

# **MONACO 2012 INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM REPORT**

## **Executive Summary**

The constitution and other laws and policies protect religious freedom and, in practice, the government generally respected religious freedom. The trend in the government's respect for religious freedom did not change significantly during the year.

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

The U.S. consulate general in Marseille discussed freedom of religion with the government and residents of Monaco.

## **Section I. Religious Demography**

According to government estimates, the population is 36,700. Roman Catholicism is the state religion, and 90 percent of the approximately 7,600 citizens are Catholic. Protestants are the second largest religious group. Most of the estimated 28,300 noncitizen residents are either Catholic or Protestant. There are an estimated 1,000 Jewish noncitizen residents and a smaller number of noncitizens who are Muslims or adhere to other religious beliefs. There are five Catholic churches and one cathedral, one Greek Orthodox Church, two Protestant churches, one synagogue, and no mosques.

## **Section II. Status of Government Respect for Religious Freedom**

### **Legal/Policy Framework**

The constitution and other laws and policies protect the right to religious freedom for all residents and citizens.

The government does not maintain an official list of banned groups, but its policy is to deny 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).

## MONACO

Catholic ritual generally plays an important role in state festivities, including the annual National Day celebration and significant events in the lives 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 or restrictions of religious freedom.

### **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. Religious leaders of various denominations periodically participated in joint religious services and cultural events to promote greater understanding and mutual religious tolerance. The government invited representatives of all government-recognized religious groups to participate in state celebrations at the Cathedral of Monaco.

### **Section IV. U.S. Government Policy**

The U.S. consulate general in Marseille managed U.S. relations with Monaco. The consulate promoted religious freedom with the government. U.S. representatives participated in several events that included representatives from various religious groups and met privately with religious leaders.