**Data description**

Please cite this paper if you use my data/code for the common religion index:

**Nguyen, A.T.N** (2019), A Global Analysis of Factors Impacting the Intensive and Extensive Margins of Bilateral FDI, *The World Economy*, 42(9), p.2649–2667.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | (1) |

with *k* is any religion in the following list: Christianity, Buddhism, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, Agnostic atheism, Animism, Bahai, Druze, Rastafari, Sikhism, Spiritualism, Taoism, Vodou.

Many religions are not included because they are specific to only one country such as Shintoism (Japan), Hoa Hao & Cao Dai (Vietnam), Bektashi (Albania), Chondogyo (North Korea), etc.

Equation (1) captures all possible common religion pair that I can construct from the CIA World Factbook data but it does not come without costs. Text data on religion from the CIA World Factbook are, in fact, very disorganized, incomplete, and lack precise information. Unspecified data present across numerous countries. In many cases they provide the total percentage of the population following a number of religions but not each separate religion. In these cases, I have to equally divide the total percentage to each religion in the list if the total percentage is less than 5%. In other cases, I have to manually collect and update the data for each religion in some countries from other sources such as Wikipedia with the condition that the information from Wikipedia comes with clear reliable references. This process is time-consuming and may explain why the other studies follow the more restrictive Helpman religion index[[1]](#footnote-1) which considers only 3 common religions: Muslim, Catholic, Protestant.

Due to the imprecision in religion data, the level of accuracy of this index has the potential for future improvement. The final dataset for a common religion index contains data for all 44,310 possible pairs between 211 countries worldwide.

Note: In my original paper, Nguyen (2019), I separate Christianity into Protestant and Catholic, but that practice missed many other brands of Christianity such as Christian Orthodox, Eastern Orthodox, Jehovah's Witness, Greek Orthodox, etc. Therefore, in this updated version, I include the more general religion (Christianity) in the list. However, if you use the index for your research, please cite Nguyen (2019) as this is the paper where I start collecting data and constructing this index.

1. Helpman, E., Melitz, M., & Rubinstein, Y. (2008). Estimating Trade Flows: Trading Partners and Trading Volumes. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 123*, 441-487. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)