

ASPECTS OF INSTITUTIONAL RELIGIOSITY AND/OR (NON-) CREDIBILITY OF EUROPEAN SOCIAL SURVEY IN MONTENEGRO

Abstract: Using data from the European Social Survey (ESS) from 2018/2019 and 2020/2021, the author investigates the contemporary religious structure in Montenegro, using the variables included in the survey: religious identification, self-assessment of religiosity, attendance at religious services, and prayer. The comparison involves all three confessions in Montenegro: Orthodox, Roman Catholics, and believers of the Islamic religious community. The main goal of the research is to determine whether there has been a shift in religiosity and whether there is an emphasized distance in the religiosity of the three confessions in this country. Moreover, the goal is to get an insight into the current situation regarding religiosity in Montenegro. The working hypothesis is that there is a current stabilization of the religious structure in Montenegro and a discrepancy between religious and confessional declarations and religious practices. Hereupon, we analyse the dimensions of religiosity with regard to basic socio-demographic characteristics and political orientations. The results have shown that there is no significant discrepancy in sex structure. The connection between dimensions of religiosity and "right-wing" political orientation is also registered.

Keywords: confessional affiliation, religiosity, Orthodoxy, political orientation, desecularization, European Social Survey, Montenegro

INTRODUCTION

The first serious, comparative analyses of sociological research on religiosity in the world, at least when it comes to empirical expertise, began after the Second World War. In that historical interval, sociological expertise recorded the decline of church religiosity in the entire Christian world, both in terms of church practice and certain dogmatic beliefs,

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such as the belief in God (Acquaviva, 1979, p. 83). Such empirical evidence encouraged numerous sociologists of religion to detect the process of secularization and the decline of religion in the then socio-historical period. Therefore, the fact that there was a secularization of society and the withdrawal of religion in that historical period was not in doubt (Berger, 1973). However, a controversy arose among theorists about the very cause of secularization and the withdrawal of religion and religiosity from the personal and social sphere. While some find the causes of secularization in the Judeo-Christian tradition, the pluralization of society, emphasizing that religion retreats into privacy, i.e., into the private sphere (Berger, 1973; Berger, 1966), others find the causes of secularization in the values brought about by urbanization, modernization, industrialization, etc. Bryan Wilson, for example, stated that religious opinions, actions, and institutions were once at the very centre of life in Western and most other societies. However, with the development of modern society, changes occur, not only in terms of religious practice and the decline of the influence of religious institutions but, above all, in terms of religious opinion. Wilson emphasizes that people are increasingly less motivated by religion in their actions, and church dogmas no longer determine appropriate behaviour. He defines secularization as a process by which religious opinion, action, and institutions lose social significance (Wilson, 1966). In short, the decline of religion was the conventional wisdom among most thinkers of the twentieth century.

This theoretical point of view was current until the beginning of the 1990s when the secularization paradigm changed. Casanova was a theorist who was among the first to be a herald, i.e., someone who noticed the continuous growth of public religion in a large part of the world, including Western Europe (Casanova, 1994). It is appropriate to emphasize, like David Martin, that secularization is a multidimensional process that takes different forms in different places (Martin, 1978, 2005). However, from that historical period until today, there has been less and less talk about secularization, which mainly focused on certain parts of the world, such as Western Europe or among the intellectual elite, as “an exception that proves the rule” (Berger, 1999). Indeed, Berger’s theory has taken a radical turn, from an anti-secularist to a strong proponent of secularization and a penitent who admits that today’s world, with some exceptions, is highly religious. In this regard, in the already cited work, Berger admits that a social scientist has an advantage over, for example, a philosopher or a theologian because of the interesting possibility that the author experiences both the decline and the verification of his/her theory. Sociologists of religion Rodney Stark and Roger Finke also advocate the thesis that it is time to carry the secularization theory to the graveyard of failed theories (Stark & Finke, 2000). Norris and Inglehart believe that the secularization thesis needs updating, considering that religion has not vanished from the world, nor does it seem it will happen. The remnants of religion have not died out; in survey research, the majority of Europeans still believe in God or identify with the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. However, as stated by these two theorists, the influence of religion on everyday life has somewhat eroded (Norris & Inglehart, 2004).

