



Learning Interculturality From rEligion



SYNTHESIS REPORT

Fondazione Hallgarten-Franchetti

Centro Studi Villa Montesca

Project Number 2016-1-IT02-KA201-024660

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PART I

Religion, multiculturalism and interculturalism

1.1 - Conceptual definition of the religion (Council of Europe) Belief is a state of the mind when we consider something true even though we are not 100% sure or able to prove it. Everybody has beliefs about life and the world they experience. Mutually supportive beliefs may form belief systems, which may be religious, philosophical or ideological. Religions are belief systems that relate humanity to spirituality. The following definition provides a good overview of the many dimensions of religion: it is a collection of cultural systems, belief systems, and worldviews that relate humanity to spirituality and, sometimes, to moral values. Many religions have narratives, symbols, traditions and sacred histories that are intended to give meaning to life or to explain the origin of life or the universe. They tend to derive morality, ethics, religious laws or a preferred lifestyle from their ideas about the cosmos and human nature. Many religions have organised behaviours, clergy, a definition of what constitutes adherence or membership, congregations of laity, regular meetings or services for the purposes of veneration of a deity or for prayer, holy places (either natural or architectural), and/or scriptures. The practice of a religion may also include sermons, commemoration of the activities of a god or gods, sacrifices, festivals, feasts, trance, initiations, funerary services, matrimonial services, meditation, music, art, dance, public service, or other aspects of human culture. However, there are examples of religions for which some or many of these aspects of structure, belief, or practices are absent.

In the simplest sense, religion describes “the relationship of human beings to what they regard as holy, sacred, spiritual or divine”. It is usually accompanied by a set of organised practices which foster a community of people who share that faith. As discussed above, belief is a broader term and it also includes “commitments which deny a dimension of existence beyond this world”. Religions and other belief systems in our environment have an influence on our identity, regardless of whether we consider ourselves religious or spiritual or not. At the same time, other parts of our identity, our history, our approach to other religions and groups considered “different” will influence how we interpret that religion or belief system. Religions and other belief systems in our environment have an influence on our identity, regardless of whether we consider ourselves religious or spiritual or not. At the same time, other parts of our identity, our history, our approach to other religions and groups considered “different” will influence how we interpret that religion or belief system.



1.2 - Multiculturalism and interculturalism: current situation and political and legal overviews in Italy, Spain, Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria

ITALY - The 1948 Constitution includes four main dispositions on religious freedom:

- *article 7*, on relations between the Italian Republic and the Catholic Church;
- *article 8*, on general equality between religions and relationships with the State for non-Catholic confessions;
- *article 19*, which protects freedom of conscience for citizens as well as foreigners;
- *article 20*, which prevents any discrimination of treatment between a religious and a non-religious society.

An essential moment in the history of Catholic Religious Education can be identified without a doubt in the **1929 Lateran Pacts** - a Treaty establishing the State of Vatican City, and a financial settlement, that was signed on 11th Feb. 1929 and ratified by the Italian Parliament on 27th May 1929 (Law 27th May 1929, No. 810) - thanks to which the education of Catholic religion was extended to both the secondary and high school curricula. As the Lateran Treaties are explicitly mentioned in article 7, along with mutual independence for State and Church, the Roman Catholic Church remained the State official religion until the revision of the Concordat in 1984. Since then, while Catholic priests are no longer paid by the State, a system of indirect fiscal funding is provided by the eight per thousand on the tax return, by which citizens can choose to donate 0.8% of their individual income to either the Catholic Church, or another religion which signed an *Intesa* with the State, or to secular charities. The mechanism of the *Intese*, whose purpose is to guarantee particularities of non-Catholic religions according to article 8 of the Constitution, was used six times between 1984 and 1995, with the Waldensian and Methodist Churches (1984), Seventh Day Adventists (1986), the Assemblies of God in Italy (1988), the Union of Jewish Communities (1989), Baptist Churches (1995) and Lutheran Churches (1995). Subsequent projects of *Intese* were all halted, or annulled in the case of Soka Gakkai (which recently signed the *Intesa* in 2016) before the conclusion of six agreements voted by the Italian Parliament between June and December 2012, with the Hindu and Buddhist federations, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Latter-Day Saints Church, the Apostolic Church and the Sacred Orthodox Archdiocese of Italy and Malta and Exarchate for Southern Europe. Under the level of the *Intese*, the status of *culti ammessi* ('tolerated cults') from the law of 06/24/1929 allows, under strict conditions of registration, limited facilities for worship and recognition of the legal validity of religious marriages.

The weaknesses of this system are twofold. On the one hand, while this status gives a substantial and symbolical legitimacy to recognized religious organizations, it has followed a mimetic trend concerning the fields covered (religious education, degrees conferred by confessional colleges...), without being on an equal footing with the Roman Catholic Church. On the other hand, the steps to recognition, especially the status of *culti ammessi*, are matched by a part of discretionary choices and vulnerability to changes in political majorities in Parliament. In other words, if Italian multiculturalism exists, it is top-down, institutional, focused on religious aspects and not integrated.

While the religious components of Italy have shown significant changes, without questioning the effectiveness of the Roman Catholic Church in terms of representation and influence, even since the collapse of Christian-Democratic currents, new issues have come to visibility, such as the place of religious symbols in public offices and schools (Lautsi v. Italy, EtCHR, 03/18/2011).

As *laicità* (secularism) is intended in a positive, active sense of intervention to guarantee religious freedom (Constitutional Court, decision 203/1989), it is nonetheless an unequal system, while some political formations like *Lega Nord* (Northern League) clearly define religious pluralism as a threat to national (or, in the above mentioned case, regional) identity and while the question of Islam is still dealt with by national media in terms of security and 'reciprocity'.

On these grounds, multiculturalism in Italy has been first debated as a dangerous schema by some intellectuals and politicians, while the Italian situation might provide a fruitful field of experimentation for policies of recognition of pluralism in the future.

List of the agreements so far implemented, approved by law pursuant to article 8 of the Italian Constitution:

<i>Religious Confession</i>	<i>Signature Date</i>	<i>Law of Approval</i>
Tavola valdese	21 Feb. 1984	<u>Law 449/1984</u>
	25 Jan. 1993 (amendment)	<u>Law 409/1993</u>
	4 Apr. 2007	<u>Law 68/2009</u>
Assemblee di Dio in Italia (ADI)	29 Dec. 1986	<u>Law 517/1988</u>
Unione delle Chiese Cristiane Avventiste del 7° giorno	29 Dec. 1986	<u>Law 516/1988</u>
	6 Nov. 1996 (amendment)	<u>Law 637/1996</u>
	4 Apr. 2007	<u>Law 67/2009</u>
Unione Comunità Ebraiche in Italia (UCEI)	27 Feb. 1987	<u>Law 101/1989</u>
	6 Nov. 1996 (amendment)	<u>Law 638/1996</u>

Unione Cristiana Evangelica Battista d'Italia (UCEBI)	29 Mar. 1993 16 Jul. 2010 (amendment)	<u>Law 116/1995</u> <u>Law n.34/12</u>
Chiesa Evangelica Luterana in Italia (CELI)	20 Apr. 1993	<u>Law 520/1995</u>
Sacra Arcidiocesi ortodossa d'Italia ed Esarcato per l'Europa Meridionale	4 Apr. 2007	<u>Law n. 126/12</u>
Chiesa di Gesù Cristo dei Santi degli ultimi giorni	4 Apr. 2007	<u>Law n. 127/12</u>
Chiesa Apostolica in Italia	4 Apr. 2007	<u>Law n. 128/12</u>
Unione Buddhista italiana (UBI)	4 Apr. 2007	<u>Law n. 245/12</u>
Unione Induista Italiana	4 Apr. 2007	<u>Law n. 246/12</u>
Istituto Buddhista Italiano Soka Gakkai (IBISG)	27 June 2015	<u>Law 28 giugno 2016,</u> <u>n. 130</u>

Italian Government, Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Service for Relations with Religious Confessions and Institutional Relations

RE within the *Intese* - The agreements between the state and religions and denominations other than the Catholic Church (*Intese*), also concern teaching their religion in public schools. They identify and defend the right of pupils and parents belonging to the relevant denomination not to attend classes teaching Roman Catholicism. Contrary to the case with the IRC, these religions or denominations have to finance the teaching themselves and the time for teaching must be found outside the regular timetable. Besides, while IRC is also a 'regular' school subject in terms of the fact that grades are given to the pupils attending it, this is not so in the case of other kinds of confessional RE. This system also stipulates the right of the relevant denomination to organize the teaching of religion in State schools, under two conditions: a congruous number of students will have to request the activation of the teaching, and that teachers shall be paid by the denomination. Article 10 of the agreement with Waldensians, stipulates that in case arrangements are made for classes teaching Protestantism in State schools by Waldensian teachers, this must be paid by the ecclesiastical authorities (gli oneri finanziari sono a carico degli organi ecclesiastici competenti). The same phrasing is reiterated in Article 12 section 3 of 2007 *intesa* with Mormons enacted in 2012.

Article 33 of the Italian Constitution - The majority of pupils in Italy are educated at public schools. Article 33 of the Constitution, in reference to "private schools", states that entities and private persons have the right to establish schools and institutions of education at no cost to the State. The Republic guarantees the freedom of the arts and sciences, which may be freely taught, and also establishes general rules for education and institutes State schools of all branches and grades. The law, when setting out the rights and obligations for the non-State schools which request parity, ensures that these schools enjoy full liberty and offer their pupils an education and qualifications of the same standards as those afforded to pupils in State schools. Private schools are mostly Roman Catholic (an

average of 75% over the last 20 years): Concordat of 1984 (Act No. 121 of 1985) strengthens the general protection granted by Article 33 of the Constitution and the general laws regulating the inclusion of private schools in public education. Article 9 of Act No. 121 of 1985 provides a specific guarantee of freedom and autonomy of Catholic schools – further, article 10 of Act No. 121 of 1985 secures the autonomy of ecclesiastical educational establishments, and a framework for civil recognition of academic degrees delivered by Catholic institutions.

For decades, a large section of the public opinion has opposed State funding for private schools. Reflecting this position, some legal experts have argued for a strict interpretation of the “*at no cost for the State*” (senza oneri per lo Stato) clause, emphasizing the principle that State funding of private schools is constitutionally illegitimate (Ventura 2013: 195). This has become a marginal position, but establishing a system of equal State funding of State schools and private schools meets a large opposition in the country; defence of the priority of State schools embodies a consolidated pattern, deeply rooted in the national customs.

Today the debate has shifted from whether the State should fund private schools or whether full parity in State funding of State and private schools should be established. Catholic Bishops have taken a clear stand in favor for the latter position and have put pressure on governments. The credit crunch and the debt crisis have deepened the divide between those who push for full parity, who criticize the inefficient State schools, while defenders of the impoverished State school are the victims of neo-liberal cuts in the State budget. If State funding of private schools remains below European standards, parity in the recognition of degrees has been basically achieved. Also, private schools integrated in public education enjoy extreme freedom, with little, if any, State control on the effective compliance of private schools with the agreed-upon standards (Ventura 2013: 195-196).

Today, private state authorized schools are managed partly by lay bodies and partly by religious bodies. In terms of structures, the number is equivalent (1.924 schools are run by religious entities and 1.749 by lay people), while in terms of enrollment religious state authorized schools are prevalent with about 218.000 users (62% of the total number of state authorized schools students).

