



Monaco — Va-PoReg Country Report

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02/02/1861 Start Autocratic Monarchy: In 1215, Monaco was re-founded as a colony of Genoa after receiving a grant of land from Emperor Henry VI in 1191. The Grimaldi family bought Monaco from the Crown of Aragon in 1419 and became the official rulers. Monaco was occupied by the French from 1793 to 1814 and became a protectorate of the Kingdom of Sardinia in 1815. The Sardinian forces left Monaco in 1860 due to the Treaty of Turin.¹ On 02/02/1861,² the sovereignty of Monaco was recognized through the Franco-Monégasque Treaty, replacing the previous status as a protectorate of the Kingdom of Sardinia under the Treaty of Vienna. As part of the treaty, Monaco ceded the towns of Menton and Roquebrune-Cap-Martin to France for 4 million francs.³ The Prince of Monaco ruled as an absolute monarch until the Monegasque Revolution of 1910 compelled him to introduce a constitution in 1911.⁴ According to LIED no multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period. LIED identifies political liberties as absent for this period. On 04/23/1911, general elections took place in Monaco to elect the 21 members of the National Council. A total of 20 candidates contested the election. Of the 629 registered voters, 524 cast their ballots, resulting in a turnout of 83.3%.⁵ Male suffrage was introduced with the election in 1911 (LIED). In 1962 suffrage was extended to women.⁶ According to LIED multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period. For this timeframe, LIED identifies political liberties as absent. 1914 According to LIED between 1914 and 1918 no multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period. Male suffrage was absent (LIED). According to LIED political liberties were absent in this timeframe. On 05/19/1918 general elections took place in Monaco to select the twelve members of the National Council.⁷ According to LIED multiparty executive and legislative elections were held again during this period. LIED still identifies political liberties as absent. The National Council's primary functions were to vote on the budget and endorse laws proposed by the prince. While this marked a shift in the direction of constitutional governance, the prince continued to wield substantial influence over legislative processes. At that time, the National Council did not possess the right to initiate legislation; this right was exclusively held by the prince. Despite political liberties being classified as absent according to LIED according to our observations political liberties were in an ambiguous state between present and absent. According to our classification Monaco is a borderline case between a constitutional and an autocratic monarchy.

11/11/1942 End Autocratic Monarchy/Start Direct Rule Occupation Regime [by Italy, Right-Wing (Fascist) Autocracy]: On this date the Italian army invaded and occupied Monaco.⁸ According to LIED no multiparty executive and legislative elections were held. LIED identifies political liberties for this period also as absent.

09/10/1943 End Direct Rule Occupation Regime [by Italy, Right-Wing (Fascist) Autocracy]/Start Direct Rule Occupation Regime [by Germany, Right-Wing (Fascist) Autocracy]: During Mussolini's fall from power, the German Wehrmacht occupied Italy and Monaco.⁹ According to LIED no multiparty executive and legislative elections were held. For this short timeframe, LIED identifies political liberties as absent.

09/03/1944 End Direct Rule Occupation Regime [by Germany, Right-Wing (Fascist) Autocracy]/Start Autocratic Monarchy: On this date Monaco was liberated as German troops retreated.¹⁰ According to LIED political liberties were absent during this period.

12/17/1962 End Autocratic Monarchy/Start Constitutional Monarchy: On this date, Prince Rainier III issued a new constitution that established the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, including various administrative offices and councils. According to the constitution of 1962, the Principality of Monaco is a constitutional monarchy. The separation of powers is constitutionally guaranteed.¹¹ Although the Prince retains most of the governing power as the head of state, the judiciary and legislature of the principality can function independently without his interference.¹² The government, under the authority of the Prince, is led by a Minister of State, who is appointed by the Prince and supported by a Government Council. The constitution ensures an independent judiciary, but the Prince appoints five full members and two judicial assistants to the Supreme Court, based on nominations from the National Council, government bodies, and the lower courts.¹³ The Constitution of Monaco was modified on 04/02/2002 and on 10/24/2002 a Treaty between Monaco and France, regarding the succession to the throne was signed. Since then, it is no longer the case that Monaco would become a French protectorate in the event of a vacant throne.¹⁴ According to LIED only multiparty legislative elections were held during this period and political liberties have been present since 1962. According to FH, Monaco is considered partly free from 1972 to 1976 with a score of 6, which corresponds to our category of rather free. From 1977 to 1992, Monaco is not included in FH's assessment. From 1993 onwards, Monaco has been interpreted as free, with scores ranging from 2 to 4. V-Dem does not treat the country in its data.

Constitutional Monarchy as of 07/01/2025 continued.

Additional Sources (Marxer/Pállinger 2009, Rose/Munro 2010)

Notes

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monaco>

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/France%E2%80%93Monaco_relations

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franco-Mon%C3%A9gasque_Treaties

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Monaco

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1911_Monegasque_general_election

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s_suffrage

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1918_Monegasque_general_election

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Monaco

⁹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monaco>

¹⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Monaco

¹¹ https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Monaco_2002

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics_of_Monaco

¹³ https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Monaco_2002 <https://freedomhouse.org/country/monaco/freedom-world/2023>

¹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franco-Mon%C3%A9gasque_Treaties

References

Rose, Richard/Munro, Neil (2010): United Kingdom, in: Nohlen, Dieter & Stöver, Philip (Hrsg.), Elections in Europe: A Data Handbook. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2001-2035.