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Many Religious ‘Nones’ Around the World Hold Spiritual Beliefs

But at lower rates than people who identify with a religion

BY Jonathan Evans, Kirsten Lesage and Manolo Corichi

FOR MEDIA OR OTHER INQUIRIES:

Jonathan Evans, Senior Researcher
Hannah Taber, Communications Manager

202.419.4372

www.pewresearch.org

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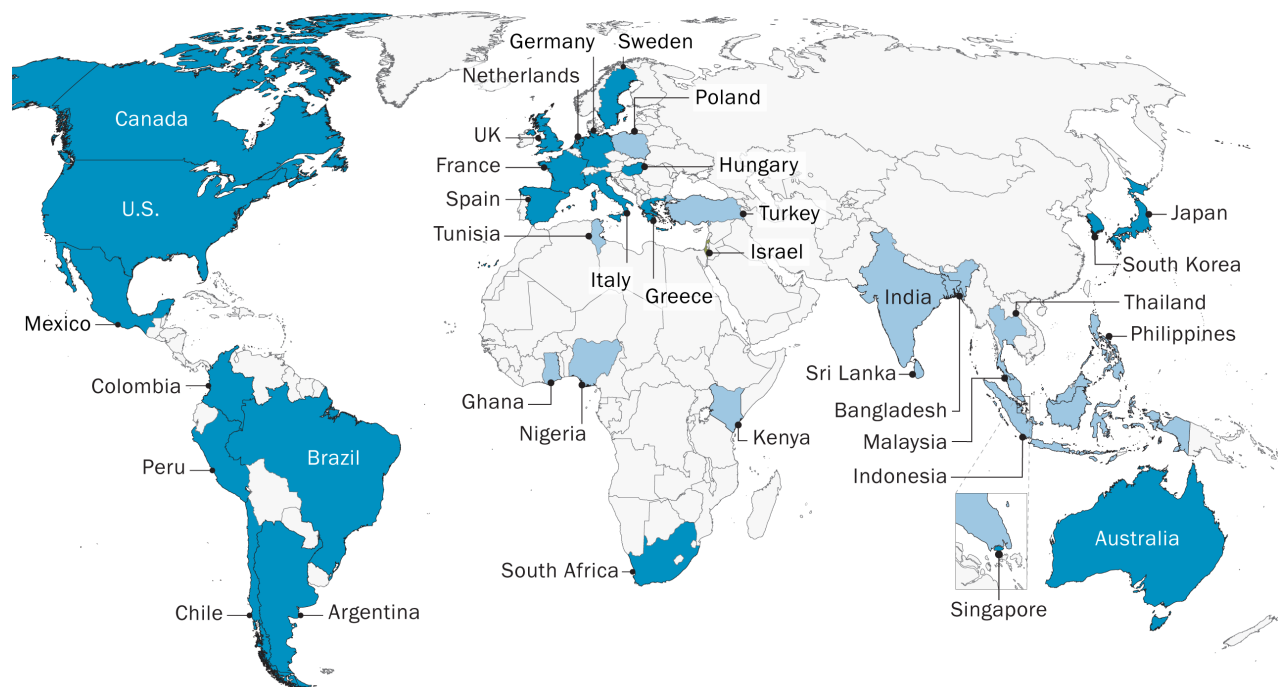
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How we did this

Pew Research Center conducted this study to better understand the religious and spiritual beliefs, practices, and views of the growing number of people around the world who are religiously unaffiliated (meaning they say they are atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular” when asked about their religion). We particularly wanted to look at the internal diversity among the unaffiliated, who are also called religious “nones.”

This report is based on surveys in 36 countries. However, we have focused on 22 countries where the survey’s samples of religiously unaffiliated adults are large enough to analyze and report separately. “Nones” make up 5% or fewer of adults in the remaining 14 countries. For more about sample sizes, refer to the [methodology](#).

Countries included in this report



Note: Pew Research Center conducted surveys in 36 countries in 2023-24, but this report focuses on 22 countries (shaded in dark blue) that have large enough samples of religiously unaffiliated adults to be analyzed separately. In the remaining 14 countries (shaded in lighter blue), the survey samples of religiously unaffiliated adults were too small for reliable analysis.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey.

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Outside the United States, this report draws on nationally representative surveys of a total of 23,202 adults interviewed from Jan. 5 to May 15, 2024. Interviews were conducted over the phone with adults in Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Interviews were conducted face-to-face in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Hungary, Mexico, Peru and South Africa. In Australia, we used a mixed-mode, probability-based online panel.

For the U.S., data comes from respondents contacted in three separate surveys, each with more than 10,000 respondents. The surveys were conducted over the following dates. Select each survey title to read about the specific survey's methodology.

- [American Trends Panel \(ATP\) Wave 132](#), July 31-Aug. 6, 2023
- [ATP Wave 143](#), Feb. 13-25, 2024
- [Religious Landscape Study](#) (RLS), July 17, 2023-March 4, 2024

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The RLS was made possible by The Pew Charitable Trusts, which received support from the Lilly Endowment Inc., Templeton Religion Trust, The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations and the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust.

Here are the [questions and responses used for this report](#) (including information about the U.S. source used for each question), along with the [survey methodology](#).

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Many Religious ‘Nones’ Around the World Hold Spiritual Beliefs

But at lower rates than people who identify with a religion

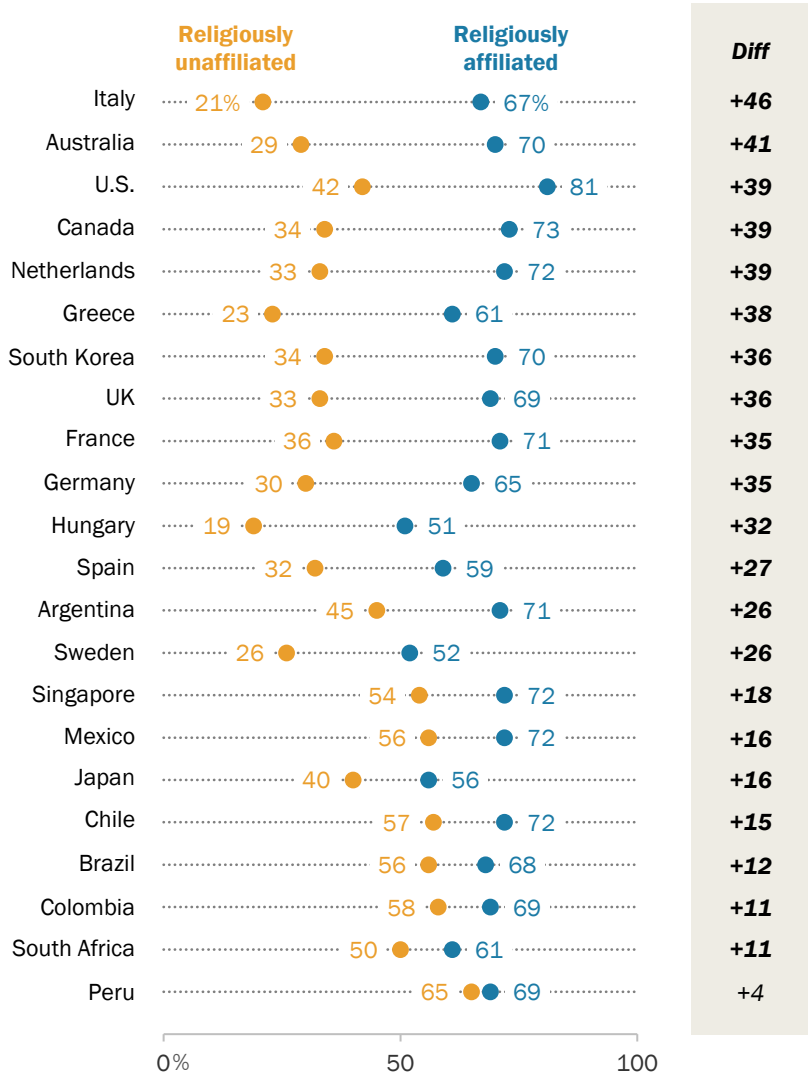
Around the world, many people who do not identify with any religion nevertheless hold a variety of spiritual and religious beliefs, including the belief that there is life after death, according to a Pew Research Center study of religiously unaffiliated adults in 22 countries.

The number of adults who are religiously unaffiliated – describing themselves as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular” – has climbed rapidly in the recent past across North America, Europe, parts of Latin America and some countries in the Asia-Pacific region, such as Australia and South Korea.

In general, religiously unaffiliated people are less likely to hold spiritual beliefs, less likely to engage in religious practices, and *more* likely to

‘Nones’ are less likely than religiously affiliated adults to believe in an afterlife

% of adults who say there is **definitely/probably** life after death, among those who are ...



Note: Statistically significant differences are in **bold**. Religiously affiliated people include Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims and adherents of other religions. Religiously unaffiliated people (also called “nones”) are those who identify as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular.” Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey.

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take a skeptical view of religion's impact on society than are Christians, Muslims and people who identify with other religions.

But sizable percentages of religiously unaffiliated adults – often called religious “nones” – *do* hold some religious or spiritual beliefs, according to our nationally representative surveys of 22 countries with relatively large unaffiliated populations.¹

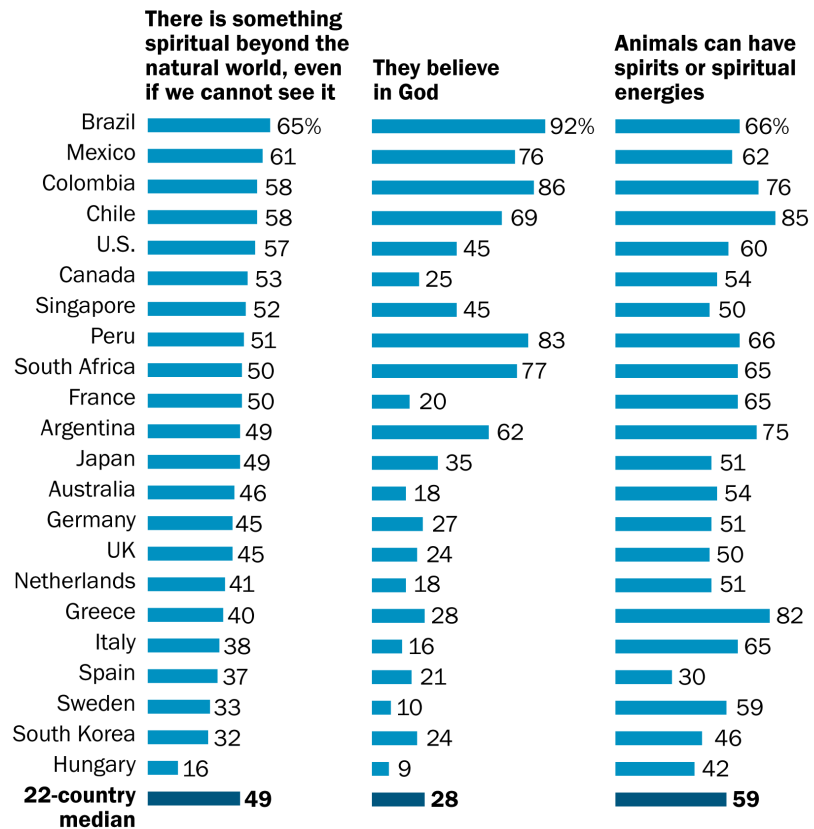
For example, in all 22 countries, about a fifth or more of “nones” believe in life after death. The shares who say there is *definitely* or *probably* an afterlife range from 19% of unaffiliated adults in Hungary to 65% in Peru.²

In seven of the 22 countries, 50% or more of all “nones” believe in life after death.

In addition, large shares of “nones” in some countries say “there is something spiritual

Among the religiously unaffiliated, many believe animals can have spirits

% of *religiously unaffiliated adults* who say ...



Note: Respondents were asked which statement comes closer to their view: “There is something spiritual beyond the natural world, even if we cannot see it” or “The natural world is all there is.” U.S. adults were asked about “animals other than humans.” Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey; survey of U.S. adults conducted July 31-Aug. 6, 2023; and Religious Landscape Study of U.S. adults conducted July 17, 2023-March 4, 2024.

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¹ The surveys, conducted in 2023 and 2024, [included a total of 36 countries](#), but this report focuses on the 22 countries where our surveys had large enough samples of religiously unaffiliated adults to break out and analyze their results separately.

² The survey asked respondents whether they believe there “definitely is,” “probably is,” “probably is not,” or “definitely is not” life after death. The question did not specify any particular version of what life after death might be like.

beyond the natural world, even if we cannot see it.” For instance, 61% of “nones” in Mexico and 65% in Brazil express this belief.

Many religiously unaffiliated adults also express belief in God. This includes solid majorities of “nones” in South Africa (77%) and several countries in Latin America, such as Brazil (92%), Colombia (86%) and Chile (69%).³

Religiously unaffiliated adults in Europe and Australia are much less inclined to believe in God. Just 18% of “nones” in Australia, 10% in Sweden and 9% in Hungary are believers.

In the United States, 45% of “nones” say they believe in God, according to our 2023 survey.⁴

Jump to more on belief in God among “nones” in [Chapter 1](#).

Another relatively common belief among people who do not affiliate with any religion is that animals can have spirits or spiritual energies. In Greece and several Latin American countries, at least three-quarters of “nones” believe this.

It might seem surprising that sizable shares of “nones” express *any* religious or spiritual beliefs. Yet nonbelief isn’t always the main reason people have no religious affiliation. In [a 2023 survey we conducted in the U.S.](#), 30% of “nones” said an extremely or very important reason they are nonreligious is that they have had “bad experiences with religious people,” about the same share who cited nonbelief in God or a higher power as a key reason (32%). Even more “nones” said they are nonreligious because they “don’t like religious organizations” (47%).

³ The translation of “God” depended on each country’s linguistic and cultural context. In societies grounded in Abrahamic religious traditions (i.e., those with large shares of Christians, Jews or Muslims), the survey used terms like “God,” “Gott,” “Dios,” “Dieu” and “Allah.” In East Asia, we used as generic a term as possible for “god” in each language, avoiding terms that refer to a specific religion’s god(s) or goddess(es).

⁴ Responses in the United States are very sensitive to differences in question wording. For example, in our [2023-24 Religious Landscape Study](#), 54% of unaffiliated Americans said they believe “in God or a universal spirit” (italics added here for emphasis).

How many ‘nones’ are secular?

