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Diversity Dynamics: How Local Religious Groups Appear, Persist, or Disappear over Time

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Religious diversity is often described and measured statically. This article goes a step further by describing how congregational religious diversity changes over time, and by exposing the mechanisms underlying these changes. We combine data from two censuses (from 2008 and 2020) of congregations in Switzerland with a sample-based national congregation study conducted in 2008. Our main findings are the following: (1) overall, the number of congregations is in decline. (2) Religious diversity remains stable, but underlying features of religious diversity change radically. For example, established Christian congregations almost only disappear while Orthodox Christians see almost only new congregations. (3) Rural areas lose congregations mainly because established Christian groups merge their parishes, while urban areas have a high turnover. (4) Some congregational characteristics such as religious tradition, number of participants or presence of a meeting space significantly predict a congregation's likelihood of disappearing, in contrast to other variables, including income.

Keywords: *congregations, religious diversity, sociology of organizations.*

INTRODUCTION

Religious diversity is the simultaneous presence of several religious traditions in a given place. When referred to at the congregational level, it is often described and measured in a static way, with researchers seeing the existence and attributes of different religious groups as interesting per se. Such studies have greatly increased our knowledge by mapping diversity and by describing, often at a deep level, the attributes, practices, and interrelations of local religious groups and their context. These studies have been conducted, for example, in Germany (Becci, Burchardt, and Giorda 2016; Körs 2018; Krech 2009; Rebenstorf 2018), Italy (Becci, Burchardt, and Giorda 2016; Giordan 2018; Pace 2018), Spain (Fons Duocastella, Luque Capellas, and Forteza Gonzales 2012; Martinez-Arino 2018), Denmark (Qvortrup Fibiger 2009; Vejrup Nielsen 2018), Switzerland (Baumann 2012; Monnot and Stolz 2014), Finland (Martikainen 2004), Great Britain (Knott 2015), Australia (Bouma 1997), and the United States (Eck 2001). A pervasive claim that

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these studies make is that religious diversity is growing strongly in western societies at a congregational level. For example, Eck (2001) writes that the growing number of so-called "immigrant congregations" has made the United States the "most religiously diverse nation" on earth and Chaves (2018:213) summarizes a book on congregational diversity in Europe by saying that "the most prominent point of similarity" across the countries or regions covered is the growth in religious diversity. Remarkably, though, many of these studies only assume that religious diversity has grown; they do not really demonstrate it. Since they use one-wave or retrospective designs, they cannot investigate changes in diversity, and nor can they give us answers to other interesting questions: How many congregations have appeared, persisted, or disappeared in a specific timespan? How do different religious traditions differ with respect to the likelihood that congregations belonging to them will appear or disappear? How do these dynamics differ with respect to the rural/urban distinction, and what determinants lead to these outcomes? How, finally, do these underlying dynamics translate into changes in aggregate diversity measures such as the Herfindahl–Hirschman Index (HHI)? It is such questions that we address in this article.[1] We contribute to the state of the art by conducting a longitudinal investigation of changes in religious diversity at the congregational level, across all religions, and for a whole country, namely Switzerland. Our key questions are: (1) At the aggregate level, how have the number of religious congregations and congregational diversity changed in Switzerland between 2008/2009 and 2020/20201?[2] (2) At the underlying level, how many congregations have emerged, persisted, and disappeared within the different religious traditions? (3) What are the congregational characteristics that account for the likelihood of a congregation appearing, persisting or disappearing?

Theory

Stability and Change with regard to Aggregate Congregational Diversity

Congregational religious diversity can be defined as the existence of local religious groups belonging to different religious traditions in a given area (Monnot and Stolz 2014). Using indicators such as the HHI, it is possible to measure the evolution of diversity on an aggregate level in a region. This aggregate change is the result of how congregations within different traditions appear, persist and disappear over time on an underlying level—processes we call "diversity dynamics". However, describing the aggregate trend of religious diversity does not allow us to infer what has happened at the underlying level. For example, if all the congregations in one tradition disappear and are replaced by an equal number of congregations belonging to a previously absent tradition, the HHI will be maintained at the exact same level. The same would be true if one group had shrunk and another grown proportionally. Similarly, a decrease in the number of congregations of one denomination may in some cases increase and in some cases decrease overall diversity. We therefore study these two levels of analysis separately, starting by assessing the change in aggregate diversity, and then examining the different forms of underlying diversity dynamics. Differentiating these underlying and aggregate levels of religious diversity also helps us identify a logical flaw that sometimes appears in research on religious diversity. Since most such research has been cross-sectional, it has been common to investigate when congregations were founded. This has then sometimes led to the impression that the number of new (and especially non-Christian) congregations has risen over time, and to the conclusion that religious diversity

[1]Note that this question of how (dis-)appearance and persistence translate into aggregate diversity is rather different from the debate launched by scholars close to religious economics about the causal effect of religious diversity on aggregate religiosity. See for this latter discussion, for example: (Finke and Stark 2005; Iannaccone 1995; Olson et al. 2020).

[2]The first census took place between 2008 and 2009, while the second took place between 2020 and 2021. For reasons of simplicity, we only refer to the years "2008" and "2020".

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has therefore greatly increased. But such a retrospective conclusion is hasty, since it omits congregations that have *disappeared* (Fons Duocastella, Luque Capellas, and Forteza Gonzales 2012; Martinez-Arino 2018).

Forms of Underlying Diversity Dynamics and Their Determinants

For our purposes, the appearance of a new congregation is defined as the creation of a local religious group covered by our definition (see "Data" subsection). Thus, a religious group that is renamed is not a new congregation, but a merger that uses a new name for the merged groups is. A new congregation can appear in different ways: it may be created spontaneously "bottom-up," or it may be planted by the mother church "top-down"; it may be linked to immigration or not; it may be the creation mainly of one person or of a core leadership group; it may follow a church-planting formula, or it may be the result of improvised strategies. The literature describes three factors as being important for the appearance of new congregations. First, religious tradition: religious traditions differ in how likely they are to create new congregations and how they go about doing so. Some religious traditions have the explicit goal of creating as many new congregations as possible (e.g., the emphasis on "church planting" in Evangelicalism (Hutchinson and Wolffe 2012; Murphree 2018)), while others generally have neither an evangelizing nor a congregation-planting agenda (e.g., in the Jewish tradition (Harrelson 2005)). Second, immigration: while a whole congregation may emigrate to another country, it is normally the other way around: individuals migrate for economic, political, or family reasons, and, once they find themselves in the host country, they come together to create local groups to cater for their religious needs (Baumann 2002). This is how local Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim groups have come into existence in all western countries since the 1970s. Third, geography, with new congregations of immigrant religions being especially common in large cities (Krech 2009), the simple reason being that immigrants tend to live in large cities. The disappearance of a congregation can be defined as the moment when the local religious group ceases its regular activities. Anderson et al. (2008) have estimated that 1 percent of congregations close annually in the United States; Dougherty, Maier, and Lugt (2008) have obtained annual closure rates of 0.7 percent and 1.2 percent for two Christian denominations over a similar time period; and May (2018) has found a rate of 1 percent for a Baptist denomination during the 1984–2011 period. These figures are surprisingly low when compared to the rates at which other types of organization disappear (Anderson et al. 2008; Dougherty, Maier, and Lugt 2008). Anderson et al. offer a compelling explanation for this low mortality by describing congregations as "minimalist organizations" that can, in difficult times, rely on the commitment of their members, who may provide free services or increase their financial giving. Congregations can also draw on savings or endowments accumulated in more prosperous times, sell or lease assets, or even solicit financial support from denominations (2008:326). The literature also identified determinants with regard to the disappearance of congregations, notably congregational age and size. For example, Dougherty and his colleagues show that congregation size and age are negatively correlated with congregation closure (2008).

