

# Peru

Peru’s democratic political institutions have been severely tested by the trauma of the government’s 20-year war with leftist guerrillas up to 1980, the exploitation of natural resources on indigenous lands, corruption and involvement in the growth of coca, used for cocaine.

Constitution and government	Education and children’s rights	Family, community, society, religious courts and tribunals	Freedom of expression advocacy of humanist values
<u>There is systematic religious privilege</u> <u>Preferential treatment is given to a religion or religion in general</u> <u>There is a religious tax or tithing which is compulsory, or which is state-administered and discriminates by precluding non-religious groups</u> <u>State-funding of religious institutions or salaries, or discriminatory tax exemptions</u>	<u>Religious or ideological instruction is mandatory in at least some public schools (without secular or humanist alternatives)</u>	<u>Religious groups control some public or social services</u>	
<u>There is a nominal state church with few privileges or progress is being made toward disestablishment</u> <u>Official symbolic deference to religion</u> <u>Anomalous discrimination by local or provincial authorities, or overseas territories</u>	<u>State-funded schools offer religious or ideological instruction with no secular or humanist alternative, but it is optional</u>		<u>Some concerns about political or media freedoms, not specific to the non-religious</u> <u>Concerns that secular or religious authorities interfere in specifically religious freedoms</u>

Legend

## Constitution and government

The constitution and other laws and policies generally protect freedom of belief. Ch.1, Article 2.3 states that every person has the right: “to freedom of conscience and religion, in an individual or collective manner. No person shall be persecuted on the basis of his ideas or beliefs. There is no crime of opinion. Public exercise of any faith is free, insofar as it does not constitute an offense against morals or a disturbance of the public order.”

While the constitution establishes separation of church and state, it recognizes the Catholic Church’s role as “an important element in the historical, cultural, and moral development of the

nation.” (Article 50)

## **Education and children’s rights**

The law mandates that all schools, public and private, provide religious education through the primary and secondary level, “without violating the freedom of conscience of the student, parents, or teachers.”

However, the law only permits the teaching of Catholicism in public schools, and the Ministry of Education mandates the presiding Catholic bishop of an area approve religious education teachers in all public schools. Parents may request the principal exempt their children from mandatory public school religion classes. Many secular private schools are granted exemptions from the religious education requirement. The law protects students who seek exemptions from Catholic education classes from being disadvantaged academically in both private and public schools.

## **Family, community and society**

### **Demography**

While census returns indicate very high religious affiliation (86%), there are active humanists in Peru, among the 3% of people who told Gallup they were convinced atheists.

<[peruhumanaratio.blogspot.co.uk/](http://peruhumanaratio.blogspot.co.uk/)>

### **Catholic privilege**

According to the Peruvian government’s Office of Catholic Affairs, the government pays stipends to the Catholic cardinal, six archbishops, and other Catholic Church officials. These stipends total at least \$1 million annually. Some Catholic clergy and laypersons employed by the church receive remuneration from the government in addition to the stipends they receive from the Church. This applies to the 44 active bishops and four auxiliary bishops. In addition, the government provides each diocese with a monthly institutional subsidy.

A 2010 religious freedom law recognizes an individual’s fundamental right of freedom of religion, as stated in the constitution and international treaties the country has ratified. Under the law, registered religious organizations gain many of the same tax benefits already granted to the Catholic Church. The law codifies the arrangement with the Catholic Church.

Registration under the 2010 law does not amount to official recognition, but only registered religious groups are entitled to receive tax exemptions and other benefits. The regulations state that in order to register, a religious entity must have at least 10,000 adult members, and the membership lists are required to be certified by the National Elections Board. At the time of writing (October 2019), 127 non-Catholic organizations have been registered, and 16 missionary evangelic organizations.

<<https://www.minjus.gob.pe/registro-nacional-de-confesiones-y-entidades-religiosas/>>

The implementation of the law has been discriminatory against non-Catholic religious organizations and non-religious bodies.

As was agreed under the 1980 Peru-Vatican Concordat, the military and the armed forces may employ only Catholic clergy as chaplains. However, a proposal has been made by the political group Peruanos Por el Kambio in February 2019 to allow Evangelical chaplains to also offer religious

services.

## **Freedom of expression, advocacy of humanist values**

The lively press is for the most part privately owned. Officials and private actors sometimes intimidate or even attack journalists in response to negative coverage. The local press watchdog Institute for Press and Society registered 60 attacks against journalists in 2013. Reporters without Borders place Peru 104/180 in their press freedom index.

High levels of crime are related to drug growth and manufacture; human rights abuses from the 20-year war remain unresolved; corruption is not tackled effectively; and indigenous tribes remain angry and concerned about mineral exploitation.