

FINAL WWL 2019 COUNTRY DOSSIER

MALAYSIA

LEVEL 3/EMBARGO

(Reporting period: 1 November 2017 – 31 October 2018)

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Access to Country Dossiers with track changes	3
Copyright Notice	3
Introduction.....	3
WWL 2019: Keys to understanding Malaysia	4
Link for general background information	4
Recent country history	4
The religious landscape	4
The political landscape	5
The socio-economic landscape	5
Concluding remarks.....	6
External Links - WWL 2019: Keys to understanding Malaysia	6
WWL 2019: Church History and Facts.....	7
How many Christians?.....	7
How did Christians get there?.....	7
What church networks exist today?	7
Religious context	8
Notes on the current situation.....	8
WWL 2019: Short & Simple Persecution Profile	9
Introduction.....	9
What type of persecution dominates?	9
Who is driving persecution?.....	9
What it results in	9
Violence	10
Examples of specific persecution in the reporting period	10
External Links - WWL 2019: Short & Simple Persecution Profile	11
WWL 2019: Persecution Dynamics	12

Introduction..... 12

Position on World Watch List (WWL)..... 12

Persecution engines 12

Drivers of persecution 13

Context 14

Christian communities and how they are affected..... 15

Pressure in the 5 spheres of life and violence 16

5 Year trends 20

Gender specific persecution..... 21

Persecution of other religious minorities 21

Future outlook..... 22

External Links - WWL 2019: Persecution Dynamics 24

Additional Reports and Articles 27

 WWR in-depth reports 27

 Open Doors article(s) from the region 27

 World Watch Monitor news articles 27

 Recent country developments 27

Introduction

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Introduction

World Watch List Malaysia	Points	WWL Rank
WWL 2019	60	42
WWL 2018	65	23
WWL 2017	60	31
WWL 2016	58	30
WWL 2015	55	37

Scores and ranks are shown above whenever the country was among the fifty highest scoring countries (Top 50) in the WWL 2015-2019 reporting periods.

Please note: The highlighted links in the text can be found written out in full at the conclusion of each main section under the heading "External links".

WWL 2019: Keys to understanding Malaysia

Link for general background information

BBC country profile: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-15356257>

Recent country history

In a truly ground-breaking election on 9 May 2018, the ruling United Malays National Organization (UMNO), which had been in charge of the country since independence in 1957, was defeated by the voters who overwhelmingly chose opposition coalition Pakatan Harapan. This happened despite gerrymandering and decisions made by the election authorities benefitting UMNO. The campaigning was racist (calling the Malay people's preferential status into question) and ethnic and especially religious issues were also played up to stir up fears among voters that the ethnic minorities (despite being Malaysian citizens) have a hidden agenda and are seeking to Christianize the country. Even slurs made by UMNO against outspoken Christian politicians did not succeed in preventing UMNO from getting voted out. Whether the new government is able to deliver on economic development and is willing to treat all Malay citizens equally, remains to be seen.

The religious landscape

The Malaysian Constitution defines "Malay" as a follower of Islam. Every citizen of Malay ethnicity is, therefore, understood to be a Muslim. Although the state is secular per definition, Islam has a strong influence on everyday life with its legal system and its political institutions being strongly influenced by Islam. The emphasis on the latter is growing, much to the disadvantage of the large non-Muslim minority. The nobility is Muslim and called to be protectors of Islam. However, it had a moderating influence against radical voices and defended the country's multi-ethnicity and -religiosity.

Slightly more than half of the population is ethnically Malay, roughly one quarter is of Chinese origin, 11% are indigenous and around 7% have an Indian background. In 1969, the country lived through serious ethnic clashes against the Chinese minority, which are still vividly remembered. Most ethnic Malays are Muslim and together with the indigenous people (who often lack education and live in East Malaysia) they enjoy a strong "affirmative action policy" by the government which gives ethnic Malay advantages in decisions concerning quotas, grants, loans and tax benefits. Basically, this policy excludes citizens with Chinese or Indian origin.

One point of contention for religious minorities is the question of claiming custody in divorce cases in religiously mixed marriages. In order to claim custody successfully, the partner most likely losing it (almost always the husband) can quickly convert to Islam and file an application with the Sharia courts, which then grant custody to the Muslim spouse. In theory the civil courts are above Sharia courts, but in practice divorce cases are frequently not decided by the civil courts but by Sharia courts (if one parent converts to Islam) since the police prefer the easier implementation of a Sharia decision. The previous government promised to find a solution to this problem but failed to deliver. Court cases on the question of custody are continuing.

The Islamization of society is increasing, although that does not necessarily mean that this is being directly transferred into the political arena as well. The elections in 2018 showed that voters were more interested in economic improvement and were disgusted with the levels of corruption within UMNO circles (for more details see "Context" in the Persecution Dynamics section below). In everyday life, however, there are more restrictions being introduced which affect non-Muslims too. For example, during Ramadan food outlets serve neither Muslims nor non-Muslims alike.

The political landscape

UMNO hit an all-time low in their popularity polls in 2016, which may have served as an early warning sign but the present administration wanted to remain in power, despite (former) Prime Minister Najib Razak being entangled in one of the largest cases of corruption worldwide. After the opposition won in May 2018, Razak was detained and awaits court proceedings. The new government announced its intention to review the Sedition Law and the National Security Act, which had been used against anyone criticizing the former government and Najib Razak in particular. As a first step, it repealed the short-lived ["fake news law"](#) in August 2018. Although the more hardline Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) was successful in the elections and even managed to regain government control over a federal state, it would seem that attempts at further Islamization have stopped for the time-being. The new government is currently focusing on economic and budget issues and on getting the corruption cases sorted. Radical Islamic voices are still around and Malaysian society is definitely Islamizing, but the government has other priorities to deal with first.

Although the government's motto is "One Malaysia", most observers agree that there is no "one Malaysia" in reality. The age-old practice of discriminating against non-Malay ethnic minorities has continued unabated by giving priority to the "Bumiputera" - i.e. the Malay population or literally "people of the soil". With policies continuing to favor Bumiputera, Chinese and Indian citizens face explicit employment and other disadvantages in: i) public offices (i.e. state ministries and administration right down to the local level), ii) state bureaucracy, iii) state-owned enterprises (such as large oil companies) and iv) the armed forces. A functioning political program promoting unity is very much needed, but this is not likely to materialize in the near future. However, the new government has sent out a clear signal by calling two Christians into high-ranking judicial functions and by appointing an ethnic Chinese Minister of Finance.

It should be noted that Malaysia is a unique parliamentary monarchy: The monarchy is not based on one royal person but is an office which rotates every five years among nine regional sultans. These Islamic rulers hold a powerful position. In principle they are to abide by electoral bodies' decisions, but in fact they can influence all decision-making, since in questions concerning Islam they also have veto power. So far, they have chosen a moderate position in most cases and have opposed demands for more Islamization.

The socio-economic landscape

In July 2015, the Washington Post ran an article claiming that around 700 million USD had been [transferred](#) to the prime minister's private account on behalf of a state fund accused of corruption. Although he managed to effectively end domestic investigations by [sacking](#) his deputy and the country's attorney-general, international investigations in Switzerland and other countries continued. The new government decided to take up the case again and within a few weeks brought a case together against Najib Razak and his wife. Goods and cash worth approximately [273 million USD](#) were found at various properties belonging to Razak, when they were searched for evidence in June 2018. The new opposition and UMNO leader is also facing corruption charges and while the investigations continue, surprising details are being unearthed.

