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**YOUTH, RELIGION AND
CONFIRMATION WORK
IN EUROPE:
THE SECOND STUDY**

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Table of Contents

I.	Introduction	
	KATI NIEMELÄ, THOMAS SCHLAG, FRIEDRICH SCHWEITZER AND HENRIK SIMOJOKI	14
1.	Youth and Religion in Europe	15
2.	Youth in Europe and Confirmation Work	16
3.	How the Protestant Churches in Europe Can Benefit from this Study	17
4.	Non-Formal Education and its Contribution to Civil Society	18
5.	The Rationale behind the Second International Study on Confirmation Work in Europe	19
6.	The Participating Countries and Churches	21
7.	Research Questions	23
8.	The Design of the Study	25
9.	How the Study Developed	26
10.	Explanation of the Terminology	28
II.	The Basic Picture	32
1.	What the Adolescents Believe	
	HENRIK REINTOFT CHRISTENSEN, IDA MARIE HØEG, DAGMAR LAGGER AND FRIEDRICH SCHWEITZER	32
1.1	Introduction	32
1.2	Analysis	33
1.3	Comparison between the First and Second Study	40
1.4	Conclusion	42
2.	Confirmation Work Today	
	LEISE CHRISTENSEN AND BERND KRUPKA	45
2.1	Curriculum and Administrative Framework in the Participating Churches	45
2.2	Official Guidelines and Structural Changes	51
2.3	Conclusion	57
3.	Expectations, Motivations and Experiences of the Confirmands	
	GEORG HARDECKER AND JONAS BROMANDER	59
3.1	Motives and Expectations	59

3.2	Satisfaction with Confirmation Time	68
3.3	Conclusion	70
4.	Confirmation Work in the View of the Workers	
	GEORG HARDECKER, KATI NIEMELÄ, THOMAS SCHLAG AND FRIEDRICH SCHWEITZER	71
4.1	Introduction	71
4.2	Staff Composition: Some General Information on the Workers	71
4.3	Important Topics – in the View of the Workers	73
4.4	Aims of the Workers	76
4.5	Satisfaction of the Workers	79
4.6	Conclusion	80
5.	Will the Church Keep Them as Members? The Influence of Confirmation Work on the Commitment to Church Membership	
	KATI NIEMELÄ, ÁDÁM HÁMORI AND BALÁZS SIBA	82
5.1	Introduction	82
5.2	Attachment to the Church in the Beginning of Confirmation Time	84
5.3	To What Extent Can Confirmation Work Strengthen the Commitment to Church Membership?	85
5.4	Conclusion	90
6.	The Wider Context: Volunteerism and Civil Society	
	JOUKO PORKKA, HENRIK SIMOJOKI AND FRIEDRICH SCHWEITZER	93
6.1	Introduction	93
6.2	Impact on the Development of a Sense of Community	93
6.3	Contribution to Ethical Commitment	94
6.4	Volunteerism and Social Capital	97
6.5	Conclusion	102
III.	Current Issues	106
1.	From Classrooms to Camps? Effects of Different Physical Learning Spaces and Teaching Methods in Confirmation Work	
	KATI NIEMELÄ AND WOLFGANG ILG	106
1.1	Introduction	106
1.2	Research Questions	107
1.3	Different Physical Spaces	108
1.4	Teaching Methods in Confirmation Work	108
1.5	Teaching in Different Physical Spaces	110

1.6	Confirmation Groups with Different Teaching Methods and Their Linkage to the Experience of Confirmation Work	111
1.7	Physical Learning Spaces, Teaching Methods and the Experience of Confirmation Work	113
1.8	Conclusion	116
2.	Giving Least to Those Who Need It Most? How Gender, Social and Religious Background Influence the Attendance and Experience of Confirmation Time	
	BERND KRUPKA, WOLFGANG ILG AND FRIEDRICH SCHWEITZER	117
2.1	Introduction	117
2.2	Effects of Pre-Selection	117
2.3	Effects of Different Background Factors	118
2.4	Conclusion	123
3.	Minding the Gap: Overall Satisfaction and Perceived Daily Life Relevance of Confirmation Work	
	CHRISTOPH H. MAASS AND HENRIK SIMOJOKI	125
3.1	Introduction	125
3.2	Gap Confirmed. Changes Between 2008 and 2013	125
3.2	The Relation of Expressed Satisfaction and Perceived Relevance in International Comparison	128
3.3	Factors Influencing the Satisfaction-Relevance-Relation	129
3.4	Conclusion	133
4.	Developing a (Religious) Identity during Confirmation Time	
	THOMAS SCHLAG, MURIEL KOCH AND CHRISTOPH H. MAASS	135
4.1	Introduction	135
4.2	Identity and Religious Identity	136
4.3	Analysis	137
4.4	Results	138
4.5	Conclusion	145
5.	The Postsecular City and Confirmation	
	HENRIK REINTOFT CHRISTENSEN AND KATI NIEMELÄ	147
5.1	Introduction	147
5.2	The Rural-Urban Distinction and Confirmation	147
5.3	Results	149
5.4	Modelling Satisfaction	151
5.5	Conclusion	154

6. Is Small Beautiful? Potentials of Confirmation Work in Minority Situations	
TOBIAS BEISSWENGER, ELŻBIETA BYRTEK, ACHIM HÄRTNER AND DAGMAR LAGGER	157
6.1 Introduction	157
6.2 Minority Churches in Europe – Three Examples	158
6.3 Confirmands and Workers in a Minority Situation – The Example of the Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche in Germany.	160
6.4 Common Features and Differences between Minority Churches	163
6.5 Conclusion	168
7. Youth and Church Services	
BERND KRUPKA AND IDA MARIE HØEG	170
7.1 Introduction	170
7.2 Worship Expectations and Experiences	172
7.3 Country Differences	172
7.4 Gender, Religious and Cultural Background	176
7.5 Active Participation and Contribution	177
7.6 Conclusion	179
IV. Country-Specific Articles	182
1. Confirmation Work in Germany	
FRIEDRICH SCHWEITZER, WOLFGANG ILG, GEORG HARDECKER AND CHRISTOPH MAASS	182
1.1 Introduction	182
1.2 Overview on data	183
1.3 Major Results	184
1.4 Changes between the First and the Second Study	191
1.5 Challenges and Questions for the Future	192
2. Confirmation Work in Austria	
STEFAN GRAUWALD AND DAGMAR LAGGER	193
2.1 Introduction	193
2.2 Major Results	193
2.3 Changes Between the First and the Second Study	201
2.4 Challenges and Questions for the Future	202
3. Confirmation Work in Switzerland	
THOMAS SCHLAG AND MURIEL KOCH	204
3.1 Introduction	204
3.2 Participation in the Study	205
3.3 The Confirmands	206

3.4	The Workers	211
3.5	Challenges and Questions for the Future	212
4.	Confirmation Work in Denmark	
	HENRIK REINTOFT CHRISTENSEN AND LEISE CHRISTENSEN	214
4.1	Introduction	214
4.2	Major Results	216
4.3	Changes between the First and the Second Study	221
4.4	Challenges and Questions for the Future	222
5.	Confirmation Work in Finland	
	KATI NIEMELÄ AND JOUKO PORKKA	223
5.1	Introduction	223
5.2	Major Results	225
5.3	Changes between the First and the Second Study	231
5.4	Challenges and Questions for the Future	232
6.	Confirmation Work in Norway	
	IDA MARIE HØEG AND BERND KRUPKA	234
6.1	The Cultural Context of Confirmation	234
6.2	Major Results	236
6.3	Workers	239
6.4	Changes Between the First and the Second Study	240
6.5	Challenges and Questions for the Future	243
7.	Confirmation Work in Sweden	
	ERIKA WILLANDER	245
7.1	Introduction	245
7.2	Quality and the Goals of Confirmation Work	245
7.3	Description of the Swedish Study	248
7.4	Expectations on Confirmation Work	249
7.5	Experiences of Confirmation Time	250
7.6	Challenges and Questions for the Future	252
8.	Confirmation Work in Poland	
	EŻBIETA BYRTEK	254
8.1	Introduction	254
8.2	Confirmation Work in Poland	256
8.3	The Polish Study	259
8.4	Major Results	259
8.5	Challenges and Questions for the Future	264
9.	Youth and Confirmation Work in Hungary	
	ÁDÁM HÁMORI, BALÁZS SIBA AND ÁGNES PÁNGYÁNSZKY	266
9.1	Introduction	266
9.2	Religions and Churches in Hungary	266
9.3	Confirmation Research in Hungary	267

9.4	Major Results	269
9.5	Challenges and Questions for the Future	278
10.	Confirmation Work in the United Methodist Church in Germany	
	ACHIM HÄRTNER AND TOBIAS BEISSWENGER	280
10.1	Introduction	280
10.2	Description of the Study: Procedures	282
10.3	Major Results	283
10.4	Challenges and Questions for the Future	290
V.	Summary of the Results – Perspectives and Challenges for the Future	
	HENRIK SIMOJOKI, FRIEDRICH SCHWEITZER, THOMAS SCHLAG AND KATI NIEMELÄ	294
1.	Introduction	294
2.	The Confirmands	295
3.	The Workers	299
4.	Confirmation Work	301
5.	Developments Between the First and the Second Study	303
6.	International Comparisons	306
6.1	Participation Rates in Different Countries	307
6.2	Comparing Different Regions in Europe	308
6.3	Comparing Minority and Majority Situations	309
6.4	The Influence of Different Educational Structures	309
6.5	Effects of Different Church Structures	310
6.6	Comparative Study of Elements of Confirmation Work	310
7.	Conclusions and Challenges for the Future	311
7.1	Confirmands’ Needs and Potentials	311
7.2	Forms and Competences of Teaching	312
7.3	The Importance of Religious Socialisation	313
7.4	Learning From Minority Situations	313
7.5	Concerning Future Research	314
7.6	Conclusion	314
VI.	The Confirmation Project in the United States. A Study of Confirmation and Equivalent Practices in the American Context	
	KATHERINE M. DOUGLASS	318
1.	Religious Life in the American Context	318
2.	Origins and Preliminary Findings of the Confirmation Project	319

3. Methodology for the Confirmation Project	321
4. Emerging Challenges and Preliminary Findings	323
VII. Methodology	
WOLFGANG ILG, CHRISTOPH MAASS AND FRIEDRICH SCHWEITZER	328
1. Background, Research Questions, Design	328
2. Questionnaires	330
3. Setup of the Samples in the Countries	331
General Description	331
<i>Germany</i>	332
<i>Austria</i>	333
<i>Switzerland</i>	334
<i>Denmark</i>	335
<i>Finland</i>	336
<i>Norway</i>	337
<i>Sweden</i>	337
<i>Poland</i>	338
<i>Hungary</i>	338
<i>The EmK Germany (Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche)</i>	339
4. Handling and Presentation of the Data	340
5. Comparisons	341
5.1 Comparisons between the Beginning and the End of Confirmation Time	341
5.2 Comparisons between the Results from the Study Conducted in 2007/2008 and the Study From 2012/2013	343
5.3 Comparisons between the Results from Different Coun- tries	344
6. Indexes	345
VIII. Literature	351
IX. Appendix	363
1. Comparative Tables	364
2. Exemplary Questionnaire	395
X. List of Figures	399
XI. List of Tables	403
XII. Authors	408

Introduction

I. Introduction

KATI NIEMELÄ, THOMAS SCHLAG, FRIEDRICH SCHWEITZER, AND
HENRIK SIMOJOKI

This volume presents the results of one of the largest studies on youth and religion that have become available so far: the second European study on confirmation work. The book examines the role and meaning of religion, faith, and church in the lives of Protestant youth in Europe. The basis for this analysis and the interpretation of its results consists of extensive data collected from nine European countries concerning confirmation work. For many young people confirmation time is crucial in determining their future attachment and relationship to religion, faith, religious identity and the church, their life orientations, moral attitudes and ethical reflection as well as their commitment to voluntary activities.

What makes young people join confirmation work in the different countries? What are factors that make it meaningful to them? What does confirmation time mean for the Churches and their workers and volunteers? How do young people and their relationship to religion, faith and church differ in different countries and how does this relationship change during confirmation time?

These are some of the questions that are examined in this book. The book is a contribution to studies aiming at understanding the role of religion in the lives of young people in Europe where religion is undergoing major changes and fast transitions. Religious pluralism is growing not only because of increased immigration but also because different and contradicting beliefs and worldviews can be found more and more among native citizens. At the same time, confirmation work should not be seen only as a central educational field of Protestant Churches but also as an important contribution to life orientation, civic education and a common understanding of how to live together. Therefore the results presented in this book can and should be interpreted against the background of European debates on education, youth and religion. Yet the Churches as religious and societal institutions can also benefit from the results of this comparative study in many important ways.

The results and interpretations presented in this volume are interconnected with the first European study on confirmation work which was conducted in 2007/2008 and which, in many respects, was the first study of its kind (cf. Schweitzer et al. 2010). With the first international study which was carried out in seven European countries – Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Nor-

way, Sweden and Switzerland (Zurich) – systematic international comparisons on an empirical basis became possible for the first time. The present study is based on new data from 2012/2013 in nine European countries. It builds upon the first study and expands it further, geographically by including Hungary, Poland, and Switzerland as a whole as well as in theoretical and empirical scope. Moreover, the Methodist Church in Germany (Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche) also joined the study.

1. Youth and Religion in Europe

The study aims at understanding the role of religion, faith and the church among Protestant youth in Europe. In studying young Europeans and their relationship to religion, several key points need to be addressed. First of all, religious and spiritual expressions and practices have changed markedly over recent decades in many European countries. As a result of increased pluralism, the dominant position of traditional Christian Churches can no longer be taken for granted. Moreover, numerous studies raise the question if today's young Europeans are less religious than earlier age cohorts (Voas/Doebler 2011; Niemelä 2011; Kääriäinen et al. 2005, 141–144; Bucher 2009; EKD 2014). A decline of religion appears to be most evident in countries where religion in general is not valued highly and where the religiosity of average citizens is not very high (Bucher 2009, 625). One of the key reasons for the decline has been seen in the changes in family settings.

At the same time, the alleged decline of religion has been under much debate. For decades, secularisation theory has dominated the research and debate related to religious change. While it was first seen as an accepted explanatory model, it was widely rejected later on (see, e. g., Berger 1999; Wilson 1982; Swatos/Olson 2000). Instead of secularisation, the current transformation of the religious landscape has been increasingly described with terms like de-secularisation (Berger 1999), de-privatisation (Casanova 1994), re-sacralisation (Davie 2010), re-enchantment (Partridge 2004), post-secularity (Habermas 2006), or with terms that highlight the declining role of Christianity, like un-churching (Fuller 2001) and de-Christianisation (Brown/Lynch 2012). Others contest the assumption of secularisation altogether and therefore question concepts like post-secularity because they are based on the assumption of an earlier secular period (Joas 2012). At the same time, other researchers still uphold secularisation theory (Pollack 2003) and suggest that »religion is dead« (Brown 2009) or »God is dead« (Bruce 2002). Some have pointed to more eclectic forms of religious expression such as »believing without belonging« (Davie

1994) or the »two faces of religion« (Campiche 2004), which highlights the role of a personal choice instead of formal requirements. Still others speak of secular Christianity or fuzzy religiosity (Voas/Day 2009) in which people are neither Christian nor non-Christian. Most of these terms and descriptions highlight the shift from the assumption of secularisation to more pluralist views as well as the shift from obligation to consumption (Davie 2005, Stolz et al. 2014).

In any case, religion still plays a very important role in the lives of many European young people (see Schweitzer et al. 2010; Madge et al. 2014). However, the picture is increasingly complex and increasingly involves choice rather than simple obligation to tradition (Davie 2010).

Furthermore, in studying young people, it must also be highlighted that there are changes in relation to religion connected to age. Research indicates that religiosity tends to decrease somewhat after the teenage years, and early adulthood is often regarded as the period when the role of religion is lowest (see, e.g., Kääriäinen et al. 2005; Mikkola et al. 2007; Denton et al. 2008). It is a common assumption that religiosity again increases in older age. However, this assumption is not always supported by recent studies. Some of the studies indicate that, with certain cohorts, religiosity seems to remain more stable and does not increase with age (Voas/Doebler 2011; Niemelä 2011; EKD 2014). Even though religion and religious expression may take new forms in later life, childhood and youth is considered the most meaningful age-period in determining the relationship to religion throughout the life-course as well (see, e.g., Bengtson et al. 2013). This implies that the results of the present study are very likely to show much of the future patterns not only among the younger generation but among Protestants in Europe in general. Although it remains true that no one can reliably predict the future and that empirical insights are limited to the past and to the present, such considerations show that the results of the present study are of interest way beyond the Churches.

2. Youth in Europe and Confirmation Work

In recent years, promoted by the European Union's directives on youth policy and by intensified cooperation and networking opportunities, a joint research field of European youth research has emerged (European Commission 2009; Chisholm 2006; du Bois-Reymond 2010; Chisholm et al. 2011). Even though it would definitely be premature or even mistaken to speak of »European Youth« in the sense of a homogeneous entity, it has become widely accepted that it is indeed useful to broaden the traditional nationally-oriented view of youth towards a European perspective. However, a closer look at relevant stu-

dies or research overviews reveals that they rarely touch religion-related issues. Consequently, there is a clear lacuna concerning youth and religion in Europe.

While the present study includes many insights into adolescents' views of religion, faith, and the church, it should also be viewed as a study that contributes to research on youth in Europe in general. By empirically describing the adolescents' views and attitudes concerning life and faith, the present study allows for a better understanding of young people in Europe, their orientations in society as well as their values and worldviews.

In addition to its size in terms of the participating countries as well as the large sample, the present study will also be of special interest because of the age-group to which it refers. In other studies on youth, this age-group of the 13 to 16 years old youth is often neglected or lumped together with all youth between 12 and 25 years of age (cf., for example, Shell Deutschland Holding 2010). Moreover, with the focus on confirmation work, the study is not just about religious attitudes in general but pays special attention to young people's relationship to institutionalised forms of religion (i. e., the Church), to worship services as well as to voluntary work. By including the voluntary workers, the study also sheds new light on the motivation, expectations, experiences and forms of confirmation work from this important perspective. In all of these respects, the present study goes far beyond the existing research concerning the relationship between youth, religion and the Church.

3. How the Protestant Churches in Europe Can Benefit from this Study

While it is important to realize that a study on youth and confirmation work in Europe is of general interest in terms of the moral and religious orientations of young people and also in terms of education, it should also be clear that the Churches most of all in the participating countries, but also in other countries, can benefit from this study in a number of ways.

First of all, confirmation work is the largest educational program of most Protestant Churches in Europe. Many resources have been invested into this program. Consequently, it is of prime interest how confirmation work is done and how successful it really is. In this respect, the study offers ample insights into the present reality of this field of work. Thus, the results of the study which show positive tendencies, affirm the manifold efforts that have been made, and can motivate the responsible persons to continue the work.

Yet it is not enough for the Churches to be better informed about the reality of confirmation work, its successes and possible shortcomings. The more far-

reaching aim must be to improve the practice of confirmation work. The present attraction to confirmation work should not be taken for granted. The many results and further analysis of the data also provide the Churches with multiple possibilities for improvements.

The international comparative approach pursued in the study has to be mentioned in this respect as well. From the perspective of the Churches, it means an important step towards a kind of ecumenical cooperation that was often lacking in the past, as well as openness for other contexts. The research project also entailed many stimulating opportunities for learning from each other and for receiving new impulses from other countries and Churches. Public lectures and training sessions as well as publications have helped to spread these insights and impulses beyond the academic world into the actual practice of confirmation work and the Churches.

The first study from 2007/2008 had a remarkably broad echo, within the Churches as well as in other fields. It is probably not claiming too much that the study had a booster effect on many people and institutions concerned with confirmation work. By making visible, with the help of scientific data, the scope and actual range of confirmation work as a link between the generations in the Churches, research of the present kind can motivate and encourage those who are doing the everyday work in this field. And last but certainly not least, it can help improve the public standing of the Churches in society offering educational programs in the non-formal sector, thus contributing, from a professional pedagogical and theological perspective, to a stronger civil society in Europe.

4. Non-Formal Education and its Contribution to Civil Society

There can be no doubt that issues of education in Europe must be increasingly understood within frameworks that go beyond national boundaries and beyond formal educational contexts. In educational policy making and in the scientific debates over the last decades, various metaphors have been used to describe the increasing degree of an Europeanisation of education, particularly in the member countries of the European Union. Compared to the normatively charged image of a »European (higher) education space« popularised by the Bologna Declaration of 1999, the reference to Europe's »educational landscape« is more descriptive and therefore preferable in the context of an empirical study like the present one. However, previous attempts to map this educational landscape have so far mainly been limited to the area of formal education and, triggered by the PISA-studies and the Bologna Process, often put their main em-

phasis on the question of the quality and performance of schools and universities. Only recently, the focus has turned more towards processes and settings of non-formal education, partly motivated by the »European Qualifications framework for lifelong learning« (European Communities 2008) in which formal, non-formal and informal learning are considered of equal weight. Considering the participation rates for confirmation work, it is easy to see that this program is an important factor in non-formal education, provided by an intermediary institution of civil society in which values and beliefs are communicated about and exchanged, and thus contributing to society in a broader sense. Each year in the countries involved in this study, altogether about half a million young people take part in confirmation work. Thus, this central educational activity of the Protestant churches proves to be one of the major forms of non-formal education in central and northern Europe.

Through the first study on confirmation work in Europe (Schweitzer et al. 2010) confirmation work was established as a new field of international-comparative research on (religious) education in Europe. Already this earlier study pointed out that confirmation work does not only have consequences for the individual person or for the church. It also has meaning for society at large (Pettersson/Simojoki 2010). In the present volume, this perspective is extended by an increased focus on civil society and on volunteerism.

Concerning civil society and volunteerism, it is again the inclusion of the workers which makes the present study special. The study offers empirical insights on these workers which allow for a better understanding of their motivation and experiences. Moreover, their expectations and experiences are compared and connected to those of the confirmands. Through this it becomes possible to capture the interplay between the religious attitudes of the adolescents on the one hand and institutionalised religion on the other.

