

MONACO

Executive Summary

The constitution and other laws and policies protect religious freedom and, in practice, the government generally respected religious freedom. The government did not demonstrate a trend toward either improvement or deterioration in respect for and protection of the right to religious freedom.

There were no reports of societal abuses or discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief, or practice.

The U.S. government discussed religious freedom with the government as part of its overall policy to promote human rights.

Section I. Religious Demography

Roman Catholicism is the state religion, and an estimated 90 percent of the approximately 7,634 citizens are Catholic. There are five Catholic churches in addition to a cathedral. An archbishop presides over the Archdiocese of Monaco. Protestantism is the next most-practiced religion with two churches. There is one Greek Orthodox Church. The constitution provides the estimated 28,250 noncitizen residents the same religious freedom that citizens enjoy. A majority of noncitizens adhere to either Catholicism or Protestantism. However, there are an estimated 1,000 Jewish noncitizen residents as well as a number of noncitizens who practice Islam or other religious beliefs. There is one synagogue; there are no mosques.

Section II. Status of Government Respect for Religious Freedom

Legal/Policy Framework

The constitution and other laws and policies protect religious freedom.

Catholic ritual generally plays an important role in state festivities, such as the annual national day celebration and significant events in the life of the ruling family.

The government observes the following religious holidays as national holidays: Saint Devote's Day, Easter Monday, Ascension Day, Whit Monday, Corpus Christi, Assumption Day, All Saints' Day, Immaculate Conception, and Christmas.

Government Practices

There were no reports of abuses of religious freedom. The government generally respected religious freedom in law and in practice.

There is no law against proselytizing by religious organizations. The government does not have an official list of banned groups, but denies registration to those considered to be involved in "dangerous" sectarian activity by France's Inter-Ministerial Mission of Vigilance and Combat Against Sectarian Aberrations (MIVILUDES). The government reported that it neither received nor denied requests for registration of groups considered to be involved with dangerous sectarian activity by MIVILUDES.

Section III. Status of Societal Respect for Religious Freedom

There were no reports of societal abuses or discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief, or practice. There is an active ecumenical movement. Religious leaders of various denominations periodically participate in joint religious services and cultural events to promote greater understanding and mutual tolerance among different confessions. Representatives of all government-recognized religious groups are invited to participate in state celebrations in the Cathedral of Monaco.

The government hosted an interfaith commemoration on the tenth anniversary of the September 11 attacks. Representatives of the major faiths (Christianity, Judaism, and Islam) were present and participated in the prayer ceremony in the Cathedral of Monaco.

Section IV. U.S. Government Policy

The U.S. government promoted religious freedom with the government as part of its overall policy to advance human rights.