

Reaching the Nations International Church Growth Almanac

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



United Kingdom

Population: 63.74 millions (#23 out of countries)

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Geography

Area: 243,610 square km. The United Kingdom is located in Western Europe and consists of Great Britain, Northern Island, and several small islands. Rugged hills and low mountains occupies most the terrain with some plains in the southeast and east. The landscape primarily consists of meadows, hills, pastures, farmland, and forest. The Gulf Stream moderates the climate despite the high latitude of the islands. Temperate climate occurs throughout the archipelago, with warm summers and cold winters. Skies are often overcast. Major rivers include the Thames, Tay, Bann, and Tywi. Lough Neagh in Northern Ireland is the largest lake. Winter windstorms and flooding are natural hazards. Environmental issues include pollution and waste disposal. The United Kingdom is administratively divided into four lieutenancy areas (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Island) and 17 dependent territories which are subdivided into Crown Dependencies and overseas territories. England is administratively divided into 27 two-tier counties, the City of London, 36 metropolitan districts, and 56 unitary authorities whereas Northern Ireland is administratively divided into 26 district council areas, Scotland is administratively divided into 32 council areas, and Wales is administratively divided into 22 unitary authorities. Crown Dependencies include the Guernsey, Jersey, and Isle of Man whereas overseas territories include Anguilla; Bermuda; the British Virgin Islands; the Cayman Islands; the Falkland Islands; Gibraltar; Montserrat; the Pitcairn Islands; Saint Helen, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha; South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands; and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

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Population: 62,348,447 (July 2010)

Annual Growth Rate: 0.563% (2010)

Fertility Rate: 1.92 children born per woman (2010)

Life Expectancy: 77.84 male, 82.11 female (2010)

Peoples

white: 92.1%

black: 2%

Indian: 1.8%

Pakistani: 1.3%

mixed: 1.2%

other: 1.6%

The population is homogenously white and 83.6% English, 8.6% Scottish, 4.9% Welsh, and 2.9% Northern Irish. Blacks, Indians, Pakistanis, and other ethnic groups have immigrated to the United Kingdom primarily during the past century generally from former British colonial possessions.

Languages: English (95%), Indian/Pakistani languages (3%), Welsh (1%), other (1%). The most commonly spoken Indian and Pakistan languages include Bengali, Gujarati, Panjabi dialects, Pashto dialects, Sylheti, and Urdu. English is the official language and only language with over one million speakers (59.2 million).

Literacy: 99% (2003)

History

Pre-Celtic and Celtic peoples inhabited the British Isles since antiquity. The Roman Empire annexed approximately half of Great Britain during the first century B.C. Angles, Saxons, and Jutes invaded Roman-held territory in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. as the power of the Roman Empire waned. The Normans conquered Great Britain in 1066 and the following century the Anglo-Normans invaded Ireland. The English conquered Wales in 1282 but did not complete a formal union between England and Wales until 1536. English explorers and tradesmen began exploring and colonizing North America in the sixteenth century. The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 established England as a world sea power and contributed to significant worldwide expansion of trade and military influence. English rule over Scotland began in 1603 but a political union did not occur until 1707 as England and Scotland were unified as Great Britain. The English and Scottish began settling the northern regions of Ireland in the seventeenth century and subjugated the Irish population under British rule. The United Kingdom played a major role in the Reformation as King Henry VIII opposed the Catholic Church and established the Church of England in 1538. Great Britain lost the American colonies in the War of Independence in the late eighteenth century but began to expand into Africa and Asia. The United Kingdom was formed in 1801 as Great Britain and Ireland were merged into a legislative union. The industrial revolution transformed the economy and power of the United Kingdom as its power and influenced surpassed France, resulting in the British Empire reaching its height during the nineteenth century, governing approximately one-fifth to one-quarter of the world's land area and population.

British power began to decline in the twentieth century as its rivals began to advance technologically, economically, and militarily. The United Kingdom suffered heavy losses during both world wars and experienced stagnant economic growth as a result of the depression in the 1930s. Continued armed insurgency against the British crown in Ireland resulted in the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1921 and an independent republic after World War II. In 1926, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand obtained complete autonomy within the British Empire and later became founding members of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The Commonwealth principally consists of former British colonies that have attained independence from the United Kingdom and aspires to propagate a shared vision and philosophy regarding civic, trade, and legal matters. Most of the remaining colonies and territories of the British Empire achieved independence in the twentieth century. Remaining colonies that did not opt for independence were retained as British Overseas Territories. Six northern predominantly-Protestant Irish counties remain part of the United Kingdom as the entity of Northern Ireland.[1] The United Kingdom experienced steady economic growth and development during the latter-half of the twentieth century while maintaining its influence as a world diplomatic power as a founding member of NATO and the Commonwealth. The United Kingdom is a member of the European Union but does not pertain to the Economic and Monetary Union. Instability in Northern Ireland occurred during the late twentieth century, but significantly improved during the 2000s.

