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# Brazil

**Total area:**

8,515,767 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population:**

207,350,000 (2017)

**Literacy:**

83%

**Official languages:**

Portuguese

**GDP (PPP) per capita:**

\$15,646 (2017 est.)

**Life expectancy:**

73 years

**Religions:**

74% Catholic, 17% Protestant, 7% Agnostic or Atheist, 2% other religions

## Prayer points

### A prayer for discernment

Phil Rout, Latin Link member in São Paulo, Brazil, writes: "Social distancing measures seem to be having the desired effect. About half of the deaths (in Brazil) have occurred here in São Paulo state, as São Paulo city is the epicentre of the virus in Brazil. However, it is difficult to be sure what the real situation is, because rates of testing are still very low. "Brazil's public health system is rather precarious, and some cities and states recently announced that they have reached capacity and now have people waiting for beds in intensive care. It is very worrying to think what might happen to the most vulnerable in society – our church has been taking food out to the streets every day to feed the homeless." Please pray for: Brazil's leaders, for God to give them wisdom and make the right decisions. Also pray for Christians in Brazil, that they would discern opportunities to share the hope that we all have in Jesus, at a time when many are very fearful or are struggling to cope. (Latin Link - May 2020)

### Bringing restoration to the broken

Betel's mission is to bring long-term freedom and restoration to lives broken by drug and alcohol abuse through building values, skills and character – living, working and worshipping together in a caring Christian community. Betel in São Paulo, Brazil, is strong and prospering. They are planning to develop a new business in the nearest large town, with the goal of establishing a new residential facility and a second church. Pray that God will make this possible. (WEC International - May 2020)

### Breaking New Ground project for students

Please pray for IFES national movement students and staff in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guyana, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago and in one other country who are pioneering student ministry in new cities and on new campuses with resources from the IFES Breaking New Ground\* initiative. Please pray that God would provide local Christian students who will get involved in this ministry and invite friends to study the Bible, and for protection and energy for staff and volunteers travelling long distances to support the new groups. \*The Breaking New Ground project was launched in 2018 to support and resource pioneering ministry by awarding grants, by identifying and training people and by mobilising prayer across IFES's global network. (IFES - April 2020)

### **Challenging the practice of 'jeitinho'**

Pray for ethics: Brazil is the country of the '*jeitinho*' (finding a way around things by bending the rules). In some cases this can reveal a sinful mentality which says it is fine to trample on others to get what you want and has led to an ethical crisis. (Latin Link - April 2020)

### **Ofaié indigenous group in Brazil**

The Ofaié is a small indigenous group in Brazil. They have a history of hardships and fighting for survival. In the past, they were thrown out of the land that belonged to their ancestors, but now they are back to their area and that means a lot to them. The day-to-day life for the Ofaié families continues to be a challenge; please pray for them. Pray that they raise themselves in dignity, cry out to God for help in times of need, and open their hearts to receive God's Word, preached by the Terena, a neighbouring indigenous group. (Emmanuel International - February 2020)

### **Light in Amazonia boat brings hope**

For over 50 years, Light in Amazonia (Luz na Amazônia), an outreach programme launched by the Bible Society of Brazil, has been working to provide social, spiritual and medical assistance to riverside communities facing situations of extreme need. Riverside dwellers face exclusion, isolation, illiteracy, child and slave labour, violence, sexual exploitation, disease, famine, and human trafficking. Most homes do not have electric power, sewerage or piped water systems (the water all comes from the river); leaving many at risk of contracting water-borne diseases. The Light in Amazonia boat has been specially designed with medical consultation rooms, a laboratory and a pharmacy; and is staffed by doctors, dentists and other health care specialists who are providing medical check-ups and tests, dental assistance, physical therapy and, most important of all, spiritual teaching. Please pray for the Bible Society of Brazil as they continue this work. Pray that as people are helped with their physical problems that God would also touch their hearts as they hear and read His Word. (Scottish Bible Society - June 2019)

