

Abstract

This article uses data from the European Values Surveys and European Social Survey for the period 1981-2004 to establish basic trends in religious attendance and belief across the ten countries that have been consistently surveyed. These show that secularization is mainly occurring in Catholic European countries and has effectively ceased among post-1945 birth cohorts in the six mainly Protestant societies where secularization began earliest. We also project the proportion of religious to nonreligious population in our sample to 2100 using fertility, age and sex-structure parameters derived from social surveys - something that no other scholars have attempted. Together with analyses of second-generation religious retention among Muslim immigrants, these suggest that western Europe will be far more religious at the end of our century than at its beginning.