

Islamic religiosity of Turkish and Moroccan immigrants and their descendants in six European countries. An exploration of residence country, community, and individual level effects.

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Introduction

Over the past century most European societies have become increasingly secular. Even though many Europeans still believe in God, their religious participation has shown a decrease since the 1970s (Norris and Inglehart, 2007). It is perhaps unsurprising then that in this strongly secularized context the religiosity of immigrants, especially those from Muslim countries has drawn much attention. Many immigrants in Europe come from countries where the population is much more religious. In the case of the guest-worker immigrants from Morocco and Turkey who often hail from rural areas, religiosity is even stronger. Muslim immigrants in Europe therewith seemed to provide an important test-case for theories of secularization. The growing range of studies on this topic provides a mixed view. Studies in Germany showed stability (Diehl and Koenig, 2009), and where studies in the Netherlands initially showed decline (Phalet *et al.*, 2008; Phalet and Ter Wal, 2005) more recent studies in that country demonstrates stagnation or even revival (Maliepaard *et al.*, 2012). A recent publication using data from the European Social Survey (Van der Bracht *et al.*, 2013b) does support the theory of increasing secularization across generations.

The aim of this paper is to increase understanding of the factors that shape religiosity at the individual, community, origin and residence country level. It adds to the growing body of research by including both previously studied factors – such as generation, concentration of co-ethnics - and several little researched factors at the individual, origin and residence country level – including belonging to a minority group in the origin country and rural origins. Continuing the line of enquiry on the role of boundaries this paper looks at the role of religious accommodation by the country of residence by using a dataset collected in countries with varying accommodation regimes. It also explores if findings from the Netherlands on a negative relation between residence country identity and religiosity represent a wider pattern and tests if the relation between the two depends on the national context.

Many of the recent studies on immigrant religiosity in Europe make use of the European Social Survey. This is a very rich resource, however as several authors have pointed out the sample of immigrants in ESS may be biased because the survey is only conducted in the national language, complicating participation of people with low proficiency in this language (Van Tubergen and Sindradottir, 2011; van der Bracht *et al.*, 2013a). Since several studies have shown that people with higher proficiency in the residence country language are less religious (van Tubergen, 2007; Smits *et al.*, 2010) and that immigrants' language proficiency varies across countries (van Tubergen and Kalmijn, 2005; Ersanilli and Koopmans, 2011) this implies that studies using ESS data may underestimate cross-national differences in religiosity.

The analyses in this paper are conducted with the Six Country Immigrant Integration Comparative Survey - SCIICS (Ersanilli and Koopmans, 2013). This survey includes immigrants of Turkish origin in six and Moroccan origin in four European countries. Since bilingual questionnaires and interviewers and the same sampling method were used in all countries, variance confounding country differences will be lower.

Theorizing immigrant religiosity

One of the main theoretical frames used to analyse immigrant religiosity is secularization theory. Since most studies point to generational decrease, I also expect that *religiosity decreases over generation* (H1).

I expect that *sharing a house with your parents leads to higher religiosity* (H2), because of the reinforcement of cultural norms by parents. Conversely as Maliepaard and Phalet have shown for the Netherlands (2012), *social contacts with the majority population is negatively related to religiosity* (H3)

Of the studies looking at effects of country of origin (van der Bracht *et al.*, 2013a; van Tubergen, 2005), few have investigated effects of differences within the country of origin such as regional differences in development, ethnic and religious composition. Since rural areas tend to be more religious than urban areas I expect that *people from a rural background will be more religious* (H4). It is often overlooked that Turkey does not only have a Sunni Muslim population but also an Alevi population. Alevism shares several believes with Shi'a Islam, but the most noticeable differences with Sunni Islam are the absence of the obligation for weekly mosque visits - instead there are relatively irregular 'cem' sessions, and the lower prevalence of the wearing of headscarves. Many Alevi also consider themselves to be more secular than Sunni Muslims. I therefore expect that *Alevi have a lower degree of religiosity than Sunni* (H5). People that belong to a disadvantaged group in the country of origin, such as Kurds in the case of Turkey, and to a certain extent Berbers in the case of Morocco, migration may differently affect their religiosity since they experience a larger increase in security (Ruiter and van Tubergen,

2009). I therefore expect that *people belonging to disadvantaged minorities in the origin country will be less religious* (H6).

