

# Position of the Hindu Forum of Belgium on reforming the system for recognizing and financing of religions

The Hindu Forum of Belgium supports the principle enshrined in the Belgium Constitution that religions being a positive contribution to society should be supported by the State like many other aspects of society are also supported.

We strongly believe that religion and spirituality have both an individual and a collective dimension. At the individual level, everyone has the right to practice their chosen faith, a right enshrined in the Belgian Constitution and in international documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, and the European Convention on Human Rights. On a collective level, faith communities and non confessional philosophies come together in shared worship, practice, and celebration of festivals, whether in temples, mosques, churches, or synagogues, etc. Both these aspects—individual and collective—need to be protected and supported, just as in politics both the individual dimension (voting) and the collective dimension (political parties) need to be protected and supported by the state.

Yet the present system of recognition and financing of religions needs an urgent reform to make it more transparent, egalitarian, fair and representative of today's religious demographics. The risk of not reforming the present day system is that the principle itself of support for religions and Non Confessional Philosophies may be removed from the Belgian Constitution and thus relegate religion to the private sphere.

## Abstract

We support the principle of state support for religions enshrined in the Belgian constitution. However, the system urgently needs reform. We advocate for a transparent recognition process and a fair financial system.

Supporting religions is positive, but the current system lacks transparency and needs urgent change. There's a risk that religions may be relegated to the private sphere. Instead, input from religions, scholars, and others should be sought to address the flaws in the system