### **Safe houses for children**

Working in Olinda, in northeastern Brazil, ReVive International provides safe houses for young girls, and now boys as well, who are victims of sexual abuse, exploitation and neglect. They will soon be opening a new home, hopefully in early-mid 2019, for babies and young children up to the age of seven, both boys and girls. Even as they open this new home, pray that one day soon the ReVive homes will all be able to close as more Christians step up to foster and adopt children. (Church Mission Society - February 2019)

### **Courageous students in Latin America**

Without a doubt, the greatest strength of students in Latin America is their initiative to be involved in mission. In many of the movements there are only one or two workers, who support students in various universities and even in cities. Students are the main protagonists of the university mission! Poverty, corruption and violence are huge challenges for students in Latin America. However, perhaps the greatest challenge is for students to not be ashamed of their faith, but instead to share and connect with the academic and social world. Please pray for courageous communities of students who know and live in God's word, who share their love for Jesus, who are serving the needs of the

vulnerable, and who enter the academic and ideological discussions of the university from the perspective of a mature and complete faith. (IFES - December 2018)

### **A Safe House for Girls**

Some CMS mission partners are working with vulnerable girls in the Northeast of Brazil. They ask that we pray for the girls in the ReVive home, a safe house for girls who have been abused or abandoned. Pray for healing from the traumatic experiences that they have had, for peace, restoration and renewed hope. Pray also for more adoptive families to come forward from local churches and, for those applying for adoption, pray that the process would go smoothly. (Church Mission Society - March 2018)

### **Reaching the Indigenous**

The Terena indigenous church has passion for missions in its DNA. For years they have sent out their own missionaries to other ethnic groups in Brazil. Today they reach out to 29 villages. The Cades Barneia and Canaã Bible Institutes are schools led by Terena church leaders to prepare and send out indigenous missionaries and pastors. In 2017 they trained 26 students from 10 different ethnic groups. The Brazilian government is closing the indigenous areas to non-indigenous people, making these populations difficult to reach. Our bible schools are preparing those who have access to these areas to enter with the gospel in places we cannot! It is a great challenge but please pray for fruits for the Kingdom of God that last forever. Please pray for the Terena Bible Institutes, for the students in training and for spiritual and finance support from the churches. (Emmanuel International - January 2018)

### **Wearing out the Buttons**

Julia lives with her daughter and 4-month-old granddaughter. She lost her leg 7 years ago after an accident and is now confined to a wheelchair. For the first few years she suffered with depression, cried incessantly and was embarrassed she didn't have her leg. Then she received a 'Player of Hope' - a solar-powered MP3 audio player - from a Brazilian missionary and everything changed. She spent hours each day listening to programmes and her life was transformed. Julia is now on her third player because she wears out the buttons! She no longer feels she is suffering and knows God is with her. Pray for those who receive audio players in Brazil today and for more lives to be changed, just like Julia's. (Reach Beyond - November 2017)

### **Incarcerated**

"It is an incredible opportunity we have been given to witness, challenge, console and love these young people who have sadly found themselves in conflict with the law," says Paul. "Many of those in the boys' detention centre we visit are aged between 12 and 17. Most have been incarcerated because of petty crime, drug trafficking or anti-social behaviour, though a few are there for more serious crimes, including murder". Recently, though, the church was granted a special opportunity to visit and spend most of the day at the boys' centre. "Praise God that one young guy last month accepted Christ as his Saviour while we were with him," reports Paul. "In addition, one of the young guys who has been recently released had been in touch to see if he could come to visit our church. Lives are being changed." Pray that there will be a true change of heart in the lives of boys who have, and may yet, give their hearts to God. (Latin Link - September 2017)

