

# **MONACO 2014 INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM REPORT**

## **Executive Summary**

The constitution guarantees religious freedom; there were no government actions limiting that freedom. Roman Catholicism is the state religion and state ceremonies included Catholic rituals. The government recognized all Abrahamic-based religions and considered registration of other religious groups on a case-by-case basis.

Religious leaders of various denominations participated in state-sponsored cultural and religious events to promote understanding and tolerance.

The U.S. Consulate General in Marseille participated in cultural and religious events, such as the Monaco National Day Mass, that included leaders from a variety of religious denominations, to show support for religious tolerance.

## **Section I. Religious Demography**

The U.S. government estimates the total population is 30,500 (July 2014 estimate), with 7,600 being citizens of the country. Ninety percent of citizens are Catholic. Protestants are the second largest religious group. Most of the estimated 22,900 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.

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

### **Legal Framework**

The constitution guarantees individuals the freedom of religion and public worship, and protects the freedom to express opinions, including on religion, subject to the right to prosecute any offenses committed in the exercise of those freedoms. No one may be compelled to participate in the rites or ceremonies of any religion or to observe its days of rest.

The constitution states Roman Catholicism is the religion of the State.

### **Government Practices**

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The government recognized all Abrahamic-based religions and considered registration of others on a case-by-case basis. It did not maintain an official list of banned groups, but its policy was to deny registration to those considered to be involved in “dangerous” sectarian activity by the Government of France’s Inter-Ministerial Mission of Vigilance and Combat against Sectarian Aberrations.

Catholic ritual generally played an important role in state ceremonies, including the annual National Day celebration, a Mass held for the commemoration of the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, and significant events in the lives of the ruling family. The government invited representatives of all government-recognized religious groups, including Christians, Muslims, and Jews, to participate in these ceremonies at the Cathedral of Monaco to promote interfaith understanding. Religious minorities often attended these events.

### **Section III. Status of Societal Respect for Religious Freedom**

Religious leaders of various denominations participated in cultural events and periodically in joint religious services, promoting dialogue between religious communities.

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

The Consul General in Marseille met with members of religious groups to show the importance of religious freedom. The Consulate General staff and other U.S. representatives participated in public events, such as the Monaco National Day Mass, that included representatives from a variety of religious denominations, to show support for religious tolerance.