Culture

British culture has been among the most influential cultures in the world over the past several centuries due to the worldwide expanse of the former British Empire, the past occupation of vast areas of territory or operation of colonies on all six inhabited continents, and its prominence in international affairs. The United Kingdom significantly influenced the development of contemporary local culture and government in Western Europe, North America, East Asia, South Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and Oceania and together with the rise of American culture in the twentieth century have contributed to the widespread use of English as an international language for business, commerce, and government. Consequently, there are an estimated 0.5-1.8 billion speakers of English as a first or second language and English is an official language of 53 countries.[2] The consumption of tea on a daily basis is an important cultural practice.

Cigarette consumption rates are comparable to the world average whereas alcohol consumption rates are higher than the world average. Divorce rates are higher than most nations.

Economy

GDP per capita: $35,100 (2010) [74.1% of US]

Human Development Index: 0.849

Corruption Index: 7.6

Remaining outside of the European Economic and Monetary Union, the United Kingdom numbers among the largest European economies and is noted for its advanced financial sector and highly effectively agricultural sector which produces 60% of food needs with less than two percent of the work force. Economic growth outpaced most of Western Europe in the 1990s and 2000s until the global financial crisis in 2008 initiated declining home prices, worldwide recession, and high consumer debt. The government has taken steps to limit the growth of social welfare programs and public ownership in recent years. Coal, petroleum, natural gas, iron ore, valuable metals, industrial metals and minerals, and farmland are natural resources. Sizeable fossil fuel reserves have been steadily depleted by exploitation and are now less economically viable. Services employ 80% of the labor force and generate 77% of the GDP whereas industry employs 18% of the labor force and generates 22% of the GDP. Machinery, industrial equipment, shipbuilding, aircraft, electronics, metals, chemicals, coal, petroleum, wood products, food processing, and clothing are the primary industries. Agriculture accounts for less than two percent of the labor force and GDP. Common agriculture products include grains, potatoes, vegetables, cattle, sheep, poultry, and fish. Germany, the United States, France, and the Netherlands are the primary trade partners. The level of perceived corruption is among the lowest worldwide.

Faiths

Christian: 71.6%

Muslim: 2.7%

Hindu: 1%

other: 1.6%

unspecified/none: 23.1%

Christians

Denominations Members Congregations

Anglican 18,081,050

Catholic 6,234,845

Latter-Day Saints 186,082 333

Jehovah's Witnesses 134,339 1,533 (Britain only)

Seventh-Day Adventists 31,019 248 (includes Crown Dependencies)

Religion

The Anglican Church is the largest Christian denomination and its members constitute 29% of the population. Catholics comprise 10% of the population whereas other Protestant groups account for 14%. A 2007 survey found that the number of church-going Catholics had outpaced the number of church-going Anglicans and a 2006 survey found that the percentage of Methodists in the population was declining whereas the percentage of Pentecostals, African church-goers, Latter-day Saints, and Eastern Orthodox Christians was increasing. A report released by Christian Research estimated that four million Christians were observant in their faith in England, Scotland, and Wales as indicated by attending church at least once a month. The percentage of church-going Christians may be as low as 5-10% of the Christian population in Great Britain whereas church attendance figures for Northern Ireland are considerably higher as 60% of Catholics attend church services monthly and 35% of Protestants attend church monthly. Religious affiliation differs dramatically by ethnicity. According to the 2001 census, 70% of

whites, 70% of black Africans, and 75% of black Caribbean peoples were Christian; 92% of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were Muslim; 45% of Indians were Hindus; and 29% of Indians were Sikhs. In Northern Ireland, Catholics and Protestants comprise 44% and 53% of the population, respectively, and continue to live in religiously segregated communities.[3] A 1991 survey found that seven out of ten had a certain belief that God exists, but that many believe that these beliefs are decreasing in importance and do not influence their daily lives.[4]

Religious Freedom

Persecution Index:

The law protects religious freedom which is upheld by the government. There is strict legislation in place which prohibits the incitement of religious hatred under the 2006 Racial and Religious Hatred Act. Only Scotland and England have state churches, the Church of England (Anglican) and the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian), respectively. No Catholic or person married to a Catholic may become a monarch. Most religious groups are classified as charities and receive tax-exemption status for value-added tax. Only faith schools receive financial support from the government. Missionaries from registered religious groups must have had past missionary service experience or receive formal training in order to obtain a visa to perform missionary work in the United Kingdom. Major Christian holidays are recognized national holidays. There has been recent debate regarding the wearing of religious clothing or symbols by school children in public schools. Christian groups report that they have been restricted in their rights to practice and display their faith in public and in the workplace. Societal abuse of religious freedom is occasional and primarily directed toward Jews and Muslims.[5]

Largest Cities

Urban: 90%

London, Birmingham, Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, Bristol, Liverpool, Sheffield, Edinburgh, Leicester, Kingston upon Hull, Bradford, Coventry, Cardiff, Nottingham, Belfast, Stoke-on-Trent, Plymouth, Southampton, Wolverhampton, Derby, Reading, Portsmouth, Newcastle upon Tyne.

24 cities with over 200,000 inhabitants have an LDS congregation. 26% of the national population resides in the 24 most populous cities.

LDS History

Following the establishment of the LDS Church in the United States in 1830, the United Kingdom became the first nation to receive LDS missionaries in 1837 as two LDS apostles were among the first seven missionaries to arrive in England in July of that year. The first convert baptisms occurred at the end of the month. Over a thousand converts joined the Church within the first few years of proselytism in the United Kingdom.[6] The oldest continuously operating LDS congregation is located in Preston, England and has functioned since 1837.[7] The first convert baptisms occurred in Scotland near Glasgow in 1840.[8] Nearly half of the population of Utah in 1870 were British immigrants as a result of LDS missionary success in the British isles in the nineteenth century. Approximately 100,000 converts joined the Church in the British Isles and emigrated to Utah before 1900.[9] During the first half of the twentieth century membership growth was slow, emigration of converts to the United States continued, and church membership was less than 10,000 until the 1960s.

In 1976, three area conferences were held in Manchester, London, and Glasgow in which President Spencer W. Kimball advised all young men to prepare for full-time missionary service.[10] That same year, missionaries opened the Shetland Islands for missionary work.[11] The United Kingdom pertained to the Europe area until the 1980s when it was assigned to the United Kingdom/Ireland/Africa Area. In 2000, the United Kingdom was assigned to the Europe West Area and in the late 2000s was assigned to the Europe Area. In 2001, two missionaries in the England Bristol Mission perished in a car accident.[12]

Missions

The British Mission was the first LDS mission to be officially organized in the Church and was headed by Heber C. Kimball in 1837. The Welsh Mission was organized in 1845, but was discontinued in 1854 and consolidated with the British Mission. Additional missions organized included the North British (1960) [renamed England Leeds in 1974], Scottish-Irish (1961) [renamed Scotland Edinburgh in 1974], Central British (1961) [renamed England Birmingham in 1974], Southwest British (1962) [renamed England Bristol in 1974], Northeast British (1962), North Scottish (1962), and British South (1964) [renamed England London South]. The Northeast British and North Scottish Missions were consolidated with neighboring missions in 1965 reducing the number of missions to five. In 1970s, missions were organized in England Manchester (1976) and England London East (1978). The England Birmingham and England London East Missions were discontinued in 1983. The England Coventry Mission was organized in 1980 and was relocated to Birmingham in 1991.

There was one mission in 1955, eight in 1964, six in 1970, eight in 1980, and seven in 1990. In 2002, the England Bristol

Mission was consolidated with neighboring missions and in 2010, the Scotland Edinburgh and Ireland Dublin Missions were consolidated into the Scotland/Ireland Mission with headquarters in Edinburgh, Scotland. In 2011, there were six missions in the United Kingdom.

Membership Growth

LDS Membership: 186,082 (2009)

In 1958, there were 6,500 Latter-day Saints in Britain.[13] There were 92,338 members in 1983, 133,100 in 1987, 161,000 in 1993, and 170,700 in 1997. By year-end 2000, membership totaled 175,572. Slow membership growth marked by oscillations in increasing and decreasing membership occurred in the 2000s as membership numbered 176,998 in 2002, 177,431 in 2004, 180,078 in 2006, and 183,672. Membership decline occurred in 2001 and 2003. Annual membership growth rates fluctuated between -1.5% and 3.5% during the 2000s and averaged around one percent. In 2000, there were 136,554 members in England, 5,482 in Northern Ireland, 26,094 in Scotland, and 7,442 in Wales whereas in 2010, there were 144,281 members in England, 5,329 in Northern Ireland, 26,917 in Scotland, and 9,555 in Wales. Wales experienced the greatest percentage increase in membership growth during the 2000s (28%) whereas Northern Ireland experienced membership decline (-2.8%).

