

HDI Rank 81*/182. **Public debt** 56.5% of GDP. **Income/person** \$6,872 (14% of USA).

Politics

A French colony between 1715 and 1810, and then British until independence in 1968. Following the racial war of 1968, the only African parliamentary democracy to have uninterrupted stability since 1969. Party politics are dominated by ethnic and religious divisions. The Hindu Indian bloc is in the majority, but increasingly forced to work with other groups in coalition.

Religion

Freedom of religion, but with a tendency to favour Indianization and, by implication, Hinduism. Mission work and Christian witness are allowed, but proselytism is looked on unfavourably in this multi-faith society.

Mauritius

Republic of Mauritius

Africa

Geography

Area 2,040 sq km. One larger and three smaller islands east of Madagascar in the western Indian Ocean. One of these, Rodrigues Island, is 500 km to the east of the others. Mauritius also claims the Chagos archipelago, including Diego Garcia, which comprise the British Indian Ocean Territory.

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010	1,294,569	0.70%
2020	1,369,990	0.52%
2030	1,417,642	0.28%

Capital Port Louis 150,000. **Urbanites** 42.6%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 23%. **Life expectancy** 72.9 yrs.

Peoples

All peoples immigrated with permanent settlements from the 18th Century onward.

Indo-Mauritian 66%. Bhojpuri 46%; Tamil 6%; Hindi 5%; Urdu 4%; others.

Creole 28%. Mixed African and European.

Chinese 3%. Majority are Hakka.

European 3%. Largely French, controlling sugar plantations and big business.

Literacy 85.1%. **Official language** English. **All languages** 13. **Indigenous languages** 6.

Languages with Scriptures 4Bi 1NT 2por 1w.i.p.

Economy

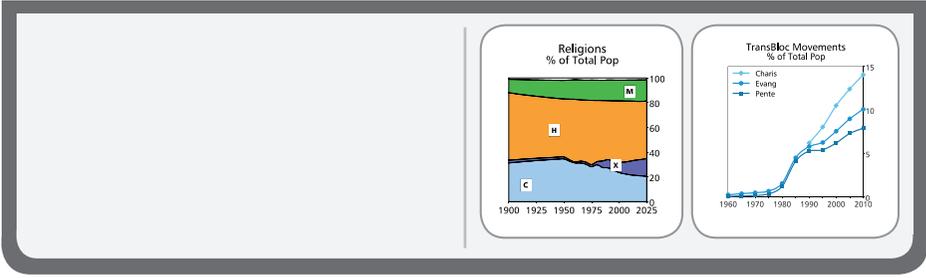
The once-dominant sugar and textile industries are losing their clout due to global markets and are being eclipsed by successful diversification and industrialization. Tourism, offshore banking and the use of Mauritius as a tax haven have become the main revenue generators. One of the more balanced and successful African economies.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Hindu	48.60	629,161	0.4%
Christian	32.71	423,454	1.2%
Muslim	17.02	220,336	0.8%
Non-religious	0.42	5,437	1.2%
Baha'i	0.40	5,178	-3.7%
Chinese	0.33	4,272	1.3%
Buddhist	0.32	4,143	-0.5%
Sikh	0.20	2,589	0.7%

Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	11	8.37	108,000	2.4%
Independent	21	1.92	25,000	6.9%
Anglican	1	0.39	5,000	-2.9%
Catholic	2	21.53	279,000	0.0%
Marginal	3	0.35	4,000	1.4%

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Catholic Church	C	49	150,406	278,251
Assemblies of God	P	140	50,000	85,000
Ch of God (Cleveland)	P	43	9,667	14,500
Seventh-day Adventist	P	38	3,779	5,500
Anglican Church	A	17	3,247	5,000
Jehovah's Witnesses	M	29	1,850	4,120
Christian Church	I	7	1,500	2,700
Voice of Deliverance Ch	I	31	1,227	2,700
Presby Ch of Mauritius	P	5	1,100	1,463
Evang Ch of Mauritius	P	5	500	850
Other denominations[28]		118	9,764	21,405
Total Christians[38]		482	233,040	421,489

TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Evangelicals			
Evangelicals	10.1	130,801	3.1%
Renewalists			
Charismatics	14.1	182,087	3.2%
Pentecostals	7.9	102,590	2.3%



