

Counting Religion in Britain

A Monthly Round-Up of New Statistical Sources

Number 3 – December 2015

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OPINION POLLS – GENERAL

Religious affiliation

Lord Ashcroft has returned to the polling fray with his first very large-scale survey since his recent serious illness, interviewing 20,054 UK adults aged 18 and over online between 20 November and 2 December 2015. The subject was attitudes to the European Union, but, as usual, a question on religious affiliation was included in a battery of background variables. The wording was: ‘which of the following religious groups do you consider yourself to be a member of?’ Results by home nation are summarized in the table, below. Full results disaggregated by other demographics can be found in table 67 at:

<http://lordashcrofthpolls.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Europe-poll-tables-Dec-15.pdf>

% down	United Kingdom	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Christian	51	51	54	50	69
Non-Christian	7	7	4	3	2
No religion	40	40	42	46	27

Guessing games

Ipsos MORI has been continuing its ‘Perils of Perception’ research, asking respondents to guess the answers to sundry factual questions and then comparing them with the actual statistics. The latest survey was conducted in 33 countries between 1 and 16 October 2015, including in Britain where 1,000 adults were interviewed online. One of the questions this year was: ‘out of every 100 people, about how many do you think do not affiliate themselves with any religion – that is, atheists, agnostics, and those who say they do not identify with any religion?’ In Britain the average guess was 45%, which Ipsos MORI noted as being 20 points above the actual census of population figure. While this is true, religious affiliation questions are notoriously sensitive to variant wording and coding, and the public’s guesstimate on this occasion was actually quite close to the proportion of religious nones found, for example, in the British Social Attitudes Surveys. A slide presentation featuring topline from the ‘Perils of Perception’ study is at:

<https://www.slideshare.net/fullscreen/IpsosMORI/the-perils-of-perception-in-2015-ipsos-mori/5>

Who wants spiritual progress?

Not many of us is the answer, according to YouGov polling of 18,235 adults in 17 countries across the world (fieldwork dates not given). They were asked to think about their whole lives and to say which of 12 things they most wanted and which single one they wanted most overall. Scores were then calculated by balancing the two figures, to give a measure incorporating both the breadth and intensity of the desire. Spiritual progress was one option, picked by just 4% of the UK sample (being ranked ninth), and by no more than 13% in any nation (United States and Indonesia heading the list in this regard). In the UK, love (19%), better health (15%), money and my own family (12% each) were the top priorities. A blog about the survey and an interactive table of topline results can be found at:

<https://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/12/23/wants/>

Religion as personal value

Religion also attracted relatively little support as a personal value, whether in the UK or the European Union (EU) as a whole, according to preliminary results from Eurobarometer 84.3, undertaken by TNS on behalf of the European Commission. UK fieldwork took place between 7 and 16 November 2015 among a sample of 1,314 adults aged 15 and over. Respondents were presented with a list of 12 values and invited to select a maximum of three which were most important to them, the findings being tabulated below, from which it will be seen that religion was ranked bottom. Religion was also included as an option on two further lists, of factors which most created a feeling of community among EU citizens and which best represented the EU. Topline data are in the annex which can be accessed via the link at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/PublicOpinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/STANDARD/surveyKy/2098>

%	UK	EU
Respect for human life	41	36
Human rights	39	40
Peace	37	45
Individual freedom	25	27
Equality	25	20
Rule of law	20	13
Respect for other cultures	20	9
Tolerance	18	17
Democracy	16	25
Solidarity/support for others	9	18
Self-fulfilment	5	9
Religion	5	6

Leaving Christ out of Christmas (1)

Family and not faith is important to Britons at Christmas, according to a news release from the British Academy in advance of its New Year series of debates and other events around faith.

