Diversity dynamics. How local religious groups are born, stay, and die over time

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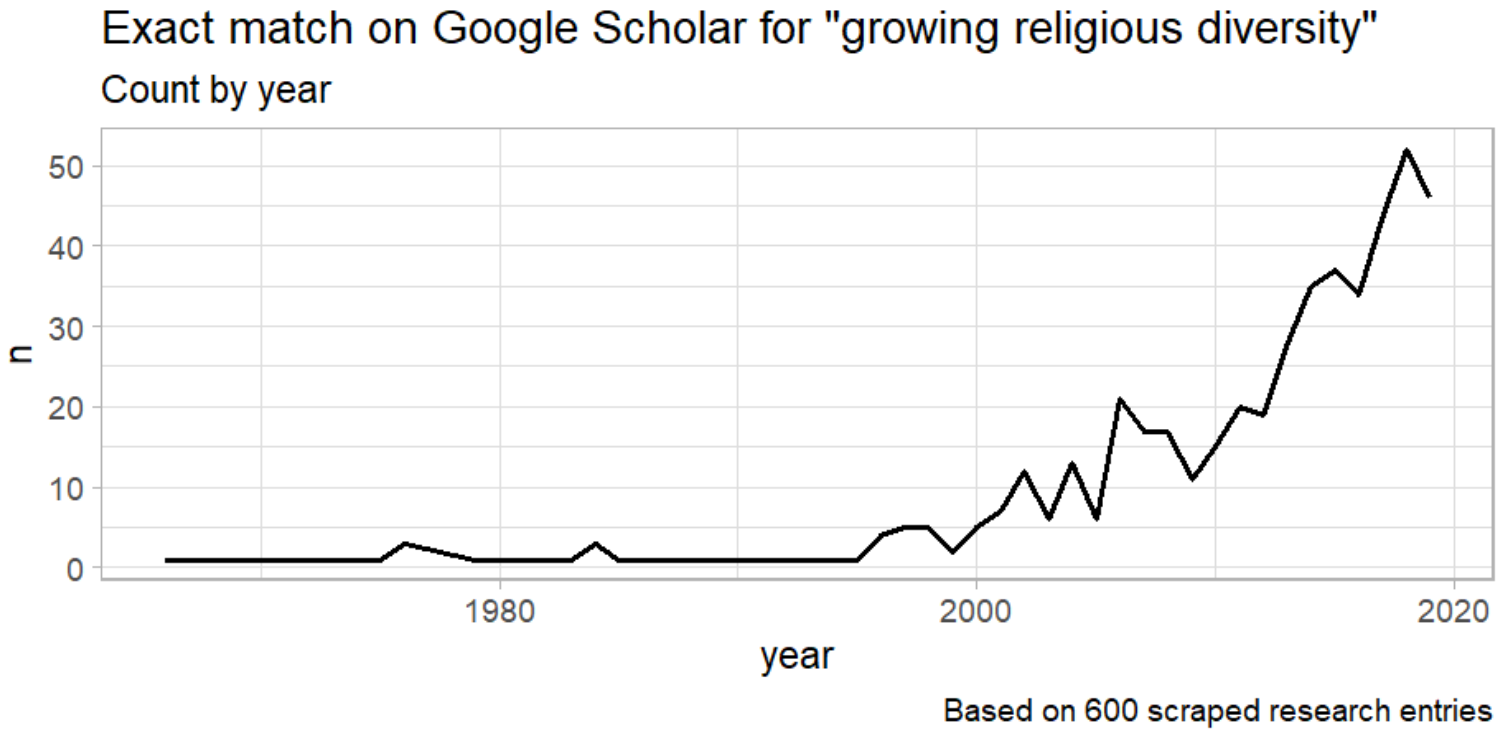
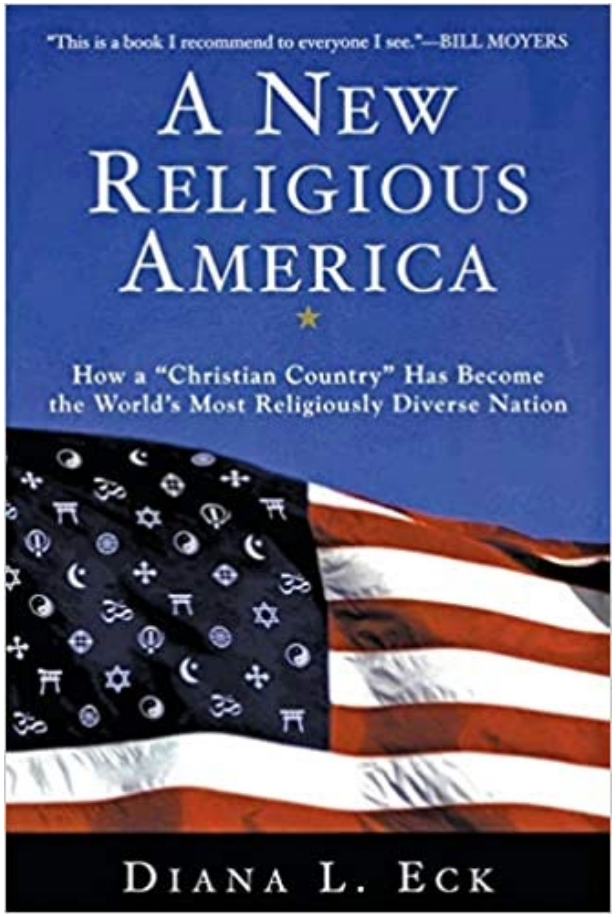
Introduction

