

Measuring Religiosity and Harmonizing Religious Measures in Cross-National Surveys

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Definition, Dimensions and Data

Substantive Definition (e.g. Spiro 1966):
Belief in supernatural entity

Dimensions (e.g. Glock 1962):

- Association with Religious Group
- Religious Behavior
- Religious Belief
- Religious Experience
- Religious Knowledge

International Social Survey Program, Europe 1998
European Social Survey 2002

Measuring Affiliation with Religious Group

Identification vs Membership

		Member of group	
		Yes	No
Identifies with group	No	Nominal member	Irreligious non-member
	Yes	Religious member	Religious non-member

Measuring Identification with Religious Group

ESS 2002, Master Questionnaire:

Do you consider yourself as belonging to any particular religion or denomination?

ESS 2002, Austria and Germany:

Regardless of whether you are a member or affiliate of a church or religious group ...

[Unabhängig davon, ob Sie Mitglied oder Angehöriger einer Kirche oder Religionsgemeinschaft sind ...]

Measuring Membership in Religious Group

ISSP 1998, Germany:

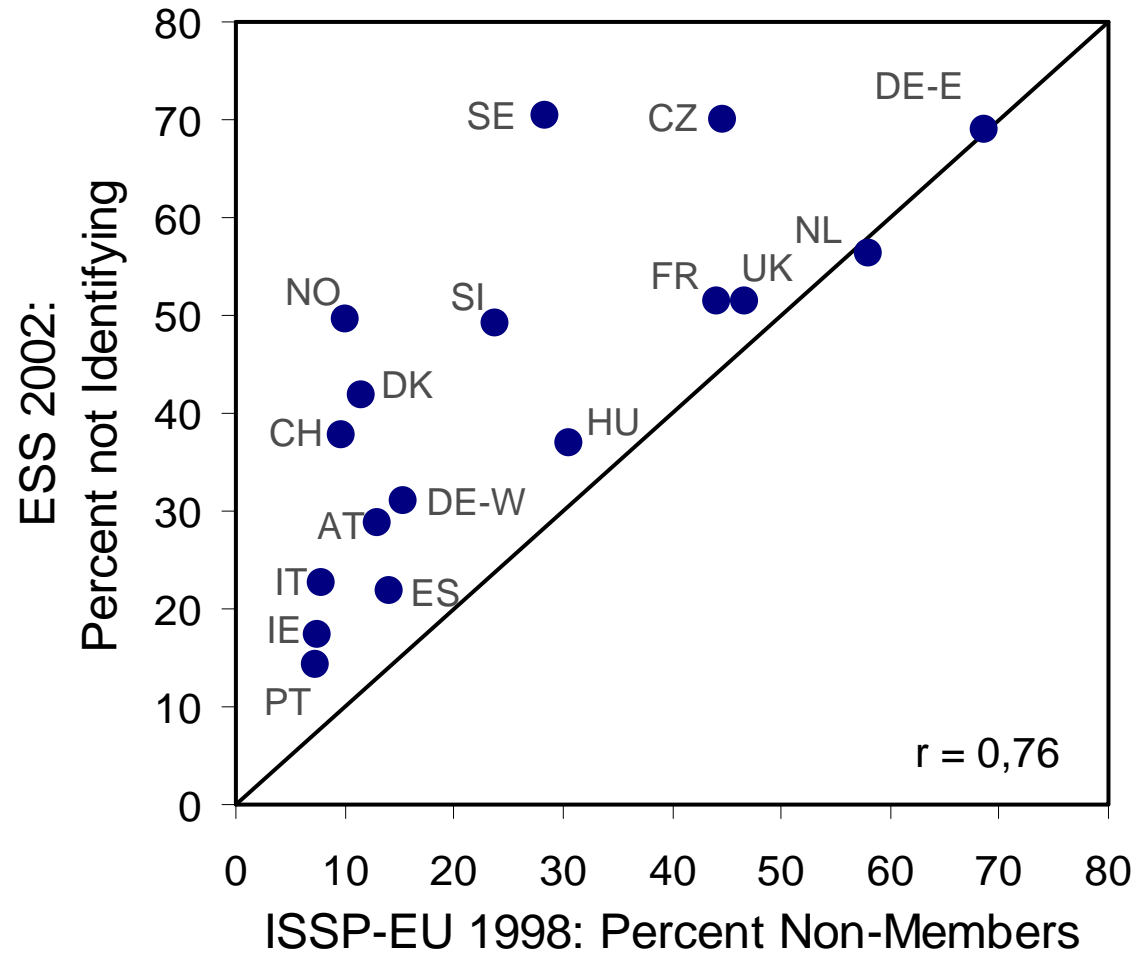
Which religious group do you belong to?

