

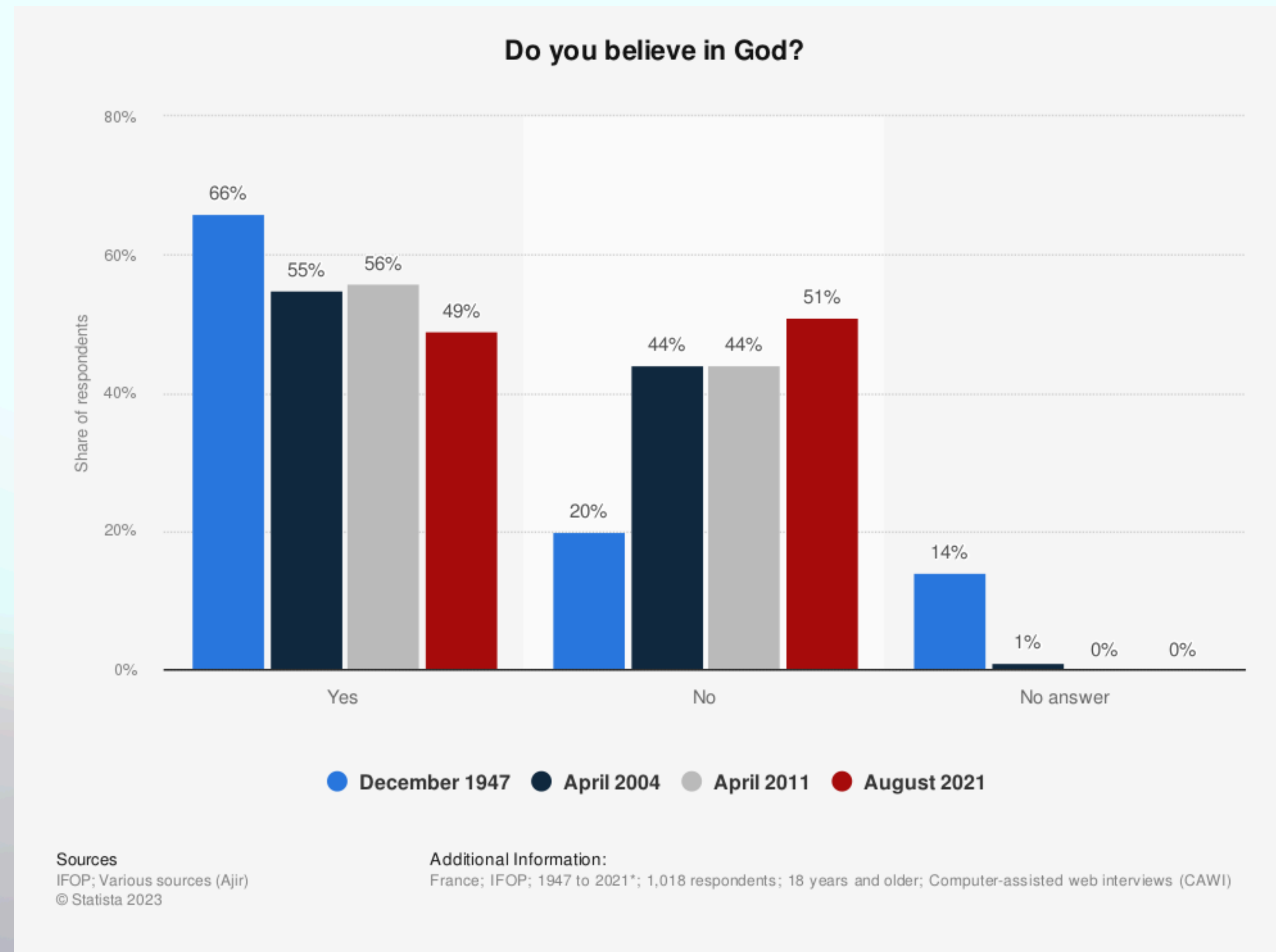


# **Connecting religious media with a post-church society**

- 1. The Problem**
- 2. The Commission**
- 3. Potential solutions**

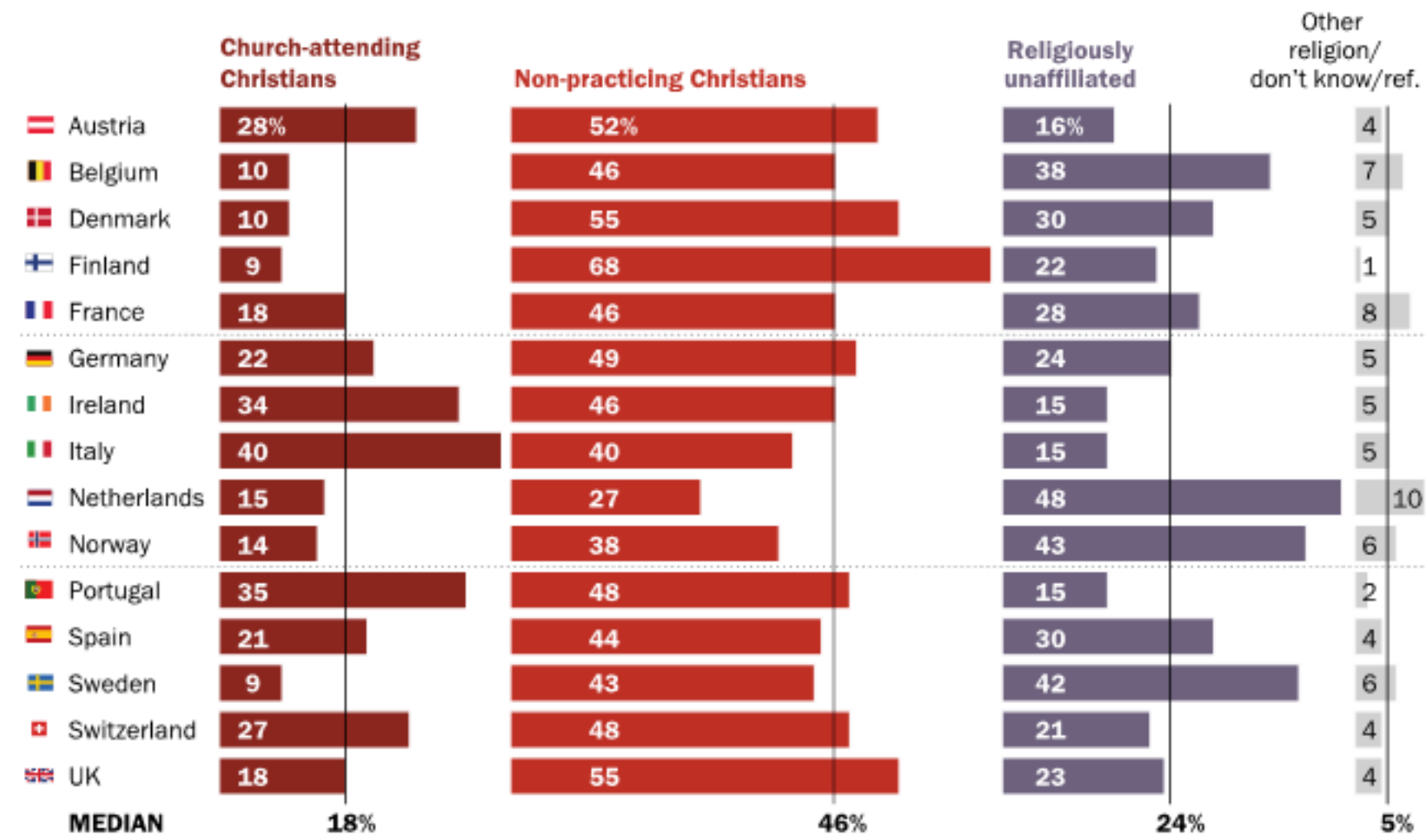
# 1) The problem

Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"



### In most Western European countries, non-practicing Christians are largest group

% who are ...



