

Explanatory notes on the approach used for the research

Over the last year the Catholic Biblical Federation has promoted an international sociological research programme to assess the relationship between the adult population of several countries and the Scriptures, aiming at investigating the aspects of this relationship among Christians who regularly attend Church services.

The research examined those behaviours – and related orientations – that lead people to approach the Scriptures, as well as other sociologically relevant behaviours and orientations, in order to carefully study the connection between the two.

Of course, the research also held in due account the status of the respondents. As mentioned, the survey was conducted by the Catholic Biblical Federation, presided over by Mgr Vincenzo Paglia, Bishop of Terni Narni Amelia, under the supervision of Professor Luca Diotallevi of Rome TRE University, who directed the working group together with Dr. Arianna Trettel. The group was composed of Professor Fr. Luca Bressan, Dr. Serena Cicchina, Dr. Roberta Ricci and the researchers of the Gfk Eurisko Institute of Rome, Dr. Antonella Mannetti and Dr. Paola Cortellessa. The research is now in course of completion.

The data was collected in the following locations:

- 9 countries in the boreal hemisphere: United States of America, United Kingdom, Germany, Holland, France, Poland, (“European”) Russia, Spain and Italy;
- 4 areas of Italy (the three major cities and Region Umbria);
- 5 countries in the austral hemisphere: Argentina, Philippines and Hong Kong, Kenya and South Africa.

The data and the outcome of the analysis are available for all the locations except for the two African countries (Kenya and South Africa). The information concerning these two countries is in the process of being evaluated and processed.

In every case the survey was conducted on a representative sample of adult population and on a subsample of people who stated they take part in Church services “at least two/three times a month”.

The latter group was selected also having regard to the variety of religious situations. In countries with a sizeable Catholic presence, the survey focused primarily on those who, according to the previous statement, declared that they were “practising” Christians.

In the case of Great Britain, the respondents were selected among people who stated they took part at least twice a month in the Anglican or Presbyterian Mass, or in the celebrations of other Churches belonging to the “historical Protestant” denominations. In the case of “European” Russia, the respondents were selected among practicing Christians who stated they belong to the “Orthodox” Church.

In all cases the information was collected by telephone interviews on sample groups selected by gender, age and demographic size of the municipality of residence, which were further examined with regard to their qualification at a later stage. The average duration of the interview was 10 minutes per 40 questions, regularly translated into the different languages. All translations were checked from a theological point of view.