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## FREEDOM IN THE WORLD 2024

# Myanmar

# 8

NOT FREE

/100

<u>Political Rights</u>	0 /40
<u>Civil Liberties</u>	8 /60

### LAST YEAR'S SCORE & STATUS

9 /100

Not Free

Global freedom statuses are calculated on a weighted scale. [See the methodology.](#)

## Overview

Military commanders seized control of Myanmar's government in February 2021, ending a period of power sharing between military and civilian leaders under a 2008 constitution that had been drafted by a previous junta. Since the coup, the military has violently suppressed dissent and battled a sizable armed resistance movement that has widespread popular support and includes militias associated with ethnic minority groups. The National League for Democracy (NLD), which led the civilian



### On Myanmar

See all data, scores & information on this country or territory.

government before the coup and won a sweeping victory in the November 2020 elections, serves as the political backbone of a self-declared National Unity Government (NUG). Protected by the armed resistance groups, the NUG exercises partial or effective control over a growing swathe of territory outside major population centers. Millions of people remain displaced or have been newly displaced by the ongoing civil war, with many seeking refuge abroad.

## Key Developments in 2023

- The military employed an increasingly brutal range of tactics to quash resistance activities. By the end of the year, nearly 4,300 people had been killed, more than 25,600 had been arrested, and more than 8,400 had been sentenced by military authorities since the coup, including 162 death sentences.
- A restrictive new political parties law was introduced in January, and 40 opposition parties, including the NLD, were officially dissolved in March after they refused to comply with its provisions.
- Longtime NLD leader Aung San Suu Kyi, who was arrested by the military during the coup and later convicted in multiple politically motivated trials, was moved to house arrest in July and received pardons for five of the 19 spurious charges against her in August. Her appeals of six convictions were denied in October.
- Officials led by Min Aung Hlaing—the armed forces commander in chief and prime minister of the military government—extended the junta-imposed state of emergency for a further six months from August, citing the ongoing fighting and instability. The extension also had the effect of delaying elections.
- The military escalated its attacks in ethnic-minority areas as well as in Sagaing and Magway Regions, which are populated mostly by the ethnic Bamar majority.

[See More >](#)

### Country Facts

#### Population

**54,180,000**

#### Region

**Asia-Pacific**

#### Global Freedom Score

**8 / 100**    **Not Free**

#### Internet Freedom Score

**10 / 100**  
**Not Free**

### Other Years

2023

Scorched-earth tactics and punitive air strikes helped to displace an additional 1.1 million civilians during the year. However, fierce resistance and an October offensive led by ethnic minority militias, also known as ethnic armed organizations (EAOs), weakened or broke the military's grip in several areas, particularly in the northeast.

## Political Rights

### A. Electoral Process

**A1** 0-4 pts

**Was the current head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections?**

**0** / 4

The political order created by the 2008 constitution, which divided power between the military and elected civilian leaders, was overturned by a February 2021 coup. Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, head of the armed forces, seized control and established a military-dominated junta, the State Administration Council (SAC), to run the country, with himself as chairman. Later that year he also took the post of prime minister in an SAC-backed interim government.

President Win Myint and State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi, both civilians supported by the NLD, were detained in the early hours of the coup. First Vice President Myint Swe, a military nominee, was quickly installed as acting president and then declared a state of emergency, formally handing power to Min Aung Hlaing and the armed forces. Win Myint and Aung San Suu Kyi have since been convicted on spurious charges ranging from incitement against the military to violating pandemic restrictions. In July 2023, Aung San Suu Kyi was moved from prison to house arrest, and in early August she was pardoned on five of the 19 charges for which she had been convicted,

reducing her 33-year prison sentence by six years.

**A2** 0-4 pts

<b>Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?</b>	<b>0 / 4</b>
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Under the 2008 constitution, the bicameral Assembly of the Union consisted of the 440-seat lower House of Representatives and the 224-seat upper House of Nationalities. Representatives served five-year terms. A quarter of the seats in both houses were reserved for the military and filled through appointment by the head of the armed forces. The remainder were filled through direct elections in a first-past-the-post system.

Though the 2020 parliamentary elections were recognized as credible, they featured significant flaws, including the exclusion of many Muslim candidates and the disenfranchisement of hundreds of thousands of people from the Rohingya ethnic minority; the cancellation by the Union Election Commission (UEC) of voting in conflict-affected districts; limited access of opposition parties to state-run media; and pandemic-related restrictions on in-person campaigning. The governing NLD won a convincing majority, but the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) refused to accept the results, alleging widespread fraud.

