

MISSIONARY ATLAS PROJECT
MIDDLE AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

Snapshot Section

Country Name:

Netherlands Antilles (*Nederlandse Antillen*)
Former name: Curacao and Dependencies

Country Founded in:

Autonomous since 1954

Population:

223,652 (July 2007 est.)

Government Type:

Constitutional monarchy with parliamentary democracy

Geography/location in the world:

Located as two island groups in the Caribbean Sea, within Central America. Curacao and Bonaire are off the coast of Venezuela; Sint Maarten, Saba, and Sint Eustatius are east of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

12 15 N, 68 45 W

Number of people groups:

Twelve people groups, Antillean Creole being the largest.

Picture of flag:



The five stars represent the main islands of the Netherlands Antilles: Bonaire, Curacao, Saba, Sint Eustatius (or Statius), and Sint Maarten.

Religion Snapshot

Major Religion and % of population:
Christianity, 96.09% of the population

All religions and % for each:

Christianity	96.09%
Hinduism	0.66%
Islam	0.31%
Judaism	0.24%
Chinese religion	0.20%
Buddhism	0.06%
Baha'i	0.03%
Non-religious/other	2.41%

Government interaction with religion:
There is freedom of religion and government respects this right.

Sources consulted:

www.peoplegroups.org

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/print/nt.html>

Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk, *Operation World*, 21st Century Edition (Harrisonburgh: R. R. Donnelley & Sons, 2001)

Country Profile

Basic Facts

Country Name: Netherlands Antilles; *Nederlandse Antillen*
Former: Curacao and Dependencies

Population: In July 2007, the Netherlands Antilles' population numbered 223,652. The population density was 232.97 people per sq km.

The age structure in July 2007 was as follows: 0-14 years: 23.6 (male 27,020/female 25,726); 15-64 years: 67.4% (male 72,449/female 78,259); 65 years and over: 9% (male 8,243/female 11,955). The median age for the total population was 33.1 years (male 31.4 years/female 34.8 years). The life expectancy at birth for the total population was 76.24 years (male 73.96 years/female 78.65 years).

With a birth rate of 14.56 births/1,000 population, a death rate of 6.39 deaths/1,000 population, and a net migration rate of -0.4 migrants/1,000 population, the Netherlands Antilles' population growth rate for 2007 was 0.777%. The 2007 estimated infant mortality rate was 9.63 deaths/1,000 live births (male 10.33 deaths/1,000 live births; female 8.9 deaths/1,000 live births). The total fertility rate was 1.99 children born/woman.

The gender ratio for 2007 was as follows: At birth: 1.05 males/females; Under 15 years: 1.05 males/females; 15-64 years: 0.926 male/female; 65 years and over: 0.69 male/female. Total population: 0.929 male/female.

Many of the inhabitants of the Netherlands Antilles are descendants of African slaves and European colonists. From the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, slaves were brought from Africa to the Netherlands Antilles and sold. Other Netherlands Antilleans originate from East Asia, Latin America, other Caribbean islands, and other countries in the world.

In 1997, the population of Curacao numbered 153,664; Bonaire 14,539; Sint [St.] Maarten 38,876; Sint [St.] Eustatius 2,237; and Saba 1,531. Klein Curacao and Klein Bonaire are uninhabited.

<http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/Netherlands-Antilles.html>

Language:

Four living languages are listed for the Netherlands Antilles: Dutch, English, Netherlands Antilles Creole English, and Papiamentu. However, Spanish is also widely spoken, especially by the Latin-American population.

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=AN

The official language, Dutch, is an Indo-European, Germanic, Low-Franconian language. Dutch is also spoken in the Netherlands, Belgium, Aruba, Suriname, Indonesia, Germany, and France. Dutch syntax follows the Subject, Verb, Object pattern in main clauses and the Subject, Object,

Verb pattern in subordinate clauses. The general assumption held by linguists is that Dutch has an underlying Subject, Order, Verb order.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dutch_grammar

In the Netherlands Antilles, around 4,000 people speak Dutch as their first language. An inability to speak Dutch is considered a social and political disadvantage and is frowned upon.

Spoken as a first language by around 1,800 people in the Netherlands Antilles, English is an Indo-European, Germanic, West, English language. English follows the Subject, Verb, Object order. English is spoken more on Saba and St. Eustatius than on the other Netherlands Antilles islands.

Netherlands Antilles Creole English has around 16,700 native speakers, mainly on St. Maarten (14,000), Saba (1,100), and St. Eustatius (1,600). These three islands have their own dialect of Netherlands Antilles Creole English. The language is a Creole, English-based, Atlantic, Eastern, Southern language, and has its own dictionary.

In 1998, around 179,000 Netherlands Antilleans spoke Papiamentu (in 2001, the percentage was 65.4%). Around 20,000 speak Papiamentu as a second language. On St. Maarten, Saba, and St. Eustatius it is not used widely; in Curacao it is. In Curacao, Papiamentu is taught during the first two years of primary school. Papiamentu is also widely used on Aruba (formerly part of Netherlands Antilles that became independent in 1986). It is a Creole, Iberian-based language. Nowadays, applicants for positions on Curacao are expected to speak Dutch, English, and Papiamentu, and preferably Spanish.

Spanish is an Indo-European, Italic, Romance, West-Iberian, Castilian language. 6.1 % of the Netherlands Antilleans speak Spanish.

Society/Culture:

Due to the origins of the population and the location of the islands (Curacao, Bonaire, St. Maarten, St. Eustatius, and Saba), Netherland Antilles has a diverse, variety of culture. About 85% of the Antilleans can trace their heritage to the African slavery during 17th-19th centuries. Even though the majority of the population is not of Dutch origin, Dutch influence can be seen all around the country. Over the past few decades, the country has been facing substantial social and economic problems due to the immigration of a large group of young and/or highly educated Antilleans to The Netherlands. However, the recent influence by the American culture has increased with extensive tourism to the islands from the United States and a number of countries from around the world.

<http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/Netherlands-Antilles.html>
<http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/Dutch-West-India#Demographics>

Marriage and the nuclear family have become the most common relationships in the middle economic strata. Couples often marry at an older age because of the matrifocal family type

where the leading role is by the female, and especially by the mothers of a community. Raising children and taking care of the household is part of the woman's primary tasks.

Stable employment in the oil industry has enabled men to fulfill their roles as husbands and fathers. However, prevalent casual and extramarital relationships most of the time are the cause of the high number of illegitimate children as well as in the divorce growth.

<http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/Netherlands-Antilles.html>

Like many Caribbean and Latin American countries, the holiday of Carnival is an important one. There are lots of festivities happening such as "jump-up" parades with beautifully colored costumes, floats, live bands, as well as beauty contests and other competitions. One of the important elements of this particular Carnival includes a middle-of-the-night *j'ouvert* (*juvé* – French), parade. Traditionally, the event ends at sunrise with a custom of the burning of a straw King Momo. The participants believe that this ceremony cleans the island of sins and bad luck.

The music of the five islands (*Curacao, Bonaire, St. Maarten, St. Eustatius, and Saba*) is a mixture of native, African, and European elements. The style of music is closely connected with trends from neighboring countries like Venezuela, Colombia, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Martinique, Trinidad, and Gaudeloupe, as well as the former Dutch possession of Suriname, which has exported *kaseko* music to great success on the islands. Curaçao is known for the typical waltzes, danzas/dances, mazurkas, and a kind of music called *tumba*, which is named after the conga drums which accompany it.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netherlands_Antilles#Culture

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Music_of_Aruba_and_the_Netherlands_Antilles

<http://worldmusiccentral.org/article.php?story=20030414202502213> (More on *kaseko* music)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJjh-RWUWG4> (Listen to *kaseko* music)

Like the other four islands of the Antilles, most of *Curacao's* inhabitants can speak four languages which are Papiamentu, Dutch, Spanish, and English. Even though popular use of Dutch increased towards the end of the 19th century and the early 20th century, it was Spanish and English that has been the languages widely spoken, whereas Dutch still remains exclusively a language for administration and legal matters.

Until the late 19th century education in *Curacao* (likewise Bonaire and Aruba) had been primarily conducted in Spanish. Dutch had become the sole language of instruction in the educational system at the beginning of the 20th century.

The rich musical legacy of Curacao has its roots in the Antillean waltzes, mazurkas, danzas, tumbas, and passilos. The most internationally renowned kind of Curacaon music is the *tumba*. Originally the name comes from an African-derived rhythm which is mostly expressed in *seú* and *tambú*. Taking its roots to be sung by slaves, who were mostly women expressing their pain and sadness, *tambú* (also called the Curacao blues) was usually accompanied by the *tambú* drum and the *agan* (a piece of iron or ploughshare) or *chapi* (a hoe), along with clapping, with the audience only women.

The other dance, *seú*, was performed during the harvest festival and traditionally it was a march by the harvesters through the fields. Customarily, the women carried produce on their heads to the warehouses while the men played the drums, kachu, and chapi. Since modern industrialization replaced traditional agriculture, the Curacao Department of Culture has been organizing an annual parade in Willemstad on Easter Monday. Over 2,500 people participate in this event every year in order to preserve this unique ritual.

<http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/Netherlands-Antilles.html>
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tumba_\(music_genre\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tumba_(music_genre))
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamb%C3%BA>
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cura%C3%A7ao#Culture>

The island of *Bonaire* is one of those unique places in the world that from the first makes visitors feel right at home. With the friendly inhabitants, it combines environmental wonders, great food, and numerous opportunities for relaxation. Like many other countries in the world, the island has gone through a lot of changes both positive and negative.

One of the positives is increased direct flights to and from the island. One of the negatives is fishing rights being sold to the European fishing fleets. Such conditions lead concerned individuals to create Support Bonaire, Inc. This organization seeks for ways to provide financial and non-financial support to educational, social, and environmental charitable organizations and projects on Bonaire. The following current projects on Bonaire are *Bonaire Animal Shelter Project, Bonaire Art & Culture Project, Bonaire Coral Health Project, Donkey Sanctuary Project, Maria Hoppner Foster Home Project, Marine Park Patrolling Project, Marine Park Youth Education Project, Sea Monitor Project, Sea Turtle Conservation Project, Support Bonaire Short Term Project Fund, and Past Projects.*

<http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/Netherlands-Antilles.html>
<http://www.supportbonaire.org>
<http://www.supportbonaire.org/Support-Bonaire-Current-Projects.html>

The natives of *St. Martin* (according to 1997 census, populace – 38,876), Creole could trace their roots all the way to Africa, the British Isles, France, and the Netherlands. Even though the Dutch were the first to colonize the island (1631), within two years the Spanish occupants invaded and evacuated the settlers. But, it was the British settlers who arrived there during the colonial period that left a larger impact on the culture.

