

U.S.Department of State
2010 REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN EUROPEAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Il Dipartimento di Stato degli USA pubblica ogni anno un Rapporto sulle condizioni della libertà religiosa nei vari stati dei 5 continenti. Il Rapporto 2010 è stato pubblicato on line il 17 novembre u.s. In ogni singolo rapporto nazionale vengono prese in considerazione, ma a volte in modo poco più che allusivo, anche le condizioni istituzionali dell'istruzione religiosa, identificate nei loro aspetti positivi o eventualmente restrittivi nei confronti del diritto di libertà religiosa dell'alunno, della famiglia o della organizzazione religiosa di appartenenza. E' da questi rapporti nazionali – limitandoci qui agli Stati Europei, membri o meno dell' attuale UE – che abbiamo estratto questi dati relativi allo status degli insegnamenti di religione, avvertendo però doverosamente il lettore di avere l'attenzione di ricollegare queste informazioni minime e sommarie ai rispettivi testi integrali, consultando direttamente il sito www.state.gov/g/drl/irf/

ALBANIA	According to the Ministry of Education, public schools are secular and the law prohibits ideological and religious indoctrination. Religion is not taught in public schools. According to official figures, religious communities, organizations, and foundations had 103 affiliated associations and foundations managing 101 educational institutions, of which 15 were officially religious-affiliated schools. By law the Ministry of Education must license these schools, and curriculums must comply with national education standards. The Catholic and Muslim groups operated numerous state-licensed schools and reported no problems obtaining licenses for new schools. The Orthodox Church and the Bektashis operated strictly religious educational centers for the training of clerics.
AUSTRIA	The government provided funding for religious instruction in public schools and places of worship for children belonging to any of the 14 officially recognized religious societies. The government did not offer such funding to other religious groups. A minimum of three children is required to form a class. In some cases, religious societies decided that the administrative cost of providing religious instruction was too great to warrant providing such courses in all schools. Attendance in religious instruction is mandatory for all students unless they formally withdraw at the beginning of the school year; students under the age of 14 require parental permission to withdraw from instruction. Instruction takes place either in the school or at sites organized by the religious groups. Some schools offered ethics classes for students not attending religious instruction.
BELGIUM	The public educational system, from kindergarten to university, requires strict neutrality of presentation of religious views for teaching personnel, except for teachers of religion. Religious or "moral" instruction is mandatory in public schools and is provided according to the student's religious or nonreligious preference. All public schools provide teachers for each of the six recognized religious groups if a sufficient number of pupils wish to attend. Public school religion teachers are nominated by a committee from their religious group and appointed by the minister of education of the concerned community government. Private authorized religious schools that follow the same curriculum as public schools are known as "free" schools. They receive community government subsidies for operating expenses and buildings. Teachers, like other civil servants, are paid by their respective community governments.
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	The Law on Religious Freedom reaffirms the right of every citizen to religious education. The law calls for an official representative of the various religious communities to be responsible for teaching religious studies in all public and private preschools, primary schools, and universities throughout BiH. These individuals are employees of the municipality in which they teach but have been accredited by the religious body governing the curriculum. However, the law was not always fully implemented. Religious education is largely decentralized, as is the education system in general. Public schools offer religious education classes, but with some exceptions, schools generally offered religious instruction only in the municipality's majority religion. Legally, students (or their parents, in the case of primary school students) may choose not to attend the classes. If a sufficient number of students of a minority religious group attend a particular school (20 in the RS, 15 in the Federation), the school must organize religion classes on their behalf. However, in rural areas there are usually no qualified religious

	<p>representatives available to teach religious studies to minority students. Minority students are often widely scattered across remote areas, making it difficult to provide classes even when a teacher is available. In the Federation's five Bosniak-majority cantons, schools offer Islamic religious instruction as a two-hour-per-week elective course. In cantons with Croat majorities, Croat students attend the elective one-hour-per-week Catholic religion course in primary and middle schools. However, in 13 Catholic schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina, parents can choose between the elective one-hour-per-week Catholic religion course and a course in ethics.</p>
BULGARIA	<p>Public schools offer an optional religious education course that covers Christianity and Islam. The course examines the historical, philosophical, and cultural aspects of religion and introduces students to the moral values of different religious groups. All officially registered religious groups can request that their religious beliefs be included in the course's curriculum.</p>
CROATIA	<p>The government requires that religious training be provided in public schools, although attendance is optional. The Roman Catholic catechism is the predominant religious teaching offered in public schools. In April 2010 the Constitutional Court refused to rule on the constitutionality of an agreement between the government and the Vatican related to the provision of catechism in elementary and high schools. The court stated that it lacked jurisdiction in the matter since it was unable to rule on the merits of international treaties. The decision was in response to a suit filed in 2000 claiming that the agreement violated the equal rights of all citizens. The suit claimed that those who did not attend catechism were not provided with classes in either their own faith or on ethics.</p> <p>Schools that met the necessary quota of seven students of a minority religious group per school allowed separate religion classes for the students. The SPC continued to complain that school enrollment questionnaires did not list the Serbian Orthodox faith as an option for religious instruction in some schools.</p> <p>SPC officials continued to report that many schoolchildren and their parents, particularly in cities where Serbian Orthodox believers do not live in compact communities, remained reluctant to identify themselves as Serbian Orthodox to avoid being singled out. Nevertheless, SPC officials continued to report a stable situation and an increase of students attending such classes in areas with Serb majorities or in areas where classes were already well established. Previous reports from the eparchy of Dalmatia regarding difficulties in the provision of religious classes for Serb Orthodox children were not repeated during the reporting period.</p>
CYPRUS	<p>In May 2010 the minister of education, other government officials, and the teachers union confirmed the government's policy that all students have the equal right to use religious symbols, including wearing a headscarf, at school. [...]</p> <p>The government requires children in public primary and secondary schools to take instruction in the Greek Orthodox religion. Primary school students of other religions may be exempted from attending religious services and instruction at the request of their guardians. Students in secondary education may be exempted from religious instruction on grounds of religion or conscience and may be exempted from attending religious services on any grounds at the request of their guardians, or their own, if they are over the age of 16.</p>
CZECH REP.	<p>Of the 31 registered churches, 10 have permission from the Ministry of Culture (under the 2002 religious freedom law) to teach religion in state schools. According to the ministry, although religious instruction is optional in public schools, school directors must introduce religious education choices if there are at least seven students in one class of the same religious group who request such instruction.</p>
DENMARK	<p>All public and private schools, including religious schools, receive government financial support. The Evangelical Lutheran faith is taught in public schools in accordance with the Public School Act; however, a student may withdraw from religious classes with parental consent. Additionally, the law requires that a Christian studies course covering world religions and philosophy and promoting tolerance and respect for all religious beliefs be taught in public school. The course is compulsory, although students may be exempted from the course if a parent presents a request in writing. If the student is 15 years old or older, the student and parent must jointly request the student's exemption from the course. According to an investigation by the Ministry of Education, an average of only 1.3 percent of students in the greater Copenhagen sample area, which has the highest concentration of non-Christians, opted out of the Christian studies course. The constitution protects the right of parents to educate their children in private schools or home schools as long as this alternate form of education matches what is "usually required in primary schools."</p> <p>In February 2009 the education minister stated that Muslim, Jewish, and Christian prayers may be substituted for collective prayer in such venues as school assemblies, as long as the prayer is invoked without preaching. During the reporting period, there were two unsuccessful attempts by the opposition in parliament to ban all forms of prayer in school.</p>