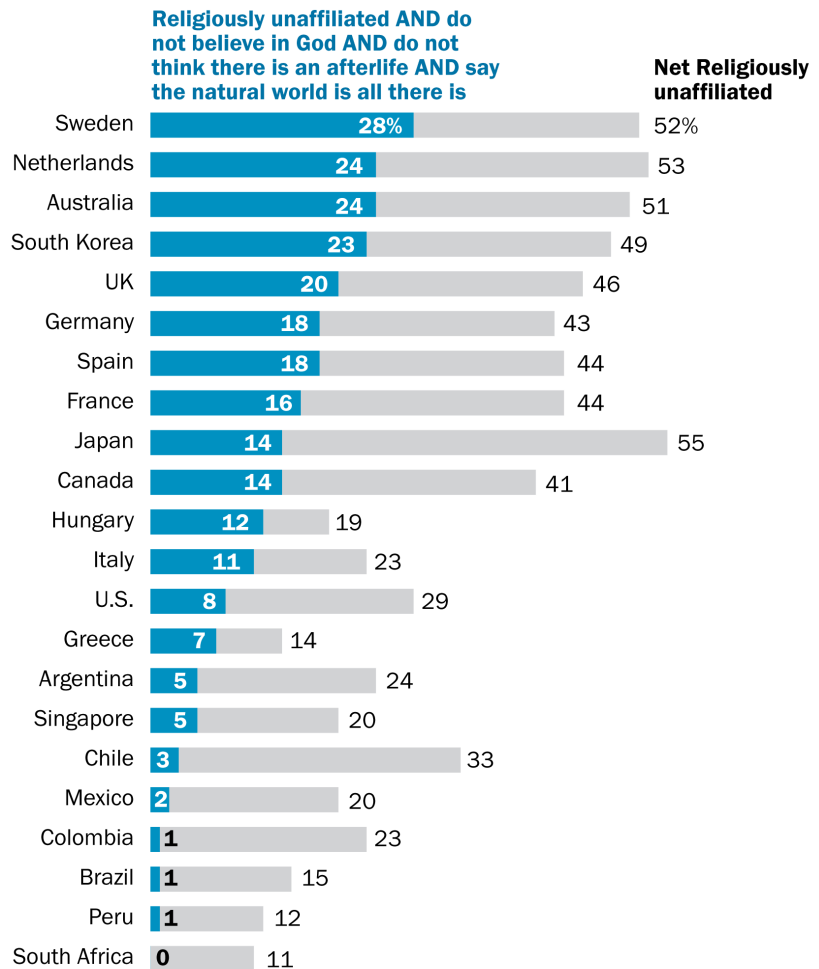
While sizable shares of “nones” in these 22 countries hold spiritual or religious beliefs, some express a more consistently secular outlook – saying they believe neither in God *nor* in an afterlife *nor* that there is “something spiritual beyond the natural world.”

In Sweden, where 52% of adults are religiously unaffiliated, around half of “nones” (or 28% of the total adult population) express nonbelief in all three of these measures. Other places where relatively large shares of adults are “nones” expressing such nonbelief are Australia (24%), the Netherlands (24%) and South Korea (23%).

Meanwhile, in several countries in the Americas, a much smaller portion of the population can be described as consistently secular in this way. In Mexico, for instance, 20% of adults are “nones,” but just 2% are “nones” who express nonbelief in the three measures analyzed here.

In Sweden, 52% of adults are ‘nones,’ and about half of them believe neither in God *nor* in an afterlife *nor* in the existence of something spiritual beyond this world

% of adults who are ...



Note: Respondents were asked which statement comes closer to their view: “There is something spiritual beyond the natural world, even if we cannot see it” or “The natural world is all there is.”

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey; survey of U.S. adults conducted July 31-Aug. 6, 2023; and Religious Landscape Study of U.S. adults conducted July 17, 2023-March 4, 2024.

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In the U.S., 29% of adults have no religious affiliation, and **“nones” who consistently take secular positions on these three survey questions make up 8% of the U.S. public.**

Do ‘nones’ partake in religious practices?

Compared with the large percentages of “nones” who hold religious *beliefs*, smaller shares tend to engage in the religious *practices* we asked about in this survey.

For example, only about a fifth or fewer of “nones” say they light incense or candles for spiritual or religious reasons in most of the 22 countries discussed in this report.

In general, “nones” are somewhat more likely to say they pray than to say they light incense or candles. However, in most of the studied countries, the “nones” who pray tend to report that they do so infrequently – a few times a month or less often.

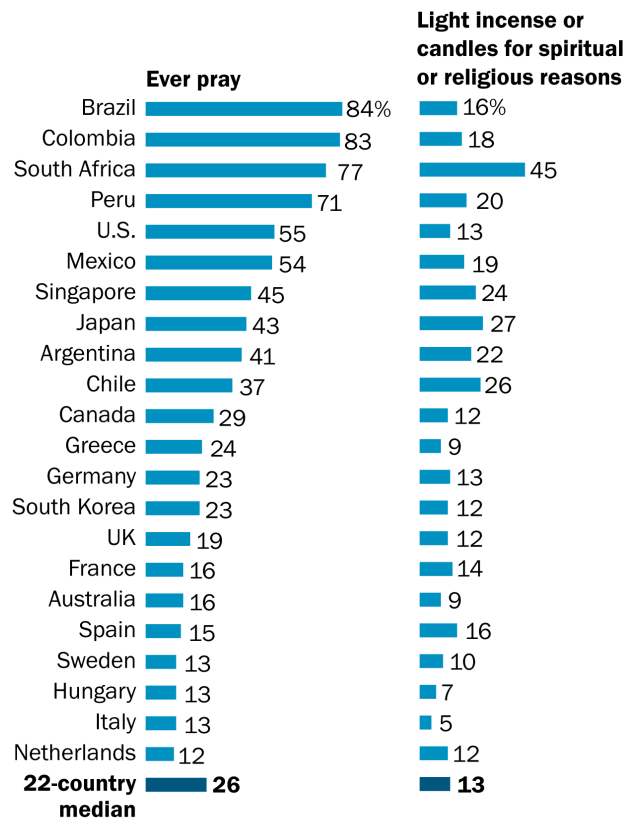
For example, just 23% of German “nones” say they *ever* pray. That includes 16% who pray a few times a month or less often, and 7% who say they pray weekly or more often.

Overall, “nones” are *much* less likely than religiously affiliated adults to engage in these practices. For instance, 72% of Christians in Germany say they ever pray, including 33% who pray at least weekly.

Jump to more on the spiritual and religious practices of “nones,” including attendance at religious services and the use of fortune tellers or horoscopes to see the future, in [Chapter 2](#).

In most countries studied, 2 in 10 or fewer ‘nones’ light candles or incense for spiritual reasons

% of **religiously unaffiliated adults** who say they ...



Note: Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey and Religious Landscape Study of U.S. adults conducted July 17, 2023-March 4, 2024.

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These are among the key findings from a Pew Research Center analysis of 2023-24 surveys conducted in 22 countries with samples of religious “nones” that are large enough to analyze and report separately. We interviewed a total of more than 34,000 respondents in the 22 countries, including more than 10,000 who are religiously unaffiliated.⁵

The rest of this Overview answers the following questions:

- [What are the main subgroups of ‘nones’?](#)
- [How important is religion to ‘nones’?](#)
- [How do ‘nones’ view religion’s impact on society?](#)

⁵ This analysis is part of a broader Pew Research Center project that included surveys in 36 countries with more than 50,000 respondents. Refer to “[Believing in Spirits and Life After Death Is Common Around the World](#)” for more information about how people with various religious identities differ in their beliefs and practices. Consult “[Comparing Levels of Religious Nationalism Around the World](#)” for information about the views of various religious groups and religiously unaffiliated people on religion’s role in politics.

What are the main subgroups of ‘nones’?

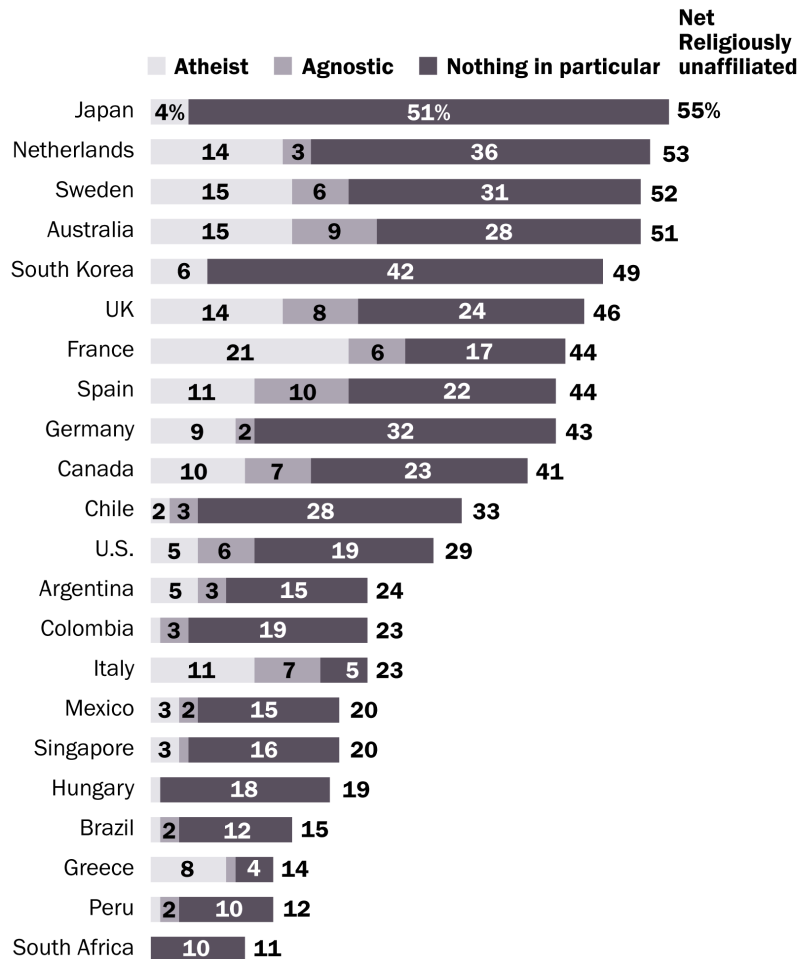
In nearly all of the 22 countries analyzed in this report, the largest subgroup of “nones” is people who say their religion is “nothing in particular,” rather than those who identify as atheist or agnostic.⁶

Indeed, in most of the countries, especially in Latin America and Asia, the percentage of adults who describe their religion as “nothing in particular” is higher than the share of atheists and agnostics combined.

For instance, 12% of adults in Brazil say they have no particular religion, while 2% identify as agnostic and 1% say they are atheist. In Singapore, 16% of adults say their religion is “nothing in particular,” while 3% are atheist and 1% are agnostic.

Many ‘nones’ identify religiously as ‘nothing in particular’ rather than as atheist or agnostic

% of adults who identify religiously as ...



Note: Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer, including rounding down to 0%. Survey-based estimates of 0% do not necessarily mean no one in those countries identifies with that religious group. Refer to this report's topline for the shares who identify as atheist, agnostic and “nothing in particular” in the 14 surveyed countries that are not the focus of this report.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey and Religious Landscape Study of U.S. adults conducted July 17, 2023-March 4, 2024.

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⁶ The Center conducted surveys in 36 countries in 2023-24, but this report focuses on 22 countries with enough religiously unaffiliated adults to analyze separately. In the remaining 14 countries, the survey samples of religiously unaffiliated adults were too small for reliable analysis. Go to this report's [topline](#) for the percentage of adults in those 14 countries who identify as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular.”

Of the 22 countries analyzed, only in Greece and Italy is atheism the most common affiliation among “nones.”

Agnostics are the smallest of the three groups that make up the “nones” in 10 of the surveyed countries, including in Australia and several European and Asian countries. In the Netherlands, for example, 36% of adults say they have no particular religion, 14% are atheist and just 3% are agnostic.

Differences in affiliation by age, education and gender

In most of the countries analyzed, adults ages 18 to 39 are much more likely than older adults to identify as “nones.” For instance, 72% of Japanese adults under 40 say they are atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular,” compared with 50% of older adults.

In general, adults with more education are somewhat more likely than those with less education to be religiously unaffiliated. For example, 28% of Argentine adults who have at least a secondary education are “nones,” compared with 18% of Argentines with less education.⁷

In nine of the countries analyzed, men are more inclined than women to say they have no religion. In the United Kingdom, for example, 51% of men are “nones,” compared with 40% of women.⁸

⁷ Secondary education is the equivalent of high school in the U.S.

⁸ A [previous Center report](#) analyzed religious affiliation rates in these and 14 other countries by age, education and gender.

How important is religion to ‘nones’?

Perhaps unsurprisingly, most religiously unaffiliated people feel that religion plays only a minor role in their lives.

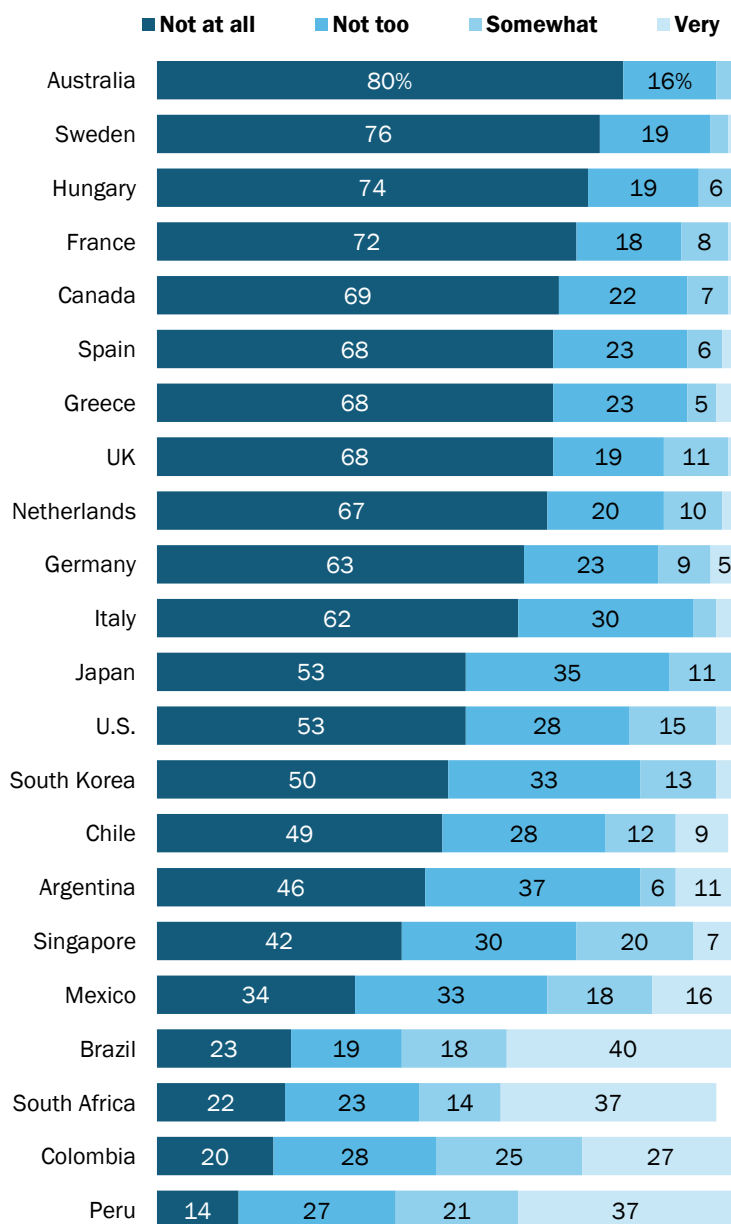
The survey offered four options: Respondents could say religion is very important, somewhat important, not too important or not at all important in their lives.

