



City of St. Louis  
*Mental Health Board*  
of Trustees

# **THE WORLD IN ST. LOUIS**

## **A CROSS-CULTURAL RESOURCE GUIDE**

Prepared by:  
The City of St. Louis Mental Health Board of Trustees

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# INTRODUCTION

At the meeting place of the great waters of North America, St. Louis owes its past, present and future to the people from all over the world who came to live here.

Regardless of the circumstances that led us to this once thriving city, our many and varied traditions, histories, voices, hands, hopes, sensibilities, superstitions, politics, religions and fortunes are woven into the fabric of our local culture. It is a brightly colored and richly textured cloth that needs every thread in it to hold it together and to give it strength.

**THE WORLD IN ST. LOUIS** presents information about residents of the City whose life experiences and world-views may differ from those of the mythical, stereotypical Middle American. This is information that is intended to help us learn about our neighbors and resources to direct them to when they might need help.

## HOW THE WORLD IN ST. LOUIS IS ORGANIZED

**THE WORLD IN ST. LOUIS** is organized by the ethnicities or nationalities of City residents. Ethnicities and nationalities were chosen based on the number of students attending St. Louis Public Schools during the current school year.

The Background section for each group offers social, political and/or economic history that may help with understanding what various people have had to contend with in the recent past. For many of our neighbors, past injustice, ill-treatment, torture and/or trauma continue to haunt their daily lives.

Listing of the predominant ethnic groups, religions and languages in each country may help with arranging or customizing service delivery for our neighbors.

The Local Resources section for each country lists the names of agencies or organizations that will advocate for, acculturate or assist residents in general or in time of need. Please let us know about other agencies and helping services we may have overlooked.

## THE WORLD IN ST. LOUIS IN CONTEXT

**THE WORLD IN ST. LOUIS** is a different place since the horrible events of September 11, 2001. We have all lost the sense of personal and collective safety we previously enjoyed. Given our uncertain times, the data presented here are in constant flux, but **THE WORLD IN ST. LOUIS** is provided to remind us to not lose our humanity as well.

# AFGHANISTAN

Location: South Asia

## Background:

Afghanistan was invaded and occupied by the Soviet Union in 1979. The USSR was forced to withdraw 10 years later by anti-communist mujahidin forces supplied and trained by the US, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and others. Fighting subsequently continued among the various mujahidin factions, giving rise to a state of warlordism that spawned the Taliban in the early 1990s. The Taliban was able to control most of the country through torture, systematic ill-treatment and degrading and capricious punishment. Allied military action forced the group's downfall in 2001. Despite the installation of a transition government, there is occasional violent political jockeying and ongoing military action to root out remaining terrorists and Taliban elements. The country suffers from enormous poverty, a crumbling infrastructure, and widespread land mines. Largely owing to persistent drought, an estimated quarter of the population were at risk of starvation in 2002. Although the transition government has promised basic human rights for women and girls, systemic and systematic repression continues to be the norm.

Afghan refugees in the United States have been victims of racially motivated violence in the aftermath of 9/11. Afghan refugees, particularly males aged 16 and above, are subject to special INS registration and secret, indefinite detention.

## Nationality:

noun: Afghan(s)  
adjective: Afghan

## Religions:

Sunni Muslim 84%, Shi'a Muslim 15%, other 1%

## Ethnic Groups:

Pashtun 38%, Tajik 25%, Uzbek 6%, Hazara 19%, minor ethnic groups (Aimaks, Turkmen, Baloch, and others)

## Languages:

Pashtu 35%, Afghan Persian (Dari) 50%, Turkic languages (primarily Uzbek and Turkmen) 11%, 30 minor languages (primarily Balochi and Pashai) 4%, much bilingualism

## Local Resources

Islamic Center of Greater St. Louis  
3843 W. Pine • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)531-8646 Fax: (314)531-4667

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weiman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

# AFRICAN-AMERICANS

Location: North America

## Background:

The majority of African-American citizens of the United States are descendants of slaves forcibly brought to the New World during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Throughout much of their history in the United States, African-Americans have been systemically and systematically discriminated against; indiscriminately jailed, persecuted, tortured and lynched, and; legally, socially, educationally and economically disenfranchised. Their contributions to the nation's character, strength and greatness generally have been devalued or ignored, and their cultural expressions frequently have been usurped by the broader society.

## Nationality:

noun: American(s)  
adjective: American

## Religions:

Christianity (Baptist, African Methodist Episcopal, Roman Catholic, etc.) with mixture of ancestral belief systems; Islam.

## Languages:

English, Dialectical English

## Local Resources

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)  
625 N. Euclid • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)862-2228

Better Family Life  
724 N. Union, Suite 301 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)367-3440 Fax: (314)367-1414

Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3701 Grandel Square • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)615-3600

Association of African-American Role Models  
P.O. Box 78873 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)768-2417

Annie Malone Children & Family Service Center  
2612 Annie Malone Dr. • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)531-0120

Blacks Assisting Blacks Against AIDS  
625 N. Euclid, Suite 320 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-1600

The African America Rite of Passage  
2411 Union • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)383-5865

Black Alcohol Service Information Center (BASIC)  
1501 Locust, Suite 1100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)621-9009 Fax: ((314)621-1071

Coalition of 100 Black Women  
P.O. Box 4505 Field Station • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)653-1994

Herbert Hoover Boys & Girls' Club  
2901 N. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)652-8300

# ALBANIA

Location: Southeast Europe

## Background:

In 1990 Albania ended 44 years of xenophobic communist rule and established a multiparty democracy. The transition has proven difficult as corrupt governments have tried to deal with severe unemployment, the collapse of a fraudulent nationwide investment scheme, widespread gangsterism, and massive influxes of refugee from neighboring Kosova, a province of Serbia. The Kosovar refugees are ethnic Albanians.

## Nationality:

noun: Albanian(s), Kosovar(s)  
adjective: Albanian, Kosovar

## Ethnic Groups:

Albanian 95%, Greeks 3%, other 2% (Vlachs, Gypsies, Serbs, and Bulgarians)

## Religions:

Muslim 70%, Albanian Orthodox 20%, Roman Catholic 10%

note: all mosques and churches were closed in 1967 and religious observances prohibited; in November 1990, Albania began allowing private religious practice

## Languages:

Albanian 90%, Greek

## Local Resources

St. Thomas the Apostle Romanian Orthodox Church  
6501 Nottingham • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)353-0841

Islamic Center of Greater St. Louis  
3843 W. Pine • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)531-8646 Fax: (314)531-4667

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weiman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# AMERICAN INDIANS

Location: North America

## Background:

Before contact with Europeans, it is estimated that there were about 2.5 million indigenous people representing over 300 distinct tribes in what would become the United States. Throughout much of its history, the United States actively attempted to exterminate these indigenous people through harsh relocation policies and practices, limiting economic opportunity leading to extreme poverty, forcibly enrolling their young people in boarding schools where their languages and cultural expressions were forbidden, and introducing alcohol and other drugs. All American Indians and Alaska Natives are citizens of the United States, though some can still claim dual citizenship to tribal entities under treaty agreements dating before 1871.

## Nationality:

noun: American(s), various tribal affiliations e.g., Shawnee(s), Navajo(s), Cherokee(s), Lakota(s), Iroquois, Chippewa(s), Iowa(s)  
adjective: American, various tribal affiliations e.g., Shawnee, Navajo, Cherokee, Lakota, Iroquois, Chippewa, Iowa

## Languages:

Predominantly English, though tribal languages are still spoken.

## Ethnic Groups:

512 federally recognized Native entities and an additional 365 state-recognized tribes. In Missouri, Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma is the only federally recognized Native entity. Dogwood Band of Free Cherokees, Northern Cherokee Nation of the Old Louisiana Territory, and Northern Cherokee Tribe of Indians are state recognized tribes.

## Local Resources

American Indian Center of St. Louis  
4115 Connecticut • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-3316 Fax: (314)773-7160

American Indian Council  
317 N. 11th Street, 7th floor • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)589-6653 Fax: (314)231-7923

# BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Location: Southeast Europe

## Background:

Bosnia and Herzegovina's declaration of sovereignty in October of 1991, was followed by a referendum for independence from the former Yugoslavia in February of 1992. The Bosnian Serbs - supported by neighboring Serbia - responded with armed resistance aimed at partitioning the republic along ethnic lines and joining Serb-held areas to form a "greater Serbia."

In March 1994, Bosnia's Bosniaks and Croats reduced the number of warring factions from three to two by signing an agreement creating a joint Bosniak/Croat Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. On 21 November 1995, in Dayton, Ohio, the warring parties signed a peace agreement that brought to a halt the three years of inter-ethnic civil strife which included torture, rape as a weapon of war and massacre. The Dayton Agreement divides Bosnia and Herzegovina roughly equally between the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Bosnian Serb Republika Srpska. In 2001, more than 80,000 refugees and displaced persons returned to their pre-war municipalities but faced physical violence and were discriminated against in access to employment, education and social welfare. Tens of thousands of potential returnees are unable to gain access to their pre-war homes.

## Nationality:

noun: Bosnian(s), Herzegovinian(s)

adjective: Bosnian, Herzegovinian

## Ethnic Groups:

Serb 31%, Bosniak 44%, Croat 17%, Yugoslav 5.5%, other 2.5%

note: Bosniak has replaced Muslim as an ethnic term in part to avoid confusion with the religious term Muslim - an adherent of Islam

## Religions:

Muslim 40%, Orthodox 31%, Roman Catholic 15%, Protestant 4%, other 10%

## Languages:

Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian

## Local Resources

Bosnia & Herzegovina Community Center  
3843 w. Pine • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)727-4592

Islamic Center of Greater St. Louis  
3843 W. Pine • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)531-8646 Fax: (314)531-4667

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weiman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# CAMBODIA

Location: Southeast Asia

## Background:

Following a five-year struggle, communist Khmer Rouge forces captured Phnom Penh in 1975 and ordered the evacuation of all cities and towns; over 1 million displaced people died from execution or enforced hardships. A 1978 Vietnamese invasion drove the Khmer Rouge into the countryside and touched off 13 years of fighting. UN-sponsored elections in 1993 helped restore some semblance of normalcy, as did the rapid diminishment of the Khmer Rouge in the mid-1990s. A coalition government, formed after national elections in 1998, brought renewed political stability and the surrender of remaining Khmer Rouge forces.