ESTONIA	Basic ecumenical religious instruction is available in public schools. A school must offer religious studies at the primary or secondary level if at least 15 students request it. Comparative religious studies are available in public and private schools on an elective basis.
FINLAND	All public schools provide religious and philosophical instruction; students may choose to study either subject. In certain Helsinki-area schools, Muslim students outnumber members of the country's second largest religious group, Orthodoxy. Countrywide, the number of Muslim students has increased by approximately 20 percent each year over the past three years. This trend was expected to continue based on current asylum and refugee trends and the group's high birth rate.
FRANCE	Public schools are secular. The law prohibits public school employees and students from wearing conspicuous religious symbols, including the Islamic headscarf, Jewish skullcap, Sikh turban, and large Christian crosses. Religious instruction is not given in public schools, but facts about religious groups are taught as part of the history curriculum. Parents may home school children for religious reasons, but all schooling must conform to the standards established for public schools. Public schools make an effort to supply special meals for students with religious dietary restrictions. During the 2009 academic year, public school cafeterias in Lyon served fish and eggs to satisfy the dietary requirements of certain religious groups in "an effort at consensus building aimed at respecting diversity," after Lyon public officials held lengthy consultations with representatives of major religious groups and pro-secularism groups. The government subsidizes private schools, including those affiliated with religious organizations.
GEORGIA	The Law on General Education specifies that "pupils, parents, and teachers enjoy freedom of religious belief, denomination, and conscience, according to the rule established by law, and have the right to choose and change any religious denomination at will." A 2005 law separating state schools and religious teaching narrowed the interpretation of the government concordat with the GOC regarding teaching Orthodoxy as an elective part of the school curriculum. The law states that such Orthodox teaching may take place only after school hours and cannot be controlled by the school or teachers. Outside instructors, including clergy, cannot regularly attend or direct student extracurricular activities or student clubs and their meetings. Lay theologians, rather than priests, led such activities. The GOC routinely reviewed religious and other textbooks used in schools for consistency with Orthodox beliefs, although this review was not conducted within the government structure but rather as part of the GOC's pastoral activities.
GERMANY	Most public schools offer Protestant and Catholic religious instruction in cooperation with those churches, as well as instruction in Judaism if enough students express interest. The number of Islamic religion classes in public schools continued to grow. In principle, participants of the federal government-sponsored Islam Conference agreed that Islamic education should be made widely available. Education is a state responsibility, and in part because no nationally recognized Islamic organization exists that could assist in developing a curriculum or providing services, the form and content of Islamic instruction vary from state to state. Organizations providing Islamic instruction do not have PLC status. All states offer religious instruction and ethics courses. In most states, students who do not wish to participate in religious instruction can substitute ethics courses. In Berlin and Brandenburg, the ethics course is compulsory, while the course on religion is voluntary. Religion and ethics courses are treated equally in Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia, meaning a student can choose either one. Although 3.5 million Muslims live in Germany, Islamic religious instruction for the estimated 750,000 to 900,000 Muslim students in the public school system remains a controversial topic. Although no Muslim group had PLC status that would entitle them to offer Islamic courses, state governments recognized the need and demand and worked with local Muslim organizations to establish such courses. Hesse's state government launched an Islamic education pilot project based on the Alevite belief on August 24, 2009 in five elementary schools. Additionally, the government formed a working group to investigate a how a full Islamic education program in all schools could be implemented. The working group met for the first time in June 2010 in cooperation with Turkish communities. Since summer 2008, North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) has introduced regular religion classes for Alevites at 15 public elementary schools for 213 students. NRW began a pilot program in 1999 in which Muslim teachers teach courses on Islam. In the 2009-10 academic year, 10,541 students (more than in any German state) participated in these classes at 133 different public schools. The Bavarian state government's 5-year pilot project on Islam courses, which began in March 2009, is ongoing. The government of Lower Saxony's plans to institute training for imams in