In half of the 22 countries analyzed, at least six-in-ten “nones” give the least religious answer, saying religion is *not at all* important to them. This includes all the European countries surveyed, as well as Australia and Canada.

In a few countries, however, about half or more of “nones” say religion is either *somewhat* or *very* important in their lives. This is the case in Brazil, Colombia, Peru and South Africa – possibly reflecting the prevalence in these countries of traditional African, Afro-Caribbean, or Indigenous and Indian religious beliefs and practices (even among people who don’t identify with any religion).

In half of studied countries, 60% or more of ‘nones’ say religion is not at all important to them

% of **religiously unaffiliated adults** who say religion is ___ important in their lives



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey and Religious Landscape Study of U.S. adults conducted July 17, 2023-March 4, 2024.

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“Nones” who say religion is not at all important in their lives are much *less* likely than other “nones” to hold the various spiritual and religious beliefs we asked about in the survey – sometimes by very wide margins.

For example, in all 15 countries with enough “nones” in both groups to allow reliable comparisons, “nones” who say religion is not at all important are less likely to believe in God than are “nones” who ascribe at least some importance to religion.

For other examples of this divide among “nones,” refer to Chapter 1 (on belief in [life after death](#), [ancestral spirits](#) and [spirits in parts of nature](#)), Chapter 2 (on [frequency of prayer](#)) and Chapter 3 (on saying [religion mostly hurts society](#)).

How do ‘nones’ view religion’s impact on society?

Many “nones” express negative views about religion’s influence on society.

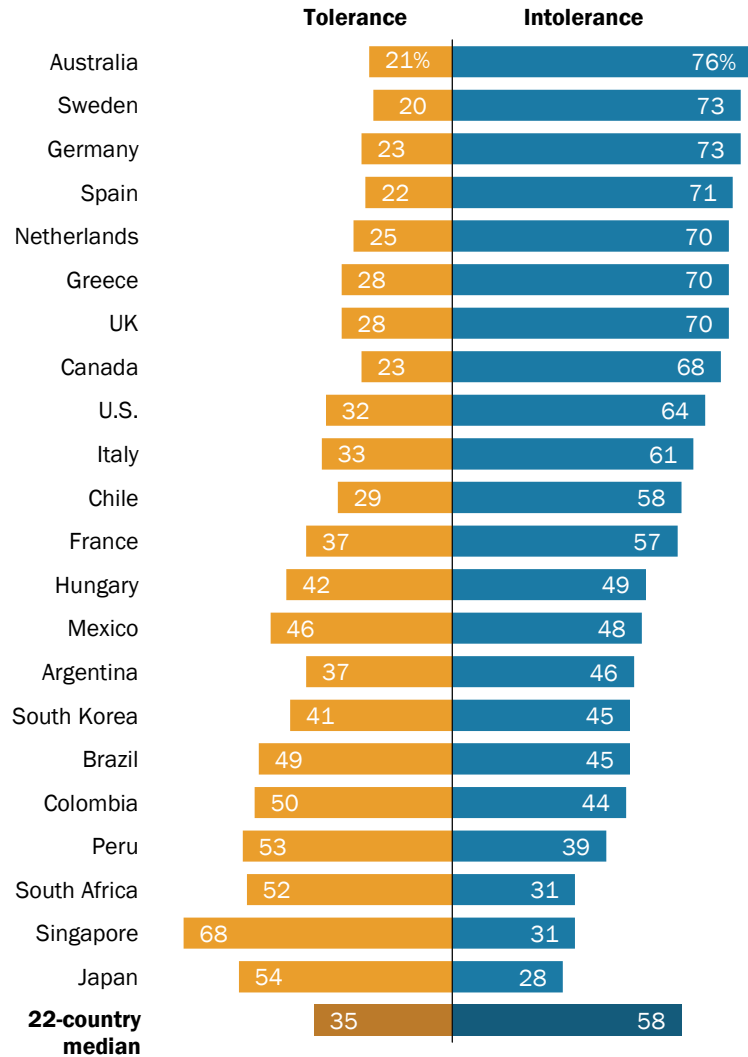
For instance, in 12 of the 22 countries studied here, religiously unaffiliated adults are more likely to say religion encourages *intolerance* than to say it encourages *tolerance*. In Germany, nearly three-quarters of “nones” say religion encourages intolerance, compared with a quarter who say it encourages tolerance.

Likewise, in every country with enough religiously unaffiliated adults to analyze, at least half of “nones” say that religion encourages superstitious thinking.

We also asked survey respondents whether religion mostly helps or mostly hurts society. Across the countries surveyed, a median of 53% say religion mostly hurts society, while a median of 38% say it mostly helps.

Three-quarters of ‘nones’ in Australia, Germany and Sweden think religion encourages intolerance

% of *religiously unaffiliated adults* who say religion encourages ...



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey.

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The views of “nones” toward religion are generally a lot more negative than the corresponding views of people who identify with a religion. In Australia, for example, 76% of “nones” say religion encourages intolerance, compared with 35% of religiously affiliated Australians.

Importance of having national leaders with religious beliefs

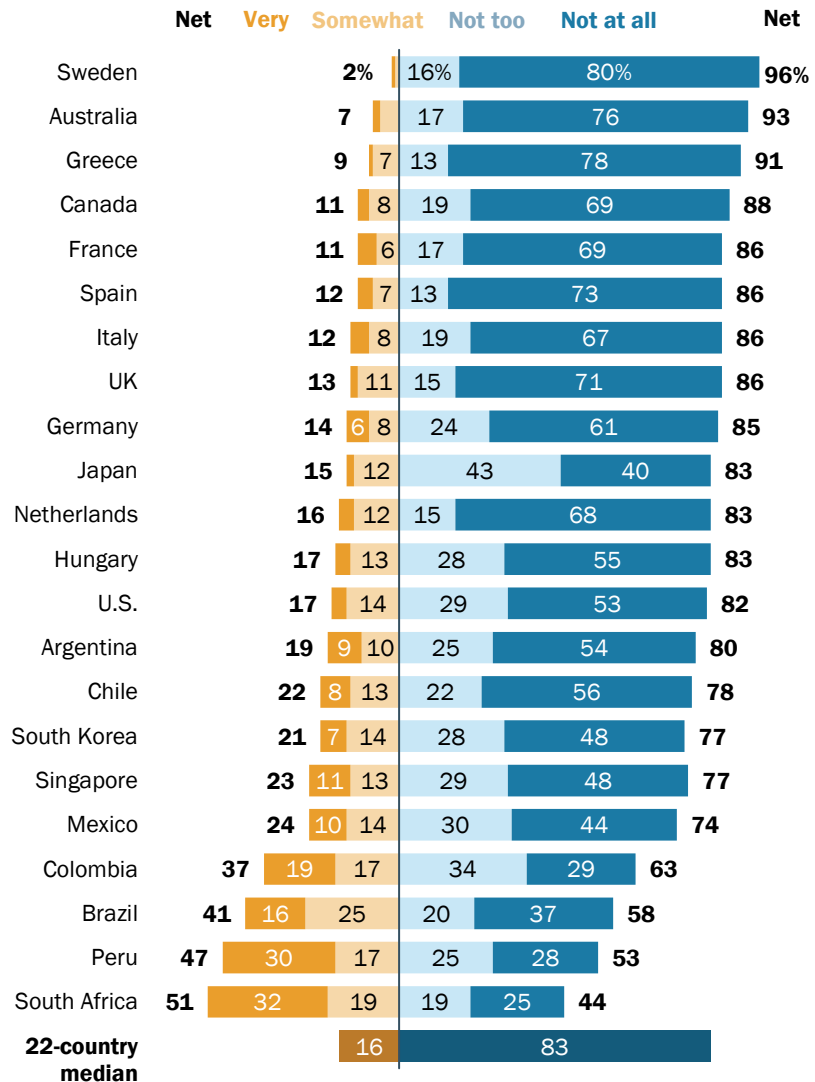
Moreover, majorities of “nones” in nearly every country we analyzed do *not* think it is important for their national leader to have strong religious beliefs.⁹

In the UK, for instance, 86% of religiously unaffiliated adults say it is not important to have a prime minister who has strong religious beliefs – including 71% of British “nones” who say this is *not at all* important for a prime minister.

For more on how religiously unaffiliated adults view

In many surveyed countries, few ‘nones’ say it is important to have a strongly religious national leader

% of **religiously unaffiliated adults** who say it is ___ important to have a national leader who has strong religious beliefs, even if they are different from their own



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey.

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⁹ The term used for the national leader varies across the countries surveyed. Respondents were asked about the qualities of the president in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, France, Mexico, Peru, South Africa, South Korea and the U.S. Respondents were asked about the qualities of the prime minister in Australia, Canada, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Singapore, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Respondents were asked about the qualities of the chancellor in Germany.

religion's role in society, jump to [Chapter 3](#).

1. What do religious ‘nones’ believe?

What are religious ‘nones’?

“Nones” are adults who describe themselves religiously as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular.” This report uses the terms “nones” and “religiously unaffiliated” interchangeably.

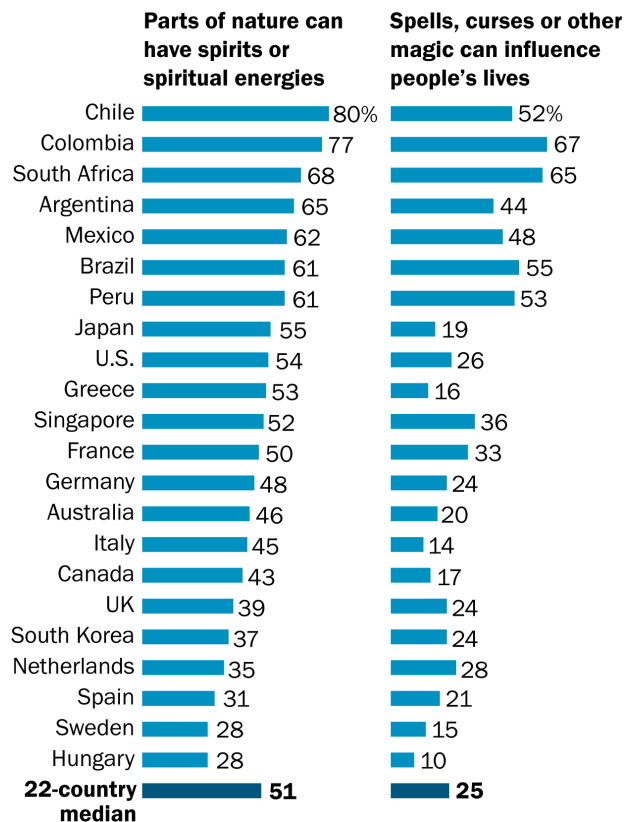
Many “nones” express a variety of religious or spiritual beliefs. For example, in many of the 22 countries analyzed by Pew Research Center in this report, sizable shares of “nones” say they believe that [something spiritual exists beyond the natural world](#), and that animals and parts of nature can have spirits or spiritual energies.

[Belief in an afterlife](#) is also relatively widespread among religiously unaffiliated adults in the countries included in the study.

Additionally, in a few countries, majorities of “nones” believe in spells, curses or other magic. And roughly a quarter or more of religiously unaffiliated adults in most of the countries discussed in this report believe that the spirits of ancestors can help or harm them. In one country – South Africa – 81% of “nones” express belief in the power of ancestral spirits.

‘Nones’ are more likely to believe in spirits in nature than to believe in magic

% of *religiously unaffiliated adults* who say ...



Note: Respondents were asked about “parts of nature, like mountains, rivers or trees.” Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown. Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey and survey of U.S. adults conducted July 31-Aug. 6, 2023.

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In general, religiously unaffiliated people around the world are less likely to hold religious and spiritual beliefs than are people in the same countries who identify with a religion.

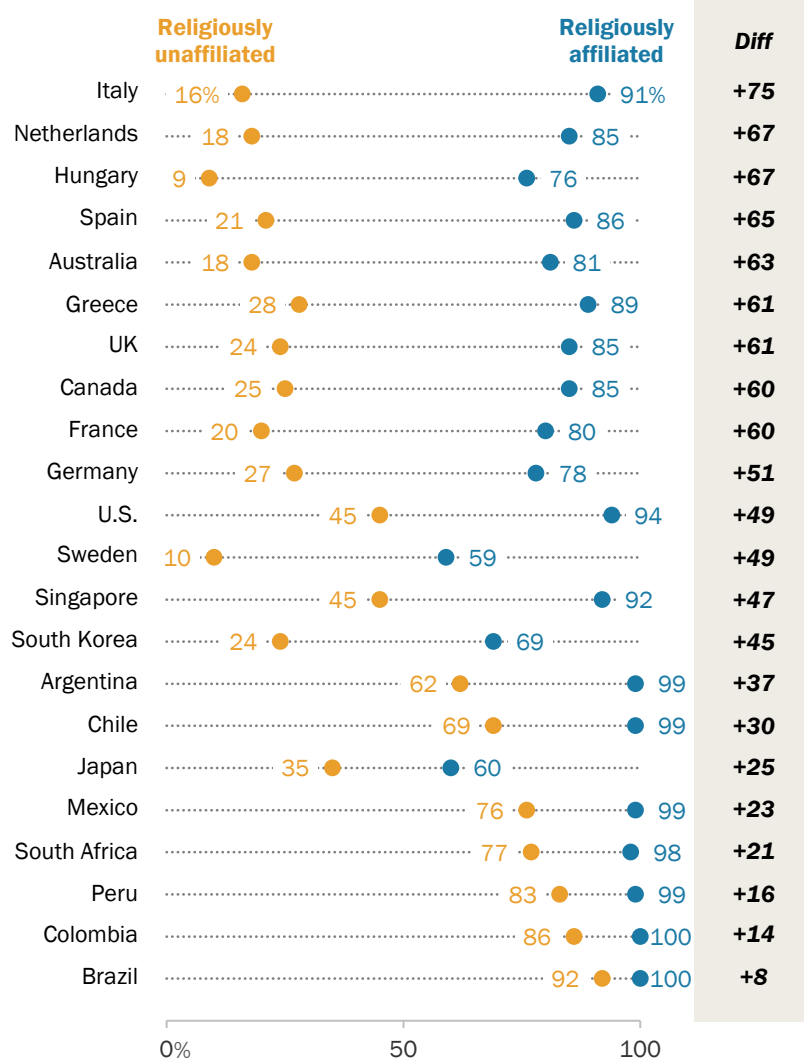
For example, “nones” are less likely to believe in God than people who identify with a religion in each of the 22 countries where our survey included enough “nones” for reliable analysis. In Italy, for instance, 16% of “nones” believe in God, compared with 91% of religiously affiliated adults – a difference of 75 percentage points.¹⁰

The differences persist, but are smaller, in countries such as Argentina, where most “nones” (62%) and even higher shares of the religiously affiliated (99%) believe in God.

Similar patterns prevail on other beliefs the survey measured.

