

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	749
Land:	Kina
Kilde:	Freedom House
Titel:	Freedom in the World 2024 – Tibet
Udgivet:	2024
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	4. juli 2024



Document #2108074

Freedom House (Author)

Freedom in the World 2024 - Tibet*

NOT FREE

0

/ 100

[Political Rights](#) -2 / 40

[Civil Liberties](#) 2 / 60

LAST YEAR'S SCORE & STATUS

1 / 100 Not Free

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

* Indicates a territory as opposed to an independent country.

Note

Freedom in the World reports assess the level of political rights and civil liberties in a given geographical area, regardless of whether they are affected by the state, nonstate actors, or foreign powers. Disputed territories are sometimes assessed separately if they meet certain criteria, including boundaries that are sufficiently stable to allow year-on-year comparisons. For more information, see the report [methodology](#) and [FAQ](#).

Overview

Tibet is ruled by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) government based in Beijing, with local decision-making power concentrated in the hands of Chinese party officials. Residents of both Han Chinese and Tibetan ethnicity are denied fundamental rights, but the authorities are especially rigorous in suppressing any signs of dissent among Tibetans, including manifestations of Tibetan religious beliefs and cultural identity. State policies, such as incentives for non-Tibetan people to migrate from other

parts of China and the compulsory relocation of ethnic Tibetans, have reduced the ethnic Tibetan share of the population over time.

Key Developments in 2023

- In February, three independent UN experts warned that almost a million Tibetan children are being directly affected by a residential school system that seems designed to systematically assimilate them into Han culture. Alongside forced closure of scores of village schools, the Chinese government has established consolidated and dislocated boarding institutions where Tibetan children receive a politicized, Mandarin-based education.
- In May, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken raised concerns about reports that China was collecting Tibetan DNA samples on a large scale as a control and surveillance measure. In 2022, the civil society organization Citizen Lab had reported that the Chinese government had collected DNA from nearly a third of the population in Tibet, without clearly obtaining consent from those involved. The report raised major concerns because the CCP has used genetic materials collected from Uyghurs in Xinjiang to further its surveillance systems and forced ethnic change campaign there.

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? 4

The Chinese government rules Tibet through administration of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and 12 Tibetan autonomous prefectures or counties in the nearby provinces of Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu, and Yunnan. Under the Chinese constitution, autonomous areas have the right to formulate their own regulations and implement national legislation in accordance with local conditions. In practice, however, decision-making authority is concentrated in the hands of unelected ethnic (Han) Chinese officials of the CCP, which has a monopoly on political power. Wang Junzheng, former deputy party secretary and chief security officer in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), was appointed to replace Wu Yingjie as TAR party secretary in October 2021, raising grave concerns that the leadership was planning to expand the draconian policies it had adopted in the XUAR to the TAR.

The few Tibetans who occupy senior executive positions serve mostly as figureheads. In 2021, Yan Jinhai, an ethnic Tibetan official who had served as the Lhasa party secretary, was chosen as chairman (governor) of the TAR. The TAR chairman is formally elected by the regional people's

congress, but in practice such decisions are predetermined by the CCP leadership.

A2 0-4 pts

Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections? 0 / 4

The regional people's congress of the TAR, which is formally elected by lower-level people's congresses, chooses delegates to China's 3,000-member National People's Congress (NPC) every five years. In practice, all candidates are vetted by the CCP. The CCP's 20th party congress in October 2022 resulted in a reshuffle of the TAR's top leadership positions.

A3 0-4 pts

Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies? 0 / 4

As in the rest of China, direct elections are only permitted at the lowest administrative levels. Tight political controls and aggressive state interference ensure that competitive races with independent candidates are even rarer in Tibet than in other parts of the country. Restrictions for village elections exclude candidates who have attended religious teachings abroad, have communicated with overseas Tibetans, or have relatives studying at monasteries outside China.