[Welcher Religionsgemeinschaft gehören Sie an?]

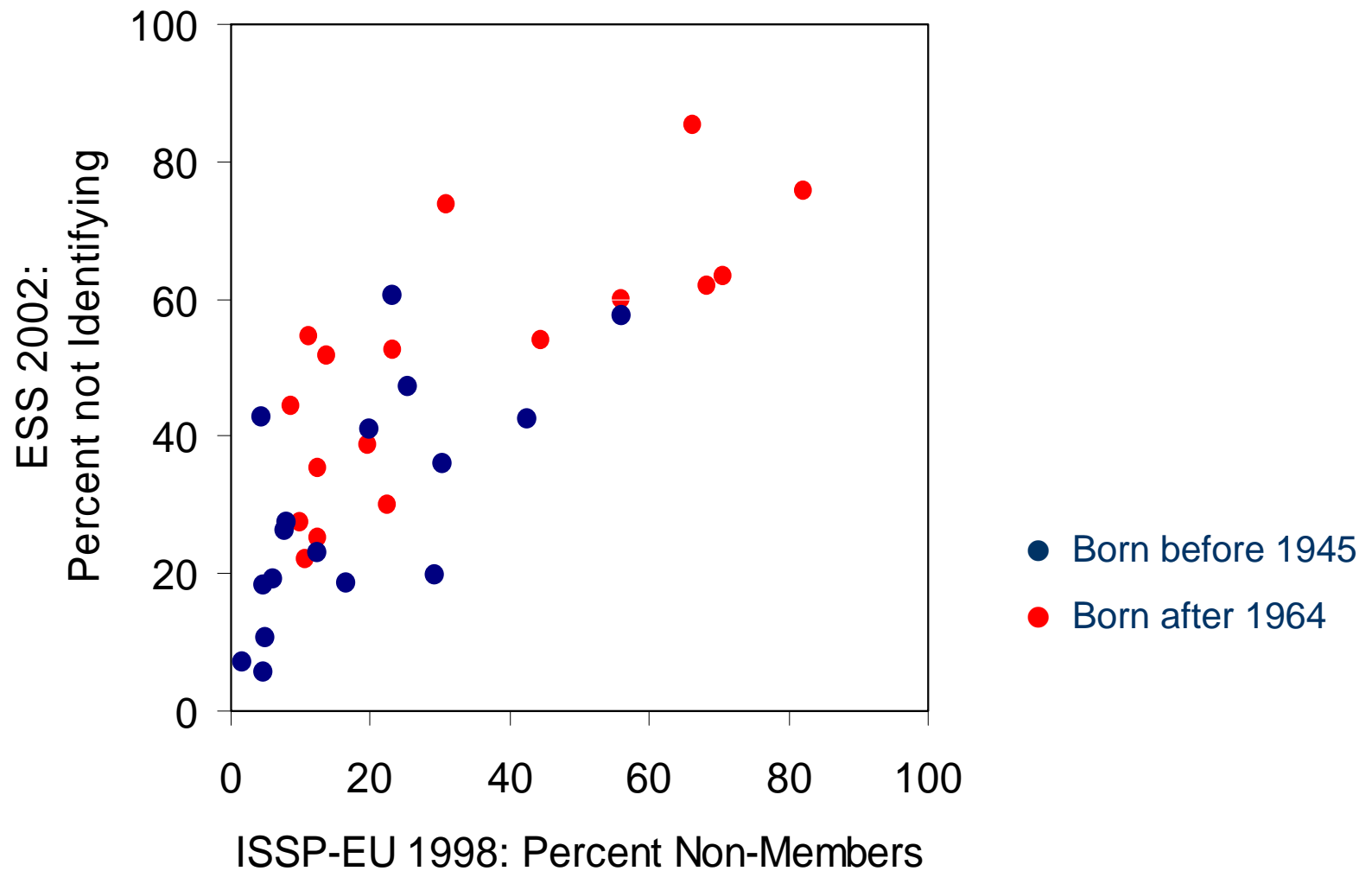
ISSP 1998, New Zealand:

What is your current religion?