Distinctive feature of this island was caused in 1648 by the division of the land into two separate nations, such as *Saint [St.] Martin* (French influence) and *St. Maarten* (Dutch influence). In spite of such diverse cultures of their respective homelands, it is rather difficult to make a distinction where *St. Martin* and *St. Maarten* begins in view of the fact that they share a great deal of similarities in their heritage and traditions.

Due to the people's search for better employment and living conditions over the past twenty years, the population of the immigrants has surpassed the number of Creoles. It is believed to be the melting pot of over 60 representatives from different countries. The language of communication is English alongside with French, Dutch, Spanish, and Papiamentu. Particularly

renowned cuisine is Creole, French, and West Indian. Various styles of popular music throughout the Caribbean also include Calypso, meringue, soca, zouk, and reggae.

<http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/Netherlands-Antilles.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_St._Martin

<http://worldmusic.about.com/od/genres/p/calypso.htm>

<http://worldmusic.about.com/od/genres/p/SocaMusic.htm>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zouk>

<http://worldmusic.about.com/od/genres/p/Reggae.htm>

African and Dutch heritage creates the mixed culture of *St Eustatius*, also commonly known as *Statia*. The later one is the result of being a colonial territory for over three centuries whereas the former one is the result of slave trade for few centuries. The slaves from Africa were brought over to the island as the workforce in the warehouses in Lower Town and the vanished plantations. Travel to this particular island will not be for a typical Caribbean vacation.

There is only one town on the island, *Oranjestad*, and it takes the traveler a few decades back, where one can enjoy the vastness of space, breathtaking views, solitude, wondering cows and goats, and secluded beaches. The only known industry known to be present on the island is an oil-holding facility, Statia Terminal.

<http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/Netherlands-Antilles.html>

http://www.lonelyplanet.com/shop_pickandmix/previews/caribbean-islands-st-eustatius-preview.pdf

The culture of the *Saba*'s island takes its heritage of the early settlers who were English, Scottish, African, and Dutch. The common surnames of the inhabitants are Hassell, Simmons, and Johnson. The population on the island has always been small due to its geographical location. It has a treacherous coastline and the entire island measures only five square miles. In comparison with its unique landscape to the rest of the islands of the Antilles (the island is a sleeping volcano rising out of the sea), modern conveniences have been coming to *Saba* relatively slow. There are a total of four villages on the island, but in 1938 the construction began to connect them with a road. By 1970 full-time electricity was available on the island. *Saba*'s official language still remains Dutch; however, the majority of the population uses English as their first language.

Even though the growing tourism to the Antilles in the last few decades brought modernizations, the islanders maintain a slow and old-fashioned lifestyle. The conservation of the island's history and environment compels some to call the island, "The Unspoiled Queen."

Women on the island continue making two traditional island products, *Saba Lace* and *Saba Spice*. *Saba Lace*, hand-stitched lace, roots its beginnings in the late 1800s. With the years, the tradition has grown into a thriving mail-order business with different countries around the world, including United States. *Saba Spice*, a special rum drink, is brewed with a combination of spices grown on the island.

The last week of July, as in many other Caribbean countries/islands, Carnival turns into a big festivity and includes creative competitions, parades, steel bands, and the bottomless sea of food.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Saba
<http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/Netherlands-Antilles.html>

One of the ways the Netherland Antilles builds networking relationship among the populace in the country and beyond her borders is through the *The Antiyano Group*. This is a helpful resource whose purpose is to bring together and reach out to everyone who is related to the Dutch Antilles all around the world.

The group offers discussions about the Dutch Antilles, latest news on different areas of interest, necessary/acquired information, and general chat in three different languages: Papiamentu, Dutch, and English. As long as there are reasonable connections to the islands or the Antilleans in general, every topic is open for conversation/debate – from the playful to the highly political.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Antiyano>

The University of the Netherlands is found on Curacao and is the institution that provides quality education and gives opportunities to its graduates to pursue further degrees around the world. In addition to this, there are nursery schools, primary, and secondary schools that operate on each island which are fully government supported.

The national team of the Netherlands Antilles, *The Netherlands Antilles National Football Team*, is managed by the Nederlands Antilliaanse Voetbal Unie.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netherlands_Antilles_national_football_team

Due to the unique landscape of each island, the only public transportation available on the islands is buses, private automobiles operating as small busses on fixed routes, and taxicabs. Since there are no rivers or railroads, each island has a good road system. Dutch Antillean Airlines (Antilliaanse Luchtvaart Maatschappij – ALM), Royal Dutch Airlines (Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij – KLM), and other international carriers provide excellent airline connections to the nearby islands as well as to other countries.

All the islands have connections with one another and with international systems through the revenues of radiotelephone, radiotelegraph, and cable. The available media existing on the islands allows citizens to have an access to the eight AM, nineteen FM, and three TV stations. Available broadcasts are in Papiamentu, Dutch, Spanish, and English languages. There are more than 2,000 users of the internet.

<http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Americas/Netherlands-American-Dependencies-NETHERLANDS-ANTILLES.html>

Several newspapers circulate throughout different locations of the Netherland Antilles in various languages along with weekly and monthly periodicals: National Newspapers – *Amigoe*, (Dutch, English), Kralendijk Newspapers – *Bonaire Reporter* (English) and *Extra* (Papiamentu), Philipsburg Newspapers – *Daily Herald* (English), and Willemstad newspapers – *Amigoe* (Dutch, English), *Antilliaans Dagblad* (Dutch), *Extra* (Papiamentu), *La Prensa* (Papiamentu), and *Vigilante* (Papiamentu).

http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.newspapers24.com/images/category/netherlands_antilles.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.newspapers24.com/netherlands-antilles-newspapers/&usq=__5LU1U9NHWqtkc5uhBdNePoEZoGU=&h=225&w=300&sz=10&hl=en&start=57&um=1&tbnid=GrxjpC2s3l-L6M:&tbnh=87&tbnw=116&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dnetherlands%2Bantilles%26start%3D40%26ndsp%3D20%26um%3D1%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DN

Official and *de facto* holidays in the Netherland Antilles include the following: New Year's Day (January 1), Carnival Holiday – St. Marten (February 21), Carnival Holiday – except St. Marten (February 23), Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Easter Monday, Queen's Day (April 30), Labor Day (May 1), Ascension Day, Curacao Flag Day (July 2), Kingdom Day (December 15), Christmas Day (December 25), Boxing Day (December 26), and New Year's Eve (December 31). Non-holiday observances include Caribbean Festival (Year Round every Thursday), January/February or February/March Carnival, Rosh Hoshanah – Jewish New Year (September), Yom Kippur (September), Antillean Day (October 21).

http://www.qppstudio.net/publicholidays2009/netherlands_antilles.htm

Sources consulted:

James Minahan *Encyclopedia of the Stateless Nations: Ethnic and National Groups around the World*, vol. 1: A-C (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002).

Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations, vol. 3 *Americas*, 12th edition (Farmington Hills: Gale Group, 2007), s.v. "Netherlands American Dependencies."

Government:

The Netherlands Antilles has the government type of a constitutional monarchy with parliamentary democracy. The country is part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and has no independence. At the head of the executive branch of the government stands Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands (since April 30, 1980). Every six years, she appoints her representative, the Governor General. Currently, Frits Goedgedrag is the Governor General.

The head of government is Prime Minister Emily de Jongh-Elhage (since March 26, 2006). The cabinet is made up of the Council of Ministers, elected by the Staten (the legislative branch or parliament). After legislative elections, the Staten usually elects the leader of the majority party as Prime Minister. Elections are held every four years. The next election is scheduled for 2010. Suffrage is universal at 18 years of age for Dutch nationals of the islands.

The legislative branch is formed by the unicameral Staten (or States) which has 22 seats. The 22 members are elected by popular vote for a four-year term (next election to be held in 2010). Bonaire has 3 seats; Curacao 14; Saba 1; St. Eustatius 1; and St. Maarten 3. Each of the islands has its own political parties. In the 2006 elections, the Party for the Restructured Antilles (Curacao) was the winner with 5 seats. New Antilles Movement (Curacao) won 3 seats; Workers' Liberation Front (Curacao) 2 seats; Forsa Korsou (Curacao) 2; National Alliance (St. Maarten) 2; People's National Party (Curacao) 2; Patriotic Union of Bonaire (Bonaire) 2; Democratic Party of St. Eustatius (St. Eustatius) 1; Democratic Party of St. Maarten (St.

Maarten) 1; Democratic Party of Bonaire (Bonaire) 1; and Windward Islands People's Movement (Saba) 1.

In 1954, the Netherlands Antilles (and Aruba and Suriname) signed the Statuut voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden (Statute for the Kingdom of the Netherlands). The Statute gave the Netherlands Antilles the right to form its own legislative system and to choose its own representatives. Some aspects of the legislative structure may change in the near future as some islands of the Netherlands Antilles may change their relation to the Netherlands.

In November 2006, leaders from the islands and the Netherlands signed the so-called 'Slotverklaring' (Final Declaration) which stipulated that the Dutch government would take over the Netherlands Antilles' national deficit (around 2.4 billion Euros). In the declaration, Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba decided to become special 'gemeenten' (municipalities) of the Netherlands.

St. Maarten and Curacao opted to become autonomous islands/countries and relate to the Netherlands in that fashion. The Island Council of Curacao, however, later disagreed with the leaders' decision to become an autonomous island/country because the Dutch government would still supervise Curacao's financial and legislative departments.

