

PART ONE: Patterns of Change

Syllabus Objectives	<p><i>Knowledge</i> § recognise the changing pattern of religious belief in Ireland today and set this pattern in a European context</p> <p><i>Understanding</i> § have an understanding of the diversity of belief in contemporary Ireland</p> <p><i>Skills</i> § identify evidence of religious belief in ancient and contemporary Ireland § recognise changing patterns in religious belief in Ireland and Europe</p> <p><i>Attitudes</i> § appreciation of and respect for the variety of religious traditions and secular movements which exist in Ireland today</p>
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Topic 1.1 Patterns of change in religious belief

Procedure

Introduction - patterns of religious belief in Ireland today; the European pattern of religious belief; Higher Level - secularisation and secularism; Higher Level - new forms of religion in Ireland - an overview of religious movements new to Ireland

Research: The changing pattern of religious belief in Ireland.

e.g. Recent Irish research:

- Tuohy, D. and Cairns, P. (2000) *Youth 2K: Threat or Promise to a Religious Culture* Dublin: Marino Institute of Education, documents the type of meaning systems young people have in Ireland today, highlighting their religious and spiritual culture.
- Greeley, A. and Ward, C. (2000), 'How 'Secularised' Is the Ireland We Live In?' *Doctrine and Life* 50 pp.581-617, reports on the authors' research in Ireland, conducted in conjunction with the International Social Survey Programme and administered in 25 other countries. They conclude that the Irish continue to believe in God, in life after death and attend weekly worship at the highest rates in Europe. While the youngest age group (born in the 1970s) is more likely to reject God and religious affiliation the overwhelming majority of this age group, they find, do not share that rejection.

Take feedback and conclude with reference to the need for an appreciation and respect for the variety of religious traditions and secular movements which exist in Ireland today.

The changing pattern of religious belief, especially among young people in the locality and in Ireland as a whole

Assignments:

Conduct research locally replicating some of the questions asked in the national and international research projects referred to above.

Assessment Questions

1. Outline three ways that young people's practice of religious belief in Ireland today differs from that of their grandparents.
2. Identify the main trends in religious belief and practice in contemporary Europe.

Outcomes

As a result of studying this section, students should be able to:

- § identify the main trends in religious belief and practice in Ireland today

- § identify the patterns of religious belief and practice among young people in the locality and in Ireland as a whole
- § establish whether there is a difference between the patterns found locally and the patterns found nationally
- § identify the main trends of religious belief and practice in contemporary Europe
- § Higher Level - explain the difference between secularisation and secularism, and give a contemporary example of each
- § Higher Level - name a religious movement new to Ireland and give a brief description of it under the following headings: central beliefs; forms of worship; moral codes.

Resources which teachers have suggested include:

- § Cassidy, E. ed. (2002) *Measuring Ireland: Discerning Values and Beliefs* Dublin: Veritas
- § A number of the articles in this book investigate the reality of secularisation in Ireland and compare belief patterns with other European countries.
- § Finnegan, J. (1997) 'Post modern Spiritualities and the Return to Magic: A Theological Reflection' *Milltown Studies* 39 pp.5-26.
- § *LOGOS: Communities of Faith in Ireland Today* (Dublin: Mater Dei Institute of Education, 2002) is a CD Rom using Irish examples only of four major world religions, to open students to the diversity of belief, worship and lifestyle in contemporary Ireland.
- § Central Statistics Office website to see changing patterns of religious affiliation expressed in various census results.