### **River Communities**

In Amazon Basin river communities, no one (not even mainland Brazilians) can enter without being invited. But one family had visited another village and met a Brazilian missionary, called Fornaldo, there. He helped the family with some problems they had, and when a relationship was built over a few visits, the father accepted a Player of Hope (an MP3 device loaded with evangelism materials) to take back to the village. The villagers were at first angry about Fornaldo being invited ashore to go and answer some questions raised about the content of the Player of Hope. After the first visit however, Fornaldo was invited back, and now many people come to the man's house every week as

they listen to the audio programmes and discuss them with the missionary. Pray for gospel seeds to be sown in that community. (Reach Beyond - September 2017)

### **Terena Church Outreaches**

The leadership of the Terena indigenous church has launched a challenging plan for this year: to hold eight conferences in areas where the Terena churches are located and also in villages where the Terena missionaries have been preaching to other Brazilian indigenous nations. The leaders are aiming to reach around 400 people in each conference, and 1,000 in two of them. Bible teaching, lectures on holistic ministry and the importance of better nutrition, alongside hands-on activities, will be carried out. Pray this initiative will serve to advance the Kingdom of God. (Emmanuel International - July 2017)

### **Church-Planting Challenges**

Church-planters in Florianopolis, Brazil, write: "Pastorally we face challenges, with people dealing with complex issues like mental health struggles, families finding it hard to make ends meet and broken relationships. In contrast to a lot of prosperity gospel teaching that's around, which encourages the belief that 'every area of your life should be victorious or there's something wrong with your faith', we try to hold onto a theology of suffering as well as a theology of healing and blessing. It's an acknowledgement that there is a real tension in this life as we do our part to extend God's kingdom in a broken world." Please pray for growth in both numbers and maturity within the church plant and wider community. (Church Mission Society - May 2017)

### **Courageous Conferences**

The leadership of the Terena indigenous church has launched a challenging plan for this year: to hold eight conferences, both in areas where the Terena churches are located, and in villages where the Terena missionaries have been preaching the gospel to other Brazilian indigenous nations. The conferences will involve churches from 25 different ethnic groups. As well as Bible teaching, lectures on holistic ministry and the importance of better nutrition (with hands-on activities) will also be held. Please pray for the Terena church leaders as they plan for the conferences and pray for the necessary funds to cover the conference expenses. (Emmanuel International - March 2017)

### **More Than Just Football**

Paul and his colleagues run a football project for boys and teenagers from a very poor area of Recife, Brazil. Recently, the project held its end-of-season awards party. But it's not just about football, for those who come along know that they will receive Biblical teaching after every session. Latin Link member Paul says: "Football really isn't our priority but instead it's where we desire to see radical changes in the attitudes, behaviour, mindsets and lives of the children and teenagers we work with, and to support and help them grow to become men of God." Pray that the young people will listen to and respond to the gospel message and Christian-values teaching they hear week by week. (Latin Link - February 2017)

### **Players of Hope**

Along the Apuquitaua River in Brazil, MP3-like audio players are being distributed to local communities. These 'Players of Hope' are solar-powered and pre-loaded with the entire Bible, a series of Bible studies and gospel and children's programmes, indigenous worship music and educational material on community and health topics. More than 500 players have recently been distributed among 28 communities, and missionaries there are being trained how to make new audio material for the devices. These communities are very open to learning more about the gospel so please pray that the Lord will use these programmes to reveal himself to these communities. (Reach Beyond - November 2016)

### **Corrientes Course**

"The biggest lesson that I learned at Corrientes was the transparency in the lives of my mentors and

the reflection of Jesus in each one of them.” This is just one comment from a Latino missionary going through the Corrientes programmes (Spanish for ‘Currents’). Corrientes is a missionary training programme using the tool of individual mentoring, and many Latinos are now serving the Lord worldwide after going through the course. Pray for Corrientes students as they prepare for service overseas, that the Lord will lead them to the place where he can use them most. (Reach Beyond - September 2016)