<http://www.overheid.aw/index.asp?moduleid=19&wgid=6&sc=0&spagetype=21&nPageID=1120&nCMSPageType=1#Bron>

In July 2007, Curacao agreed to the stipulations of the Slotverklaring. In February of the same year, the Netherlands and all the islands, except Curacao, signed an agreement which would end their relationship as the Netherlands Antilles on December 15, 2008. However, this action has been postponed. The islands of Bonaire, Saba, and St. Maarten, now as special municipalities, will introduce Dutch law and resemble Dutch municipalities (mayor, municipal, council, and aldermen). The residents will have the right to vote in Dutch national elections as well as European elections. They will also benefit from available aid provided by the Dutch government for debt relief, poverty reduction, and social development.

The judicial branch of the government is formed by the court of first instance and the joint High Court of Justice of which the judges are appointed by the Dutch monarch. Cases are initially tried in the court of first instance. Appeal cases are tried in the High Court of Justice.

Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations, vol. 3 *Americas*, 12th edition (Farmington Hills: Gale Group, 2007), s.v. "Netherlands American Dependencies."

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netherlands_Antilles

Economy:

The economy of the Netherlands Antilles evolves around offshore finance, tourism, and petroleum refining. Despite a small increase in GDP in the past eight years, the income per capita is high and the infrastructure is well developed compared to those of other countries in the region. Most of the oil imported for refinery comes from Venezuela. The U.S.A. and Mexico are

the main suppliers of capital and consumer goods. In general, agriculture is problematic due to inadequate supplies of water and poor soils. The Netherlands Antillean population is aging, but the government is unable to reform the pension and health systems because of budgetary issues.

In 2004, the Netherlands Antilles' GDP (purchasing power parity) was an estimated \$2.8 billion. The growth rate that year was 1%, and GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) was \$16,000. In 2000, services contributed 84% to GDP; industry 15%; and agriculture 1%. In 2005, the labor force numbered 83,600 people of which 79% were working in the services sector; 20% in the industrial sector; and 1% in the agricultural sector. The unemployment rate for 2002 was an estimated 17%. In 2003, the inflation rate was 2.1%. The Netherlands Antilles' budget in 2004 included \$757.9 million in revenues and \$949.5 million in expenditures.

The main agricultural products are tropical fruit, aloes, peanuts, sorghum, and vegetables. Tourism is an important source of income on Curacao, St. Maarten, and Bonaire. Petroleum refining takes place on Curacao while both Curacao and Bonaire have petroleum transshipment facilities. In 2006, the following were export partners for the export of petroleum products: U.S.A. 28.5%; Panama 12%; Mexico 9.4%; Haiti 5.6%; Singapore 5.1%; and the Bahamas 4.5%. The export amounted to \$2.076 billion. The import commodities, worth \$4.383 billion, consisted of food, crude petroleum, and manufactures. The import partners were Venezuela (71.2%), U.S.A. (10.4%), and Italy (3.7%). Light manufacturing takes place on Curacao, too.

The Netherlands Antilles has received \$21.32 million in economic aid. In 2000, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) gave \$61 million. The Netherlands supported the Netherlands Antilles in 2004 with \$40 million. That same year, the external debt of the Netherlands Antilles was \$2.68 billion. The country's currency is the Netherlands Antillean Guilder (ANG) which equaled US\$1.79 in 2006.

The Netherlands Antilles has five airports (2007), all with paved runways. The main ports and terminals for the merchant marine are Willemstad, Kralendijk, Fuik Bay, and Bopec Terminal. The Netherlands Antilles does not have regular military forces since the Kingdom of the Netherlands is responsible for defense. The Netherlands Antilles has a National Guard and Police Force. Anyone 16 years of age and over may join the National Guard. There is no conscription.

Literacy:

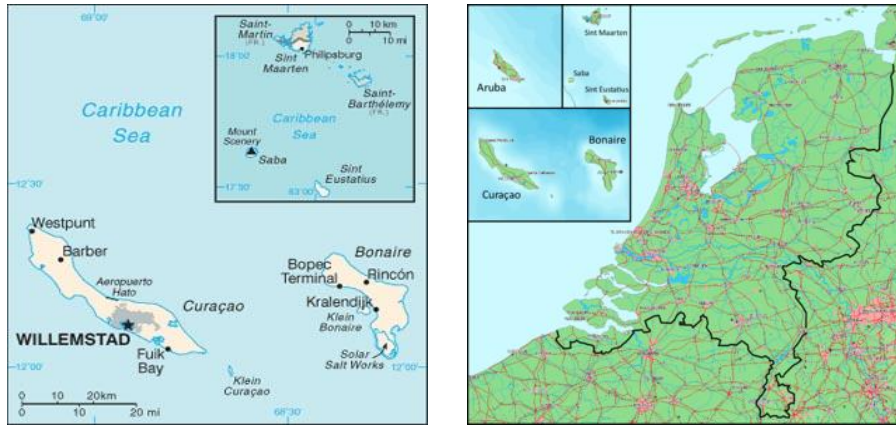
Literacy is defined as: age 15 and over can read and write.

Total population: 96.7%

Male: 96.7%

Female: 96.8%

Land/Geography:



Map of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. All countries/islands are to scale.
12 15 N, 68 45 W

The Netherlands Antilles consists of two island groups in the Caribbean Sea. The first group is known as the *Benedenwindse Eilanden* (Leeward Islands) and forms part of the Leeward Antilles island chain off the coast of Venezuela. *Bonaire*, *Curacao*, and the two islets *Klein Bonaire* and *Klein Curacao* are the Netherlands Antillean islands of this chain; Aruba (part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands) completes the chain (Aruba withdrew from this group in 1986).

The second group, known as the *Bovenwindse Eilanden* (Windward Islands), is located east of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. These islands are *Saba*, *Sint Eustatius*, and *Sint Maarten*. Sint Maarten is the southern part of the island Saint Martin. The northern part of that island is called Saint Martin and belongs to the French overseas department.

Other (uninhabited) islands that are part of the Netherlands Antilles are *Carnia*, *Cow and Calf*, *Green Island*, *Guana Cay*, *Hen and Chicken*, *Isla Makuka*, *Kadoesji*, *Little Island*, *Little Key*, *Mal Aborder*, *Meeuwkje*, *Mollibeday Rots*, *Mona Island*, *Pelican Island*, *Penso*, *Rancho*, *Sapate Eiland*, and *Willelberg*.

The total area of the Netherlands Antilles is 960 sq km (370 sq mi) of which all is land. The only land boundary is between Sint Maarten and Saint Martin and it is 15 km (9.3 mi) long. The Netherlands Antilles' coastline measures 364 km (226.1 mi). Its maritime claims consist of 12 nautical miles of territorial sea and 12 nm exclusive fishing zone. The lowest point is the Caribbean Sea at 0 m, and the highest point is Mount Scenery on Saba (862 m; 2,828 ft).

In 2005, 10% of the land area was arable; 0% was used for permanent crops; 90% for other purposes. Curacao has phosphates and Bonaire has salt. The other islands do not have any natural resources. The Caribbean hurricane belt lies north of Curacao and Bonaire so these two islands are rarely threatened by hurricanes. However, Sint Eustatius, Saba, and Sint Maarten are located in the hurricane belt and may experience hurricanes every year between July and October.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/print/nt.html>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netherlands_Antilles

History

The first human civilization to inhabit the Netherland Antilles is recognized to be the Arawaks (from Lokono language *aru*, word for cassava flower.) This term was given to the people who Christopher Columbus discovered in 1492 and has been used since. Previously known as the Netherlands West Indies or Dutch Antilles/West Indies, the Netherlands Antilles (Dutch: Nederlandse Antillen), is part of the Lesser Antilles and consists of two groups of islands in the Caribbean Sea which form an autonomous part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

First group is just off the Venezuelan coast – Curacao and Bonaire. The second group is located southeast of the Virgin Islands – St. Eustatius, Saba, and St. Maarten. Due to their location and topography, the islands' economy depends mostly upon international commerce and shipping, tourism, international financial services, and petroleum.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arawak>
<http://www.native-languages.org/arawak.htm>
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassava>

Both island groups – leeward (Aruba, Curacao, and Bonaire) and windward (Martinique, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent, Grenadines, Grenada, Dominica) – were discovered and initially settled by European pioneers from Spain. The leeward chain, the northern islands of the Lesser Antilles, was the discovery of Alonso de Ojeda, (1499) and the windward, the southern islands of the Lesser Antilles, was the discovery attributed to Christopher Columbus (1492-3.) The island was conquered by the Dutch Crown in the 1600s.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netherlands_Antilles
<http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/43/index-gc.html>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leeward_Islands
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windward_Islands

Like many other countries in the Caribbean, the prosperity of *Curacao* (capital is Willemstad) had originated due to the expansion of Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries. The initial motion to expand was taken by the Spanish and Portuguese, but England, France, and the Netherlands completed the circle. The island was the prominent center of the Caribbean slave trade base as well as a military outpost in the 17th century while being in the ownership of the Dutch West India Company until the slavery was abolished in 1863.

Curacao has been one of the colonies of the Dutch crown since 1600 with two intermissions of British occupation: 1800-1803 and 1807-1816. Since 1954 Curacao became the headquarters for the Netherland Antilles Government within the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

<http://www.geocities.com/willemstadorg/WstadHis/wstadhis.htm>

After recognizing the historical legacy the island carries, in 1988 The Netherlands Committee for UNESCO set the criteria for the buildings to be designated as a historical value. Today, Willemstad has approximately 765 monuments that are listed under the protected buildings in the Historic Area of the city. There are a number of historic buildings on the island including eight forts, more than 90 *landhuizen* (from Dutch “plantation houses”), 80 of which qualify for the

status of listed monuments. The suburbs of Willemstad also reflect the social and cultural history of the area. One still will find hundreds of wooden and stone-built former slave-type accommodations called *kunuku* houses. Seventy-five of those are listed in the Western and Eastern urban fringes of the Historic Area of Willemstad.

<http://www.geocities.com/willemstadorg/WstadHis/wstadhis1.htm#His2>
<http://www.curacao.com/TheCuracaoDifference/UniqueArchitecture/Landhuizen.aspx>

Bonaire, (Bon Naj, “low land,” capital – Kralendijk), similar to Curacao, was the colony of the Dutch Crown since 1663. The Dutch East Indian Company established the island as the granary until 1791. Bonaire became the center of the rapidly growing trade in slaves from Africa who were imported to work the European farms and plantations, mainly harvesting corn, salt, and lumber.

