

## MIDDLE AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

### MARTINIQUE

#### Snapshot Section

**Country Name:**

Department of Martinique  
*Departement de la Martinique*

**Country Founded in:**

Discovered by Columbus in 1502  
Colonized by France in 1635 and has remained in French possession except for three brief periods from 1762-63, 1793-1802, and 1809-15.

**Population:**

439,202 (2007 est.)

**Government Type:**

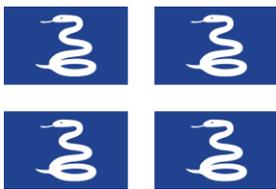
Republic – Martinique is one of five overseas departments and one of 26 regions of France.  
It has two legislative houses for the island: General Council and Regional Council.

**Geography/location in the world:**

Martinique is an island in the Caribbean to the south of Dominica and the north of St. Lucia in the Lesser Antilles islands. It is between the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean.

**Number of people groups:**

There are 9 people groups residing in Martinique with Guadeloupean Creole French being the largest (361,000).

**Picture of flag:**

## **Religion Snapshot**

### **Major Religion and % of population:**

Roman Catholic 86%

### **All religions and % for each:**

Roman Catholic (86%)

Protestant (5.6%)

Muslim (0.5%)

Baha'i (0.5%)

Hindu (0.3%)

Other (7.1%)

### **Government interaction with religion:**

As a department of France, Martinique has religious freedom and separation of church and state, as does France. A French law passed in 2000 punishes sects who “use mental manipulation” with 5 years imprisonment and a \$75,000 fine.

<http://www.crosswalk.com/525900/>

### **Sources consulted:**

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/1999/329.htm>

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/countries.php?rog3=MB>

<http://www.britannica.com/new-multimedia/pdf/wordat129.pdf>

<http://indexmundi.com/martinique/population.html>

*Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations*, vol. 3: *Americas*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. (Detroit: Gale Group, 2001  
*Operation World. 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. 2001.

# MISSION ATLAS PROJECT

## MARTINIQUE

### Basic Facts

**Name:**

Department of Martinique  
*Departement de la Martinique*

**Population:**

Martinique has a fairly even distribution of population between age groups.

Under 15:	21.4%
15-29:	19.4%
30-44:	23.7%
45-59:	18.4%
60 and over:	17.1%

An overwhelming majority of the population (98%) lives in urban centers with a population density of 354.6 persons per sq km.

The sex distribution is 47.01% male to 52.99% female.

The ethnic make-up consists of 93.4% mixed race (black/white/Asian), 3.0% French, 1.9% East Indian, and 1.7% other.

The population growth rate is 0.7%.

The birth rate is 13.4 births / 1,000 population compared to a world avg. of 21.1 / 1,000. 31.8% are legitimate vs. 68.2% illegitimate.

The infant mortality rate is 6.76 / 1,000 live births (1999).

The average number of births per childbearing woman is 1.9.

The marriage and divorce rates are 3.6 / 1,000 pop. and 1.9 / 1,000 pop.

The life expectancy is 75.9 yrs for males and 82.0 yrs for females.

The death rate is 7.2 deaths / 1,000 pop. (world: 9.0 / 1,000)

Major causes of death per 100,000 population include: diseases of the circulatory system (234.2), cerebrovascular disease (86.4), malignant neoplasms (164.8), accidents, poisoning, and violence (55.7), and diabetes mellitus (36.1).

<http://www.britannica.com/new-multimedia/pdf/wordat129.pdf>

## Language:

There are two official languages of Martinique. The national language is French in the lineage of the Indo-European language group. However, a majority of the islanders speak Martiniquan Creole French, also called Patwa, Patois, or Guadeloupean Creole French, which is of the Creole language group.

“Creole and its many varieties evolved as a new form of *patois* as a result of interaction on the overseas plantations of Europe. It is a common language emanating from the culture of people who have evolved in a Creole environment, where French masters living far from France adopted this life-style during the time they had African slaves and later, indentured Indian and Chinese laborers.”

