



Iceland

Republic of Iceland

Europe

Geography

Area 103,000 sq km. A volcanic island in the North Atlantic; mountainous, largely barren with many large glaciers.

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010	329,279	2.17%
2020	370,487	0.97%
2030	391,989	0.44%

Capital Reykjavik 202,000. **Urbanites** 92.3%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 21%. **Life expectancy** 81.7 yrs.

Peoples

Icelandic 91.7%. **Other** 8.3% (mostly European but increasingly otherwise). Danish 1.2%; Swedish 0.6%; Polish 0.6%. **Literacy** 100%. **Official language** Icelandic. **All languages** 2. **Languages with Scriptures** 1Bi.

Economy

One of the world's highest living standards. Fishing and limited agriculture are being supplanted by tourism, hydroelectric-energy plants and aluminum-smelting projects. A fast-growing finance sector infamously triggered a financial crisis and banking collapse in 2008-2009; consequences of the financial crisis have already seen the demise of one government. Energy plants and aluminum factories are controversial, given Iceland's unique and fragile environment.

HDI Rank 3rd/182. **Public debt** 56.5% of GDP. **Income/person** \$53,058 (112% of USA).

Politics

The world's oldest parliament, established in 930.

Under Norwegian and Danish rule 1262-1944. Parliamentary republic and a member of NATO. Not part of the EU.

Religion

The Lutheran Church is still recognized as the state church, but there is religious freedom.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Christian	90.60	298,327	1.2%
Non-religious	8.33	27,429	18.2%
Other	0.60	1,976	4.0%
Buddhist	0.27	889	5.5%
Muslim	0.11	362	8.9%
Baha'i	0.09	296	0.0%

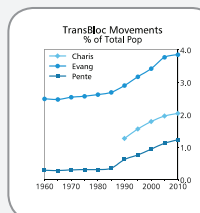
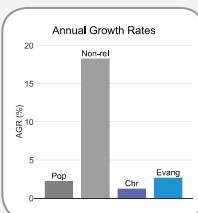
Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	19	83.57	275,000	0.4%
Independent	2	0.46	2,000	2.0%
Catholic	1	2.52	8,000	5.2%
Orthodox	2	0.11	<500	3.1%
Marginal	2	0.27	<1,000	0.8%
Unaffiliated		3.67	12,000	32.0%

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Lutheran Church	P	275	177,273	253,500
Lutheran Free Chs	P	4	11,958	17,100
Catholic Church	C	5	5,929	8,300
Pentecostal Church	P	8	1,518	2,270
Charismatic churches	P	4	528	900
Pentecostal Fellowship	I	4	553	800
Seventh-day Adventist	P	7	525	760
The Way Chr Fell	I	1	438	700
Jehovah's Witnesses	M	9	358	680
Other denominations[11]		209	882	1,190
Total Christians[26]		526	199,962	286,200

TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Evangelicals			
Evangelicals	3.8	12,641	2.6%
Renewalists			
Charismatics	2.0	6,700	3.1%
Pentecostals	1.2	4,005	4.0%

Missionaries from Iceland

P, I, A 8 (6 long-term) in one organized agency, and denominational efforts: to Ethiopia 4, Kenya 2.



Challenges for Prayer

- 1 Traditional Icelandic life can be considered under threat.** High-profile disputes divide opinion between conservationists wanting to preserve the environment and industrialists wanting to cash in on the resources. Although the total number of immigrants is not massive, Iceland's relatively small population has seen possibly the largest migration rate in Europe, bringing other faiths and cultures into a traditionally guarded society. Pray for wisdom for leaders and the people in dealing with these new challenges.
- 2 The majority of Icelanders are Christian, but only nominally so.** Biblical Christianity and a lifestyle of following Christ are alien concepts to most. Some of the more isolated areas are spiritual wastelands, with almost no active Christianity at all. Ask the Lord to break into Icelandic society and orchestrate a revival that touches every person and aspect of life.
- 3 The Lutheran and the smaller, but similar, Free Churches** are suffering the same challenges as much of Europe – declining and aging congregations, low attendance and a general lack of spiritual vitality. There is, of course, a segment of Lutherans who faithfully follow Jesus; pray that their numbers might multiply. And, there is actually a surfeit of young trainees – so much so that churches may “export” them to serve in Lutheran or Anglican congregations abroad! Pray for a surge of new life in the congregations and the leadership. Pray also for the theological faculty where all pastors are trained.
- 4 Evangelical believers are not many** (3.8%), but their numbers are growing. In particular, Lutheran Free Churches, Pentecostals and charismatic churches are increasing and displaying admirable unity and cooperation. The Pentecostal Church, together with World Horizons, runs a short-term discipleship ministry, and the ex-**YWAM** training centre is now a residential Christian training community. Several congregations use the Alpha Course to good effect. Pray that the living faith and unity of evangelicals might open the hearts of many to the good news.
- 5 The Bible Society** launched in 2000 a new Bible translation, which was well received. The 2007 release of *The 100-Minute Bible* in Icelandic resulted in many acquiring Bibles. Pray that many would come back into contact with the transforming Word of God.
- 6 Christian Radio.** Radio Lindin, which can reach about 90% of the population, remains on air and is a blessing to believers. And it has been used to bring some unbelievers to faith. It is also available via the Internet.