

FRANCE | UPR43 Stakeholders Report's Summary of Recommendations | April 2023

The legislative framework governing public worship in France was modified in the application of the law consolidating the respect of the principles of the Republic of 24th August, 2021. The law reinforced the obligations of declaration of associations exercising public worship and of financial transparency, in particular with regard to financing from abroad. The law also reinforced penal sanctions and administrative measures against religious communities. To respect freedom of religion, the free exercise of worship and freedom of association, we recommend the following:

- Ensure that new legislation on worship is not restrictive or constraining, is applied harmoniously across the territory of France by departments and prefectures, and with adequate attention to the needs of diaspora religious communities in France.
- Following the jurisprudence of the *Conseil d'État*, ensure that places of worship are considered as places essential to the imperative needs of the population and thus, in the event of emergency health (or security) restrictions, adapt the protocols to the concrete circumstances, in consultation with the representatives of the cults, on a truly representative and broad basis.
- Include anti-religious hatred in the mission of the DILCRAH (Interministerial Delegation for the Fight against Racism, Antisemitism and Anti-LGBT Hatred) to cover offences and discrimination against people of other origins and religions, notably towards Christianity, whether Catholic, Protestant-Evangelical, Orthodox, and towards Islam as well as towards all other religions.
- Ensure that political leaders speak publicly, respectfully and accurately without fuelling anti-religious sentiment, prejudice or stigmatisation of believers or groups of believers.
- Promote the understanding of religious freedom in France by improving the teaching of the religious phenomenon within the national education programs.
- Clarify the notion of the immediate surroundings of public schools or educational establishments to guarantee the legal security of students, parents or third parties for the exercise of the freedom of expression, manifestation and propagation of religious beliefs in relation to article L.141-5-2 of the Education Code.
- Ensure respect for the pluralism of beliefs and opinions by protecting the expression of religious opinions concerning, in particular, human identity, the family, the couple, procreation, and the beginning and the end of life.
- Amend the Public Health Code to include a general conscientious objection clause for all caregivers, particularly in the areas of procreation or the end of life.

Report in French language submitted on 3rd October 2022:

<https://un.worldea.org/france-freedom-of-religion-report-to-the-upr-43rd-session/>

For additional information, please contact:

WEA: Markus Hofer, Communication and Outreach Officer, Geneva Office, World Evangelical Alliance; geneva@worldea.org; <https://un.worldea.org>
World Evangelical Alliance - C/O RES - CP 23 – 1211
Geneva 8 – Switzerland

