



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 the newly established Kingdom of Italy seized many of the Papal States. In 1870, the pope's holdings were further circumscribed when Rome itself was annexed.

Capital name: Vatican City

Government type ecclesiastical elective monarchy; self-described as an "absolute monarchy"

Area
total : 0 sq km
land: 0.44 sq km
water: 0 sq km

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

Natural resources none

Population total: 1,000 (2024)

Population growth rate 0% (2014 est.)

Ethnic groups Italian, Swiss, Argentinian, and other nationalities from around the world (2017)

Religions Roman Catholic

Languages Italian, Latin, French, various other languages

Executive branch chief of state: Pope LEO XIV (since 8 May 2025)

head of government: President of the Pontifical Commission for the State of Vatican City and President of the Governorate of the Vatican City State Fernando VERGEZ ALZAGA (since 1 October 2021)

Diplomatic representation in the US chief of mission: Apostolic Nuncio Cardinal Christophe PIERRE (since 27 June 2016)

Diplomatic representation from the US chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant); Chargé d'Affaires Laura HOCHLA (since 8 July 2024)

Economic overview limited, tourism-based economy; euro user with own minted coins; produces commemorative stamps, coins, and publications to support museums and religious needs; residents pay no direct taxes; "zero deficit" plan to address budget shortfall