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? 0 / 4

All organized political activity outside the CCP is illegal and harshly punished, as is any evidence of loyalty to or communication with the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA)—a representative body based in Dharamsala, India, that functions as a government-in-exile.

The CTA includes an elected parliament whose members serve five-year terms; there is also a Supreme Justice Commission that adjudicates civil disputes and a directly elected political leader, also serving five-year terms. Votes are collected from the global Tibetan diaspora. The Dalai Lama, the Tibetan spiritual leader who also traditionally served as head of state, renounced his political role in 2011. In May 2021, Penpa Tsering was elected as political leader of the CTA, replacing Lobsang Sangay, who stepped down after serving two terms.

B2 0-4 pts

Is there a realistic opportunity for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections? 0 / 4

As in China as a whole, the one-party system structurally precludes and rigorously suppresses the development of any organized political opposition. Tibet has never experienced a peaceful and democratic transfer of power between rival groups.

B3 0-4 pts

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? 0 / 4

The authoritarian CCP is not accountable to voters and denies the public any meaningful influence or independent participation in political affairs.

B4 0-4 pts

Do various segments of the population (including ethnic, racial, religious, gender, LGBT+, and other relevant groups) have full political rights and electoral opportunities? 0 / 4

Political opportunities for ethnic Tibetans within Tibet remain limited. Ethnic Chinese officials dominate top-level and strategic positions in the CCP and government, while ethnic Tibetans are restricted to lower-level and rubber-stamp positions. The authorities vigorously suppress and harshly punish any independent political or civic engagement by Tibetans, even on local community issues that were considered less politically sensitive in previous decades.

Women are well represented in many public sector jobs and CCP posts within the TAR, though most high-level officials are men. Women and demographic minorities like the LGBT+ or monastic communities are unable to organize independently to advance their political interests.

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

As elsewhere in China, unelected CCP officials determine and implement government policies in Tibet. Constitutionally, the TAR, like other ethnic minority regions, should enjoy greater autonomy than other provinces, but in practice it is controlled even more tightly by the central government. CCP entities—like the United Front Work Department—are explicitly in charge of policy areas including religious affairs and ethnic minorities, which are especially relevant for Tibet.

C2 0-4 pts

Are safeguards against official corruption strong and effective? 1 / 4

Corruption is believed to be extensive, as it is in China more generally, though little information is available on the scale of the problem.

There have been moves in recent years to curb graft among the region's officials as part of Chinese president Xi Jinping's nationwide anticorruption campaign. However, many prosecutions are believed to be politically selective or reprisals for perceived political and religious disloyalty. Efforts to control corruption are monopolized by the CCP leadership; as elsewhere in China, citizens who seek to expose official misdeeds in Tibet have faced detention and prosecution.

C3 0-4 pts

Does the government operate with openness and transparency? 0 / 4

Governance is opaque in all of China but even more so in Tibet, where the CCP's policies and decision-making are rarely if ever public knowledge.

Add Q

Is the government or occupying power deliberately changing the ethnic composition of a country or territory so as to destroy a -3 culture or tip the political balance in favor of another group?

In recent years, the Chinese government has accelerated policies that decrease the proportion of Tibetans in the TAR and undermine their cultural and religious identity—part of a renewed, nationwide campaign to “Sinicize” religious and ethnic minority populations. According to a February 2023 statement from three independent UN experts, the Chinese government has placed around a million Tibetan children in residential boarding institutions across the Tibetan plateau; the children reportedly range in age from four to eighteen. The students receive a deeply politicized education that seeks to strip them of their native language and their Tibetan culture and religion. Reports by the civil society group Tibet Action Institute and testimonies from the region indicate that a growing number of Tibetan children are losing the ability to converse in Tibetan and becoming estranged from their families and communities.

