

# WORLD CHRISTIAN ENCYCLOPEDIA

A comparative survey of churches and  
religions in the modern world

SECOND EDITION

David B. Barrett  
George T. Kurian  
Todd M. Johnson

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The world by countries:  
religionists, churches, ministries

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# COCOS (KEELING) ISLANDS



## SECULAR DATA, AD 2000

**STATE**  
**Official name:** The Territory of Cocos (Keeling) Islands.  
**Short name:** Cocos (Keeling) Islands. **Adjective of nationality:** Cocos Islanders.  
**Flag:** That of Australia.  
**Area:** 14 sq. km. (5 sq. mi.).  
**Government:** Australian dependency, since 1955 (1857 British colony).  
**Legislature:** Cocos (Keeling) Islands Council.  
**Official language:** English.  
**Monetary unit:** 1 Australian dollar (\$) = 100 cents. **US\$1 = \$A 1.70.**  
**Chief cities:** WEST ISLAND 551.  
**Political divisions:** 1 province.

**DEMOGRAPHY**  
**Population:** 1,000.  
**Population density:** 51.8/sq. km. (145.2/sq. mi.).

**Under 15 years:** 200.  
**Growth rate p.a.:** 0.91% (births 12.57, deaths 7.65).  
**Mortality: Infant, per 1,000:** 5.5; **Maternal per 100,000:** 25.0.  
**Life expectancy:** 79 (male 76, female 82).  
**Household size:** 4.0. **Floor area per person, sq.m:** 22.0.  
**Major languages:** Malay, English, Chinese.  
**Urban dwellers:** 80.00%. **Urban growth rate p.a.:** 1.77%.  
**Labor force:** 40%.

**ETHNOLINGUISTIC PEOPLES**  
 69.6% Cocos Islander (Malay); 14.0% Anglo-Australian; 14.0% British; 1.0% Han Chinese.

**ECONOMY**  
**National income p.a. per person:** US\$1,377; **per family:** US\$5,509.

**EDUCATION**  
**Adult literacy:** 62% (male 68%, female 56%). **Schools:** 4.  
**Universities:** 0. **School enrolment:** female/male: 65%/65%.

**HEALTH**  
**Access to health services:** 75%. **Access to safe water:** 80%.  
**Hospitals:** 1 (30 beds per 10,000). **Doctors:** 2.  
**Blind:** 5. **Deaf:** 10. **Murder rate:** 5.  
**Lepers:** 0.

**LITERATURE**  
**New book titles p.a.:** 1 (200 p.a. per million). **Periodicals:** 0.  
**Newspapers:** 0 dailies.

**COMMUNICATION** (per 1,000 people)  
**Phones:** 120 (10% mobile). **Radios:** 500. **TV sets:** 150.  
**Daily newspaper circulation:** <1. **Computers:** 50.

**HUMAN LIFE AND LIBERTY** (optimum condition=100.0%)  
**HDI:** 70.0. **HSI:** 60.0. **HFI:** 80.0. **EFL:** 55.0.

Country Table 1. Religious adherents in Cocos (Keeling) Islands, AD 1900-2025.

