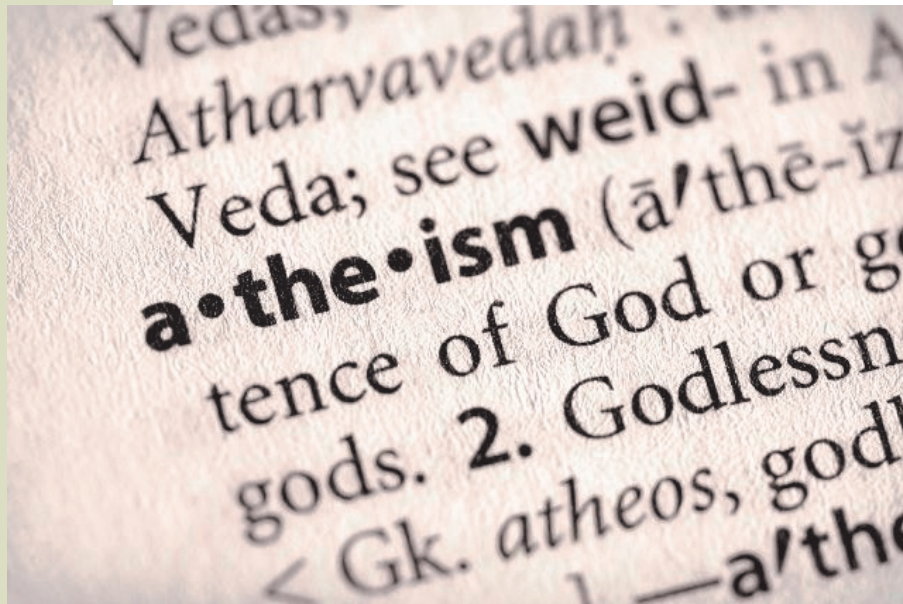




quarterly bulletin of research-based information  
on mission in Europe



## Secular Europe: its past or its future?

**O**n the Pope's recent visit to the UK, Benedict XVI launched a blistering attack on "aggressive secularism" which seeks to exclude "God, religion and virtue from public life". Despite a rocky start, the media generally applauded his comments and a diverse range of Christians found that he was saying things that they instinctively feel.

British missiologist, Andrew Kirk, has consistently argued over several decades that the most urgent dialogue in which Christians should engage is not inter-religious dialogue (important though that is) but a dialogue with secular ideology about the hidden and unexamined assumptions it makes about the way that societies go about their daily routines. More recently the think-tank *Ekklesia* ran a feature listing the many ways in which one British political party was consulting regularly with the Christian community. Its author, Jonathan Bartley, controversially suggested that 'some in the churches, and indeed the Pope, are on another planet when they complain about the banishment of religion from public life in the UK.'

'Religious' and 'secular' were originally terms used to distinguish monks from priests. Their modern usage is slightly different. We now understand 'secular' to refer to a radical philosophical and practical

alternative to a life lived with reference to God, gods, or other spiritual realities. Two other terms are dependent on it: secularisation and secularism.

Secularisation describes the gradual withdrawal or rejection of religious participation and values in the public realms of politics, the arts, media, and education. In Europe the most rigorous example of this is the French case of *laïcité*, the radical separation of church and state. Secularism, on the other hand, is the committed philosophy that seeks to explain all of life without any reference to God, gods, or the divine. Many of the most ardent critics of contemporary faith are committed secularists, with the atheist Richard Dawkins amongst them. The eradication of religious attitudes and practices from public spaces and workplaces often focuses on certain symbols, religious headdresses and crucifixes, for example.

### What recent trends can we highlight?

Ron Inglehart, using data from the European and World Values surveys gathered over several decades, has linked secularisation with a country's shift from being a 'culture of survival' to a 'culture of self-expression'. Economic prosperity and

...CONTINUED INSIDE

## EDITORIAL

### Can atheism save Europe?

**O**ver the last few years prominent atheists such as Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens have called for the definitive abandonment of Europe's Christian heritage arguing that religion poisons everything to such an extent that it is detrimental to society. As they see it, Europe's only hope is for a New Enlightenment that will see the triumph of secularism over religion and assist in the progress of civilization.

Christian apologists such as John Lennox and Alister McGrath have faced these arguments head on and asked whether atheism, given its history and objectives, can really offer any genuine salvation for European society.

Away from the academic arena where these debates take place, secularism as a sociological phenomenon is changing the religious landscape of Europe. This edition of Vista attempts to assess the secularisation of Europe from a variety of viewpoints.

