



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



DFAT COUNTRY INFORMATION REPORT INDONESIA

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ACRONYMS

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
CSO(s)	Civil Society Organisation(s)
FPI	Islamic Defenders Front
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
ILO	International Labour Organization
INP	Indonesian National Police
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ITE Law	Information and Electronic Transactions Law
JKN	National Health Insurance Scheme
Komnas HAM	National Commission on Human Rights (Indonesia's national human rights institution)
KPK	Corruption Eradication Commission
KTP	Resident Identity Card
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and/or Intersex
RSF	Reporters Without Borders
TNI	Indonesian Armed Forces
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

GLOSSARY

<i>adat</i>	Literally meaning ‘customary’; traditional customary laws observed in some regions
doxing	Publishing personal details online to facilitate in-person harassment or violence
hacking	Unauthorised electronic access to a computer or device
<i>jilbab</i>	A head covering worn by Muslim women that covers the hair, neck and chest
<i>madrasah</i>	Islamic school
<i>Pancasila</i>	The official foundational ideology of the Republic of Indonesia (see Pancasila)
Papua provinces	The eastern provinces of Papua and West Papua and newly formed provinces of South Papua, South West Papua, Central Papua and Papua Highlands
<i>pasung</i>	Shackling, or physically restraining and confining people, usually those with mental illness
<i>sharia</i>	Islamic law
trolling	Posting inflammatory material online for personal gratification or harassment

Terms used in this report

high risk	DFAT is aware of a strong pattern of incidents
moderate risk	DFAT is aware of sufficient incidents to suggest a pattern of behaviour
low risk	DFAT is aware of incidents but has insufficient evidence to conclude they form a pattern

official discrimination

1. legal or regulatory measures applying to a particular group that impede access to state protection or services that are available to other sections of the population (examples might include but are not limited to difficulties in obtaining personal registrations or identity papers, difficulties in having papers recognised, arbitrary arrest and detention)
2. behaviour by state employees towards a particular group that impedes access to state protection or services otherwise available, including by failure to implement legislative or administrative measures

societal discrimination

1. behaviour by members of society (including family members, employers or service providers) that impedes access by a particular group to goods or services normally available to other sections of society (examples could include but are not limited to refusal to rent property, refusal to sell goods or services, or employment discrimination)
2. ostracism or exclusion by members of society (including family, acquaintances, employers, colleagues or service providers)

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1.1 This Country Information Report has been prepared by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) for protection status determination purposes only. It provides DFAT's best judgement and assessment at time of writing and is distinct from Australian Government policy with respect to Indonesia.

1.2 The report provides a general, rather than an exhaustive, country overview. It has been prepared with regard to the current caseload for decision makers in Australia without reference to individual applications for protection visas. The report does not contain policy guidance for decision makers.

1.3 Ministerial Direction Number 84 of 24 June 2019, issued under s 499 of the *Migration Act* (1958), states that:

Where the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has prepared [a] country information assessment expressly for protection status determination purposes, and that assessment is available to the decision maker, the decision maker must take into account that assessment, where relevant, in making their decision. The decision maker is not precluded from considering other relevant information about the country.

1.4 This report is based on DFAT's on-the-ground knowledge and discussions with a range of sources in Indonesia. It also takes into account relevant information from government and non-government sources, including but not limited to: those produced by the Indonesian Government and other governments; relevant UN bodies and international organisations such as the World Bank, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Health Organization; leading human rights organisations and international non-governmental organisations, such as Amnesty International, Transparency International and Freedom House; Indonesian non-governmental organisations; and reputable Indonesian and international news organisations. Where DFAT does not refer to a specific source of a report or allegation, this may be to protect the source.

1.5 This updated Country Information Report replaces the previous DFAT Country Information Report on Indonesia published on 25 January 2019.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

RECENT HISTORY

2.1 The Indonesian archipelago was a Dutch colony between the early 17th century until the mid-20th century. Present-day territorial boundaries reflect those of the former colony. Japan invaded and occupied the territory in 1942. Indonesian nationalist leader, Sukarno (who went by only one name), declared independence after Japan's defeat in 1945. After a period of guerrilla war, the Dutch recognised Indonesia's independence in 1949.

2.2 In 1957, then-President Sukarno declared martial law and cancelled elections. Tensions grew between the Indonesian military and the Communist Party. Communist sympathisers allegedly murdered six senior generals in 1965, leading to a nation-wide anti-communist purge that killed hundreds of thousands of people.

2.3 General Suharto took control of the military and gradually eased Sukarno from power, removing him completely by 1967 and becoming President. Under Suharto's military-based 'New Order' government, political stability returned to Indonesia and the economy grew substantially. Over time, popular discontent grew with Suharto's government because of limited political freedom, human rights abuses, corruption and economic inequality. The 1997 Asian Financial Crisis led to high inflation, unemployment and bank and company collapses. Riots and looting occurred, particularly targeting the Chinese-Indonesian community. Suharto resigned as President in May 1998, ending the New Order era. Several serious incidents of communal violence (both ethnic and religious-based) also occurred across the archipelago.

2.4 The post-Suharto era, known as the 'democratic era' saw increased political stability and improvements in the material well-being of most citizens (see also [Political Opinion \(Actual or Imputed\)](#)). Indonesia held free and fair elections in 1999 and has continued this democratic tradition since, with the most recent presidential and general elections held in 2019.

2.5 In the 2019 election, President Joko Widodo (known widely as 'Jokowi') ran for a second and final term against former military general (and current Defence Minister) Prabowo Subianto. Widodo won the presidential race with approximately 55 per cent of the vote.

DEMOGRAPHY

2.6 The CIA World Factbook estimates Indonesia's population is 279.5 million – the fourth-largest in the world. Approximately 59 per cent of the population lives in urban areas. Jakarta, the capital, is home to more than 11 million people; the next biggest cities, Bekasi, Surabaya and Depok, have approximately 3 million residents each. *Bahasa Indonesia* ('Indonesian') is the official language and lingua franca of Indonesia, however hundreds of languages exist throughout the islands. For ethnic demography see [Race/Nationality](#). For religious demography see [Religion](#).

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

2.7 According to the World Bank, Indonesia's economy is the largest in Southeast Asia and sixteenth largest globally, as measured by GDP. Indonesia saw year-on-year GDP growth of 5 to 6 per cent between 2010 and 2019, before a fall in 2020 during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. The economy recovered in 2021, with 3.7 per cent GDP growth and strong indications of further growth in the years ahead. According to the International Monetary Fund, the economy grew 5.3 per cent in 2022, and projects growth of 5 per cent in 2023.

2.8 Major industries include resources (crude petroleum and natural gas), agriculture (such as coffee, rubber, cocoa, sugar, palm oil and tobacco) and manufacturing. The services sector (including transport, communications, tourism and financial services) increasingly drives Indonesia's economy more than traditional agriculture.

2.9 Poverty has more than halved since the turn of the century. According to March 2022 data from Statistika Indonesia, Indonesia's Central Bureau of Statistics, the poverty rate was 7.5 per cent in urban areas and 12.29 per cent in rural areas, and the poverty line was IDR 505,469 per month (about AUD 50). While the numbers of those in poverty are falling, a substantial number of Indonesians are vulnerable to falling into poverty, with some estimates of the 'near poor' numbering about 20 per cent or more of the entire population.

Employment

2.10 According to Statistics Indonesia, the unemployment rate was 5.8 per cent in August 2022. Many Indonesians work in the informal sector, including in small and medium enterprises, as contractors, or in the 'gig economy', for example driving cars or motorcycles hired through a mobile phone application.

2.11 Jakarta is the largest city with the most employment opportunities. In country sources told DFAT that informal work can be obtained without much difficulty in other big cities (for example, Makassar, Surabaya, or in the tourism industry in Bali). Personal connections, for example through family, previous work or within one's own ethnic group, are helpful, but not essential, for finding informal employment.

Corruption

2.12 Corruption is a longstanding issue, from petty day-to-day issues to examples of large-scale corruption. Indonesia ranked 110th out of 180 countries in the 2022 Corruption Perceptions Index published by Transparency International. Judicial and bureaucratic decision-making and police interaction are, at times, susceptible to the payment of bribes.

2.13 Notwithstanding strong laws against corruption, international commentators have observed weak enforcement of anti-corruption legislation, ineffective regulatory mechanisms and conflict legislation, a culture of nepotism and favouritism, and bribery in the public service, judiciary, police and politics. Petty corruption is common in areas such as policing and education, particularly higher education.

2.14 The main anti-corruption authority is the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), however various other agencies may also tackle corruption. The KPK enjoys popular support among Indonesians, and it has been involved in a number of high-profile prosecutions. These efforts tend to be focused on grand corruption; the petty corruption that most Indonesians experience in their day-to-day lives (see sections on [police](#), [judiciary](#) and [detention and prison](#)) is unlikely to be affected by high-profile anti-corruption efforts.

2.15 DFAT is not aware of any significant change in the day-to-day levels of corruption since the last DFAT Country Information Report.

Health

2.16 Article 28H of the Constitution guarantees citizens the right to obtain medical care, while Article 34 obliges the state to provide medical and public service facilities. Responsibility for health service delivery in Indonesia has been devolved to the district level since the early 2000s, and health services vary in quality and availability between districts.

2.17 In January 2014, Indonesia began the implementation of a National Health Insurance Scheme (JKN), Indonesia's universal healthcare system. DFAT understands that most of the population is now covered by the JKN, with citizens and those living in the country for more than six months required to register for the scheme. Those enrolled must pay premiums, which may be subsidised for the poor. While JKN is available to most, there are still several million Indonesians, including those with disabilities and complex health needs, who do not have access to the scheme.