Finally, a congregational merger may be defined as the organizational union of two or more congregations. Mergers may take one of two forms. Either one congregation absorbs one or several other congregations, the latter thus losing their identity, or two or more congregations merge to form a completely new congregation (with all the former congregations losing their former identity). The goal behind merging organizations is normally to increase organizational efficiency. Concerning congregations, it is argued that a merger will lead to fewer people being needed for organizational boards, to reduced costs for renting facilities, and to more participants in church (Friederich 2017; Steiner and Notter 2021; Tomberlin and Bird 2012). But there are also possible disadvantages involved in merging congregations: for example, it may prove difficult to merge the different congregational cultures, the expected economies of scale could not materialize, and the

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quality of services provided mays deteriorate because the congregation tries to cater to a larger territory. According to the "religious economies" model by Stark and Finke, it is especially "low-tension bodies" (denominations or congregations) that disappear via mergers (2000:206). In the framework of this theory, low-tension bodies emerge through a sect-to-church transition from high-tension bodies. Once they are low-tension, they lose members and create an over-supply that has to be corrected by mergers.

Methodology

Data

We combine data from two censuses of congregations across all religious traditions, and a sample-based national congregation study (NCS) conducted in 2008. Census data enable us to measure changes in aggregate diversity, as well as to examine underlying diversity dynamics. The effect of congregational characteristics on the latter are assessed using both census and NCS data.

2008 and 2020 Censuses

The censuses took place in 2008/2009 and 2020/2021 and used a similar methodology. The starting point for each was the well-known definition of a congregation coined by Chaves (2004:1):

> a social institution in which individuals who are not all religious specialists gather in physical proximity to one another, frequently and at regularly scheduled intervals, for activities and events with explicitly religious content and purpose, and in which there is continuity over time in the individuals who gather, the location of the gathering, and the nature of the activities and events at each gathering.

Applying this definition, we systematically counted and categorized all local religious groups in the country (for a discussion of how to apply these criteria, see Monnot and Stolz 2018b). We combined all available sources of information, including existing lists of local religious groups produced by churches and religious federations; existing lists (published or not) compiled by scholars; existing lists on institutional websites, directories, or databases; and interviews with informed individuals within the religious milieus. All this information was combined and reviewed to identify local religious congregations. A congregation was retained on the final list only if it appeared on two independent sources of information. We started out in 2020 with the 2008 list and updated it systematically using all the steps already described, thus noting whether the congregations that existed in 2008 still existed or had disappeared by 2020, and whether new congregations belonging to that religious tradition appeared sometime between 2008 and 2020.

NCS 2008

The Swiss National Study of Congregations I enabled us to assess the effect of congregation characteristics on their likelihood of appearing, disappearing and merging. It was modeled on the NCS conducted in the United States (Monnot and Stolz 2014; Stolz and Chaves 2017). For every randomly selected congregation, we interviewed by telephone one key informant (in most cases, the spiritual leader[3]) in 2008/2009 in one of the three main languages of Switzerland, namely German, French, and Italian). Approximately 250 questions focused on concrete and verifiable

[3]Pre-tests showed that spiritual leaders were the most knowledgeable about congregational life and practices. We have always tried to arrange a meeting with a spiritual rather than an administrative leader (e.g., the priest rather than the parish president in the case of a Catholic congregation). Some groups, for example, in some neo-Hindu congregations, have no

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congregational practices, as well as on the tangible characteristics of the organization that the respondent could provide reliable information on. The response rate was 71.8 percent. Small religious traditions were oversampled.

Measuring Change in Aggregate Religious Diversity

We used the census data to measure the change in *aggregate religious diversity*, which we have operationalized using 1 – HHI (Krech 2009; Voas, Olson, and Crockett 2002). Religious diversity is then computed as

$$1 - \sum_{i=1}^{N} s_i^2$$

where s is the proportion of congregations that belong to the religious tradition i, and N is the number of religious traditions. We computed this formula on two levels: first for Switzerland as a whole, and then separately for each of the three categories of our *size of the community* variable, which we detail below. Obviously, the score obtained depends significantly on the religious classification used, as well as on the area observed. To ensure robustness, we therefore compute the diversity scores with different religious classifications (with 6, 12, 16, and 35 levels, see the coding in Appendix A3) and control for urban/rural and language region.

Measuring Underlying Diversity Dynamics and Their Determinants

For each listed congregation, the census data show whether it disappeared, merged, persisted or appeared between the two waves. This resulted in three dependent variables: *appeared*, *disappeared*, and *merged*. These three variables indicate whether the designated event occurred for the congregation in question between 2008 and 2020 (1 = yes, 0 = no).[4] The census data also include other variables that have enabled us to explore the relationship between these diversity dynamics and three major congregational features, from which independent variables were obtained: the religious tradition (1), the community size (2), and the migratory nature of the congregation (3).

(1) Religious tradition is mainly operationalized with a *12-level religious tradition* variable, which distinguishes (Roman) Catholic, Reformed Protestant, classical Evangelical, charismatic Evangelical, conservative Evangelical, Orthodox Christian, other Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu/Sikh, and other religions.[5] The categories do not have the same level of precision, since the different religions, traditions and denominations vary greatly in the number of congregations that they have. We also used a 3-level religious tradition variable to distinguish established Christian (Reformed Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Christ-Catholic), nonestablished Christian (all other Christians), and non-Christian.
(2) Second, the size of the community where the congregation is located was measured using a 4-level variable, based on Swiss government data. The levels are 0–1999, 2000–9999,

formal spiritual or administrative leader. In such cases, we have asked for an interview with someone who knows the congregation very well.

[4]This split into three dichotomous coding variables is used in regression models. In the graphs, we use on the one hand the variable *status*, which indicates whether the congregation has disappeared since 2008, remained between 2008 and 2020, or been founded since 2008, and on the other hand the dichotomous variable *merged*.

[5]In this coding, Catholics are exclusively Roman Catholics. Christ Catholics, a very small but established group, are coded as "Other Christians". We have grouped the Sikhs with the Hindus for practical reasons, as the former have only four congregations in our census data set.

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10,000–99,999, and 100,000+ inhabitants. This variable was used as a proxy for the extent to which the location of the congregation is urban or rural.

(3) Third, the *immigrant* variable indicates whether a congregation is considered immigrant (1 = yes, 0 = no). We have classified congregations as immigrant if they meet one or two of the following criteria: (1) it primarily uses a language that is not a national language[6] and/or (2) it organizes some of its activities specifically for people from a specific migratory group (e.g., Turkish–German language classes). By completing the census, we were able to code the variable for a vast majority of both waves' congregations (96 percent), most notably thanks to the congregations' and denominations' websites. This approach is not perfect, as websites do not always give absolute certainty regarding our criteria. The proportion of missing values of the variable is also unevenly distributed according to the tradition in question, which could lead to bias. We are confident, however, that our procedure provides a reasonable approximation of reality thanks to the relative completeness of the information available on the websites. Detailed information on the distribution of the *immigrant* variable according to the tradition can be found in Appendix A4. By linking census data with the NCS data set, we were also able to test the effect of several other variables on the likelihood of the 2008 congregations to disappear and merge. Namely, we used the variable *year of foundation* that measures in which year the congregation was founded. We additionally used a dichotomous *meeting space* variable, which indicates whether the congregation has one or several places open during the week where members can meet regularly, such as a cafeteria, a library, a games room, and so on (1 = yes, 0 = no). We also used a *conflict* variable indicating whether the congregation's respondent had reported a "conflict which required a special meeting to be resolved" in the last 2 years (1 = yes, 0 = no). Finally, the following variables allowed us to assess the relationships between different types of congregational resources on the one hand, and the *disappeared* and *merged* variables on the other: (1) *ownership of building* is a 3-level variable measuring whether the congregation is the owner of the building where it organizes worship. The question reads: "Does your community or federation own your place of worship, can you use the place for free, or do you pay rent?" The variable is transformed into two dummy variables, with "using the place for free" being the reference category. (2) *Income* was measured by asking the key informant to specify the total amount of congregational income from all sources during the past year. This variable was logged (log 10) in our analyses. (3) Attendance and membership were operationalized by asking the key informant how many persons participated regularly in the religious life of the congregation, and how many people were formally members of the congregation. The resulting *Number regular participants* and *Number total members* were logged (log 10) in our analyses.

