



Europe :: Holy See (Vatican City)

Introduction :: Holy See (Vatican City)

Background:

Popes in their secular role ruled portions of the Italian peninsula for more than a thousand years until the mid 19th century, when many of the Papal States were seized by the newly united Kingdom of Italy. In 1870, the pope's holdings were further circumscribed when Rome itself was annexed. Disputes between a series of "prisoner" popes and Italy were resolved in 1929 by three Lateran Treaties, which established the independent state of Vatican City and granted Roman Catholicism special status in Italy. In 1984, a concordat between the Holy See and Italy modified certain of the earlier treaty provisions, including the primacy of Roman Catholicism as the Italian state religion. Present concerns of the Holy See include religious freedom, threats against minority Christian communities in Africa and the Middle East, sexual misconduct by clergy, international development, interreligious dialogue and reconciliation, and the application of church doctrine in an era of rapid change and globalization. About 1.2 billion people worldwide profess Catholicism - the world's largest Christian faith.

Geography :: Holy See (Vatican City)

Location:

Southern Europe, an enclave of Rome (Italy)

Geographic coordinates:

41 54 N, 12 27 E

Map references:

Europe

Area:

total: 0.44 sq km

country comparison to the world: 252

land: 0.44 sq km

water: 0 sq km

Area - comparative:

about 0.7 times the size of The National Mall in Washington, DC

Land boundaries:

total: 3.2 km

border countries: Italy 3.2 km

Coastline:

0 km (landlocked)

Maritime claims:

none (landlocked)

Climate:

temperate; mild, rainy winters (September to May) with hot, dry summers (May to September)

Terrain:

urban; low hill

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: unnamed location 19 m

highest point: unnamed elevation 75 m

Natural resources:

none

Land use:

arable land:

permanent crops: 0%

other: 100% (urban area) (2011)

Irrigated land:

0 sq km (2011)

Natural hazards:

NA

Environment - current issues:

NA

Environment - international agreements:

party to: Ozone Layer Protection

signed, but not ratified: Air Pollution, Environmental Modification

Geography - note:

landlocked; enclave in Rome, Italy; world's smallest state; beyond the territorial boundary of Vatican City, the Lateran Treaty of 1929 grants the Holy See extraterritorial authority over 23 sites in Rome and five outside of Rome, including the Pontifical Palace at Castel Gandolfo (the Pope's summer residence)

People and Society :: Holy See (Vatican City)

Nationality:

noun: none

adjective: none

Ethnic groups:

Italians, Swiss, other

Languages:

Italian, Latin, French, various other languages

Religions:

Roman Catholic

Population:

839 (July 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 238

Population growth rate:

0% (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 194

Urbanization:

urban population: 100% of total population (2010)

rate of urbanization: 0.1% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

NA

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:

NA

HIV/AIDS - deaths:

NA

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write

total population: 100%

male: 100%

female: 100%

Government :: Holy See (Vatican City)

Country name:

conventional long form: The Holy See (Vatican City State)

conventional short form: Holy See (Vatican City)

local long form: La Santa Sede (Stato della Citta del Vaticano)

local short form: Santa Sede (Citta del Vaticano)

Government type:

ecclesiastical

Capital:

name: Vatican City

geographic coordinates: 41 54 N, 12 27 E

time difference: UTC+1 (6 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

daylight saving time: +1hr, begins last Sunday in March; ends last Sunday in October

Administrative divisions:

none

Independence:

11 February 1929 (from Italy); note - the three treaties signed with Italy on 11 February 1929 acknowledged, among other things, the full sovereignty of the Holy See and established its territorial extent; however, the origin of the Papal States, which over centuries varied considerably in extent, may be traced back to 754

National holiday:

Election Day of Pope FRANCIS, 13 March (2013)

Constitution:

previous 1929, 1963; latest adopted 26 November 2000, effective 22 February 2001 (Fundamental Law by Pope JOHN PAUL II); note - Pope Francis in October 2013 appointed a group of cardinals to revise the constitution

Legal system:

religious legal system based on canon (religious) law

International law organization participation:

has not submitted an ICJ jurisdiction declaration; non-party state to the ICCt

Suffrage:

election of the pope is limited to cardinals less than 80 years old

Executive branch:

chief of state: Pope FRANCIS (since 13 March 2013)

head of government: Secretary of State Archbishop Pietro PAROLIN (since 15 October 2013); note - previous Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio BERTONE will remain as Camerlengo, a position he has held since 4 April 2007

cabinet: Pontifical Commission for the State of Vatican City appointed by the pope
(For more information visit the **World Leaders website** [🌐](#))

elections: pope elected for life, or until voluntary resignation, by the College of Cardinals; election last held on 13 March 2013 (next to be held after the death or resignation of the current pope); Secretary of State appointed by the pope

election results: Jorge Mario BERGOGLIO elected Pope FRANCIS

Legislative branch:

unicameral Pontifical Commission for Vatican City State

Judicial branch:

highest court(s): Supreme Court or Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura (consists of the cardinal prefect, who serves as ex-officio president of the court, and 2 other cardinals of the Prefect Signatura)
note - judicial duties were established by the Motu Proprio, papal directive, of Pope PIUS XII on 1 May 1946; note 2: most Vatican City criminal matters are handled by the Republic of Italy courts

judge selection and term of office: cardinal prefect appointed by the Pope; the other 2 cardinals of the court appointed by the cardinal prefect on a yearly basis

subordinate courts: Appellate Court of Vatican City; Tribunal of Vatican City

Political parties and leaders:

none

Political pressure groups and leaders:

none (exclusive of influence exercised by church officers)