	<p>the state were ongoing. The training would include courses in civic education, German language, and a dialogue with Christian churches. In September 2009, independent academic certification of the Islamic Religious Education program at Osnabrueck University resulted in a confirmation that a two-year program designed to train Islamic religious instructors would be continued. Twenty-five students are enrolled at Osnabrueck University and are expected to become Islamic religious instructors in public schools upon completion of their education. The University of Muenster in NRW, the holder of the country's first chair for training secondary school teachers in Islamic religious instruction, announced in spring 2010 the creation of a second chair of Islamic studies to be filled by an applicant of Lebanese descent. The appointment requires approval by several Muslim organizations and the formal approval of the appointment was pending. The University of Muenster's first chair remained unfilled after a controversy surrounding its first incumbent. A plan by Benjamin Idris, the imam of the Muslim community in Penzberg, to develop a Muslim Center in Munich ("ZIEM") comprising a community center, mosque, library, and an academy for the education of imams, was being prevented by Bavaria's Interior Ministry. The Interior Ministry suspected the Penzberg community of being affiliated with Milli Goerues and the Muslim Brotherhood, organizations that are highlighted in the annual report of Bavaria's OPC. Bavaria's OPC continued to assert that the Muslim community in Penzberg was closely affiliated with fundamentalist Islam. Penzberg's Muslim community was appealing this ruling to the Bavarian state court. Areas remained where the law and Islamic practices conflicted with one another, such as the call to prayer, Islamic ritual slaughtering, and the segregation of older boys and girls during sports classes. The legal requirement that children attend school, confirmed by the Constitutional Court and the European Court of Justice in 2006, continued to be a problem for some homeschooling advocates for religious reasons, due to concerns about sex education and the teaching of evolution.</p>
GREECE	<p>Orthodox religious instruction in public primary and secondary schools, at government expense, is mandatory for all students. Non-Orthodox students may exempt themselves. However, public schools offer no alternative activity or non-Orthodox religious instruction for these children. Many private schools offer alternative religious instruction to their students. Christian religious symbols, including crucifixes and icons, are displayed in public offices, school and university classrooms, and courts. In 2009 three lawyers from Thessaloniki petitioned the administrative court of Thessaloniki to remove all religious symbols from courtrooms. The petition was rejected by the administrative courts in January 2010, but the lawyers appealed to the Supreme Court. The Orthodox Church stated that it opposed the removal of religious symbols and decided to intervene legally at the Supreme Court. their students.</p>
HUNGARY	<p>Registered religious groups have the right to provide religious education in public schools if requested by the students or parents. Religious instruction was not part of the curriculum in public schools, but the government permitted primary and secondary school students to enroll in extracurricular religious education classes. Optional religious instruction was usually held after the normal school day and taught in school facilities by representatives of various religious groups. While the government made provisions for minority religious groups to engage in religious education in public schools, the four historical groups provided the majority of after-hours religious instruction. Private schools were not obligated to ensure religious education. [...] Educational and social institutions, such as schools and homes for the elderly maintained by registered religious groups, are entitled under the law to receive the same public support as institutions maintained by the state or municipalities. However, state subsidies to various churches for educational and social services continued to be the most important source of contention in church-state relations.</p>
ICELAND	<p>The official state religion is Lutheranism. Article 62 of the constitution establishes the ELC as the state church and pledges the state's support and protection. Parliament has the power to pass a law to change this article. The state operates a network of Lutheran parish churches throughout the country, and the Lutheran Bishop of Iceland appoints state church ministers to these parishes. The state directly pays the salaries of the 139 ministers in the state church, and these ministers are considered public servants under the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights. These ministers counsel persons of all faiths and offer ecumenical services for marriages and funerals. In addition state radio broadcasts worship services every Sunday morning and daily devotions morning and night. [...]</p> <p>Virtually all schools are public schools. School grades 1-10 (ages 6-15) are required by law to include instruction in theology. The law also mandates that general teaching practices be shaped by "the Christian heritage of Icelandic culture, equality, responsibility, concern, tolerance, and respect for human value." The compulsory curriculum for Christianity, ethics, and theology, does, however, suggest a multicultural approach to religious education and an emphasis on teaching a variety of beliefs. In secondary schools, theology continues to be taught under the rubric of "community studies" along with sociology, philosophy, and history.</p>

	<p>The law provides the Minister of Education with the authority to exempt pupils from instruction in compulsory subjects such as Christianity, ethics, and theology. In practice individual school authorities issue exemptions informally. There is no obligation for school authorities to offer other religious or secular instruction in place of these classes. Some observers have noted that this discourages students or their parents from requesting such exemptions and may isolate students who seek exemptions or put them at risk of bullying in schools.</p>
IRELAND	<p>The government permits, but does not require, religious instruction in public schools. Most primary and secondary schools are denominational, and their boards of management are governed partially by trustees who are members of the Catholic Church or, in fewer cases, the Church of Ireland or other religious denominations. Under the terms of the constitution, the Department of Education must, and does provide equal funding to schools of different religious denominations, including Islamic and Jewish schools. Although religious instruction is an integral part of the curriculum of most schools, parents may exempt their children from such instruction. [In 2003 the Equality Authority declared that church-linked schools are permitted legally to refuse to admit a student who is not of that religious group if the school can prove that the refusal is essential to the maintenance of the "ethos" of the school (for example, too many Catholics in a Muslim school could prevent the school from having a Muslim "ethos"). However, there were no reports of any children being refused admission to any school for this reason. By law a religious school may select its staff based on their religious beliefs].</p>
ITALY	<p>The revised concordat of 1984 accords the Catholic Church certain privileges regarding instruction in public schools. For example, the government allowed the church to select Catholic teachers, paid by the state, to provide instruction in "hour of religion" courses taught in the public schools. Such courses were optional, and students who did not wish to attend were free to study other subjects or, in certain cases, to leave school early. While in the past this instruction involved Catholic priests teaching catechism, church-selected instructors may now be either lay or religious, and their instruction is intended to include material relevant to non-Catholic religious groups. Problems may arise in small communities where information about other religious groups and the number of non-Catholics was limited. The constitution prohibits state support for private schools; however, the law provides tax breaks for parents with dependents in private schools.</p>
KOSOVO	<p>The law and regulations provide for separation between religious and public spheres and prohibit public education institutions from providing religious education or other activities promoting a specific religion. Although the Office of the Ombudsperson assessed there was no legal basis to do so, the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology issued an administrative instruction to secondary schools at the start of the 2009-2010 school year prohibiting students from wearing Islamic headscarves. School administrators selectively applied this instruction and previous instructions from the ministry to prevent teachers and students from wearing headscarves in public schools. The Office of the Ombudsperson noted it would again issue a formal opinion that the headscarf ban is not in keeping with the law, as it did in 2004.</p>
LATVIA	<p>The Law on Religious Organizations and other laws stipulate that only representatives of traditional Christian churches (i.e., Catholic, Evangelical Lutheran, Orthodox Christian, Old Believer, Baptist, Methodist, and Adventist) and Jewish groups may teach religion in public schools to public school students who volunteer to take the classes. The government provides funds for this education. Students at state-supported national minority schools also may receive education on a voluntary basis on the religion "characteristic of the national minority." Other denominations and religious groups that do not have their own state-supported minority schools may provide religious education only in private schools.</p>
LITHUANIA	<p>The constitution establishes public educational institutions as secular. The Law on Education permits and funds religious instruction in public schools, but only for traditional and other state-recognized religious groups. In practice parents can choose either religious instruction or secular ethics classes for their children. Schools decide which of the traditional religious groups will be represented in their curriculums on the basis of requests from parents for children up to age 14 (after age 14, the student decides). During the reporting period, the Ministry of Education and Science received no complaints about any school not providing requested religious instruction. The number of wholly private religious schools is relatively low. There were 30 schools with ties to Catholic and Jewish groups, although students of different religious groups often attended these schools. All accredited private schools (religious and nonreligious) receive funding from the Ministry of Education and Science through a voucher system based on the number of pupils; private Roman Catholic schools receive additional funds from the government to cover operational costs. This system covers program, but not</p>

