, causing extreme psychological distress and trauma for the victims. According to country experts, women are sometimes raped next to male hostages, who are bound. Certain terrorist groups seek Islamization through violent means, forcibly marrying abducted women to militia leaders and subjecting others to a life of sexual slavery. Reports indicate that the number of [sexual violence](#) cases has risen in 2021 (HumAngle, 4 May 2021).

Due to the shame of sexual violence, Christian women and girls may face isolation and rejection from their families and communities following an attack. Rape can '[socially destroy](#)' communities and victims, due to stigma and the fear of disease linked to rape (van Wier-ingen, K., 2020). In more extreme cases, an attack may cost a girl her life.

Gender-specific religious persecution / Male

Group	Male Pressure Points
Economic	Denied inheritance or possessions; Economic harassment via business/job/work access
Political and Legal	-
Security	Military/militia conscription/service against conscience; Trafficking; Violence – physical
Social and Cultural	-
Technological	-

In DRC, political, social and economic tensions make life difficult for much of the population. In a context of ambient violence and impunity, Congolese Christian men face violent and extreme forms of persecution, including maiming, abduction, forced recruitment into militia groups, forced labor, sexual mutilation, disemboweling and brutal killings. While women and girls face the highest rates of rape, a country expert highlights the fact that “men and boys also face conflict-related sexual violence.”

To escape their kidnapers, men may be forced to pay large ransoms; these fines paralyze already impoverished families, sentencing them to live out the next few years in even more desperate poverty. Even without punitive ransoms, Christian men reportedly face discrimination in the workplace and in some cases, are denied the opportunity to work.

The targeting of Christian men in these ways also serves to weaken their families as well as the wider Church. Church leaders are also targeted, especially if they have publicly denounced violence.

Persecution of other religious minorities

According to the US State Department (IRFR 2020):

- "Muslim community leaders again said the government did not afford them some of the same privileges as larger religious groups. The government continued to deny Muslims the opportunity to provide chaplains for Muslims in the military, police force, and hospitals, despite a complaint filed in 2015 with the then president and his cabinet."
- "Leaders of Jehovah's Witnesses reported generally positive relations with persons from other religious groups but said that at least 27 cases of assault on or suspected killings of Jehovah's Witnesses dating from as early as 2015 continued to languish in the court system or were never sent to court for criminal prosecution after the arrests of suspects."

The government also used excessive force against the [Bundu dia Kongo](#) religious group which resulted in the death of over 55 people in April 2020 in western Kongo Central Province (HRW, 19 May 2020).

Future outlook

The outlook for Christians as viewed through the lens of:

Islamic oppression

The country has struggled to deal with ADF for many years and there is no plan of action to put a stop to the violent attacks. Thus, it is expected that ADF will remain a potent driver of persecution in the country for some years to come. A [UN report](#) released in July 2020 has suggested that ADF might have committed crimes against humanity (Reliefweb, 6 July 2020).

Dictatorial paranoia

Many hoped that the change of president would bring about positive reform measures. However, so far there is nothing visible to report. Impunity, corruption and the abuse of human rights defenders continue as before. Thus, although this Persecution engine has become less strong through the departure of President Kabila, the situation is still problematic for Christians and churches.

Organized corruption and crime

This is probably the toughest Persecution engine to eliminate. It is very complex due to multiple actors being involved at domestic, regional and international levels. Even neighboring countries are believed to be involved in smuggling minerals out of DRC. Thus, this engine will remain potent and destructive in the country and Christians and churches will remain vulnerable to its effects.

Clan oppression

It is likely that this Persecution engine will eventually recede in the long term, but in the short term it may rise since Christians are evangelizing frequently and the reaction to this may increase in magnitude.

External Links - Persecution Dynamics

- Drivers of persecution description: Institute for Security Studies - <https://www.theestafrican.co.ke/business/Illegal-minerals-from-DR-Congo-fund-terrorist-groups/2560-3134040-rpdwnpz/index.html>
- Drivers of persecution description: mining industry - <https://www.raconteur.net/business-innovation/cobalt-mining-human-rights>
- Block 5.1: Church activities have been monitored, hindered, disturbed, or obstructed. (3.50 points): IRFR 2019 - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-report-on-international-religious-freedom/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: 37% of girls - <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/child-marriage/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: sexual violence - <https://humanglemedia.com/55-sexual-violence-cases-reported-in-dr-congo-within-a-month/>
- Gender-specific religious persecution Female description: 'socially destroy' - <https://jhumanitarianaction.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41018-020-00074-4>
- Persecution of other religious minorities: Bundu dia Kongo - <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/05/19/dr-congo-bloody-crackdown-political-religious-group>
- Persecution of other religious minorities: - <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/05/19/dr-congo-bloody-crackdown-political-religious-group>
- Future outlook: UN report - <https://reliefweb.int/report/democratic-republic-congo/report-violations-human-rights-and-international-humanitarian-law>

Further useful reports

A selection of in-depth reports and smaller articles are available on World Watch Research's Open Doors Analytical website (password: freedom) and on the World Watch Monitor website:

- <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/reports/>
- <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/?s=Democratic Republic of the Congo>
- <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/countries/Democratic Republic of the Congo>
- [DRC – Mapping the conflict – 2018](#)

External Links - Further useful reports

- Further useful reports: DRC – Mapping the conflict – 2018 - <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/DRC-Mapping-the-conflict-WWR-2018.pdf>