



Guyana

Cooperative Republic of Guyana

South America

Geography

Area 215,000 sq km. On the north coast of South America. A developed coastal strip with under-developed, forested interior.

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010 761,442	-0.06%	4/sq km
2020 745,024	-0.25%	3/sq km
2030 713,778	-0.52%	3/sq km

About 90% live on the coast.

Capital Georgetown 132,000. **Urbanites** 28.5%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 30%. **Life expectancy** 66.5 yrs.

Peoples

Colonial importation of labour for the sugar industry created the current racial diversity and political tension.

South Asian 42.5%. Predominantly rural farmers from the Indian sub-continent. Declining through emigration.

African 29.7%. Dominant in government, civil service and in urban areas.

Mixed 16.5%. Primarily Eurafrikan, but some Asian and Amerindian also.

Amerindian 8.9%. The majority live in the sparsely inhabited interior. Main groups:

Arawak 3.2%. Arawak; Wapishana.

Carib 2.9%. Largest: Macushi, Patamona, Akawaio, Carib.

Detribalized Amerindian 2.0%.

Other 0.9%.

Other 2.4%. Portuguese, Chinese, British.

Literacy 96.5%. **Official languages** English; Creole used by 90% of the population. **All languages** 19. **Indigenous languages** 16.

Languages with Scriptures 2Bi 5NT 9por 4w.i.p.

Economy

Mainstays are gold, sugar, rice, forest products and minerals. A 20-year Marxist economic

experiment impoverished the country despite its economic potential. Living standards fell, foreign investment dried up and many of the better-educated are still leaving the country. A gradual improvement since 1992, but severe flooding in 2005 caused \$415 million of damage.

HDI Rank 114th/182. **Public debt** 157% of GDP. **Income/person** \$1,509 (3% of USA).

Politics

Dutch rule 1750-1814; British rule until independence in 1966. Both main political parties were previously Marxist in orientation but remain bitterly divided along racial lines (Indo-Guyanese versus Afro-Guyanese). Racial tension continues. Venezuela to the west and Suriname to the east both lay claim to large parts of Guyana.

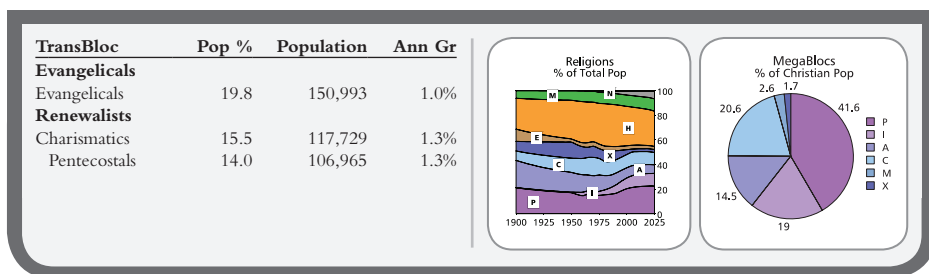
Religion

Atheism promoted until 1985, with considerable tension between the government and the main churches. A secular state with full religious freedom since then.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Christian	52.68	401,128	0.0%
Hindu	30.30	230,717	0.5%
Muslim	9.40	71,576	0.2%
Non-religious	4.00	30,458	2.6%
Ethnoreligionist	3.00	22,843	-0.7%
Baha'i	0.40	3,046	-0.1%
Buddhist	0.22	1,675	-0.1%

Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	40	24.20	184,000	1.2%
Independent	29	11.06	84,000	1.4%
Anglican	1	8.41	64,000	-0.6%
Catholic	1	11.95	91,000	0.2%
Orthodox	1	1.00	8,000	-0.8%
Marginal	9	1.53	12,000	3.0%
<i>Doubly affiliated</i>		-5.47	-42,000	0.0%