Challenges for Prayer

- 1 This complex multi-ethnic and multi-religious society** makes evangelism a challenge; pray for great wisdom and discernment among Christians. The Hinduization of government and culture, as well as strong ancestral and ethnic ties, make it difficult for Indians to become believers. However, large numbers of Hindus are coming to Jesus through the bold witness of evangelical/Pentecostal churches.
- 2 Most older churches face slow decline** and are nominal in faith. Roman Catholics are seeing Hindu beliefs and practices make their way into churches in some places. But the charismatic movement is making a big impact on Catholics, with many coming to personal faith in Christ. Many of those impacted formed their own independent groups. The Roman Catholic Church is experiencing a move back to Bible reading, and now runs several active ministries on the island. Pray for a greater spread of this spiritual vitality among traditional churches in Mauritius.
- 3 Among evangelicals, growth is most rapid** within the charismatic groups. Other evangelicals and independent house groups experience modest growth, but not without opposition. Subtle discrimination when applying for official permits – and more open hostility when sharing the gospel – are common. Proselytizers are painted as imperialistic and intolerant in this atmosphere of hyper-ecumenism. The Church has suffered from internal division, but the 1995 formation of a Fellowship of Christian Churches in Mauritius (FCCM) was a significant step forward, drawing together a wide range of churches and ministries. A similar group serves Pentecostals specifically. Pray for unity among Christians to deepen, to inform ministry and strategy, and to shape a positive testimony to non-believers.
- 4 Training leaders is of prime importance.** The AoG School of Ministry offers multi-level programmes ranging from correspondence to degree-level courses. TEE is utilized by most denominations and there are several correspondence schools, one being the Emmaus BCC. To train clergy and laity, the Anglican Church opened the Training Centre for Ministries and Community Development in Curepipe. The most exciting development is the rebirth of the Mauritian Bible Training Institute, an evangelical Bible school started with input from SIM, which now enjoys a partnership with Vose Seminary in Australia. Praise the Lord for the development of Bible training, but also pray that Mauritius might receive more teachers of the Word who are well-trained models of godliness.
- 5 Ministry to young people** is met with encouraging openness. While they are less bound by ethnic loyalties, many are held back from open commitment by family pressures or liberal church leaders. The challenges they face have intensified in recent years: violent crime, sexual immorality and an erosion of traditional values. Intravenous drug use is second highest in the world; some ministries have opened work to help drug users. Opportunities are limited for ministry in schools and campuses (the university is non-residential), but YFC, YWAM, IFES, CCCI, SU and CEF reach students and children by creative means. Praise God for government recognition of these ministries, and pray for their fruitfulness.
- 6 Rodrigues Islanders**, numbering around 38,000, are largely Creole, largely Catholic, and tend to be poor and isolated. There is a small presence of other faiths (Hindu and Muslim) and other denominations (Anglican, Pentecostal, SdA) on this semi-autonomous island. Christians are active in education with five schools under their care, but faith tends to be nominal, blending biblical teachings with ungodly traditional beliefs. Pray for God's Spirit to work anew among the Creole.

7 **Missionary work in Mauritius** is limited due to the difficulty in obtaining long-term visas and lack of appropriately trained personnel. Valuable ministry could be done if expats and locals work together in effective partnerships. Missionaries sent from Mauritius are few due to isolation and lack of missions vision in local churches. Five Mauritians are serving overseas, four with **WEC**. Pray that Mauritian believers and congregations may become more active in supporting world evangelization.

8 **Specific unreached minorities.** Pray for:

- a) **Muslims.** While the Muslim population has become more visible, the number of believers from a Muslim background remains quite small compared to their population size, and only a handful of Christians actively reach out to them. An appropriate and specific outreach is needed.
- b) **Speakers of major Indian languages,** Bhojpuri, Hindi and Urdu, all representing large unreached groups in India. The **JESUS** film and literature distribution are used to reach them.
- c) **The Chinese community.** Most Chinese have become Catholic, and a number of those are impacted by the charismatic renewal. Evangelical believers number over 700 in six congregations. Pray for the combined barriers of spiritual powers and the drive for wealth – keeping many from a full commitment to Christ – to be removed.
- d) **The Chagos Islanders** were evacuated to Mauritius from the British Indian Ocean Territories 1,700 km to the northeast in 1966-70. For the last 10 years, they have been forced to go through courts of law to uphold their right of abode in their homeland, the Chagos Archipelago. Law courts repeatedly affirm their right to return; the government repeatedly quashes the rulings. They live in very difficult conditions with high rates of poverty and unemployment. Almost all are Catholic. Pray for their return and resettlement, and for continued opportunities for these 8,000 Chagossians to hear and respond to the gospel. *Mo Pense Toi* (“I Think and Care about You”) is a Bible-based NGO seeking to bring the Chagossian community relief, comfort and hope through holistic application of the gospel.

9 **Help ministries** needing prayer:

- a) **The Bible Society** has a vital role in distributing Scriptures in all the island territories of the Indian Ocean – Seychelles, Réunion, Comoros and others. Over 200,000 Scripture portions, NTs and Bibles are distributed each year. A modern Creole NT is being put together.
- b) **Christian bookshops** grew from two in 1990 to eleven in 2009. Despite this, Christian literature is not getting into the hands of unbelievers. Pray for the provision and distribution of appropriate Christian literature.
- c) **Scripture Union** distributes daily Bible-reading materials and coordinates various short-term outreaches and ministries on a national level.
- d) **Christian radio broadcasts.** Catholics, Anglicans, Baptists and SdA are all allotted time on the government station. Private stations are not allowed to broadcast religious programmes. FEBA and TWR beam programmes in French and English on shortwave.
- e) **The JESUS film** is now available in almost all spoken languages in Mauritius – French, Creole, English, Hindi, Bhojpuri, Marathi, Tamil, Telegu, Urdu, Hakka, Mandarin, Cantonese, Malagasy, as well as a children’s version in Creole.
- f) **Internet resources** are in great need, since Mauritius boasts the highest connectivity rate per inhabitant in Africa. Pray for developments in this area, particularly to address the paucity of online resources in Mauritian Creole.