

Young People Increasingly Interested in Spirituality

An international research group presented their findings on youth, values, and religion in Rome last month. The study is being carried out by the “Footprints” research group from the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross (Rome) and seven other universities around the world.

05/02/2024

The survey was conducted in November and December 2023 in eight countries: Argentina, Brazil, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Philippines, Spain, and the United Kingdom. The sample consisted of 4,889 young people between 18 and 29 years of age.

The survey found that there has been an increase in interest in spirituality among young people worldwide, particularly in countries like Kenya, Philippines, and Brazil, where 82% to 92% of young people identify as "believers."

In nations in the process of secularization, such as Spain and Italy, believers live their faith with deep conviction. 60% of the young Catholic Spaniards and Italians surveyed said that attending Mass and receiving the Eucharist are fundamental aspects of their lives.

Mexico and Argentina occupy an intermediate position regarding religious beliefs, with results similar to those in Spain and Italy. Mexico stands out with 71% believers, followed by Argentina, with 51%. When asked how frequently they attend Mass, respondents in these two countries showed less regularity (39% and 61%, respectively).

In the United Kingdom, 48% of the surveyed young people identify as believers, and among the believers 88% say they pray several times a week.

The majority of young believers (76%) perceive the Church as an institution that contributes to the good of society.

Other results from the study on spirituality among young people:

When asked about social issues, a significant portion of the sample

condemned political corruption (94% among believers, 85% among non-believers) and ecological issues (93% among believers, 85% among non-believers). Catholics, members of other religions, and atheists are equally opposed to the death penalty and the justification of war.

There is also a great convergence in opposing the legalization of prostitution (70%).

Young people who identify as "atheists" or "agnostics" express an interest in life after death and a desire to understand suffering.

In Kenya and the Philippines, 70% of the young people who declare themselves non-believers nevertheless consider prayer an important aspect of their lives.

In summary, the Footprints research group's first study offers pertinent information about young people and

their religious convictions, with concrete data and levels of nuance. The international scope of the project allows for filtering and comparison between countries.

More information about the study and the survey results can be found [here](#).

Footprints. Young People: Expectations, Ideals, Beliefs

Footprints. Young People: Expectations, Ideals, Beliefs is an interdisciplinary international research group at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, initiated in 2022, meant to listen to young people in order to better understand their values, expectations, and hopes through surveys and discussion groups.

The first phase is dedicated to religion, faith, and values.

Subsequent phases will have to do with work and relationships.

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