SPAIN - The basic legal framework governing Religious Education in School (RES) and the justification of its presence in the Spanish education system is defined in the following regulations:

- **Spanish constitution of 1978**, according to which “*the public authorities guarantee the right of parents to ensure that their children receive religious and moral instruction in accordance with their own convictions*”. Additionally, it is established that this religious and moral instruction in accordance with one’s own convictions shall be included in formal education. In this sense, parents’ right to choose on the religious and moral education their children shall



receive is derived from the right to religious freedom itself and from educational rights, namely, the fundamental right to education and to freedom of education.

- **International treaties** - The International Treaty with the Catholic Church, establishes a regulation in educational institutions, which is included in the Agreement between the Spanish Government and the Holy See concerning Education and Cultural Affairs, signed in Vatican City on January 3rd, 1979. This agreement has been legally considered as an international treaty, since the Holy See has international legal personality. There are also Agreements with Islam, Evangelism, Judaism.
- **Organic law on Religious Freedom** - Religious freedom guaranteed by the constitution includes everybody's right to choose the religious and moral education for themselves and for incapacitated minors in accordance with their own convictions.
- **Organic Law 2/2006, 3 May**, on Education, consolidated by the **Organic Law 8/2013, 9 December**, on the Improvement of the Quality of Education holds that Catholic religious education shall be adjusted to the Agreement concerning Education and Cultural Affairs between the Spanish Government and the Holy See. That is why Catholic religious education shall be included as an area or subject in the corresponding educational stage, and it shall be compulsorily offered by educational centres and taken voluntarily by the students.
- **Agreements with Religious Faiths** - Catholic Church, Evangelism, Islam, Judaism:
 - International treaties: Catholic Church; the regulation on Catholic religious education in educational institutions is included in the agreement between the Spanish Government and the Holy See; Educational plans shall include the teaching of catholic religion in all Educational Centres but Religious Education shall not be obligatory for all students.
 - Agreements with organic law status: Islam, evangelism, Judaism; students, their parents and those school organisms so requesting, shall be guaranteed the right to receive religious classes in public and private schools. Religious education shall be imparted by teachers designated by the Churches. The contest of religious education shall be determined by the respective communities.

Further, **Royal Decree 696/2007, 1 June**, establishes the employment relationships of Religious Education teachers provided by the third Additional Provision of the Organic Law 2/2006, 3 May, on Education.

The following requirements shall be fulfilled to teach Religious Education:

- Hold the same qualifications, or equivalent, required to government-employed school teachers in compliance with the Organic Law 2/2006, 3 May, on Education.
- Recommendation by the religious authority to teach Religious Education.



- Provide determination of suitability or equivalent certification, prior to the teacher's employment by the competent authority.

GREECE - In Greece the education system has a centralized structure and a unified planning under the ministry of Education. The administration of the Greek educational system has three different levels:

1. *National or Central Level* (Minister, Deputy Minister, General Secretary and General Managers, Councils);
2. *District/Prefectural Level* (Head of Education Departments, Heads of Education Offices, Directors and Deputy Directors of Schools, Teacher's Council);
3. *School Level* (School Unit Director, Assistant Director, Association of school teachers, School Board, etc.)

While Greek society had made significant progress and adopted social practices that transcend the religious prejudices of the past (such as the reform of family law, the issue of abortion and divorce), religious education remained defensively oriented in outdated educational standards.

According to the Spanish Constitution, education is one of the main tasks of the state (16 par. 1) and is defined as mandatory for nine years duration (16 par. 3), it serves specific principles (16 par. 2) among of which the development of religious consciousness.

The Administrative Court stated that "the purpose of this provision (Article 16 Paragraph 2) is to maintain the orthodox Christian doctrine espoused by the vast majority of Greek citizens". Also, according to the common law, the course aims at making students partakers of the truths of the Orthodox Christian faith. These principles are reflected in the way that the course of religious textbooks are formed, where as a basic prerequisite arises that the Greek citizen is both a Christian-Orthodox.

Based on this argument it was considered by the Supreme Administrative Court (CoE) the compulsory character of the course of religion, for the exemption of which there should be reliable statement of the students' parents that they are atheists, heathens or heterodox. In the same vein, the Council of State ruled that the education system must ensure the teaching of the course of the religion should take place for a sufficient number of hours per week. Moreover, the official church believed that whatever comes out from the row of bond-catechism lesson, constitutes a hostile act. They also asked to express an opinion on the content of all books of religion at all levels of education.

These views were partly embraced by the State Council and at a later judgment in consultative formation [24], made a shift in the case-law, and accepted that the legislator is free to choose the religious model considers appropriate (Spiritual or catechetical) although it highlights that Spiritual



responds more to the liberal features of the Constitution (Article 5 paragraph 1, 13 paragraph 1 and 16 paragraph 2).

Educational matters in Greece began to move after the Democracy restoration (1974) and the reform of 1976, the main purpose of which was the democratization of education. However, despite the fundamental proclamation of the primacy of the school's cognitive orientation and the weakening of ethnocentric educational philosophy, the religion education – along with the lessons of history and language remained the main “weapons” of establishing national and religious identity for the students in the Greek Schools.

More specifically, the general purpose of religion teaching in the primary school was “the development of students' religious sentiment, the consolidation of the faith in the Christian Religion and enhancing their active participation in our people's religious life”. The teaching of religion wasn't enriched by the international religion and pedagogical concerns of the 60s and 70s which tended to have a more open-minded view. The result was for the lessons to remain in the suffocating, regulatory conditions of religious education of the previous decades and keep the “Preachy” character, assuming that all school pupils are faithful Christians. The textbooks compiled during 1977-1981 were distinguished by lack of child –centered orientation not only to the contents but also to the presentation form. From the early 80's series of interventions is being carried out in order to capture in the teaching content the national, cultural and linguistic diversity that characterizes the classrooms. New books, changes in the curriculum and manuals attempt to include more and more references to the pupils' particular culture and to show positive images for the respective national cultural groups.

Since the 90's, in the context of social developments and discussions on the role of the religious lesson, the Greek school made the first attempt on the methodical teaching of other religions mostly in secondary education. For what concerns the three cycles of compulsory education, in the latest program of religion studies Christianity remains the main religion for study and retains a special and “privileged” position, while six other religions are gradually being approached: Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism (with a greater focus on Judaism and Islam).

According to the guide book for the teachers of the primary schools (which teach the religion lessons, as in Greek pedagogical program for primary schools it is no specialized teacher of religion), the religions of the world are not presented to the students simplistically and schematically as closed belief systems, whose substance is expressed in a series of propositions or doctrinal positions. In the recent educational program there is an attempted to highlight the potential and evolutionary character of religions, since students are invited to understand religion as:

- Timeless search for meaning and value of life and answers to fundamental questions of people
- Everyday life of people and communities



- A prominent factor in culture
- Live presence in the modern world

At the same time, it is considered as very important for students from other religious traditions, to understand the types and essence of Christianity, to become accustomed to the culture of the country in which they are located.

The new educational program proposes an approach to Christianity with a focus on the Orthodox tradition first and gradually extending to the other two great Christian traditions (the Roman Catholic and Protestant).

TURKEY - Multiculturalism and interculturalism are two different concepts while the prior basically defines the presence and acceptance of different cultures within a single country; the latter supports actions which support intercultural dialogue, tolerance and understanding instead of sole acceptance (Harper 2011; Penaz & Saenz 2006). Government policies and strategies which supports communication among cultures and different belief systems may be considered more useful for decreasing conflicts due to clash of cultures rather than promoting centralization on diversity and cultural uniqueness that might cause intercultural competition and lead to ethnic conflict (Caval 2001; Hurd 2011).

Turkey has always been a refuge to people from diverse cultures and belief systems. For instance, since the early 15th century Ottoman Empire has opened its gates to hundreds of thousands of Spanish, Armenian, and Portuguese Jews along with Russians, Polish and Europeans in search political asylum in the course of over 600 years (Aydin, 2012). Owing to its historical nature, Turkey has become a home for various cultures, ethnicities and religions. Furthermore, according to the International Religion Freedom Report of U.S. Department of State, in Turkey, within the population of 79.4 million, “there are 15 million to 20 million Alevi Muslims. Alevi foundation leaders report higher numbers, estimating 20 million to 25 million Alevis in the country. The Shia Ja’fari community estimates its numbers at three million” (2015). The rest of the people who are from different religions compose %1 of the population and they mostly live in Istanbul and other large cities (2015). “While exact figures are not available, these groups self-report approximately 90,000 Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Christians; 25,000 Roman Catholics; 15,000 Russian Orthodox Christians; 10,000 Bahais; 22,000 Yezidis; 5,000 Jehovah’s Witnesses; 7,000 members of Protestant denominations; 3,000 Chaldean Christians; and up to 2,000 Greek Orthodox Christians; “there also are small, undetermined numbers of Bulgarian Orthodox, Nestorian, Georgian Orthodox, Ukrainian Orthodox, Syriac Catholic, Armenian Catholic, Anglican, and Maronite Christians. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) estimates its membership at approximately 300 individuals. Estimates of the number of



atheists vary, but most recent published surveys suggest approximately 2 percent of the population is atheist” (2015).

Besides the religion diversity there is also a significant amount of ethnic variety who have their own languages and cultures in the country. Owing to ethnolinguistic estimates in 2014 by Ethnologue, while %70.6 of it is comprised by Anatolian Turks; %10.7 is Kurmanji Kurds and %7.7 is Turcophones Kurds. Moreover, Zaza Kurds, Lebanese Arabs and Kabardians Circassians compose less than %2 of the population (2014). According to The World Factbook the population in Turkey is Turkish 70-75%, Kurdish 19%, other minorities 7-12% (CIA, 2017). Lastly, Iraqi Arabs, Persians, Azerbaijani, Romani, Gagauzes, Pomaks, Pontic Greeks, Adyghe Circassians, Alevi Kurds, Georgians, Bosniaks, Chechens, Crimean Tatars, Lazs, Karakalpaks, Albanians, Armenians, Abkhazians, Han Chinese, Ossetians, British, Macedonians, Jews, Tatars, Assyrians are the rest of the ethnic groups which constitutes less than %1 of it (2014). In terms of policy in education, government took several actions to include other languages within the country such as Kurdish, Arabic, Zaza language and Circassian. However, it is still not adequate for an extensive intercultural education.

In consideration of these religion and ethnic demographical facts of the country, government policies, which support interculturalism, should become very significant and one of the priorities in order to achieve peace and tolerance among citizens of Turkey.

BULGARIA – The worldly character of the Bulgarian school is announced by the Provisional Statute for National Schools in 1878, approved by Prince Dondukov - Korsakov. From then until 1944, the subject of the Law of God/religion was studied at school, which did not interfere with the already established secular nature of education. The training was conducted by qualified teachers, and later by priests, and the textbooks were controlled by the Holy Synod. 281 textbooks were published.

After 1944, however, political changes took place in Bulgaria, leading to a change in educational policy. At the beginning of 1945, religion dropped out of the curricula of primary and pedagogical schools. The next school year was only facultative, one hour a week in primary and junior high schools. In January 1946, the temporary education minister, Dr. Racho Angelov, ordered the school to remain in a neutral position with respect to the church. With the 1947 Constitution and the 1949 Religious Denominations, religion definitively dropped out of the curriculum of public schools.

