Religiousness and Demographic Events: a Comparative Study of European Countries

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Incomplete draft:
Abstract prepared for a submission to the EAPS meeting 2006 - please do not cite

1. Introduction - purpose of this study

The links between religion and demographic behaviour have been extensively studied in the USA, Great Britain and few other countries. McQuillan (2004) and Lehrer (2004) present detailed reviews. However, research in this field in Europe is scanty, particularly where comparative international studies are considered. European demographers usually take into account religiosity as much as a control variable in studies that focus on other issues. There exist few exceptions, notably the work of Van de Kaa, Lesthaeghe and their colleagues who consider the impact of religion on demographic events in the broader framework of ideational change.

This study focuses on the association between religiosity and demographic young adults' life-course events, and their timing, in the European countries where the FFS data are available (FFS is the acronym for Fertility and Family Surveys). It aims to contribute towards a deeper understanding of this association instead of merely treating it as a side correlation that should only be controlled for. The life-course events considered are age at first intercourse, age at leaving home, cohabitation and marriage, age at first marriage, number of children, and age at birth of the first child.

We use the term "religiosity" in this paper to denote any type of measurement of religion. It could denote either religious denomination (affiliation), or the assessment of inner feelings and conceptions about religion, or practicing of religion.

The FFS sample sizes do not include a sufficient number of adherents to Islam. For this purpose we are forced to miss this religious affiliation. Religiosity hence refers to Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, and Orthodox Christianity, as well as a group of "freethinkers": persons who believe in a super-natural power like God but do not belong to any church institution. This religiosity is known as "believing without belonging", or "unchurched religion".

2. Theoretical background: why does religiosity have an effect on demographic events?

We outline three major modes upon which religiosity can have an effect on early adults' life course demographic events: religious ideology, ideational shifts and secularisation, and dealing with contingency situations.

Religious ideology is a fundamental theoretical argumentation. The teachings of a church include canon-based rules and recommendations referring to crucial life

events, and family formation in particular. In general, they have an explicit pro-family orientation and pro-natalism. These rules exercise their effect on demographic behaviour along a variety of ways. McqQuillan (2004) discusses three. One is through them being deeply routed in the culture of the social group where individuals of interest reside. Personal values and attitudes and social norms are shaped in this cultural environment and exercise a corresponding effect on individual behaviour. Another way that religious rules and convention have their effect on behaviour is through the direct influence of the church on its adherents. A religious institution has the resources to communicate its teachings to its members and to enforce fulfilment of, or sanction the failure to carry out the rules. The third way is indirect: the followers feel attached to the religious community and adapt to rules and conventions.

The second mode is well known in demography: ideational shifts and particularly secularisation. The impact of ideational shifts on demographic behaviour has been advocated by van de Kaa and Lesthaeghe. Changes in values during the recent decades have been along the direction of increased individual autonomy, decrease in the authority of institutions (like the church), increased desire for self-fulfilment and self-expression. Constraints set by social norms have become less effective on individual behaviour because sanctions have decreased and norms change towards being more prescriptive than proscriptive. Secularisation is a tendency of the decrease in the influence of the church on individuals' choices for their personal life. Ideational changes in general imply that the traditional cultural values related to family and children are gradually displaced by "post-modern" values where individuals make decisions about marriage and children without any considerations about adaptation to requirements set by any institution. More religious people are less likely to turn towards modern values and stay attached to the traditional values. One important debate around secularisation is that it refers to a decrease in church attendance and adherence to a particular religion, and not necessarily to inner beliefs. Some scientists argue that "believing without belonging" is an upward contemporary trend.

While the effect of religious ideology was substantive, the third major mode is functionalist, i.e. refers to "problems" that religion can "solve". Among the different functions of religion, one is of particular importance to us. It is known in the scientific literature on religion as "dealing with contingency situations". In short it means that religion supplies guidance to the people when they confront unexpected situations or situations that are crucial in one's life. Examples of demographic events that have a crucial effect on one's life include a marriage, a birth of a child, or a death of a close person. A birth is an irreversible event; a divorce connects to complications that no one is happy to have. Moreover, individuals in a contemporary society take decisions about these crucial events in an environment of uncertainty and insecurity (Blossfeld et al. 2005). Therefore they are likely to postpone or reject these events when they do not dispose with a sufficient clarity on the situation. As a result marriages and births decrease. Religious people, with whatever perception about God, feel less insecure and less uncertain in their future, as they rely on an objective super-power that may provide help. Hence they are less likely to postpone and reject family events.

