

Praying for Greece

(Bulgaria, Albania)

Geography

Area: 131,957 sq km. Southernmost part of Balkan Peninsula in southeast Europe and 150 inhabited islands in the Ionian, Aegean and Mediterranean Seas. The islands constitute 20% of the land area.

Population: 11,183,393

Annual Growth: 0.22%

Capital: Athens

Urbanites: 61.4%

Peoples

People Groups: 46 (22% unreached)

Official language: Greek **Languages:** 24 All languages

Religion

Largest Religion: Christian 10,228,331 (91.46%)

Evangelicals: 41,376 (0.4%)



Answered Prayers and Specific prayer needs listed on back.

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Greece Specific Prayer Needs

The Orthodox Church was a rallying point for Greece during the long Ottoman and then German occupations. Orthodoxy became a deep part of Greek identity and contributed to an attitude of xenophobia. Other expressions of Christianity are seen as a threat. Renewal within the Orthodox framework tends to mean anti-heresy movements and increased monasticism. Most Greeks are ignorant of the gospel message and are unreceptive to any non-Orthodox witness. Points for prayer:

a) Spiritual renewal and reformation are needed within the Greek Orthodox Church. Pray for the archbishop, the bishops and priests to be led by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit and to in turn lead the people of Greece into a life-changing encounter with the living God.

b) The relationship between Orthodox and Protestant communities has been characterized by rivalry, mistrust and hostility. Pray that members and leaders in both might recognize the true enemy and work together to build God's Kingdom.

c) There are growing calls from within the Orthodox community for the re-evangelization of the Greek people. Thank God for the recognition that there is spiritual work to be done; pray that this may lead to greater collaboration between Orthodox and evangelical churches.

Religious minorities have in the past been persecuted by the Greek government and frowned upon socially by the majority. But in recent years things have improved, although discrimination occasionally occurs due to ignorance or fanaticism. While Muslims and Jews enjoy official recognition, Catholics and Protestants often face difficulties in getting the same recognition. In such cases, proselytism tends to be the stumbling block – any groups perceived as attempting to woo Greeks away from Orthodoxy will face opposition. Pray that such discrimination might end and, in turn, that evangelicals might see the effectiveness of working toward the re-evangelization of Greeks in appropriate ways and through the right channels.