## Nationality:

noun: Cambodian(s)

adjective: Cambodian

## Ethnic Groups:

Khmer 90%, Vietnamese 5%, Chinese 1%, other 4%

## Religions:

Theravada Buddhist 95%, other 5%

## Languages:

Khmer (official) 95%, French, English

## Local Resources

Cambodia Bible Study & Worship

3641 Russell • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)771-6208

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)

2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)865-5267

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis

3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

# CHINA

Location: East Asia

## Background:

In the first half of the 20th century, China was beset by major famines, civil unrest, military defeats, and foreign occupation. After World War II, the Communists under Mao Zedong imposed strict controls over everyday life and cost the lives of tens of millions of people. Political controls remain tight even while economic controls continue to weaken. Citizens are arbitrarily detained or imprisoned for peacefully asserting their rights to freedom of expression, association or belief.

## Nationality:

noun: Chinese (singular and plural)

adjective: Chinese

## Ethnic Groups:

Han Chinese 91.9%, Zhuang, Uigur, Hui, Yi, Tibetan, Miao, Manchu, Mongol, Buyi, Korean, and other nationalities 8.1%

## Religions:

Daoist (Taoist), Buddhist, Muslim 2%-3%, Christian 1% (est.)

note: officially atheist

## Languages:

Standard Chinese or Mandarin (Putonghua, based on the Beijing dialect), Yue (Cantonese), Wu (Shanghaiese), Minbei (Fuzhou), Minnan (Hokkien-Taiwanese), Xiang, Gan, Hakka dialects, minor languages

## Local Resources

Chinese Chamber of Commerce

8514 Olive • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)569-9988 Fax: (314)997-7988

St. Louis Chinese American News

8601 Olive • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)432-3858 Fax: (314)432-1217

Chinese Culture Center

8406 Olive • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)567-5540 Fax: (314)567-6631

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis

3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)

2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)865-5267

# COLOMBIA

Location: Northern South America

## Background:

A 40-year guerilla insurgency, supported in part by funds from the drug trade, and retaliatory government action are responsible for forcibly displacing more than 300,000 civilians, killing more than 4,000 civilians and “disappearing” more than 300 people since 2000. Paramilitaries, operating with the active or tacit support of the security forces, have carried out hundreds of massacres of civilians in different parts of the country, but particularly in southern regions where US-funded anti-drug battalions operate.

## Nationality:

noun: Colombian(s)  
adjective: Colombian

## Ethnic Groups:

Mestizo 58%, White 20%, Mulatto 14%, Black 4%, Mixed Black-Amerindian 3%, Amerindian 1%

## Religions:

Roman Catholic 90%

## Languages:

Spanish

## Local Resources

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan St. Louis  
P.O. Box 170094 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-4788

IMAGE, Inc., St. Louis Chapter  
6651 Gravois #212 P.O. Box 78296 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)832-0790

Iglesia de la Nueva Comunidad United Methodist Church  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)772-8009

Accion Social Comunitaria  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

La Clinica Latino Community Health Center for Healthcare Services  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

Southside Catholic Community Services for Social and Mental Health Services  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-6100

# CONGO

Location: Central Africa

## Background:

Since 1994 the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire) has been rent by ethnic strife and civil war, touched off by a massive inflow of refugees from the fighting in Rwanda and Burundi. Troops from Uganda, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Angola, and Namibia have intervened in this devastating conflict. A cease-fire was signed on 10 July 1999, but skirmishing continues.

In 1994, about a million refugees fled into Zaire to escape the fighting between the Hutus and the Tutsis in Rwanda and Burundi; the outbreak of widespread fighting in the Congo between rebels and government forces in October 1996 spurred about 875,000 refugees to return to Rwanda in late 1996 and early 1997; an additional 173,000 Rwandan refugees disappeared in early 1997 and are assumed to have been killed by Congolese forces; fighting renewed in August 1998 and has continued sporadically into 2000 resulting in further internal displacement and refugee movements within the African Great Lakes region.

## Nationality:

noun: Congolese (singular and plural)

adjective: Congolese or Congo

## Ethnic Groups:

over 200 African ethnic groups of which the majority are Bantu; the four largest tribes - Mongo, Luba, Kongo (all Bantu), and the Mangbetu-Azande (Hamitic) make up about 45% of the population

## Religions:

Roman Catholic 50%, Protestant 20%, Kimbanguist 10%, Muslim 10%, other syncretic sects and indigenous beliefs 10%

## Languages:

French (official), Lingala, Kingwana (a dialect of Kiswahili or Swahili), Kikongo, Tshiluba

## Local Resources

St. Louis Committee on Africa  
5956 Cabanne Pl. • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)721-0249

African Refugee Service  
2149 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)577-6880 Fax: (314)577-6874

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# CROATIA

Location: Southeast Europe

## Background:

In 1918, the Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes formed a kingdom known after 1929 as Yugoslavia. Following World War II, Yugoslavia became an independent communist state under the strong hand of Marshal Tito. Although Croatia declared its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, it took four years of sporadic, but often bitter, fighting before occupying Serb armies were mostly cleared from Croatian lands. Under UN supervision the last Serb-held enclave in eastern Slovenia was returned to Croatia in 1998. By 2001, fewer than 10,000 of the estimated 300,000 Serbs who had fled the country returned. The return of their property remains slow and their tenancy rights have been effectively abrogated.

## Nationality:

noun: Croat(s)

adjective: Croatian

## Ethnic Groups:

Croat 78.1%, Serb 12.2%, Muslim 0.9%, Hungarian 0.5%, Slovenian 0.5%, Czech 0.4%, Albanian 0.3%, Montenegrin 0.3%, Roma 0.2%, others 6.6%

## Religions:

Roman Catholic 76.5%, Orthodox 11.1%, Muslim 1.2%, Protestant 0.4%, others and unknown 10.8%

## Languages:

Croatian 96%, other 4% (including Italian, Hungarian, Czech, Slovak, and German)

## St. Joseph Croatian Church

2112 S. 12 • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)771-0958 Fax: (314)771-0958

## Catholic Refugee Services

2840 Wisconsin • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)771-2570 Fax: (314)771-6406

## Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services

Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)516-6738

## Local Resources

### International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis

3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

### Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)

2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)865-5267

### War Trauma Recovery Project

P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)771-7061

# CUBA

Location: Caribbean

## Background:

Fidel Castro led a rebel army to victory in 1959; his iron will has held the country together since. The country is now slowly recovering from a severe economic recession following the withdrawal of former Soviet subsidies, worth \$4 billion to \$6 billion annually, in 1990. Havana blames its difficulties on the US embargo in place since 1962. The average Cuban's standard of living remains at a lower level than before the severe economic depression of the early 1990s, which was caused by the loss of Soviet aid and domestic inefficiencies. High oil prices, recessions in key export markets, and damage from Hurricane Michelle hampered growth in 2001. Illegal immigration is a continuing problem; Cubans attempt to depart the island and enter the US using homemade rafts, alien smugglers, direct flights, or falsified visas. For more than 40 years, Cuban refugees have routinely been given asylum in the United States. Under a "wet-foot, dry-foot" policy adopted by the Immigration and Naturalization Service in the 1990s, Cubans who reach U.S. soil are automatically allowed to stay; those caught at sea are sent home.

## Nationality:

noun: Cuban(s)

adjective: Cuban

## Ethnic Groups:

Mulatto 51%, White 37%, Black 11%, Chinese 1%

## Religions:

85% Roman Catholic prior to Castro assuming power; Protestants, Jehovah's Witnesses, Jews, and Santeria are also represented

## Languages:

Spanish

## Local Resources

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan St. Louis  
P.O. Box 170094 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-4788

IMAGE, Inc., St. Louis Chapter  
6651 Gravois #212 P.O. Box 78296 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)832-0790

Iglesia de la Nueva Comunidad United Methodist Church  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)772-8009

Accion Social Comunitaria  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

La Clinica Latino Community Health Center for Healthcare Services  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

Southside Catholic Community Services for Social and Mental Health Services  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-6100

# DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Location: Caribbean

## Background:

The Dominican Republic forms the eastern two-thirds of the island Hispaniola, and Haiti the remainder. Claimed by Columbus on his first voyage in 1492, the Spanish brought African slaves to the island beginning in 1503 to ensure adequate labor for plantations. A legacy of unsettled, mostly non-representative, rule for much of the 20th century was brought to an end in 1996 when free and open elections ushered in a new government.

About half of Dominicans live in rural areas; many are small landholders. The country suffers from marked income inequality: the poorest half of the population receives less than 20% of GNP, while the richest 10% enjoy 40% of national income. Haitians form the largest foreign minority group and are routinely discriminated against because of their color.

## Nationality:

noun: Dominican(s)  
adjective: Dominican

## Religions:

Roman Catholic 95%

## Languages:

Spanish

## Ethnic Groups:

White 16%, Black 11%, Mixed 73%

## Local Resources

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan St. Louis  
P.O. Box 170094 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-4788

IMAGE, Inc., St. Louis Chapter  
6651 Gravois #212 P.O. Box 78296 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)832-0790

Iglesia de la Nueva Comunidad United Methodist Church  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)772-8009

Accion Social Comunitaria  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

La Clinica Latino Community Health Center for Healthcare Services  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

Southside Catholic Community Services for Social and Mental Health Services  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-6100

# EL SALVADOR

Location: Central America

## Background:

El Salvador's population numbers about 6.2 million; almost 90% is of mixed Indian and Spanish extraction. About 1% is indigenous; very few Indians have retained their customs and traditions.

The country's people are largely Roman Catholic -- though Protestant groups are growing -- and Spanish is the language spoken by virtually all inhabitants. The capital city of San Salvador has about 1.7 million people; an estimated 42% of El Salvador's population live in rural areas.

A 12-year civil war, which cost the lives of some 75,000 people, was brought to a close in 1992 when the government and leftist rebels signed a treaty that provided for military and political reforms. In 2001, two massive earthquakes devastated the country.

## Nationality:

noun: Salvadoran(s)  
adjective: Salvadoran

## Ethnic Groups:

Mestizo 90%, Amerindian 1%, White 9%

## Religions:

Roman Catholic 86%

## Languages:

Spanish, Nahua (among some Amerindians)

## Local Resources

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan St. Louis  
P.O. Box 170094 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-4788

IMAGE, Inc., St. Louis Chapter  
6651 Gravois #212 P.O. Box 78296 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)832-0790

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3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

Southside Catholic Community Services for Social and Mental Health Services  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-6100

# ERITREA

Location: East Africa

## Background:

Eritrea was awarded to Ethiopia in 1952 as part of a federation. Ethiopia's annexation of Eritrea as a province 10 years later sparked a 30-year struggle for independence that ended in 1991 with Eritrean rebels defeating Ethiopian governmental forces. Since independence from Ethiopia, Eritrea has faced the economic problems of a small, desperately poor country. The country's economy is largely based on subsistence agriculture, with 80% of the population involved in farming and herding. The Ethiopian-Eritrea war in 1998-2000 severely hurt Eritrea's economy. The war prevented planting of crops in Eritrea's most productive region, causing food production to drop by 62%. Fundamental social problems include illiteracy, unemployment, and low skills. Despite continuing political and military uncertainty, tens of thousands of refugees have voluntarily repatriated since 2001.

