

Netherlands scraps blasphemy law – but seeks a way to replace it

Posted: Thu, 5th Dec 2013

The upper House of the Dutch parliament has voted to abolish the country's blasphemy law (Article 147), which has been on the statute books since 1932. However, it still remains illegal under Dutch law to be disrespectful to police officers or to insult Queen Beatrix.

There had been some doubt about whether the abolition would go through after the Coalition Government tried to placate smaller religious parties – the votes of which it needs in order to get its economic policy through.

As a compromise, another parliamentary decision was approved that will permit an amendment to another statute in order to outlaw "serious insult to religion".

Terry Sanderson, president of the National Secular Society, said: "The blasphemy law in the Netherlands was more or less a dead duck anyway and hasn't been used for decades. Courts regarded it as unusable. Introducing something else in its place could be very much worse. Protecting religion from 'insult' gives the green light to every extremist in the country to start using the law to try to restrict free speech."

- [Share on What's App](#)
- [Share on Facebook](#)
- [Share on Twitter](#)
- [Share on Email](#)
- [Subscribe to RSS Feed](#)

Tags: [Free speech](#)

Related Campaigns

•

[Protect freedom of expression](#)

We promote free speech as a positive value.

[Read More](#)

Related Articles

We must empower secular schools to assert their ethos

When Islamists tried to bully Michaela Community School, the school refused to back down. Other schools have not been so successful in challenging religious intimidation. Megan Manson explores what made Michaela different. [Read More »](#)

NSS announces major conference on protecting liberal values

Kenan Malik, Joan Smith and more speaking at NSS Secularism 2024 conference in London. [Read More »](#)

NSS hosts talk with author of Annie Besant book

Renowned author Michael Meyer discusses 'A Dirty, Filthy Book' in online event. [Read More »](#)

Three years on, the lessons of Batley are yet to be learned

The Batley affair exposed the Islamist threat to UK schools. We're still yet to come to terms with its implications, says Jack Rivington. [Read More »](#)

Response unit needed to tackle blasphemy flashpoints, report says

Recommendations echo NSS calls for more support for schools facing religious intimidation and threats. [Read More »](#)