In 2009, one in 335 was LDS. In 2009, one in 357 was LDS in England, one in 333 was LDS in Northern Ireland, one in 192 was LDS in Scotland, and one in 313 was LDS in Wales.

Congregational Growth

Wards: 281 Branches: 52

There were five branches in Scotland in 1955.[14] There were 360 congregations in the United Kingdom in 1987, 344 in 1993, 374 in 1997, and 365 in 2000. The number of congregations declined in the 2000s, numbering to 360 in 2002, 366 in 2004, 350 in 2006, and 336 in 2008. The number of wards during the 2000s increased from 274 in 2000 to 281 in 2010 whereas the number of branches declined from 95 in 2000 to 52 in 2010. Between 2000 and 2009, the number of congregations declined by 23 in England, seven in Scotland, and three in Northern Ireland whereas the number of congregations increased in Wales by four.

The first stake in England was organized in Manchester in 1960. Six additional English stakes were organized in the 1960s in Leicester (1961), Huddersfield (1961), Sunderland (1963), and Birmingham (1969). In the 1970s, 21 additional stakes were organized in England in Norwich (1971), Nottingham (1973), Portsmouth (1973), Hull (1973), Bristol (1973), Reading (1973), Romford (1974), Newcastle-Under-Lyme (1975), Liverpool (1976), Billingham (1976), Preston (1976), Leeds (1976), Northampton (1977), Lichfield (1977), Crawley (1977), Plymouth (1977), London Hyde Park (1978), London Wandsworth (1978), Maidstone (1978), St. Albans (1978), and Staines (1982). In the 1980s, six additional stakes were organized in Cheltenham (1982), Poole (1982), Ashton (1982), Chester (1982), Sheffield (1982), and Ipswich (1983). In the 1990s and 2000s, five new stakes were organized in Coventry (1993), Canterbury (1995), Watford (1996), York (1996), and Chorley (2005).

The first stake in Scotland was organized in Glasgow in 1962. Additional stakes were organized in Dundee (1975), Aberdeen (1980), Paisley (1980), and Edinburgh (1980). Northern Ireland's sole LDS stake was organized in Belfast in 1974. The first stake in Wales was organized in Merthyr Tydfil in 1975. A second Welsh stake was formed in Cardiff in 1982.

The number of stakes increased from one in 1960 to eight in 1970, 35 in 1980, 42 in 1990, 46 in 2000, and 47 in 2010.

Activity and Retention

The average number of members per congregation increased from 370 in 1987 to 481 in 2000 and 554 in 2009. In 1993, the Scotland Edinburgh Mission emphasized the need for local members to attend missionary lessons to nonmembers and assist in fellowshipping, which resulted in increases in the number of missionary lessons taught and in convert retention.[15] 14,000 members assembled for the first area conference in Manchester, England in 1971.[16] In 1992, 55,200 attended the temple open house for the London England Temple.[17] 10,500 members attended the groundbreaking of the Preston England Temple in 1994.[18] In 1998, 123,607 attended the Preston England Temple open house.[19] 4,643 were enrolled in seminary and institute during the 2009-2010 school year. In 2011, full-time missionaries reported that most wards generally had between 50 and 120 active members whereas most branches had fewer than 60 active members. Nationwide active membership is estimated at approximately 30,000, or 15-20% of total church membership.

Finding and Public Relations

In 1963, President David O. McKay noted while dedicating a new meetinghouse that public opinion toward the LDS Church had

significantly improved in Wales.[20] Approximately 200 attended a family history seminar in Birmingham, England in 1988.[21] In 1988, the Church published advertisements in local newspapers in England and Scotland about church teachings.[22] That same year, the BYU Young Ambassadors performed in Northern Ireland.[23] In 1995, President Hinckley was interviewed by the media and affirmed the Church's Christ-centered teachings and purpose.[24] In 2001, the Edinburgh Scotland Stake president offered a public prayer in Scottish Parliament[25] and 40,000 attended the opening festivities of an LDS commemorative sea trek of fleeing Latter-day Saint British immigrants in the nineteenth century.[26] In 2004, the Glasgow Scotland Stake held an interfaith banquette attended by several leaders of local faith groups.[27] The Church operates a call center at the England Missionary Training Center operated primarily by missionaries receiving missionary training.

