

Counting Religion in Britain

A Monthly Round-Up of New Statistical Sources

Number 9 – June 2016

© Clive D. Field, 2016

OPINION POLLS – BREXIT

The referendum on the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union (EU), held on 23 June, was unquestionably the single most important event of the month, and its outcome (a vote to leave the EU) is likely to have far-reaching consequences. Although religion barely surfaced in the heated public and political debates which preceded the referendum, religious elements were occasionally featured in some of the pre- and post-referendum opinion polling.

Pre-referendum: voting intentions of religious groups

ORB International's online poll for *The Independent*, conducted among 2,052 British electors on 8-9 June 2016, seems to have been the last pre-referendum survey to have recorded the prospective referendum voting intentions of the principal religious groups. In line with previous polls, it demonstrated the wish of a majority of Christians to leave the EU, as tabulated below. The statistics have been calculated from the full data available at:

<http://www.opinion.co.uk/perch/resources/orbindependent-friday-10th-june-final-data-tables.pdf>

% across	Remain	Leave
All	47	53
Christians	43	57
Non-Christians	52	48
No religion	51	49

Pre-referendum: voting intentions of practising Christians

In contrast with the views of professing Christians, noted above, 54% of 1,200 *practising* (churchgoing) Christians (laity and church leaders) in membership of Christian Research's online Resonate panel indicated an intention to vote to remain in the EU at the referendum, in a survey launched on 9 June 2016. This was four points up on the figure from a similar Resonate poll in March. Just over one-quarter (28%) were planning to vote to leave. Awareness of the recent open letter on the referendum by former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, which argued that leaving the EU would threaten peace in Europe, was limited, nearly half the respondents not having heard about it at all. Other topics covered in the June Resonate omnibus were attitudes to the National Health Service and the Investigatory Powers Bill. A press release about the survey is at:

<http://www.christian-research.org/reports/privacy-nhs-and-the-referendum/>

Pre-referendum: voting intentions and science

Assaad Razzouk, the Lebanese-British energy entrepreneur, commissioned ComRes to undertake, between 29 May and 5 June 2016, a telephone poll of two sub-samples of 809 adults intending to vote to remain in or leave the EU, exploring their attitudes to science. One of the statements to which respondents were invited to react was ‘people who question the theory of evolution have a point’. Answers are tabulated below, revealing that Britons who were more sceptical about the EU also found it more difficult to accept the theory of evolution. Data tables can be found at:

<http://www.comres.co.uk/polls/assaad-razzouk-eu-referendum-and-science-poll/>

% across	Agree	Disagree
Remainers	36	59
Leavers	46	47

Pre-referendum: intervention of religious figures

During the course of the referendum campaign, several prominent religious leaders and groups made their views known on whether the UK should remain in or leave the EU, including the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. The majority of these religious opinion formers argued in favour of remaining. However, the British public was not inclined to attach much weight to their counsel, according to a YouGov poll for the *Today* programme on BBC Radio, undertaken on 13-14 June 2016 among an online sample of 1,656 adults. Asked which of 13 types of people they trusted for their statements on remaining or leaving, senior religious figures ranked eighth, albeit only 15% trusted what they said about the EU and no more than 24% in any demographic sub-group (those intending to vote remain). Three-fifths distrusted senior religious figures on the EU, peaking at 71% among men. The only consolation for religious leaders was that electors exhibited net distrust in all the types of people on the list, save academics, who notched up a net trust score of 6%. A topline summary is shown below.

% across	Trust	Distrust
Academics	43	37
Economists	38	39
People from well-known businesses	37	43
People from well-known charities	37	40
People from the Bank of England	36	45
People from international organizations	32	46
Think tanks	28	44
<i>Senior religious figures</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>61</i>
Political leaders of other countries	14	67
Politicians from Britain	13	72
Well-known actors and entertainers	12	61
Well-known sports people	10	64
Newspaper journalists	10	74

Data tables can be found at:

https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/x4iynd1mn7/TodayResults_160614_EUReferendum_W.pdf

Post-referendum: actual voting of religious groups

Lord Ashcroft polled 12,369 electors after they had voted in the referendum, 11,369 of them interviewed online and 1,000 by telephone. The reported voting of the major religious groups is tabulated below, from which it will be seen that, in line with voting intentions in pre-referendum surveys, Christians inclined to be leavers and non-Christians and religious nones to be remainers. Age probably largely accounts for this pattern since in general older people were most likely to have voted to leave the EU and younger people to remain; Christians have a disproportionately elderly profile and non-Christians (particularly Muslims) and nones a disproportionately younger profile. Details of voting by religion can be found on p. 10 and of the demographics of religious belonging (including when respondents made their minds up about how to vote in the referendum) on pp. 56-9 of the full computer tables at:

<http://lordashcrofthpolls.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/How-the-UK-voted-Full-tables-1.pdf>

% across	Remain	Leave
All	48	52
Christians	42	58
Muslims	70	30
Other non-Christians	53	47
No religion	55	45

Post-referendum: actual voting of Jews

Almost twice as many Jews voted to remain in the EU as elected to leave, 59% versus 31%, according to a telephone poll of 1,002 members of a pre-recruited panel of self-identified British Jews interviewed by Survation for the *Jewish Chronicle* on 27-29 June 2016. A further 9% did not vote or refused to say how they had voted. Jews aged 55 and over (38%) or who supported the Conservative Party (39%) were among those most inclined to leave, and respondents aged 35-54 (67%) were among those most disposed to stay. Unsurprisingly, given this voting pattern, only 28% of Jews expressed satisfaction with the result of the referendum, 60% being unhappy, while 39% claimed to feel less safe in the light of the outcome and 57% to being pessimistic about the future. Asked who should be the next Prime Minister, following David Cameron’s resignation, a plurality (39%) of Jews plumped for Theresa May. The *Jewish Chronicle*’s coverage of the poll, with a link to the full data tables, can be found at:

<http://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/159839/brexit-vote-triggers-fears-over-security>

OPINION POLLS – OTHER TOPICS

Charitable giving

Religious causes received 13% of charitable donations in 2015, the same as children and young people’s causes, but three points behind medical research. However, religious causes notched up the highest average donation (£49) of all types of charity, as well as the highest median

donation (£16). Over-65s were almost three times as likely to report donating to religious causes as 16-24s (17 per cent versus 6%). Data derive from the Charities Aid Foundation report *UK Giving, 2015: An Overview of Charitable Giving in the UK during 2015*, which is based upon face-to-face interviews conducted by GfK NOP with 4,160 UK adults aged 16 and over in February, May, August, and November 2015. It can be found at:

https://www.cafonline.org/docs/default-source/personal-giving/caf_ukgiving2015_1891a_web_230516.pdf?sfvrsn=2

Religious education and faith schools

YouGov has recently (and very belatedly) posted on its website the data tables for an online poll it conducted among 2,198 UK adults on 14-15 September 2015. It was commissioned by Ideate Research in discussion with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) in advance of a major debate on faith and education staged as part of the Cambridge Festival of Ideas on 21 October 2015. Some headline findings were included in a press release from AHRC on that date, which attracted very little media coverage, but this is apparently the first time that detailed results have entered the public domain. The survey found that 77% of the population considered that religious education (RE) should be a compulsory (45%) or optional (32%) part of the national curriculum, with only 17% dissenting; paradoxically, notwithstanding their relatively low religiosity, 18-24s were keenest (53%) on compulsory RE. As the table below indicates, views about faith schools were decidedly more mixed, especially in the case of Islamic schools, which almost half the sample wished to see prohibited. When it came to changes affecting UK society over the next half-century, very few (8%) thought religious leaders would be best able to lead such changes, with just 7% suggesting they would be best equipped to help the general public understand the changes.

Attitudes to ... (% down)	Christian schools	Islamic schools	Jewish schools
Should be allowed and receive state funding	44	12	16
Should be allowed but not receive state funding	32	34	43
Should not be allowed in UK	16	44	28

Data tables are at:

https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/v50s4c7q5d/YG-Archive-10616-IdeateResearch.pdf

Freedom of speech

A newly-published ComRes poll commissioned by the Conservative Woman, for which 2,050 adults were interviewed online on 7-9 May 2016, revealed Britons to be somewhat ambivalent about legislative limitations on freedom of speech designed to protect people's rights not to be offended by what others say. Two of the eight statements the sample was invited to respond to had a religious dimension. One asked whether it was right to have laws against 'hate speech' even if it might mean, for example, that Christian preachers could be arrested for repeating something in the Bible. In reply, almost twice as many contended that it was not right to have such laws as agreed that it was, 47% versus 26%, with a majority of men, over-55s, and residents of Northern England and the West Midlands opposed to such restrictions and no more than 31% in any demographic sub-group in favour of them. In similar vein, three-fifths (61%)

of interviewees disagreed with the suggestion that persons who criticize Islam should be punished by hate speech laws, the proportion rising to seven in ten among men and over-55s; just 15% agreed with the proposition, and no more than 28% in any sub-group. Full data tables are available at:

http://www.comres.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ComRes_Freedom-of-Speech-Poll_tables.pdf