Talking about Europe and the resurgence of religion, i.e., de-secularization, Grace Davie calls for caution concerning the more careful use of the term “secularization”. This author believes that it is more about non-church religiosity than about complete secularization. The decline in church religiosity (especially among Protestant believers) does not necessarily mean the erosion of religiosity because the abdication of religious belief has not

yet occurred, which this author calls “believing without belonging” (Davie, 2005; 2005a). For example, in Great Britain, about 72% of the population identified with Christianity, and a small number attended church. Alister McGrath states that this has been a pastoral problem the churches must take into account, concluding that simplistic predictions about secularity and atheism are not fulfilled (McGrath, 2022, p. 262). Hervieu-Léger suggests that religion should be viewed as “a chain of memory” in the context of the distinction between traditional societies (“societies of memory”) and modern societies (“societies of change”) (Hervieu-Léger, 2000, p. 123). In other words, for this author, religion is the link that makes an individual believer a member of a community that gathers past, present, and future members, and it is also a part of tradition (collective memory) that becomes the foundation of community life. For Hervieu-Léger, modern societies, especially modern societies in Europe, are not less religious due to increasing rationality, as Wilson concluded, but because they are becoming less and less able to maintain the memory at the very centre of religious existence. That is why she calls them “amnesiac societies”. On the one hand, she states the dissolution of the foundations of religious life as a paradox of modern societies and, on the other hand, the opening of a space that only religion can fill. Therefore, the paradox of modernity is in removing the need for religion and religious feeling (through amnesia), but, in its utopian forms, it cannot avoid remaining in contact with religion.

The secularist principle of action in Montenegro began after the Second World War, marked by the social marginalization and demonopolization of religion. Secularization during that historical period was also supported by systemically conducted atheization, reflected in the atheistic spirit of upbringing and education of children and adults (Bakrač, 2013, pp. 133-135). Almost the entire second half of the twentieth century was directed ideologically against religion, following the political-ideological principles of the then political establishment, which was in accordance with the postulates of Marxist prove-nance of religion, that the idea of God was actually one's attempt to cope with the cruelty of material life and pain arising from social and economic difficulties (McGrath, 2022, p. 77). Empirical research has unequivocally testified to this in at least two ways: first, during that historical interval, there was no excessive research on religiosity, and then, even little research emphasized the secular principle of the state and the atheization of society. In fact, during that historical time, the attitude of the regime towards religion was not the same throughout the entire period. There were noticeable oscillations from the end of the Second World War when the system showed little tolerance for religion, and during the 1970s, when there was a kind of thawing and a more relaxed approach of the political establishment towards religion. During that period, the loyalty of the church towards the state was not absent, which, to some extent, resulted in the harmonization of relations (Vukomanović, 1997, p. 297). Although not overly extensive, the empirical evidence has testified to the degree of secularization and conducted atheization in the territory of Montenegro. According to the 1953 Census, 32% of the population of Montenegro did not want to self-identify denominationally, which was the highest percentage compared to the former Yugoslav republics. According to research from 1974, the smallest range of religiosity was in Serbia and Montenegro (Pantić, 1974). Vrcan dealt with the religiosity of young people in the SFRY, and according to records from 1990, only 12% of young people declared themselves religious in Montenegro (Vrcan, 1990, p. 132).