Belief in God is much higher among adults with a religious identity than among ‘nones’

% of adults who believe in God, among those who are ...



Note: All differences are statistically significant. Religiously affiliated people include Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims and adherents of other religions. Religiously unaffiliated people (also called “nones”) are those who identify as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular.” Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey and survey of U.S. adults conducted July 31-Aug. 6, 2023.

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¹⁰ The translation of “God” depended on each country’s linguistic and cultural context. In societies grounded in Abrahamic religious traditions (i.e., those with large shares of Christians, Jews or Muslims), the survey used terms like “God,” “Gott,” “Dios,” “Dieu” and “Allah.” In East Asia, we used as generic a term as possible for “god” in each language, avoiding terms that refer to a specific religion’s god(s) or goddess(es).

Within the broad category of “nones,” people who identify as atheists generally are less likely than people who describe their religion as “nothing in particular” to hold some spiritual and religious beliefs.¹¹ For example, in Australia, 14% of atheists say there is life after death, while 37% of people who say their religion is “nothing in particular” believe in an afterlife.¹²

Self-described agnostics sometimes are similar to atheists and sometimes differ from them on the wide range of beliefs discussed in this report. We have enough agnostics in our survey samples to provide detailed analyses of their views in only five of the 22 countries surveyed. For country-by-country survey results among agnostics, atheists and people who identify religiously as “nothing in particular,” go to the report [topline](#).

¹¹ The surveys, conducted in 2023 and 2024, [included a total of 36 countries](#), but this report focuses on the 22 countries where our surveys had large enough samples of religiously unaffiliated adults to break out and analyze their results separately. Of the 22 countries, 20 also have sufficient sample sizes to break out results for people who say their religion is “nothing in particular,” 10 have samples large enough to break out self-identified atheists, and five have samples large enough to break out agnostics.

¹² However, the differences between atheists and people in the “nothing in particular” category are generally less pronounced and more inconsistent on survey questions about religious and spiritual practices, and on questions about the relationship between religion and society.

Within a country's population of "nones," there are often wide gaps in belief between two other subgroups: those who say religion is *not at all* important in their lives, and those who attribute even a little (or more) personal importance to religion.

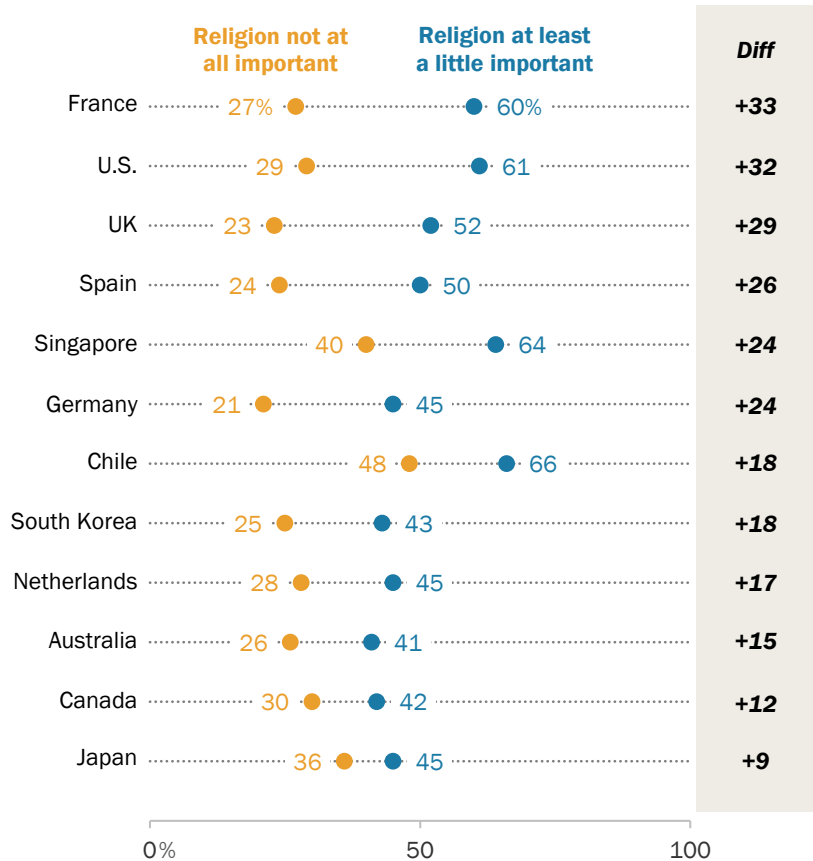
For example, "nones" who view religion as not at all important are much less likely than other "nones" to say there is definitely or probably an afterlife.¹³

The survey findings also indicate that women who are "nones" generally are more likely than men who are "nones" to express a variety of beliefs. Among "nones" in Singapore, for instance, women are about twice as likely as men to believe that spirits can inhabit objects such as crystals, jewels or stones (45% vs. 21%). This pattern is consistent with our [previous studies](#) showing that women tend to be more religious than men in many countries, particularly within Christian populations.

(The religious and spiritual beliefs of "nones" are also discussed in this report's [Overview](#).)

Belief in an afterlife is lower among 'nones' who see religion as not at all important in their lives

% of *religiously unaffiliated adults* who say there is *definitely/probably* life after death, by personal importance of religion



Note: Only countries with statistically significant differences are shown. "Religion at least a little important" includes those who say religion is "very," "somewhat" or "not too" important in their life.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey.

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¹³ The survey asked respondents whether they believe there "definitely is," "probably is," "probably is not," or "definitely is not" life after death. The question did not specify any particular version of what life after death might be like.

Jump to sections on: [Belief in God](#) | [Belief in ancestral spirits](#) |
[Belief in other kinds of spirits](#) | [How the beliefs of 'nones' vary by gender](#)

Belief in God

In most of the 22 countries analyzed, at least one-in-five religious “nones” say they [believe in God](#).

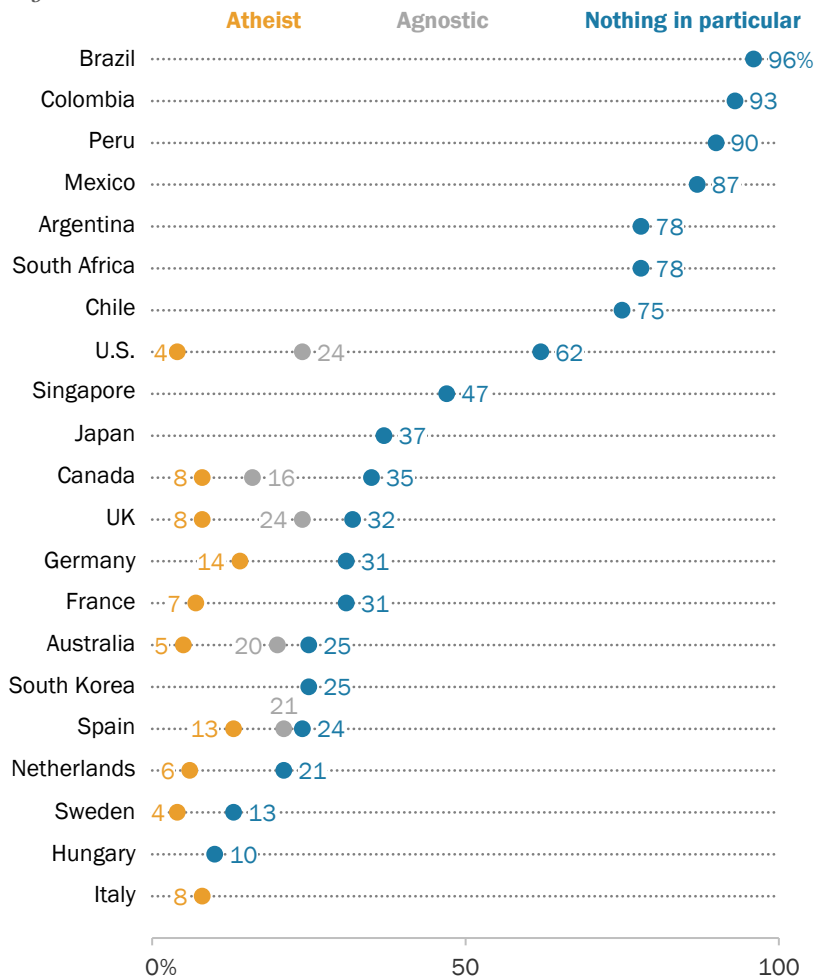
However, among “nones” who describe their religious identity as “nothing in particular,” the share expressing belief in God varies widely by country. For example, people in the “nothing in particular” category in Latin American countries are a lot more likely than those in European countries to believe in God.

One possible explanation for these regional differences is that belief in God is more widespread throughout the general populations (including among religiously affiliated adults) in Latin American countries than in European ones.

For instance, nearly universal shares of Christians in all six Latin American countries surveyed express belief in God. Smaller majorities of Christians (about three-quarters) express belief in God in France, Germany and Hungary, while in Sweden, just 58% of self-identified Christians say they believe in God.

Nearly all Brazilians whose religion is ‘nothing in particular’ say they believe in God

% of adults who say they believe in God, among different subgroups of religious “nones”



Note: Only countries where survey samples of atheists, agnostics or those who describe their religion as “nothing in particular” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown: 20 have large enough sample sizes to report on people saying their religion is “nothing in particular,” 10 have large enough sample sizes among atheists, and five have large enough sample sizes among agnostics.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey and survey of U.S. adults conducted July 31-Aug. 6, 2023.

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In general, across the countries with survey samples large enough to enable comparisons between atheists and people who say their religion is “nothing in particular,” atheists are less likely than the “nothing in particular” group to believe in God. For example, in the United Kingdom, 8% of atheists express belief in God, compared with 32% of adults who identify with no particular religion.

(Even though atheism is commonly understood to mean *not* believing in God, small shares of respondents in many places say they are atheists in answer to a religious identification question, yet they say they believe in God or affirm other religious or spiritual beliefs in response to other questions. Some scholars of religion argue that inconsistency or “incongruence” actually is the norm, not the exception, when one looks deeply into the religious identities, beliefs and practices of people around the world.)

Belief in ancestral spirits

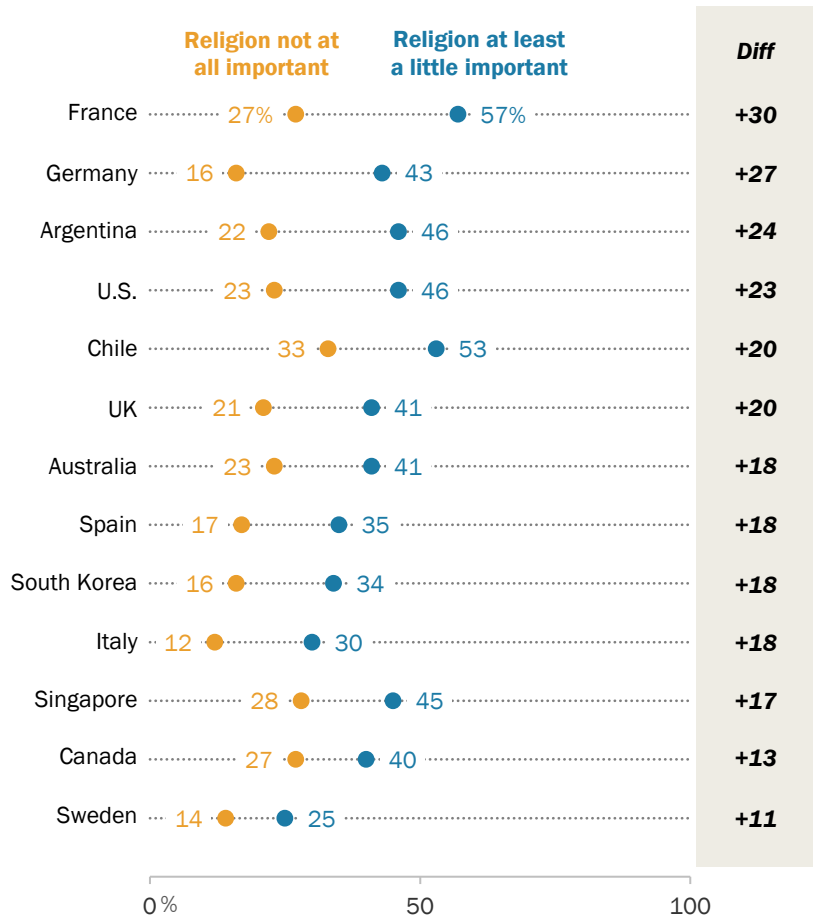
In most of the countries analyzed in this report, about 20% to 40% of religiously unaffiliated adults believe that the spirits of ancestors can help or harm them. This includes 36% of “nones” in France, 31% in Canada and 25% in South Korea. Only in South Africa do a majority of “nones” (81%) believe ancestral spirits can affect them.

In general, “nones” who say religion is *not at all* important in their lives are much less likely than other “nones” to believe that ancestral spirits can help or harm them. For example, in France, 27% of “nones” who say religion is not at all important to them believe in the active role of ancestral spirits, compared with 57% of other “nones.”

Self-identified atheists are generally less likely than people who describe their religion as “nothing in particular” to believe in the power of ancestral spirits. In the Netherlands, for instance, 14% of atheists say the spirits of ancestors can help or hurt them, while 27% of adults in the “nothing in particular” category express the same belief.

‘Nones’ who see religion as not at all important are less likely to believe in influence of ancestral spirits

% of **religiously unaffiliated adults** who believe the spirits of ancestors can help or hurt them, by personal importance of religion



Note: Only countries with statistically significant differences are shown. “Religion at least a little important” includes those who say religion is “very,” “somewhat” or “not too” important in their life.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey.

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Belief in other kinds of spirits

We also asked survey respondents whether they think spirits or spiritual energies are present in parts of nature (such as mountains, rivers or trees), in certain objects (such as crystals, jewels or stones), or in animals.

In most of the 22 countries discussed in this report, half or more of “nones” say animals have spirits or spiritual energies.

And in most of these countries, sizable shares also believe that parts of nature can have spirits, though the shares range widely, from 80% of Chilean “nones” to 28% of Hungarian and Swedish “nones.”