The theoretical arguments give rise to the following hypotheses:

(1) More religious people are more likely to experience a first intercourse later in life as compared to less religious or non-religious people.

(2) More religious people are less likely to have ever cohabited outside a marriage.
(3) More religious people are more likely to enter a first union (usually a marriage) and have their first child earlier than non-religious people.
(4) More religious people are more likely to have more children.

We study also the age at leaving the parental home. It is difficult to draw a hypothesis about the effect of religiosity on this age because this effect is contradictory. On one side religiosity can be expected to cause an early leaving of the parental home due to an earlier marriage, or a later leaving of the parental home as a result of a preference to live in the family of the parents rather than in a single-person household.

3. Measurement of religiosity, data and methods

We use the FFS surveys: a set of internationally comparable surveys carried out in a number of European countries during the 90s. We make use of three questions. One of them, denoted as q917, measures religious affiliation: "*What religion do you adhere to*?" with the answer being either one of the religious denominations or "*freethinker*", i.e. a religious person who does not pertain to any denomination. We keep in the analyses only those denominations whose proportion in the sample is not below 2 percent; those that are below this boundary are grouped in the item "other". Hence the number of religious affiliations can differ among the countries. Islam is not considered separately because of the small number of respondents.

The other two questions provide measures of religiosity. The first one of them (q916) is: "*Are you religious*?" with possible answers "*yes*", "*somewhat*", "*no*"; we remove the answers "*don't know*". The second question on religiosity (q918) is "*How often do you attend religious services (apart from weddings, funerals, baptisms, and the like*?" with answers classified as: "*More than once a week", "Once a week", "About once a month", "Only at official holidays", "Once a year"; "(Practically) never*". It is used as a continuous variable in the regressions. The first question measures self-assessed religiosity and the three answers give a certain measure of its intensity. The second question measures objective religiosity or practicing of religion.

The question on religious affiliation was asked only to respondents who have responded (to q916) that they are religious or somewhat religious. This is a drawback because non-religious people may affiliate to a religion as a result of their perception that the religion denomination expresses a cultural facet of the society. Another drawback of asking only religious people about affiliation refers to the regressions that we intend to run. The number of non-religious people is large in most of the European countries. In case we denote them as people without affiliation, we get a high correlation between the variables of affiliation and of religiosity that may lead to biased estimates of the regression coefficients.

We run a set of linear regressions where the dependent variable is one of the life course variables of interest. The regressions were run separately for each one of the three questions on religiosity, and separately for males and females. Regretfully we cannot combine religiosity with religious affiliation in one regression because of the high correlation, as mentioned above. The independent variables included a variable with three levels of education: lower than secondary, secondary, and higher than

secondary (secondary level corresponds to some 10-12 years in school); age of the respondent; and the number of siblings at age 15. The latter variable is a proxy for the socialization of the respondent during the teenage period. In the present version we do not discuss these three variables that are left to have the role of control variables.

Religiosity as measured with the three questions at hand is observed at the time of survey, while the events have taken place before the survey date. Studies in the US and in Europe show (although the latter are not controlled for a cohort effect) that intensity of religiosity increases with age. Therefore the association we may establish may be the result of inverse causality, i.e. the event of interest causes rise in religious intensity. Controlling for inverse causality requires panel data.

However, studies show that while intensity of religiosity changes through life, the dichotomy "religious or not" is much more stable. We rely on these studies and therefore expect that inverse causality will rarely be the case, were religiosity measured with the dichotomy. In addition, since religious affiliation is asked only to respondents who have already declared that they are religious, if the dichotomy holds, then religious affiliation is also very likely to stay unchanged (i.e. cases of religious conversion are considered to be too few in order to have an effect on the study).

The dichotomous variable has been studied by Huber (2003) for example. He has compared it with a large scale of 10 items constructed for a profound measurement of religiosity. Huber found that the 10-items scale and the dichotomous question have a high correlation (0.83). This finding indicates that the dichotomous variable can effectively be used for the measurement of religiosity in studies where detailed information on religiosity is not required.

