

Counting Religion in Britain

A Monthly Round-Up of New Statistical Sources

Number 31 – April 2018

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OPINION POLLS

Religious divisions

The gulf between people of different religions is second only to that between immigrants and natives as a cause of tension in society, according to the 1,000 adults aged 16-64 interviewed online by Ipsos MORI for the BBC in late January and early February 2018. Almost half (47%) regarded inter-religious differences as a source of societal friction in Britain, 20 points more than the 27-nation mean and only exceeded in Belgium and India. Moreover, 11% of Britons agreed that mixing with people from other religions created conflict, with a further 30% suggesting that it sometimes led to misunderstandings, the combined figure not far short of the 46% thinking it produced mutual understanding and respect. A hard core of 7% in Britain did not trust persons from a different religion to their own. Topline results for all nations are at:

<https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/bbc-global-survey-world-divided>

Most admired men

In its latest annual multinational poll of the most admired men and women, conducted online in early 2018, the Dalai Lama and Pope Francis emerged as, respectively, the fourth and eleventh most admired men among the sample of adult Britons, with scores of 4.1% and 2.8%. The list was headed by David Attenborough (16.6%), Barack Obama (12.3%), and the late Stephen Hawking (9.2%). Globally, across the 35 nations surveyed, the Dalai Lama was ranked the seventh most admired man (3.9%) and Pope Francis sixteenth (2.2%). More details are available at:

<https://yougov.co.uk/news/2018/04/11/worlds-most-admired-2018/>

Religion in Scotland

On behalf of the *Sunday Times* (Scotland), Panelbase has conducted one of the most detailed national cross-sectional surveys of religion in contemporary Scotland for many years. Online interviews were completed with 1,037 adults resident in Scotland between 23 and 28 March 2018. Questions covered three areas: personal religion; perceptions of change in the Roman Catholic Church under Pope Francis; and attitudes to the respect shown to major religions in Scotland and personal experience of religious prejudice. The proportion belonging to no religion was 46%, with Church of Scotland adherents numbering 30% and Roman Catholics 11%. Apart from rites of passage, two-thirds last attended a religious service over a year ago (31%) or have never or practically never done so (35%). Just one-quarter believed that Jesus Christ was a real person who died and came back to life and was the Son of God, a plurality of 47% disbelieving and 24% undecided. With regard to Pope Francis, the majority (52%) did not know whether he has moved the Roman Catholic Church in new directions or maintained its traditional positions, the remainder being evenly split between the two options. However, only

minorities felt the Church during his pontificate had: become more accepting (32%) and more open (28%); more hospitable to homosexuality (22%), artificial contraception (21%), abortion (12%), and married priests (19%); and got tougher with abusers (23%). One-third of Scots considered that Islam is shown too much respect, with one-quarter thinking that Christianity receives too little. Nine in ten had not experienced religious prejudice or abuse in the past five years. Two articles derived from the survey were published in the *Sunday Times* (Scotland) on 1 April 2018 (pp. 1-2 and 5) and full data tables are available at:

<https://www.drg.global/wp-content/uploads/W7181w15fulltablesforpublication090418.pdf>

Christian giving

The Christian Opinion Panel: Giving Survey is a 40-page report from Colchester-based TMH Media, derived from an online poll which it commissioned in October 2017 and answered by 546 British Christians aged 15 and over who were viewers of Christian television channels. Exact details of survey agency and sampling methodology are uncertain and the sample seems potentially demographically skewed. Certainly, compared to the known profile of *all* churchgoers, respondents were disproportionately young (only 5% were over 65!), educated to degree level, from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (there were almost as many Africans as white British), and resident in London and the South-East. The 43 questions covered three main areas: charity giving, church giving, and legacy giving. Although 99% considered it important to give to charity, slightly fewer (87%) claimed to be doing so in practice, religious causes and those dedicated to helping young people and the homeless being most popular. Of those giving to charity, 48% also volunteered for charity. Of the 13% who did not give to charity, 72% were giving to their church (implying that 4% of the whole sample gave neither to charity nor to church). Only 29% had plans to leave a legacy gift in their will. The report can be downloaded for free but requires prior registration with TMH Media at:

<https://www.christianopinionpanel.com/>

Patron saints' days

According to a YouGov poll conducted for St George's Day in 2018, there is limited appetite among UK adults for each of the four UK patron saints' days to become bank holidays across the whole of the UK. The preference is for each day to be observed as a public holiday only in the appropriate home nation (as is already the case in Scotland and Northern Ireland). For instance, 49% of English residents think St George's Day should be a bank holiday just in England compared with 24% who want it marked across the entire UK and 18% who do not want it to become a bank holiday for anyone. Full results and details of fieldwork and sample size have not been released, but there is a blog at:

<https://yougov.co.uk/news/2018/04/23/brits-support-patron-saints-days-bank-holidays-ind/>

Religious discrimination

The newly-released Special Eurobarometer 471 on *Fairness, Inequality, and Intergenerational Mobility* enquired into the personal experiences of discrimination or harassment of EU citizens during the preceding 12 months. Relatively few reported such experiences on the grounds of religion or beliefs, 3% in the UK and 2% across the EU as a whole. The overwhelming majority of respondents, 77% in the UK and 83% in the EU, could recall no incidents of discrimination

or harassment of any sort during the past year. Data were gathered as part of Eurobarometer Wave 88.4, the UK fieldwork for which was conducted face-to-face by Kantar TNS between 2 and 9 December 2017 among a sample of 1,338 adults aged 15 and over. Topline results have been published in the report at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/SPECIAL/surveyKy/2166>

Islamophobia

Negative attitudes towards Islam and Muslims continue to be widespread, according to fresh polling for Hope not Hate, for which over 5,000 adults were interviewed online by YouGov in late January 2018. More than one-third (37%) of informants thought Islam poses a threat to the British way of life (including majorities of over-65s and Conservative leave voters in the 2016 referendum on membership of the European Union), against 33% who viewed Islam as generally compatible with the British way of life (the remainder could not choose between the two options). Almost one-fifth (18%) claimed to have become more suspicious of British Muslims since the Islamist terrorist attacks in Britain during 2017, with a further 24% being already suspicious before. With regard to the integration of Muslims in Britain into British society, the pattern of responses was:

- Almost all British Muslims want to integrate – 10%
- Most Muslims want to integrate but there are some who do not – 49%
- Most Muslims do not want to integrate but there are some who do – 23%
- Almost all Muslims do not want to integrate – 7%
- Don't know – 10%

There was significant support, including by pluralities of over-65s and Conservative leave voters, for banning the burka as a means of improving community relations. At the same time, there was majority recognition that Muslims face discrimination in Britain: 58% saying this existed in the media and 71% in the wider society. Full data tables have yet to be posted online, but headline findings are reported in Rosie Carter and Nick Lowles, *Britain Divided? Rivers of Blood 50 Years On*, published by Hope not Hate and available for free download at:

<https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Britain-Divided-50-years-on.pdf>

Negativity towards Muslims also emerged in a major opinion poll on immigration which British Future commissioned from Survation, 2,014 UK adults being interviewed online on 16-19 February 2018. When asked how much ethnic or religious prejudice they perceived there was against adherents of the major faith groups, respondents had little doubt that Muslims were the clear religious 'outsiders', the distribution of answers being as follows:

Extent of prejudice against (% across)	A lot	A little	Hardly any	None at all
Muslims	56.1	32.4	7.2	4.3
Jews	14.3	45.1	32.2	8.4
Sikhs	13.8	44.1	32.8	9.3
Hindus	12.5	47.1	32.1	8.2
Christians	10.1	26.9	39.0	24.0

Some of this prejudice was displayed by the interviewees themselves, in their replies to another question, enquiring how comfortable or uncomfortable they would feel about various positions being occupied by a Muslim. Those saying they were uncomfortable about Muslims occupying particular roles were: as boyfriend/girlfriend of one of your children (35%), husband/wife of one of your children (35%), Prime Minister (34%), your local MP (24%), your child's school teacher (22%), your next-door neighbour (21%), best friend of one of your children (18%), your boss/line manager (18%), police officer (16%), your colleagues (14%), doctor/nurse treating you in hospital (13%), and local business owner (12%). Data tables are available at:

<http://survation.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Final-British-Future-UK-Sample-Tables-revised.pdf>