In February 2021, hours before the new representatives were to convene and choose new executive officials, the military seized control, dissolved the parliament, and detained or placed under house arrest hundreds of elected representatives. In July 2023, the military government confirmed the indefinite postponement of elections, which had initially been set for August, and extended—effective August 1—the state of emergency for a further six months.

**A3** 0-4 pts

**Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies?**

0/4

Various features of the electoral framework undermined the democratic nature of recent elections before the 2021 coup. These included the military's role in presidential nominations and appointments to both chambers of parliament, the UEC's lack of independence, and rigid citizenship laws and excessive residency requirements that prevented large numbers of people from voting or standing for office.

After seizing power in February 2021, the military leadership justified its rejection of the 2020 elections by citing the USDP's fraud allegations, flaws in electoral administration, and the NLD's "failure" to address alleged voter-list discrepancies. The military regime also dissolved the UEC before reinstating it with all new members. A UEC deputy director who testified for the prosecution in a 2022 election-fraud trial against Win Myint and Aung San Suu Kyi was reportedly assassinated by a resistance group in April 2023. The extension of the state of emergency in August 2023 and the associated postponement of elections raised further doubts about the military's commitment to restore electoral processes.

## B. Political Pluralism and Participation

**B1** 0-4 pts

**Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system free of undue obstacles to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?**

1/4

Party competition in the lead-up to the 2020 elections was robust, with 7,000 candidates from more than 90 parties participating. Political parties continued to function after the 2021 coup, though prominent political leaders have been arrested by the military regime, and some have been convicted of spurious criminal offenses.

The 2008 constitution contains a requirement that political parties be loyal to the state, which carries the potential for abuse, and other laws allow for the deregistration of political parties that accept support from foreign governments or religious bodies, or that are deemed to have abused religion for political purposes.

A new law imposed by the military regime in January 2023 compelled political parties to reregister within 60 days and forbade anyone convicted of a crime from joining a party, effectively disqualifying a number of political leaders. When dozens of parties and groups, including the NLD, refused to comply, they were formally dissolved in March, though the measure had no practical effect in areas outside the military's control.

**B2** 0-4 pts

<p><b>Is there a realistic opportunity for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections?</b></p>	<p><b>1 / 4</b></p>
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The military's constitutional prerogatives, as well as its close ties to the USDP, limited the degree to which any other force could secure control over the executive or the legislature through elections prior to the 2021 coup. However, the coup leaders may have acted in response to the NLD's capture of a convincing parliamentary majority in the November 2020 elections.

Min Aung Hlaing has repeatedly declared that new elections would be delayed until the country is "peaceful." However, the NUG and its diverse armed supporters have continued to gain

strength as an alternative power base, and they have pledged to establish a democratic political system.

**B3** 0-4 pts

<b>Are the people's political choices free from domination by forces that are external to the political sphere, or by political forces that employ extrapolitical means?</b>	<b>0/4</b>
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The military leadership maintained considerable power over political affairs even before the 2021 coup, in which it effectively quashed the results of the November 2020 elections. Since then, the SAC junta has consistently used harsh tactics to suppress civilian opposition in areas under its control, including the arrest and sentencing of political leaders and protesters, excessive violence and mass killings, and custodial abuse. In September 2023, the NLD's Human Rights Documentation Team estimated that more than 1,900 party members had been arrested, of whom at least 1,269 remained in detention, including 73 elected members of parliament. It also reported that at least 100 NLD members, including three former legislators, had been killed. The military continues to wage war against armed resistance groups across the country, further reducing the space for peaceful political activity.

**B4** 0-4 pts

<b>Do various segments of the population (including ethnic, racial, religious, gender, LGBT+, and other relevant groups) have full political rights and electoral opportunities?</b>	<b>1/4</b>
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Members of Myanmar's Buddhist and ethnic Bamar majority hold most senior leadership positions, including in major national political parties, the pre-2021 civilian government, and the military. Members of ethnic and religious minority groups have historically faced restrictions on their political rights and electoral opportunities, including through discriminatory

citizenship, residency, and party registration laws.

