



HDI Rank 115th/182. **Public debt** 4.24% of GDP. **Income/person** \$1,975 (4% of USA).

Politics

Unified as a nation in 1206, which, under Genghis Khan, became the greatest land empire ever known, stretching from China and Korea to Central Europe. Under foreign domination between 1368 and 1911. Autonomous from Chinese and Manchu domination in 1911. A Russian-supported revolution in 1921 installed a Marxist revolutionary government. A multiparty democracy was instituted in 1990. Protests over corruption and failure to help the poor plague the current government.

Religion

Buddhism, Shamanism and Islam are recognized as Mongolia's main religions, but certain religious freedoms are granted to all people. There are some restrictions on foreign religious workers, but Mongolia is effectively one of the most open countries in Asia, with limited government interference in Christian work.

Mongolia

Mongol Uls

Asia

Geography

Area 1,565,000 sq km. Grassland, forests in north, three major mountain ranges and the great Gobi Desert in the east and south. Subject to climatic extremes.

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010	2,701,117	1.16%
2020	3,002,051	1.01%
2030	3,236,104	0.64%

Approximately 33% are nomadic pastoralists.

Capital Ulaanbaatar (Ulan Bator) 965,961. **Urbanites** 57.5%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 26%. **Life expectancy** 66.2 yrs.

Peoples

Mongolian 90.9%. Seven distinct dialects. Khalkha 67.0%; Kalmyk-Oirat 7.0%; Northern Mongol 5.0%; Durbet 2.9%; Buryat 2.7%.

Turkic 6.6%. Kazakh 5.3%; Tuvan 1.2% in far west.

Other 2.5%. Chinese 1.5%.

Literacy 97.8%. **Official language** Khalkha Mongolian. **All languages** 15. **Indigenous languages** 13. **Languages with Scriptures** 4Bi 4NT 4w.i.p.

Economy

A traditionally pastoral and agricultural economy, but mining secures the highest proportion of foreign exchange. The livestock (especially cashmere) and tourism trades are growing earners. Severe winters brought great losses of livestock, which impoverished many and forced thousands to move to the cities seeking work. Changing from a USSR-dependent, central economy to a market economy has been difficult. A minority have become rich, but many are in greater difficulty than before. Large-scale emigration is occurring as many thousands of Mongolians seek employment abroad.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Buddhist	35.30	953,494	4.0%
Ethnoreligionist	32.40	875,162	1.4%
Non-religious	26.48	715,256	-2.6%
Muslim	4.10	110,746	1.4%
Christian	1.72	46,459	7.5%

All figures are estimates, since no national survey has been done, and distinctions between Buddhism and shamanism are blurred.

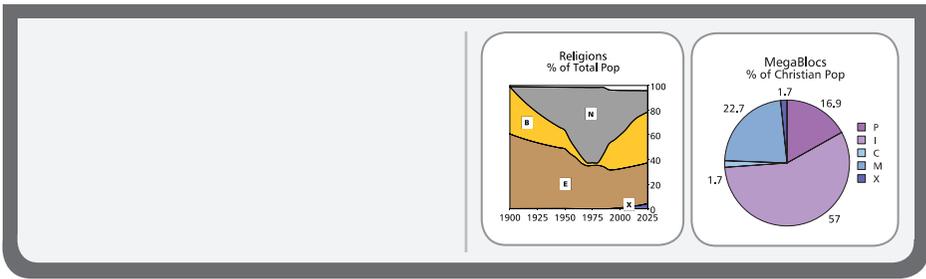
Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	15	0.29	8,000	5.8%
Independent	47	0.98	27,000	8.7%
Catholic	1	0.03	1,000	3.1%
Orthodox	4	0.03	1,000	1.8%
Marginal	3	0.39	10,000	7.6%

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Mongolian indig groups	I	195	5,800	17,800
Latter-day Saints	M	29	4,550	9,100
Charismatic groups	I	38	3,846	7,500
Assemblies of God	P	10	1,825	2,870
Assembly Hall Chs	I	23	492	1,230
Other denominations[21]		66	3,933	8,090
Total Christians[70]		361	20,446	46,590

TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Evangelicals			
Evangelicals	1.2	33,496	7.9%
Renewalists			
Charismatics	0.8	22,106	9.0%
Pentecostals	0.1	2,870	4.1%

Missionaries from Mongolia

P,I,A 20 cross-cultural; 5 international.



Answers to Prayer

- 1 In 1989 there may have been only four Mongolian Christians.** By 2000, there was an estimated community of 8,000 to 10,000. Today, there are over 40,000 believers in hundreds of churches and groups, meeting in most parts of the country.
- 2 The Mongolian Church is maturing rapidly,** often out of necessity. Less than one generation old, it already sends missionaries to unreached areas of Mongolia and beyond, running many national ministries originally founded by missionaries and developing a culturally appropriate worship canon.

