

Simplified Factsheet:

Sinicization of Religion in China

- **Overview of Sinicization Policy:**
 - Coercive policy under Xi Jinping to align religion with Chinese Communist Party (CCP) ideology (subordinates religious groups to the CCP's political and Marxist agenda).
 - It targets five recognized religions: Buddhism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, and Taoism (and enforces CCP control over beliefs, practices, and infrastructure).
 - Criminalizes non-CCP-aligned religious activities (violates international religious freedom rights).
- **Demographics and Historical Context:**
 - China is officially atheist; religion has historically been suppressed, notably during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976, which destroyed worship sites and persecuted believers).
 - Religious revival post-Cultural Revolution; estimates of 350–850 million adherents among a 1.4 billion population (2021: 18% Buddhist, 5% Christian, 2% Muslim, plus Taoism, Falun Gong, folk practices).
- **State Control Mechanisms:**
 - Managed through seven state-controlled religious organizations (e.g., Buddhist Association of China, Catholic Patriotic Association) under the CCP's United Front Work Department and the State Administration for Religious Affairs.
 - Religious groups must register and submit to CCP oversight (unregistered groups like Falun Gong face severe persecution, including mass arrests via anti-cult laws).
- **Sinicization in Theory:**
 - Embeds CCP ideology into religious doctrines, architecture, and practices (promotes "patriotism" as loyalty to the CCP).
 - Eliminates "foreign" influences and enforces assimilation (e.g., Xinjiang regulations mandate socialist values, Chinese-style architecture).
 - Five-year Sinicization Work Plans (2023–2027) deepen CCP control (e.g., requiring political loyalty and conformity in sermons and rituals).
- **Sinicization in Practice:**
 - **Muslims** (Uyghurs, Hui):
 - Genocide, crimes against humanity in Xinjiang (1 million detained in reeducation camps since 2017, forced to renounce faith, culture).
 - Mosque closures, destruction, or conversion to Chinese-style architecture (bans on Islamic practices like veils, Ramadan fasting).
 - **Tibetan Buddhists:**
 - Interference in the reincarnation process (e.g., abduction of the Dalai Lama-recognized Panchen Lama in 1995, installation of a CCP-backed figure).
 - Suppression of Dalai Lama reverence (detentions for possessing his images, planning for a CCP-controlled Dalai Lama successor).
 - **Christians** (Catholic, Protestant):
 - Removal of crosses, replacement of religious imagery with Xi Jinping portraits (clergy instructed to preach CCP ideology).

- Persecution of unregistered churches (underground Catholics, house church Protestants face arrests, forced disappearances).
- **Buddhists and Taoists:**
 - Destruction of temples, removal of statues (CCP slogans posted on temple grounds).
 - Punishments for non-CCP-aligned activities (enforces conformity to the CCP's patriotic vision).
- **Human Rights Violations:**
 - Systematic religious freedom violations (genocide, mass incarceration, cultural destruction).
 - Forced assimilation (e.g., separation of Uyghur and Tibetan children into state-run schools to erase cultural and religious ties).
 - Enforced disappearances, torture, and forced labor (targeting religious leaders, adherents refusing CCP alignment).
- **Conclusion:**
 - Sinicization entrenches CCP control over religious life (forces conformity in beliefs, leadership, and architecture).
 - Results in ongoing, egregious human rights abuses (undermines the autonomy of religious communities across China).

See: The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom's [2024 Fact Sheet on Sinicization](#).