Membership vs Identification



Change of Membership/Identification



The Problem of Religious Diversity

Countless religious groups; Steensland et al. (2000) name over 150 Protestant denominations in the USA alone (see also Campbell 2005)

Even bigger problem in cross-national surveys, e.g. ESS:

The Problem of Religious Diversity

Questionnaire	ESS round 1	Dataset
Christian – no denomination		
Roman Catholic		1 Roman Cathlic
Greek or Russian Orthodox	}	3 Eastern Orthodox
Other Eastern Orthodox, which		
Protestant (no further detail)	}	
Church of England/Anglican		
Baptist		
Methodist		
Presbyterian/Church of Scotland		2 Protestant
United Reform Church/Congegational		
Free Presbyterian		
Bretheren		
Other Protestant		
Other Christian		4 Other Christian

Indicators of Religiosity

Subjective religiosity

Attending religious services

Praying

Belief

Subjective Religiosity

ISSP 1998

Would you describe yourself as ...

- 1 Extremely religious
- 2 Very religious
- 3 Somewhat religious
- 4 Neither religious nor non-religious
- 5 Somewhat non-religious
- 6 Very non-religious
- 7 Extremely non-religious

ESS 2002

Regardless of whether you belong to a particular religion, how religious would you say you are?

00 Not at all religious

...

10 Very religious

Attending Religious Services

ISSP 1998

Attending religious services

- 1 Once a week or more
- 2 2-3 times a month
- 3 Once a month
- 4 Several times a year
- 5 Less frequently a year
- 6 Never

ESS 2002

Apart from special occasions such as weddings and funerals, about how often do you attend religious services nowadays?

- 1 Every day
- 2 More than once a week
- 3 Once a week
- 4 At least once a month
- 5 Only on special holy days
- 6 Less often
- 7 Never

Praying

ISSP 1998

About how often do you pray?

- 1 Never
- 2 Less than once a year
- 3 About once or twice a year
- 4 Several times a year
- 5 About once a month
- 6 2-3 times a month
- 7 Nearly every week
- 8 Every week
- 9 Several times a week
- 10 Once a day
- 11 Several times a day