2.18 There is a gap in service provision and quality between urban and rural areas, and a mix of private and public health facilities. While most Indonesians have access to healthcare of sorts, this may not be access to a doctor or a hospital, but rather to a health worker of some type (e.g., a nurse or a health educator). Access could be in a hospital or possibly in a healthcare centre without many facilities. DFAT assesses that it is difficult to give an overall assessment of healthcare availability and quality, which differs significantly from place to place and circumstance to circumstance. Rich people in urban areas generally have access to better quality healthcare services than do the poor in rural areas, however most Indonesians can access basic healthcare.

Mental health

2.19 Mental health, including depression and anxiety, is poorly understood, and not widely accepted by most health providers and the general public. Services are limited or unavailable in most places, and access is affected by stigma, both from society and individual social and family groups. Admitting that a member of one's family is living with mental illness can bring shame on the whole family and so are often not admitted, much less treated.

2.20 *Pasung*, or 'shackling', is reported. A family member living with mental illness may be hidden away, or literally or figuratively 'shackled' to protect family honour. Shackling may occur at a family home or at an institution, such as a healthcare or religious facility. Shackling may also occur because of a lack of other treatment options, or because people with disability are seen as an economic burden. It may be perceived to be safer to lock a person with a mental illness away, for example, when no realistic treatment options are available and economic capacity to care for family members is limited. DFAT does not have enough data to be able to comment on the prevalence of shackling.

2.21 Some dedicated mental health facilities (psychiatric hospitals or wards) exist, more commonly in urban areas, and care is usually covered under the JKN. Mental health workforce and medical supplies can be limited, particularly in rural areas. An October 2021 article in the *Jakarta Post* notes that there are just 1,053 psychologists in Indonesia, a country with a population that exceeds 277 million.

People living with HIV

2.22 According to the CIA World Factbook, Indonesia's HIV infection rate is about 0.3 per cent, affecting approximately half a million people. The HIV infection rate differs across the country; for example, it is much higher in the Papua provinces. Women make up about a third of new infections each year. HIV treatment is generally available from healthcare providers, civil society organisations (CSOs) and religious organisations. DFAT is not aware of the cost, if any, for such services.

2.23 HIV carries a strong social stigma which may prevent people from being tested or treated, and many people with HIV likely do not know that they have the condition. Death from late-stage HIV (AIDS) occurs,

however because of stigma and lack of testing, communities may dismiss AIDS-defining illnesses and related deaths as some other medical problem.

Welfare

2.24 Those eligible for state welfare services might receive cash payments, basic food cards or subsidies, for example for rice, education or healthcare insurance payments. Eligibility requirements for various payments are complex and may be difficult for vulnerable people to navigate. Indonesians employed in the [informal sector](#) are not eligible for unemployment insurance policies. The very poor may be able to access some payments (this should not be assumed due to the complexity of eligibility criteria), but these alone would not be sufficient for subsistence. Welfare services may also be supplemented by religious groups; for example, places of worship are active in providing food, shelter and healthcare. Most Indonesians receive subsidised healthcare; see [Health](#).

Education

2.25 Education is mostly state-provided but there are also religious schools that follow the national curriculum. The Constitution provides a right to 'basic education', which includes primary and junior secondary levels (up to year 9). Basic education is free. The state education system is broadly non-sectarian but the private sector tends to be religiously-based, for example Islamic *pesantren* (boarding schools) and *madrasahs* and many Christian schools. Schools based on language (for example, Chinese or French language schools) educate some children. Educational outcomes across the country vary based on location and socioeconomic status.

2.26 There are few barriers to children (boys or girls) accessing education. Quality is a greater problem than access. Some schools, especially in remote areas, do not have running water or toilets, for example. Some are not staffed sufficiently, and some classrooms may lack a teacher, for example.

POLITICAL SYSTEM

2.27 Indonesia is a democracy with elections held every five years. The most recent election, held in 2019, was considered free and fair by international observers. The People's Consultative Assembly (DPR) is the parliamentary body that considers legislation. The Regional Representative Council (DPD) advises the government on behalf of the regions. Together, these bodies are known as the People's Consultative Assembly.

2.28 Each province is headed by a Governor, directly elected for a term of five years. Each province also has its own legislative assembly. Several provinces have special status: Aceh, including for the use of *sharia* law; the Special Region of Yogyakarta, as a sovereign monarchy within Indonesia; the six Papua provinces (Papua, Papua Highlands, Central Papua, South Papua, Southwest Papua and West Papua) for the implementation of special development programmes; and the Special Capital Region of Jakarta. Provinces are subdivided into regencies or cities and smaller administrative units.

Pancasila

2.29 *Pancasila* is the official, foundational ideology of the Republic of Indonesia that dates from the time of independence. It comprises the following five principles: belief in one God; just and civilised humanity;

national unity; democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultations; and social justice for all Indonesians. *Pancasila* occupies a special place in the national consciousness, and Indonesians learn its principles from an early age. During the Suharto New Order period, the state frequently used *Pancasila* to suppress opposition that it called 'anti-*Pancasila*' activities. Today, the ideology is still invoked in national political discourse and is a key element that unites Indonesia's diverse population. The revised Criminal Code, passed by Indonesia's Parliament in December 2022, will potentially outlaw activities considered to be anti-*Pancasila*. DFAT understands that the provisions will become law three years after promulgation. At the time of publication, DFAT awaits further clarity on how the law will be interpreted as implementing regulations are finalised.

HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK

2.30 Indonesia's Constitution enshrines many fundamental human rights, including: the right to life; freedom from torture; freedom of religion; freedom from enslavement; recognition as a person before the law; freedom of expression; freedom of association; and freedom from discrimination.

2.31 Indonesia's national human rights institution is the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM). Komnas HAM monitors human rights, conducts education campaigns and can mediate between parties. The body has a good reputation and a history of raising and investigating human rights matters, including politically sensitive matters (for example LGBTI issues). Recommendations by Komnas HAM are not binding on the government and are not always implemented.

2.32 The National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) tackles violence against women. It conducts research, disseminates information, monitors women's rights, advises executive, legislative and judicial institutions, and develops international cooperation. Like Komnas HAM, its advice is not binding on government. Komnas Perempuan has a good reputation and is effective in advocating for laws and policies to prevent violence against women, though it sometimes attracts criticism from right wing and religious hard-line groups.

SECURITY SITUATION

2.33 There have been fewer terrorist attacks in Indonesia in recent years, compared to during the first two decades of the 21st century. Attacks have not generally been as sophisticated, in large part due to efforts by authorities to detect and disrupt terrorist groups. Nevertheless, attacks can occur, including by individuals with links to, or inspired by, ISIS. In March 2021, for example, two married suicide bombers attacked a Catholic cathedral in Makassar, killing themselves and injuring 20 bystanders. In May 2021, police disrupted plans to kill a Catholic bishop in the Papua provinces and attack several churches (see [Christians](#)).

2.34 While crime remains a persistent threat, Indonesia is generally safe. Some parts of Jakarta, Surabaya and Makassar, for example, experience street crime. Both poverty and related crime rose during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some have connections with gangs in other parts of the world, for example with motorcycle gangs in Australia.

REFUGEE CONVENTION CLAIMS

RACE/NATIONALITY

3.1 Indonesia is one of the world's most ethnically diverse countries. The government promotes racial tolerance, and legislation prohibiting racial discrimination and vilification has been in force since 2008. Online racial hate speech is banned by Indonesian law, however issues about race and discrimination are openly discussed in Indonesia. Article 28I(2) of the Constitution, among other articles, states that every person shall have the right to be free from discriminatory treatment based upon any grounds whatsoever and shall have the right to protection from such treatment.

3.2 According to the CIA World Factbook, as at April 2023 approximately 40 per cent of the population was Javanese, 15 per cent Sundanese, and 3.7 per cent Malay. Various other ethnic identities exist among the many islands. Indonesians of Chinese descent comprise approximately 1.2 per cent of the population.

3.3 For many decades the government pursued a 'transmigration' policy (*transmigrasi*), with landless people offered land and housing in less heavily populated locations to ease population pressures in densely populated islands such as Java. Because of this policy, and following recent movements of people for economic reasons, it is common to find people of various ethnic groups in areas of the country where they are not the majority. Critics of transmigration argue it failed to integrate arriving populations into host communities, and that subsequent segregation led, in some cases, to communal tensions in rural areas, or that the program has simply relocated, rather than resolved, poverty.

3.4 People from different ethnicities and different parts of Indonesia are often visibly distinguishable by body and facial features, skin tone, or are recognisable by their name. Low-level ethnic discrimination, like stereotypes and the use of racist slurs, occurs in Indonesia, as in other parts of the world. Non-Javanese are worse affected, but ethnic chauvinism occurs among members of all ethnic groups.

3.5 DFAT is not aware of a pattern of incidents of official discrimination based on race or ethnicity.

Ethnically Chinese Indonesians

3.6 Successive waves of immigration to Indonesia from China have resulted in well-established ethnically Chinese Indonesian communities throughout the country. Many Chinese Indonesians can trace their history in Indonesia back many generations, may no longer identify as Chinese, and may not speak a Chinese language. Most Chinese Indonesians belong to a religious minority, either Buddhism or a [Christian denomination](#).

3.7 The Suharto-era New Order regime implemented a range of discriminatory measures, prohibiting Chinese language newspapers, schools and cultural expression and requiring Indonesian names. Violence and looting targeting Chinese Indonesians and their homes and businesses peaked during the Asian Financial Crisis (see [Recent History](#)). Since the end of the New Order regime in 1998, successive governments have removed official policy measures discriminating against ethnically Chinese Indonesians. Chinese New Year is a national public holiday, Confucianism is an officially recognised religion, Chinese-language newspapers are published, and there are no barriers to Chinese cultural celebrations or education.

3.8 Hundreds of thousands of protesters demonstrated in Jakarta on several occasions in 2016 to demand the detention of the Christian and Chinese-Indonesian Governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (often referred to as 'Ahok'), after he was arrested for allegedly insulting Islam. Violence between protesters and police was reported, but not violence against ordinary citizens, as occurred in 1998.

