



# The **Kazakhs** of **Central Asia**

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## The Kazakh Culture

For 200 years Kazakhs were under the rule of its northern neighbor, Russia. They experienced deep repression of their culture. The nomadic way was outlawed in the 1920's, yet their emphasis on family and relationships continues to direct many decisions of life today.

Professional advancement, even from one's first job, is most often impacted by the long lasting web of relationships which every family member nourishes.

Under the USSR, their Islamic practice became confined to the home and burial grounds. Now, after 25 years of independence, their Islamic understanding and practice remain intact, part of the fabric of most families.

There is evidence on the city streets, however, that some younger Kazakhs are taking greater interest in their more normative Islamic expression. While attendance at Friday prayers is increasing, the hijab is not.

The Kazakh language has seen a wonderful resurgence. Still, many Kazakhs find their daily lives filled with Russian language and certainly many Russian loanwords. Peaceful coexistence with their Russian neighbors has always been a value for Kazakhs. But speak Kazakh to a Kazakh person and watch doors open wide!

## Kazakh People

Kazakhs are a Turkic people who live primarily in the southern part of Eastern Europe, the Ural mountains and northern parts of Central Asia (largely Kazakhstan, but also parts of Uzbekistan, China, Russia and Mongolia).

Kazakhs are the second largest Muslim people group within Central Asia.

The Kazakhs of Central Asia are a people of deep heritage and tradition. They trace their roots for almost 500 years as nomadic herdsman moving through the steppe with their extended families.

Islam has had a profound mark on this culture, but open expression was very limited for most of the 20th century under the Soviet system. Since early 1990, there has been a revival of faith, culture, and language as the Kazakhs have made a new way.

Hospitality has always been highly valued and provides countless opportunities for sharing. Come and sow seeds of the Gospel of Peace.



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# Loving Kazakhs to Christ

## So many waiting to hear...

From only a handful of Jesus followers in 1989 to over 15,000 worshipers on a given Sunday now, God has worked with power in this amazing land.

The pressures against the Christian faith for the Kazakh include strenuous laws against sharing the Gospel and very significant family prohibitions.

“To be Kazakh is to be Muslim. To be Christian is to be Russian.” How can one follow Jesus and still be a member of the Kazakh community? Creativity within relationship makes sharing faith possible.

Over 60,000 Kazakhs have heard Truth and been touched to some degree. But living out that faith decision has proved a great challenge. Growth has been static for almost 10 years now.

In the ninth largest country in the world, there is about one Kazakh evangelical Christian for every 1000 people. Even that number doesn't quite tell the whole story as a significant concentration of believers reside in one key city.

The largest mosque in the capital city has an attendance of 10,000 on a high holy day, yet at the ratio referenced above, only six people could speak personally of redemption in Jesus Christ.

Entire villages have no witness at all. The need is great and more workers are needed to share the love of Christ with the Kazakh people!



## Ministry Overview

People	Kazakh
Language	Kazakh
Location	Central Asia
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Professional in Mission</li><li>• Business as Mission</li><li>• Teaching English</li><li>• Church Planting</li></ul>

*The Kazakh church has seen some maturity develop over the past 25 years. And still the needs are great.*

*Discipling is very important for the growth of this community. Holding fast to biblical values that will transcend culture, workers can have a significant impact in this primarily first generation Christian community as it seeks to be obedient to Christ's mandate.*

*Few Kazakhs have seen someone older finish the race well. Many have yet to see what a Kazakh Christian family looks like through the various stages of life.*

*This creative-access field is for the hearty and for people who enjoy deep relationships. Come make a difference in Central Asia!*



**Join the Team!**

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