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FamChIP
Italian-Polish comparison



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
FIRENZE
DiSIA
DIPARTIMENTO DI STATISTICA,
INFORMATICA, APPLICAZIONI
"GIUSEPPE PARENTI"

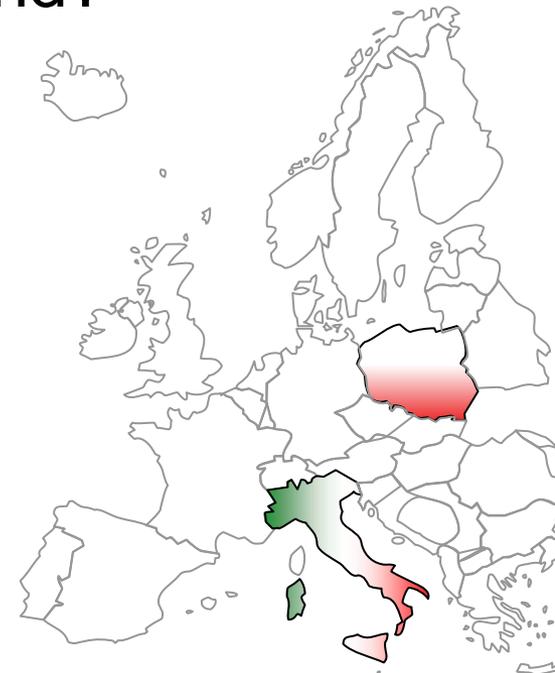
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A Dirty Look from the Neighbours. Does Living in a Religious Neighbourhood Prevent Cohabitation in Italy and Poland?

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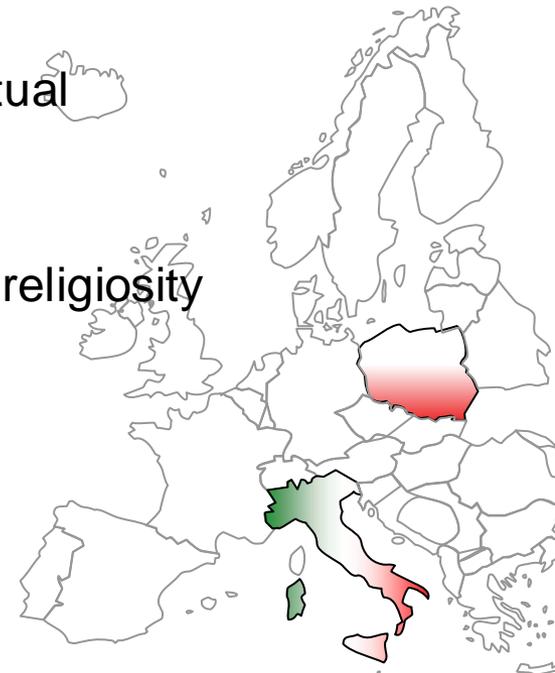
- the role of individual-level religiosity in union formation processes:
 - beliefs on sanctity of marriage and amorality of extramarital intimate relationships
 - **psychological costs** of specific life choices (Lehrer 2004)
 - religiosity affects the type, quality and duration of partnerships (Berghammer 2012; Eggebeen and Dew 2009; Lehrer 2004; Teachman 2002; Marks 2005; Lehrer and Chiswick 1993)
- the role of contextual religiosity in union formation processes:
 - the impact of **social networks** that maintain behaviour consistent with the prescriptions of the dominating religion (Smith 2003)
 - **social sanctions** on individuals whose living arrangements clash with religious norms
 - **so far: no empirical studies** on the role of contextual religiosity for individual-level decisions regarding union formation
- **Poland and Italy**
 - limited secularisation and individualisation
 - homogenous in terms of religious denomination



- **What are the mechanisms of how the local environment may affect the individual decisions on union formation?**
- **What is the impact of a contextual religiosity on an individual decision to enter cohabitation?**

Mixed method approach:

- Qualitative methods to **explore the mechanisms** of contextual influence on union formation
- Quantitative methods to **measure the impact** of contextual religiosity on individual decisions to enter cohabitation