3.9 Chinese Indonesians experience societal discrimination in the form of negative stereotypes that portray them as greedy, as criminals or as being associated with China and its policies. Discrimination of this type increased around the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic due to the extensive media coverage of China and various claims about the origins of the virus at the time.

3.10 Risk of societal discrimination against Chinese Indonesians depends on individual circumstances. Individuals with wealth are less affected; they can use their wealth and connections with powerful people to protect themselves. Many Chinese Indonesians work in family businesses or within their own ethnic community, which reduces the chances of discrimination at work. Those without such networks or wealth would be more at risk of discrimination, but that applies to all Indonesians, not just Chinese Indonesians.

3.11 Memories of the 1998 violence and 2016 protests are still fresh in the memories of many ethnically Chinese Indonesians. Some jealousy of perceived wealth can lead to threats and some Chinese Indonesians keep a low profile as a result. Anti-minority sentiment is also heightened during election campaigns. Violence has occurred in the past but is not an everyday experience for Chinese Indonesians.

3.12 DFAT assesses that Chinese Indonesians currently face a low risk of societal violence and a moderate risk of low-level societal discrimination. DFAT is not aware of official discrimination against Chinese Indonesians.

Ethnic Papuans

3.13 International media reports ethnic Papuans can experience racism. Examples cited include stereotypical descriptions or being referred to by ethnic slurs. There is some crossover with religious discrimination; most ethnic Papuans are Christian. Ethnic Papuans are thus sometimes affected by broader stereotyping of Christians as violent because they eat pork and drink alcohol, both of which are perceived by some Muslims to cause violence. Sometimes ethnic Papuans are characterised as terrorists by Islamists (they are called 'Christian terrorists'), which could be a backlash against societal attention paid to Islamic extremist terrorism.

3.14 The effect of this discrimination can amount to exclusion and discrimination in accessing goods and services. Some ethnic Papuans claim that they have been refused rides in taxis or on rideshares or have missed out on promotions at work.

3.15 Ethnic Papuans often live together in boarding houses, particularly those who have migrated to other parts of Indonesia for education. There are prominent examples of groups of Papuans living together being the targets of racism. For example, in 2019 in Surabaya, Indonesian nationalist groups accused ethnic Papuan students staying at a university dormitory of damaging an Indonesian flag and used racist taunts before riot police attended. Protests against racism and in favour of separatism were held by both ethnic Papuans and non-ethnic Papuans in at least 30 cities. Related violent protests in Wamena in Papua province led to 33 deaths.

3.16 Societal awareness of discrimination against ethnic Papuans is growing. A protest movement inspired by the 'Black Lives Matter' (sometimes called 'Papuan Lives Matter') movement also emerged in Indonesia in mid-2020 to protest alleged police brutality against ethnic Papuans. The movement was controversial in Indonesia and heavily covered in the local and international media. Over time, ethnic Papuans have become more visible in television and advertising.

3.17 DFAT assesses that ethnic Papuans are at a low risk of societal violence in general. This assessment does not apply to the Papua highlands; see [Secessionists in the Papua provinces](#). DFAT assesses ethnic Papuans are at a moderate risk of low-level societal discrimination. DFAT is aware of claims of police surveillance of ethnic Papuans who live outside the Papua provinces but does not have enough information to make an assessment on whether this amounts to official discrimination.

RELIGION

3.18 Indonesia is the world's largest majority Muslim country, by population. According to the most recent census in 2010, approximately 87.2 per cent of the population is Muslim (almost all of whom are Sunni), 7 per cent is Protestant, just under 3 per cent is Catholic and 1.7 per cent is Hindu.

3.19 Indonesia is officially a religiously pluralist state. The constitution guarantees freedom of religion subject to restrictions in the interests of morality, religious values, security and public order. Major religions generally have good relationships with each other and with government authorities at an institutional level, but this differs for smaller religions and between individual religious communities.

3.20 Not every religion is legally recognised. According to the law, religions must have a prophet, a holy book, a deity and international recognition. Indonesia recognises six official faiths that meet that definition: Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Confucianism. Other faiths, such as Judaism or Daoism, are not prohibited and have general protection under the constitution. Religious groups other than those from the six official religions must seek approval from the Ministry of Home Affairs to operate as civil society organisations. Failure to do so may lead to arrests and charges, for example for blasphemy.

3.21 Apostasy is not a crime in Indonesia and religious conversions do occur. Individual conversion is sometimes driven by social media, or whole communities or families might convert. There is some bureaucracy involved (a person's religion must be registered and appears on identity cards, for example) and conversion can be difficult and frustrating, but not impossible, to navigate. Some people may have difficulties with their families accepting their choice of faith, but that depends on individual families.

3.22 Laws relating to family and inheritance vary according to religion. The *Marriage Law* (1974) has general applicability and states that the legal age for marriage is 19 years for men or women (which increased from 16 for girls in 2019), but those under 21 years of age must obtain parental permission to marry. Both parties of a couple getting married in Indonesia must declare a religion, with agnosticism and atheism not recognised. In practice, most marriage partners are of the same faith, or one partner converts to the other's religion.

3.23 To obtain permission to build a new house of worship, registered religious groups must obtain 90 signatures of support from the users of the planned house of worship and at least 60 from members of the broader community. In practice, this means that adherents of small faiths (for example, small denominations of Christianity) have a more difficult time getting approvals.

3.24 Because local governments are responsible for implementing approvals, the experience of different religious groups seeking approval may differ from place to place. Local government areas have 'Forums for Religious Harmony' with members from the six official religions who grant building permission. Such forums also play a role in mediating religious conflicts.

Sharia law

3.25 Islamic law (*sharia*) is applied in the province of Aceh, northern Sumatra, under the terms of a 2005 peace agreement that ended a separatist conflict there. In West Sumatra, *sharia* has been applied through

customary law (which in Indonesia can have the same status as other laws) known as *adat* since 2022, however there were earlier, less formalised applications of *sharia* before that time in West Sumatra and other places.

3.26 *Sharia* regulations in Aceh prohibit the consumption, production and distribution of alcohol, close proximity to members of the opposite sex with whom one is not married or closely related, adultery, gambling, and same-sex sexual relations (see [LGBTI](#)). The regulations impose strict dress codes based on 'Islamic attire' and enforce curfews on women. Since 2005, punishments for violations of the regulations have included public canings. For example, *The Guardian* reported in January 2022 that a woman had been flogged 100 times for adultery, while the male involved had received only 15 lashes because of his denials of wrongdoing.

3.27 *Sharia* is intended to apply to Muslims in Aceh and not to non-Muslims or non-permanent residents. Non-Muslims are expected to obey criminal laws based on Islamic law in cases where the national criminal code does not otherwise cover an offence. According to the 2021 US Department of State Human Rights Report for Indonesia, some people who would not otherwise be subject to *sharia* elect to receive legal resolutions, or punishment, in *sharia* courts because, in some cases, they are faster and less expensive than [non-sharia courts](#), or the punishment might be less..

3.28 *Sharia* is less strictly enforced in West Sumatra than in Aceh. As at publication, alcohol was generally available in West Sumatra, for example, whereas it was not in Aceh. Legal punishments and rules of evidence that apply in Aceh (for example, requiring witnesses for crimes, including gender-based violence) may not apply in West Sumatra.

Blasphemy and defamation of religion

3.29 Indonesia's Criminal Code prohibits acts or words that insult one of the official religions. The *Electronic Information and Transaction Law* (ITE Law) also makes it an offence to deliberately disseminate information aimed at inciting hatred or using blasphemous or heretical language. Punishments may be severe; for example, in April 2022 a Christian preacher was sentenced to 10 years in prison for comments he made on YouTube which a court found were blasphemous. A Muslim cleric who was convicted for blasphemy against the Bible and hate speech against Christians received a five-month sentence in January 2022.

3.30 Blasphemy laws are sometimes used against religious minorities, however sources note they are also sometimes used Muslim-on-Muslim to settle personal disputes, for example disputes between neighbours. On contentious issues, including blasphemy, once allegations are spread (often via social media) there is a chance of widespread communal protests.

3.31 According to the 2021 US Department of State Indonesia International Religious Freedom Report, there were 67 blasphemy cases in 2020, 43 of which were related to social media activity. The report states that sources have noted a trend of increases in the number of blasphemy cases and convictions, particularly when viewed over a period of decades (since the transition to democracy in the late 1990s, for example).

3.32 Politically motivated blasphemy allegations are possible, especially against religious minorities. There is potential for such accusations to be accompanied by hate speech or, in rare cases, violence. Overall, such outcomes are unlikely even for religious minorities, and blasphemy allegations are not a day-to-day occurrence for religious minorities.

3.33 DFAT assesses that, overall, religious minorities face a low threat of blasphemy allegations being made against them. See relevant sections below for specific information about various religious minorities.

Mainstream Islam

3.34 Indonesia's mainstream Islamic identity has historically emphasised moderation and syncretism, although often with socially conservative elements. Islamic belief and practice is not consistent throughout the country, with varying degrees and combinations of this moderation, syncretism and conservatism in response to different local issues.

3.35 Given the diversity of approaches to Islam in Indonesia, hard-line Islamic groups, including the now-banned Islamic Defenders Front ('FPI') can be influential and can at times target moderate Muslims. The leader of FPI was arrested in December 2020 for breaching COVID-19 rules and the organisation was banned and disbanded for their links to terrorism and 'public disorder'.

3.36 Outward expressions of Muslim piety have increased since the beginning of the democratic period. For example, the number of people wearing the hijab, *jilbab* (a form of head covering that covers hair, neck and chest), or beards, or going on religious pilgrimages, has increased, particularly among the middle classes. A rise in interest in religion does not necessarily reflect a rise in radicalism, however, may reflect current social pressures as well as longstanding Indonesian social conservatism, which is also found among non-Muslims.