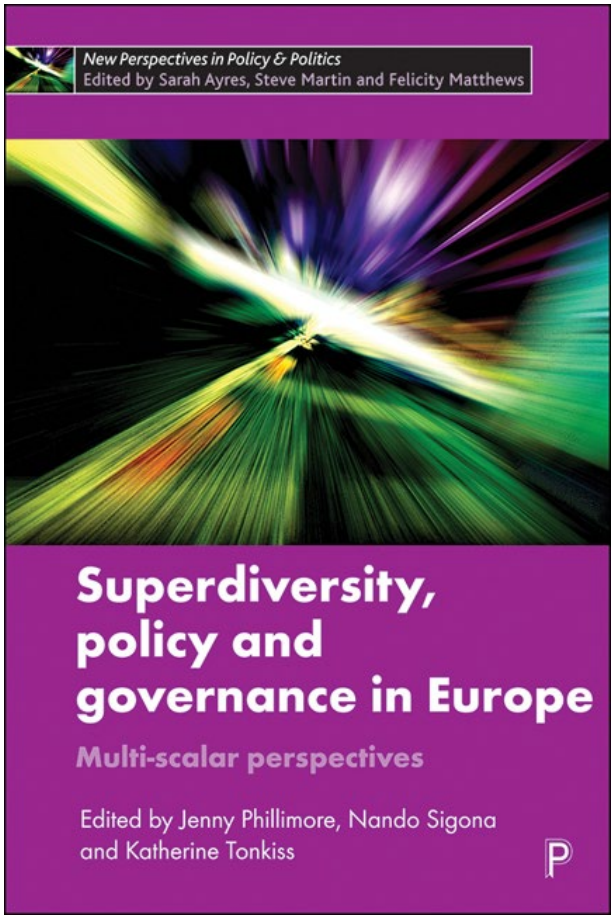
Religious diversity

- Consensus: rising congregational religious diversity in the West (Körs 2017, Rebenstorf 2018, Krech 2009a, Becci, Burchardt, and Giorda 2016, Giordan 2018, Pace 2018, Martinez-Arino 2018, Fons Duocastella, Luque Capellas, and Forteza Gonzales 2012, Vejrup Nielsen 2018, Qvortrup, Fibiger 2009, Eck 2002).



Introduction





Introduction

Common limitations when measuring congregational diversity :

- One wave: diversity of the past is measured retrospectively
- Geographical limitations
- Denominational Limitations

Central questions

1. How many congregations have been born, stayed, and disappeared in the different religious traditions?

2. How has congregational diversity evolved in Switzerland over the last ten years?

3. What determinants account for the probability of a congregation to disappear?

Method

Data

1. Census 2008

2. Census 2020

3. NCS 2008
   representative sample of congregations
   interviews with one key informant per group
   N = 1040

Censuses Methodology

- Definition of "congregation" (Chaves 2004)
- Additional definitions and rules (Stolz & Monnot 2018)
- A "search" conducted by religious tradition or current
- Three steps

Measure of religious diversity

Congregational religious diversity = the existence of local religious groups of different religious traditions in a given territory

Measuring diversity : 1 – Herfindahl-Hirschman Index

$$Diversity = 1 - \sum_{i=1}^{n} x^2$$

with n = number of groups, x = percentage of the groups belonging to religious denomination i

