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Article

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Institutionalizing the Relationship between Religious Teaching and Religious Freedom: The Case of the Republic of San Marino

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Abstract: This paper examines the principles of denominational religious teaching in public schools at the background of a broader debate, concerning its compatibility with the standards of freedom of/from religion, by assessing the case of the Republic of San Marino. In doing so, revisions were made to some of the solutions proposed within the framework of international documents, such as the *Toledo Guiding Principles on Teaching about Religions and Beliefs in Public Schools* (OSCE/ODIHR). Among the various solutions, the Toledo document proposes the preparation of an alternative lesson of equal dignity, for those pupils who do not avail themselves of denominational education. The preparation of an alternative lesson is to be followed by a detailed analysis of the regulatory procedure that led to the achievement of this solution in the Republic of San Marino; the procedure entailed setting up a course on “Ethics, culture and society” in public schools for those who do not wish to avail themselves of Catholic religious education. These types of lessons were introduced, experimentally, in the academic year of 2019–2020 and the monitoring of the experiment is currently in progress. Shown, in conclusion, will be how this educational experiment could be a good practice for institutionalizing religious freedom in a small country, in which denominational religious teaching is mandatory.

Keywords: religious freedom; denominational religious teaching; human rights; religion; teaching about religion and beliefs; ethics; culture and society; San Marino Republic



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1. Introduction: Teaching about Religions and Beliefs in a Multicultural Context

The debate on teaching about religions and beliefs in public schools became a highly contested issue in multicultural societies questioning the models of inclusion of various stakeholders in defining possible strategies of dialogue between religions, as well as secular and religious stakeholders (Modood 2014). This debate is closely linked to the subject of freedom of/from religion, as well as to other issues concerning human rights, such as the right to education, the freedom of education of children in accordance with parents' philosophical and religious convictions (Council of Europe 2005), the freedom of teaching by teachers and the freedom of believers to bear witness to their own faith. The subject is articulated and complex and can be examined from various disciplinary perspectives and by taking different cultural sensitivities into account (Porcarelli 2018).

In order to better outline the research question, it is important to pinpoint the many variables that intertwine, when freedom of religion encounters freedom of education, both of which emerge as human rights, solemnly acclaimed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, approved by the UN in 1948, in Articles 18 (freedom of religion) and 26 (freedom of education). Considered, in particular, was the last part of Article 26, which specifies that “Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children”. There are relevant issues concerning: the public role and social function of religious instruction; the possibility of availing oneself, or not, thereof; the institutional and regulatory conditions for safeguarding freedom of religion and the right of education, of both those who avail themselves of it and those who decide not to. Some

general principles to consider about this issue were set forth in a vital document drawn up by a group of experts meeting in Toledo (OSCE/ODIHR 2007); the resulting document is the *Toledo Guiding Principles on Teaching about Religions and Beliefs in Public Schools*, prepared by the ODIHR Advisory Council of Experts on Freedom of Religion and Belief. The document emphasizes the important role of teaching about religions and beliefs in supporting reciprocal knowledge among people of different faiths and cultures, thus aiding in overcoming stereotypes and discrimination, in view of a more peaceful, respectful co-existence. Also posed is the problem of the methods for teaching about religions being able to fully respect the human rights and freedom of religion of all students. There is an open debate on this subject, between those who think that only a historic-comparative approach is effectively neutral (AAR 2010; Pagano 2006) and those who think that a denominational-type lesson, but of a cultural, not catechistical nature, can also be neutral (Bianchi 2010; Cicatelli 2015; Porcarelli 2022), although not necessarily everyone sees it that way. In any case, the fifth guiding principle indicated in the Toledo document makes a clear statement about this possible situation as well:

Where a compulsory program involving teaching about religions and beliefs is not sufficiently objective, efforts should be made to revise it to make it more balanced and impartial, but where this is not possible, or cannot be accomplished immediately, recognizing opt-out rights may be a satisfactory solution for parents and pupils, provided that the opt-out arrangements are structured in a sensitive and non-discriminatory way (OSCE/ODIHR 2007, p. 16).