International organization participation:

CE (observer), IAEA, Interpol, IOM, ITSO, ITU, ITUC (NGOs), OAS (observer), OPCW, OSCE, Schengen Convention (de facto member), UN (observer), UNCTAD, UNHCR, Union Latina (observer), UNWTO (observer), UPU, WIPO, WTO (observer)

Diplomatic representation in the US:

chief of mission: Apostolic Nuncio Carlo Maria VIGANO (since 16 November 2011)

chancery: 3339 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008

telephone: [1] (202) 333-7121

FAX: [1] (202) 337-4036

Diplomatic representation from the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador Kenneth F. HACKETT (since 20 August 2013)

embassy: Villa Domiziana, Via delle Terme Deciane 26, 00153 Rome

mailing address: Unit 5660, Box 66, DPO AE 09624-0066

telephone: [39] (06) 4674-3428

FAX: [39] (06) 575-8346

Flag description:

two vertical bands of yellow (hoist side) and white with the arms of the Holy See, consisting of the crossed keys of Saint Peter surmounted by the three-tiered papal tiara, centered in the white band; the yellow color represents the pope's spiritual power, the white his worldly power

National symbol(s):

crossed keys

National anthem:

name: "Inno e Marcia Pontificale" (Hymn and Pontifical March); often called The Pontifical Hymn

 [PLAY ANTHEM](#)

lyrics/music: Raffaello LAVAGNA/Charles-Francois GOUNOD

note: adopted 1950

Economy :: Holy See (Vatican City)

Economy - overview:

The Holy See is supported financially by a variety of sources, including investments, real estate income, and donations from Catholic individuals, dioceses, and institutions; these help fund the Roman Curia (Vatican bureaucracy), diplomatic missions, and media outlets. Moreover, an annual collection taken up in dioceses and from direct donations go to a non-budgetary fund, known as Peter's Pence, which is used directly by the Pope for charity, disaster relief, and aid to churches in developing nations. Donations increased between 2010 and 2011. The separate Vatican City State budget includes the Vatican museums and post office and is supported financially by the sale of stamps, coins, medals, and tourist mementos; by fees for admission to museums; and by publication sales. Its revenues increased between 2010 and 2011 because of expanded opening hours and a growing number of visitors. However, the Holy See has not escaped the financial difficulties engulfing other European countries; in 2012 it started a spending review to determine where to cut costs to reverse its 2011 budget deficit of 15 million euros. Most public expenditures go to wages and other personnel costs; the incomes and living standards of lay workers are comparable to those of counterparts who work in the city of Rome.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$NA

Industries:

printing; production of coins, medals, postage stamps; mosaics and staff uniforms; worldwide banking and financial activities

Labor force:

2,832 (December 2011)

country comparison to the world: 227

Labor force - by occupation:

note: essentially services with a small amount of industry; nearly all dignitaries, priests, nuns, guards, and the approximately 3,000 lay workers live outside the Vatican

Population below poverty line:

NA%

Budget:

revenues: \$308 million

expenditures: \$326.4 million (2011)

Fiscal year:

calendar year

Exchange rates:

euros (EUR) per US dollar -

0.78 (2012 est.)

0.72 (2011 est.)

0.76 (2010 est.)

0.72 (2009 est.)

0.68 (2008 est.)

Communications :: Holy See (Vatican City)

Telephone system:

general assessment: automatic digital exchange

domestic: connected via fiber optic cable to Telecom Italia network

international: country code - 39; uses Italian system (2012)

Broadcast media:

the Vatican Television Center (CTV) transmits live broadcasts of the Pope's Sunday and Wednesday audiences, as well as the Pope's public celebrations; CTV also produces documentaries; Vatican Radio is the Holy See's official broadcasting service broadcasting via shortwave, AM and FM frequencies, and via satellite and Internet connections (2008)

Internet country code:

.va

Internet hosts:

107 (2012)

country comparison to the world: 207

Military :: Holy See (Vatican City)

Military branches:

Pontifical Swiss Guard Corps (Corpo della Guardia Svizzera Pontificia) (2013)

Military service age and obligation:

Pontifical Swiss Guard Corps (Corpo della Guardia Svizzera Pontificia): 19-30 years of age for voluntary military service; no conscription; must be Roman Catholic, a Swiss citizen, with a secondary education (2013)

Military - note:

defense is the responsibility of Italy; ceremonial and limited security duties performed by Pontifical Swiss Guard

Transnational Issues :: Holy See (Vatican City)

Disputes - international:

none