<http://www.travellady.com/Issues/Issue50/Bonaire.htm>

Another island that went through a lot of series of conflicts and territorial turmoil is *St. Maarten* (capital – Philipsburg). Although there were roughly twenty five years of Spanish and British invasion in between, it was the Dutch Crown who first colonized St. Maarten in 1631. Released by the departing Spanish administration in 1648, Dutch and French prisoners of war agreeably divided the island and later it was recognized by a treaty between the Dutch and French governments which was finalized in 1817. The island had seen its golden days during the exportation of salt and slave based plantation economy until the slavery abolition in 1863.

The small island of *St Eustatius* (capital – Oranjestad) had seen a change of hands 22 times between different invaders in its history. It was first colonized by the French and Englishmen in 1625. The Dutch Crown took hold of the island’s future in 1632, and like number of islands around, it also became the center of the slave import/export in the eastern Caribbean. Near the turn of the 19th century its capital became one of the more prosperous cities, with rapid populace growth, in the Americas. The capital was sacked and burned by the British Territorial Army in 1781 after Oranjestad willingly gave its first salute by a foreign power to the new United States flag.

Saba (capital – The Bottom), the island nearest to St. Eustatius, was first sighted by Christopher Columbus in 1632. It was believed to be uninhabited up until then. It was the Dutch Crown who colonized the island in 1640. Due to its rugged landscape and rather difficult accessibility, the island never achieved any economic importance. The island was a welcoming haven for pirates for many years.

Early settlers who tried to endure the hardy nature of the island’s conditions relied on farming, fishing, sailing, and shipbuilding for their livelihood. Saba remains the least populated island of the Netherlands Antilles. Similar to the rest of the islands, during the colonial period, Saba changed hands between Spanish, English, Dutch, and French numerous times.

In 1845 the Dutch Leeward islands united with Curacao, Bonaire, and Aruba in a political unit. Until the oil discovery off the Venezuelan’s shore, which led to the refinery establishment on

Curacao in the 20th century, the economy of all the Antillean islands was going downhill due to the abolition of slavery.

From the 20th century on, the islands generally prospered as a result of the increased oil demand as a result of the favorable location of the islands, their good nature created ports, cheap labor, and the political stability of the territory. During the World War II the islands were left to be independent due to the Nazi's conquest of The Netherlands. The government in Willemstad took control over the situation and competently extended its authority to the rest of the islands of the Netherland Antilles.

The rapid growth of tourism business to the Caribbean in the 1960s provided much needed income for each of the islands. With the increased prosperity came serious labor agitation on St. Maarten and Curacao which were established as important stops for Caribbean cruise ships. The labor conflicts on Curacao in 1969 led to riots and arson, provoked by separatist and racial tension. These unfortunate circumstances led to great damaging of the important tourism industry of all five islands in the Antilles and only in the mid-1970s were they able to recover from the economic distress.

Prior to becoming a separate country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands under a 1954 statute, the Netherland Antilles was a colonial territory of the Dutch Crown. After the referendum which was held from June 2000 through April 2005, each island within the Netherland Antilles made a choice of its future status: (1) voted for *status aparte* – St. Maarten and Curacao, granted in July 2007; (2) voted for closer ties to the Kingdom of the Netherlands – Saba and Bonaire, granted in July 2007; (3) voted to stay within the Netherlands Antilles – St. Eustatius, granted in July 2007. None of the islands voted for being an independent entity apart from the Netherland Antilles.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netherlands_Antilles

The planned dissolution of The Netherlands Antilles as a unified political entity on December 15, 2008 has been postponed to an indefinite future date. Therefore, the legislation to amend the charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and to define the new status of Bonaire, Saba, and St. Eustatius is still being reviewed.

The Bank of the Netherland Antilles (Bank van de Nederlandse Antillen) holds a good status with the countries nearby as well as around the world. The handling of its financial matters by the means of currency issued, holding official reserves, regulating the banking matters, acting as the central foreign exchange bank, and having tax treaties with United States, has encouraged U.S. individuals and businesses to shelter their funds in the islands.

<http://www.historyofnations.net/northamerica/netherlandsantilles.html>
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/22528.htm>

Much information is taken from:

James Minahan *Encyclopedia of the Stateless Nations: Ethnic and National Groups around the World*, vol. 1: A-C (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002).

Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations, vol. 3 *Americas*, 12th edition (Farmington Hills: Gale Group, 2007), s.v. "Netherlands American Dependencies."

Christian History

About one tenth of the Antillean population belongs to various Protestant denominations such as Dutch Reformed, Lutheran, and Methodist churches. Christianity was brought to the Caribbean islands by European missionary groups like the Baptists, Moravians, Quakers, and the Catholics. Many of these groups were met with great resistance, mostly by slave owners for the reasons that Christians taught literacy to slaves and held worship services on a regular basis.

With Dutch occupation of the Antilles in 1634 and arrival of the Protestants in 1650, the Dutch Reformed churches were established on Curacao and Bonaire. The Netherland Antilles maintained complete freedom of religion. Throughout the years/centuries other denominations and Christian ministries took advantage of the offered religious liberty and established their congregations.

Among the denominations are the Seventh-day Adventists (1926), Anglicans, and Moravians. Many will agree that the Antilles is the home for the oldest faith practicing Jewish community in the Americas. The Southern Baptist Convention, US based headquarters, made its way to the area in 1983 by sending its missionaries though their work in the Antilles has had a few interruptions. A merger of the Netherlands Reformed Church and the Protestant Church was a result of founding the United Protestant Church of Netherlands Antilles, a milestone in 1984.

In regard to the ministries finding their way to the Antilles are the following: (1) The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM) established in 1931 and continues to reach out in different areas to the indigenous people; (2) Grace Ministries International planted their roots in 1953; (3) since 1964 Trans World Radio has been one of the most effective evangelistic approaches in the Antilles; (4) Gospel Outreach Mission has been another asset touching people for the Lord since 1994; (5) The Salvation Army has been present on Curacao since 1927-1980.

There are some other ministries in the Antilles that are effectively reaching people and impacting the work of God's kingdom. However, for one of those, the date of its establishment in the Lesser Antilles is not known, this is the Child Evangelism Fellowship ministry.

<http://www.prolades.com/cra/regions/caribe/net/dwi-chron.htm>
http://www1.salvationarmy.org/ihq%5Cwww_sa.nsf/vw-sublinks/B3A5335DE083697E802573C400544826?openDocument

The Dutch colonists established a Protestant community on *Curacao* in 1635. One of the first pastors who arrived in Curacao from Holland in the early 1700s was W. Rasvelt. He experienced a great deal of criticism from his superiors and peers in Holland while working to establish a protestant church among Catholics and those who were inclined to Catholicism.

There is little to no evidence that black slaves were converted to Protestantism since it was not in the practice of the Reformed church to accept slaves, blacks, or mulattoes as members of the church. A few reasons why slave-owners were opposed to Protestant missionaries evangelizing

or teaching reading and writing to their slaves were: (1) they did not want to give the slaves time off to go to worship services, and most of all (2) fear if the slaves were educated they would have a mind of their own, becoming rebellious against their masters.

Protestants made a few more attempts at the beginning of the 1800s in evangelizing the slaves, but, as in decades prior, the movement was not pushed among the Protestant clergy. In addition to religious diversity, there were social and racial differentiations. Jewish slave-owners, parts of the élite society, even Protestants baptized their slaves in a Catholic church.

The élite members used Roman Catholicism to strengthen the established system of administration. Eventually, the Christian pioneers were accepted and their teachings were spread throughout the islands. In 1825, Dutch Colonial authorities forced a merger of the Dutch Reformed churches and Dutch Lutheran churches forming the Protestant Church. The Church and religion in the Caribbean played an integral part for both the white and black societies. The introduction of Christianity to the slaves was a positive reinforcement for emancipation.

The Baptist community in Curacao was established by the Baptist missionaries from Venezuela. In 1983 the Venezuelan Baptist Convention appointed its first missionary and began mission work in collaboration with FMBSBC. As a result of this work on Curacao in 1983, the newly established congregation, Calvary Baptist Church, started worship services. Due to an unexpected personnel loss in both the Venezuelan mission and FMBSBC in 1987, Baptist work on the island experienced a setback. It was later revived shortly after as a missionary movement beginning from Latin America.

One of the greatest aids in Baptist work on the island is the Trans-World Christian radio, with its headquarters on Bonaire. It promotes the evangelical effort of spreading the gospel throughout the islands of Netherland Antilles. Curacao has a strong Baptist Association, the Evangelical Church, and other churches related to the Baptist confession of faith.

http://books.google.com/books?id=gn9WhwjcezIC&pg=PA541&lpg=PA541&dq=lutheran+church,+saba,+netherland+antilles&source=bl&ots=iAw3A1IE3L&sig=yvb4Cz_f4Gmi_AUQjeA0d_J1v-I&hl=en&ei=FivmSZHYJZrjnQeatpWICQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=3#PPA542,M1
<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/regions/caribbean/netherlands-antilles.html>

The Reformed Church of Antilles was formed in the mid-1600s with the arrival of the first preacher on the island, Ds. Fredericus Vitteus, who started his service as a garrison preacher. Later, in 1824, the church was named “Hervormde Kerk” which gave the origins to the United Protestant Church of Curacao. The formation of the church was the result of the union between “Hervormde” and the Lutheran Church, strongly influenced in the process by King Willem I of The Netherlands. The rich history of the church makes the parishioners very proud and grateful of their heritage which they pass along from generation to generation.

<http://www.fortchurch.com>

The Reformed Church in Curacao was formed in 1931 by members of the Protestant Church which included members of the Netherlands Reformed Church. The country of Aruba and the

island of Curacao have headquarters for the Norwegian Seamen's Mission. The resident pastors conduct Lutheran services at these locations.