Language Materials

Languages with LDS Scripture: English, Welsh,

All LDS scriptures and materials are available in English. Only the Book of Mormon is available in Welsh. Additional LDS materials translated into Welsh include The Family: A Proclamation to the World, the Articles of Faith, and a Mormon Tabernacle Choir DVD.

Meetinghouses

There were approximately 300 LDS meetinghouses in the United Kingdom in April 2011. Most congregations meet in church-built meetinghouses. Some smaller branches meet in renovated buildings or rented spaces.

Humanitarian and Development Work

In 1999, Relief society members in the Edinburgh Scotland Stake assembled hundreds of school supply, hygiene, and bedding kits for needy children in Africa.[28] Many local members have organized and carried out humanitarian relief efforts for Africa and Asia. The Church has also provided donations of computer and medical equipment, beddings, and children's vitamins.[29]

Opportunities, Challenges and Prospects

Religious Freedom

Latter-day Saints experience full religious freedom throughout the United Kingdom and freely assemble, worship, and proselyte. Foreign full-time missionaries serve regularly from around the world with few challenges obtaining needed visa documentation. The acceptance of public religious expression has waned in society due to increasing secularism, but no laws or government policies have limited the religious expression and practices of Latter-day Saints at present.

Cultural Issues

Increasing secularism and declining acceptance of organized religion in public life in the United Kingdom are major barriers to LDS mission outreach which have reduced receptivity among the general British population and have likely compromised member activity rates among Latter-day Saints. The Church is still committed to performing greater mission outreach in the United Kingdom than other Western European nations notwithstanding these challenges but many investigators and converts are immigrants, particularly from Africa. The cosmopolitan atmosphere of London and some of the largest cities has encouraged greater cultural understanding and acceptance of converts from ethnic minority groups although language barriers can create obstacles for gospel understanding and personal testimony development. The Church has struggled to instill regular church attendance into many British investigators and converts and there is a greater need for increased emphasis on these and other prebaptismal conditions in order to curb against convert attrition.

The emigration to the United States, Australia, and New Zealand of many stalwart British Latter-day Saints has eroded the Church's stability and has limited church growth since the mid-nineteenth century. Over the past two decades the number of English international church leaders who emigrated to the United States or Australia has been approximately equivalent to the number of English international church leaders that continue to reside in the United Kingdom.

National Outreach

Approximately half of the British population resides in a city with an LDS congregation. All 68 cities over 100,000 have an LDS congregation or are within five kilometers of a city with an LDS congregation. Of the nearly 200 cities in the United Kingdom

with over 50,000 inhabitants, approximately a dozen have no LDS congregations. The majority of the largest unreached cities are located on the peripheries of the largest cities in England or are in south England. Unlike many Western European nations, the LDS Church in the United Kingdom has congregations in several cities with 20,000 or fewer inhabitants, such as Skipton, England and Aberystwyth, Wales. Nine of the 26 district council areas in Northern Ireland, 28 of the 32 council areas of Scotland, and 18 of the 22 unitary authorities in Wales have at least one LDS congregation. All administrative divisions have an LDS congregation in England with only a few exceptions in southwestern England. The average LDS congregation in the United Kingdom includes between 100,000 and 200,000 people within its geographical boundaries. Outreach appears most penetrating in Scotland and Wales (one LDS congregation per 125,000 people) whereas outreach is more limited in Northern Ireland and England (one LDS congregation per 161,000 and 198,000, respectively).

Opportunities for future growth appear highest in the most populous cities without currently-operating LDS congregations in England such as Ellesmere Port, Royal Leamington Spa, and Margate, as well as in cities with greater than 50,000 inhabitants. Many of London's 32 boroughs have no nearby LDS congregations and are lesser-reached by the Church. Local leadership and member-missionary resources appear adequate in many areas for British members to undertake the responsibility of extending outreach to these cities at present as most are within close proximity to cities with LDS congregations. Cooperation between full-time missionaries and local leaders in holding cottage meetings and employing creative proselytism approaches will be needed to reverse the ongoing trend of congregation consolidations and stagnant to declining national outreach since the mid-2000s. Prospects for expanding national outreach are poor in Northern Ireland and Scotland due to continuing congregation consolidations, low receptivity to the Church, LDS congregations already operating in most medium-sized cities, and few member-missionary resources available. Conditions for growth are most favorable in Wales due to slow congregational growth over the past decade and increasing seminary and institute enrollment combined with commensurate membership growth, indicative of higher member activity and convert retention rates.

