



Back to Europe movement

Acts 16,9

**During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia
standing and begging him,
“Come over to Macedonia and help us.”**

“I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call on my name, I said, ‘Here am I, here am I.’

Isaiah 65,1

‘Sir,’ the servant said, ‘what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.’ Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full.

Luke 14,22-23

1. "Back to Europe Movement" – Connecting people for Europe.

Back to Europe (B2E) is an international ministry, networking with others to help develop a process of mobilizing the Church around the world to reach Europe with the gospel.

The Vision is to motivate and assist the European and the Global Church to work together to see the Kingdom of God manifested in the Europe of today and of the future.

It started with the TORREMOLINOS CONSULTATION

In May 2009 leaders from different parts of the world involved in holistic missional work in Europe met in Torremolinos (Málaga, Spain) to discuss the need for co-operation and mobilization of the global church to again reach the continent of Europe of our days with the gospel of Jesus. Key expression during this meeting was: A renewed Macedonian Call. The statement resulting from the meeting has become the Mission Statement and basis to work from for the Back to Europe movement.

Now, when we talk about “movement”, we do not pretend that the movement is created by us or by any human organization. What we see is a God given momentum! We observe that God is rising up a dynamic mission movement in the global south which has been growing for several years now. So we only try to “ride on God’s wave”, promoting and encouraging what is already on the move and pointing to the specific needs of Europe.

Our current Coordinating Committee:

Jesus Londoño, Granada, Spain;
Samuel Cueva, London, GB;
Thomas Milk, Herne, Germany;

2. Why Europe? Why now?

The overall picture of Europe is extremely diverse and there are many different aspects to be considered if you try to understand this continent. From our point of view, four facts highlight in particular the European missiological situation of our time:

○ **Statistics**

With only 2.3%, Europe has the lowest number of evangelicals of all continents.

It is a widely accepted fact that Europe has become a mission field (See att. 1). But this is not only an issue of numbers and statistics. Mission in Europe has to deal with the problems of Post-Christian attitudes and an institutionalized nominalism.

As Europe is „now the most secular continent on earth “, (Timothy Garton Ash), it is hard for people coming from different cultural, denominational and spiritual backgrounds of other continents to really develop a loving compassion for people who think they are beyond the need of the grace and mercy of God. But without a motivation which is driven by the divine love of Christ, there will be no penetration of ungodly structures in Europe. New social groups like i.e. Post-Christians, Post-Communist, Post-Modern, Post-Migrant, are arising in Europe and have become "emerging communities without the gospel". (See att. 2).

These spiritual challenges of Europe cannot be met without considerable help from the mission force of the global south.

○ **Migration/Diaspora - the two sides of the coin**

● There are more than 55 million immigrants living in Europe. Furthermore, several million refugees came during the last few years and many more will come in the near future (See att.3 - spanish). Many of these ethnic groups are unreached people, from limited access countries. They are now within reach of the gospel in Europe. As a historic opportunity these people can be reached in a joint effort by the global church.

● At the same time a considerable number of these people who came to Europe are born again Christians and they are already bringing the gospel “Back to Europe”. The challenge is to help them and their migrant churches understand the spiritual needs of their new host continent and invite them to really participate in its re-evangelization.

○ **Strategic position**

Europe is a “mission gateway” with great potential. As the Middle East is the focal point of end time events, with a population of more than 400 million Muslims, Europe’s geographical proximity gives it a key role as a platform and a base for the support of missionary activities of the local Christian community and the mission work in that area. (See att.3: “EQUIP 7: learning community”) Furthermore, we know that Europe has a horrible anti-Semitic history. Now is the time that the European church can humbly participate and serve in a reconciliation ministry between the Jewish people and their neighbors.¹

○ **Multi ethnicity**

Both religious freedom in Europe and the overwhelming diversity of European society offer the fertile soil for raising multiethnic intercultural² churches

- where reconciliation between nations is fostered as a core value and
- where a new culture of encounter is cultivated through loving relationships.