Table 1 gives descriptive information on our dependent and independent variables. For our modeling, we use straightforward logistic regression. We used R (version 4.1.1). For replication purposes, the data and scripts are available upon request. They will be made available in the following data repositories: FORS (https://forscenter.ch) and ARDA (https://thearda.com).

[6]The Swiss national languages are German, French, Italian, and Romansh. If a congregation primarily uses one of the national languages, but in a region where this language is not one of the official languages (e.g., Italian in Geneva), it is classified as immigrant.

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Table 1: Descriptive information on the census and the NCS 1 data sets

	Census Data Set		NCS 1 Data Set
	2008	2020	2008
1 - Herfindahl Index (Trad12)	0.83	0.84	–
appeared (mean, SD)	0.130 (0.337)		–
disappeared (mean, *SD*)	0.193 (0.395)		0.154 (0.361)
merged (mean, *SD*)	0.052 (0.221)		0.0391 (0.194)
Immigrant	1126 (17.8%)	1227 (20.9%)	–
Catholic	1960 (30.9%)	1818 (30.9%)	252 (24.7%)
Reformed Protestant	1073 (16.9%)	928 (15.8%)	181 (17.7%)
Evangelical (classical)	561 (8.8%)	540 (9.2%)	140 (13.7%)
Evangelical (charismatic)	720 (11.4%)	725 (12.3%)	88 (8.6%)
Evangelical (conservative)	195 (3.1%)	128 (2.2%)	21 (2.1%)
Orthodox Christian	70 (1.1%)	118 (2%)	21 (2.1%)
Other Christians	775 (12.2%)	683 (11.6%)	99 (9.7%)
Jewish	34 (0.5%)	29 (0.5%)	18 (1.8%)
Muslim	361 (5.7%)	363 (6.2%)	64 (6.3%)
Buddhist	141 (2.2%)	161 (2.7%)	47 (4.6%)
Hindus/Sikhs	185 (2.9%)	174 (3%)	32 (3.1%)
Others	266 (4.2%)	216 (3.7%)	59 (5.8%)
Community size			
0–1999	1079 (17%)	943 (16%)	218 (21.3%)
2000–9999	2080 (32.8%)	1909 (32.4%)	353 (34.5%)
10,000–99,999	2119 (33.4%)	2065 (35.1%)	293 (28.7%)
100,000+	1063 (16.8%)	966 (16.4%)	158 (15.5%)
Year of foundation (median, IQR)	–	–	1919 (287)
Number regular participants	–	–	70 (120)
Number total members	–	–	151 (481)
Renting	—	–	250 (24.5%)
Owner	–	–	640 (62.6%)
Meeting space	–	–	499 (48.8%)
Income (median, IQR)	–	–	173,437 (550,000)
N	6341	5883	1022

Results

Stable Aggregate Diversity and Declining Number of Congregations

There was no increase in religious diversity on an aggregate level in Switzerland between 2008 and 2020. Rather, as shown in Figure 1(a), religious diversity remained stable. This is true when analyzing religious diversity in Switzerland generally and when controlling for urban/rural or language region. It is also robust when varying the "resolution" of our measurement of religious diversity, that is, whether we use a religious tradition variable with 6, 12, 16, or 35 categories (see Appendix A3). The finding of stable religious diversity over a period of more than 10 years is noteworthy, since it contrasts with many studies that report or suggest increasing religious diversity, especially in urban contexts (Monnot and Stolz 2018a).

Figure 1
Religious diversity (computed with the 12-level religious tradition variable) and number of religious congregations by urban/rural distinctions in 2008 and 2020

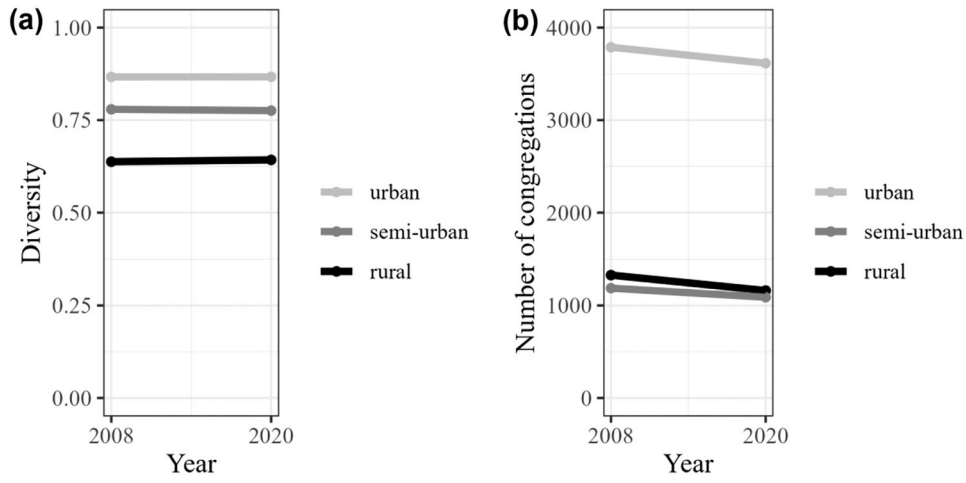
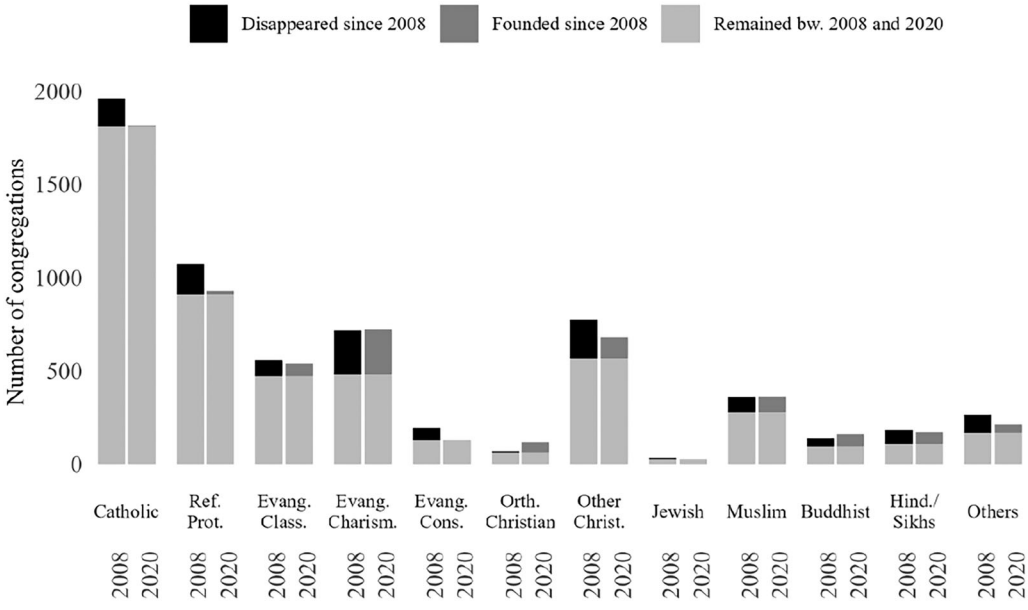


Figure 2
Number of appeared, stayed, and disappeared congregations, by religious tradition



Although religious diversity remained remarkably stable, the number of religious congregations in Switzerland declined in the period observed, from 6341 to 5883 (Figure 1 (b)). This decline (−7.2 percent) is the result of the fact that more congregations disappeared (1224) than appeared (766), with 5117 persisting. Since the population grew during the same period from 7,508,700 to 8,680,890, the number of inhabitants per congregation rose quite steeply from 1184 in 2008 to 1476 in 2020. The secularization of Switzerland, which can be observed at the individual level (Monnot and Wernli 2023; Stolz and Senn 2022), is thus accompanied by a decline in the number of local religious communities, a decline that can be found for established Christians (−297), nonestablished Christians (−117), and non-Christians (−44).

