



Reaching the Nations International Church Growth Almanac

Country reports on the LDS Church around the world from a landmark almanac. Includes detailed analysis of history, context, culture, needs, challenges and opportunities for church growth.



Andorra

Population: 0.09 millions (#206 out of countries)

By David Stewart and Matt Martinich

Geography

Area: 468 square km. Nestled in the Pyrenees Mountains, Andorra is a tiny landlocked country bordering France and Spain. Terrain consists of rugged mountains and narrow mountain valleys that are subject to cold, snowy winters and warm, dry summers. Avalanches are a natural hazard. Environmental issues include deforestation, overgrazing, and pollution. Andorra is divided into seven administrative parishes.

Peoples

Andorran: 45.5%

Spanish: 26.6%

Portuguese: 12.9%

French: 5.2%

Other: 9.8%

Andorrans are ethnic Catalans.^[1] Other Europeans from the Iberian Peninsula and France comprise approximately two-thirds of the population.

Population: 85,708 (July 2018)

Annual Growth Rate: -0.01% (2018)

Fertility Rate: 1.41 children born per woman (2018)

Life Expectancy: 80.7 male, 85.3 female (2018)

Languages: Catalan (39%), Spanish (36%), Portuguese (15%), French (6%), other (4%). Catalan is the official language.

Literacy: 100% (2016)

History

In order to prevent advancing Muslim Moor armies from invading France, Charlemagne organized the March states in the Pyrenees around the ninth century, among which was present-day Andorra. A charter was granted by Charlemagne to Andorra for assistance in repelling the Moors, but a dispute arose in the thirteenth century between a French count and a Spanish bishop who each claimed authority. The dispute was resolved by both parties sharing sovereignty of Andorra, an agreement that endured from 1278 to 1607. French King Henry IV established the Bishop of Urgell and the head of the French state as co-princes of Andorra. Andorra has remained outside of most European history due to its isolation and small population but has been involved in some political matters of France and Spain. In 1993, the Andorran constitution was approved and dictated that the state is a sovereign parliamentary democracy with two co-princes as heads of state.[\[2\]](#) In recent years, Andorra has become a popular tourist destination for outdoor recreation. Andorra is not a member of the European Union (EU), but it has a special relationship with the EU in regards to customs, cooperative agreements, and use of the euro as its currency.

Culture

Andorra shares many cultural similarities with Catalan Spain regarding language, cuisine, and music, but the development of the tourist industry and greater integration with southwestern Europe has generated a more cosmopolitan feel to Andorran society as Andorran citizens are a minority. Skiing is the most popular sport. Folk dances are a proud national tradition. Alcohol and tobacco cigarette consumption rates are among the highest in the world.

Economy

GDP per capita: \$49,900 (2017) [88.4% of U.S.]

Human Development Index: 0.858 (2017)

Corruption Index: N/A

Tourism and banking dominate the economy. Millions of tourists visit annually, primarily attracted by winter and summer resorts. Duty-free status for some products has also attracted increased commerce. Hydropower, mineral water, forest, iron ore, and lead are natural resources. Services employ 95.1% of the labor force. Industries include tourism, skiing, livestock, banking, and furniture. Cereal crops and sheep are the primary agricultural products. Trade primarily occurs with Spain and France.

Corruption is perceived at levels lower than in most nations. There have been neither thorough investigations of corruption in Andorra nor any recorded convictions for corruption. There may be some areas vulnerable to corruption but no major concerns have been reported.[\[3\]](#)

Faiths

Christian: 89.5%

Muslim: 1.8%

Other/unspecified: 8.7%

Christians

Denominations – Members – Congregations

Catholic – 70,000

Evangelicals – 310

Religion

Catholics are estimated to constitute nearly 90% of the population, as Andorrans and Spanish, French, and Portuguese immigrants are traditionally Catholic. Practicing Catholics may account for as much as 50% of the Catholic population. Other Christian groups include Protestants, Latter-day Saints, and Jehovah's Witnesses. There are approximately 800-2,000 Muslims, 100 Jews, and a few Hindus.[\[4\]](#)