4. Results

The regression results are exposed in tables 1 to 6. In each table the countries are ordered as follows: first the countries with a prevailing proportion of Catholic population in the sample (Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Spain) in alphabetic order; then the countries with a mixture of Catholics and Protestants (Germany and Switzerland), followed by the countries with a larger share of Protestants (Estonia, Latvia, Norway, Sweden). Finally two Orthodox countries, Greece and Bulgaria, are placed. Some of the countries are missing in a particular table because the corresponding question has not been asked.

Age at first sexual intercourse (table 1)
Table 1, males, shows that the coefficient for a variable that reports religiosity (self-assessed or attendance of religious practices) is frequently negative. The dependent variable denotes an increase in the age at first intercourse, and hence a negative sign shows that the lower the religiosity, the lower the age at first intercourse.

Religious people are more likely to have a first intercourse later in life than the less religious ones in all Catholic countries. This inference is transparent for both religiosity questions. We find that self-assessed religiosity is insignificant in the non-Catholic countries, i.e. Protestant and Orthodox. The same inference is valid for religious attendance in Estonia and Latvia.

Religious affiliation is significantly different between Catholics, on one side, and Protestants and Orthodox, on the other. The latter are more likely to have an earlier first sexual intercourse as compared to the former. Estonia and Latvia are the only countries where all the three groups are represented. In both countries the coefficient for the Orthodox is higher in absolute value than that for the Protestants; Orthodox seems to be posing the least restrictions on this behaviour among the three major religious groups in Europe.

About the same inferences are valid for the females.

Age at leaving the parental home (table 2)
The coefficients are interpreted like those in the previous table. The table for the males indicates that statistical significance prevails among the Protestant countries in a direction that non-religious (or less religious) people are more likely to leave their parental home later than the more religious people.

The results for religious denomination show that the followers of Catholicism are more likely to leave the parental home earlier than followers of Protestantism and Orthodox.

The results for the females indicate less regularity with respect to the groups of countries. Statistical significance is revealed in a direction as discussed above for the males.

Ever cohabited (table 3)
In this case we run a logistic regression. The odds ratios indicate a significant prevalence of cohabitation among the non-religious and somewhat religious individuals, either men or women. Estonia and Latvia, two countries with a prevalence of a Protestant affiliation, are notable exceptions among the men. Differences by denomination indicate again a considerable prevalence of cohabitation among freethinkers relative to Catholics and Protestants, and among protestants as compared to Catholics. This form of living arrangement is still not spread in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe where Orthodox prevails, and perhaps for this purpose we do not find a significant difference from the Catholics.

Age at first union (table 4)
In general, a lower level of religiosity associates with a later age at first union. The more religious people tend to enter a family life earlier than the less religious people. However, this observation is not observed in all countries. One reason could be heterogeneity: religious people enter earlier in a marriage, but less religious people enter earlier in a non-marital union. However, in Italy and Poland cohabitation prevails only among a couple of percent of the population, and statistical significance is not observed, except for religious practices in Poland. The same holds for Eastern Germany (former GDR) where non-religiousness prevails.

Number of children (table 5)
We observe for the males that lower religiousness associates with a lower number of children in the countries where Protestants prevail. In several countries with Catholic population there is no statistical significance: Hungary, Italy, Lithuania. However, the

statistical difference seems universal where females are considered. Lower religiousness associates with a lower number of children.

Age at birth of first child (table 6)
This indicator does not reveal any association with religiousness. The results in the two Orthodox countries, Bulgaria and Greece, are contradictory. Less religious people in Bulgaria are having their first child later, while in Greece they are having it earlier. This difference needs further research.

5. Summary

We study the association between religiousness and life course events in 17 European countries. "Religiosity" is either self-assessed (or frequency of church attendance), or religious affiliation. We find that there is no single country from our list where religiosity does not associate with some of the life course events. This association should get more attention in the analyses of life course and family formation.

We find strong support for *some* of our hypotheses. Thus more religious people are more likely to have experienced later the first intercourse (hypothesis 1); they are less likely to ever enter a cohabitation (hypothesis 2), and they have more children (hypothesis 4). However, we find less support for the timing of first entry into a union and age at having the first child. Still the results indicate that we can accept hypothesis 3, at least in some countries.

We find also that the same inferences hold where Catholicism is compared to Protestantism, Orthodox, and "Freethinkers". The latter, presumed to be religious people without an institutional denomination, reveal behaviour that is closest to that of non-religious people. It can be conjectured that this is a consequence of the fact that they do not experience the normative pressure of the institutional teachings and ideology.