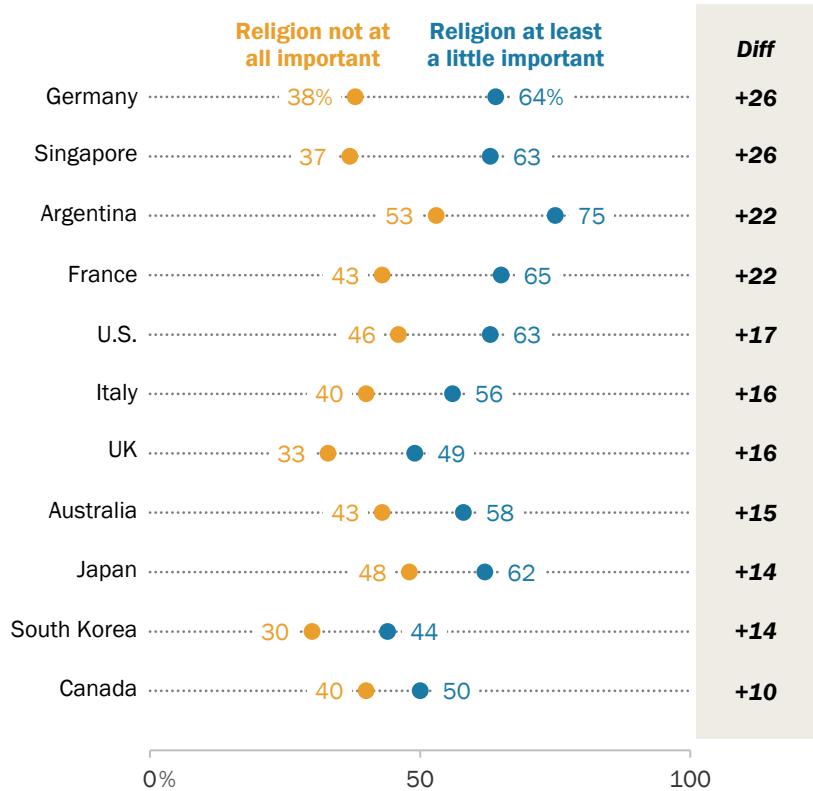
Much lower percentages of “nones” believe that certain objects can have spiritual energies.

In a now-familiar pattern, “nones” who say religion is *not at all* important in their lives

are less likely than other “nones” to believe that mountains, rivers or trees can have spirits. In Germany, for instance, 38% of “nones” who place no importance on religion hold this belief, compared with 64% of “nones” who say religion has at least a little importance in their lives.

‘Nones’ who place no importance on religion in their lives are less likely to believe parts of nature can have spirits

% of **religiously unaffiliated adults** who say that parts of nature, like mountains, rivers or trees, can have spirits or spiritual energies, by personal importance of religion



Note: Only countries with statistically significant differences are shown. “Religion at least a little important” includes those who say religion is “very,” “somewhat” or “not too” important in their life.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey and survey of U.S. adults conducted July 31-Aug. 6, 2023.

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How the beliefs of ‘nones’ vary by gender

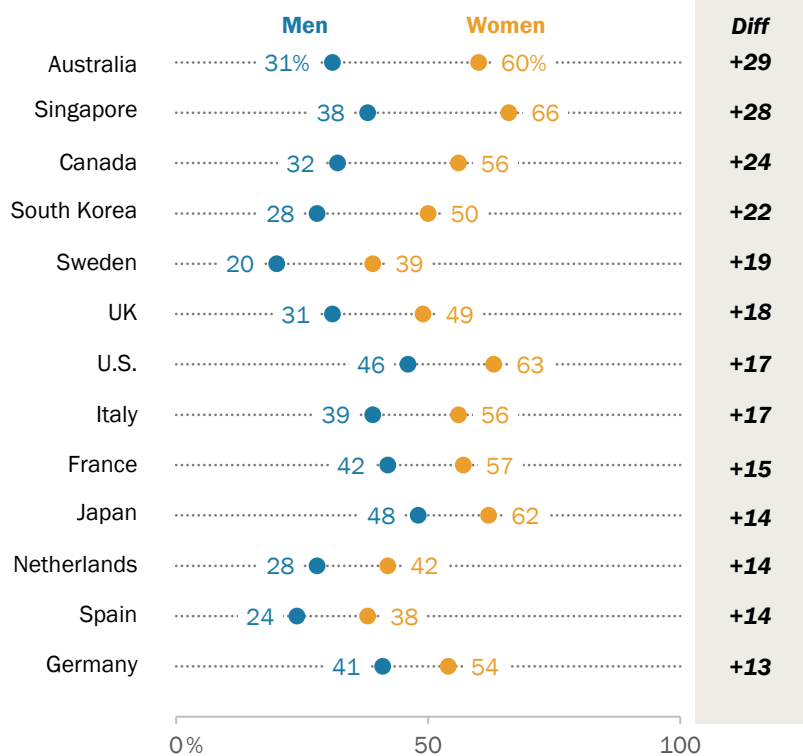
Among religiously unaffiliated adults, women are generally more likely than men to hold most of the religious and spiritual beliefs asked about in the survey.

This gender gap occurs in more than a dozen countries on the question of whether parts of nature can have spirits or spiritual energies. In Australia, for example, 60% of women who are “nones” believe this, compared with 31% of “nones” who are men.

Similarly, among “nones,” women typically are more likely than men to believe in reincarnation – defined in the survey as the belief that “people will be reborn in this world again and again.” For instance, unaffiliated women in South Korea are about twice as likely as unaffiliated men to believe in reincarnation (36% vs. 16%).

Religiously unaffiliated women are more likely than men to believe parts of nature can have spirits

% of religiously unaffiliated adults who say that parts of nature, like mountains, rivers or trees, can have spirits or spiritual energies, by gender



Note: Only countries with statistically significant differences are shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey and survey of U.S. adults conducted July 31-Aug. 6, 2023.

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However, unaffiliated women are more likely than unaffiliated men to believe in God in only four of the 15 countries with sufficient sample sizes to analyze differences by gender. And among Swedish “nones,” *men* are somewhat more likely than women to express belief (13% vs. 6%).

There aren’t many substantial differences on these questions by age or education. For example, the beliefs of “nones” ages 18 to 39 are typically quite similar to those of “nones” ages 40 and older. That said, on a few questions in this survey, younger religiously unaffiliated adults are somewhat

more likely than older “nones” to believe. In Canada, for example, 62% of younger “nones” believe that animals can have spirits, compared with half of older “nones.”

And while “nones” in the United States with at least an associate degree are somewhat less likely than U.S. “nones” with less education to hold most of the beliefs in this survey, this general pattern does not meaningfully extend across the other countries analyzed.

2. Do ‘nones’ follow religious practices?

What are religious ‘nones’?

“Nones” are adults who describe themselves religiously as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular.” This report uses the terms “nones” and “religiously unaffiliated” interchangeably.

Overall, religious “nones” are less likely than [adults who identify with a religion](#) to engage in religious or spiritual practices.

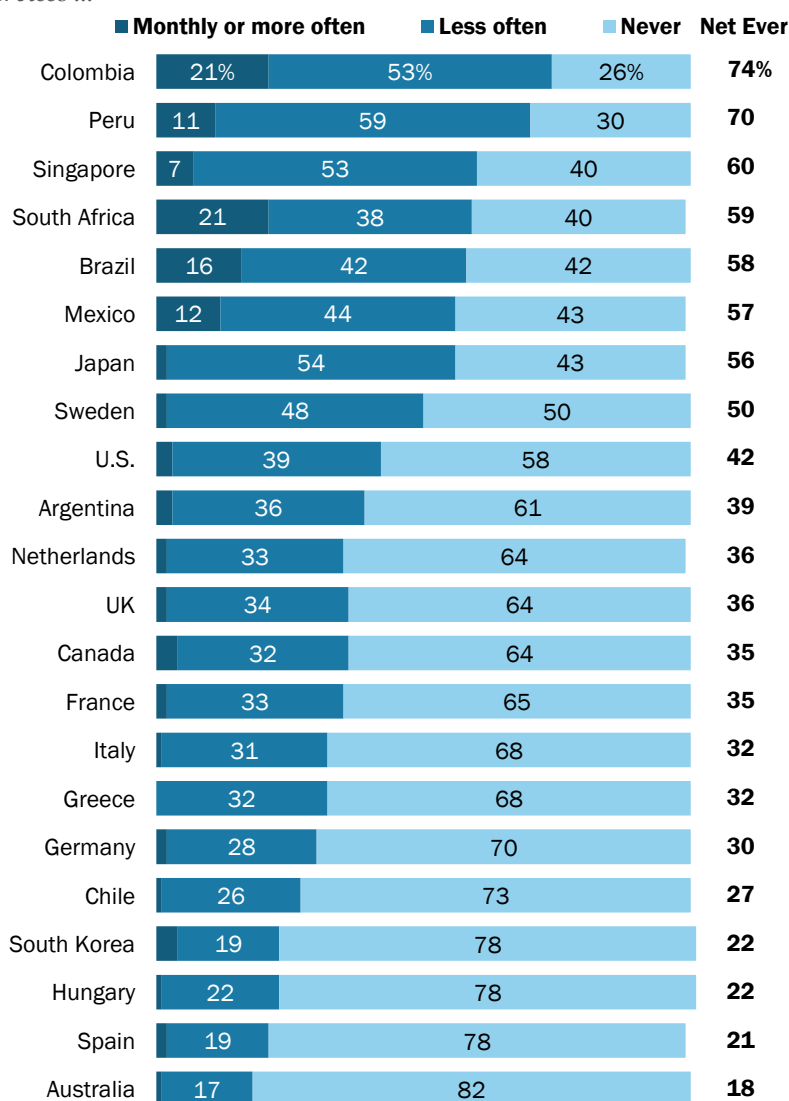
In most of the 22 countries analyzed, majorities of “nones” say they *never* attend religious services. And those who do attend services tend not to go on a regular basis (meaning, they go less often than once a month).

For example, in Germany, 30% of “nones” say they go to religious services at least sometimes, but only 2% say they attend monthly or more often.

Even in places where a majority of “nones” attend services, most of them go less often than monthly. In Peru, for instance, 70% of religiously unaffiliated adults say they *ever* go to church, but only 11% say they attend at least once a month.

How often religiously unaffiliated adults say they attend worship services

% of **religiously unaffiliated adults** who say they attend religious services ...



Note: Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown. Respondents were asked how often they attend services “aside from weddings and funerals.” U.S. attendance figures are based on those who say they attend *in person*. Those who did not answer are not shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey and Religious Landscape Study of U.S. adults conducted July 17, 2023–March 4, 2024.

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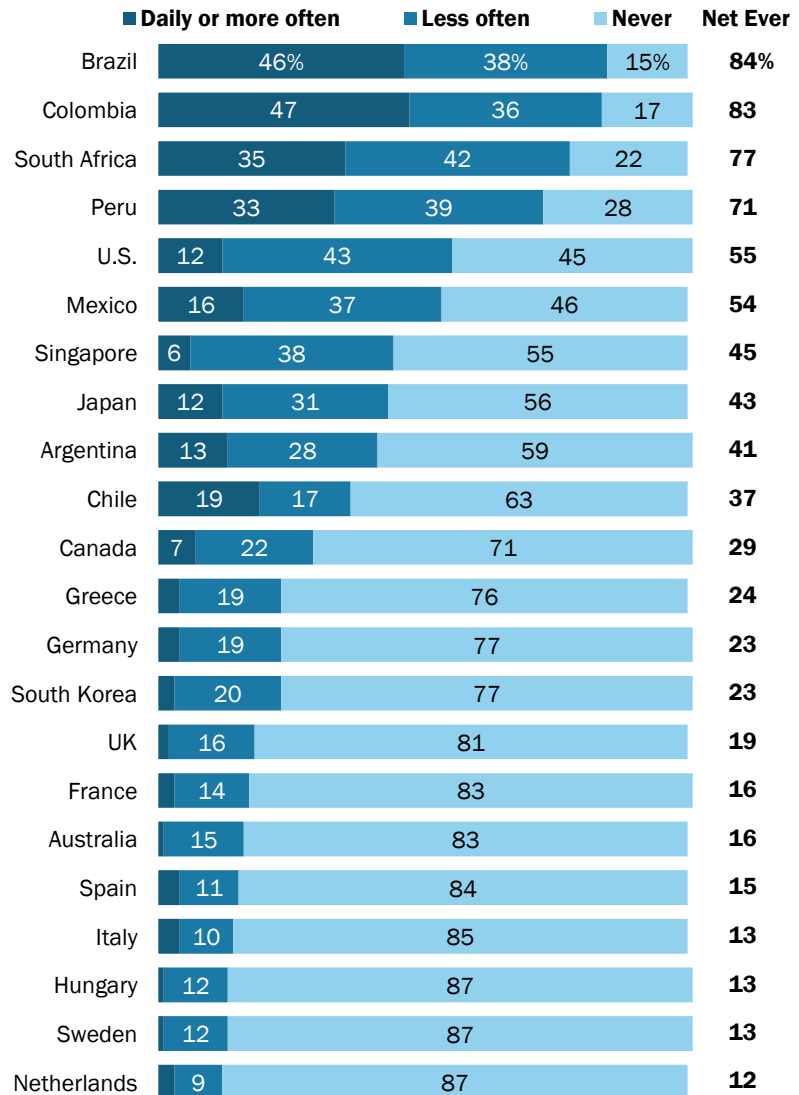
Similarly, in most of the countries studied, a majority of “nones” say they never pray, including 77% in Germany and South Korea.

In general, the countries where “nones” are least likely to pray are in Europe. In Hungary, the Netherlands and Sweden, for example, 87% of “nones” say they never pray. ([Other findings show](#) that European countries also tend to have the smallest shares of *Christians* who say they ever pray.)

Most “nones” also do not engage in the other religious and spiritual practices asked about in the survey. **In most countries included in this report, no more than about one-fifth of “nones” say they light candles for religious reasons; visit fortune tellers or consult horoscopes to see into the future; wear or carry religious items or symbols; or fast during holy times.**

In many countries surveyed, large shares of ‘nones’ never pray

% of *religiously unaffiliated adults* who say they pray ...



Note: Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown. Those who did not answer are not shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey and Religious Landscape Study of U.S. adults conducted July 17, 2023–March 4, 2024.

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Across the countries surveyed, there is no strong pattern of differences on these questions between the three main subgroups of “nones” – atheists, agnostics and people who identify religiously as “nothing in particular.”¹⁴ For country-by-country survey results among all three groups, go to the report [topline](#).

Jump to sections on: [Spiritual and religious practices of ‘nones’](#) | [How religious practices vary among ‘nones’](#) | [How the practices of ‘nones’ differ by gender](#)

¹⁴ The surveys, conducted in 2023 and 2024, [included a total of 36 countries](#), but this report focuses on the 22 countries where our surveys had large enough samples of religiously unaffiliated adults to break out and analyze their results separately.

