
Sweden: Christian Council, “one youth out of two humiliated or hurt because of their faith”

“Young believers in society” is the heading of a report that the Christian Council of Sweden published today and that shows that one young Christian out of two is humiliated or hurt because of their faith, so badly that “many young people do not express their beliefs”. As reported by the Council in a notice, the survey, which was conducted on 393 young Christians from different confessions, stemmed from the fact that on 1st January 2020 the national law implemented the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, that includes the child’s right to have a thorough education and the right to have a religious and cultural identity. “How can such change protect the religious freedom of children and teenagers in Sweden?”, this is the question that the Churches asked themselves. 50% of young people stated they “suffered violations because of their faith”; for one youth out of four, it was a teacher who hurt them. “The report is further proof of the fact that religious freedom in Sweden is not so obvious as we are led to believe”, Antje Jackelén, archbishop of the Church of Sweden, stated. “There is a clear tendency to state that children and teenagers should be raised in a religion-neutral world. Sweden is a secular country but it is not a secular society, it is largely made up of people with religious beliefs”, the Church leaders wrote in the Svenska dagbladet today. “What happens in the long term in a society in which young people are not encouraged to explore their beliefs and do not learn to respect other people’s beliefs?”, wondered Daniel Alm, in charge of free Pentecostal assemblies. “Our survey focussed on young Christians. There’s reason to believe for instance that young Muslims and Jews have had the same experiences or maybe even worse ones”, Anders Arborelius, Cardinal of Stockholm, pointed out.

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