Of Pride and prejudice
An exploration of atheists’ attitudes towards their countries, and other people’s attitudes towards atheists.

ONBound Workshop
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Can atheists be patriots?

No, I don't know that atheists should be considered as citizens, nor should they be considered as patriots. This is one nation under God.

— George H. W. Bush —
Anti-atheist prejudice?

- Deeply rooted distrust against people, who do not feel their actions to be morally judged by any God and, thus, do not fear to face any consequences for amoral actions (Gervais, 2013).
- “Atheists are among the least liked, least desired, and most excluded individuals in America” (Mudd et al. 2015).
- Nearly half of Americans would not vote for an atheist candidate in a presidential election (Green, 2007).
- Americans are reluctant to let their children marry an atheist (Edgell et al., 2006).
- They view atheists as the group that least agrees with their vision of American society (Edgell et al., 2006).
Is the assumed causal relationship between religiosity and national pride U.S. specific?
Who are the atheists?

Definition (Oxford Dictionary of Atheism):
Greek: ‘a’ = not or without; ‘theos’ = God
➤ A belief in the non-existence of a God or Gods.

➤ Passive atheists
   Habitat: secular countries, no religious socialization, no social pressure to be religious, no anger, no fight, no reason to crusade others, possibly a problem with self-definition

➤ Active atheists
   Habitat: religious countries, religious socialization, social pressure to be religious creates counter-reaction, painful process of apostacy, are forced to deal with their secularity, label themselves atheists
Politicians who do not believe in God are unfit for public office
Are the prejudices justified?
My Atheists

- 21,517 define themselves as atheists

- 593,179 cases without denomination
  
  +
  
  I don’t believe in God
  
  God is not important at all in my life
  
  I’m not religious at all

→ 139,170 atheists
Where are the Atheists?

Atheists in 122 out of 162 countries

- across all measurement points!
- In the majority of countries very low case numbers

ONBound Atheists in %
National pride

How proud are you being ... ?

Harmonized measure:
- 0 not proud at all – 3 very proud

Mean values
Religious people: 2.60
Less religious + fuzzy people: 2.55
Atheists: 2.20
Mean values for national pride across 30 countries

![Graph showing mean values for national pride across 30 countries for atheists and religious people.]
What are the predictors for national pride among atheists and non-atheists?

Projection of religious values on the nation encourages patriotism for religious people
- easier when the church and state relationship is close
- easier in religiously homogeneous societies
- Atheists don’t need to distance themselves from national ideas, only because they want distance from religion.

Hypothesis:
In religious countries, where the church and state relationship is close and religious pluralization is low, atheists tend to be less proud than religious people.
What are the predictors for national pride among atheists and non-atheists?

**Individual level:**
- Sex
- Age
- Education
- Atheism
- Being religious

**Country level:**
- General level of religiosity
- Church and State relationship
- Religious pluralization
## Individual level regression results

*b*-values; **dv**: national pride

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Significance min 5% level
First conclusions

- In highly religious countries, religiousness tends to have a strong significant positive impact on national pride and atheism tends to have a negative impact.

- However, in secular countries, where religion is/was opposed by the state, atheism has a positive effect on national pride.
Future tasks

**Task 1:** Multilevel analysis (+ invariance test), including indicator for the decade

**Task 2:** Paying more attention towards the different dominant religions. What does it mean to be non-religious in e.g. a predominantly Buddhist country?
Literature