The Church has a well-designed internet website for the United Kingdom at http://www.lds.org.uk/ providing local news, basic information about the LDS Church and its teachings, resources for single members, a gospel library, and links to other English-language LDS websites. There are also opportunities for member-missionary internet-based proselytism through links on the site to Facebook and Twitter. In 1997, England had the fifth most visitors to the Church's official website[30] but in December 2010 the LDS United Kingdom website was not among the top ten most frequently visited country websites likely due to many British members utilizing the United States-based lds.org.

Member Activity and Convert Retention

Overall the United Kingdom experiences one of the lowest member activity rates among Western European nations, especially in Scotland where there was an average of 657 members per congregation in 2009. Convert retention appeared the lowest between the 1960s and 1990s at a time when church membership grew most rapidly. Quick-baptism tactics which emphasized minimal prebaptismal preparation and reaching arbitrary quotas is the primary cause of poor retention and rapid membership growth during this period. One practice which severely reduced member activity rates was fellowshipping nonmembers with local Latter-day Saints through playing baseball and then baptizing nonmember participants, which were later coined "baseball baptisms." Notwithstanding inconsistent standards for convert baptisms and a lack of proper focus on proselytism during this period, the number of LDS congregations increased the most rapidly than at any other time in the history of the Church in the United Kingdom primarily due to a nationwide meetinghouse construction program and an unprecedented opening of new missions from one in 1959 to eight in 1964.

In recent years, there has been no meaningful increase in active membership overall in the United Kingdom largely due to low birth rates in member families, many Latter-day Saint youth not serving full-time missions and going inactive, and modest convert retention rates. The LDS Church in Scotland and England have demonstrated the least amount of progress as indicated by stagnant number of members enrolled in seminary and institute, the number of congregations closed, and an increase in the average number of members per congregation. The number of members enrolled in seminary and institute in England and Scotland was constant during the late 2000s (1% increase) and experienced significant increases in Wales (31%) and Northern Ireland (23%) between 2008 and 2010. Wales was the only lieutenancy area in the United Kingdom to experience an increase in the number of congregations between 2000 and 2009 whereas significant declines occurred in England and Scotland. Assuming no increase in the average number of active members per congregation, an increase in the average number of nominal members per congregation generally indicates decreasing member activity rates as there are fewer active members to staff the same number of congregations. Large increases in the average number of members per congregation occurred in Scotland (113), Northern Ireland (93), and England (72) between 2000 and 2009 whereas the increase in the average number of members per congregation in Wales was low (26).

Noting limited progress increasing the number of active members, the Europe Area presidency set a goal in 2010 for the entire area to double the number of active members by 2020 with the United Kingdom being a major area of focus. To achieve this goal, regional church leadership stressed the need to make ward and branch councils central in missionary efforts to reactive and baptize new converts in addition to emphasizing the need for close cooperation between local members and full-time missionaries. Added emphasis was also placed on member-missionary work.[31] The vision and prospective of the area presidency offers an appropriate and self-sustaining approach to improving member activity rates by reducing the emphasis on full-time missionaries to find, teach, and reactive and to carefully coordinate and delegate various missionary tasks among ward and branch members. Successful implementation and consistency of directing local missionary efforts through ward councils will likely be the greatest challenge for regional leadership and success will be manifest over the medium-term through reversing the trend of congregation consolidations that has persisted since the mid-2000s.

Ethnic Issues and Integration

Populations outside of the largest cities are homogenously British and ethnic integration issues are nearly absent. LDS missionaries report no significant ethnic integration issues at church among native British peoples. Traditionally Muslim or Hindu peoples from South Asia appear the most difficult to reach and integrate into LDS congregations due to differing cultural practices, little familiarity with Christianity or long-term resistance to conversion, and family disapproval.

