



# Eritrea



On The World Watch List

**“In prison, one of my main purposes as a Christian was to evangelise.”**

– Musse\*, a believer imprisoned for their faith.

Score: 88/100

Extreme

Violence:		66%
Church Life:		92%
National Life:		95%
Community Life:		95%
Family Life:		95%
Private Life:		93%

Region:	Africa
Leader:	President Isaias Afwerki
Persecution Level:	Extreme
Christian Population:	2,552,000 (47%)
Main Religion:	Islam
Source of Persecution:	Denominational Protectionism

## Division In The Eritrean Church

Christians from non-traditional denominations face the harshest persecution in Eritrea, both from the government and from the Eritrean Orthodox Church (EOC). The EOC is the only Christian denomination recognized by the government, and it is tightly controlled by those in power. The authorities monitor phone calls, church-related activity and conduct countless raids, targeting Christians.

Christians who have converted from Islam are often denied access to crucial social services. Believers can be arrested and imprisoned without trial and many Christians are held in inhumane prisons because of their faith – their families often don't know if they're still alive.

## Danger For Women

Unlike most countries, women in Eritrea are subjected to obligatory military service. Christian women who are conscripted are vulnerable to gender-based violence. They can often be detained or imprisoned and experience excessive violence from prison guards. There is little legal protection against physical abuse, loss of child custody or forced divorce for Christian women.

\*Name changed for security purposes.

## How can we pray for Eritrea?

Pray the faith of local Christians would grow through persecution and affliction.

Pray that Eritrean churches and church leaders would have wisdom when engaging with their government about religious freedom, and be unified despite denomination.

Ask God to comfort women and children, who have their husband or father in prison for following Jesus.

Download the full WWL report at [opendoors.org.au/resources](https://opendoors.org.au/resources) or [opendoors.org.nz/resources](https://opendoors.org.nz/resources)