The co-ethnic community can influence immigrants' religiosity in several ways. I expect that *religiosity will be higher for people living in places with higher shares of co-ethnics* (H7).

As observed by Zolberg and Long (1999) Europe's history generated religious boundaries turning Muslims into 'the other'. The brightness of the boundary surrounding Muslim groups, may make it difficult to combine identification with the residence country and a high religiosity, since these two are presented as incompatible. I therefore expect that there is a *negative relation* between the two (H8).

European countries have dealt differently with claims of Muslim immigrants for accommodation of their religious practice (e.g. halal slaughtering, mosque building) mostly along the lines of their church-state regimes (Koopmans *et al.*, 2005; Soper and Fetzer, 2007; Maussen, 2009). I expect that *Muslim immigrants' religiosity is higher in countries that accommodate Islam more* (H9). By the extent to which they accommodate Islam, states signal the strength of the boundary between Muslims and the majority society (Phalet *et al.*, 2013). I therefore expect that *the relation between residence country identity and religiosity varies with the extent of accommodation of Islam* (H10).

European countries do not only differ in their degree of accommodation of Islam, they also show variation in secularisation. Studies have shown that immigrant religiosity is positively related to that of the majority population (van Tubergen, 2005; Van Tubergen and Sindradottir, 2011; van der Bracht *et al.*, 2013a). It can therefore be expected that *religiosity is lower in countries with a more secularised population* (H11).

Data and measurement

This paper uses the Six Country Immigrant Integration Comparative Survey (SCIICS) dataset (Ersanilli and Koopmans, 2013). SCIICS is a telephone survey with bilingual questionnaires and interviewers conducted in 2008 in six countries that have pursued different policies of accommodation of Islam: the Netherlands, Germany, France, Belgium, Austria, and Sweden. Turkish migrants and their children were surveyed in all six countries, and Moroccan migrants and their children in the first four as Austria and Sweden have negligible numbers of Moroccan migrants. In all countries immigration of Turks and Moroccans started during the guest-worker period. After the end of recruitment around 1974, differences in family reunification, asylum application and residence permit rules lead to divergence in patterns of Turkish immigration (Muus, 2003; Dagevos *et al.*, 2006). To control for the resulting composition effects, the SCIICS target population is limited to Turkish and Moroccan immigrants who arrived before 1975, as well as their offspring. Immigrants who arrived as adults after 1975, mostly as spouses or asylum seekers, are excluded.

Since previous studies have shown that not only country of origin but also region of origin influence immigrants' religiosity, and Turkish migration often followed a regional pattern SCIICS also used a regional selection criterion. Half of the Turkish sample in each country was limited to only respondents from 27 Turkish provinces situated in Central and Eastern-Anatolia¹ and half of the Moroccan sample to the northern provinces that used to be part of the Spanish protectorate.

Because the goal of SCIICS was to achieve a cross-nationally comparative sample we have chosen for a sampling technique that could be used in all six countries: surname based phone book sampling. This method has proven to result in high quality samples in previous studies (Galonska *et al.*, 2003; Granato, 1999; Ersanilli, 2010).

Religious accommodation in the SCIICS countries

Of the six countries the Netherlands has been most accommodative to demands of Muslims. It may come as a surprise to some that Austria scores high on accommodation. The Austro-Hungarian empire included significant shares of Muslims and a law of 1867 gave Muslims the right to build mosques and practice their religion.²

Cross-national differences in secularization follow a very different pattern from accommodative policies with the Netherlands, France and especially Sweden showing high degrees of secularization.

Measurement

Four indicators of religiosity are studied: identity, dietary practice, mosque visits and religious orthodoxy. Many previous studies also look at affiliation, however in the SCIICS samples affiliations levels are very high leaving little variation to explain. 96.6% of the Turkish sample (disregarding Assyrian Christians) and 97.5% of the Moroccan sample answered "Muslim" to the question "which religion do you belong to"³.