The idea of restoring religious education in the Bulgarian school was reborn after the political changes of 1989. Since 1997, concrete actions have been taken to develop a concept for the introduction of the subject of Religion.

In 1998, the Ministry of Education and Science set up a Religious Commission to create concepts, curricula and textbooks. Representatives of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (BOC) had objections to the name, content and manner of introduction of the subject, thus offering religion as a compulsory



subject, respectively, with different educational content and confessional teaching. The Commission rejected these proposals and reaffirmed the concept of the experimental introduction of a single subject for religion. The curriculum for all grades of the general school was determined, teaching materials for students were prepared and the specialists who would teach religion - graduates of philosophy, Bulgarian philology and history were chosen. For Primary Teachers at the Theological Faculty of Sofia University they started courses in post-graduate specialization in theology.

In 2000, the Religious Affairs Committee of the Ministry of Education and Science developed normative and methodological guidelines and affirmed two forms of teaching the subject Religion: Religion-Christianity and Religion-Islam. That is how the subject is taught today.

Teaching the school subject “Religion” is based on the following acts of legislation:

- According to the **Constitution**, religious faiths in the Republic of Bulgaria are “free” (article 13, paragraph 1), the religious institutions are separated from the State (article 13, paragraph 2), and the traditional religion is the eastern orthodox faith (article 13, paragraph 3).
- The equality and respect to other religions, the free right to practice a religious faith, its protection as well as the legal status of religious communities and institutions and their relations with the State are covered in the **Religious Denominations Act** (article 4, paragraph 1).
- School education is codified in the **Law on Pre-school and School Education** (published in Official Gazette, issue 79 of October 13, 2015; in force since August 1, 2016), which defines pre-school and school education in Bulgaria as “secular” (article 11, paragraph 1) and “does not allow the imposition of ideological and religious doctrines on students’ education” (article 11, paragraph 2). In the process of school education “religions are taught in historical, philosophical and cultural prospective through the learning content of different school subjects. Under the conditions of the above act, the school subject “Religion” can be also taught in the course of school education” (article 76, paragraph 4). The school subjects under paragraphs 1,2,3,4 and 6 – to which the school subject “Religion” belongs – are taught in learning programs approved by the Minister of Education and Science. The learning programs determine the number of hours for teaching a specific school subject.
- There is also a still existing **Instruction № 2 of June 23, 2003** concerning the training on the subject "Religion" which defines the conditions and order for teaching the school subject "Religion". It states that "pupils from the first to the twelfth grade have the right to study the subject" Religion "in the classes of compulsory and/or elective preparation" (Article 2). The organization of training on the subject "Religion" takes place in compliance with:
 - the desire of the students;
 - the capacity of the municipality and the school to provide qualified teachers;



- the Concept of Education in the Subject "Religion" in the Comprehensive Schools of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Concept of Education of Muslim Children in the Subject "Religion - Islam" in the Comprehensive Schools (Section 2, Article 3), approved by the Minister of Education and Science.

PART II

Teaching Religion in a changing society - Religions and Multiculturalism within school programs: a comparative analysis in Italy, Spain, Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria

ITALY - An agreement between the appropriate school authority and the CEI - Conferenza Episcopale Italiana (Italian Episcopal Conference) has established: the curricula for the various types and levels of the public schools; the ways in which said subject is organized, including the way it is positioned within the frame of the other lessons; the criteria for choosing textbooks; the professional profiles for choosing the teachers. Currently, the curricula for the hour of religion are established for each level and type of school by the Ministry subject to an agreement with the CEI, in the understanding that it is the latter who has the competence to define their conformity with the doctrine of the Church. Kindergarten is assigned a yearly total of 60 hours (one and a half hours per week), elementary school is assigned two hours of CRE per week while I and II level secondary school are assigned one hour of CRE per week. Catholic schools of every level and type were assigned additional hours, in compliance with the Educational Offer Plan established by each school.

The different relationships entangling Italy's political and cultural institutions and the education system traditionally regard the search for a common path that conciliates religion, religious diversity and secularism as a confrontational and divisive field of action.

From a practical point of view related to the contents of CRE, the curricula are determined on the base of a Decree of the President of the Republic (D.P.R.), in particular:

- **D.P.R. 11th February 2010**, concerning CRE programs for kindergartens and first school cycle - primary and lower secondary school;
- **D.P.R. 20th August 2012, no. 176**, related to the implementation of the Intesa between the CEI (Italian Episcopal Conference) and the MIUR (Italian Ministry for Education, Universities and Research), concerning recommendations for the teaching of Catholic religion in Secondary Education and Vocational Education and Training.

Kindergarten is assigned a yearly total of 60 hours of CRE (one and a half hours per week). The set of Skills Development Goals conceived by the legislator are entirely permeated by the doctrine of the



Church: the pupils discover in the stories of the Gospel the person and the teaching of Jesus, from whom they learn that God is the Father of all, and that the Church is the community of men and women united in his name; they start to recognize some symbolic and figurative languages typical of Christians' traditions and life (signs, religious holidays, prayers, songs, gestures, environments, arts, etc.) and they start to learn some of the terms of Christian language, listening to simple biblical stories.

For what concerns the first school cycle - primary and lower secondary school – the description of the Learning Objectives included in D.P.R. 20th August 2012, no. 176 is indicative and states: *“Learning objectives for each age group are divided into four theme spheres, taking into account the centrality of the person of Jesus Christ:*

- 1. God and men, with main historical and doctrinal references to Christianity;*
- 2. The Bible and other sources, in order to provide for knowledge on a documental basis;*
- 3. Religious language, in its verbal and non-verbal declinations;*
- 4. Ethical and religious values, in order to illustrate the link that connects religious elements with the growth of a moral dimension and the development of a civil, responsible and sympathetic coexistence.”*

Catholic Religious Education, while offering a first overview of the historical-positive elements of the Christian Revelation, encourages and follows the intellectual development and all other aspects of the person through an in-depth critical analysis of the core issues of life. The educational proposal of CRE allows reflection on the big questions related to human condition (identity research, relationship life, complexity of the reality, good and evil, value-based choices, origin and end of life, radical questions of meaning ...) and urges the comparison with the answer developed within the Christian tradition in respect of the process of personal growth and in different ways according to the specific age group, by studying in depth the anthropological, social and moral implications and by promoting a comparison through which the student, in the exercise of his/her own freedom, reflects and is oriented towards the choice of a responsible life project.

The set of Skills Development Goals and Learning Objectives related to the different school grades feature the presence (yet weak) of elements concerning the issue of “interreligious dialogue”, in particular: students are aware that the Bible is the sacred text for Christians and Jews and a fundamental document of our culture, knowing how to distinguish it from other categories of texts, including those of other religions; students are aware of events, people, and structures of the Catholic Church since its origins and compare them with those of other Christian confessions, highlighting the perspectives of the ecumenical path; students are aware of the origins and development of Christianity and other great religions and are able to identify the most important aspects of interreligious dialogue; student are able to compare the Bible with the sacred texts of other religions; students discover the



answer that the Bible gives on human condition and are able to compare it to the ones of the major non-Christian religions.

At the end of the first school cycle, students should be able to interact with people with different religious beliefs, developing an identity that is open to confrontation and dialogue. This, together with other competences, is to be achieved through the following Learning Objectives: to understand some fundamental categories of the Jewish-Christian faith (revelation, promise, covenant, messiah, resurrection, grace, Kingdom of God, salvation, ...) and compare them with those of other major religions; to identify the specific elements of the Christian prayer, also making a comparison with those of other religions; to know how to express the main reasons supporting the ethical choices of Catholics concerning affective relationships and the value of life from its beginning to its end, in a context of cultural and religious pluralism.

Some Learning Objectives link religion to the field of art and cultural heritage, in particular: to identify the biblical texts that inspired the main Italian and European artistic productions (literary, musical, pictorial ...); to recognize the expressive languages of faith (symbols, prayers, rituals, etc.) by learning to appreciate them from an artistic, cultural and spiritual point of view; to recognize the Christian message in Italian and European art and culture of the late-ancient, medieval, modern and contemporary times.

It is also worth mentioning the ambitious attempt, included in the set of Learning Objectives, to propose a non-conflicting vision of the relation between religion and science: “to consider the perspective of Christian faith and the results of science as distinct but non-conflicting interpretations of man and the world”.

Alternatively to the CRE, the regulation provides for several options: an alternative activity established by the school itself which should, as suggested by the 1986 Ministry Circulars, Nos. 128, 129, 131, and 131, address topics concerning ethics, values, tolerance and peace. This activity should be imparted by any teacher who is, at the time, available. Another option is tutoring (revision, in-depth studying) or, for high school, a study activity without the presence of any teacher, within the school premises; lastly, a very used option is the early exit from school (or delayed entry).

With regard to the first option (alternative activity established by the school itself), it is worth mentioning that some Italian schools provide themselves with ‘enhancement teachers’, who are nominated by the Regional School Office. In Liceo Classico A. Mariotti (Perugia, Umbria) for example, since the program of constitutional and civic education is often not carried out (in this case, it should be up to History and Philosophy teachers) and since a law course is not foreseen in the educational planning of the school, the headmaster along with the teaching board decided to introduce a course of constitutional and civic education addressed to those who have chosen not to attend the hour of CRE.



Other schools, especially technical institutes, opted for the implementation of technical courses, more suitable to their specific educational planning.

SPAIN - Royal Decree 696/2007, 1 June, establishes the employment relationships of Religious Education teachers provided by the third Additional Provision of the Organic Law 2/2006, 3 May, on Education.

The following requirements shall be fulfilled to teach Religious Education:

- Hold the same qualifications, or equivalent, required to government-employed school teachers in compliance with the Organic Law 2/2006, 3 May, on Education.
- Recommendation by the religious authority to teach Religious Education.
- Provide determination of suitability or equivalent certification, prior to the teacher's employment by the competent authority.

Catholic Religious Education (CRE) According to the Agreement on the economic and labour related system for teachers not employed by the government in charge of Catholic Religious Education in Public Schools for Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary Education, the State finances the teaching of CRE in Public Schools for Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary Education. Teachers of Catholic Religious Education shall be remunerated in accordance with the salaries of interim teachers at the educational stage.

Teachers in charge of Catholic Religious Education shall provide service under the recruitment system with a full-time or part-time fixed-term contract coinciding with the academic year. They shall be included under the general social security scheme, to which teachers of Early Childhood and Primary Education schools shall be incorporated. To this effect, the employer shall be the corresponding Education Authority.

Evangelical and Muslim Religious Education Teachers shall depend on the corresponding religious authorities. Additionally, these authorities shall be able to determine the system of these teachers, in accordance with the specific service they provide. The State shall pay the religious authorities for the services provided by individuals teaching RES in public primary and secondary schools. The Spanish law holds that the students who choose not to attend religious education shall take an alternative subject, this way ensuring the non-discrimination of the students that receive religious education.

As for Primary Education (which comprises six years), every academic year students shall take one of the following subjects included in the area of specific subjects: Religious Education or Social and Civic Values, at parents' or legal guardians' choice.

As for Compulsory Secondary Education, Every academic year students shall take one of the following subjects included in the area of specific subjects: Religious Education or Ethical Values, at parents' or legal guardians' choice or, if applicable, at the student's choice.