Results

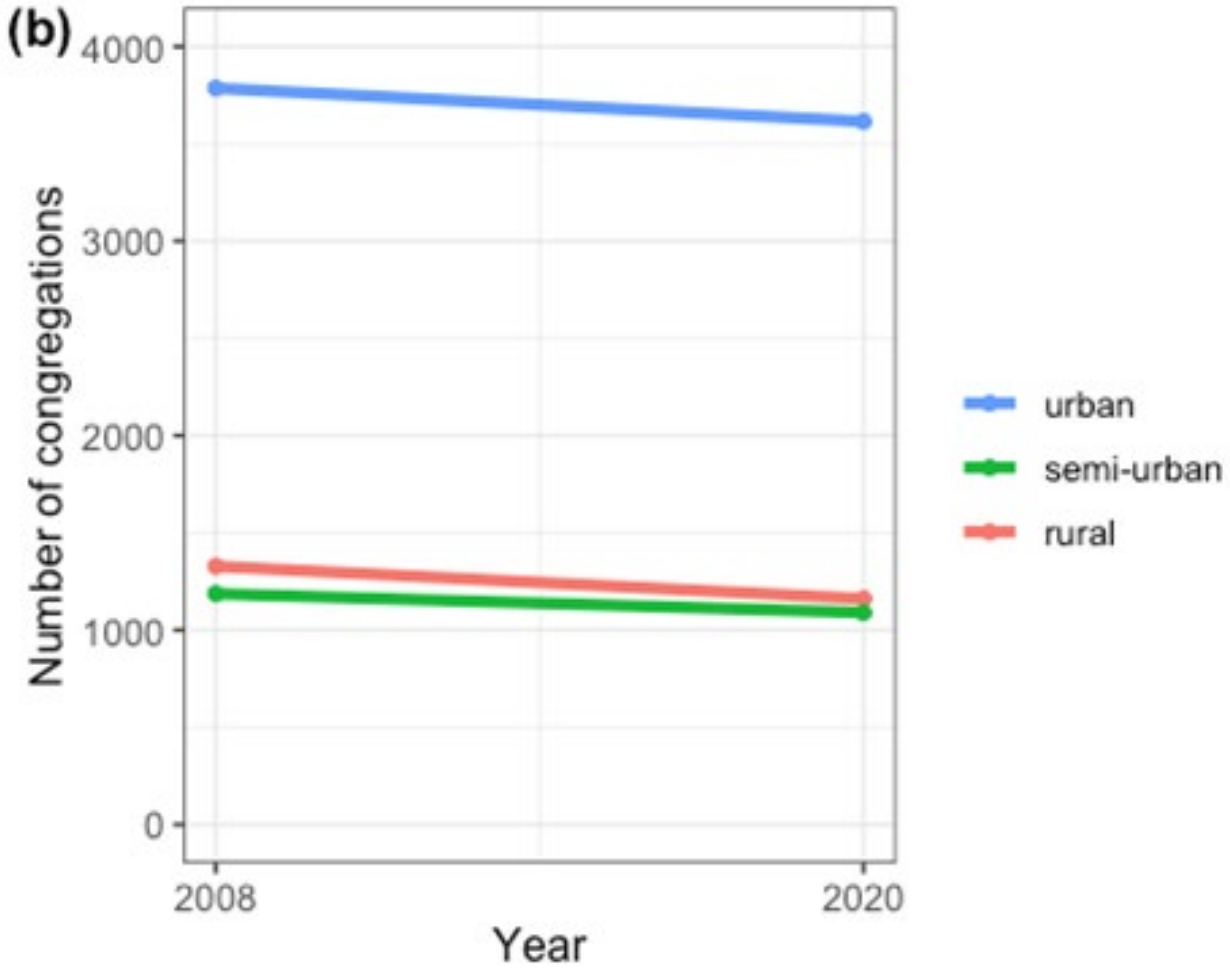
How many congregations have been born, stayed, and disappeared in the different religious traditions?