	<p>capital costs of school operation. Founders generally bear responsibility for covering capital outlays; however, the ministry provides funding for capital costs of traditional religious private schools where an international agreement to do so exists. In 2009, public schools provided religious education to students from the following religious groups: 235,070 Roman Catholics; 2,898 Russian Orthodox; 602 Evangelical Lutherans; 215 Evangelical Reformed Lutherans; 287 Jews; 387 Greek Catholics; 15 Old Believers; and eight Muslims. A total of 192,477 students studied ethics.</p>
LUXEMBOURG	<p>There is a long tradition of religious education in public schools. A 1997 convention between the minister of national education and the Catholic archbishop governs religious instruction. In accordance with this convention, religious instruction is a local matter, coordinated at the communal level (there are 116 communes that regulate local affairs) between representatives of the Catholic Church and communal authorities. There are government-salaried religious instructors at all levels in public schools. Parents and pupils may choose between instruction in Catholicism or an ethics course. Schools grant exemption from this instruction on an individual basis. Approximately 81 percent of primary school pupils and 57 percent of high school students choose religious instruction. The government subsidizes all public schools and also private religious schools whose religious group has signed a convention with the state. The government also subsidizes a Catholic seminary. In 2006 the country's education initiative to provide religious and moral instruction for students in their last year of coursework received favorable notice in the European Union's Report on Discrimination and Islamophobia. The initiative was begun as a pilot program in 2004 in one high school, which remains the only school in the program; it focuses on interfaith dialogue and explains the basic religious precepts of non-Christian religions. This program was developed in consultation with the Catholic Church and Muslim community, among others. Although originally scheduled to be made universal for high school students in their final year, at the end of the reporting period it was no longer expected to be made universal.</p>
MACEDONIA	<p>Private religious primary schools are not allowed under the law, but there are no restrictions on private religious schools at secondary levels and above, or on religious education that takes place in religious spaces such as churches and mosques. At the end of the previous reporting period, the Ministry of Education announced plans to develop a new course entitled "Ethics of Religion" for the 2009-10 school year, asking students/parents to choose between history of religions and ethics of religion. A previous religious course had been ruled unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court. The new course was not implemented in 2009, but the Ministry of Education announced it would be implemented for the 2010-11 school year, with the second option being "Culture of Civilization." Some religious groups expressed concern that children would be separated into different classes based on religion and that no religious courses would be offered for children who are not Orthodox or Muslim. The Ministry of Culture, in cooperation with the State Commission for Relations with Religious Communities and Groups, organized the 2nd World Conference on Dialogue among Religions and Civilizations, held May 6-9, 2010, in Ohrid. A total of 480 religious leaders, government officials, academics, and representatives of the international community from more than 40 countries participated. A declaration was adopted pledging the promotion of tolerance and coexistence and supporting interreligious and intercultural dialogue. In April 2010 parliament passed a new antidiscrimination law to protect against discrimination based on religious beliefs. The law was scheduled to be implemented on January 1, 2011.</p>
MALTA	<p>Religious education in Roman Catholicism is mandated in the constitution and compulsory in all state schools; however, there are constitutional and legal provisions for the parent, guardian, or student to opt out of the instruction. The school curriculum includes general studies in human rights, ethnic relations, and cultural diversity as part of values education to promote tolerance. Enrollment in private religious schools is permitted. Homeschooling is allowed only in extreme cases, such as chronic illness, under the Education Act.</p>
MOLDOVA	<p>According to the law on education, "moral and spiritual instruction" was mandatory for primary school students and optional for secondary school and university students. Some schools offered religion courses, but enrollment depended on parental request and the availability of funds. On May 8, 2010, the MOC organized a rally of several thousand church members in the main public square of Chisinau as part of its current campaign to organize a national referendum calling for mandatory "Orthodox Basics" courses in all elementary and secondary schools. On May 16, Minister of Education Leonid Bujor announced that religious education would be taught in schools but said that it would be optional. On June 15, the Chisinau Court of Appeals ruled in favor of a petition by 17 NGOs who argued that introducing mandatory religion courses in schools was unconstitutional and annulled the Central Election Commission's June 4 approval of the referendum. Supporters of the referendum reportedly will appeal the decision to the Supreme Court of Justice. At the end of the reporting period, they had not done so. [...] . Religious education may be offered in Transnistria, but only if parents and guardians take into consideration the child's rights to freedom of conscience. Extracurricular religious education in public and private schools is allowed if parents and guardians requested it, and the child accepts it.</p>