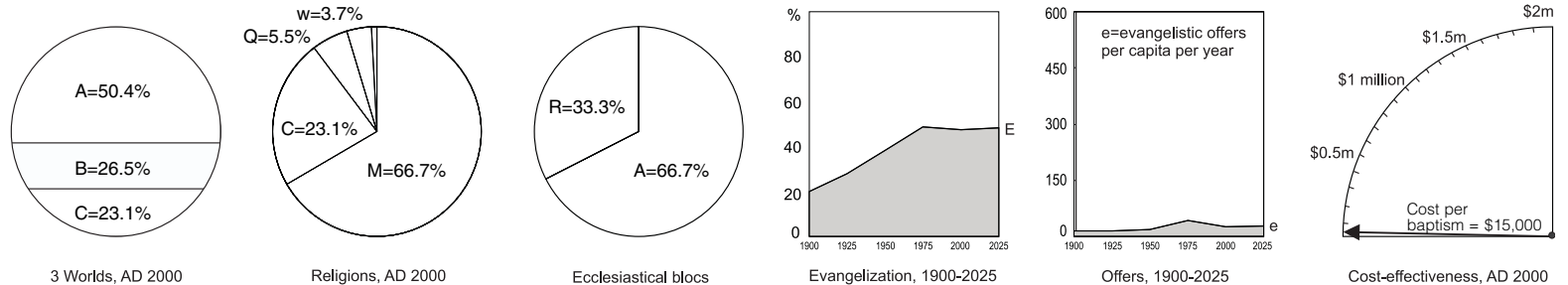
Name	1900		1970		mid-1990		Annual change, 1990-2000				mid-1995		mid-2000		mid-2025	
	Adherents	%	Adherents	%	Adherents	%	Natural	Conversion	Total	Rate	Adherents	%	Adherents	%	Adherents	%
Muslims	522	87.0	159	45.6	389	63.9	9	1	10	2.21	465	66.4	484	66.7	573	65.6
<b>Christians</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>43.0</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>20.6</b>
<i>PROFESSION</i>																
<b>professing Christians</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>43.0</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>20.6</b>
<i>AFFILIATION</i>																
unaffiliated Christians	6	1.0	40	11.5	40	6.6	1	0	1	1.18	45	6.4	45	6.2	50	5.7
<b>affiliated Christians</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>31.5</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.25</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>14.9</b>
Anglicans	48	8.0	70	20.1	80	13.1	2	-2	0	0.37	80	11.4	83	11.4	85	9.7
Roman Catholics	6	1.0	40	11.5	40	6.6	1	-1	0	0.00	40	5.7	40	5.5	45	5.2
<i>Trans-megabloc groupings</i>																
Evangelicals	20	3.3	10	2.9	8	1.3	0	0	0	2.26	8	1.1	10	1.4	20	2.3
Pentecostals/Charismatics	0	0.0	0	0.0	10	1.6	0	1	1	4.14	12	1.7	15	2.1	20	2.3
<b>Great Commission Christians</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>7.5</b>
Nonreligious	0	0.0	10	2.9	35	5.8	1	0	1	1.34	40	5.7	40	5.5	60	6.9
Baha'is	0	0.0	10	2.9	20	3.3	0	1	1	3.05	25	3.6	27	3.7	50	5.7
Chinese folk-religionists	18	3.0	20	5.7	5	0.8	0	0	0	3.42	5	0.7	7	1.0	10	1.2
World A (unevangelized persons)	480	80.0	150	43.0	339	55.8	9	-6	3	0.74	370	52.9	365	50.4	399	45.8
World B (evangelized non-Christians)	60	10.0	48	14.0	109	17.9	1	8	9	5.81	164	23.5	192	26.5	293	33.6
World C (Christians)	60	10.0	150	43.0	160	26.3	3	-2	1	0.49	165	23.6	168	23.1	180	20.6
<b>Country's population</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1.77</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**COLUMNS, ROWS.**  
 For meanings and definitions, see Codebook (Part 3). Note that, by definition, total 'Christians' = professing + crypto-Christians, which also = affiliated + unaffiliated Christians, and also = Great Commission Christians + latent Christians. Percentages may not always total exactly, due to rounding.

**CENSUSES.**  
**30.VI.1961:** 73.2% Muslims and Chinese folk-religionists, 13.5% Anglicans, 6.8% Protestants, 5.8% Roman Catholics, 0.5% nonreligious. **30.VI.1966:** 71.2% Muslims and Chinese folk-religionists, 16.3% Anglicans, 6.9% Roman Catholics, 5.4% Protestants, 0.2% nonreligious. **1981:** 67.3% Muslims, 10.3% nonreligious, 8.5% Anglicans, 7.2% Protestants, 6.7% Roman Catholics. **1986:** 66.9% Muslims, 12.7% nonreligious, 8.6% Roman Catholics, 6.2% Protestants, 5.6% Anglicans.

**NOTES ON RELIGIONS**  
**BAHA'IS.** A first spiritual assembly was begun in 1960 on West Island, and is still the sole assembly (1998).  
**CHRISTIANS.** Europeans, Anglo-Australians, and some Chinese.  
**MUSLIMS.** Descendants of Malays, among whom there are still animistic practices.  
**NONRELIGIOUS.** Europeans and Anglo-Australians.