We believe these kingdom values to be Gods answer to the torn and hateful humanity of our days.

Intercultural unity of the church will always imply a shared leadership, thus demanding people from sending and receiving churches and institutions to really live and practice serving humility.

3. The main purposes of B2E

1. Working together

The "Back to Europe Movement" (B2E) seeks to join efforts between different ministries and churches in Europe, issuing a "Macedonian call" to the Church around the world.

2. To raise awareness of Europe as a mission field

B2E seeks to strike a missiological balance between the needs of Unreached People Groups as a priority for mission resources, and much of Europe, which has become a mission field with the same need for evangelization and spiritual awakening.

¹ AFTA (Arabs for the Arabs) is a Mission organization, working in 15 different countries in the Middle East. They use the proximity of Europe by establishing a training center in Cyprus. At the same time, they have an important ministry of reconciliation between Arabs and Jews

² We use the phrase „intercultural“ to emphasize the reciprocal, two-way bridging (thus: inter-) between two or more cultural groups. (We do not use: Cross-cultural = one-way relationship; Multi-cultural = co-existence without relationship)

3. To mobilize the Church around the world towards Europe

The Church around the world must engage in the re-evangelization of Europe. We seek to mobilize the Church with contextual models, identifying the parameters and profiles of evangelism and church planting.

4. To mobilize evangelism among new immigrants in Europe

Europe is experiencing one of the biggest people group migrations in history. Many of these ethnic groups come from limited access countries. They can be reached in Europe with the gospel.

5. To assist new missionary sending nations

B2E seeks to help sending nations explore the types of missionaries needed to reach Europe, and encourage models of church planting that will increase their effectiveness on the field, in partnership with local efforts.

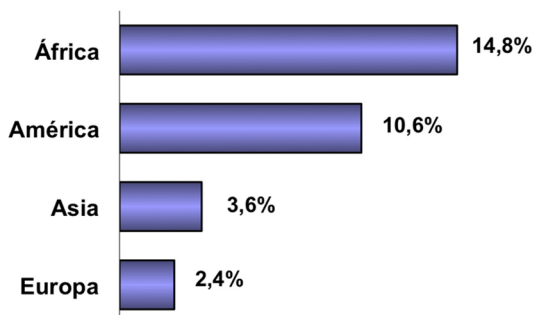
B2E is networking with international ministries and networks (like COMIBAM), developing a process to assist missionary movements of other continents to mobilize the Church around the world to reach Europe with the gospel. To accomplish this goal there are close links to existing international organizations (like OC Spain, Kontaktmission and others), who offer their infrastructure.

How can we achieve these goals?

- By increasing the **number of missionaries** working in Europe in cooperation with our partners like OC and Kontaktmission.
- By focusing attention on **evangelistic projects** in spiritually neglected areas of Europe.
- By strengthening the **church planting** movement in the European context.
- By stressing the need to reach the **unreached peoples** living in Europe, like Muslim, Hindu and others.
- By assisting and supporting **other mission movements** in the world i.e. in the middle east (AFTA).

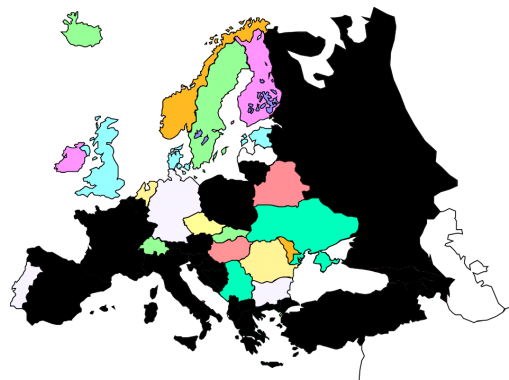
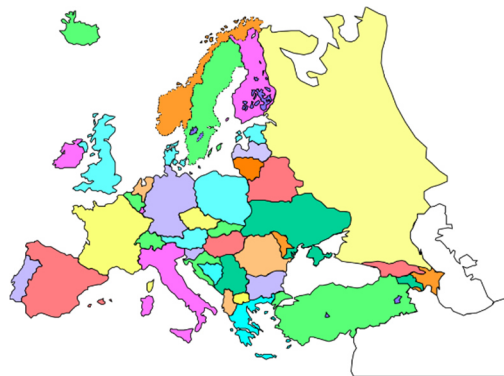
Attachment 1:

Evangelical Christians in Europe:

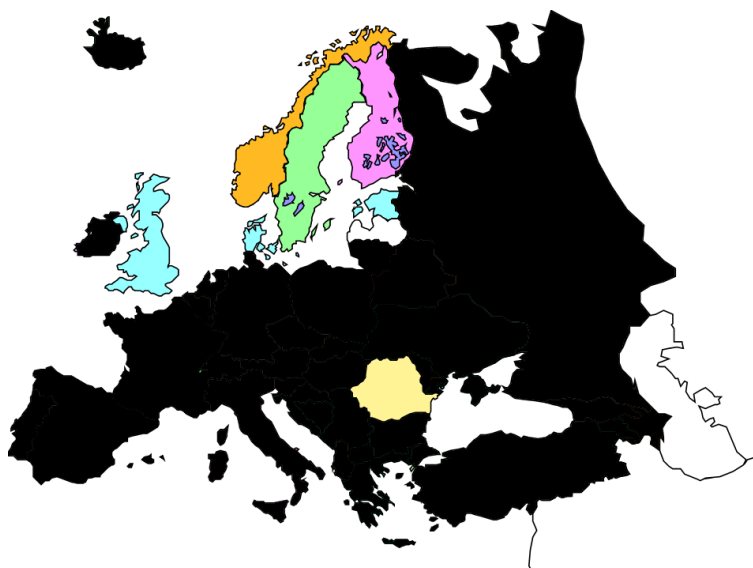


Europe
(Population: 511,81 Mill.
in 46 countries, EU: 27 countries)

Less than 1% evangelical Christians:



Less than 4% evangelical Christians:



Attachment 2:

Five types of Europeans

Deborah Meroff, in her book *Europe: Restoring Hope*, lists 5 kinds of Europeans that in her view characterize the new Europe. (She may be drawing on some work by Jeff Fountain for these descriptors.) They are:

1. The Post Christian European.

Essentially someone who is not against Christianity and might even say that they are a Christian in a cultural sense, but for whom Christianity is not a serious or live option. They live without any interaction with Christianity.

2. The Post-Communist European.

Disillusioned by the effects of Communism, detached from a significant experience of Christianity but open to new narratives and experiences. Looking for hope.

3. The Post Modern European.

Confident, enjoying the fruit of a consumer society, willing to see religion as something that can benefit them but seeing it more as a self-help therapy, a consumer product in the spirituality department of life.

4. The Post Migrant European.

Someone who is experiencing a question about their identity. They are aware of where their parents came from but that tradition needs to be reinterpreted for them if they are to function as Europeans.