Darrell Jackson looks at the topic in general, defining some important terms and considering whether secularisation is Europe's past or its future. Jo Appleton presents a fascinating investigation into the constitutions of the nations of Europe and the differing relationships between the church and the state. In the final major article I present an analysis of the recently published European Values Survey (2008), and publish for the first time what we have called "The NOVA Index of European Secularity".

To conclude another bumper edition of Vista we return to the subject of religious symbols to look at the pressure to remove crosses from schools, public buildings and even when worn as jewellery, and provide another review of useful resources for engaging with secularism.

We hope you enjoy this edition and that you will continue to give us feedback on Vista through our blog:

<http://europeanmission.wordpress.com/>

JM

modernisation result in secular and rational values usurping religious and traditional values. His work is especially important for the empirical data he uses to support a variant for of secularisation theory which broadly argues that secular views replace religious views as a country modernises.

However, other sociologists have disavowed or drastically revised their previous positions. Peter Berger is one, and his work with Grace Davie suggests that European secularisation is an exception to many other societies that are both modern *and* religious. In fact, modernised European countries show significant variations of religious attitudes.

A 2007 Eurostat survey of 27,000 individuals found that 53% regarded religion as an important element of their lives with almost 75% claiming allegiance to a religious community. In 2009, Gallup sampled 34 European countries and an average of 54.6% adults agreed that 'religion was an important part of my daily life'. Whilst only 27% of the UK population views religion as important, 40% of Germany's equally modern population claimed that to be the case, whilst in Cyprus, Poland and Italy, that figure is greater than 70%.

A survey by the *Institut Français d'Opinion Publique* (IFOP) for *Le Croix* in April 2010 concluded that religion was still a private affair in England whilst in France the policy of *laïcité* excludes religion from the political domain. However, in Germany the churches fulfil important social functions as a quasi 'state organisation'.

## Secularisation and the governments of Europe

Politics are a largely secular affair across the institutions of the EU. With its mandate for cultural policy, the Council of Europe has managed to establish and retain a place for the participation of religious communities in civil society and cultural activism. Ironically, across Europe, secular governments have generally done better at granting religious and other personal freedoms to minority religious traditions than have governments allied closely to dominant religious communities, whether Christian or Islamic.

***“Europeans do not expect religions to be merely religious but to address society’s failings. They expect the church to live in the ‘here and now’ of everyday life, making its contribution to peace and the reduction of poverty.”***

***Jérôme Fourquet,  
Associate Director IFOP***

For this reason, evangelicals have traditionally welcomed secular forms of government. Perhaps surprisingly, there are a number of national Constitutions that still allow a notional space for mentions of either God and the Christian Church or tradition.

Some European political leaders appear nervous about the growing contribution of religious communities to civil society, fearing a return to Christendom values and practices. In the face of this, an increasingly vocal, confident and active European Islam might seem to presage an imminent 'clash of civilisations' and this fact helps to explain the

political rush to promote intercultural and inter-religious dialogue in Europe. Whether the religious communities are content to be constrained to the intercultural space that has been allotted for their inter-religious dialogues is a question that secular politicians are bound to monitor closely. It appears to at least hint at the fact that the divide between secular political institutions and religious communities is far from being unbridgeable.

## Is secularisation Europe's past or its future?

Secular assumptions and attitudes provide hard ground for nurturing the fruits of Christian mission. However, the 1990s experienced a 'great reversal' of the sociological predictions of the 1960s regarding secularisation. The rise of global Pentecostalism and global Islam have chastened the 'prophets of religious demise' and led to revisions of their projections. Frustratingly, traditional indicators of secularisation still tend downwards in Europe: church attendance and the professing of orthodox Christian beliefs and practices. Encouragement can be found in the lively engagement and contribution of Christian communities to civil society, community welfare, educational, and charitable or philanthropic projects. This engagement is not only a mark of the Church in mission, it may yet hold one key to a reversal in its declining fortunes in Europe.

Whether Europe's future is a faith-free or a faith-filled future remains to be seen. The witness of Christian history is that faith has persevered through persecution and opposition. The mission of the Churches of Europe is to journey into a future that exists within God's future. DJ



*Kryžių kalnas*, Hill of Crosses, near Šiauliai, in northern Lithuania Source: Flickr, rights reserved

## SECULARITY AND EUROPEAN CONSTITUTIONS

While Europe as a whole may be seen as increasingly secular, there are a surprising number of mentions of God, the church and religion in the constitutions of individual countries. The table below gives an overview of these. The majority of mentions of 'the church' are in the context of its separation from the state. Religion is usually mentioned with regard to 'freedom of religion'. This is usually defined as the freedom for an individual to practice their religion, with no mention of evangelism or conversion outside of their religious communities.