At the beginning of the 1990s, the religious landscape in Montenegro changed. Namely, in that period, marked by the collapse of the socialist regime and numerous subsequent events such as the collapse of the SFRY and the secession of the then republics from the SFRY, the revitalization of religion and the desecularization of society took place. Religion, which returned to the social scene, was burdened by a long-term existence under the rule of socialism at that time, followed by social limitation and the clergy's frustration with the long-term rule of real socialism. All this affected the public activity of religion, burdened by tradition and nationalism, where the church appeared as the pivot and guardian of those values. Empirical evidence has testified to the return of religion and the desecularization of society. That is especially visible in the Orthodox-dominant areas and, therefore, in Montenegro. Also, the revitalization of religion was evident among the youth population, regardless of confessional affiliation. This process of revitalization is reflected in the fact that those who have been more or less distant from religion and the church return to religion, in the complete return of those who have been attached partially to religion and the church, and in the increased attachment to religion among a certain number of people who return some functions to religion such as homogenization, integration, and even compensation. The self-assessment of religiosity, belief in God, some dogmatic concepts of faith, confessional self-identification, and the intensification of religious practices such as church attendance, prayer, etc., are particularly pronounced. For example, according to the 1991 Census, 69.1% identified themselves as Orthodox, 19.18% as Muslims, and 4.41% as Roman Catholics. According to the 2003 Census, that score, in the same order, was 74.2%, 17.7%, 3.5%, and the 2011 Census showed 72.0%, 15.9%, and 3.4%. According to research from 2000, one-fifth of respondents showed a low level of religiosity, 57.1% showed a medium level of religiosity, and 22.2% were religious. According to this research, the conclusion is that religiosity in Montenegro is high, 117.1, in the interval from a minimum of 40 to a maximum of 170 points. As for the confessional peculiarities, this research indicates that the religiosity of Catholics is on average regarding general religiosity, members of the Islamic religious community are above average, and the religiosity of Orthodox respondents is below average (Bešić and Đukanović, 2000, p. 137).

Considering the previous studies in Montenegro, it would be convenient and scientifically relevant to compare later studies on religiosity and see if there has been a shift in the vitality of religion and religiosity in this country. Accordingly, religious dynamics will be compared in Montenegro, following the previous studies and comparing it with the European Social Survey (ESS) data from 2018/2019 and 2020/2021, using the variables included in that research: religious identification, self-assessment of religiosity, attendance at religious ceremonies, and prayer. The paper particularly problematizes those religiosity variables and then compares the data with the studies from 2013. The comparison includes all three confessions in Montenegro: Orthodox, Roman Catholics, and believers of the Islamic religious community. Therefore, the main goal of the research is to determine whether the vitality of religiosity is maintained and whether there is a pronounced distance in religiosity of the three confessions in this country. The working hypothesis from which we start is that there is a current stabilization of the religious structure in Montenegro and a discrepancy between religious and confessional declarations on the one hand and religious practices on the other. Therefore, we analyse the

dimensions of religiosity concerning the main socio-demographic characteristics and political orientations. Following the aim of this paper, religiosity is measured by the dimensions of confessional affiliation, institutional religious practice, and the church's public role. Confessional affiliation consists of one indicator, i.e., belonging to a specific confession. Institutional religious practice encompasses one standardized indicator, and the church's public role is measured by going to the church to attend religious ceremonies. Personal religiosity is a dimension commonly referred to as religiosity in a narrower sense; it includes four elements: confessional self-identification, religious self-identification, attendance at religious ceremonies, and a prayer to God outside of a religious ceremony. The indices of church and personal religiosity we emphasize in the analysis are constructed from the mentioned elements. In the further analysis, we also use two predictor sets. The first includes the main socio-demographic characteristics - sex, and the second implies religiosity on the variables included in the ESS. It is important to emphasize that two very significant and striking events marked the entire process of the ESS in 2020. First, the Law on Freedom of Religion in Montenegro was actualized. That was the period when the Serbian Orthodox Church homogenized believers in "the defence of holy places" as a means of resisting the then political establishment (Bakrač, 2022). Later, along with the previous event, the COVID-19 pandemic left an imprint on the field of religiosity.

METHODOLOGY

This paper is based on the results of empirical research conducted as part of the international research project, the European Social Survey (ESS), on 28 February 2018 and 23 May 2020. The European Social Survey is one of the greatest and methodologically highest-quality comparative surveys in the world in the field of social sciences. It focuses on collecting data at the level of participating countries, which are used later for comparative measurement and monitoring of trends and changes in society. Surveys have been conducted in European countries since 2001. So far, nine rounds of research have been completed, in which over 30 countries participated. Montenegro participated in this survey for the first time in the 9th round.