## Nationality:

noun: Eritrean(s)

adjective: Eritrean

## Ethnic Groups:

Tigrinya 50%, Tigre and Kunama 40%, Afar 4%, Saho (Red Sea coast dwellers) 3%

## Religions:

Muslim 40%; Coptic Christian, Roman Catholic, Protestant 40%

## Languages:

Afar, Amharic, Arabic, Tigre and Kunama, Tigrinya, other Cushitic languages

## Local Resources

Eritrean Mutual Aid Society

P.O. Box 23115 St. Louis, MO

Phone: (636)537-4095 Fax: (314)621-4372

St. Louis Committee on Africa

5956 Cabanne Pl. • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)721-0249

African Refugee Service

2149 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)577-6880 Fax: (314)577-6874

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services

Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis

3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)

2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)865-5267

War Trauma Recovery Project

P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)771-7061

# ETHIOPIA

Location: East Africa

## Background:

Ethiopia is the oldest independent nation on the African continent. In 1974 a military junta deposed Emperor Haile Selassie and established a socialist state. Torn by bloody coups, uprisings, wide-scale drought, and massive refugee problems, the regime was toppled by a coalition of rebel forces in 1991. Ethiopia's first multiparty elections were held in 1995. The agricultural sector suffers from frequent drought and poor cultivation practices, and about 5 million of its 59 million people need food assistance annually. The war with Eritrea in 1999-2000 and recurrent drought have buffeted the economy. Under Ethiopia's land tenure system, the government owns all land and provides long-term leases to the tenants; the system hampers growth of a more robust capitalist market. Despite ongoing armed conflict in Oromo and Somali regions of the country and violent suppression of all protest, thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons have voluntarily returned since 2001.

## Nationality:

noun: Ethiopian(s)  
adjective: Ethiopian

## Ethnic Groups:

Oromo 40%, Amhara and Tigre 32%, Sidamo 9%, Shankella 6%,  
Somali 6%, Afar 4%, Gurage 2%, other 1%

## Religions:

Muslim 45%-50%, Ethiopian Orthodox 35%-40%, animist 12%,  
other 3%-8%

## Languages:

Amharic, Tigrinya, Orominga, Guaraginga, Somali, Arabic, other  
local languages, English (major foreign language taught in schools)

Ethiopian Community Association of Missouri  
2348 Tennessee • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)776-7464 Fax: (314)776-0401

St. Louis Committee on Africa  
5956 W. Cabanne Pl. • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)721-0249

African Refugee Service  
2149 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)577-6880 Fax: (314)577-6874

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

## Local Resources

St. Gabriel Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church  
3 S. Euclid • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)531-1343 Fax: (314)367-4014

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# GUATEMALA

Location: Central America

## Background:

More than half of Guatemalans are descendants of indigenous Mayan nations. Westernized Mayans and mestizos (mixed European and indigenous ancestry) are known as Ladinos. Most of Guatemala's population is rural, though urbanization is accelerating. Though the official language is Spanish, it is not universally understood among the indigenous population.

During the second half of the 20th century, Guatemala experienced a variety of military and civilian governments as well as a 36-year guerrilla war. In 1996, the government signed a peace agreement formally ending the conflict, which had led to the death of more than 100,000 people and had created some 1 million refugees.

## Nationality:

noun: Guatemalan(s)

adjective: Guatemalan

## Ethnic Groups:

Mestizo (mixed Amerindian-Spanish or assimilated Amerindian - in local Spanish called Ladino), approximately 56%, Amerindian or predominantly Amerindian, approximately 44%

## Religions:

Roman Catholic, Protestant, indigenous Mayan beliefs

## Languages:

Spanish 60%, Amerindian languages 40% (more than 20 Amerindian languages, including Quiche, Cakchiquel, Kekchi, Mam, Garifuna, and Xinca)

## Local Resources

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan St. Louis  
P.O. Box 170094 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-4788

IMAGE, Inc., St. Louis Chapter  
6651 Gravois #212 P.O. Box 78296 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)832-0790

Iglesia de la Nueva Comunidad United Methodist Church  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)772-8009

Accion Social Comunitaria  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

La Clinica Latino Community Health Center for Healthcare Services  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

Southside Catholic Community Services for Social and Mental Health Services  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-6100

# HAITI

Location: Caribbean

## Background:

One of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere, Haiti has been plagued by political violence for most of its history. Over three decades of dictatorship followed by military rule ended in 1990 when Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected president. Most of his term was usurped by a military takeover, but he was able to return to office in 1994 and oversee the installation of a close associate to the presidency in 1996. Haitians, who represent the latest large wave of immigrants arriving in South Florida, are usually deported, often after being detained by the INS until their asylum cases are heard. The government says most of the Haitians are economic, not political, refugees and not entitled to asylum. Unlike other refugee groups, Haitians are not released to the custody of relatives or sponsors while awaiting INS hearings.

## Nationality:

noun: Haitian(s)

adjective: Haitian

## Ethnic Groups:

Black 95%, Mulatto plus White 5%

## Religions:

Roman Catholic 80%, Protestant 16% (Baptist 10%, Pentecostal 4%, Adventist 1%, other 1%), none 1%, other 3% (1982)

note: roughly one-half of the population also practices Voodoo

## Languages:

French (official), Creole (official)

## Local Resources

Haitian Association of St. Louis  
P.O. Box 170094 St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)968-9025 Fax: (314)968-6397

Eglise Baptiste d'Expression Française de St. Louis  
2817 Utah • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-0108 Fax: (314)773-3032

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# HONDURAS

Location: Central America

## Background:

Honduras, along with the other Central American provinces, gained independence from Spain in 1821. Since independence, Honduras has been plagued with nearly 300 internal rebellions, civil wars, and changes of government — more than half occurring during the 20th century. Its agriculturally based economy came to be dominated by U.S. companies that established vast banana plantations along the north coast. Foreign capital, plantation life, and conservative politics held sway in Honduras from the late 19th until the mid-20th century.

Police are said to indiscriminately use excessive force against Amerindian and black civilians.

## Nationality:

noun: Honduran(s)

adjective: Honduran

## Ethnic Groups:

Mestizo (Mixed Amerindian and European) 90%, Amerindian 7%,

Black 2%, White 1%

## Religions:

Roman Catholic 97%, Protestant minority

## Languages:

Spanish, Amerindian dialects

## Local Resources

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan St. Louis

P.O. Box 170094 • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)771-4788

IMAGE, Inc., St. Louis Chapter

6651 Gravois #212 P.O. Box 78296 • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)832-0790

Iglesia de la Nueva Comunidad United Methodist Church

3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)772-8009

Accion Social Comunitaria

3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

La Clinica Latino Community Health Center for Healthcare Services

3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

Southside Catholic Community Services for Social and Mental Health Services

2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)773-6100

# HUNGARY

Location: Central Europe

## Background:

Hungary fell under communist rule following World War II. Hungary led the movement to dissolve the Warsaw Pact and steadily shifted toward multiparty democracy and a market-oriented economy. Following the collapse of the USSR in 1991, Hungary developed close political and economic ties to Western Europe. It joined NATO in 1999. Hungary's transition to a Western-style parliamentary democracy was the first and the smoothest among the former Soviet bloc, inspired by a nationalism that long had encouraged Hungarians to control their own destiny. In 2001, there were continued reports that Romas were ill-treated by police and subject to frequent, violent racist attacks. Large numbers of Afghan refugees and asylum-seekers are segregated in special detention centers and their movements are severely proscribed.

## Nationality:

noun: Hungarian(s)  
adjective: Hungarian

## Ethnic Groups:

Hungarian 89.9%, Roma 4%, German 2.6%, Serb 2%, Slovak 0.8%, Romanian 0.7%

## Religions:

Roman Catholic 67.5%, Calvinist 20%, Lutheran 5%, atheist and other 7.5%

## Languages:

Hungarian 98.2%, other 1.8%

## Local Resources

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# INDIA

Location: South Asia

## Background:

Although India occupies only 2.4% of the world's land area, it supports over 15% of the world's population. Almost 40% of Indians are younger than 15 years of age. Religion, caste, and language are major determinants of social and political organization in India today. The government has recognized 18 languages as official; Hindi is the most widely spoken.

The caste system reflects Indian occupational and religiously defined hierarchies. Traditionally, there are four broad categories of castes (varnas), including a category of outcasts, earlier called "untouchables" but now commonly referred to as "dalits." Despite economic modernization and laws countering discrimination against the lower end of the class structure, the caste system remains an important source of social identification for most Hindus and a potent factor in the political life of the country. People from socially and economically marginalized sectors of the society are vulnerable to torture and ill-treatment by police and other non-state actors.

Nonviolent resistance to British colonialism under Mohandas Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru led to independence in 1947. The subcontinent was divided into the secular state of India and the smaller Muslim state of Pakistan. A third war between the two countries in 1971 resulted in East Pakistan becoming the separate nation of Bangladesh. Fundamental concerns in India include the ongoing dispute with Pakistan over Kashmir, massive overpopulation, environmental degradation, extensive poverty, and ethnic strife, all this despite impressive gains in economic investment and output.

## Nationality:

noun: Indian(s)

adjective: Indian

## Ethnic Groups:

Indo-Aryan 72%, Dravidian 25%, Mongoloid and other 3%

## Religions:

Hindu 80%, Muslim 14%, Christian 2.4%, Sikh 2%, Buddhist 0.7%, Jains 0.5%, other 0.4%

## Languages:

English is the most important language for national, political, and commercial communication. Hindi (the national language and primary tongue of 30% of the people), Bengali, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, Gujarati, Malayalam, Kannada, Oriya, Punjabi, Assamese, Kashmiri, Sindhi, Sanskrit, and Hindustani are also spoken.

## Local Resources

Association of Indians in America  
11155 Clayton Rd. • St. Louis, MO 63131  
Phone: (314)434-7495

India Association of St. Louis  
10635 Page Ave. • St. Louis, MO 63132  
Phone: (314)423-9990 Fax: (314)423-0391

The Hindu Temple of St. Louis  
725 Weidman Rd. Ballwin, MO 63011

Phone: (636)230-3300 Fax: (636)830-2904

Mahatma Gandhi Center  
717 Weidman Rd. Ballwin, MO 63011  
Phone: (314)644-6699 or 997-1769 Fax: (314)644-1338

# IRAN

Location: West Asia

## Background:

Known as Persia until 1935, Iran became an Islamic republic in 1979 after the ruling shah was forced into exile. Conservative clerical forces subsequently crushed westernizing liberal elements. During 1980-88, Iran fought a bloody, indecisive war with Iraq over disputed territory. The 1979 Islamic revolution and the war with Iraq transformed Iran's class structure politically, socially, and economically. In general, however, Iranian society remains divided into urban, market-town, village, and tribal groups. Clerics, called mullahs, dominate politics and nearly all aspects of Iranian life, both urban and rural. After the fall of the Pahlavi regime in 1979, much of the urban upper class of prominent merchants, industrialists, and professionals, favored by the former Shah, lost standing and influence to the senior clergy and their supporters. Bazaar merchants, who were allied with the clergy against the Pahlavi shahs, have also gained political and economic power since the revolution. The urban working class has enjoyed somewhat enhanced status and economic mobility, spurred in part by opportunities provided by revolutionary organizations and the government bureaucracy.