Trust in religious leaders

Young people generally do not trust religious leaders or other authority figures, according to an online poll of 1,351 Britons aged 18-30 conducted by YouGov for Hope not Hate on 6-13 May 2016. Three-fifths of respondents said that they did not trust religious leaders very much (29%) or at all (31%), with just 22% registering a great deal (3%) or a fair amount (19%) of trust, the positive rating standing highest among non-whites (30%), part-time workers (30%), and Scots (31%). The only two of the eight groups asked about which were trusted by a majority were teachers or academics and other young persons. Summary findings are tabulated below, and full data tables can be found at:

https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/ej63u31ku2/HopeNotHateResults_YoungPeople_160513_website.pdf

% across	Trust	Distrust
A teacher/academic	72	13
A young person like yourself	50	31
A trade union leader/official	31	45
A religious leader	22	60
A TV or sports star	16	66
A leader of multinational company	16	65
The media	13	73
A politician	10	76

Islamic State

Islamic State is the top of eight international concerns in Britain, with 79 per cent of the public regarding it as a major threat to our country and a further 16 per cent as a minor threat. This is according to the latest report from the Pew Global Attitudes Project, for which 1,460 Britons aged 18 and over were interviewed by TNS BMRB by telephone between 4 April and 1 May 2016. The full ranking of concerns, with comparisons for France and Germany (where, alongside Italy and Spain, Islamic State was seen as an even greater threat than in Britain), is tabulated below, while Pew's report on the survey can be found at:

<http://www.pewglobal.org/2016/06/13/europeans-face-the-world-divided/>

% regarding as a major threat	Britain	France	Germany
Islamic State	79	91	85
Global climate change	58	73	65
Cyberattacks from other countries	55	68	66
Large number of refugees	52	45	31
Global economic instability	48	73	39
China's emergence as a world power	31	43	28
Tensions with Russia	28	34	31
United States power and influence	24	28	25

FAITH ORGANIZATION STUDIES

Faith-based charities

New Philanthropy Capital's ongoing programme of research into faith-based charities has resulted in a further brief report: David Bull, Lucy de Las Casas, and Rachel Wharton, *Faith Matters: Understanding the Size, Income, and Focus of Faith-Based Charities*. The 43,352 faith-based charities in England and Wales represent 27% of all charities and receive 23% (£16.3 billion) of the charity sector's income. However, four-fifths of the income of faith-based charities is concentrated in just 1,719 organizations. Despite the inroads of secularization, proportionately more faith-based than non-faith-based charities have been registered with the Charity Commission during the past 10 years, 34% versus 25%. Relative to their non-faith-based counterparts, faith-based charities are especially active in the fields of overseas aid, human rights, and anti-poverty. The report can be found at:

<http://www.thinknpc.org/publications/faith-matters/>

Church of England ministry statistics

The Church of England has published *Ministry Statistics, 2012 to 2015*, showing national trends in numbers of stipendiary and self-supporting clergy, and their age, gender, and ethnic profiles. Detailed diocesan-level tables are also available in a separate Excel file. The data primarily derive from a new clergy payroll system, introduced in 2012, supplemented by *Crockford's Clerical Directory*. This means that there is not strict methodological comparability with earlier statistics. Although overall totals of ordained ministers have remained stable since 2012, at just over 20,000, there has been a decline of 4% in stipendiary clergy over the four-year period, with the steady increase in female ministers not offsetting the steady decline in their male counterparts. As at 31 December 2015, 26% of stipendiary clergy were women, including 7 diocesan or suffragan bishops, 26 archdeacons, and 6 cathedral deans. One-quarter of stipendiary parochial clergy were aged 60 and over, ranging by diocese from 9% to 41%. Full details can be found at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/facts-stats/research-statistics/ministry-statistics.aspx>