This paper focuses on the public policies provided for alternative solutions for those who choose not to avail themselves of a denominational lesson on religion, as occurs in some countries, such as Italy. As concerns the Teaching of the Catholic religion in Italy, the issue is quite complex (Silhol 2021; Porcarelli 2022) and different theories are dealt with (Giorda 2009; Giorda and Saggioro 2011). The solution arrived at is not easy to manage, as it provides—for those who do not avail themselves of the lesson on religion—for four different types of proposals, some of which have educational value¹, others (such as the possibility of leaving school) absolutely not. While there are studies providing a comparative analysis of the situation in other countries (Fancourt 2022) and others offering a comprehensive panorama of the situation in Europe (Genre and Pajer 2005; Pajer 2017), it was found relevant to study the specific case of the Republic of San Marino.

The selection of this case is not random. It shows noteworthy institutional analogies with the Republic of Italy (the lesson on the Catholic religion based on an agreement, which can be declined), but in which a more linear solution could be drawn up for those who do not avail themselves of this lesson. The disciplinary perspective assumed in this paper is that of pedagogy and, from a methodological viewpoint, a pedagogical analysis will be performed on some institutional and legislative choices, taking the Republic of San Marino as a case study. The research question is whether the choice of establishing an alternative teaching to that of Catholic religion (IRC)—clearly defined and with its own specific programmes—is more suitable to protect the religious freedom of all parties involved, compared to other possible solutions.

At the time this paper is being presented, there has yet to be any monitoring of the experiment started up in 2019 (an experiment expected to be concluded in 2023), so there are no consolidated, empirical data and the focus will be on the analysis of the institutional choices and regulatory documentation produced by the authorities of the Republic of San Marino.

2. The Choice of Establishing an Alternative to the Teaching of the Catholic Religion in the Republic of San Marino

The school system of the Republic of San Marino is structured with strong similarities to that of its neighbour, the Republic of Italy, which represents the natural way out for many Sammarinese citizens. The Teaching of the Catholic Religion is regulated by an agreement between the Holy See and the Republic of San Marino² and is concretely implemented

through an Accord between the Republic and the Bishop of the Diocese of San Marino-Montefeltro³. The Teaching of the Catholic Religion, as specified in the Accord, “is of a purely cultural nature” and provides for an evaluation of the students’ progress; in any case, it is possible to choose whether or not to avail oneself of this particular lesson. The general regulatory framework abides by the guidelines found in the *Toledo Guiding Principles*, but the question of an educational offer for those who do not avail themselves of the lessons remains open.

The political path of the measure, being dealt with herein, began with a Guideline dated 22 February 2017, when the *Consiglio Grande e Generale*⁴, after having rejected the *istanze d’arengo*⁵ that called for the abolition of the hour of religion and the setting up of a secular lesson as an alternative to that of the lesson on the Catholic religion, approved an agenda, in which the government was called on to spare no efforts in going beyond the institution of an exemption and setting up an alternative lesson. Among the items reported in this Guideline⁶ is that of “starting up specific provisions so that those students, who opt for exemption from religious lessons, as far as pertains to their evaluation and in case of a calculation of the average of their school marks for accessing a scholarship, are not left at a disadvantage” (*Consiglio Grande e Generale* 2017, p. 2). The intention of the legislators was to overcome a discriminatory condition, in which there were those who decided not to avail themselves of the Teaching of the Catholic Religion, as they held no equivalent teaching or assessment.