<http://www.prolades.com/cra/regions/caribe/net/dwi-chron.htm>

<http://www.lcms.org/ca/www/cyclopedia/02/display.asp?t1=c&word=CARIBBEANISLANDS>

Various congregations in Curacao together formed the council of churches with the following denominations: the United Protestant, the Catholic, the Methodist, Moravian, and the Anglican. Similar councils also exist on the islands of St. Eustatius and St. Maarten. Apart from the large number of the Catholic communities, the Seventh-day Adventists Church is the next largest denomination (non-Catholic) which is associated with the council in Curacao. The historical records show that the Council of Churches established its presence in the Antilles in 1925-6.

<http://www.prolades.com/cra/regions/caribe/net/dwi-chron.htm>

There is very little information available on Pentecostal churches on the island except that in 1974, the United Pentecostal Church International found its home in this part of the world. Today, many of the Pentecostal churches on Curacao belong to the Assembly of God association.

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/regions/caribbean/netherlands-antilles.html>

<http://www.prolades.com/cra/regions/caribe/net/dwi-chron.htm>

It is said that *Bonaire* residents make religion an integral part of their life. Strong communities of believers and a number of churches on the island build strong, cultural input in the Christian population. Everyone is welcomed to attend the services, although visitors are asked to respect the warm hospitality of the congregations by wearing appropriate attire which excludes shorts, T-shirts, and flip-flops. Among a number of Christian denominations, Bonaire First Baptist Church (BFBC) is one of the older churches on the island. The church dates the first organizational meeting to July 14, 1904 and her dedication to August 28, 1910.

Due to a small membership at the beginning, the church could not have a full-time pastor. Rev. W.B. Bassett, a well-known minister from Macon, Georgia, conducted worship service one weekend each month. Sunday School classes met every Sunday. Little is known about the function of the church from the years 1910-1939, since the church records were inadvertently destroyed. However, there are some records that indicate the Women's Missionary Society was established in 1922, its first director was Mrs. A.L. Sasser.

In 1930, during the Great Depression in the states, BFBC, with twenty-three church members and Sunday School enrolment at twenty-two, was able to pay the pastor \$150.00 that year. Among the pastors of the BFBC who made a great impact on the church's spiritual growth as well as touched the surrounding community were the following: Rev. Henry Ford Wilson, Rev. Oscar DeLoach, Rev. Billy Anglin, and Kenny Rogers.

Likewise in Curacao, King William I of The Netherlands brought together the Netherlands Reformed Church and the Lutheran Church in the United Protestant Church (UPC). The UPC church believes the Bible is the inspired Word of God, in one God who is the Creator of heaven and earth. According to the church's faith statement, the only way to God is Jesus Christ. The

Holy Spirit is sent to guide followers of Christ on this earth until He comes back for His Church. The UPC church has strong and friendly relationship with the Protestant churches of Bonaire, Aruba, and the Protestant Church in The Netherlands.

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/regions/caribbean/netherlands-antilles/united-protestant-church.html>

Another Baptist movement can be witnessed in Netherland Antilles on the French side of *St. Maarten* during the 1970s-80s. The person credited for that is an African American Baptist layman who made an effort to start a Baptist English language mission. With the help of visiting Baptist believers who held Vacation Bible Schools from year to year, a small group of believers established its identity on the island. With its beginning on St. Eustatius in 1787, Methodist work spread to St. Maarten in the 1840s. In 1967 the Methodist churches of St. Maarten, St. Eustatius, and Curacao became part of the Conference of the Methodist Church in the Americas and the Caribbean.

From the wide spread evangelistic outreach, it is likely that Lutheran, Pentecostal, Protestant, and Reformed churches have small parishes on St. Maarten, but there are no records of them available at the researcher's disposal.

http://books.google.com/books?id=gn9WhwjcezIC&pg=PA541&lpg=PA541&dq=lutheran+church,+saba,+netherland+antilles&source=bl&ots=iAw3A1IE3L&sig=yvb4Cz_f4Gmi_AUQjeA0d_J1v-I&hl=en&ei=FivmSZHYJZrjnQeatpWiCQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=3#PPA543,M1
http://www.adherents.com/adhloc/Wh_225.html

St. Eustatius has created a safe haven for the Methodists work on the island. The Wesleyan Methodist Church was formed by Bishop Thomas Coke in 1787. It is believed that the first Methodist converts were led to the Lord by an African slave known as Black Harry. With its beginning on St. Eustatius in 1787 and preceding the establishment on St. Maarten in the 1830s, the Methodist work spread to Curacao in the 1940s.

<http://www.prolades.com/cra/regions/caribe/net/dwi-chron.htm>

There are a few Baptist churches present on the island as well as Lutheran, Pentecostal, Protestant, and Reformed churches having small parishes. However, there is little to no information on them available at the researcher's disposal.

http://www.adherents.com/adhloc/Wh_225.html

The least recorded information on any Christian work present is in the Saba area. Some records show there are small memberships of an Anglican and Seven-Day Adventist churches.

<http://www.prolades.com/cra/regions/caribe/net/dwi-chron.htm>

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http://www.nationmaster.com/red/country/nt-netherlands-antilles/rel-religion&b_cite=1&b_define=1
http://books.google.com/books?id=HEBeNigNwKkC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_summary_r&cad=0#PPA1_M1
<http://www.prolades.com/cra/regions/caribe/net/dwi-chron.htm>
http://books.google.com/books?id=HEBeNigNwKkC&pg=PA130&lpg=PA130&dq=christian+history+in+curacao&source=bl&ots=zdKgOUgrsh&sig=zG6pF5VGPM8wAWwhLT7vpaAiFag&hl=en&ei=IB3eSbrbFYicMvrU9VQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=7#PPA132.M1
<http://www.zum.de/whkmla/region/caribbean/xnantilles.html>
http://books.google.com/books?id=gn9WhwicezIC&pg=PA541&lpg=PA541&dq=lutheran+church,+netherland+antilles&source=bl&ots=iAw3A2JEYH&sig=3oh6lijydcG2hHdvc6nhhYVnOpo&hl=en&ei=xFXmSeaDDZHwnQeU47CxCO&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=2
<http://www.waymarking.com/cat/details.aspx?f=1&guid=eea25991-6af2-4c36-96af-1a4525e19197&tp=3&wst=6>
<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/who-are-we.html>

Religions

Non Christian

Baha'i (0.03%): The Baha'i religion began in Persia in 1844 under the leader and founder Bahá'u'lláh, whose name means 'glory of god.' Followers of the Baha'i World Faith believe that the world is but one country and all people are its citizens. Baha'i emphasizes the unity of humanity, the equality of male and female, elimination of extreme riches and poverty, religious tolerance, and access for all to education and culture.

According to Baha'i, all religions are diverse expressions of the one universal religion. In government censuses Baha'is are usually counted as Muslims or Hindus and not shown separately.

Buddhism (0.06%): Buddhism is a religion and practical philosophy based on the teachings of Siddharta/Buddha Gautama (6th-5th centuries BC). Buddhism is the 4th largest religion in the world. A Buddha "is generally considered to be a person who discovers the true nature of reality through years of spiritual cultivation, investigation of the various religious practices of his time, and meditation. This transformational discovery is called bodhi - literally, "Awakening" (more commonly called "Enlightenment".) To reach this state of enlightenment or nirvana, a person must follow the Noble Eightfold Path, which is 1 of the Four Noble Truths. To reach this state of enlightenment or nirvana, a person must follow the Noble Eightfold Path, which is 1 of the Four Noble Truths.

Chinese religion (0.20%): Chinese folk religion (often used synonymously as *Chinese traditional religion*) has been practiced in much of China for thousands of years and formed an important

part of the modern Chinese culture. It also claims at least 400 million committed followers. Chinese folk religion is mainly based on two concepts such as Chinese mythology and ancestor veneration as well as it includes religious practices of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism.

Along side with ceremonies and festivals, devotion to different gods, deities, goddesses, “saints,” immortals, and demigods, the followers observe their worship to the sun, moon, earth, the heaven, various stars, as well as the animals. One of the key religious icons in these beliefs is the Chinese dragon.

Hinduism (0.66%): The basic belief of Hinduism is that human and animal spirits reincarnate. The caste system, finding morality, merging with Brahman or ultimate reality, and reaching Nirvana (at which stage a spirit will no longer reincarnate) are other key concepts of this major world religion.

Islam (0.31%): Literally – ‘submission to the will of God.’ Islam’s holy book is the Qur’an. Some of the basic tenets of faith are belief in Allah and his unity, belief in the prophets (especially Muhammad; Jesus was only one of the prophets and fully man). The practicing followers of Islam, Muslims, accept the teachings about the Judgment Day, Paradise, and Hell. Immigrants from Syria, Lebanon, and Surinam have a mosque on Curacao and are grouped in the Association of the Muslim Community of Curacao.

Jehovah’s Witnesses (2,085): Jehovah’s Witnesses believe they are the restoration of 1st-century Christianity. *The Watchtower and Awake!* are two magazines. The group’s headquarters are in Brooklyn, New York. They trace their origin to the Bible Students (late 1870s).

Judaism (0.24%): The religion of Jews characterized by belief in one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and in the mission of Jews to teach the Fatherhood of God as revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures. The Jewish Holy Book consists of the Torah (the law), the Nebiim (the prophets), and the Chetoebim (the writings). Christians refer to this collection as the Old Testament. A central belief of Judaism is that God, the Creator of the World, made a covenant (agreement) with Abraham from whom the entire nation descended.

Throughout the history the Jewish people have often been called the “Chosen People.” This reference is based on the biblical tradition. God made a covenant with the handful of people in which He provided that they would be blessed by His love and protection if they remained faithful to His law, worshipped Him, and be accountable for sins against God’s laws. Orthodox Jews believe in a coming Messiah (from Hebrew “the anointed one”) who will unite the nation bringing peace and justice to all mankind.

Later Day Saints – LDS (342): The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, of which the members are known as Mormons, was founded by Joseph Smith in 1820. The Church claims 11 million members worldwide. In addition to the Bible, the Latter-day Saints consider The Pearl of Great Price, The Doctrine and Covenants, and The Book of Mormon (1830) as sacred. Although in 1890, the practice of polygamy was officially rejected, polygamy is still present in the state of Utah (USA). The Mormons are known for their extensive research in genealogy. Their views on the main Christian doctrines differ from those held by evangelical Christians.

