

Challenges for Prayer

- 1 Christianity is generally professed**, but nominalism is widespread, the most ardent Catholics being the Filipinos. Many older people are followers of the *Modekngei* movement, a religion unique to Palau that is a mixture of Christianity and magic; materialism and pluralism are the greater threats to the younger generation. Pray for the revival of the Koror Evangelical Church – the fruit of the work of the Liebenzell Mission. The **AoG** have a small but growing work.
- 2 Hindrances to the gospel** need to be removed. Closed cultures and strong traditionalism make many villages and outlying islands unwilling for change. The debilitating effects of US aid, material comforts and enormous consumption of beer make discipleship and commitment rare. Only the NT is available in Palauan (and nothing in Sonorol or Tobian), so theological depth is lacking. Outreach to smaller unevangelized island communities is complicated by their geographic isolation.
- 3 Missionary vision** for less-evangelized Micronesian islands and beyond is being stimulated by the **YWAM** base in Palau. **YWAM** is also having an impact on the campus of the only college in Palau.
- 4 Palau is curiously being used** as a new place of settlement for Uyghur ex-detainees of Guantanamo and for Burmese political refugees. May these and other immigrants find not only a new home but a new life in Christ as well.

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Home

Features

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010 3,575,574	-1.00%	106/sq km
2020 3,378,426	-0.49%	100/sq km
2030 3,182,495	-0.67%	94/sq km

Capital Chisinau 656,000. **Urbanites** 41.2%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 17%. **Life expectancy** 68.3 yrs.

Peoples

European 93.4%. Widespread intermarriage and mixing.

Latin 76.0%. Moldavian 73.8%; Romanian 2.2%.

Slavic 17.0%. Ukrainian 8.5%; Russian 6.0%; Bulgarian 1.9%.

Other 0.3%. German, Armenian, other European.

Turkic 4.0%. Gagauz 3.4%.

All other 2.6%. Romani, Jews, others.

Literacy 99.1%. **Official language** Moldovan Romanian. **All languages** 13. **Indigenous languages** 5. **Languages with Scriptures** 2Bi 2NT 2por 1w.i.p.

Economy

Rich agricultural land with unfulfilled potential. Europe's poorest nation due to persistent and

Moldova

Republic of Moldova

Europe

Geography

Area 33,700 sq km. Landlocked republic between the Ukraine and Romania.

unresolved political problems, lack of industry and trade, economic dependence on Russia and lingering effects of communism.

HDI Rank 117th/182. **Public debt** 22.3% of GDP. **Income/person** \$1,693 (4% of USA).

Politics

Most of Moldova's political grief is descended from the USSR's policy of hacking up and reassigning regions across ethnic and cultural lines. The largely autonomous Transnistria region of Moldova has, with Russian backing, effectively seceded from the rest of Moldova and is a haven for organized crime and smuggling. The Gagauz region in the southwest operates with autonomy. The Communist party won the 2009 elections, but these were contested as fraudulent, and a subsequent election saw an opposition coalition take power.

Religion

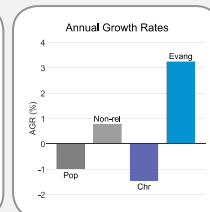
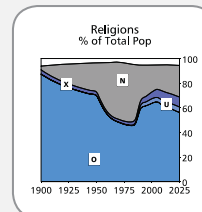
The Orthodox Church regained strong political influence and uses it against those it regards as threats – unregistered Protestants, Muslims and rival Orthodox groups. Schism in the Orthodox Church between Russian and Romanian patriarchates further divides the country's religious population. Some degree of religious freedom exists, since the government stalls on further legislation of freedom.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Christian	73.36	2,623,041	-1.5%
Non-religious	21.56	770,894	0.8%
Muslim	4.95	176,991	-0.4%
Jewish	0.13	4,648	-20.9%

Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	13	3.86	138,000	2.4%
Independent	20	0.53	19,000	14.5%
Catholic	2	2.04	73,000	-0.3%
Orthodox	9	61.74	2,208,000	-2.0%
Marginal	2	1.21	43,000	1.0%
Unaffiliated		3.98	142,000	1.6%