Christians

3.37 Christianity is Indonesia's second-largest religion after Islam. Many Christians live in the Papua provinces, parts of North Sumatra, East Nusa Tenggara, North Sulawesi, and Maluku islands, but also in Jakarta and other parts of the country. There are Christians in every province of Indonesia. Many Indonesians of Chinese descent are Catholic. Along with the Catholic church, many Protestant churches operate in Indonesia, including mainline Protestant churches (especially Lutheran denominations), and evangelical and Pentecostal churches, as well as non-denominational independent churches. Christians are generally able to practise their faith freely throughout Indonesia. In general, Christians have good relations between denominations and with other religions, including regular dialogue and a generally peaceful coexistence.

3.38 In country sources told DFAT that they do not generally experience discrimination, for example, because of the faith listed on their identity cards, when publishing literature, or for having Christian websites. Localised discrimination from local governments is possible. For example, the Indonesian Christian Church (GKI) won a 2010 Supreme Court challenge against the revocation of its building permit in Bogor, near Jakarta. The Church remains sealed by the local government at the time of writing despite the court ruling.

3.39 Religious intolerance against Christians occurs occasionally with a small possibility of violence. Police sometimes provide armed protection to churches, especially during religious festivals. In-country sources told DFAT that most churchgoers feel safe going to church on Sundays.

3.40 Attacks against Christians can be highly organised, and police investigate and sometimes disrupt these threats. For example, a bomb attack in Makassar in March 2021 on Sacred Heart Cathedral injured about 20 people. Police arrested 53 people for the attack, who were charged with terrorism offences. In May 2021, police disrupted plans to kill a Catholic bishop in the Papua provinces and attack several other churches. In November 2020, ISIS-linked terrorist group East Indonesia Mujahidin (MIT) carried out an attack on several homes and a Salvation Army church in Central Sulawesi, killing four.

3.41 DFAT assesses that Christians residing in areas where they are a majority do not face either official or societal discrimination. Christians residing in areas where conservative Islam is prevalent face a low risk of societal discrimination in the form of impediments to worship. Violence does occur and there are recent high-profile examples, but this is not the day-to-day experience of most Christians.

Ahmadiyah (Ahmadis)

3.42 Ahmadis believe that their 19th century founder succeeded the Prophet Muhammad as the embodiment of the spirit of the Prophet incarnate. This belief differs from conventional Islamic doctrine, which does not allow for the possibility of a prophet after Muhammad. Ahmadis self-identify as Muslims but are targeted by some Sunni Muslims in many parts of the world, including Indonesia, for perceived blasphemy.

3.43 Proselytising by Ahmadis is banned by government decree. Violations carry a five-year prison sentence and Ahmadis may be charged with blasphemy. The same decree bans vigilantism against Ahmadis, similarly carrying a prison term of four-and-a-half years. Ahmadis do not publicly proselytise in Indonesia, however an international Ahmadi media presence is accessible from Indonesia. In the mainstream media and on social media, anti-Ahmadi sentiment is common. Ahmadi issues are seldom reported on and public information about Ahmadis' experiences is limited.

3.44 Communal violence against Ahmadis has occurred in the past. A mob of more than 100 people (some sources say as many as 200) attacked an Ahmadi mosque in West Kalimantan in September 2021, for example. Ten arrests were made and police deployed troops in the aftermath to restore calm. The mosque was later demolished by the local government as an 'unlicensed building'.

3.45 In further examples, mobs forced out a village of Ahmadis in East Lombok in 2006, and another in West Nusa Tenggara in 2018. According to the 2021 US Department of State International Religious Freedom Report (published June 2022) those affected in both incidents remain displaced.

3.46 In country sources told DFAT that most Ahmadis do not experience discrimination in accessing official services, at least in Jakarta. A minority of Ahmadis have reported difficulties in obtaining identity cards ('KTP', which list the bearer's religion) from local authorities who refuse to accept the Ahmadis' nomination of Islam; however, this treatment does not appear to be consistently applied and DFAT understands that most Ahmadi KTPs contain the designation 'Muslim'.

3.47 DFAT assesses that Ahmadis face a moderate risk official discrimination because they are unable to proselytise freely. DFAT assesses that Ahmadis residing in conservative areas face a moderate risk of societal discrimination that may include physical and verbal threats and harassment and being prevented access to their places of worship. DFAT assesses that Ahmadis living in Jakarta face a lower risk of societal and official discrimination. Incidents of violence have occurred in the recent past, but these are not day-to-day experiences for most Ahmadis.

Shi'a

3.48 The number of Shi'a Muslims is difficult to estimate: the 2021 US Department of State International Religious Freedom Report states that between 1 million to 5 million Shi'a live in Indonesia. Sectarian differences between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims are less pronounced in Indonesia than in other majority Muslim countries. A 2012 Pew Research study found that 56 per cent of the total population identified as 'just a Muslim', the most popular response.

3.49 Self-identified Shi'a Muslims may become targets of Sunni extremists. Violent incidents are uncommon but anti-Shi'a rhetoric is common in traditional and social media (though this is not necessarily representative of popular opinion). The most recent well-publicised incident of violence was when a mob of approximately 100 people attacked Shi'a Muslims during a pre-wedding ceremony in Central Java in August 2020.

3.50 DFAT assesses that Shi'a residing in areas where conservative Sunni Islam is prevalent face a moderate risk of societal discrimination that may include physical and verbal threats and harassment, and they may be

prevented from accessing their places of worship. There have been recent incidents of violence, but this is not a day-to-day experience for most Shi'a Muslims.

Hinduism

3.51 Hinduism has an ancient history in Indonesia. It is the majority religion in the province of Bali where over 80 per cent of the population identified as Hindu at the last census. Internal migration of Balinese Hindus to Lampung, South Sumatra, Central Sulawesi and the Kalimantan provinces has resulted in Hindu communities in those places.

3.52 Religion in Indonesia is constitutionally defined as a belief in 'One and Only God' in the Abrahamic monotheistic tradition. Like other non-monotheistic faiths, Hindus were classed as not having a religion before 1965. Hindus declared a belief in Sanghyang Acintya as their Supreme God in order to fit the definition of worshipping one god. Some polytheistic indigenous religions, sometimes with little to do with Hinduism, affiliated themselves with Hinduism to take advantage of the official status of the religion.

3.53 Like followers of other minority religions, Hindus have claimed difficulty in establishing houses of worship, under pressure of local hard-line Islamic groups or because of bureaucratic processes that they claim are discriminatory. Police sometimes provide armed protection to Hindu temples, especially during religious festivals.

3.54 DFAT assesses that Hindus living in Bali do not face societal discrimination or violence based on their religion. Hindus living in other parts of the country where they are a small minority may face low-level societal discrimination. DFAT is not aware of reports of official discrimination against Hindus.

Atheism

3.55 Professed atheism in Indonesia is very uncommon; most atheists likely hide their beliefs. Atheism was associated with communism and the banned Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) during the New Order period. (See [Recent History](#). See also [Pancasila](#), Indonesia's foundational philosophy, which is inconsistent with atheism.) Atheists may communicate online, including in closed groups on social media. A religion is usually listed on a citizen's identity card, however an option for a dash (-) where religion is usually placed may be possible. But many opt to list a religion on their identity card, as such (non-) identification may lead to discrimination, for example in obtaining employment.

3.56 In country sources told DFAT that a public confession of atheism and, particularly, attempts to convince others to share that belief could lead to blasphemy charges. However, the situation is unclear because, whether for cultural reasons or for fear of the consequences, few people do this. It is socially acceptable to say that one is 'non-practising' or to say that 'religion is not a big part of my life', but denial of the existence of God or trying to organise with others who share that belief, especially for the purpose of convincing others, is taboo.

3.57 DFAT assesses that there is no pattern of anti-atheist violence or discrimination because so few atheists are public about their identity and thus few incidents occur. DFAT assesses that a person who is openly atheist would face a moderate risk of societal and official discrimination and violence. The risk of either societal discrimination or violence would increase if that person tried to convert others.

Adat communities

3.58 'Adat' means 'customary' and refers to the traditional beliefs and practices in a particular place. A many as 1,200 different traditional faith groups exist in Indonesia. These groups have a diverse range of religions, which include animism and syncretic mixes of traditional beliefs and world religions like Islam and Christianity. Traditional beliefs are regulated by, and registered with, the Ministry of Education and Culture, rather than the Department of Religious Affairs. In 2017 the Constitutional Court recognised *adat* religions and allowed citizens to select those religions for their identity cards. Despite this, many choose to list a more established recognised religion because it reduces discrimination. The Constitutional Court ruling does not necessarily translate into a reduced experience of discrimination, in practice. According to the 2021 US Department of State's International Religious Freedom Report, traditional faith adherents may avoid contesting decisions that deny building permits or access to houses of worship for fear of being accused of atheism.

3.59 In country sources told DFAT that, since the Constitutional Court ruling, more *adat* communities or those adhering to syncretic religions have been self-identifying as members of their religions. However, the same sources noted that having that self-identity made it easier for hard-line religionists (likely hard-line Muslims, or intolerant Christian groups) to identify and attack them. DFAT assesses that local authorities generally respect people's right to practise traditional beliefs, but that there is a low risk of societal and official discrimination and violence against individuals from *adat* communities.

POLITICAL OPINION (ACTUAL OR IMPUTED)

3.60 Indonesia has made significant democratic gains in the post-New Order era, establishing pluralism in politics and the media, and undergoing multiple peaceful transfers of power. It has become a democracy with a genuine public contest of ideas, fair elections, and the freedom to analyse and criticise those elections. Article 28E of the constitution states Indonesians have the rights to the freedom to believe their faith and to express views and thoughts in accordance with their conscience; and to associate, to assemble and to express opinions.