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creoles\\_and\\_Patois](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creoles_and_Patois)

## Society/Culture:

Being an overseas department of France, Martinique has a culture that blends the French and the Caribbean cultures. Like the French, many businesses close at noon and reopen later in the day. Additionally, language and education are representative of the French culture.

On the other hand, there is also a huge emphasis on the island culture of the Caribbean. The island is marked by many distinctive symbols including *Ile aux Fleurs* (“Island of the Flowers”), one of two unofficial nicknames given to the island. The other is *Pays des Revenants* (“Land to Which One Returns”). Another symbol is a wooden fishing boat, called a *gommier*. This symbolizes a society that is completely surrounded by the sea. Also, the *bakoua* is a woven hat which symbolizes its early peasant culture when most of the inhabitants were slaves of the French landowners. The island mascot is the *colibri* or hummingbird.

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

Food customs also blend that of French and Creole styles to bring about a unique Martinican cuisine. Much of the food is prepared using fruits and seafood, and made spicy using hot pepper called *piment*. During holidays, *boudin*, a spicy sausage of pig’s blood, is a staple. Other dishes include a great deal of fish and shellfish that is so abundant in the area. Many meals are still accompanied by imported French wines.

The inhabitants of Martinique find many reasons to celebrate, for art, culture, and sports. Perhaps the most famous of their celebrations, however, is Carnival. The islanders refer to this event as Vaval, the name of the giant puppet that personifies the event. Related to the Catholic Mardi Gras, Carnival is a four-day celebration that occurs just before Lent. During this event, people dress up in costumes and fill the streets with the sounds of drums, singing, and parades. The islanders elect a Carnival Queen, a Mini-Queen, and a Queen Mother from each town and the children will dress up in costumes as well and get candy and money from drivers on the street.

<http://martinique-guide.info/past.and.present/culture/>

In addition to this, Martinicans also celebrate Bastille Day, Armistice Day, May Day, Easter, and Emancipation Day as well as *Bannzil Kréyol* (the International Day of Creole). Emancipation Day is celebrated August 1<sup>st</sup>, and *Bannzil Kréyol* is celebrated October 28<sup>th</sup>.

In Martinican society, machismo is a continued tradition practiced where women lead the households while men dominate the outside society. It is normal for men to have mistresses in addition to their wives and family at home.

Women who are employed may expect to receive lower wages and deal with male chauvinistic attitudes and behaviors. Couples often live together along with their children, and they are assisted in childcare with close relatives.

There is a pressure for Martinicans among their families to “marry up” rather than down in terms of social class and skin color. As a result, little more than 1/3 of Martinican men, age 18 or older, and Martinican women, age 15 or older, are married.

In socialization and formality, French customs prevail. In meeting a stranger in public places, it is customary to open a conversation in French rather than in Creole, which could be seen as disrespectful. One is expected also to use the formal *vous* form of speech rather than the informal *tu* form. Shaking hands is normal.

For more intimate interaction, Martinicans use the French greeting adapted to their own style. As opposed to the standard two-cheek kiss where only cheeks touch, Martinicans kiss up to four times moving slower and making a more elaborate head turn to allow for lip-to-cheek contact.

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

Soccer and cockfighting are popular sports in Martinique.

### **Government:**

Martinique is an overseas region and an overseas department of France. Therefore, it is under the same governmental system as France.

France is a republic divided into three branches of government: the executive branch, the legislative branch, and the judiciary branch.

The executive branch is comprised of the President and the Prime Minister. President Nicolas Sarkozy was elected May 16, 2007 and he appointed Prime Minister François Fillon.

The legislative branch is comprised of Parliament, which is made up of two houses: the National Assembly and the Senate.

The judiciary is based on civil law and made up of the judicial branch and the administrative branch. Each of these has their own supreme court, the *courts of cassation* for the judicial branch and the *Conseil d'Etat* for the administrative branch.