Leadership of large Anglican churches

At the end of 2015, of the 112 Church of England churches with a Usual Sunday Attendance of at least 350, only three were led by women. In a recent paper, Liz Graveling explores why,

more than two decades after women were admitted to the priesthood, so few are reaching these positions. Her research has involved statistical analysis of the current leadership of large churches and semi-structured interviews with 22 ordained ministers, mainly Evangelicals. Factors contributing to the gender imbalance are found to be: career progression time-lag; discrimination; social processes; incompatible social roles and working conditions; and organizational structures and dynamics. Graveling's 25-page paper on 'Vocational Pathways: Clergy Leading Large Churches' is available at:

http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/UserFiles/File/TRIG/Vocational_pathways_large_churches.pdf

Baptist statistics

The Baptist Union of Great Britain has recently launched a church statistics page on its website. It is currently limited to returns of membership and attendance for 2015, but the intention is to add information for past years in due course. In 2015 there were 126,144 members of the 2,028 churches in England and Wales belonging either to the Union or another Baptist Association, with 2,724 baptisms (equivalent to 2% of membership). Average attendance at the main weekly service, scaled up for missing data, numbered 159,360, sub-divided between 14% children, 7% young people, 8% young adults, 40% other adults, and 30% seniors. Full details, including geographical breakdowns, can be found at:

http://www.baptist.org.uk/Articles/471032/Church_Statistics.aspx

Quaker statistics

The Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain has published an annual *Tabular Statement* of membership since 1862, based on information provided by area meetings and collated by the Recording Clerk. Membership at the end of December 2015 stood at 13,401, just 126 less than in 2014, and representing the smallest decrease for two decades. This contrasted with sharper 12-month declines in attenders (minus 5%) and of children not in membership (down 14%). For the first time in 2015, the gender breakdown of adults included the option to identify as other than a man or woman; 1 member and 44 attenders (36 of them in Scotland) were recorded as such. Also new for 2015 was the production of statistics at local meeting level, available as supplementary online tables. The *Tabular Statement*, which contains a significant amount of historical data (in some cases going back to 1935), can be accessed via the link at:

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/ym/documents-1>

Islamophobia (1)

The European Network against Racism (ENAR) has published *Forgotten Women: The Impact of Islamophobia on Muslim Women in the United Kingdom*, researched between December 2014 and January 2016 by Bharath Ganesh and Iman Abou Atta (both of Faith Matters), with support from the European Union, the Open Society Foundations, and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. The 75-page report mostly draws upon pre-existing official statistics, polling data, legislation, case law, and secondary literature to illustrate the inequalities and discrimination which affect Muslim women in the UK, especially as regards employment opportunities and experience of hate crimes. There is a particular dependence upon Faith

Matters' own Tell MAMA database of Islamophobic incidents, which is not yet universally recognized as an authoritative source. On the whole, the analysis seems to add little to previous overviews covering similar ground, although it perhaps has some value in a comparative context, since it forms one of a series of seven simultaneous national reports (the others examining Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, and Sweden). The document, with a four-page fact sheet on the UK, which serves as an extended executive summary, can be downloaded from:

<http://www.enar-eu.org/Forgotten-Women-the-impact-of-Islamophobia-on-Muslim-women>

Islamophobia (2)

Meanwhile, Tell MAMA has published its 60-page annual report for 2015, entitled *The Geography of Anti-Muslim Hatred*. A record number (437) 'offline' or in person anti-Muslim incidents were recorded by the organization during the year, 50% involving abusive behaviour and 17% assault. Three-fifths of the victims were women and three-quarters of the perpetrators were men (predominantly white). Tell MAMA received fewer (364) notifications of online incidents than in previous years, which it attributes to better policing by social media platforms of hate speech, abuse, and trolling. The report is available at:

http://tellmamauk.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/tell_mama_2015_annual_report.pdf

ACADEMIC STUDIES

Religion and well-being

A meta-analysis of 139 English-language academic studies exploring links between religion and well-being is offered by Nick Spencer, Gillian Madden, Clare Purtill, and Joseph Ewing, *Religion and Well-Being: Assessing the Evidence* (London: Theos, 2016, 91pp., ISBN 978-0-9931969-4-2). The overwhelming majority of these studies are international, and disproportionately American, reflecting the relatively late beginning of measurement of well-being in the UK, especially in the form of official statistics. Using five conceptions of religion and four of well-being, the authors detect a variable but mostly positive correlation between the two. The book can be freely downloaded from:

<http://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/files/files/Reports/Religion%20and%20well-being%207%20combined.pdf>

