

**Evangelical Religious Education in Spain— Ana Calvo Tello (FEREDE)****Report submitted to the:****INTEREUROPEAN COMMISSION  
ON CHURCH AND SCHOOL - ICCS-  
December 2015****1. Introduction and legal framework of Religious Education in Spain:**

The Spanish Constitution of 1978 established Spain as a pluralistic democracy and, as such, represented a major change in the traditional attitudes of the State towards religion. Religious freedom and religious equality henceforth have been recognized as basic rights, the free exercise of which are purportedly guaranteed in the broadest sense; subject only to those restrictions laid down by laws to maintain public order and protect the fundamental rights of others.

The Constitution, in Article 27, states the guarantee of the exercise of freedom in the matter of Religious Education:

*The public authorities guarantee the right of parents to ensure that their children receive religious and moral instruction that is in accordance with their own convictions.*

**Religious Education** (*Enseñanza Religiosa*) in Spain is carried out from a confessional stand point. There are four major religious confessions in Spain recognized by the government: Catholic, Protestant or Evangelical, Jewish and Muslim confessions.

In 1979 the State agreed to include Catholic religious studies as part of the base curriculum in all educational centers and across all grade levels. In 1992, the Government created the Cooperation Agreements with the remaining three minority confessions. This marked a significant moment in Spanish history, especially as it



occurred exactly 500 years after the expulsions of Jews and Muslims by the Catholic Kings, Isabel and Fernando.

The Cooperation Agreements of 1992 (Law 24/1992) created the first avenue for true religious freedom in Spain. For the Evangelical Confession, the formal agreements were reached with the Federation of Evangelical Religious Entities of Spain (FEREDE) and are listed below:

Religious Education is developed in Article 10 which states the following:

*In compliance of article 27 of the Constitution concerning the right to education (:::) the pupils, their parents and the school governing entities shall be entitled, at their request, to exercise the right of these pupils to receive Evangelical religious education at the preschool, primary and secondary level in both public schools and state-subsidized private schools, provided this is not in contradiction with the ideological nature of the private school in question.*

## **2. Schools and students and of Evangelical Religious Education in public schools:**

*Public schools and state-subsidized private schools, as referred to in this article, shall provide a suitable premises for dispensing the religious education to which pupils are entitled by law, without detriment to academic activities. (Article 10.4)*

Although it is difficult to say with precision, and data is very difficult to find, we estimate that there are approximately 9 million young people enrolled in non-university level education. 3.5 million students are believed to be enrolled in catholic education, 12.000 students are enrolled in Muslim religious education, 12.300 in Evangelical religious education and none are enrolled in Jewish religious education (The Jewish confession utilizes their own private schools and have not exercised this government granted right in the Cooperation Agreements of 1992).

Currently there are approximately 650 public schools providing Evangelical religious education with roughly 14.000 students taking the Evangelical religious course.

Each period of Evangelical religious educations utilizes 45 minutes, with sessions twice weekly. While the Evangelical Religious Education course is “optional”, the students receive grades that count towards their overall GPA. Students can also choose the “Alternative” course option, which focuses on ethics and citizenship and is offered for families that do not desire a religious-content course.

## **3. Teachers of Evangelical Religious Education**

*Evangelical religious education shall be dispensed by teachers appointed by the Churches belonging to the Federation of*



*Evangelical Religious Entities of Spain, in keeping with the agreement of FREDE (Article 10.2).*

There are, in total, 234 Evangelical religious teachers nationally in Spain, serving across 650 schools. Evangelical religious teachers must meet all the requirements necessary in other subject areas in addition to holding a certificate of Religious Studies through completion of coursework provided by FERERE. Furthermore, these teachers must be members of a FERERE member church in order to comply with the Cooperation Agreements.

The certificate in Religious Studies is a theological and pedagogical course that all Evangelical teachers are required to have. The course equips prospective teachers with the theological and biblical knowledge based on the mainstream beliefs and teachings of Protestant Christianity common to all Protestant denominations.

There are two study tracks depending on the prospective teacher's university degree, but the main track has the following courses:

<b>Credits ( 60 ECTS)</b>			
<b>First Semester</b>		<b>Second Semester</b>	
<i>Personality Development</i>	4	<i>Church History</i>	3
<i>Teaching methodology</i>	4	<i>New and Old Testament Survey</i>	3
<i>Society, family and education</i>	4	<i>Christian Ethics</i>	4
<i>The mission of the ERE teacher</i>	3	<i>Teaching the ERE curriculum</i>	4
<i>Teaching Evangelical Religious Education</i>	4	<i>Research and innovation in the classroom</i>	3
<i>Systematic Theology</i>	4	<i>Final thesis</i>	8
<i>Biblical Hermeneutics</i>	4		
<i>Practicum</i>			8
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>

(\*)1 credit ECTS =25 hours of work.

We are in the process of seeking to have our theological course accredited by the Spanish Government following in the path of the Protestant Seminaries in Spain, which had their university degrees recognized by the government beginning in 2006. Our goal is to have our course accredited in 2016.

This is in accordance with article 10.5 that states the following:

*“The churches belonging to the Federation of Evangelical Religious Entities of Spain may organize religious teaching courses at public universities, using the premises and resources they dispose of to this end, with the agreement of the academic authorities”.*

**Curricula and books:**

*“The contents of Evangelical religious education and the corresponding textbooks shall be set by the respective communities, with the agreement of the Federation of Evangelical Religious Entities of Spain”.*

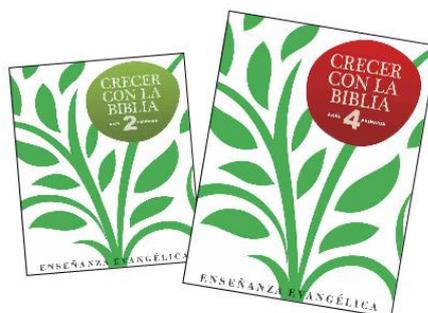
The FEREDE has developed a curriculum for Kindergarten, Primary, Secondary and Pre-university level (last two years of high school education). The contents have been approved by all the evangelical denominations of the Federation and the last update of the curriculums has been published by the Ministry of Education of Spain in 2015.

The curriculums follow the following table of contents:

CORE THEMES	<i>Kindergarten</i>	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Pre-University secondary education</i>
<b>Bible</b>	Creation Bible People of God	Bible The world God created People of God	Bible History of the Old Testament	Bible Hermeneutics. God and human beings. History of the people of Israel
<b>Jesus</b>	Jesus	Jesus	Jesus	Jesus
<b>Church History</b>			History of Christianity	Church History
<b>Christian life</b>	Family Relationship with God Christian life	Family God loves us	Being a christian Christian Ethics	Christian Ethics Christianity and culture

In addition, a collection of books for Primary education was published by FEREDE 4 years ago. This ambitious endeavor was completed thanks to the collaboration of many teachers, and a pedagogical team, and it has the approval of all the denominations of the Federation.

The name of the collection is Crecer con la Biblia (Growing up with the Bible). There are six books in the collection covering the six years of primary education.





#### **4. Reformation project initiative:**

Our department would like to join the European project that celebrates the 500 year anniversary of the Reformation. We are brainstorming ideas, projects, materials, possible day-trips, etc. to commemorate this important date in the Christian history that needs to be remembered in our country.