ESS 2002

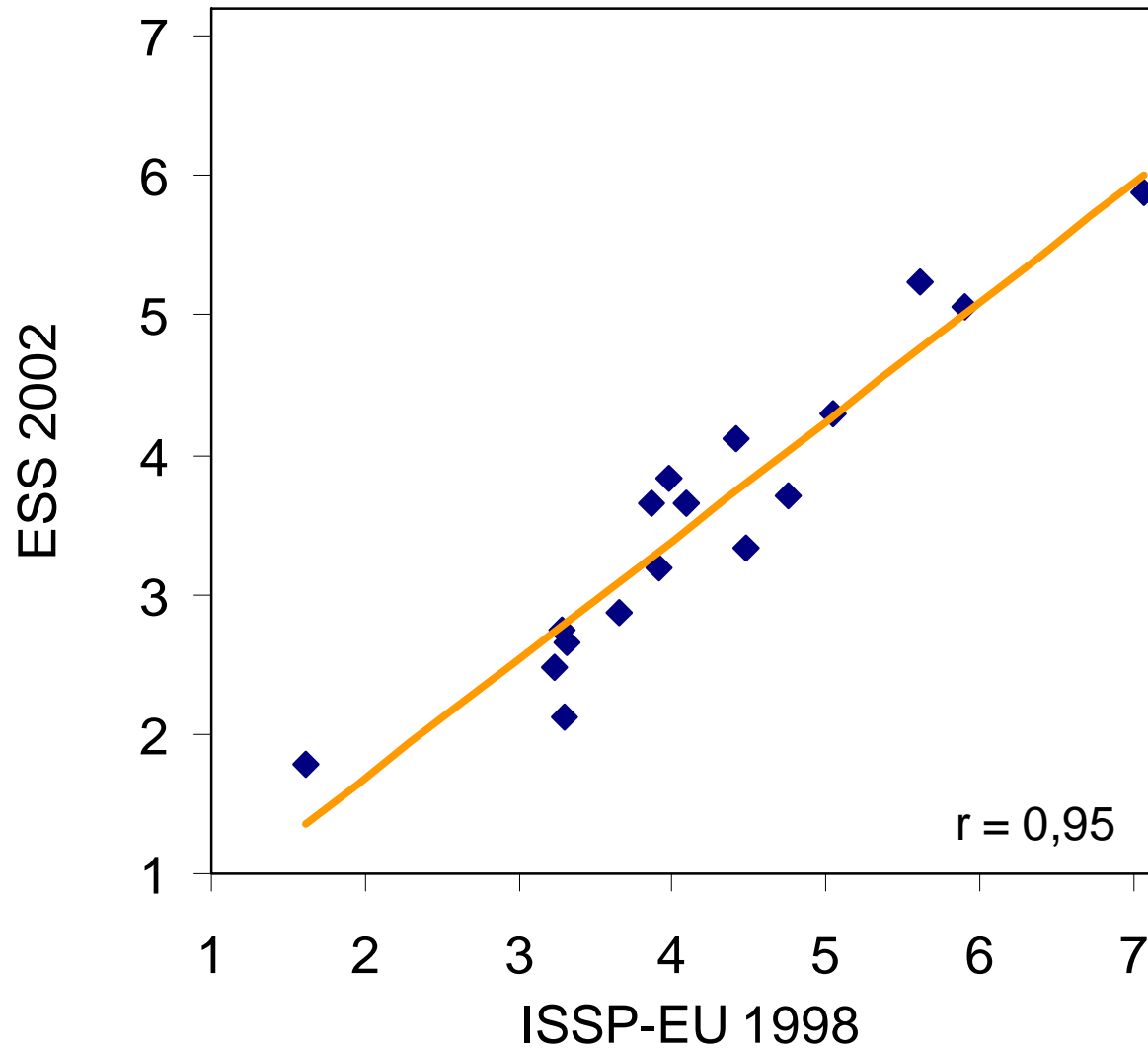
Apart from when you are at religious services, how often, if at all, do you pray?

- 1 Every day
- 2 More than once a week
- 3 Once a week
- 4 At least once a month
- 5 Only on special holy days
- 6 Less often
- 7 Never

Index of Religiosity: Factor Loadings

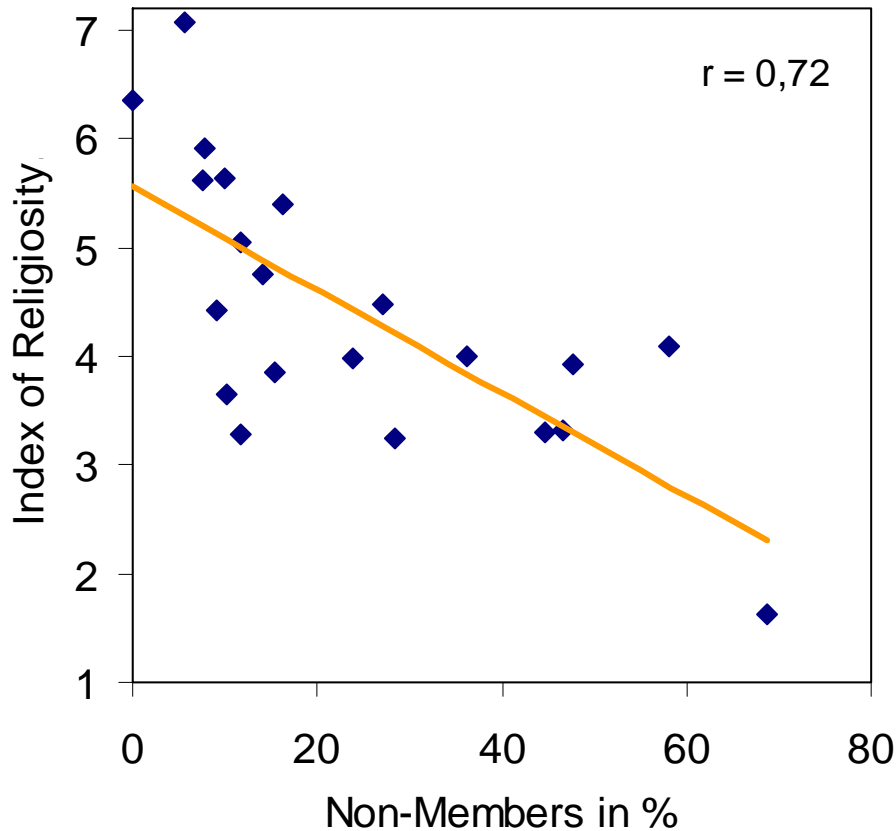
	ISSP-EU	ESS
Subjective Religiosity	0.86	0.88
Services	0.86	0.87
Praying	0.90	0.89
Common Variance	76%	77%