Challenges for Prayer

- 1 The difficult economic situation,** a major challenge for the government, deeply affects every aspect of life – employment, education, children’s welfare and others. The very feasibility of traditional nomadic pastoralism is under threat. “Insider capitalism” yields great wealth for a few but gripping poverty for many others. Failing to address this adequately has already caused the collapse of one government. Pray that the leaders of Mongolia might rule with fairness and wisdom.
- 2 Mongolia’s traditional religions,** Lamaistic Buddhism and shamanism, have experienced resurgence since independence. Buddhism numerically dominates, but most do not understand it well. Deeper in the Mongolian psyche are beliefs in shamanism, traditional ethnic superstitions and even occult practices. Increasing numbers of Mongolians, especially younger ones, are consulting shamans for help with health, finance and relationship issues. Pray that Mongolians might find complete liberation and have transformed lives through following the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3 Christianity in Mongolia** is a reality for the first time in modern history. There are now close to 200 churches in the capital as well as believers, if only in tiny groups, in every one of Mongolia’s provincial centres. Yet there are challenges:
 - a) Many are interested in Christianity,** but their reasons are mixed. In the past, a significant attraction was the chance of employment by missionaries/NGOs. Today, some who come into the church drift away or never become disciples. Pray for effective discipleship and Christ-like living among believers. Only a few of the larger churches have become financially autonomous from foreign sponsors.
 - b) Christianity must shed its foreign-ness,** becoming truly Mongolian and still biblically centred. Many missionaries enter with inadequate cross-cultural preparation. Pray for a better contextualization of biblical truths to fit Mongolian culture.
 - c) Age-imbalanced congregations** are usually comprised of many young adults and students, but far fewer of the older generation, especially older men. Children tend not to be brought to church. Pray for a harvest among all ages and generations.
 - d) Rural churches have very little support** or teaching due to a lack of finances and their distance from the capital, where most of the training and resources exist. An effective nomadic church concept has yet to be established.
 - e) The need for spiritual unity.** The Mongolian Evangelical Alliance (MEA) seeks to bring together all Mongolian churches for fellowship, growth and a united front in representing Christians to the government. Pray for vision, leadership and real oneness to come out of the MEA.

4 Developing Mongolian church leaders is a strategic need and the key to strengthening the Church. Good training is central to this – most churches, especially rural ones, desperately need biblically astute leaders and teachers. There are eight Bible colleges, mainly denominational in character. The largest is the interdenominational Union Bible Theological College, which focuses on training church leaders. There are also other Bible training centres, run by local churches and missions. Given the country's vast size and rapid church growth, developing a TEE programme that serves the far-flung congregations is possibly the Mongolian Church's greatest need. Pray for the right models of leadership and appropriate support structures to develop, from high-level academic study to informal training of laity.

5 The expatriate Christian workforce has a significant role to play. Many, as members of NGOs, focus on aid and development. Missionaries are now shifting from evangelism and discipleship to helping train and serve the Mongolian church to rightly assume those roles. Joint Christian Services (a network of nearly 15 Western-based agencies) and another umbrella group of Korean agencies are striving to coordinate work, along with the MEA and other Christian groups. Most work is based in Ulaanbaatar, but increasingly is moving into rural areas – pray for this to continue. Pray especially for unity among agencies, long-term commitment, willingness to truly learn and adapt to Mongolian culture and close, humble relationships of trust with Mongolian leaders. Pray also that openness in Mongolia continues so that Christian ministry can carry on.

6 Economic difficulties have led to widespread social upheaval, exploitation and the breakdown of traditional values. Crime, alcoholism and prostitution are tragically common. Homelessness can still be a problem in the cities. Most agencies are involved in some kind of health, relief, education or literature programme; these are opportunities to demonstrate Christ's compassionate love. Pray for maximum long-term benefit to the people and the emerging Church.

7 The less evangelized for prayer:

- a) **Nomads** find their traditional life increasingly difficult to maintain. Pray for culturally sensitive holistic ministries that demonstrate the gospel to them.
- b) **Kazakhs** are a majority in the far-western province of Bayan-Olgii. Most are Muslim, but a few are Christian. Some Christians work among them, and Muslim missionaries seek to re-Islamize these people.
- c) **Ethnic minorities.** The Chinese and Russian communities have a few believers, with at least one church for each group. Little to no specific outreach is directed toward the Kalmyk, Tuvan and Evenki peoples.
- d) **Students.** CCCI, IFES, UBF (Korean student campus churches) and others work to reach students through camps, seminars and student discipleship groups. Mongolian leadership is emerging through this ministry, but the process of taking young adults from initial interest to mature disciples requires patience and faith.

8 Specific Christian support ministries for prayer:

- a) **Bible translation** is a very important issue. One main translation is used by most churches and is currently being revised. A couple of other translations exist, one using a different set of religious vocabulary. Pray for increased use of Scripture by Mongolians and for the Holy Spirit to teach, grow and guide many through God's Word. Braille Bibles and audio Scriptures are available for those unable to read.
- b) **The JESUS film**, available in most indigenous languages, is widely used on television and film screenings around the country. Many have been moved by it.
- c) **MAF** flies as Blue Sky Aviation. Mongolia's vastness and need for evangelism, training and humanitarian work makes this a strategically important venture.
- d) **Christian radio and television.** FEBC operates a Christian radio station in the capital – Wind FM provides a vital service, but needs greater range to reach the rural population. Programming includes news, music and Christian teaching. Eagle TV is a Christian-owned terrestrial station that has a much-loved news programme and is airing Christian programmes that share the gospel through drama, teaching and testimonies.