5. The Rationale behind the Second International Study on Confirmation Work in Europe

The first study on confirmation work in Europe has exerted an unexpected and remarkable influence on the conceptual development of this field of work in the countries involved, including the training of future ministers as well as training programs for voluntary workers. The results of the study were presented in a number of nationally oriented monographs and articles in different languages (Ilg et al. 2009; Innanen/Niemelä 2009; Schlag/Voirol-Sturzenegger 2010; Krupka/Reite 2010; Christensen 2010; Høeg 2010; Simojoki et al. 2010; 2011) which have been widely discussed, especially regarding their implications for the prac-

tice of confirmation work in the respective contexts. Five years later, a second study is presented with a significantly expanded research design. This new study promises a number of specific advantages.

- Since this representative study replicates the basic design of the first one (with questionnaires at the beginning and towards the end of confirmation time) and since about two thirds of the items were retained, it is now possible for the first time to capture long-term developments in confirmation work: Which trends prevail? What changes can be observed? As the contributions to this volume show there is indeed both, much stability of the overall picture but there also are some remarkable discontinuities.
- The first survey was conducted to deliver a broad overview of the current practice of confirmation work in Europe. The high degree of satisfaction with confirmation work expressed by the adolescents has been perceived as encouraging. 72 % of the confirmands taking part in the study were satisfied with their confirmation time (Schweitzer et al. 2010, 316). Moreover, a number of positive aspects like high participation rates and innovative forms and methods were found. At the same time, the results also indicated a number of points which require in-depth investigation and sometimes improvement. To name some examples: The empirical results of the first study suggested that the voluntary work of young people contributes to the quality of confirmation work in various ways (Pettersson/Simojoki 2010, 273 ff.). It also turned out that worship services are of little interest to today's confirmands who, in most cases, consider them »boring« (Schweitzer et al. 2010, 314). In the second study, such issues that are central to the practice of confirmation work are examined in more detail.
- Furthermore, some central variables for the interpretation and development of confirmation work are scrutinised in more detail. In addition to a range of social factors like gender, social background, religious socialisation, etc., special emphasis is given, for example, to the influence of urban-rural differences and of majority-minority situations.

To put it more generally, questions like the following can be discussed on the basis of the current study:

- Are the very positive results from the first study rather coincidental, i. e., expressive only of a certain point in time, or can the results be generalised? The same has to be asked for the problematic indications which could also turn out quite different some years later.
- On the one hand, the first European study showed that a number of adolescents were active in voluntary work after confirmation. On the other hand, the majority distance themselves from the church and their parish and seem to show little interest in church-related programs after confirmation. How can these different developments be explained and which opportunities can

be developed for young people to connect their positive experiences during confirmation time with the time afterwards? This is of course a very far-reaching question that can only be answered in part from the data of the study. Further research that is in the process of being carried out by the present research team, will shed additional light on this question.

- The first European study aimed at providing new impulses for the practice of confirmation work and to contribute to the further development of this field. With the five years interval between the two studies, it is possible to ask if at least some improvements can be observed concerning those aspects that, in light of the results of the first study, were considered problematic.

In addition to such questions, the advantages of studies carried out repeatedly, can be seen in a clear increase of the validity of the interpretation of the results. Without a comparative perspective, empirical results can hardly be interpreted at all. High acceptance rates can simply be a snap-shot impression, with possibly a significant decline following right after it. Developments can only be identified by long-term and longitudinal studies.

A common perspective behind such questions can also be seen in the interest in sustainability of educational efforts and in long-term improvements. Working with studies carried out repeatedly is a promising procedure. Yet what about the timing of the two studies with five years between them? The logic behind this timeframe can be explained by two considerations. On the one hand, the time between the studies should be long enough to allow for significant changes (in this respect the German so-called Shell-Studies on youth that work with similar timeframes, can be quoted as a well-known example; cf. Shell Deutschland Holding 2010); on the other hand, the time between the two studies should not be too long because comparisons make more sense especially to practitioners if not too much time has elapsed between the different studies.

6. The Participating Countries and Churches

In the first international study on confirmation work, the contextual diversity of confirmation work in Europe under study was confined to the German speaking countries and Scandinavia. All of these countries – Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland – also took part in the present study. In most of them, either the majority of the population is Protestant (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden) or at least one third of it (Germany, Switzerland). Moreover, Protestantism was established as state church or similar structure in these countries, at least in the past. Although in the present, this only applies to Denmark and Norway, the situation continues to be influenced

by the former forms of established Churches. Only in Austria, Protestants are a small minority while the majority there is Roman Catholic. All of these countries are often considered »Western« in the sense that they are affluent countries and belonged to non-Socialist Europe in the second half of the 20th century.

The second study includes new countries and a Church with a different structure:

- With Poland and Hungary, two central European countries that were part of the so-called East-Block Countries participated in the study. Including these countries does not only broaden the geographical scope of the present study but also widens the perspectives of comparative analysis in important respects. In both contexts, confirmation work faces historically shaped conditions and challenges that in many ways differ considerably from those of the previously studied countries. In Poland, Protestants are a small minority – the majority of the Polish population is Roman Catholic. In Hungary, 37% of the population are Roman Catholics and about 14% Protestants.
- With the German Methodists (Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche, EmK), a type of Church is part of the new study that differs from the other Churches in important respects. Most of all, the other participating Churches are regional or state-wide Churches and through this, are defined by geographical references. This is not the case with the Methodist Church that has never defined itself geographically and that has always stayed away from any connection to the state. In this respect, it considers itself a »free church«. Its inclusion in the study consequently allows for interesting comparisons concerning different structures of the church. Yet readers should keep in mind that the Methodist data require special interpretation in line with the different context. For this reason, the data from the EmK were not included in calculating the totals presented in the appendix.

Unfortunately, the inclusion of additional countries was not without difficulties. In Poland, it was not possible to obtain data from the workers. In Hungary, the research team encountered a number of unforeseen difficulties that could only be overcome with much effort (see below, p. 266 ff.). This is the reason why the data from Hungary could not be included in all steps of the evaluation and interpretation of the data. This refers especially to the calculation of the totals.

In the appendix as well as in the tables throughout the book, the data from the Methodists and from Hungary are separated from the other data by a double line to indicate that these data were not included with the calculation of the totals for the other countries and Churches.

7. Research Questions

In correspondence with the first study, the main questions referred to expectations and experiences with confirmation work for the confirmands as well as the full-time and the voluntary workers. One of the questionnaires can be found in the appendix (cf. p. 395 ff.). It may serve to illustrate the explanations in the following.

In order to achieve a set of data that allows for valid comparisons between the first and the second study, it was decided that about two thirds of the items from the first study should be used again in the second study. Only responses to identical questions allow for comparison. The items to be retained were chosen on the basis of their meaning for the study as a whole. Items that had turned out to be problematic or less meaningful in terms of interpretation were dropped. New items were developed in conversations within the international research team, with a special eye on the questions and problems that emerged from the first study, for example, concerning worship services and voluntary work. Moreover, a number of experts external to the research team were asked for suggestions. In the end, limitations of space played a decisive role. Although not all questions of interest could be asked, preference was given to a brief questionnaire that would encourage the confirmands as well as the workers to answer in a serious manner.

Two general questions can summarise the main interest pursued in this volume:

- What are the expectations of the confirmands and of the full-time and voluntary workers concerning confirmation work?
- What are the experiences of these different groups with confirmation work and what are factors that explain differences related to these experiences?

Both of these questions can now be examined comparatively and from various perspectives (see below), making use of the data from t_1 and t_2 as well as from the two studies from 2007/2008 and 2012/2013.

In more detail, the following perspectives guided the research (in parenthesis, the respective chapters of the book are mentioned):

1. *Personal views*

- beliefs, religious attitudes, values and worldviews of the confirmands (II.1)
- expectations and experiences of the confirmands (II.3)
- religious identity (III.4)
- the confirmands perception of church services (III.7)
- expectations, aims and experiences of the workers (II.4)

2. *Comparisons over time*

- developments and changes during confirmation time ($t_1 \rightarrow t_2$)
- longitudinal developments (first study \rightarrow second study)

3. *Influence of different contextual aspects*

- comparison by differences in the national contexts (country reports, IV)
- comparison by differences in the personal context (gender, educational background and religious socialisation)
- comparison by differences in the regional contexts (urban-rural, III.5)
- comparison by denominational differences (majority-minority Churches, EmK, III.6)

4. *Pedagogical perspectives*

- aims of confirmation work (II.2)
- settings and concepts of confirmation work (II.2; III.1)
- methods and materials of confirmation works (II.2)

5. *Effects of confirmation work*

- religious change, influence on the relationship to the church and parish (II.5)
- effects on the perception of church services (III.7)
- effects of different models of confirmation work (III.1)
- contribution to volunteerism and civil society (II.6)

6. *Methodological perspectives*

- further refinement of an international comparative research on youth, religion and education (VII)

While this volume is put together, the research team is getting ready to send out a third set of questionnaires to be filled in by the former confirmands two years after confirmation (t_3). The aim of this part of the study is to find out more about the question of what comes after confirmation. In some of the countries, a considerable number of the confirmands join the voluntary workers active in confirmation work, thus becoming young leaders in this field themselves. In other countries, programs of Christian youth work are offered. The study will, however, not be limited to the group of those who remain active in church-related contexts but will also try to reach those who distance themselves after confirmation. Some of the questions to be addressed in connection with t_3 will be:

- What can be done to support young people in staying in touch with the church?
- Are there long-term effects of different experiences with confirmation work?

- What are the motives of those who become volunteers in confirmation work?
- What are the experiences of the young volunteers?
- Are there certain preconditions for joining the volunteers or for taking part in youth work after confirmation that can be identified empirically?

Since the results from t_3 are not available yet, the book cannot address answers to these questions. They will be taken up in another publication in this series expected for 2016/2017.

8. The Design of the Study

The aim of the present study was to allow for comparisons concerning confirmation work in Europe over time, in respect to its potentials as well as its continuing need for further improvement. Moreover, in order to make comparisons possible, the basic design of the first study had to be used again.

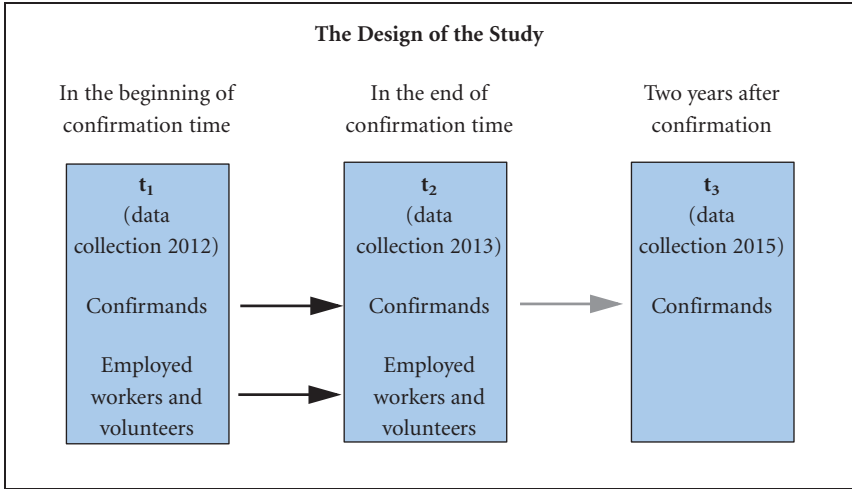
At the same time, as mentioned above, the present study will also be the presupposition for an important further extension of the research still under way. Two years after confirmation, the young people will be given a third questionnaire. This questionnaire will include a special focus on their participation or non-participation in church-related programs and their relationship to the church in order to investigate the possible long-term effects of confirmation work. This third part of the study will be another innovative element, because, compared, for example, to the United States (cf. Smith/Snell 2009), such long-term surveys are rare to non-existent in the European context.

Figure 1 gives an overview on the different parts of the study from t_1 to t_3 ; Table 1 shows the sample sizes for the participating countries.

Table 1: Sample sizes for the countries involved (t_1)

Country	Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK
units/ groups	1635	576	28	477	61	111	48	59	42	134	99
confir- mands	28070	10191	495	7217	2024	2436	2337	1381	362	866	761
workers	4172	1667	126	905	80	679	105	357	–	115	138

Figure 1: Overview on the different parts of the study



9. How the Study Developed

The group of researchers, who carried out the study presented in this volume, has worked together for almost ten years. Many of the group members first came together in 2006, and many meetings in all of the participating countries followed. Early on, the group decided to form its own network, the »International Network for Research and Development of Confirmation and Christian Youth Work« founded in 2007. It was the shared interest in doing empirical research on confirmation work and to make possible international exchange and comparison that brought this group together.

In addition to electronic means of communication that played an important role for this group of researchers, a number of meetings took place in most of the participating countries. These meetings gave the group a chance to get at least a glimpse of the different situations in the countries where the meetings took place. The meetings were supported and facilitated by the local Churches in very generous ways. We are very grateful for this generosity that was extended to the researchers in a truly ecumenical spirit.

While the authors of the present volume carried the main load of work with the research, there also was much support from others that at least must be mentioned here – in the following, the teams and sponsors are listed in the order of how the countries are presented in this volume. Marianne Martin (Tübingen) was responsible for the language editing.

More information about the authors of this study can be found in the appendix.

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Sponsors: The Regional Churches, EKD, Comenius-Institute, University of Tübingen

Austria:

Team: Stefan Grauwald, Dagmar Lagger, Karl Schiefermair

Sponsors: Evangelische Kirche A.B. (Lutheran Church) and Evangelische Kirche H.B. (Reformed Church), University College of Teacher Education of Christian Churches Vienna/Krems, Austria (Kirchliche Pädagogische Hochschule Wien/Krems)

Switzerland:

Team: Thomas Schlag, Muriel Koch, Christoph H. Maaß, Jonas Stutz, Rahel Voirol-Sturzenegger

Sponsors: Cantonal Churches, Faculty of Theology and University of Zurich

Denmark:

Team: Leise Christensen, Henrik Reintoft Christensen, Birthe Jakobsen, Helle Sangild Qvist, Church of Denmark-Center for Further Education of Research, Eberhard Harbsmeier (Loegumkloster), Hans Vium Mikkelsen

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Sponsors: Church Research Institute, Tampere, Christian Education and Family Work/The Church Council, Helsinki, The Center for Church Swedish-speaking Work/The Church Council, Helsinki

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Team: Ida Marie Hoeg, Bernd Krupka, Dag-Eirik Lannem, IKO

Sponsors: The Church Council of the Norwegian Church, IKO-kirkelig pedagogisk senter (Church Educational Centre), KIFO-Institutt for religions- og livssynsforskning (Institute for Church, Religion, and Worldview Research) and KUN – Kirkelig utdanningscenter nord (Northern Norway Educational Centre of Practical Theology), scanning company Viascan

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 Sponsors: Unit for Analysis, located at the Arch Bishop and General Secretary secretariat of the Church of Sweden

Poland:

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Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche in Deutschland (German Methodists):

Team: Tobias Beißwenger, Achim Härtner
 Sponsors: Theologische Hochschule Reutlingen (Reutlingen School of Theology), Kinder und Jugendwerk der Süddeutschen Jährlichen Konferenz der Evangelisch-methodistischen Kirche (Department for Children and Youth Work of the Southern Annual Conference, United Methodist Church in Germany)

10. Explanation of the Terminology

For most of the items, the answers were measured by a scale of 1 to 7, with wordings given in the questionnaire like 1 = »not applicable at all« and 7 = »totally applicable«. In order to reduce the complexity of the tables in this publication, the answering levels 1, 2 and 3 are summarised as »No«, 4 »Middle« and 5, 6 and 7 as »Yes«. In computing the data (e.g., for correlations), the original answering levels have been kept. When reporting results, usually »percentages yes« are reported which is easier to understand than mean values.

The following statistical abbreviations will be used throughout the book:

- *Items* are the questions within a questionnaire.
- *Percentages (%)* refer to valid percent. The number of missing answers is usually about 1-4% of all answers and will not be stated for every item. Rounding accounts for deviations of percentage sums not equalling 100%.
- *Percent points* indicate the differences between percentages.

- The *scale level* of the Likert-scales (rating scales) is metric.
- *Sample size* (N) stands for the number of valid answers to a certain item.
- *Mean value* (M) is the average of all answers for a certain item.
- *Standard deviation* (SD) indicates the spread of the answers to a certain item.
- *Level of significance* (p): In this book a level of 5% ($* = p < 0.05$) or 1% ($** = p < 0.01$) or 0.1% ($*** = p < 0.001$) is used. Due to the large number of questionnaires, not all significant differences can be considered relevant. As the sensitivity of significance test is connected to sample size, even small differences become statistically significant in countries with large sample sizes. All differences reported are significant at least on a 0.05-level. Statistical details (F-values, degrees of freedom, etc.) are mostly not reported in order to make the book more accessible to readers without statistical training.
- *Correlation coefficient* (r) states the degree of interdependence of two variables. It ranges from - 1 to + 1. The closer it is to 0, the smaller the interdependence between the variables.
- *Cronbach Alpha* (α) measures the degree of internal consistency of the items in an index.

When presenting data, the following order of countries is used, which is no more than a technical convention: Germany (DE EKD), Austria (AT), Switzerland (CH), Denmark (DK), Finland (FI), Norway (NO), Sweden (SE), Poland (PL), Hungary (HU). The data from the German Methodists (DE EmK) are presented last because of the different structure of this Church.

The Basic Picture

II. The Basic Picture

1. What the Adolescents Believe

HENRIK REINTOFT CHRISTENSEN, IDA MARIE HØEG, DAGMAR LAGGER, AND
FRIEDRICH SCHWEITZER

1.1 Introduction

How young people relate to religion, to religious institutions and traditions has been of major interest in many countries in recent years. There are a number of different reasons that motivate this interest. Politicians are worrying about the growing pluralism of religious orientations and worldviews in society. Churches are concerned about the future development of their membership. Parents are wondering about what their children might come to believe. Moreover, there are controversial debates within the academic field concerning the ways one can interpret the religious changes of the present. Are we to speak of secularisation or rather of religious pluralisation and individualisation? The question how to describe and to explain the religious orientations of young people refers to a contested field. Many studies on youth actually make little or no reference to religion. More or less tacitly, they seem to assume that religion is no longer a reference point for young people. At least implicitly, such views follow one of the oldest social scientific theories of religion – the theory of secularisation that, more recently, has come under much debate. The concept of secularisation refers to a historical process of transformation through which religion loses its former influence on culture, and society, as well as on the life of the individual person. Such effects are often interpreted as an inescapable consequence of social and cultural modernisation. According to this view, a rational understanding of human life leaves no space for religious orientations. Additional factors are economic affluence and modern medicine that make life feel secure and self-determined.

While there are certain regions or even countries that can be cited as evidence for the theory of secularisation – former East Germany, for example – generally speaking this theory has lost much of its credibility. The reason for this loss simply is that the expected effects of ever decreasing religious influences have never become a reality in most parts of the world. Moreover, a number of analysts like José Casanova (1994) and Charles Taylor (2007) have pointed out that the standard narrative of secularisation is far too simple in order to capture the

complexities of history – and speaking of a »narrative« in this case already highlights the construed character of this theory. Theories of secularisation are increasingly viewed as interpretive constructions and not as factual accounts. Consequently, the term secularisation cannot be taken simply as a distinct explanatory concept anymore (Luhmann 2000, 278), which is not to say, as will also become clear in the following, that religion goes unchallenged by the changes in culture and society.

Such second thoughts concerning secularisation explain why other concepts like religious individualisation and pluralisation have recently gained in influence with many analysts. In this view, young people keep their distance to religious traditions and, even more, to religious institutions. They want to be free to come to their own decisions concerning their faith or their refusal to assent to any given religion, rather than following what they consider the narrow expectations of churches or other religious bodies.

Making religion dependent upon individual preferences necessarily leads to more religious plurality, within as well as beyond the churches. In this respect, religious pluralisation is a consequence of religious individualisation. At the same time, this pluralisation also is the result of migration, internationalisation, or globalisation. Secularisation, individualisation and pluralisation are the three major interpretive approaches in the discussion on youth and religion today in Europe. On a more specific level, the views developed by Grace Davie (1994) under the rubric of »believing without belonging« should be mentioned as well. Davie's interpretation refers to the growing difference between those who see themselves as believers and those who feel part of a religious body like the church. In the following, these views of religion will be used as interpretive lenses, and at the end of this chapter, the question will be taken up of how the data fit or do not fit with different theoretical approaches.

1.2 Analysis

Beliefs and Religious Attitudes

In the present study, confirmands from nine countries were asked about their belief in God and religious attitudes as well as their overall attitude to religious faith and Christian knowledge. The responses reflect that the confirmands have a relatively individualised relationship to Christian traditions. In the beginning of confirmation time, approximately 60 % of the confirmands believe in God and the same share have an image of a loving God who cares about each one of us. 51 % believe in an afterlife and 41 % that Jesus has risen from the dead. 38 % believe in God as creator, and this is the belief with the lowest support. 37 % have experienced that faith in God helps in difficult situations. From the per-

spectives of the churches, the main intention of Protestant confirmation is to achieve knowledge of Christian faith and culture. Already at the beginning of confirmation time, half of the adolescents report that they know what the Christian faith entails. The beliefs in each country are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Christian beliefs (t_1): approval rates in international comparison (%)

	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK
CE01: God created the world.	46	45	33	37	24	35	22	92	77	80
CE02: There is a life after death.	52	57	52	56	36	46	56	86	74	75
CE03: God loves all humans and cares about each one of us.	66	66	53	64	46	60	55	93	85	90
CE04: Jesus has risen from the dead.	52	59	37	42	31	40	27	96	80	85
CE05: I am not sure what I should believe.	31	31	38	35	31	44	47	15	25	24
CE09: I believe in God.	68	71	51	67	35	46	30	92	86	90
CE08: Faith in God helps me in difficult situations.	44	46	34	33	25	30	21	88	75	75
CE10: I know what the Christian faith entails.	53	54	46	45	41	51	41	88	64	45

N (countries) = 353-10075; scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7).

The status of Christian beliefs among the confirmands in the beginning of confirmation time shows interesting national and regional patterns. Minority confirmands score higher on Christian belief-items than confirmands from countries where Lutheran or Protestants constitute a large proportion or the majority of the population. This is evident for confirmands from Poland, to some extent Austria, and this is also the case for the Methodists (EmK) in Germany. The Danish confirmands have just as much in common with confirmands from Germany, Austria and Switzerland as with confirmands from the other Nordic countries. The other Nordic countries (Finland, Norway, and Sweden) share similar belief patterns. An overall impression is that the existence of minority Churches on the one hand, and secularisation in the Nordic countries on the other hand, are significant factors for interpreting the confirmands' beliefs.