Denmark, Greece, Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Malta all have constitutional state churches. Sweden, Finland and Spain have differing degrees of separation of church and state whilst maintaining a close relationship between the two. JA

Country	Mentioned in the constitution:				Majority religion
	God	Church	Religion	Relationship between church and state	
Albania	✓	✗	✓	Constitutionally, there is no official religion. "We, the people of Albania, proud and aware of our history, with responsibility for the future, and with faith in God and/or other universal values..."	
Austria	✗	✓	✓		RC 73.6%
Belarus	✗	✗	✓	Article 16 - Religions and faiths shall be equal before the law. Relations between the State and religious organizations shall be regulated by the law with regard to their influence on the formation of the spiritual, cultural and state traditions of the Belarusian people	
Belgium	✗	✗	✓	Article 24 - Everyone has right to religious education Article 181 - Ministers receive their salary from the state	RC 75%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	✗	✗	✓		
Bulgaria	✗	✓	✓	Article 13,2 - Religious institutions shall be separate from the State. Article 13,3 - Eastern Orthodox Christianity shall be considered the traditional religion in the Republic of Bulgaria.	BOrth 82.6%
Croatia	✗		✓	R.C Church has historical relationship with the state	RC 87.8%
Cyprus	✗	✓	✗		G Orth 78%
Czech Rep.	✗	✗	✗		None 49%
Denmark	✓	✓	✗	Article 4 - The Evangelical Lutheran Church shall be the Established Church of Denmark, and as such shall be supported by the State. Article 6 – King must be a member of the State Church	ELuth 95%
Estonia	✗	✓	✓	Article 40 – No state church	None 40.2%
Finland	✗	✓	✓	Historical relationship with Evangelical Lutheran Church as state church – but gradual disassociation	Luth 84.2%
France	✗	✗	✓	Article 1 - France shall be an indivisible, secular, democratic and social Republic.	RC 78.8%
Germany	✓	✓	✓	Article 137 - No state church	RC 31.7%
Greece	✓	✓	✓	Greek Orthodox church is constitutionally the state church	GOrth 98%
Hungary	✗	✓	✓	R.C Church has historical relationship with the state Article 60 - Church is separate from the state	RC 51.9%
Iceland	✗	✓	✓	Article 62 - The Evangelical Lutheran Church shall be the State Church in Iceland and, as such, it shall be supported and protected by the State.	Luth 85.5%
Ireland	✓	✓	✓	"In the Name of the Most Holy Trinity, from Whom is all authority and to Whom, as our final end, all actions both of men and States must be referred, We, the people of Éire, Humbly acknowledging all our obligations to our Divine Lord, Jesus Christ," Article 6 - All powers of government, legislative, executive and judicial, derive, under God, from the people,	RC 88.4%
Italy	✗	✓	✓	Article 7 - State and Roman Catholic Church independent	RC 90%
Kosovo	✗	✗	✓	Article 8 - The Republic of Kosovo is a secular state and is neutral in matters of religious beliefs.	
Latvia	✗	✓	✓	Article 99 - Church separate from the state	Luth 55%
Liechtenstein	✓	✗	✗	Article 37 - Roman Catholic Church is the state church	RC 76.2%
Lithuania	✓	✓	✓	Article 43 - There shall not be a state religion in Lithuania	RC 79%
Luxembourg	✗	✓	✓	Strong relationship between state and Roman Catholic church	RC 87%
Macedonia	✗	✓	✓		MOrth 64.7%
Malta	✓	✓	✓	Section 2 -The religion of Malta is the Roman Catholic Apostolic Religion	RC 98%
Moldova	✗	✗	✓		
Monaco	✗	✗	✓	Article 9 -The Catholic religion is the religion of the state	