Spencer has also written a blog about the report for the LSE's newly-launched Religion and the Public Sphere website. This can be read at:

<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/religionpublicsphere/2016/06/28/is-religion-good-for-you-analysing-three-decades-worth-of-academic-research-on-the-relationship-between-religion-and-well-being/>

British Social Attitudes, 2015

The book-length report on the 33rd British Social Attitudes Survey, based on interviews with a random probability sample of 4,328 Britons aged 18 and over by NatCen between August

and November 2015, was published this month. The dataset has not yet been released nor has the questionnaire. Although none of the chapters in the report focuses on religion, the technical appendix (p. 123) does reveal the weighted results of the question on religious belonging, with 48% self-identifying as religious nones, 17% as Anglicans, 9% as Roman Catholics, 17% as other Christians, and 8% as non-Christians. The report is available at:

<http://bsa.natcen.ac.uk/latest-report/british-social-attitudes-33/introduction.aspx>

Psychological profiles of Anglican congregants

The subject of psychological type and temperament profiles of Anglican congregations in England has been re-examined by Leslie Francis, Howard Wright, and Mandy Robbins through a study of 196 attenders at three services at one particular church, situated against the normative profile generated by 3,302 worshippers at 140 churches reported in *International Journal of Practical Theology* in 2011. The authors conclude that individual churches are able to offer diverse provisions which result in congregations with distinctively different psychological profiles. ‘Temperament Theory and Congregation Studies: Different Types for Different Services?’ is published in *Practical Theology*, Vol. 9, No. 1, March 2016, pp. 29-45, and access options are outlined at:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1756073X.2016.1149679>

NEW DATASETS AT UK DATA SERVICE

SN 7975: National Survey of Bereaved People, 2012 – SN 7977: National Survey of Bereaved People, 2013 – SN 7978: National Survey of Bereaved People, 2014 – SN 7979: National Survey of Bereaved People, 2015

The *National Survey of Bereaved People*, alternatively known as *VOICES: Views of Informal Carers, Evaluation of Services*, is an annual survey (begun in 2011) designed to measure the quality of end-of-life care, especially during the last three months of life. It is undertaken in England by the Office for National Statistics on behalf of the Department of Health by means of a postal questionnaire completed by the persons who registered a random sample of deaths. There were 22,635 respondents in 2012, 22,661 in 2013, 21,403 in 2014, and 21,320 in 2015, each of whom provided an assessment of the care received by the deceased (including spiritual support during the final two days), together with background details about the deceased (including religious allegiance). Catalogue descriptions and documentation can be found at:

<https://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/?sn=7975&type=Data%20catalogue>

<https://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/?sn=7977&type=Data%20catalogue>

<https://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/?sn=7978&type=Data%20catalogue>

<https://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/?sn=7979&type=Data%20catalogue>

SN 7995: Scottish Surveys Core Questions, 2014

The report on this dataset was considered in *Counting Religion in Britain*, No. 8, May 2016. The dataset itself has now been deposited with the UK Data Service, and a catalogue description and documentation can be found at:

<https://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/?sn=7995&type=Data%20catalogue>

PEOPLE NEWS

Bill Pickering (1922-2016)

William Stuart Frederick Pickering, pioneer British sociologist of religion and Anglican clergyman, died on 23 May 2016, aged 94. He taught successively at King's College London (1955-56); St John's College, University of Manitoba (1956-66); and the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1966-87), from where he retired to Cambridge. He is perhaps best known nowadays for his writings on Émile Durkheim and for establishing the British Centre for Durkheimian Studies at the University of Oxford, as well as the journal *Durkheimian Studies* and the Durkheim Press. However, some of his earliest work was in the empirical sociology of religion. His 1958 doctoral thesis, 'The Place of Religion in the Social Structure of Two English Industrial Towns (Rawmarsh, Yorkshire and Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire)', remains a ground-breaking study of the British religious landscape in the 1950s, employing a range of archival, census, and life history approaches. Sadly, little from this was ever published, mainly as essays in *Vocation de la sociologie religieuse* (1958) and *Archives de Sociologie des Religions* (1961). He also analysed the statistical background to the Anglican-Methodist Conversations (1961), patterns of post-war churchgoing (1972), and the endurance of rites of passage (1974). An important monograph, *Theological Colleges: A Sociological Appraisal*, written in the 1970s and based on a survey of British colleges in 1968-69, never made it into print.