Language Issues

LDS scriptures and church materials are available in the native language of approximately 97% of the British population. The remaining three percent of the population comprise primarily of Indian and Pakistani immigrations who speak languages with few or no LDS materials translated; however many of these immigrants speak English as a second language. Welsh speakers number approximately half a million, but there are only 32,000 monolingual speakers, reducing the need for Welsh-language LDS proselytism and additional translations of LDS materials. The widespread use of English has simplified LDS mission outreach and has reduced the need for greater resources dedicated for non-English speakers. A handful of LDS missionaries in England learn other languages to conduct proselytism and teaching, such as Mandarin Chinese. There are only two LDS congregations designated as non-English speaking however, one for Portuguese speakers and one for Spanish speakers and both of which are located in London. Notwithstanding the influx of non-British LDS converts over the past two decades, there are no other congregations to suit their language needs largely due to inadequate number of converts speaking the same languages and low convert retention rates. Many non-British converts are competent in speaking English as a second language, further reducing the need for additional non-English-speaking congregations. Only LDS Mandarin Chinese-speakers appear likely to have their own language-specific congregation in the coming years largely due to higher receptivity than other ethnic minority or immigrant groups and concentrated missionary efforts directed to Chinese.

Missionary Service

Opened in 1998 in Preston, the England Missionary Training Center (MTC) is the only missionary training center of the LDS Church in Europe and had the capacity to house 84 elders, 24 sisters, and one senior missionary couple in 2000. The England MTC primarily offers three-week training for missionaries destined to serve in the British Isles but in the past has serviced speakers of English as a second language from continental Europe, Russia, and Mongolia.[32] The England MTC is well utilized and appears to accommodate North American missionaries more frequently than their British counterparts. The United Kingdom is dependent on foreign missionary manpower to staff its local missionary force notwithstanding close to 190,000 nominal members and six LDS missions. Low birth rates among British Latter-day Saints, poor member activity rates, low seminary and institute enrollment, and the delayed opening of a national missionary training center until 1998 appear major contributing factors for few local members serving missions.

Leadership

The strength and sizeable numbers of active local priesthood leadership is manifest by no LDS stakes being discontinued in the history of the Church in the United Kingdom and stakes functioning throughout mainland Britain. Few Church employees have served in local or national leadership positions and local leadership is generally self-sufficient in most locations. Limited numbers of active priesthood holders delay the creation of additional congregations in some areas, such as large cities with only one congregation and medium-sized cities with no LDS units. With only a handful of exceptions, LDS congregations are led and staffed by local members. There has been a nearly continuous streak of local members serving as temple presidents for temples in England since the late 1980s.

The LDS Church in the United Kingdom has supplied the Church with more international leadership manpower than any other European country as several members have served as mission presidents, regional representatives, area seventies, general authorities, and temple presidents. Most British LDS leaders are from England. In 1992, E. Keith Wigglesworth from Reading was called to preside over the England Leeds Mission[33] and Ian D. Swanney from York was called to preside over the Scotland Edinburgh Mission.[34] In 1994, Rowland E. Elvidge from St. Albans was called to preside over the England Bristol Mission.[35] In 1995, Gordon Williams from Huddersfield was called to preside over the Scotland Edinburgh Mission.[36] In 2001, Albert Roy from Glasgow was called to preside over the Canada Edmonton Mission[37] and Raymond Botterell from Crawley[38] was called to preside over the Kenya Nairobi Mission.[39] In 2003, Charles Raymond Lowry from Lisburn[40] was called to preside over the England Birmingham Mission.[41] In 2004, Brent LaMar Buckner from Solihull was called to preside over the Switzerland Zurich Mission.[42] In 2006, Mark Laurence Lewis from Bath[43] was called to preside over the Philippines Laoag Mission[44] and Bryan Skelton from Hull was called to preside over the Singapore Mission.[45] In 2008, Clive Richard Jolliffe from Huntingdon was called to preside over the New Zealand Wellington Mission.[46] In 2011, Robert Ian Preston from Ashton-Under-Lyne[47] was called to preside over the England Manchester Mission.[48]

Geoffrey D. Mawlam from Lichfield was called as a regional representative in 1989.[49] In 1992, J. Roy Caddick from Manchester was called as a regional representative.[50] In 1994, Brian Arthur Watling from Colchester was called as a regional representative.[51] In 1995, John Maxwell from Clayworth Retford and Brian Watling from Colchester were called as area authorities.[52] In 2000, Rowland E. Elvidge from St. Albans was called as an Area Authority Seventy.[53] In 2002, David S. Baxter from Suffolk was called as an Area Authority Seventy.[54] In 2004, Andrew M. Ford from Longborough was called as an Area Authority Seventy.[55] In 2005, Patrick Kearon from Clevedon was called as an Area Seventy.[56] In 2006, Stephen C. Kerr from Stirling was called as an Area Seventy.[57] In 2010, George R. Donaldson from Denbigshire was called as an Area