Religious Freedom

The constitution protects religious freedom, which is upheld by the government. The constitution recognizes a special relationship with the Catholic Church, as it is the traditional faith of the Andorran population. The Catholic Bishop of the Spanish town of La Seu d'Urgell is one of the two constitutionally designated princes. Registration with the government is not required for religious groups but necessary to receive government benefits. Other religious groups may register as cultural organizations. A patrimony declaration stating the inheritance or endowment of a religious group, a statement providing the names of the leaders of the organization, and a summary of its statutes or purpose of the organization are required to obtain official recognition. There have been no reports of rejected applications. Religious education is optional and teaches Catholicism. Local government dictates the allocation of places of worship to religious groups. There are no reported restrictions on religious freedom and very few reports of societal abuse of religious freedom.[\[5\]](#)

Largest Cities

Urban: 88%

Andorra la Vella, Escaldes-Engordany, Sant Julià de Lòria, Encamp, La Massana, Ordino, Santa Coloma d'Andorra, Canillo, El Pas de la Casa, Arinsal.

Cities listed in **bold** have no official congregations of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

None of the ten largest towns has a Church congregation. The Andorra Branch meets in La Seu d'Urgell, Spain. A member group meets in Andorra la Vella under the supervision of the Andorra Branch. Ninety percent (90%) of the national population resides in the ten most populous towns.

Church History and Background

There were five Latter-day Saints in Andorra in 1991, and the first convert baptism occurred in 1992. Prior to the organization of the Andorra Branch in 1993, members traveled to Lleida, Spain for church meetings. The Church applied for government recognition the same year. Church meetings initially occurred in members' homes until a meetinghouse was secured in 1994. In the mid-1990s, there were as many as forty-five members in Andorra who attended church. Nonnative Church leaders from outside the branch boundaries served as the branch president until 1998 when the first local branch president was called.[\[6\]](#) In 2000, there were seventy-three members. During the 2000s, church membership fluctuated between fifty and ninety members. Membership totaled eighty-eight in 2005 and sixty-four in 2009.

In early 2011, Andorra pertained to the Spain Barcelona Mission and the Andorra Branch was not assigned to a stake or district. In mid-2011, there were only eleven active members and two prospective members who attended Church for the entire branch. In 2012, the Andorra Branch was assigned to the Lleida Spain Stake. Sometime in the early 2010s, the Andorra Branch meetinghouse was moved from within Andorra to La Seu d'Urgell, Spain. After this point, the Church no longer reported official membership figures for Andorra as membership totals for the branch were included in Spain. The country of Andorra comprised less than 20% of the geographical area within the boundaries of the Andorra Branch as of early 2019. However, many, if not most, of the members in the branch reside in Andorra. There were likely between 60-80 members in the Andorra Branch as of 2018.

The Church established a member group that met within Andorra in early 2017. The group appeared to meet in Andorra la Vella. In late 2017, there were approximately twenty people who attended church meetings in La Seu d'Urgell and six local members who attended church meetings in Andorra. By early 2018, there were approximately one dozen people who attended the group in Andorra and twenty people who attended the branch in La Seu d'Urgell. Active membership is estimated at thirty, or

40%–50% of total membership. However, there are likely many members who have moved to Andorra over the years that are unknown to the Church. Andorra is assigned to the Madrid Spain Temple district.