### **Propac Centre**

The Propac Centre in Águas Formosas, Brazil was started through the vision and compassion of a local pastor and his wife. They had seen and heard that there was a problem with children suffering from violence and sexual abuse in their homes and neighbourhood. Their idea was to have the church host the children and that is where the day care centre began. Propac wants to be a refuge for children at risk, where they are loved, learn more about the Word of God, have meals, and participate in training projects like Computers and Sewing. Please pray for the children who come to the centre, and their families, that they will experience God's love and find new opportunities to improve their lives. (Emmanuel International - July 2016)

### **MP3 Bibles**

Players of Hope are solar-powered MP3 players, preloaded with the entire Bible, a series of Bible studies and gospel programmes, children's programming, indigenous worship music and educational programmes on community and health topics. 500 Players of Hope have just been distributed among 28 communities along the Amazon Basin in Brazil and missionaries there are being trained how to make new audio material for the devices. These communities are very open to learning more about the gospel so please pray for engaging material and for God to send more missionaries to teach local people how to produce their own audio content. (Reach Beyond - November 2015)

### **Cross-cultural training**

There has been amazing numerical growth in the Evangelical Church in Latin America in the past 50 years, from around 23 million in 1970 to 228.5 million in 2010. There's also been incredible growth in the Latin mission movement: there are now about 18,000 Latin American mission workers worldwide. Sadly, many return home before time due to lack of finance and inadequate training. Pray for organisations such as ProMETA, which is developing into an online university offering five Masters programmes to help give mission workers the tools to be successful in a cross-cultural situation. (Latin Link - March 2015)

### **Forced into prostitution**

Pray for organisations working with children and young people who have been forced into prostitution or who have suffered abuse from within the home. According to the Brazilian government, out of the 59.5 million children and teenagers in Brazil, almost half of them (45.9%) live in extremely poor conditions where they find themselves vulnerable to great risk. Boys tend to join the drug gangs where their lives are endangered either due to the drugs or rival gangs. The girls tend to find themselves in even more vulnerable situations as many are forced into selling their bodies for money. UNICEF estimates that there are around 500,000 children involved in the sex industry in Brazil with another inestimable number suffering 'hidden' systematic abuse within the home. In some cases the child's own family has been found encouraging them to sell their body or has actively 'touted' the child for sex. (Church Mission Society - January 2015)

### **When the rain falls...**

When the rain falls and the river next to her house rises, Maria will often end up wading through water that's up to her chest. The river is poorly managed, used as a dumping ground and the water leaves Maria's home a stinking mess. Such is the reality of living in the favela of Peixinhos. Maria makes a meagre living from recycling and cleaning but being repeatedly hit by flooding has taken its toll on her living conditions. Pray for a Tearfund youth project in the area which aims to change people's

attitudes towards their neighbourhood, using drama to raise awareness of environmental issues. Besides environmental work, young people are being helped to speak out about the needs of their community, enabling change to come from inside. (Tearfund - September 2014)

### **'Green drought'**

It's another year of 'green drought' in north-east Brazil - a term used by locals to refer to the fact that the rainy season has started, but there has only been sufficient rain to turn the landscape green, not to grow crops. The hardy people living in the semi-arid region understand climate change and are quick to point to the impact it's having on their daily lives. Yields from farming have diminished for four consecutive years. However, new possibilities are becoming a reality as families adapt to the effects of climate change. In 2012 the people of Carnaíba decided to set up a bakery. They were supported by Tearfund partner Diaconia, who provided training, support with planning and budgeting, and later, as the business took off, helped them gain permission from the local authority to utilise the kitchens of a disused school. Pray for this and other initiatives that are helping people to cope with the effects of climate change. (Tearfund - May 2014)

