



Dominican Republic

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Caribbean

Geography

Area 48,443 sq km. The eastern two-thirds of the island of Hispaniola, shared with Haiti.

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010	10,225,482	1.41%
2020	11,450,700	1.05%
2030	12,430,548	0.75%

Capital Santo Domingo 2,180,150. **Urbanites** 70.5%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 32%. **Life expectancy** 72.4 yrs.

Peoples

Dominican 87.5%. Mestizo 64.1%; white Dominican 14.7%; black Dominican 8.6%.

Haitian 10.2%. Speaking French Creole; a minority are Dominican-born – most are undocumented, illegal migrant labourers.

Other 2.3%. Spanish 0.8%; US citizen 0.7%; Jamaican 0.3%; Chinese 0.3%.

Literacy 87.7%. **Official language** Spanish. **All languages** 8. **Indigenous languages** 4. **Languages with Scriptures** 3Bi.

Economy

Growth in the early 1970s was replaced by decline from mismanagement, corruption and bloated ineffective government. In 2004, robust policies saw marked and continued improvement. Tourism has replaced agricultural exports (sugarcane, coffee, tobacco) as the primary revenue source, followed by remittances from abroad. Very large gap between the rich and the large numbers of poor.

HDI Rank 90th/182. **Public debt** 37.4% of GDP. **Income/person** \$4,992 (11% of USA).

Politics

Independence achieved four times – twice from Spain (1821/65), once from Haiti (1844) and once from the USA (1924)! Thirty years of repressive dictatorship ended in 1961. Subsequent democratic governments, although usually manipulative and corrupt, have overseen a slow move toward more fair and representative democracy. The poor and the oppressed Haitian underclass remain largely disenfranchised.

Religion

Catholicism is unofficially the state religion based on a concordat with the Vatican. The Catholic Church jealously guards its privileged status. Full freedom of religion in basic rights for non-Catholics.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Christian	94.35	9,647,742	1.3%
Non-religious	3.20	327,215	4.9%
Ethnoreligionist	2.23	228,028	2.0%
Muslim	0.11	11,248	5.6%
Baha'i	0.08	8,180	4.2%
Buddhist	0.02	2,045	1.4%
Jewish	0.01	1,023	1.4%

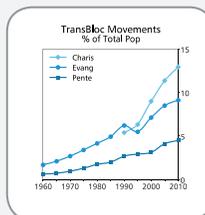
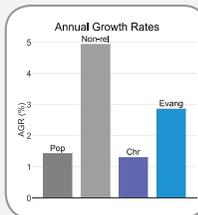
Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	32	7.11	727,000	2.7%
Independent	37	1.93	197,000	3.6%
Anglican	1	0.04	5,000	0.4%
Catholic	1	82.44	8,430,000	1.0%
Marginal	2	1.75	179,000	3.3%
Unaffiliated		1.42	145,000	11.3%
<i>Doubly affiliated</i>		-0.34	-35,000	0.0%

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Catholic Church	C	320	4,390,625	8,430,000
Seventh-day Adventist	P	1,424	168,000	223,000
Ch of God (Cleveland)	P	700	65,000	162,500
Latter-day Saints (Mormon)	M	301	60,294	102,500
Ch of God of Prophecy	P	471	33,000	94,380
Jehovah's Witnesses	M	378	29,400	76,440
Assemblies of God	P	527	48,000	74,000
Defenders of the Faith	I	42	8,900	24,920
Ch of the Nazarene	P	170	11,150	24,753
Free Methodist Ch	P	175	7,500	20,500
Christian Assem of God	I	145	11,600	19,372
Misión Principe de Paz	I	91	8,200	18,614
Christian Reformed Ch	P	230	3,400	17,000
Christian Bible Ch	P	67	6,700	16,750
Christian Brethren	P	180	7,500	15,000
Salvation Army	P	44	4,370	12,498
Dominican Evang Ch	P	88	4,130	9,500
Other denominations[56]		7,479	91,417	196,010
<i>Doubly affiliated</i>				-35,000
Total Christians[73]			12,832	4,959,1869,502,737

TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Evangelicals			
Evangelicals	9.1	931,234	2.8%
Renewalists			
Charismatics	12.9	1,322,536	4.1%
Pentecostals	4.5	457,201	3.1%

Dominican Republic | Operation World

Missionaries from Dominican Republic
P, I, A 32 (15 long-term) in 7 agencies: to the Caribbean 14, Middle East 6.