France has various legal subdivisions, which include regions, departments, and communes, and the national government is prohibited from imposing themselves on the legal operations of the divisions.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Government\\_of\\_France](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Government_of_France)

Martinique is both a region and a department of the French government and it is divided into three *arrondissements*, which is made up of 34 communes. These 34 communes are each governed by an elected municipal council. Martinique sends two representatives to the Senate and four representatives to the National Assembly in Paris where they are represented in the national government. They receive a prefect from France who comes to act as the local executive of the central government on the island.

In addition to this local executive, there are also two locally elected assemblies. These include the general council with 45 members and the regional council with 41 members. The general council is in charge of roads, housing, transportation, education and the infrastructure in general while the regional council is in charge of economic, social, sanitary, scientific, and cultural development.

The current prefect since 2004 is Yves Dassonville. The president of the General Council is Claude Lise, elected March 22, 1992. The president of the Regional Council is Alfred Marie-Jeanne since March 1998. Members of both councils are elected by local popular vote to serve six year terms.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics\\_of\\_Martinique](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics_of_Martinique)

France controls the legislative and judicial branches of Martinique. The police force and Gendarmerie, a military unit charged with police duties, are French. In addition, France holds the third strongest military presence in the Caribbean, mostly present in Martinique.

There are a number of political parties present in Martinique, but they can be grouped into three primary categories: those in favor of continuing to be a department of France, those in favor of becoming autonomous within the French Republic, and those in favor of complete independence from France.

The parties belonging to the first group include the Gaullist Rassemblement pour la République, the modern right Union pour la Démocratie Française, and the leftist Fédération de la Martinique. In the second group, parties include the Parti Communiste Martiniquais and the Parti Progressiste Martiniquais. The proindependence parties number the most with the Combat Ouvrier, the Conseil National des Comités Populaires,

Group Révolution Socialiste, Mouvement des Démocrates et Ecologistes pour une Martinique Souveraine, and the Mouvement Indépendantiste Martiniquais.

The strongest of these throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the Parti Progressiste Martiniquais, led by Aimé Césaire, advocating Martinican autonomy within the French Republic.

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

### **Economy:**

Martinique's economy was one traditionally based on agriculture. However, in recent years, the island's source of economic wealth due to agriculture has declined with the decline of sugar production and its economy has become more reliant on the tourism industry.

As of 2003, Martinique had a GDP of \$6.117 billion with \$14,400 GDP per capita. 6% GDP came from agriculture, 11% from industries, and 83% from services. As of 1998, 165,900 people of Martinique's population were employed in the labor force, leaving 27.2% of the population unemployed. 11,000 of those in the labor force were employed by the tourism industry. Martinique's main trade partner is France with two-thirds of the island's imports coming from France and more than three-fifths of its exports going to France. The value of its imports far exceeds the value of its exports, which results in a large trade deficit. This fact, combined with the fact that unemployment in Martinique is so high, makes it difficult for Martinique to make much progress economically.

Martinique has extremely fertile soil, which accounts for why the economy was mainly based on agriculture for so long. Major products produced by Martinique include sugarcane, bananas, avocados, exotic fruits, various vegetables, and flowers. Its main exports include refined petroleum products, bananas, rum made from sugarcane, and pineapples. Its main export partners include France (45%) and Guadeloupe (28%). Export revenues totaled \$404.2 million f.o.b. (free on board) in 2002.

Most of the job market is made up of tourism positions and government positions. Tourism has provided 11,000 jobs for Martinicans, allowing the major part of foreign exchange for Martinique to be in tourism. Due to the French government's assistance with Martinique's economy, another large portion of jobs are in government positions. Other industries include petroleum refining, sugar and rum production, and pineapple canning.

Since Martinique is a remote tropical island, it is forced to import high priced items such as vehicles, meats, foodstuffs, clothing, construction materials, petroleum products, and other consumer goods. It gets most of its imports from France (62%), while also importing goods from Venezuela (6%), Germany (4%), Italy (4%), and the U.S (3%). The total value of its imports totaled \$2.307 billion c.i.f. (cost, insurance, and freight) in 2002.