## Nationality:

noun: Iranian(s)  
adjective: Iranian

## Ethnic Groups:

Persian 51%, Azeri 24%, Gilaki and Mazandarani 8%, Kurd 7%, Arab 3%, Lur 2%, Baloch 2%, Turkmen 2%, other 1%

## Religions:

Shi'a Muslim 89%, Sunni Muslim 10%, Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian, and Baha'i 1%

## Languages:

Persian and Persian dialects 58%, Turkic and Turkic dialects 26%, Kurdish 9%, Luri 2%, Balochi 1%, Arabic 1%, Turkish 1%, other 2%

## Local Resources

Islamic Center of Greater St. Louis  
3843 W. Pine • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)531-8646 Fax: (314)531-4667

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# IRAQ

Location: West Asia

## Background:

Formerly part of the Ottoman Empire, a "republic" was proclaimed in 1958, but in actuality a series of military strongmen have ruled the country since then, the latest being Saddam Hussein. To quell dissent and to maintain control, it has often been reported that President Hussein ordered the release of chemical and biological agents against segments of the Iraqi citizenry. Territorial disputes with Iran led to an inconclusive and costly eight-year war (1980-1988). In August 1990 Iraq seized Kuwait, but was expelled by US-led, UN coalition forces during January-February 1991. Although militarily partitioned in the north and south by UN ordered "no-fly zones," Iraq was not occupied. The Hussein regime was allowed to stay in control but required to scrap all weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles and, to allow UN verification inspections. Stringent UN-imposed economic sanctions reportedly resulted in severe hardship for the civilian population. Although assertions of terrorist connections between al-Qaeda and the Hussein regime have been thoroughly discredited, the US and UK are clamoring for war against Iraq due to its non-compliance with previous UN resolutions. Political prisoners and detainees are reportedly subjected to systematic torture including cigarette burns, pulling out fingernails, rape and suspension.

## Nationality:

noun: Iraqi(s)

adjective: Iraqi

## Ethnic Groups:

Arab 75%-80%, Kurdish 15%-20%, Turkoman, Assyrian or other 5%

## Religions:

Muslim 97% (Shi'a 60%-65%, Sunni 32%-37%), Christian or other 3%

## Languages:

Arabic, Kurdish (official in Kurdish regions), Assyrian, Armenian

## Local Resources

Al-Bayt Al-Iraqi (Iraqi House)  
7000 Chippewa, Suite 205 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)353-1377

Islamic Center of Greater St. Louis  
3843 W. Pine • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)531-8646 Fax: (314)531-4667

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# JORDAN

Location: West Asia

## Background:

For most of its history since independence from British administration in 1946, Jordan was ruled by King Hussein (1953-1999). A pragmatic ruler, he successfully navigated competing pressures from the major powers (US, USSR, and UK), various Arab states, Israel, and a large internal Palestinian population, through several wars and coup attempts. In 1989 he resumed parliamentary elections and gradually permitted political liberalization; in 1994 a formal peace treaty was signed with Israel. Abdullah II, who became king upon his father's death, continues the careful internal and external navigation of competing pressures.

Jordanians are Arabs, except for a few small communities of Circassians, Armenians, and Kurds which have adapted to Arab culture. The official language is Arabic, but English is used widely in commerce and government. About 70% of Jordan's population is urban; less than 6% of the rural population is nomadic or seminomadic. Most people live where the rainfall supports agriculture. About 1.5 million Palestinian Arabs registered as refugees and displaced persons reside in Jordan, most as citizens.

## Nationality:

noun: Jordanian(s)

adjective: Jordanian

## Ethnic Groups:

Arab 98%, Circassian 1%, Armenian 1%

## Religions:

Sunni Muslim 96%, Christian 4%

## Languages:

Arabic (official), English widely understood among upper and middle classes

## Local Resources

Islamic Center of Greater St. Louis

3843 W. Pine • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)531-8646 Fax: (314)531-4667

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)

2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)865-5267

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis

3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

# KENYA

Location: East Africa

## Background:

Kenya has a very diverse population that includes most major language groups of Africa. The standard of living in major cities has been declining in recent years. Most city workers retain links with their rural, extended families and leave the city periodically to help work on the family farm. About 75% of the work force is engaged in agriculture, mainly as subsistence farmers. Women's issues, particularly concerns over property ownership and genital mutilation, are currently being discussed as part of the national agenda.

Ethnic divisions account for many of Kenya's problems. During the early 1990s, tribal clashes killed thousands and left tens of thousands homeless. Ethnically split opposition groups allowed the regime of Daniel Toroitich arap Moi, in power since 1978, to be reelected for a fourth term in 1997 in balloting marred by violence and fraud. Successful presidential and parliamentary elections were held in December 2002 with minimum reports of violence. There was a relatively peaceful transition of power.

## Nationality:

noun: Kenyan(s)  
adjective: Kenyan

## Ethnic Groups:

Kikuyu 22%, Luhya 14%, Luo 13%, Kalenjin 12%, Kamba 11%,  
Kisii 6%, Meru 6%, other African 15%, non-African (Asian,  
European, and Arab) 1%

## Religions:

Protestant 38%, Roman Catholic 28%, indigenous beliefs 26%,  
Muslim 7%, other 1%

## Languages:

English (official), Kiswahili (official), numerous indigenous  
languages

## Local Resources

St. Louis Committee on Africa  
5956 Cabanne Pl. • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)721-0249

African Refugee Service  
2149 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)577-6880 Fax: (314)577-6874

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# KOSOVA/KOSOVO

Location: Southeast Asia

## Background

Kosova (Koh-SOH-vah), also known as Kosovo, is the disputed region between Kosova's Albanian majority and Serbia. Once an autonomous federal unit of Yugoslavia, in 1989 it was stripped away of its autonomy by the government of Slobodan Milosevic, whose later actions would result in the ensuing wars in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Kosova.

After the revocation of Kosova's autonomy, the Serbian authorities closed schools in the Albanian language, massively dismissed Albanians from state-owned enterprises, and suspended Kosova's legal parliament and government. Serbia instituted a regime of systematic oppression of the Albanian population in Kosova, and flagrant violations of basic rights of Albanians occurred frequently.

After 1998 Serbian security forces conducted a scorched earth policy in Kosova, raising villages to the ground, creating an exodus of over one million refugees and internally displaced persons, left over 300,000 people without shelter, an estimated 10,000 dead, and mass graves containing bodies of up to one hundred civilians, including women and children, who have been summarily executed.

## Nationality:

noun: Kosovar(s)

adjective: Kosovar

## Ethnic Groups:

Albanian 95%, Greeks 3%, other 2% (Vlachs, Gypsies, Serbs, and Bulgarians)

## Religions:

Muslim 70%, Albanian Orthodox 20%, Roman Catholic 10%

note: all mosques and churches were closed in 1967 and religious observances prohibited; in November 1990, Albania began allowing private religious practice

## Languages:

Albanian 90%, Greek

## Local Resources

St. Thomas the Apostle Romanian Orthodox Church  
6501 Nottingham St. Louis, MO Phone: (314)353-0841

Islamic Center of Greater St. Louis  
3843 W. Pine • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)531-8646 Fax: (314)531-4667

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# KURDISTAN

Location: West Asia

## Background:

15 million to 20 million Kurds live in a mountainous area straddling the borders of Armenia, Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey. The Kurds have been subjugated for most of their history. In modern times, Kurds have tried to set up independent states in Iran, Iraq and Turkey, but their efforts have been crushed every time. The race, language, habits, traditions and history of the Kurds differ from those of Arabs. Kurds and their language are descended from Aryan origins, while the Arabs and their language are of Semitic origins.

The Kurds received especially harsh treatment at the hands of the Turkish government, which tried to deprive them of Kurdish identity by designating them "Mountain Turks," outlawing their language and forbidding them to wear traditional Kurdish costumes in the cities. The government also encouraged the migration of Kurds to the cities to dilute the population in the uplands. Turkey continues its policy of not recognizing the Kurds as a minority group.

In Iraq, Kurds have faced similar repression. After the Kurds supported Iran in the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, Saddam Hussein retaliated, razing villages and attacking peasants with chemical weapons. The Kurds rebelled again after the Persian Gulf War only to be crushed again by Iraqi troops. About 2 million fled to Iran; 5 million currently live in Iraq. The United States has tried to create a safe haven for the Kurds within Iraq by imposing a "no-fly" zone north of the 36th parallel.

## Nationality:

noun: Kurd(s)

adjective: Kurdish

## Ethnic Groups:

Kurds

## Religions:

Sunni Muslim

## Languages:

Kurdish

## Local Resources

Islamic Center of Greater St. Louis

3843 W. Pine • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)531-8646 Fax: (314)531-4667

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services

Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis

3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)

2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)865-5267

War Trauma Recovery Project

P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)771-7061

# LAOS

Location: Southeast Asia

## Background:

In 1975 the communist Pathet Lao took control of the government, ending a six-century-old monarchy. Initial closer ties to Vietnam and socialization were replaced with a gradual return to private enterprise, an easing of foreign investment laws, and the admission into Alliance of Southeast Asian Nations in 1997. Despite official denials, arrests and harassment of members of small unauthorized Christian churches occur, particularly in villages away from more urban areas. Authorities have closed churches and imprisoned people who refused to renounce their faith.

About half the country's people are ethnic Lao, the principal lowland inhabitants and politically and culturally dominant group. Mountain tribes are known as Lao Sung or highland Lao or Lao Theung or midslope Lao. Some Vietnamese and Chinese minorities remain, particularly in the towns. French, once common in government and commerce, has declined in usage, while knowledge of English has increased in recent years.