In terms of economy, Malaysia is a fast growing and modernizing state. It is one of the economically and politically most stable countries in South East Asia, although the new government faces several challenges. The cost of living for many people, including the middle class, had become very high, so the Goods and Service Tax was abolished. Large infrastructure projects have been put on hold or even cancelled, making relations with neighboring Singapore or big lender China more difficult. However,

Malaysia has vast resources – including oil – and if these are used wisely, the country will be able to develop. As a lot of oil and gas is found in the waters around East Malaysia, especially Sarawak, it remains to be seen how fair revenue sharing will be achieved. Sarawak is the only state with a Christian majority. Malaysia aims at achieving "high-income status" by 2020, as classified by the World Bank, and if it continues to grow economically at a constant pace this is very possible. There is a growing middle-class and poverty has been reduced, standing now at one of the lowest levels of all South East Asian countries. The odds for increasing prosperity therefore look promising, despite all challenges.

Concluding remarks

The grenade attack on a café in the State of Selangor in June 2016 has been the only successful Islamic terrorist attack in the country so far. It showed the very real danger of Islamic State militants making inroads into Malaysia. Already in 2016 the country announced that it would take up joint patrols with Indonesia and the Philippines to counter the terrorist threat in the tri-border island region. The capture of the city of Marawi/Philippines by radical Islamic militants in May 2017, and the fact that radicals were able to hold it for five months, shows the very real danger as well as the urgent need for cooperation in this region.

According to a survey, 84.3% of Malaysians feel that the relationship between the government and people is similar to that between a parent and a child. It is therefore by no means certain that Malay citizens are wanting a growing openness instead of paternalism. This wish of being protected and safe is well reflected in the election of former long-term Prime Minister Mohamed Mahathir, who became the oldest elected head of government worldwide, at the age of 93. It is far from certain at this point in time, whether he will be willing and able to stop the one-sidedness of Malaysian politics and avoid using ethnicities and religion as trump cards in the political game (which stirs up insecurity and gains voters). If his first tenure is anything to go by, Christians and others cannot expect any such changes. The good thing is that the government will be busy focusing on the economy and budget issues. If, however, the government fails to deliver on their promises and fails to bring voters relief from the rising costs of living, it is quite possible that the opposition will wake up and UMNO and radical PAS will demand protection for Malay and Islamic interests.

External Links - WWL 2019: Keys to understanding Malaysia

- The political landscape: "fake news law"
<https://asiancorrespondent.com/2018/08/malaysia-repeals-controversial-short-lived-fake-news-law/#BYjYQ1rJ3K1IjVf.97>
- The socio-economic landscape: transferred
<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/03/us-malaysia-1mdb-idUSKCNOPD07S20150703?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews>
- The socio-economic landscape: sacking
<http://www.irrawaddy.org/asia/malaysian-pm-axes-deputy-attorney-general-amid-fund-scandal.html>
- The socio-economic landscape: 273 million USD
<https://asiancorrespondent.com/2018/06/malaysian-police-seize-273-million-in-goods-from-former-pm-najibs-properties/#6Ovaq1FsmeEYE3DH.97>

WWL 2019: Church History and Facts

How many Christians?

Pop 2018	Christians	Chr%
32,042,000	2,946,000	9.2

Source: Johnson T M and Zurlo G A (eds.), *World Christian Database* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed January 2018)

How did Christians get there?

Nestorians and Persian traders introduced Christianity to the Malacca islands in the 7th century but Christianity only began to spread with the arrival of Portuguese Catholic missionaries in 1511. The British took over Malacca in 1795 and the London Missionary Society was based there from 1815 onwards. Churches were established mainly to serve British expatriates. By silent agreement between the British authorities and the ruling sultan, missionary work among Muslims was not allowed. Hence, mission work concentrated on animistic tribes. Due to a change in policy by the government, most missionaries had to leave the country by the late 1970s, but the Church continued to grow - especially in East Malaysia.

What church networks exist today?

Church networks: Malaysia		Christians	%
Orthodox		6,300	0.2
Catholic		1,458,000	49.5
Protestant		1,222,000	41.5
Independent		251,000	8.5
Unaffiliated		45,800	1.6
Doubly-affiliated Christians		-37,000	-1.3
Total		2,946,100	100.0
<i>(Any deviation from the total number of Christians stated above is due to the rounding of decimals)</i>			
Evangelical movement		740,000	25.1
Renewalist movement		739,000	25.1

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: Believers 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.

Source: Johnson T M and Zurlo G A (eds.), *World Christian Database* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed January 2018)

Two-thirds of the nation's Christians are to be found in East Malaysia, where only 30% of the total population live. Many churches are working along ethnic lines and are frightened to integrate Christians with a Muslim background or even do not see the necessity. The major Christian denominations in Malaysia include Anglicans, Brethren, Baptists, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians and independent churches.

Religious context

Religious Context: Malaysia	Numbers	%
Christians	2,946,000	9.2
Muslim	18,003,000	56.2
Hindu	2,013,000	6.3
Buddhist	1,707,000	5.3
Ethnoreligionist	1,090,000	3.4
Jewish	100	0.0
Bahai	74,300	0.2
Atheist	36,400	0.1
Agnostic	121,000	0.4
Other	6,052,700	18.9

OTHER includes Chinese folk, New religionist, Sikh, Spiritist, Taoist, Confucianist, Jain, Shintoist, Zoroastrian.

Source: Johnson T M and Zurlo G A (eds.), World Christian Database (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed January 2018)

According to WCD statistics, 9.2% of the population are Christian, slightly more than half of them Catholics. 56% of the population are (mainly Sunni) Muslim and 18.5% are followers of Chinese folk religions, which reflects the large ethnic Chinese minority in Malaysia.

Notes on the current situation

Malaysian society is becoming increasingly Islamic. Church leaders are becoming more vocal in voicing their criticism of unfair government policies, whether in matters concerning mixed-faith marriages and claiming custody, or in the "affirmative action policy" for the Malay majority. In an unprecedented move prior to the elections, church leaders even called for Christians to vote for the opposition coalition. Basically, the "affirmative action policy" excludes citizens with Chinese or Indian origin and ensures that ethnic Malay and indigenous people (so called "Bumiputra", "sons of the soil") are given the advantage when quotas, grants, loans and tax benefits etc. need to be decided. In order to please an Islamizing society, the previous government responded with more pressure on minorities. This may stop for now with the new government focusing on the country's development and economy. Should they fail or not deliver quick enough, however, they could resort to the old tactics of targeting religious and ethnic minorities.

WWL 2019: Short & Simple Persecution Profile

Introduction

Reporting period: 1 November 2017 - 31 October 2018

With a score of 60 points, Malaysia ranked 42 in WWL 2019.

What type of persecution dominates?

Islamic oppression: After the elections in May 2018, the conservative Muslim PAS party, which governs the state of Kelantan, immediately called for Sharia penal law to be introduced there. According to the Constitution, Sharia law is not on an equal footing with civil law, but in practice Sharia is dominant as can especially be seen in cases of divorce and custody.

Dictatorial paranoia: Despite a change in administration in 2018, the government continues to follow a policy of preferential treatment for Malay people. Prime Minister Mahathir was originally responsible for developing this idea of preferential treatment and if his current policies do not give the results voters want to see quickly enough, in order to stay in power he could decide to join forces with the radical Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party which would affect the Christian minority seriously.

Who is driving persecution?

The Constitution prohibits Malays from converting to other religions and limits the propagation of non-Muslim religions. Both the ruling and opposition parties uphold Islam, and government officials therefore strive to maintain or increase the Islamic influence on society to the detriment of non-Muslim minorities. Various Muslim NGOs see themselves as “champions of Islam” and have the support of the government. They stir up racial disharmony and religious discrimination. For Christians with a Muslim background, family members are the strongest drivers of persecution.