Declining number of congregations

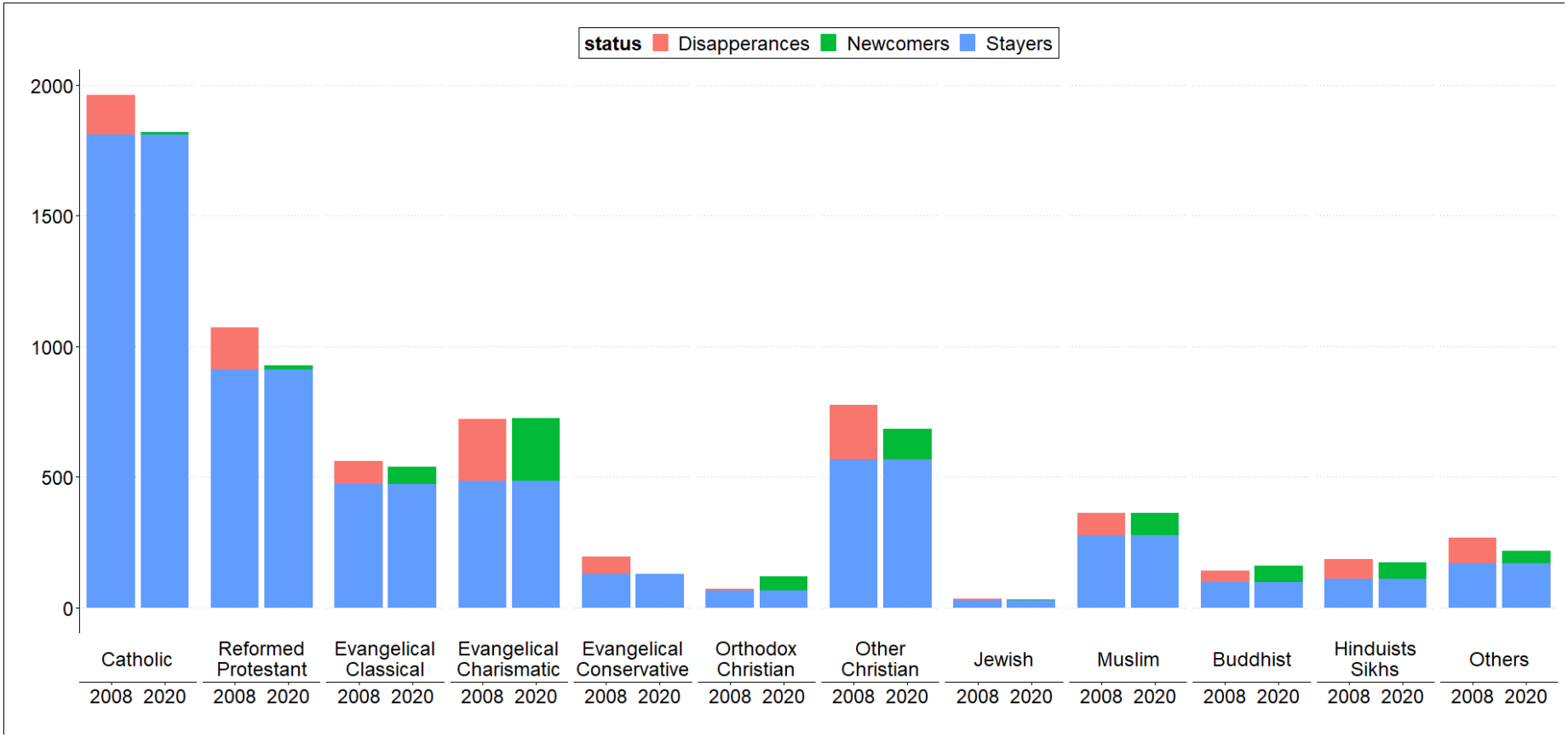
N congregations

2008 : **6341**
2020 : **5885**

Decline in the number of congregations



appearingcomer, Stayers, and Disappearances



How has congregational diversity evolved in Switzerland over the last ten years?

