

NATIONAL CENSUS OF BELIZE RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION, 1970-2010

Compiled by Clifton L. Holland

8 September 2011

CENSUS	CATHOLIC	PROTESTANT	OTHER	NONE/NA
1970	64.6%	27.8%	7.6%	--
1980	61.9%	34.9%	1.2%	2.9%
1991	57.7%	34.3%	3.4%	6.0%
2000	49.6%	35.8%	4.6%	10.0%
2010	40.5%	50.5%	7.4%	1.6%

*This category includes “no religion” and “no answer.”

NOTES:

(1) The definition of which groups belong in the “Protestant” category was made by PROLADES based on information provided by the respective national census, and the statistics for the category of “Other” were modified accordingly.

(2) “Other religions” included a wide range of smaller religions: Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses and other Marginal Christian groups. Non-Christian traditions included Hindu, Bahai, Chinese religions (mainly Buddhism), as well as Islam/Black Muslim and Rastafarian communities among the Creole population. Official census categories, however, oversimplified religious identity in Belize. Some syncretistic beliefs and practices could easily be recognized. Many Garifuna for example, while nominally Roman Catholic, continue to uphold their traditional beliefs and practices, such as the *dugu* ritual, through which they honored their ancestors and perpetuated their distinctive Afro-Caribbean cultural identity. The Catholicism of many Mayans was similarly inflected with aspects of their own Amerindian cultural traditions. Among Creoles, the belief in Obeah, or witchcraft, has endured, particularly among the older generations of the urban and rural poor.

Source: <http://countrystudies.us/belize/25.htm>

OTHER SOURCES:

1. Population by Religion, 1970 Population Census, Central Statistical Office (Belmopan, Belize).
2. Population by Religion, 1980 Population Census, Central Statistical Office (Belmopan, Belize).
3. Central Statistical Office (Belmopan, Belize). *1991 Population Census: Major Findings*. [1993?]. Selected results are presented from the 1991 census of Belize. The data include total population by sex and rural or urban area and district for 1970, 1980, and 1990; age distribution; ethnic groups, religion, language, disability, and place of birth; international migration; education; marital status and fertility; economic activity; income; and housing. Central Statistical Office, Ministry of Finance, Belmopan, Cayo, Belize.
4. Population by Religion, 2000 Population Census, Central Statistical Office (Belmopan, Belize).
5. Population by Religious Denomination, 2010 Population Census, Belize Statistical Institute (Belmopan, Belize).