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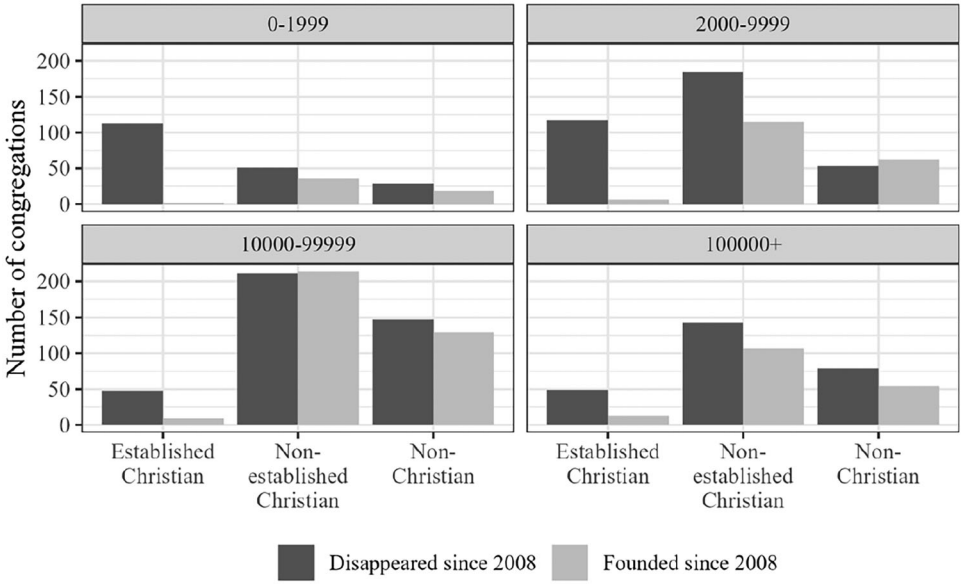
Diversity Dynamics: New Congregations, Congregations that Persist, and Defunct Congregations

Although religious diversity is very stable at an aggregate level, the percentage of new, persisting, and defunct congregations varies strongly between religious traditions at an underlying level (Figure 2). Catholics, Reformed Protestants, and conservative Evangelicals report almost only congregations that have disappeared; Orthodox Christians report almost only new congregations; and all others report varying percentages of turnover with both new and defunct congregations. The highest turnover can be found among charismatic Evangelicals. As for net growth (appearances – disappearances), all denominations have declined except Orthodox Christians (+48 congregations), Buddhists (+20 congregations), charismatic Evangelicals (+5 congregations), and Muslims (+2 congregations). Several points are worth noting with regard to these findings. First, established groups (Catholics and Reformed Protestants) are basically in a defensive position: they are subject to many congregational disappearances, but have no newly forming groups to counteract this decline. There is an extremely low number of new congregations (seven among Catholics and 17 among Reformed Protestants), and all of these are without exception due to mergers where two or more congregations disappeared to create a new congregation with a new name. Second, the different Evangelical streams have very different dynamics from one another. Conservative Evangelicals are clearly in decline, while traditional and charismatic Evangelicals are relatively stable, although the latter have a much higher turnover. Third, Orthodox Christians have the highest growth rate with +69 percent (+48 congregations, which means an annual growth of +5.7 percent). This rate is even higher than that reported for the same tradition by Giordan (2018) in his Italian mapping study. Fourth, the number of Muslim groups has only grown very slightly (+2 groups, +0.6 percent overall). This is interesting, since the Muslim population increased by about 28 percent between 2010 and 2020 (OFS 2022). This lack of correspondence is probably related to the difficulties that Muslims face when it comes to opening a mosque or a prayer hall. Indeed, NCS data tell us that 22.2 percent of Muslim congregations have experienced an "opposition problem" regarding "building or assigning a place of worship," which is more than twice the overall mean (11 percent). An ethnography by Monnot (2016) also shows that Swiss Muslim associations face a considerable degree of local opposition when it comes to renting premises for prayer or transforming a space into a prayer room. Finally, despite the changes we describe here in terms of disappearances and appearances, the censuses also reveal a considerable degree of stability: only 19.3 percent[7] of congregations present in 2008 have since disappeared, while only 8.7 percent of congregations observed in 2020 have appeared since 2008.

Figure 2 also helps us to see the limitations of congregational diversity studies based on a single-wave design. They only allow for an assessment of past religiosity in retrospect (generally using congregations' founding year). The problem with such an approach is that it involves a kind of survivor bias: one cannot ask the disappeared congregations when they were founded. In a pinch, this would not be a problem for measuring past diversity if congregations affiliated with minority traditions had the same probability of disappearing each year as majority congregations. However, as can be glimpsed from the graph, minority traditions often have a higher mortality rate. By way of illustration, 17 percent of Christian congregations present in 2008 have disappeared, with this percentage being almost twice as high among non-Christian congregations (32 percent). Under these conditions, the religious diversity of the past can be underestimated by such studies.

[7]This proportion translates to an annual mortality rate of 1.6 percent, much higher than the 1 percent annual mortality rate reported for American congregations over the 1998–2005 period (Anderson et al. 2008). This difference cannot be attributed to the fact that Switzerland has "established" denominations. The Swiss rate is markedly higher for non-Christian congregations (2.6 percent) and nonestablished Christians (2.2 percent), whereas it is almost identical to the American rate for established (in Switzerland: mainline) Christian congregations (0.9 percent).

Figure 3
Number of appeared and disappeared congregation, by community size



Diversity Dynamics in Rural and Urban Areas

Diversity dynamics differ in urban and rural areas. As can be seen in Figure 3, the main process in rural areas (0–1999 inhabitants) is disappearance. The disappeared rural congregations are mainly those of established Christians. This is partly because there are far fewer nonestablished Christians and non-Christians in rural areas in the first place. The main process in urban areas, on the other hand, is turnover (especially among nonestablished Christians and non-Christians), with many congregations both appearing and disappearing. Overall, however, the number of congregations is also declining in urban areas, in all three categories of the *3-level religious tradition* variable (established Christians, nonestablished Christians, non-Christians).

One important point regarding the disappearance of congregations in rural areas is that this does not normally mean that entire villages are then without a congregation, but rather that the provision of religious goods in rural areas is "thinned out". As we will show below, it is a fact that established congregations disappear only through merger, meaning that a merged congregation takes over the administration of salvation goods for a village that has lost its "own" parish or congregation. This is not possible without scaling down the provision of goods. Thus, the church building will often continue to exist, but it will only host religious services occasionally. A critical point to note regarding turnover in the large cities is that it helps us change the perspective from what we have learnt from mapping studies. Mapping studies have mostly shown the large diversity and number of new religious groups in large cities, sometimes interpreting this as pointing to growth of religious diversity and even of religious activity in general. In contrast, our method suggests that the high number of new congregations, especially among nonestablished Christians and non-Christians, is counterbalanced and even surpassed by the number of congregations that disappear. In other words, what is important in the urban context is not growth but turnover.