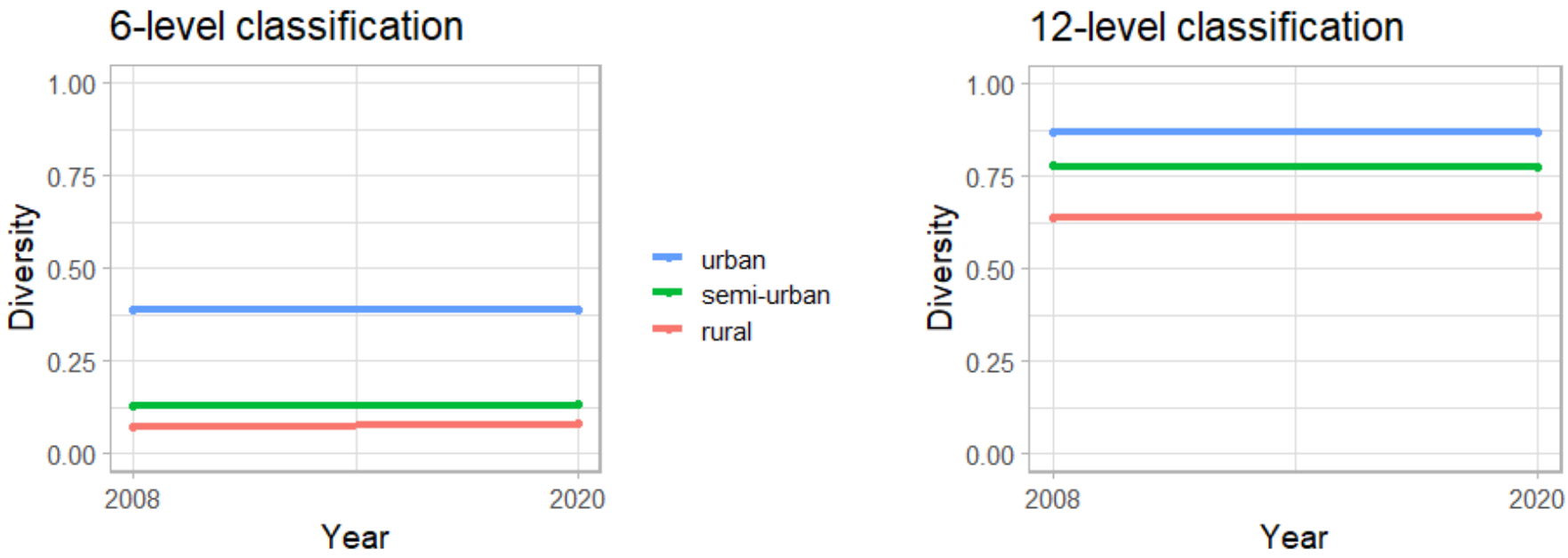
Stable religious Diversity

Switzerland as a whole

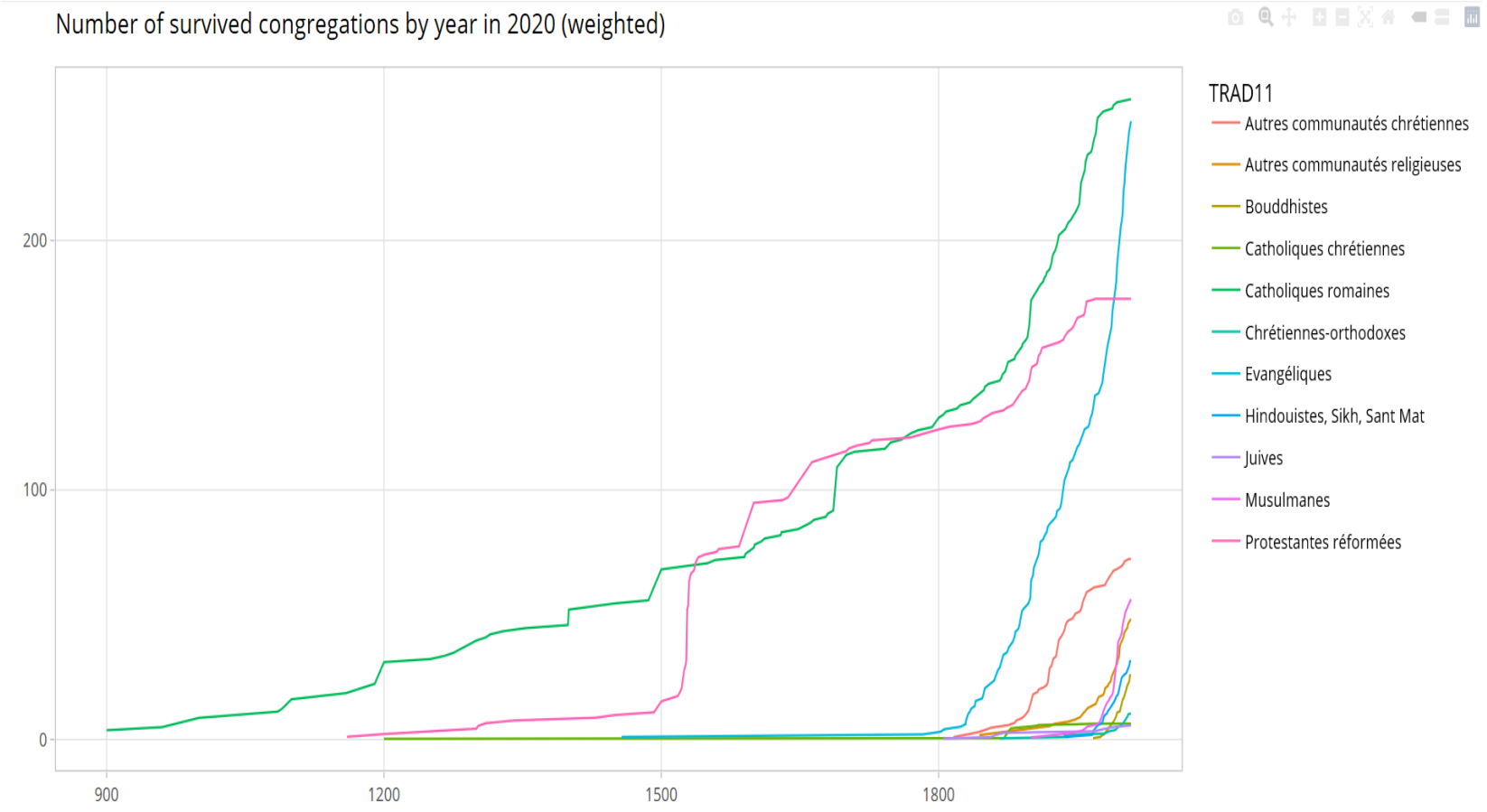
year	*Trad6*	*Trad12*	*Trad16*	*Trad35*
2008	0.28	0.83	0.84	0.86
2020	0.29	0.84	0.84	0.86

