

How Europe defines the "good god". The European Union' strategies to advocate freedom of religion and belief and to counter radicalization" « GOODGOD »

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Researcher :
François Foret

Abstract

The European Union (EU) has recently emerged as a significant player to promote freedom of religion and belief (FoRB) in its external policy and to build a coordinated approach of counter-radicalization (CR) in internal affairs.

On both issues, public authorities at all levels of governance are led to define a "good religion" congruent with democratic and social norms to be protected and a "bad religion" that must be kept under control. The EU is no exception even if it has no direct competencies on FoRB as well as on CR and meets its usual difficulties to deal with value-loaded issues.

The purpose of GOODGOD is to explain the reasons, modalities and effects of this new role of European institutions and arenas; and what it says about the contemporary recombination between the member states and the EU on one hand; between politics and religion on the other hand. The main hypothesis is that what happens at the level of the EU reflects and adapts slightly societal and political trends at work at national level: the 'securitization of religion', managed as a risk factor; its 'culturalization', as a mere symbolic resource to assert the legitimacy of public institutions and collective identity.

Overall, it would mean that the EU has a limited transformative influence and is in the continuity of national secularisms and secularization.

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