The government's Farmer and Pastoralist Training and Labor Transfer Action Plan forced tens of thousands of additional Tibetan farmers and nomads to surrender their land-use rights to state-run collectives, become wage laborers, move to urban areas where they are crowded into large apartment blocks, and prevent them from pursuing traditional ways of life. Parallel government policies encourage ethnic Chinese migration to the TAR, for example by recruiting workers for infrastructure projects in the region; such migrants typically do not change their household registration, meaning their numbers are not reflected in official statistics. “Ethnic unity” regulations promote intermarriage between Han Chinese and Tibetans through financial incentives, further eroding Tibetans' distinct cultural and religious identity.

Tibetan has been phased out as a language of instruction in schools over the past decade, and the government has begun forcing Tibetan parents,

many of whom are Tibetan-speaking nomads and farmers, to learn Mandarin so that they can teach their children the national language instead of Tibetan. To damage and destroy Tibetan culture, Chinese authorities have incarcerated scores of Tibetan cultural, religious, and intellectual figures, including monks, writers, intellectuals, musicians, and prominent scholars. The exact number of people imprisoned is unknown due to Beijing's tight control of information in the region.

In May 2023, Secretary of State Antony Blinken publicly raised concerns over reports that China was collecting DNA from Tibetan people on a large scale "as an additional form of control and surveillance over the Tibetan population." In 2022, the civil society organization Citizen Lab reported that the Chinese government had collected DNA from nearly a third of the population in Tibet without clearly obtaining consent from those involved. The report raised serious concerns because the CCP has used genetic materials collected from Uyghurs in Xinjiang to further its surveillance systems and forced ethnic change campaign there.

Civil Liberties

D Freedom of Expression and Belief

D1 0-4 pts

Are there free and independent media? 0 / 4

CCP authorities control traditional and social media in Tibet even more strictly than in Han Chinese areas of the country. Individuals who use the internet, social media, or other means to share politically sensitive news content or commentary face arrest and heavy criminal penalties.

Deliberate internet blackouts occur periodically in Tibet, including in areas where public demonstrations or natural disasters have occurred. International broadcasts are jammed, and personal communication devices are confiscated and searched. The online censorship and monitoring systems in place across China are applied more stringently in Tibet, while censorship of Tibet-related keywords on apps like WeChat has become more sophisticated. The use of Tibetan language is banned on a range of social media apps, particularly ones that use streaming and live communication services.

The TAR is the only provincial-level region of China that requires foreigners to obtain a special permit to enter, and foreign journalists are regularly prevented from visiting. Journalists also face barriers in access to Tibetan areas of Sichuan and other provinces, though no permission is officially required to travel to those places. Tibetans who communicate with foreign media or other foreign contacts without permission face criminal prosecution and long prison sentences. Sharing local information online can also lead to punishment.

D2 0-4 pts

Are individuals free to practice and express their religious faith or nonbelief in public and private? 0 / 4

Religious practice is carefully managed and increasingly restricted in Tibet. Chinese authorities view Tibetan reverence for the Dalai Lama and adherence to the region's unique form of Buddhism as a threat to CCP rule. Tibetan Buddhist clergy and lay believers are forced to denounce the Dalai Lama, pledge their loyalty to the CCP and socialism above their religious beliefs, and attend political education sessions. People who possess Dalai Lama-related materials, especially in the TAR, are routinely detained and at times criminally prosecuted. In April 2023, a Tibetan man from Ngaba's Kyungchu county was sentenced to two years in prison after photos of the Dalai Lama were found on his mobile phone; a woman from Dhola County was arrested in October for sharing a photo of the Dalai Lama on WeChat.

Political and ideological indoctrination within monasteries and nunneries intensified in 2022, with monks and nuns subjected to invasive and onerous supervision. "Management committees," made up of CCP cadres and the police, exercise broad authority to directly control the daily operations of religious communities. "Intelligent temple management" systems operate in nearly all religious institutions, including pervasive video surveillance in all temples and monasteries. In September 2023, a repressive new Chinese government decree called the "Measures for the Administration of Religious Activity Sites," also known as "Order Number 19," went into effect. It requires that official permission be granted to any place of worship before it can engage in religious activity and also decrees that the places of worship "shall...thoroughly implement Xi Jinping's ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristics for the new era," among other explicitly political goals.

