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San Marino

BUREAU OF DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND LABOR

July-December, 2010 International Religious Freedom Report

Report

September 13, 2011

The constitution and other laws and policies protect religious freedom and, in practice, the government generally enforced these protections.

The government generally respected religious freedom in law and in practice. There was no change in the status of respect for religious freedom by the government during the reporting period.

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

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

Section I. Religious Demography

The country has an area of 38 square miles and a population of 33,000.

The government does not provide statistics on the size of religious groups, and there was no census data on religious membership; however, it was estimated that more than 90 percent of the population is Roman Catholic. Other religious groups include small numbers of Jehovah's Witnesses, Bahais, Muslims, Jews, and members of the Waldesian Church. In recent years the number of Orthodox Church members has greatly increased due to immigration from Eastern Europe.

Section II. Status of Government Respect for Religious Freedom

Legal/Policy Framework

Please refer to Appendix C in the Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for the status of the government's acceptance of international legal standards <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/appendices/index.htm>.

The constitution and other laws and policies protect religious freedom and, in practice, the government generally enforced these protections. The country maintains a public "meditation and prayer" site in the capital for use by worshipers of any religion.

Although Catholicism is dominant, it is not the state religion, and the law prohibits discrimination based on religion. Catholic principles permeate state institutions symbolically; for example, crucifixes sometimes hang on courtroom and government office walls. The Catholic Church receives direct benefits from the state funded by income tax revenue; taxpayers may request that 0.3 percent of their income tax payments be allocated to the Catholic Church or to "other charities," including other religious groups. Any charity or religious group can obtain this benefit by meeting the requirements of Law No. 9 of 1993 (which requires that a recipient group be registered as a nonprofit organization based in San Marino). Such organizations need not register, but if a portion of an income tax payment is allocated to an organization, it will be contacted by tax authorities to prove its legitimacy and to make available its financial statements.

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

The government observes the following religious holidays as national holidays: Epiphany, Saint Agatha, Easter, Corpus Domini, All Saints' Day, Commemoration of the Dead, Immaculate Conception, and Christmas.

Restrictions on Religious Freedom

The government generally respected religious freedom in law and in practice. There was no change in the status of respect for religious freedom by the government during the reporting period.

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

Section III. Status of Societal Actions Affecting Enjoyment of Religious Freedom

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

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 with the government as part of its overall policy to promote human rights.

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