



## China

The Communist Party of China has governed China for nearly 70 years. Parties, political groups or unions that are not controlled by the Communist Party are not allowed. The communist party controls both the legal and judicial system, and courts are not independent. People trying to go to court to defend themselves against unlawful acts committed by the central or local government risk being prosecuted themselves, or they may be subjected to harassment or even torture to force them to withdraw their claims.

Both at national and local level, the Chinese authorities strike down hard against all those they fear could undermine their position of power and their control over what people think. Lawyers, journalists, bloggers, academics or human rights defenders that reveal human rights abuses or question the one-party system are charged with "causing division", "undermining the confidence in the government" or "undermining the state unity" and are sentenced to long prison terms. Religious groups that will not accept that the state governs their beliefs and traditions are severely persecuted. The same applies to members of certain ethnic groups that the government considers dangerous, including Uighurs and Tibetans.

China is also the country that uses the death penalty most widely. Although all statistics on the death penalty in China is kept secret, we must assume that more people are executed in China than in the rest of the world combined. Many are sentenced to death after unfair trials, partly without the aid of a lawyer.

While the Chinese government has stepped up censorship, suppression of freedom of expression and persecution of opponents, they have over the past decades also had a strong focus on economic development and poverty reduction. As the world's second largest economic power (after the USA), China is active in many international arenas and is keen on good relations with other countries. This opens opportunities to influence the Chinese government to show more respect for human rights.

## Uyghurs

Uyghurs are a mostly Muslim Turk ethnic group mainly living in the Xinjiang province in north-western China. Chinese Uyghurs have been subjected to systematic and extensive human rights violations. These include arbitrary detention, imprisonment and torture as well as severe restrictions on religious freedom and cultural rights. Local authorities maintain tight control over religious practice and limit the use of the Uyghur language.

Many Han Chinese (the largest population group in China, which represents approximately 94% of the population) are moving to the Xinjiang region, taking control of more and more of both the land and the businesses there. This undermines the opportunity of Uyghurs to live in line with their culture. This, in addition to the discrimination and abuse Uyghurs are exposed to, create discontent and ethnic tensions.

### Further information:

More information on the human rights situation in China can be found on the homepage of Amnesty's International Secretariat: [www.amnesty.org/en/countries/asia-and-the-pacific/china](http://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/asia-and-the-pacific/china)

For more background information on China see for example:

BBC Country Profiles: [www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-13017877](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-13017877)