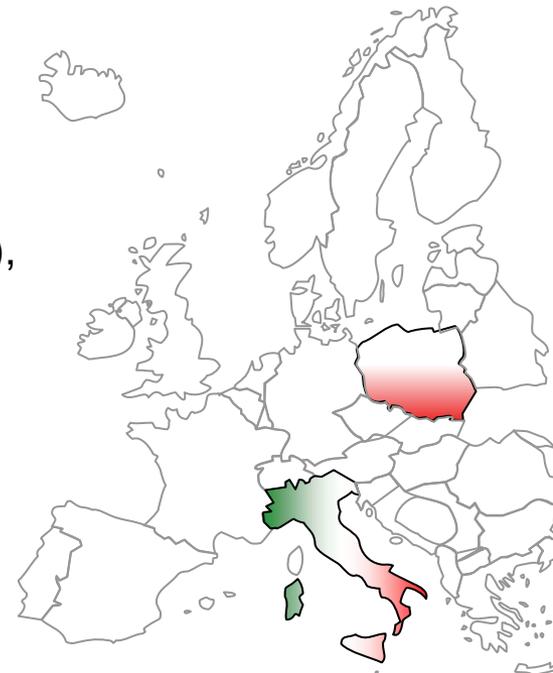


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Qualitative analyses



- Qualitative data collected in the project “**Childbearing Within Cohabitation**” coordinated by Brienna Perelli-Harris at University of Southampton.
- Focus group interviews (FGI) conducted in February-April 2012 in Italy and in March 2012 in Poland on **individuals aged 25-40**.
- Altogether: **69** respondents in Poland and **58** in Italy.
- In total, eight FGIs were conducted in each country:
 - ✓ two with women of low-medium education (Fem, Low edu),
 - ✓ two with women with some tertiary education (Fem, High edu),
 - ✓ two with men of low-medium education (Male, Low edu),
 - ✓ two with men with tertiary degree (Male, High edu).





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Preliminary qualitative findings



Individual-level or contextual religiosity?

In both countries the respondents recognize an importance of individual religiosity – but they also recognize the role of Catholicism in Italian and Polish society as important for marital choices:

Individual level:

For strongly believing people, it's a natural order of things, that you do get married (PL, Male)

I'm a religious person, so it is normal for me to get married instead of cohabiting (IT, Fem)

Contextual-level:

...people get married just because the society is asking them to do it...

...religious country... religion can have a decisive voice concerning marriage...

...there is a strong Church pressure...

How does it work?





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Preliminary qualitative findings



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POLAND:

Two main social actors identified: 'the neighbors' & 'the Church / priests'. Sanctions seem more severe, when childbearing is concerned.

- *People around me* find my wedding more important than I do;
- People are always interested in what their *neighbors* do, instead of minding their own business. (PL, Male)

Maybe we should get married, because later we may have problems with baptizing a child, the First Communion and so on. Because a priest won't visit our home after Christmas. (PL, Fem)





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Preliminary qualitative findings



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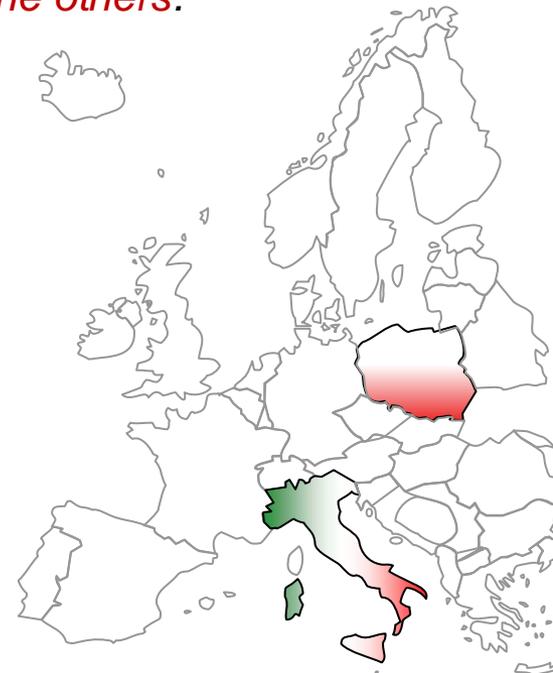
ITALY:

The social actors seem more abstract: ‘the others’ & ‘religion’.
Sanctions are not related to childbearing.

*...two persons who are married are considered as “husband and wife”; two people cohabiting, although they live together for a long time, although they have a child, as much as modern we are, they are not 100% a couple **for the others**.*

(IT, Male)

*In principle, I think it is from religion that the marriage originates ... marrying becomes something expected because of the culture ... because of **the religion**.* (IT, Male)





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Preliminary qualitative findings



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In Poland sanctions seem more tangible than in Italy. Consequently, anonymity of a big city offers some protection against them.