Anyone under the age of 18 is prohibited from becoming a monk or a nun, and religious education for children is prohibited. A law enacted in March 2022 prohibits any individual or group from posting religious content online without a special license. In 2022, authorities launched the "Three Consciousness" campaign, forcing nuns and monks to attend reeducation classes during which they are required to condemn specific Tibetan religious and cultural beliefs and practices. These practices include Tsethar or "merit release," the Buddhist practice of releasing animals destined for slaughter, and Saka Dawa fasting in observance of the feast that celebrates the birth, enlightenment, and death of the Buddha. They were further required to denounce the Tibetan farmers' strikes and other nonviolent protests.

In July 2023, Chinese authorities shut down a Kalachakra teaching in Tsolho Tibetan Prefecture; in the process, the authorities destroyed a sand mandala, a religious installation that was part of the ritual. The same month, another Kalachakra teaching in Gannan Tibetan Autonomous

Prefecture was blocked by the government, which had initially approved the event. In September, the religious gathering was eventually allowed to take place. However, after some 100,000 people had traveled to the venue, authorities announced that only people local to the area in which the event was taking place could attend. Tens of thousands of visiting Tibetans defied the orders and attended anyway.

The Chinese government has asserted its intention to select the successor of the current Dalai Lama, who turned 88 in July 2023, and has intervened into Tibetan tradition by appointing its own puppet Panchen Lama, a religious figure who plays an important role in identifying the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama, according to Tibetan Buddhist rituals. The location of the Panchen Lama, who was originally recognized by the current Dalai Lama, remains unknown; he was abducted by Chinese officials in 1995, when he was six years old.

D3 0-4 pts

Is there academic freedom, and is the educational system free 0 / from extensive political indoctrination? 4

University professors or school teachers cannot touch certain topics, and many must attend political indoctrination sessions. The government restricts course materials to suppress unofficial versions of Tibetan history and has phased out the use of Tibetan as the language of instruction in schools over the past decade. Private and monastery schools have been shut down in recent years in an effort to force students into government-run schools—many of them boarding schools—where Mandarin is the only language of instruction.

D4 0-4 pts

Are individuals free to express their personal views on political or 0 / other sensitive topics without fear of surveillance or retribution? 4

Freedom of expression, including in private, is severely limited by factors including authorities' monitoring of electronic communications, a heavy security presence, recruitment of informants, regular ideological campaigns in Tibetan areas, and harsh punishments for those who post on sensitive subjects. The authorities in Tibet make use of an invasive security and censorship system that features nearly ubiquitous video cameras, use of facial-recognition technology, "smart" identity cards, and integrated surveillance systems that allow tracking of residents and tourists in real time. Hundreds of "security centers" operate across the region, with more than 130 in Lhasa alone. Tibetans are regularly detained or imprisoned for expressing support for or sharing images of the Dalai Lama and Tibetan independence, sending politically sensitive information abroad, or engaging in other forms of cultural expression.

E Associational and Organizational Rights

E1 0-4 pts

Is there freedom of assembly? 0 / 4

Chinese authorities severely restrict freedom of assembly as part of the government's intensified "stability maintenance" policies in Tibet. Control and surveillance of public gatherings extend beyond major towns to villages and rural areas. Even nonviolent protesters are rapidly and often violently dispersed and harshly punished. Despite the restrictions, Tibetans continue to express their views on government policies through sporadic solitary or small-scale protests in public places, though they are usually immediately arrested by police.

E2 0-4 pts

Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations, particularly those that are engaged in human rights- and governance-related work? 0 / 4

Tibetans are unable to establish and operate nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) without facing punishment by the authorities. Even seemingly apolitical social and community engagement is not tolerated. Many Tibetans working for environmental protection have also been imprisoned. Foreign NGOs are generally not allowed to operate in Tibet.

