

Mission Atlas Project
Asia
Macau

Basic Facts

Name: Macau or Macao, now incorporated as a Special Administrative District of China on 20 December 1999.

Population: Estimates run from 437,000 (2000 – Macau Gov.) to 453,377 (July 2001 – CIA). The majority of the population (80%) lives on the peninsula with the population growing on the Islands of Taipa and Coloane as development increases. Ethnically the overwhelming majority is Chinese (95-96%). Most of this group has ancestral ties to the Guangdong Province of China. Other groups are immigrants from Hong Kong and a group of people who are a mixture of Portuguese/ Chinese descent who are called Macanese people (2.7 %). There is still a small Portuguese population.

Macau government reports the annual population growth to be around 4% a year. However the CIA give as 1.79% annual growth rate. Interesting that the government says that there is an annual people-flow rate of 25 million coming in and out of the country. Macau is one of the countries with the highest density ratio. The ratio is 24,379 persons per sq km (63,195 per sq mi).

The age structure of the Macau is 0-14 years: 22.68% (male – 53,291/ female – 49,615); 15-64 years: 70.08% (male – 150,538/ female – 167,431) and 65 years and over: 7.24% (male – 13,287/ female – 19,571). Life expectancy is total population: 81.69 years; male: 78.88 years and female: 84.69 years. The birth rate is 12.36 births/ 1,000 population. Death rate is 3.71 deaths/ 1,000 population. The infant mortality rate is 4.47 death/ 1,000 live births. The total fertility rate is 1.31 children born/ woman. The net migration rate is 9.25 migrant(s)/ 1,000 population.

<http://www.luptravel.com/international/asia/macau/people.html>.

Location: Macau is located on the peninsula of Macau on the southeast coast of China. It is also composed of two small islands Taipa and Coloane. It borders the Guangdong Province and is west of the Pearl River Delta. The total area ranges from 21 sq km (CIA) to 23.8 sq km (Macau Gov.) depending upon recent land reclamation that is constantly in progress. The comparative area would be 0.1 the size of Washington DC. Encarta divides the land space the peninsula 6.5 sq km; Taipa 3.8 sq km and Coloane 7.1 sq km. This does not factor in recent land reclamation.

Land Boundaries: Land boundary with China is 0.34 km (.2 mi). The coastline is 40 km (25 mi).

Terrain: The topography of Macau is low rolling hills. The elevation ranges from sea level to 174 m (571 ft). The city is connected to the islands by two bridges and one causeway. The main natural hazard faced by the island is typhoons in summer and early fall. These storms can cause great damage and flooding. Only 2% of the land is used for permanent crops.

Climate: The climate is subtropical. The fall is cool and dry and the winters are mild with no frost. The average January temperature is 16 degrees C (61 F). The summers are warm and humid with an average temperature in July of 26 degrees C (79 F). The average rainfall is 200mm or around 80 in.

Typhoons have a big impact on the summer rainfall.

http://www.theodora.com/wfb/macau_geography.html.

Economy:

China exerts major influence in Macau is through investments. The local economy is heavily dependant on gambling and tourism (40% GDP and 25% GDP respectively) as Macau receives more than eight million tourist in 2000. Industry used to be more prominent in the country but has declined in recent years. However, the value of the goods produced has continued to increase.

The two main areas of manufacturing are textiles and clothing (approximately 75% of export earnings) and fireworks. In attempts to diversify areas such as toys and electronics have increased. The main recipients of exports are United States and the European Union.

Macau receives the most imports from China and Hong Kong, mainly raw materials, food, water and fuels. The deficit of imports is more than balanced by the profits form gambling and tourism. Macau is a free port. *Pataca* is the unit of currency in Macau; they also accept Hong Kong currency. *Patacas* to US dollar – 8.033 (Jan 2001). The *Pataca* is linked to the Hong Kong dollar at the rate of 1.03 *Pataca* per Hong Kong dollar.

Macau has an excellent transportation system, which includes commercial shipping routes and passenger routes, that use high-speed hydrofoils and catamaran, between Hong Kong and some cities in China. In 1995 the Macau International Airport began operation. Modern telecommunication and media services are available in Macau. Interestingly most of the television broadcasts originate in Hong Kong. There is a public television station in Macau that broadcasts in Cantonese and Portuguese. There is also one public and one private radio station that broadcast in the same two languages. Macau has eleven daily newspapers (4 – Portuguese; 7 – Chinese).

