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FUNDING :

- SWISS NATIONAL SCIENCE
FOUNDATION (SNSF)



Changes in the Swiss religious landscape and diversity.

First results in the light of two National Congregations Censuses

Introduction

- Religious diversity and its effects : a central theme in the sociology of religion (Berger 1967 ; Finke & Stark 1988 ; Voas, Crockett & Olson 2002 ; Beckford 2014)
- Importance of measuring religious diversity and its changes
- Two types of studies: individual level vs. collective level
- Current mapping studies mostly have one or more of the following limitations (Giordan & Guglielmi (2018) ; Körs (2018) ; Martínez-Ariño (2018) ; Pace (2018) ; Vejrup Nielsen (2018))
 - Not longitudinal
 - Limited to certain religions
 - Limited in terms of geographical scope (eg : studies on one metropolis only)

Introduction

- The NCS2 census helps to fill these gaps through its features :
 - Across all religions
 - National scope
 - Longitudinal
 - 1st wave : 2008
 - 2nd wave : 2021

Central questions

1. Which denominations grow /decline regarding their number of congregations ?
2. How has religious diversity changed since 2008 ?

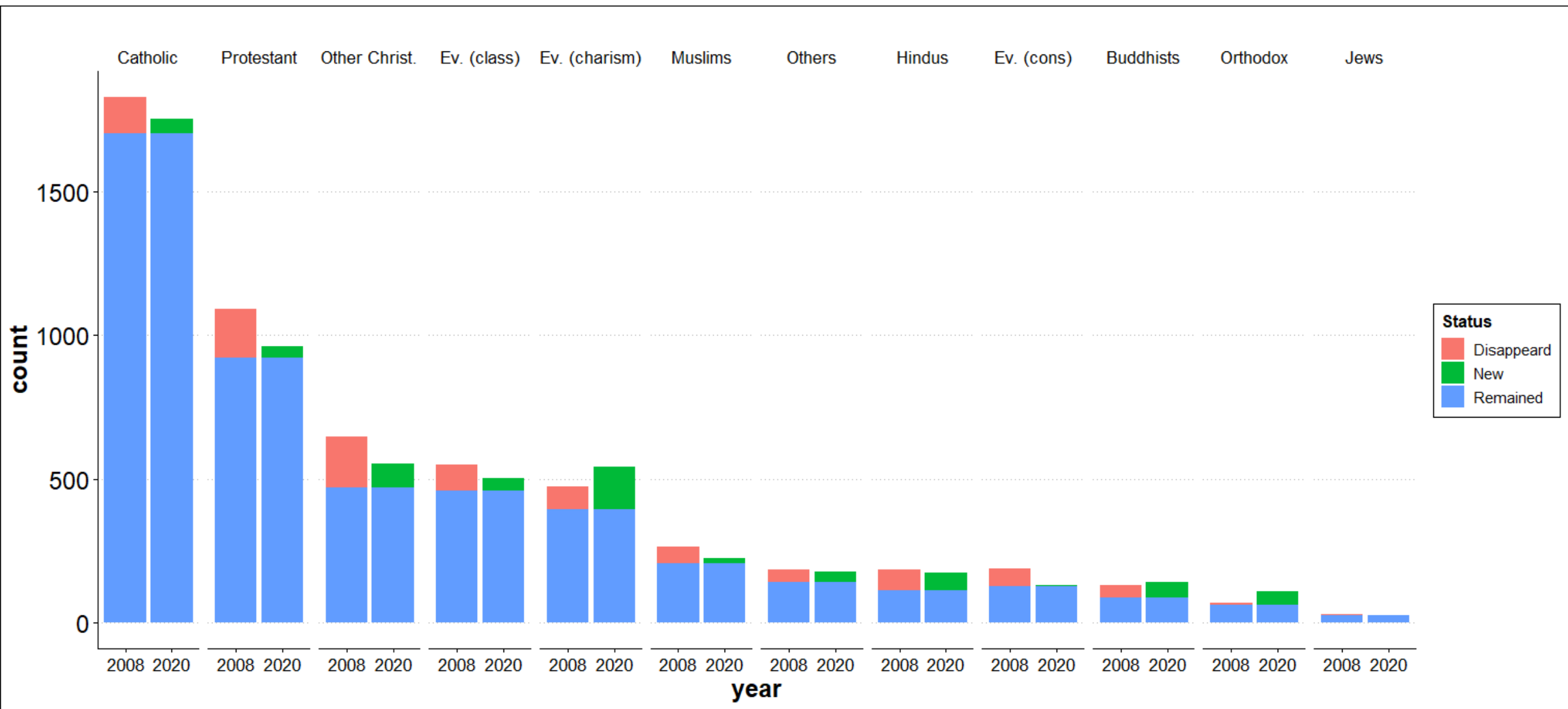
Methodology of the census

- Definition of "congregation" by Chaves (2004) provided precise counting criteria
 - Physical gatherings
 - Not all religious specialists
 - Frequent and regular gatherings
 - Explicit religious content and purpose
 - Continuity (times ; individuals ; location ; activities)
- Additional rules (Stolz & Monnot 2018)
- Expert checks