3.61 Indonesians enjoy freedom of expression in general, however, in practice, various laws limit the exercise of this right. A range of non-violent offences attract lengthy prison terms, including defamation, libel, hate speech, insult (including against the president and vice-president), and the spread of communist teachings in public. Provisions under the ITE law allow for defamation, hate speech and immorality to be criminally prosecuted. Activists report they have been unfairly targeted by these laws for commentary (including social media commentary) on sensitive topics like secession of the Papua provinces. Activists also report receiving online abuse, including doxing on social media.

3.62 These laws are sometimes used against journalists or social media users, however can also be weaponised in personal disputes, between neighbours, for example. Sources told DFAT that such laws are sometimes used by police to solicit bribes.

3.63 Protests about corruption and political issues are common and usually peaceful. Violence (between protesters or between protesters and security forces) is possible and protests can grow very quickly from just a few people to many thousands. They can also quickly escalate into violence. At least two students were killed in an anti-corruption protest in South Sulawesi in 2019. NGOs are generally able to operate freely and without significant barriers to registration. Prior notice given to police is generally required to hold a public demonstration, and police presence at protests is often extensive. The situation is different in the Papua provinces; protests there can be violent, and permits may not be issued. When protests do occur, protesters risk arrest. Arrests at protests about Papua secessionism have also taken place outside the Papua provinces.

3.64 Parliament passed a revised Criminal Code in December 2022. The code includes provisions against insulting the President, which can carry a maximum three-year prison term. DFAT understands that the provisions will become law three years after promulgation. As at publication, DFAT is awaiting further clarity on how the law will be interpreted as implementing regulations are finalised.

Secessionists in the Papua provinces

3.65 There is a long-running armed conflict in the Papua provinces related to secessionist aspirations. Parts of the Papua provinces, particularly the Highlands, are very remote and dangerous. There is a heavy security presence (police and military) in the region.

3.66 In the last two decades, development of the region has been a key priority for government. There is some debate among activists about the way that the benefits of government programs are distributed, but this does not generally lead to violence.

3.67 Violence in Highland Papua has, over a number of years, displaced large numbers of people. Information about the violence is often difficult or impossible to verify because of a lack of access to the area by independent observers. Some reporting suggests violence by security forces is getting worse, although the scarcity of data makes it difficult to verify these reports.

3.68 The secessionist movement is not united or homogenous; there is overlap, linkages and (sometimes violent) disputes between different secessionist groups. Tribal politics, gang violence, alcohol-related violence and corruption also play a role in the interaction among the various groups. Some secessionist groups entirely eschew violence. Violence that is unrelated to secessionism is sometimes incorrectly reported as secessionist violence. For example, a fire that killed 17 people at a karaoke bar in West Papua province in January 2022 was initially thought to be caused by separatists, however it was actually gang related.

3.69 Civilians are often the victims of violence, whether by secessionists or security forces, however the experience of non-combatants is seldom reported and not well-understood. Papuan society generally, and the conflict over secession in particular, is male-driven and women in particular may be subject to, or non-willing participants in, violence.

3.70 In January 2022, the West Papua National Liberation Army (TPNPB-OPM) claimed responsibility for an attack that killed three Indonesian soldiers in Papua. The same group claimed a lethal attack earlier that month.

3.71 Protests in favour of secession take place inside and outside the Papua provinces, including outside Indonesia. Police raids (or forced entry by 'concerned neighbours') on university dormitories have been reported. Activists claim that they are closely watched by authorities but the extent and justification of this alleged surveillance is not clear. The internet may be cut or 'throttled' at times of particular conflict, which can slow the release of already difficult-to-verify information. Activists have been charged with treason and sent to prison for protests, including raising the Morning Star flag, a symbol of secessionism that is illegal in Indonesia.

3.72 A large number of non-ethnic Papuans live in the Papua provinces following years of transmigration and privately funded relocations. They now outnumber ethnic Papuans in many of the larger coastal cities. Some ethnic Papuans object to the presence of non-ethnic Papuans. Many non-ethnically Papuan residents consider themselves to be 'Papuan'. Like all Indonesians, ethnic Papuans can and do move to other parts of the country, and ethnic Papuans can be found in different parts of Indonesia, including Jakarta.

GROUPS OF INTEREST

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

3.73 Indonesia hosts a strong and active civil society sector which has steadily expanded in the democratic era. Organisations advocate on and provide services in relation to a wide range of social, cultural, political and economic issues. CSOs generally conduct their activities without significant government interference and often cooperate with government. CSOs are well-networked with each other and often use their connections across the sector to cooperate with or inform government activities.

3.74 Some organisations working on politically sensitive issues have reported government monitoring of their activities, however this problem does not appear to be widespread. Organisations with connections to secessionist movements – [particularly in the Papua provinces](#) – are likely to attract official attention or sanction but the level of hindrance experienced depends on personal networks of members and skill at navigating Indonesian political frameworks.

3.75 The *Law on Societal Organisations* (2013, amended in 2017) requires civic and religious CSOs to register and submit to regular reviews. Foreign CSOs must be registered and have a memorandum of understanding with the relevant government department. The law bans them from committing blasphemy or espousing ideas that conflict with the principles of *Pancasila*, including atheism and communism (see [Pancasila](#)).

Media

3.76 Press freedoms in Indonesia have expanded extensively in the democratic era. Article 28 of the constitution provides the right to express written and oral opinions within the limits of the law. The Law on Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE law) extends libel laws to online media; journalists can be imprisoned for up to six years for online defamation or hate speech. Truth is not a defence against defamation. The 1999 Press Law ended most forms of censorship and led to the establishment of the Indonesian Press Council, which according to Reporters Without Borders (RSF) can handle most media-related disputes out of court.

3.77 Indonesia has a well-developed television and radio market with state and private broadcast options. The market for print media is less developed and there are few outlets. While some media outlets produce high-quality investigative journalism, the landscape and diversity of media is generally quite limited in Indonesia and this can lead to a lack of diversity of voices.

3.78 Social media is very popular, especially among young people, and gives some diversity to an otherwise limited media landscape. It is also used to spread misinformation and disinformation, hatred and violence at times (organising violent rallies or communal violence, for example), as is the case in the rest of the world. The government has increasing capacity to monitor social media, however the majority of social media posts do not attract government attention. Activists allege that their social media is monitored and that the government uses online trolls to spread government-friendly political narratives. DFAT is unable to verify these allegations.

3.79 Journalists are mostly safe, but some incidents of violence or harassment have been reported. According to RSF, journalists who report on local corruption might be subject to ‘various forms of intimidation’ by police or soldiers that can include arrest or acts or threats of violence. According to in-country sources, this includes online harassment and doxing, but generally not in-person attacks. Cyber attacks by unknown actors that seek to steal information or disrupt activities have also affected traditional media websites in the last several years.

3.80 The Alliance of Independent Journalists was quoted by the ABC in a June 2021 article saying that there were ‘at least 114 cases of violence against journalists’ in the Papua provinces between 2000 and 2021. In an example cited by the ABC, a journalist’s utility vehicle was reportedly spray painted and its windows smashed while in the Papua provinces in 2021. Authorities restrict journalists from having free-ranging access to the Papua region making reports like these difficult to verify.

3.81 Journalists may self-censor to avoid political trouble. Reports on powerful people and their personal lives, corruption, religion or LGBTI affairs, for example, are generally off-limits. The lack of media diversity combined with the personal beliefs of journalists may also contribute to a lack of reporting on religious minorities or LGBTI people. Media outlets are unlikely to use legal or other mechanisms to protect journalists’ jobs or prevent criminal or civil legal action; as such, journalists self-censor as a form of protection. Under the law, disputes with journalists should be resolved through the Press Council and journalists should be protected from prosecution. In practice, the ITE law, which can be used alone or in conjunction with other laws, may result in sanctions including prison time.

3.82 DFAT assesses that Indonesian journalists and social media users are generally able to operate without interference throughout Indonesia (with the Papua provinces as the exception). Some journalists self-censor on sensitive issues like the Papua provinces or LGBTI issues or matters related to religion.

Women and girls

3.83 Women participate in all areas of Indonesian society, but societal, cultural and religious barriers limit the extent of that participation. Women are protected by anti-discrimination laws in employment (which are not always effectively enforced).

3.84 Women experience discrimination in the application of customary law (known as *adat*), which may have the same force of law as statutes which may favour existing patriarchal structures that are embedded in local cultures. For example, inheritance is sometimes denied to women under *adat* laws.

3.85 Girls are much more likely to be in a child marriage than boys. According to a 2020 study by the Australia Indonesia Partnership for Justice, approximately 400,000 children and adolescents are married each year in Indonesia, 87.5 per cent of whom are girls. Courts may grant special dispensation to allow an otherwise underage marriage. South Sulawesi is known for high rates of girl-marriage, and this was made worse during the COVID-19 pandemic with some families selling their girls, as young as (but possibly younger than) 12 years of age.

Violence against women

3.86 Violence against women, such as rape (including spousal rape) and domestic violence, is against the law. Indonesia’s parliament passed further laws in April 2022 that outlawed forced marriage, forced sterilisation, and some kinds of assault and harassment, including the circulation of non-consensual material. The bill was opposed by conservative lawmakers. As at publication, it is too early to assess the effectiveness of the new legislation, particularly as enabling regulations are yet to be implemented. Early reports suggest that, while somewhat effective in preventing home-based domestic violence, there was an increase of incidents of violence outside the home (for example on public transport), which is not covered by the law. This increase may be due to perpetrators of violence changing their behaviour may reflect changes in reporting or be COVID-19-related.

3.87 More women than ever are wearing a *jilbab*. This may be to prevent perceived risk of violence in the street or accusations that women who do not cover up are inviting attention, as well as a reflection of increased religiosity in the country. In-country sources told DFAT that some non-Muslim women also adapt

this practice for the same reasons. While covering up may lessen harassment, DFAT notes it is still relatively common to see women in Indonesia without any head covering, and harassment does not necessarily follow.