Spiritual and religious practices of ‘nones’

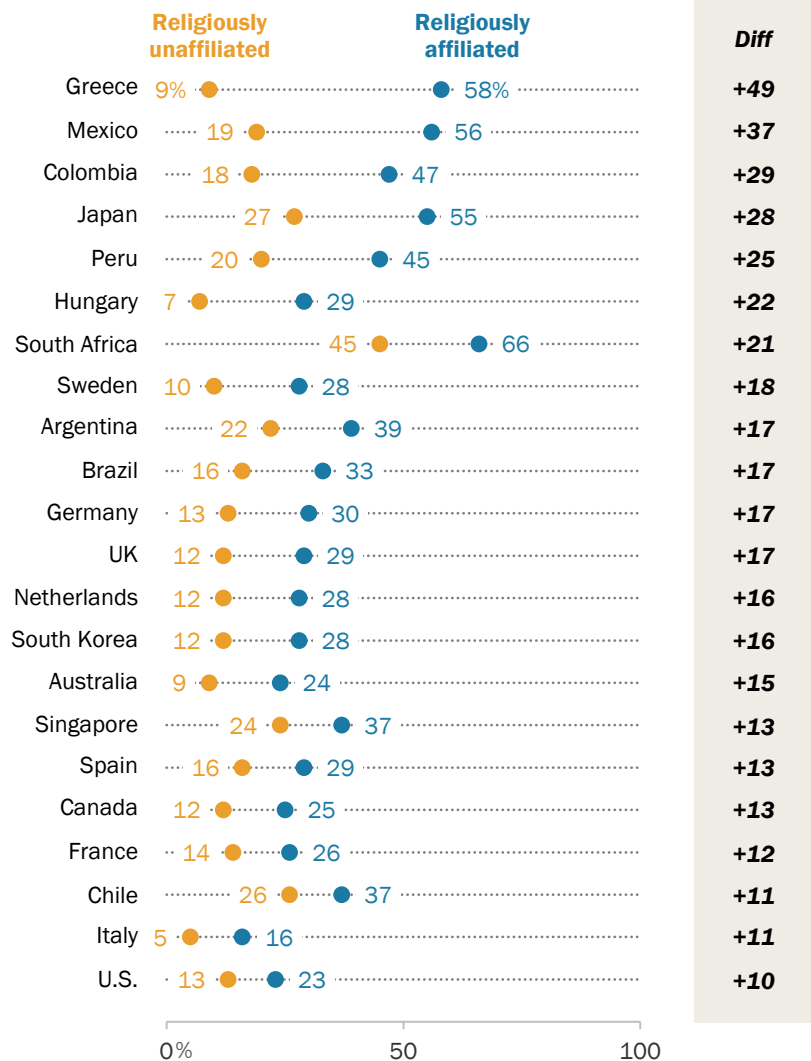
In the 22 countries studied, “nones” are significantly less likely than religiously affiliated adults to say they light incense or candles for spiritual or religious reasons. In Peru, 20% of “nones” say they do this, compared with 45% of Peruvian adults with a religious affiliation (mostly Christians).

The divide between “nones” and the religiously affiliated on rates of prayer are particularly stark in many places studied. In Italy, for instance, just 13% of “nones” say they *ever* pray, compared with 85% of religiously affiliated Italians.

On the other hand, “nones” in each country are pretty similar to their religiously affiliated compatriots when it comes to the use of [fortune tellers](#), [horoscopes and other ways to see the future](#). In Mexico, for instance, 12% of adults in each group say they use these methods to try to predict the future.

Religiously affiliated adults are more likely than ‘nones’ to use incense or candles

% of adults who say they light incense or candles for spiritual or religious reasons, among those who are ...



Note: All differences are statistically significant. Religiously affiliated people include Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims and adherents of other religions. Religiously unaffiliated people (also called “nones”) are those who identify as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular.” Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey.

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How religious practices vary among ‘nones’

“Nones” who say religion is *not at all* important in their lives are generally less likely than “nones” who ascribe at least a little importance to religion to participate in the religious and spiritual practices asked about in this survey.

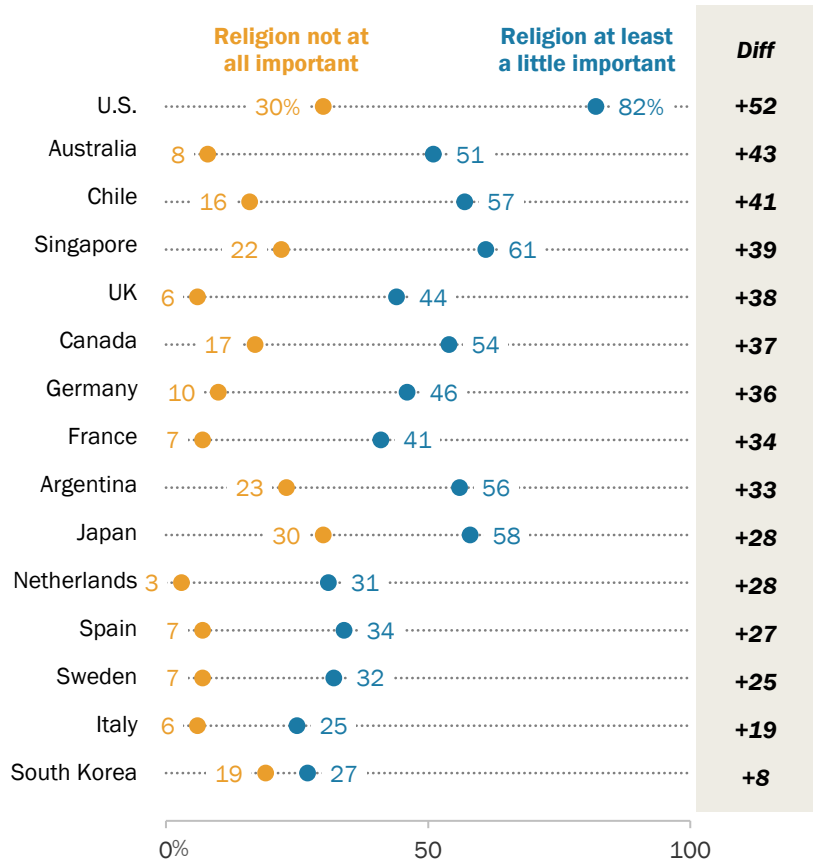
For instance, in all 15 countries with enough “nones” to analyze in both groups, those who say religion is not at all important are significantly less likely than other “nones” to say they ever pray.

In Japan, 30% of “nones” who say religion is not at all important say they *ever* pray, compared with 58% of those who say religion is at least a little important in their lives. And in the United States, 30% of “nones” who consider religion not at all important say they pray, compared with 82% among other “nones.”

Neither age nor education factor meaningfully into how often “nones” engage in religious practices.

‘Nones’ who place no importance on religion in their lives are less likely to pray

% of **religiously unaffiliated adults** who say they ever pray, by personal importance of religion



Note: All differences are statistically significant. “Religion at least a little important” includes those who say religion is “very,” “somewhat” or “not too” important in their life. Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” in both categories are large enough for reliable analysis are shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey and Religious Landscape Study of U.S. adults conducted July 17, 2023–March 4, 2024.

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How the practices of ‘nones’ differ by gender

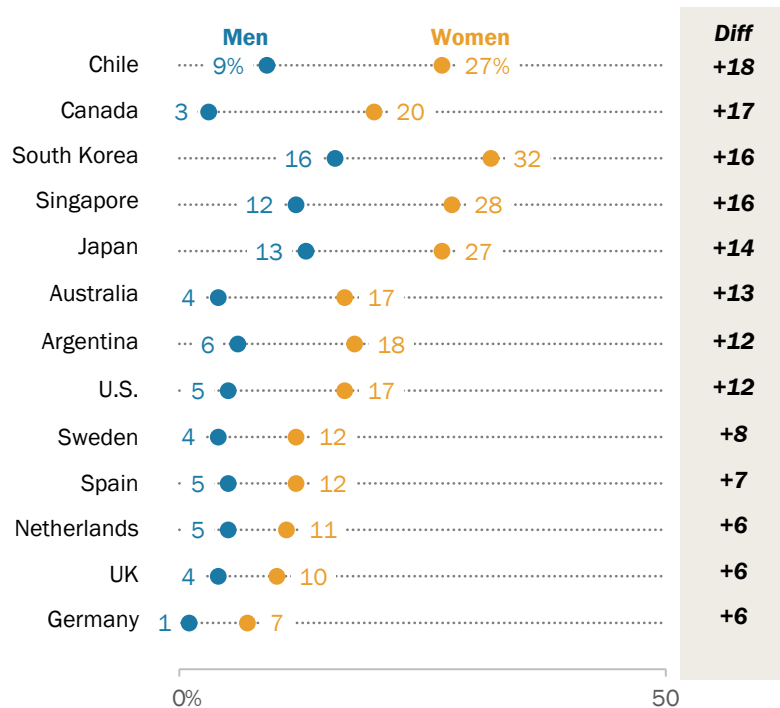
Among “nones” in the analyzed countries, women are more likely than men to say they consult fortune tellers or horoscopes, or try to see the future in other ways. Among Chilean “nones,” for example, women are three times as likely as men to say they use these methods to try to look into the future (27% vs. 9%).

This general pattern is present across the countries we surveyed in the Americas, Europe and Asia.

Among “nones,” women also are more likely than men to say they light candles or incense for spiritual or religious reasons. In the United States, for instance, 19% of religiously unaffiliated women light candles or incense for spiritual reasons, compared with 7% of unaffiliated men.

Among ‘nones,’ women in numerous countries are more likely than men to try to see the future

% of religiously unaffiliated adults who say they consult a fortune teller, horoscope or other way to see the future, by gender



Note: Only countries with statistically significant differences are shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey.

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However, when it comes to the other religious and spiritual practices asked about on the survey, such as attending religious services, there is no strong and consistent pattern of gender differences among religiously unaffiliated adults.

3. What do ‘nones’ think is religion’s impact on society?

What are religious ‘nones’?

“Nones” are adults who describe themselves religiously as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular.” This report uses the terms “nones” and “religiously unaffiliated” interchangeably.

Negative views about religion’s influence on society are fairly common among “nones” across the 22 countries analyzed in this study.¹⁵

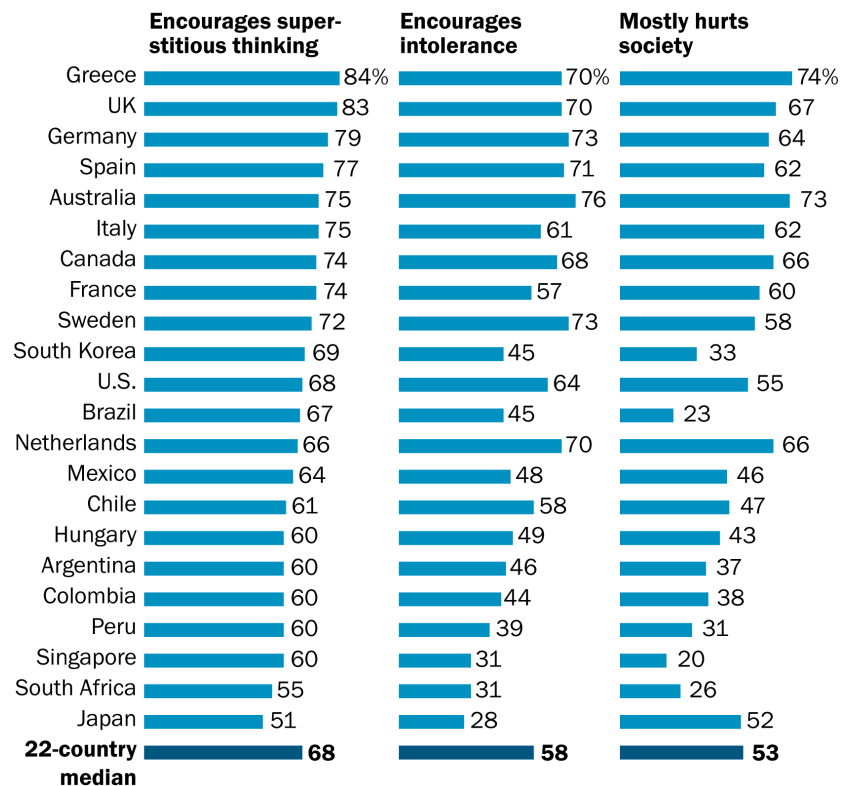
We asked respondents three separate questions about the social impacts of religion: whether religion encourages *superstitious thinking*; whether religion encourages *tolerance or intolerance*; and whether religion *mostly helps or mostly hurts* society.¹⁶

In all 22 countries, at least half of religiously unaffiliated adults say that religion encourages superstitious thinking. This rises to 83% of “nones” in the United Kingdom and 84% in Greece.

In about half of the countries, a majority of “nones” also say

Many ‘nones’ say religion encourages superstition and intolerance – and hurts society

% of *religiously unaffiliated adults* who say religion ...



Note: Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey.

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¹⁵ The surveys, conducted in 2023 and 2024, [included a total of 36 countries](#), but this report focuses on the 22 countries where our surveys had large enough samples of religiously unaffiliated adults to break out and analyze their results separately.

¹⁶ In the United States, we previously asked similar questions about the impact of religion on society using a slightly different scale. To learn more, read the 2023 report “[Spirituality Among Americans](#).”

religion encourages intolerance. This includes 76% of “nones” in Australia and 73% each in Germany and Sweden.

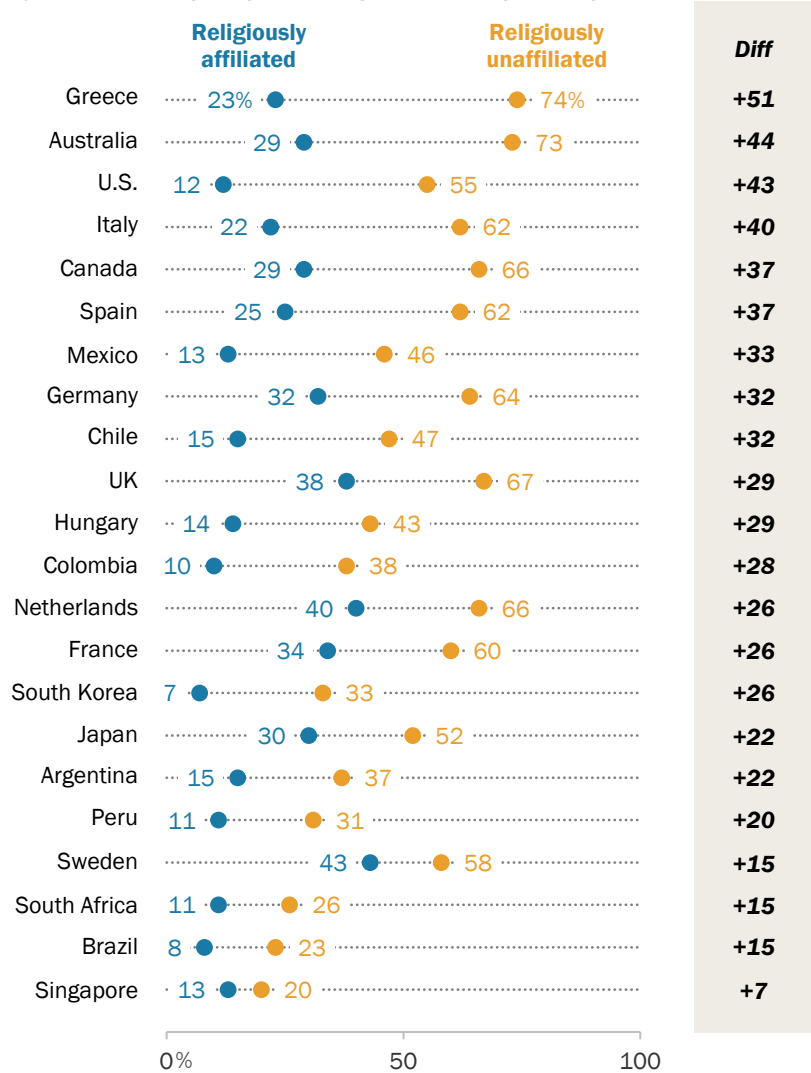
“Nones” in Europe tend to be especially likely to voice negative views of religion. For example, most religiously unaffiliated adults in Spain say that religion encourages superstitious thinking (77%) and intolerance (71%), and that it mostly hurts society (62%).