Multidimensional approaches to the study of religiosity in sociological research, as well as in the ESS, start from the fact that religion is a complex phenomenon expressed through various dimensions, which, although connected, are relatively independent and thus provide a deeper insight into certain aspects of religiosity (Marinović Jerolimov, 1995; Zrinščak, 2008). As the title emphasizes, the paper analyses issues of institutional religiosity in contemporary Montenegrin society. By "institutional religiosity" here, we mean the expression of confessional affiliation - in terms of belonging to a specific religious institution, religious self-identification - in terms of expressing "religiosity in accordance with church teaching", and institutional religious practice - in terms of attending religious ceremonies characteristic of the respondents' confessional affiliation.

We base our hypotheses according to the possibilities and variables examined by the ESS. The hypothesis is based on previous research in Montenegro and the region (Bešić and Đukanović, 2000; Bakrač, 2013; Nikodem, 2010; Črpić, Zrinščak, 2005; 2010) and

represents a broader hypothetical framework within which we analyse changes in specific indicators of institutional religiosity.

H1 There is no significant deviation in religiosity based on sex differences, although we attribute a slight advantage to the female sex.

We base the hypothesis on previous research, especially on young people in Montenegro (Bakrač, 2013). Religiosity is widespread in Montenegrin society, and religious people are present in all socio-demographic groups. Nevertheless, all studies so far have shown that higher religiosity is statistically associated with the female sex².

H2 There is a discrepancy in religiosity concerning self-assessment of religiosity and religious practice - going to church and prayer.

H3 Religiosity and political orientations. We assume there has been a strengthening of the connection between religiosity and “right-wing” political orientation.

Previous studies have shown a connection between religiosity and “right-wing” political orientation (Nikodem, 2011; 2012). In addition, the public engagement of the church, discussions about that role, and the fact that a series of political positions in public are legitimized by church support and/or religious views point out that the connection between religiosity and “right-wing” political orientation can be even more strongly empirically confirmed.

CONFESSITIONAL AFFILIATION

We begin the overview of the basic indicators of institutional religiosity with the question of belonging to a specific religious community, i.e., confession. As evident from [Table 1](#), confessional affiliation in Montenegrin society includes the majority of citizens. According to the results of the ESS for 2018 in Montenegro, about 44% of citizens belonged to the Serbian Orthodox Church, while about 23% belonged to “other Orthodox churches”. According to the ESS from 2018 and 2020, confessional self-identification is presented in [Table 1](#). According to this survey, the total number of Orthodox respondents was about 73% in 2018 and 68.2% in 2020. Compared with the 2011 Census, there were about 72% of Orthodox believers, which was a slight difference. There were 3.5% of Roman Catholics, while the number of members of the Islamic community increased, as there were 15.9% according to the Census and about 27% according to the ESS research. The first indicator of religiosity is confessional affiliation. According to the last few Censuses³, there are no significant changes regarding confessional affiliation in Montenegrin society. According to public opinion research in 2014, 55% of the citizens of Montenegro expressed the highest level of trust in the Serbian Orthodox Church⁴, 47.8%⁵ in 2019, and in May 2023, the

² RESEARCH Women More Religious Than Men Tanjug 26 March 2016 <https://www.blic.rs/vesti/drustvo/istrzivanje-zene-religiozniye-od-muskaraca/gvskbqq>

³ www.monstat.org

⁴ The Highest Trust in the President and the Serbian Orthodox Church 8 December 2014 <https://rtcg.me/vijesti/politika/75055/najvece-povjerenje-u-predsjednika-i-spc.html>

⁵ Mirjana D. 18 July 2019 Citizens Have the Most Trust in Đukanović, the Education System, and the Serbian Orthodox Church <https://www.antenam.net/politika/126906-gradjani-najvise-povjerenja-imaju-u-djukanovica-i-spc>

Serbian Orthodox Church enjoyed the trust of 55.5% of respondents⁶. As mentioned, the processes of socio-political changes from 2020 definitely influenced the indicated changes in the declaration of confessional affiliation. In this sense, confessional affiliation can also have non-religious, i.e., secular characteristics. Comparing European Social Surveys has revealed the differences among the believers of the Serbian Orthodox Church when the number of these believers in 2020 decreased by almost 17%, which has been subject to analysis and further research since it was a period when the Serbian Orthodox Church homogenized its believers around the Law on Freedom of Religion. Also, both surveys show an increase in believers of the Islamic religious community, which significantly deviates from the results of the 2011 Census.