3.88 Victims of violence (whether societal or domestic) are often reluctant to report their experiences. Many women do not trust police; they lack confidence in the police's ability or willingness to help them or may fear that their personal information will become public knowledge and the subject of gossip in their communities if they do report violence. A woman would most likely need to report violence to a male officer and may fear that the officer will not believe her or take action to protect her.

3.89 Filing of police reports can be frustrating. If the fact that women have complained becomes public (for example, if it is shared on social media) women fear public scrutiny (for example, claims that a woman was raped because of her dress or behaviour). Women may also fear discrimination at work or at home. According to in-country sources, filing of police reports can lead to women being ostracised from their families, homes, jobs or schools. In effect even if a woman is able to leave an abusive relationship, the perpetrator of violence is unlikely to be held to account for his actions; many women simply want to get out of an abusive relationship, not pursue criminal charges.

3.90 Women may be reluctant to leave abusive marriages if they have children. Retaining custody of children may be difficult (legal proceedings are expensive and take time) and women may fear their children will become victims of violence if left behind. Women may be financially dependent on their husbands, thus leaving an abusive relationship may cause significant economic insecurity and hardship for a woman or her children.

3.91 Rates of domestic violence increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, as was the case in many countries. The National Commission on Violence Against Women, a government-funded body that is active and effective in awareness-raising and campaigning against violence, noted that this increase was in part due to the social and economic impacts of the pandemic (with people at home more) but also due to an increased willingness of women to report abuse.

3.92 Services for women experiencing domestic violence exist, however may not have the capacity to help all the women who need them. There are safehouses that generally are safe; their locations are kept secret to prevent perpetrators of violence finding their victims. Such safehouses are not available in every part of the country (more likely in larger cities). Facilities vary, however many shelters provide holistic support services that can include education, healthcare and legal assistance. Some shelters are government-run, others are provided by the NGO sector. Some shelters provide counselling, legal and other kinds of support.

Single women, widows and divorcees

3.93 Women who are not married may face social stigma or harassment, including sexual harassment, especially if they are divorced. Some women choose to move to Jakarta for more independence. This option may not be available to women who are financially dependent on their families or lack work connections in their hometown or in Jakarta.

3.94 Indonesian society is patriarchal and women without husbands have less 'social access'; they are less likely to have networks or be invited to social events. This, in turn, can lead to fewer opportunities for social and economic advancement. Divorces can be difficult to obtain. Indonesia does not have no-fault divorce and women might have difficulty proving the grounds for divorce.

3.95 Parliament passed a revised Criminal Code in December 2022. The code includes provisions that prohibit adultery and unmarried cohabitation for heterosexual couples, which limits the lodging of complaints to direct family members. As such, the application of the law is likely to be limited. Penalties include a maximum one-year prison term for adultery and six-month prison term for extra-marital cohabitation. DFAT

understands that the provisions will become law three years after promulgation. As at publication, DFAT is awaiting further clarity on how the law will be interpreted as implementing regulations are finalised.

3.96 It is possible, but difficult, to live as a single person (whether through choosing to remain unmarried, or through widowhood or divorce). Because of this difficulty and potential stigma, many women choose not to leave abusive marriages, and choosing to live a single lifestyle is very uncommon. DFAT assesses that single women experience a moderate risk of societal discrimination. DFAT is not aware of official discrimination against single women.

Sexual orientation and gender identity

3.97 There is no national law against same-sex sexual relations, but it is illegal in Aceh, where ‘offenders’ are caned as a judicial punishment for same-sex acts. Nonetheless, LGBTI people are heavily stigmatised in Indonesia. Terms like ‘LGBT’ are broadly taboo or used as an insult. In-country sources told DFAT it is very difficult to be openly LGBTI in Indonesia. A 2020 Pew Research Centre survey found that public acceptance of homosexuality was only 9 per cent among Indonesians, an increase from 3 per cent in 2013, however still among the lowest of the 34 countries surveyed (by comparison, public acceptance was 81 per cent among Australians).

3.98 Despite not being illegal, LGBTI people are sometimes targeted by police. For example, according to international media, a private ‘gay party’ was raided by police with charges laid against nine people for ‘obscene acts’ under anti-pornography laws in August 2020. Other raids on private homes of suspected LGBTI people were ordered by the mayor of Depok in West Java in January 2020. LGBTI people may face charges in the military, where same-sex sexual activity is illegal. In June 2022, two soldiers were sentenced to eight and nine months’ prison respectively for having male-male sex. LGBTI people have been dismissed from the police force because of their sexual orientation. Because of the threat of arrest or extortion, most LGBTI people avoid police.

3.99 The experience of LGBTI Indonesians depends a lot on their families. Family networks are crucial. Those whose families reject them are at a high risk of poverty, may be forced into sham marriages, or simply be required, on a day-to-day basis, to hide their sexual orientation or gender identity. Given prevailing societal attitudes, many LGBTI people will submit to sham marriages or attempts to ‘cure’ them. LGBTI women are vulnerable to violence and forced marriage.

3.100 LGBTI NGOs or social groups do exist, but they must be cautious to protect their safety. It may be possible for LGBTI people to connect using social media or dating apps like ‘Grindr’ (the most commonly used app), ‘Growlr’, ‘Scruff’ or ‘9Monsters’, but their use is hidden and users commonly use virtual private networks to disguise their access to these platforms.

3.101 Digital means can also be used to harass LGBTI people. DFAT is aware of cases where social media was used to ‘out’ (forcibly expose someone’s sexual orientation or gender identity without their consent) an LGBTI person to facilitate online bullying and harassment. This can lead to the threat of violence including death threats, but DFAT is not aware of acts of violence stemming from online harassment.

3.102 Cultural references to LGBTI matters are sensitive. An online video by a popular podcaster, Deddy Corbuzier, including an interview with a gay couple caused an outcry until Corbuzier took the video down and apologised. According to the *New York Times*, the Indonesian Film Censorship Board was reviewing the 2022 Disney film, *Lightyear*, because it had a lesbian character, which breached Indonesian laws that prohibit ‘deviant’ or ‘vulgar’ content.

3.103 Accusations of LGBTI activity, which are probably false, are sometimes used to foment outrage or ‘spice up’ a news story. Widespread outrage and protests occurred when the British Embassy in Jakarta raised

a rainbow flag on their own grounds in support of LGBTI people. Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned and rebuked the Ambassador of the United Kingdom to Indonesia over the incident. Incidents like these can quickly cause widespread outrage on social media and lead to street protests. Many LGBTI organisations keep a low profile and request that foreign interests (including international NGOs or foreign missions, for example) do not publicly associate with them to prevent backlash.

3.104 An American woman working in Bali who described the island as 'a safe place for the black and queer community' was deported after local outrage and authorities accused her of 'disseminating information disturbing to the public'. *The Guardian* reported in January 2021 that, while Bali is a safer place for LGBTI people, the experience of visitors and tourists is very different, with LGBTI locals experiencing day-to-day discrimination even while serving LGBTI tourists.

3.105 Multiple sources told DFAT that, while the comments mentioned above were unrealistic and insensitive, the situation for LGBTI people in heavily-touristed Bali is somewhat better than in most other parts of Indonesia because international visitors may be more tolerant or be LGBTI themselves. There is a vibrant nightlife in parts of Bali that is well-frequented by international tourists and this provides some LGBTI Indonesians a space for self-expression, but these spaces are not necessarily inclusive of all LGBTI people.

3.106 Other sources told DFAT that working in international hotels or tourism in other parts of the country (including big cities like Jakarta) may be a safer place for LGBTI people for the same reasons. Even then, LGBTI people in these locations would potentially be subject to violence or discrimination.

3.107 *Waria*, a traditional male-to-female transgender identity, has long featured in traditional beliefs and cultural practices in parts of Indonesia. *Waria* are often marginalised or stereotyped as sex workers or criminals and are vulnerable to violence, including assault and sexual assault. They may be rejected by family or unable to secure unemployment. Many end up in big cities, begging to make a living.

3.108 Transgender and other gender-diverse people are sometimes harassed by local authorities who force them to dress and act in accordance with their biological sex. Transgender people experience societal and official discrimination; they may not be issued identity cards, or cards that are issued can misgender them. They generally lack opportunities for employment and many of them work as sex workers, in the beauty industry or as entertainers. These career choices are limited; many transgender people work in those industries due to lack of choice or access to other industries, as a result of discrimination rather than choice. Women who work in those industries are more likely than other women to experience violence on the street, whether that is due to the nature of their work, because they are transgender, or for a combination of those reasons.

3.109 While LGBTI people do not report direct discrimination in the provision of healthcare, education and services this is probably because most are forced to hide their sexual orientation or gender identity, and so do not experience discrimination as a result. Some LGBTI people may have difficulty accessing appropriate services; for example, LGBTI-appropriate housing or healthcare may simply be unavailable.

3.110 Parliament passed a revised Criminal Code in December 2022. The Code includes provisions that criminalise cohabitation and adultery, though the law limits who can lodge the complaint to direct family members. Because same-sex marriage is illegal in Indonesia, the law could in effect criminalise same-sex sex. Penalties include a maximum one-year prison term. DFAT understands that the provisions will become law three years after promulgation. As at publication, DFAT is awaiting further clarity on how the law will be interpreted as implementing regulations are finalised.

3.111 DFAT assesses that LGBTI people face a moderate risk of societal discrimination: traditional views about sexuality and gender can restrict participation in the workforce and the broader community. People perceived to be LGBTI may face a risk of violence, particularly if living in religiously conservative areas and communities, including Muslim and Christian communities. LGBTI individuals face a moderate risk of official

discrimination due to national laws that discriminate against them based on their sexuality, and due to official attitudes. DFAT assesses that LGBTI people living in Aceh face a high risk of official and societal discrimination and violence.