Poland – **rural / urban** distinction matters:

In a small village [...] everyone points the finger at you (PL, Male)

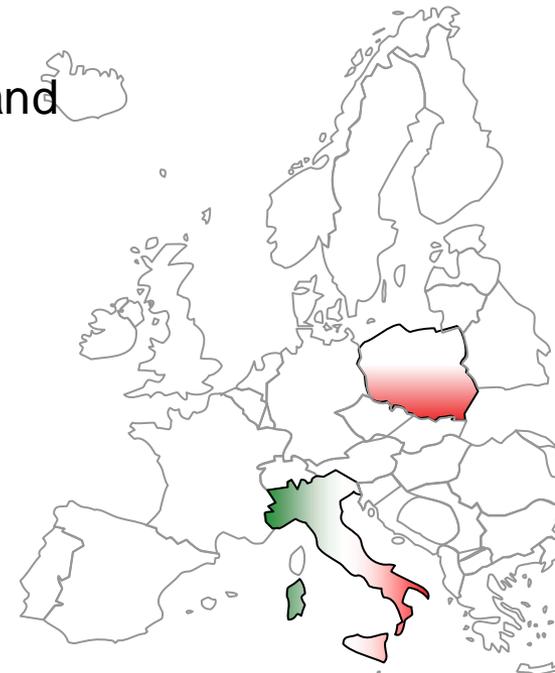
In bigger cities, one is more anonymous, people are not watching you that closely (PL, Fem)

It is not the case in Italy. The influence seems more abstract and not the size but the religiosity of the municipality matters, a local attachment to religion and tradition.

Italy – **south / north** distinction matters:

Religious fundamentalism is particularly strong in Southern Italian regions, both among lower and higher educated people.

I came from the South, and I know! (IT, Fem)



ITALY	POLAND
Household Multipurpose Survey on Family and Social Subjects (2009)	Polish Generation and Gender Survey (2011)
Cohorts: 1975-1989	Cohorts: 1975-1989

METHOD:

We model the probability of choosing **cohabitation vs. marriage** by means of **multilevel logit models** (standard errors of the estimates were adjusted for the possible intra-group correlations at the regional level).





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Quantitative analyses



Key explanatory covariate:

Share of religiosity in neighborhoods where respondents live. We combined region of residence with the size of municipality and obtained **126 areas for Italy** and **72 for Poland**.

Key control variable:

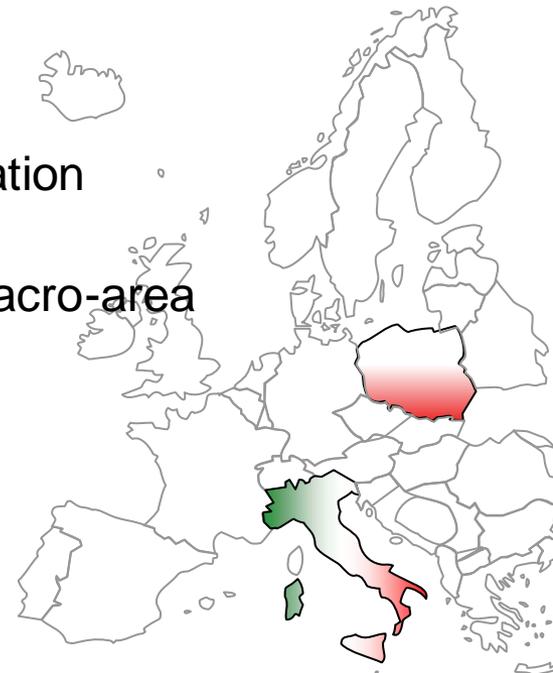
Measure of individual-level religiosity – the frequency of attending religious services in Church.

Other control variables:

- **Model 1**: Age at partnership formation, cohort, gender, education attainment, parental divorce.
- **Model 2**: place of residence (urban vs. rural area) and the macro-area or residence*.

*) Relevant distinctions:

- **South vs. North** for Italy (*Dalla Zuanna and Righi 1999*),
- **East vs. West** for Poland (*Eberhardt 2011*).





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Results



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	ITALY		POLAND	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Frequency of attending church (<i>ref. less than weekly</i>)				
Attending the church often	-0.33***	-0.27***	-1.01***	-1.00***
Contextual religiosity (<i>ref. low share</i>)				
Medium share	-0.03	0.11	-0.64***	-0.40**
High share	-0.68**	0.04	-1.17	-0.63
Place of resid. (<i>ref. urban</i>)				
Rural		0.06		-0.66***
Regional division of residence (<i>ref. PL: West, IT: North</i>)				
PL: East; IT: South		-1.16***		-0.53***