E3 0-4 pts

Is there freedom for trade unions and similar professional or labor organizations? 0 / 4

Independent trade unions are illegal in Tibet, as in China as a whole. The only legal union organization is the government-controlled All-China Federation of Trade Unions, which has long been criticized for failing to properly defend workers' rights. Labor activism in Tibet is riskier and much rarer than in other parts of China.

F Rule of Law

F1 0-4 pts

Is there an independent judiciary? 0 / 4

The CCP controls the judicial system, and courts consequently lack independence. Courts at all levels are supervised by party political-legal committees that influence the appointment of judges, court operations, and verdicts and sentences. Given the political sensitivity of Tibetan issues, the scope for autonomous judicial decision-making in Tibetan areas is even more limited than elsewhere in China.

F2 0-4 pts

Does due process prevail in civil and criminal matters? 0 / 4

Tibetans are systematically denied due process in criminal matters. Among other abuses, they are subjected to arbitrary arrest, denial of family visits, long periods of enforced disappearance, solitary confinement, and illegal pretrial detention. Authorities often fail to inform families of the detention, whereabouts, and well-being of loved ones and

threaten them with punishment for revealing information. Tibetans have even less access to legal representation of their choice than Han Chinese; lawyers seeking to defend them are routinely harassed, denied access to their clients, blocked from attending relevant hearings, and in some cases disbarred in retaliation. Trials are closed if state security interests are invoked, which sometimes occurs even when no political crime is listed.

As of May 2021, the US State Department estimated that there were between 500 and 2,000 political prisoners in Tibet.

F3 0-4 pts

Is there protection from the illegitimate use of physical force and freedom from war and insurgencies? 0 / 4

Detained suspects and prisoners are subject to torture and other forms of ill-treatment. Many Tibetan prisoners of conscience die in custody under circumstances indicating torture, and others are released with severe injuries and in extremely poor health, apparently to avoid deaths in custody. Many of the latter subsequently succumb to their injuries.

F4 0-4 pts

Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population? 0 / 4

Ethnic Tibetans face a range of socioeconomic disadvantages and discriminatory treatment by employers, law enforcement agencies, and other official bodies. The dominant role of the Chinese language in education and employment limits opportunities for rural Tibetans, 80 percent of whom have no or limited Mandarin-language skills. Increased Mandarin language testing for employment has disadvantaged ethnic Tibetans seeking permanent jobs in more lucrative positions. While Tibetans are supposed to receive preferential treatment in university admission examinations, Tibetan students often face insurmountable obstacles to gain admission to top-tier national-level secondary schools. Tibetans who apply for public-sector jobs are required to denounce the Dalai Lama, renounce their religious beliefs, and demonstrate their political loyalty in ways that fundamentally negate their ethnic and cultural identity.

As in the rest of China, gender bias against women remains widespread, despite laws barring workplace discrimination. LGBT+ people suffer from discrimination, though same-sex sexual activity is not criminalized. Social pressures discourage discussion of LGBT+ issues.

G Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights

G1 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy freedom of movement, including the ability to change their place of residence, employment, or education? 0 / 4

The TAR features extreme restrictions on freedom of movement that disproportionately affect ethnic Tibetans. Obstacles including troop deployments, checkpoints, roadblocks, required bureaucratic approvals, and passport restrictions impede freedom of movement both within Tibetan areas—especially the TAR—and between those areas and the outside world. The more than 2,000 “inspectors” that staff around 700 “discipline committees” set up in recent years in rural Tibetan communities have tightened travel restrictions, with Tibetans needing permits to enter certain areas, particularly near international borders in the south.

While Han Chinese tourists have been encouraged to visit the TAR and can move around freely, the movements of foreign tourists, journalists, diplomats, and others are tightly controlled, and they are often denied entry. Tibetans face nearly insurmountable hurdles in obtaining a passport for foreign travel, and foreign nationals of Tibetan origin face enormous challenges when seeking a visa to visit Tibet, often waiting for years only for their request to be denied.