Netherlands	✗	✗	✓		None 41%
Norway	✓	✓	✓	Article 2 - The Evangelical-Lutheran religion shall remain the official religion of the State.	ChNor85.7%
Poland	✓	✓	✓	"Both those who believe in God as the source of truth, justice, good and beauty, As well as those not sharing such faith but respecting those universal values as arising from other sources...Beholden to our ancestors for their labours, their struggle for independence achieved at great sacrifice, for our culture rooted in the Christian heritage of the Nation and in universal human values,...recognizing our responsibility before God or our own consciences."	RC 89.8%
Portugal	✗	✓	✓	Article 41 - Church and state are separate	RC 88%
Romania	✓	✗	✓	Article 29, 5 - Religious cults shall be autonomous from the State and shall enjoy support from it, including the facilitation of religious assistance in the army, in hospitals, prisons, homes and orphanages.	EOrth89.8%
Serbia and Montenegro	✗	✓	✓	Article 11 - The Republic of Serbia is a secular state. Churches and religious communities are separated from the state.	
Slovakia (Slovak Rep.)	✗	✓	✓	Church separate from the state	RC 68.9%
Slovenia	✗	✗	✓	Article 7 - State and religious communities shall be separate	RC 57.8%
Spain	✗	✓	✓	Article 16 There shall be no State religion. The public authorities shall take the religious beliefs of Spanish society into account and shall consequently maintain appropriate cooperation with the Catholic Church and the other confessions.	RC 80%
Sweden	✗	✗	✓	State and church formally separated in 2000	Luth/Prot 87%
Switzerland	✓	✓	✓	Article 72 - The regulation of the relationship between church and state is a cantonal matter. Preamble begins: "In the name of God Almighty!"	RC 41.8%
Turkey	✗	✗	✓	Article 2 - The Republic of Turkey is a democratic, secular and social state governed by the rule of law;	Muslim 99%
Ukraine	✓	✓	✓	Preamble: "realizing the responsibility in the eyes of God, before our own conscience, past, present and future generations," Church and state separate	
UK	—	—	—	Church of England and the Church of Scotland are 'established' churches, with the Queen as the head of the Church of England. There is no constitution.	Anglican 21% (Christian 71%)

Key: RC – Roman Catholic  
Luth – Lutheran  
BOrth – Bulgarian Orthodox  
EOrth – Eastern Orthodox  
GOrth – Greek Orthodox  
MOrth – Macedonian Orthodox

Sources: <http://www.legislationline.org/documents/section/constitutions>;  
<http://www.kypros.org/Constitution/English/>  
<http://www.kushtetutakosoves.info>  
ERICarts :Sharing Diversity/Annex 5 (Summer 2007)  
British Social Attitudes Survey, 2007, Office for National Statistics 2010



## MEASURING SECULARITY IN EUROPE

Is there any reliable way to assess the process of secularisation? If secularity is the result of this process is there any way to measure the current state of secularity in Europe?

Discussions on the advance of secularism often make selective use of opinion survey data. Most surveys are limited to one country and even then comparison between surveys is notoriously difficult for technical reasons. Thankfully one survey conducted across Europe at intervals throughout the last thirty years may provide us with the tools we need to measure secularity in Europe.

The **European Values Study (EVS)** describes itself as “the most comprehensive research project on human values in Europe”. Conducted on four occasions during the last thirty years (1981, 1990, 1999 and 2008) the study has sought to understand how Europeans think about life, family, work, religion, sex, politics and society. The use of the same questionnaire in every country and the repetition of the survey at approximately ten year intervals make it an invaluable tool for measuring changes in values. Unfortunately not all the results from the 2008 survey are available and these include Croatia, Italy and the UK. Nevertheless, the 130 questions in the survey provide a goldmine of information for sociologists and the specifically religious questions give us some reliable measures for secularity.

For the purposes of this article we have isolated the EVS data from 20 major European countries and have focussed on the responses to five questions:

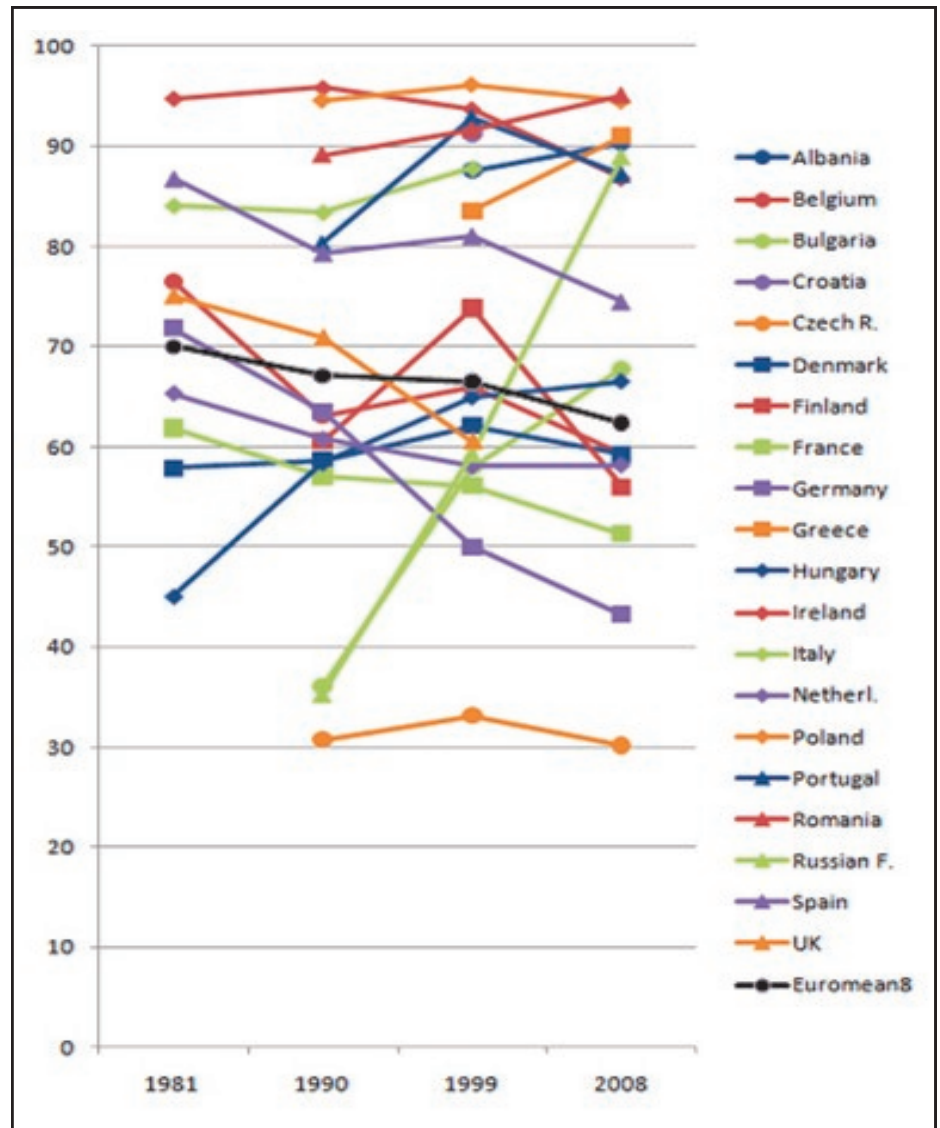
1. Do you believe in God?
2. How important is religion in your life?
3. Independently of whether you go to church or not, would you say you are religious, not religious or a convinced atheist?
4. Apart from weddings, funerals and christenings, how often do you attend religious services?
5. How much confidence do you have in the church?

### Do you believe in God?

This most basic of questions has been asked in all four waves of the EVS. Taking the data from the eight countries which have participated in all four waves of the study and for whom the 2008 data is available, the number of Europeans who respond affirmatively to this question has declined from 70% to 62%. A closer inspection of the data, however, shows that this trend is far from universal.

In Germany the percentage has dropped much more notably from 72% to 43% in the last

Percentage of respondents who believe in God



thirty years. But perhaps more surprisingly are those countries which have seen a significant increase in belief in God. In 1990 only 35% of respondents in Bulgaria and Russia said that they believed in God. By 2008 this had risen to 68% of Bulgarians and 89% of Russians. Today in Europe belief in God is most prevalent in Romania (95%), Poland (94%), Greece (91%), Albania (90%) and Russia (89%). The Czech Republic stands out as the most unbelieving at 30%.

### How important is religion in your life?

Whilst a clear majority of Europeans continue to believe in God only 15-20% would consider themselves to be “very religious”. The Europeans who most consider themselves to be “very religious” are the Romanians (57%), and the Greeks (46%), and in both cases have become more so since the last survey in 1999. Those who consider religion to be least important include the Danes (9%), the Germans (8%) and the Czechs (6%).