<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-54677/Martinique>  
[http://www.indexmundi.com/martinique/economy\\_profile.html](http://www.indexmundi.com/martinique/economy_profile.html)  
<http://martinique-guide.info/past.and.present/economy/>

### Literacy:

97.7% (2003 est.)

### Land/Geography:



Geographic Coordinates: 14 40 N, 61 00 W

Martinique is an island in the Caribbean, part of the Lesser Antilles south of Dominica and north of St. Lucia. Its total area is 1,100 sq km with 1,060 sq km being land area and 40 sq km being water area. Its coastline is 350 km around. Martinique claims 12 nautical miles of territorial sea and 200 nautical miles of an exclusive economic zone. Its highest point is the peak of Montagne Pelee at 1,397 m and its lowest point is at sea level on the coast (0 m). The capital, Fort-de-France, is located on the west coast north of an inland bay called the Bay of Fort-de-France (La Baie du Fort-de-France).

Martinique's climate is tropical with an average temperature of 26 degrees C (79 degrees F). It has a dry season from December to June and a rainy season from July to December. Rainfall is very irregular and can range anywhere from 40 inches to 400 inches per year. It is also very humid. Northeast trade winds blow almost 300 days a year, but hot winds from the south occasionally bring hurricanes. On average, Martinique suffers a variety of major natural disaster, hurricanes, flooding, or volcano eruptions, every five years.

The terrain of Martinique is largely mountainous and forests cover about one-fourth of the total land area. The largest and most dominant mountain is an active volcano, Mt. Pelee. The Lezarde is one of the few rivers that drain into the sea from the mountains. Most of the coastal regions are covered in mangrove swamps and tropical rainforests. The land use is broken up into 9.09% arable land, 10% permanent crops, and 80.19% used for other purposes.

<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-54671/Martinique>  
[http://www.theodora.com/wfbcurrent/martinique/martinique\\_geography.html](http://www.theodora.com/wfbcurrent/martinique/martinique_geography.html)  
<http://www.graphicmaps.com/webimage/countrys/namerica/caribb/martnque.htm>

## History

The first inhabitants of the island of Martinique were the Arawak Indians, migrating from the Orénoque basin in northern South America. Evidence suggests that there were approximately sixty Arawak sites in Martinique around the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. Around the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the Carib Indians, after which the Caribbean region is named, came and defeated the Arawak reign over the island and much of the surrounding islands throughout the Lesser Antilles. It is from the Carib language that the island got its name, Madinina, meaning “Island of Flowers.”

In June 1502, Christopher Columbus landed on Martinique on one of his last expeditions to the Americas. The Spaniards did not take much interest in the island, and it was left alone until 1635 when Pierre Belain d’Esnambuc landed with a number of settlers and colonized the island for France.

The colony began agricultural production with sugar cane, cotton, and tobacco being its first crops. Relations between the Carib Indians and the French thus became hostile and resulted in the Carib Expulsion, forcing the Caribs to be removed from the island in 1660. European labor force was not enough to fill the amount needed to work the plantations in Martinique, so in 1642, King Louis XIII authorized that blacks from Africa be seized as slaves to work the fields in the colonies of the Americas. Through the slave trade, goods were taken to France, exchanged for goods to be taken to Africa, and there the goods would be traded for slaves to be brought to the Americas. This action accounts for a large portion of what would become the dominant culture of Martinique, being Creole from the mix of the French landowners and the African slaves.

Martinique remained under French control with the exception of three brief periods when the British captured and controlled the island. The first of these was during the Seven Years’ War from 1762-63. The British again controlled the island from 1794-1802 during the French Revolutionary Wars after the Creole landowners sought out the British for protection against the abolition of slavery that they feared would occur in France (which it did in 1794). However, in 1801, Napoleon reinstated slavery and in 1802 soldiers from France regained control of Martinique for French rule under the Treaty of Amiens. The last British rule over Martinique was 1809-1814 during the Napoleonic Wars. Slavery was officially abolished in 1848 with Victor Schoelcher and all slaves became French subjects. Many of the former slaves then moved off the plantations and were replaced by workers from India who were paid low salaries and faced persecution and racism as well as terribly harsh conditions.