The political process triggered by the approval of the *istanza d’arengo* then overlapped the path of overall renewal of the Sammarinese curricular guidelines, which represented an innovative moment compared to the pre-existing programmes; the pedagogical system aligned with the logic of competency-based learning. During the early months of 2019, after the adoption at first reading of the Law, which will be discussed below, the process aimed at drawing up a draft of the *curricular guidelines* for “Ethics, culture and society” (ECS) was started up; this process involved a workgroup, coordinated by the author hereof, who provided for the inclusion of representation of the teachers. Hence, the final adoption of Law no. 96 of 6 June 2019 was reached, entitled, “Setting up the lesson on *Ethics, culture and society*”. The lesson thereof was introduced starting from school year 2019–2020 and was explicitly linked to the exercise of some fundamental freedoms, insofar as “students are allowed to exercise the right of availing themselves of this lesson in alternative to the ‘Catholic Religion’, in observance of individual freedom of conscience and educational responsibility of parents” (Art. 1). At the same time, the *Consiglio di Dipartimento Istruzione*⁷ was given the task of drawing up a proposal of *curricular guidelines* for this lesson for academic year 2018/2019. The Law also indicates a policy line for outlining the *Competency Goals* at which to aim, that is:

- The in-depth study of the fundamental values of the human experience and civil coexistence, by means of comparison and intercultural dialogue;
- The construction of the meaning of legality and the development of an ethic of responsibility;
- The maturation of the awareness that human beings have not only rights recognised by national and international documents, but also corresponding duties to be fulfilled. (Art. 2, para. 2 of said Law).

The analysis of the regulatory text reveals the intention of legislators to propose an alternative lesson of equal cultural dignity to that of the Catholic Religion; while not constituting historic-religious teaching, also as a political choice, specialist teachers with specific training were not to be designated—at least not in this first experimental phase; regular classroom teachers were to be assigned this task, beginning with teachers who have hours available in their work schedule. The subjects identified in said Law referred to issues of philosophical and legal value found in the field of respect for human rights, the foundations of ethically relevant choices and personal and social responsibility as citizens. Of interest, too, is the reference to intercultural dialogue, which—in perspective—could

also include interreligious dialogue (Porcarelli 2022), but which, herein, is mainly linked to the needs of civil and peaceful coexistence. The choice of a lesson in alternative to religion that is oriented toward matters of ethics and citizenship has been confirmed in various European countries (Catterin 2013; Pajer 2017), such as Germany, for example, where one is given the possibility of choosing among Catholic denominational, Evangelical denominational or non-denominational lessons on matters of ethics and citizenship. Of particular interest within the objectives of this work is the teaching of “Life Design—Ethics—Religion Studies”, which is set up as a non-denominational lesson (in this case aimed at all students) and achieved in Brandenburg (Kenngott 2017).

3. Pedagogical Identity of the Discipline Concerning “Ethics, Culture and Society”

Analysing the identity and educational value of a school discipline can be considered a topic that falls within the field of *Social Pedagogy* (Porcarelli 2021) and, more specifically, in *Scholastic Pedagogy*. It contributes to defining the social mandate of an institution (a school) with an educational-type mission, that is, that of educating through teaching. In this case a warning factor is added, because the educational mandate that the legislature is ascribing to this specific lesson is linked to the protection of human rights, respect for religious freedom and the capacity to promote attitudes of respect, tolerance and intercultural dialogue.

The curricular guidelines for the discipline on “Ethics, culture and society” are adopted experimentally through Delegated Decree no. 144 of 19 September 2019⁸. The lesson is identified by three keywords (ethics, culture, society), the first of which is meant to state the essentials of the entire discipline, as is clearly revealed by reading the *Ragioni formative* (*Educational reasons*) for the lesson, which we find in the curricular guidelines:

The discipline of “Ethics, culture and society” has arisen from the choice made by the Republic of San Marino to provide knowledge about ethical topics, also to students who do not avail themselves of the Teaching of the Catholic Religion. Therefore, the new discipline has been developed on plans of a universal nature that leave aside denominational-type choices and also take into account some international orientations in this direction. Coexisting in the culture, in which we live, are diverse ethical views and frameworks of values that can be quite different. Precisely for this reason, it is important to scrutinise, with the students, the relationship between ethics, culture and society, in order to provide them, gradually and age-based, with those individual and social competencies, which allow them to progressively develop a critical way of thinking about such delicate topics and adopt consequent behaviours (Consiglio Grande e Generale 2019, p. 1).