What it results in

Converts experience most persecution as every ethnic Malay is expected to be Muslim. Whoever deviates from this is not just going against the Constitution, but also against society at large and of course, against family and neighborhood. Roman Catholics and Methodists are watched by the authorities and NGOs, but non-traditional Protestant groups are more often targeted as these tend to be more active in testifying about their faith.

Violence

The following table is based on reported cases. Since many incidents go unreported, the numbers below must be understood as being minimum figures.

Malaysia	Reporting period	Christians killed	Christians attacked	Christians arrested	Churches attacked	Christian-owned houses and shops attacked
WWL 2019	01 Nov 2017 - 31 Oct 2018	0	3	0	2	0
WWL 2018	01 Nov 2016 - 31 Oct 2017	0	6	2	3	0

Christians killed refers to the number of Christians killed for faith-related reasons (including state-sanctioned executions). Christians attacked refers to the number of Christians abducted, raped or otherwise sexually harassed, forced into marriage to non-Christians or otherwise physically or mentally abused (including beatings and death-threats) for faith-related reasons. Christians arrested refers to the number of Christians detained without trial or sentenced to jail, labor camp, sent to psychiatric hospital as punishment or similar things for faith-related reasons. Churches attacked refers to the number of churches or Christian buildings (schools, hospitals, cemeteries, etc.) attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons. Christian-owned houses and shops attacked refers to the number of houses of Christians or other property (including shops and businesses of Christians) attacked, damaged, bombed, looted, destroyed, burned down, closed or confiscated for faith-related reasons.

Examples of specific persecution in the reporting period

- In a long awaited ruling, the Federal Court has decided that the conversion of children under 18 years of age of needs the [consent of both parents](#). The previous government, however, decided to set up a [special department](#) called the “Syariah and Harmonisation of Law division” to address issues pertaining to Islam and Sharia (syariah) law that arise at federal and international levels. How the new government will deal with this highly political issue may give a first indication of the direction it will be going as concerns minorities.
- When a conversion to Christianity becomes known, the Christian is usually either reported to the Islamic authorities or simply expelled from the community. Christian converts are excluded from the hereditary order and claiming custody continues to be a problem for the non-Muslim spouse. However, there are also cases where converts are accepted by their families and these become Christians too. As for Christians from a Hindu or Buddhist background, the pressure is more from the families since the government is only concerned about Muslims converting.
- All children in state-run nursery and primary schools are required to attend Islamic education. In state schools, only Muslim pupils (including Christians with a Muslim background) are required to attend Islamic classes. At the university level, there is a compulsory subject for all called "Islamic and Asian Civilization" which is felt to be a government instrument for furthering Islamization.
- The new government is allowing Malaysia's human rights commission, [SUHAKAM](#), to act as an advisory body and prepare a report on the continued disappearance of Pastor Raymond Koh, who was abducted in broad daylight by unknown assailants on 13 February 2017. (According to media reports, this abduction could be linked to allegations that he was active in the conversion of Muslims. However, a police [whistle-blower](#) refused to testify in public after claiming in May 2018 that a police Special Branch had carried out the abduction.)

External Links - WWL 2019: Short & Simple Persecution Profile

- Examples of specific persecution in the reporting period: consent of both parents
https://apnews.com/e092a86857ed4cde8981ac8de183b5ee?utm_source=Pew+Research+Center&utm_campaign=7c8450d18d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_01_29&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_3e953b9b70-7c8450d18d-399904105
- Examples of specific persecution in the reporting period: special department
<http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/malaysias-agc-sets-up-unit-to-address-syariah-law-issues>
- Examples of specific persecution in the reporting period: SUHAKAM
<https://www.suhakam.org.my/?s=Koh>
- Examples of specific persecution in the reporting period: whistle-blower
<https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2018/05/16/pastor-koh-case-lawyer-to-call-as-witness-whistleblower-cop/>

WWL 2019: Persecution Dynamics

Introduction

Reporting period: 1 November 2017 - 31 October 2018

Position on World Watch List (WWL)

With a score of 60 points, Malaysia ranked 42 in WWL 2019. The drop of 5 points compared to WWL 2018 partly reflects the surprising result of the political elections in 2018. Scores dropped most significantly in the pressure experienced in the *National* and *Church spheres of life*, but also for violence. Whereas Christians and other minorities still have a feeling of insecurity ever since three Christian workers (and a Muslim social activist) went missing without any trace in November 2016 and February 2017, there is hope that the new government will bring positive changes. However, laws are changed quicker than mindsets, so any real change for Christians in society will only be seen slowly, if at all. The already existing rift between East and West Malaysia has been deepened, especially in the case of Sarawak State, which holds a relative Christian majority.

Persecution engines

Persecution engines: Malaysia	Abbreviation	Level of influence
Islamic oppression	IO	Strong
Religious nationalism	RN	Not at all
Ethnic antagonism	EA	Not at all
Denominational protectionism	DPR	Not at all
Communist and post - Communist oppression	CPCO	Not at all
Secular intolerance	SI	Not at all
Dictatorial paranoia	DPA	Medium
Organized corruption and crime	OCC	Not at all

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 (long version).

Islamic oppression (Strong):

Malaysia carries the image of probably being the world's best role model for a liberal and tolerant Islamic country. However, this image has been fading over the last years, a trend confirmed in the WWL 2019 reporting period. One example of this can be seen in the government's continued effort to introduce Sharia penal law (*hudud*) in the State of Kelantan. Conservative Muslim PAS party, ruling the state of Kelantan, immediately called for Sharia penal law immediately after elections in May 2018 again. According to the Constitution, Sharia law is not on an equal footing with civil law, but in practice this regulation is not in force anymore. This can especially be seen in cases of divorce and custody: Civil courts frequently decide in favor of the child's non-Muslim mother, which is why fathers sometimes convert to Islam since, if they claim custody before Sharia courts, it will be granted to them. The police prefers to implement the latter's decisions as this causes less trouble for them. This raises the legal question of the rule of law in Malaysia, even though there have been efforts to solve such problems by instituting a committee to work on solutions. In a long awaited ruling, the Federal Court said that the conversion of children under 18 years of age of needs the [consent of both parents](#). The previous government, however, decided to set up a [special department](#) called the "Syariah and Harmonization of Law division" to address issues pertaining to Islam and Sharia (syariah) law that arise. How the new

government will deal with this highly political issue may give a first indication of the direction it will be taking as concerns minorities.

The ban on using the standard vocabulary "Allah" for God in Bahasa Malay, implemented against a Catholic newspaper, which was sanctioned by the High Court in January 2015, is being followed by more court cases, e.g. in the state of Sabah. This case is still pending as the [question of access](#) to government documents has to be decided first. [Slurs](#) for religious reasons are still common. In the 2018 election campaign a Christian politician was accused of having a "purely missionary agenda". Another sign that society is becoming increasingly Islamic and sensitive can be seen by how many shops decided [not to show pictures of dogs](#) in decorations celebrating the Chinese New Year. According to the Chinese calendar, in February 2018 the Year of the Dog started.

Dictatorial paranoia (Medium):

While *Dictatorial paranoia* is certainly only a subsidiary persecution engine in Malaysia, it is still relevant for understanding the country's situation. This was definitely true as long as the UMNO coalition governed the country prior to elections in 2018. This coalition was comprised of a Muslim party in alliance with smaller Chinese and Indian parties and for years had never had to face opposition parties. So the UMNO re-emphasized its policy of preferential treatment for Malay people (instead of following a policy of equality) and increasingly played religious and racial cards in an attempt to stay power. However, this Persecution engine may well continue as Prime Minister Mahathir was originally responsible for developing the whole idea of preferential treatment. If his current policies do not give the results voters want to see quickly enough, *Dictatorial paranoia* may have a revival.