Ingeborg Zielinski, who received her education from The Netherlands, returned to Curacao in the Netherlands Antilles in September 1971. She was the most well-known member of the Church on the island. Missionary work was opened and closed on Curacao in 1978-1978 by the Venezuela Caracas Mission following many requests for missionaries by Zielinski.

The Curacao Branch (a small denomination) was created in October 1979. It was not until 1982 decision was made to conduct the meetings in the local language of Papiamentu. Acting upon it, the Church began to progress among natives. A chapel was dedicated in August 1988. The first branch of the LDS was organized in September 1990. In 2004 there were 79 members of this denomination present in Bonaire.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhism>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_folk_religion

<http://newsroom.lds.org/ldsnewsroom/eng/contact-us/netherlands-antilles>

Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches

Christianity to the Antilles was brought by Catholics Franciscans and Jesuits from Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic during the 16th century. As it was mentioned elsewhere above, with Dutch occupation of the Antilles in 1634 and arrival of the Protestants in 1650, the Dutch colonists were very passionate in expelling the Catholics from the Antilles. The missionary monks were expelled and were not able to resume their work until 1705 – the exceptions were given to few Jesuits who were allowed to return to the island that year.

Spanish and French priests followed them arriving to *Curacao* on their way to other destinations in the Caribbean. The bishops of the Spanish established Coro diocese (northwest Venezuela near the Caribbean Sea east-northeast of Maracaibo) presented themselves also as the bishops of Aruba, Bonaire, and Curacao. When there were no priests available in the area, the Spanish evangelization allowed the use of the laypersons in order to accomplish certain pastoral tasks which included teaching catechism, the rosary, and performing the sacrament of baptism. About $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Antillean population is Roman Catholic. There is even a speculation that indigenous community evangelized and baptized the slaves during the times when the priests were not present.

By the beginning of the 18th century almost all the slaves on the island were converted into Catholicism. According to the historical statistics, slaves and free man comprised the majority of the population which was Catholic while the members of the élite group were either Protestant or Jewish. In 1814 the first apostolic vicar appointed to the island was a secular priest from Holland, - Martinus J. Niewindt. 1842 marks an important beginning such as a formation of Vicariate on Curacao. With his better administration more priests came from Holland, new parishes established, powerful Catholic regime established, as well as the first religious sisters from Holland instituted their new place of abode on the island. Slave society produced the aristocratic ideology which demanded three distinct differentiations: social – master/slave, racial – white/black and religious – Catholic/non-Catholic. In 1958 another significant event happened on Curacao and that is an establishment of the Diocese of Willemstad.

Often mixed with Christian customs, many traditions brought to the Antillean islands by black slaves remain as religious or folk traditions.

The most popular religion in French *St. Martin* is Roman Catholicism whereas the Dutch part of *St. Maarten* is in favor of Protestant denominations and for the most part the Methodist denomination. The Dutch half of the island also has small communities of Jewish and Seventh-day Adventist's congregations.

The predominant religion on *Saba* is Catholicism alongside with other religious organizations such as Wesleyan Holiness and Judaism.

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http://books.google.com/books?id=HEBeNigNwKkC&pg=PA130&lpg=PA130&dq=christian+history+in+curacao&source=bl&ots=zdKgOUgrsh&sig=zG6pFSVGPm8wAWwhLT7vpaAIFAg&hl=en&ei=IB3eSbrbFYicMvrU9VQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=7#PPA131,M1

<http://www.prolades.com/cra/regions/caribe/net/dwi-chron.htm>

Christian or Evangelical

Anglican Church (840)

The denomination started on the island around 1960 and is a part of the Anglo-Catholic Megabloc. According to the 1995 statistics, there is 1 congregation present in the country with 2,400 individuals affiliated with this denomination. The denomination's growth rate is 3.56% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995. Nothing further is available on the history of the denomination in this country at this time.

Assemblies of God (394)

The denomination started on the island ca1975 and it belongs to the Baptist-Pentecostal or Keswick-Pentecostal Megabloc. The functions of the denomination are similar to the Assemblies of God in USA. According to the 1995 statistics, there are 15 congregations present in the country with 1,160 individuals affiliated with this denomination. The denomination's growth rate is 5.00% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995. Nothing further is available on the history of the denomination in this country at this time.

Baptist Association (646)

The denomination started on the island 1983 and belongs to the Protestant-Evangelical Baptist Megabloc. According to the 1995 statistics, there are 8 congregations present in the country with 1,080 individuals affiliated with this denomination. The denomination's growth rate is 8.33% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995. Nothing further is available on the history of the denomination in the country at this time.

Church of God of Prophecy (300)

The denomination started its function on the island 1959 and belongs to the Protestant Holiness-Pentecostal Megabloc. According to the 1995 statistics, there are 3 congregations present in the country with 500 individuals affiliated with this denomination. The denomination's growth rate is 6.65% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995. Nothing further is available on the history of the denomination in this country at this time.

Church of God (280)

There is no information available on the date of denomination started on the island. The church belongs to the Protestant Holiness non-Pentecostal Perfectionist Megabloc. According to the 1995 statistics, there are 7 congregations present in the country with 560 individuals affiliated with this denomination. The denomination's growth rate is 0.05% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995. Nothing further is available on the history of the denomination in this country at this time.

Church of God (200)

There is no information available on the date the denomination started on the island. The church belongs to the Holiness-Pentecostal Megabloc. According to the 1995 statistics, there are 5 congregations present in the country with 400 individuals affiliated with this denomination. Congregations are predominantly located on the island of St. Martin, the French part. The denomination's growth rate is 0.05% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995. Nothing further is available on the history of the denomination in this country at this time.

Evangelical Church (472)

The denomination started its functioning in 1931 and belongs to the Independent Evangelical bloc. According to the 1995 statistics, there are 12 congregations present with 1,200 individuals affiliated with this denomination. The denomination's growth rate is 3.56% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995. The church carries out work with the Papiamento population on Curacao as well as a broad-spectrum of ministry on Bonaire. Nothing further is available on the history of the denomination in this country at this time.

Methodist Church (1,100)

The beginning of Methodist work in the Netherland started in St. Eustatius in 1787, later spreading to St. Martin in the 1840s and to Curacao in the 1930s. In 1967 the churches from different islands became part of the Conference of the Methodist Church in the Americas and the Caribbean. The Methodist churches associate with the counsel in Curacao and belong to the

Protestant Methodist Megabloc. According to 1995 statistics, there are 3 congregations present with 2,560 individuals affiliated with this denomination. The denomination's growth rate is -0.63% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995. Nothing further is available on the history of the denomination in this country at this time.

Moravian Church in Curacao (600)

The ministry of the Moravian church in the Antilles spread from Moravians in Surinam. The actual beginning date of the Moravian congregation in the Netherland Antilles is not known. The denomination belongs to the Protestant Moravian Megabloc. According to the 1995 statistics, there are 2 congregations present with 1,000 individuals affiliated. The denomination's growth rate is 0.05% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995. Nothing further is available on the history of the denomination in this country at this time.

Reformed Church (120)

The church is located on Curacao and claims its beginnings from the Dutch Calvinist origin. The name of the denomination originally spelled as *Gereformeerde Kerk*. The church belongs to Protestant Reformed Megabloc. According to the 1995 statistics, there is only 1 congregation present with 600 individuals affiliated. The denomination's growth rate is 0.05% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995. Nothing further is available on the history of the denomination in this country at this time.

Reformed Church, Liberated (440), also known as Gereformeerde Kerk (Vrijgemaakt)

The church is located on Curacao and belongs to the Protestant Reformed Megabloc. The existence of this church came from the withdrawal of one group over doctrinal differences in 1950. There is 1 congregation present with 100 individuals affiliated. The denomination's growth rate is 0.42% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995. Nothing further is available on the history of the denomination in this country at this time.

Salvation Army in Curacao (800)

The church began in the community as a denomination in 1927. It belongs to the Protestant Salvationist Megabloc. There are 16 congregations with 1,140 individuals affiliated. The denomination's growth rate is -2.22% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995. Nothing further is available on the history of the denomination in this country at this time.

Seven Day Adventist (2,460)

The Seventh-day Adventists Church is believed to be the largest non-Catholic community claiming its beginnings in the Netherland Antilles from 1925-6. The church is associated with the council in Curaçao and belongs to the Protestant Adventist Megabloc. According to 2000 statistics, there are 27 congregations present with 5,854 individuals affiliated. The denomination's growth rate is 0.62% over a 30-year period, 1970-2000.

United Pentecostal Church (300)

The church has opened its doors to the community since 1974. It belongs to the Protestant Oneness-Pentecostal or Unitarian Pentecostal (Jesus Only) Megabloc. There are 4 congregations present with 700 individuals affiliated. The denomination's growth rate is 4.76% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995. Nothing further is available on the history of the denomination in this country at this time.

United Protestant Church of Curacao (3,700) also known as Verenigde Protestantse Gemeente van Curacao

This is probably the oldest Reformed church on the Antilles. It was established in the year 1650, with some sources dating it back to 1635. The church belongs to the Protestant Lutheran Megabloc. There are 3 congregations present with 5,000 individuals affiliated. The denomination growth rate is -0.38% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995. In 1825, as a result of two merging churches – Reformed and Lutheran –the United Protestant Church (UPC) was created. The UPC believes the Bible is Word of God which is the foundation of Christian life. The congregations seek ways to serve their members and the community that are most applicable to contemporary Christians. More about this in:

<http://www.vpg-curacao.com/Index%20VPG%20Engels.htm>

Other Protestant Denominations (1,000)

The locations of the other 20 congregations who belong to the Protestant Megabloc are not available at this point of research. There are 2,000 individuals affiliated with these churches. The denomination growth rate is 0.05% over a 25-year period, 1970-1995.