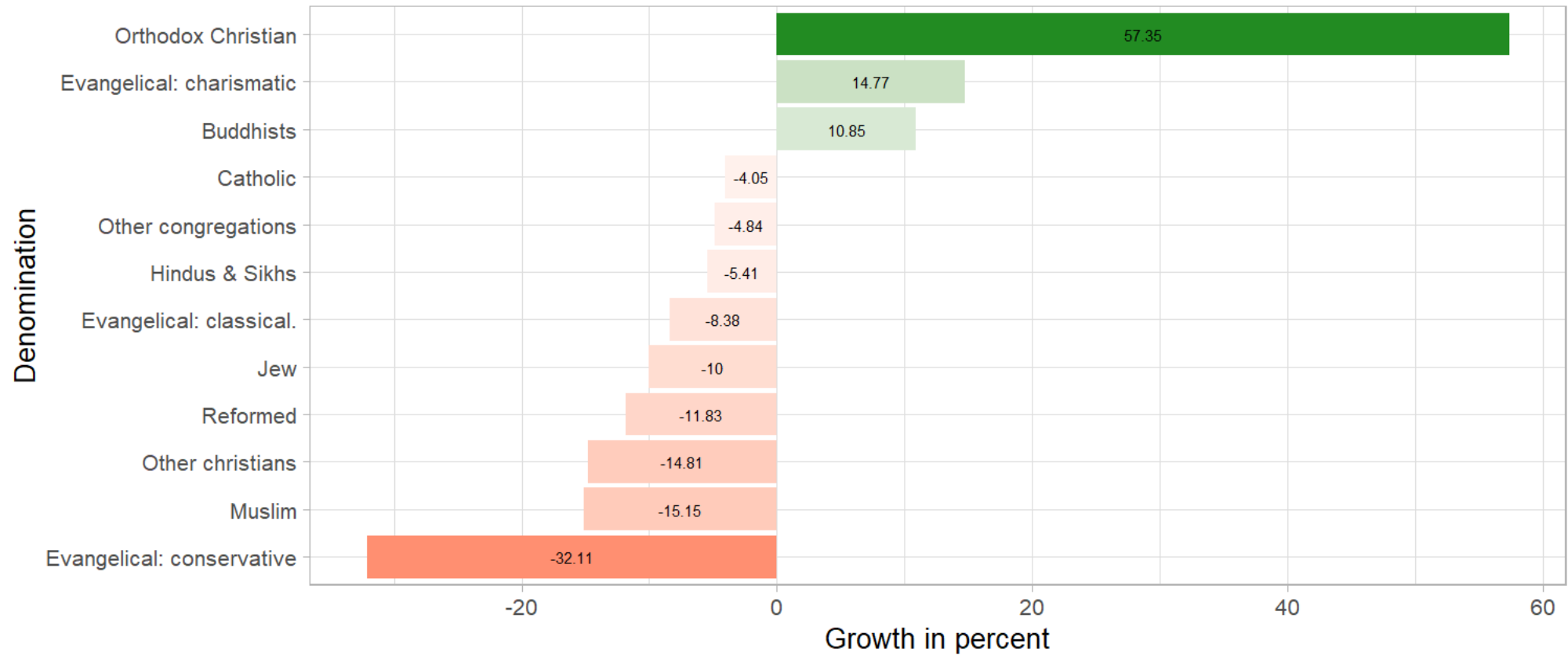
First question

Which denominations grow /decline, with regard to their number of congregations ?