SELF-ASSESSMENT OF RELIGIOSITY

When it comes to self-assessment of religiosity, the European Social Surveys presented in [Table 2](#) show a kind of stability with growth tendencies in 2020. Namely, the first indicator of personal religiosity is religious self-identification, and the results show significant changes. Among all confessions, religiosity has practically doubled. In the total sample, we would say that about 40.7% were religious, 28.7% were moderately religious, and 30.6% were non-religious for 2018, and in the same order, for 2020, the score was as follows: 34.1%, 26.1%, and 39.8%. In the comparison between the two European Social Surveys, there was an increase in religiosity in 2020. It is difficult to explain such a score, especially among members of the Roman Catholic Church, where the score has doubled. We could find a kind of explanation for the Serbian Orthodox Church in the actualization of the Law on Freedom of Religion, which significantly motivated and homogenized the believers of that church. However, through a comparative analysis between the two research rounds, we conclude that the number of members of the Serbian Orthodox Church decreases, but their religiosity increases. According to research on the religiosity of young people in Montenegro (Bakrač, 2013), 81.4% of members of the Orthodox confession, 81.2% of members of the Roman Catholic confession, and 84.8% of members of the Islamic religious community declared themselves religious. In the modality of self-assessment of religiosity, 81.5% of young people declared themselves religious in the total sample. The analysis of religious self-identification and sex structure shown in [Table 3](#) indicates that women are more inclined to “religiosity in accordance with church teaching”, while men are slightly less religious. Therefore, there are no significant deviations in religiosity regarding sex structure. The male sex takes the lead in non-religiosity, while the female sex takes the lead in religiosity. We have noticed that the degree of religiosity increased slightly in 2020 for both sexes. Compared with the research on young people (Bakrač, 2013), the score among the male population was about 49.0%, and 51.0% among the female population.

⁶ Political Public Opinion in Montenegro May 2023 <https://www.cedem.me/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Prezentacija-MAJ-2023-11-30h.pdf>

ATTENDANCE AT RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES

The inherent attachment to religion and the church, shown in [Table 4](#), primarily relates to religious practices, such as weddings and funerals, so we often call them religious or church non-profane ceremonies. Accordingly, the ESS observed religiosity through the variable of attending church ceremonies. For example, according to data for 2020, regarding the Montenegrin Orthodox Church,⁷ 22.2% of believers went to church at least once a month, 19.8% only on major holidays, and 58.1% rarely or never. According to the same order, for 2018, that score was 25.4%, 39.7%, and 34.9%. Compared with the research on young people, 37.6% went to church up to once a month, 44.2% several times a year, and 14.2% rarely. In the same order, for believers of the Roman Catholic Church, the score was 54.4%, 28.2%, and 14.7%, and for the Islamic religious community: 36.6%, 38.4%, and 17.0%. There is a noticeable increase in religiosity based on this indicator on a monthly basis.