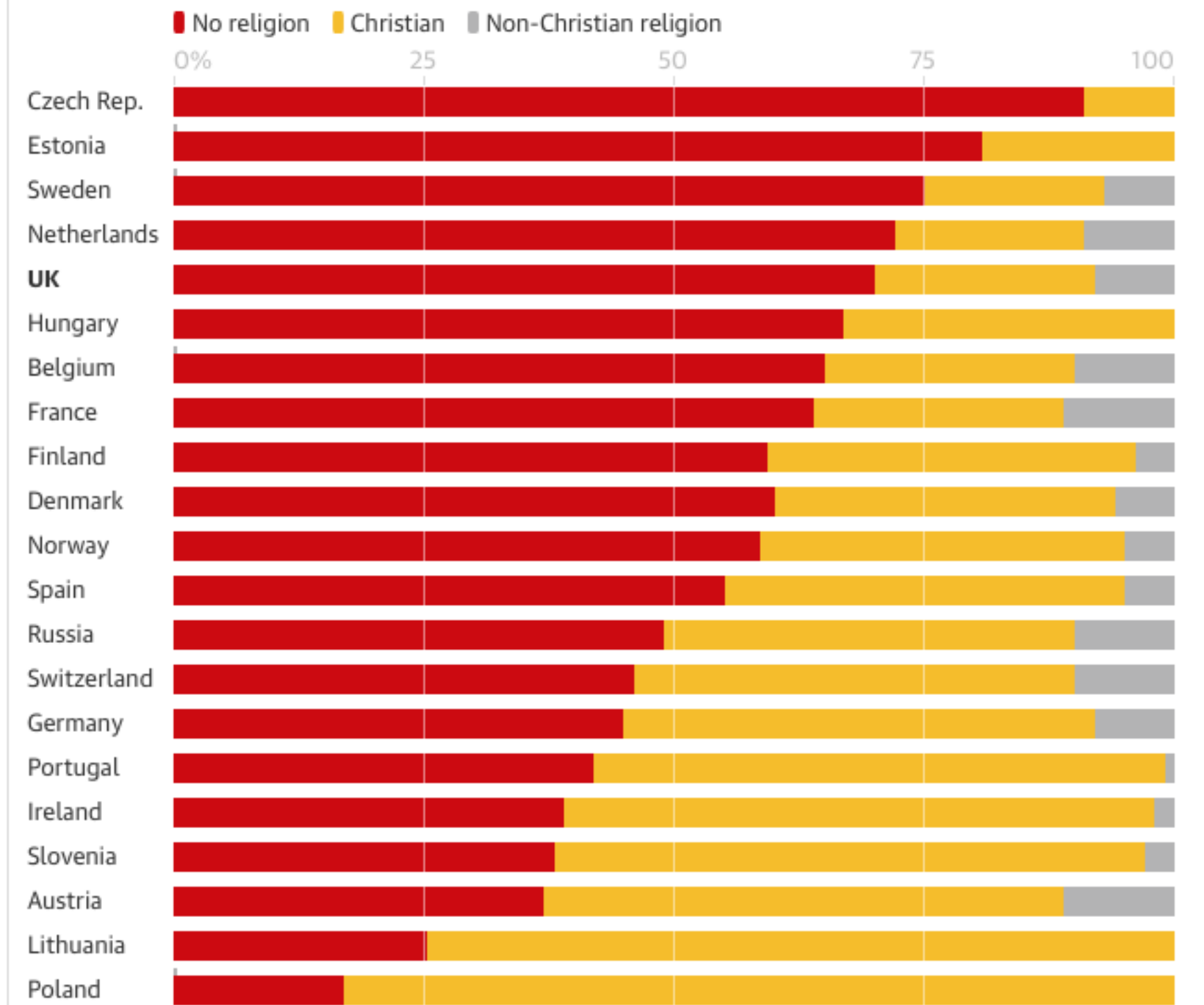
Note: Church-attending Christians are defined as those who say they attend church at least monthly. Non-practicing Christians are defined as those who attend less often. Other religion/don't know/ref. are mostly Muslim respondents. General population surveys in Western Europe may not fully capture the size of minority populations, such as Muslims. Therefore, these figures may differ from previously published demographic estimates. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Source: Survey conducted April-August 2017 in 15 countries. See Methodology for details. "Being Christian in Western Europe"