Seventy.[58]

In 1990, Kenneth Johnson from Norwich, England was called to the Second Quorum of the Seventy.[59] In 2006, Elder David Baxter was called to the First Quorum of the Seventy.[60]

In 1988, Ralph Pulman from Merthyr Tydfil was called as the London England Temple president.[61] In 1993, Arthur J. Turvey from Maidstone was called as the London England Temple president.[62] In 1996, Ian D. Swanney from York was called as the London England Temple president[63] and was called as the Preston England Temple president in 1998. In 1998, Peter Leonard Morley was called as president of the London England Temple.[64] In 2000, David Moore Porch from Glasgow was called as the Preston England Temple president.[65] In 2001, George Howell Jones from Chichester was called as the London England Temple president.[66] In 2003, John Maxwell from Retford was called as the Preston England Temple president.[67] In 2006, Arnold Jones from Merthyr Tydfil was called as the Preston England Temple president.[68] In 2007, Michael Robert Fagg from Maldon was called as the London England Temple president.[69] In 2010, Charles Raymond Lowry was called as the London England Temple president.[70]

Temple

Southern England is assigned to the London England Temple district whereas northern England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales pertain to the Preston England Temple district. The London England and Preston England temples are well-utilized as indicated by endowment sessions scheduled hourly from eight in the morning until late in the evening Tuesdays through Fridays and every half hour or 45-minutes on Saturday mornings and hourly on Saturday afternoons. Most church members in the United Kingdom are within a day's travel to the temple, although travel to the temple is more difficult for members in Scotland and Northern Ireland due to distance. Prospects appear favorable for a future small temple in Scotland over the medium-term pending progress increasing active membership and reversing the trend of congregation closures. A potential temple in Scotland would likely service five stakes. Additional temples may be constructed in Birmingham, England or Cardiff, Wales due to high rates of temple attendance among active church membership throughout the British Isles and sizeable LDS populations nearby these locations capable of staffing and operating additional temples.

Comparative Growth

The LDS Church in the United Kingdom had the tenth largest number of members, the tenth most congregations, eighth most stakes, and eleventh most missions in the world although the United Kingdom ranked twenty-second by total population. LDS membership in the United Kingdom accounts for 28% of LDS membership in Europe and the former Soviet Union and is a source of stability and strength for the Church in Europe. Member activity and convert retention rates appear among the lowest in Western Europe as only 2.5% of LDS membership in the United Kingdom is enrolled in seminary and institute compared to 10.2% in Finland, 5% in Germany, 4.4% in Italy, and 3.6% in France. The average number of members per congregation in the United Kingdom is higher than most of Western Europe. With the exception of Russia, no other European nation has as many LDS missions as the United Kingdom. The LDS Church in the United Kingdom experienced the fifth largest decline in the number of LDS congregations between 2000 and 2010 (-32) after Chile (-260), the Philippines (-57), Guatemala (-36), and Panama (-32). The percentage of the population residing in cities with LDS congregations is representative of most of Western Europe.

Other outreach-minded Christian denominations report similar numbers of converts baptized year to year as the LDS Church but have higher activity and retention rates largely due to greater prebaptismal preparation and local member-missionary involvement. Seventh Day Adventists reported increasing numbers of convert baptisms and steady congregational growth during the 2000s. There were 1,145 Adventist convert baptisms in 2009.[71] Jehovah's Witnesses reported nearly five times as many congregations and approximately four times as many active members as Latter-day Saints in 2010. At this time there were more Jehovah's Witness congregations in the United Kingdom than LDS congregations in all of Europe and Russia. Witnesses baptized 2,600 converts in 2010.[72]

Future Prospects

The outlook for future LDS Church growth in the United Kingdom is mixed as low member activity rates, poor convert retention, few local members serving missions, declining receptivity of the general population, and ongoing congregation consolidations threaten the stability of the Church. An increased effort by the area presidency in recent years for local congregations and members to be self-sufficient in reactivation, finding, and teaching efforts through implementing missionary activity by ward councils may reverse stagnant growth trends if consistently applied throughout the country and success will be manifest by the creation of new congregations and stabilization of smaller units. At present no new stakes appear close to dividing and a few stakes in England and Scotland may consolidate with neighboring stakes if trends of congregation consolidations continue. Additional temples may be constructed if merited by member activity and temple attendance rates.

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