Diversity Dynamics and Immigration

One major question with regard to new congregations is whether they have come about as a result of autochthonous congregational vitality or immigration. Our data allow us to investigate

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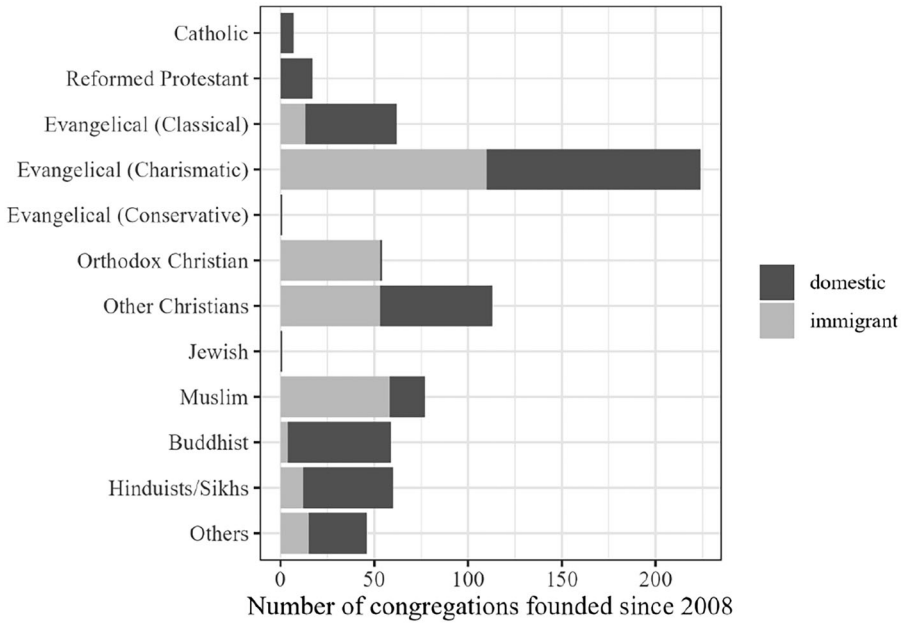
Figure 4
Number of congregations founded since 2008 that are immigrant and domestic, by religious tradition



this question empirically. As seen in Table 1, the proportion of "immigrant" congregations increased from 2008 (17.8 percent) to 2020 (20.9 percent). When it comes to the question of how many of the new congregations in each religious tradition are the result of immigration, the results displayed in Figure 4 partly confirm and partly confound expectations.

As expected, immigration is the major reason for the strong growth in the number of Orthodox congregations in Switzerland, with 98.1 percent of new Orthodox congregations being "immigrant congregations," the majority of which can be assigned to national denominations (Russian, Bulgarian, Ethiopian, Romanian, etc.). Immigration is also of great importance for Muslims and charismatic Evangelicals, for whom 75.3 percent and 49.1 percent of new congregations are "immigrant congregations". No less surprisingly, there are no "immigrant congregations" among the rare newcomers within the established Christian congregations. A more unexpected result is the low proportion of "immigrant congregations" among the new Buddhist (6.8 percent) and the Hindu/Sikhs (20 percent) congregations. The appearance of new Buddhist and Hindu/Sikhs congregations was only marginally caused by immigration during the observation period. Those religious traditions have developed an autochthonous existence that is able to generate new groups.

Diversity Dynamics and Mergers

How many of the disappearances of local religious groups are due to mergers, and which congregations merge? Our data enable us to answer these questions for the first time for a European country across all religious traditions, and our findings are striking (Figure 5). Established denominations (Reformed Protestant, Catholic) disappear exclusively as a result of mergers, while nonestablished groups hardly ever merge. In the observation period, 149 Catholic and 162 Reformed Protestant congregations disappeared, with all merging. In contrast, all the other traditions together saw 913 groups disappear, with only 17 (1.9 percent) merging. Our explanation is that there is public recognition for Catholic and Reformed churches, which means that they exist (in

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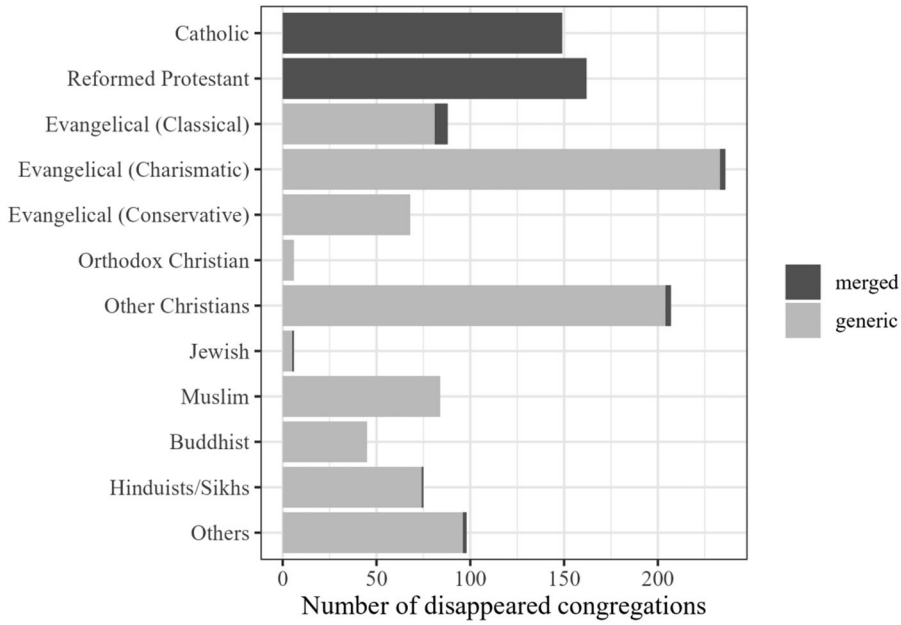
Figure 5
Reasons for the disappearance of congregations, by religious tradition



most cantons) as institutions of public law and are thus seen as providers of public welfare[8]. It also means (again, in most cantons) that their administrative structure is relatively significant, and that they receive public funds, either through church tax or through direct state funding. As providers of public welfare, they can evade simple closure if Catholic or Reformed members still exist in a given territory. On the other hand, it seems much easier to justify merging two or more congregations and then arguing that the newly merged congregation caters for the needs of those Catholic and Reformed members remaining. Such a merger also means that the physical church as a spiritual building can be kept in each village. In fact, even though people may never attend church service, they often want their church building to remain in the village at all costs (Sahli and Wüthrich 2007). Finally, a merger reduces the number of paid and voluntary staff necessary to maintain a working congregation. Merging with another congregation is not easy and is often met with resistance from parish members. It is therefore often cantonal authorities or their denominations that encourage congregations to merge. For example, the main impulse behind the mega-merger of parishes in the city of Zurich (which merged 32 reformed parishes together) came from the cantonal authorities. In addition to being able to issue injunctions to merge parishes, cantonal authorities often assist parishes in the merger process, with regard both to its planning and implementation, and to its financing (Steiner and Notter 2021). According to the survey by Steiner and Notter (2021), it is also often the cantonal mother church that initiates and helps to implement mergers. Another point worth noting is that there are more Reformed Protestant than Catholic mergers in absolute terms. In relative terms, this difference is even more pronounced: twice as many Reformed Protestant groups (15.1 percent) merged than Catholic groups (7.6 percent). The reason for this difference is that, to avoid "hard" mergers, Catholics resort to so-called "pastoral clustering". This is when two or more parishes pool their resources, and particularly their pastoral staff (Berchier 2012; Monnot 2013). Thus, while each of the merged congregations retains

[8]For a detailed analysis of the relationship between welfare and religion in Europe, see (Bäckström et al. 2016).

