



Religious Change at a Time of Recompositions in Europe: Actors, Norms, Values – New Challenges

11–12 September 2025, Bratislava (Slovakia)

Organisers: Slovak Academy of Sciences and Comenius University in Bratislava, in cooperation with the [EUREL network](#)

Argument:

The last five decades have been marked by significant changes in the religious and political life of Europe. The first half of this period was a period of the gradual disintegration of a bipolar Europe divided by the Cold War and the gradual integration of Western European societies into the European Union. The processes of integration of Western Europe were accompanied by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of the communist party regimes in the countries of the socialist camp, regimes formally promoting a materialist and atheist form of state. Whereas in Western Europe there was a gradual secularisation of states and a strengthening of tendencies towards a religiously neutral state, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe fundamentally changed not only their relationship to religion in the public sphere but also the place of religion in the newly emerging conditions of political pluralism.

The countries of Western Europe, already marked since the post-war period by increased migration from within and from outside Europe, have also been confronted since 1990 with increasing migration from several countries of Central and Eastern Europe. On the other hand, the opening up of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to the West also opened up space for new worldviews and religious currents, initially mainly from Western Europe and the USA, and later, under the influence of increasing migration, also from the Middle East and Asia. With these changes, issues such as the rights of religious minorities, religious fundamentalism and the definition of state neutrality have become prominent in political debate and in the case law of national and European courts.

The enlargement of the European Union at the turn of the 21st century was another important factor influencing the religious situation in the countries of the east of Europe. This period was marked not only by increasing migration between EU member states but also by changes in the legislative conditions concerning religious life. Although the European Union does not create a uniform legislative framework for the regulation of religious life in its member states, the gradual integration of the European Union has led to the reciprocal influence of the practices of national states in matters of the state's relationship to different religious groups. The legislation of national states concerning religious life is a very important actor in the interrelations between the various religious and non-religious groups in different countries, but it is also an expression of the state's relations with specific religious groups. At the regional level, the case law of the European Court of Human Rights strikes a balance between the autonomy of national systems and the setting of common standards.

So far, the last major factor affecting religious life in European countries has been several waves of migration to Europe, mainly as a result of military conflicts outside Europe, but also within continental Europe. All these factors affect religious life in different ways in different countries, changing the religious structure of societies and manifesting themselves in

changes in legislation, policies and case law regulating the possibilities of different religious and worldview actors. It also affects political life, with more radical approaches becoming increasingly visible.

All these forms of social, political and religious evolution can lead to two apparently opposing trends: a willingness to adapt to this pluralism and a desire to 'keep' more traditional views. This raises many questions, some of which are pressing matters that we intend to discuss during the conference.

Papers can address any of the following research topics, using approaches from various social sciences (sociology, law, political sciences, etc.):

- Transformations in Europe, transformations of Europe; trends and factors of change in affiliations, worldviews and beliefs: actors, norms, values (over the last half-century).
- The mutual influence of state policies, law, and the lobbying of religious and secular actors to maintain or enhance their place in public life.
- How migration (within the EU but also from outside the EU) and military conflicts affect the religious composition of various societies, the position of diverse religious and secular actors in European countries, and their relationship with state policies and the legal landscape.
- Theoretical choices and methodological challenges in the study of changes in religions and worldviews in Europe from various disciplines (sociology, law, political sciences, etc.).

We invite researchers to submit their proposals, along with their name and position, and a brief biography of up to 50 words. Submissions should be a maximum of 500 words in length. Early-career researchers and PhD students are strongly encouraged to submit a proposal.

Proposals can be submitted via the conference website [Religious change at a time of recompositions in Europe](#).

Contributions can be given in **French or English**. Submissions can be sent in either language. Key dates: **deadline for submission is 30 March 2025**; answer sent to applicants at the end of May 2025.

There are no conference fees. For the smooth running of the conference, presentations will be in person only.

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Organising Committee:

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