GPD – real growth rate – 2% (2000 est.)

GDP – per capita - \$17,500 (2000 est.)

GDP – composition by sector – industry – 25%; services – 75%

Inflation rate -/ -1.8% (2000 est.)

Labor force – by occupation – restaurants and hotels 26%, manufacturing 22%, other services 52% (2000 est.)

Unemployment – 6.2% (Aug 2001) <http://www.economia.gov.mo/>.

Government

Following a political revolution in Portugal that installed democracy as the governing order, Portugal then gave independence to it's overseas territories. Macau became a Chinese territory that was administrated by Portugal. The Macau Organic Law, which established the legislative assembly and operational procedures, was ratified in 1976. This gave Macau a larger amount of local autonomy, but it still remained subject to the Constitution of Portugal.

The executive head of the territory was a Portuguese government appointee by the President of Portugal. The legislative assembly is composed of twenty-three members. Eight are elected directly by the people, seven are appointed by the governor, and eight are elected indirectly. This last group is composed of specifically designated cultural, economic and religious sectors of the population. Due to

the appointive process of the assembly, a large amount of power rested with the governor. There is also an elected city council that has imputed from the people into the legislative process.

The last election in 1996 divided among three main parties: pro-business (4), pro-China (3) and a liberal democratic group (1). In 1999 Macau became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China. China's executive leadership replaced the Portuguese governor. The Portuguese Constitution was replaced by the Basic Law approved in March 1993 by China's National People's Congress as serves as Macau's "mini-constitution." The legal system continues to be based upon Portuguese civil law system. The legislative Assembly is still active with the next election in October 01. The judicial branch is the Court of Final Appeal in the Macau Special Administrative Region. The national holidays are 1 October (1949), the anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Also observed in Macau is 20 Dec 1999 – the Macau Special Administrative Region Establishment Day. <http://www.macao.gov.mo/>.

Society:

Macau society is in a state of flux. It has strong ties to the past socially and religiously, yet the younger age group is responding to the exposure of the modern Western world. The standard of living has improved for the common worker in recent years. Prices for Western goods have remained reasonable. An important development in recent years has been the rise of a middle class in Macau. Society is heavily influenced by Animism, idolatry and superstition.

A major problem in Macau is the gambling industry. Most of the eight million tourists to Macau come for gambling related activities. The government receives from 25 to 40% of the revenue from the casinos. In 1996 over two billion dollars were generated through gambling related activities. This develops a dependency by the government and does not create a climate for strengthening families and society.

With the rise of the middle class comes the openness for new ideas and values. This creates a tension with the "obey your elders" mentality and ancestral worship. Another factor of rapid change is the urbanization of Macau. It is no longer just a sleepy seaport but becoming a growing country with the coming of many people from the north. <http://macaunews.net/>.
<http://www.lib.virginia.edu/ssdcbin/worldbin/world1c.cgi?SET=cny&GEO=mac>.

Languages

There are three prominent languages of Macau. They are Chinese, Yue (Cantonese, Yueh, Yue), Macanese (Macau Creole Portuguese, Macaense), and Portuguese are spoken in Macau. 498,000 speak the Yue, which is almost 100% of the population. They have the Bible 1894-1981, NT 1877, in press (1996), Bible portions 1862-1903. 2,000 people speak Portuguese as their first language and another 11,500 speak it as a second language. They have the Bible 1751, in press (1993). NT 1681-1982, Bible portions 1505-1951. There are very few speakers of Macanese in Macau with about 4,000 living in Hong Kong. <http://www.ethnologue.com>.

Urbanization: Locate on three islands; the country is 97% urban.

Literacy: The literacy rate is 90% of the people age 15 and above can read (93% male, 86% female).

Religion: Interestingly, Macau was the beginning point for Protestant missionaries to China. Now about 1% of the population is Protestants. In the 1600 approximately 95% of the population was Roman Catholic, now the percentage is 5%. 13% of Macau is Buddhist, 19% Chinese religions and 60% are non-religious. Of this group, about 1% is made up of Hindus, Muslims and others.

History

Macau possesses a long history of being a territory of China. Archaeological evidence exists of Chinese culture present in Macau dating back 4,000 to 6,000 years. In the early centuries the territory of Macau was under the control of many districts depending on the ruling dynasty. Wangxia (Mongha) is the oldest continuous community on the islands dating (1279-1386 A.D.). It is also the location of the temple dedicated to the Buddhist Guanyin (Goddess of Mercy), which is the oldest temple in the region.