Index of Religiosity: Country Means

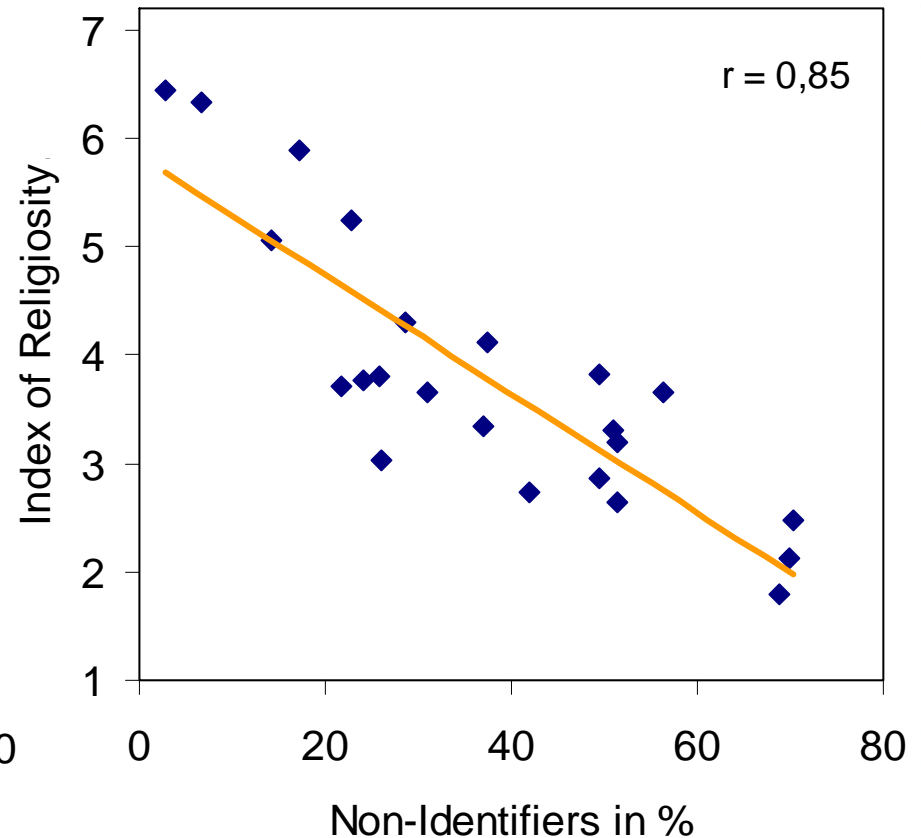


Membership/Identification and Religiosity

ISSP-EU 1998



ESS 2002



Conclusion

- Membership in and identification with a religious group does not have the same meaning in most European countries
- Religiosity can be measured reliably and validly across European countries and across denominations in Europe
- Measures for non-institutionalized, individual religiosity should be added

Thank you!