



U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

San Marino

International Religious Freedom Report 2006

Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

The law provides for freedom of religion, and the Government generally respected this right in practice.

There was no change in the status of respect for religious freedom during the period covered by this report, and government policy continued to contribute to the generally free practice of religion.

The generally amicable relationship among religious groups in society contributed to religious freedom.

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

Section I. Religious Demography

The country has an area of 37.57 square miles and a population of approximately 30 thousand.

The Government does not provide statistics on the size of religious groups, and there were no census data providing information on religious membership; however, it is estimated that more than 95 percent of the population was Roman Catholic. Other religious groups included small numbers of Jehovah's Witnesses, Baha'is, Muslims, Jews, and members of the Waldesian Church.

Section II. Status of Religious Freedom

Legal/Policy Framework

The law provides for freedom of religion, and the Government generally respected this right in practice. The Government at all levels sought to protect this right in full and did not tolerate its abuse, either by governmental or private actors.

Although Catholicism is dominant, it is not the state religion, and the law prohibits discrimination based on religion. The Catholic Church receives direct benefits from the state through income tax revenues; taxpayers may request that 0.3 percent of their income tax payments be allocated to the Catholic Church or to "other" charities, including three religious groups (the Waldesian Church, the Baha'i Community, and Jehovah's Witnesses).

In 1993, some parliamentarians objected to the traditional 1909 oath of loyalty sworn on the "Holy Gospels." Following this objection, Parliament changed the law in 1993 to permit a choice between the traditional oath and one in which the reference to the Gospels was replaced with "on my honor." In 1999, a European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ruling implicitly endorsed the revised 1993 legal formulation. The ECHR also noted that the traditional oath continues to be mandatory for other offices, such as the captain regent or a member of the Government; however, by the end of the period covered by this report, no elected Captain Regent or government member had challenged the validity of the 1909 oath.

There are no private religious schools; the school system is public and is financed by the state. Public schools provide Catholic religious instruction; however, students may choose without penalty not to participate.

Epiphany, Saint Agatha, Easter, Corpus Domini, All Saints' Day, Commemoration of the Dead, Immaculate Conception, and Christmas are national holidays.

Restrictions on Religious Freedom

Government policy and practice contributed to the generally free practice of religion.

There were no reports of religious prisoners or detainees in the country.

Forced Religious Conversion

There were no reports of forced religious conversion, including of minor U.S. citizens who had been abducted or illegally removed from the

United States, or of the refusal to allow such citizens to be returned to the United States.

Section III. Societal Abuses and Discrimination

The generally amicable relationship among religious groups in society contributed to religious freedom, and government and religious officials encourage mutual respect for differences.

The country's role protecting religious minorities during World War II, including 100,000 total refugees, approximately 1,000 percent of the country's regular population at the time, is a public source of pride for citizens and government officials.

Catholicism is not a state religion, but it is dominant in society, as most citizens were born and raised under Catholic principles that form part of their culture. These principles still permeate state institutions symbolically; for example, crucifixes sometimes hang on courtroom or government office walls. The country's dominant Catholic heritage may inform individual choices on lifestyle matters such as marriage or divorce, although there is no government suasion involved.

Section IV. U.S. Government Policy

The U.S. government discusses religious freedom issues with the Government as part of its policy to promote human rights and has always found the Government fully open to such discussions.

Released on September 15, 2006

[International Religious Freedom Report Home Page](#)