The cultural background referred to is that of ethical and cultural pluralism, which, pedagogically speaking, is placed on the horizon of intercultural education (Keast 2007; Guetta 2016; Moscato 2020), in which the *Ragioni formative* for this lesson acquire meaning. They outline a space of articulated, complex thought, which takes into account some applications linked to the horizons of meaning of the individual path of each student, as well as far-reaching social and cultural issues. The first of these *Ragioni formative* identifies a path towards wellbeing and self-awareness, in order to outline a scenario inspired by both the famous Socratic imperative (*know yourself*) and the intuition of Aristotle, so the ethical issues are “related to the natural desire of every human being to achieve happiness” (Consiglio Grande e Generale 2019, p. 2). The natural development of this first area is the one indicated in the expression, *The time for choices*, in which the necessity to develop criteria and strategies for making conscious choices (in an age-appropriate manner) is emphasised considering universally recognised human values. The core of the *Ragioni formative* for the discipline is set forth by the paragraph indicating the mental environment, in which the lesson (*Being responsible for oneself and others*) is being taught and its broad disciplinary structure is formed (see the *Ragioni formative*).

Ethical topics are often linked to the idea of responsibility in the etymological sense of knowing how “to account for” one’s choices towards oneself and others, who, in turn, may have justifiable expectations towards us and be held account-

able for what they do. Responsibility towards oneself is tied to the awareness of one's actions and decisions and their consequences, as related, also, to the steady creation of one's self-image and life plan. Responsibility towards others is tied to both the commitments that each person may assume being accountable for and, consequently, honour them, and the awareness that individual actions have consequences on the lives of everyone (Consiglio Grande e Generale 2019, p. 3).

If it is true that the ethical dimension (*Responsibility towards oneself*) represents the beating heart of this discipline, it is likewise true that the other two terms completing the title are not purely ornamental, but rather emphasise how the ethical dimension does not concern solely the individual sphere, but also encompasses the interpersonal and social dimension. This is why one speaks of *responsibility towards others*, as well as *responsibility towards the world*, referring not only to the environmental issue, but also to responsibility of a theoretical and culture nature. To know how to live in the here and now, typified by a many-faceted complexity, which Bauman (2000) identified through the image of *liquid modernity*, "it is essential that children and young people gradually acquire a method for understanding the reality and development of the context, in which they live, so as to identify some of its cultural trends, defend themselves against stereotypes and prejudices, and cautiously navigate around the world of online information and social platforms" (Consiglio Grande e Generale 2019, p. 3).

The curricular guidelines for "Ethics, culture and society" wind along the scholastic path, starting from elementary school⁹; the main educational goal is identified for each school level, hereby linking the goal to the educational intention of the particular level. Elementary school "helps consolidate personal identity, hereby placing children in a condition to peacefully experience the various facets of self, feeling reassured in their actions and learning to know themselves and be recognised by others as unique beings" (Consiglio Grande e Generale 2019, p. 4). The first step along the educational path, which is of an ethical nature, consists of strengthening one's personal identity, recognising oneself as a unique being, in order to also recognise others as such, trust them, offer and ask for help and become capable of generous gestures. A young, middle-school boy goes through a difficult age of preadolescence, which also means significant bodily changes that impact as much the representation of self as relations with others and their emotional life. Family relations evolve and relationships between peers become increasingly relevant, so that it is just as important that this be achieved as are the hoped for curricular guidelines; therefore, "young people become increasingly aware of their own choices, even if they risk allowing themselves to be compliantly led by the need to feel accepted by the group or the trends of the moment" (Consiglio Grande e Generale 2019, p. 7). Awareness of one's own choices is also and especially important in relation to the orientation purposes that typify middle school (Moscato 2013), at the conclusion of which the students are required to choose their course of study, which already places them in the perspective of a life plan. Even more complex are the educational aims that the lessons, such as those on "Ethics, culture and society", can have for young people in secondary schools, as clearly expressed in the *curricular guidelines*:

