



## History

Yemen is one of the poorest countries in the Arab world, despite a history of trade and commerce due to its strategic position on the ancient spice routes. Yemen was occupied by the Ottoman Turks until 1918, when it became a British protectorate. In 1967 the last British troops left and the southern part of Yemen adopted a Communist oriented government, resulting in the mass emigration of thousands of Yemenis to the north. North and south Yemen were unified as the Republic of Yemen in 1990, although there remains much civil unrest and armed conflict between the two. Yemen is a very tribal society, with an estimated 6,000 sheiks still presiding over various rural areas, and 70% of the population living outside urban settlements.<sup>1</sup>

## Government

Following months of unrest President Saleh signed an agreement in November 2011 in which he undertook to hand power to his deputy, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi, ahead of an early presidential election. Mr Hadi took office in an uncontested presidential election in February 2012.

## Social Issues

Yemen faces many social problems, two of which include drug use and the widespread availability and distribution of weapons and firearms throughout the country. The consumption of the narcotic plant khat is common, but greatly reduces the efficiency of workers, as well as taking up to 50% of the average Yemeni's family's income. This is a problem for a country in which 45.5% of the population live below the poverty line.

### **THE WAY TV Viewership**

Figures are unknown but The Way TV's Audience Relations staff occasionally receive messages from viewers in Yemen.

### **Religion**

Freedom of religion and the right to practise it are permitted by the government, although there are restrictions on which places of worship non-Muslims can use. All legislation and law follow Shari 'a codes and conversion to a religion apart from Islam is forbidden. 2. The right to build places of worship by non-Muslims requires government permission, although this cannot be requested by a non-Muslim.

### **Prayer Points**

Pray for stability to come to Yemen.

Pray that the government reconsiders its laws banning the construction of churches, so that Christians are able to meet together to worship.

"I would like to pray to God to bless The Way TV. We were longing for such a channel for Arabs. You are the light for us and I pray that the Lord pours His love on you." By text message from Yemen