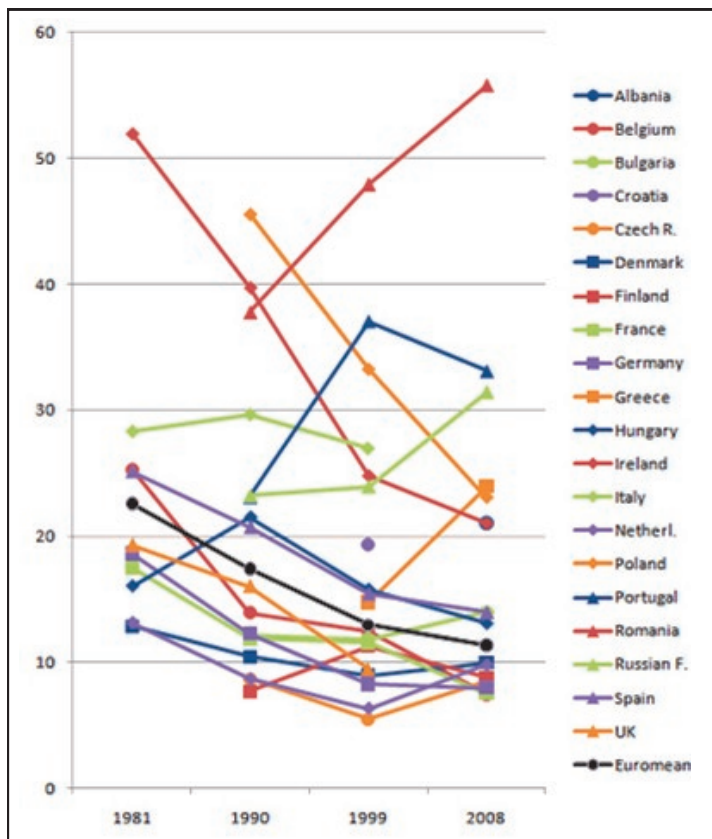
### Are you religious, non-religious or atheist?

Respondents were asked if they considered themselves to be “religious”, “not religious” or self-consciously “atheist”. It may not be a surprise to find 87% of the Greeks and 84% of the Poles confessing they are religious. What is more surprising is to find 83% of Albanians do so, up from 65% in 1999, the sharpest rise in any European country. Today, only 3% of Albanians declare themselves to be atheists, an astonishing figure given the country’s recent history. The countries with the most self-declared atheists are France (17%), Czech Rep, (15%), Germany (14%), Belgium (11%) and Spain (10%).

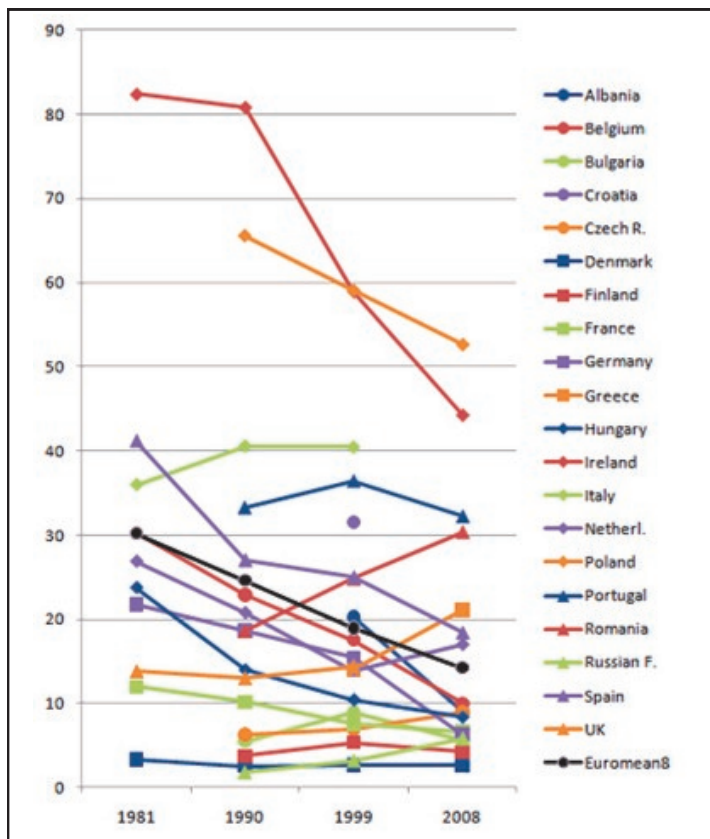
### How often do you attend religious services?

Another indication of secularisation in Europe can be seen in trends in attendance at religious services over the last 20 years. For the group of countries who have

Percentage of respondents with a "great deal of confidence" in the church



Percentage of respondents who attend a religious service at least once a week



participated in all four waves of the study and whose data is available, the percentage of respondents who attend a religious service at least once a week has dropped from 30% in 1980 to 14% in 2008. Russians, Greeks and particularly Romanians are attending services more regularly than before, but this contrasts with those countries that have seen a dramatic fall in attendance: Germany (down from 22% in 1990 to 6% in 2008), Belgium (down from 30% in 1990 to 10% in 2008) and Spain (down from 41% in 1990 to 18% in 2008). But the most notable fall of all has occurred in Ireland, where weekly attendance exceeded 80% in both the 1980 and 1990 surveys but then suffered a dramatic decline to stand at only 44% in 2008).