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Moldovan Orthodox Ch	O	860	682,517	976,000
Russian Orthodox	O	270	447,552	640,000
Metro Ch of Bessarabia	O	55	358,741	513,000
Catholic Church	C	35	43,000	73,000
Bulgarian Orthodox	O	17	38,000	58,000
Baptist Union	P	500	23,000	57,000
Jehovah's Witnesses	M	270	19,000	43,000
Seventh-day Adventist	P	170	13,000	32,500
Pentecostal Churches	P	240	13,500	32,000
Old Believers	O	22	9,091	14,000
Charismatic Churches	I	30	4,000	8,000
Other denominations[18]		194	15,878	34,187
Total Christians[46]		2,663	1,667,279	2,480,687

TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Evangelicals			
Evangelicals	3.7	132,471	3.2%
Renewalists			
Charismatics	1.7	60,141	4.8%
Pentecostals	0.9	32,250	2.7%



Answers to Prayer

- 1** **Moldova remains very fertile ground** for the gospel, and believing churches continue to grow and multiply. There is a sense of increasing momentum as the gospel permeates deeper into Moldova through evangelism and church planting.

Challenges for Prayer

- 1** **The nation cannot move forward** until several major issues find resolution. Transnistria remains a de facto separate state and undermines stability and progress for the rest of Moldova. Unemployment and alcohol abuse are widespread problems. The depressed economy forces up to 25% of Moldovans to seek work abroad, often at the risk of exploitation – Moldova is the source for the largest numbers of young women lured abroad into human trafficking rings. Pray for a government that will wisely and effectively address these devastating and costly challenges.
- 2** **The influence of the Orthodox Church** makes evangelical work difficult. Preaching and planting churches in traditionally Orthodox villages is especially opposed, frequently with violence. Bureaucratic antipathy to any non-Orthodox work means that building and

registering churches is a difficult process; houses are usually converted to make new evangelical buildings. Yet there is also life in the Orthodox Church, especially through Agape, a ministry of The Lord's Army. Pray that the Holy Spirit would deepen the spiritual life of many from the Orthodox faith.

3 Evangelical Christians have multiplied greatly in spite of many challenges. Materially lacking, their spiritual vitality and determination yield much fruit. Still, poverty has forced many pastors and up to 20,000 evangelicals to leave Moldova in recent years. Pray that God might provide the church's material needs – employment, buildings, discipleship materials, training resources. Agape and the Salvation Army are particularly active in assisting the poor. Praise God that unity among denominations is increasing.

4 Leadership training and discipleship are still the greatest needs – most acutely for pastors and student leaders. SGA runs the strategic Moldovan Mission School; many pastors and church planters in northern Moldova are graduates. Both Baptists and Pentecostals have theological schools, there is an independent evangelical Bible School in the capital and the Brethren and OM are involved in Bible teaching. Pray for all these programmes to raise up godly, mature leaders. Pray for the provision of resources for both students and schools.

5 The less reached for prayer:

- a) **The Gagauz**, who are Turkish but Orthodox Christians. Among them are some evangelicals, who have a vision to reach Muslims both in Moldova and in Eurasia.
- b) **The Muslim minorities**. Increasing numbers of Turkic Muslims (>20,000) face antipathy from the Orthodox majority, but the Gagauz and Moldovans (Romanian Missionary Society) are sharing the gospel with them.
- c) **The Gypsy population** is large and has very few evangelical Christians.

6 Mission vision among Moldovans is rapidly growing, but training and support are serious obstacles requiring prayer. OM and the European Baptist Federation are just two of the groups dedicated to finding innovative ways to train, send and support economically-limited Moldovans through partnerships with other Christians. Pray for a release of resources to support those called by God to serve in Moldova and abroad.

7 Christian help ministries for prayer:

- a) **Radio. TWR** broadcasts out from Moldova to many Eastern European countries. Moldovans can tune in to 19.5 hours/week in eight languages. Also, a local Christian radio ministry, Micul Samaritan, has 12 stations; they enjoy a fruitful ministry and widespread response.
- b) **The JESUS film**, which is available in Romanian, Ukrainian, Russian and Bulgarian, and has been widely viewed.
- c) **Short-term missions**. Many Western groups send short-term teams, ostensibly to serve the church there through erecting church buildings, teaching and assisting local congregations and ministries. Pray that these guests will serve humbly, affirm national leaders and allow for an authentic Moldovan expression of God's Kingdom.
- d) **Summer camps and outreach programmes** engaged in sports ministry. Nearly every church is actively involved in this work each summer.

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