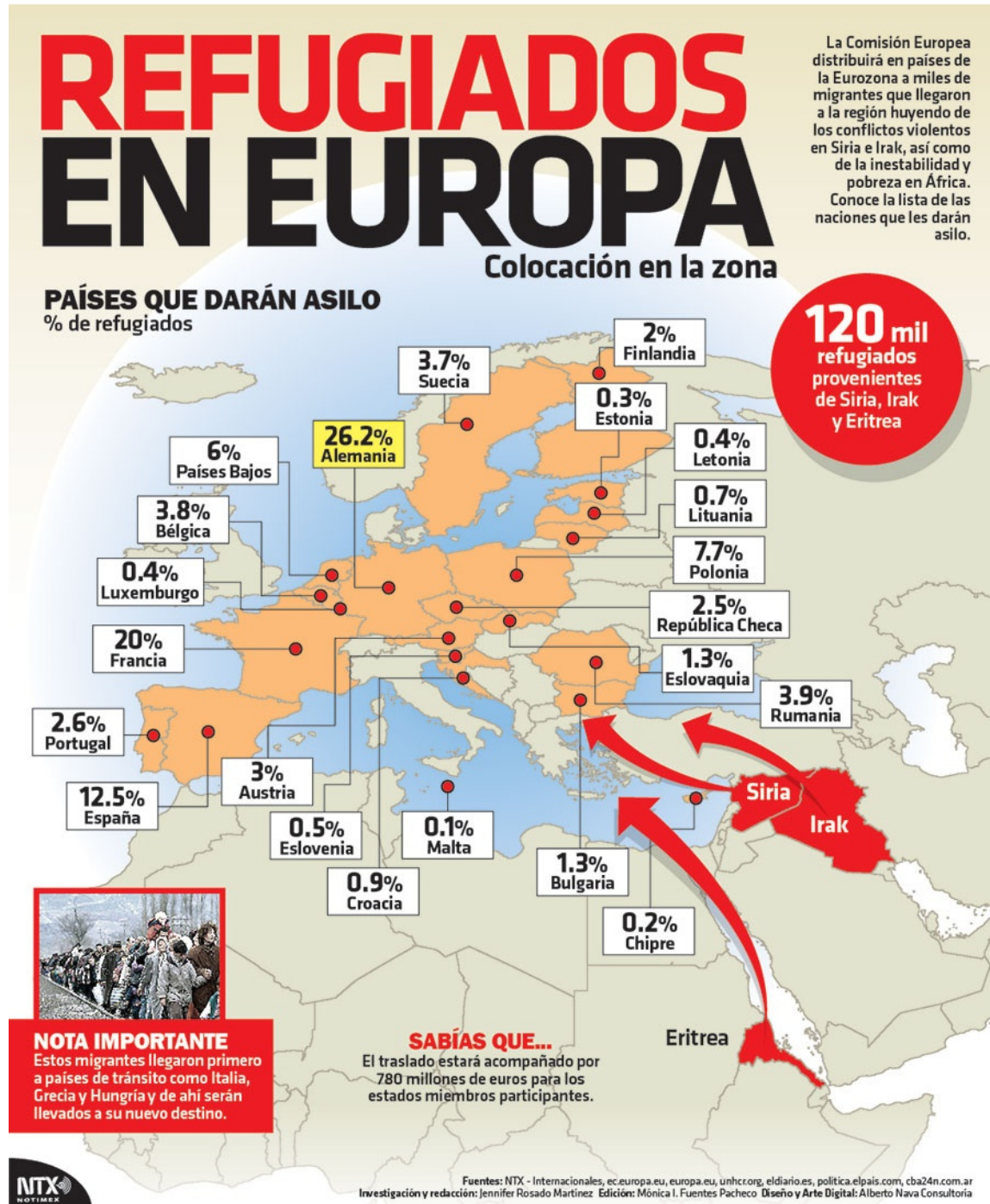
5. The Post Secular European.

Here is someone who has lost confidence in modernity and actively explores religious ideas of all kinds in the new Europe. They believe in spirits, the power of evil and dabble in a variety of spiritual experiences. They are open to many ideas but want to retain their own freedom to pick and mix.

Deborah does not claim that these categories describe all Europeans but are interesting pointers to what we increasingly find as European citizens in the mission field that is Europe. Helpful for our own reflection.

Attachment 3:

Distribution of Refugees in Europe:



Attachment 4:

“EQUIP 7: learning community”

1. The name has been set as “EQUIP 7: learning community” in order to help refugees and Diaspora leaders and pastors be equipped more for the kingdom of God.
2. The vision statement(Why) is “To see Diaspora people in Europe and beyond equipped for God’s Kingdom and His mission.”
3. The mission statement(How) is “To facilitate learning communities with Diaspora pastors and leaders.”
4. 7 core values are: Flexibility, Collaboration, Relevancy, Inter-clusion, Transparency, Integrity, Reciprocity (number 7 means “perfection” Biblically).

Partners (added more later): 23 orgs.

