

UPF Lisbon, Portugal Protects Cultural and Religious Heritage of Minority Groups

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Lisbon, Portugal -- The Universal Peace Federation (UPF) Portugal has been involved in the **PROSECUW Project** since its first participation on December 21, 2022, at the invitation of Ambassador for Peace, **Prof. Paulo Oliveira**, from the Lusophone University of Lisbon. The most recent participation was through their other partnership with the Municipality of Odivelas (also our partner), on April 17, 2023. The two main representatives in Portugal, Prof. Paulo Oliveira (Lusophone Observatory of Economical Activities - OLAE) as General Coordinator, and **Prof. Paulo Mendes Pinto** (Science of Religions) as Scientific Coordinator, were present for both events.

The PROSECUW Project (Protecting and Securing Places of Worship) and Protecting Sacred Sites and Cultural Heritage of Minority Groups in Crisis Situations through Law, is a collaborative effort between various institutions and organizations in Europe and beyond to protect religious and cultural heritage in times of crisis (Developing a Comprehensive and Adequate Legal Framework Within and Outside the European Union). The project is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation program and involves partners from countries such as Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Spain, and the United Kingdom. The project also involves various entities such as universities, research centers, NGOs, and government agencies (such as Criminal Investigation Police) and works with the religious communities within the countries.



The PROSECUW Project is essential in protecting the cultural and religious heritage of minority groups in crisis situations, including discrimination and/or persecution of any kind or by any group or institution (including state), vandalism or terrorism. In times of conflict, the destruction of places of worship, cultural heritage, and religious objects is often used as a tool of war to erode the identity of minority

groups. The project aims to develop a comprehensive and adequate legal framework to protect religious and cultural heritage both within and outside the European Union. This legal framework will serve as a tool for governments, institutions and organizations to prevent the destruction of religious and cultural heritage during crisis situations, promoting social cohesion, and safeguarding the rights of minority groups.



The participation of the Universal Peace Federation Portugal, as an Interfaith Organization in this PROSECUW Project, is of the utmost importance to help protect the cultural and religious heritage of all minority groups (including those in Portugal). Along with the testimonies of representatives (many of them already our friends and some also Ambassadors for Peace) of almost 20 invited religious communities, UPF PT also had the opportunity to denounce the current and flagrant persecution of the Unification Church in Japan, as well as the fragilities of a better acceptance of this religious entity in Portugal, where it is completely legalized and rooted.

"The Divinity of Oneness" Documentary is a documentary that explores the concept of oneness, the interconnectivity of all things and how this idea is expressed in different religions and cultures. The documentary features interviews with various religious leaders, scholars and experts, including Prof. Paulo Oliveira and Prof. Paulo Mendes Pinto. The documentary serves as a complement to the PROSECUW Project, as it promotes a message of unity, tolerance and respect for diversity, values that are essential in protecting the cultural and religious heritage of minority groups.

[PROSECUW Website](#)



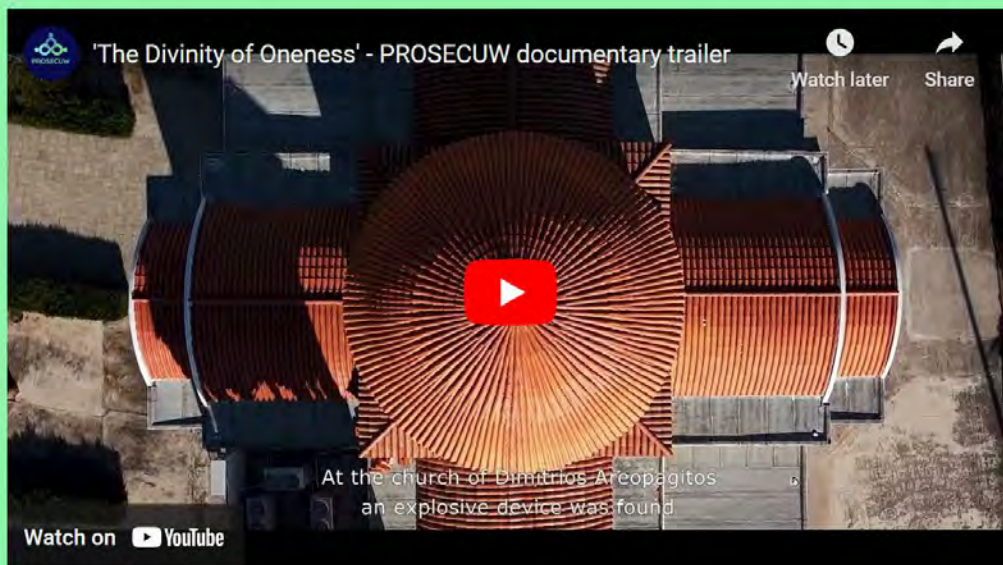
Protect and Secure Worship



Welcome to the PROSECUW

Protection and Security for Places of Worship project. This innovative project, funded by the Internal Security Fund Police (ISFP) of the European Commission, aims to enhance protection at places of worship in European countries, by setting up cooperation between public authorities, religious leaders, civil society actors, and the local communities, by developing their capacity to counteract radicalization and hate-speech.

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