Merchant ships have used Macau as a trading point since the fifth century A.D., as a site for fresh water, food and refuge. The first Portuguese sailed into the harbor in 1513 and claimed the island for the king of Portugal. With the arrival of Portuguese ships in 1517 and 1518, the Chinese demonstrated their disapproval by evicting them from the island in 1521. It was not until 1553 that Portugal established a permanent trading post on the island. Macau became an established Portuguese community in 1557.

The Portuguese considered the location as an ideal trading post in Asia and began the colony with two primary objectives. The first was to use Macau as the hub to develop trading with China, Japan, and the other Asian countries. The second objective was to establish Roman Catholicism throughout the region. The main motivators of the church efforts were the Jesuit priests.

Portugal achieved limited success in these goals. Several reasons are given: size of the task, resistance of China (both for economic and religious issues), and the aggressive actions of other nations in the region (especially Great Britain). The height of the success of the colony was in the early seventeenth century, after which it stagnated and never really recovered. While other countries used force to assure their trading privileges, Portugal negotiated trade treaties.

the beginning China received a yearly rent payment for the colony. However in the 1840's Portugal decided to cease the payments and expelled the remaining Chinese government officials. In 1845 Portugal declared Macau to be a free port. In 1887, China acknowledged the inevitable and recognized Portugal's control over Macau. By the end of the nineteenth century Macau experienced a major decline as a trading center in Asia. Several factors contributed to the downfall: heaving silting of the harbor and the rise of Hong Kong as a major port and trade center. With the decline of status as a major trade center came the increase of smuggling, gambling, and gang activity. In 1949 the population exploded with refugees from Communist China.

Portuguese control remained for one hundred years when in 1987 Portugal and China signed a treaty to return Macau to China in 1999. Since that time Macau has been a special administrative region (SAR) of China. This arrangement allows Macau to have separate political, judicial and social systems from the rest of China. However, China names the chief political executive of Macau. <http://www.macaumuseum.gov.mo/maineng.htm>. <http://www.danek.net/mysite/macau/>.

People Groups

Chinese, Yue **(370,000/ 46,305,000)**

This is the most predominate people group. They are also referred to as Macau Chinese or Cantonese. Estimates of the number of people range from 498,000 by Ethnologue (SIL) to 370,000 by Joshua Project II (JPII). Approximately 3% are Christian with a very small number of evangelicals. They have a completed Bible in their heart language ((1894), the Jesus film, Christian Radio broadcasts and audio recordings of the Gospel. The Cantonese are very industrious and adept and trade and investment industries. They are known for their unique opera and folk art.

Han Chinese **(12,000/ 1,042,482,187)**

Are the second largest group (23,000 (JPII) to 12,000 (Operation World (OW)) and they are mostly composed of refugees from Mynanmar (Burma). Their primary language is Burmese. Barrett lists this group as Han, however in the JPII these numbers match up with the Han, Min Nan. If it is the Min Nan referred to here, they have the Bible (1933), the Jesus film, Gospel recordings and Christian radio broadcasting.

Han Chinese, Mandarin **(11,000/ 701,116, 436)**

They are the third largest people group with 11,000 (JPII). The Mandarin language is the most widely spoken language in the world. Over 780 million Chinese use this as their heart language. They have the Bible (1874), Jesus film, Gospel recordings and Christian radio broadcasting.

Macanese **(7,500/ 7,500)**

Macao Creole Portuguese, another name for the language of the Macanese and is the next largest people group with 7,500 (SIL/JPII). There are very few who use this language outside some of the older women.

Filipino

The Filipino population is 3,000 (OW). However there is no designation of which people group. It is more a national designation. A possible people group could be the Filipino-Chinese Mestizos, but there is no definite designation. A survey is needed.

Macau, Portuguese **(2,000/ 10,000,000)**

The Portuguese population in Macau is approximately 2,000 (JPII) in number. They are predominately Roman Catholic. They have the Bible (1751), Jesus film, Gospel recordings and Christian radio broadcasting.

Javanese

Approximately 600 (JPII) in number, but no definite people group is designated. This designation is more nationality than a specific people group. A survey is needed

Thai **(1,500/ 23,000,000)**

Small group of workers make up the population of about 1,500 (OW)

British

Business and expatriates constitute about 1,700 (JPII) people.