References

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Table 1: Age at first intercourse, linear regression
(controlled for education, age of respondent, number of siblings at age 15)

Males

	Religiosity self-assessed		Religious affiliation		Attendance of religious services
		Coef.		Coef.	Coef.
Czech Rep.	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,49 - 1,27 ***		n.a.	- 0,42 ***
Hungary	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,30 * - 0,50 ***	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 - 0,02 0,00	- 0,25 ***
Italy	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,58 - 0,67 ***		n.a.	- 0,28 ***
Lithuania	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,26 * - 1,00 ***	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 - 1,10 *** - 0,34	n.a.
Poland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 1,51 *** - 1,79 ***		n.a.	- 0,51 ***
Slovakia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,78 *** - 1,36 ***	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 - 1,24 *** - 0,30	- 0,50 ***
Spain	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,53 ** - 0,88 ***	Catholic (base) Freethinker other	0 - 0,87 * 0,80	- 0,36 ***
Switzerland	yes (base) no	0 - 0,62 ***	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,26 0,45	- 0,48 ***
Estonia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,46 - 0,46	Protest. (base) Catholic Orthodox other	0 - 0,01 0,10 - 0,16	n.a.
Latvia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,26 0,21	Catholic (base) Protest. Orthodox other	0 - 0,10 *** - 0,69 *** - 0,19	- 0,01
Norway		n.a.		n.a.	- 0,92 ***
Greece	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,20 - 0,13		n.a.	- 0,25 ***

Note: p>0.01 is denoted with three stars; p>0.05 with two stars, and p>0.05 with one star.

Age at first intercourse:
Females

	Religiosity self-assessed		Religious affiliation		Attendance of religious services
		Coef.		Coef.	Coef.
Czech Rep.	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,29 - 0,82 ***		n.a.	- 0,30 ***
Hungary	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,16 - 0,56 ***	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,21 - 0,06	- 0,21 ***
Italy	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 1,17 *** - 1,62 ***		n.a.	- 0,42 ***
Lithuania	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,30 ** - 0,57 ***	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 - 0,66 ** - 0,66 **	n.a.
Poland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,68 * - 0,80 *		n.a.	- 0,34 ***
Slovakia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,59 *** - 0,73 ***	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 0,77 *** 0,14	- 0,26 ***
Spain	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,55 *** - 1,25 ***	Catholic (base) Freethinker other	0 - 1,38 *** - 0,34	- 0,29 ***
Switzerland	yes (base) no	0 - 0,86 ***	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 - 0,18 * 0,74 ***	- 0,31 ***
Estonia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,12 - 0,11	Protest. (base) Catholic Orthodox other	0 - 0,02 - 0,38 * 0,28	n.a.
Latvia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,03 - 0,05	Catholic (base) Protest. Orthodox other	0 - 0,51 *** - 0,17 0,07	0,06
Norway		n.a.		n.a.	- 0,66 ***
Bulgaria	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,19 - 0,02		n.a.	0,01
Greece	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,56 ** - 0,90 ***		n.a.	- 0,35 ***

Note: p>0.01 is denoted with three stars; p>0.05 with two stars, and p>0.05 with one star.

Table 2: Age at leaving the parental home, linear regression results
(controlled for education, age of respondent, number of siblings at age 15)

Males

	Religiosity self-assessed		Religious affiliation		Attendance of religious services
		Coef.		Coef.	Coef.
Austria	yes (base) no	0 0,66 **	Catholic (base) Protest. Freethinker other	0 2,42 *** 2,44 *** 0,38	n.a.
Czech Rep.	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,78 0,75		n.a.	0,17
Hungary	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,15 0,41	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,26 0,88	0,13
Italy	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,53 0,47		n.a.	- 0,04
Lithuania	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,14 - 0,05	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 - 0,88 - 0,47	n.a.
Poland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,76 0,36		n.a.	0,18 ***
Slovakia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,12 - 0,62 **	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 2,11 *** 0,02	- 0,10
Spain	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,07 0,70 **	Catholic (base) Freethinker other	0 0,98 2,63 **	0,07
Eastern Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,44 - 0,01		n.a.	0,17 *
Western Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,45 0,60	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,68 ** 2,59 ***	0,32 ***
Switzerland	yes (base) no	0 0,54 *	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,49 ** 0,83 *	0,06
Estonia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 1,41 *** 1,26 **	Protest. (base) Catholic Orthodox other	0 - 1,39 - 0,10 0,94	n.a.
Finland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,17 0,42		n.a.	0,21 **
Latvia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,48 - 0,99 **	Catholic (base) Protest. Orthodox other	0 - 0,66 0,72 - 0,42	- 0,21
Norway		n.a.		n.a.	0,14
Sweden		n.a.		n.a.	0,13 *

Greece	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,15 1,33 **		n.a.	- 0,05

Note: p>0.01 is denoted with three stars; p>0.05 with two stars, and p>0.05 with one star.