There are distinct internal differences in beliefs among the confirmands. God as a creator and God as a loving and caring God is among the attitudes with the

highest degree of support from German, Austrian, Swiss, Polish, and Danish confirmands. These two attitudes are not as strong in Norway, Finland, and Sweden. Here the perception of God as creator scores lower. In Norway, Finland, and Sweden, the confirmands tend to have a stronger belief in life after death than in God as creator. God as a loving and caring God and life after death are the two religious beliefs that most of the confirmands agree with. The question then is whether the aim of confirmation work is achieved: do they learn more about Christian faith and culture? In Table 3 the change in belief attitudes between t_1 and t_2 is examined.

Table 3: Change in Christian belief (t_1 to t_2): approval rates in international comparison (Mean)

	iCE1 Christian belief (t_1)	iKE1 Christian belief (t_2)	Mean difference
Germany EKD	4.72	4.78***	0.06
Austria	4.73	4.83	0.09
Switzerland	4.11	4.12	0.01
Denmark	4.49	4.53	0.04
Finland	3.67	4.07***	0.41
Norway	4.15	4.40***	0.24
Sweden	3.72	4.01***	0.30
Poland	6.44	6.27*	-0.18
Hungary	5.94	6.02	0.08
Germany EmK	6.02	6.00	-0.02
Total	4.44	4.57***	0.13

N (total) = 22654; N (countries) = 295-8945; scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; the means of individual differences is computed as t_2 value minus t_1 value. Only matched cases were used. Sig. (paired t-test): * $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$.

Confirmation work does have an impact on the confirmands' religious path. In most of the countries, there is change in religious attitudes during confirmation time, although the changes are rather small in some of the countries, and actually negative for the Polish confirmands. The positive effect is strongest for countries where confirmands start their confirmation time with relatively low levels of religious attitudes. Switzerland, Finland, Sweden and Norway are among those countries. In this respect, confirmation time does not have the same effect on the Swiss confirmands as it has on confirmands from the three

Scandinavian countries, and not even as the Norwegian confirmands who had exactly the same starting point as the Swiss.

Attitudes to Church and Christianity in General

According to secularisation theory, the expectation is that most people and perhaps especially young people would not have a good opinion of the church and even less a positive attitude towards it. As individualised persons they are brought up in a culture in which institutional religion has less impact than it had a few generations ago. The study asked whether the church has answers to the questions the confirmands find important, and if it is important for them to belong to the church.

Table 4: Positive attitudes towards the Church (t_1): approval rates in international comparison (%)

	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK
CG02: The Church does not have answers to the questions that are important for me.	31	30	36	24	34	28	21	25	19	26
CG01: It is important for me to belong to the Church.	41	42	27	26	28	31	18	82	63	70
CG05: The Church does a lot of good things for the people.	72	67	62	64	67	75	75	88	79	83
CF02: Positive attitude towards the Church	71	84	55	48	34	47	54	88	80	87

N (countries) = 353-10054. The share of those with a positive response to the question (5, 6, 7 for CG01, CG02 and CG05; 4, 5 for CF02).

The confirmands were asked to what degree the Church does not provide answers to the questions they find important in their lives. The table shows that fewer Scandinavian and Polish confirmands agree that the Church does not provide such answers than in the other countries. In the German speaking countries and in Finland, more confirmands agree that the Church does not provide answers to important questions.

At the same time, it is less important for the confirmands to belong to the Church in the Nordic countries. The Swedish confirmands are least likely to agree that the Church does not have answers to important questions but it is not important for them to belong to the Church. The Swedish confirmands aside, one could hypothesise that the more you agree that the Church can answer important questions, the more important it is to belong to the Church.

There are, however, no correlations between the two except for Germany, which shows a very small correlation ($r_s = .06, p < .001$), and Norway where it is actually negative ($r_s = -0,11, p < .001$). In Norway, it is less important for the Church to answer important questions, the more important it is to belong to the Church.

Most confirmands find that the Church does a lot of good things for people, yet many of them do not find it important to belong to the Church. Surprisingly there is only a very weak correlation between the personal attitude of CG02 and the communal attitude of CG05 ($r_s = .04, p < .001$). This might be due to different directions in some of the countries. In Poland, Hungary and among the EmK confirmands, the correlation is strongest and most significant whereas it is not significant in Austria, Finland, and Sweden and actually points in the other direction in Norway. Finally, regarding the share of positive attitudes towards the Church, the Nordic state Churches and the Reformed Church in Switzerland are grouped together below the average while the Austrian, German, and Polish Churches show higher values.

Fewer confirmands in the Nordic countries and Switzerland agree to having a positive attitude toward the Church, with only 34% in Finland in contrast to the 84% and 88% in Austria and Poland respectively. Again one could hypothesise that the more positive you feel about the Church, the more important it is to belong to it. This time, there are significant correlations in all countries, ranging from .22 and .29 in Poland and Sweden respectively to .42 and .48 in Finland and Norway, with the rest of the countries in between.

Religious Background

So far, the religious beliefs and attitudes of the confirmands were examined at the start and ending of confirmation time. The confirmands are not blank slates, however, and come with a background, some of them also with a religious background. Contact with religion and church starts mostly within the family. 94% of the confirmands are already baptised and some of them have parents interested in religion and have also attended church activities earlier in their life. According to the confirmands, 59% of the parents are »somewhat interested in religion«, 20% are »quite interested«, 4% »very interested« and 17% »not interested at some«. Looking at the correlation between the estimation about parents' religious interest and their own religiosity, CG01/KG01 »It is important for me to belong to the church« and CE09 »I believe in God«, a significant connection can be found in some of the countries in t_1 ($p = 0,4$ for Denmark and Poland, $p = 0,6$ for Finland and Norway, $p = 0,5$ for all other countries; $p < 0,01$) and t_2 ($p = 0,5$ for Germany EKD, Switzerland and Denmark, $p = 0,6$ for the other countries; $p < 0,01$). Parents obviously play an important role in this respect. Evening prayer with the parents (CJ02) is an exam-

ple for religious practice in the family. But 27 % of the confirmands state that they never did it and 24 % do not remember. Only 15 % remember an evening prayer »sometimes« and just 11 % daily. This traditional form of religious practice is unevenly distributed between the countries from 59 % with the German Methodists to 6 % in Denmark and Sweden with the rest of the countries in between: Poland (46 %), Norway (21 %), Switzerland (20 %), Finland (19 %), Germany (17 %), and Austria (16 %). Reading the Bible (CH04) is an even rarer practice than evening prayer. 74 % of the confirmands ticked the box »never«. This method of getting familiar with Christian faith plays no role for the majority of the confirmands. More confirmands have attended group activities offered by the church, for example, Sunday school, children or youth groups. The higher frequency for participation of children in church groups with the German Methodists and in Poland could be connected to the minority situation. In Switzerland, the girls and boys have to pass a mandatory catechetical program before confirmation.

Table 5: Previous participation in group activities (t_1) in international comparison (%)

	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK
CM11: when you were 5-9 years?	47	48	48	19	37	36	37	85 ^a	43	71
CM12: from the age of 10 years until now?	51	45	63	24	13	22	23		51	71

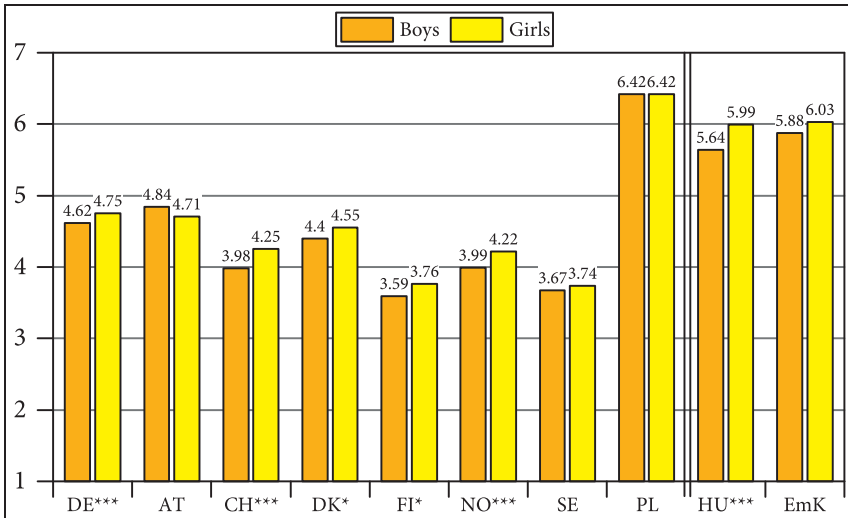
N = 302-9488; the share of those answering yes to the questions of participation.

^a In Poland, the question was not differentiated in relation to age.

Gender Effects on Beliefs and Attitudes

Above, the national differences concerning Christian belief were shown. It is generally assumed that women are more religious than men, and to some degree, this turns out to be the case with the adolescents in the present study as well. Examining gender differences in belief, Figure 2 shows the mean scores on the belief index in each country for both boys and girls (this index is a sum variable of items from the CE/KE section of the questionnaire, cf. p. 345).

The differences are not large but in five countries they are significant. In Sweden and in the two minority countries, Austria and Poland, the girls are not more religious than the boys. In Poland, both show the same extremely high mean score on the belief index (6.42 out of 7), and in Austria, boys actually score higher than girls. However, due to the small sample size, these results are not significant. In all the other countries, the girls are significantly more religious

Figure 2: Mean score on belief index by country and gender, t_1 

N (countries) = 358-10024; scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable. The means have been compared using ANOVA. * $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$.

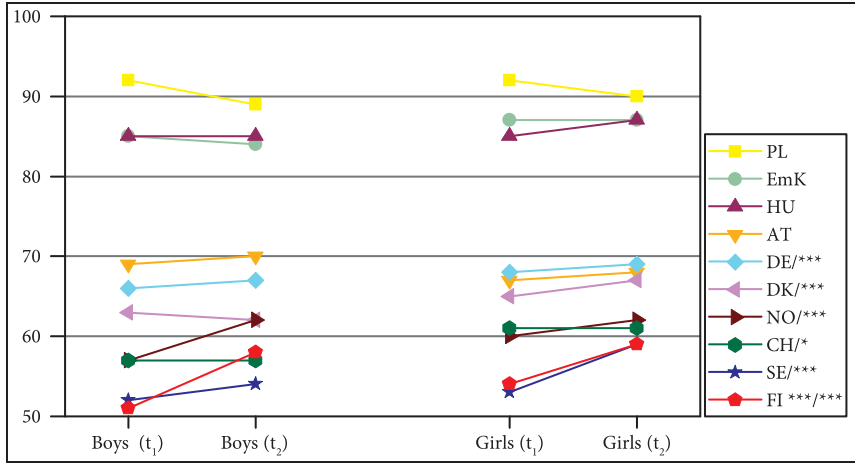
than the boys although the actual difference is often rather small. How do the results at the beginning and at the end of confirmation time compare in relationship to gender? The following Figure 3 gives a first impression. Each line represents the score of either boys or girls in each country.

Figure 3 shows an increase for the boys in most countries, but decreases in Denmark and Poland. However, the difference is only significant in Germany and Finland. Looking at the girls, the change in belief is more marked. Here, significant differences can be found in all countries except Poland and Austria. The change itself is biggest in Sweden and Finland (the lines are almost overlapping in the figure), but these confirmands are still scoring lowest on the belief index.

When looking at the development in attitudes towards the church from t_1 to t_2 , fewer confirmands answer that they have neither positive nor negative attitudes towards the church at t_2 . The biggest positive change is found with Finnish girls, with an almost 50% increase in positive attitudes (from 36% to 52%). On the other hand, even though more confirmands become more positive and fewer become less indifferent during confirmation time, there is no strong decrease in negative attitudes.

Figure 4 shows that boys are generally more negative towards the church than girls at the beginning of confirmation time as well as at the end. Looking at the

Figure 3: Development of belief (iCE1/iKE1) during confirmation time (t_1 to t_2) by country and gender (paired t-test)



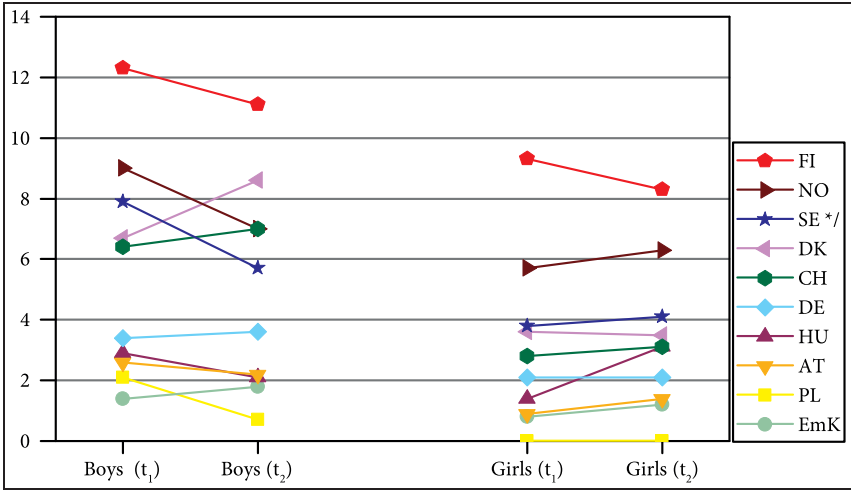
N (countries) = N = 145-4248 (boys) and 155-4471 (girls); significance is given in the legend for each country for boys and girls respectively. The score was normalised as a score between 1 and 100, but only scores from 50 to 100 are shown. The slope indicates if the belief score has increased or decreased between t_1 and t_2 . * $p < .05$ and *** $p < .001$. Countries are listed in the order of their appearance in the figure (Boys t_1).

development between the two points in time, one can see that the share of boys with a negative attitude has increased in Denmark, Germany and Switzerland, and decreased in Austria, Finland, Norway, Poland, and Sweden. It is, however, only the Swedish boys that show a significant decrease between t_1 and t_2 . Considering the development among the girls, the negative attitudes have not significantly decreased during confirmation time.

1.3 Comparison between the First and Second Study

The situation in the seven countries shows notable stability. Belief in God and that Jesus has risen from the dead, reveals no changes from 2007 to 2012. This is also the case for knowledge about Christianity. A similar percentage express the opinion that they know what the Christian faith entails. However, some changes in religious belief in the beginning of confirmation time in 2007 and in the beginning of confirmation time in 2012 have occurred. In 2012, confirmands were more likely than in 2007 to believe that faith in God helps them in difficult situations (significant difference) and God loves all humans and cares about each one of us (significant difference). Moreover, confirmands in

Figure 4: Development of negative attitudes towards the church during confirmation time (t_1 to t_2) by country and gender in percent (paired t-test)



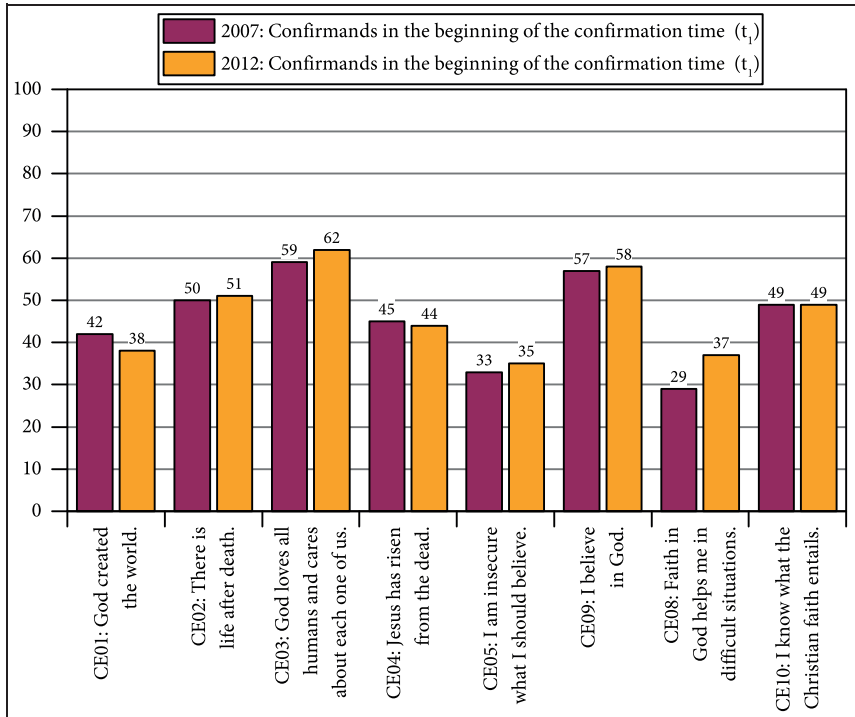
N (countries) = 135-3008 (boys) and 163-3451 (girls); significance is given in the legend for each country for boys and girls respectively; * $p < .05$. Countries are listed in the order of their appearance in the figure (Boys t_1).

2012 were less likely to believe that God created the world (significant difference).

The comparison over the five years between the two studies shows that the Christian beliefs at t_2 are surprisingly similar, although the religious starting point was somewhat stronger in 2012 than in 2007 (see Figure 6). This holds true for all of the belief-items except for the statement that faith in God helps one in difficult situations and knowledge about Christian faith. Confirmands in 2013 are less likely to know what the Christian faith entails than in 2008. This means that confirmation time did not have the same effect concerning knowledge as in 2008. Yet confirmation work seems to have positive effects on confirmands' belief in a God who helps them in difficult situations. The substantial increase in the experience that faith in God helps one in difficult situations, is related to the practical as well as to the personal dimension of religious belief.

The finding suggests that religious belief tends to be seen in more personal terms than five years earlier and that there is a positive psychological benefit for young people from believing. This may reflect a turn in religion to subjective experiences and feelings (Heelas/Woodhead 2005) so that religion would have gained importance for adolescents and young adults in terms of subjective well-being and problem-solving (Smith/Deuton 2005, Smith/Snell 2009).

Figure 5: Religious beliefs in the beginning of confirmation time (t_1) in 2007 and 2012 (%)

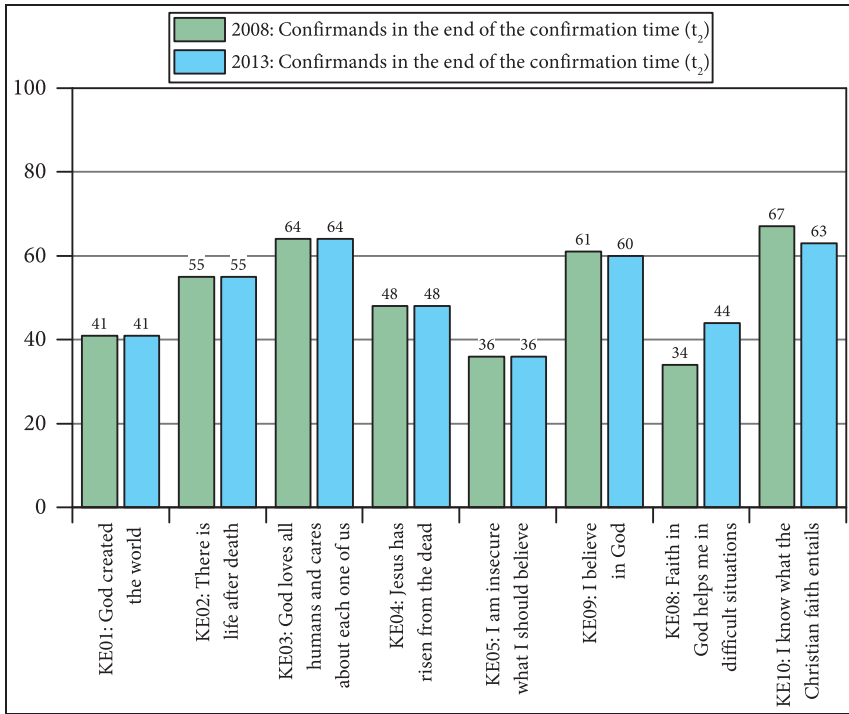


N = 19046-19239 (2007), N = 26637-26895 (2012); scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7)

1.4 Conclusion

First of all, it seems obvious that the results presented cannot be interpreted by viewing them through a single theoretical lense. Moreover, there might be multiple background factors that could not be probed in the present study, like, for example, cultural influences. In any case, the general picture is multi-faceted. There are tendencies that appear to be due to secularisation, for example, concerning faith in creation that is increasingly doubted. Yet in general, the faith in God claimed by the adolescents seems to follow more the pattern of individualisation, with clearly more agreement to this faith as such than to specifically Christian beliefs.

In comparison, the results of the first and the second study on confirmation work in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 indicate a surprising stability and continuity in terms of religious attitudes. At the same time, there also are changes. Most

Figure 6: Christian beliefs in the end of confirmation time (t_2) (%)

N = 17641-17808 (2008), N = 22496-22677 (2013); scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7).

notably, the share of confirmands who say that faith in God helps them in difficult situations, has gone up markedly. There also is an increase of those who feel that God loves and cares for each and every one. Both respects were not to be expected, in that they indicate a growing degree of interest in individual or personal religion. It is less surprising to note that faith in God as creator (»God created the world«) received less assent in the second study than five years earlier, especially in the Nordic countries.

The relationship to the church as an institution turns out to be especially complex. Many more confirmands take part in confirmation work than those who say that it is important to them to belong to the church. In this respect, the pattern of »believing without belonging« appears to be reversed into »belonging without believing«. Yet according to the results, many more confirmands believe in God or even in specifically Christian statements about God than those who say that it is important to them to belong to the church. Consequently, it would also be too simple to refer to them as »without believing«.

Belonging to the church is less dependent on the degree that the young people trust the church to have answers to their questions, than to a positive relationship to the church. This indicates that the relationship to the church cannot be equaled to a single aspect but probably consists of a whole set of different aspects influencing it.

In all the respects mentioned so far, there are also national influences. General theories that only focus on international or global change are likely to overlook such differences. Obviously, national differences in terms of traditions and contexts continue to play an important role on a personal level, the influence of the parents and of a religious upbringing in the family is very visible. This influence remains important, although many families do not tend to favor traditional forms of religious nurture.

