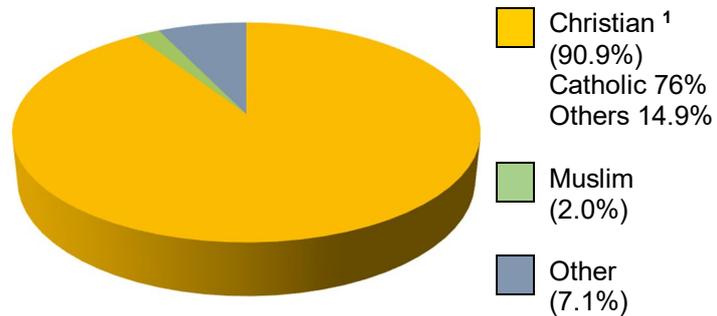


ARGENTINA



Area: ² 2.8 million km ²	Population: ³ 41.1 million	Political system: Democracy	Major Language(s): Spanish, Guaraní, Qom, Mocoquí, Wichi.
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Legal framework on Freedom of Religion and actual application

The preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of Argentina states that the constitution is enacted and established invoking the protection of God, who is the source of all reason and justice.

Article 2 of the constitution states that the Federal Government supports the Roman Catholic Apostolic religion.

All inhabitants of the republic enjoy various rights under the laws that regulate their exercise, including the right to practice freely their religion. This right is also exercised by foreigners who enjoy all civil rights within the national territory.

At the same time, private actions that do not offend public order and morals and do not harm a third party "...are only reserved to God".

On taking office, the President and Vice President shall be sworn in according to their religious beliefs. Members of the clergy cannot be members of Congress.

Religious communities can have educational institutions if they fund them.⁴

Argentina and the Holy See are bound by an agreement signed in 1966, whereby the Argentine State recognises and guarantees the Roman Catholic Church's right to exercise freely its spiritual and religious authority.⁵

Incidents

In August 2014, the newspaper *La Nación* published a report titled "Mi Dios ¿Qué tan tolerantes con las religiones somos los argentinos?" (My God: How tolerant are Argentinians towards religions?).⁶

In November 2014, the *Consejo Argentino para la Libertad Religiosa* (Argentine Council for Religious Freedom, CALIR) issued a statement expressing alarm and concern over a series of attacks against members of the Pueblo Grande Baptist Church in the city of Río Tercero

(Córdoba), which forced the religious community to worship under police protection, as well as over a shooting incident in October 2014 involving the church's pastor, Rev Marcelo Nieva, and an aide.⁷

In November 2014, CALIR issued a statement about the proposed new Civil and Commercial Code, laying out its own observations. In its statement, the Council indicated which proposals have been favourably received and which have not, all this “. . . in order to achieve the broadest protection of religious freedom and everyone's legitimate rights”.⁸

In December 2014, the Supreme Court of the province of Buenos Aires upheld a sentence against a trade union that had penalised a Seventh-day Adventist woman for not working on Saturdays. According to her faith, Saturday is the Sabbath and is a day for worship and for that reason she requested not to work on that day.⁹

In July 2015, the Second Appeal Chamber of the Civil and Commercial Court in La Plata ruled that the mother of a four-year-old girl could initiate her daughter into the practices of the religion she professes despite the father's opposition.¹⁰

In August 2015 the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Argentina presented Action Guidelines in cases of alleged sexual abuse involving clergymen and minors.¹¹

In September 2015, the Supreme Court of Mendoza ruled against a constitutional motion filed against the decision by the administrative authority to allow the celebration of the festivities of the Patron Saint St James (Santiago) and the Virgen del Carmen de Cuyo as school holidays.¹²

In November 2015, the *Observatorio de la Discriminación en Radio y TV* (Observatory on Discrimination in Radio and TV) presented evidence of discriminatory practices and speeches on television indicating, among other things, discrimination based on religion.¹³

In February 2016, the La Alameda NGO published a report that exposes crimes committed by fascist organisations in Mar del Plata, based on ethnic, religious, gender and/or ideological discrimination.¹⁴

Prospects for freedom of religion

Argentina is the Latin American country that has arguably achieved the best coexistence among people of different religions, bearing fruit in effective inter-religious dialogue. This enables the religions to take joint action and maintain permanent initiatives such as the one developed by CALIR. In the period under consideration, there was an isolated episode of intolerance towards a religion, unlike the previous period (2012-2014) when several events of this nature were recorded. However, what stands out in this period is a series of civil laws that go against the teachings of the religions that have traditionally cooperated with the State. Although they do not touch religious freedom per se, they nevertheless affect the institutional relations between the Government and the various religions. Despite this, things have improved in terms of respect for religious freedom, and the outlook is better.

¹ <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e45be46.html> accessed on 30 April 2016.

² <http://www.argentina.gob.ar/pais/61-sistema-de-gobierno.phpl> accessed on 25 March 2016.

³ http://www.thearda.com/internationalData/countries/Country_11_2.asp accessed on 1 March 2016.

⁴ <http://www.infojus.gob.ar/nacional-constitucion-nacion-argentina-lnn0002665-1853-05-01/123456789-0abc-defg-g56-62000ncanyel> accessed on 25 March 2016.

⁵ <http://www.calir.org.ar/legis.htm> accessed on 1 April 2016.

⁶ <http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1718792-mi-dios-que-tan-tolerantes-con-las-religiones-somos-los-argentinos> accessed on 25 March 2016.

⁷ <http://www.calir.org.ar/verPdf.php?doc=/docs/SituacionIBRioTerceroCordobaDECLARACION.19noviembre2014.pdf> accessed on 4 April 2016.

<http://www.noticiacristiana.com/sociedad/persecuciones/2014/11/pastor-bautista-decide-confrontar-el-crimen-organizado-en-argentina.html> accessed on 4 April 2016.

⁸ <http://www.calir.org.ar/verPdf.php?doc=/docs/SobreCodigoCivil.5noviembre2014.pdf>
accessed on 4 April 2016.

⁹ <http://www.diariojudicial.com/nota/35644> accessed on 1 April 2016.

¹⁰ <http://www.celir.cl/v2/Boletines/bjoctXI.pdf> accessed on 25 March 2016

¹¹ <http://www.episcopado.org/portal/actualidad-cea/oficina-de-prensa/item/1018-presentaci%C3%B3n-de-las-l%C3%ADneas-gu%C3%ADa-de-consulta-sobre-los-casos-de-abuso.html> accessed on 1 April 2016.

¹² <http://www.celir.cl/v2/Boletines/bjoctXI.pdf> accessed on 31 March 2016.

¹³ <http://www.obserdiscriminacion.gob.ar/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Monitoreo-al-24-11.pdf> accessed on 25 March 2016.

¹⁴ <http://www.politicargentina.com/notas/201602/11713-revelan-accionar-fascista-organizado-en-mar-del-plata.html>
accessed on 1 April 2016.