In secondary school, young people are eagerly open to increasingly broader horizons; they delve independently into relationships outside the family circle and begin to explore various contexts of life and socialisation. Adolescence is also the age in which each person sets out new horizons of meaning, sometimes challenging reference points acquired in the household or in educational environments experienced during childhood. Young people also experience friendships and emotional relationships that can be quite intense, and during which they put themselves at stake and mature significant aspects of their own identities, in addition to weighing up important choices concerning the authenticity, with which they relate to allegiance to themselves and others, and loyalty and correctness in attitudes and behaviours. All these are very significant variables from

an ethical point of view and on which it might be timely to dwell in educational terms ([Consiglio Grande e Generale 2019](#), pp. 9–10).

The biographical trajectories that secondary school students go through in search of their adult identity may differ considerably. Some young people grow in linear continuity, with horizons of meaning, in which they were raised within their families and cultures, while others clearly separate themselves from it and attempt to explore other paths and horizons. The attitude of the teachers towards these biographic trajectories is always to be embodied by a vast openness to dialogue. The lesson on “Ethics, culture and society” may offer useful cultural tools for developing these biographical trajectories; this is paradigmatically expressed by one of the Competency Goals foreseen in secondary schools, so that a young person “deals with the education they receive and progressively reshapes their horizons of meaning, until a conscious framework of reference values is identified, by means of which they can direct their choices. The young person identifies the key points of the decision-making processes and gets accustomed to making their own decisions, consciously and responsibly, keeping a critical mind and autonomy of judgement” ([Consiglio Grande e Generale 2019](#), p. 10). In this kind of school, one can still find full development and the educational potential of the third area of competences provided by this lesson (*Responsibility towards the world*), hereby facing the great demands concerning the globalised world, intercultural perspective, interreligious dialogue and the complex dynamisms of the working world, until one arrives at the specificity of *knowledge societies*.

4. Conclusions

Can the establishment of the lesson on of ECS be considered a significant contribution towards institutionalising one of the conditions for exercising freedom of/from religion, in a country, where there is denominational religious teaching? A possible reply to this question has been attempted herein, after describing the institutional characteristics of the lesson on ECS.

An initial consideration can begin with the cultural and political debate, which arose in the Sammarinese context, and by taking into account the prior institutional situation. The Republic of San Marino provides for the Teaching of the Catholic Religion (*Insegnamento della Religione Cattolica*) (IRC in Italian) of a cultural nature, through inter-institutional governance between civil and Church authorities; it is regulated by an Agreement, the features of which are currently quite similar to the Agreement between the Republic of Italy and the Holy See. However, the latter Agreement followed a parallel, independent procedure, clearly described by [Fabbri \(2018\)](#), with the abolition of this lesson, through the Decree of 3 August 1909, its reintroduction through Law no. 32 of 1963 (starting from middle school) and the possibility—starting from 1975¹⁰—of requesting exemption from this lesson, without the need to give reasons for the request.

In San Marino, on 2 April 1992, an Agreement was signed between the Republic of San Marino and the Holy See, which does not explicitly deal with the Teaching of the Catholic Religion; however, in 1994, it was the focus of an Agreement between the Department of Education and the Diocese of San Marino-Montefeltro. This Agreement was frequently revised, until reaching the Agreement of 26 June 2018 between the Republic of San Marino and the Holy See, after which the Accord between the Secretary of State and the Diocese was signed on 28 March 2019. At the end of this long process, the form assumed for the Teaching of the Catholic Religion was that of a cultural-type lesson, which Sammarinese schools were offering through teachers appointed by the Church authorities. This lesson involved an assessment for those who avail themselves of it, as well as the possibility of requesting exemption.