Stable religious Diversity

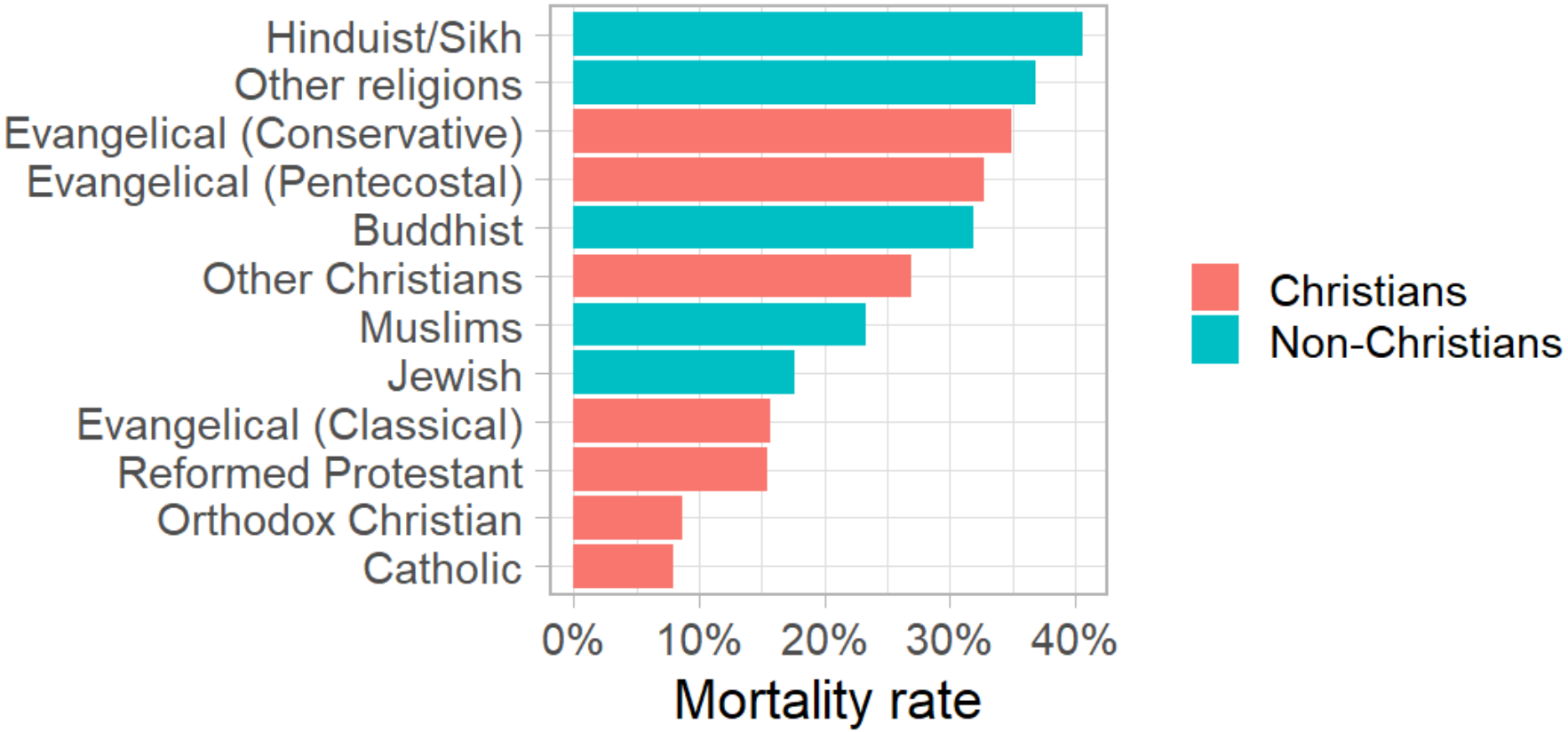
By type of community



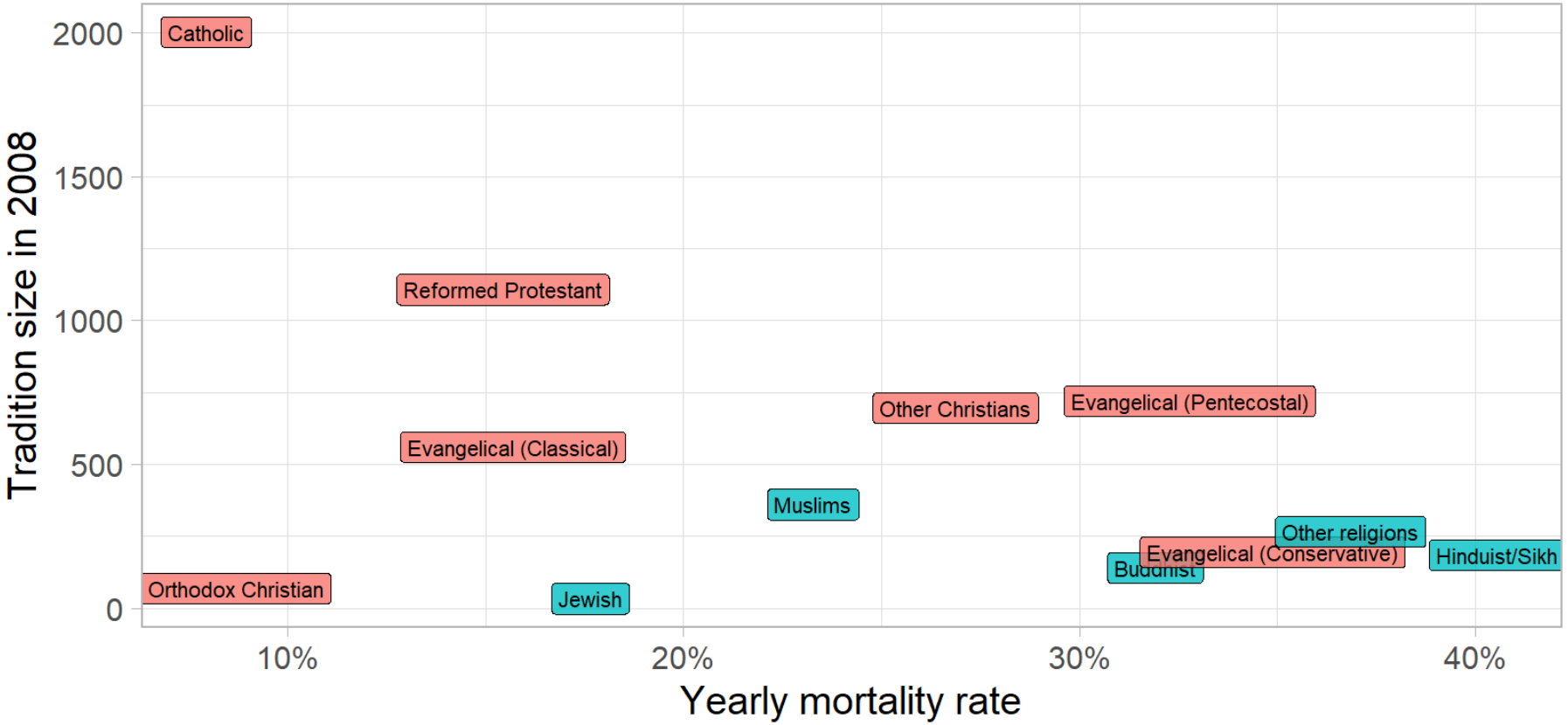
Stable religious Diversity



Stable religious Diversity



Stable religious Diversity

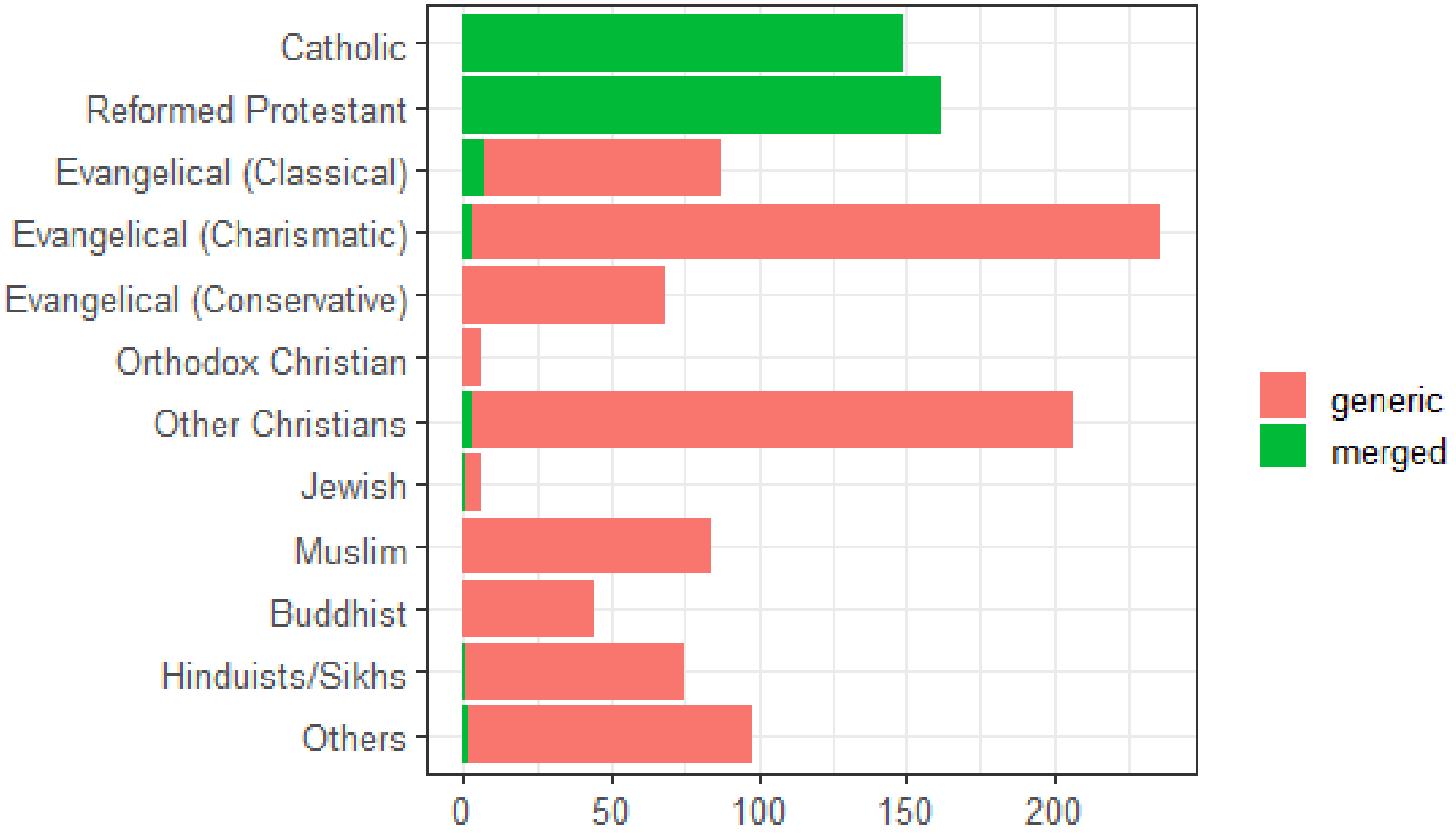


What determinants account for the probability of a congregation to disappear?

Déterminants de la fermeture des communautées

	closed
2'000-9'999	0.5 *
10'000-99'999	0.6
100'000+	1.1
Number regular participants	0.6 ***
Number total members	0.9
Renting	1.7
Owner	0.8
Cafeteria	0.5 **
Conflict	0.9
Income(log)	1.0
Catholic	1.0
Reformed Protestant	5.6 **
Evangelical (Classical)	3.2 *
Evangelical (Charismatic)	2.6
Evangelical (Conservative)	8.0 ***
Orthodox Christian	2.2
Other Christian	6.8 ***
Jewish	2.6
Muslim	1.4
Buddhist	1.9
Hinduist/Sikh	1.8
Observations	1022
R2 Tjur	0.165

Mergers


Catholic
Reformed Protestant
Evangelical (Classical)
Evangelical (Charismatic)
Evangelical (Conservative)