MONTENEGRO	<p>By law religious studies are not included in primary or secondary school curricula. The SPC Orthodox theological school in Cetinje and the Muslim religious secondary school in Tuzi are not included in the national educational system.</p> <p>Some Muslim clerics described as "Wahhabis" preached forms of Islam that tended to be intolerant of other religions or other interpretations of Islam. The press wrote that the number of "Wahhabis" increased and that they provoked some incidents with mainstream imams. Police stated that they intensively monitored the activities of such persons.</p>
NETHERIAND	<p>Society has become increasingly secularized. In general church membership continued to decline. According to a 2006 study by the government's Social Cultural Planning Bureau, the number of persons who are church members declined steadily from 76 percent of the population in 1958 to 30 percent in 2006 (16 percent Catholic and 14 percent Protestant). Only 16 percent regularly attend church. Catholics constitute the largest religious group in the country. The government provides education funding to public and religious schools, other religious educational institutions, and health care facilities, irrespective of their religious affiliation. To qualify for funding, institutions must meet strict nonreligious criteria in curriculum, minimum class size, and health care. Some high school teachers found it difficult to discuss the Holocaust in class due to opposition from students, in particular Muslim students.</p>
NORWAY	<p>The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norway is the state church. The state supports it financially, and there is a constitutional requirement that the king and at least one-half of the cabinet belong to this church. The king, who heads the state church, formally nominates bishops, and clerical salaries and pensions are regulated by law. There is continued public debate about introducing greater separation between church and state. In April 2008 the minister of culture presented a parliament-commissioned report on the state and church relationship. The report, which took five years to complete and included significant public input, called for maintaining, but further democratizing, the state church. It proposed changes to the constitution to further separate church and state functions. One of the immediate effects was an agreement, signed by seven parties in parliament, to support amending the constitution to give the state church the ability to select, but not appoint, its own bishops. The agreed wording also would institute the system of public financing for all religious groups recognized in the constitution, similar to the existing public financing already in place for the Church of Norway. The power to appoint bishops will not be transferred to the church until parliament votes on the proposed constitutional amendments, expected sometime during the 2009-13 parliamentary session. A 1997 law introduced the Christian Knowledge and Religious and Ethical Information (CKREE) course for grades one through 10 (generally ages six to 16). The CKREE course reviews world religions and philosophy while promoting tolerance and respect for all religious beliefs. Citing the country's Christian history (and the stated importance of Christianity to society), the CKREE course devotes an extensive amount of time to studying Christianity. This course is mandatory; there are no exceptions for children of other religious groups. On special grounds, students may be exempted from participating in or performing specific religious acts, such as church services or prayer. Organizations for atheists, as well as Muslim communities, contested the legality of mandatory religious education, claiming that it was a breach of freedom of religion and parents' right to provide religious instruction to their children. After the case was heard before the ECHR in 2002 and again in 2006, the government modified the curriculum and expanded the education to more thoroughly discuss other religions while continuing an emphasis on Christianity as the religion of the majority of citizens.</p>
POLAND	<p>The constitution gives parents the right to raise their children in accordance with their own religious and philosophical beliefs. Religious education classes are taught in the public schools. In theory, children have a choice between religious instruction and ethics. Although Roman Catholic Church representatives teach the vast majority of these religion classes, parents may request classes taught by representatives from any of the legally registered religious groups to fulfill the religious education requirement; however, there were reports that accommodating the needs of religious minorities was a problem. While not common, the Ministry of Education pays for non-Catholic religious instruction in some circumstances, such as Polish Orthodox classes in the eastern part of the country. Religious education instructors, including clergy, receive salaries from the state for teaching religion in public schools. Catholic Church representatives are included on a commission that determines which books qualify for school use. Religion classes are taught in public schools. Students may request to take an ethics class or a personalized religion class if they do not wish to take the standard course. Where an alternate class is not available, students may opt to spend the class time in supervised study. According to the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, there were challenges in organizing ethics classes for students who did not attend religion classes, which resulted in indirect discrimination against students belonging to minorities. The foundation</p>