On behalf of British Future, Survation ran the identical survey with two specialist samples. One was of 519 adults aged 18 and over in the West Midlands, interviewed online on 23-27 February 2018, with data tables available at:

<http://survation.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Final-British-Future-WM-Sample-Tables-revised.pdf>

The other sample was of 1,023 black and minority ethnic adults aged 18 and over in the UK, interviewed online on 22-25 February 2018, with data tables available at:

<http://survation.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Final-British-Future-BME-Sample-Tables-revised.pdf>

Labour and anti-Semitism

The political and media row about anti-Semitism in the Labour Party, which reignited in March, rumbled on into April 2018 and prompted four new polls among the general public.

The first poll to be published was a debut survey from Deltapoll, for which 1,010 adult Britons were interviewed online on 5-6 April 2018, on behalf of *The Observer*. It found that 51% of the electorate believed that Labour has a problem with anti-Semitism to some degree (comprising 21% thinking the party is riddled with people holding anti-Semitic views and 30% detecting pockets of anti-Semitism), peaking at 69% of over-65s and 70% of Conservative voters. Another 14% overall (and no more than 28% even of Labour supporters) felt that Labour has little or no difficulty with anti-Semitism, while 35% (including just over three-fifths of non-voters) were undecided. One-third of interviewees associated Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn with anti-Semitism, reaching 50% among over-65s and 59% of Conservatives. Full data tables are available at:

<http://www.deltapoll.co.uk/polls/is-anti-semitism-widespread-within-the-labour-party>

The second poll, by YouGov on 4-5 April 2018 among an online sample of 1,662 adult Britons, focused on Corbyn's handling of the claims of anti-Semitism in the Labour Party, a story of which 85% professed to be aware, albeit fewer than one-third of that number were following it closely. A plurality of 46% considered that Corbyn had dealt with the issue badly, and this was especially true of Conservatives (74%) and over-65s (65%). Just 15% deemed he had responded well, and no more than 31% among Labour voters, with 38% expressing no views on the subject (including the majority of under-25s). One in ten voters agreed that their opinion

of Corbyn had been damaged by his response (this being especially true of Liberal Democrats), on top of the 40% who were already negative towards him. Full data tables are available at:

https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/frm65qm1g8/InternalResults_180405_Anti-Semitism_w.pdf

The third poll was carried out by BMG Research on behalf of *The Independent*, among an online sample of 1,562 Britons on 10-13 April 2018. Asked whether each of the four main political parties had a problem with racism and/or religious prejudice, 61% believed this was true of the Labour Party to some degree, second only to UKIP (67%). A majority (52%) of respondents judged that Corbyn had dealt with claims of anti-Semitism in the Labour Party badly – quite badly (25%) or very badly (27%) – compared with 21% who thought he had handled them well and 27% undecided. At the same time, 32% agreed to some extent with the proposition that the issue had been exaggerated to damage Corbyn and the Labour leadership. Full data tables are available at:

<http://www.bmgresearch.co.uk/bmg-independent-52-state-corbyn-dealt-claims-anti-semitism-labour-party-badly/>

The fourth poll was undertaken by ComRes for the *Sunday Express*, among an online sample of 2,038 Britons on 11-12 April 2018, 46% of whom disagreed that Corbyn was tackling anti-Semitism in the Labour Party effectively, peaking at 65% of over-65s and 78% of Conservatives. One-fifth considered that he was on top of the situation, while 34% were undecided. Full data tables are available at:

<http://www.comresglobal.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Sunday-Express-April-2018-Poll-Full-Results-20042018.pdf>

70th anniversary of Israel

To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of Israel, the *Jewish News* commissioned ComRes to conduct an online survey of 2,039 Britons on 17-18 January 2018 to gauge attitudes towards the Jewish state. On the whole, from the five questions asked, the public did not emerge as especially engaged or well-informed. Only minorities agreed that Israel and Britain are natural allies and partners (29%) or that Britain should continue its support for Israel as a valuable ally in the Middle East (35%). However, there were a large number of ‘don’t knows’, which ComRes had to exclude in order to yield more ‘positive-looking’ results. Full data tables, including breaks by religious affiliation, are available at:

http://www.comresglobal.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Jewish-News_January-2018-poll_Israel.pdf