Challenges for Prayer

1 **Columbus’ declared affection for this island** and subsequent European colonization have yielded 500 years of turmoil. Foreign disease and the Spanish destroyed the one million indigenous Arawak Taino people. Sugar cane crops soon became massive plantations, which then required the importation of slaves. Both European colonial powers and Dominican governments have ruthlessly exploited the land and the people – this can be seen in the massive gap between a small wealthy elite and the poor majority. Pray for justice – economic and political – something missing from most of the Dominican Republic’s history.

2 **Catholicism has held sway** since the arrival of the Spanish and their “converted” slaves. Unfortunately, nearly half of those who call themselves Catholic are not active in their faith. Up to 25% of those claimed by the Catholic Church declare themselves to have no religion. Many who are active practice a dangerous blend of Christianity and Afro-Spiritism, influenced by Cuban *santeria* and Haitian voodoo. The influence of the Catholic Church was such that, in the past, becoming a Protestant meant disapproval and ostracism. Pray for widespread renewal and awakening among Catholics to the power of Scripture and the Holy Spirit. Thank God for the faithful who continue to follow Jesus within Catholicism.

3 **Evangelical growth continues** – with numbers more than doubling from 1990 to 2010. The Pentecostal/charismatic churches claim large increases in numbers; the ministries of Brethren, Baptists and many others are effective in their holistic and empowering approach. Pray that the dynamism and ambition of the former groups might be wedded to the hands-on transforming ministry of the latter, so that growth might be in number and in quality. Many are open to the gospel when presented simply and in love.

4 **The major challenges confronting Christians** are:

a) **Religious liberty.** Outright persecution is rare, but those outside the religious majority are often faced with bureaucratic antipathy and low-level hostility. Pray for complete freedom in ministry and of public religious life.

b) **Retention of those converted.** There has been growth in many denominations, especially Pentecostal/charismatic groups, but only a small proportion of those who respond through evangelism become participating members of a local congregation.

c) **Development of biblical ethics** for Christian involvement in a society where corruption, violent crime and promiscuity are alarmingly widespread.

d) **Cultivation of a missions vision.** There are increasing numbers of Dominican missionaries. The Assemblies of God in DR is becoming a missionary-sending force. A few ministries are trying to develop a Dominican missions movement.

5 **Church resources are a constant battle.** Evangelicals generally work out of a context of poverty, which usually cultivates a receiving-only attitude and a relationship of dependency on foreign organizations. Many current and potential spiritual leaders leave the country for the economic improvements of life in the USA or Puerto Rico. Pray for endurance, provision and faithfulness to those called to minister, especially those serving in the poorer, rural areas. Pray that the 15 or so Bible schools and the National Evangelical University may provide spiritual, mature and stable leaders for

the future.

6 Foreign missions are generally welcomed, but wisdom is required for them to have maximum impact. The most fruitful and effective ministries are holistic, combining evangelism with development and education. Children at risk and the disabled are areas where ministry is fruitful. Some agencies serving in DR: Kids Alive, **BIM, AoG, YWAM, IMB**.

7 The large Haitian underclass proves to be a scapegoat and a challenge, but a responsive mission field. Haitians are immigrants, or descendants of immigrants, who are usually despised by Hispanics and forced to work as manual labourers in unjust and harsh conditions. They bring many of Haiti's problems with them and face discrimination from Dominicans – even from Christians. As Haiti continues to stagnate, the situation will only increase and intensify. Pray for the growing Haitian churches in DR (Christian Reformed, Baptist, Nazarene, others). Pray for the Dominican Church to take up this challenge with faith and good grace.

8 The less evangelized for prayer:

- a) *The unchurched majority* are nominally Christian, but occultism is pervasive and strong. As many as 4,000 villages have no evangelical witness.
- b) *The middle and upper classes* have relatively fewer evangelicals. **CMA** and Foursquare Missions have majored on reaching them. The potential influence and impact of these classes are great.
- c) *Youth*. There are 37 universities and colleges with more than 200,000 students, but the need to work to pay for tuition and the lack of job prospects and purpose in life cripple initiative. Pray for **ADEE(IFES)** and **CCCI**, who have fewer than 1,000 students in their groups. Pray for staff/student workers and for their ministries of proclaiming the gospel and training leaders.
- d) *The Chinese*, who have only two congregations of believers among them. The **IMB** has a work among them.