Drivers of persecution

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

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

Drivers of Islamic oppression:

The Constitution prohibits Malays from converting to other religions and limits propagating non-Muslim religions. Government officials hence strive for maintaining and if possible increasing Islamic standards, to the detriment of non-Muslim minorities. Various Muslim NGOs see themselves as

“champions of Islam” and had the support of the former government. At times they stir up racial disharmony and religious discrimination with their statements and actions. Political parties like the UMNO and PAS uphold and protect Islam. It was the PAS, for example, who proposed the introduction of Hudud Law in Kelantan. In January 2016, PAS leader Hadi Awang was [quoted](#) as claiming that Christians are converting Muslims using money. In this way, discord and hatred against Christians is being sown. UMNO and PAS are using religion to rally support from the Malays, even more so now from the opposition benches. If the new Pakatan Harapan government is able and willing to bring changes for ethnic and religious minorities remains to be seen. For converts, family members continue to be the strongest drivers of persecution.

Drivers of Dictatorial paranoia:

For more than six months of the reporting period, Dictatorial paranoia has been a strong driver of persecution, especially as government and administration were concerned. With the newly elected government, this may change slowly. It should, however, not be overlooked that the Islamic PAS holds a majority in some states in Malaysia and although the administration serves a new government now, this does not mean that the officials change their thinking quickly. This is especially true for the administration of religious affairs. As stated above, *Dictatorial paranoia* has become weaker, but its ideology and drivers are still active.

Context

Malaysian society is increasingly divided between an ethnic Malay majority (which is clearly favored by the government) and the Chinese and Indian minorities (as well as the indigenous tribal population living mainly in the eastern part of Malaysia) which are discriminated against. Racism is an everyday experience for ethnic minorities in Malaysia. In recent years, the government - now ousted since May 2018 - had increasingly played the racist and religious card to stay in power and to rally support from the ethnic Malay majority, which makes up around 60% of the population. Criticism from the opposition was (mis-)represented as threatening the Malay dominance or even as a plot to oust Islam from Malaysia. Christians are particularly affected by this tension since most Christians either belong to indigenous tribal groups or are of Chinese or Indian origin.

Pastor Raymond Koh was [abducted in broad daylight](#) on 13 February 2017, when his car was stopped in Petaling Jaya by three black SUVs and he was taken away to an unknown place. This sent shockwaves through the whole Christian and minority community, especially after it emerged that a pastor couple, Joshua and Ruth Hilmy, had already gone missing in November 2016. The fact that the police have still made [no tangible progress](#) concerning the abduction of Pastor Koh and have shown more interest in his alleged involvement in missionary activities, showed Christians the little interest government and authorities have in finding the truth. It is not just Christians who are targeted for such kidnapping - a civil society activist of Shiite faith was also abducted.

The corruption scandal (see next paragraph), was the final straw that broke UMNO's back. All efforts to cover up the scandal and to get all investigations stopped did not help soothe the public's worry and Prime Minister Razak was increasingly seen as being arrogant and not caring for the people's needs. The opposition, which was suffering from divisions, founded a new party and was elected in a landslide vote, pushing UMNO out of government for the first time since Malaysia's foundation in 1957. Reconciliation between long-term Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad (called Dr M and now 93 years old), and former Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim has given opposition forces [new hope](#) and one of the first decisions of the new government was to release Anwar Ibrahim from prison. He is most likely to become the new prime minister when he has recovered from his time in prison. As a

first step, he was elected to parliament in a landslide by-election, but announced that he does not plan to join government for the time-being.

The big corruption scandal concerning a development fund called "1MDB" has loomed like a sword of Damocles over the prime minister's head for years, especially as international investigations in Switzerland and [the US](#) are still ongoing. After the 2018 election, domestic investigations immediately resumed and several officers dismissed by Razak have been re-instated. Goods and cash worth approximately [273 million USD](#) were found at various properties belonging to Razak, when raids were carried out for finding evidence. More and more details are unearthed as international investigations continue and US American authorities indicted several individuals, among them a former high-ranking employer of investment bank Goldman Sachs.

Malaysia follows an "affirmative action policy" by which Bumiputera (the "sons of the soil" - i.e. Malay and indigenous citizens) receive state benefits when it comes to housing, schools and other government schemes. While in theory, (Christian) indigenous people in East Malaysia should benefit from this policy as well, in practice, this is rarely the case. As one Christian put it: "We are the bumi (= soil), they are the putra (= sons or princes)".

Christian communities and how they are affected

To better understand Christianity in Malaysia, an additional explanation is required at this point. For Malaysia, it can be helpful to make distinctions according to geographical distribution and origin. The majority of Christians come from a *Bumiputra* background, which literally translated reads "sons of the soil", meaning that they belong to the country and come from the indigenous tribal population. From the government's perspective, they qualify for affirmative action benefits such as discounted houses, scholarships etc., but in practice this only applies as long as the *Bumiputra* are not Christians. If they become Christians, their privileges are quickly withdrawn. *Non-Bumiputra* Christians come mainly from the Chinese and Indian ethnic minorities and are divided up into a plethora of different denominations, ranging in size from small house-churches to mega-churches. Finally, the geographical distribution is important as well. Most *Bumiputra* Christians are living in the states of Sabah and Sarawak; the latter still has a Christian majority. These states make up East Malaysia and are situated on the island of Borneo (which is shared with Brunei and Indonesia). To complicate the situation, many *Bumiputra* are migrating to West Malaysia for educational or economic reasons where it is especially hard for them to stay true to their Christian faith. Converts from a Muslim-Malay background complete the picture of the Malaysian church. These Christians face a high level of persecution as they not only leave their faith, but this decision is seen as acting against their very ethnicity and nation as well.

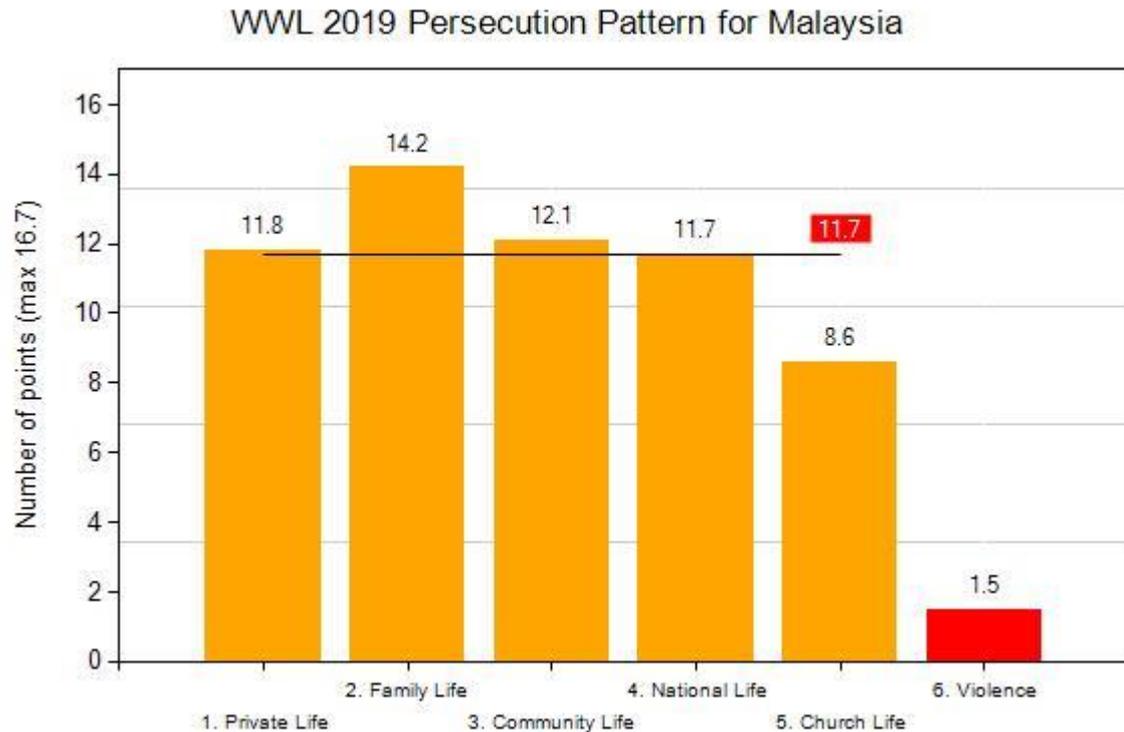
Communities of expatriate Christians: There are many nationalities who have their own Christian fellowships and are self-supporting. They struggle to obtain legal status at times, but are basically free to live their faith as long as they stay within their walls. Nepali and Vietnamese Christians in most cases join the Historical Christian communities.

