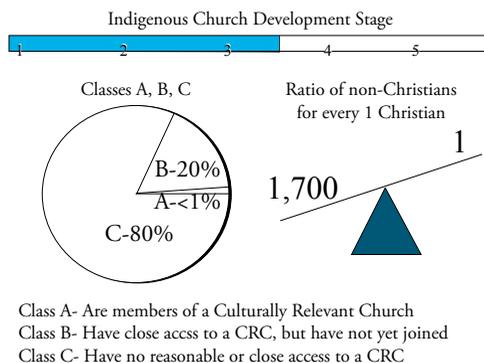


Kazakh



Quick Facts

Population: 12,000,000
 Kazakhstan: 8,700,000
 China: 1,300,000
 Uzbekistan: 1,000,000
 Russia: 600,000
Religion: Sunni Islam
Believers: 0.05% (MBB)
Scriptures: NT
Ministry Tools: JRGT
Church Status: 3
Mission Status: 2
MS Subgroups: 25+



Identity: The Kazakhs descend from Genghis Khan's nomadic herdsmen army which swept across Central Asia in the 13th century. Historically, they were divided into three great hordes, or alliances of tribes and clans. These three hordes broke away from the Uzbeks in the 16th century and formed their own confederation. Since that time, they have gradually evolved into a distinct ethnic group.

Lifestyle: Traditionally, the nomadic Kazakh encamped in temporary settlements called *auls*, which ranged from 5 to 20 tents in the summer and 50 to 1,000 in the winter. The Soviets sought to end this practice by developing the rangeland into farms, and importing foreign labor to manage them. As a result, over 1 million Kazakhs died of starvation. Today, many rural Kazakhs are returning to their pastoral lifestyle.

Customs: Up until the Soviet era, the Kazakhs were ruled by a noble class

led by a hierarchy of Khans, or clan, tribal and horde rulers. This noble class only intermarried within itself, and arranged marriages between commoners to strengthen clan and tribal alliances. Today, Kazakhs continue to arrange marriages between clan lineages, often many years in advance. The new couple will be given their own yurt and a small herd of livestock.

Religion: Most of the noble class converted to Islam in the 15th century through the preaching of itinerant Sufi missionaries. The Soviets endeavored to break up the noble class, and mostly succeeded, resulting in the nobility becoming largely secularized and Russified. Most Kazakhs have adhered to their traditional Shamanism, and this continues today, loosely syncretized with an already unorthodox Islam.

Christian Outreach: There has been excellent progress in church planting among the urbanized secular Kazakhs.

Over 100 Kazakh speaking fellowships and discipleship groups have been established in the last 15 years. However, among the rural Kazakhs, which account for 75% of the group's population, little progress has been made. In China, several underground Kazakh house fellowships have been established in the last few years.

How to Pray:

☞ Since 1991, over 5,000 mosques have been built in Kazakhstan. Pray that the efforts to convert Kazakhs to orthodox Islam will not be successful in any way.

☞ From the early days, the young Kazakh church has been a missionary Church, helping to plant the first fellowships among the Kirgiz (a closely related people). Pray that many more leaders and missionaries would be trained and thrust out.

☞ A culturally sensitive Russian Bible is being prepared for the 40% of Kazakhs who no longer speak their native language. Pray for its success and wide distribution.

☞ Efforts are underway by both Russian Orthodox and Islamic groups to restrict the witness of evangelicals. Pray for full religious freedom.

**Every year 110,000
 Kazakhs die
 without Christ.**