By 1902, the capital of St. Pierre was largely considered to be the most cultured town in the West Indies. However, an eruption from Mount Pelée destroyed the town and its 28,000 inhabitants causing it to lose its cultural reputation and its status of capital, which was transferred to the current capital, Fort-de-France.

In 1946, under Aimé Césaire’s political leadership, Martinique became an overseas department of France which it remains today. It has been granted regional status and the

island has gained more political autonomy as it has its own local governing body and laws which govern the island.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Martinique](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Martinique)  
<http://en.webcaribes.com/martinique/history.html>  
<http://membres.lycos.fr/fdl/e-histo.htm>

### **Christian History**

The arrival of the French on the island of Martinique also brought the French religion, Roman Catholicism. That has remained the primary religion ever since, but it is not widely practiced among the inhabitants. Dominican, Jesuit, and Capuchin missionaries arrived with early settlers to convert the Indians and the slave labor force to the Catholic religion. However, it was not until 1816 that the first apostolic prefect was appointed over the island. In 1850 Martinique became a diocese under the jurisdiction of Propaganda Fide in Rome. This means that Rome targeted Martinique as a mission field to be evangelized for the Catholic faith. Although, Catholicism was the primary religion already, it was difficult to gain clergy members on the island.

There has not been much Protestant influence in Martinique until recently. From 1970 to 1995, the number of Protestants nearly doubled, with a majority of the advance being made by Seventh Day Adventists who arrived in 1924. Independent Baptists arrived in 1945 and have developed in 4 different areas on the island. There is also a Reformed Church, but it attracts mostly the metropolitan French.

Syncretism has become a major problem in Martinique. Maldevidan Spiritism is a syncretism of Hinduism and Catholicism with the primary deity being Maldevidan, a figure often portrayed riding on a horse and identified with Jesus Christ. Another of the gods is Mari-eman, who is associated with the Virgin Mary, but not the mother of Maldevidan. Maldevidan Spiritism is common in the northern parts of the island where many temples can be found. Another belief system held by the islanders is called *Quimbois*. It is a system of beliefs that practices plant medicines and sorcery and is rooted deep within popular culture. It has existed since the slave era among the inhabitants.

Martinique has a policy of religious freedom while there remains an archbishop who presides over 47 parishes and 60 priests. France would provide the archbishops for the island until 1973 when a native of Martinique became the first national to be archbishop over Martinique. Since then, France has had less involvement in the religious affairs of the island.

<http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/Martinique.html>  
*World Christian Encyclopedia Volume I*

## Religions

### Non Christian:

*Islam* (0.5%): “In Martinique, the Muslim community is mainly composed of African Muslim immigrants from West Africa. Martinique is also home to a very wealthy immigrant Palestinian Muslim community supported by Saudi Arabia.”

<http://hendrasyahputra-d.blogspot.com/>

*Hinduism* (0.3%): Hinduism came to Martinique with the importation of Indian labor following the abolition of slavery. Temples remain in use in Martinique although only about 0.3% of Martinicans now practice the Hindu religion.

*Buddhism* (less than 1,000): Buddhism is practiced by the Mandarin Chinese and the Vietnamese that have immigrated to the island.

*Baha’i* (0.5%): Baha’i has seen rapid growth in its local assemblies and has had steady growth from 0.1% in 1970 to 0.5% today.

*Spiritists* (0.1%): Maldevidan Spiritists combine aspects of the Hindu religion with Catholicism associating the principal deity, Maldevidan, with Jesus Christ and the second most important deity, Mari-eman, with the Virgin Mary. This is common in the northern regions of the island with many shrines and gathering places throughout the region. Rituals include playing drums, dancing on sharpened machettes, and sacrificing animals such as cocks and sheep.

