Research on Religion, Crucial for Europe’s Societies:
Perspectives on Europe’s Next Framework Programme (FP 9)
from the LERU Universities

14 May 2018, Brussels

Venue: Mission of Switzerland to the European Union, Place du Luxembourg 1, 1050 Brussels

Religion is a crucial factor for societal integration within Europe and research on religion is thus a natural element to be included in the FP 9. Its significance for societal integration holds true both for individual societies and states as for Europe as a whole. The need for increased, scientific knowledge in this realm is self-evident.

Research on Theology and Religious Studies is currently parochialized in Europe according to its different political systems and their cultural and historical backgrounds. In order to define common grounds and areas of contacts, FP 9 should include incentives to develop a bottom-up driven integration of the different academic approaches to religion within Europe. This multi-faceted integration will remain pluralistic in nature and should enforce developments that arise of the different European traditions and institutions in the field of Theology and Religious Studies themselves.

Bringing Theology and Religious Studies in Europe together will have an impact not only on the integration of academic studies, but will also enforce societal integration with respect to different religious traditions in Europe itself.

Europe thus could become a forerunner on a global scale in developing an integrated academic approach to different religions in order to activate and implement their potentials regarding societal integration and cultural cohesion.

Developing FP 9 should take into account the crucial role of religions and their academic studies for Europe’s successful political, cultural and societal future.

The LERU Theology and Religious Studies group will take initiatives in that regard, but the success of such initiatives will depend upon the support by FP 9.
Programme:

11.00  Prof. Kurt Deketelaere, Secretary General of LERU (Leuven): Welcome

11.15  Prof. Reiner Anselm (Munich) and Prof. Konrad Schmid (Zurich): Introduction

11.30  Prof. Patrick Pasture (Leuven): Project Presentation “The H2020 RETOPEA project: Imagining religious toleration and peace, or how can we help teenagers learning from history?”.

12.00  Lunch

12.30  Karen Marie Sø Leth-Nissen, Researcher (Copenhagen): Project Presentation “Alternative rural futures: Developing a project for H2020 from a practical theology perspective”.

13.00  Prof. Petri Luomanen (Helsinki): Presentation: “Questionnaire on ongoing and future research projects in theology and religious studies within LERU universities”

13.30  Q&A, followed by general discussion

14.30  End