Much information in this section is taken from:

Barrett, David B., George T. Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson. *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World*, vol. 1: *The World by Countries: Religionists, Churches, Ministries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Barrett, David B., George T. Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson. *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World*, vol. 2: *The World by Segments: Religions, Peoples, Languages, Cities, Topics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Johnstone, Patrick and Jason Mandryk. *Operation World*, 21st Century Edition. Updated and Revised (Harrisonburgh: R. R. Donnelley & Sons, 2005), s.v. "Netherlands Antilles."

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/regions/caribbean/netherlands-antilles.html>

<http://www.bwa-baptist-heritage.org/hst-carb.htm>

http://www.thechurchofgod.org/news/read.php?news_id=1

<http://www.prolades.com/cra/regions/caribe/net/dwi-chron.htm>

People Groups

All information, unless otherwise noted, is obtained from:

www.peoplegroups.org

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php>

<http://www.ethnologue.com>

People code and population in this country, unless otherwise noted, is taken from

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php>

110448

American (1,800)

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=eng

In general, the American people are comprised of many different ethnic groups. The American population is a melting pot of mainly Native American, European, and African American people groups. The official language is English, a West-Germanic language of the Indo-European language family. Americans can be selfish, self-centered, and very little or none interested in the rest of the world. However, they have also shown much of the world that they can be generous and helpful to those in need as well as knowledgeable about the world. In general, the average American believes in hard work, independence, individual achievement, and rewards on one's own merits. The culture is known to be in constant motion, which is most of the time dictated by the circumstances or career of the individuals.

Although the majority of Americans adhere to the Christian faith, many of them are nominal in their religious conviction or hold beliefs that are widely different from the orthodox Christian faith. In the past 100 years, the culture has been heavily influenced by secularism and Eastern religions which have altered popular mindsets in general as well as the conviction of people in Christianity.

About 87% of the population is affiliated with some type of religious entity with a large group of Protestant. Of these, 4.35% are known evangelical Christian.

Many Christian resources are available for this people group. Along with the complete Bible and printed Christian materials, people can view the *Jesus* film and other films based on the Christian belief system. Radio broadcasts and Gospel recordings are available for this population.

100390

Antillean Creole, Papiamentu (139,000)

The settlement of the Dutch and Spanish in the 15th and 16th centuries reflects European features in the Arubans. The word "Creole" was first used to differentiate Europeans from American born descendants. In the present day society, Creole has adopted a new meaning: the name describes the culture which is formed by the mixture of many influences with application to language, cooking, clothes, and architecture. Papiamentu is the language that is primarily used by this people group.

Approximately 88% of the Antillean Creole population is affiliated with some type of religious group with a large group of followers claiming to be Roman Catholic. There are about 5.22% known evangelical Christians.

Christian resources are available for this people group. Along with the complete Bible and printed Christian materials, people can view the *Jesus* film and other films based on the Christian belief system. There is no indication of existing radio broadcasts and Gospel recordings for this group of population. However, the people may be exposed to the above ministries in the official languages, such as Dutch, English, and Virgin Islands Creole English.

100389

Antilles English Speaking (9,700)

Alternate People Names: British, Internationals

Population of this people group consists of former immigrants from Great Britain who speak the English language. They may also come from various Western European countries and countries from all the around the world.

Around 87% of the population is affiliated with some type of religious group. A large group of followers associate themselves with Protestant membership. There is about 1.74% known evangelical Christians.

Christian resources are available for this people group. Along with the complete Bible and printed Christian materials, people can view the *Jesus* film and other films based on the Christian belief system. Radio broadcasts and Gospel recordings exist for this group of population.

100425

Arab (500)

Alternate People Names: Anglolan Arabs, Baggara, Bedouin Arab, Bosnian Muslims, Coast, Coast Arab, Hemat, Iraqi Arab, Lebanese Arab, Levantine Arab, Nawar, Palestinian Arab, Palestinian Arabs, Saudi Arab, Syrian Arab, or Syro-Lebanese Arab.

Arabs have been present in the Netherland Antilles since the mid 17th century. The Antilles Arabs speak primarily standard Arabic and are mainly Muslim. Worldwide Arabs number over 148 million. They form the majority population in 15 countries. The few most essential characteristics that determine whether or not a person is a true Arab are: the pride of being an Arab, the ability to speak Arabic (or an Arab dialect), and identification with the Arabian culture. The Arabs are “the largest, most diverse and most politically influential Muslim ethnic group in the world.”

(From Richard V. Weekes, ed., *Muslim Peoples: A World Ethnographic Survey*, 2d ed., *Acehnese-Lur* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1984), 35)

About 15% of the Arab population in the Antilles is affiliated with some type of religious group. This people group strongly claims belonging to the Islamic religion with a large group indicating they are Sunni followers. There is a mere 0.3% known evangelical Christians.

Christian resources are available for this people group. Along with the complete Bible and printed Christian materials, people can view the *Jesus* film and other films based on the Christian belief system. Radio broadcasts and Gospel recordings along with ethnic worship music exist.

102927

British (1,900)

Alternate People Names: Anglo-Pakistani, Anglophones, Euronesian, Scot, Scottish, White

The Anglophones are English-speaking people from Great Britain. They consist of English, Scots, Welsh, and Irish people. This people group shares a similar culture with many individual/national elements.

Seventy percent of the population indicates that they are affiliated with some type of religious group. Among these only 3.5% are known evangelical Christian.

There are Christian resources available for this people group. Along with the complete Bible and printed Christian materials, people can view the *Jesus* film and other films based on the Christian belief system. Radio broadcasts and Gospel recordings exist for this group of population.

114916

Deaf Dutch (1,094)

www.peplegroups.org

Primary language of this people group is Dutch Sign Language. The Netherlands Antilles has three deaf institutions.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=114916&rog3=NT>

About 96.09% of the population is affiliated with some type of religious group while approximately 7.3% are known evangelical Christian.

There are no indications of the Bible being translated or any other ministries available for this people group. However, people may have been exposed to the written Gospel message in the official languages, such as Papiamentu, English, and Virgin Islands Creole English.

102787

Dutch (4,000)

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=nld

Alternate People Names: Dutch Jew, Fleming

The Dutch are a western-Germanic people. They speak Dutch and/or Frisian along with many dialects. The Dutch are known as hardworking, devout, tolerant, and liberal people. The Dutch are tall with fair skin. The majority of Dutch call themselves Christian, though the culture becomes more and more secular.

Around 76% of the Dutch population is affiliated with some type of religious group. A large group indicates followers being Protestant. Only mere 0.342% is known evangelical Christian.

There are Christian resources available for this people group. Along with the complete Bible and printed Christian materials, people can view the *Jesus* film and other films based on the Christian belief system. Radio broadcasts and Gospel recordings along with ethnic worship music exist.

103059

French (1,200)

Alternate People Names: Franco-Mauritian Mulatto, Metropolitan

The French in the Netherland Antilles come from France, one of the most powerful nations in the world. The French are a Latin people with a mix of Germanic, Mediterranean, and other European peoples. French is one of the Gallo-Romance languages (part of the Romance group of Indo-European languages). Close to 90% of the French worldwide is Roman Catholic. Although the majority of the population belongs to the Roman Catholic Church, most of the people are secular. For centuries, the French have been known for their art, letters, and fashion.

Seventy-six percent of the French population in the Antilles is affiliated with some type of religious group. Only 7.6% are known evangelical Christian.

There are Christian resources available for this people group. Along with the complete Bible and printed Christian materials, people can view the *Jesus* film and other films based on the Christian belief system. Radio broadcasts and Gospel recordings along with ethnic worship music exist.

103701

Han Chinese, Cantonese (1,600)

Alternate People Names: Baihua, Cantonese, Guangdong Hua, Guangxi, Gwong Dung Waa, Hakka, Han Chinese, Macau Chinese, Nung, Punti, Totok, Yuet, Yuh

Primary language: Chinese, Yue

Primary religion: Buddhism, ethnic religions

Han Chinese is the largest ethnic group in the world referring to the natives from China, making up 19% of the entire human global population. The name “Han” comes from the Han Dynasty. The word also stands for the name of the river sited in central China – Han River. It is believed that the founders of the Han dynasty once were based near the locality of the river. In Classical Literary Chinese the word “Han” can also mean the “Milky Way” or as people in ancient China called it, the “Heavenly River.”

The official modern language of Standard Spoken Chinese Yue is known as Standard Mandarin. Even though it is usually called “Mandarin” in non-academic, every day usage of the language, linguists use the word “Mandarin” to refer to the entire language. Although the majority of Han Chinese people are Buddhists, there is a wide variety of ethnic religions present in the culture.

Throughout the history, Cantonese are known to be the most openly religious of all Chinese people. A large group among them adheres to ethnic religions of the culture while 4% claim affiliation with some other type of religious group. Among these a mere 0.0628% is known evangelical Christian.

There are Christian resources available for this people group. Along with the complete Bible and printed Christian materials, people can view the *Jesus* film and other films based on the Christian belief system. Radio broadcasts and Gospel recordings exist.

100389

Internationals (8,122)

www.peoplesgroups.org

Little is available on this people group. The primary language of communication is English. A large number of this population adheres to some type of religious group.

Christian resources are available for this group. Along with the complete Bible and printed Christian materials, people can view the *Jesus* film and other films based on the Christian belief system. Radio broadcasts, Gospel recordings, and ethnic worship music exist.

102791

Jew, Dutch (200)

Alternate People Names: Jew, Dutch Speaking

Due to persecution and discrimination of the Jewish populace throughout history, the society has been forced to migrate and settle around the world. Most Jews came to the Americas from Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the Middle East. The Jewish community has been present in Netherland Antilles since the mid17th century. From that time on, the economy has been greatly influenced by the Jewish businessman, both in commerce and agriculture. While most of them speak Dutch, English, or Spanish, other distinctive Jewish dialects are widely used.

Jewish people are believed to represent the oldest monotheistic religion of modern times. A large group of people follow the traditional religious belief systems of their ancestors while others adopted Judaism as one of the types of their expressions of faith. Only 0.27% affiliate with some other type of religious entity. Among these only 0.0054% are known evangelical Christian.

There are Christian resources available for this people group. Along with the complete Bible and printed Christian materials, people can view the *Jesus* film and other films based on the Christian belief system. Radio broadcasts and Gospel recordings, and ethnic worship music exist.

