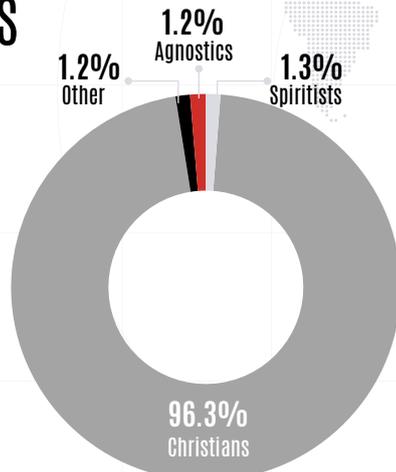




GRENADA

RELIGIONS



Population

109,308

GDP per capita

13,594 US\$

Area

345 Km²

GINI INDEX*

N/A

*Economic Inequality

LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND ACTUAL APPLICATION

The Preamble to the Constitution of Grenada¹ states that the nation is based on principles that recognise the “fatherhood and supremacy of God and man’s duties to his fellow man”. It also recognises that, “inasmuch as spiritual development is of supreme importance to human existence, and the highest expression thereof, it is their aspiration to serve that end”. It highlights “the dignity of human values and that all men are endowed by the Creator with equal and inalienable rights, reason, and conscience”.

Article 1 of the Constitution guarantees the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of each person, such as - among others - freedom of conscience, expression and association, without distinction of race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex, subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and the public interest.

No person should be hindered in the enjoyment of his or her freedom of conscience, including freedom of thought, religion, freedom to change religion or belief, and to manifest and propagate his or her belief, whether in worship,

teaching, practice and observance, individually or collectively, in public or in private (Article 9, 1).

Conscientious objection to military service is also recognised (Article 4, 3, c).

Except with one’s consent (or a guardian’s for minors under 18), no person attending an educational establishment can be obliged to receive religious instruction or take part in or attend a religious ceremony that is not of their religion (Article 9, 2).

Every religious community has the right to set up and maintain its own educational establishments and will not be prevented or hindered from providing religious instruction to its members, whether or not they receive government subsidies (Article 9, 3).

The government funds public schools run by Christian groups (Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Seventh-day Adventist, Mennonite), however, funding is not limited to them. Students are not required to attend religion classes.²

The Constitution also stipulates that no one shall take an oath against their beliefs or in a manner that is contrary to their religion or belief (Article 9, 4).

No law may be discriminatory in itself or in its effects, where discrimination means different treatment of persons

by reason of their sex, race, place of origin, political opinion, colour, or creed (Article 13, 5).

People are allowed to appear with their heads covered in accordance with certain religious practices in the photographs included in national identity papers, provided the face is visible.³

Religious groups are entitled to tax and customs exemptions if they are recognised as non-profit organisations and are registered with the Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office (CAIPO), and provide information about their organisation, directors, place of operation and nature of their activities. They must also send a request to the Ministry of Finance.⁴

Foreign missionaries must pay a fee for a worker's permit or get a waiver from the Ministry of Labour. They must show previous experience and be sponsored by a registered religious organisation.⁵

The Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Religious Affairs and Information is responsible for religious affairs and religious organisations.⁶

INCIDENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS

With respect to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Minister in charge of Religious Affairs, Emmalin Pierre, spoke favour-

ably in May 2020 about the work of Churches and religious leaders for "their efforts to use all possible means to provide hope to the nation in these very difficult times."⁷

Also, in May 2020, a protocol on reopening churches was released. This followed the imposition of restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, Churches must apply online for permission to reopen, and comply with a series of health and social distancing measures.⁸ The Religious Affairs Office is required to answer all requests within two business days. Funerals and weddings are allowed with a maximum of 10 people. All other ceremonies, including baptisms, were suspended until further notice.⁹

PROSPECTS FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Religious freedom is respected and no incidents of either intolerance or discrimination were recorded during the reporting period. The Ministry responsible for Religious Affairs as well as a number of government officials have shown support to the work of the Churches, and in this way prospects for the right to religious freedom remain positive.

SOURCES / ENDNOTES

1 Grenada 1973 (reinst. 1991, rev. 1992), Constitute Project, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Grenada_1992?lang=en (accessed 18th September 2020).

2 Office of International Religious Freedom, "Grenada," 2019 Report on International Religious Freedom, U.S. Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-report-on-international-religious-freedom/grenada/> (accessed 18th September 2020).

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*

6 See Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Religious Affairs and Information, <https://www.gov.gd/moe/> (accessed 18th September 2020).

7 "Road is being cleared for public officers to resume work," The New Today, 8th May 2020, <https://www.thenewtodaygrenada.com/local-news/road-is-being-cleared-for-public-officers-to-resume-work/> (accessed 31st October 2020).

8 "Covid-19 Protocols: Reopening Churches," Now Grenada, 16th May 2020, <https://www.nowgrenada.com/2020/05/covid-19-protocols-for-reopening-of-churches/> (accessed 20th August 2020).

9 *Ibid.*