

6th session of the Forum on Minority Issues

II. Legal framework and key concepts

Permanent Mission of Greece

Thank you, Madame Chair person.

Religious freedom in Greece is ensured in article 13 of the Constitution, as well as in the relevant conventions signed by the country. In article 13, the Constitution protects both freedom of belief and religious freedom. It should be noted that here that the article 13 of the Constitution is a (...) principle of the state and cannot be subject to revision as it protects the current freedom of worship. According to the Greek Constitution, all religious communities can organise freely in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Code for the Unions. In this context, the same legal regime applicable to the Church of Greece has been granted to the Jew community. Special legal status also applies to the (...) since Greece is the only country in Europe where the (...) have legal responsibility for issues of practice of private, personal and family law. Also, to all religious communities in Greece, regardless of their legal personality apply the same provisions regarding the tax treatment. The Government is in the process of dialogue with various religious communities to introduce new legislation which will institutionalise a new category of legal identity, special for religious communities. Greece has voted special legislation regarding the mosque in Athens, the cost of the construction and the salary of the cooperative Iman will be assumed by the Greek state. With regard to the Muslim minority in (...) the Greek government pays its salary of tributes (...) Islam religious teachers. Since 2009 a special quote of places has been defined in all competition of the Supreme Council for the personal selection in the public sector for candidates of the Muslim minority. Schools books have been and continued to (...) reinforce understanding and respect for the different, to enhance interest in other people's beliefs, religion, way of living and thinking. In the context of combating intolerance and discrimination further measures have been taken and implemented in Greek school. More specifically, the ministry of Education and Religious Affairs has not allowed the distribution of any type of leaflets in particular of those creating a negative image or defame any religion, belief or tradition. The Greek state has provided by law in compliance with its commitments at the international law the factional of schools for the children of the Muslim minority in Greece. Also, the possibility is given for the teaching of the subject of religious studies to Roman Catholic people in dialect of (...) by roman Catholic theologians. In this context, of the equal treatment of students and (...) official religious holidays the Greek state has introduced legislation to recognise the religious holidays of the Muslims, Jews, and the Roman Catholic students.

Thank you