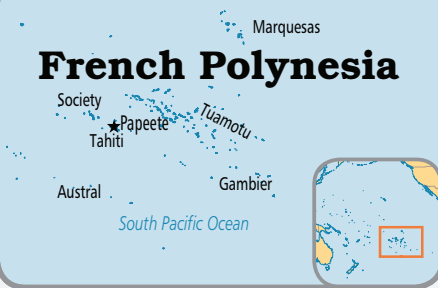


# French Polynesia



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## Territory of French Polynesia

Pacific

### Geography

**Area** 3,521 sq km. Five island archipelagos and 118 islands – (Society, Tuamotu, Marquesas, Austral and Gambier) in south-central Pacific. Tahiti, the largest island at 1,042 sq km, is where over 70% live.

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010	272,394	1.30%
2020	304,378	1.03%
2030	328,548	0.68%

**Capital** Papeete 134,000. **Urbanites** 51.4%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 26%. **Life expectancy** 75.5 yrs.

### Peoples

**Polynesian** 61.9%. Speaking 10 distinct languages, largest: Tahitian, Tuamotuan, Tubuaian, Marquesan(2), Mangarevan.

**Mixed race** 16.5%. Polynesian, European, Chinese.

**Chinese** 10.9%. Mainly traders.

**European** 10.7%. Administrators, military, others.

**Literacy** 99%. **Official languages** French and Tahitian. **All languages** 11. **Indigenous languages** 9. **Languages with Scriptures** 3Bi 1NT 3por 4wi.p.

### Economy

Heavily dependent on French aid and military spending, but the income has not benefited all. Tourism, pearls and agriculture make up the rest of the economy. The suspension, then end, of nuclear testing has had a significant effect on the economy.

**Public debt** 13.22% of GDP. **Income/person** \$17,290 (38% of USA). **Unemployment** 12% (unofficially much higher).

### Politics

French colony in 1880. Overseas Territory in 1957–2003. Since then, an overseas territory of France, with a high degree of autonomy and its own president. The controversial use of Mururoa Atoll for testing nuclear weapons provoked international opposition and fuelled the Tahitian independence movement.

### Religion

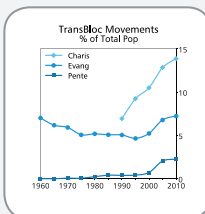
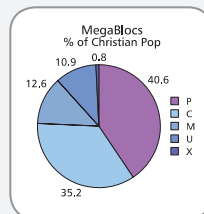
There is complete religious freedom, but society is increasingly materialistic and secular.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Christian	92.25	251,283	1.3%
Non-religious	5.00	13,620	1.3%
Chinese	2.10	5,720	2.3%
Ethnoreligionist	0.30	817	1.3%
Baha'i	0.25	681	5.9%
Jewish	0.10	272	3.5%

Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	4	41.92	114,000	0.5%
Independent	12	0.78	2,000	2.0%
Catholic	1	36.34	99,000	1.0%
Marginal	3	13.00	35,000	-0.1%
Unaffiliated		11.20	31,000	3.6%
<i>Doubly affiliated</i>		-11.01	-30,000	0.0%

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Catholic Church	C	88	47,143	99,000
Ma'ohi Protestant Ch	P	82	32,000	90,500
Latter-day Saints(Mormon)	M	80	12,422	20,000
Seventh-day Adventist	P	45	5,500	17,600
Sanito (Ref Mormon)	M	48	4,800	9,600
Jehovah's Witnesses	M	30	2,231	5,800
Assem of God (French)	P	9	1,796	3,000
Other Reformed chs	I	11	500	1,150
Other charismatic	I	6	529	900
Other denominations[3]		27	2,538	3,170
<i>Doubly affiliated</i>				-30,000
<b>Total Christians[20]</b>		<b>426</b>	<b>109,459</b>	<b>220,720</b>

TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
<b>Evangelicals</b>			
Evangelicals	7.2	19,712	2.6%
<b>Renewalists</b>			
Charismatics	13.9	37,779	2.9%
Pentecostals	2.3	6,130	3.2%



# Challenges for Prayer

**1 Tahiti is a paradise lost.** Formerly a strongly Christian nation that sent missionaries all over the Pacific, Tahiti is now being debased by increasing vice and immorality as well as serious challenges to traditional values and ways of life. There is spiritual openness, but it seems to be shouted down by materialism. No longer do Tahitian missionaries leave for other lands as they once did.

**2 Those with a vital personal faith are now rare.** As a result, there is a reversion to the bondage of pagan occultism and a multiplication of syncretistic and foreign sects, especially two forms of Mormonism. Pray for a spiritual revolution to take place among the many nominal Catholic and Protestant Christians.

**3 The LMS-planted Ma'ohi Church has declined.** Once the Church of the majority of Islanders, liberal theology is now predominant and evangelicals are few. Splits and defections have reduced its percentage and influence, and some well-publicized cases involving misuse of funds damaged the Church's reputation further. Pray for a moving of the Spirit of God to bring this Church back to its first love, as in the early 19th Century. There are some signs of life with the greater inclusion of young people and women.

**4 The Catholic Church,** originally supported by the French colonial powers against the British LMS, is now the largest denomination. Through the 1980s and 1990s, strong charismatic renewal brought significant growth but also controversy, as intellectuals saw this as a reemergence of tribal pagan influence. Today, 25-30% of Catholics are involved in the renewal movement; the rest are mostly non-practicing and very nominal.

**5 The evangelical witness is very small,** consisting of Pentecostal and charismatic churches and a few splinter groups from the Ma'ohi Church. Evangelical agencies found elsewhere in the Anglophone Pacific have neglected Francophone territories. In contrast, two varieties of Mormonism have thrived in these islands for over 150 years. Evangelicals are increasing slowly, but greater cooperation is required – an Evangelical Fellowship/Alliance is needed. Pentecostals run a Bible school and radio station.

**6 The less-evangelized** – almost all adhere to some form of Christianity, but many are without a clear gospel witness:

*a) The outer island groups* are largely Catholic with little evangelical presence. The Marquesans, Mangarevans and Tuamotuans cannot easily understand the related Tahitian language, and have little of the Bible in their own languages.

*b) Significant emigration* from the outer islands to Tahiti gives opportunities for Islanders to encounter Jesus in Papeete, but those who move are too often lost to the Church.

*c) The Chinese* have a few Protestants, Catholics and Chinese ethnoreligionists, but most Chinese are effectively secular.

*d) The French community* lives a life apart, having minimal contact with any Church.

*e) The Jewish community,* newly arrived and in need of their Messiah.