Religious identity is the mean of the answers to the questions "To what extent do you feel connected to Muslims?", "To what extent do you feel Muslim?" and "To what extent are you proud of being Muslim?". All questions have a 5-point answer scale ranging from 1 "not at all" to 5 "completely".

¹ These provinces are Afyon, Agri, Ardahan, Aksaray, Bingol, Bitlis, Cankiri, Elazig, Erzincan, Erzurum, Eskisehir, Hakkari, Igdir, Karaman, Kars, Kayseri, Kirikkale, Kirsehir, Konya, Malatya, Mus, Nevsehir, Nigde, Sivas, Tunceli, Yozgat, and Van.

² <http://www.euro-islam.info/country-profiles/austria/>

³ It is possible that the phrasing of the question has contributed to a high affiliation rate. For the Turkish group religious affiliation is clearly lower in Sweden than in the other countries, standing at 87.85%

Dietary practice. Is the mean score of answers to the questions “do you eat halal food?” and “do you participate in Ramadan?”, both measured on a 4-point scale: no, never/ yes, sometimes/ yes, mostly/ yes, always.

Mosque visits Respondents were asked how often they go to the mosque. The answer scale ranges from 1 “never” to 5 “daily”.

Religious orthodoxy. Measured by the question “Muslims have to return to the original roots of Islam”. Answer categories are 1 ‘agree’ and 0 ‘disagree’. ⁴

Generation is divided into two dummy variables: second generation for those born in the residence country and in-between generation for people who were born in Turkey or Morocco and came to the current country of residence before the age of 18. The first generation of people who migrated aged 18 or over serves as reference category.

Living with parents is a dummy capturing whether people live in the same house as their parents.

Rural origin this is a dummy variable that is ‘1’ is respondents or their parents grew up in a village in Turkey/Morocco.

Alevi is a dummy for self-reported Alevi. The reference category is Sunni.

Share of co-ethnics: Number of people born in Turkey/Morocco as share of the total population in the place of residence.⁵

Residence country identity is the mean of the answers to the questions “to what extent you feel connected to [survey country nationals]?”, “To what extent do you feel [survey country national]?” and “To what extent are you proud of being [survey country national]?”. All questions have a 5-point answer scale ranging from 1 “not at all” to 5 “completely”.

Social contacts with majority group members was measured with the question “How many of the people visiting you at home are of [survey country] origin?”. The answer scale ranges from 1 “(almost) all” to 5 “(almost) none”.

The analyses are also controlled for *gender* (male=1), *ethnic minority in the origin country* (Kurds for the Turks group, Berber for the Moroccan group), and the *log of the size of the place of residence*. Models also include dummies for married, with single, divorced, widowed or cohabiting as the reference group, and parenthood to capture life phase transitions that are known to influence religiosity. Finally controls were added for *education* operationalized as the highest education completed in either the residence country or Turkey or Morocco. It is captured by two dummies: none/primary and tertiary, with secondary school as reference category. Table 2 presents descriptive statistics on all variables.

⁴ The small group of “neither agree nor disagree” was added to the reference category. An ordered logit run on the original 3 point scale yielded similar results as those presented below. Available from author on request.

⁵ For detailed information on sources and definition in each country see Ersanilli & Koopmans (2013)

Results

Table 3 present the results of the (ordered) logistic regression analyses without interaction effects. Many of the individual level variables show consistent effects across indicators of religiosity and both groups. There is a significant decline in religiosity from the first to the in-between and second generation – with the exception of dietary practice for the Moroccan origin group. This fits with the secularization hypotheses, however it is important to note that there are no significant decreases between the in-between and second generation, confirming the stagnation found in earlier studies.

People who share a house with their parents tend to be more religious, though this is only significant for the Turkish group for all but orthodoxy and for the Moroccan origin group only for mosque attendance. This mostly confirms hypothesis 3.