*Quimbois*: A version of Hinduism brought to Martinique by the southern Indian immigrants who replaced the slaves, Quimbois is a religion that practices plant and herb medicines and sorcery and survives in a few places on the island. Most of these *quimboiseurs* consider themselves to be Catholic.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hinduism\\_in\\_Martinique](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hinduism_in_Martinique)

*World Christian Encyclopedia Volume I*

*Jehovah’s Witness* (about 1%): There has been a surge in activity in recent years for Jehovah’s Witnesses in Martinique. This group is growing in strength.

*Roman Catholic Church* (86%): Roman Catholicism was brought to Martinique with the French explorers who settled the island in 1635. The diocese of Martinique was erected in 1850 under Bishop Etienne Jean François Le Herpeur and claimed the religion of almost the entire population. Today, Catholicism covers 86% of the population and has 60 priests over forty-seven parishes under archbishop Gilbert Marie Michel Méranville. In 1967, the diocese was elevated from Diocese of Martinique (Fort-de-France e Saint Pierre) to Diocese of Fort-de-France (e Saint Pierre). The Catholic Church holds 47 congregations in Martinique with a membership of 188,571 and affiliations of 330,000.

<http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/diocese/dfodf.html>

## **Protestant/Evangelical/Pentecostal:**

*Assemblées de Dieu* (Assembly of God): This church started as a mission in 1975 from the Assemblies of God of France and the U.S. In 2001, it had twenty-five congregations with 2,100 members and 4,200 affiliates. It is a Pentecostal church that believes in a 2-crisis-experience, these being conversion and the baptism of the Spirit.

*Assoc. des Eglises Ev. Baptistes* (Association of Evangelical Baptist Christians): This Baptist church began in Martinique in 1980 and had 5 congregations with 200 members and 308 affiliates in 1995.

*Eglise Baptiste* (Baptist Church): This church was established in 1977 by Southern Baptist missionaries. In 2001, it had 4 congregations with 340 members and 500 affiliates.

*Eglise Baptiste Indépendante*: This church began in 1945 as a mission of Evangelical Baptists from the United States. In Martinique, it has some Bible shops and does some radio work. In 1995, it had ten foreign missionary personnel. As of 2001, this church had ten congregations with 570 members and 850 affiliates.

*Seventh Day Adventist* (3%): This group represents the fastest growing group in Martinique. They have gained a following from both the rural and the urban settings among the more impoverished class in Martinique.

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

<http://www.nationmaster.com/country/mb-martinique/rel-religion>

*Eglise de Dieu*: This mission was established around 1975 by missionaries of the Church of God of Cleveland from the United States. It is Pentecostal in nature with belief in conversion, sanctification, and baptism of the Spirit, signified by speaking in tongues. In 2001, the church had five congregations with 520 members and 1,200 affiliates.

*Eglise de Dieu de Prophétie*: A mission of the Church of God of Prophecy established in 1986, this church has close ties to, and is a schism of, the Church of God (Cleveland). In 1995, there was one congregation in Martinique with 50 members and 83 affiliates.

*Eglise du Nazaréne*: Established in 1976 as a mission of the Church of the Nazarene, this church is a holiness church out of the Methodist tradition. In 2001, it had six congregations with 180 members and 250 affiliates.

*Eglise Réformée de France*: This church is a branch of the Reformed Church of France. It serves mostly native French military and civilians. In 2001, there was one congregation of 170 members and 300 affiliates.

*Fédération des Eglises Ev. Baptistes*: This small federation began in Martinique around 1985. In 1995, it had only one congregation of 20 members and 40 affiliates.

*Mission Chrétienne Ev. de Martinique*: This is the fastest growing of the evangelical churches in Martinique. Began around 1955, it grew to twenty-nine congregations by 2001, having 4,336 members and 6,200 affiliates.

## People Groups

**46662**

### **Béké White Creole (5,151)**

The Béké are Creole Whites born in the Antilles. They are descended from the French slave owners during the plantation period of Martinican history. They speak French and are primarily Catholic.

