



## SCIENTIFIC FINAL REPORT

Regnr Östersjöstiftelsen: 30/13

Project manager: Jørgen Straarup

Project title: Cultural and religious diversity in primary school (CARDIPS)

### 1. Purpose of the project

Using pupils' experience of cultural and religious diversity in school as a point of departure, this project's aim is to ...

(1) describe the bearing of a number of structural factors on that experience (national, local, historical, pedagogical, cultural, religious factors); to

(2) describe how variation in age and family tradition affects pupils' experience of cultural and religious diversity in school; to

(3) compare how pupils' experience and its contingent factors differ in three countries along the shores of the Baltic Sea; and to

(4) develop tools for teaching about diversity in intercultural teacher education.

### 2. The three most important results of the project and what conclusions can be drawn from them

I. Primary school teaching in religion is deeply ingrained in national, cultural, and religious traditions of Estonia and Sweden. The countries historical development and the roles played by Christian churches (Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, Baptist and Pentecostal) in recent centuries set their mark on the religious and cultural thinking of the two countries. In recent years, migration of primarily Muslims have added an element to the primary school situation which has not been fully integrated into the thinking of parents, teachers, and students. In the Estonian case, there has been a longer history of Muslim Tatars. This has not been dealt with in the project.

—> Not only is there a need for pedagogical understanding of the extent to which national background affects the teaching of religion, but also an understanding of the extent to which religious education is a part of nation building.

II. Primary school students approach the theme *religion* with varying degrees of estrangement, and thus carefulness in Estonia and Sweden. Because of the long-term movement away from confessional teaching of religion in both countries, there is a general lack of language and conceptual structure for grasping the phenomenon of religion among students, and to a certain degree, teachers. Theological terms such as “salvation”, “atonement”, “sin”, etc. tend not to be understood among students. That fact generates a curiosity for religious traditions and terms, especially if religious differences are present in the students' classroom.



—> Students have varying knowledge of religion, which does not hinder a vivid interest in religious differences, especially those represented in their own classroom.

III. Primary school classrooms in Estonia and Sweden with diversity in the religious composition of the students tend to minimize the importance of religious differences. To the degree that students follow outlines of an ongoing political discussion on religion they realize that religion is a contested area. They tend not to want that fact to create conflict in their own classroom.

—> In their local setting, students tend to be careful not to stress the importance of cultural and religious differences. Instead, they tend to attempt to reduce the effects of differences for friendships and comradeship.

### **3. The project's contribution to the international research frontline**

The project's contribution to the international research frontline consists of two parts.

(I) The first part is a detailed description of factors behind religious education in primary school in the two countries Estonia and Sweden. Helped by this detailed description of the situation in which religious education takes place there is a possibility to extract general conclusions of the importance of such factors as the country's particular religious history, linked to its political (historical) development. The differences between Estonia and Sweden stand out as important in this respect: Sweden as a relatively stable country for two centuries or more, with a Lutheran state church up until the third millennium, Estonia with a political history of political change, from one kind of secularism (state atheism) to another (liberal secularism), but also with a long term presence of an Orthodox church in a predominantly Lutheran country. Sweden's national curriculum for religious studies serves as an instrument which allows for a comparison of classrooms across the country. In Estonia, the subject is taught as a part of other school subjects, or an elective subject in some schools.

(II) The second part is a theoretical discussion of the importance of those varying factors when it comes to religious education in primary school. Beside the national and historical factors mentioned, the project discusses local, pedagogical, cultural, and religious factors. These theoretical discussions are tools for an analysis of religious education in (mostly) European countries, since the factors characterizing Estonia and Sweden are present in other (European) countries as well, albeit in varying compositions and degrees.

### **4. New research questions that the project has led to**

The project has led to a possibility for investigation and understanding primary school teaching of and learning about religion in Northern Europe from a platform of already established results from Estonia and Sweden. In these countries, basic factors for religious studies have been established. From that vantage point the investigation of and comparison with other countries in the Northern part of Europa call for attention: How is cultural and religious diversity in primary school managed in countries such as Finland, Russia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Denmark, Norway.



Given the development of the countries in Northern Europe in the direction of a less positive view of diversity (cultural and religious), the consequences of this value change within primary school call for an investigation with research questions such as: Which are the consequences for primary school teaching and learning of the countries movement away from a positive view of cultural and religious diversity? To what degree is teaching religious studies in primary school expected to participate in creating a national narrative or myth?

## **5. The contribution of the research to the knowledge of the Baltic Sea Region and Eastern Europe**

The Southern shore of the Baltic Sea has been focused in the project, along with Sweden representing the Northern shore. A number of attempts to compare primary school in these two countries with Finland have been carried out, and during the project, there has been intense communication and cooperation with Finnish colleagues. Attempts at cooperating with Russian, Belarussian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Polish colleagues did not result in actual research work, whereas collaboration with German, Danish, and Norwegian researchers resulted in conference presentations and articles.