As expected (H4) people of rural origin tend to be more religious, however this is again only significant for the Turkish origin group.

In the Turkish group, Alevi are much less religious than Sunni, confirming H5.

Hypothesis 6 predicted that religiosity would be lower for groups that are underprivileged in the origin country. The analyses shows support for this in the case of Kurds in the Turkish group on all measures except orthodoxy, but for Berber in the Moroccan group the contrary is found.

On the community level, the analyses show a positive relation between share of co-ethnics in the place of residence and religiosity in line with hypothesis 7. Only for orthodoxy is there no significant effect. This may be because opinions, such as orthodoxy, are less sensitive to social control than behavior and identity.

On the residence country level there are several significant cross-national differences (Table 3). Figure 1 presents the predicted country means⁶ and 95% confidence interval controlled for all variables in the models of Table 3. Whereas on the individual, community and origin level most effects are in the same direction for both groups, this is not the case for the residence country effects. For the Turkish group, religiosity is systematically lowest in Germany and Sweden. Differences with Germany are significant except for Sweden for identity, Austria for diet and mosque and Belgium for mosque attendance. Religiosity in Sweden is significantly lower in all countries for all indicators except the Netherlands and France on the orthodoxy measure. This cross-national pattern does not fit either of the hypotheses on country differences. The patterns is not in line with differences in accommodation (H9) nor with levels of secularism of the majority population (H11); Germany has one of the lowest levels of

⁶ This reflects the predicted score for a person that on all other independent variables in the model has a score equal to the average of the sample of that group. Note that for mosque visits the graph present the predicted probability that a person visits the mosque weekly or more often, and for dietary practice for people who always observe both Ramadan and halal prescripts.

accommodation and the highest levels of religiosity of the majority population, whereas Sweden is moderately accommodative and highly secular.

It is therefore likely that the pattern of cross-national differences is caused by another factor. An examination of the cross-national differences for the Moroccan origin group supports this idea. Here also several cross-national differences are found, but the pattern is different than that the Turkish group. Though religious identity is again significantly lower in Germany than in the other countries, on the other three indicators the German-Moroccans are significantly more religious. For the Moroccan group the cross-national differences are much less systematic.

Table 3 Results from ordered logit and logit (orthodoxy) regression on indicators of religiosity.

	Religious identity		Dietary practice		Mosque visit		Religious orthodoxy	
	Turkish origin	Moroccan origin	Turkish origin	Moroccan origin	Turkish origin	Moroccan origin	Turkish origin	Moroccan origin
Netherlands	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Germany	-0.76***	-0.51***	-0.32*	0.71**	-0.43***	1.00***	-0.57***	0.54***
France	-0.28*	0.13	-0.040	0.65**	-0.48***	-0.31*	-0.12	0.80***
Belgium	-0.068	-0.013	0.47*	0.33	-0.26	-0.15	0.58***	0.50***
Austria	-0.15		-0.34**		-0.31*		0.51***	
Sweden	-0.69***		-1.73***		-1.21***		-0.34*	
Male	-0.16*	-0.085	-0.50***	-0.65***	1.85***	1.57***	0.066	0.12
First generation	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
In-between generation	-0.68***	-0.74***	-0.34**	-0.60+	-0.66***	-1.31***	-0.23+	-0.72***
Second generation	-0.69***	-0.66***	-0.37*	-0.49	-0.73***	-1.16***	-0.43**	-0.75***
Edu: none/primary	0.49***	0.19	0.37***	1.05**	0.53***	0.65***	0.73***	0.66***
Edu: tertiary	-0.51***	-0.34**	-0.76***	-0.44*	-0.72***	-0.29**	-0.60***	-0.78***
Married	0.32*	0.40*	0.60***	1.58***	0.56***	0.51**	-0.0064	-0.037
Has children	0.19	-0.030	0.34*	-0.55+	0.042	-0.16	0.077	0.031
Lives with parents	0.32*	0.23	0.93***	0.11	0.58***	0.69***	-0.13	0.34+
Berber		-0.054		0.53***		0.17+		-0.14
Kurdish	-0.44*		-0.35*		-0.44*		-0.079	
Alevi	-1.82***		-2.80***		-3.95***		-1.28***	
Share of co-ethnics	0.059**	0.044	0.044+	0.24***	0.080***	0.096***	0.035	0.056
Size of pl. of res	-0.034	0.092*	-0.0061	0.0060	-0.020	0.010	0.026	0.048
Village origin	0.25**	-0.012	0.17+	-0.20	0.36***	0.14+	0.28**	0.058
N	2997	1988	3096	2032	3087	2025	2752	1796
Wald Chi2	314.1	127.5	739.5	198.4	859.7	725.6	416.0	201.4
Prob>F	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Log likelihood	-4374.9	-2361.0	-3853.6	-861.6	-3702.6	-2673.3	-2174.2	-1323.4