Leaving home:

Females

	Religiosity self-assessed		Religious affiliation		Attendance of religious services
		Coef.		Coef.	Coef.
Austria	yes (base) no	0 0,71 ***	Catholic (base) Protest. Freethinker other	0 - 0,11 1,75 *** 0,52	n.a.
Czech Rep.	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,02 0,08		n.a.	0,06
Hungary	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,01 0,23	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,45 * 0,93 ***	0,11 **
Italy	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,23 0,42		n.a.	0,05
Lithuania	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,13 - 0,18	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 - 0,77 ** 0,16	n.a.
Poland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,89 - 0,44		n.a.	0,13 *
Slovakia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,17 - 0,19	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 1,02 ** 1,16 ***	0,11 *
Spain	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,32 * 0,49 **	Catholic (base) Freethinker other	0 1,27 ** 0,65	0,07
Eastern Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,35 0,52		n.a.	0,18 ***
Western Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,13 0,56 **	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,81 *** 0,46	0,23 ***
Switzerland	yes (base) no	0 0,13	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,26 ** 0,15	- 0,05
Estonia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,18 - 0,16	Protest. (base) Catholic Orthodox other	0 1,21 - 0,06 - 0,65	n.a.
Finland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,13 0,09		n.a.	0,11 **
Latvia	yes (base) somewhat	0 - 0,43 *	Catholic (base) Protest.	0 - 0,36	- 0,27 ***

	no	- 0,92 ***	Orthodox other	- 0,33 - 0,55	
Norway		n.a.	n.a.	0,04
Sweden		n.a.	n.a.	0,06 *
Greece	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,25 0,09	n.a.	0,08

Note: p>0.01 is denoted with three stars; p>0.05 with two stars, and p>0.05 with one star.

Table 3: Ever cohabited, logistic regression results (odds ratios)
(controlled for education, age of respondent, number of siblings at age 15)

Males

	Religiosity self-assessed		Religious affiliation		Attendance of religious services
		Coef.		Coef.	Coef.
Austria	yes (base) no	1 0,66 ***	Catholic (base) Protest. Freethinker other	1 0,84 0,49 *** 1,98 **	n.a.
Czech Rep.	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,58 0,50		n.a.	0,86
Hungary	yes (base) somewhat no	1 1,41 0,64 **	Catholic (base) Protest. other	1 1,42 0,25 ***	0,79 ***
Italy	yes (base) somewhat no	1 1,14 0,30 ***		n.a.	0,76 **
Lithuania	yes (base) somewhat no	1 1,09 0,79	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	1 0,48 ** 0,44 ***	n.a.
Poland	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,36 ** 0,64		n.a.	0,65 ***
Slovakia	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,58 *** 0,50 ***	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	1 1,26 1,13	0,75 ***
Spain	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,94 0,31 ***	Catholic (base) Freethinker other	1 0,20 *** 1,47	0,68 ***
Eastern Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,43 ** 0,38 ***		n.a.	0,80 ***
Western Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	1 1,00 0,61 **	Catholic (base) Protest. other	1 0,48 *** 0,75	0,70 ***
Switzerland	yes (base) no	1 0,41 ***	Catholic (base) Protest. other	1 0,81 * 1,72 *	0,73 ***
Estonia	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,60 0,57	Protest. (base) Catholic Orthodox other	1 0,63 0,92 1,36	n.a.
Finland	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,63 * 0,47 ***		n.a.	0,74 ***
Latvia	yes (base) somewhat no	1 1,09 0,21	Catholic (base) Protest. Orthodox other	1 0,39 *** 0,81 0,50 **	1,02
Greece	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,88 0,79		n.a.	0,79 **