Historical Christian communities: Examples are the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist or Lutheran churches and the Protestant Church in Sabah. These are less affected by persecution than Non-traditional Christian communities or converts, but they do suffer from discrimination.

Converts to Christianity: Christian converts from a Muslim background suffer most persecution, namely from family, friends, neighbors and the authorities.

Non-traditional Christian communities: Examples are Evangelical, Baptist and Pentecostal congregations, Assemblies of God, Salvation Army, Sabah Injil Borneo and others. They often face monitoring, discrimination, intimidation and harassment.

Pressure in the 5 spheres of life and violence



The WWL 2019 Persecution pattern for Malaysia shows:

- Overall, the pressure on Christians in Malaysia decreased in all *spheres of life*, causing the average pressure to go down from 12.3 in WWL 2018 to 11.7 in WWL 2019.
- Pressure is extreme and strongest in the *Family sphere of life*, and is at a very high level in the *Community, Private* and *National spheres of life*. The score for pressure in the *National sphere* was narrowly overtaken by the score in the *Private sphere*, reflecting the fact that in May 2018, a government with less *Dictatorial paranoia* took over. The pressure in the *Family, Community* and *Private spheres* points to problems faced by converts from Islam and other religions, driven as well by the country's Islamization policy. Pressure resulting from the persecution engine *Islamic oppression* is present in all spheres. Conservative Islamic groups and parties continue to be strong in Malaysia.
- The score for violence against Christians more than halved from 3.9 in WWL 2018 to 1.5 in WWL 2019. Apart from the abduction of certain Christians in recent years, persecution has rarely been violent in Malaysia.

Private sphere:

By law, Malay Muslims are not allowed to convert from Islam in any state except Sarawak. The Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) wants the penalty for apostasy to be death, but so far was not successful in its efforts. Malay converts cannot attend any public church activities. If they do so, they risk being caught by the authorities and the church attended will face serious consequences for welcoming them. Therefore, converts gather secretly in homes for all their Christian activities, away from the prying eyes

of government, community and the registered churches. Consequently, they have to be very careful in the way they worship, especially if they are the only Christians in their family. Bibles and other Christian materials have to be hidden carefully and can only be used with much caution as devout Muslim families will not tolerate it. Since Muslims who convert to Christianity are considered apostates, it is very risky for them to reveal their faith, as they will be punished or can be sent to an Islamic purification center where they are pressured into returning to Islam. Converts have been known to disappear from one day to the next with no-one knowing their whereabouts. According to a guideline from the Fatwa Department, Christmas trees and other decorations that have come to symbolize Christmas celebrations around the world should not be used if a Muslim plans to attend a Christmas event. It also forbids Muslims from attending Christmas functions that have religious songs or the use of the cross, or "speech or gestures in the form of a praise to the non-Muslim religion". However, it was not mentioned whether failing to do so would have any consequences.

Family sphere:

According to law, children born to couples with one Muslim parent (either by birth or conversion), are automatically registered as Muslims. There have been many cases like this in Sabah for indigenous Christians. As Bumiputras, most of them have the word 'bin' or 'binti' in their names which leads the officers to believe they are Muslims and put 'Islam' as their religion in the MyKads (Identity card). This has been one of the main problems Bumiputra Christians have been facing but some of them do not attempt to 'fight' over it as the process is long and arduous and there have been very few successful results. Every Malaysian has an identity card and one's religion is recorded on this card by the Federal Registration Department. Once a citizen is registered as a Muslim, this can only be changed after long court proceedings - [with no high likelihood of success](#). In a landmark ruling in January 2018, the Federal Court declared that the [consent of both parents](#) was needed to convert a minor's faith, thus the unilateral child conversion is no longer allowed (Indira Gandhi case). This decision was reiterated in October 2018 in a [further case](#), adding pressure on the new government to close existing legal loopholes despite pressure by radical Islamic groups and parties.

Malaysia seems to be the only country in the world where a religious conversion changes ethnicity as well. There are reported cases where children of converted natives suddenly 'professed' to be Muslim Malays when their real ethnicity is Iban. When asked why, they answered, "Because our (Muslim) teachers told us so!" The registration department also issues death certificates. If records show that the person who died had been registered as a Muslim, the authorities will inform the Islamic religious authority. If the burial rites are not celebrated according to Islam, this Islamic authority has the right to take the body away from the non-Muslim family so that they can perform Islamic rites for the deceased.

Christians with a Muslim background can also be forced to divorce (if married) and lose their inheritance rights, once discovered. Organizing a baptism, Christian wedding or funeral can become difficult or even impossible. Converts can be kept isolated by their families, or expelled from the family home, or even sent to Islamic purification (meaning re-education) camps, although this rarely happens. Children of converts have to attend Islamic education in schools and there are reports that Christian children are put under pressure to convert to Islam. Sometimes, parents who have converted to Christianity have to take their child out of school as it may unintentionally talk about its parents' faith.

Some Christians from indigenous tribes, especially in Sabah, are converted to Islam by trickery. To accept financial help from the government, some of them handed in their identity card and signed a form not knowing that this was a declaration to convert to Islam. When they got back their card back, they realized that their religion has been changed to Islam. When they tried to reverse this, they were

told by the Federal Registration Department that their religious status can only be changed if approval is given by the Sharia courts, which is impossible to obtain.

Community sphere:

Christians are monitored by state authorities as well as by local Muslim communities and Malay Islamic rights groups (e.g. Perkasa and ISMA). In remote areas in Sabah and Sarawak, Malay communities have access to water and electricity, but some known Christian native communities are denied such access. For qualifying for higher education and scholarships, Christians need to overcome far higher hurdles than Muslims due to the "affirmative action policy" in favor of Malays. Another part of this policy is that ethnic Malays get a 10% price reduction when they buy property while others need to pay the full price. This can be regarded as an indirect *jizya* tax, as far as Chinese and Indian Christians are considered, as they do not qualify for such benefits. Muslims are exempt from certain taxes because they pay the *zakat* and a reduced income tax, while others pay the full income tax. As for private businesses (for example owned by Chinese Christians), to get government contracts it is required by law that the owners must have *bumiputra* partners. To get round this, some companies are known to have 'bumiputra partners' on paper only. Converts face strong pressure from family, friends and neighbors to recant their Christian faith. Christians experience discrimination in their business lives too and will not make it to higher positions in government employment. For non-Malay students, access to several universities is limited. In a news article in February 2018, only one student from UiTM (a government university reserved for *bumiputras*) openly supported the idea of opening the universities to non-*bumiputras* during a forum. He expressed the opinion that non-*bumiputras* also had a right to education, but was met with angry and racist remarks from his classmates. The head of the class even said: "Do you think that if UiTM opens its doors for the non-*bumiputras*, you would be here? If the Indians and Chinese get into UiTM, you guys will never be able to finish your studies".

