

# PORTUGAL



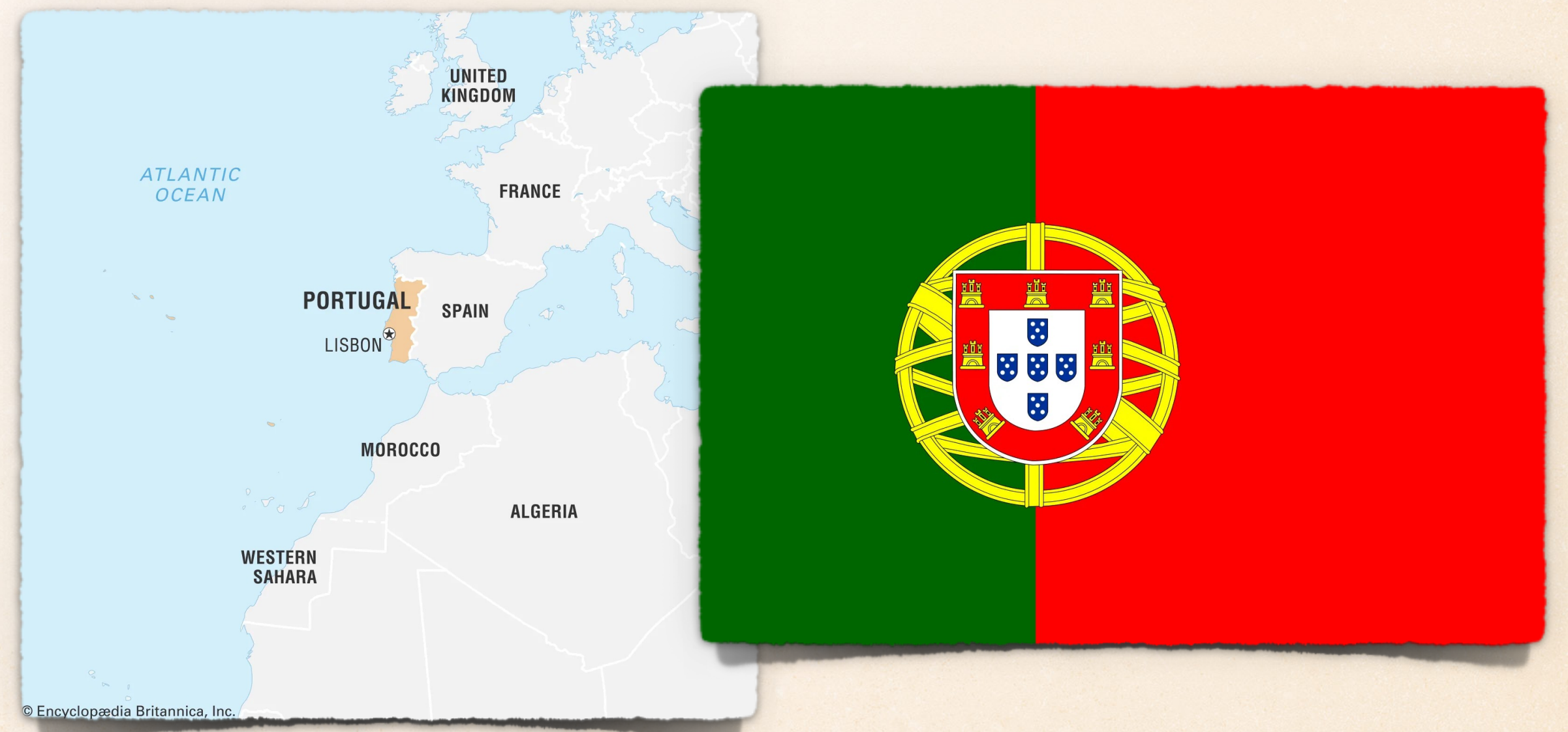


# PORTUGAL

- ❖ Continent: Europe
- ❖ Population: 10,263,850
- ❖ Religion:
  - ❖ Christian 89%
  - ❖ Agnostic 7%
  - ❖ Atheist 2%
  - ❖ Buddhist 1%
  - ❖ Muslim 1 %

❖ Literacy Rate: 96.1%

❖ Unreached: 1.1%





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Lush green forests drape the rugged mountain sides of Portugal, feeding the thriving logging and cork industries for which the country is known. Bound by a single language, the Portuguese people have retained their national unity and ethnic identity for thousands of years. As a predominantly Catholic country, Portugal is even further unified by the culturally embedded traditions and practices of the Church. Most citizens are proud to be Portuguese and appreciate their historical connection to the ocean in seafaring and exploration. The culture is generally formal, but the people can otherwise be very passionate and expressive.





Once a global maritime power in the 15th and 16th centuries, Portugal's empire used to span Brazil as well as parts of Asia and Africa. Its wealth was unmatched, and for a time, Portugal was the richest country in the world. Eventually, its colonies and overseas territories slowly gained independence or were relinquished, diminishing the country's power and wealth. In 1910, Portugal's monarchy was deposed, only to be replaced by several decades of corrupt dictatorship. But a bloodless coup in 1974 — known as the Revolution of the Carnations — overthrew the repressive government and established significant democratic reforms.





After several years of struggling to redevelop itself, economic growth improved in 1986 after Portugal joined the European Union and became a founding member of NATO. As the international market slowed, the nation found it difficult to compete with Asia and Eastern Europe for foreign investments. Political corruption is prevalent from local councils to top government administration and affects the flow of cash in the country. Jobs are limited, and youth unemployment rates are some of the highest in Europe. Portugal is also known as the bridge for shipping cocaine and hashish from Southeast Asia to Europe and North America.





Roughly 90% of the Portuguese population claims Catholicism, but it is largely a cultural faith. Few openly practice and only 19% attend Mass. Catholic Church traditions are deeply embedded in Portuguese culture, but few have a living and growing relationship with the Lord. The Portuguese youth in particular are overlooked, and New Age ideals, Mormonism, and Jehovah's Witnesses are beginning to take hold of those who do not know Christ. Increasing pursuit of individualism and material gain further blind the people from seeing their need for a Savior. Yet, God is bigger than corruption, addiction, and the financial institutions of the world! Portugal is in desperate need of a revival now more than ever. If people can start encountering the Scriptures in a meaningful way, the Holy Spirit will surely move in the hearts of the Portuguese.



# PRAYER POINTS

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“IF YOU ASK ME ANYTHING IN MY NAME, I WILL DO IT.” JOHN 14:14

- ❖ Pray for traditional religion to be replaced with genuine faith for those in the Roman Catholic Church.
- ❖ Pray for believers to catch a missions vision and seize evangelistic opportunities in the greater Portuguese-speaking world.
- ❖ Pray for the Portuguese Evangelical Alliance’s initiative to plant a church in every one of Portugal’s 316 counties by 2015.