The 1982 Citizenship Law does not allow for anyone who entered the country or is descended from someone who entered the country after 1948 to become a full citizen with political rights. Naturalization of spouses is only allowed if the spouse holds a Foreigner's Registration Certificate from before the law's enactment. Most members of the mainly Muslim Rohingya ethnic group were rendered stateless by the 1982 Citizenship Law, which also dictates that only those who are descended from ethnic groups deemed to be native to the country prior to 1823 are considered full citizens. A 2015 presidential decree revoked the temporary identification cards that had allowed Rohingya to vote, and most of the 600,000 Rohingya remaining in Myanmar were unable to vote in the 2020 elections.

Women remain underrepresented in the government and civil service, due largely to societal biases that discourage their political participation. Notwithstanding the prominence of Aung San Suu Kyi, whose father led Myanmar's independence struggle, few women have achieved ministerial-level appointments.

The NUG and its affiliated body of legislators who were ousted by the coup, the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH), have made a concerted effort to include members of Myanmar's various ethnic groups in their leadership structures and to address the goals and demands of these constituencies. They have also formed alliances with many of the country's EAOs in opposition to military rule.

## C. Functioning of Government

**C1** 0-4 pts



**Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government?**

0 / 4

In February 2021, the military prevented the newly elected parliament from convening or choosing a new government, detained President Win Myint and other civilian officials, and installed First Vice President Myint Swe of the USDP as acting president, allowing him to declare a state of emergency and hand power to the military chief under a provision in the 2008 constitution. The state of emergency was renewed in August 2023 for a further six months.

The SAC junta's takeover of the state has led to a breakdown in governance, including in areas such as education, health care, local administration, and tax collection. The recent successes of the armed resistance movement have also reduced the amount of territory under the military government's effective control. A report produced in September 2022 by the Special Advisory Council for Myanmar, an independent group of international experts, estimated that the junta exercised full stable control in only 22 percent of the country's townships, and resistance forces made further gains during 2023.

In April 2021, the CRPH established the NUG, a resistance government largely made up of ousted NLD politicians. Since then, the NUG has operated as an alternate power structure with influence or effective control over a growing swathe of the country. Shortly after it was formed, the military leadership classified the NUG, its armed People's Defense Forces (PDFs), and the CRPH as terrorist organizations. In partnership with ethnic minority organizations and newer local-level structures, the NUG has engaged in a range of service-delivery and revenue-collection activities, though financial and logistical limitations persist. In a first effort at statewide governance, a coalition of anticoup groups in Kayah State, also known as Karenni State, set up an interim executive council in July 2023.

**C2** 0-4 pts

<b>Are safeguards against official corruption strong and effective?</b>	<b>1</b> / 4
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Despite government initiatives aimed at curbing official corruption, including an Anti-Corruption Commission established in 2014, it remains rampant at both the national and local levels. Following the 2021 coup, the military brought multiple illegitimate corruption charges against civilian political leaders, and Aung San Suu Kyi was convicted on a range of charges in 2022, despite the dubious evidence presented against her. While she was pardoned on some convictions in August 2023, the Supreme Court in October declined to consider her appeals of six corruption convictions.

Privatization of state-owned companies and other economic reforms in recent years have allegedly benefited family members and associates of military and government officials. After the February 2021 coup, the children of high-ranking military leaders allegedly attempted to use their connections to secure lucrative supply contracts and other assets. However, in a broad crackdown, several senior military officials were convicted on corruption charges and sentenced to lengthy prison terms in October 2023, and a wider range of figures at military-aligned companies were believed to be under investigation for price fixing and other irregularities.

**C3** 0-4 pts

<b>Does the government operate with openness and transparency?</b>	<b>0</b> / 4
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After the military took power in 2021, the already limited transparency mechanisms of the previous government were dismantled; oversight by civil society groups and the media has been completely suppressed under military rule, and access to information is severely restricted, partly through internet

ensorship.

The military has long controlled an extensive network of “crony companies” whose revenues enable it to avoid accountability and public oversight and engage in human rights violations with impunity, according to a United Nations report released in 2019.