In High School during the 1st year students shall take one the following subjects included in the area of specific subjects:

- Physical Education.
- Depending on the regulation and the syllabus of the courses available established by each Education Authority and, where appropriate, on the courses available in each educational centre, a minimum of two and a maximum of three subjects among the following:

Subjects available during 1st year

Musical Analysis I	Applied Anatomy	Scientific Culture	Artistic Drawing I	Technical Drawing I	Musical Language & Practice
Religious Education	Second Foreign Language I	Industrial Technology I	Information & Communication Technologies I	Volume	One subject from the area of core subjects not previously taken by the student

During the 2nd year depending on the regulation and the syllabus of the courses available established by each Education Authority and, where appropriate, on the courses available in each educational centre, a minimum of two and a maximum of three subjects among the following:

Subjects available during 2nd year

Musical Analysis II	Earth & Environmental Sciences	Artistic Drawing II	Technical Drawing II	Basics of Administration and Management	History of Philosophy
History of Music & Dancing	Audiovisual Communications	Psychology	Religious Education	Second Foreign Language II	Graphic and Plastic Expression Techniques
Industrial Technology II	Information & Communication Technologies II	One subject from the area of core subjects not previously taken by the student, which shall be considered as a specific subject for all intents and purposes			



The basic regulation and organization of religious education depends on whether it is Catholic religious education or Evangelical and/or Muslim.

Catholic Religious Education (CRE) It is compulsorily offered by the school centres and voluntarily taken by the students. The ecclesiastical hierarchy shall be responsible for determining the contents of Catholic religious education, as well as suggesting textbooks and instructional materials for this purpose. The Spanish government assumes the funding of Catholic religious education in public schools for Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary Education. In this case, the teachers are designated by the ecclesiastical hierarchy, which can revoke suitability and put an end to the working relationship with the Government. Thus there is an alternative subject in Compulsory Primary and Secondary Education, but there is no alternative subject in High School.

Muslim and Evangelical Religious Education The students' parents or guardians, or the students themselves if they are over eighteen, shall voluntarily express to the headmaster their wish to attend religious education at the beginning of every educational stage or when they first enroll in the center, although the decision may be modified at the beginning of every academic year. The religious authority shall be responsible for determining the contents of religious education, as well as suggesting textbooks and instructional materials for this purpose. Before the beginning of every academic year, the religious authority shall inform the corresponding Education Authority who the suitable persons to teach Religious Education at different educational stages are. The teachers in these cases depend on the corresponding religious authorities that have designated them. Likewise these authorities shall be authorized to establish the labour system of the teachers, in accordance with the specific nature of the service provided.

RES classes shall be paid by the State when the number of students attending RES classes is equal to or larger than ten. Every year, the Spanish government shall transfer the total amount resulting from the application of the previous clause for the service provided during the preceding academic year by the teachers of Religious Education who are not government-employed schoolteachers. As in the case of Catholic religious education, there is an alternative subject in Compulsory Primary and Secondary Education, but there is no alternative subject in High School.

It is interesting to highlight that Jewish Religious Education is neither regulated nor taught in public schools in Spain.

As for how many hours are taught depending on school level, each autonomous community establishes, in conformity with the State's basic regulation, the timetables for each subject. Timetables regarding the autonomous community of Aragon are presented below. Timetables are the same for all RES.

Table 3: Times for RES in Aragon

Educational Level	Time	Grades
Primary Education	45 minutes of class every academic year	from 1st to 6 th grade
Compulsory Secondary Education	1 hour of class every academic year	from 1st to 4 th grade
High School	1 hour of class every academic year	from 1st to 2 nd grade

GREECE - From the early 80's a series of interventions is being carried out in order to capture in the teaching content the national, cultural and linguistic diversity that characterizes the classrooms. New books, changes in the curriculum and manuals attempt to include more and more references to the pupils' particular culture and to show positive images for the respective national cultural groups (Γιαγκάζογλου, 2014).

Since the 90's, in the context of social developments and discussions on the role of the religious lesson, the Greek school made the first attempt on the methodical teaching of other religions mostly in secondary education (Γιαγκάζογλου, 2014). For what concerns the three cycles of compulsory education, in the latest program of religion studies Christianity remains the main religion for study and retains a special and "privileged" position, while six other religions are gradually being approached: Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism (with a greater focus on Judaism and Islam).

According to the guide book for the teachers of the primary schools (which teach the religion lessons, as in Greek pedagogical program for primary schools it is no specialized teacher of religion), the religions of the world are not presented to the students simplistically and schematically as closed belief systems, whose substance is expressed in a series of propositions or doctrinal positions. In the recent educational program there is an attempted to highlight the potential and evolutionary character of religions, since students are invited to understand religion as:

- Timeless search for meaning and value of life and answers to fundamental questions of people
- Everyday life of people and communities
- A prominent factor in culture
- Live presence in the modern world

At the same time, it is considered as very important for students from other religious traditions, to understand the types and essence of Christianity, to become accustomed to the culture of the country in which they are located.

The new educational program proposes an approach to Christianity with a focus on the Orthodox tradition first and gradually extending to the other two great Christian traditions (the Roman Catholic and Protestant) (Γιαγκάζογλου, 2014).

Greek Religion Educational Curriculum and Timetable

From the teacher's guide for teaching religion in primary and secondary school, edition 2014.

Third Grade of Primary Schools: We discover faces, images and stories (56 hours)	Fourth Grade of Primary Schools : We discover faces, images and stories (56 hours)	Fifth Grade of Primary Schools: We discover texts, monuments, places and events (30 hours)	Sixth Grade of Primary Schools: Ανακαλύπτουμε κείμενα, μνημεία, τόπους και γεγονότα (30 hours)
Living together (6 hours)	When people pray (6 hours)	Teachers and Students (6 hours)	The First Christians: Difficulties and Adventures (6 hours)
The joy of Celebration (6 hours)	The Mother of Christ (6 hours)	Walk together with limits and rules (4 hours)	Persecutions and Spread of Christianity: Persons and Testimonies (2 hours)
Sunday: An important day of the Week (6 hours)	Grate "Kids" (6 hours)	Walking ahead by changing (6 hours)	The Bible: An Historical and Timeless Book (4 hours)
Christmas: God becomes a man (8 hours)	All Equal, All Different (10 hours)	Prophecies of the Bible: Calling for repent and announcement of the Messiah's coming (4 hours)	The Divine Eucharist: Source and climax of the Church's life (6 hours)
Celebrating Pasha (8 hours)	Holly Places and Sacred paths	Jesus Christ's Church in History	From the Christians of our country to the

	(10 hours)	(4 hours)	Christians of the World
Our world is a gem (8 hours)	Christian Saints and Sacred Persons of other Religions (8 hours)	Missions for the "Good News" (4 hours)	Religions in our Country (4 hours)

Methodological approaches of teaching religion according to the curriculum

Teaching strategies for the above curriculum have the orientation of:

- do not regard teaching as a process of providing and receiving information but as an active knowledge-building process involving learners actively and interactively;
- adopt the view that knowledge and thought are formed through the person's contact with the world and the social context;
- Explain and serve the fundamental principles of approaching the religious cognitive object, as embodied in the new curriculum, i.e. interpretation, dialogue and critical literacy;
- develop equally and consistently both the objectives and the contents of the curriculum, highlighting the methodical process as a functional part, which is a central choice of a Process Procedure;
- Selected and organized exclusively by the teacher according to the conditions and requirements of his class, not considering them exclusively technocratic but continuously investigating their relationship with the humanistic and moral basis of teaching. (Γιαγκάζογλου, 2014);

Participatory forms of teaching promote a learning procedure in which all students are treated equally, diversity is treated with respect, opportunities are created to improve the lives of children with difficulties, and student marginalization tends to disappear. (Γιαγκάζογλου, 2014).

Also **Exploratory** teaching processes are being implemented in which, the teacher acts as a facilitator and organizer of the work to be done: chooses and provides material - appropriate and accessible to students - from a variety of sources or guides them to identify themselves. In information organization and case-shaping activities, the teacher controls the involvement of all students, supports their efforts, participates in any rewriting of the question, organizes alternatives and activities, and takes care not to create deviations that prevent research. Exploratory teaching is flexible and can be applied to students of all ages, infrastructure and capabilities but needs serious planning, careful organization and continuous remodeling. Exploratory approaches work more effectively when combined with collaboration groups. (Γιαγκάζογλου, 2014)



The **Collaboration Groups**, especially in multicultural and multinational societies, it is an ideal framework, as - through this method - the school can facilitate the social integration of people of different potentials and origins while at the same time mitigating rejection and competitive attitudes and practices (Matsagouras, 2000).

Project Method - It is a form of group teaching in which teachers and students, participating equally, are in an open learning process whose boundaries and procedures are not strictly defined. The process of a Project starts with an initiative that is expressed as a suggestion and on the occasion of an experience, event or problem, which the participants after exchanging views undertake to investigate. Having agreed on what they are going to do, jointly define their areas of action and make their programming.

Some of the Teaching technics that are proposed for the curriculum are as follows:

- Brainstorming
- Think, Pair, Share. (TPS)
- Dimensional Analysis (Dimensional Analysis)
- Case study
- Mind map
- Building Online Bridges - Building e bridges
- Online webcasting
- Reflective Journal
- Teaching through art. Patterns of artistic reasoning - Artful thinking
- [I see, I think, I wonder].
- [Think, puzzle, explore]
- [Creative Questions]
- Collage creation
- Painting
- Visits
- Thematic approach



- Round table discussion
- Narrative stories
- Experiential techniques and activities

Perspectives Nikolaos Filis, Minister of Education in 2015, attempted changes to the curriculum of the religion education, with the aim of transforming the course, using extra-philosophical and literary texts, and eliminate the orthodox centric character that it has. In the above changes, the Church reacted through the Archbishop's Jeronime, claiming for religious education. The solution came from a meeting between the two government partners, the Minister and the Archbishop, where the decision was suspended, and a public debate has opened. From this conflict, between the Minister of Education and the Archbishop, the question arises once again whether the Church can interfere with state issues, what is the position of the Church in a modern state, what should be the relations between them. (Μυλωνάς - Λέκκας, 2016)

At this point the Greek Ministry of Education is creating the new Educational approach with new books for the Religion teaching in primary and secondary schools which is going to be more adjusted to the inter-cultural school environment the way it has been evolved the last years. Unfortunately the exact content will be available within the next few months, so for the moment we are not able to include it in our research.

TURKEY - The decision of European Court of Human Rights on compulsory education in September of 2014 has raised debates on the subject in Turkey. Since 1924, the legislation in Turkey enforces the religion education and its effects on Turkey's secularity has been debated hotly ever since. More specifically, the 14th article of Turkish constitution states that religion education must be supervised and be under control of the government. Current situation in Turkey about the new curriculum, that Turkish Education Ministry proposes, is still in process of taking feedbacks. On compulsory religion education issue, Ministry does not have any clear decision on whether to comply to the ruling of European Court of Human Rights in 2014 September or not. Therefore, in a new curriculum proposal the religion and ethics course has not presented yet.