The *istanze d'arengo* presented in 2015, which were commented on above, proposed the abolition of the Teaching of the Catholic Religion and its replacement with a non-denominational lesson. Apart from the understandable desire to protect those who did not intend to avail themselves of the IRC, the above-mentioned petitions were set in a clearly secular perspective ([Sistach 2019](#)) and put at risk the religious freedom of most of

the Sammarinese population that, in any case, has continued to choose this lesson. The setting up of the lesson on “Ethics, Culture and Society” rectified a double discrimination that continued to the detriment of those who did not avail themselves of the Teaching of the Catholic Religion. In the first place, all students were offered the possibility of having the same number of disciplines evaluated, while before there were those who had one less evaluation, that is, students who did not attend IRC lessons. In the second place, an equivalent educational offer was created, so that also those who did not avail themselves of the IRC had the possibility of receiving a specific education on ethics and value-based topics, with a view to *life-deep learning* that is an integral part of quality education (Bélanger 2016). This way the choice of not availing oneself of the IRC can be accomplished with the utmost tranquillity and full conviction that there will not be—for children and young people—any kind of discrimination or “detriment” of an educational or evaluative nature. In line with what is stated in the *Toledo Guiding Principles* (OSCE/ODIHR 2007), this can be considered one of the conditions for the full exercise of freedom of religion or belief.

This reflection can be concluded by endeavouring to identify possible further lines of development of the lesson on ECS; to complete the elaboration of this thinking, it is appropriate to wait for the results of the monitoring still in progress, but, in this phase, nothing prohibits drawing up interim hypotheses. An initial hypothesis, certainly very linear and clearly defined from a cultural perspective (Giorda and Saggioro 2011), might be to foresee a non-denominational-type lesson, which would be positioned within the discipline of the sciences of religions, to be proposed to those who do not avail themselves of the IRC.

This proposal would present advantages on a cultural plane, because it would be a greater equivalence between the two lessons. In both cases, the lessons would be in the field of religious culture, hereby simultaneously altering the approach to the ethical-value-base dimension. In the case study presented here, this solution, which some of the teachers involved in teaching ECS also presaged and who opened up in informal talks, might present some organizational difficulties and structural challenges.

In fact, technically, it would be a matter of establishing a new subject certification for teachers of religious sciences. Certified teachers would be appointed to teach a class of one hour per week. It is important to note that this lesson would only take place, in cases of there being students who do not avail themselves of the IRC. However, without having reliable forecasts—from year to year—of the number of classes, in which this lesson could be activated, it is difficult to include it in the curricula. This type of solution might be easier to manage in a larger-sized country (such as Italy), but it appears more complicated for a small country, such as the Republic of San Marino, which has a population of about 30,000.

So, one suggestion could be the evolution of the proposal in continuity with the current one, that is, a lesson of a non-denominational nature with a philosophical and cultural inclination (rather than historic-religious), that would be carried out by classroom teachers. An assessment would be made of the specific preparation of each teacher and significant account would be taken of the educational needs expressed by the students. In order to draw up a working hypothesis, cultural-type considerations would be taken into account: for example, the field of social sciences has seen a transition from the paradigm of *secularisation* to *pluralism* (Berger 2014). So, we can assume that, in the future, there will be a transition from a simple “binary” model (either the Catholic Religion or ECS) to a “plural” model, with a “dialogic”-type system, which takes into account the current multicultural context (Wang 2013; Zonne-Gätjens 2022).

Diana Eck, professor at Harvard University, proposes the perspective of *religious pluralism*¹¹, inviting to overcome exclusion and assimilation. Pluralism is “the engagement of our differences in the creation of a common society” (Eck and Randall 2018, p. 49). Pluralism is not diversity alone, but the energetic engagement with diversity, active seeking of understanding across lines of difference, based on dialogue. It is a topic that, in the Italian pedagogical literature, is clarified in the field of intercultural education (Salvarani 2006; Giusti 2017). Religious pluralism is not only a civic response to an increasingly

multi-ethnic and multi-religious society, but also has theological foundations, which are different in different religious perspectives (Eck 2007). It is necessary to take into account the theological perspectives on which the different religions base *interreligious / interfaith dialogue* (Neufeldt 2011; Patel et al. 2018; Admirand 2019).