#### Add Q

<b>Is the government or occupying power deliberately changing the ethnic composition of a country or territory so as to destroy a culture or tip the political balance in favor of another group?</b>	<b>-4</b>
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The central authorities have for decades used violence, displacement, and other tactics to alter the demographics of states with ethnic unrest or insurgencies. The Rohingya in Rakhine State have faced particularly harsh restrictions, including limits on family size and the ability and right to marry, the denial of legal status and social services, and disenfranchisement and loss of citizenship. In 2017, repression against the Rohingya escalated; military operations across the northern part of the state led to reports of torture, rape, indiscriminate killings, and the burning of villages, worsening already dire humanitarian conditions and causing 740,000 Rohingya refugees to join the 200,000 others living as refugees in Bangladesh. As of 2023, there had been little meaningful accountability for these atrocities, and there was no viable path for the refugees’ return. Human rights experts and the United Nations have labeled the abuses against the Rohingya as crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing, and many critics—including the US government in March 2022—have argued that they constitute either genocide or a precursor to genocide. The February 2021 coup and its aftermath have limited international observers’ access to Myanmar, frustrating efforts to document ongoing ethnicity-based violence and hold perpetrators accountable.

# Civil Liberties

## D. Freedom of Expression and Belief

**D1** 0-4 pts

<b>Are there free and independent media?</b>	<b>1/4</b>
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Following the coup, the military seized control of state-owned broadcast media, took private broadcasters off the air, and severely restricted internet access, including access to social media platforms and news outlets. While licenses for independent media organizations were rescinded, some outlets have continued to provide news coverage while operating in hiding or in exile.

Many journalists have also been forced to flee military-controlled areas or face imprisonment. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), at least 43 journalists were behind bars in Myanmar as of December 2023. Several have been sentenced to lengthy prison terms, including Sai Zaw Thaïke, a Myanmar Now photojournalist who received a 20-year sentence on multiple charges in September.

**D2** 0-4 pts

<b>Are individuals free to practice and express their religious faith or nonbelief in public and private?</b>	<b>1/4</b>
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The constitution provides for freedom of religion. It distinguishes Buddhism as the majority religion, but also recognizes Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and animism. The government occasionally interferes with religious assemblies and attempts to control the Buddhist clergy. Authorities

discriminate against minority religious groups—particularly Muslims—in practice, refusing them permission to hold gatherings and restricting educational activities, proselytization, and construction and repair of houses of worship.

Muslims face systematic discrimination in obtaining identity cards, and “Muslim-free” villages have been established with the complicity of the authorities, who have at times amplified hate speech. Ultranationalist Buddhist groups have urged boycotts against Muslim-run businesses and disseminated anti-Muslim propaganda.

**D3** 0-4 pts

<p><b>Is there academic freedom, and is the educational system free from extensive political indoctrination?</b></p>	<p><b>0</b> / 4</p>
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Political activity on university campuses is restricted, and universities are not autonomous. Student unions—which have historically been important advocates for human rights—are discouraged, have no formal registration mechanisms, and are viewed with suspicion by authorities.

University students and staff played a key role in protests and strikes following the February 2021 coup; in response, the military stormed dozens of universities, seizing control of the campuses and detaining or suspending thousands of students and faculty members. The NUG estimated in 2022 that approximately 200,000 out of a total of 450,000 teachers joined the anticoup Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) at some point. While some later returned to work in regime-administered schools out of necessity, others sought to teach children in areas outside of the junta’s control, where a robust network of CDM schools has been established. In 2023 the NUG organized alternative university entrance exams.

**D4** 0-4 pts

**Are individuals free to express their personal views on political or other sensitive topics without fear of surveillance or retribution?**

**1** / 4

Private discussion and personal expression—already constrained by state surveillance and laws inhibiting online speech—became more difficult and dangerous following the 2021 coup. The junta enacted sweeping revisions of existing legal code, removing key protections against arbitrary surveillance and banning the use of circumvention tools to evade online censorship and surveillance.

Hundreds of people have been arrested and prosecuted for speech-related offenses under the revised legal code, with most cases involving comments made online; hundreds of others have been forced into hiding or exile to avoid arrest. In May 2023, rapper Byu Har was arrested after releasing a song on social media that was critical of the junta; in August he received a 20-year prison sentence.

## E. Associational and Organizational Rights

**E1** 0-4 pts

**Is there freedom of assembly?**

**0** / 4

Unauthorized demonstrations are punishable with up to six months in prison under the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Law; a variety of other vaguely defined violations can draw lesser penalties. Within a week of seizing power in 2021, the military banned all gatherings of more than five people, imposed a strict curfew, and began using lethal and indiscriminate force against peaceful protesters. Widespread internet restrictions also hindered the CDM's organization of

protests. Military violence has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of protesters and the arrest of thousands more since the coup, but after two years of sustained pressure, mass protests became less common in 2023.