National sphere:

The Constitution defines ethnic Malays as Muslims. That is why Malays do not have the religious liberty to leave Islam and embrace another religion. In the WWL 2019 reporting period, the Federal Court ruled that jurisdiction on the validity of a conversion lies with the Sharia and not the civil courts, leaving converts effectively without legal representation for the time-being. The Constitution also prohibits adherents of other religions from propagating their religion among Malay Muslims. Yet it allows Muslims to propagate Islam all over the country. Furthermore, Sharia law is in place in conjunction with civil law, and the proposed *hudud*-bill which plans to allow Islamic corporal punishment in the state of Kelantan is still pending in parliament. On websites run by Malay Islamic rights groups and in government-owned media, Christians are frequently slandered, for example by spreading rumors that Christians and Jews want to take over Malaysia. "Christian missionaries" are accused of stirring up social unrest and prominent Christian politician Hannah Yeoh has been publicly accused of crusading for Christianity in elections. Former Federal Territories Minister Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor urged churches not to speak untruths in their sermons. He has also claimed that Christians practice a "caste" system, where the clergy is regarded as sacred.

The country's harsh sedition laws have drawn much condemnation from international observers. Although the law bans any action, speech or publication that brings contempt against the government or Malaysia's nine royal sultans and prohibits people from inciting hatred between different races and religions, it is used one-sidedly. Those who instigate hatred and stoke racial and religious sentiments against Christians are never charged for sedition. Questioning the special position of the ethnic Malay majority and the natives of Sabah and Sarawak falls under sedition as well. Those who have spoken out against the government have mostly had to face sedition charges too. The new government tried

to lift the sedition laws, but was stopped by the opposition which still holds a majority in the second chamber of parliament. It is, however, likely that the new government will not implement the law strictly. Indigenous people face aggressive, deliberate attempts to convert them to Islam, especially those who migrate to West Malaysia as it is easy to take advantage of their social uprooting and their economic vulnerability. In the long term, the Christian population may shrink because of this, especially in East Malaysia.

In another surprising move, the new government called upon non-Malay and non-Muslims to serve as minister for justice, attorney-general and chief justice. This has led to accusations that the Muslim cause is lost and Malaysia will now be "Christianized". A member of the opposition even claimed that Prime Minister Mohamed Mahathir is '[in the hands of the Christian DAP](#)'. Giving another sign for reform, the new government also announced in October 2018 to [ratify international human rights conventions](#).

Church sphere:

Most non-traditional Christian communities are not registered as churches but operate as organizations or community centers, buying shop or factory premises to operate from. Whilst most churches are monitored, they do not face restrictions regarding their meetings. However, openly integrating Malay converts is impossible. All printing of Christian materials requires permission from the government. Restrictions are imposed on importing Bahasa Malaysia materials and the Bible and Christian Malay books from Indonesia are banned. In 2015, the government issued a SOP (standard operating procedure) according to which [all imported Christian publications](#) (including the Malay Bible) are to be controlled by the Quranic Division of the Home Ministry. Despite objections from church leaders, the government went ahead with its implementation. Moreover, the use of the word "Allah" for God is practically banned for Christians, after the High Court banned the Christian usage of the term "Allah" for God, implemented against a Catholic newspaper (notwithstanding the fact that this term has been used for hundreds of years in Bibles and other Christian publications and is used in the Bahasa Indonesia Bible without any problem). A proposal made during the Jill Ireland case in November 2017 requested that the country's (Islamic) language institute issue a [new Bible translation](#) without the word "Allah". It also revealed the Islamic authorities mindset when they proposed getting the state authorities to do the translation of the Bible - instead of Christians. Another "Allah" case, brought by the Sabah church, is still pending before the courts.

Violence:

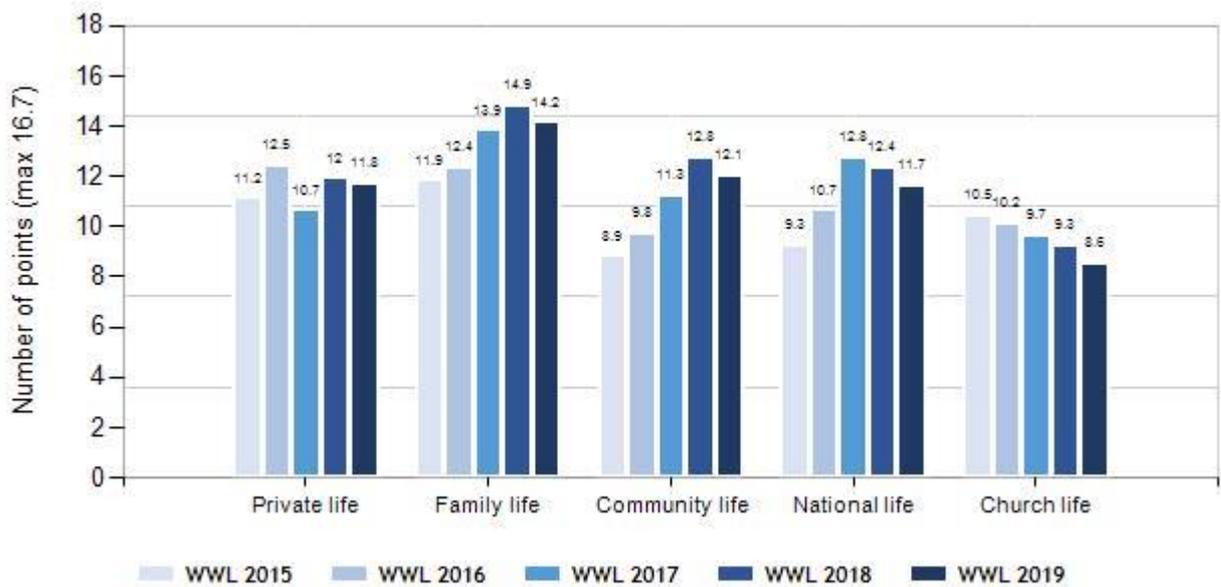
The violence score is low and includes the ongoing cases of abduction. Pastor Joshua Hilmy and his wife Ruth have been [missing](#) for more than two years now, after they disappeared from their home in the state of Selangor. Pastor Raymond Koh was abducted while driving on a busy road in Petaling Jaya and is missing since February 2017. His whereabouts are still unknown and there is speculation that the [government must have been involved](#).

For a summary of the statistics on violence, please see the Short and Simple Persecution Profile section above.