## Nationality:

noun: Lao(s) or Laotian(s)

adjective: Lao or Laotian

## Ethnic Groups:

Lao Loum (lowland) 68%, Lao Theung (upland) 22%, Lao Soung (highland) including the Hmong ("Meo") and the Yao (Mien) 9%, ethnic Vietnamese/Chinese 1%

## Religions:

Buddhist 60%, animist and other 40%

## Languages:

Lao (official), French, English, and various ethnic languages

## Local Resources

Lao Mutual Aid Association  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-4081

Laotian Baptist Ministry  
3514 Oregon • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-6100 Fax: (314)771-0674

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

# LEBANON

Location: West Asia

## Background:

The population of Lebanon comprises Christians and Muslims. Claims since the early 1970s by Muslims that they are in the majority contributed to tensions preceding the 1975-76 civil strife and have been the basis of demands for a more powerful Muslim voice in the government. There are over 350,000 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon who are subject to discriminatory legislation and policies, particularly regarding access to education, employment, housing and health care. Hundreds of other refugees and asylum-seekers, mostly Iraqi and Sudanese, continue to be detained on the grounds of illegal entry and residence.

It is estimated that 600,000-900,000 persons fled the country during the initial years of civil strife (1975-76). Although some returned, continuing instability until 1990 sparked further waves of emigration. Many Lebanese still derive their living from agriculture. The urban population, concentrated mainly in Beirut and Tripoli, is noted for its commercial enterprise, but chronic instability until 1990 in much of the country has had a strong negative impact on both agriculture and commerce. Lebanon has a higher proportion of skilled labor than any other Arab country.

Lebanon has made progress toward rebuilding its political institutions and regaining its national sovereignty since 1991 and the end of the devastating 16-year civil war. Although Israeli forces withdrew in 2000, Syrian forces still occupy areas of Lebanon.

## Nationality:

noun: Lebanese (singular and plural)  
adjective: Lebanese

## Ethnic Groups:

Arab 95%, Armenian 4%, other 1%

## Religions:

Muslim 70% (5 legally recognized Islamic groups - Shi'a, Sunni, Druze, Isma'ilite, Alawite or Nusayri), Christian 30% (11 legally recognized Christian groups - 4 Orthodox Christian, 6 Catholic, 1 Protestant), Jewish NEGL%

## Languages:

Arabic (official), French, English, Armenian widely understood

## Local Resources

Islamic Center of Greater St. Louis  
3843 W. Pine • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)531-8646 Fax: (314)531-4667

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# LIBERIA

Location: West Africa

## Background:

A civil war in 1989-96 destroyed much of Liberia's economy, especially the infrastructure in and around Monrovia. Many businessmen fled the country, taking capital and expertise with them. Some returned; many will not return. A still unsettled domestic security situation has slowed the process of rebuilding the social and economic structure of this war-torn country. Less than 40% of the population is literate. Armed conflict since 2000 has resulted in widespread abuses against civilians by both government and opposition forces including arbitrary detention of thousands of men and boys (sometimes in holes dug in the ground), sexual violence against women and girls as a weapon of war, and massive displacement of tens of thousands of civilians within Liberia and over the borders to Guinea and Sierra Leone.

## Nationality:

noun: Liberian(s)  
adjective: Liberian

## Ethnic Groups:

indigenous African tribes 95% (including Kpelle, Bassa, Gio, Kru, Grebo, Mano, Krahn, Gola, Gbandi, Loma, Kissi, Vai, and Bella), Americo-Liberians 2.5% (descendants of US slaves), Congo People 2.5% (descendants of Caribbean slaves)

## Religions:

indigenous beliefs 40%, Christian 40%, Muslim 20%

## Languages:

English 20% (official), some 20 ethnic group languages, of which a few can be written and are used in correspondence

## Local Resources

St. Louis Committee on Africa  
5956 Cabanne Pl. • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)721-0249

African Refugee Service  
2149 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)577-6880 Fax: (314)577-6874

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# MACEDONIA

Location: Southeast Europe

## Background:

International recognition of The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's independence from Yugoslavia in 1991 was delayed by Greece's objection to the new state's use of what it considered a Hellenic name and symbols. Greece finally lifted its trade blockade in 1995, and the two countries agreed to normalize relations. Macedonia's large Albanian minority and the de facto independence of neighboring Kosovo continue to be sources of ethnic tension. Tensions escalated during 2001 and erupted in several riots and armed police intervention that led to an additional 170,000 ethnic Albanians.

## Nationality:

noun: Macedonian(s)

adjective: Macedonian

## Ethnic Groups:

Macedonian 66.6%, Albanian 22.7%, Turkish 4%, Roma 2.2%, Serb 2.1%, other 2.4% (1994)

## Religions:

Macedonian Orthodox 67%, Muslim 30%, other 3%

## Languages:

Macedonian 70%, Albanian 21%, Turkish 3%, Serbo-Croatian 3%, other 3%

## Local Resources

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# MADAGASCAR

Location: Southern Africa/Indian Ocean

## Background:

Formerly an independent kingdom, Madagascar became a French colony in 1886, but regained its independence in 1960. During 1992-93, free presidential and National Assembly elections were held, ending 17 years of single-party rule. Madagascar's population is predominantly of mixed Asian and African origin. There are 18 separate tribal groups. Asian features are most predominant in the central highlands people. The coastal people are of African origin. The Malagasy language is of Malayo-Polynesian origin and is generally spoken throughout the island. French also is spoken among the educated of this former French colony.

Most people practice traditional religions, which tend to emphasize links between the living and the dead. They believe that the dead join their ancestors in the ranks of divinity and that ancestors are intensely concerned with the fate of their living descendants. This spiritual communion is celebrated by the reburial practice of famadihana, or "turning over the dead." In this ritual, relatives' remains are exhumed, rewrapped in new silk shrouds, and reburied following festive ceremonies in their honor. An historical rivalry exists between the predominantly Catholic coastal people, considered to be underprivileged, and the predominantly Protestant highlanders, who tend to prevail in the civil service, business, and professions. A new policy of decentralizing resources and authority is intended to enhance the development potential of all Madagascar's provinces.

## Nationality:

noun: Malagasy (singular and plural)

adjective: Malagasy

## Ethnic Groups:

Malayo-Indonesian (Merina and related Betsileo), Cotiers (mixed African, Malayo-Indonesian, and Arab ancestry - Betsimisaraka, Tsimihety, Antaisaka, Sakalava), French, Indian, Creole, Comoran

## Religions:

indigenous beliefs 52%, Christian 41%, Muslim 7%

## Languages:

French (official), Malagasy (official)

## Local Resources

St. Louis Committee on Africa  
5956 Cabanne Pl. • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)721-0249

African Refugee Service  
2149 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)577-6880 Fax: (314)577-6874

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# MALAWI

Location: Southern Africa

## Background:

After three decades of one-party rule, the landlocked country held multiparty elections in 1994 under a provisional constitution, which took full effect the following year. Twice as many Malawian men as women are literate.

## Nationality:

noun: Malawian(s)

adjective: Malawian

## Ethnic Groups:

Chewa, Nyanja, Tumbuko, Yao, Lomwe, Sena, Tonga, Ngoni, Ngonde, Asian, European

## Religions:

Protestant 55%, Roman Catholic 20%, Muslim 20%, indigenous beliefs

## Languages:

English (official), Chichewa (official), other languages important regionally

## Local Resources

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5956 Cabanne Pl. • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)721-0249

African Refugee Service  
2149 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)577-6880 Fax: (314)577-6874

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# MALAYSIA

Location: Southeast Asia

## Background:

Malaysia was created in 1963 through the merging of Malaya (independent in 1957) and the former British Singapore, both of which formed West Malaysia, and Sabah and Sarawak in north Borneo, which composed East Malaysia. The first three years of independence were marred by hostilities with Indonesia. Singapore seceded from the union in 1965.

Malaysia's population comprises many ethnic groups, with the politically dominant Malaysians comprising a plurality. By constitutional definition, all Malaysians are Muslim. About a quarter of the population is Chinese who have historically played an important role in trade and business.

Malaysians of Indian descent comprise about 7% of the population and include Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and Christians. About 85% of the Indian community is Tamil.

## Nationality:

noun: Malaysian(s)

adjective: Malaysian

## Ethnic Groups:

Malay and other indigenous 58%, Chinese 26%, Indian 7%, others 9%

## Religions:

Islam, Buddhism, Daoism, Hinduism, Christianity, Sikhism; note - in addition, Shamanism is practiced in East Malaysia

## Languages:

Bahasa Melayu (official), English, Chinese dialects (Cantonese, Mandarin, Hokkien, Hakka, Hainan, Foochow), Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Panjabi, Thai; note - in addition, in East Malaysia several indigenous languages are spoken, the largest of which are Iban and Kadazan

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

## Local Resources

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# MEXICO

Location: Southern North America

## Background:

The site of advanced Amerindian civilizations, Mexico came under Spanish rule for three centuries before achieving independence early in the 19th century. A devaluation of the peso in late 1994 threw Mexico into economic turmoil, triggering the worst recession in over half a century. Ongoing economic and social concerns include low real wages, underemployment for a large segment of the population, inequitable income distribution, and few advancement opportunities for the largely Amerindian population in the impoverished southern states.

## Nationality:

noun: Mexican(s)

adjective: Mexican

## Ethnic Groups:

Mestizo (Amerindian-Spanish) 60%, Amerindian or predominantly Amerindian 30%, white 9%, other 1%

## Religions:

nominally Roman Catholic 89%, Protestant 6%, other 5%

## Languages:

Spanish, various Mayan, Nahuatl, and other regional indigenous languages

## Local Resources

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan St. Louis  
P.O. Box 170094 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-4788

IMAGE, Inc., St. Louis Chapter  
6651 Gravois #212 P.O. Box 78296 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)832-0790

Iglesia de la Nueva Comunidad United Methodist Church  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)772-8009

Accion Social Comunitaria  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

La Clinica Latino Community Health Center for Healthcare Services  
3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

Southside Catholic Community Services  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-0157

# MOLDOVA

Location: Central Europe

## Background:

Moldova occupies most of what has been known as Bessarabia. Moldova's location has made it a historic passageway between Asia and southern Europe, as well as the victim of frequent warfare.

Although independent from the USSR since 1991, Russian forces have remained on Moldovan territory east of the Nistru (Dniester) River supporting the Slavic majority population (mostly Ukrainians and Russians) who have proclaimed a "Transnistria" republic.

## Nationality:

noun: Moldovan(s)

adjective: Moldovan

## Ethnic Groups:

Moldavian/Romanian 64.5%, Ukrainian 13.8%, Russian 13%, Gagauz 3.5%, Jewish 1.5%, Bulgarian 2%, other 1.7% (1989 est.)

