



Réunion — Va-PoReg Country Report

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01/01/1642 Start Direct Rule Colonial Regime [of France]: Initially uninhabited, Réunion was explored by Portuguese navigators in the early 1500s. In 1642, the island was officially claimed by the French.¹ It saw settlement in the mid-1600s when the French East India Company created a stopover for ships traveling to India via the Cape of Good Hope. Enslaved Africans were introduced to work in coffee and later sugar plantations. In 1848, following the abolition of slavery, indentured laborers from mainland Southeast Asia, India, and Eastern Africa were brought to the island. Réunion remained under French colonial rule until 1946.² LIED does not provide any data for Réunion's colonial period.

03/19/1946 End Direct Rule Colonial Regime [of France, Liberal Democracy]/Start Part of Other Country [of France, Liberal Democracy]: On this date, Réunion became an overseas department of France.³ Réunion is classified as an overseas department and region of France (referred to in French as a *département et région d'Outre-mer* or DROM). It operates under the jurisdiction of Article 73 of the French Constitution, ensuring that laws and regulations are universally applicable, similar to those in metropolitan France.⁴ FH, LIED and V-Dem do not provide data for Réunion. Due to the legal equality of the overseas territory with the regions of mainland France, as well as its representation in the French Parliament and in the European Union, Réunion can be regarded as a part of France.

Part of Other Country [of France, Liberal Democracy] as of 07/01/2025 continued.

Notes

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R%C3%A9union#History>

² <https://www.britannica.com/place/Reunion#ref6135>

³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R%C3%A9union#History>

⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R%C3%A9union#Politics>