Increased China-Nepal cooperation has made it difficult for Tibetans to cross the border into Nepal. Some Tibetan pilgrims who travel abroad face detention upon return to China. In July 2023, news emerged that authorities had arrested and were holding four members of a group of eight Tibetan middle school students who had attempted to escape to India in March. The whereabouts of the other four students were unknown, though authorities had reportedly told their parents that they were in India with “criminal or blacklisted” groups and could possibly be retrieved through the payment of a large sum.

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

The economy is dominated by state-owned enterprises and private businesses with informal ties to officials. Tibetans reportedly find it harder than Chinese residents to obtain permits and loans to open businesses, and Tibetan-owned businesses are often arbitrarily shut down.

The multiyear policy of forcing Tibetans off their rural land and into the urban wage economy has given the state additional leverage over a growing proportion of the population, as those affected become increasingly dependent on market wages and government subsidies for their livelihood.

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? 0 / 4

State policies that actively encourage interethnic marriages with financial and other incentives, and that require couples to designate a single ethnicity for their children, are among the ongoing policies that have reduced the ethnic Tibetan share of the TAR's population. Tibetan women are vulnerable to human trafficking schemes that result in forced marriage.

In recent years, China has increasingly imposed policies of mandatory boarding for Tibetan students. Increasingly young children are coerced into a system of politicized educational indoctrination that displaces the children's native language, culture, and religion. Tibetan students board at far higher rates (78 percent) than Chinese students in the rest of the country (22 percent); a 2015 Beijing directive called on officials to build more boarding schools in parts of the country where minority populations lived so that "children of all ethnic minorities will live in a school, study in a school, and grow up in a school." A 2021 report by Tibet Action Institute indicated that authorities regularly use fines and the threat of arrest or denial of services to coerce parents to send their children to the government boarding schools. In many cases, children as young as four, five, and six are forced to spend five days a week at boarding school, away from their families, where they learn in an unfamiliar linguistic and cultural setting. This state-driven linguistic dispossession, often beginning at a very young age, creates a language barrier between many children and their parents and grandparents, taking aim at Tibetan family life and cultural foundations. The intensity and scale of this assimilationist policy represents not only an alarming encroachment on Tibetans' personal and social freedoms but an unprecedented assault on their ethnolinguistic identity.

Score Change: The score declined from 1 to 0 because government policies have forced Tibetan children to enroll in Chinese boarding schools at increasingly younger ages, undermining family integrity and stripping children of their native language and culture.

G4 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from 1 / economic exploitation? 4

Exploitative employment practices are pervasive in many industries, as is the case across China, though ethnic Tibetans report additional disadvantages in hiring and compensation. Human trafficking that targets Tibetan women can lead to forced prostitution or exploitative employment in domestic service and other economic sectors elsewhere in China. The herders, farmers, and other Tibetans who are forced off their rural land and resettled in towns and cities are extremely vulnerable to exploitation by public and private employers alike. Recent increases in Mandarin language requirements and testing for employment discriminate against ethnic Tibetans.

ecoi.net description:

Tibet: Annual report on political rights and civil liberties in 2023

Country:

China

Source:

[Freedom House](#) (Author)

Published:

2024

Original link:

<https://freedomhouse.org/country/tibet/freedom-world/2024>

Document type:

Periodical Report

Language:

English

Available on ecoi.net since:

25 April 2024

Document ID:

2108074

Austrian Red Cross
Austrian Centre for
Country of Origin and
Asylum Research and
Documentation
(ACCORD)

Wiedner Hauptstraße
32, 1041 Wien
T +43 1 589 00 583
F +43 1 589 00 589
info@ecoi.net

Contact
Imprint & Disclaimer
F.A.Q.
Data Protection Notice

ecoi.net is run by the Austrian Red Cross (department ACCORD) in cooperation with Informationsverbund Asyl & Migration. ecoi.net is funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and Caritas Austria. ecoi.net is supported by ECRE & UNHCR.