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### 70% of young people in the UK identify with no religion

How 16- to 29-year-olds self-identify, %

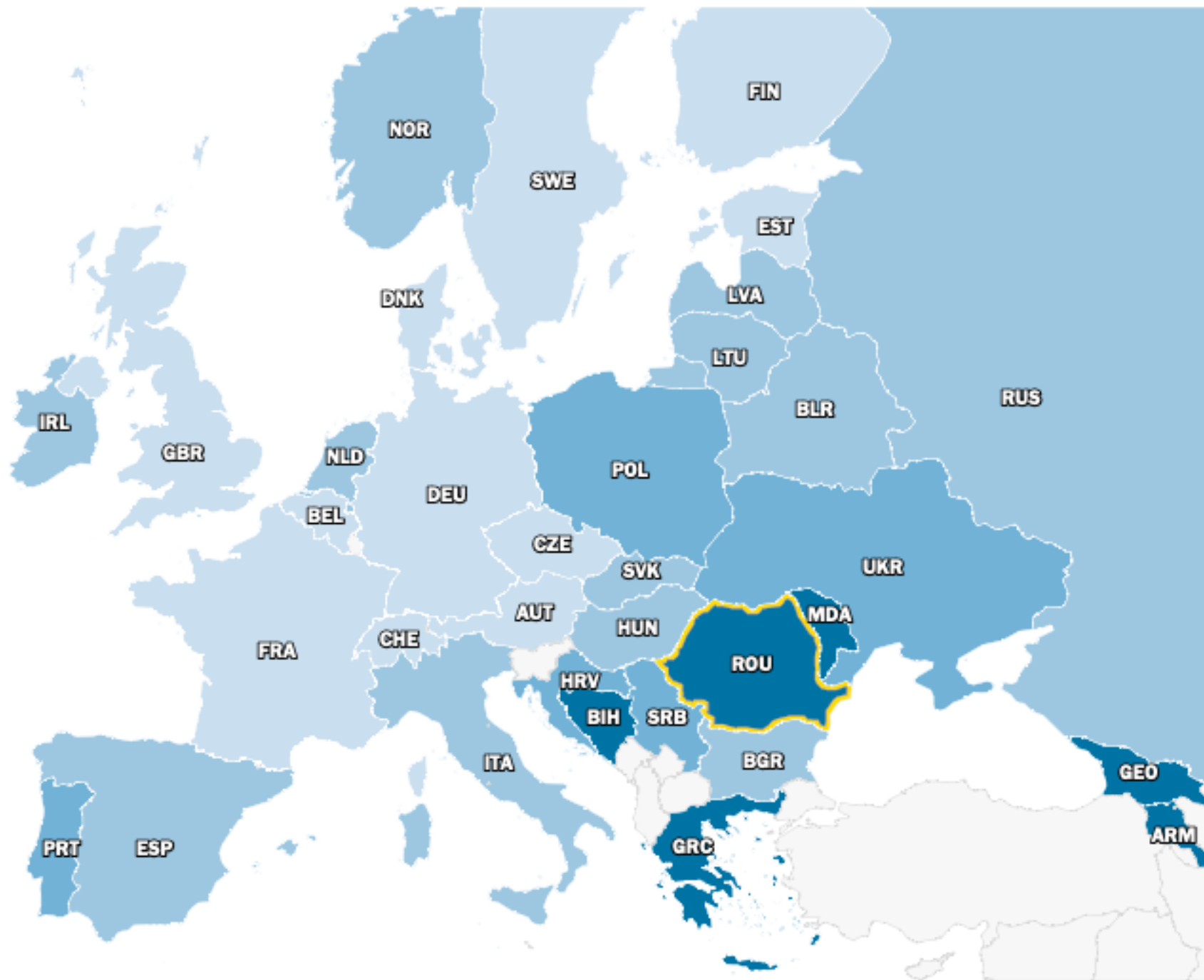


Guardian Graphic | Source: St Mary's University, Twickenham

## Overall religiosity by country

% of adults who are "highly religious"

0-14% 15-29% 30-44% 45-60% Not surveyed



1. Romania	55%
2. Armenia	51%
3. Georgia	50%
4. Greece	49%
5. Moldova	47%
6. Bosnia	46%
7. Croatia	44%
8. Poland	40%
9. Portugal	37%
10. Serbia	32%
11. Ukraine	31%
12. Slovakia	29%
13. Belarus	27%
13. Italy	27%
15. Ireland	24%
16. Lithuania	21%
16. Spain	21%
18. Bulgaria	18%
18. Netherlands	18%
20. Hungary	17%
20. Norway	17%
20. Russia	17%
23. Latvia	15%
24. Austria	14%
25. Finland	13%
26. France	12%
26. Germany	12%
26. Switzerland	12%
29. United Kingdom	11%
30. Belgium	10%
30. Sweden	10%
32. Czech Republic	8%
32. Denmark	8%
34. Estonia	7%

# What is a post-church/Christian society?

*Post-Christianity is a phenomenon in which Christianity is no longer the dominant civil religion of a society but has gradually assumed values, culture, and worldviews that are not necessarily Christian.* Wikipedia

# What is a post-church/Christian society?

*“Post-Christian” is an aggregate of all forms of present-day alternative worldviews to the Christian one. In the post-Christian worldview, one can find the co-existence of both modernist traits and postmodern trends.* Gene Veith

*Veith explains that “post-Christian” isn’t the evolution of the postmodern but the blending of modernism and postmodernism into a new anti-Christian posture: “Modernism with its scientific materialism and trust in evolutionary progress is post-Christian. So is postmodernism with its relativistic mindset”*

# What is a post-church/Christian society?

*The fundamental institutions of society in Europe (e.g. family, school, church) have been classically shaped from a Christian, (in many cases protestant) worldview and are now rewriting their system of values, sabotaging their conventional stance.*