Prayer as an Indicator of Religiosity

Prayer falls into the category of indicators of an act of piety. As such, prayer in socio-logical research is considered a significant indicator when assessing religiosity. Prayer is an internal need, and it cannot be a conformist behaviour conditioned by pressure from the external environment, i.e., from society or another person. It is conditioned most often by some personal problems. In the total sample, according to the ESS research shown in [Table 5](#) for 2018, 18.9% of respondents prayed every day, 13.9% once a week, 13.5% monthly, and 53.7% rarely or never. For 2020, in the same order, that score was 17.0% every day, 14.9% weekly, 7.4% monthly, 8.4% only on holy days, and 52.3% rarely or never. Compared with young people (Bakrač, 2013), 12.8% of Orthodox respondents never prayed, 24.8% rarely, 26.6% occasionally, 18.6% often, and 17.2% regularly. Among believers of the Roman Catholic Church, that score was 8.7%, 23.3%, 32.0%, 16.0%, 20.0%, and among believers of the Islamic religious community, the score for performing Namaz was 49.4%, 21.3%, 15.2%, 6.7%, and 7.4%. In the Montenegrin Orthodox Church, 41.2% of respondents prayed never or rarely, 11.1% prayed regularly, and 19% prayed only on religious holidays. That score for 2020 was 45.3%, 9.3% every day, 17.4% weekly, 5.8% monthly, and 22.1% on holy days. It is interesting to note that the religiosity of believers of the Roman Catholic Church doubled concerning daily or monthly prayer in 2020. Possibly, although it is difficult to explain, the COVID-19 pandemic influenced this. However, it is difficult to accept the data that the score for respondents of the Serbian Orthodox Church has almost halved in daily and monthly prayer.

Religiosity and Political Affiliation of Respondents

Among respondents who belong to the ideological political spectrum of the left, the ESS data, shown in [Table 6](#), indicate the following: Democratic Party of Socialists, Social

⁷ Religious community recognized in Montenegro, but not recognized by other Orthodox churches in the world. At its head is a person excommunicated by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew (editor's note).

Democratic Party - 48.6% of respondents declared themselves non-religious, 29.5% moderately religious, and 21.9% religious. For 2020, that score was 34.6%, 40.5%, and 25.3%. On the other hand, the score for right-oriented respondents - Democratic Front was 22.4%, 23.3%, and 54.3%. For 2020, the score was 24.1%, 39.9%, and 36.0%. As we move towards the right ideological spectrum, religiosity increases, and as we move towards the left, i.e., the left ideological and political spectrum, religiosity decreases. Respondents of "the right-wing" political orientation are more inclined towards church religiosity, and it is peculiarly interesting that during the mentioned period, the connection between "the right-wing" political option and church religiosity has strengthened. For example, according to the indicators from 2020, 4.9% of the left-oriented respondents and 11.7% of the right-wing political spectrum went to church daily. 4.8% of respondents of the left political spectrum and 8.7% of the right political spectrum prayed daily. The research indicates a significant shift, shown in [Table 7](#), from which we single out two significant observations: first, there has been a decline in the trust of believers of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the Democratic Party of Socialists, according to the ESS research in 2020. We could explain this by the fact that with the activation of the Law on Freedom of Religion, the number of believers of the Serbian Orthodox Church was 20% lower among the sympathizers of the Democratic Party of Socialists. However, what is difficult to explain is that in such a political climate, there has been a decrease in the believers of the Serbian Orthodox Church among the sympathizers of the Democratic Front. All of this points to the insufficient precision and methodological questionability of the ESS research.

CONCLUSION

The latest research results also indicate that religiosity in Montenegro is widespread, and despite the observed changes, it remains a significant characteristic of Montenegrin citizens. Of course, this does not mean that non-religiosity is not present. The religious landscape of Montenegro is getting more complex, and we can draw several significant conclusions from this analysis, which raise the question of theoretical explanations of the trends and the role of religion in Montenegro and can stimulate further discussions on the subject.

The first conclusion we can reach by analysing the ESS data in Montenegro is the questionability of the precision of the sample. Namely, comparing previous studies on religiosity in Montenegro, we observe a pretty plausible attitude of Montenegrin society towards confessional affiliation and religious self-assessment. Here, there seems to be imprecision regarding the Orthodox confession. The survey divided the Orthodox corpus into three levels: the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Montenegrin Orthodox Church, and other Orthodox denominations – "Other" (in the ESS survey for 2020, it was specified - without affiliation to Serbian Orthodox Church and Montenegrin Orthodox Church). At the same time, it was not specified which other Orthodox denominations these were. It has been unclear whether this referred to members of the Russian, Macedonian, etc. Orthodox Churches. Also, it has been unclear who formulated the items (not the questions; we assume that the questions were standardized for all countries), and the assumption was that the items were formulated by the management team of researchers in Montenegro, who had the freedom to adapt the items to the country where the survey was conducted. It is

