



# Honduras

## Republic of Honduras

### Latin America

### Geography

**Area** 112,088 sq km. A mountainous land with rain forests and fertile coastal plains on the Caribbean and Pacific coasts.

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010	7,615,584	2.01%
2020	9,136,431	1.73%
2030	10,491,748	1.28%

**Capital** Tegucigalpa 1,027,976. **Urbanites** 48.8%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 37%. **Life expectancy** 72 yrs.

### Peoples

**Spanish-culture** 89.0%. Mestizo (Ladino) 85.0%; Afro-American 2.0%; White 2.0%.

**Amerindians** 7.9%. Seven peoples whose languages are rapidly disappearing. Largest: Detribalized (mainly Lenca origin) 4.0%; Lenca 1.4%; Garifuna (Black Carib) 1.8%; Miskitu 0.5%.

**Other** 3.1%. Arab (Palestinian) 0.8%; Jamaican 0.5%; various other ethnicities.

**Literacy** 80%. **Official language** Spanish.

**Other language** English on the northern coast.

**All languages** 13. **Indigenous languages** 10.

**Languages with Scriptures** 5Bi 2NT 1por 1w.i.p.

### Economy

One of the Western hemisphere's poorest countries, with most wealth in the hands of a very small minority. Widespread unemployment, low wages, the devastation of Hurricane Mitch in 1998 and limited development weigh in to make life difficult for the majority, with most of the population below the poverty line. Agriculture, services, tourism and remittances account for most of the economic activity.

**HDI Rank** 112<sup>nd</sup>/182. **Public debt** 20.4% of GDP. **Income/person** \$1,826 (4% of USA). **Unemployment** 27.9%.

### Politics

Independent from Spain in 1821, but 134 revolutions and revolts by 1932. Military rule for much of the 20th Century. Democratic civilian government since 1984 has been hampered by the power and autonomy of the military and by US meddling in the region in the 1980s. Stamping out government corruption, creating jobs and tackling crime will be challenges for any elected leader for years to come.

### Religion

The Roman Catholic Church is officially recognized, but there is separation of Church and state with religious freedom.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Christian	96.64	7,359,700	2.0%
Non-religious	1.90	144,696	5.6%
Ethnoreligionist	0.80	60,925	-0.4%
Baha'i	0.45	34,270	2.0%
Muslim	0.18	13,708	3.2%
Buddhist	0.03	2,285	2.0%

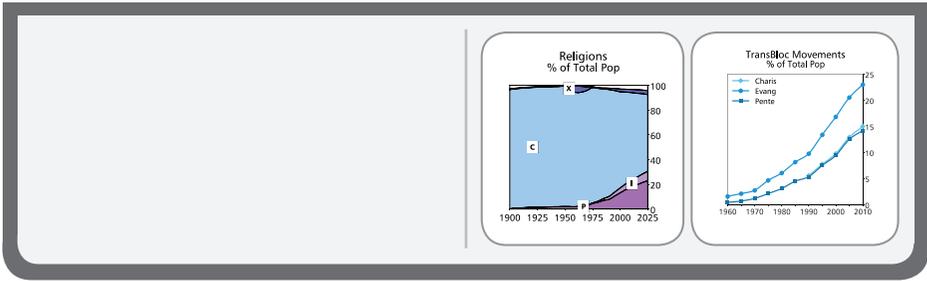
Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	58	19.37	1,475,000	3.9%
Independent	62	5.98	455,000	5.1%
Anglican	1	0.11	8,000	2.7%
Catholic	1	79.77	6,075,000	1.0%
Orthodox	3	0.07	5,000	-0.4%
Marginal	5	2.66	203,000	3.4%
<i>Doubly affiliated</i>		-11.32	-861,000	0.0%

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Catholic Church	C	930	3,164,062	6,075,000
Indig Pente/Charis Chs	I	2,185	78,671	225,000
Foursquare Gospel Ch	P	325	77,000	215,600
Seventh-day Adventist	P	450	90,000	198,000
Ch of God (Cleveland)	P	1,968	61,000	184,830
Latter-day Saints(Mormon)	M	394	80,838	135,000
Assemblies of God	P	888	35,500	119,000
Principé de Paz	I	486	34,000	113,220
Christian Brethren	P	462	42,000	105,000
Central American Ch	P	800	24,000	82,800
Jehovah's Witnesses	M	298	19,100	63,603
World Gospel Mission	P	240	33,000	61,500
Other denominations[67]		5,621	259,721	642,263
<i>Doubly affiliated</i>				-861,000
<b>Total Christians[130]</b>		<b>15,047</b>	<b>3,998,8927</b>	<b>3,358,816</b>

TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
<b>Evangelicals</b>			
Evangelicals	23.0	1,751,873	4.4%
<b>Renewalists</b>			
Charismatics	15.0	1,142,177	5.1%
Pentecostals	14.2	1,078,804	4.6%

### Missionaries from Honduras

**P,I,A** 116 (79 long-term) in 22 agencies: to elsewhere in Central America/Mexico 35, Europe 25, North America 22.



## Answers to Prayer

- 1 **Five decades of evangelical growth** began with the successful Evangelism in Depth programme of 1963. In 1960, evangelicals numbered 32,000 and were 1.7% of the population. They are now 1,750,000 and 23.0%, and growth shows little sign of stopping. Some polls show that up to 36% of the population identify with evangelical beliefs.
- 2 **The indigenous peoples of the eastern rainforests.** The Miskitu, Garifuna, Sumo and Tol have won significant concessions to preserve their endangered habitat and cultures in the face of economic predation of their environment. Formerly a voiceless, legally disadvantaged underclass, these concessions enable them to protect, preserve and develop their traditional culture.