**Do you have confidence in the church**

The final measure we have chosen relates to the confidence that Europeans have in the church over this period. The aforementioned group of countries whose data is available for all four waves give us a good indicator of the trends. In 1980, 23% of respondents said they had a "great deal of confidence in the church". By 2008 this figure had fallen to 11%. Once again Greece, Russia and particularly Romania seemed to buck the trend with rises in confidence over the last 20 years but two Catholic countries have suffered a crisis of confidence with their levels falling markedly. In 1980 52% of all Irish people said they had a great deal of confidence in the church. By

2008 this had collapsed to 21%. Likewise for the Poles who suffered a drop in confidence from 46% in 1990 to 23% in 2008. It would seem sensible to suggest that this may be related to the scandals of sexual abuse by priests in these countries.

**The NOVA Index of Secularity**

Taking these five measures from the 2008 EVS we have attempted to combine the data into a single table which might serve as an index of secularism in Europe. We have called it "The NOVA Index of European Secularity". The scale has no absolute meaning but does reflect the relative levels of secularity as manifest in that countries' responses to the EVS. For the three countries whose data has not yet been published for the 2008 wave we have taken the 1999 EVS data and generated an estimate using the mean variance over that period.

We see that this puts the Czech Republic at the top of the secularity league table, closely followed by Germany, France and the UK. The most religious countries are Romania, Poland and Greece.

All the data from this research can be consulted online via the European Values Study website: [www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu](http://www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu). In the coming weeks the tables and graphs will be uploaded to our website and blog for your further consideration. JM

**The NOVA Index of European Secularity**

Rank	Country	NIS value
1	Czech R.	3.61
2	Germany	3.39
3	France	3.27
4	UK*	3.21
5	Belgium	3.16
6	Finland	3.16
7	Spain	3.05
8	Hungary	3.04
9	Netherlands	2.98
10	Denmark	2.93
11	Bulgaria	2.79
12	Albania	2.72
13	Russian Fed.	2.65
14	Croatia*	2.51
15	Ireland	2.30
16	Italy*	2.28
17	Portugal	2.26
18	Greece	2.13
19	Poland	2.03
20	Romania	1.84

(Based on the results of the 2008 European Values Study. \* The values for the UK, Croatia and Italy are estimates based on the results of the 1999 EVS and making an adjustment for the average rate of secularisation across the dataset since then.)

**R**eaders of *Vista* can hardly be unaware that over the last five years or so, the wearing of a cross in public or the displaying of a crucifix on the walls of a public school, hospital or office has become a focus for social policy legislators in a number of European countries.

It may be too early to predict future trends, but an anticipated ruling from the European Court of Human Rights about a pending Italian case will prove important to the ongoing debate. Lawyers from the EU countries with significant Roman Catholic majorities have made representations to the EU and the Council of Europe about these issues, touching as they do on the question of Church and State and questions of individual liberties in addition to secularisation.

In our last issue we investigated the banning of the wearing of *burqas* in public. There may be religious motivations for taking such measures but in most cases they are inspired by concerns to maintain a secular and level (so it is argued) playing field. This has also been extended to Christian religious symbolism in the public spaces of Europe and both crosses (plain) and crucifixes (adorned) have been banned for a variety of reasons. In some instances, health and safety reasons have been cited where the cross or crucifix is carried on a necklace.

Europeans may be willing to accept the banning of religious symbols in public as a way of avoiding the religious conflicts they are believed to provoke. But, when a Jewish lawyer advocates for the retention of a crucifix in an Italian classroom, Europe's policy makers have to ask themselves whether a simplistic analysis of 'fear of religious conflict' is an adequate defense for removing all religious symbols from the public square. A more nuanced response is overdue. DJ

### Common arguments for banning crosses

- Wearing them poses a health & safety risk.
- Wearing them contravenes existing dress codes.
- Displaying them in public buildings infringes individual freedoms.
- Displaying them is inappropriate for a secular, non-confessional state.

### Common arguments for retaining crosses

- It reinforces national and cultural identity.
- It confers similar rights to the wearing of Islamic and Sikh headdresses.
- It is a symbol of 'universal' values.

## Ban the cross timeline

2006

British Airways check-in worker Nadia Eweida, of Egyptian ethnicity is banned from wearing a cross because the wearing of all publically visible jewellery is forbidden by the company.