5 Year trends

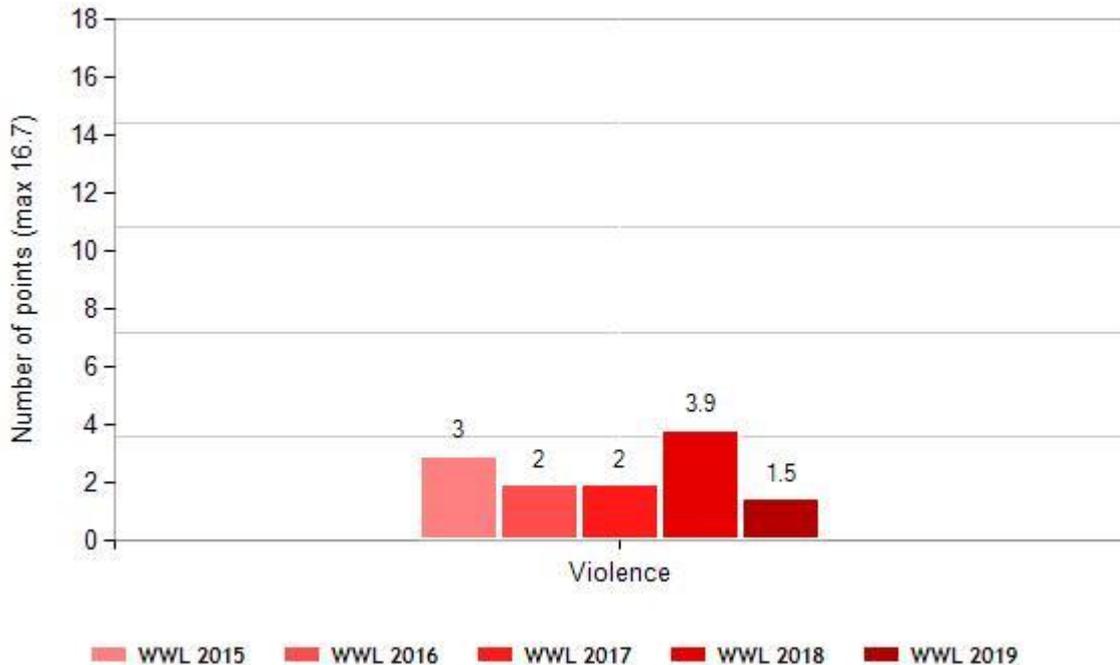
The five year trend for Malaysia shows an unstable situation. In Chart 1, the level of pressure in *Church life* decreased in all five reporting periods (reflecting an increasing boldness in church activity more than any changes occurring due to government or society). The levels of pressure in all other spheres decreased since WWL 2018, but are at a higher level than in WWL 2015. This is also reflected in the average level of pressure as shown in Chart 2. Whereas the level returned to the average of 2017, after having peaked in WWL 2018, it is considerably higher than it was in 2015. Seen over five years, the situation for Christians in Malaysia has clearly become more difficult. After a spike in violence in 2018, due to the (still unsolved) abduction of three Christians, the violence score returned back to its "normal" lower level.

WWL 2015 - WWL 2019 Persecution Profile for Malaysia (Spheres of life)



WWL 2015 - WWL 2019 Persecution Pattern history: Malaysia	Average pressure over 5 Spheres of life
2019	11.7
2018	12.3
2017	11.7
2016	11.1
2015	10.3

WWL 2015 - WWL 2019 Persecution Profile for Malaysia (Violence)



Gender specific persecution

If a woman or a girl converts to Christianity and family or community find out about it, she is usually threatened with rape and/or forced into marriage with a Muslim. As for Muslims, the minimum legal age for marriage in the Islamic family laws is 18 (male) and 16 (female), but those below these ages can still marry if they get the consent of a Sharia judge. Thus it is possible for children in Malaysia to get married if permission is given by a Sharia judge. This law can make convert women/children more vulnerable. In the WWL 2019 reporting period, a case of an [eleven year old Thai girl](#) (not a Christian), married to a 41 year old Malaysian man led to a public outcry. This highlights that under age marriages are still taking place in considerable numbers, even if amendments to raise the marrying age to 18 years old are underway, but there are still special provisions in this law which give special discretion to the Sharia courts.

Civil society organizations stated in a February 2018 [CEDAW](#) report that "Muslim women now enjoy far less rights in marriage, divorce, guardianship of their children and inheritance than their non-Muslim counterparts". The report also stated: "Other areas of gross discrimination against women under the Islamic Family Laws include divorce, polygamy and child marriage." This law can make convert women/children be more vulnerable; if their Christian faith is discovered, they can be forced into marriage with a Muslim.

Persecution of other religious minorities

The Muslim minority of Shiites is also severely persecuted in Malaysia, as was illustrated by the [abduction](#) of one of their activists (in April 2017). Hindu believers, adherents of traditional Chinese religions and Buddhists are also affected by the government's preferential treatment of ethnic Malays.

Future outlook

The political outlook: The new government faces challenges on multiple fronts and its biggest task will be arguably to fulfil economic expectations despite a restricted budget. As the new government has called into its ranks more non-Muslims (including Christians) than ever before, they could be used as scapegoats if times get tough. UMNO and PAS, now both in opposition, will decry everything they perceive as a threat to Islam or the predominant position of Malays. Finally, it remains to be seen if, when and how smoothly the transition of power from Dr M to Anwar Ibrahim will take place and in which direction the new government will be steered.

The outlook for Christians - through the lens of:

- *Islamic oppression:* The ongoing saga of introducing Sharia law in the state of Kelantan shows that the route UMNO was taking has failed. UMNO was wooing conservative Muslims, bridging the gap to conservative Muslim PAS, and trying to exploit the already big ethnic and religious gap the country is suffering from. Elections in 2018 saw UMNO voted out of power and PAS only making moderate gains. Nevertheless, the [defeat](#) of UMNO does not mean that conservative Islamic parties are out of the picture for good. The field of tension the new government moves in is well illustrated by the following: At the 73rd UN General Assembly in October 2018, the Prime minister made a commitment to “ratify all remaining core UN instruments related to the protection of human rights”. This is the first time that a 'promise' has been made regarding Malaysia's commitment to ratify international human rights conventions and would include, among others, the Convention on Civil and Political Rights. However, conservative Muslim politicians reminded the government of the Federal Constitution's Article 153 which gives preference to one ethnic group (namely the Malay and the Bumiputra), adding this could run contrary to Article 2 of the UN convention calling for full and equal rights and freedom. In a first setback, the government announced on 23 November 2018 that it will [not ratify](#) the International Convention on the Eradication of Racial Discrimination, stating: “The government will continue to defend the Federal Constitution that contains the social contract that has been agreed upon by representatives from all races during the formation of this country.”

A shift towards more rigid and political Islamic practice is taking place with an influx of radical Islamic scholars returning from Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Many of these Malay scholars have joined the government as members of the Department of Islamic Advancement of Malaysia to preach in mosques and spread Islam. Islamization of native Christians from Sabah and Sarawak (East Malaysia) is happening at a fast rate. Sarawak still enjoys a greater degree of religious freedom compared to West Malaysia (it is the only place where Islam is not the state religion). But once the population demography tilts towards Islam, more Islamic laws will undoubtedly be set in place. There are reports from remote areas where uneducated indigenous people in Sabah and Sarawak are "drugged" or people are made drunk and forced to sign documents, after which they turn out to have become Muslims. If this practice is going to change anytime soon has to be seen. The Malaysian Islamic State group (IS) leader in Syria [was killed](#) by a drone attack in April 2017, which is slowing down recruiting efforts by IS. The militant group staged a first attack in Malaysia in June 2016 by detonating a grenade in Selangor, injuring eight. However, there are dozens and maybe hundreds of other suspects with links to IS. The fact that in neighboring Philippines IS-related groups succeeded in capturing the city of Marawi in May 2017 sent shockwaves through the region and put all security services on high alert. One of the leaders of the insurgency, who was killed in the fighting, was a Malaysian citizen. Malaysia started joint sea-patrols with Indonesia and the

Philippines to counter Islamic militant activity in the Sulu Sea, but the threat is growing and more needs to be done. Consequently, the situation in Malaysia will remain volatile, as its main persecution engine *Islamic oppression* remains active, leading to ongoing challenges and threats for the Christian minority.

- *Dictatorial paranoia*: Although a partly brand-new coalition of parties took over government in May 2018, there are a lot of old faces around as well. Dr M himself, but Anwar Ibrahim as well, have track records of traits which fit well into the definition of *Dictatorial paranoia*. The first signs the government is sending are positive and therefore it can be hoped that the history of clinging to power at all costs is over. However, this will only be seen in the long term. Minorities will watch the new government's announcements and policies closely, particularly their implementation.