Great Commission Instrument Panel: status of Cocos (Keeling) Islands (for explanation see start of Part 4)



Country summary. **Worlds A, B, C by ethnolinguistic peoples, cities, and major civil divisions in Cocos (Keeling) Islands.**

World	PEOPLES							CITIES							CIVIL DIVISIONS						
	Num	Pop 2000	C%	Christians	E%	U%	Unevangelized	Num	Pop 2000	C%	Christians	E%	U%	Unevangelized	Num	Pop 2000	C%	Christians	E%	U%	Unevangelized
A	2	515	0.39	2	29	71	364	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	1	726	16.94	123	50	50	366
B	2	109	54.13	59	98	2	2	1	551	19.06	105	54	46	255	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0
C	1	102	59.80	61	100	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>16.80</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>19.06</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>16.94</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>366</b>

**Country status.** Cocos (Keeling) Islands is an Australian territory comprised of a group of 27 islands in the Indian Ocean. The chief product of the economy is copra.

#### HUMAN LIFE AND LIBERTY

**Human rights and freedoms.** As a territory of Australia, Australian laws fully protect human rights.

#### NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS

**Islam** is the main religion of the Malays who make up 66% of the population. There are also a few Chinese folk-religionists.

#### CHRISTIANITY

Christians are largely Europeans and Australians, with some Chinese. For Anglicans, the Cocos Islands are part of the Church of England in Australia. For Catholics, the territory is under the archdiocese of Perth. The number of Catholics varies according to the work force on the island. There are no resident reli-

gious personnel, but a priest visits the island yearly. Anglicans numbered 20% of the population in 1970, mostly from Australia, but then fell rapidly to 11.4% by 1995.

**CATHOLIC CHURCH.** The Holy See has no diplomatic relations with Cocos (Keeling Island) in AD 2000.

**Indigenous missions.** There is no missionary outreach from the Cocos Islands.

#### CHURCH AND STATE

As a private and commercial property, then later a British and Australian territory, the islands have never made religion a factor of importance. Uninhabited until 1826, the islands were first discovered by William Keeling of the East India Company in 1609. John Clunies-Ross arrived in 1827 and developed extensive coconut plantations, virtually ruling the area as his private possession after 1831. Britain annexed the islands in 1878, but the Clunies-Ross family was left in control until 1955 when they became an Australian

Commonwealth territory. The Australian constitution makes provision for free profession and practice of religion in all its territories.

#### FUTURE TRENDS AND PROSPECTS

The nonreligious have exhibited steady growth and are likely to increase to 7.2% of the population from a 1970 figure of 2%.

Christians, Muslims, and the nonreligious will likely represent the population in an approximate 40:40:10 ratio well into the 21st century.

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Country Table 2. **Organized churches and denominations in Cocos (Keeling) Islands.**

Official name (bold type = church with over 10% of all affiliated)	Begun	Type	Counc	Congs	Adults	Affiliated 1970	Affiliated 1995	G%	Names, notes, and other statistics (see Codebook, Part 3)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Catholic Church (M Perth)</b>		R-Lat	P. . . .	1	20	40	40	0.05	Expatriate laborers. No resident personnel; annual visit from Perth (Australia). Included in Diocese of Perth. Expatriates; services in English.
<b>Ch of England in Australia (D Perth)</b>		A-Cen	awe. . .	1	30	70	80	0.05	
<b>Totals</b>				<b>2</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>120</b>		
<i>Churches, members, growth, 1900-2025</i>									
Total churches, members, and denominations (mid-1900)				Congs	Adults	Affiliated	G%	Total denominations	6 Megablocs: O R A P I m
Total churches, members, and denominations (mid-1970)	1			1	30	54	1.02	1	0 0 1 0 0 0
Total churches, members, and denominations (mid-1990)	2			2	60	110	1.02	2	0 1 1 0 0 0
Total churches, members, and denominations (mid-1995)	2			2	50	120	0.44	2	0 1 1 0 0 0
Total churches, members, and denominations (mid-2000)	2			2	50	120	0.00	2	0 1 1 0 0 0
Total churches, members, and denominations (mid-2025)	3			3	51	123	0.50	2	0 1 1 0 0 0
Total churches, members, and denominations (mid-2025)	10			10	54	130	0.22	9	0 1 1 1 5 1