2007



Robert Napier School in Gillingham, Kent, orders 13 year-old schoolgirl, Samantha Devine to remove her crucifix because it poses a health and safety risk. A blazer lapel badge was considered more appropriate.

2008

A Spanish court judges it inappropriate that a state school displays crucifixes. The Spanish Evangelical Alliance supports such moves because they help guarantee the religious neutrality of public officials.



2009



The European Court of Human Rights, rules in 'Lautsi v. Italy' that a school displaying the crucifix is a "violation of parents' rights" to educate children in accord with their convictions. The final judgement may affect all 47 Council of Europe member states.

2010  
April

British nurse, Shirley Chaplin, loses appeal to wear a crucifix at work. The Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Trust wins on health and safety grounds. The Trust says a lapel badge is appropriate.



German First Minister, Aygül Özkan, calls for a ban on crosses in state schools. She withdrew suggestions following criticism from fellow members of the ruling CDU.

June

Spain's government introduces draft Law of Freedom of Religion regulating the use of crucifixes in public schools, hospitals and council buildings.



An Amsterdam court rules that the city's public transport authority was correct to ban an Egyptian-born tram conductor from wearing a crucifix on the basis it was attached to a necklace.

August

In Poland, 80% of survey respondents urged the removal of a cross facing the Presidential palace commemorating the death of the former President.



The BBC reports that human-rights NGO, Helsinki Monitor, has urged Greek Courts to remove icons and bibles from its judgement chambers.



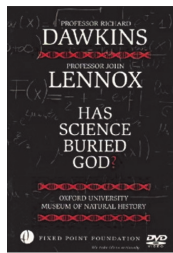
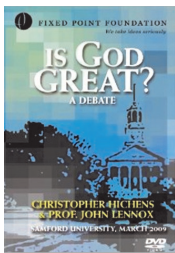
It is possible to explore a Christian response to secular culture at many different levels. The resources below are some examples of ways in which you can engage with the themes, including using them as a tool to share the Gospel with people living around us.

**Publications**

The Gospel and Our Culture Network aims to 'stimulate and assist the Church's witness in and to Western culture, with a view to transforming the basic premises of that culture in the light of the reality of Jesus Christ.' Their website has a collection of academic papers and their newsletter is available from <http://www.gospel-culture.org.uk/pastnews.htm> The ACCESS U.K supplement contains an annotated list of 20 articles and passages from a variety of books, selected to 'enrich reflection on the Gospel and Western Culture.



There are several books and DVDs aimed at refuting the agenda of secularists such as Richard Dawkins. Professor John Lennox has debated publicly with both Richard Dawkins (the God Delusion) and Christopher Hitchens (Can atheism save Europe?). DVDs of the



debates are available to buy, and you can download study guides for discussion with friends from [www.fixed-point.org/index.php/debates](http://www.fixed-point.org/index.php/debates)

**Understanding popular culture**

The vision of Damaris Trust is to "help Christians communicate their faith appropriately within popular contemporary culture". The organisation produces a weekly email *CultureWatch* alert, with reviews and study guides for secular films, literature and music. You can sign up for this email at [www.damaris.org/cm/home/culturewatch](http://www.damaris.org/cm/home/culturewatch) Damaris is based in both the UK and Norway, with some of their resources available in Norwegian.

Bible Society's *Reel Issues* is another free resource focusing particularly on films. Subscribers receive monthly study guides, which include specific scripture passages relating the themes highlighted in the film under discussion. You can also access an extensive archive of film discussions.



How do you respond when you are talking about some of the 'big issues' of in the news? *Friday Night Theology* from the UK Evangelical Alliance offers a Christian reflection on a topical issue of the day – however as it is a UK-based organisation, the focus can be more British than European!

**Courses**

The London Institute of Christianity hosts the *Toolbox* course, a five-day course which helps participants in developing skills in biblical interpretation and engaging with today's changing culture. Topics include understanding and reading media, globalisation, and interpreting the bible. For more information visit <http://www.licc.org.uk/engaging-with-culture/licc-toolbox/>



For French speakers, *Passerelles vers Dieu* is a six-session DVD-based evangelistic course aimed at building bridges for the Gospel with your secular neighbours. There is an accompanying book written by David Brown of Mission France. Both resources are available to buy from [www.editionsfarel.com](http://www.editionsfarel.com)



We have attempted to list some resources for mission that we think might be of most help. We hope you agree and if you know of others, especially non-English resources, we'd love to hear from you so we can list them on our blog at <http://europeanmission.wordpress.com>. JA

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