



Haiti

Republic of Haiti

Caribbean

Geography

Area 27,400 sq km. Western third of the island of Hispaniola; shared with the Dominican Republic.

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010	10,188,175	1.60%
2020	11,722,392	1.36%
2030	13,195,567	1.13%

One of the most-densely populated countries in the Americas. Hundreds of thousands of Haitians have fled/emigrated. These figures do not reflect the loss of life from the January 2010 earthquake and subsequent emigration.

Capital Port-au-Prince 2,143,458. **Urbanites** 49.6%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 36%. **Life expectancy** 61 yrs.

Peoples

African Caribbean 94.3%.
Mulatto (Eurafrican) 5.4%.
Other 0.3%.

Literacy 51.9%. Functional literacy may be as low as 20%. **Official language** French (10% speak it). **Common languages** Haitian Creole, English and Spanish increasingly used as a second language. **Languages with Scripture** 2Bi 1w.i.p.

Economy

The poorest state in the Western Hemisphere, aggravated by overpopulation, deforestation (only 2% of original forests remain), soil erosion, pollution and hurricanes. Around 75% live on less than \$2/day, and two-thirds are under- or unemployed. Political instability and violence prevent proper aid distribution and long-term investment. The 2010 earthquake devastated much of what little economic infrastructure did exist. After this disaster, it will take billions of dollars and many years of stability, coupled with

sustained redevelopment, to see any long-term economic progress. Major sources of income include remittances from expatriate Haitians and, now, aid, relief and development funds earmarked for earthquake recovery.

HDI Rank 149th/182. **Public debt** 33% of GDP. **Income/person** \$790 (2% of USA). **Unemployment** 32.7%.

Politics

A slave revolt against the French in 1804 created the first black republic in the world. Haiti was made to pay for its freedom with steep reparations to France and economic/diplomatic isolation by the European and American imperial powers, crippling the nation in its early years. Since then, it has had a troubled history of bloodshed and dictatorships. The deposing of the Duvaliers in 1986 ended a particularly brutal dictatorship. A succession of coups and military governments since, including US-led intervention in 1994, have done little to instill stability, but the longer-term presence of the UN has assisted. Haiti annually appears at or near the top of the corruption index; crime is rife, and 25% of the already-under-strength police force are in the pockets of drug lords and gangs. The earthquake and the devastation it caused to the physical infrastructure, the psyche of the people and the loss of life, combined with the massive influx of international aid and assistance, may profoundly reshape how politics are done in Haiti.

Religion

The Roman Catholic Church's role as the state church ended in 1987. An estimated 75% of Christians are also actively involved in voodoo, a development of West African Spiritism and witchcraft. But religious sentiment is strong, and almost all Haitians primarily identify themselves as Christian. There is freedom of religion.

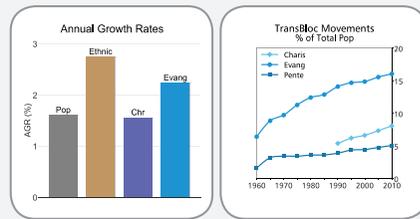
Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Christian	95.12	9,690,992	1.6%
Ethnoreligionist	2.78	283,231	2.7%
Non-religious	1.95	198,669	2.7%
Baha'i	0.10	10,188	1.6%
Muslim	0.05	5,094	6.2%

Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	32	15.37	1,566,000	1.9%
Independent	236	3.37	344,000	3.4%
Anglican	1	1.21	123,000	1.4%
Catholic	1	69.31	7,062,000	0.9%
Marginal	2	0.49	50,000	2.6%
Unaffiliated		15.90	1,617,000	-0.6%
<i>Doubly affiliated</i>		-10.50-	1,070,000	0.0%

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Catholic Church	C	247	4,105,523	7,061,500
Seventh-day Adventist	P	420	325,185	439,000

Ch of the Nazarene	P	523	100,000	167,000
Baptist Convention	P	96	85,000	139,500
Ch of God (Cleveland)	P	395	70,556	127,000
Episcopal Church	A	430	36,937	123,000
Ev Bapt Ch of S Haiti	P	487	37,954	115,000
Conservative Bapt Miss	P	348	17,750	76,400
Assemblies of God	P	278	45,000	67,500
Evangelical Baptist Union	P	160	40,000	60,000
Ch of God of Prophecy	P	415	29,500	59,000
Ch of God in Christ	I	150	23,000	57,500
United Pentecostal Ch	P	629	38,976	49,500
Chr Methodist Episc Ch	I	215	28,000	46,760
Other denominations[258]		4,510	261,532	555,106
<i>Doubly affiliated</i>				<i>-1,070,000</i>
Total Christians[272]		9,303	5,244,913	8,073,766

TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Evangelicals			
Evangelicals	16.0	1,633,193	2.2%
Renewalists			
Charismatics	8.1	821,505	3.6%
Pentecostals	5.1	515,150	2.9%



Answers to Prayer

- 1** **The spiritual response to the tragedy of the 2010 earthquake** was an almost universal outpouring of prayer, repentance and calling upon God for mercy and deliverance. Out of the disaster, God appears to be doing something radical and new among the people of Haiti. Reports abound that the three days of prayer and fasting called for by the president – replacing February 2010’s Mardi Gras – were attended by over one million people.
- 2** **Evangelical Christians have steadily grown in number** over the decades, through evangelism, love in action and by openly standing against voodooism and the spiritual forces behind it. Vision Haiti (HAVIDEC), a concerted prayer movement that includes many denominations and organizations, is determined to see deliverance for Haiti through prayer. The power of the gospel over the spiritual forces of evil has been clearly demonstrated in several instances.
- 3** **Church-mission relations have improved greatly** in the last decade; both expat and indigenous believers, working together for common goals, have yielded not only better relationships but also greater fruitfulness.

Challenges for Prayer

- 1** **The earthquake of 2010 was a disaster on many levels.** But it also offers hope out of tragedy. It is believed that 230,000 lost their lives, 300,000 were injured and over one million were rendered homeless. Hundreds of thousands of homes and buildings were also destroyed, including some major government buildings. Aid arrived from around the world, but coordination was difficult in the aftermath of the earthquake, and assistance will be needed for a long time to come. For a host of reasons, Haiti struggled as a nation from its very inception. This shattering disaster could be an opportunity to reshape not just the physical infrastructure of the nation, but the cultural, economic, political and societal infrastructures as well. Some points to cover in prayer include:
 - a) The rebuilding efforts will take years.** Haiti’s infrastructure was never good, and Port-au-Prince’s was especially weak due to rapid urbanization from poorer rural areas. Countless homes will need to be rebuilt or restored; the sheer scale of money and manpower needed is staggering for the Western Hemisphere’s poorest nation. Pray for the best long-term development for the city and nation, rather than quick fixes. Pray for generous assistance from wealthier neighbours and nations and agencies from further abroad.
 - b) The human suffering was immense** in the immediate aftermath and will continue for years. The shared emotional trauma of the events, the massive loss of life and the long-term injuries will all leave major scars on the Haitian population. Healing from such hurts needs time, care and the love of God.

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c) *Haiti was a financial and social mess* even before the earthquake. Repairing all the damage, however, will not create a healthy economy. Haiti must rebuild beyond its previous state and develop long-term plans and policies that are shaped with wisdom and justice.

2 **Haiti must find release from the bondages of its past.** The Spanish genocide against the indigenous Arawaks, and the cruel slavery instituted and maintained by the Spanish and then the French, form a tragic background. The tyrannies, cruelties and use of voodoo as a means of control have fostered a spirit of fear that permeates every level of society. More recent interventions by foreign powers have not banished the endemic problems. Pray that:

a) *The powerful spirits underlying voodooism might be bound in the name of Jesus.* Pray that the ubiquitous influence and enduring legacy of voodoo might be made subordinate to the authority of Christ – especially in the lives of Christians.

b) *Haitians who call themselves Christian might experience the transforming nature* of a personal relationship with Christ. Only through the regeneration and power of the Holy Spirit will the heritage of voodoo be overcome.

c) *This nation might enjoy stability, safety and sustained development* by removing the systemic evils holding it back and by instilling biblical values and practices on every level of society.

3 **Haiti needs godly leaders** who will prioritize the good of the nation and address its massive problems. Two centuries of misrule, tyranny and recent flawed democratic attempts have brought hopelessness and despair. Corruption is rampant, and robberies and kidnappings commonplace. The economic plight of most Haitians deepens each year, exacerbated by the events of 2010. Many seek to escape, some physically by fleeing the country in unsafe and leaky boats, others emotionally through taking drugs. Pray that men and women may be raised up who will reverse these trends and establish justice, righteousness and long-term stability.

4 **The spiritual outpouring of faith in God in the aftermath of the earthquake** also shook the nation and moved the entire world. When the president called for three days of prayer and fasting during Mardi Gras – traditionally a time of partying and excess – no one expected one million people to turn out. Throughout the country, churches were filled to overflowing and services were held amid rubble and in the ruined streets. Pray that this spiritual shaking would not merely be an expression of grief, fear and desperation, but would shape itself into an unprecedented turning to God that redefines the spiritual life of Haiti. Numerous traditions allege that Haiti was dedicated to Satan through its voodoo past; pray that today it might be known as a nation wholly dedicated to the Lord Jesus.