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its legal and administrative independence, the congregations together share a single pastoral team and usually rotate the place of worship.[9]

Thus, what is happening in Reformed and Catholic parishes actually differs little: both pool resources, and both have congregations that increasingly work together to cope with a decline in membership and resources while nonetheless trying to provide a comprehensive service in a given territory. But, while the Reformed tradition tends to merge parishes completely, the Catholic tradition keeps the parishes as separate units, while merging their resources (such as pastoral and administrative staff). Finally, it should be noted that the greater proportion of mergers in established churches is in line with the theoretical proposition on this subject in the "religious economies" model by Stark and Finke (2000:206).

Determinants of Diversity Dynamics

In what follows, we use straightforward logistic regressions to investigate how strong the relationships are between independent variables and our three dichotomous dependent variables (*appeared*, *disappeared*, and *merged*). In practical terms, we use a generalized linear model with a log-link, as well as nested models, gradually introducing different explanatory variables, and finally the 12-level *religious tradition* variable. We only highlight here the most important findings that these analyses yield. Overall, we find that using a multivariate perspective confirms what we have already seen by way of the graphs.

Table 2 presents nine logistic regression models with the dependent variables *appeared*, (1 = appeared, 0 = otherwise), *disappeared*, (1 = disappeared, 0 = otherwise), and *merged* (1 = merged, 0 = otherwise). The population observed in the three models for the *appeared* variable consists only of congregations that either appeared or persisted between 2008 and 2020 (i.e., the 2020 population). The population observed in the models for the *disappeared* and *merged* variables comprises only congregations that either persisted or disappeared between 2008 and 2020 (i.e., the 2008 population). In the first model for the *appeared* dependent variable, we only introduce the dichotomous variable measuring whether the congregation observed was coded as "immigrant". Among the congregations that existed in 2020, the odds of an immigrant congregation having been founded since 2008 are four times higher than those for a nonimmigrant group. In the next model (*Appeared* 2), we introduce the 4-level variable *size of community* (with 0–1999 inhabitants as the reference category). We find that urban congregations that exist in 2020 have twice the odds to have been founded since 2008 than rural congregations. In the third model (*Appeared* 3), we introduce the 12-level *religious tradition* variable (with *Evangelical Classical* as the reference category). All non-Christian traditions, except Jewish, have a higher probability of founding new communities than classical Evangelicals, with the odds ratios particularly low for established Christians, and high for Orthodox Christians or charismatic Evangelicals.

Despite taking religious tradition into account, the odds ratio for immigrant congregations is twice as high as for nonimmigrant congregations. One interesting detail is that the effect of the urban context changes from larger than 1 to smaller than 1 when introducing religious tradition, which now suggests that the effect of the urban context is to reduce the likelihood that a new congregation will appear (odds ratio = 0.391). The reason for this is that most non-Christian groups can be found in urban contexts; controlling for religious tradition can thus change the direction of the rural/urban effect.

[9] As a further explanation, the greater reluctance of Catholics to merge could be interpreted as a difference in the importance, or even the sacredness, that they attach to their church buildings. However, our data do not allow take a definitive statement. On the other hand, a study by Village and Francis (2021) shows that among English churchgoers, it is the Catholics who attach the most importance to their local religious buildings, both in terms of faith and identity.

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Table 2: Odds ratios with regard to a congregation appearing, disappearing, or being subject to merger (census data)

Predictors	*Appeared 1* Odds Ratios	*Appeared 2* Odds Ratios	*Appeared 3* Odds Ratios	*Disappeared 1* Odds Ratios	*Disappeared 2* Odds Ratios	*Disappeared 3* Odds Ratios	*Merged 1* Odds Ratios	*Merged 2* Odds Ratios	*Merged 3* Odds Ratios
Intercept	0.098***	0.059***	0.222***	0.213***	0.200***	0.256***	0.066***	0.119***	0.013***
Migrant	3.562***	2.886***	1.977***	1.122	0.999	0.941	0.218***	0.279***	0.567 *
2000–9999 inh.		1.445 *	0.615 *		0.968	0.727**		0.539***	0.695 *
10,000–99,999 inh.		2.199***	0.513***		1.064	0.550***		0.256***	0.566**
100,000+ inh.		2.143***	0.391***		1.523***	0.672**		0.622**	1.932**
Catholics			0.023***			0.427***			7.862***
Reformed Protestant			0.121***			0.900			15.702***
Evangelical Charismatic			3.165***			2.450***			0.436
Evangelical Conservative			0.058**			2.826***			0.000
Orthodox Christian			3.958***			0.624			0.000
Other Christians			1.436*			2.124***			0.241
Jewish			0.286			0.948			1.948
Muslim			1.393			1.743**			0.000
Buddhist			6.928***			2.363***			0.000
Hindu/Sikh			4.573***			4.277***			0.454
Others			2.408***			3.484***			0.290
Observations	5733	5733	5733	6102	6102	6102	6102	6102	6102
R^2 Tjur	0.044	0.049	0.192	0.000	0.004	0.068	0.007	0.019	0.078
Deviance	4118.844	4082.477	3225.008	5725.616	5703.718	5314.520	2478.310	2413.109	2087.790
AIC	4122.844	4092.477	3257.008	5729.616	5713.718	5346.520	2482.310	2423.109	2119.790

*$p < .05$;
**$p < .01$;
***$p < .001$.

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Table 3: Odds ratios with regard to a congregation disappearing or being subject to merger (NCS data)

Predictors	*Disappeared 1* Odds Ratios	*Disappeared 2* Odds Ratios	*Disappeared 3* Odds Ratios	*Disappeared 4* Odds Ratios	*Disappeared 5* Odds Ratios	*Merged 1* Odds Ratios	*Merged 2* Odds Ratios	*Merged 3* Odds Ratios	*Merged 4* Odds Ratios	*Merged 5* Odds Ratios
Intercept	0.22***	0.28***	3.36**	2.88*	8.99***	0.10***	0.07***	0.08***	0.06*	0.10
2000–9999 inh.	0.69	0.52**	0.70	0.65	0.56*	0.26**	0.31**	0.33**	0.32**	0.42*
10,000–99,999 inh.	0.83	0.51*	0.64	0.58	0.53*	0.07***	0.11**	0.12**	0.12**	0.35
100,000+ inh.	0.95	0.56	0.78	0.62	0.57	0.60	1.08	1.10	1.34	3.73*
Year of foundation		1.70***	1.29*	1.15	1.12		0.63**	0.67**	0.70*	0.86
Number regular participants			0.65***	0.72**	0.61***			0.70	0.72	0.73
Number total members			0.82*	0.89	0.87			1.28	1.24	0.88
Renting				1.31	1.67				0.26*	1.24
Owner				0.68	0.76				0.43	0.53
Meeting space				0.50***	0.53**				0.42*	0.38*
Conflict				1.08	0.85				0.82	0.71
Income				0.98	0.97				1.14	1.00
Catholics					0.31*					0.64
Reformed Protestant					0.30*					12.39*
Evangelical Charismatic					1.74					47.26**
Evangelical Conservative					0.79					0.00
Orthodox Christian					2.47					0.00

(*Continued*)

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Table 3: (Continued)

Predictors	*Disappeared 1* Odds Ratios	*Disappeared 2* Odds Ratios	*Disappeared 3* Odds Ratios	*Disappeared 4* Odds Ratios	*Disappeared 5* Odds Ratios	*Merged 1* Odds Ratios	*Merged 2* Odds Ratios	*Merged 3* Odds Ratios	*Merged 4* Odds Ratios	*Merged 5* Odds Ratios
Other Christian					0.68					0.00
Jewish					2.09*					3.25
Muslim					0.80					5.20
Buddhist					0.44					0.00
Hindu/Sikh					0.59					0.00
Others					0.54					0.00
Observations	1022	1022	1022	1022	1022	1022	1022	1022	1022	1022
R^2 Tjur	0.003	0.022	0.090	0.115	0.165	0.027	0.042	0.046	0.071	0.137
Deviance	873.829	853.747	792.621	771.634	724.544	310.460	301.258	297.384	285.455	246.097
AIC	881.829	863.747	806.621	795.634	770.544	318.460	311.258	311.384	309.455	292.097

*$p < .05$;
**$p < .01$;
***$p < .001$.