According to MEB's (Ministry of National Education) current syllabus of Religion, Culture and Ethics Course, one of the main purpose is introducing fundamental cultural and moral values of Turkey to the students through education of Islam (MEB 2010). It states that a vast scale of the culture, such as literature, music, arts and customs, comprises of Islamic belief and the way of life (MEB 2010). In this sense, it is believed that teaching religion of Islam will preserve cultural values and raise students who have respect towards their heritage (MEB 2010). The syllabus also contains respect to other religions and cultures, reforms and democratic values of Atatürk, national solidarity and respect to human rights and environment (MEB 2010). Among twenty eight objectives of the course, two objectives, the



2nd and the 27th, aim to teach students respect and tolerance to different cultures and beliefs through education of basic characteristics of different religions other than Islam. 27th falls under the three Universal objectives that also include emphasizing the overlap of universal humanistic values and Islamic humanistic values; secondly, making the connection between universal values and “their own religion”, here “own religion” means Islam so it can be seen that the ministry accepts the Turkish students as Muslims who should follow the discipline of Islamic religion (MEB 2010). Through the education program starting from 4th grade until the end of 8th grade, just %9,5 of the subjects are created for education of different religions and only one subject, which demonstrates %4,5, is about love, friendship and fraternity apart from religion of Islam. Additionally, the list of concepts that will be taught during the 5 years of the course includes only 4 religions other than Islam and no major beliefs within Turkey, such as one of the most practiced religion sects Alewism, and universally.

Moreover, right of exemption from the course has been another issue for a long time. While the students from Christian and Jewish families can practice the right of being exempted from the course, it is still not possible for other students who are from different kind of religion and belief system or simply does not want to be included in the lecture due to various reasons (Kaya 2015). For instance, it is stated in various reports that Alewi students have been facing difficulties and impracticability about exemption from the course (ERG 2011; Kaya 2015; Eğitimsen 2017). As a consequence of this kind of issues, increasing possibility of discrimination and eroded freedom of thought become inevitable current facts, which take their place at the top of the heap of current problems that Republic of Turkey has been facing for a long time.

Besides the inefficacy of curriculum and matter of exemption, multicultural personality level of teachers also falls within primary criticisms. According a recent study from Journal of Research in Education and Teaching, investigations show that the majority of teachers are lacking to be multicultural models and they should be educated more during university in terms of how to teach in a multicultural society and communication between cultures (Şahin & Kılıncı 2016). On the other hand, it is proved that having a sensitive behavior towards different cultures increases the success and progress of students (Banks, et al., 2001). Therefore, teachers are playing a crucial part in following the means of multicultural education and having an equal attention for all children coming from different cultures (Polat & Kılıç 2013). Since they are the most important actors who have an enormous impact in development of students, the results of various aforementioned studies become a worrying and unpromising fact for a highly multicultural country which needs a proper education of interculturalism among its citizens.

In the light of these facts, it could be concluded that subjects are extremely insufficient for covering the necessities of intercultural education and cannot embrace other beliefs and religions within Turkey adequately. As Eğitim Reformu Girişimi (Initiative Reform of Education) (2011) and Eğitimsen



Öğretmenler Sendikası (Teachers' Syndicate) (2017) reports indicate that current curriculum in public schools are not satisfying enough in fulfilling some basics such as supporting religion diversification and respect to other cultures and beliefs. Hence, students are being raised without knowing the other elements of the culture that are considered as minority; however, has been playing important role in making it very rich and diverse throughout the history.

BULGARIA - As a subject of study Religion was introduced in the Bulgarian schools during the academic year 1997-1998. From 2003 to the present time, religion is studied as a subject of compulsory and/or elective preparation of students from 1st to 12th grade and is realized according to the wishes of the student (his/her parents) and the ability of the schools to provide qualified teachers. The curriculum complies with the educational requirements in the country.

Religious education in Bulgaria takes place in five spiritual schools - two spiritual seminaries and three Muslim schools. In these schools, apart from general subjects, religious disciplines are also extensively studied. According to the MES (Ministry of Education and Science) instruction, teachers who have the right to teach the subjects "Religion" and "Religion-Islam" must meet one of the following requirements:

- To have higher education in the field of "Humanities" - professional field "Religion and theology";
- Primary school teachers who have completed a course of study at faculties of higher education in the Republic of Bulgaria
- or persons who graduated from the Higher Islamic Institute (Article 11).

The next stage of religious education takes place in higher schools. The Faculty of Theology at the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" was founded more than 70 years ago. In June 1950, it was separated from the Sofia University as a Spiritual Academy, which is disadvantaged compared to other higher schools in the country. It was only in July 1991, with the political changes, that the status of the Faculty of Theology was restored. This change brings back the dignity of higher theological education. New theological faculties were established at the universities of Veliko Tarnovo, Shumen, Blagoevgrad and Kardzhali.

In Bulgaria there is also a Higher Islamic Institute, established in 1998, based on the Religious Denominations Act. This is the first independent high school of Muslims in Bulgaria, which is defined as a high school of the Muslim denomination in the country. However, the Higher Islamic Institute and its majors are not accredited by the National Agency for Assessment and Accreditation at the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria.



From this academic year at the Theological Faculty of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" a new Master's program "Religion in Europe" has been introduced. "The program is aimed at preparing two profiles of specialists in the three monotheistic religions - Christianity, Islam, Judaism, which in varying degrees have affected the formation of the culture and civilization of Europe over the centuries. The aim is students to acquire solid knowledge about them in comparative theological terms, which ensures insight into the religious diversity on the map of modern Europe."

PART III

Exploration of the pedagogical approaches related to the teaching of religion in Italy, Spain, Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria

ITALY

Religion as a discipline in Italy: state of the debate The main discussion in Italy is oriented along the vision that are more proper and relevant. For some authors we can propose an ethno-historical-anthropological, religious culture, that could, as an alternative to the creation of a new discipline, be promoted by taking into account the dissemination of the different aspects of this culture in different disciplines. In this case, the disciplines that study and teach art should take care of the artistic aspects present in religions.

A second approach proposes the presence of religious culture as a "comparative study of religions". In this case, the school should guarantee a cultural approach to the phenomena that characterize Christian, Muslim, Hindu religion or other religions, and compares them to highlight the aspects of correspondence and difference, building a sort of synoptic reading of religions. In the school environment, this approach could result in religious education paths proposed in the different grades of school according to the comparative method.

A third approach proposes religious culture in the "scientific-critical-theoretical" sense, and as such it does not primarily aim to explain "how things are" but to critically consider the reasons why a certain religious culture is justified. In the case of Europe, and of Italy in particular, the discussion is addressed to the faith of Christian religion, but there's also a debate related to other religious traditions. Understanding in this way religious culture cannot stand out from confrontation with confessional theologies.

This is related to the contextual state of the art that allows to prospect the impossibility of the study of the religion, without the object of the study (religion without a religious context).

This one is the way the Italian government intends to propose for teaching this discipline in schools.



There is also a fourth approach: religious cultures can be understood in the sense of "psychogenic and philosophical-pedagogical" and the questions to which they are to answer refer to how, where and when the dimension of faith and religion is born and developed in the "man and the related accepted possibility of a free transcendence of the transcendent in human life and in the world to make the first and the second understandable".¹

In short, the approach to a pedagogic research in term of religion as a discipline begins with a problem, but the effort to solve the problem or discuss it (because the problem is strictly related with a variety of attempts to understand the meaning of the human being) stir a plurality of suspicions or hopes that can be translated into acts. From these, the discipline takes shape, as a set of knowledge grouped according to specific criteria which, in the field of education, give rise to teaching and study religion as a subject.

In this perspective, interesting is the reflection of the Center for Educational Research and Innovation (OERC). In the text there are some first terminological definitions that trace the methods of meeting and working between disciplines. In particular, multi- and inter-disciplinarity are defined.

If we can divide the teaching of the religion in phases, we can propose this didactic approach stated that the inter and multi-disciplinarity is the pedagogic area in which the religion finds its conceptual place.

Expected Pedagogic Impact The teaching of the religion, in particular the most common (the catholic religion) has impress an educative pathway to the personal ethical issues. The religion should contribute to prepare the students to face their social and ethic life, allowing them and prepare them to answer to questions related to the inner life and to the philosophical approach in life.

It can contribute to a more critical attitude towards the challenges of the social life, in particular related to the personal approach to behaviors and social relationships, preparing the students to have a critical and personal position and reactions to critical issues, such as drug, bullying and social networking extreme behaviors.

The **first phase**, Analysis of the Educational Needs, highlights, from an analysis of the Educational, Cultural and Professional Profile of the Students, the needs that the teacher points out in school. It is important at this stage to know the students, to identify the personal characteristics of the students, their communication skills, the openness to the other, the expansiveness or the confidentiality of the character, the expectations that move them to the proposals of the School, the personal resources they own.

¹ G. Bertagna, *Quale cultura religiosa nella scuola riteri per uno sguardo alla situazione italiana ed europea*, in L. Caimi, a cura di, *Autorità e libertà. Tra coscienza personale, vita civile e processi educativi. Studi in onore di Luciano Pazzaglia*, cit., p. 356



In the **second phase**, Identifying a Scope of Social Life and formulation of hypothesis, the teacher should pay attention to the diverse cultural and associative realities of the territory to select the particular contexts that can be configured as a means of promoting students' unified knowledge and allowing them to achieve the identified educative objective. It will be useful at this stage to have a mapping of cultural and welfare associative realities, as well as institutional ones, without which it is difficult to design a formative alternative pathway that links school and society in the specific cultural and social context. More generally, this mapping phase should involve the school institution in order to build a "database" available to any other teacher and thus have a broad view of the territory and the training opportunities that it can offer to the school

The **third phase**, identifies the educative action and the impact of the educative action. In this phase the use of the storytelling as way to discuss the problematic and critic interaction between the man and the religion. The story of the Bible, or better the stories of the Bible are origin of different approaches and cultural perspectives.

This discussion can/should generate an interaction among the students and the teachers, being the religion the pivoting discipline that can bring the class to increase the awareness about the problems and the personal ethic approaches.

Conclusion The main difference between teaching religion in schools and catholic Catechesis resides on the method and the language used and also in the formative proposal, that is very different from the "performative" announcement of catechesis. The teaching of religion is rooted in the school context.

Catechesis is a requirement of the ecclesial context. It aims at the formation of man, who welcomes the vocation of being a Christian, responding to an announcement that can involve himself in person until a totalizing membership. Teaching religion's goal is the formation of man-citizen, also through religious culture, particularly Catholic, in comparison with the different visions of the world in the community. Teaching religion proposes specific content as an opportunity to read the cultural, existential, and spiritual context in which the pupil and the family live. It is based on motivations of anthropological-social, historical-cultural, pedagogic-didactic, in interdisciplinary dialogue. For this reason, teaching religion in order to develop a knowledge of skills, as indicated in the National Curriculum Guidelines, and to take into account the skills development goals at the end of primary school, declines them through four -modulated environments in each of the five years, respecting key competences, recommended by the European Parliament and the Council in December 2006 (2006/962 / EC).

In this context the teaching of the catholic religion is open to the presence of other believers that can contribute to the discussion about the ethical issues and find space for increasing the personal skills without changing their religion views and beliefs.



GREECE - Looking through the current and past few years' bibliography various cases of mistakes or inadequacies in the field of creating a multicultural-friendly school environment can be found.

In many schools, foreign children and their families are treated as potential criminals and they are followed by a suspicious attitude from local children. This attitude often reaches racist and xenophobic levels. Consequently, many families come to the solution of giving their children 'christianised' names in an attempt to help them become more easily accepted by the school environment. This example brings to surface the pressure that arises to foreign pupils who- in the name of cultural and religious homogeneity- have to oppress their real identity.