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Catholic Church	C	40	48,148	91,000
Seventh-day Adventist	P	150	48,000	70,000
Anglican Church	A	123	16,000	64,000
Full Gospel Fellowship	I	160	12,800	48,000
Assemblies of God	P	78	12,000	24,000
NT Church of God	P	70	11,000	19,000
Lutheran Church	P	42	4,200	10,500
Methodist Ch (MCCA)	P	40	3,200	8,200
Ethiopian Orthodox	O	28	5,000	7,600
Jehovah's Witnesses	M	38	2,700	7,560
Wesleyan Church	P	37	3,105	5,900
Ch of the Nazarene	P	48	3,200	4,750
Other denominations[69]		667	43,548	82,216
<i>Doubly affiliated Pentecostals</i>				-15,000
<i>Doubly affiliated</i>				-26,650
Total Christians[81]		1,521	212,901	401,076



Answers to Prayer

- 1 Complete religious freedom** since the waning of atheistic rhetoric in the 1980s.
- 2 Continued responsiveness to the gospel** among most ethnic groups in the country.
- 3 Christian unity is getting stronger** in this diverse and often divided country, providing a testimony to the nation and a drawing point for those considering the gospel.

Challenges for Prayer

- 1 Guyana seems to exist precariously on many levels.** It is constantly under threat from persistent claims on its land by Venezuela and Suriname. The political sphere is defined along racial lines. The economy is vulnerable to the climate, as the disastrous floods of 2005 attest. Large-scale emigration has denuded the country of much of its population, including many of the most gifted. Pray that an enduring hope might come to Guyana, most expressly through the transformation that only the gospel can enact.
- 2 There is a vital, vibrant, growing evangelical witness,** and evangelicals are found in all levels of society. Pentecostal, charismatic (“clap-hand”) and evangelical denominations and fellowships continue to grow despite negative population growth. Churches are still largely divided along racial lines, but the multiracial congregations that do exist are some of the few ethnic bridges in the country. The cross-denominational work of the Guyanese Evangelical Fellowship is vital in this area. Pray for all believers to demonstrate the power of the gospel in their unity, in their words and in holy living.
- 3 Most Afro-Guyanese and mixed-race Guyanese are Christian,** but nominalism is widespread, stable two-parent families rare (a legacy of the time of slavery) and syncretistic and deviant beliefs common. Obeah Spiritism and witchcraft, Rastafarianism and foreign sects as well as the racist Nation of Islam are influential here. Pray for the true and uncorrupted gospel to radically impact these communities.
- 4 The Indo-Guyanese population is mostly Hindu,** but with large and equally sized Muslim and Christian communities. Pray for:
 - a) The many Hindu rural communities** and for their evangelization.
 - b) The large numbers of Muslims** – increasingly influenced by Islamist rhetoric. Some have been won to Christ out of this context, but Guyanese Muslims remain the least reached group in the nation.
- 5 The Amerindian peoples are largely Christianized** and predominantly Catholic, but significant numbers are also becoming Pentecostals through the ministry of **AoG**, Church of God and the Full Gospel Fellowship. **UFM**’s work in the south among the Waiwai, Macushi and Wapishana has resulted in a growing, missionary-minded Church. Pray for the development of indigenous Christian leadership and mature churches that can retain their cultural identity and still survive the impact of modernity.

6 Ministry among young people is vital because family life, further education, employment and the future in general are great challenges. Most evangelical denominations have work among youth. **IFES** has an extensive ministry with 12 full-time staff and more than 200 groups at primary, secondary and tertiary levels where they reach over 12,000 students every week. Praise God for many decisions to follow Jesus; pray for effective discipleship.

7 Medical ministry is both important and fruitful. With limited medical facilities and widespread AIDS (Guyana has the second highest prevalence in the Caribbean region) and malaria, Guyana is in need of better medical care. The loving testimony of Christian medical workers from many groups, including **YWAM** and Operation Guyana, opens many doors for the gospel to be shared.

8 Christian missions have had a deep and positive impact on society. Missions are free to work in every capacity. The majority are involved in church planting, Bible translation, leadership training and development. Major missions: Adventist World Aviation, **CC**, **ELCA**, Global Outreach International.

9 Christian literature and Bible translation are all the more important given the relative dearth of Christian radio and TV in the vernacular of the vast majority. Functional literacy remains significantly lower than the official literacy rate.