The Academy commissioned YouGov to poll an online sample of 1,751 adults on 14-15 December 2015 on the most and least important aspects of the Christmas period for them. Spending time with family and friends was most important for 65% followed by having time off work (12%). Faith/Christianity was the choice of only 7%, and no more than 12% in any demographic sub-group (among the over-60s and in Scotland). Moreover, faith/Christianity actually topped the list of the least important aspects of the Christmas period, at 33%, being especially unpopular among the under-40s. Linda Woodhead had a comment piece about the survey in *The Times* for 23 December, describing Christmas as ‘this sacred ritual of kindred’, while the full data table is at:

https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/22iawbpysa/BritishAcademyResults_151215_ChristmasHolidays_Website.pdf

Leaving Christ out of Christmas (2)

In similar vein, an online poll by BMG Research for the *Evening Standard* on 9-15 December 2015 found that for 74% of 1,585 UK adults the highlight of the festive period would be a traditional Christmas Day dinner with family or friends. The next favourite activity was giving and receiving gifts (60%), although only 32% enjoyed going shopping for presents. Celebrating the birth of Christ was a favourite aspect of Christmas for a lowly 18%, ranging from 14% of under-35s to 24% of over-65s. Singing carols was enjoyed by 21%, and going to church on Christmas Day by 10% (the least attractive of the available options). Slightly more, 12% (including 17% of over-65s), said they would definitely worship over the Christmas period and a further 16% said they might, the remaining 72% having definitely decided they would not attend (66%) or being unsure (6%). An article about the survey appeared in the *Evening Standard* for 23 December and full data tables are at:

http://www.bmgresearch.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/CONFIDENTIAL-BMG-UK-Omnibus-Dec15-Evening-Standard-Christmas-poll_1.pdf

Neighbours at Christmas

Almost four in five Britons (78%) anticipated talking to their neighbours over the Christmas period, and 18% said they would be speaking with neighbours who were mostly of a different religion to themselves. In a further 29% of cases the neighbours were mostly of the same religion, while the remaining 31% apparently did not know which faith their neighbours followed. Londoners and black and minority ethnic (BME) persons were the groups most likely to be talking to neighbours of a different religion at Christmas. The survey was conducted between 4 and 8 December 2015 by Ipsos MORI on behalf of The Challenge charity among an online sample of 1,170 adults aged 16-75, including a booster of BMEs. Data tables are at:

<https://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/3677/Eight-in-ten-Britons-will-speak-to-their-neighbours-over-Christmas.aspx>

Religion and later life

The relative irreligiosity of the young is well documented. Time was when older age cohorts scored highest on most indicators of religious belonging, behaving, and believing, but there are signs that this is beginning to change. A small piece of evidence derives from an Ipsos MORI poll for the Centre for Ageing Better, for which 1,389 adults aged 50 and over across England were interviewed face-to-face between 25 September and 18 October 2015. They were asked two questions which touched on religion. The first required them to identify factors of importance in contributing to a good later life. Religion/faith was one of the options and was selected by just one person in the entire sample. The second question concerned social groups with which respondents had been involved during the previous 12 months. Religious groups, including attendance at a place of worship, was one possible reply, which 10% claimed to participate in (ranging from 6% of persons in their early 50s to 14% of over-75s). Data tables are at:

http://laterlife.ageing-better.org.uk/resources/cfab_lli_2015_data_tables.pdf

Karma

Asked online by YouGov on 15 December 2015, a plurality (41%) of 4,009 UK adults and a majority (52%) of women claimed to believe in karma, the Eastern spiritual principle of cause and effect whereby the intentions and actions of an individual influence his or her future in terms of happiness or suffering. Around one-quarter (24%) were undecided whether they believed, while 28% disbelieved and 7% were unsure what karma is. However, when karma was more fully explained, 15% more of the believers saw the potential effect as psychological rather than spiritual, and only 27% anticipated that a good deed today would in practice increase the likelihood of something good happening to them tomorrow (59% saying there would be no effect). This suggests that people's understanding of Eastern-style religious concepts and practices may be neither secure nor internally consistent. Results of the survey are posted at:

<https://yougov.co.uk/opi/surveys/results#/survey/ecb30710-a313-11e5-b9b0-005056900127>

Perceptions of Jews and Muslims

On behalf of *Prospect* magazine, YouGov has recently conducted 48 separate online surveys among representative samples of adult Britons, each survey exploring perceptions of a specific group of people, defined by a combination of gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, and religion. Each of the 48 groups was scored according to five positive qualities (intelligence, honesty, industry, politeness, and helpfulness) and five negative attributes (violence, fare-dodging, drug-taking, promiscuity, and drunkenness). The table below shows the topline scores for groups involving Jews and Muslims, the only two religious categories which were covered, together with their rank order (out of 48 groups). It will be seen that Jews were rated more favourably than Muslims and, within both categories, women more favourably than men. Muslim men in their 20s had the lowest rank order of these 12 groups, although white men in their 20s were the most derided of all 48 groups. White women in their 60s were the most praised group. Peter Kellner has an article about the surveys, 'Good Will to All Men', in