Ever cohabited:
Females

	Religiosity self-assessed		Religious affiliation		Attendance of religious services
		Coef.		Coef.	Coef.
Austria	yes (base) no	1 0,59 ***	Catholic (base) Protest. Freethinker other	1 0,77 0,45 *** 2,05 ***	n.a.
Czech Rep.	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,64 0,50 **		n.a.	0,83 **
Hungary	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,86 0,62 ***	Catholic (base) Protest. other	1 0,94 1,44	0,76 ***
Italy	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,35 *** 0,26 ***		n.a.	0,60 ***
Lithuania	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,69 *** 0,84	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	1 0,54 ** 0,55 **	n.a.
Poland	yes (base) somewhat no	1 1,12 0,23 **		n.a.	0,67 ***
Slovakia	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,66 *** 0,56 ***	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	1 1,37 1,00	0,75 ***
Spain	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,69 ** 0,33 ***	Catholic (base) Freethinker other	1 0,20 *** 1,03	0,69 ***
Eastern Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,51 ** 0,43 ***		n.a.	0,80 ***
Western Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,52 *** 0,36 ***	Catholic (base) Protest. other	1 0,77 ** 1,86	0,69 ***
Switzerland	yes (base) no	1 0,55 ***	Catholic (base) Protest. other	1 0,85 * 1,87 ***	0,76 ***
Estonia	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,65 * 0,56 **	Protest. (base) Catholic Orthodox other	1 1,11 1,08 0,81	n.a.
Finland	yes (base) somewhat no	1 0,48 *** 0,31 ***		n.a.	0,65 ***
Latvia	yes (base) somewhat no	1 1,11 1,00	Catholic (base) Protest. Orthodox other	1 0,83 0,81 1,21	0,99
Bulgaria	yes (base) somewhat	1 0,60 ***		n.a.	1,09

	no			
Greece	yes (base)	1	n.a.	0,62 ***
	somewhat	0,61 **		
	no	0,34 ***		

Note: p>0.01 is denoted with three stars; p>0.05 with two stars, and p>0.05 with one star.

Table 4: Age at first union, linear regression results
(controlled for education, age of respondent, number of siblings at age 15)

Males

	Religiosity self-assessed		Religious affiliation		Attendance of religious services
		Coef.		Coef.	Coef.
Austria	yes (base) no	0 0,18	Catholic (base) Protest. Freethinker other	0 0,32 - 0,16 1,16 *	n.a.
Czech Rep.	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,41 0,68		n.a.	0,10
Hungary	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,15 0,20	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,33 0,52	0,17 **
Italy	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,23 0,91		n.a.	- 0,05
Lithuania	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,07 0,08	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 0,95 ** - 0,15	n.a.
Poland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,42 0,38		n.a.	0,15 ***
Slovakia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,32 0,19	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 2,27 *** 0,26	0,20 ***
Spain	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,09 0,70 ***	Catholic (base) Freethinker other	0 1,57 ** 0,77	0,20 ***
Eastern Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,74 0,19		n.a.	0,06
Western Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,21 0,48	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,08 0,19	0,10
Switzerland	yes (base) no	0 0,75 **	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,27 - 0,11	0,15 **
Estonia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,62 0,70	Protest. (base) Catholic Orthodox other	0 - 0,04 - 0,24 - 0,39	n.a.
Finland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,29 0,14		n.a.	0,26 **
Latvia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,21 - 0,15	Catholic (base) Protest. Orthodox other	0 0,28 0,57 * 0,08	- 0,02
Norway		n.a.		n.a.	0,17 *
Sweden		n.a.		n.a.	0,35 ***

Greece	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,69 0,13		n.a.	0,28

Note: p>0.01 is denoted with three stars; p>0.05 with two stars, and p>0.05 with one star.

Age at first union:

Females

	Religiosity self-assessed		Religious affiliation		Attendance of religious services
		Coef.		Coef.	Coef.
Austria	yes (base) no	0 0,55 ***	Catholic (base) Protest. Freethinker other	0 - 0,50 * 0,83 *** 0,90 **	n.a.
Czech Rep.	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,21 0,20		n.a.	0,13 **
Hungary	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,8 0,04	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,13 0,37	0,11 ***
Italy	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,10 0,17		n.a.	- 0,03
Lithuania	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,29 ** - 0,11	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 0,47 0,48	n.a.
Poland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,04 - 0,72		n.a.	0,11 **
Slovakia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,29 * - 0,24	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 0,40 0,68 **	0,07
Spain	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,33 * 0,21	Catholic (base) Freethinker other	0 1,26 *** 1,11 **	0,06
Eastern Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,25 0,18		n.a.	0,07
Western Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,06 - 0,10	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,59 *** - 0,01	- 0,03
Switzerland	yes (base) no	0 0,35	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,14 0,38	0,10 ***
Estonia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,11 0,05	Protest. (base) Catholic Orthodox other	0 - 0,39 1,11 *** 0,17	n.a.
Finland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,39 * 0,53 **		n.a.	0,20 ***