**E2** 0-4 pts

<p><b>Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations, particularly those that are engaged in human rights– and governance-related work?</b></p>	<p><b>1</b> / 4</p>
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Many nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have effectively disbanded since the 2021 coup. NGO staff face arrest and prosecution, many prominent activists have been forced into hiding or exile, and registration and banking restrictions have increased. Despite these obstacles, several organizations and individuals—many of them operating at least partly from abroad—continue to document human rights abuses in the country and engage in international advocacy.

The Organization Registration Law, introduced in 2022, tightened registration and operating requirements for NGOs and imposed severe penalties for violations, making it increasingly difficult for NGOs to engage even in development or humanitarian aid work. During 2023, military authorities reiterated that local and international aid groups were required to register with the government and obtain permits from the townships in which they sought to operate, while activists said securing official approval was extremely difficult in practice.

**E3** 0-4 pts

<p><b>Is there freedom for trade unions and similar professional or labor organizations?</b></p>	<p><b>1</b> / 4</p>
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Unions took on a leading role in organizing protests and strikes immediately following the 2021 coup. In response, military authorities declared most unions illegal, conducted violent raids

and mass arrests targeting union members, and detained or threatened dozens of key labor leaders, causing many to flee. By June of that year, thousands of civil servants and private-sector employees had been fired for their participation in the CDM. As of 2023, independent unions remained effectively banned, forcing them to operate illegally or in exile, and many labor leaders were still in detention, in some cases serving lengthy prison sentences on trumped-up charges.

## F. Rule of Law

**F1** 0-4 pts

<b>Is there an independent judiciary?</b>	<b>0</b> / 4
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The judiciary is not independent. Before the military coup, the courts generally adjudicated cases in accordance with the government's interests, particularly in major cases with political implications. Following the coup, the military forcibly took complete control of Myanmar's judicial system, which has since issued rulings in support of the SAC regime.

**F2** 0-4 pts

<b>Does due process prevail in civil and criminal matters?</b>	<b>0</b> / 4
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Since the 2021 coup, revisions to the criminal code and the imposition of a state of emergency have allowed the regime to disregard existing safeguards against arbitrary arrest and detention. In March 2021, the junta empowered military tribunals to impose death sentences on civilians; by the end of 2023, closed-door tribunals had sentenced more than 160 people to death. Defense lawyers who take on politically sensitive cases are also subject to arrest and abuse, according to a June 2023 Human Rights Watch report.



The number of political prisoners rose dramatically after the coup; most were arrested while protesting, although dozens of prominent political leaders and some cultural figures were specifically targeted. According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), 25,656 individuals had been arrested by the end of 2023, including 19,891 who were still detained and over 8,400 who were serving prison sentences.

**F3** 0-4 pts

**Is there protection from the illegitimate use of physical force and freedom from war and insurgencies?**

0 / 4

The civil conflict set off by the 2021 coup has exposed the civilian population to growing violence. Indiscriminate shelling and aerial attacks, the destruction of villages, extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, torture, rape, and other abuses by the military escalated in intensity and brutality during 2023, driving estimates of cumulative civilian deaths to more than 4,000. In April 2023, an air strike using a thermobaric bomb killed at least 160 civilians at a gathering in Sagaing Region. Later in the year, Amnesty International documented the military's indiscriminate use of cluster munitions in response to a successful opposition offensive known as Operation 1027, and allegations surfaced that the military had deployed chemical weapons against EAO forces in the north.

Long-standing armed conflicts between ethnic rebel groups and the central government continued in 2023 in Shan, Kachin, Kayin, Chin, Kayah, and Rakhine States, but the EAOs based in these areas have increasingly cooperated with PDF groups even in ethnically Bamar areas, such as the Sagaing and Magway Regions. Their combined efforts in tandem with Operation 1027, which began in late October, led to the capture of numerous military outposts and several important towns, particularly in the northeast of the country. Meanwhile, resistance forces in

major urban centers continued to carry out guerrilla attacks against junta-related targets, including assassinations and small bombings. Antijunta groups, which operate with considerable autonomy in practice, have been accused of committing extrajudicial executions and other human rights abuses.

Prisons in Myanmar are severely overcrowded, and conditions for inmates are extremely unsanitary, sometimes to the extent that they endanger the lives of inmates. Following the coup, the numbers of detainees rapidly increased; grave abuses that had been prevalent during previous periods of military rule have been regularly reported.