	<p>noted that a specific regulation requiring a minimum of seven students to organize a separate religion or ethics class is a significant impediment for many schools, particularly in rural areas. On June 15, 2010, the European Court of Human Rights issued a ruling in response to a 2002 case filed by a Polish family over the practice of including grades from religion or ethics classes on students' report cards. The court ruled that the absence of a mark for "religion/ethics" on the students' school transcripts amounted to a form of unwarranted stigmatization, which violated the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. The court dismissed a corresponding claim that the lack of choice between ethics and religion classes in some schools was a violation the convention. On December 2, 2009, the Constitutional Court ruled that an Education Ministry directive, which stated that grades for religious education should be included in students' overall grade point averages, did not violate the constitution. Although the constitution provides for the separation of religion and state, crucifixes hang in both the upper and lower houses of parliament as well as in many other public buildings, including public school classrooms.</p>
PORTUGAL	<p>Public secondary school curricula include an optional course called "Religion and Morals," which functions as a survey of world religious groups and is taught by laypersons. It can be used to provide instruction on the Catholic religion, in which case the Catholic Church must approve all teachers for the course. Other religious groups can create such a course if they have 10 or more children of that faith in the particular school. Representatives from each religious group have the right to require their approval of the course's instructors. Schools, both public and private, are also required to accommodate the religious practices of students, including rescheduling tests if necessary.</p>
ROMANIA	<p>The government permitted, but does not require, religious instruction in public schools. Attendance in religion classes was optional. To opt out of religion classes, students must submit a request in writing. The 18 recognized religions were entitled to hold religion classes in public schools, but only if their adherents constituted a certain proportion of the student population. The law permitted instruction according to the religious Some minority religious groups also complained that authorities generally allowed the Orthodox Church to have an active role in opening ceremonies in schools and on other occasions, but that other religions were underrepresented. Greek Catholic priests from Transylvania complained that they were never invited to local events, not even those commemorating Greek Catholic heroes.</p> <p>An Orthodox religion textbook published in 2006 by the Ministry of Education with the coordination of the then and present state secretary for religious affairs continued to generate complaints and dissatisfaction among minority religious groups. The book described the emergence of the Greek Catholic Church in the 18th century as the result of "Catholic proselytizing" and described Jehovah's Witnesses, Baha'is, and Mormons as sects "representing a genuine threat to society." A chapter in the religion textbook alleged that sects proselytized using such means as brainwashing, bribery, blackmail, and exploitation of the poor. While the government stated it had withdrawn the textbook, Jehovah's Witnesses and Baha'is reported that it was neither amended nor withdrawn during the reporting period. The CNCD confirmed to the Baha'is that the textbook had never been changed and the Baha'is decided to take legal action against the Ministry of Education and the state secretary in question.affiliation of students' parents. The constitution and the 2006 religion law allow the establishment of confessional schools subsidized by the state.</p>
RUSSIA	<p>The federal government does not require religious instruction in schools, but it allows public use of school buildings after hours for the ROC to provide religious instruction on a voluntary basis. Religion is taught in Sunday schools, in public secondary schools, and in specialized religious schools (lyceums, gymnasia); the latter have the status of a secondary educational institution. Several regions offer a course on Orthodox Christianity in public schools. In practice students may be compelled to take this course where schools do not provide alternatives. In April 2010 a pilot program based on a presidential order from July 2009 began for religious education in schools in 19 regions of the country (with 15,445 teachers trained for the purpose), including the Muslim-majority North Caucasus, Russian Orthodox-majority areas of the country, and the Jewish Autonomous Region in the Far East. Under the program, fourth-grade students could, with parental permission, choose to study the new curriculum of "Foundations of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics." The course is divided into three possible modules over six months: one on Orthodoxy, Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism; another on the history of religious cultures; and a third on secular ethics. Parents are supposed to be allowed to select one of the three modules for their children to study and, in all but five of the pilot regions, a majority of students chose secular ethics. However, the country's human rights groups have reported instances in which ROC officials allegedly pressured parents not to allow their children to select the secular ethics portion of the course. In January 2010 after 93 percent of local parents had opted for the secular ethics course for their children, the Archbishop of Yekaterinburg and Vekhotursk met with schoolteachers in Kamensk-Uralsky (Sverdlovsk Region), for an "explanatory conversation," and the city administration offered the</p>

	<p>parents another opportunity to choose. In June 2010 the ROC publicly called for an end to what it called "the monopoly of Darwinism" in schools. In July 2009 a group of academics, human rights advocates, and parents began collecting signatures for an appeal to President Medvedev protesting against "clericalization of general schools." In October 2009 at the opening of the Fifth Annual International Conference on Religion, Conflict, and Peace at Saint Petersburg State University, students organized an anticlerical campaign and distributed leaflets. As in past years, some regions offered a course on the history of religion, an initiative that the minister of education suggested but did not introduce nationally. Although the Ministry of Education rejected continuing the publication and dissemination of a controversial textbook that detailed Orthodox Christianity's contribution to the country's culture, some schools continued to use the text. The textbook contained descriptions of some religious groups that members of those groups found objectionable. The Congress of Religious Associations in the Tyumen Region appealed to the governor and the regional department of education to allow input from other religious groups into the religious culture curriculum, claiming that the course contained only the views of the ROC.</p>
SAN MARINO	<p>There are no private religious schools; the school system is public and state-financed. Public schools provide Catholic religious instruction; however, students may choose without penalty not to participate.</p>
SERBIA	<p>Students in primary and secondary schools are required to attend classes either on one of the seven "traditional" religious communities or on civic education. A study commissioned by the Religion Ministry to evaluate the impact of religious education since its introduction in 2001 found that students who opted for religion classes wanted to learn more about their religion (32 percent), were religious (26 percent), were interested in culture and tradition (18 percent), or wanted "to become a better person" (7 percent). The main recommendations of the first phase of the study, which focused on Belgrade, were the need to introduce changes in training programs and to provide greater professional support and assistance to religion teachers. Protestant leaders and NGOs continued to object to the teaching of religion in public schools, while leaders of religious groups excluded from the program continued to express dissatisfaction with the government's narrow definition of religion. The Government Committee for Religious Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools was composed of civil servants from the Religion Ministry and representatives of the seven "traditional" religious communities; there were no representatives of minority religious groups on the committee. NGOs reported that only Orthodox religion classes were offered in multiconfessional Belgrade. The Religion Ministry refuted this claim but explained that there must be a minimum of five students in a grade to justify establishment of a specific religion class. Students and the dean of the Faculty of Islamic Studies in Novi Pazar protested against the Religion Ministry's decision to exclude their university from its yearly competition for student stipends. They claimed that the terms of the competition were discriminatory because they provided preferential treatment to ethnic Serb students from Serbia, Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and other neighboring countries.</p>
SLOVAK REPUBLIC	<p>No official state religion exists; however, because of the number of adherents, Roman Catholicism is considered the dominant religion. A 2001 concordat with the Vatican provides the legal framework for relations between the country's Catholic Church, the government, and the Vatican. Two corollaries deal with priests serving as military chaplains and religious education. A 2002 agreement between the government and 11 other registered religious groups attempts to counterbalance the Vatican agreement and provide equal status to the remaining registered religious groups. A corollary agreement on religious education, identical versions of which were signed with the 11 other registered religious groups, mandates that all public elementary schools require children to take either a religion class or an ethics class, depending on their (or their parents') preference. Despite some concerns, smaller religious groups reiterated that they were generally pleased with the system. According to a corollary to the Vatican concordat, a 2004 law requires public elementary school students to take either a religion or ethics class. Critics claimed that students in some schools, particularly in poor, rural communities, might be denied a choice or were pressured to choose the religion class.</p>
SLOVENIA	<p>At state-licensed schools the law forbids lessons with the goal of educating children in a particular religion and prayer meetings. The government partially finances teachers' salaries at religiously affiliated schools. Licensed schools may not display religious symbols, but students may wear religious symbols. At unlicensed private religious schools, religious lessons generally are mandatory. The government promoted tolerance and antibias education through its programs in primary and secondary schools and made the Holocaust a mandatory topic in the primary and secondary contemporary history curriculum. On September 6, 2009, the Jewish community, supported by local government officials, held the fourth annual European Day of Jewish Culture festival, which the president attended and which received broad media coverage.</p>