## Challenges for Prayer

- 1 **The government faces an uphill battle** in establishing true stability and order. A young nation, Honduras' colonial past and military rule for most of its independence mean that democratic structures and mentalities must be nurtured. Corruption within the government, preferential treatment of the rich minority and prevalent poverty make the nation vulnerable to structures of sin. Pray for righteousness and for wise and resolute governance.
- 2 **Socio-economic problems are widespread** and deeply entrenched. At the root of most problems lies endemic and lasting poverty, affecting up to 80% of the population. Pray for these issues:
  - a) **Children at risk.** More than half of Honduras' population are children, the majority living in poverty. Destitution drives them to desperate measures.
    - i *Illegal emigration.* Thousands of children attempt to cross to the USA to find family members working there. Usually, they end up incarcerated in Guatemala or Mexico – in terrible conditions.
    - ii *Pepenadores,* or garbage dump children, are more prevalent in Honduras than in any nation in the Americas.
    - iii *Street children,* numbering in the thousands, are often exterminated as a nuisance by ruthless groups in the name of social cleansing.
    - iv *Vice and crime.* Many of the above groups and others get swept up by organized crime and exploited as gang members and sex workers.
  - b) **Powerful gangs** known as *maras* are made up mostly of youth, but have massive influence and power in Honduran society. They are becoming more violent and ruthless and are linking up with drug cartels using Honduras as a transshipment point. The government is waging an increasingly intense war against these groups for whom kidnapping, extortion and assault are the main activities.
  - c) **AIDS has decimated the population.** Honduras is home to 60% of Central America's AIDS cases. Poverty, ignorance, a widespread sex industry, a macho culture and the Catholic stance against contraception all contribute to its rapid growth. Pray for moral courage and an educational shift among Hondurans to halt the spread of AIDS.
  - d) **The devastation of Hurricane Mitch** continues to blight Honduras. Many towns, villages and

churches were virtually destroyed. The needs after 10 years are to re-establish both infrastructure and self-sustaining industries. Pray for all involved (World Relief, Tearfund, WVI, Lutheran World Relief, others).

**3 Catholicism's influence is rapidly declining.** In some polls, the 80% affiliation rate is reportedly as low as 47%. The greatest factors contributing to this decline include the lack of indigenous personnel, widespread nominalism, the influence of animism/paganism within the Church and large-scale migration to evangelical churches. Only about 20% of Catholics are actively involved in the Church. There is considerable agreement between Catholics and evangelicals on communal and social issues. Pray for a Holy Spirit-driven revival to sweep through the Catholic Church; the impact of this could still transform Honduran society.

**4 The growing number and influence of evangelicals** is praiseworthy, as is the greatly increasing number and size of many congregations. *La Cosecha* ("The Harvest") is a Foursquare church with a weekly attendance of 20,000, despite being founded only 20 years ago. Sadly, much of the progress among evangelicals in Honduras is undermined by their fragmentation into countless denominations and the resulting jealousies and isolationism. In part, this is due to the imported divisions and rivalries brought in by missionaries. Pray for the *Confraternidad Evangélica* (founded in 1987), which represents 90% of evangelicals in the country. It works to cultivate fellowship and cooperation across denominations.

**5 Leadership training** becomes ever more vital as the number of congregations continues to grow. Many seminaries and Bible schools face difficulties (costs, staffing, cooperation), enhancing the importance of networks of TEE programmes run by various denominations. Pray that the trainers might impart biblical knowledge and be models for spiritual ministry.

**6 Amerindian peoples** have partially assimilated into Spanish culture. Among the Lenca, **WGM** and **CAMI** are working to great effect. The peoples of the eastern forests (Miskitu, Garifuna, Sumo and Tol) retain more of their cultural identity. In recent years many have come to Christ. **MOPAWI** (*Mosquitia Pawisa*), an indigenous body founded on Christian principles, is dedicated to development of local cultures, to community projects and to advocacy of full equality under the law. Baptists, Christian Fellowship Mission, Miskito Missions and others work among the very poor but responsive peoples. Pray for healthy development of churches among them and for all forms of exploitation to end.

**7 Missions vision has grown significantly** in the past decade. There are now several mission agencies, both denominational and interdenominational, that train and send cross-cultural workers. Some examples: **YWAM**, *Puerto al Mundo*, Baptists, *El Cordero* and the Council of Evangelical Churches. Pray for the whole Honduran Church to gain a greater vision for outreach and mission.

**8 Foreign mission agencies can still play a key role** in training and development, specialized ministries and in holistic projects, for which there are many openings. Pray for humble sensitivity and for a legacy of raising up and empowering Honduran leadership and initiatives. The largest agencies are: **CCCI**, **WGM**, **CAMI**, **CB/CMML**, **CCCC**, **BIM**.

**9 Specialist Christian ministries.** Pray for:

- a) **Student outreach by both CCCI and IFES.** With a burgeoning young population, many churches are also taking up ministry to children and students.
- b) **Christian literature.** Hosanna and Vida's bookstores are important resources for Christian growth.
- c) **Radio.** National radio gives time to several evangelical churches, and there are 41 local evangelical radio stations (such as HRVC, *Stereo Luz* and *Cosecha*) and two TV channels as well as Internet radio.