5 **Haitians overwhelmingly identify themselves as “Christian”,** but many if not most Catholics have also dabbled in voodoo (although many others actively oppose it). Haiti is often referred to as “90% Catholic and 100% Voodoo”. The credibility and impact of the Catholic Church are sorely compromised. Pray for renewal, reformation and the cleansing work of the Holy Spirit to sweep through this massive and influential denomination.

6 **The steady growth of Protestant churches** is no surprise – no other faith offers the spiritual hope and practical help available to evangelicals. Yet there are areas for prayer:

a) *The rural poor are the most responsive.* Illiteracy, marginalization in society and lack of adequate teaching have all reduced the Church’s potential impact. But evangelicals are doing a great job of addressing these challenges via radio, children’s education and pastoral and lay training.

b) *Denominational fragmentation* on issues of personality, charismatic growth and liberation theology confuse and divide Christians. The Protestant Federation and the Council of Evangelical Churches give Protestants a platform for speaking with one voice to the government and for cooperating in social, evangelistic and prayer initiatives.

c) *Spiritual opposition.* Recently, those who practice voodoo have been more outspoken, especially through the media, about their animosity toward Protestants. Pray for spiritual purity and for the love and power of Christ to shine through believers.

7 **Leadership training is too limited** because of the poverty of churches. A rigid traditionalism of imported theologies and systems is widespread. Many pastors have little training; some are barely literate. Pray for the 20 or so Bible schools/seminaries and the many TEE programmes that seek to meet the need. Pray for Haitian leaders to be men of faith and spiritual authority, who are not diverted by material inducements. Pray for resources in Creole that will foster lay training and

leadership development.

8 Desperate physical and social needs attract a wide range of Christian community development agencies, such as WVI, Tearfund, World Concern, the Mennonites and many others. Sensitivity and wisdom are needed to preserve the indigeneity, integrity and independence of the churches and their leaders and to not create further dependency. Pressing needs must be addressed regarding ecology, agriculture, healthcare, AIDS, education and children at risk. Pray that every expression of Christian concern might have long-term redemptive impact and draw people to the Saviour.

9 Particularly needy or strategic groups:

- a) **The Mulatto elite** are wealthy, French-oriented and isolated from the majority. Few realize their need for a personal faith. The wealthiest 15% of Haiti's population control 90% of its resources; active Christians who wield such influence could make a great difference in the nation.
- b) **The youth.** Poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and constant turmoil that disrupts the education system all make for a difficult context for Haitian youth. Guns and gangs are the paths many take to cope. Too few churches have active programmes designed for young people. GBEUH (**IFES**) has three full-time staff and around 25 student groups; **CCCI** and Navigators are also active.
- c) **Refugees.** The Haitian diaspora numbers in the millions – in the USA, Cuba, Bahamas and elsewhere. Their destitution and need make them spiritually receptive. A number of missions (**WT**, **OMS**, **CoN** and others) seek to minister to them. Aiding or harbouring Haitian illegal refugees in other Caribbean nations can bring legal consequences, creating a dilemma for those seeking to show compassion. Pray for more workers called to reach the Haitian diaspora.
- d) **The restaveks** (from the Creole – “stay-withs”) are effectively child slaves, numbering 300,000 to 400,000 – or 10% of all children in Haiti. They are easily available to be bought or sold. They are usually orphans, runaways or poor rural children whose parents can't afford to care for them. These children labour endlessly; they have no education and no health care. Pray for God to raise up people and organizations dedicated to showing compassion and love to the *restaveks*.

10 Missions plays a valuable supportive role to the national Church. Upheavals and violence have forced most missionaries out of the country at one time or another; many never return. Pray for these servants of the Lord, for their testimony and service, and that they may contribute to the maturing of the Haitian Church. The larger missions are: **CCCI**, **OMS**, **CW**, **MAF**, **YWAM**.

11 Christian Ministries:

- a) **Bibles and Christian literature** are in short supply; there is a clear need for more Scripture and discipleship material. The Creole Bible has a significant impact on the understanding and application of God's Word. The Bible Society, the Bible League and others distribute what they can. Pray also for effective literacy programmes to be maintained.
- b) **Christian radio** is possibly the most effective tool for reaching and discipling Haitians. A high proportion of the population listens to *Radio Lumière's* five stations in the south and centre – Evangelical Baptist Church of South Haiti (**WT**) and 4VEH (**OMS**) in the north. **TWR** and others broadcast over 2,000 hours weekly. Radio 4VEH also streams over the Internet, reaching the Haitian diaspora. Vandalism against radio towers and relays is a real challenge.