Inter-religious marriages

The overwhelming majority (92%) of 1,681 UK adults aged 16-75, interviewed online by Ipsos MORI for King’s College London on 23-27 February 2018, raised no objections to people of different religions marrying each other. Just 2% thought the practice should be banned, with a further 3% disapproving but not in favour of a ban, and 4% undecided. Somewhat fewer, 82%, said they would still have no concerns even if it was a family member or close friend who was marrying somebody of a different religion, against 3% anticipating they would be very

concerned and 12% slightly concerned. Rather fewer still, 77%, were comfortable with the prospect of a member of the Royal Family marrying a person of a different faith. Topline results and breaks by demographics are both available at:

<https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/most-britons-would-have-no-concerns-about-royal-same-sex-marriage>

The topic was also explored in the Survation/British Future immigration polls mentioned above. In the UK cross-section, 70% of adults said they would be comfortable, and 30% uncomfortable, about the prospect of their child or grandchild entering into a serious relationship or marriage with a person practising a different faith. For black and minority ethnic adults, the figures were, respectively, 68% and 32%. Among a sample of 1,030 Londoners, interviewed online by YouGov on 13-19 March 2018, 68% deemed it acceptable for a member of the Royal Family to marry someone of a different religion, while 18% were opposed and 14% undecided. Full data tables for the YouGov survey are available at:

http://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/95ulsywu1d/InternalResults_Monarchy_London_180319_final_w.pdf

FAITH ORGANIZATION STUDIES

#LiveLent 2018

The Church of England has announced the results of its multifaceted six-week Lent 2018 campaign. The headline statistics include: a reach of 3.54 million across the Church's social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram) for the #LiveLent reflections; short explanatory videos on Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Day watched 164,000 times; and Good Friday and Easter video prayers seen 300,000 times. For full details, read the press release at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/comment-and-features/how-did-livelent-2018-help-people-take-journey-easter>

Marriage intentions

The national marriage rate may be declining, and the proportion choosing to marry in a religious ceremony may also be falling, but the Church of England has derived encouragement from the findings of a survey of millennials it commissioned from 9Dot-Research. The sample comprised 1,012 unmarried young adults aged 18-35 interviewed (presumably online) on 14-15 November 2017, having excluded the 7% of the original 1,085 who said they had no intention of ever being married. Almost three-quarters (72%) of the remaining respondents expected to get married at some stage, one-sixth of whom were already engaged. More expressed a preference for a wedding in church or chapel (47%) than in a registry office or town hall (34%), albeit this choice was often driven by a wish for a traditional venue. Of those contemplating marriage, 17% stated that faith or religion had influenced their thinking. Detailed computer tables from the survey have not been published, but the Church of England's press release is available at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/news/generation-y-still-hope-walk-down-aisle>

Pastoral Research Centre Trust

The Pastoral Research Centre Trust (PRCT), an independent centre for applied socio-religious research with particular reference to the Roman Catholic community in England and Wales, was formally dissolved as a company on 24 April 2018. This was at the request of the company's directors and reflected commencement of the transfer of the PRCT's library and archive to Durham University and the need to reduce administrative overheads. The PRCT's work will be continued by a new Pastoral Research Centre Association, whose secretary will be Tony Spencer (as he was for the PRCT). There is a potted history of the PRCT at:

<https://www.prct.org.uk/a-potted-history-of-the-nds>

Jewish identity

In the latest report by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, David Graham utilizes a 2012 survey of European (including UK) Jewry commissioned by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights to investigate *European Jewish Identity: Mosaic or Monolith? An Empirical Assessment of Eight European Countries*. It analyses Jewish identity comparatively (between Europe, Israel, and the United States) and within Europe (in terms of beliefs; practice and ritual observance; schooling; and ethnicity, parentage, and intermarriage). UK Jews emerged as the most likely of the eight national Jewish communities to be Jewish by birth, least likely to be intermarried, most likely to be religiously observant, and least likely to feel threatened by anti-Semitism. The 49-page report can be downloaded at:

[http://www.jpr.org.uk/documents/JPR.2018.European Jewish identity.Mosaic or Monolith.pdf](http://www.jpr.org.uk/documents/JPR.2018.European%20Jewish%20identity.Mosaic%20or%20Monolith.pdf)

ACADEMIC STUDIES

Liverpool sectarianism

Liverpool Sectarianism: The Rise and Demise, by Keith Daniel Roberts (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2017, 334 pp., ISBN 978-1-78138-317-9, £19.99, paperback) draws upon a certain amount of quantitative evidence. This is mainly concentrated in the four appendices (pp. 310-23) which cover: the incidence of faith schools; Orange lodge numbers in Liverpool and Bootle province; newspaper attendance estimates for the Twelfth of July Orange parades since the early nineteenth century (discussed in more detail on pp. 80-5); and the results of a questionnaire survey of 215 members of the Orange Order. The book's webpage is at:

<https://liverpooluniversitypress.co.uk/products/86423>

Empirical rural theology

The current issue of *Rural Theology* (Vol. 16, No. 1, 2018) includes two exemplars of research into empirical theology in rural contexts: Owen Edwards and Tania ap Siôn, 'Learning in Rural Cathedrals: A Case Study of Religious Education outside the Classroom' (pp. 17-33), based on

the responses of 310 cathedral visitors aged 7-11 from 14 primary schools across north Wales; and Christopher Rutledge, 'Churchmanship and Personality among Rural Anglican Clergy' (pp. 34-42), based on data provided by 136 clergy from a mainly rural diocese of the Church of England. Access options are outlined at:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/yrur20/16/1?nav=tocList>

Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity

Mark Cartledge's *Narratives and Numbers: Empirical Studies of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 2017, x + 221 pp., ISBN 978-90-04-34552-2, €49, paperback) gathers together 10 essays published by the author over an 18-year period. They comprise a mixture of quantitative and qualitative case studies of Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity in the UK and the USA. The book's webpage is at:

<https://brill.com/view/title/34510?format=PBK>

NEW DATASETS

UK Data Service SN 8331: Annual Population Survey, 2017

The Annual Population Survey is compiled by the Office for National Statistics in partnership with the devolved administrations in Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. It incorporates a sub-set of key variables from the several Labour Force Surveys and is designed to be sufficiently robust and large-scale to produce reliable estimates at local authority level. The January-December 2017 dataset is based on 290,060 face-to-face and telephone interviews with adults and young persons living away from the parental home. A question on religious affiliation is included: 'what is your religion?' in Britain and 'what is your religious denomination?' in Northern Ireland. A catalogue description of the dataset is available at:

<https://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/?sn=8331&type=Data%20catalogue>

UK Data Service SN 8333: Scottish Household Survey, 2016

The Scottish Household Survey, initiated in 1999, is undertaken on behalf of the Scottish Government by a polling consortium led by Ipsos MORI. Information is collected about the composition, characteristics, attitudes, and behaviour of private households and individuals in Scotland; and about the physical condition of their homes. For the 2016 survey (January 2016-March 2017) data were gathered, by means of face-to-face interview, on 10,470 households and 9,640 adults. The specifically religious content of the questionnaire covered: religion belonged to; experience of discrimination or harassment on religious grounds; and incidence of volunteering for religious and other groups. A catalogue description for the dataset is available at:

<https://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/?sn=8333&type=Data%20catalogue>

UK Data Service SN 8334: Health Survey for England, 2016

The Health Survey for England, 2016 is the twenty-sixth in a series of annual studies designed to monitor trends in the nation's health. It is commissioned by NHS Digital and conducted by NatCen Social Research and the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health at University College London. It is undertaken through a combination of face-to-face interview, self-completion questionnaire, and clinical and other measurements. A number of core health-related topics are explored each year with additional topics investigated on a more occasional basis (including, in 2016, physical activity, weight management, kidney and liver disease, and problem gambling). A question 'what is your religion or belief?' was one of the background variables included in the self-completion booklets given to the 10,067 adults and children interviewed in 2016, with reply options of no religion, Roman Catholic, other Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, and any other religion. This permits analysis of the religious correlates of particular health conditions and attitudes. For a full description of the dataset and background documentation, see the catalogue entry at:

<https://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/?sn=8334&type=Data%20catalogue>