It is no surprise that gender also plays a role as a background variable. Female confirmands tend to be more religious than boys, and their attitudes towards the church are also more positive. Yet at the same time, gender differences in confirmation work in general are not as big as one might expect. Confirmation work has effects on most of the confirmands, and generally speaking, these effects go in the direction expected by those who organise this program. In other words, investing time and other resources into confirmation work is highly advisable for the Churches. Yet the impact of confirmation work is stronger with girls than with boys, concerning their faith as well as their attitudes towards the church. This may raise questions concerning the ways in which confirmation work is carried out. So far, it does not seem to be equally in line with the interests of girls and boys.

2. Confirmation Work Today

LEISE CHRISTENSEN AND BERND KRUPKA

The 2007/2008 study, described confirmation work in transition: Firstly on the level of society, where in some countries confirmation had the self-evidence of a common public rite, as for example, in Denmark where there did not even exist any detailed regulations for confirmation work. Or in other countries, confirmation work was becoming part of the private religious sphere, as for example, in Sweden, where only a minority of the age group still participates in confirmation work. This transition links to a paradigm shift in curricular aims and workers' orientations with three poles: a traditional focus on catechism topics on the one hand, a focus on the adolescents' life-world and its challenges and experiences on the other, and finally, a focus on church socialisation and an integration of confirmands into the community of the parish. In terms of its methodical expression, confirmation work has been in the transition from a school-type-setting with weekly lessons, sometimes, as in Denmark, literally in school or in classroom-type localities, to a youth-work-type-setting, integrating a variety of professional approaches and volunteer work in team-style confirmation work, preferring camp settings and more community- and experience-based methods.

What has happened during the five years between the two studies? This chapter will present the changes from 2007/2008 to 2012/2013. It will discuss these changes and other relevant observations, in order to give an impression of the status of confirmation work and where it is heading in the future.

2.1 Curriculum and Administrative Framework in the Participating Churches

Notable curricular changes have mainly happened in Norway (2009) and Denmark (2014). For changes in the other countries since 2008, see the reports from the countries participating in the study (p. 181 ff.).

In Norway, confirmation work is now embodied in the new Plan for Christian Education, covering the life-span from 0-18 years. The new plan changes the focus of confirmation work from youth-work integration to life-world- and parish-integration. The Christian life that confirmands are being prepared for, is no longer defined by the community that the parish can offer to young people but by »home, ... church ... and society« (Plan for Christian Education 2010, 23). The dialogue with the young people's own questions and the chal-

Table 6: Curricular Background of Confirmation Work between 2007/2008 and 2012/2013

	DE (EKD)	AT	CH/Zürich	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE (EmK)
Orders for confirmation 2007/2008	Regional variations in Churches in the federal states	Church Order	Church Order	Royal Decree; Book of order	Church Law, Church Order; Church Handbook	Order for Worship, Syllabus passed by the synod	Church Handbook	(did not take part in the 2007/2008 survey)	(did not take part in the 2007/2008 survey)	(did not take part in the 2007/2008 survey)
2012/2013	<i>Depends on regional churches</i>	<i>No changes</i>	<i>No changes</i>	New Royal Decree in 2014; several changes	<i>No changes</i>	New Syllabus for Christian education (2009)	<i>No changes</i>	Book of Order.	Books of Order from Reformed-Calvinist, Evangelical-Lutheran denominations and Methodists	New Order of Confirmation Work (KU) in 2000
Curriculum for confirmation 2007/2008	Limited references to official aims in church documents	No curriculum	No curriculum	No curriculum	Rippikoulu-suunnitelma 2001 as frame; plans in local parishes	Plan for confirmation firmsjonstiden I Den norske kirke 1998, requiring local plans in parishes	National guidelines (Rikklinjor för Svenska kyrkans konfirmand-arbete) revised 2008	–	–	–

DE (EKD)	AT	CH/Zürich	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE (EmK)
2012/2013	Since 2009: No changes 6 regional Churches have made new guidelines	No changes	A set of guidelines in 2014	No changes	A chapter in the 0-18 Plan for Christian Education from 2009, requiring local plans.	No changes	Martin Luther's Small Cat.	No set curriculum for any of the Churches mentioned above	National curriculum of Confirmation Work (KU) in 2000. Later new topics suggested by CW workers
Central aims 2007/2008	Traditionally: » To convey experiences of faith; to work out the Christian faith—Contemporary: to encounter the congregation for young people	»Confirmation is the invitation for a responsible Christian existence and to participate in the life of regional Church«	»To strengthen the familiarity of confirmation with Christian teachings and the Order of Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church«.	»»To be reinforced in the faith in the Triune God; to grow in love for fellow humans; to live a life of prayer in communion with the parish«	»To awaken and strengthen the faith given in baptism so that the young people can live in the community of the parish and grow as disciples of Jesus«	»offer the possibility to explore and test the Christian faith from the perspective of their own questions of life«	-	-	-

DE (EKD)	AT	CH/Zürich	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE (EmK)
2012/ 2013	No changes	No changes	More variety in methods of teaching; still ministers teaching but not necessarily the local parish minister; few volunteers	No changes	»a comprehensive summary and experience of the doctrines, practice and fellowship inherent in faith, in dialogue with the young people's own questions of life.«	No changes	Only the ministers teach confirmation work. School RE can be connected to confirmation work.	To a great extent locally decided. Few volunteers.	Minister of circuit teaching. More variety in methods and teaching materials

lenges of their life-world is more prominent than in the old plan. The volume has increased from 45 lessons (à 45 min.) to 60 hours.

In Denmark, a new Royal Decree was introduced in 2014, new non-compulsory guidelines for workers were published, covering not only the theological perspective of the work, but also the didactical and pedagogical sides, and a state school reform was undertaken. The work on the new Decree was clearly inspired by the results of the first international survey on confirmation work in Europe (cf. Schweitzer et al. 2010).

The Royal Decree requires that the confirmands should be familiar with the elementary content of the Christian faith and the order of the worship service in the Church of Denmark and that a bridge should be built between the life-world of the confirmands and the Gospel. The Decree does not only mention the ordinary confirmation preparation but also mentions the so-called mini-confirmands.

Miniconfirmand classes take place in the 3rd or 4th grade and consist generally of about 8-10 double lessons that can take place with one double lesson a week for about ten weeks or as all-day-sessions or as a summer or weekend camp. There is no curriculum for miniconfirmand classes and it is not a requirement that regular confirmands have attended the classes. However, with the Decree, it became compulsory for the parishes to offer this program. Miniconfirmand classes usually take place in the actual church or in the church hall/vicarage. About half of the children offered this kind of classes participate.

The results of the first survey (Schweitzer et al. 2010) also inspired the establishment of the Danish Confirmand Center. It is a homepage (www.konfirmandcenter.dk) for confirmand workers. It is widely used among the ministers of the Church of Denmark. The center promotes an experience-based teaching philosophy where lectures are a no go.

Among the churches new to the 2012/2013 study, the Polish Lutheran and the Hungarian Protestant Churches, represent a more traditional picture where confirmation work is still quite self-evident and scarcely regulated by church-wide curriculums. In Hungary, three Churches took part in the new study – the Reformed Church, the Evangelical-Lutheran Church and the Methodist Church. All three Hungarian Protestant Churches have different books of Order but none of the Churches have curriculums or official aims for confirmation work. The number of lessons and length of confirmation time are decided locally and vary across the country.

The Lutheran Church in Poland is very small and thus has not developed a lot of different teaching materials. The central aims and curriculum are covered by Luther's Small Catechism. There are certain guidelines for the topics of confirmation work and they are in accordance with The Small Catechism. There is

one official workbook in two parts for the confirmands in addition to the Small Catechism. The confirmands attend confirmation classes for about 19 months but there is no set number of lessons. The pedagogical methods are somewhat traditional but methodological variations are being developed.

The Methodists in Germany (Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche) last changed its curriculum and order for confirmation work in 2000, but new topics are introduced on a continuous basis. Confirmands participate in confirmation work over a period of two years, which is different from most other Churches in the survey. The central aim of the curriculum does not mention the parish, but focuses on the role of the Christian faith in the world.

On a curricular and administrative level, only Denmark and Norway show changes in the number of lessons or the time span covered in confirmation work since 2007/2008. Besides these changes, only a few minor changes in confirmation work practice indicating more methodical variation can be observed (cf. Table 7). The exception is Norway, where the new plan focusses on central expressions of parish life and has abandoned the compulsory choice between several methodical options from the former syllabus.

There are no major developments concerning workbooks since the last study, possibly indicating a process where other, more flexible and digitalised resources replace the workbook genre as a whole.

2.2 Official Guidelines and Structural Changes

To which extent are official guidelines descriptive of confirmation work practice? The present study allows for some general observations about the structural effect of the guidelines.

Firstly, one can notice that the number of workers who consider themselves familiar with confirmation work guidelines has increased somewhat since 2007/2008 (67%). In 2012/2013, 69% of the confirmation workers were familiar with the official plans and guidelines for their work, the rate being highest in Denmark (87%). However, only 56% of the workers found the official guidelines helpful, the rate actually being lowest in Denmark (mirroring the ongoing discussion about the new Royal Decree on confirmation work). On the whole, 73% of those workers who actually knew the guidelines found them helpful. While different degrees of involvement for confirmation workers and a large number of volunteers in some of the Churches in the study (see p. 71 ff.) imply different degrees of familiarity with official guidelines, the figures indicate that the practice of confirmation work has its own momentum vis-a-vis the official guidelines.

Table 7: Changes in the practical framework of confirmation work between 2008 and 2013

	DE (EKD)	AT	CH/Zürich	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE (EmK)
Length of time 2007/2008	Throughout one school year	8 – 12 months	10 – 12 months	September to April/May	Min. half a year	A time-spread over 8 months is compulsory.	From 4 weeks to one year	(did not take part in the 2007/2008 survey)	(did not take part in the 2007/2008 survey)	(did not take part in the 2007/2008 survey)
2012/2013	No changes	No changes	No changes	Confirmation time now occasionally starts later than September	No changes	60 hours during a time-spread of 8 months	No changes	19 months	A huge variety of models according to local traditions	20–24 months
Age of confirmands	13 – 14	12 – 15	15 – 16	13 – 15	14 – 15	14 – 15	15	On average 15	12–14	12–14
Lessons 2007/2008	One meeting (a 90 min) a week	20 – 50 lessons (a 60 min.), camps included	72 lessons (a 45 min.)	Min. 24 double lessons (a 90 min.), Sunday services	80 lessons (a 45 min)	45 lessons incl. 8 Sunday services	60 hours	–	–	–
2012/2013	No changes (varies from parish to parish)	No changes	No changes	Min. 48 lessons (a 45 min.)= 36 hours, Sunday services	No changes	60 hours incl. 8 Sunday services	No changes	No set number	A huge variety of models in accordance with local choices	Average: 34 fortnightly lessons (a 60 min) plus 5 block seminars or camp days

	DE (EKD)	AT	CH/Zürich	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE (EmK)
Camp as a part of training 2007/2008	Weekend camps	Often week-ends	3 – 7 days	Some shorter camps (2 – 3 days)	90% of groups about a week	Mostly week-end camps, occasionally longer camps.	Minimum one weekend – maximum 4 weeks	-	-	-
2012/2013	No changes – average 3 nights of camp	Often week-ends or short camps	No changes	No changes	No changes	Mostly 1-2 weekend camps, a higher share of parishes offering longer camps	No changes	Camps very seldom- Occasional weekend camps.	Not very often. Camps can be found after the confirmation	Average: 3.6 overnight stays at a camp or KU weekend
Teaching environment 2007/2008 & 2012/2013	Parish hall, camps	Church, parish hall, camps	Parish hall, Community centre, camps	Church hall, vicarage house, church	»purpose-oriented room«, camp centers, a special sacramental room needed	Church, parish hall, occasionally school or localities of one of the pietist mission societies	parish localities with ordinary lecture room or more relaxed room, camp or conference center	Church hall	Church hall, rectory	Church hall, some excursions, camps

Table 8: Study books in Confirmation Work 2008 and 2013

	DE (EKD)	AT	CH/Zürich	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE (EmK)
Ecclesiastical books to study 2007/2008 & 2012/2013	Bible, Hymn book	Bible, Hymn book	Bible, Hymn books	Bible, Hymn book	Bible, Hymn book, Finnish Catechism	Hymn Bible	Bible, Hymn book	Luther's Small Cat., Hymn book	Bible, Hymn book	Bible, Hymn, Methodist Hymn book
Workbook for confirmands 2007/2008	Large variety to choose from	Some pastors use books from Germany	various books or materials	Large variety to choose from	The book accepted by the bishops (7 different books)	Large variety of often: Konfirmand-publi-shers. bibelen (Bible with a national catechetic authorisation appendix)	A variety of different publishers. No official national authorisation	-	-	-
2012/2013	No changes	No changes	No changes	No changes	No changes	Confirmant-bibelen in 2 nd edition 2011, less other books available. Digital re-sources	No changes	Luther's Small Cat. One official workbook	Varies from place to place	Copied Materials from CW hand-book: »Un-terwegs ins Leben«. Other Protestant CW teaching materials

	DE (EKD)	AT	CH/Zürich	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE (EmK)
Handbook for teachers 2007/2008	Large variety, each workbook has a handbook for teachers	No	various books or materials	Large variety, each workbook has a handbook for teachers	Each workbook has a handbook for teachers	Handbook for off. Curriculum, 1998, Teacher versions of the various study books	Common: 3 handbook volumes 2003-2005 by Verbium	-	-	-
2012/2013	No changes	No changes	No changes	No changes	No changes	Handbook and website for Konfirmanden, teacher versions of other books	No changes	No handbook	Reformed Church: No Handbook; Evangelical-Lutheran Church: 'Támuló közösségben' (2008)	CW-handbook: »Unterwegs ins Leben« Periodical: KU-Impulse (since 2012)

Table 9: Teaching structure in confirmation work (t_2) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 (average number per unit)

	2007/2008	2012/2013
VQ01: number of meetings overall (without normal Sunday services)	35.76	31.79
VQ02: hours of »normal instruction« (hours à 60 min.)	47.05	42.82
VQ03: special days with the group (at least 3 hours, without trips, outings, camps)	3.07	3.86
VQ04: trips/outings (at least 3 hours)	1.02	1.40
VQ05: overnight events in the context of trips/outings/camps (number of nights altogether)	3.98	3.44
VQ06: Internship in the parish (hours per confirmand)	2.14	2.72

Average number per unit; N = 996-1041 units.

Second, the general change from a school-type paradigm to youth-work-type confirmation work is continuing. Table 9 shows how the overall number of meetings and the hours of regular instruction have declined somewhat since 2007/2008, while the number of special days, outings, placements in the parish and integrated youth work activities have increased.

Third, the transition from school-type to youth-work-type has implications for the type of staff involved in confirmation work. While a classroom setting initially was designed as a »one-man-show«, the youth-work setting implies the presence of a group of staff in various roles and from various professions, and, at least usually, the presence of volunteers. Also in this respect, the transition from school-type to youth-work-type confirmation work has continued. On the average, the number of ministers involved in confirmation work has declined, while the number of other workers and volunteers per unit has increased.

Table 10: Ministers, catechists, deacons, volunteers, others (t_2) in confirmation work in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 (average number per unit)

	2007/2008	2012/2013
VU01: ministers	1.68	1.36
VU02: deacons/catechists/youth workers	0.50	0.68
VU03: parents of the confirmands	1.36	1.66
VU04: volunteers older than 18 years (confirmands' parents not included)	2.26	2.38
VU05: volunteers younger than 18 years	2.42	3.50
VU06: others, i. e.	0.53	1.79

N = 393-758 units.

Fourth, one can discern some effects of the age and the gender proportion of confirmation staff. While the age of the workers has not really changed since 2007/2008 (from 33.3 to 33.1 years), the rate of female staff in confirmation work has increased by 6 %-point to 56.5 % of the workers' sample in 2012/2013.

In both 2007/2008 and 2012/2013, Swedish confirmation work, featuring the youngest staff with the highest share of female workers, does best in terms of confirmand experience. Is it possible to generalise that a higher rate of female workers and younger staff have a positive effect on confirmation work? A correlation analysis (Pearson) on unit level shows a more complex picture. Confirmand satisfaction (iKN3), experience of growth in faith (iKB1) and attitude change in confirmation work (iCE1-DIFF) are the items where confirmands with low church affiliation usually score high (cf. p. 35). They correlate negatively with increasing staff age (VF02; iKN3: $-.192^{**}$; iKB1: $-.062^*$; iCE1-DIFF: -0.76^* ; N = 998-1052 units, ** : sign. at .001-level, * :sign. at .05-level). In the same perspective, the proportion of female staff has no statistically significant effect. Among more religious confirmand groups with a higher church affiliation, the correlation runs in the opposite direction: the score of the units on iKN3 Christian Beliefs correlates positively with workers age (VF02: $.207^{**}$) and negatively with the proportion of female workers in the unit's staff ($-.205^{**}$). Younger staff and a higher rate of female staff contribute thus to reaching more young people.

2.3 Conclusion

The 2012/2013 study shows an ongoing transition of confirmation work leaving the school-type paradigm of formal education and becoming more and

more integrated into the youth-work-paradigm of non-formal education, implying more variation in social forms of teaching and methods, both on a curricular level and in practice. While the newly participating churches in Hungary and Poland place themselves on the more conservative spectrum of the study, they show the same tendencies. In the empirical material one can observe that the involvement of other professions than the ministers, and of volunteers has increased since 2008, along with the rate of female confirmation workers.

From a different perspective, the 2007/2008 study could distinguish between a general adolescent life-world focus and a parish socialisation focus where the integration into the local parish and youth work community on the other hand, were a curricular concern. While in the 2007/2008 study, the Church of Sweden curriculum was the only curriculum explicitly focusing on the adolescent life-world without a focus on the parish community, adolescent life-world questions have since acquired more curricular status both in Denmark and Norway, while the role of the local parish and its community has been less pronounced at least in Norway. Among the new participants of the 2012/2013 study, the Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche has a curricular focus on the role of the church in the world, also implying a focus on the adolescent life-world.

Does this mean that parish- and parish-youth-work-integration are losing importance as the focal point of confirmation work? Other studies describe a change in patterns of association for parish life in general and for church youth work (Fretheim 2014, Ilg et al. 2014, Ward 2002), due to general changes in society on the one hand, and the integration of formal and non-formal education in the concept of whole-day schooling on the other. Certainly, this has consequences for the parish community and the shape of the youth work which confirmands encounter, implying that confirmation work has to prepare confirmands for other forms and ideals of Christian fellowship than the ones the present generation of adult workers grew up with.

3. Expectations, Motivations and Experiences of the Confirmands

GEORG HARDECKER AND JONAS BROMANDER

This chapter is about confirmation time from the perspective of the confirmands. The focus will be on changes taking place between the beginning and the end of confirmation time. Accordingly, this chapter deals with the confirmands' motives and expectations for confirmation work, relating them to the experiences they actually had. Consequently, questions like the following will be asked: What kind of motives and expectations do confirmands bring with them? How do their experiences correspond to the image of confirmation time they had in the beginning? Where do the experiences exceed the expectations and where is confirmation time falling short of the confirmands' expectations?

3.1 Motives and Expectations

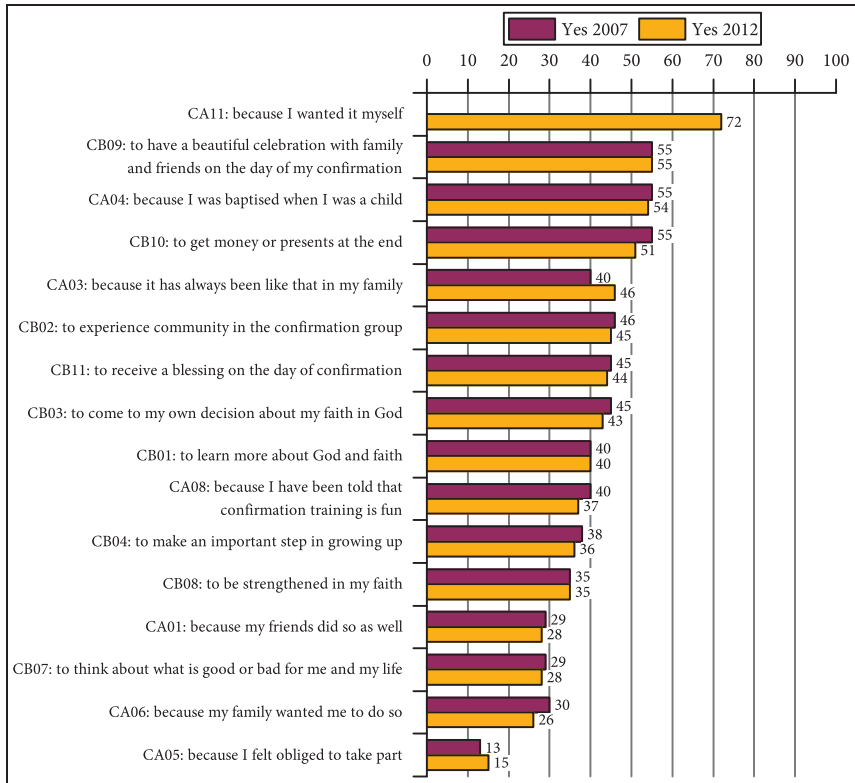
In t_1 , confirmands were asked about their motives for participating in confirmation time and what expectations they had for this time. These questions were marked as CA and CB in the questionnaire. Figure 7 shows the overall results concerning the confirmands' expectations and motives for attending confirmation time. The results indicate that the most important reason for attending is linked to young people's own will to attend. As many as 73% of the adolescents in the study agree that they attended because they wanted it themselves (CA11). On the other hand, at the bottom end of the list are motives that are the opposite of one's own will: that they felt obliged to attend or that they attended because their family wanted it or because their friends attend as well. This means that young people are strongly emphasising their own will for attending.

Other important motives and expectations are related to young people's wish to have a beautiful celebration with family and friends on the day of confirmation (CB09), to get money and presents in the end (CB10) and because they were baptised when they were children (CA04). About 40% of the confirmands have various religious motives and expectations related to confirmation time.

A factor analysis was performed in order to analyse the connections between these items (CA and CB). It revealed that the items related to motives and expectations could be categorised into four distinct dimensions explaining 58% of the variation (see Table 11). These are: faith-related motives, family tradition, celebration and fun and friendship.

In the following, first the four dimensions will be explained, then each of the

Figure 7: Expectations and motives for attending confirmation in 2007 and 2012 (%)



N = 19189-19208 (2007), N = 25950-26023 (2012); scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7). CA 11: Not asked in 2007.

dimensions will be further scrutinised and the results for the respective items will be analysed.