The knowledge resulting from the project is thus primarily on Estonia and Sweden, i.e. commonalities and differences between the two countries.

## **6. Dissemination of the results of the project within and outside the research community**

### **Monographs**

Berglund, Jenny. 2015. *Publicly Funded Islamic Education in Europe and the United States*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.  
<http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2015/04/islamic-education-berglund/final-web-pdf.pdf>

Berglund, Jenny. 2017. *Education Policy – a Swedish Success Story?: Integration of Newly Arrived Students into the Swedish School System*. Berlin, DE: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.  
<http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id/ipa/13259.pdf>

Straarup, Jørgen. 2017. *Diversity in Estonian and Swedish Primary School, a Pilot Study. Working Paper*. 2017:1. Huddinge, SE: Södertörn University.  
<http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:sh:diva-33501>

Straarup, Jørgen. 2017. *Values Related to Religion in Estonia and Sweden, 2011. Unpublished*. Huddinge, SE: Södertörn University.

Vikdahl, Linda. 2018. *Det kommer inte på tal: en studie om religiös och kulturell mångfald i grundskolan*. Skellefteå, SE: Artos Academic.

Jahnke, Fredrik. 2021. *Toleransens altare och undvikandets hänsynsfullhet [Elektronisk resurs] Religion och meningsskapande bland svenska grundskoleelever*. Huddinge, SE: Södertörns högskola. <http://sh.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1529779/FULLTEXT01>



## Articles

- Berglund, Jenny. 2013. "Swedish Religion Education - Objective but Marinated in Lutheran Protestantism?" *Temenos* 49(2):165–184.  
<https://journal.fi/temenos/article/view/9545/13974>
- Straarup, Jørgen. 2013. "Från outsourcing till 'insourcing': Trosundervisningen i Svenska kyrkan under 1900-talet." P. 47–56 in Vol. 2013, *Kyrkohistorisk årskrift, 0085-2619*. Uppsala, SE: Svenska kyrkohistoriska föreningen. <http://sh.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A687154&dswid=2021>
- Berglund, Jenny. 2014. "An Ethnographic Eye on Religion in Everyday Life." *British Journal of Religious Education* 36(1):39–52. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2013.820167>
- Kallioniemi, Arto, Olga Schihalejev, Saila Poulter, and Arniika Kuusisto. 2017. "Virolaisten ja suomalaisten nuorten käsityksiä uskonnonopetuksesta koulussa." *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* (1):34–46.
- Kallioniemi, Arto, Olga Schihalejev, Arniika Kuusisto, and Saila Poulter. 2018. "Estonian and Finnish Pupils' Experiences of Religious Issues and Views on the Place of Religion in School." *Religion & Education* 45(1):73–88.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15507394.2017.1355176>
- Schihalejev, Olga. 2018. "Ten-Year-Olds in Estonia and Sweden Draw What Makes Them Happy: A Research Story." *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 23(4):401–411.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1364436X.2018.1536649>
- Vikdahl, Linda. 2019. "A Lot Is at Stake. On the Possibilities for Religion-Related Dialog in a School, in Sweden [Elektronisk Resurs]." *Religion & Education* 46(1):81–100.  
<https://sh.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1301666/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Vikdahl, Linda, and Geir Skeie. 2019. "Possibilities and Limitations of Religion-Related Dialog in Schools: Conclusion and Discussion of Findings from the ReDi Project [Elektronisk Resurs]." *Religion & Education* 46(1):115–129. <http://sh.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1301356/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Schihalejev, Olga, Arniika Kuusisto, Linda Vikdahl, and Arto Kallioniemi. 2020. "Religion and Children's Perceptions of Bullying in Multicultural Schools in Estonia, Finland and Sweden." *Journal of Beliefs and Values* 41(3):371–384.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13617672.2019.1686732>
- Vikdahl, Linda, Olga Schihalejev, Arto Kallioniemi, and Arniika Kuusisto. 2021. "Religious Socialization among Youth in Sweden, Estonia and Finland." Ongoing.

## Textbooks

- Berglund, Jenny. 2013. "Islamic Education in Sweden." in *Islamic education in secular societies: in cooperation with Sedef Sertkan and Zsófia Windisch*, edited by E. Aslan and M. Rausch. New York, NY: Peter Lang Edition.
- Berglund, Jenny. 2014. "Keeping the Faith: Reflections on Religious Nurture among Young British Sikhs." in *Religion, education and society*, edited by E. Arweck and R. Jackson. London, UK: Routledge.
- Schihalejev, Olga. 2014. "Young People's Attitudes to Religious Diversity: Quantitative Approaches from Social Psychology and Empirical Theology." in *Religion, education and society*, edited by E. Arweck and R. Jackson. London, UK: Routledge.