### **'One of the least evangelised places in Brazil'**

It's said that the area around Cariré is one of the least evangelised places in Brazil. The town has a population of around 7,000 but there are also many small settlements spread across the countryside. Challenges in the region include idolatry and witchcraft (many families, even Christians, will approach the local witchdoctor for healing). Proclamation Church in Cariré started two years ago, with one weekly cell group. Today there are 11 cell groups and a Sunday congregation of over 60 people, consisting mostly of poor families. Each month the cell groups distribute food parcels to those in need. The groups also play an important role in discipleship, helping individuals to develop the gifts God has given them. Give thanks that Jesus is transforming lives in Cariré! (Latin Link - May 2014)

### **World Cup**

The 2014 World Cup being held in Brazil this summer will bring challenges such as a cocaine boom and increased sex tourism. Yet with around 600,000 visitors, there are plenty of opportunities for reaching out with the gospel. The church has the chance to speak out for those with no voice, including those being trafficked, and to hold authorities accountable on child abuse and how public money is spent. However, in order to make a lasting difference in people's lives beyond evangelism during the tournament, the Brazilian church will have to overcome its lack of unity and unwillingness to work together. Please pray for the church to seize this opportunity. (Latin Link - March 2014)

### **Overcoming addictions**

Young people in the Ilha de Boipeba region of Bahia, Brazil, whose lives have been affected by drugs and other issues, can now channel their energies into sports while deepening their faith in Christ, thanks to the work of EMAF. Dozens meet to play basketball, football, volleyball and work on their judo moves, while a gentle approach to sharing God's love helps bring spiritual benefits to lives previously enslaved by addictions. Around 40 have been mentored in their Christian faith; some are in the process of joining the church. "Our goal is to reach 400 young people per week by the end of 2015," say EMAF. (WorldShare - July 2013)

### **Sexual exploitation**

UNICEF estimates that there are around 500,000 children involved in the sex industry in Brazil with another inestimable number suffering systematic abuse within their own home. Since the 2001 Asian tsunami, the northeast of Brazil has overtaken Thailand as the 'capital' of sex tourism. Indeed a government study on children forced into prostitution in Recife found that the majority of them are aged between 5 and 14 years old with the average age of their first sexual encounter being just 10 years old. Pray for *ReVive*, a new project which will work with young girls who have been forced into prostitution or who are being sexually exploited or abused. There are lots of projects working with boys in the area, but none working exclusively with girls. (Church Mission Society - November 2012)

### **Resistant to the gospel**

Pray for the Ye'kuana or Maiongong people groups who live alongside the Sanumá (Yanomami) in Auaris. They broke off from the main group in Venezuela in order to separate themselves from the evangelism that was taking place in their tribal group. They are very resistant to the gospel. Please pray for a breakthrough. (Mission Aviation Fellowship UK - September 2012)

### **My Father's House**

Rafael grew up with his grandmother in Olinda, a city known for violence and poverty. As a pre-teen, Rafael joined a local gang and started sniffing solvents and stealing. Following a gang fight, a death warrant was issued for Rafael. He fled to the streets, where he was picked up and sent to *My Father's House*, a Christian-run haven for vulnerable boys. After a few weeks, Rafael gave himself to Jesus. He kicked the glue habit and enrolled in school. Because of the death warrant, Rafael couldn't return to his grandma so a CMS team found one of Rafael's uncles, and then found a larger house with a shop for the family to run. They arranged for business training for Rafael's uncle and for Rafael to visit the family on weekends. Before long, he was ready to move in full-time. Pray for Rafael and others like him, as well as for the ministries of those trying to reach them. (Church Mission Society - March 2012)

### **High crime rates**

Crime throughout Brazil, assassinations, hijackings and extreme violence has risen to alarming rates. The number of drug addicts has doubled in the last few years and this is reflected in the number of fatal accidents on urban roads. The number of fatalities resulting from car and motorcycle accidents during the first three months of the present year has more than doubled from the same period last year. Authorities are most concerned also with the news that a new drug, even more addictive than crack, is now in circulation. Please pray for the safety of those working, living and travelling in Brazil. Also pray for young people growing up in this environment. (Echoes International - July 2011)

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