

THE PRINCIPALITY OF MONACO

The Principality of Monaco, an independent and sovereign state recognised by the international community, is situated at $43^{\circ}44'$ latitude and $7^{\circ}24'$ longitude east, in the northern hemisphere on the south coast of Europe and on the north shore of the Mediterranean at the same distance from the Strait of Gibraltar and the Dardanelles. It is also found in the centre of the Ligurian basin. More precisely, Monaco is enclosed within the French territory, between several regions of the Alpes Maritimes (Cap d'Ail, La Turbie, Beausoleil and Roquebrune-Cap-Martin).

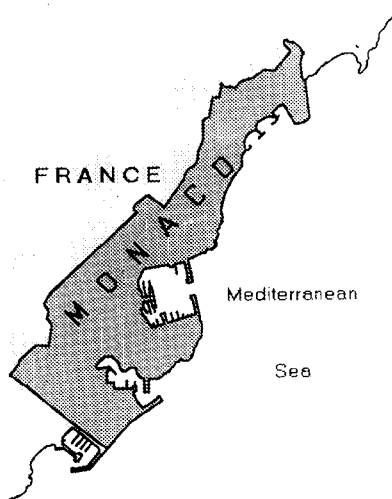


FIG. 1.- The Principality of Monaco.

It covers an area of 195 hectares, 40 of which have been gained from the sea over the last 20 years. The extension of the Principality into the sea concerns three littoral zones. However, the most remarkable operation is Fontvieille, one of the five areas of Monaco. Fontvieille has in fact become part of the "rocks", 40 m in depth, and is an area of 22 hectares made up of sports facilities and tourist sites adjoining a pleasure port as well as an industrial zone consisting of businesses, in particular non-polluting industries.

The Principality stretches along a straight coastal band, orientated north-east and south-west, rising sometimes to almost vertical and reaching 163 m. Its length varies between 1,050 m and 350 m only. The coast stretches for 4,100 m. Monaco is surrounded by a circle of high reliefs including an altitude of between 550 m and 1,100 m and less than 2.7 km of littoral. It is situated at the foot of a basin with a slope of 7 km², consisting of 4 small valleys drained off by the running water at a torrential rate of flow.

The undersea relief of the Principality can be compared to a land relief. The continental shelf, which is very narrow, covers about 1 km²; continental slope is very slant because it reaches a depth of 1,100 m in less than 6 km and 2,000 m to 24.5 km off Monaco.

The Constitution of 17 December 1962 states that the Principality is a sovereign and independent state within the frame of general principles of international law and certain particular French conventions. The Constitution states that the principle of the Government is the hereditary and constitutional monarchy. Monaco prides itself on legislative, executive as well as judicial power and guarantees separation between administrative, legislative and judiciary functions. The Principality is made up of only one town, Monaco, whose limits merge with those of the State.

The Principality is made up of 29 972 inhabitants and represents 122 nationalities, 6 617 of whom are Monegasque, 12 047 are French and 5 000 Italian (according to the last official census in 1990).

The climate is mild during the winter (average temperature is 8.2°) and hot during the summer (average temperature is 25.5°). The yearly average is 16.31° and the Principality benefits from an exceptional amount of sunshine. Heavy rain is rare but intense, with an important level of water (average of 763 mm a year) and there are few days when it rains (average of 63 days per year).

French is the official language, although Italian and English are also both spoken. The traditional language, Monegasque, is still used by the 'elderly locals' and taught to the youngest children in the schools of the Principality.

The official currency is the French franc. Monegasque coins of the same value as French money can also be found in circulation.

The economic activity of the Principality is based on 4 axis: the industrial activity; the tourism; the service industries; and commercial and Real Estate sector.

The running of the maritime sector therefore represents a small part of the economic activity of the Principality.

The fleet which fly under the Monaco flag is made up of a thousand pleasure boats and yachts.

For over a century, the Principality has developed initiatives in favour of the protection of certain species and the development of marine flora and fauna in general and, in particular, of those in the Mediterranean. The sea of Monaco has

been studied, since the beginning of the century, by groups from the Oceanographic Museum, founded by Prince Albert 1er, the scientific centre of Monaco, established by HRH Prince Rainier III, and also from Environmental Services. An important part of the littoral of the Principality is protected.

With regards to international cooperation, Monaco has contributed to development plans, signed and approved or supported a certain number of conventions.

In the field of maritime affairs, Monaco has, in particular, approved the following organisations:

- International Hydrographic Bureau (IHB);
- General Fisheries Council for the Mediterranean;
- International Maritime Organisation (IMO);
- Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP);
- International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean (ICSEM);
- Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC);
- Permanent International Association of the Navigation Congress;
- International Council of Scientific Unions;
- International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics;
- European Seismology Union;
- World Conservation Union (IUCN).

The International Hydrographic Bureau is one of the international organisations (the other one being the International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean (ICSEM)) which has a link with the sea and whose headquarters are in Monaco.

The International Hydrographic Bureau has been located in Monaco since its formation due to the offer of gratuitous accommodation by Prince Albert 1er, a renowned oceanographer. It is also thanks to the "Sailor Prince" that the IHB has been in charge of the GEBCO (General Bathymetric Chart of oceans) since 1932.

The International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO) was created by an international convention adopted in Monaco on 3 May 1967. In accordance with this convention, the Headquarters of the IHO are in Monaco.