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In the three models for *disappeared*, we find that the *immigrant* variable has no significant effect. In the *Disappeared 2* model, the odds of congregations disappearing are 1.5 times higher in an urban context. However, controlling for religious tradition reduces this odds ratio again to below 1 (0.672). We have just noted that non-Christian traditions generally have a very high probability of creating new congregations. At the same time, non-Christian communities are also the most likely to disappear. For example, the odds of appearing for Hindus are 4.6 times higher than for the reference category, but their odds of disappearing are simultaneously 4.3 times higher. We find here the turnover phenomenon discussed above.

In the three models depicting mergers, we find again that it is mostly Established Christians, Reformed Protestants in particular, that merge. Once religious tradition is controlled for (*Merged 3* model), a new insight emerges with the odds ratios for the different levels of *community size*. The odds of a congregation in a very large city merging are almost twice as high as those for a congregation in the reference category (0–1000 inhabitants). Conversely, the odds of congregations located in "intermediate" communities (2000–9999 and 10,000–99,999 inhabitants) merging are about half as high as those in the reference category.

Table 3 uses NCS data and displays models explaining disappearances and mergers with several additional explanatory variables.[10] Our findings from the census data are *grosso modo* confirmed, but the NCS perspective allows additional insights. Disappearances are significantly more likely if a congregation is small (measured by the number of regular participants), and if it has no weekday meeting place (*meeting space* variable). Although it is not very surprising that a large pool of active participants protects the congregation from closure, it is more interesting that *meeting space* has a very strong and significant effect on the congregation's survival. In the *Disappeared 4* and *Disappeared 5* models, congregations that have a weekday meeting space present roughly half the odds ratio of closure, signifying a considerably lower probability of dissolution compared to those without such a space. We can hypothesize that meeting spaces allow participants to obtain goods such as social connections and "informal social support" (Ellison 1995), which in turn encourage them to keep the congregation alive.

In line with previous studies (Dougherty, Maier, and Lugt 2008), models *Disappeared 2* and *Disappeared 3* show a negative correlation between the age of a congregation and its propensity to disappear (*Year of foundation* variable). However, in models 4 and 5, this correlation is no longer significant. The total number of *members*, ownership of the building, conflict in the previous few years, and income are generally not significant in predicting disappearance. In other words, resources have a mixed impact on diversity dynamics, with only the availability of a weekday meeting space and the number of regular participants being strong predictors of disappearance. As for mergers, the main finding is again that these are basically a phenomenon found among Reformed Protestants, and to a lesser extent among Catholics. Interestingly, the size of the congregation in terms of the number both of regular participants and members does not seem to be related to the likelihood of a merger (*Merged 3–5 models*).

Conclusion

The goal of our article has been to look at how religious diversity in Switzerland changed between 2008 and 2020, and to explore the mechanisms underlying these changes. To do so, we combined data from two congregations censuses conducted in 2008 and 2020 with a sample-based NCS from 2008. Our research has led to several new findings: (1) Between 2008 and 2020, there was no increase in religious diversity at an aggregate level in Switzerland. This finding remains

[10]To verify the existence of collinearity problems in these models and these presented in Table 2, we submitted each model with more than one predictor to a Generalized Variance Inflation Factor (GVIF) test. The resulting GVIF values for predictors were found to be well below 10, an often-used threshold for collinearity detecting (Aheto 2019).

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robust when changing the measurement precision of religious tradition and controlling for urbanism or language region. The finding that religious diversity remains stable over a period of more than 10 years contrasts with many studies that report that religious diversity is increasing, especially in urban contexts, which has sometimes been labeled "super-diversity" (Vertovec 2007).[11] (2) Although religious diversity is very stable at an aggregate level, the percentage of new, persisting, and defunct congregations varies strongly between religious denominations at an underlying level. (3) Rural areas lose congregations mainly because established Christian groups merge their rural parishes. Urban areas have a high turnover of congregations mainly due to the activities of nonestablished Christians and non-Christian groups. Urban areas lose fewer congregations than rural areas. (4) Overall, the proportion of immigrant communities has increased. Immigration is the major reason why there is much appeared Orthodox and Muslim congregations. It is also widely significant for other traditions such as charismatic Evangelicals. However, not all pockets of growth can be explained by migratory flows: only a small part of the new Buddhist, Hindu and Sikh congregations were the result of immigration during the time of observation. (5) The disappearance of congregations belonging to established denominations only occurs as a result of mergers, while nonestablished groups hardly ever merge. Reformed Protestants and Catholics also have different strategies when it comes to merging congregations. While the former simply merge, the latter often use a compromise strategy that sees unmerged parishes being combined into "pastoral units" that nonetheless function very much like merged parishes. (6) We find that the likelihood that a congregation will disappear increases especially when it lacks regular participants and, interestingly, a meeting space. Other resources-related features of the congregation, such as income or building ownership were however not significant determinants in our models. Whether these findings can be generalized for other countries in western Europe is an open question, but we suspect that many can for countries such as Germany, France, and Italy, since individual religiosity has evolved in these countries in a very similar way to how it has evolved in Switzerland, and a remarkably similar picture emerges of these countries in various studies of congregations (Monnot and Stolz 2018a).

From a distance, the declining number of congregations seem to suggest further that Swiss society is subject to secularization. Although the Swiss population has grown significantly, the number of religious congregations has declined. This is the case across the country as a whole, but especially in rural areas, where the established churches have merged and continue to merge their parishes. Even in urban areas, the overall number of congregations is on the decline, with globalization and the influx of new religions being unable (at least in the area and the period observed here) to compensate for the effects of secularization at a congregational level.

There are obvious limitations to our study. First, we only compare our indicators for two time points, and it is still open whether the changes found point to longer lasting trends. Future waves will give us answers here. Second, we have looked at diversity only at the mesolevel of local religious groups. Microlevel indicators of aggregate religious diversity are also important to grasp religious diversity.[12] Third, there are inherent limitations to our data, since certain religious

[11] We acknowledge that the concept developed by Vertovec (2007) was not only intended to mean "a lot of diversity," but also included various other elements. As Meissner (2015) has shown, however, many researchers used the term later in the sense only of "a lot of diversity". To be critical, though, we should also say that Vertovec neither clearly defined nor operationalized super-diversity (Meissner and Vertovec 2015; Vertovec 2007). Since Vertovec provided no guidance on how to distinguish a situation of diversity from one of super-diversity, it is in our view still debatable as to whether we need the new term at all.