Variables which describe various faith-related motives have their highest loading on the first factor. These are: »to be strengthened in my faith«, »to learn more about God and faith«, »to receive a blessing at the day of confirmation« and »to come to my own decision about my faith in God«. Also the following items have their highest loading on the first factor: »to think about what is good and bad in my life« and »to make an important step in growing up«. The dimension is named according to the items with the highest loading on the factor as »faith-related motives«.

The second factor included the items »because my family wanted me to do so«, »because I felt obliged to take part«, »because it has always been like that in

Table 11: Factor analysis (rotated factor matrix): Expectations and motives (t₁, 2012)

	1	2	3	4
	Faith-re- lated mo- tives	Family tradition	Celebration	Fun and friendship
CB08: to be strengthened in my faith.	.80			
CB01: to learn more about God and faith.	.75			
CB11: to receive a blessing on the day of confirmation.	.69			
CB03: to come to my own decision about my faith in God.	.64			
CB07: to think about what is good or bad for me and my life.	.63			
CB04: to make an important step in growingup.	.59			
CA11: because I wanted it myself.	.44	(-.29)		(.28)
CA06: because my family wanted me to do so.		.76		
CA05: because I felt obliged to take part.		.56		
CA03: because it has always been like that in my family.		.48		
CA04: because I was baptised when I was a child.	(.25)	.40		
CB10: to get money or presents at the end.			.72	
CB09: to have a beautiful celebration with family and friends on the day of my confirmation.			.71	
CA08: because I have been told that confirmation training is fun.				.63
CB02: to experience community in the confirmation group.	(.49)			.50
CA01: because my friends did so as well.				.33

N = 24556.

my family« and »because I was baptised as a child«. This dimension is called »family tradition«.

The following items had the highest loading on the third factor »to have a beautiful celebration with family and friends on the day of my confirmation« and »to get money and presents at the end«. Both of these items were taken to relate to celebration and, thus, the factor dimension was thought of as celebration-related motivation.

The fourth and last factor dimension gathers the items »because I've been told that confirmation training is fun« and »because my friends did so as well« and »to experience community in the confirmation group«. The last mentioned item is also gets a quite strong side-loading on the first factor. Given that these items were linked in the fourth dimension it was assumed that it stands for expectations of »fun and friendship« during confirmation time.

In the following, each of these four dimensions will be analysed. What is different between the countries? Did the experiences meet the expectations? Were there changes between the first and the second study?

Faith-related Motives, Expectations and Experiences

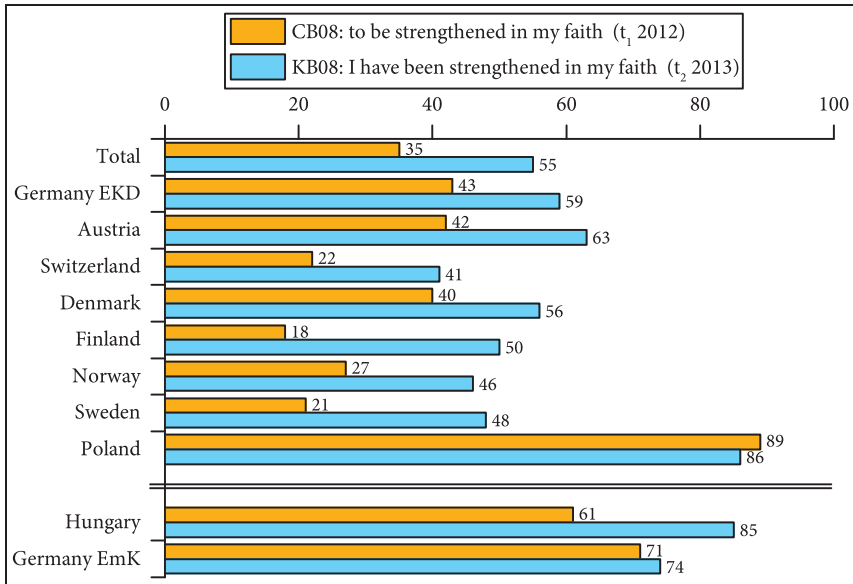
The faith-related motives explain more of the total variance than the other dimensions and are also the dimension which fits best with the Churches' motivation for confirmation time. Taking a closer look at these motives and expectations and respective experiences, the following can be found:

Expectations and experiences related to being strengthened in faith (CB08) differ strongly within the different countries. In the beginning of confirmation time, the agreement with this motive is at 35% on the average, while in the end as many as 55% of all confirmands said that they actually had been strengthened in their faith (KB08). This means a difference of 17 percent points! (See Figure 8) The experiences related to being strengthened in faith are notably higher than expectations related to it in Finland and Sweden while in Poland and among the Methodist confirmands in Germany they are so high already in the beginning that they are much more difficult to meet.

Although the expectations for confirmation time vary considerably between the different countries, more than two thirds of the adolescents in Germany (EmK), Hungary and Poland and more or less half of the confirmands in the other countries said that they had been strengthened in their faith. Some changes between the first and second study can be observed. The experience of being strengthened in faith decreased in Finland by 5 percent points from the previous study (2007/2008), whereas in Denmark (+ 8) and Austria (+ 10) there were increases.

40% of all confirmands were motivated by »learning more about God and faith« (CB01). However, differences between the countries occur. While less

Figure 8: Strengthened in faith – expectations and experiences (CB08/KB08) (%)



N (total) = 25855 (t₁ 2012); N = 22737 (t₂ 2013). N (countries) = 357-9988 (t₁ 2012), 292-8982 (t₂ 2013); scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7).

than a third of the confirmands in Switzerland, Finland and Norway affirmed this statement, the agreement of the confirmands in Germany (EKD), Austria, Denmark and Sweden ranged between 40% and 45%. Even higher values can be found among confirmands from the German Methodists (EmK) (73%) and Poland (87%). Between 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 the only noteworthy change took place in Austria (+ 7 percent points).

In the same way, the motivation differs while the experiences are similar. Positive responses to the statement »I have learnt more about God and faith« (KB01) were between 69% in Austria and 80% in Germany (EmK). Switzerland's confirmands affirm this slightly less often (60%), the Polish more often (88%). Most noteworthy is the change in Austria (+ 10) and in Norway (+ 9) over the five years between the two studies.

At the same time, 45% of the confirmands reported at the end of their confirmation time that »what I learnt in confirmation time has little to do with my daily life« (KK35). Within the different countries the agreement ranges between 34% in Poland and in Germany (EmK) and 53% in Switzerland. At the same time, at least one third of the adolescents perceived a relationship between their daily life and what they learnt during confirmation time. In Austria one can see

a positive development between 2008 and 2013 (- 9), while in Norway (+ 6) and Sweden (+ 9) the number of confirmands who can see a connection between life and faith decreased.

While in t_1 39% of the confirmands expressed their expectation »that my questions concerning faith will play a role« (CK11), 42% made the experience that these questions were actually addressed (KK11). The picture in the different countries varies. In the German speaking countries as well as in Denmark and Norway the values are between 36% and 45%, while in Finland, Sweden, Poland and Germany (EmK), more than 50% of the confirmands affirmed this statement. It seems to be a general development that more of the confirmands' questions concerning faith were taken up in confirmation time.

In t_1 , 44% of the confirmands said that it is important for them to receive the blessing (CB11), while in t_2 63% affirmed this. It can be seen that the differences between the countries (between less than one third and more than two thirds) become smaller during confirmation time. In t_2 , the importance of receiving a blessing is between 55% and 68%, with remarkably higher values in Hungary (82%), Poland (89%) and Germany (EmK) (85%). The spectrum of all confirmands' answers therefore became smaller.

Varying expectations, similar experiences – this pattern can also be observed with regard to coming to one's »own decision about my faith in God« (CB03) (see Figure 9). A noteworthy increase can be found in Austria (+ 18). Only the Swedish values decreased (- 12). Many of the confirmands in the different countries made the same experience: They felt enabled to come to a decision of their own. However, this experience was not associated with a common motivation or expectation to get enabled to come to such a decision.

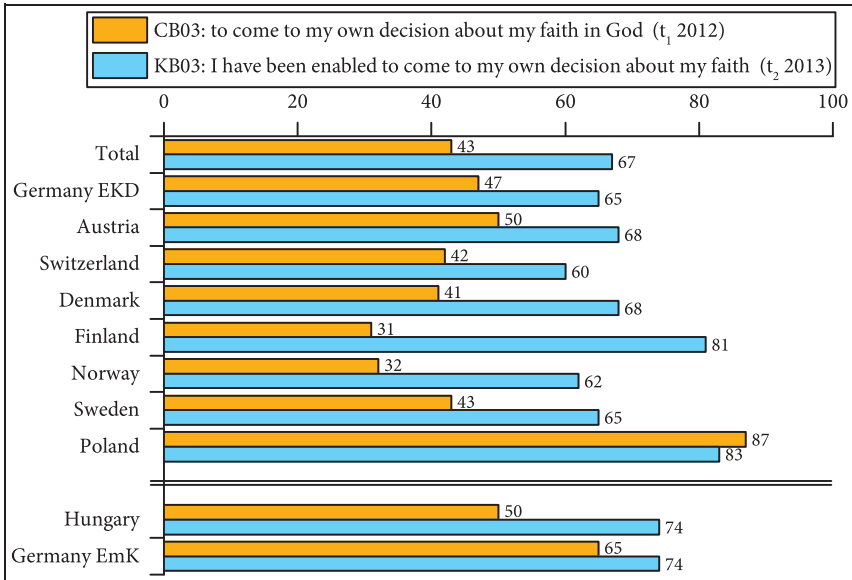
»To think about what is good or bad for me and my life« (CB07) is an expectation that 28% of the confirmands expressed in t_1 . In t_2 , 53% of the confirmands said that they thought about »good or bad« (KB07) – the spectrum is, as in t_1 , very close together (between 50% in Denmark and 60% in Sweden). The Polish confirmands' experience was what they had expected (76%), in Hungary the increase was by 33 percent points (86%), in Germany (EmK) by 18 (65%).

The expectations confirmands have towards faith are very different between the countries taking part in the study. An interesting observation is that the confirmands' views of faith seem to get clearer during confirmation time – a development to be found with all of the confirmands, regardless of which country they live in.

Family Tradition as Motivation

»Family tradition« is an important motivation for taking part in confirmation time. For about half of the confirmands in the participating countries, »family tradition« is a reason to take part.

Figure 9: Own decision about my faith: Expectations and Experiences (CB03/KB03) (%)



N (total) = 25906 (2012); 22541 (t₂ 2013), N (countries) = 354-10008 (t₁ 2012), 292-8850 (t₂ 2013); scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7).

26% of the confirmands said that their family »wanted me to do so« (CA06). Finnish (44%), Hungarian (43%) and Polish confirmands (55%) affirmed this more often, while only 20% to 35% of the confirmands in the other countries did. In the case of the Polish confirmands, the influence of the family is accompanied by a feeling of obligation (CA05: 77%). In Norway (29%), Finland (35%) and Hungary (38%), the number of confirmands feeling obligated by the family is clearly smaller; in the other countries, their number amounts to 8% to 21%. 46% of all confirmands affirmed that they took part in confirmation time »because it has always been like that in my family« (CA03). The country-specific answers of confirmands concerning their own baptism as a motivation are even closer together. »Because I was baptised when I was a child« (CA04) was a motive for taking part in confirmation time for 54% of all the confirmands. In almost all of the countries one can observe stability between the first and the second study. Therefore the change concerning baptism as a motive (CA04) in Finland (- 29) and Sweden (+ 35) is even more impressive.

In sum, the tradition of the family plays an important role in the confirmands' view of confirmation time. At the same time, the tradition of the family

is considered less as an obligation than a motivation. Some changes concerning one's own baptism as a motive to participate became visible.

Celebration as an Expectation

Another important motive is the celebration on the day of confirmation. Concerning this celebration itself, no experiences but only expectations can be reported because the respective questions were asked before the day of confirmation. Between the results of the first study on the one hand, and the results of the second on the other, there are no major changes, at least on the level of the total values. A comparison between t_1 and t_2 , however, makes some remarkable changes visible (see Figure 10).

55 % of the confirmands expected to have a beautiful celebration with family and friends (CB09). The values of the different countries vary between 43 % in Austria and Hungary and 63 % in Norway. In Poland, 70 % of the confirmands affirmed this expectation. Compared to the previous study in 2007/2008, the results in Austria, Denmark and Sweden decreased by some percent points, while in Norway (+ 5) and Sweden (+ 8) the values increased during the years between the two studies.

The number of confirmands expecting to have a beautiful celebration increased by 27 percent points to 81 % (KB09) shortly before the day of confirmation. Interestingly, by t_2 , the variation between the country-specific values had become smaller; between 79 % and 91 % of the confirmands share the expectation of a beautiful celebration (with the exceptions of 65 % in Norway and 69 % in Poland). Remarkable changes since the last study can be observed in Austria (+ 12 percent points), Denmark (- 5) and Norway (- 24).

The expectation to get money (CB/KB10) increased as well between t_1 and t_2 .

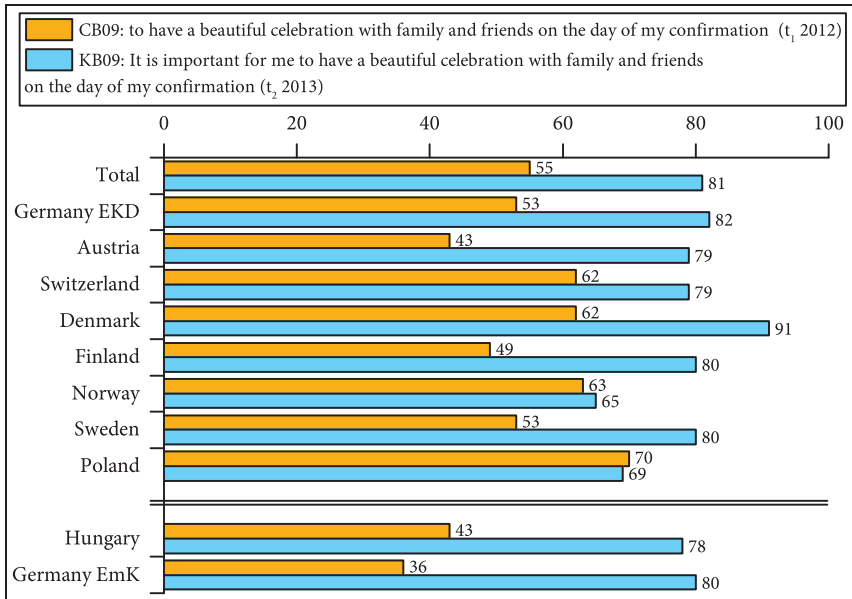
The confirmands' view of confirmation time is also focused on the celebration; confirmands express their expectations towards the confirmation day very clearly. These expectations become higher during confirmation time – in all countries, and again, the differences between the countries became smaller.

Fun and Friendship – Expectations and Experiences

The picture confirmands draw of their confirmation time in the beginning, includes the expectation to have fun. This expectation is not fully met by the experiences. One can say that the experiences do not fulfill the confirmands' expectations but, nevertheless, they are satisfactory for the confirmands. The satisfaction all confirmands expressed at the end of their confirmation time, reaches 76 % (KN01).

For 37 % of the adolescents the fact that they »have been told that confirmation training is fun« (CA08) is one of the reasons for taking part. The respective values range between 12 % in Denmark and 69 % in Sweden. Obviously, the

Figure 10: Expectations concerning the celebration on the confirmation day in the beginning (t_1) and in the end of confirmation time (t_2) (%)



N (total) = 25985 (t_1 2012), 22299 (t_2 2013); N (countries) = 359-10044 (t_1 2012), 299-8915 (t_2 2013); scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7).

image of confirmation time differs greatly between the countries. Yet 86 % of all confirmands expressed in t_1 that it is important »to have a lot of fun« (CK05). One can read this result as the simple expression of a personal wish. However, it could also be interpreted as an expression of a positive image of confirmation time. Church and confirmation time do not exclude the expectation to have fun (cf. Schweitzer et al. 2015, 147 f.).

At the end of confirmation time, 69 % of the confirmands affirmed that they had a lot of fun (KK05). The experiences did not totally meet the high expectations. Only in Finland, the experiences (80 %) slightly exceeded the expectations (79 %).

Looking at the expectations and experiences concerning friendship and community, it can be seen that at the beginning of confirmation time, 45 % expressed the expectation »to experience community in the confirmation group« (CB02). 77 % of the adolescents reported that they actually »experienced good community in the confirmation group« (KB02). The difference between the countries decreased. In t_2 , all values range between 75 % and 89 %. One can see on the one hand, that confirmation time, as expected by the confirmands,

made possible good experiences and on the other hand, that the experiences in the different countries were much more similar than the expectations had been. It also seems to fit the picture that 57 % of the adolescents stated that they made new friends (KK56) – but the differences between the countries do not allow for a clear interpretation of the connection between friendship and community. In Denmark, only 26 % stated that they made new friends, while in Finland (77 %), Sweden (76 %) and Hungary (78 %) the values were much higher. The experience of good community in the group does not automatically mean that someone has made new friends.

The factor analysis brought to light that there is a correlation between fun and friendship on the one hand, and »because I wanted it myself« (CA11) on the other. 72 % of the confirmands state that one reason for taking part in confirmation time is their own will to do so – the highest motivation of all. The values range between 53 % in Switzerland and 88 % in Poland.

The motivational power of friends taking part in confirmation time is with 28 % surprisingly low (CA01). In Sweden (43 %, + 12 percent points) and in Poland (48 %) one can find the highest values, while in Denmark only 8 % affirm the motivational importance of the peer group, 6 percent points less than 5 years before. A similar decrease occurred in Finland (-8).

3.2 Satisfaction with Confirmation Time

The confirmands' satisfaction with confirmation time is quite high. In all countries, more than two thirds of the confirmands express strong satisfaction with the whole confirmation time (KN01: 76 %, see Table 12). Table 12 presents the results for satisfaction with various aspects of confirmation time while Figure 11 holds the satisfaction values for the different countries.

Confirmands' satisfaction is highest in Sweden and Hungary where as many as 90 % of the confirmands expressed satisfaction with the whole confirmation time. Also in Poland, the rate is very high (86 %). The satisfaction with the minister (or person primarily responsible for confirmation work: KN07), with other teachers and workers (KN08: only in Denmark under two thirds assent: 58 %) and with the camps (KN11) is on the same level of satisfaction. The share of 59 % who said that they »came into good personal contact with the leaders and workers« (KK03) fits this picture as well.

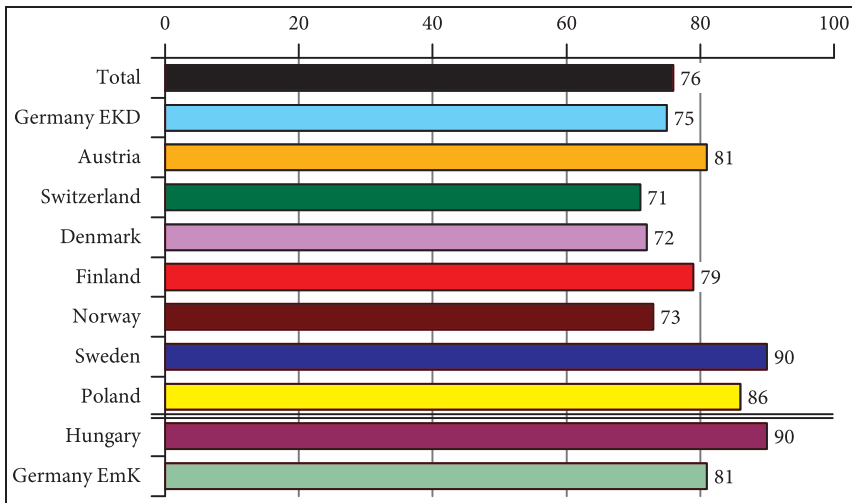
The lowest satisfaction values refer to worship services (KN10: 59 %) and to working methods (KN20: 58 %). There is a fair amount of variation between the countries in how satisfaction with content and topics in confirmation time

Table 12: Confirmands' satisfaction with various aspects of confirmation time (t₂)

To what extent are you satisfied with ...		M	SD	Positive (5, 6, 7)
KN01	the whole confirmation time	5.38	1.37	76 %
KN03	content/topics of lessons in confirmation work	4.88	1.31	62 %
KN07	minister/person primarily responsible for confirmation work	5.54	1.52	77 %
KN08	other teachers/workers	5.35	1.50	74 %
KN10	church services	4.73	1.48	59 %
KN11	camp(s)	5.55	1.66	76 %
KN14	music, songs and singing	4.84	1.62	61 %
KN20	working methods (for example, working with biblical texts, group work etc.)	4.77	1.38	58 %

N = 20114-22765.

Figure 11: Confirmands' satisfaction with the whole confirmation time (KN01) (%)



N (total) = 22654; N (countries) = 295-8945; scale: 1 = not satisfied at all; 7 = totally satisfied; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7).

is ranked (KN03: 62%). Interestingly, the ranking of the different aspects of satisfaction is the same for all countries.

The question if the adolescents »could influence the decisions about the topics« (CK04) is related to the rather low satisfaction rate concerning working methods and topics. While in t_1 , 36% said that this possibility is important for them, in t_2 , 34% of the confirmands affirmed that such an influence was really possible (KK04). The expectation is in line with the experience. Nevertheless, the question remains if confirmation work should be content with this low level of confirmands' involvement in content questions.

3.3 Conclusion

The results show that the confirmands are highly emphasising their own will in attending. The most important reason for young people to attend confirmation time is simply because they want it themselves. Other important reasons are related to family tradition, fun and friendship, celebration, and faith. The results show that the closer the day of confirmation, the stronger the feeling of anticipation becomes. In the beginning of confirmation time, 55% of the confirmands expected to have a beautiful celebration with family and friends (CB09), while 81% expected this shortly before the day of confirmation (KB09).

Concerning faith and community, the experiences surpass the expectations. And while confirmands' expectations show country-specific profiles, the actual experiences correspond to something like a common profile across the participating countries and Churches. In other words, there are varying expectations but similar experiences. Referring to confirmation work in Europe is more than just a general phrase. In the beginning, 35% of the confirmands, on an average, expected to be strengthened in faith (CB08) and the agreement to this statement was very different between the countries. In t_2 , 55% said that they actually had been strengthened in faith (KB08); the country-specific values became more similar. In t_1 , the expectation to »experience good community in the confirmation group« (CB02) varied between 30% and 68% within the countries – in t_2 , however, the experience of good community was affirmed by between 75% and 89% (KB02) of the confirmands.