Conclusion: 2018 will always be remembered as the year when the electorate discovered its power in Malaysia. However, there are at least three reasons why little is likely to change for the Christian minority with the new government in power: First, although Mahathir refers to the radical PAS politicians (who strived to introduce Sharia law in Kelantan State) as Taliban and opposes them, he himself was responsible for introducing the affirmative action policy for Malays and will not change it. Secondly, he has announced he wants to limit Chinese economic influence, which is likely to affect the Christian population as well. Thirdly, he intends to set up a commission to investigate the major corruption case of 1MDB, but has not made any mention of re-opening government investigations concerning the abduction of [Pastor Raymond Koh](#) (and others), particularly as regards the alleged complicity by state security organs.

Another challenge for the future could come from a re-organized UMNO, which may well resort to more sectarian rhetoric in the future. A taste of this already emerged when a member of the opposition accused Prime Minister Mohamed Mahathir of being '[in the hands of the Christian DAP](#)'. With the new minister for justice, the new attorney-general and the new chief justice all being non-Malay and non-Muslim, this has led to claims that the Muslim cause is lost and Malaysia will now be 'Christianized'. Of course, this is by no means true, but it is likely that the country will hear more such rhetoric. Interestingly, Wan Salim Wan Mohd Noor, the Mufti of Penang State, has said that Islam does not prohibit the appointment of non-Muslims to ministerial or legal posts, a view strongly opposed by more radical Muslims. In July 2018, a mere two months after the elections and at a time when the new government was still settling in, a coalition of more than 300 NGOs claimed that the Malay majority [is already feeling side-lined](#). This shows the direction in which the opposition now seems to be heading. More such claims and ethnic and religious divisive speech can be expected.

But observers are not just seeing problems in the opposition. All current positive signs and developments in the ruling coalition need to be viewed with a critical eye. Malaysia does indeed have a historic chance to re-build the country and make it a truly inclusive society to the benefit of all citizens, no matter what ethnic or religious minorities or majorities they belong to. However, the probable new prime minister, Anwar Ibrahim, who made a re-appearance on the political stage by winning by-elections in a landslide vote in October 2018 (after leaving prison only in Spring 2018), is a politician with many facets. This has led observers to ask "[Is he for real?](#)". When he was previously an important minister, Ibrahim encouraged actions against all kinds of minorities and always backed the "affirmative action policy". Thus the wave of optimism and hopes for change in the wake of the May 2018 election results may turn out to be premature. It should also not be forgotten that Islamic

conservative PAS rules in several states and has not really been weakened. Christians and other minorities thus seem set to face a volatile future.

External Links - WWL 2019: Persecution Dynamics

- Persecution engines: consent of both parents
https://apnews.com/e092a86857ed4cde8981ac8de183b5ee?utm_source=Pew+Research+Center&utm_campaign=7c8450d18d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_01_29&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_3e953b9b70-7c8450d18d-399904105
- Persecution engines: special department
<http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/malaysias-agc-sets-up-unit-to-address-syariah-law-issues>
- Persecution engines: question of access
<http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/court-sets-march-29-for-case-management-on-allah-ban-discovery-application#5jRt8joFLyZRAsWt.97>
- Persecution engines: Slurs
<https://www.malaymail.com/s/1636227/hannah-yeoh-judge-me-based-on-my-work-not-my-faith>
- Persecution engines: not to show pictures of dogs
https://edition.cnn.com/2018/02/13/asia/malaysia-religion-year-of-the-dog-intl/index.html?utm_source=Pew+Research+Center&utm_campaign=18f14166f6-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_02_14&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_3e953b9b70-18f14166f6-399904105
- Drivers of persecution: quoted
<http://www.asiaone.com/malaysia/pas-president-under-fire-over-christian-missionaries-remark>
- Context: abducted in broad daylight
<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/03/update-son-of-abducted-malaysian-pastor-suspects-he-may-have-been-murdered/>
- Context: no tangible progress
<http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/wife-of-pastor-missing-for-200-days-pens-scathing-letter-to-igp>
- Context: new hope
<http://www.rsis.edu.sg/rsis-publication/rsis/co17135-sealing-the-mahathir-anwar-alliance-will-they-unseat-najib/>
- Context: the US
<http://www.benarnews.org/english/news/malaysian/1mdb-08112017204444.html>
- Context: 273 million USD
<https://asiancorrespondent.com/2018/06/malaysian-police-seize-273-million-in-goods-from-former-pm-najibs-properties/#6Ovaq1FsmeEYE3DH.97>

- Pressure in the 5 spheres of life and violence: with no high likelihood of success
<http://www.bpnews.net/51377/erlc-video-malaysian-liberty-burdened-by-id-cards>
- Pressure in the 5 spheres of life and violence: consent of both parents
https://apnews.com/e092a86857ed4cde8981ac8de183b5ee?utm_source=Pew+Research+Center&utm_campaign=7c8450d18d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_01_29&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_3e953b9b70-7c8450d18d-399904105
- Pressure in the 5 spheres of life and violence: further case
<https://www.ucanews.com/news/malaysian-court-bars-unilateral-child-conversions/83650>
- Pressure in the 5 spheres of life and violence: in the hands of the Christian DAP'
<https://www.malaymail.com/s/1651529/claiming-christian-dap-in-control-of-dr-m-umno-man-plans-parliament-protest>
- Pressure in the 5 spheres of life and violence: ratify international human rights conventions
<https://www.malaymail.com/s/1684667/suhakam-path-clear-for-putrajaya-to-ratify-conventions-against-torture-diss>
- Pressure in the 5 spheres of life and violence: all imported Christian publications
<https://www.malaysiakini.com/letters/302177>
- Pressure in the 5 spheres of life and violence: new Bible translation
<http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/citing-sacred-patrimony-churches-reject-unauthorised-dbp-translation-of-bib>
- Pressure in the 5 spheres of life and violence: missing
<http://www.benarnews.org/english/news/malaysian/missing-persons-04142017152813.html>
- Pressure in the 5 spheres of life and violence: government must have been involved
<http://www.ucanews.com/news/mysterious-disappearances-of-pastors-activists-in-malaysia/78962>
- Gender specific persecution: eleven year old Thai girl
<https://www.malaymail.com/s/1659939/other-ministries-agencies-not-pulling-weight-in-child-bride-case-hannah-yeo>
- Gender specific persecution: CEDAW
<https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>
- Persecution of other religious minorities: abduction
<https://asiancorrespondent.com/2017/04/malaysia-5th-activist-mysteriously-disappears-calls-mount-police-action/>
- Future outlook: defeat
<http://www.newmandala.org/struggle-islamisms-new-malaysia/>
- Future outlook: not ratify
<https://www.malaymail.com/s/1696399/malaysia-decides-not-to-ratify-icerd>
- Future outlook: was killed
<http://www.benarnews.org/english/news/malaysian/terror-recruit-08222017160847.html>

- Future outlook: Pastor Raymond Koh
<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/01/malaysian-pastor-raymond-kohs-kidnap-inquiry-halted/>
- Future outlook: in the hands of the Christian DAP'
<https://www.malaymail.com/s/1651529/claiming-christian-dap-in-control-of-dr-m-umno-man-plans-parliament-protest>
- Future outlook: is already feeling side-lined.
<https://www.benarnews.org/english/news/malaysian/malaysia-politics-07272018173848.html>
- Future outlook: "Is he for real?"
<https://www.ucanews.com/news/anwar-ibrahim-is-he-for-real/83670>

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