People with Disabilities

3.112 Facilities for people with physical disabilities are often poor and inaccessible. Ramps are sometimes available but are often so steep as to be unusable. Tactile paving (that can be used by people with blindness or low vision to warn of hazards) exists on some footpaths, but it does not necessarily lead anywhere in particular or may lead directly into hazards.

3.113 Transport for people with physical disabilities might be impossible without a private car and possibly a driver. Accessibility of public transport and facilities is improving, but it should not be assumed and may not be available, depending on individual circumstances. The nature of a person's disability may also affect their job prospects. Poor pedestrian and public transport infrastructure, and environmental hazards such as pollution in large cities and high heat and humidity, may prevent people with disabilities being able to access their workplace.

3.114 People living with mental illness, cognitive disability, or those who are neurodiverse do not receive the same standard of care as they generally would in Australia. Stigma against people with autism, for example, is high, and the concept might be dismissed as fabricated or a result of poor parenting. Ostracism from families, schools or communities is possible. There is a lack of professionals with expertise in the area, but some facilities for children exist in big cities.

3.115 The level of risk for people with disabilities depends on the nature of the disability and an individual's needs, and it is impossible to give an overall assessment. DFAT is not aware of violence against people with disabilities, in general – but see section on [mental health](#) for information on *pasung*, a form of shackling of some people with mental health conditions that is used against some people with disabilities and can involve violence.

Victims of loan sharks

3.116 Usury occurs in Indonesia, but it is mostly a hidden crime. Online lenders have grown in popularity and money can be lent from outfits based overseas. DFAT is aware of media reports of those who have borrowed money being harassed by debt collectors, which in some cases has led to suicide. Harassment can take the form of threats of violence or blackmail.

3.117 People borrow money for different reasons, however in-country sources noted that borrowing money can be related to a migration attempt and the creditor may in fact be a people smuggler.

3.118 Police occasionally target usurious lenders, including online lenders, however police protection should not be assumed. Police corruption and lack of resources may act as barriers to seeking police assistance (see [Police](#)).

3.119 Loan sharking, especially using technology, is not uncommon, however little information about the practice is publicly available, and many Indonesians avoid talking about it due to shame or fear. There is a potential for violence from debt collectors contracted by loan sharks, even if the money originated overseas, however it is difficult to assess generally whether harm would come to borrowers, and outcomes differ from case to case.

Asylum seekers

3.120 Indonesia is a transit country for asylum seekers seeking protection in Australia and other countries. This often includes Afghans and Rohingya. The latter may make the dangerous sea journey across the Andaman Sea to Aceh, but in-country sources told DFAT most Rohingya are attempting to get to Malaysia, not Indonesia. It is relatively easy to cross between Indonesia and Malaysia. Other asylum seekers have been in Indonesia for some years, many for about a decade.

3.121 Some people from Papua New Guinea may cross the border into the Indonesian Papua provinces and may access aid or services provided by churches in the area or seek to get away from localised tribal violence at home. These asylum seekers do not usually speak Indonesian, are not entitled to government services, and often live in remote areas where such services are not available anyway.

3.122 Many asylum seekers, especially Afghans, live in Makassar. There are regular protests outside the UNHCR office there, however these are almost always peaceful and unhindered by authorities (however, sources did mention one unauthorised protest by Afghan asylum seekers that ended in violence at the hands of police; this appears to be an isolated incident). Afghan asylum seekers usually have accommodation arranged for them (often by the International Organization for Migration) and may receive other aid or services from official bodies or local charities. Very few are in detention.

3.123 Sources told DFAT that there is some backlash against asylum seekers who might receive payments or support from official bodies or charities that are not available to citizens in the area. They may also work (illegally) in jobs to which citizens feel entitled. The extent of this feeling is not clear.

3.124 While they might not be officially entitled to it, many asylum seekers are able to access health and education services unofficially. These services might be provided by charities or by local governments on an unofficial basis. Asylum seekers generally must register with police in the local area.

3.125 DFAT assesses that there is a risk of societal discrimination against asylum seekers, however there is insufficient information for DFAT to assess the level of risk posed. DFAT is not aware a pattern of violence against asylum seekers.

COMPLEMENTARY PROTECTION CLAIMS

ARBITRARY DEPRIVATION OF LIFE

Extrajudicial Killings

4.1 While the general human rights situation in Indonesia has improved dramatically since the end of the New Order regime, reports of extrajudicial killing by security forces continue. Numbers of fatalities at the hands of security forces are difficult to estimate and may be underreported.

4.2 According to the 2021 US Department of State Human Rights Report on Indonesia, in ‘many cases of alleged extrajudicial killings,’ police and military did not conduct any investigations and, when they did, they did not disclose the findings, making the situation even more unclear.

4.3 Most allegations of extrajudicial killings relate to the Papua provinces. In August 2022, six soldiers were arrested on suspicion of killing and mutilating alleged secessionists. The soldiers allegedly lured the secessionists to a meeting under the pretence of selling them weapons, killed them, then dismembered the corpses and threw them in a river. According to international media reporting in February 2023, six soldiers and four civilians were charged with the murders. Of the soldiers, two received a life sentence in February 2023, one received a 20 year prison sentence and one received a 15 year prison sentence. Another soldier was sentenced to life in prison in January 2023 and the sixth died before he was sentenced. As at publication, the four civilians have yet to be sentenced.

4.4 When alleged killings occur in violent or remote parts of the country, such as the Papua highlands, it is often difficult to know the circumstances of the death.

4.5 In 2018 there were multiple reports of extrajudicial killings related to drugs. Sources recalled the events, however DFAT was not able to source evidence of continued examples. Such killings are possible, but DFAT is not aware of a pattern in the last few years.

Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances

4.6 Since the end of the New Order regime, few cases of enforced or involuntary disappearance have been documented, but some historical cases, for example from the 1960 anti-communist purges or 1990 pro-democracy movement that occurred across the archipelago, remain unresolved.

4.7 A ‘disappearance’ can also occur when a person is arrested and their friends, family or legal representatives are not informed of their arrest. This kind of ‘disappearance’ is reported in various parts of the country. Police are legally required to inform relevant parties within 24 hours of an arrest, however, according to sources, this does not always occur, and sometimes documents are falsified with incorrect dates or times. It is also possible that prisoners do not want family or friends notified because of shame or embarrassment.

4.8 The public profile of a victim is important. A low-profile person is much less likely to experience arrest (whether it amounts to a disappearance or not), however a high-profile person is more likely to have connections that may assist and prevent an arrest from escalating into a disappearance.

4.9 Most recent allegations of enforced disappearance relate to the Papua provinces. Some people flee into the jungles of Papua (or across the border to Papua New Guinea) deliberately to avoid detection or violence, and their whereabouts may be unknown as a result. The circumstances of these incidents are not clear; they may occur in very remote parts of the country and DFAT cannot independently verify any allegations.

Deaths in Custody

4.10 Custodial deaths in Indonesia usually occur because of the unsanitary conditions of prisons, including severe overcrowding, lack of medical treatment, or criminal activities within the prison (see [Detention and Prison](#)). Other deaths in custody are occasionally reported. For example, in September 2020, a man being held in connection to homicide and robbery charges died in police custody in unclear circumstances (he had gunshot wounds to the legs, the cause of which was disputed) in West Papua province.

4.11 In another example from August 2022, a Peruvian transgender activist, Rodrigo Ventocilla, died in hospital after becoming ill in detention. He was initially detained for possession of marijuana, which is a serious offence in Indonesia. Police alleged that Ventocilla had taken drugs in custody which led to organ failure. His husband, with whom he was honeymooning, was also detained. Ventocilla's family claims that Balinese police demanded 'exorbitant sums of money' for their release before his death. His supporters claim that he was tortured by police.

DEATH PENALTY

4.12 Indonesian law allows the death penalty for about 50 different offences contained in various laws. The death penalty can be applied for drug offences and violent offences (robbery, murder and terrorism) but also, in theory, for some economic crimes, including large-scale corruption. According to Amnesty International, in 2021 Indonesia sentenced at least 114 people to death but carried out no executions (the last execution was in 2016). There is no data available on the number of people on death row, however DFAT understands that dozens of death sentences are pronounced annually. There is wide public support for the death penalty.

4.13 Parliament passed a revised Criminal Code in December 2022. The code retains the death penalty, although it imposes a probationary period of 10 years between sentencing and execution. DFAT understands that the provisions will become law three years after promulgation. As at publication, DFAT awaits further clarity on how the law will be interpreted as implementing regulations are finalised.

4.14 According to the US Department of State's 2021 Human Rights Report, free legal advice is provided to those facing the death penalty, however this does not always occur in practice. The report cites unnamed NGOs stated prosecutors may have a 'pocket lawyer', who can be called in to give a pro-forma defence for clients.

TORTURE, CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT

4.15 Torture is banned by article 28G(2) of the Constitution, and Indonesia is a signatory to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. In practice, allegations of torture against security forces are sometimes made. Police investigate allegations of torture when they are made, however the findings of those investigations are seldom released. Komnas-HAM also can, and does, investigate and report on alleged incidents of torture, however its recommendations are not binding.

4.16 There are systems in place, such as inspections and CCTV surveillance, to detect torture, however these systems are not fail-proof. In country sources told DFAT that checks and surveillance are ‘not always happening’. According to in country sources, these incidents generally occur in police custody (rather than prisons, for example).

4.17 Torture is most often allegedly carried out by police, with fewer incidents of torture alleged against military and prison officials. According to in-country sources, wooden blocks or bare hands and feet may be used to strike prisoners, with care taken to avoid obvious injuries. Other less commonly alleged means of torture include use of lit cigarettes, electricity (the exact use is not clear from sources) and hard objects (such as firearms used to strike prisoners). In 2019, a two-metre-long snake was reportedly wrapped around a suspect accused of stealing mobile phones in Papua province. This incident appears to be unusual and DFAT is not aware of similar incidents.