However, in a handful of countries in other regions, religiously unaffiliated people are more positive about religion. In Brazil, Singapore and South Africa, for instance, only about a quarter or fewer of “nones” say religion mostly hurts society. Majorities of “nones” in these countries say religion mostly *helps* society.

As a general pattern around the world, though, “nones” are much more likely than adults with a religious affiliation to express negative views about religion. In Greece, for example, 74% of “nones” say religion mostly *hurts* society, compared with 23% of people identifying with a religion (mostly Christianity) who say this.

Religiously affiliated adults are less likely than ‘nones’ to view religion as harmful

% of adults who say religion mostly hurts society, among those who are ...



Note: All differences are statistically significant. Religiously affiliated people include Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims and adherents of other religions. Religiously unaffiliated people (also called “nones”) are those who identify as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular.” Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey.

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“Nones” also are more likely than the religiously affiliated to say religion encourages superstition and intolerance. They are *less* likely than the affiliated to view religious traits as important for national leaders, and less inclined to say that religious texts should influence national laws.

Jump to sections on: [Views of ‘nones’ on the religion of their country’s leader](#) | [What ‘nones’ say about religion’s influence on their country’s laws](#) | [Differences in the views of ‘nones’](#)

Views of ‘nones’ on the religion of their country’s leader

Relatively few “nones” (a median of 13% across the 22 countries covered in this report) say it is important for the leader of their country to have religious beliefs that are the same as their own.¹⁷

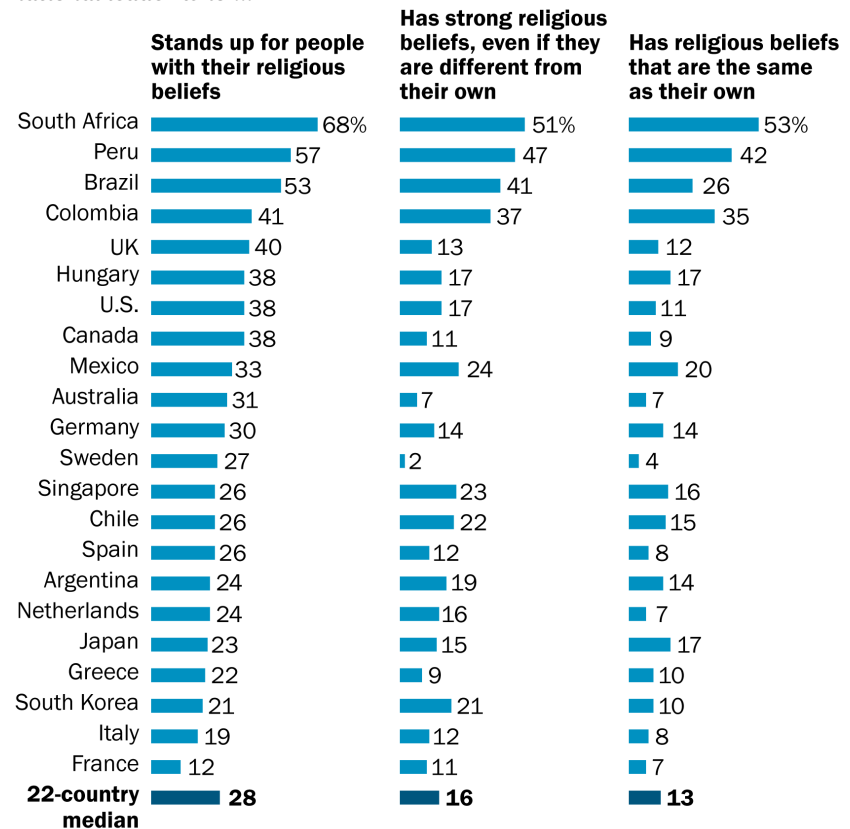
Similarly low shares (16% median) say it’s important for their national leader to have strong religious beliefs, even if those beliefs differ from their own.

Overall, slightly higher shares of “nones” say it is important to have a leader who stands up for people with their religious beliefs (28% median).

For example, in the Netherlands, 7% of “nones” say it’s important for the prime minister to share their beliefs, while 16% say it is important for the prime minister to have strong religious beliefs, and 24% say it is important for the prime minister to stand up for people with their religious beliefs (i.e., the religiously unaffiliated respondent’s beliefs).

Few ‘nones’ say it is important for their country’s leader to share their beliefs

% of **religiously unaffiliated** adults who say it is important to have a national leader who ...



Note: Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey.

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¹⁷ The term used for the national leader in the questionnaire varies across the countries surveyed. Respondents were asked about the qualities of the president in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, France, Mexico, Peru, South Africa, South Korea and the U.S. Respondents were asked about the qualities of the prime minister in Australia, Canada, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Singapore, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Respondents were asked about the qualities of the chancellor in Germany.

South Africa stands out as the only country where half or more of “nones” say all three measures are important, including 68% who say it is important for the president to stand up for people with their religious beliefs.

What ‘nones’ say about religion’s influence on their country’s laws

The survey also asked how much influence religious texts or teachings currently have on the laws of each country, and whether respondents think these sacred texts or teachings *should* have that much influence.

The specific text mentioned in the question depended on the historically predominant religion in each country.¹⁸

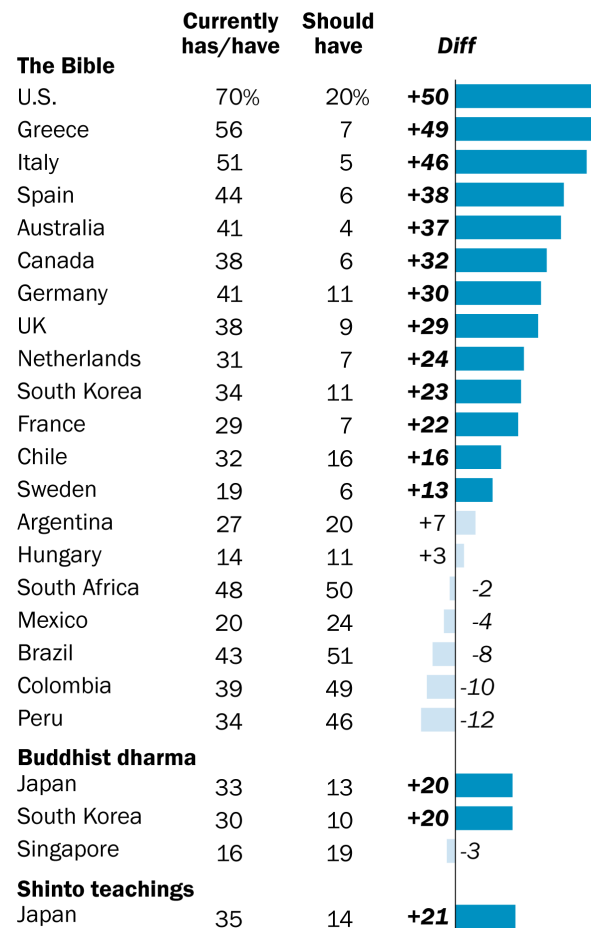
In many of the 22 countries covered here, “nones” are significantly more likely to say that religious texts *do* play a role in their country’s laws than to say that those texts *should* play a role.

In South Korea, for example, “nones” are three times as likely to say the Bible *currently has* a great deal or fair amount of influence on the laws of their country as they are to say the Bible *should have* that level of influence on their laws (34% vs. 11%). A similar pattern occurs when South Korean “nones” are asked about the influence of Buddhist dharma on their country’s laws (30% vs. 10%).

In almost all countries analyzed, a quarter or fewer of “nones” say that religious texts or teachings *should have* a great deal or a fair amount of influence on laws. However, Brazil, Colombia, Peru and South Africa stand out as

Relatively few unaffiliated people want religious texts to influence their laws

% of **religiously unaffiliated adults** who say [the Bible/Buddhist dharma/Shinto teachings] ___ **a great deal/fair amount** of influence on the laws of their country



Note: Statistically significant differences are in **bold**. Only countries where survey samples of religious “nones” are large enough for reliable analysis are shown. In Japan, respondents were asked about Buddhist dharma and Shinto teachings as two items; in South Korea, about the Bible and Buddhist dharma. In the U.S., the answer options were “A great deal” and “Some.”

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey.

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¹⁸ In countries where Christianity has been a historically predominant religion, respondents were asked about the influence of the Bible. In countries where Buddhism has been a historically predominant religion, we asked about “Buddhist dharma,” or teachings. In Japan, we also asked about Shinto teachings. For attitudes toward the influence of religious texts in national laws across all three dozen countries surveyed, read [“Comparing Levels of Religious Nationalism Around the World.”](#)

exceptions; in these countries, close to half of “nones” say the Bible should have at least a fair amount of influence on their country’s laws.

Greece and the United States are the only places where a majority of “nones” say the Bible *currently has* at least a fair amount of influence on the laws in their country. The unaffiliated in Hungary, Mexico, Singapore and Sweden are the least likely to say that a religious text has influence over their laws; in those four countries, only about a fifth or fewer of “nones” take that position.

Differences in the views of ‘nones’

Overall, “nones” who say religion is *not at all* important to them are much more likely than “nones” who ascribe at least a little importance to religion to view religion’s role in society negatively.

For example, in Canada, 74% of “nones” who say religion is not at all important in their lives also express the view that religion mostly hurts society. Among other Canadian “nones,” 48% say religion mostly hurts society.

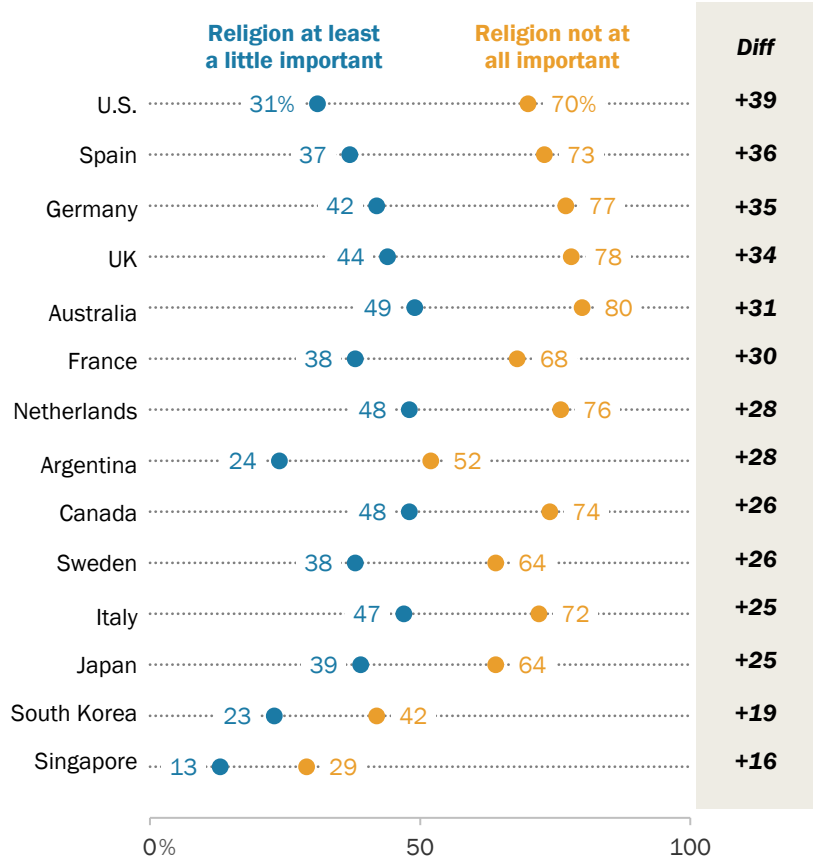
And in most surveyed countries where we have enough “nones” in both groups to make the comparison, “nones” who view religion as not at all important in their lives are significantly *less* likely than “nones” who say religion is at least a little important to think that religious texts should influence their country’s laws.

In Chile, for instance, just 8% of “nones” who say religion is *not at all* important to them want the Bible to have at least some influence on their laws. Among other “nones” in Chile, about three times as many hold this view.

Similar divides emerge between “nones” who say religion is not at all important and other “nones” on the questions about the importance of their national leader’s religious beliefs.

‘Nones’ who place no personal importance on religion are more likely to see religion as harmful to society

% of **religiously unaffiliated adults** who say religion mostly hurts society, by personal importance of religion



Note: Only countries with statistically significant differences are shown. “Religion at least a little important” includes those who say religion is “very,” “somewhat” or “not too” important in their life.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey.

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There are no clear or consistent differences between younger and older “nones” – nor between religiously unaffiliated women and men – on views toward religion’s role in society.

Meanwhile, in the U.S., “nones” with at least an associate degree express less favorable views toward religion than do “nones” with less education. But this difference among “nones” by education is not widely present across the other countries surveyed.

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This report is a collaborative effort based on the input and analysis of the following individuals:

Primary research team

Jonathan Evans, *Senior Researcher*

Kirsten Lesage, *Research Associate*

Manolo Corichi, *Research Analyst*

Research team

Becka A. Alper, *Senior Researcher*

Laura Clancy, *Research Analyst*

Alan Cooperman, *Director, Religion Research*

Sneha Gubbala, *Research Analyst*

Moiria Fagan, *Research Associate*

Janell Fetterolf, *Senior Researcher*

Sofia Hernandez Ramones, *Research Assistant*

Asta Kallo, *Research Assistant*

Jordan Lippert, *Research Analyst*

William Miner, *Research Analyst*

Besheer Mohamed, *Principal Researcher*

Jacob Poushter, *Associate Director, Global Attitudes Research*

Andrew Prozorovsky, *Research Assistant*

Chip Rotolo, *Research Associate*

Laura Silver, *Associate Director, Global Attitudes Research*

Maria Smerkovich, *Research Associate*

Gregory A. Smith, *Senior Associate Director, Religion Research*

Patricia Tevington, *Research Associate*

Richard Wike, *Director, Global Attitudes Research*

Methods team

Ashley Amaya, *Associate Director, Survey Methods*

Dorene Asare-Marfo, *Senior Panel Manager*

Anna Brown, *Research Methodologist*

Courtney Kennedy, *Vice President, Methods and Innovation*

Arnold Lau, *Research Methodologist*

Carolyn Lau, *International Research Methodologist*

Andrew Mercer, *Principal Methodologist*

Patrick Moynihan, *Associate Director, International Research Methods*

Georgina Pizzolitto, *Research Methodologist*

Dana Popky, *Associate Panel Manager*

Sofi Sinozich, *International Research Methodologist*

Editorial and graphic design

Jeff Diamant, *Senior Writer/Editor*

Rebecca Leppert, *Editorial Specialist*

Bill Webster, *Senior Information Graphics Designer*

Communications and web publishing

Justine Coleman, *Associate Digital Producer*

Maya Pottiger, *Communications Associate*

Hannah Taber, *Communications Manager*

Former Center staff who contributed to this report include Christine Huang, Justin Nortey and Kelsey Jo Starr.

