

Workshop– part II: "Adolescents' Religious Attitudes and their Relationship to the Church"
Erfurt, 2017-05-04

I will present you some results from the article *Religious Trajectories in Adolescence: Beliefs and Attitudes*, written by Friedrich Schweitzer, Henrik R. Christensen from Denmark and me.



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The main contents are faith and church. The confirmands were asked at all 3 times in this survey (2012, 2013, 2015) about their general attitude toward faith and church.

Why a difference between different European countries is of interest?
Comparing different countries needs the reflection of the regional contexts.

- - towards faith
- - towards church

differences between countries depend on

- relationship between state and church
 - legal situation and constitution
 - society and youth
 - school system
 - religious education
-

Now we look at two figures:

1. CF/KF/QF01 Christian Faith and
2. CF/KF/QF02 Church

ad 1) In all countries, except Austria, between t1 and t2 an increase can be observed. Two years after confirmation a more or less decrease comes.

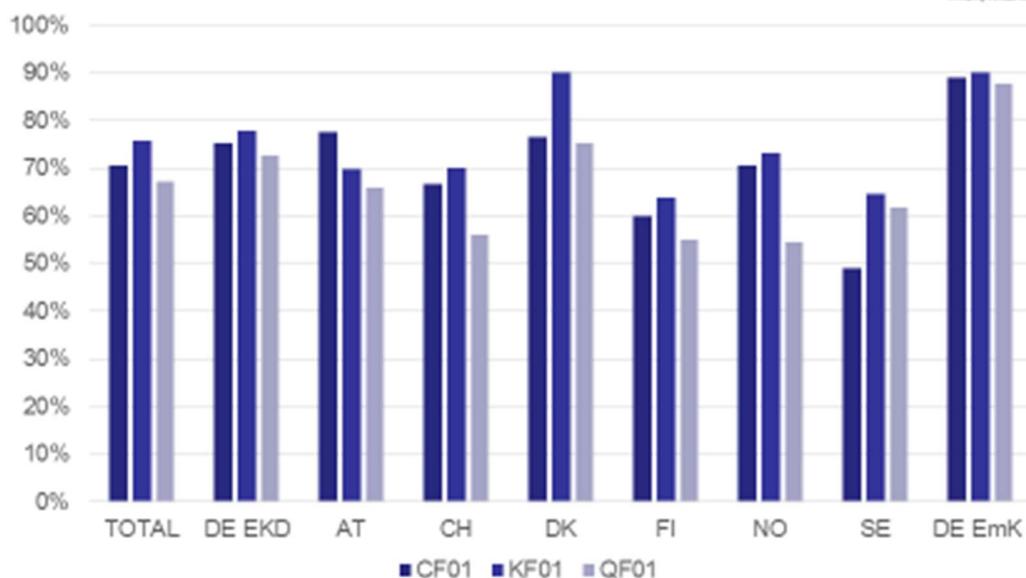
The difference in Sweden between t1 and t2 is rather high. In Sweden the confirmation-rate is about 29% within the Swedish age-group. One can expect, that only the young people, who are interested in Christianity take part at confirmation. But in Sweden the t3-value is higher as t1. In all other countries the t3-value lies below t1.

In Denmark and Sweden the positive effect is higher than in the other countries.

The values of the EMK are high at all 3 times. This refers to the minority-context, in which the members of the church are more connected and maybe even more pious.

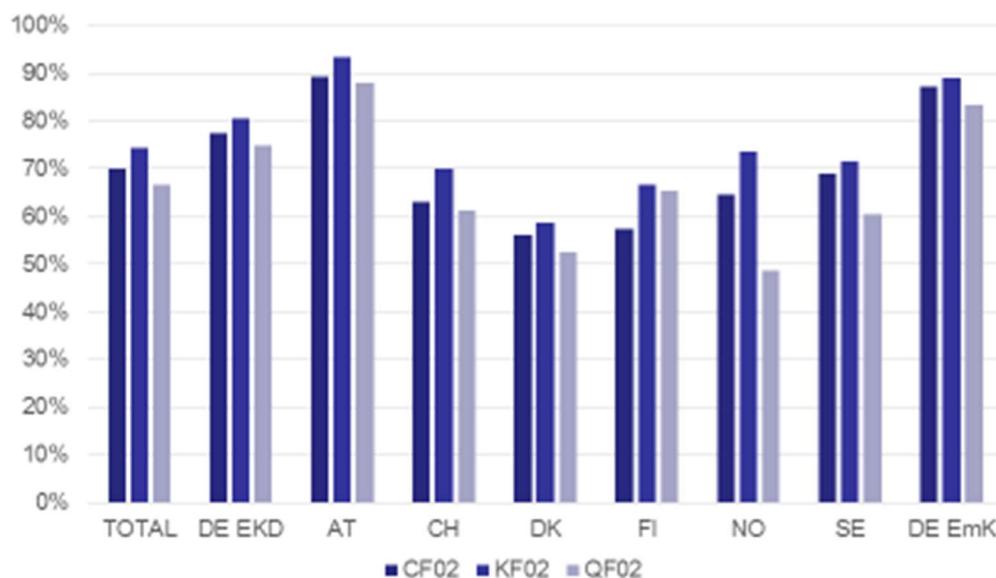
Before we change to the next slide, please keep in mind the values of Denmark.