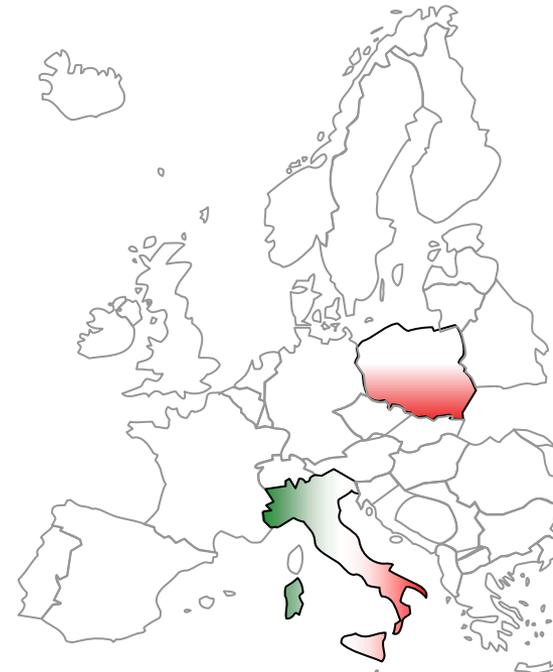
Discussion

- Individuals tend to make life choices consistent with the dominating religion, **even if they are not very religious themselves** (mechanisms explained in the qualitative study)
- Individuals living in Polish **rural areas** and in the eastern part of Poland as well as those living in **southern part** of Italy are less likely to cohabit
- After controlling for territorial characteristics, the role of neighborhood-specific religiosity weakened in the magnitude or lost its statistical power
→ a direct effect of social norms and traditions that are shaped by religion, rather than religious dogmas themselves ?



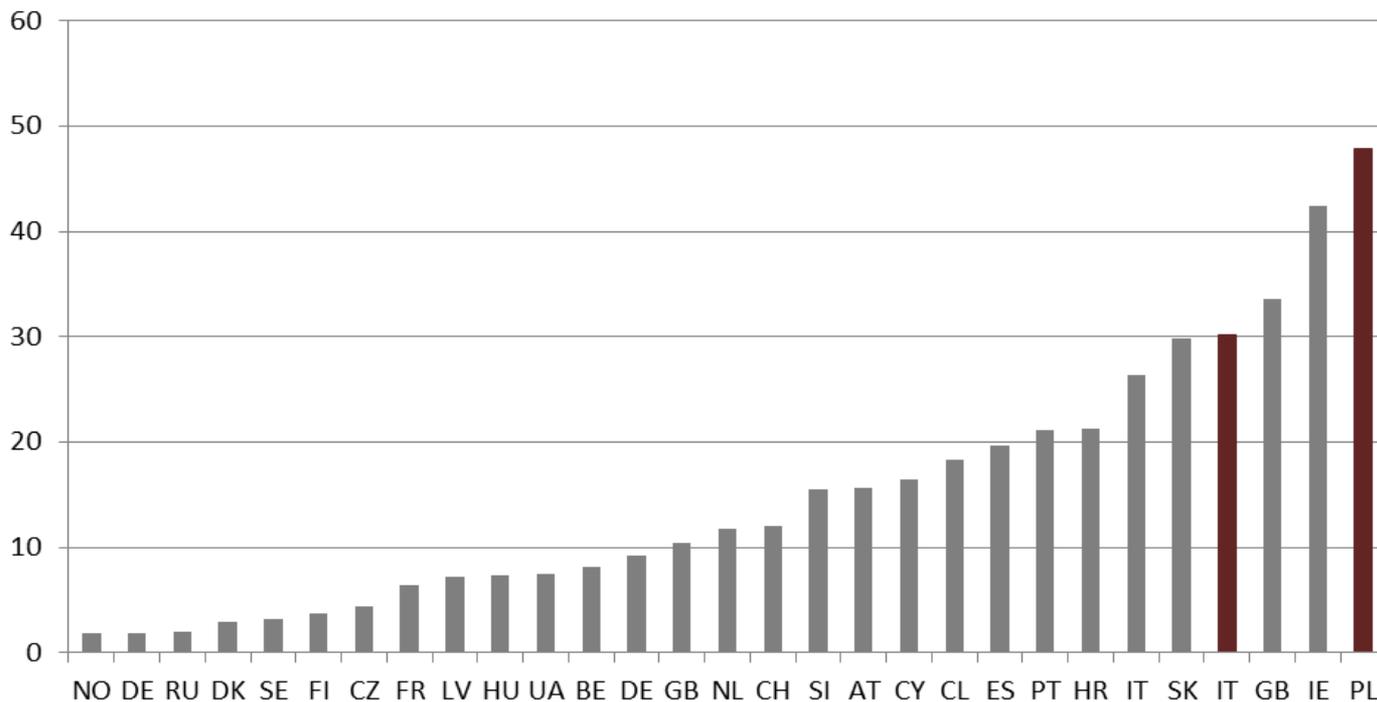
Thank you for your attention !
Comments and suggestions very welcome:

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Additional slides

attending church at least once a week



Source: ISSP data 2008