Opportunities

Latter-day Saints have maintained a consistent presence in Andorra for nearly three decades despite the country's tiny population and low receptivity to mission outreach. The greatest success in recent years has come from finding members who have lost contact with the Church and who are unaware of a Church presence in the country. Most of these members are from Latin American countries and have moved to Andorra for employment purposes. Senior missionaries in the late 2010s reported that some of these members have lived in Andorra for a decade or longer and were unable to locate the Church. Despite their long absence from the Church, there has been good interest among these lost members and many have returned to Church activity once they were located and appropriately fellowshipped into the branch or member group. Missionaries were not assigned to Andorra for a twelve to eighteen month period in the late 2000s but in 2010 were briefly stationed for a few weeks to provide training and encouragement to local members in their member-missionary efforts. Full-time missionaries have been consistently assigned for most of the 2010s. There was also a senior missionary couple assigned to Andorra in the late 2010s. Local leadership appears limited and partially self-sufficient. Seminary and institute have appeared to have not yet been introduced and may facilitate finding and convert retention efforts. Latter-day Saint scriptures and materials are available in languages spoken by practically the entire population. All Latter-day Saint scriptures are available in Catalan, Spanish, French, and Portuguese. Church materials in Catalan are limited to the Articles of Faith, Gospel Principles, and the Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith, whereas most church materials are available in Spanish, French, and Portuguese.

Challenges

With one of the most religiously active Catholic populations in Western Europe, receptivity to the Church and other nontraditional Christian denominations has been low. Those who are not religiously active exhibit little interest in the Church due to the influence of secularism. Although few in numbers, prospective Latter-day Saint converts are likely to have developed several daily or weekly religious practices, as indicated by the relatively high percentage of practicing Catholics. There was no increase in nominal church membership during the 2000s, as few have joined the Church. Twenty-six percent (26%) of the national population resides in Andorra la Vella, the only town with a congregation. However, the member group in Andorra has only been recently reestablished and continues to lack adequate leadership to become an official branch. The tiny geographic size and small population of the country make the opening of additional mission outreach centers unfeasible, as there are fewer than one hundred members, limited mission outreach resources dedicated to the region, and low receptivity. Other missionary-oriented Christians report stagnant or very slow membership and congregational growth. Most non-Catholic denominations operate only one congregation at most; Jehovah's Witnesses report three.

Future Prospects

The continued operation of the Andorra Branch without the permanent assignment of full-time missionaries for significant periods of time in the past two decades indicates that local leadership and active membership are self-reliant and capable of fulfilling administrative tasks with minimal mentoring and supervision from missionaries and mission leaders. There has been good progress in the 2010s with the augmentation of church attendance from approximately thirteen in mid-2011 to thirty by early 2018. The establishment of a member group that assembles within Andorra has appeared primarily responsible for increases in Church attendance and reactivation efforts. Low receptivity to non-Catholic denominations will likely continue and result in stagnant membership growth for the foreseeable future unless local members are able to develop proselytism approaches culturally tailored to the needs and societal conditions of Andorra. Progress with the Church in Andorra within the foreseeable future will likely center on Spanish-speaking Latin Americans who live in the country for employment purposes as they are the most receptive group according to reports from full-time missionaries. However, the group in Andorra is vulnerable for closure in the future due to the small size of active membership and lack of adequate numbers of local leadership to staff an official branch. Moreover, the transient nature of members who temporarily live in the country for employment purposes poses challenges for long-term stability for the Church in Andorra, specifically with leadership development.

[1] "Andorra," International Religious Freedom Report 2010," 17 November 2010.
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148907.htm>

[2] "Background Note: Andorra," Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, 8 February 2011.
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3164.htm>

[3] "The Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) publishes report on Andorra," Council of Europe, 7 February 2007.
http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/greco/news/news2007/news%2820070207%29eval1&2_andorra_EN.asp

[4] "Andorra," International Religious Freedom Report for 2017." Accessed 28 March 2019.
<https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm?year=2017&dliid=280876#wrapper>

[5] "Andorra," International Religious Freedom Report for 2017." Accessed 28 March 2019.
<https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm?year=2017&dliid=280876#wrapper>

[6] "Andorra," Country Profile, retrieved 8 March 2011. <http://newsroom.lds.org/country/andorra>