Arbitrary Arrest and Detention

4.18 Suspects can be detained for up to 110 days before charges must be filed, this period can be extended to 290 days, including for terrorism cases. Bail is not available, but judges and investigators can ‘suspend’ detention on application.

4.19 Some activist groups have claimed that their members have been subject to arbitrary arrest, however this does not appear to be a common, and those arrested are usually released quickly. Some activists for secession of the Papua provinces have claimed arbitrary arrest, however DFAT is unable to verify these claims. In some such cases, police operations may be legitimate responses to violence and crime, which is common in the region. See [Secessionists in the Papua provinces](#).

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

STATE PROTECTION

Police

5.1 Indonesia's national police force is the Indonesian National Police (INP). Day-to-day experiences with police differ. Some police officers are better educated or better trained than others. Depending on their levels of wealth, education or personal networks, some people fear police because of fear of unwarranted arrest or violence, or because of the force's reputation for corruption.

5.2 Bribes can be demanded for relatively minor offences, or at traffic stops, and also in relation to criminal investigations, for example to commence an investigation or to make a particular finding. Bribes can change police outcomes in favour of the person giving the bribe. While interactions with police differ from case to case, police are generally effective at detecting and investigating crime.

5.3 Police record keeping is unreliable. Police databases exist, however they are not nationwide. Information on crime and identity may be kept in paper form, or be handwritten in a local police station; police in other parts of the country may not be able to access it. A clear police check is not necessarily an indication that a person has not committed, been charged with, or convicted of a crime. It is difficult or impossible to verify police checks accurately.

5.4 Police brutality has also been criticised by human rights activists. The police response to protests is sometimes violent, for example, and some violence occurs in the process of arrests (which may be proportionate or disproportionate in different circumstances). As elsewhere, the proliferation of a relatively free and open social media means that more incidents, and videos of them, are visible to the general public, which can create the perception of an increase in brutality or conversely may make officers more reluctant to commit brutality in the first place, knowing that they are being watched and recorded. According to the US Department of State's 2021 Human Rights Report, legal aid organisations claim that they sometimes had difficulty accessing detainee clients, especially if physical or other abuse was alleged.

Judiciary

5.5 Indonesia has a complex justice system evolved from three inherited sources of law: Dutch colonial law, *sharia*, and customary law. Article 24 of the constitution guarantees judicial independence. The judiciary is significantly more independent than it was during the New Order period, however corruption and outside influence, including from business and government interests, weaken judicial independence. There are reported instances where corruption, especially the payment of bribes to court staff for administrative processes or to judicial officers directly, has changed the outcomes of cases.

5.6 The Supreme Court and Constitutional Court are Indonesia's highest courts. Indonesia has general, military, religious and state administrative courts (that decide on matters of administrative law) and special

courts that deal in industrial relations, commercial disputes, youth and human rights. The Supreme Court can hear appeals from lower courts, and the Constitutional Court can review the constitution, settle disputes among government bodies and settle election disputes.

5.7 Long delays are common in both criminal and civil cases. In extreme circumstances, cases may even take up to a decade or longer to resolve, however several years is much more common, depending on the seniority of the court (senior courts take longer) and the complexity of the case.

5.8 Access to justice is often not possible for the poor. There is public legal aid available to the poor, but quality varies. Some legal aid NGOs may provide assistance, but their funding is limited, and demand is great, thus not every client will have access.

5.9 According to the US Department of State's 2021 Human Rights Report, decentralisation of courts means that orders from another part of the country may not be well enforced. This means that a person may be able to ignore a court order by [moving to another part of the country](#).

Detention and Prison

5.10 Like many government services, prisons are decentralised to the provinces and the experience of different prisoners at different prisons can vary substantially. Attitudes and treatment often depend on individual guards or the guard-to-prisoner ratio, which differs from prison to prison. Conditions vary from institution to institution, even within the same province.

5.11 Across Indonesia, prisons are often overcrowded, especially in detention centres and medium-security institutions, which can lead to problems with health and hygiene. According to the World Prison Brief, July 2022 figures indicated that overall prison occupancy was at 211 per cent. In September 2011, a fire in an overcrowded prison killed 49 inmates, who died locked in their cells.

5.12 Prisons hold convicted criminals and detention centres hold those on remand. Sometimes these two types of facilities coexist in one physical location. DFAT understands that this separation is generally respected, however due to overcrowding, there have been instances of mixing of these types of prisoners. Women and men are held separately, and women usually experience much better prison conditions than do men.

5.13 Indonesia is a very hot and humid country and prisons are not air conditioned. In-country sources told DFAT that, although prisons can be dirty or smelly in places (for example, toilets), general cleanliness and order is maintained overall; there are generally not problems with vermin, for example.

5.14 In country sources told DFAT that, in many cases, there is access to adequate medical, psychological and dental care. However, prisons may be far from tertiary facilities and, while facilities for treatment are known to exist, the quality and availability of staff and services is less clear, and probably differs from prison to prison.

5.15 Food may be insufficient or nutritionally inadequate. Some prisoners have access to meals delivered from outside restaurants. There is often a prison canteen, however it may not sell nutritious food.

5.16 Prisoners who exhibit good behaviour may have access to study, sporting, or cultural opportunities like art therapy, or be allowed to have small comforts (like food or means to prepare food) in their cells. Prisoners generally have contact with family, friends and lawyers. Treatment of prisoners differs from prison to prison. Older people and foreign prisoners may be treated better than other prisoners, however it depends on individual circumstances. Well-behaved prisoners who are not on serious charges (such as terrorism, corruption or drugs charges) may be eligible to have their sentences shortened. Access to privileges is assisted by having a network inside or outside the prison, as elsewhere in the world. Those with family on the outside,

well-connected lawyers or other powerful contacts may receive more privileges. Those without networks may receive none.

5.17 There is potential for violence in prisons. According to in-country sources, prisoners convicted of sex-related offences are more likely to experience violence. Gangs operate in prisons and drugs, especially methamphetamine, circulate widely. Prison gangs may be related to outside gangs (or be the same gang) or may be ethnically-based. A video emerged in 2019 of prisoners in Bali being dragged across gravel in shackles while being transferred between prisons. According to international media, men were being dragged or were crawling because their shackles were so tight that they could not move freely. DFAT is not aware of other similar incidents. Overall, DFAT understands that prisoners are well-disciplined but the means to achieve that discipline are less clear.

INTERNAL RELOCATION

5.18 Indonesian citizens are legally able to move and reside freely within all territories of the Republic of Indonesia, and Indonesians can and do relocate. There may be administrative hurdles for travel by NGOs, journalists and others to the Papua provinces, and the security situation, particularly in the highlands, is unpredictable. People of Papuan ethnicity can and do move in and out of the area.

5.19 Major cities, particularly Jakarta, offer Indonesians greater opportunities for employment. Presidential Decree No. 25 (2008), based on Law No. 23 (2006) requires Indonesian citizens who relocate within Indonesia to register with the relevant local authority within one year of relocation. Registration information is passed to higher authorities.

TREATMENT OF RETURNEES

Exit and Entry Procedures

5.20 Unlawfully leaving or entering outside of a designated crossing is common. Sometimes border crossings are many kilometres from the border and they are not always staffed. It is also possible to pay bribes to border officers to overlook people or goods smuggling or unlawful entry or exit. Most Indonesians and foreign visitors experience nothing unusual or difficult when entering or leaving Indonesia. Inward and outward travel might be controlled through an entry or exit control list, however it is unlikely that it is consulted for every entry and exit, and DFAT is not aware of the details of its contents or use.

Conditions for Returnees

5.21 A failed asylum seeker is unlikely to be held or questioned by authorities and DFAT is not aware of any examples of this occurring. Those who are engaged in separatist or terrorist activity may be questioned by authorities, however it is difficult to assess with certainty whether this would apply in various individual circumstances, particularly given poor record keeping (see [Police](#)).

DOCUMENTATION

5.22 Most Indonesians have identity documentation of some kind, however there remains an (unspecified) proportion of the population that is yet to receive identity documents. Those affected are more likely to be

from traditional *adat* communities, *waria* and those living in very remote areas. Indonesian civil registries are responsible for issuing most personal identity documents. These civil registries are primarily administered at the provincial level, but may refer some cases to their headquarters in Jakarta.

5.23 The primary Indonesian national identity card is the *Kartu Tanda Penduduk* (KTP), or citizen identity card, which is issued to those aged 17 years or older, or upon marriage. The electronic KTP contains robust security features, including an electronic chip, photograph, fingerprint and multi-layered plastic. As with other documents, the integrity of the KTP is only as good as the documents that were presented to obtain it. A KTP may thus not be a reliable indicator of identity.

5.24 Fraud is common. There is a well-developed outward migration 'industry', or middlemen and fixers, who can provide false documents (for example, identity documents, IELTS results, or financial documents). There are also print shops that specialise in fake documents. It is also relatively easy to fraudulently obtain genuine documents.

5.25 Name changes are not difficult to obtain. New passports under a new name can be obtained easily and biometric checks are not always undertaken. Documents like passports or drivers' licences are not necessarily reliable because they might be based on other fraudulent documents, which can be obtained fraudulently using the methods mentioned above.

5.26 Some 'migration agents' are in fact people smugglers, and victims may not know that they have engaged a people smuggler until they are questioned by authorities overseas. In this case, the 'agent' will probably provide the false documents, which the intending migrant may not understand. Most people migrate or are smuggled to the Middle East or Malaysia, and entry to Australia is far less common.

5.27 Document verification, particularly with banks and education providers, may be possible and an accurate answer may be obtained, however this varies from case to case. Official identity documents (passports, drivers' licences) are difficult to verify and, even if they can be verified, do not guarantee that the holder of the passport is who they say they are.