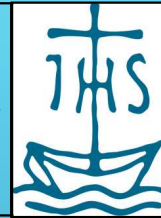




Erasmus+

**IRENE**  
Innovative Religious Education NEtwork:  
educating to the religious diversity

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# ERASMUS+ IRENE PROJECT THE ITALIAN SURVEY

## A SUMMARY



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- ▶ THE BOUNDARY OF THE RESEARCH
- ▶ THE METHOD
- ▶ TWO GROUPS
- ▶ TWO PRECIOUS POINTS OF VIEW
- ▶ CONCLUSIONS

## THE SUMMARY

A RICH SURVEY, ONLY A FEW POINTS

▶ THE NUMBER OF RECEIVERS

$$90 = 18 + 72$$



▶ THE LOCATION

NORTHERN ITALY – RIMINI



# THE RESEARCH BOUNDARY

Nevertheless this small perimeter of the search

**“reflects the religious differentiation of Italian society: 75% of the population still declares themselves Catholic (twenty years ago it was 82%), while is growing the presence of Muslim, Orthodox, Sikh, Buddhist, Hindu religious communities and immigrants from Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa who belong to the many and diverse Neo-Pentecostal churches.”**

**REPORT ON IRENE PROJECT INTERVIEWS/QUESTIONNAIRES: ITALY**

**Prof. Enzo Pace**

## A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF RECEIVERS

### TWO SERIES OF RECEIVERS:

- ▶ 18 theology academic professors
- ▶ 72 individuals among Catholic religion school teachers and/or Catholic educators, i.e. parish catechists, Scout leaders and others

### TWO DIFFERENT WAYS TO ACHIEVE THE ANSWERS:

- ▶ interview
- ▶ google form questionnaire

## THE METHOD

The Theology professors brought their **academic knowledge, a wide approach** to the matter of interreligious dialogue and a **real personal commitment in this problem of crucial importance** in today world.

The teachers in public schools and the educators and group leaders in catholic associations brought their **direct experience with students and young people** and their **practical and creative approach** to a matter which involves **everyday life in the classes** and that they can see first-hand.

**“the most interesting teaching experiments – although they are only a few – are those in which Catholic religion teachers worked together with teachers of other subjects in order to develop a multidisciplinary educational project open to both those who attend and those who do not attend Catholic religion classes and which therefore does not coincide with the institutional perimeter of the religion school class.”**

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**“If the teachers are Theology professors (of either Catholic, Evangelical or Orthodox Theology), their main teaching purposes are presented by their reference institution.**

**If the teachers are (Catholic) religion teachers at school (Group B), they may count with a higher degree of freedom, but at the same time their double belonging – i.e. being trained at institutes controlled by the bishops and being employed by the State – restricts the scope of their training action since its contents have been learnt in a Catholic environment but its purposes are defined by State programmes.”**

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## **2 DIFFERENT GROUPS**

- ▶ “Through the comparison of the two groups we understand that the interviewees widely require training to live up to a religiously changed society which is not mainly Catholic anymore but is layered into different new and old religious expressions.
- ▶ Group A reveals such requirement through the high number of professors that focus their training activity on **ecumenical and interfaith dialogue topics**.
- ▶ Teachers of Group B mainly stay faithful to the institutional rules of engagement with both the Catholic Church and the Italian State, but are also firmly convinced that the widespread religious illiteracy among pupils [...] is connected with the **Catholic socialisation model on one side [...] and the difficulty to put in praxis in class the teaching innovative ideas and projects for religious diversity education on the other.**”

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## **2 DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW**



The survey shows the widespread common belief that dealing with the topic of religious diversity is necessary.

This means – as concerns the academic world – **“investing intellectual and spiritual energies to give theological-practical substance to ecumenical and interfaith dialogue.”**

It means also - for school teacher as for group leaders in Catholic associations - **“aiming at both teaching the fundamentals of a religion and its impact on the culture of a nation and at giving pupils the ground rules in order to know the differences and similarities among the numerous religions represented in society and in the social little world of the school class.”**

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## **CONCLUSIONS**