[12] By way of example, Liedhegener and Odermatt measured the evolution of HHI between 2000 and 2010 for 44 European countries, based on individual affiliation. They do point to a "modest" (2018:42) religious pluralization. They found that the county-level median of 1 – HHI increases (from 0.38 to 0.43). However, they also note that most European countries remain stable, that only five to seven countries (almost all Northern European) see their diversity increase substantially,

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traditions have few congregations, which often makes statistical evaluations difficult. Fourth, we have ignored the issue of how the state influences religious diversity (Becci 2015).

Apart from providing substantive findings, our study also allows us to formulate two further general insights. The first insight, which is obvious but important, is that longitudinal data are necessary to judge whether changes in diversity are significant. A one-shot study cannot ascertain an increase in diversity, and nor can a retrospective study, since neither can measure the number of defunct congregations. The second insight is that, if we aim to interpret the changes undergone or the stability in aggregate religious diversity, then it is important to address the mechanisms underlying these processes. We need to record the number of new, persisting, and defunct congregations in different religious traditions, categorize the form that each takes, and relate them to determinants. Only by proceeding in such a manner can we reveal many important features of the process of religious change.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The underlying data as well as the R scripts leading to the results in this article are available from the authors upon request and will be made available in the following data repositories: FORS (https://forscenter.ch) and ARDA (https://thearda.com).

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and that four countries even endure opposite trends. Switzerland is one of the countries in which the HHI "was left unchanged" (2018:45).

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Appendix

A1. Absolute Numbers of Defunct, Persisting, New, and Merged Congregations (Census Data)

Table A1

Table A1: Numbers of defunct, persisting, new, and merged congregation in 2008 and 2020 according to religious tradition (census data)

Tradition	Year 2008	Year 2020	Defunct	Persisting	New	Merged
Catholic	1960	1818	149	1811	7	149
Reformed Protestant	1073	928	162	911	17	162
Evangelical (Classical)	561	540	88	473	67	7
Evangelical (Charismatic)	720	725	236	484	241	3
Evangelical (Conservative)	195	128	68	127	1	0
Orthodox Christian	70	118	6	64	54	0
Other Christians	775	683	207	568	115	3
Jewish	34	29	6	28	1	1
Muslim	361	363	84	277	86	0
Buddhist	141	161	45	96	65	0
Hinduists/Sikhs	185	174	75	110	64	1
Others	266	216	98	168	48	2
Total	6341	5883	1224	5117	766	328

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A2. Coding of Religious Tradition Variables

Table A2

Table A2: Coding of religious tradition variables

Trad	Codings
Trad3:	Established Christian, non-established Christian, non-Christian.
Trad6:	Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu/Sikh, Other
Trad12:	(Roman) Catholic, Reformed Protestant, Evangelical (Classical), Evangelical (Charismatic), Evangelical (Conservative), Orthodox Christian, Other Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu/Sikh, Others.
Trad16:	(Roman) Catholic, Christ Catholic, Reformed Protestant, Evangelical (Classical), Evangelical (Charismatic), Evangelical (Conservative), Orthodox Christian, Messianic (e.g., Jehovah's Witnesses, Latter Day Saints, 7th Day Adventists), Neo-Apostolic, Other Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu/Sikh, Bahaï, Others.
Trad35:	Roman Catholic, Christ Catholic, Reformed Protestant, Neo-Pietist, Independent Pietist, Anabaptist, Baptist, Methodist, Quaker, Salvation Army, Darbyst, Pentecostal and other charismatic, Other evangelicals, Lutherans, Anglicans etc., Neo-apostolic, Messianic (Jehovah's Witnesses, LSD etc.), Christian Orthodox, Christian Science, Other Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Sufi, Alevites, Bahaï, Buddhist, Hindu, Neo-pagan, Sikh and Sant Mat, Neo-revelation, Theosophy, Spiritist and mediumnic groups, Scientology, Rosicrucian, UFO movements, Others.

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A3. Diversity Scores with Religious Tradition Variables of Different Specificity in Switzerland, Community Size, and Swiss Language Regions (Census)

Table A3

Table A3: Diversity scores according to different religious classifications

Year	Area	*Trad6*	*Trad12*	*Trad16*	*Trad35*
2008	Switzerland	0.28	0.83	0.84	0.86
2020	Switzerland	0.29	0.83	0.84	0.86
2008	0–1999 inhabitants municipalities	0.09	0.63	0.63	0.63
2020	0–1999 inhabitants municipalities	0.08	0.62	0.62	0.62
2008	2000–9999 inhabitants municipalities	0.15	0.77	0.78	0.79
2020	2000–9999 inhabitants municipalities	0.17	0.78	0.78	0.79
2008	10,000–99,999 inhabitants municipalities	0.37	0.86	0.88	0.91
2020	10,000–99,999 inhabitants municipalities	0.36	0.86	0.88	0.91
2008	100,000+ inhabitants municipalities	0.5	0.88	0.9	0.93
2020	100,000+ inhabitants municipalities	0.5	0.88	0.9	0.93
2008	German-speaking	0.29	0.84	0.86	0.87
2020	German-speaking	0.3	0.84	0.85	0.87
2008	French-speaking	0.27	0.83	0.83	0.85
2020	French-speaking	0.3	0.83	0.84	0.86
2008	Italian-speaking	0.19	0.54	0.55	0.55
2020	Italian-speaking	0.16	0.57	0.57	0.57

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A4. Number and Proportion of Immigrant Congregations by Religious Tradition and Year (Census)

Table A4

Table A4: Number and proportion of immigrant congregations in 2008 and 2020 according to religious tradition

Year	Trad12	Domestic	Immigration	NA
2008	Catholic	1712 (87.3%)	246 (12.6%)	2 (0.1%)
2020	Catholic	1583 (87.1%)	233 (12.8%)	2 (0.1%)
2008	Reformed Protestant	1064 (99.2%)	7 (0.7%)	2 (0.2%)
2020	Reformed Protestant	921 (99.2%)	6 (0.6%)	1 (0.1%)
2008	Evangelical (Classical)	533 (95%)	15 (2.7%)	13 (2.3%)
2020	Evangelical (Classical)	506 (93.7%)	24 (4.4%)	10 (1.9%)
2008	Evangelical (Charismatic)	375 (52.1%)	270 (37.5%)	75 (10.4%)
2020	Evangelical (Charismatic)	407 (56.1%)	282 (38.9%)	36 (5%)
2008	Evangelical (Conservative)	191 (97.9%)	0 (0%)	4 (2.1%)
2020	Evangelical (Conservative)	127 (99.2%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.8%)
2008	Orthodox Christian	4 (5.7%)	65 (92.9%)	1 (1.4%)
2020	Orthodox Christian	4 (3.4%)	113 (95.8%)	1 (0.8%)
2008	Other Christians	593 (76.5%)	159 (20.5%)	23 (3%)
2020	Other Christians	490 (71.7%)	183 (26.8%)	10 (1.5%)
2008	Jewish	18 (52.9%)	12 (35.3%)	4 (11.8%)
2020	Jewish	15 (51.7%)	12 (41.4%)	2 (6.9%)
2008	Muslim	32 (8.9%)	298 (82.5%)	31 (8.6%)
2020	Muslim	42 (11.6%)	296 (81.5%)	25 (6.9%)
2008	Buddhist	92 (65.2%)	11 (7.8%)	38 (27%)
2020	Buddhist	119 (73.9%)	14 (8.7%)	28 (17.4%)
2008	Hinduists/Sikhs	138 (74.6%)	28 (15.1%)	19 (10.3%)
2020	Hinduists/Sikhs	120 (69%)	38 (21.8%)	16 (9.2%)
2008	Others	224 (84.2%)	15 (5.6%)	27 (10.2%)
2020	Others	172 (79.6%)	26 (12%)	18 (8.3%)

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