Latvia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,04 - 0,14	Catholic (base) Protest. Orthodox other	0 0,03 0,13 - 0,11	0,00
Norway		n.a.		n.a.	0,14 ***
Sweden		n.a.		n.a.	0,27 ***
Bulgaria	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,05 - 0,36 *		n.a.	- 0,20 **
Greece	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,33 0,05		n.a.	- 0,05

Note: p>0.01 is denoted with three stars; p>0.05 with two stars, and p>0.05 with one star.

Table 5: Number of children, linear regression results
(controlled for education, age of respondent, number of siblings at age 15)

Males

	Religiosity self-assessed		Religious affiliation		Attendance of religious services
		Coef.		Coef.	Coef.
Austria	yes (base) no	0 - 0,06	Catholic (base) Protest. Freethinker other	0 - 0,04 - 0,28 * 0,02	n.a.
Czech Rep.	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,22 * - 0,22 **		n.a.	- 0,05 *
Hungary	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,00 0,00	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 - 0,06 - 0,30	- 0,02
Italy	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,05 - 0,26 *		n.a.	- 0,01
Lithuania	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,00 0,08	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 - 0,12 - 0,02	n.a.
Poland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,15 - 0,25 *		n.a.	- 0,08 ***
Slovakia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,14 *** - 0,19 ***	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 0,01 - 0,06	- 0,10 ***
Spain	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,00 - 0,11	Catholic (base) Freethinker other	0 - 0,13 - 0,18	- 0,04 **
Eastern Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,28 ** - 0,33 ***		n.a.	- 0,03
Western Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,06 - 0,15	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 - 0,03 0,13	- 0,04 *
Switzerland	yes (base) no	0 - 0,13	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,06 0,43 ***	- 0,08 ***
Estonia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,17 0,17	Protest. (base) Catholic Orthodox other	0 - 0,17 0,05 0,06	n.a.
Finland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,32 *** - 0,42 ***		n.a.	- 0,13 ***
Latvia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,02 0,17 **	Catholic (base) Protest. Orthodox other	0 - 0,05 - 0,14 * - 0,05	0,06 ***
Norway		n.a.		n.a.	- 0,10 ***
Sweden		n.a.		n.a.	- 0,12 ***

Greece	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,22 *** - 0,22 **		n.a.	- 0,08 ***

Note: p>0.01 is denoted with three stars; p>0.05 with two stars, and p>0.05 with one star.

Number of children:

Females

	Religiosity self-assessed		Religious affiliation		Attendance of religious services
		Coef.		Coef.	Coef.
Austria	yes (base) no	0 - 0,15 ***	Catholic (base) Protest. Freethinker other	0 0,01 - 0,26 *** 0,17 *	n.a.
Czech Rep.	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,15 * - 0,30 ***		n.a.	- 0,06 ***
Hungary	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,02 0,03	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 - 0,01 - 0,08	0,03 **
Italy	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,26 *** - 0,24 ***		n.a.	- 0,06 ***
Lithuania	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,01 - 0,16 ***	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 - 0,12 - 0,09	n.a.
Poland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,47 *** - 0,17		n.a.	- 0,10 ***
Slovakia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,20 *** - 0,21 ***	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 - 0,22 ** - 0,8	- 0,10 ***
Spain	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,05 - 0,16	Catholic (base) Freethinker other	0 0,5 0,47 ***	- 0,01
Eastern Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,18 * - 0,25 ***		n.a.	- 0,03 *
Western Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,10 - 0,18 **	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,09 * 0,18	- 0,06 ***
Switzerland	yes (base) no	0 - 0,17 **	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,10 *** 0,38 ***	- 0,10 ***
Estonia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,09 0,07	Protest. (base) Catholic Orthodox other	0 - 0,45 - 0,06 - 0,22 *	n.a.
Finland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,45 *** - 0,58 ***		n.a.	- 0,14 ***
Latvia	yes (base)	0	Catholic (base)	0	0,02

	somewhat no	- 0,13 *** - 0,03	Protest. Orthodox other	0,22 *** - 0,28 *** 0,04	
Norway		n.a.		n.a.	- 0,15 ***
Sweden		n.a.		n.a.	- 0,07 ***
Bulgaria	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,00 0,02		n.a.	0,06 ***
Greece	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,16 *** - 0,16 **		n.a.	- 0,08 ***