Moreover, as most schools do not have a clear multicultural and anti-discriminatory strategy, teachers feel like they are carrying a personal weight of defending their pupils against racist attacks, often calling forth punishments and verbal attacks towards the offenders.

Additionally, there have been examples where pupils who do not speak Greek very well were rewarded only when they showed significant progress in their language skills. These pupils were falsely given the message that only if they act as Greeks will be treated and rewarded equally.

The above are typical examples of wrong attitudes and behaviours that reveal the necessity of shaping a multicultural pedagogical model that will promote equal treatment of all pupils regardless of their language and cultural background.

BULGARIA - While writing this report on the history of Religion at the Bulgarian School, the laws and the different perspectives in the existing analysis, our team held informal conversations with educational experts and parents to follow their attitudes and opinions on religion education and organized a focus group discussion for discovering the approaches and the needs.

Information about the pedagogical approaches has also been found in several published articles.

Svetla Ang. Shapkalova in her article "The pedagogical experience in an education of interreligious tolerance" she reveals a co temporal pedagogical experience in religious education and upbringing of students in primary schools and those from universities concerning their skills and knowledge's about interreligious tolerance. According to Shapkarova, "the curriculum of other subjects can fit into religious education. The integrative tendency is not only theoretically possible but also practically fully applicable". The article describes specific models for the application of the subjects of religion in the following disciplines: Bulgarian language and literature, mathematics, manual labor, music, etc. Based on hers many years of experience, the author states that "religious knowledge should be developed with the students in a free spirit and should educate tolerance to the others."

As an innovation in teaching religion, we could present an educational program on the integration of knowledge about religions in the first, second, third and fourth grades, adopted as an innovation at a



meeting of methodological unit - "Primary Teachers", realized in class. The practice is realized in "Vasil Levski" Secondary School - Krumovgrad, Kardzhali.

The aim of the program is to build behavioral models in the school in harmony with Christian and Muslim values and morals, to build dialogue and communication skills based on the Christian and Muslim understanding of man, his place in the world, the community and the relationship with his neighbors.

In the description we also find an example curriculum, a description of METHODS of work in pedagogical practice, organization of open lessons. Advantages of the presented practice are presented compared to the standard approaches.

PART IV - CASE STUDIES

ITALY

History of Religions in the Waldensian Liceo in Torre Pellice The project carried out by the Waldensian Liceo in Torre Pellice, the only Waldensian high school in Italy with three separate curricula, European, Scientific, Classical, has without a doubt a long and solid tradition. The exceptional nature of a Waldensian high school located in Val Pellice is well suited to a geographical area which is known for the history of a local protestant minority which has always been connected with European history. It was established in 1831 in order to answer the needs of Waldensian families who wished their children to have an education, but which, because of a strong religious intolerance, were not allowed to attend normal schools; it was structured according to the model of English schools as required by the Anglican priest W. S. Gilly who played an active role in organizing the college. By the late 1800s the college became a state- recognized liceo classico, featuring the same rights and duties of a public school and is currently managed by a committee assigned by the Waldensian Table, supported by an educational scientific Committee.

Ever since 1984 the five year study course has integrated a course in History of Religions, therefore a necessary subject for all students, and including specific assessment marks. With the first project two subjects have been introduced: History of Religions and Local History. Both have been considered to be complementary subjects to general history, and have thus been made compulsory and in turn accepted by the families, both Waldensian and non-Waldensian, believers and non-believers. Specifically, the Local History course was a course in historical methods starting from the examination of the history of the local valleys, thanks to the possibility of using the Historical Archive and the Library of the Società di Studi Valdesi (Waldensian Society of Studies), easily accessible since they are located next to the school. Studying the history of the valleys often invades the field of the history of



Christian religion and specifically requires to study Waldensian religion, with the added bonus that Waldensian history is tightly bound to both the history of Piemonte and of protestant Europe, from Switzerland to Holland to England to Germany, the latter hosting many Waldensian colonies since the 1600s.

History of Religions has proven to be a unique experience and has allowed the students to learn the history, the developments and the thematic contents of several great religions. From the year 2000 the schedule requires one hour a week for one term, adding up to about 15 hours each year. The course, which features a historical approach and integrates the normal course of history, aims to teach the principal founding elements of the ancient religions of the Mediterranean (specifically Greco-roman religion, through a prosopography presentation of the gods of creation and the Olympian gods) and of the religions of the present-day world; there are presentations of the Bible and the Koran and the students are introduced, in compliance with the comparison method, to the common themes which present-day religions have to deal with. The course aims to allow the students to learn about the main differences between religions, to learn about the relationship between religion and culture of people throughout history. This pluralistic and secular outlook has given the opportunity that these topics are often educational and complementary to other subjects which are taught in school, thus resulting in being, undoubtedly, interdisciplinary.

History of Religions in the Liceo Sociale in Torino It is a specific subject whose objectives are both cognitive and educational, structured upon a well-defined and precise cultural content and it employs a scientific method; thus, the hour has a well-defined autonomy within the educational curriculum which the school offers its students. All classes in liceo scientifico and liceo classico have a mandatory hour, every week, in History of Religions. The pedagogical approach in relation to the 'fundamentals' concerning the subjective religious experience and the historical religious phenomenon should seek to educate individuals capable to establish dialogue and social co-existence among different cultures and beliefs: the 'religious' must be recognized and metabolized as the central dimension in all cultures, as a cultural product and as an object of historical analysis, but also as the carrier of knowledge, as one of the keys for interpreting human history .

The course was activated in 2008/2009, thanks to an agreement between the Laurea Specialistica Course in Religious Sciences, at the University of Torino and the above mentioned school. The Laurea Course Committee expressed its satisfaction with the course and decided unanimously to assign between one and three university credits for those who positively attended the History of Religions course and obtained the certification issued by the school .

The establishment of a course in History of Religions, as an educational and cultural approach to the religious phenomenon, considered in its actual expressions, is believed to be of paramount importance

in developing a kind of knowledge and a kind of awareness able to draw on that knowledge, aiming at educating an active citizen capable to create relationships and dialogue in contexts of social pluralism.

It was a matter of planning a school course which, in its subject matter, was able to take into account the way religious phenomena appear in relation to their anthropological, sociological, historical, psychological aspects, the specific aspects of religions concerning their effective richness in values, with special care given to their fundamental books, the necessary educational and teaching aspects in relation to the various age groups of the students, in cooperation with the other school subjects.

The framework of the contents of the subject requires certain priority criteria in choosing the program, guided by pedagogical and school requirements. They are as follow:

- preference given to the great current world religions, rather than to ancient religions;
- preference given to those religions which have had and currently have a greater impact on Western civilization (mainly, but not exclusively, monotheisms);
- preference given to those contents which might become functional for the existential quest of an adolescent, in relation to human and social values.
- the subject provides for grades and marks which will be submitted to the assessment of progress and will be recorded in the students' personal report cards.

The proposed program is intended for a five-year period in which objectives and contents will have to be balanced year by year along the entire course; given the current lack of a textbook which would be suitable for students ranging between 15 and 19, it was chosen to supply documents drafted by the teacher or taken from other texts:

I year	What is religion?; The religious situation in the post-secular contemporary world; Some key concepts: religion; religious; holy/profane; pure/impure; rite/myth; symbol; A first approach to the concept of 'holy book' (the holy book as a code)
II year	The Jewish world; Hebrew Canon; Religions in the Classic world; Early Christianity; Jesus, Messiah and Prophet; the Gospels
III year	The Islamic world; the Koran; Western world and Eastern world: the complexity of Christianities, especially the various and differing interpretations of the Bible; A small case-study: History of the Society of Jesus (Compagnia di Gesù)
IV year	Religions in the Eastern part of the world (Hinduism and Buddhism); Reading of a few excerpts from Hindu and Buddhist texts; Religions in the world and in Italy today: an overview

V year	The sciences of religions; Searching for a History of Religions; Religions and the world of today: thematic focal points and challenges in the III millennium; an example: the Bible and ethics; Religions and violence; Religions and politics; fundamentalisms
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However, since the 2008/2009 school year was the first year, it was decided to begin with a program which was the same for all classes, seeking to provide students who were dealing with these issues for the first time with the conceptual and linguistic tools necessary to understand the subject.

An assessment test revealed the normal and expected gaps as well as foregone religious prejudices of the students concerning religions and history. The aim of the first lessons was to map out, from a historical and religious point of view, the religions of the modern world, even focusing on the debatable definition of 'religion' itself.

A second series of lessons addressed the concept of the religious 'symbol', and included an analysis of symbols from today's most widespread religions, based on the number of worshippers, territorial expansion and identity autonomy.

In one class of liceo scientifico a topic based on the recent book by B. Salvarani, concerning religious issues as shown in the Simpsons cartoon, was addressed; this was achieved by watching 10 selected episodes, followed by a discussion regarding the specific religious issues which had been addressed. This experiment gave the chance to present the religion and the religious by means of a very simple medium – a cartoon – which is watched and much appreciated by children and adolescents.

A third part, which was addressed by means of role playing during the first two years and of classroom lessons and work groups during the final three years, sought to provide some data concerning fundamental categories in order to approach the great present-day religions (historical information, holy books, founder, precepts of behavior, prayers, trends, life-death cycle, festivities).

In developing and carrying out this hour of History of Religions, I believed that it would be useful to address at least three needs: first of all the path, to be followed in compliance with the programme developed and presented at the beginning of the school year to colleagues and students; but there are also important moments of cooperation with other subjects, seeking to offer in depth views and integration among subjects which allow to address and develop side topics which differ from mainstream path. History of Religions is certainly an autonomous subject, but it also services other subjects, and thus is able to, and must, establish interdisciplinary points of exchange in order to address in a more suitable manner parts of the programme of other subjects which, sometimes due to time and other practical constraints, are carried out in a hurry and in a hasty manner. Finally, there is also the possibility for 'links' with current events, which are necessary to understand if they are to



become not only reason for discussion among students, but also a moment of education and development of a critical and more mature conscience: this third and final component is based on the belief that reading and interpreting the present through certain categories offered by History of Religions is one of the more useful tools for 'citizenship education' and for active and responsible 'political participation'.

During 2009/2010, the second year of this experiment, topics were addressed as listed in the previously mentioned program, according to year; the objective is to reap the fruits of one year of work during which the students will have learned fundamental elements thanks to which they will have become able to move comfortably in a subject like History of Religions, at least as far as terminology, key concepts and methods are concerned.

Dealing with religious pluralism has offered the chance to develop the issue of cultural encounters and differences, of interaction and integration within multicultural societies, and it has been useful to stimulate the students in a desire to know before judging or expressing an opinion regarding something which was previously unknown, as in the case of different cultures and religions.

SPAIN

Religious education situation in three educational centers in the city of Zaragoza is presented. These centres are located in different districts, therefore they have very different students regarding their socio-economic status.

Santo Domingo De Silos School The school is located in the district of Las Fuentes. 42.192 people live in this district, being 7.092 of them foreign people, so 83.19 % of the population registered in this district is Spanish. The migrant communities most represented are Rumanians (2,736 residents), Moroccans (549 residents), and Ecuadorians (413 residents). The average age in the district is 46.5. There is a dependency ratio of 57.13 %, an ageing index of 213.7 %, a youth ratio of 44.79 %, and a motherhood rate of 11.7 %. The average household wage in the district is 24,844 euros.