The majority of confirmands were clearly satisfied with their confirmation time. The lowest satisfaction rates were found concerning services and working methods.

4. Confirmation Work in the View of the Workers

GEORG HARDECKER, KATI NIEMELÄ, THOMAS SCHLAG, AND
FRIEDRICH SCHWEITZER

4.1 Introduction

It is obvious that the quality and meaning of confirmation work depends on those who are planning and organising this program. The ministers continue to be key persons in this respect but, increasingly, voluntary workers also play an important role. In order to capture the views of the workers, the study asked not only confirmands but also the workers themselves, both ministers and other workers. Their views on confirmation work – concerning topics, aims, motives as well as their experiences – will be presented in the following.

Both kinds of workers are addressed in the following, employed workers (full-time or part-time) and voluntary workers. In the following, the term »workers« includes both groups. In cases where it is necessary to distinguish between the two groups, the terms »employed workers«, »main responsible person« or »ministers« on the one hand, and »voluntary workers« or »volunteers« on the other hand, are used. This distinction remains helpful in spite of the fact that volunteers may receive some kind of financial compensation in some of the countries participating in the study.

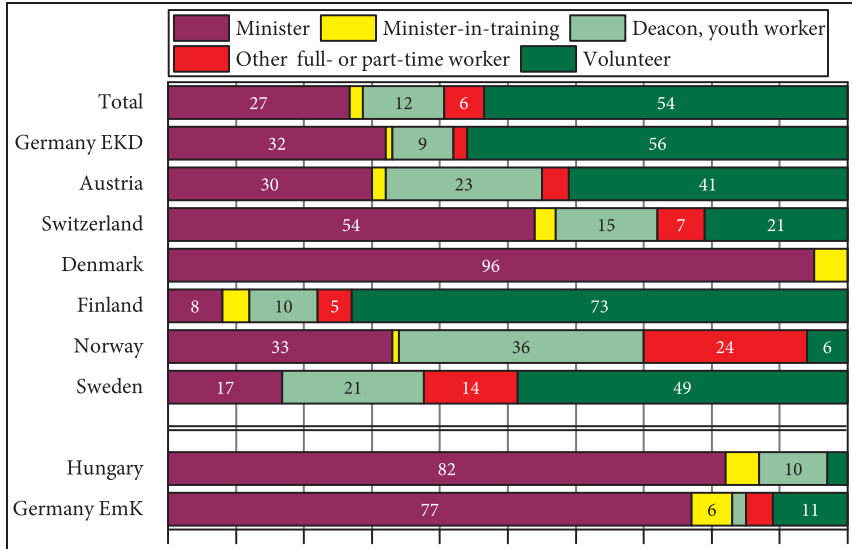
4.2 Staff Composition: Some General Information on the Workers

Who are »the workers«? The first study made clear that confirmation work is not only based on ministers and confirmands but also involves volunteers (Schweitzer et al. 2010, 282). To what extent this applies, however, is very country-specific. The different kinds of the workers are shown in Figure 12.

On an international level, less than half (46 %) of those working in confirmation work are full- or part-time employed workers and more than half (54 %) are volunteers. Confirmation work today often means teamwork: the majority (83 %) of the main responsible persons state that they are working with a team of workers (WE12) and more than half (56 %) that confirmation work is organised and prepared together with volunteers (VU07). The share of volunteers is highest in Finland (73 %), Germany (EKD: 56 %) and Sweden (49 %), while in Denmark no volunteer was involved in the study. In Denmark all employed workers were either ministers or ministers-in-training.

The age distribution among volunteers is very wide. In the data, the youngest volunteer was 14 and the oldest 80 years old. The average age of the volunteers

Figure 12: Different workers in confirmation work in the participating countries (%)



N = 4331.

is 20 years. The volunteers are youngest in Finland (mean age 16-17) and Sweden (18 years), while in Hungary and among the Methodists in Germany volunteers are typically about as old as the employed workers. The mean age of the employed workers is 42 years.

The following observations can be made about gender. While 64% of the ministers are male and 36% female, within the group of the volunteers the distribution is almost the other way round: 37% of the volunteers are male and 63% are female. The country-specific gender distribution is, however, not determined by the share of volunteers alone. The biggest percentage of female workers is found in Finland (65%), the country with the largest group of volunteers; whereas Denmark, the country with no volunteers in confirmation work, also has a share of 61% of women. More confirmation work in teams does not automatically mean more female workers.

Before the confirmation work gets started, 30% of the workers know (almost) none of the confirmands, 29% know less than half of the confirmands (WF05). Confirmation work therefore allows for new contacts between the different age groups within the church. Especially in the Nordic countries and in Austria, it is typical that the workers do not know most of the confirmands in advance. In Norway, only 3% of the workers said that they knew most of the confirmands before confirmation time while in Hungary the share was 63% and 51% among the Methodists in Germany.

Another difference concerns the involvement of deacons and youth workers in confirmation work. The share of deacons and youth workers is bigger than the share of ministers in Norway, Sweden and Finland. Also in Austria their share is almost equal to the share of ministers.

Two aspects show no country-specific character: almost all workers are Protestants (WF03: 98.7%), and almost all of them have the nationality of the respective country (WF04: 98%).

Comparing the values from the first study with those from the second, one can see an increase in the share of workers who participated in special trainings for confirmation workers. This is the case at least in Germany (EKD) and Austria (WF18, only asked in DE [EKD], AT, CH, DK): Less than one third did not attend such training in 2012/2013. In Denmark, values are stable, in Switzerland 32% of the workers did not attend a special training (2007/2008: 23%).

Within 5 years, the share of the female workers increased in Germany (EKD) by 5 percent points and in Denmark by 14.

4.3 Important Topics – in the View of the Workers

What topics are important in the eyes of the workers? At the beginning of confirmation time, the workers were asked concerning the importance of twenty possible topics. On the one hand, nine of these topics received 80% and more agreement which means that they were affirmed by a huge majority of workers: Baptism, The Lord's Supper, Jesus Christ, the Bible, God, justice and responsibility for others, the meaning of life, death and resurrection. On the other hand, there were six topics that received less than 50% agreement: other Christian denominations (for example, Catholics), other religions, drug abuse and criminal behavior, angels, magic/esoterics/supernatural experiences, care of the environment/ecology. The five topics in between were: course and meaning of Sunday services, one's own parish, friendship, love and sexuality, the social mission of the church. This basic picture also holds true, with few exceptions, for Hungary and the EmK where most topics receive affirmations above 50%.

The workers' choices show a certain preference for topics that are clearly related to the Christian tradition but the list of most preferred topics also includes some ethical topics (justice and responsibility) and existential questions (meaning of life). Yet beyond the international averages, there is a considerable amount of variation, at least with some of the topics. In this respect, national and regional traditions seem to play a role. Moreover, the difference between the main responsible workers who often are ministers, and the volunteers comes into play here.

National variations can be found, for example, with the Lord's Supper (only

69 % in Switzerland), the course and meaning of Sunday services (only 51 % in Norway), one's own parish (only 51 % in Denmark) or other religions (only 9 % in Denmark and 12 % in Norway) with negative tendencies on the one hand, and with positive tendencies, on the other hand, in the case of other Christian denominations that attract special interest in Hungary (62 %) and with the EmK (56 %). The special interest in denominational topics could be explained by the special structure of the EmK as a minority Church and, in the case of Hungary, with the strong Catholic presence in this country (unfortunately, there are no data on the workers in Poland for comparison).

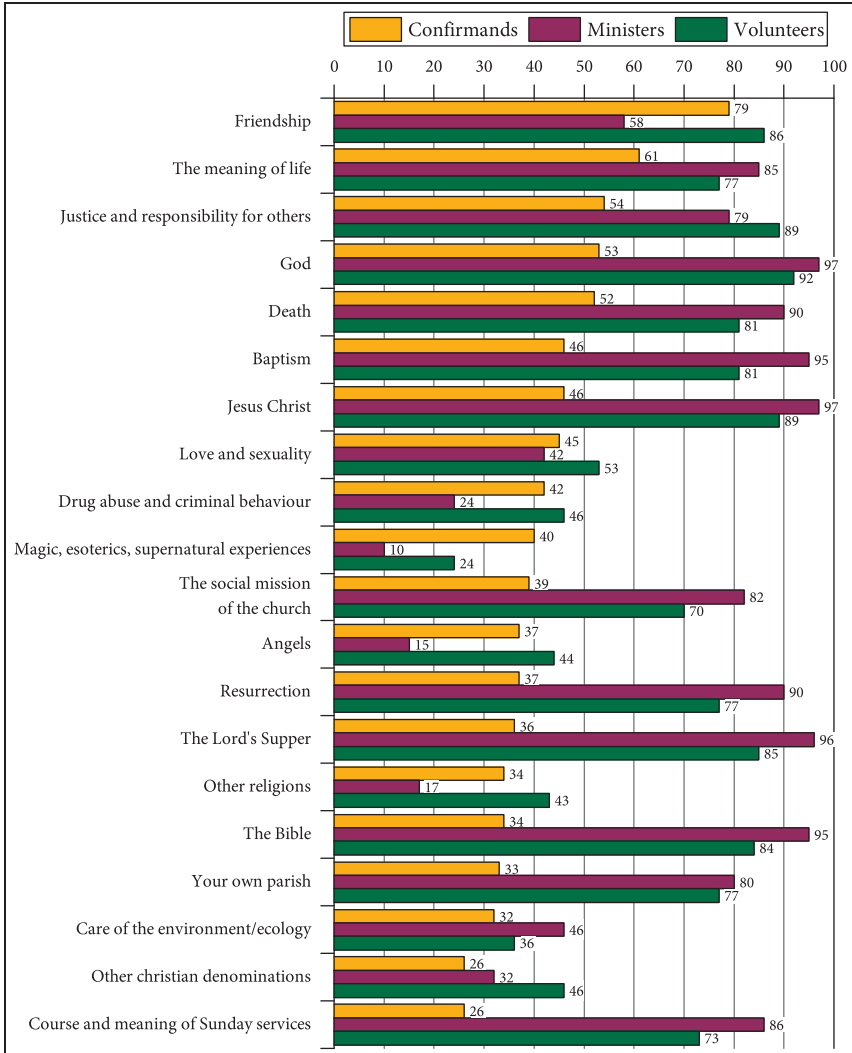
The second variation of interest refers to differences between the preferences of the ministers who are often the main responsible workers, and the volunteers. Such differences show up with some of the topics while in other cases the preferences are very similar. It is very interesting to compare the ministers' and volunteers' preferences with the preferences of the confirmands. Figure 13 describes the preferences of all three groups.

With some topics, the interests expressed by the confirmands exceed those of the ministers, in other cases, the reverse is true. The voluntary workers are often closer to the confirmands which indicates the special potential they have for meeting the confirmands' interests, probably because they are close in terms of age. Moreover, the pattern for the ministers shows that they tend to stress church-related topics much more than the confirmands.

Comparing the two studies from 2007/2008 and 2012/2013, there are a number of changes in the workers' preferences. Some topics receive less approval: baptism (- 6 percent points), the Lord's Supper (- 3), course and meaning of Sunday services (- 4), Jesus Christ (- 4). Other topics receive more approval than five years earlier: friendship (+ 3), love and sexuality (+ 4), social mission of the church (+ 5). Taken together, this means that traditional topics of the Christian faith have lost some of their standing, although still at a very high level, while topics closer to the life world of the confirmands have gained in interest.

Yet again one needs to be aware of different developments in the participating countries. In the case of friendship as a topic, there are increases as well as decreases to be observed between the two studies: Austria (+ 3 percent points), canton of Zurich (- 8), Denmark (- 6), Norway (- 9). In such cases, general averages obviously cannot tell the whole picture.

Figure 13: Interest in topics at the beginning of confirmation time (t_1) among ministers, volunteers and confirmands (%)



N = 18676-26019 (confirmands); N = 905-1380 (ministers); N = 1385-1541 (volunteers); 7-point-scales were used; the share of positive responses (5, 6, 7) is reported. Items: CL01-CL25 and WA03-WA26. No data was collected for WA12/CL16 (Care of the environment/ecology), WA23/CL22 (God), and WA26/CL25 (Angels) in Switzerland. The items are sorted according to the interest among confirmands.

4.4 Aims of the Workers

Workers' aims were classified into six categories with the help of factor analysis. These are:

- *Faith related aims* (Cronbach's alpha = .82) which consists of the following items: WB20: experience the presence of God; WC11: learn to live their everyday life in relationship to God; WC02: be strengthened in their faith; WB10: get to know other people to whom faith is important; WD02: Confirmation work should be used as a missionary chance for winning people for the Christian faith.
- *Aims related to community and fun* (.67) which consists of the following items: WB30: meet nice people in the services; WB31: feel secure and accepted in the group in the services; WD07: have a lot of fun; WB33: experience a friendly atmosphere in the services; WB09: be allowed to decide about the topics together with their fellow confirmands.
- *Aims related to liturgical life* (.74) which consists of the following items: WB27: become (more) familiar with the use of the hymn book; WB34: get acquainted with the liturgy; WC03: learn central Christian texts by heart (e.g., the Creed); WB11: become (more) familiar with the Bible; WC09: learn to enjoy singing or making music.
- *Aims related to encouraging voluntary work* (.79) which consists of the following items: WP12: get to know parts, programs and tasks in the church where they can work as volunteers; WP13: be won for continuing as voluntary workers in the church; WP11: get to know young people working in the church as volunteers.
- *Aims related to personal growth and belonging* (.72) which consists of the following items: WC04: be supported in their personal and social development; WC01: develop a personal point of view concerning their own life; WD03: experience community; WC16: develop a sense of belonging to the parish; WC15: experience that their questions concerning faith play a role.
- *Aims related to an active role in services* (.73) which consists of the following items: WB28: be given the opportunity to contribute their own ideas to the preparation of a service; WB29: have tasks in the services (for example, do a reading); WB04: experience forms of worship adequate for young people.

Aims related to personal growth and belonging were regarded as most important aims both by employed workers and volunteers. Over 90 % regarded these as important. Employed workers regarded faith-related aims as second most important (82 %) while volunteers placed the importance of the sense of community and fun (82 %) as the second most important aim. Both employed workers and volunteers put equal emphasis on the confirmands' active role in services and encouraging confirmands to take part in church voluntary work. Faith-related aims were regarded as important by 82 % of employed workers and 62 % of volunteers. The aims related to liturgical life were regarded as least important; 55 % of employed workers and 44 % of volunteers regarded it as important.

Table 13: Aims of the employed workers' and volunteers' (t₁)

	Employed workers		Volunteers		Total	
	Important (5-7) %	Mean	Important (5-7) %	Mean	Important (5-7) %	Mean
Aims related to personal growth and belonging	94	6.08	91	5.97	92	6.02
Aims related to community and fun	78	5.54	86	5.79	82	5.67
Aims related to an active role in services	82	5.66	80	5.65	80	5.64
Faith-related aims	82	5.69	61	5.17	71	5.41
Aims related to encouraging voluntary work	71	5.29	67	5.27	68	5.25
Aims related to liturgical life	55	4.95	44	4.71	49	4.82

N = 3610-4044 (total), N = 1789 (employed workers), N = 1710 (volunteers); scale: 1 = not important; 7 = very important.

Employed workers in different countries differed from each other (see Table 14). The biggest differences were related to how much they put emphasis on encouraging voluntary work, community and fun and faith-related aims. Encouraging voluntary work was given very little emphasis in Denmark while in other countries it was typically regarded as important. Faith-related aims were given most emphasis in Hungary and among the Methodist confirmation workers in Germany, and Norway, and again least in Denmark. Aims related

to community and fun were given most emphasis in Sweden and Finland, and least in Germany and Switzerland. Liturgical life was emphasised most among the employed workers in Hungary and Finland and least among the employed workers in Switzerland. Aims related to the confirmands' active role in services and aims related to growth and belonging were typically regarded as important among employed workers in all countries, but slightly less in Denmark.

Table 14: Share of employed workers in different countries (t_1) who regard different aims as important (%)

Employed workers	Total	DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU	DE
	EKD									EmK
Aims related to growth and belonging	94	95	95	94	87	97	95	91	98	96
Faith related aims	82	85	74	67	65	82	89	81	95	91
Aims related to an active role in services	82	83	85	80	69	83	88	78	76	88
Aims related to community and fun	78	70	75	71	77	94	77	90	79	82
Aims related to liturgical life	55	56	35	28	63	69	48	51	81	47
Aims related to encouraging voluntary work	71	77	80	*	16	81	81	65	68	84

* Item WP11 was not asked in Switzerland so the sum variable cannot be computed for Switzerland.

N = 1974 (total), 846 (DE EKD), 20 (AT), 106 (CH), 88 (DK), 215 (FI), 98 (NO), 380 (SE), 106 (HU), 115 (DE EmK); scale: 1 = not important; 7 = very important; the share of those with a positive response (mean value > 5).

There were also some notable differences in aims among volunteers in different countries. These are presented in Table 15. The biggest differences among volunteers were related to how much faith-related aims were given emphasis by them. They were highlighted less among Finnish and Swedish volunteers – one of the reasons probably is their younger age compared to the age of volunteers in other countries.

Compared with the results from 2007/2008, some changes have taken place. However, the dimensions of the aims cannot be used for comparison since not all items were included or they are not fully comparable in data from 2007/2008. Therefore, the comparison needs to be done by analysing single items. Among the full-time workers there is a slight decline especially in some faith-related aims. These are the importance of »becoming familiar with the content of Bible« (WB11: 94% to 85%), being »strengthened in their faith«

Table 15: Share of volunteers in different countries (t_1) who regard different aims as important (%)

Volunteers	Total	DE	AT	CH	FI	SE	HU	DE
		EKD						EmK
Aims related to growth and belonging	91	92	92	88	88	90	100	100
Aims related to community and fun	86	81	92	92	89	96	67	82
Aims related to an active role in services	80	86	83	75	75	71	100	100
Aims related to encouraging voluntary work	67	75	62	*	60	54	100	73
Faith related aims	61	71	75	71	46	56	100	91
Aims related to liturgical life	44	43	25	39	50	38	100	36

* Item WP11 was not asked in Switzerland so the sum variable cannot be computed for Switzerland.

N = 1951 (total), 1016 (DE EKD), 12 (AT), 24 (CH), 587 (FI), 298 (SE), 11 (HU), 3 (DE EmK); Denmark is not included because there were no volunteers in the study there, and Norway is not included because there are no data for the volunteers in t_1 ; scale: 1 = not important; 7 = very important; the share of those with a positive response (mean value > 5).

(WC02: 94 % to 92 %) and learning »to live their everyday life in relationship to God« (WC11: 86 % to 80 %) and learning central Christian texts by heart (WC03: 64 % to 61 %).

4.5 Satisfaction of the Workers

In t_2 the workers were asked how satisfied they are with the confirmation work in their specific parish (VM01) and how they like doing confirmation work in general (VM02) (see Table 16). Of all workers, 89 % like doing confirmation work and 83 % are satisfied with the confirmation work in their parish.

In Sweden, the values for the satisfaction with the local confirmation work and the share of those who like doing confirmation work are equal, in Finland the satisfaction with the confirmation work in the parish is slightly higher than the share of those who like doing confirmation work. In all other countries, the share of those who like doing confirmation work is slightly higher than the share of those satisfied with the confirmation work in their parish.

The biggest differences between both aspects of satisfaction on the one hand, and the lowest values concerning the own satisfaction with the local confirmation work on the other, can be found in Hungary and among the Methodists in

Table 16: Share of the workers who are satisfied with the confirmation work in their parish (VM01) and who like doing confirmation work (VM02) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 (t₂) in different countries (%)

	VM01: satisfied with the confirmation work in their parish		VM02: like doing confirmation work	
	2007/2008	2012/2013	2007/2008	2012/2013
Total	83	83	89	89
DE EKD	81	84	91	92
AT	85	91	96	95
CH	78 (CH-ZH)	82 (85 CH-ZH)	94 (CH-ZH)	90 (90 CH-ZH)
DK	88	73	85	87
FI	92	88	90	81
NO	81	78	87	90
SE	93	84	97	84
HU	–	71	–	92
DE EmK	–	69	–	85

N = 2558 (total); 1292 (DE EKD); 116 (AT); 662 (CH); 67 (DE), 154 (FI); 76 (NO); 196 (SE); 31 (HU); 111 (DE EmK); scale: 1 = not at all; 7 = totally; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7).

Germany (EmK). This might be related to the smaller size of these churches. The smaller the church and the confirmands' groups, the smaller the possibilities.

Remarkable decreases between the first and the second study are, for example, the satisfaction with the local confirmation work in Sweden by 9 percent points and in Denmark by 15. So in Denmark, the relation between general pleasure and the local confirmation work becomes similar to the values in Hungary and the Methodists in Germany (EmK), but without the minority situation. Within the German speaking countries, one can observe a slight increase: the workers are more satisfied than 5 years earlier.

4.6 Conclusion

From the results on the workers, some findings can lead to general conclusions and further efforts:

1. Obviously and somehow surprisingly, the number of volunteers participating in confirmation work throughout the European countries involved in the study, is higher than the number of »professionals«, be it ministers, minis-

ters-in-training, deacons, youth workers or other full- or part-time workers. That means that, on a European level, one should not draw a picture of confirmation work which presents the image of »one minister teaching his or her group«, but rather the picture of a lively and dynamic group of many, especially young people involved in preparing and doing confirmation work. In this respect, confirmation work builds a link between the different generations in the church. Concerning this observation, it is interesting that for young women, it is obviously much more attractive to become volunteers than for young men. So it could well be that the gender gap continues after confirmation.