USA White

The number about 656 (JPII) of business and expatriates. [Johnstone says 4000 westerners **Lisa might this include all Westeners, not just Americans? – you make the call - Dave]

Han Chinese, Dan

This group is sometimes referred to as Boat people. There are no population figures given for this group in Macau. The nature of their life style contributes to the difficulty in getting an accurate population count. They describe themselves as the *Soisangyan* – “water-borne people.” They speak the Yuehai dialect of Cantonese. The life of the Dan revolves around their close association with water. Their customs and religion both reflect this close association.

History of Christianity

Macao was the starting point for Protestant mission in China but has the dubious distinction of being the first Christian territory in Asia to become non-Christian. In 1600 almost 95 % of the people in Macao were Catholic. By 2000 the percentage had shrunk to 5.18 %. The Catholics have declined dramatically in recent years and the Protestants have always been small.

Non- Christian Religions

The majority of people are Chinese Folk Religionists (45%). This is a mixture of animism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Non-religionist (22.5%) makes up the second largest category and is growing. Buddhist (16%) is the third largest non-Christian religion in Macau. The communist influence is seen in the number of atheists (3.5%) in Macau that can also be reflected in the high number of non-religionists. There are also very small numbers of Muslim and Baha'is.

Christianity

Catholics comprise 8% of the population, which reflects a steady decline. Protestants represent only .3% and Anglican .1% of the population. A total of around 7.1 % of the people affiliate with any group claiming to be Christian.

Roman Catholic Church

Ministry began in 1557 when the permanent settlement was established. Fourteen years later, Macau became a diocese in 1576. Francis Xavier, the first secretary of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), died on Macau in an attempt to bring Christianity to China in 1552. Matteo Ricci, the 16th Century pioneer Catholic missionary to China, studied in Macau before being allowed to enter China in 1583. There are many churches in Macau, many historic.

<http://www.hoteltravel.com/hongkong/macau/guides/sightseeing.htm>.

Protestants

Robert Morrison, the first protestant missionary to China (1807) representing the London Missionary Society, lived at times in Macau as he continued to translate the Bible in to Chinese.

Morrison is buried in Macau. Although the evangelical churches remain small, the numbers of congregations increased between 1990 and 2000 when these churches nearly doubled.

Baptist affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention is the largest protestant body of believers. Missionaries were passing through Macau in the 1800's on the way to China. The Macau Baptist Church was founded in 1910. However in almost one hundred years they have only approximately five hundred members and two thousand affiliated. The missionaries have an active ministry with the many restaurant workers in the city.

The Anglican Church of Hong Kong and Macau was established in 1940. They have two small congregations with a membership of about 100 and two hundred affiliated.

Following World War II several denominations began work in Macau. The Seven Day Adventists has two small congregations (200 members, 500 affiliated) and began in 1949. The Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) began mission work in 1952 and has two churches with a membership of one hundred and affiliated five hundred.

In 1954 the Assembly of God and Evangelical Zion Church began their ministries in Macau. The Assemblies have one congregation of three hundred members and six hundred affiliated.

The Zion church has three small congregations with sixty members and two hundred and thirty affiliated. They also are support and orphanage.

There is also Free Methodists, a holiness church, of fifty members and two hundred affiliated. Campus Crusade for Christ International (46 workers) and YWAM (Youth With A Mission) (9 workers) are active in Macau. <http://www.missionmacau.org/links.html>.

Missiological Implications

1. The Christian movement should relate to the churches and the Christian movement in Macao with every possible means at cooperative ministry. Churches from other countries should seek to aid the churches in Macao in their ministries and development.
2. Ministry and evangelistic outreach to the many workers in the gambling, hotel, and restaurant industries is an important area of ministry for Christians and churches.
3. Outreach to the many unreached groups in Macao such as the 12000 refugees from Myanmar who have only one church among them and the many workers from mainland China
4. Support for believers and their families facing persecution and pressure from society is essential. There is the pressure of conforming to ancestral worship, communism, and living in a society that is economically dominated by gambling, organized crime, corruption, and other moral issues associated with this lifestyle.

5. Need to develop indigenous leaders and provide training for them. Theological Education by Extension would be an excellent approach for the current political situation.
6. The development of a clear, positive, redemptive, contextual Christian apologetic to address the issues of gambling, Buddhism, animism, and the associated idolatry and worldview is needed.
7. In a country of uncertainty of what the future holds, the message of hope in Christ needs to be shown and shared clearly and with conviction.

<http://www.missionmacau.org/prayer2.html>.