Note: Standard errors clustered by place of residence. Two tailed tests + p<0.10 * p<0.05 ** p<0.01

***p<0.001

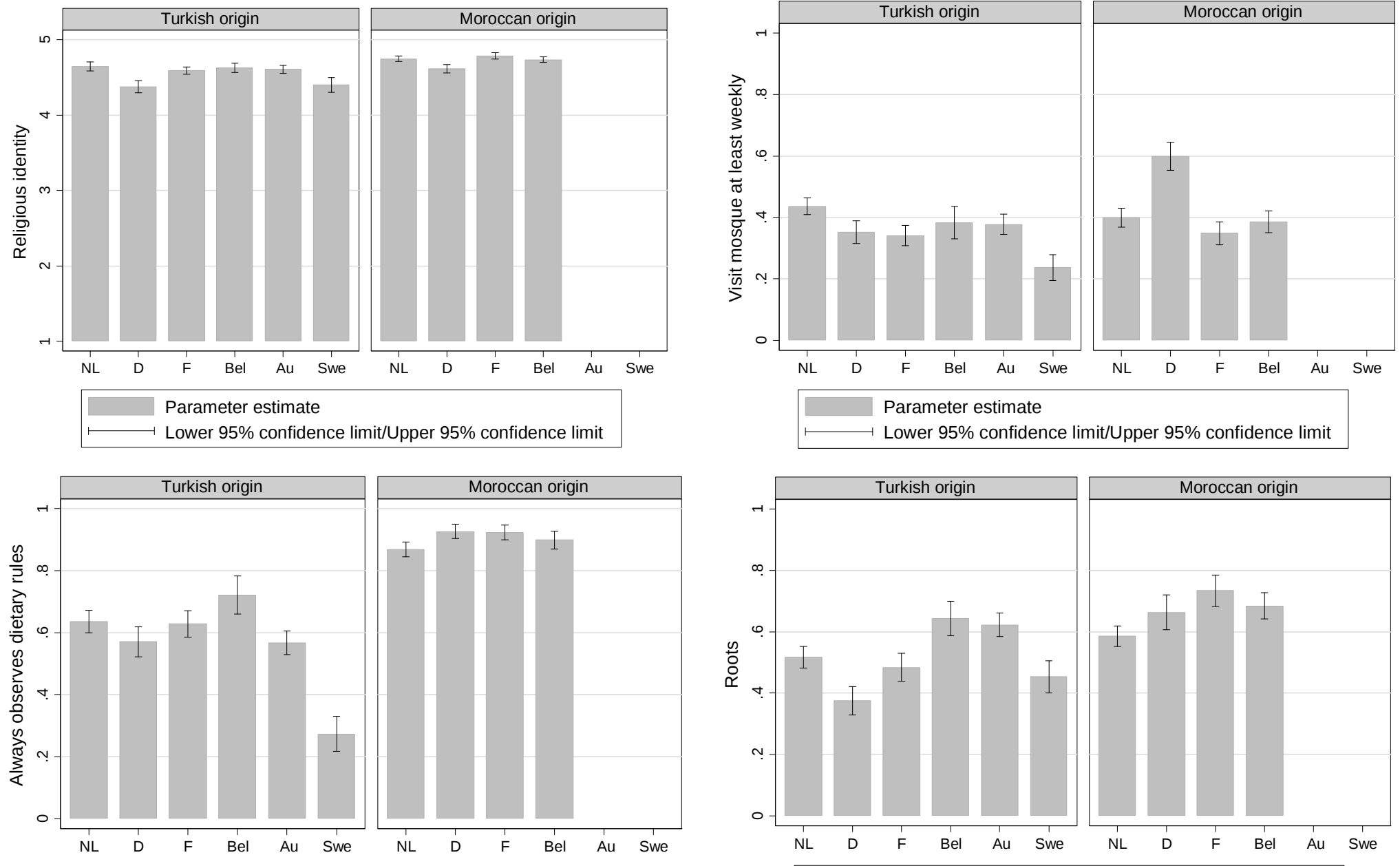


Figure 1. Predicted means (identity) and proportions controlling for sex, education, generation, life phase, minority groups, residence and origin characteristics

In the second step the residence country identity and majority group social contact variables were added to the model. In the interest of space, Table 4 displays the abridged results. Most effects remained the same including the country differences.

Hypothesis 8 stated that there is a trade-off between Islamic religiosity and residence country identification. The results largely confirm this; there is a significant negative relation for both groups and all indicators, except religious identity of Moroccans. This means that the findings from earlier studies in the Netherlands are replicated for a larger set of countries.

A higher frequency of residence country visitors also leads to consistently lower religiosity confirming the third hypothesis and mirroring findings on the effects of contacts with co-ethnics.

Table 4 Abridged results from ordered logit and logit (orthodoxy) regression on indicators of religiosity with residence country identity and majority group visitors.

	Religious identity		Dietary practice		Mosque visit		Religious orthodoxy	
	Turkish origin	Moroccan origin	Turkish origin	Moroccan origin	Turkish origin	Moroccan origin	Turkish origin	Moroccan origin
Netherlands	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Germany	-0.76***	-0.54***	-0.32*	0.57*	-0.41**	0.93***	-0.63***	0.17
France	-0.27*	0.11	-0.015	0.66**	-0.48***	-0.38**	-0.14	0.69***
Belgium	-0.022	0.0049	0.55**	0.34	-0.23	-0.12	0.66***	0.50***
Austria	-0.20+		-0.39**		-0.36**		0.41***	
Sweden	-0.70***		-1.73***		-1.20***		-0.25+	