2. It should also be said here again that the confirmands are very satisfied with the workers (cf. p. 68). This again speaks for the potentials of teamwork in this field.
3. The number of volunteers involved in confirmation work should not only be appreciated for their contribution to making this program more attractive for the confirmands but as a development that has its own value especially for older adolescents. For them, it probably means either a first active form of commitment or, in cases where such commitment was already there before confirmation work, a chance to continue with it. In either case, becoming a volunteer in confirmation work can be viewed as part of education for civil society (cf. p. 93 ff.).
4. The main aim of the workers throughout the participating countries is obviously not to shape a certain missionary form of confirmation work but rather to try to develop a liveable and workable balance of faith-, life- and youth-related questions. Examining the results one wonders whether the slight decline of faith-related aims over the last years indicates a general »self-secularisation« among the workers. It could also be the case, however, that workers have become more hesitant to identify with traditional teachings. It would be important to do more research in this respect.
5. Most of the workers are very satisfied with the confirmation work in their own parish. Of course, this result only reflects their personal self-estimations. Therefore, the question remains open if this satisfaction really mirrors the actual quality of confirmation work.
6. Concerning all these results it can be said that the workers, be it the professionals or the volunteers, show a deep commitment of heart and soul and a high potential of positive motivation. Beside this, they hint at the need of further improvements, be it the stronger connection of faith-, life- and youth-related issues, the team-building-factor and also the continuous improvement of their individual pedagogical and theological competences, manifested in a further increase of specific trainings for all the workers, involved in confirmation work.

5. Will the Church Keep Them as Members? The Influence of Confirmation Work on the Commitment to Church Membership

KATI NIEMELÄ, ÁDÁM HÁMORI, AND BALÁZS SIBA

5.1 Introduction

Weakening attachment to religious institutions has been regarded as one of the key challenges to traditional religious groups. Especially Protestant Christianity has been increasingly losing its position in the personal lives of people in Europe. It is visible in declining membership figures and declining participation rates in many countries, but has not necessarily meant decline in believing in general. Davie refers to this phenomenon as »believing without belonging« (Davie 1994; 2000). Heelas and Woodhead (2005) on the other hand, argue that the current age is characterised by a massive subjective turn in modern culture and they regard it as the greatest change since the Christianisation of Europe. People no longer primarily conceive themselves as belonging to a community or as a link in the chain of a tradition. Therefore, they are more inclined to a life defined by their own subjective experiences and needs (Heelas/Woodhead 2005, 2-4). Many studies indicate that especially the younger generations are increasingly likely to be skeptical of religious institutions. They cast doubt on traditional beliefs and values and do not blindly follow what they have learned in childhood. They search for deeper personal meaning but not within religious institutions. They primarily make individual decisions based on their own beliefs and life-views and no longer belong to religious institutions because of tradition. They no longer belong only because they have been raised to belong, but increasingly demand personal meaningfulness in order to stay members. With these attitudes, young adults in this age group represent a challenge for churches and religious organisations. (Niemelä 2015; Mikkola et al. 2007)

The decreasing role of religious institutions in the lives of young people is linked to changes in the family setting. A decreasing number of young people have been raised with a close link to religious institutions and received a clear religious upbringing. Quantitative data (e.g., ISSP 2008, Religion Monitor, World Values Survey) show that religious upbringing in homes is declining especially in highly industrialised countries (e.g., Bucher 2009, 625; Niemelä 2011).

Out of the countries in our study, the church membership rates have been declining especially in the Nordic Countries. During the 21st century, the church membership rates of the Lutheran Church have declined from 2000 to 2013 most in Sweden (from 83 % to 66 %). In the other Nordic countries, the

decline has been slightly more moderate, but still faster than ever before: Finland from 85 % to 75 %, Iceland from 89 % to 76 %, Norway from 86 % to 75 % and Denmark from 85 % to 79 %. Church-leaving is overrepresented among young people; this is the case especially in Finland where church-leaving just a few years after confirmation has become increasingly common and as many as one fourth has left the church in early adulthood in the beginning of the 21st century. A longitudinal study of Finnish confirmands shows that church-leaving is not primarily linked to negative church experiences or attitudes, but simply to lack of meaningfulness. Negative confirmation experiences do increase the likelihood to leave the church, but those with negative experiences are only a minority among church-leavers. Therefore, the majority of church-leavers have typically experienced confirmation time as fun, however seldom as personally meaningful in a deeper sense (Niemelä 2015).

Hungary exemplifies a typical post-Socialist trajectory. As Hungarian sociologist Miklós Tomka has shown, up to the turn of the millennium, the elderly rural population used to be the most practicing (i. e., church-going). Ten years later, however, in line with declining religiosity of all subgroups of the population, differences between rural and urban as well as older and younger populations have been levelled. It is apparent that the decline of commitment to traditional institutionalised religiosity has been accompanied by a relative stability of openness to certain religious values such as belief in God (Tomka 2010a). As far as younger age groups are concerned, however, changes in denominational commitment, religious practice, religious identity and belief of younger age-groups have been showing a declining trend through Hungarian Youth survey waves 2000 and 2012. Moreover, in contrast with previous theoretical assumptions of religious individualisation, it is rather falling interest in religion which drives this decline (Hámori/Rosta 2014a).

While the youth need an ideology on the cognitive level, they emotionally search for a community. There is always a community to which the adolescents want to belong. This community could be a peer-group, a clique, or a church community as well (Nipkow 1997, 43). One of the central aims of confirmation time in most countries is linked to strengthening young people's commitment to their church and parish. For example, in Austria one of the key aims is to help young people »to find a home within their congregation«, in Finland and Norway, that the young people would live their life in the community of the parish (Innanen/Krupka 2010b).

Commitment to the church can be viewed from different perspectives. The church commitment can be divided into three levels: 1) institutional commitment which refers to the commitment to belong to the church as a member, 2) practical commitment which refers to the commitment to attend and to practice religion, and 3) theoretical commitment which refers to the commit-

ment to the faith and doctrine of the church (see Häkkinen 2010, 39). This chapter considers the commitment related to the first category: to what extent are confirmands committed to church membership and to what extent can confirmation work strengthen this commitment?

The following questions will be asked:

1. How does the importance of church membership differ in the beginning of confirmation time in the different contexts studied?
2. How does the importance of church membership change during confirmation time? How does confirmation time influence young people's attitudes towards baptising their future children?
3. What explains the commitment to church membership and changes in it during confirmation time in different contexts?

Results give insight to the future development of church membership of the countries and contexts studied.

5.2 Attachment to the Church in the Beginning of Confirmation Time

The general attachment to the church differs notably between the countries and in the churches studied. The attachment is strongest among the Lutheran confirmands in Poland, among Methodist confirmands in Germany and among the Reformed and Lutheran confirmands in Hungary. All of these groups are in a minority position in their country. 83 % of confirmands in Poland, 70 % among Methodist confirmands in Germany and 63 % of Hungarian confirmands already regard belonging to the church as important to them in the beginning of confirmation time.

German (EKD) and Austrian confirmands are also above the average in their attachment. As many as 41 % of the German (EKD) confirmands and 43 % of the Austrian confirmands regard it important to belong to the church in the beginning of confirmation time. The Swedish confirmands are on the low end: less than one fifth of the confirmands in Sweden regard belonging to the church as important. In the other Nordic countries and in Switzerland the share is between 26 and 32 %.

Women in general regard church membership as more important than male confirmands. However, Polish and Austrian confirmands do not follow this pattern; in these countries male confirmands are more likely to regard church membership as more important.

The importance of church membership among the confirmands in different contexts is linked to the general membership rate of the examined church in the country. In countries in which the church is in a clear majority position, the

confirmands do not typically regard church membership as important. This is the case in the Nordic countries. In these countries 65 to 78 % of the population belong to the Lutheran church, but only 18 to 32 % of the confirmands regard church membership as important. The cases in which the studied church is in a minority position, the importance of church membership is notably higher.

The importance of church membership among confirmands is linked to parents' interest in religion ($r = .39^{***}$). If parents are interested in religion, the young people are likely to regard membership as important. The linkage is statistically very significant in all countries and the Churches studied.

Table 17: The share of confirmands regarding church membership as important in the beginning of confirmation time (t_1) and the share of church members and the share of parents interested in religion in the different countries (%)

	Share of members of this Church in the country	Church membership important in the beginning of confirmation time (CG01)	Parents very or quite interested in religion (CJ01)	N \geq
Germany EKD	31 (EKD)	41	25	9847
Austria	4 (Lutheran and Reformed)	43	31	481
Switzerland	30 (Reformed)	27	17	7003
Denmark	78 (Lutheran)	27	25	1940
Finland	75 (Lutheran)	28	20	2278
Norway	75 (Lutheran)	32	22	2202
Sweden	66 (Lutheran)	19	23	1320
Poland	< 1 (Lutheran)	83	75	354
Hungary	12 (Reformed) 2 (Lutheran)	63	69	755
Germany EmK	< 1 (Methodist)	70	77	739

5.3 To What Extent Can Confirmation Work Strengthen the Commitment to Church Membership?

The importance of church membership changes in most countries to more positive during the confirmation time. When the responses of only those who have replied to both t_1 and t_2 are taken into account, the change in the impor-

tance of membership is statistically significant in all countries. Also in Austria the change is towards positive, but it does not reach statistical significance due to a low number of paired questionnaires.

Table 18: Change in the importance of church membership during confirmation time. Mean values (t_1 and t_2) and the average change (paired sample t-test)

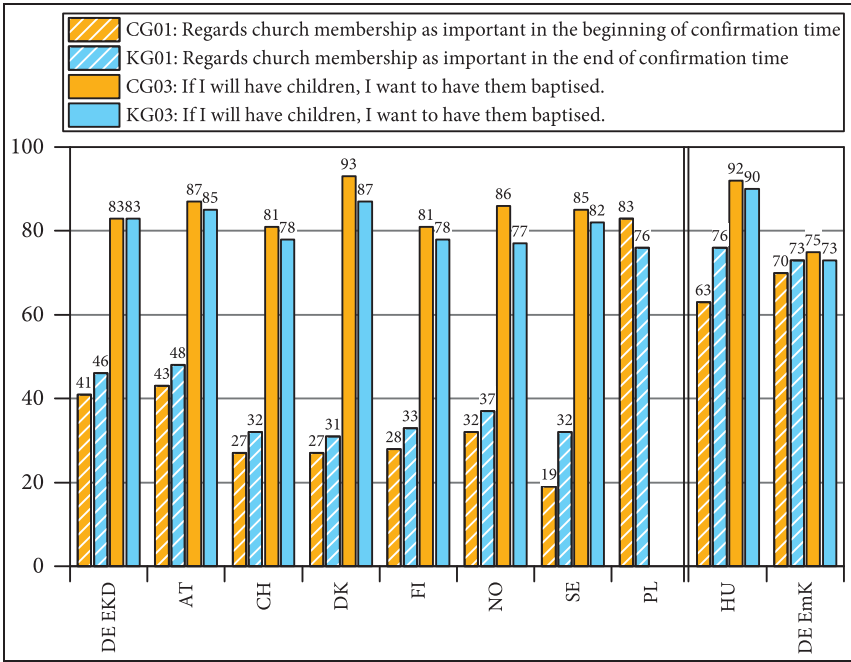
	Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK
CG01: It is important for me to belong to the Church.	3.97	4.23	4.29	3.52	3.64	3.66	3.73	3.28	5.84	5.17	5.35
KG01: It is important for me to belong to the Church.	4.13	4.33	4.46	3.71	3.81	3.89	4.04	3.60	5.69	5.54	5.35
Average change	0.16	0.10	0.17	0.19	0.17	0.23	0.31	0.32	-0.15	0.37	0.00
Paired sample t-test	-12.40	-5.44	-1.80	8.08	-2.85	-5.81	-5.60	-4.05	1.07	-3.31	-.06
Sig. of t-test	***	***		***	*	***	***	***		***	
N	16344	7281	335	4862	708	1664	1187	471	166	236	522

Scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; only the responses of those replying to both t_1 and t_2 are presented. The *, **, *** show a significant differences at the .05, .01, and .001 level.

One of the crucial questions about the future of the church is related to the parents' willingness to baptise their children. In the beginning of confirmation time, the share of confirmands who are planning to baptise their future children ranges from 75 % among German Methodist confirmands to 93 % among Danish confirmands. These figures do not rise in any of the countries but tend to decline (see Figure 14). The decline is clearest in Norway (from 86 % to 77 %) and in Denmark (from 93 % to 87 %).

What explains the attitudes towards church membership in the end of confirmation and the changes in attitudes during confirmation time? Regression analysis was used to test which background factors or factors related to confirmation experiences influenced the confirmands' commitment to church membership (KG01: It is important for me to belong to the Church) and changes in it during confirmation time (diff_CG01: KG01 minus CG01). As to independent variables, item CJ01 (»How interested are your parents in religion?«) measured confirmands' perception of the religiosity of their family background. Five items (KB02, KK03, KK37, KK56, KN07, see question wordings in the tables) measured community and personal relational aspects of the confirmation time. Four items (KB03, KK04, KK11, KK57) measured, either directly or in-

Figure 14: The share of those regarding church membership as important and those planning to baptise their future children in the beginning (t_1) and in the end (t_2) of confirmation time in different countries (%)



N (total) = 26626 (t_1 2012), 22459 (t_2 2013); N (countries) = 358-10074 (t_1 2012), 293-8964 (t_2 2013).

directly, perceived group involvement and opportunity for democratic participation in the confirmation group. Two items measured general satisfaction (KK05, KN01). Since a wide range of scholarly literature so far evidenced the significance of gender in religious commitment and behaviour that was also included in the analysis.

Table 19 and Table 20 show that variables included in the regression models significantly influenced both the level of commitment at the end of confirmation time and the extent of change during confirmation time in most participating countries. However, explanative power of the model was considerably higher in the case of outcome commitment than in the case of change during confirmation time. This probably can be explained partly by the higher variance of diff_CG01 to KG01 as well as that the change caused by these contextual variables was in any case smaller. That is, for many confirmands, the commitment to the church was higher already at the beginning of confirmation time, provided that they were interested in faith-related issues or coming from a religious background.

Table 19: Factors explaining the importance of church membership in the end of confirmation time (KG01) among confirmands in different countries (Linear regression)

	Total	DE EKD	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU	DE EmK
(Constant)	***	***	***	**	***	***	*	*	***
Sex of the confirmand (combination of CM01 & KM01)	.02**	.03**	.06***	.13***	.05*		.10*		.12**
CJ01: How interested are your parents in religion? ^a	.32***	.23***	.25***	.21***	.21***	.19***	.25***	.19**	.19***
KB02: I have experienced good community in the confirmation group.	-.03***		-.08***		.09**				
KB03: I have been enabled to come to my own deci- sion about my faith.	.10***	.13***	.12***	.10*		.08**	.14**	.24***	.23***
KK03: I came into good personal contact with the leaders and workers.	-.02	.05***	.05**						
KK04: We could influence the decisions about the to- pics.	-.03***				.11**				
KK05: I had a lot of fun.	.05***	.09***	.09***	.13**		.09*			
KK11: My questions con- cerning faith were ad- dressed.	.06***	.11***	.10***	.09*	.06*	.14***	.18**		
KK37: In our parish I feel welcome and accepted.	.07***	.20***	.18***	.11**	.13***	.16***		.16*	.18***
KK56: I made new friends within the group.	-.01	-.02*	.05***		-.06*			.25**	
KK57: I was given the chance to try out volun- tary work.	.06***	.07***	.12***	.09*	.08***	.06*		.20**	
KN01: I am satisfied with the whole confirmation time.	.06***	.08***	.10***		.08**	.09**	.18**		
KN07: I am satisfied with the minister primarily re- sponsible for confirmation work.	.01		-.04*			.07*			
VARIANCE EXPLAINED	17.7 %	32.0 %	29.3 %	22.5 %	21.7 %	25.6 %	20.1 %	43.0 %	24.5 %

^a item CJ01 was changed into reverse order where 1 = not interested at all, 4 = very interested. N (total) = 14254; N (countries) = 670-8685; the results for Austria and Poland are not presented due to the low number of respondents.

Table 20: Factors explaining the change in importance of church membership in the end of confirmation time (diff_CG01) among confirmands in different countries (Linear regression)

	Total	DE EKD	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU	DE EmK
(Constant)	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	**	
Sex of the confirmand (combination CM01 & KM01)	.02*			.12**		-.07*			
CJ01: How interested are your parents in religion? ^a	-.09***	-.09***	-.07***	-.09*	-.13***	-.08**		-.19*	
KB02: I have experienced good community in the confirmation group.	.02		-.05**						
KB03: I have been enabled to come to my own deci- sion about my faith.	.01		.05**						
KK03: I came into good personal contact with the leaders and workers.	.04***	.04**	.05*	.11*					
KK04: We could influence the decisions about the to- pics.	.02*	.03*		-.12**	.08*				
KK05: I had a lot of fun.	.04**	.04*							
KK11: My questions con- cerning faith were ad- dressed.	.05***	.04**	.07***			.10**			
KK37: In our parish I feel welcome and accepted.	.09***	.11***	.05**		.06*	.09*			
KK56: I made new friends within the group.	-.00								
KK57: I was given the chance to try out volun- tary work.	.02		.06***						
KN01: I am satisfied with the whole confirmation time.	.02						.21**		
KN07: I am satisfied with the minister primarily re- sponsible for confirmation work.	.01								
VARIANCE EXPLAINED	4.5 %	4.1 %	3.0 %	7.0 %	5.0 %	4.6 %	6.6 %	6.9 %	not sig.

^a item CJ01 was changed into reverse order where 1 = not interested at all, 4 = very interested. N (total) = 14183; N (countries) = 668-8653; the results for Austria and Poland are not presented due to the low number of respondents.

The models show that the parents' interest in religion is by far the most meaningful factor in determining both the confirmands relationship to the church membership and the possible change in it during confirmation time. Thus, it can be assumed that a) the lower the parents' interest in religion, the lower the commitment to the church membership among confirmands at the end of confirmation time, and b) the lower the parents' interest in religion, the higher positive change can be observed during – and, presumably, as a consequence of – confirmation time. This is partly linked to the fact that many of those whose parents are religious, are already in the beginning of confirmation time strongly committed to their church membership, so within the limits of a 1 to 7 scale, there is no possibility to measure increase.

Other important factors in both models are related to the feeling of being welcome in the parish, and the feeling that one's own questions were addressed and that one has been able to have fun. In the first model (importance of church membership in the end) also the feeling of community, ability to influence the decision about the topics, the chance to come to one's own decision about faith, the chance to try out voluntary work are statistically very significant. In the second model (the change in the importance of church membership) the good personal contact with leaders and workers was also statistically significant.

At the same time, there are revealing differences between countries. The effect of the religious interest of parents on the importance of church membership (CG09) was significant in most (9) contexts and even the most important in many (e.g., EKD in Germany, Switzerland and all Nordic countries).

The effect of item KK37 (»In our parish I feel welcome and accepted.«) was significant in 9 countries and also positively influenced change in commitment in 4 countries showing that perception of an open atmosphere was an important component of becoming a member. Furthermore, significant positive effect of item KB03 (»I have been enabled to come to my own decision about my faith.«) in 7 countries on KG01 but only in one (!) on the difference in the importance of church membership (diff_CG01) showed that probably only those confirmands had the need to be enabled to make their own decision about faith who were already interested in this issue.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter we have been analysing the relationship to church membership and changes in it during confirmation time: can confirmation work strengthen the relationship to church membership? The results show that in most countries confirmation work strengthens confirmands' commitment to church membership. Furthermore, the results show that the commitment to church

membership differs notably between the countries: it is highest in contexts where the Church is in a minority position and lowest in the Nordic countries where the church membership rate is high but has been clearly declining during the 21st century. When it comes to confirmands' willingness to baptise their future children, confirmation time does not seem to have any influence or if it has, the share of those planning to baptise their children tends to decline during confirmation time.

Concerning commitment to church membership and personal religiosity in general, it is not only the attitude itself which has to be taken into consideration but also the social environment and atmosphere, i. e., the role models, the historical time period in which people are living, and various unpredictable events that may occur throughout their lives. Firstly, earlier research shows that the family as the most important agent of socialisation has a long-term influence on faith development, moral judgement and values (Horváth-Szabó 1998). Parents give the first patterns of representation of God and religion (or the lack of religion). Our results show that parents are most meaningful also in determining the attitude towards church membership still at the end of confirmation time. Secondly, it should be underlined that personal religiosity is linked to community also more broadly than just to primary socialisation within the family. As children grow older the effects of secondary sociological factors (extended family, neighbours, friends, media) increase in their lives. Thirdly, among these, church community can play a crucial role in religious development and socialisation since children gain knowledge and experience on religion there and meet various religious lifestyles. These factors can help to turn the »me« religion into »we« religion (Sundén 1982, 50). The results confirm the importance of community: the significant effect of experiencing a good community in the confirmation group in some and feeling accepted in the parish in almost all participating countries underline this positive relationship. Fourthly, concerning the attachment to the Church, it is significant whether the confirmand encounters role models or mentors who conduct their life according to their Christian faith in an authentic and desirable manner for the young people (Smith/Denton 2005, 243 raise this issue in an American context). This, even if indirectly, is mirrored in some countries by the significant positive effect of coming into a good personal contact with leaders of the confirmation group. Fifthly, it is also important that the method and topics of teaching correspond to the confirmands' personal needs both of participation and individual identity questions. The youth need support and encouragement, paying attention to them and attracting their attention to the topic of learning. From this point of view confirmation work is not only teaching of basics of the Christian faith and tradition, but giving space for personal reflection of their spiritual quest. Based on the results this space for personal reflection was one of the key factors in explaining the commitment to

the Church at the end of confirmation time and its development during confirmation time. The extent to which confirmands perceived how much they »have been enabled to come to their own decision about faith« and how much »their questions concerning faith were addressed« presents a relatively strong predictor of their commitment to church membership in several countries.

6. The Wider Context: Volunteerism and Civil Society

JOUKO PORKKA, HENRIK SIMOJOKI, AND FRIEDRICH SCHWEITZER

6.1 Introduction

Confirmation work does not only have consequences for the individual person or for the church. It also has meaning for society at large. This broader meaning is especially visible from its function as education for civil society which, among others, includes volunteerism. Typically, confirmation work entails the encounter with volunteers – young volunteers who often still are adolescents themselves –, it introduces the confirmands to the importance of social commitment and, at least in many cases, it gives them a chance to try out being volunteers themselves.

In the present context, the term civil society refers to the social structures that mediate between the individuals in society on the one hand and the state on the other (cf. Cohen/Arato 1992). Such structures consist of voluntary associations, action groups, etc., that enable the individuals to exert influence beyond their personal sphere. Often such associations pursue pro-social aims – like supporting people in need or helping refugees – or they follow a shared political goal like preserving the natural environment. After the separation between state and church, the church has also been called an institution of civil society in order to emphasise that religion is not limited to a private matter (Huber 1998). Religion is often viewed as an important motive for volunteerism (cf. Hustinx et al. 2015).