Prospect, No. 238, January 2016, pp. 16-19. A blog, with a link to an interactive data table (permitting analysis by gender, age, social grade, region, and voting), is available at:

<https://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/12/14/young-white-men-most-derided/>

	Positive average	Negative average	Overall rating	Rank order
<i>Jews</i>				
Jewish man in his 20s	50	-48	49	22
Jewish man in his 40s	51	-52	52	17
Jewish man in his 60s	58	-59	58	6
Jewish woman in her 20s	58	-55	56	9
Jewish woman in her 40s	55	-62	59	5
Jewish woman in her 60s	52	-57	54	11
<i>Muslims</i>				
Muslim man in his 20s	36	-40	38	34
Muslim man in his 40s	36	-45	40	31
Muslim man in his 60s	42	-56	49	21
Muslim woman in her 20s	40	-63	52	18
Muslim woman in her 40s	36	-65	51	19
Muslim woman in her 60s	31	-70	50	20

Pre- and post-Paris attitudes to Muslims

There has been ‘a surprising resilience’ of British attitudes toward Muslims following the Islamist attacks in Paris on 13 November 2015, according to Rob Ford and Maria Sobolewska of the University of Manchester’s School of Social Sciences. They commissioned YouGov to poll two online samples (n= 1,707 and 1,621, respectively) of Britons on 10-12 November (as it turned out, immediately before the attacks) and on 17-18 November (immediately afterwards), asking identical questions on each occasion. Some headline results are tabulated below, from which it will be seen that attitudes toward Muslims did not significantly harden in the aftermath of the attacks, and, indeed, there was a modest softening. Of course, this relative lack of movement in public opinion may not really be a cause of great optimism, which Ford and Sobolewska incline to embrace, but simply reflect the large degree of pre-existing negativity or at least ambivalence about Muslims. Perhaps the real and enduring significance of these surveys is that they appear to answer the doubting Thomases who are too ready to dismiss event-driven polling on the grounds that it captures the public mood in the heat of the moment, and thus atypically. Ford and Sobolewska have a blog about the research, including a link to the topline data, at:

<https://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/12/23/after-paris-surprising-resilience-british-attitude/>

% down	Pre-attacks	Post-attacks
<i>Muslims have a lot to offer British culture</i>		
Agree	32	34
Neither agree nor disagree	32	31
Disagree	35	35
<i>Western European and Muslim ways of life are irreconcilable</i>		
Agree	51	49
Neither agree nor disagree	28	27
Disagree	21	24
<i>Muslims in Britain have respect for culture and way of life of others</i>		
Agree	23	27
Neither agree nor disagree	23	22
Disagree	53	50

Donald Trump on Muslims

The recent call by Donald Trump, the current frontrunner for the Republican Party presidential nomination, for a ban on Muslims entering the United States, either as immigrants or tourists, has caused a bit of a backlash, both there, in Britain, and around the world. YouGov tested the pulse of public opinion by running a snap poll of 4,608 UK adults online on 8 December 2015. Asked whether they thought Trump’s proposal would be an appropriate policy for the United States, 64% said it would not be. One-quarter deemed it appropriate, including 61% of UKIP voters. Further information and a link to the data is available in the blog at:

<https://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/12/09/brits-oppose-muslim-policy-pockets-approval/>

One component of the backlash against Trump in Britain was an online petition calling for him to be banned from entering the UK. By 10 December this had attracted around 400,000 signatures, prompting YouGov to run another snap poll among its UK panellists that day, to which 5,506 responded. Approximately two-fifths (39%) thought Trump should be banned from the UK on account of what he had said against Muslims, while 47% disagreed and 14% were undecided. Results are available at:

<https://yougov.co.uk/opi/surveys/results#/survey/3c456cd0-9f24-11e5-ba8c-005056900127>

Ethno-religious integration

A surprisingly large number of UK adults appear ambivalent about the desirability of schoolchildren integrating across religious or racial boundaries, according to a YouGov poll of 2,092 people interviewed online on 19-20 November 2015 on behalf of The Challenge charity. Asked whether ‘every school child should participate in group activities with children from different faith/ethnic backgrounds to their own, either in school and/or in their local community’, just 64% were in agreement, with 11% disagreeing, and 21% neutral. Affirmative answers ranged from 48% to 82% by demographic sub-group, and negative ones from 7% to 20%. There was no analysis of opinion by religious affiliation. Data tables are at:

https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/yaviwesgx1/Results-for-The-Challenge-Statement-Test-20112015.pdf

OPINION POLLS – ISLAMIC STATE

Polls in this section are arranged in chronological order by last date of fieldwork.