Daniel Ahn (OMF, degree program for migrant people in Free Univ. Netherland),

David Watson (Writer and lecturer, Germany),

Dina Basta (Al-haq Ministries, U.S.A),

David Haokip (Anglican church, UK)

Elia Daoud (Arab Ministries, Germany),

Herbert Hong (IMB, U.S.A),

Hubert Keil (Afghan Ministries, Germany),

Hun Kim (Wycliffe Europe),

Hyuk Rhee (Gospel Fellowship, Germany).

Israel Olofinyana (from Nigeria) (CMMW-Centre for Training Missionary from Majority world, UK),

Jesoon Chung (ARILAC, HanDong university, Korea),

Joel Kim (WEC, IMM, Arab Refugee ministry, Egypt),

Kevin Mason (DPI-Diaspora People in Europe, Hungary),

Matthias Knodler (DMG, Germany),

Paul Sydnor (Highway Ministries, France),

Peter Oyugi (from Kenia) (AIM, African Diaspora mission, UK),

Peter Vimal (ECM Refugee Ministry, Germany),

Rodrigo Assis Da Silva (IBC, Germany),

Samuel Cueva (Latin America Diaspora, UK),

Thomas Hieber (SAC-South Asia Diaspora, Germany),

Thomas Milk (Kontaktmission Germany, Back to Europe),

Willi Federer (Allianz Mission, Germany),

Yong Jung Cho (KWMA-Korea World Mission Association, Korea)

Attachment 5:

Mission in Europe?

Understanding a missiological approach for missions

Samuel Cueva

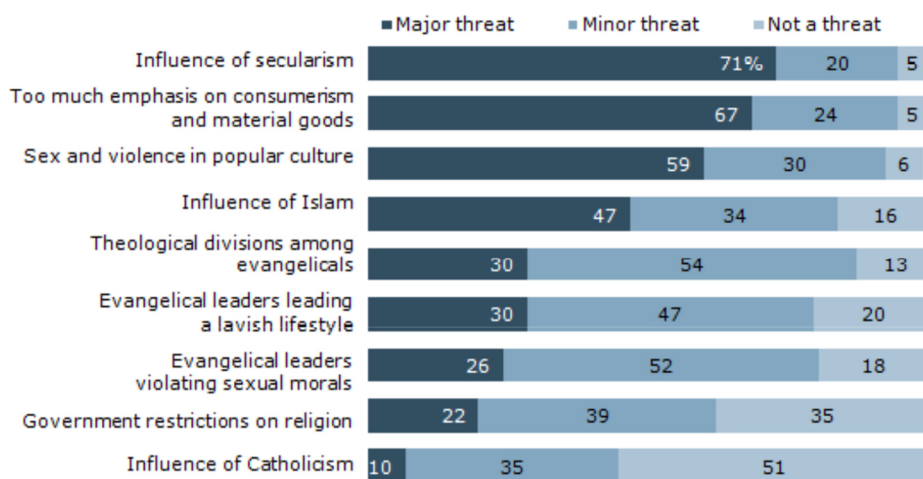
26/09/11

In this paper, I would like to provide some missiological clues that can help Christians to target the reality of a spiritual need in Europe. As many Christians have recognized that Europe is in spiritual decline, therefore, the mission of God in Europe cries out for a mission of hope. This leads to the development of a mission strategy of biblical teaching and radical discipleship through the European church and the presence of a new force in mission.

1. The reality of current issues to Christian mission in Europe

In a survey conducted by 'The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life', (<http://pewforum.org/Christian/Evangelical-Protestant-Churches/Global-Survey-exec.aspx>), in its article, 'Global Survey of Evangelical Protestant Leaders', a report was provided on June 22, 2011. This report provides clues for discovering the spiritual needs for mission in Europe. The survey had the input of Global Christianity

What Are the Threats to Evangelical Christianity?