The neighborhood was born at the beginning of the 20th century, thanks to the settlement of three industrial facilities: the municipal slaughterhouse, the Utrillas railway station and its units where the coal from the mines was unloaded, and the depots and maintenance services for tramways. These facilities, together with the building of the Castellón road, an axis of circulation connecting Bajo Aragón and Levante areas, encouraged people to settle and build houses.

In the 1950s the district received an important migration flow from the rural areas caused by the emerging industrial development of Zaragoza. Its population went from 8,000 residents in 1957 to 34 952 in 1970. During this last decade, a strong neighbouring movement arose around some Catholic



churches, the trade unions, and the democratic political parties that were still clandestine. This neighbouring movement started to claim basic rights for a respectable civic life: having a taxi service (because taxis in that period did not go to the neighbourhood due to the condition of its roads), road paving, streets lighting, enough water pressure to supply the apartments, healthcare services, schools, etc.

Thanks to the neighbouring movement of the 1970s, the resources of the district increased and, with the settlement of the first democratic City Council, whose first milestone was the Development Plan of 1986 that included many urban infrastructures, the district improved and was remodelled. At the beginning of the Spanish transition to democracy, this was one of the youngest districts with the largest demographic growth. On the contrary, during the 1980s population growth stopped, as in the rest of Spain, and the district started a process of slow ageing. Many young people moved from Las Fuentes to the new neighbourhoods that were built in the suburbs, with a lower maintenance cost and affordable prices. Even though the district has lost a considerable amount of its youngest population, Las Fuentes is still the second most densely populated neighbourhood, after Delicias, with 6,681 residents per square kilometre, and the housing construction has not been entirely stopped, especially in its surrounding area.

Santo Domingo de Silos School is a charter school. It is confessional, Catholic and funded by private finance initiative. It is owned by the Canonical Institution Obra Diocesana Santo Domingo de Silos, that belongs to the archdiocese of Zaragoza, it has legal personality and is self-governed according to the applicable law.

Julián Matute Hervías, a priest member of the Metropolitan Council of Canons, founded the school around the Santo Domingo de Silos church in Zaragoza in 1959, aware of the situation of the migrant people that had arrived from the Aragonese rural areas to the district of Las Fuentes during the 1950s and did not have enough public educational services.

In this urban settlement, located near the river Ebro, one kilometre and a half from the Basilica of Nuestra Señora del Pilar, many cheap houses were built for the working population who arrived due to the industrial development of Zaragoza launched by the development policy of the Franco regime. The growth of the neighbourhood was very fast, thanks also to the construction of the tramway line that connected it to the city centre. This construction was promoted by a very active family of businessmen, the Escoriaza, real-estate developers who not only owned the tramway network but also many plots of land.

The school supported by canon Matute answered to the educational needs of the children of the migrant working population who were unattended by the public authorities. Together with its founder, 11 nuns (Operarias del Divino Maestro) were responsible for the organisation and

management of the 8 school units, the school and house for young mothers, supplementary courses on commercial calculations, typing and languages, teambuilding activities, Catechism and cinema shows.

In the 63/64 school year, 2 affiliated sections of the Miguel Servet and Goya High Schools were created and they were increased to 4 in the 67/68 academic year. During that period, professional training courses were also activated. The growth of this educational centre was extraordinary, reaching almost 7,000 students (6,753 students during the 82/83 academic year). The Canonical Institution Obra Diocesana Santo Domingo de Silos assisted in the growth and development of the district Las Fuentes from the very beginning.

At present Santo Domingo de Silos School comprises the following educational stages: Early Childhood and Primary School, Compulsory Secondary Education, High School, Advanced Vocational School, and Basic Professional School. Additionally, it offers some courses programmed el Centro de Formación para el Empleo (an occupational training centre) and la Escuela de Tiempo Libre (a leisure activity centre).

In 2006, its professional training section won the Medal of Honour of Education in Aragon. It currently has 1,663 students from Early Childhood to High School, not considering the students that attend the different branches of professional training.

The following table shows students distribution according to their choices in relation to religious education or alternative courses (social and civic or ethical values) divided by their educational stage:

COURSE	NUMBER OF REGISTERED STUDENTS IN EACH EDUCATIONAL STAGE	CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	EVANGELIST RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	MUSLIM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	SOCIAL AND CIVIC OR ETHICAL VALUES
EARLY CHILDHOOD	311	291	-	-	20
PRIMARY SCHOOL	711	657	-	-	54
COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION	465	426	-	-	39
HIGH SCHOOL	176	163	-	-	13
TOTAL	1 663	340	-	-	126

"El Salvador" (Jesuitas) School The school is located in the district of Universidad. 49.745 people live in this district, and 5.947 of them (11.95 %) are foreign people. The migrant communities most represented are Rumanians (1,841 residents), Nicaraguans (707 residents), Chinese (384), and Ecuadorians (301 residents). The average age in the district is 46 years and a half. It has a dependency

ratio of 59.9 %, an ageing index of 214 %, a youth ratio of 46.7 %, and a motherhood rate of 10.65 %. The average household wage in the district is 39,021 euros.

The district of Universidad was born after the Spanish Civil War, thanks to the urban development of the Gran Vía street and the tramway line that connected Parque Grande with the city centre. The construction of the largest hospital in the city, “Casa Grande”, and the new campus of the University of Zaragoza gave the final boost to this area, absorbed by the city in the following decades. Other great and emblematic sites were built in the district: the diocesan seminary, La Romareda stadium, and the military hospital near the adjacent district of Casablanca.

El Salvador-Jesuitas School is a charter school owned by the Society of Jesus that has inherited the long educational tradition of the Jesuits in the city. It was founded in Zaragoza in 1556. During that period the Royal Seminary of San Carlos was built and had to be abandoned by the Jesuits in 1767 when they were expelled from Spain. They came back to Zaragoza in 1871 and since then the school has occupied different locations. It was finally located in the district of Universidad in 1971. It offers 8 bus lines for the students coming from all the neighbourhoods of Zaragoza, which means its students do not necessarily belong to the resident population of the district where the school is located. The school is aimed at children from wealthy families. There are 70 teachers for early Childhood and Primary School, and 52 teachers for Secondary Education and High School.

The following table shows students distribution according to their choices in relation to religious education or alternative courses (social and civic or ethical values) divided by their educational stage:

COURSE	NUMBER OF REGISTERED STUDENTS IN EACH EDUCATIONAL STAGE	CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	EVANGELIST RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	MUSLIM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	SOCIAL AND CIVIC OR ETHICAL VALUES
EARLY CHILDHOOD	373	373			
PRIMARY SCHOOL	751	751			
COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION	559	559			
HIGH SCHOOL	198	198			
TOTAL	1 881	1 881			

Valdespartera Pre-School and Primary School The school is located in the district of Casablanca. There are 44.943 people living in this district, and 2.309 of them are foreign people, so 94.7 % of its residents are Spanish. The migrant communities most represented are Rumanians (683 residents), Moroccans (160 residents), Colombians (118 residents), Ecuadorians (111 residents), and Nicaraguans (94). The



average age in the district is 35 years and a half. There is a dependency ratio of 43.9 %, an ageing index of 39.2 %, a youth ratio of 254.8 %, and a motherhood rate of 31.1 %. The average household wage in the district is 37,590 euros.

Valdespartera is a recently built neighbourhood that gives its name to the school and is located in the district of Casablanca. This district has three clearly differentiated areas. The oldest area is located near to the Military Hospital and the Incrédulos Fountain, and its urban development started in the 1950s. The two other areas, Montecanal and Valdespartera, were born a few years ago. The development of Montecanal started in 1990, and Valdespartera was planned in 2001.

The most remarkable characteristic of Valdespartera is the fact that it was planned and built according to sustainability principles. The site where the neighbourhood was built was previously used by the military quarters of Valdespartera, and was transferred by the Ministry of Defence to the City Council of Zaragoza in 2001.

The neighbourhood promoters were the City Council of Zaragoza, the Autonomous Community of Aragon, and the savings banks Ibercaja and Caja de Ahorros de la Inmaculada. All four contributed to the construction of a green development project, in line with the experiences developed in different European cities by that time. Once the Partial Building Plan was approved in 2002, development started the following year and finished in 2010.

There are 9,687 apartments in Valdespartera, and 9,367 of them (97 %) are subsidised housing, with a basic price or a maximum price. 116 million euros have been invested in the project..

The neighbourhood project is addressed to people with different social status, with the aim of contributing, thanks to a varied offer, to the integration of people with different socioeconomic characteristics in an urban area characterised by sustainability. The residential area offers a great variety of leisure, sports, and cultural facilities addressed at not only the neighbourhood population but also the rest of the city. One of the most remarkable traits of its buildings is their bioclimatological conception, thanks to which dependence from non-renewable resources is reduced in favour of alternative energy sources.

Valdespartera School is a public school that opened its doors in the 08-09 academic year. It offers all the educational levels of Early Childhood and Primary School stages, but the most requested are those of Primary School, since young couples that have moved to this neighbourhood mainly form the population.

This public pre-school and primary school is included in the Bilingual Program (English-Spanish) of the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport and the British Council, and currently all the

educational levels in the school follow this program. There are two other educational centres in the neighbourhood: San Jorge pre-school and primary school, and Valdespartera High School.

The following table shows student distribution according to their choices in relation to religious education or alternative courses (social and civic or ethical values) divided by their educational stage:

COURSE	NUMBER OF REGISTERED STUDENTS IN EACH EDUCATIONAL STAGE	CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	EVANGELIST RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	MUSLIM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	SOCIAL AND CIVIC OR ETHICAL VALUES
EARLY CHILDHOOD	226	103	5	-	118
PRIMARY SCHOOL	468	237	2	7	222
TOTAL	694	340	7	7	340

Conclusions

The choices concerning religious education made by the students in each of the studied centres are different. Their differences are related to the schools ownership and their location. Regarding the ownership, despite the first two are charter schools and operate within the public educational system, it is understandable that there is an important bias towards Catholic religious education in comparison to the alternative courses. This statement is put into context by the socioeconomic environment of the educational centre. Thus, in El Salvador School, an educational centre chosen voluntarily by parents –since there are other educational centres in the area and those children coming from other districts have to pay additional costs – the acceptance of the confessional character of the centre is somehow logical. Claiming an alternative to religious education in a Catholic school chosen by the parents does not make much sense. For this reason, the fact that all the students in this centre receive Catholic religious education is quite coherent.

The case of Santo Domingo de Silos School is more complex. Although it is owned by the archdiocese, part of the students attends this school because there are no other public schools in the area. Therefore, the owners of the educational centre respect this situation and offer the possibility to attend alternative courses. Nevertheless, there are not that many students who chose the alternative to Catholic religious education -only 7.6 % of the total of students registered in all the educational stages.

The most contrasting situation is lived in Valdespartera public school, where the students are divided symmetrically between those who prefer Catholic religious education and those who have chosen alternatives to religious education. 49 % receive Catholic religious education, 49 % attend alternative



courses, and 2 % receive other religious education (1 % Evangelist education and 1% Muslim education). Regarding Muslim religious education, interestingly it is offered in a context without a high number of migrant residents coming from areas where this faith is culturally predominant. As previously mentioned, there are 160 Moroccans living in this district (0.36 % of the total population), and residents coming from other Muslim cultural areas are very scarce, a fact that differs from the 1 % of students who receive Muslim religious education.