- Straarup, Jørgen. 2014. "Belief in God, Jesus and Afterlife, West and East of the Gulf of Bothnia." P. 279—317 in *Религия, religio и религиозность в региональном и глобальном измерении, СВЕЧА [Svecha]*, edited by E. И. Аринин. Vladimir, RU: Vladimir State University, ВлГУ.
- Schihalejev, Olga. 2015. "Shifting Borders in Religious Education in Estonia." P. 85—104 in *Crossings and crosses: borders, educations, and religions in northern Europe*, edited by J. Berglund, T. Lundén, and P. Strandbrink. Boston, MA: De Gruyter.
- Straarup, Jørgen. 2015. "Virtual Religious Communities — Old Wine in New Wineskins?" P. 121—138 in *Global Community?: Transnational and Transdisciplinary Exchanges*, edited by H. Enroth and D. Brommesson. London, UK: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Berglund, Jenny. 2016. "Islamic Religious Education in Muslim Schools: A Translation of Islam to the Swedish School System." P. 109—121 in *Religious education in a global-local world*. Cham, DE: Springer International Publishing.
- Berglund, Jenny, Yafa Shanneik, and Brian Bocking. 2016. "Introduction." P. 1—10 in *Religious education in a global-local world*. Cham, DE: Springer International Publishing.
- Berglund, Jenny, Yafa Shanneik, and Brian Bocking, eds. 2016. *Religious Education in a Global-Local World*. Cham, DE: Springer International Publishing.
- Straarup, Jørgen. 2016. "Kristendom och annan religion i Hortlax och Nykarleby." P. 22—27 in *Lika som bär? Det religiösa landskapet i Hortlax och Nykarleby, Bottniska studier 0560-2416 & 0473-8063*. Umeå, SE & Vasa, FI: Kungl. Skytteanska Samfundet & Svensk-Österbottniska Samfundet.
- Straarup, Jørgen. 2016. "Sociologiska svar." P. 100—119 in *Varför finns religion?*, edited by D. Thurffjell. Stockholm, SE: Molin & Sorgenfrei Förlag.
- Straarup, Jørgen. 2016. "Trosuppfattningar." P. 99—143 in *Lika som bär? Det religiösa landskapet i Hortlax och Nykarleby, Bottniska studier 0560-2416 & 0473-8063*. Umeå, SE & Vasa, FI: Kungl. Skytteanska Samfundet & Svensk-Österbottniska Samfundet.
- Vikdahl, Linda. 2017. "Medborgarskap, rättigheter och demokrati: om delaktighet i kyrkans kulturarv för personer med utvecklingsstörning." P. 133—147 in *Mellan himmel och jord: Svenska kyrkans kulturarv inför framtiden, Forskning för kyrkan, 1652-8581*, edited by G. Gunner and M. Södling. Stockholm, SE: Verbum.
- Berglund, Jenny, ed. 2018. *European Perspectives on Islamic Education and Public Schooling*. Sheffield, UK: Equinox.
- Kuusisto, Arniika, Jørgen Straarup, Olga Schihalejev, Arto Kallioniemi, and Linda Vikdahl. 2018. "Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives to Studying Religious and Cultural Diversity in Finnish, Swedish and Estonian Comprehensive Schools." P. 31—45 in *New international studies on religions and dialogue in education, Research on Religious and Spiritual Education*, edited by M. Ubani. Münster, DE: Waxmann.
- Nilsson, Staffan. 2018. "Det oförutsägbara klassrummet – utmaningar och möjligheter." P. 109—129 in *Interkulturell religionsdidaktik: utmaningar och möjligheter*, edited by O. Franck and P. Thalén. Lund, SE: Studentlitteratur.
- Nilsson, Staffan. 2020. "Majoritetskulturella föreställningar om religion." P. 37—67 in *Perspektiv på interkulturalitet, Södertörn Studies in Education*, edited by H. Hill. Huddinge, SE: Södertörns högskola.
- Straarup, Jørgen. 2021. "12. Migranternas religiösa mötesplatser – en teoriprövning." P. 208—224 in *Socialt arbete i ett mångkulturellt Sverige – migrationens bidrag till folkhemmet*, edited by A. Hajighasemi and J. Straarup. Stockholm, SE: Liber.



