

MORE ON KEY FINDINGS

The following texts illustrate some conclusions that can be drawn from the key findings and analyze the data on which they are based.

RBM RIGHTS: WHICH COUNTRIES AND RBMs ARE BETTER OFF?

Which countries' legal systems promote RBM rights the most?

The answer is found in the P-index (States) which is posted on the **COUNTRIES** page of this website. The average of the 16 countries is 0.28. The countries that are above the average are, in descending order, **POLAND, PORTUGAL, CROATIA, SWEDEN, ITALY**, and **SPAIN**. With the exception of **SWEDEN**, they are all countries that regulate relations with minorities through agreements or laws negotiated with individual RBMs. **ESTONIA** and **FINLAND** score at the average while below it are, again in descending order, **DENMARK, ROMANIA, AUSTRIA, GREECE, CYPRUS, BELGIUM, HUNGARY** and **FRANCE**. With the exception of **HUNGARY**, these are all countries that regulate their relations with RBMs through laws enacted unilaterally by the state, without agreements with RBMs. The *Atlas* data thus indicate that cooperation between the state and RBMs is functional in promoting their rights.

In which legal systems are the differences between RBMs greater and in which are they less?

The answer is found in the E-index (States) which is posted on the **COUNTRIES** page of the website. The average of the 16 countries is 0.05. Above the average are, in descending order, **DENMARK, SWEDEN, HUNGARY**, and **CYPRUS**: these are the countries where the differences in treatment between RBMs are least. **PORTUGAL, FRANCE, GREECE, FINLAND**, and **ESTONIA** score at the average, below which are **POLAND, CROATIA, BELGIUM, ROMANIA, AUSTRIA, ITALY**, and **SPAIN**. With the exception of **HUNGARY**, all countries that regulate their relations with RBMs through agreements or negotiated laws are in the last group. Thus, it seems that the agreements between state and RBMs, which are instrumental in promoting RBM rights, do not guarantee their equal treatment. This means that in countries that have concluded agreements with RBMs, the promotion of their rights is selective, rewarding some and penalizing others.

In which legal systems is the distance between religious minority and majority rights the least?

The answer is found in the G-index (States) which is posted on the **COUNTRIES** page of this website. The average for the 16 countries is -0.17. Above the average are, in descending order, **SWEDEN, FRANCE, BELGIUM, DENMARK**, and **FINLAND**: in these states the majority-minority gap is smaller. **AUSTRIA** has a score equal to the average while below it are **PORTUGAL, CROATIA, ROMANIA, POLAND, CYPRUS, GREECE, ITALY**, and **SPAIN**. States with a Protestant religious tradition and those where the process of



secularization is more developed, such as **BELGIUM** and **FRANCE**, are those where the distance between religious majorities and minorities is lower. The conclusion of agreements between states and RBMs does not seem to reduce this gap: the legal systems of all the countries that stand above the average do not provide for them.

Which RBMs receive more promotion of their rights and which less?

The answer is found in the P-index (RBMs) posted on the **RELIGIONS/BELIEFS** page of this website. The average is 0.20, and above it are, in descending order, the **ORTHODOX**, **PROTESTANT** (both mainline and evangelical), and **CATHOLIC CHURCHES**, followed by the **JEWISH** and **ISLAMIC COMMUNITIES**; below the average, again in the same order, are the **MORMONS**, **JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES**, **BUDDHIST**, **HINDU** and **SIKH COMMUNITIES**, and finally **BOs** and **SCIENTOLOGY**. These data indicate that the rights of the Christian Churches and the Jewish and Muslim communities are more promoted than those of all other RBMs. The most interesting finding concerns the Muslim communities. While taking into account that this finding is derived from an analysis of legal systems and that an examination of ongoing social processes in European countries would probably lead to different conclusions, it seems that the domestic laws of most EU countries have been able to include the Muslim communities in the system of protection and promotion of RBM rights.

In conclusion, in which countries are RBMs better off?

This question cannot be answered through a legal-only analysis. The data resulting from the P-, E- and G-indices offer some clues, but these need to be confirmed through surveys of other kinds. **SWEDEN** is the only country above average in each of the three indices; **DENMARK** is above average in two of them and equal to average in the third. **ROMANIA** is below average in the three indices, while **GREECE** and **AUSTRIA** are below average in two and equal to average in the third. Considering also the scores of the other states (which are displayed in the three graphs on the **COUNTRIES** page), the legal systems of countries with a Protestant religious majority appear more attentive to RBM rights than those with a Catholic or Orthodox one. However, the religious tradition of a country is just one component of a broader picture that must be taken into account in its entirety to gain a proper understanding of the data collected by the *Atlas*.