YouGov (1)

In an online poll for *The Times*, conducted among 1,657 adults in Britain on 30 November and 1 December 2015, YouGov reported a sharp drop in public support for RAF air strikes against Islamic State (IS) in Syria, down from 59% on 23-24 November to 48%. The poll was published in *The Times* on 2 December, to coincide with the House of Commons debate on the issue, which resulted in MPs backing the Government's motion to extend air strikes from Iraq to Syria. The survey also covered the possible return of British ground troops to Iraq to fight IS, and the commitment of British and US ground troops against IS in Syria, opinion being evenly divided in both cases. Data tables can be accessed via Peter Kellner's blog at:

<https://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/12/02/analysis-sharp-fall-support-air-strikes-syria/>

YouGov (2)

Interviewed by YouGov on the day, 2 December 2015, of the House of Commons debate about extending air strikes against Islamic State (IS), 74% of 11,410 UK adults correctly anticipated that MPs would vote in favour of bombing IS in Syria, only 8% forecasting the opposite outcome. Results are available at:

<https://yougov.co.uk/opi/surveys/results#/survey/a9a2ba00-98d8-11e5-a807-005056900127>

YouGov (3)

An ostensibly separate survey of YouGov panellists on 2 December 2015 found that 86% judged it right for Parliament to be debating the extension of air strikes against Islamic State, albeit only 14% expected to feel safer from terrorism in three years' time in the event of a vote to extend strikes (34% saying they would be less safe). Results are available at:

<https://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/12/03/debate-syria/>

YouGov (4)

A snap poll of YouGov panellists on 3 December 2015, following Parliamentary approval of, and the commencement of, British air strikes against Islamic State (IS) in Syria, revealed significant reservations on the part of the public. Just 22% were confident that this had been the right thing to do, while 25% were unsure but relieved that something was being done, 31% believed air strikes would not help and would result in the loss of innocent lives, and 15% were horrified that Britain was intervening where it had no right to do so. On the other hand, 41%

supported the deployment of British ground troops against IS in Syria, now or in the future, 48% being opposed. There was pessimism about the prospects for defeating IS in Syria, 32% suggesting that it would never happen, and 60% that it would take over one year (including 35% saying it would take more than three years). Results are available at:

<https://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/12/04/effect-uk-action-syria/>

YouGov (5)

In an online poll among 1,672 adults on 2-3 December 2015, Youov posed the same three questions about fighting Islamic State (IS) in the air and on the ground as in their survey of 30 November-1 December (reported above). Fieldwork took place partly before and partly after the House of Commons vote in favour of British air strikes against IS in Syria. A further drop in support for such strikes was revealed, down to 44%, with Labour voters particularly likely to have had a change of heart. For YouGov's analysis of the trends, and a link to the full data tables, see the blog at:

<https://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/12/06/support-syria-air-strikes-falls-again/>

YouGov (6)

On behalf of WalesOnline, YouGov polled 1,005 Welsh adults between 30 November and 4 December 2015 about their attitudes to British air strikes against Islamic State (IS) in Syria (a plurality of 45% approving), and their assessment of such strikes increasing the likelihood of terrorist attacks in the UK (54% thinking so). The data table is at:

https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/1rr4w9u45/WalesOnline_Results_December15_Syria_w.pdf

ComRes

Even after the House of Commons vote for British participation in air strikes against Islamic State (IS) in Syria, less than half (47%) of the British public endorsed them, with 33% disapproving and 20% uncertain. Even fewer (25%) favoured the imminent involvement of British troops in a ground war against IS in Syria, with 48% opposed, while 32% judged that there were no circumstances under which British troops should engage in ground combat with IS. The findings emerged from an online poll of 2,049 adults by ComRes for the *Independent on Sunday* conducted on 9-11 December 2015. Topline results were published in the *Independent on Sunday* on 13 December and the full data tables are at:

<http://www.comres.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/IO-S-SM-Political-Poll-December-2015.pdf>

Ipsos MORI

Very few adults (9%) think British participation in air strikes against Islamic State in Syria will make Britain safer from terrorism, while 44% consider it will make it less safe, and a further 44% that it will make no difference. Optimists did not rise above 17% in any demographic subgroup. The poll was conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of the *Evening Standard* among a sample of 1,040 Britons interviewed by telephone on 12-14 December 2015. Topline results were published in the *Evening Standard* on 17 December and the full data table is available via the link at:

<https://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/3672/Few-believe-air-strikes-in-Syria-will-make-Britain-safer.aspx>

FAITH ORGANIZATION STUDIES

Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life

The independent Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life, convened by the inter-faith Woolf Institute, Cambridge in September 2013 and chaired by Baroness Elizabeth Butler-Sloss, has published its final report under the title of *Living with Difference: Community, Diversity, and the Common Good*. It was prepared by a team of 20 commissioners, including several academics. Its findings and recommendations have proved controversial, not least in appearing to challenge the notion of the UK as a Christian society and the role of the Church of England within it. Ruth Gledhill, former religious affairs correspondent of *The Times*, has described it on the *Christian Today* website as ‘the worst report I’ve ever read’. The recurring theme is the need to learn to understand and live with differences, differences which are said largely to have arisen from the growth of non-Christian faiths and of people of no religion. Although the Commission took evidence, in the form of responses to a public consultation, local hearings, weekend seminars, and personal interviews, it did not undertake any new quantitative research. Rather, it relied (in Appendix A and elsewhere) upon the official censuses of religious profession, a range of sample survey data, and faith-based investigations. These statistics are not treated systematically, as an overview of changes in the religious landscape over recent decades, but selectively, in support of the various topics into which the report is sub-divided, such as education, media, dialogue, social action, and law. The report is at:

<https://corablivingwithdifference.files.wordpress.com/2015/12/living-with-difference-community-diversity-and-the-common-good.pdf>

Church and community night shelters

A total of 2,171 people stayed in the network of church and community night shelters, mostly in London, linked with the national Christian homelessness charity Housing Justice between October 2014 and May 2015, according to *Church and Community Night Shelter Network Impact Report, 2014-2015*. The majority of guests were male (86%) and aged 26-50 (66%). Three in ten stayed for longer than one month, and 39% received assistance to move from the

shelter into their own accommodation. An estimated 231,000 volunteer hours were given to be alongside the guests. The report is available at:

http://www.housingjustice.org.uk/data/files/Shelters/CCNS_IMPACT_report_2014_15.pdf

OFFICIAL STATISTICS

Christmas Day working

The last official figures, from the Labour Force Survey, of the number of people working on Christmas Day in the UK relate to 2012. However, the Trades Union Congress (TUC) has updated them for 2015 in the light of employment growth during the intervening three years. The TUC estimate was that 905,000 individuals would be working on 25 December in 2015, 5% more than in 2012, and equivalent to 3% of all employees. The largest groups were expected to be care workers and home carers (168,000) and nurses and nursing auxiliaries/assistants (135,000). According to the TUC, there would be 20,000 clergy 'on duty', 6,000 fewer than in 2012 (the reason for this not being stated), which represents 52% of Christian ministers in the UK (as recorded in the current edition of Peter Brierley's *UK Church Statistics*). The TUC press release is at:

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/workplace-issues/work-life-balance/employment-rights/working-time-holidays/over-900000-workers-set>

Religion on Jersey

The States of Jersey, a self-governing Crown Dependency, have published a report on the *Jersey Annual Social Survey, 2015*. Data were collected by means of a self-completion postal questionnaire sent to a random sample of 3,200 Jersey households in June-July 2015, requesting it to be filled in by the household member who next celebrated their birthday and who was aged 16 or over. There was a 52% response, and results were weighted to be representative of the island's population as a whole. For the first time, a question on religious affiliation was included. This revealed that 54% of Jersey residents claimed to have a religion, 39% did not, with 7% unsure. Religious nones peaked at 52% among 16-34s, falling to 17% of over-65s. Of those professing a religion, 97% were Christians, mostly equally divided between Church of England (Jersey being part of the Diocese of Winchester until quite recently) and Roman Catholic. The report on the survey is available at:

<http://www.gov.je/SiteCollectionDocuments/Government%20and%20administration/R%20JASS%202015%2020151202%20SU.pdf>

Hate crimes

Newly-released data from the Metropolitan Police reveal that both anti-Semitic and Islamophobic hate crimes increased by more than three-fifths during the 12 months to November 2015 compared with an average rolling annual growth of 4% for all crime categories. Anti-Semitic crimes numbered 483 in the Metropolitan Police area in 2014/15

compared with 299 in 2013/14, up by 61.5%, while Islamophobic crimes amounted to 818 in 2014/15 against 499 in 2013/14, a jump of 63.9%. This worrying expansion in religious hate crimes reflected the domestic fallout from international tensions, most recently after the Islamist attacks in Paris, but, according to a police spokesperson, was also linked to improved reporting by the public of religious hate crimes and greater awareness of them on the part of police officers. An interactive page for the figures can be found at:

<http://www.met.police.uk/crimefigures/index.php>

ACADEMIC STUDIES

Yearbook of International Religious Demography, 2015

Volume 2 of the *Yearbook of International Religious Demography* (ISSN 2352-1147), which was launched by Brill in 2014, has recently appeared, edited by Brian Grim, Todd Johnson, Vegard Skirbekk, and Gina Zurlo. It provides an annual snapshot of religious population statistics analysed at the global and continental levels (in parts 1 and 2, respectively), together with a series of eight case studies in part 3 (none specific to the UK) and a list of data sources in part 4. A publication of the International Religious Demography Project, which is also responsible for the *World Religion Database*, the volume can be bought in print or as an e-book for €89 and is more fully described at:

<http://www.brill.com/products/reference-work/yearbook-international-religious-demography-2015>

Religion and Britishness

Using descriptive and multivariate analyses of the 2008/09 Home Office Citizenship Survey (HOCS) for England and Wales, Saffron Karlsen and James Nazroo have examined the extent to which there are ethno-religious differences in a sense of ‘Britishness’ (undefined in HOCS) and in perceptions of the compatibility between Britishness and other cultural/religious identities among nine minority groups spanning four world faiths (Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism). Comparisons are also drawn with an earlier survey for 2000/01. The authors’ findings are especially used to ‘expose the straw man manufactured by Governments and policy commentators’, which has raised questions about the integration and loyalty to the country of British Muslims who, in reality, according to this study, make a strong claim to Britishness. ‘Ethnic and Religious Differences in the Attitudes of People towards Being “British”’ was published in *Sociological Review*, Vol. 63, No. 4, 2015, pp. 759-81, and access options are outlined at:

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-954X.12313/abstract>

Religion and party choice

In an article first published in the online edition of *British Journal of Political Science* in April 2014 but not formally assigned to an issue (Vol. 45, No. 4, pp. 907-27, plus six tables of

regression models) until 18 months later, James Tilley uses the sequences of British Election Studies stretching back to 1964 and British Social Attitudes Surveys from 1983 to demonstrate that religious cleavages have proved remarkably resilient in an ostensibly secular Britain. The relationship between religion and party preference, he argues, is not primarily due to the social composition of the various religious groups, nor to ideological differences between them (in terms of social conservatism, economic leftism, or national identity). Rather, particular denominations are associated with parties that represented their denominational interests in the early twentieth century, these linkages mainly being underpinned by parental transmission of party affiliation within denomination. Data are presented separately for England and Wales and for Scotland, and for the principal religious groups (Church of England, Church of Scotland, Nonconformist, Roman Catholic, and no religion), also controlling for religious practice. “‘We Don’t Do God’? Religion and Party Choice in Britain’ can be accessed by journal subscribers or on a pay-per-view basis at:

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=9915556&fulltextType=RA&fileId=S0007123414000052>

Religion and substances

Using data from a sample of 12,252 young people in the UK in 2011-12, Gemma Penny and Leslie Francis have probed the relationships between ‘Implicit Religion, Explicit Religion, and Attitude toward Substances: An Empirical Enquiry among 13- to 15-Year-Old Adolescents’, *Implicit Religion*, Vol. 18, No. 3, 2015, pp. 373-97. Having initially explored the prevalence of implicit religion, operationalized as attachment to traditional Christian rites of passage, the authors went on to test (and confirm) the hypothesis that explicit religiosity (operationalized as church attendance) and implicit religiosity (as defined above) are both associated with proscriptive attitudes towards substances. Access options to the article are outlined at:

<https://journals.equinoxpub.com/index.php/IR/article/view/28054>

Scottish sectarianism

A recent issue of *Scottish Affairs* (Vol. 24, No. 3, 2015) comprised six articles on the theme of sectarianism in contemporary Scotland, based upon a combination of new quantitative and qualitative research and reflection on previous research. Of particular statistical interest is Rachel Ormston, John Curtice, Stephen Hinchliffe, and Anna Marcinkiewicz, ‘A Subtle but Intractable Problem? Public Attitudes to Sectarianism in 2014’ (pp. 266-87), deriving from the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey for 2014, for which 1,501 residents of Scotland were interviewed face-to-face by ScotCen Social Research. It revealed a major disjunction between popular perceptions of the generalized existence of anti-Catholic or anti-Protestant prejudice, which were quite high (88% believing it was a problem affecting at least some parts of Scotland), and direct observation or experience of specific forms of sectarian behaviour in their own locality or lives, for example in terms of harassment or job discrimination. ‘So many members of the Scottish public seem to think that religious discrimination and sectarianism are things that happen in Scotland, but not in their area, and not to them.’ Another important quantitative paper is Michael Rosie, ‘The Sectarian Iceberg?’ (pp. 328-50), which revisited

existing census and sample survey data, including the influential NFO Social Research poll of sectarianism in Glasgow in 2002. The print edition of the entire issue of *Scottish Affairs* can be purchased from Edinburgh University Press for £8 or individual articles bought online at:

<http://www.euppublishing.com/toc/scot/24/3>

Religion and science

The UK's biological and physical science community is not especially religious, according to initial findings from the Religion and Public Life Program (based at Rice University in the United States), and published in the report *A Global Lab: Religion among Scientists in International Context*, written by Elaine Howard Eklund, David Johnson, Sarah Hamshari, Kirstin Matthews, and Steven Lewis. With major financial support from the Templeton World Charity Foundation, biologists and physicists were surveyed in eight countries (France, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Taiwan, Turkey, UK, and United States), with responses obtained from 9,422 of them, 42% of those approached. Among the weighted sample of 1,531 respondents in the UK (55% male, 45% female), 65% described themselves as agnostic or atheist and 59% as neither religious nor spiritual, while 65% never prayed and 60% never or practically never attended religious services. Detailed results from the research will eventually appear in three books, which are being written, and 17 academic papers are currently under review or in process. Meanwhile, the summary report can be read at:

<https://rplp.rice.edu/uploadedFiles/RPLP/A%20Global%20Lab%20Conference%20Summary%20Report%202015%201201.pdf>

Press representations of Muslims and Islam

In a post on the *Radicalisation Research* website, Paul Baker and Tony McEnery discuss 'The British Press and Radicalisation', summarizing the findings of their forthcoming report for the charity MEND (Muslim Engagement and Development). Using corpus-based discourse analysis techniques, the authors have studied the representation of Muslims and Islam in the British press over time, with reference to 11 broadsheet and tabloid newspapers. Comparing 1998-2009 with 2010-14, they demonstrate a trend away from labelling both Muslims and Islamic in extremist terms but a slight increase in descriptions of Islam in these terms. This suggests that the labelling of extremism has become less personalized, more associated with the religion rather than its people. At the same time, the press is projecting a growth in radicalization and attributing it in the main to extremist interpretations of Islam. The essay can be read at:

<http://www.radicalisationresearch.org/debate/baker-british-press-and-radicalisation/>

NEW DATASET AT UK DATA SERVICE

SN 7851: Scottish Health Survey, 2014

The Scottish Health Survey, established in 1995, is undertaken by ScotCen Social Research on behalf of the Scottish Government. The 2014 study involved face-to-face and self-completion interviews and clinical/physical measurements with 4,659 adults resident in private households throughout Scotland between January 2014 and February 2015. Replies to the various health questions can be analysed by a range of background variables, including religion. The wording of the religion question was: ‘what religion, religious denomination or body do you belong to?’ Response options comprised the major world faiths plus pagan, although Christians were subdivided between Church of Scotland, Roman Catholic, and other (with the facility to write in a specific denomination). The dataset description is available at:

<https://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/?sn=7851&type=Data%20catalogue>