About Religare

Religare, “Religious Diversity and Secular Models in Europe: Innovative Approaches to Law and Policy,” is a 3 year EU 7th Framework Program (2010-2013). This project addresses the challenges of religious pluralism in contemporary Europe. It starts from the idea of equality and the ways in which it is challenged by the increasing diversity of religions and other convictions that are transforming Europe into a new type of entity. The focus is on ten target countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. For more information on Religare, see www.religareproject.eu

REGISTRATION
You can register for this Symposium at www.pvthemis.be

The event will take place at the Law Faculty. Places are limited. The entrance fee of 40 euro covers materials, coffee breaks and lunch

If you need travel, hotel or other information, please contact Katayoun Alidadi at katayoun.alidadi@law.kuleuven.be

How has the stance of the European Court of Human Rights on religious freedom in the workplace evolved? How should we assess the hands-off approach by the European court in this area, exemplified by the broad margin of appreciation for states? How does a plaintiff convince the Court that he really is of a particular faith requiring him to observe certain (non-Christian) religious holidays? How do various EU member states and Turkey compare when it comes to the right of public school teachers to wear their religious dress? Considering the high rates of unemployment amongst religious minorities, how should we evaluate the level of accommodation given in the workplace? Since religious liberty also has a negative aspect, what is the right of employees not to be confronted with religious manifestation by the state in the workplace? What is the effect of a perceived proliferation and diversification of (Christian and non-Christian) faith-based companies across the EU? To what extent has the American “Faith at Work” movement affected the European work landscape?

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KATHOLIEKE UNIVERSITEIT
LEUVEN

RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY & THE EUROPEAN WORKPLACE

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM
13 JANUARY 2011
KULeuVEN, BELGIUM
As a potentially powerful element of identity, religion makes its way into the amalgam of European workplaces. In recent years, employees have claimed accommodation of their religious beliefs and practices before the national courts and the European Court of Human Rights. Muslim workers have requested time-off to observe the Islamic Sugar Feast, pious Catholics have sought to wear visible crucifixes with their uniforms, and job seekers have sought to retain state unemployment benefits after refusing positions that contradict with their religious obligations. The issue of public school teachers wearing an Islamic headscarf remains controversial in various states.

Divergent judicial decisions have been reached across Europe, with case law affecting the public perception of religious conflicts in the context of labour relations. Because religious claims potentially conflict with other rights and interests in the workplace, a delicate balance must be stricken between a multitude of factors, perspectives and values. But what can we learn from the experiences in other countries and from comparative analyses?

This symposium, organized at the Law Faculty of the Catholic University of Leuven under the umbrella of FP7 Religare, brings together a number of junior and senior scholars. With a view of adding to the debate concerning the proper scope of religious liberty in the workplace, various questions will be addressed.

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