Note: p>0.01 is denoted with three stars; p>0.05 with two stars, and p>0.05 with one star.

Table 6: Age at birth of first child, linear regression results
(controlled for education, age of respondent, number of siblings at age 15)

Males

	Religiosity self-assessed		Religious affiliation		Attendance of religious services
		Coef.		Coef.	Coef.
Austria	yes (base) no	0 0,53	Catholic (base) Protest. Freethinker other	0 0,32 - 1,23 0,55	n.a.
Czech Rep.	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,70 0,85 *		n.a.	0,14
Hungary	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,27 0,08	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,49 - 0,11	0,19 **
Italy	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 1,06 1,65		n.a.	0,13
Lithuania	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,17 0,02	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 0,97 ** 0,51	n.a.
Poland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 n.a. n.a.		n.a.	1,68
Slovakia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,26 0,16	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 1,32 * - 0,92 *	0,12
Spain	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,02 0,19	Catholic (base) Freethinker other	0 0,23 0,63	0,15 *
Eastern Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,00 0,50		n.a.	0,15
Western Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,31 - 0,07	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 - 0,11 0,45	- 0,03
Switzerland	yes (base) no	0 - 0,34	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,34 1,78 ***	- 0,11
Estonia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,20 - 0,18	Protest. (base) Catholic Orthodox other	0 0,35 0,37 0,36	n.a.
Finland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,00 - 0,17		n.a.	0,01
Latvia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,14 0,00	Catholic (base) Protest. Orthodox other	0 0,24 0,62 0,44	- 0,03
Norway		n.a.		n.a.	0,16
Sweden		n.a.		n.a.	0,25 **

Greece	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 2,14 *** - 1,23		n.a.	- 0,67 ***

Note: p>0.01 is denoted with three stars; p>0.05 with two stars, and p>0.05 with one star.

Age at birth of first child:

Females

	Religiosity self-assessed		Religious affiliation		Attendance of religious services
		Coef.		Coef.	Coef.
Austria	yes (base) no	0 0,28 *	Catholic (base) Protest. Freethinker other	0 0,10 - 0,11 1,23 ***	n.a.
Czech Rep.	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,26 0,47 *		n.a.	0,15 **
Hungary	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,13 0,08	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 - 0,04 0,32	0,12 **
Italy	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 1,40 * - 0,53		n.a.	- 0,01
Lithuania	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,14 - 0,13	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 0,47 0,11	n.a.
Poland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,61 - 0,40		n.a.	0,07
Slovakia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,09 - 0,44 **	Catholic (base) Orthodox other	0 - 0,90 ** - 0,33	- 0,03
Spain	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,10 - 0,10	Catholic (base) Freethinker other	0 0,97 * 0,80	0,00
Eastern Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,74 * 0,58 *		n.a.	0,08
Western Germany	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,01 - 0,37	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 0,57 *	- 0,15 **
Switzerland	yes (base) no	0 - 0,27	Catholic (base) Protest. other	0 - 0,02 1,16 ***	- 0,04
Estonia	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,16 - 0,29	Protest. (base) Catholic Orthodox other	0 1,34 0,47 0,30	n.a.
Finland	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,20 - 0,11		n.a.	0,09
Latvia	yes (base)	0	Catholic (base)	0	0,01

	somewhat no	0,10 - 0,07	Protest. Orthodox other	0,02 - 0,13 0,27	
Norway		n.a.		n.a.	- 0,06
Sweden		n.a.		n.a.	0,04
Bulgaria	yes (base) somewhat no	0 0,41 * 0,37		n.a.	0,25 ***
Greece	yes (base) somewhat no	0 - 0,73 ** - 0,77		n.a.	- 0,28 **

Note: p>0.01 is denoted with three stars; p>0.05 with two stars, and p>0.05 with one star.