Residence country identity	-0.16***	-0.021	-0.18***	-0.18*	-0.12***	-0.15**	-0.27***	-0.42***
Residence country visitors at home	0.30***	0.29***	0.36***	0.55***	0.30***	0.39***	0.30***	0.25***
N	2997	1988	3096	2032	3087	2025	2752	1796
Wald Chi2	452.6	141.7	840.5	293.3	948.3	721.4	468.2	300.4
Prob>F	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Log likelihood	-4333.0	-2342.7	-3795.4	-827.0	-3661.6	-2620.3	-1682.2	-1010.4

Note: Standard errors clustered by place of residence. Two tailed tests + p<0.10 * p<0.05 ** p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Discussion and conclusion

- The analyses supported earlier studies that found mixed evidence of both secularization and stagnation of religiosity over generations
- The analyses have pointed out the importance of looking at difference within origin groups, such as denomination and rural origin. Since these characteristics are not distribute evenly across destination countries, they should where possible be controlled for to limit confounding variance of cross-national difference
- The cross-national differences that were found follow neither the pattern of the degree of religious accommodation nor that of secularization. The consistent differences between the two immigrant groups across the varies measures suggest that community dynamics may play an important role. This fits with some of the findings from the TIES

project that found differences between cities within the same country (Phalet *et al.*, 2013).

- The analyses showed a general negative relation between residence country identification and social contacts with residence country natives on the one hand and religiosity. It is however possible that the causality lies in the opposite direction with less religious people maintaining closer ties with residence country natives and showing a stronger identification with the residence country,

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