

What is the Smallest Country of the World?



Country means a territory with a fixed boundary and a government of its own. Every country has its own flag and an administrative system. According to this definition, Vatican is the smallest country of the world.

Vatican is a country with the Pope, the spiritual leader of the Catholic Christians, as its head. It is situated in the centre of Rome, the capital of Italy. It is fully under the control of the Pope. It has its own flag. This country has its own independent postal system, railway station, telephones and broadcasting arrangements. You will be surprised to know that the total area of this country is only 0.45 sq. kilometers. Even though this country does not have any independent source of income, it manages its affairs well from the contributions made by the Catholics all over the world. In this country, the Pope's residence is a fascinating palace with a beautiful garden, a library and a museum. Vatican City maintains diplomatic relations 'with other countries of the world.

The story of the formation of Vatican is very interesting. For hundreds' of years in the past, Italy has been the centre of activities for the Catholic Christians. For a long time, Pope had political control over a larger territory in central Italy. In 1859 this part was known as 'Papal states' and at that time its area was sixteen thousand square miles. In 1870 Rome was made the national capital of Italy and Pope's territory was merged into the Italian kingdom without his consent. As a result, relations between the King and the Pope became strained. These differences ended in 1929 with a settlement

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between the Italian Government and the Pope and, as a result, Vatican was recognized as an independent and sovereign state.

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