somewhat strange that in Montenegrin society, which has been polarized quite sharply by confession, the affiliation to the Serbian Orthodox Church decreased from about 44% in 2018 to about 28% in 2020⁸. It has been particularly challenging to find a reasonable explanation for the fact that this happened in the year when there was a discussion on the Law on Religion in Montenegro, which further homogenized the believers of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Montenegro (Bakrač, 2022). It is indicative that the number of Islamic religious community believers is almost identical to the number of believers of the Serbian Orthodox Church, according to the ESS data from 2020-2021. Therefore, it remains unclear whether this is a relevant sampling or, on the contrary, something with elements of "biased sampling" where the research methodology has failed; further empirical research will have to show. If we add to that the opinion of the then political establishment that efforts should be made in Montenegro to form an Orthodox Church without a national sign, then the assumption and suspicion that the mentioned surveys have been politically burdened and motivated rise. The then president of Montenegro, Milo Đukanović, said in an interview: "The inspiration for opening this topic is an attempt at reconciliation. I do not see an epilogue by forming the Montenegrin Orthodox Church now in Montenegro, compared to the practice of the Serbian Orthodox Church, from which Montenegrins would expel Serbs, and the divisions would continue - said Đukanović... I want to help us overcome the state of deep schism within the Orthodox essence of Montenegro. I do not in the least exclude the Metropolitanate of Montenegro and the Littoral, other dioceses of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Montenegro, nor their clergy from that project. The door is open for them to be part of this solution, not to remain traditionally part of the problem... that church would widely open its doors for all believing people of the Orthodox confession, and for all those who have served in this or that church so far, it would open the possibility for them to put their services, experience, and knowledge into the function so that the church can develop and become an important pillar of further social cohesion in Montenegro."⁹ Based on what has been said so far, the mentioned surveys left the impression of empirical verification of what the then president of the state promoted a little earlier. The second conclusion concerns religiosity. Although we have certain doubts about the sampled material from 2018 and 2020, the results show stabilization and an increase in religiosity between the two surveyed periods, at least regarding the religious self-assessment among all three confessions. While such an increase among the members of the Serbian Orthodox Church could be explained by dissatisfaction with the Law on Freedom of Religion, which was

⁸ The fact that there is a kind of inconsistency and methodologically questionable oscillations in the survey is also indicated by data from the researchers responsible for the ESS research in Montenegro, according to which in July 2021, "approximately 43% of the Orthodox population in Montenegro identified themselves as part of the Serbian Orthodox Church, 21% as part of the Montenegrin Orthodox Church, and 35% 'do not want to choose'". Therefore, this is a kind of denial of their own ESS research from 2020. Antena M, 12 August 2021. Komar: The latest surveys show that the Serbian Orthodox Church is supported by 43% and the Montenegrin Orthodox Church by 21% of the Orthodox population <https://www.antenam.net/drustvo/210464-komar-najnovije-ankete-pokazuju-da-spc-podrzava-43-a-cpc-21-pravoslavnog-stanovnistva>

⁹ Đukanović suggests: To form the Orthodox Church of Montenegro 12 July 2019 <https://www.vesti-online.com/djukanovic-predlaze-formirati-pravoslavnu-crkvu-crne-gore/>