## Religions:

Eastern Orthodox 98.5%, Jewish 1.5%, Baptist (only about 1,000 members) (1991)

## Languages:

Moldovan (official, virtually the same as the Romanian language), Russian, Gagauz (a Turkish dialect)

## Local Resources

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# NICARAGUA

Location: Central America

## Background:

Most Nicaraguans have both European and Indian ancestry, and the culture of the country reflects the Ibero-European and Indian heritage of its people. Only the Indians of the eastern half of the country remain ethnically distinct and retain tribal customs and languages. A large black minority (of Jamaican origin) is concentrated on the Caribbean coast. In the mid-1980s, the central government divided the eastern half of the country into two autonomous regions and granted the people of the region limited self-rule. The 1995 constitutional reform guaranteed the integrity of the regions' several unique cultures and gave the inhabitants a say in the use of the area's natural resources. Roman Catholicism is the major religion, but Evangelical Protestant groups have grown recently, and there are strong Anglican and Moravian communities on the Caribbean coast. Most Nicaraguans live in the Pacific lowlands and the adjacent interior highlands. The population is 54% urban.

Violent opposition to governmental manipulation and corruption spread to all classes by 1978 and resulted in a short-lived civil war that brought the Marxist Sandinista guerrillas to power in 1979. Nicaraguan aid to leftist rebels in El Salvador caused the US to sponsor anti-Sandinista contra guerrillas through much of the 1980s. Free elections in 1990 and again in 1996 saw the Sandinistas defeated. The country has slowly rebuilt its economy during the 1990s, but was hard hit by Hurricane Mitch in 1998.

## Nationality:

noun: Nicaraguan(s)

adjective: Nicaraguan

## Ethnic Groups:

Mestizo (Mixed Amerindian and White) 69%, White 17%, Black 9%, Amerindian 5%

## Religions:

Roman Catholic 85%, Protestant

## Languages:

Spanish (official)

note: English and indigenous languages on Atlantic coast

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P.O. Box 170094 • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)771-4788

IMAGE, Inc., St. Louis Chapter

6651 Gravois #212 P.O. Box 78296 • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)832-0790

Iglesia de la Nueva Comunidad United Methodist Church

3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)772-8009

## Local Resources

Accion Social Comunitaria

3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

La Clinica Latino Community Health Center for Healthcare Services

3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

Southside Catholic Community Services for Social and Mental Health Services

2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)773-6100

# NIGERIA

Location: West Africa

## Background:

The most populous country in Africa, Nigeria accounts for one-quarter of West Africa's people. The variety of customs, languages, and traditions among Nigeria's 250 ethnic groups gives the country a rich diversity. The dominant ethnic group in the northern two-thirds of the country is the Hausa-Fulani, most of whom are Muslim. The Yoruba people are predominant in the southwest. About half of the Yorubas are Christian and half Muslim. The predominantly Catholic Igbo are the largest ethnic group in the southeast. Persons of different language backgrounds most commonly communicate in English, although knowledge of two or more Nigerian languages is widespread. Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo are the most widely used.

Since 1999, there have been violent intercommunal clashes between Christians and Muslims that have left hundreds dead and tens of thousands displaced. Moreover, new penal codes and laws of criminal procedure inspired by Sharia (Islamic law) in the Muslim north have introduced cruel, inhumane and degrading punishments, including amputation of limbs, flogging and stoning.

## Nationality:

noun: Nigerian(s)

adjective: Nigerian

## Religions:

Muslim 50%, Christian 40%, indigenous beliefs 10%

## Ethnic Groups:

Nigeria, which is Africa's most populous country, is composed of more than 250 ethnic groups; the following are the most populous and politically influential: Hausa and Fulani 29%, Yoruba 21%, Igbo (Ibo) 18%, Ijaw 10%, Kanuri 4%, Ibibio 3.5%, Tiv 2.5%

## Languages:

English (official), Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo (Ibo), Fulani

## Local Resources

St. Louis Committee on Africa  
5956 Cabane Pl. • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)721-0249

African Refugee Service  
2149 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)577-6880 Fax: (314)577-6874

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# PAKISTAN

Location: South Asia

## Background:

The separation in 1947 of British India into the Muslim state of Pakistan (with two sections West and East) and largely Hindu India was never satisfactorily resolved. A third war between these countries in 1971 resulted in East Pakistan seceding and becoming the separate nation of Bangladesh. A dispute over the state of Kashmir is ongoing. In response to Indian nuclear weapons testing, Pakistan conducted its own tests in 1998. Pakistan, an impoverished and underdeveloped country, suffers from internal political disputes, lack of foreign investment, and a costly confrontation with neighboring India. Pakistan's economic prospects are marred by poor human development indicators, low levels of foreign investment, and reliance on international creditors for hard currency inflows. It is reported that a majority of the population lacks access to potable water.

## Nationality:

noun: Pakistani(s)

adjective: Pakistani

## Religions:

Muslim 97% (Sunni 77%, Shi'a 20%), Christian, Hindu, and other 3%

## Ethnic Groups:

Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtun (Pathan), Baloch, Muhajir (immigrants from India at the time of partition and their descendants)

## Languages:

Punjabi 48%, Sindhi 12%, Siraiki (a Punjabi variant) 10%, Pashtu 8%, Urdu (official) 8%, Balochi 3%, Hindko 2%, Brahui 1%, English (official and lingua franca of Pakistani elite and most government ministries), Burushaski, and other 8%

## Local Resources

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# PHILIPPINES

Location: Southeast Asia

## Background:

The Philippines were ceded by Spain to the US in 1898 following the Spanish-American War. They attained their independence in 1946 after being occupied by the Japanese in World War II. In 1992, the US closed down its last military bases on the islands. A quarter-century-old guerrilla war with Muslim separatists on the island of Mindanao, which had claimed 120,000 lives, ended with a treaty in 1996.

The majority of Philippine people are of Malay stock. The most significant ethnic minority group is the Chinese. As a result of intermarriage, many Filipinos have some Chinese and Spanish ancestry. Americans and Spaniards constitute the next largest alien minorities in the country.

About 87 native languages and dialects are spoken. Of these, eight are the first languages of more than 85% of the population. The three principal indigenous languages are Cebuano, spoken in the Visayas; Tagalog, predominant in the area around Manila; and Ilocano, spoken in northern Luzon. Since 1939, in an effort to develop national unity, the government has promoted the use of the national language, Pilipino, which is based on Tagalog. Pilipino is taught in all schools and is gaining acceptance, particularly as a second language.

English, the most important nonnative language, is used as a second language by many, including nearly all professionals, academics, and government workers. Only a few Filipino families retain Spanish usage. Despite this multiplicity of languages, the Philippines has one of the highest literacy rates in the East Asian and Pacific area. About 90% of the population 10 years of age and older are literate.

## Nationality:

noun: Filipino(s)

adjective: Philippine

## Ethnic Groups:

Christian Malay 91.5%, Muslim Malay 4%, Chinese 1.5%, other 3%

## Religions:

Roman Catholic 83%, Protestant 9%, Muslim 5%, Buddhist and other 3%

## Languages:

Pilipino (official, based on Tagalog), English (official)

## Local Resources

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3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# POLAND

Location: Central Europe

## Background:

Labor turmoil in 1980 led to the formation of an independent trade union "Solidarity" that over time became a political force and by 1990 had swept parliamentary elections and the presidency. Complete freedom for Poland came with the implosion of the USSR in 1991. Poland joined the NATO alliance in 1999.

Poland today is ethnically almost homogeneous (98% Polish), in contrast with the pre-World War II period, when there were significant ethnic minorities — 4.5 million Ukrainians, 3 million Jews, 1 million Belorussians, and 800,000 Germans. The majority of the Jews were murdered during the German occupation in World War II, and many others emigrated in the succeeding years. Most Germans left Poland at the end of the war, while many Ukrainians and Belorussians lived in territories incorporated into the then-U.S.S.R. Small Ukrainian, Belorussian, Slovakian, and Lithuanian minorities reside along the borders, and a German minority is concentrated near the southwest city of Opole.

## Nationality:

noun: Pole(s)  
adjective: Polish

## Ethnic Groups:

Polish 97.6%, German 1.3%, Ukrainian 0.6%, Byelorussian 0.5%  
(1990 est.)

## Religions:

Roman Catholic 95% (about 75% practicing), Eastern Orthodox,  
Protestant, and other 5%

## Languages:

Polish

## Local Resources

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# PUERTO RICO

Location: Greater Antilles, Caribbean Sea

## Background:

Puerto Rico is a commonwealth of the United States. Puerto Ricans are US citizens. Puerto Ricans share most rights and obligations of other U.S. citizens. Residents of the commonwealth may not vote in U.S. presidential elections, however, and, except for federal employees and members of the U.S. armed forces, are not required to pay federal income taxes. In plebiscites, Puerto Ricans have consistently voted to maintain the island's commonwealth status over independence or statehood. Because of intermarriage between Spanish colonizers, African slaves and indigenous Taino Indians, complexions of Puerto Ricans range from white to black. Most Puerto Ricans speak Spanish as their first language, but many speak fluent English as well. As a result, many Puerto Ricans mix English and Spanish in the same sentence producing what is sometimes called "Spanglish."

## Nationality:

noun: Puerto Rican(s)

adjective: Puerto Rican

## Religions:

Roman Catholic 85%, Protestant and other 15%

## Languages:

Spanish, English

## Local Resources

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P.O. Box 170094 • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)771-4788

IMAGE, Inc., St. Louis Chapter

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Phone: (314)832-0790

Iglesia de la Nueva Comunidad United Methodist Church

3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)772-8009

Accion Social Comunitaria

3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

La Clinica Latino Community Health Center for Healthcare Services

3646 Fairview • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)664-5565 Fax: (314)773-0709

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2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)773-6100

# ROMANIA

Location: East Europe

## Background:

The decades-long rule of President Nicolae Ceausescu became increasingly draconian through the 1980s. He was overthrown and executed in late 1989. Former communists dominated the government until 1996 when they were swept from power.

## Nationality:

noun: Romanian(s)

adjective: Romanian

## Ethnic Groups:

Romanian 89.5%, Hungarian 7.1%, Roma 1.8%, German 0.5%,  
Ukrainian 0.3%, other 0.8% (1992)

## Religions:

Romanian Orthodox 70%, Roman Catholic 6% (of which 3% are  
Uniate), Protestant 6%, unaffiliated 18%

## Languages:

Romanian, Hungarian, German

## Local Resources

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# RUSSIA

Location: North Asia

## Background:

Since 1991, Russia has struggled in its efforts to build a democratic political system and market economy to replace the strict social, political, and economic controls of the communist period.

Russia's population is predominantly urban.. As a result of great emphasis on science and technology in education, Russian medical, mathematical, scientific, and space and aviation research is generally of a high order. The number of doctors in relation to the population is high by American standards, although medical care in Russia, even in major cities, is far below Western standards.

The Russian labor force is undergoing tremendous changes. Although well-educated and skilled, it is largely mismatched to the rapidly changing needs of the Russian economy. Millions of Russian workers are underemployed. Unemployment is highest among women and young people. Many Russian workers compensate by working other part-time jobs. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the economic dislocation it engendered, the standard of living fell dramatically, and one third of the population lives on just over \$1 a day.