THE KEY FINDINGS EXPLAINED

I. PROMOTION OF RBM RIGHTS: P-INDEX (STATES)																
STATES	AU	BE	CR	CY	DK	ES	FL	FR	GR	HU	IT	PL	PT	RO	SP	SW
Average Score: 0.28																
SCORES	0.25	0.23	0.33	0.24	0.27	0.28	0.28	0.23	0.25	0.23	0.29	0.36	0.36	0.27	0.29	0.30

1. All countries are above the zero line which means that RBM rights as a whole are respected. However, respect does not mean promotion and only promotion of rights can allow RBMs to contribute to the development of an inclusive and cohesive society.

2. The average score of the 16 EU countries is 0.28: 8 countries are below average, 6 above, and 2 (Estonia and Finland) have a score corresponding to the average. If we take into consideration the religious demography of these countries¹, the data show that 63% of all countries with a Catholic majority and 33% of those with a Protestant majority (Sweden) score better than the others while countries with an Orthodox majority face more challenges in promoting RBM rights.

3. The outcome is slightly different if we employ another method of reading the data and divide the countries into three groups: those well above the average (>0.29), around the average (0.27÷0.29), and well below the average (<0.27). In the first group there are 3 countries with a Catholic majority (=38% of all Catholic countries) and 1 country with a Protestant majority (=33% of all Protestant countries); in the second, 2 Protestant countries (66%) together with 2 Catholic (=25%) and the Orthodox (=33%) ones; and in the third, 3 Catholic (=38%) and 2 Orthodox (=66%) countries. This second method of reading the data indicates that all countries with a Protestant majority score in the medium/high range, countries with a Catholic majority are equally divided between those well above and well below the average, and countries with an Orthodox majority score in the medium/low range.

4. If we now consider the way relations between states and religions are regulated and divide the countries into states which have concluded agreements with RBMs and states which have adopted a

¹ Estonia and Hungary have no religious majority (see the page **ABOUT**, section **METHODOLOGY** at <https://atlasminorityrights.eu>).

system of registration/recognition of RBMs², above the average there are 83% of the countries with agreements and 10% of the countries with a system of state registration/recognition of RBMs. It appears that agreements between state and religious organizations foster the promotion of RBM rights.

II. (UN)EQUAL TREATMENT OF RBMs: E-INDEX (STATES)																
STATES	AU	BE	CR	CY	DK	ES	FL	FR	GR	HU	IT	PL	PT	RO	SP	SW
Average Score: 0.05																
SCORES	0.07	0.08	0.09	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.07	0.10	0.05	0.08	0.07	0.03

1. To read this table correctly, it should be kept in mind that the E-index measures the equality of the legal treatment of RBMs independently from the way they are treated: a state where all RBMs are deprived of their rights will score better because the lack of rights involves all RBMs and therefore all minorities are treated equally. For this reason, the E-index should always be read in connection with the P-index.

2. The score 0 indicates equal treatment of RBMs: as no country scores 0, no state treats RBMs equally. Everywhere some RBMs are better off than others.

3. The average score is 0.05: 7 countries score above the average, 4 below and 5 have a score corresponding to the average. In the first group, that is in the countries where differences among RBMs are greater, there is 1 country with an Orthodox majority (33% of all the countries with this majority), 6 with a Catholic majority (75%) and none with a Protestant majority. The 4 countries which are below the average, that is the countries where the differences are smaller, are comprised of 2 countries with a Protestant majority (66%), 1 with an Orthodox majority (33% of all Orthodox countries) and 1, Hungary, without a clear religious majority. These data indicate that Protestant countries are more likely to treat RBMs equally (for the better or the worse).

4. These findings are confirmed if we adopt the second method of calculating the scores. In the group well below the average (<0.04), that is the group where differences in the treatment of RBMs are smaller,

² Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, and Spain have concluded agreements with RBMs; all other countries have adopted a system of registration or recognition of RBMs.

there are only 2 Protestant countries (Denmark and Sweden, that is the 66% of the countries with this majority); in the group well above the average (>0.06) we find 1 Orthodox (=33%) and 6 Catholic (75%) countries; in the middle group ($0.04 \div 0.06$), we find 2 Catholic (25%), 2 Orthodox (66%) and 1 Protestant (33%) countries. These data show that the countries with a Catholic majority score in the low to middle range, those with a Protestant majority in the high to middle range and the countries with an Orthodox majority score in the middle to low range.