The hypothesis is a “dialogic” management of teaching religion and the alternative thereto, with the possible opening to other representative interlocutors of religious communities present in the country. Points of reference for this hypothesis are some considerations of Thorsten Knauth (2007), whereby “the model of a cooperative denominational religious education is an expression of a specific religious-pedagogical approach to religious and cultural plurality” (p. 254). The model not only provides for denominational lessons, whether Catholic or Protestant (or, in alternative, a non-denominational lesson of an ethical and civic nature), but also interdenominational workgroups open to all religions present in the country.

In order to apply this model to a Sammarinese cultural context, in which there are no organised religious presences of a consistent number to be compared to that of the Catholic religion, inspiration can be drawn from a solution presaged for Italy (where the socio-religious situation is quite similar), that is, a “host IRC” (Porcarelli 2022; Macale 2020). This hypothesis is based on the developments in Catholic theology, regarding interreligious dialogue, since the Second Vatican Council: today the Catholic Church believes that other religions can be a means to salvation and help Catholics deepen their faith (Fuss 2006, 2012). This is why one can conceive of the IRC opening up to accepting some participations of other religious communities present in the country (Muslim, Jewish, etc.). Such moments of encounter (but also culturally significant moments) could be shared as much with the students who avail themselves of the IRC as with those who opt for the lesson on ECS. Programmes could be provided in preparation of those moments, during which students will be able to participate with the teachers of religion and ECS.

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Notes

- ¹ There are four possible options in Italy for those who do not avail themselves of IRC: (1) alternative lessons approved by the individual schools, (2) individual study with the aid of teachers, (3) individual, non-aided study, (4) leaving the school (Cicatelli 2015; Porcarelli 2022).
- ² The most recent agreement was signed on 26 June 2018 and revived, confirmed and updated the agreement signed on 2 April 1992. For an accurate analysis of the Sammarinese regulations on the subject of the Teaching of the Catholic Religion, please see the Fabbri (2018).
- ³ The one currently in forces is the “Accord between the Secretary of State for Education and the Diocese of San Marino-Montefeltro pertaining to the Teaching of the Catholic Religion in schools in the Republic of San Marino”, signed on 27 March 2019.
- ⁴ The *Consiglio Grande e Generale* is a representative body made up of 60 members elected by direct universal suffrage, whose responsibilities—in the Republic of San Marino—include legislative powers, determination of the political direction and the exercise of supervisory functions. As the *Consiglio Grande e Generale* is the official name of the body, it is left in Italian in the text. In English, the name translates into Great and General Council.
- ⁵ The expression “*istanza d'arengo*”, in the legal structure of the Republic of San Marino, is intended to mean the presentation, by citizens, of “petitions on topics of public interest”; such a petition can be freely presented by any citizen, at six-month intervals (the first Sunday after 1 October and the first Sunday after 1 April). The term *Arengo* refers to the name of the first form of

government of the Republic of San Marino, a public body that developed in about the year 1000, which originally indicated the meeting of all heads of family. Having steadily evolved over the course of the centuries, its role is now absorbed into the functions of the *Consiglio Grande e Generale*, while the name has remained to indicate the petitions (or requests) of public interest, which citizens present directly to the Council.

- 6 This document expresses a political orientation, aimed at initiating the path that will lead to the establishment of an alternative teaching to that of the Catholic Religion.
- 7 In the Republic of San Marino, the *Consiglio di Dipartimento Istruzione*, i.e., Education Department, carries out the functions of what is commonly known as the Ministry of Education.
- 8 The document cited is: *Consiglio Grande e Generale* (2019); the page numbers indicated in the citations refer to the document in .pdf format attached to the Decree in question.
- 9 Teaching of the Catholic Religion as a specific discipline is not foreseen in pre-schools, hence, neither is the alternative teaching, "Ethics, culture and society".
- 10 Law no. 40 of 29 October 1975.
- 11 Diana Eck is the creator of the Pluralism Project. For more information see the website: www.pluralism.org (accessed on 14 May 2023).

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