## Nationality:

noun: Russian(s)  
adjective: Russian

## Religions:

Russian Orthodox, Muslim, other

## Ethnic Groups:

Russian 81.5%, Tatar 3.8%, Ukrainian 3%, Chuvash 1.2%, Bashkir 0.9%, Byelorussian 0.8%, Moldavian 0.7%, other 8.1%

## Languages:

Russian, other

## Local Resources

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# SENEGAL

Location: West Africa

## Background:

About 70% of Senegal's population is rural and less than 40% is literate. About 50,000 Europeans (mostly French) and Lebanese reside in Senegal, mainly in the cities where deep-seated urban problems include chronic unemployment, trade union militancy, juvenile delinquency, and drug addiction. French is the official language but is used regularly only by the literate minority. All Senegalese speak an indigenous language, of which Wolof has the largest usage.

Despite chronic economic problems, tempestuous domestic politics, which have on occasion spilled over into street violence, border tensions and a violent separatist movement in the southern region of the country, Senegal's commitment to democracy and human rights appears reasonably strong in its fourth decade of independence.

## Nationality:

noun: Senegalese (singular and plural)

adjective: Senegalese

## Ethnic Groups:

Wolof 43.3%, Pular 23.8%, Serer 14.7%, Jola 3.7%, Mandinka 3%,  
Soninke 1.1%, European and Lebanese 1%, other 9.4%

## Religions:

Muslim 92%, indigenous beliefs 6%, Christian 2% (mostly Roman Catholic)

## Languages:

French (official), Wolof, Pulaar, Jola, Mandinka

## Local Resources

St. Louis Committee on Africa  
5956 Cabanne Pl. • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)721-0249

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# SIERRA LEONE

Location: West Africa

## Background:

Since 1991, civil war between the government and the Revolutionary United Front has resulted in tens of thousands of deaths and the displacement of more than 2 million people (well over one-third of the population) many of whom are now refugees in neighboring countries. Despite a UN-brokered cease-fire in 2000, rebel forces and government-sponsored militia continued to kill, torture and abduct civilians and returning refugees. Each side forcibly impressed civilians (including children) to fight or labor for them, and they raped women and girls. In 2001, Guinean armed forces indiscriminately strafed Sierra Leonean border areas with helicopter gun ships that resulted in hundreds of civilian casualties, massive displacement of people and destruction of property.

In the past, Sierra Leoneans were noted for their educational achievement, trading activity, entrepreneurial skills, and arts and crafts work, particularly wood carving. Many are part of larger ethnic networks extending into several countries, which link West African states in the area. However, the level of education and infrastructure have declined sharply over the past 25 years.

## Nationality:

noun: Sierra Leonean(s)

adjective: Sierra Leonean

## Ethnic Groups:

20 native African tribes 90% (Temne 30%, Mende 30%, other 30%), Creole 10% (descendants of freed Jamaican slaves), refugees from Liberia, small numbers of Europeans, Lebanese, Pakistanis, and Indians

## Religions:

Muslim 60%, indigenous beliefs 30%, Christian 10%

## Languages:

English (official, regular use limited to literate minority), Mende (principal vernacular in the south), Temne (principal vernacular in the north), Krio (English-based Creole, spoken by the descendants of freed Jamaican slaves)

## Local Resources

St. Louis Committee on Africa  
5956 Cabane Pl. • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)721-0249

African Refugee Service  
2149 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)577-6880 Fax: (314)577-6874

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# SLOVENIA

Location: Southeast Europe

## Background:

Dissatisfied with the exercise of power of the majority Serbs, the Slovenes succeeded in establishing their independence in 1991. The majority of Slovenia's population is Slovene (more than 87%). Hungarians and Italians have the status of indigenous minorities under the Slovenian Constitution, which guarantees them seats in the National Assembly. Most other minority groups, particularly those from the former Yugoslavia, immigrated after World War II for economic reasons. Slovenes are predominantly Roman Catholic, though the country also has a small number of Protestants, Orthodox Christians, Muslims, and Jews. Slovene is a Slavic language that is written in the Roman script.

## Nationality:

noun: Slovene(s)  
adjective: Slovenian

## Religions:

Roman Catholic 70.8% (including Uniate 2%), Lutheran 1%, Muslim 1%, atheist 4.3%, other 22.9%

## Ethnic Groups:

Slovene 88%, Croat 3%, Serb 2%, Bosniak 1%, Yugoslav 0.6%, Hungarian 0.4%, other 5%

## Languages:

Slovenian 91%, Serbo-Croatian 6%, other 3%

## Local Resources

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# SOMALIA

Location: East Africa

## Background:

Although Somalis have a remarkably homogeneous culture and identity, intermittent civil war has been a fact of life since 1977. Beginning in 1993, a two-year UN humanitarian effort (primarily in the south) was able to alleviate famine conditions, but when the UN withdrew in 1995, having suffered significant casualties, order still had not been restored. A transitional national government was established in 2000, but has not been fully recognized in the fractious south of the country where fighting between rival clans continues unabated. Women, children and minorities have been especially vulnerable to abuses.

Somalia is one of the world's poorest and least developed countries, with few natural resources and prone to drought.

## Nationality:

noun: Somali(s)

adjective: Somali

## Ethnic Groups:

Somali 85%, Bantu, Arabs 30,000

## Religions:

Sunni Muslim

## Languages:

Somali (official), Arabic, Italian, English

## Local Resources

Banadir and Brava Community  
2348 Tennessee • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-4043 Fax: (314)776-0401

St. Louis Committee on Africa  
5956 Cabane Pl. • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)721-0249

African Refugee Service  
2149 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)577-6880 Fax: (314)577-6874

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
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War Trauma Recovery Project  
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Phone: (314)771-7061

# SOUTH AFRICA

Location: Southern Africa

## Background:

Until 1991, South African law divided the population into four major racial categories: Africans (black), whites, coloreds, and Asians. Although this law has been abolished, many South Africans still view themselves and each other according to these categories. Africans comprise about 77% of the population and are divided into a number of different ethnic groups. Whites comprise about 11% of the population. They are primarily descendants of Dutch, French, English, and German settlers who began arriving at the Cape in the late 17th century. Coloreds are mixed-race people primarily descending from the earliest settlers and the indigenous peoples. They comprise about 9% of the total population. Asians descend from Indian workers brought to South Africa in the mid-19th century to work on the sugar estates in Natal. They constitute about 3% of the population and are concentrated in the KwaZulu-Natal Province.

Education is in a state of flux. Under the apartheid system schools were segregated, and the quantity and quality of education varied significantly across racial groups. Although the laws governing this segregation have been abolished, the long and arduous process of restructuring the country's educational system is just beginning. The challenge is to create a single nondiscriminatory, nonracial system that offers the same standards of education to all people.

## Nationality:

noun: South African(s)  
adjective: South African

## Religions:

Christian 68% (includes most whites and Coloreds, about 60% of blacks and about 40% of Indians), Muslim 2%, Hindu 1.5% (60% of Indians), indigenous beliefs and animist 28.5%

## Ethnic Groups:

Black 75.2%, White 13.6%, Colored 8.6%, Indian 2.6%

## Languages:

11 official languages, including Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Pedi, Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, Zulu

## Local Resources

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# SUDAN

Location: North Africa

## Background:

Since 1983, the war and famine-related effects have led to more than 2 million deaths and over 4 million people displaced. The war pits the Arab/Muslim majority in Khartoum against the non-Muslim African rebels in the south. Unarmed civilians continue to be killed as a result of indiscriminate bombing or direct attack by government and opposition forces. Human rights abuses in war zones were committed with impunity by all parties to the conflict, including summary and arbitrary executions, torture, abductions, sexual violence against women and girls and forcible recruitment of children into fighting forces.

## Nationality:

noun: Sudanese (singular and plural)

adjective: Sudanese

## Ethnic Groups:

Black 52%, Arab 39%, Beja 6%, Foreigners 2%, Other 1%

## Religions:

Sunni Muslim 70% (in north), indigenous beliefs 25%, Christian 5% (mostly in south and Khartoum)

## Languages:

Arabic (official), Nubian, Ta Bedawie, diverse dialects of Nilotic, Nilo-Hamitic, Sudanic languages, English

note: program of Arabization in process

## Local Resources

St. Louis Committee on Africa  
5956 Cabanne Pl. • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)721-0249

African Refugee Service  
2149 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)577-6880 Fax: (314)577-6874

Center for Trauma Recovery for Mental Health Services  
Weinman Center, UMSL, 8001 Natural Bridge • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)516-6738

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
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War Trauma Recovery Project  
P.O. Box 63100 • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)771-7061

# THAILAND

Location: Southeast Asia

## Background:

Thailand is the only southeast Asian country never to have been taken over by a European power. A bloodless revolution in 1932 led to a constitutional monarchy. In alliance with Japan during World War II, Thailand became a US ally following the conflict.

Thailand's population is relatively homogeneous. More than 85% speak a dialect of Thai and share a common culture. The largest minorities are the Chinese and the Malay-speaking Muslims of the south. Other groups include the Khmer; the Mon, who are substantially assimilated with the Thai; and the Vietnamese. Smaller, predominantly mountain-dwelling tribes, such as the Hmong, Karen, and Mein, number about 500,000.

The population is mostly rural, concentrated in the rice-growing areas of the central, northeastern, and northern regions. However, as Thailand continues to industrialize, its urban population is growing.

## Nationality:

noun: Thai (singular and plural)  
adjective: Thai

## Religions:

Buddhism 95%, Muslim 3.8%, Christianity 0.5%, Hinduism 0.1%,  
other 0.6% (1991)

## Ethnic Groups:

Thai 75%, Chinese 14%, other 11%

## Languages:

Thai, English (secondary language of the elite), ethnic and regional  
dialects

## Local Resources

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# TUNISIA

Location: North Africa

## Background:

Tunisians are descendants of indigenous Berber and Arab tribes that migrated to North Africa during the seventh century. Tunisia was a French protectorate until independence in 1956.

Following independence from France in 1956, President Habib Bourgiuba established a strict one-party state. He dominated the country for 31 years, repressing Islamic fundamentalism and establishing rights for women unmatched by any other Arab nation. In recent years, Tunisia has taken a moderate, non-aligned stance in its foreign relations. Domestically, it has sought to diffuse rising pressure for a more open political society.

Unemployment continues to plague Tunisia's economy and is aggravated by a rapidly growing work force. An estimated 60% of the population is under the age of 25, and an estimated 50% of workers are unemployed or underemployed.