Number of congregations by denomination and year

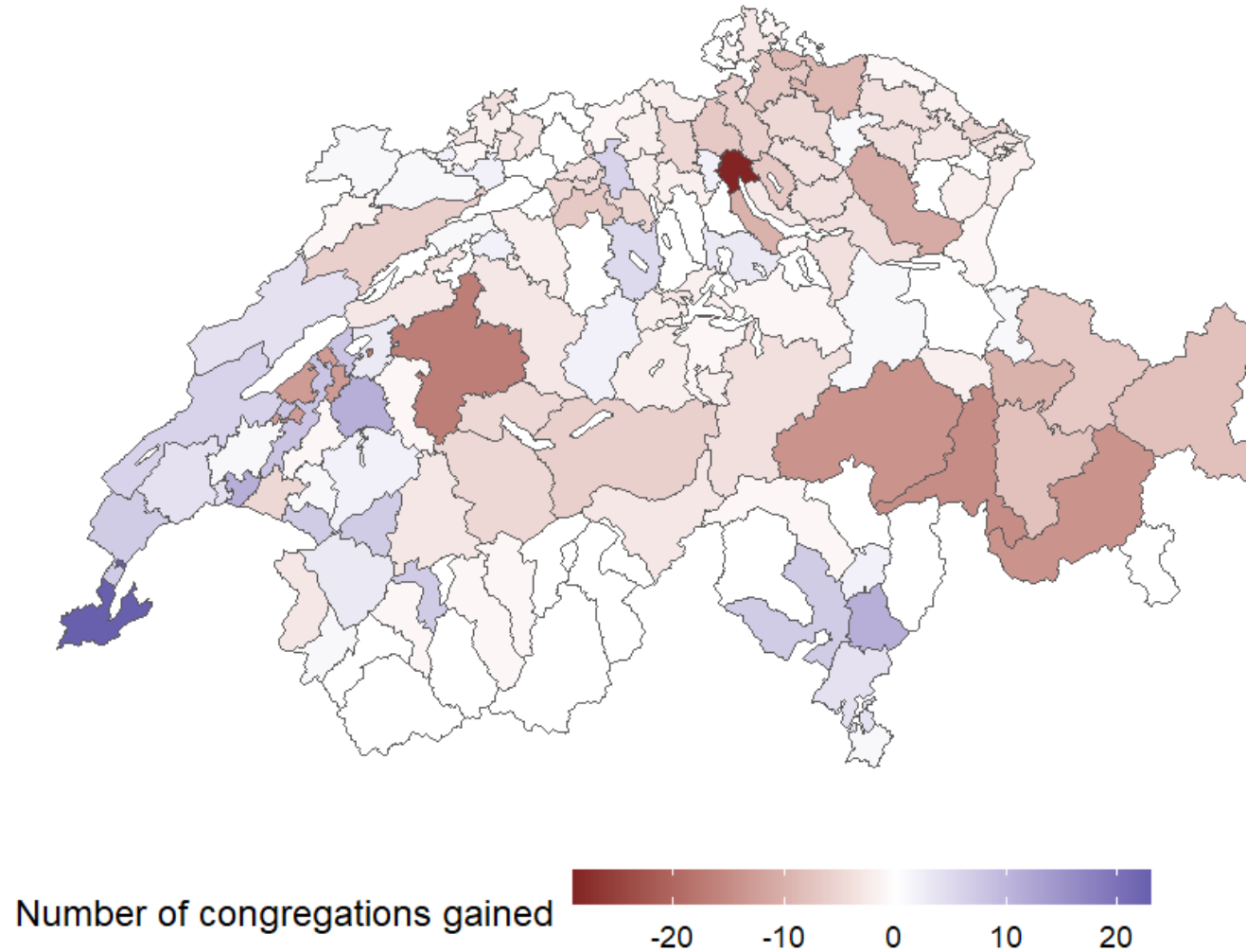


Growth rates by denominations



Source : NCS 2

Growth and decline in the number of congregations (by districts)



Religious Diversity

Methodological foreword

- Religious diversity was operationalized through the computation of the “Diversity Score” [0 - 1] of every municipality
- Nomenclature used : 12-levels

Computing the Religious Diversity Score

- 1st step: Within every municipality and for each denomination, divide the number of congregation (in the deno.) by the total number of congregations to get the **shares**
- 2nd step: square theses shares
- 3rd sum the result to get the **Herfindahl-Index (H)**
- 4th step: get the **Diversity Score** by inversing the Herfindahl-Index ($1-H$)

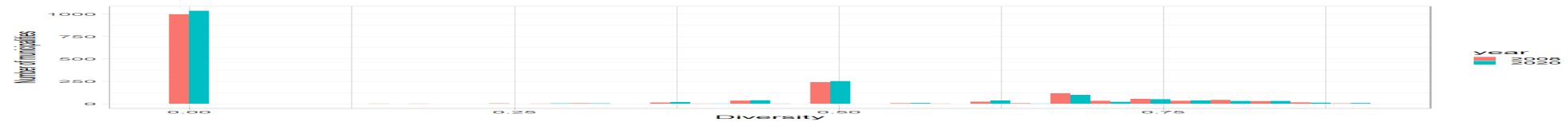
Example #	Congregational composition of the municipality	Shares	Shares squared	H	Diversity Index
lowest	1 [catholic]	1	1	1	0
2	4 [catholic] ; 1 [reformed]	0.8 ; 0.2	0.64 ; 0.04	0.68	0.32
3	1 [catholic] ; 1 [reformed]	0.5 ; 0.5	0.25 ; 0.25	0.5	0.5
highest	1 of each 12 deno.	0.083 ; 0.083 (...)	0.007 ; 0.007 ; (...)	0.083	0.917

Is diversity growing?

Context

- Super-Diversity (Vertovec, 2007)
 - Recent trend toward « a level and kind of complexity surpassing anything [some area] has previously experienced »
 - Widely applied regarding religious diversity (Becci & Burchardt, 2017)
- At the congregational level, researches found empirically growing religious diversity
 - Barcelona : Martínez-Ariño (2018)
 - Aarhus : Vejrup Nielsen (2018)
- We might expect a growing diversity

Distribution of Diversity Score in municipalities (2008 VS 2020)



Very weak differences in Diversity Score means (unit = municipality)

Nomenclature	Filter	Mean 2008	Mean 2020	Difference (2020-2008)	Differences in % of the maximum Score (0.92)
35	No filter	0.255	0.244	-0.011	-1.20%
6	No filter	0.709	0.701	-0.008	-0.87%
12	No filter	0.246	0.234	-0.012	-1.30%
12	Only pop. > 15'000	0.795	0.793	-0.002	-0.22%
12	Only pop. < 15'000	0.217	0.205	-0.012	-1.30%

Temporary conclusions

1. Relative stability in the denominational structure of the Swiss congregations
 - Biggest growths and declines : non-established christians
2. No overall growth of religious diversity