

Bonner Querschnitte

Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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Audit statement of the World Watch List 2023 published

The IIRF releases the audit statement of the World Watch List 2023 of Open Doors International

(Bonn, 27.01.2023) Each year, since 2014, the International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF) systematically reviews the annual issue of the World Watch List of Open Doors International. The audits are conducted by a team of scholars that are experts in religious freedom research. In each audit, these scholars take a thorough look at the process of data gathering, evaluation and scoring of the World Watch List.



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Audit Statement on the outcomes of the Open Doors World Watch List 2023

Thursday, 12 January, 2023

Audit Coordinator: Dr Dennis P. Petri (International Director, IIRF)

The audit of the 2023 edition of the World Watch List (WWL) of Open Doors, which is conducted annually by the International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF), has confirmed that the World Watch Research team has upheld the quality standards of the previous years.

The audit consisted of two parts. In the first, the team of auditors assessed whether the WWL methodology was applied correctly. We found that the WWL 2023 complies with all its methodological requirements, is based on a broad range of sources, and its conclusions are duly substantiated. It should be noted that the degree of certainty of each country score always depends on the depth and quality of the information received in the reporting period, and that this may vary from country to country.

In the second part of the audit, a determination was made as to whether the scores and write-ups adequately reflected the situation in the country, based on the knowledge and experience of the auditors. We concluded that, overall, the WWL 2023 provides an accurate, balanced, and detailed account of the discrimination and persecution of Christians in the world.

The IIRF team of auditors comprised six high level academics from different disciplines and nationalities. They each have active expertise on religious freedom in the countries and regions they audited.

The most recent audit statement (available in English and German), published on 12 January 2023, confirms that the World Watch Research team has upheld the quality standards of the previous years.

Dr. Dennis P. Petri, the International Director of the IIRF and the Coordinator of this year's audit says: "We commend World Watch Research on the excellent quality of its research and the way its team cooperated with the audit. They have shown great commitment to academic integrity and again delivered a high-quality product."

The World Watch List includes a ranking of the top 50 countries where it is most difficult to be a Christian. It is one of the most quoted instruments for measuring discrimination of Christians. Detailed information about the 2023 issue of the World Watch List, its methodology and its underlying research can be found at World Watch Research (www.opendoorsanalytical.org; password = freedom).

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missiotop.org

Evangelical Review of Theology (New York, Bonn)
theology.worldea.org/evangelical-review-of-theology

Giving Hands – International Charity (Bonn)
gebende-haende.de

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worldea.org/what-we-do/global-theology/

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islaminstute.net

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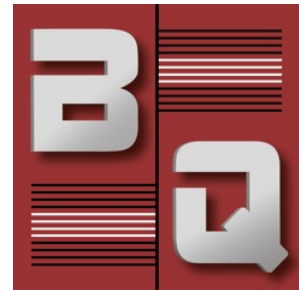
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In 2012, the IIRF advised World Watch Research, the research department of Open Doors International, when it comprehensively revised its methodology. A detailed report of this exercise can be found in *'Measuring persecution: The new questionnaire design of the World Watch List'* (see link below).

Scholars connected to the IIRF have specialized in the assessment and critical analysis of religious freedom datasets. For some examples, you can refer the IIRF publications: *'The Impact of Religious Freedom Research'* and *'The Tyranny of Religious Freedom Rankings'*.

The following is the full audit statement for 2023

The audit consisted of two parts. In the first, the team of auditors assessed whether the WWL methodology was applied correctly. We found that the WWL 2023 complies with all its methodological requirements, is based on a broad range of sources, and its conclusions are duly substantiated. It should be noted that the degree of certainty of each country score always depends on the depth and quality of the information received in the reporting period; and that this may vary from country to country.

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The IIRF team of auditors comprised six high level academics from different disciplines and nationalities. They each have active expertise on religious freedom in the countries and regions they audited. The six countries selected for the audit were carefully chosen from the Top 50 of the WWL. None of these countries had been subject to audits in previous years. We also made sure that the work of all the members of the World Watch Research team was audited.

The materials included in the audit were the final questionnaires for the countries considered, the accompanying country dossiers, and any additional information provided by the researchers of World Watch Research. Additional statements, documents, or interpretations by Open Doors International or the Open Doors national affiliates based on or associated with the publication of the WWL 2023 remain outside the scope of this audit statement.

A detailed audit report has been submitted to World Watch Research with recommendations for potential future improvements and will be discussed with the members of the research team.

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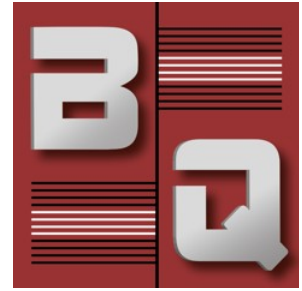
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Downloads and Links:

- Audit statement of the World Watch List 2023 ([pdf](#))
- Audit statement of the World Watch List 2023 in German ([pdf](#))
- Website of the International Institute for Religious Freedom: <https://iirf.global>
- World Watch List 2023 website: <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/persecution/countries/>
- 'Measuring persecution: The new questionnaire design of the World Watch List': <https://ijrf.org/index.php/home/article/view/80>
- 'The Impact of Religious Freedom Research': <https://ijrf.org/index.php/home/issue/view/vol12>
- 'The Tyranny of Religious Freedom Rankings': <https://iirf.global/publications/reports/the-tyranny-of-religious-freedom-rankings/>

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