<p>SPAIN</p>	<p>In July 2009, the Catalan regional government's director of religious affairs approved a law that sets guidelines for municipalities to provide access to spaces to be used for religious purposes. The law provides for optional Catholic education in public schools. Muslim and Protestant leaders have called for the government to provide more support for public religious education in their respective religions, in accordance with the agreements signed with the government in 1992. In 2004 the government responded by approving legislation that mandates funding for teachers for Catholic, Islamic, Protestant, and Judaic instruction in public schools when at least 10 students request them. The courses are not mandatory. Those students who elect not to take confessional courses are obliged to take an alternative course covering general social, cultural, and religious themes. The development of curriculums and the financing of teachers for religious education, however, is the responsibility of the autonomous communities, with the exception of Andalucía, Aragón, the Basque Country, Las Canarias, Cantabria, and La Rioja, and the two autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla, which under their individual regional statues keeps religious education as the responsibility of the national government. The national entities registered with the MOJ are responsible for the selection of teachers for their particular religion. Either the national Ministry of Education or the regional entity responsible for education certifies teachers' credentials. Teachers must hold teaching degrees, have training in Spanish law, and be fluent in Spanish. During the 2009-10 academic year, the government employed 46 teachers for Islamic religious education and approximately 15,000 teachers for Catholic religious education in public schools. UCIDE estimated that there were 166,192 Muslim students who would take classes in Islamic education if possible. There are no restrictions placed on parents who want to provide their children religious homeschooling or enroll them in private religious schools.</p>
<p>SWEDEN</p>	<p>Religious education covering all world religions is compulsory in public schools. Parents may send their children to independent religious schools (all of which receive government subsidies through the school voucher system), which must adhere to government guidelines on core academic curricula. The governmental Living History Forum promoted national educational programs on the Holocaust, anti-Semitism, and racism. Its educational exhibition, "Sweden and the Holocaust," continued to tour nationwide. The forum started an educational campaign, "Anne Frank & I," in 2006 to target high school students. This campaign continued during the reporting period. The exhibit was scheduled to tour countrywide during 2009-10.</p>
<p>SWITZERLAND</p>	<p>Education policy is set at the cantonal level, but school authorities at the county level wield some discretionary power in its implementation. Most public cantonal schools offered religious education, with the exception of schools in Geneva and Neuchatel. Classes in Catholic and Protestant doctrines are normally offered; some schools also cover other religious groups in the country. Since 2002, two municipalities have offered religious classes in Islamic doctrine in the canton of Lucerne. In some cantons, religious classes are voluntary, while in others they form part of the mandatory curriculum; however, waivers are routinely granted for children whose parents request them. Those of different religious groups are free to attend classes for their own creeds during the class period. Parents may also send their children to private religious schools and to classes offered by religious groups, or they may teach their children at home. A number of cantons have reformed religious education in public schools to either complement or entirely supplant traditional classes in Christian doctrines with non-confessional teachings about religion and culture. In virtually all cantons contemplating or implementing reform, authorities planned to make the non-confessional teachings about religion and culture a non-elective part of the curriculum for all pupils. Regarding waivers on religious grounds from classes other than confessional instruction, there are no national guidelines, and practices vary. Some cantons have issued guidelines not to excuse pupils from swimming or physical education classes. In 2008 the Federal Tribunal reviewed its 1993 ruling regarding exemptions for students from swimming or other physical education classes on religious grounds. The Tribunal's 2008 ruling allows individual cantons to determine when exemptions from swimming lessons are permitted on religious grounds. In order to avoid exemptions from swimming lessons, a number of cantons decided to allow Muslim girls to use a full-coverage swimsuit.</p>
<p>TURKEY</p>	<p>The constitution establishes compulsory religious and moral instruction in public primary and secondary schools, with content determined by the Ministry of National Education's Department of Religious Instruction. Greek Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, and Jewish religious foundations may operate schools under the supervision of the Education Ministry. The curricula of these schools included information unique to the cultures of the three groups. The ministry reportedly verified if the child's father or mother was a Turkish citizen from that minority community before the child may enroll. Other non-Muslim communities may not operate schools of their own. Members of non-Muslim religious communities were exempted legally from compulsory religious and moral instruction in primary and secondary schools. The government claimed that the compulsory instruction covered the range of world religions, but religious groups asserted that the courses reflect Hanafi Sunni Islamic doctrine. A few groups,</p>