Q16a-i. No answer responses not shown.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S FORUM ON RELIGION & PUBLIC LIFE

as it was conducted during the III Lausanne Congress in Cape Town in October 2010. In our view, according to the data provided below, the influence of secular thinking with 71%, too much consumerism with 67%, and

sex and violence in popular culture with 59%, are the three main issues that the mission of the church is challenged with in order to accomplish their mission double mandate through evangelism and social responsibility. The reason is that these three realities are growing with an increasing influence within the European society; Children, young people and adults think and behave with that influence.

2. The reality of online language usage

A recent published European Union survey, has explored the use of online language (*European Mission*, May 12, 2011, <http://europeanmission.redcliffe.org/category/europa/>). A report by Eurobarometer has published results which will be of interest to Christian missions, in relation to those who make significant investments in having an online presence. The survey may also have broader application to all Christian Media organisations with an interest in Europe. It is explained that in all 27 EU countries, 54% said they had gone online several times a day. English is the most frequently used language when going online, and 48% of Internet users in the EU mentioned using English for reading or watching content on the Internet.

In this sense, proclaiming the Gospel through Internet becomes an important mission strategy, where online presence is part of European culture. The evangelisation in Europe invites to promote a mission force very conscious of this reality.

3. The reality of high divorces in the European Union

Nova Research reports that the EU's Justice Minister, Viviane Reding, pointed out (24th March, <http://europeanmission.redcliffe.org/2010/03/25/cross-cultural-eu-divorces-at-140000-per-year/>) that she does 'not want people in the EU to be left to manage complicated international divorces alone.' The EU's annual divorce rate passed 1 million in 2005 and of those, 140,000 were cross-national divorces. Divorce is possible in all EU member states with the exception of Malta. This means that in any one year, two out of every thousand EU citizens successfully petition for a divorce. In contrast, nearly five out of a thousand get married within the European Union.

These figures provide a view of how a mission strategy needs to be addressed for the mission of the church and missionaries in Europe. This is a social phenomenon that we clearly affirm that the Gospel has something to say; is there a hope to change this European reality?

4. The reality of increasing secular thinking

As an example of the increasing secularisation in Europe, it is stated that 25% of the Swiss are non-religious (<http://europeanmission.redcliffe.org/2011/04/20/the-non-religious-swiss-increases-in-size/>). On 31st March, the website [Swissinfo.ch](http://www.swissinfo.ch) provided a survey indicating that one in four Swiss citizens chose to describe themselves as 'non-religious'. This was significantly up from the 1% who claimed to be non-religious in 1970 and the 11% who did so in the year 2000.

The survey reported that of 1,229 people and a further 73 in-depth interviews produced a categorisation of people within four types: 1. distanced (64%), 2. institutional (17%), 3. secular (10%), and 4. alternative (9%). Institutionals represent the active churchgoers whilst the majority 'distanced' group attended occasional

church services but did not consider religion to be very important in their lives. Most 'alternatives' were women interested in meditation, reincarnation and herbal remedies. Commenting on the findings, Markus Ries, a theologian at Lucerne University, predicted that 'the way in which people practise their beliefs changes; being part of a church or a religious congregation will not be the same in 25 years as it is today; there will be much more plurality and much less homogeneity, the same as in society itself' (*Swissinfo.ch*, http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/swiss_news/One_in_four_shuns_religion_in_Switzerland.html?cid=29877728). He adds that 'there are many people who believe in God, but they don't describe their beliefs in the way that they did during their childhood – and they think that the Church still does it that way'.

Secular thinking is spreading out through institutions such as primary and secondary schools, universities, and the nuclear familiar environment, where God is an object rather than a subject. The new Christian mission for Europe in most cases needs to be understood in the contexts of global realities rather than isolated and provincial interpretation of homogenous groups. A missiological question relates to this factor: Are more European countries secular than others which need to be targeted with the Gospel? Or is there a primary divine call to some countries in Europe for people to live and work?