How would you describe your current attitude towards the Christian faith in general?



N = 2858, t1/t2/t3 matched cases; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)

How would you describe your current attitude towards our church in general?



N = 2837, t1/t2/t3 matched cases; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)

Ad 2) The next item “How would you describe your current attitude towards our Church in general”?

Here Denmark is lower!

The Austrian high values indicate that Christianity is also connected with the roman-catholic church. The identification with the Protestant Church is very high and essential for faith.

We can observe the same effect as before – increase between t_1 and t_2 and decrease between t_2 and t_3 . Except: Finland! The Finnish way with the young confirmed leaders is a model of success. The confirmands consider church as an attractive institution.



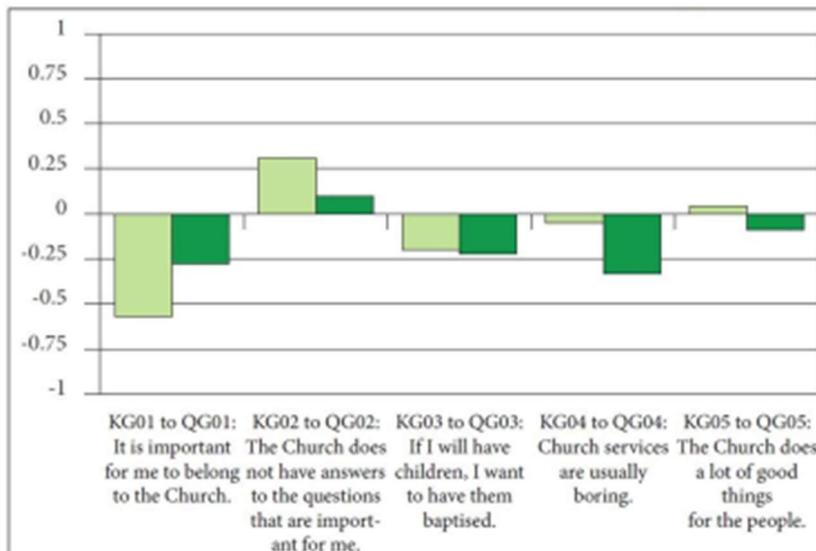
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- increase $t_1 - t_2$ and decrease $t_2 - t_3$
 - exception: Austria (faith)
 - t_3 lower than t_1
 - exceptions: Sweden (faith), Finland (church)
 - view on church in context of minority (Austria, EMK in Germany, Poland)
 - keep in mind: in t_3 almost all confirmed girls and boys are church-friendly
-

A gender perspective always helps getting more insight. At t3 two third of the confirmed participants at the survey were female. We'll make a look into some changes between t₂ and t₃.

female: light green

male: dark green

CHURCH and Gender



Changes from t2 (2013) to t3 (2015): gender-specific differences, N female = 2026-2073, N male = 1097-1130



- more female (65%) participated in t₃
- criticism-question (QG02) shows positive change
- image-question (QG05) shows difference between boys and girls
- baptism-question (QG03) with narrow gender-difference
- church-question (QG01) more problematic for girls
- church service-question (QG04) more problematic for boys

Now I close with some general findings:



- Youth in general gets more critical.
- Confirmation fosters young people finding their paths into future.
- They can change their opinion even several years after confirmation!
- Religious distancing or religious individualizing?
- *Let's discuss about!*



Thank you for your attention!

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Thomas Ebinger recommends of a book concerning creation:

Rainer Oberthür, Das Buch vom Anfang von allem: Bibel, Naturwissenschaft und das Geheimnis unseres Universums. – Kösel Verlag 2017