**22270**

### **East Indian (1,071)**

The East Indian peoples of Martinique come from the Tamil people group of South Asia. The East Indians came to the island when slavery was abolished in 1848 and a workforce was needed to replace the freed slaves. The current population differs greatly between different sources (Joshua Projects reports 7,500 East Indians living in Martinique). The East Indians have assimilated into the Martinican culture, adopting Lesser Antillean Creole French as their primary language and Christianity as their primary religion although some still practice Hinduism.

**16390**

### **French (32,969)**

The French on the island are mainly there to fill government, military, and education positions. They are referred to by the islanders as metros and often treated as outsiders.

Most of the French population in Martinique attend the Reformed Church of France.

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

*World Christian Encyclopedia Volume 1*

**16391**

### **French Creole (360,605)**

This group comprises the majority of the population of Martinique. This group descended from the African slaves intermarried with the French plantation owners. This group speaks a dialect of Lesser Antillean Creole French close to Guadeloupean Creole French.

Their primary religion is Catholic. However, 5% of the population is evangelical with an accelerating rate of new fellowships.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php?rop3=106357&rog3=MB>

<http://www.peoplegroups.org/Detail.aspx?PID=16391>

**22269**

**Haitian (3,217)**

This group is of the same Afro-Caribbean cluster as the French Creole. The Haitians immigrated to Martinique in the 1970's from Haiti, which they left for political reasons. Their greatest contribution to Martinican society is that of their music, called kadans ("cadence"). Their slave culture and language of Haitian Creole French identify well with the French Creole of the island, and they have gotten along well in Martinique.

Their primary religion is Catholic, with between 2-5% being evangelical.

<http://www.sibetrans.com/trans/trans2/desroches.htm>

**16392**

**Han Chinese, Mandarin (574)**

The Han Chinese make up the largest people group in the world at about 1.3 billion. They speak the Mandarin dialect of Chinese.

They are about 50% Christian on the island of Martinique and do have the Bible available in their own language. Between .01-2% of this group is evangelical. The other 50% are Buddhist. No information could be found about this group in Martinique.

**16393**

**Syrian Arab (574)**

This group is a subgroup of the Levant Arabs. They have a wealthy community in Martinique supported by Saudi Arabia.

This group speaks North Levantine Arabic and is primarily Christian in Martinique while the Levant Arabs of Syria are Sunni Muslim. Bible translations and gospel recordings are available in their language while the Jesus film is not.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam\\_in\\_South\\_America](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam_in_South_America)

**16394**

**Vietnamese (382)**

There is a small population of Vietnamese in Martinique. Their language is Vietnamese and their religion is Buddhism.

They are among the least reached people group in Martinique although Bible translations, gospel recordings and the Jesus film are all available in their language. No information could be found about this group in Martinique.

## **Missiological Implications**

1. Evangelical Churches and Christians should recognize Martinique as a viable field for evangelism and church starting. Believers should band together to pray for this land and its peoples.
2. Evangelical Churches and Christians should develop a plan for evangelizing Roman Catholics (especially those who practice a form of syncretized or folk Catholicism) and gathering the converts into churches. The existing believers should be trained in the use of these methods of evangelism and church starting.
3. Evangelical Christians and churches should develop means of teaching the true nature of Christian conversion and Christian living. This method should be used among the believers in Martinique.
4. Evangelical Churches and Christians should become more aware of the economic and health problems that exist in Martinique and seek means to meet these social and economic needs.
5. Evangelical Churches and Christians need to share the truth of Christianity among the highly syncretized people who continue to practice folk religion including sorcery.
6. Evangelical Churches and Christians should seek to contribute training and aid to the churches in Martinique.
7. Evangelical Churches and Christians should consider an effort among the French peoples who are primarily Orthodox in their beliefs. Evangelism and church starting ministry might well find harvest among these peoples. This people group numbers over 32,000

### **Pictures:**

### **Links:**

[http://www.ethnologue.com/show\\_country.asp?name=MQ](http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=MQ) For language information

<http://www.sibetrans.com/trans/trans2/desroches.htm> Martinican music

<http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/Martinique.html> Culture