**F4** 0-4 pts

<b>Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population?</b>	<b>0/4</b>
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For decades, the military's worst human rights abuses have often targeted ethnic and religious minority populations. The government's failure to protect victims, conduct investigations, and punish perpetrators is well documented. The period since the 2021 coup has been characterized by further deterioration in the country's human rights situation and a lack of accountability for offenders.

Ethnic minority groups such as the Shan, Mon, Chin, Karen, and Kachin, as well as Rohingya and non-Rohingya Muslims, also face some societal discrimination, while the ethnic Bamar and Buddhist majority retains a privileged position.

In addition to conflict-related violence, women are subject to discrimination in employment, against which there are no explicit legal protections. Several laws create a hostile environment for LGBT+ residents. Same-sex sexual activity is criminalized, and police reportedly harass, extort, and physically and sexually abuse LGBT+ people.

# G. Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights

**G1** 0-4 pts

<b>Do individuals enjoy freedom of movement, including the ability to change their place of residence, employment, or education?</b>	<b>1/4</b>
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Since the 2021 coup, movement has been increasingly restricted across the country. The military has erected roadblocks and checkpoints; enforced exit controls, curfews, and residency rules for private dwellings that require reporting overnight guests; and engaged in violent raids of neighborhoods and villages. Some high-profile dissidents have been arrested as they attempted to leave Myanmar by air, while thousands more have fled to neighboring countries by land despite the dangers posed by military forces. A 2022 decree required a national registration card to travel internally or stay somewhere outside one's home, and an October 2023 directive obliged air passengers flying between the cities of Mandalay and Yangon to submit arrival and departure documents as well.

The UN estimated that an additional 1.1 million people were displaced during 2023, bringing the total number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Myanmar to 2.6 million. About 628,000 of the total were forced to flee the more acute fighting between the military and ethnic armies in the north beginning in October.

Myanmar's large population of stateless residents remain subject to significant restrictions on their movement, particularly the 600,000 Rohingya who remain in Rakhine State and are confined to designated camps and villages; those who attempt to travel outside these areas are regularly detained.

**G2** 0-4 pts

**Are individuals able to exercise the right to own property and establish private businesses without undue interference from state or nonstate actors?**

**1/4**

Disputes over land-grabbing and business projects that violate human rights are common. Myanmar's property-transfer laws prohibit transfers to or from a foreigner except in certain state-approved cases of inheritance and require registration of foreign-owned property. Stateless residents, including the Rohingya, cannot legally buy or sell property or set up a business.

Instances of forced eviction and displacement, confiscation, lack of sufficient compensation, and direct violence against landholders by state security officials abound. Court cases are frequently brought against farmers for trespassing on land that was taken from them. The civil conflict since the 2021 coup has involved military attacks and widespread destruction of property, including the leveling of entire villages using scorched-earth tactics. The military has also engaged in seizures of property targeting political dissidents, confiscating hundreds of properties during 2023.

**G3** 0-4 pts

**Do individuals enjoy personal social freedoms, including choice of marriage partner and size of family, protection from domestic violence, and control over appearance?**

**1/4**

Legal restrictions require Buddhist women to submit an application to marry non-Buddhist men. Laws that might protect women from domestic abuse and rape are weak and poorly enforced, and such violence is an acute and persistent problem. The military has a record of using rape as a weapon of war against ethnic minority women, and security personnel typically enjoy impunity for sexual violence. Since the 2021 coup,

numerous instances of gender-based violence have been reported by detainees.

**G4** 0-4 pts

<b>Do individuals enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from economic exploitation?</b>	<b>0</b> / 4
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Human trafficking, forced labor, child labor, and the recruitment of child soldiers are serious problems in Myanmar, and all have worsened since the 2021 coup, partly because IDPs are especially vulnerable to various forms of exploitation. Child soldiers are enlisted by the military and EAOs. Armed groups and commercial interests continue to use forced labor despite a formal ban on the practice. Trafficking victims include women and girls subjected to forced sex work and domestic servitude, as well as women who are sold as brides to men in China. More recently, there have been increased reports of individuals being trafficked from neighboring countries into Myanmar to engage in sex work or forced labor in large cyber-scam operations run by criminal organizations.

*Score Change: The score declined from 1 to 0 due to an increase in human trafficking by criminal organizations and armed groups in recent years.*

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