## Nationality:

noun: Tunisian(s)

adjective: Tunisian

## Religions:

Muslim 98%, Christian 1%, Jewish and other 1%

## Ethnic Groups:

Arab 98%, European 1%, Jewish and other 1%

## Languages:

Arabic, French

## Local Resources

Islamic Center of Greater St. Louis  
3843 W. Pine • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)531-8646 Fax: (314)531-4667

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

# UKRAINE

Location: East Europe

## Background:

Richly endowed in natural resources, Ukraine has been fought over and subjugated for centuries. A short-lived independence from Russia (1917-1920) was followed by brutal Soviet rule that engineered two artificial famines (1921-22 and 1932-33) in which over 8 million died, and World War II, in which German and Soviet armies were responsible for some 7 million more deaths. Although independence was attained in 1991 with the dissolution of the USSR, true freedom remains elusive as many of the former Soviet elite remain entrenched, stalling efforts at economic reform, privatization, and civic liberties.

## Nationality:

noun: Ukrainian(s)  
adjective: Ukrainian

## Ethnic Groups:

Ukrainian 73%, Russian 22%, Jewish 1%, other 4%

## Religions:

Ukrainian Orthodox - Moscow Patriarchate, Ukrainian Orthodox - Kiev Patriarchate, Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox, Ukrainian Catholic (Uniate), Protestant, Jewish

## Languages:

Ukrainian, Russian, Romanian, Polish, Hungarian

## Local Resources

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

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Phone: (314)865-5267

# UZBEKISTAN

Location: Central Asia

## Background:

During the Soviet era, intensive production of cotton and grain led to overuse of agrochemicals and the depletion of water supplies, which have left the land poisoned and the Aral Sea and certain rivers half dry. Independent since 1991, the country seeks to gradually lessen its dependence on agriculture while developing its mineral and petroleum reserves. Current concerns include terrorism by Islamic militant groups from Tajikistan and Afghanistan, a non-convertible currency, and the curtailment of human rights and democratization.

Uzbekistan is Central Asia's most highly populated country. Its 24 million people, concentrated in the south and east of the country, are close to half the region's total population. Uzbekistan had been one of the poorest republics of the Soviet Union; much of its population was engaged in cotton farming in small rural communities. The population continues to be heavily rural and dependent on farming for its livelihood.

Although Uzbek is the official state language;, Russian is the de facto language for interethnic communication, including day-to-day government and business use.

Due to budget constraints and other transition problems following the collapse of the Soviet Union, texts and other school supplies, teaching methods, curricula, and educational institutions are outdated, inappropriate, and poorly kept. Additionally, the proportion of school-aged persons enrolled has been dropping. While the government is concerned about this, budgets remain tight, and foreign aid for education has not been sufficient to compensate.

Similarly, in health care, life expectancy is long, but after the breakup of the Soviet Union, health care resources have declined, reducing health care quality, accessibility, and efficiency.

## Nationality:

noun: Uzbekistani(s)  
adjective: Uzbekistani

## Ethnic Groups:

Uzbek 80%, Russian 5.5%, Tajik 5%, Kazakh 3%, Karakalpak 2.5%,  
Tatar 1.5%, other 2.5% (1996 est.)

## Religions:

Muslim 88% (mostly Sunnis), Eastern Orthodox 9%, other 3%

## Languages:

Uzbek 74.3%, Russian 14.2%, Tajik 4.4%, other 7.1%

## Local Resources

International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis  
3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

Language Access Metro Project (LAMP)  
2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO  
Phone: (314)865-5267

# VIETNAM

Location: Southeast Asia

## Background:

France occupied all of Vietnam by 1884. Independence was declared after World War II, but the French continued to rule until 1954 when they were defeated by communist forces under Ho Chi Minh, who took control of the north. US economic and military aid to South Vietnam grew through the 1960s in an attempt to bolster the government, but US armed forces were withdrawn following a cease-fire agreement in 1973. Two years later North Vietnamese forces overran the south. Economic reconstruction of the reunited country has proven difficult as aging Communist Party leaders have only grudgingly initiated reforms necessary for a free market. In 2001, the government crushed protests by ethnic minorities in the central highlands over government confiscation of ancestral homeland, Vietnamese settlers taking agricultural land, lack of freedom of worship. Thousands of people fled to Cambodia.

## Nationality:

noun: Vietnamese (singular and plural)

adjective: Vietnamese

## Ethnic Groups:

Vietnamese 85%-90%, Chinese 3%, Muong, Tai, Meo, Khmer, Man, Cham

## Religions:

Buddhist, Taoist, Roman Catholic, indigenous beliefs, Muslim, Protestant, Cao Dai, Hoa Hao

## Languages:

Vietnamese (official), Chinese, English, French, Khmer, tribal languages (Mon-Khmer and Malayo-Polynesian)

## Local Resources

### Vien-Minh Buddhist Temple

5232 Bulwer Ave. • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)421-3450 Fax: (314)621-0109

### Vietnamese Catholic Community of St. Louis

3949 Iowa Ave. • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)772-2644 Fax: (314)776-4639

### Vietnamese Center for Community Activities

4067 S. Grand Blvd. • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)457-1211 Fax: (314)694-3415

### Vietnamese Lutheran Fellowship

1128 S. Kingshighway • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)535-2125 Fax: (314)535-1060

### Catholic Community Services Vietnamese Center

2901 Cherokee • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)664-8990 Fax: (314)664-8991

### International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis

3654 S. Grand • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)773-9090 Fax: (314)773-6047

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2647 Ohio • St. Louis, MO

Phone: (314)865-5267

## USEFUL INTERNET RESOURCES:

Information from many of the following web sites was used to prepare **THE WORLD IN ST. LOUIS**. Underlined sites were live and active as of this printing.

- Afghanistan Culture: <http://annuit.com/spiffytek/tecknoworld/kalbulistan/culture.htm>  
African Culture: <http://af.orientation.com/country/et/culture.html>  
Amnesty International: <http://www.amnesty.org>  
Anglo and Hispanic Value conflicts and some Remedies: <http://literacynet.org/lp/hperspectives/anglohispcult.html>  
Armenian Culture: <http://www.oxy.edu/~kiss/culture.htm>  
Bangladesh, its People and Culture: <http://lynx.dac.neu.edu/j/jiqbal/bangla1.html>  
Best of Islands Philippines: <http://www.philines.ops.gov.ph/top.html>  
Central Intelligence Agency, World Factbook 2002: <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>  
Centuries of Serbian Suffering in Kosovo and Methodia: <http://home1.gte.net/prbich/Kosovo/terror.htm>  
Croatian Culture: <http://www.croatia.net/html/culture.html>  
Deep Culture: <http://literacynet.org/lp/hperspectives/deepcult.html>  
Descriptive Services of Non Governmental Agencies: <http://st.louis.missouri.org/lamp/descriptive%20services.htm>  
Dos and Don'ts: <http://cambodiaadoptnet.com/newpage33.htm>  
Forgotten Kids: <http://www.nwret.org/orientoring/bulletin4/barnes.html>  
Haiti Culture: <http://www.carribbean-supersite.com/haiti/culture.htm>  
Haitian Culture: <http://emuseum.mnsu.edu/cultural/mesoamerica/hatianculture.html>  
Hispanic Culture: <http://literacynet.org/lp/hperspectives/hispcult.html>  
Hispanic Mental Health: <http://latinomentalhealth.net/>  
How the Students Culture effects Their Behavior: <http://literacynet.org/lp/hperspectives/culteffect.html>  
Human Rights Watch: <http://www.hrw.org/>  
Immigration and Naturalization: <http://www.immigration.gov>  
Immigration and Refugee Services of America: <http://www.refugeesusa.org>  
International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis, Culture Links (March, 2001)  
International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis, Annual Report: 2001  
<http://www.intlinst.org>  
Iraq history: [http://homearchilles.net/~sal/iraq\\_history.html](http://homearchilles.net/~sal/iraq_history.html)  
Iraqi Kurds: <http://www.culturalorientation.net/kurds/ksoc.html>  
Kurdish Culture: <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/~j/shupe/culture.html>  
Lost Dreams of Iraqi School Children: <http://wwwz.one.net.au/~newdawn/Docs/iraq-doc20.htm>  
Mental Health of Children: <http://ukans.edu/~karpwit/PublicEd.htm>  
Migration and Refugee Services: <http://www.nccbusce.org/mrs/resettlement.htm>  
Nigerian Refugees and Immigrants: [http://www.baylor.edu/~Charles\\_Kemp/nigerian\\_refugees.htm](http://www.baylor.edu/~Charles_Kemp/nigerian_refugees.htm)  
Office of Refugee Resettlement: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr>  
Oromo: <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/society/A0836907.html>  
Our ESOL Students: <http://literacynet.org/lp/hperspectives/esol.html>  
Paraguay's Annual Report: <http://www.paraquaid.org>  
Partners in Caregiving: Dementia Services Program: <http://www.rwjf.org/reports/npreports/partnerse.htm>  
PTSD and Culture Shock in the Bosnian Refugee Population in Chicago: <http://www.mc-mmlmhs.org/cultures/issueessays/PTSDenglish.htm>  
Puerto Rican Culture: <http://welcometopuertorico.org/culture/>  
Refugees and Migration: [http://www.oneworld.net/themes/topic/topic\\_128\\_1.shtml](http://www.oneworld.net/themes/topic/topic_128_1.shtml)  
Religion and Culture of the Roma: <http://www.religoustolerance.org/roma.htm>  
Social Cleavages and National "Awakening" in the Ottoman Macedonia: <http://philippos.mpa.gr/other/6ounaris.html>  
Somalia Culture: The Somali & the Sab: [http://www.arab.net/somalia/so\\_somalisab.htm](http://www.arab.net/somalia/so_somalisab.htm)  
St Louis Profile: [http://st.louis.missouri.org/lamp/STL\\_profile.htm](http://st.louis.missouri.org/lamp/STL_profile.htm)  
St. Louis Five Year Consolidated Plan Strategy: <http://stlouis.missouri.org/5yearstrategy/background/youth.html>  
Sudan History: [http://www.arab.net/sudan/sn\\_euro.htm](http://www.arab.net/sudan/sn_euro.htm)  
The Cause of the Eritrean - Ethiopian Border Conflict: By Alemsegal Tesful: <http://dehai.org/conflict/index.html>  
Understanding the Wide Scope Of Culture: <http://literacynet.org/lp/hperspectives/scopecult.html>  
United States Department of State: <http://www.state.gov>  
Vietnamese Culture: By Huyne Dinh Te: <http://www.geocities.com/Sotto/Den/5908/values/attitude.html>

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PLEASE ADDRESS ALL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS TO:

Carter Whitson, Grants Manager  
City of St. Louis Mental Health Board of Trustees  
4144 Lindell Boulevard, Suite 300  
St. Louis, Missouri 63108

(314) 535-6964 (voice)(314) 535-6584 (fax)

[cwhitson@stlmhb.com](mailto:cwhitson@stlmhb.com)

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