Methodology

About Pew Research Center's Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey

Results for the survey are based on telephone, face-to-face and online interviews conducted under the direction of Gallup, Langer Research Associates, Social Research Centre and Verian. The results are based on national samples, unless otherwise noted. Here are more details about our [international survey methodology and country-specific sample designs](#).

The American Trends Panel survey methodology

Results for the United States are based in part on surveys conducted on Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel (ATP), a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. Panelists participate via self-administered web surveys. Panelists who did not have internet access at home were provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. Interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish. The panel was managed by Ipsos.

Data in this report is drawn primarily from ATP Wave 143, conducted from Feb. 13 to 25, 2024. A total of 12,693 panelists responded out of 14,762 who were sampled, for a response rate of 89% (AAPOR RR3). The survey includes an [oversample](#) of 2,051 Jewish and Muslim Americans from Ipsos' KnowledgePanel, SSRS's Opinion Panel and NORC at the University of Chicago's AmeriSpeak Panel. These oversampled groups are weighted to reflect their correct proportions in the population. The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 4%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged on to the survey and completed at least one item is less than 1%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 12,693 respondents is plus or minus 1.5 percentage points.

Additional survey questions were asked on ATP Wave 132, conducted from July 31 to Aug. 6, 2023, among 11,201 panelists. Here is the [methodology for Wave 132](#).

Further survey questions were asked on the Religious Landscape Study (RLS), a national cross-sectional survey conducted for Pew Research Center by NORC at the University of Chicago. It was conducted mainly online and on paper from July 17, 2023, to March 4, 2024, among a nationally representative sample of 36,908 adults. Here is the [methodology for the RLS](#).

For information about which survey questions were asked on which U.S. survey, refer to the [topline](#).

ATP Panel recruitment

The ATP was created in 2014, with the first cohort of panelists invited to join the panel at the end of a large, national, landline and cellphone random-digit-dial survey that was conducted in both English and Spanish. Two additional recruitments were conducted using the same method in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Across these three surveys, a total of 19,718 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 9,942 (50%) agreed to participate.

In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to address-based sampling (ABS) recruitment. A study cover letter and a pre-incentive are mailed to a stratified, random sample of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File. This Postal Service file has been estimated to cover as much as 98% of the population, although some studies suggest that the coverage could be in the low 90% range.¹⁹ Within each sampled household, the adult with the next birthday is asked to participate. Other details of the ABS recruitment protocol have changed over time but are available upon request.²⁰

We have recruited a national sample of U.S. adults to the ATP approximately once per year since 2014. In some years, the recruitment has included additional efforts (known as an "oversample") to boost sample size with underrepresented groups. For example, Hispanic, Black and Asian adults were oversampled in 2019, 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Across the six address-based recruitments, a total of 23,862 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 20,917 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. Of the 30,859

American Trends Panel recruitment surveys

Recruitment dates	Mode	Invited	Joined	Active panelists remaining
Jan. 23-March 16, 2014	Landline/ cell RDD	9,809	5,338	1,391
Aug. 27-Oct. 4, 2015	Landline/ cell RDD	6,004	2,976	831
April 25-June 4, 2017	Landline/ cell RDD	3,905	1,628	404
Aug. 8-Oct. 31, 2018	ABS	9,396	8,778	3,848
Aug. 19-Nov. 30, 2019	ABS	5,900	4,720	1,387
June 1-July 19, 2020; Feb. 10-March 31, 2021	ABS	3,197	2,812	1,440
May 29-July 7, 2021; Sept. 16-Nov. 1, 2021	ABS	1,329	1,162	731
May 24-Sept. 29, 2022	ABS	3,354	2,869	1,454
April 17-May 30, 2023	ABS	686	576	434
	Total	43,580	30,859	11,920

Note: RDD is random-digit dial; ABS is address-based sampling. Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves or who did not complete an annual profiling survey are removed from the panel. Panelists also become inactive if they ask to be removed from the panel.

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¹⁹ AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. "AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling."

²⁰ Email pewsurveys@pewresearch.org.

individuals who have ever joined the ATP, 11,920 remained active panelists and continued to receive survey invitations at the time this survey was conducted.

The American Trends Panel never uses breakout routers or chains that direct respondents to additional surveys.

Sample design

The overall target population for ATP Wave 143 was noninstitutionalized persons ages 18 and older living in the U.S., including Alaska and Hawaii. All active panel members who completed the ATP wave which fielded from July 31 to Aug. 6, 2023 (ATP W132), or panelists who previously identified as Jewish or Muslim, were invited to participate in this wave.

The ATP was supplemented with an oversample of self-identified Jewish and Muslim American panelists from three other probability panels: Ipsos' KnowledgePanel, SSRS's Opinion Panel, and NORC at the University of Chicago's AmeriSpeak panel. All panelists who met the selection criteria were selected with certainty.

Questionnaire development and testing

The questionnaire was developed by Pew Research Center in consultation with Ipsos, SSRS and NORC. The survey for ATP and KP panelists was programmed by Ipsos, while the survey for SSRS and NORC panelists was programmed by SSRS. A small number of SSRS panelists took their survey over the phone with an interviewer. Both web programs were rigorously tested on both PC and mobile devices by the Ipsos, SSRS and NORC project management teams and Pew Research Center researchers. The Ipsos project management team also populated test data that was analyzed in SPSS to ensure the logic and randomizations were working as intended before launching the survey.

Incentives

All ATP respondents were offered a post-paid incentive for their participation. Respondents could choose to receive the post-paid incentive in the form of a check or a gift code to Amazon.com or could choose to decline the incentive. Incentive amounts ranged from \$5 to \$20 depending on whether the respondent belongs to a part of the population that is harder or easier to reach. Differential incentive amounts were designed to increase panel survey participation among groups that traditionally have low survey response propensities.

Respondents from the Ipsos KnowledgePanel, SSRS Opinion Panel and AmeriSpeak were offered the cash equivalent of \$10 for completing this survey.

Data collection protocol

The data collection field period for this survey was Feb. 13 to 25, 2024. Postcard notifications were mailed to a subset of ATP panelists with a known residential address on Feb. 12.²¹

Invitations were sent out in separate launches. Sixty ATP panelists and 300 KP panelists were included in the soft launch, which began with an initial invitation sent on Feb. 13. The ATP and KP panelists chosen for the soft launch were known responders who had completed previous surveys within one day of receiving their invitation. All remaining ATP and KP sampled panelists were included in the full launch and were sent an invitation on Feb. 14.

Overall, 129 SSRS panelists were included in the SSRS soft launch, which began with an initial invitation on Feb. 14. And 110 NORC panelists were included in the NORC soft launch, which began with an initial invitation on Feb. 15. All remaining SSRS and NORC sampled panelists were included together in the full launch and were sent an invitation on Feb. 15.

All panelists with an email address received an email invitation and up to four email reminders if they did not respond to the survey. All ATP panelists who consented to SMS messages received an SMS invitation and up to four SMS reminders.

Data quality checks

To ensure high-quality data, the Center's researchers performed data quality checks to identify any respondents showing clear patterns of satisficing. This includes checking whether respondents left questions blank at very high rates or always selected the first or last answer presented. As a result of this checking, six ATP respondents were removed from the survey dataset prior to weighting and analysis.

Invitation and reminder dates, ATP Wave 143

	ATP/KP soft launch	ATP/KP full launch	SSRS soft launch	NORC soft launch	SSRS/ NORC full launch
Initial invitation	Feb. 13, 2024	Feb. 14, 2024	Feb. 14, 2024	Feb. 15, 2024	Feb. 15, 2024
First reminder	Feb. 17, 2024	Feb. 17, 2024	Feb. 17, 2024	Feb. 17, 2024	Feb. 17, 2024
Second reminder	Feb. 19, 2024	Feb. 19, 2024	Feb. 19, 2024	Feb. 19, 2024	Feb. 19, 2024
Third reminder	Feb. 22, 2024	Feb. 22, 2024	Feb. 22, 2024	Feb. 22, 2024	Feb. 22, 2024
Final reminder	Feb. 24, 2024	Feb. 24, 2024	Feb. 24, 2024	Feb. 24, 2024	Feb. 24, 2024

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²¹ Postcard notifications are sent to 1) panelists who have been provided with a tablet to take ATP surveys, 2) panelists who were recruited within the last two years, and 3) panelists recruited prior to the last two years who opt to continue receiving postcard notifications.

Weighting

The data was weighted in a multistep process that accounts for multiple stages of sampling and nonresponse that occur at different points in the survey process. First, each panelist begins with a base weight that reflects their probability of inclusion in the panel to which they belong. Separately for each of the four panels (ATP, KP, SSRS, NORC), the base weights for Muslim and Jewish respondents were scaled to be proportional to the group's effective sample size. These weights were then combined and calibrated so that the overall proportions of Jewish and Muslim respondents respectively match the [National Public Opinion Reference Survey](#) (NPORS) benchmark.

This weight is then calibrated again to align with the full set of population benchmarks identified in the accompanying table (which also includes the NPORS benchmarks for the shares of Jewish and Muslim adults). To reduce the loss in precision stemming from variance in the weights, the weights were trimmed separately among Jewish, Muslim, Hispanic, non-Hispanic Black and non-Hispanic Asian respondents at the 98th percentile, and among all other respondents at the 99.5th percentile. Sampling errors and tests of statistical significance take into account the effect of weighting.

American Trends Panel weighting dimensions

Variable	Benchmark source
Age (detailed)	2022 American Community Survey (ACS)
Age x Gender	
Education x Gender	
Education x Age	
Race/Ethnicity x Education	
Black (alone or in combination) x Hispanic	
Born inside vs. outside the U.S. among Hispanics and Asian Americans	
Years lived in the U.S.	2021 CPS Volunteering & Civic Life Supplement
Census region x Metropolitan status	
Volunteerism	2022 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement
Party affiliation x Voter registration	
Party affiliation x Race/Ethnicity	2023 National Public Opinion Reference Survey (NPORS)
Frequency of internet use	
Religious affiliation (Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Religiously unaffiliated, Other)	

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on noninstitutionalized adults. Voter registration is calculated using procedures from Hur, Achen (2013) and rescaled to include the total U.S. adult population.

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Dispositions and response rates

Final dispositions, ATP Wave 143

	AAPOR code	ATP	KP	SSRS	AmeriSpeak	Total
Completed interview	1.1	10,642	959	696	396	12,693
Logged on to survey; broke off	2.12	35	2	0	0	37
Logged on to survey; did not complete any items	2.1121	22	0	0	0	22
Never logged on (implicit refusal)	2.11	320	0	0	0	320
Survey completed after close of the field period	2.27	1	0	0	0	1
Completed interview but was removed for data quality	2.3	6	0	0	0	6
Completed interview but was removed for ineligibility		0	120	71	76	267
Eligibility undetermined	3.2	0	168	618	630	1416
Screened out	4.7	0	0	0	0	0
Total panelists sampled for the survey		11,026	1,249	1,385	1,102	14,762
Completed interviews	I	10,642	959	696	396	12,693
Partial interviews	P	0	0	0	0	0
Refusals	R	377	2	0	0	379
Noncontact	NC	1	0	0	0	1
Other	O	6	0	0	0	6
Unknown household	UH	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown other	UO	0	168	618	630	1416
Not eligible	NE	0	120	71	76	267
Screen out	SO	0	0	0	0	0
Total		11,026	1,249	1,385	1,102	14,762
Est. eligibility rate among unscreened: $e = (I+P+R)/(I+P+R+SO+NE)$		100%	88.9%	90.7%	83.9%	
AAPOR RR1 = $I / (I+P+R+NC+O+UH+UO)$		97%	85%	50%	39%	88%
AAPOR RR3 = $I / (I+P+R+NC+O+[e*(UH+UO)])$		97%	90%	55%	43%	89%

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Cumulative response rate as of ATP Wave 143

	ATP	KP	SSRS	NORC	Total
Weighted response rate to recruitment surveys	11%	11%	8%	29%	12%
% of recruitment survey respondents who agreed to join the panel, among those invited	71%	61%	49%	76%	68%
% of those agreeing to join who were active panelists at start of Wave 143	45%	19%	74%	79%	48%
Response rate to Wave 143 survey	97%	90%	55%	43%	88%
Cumulative response rate	4%	1%	2%	8%	4%

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Analysis

We analyzed respondents' attitudes based on their religious identification and their educational attainment.

Religious identification

In each country surveyed, respondents were asked about their current religious identification. We then analyzed religious groups with sufficiently large sample sizes to be reliable. Refer to the table for the number of religiously unaffiliated respondents (i.e., those who identify religiously as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular”), and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence, in each of the 22 countries discussed in this report.

For questions asked on ATP Wave 143 in the U.S., this analysis reports the opinions of 3,207 religiously unaffiliated adults in the U.S. – slightly more than the 3,205 included in a [previous analysis of U.S. data](#). The sample size difference is attributable to small differences in the backcoding of religious identity questions across the two studies.

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request. One should bear in mind that in addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

Sample sizes and margins of error for the religiously unaffiliated in this analysis

Country	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Argentina	240	8.2 percentage points
Australia	1,022	3.4 percentage points
Brazil	157	11.3 percentage points
Canada	460	5.4 percentage points
Chile	309	8.2 percentage points
Colombia	195	10.0 percentage points
France	446	6.5 percentage points
Germany	468	6.6 percentage points
Greece	141	11.9 percentage points
Hungary	178	10.6 percentage points
Italy	289	8.4 percentage points
Japan	533	5.0 percentage points
Mexico	199	10.0 percentage points
Netherlands	545	5.3 percentage points
Peru	124	12.5 percentage points
Singapore	258	7.9 percentage points
South Africa	168	10.1 percentage points
South Korea	494	5.6 percentage points
Spain	440	6.5 percentage points
Sweden	496	5.7 percentage points
UK	465	6.0 percentage points
U.S. – ATP Wave 132	3,317	2.7 percentage points
U.S. – ATP Wave 132 (God subset)*	1,639	3.8 percentage points
U.S. – ATP Wave 143	3,207	2.8 percentage points
U.S. – 2023-24 RLS	10,729	1.4 percentage points

* Only half of the sample in ATP Wave 132 was randomly selected to receive the question analyzed in this report about belief in God. Note: Refer to the report topline for which survey questions were asked on which survey in the U.S.

Source: Spring 2024 Global Attitudes Survey; survey of U.S. adults conducted July 31-Aug. 6, 2023; and Religious Landscape Study of U.S. adults conducted July 17, 2023-March 4, 2024.

“Many Religious ‘Nones’ Around the World Hold Spiritual Beliefs”

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Education

To compare educational groups across countries, we standardized education levels based on the United Nations' [International Standard Classification of Education \(ISCED\)](#).

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