very current during that period and initiated by the then-ruling establishment, and which could encourage the believers of the Serbian Orthodox Church to become more religious, it has been challenging to find a relevant scientific basis for a jump in religiosity among the other two dominant confessions in Montenegro, especially among the believers of the Roman Catholic Church. Speaking about the believers of the Serbian Orthodox Church, we could find, to some extent, a scientific explanation in the fact that religion remains the most accepted answer to identity and anthropological dilemmas. Additionally, based on comparative data, we conclude that religiosity was a strong basis for the social mobilization of some believers in the past years, as we can see in the example of processions from 2020 and 2021. A similar score for religiosity is evident regarding attending religious ceremonies and praying to God. We came to the next conclusion by comparing affiliation to a political ideology and party with the attitude toward religion. Namely, this analysis confirmed the strengthening of the connection between religiosity and right-wing political orientation. Therefore, we can conclude that the analysis of the relationship between the changes in religiosity and the social action of various socio-political and religious actors is a significant heuristic direction of future sociological research (Stolz et al., 2016). The political establishment embodied in the dominance of the Democratic Party of Socialists initiated the Law on Freedom of Religion, so with this comparative analysis, we have concluded that there was a sudden jump in trust in that party among the believers of the Montenegrin Orthodox Church and a decrease among the believers of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Finally, it is difficult to prove the (non-) credibility and empirical verifiability of the obtained data. If the data obtained are relevant, then this is a serious alarm for a sociologist of religion to monitor and explain the trends in the religiosity of the population in Montenegro because, according to such records, there has been an evident shift in religiosity. However, if, after all, it turns out that the research is conducted methodologically incorrectly with a noticeable methodological bias and political motivation, then it remains a great regret that such a useful database for comparative analysis has become meaningless. Additionally, such an outcome would demonstrate the absurdity of putting other values (such as political) in the primary position and the scientific ones in the secondary position and importance.



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АСПЕКТИ ИНСТИТУЦИОНАЛНЕ РЕЛИГИОЗНОСТИ, ОДНОСНО (НЕ)КРЕДИБИЛНОСТИ ЕВРОПСКОГ ДРУШТВЕНОГ ИСТРАЖИВАЊА У ЦРНОЈ ГОРИ

(Превод *In Extenso*)

Сажетак: Користећи податке Европског друштвеног истраживања (енгл. ESS) из 2018/2019. и 2020/2021. године, аутор проучава савремену верску структуру у Црној Гори користећи варијабле обухваћене овим истраживањем: верску идентификацију, самопроцену религиозности, присуствање верској служби и молитви. Поређење обухвата све три конфесије у Црној Гори: православну, римокатоличку и припаднике исламске верске заједнице. Главни циљ рада јесте да утврди да ли је дошло до промена у религиозности и да ли постоји изражена дистанца између три конфесије у овој држави. Осим тога, циљ је да се стекне увид у тренутну ситуацију у вези са религиозношћу у Црној Гори. Радна претпоставка је да се верска структура у Црној Гори тренутно стабилизује, док постоји раскорак између верских и конфесионалних изјава и верске праксе. Стога анализирамо димензије религиозности у погледу основних социодемографских карактеристика и политичких опредељења. Резултати показују да не постоји значајан раскорак у родној структури. Такође је забележена повезаност димензија религиозности и „десничарске“ политичке оријентације.

Кључне речи: конфесионална припадност, религиозност, православље, политичко опредељење, десекуларизација, Европско друштвено истраживање, Црна Гора

УВОД

Прве озбиљне упоредне анализе социолошких истраживања о религиозности у свету, бар када је реч о емпиријском експертизи, почеле су после Другог светског рата. У том историјском интервалу, социолошка експертиза забележила је опадање црквене религиозности у читавом хришћанској свету, како у погледу црквене праксе и одређених догматских уверења, тако и у погледу вере у Бога (Acquaviva, 1979, p. 83).

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Табела 7. Конфесионална припадност и припадност јолитичким партијама
/ Table 7. Confessional affiliation and affiliation to political parties

	Римокатоличка црква / Roman Catholic Church	Српска православна црква / Serbian Orthodox Church	Црногорска православна црква / Montenegrin Orthodox Church	Остале православне цркве / Other Orthodox	Ислам/Islam
ДПС/DPS	3,2	20	23,2	3	19,2
СДП/SDP	0	0	0	40	18,4
ДФ/DF	0	0	89,5	35	0
ДЕМОКРАТЕ/DEMOCRATS	0	0	100	24	0
УРА/URA	0	0	33,3	2	33,3
БС/BS	0	0	0	0	4,1
				0	4,1
				0	0
				10,5	0
				5	16,7
				0	0
				20,0	32,0
				55,0	46,1
				6,7	7,8
				40	0
				2020.	2018.
				2018.	2020.
				32,0	46,1
				33,3	4,3
				0	1,7
				100,0	31,3

◀ НАЗАД

◀ ВАСК

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