5. Coming now to the impact of the legal system of state-religions relationship on equal treatment, the countries which have adopted a system of registration/recognition of RBMs are evenly distributed throughout the scoring scale while the majority of the countries which have concluded agreements with RBMs are above the average. This means that the agreements, which promote RBM rights, do not guarantee their equal treatment.

III. PROMOTION AND (UN)EQUAL TREATMENT (STATES)																
STATES	AU	BE	CR	CY	DK	ES	FL	FR	GR	HU	IT	PL	PT	RO	SP	SW
Average Score: P-index 0.28																
SCORES P-INDEX	0.25	0.23	0.33	0.24	0.27	0.28	0.28	0.23	0.25	0.23	0.29	0.36	0.36	0.27	0.29	0.30
Average Score: E-index 0.05																
SCORES E-INDEX	0.07	0.08	0.09	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.07	0.10	0.05	0.08	0.07	0.03

1. From what has been said so far, it can be assumed that RBMs are in a more favorable position in countries that ensure a good level of promotion of their rights and, at the same time, a good degree of equal treatment. In this table the countries which score better than average both in the P- and in the (un)E-index are highlighted in green, those which score worse than average in both indices are highlighted in red.

2. Only 1 country, Sweden, scores better than average in both indices; Portugal scores even better in the P-index but only about average in the E-index. The data show that Portugal is better in promoting RBM rights, Sweden in ensuring equal treatment; Portugal has a legal system of agreements between state and religions (and this confirms what has been said on the link between agreements and promotion of rights),

Sweden is a country where the same law applies to all RBMs and this explains the good score in the (un)E-index.

3. All other countries which have a good score in the first index have a bad one in the second and vice versa. This seems to indicate that promotion of RBM rights and equal treatment of RBMs go in opposite directions: the greater the former, the lesser the latter. Therefore, the promotion of RBM rights is always selective.

4. The countries which score worse than average in both indices are Austria, Belgium (2 countries with a Catholic background and without a system of agreements between state and religions) and Romania, an Orthodox country which is close to the average score in the field of rights promotion but has a bad score in the field of equal treatment of RBMs.














IV. GAP BETWEEN MAJORITY AND MINORITY RELIGIONS: G-INDEX																
STATES	AU	BE	CR	CY	DK	ES	FL	FR	GR	HU	IT	PL	PT	RO	SP	SW
Average Score: -0.17																
SCORES	-0.17	-0.10	-0.19	-0.22	-0.13	N/A	-0.14	-0.08	-0.23	N/A	-0.26	-0.20	-0.18	-0.19	-0.26	-0.05

1. This index measures the gap between the rights enjoyed by majority and minority religious organizations.

2. First of all, it should be underlined that in no country do RBMs enjoy the same rights as the majority religious organization. Everywhere RBMs are well below the 0 score, which indicates equal treatment, and this means that there is a strong gap from the majority.

3. All the countries with a Protestant majority score better than the average, that is the gap majority-minorities is relatively small. The gap is larger in countries with a Catholic or Orthodox majority.

4. Adopting the second method of calculating scores does not change the outcome. In the group where the gap is smaller (<-0.15), there are all the Protestant and 2 Catholic (=25%) countries; in the middle group (-0.19÷-0.15) we find 3 Catholic (=38%) and 1 Orthodox (=33%) countries; in the group where the gap is wider (>-0.19) there are 3 Catholic (=38%), and 2 Orthodox (=66%) countries.

V. PROMOTION OF RBM RIGHTS: P-INDEX (RBMs)												
												
BOs	BUDDHISTS	CATHOLICS	HINDUS	MUSLIMS	Jws	JEWS	MORMONS	ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS	PROT. EVANG.	PROT. MAINLINE	SCIENTOLOGY	SIKH
Average Score: 0.20												
0.14	0.18	0.25	0.17	0.22	0.18	0.23	0.18	0.28	0.27	0.28	0.13	0.15

1. It is no surprise that at the top of the promotion scale are traditional Christian minorities: the Christian heritage of Europe is thus confirmed.
2. The Jewish and Muslim minorities obtain almost the same score. This contradicts the idea of Europe as a Judeo-Christian continent: at the level of legal systems, EU countries have been able to include the Muslim communities on an (almost) equal footing with the Jewish ones (the outcome would probably be different if the analysis were conducted in the field of social attitudes and perceptions).