210054

Latin American (11,000)

Alternate People Names: Latino

The Latino (fem. Latina) is defined as a native of Latin-America or Spanish-speaking descent regardless of race. Linguistically refers to the Romance languages in general (from Latin, *Hispanus*, adjective from *Hispania* – the Roman name for the Iberian Peninsula.)

Due to the Spaniards taking the Roman Catholic traditions to Latin America, Catholicism continues to be the predominant religious affiliation. About 87% of the population has indicated they are affiliated with some type of religious group. Among these only around 5.4% are known evangelical Christian.

Christian resources are available for this people group. Along with the complete Bible and printed Christian materials, people can view the *Jesus* film and other films based on the Christian belief system. Radio broadcasts and Gospel recordings exist.

109662

Levantine Arabs (436)

www.peoplesgroups.org

The Levantine Arabs originally settled all over the Arabian Peninsula and later migrated to North Africa. The inhabitants of this people group comprise ethnic groups from East Mediterranean such as Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria. Moreover, the term “Levant” includes several groups of Arabs such as the Jordanian, Palestinian, Iraqi, Arabic Jewish, Chaldean, and Syrian Arabs. Throughout their history, this community has had a close association with Islam. The two main branches of Islam in the region are the Shi’ites and Shafiites. Even to this day, all of the ethnic groups in the community claim themselves to be Muslim, except for the Arabic Jewish Arabs.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=109662&rog3=NS>

An Arabic language called *Arabiya* is what most Levant Arabs speak. Others speak an Arabic language known as *Mashriqi*. Levantine Arabic (sometimes called *Eastern Arabic*) belongs to the group of Arabic varieties spoken in the 100 km radius (a hair over 62 miles) of the eastern-Mediterranean coastal strip known as the Levant. This area can be found in western Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Israel, and western Jordan. Linguists have divided the language into two major branches, such as North Levantine (Syria) and South Levantine (Lebanon, Palestine, Israel, and Jordan.)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Levantine_Arabic

There is no indication of evangelical Christians among this people group while the majority of the population claims Islam their practicing religion.

There are Christian resources available for this people group. The complete Bible and other printed materials are available. People can view the *Jesus* film and other Christian films. Radio broadcasts and Gospel recordings exist.

108129

Portuguese (1,400)

Alternate People Names: Branco, Brazilian, Portuguese Jew

As a Latin people, the Portuguese display Iberian, Roman, Visigoth, and Moorish ethnic elements. Having 4 distinct dialects, the Portuguese language is a Western language of the Romance language group. Around 97% of the Portuguese consider themselves Roman Catholic.

Ninety-three percent of the population is affiliated with some type of religious group while a large group of followers claim to be Roman Catholic. Only a mere 1.86% is known evangelical Christian.

There are Christian resources available for this people group. Along with the complete Bible and printed Christian materials, people can view the *Jesus* film and other films based on the Christian belief system. Radio broadcasts and Gospel recordings, and ethnic worship music exist.

108730

Sarnami Hindi, East Indian (600)

Alternate People Names: Awadhi, Caribbean Hindi, Caribbean Hindi Speakers, Carribean Hindi, East Indian, East Indian Hindi, Hindi.

Hindustani (hīndūstānī - alternately also used as Hindi), usually refer to the people from the geographical region in northern India, east and south of the Yamuna river, between the Vindhya mountains and the Himalayas. Immigrants to the Netherland Antilles preserved the language, culture, and traditions which they passed from one generation to another.

Hindustani is the primary language of this people group. This language is a subdivision of the Indic group of the Indo-Iranian languages which form a subfamily of the Indo-European family of languages. The term "Hindustani" is used to include some vernacular dialects of northern India as well as an ethnic term which is applied to the South Asian region. Hindustani plays an important role in modern India as a *lingua franca* ("*Lingua franca* is a language used by people of diverse speech to communicate with one another, often a basic form of speech with simplified grammar")

http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&defl=en&q=define:lingua+franca&ei=Ig-nSf-wFYzRnQfqmp3nDw&sa=X&oi=glossary_definition&ct=title

The number of people who speak or understand Hindustani has been variously estimated, but it probably exceeds 400 million. It is believed that among the world's language communities, Hindustani ranks third in number of speakers, after Chinese and English.

Fairbanks, G. H. and B. G. Misra, *Spoken and Written Hindi*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966. Rai, A. A *House Divided: The Origin and Development of Hindi-Hindavi*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

<http://www.answers.com/topic/hindustani>

Only 1% of the Sarnami Hindi population is affiliated with some type of religious group. A large group of followers claim to belong to the Hindu religion. A mere 0.02% is known evangelical Christian.

There are Christian resources available for this people group. There is no indication of a complete Bible being available, though other printed materials and Gospel recordings exist. People can view the *Jesus* film and other Christian films. Even though there are only a few Christian resources available in their primary language, they may have been exposed to the various Gospel ministries in the official languages, such as Papiamentu, Dutch, English, and Virgin Islands Creole English.

109625

Surinamese Creole, Sranan (2,900)

Alternate People Names: Surinamer Creole, Surinamers

Primary language of communication in this people group is Sranan. Linguists have classified the language as Creole, English Based, Atlantic Suriname. Besides Suriname, where the language is embedded, Sranan is also used in Paramaribo, along its coast as well as in Sranan Tongo, Taki-Taki, Aruba, the Netherlands, and the Netherlands Antilles as a language of wider communication. The lingua franca is 80% of the population in the country. Over 126,000 people around the world use Sranan as their first language and over 300,000 as their second language.

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=srn

The general population of this group is monolingual speakers. Dutch is mostly used as a second language putting English in the category of less spoken languages in this people group.

http://www.indiawijzer.nl/what_is_indiawijzer/wahid_press_and_publication/publication/35_indians_in_them_lives_on_%20gopio.pdf

Seventy-eight percent of the Surinamese Creole population is affiliated with some type of religious group with a large group of followers claiming to be Roman Catholic. Only 1.86% is known evangelical Christian.

There are Christian resources available for this people group. Along with the complete Bible and printed Christian materials, people can view the *Jesus* film and other films based on the Christian belief system. Along with the available Gospel recordings they may have been exposed to the various Gospel ministries in the official languages, such as Papiamentu, Dutch, English, and Virgin Islands Creole English.

210323

Virgin Islanders (16,700)

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=vic

Primary language of this population is Virgin Islands Creole English which is also interchangeably used as Netherlands Antilles Creole English. The regions/populations where the language is used are St. Maarten (14,000), Saba (1,100), and St. Eustatius (1,600).

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=vic

About 90% of the population indicates that they are affiliated with some type of religious group. Among these only around 4.5% are known evangelical Christian.

There are no indications of the Bible being translated or any other ministry tools available for this people group. However, people may have been exposed to the Gospel message and resources in the official languages, such as Papiamentu, Dutch, and English.

110760

West Indian, Black (13,890)

www.peoplegroups.org

The original descendants of this people group were the Caribs and Arawaks who came from an archipelago between southeast North America and northern South America. Such geographical location has separated the Caribbean Sea from the Atlantic Ocean, the Greater Antilles, the Lesser Antilles, and the Bahama Islands.

<http://www.answers.com/west%20indian>

The primary language of this population is Virgin Islands Creole English which is also interchangeably used as the Netherlands Antilles Creole English. The regions/populations where the language is used are St. Maarten (14,000), Saba (1,100), and St. Eustatius (1,600).

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=vic

A few resources indicate the primary religion as Christianity, although there are no suggestions on implication of the evangelical Christian.

The only indication of the available Christian resources for this people group is the Bible translation. Even though there are no other ministry tools available for this people group, people may have been exposed to the Gospel message of the official languages of the country, such as Papiamentu, English, The Netherlands Antilles Creole English, and Dutch.

Resources consulted:

Klich, Ignacio and Jeffrey Lesser, ed., *Arab and Jewish Immigrants in Latin America: Images and Realities* (New York: Routledge, 1998).

[http://books.google.com/books?id=244w6MbrOTAC&pg=PA225&lpq=PA225&dq=Klich,+Ignacio+and+Jeffrey+L+esser,+ed.,+Arab+and+Jewish+Immigrants+in+Latin+America:+Images+and+Realities+\(New+York:+Routledge,+1998\).&source=bl&ots=s0euADKHb9&sig=0C-o9lUC2B2_Vyaz7-Po0VIDABE&hl=en&ei=GkEDSoH9EoqvmQeLwvHyBA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1](http://books.google.com/books?id=244w6MbrOTAC&pg=PA225&lpq=PA225&dq=Klich,+Ignacio+and+Jeffrey+L+esser,+ed.,+Arab+and+Jewish+Immigrants+in+Latin+America:+Images+and+Realities+(New+York:+Routledge,+1998).&source=bl&ots=s0euADKHb9&sig=0C-o9lUC2B2_Vyaz7-Po0VIDABE&hl=en&ei=GkEDSoH9EoqvmQeLwvHyBA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1)

Missiological Implications

1. Evangelical Christians and churches should recognize the opportunities for basic evangelism and church starting on these islands. Even though there is openness to the gospel, it has not resulted in great harvest.
2. Evangelical Christians and churches should strive to plan congregations to meet the exact needs of each group of people on each island. The one plan for all people approach may have contributed to the meager growth in the churches on these islands. Particular interest should drive evangelism and church starting among the Virgin Islanders and the West Indian Black populations. These people have large numbers with small percentages of Evangelicals.
3. Evangelical Christians and churches should strive to develop plans and procedures to share the Good News with the non-religious. The non-religious make up 2.41 percent of the people and the group is increasing at a rate of + 2.8 percent annually.
4. Evangelical Christians and churches should pray for and seek to aid the congregations on the islands to experience true revival and begin to engage in heart-felt missionary outreach.
5. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek to supplement the Papiamento Bible (published in 1997) with other Christian resources that could be employed in evangelism, church starting, and discipleship efforts.
6. Evangelical Christians and churches should praise the Lord for the significant radio ministry, but also urge the many missionaries engaged in radio work to expand their ministries to direct evangelism and church planting.
7. Evangelical Christians and churches should encourage the use of small group approaches including house churches to reach the people of these islands.

Links:

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/print/nt.html>