Sorgenfrei, Simon, David Thurffjell, Lovisa Bergdahl, Martin Bergkvist, Jenny Berglund, Karin Borevi, Yassin Ehdahl, David Gunnarsson, Magnus Hagevi, Arniika Kuusisto, Göran Larsson, Martha Middlemiss Lé Mon, Margarita Mondaca, Staffan Nilsson, Magdalena Nordin, Chato Rasoal, Amir Rostami, Farhan Sarwar, Göran Ståhle, Peder Thalén, Linda Vikdahl, Noomi Weinryb, Malin Wieslander, Jenny Yourstone, Maria Zackariasson, Kavot Zillen, and Karin Åström. 2021. *Mångreligiositet och sekularitet i svenskt polisväsende, vård, skola och offentlig förvaltning – en forskningsöversikt [Elektronisk resurs]. IMS rapportserie*. 1. Huddinge, SE: Institutet för forskning om mångreligiositet och sekularitet. <http://sh.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1529479/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

## Popular science publications

Straarup, Jørgen. 2020. "Såsom på bio." P. 325–336 in *Kvinnligt religiöst ledarskap: en vänbok till Gunilla Gunner*. Vol. 10, *Södertörn studies on religion*, edited by S. Sorgenfrei and D. Thurffjell. Huddinge, SE: Södertörns högskola.

Vikdahl, Linda. 2020. "I väntan på nådens år." P. 229–239 in *Kvinnligt religiöst ledarskap: en vänbok till Gunilla Gunner, Södertörn Studies on Religion*, edited by S. Sorgenfrei and D. Thurffjell. Huddinge, SE: Södertörns högskola.

## Conferences (most important in boldface)

Fredrik Jahnke

2016: European association for the study of Religions (EASR), Helsinki Finland. Paper title: *Swedish school children' talk about religious diversity – methodological considerations*

2016: "Religions and Worldviews in Education" The European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (Earli) - SIG 19 -, Siegen Tyskland. Paper title: *Swedish school children's talk about religious diversity.*

2017: European association for the study of Religions (EASR), Leuven Belgien. Paper title: *Are children and young people religious literate?*

2018: **European association for the study of Religions** (EASR), Bern Schweiz. Paper title: *Religion and meaning. How Swedish pupils in religiously diverse schools talks about religion.*

2019: Nordic Conference on Religious Education (NCRE), Trondheim, Norway. Paper title: *Safe space and religious literacy in a Swedish context.*

Olga Schihalejev

2014: The conference "Holy crap -intersections of the popular and the sacred in youth cultures", Helsinki Finland. Paper title: *Secular youth in Estonia and they sacred world*

2014: 19th Session of the International Seminar on Religious Education and Values (ISREV), York England. Paper title: *Who benefits from Religious Education in Estonia?*

2015: The conference "Religion and Dialogue in Europe: New research projects in the area of Education and Society, Klingenthal France. Paper title: *The structure and rationale of the research project CARDIPS.*

2016: The International Seminar on Religious Education and Values, XX session "Values, Human Rights and Religious Education", Chicago U. S. A. Paper title: *What makes you happy? Drawings of 10-years old children in Estonia and Sweden.*

2016: **The conference "Freedom of Religion or Belief in Situations of Crisis"**, Tallin Estonia. Paper title: *Religion in the school context: Freedom from or of religion?*



Jørgen Straarup

2014: "Change and Continuity – Religion, State, Civil Society", The 22nd Nordic Conference for Sociology of Religion (NCSR): Copenhagen Denmark. Paper title: *The role of religion in civil society*.

2014: "Identities, cultures and world views: Religious and spiritual education in pluralistic settings" (EARLI SIG 19), Helsinki Finland. Paper title: *Cultural and religious diversity in primary school*.

2015: "**Religion and dialogue in Europe. New research projects in the area of education and society**". Klingenthal France. Paper title: *Importance of religion according to primary school students aged 10, 13 and 16: the problem of reliability*.

2015: 16th Biennial EARLI Conference for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI 2015). Limassol Cyprus. Paper title: *Pupils' views of cultural and religious diversity in a pluralistic educational context*.

2015: "**Shifting borders in Religious Education**" XIII Nordic Conference on Religious Education (NCRE). Tartu Estonia. Paper title: *Religious Judgment Test as an Indicator of Religious Development; Test Construction, Validity and Empirical Findings*.

2017: "**Communicating Religion**" (EASR). Leuven Belgium. Paper title: *Baltic differences in reception of instruction in religious studies, or Methodological deliberations when comparing Sweden, Estonia and West Bengal*.

2018: The 24th Nordic Conference in the Sociology of Religion (NCSR), Oslo Norway. Paper title: *Values related to religion in Estonia and Sweden, 2011*.

Linda Vikdahl

2018: International Conference on Sociology of Religion (ICSR), Toronto Canada. No paper.