

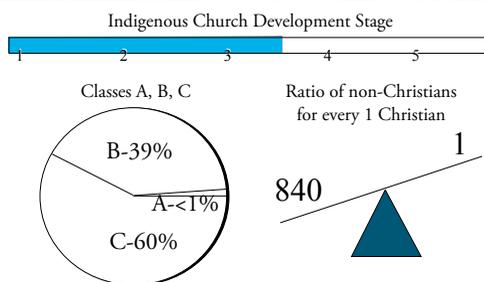
Kyrgyz



Quick Facts

Population: 4,200,000
 Kyrgyzstan: 3,500,000
 China: 350,000
 Uzbekistan: 240,000
 Tajikistan: 80,000

Religion: Islam—Sunni
Believers: 0.11% (MBB)
Scriptures: NT
Ministry Tools: JRGT
C Status: 3
M Status: 2
MS Subgroups: 5+



Class A- Are members of a Culturally Relevant Church
 Class B- Have close access to a CRC, but have not yet joined
 Class C- Have no reasonable or close access to a CRC

Identity: The Kyrgyz are a Turkic people, which originated in central Siberia. They did not become a separate ethnicity from the Kazakhs until the 15th century when, according to tradition, forty tribes were forced from their Siberian homeland by the Kalmyks and other tribes, into what is now present day Kyrgyzstan.

Lifestyle: Throughout Soviet occupation, the Kyrgyz attempted to maintain their nomadic pastoralism, moreso than any other Central Asian people. When the Soviets tried to force them into collectivized farming, many slaughtered their herds in protest and fled to China. Today most rural Kyrgyz continue to practice a semi-nomadic lifestyle, though many young people are immigrating to the cities, causing urban slums and unemployment to grow at an alarming rate.

Customs: Kyrgyz must be able to trace their ancestry back seven

generations to establish themselves as Kyrgyz, and not the descendants of slaves or mixed marriages. Kinship herding groups called *oruq* have enormous authority as a collective governing unit over the decisions made by every family and individual. Leaders of *oruqs* are elected democratically, and typically transfer over to modern civic leadership roles, such as mayors of towns, etc.

Religion: The Kyrgyz converted to Islam in the 15th century during their long march from Siberia. They were brought to faith by Sufi missionaries, who allowed the Kyrgyz to syncretize much of their Shamanistic beliefs. The city of Osh is a popular pilgrimage site, containing the tombs of Muslim saints, including the biblical Job. Shamans are still called upon to heal and drive out spirits, though typically the ritual will include Quranic chanting.

Christian Outreach: The growth of the Kyrgyz church has been faster than any

other Central Asian Muslim people. Over 80 Kyrgyz churches have been established and a strong indigenous leadership is emerging. The desire to reach out beyond Kyrgyzstan may soon develop into a significant cross-cultural missions movement.

How to Pray:

✞ Praise God for the 100+ missionaries which are laboring among the Kyrgyz. Pray for a successful transfer of leadership to Kyrgyz pastors and evangelists.

✞ The emerging Kyrgyz church has demonstrated a strong sense of unity, due in part to cooperative efforts of mission organizations in the Kyrgyz Partnership. Pray that this unity might continue to deepen and become a model throughout Central Asian MBB communities.

✞ Pray for church planters to be sent from Kyrgyzstan to work among the Kyrgyz in China, which have only a handful of believers, and for the complete evangelization of all Kyrgyzstan's minority Muslim peoples.

✞ Pray that the Church might have favor with the government of Kyrgyzstan, despite pressures from other Central Asian countries to crack down on Evangelicals.

**Every year 45,000
 Kyrgyz die
 without Christ.**