Orthodox Christian
Other Christians
Jewish
Muslim
Buddhist
Hinduists/Sikhs
Others
0
50
100
150
200
generic
merged
Number of disappeared congregations

Conclusion

Conclusions

1. Decline in the number of congregations.

2. Stability in religious diversity

3. Proportions of newcomers, stayers, and disappearances varies strongly between religious denominations.

4. Having a physical space in the congregation to socialize is more protective of closure than money or space ownership

5. Disappearance of established denominations (Reformed Protestant, Catholics) happens exclusively by mergers, non-established groups almost never merge.

Appendix 1

Table A3 *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, Other.
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, Other.
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

Appendix 2

- Diversity Scores
  - Calculated over 2 periods (2008 and 2020)
  - Calculated on 2 levels
  - Calculated with 4 different religious classifications

Appendix 3

Table 1 Descriptive information on the Census and the NCS 1 dataset

	Census dataset		NCS 1 dataset
	2008	2020	2008
1 - Herfindahl Index (Trad12)	0.83	0.84	0.862
appeared (mean, sd)	0.130 (0.337)		-
disappeared (mean, sd)	0.193 (0.395)		0.169 (0.374)
merged (mean, sd)	0.052 (0.222)		0.038 (0.190)
Catholic	1960 (30.9%)	1818 (30.9%)	256 (24.6%)
Reformed Protestant	1073 (16.9%)	928 (15.8%)	182 (17.5%)
Evangelical (Classical)	560 (8.8%)	539 (9.2%)	140 (13.5%)
Evangelical (Charismatic)	719 (11.3%)	724 (12.3%)	89 (8.6%)
Evangelical (Conservative)	195 (3.1%)	129 (2.2%)	22 (2.1%)
Orthodox Christian	70 (1.1%)	118 (2%)	22 (2.1%)
Other Christians	775 (12.2%)	684 (11.6%)	99 (9.5%)
Jewish	34 (0.5%)	29 (0.5%)	18 (1.7%)
Muslim	360 (5.7%)	363 (6.2%)	66 (6.3%)
Buddhist	141 (2.2%)	161 (2.7%)	50 (4.8%)
Hinduists/Sikhs	185 (2.9%)	174 (3%)	36 (3.5%)
Others	267 (4.2%)	217 (3.7%)	60 (5.8%)
N	6317	5848	1040