5. The reality of non-religious young people in the United Kingdom

Initial reflections on non-religious young people has been published by Dr. Rebecca Catto of Lancaster University (<http://europeanmission.redcliffe.org/2011/04/15/non-religious-young-people-in-Britain/>). She explores their worldview who self-identify as atheists, free thinkers, humanists, secularists, and/or sceptics. Catto in *the Guardian* (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2011/apr/14/atheism-socialnetworking/print>), reports that these 'new atheists' may be: 1. more flexible and open to different perspectives and some have attended events with actively Christian friends, 2. prefer to engage with online communities than belong to official organisations, 3. They are strongly influenced by family and education, 4. Some have reacted against Christian childhood, 5. Some are looking to challenge the influence of the Christian Union on University Campus, 6. some would like to break the association between Britishness and Christianity, and 7. the important thing is being pro-human rather than anti-religious.'

The Nova Research Centre (<http://europeanmission.redcliffe.org/2011/04/15/non-religious-young-people-in-Britain/>) in the United Kingdom, suggests that this greater flexibility on the part of the new atheists compared to older non-religionists is supported by their own analysis of data from the European Values Survey in which they examined generational differences and secularisation. Therefore the challenge to Christian witness is not necessarily that the new atheist perspective is a 'faith-free' zone. They conclude that for some it would appear to be a search for truth and morality and for whom 'the secular can be just as moral, emotional and sacred as the religious.' I totally agree when it is stated that our task in Christian mission is to

demonstrate the truth that Christian versions of morality, the sacred, and human nature are more adequate, beautiful, and compelling than its rivals.

For a new mission in Europe, it is essential to target the new generation of young people who can receive a true hope through the Gospel the new mission force would preach in depth collaboration with the churches and missions currently present in Europe.

A missiological interpretation of the spiritual needs in Europe

Of course there is a clear difference between mission and missions. The latter refers to the mission activity the church does, it is the mission mandate God has given to its church to do, and the first refers to the mission of God- *the missio Dei*- in itself, of his loving act to restore the human being and redeeming everything for his glory. Within a global mission in the third millennium, the mission frontiers to cross by the Christian church are above all cultural, social, political, linguistic, technological, religious, philosophical, and ideological frontiers.

In this sense, for the evangelisation in Europe, it is important to clarify the difference between evangelistic mission to people, with missions as geographical distance. The second usually refers to those who never heard the gospel and the first refers to those who need the gospel despite hearing the gospel perhaps many times. The wonderful expectation of a new force in mission for Europe asks new missionaries to avoid the provincial use of the coined phrase 'unreached people', this due to the fact that Europe is not set up in distant lands, and as for many, Europe is the heart of the world in terms of political, economic and philosophical influence. We do not want to get closed doors while ringing the bell, we want to get answers of help and collaboration after knocking on these doors. We do not want to use a missiology of distant lands and remote places for Europe as all of the countries and important cities in this continent have great transport links, hospitals, schools, town planning and immense suburbs and so on. As mission is from everywhere to everywhere, it must be also from every Christian to every person.

Evangelisation requires spiritual intelligence for doing right mission in Europe. This implies bearing in mind an integral mission where the gospel has to be proclaimed verbally, and with social presence, within the daily life of every Christian person, who challenges the influence of secular and atheistic thinking, and its consumerist approach to life. It is therefore necessary to strengthen and to vitalize the presence of a kerygmatic, doxological, diakonical, and an antagonistic mission from the part of the Church's mission activity, missionaries and mission societies that have a clear call to revitalize the evangelisation in Europe.

Mission is possible in Europe as it is possible everywhere God wants to show his glory. Throughout mission history, spiritual revitalization has always come by the proclamation of the Gospel, which has a double mandate, in word and in deeds.

Our desire is to deepen our contact with you, the MANI network. Here are some questions that could help us to understand more clearly the current situation of the missionary force in your country. Thank you for your help:

Country: _____

How many mission organizations and/or churches are there involved in MANI:

How many missionaries:

Working inside the country:

Working in other countries:

Which countries:

Which are the most urgent needs of MANI as a Movement:

Most urgent needs of the missionaries:

Does the missionary movement of your country also focus on the spiritual needs of Europe?