GREECE

Case Study 1 - In many schools, foreign children and their families are treated as potential criminals and they are followed by a suspicious attitude from local children. This attitude often reaches racist and xenophobic levels.

H.L. is a 6th grade pupil. He was born in Greece by Albanian parents who immigrated to Greece about twenty years ago. Since the third grade he has been facing verbal and psychological abuse. Some of his classmates call him nasty names and- what hurts him the most- they call him 'thief'. H.L. soon started avoiding talking to the children in the classroom, during the breaks he preferred to spend time on his own until one day he even started claiming that he does not want to go to school any more. Been asked by his parents he said that he had started feeling ashamed of his origin and he asked his parents never to talk to him in Albanian again and even not call him by his name while at school. Soon after this, his parents started calling him by the Greek name 'Antonis' and talked to him only in Greek.

Many families come to the solution of giving their children Greek names in an attempt to help them become more easily accepted by the school environment. The above mentioned example brings to surface the pressure that arises to foreign pupils who- in the name of cultural and religious homogeneity- have to oppress their real identity.

Case Study 2 - S.F. attends the 6th grade. He was born in Greece by Romanian parents. As both of them struggle with the Greek language, they mainly talk to him in Romanian causing S.F. some deficits in Greek vocabulary and in his ability to speak fluently. S.F. has often been criticised by his teachers on his language abilities, making him feel inadequate and unable to express himself properly. As a result, he avoids participating in class activities and socializing with his classmates. His teachers verbally reward him only when they notice some progress in his language abilities, however this attitude causes S.F. more stress as he feels that his acceptance depends on his improvement. This example shows how easily false conclusions may be imposed to pupils from other countries, especially conclusions that deal with the notion that only if they act, feel and speak as Greek they will be accepted in the school environment.



BULGARIA

Case study 1: Innovation in Teaching Religion As an innovation in teaching religion, we could present an educational program on the integration of knowledge about religions in the first, second, third and fourth grades, adopted as an innovation at a meeting of methodological unit - "Primary Teachers", realized in class. The practice is realized in "Vasil Levski" Secondary School - Krumovgrad, Kardzhali.

The aim of the program is to build behavioral models in the school in harmony with Christian and Muslim values and morals, to build dialogue and communication skills based on the Christian and Muslim understanding of man, his place in the world, the community and the relationship with his neighbors.

The project is called "Knowledge Of The Religion - "Education For Ethnic Religious Tolerance In School"

Abstract of the program: In recent years, the crisis of Bulgarian education has been identified as a particular one a current issue in various aspects. One of them requires a change to the attitude towards education. The school must form the understanding of the students that the elements of uniqueness are characteristic of all cultures around the world that to a certain extent every culture is different from ours and cannot be understood without being studied.

That is why the purpose of this pedagogical practice consists in studying pupils' readiness towards tolerance and understanding of the two main religions in the area, in order to reach the notion that religion, independently what he is, he teaches only good and tolerant. Examples of elements of the curriculum are used contents in the cycle of learning subjects in the initial stage with students from the first - fourth grade - representatives of the four ethnic communities - Bulgarian-Christian, Turkish-Mohammedans, Bulgarian-Mohammedans and other and other ethnic groups.

Practice Description: Introduction and inclusion of students from 1-4 grade to the knowledge of faith within the curriculum of Bulgarian language and literature, public and natural sciences and arts, in accordance with the State Educational Standards and the curriculum of the relevant objects. Creating lessons and multimedia presentations to them students with major holidays and concepts of Christianity and Muslimism that they are related to Bulgarian history, literature, cultural holidays and national life.

In the description we also find an example curriculum, a description of METHODS of work in pedagogical practice, organization of open lessons. Advantages of the presented practice are presented compared to the standard approaches.



Advantages of the presented practice as compared to the standard approaches to work and training.

The presented practice aims to help create a creative environment in which students (83 in numbers) participate in the analysis of particular constructed situations and formulate positive patterns of behavior that are strive to follow in everyday life. There are tasks related to the development of positive behavioral patterns designed to promote ethnic tolerance and reducing aggression and violence among students.

Within the individual lessons, tasks are included to validate constructive behavior that restricts forms of violence and harassment; creates a favorable climate in the classroom and a class that stimulates communication and development of students' communication skills.

There are not ready solutions but an opportunity to analyze the situation, which develops the emotional and social intelligence of the students, focuses on the need to understand other people and their needs, to learn to be cooperating with them.

As an attachment, description of two themes:

Theme: The otherness as a value. Development of interethnic relations - "The Crow and the Parrot" - / by Saadi / parable; "The White Dove" Marko Ganchev; "The Garden of Nations" Yosif Nunev.

Purpose: To address the issue of difference, of otherness.

Materials: Parable, poem, and fairy tale.

Instruction: The teacher tells (or reads) the parable "The Crow and the Parrot". Then this invites the participants to share what reflections the audience has created history, what qualities the heroes possess, know people with similar behavior allowing for the maximum number of speeches. Teacher summarizes and emphasizes the fact that intolerance to differences in public life is a way to discrimination. Regardless of its qualities (whether it is crow or parrot) one can develop arrogance to others and consider them to be inferior by yourself. Through the interdisciplinary relationship with the literature lesson on "The White Dove" Marko Ganchev emphasizes that it is not a shame to be different and how to we accept the different from us. This focus also applies to the work on the subject "The Garden of Nations" by Joseph Nunev.

Activities: Read through a task, answer questions, select reading. Working on the notion of tolerance: What is tolerance? Tolerance is a term that expresses behaviors, manners, approaches and attitudes of support, understanding and non-discrimination to minority or under-represented groups or groups that are in some way disadvantaged. Do we manage to be tolerant? Help with folk wisdom by linking



the mixed words to the sentence: / envy, not who, sees /. Point out, share examples from our / your / everyday life.

Theme: Different (conversation with a friend)

Aim: To address situations in which the rights of another person are violated and where tolerance is important. The class is divided into groups in pairs and the rest are observers. One text is assigned to Role 1, and Role 2 to the other.

Role 1: You are Annie. She is a student at Vasil Levski University. Two months ago in your class came a new student who is of Roma origin. She does not speak well Bulgarian. You know she's a Muslim woman.

Once the teacher releases her from school for some of their religious reasons holiday. You do not like it. You cannot understand what he believes in. You think it might be better to leave your class. You are particularly annoyed when you start talking to incomprehensible to you with the new boy in the other class. You think they are discussing you. You trying to attract some of your girlfriends and make them make the number the new girl and set the class against her. Maya and Kremena agree, but Blaga refuses and starts to come out of you.

Yesterday he begs you to talk. You go to the appointment. Your tense, because you like Blaga very much and you're afraid of losing her like a girlfriend.

Role 2: Your name is Blaga. You are studying at the Vasil Levski Sofia University. Your new class has come recently a student who is of Roma origin does not speak well Bulgarian. You know it is Muslim because she does not attend school one day for a religious holiday.

You would like to contact her to learn about her religion. IN she speaks in her native tongue with the new boy from the next class. You will you know a word in this unfamiliar language. It's interesting to talk to her. She's cute careful. You are telling new things. But Annie, your girlfriend and classmate, shapes up a group of several girls around her and she starts to tease the new girl to him he insults and mocks him. Annie continually invites you too. You refuse and you start to you avoid it. You think such behavior is unfair. You decide to talk to Annie.

You set a meeting. Annie is approaching you fast. You're starting the conversation. Everyone learns their role well, then couples hold the conversation for which is mentioned at the end of the text. Observers choose their favorite.

Participants share their role-playing experience with the big group, what they think about situations.

Questions: Have you had such situations in your life? You interfere when that happens is it happening to you?



Case study 2: an open lesson on subject "Religion" The Open lesson of a teacher of religion at a Bulgarian school, Mrs. Ruska Tosheva. The lesson is on the initiative of the Headmaster. Invited are: the mayor of the school area, Deputy Mayor of Education, Culture, Social Activities and Sport, professor of the Faculty of Theology and students.

Other schools in the same area have been also invited to show them in practice how religion is taught and the good example of the 20th primary school to find place in other schools.

The theme of the lesson was "St. George", but he did not confine himself to the saint's personality, but extended to the memory of his memory in the past and today, on the monasteries bearing the name of St. George, the miraculous icons, the military parade in his honor, the courageous orders of the name of the saint and his worship by other nations and faiths.

In the lesson, interrelationships were made with the Bulgarian language and literature, where students studied Bulgarian folklore and folk music.

The pupils freely co-operated with theological terms and showed solid knowledge, but that is not surprising given that they study a first-class religion. They presented their projects, which included the history, architecture, the present state of some of the great monasteries devoted to St. George, told about the facts they had impressed upon their research work.

Prof. Bozhidar Andonov expressed his joy at the successes of the teachers and students in the 20th Primary School, which is one of the few in Sofia, where religion is still being studied. He noted that only through the knowledge of our religion, our culture and traditions can we become involved in European values and participate dignified in the life of united Europe.

Then, at the meeting in the Headmaster's office, the mayor and representatives of the municipality expressed their satisfaction with the way of teaching religion in the 20th Primary School. They noted that the linking of the curriculum with the national culture, which Mrs Tosheva made, provided for the easy perception of religious values and morals by children and their parents. They regretted that the other school headmasters did not show the same openness and initiative to bring children to the foundations of religion.

In an interview, the director noted that for more than 15 years in the school the subject of religion was studied. "Even at the first meeting with the first-class parents, we say that religion is being studied at the school. Ms. Tosheva explains what the children will learn. Parents are happy to enroll their children. Units are those who refuse. So, from 1 to 4, we have 17 classes and 17 religion groups. After 4 grade, children want to continue studying the subject. They know the teacher, they like their hours, the atmosphere. "Bulgarian Language and Literature teachers in 5 grade cooperate with Ms. Tosheva, because in the curriculum there are included topics related to religion. "Then I notice that children



draw conclusions on many of the issues we are considering in literature because they are familiar with religion," says Mrs. Doganjiyska.

The question of whether the organization of teaching a religion in a school is very difficult, and so the directors refuse, and replies: "The organization is not difficult. It is important to have a desire. We have a full-time teacher, there are enough children and hours and work goes." Teachers have agreed to study religion in schools only if the emphasis is on the cultural foundations of religion, values and morality, they do not want to be a doctrine because not every parent wants his children to become believers but just to know their own religion.

According to the headmaster today, schooling can not speak of religion as creed, it was possible in the past when the Church was strong, today, she thinks, education is more influential, so teaching religion must be in line with the new realities. In this connection, she noted that the Church is in charge of religion teachers in front of schools. "Almost no attention is paid by the Church of the Schools, I go, please priests to come to the water on September 15, invite them to our various initiatives, but most often they refuse to participate. Somehow the Church is segregated from the school, " she says.

Asked how parents perceive that their children know more about them on faith and religion, the headmaster replies, "There are parents who come to consult Ms. Tosheva on how rituals are done, which is right and what not. "According to the director, parents want their children to know about religion, there is an interest in the subject both on the part of adults and children. It is already a matter of organizing schools to provide a religion for their students.