	<p>such as Protestants and Syriac Orthodox, faced difficulty obtaining exemptions from the compulsory instruction, particularly if their identification cards did not list a religion other than Islam. Alevi children received the same compulsory religious education as all Muslim students, and many Alevis alleged discrimination in the government's failure to include any of their doctrines or beliefs in religious instruction classes in public schools. A 2007 ECHR decision allowed an Alevi parent to request that his daughter be exempted from her school's compulsory religious education. However, during the reporting period, Alevis had nearly 20 court cases pending against the Ministry of Education alleging discrimination. Materials on Alevis were added to the religious course curriculum after the ECHR decision, but many Alevis believed them to be inadequate and, in some cases, false. The law established eight years of compulsory secular education, after which students may pursue studies at general state schools or vocational high schools, which include imam hatip (Muslim preacher) high schools. Graduates of vocational schools, as well as general state schools, faced an automatic minimal reduction in their university entrance examination grades if they applied for university programs outside their field of high school specialization. This reduction made it more difficult for imam hatip graduates to enroll in university programs other than theology. Most families that enrolled their children in imam hatip schools did so to expose them to more extensive religious education, not to train them as imams. Students were permitted to enroll in summer Qur'an classes provided by the Diyanet after completing the fifth grade (about age 11). Individuals who have completed the eighth grade or reached 16 years of age can attend yearlong Qur'an courses provided by the Diyanet. Unofficial Qur'an courses also existed outside the Diyanet's control.</p>
<p>UKRAINE</p>	<p>While the law restricts the teaching of religion as part of the public school curriculum, a 2005 presidential decree sought to introduce "ethics of faith" training courses into the curriculum. The All-Ukraine Council of Churches and Religious Organizations continued to lobby the government to allow religious organizations to own and operate private educational institutions where, in addition to a secular curriculum, students would learn about religion. On May 15, 2010, the High Accreditation Commission of Ukraine included theology in the list of postgraduate dissertation disciplines as a branch of philosophy. Representatives of major religious denominations welcomed the decision, expressing hope that the government would make further steps toward full recognition of theology as an academic discipline. The Civil Council for Cooperation between the Ministry of Science and Education and Churches and Religious Organizations discussed ways to enhance the ministry's dialogue with religious organizations, adopt legislative amendments, and grant full state recognition to theology as an academic discipline. On May 11, 2010, the parliament adopted legislative amendments increasing penalties for violations of the law on the protection of cultural heritage.</p>
<p>UNITED KINGDOM</p>	<p>No church or religious organization receives direct funding from the government, with the exception of "faith schools." The government provides financial support--up to 90 percent of the total capital costs of the buildings and 100 percent of running costs, including teachers' salaries--to sectarian educational institutions that are commonly referred to as "faith schools." After several controversial court decisions prohibiting full-face veils (but not headscarves) and Christian chastity rings in school, the Department of Education provided guidance that advises schools to "... act reasonably in accommodating religious requirements," under human rights legislation. Some Muslim groups, including the Islamic Human Rights Commission, stated it was inappropriate for the government to provide guidance that regulated Muslim communities in matters concerning the expression of their religious beliefs. However, it is also legally possible under the act, according to the guidance, to have a school uniform policy that "restricts the freedom of pupils to manifest their religion" on the grounds of health and safety and the "protection of the rights and freedoms of others." The government's guidance is meant to remind "head teachers" to act with a degree of sensitivity when considering decisions that would affect the cultural complexion of their communities. At the end of the previous reporting period, more than 30 percent of state schools had a religious character. Nearly all of the approximately 7,000 "faith schools" in England (numbers are not available for Scotland and Wales) are associated with Christian denominations, although there are Jewish, Islamic, Sikh, and one Hindu school. In addition several hundred independent schools of a religious nature receive no state support but must meet government quality standards. Controversy arose in 2006 regarding more than 100 Islamic schools when an Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted) evaluation of these schools showed many were "little more than places where the Qur'an was recited." The schools were given time to correct their deficiencies. A review was due in 2010. As of October 2009, reports from the Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board (MINAB) indicated that there were approximately 2,000 official madrassas in the country.</p> <p>In April 2009 the government mandated that all schools teach sex education ("Personal, Social, and Health Education"), but allowed faith schools to teach their pupils their faiths'</p>

teachings that some aspects of the standard curriculum is wrong. Some Christian schools also faced controversy because they were accused of not following the national curriculum in science, teaching creationism instead. In an Ofsted report published in October 2009, a small number of independent faith schools used teaching materials that "included biased material or provided inaccurate information about other religions."

Almost all schools in Northern Ireland receive state support. More than 90 percent of students attended schools that were either predominantly Protestant (state-run) or Catholic. Integrated schools served approximately 7 percent of school-age children whose families voluntarily chose this option, often after overcoming significant obstacles to provide the resources to start a school and demonstrate its sustainability for three years before government funding begins. Demand for places in integrated schools outweighed the limited number of places available. There were more than 60 integrated schools, and the government permits existing schools to petition to change from state-run or Catholic to integrated status. More schools petition for that status than are granted it.

The law requires religious education for all children, ages three to 19, in publicly maintained schools. In England and Wales, it forms part of the core curriculum in accordance with the 1988 Education Reform Act. In Scotland religious education of some sort is mandated by the 1980 Education Act. However, the shape and content of religious instruction throughout the country is decided on a local basis. Locally agreed syllabuses are required to reflect the predominant place of Christianity while taking into account the teachings and practices of other principal religious groups in the country. Syllabi must be nondenominational and refrain from attempting to convert pupils. Schools with a religious designation follow a syllabus drawn up by the school governors according to the trust deed of the school. All parents have the legal right to request that their children not participate in religious education.

Daily collective prayer or worship of "a wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character" is practiced in schools in England and Wales, a requirement that may be waived for students who obtain permission of the school authorities. The 2006 Education and Inspections Act permits sixth form students (generally 16-to-19-year-olds) to withdraw themselves from worship without their parents' permission or action. This law does not exempt sixth form students from religious education classes. Non-Christian worship is permitted with approval of the authorities. Teachers have the right not to participate in collective worship, without prejudice, unless they work for a faith school. In 2009 the National Union of Teachers called on the government to end the requirement for a collective act of worship, but easing of the requirement had not occurred by the end of the reporting period.

In Bermuda the constitution provides for freedom of religion, and other laws and policies contributed to the generally free practice of religion. The government school curriculum includes religious instruction. The 1996 Education Act allows collective worship by the students but prohibits collective worship at public schools from being "distinctive of any particular religious group." The act also provides for exceptions to the requirement that pupils in public schools engage in collective worship at least once a week. It gives parents the right to request that their children be excused from such worship and, moreover, authorizes such pupils to worship elsewhere at the beginning or end of the school day. Home schooling is an approved alternative to public or private school for religious or other reasons. The government does not fund the teaching of atheism in schools. Representatives of the Jewish community noted on a Web site that bringing up children in a country where Christian prayers are said in both the public and most private schools is a challenge.