# What is a post-church/Christian society?

*In some Northern European countries, the post-Christianizing process takes the form of aggressive secularization of society. The basic moral public discourse took Christian values for granted is undergoing a drastic revision by competing, and at times antagonistic, moral frameworks.* Leonardo De Chirico

# What is a post-church/Christian society?

*Indeed, not all that's identified as a "Christian" heritage in a nation or culture was actually a virtuous realization of Christianity. What is normally assumed as belonging to a Christian heritage was actually a sub-Christian version of it—something seemingly close but fundamentally distant. In many cases, it was a deformed "Christianity" based on a long Constantinian trajectory, marked by the heresy of confusing and conflating state and church, religion and politics, canon law and common law, Christian identity and national identity.*

*Leonardo De Chirico*

# What is a post-church/Christian society?

The causes are multifactorial, but the reality is that faith in God has been negatively affected by the perception society has about *christianism*, more specifically about *christians*. The western world has experienced centuries of “*christianism*” but, very little is known about Jesus and his true followers.

# What is a post-church/Christian society?

We must see post-christianity as an opportunity for real christianity!

# What is a post-church/Christian society?

Are we a part of the problem?

Can we be a part of the solution?

# How does a post-christian think?

“Truth” is what you believe it to be. Something can be “true for you, but not true for me”.

“Choice” is a big virtue in our consumer society. Choice extends to value systems, beliefs, and lifestyle choices. All are seen as equally valid. Feeling comfortable with choices is paramount.

# How does a post-christian think?

- \* Reality is seen through personal lens.
- \* Not trying to understand reality, it is too complex anyways.
- \* In quest for truth, truth that works for the personal needs.
- \* There are no simple answers to life's most complex questions.
- \* The common values of the group and community are of high importance (friends are derived from people that share common values).
- \* Tolerance is key.
- \* Everyone must live the way they want to.
- \* There are no better belief systems than others, there's no reason to argue.
- \* Idealism is dead, pragmatism and the finding of solutions are foundational.
- \* Institutional religion is dead, it represents a failure.
- \* Spirituality is important, even desired, but an institutional experience is not wanted.

## 2. Our mandate: The Great Commission

<sup>18</sup> Then Jesus came to them and said, “**All authority** in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

<sup>19</sup> Therefore **go and make disciples of all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and **teaching them** to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely **I am with you always, to the very end of the age.**”



*The manner in which the truth is presented often has much to do in determining whether it will be accepted or rejected.* — Testimonies For The Church 4:404, 405 (1880).

# Our mandate: The Great Commission

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22, 23

<sup>27</sup> Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. James 1:27

# Our mandate: The Great Commission

<sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. Matthew 5:16

<sup>12</sup> Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12

# Our mandate: The Great Commission

It is trials that lead us to see what we are. It is the season of temptation that gives a glimpse of one's real character, showing the necessity of the cultivation of good traits. **Trusting in the blessing of God, the Christian is safe anywhere. In the city he will not be corrupted. In the counting-room he will be marked for his habits of strict integrity. In the mechanic's shop every portion of his work will be done with fidelity, with an eye single to the glory of God.** When this course is pursued by its individual members, a church will be successful. Prosperity will never attend these churches until the individual members shall be closely connected with God, having an unselfish interest in the salvation of their fellow-men. Ministers may preach pleasing and forcible discourses, much labor may be put forth to build up and make the church prosperous; **but unless its individual members shall act their part as servants of Jesus Christ, the church will ever be in darkness, and without strength. The influence of a really consistent example, hard and dark as the world is, will be a power for good.** T28 29.2

# Our mandate: The Great Commission

It is the same Grace, extended to us, that we need to extend to others. His Grace is sufficient and embodies the solution to all human problems, a final solution for sin. Is the content of our message filled with His Grace?

“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:35

### 3. Ideas / Solutions - Audience

*For though I am free from all, I have made myself a **servant to all**, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.* 1 Corinthians 9.19-23

### **3. Ideas / Solutions - Audience**

According to Paul, our audience is defined as *everybody and anybody*. Those who are like us and, particularly, those that are different.

How? By becoming a *servant...*

# 3. Ideas / Solutions - Strategy

**A) Forget about monologues, build a dialogical community.**





# 3. Ideas / Solutions - Strategy

**B) Provide for the common good in your area of influence.**



# 3. Ideas / Solutions - Strategy

**C) Listen, show that you genuinely care. Do not get defensive!**



# 3. Ideas / Solutions - Strategy

D) Start with commonalities, empathize, be vulnerable.



# 3. Ideas / Solutions - Strategy

**E) Be authentic, share your personal story (with Christ).**



# 3. Ideas / Solutions - Strategy

**F) Avoid unnecessary tension, do not assume an antagonistic role.**



# 3. Ideas / Solutions - Strategy

**G) Stand firm in your beliefs, do not hesitate to show your moral compass (in LOVE!). Do not apologize for God's truth.**



# 3. Ideas / Solutions - Strategy

H) Know your Bible, pray fervently.



# 3. Ideas / Solutions - Strategy

1) Do not (ever!) become a troll.





# 3. Ideas / Solutions - Strategy

**J) Model, in practical ways, the expressions of your faith.**



# 3. Ideas / Solutions - Strategy

**K) Provide for a space where fellowship happens before you transition to a church environment.**