The importance of civil society for democracy has come to be widely acknowledged. Democracy requires committed citizens who are interested in shared political deliberation and social action. It has also become obvious that sustaining civil society requires intentional efforts for supporting social values in education and for introducing young people to voluntary work.

The present chapter presents and discusses the respective findings from the current study on confirmation work. First it addresses the possible contribution of confirmation work to social integration and participation. In a next step, the influence of confirmation work on ethical commitment is discussed. The main emphasis of the chapter lies on the question of volunteerism.

6.2 Impact on the Development of a Sense of Community

In a way, confirmation work can be understood as a specific social setting where young people can develop and strengthen their »sense of community«. In cur-

rent social science this term is defined as the »perception of belonging that makes us feel good and safe« (Hyde/Chavis 2008, 179). It is generally agreed that positive experiences of connectedness are an important resource both of individual well-being and of caring societies. The results of the first study on confirmation work (2007/2008) supported the assumption that confirmation work fosters a sense of community (Pettersson/Simojoki 2010, 268–270).

All in all, the findings of the second study (2012/2013) confirm the general picture drawn five years earlier: 77% of the confirmands state that they have experienced good community in the confirmation group, from 74% in Germany to 89% in Sweden (KB02). In all countries that participated in the first study, the numbers are slightly, although not much higher than in 2008. The experiences in this regard seem to have even exceeded the expectations of the confirmands. At the beginning of confirmation time, less than half of them mentioned the experience of community as a major reason for taking part (44%, CB02). The expectations concerning community were exceeded the most in Finland where only 30% of the confirmands mentioned the experience of community as an important reason for taking part, but at the end, 78% expressed that they had experienced it.

Although the general picture is clear, the reality is more ambiguous. On a personal level, the developments occur in two directions: while 65% of the confirmands reported that their expectations related to community were exceeded, 16% of the confirmands reported disappointment with it (respective experiences also relate to worship services, cf. p. 170 ff.).

6.3 Contribution to Ethical Commitment

Whereas the community-based experiences during confirmation time have remained rather stable in comparison to the first study, there are some noticeable shifts regarding ethical orientation and commitment.

In the first study it was noted that the confirmands have a high interest in ethical issues and value them as more important than traditional faith-related topics (Pettersson/Simojoki 2010, 271). In the second study, ethical topics received less approval than five years earlier. In the beginning of confirmation time, 54% of the respondents expressed interest in learning more about »justice and responsibility for others« (CL08). On the one hand, this still is the third highest approval rate; on the other hand, the interest in this topic has declined by 4 percent points compared to five years earlier. The four other ethical items included in this battery rank considerably lower. 45% of the respondents were interested in the topic »love and sexuality« (CL12), 42% wanted to talk about questions of drug abuse and criminal behaviour (CL10), 39% showed interest

in the social mission of the church (CL21) and only 32 % wanted ecological questions to be addressed during confirmation time (CL16). Altogether, there does not seem to be a clear preference for ethical themes in the beginning of confirmation time; most of the traditional dogmatic topics have similar or even higher approval rates.

At the end of confirmation time, the confirmands were asked again about their preferences (which was not done in the first study). Strikingly, two ethically connoted items show the highest increase in approval. At the end, 66 % of the confirmands show interest in »justice and responsibility«, 12 percent points more than at the beginning of confirmation time (KL08). The rise is even higher with regard to »love and sexuality« (KL12) which is favoured by 60 % of the respondents at the end instead of 45 % in the beginning of confirmation time. Naturally, this increase should not be attributed to confirmation work alone. Especially in the latter case, developmental factors may play a more important role.

There are some clear indicators, however, that confirmation work does indeed foster ethical commitment. First of all, this assumption is strongly supported by the confirmands themselves. Looking back at their confirmation time, 59 % of them say that they experienced that their »commitment to other people« is important. In this case, it is especially worthwhile to take a more detailed comparative look at the findings from the first and from the second study.

Table 21: Confirmands' views of commitment at the end of confirmation time in 2008 and 2013 (t₂) in different countries (%)

KK44: I have experienced that my commitment to other people is important.	Total	DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU	DE (EMK)
		EKD		ZH						
2008	51	52	46	42	32	57	45	61		
2013	59	60	68	57	46	64	60	61	77	71

N (total) = 17604 (2008), 17804 (2013); N (countries) = 468-10631 (2008), 457-8950 (2013).

Table 21 shows that with the exception of Sweden where the numbers were already particularly high in 2008, the impact of confirmation work on the ethical commitment as viewed by the confirmands has increased markedly during the five years between the two studies: from 7 percent points increase in Finland to 22 percent points increase in Austria.

However, this observation holds true only for the social dimension of ethical commitment. Concerning the attitude towards ecological problems, no comparable increase can be observed. In 2013, 38 % of the confirmands stated that

they became more conscious of their responsibility for ecological problems during confirmation time which is one percent point less than five years before (KK45). However, there seem to be major differences between the countries concerning this item. While only 27% of the Norwegian and 33% of the Swiss (Zurich) confirmands agreed to this in 2008, the percentage is now 44 in Norway and 44 in the canton of Zurich. In Sweden, the development has been the opposite. The figure was 44% in 2008 and now it is only 27%. In Denmark, the figure is low in both studies: 22% in 2008 and 28% in 2013.

In today's Europe with its pluralising societies, fostering awareness and tolerance of religious difference is widely regarded as one of the most important tasks of religious education. Until today, this challenge has been mainly discussed with regard to Religious Education at school. This is one of the reasons why the present study included questions about if and how confirmation time influenced the confirmands' knowledge and understanding of other religions and to what extent their attitudes towards them were influenced during this time.

All in all, the findings are rather disparate. On the one hand, only a third of the confirmands feel that they have learned more about other religions during confirmation time (33%, KB15). In this respect, the contribution of confirmation work to interreligious knowledge and understanding seems to be rather limited, as already shown by the first study. On the other hand, 55% of the confirmands state that they have learned to respect other religions during confirmation time (KK55). According to the confirmands' views, confirmation work fosters tolerance and respect for other religions but does not increase their knowledge about them.

The need to distinguish between tolerance and knowledge becomes even more apparent in international comparison. As Table 22 shows, the confirmands' views concerning effects on interreligious knowledge and on attitudes diverge most in Norway: In their own perception, 63% of the Norwegian confirmands have learned to respect other religions during confirmation time, whereas only 24% have actually learned more about them. The results from Sweden and Finland show a similar tendency. In Germany (EKD) in contrast, an above-average number of confirmands have gained more knowledge about other religions (37%), while 54% say that they have learned to respect other religions – the second lowest percentage after Finland. Again, the Polish and the Hungarian numbers are markedly different (cf. Table 22).

Table 22: Confirmands' views on how they learnt to know and respect other religions during confirmation time (t_2) in different countries (%)

During confir- mation time ...	Total	DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK
I have learnt more about other reli- gions (KB15).	33	37	37	42	34	22	24	23	67	59	42
I have learnt to re- spect other reli- gions that are dif- ferent from mine (KK55).	55	54	59	56	57	51	63	59	71	66	59

N (total) = 22535-22684; N (countries) = 294-8971; share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable.

6.4 Volunteerism and Social Capital

As said before, the first study on confirmation work showed that confirmation work reinforces young peoples' commitment to voluntary activity (Pettersson/Simojoki 2010). Voluntarism is closely related to the concept of social capital because it produces social capital (Pääkkönen 2010, 65). Although the definition of »social capital« is still under debate, it usually includes »social networks and the associated norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness« (Stiglitz et al. 2009, 182). In the present study, social capital was measured by asking the respondents about previous experiences from voluntary work, religious involvement and parents' involvement in volunteerism. Because of the significant differences between males and females in volunteering according to previous studies (for example, Bittman/Fisher 2006; Pääkkönen 2010), gender was accounted for while analysing the data.

Attitudes concerning reciprocity and trustworthiness were measured in the beginning of confirmation time by the statement »I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself« (CP04). Table 23 shows that the Polish confirmands scored highest (82 %) but the Swedish (74 %) and the Norwegian (61 %) were also quite high – the lowest score occurred with the Danes (38 %). Rather striking differences were found between the boys and the girls: boys (43 %) scored much lower than girls (61 %) on the average, with the biggest difference occurring in Finland (boys 36 %, girls 63 %).

The majority of the confirmands had experiences with volunteering before confirmation time. These experiences came mostly from their hobbies or

Table 23: Male and female confirmands' who are concerned about those less fortunate than themselves (CP04) in the beginning of confirmation time in different countries (%)

	Total	DE EKD	AT	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK
Male	43	44	47	31	36	50	61	78	60	56
Female	61	58	64	45	63	71	81	87	75	71
Total	53	51	55	38	49	61	74	82	67	64

N (total) = 18641; N (countries) = 162-19385; CP04: »I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself« (not included in the Swiss questionnaire); share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable.

school. Table 24 shows that 47% of the confirmands were volunteers in sports (CP 9); this is the most common in Norway (66%) and in Switzerland (62%) and the most unusual in Poland (23%) and in Finland (35%). Boys had volunteered in sports more often than girls (boys 51%, girls 43%).

45% of the confirmands had experiences with volunteerism in a school context (CP11); for example, they may have acted as spokespersons for the class. This varied greatly from country to country; it was most common in Germany (63%, EKD), while only a third of the confirmands were volunteers at school in Switzerland (33%), Finland (31%), and Poland (30%), and only 21% in Denmark. This form of volunteering was more common among girls than boys (boys 43%, girls 51%).

Table 24: Confirmands' experience with volunteerism in different fields of society prior to confirmation time (t_1) in different countries (%)

	Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	PL	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU	DE EmK
Sports	47	46	49	62	23	50	35	66	43	49	41
Music	23	26	37	29	14	14	16	29	23	30	38
School	47	63	54	33	30	21	31	39	42	39	57
Church	12	17	12	17	11	5	6	7	7	20	39
Youth work	10	12	11	17	11	4	9	8	10	18	12
Some other	16	13	8	14	13	28	24	13	9	14	15

N (total) = 22460; N (countries) = 362-8295; CP09-CP14: »Please indicate if you have ever been a voluntary worker in the following fields ...« Share of those with a positive response.

23% of the confirmands had some experiences with musical volunteer activity. This was most common in the Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche (EmK)

(38 %) and in Austria (37 %) and most rare in Denmark (14 %), Poland (14 %), and Finland (16 %). Musical volunteering is more common among girls (boys 20 %, girls 26 %). Volunteering in church and youth work before confirmation time is much less common than volunteering in sports, school or music – only 12 % of the confirmands have had experiences with voluntary activity in the church. It is the most common in Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche (EmK) where 39 % of the confirmands had such experiences (CP12). In the other Central European countries, between 11 % and 20 % of the confirmands had experiences with volunteering in the church but in the Nordic countries such volunteering is sporadic (5 to 7 %). In terms of volunteering in youth work, there are two extremes: in Hungary 18 % and Switzerland 17 % of the confirmands have experienced some sort of youth work volunteerism, while only 4 % of the Danish confirmands had such experiences. In the other countries, the number hovers around 10 % (8 % to 12 %).

In general, confirmands were not very familiar with volunteerism in the beginning of confirmation time. In addition to not having volunteered in the church themselves, 28 % of the confirmands knew no volunteers in the church (CP07) and 16 % only one person. The variance between countries was extreme on this item: 65 % of the Danes and 40 % of the Norwegians and Swedish knew no church volunteers, while the equivalent number was only 15 % among the EKD German confirmands and just 7 % among the Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche (EmK).

Table 25 shows that in the beginning of confirmation time, 16 % of the confirmands were interested in volunteering in the church after confirmation (CP01). This interest was lowest in Denmark (7 %) and Norway (11 %) and highest among the Polish confirmands (45 %) and in the EmK in Germany (43 %).

During confirmation time, a huge shift occurs in the confirmands' attitudes concerning volunteering. At the end of confirmation time, 30 % of the confirmands stated that they would be interested in volunteering in the church (KP01). The biggest change was observed among the Finnish confirmands: 45 % of the Finnish respondents could imagine volunteering in the church, a strong increase of 27 percent points.

A question regarding the confirmands' interests in volunteering outside the church after confirmation time was included in both of the questionnaires, in the beginning (CP02) and at the end of confirmation time (KP34). Although the item was identical in both questionnaires, the scale in t_1 was Likert style (1-7) while in t_2 the answering options were only »yes/no«. Although the scale is different, the results are still comparable to a degree. The comparison of these two variables clearly shows that during confirmation time an even bigger shift occurs in the confirmands' interest to volunteer outside the church. 27 % of the

Table 25: The confirmands' willingness to volunteer in the church in the beginning (t_1) and at the end (t_2) of confirmation time

	Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	PL	DK	FIN	NO	SE	HU	DE EmK
t_1 (%)	16	19	18	14	45	7	18	11	19	31	43
t_2 (%)	30	32	36	21	49	11	45	22	36	49	50
Change (in percent points)	+14	+13	+18	+7	+4	+4	+27	+11	+17	+18	+7

N (total) = 25865 (t_1); N (countries) = 351-10060 (t_1); N (total) = 22242 (t_2); N (countries) = 299-8877(t_2); KN18: I can imagine working in the church as a volunteer after confirmation time; share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable.

confirmands stated in the beginning and 50% at the end of confirmation time that they could imagine volunteering in fields other than the church after confirmation. The most dramatic changes were observed in Sweden (39 percent points), Finland (38 percent points) and Denmark (33 percent points) while the least dramatic but still significant changes occurred in Hungary (11 percent points), Switzerland (15 percent points), Norway (18 percent points) and Poland (19 percent points).

In the beginning of confirmation time, boys appear less motivated to volunteer; this goes for both, the church (boys 14%, girls 20%) and other fields (boys 22%, girls 32%). The positive change is also greater among the girls than among the boys, both in the church (boys +12 and girls +13 percent points) and the other fields (boys +20 and girls +26 percent points).

Although the overall change is strongly positive, detailed analysis shows that it is bi-directional. Motivation for volunteering in the church decreases among 24% and increases among 45% of the confirmands.

Why does this huge change take place? Voluntary work seems to be an important topic of discussion during confirmation time. Only 34% (KK58, not asked in Switzerland) of the confirmands replied that their confirmation time did not involve such discussions. Beyond discussion, confirmation work often offered opportunities to try out volunteering in practice. 33% (KK57) of the confirmands reported that they were given such a chance and 32% (KK26) that they temporarily worked in programs of the church, for example, in internships.

During confirmation time confirmands gain an increased awareness of opportunities for becoming a volunteer in the church. While in the beginning, only 46% (CP03) said that the Church gives young people opportunities to

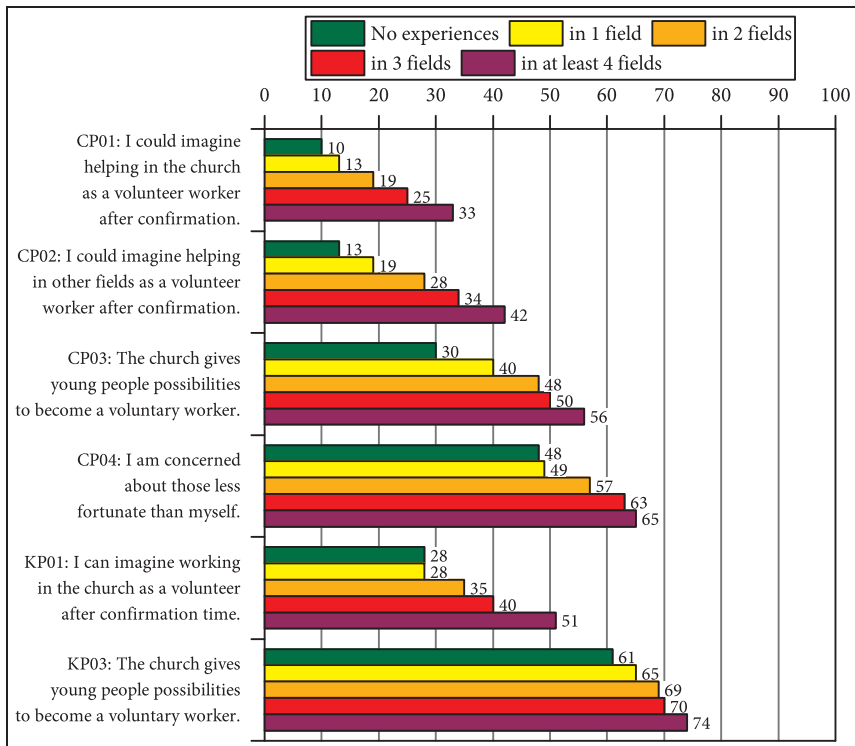
become a volunteer, the corresponding share is 64% (KP03) at the end of confirmation time. Not only do the confirmands have opportunities to try out volunteering and to talk about it but they also come to know volunteers. In most of the churches, volunteers are involved in confirmation work. Peer volunteers in confirmation work could well be the most important factor encouraging the confirmands to become volunteers themselves.

The Finnish model seems to be the most effective. Here, young confirmed volunteers take part in almost every confirmation group and live together with the confirmands in camps. This would partly explain the result described above: the Finnish confirmands seem less motivated on topics like justice and responsibility for others as a topic of confirmation work (CL08: 39% in Finland, average 55%) and they have less expectations for experiencing community in the confirmation group (CB02, 30% in Finland, average 45%). During confirmation time, however, they experience the largest positive shift of the sample. In Finland, the change on item CL08/KL08 is + 31 percent points (average + 11 percent points) and + 48 percent points on item CB02/KB02 (average + 33 percent points).

However, it is not only the peer volunteers' example that may influence the confirmands' interest in volunteerism. Figure 15 below shows that a positive correlation was found between the confirmands' own previous experiences with volunteerism (either at school, youth work, sports, music or church) and their interest to volunteer in the Church or elsewhere in society after confirmation. It appears evident that the more previous experiences the confirmands have with volunteerism, the more interest they have in new fields of volunteering. The confirmands who volunteered in several fields before confirmation time, are probably much more aware of young peoples' volunteering options and therefore they recognise these possibilities also in the Church already in the beginning of confirmation time (CP03). The more experiences people have with volunteerism, the more they seem to care for those less fortunate (CP04).

The cumulative nature of volunteerism fits with the findings of some other youth surveys. For example in the Finnish youth Barometer, only 5% of the adolescents volunteered in only one activity while 12% were active in at least five different activities simultaneously (Myllyniemi 2012, 18-22). The results support the idea that social capital grows among those confirmands who were volunteers already before confirmation time. For confirmands who had no previous experience with volunteering, however, confirmation time seems to offer a good opportunity to begin with such activity, which in turn appears beneficial both in terms of their personal development and the development of civil society.

Figure 15: The connection between confirmands' previous experience with volunteering and confirmands' interest to volunteer either in the Church or other fields than the Church (%)



N (total) = 20002-27135; CP01-CP04, KP01, KP03; share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable.

6.5 Conclusion

Volunteerism has become an important topic in many countries and is very often addressed within the theoretical framework of civil society. The availability of special reports and surveys concerning voluntary work in most of the countries participating in the present study is indicative of the importance attributed to this topic (to only mention three examples: Gensicke/Geiss 2010; Center for frivilligt socialt arbejde 2013; Arnesen et al. 2013). Moreover, it has also been discovered in this context that being involved in voluntary work is not limited to adults. The results show that adolescents are probably not the age group which is the most active in this respect, but still a considerable number

of today's youth actually are involved with this kind of activity. In many cases, this involvement seems to start early, well before the age of fifteen (Düx et al. 2008, 38).

Some of the reports also try to identify background factors for the willingness to serve as a volunteer. Clearly, in addition to age, gender plays a role but also education or migration-related influences as well as the political traditions in the countries. Moreover, religion is an important factor in this context (Hustinx et al. 2015). According to Richard M. Lerner, regardless of whether the young person is participating in sports, clubs, or free-time organisations at school or in the community, three features are shared across these fields: positive and sustained relationships between adolescents and adults; activities that build important life skills; opportunities for youth to use these life skills as both participants in and as leaders of valued community activities (Lerner 2004; Roth/Brooks-Gunn 2003).

It seems, however, that the question of how young people get involved with volunteerism and what factors play a role in this process have not been studied sufficiently (cf. Düx et al. 2008). This is why the results on the connections between confirmation work, volunteerism and civil society laid out in this chapter deserve special attention. They shed light on an important context where young people can encounter volunteers, benefit from their work, try it out themselves and consider ethical views that support commitment to the common good.

Focusing on communal experiences, ethical commitment and, particularly volunteerism, our comparative analysis indicates that confirmation time clearly contributes to preparing young people for active participation in civil society in important respects. All in all, the empirical findings are quite in line with the results of the first study conducted in 2007/2008. At the same time, they reveal some interesting differences between the countries, especially regarding volunteerism. Obviously, the extent to which confirmation work impacts the social, ethical and voluntary commitment of the young people depends on conceptual, contextual and also biographical factors that need to be investigated more thoroughly.

Current Issues

III. Current Issues

1. From Classrooms to Camps? Effects of Different Physical Learning Spaces and Teaching Methods in Confirmation Work

KATI NIEMELÄ AND WOLFGANG ILG

1.1 Introduction

There is a dynamic interplay between different teaching models and methods, physical learning spaces and learning outcomes. The design of physical learning spaces is a crucial starting point for learning (see, e.g., Brooks 2011; Chism/Bickford 2002). In confirmation settings the physical design varies considerably: from traditional classroom-settings to open-fire camp settings, and anything between these and a mixture of them (see Schweitzer et al. 2010; for different learning environments in »catechetical learning« also see de Kock 2014). These physical spaces most likely also have a linkage to certain teaching models and methods used by confirmation workers. Teachers with certain teaching models are most likely more interested in teaching in camp settings and promoting such spaces. A certain physical space itself may promote different teaching models and teaching methods and restrict the usage of others. On the other hand, the same teaching methods can be applied in different physical learning spaces. Regardless of the physical space, teaching can be of the same style. For example, a teacher may be inclined to use teacher-centered lecturing or various learner-centered methods, independent of the physical space where this takes place.

Previous studies on confirmation work have shown that the physical learning space is an influential factor in explaining the experience of confirmation work: the longer the time spent in a camp setting, the more positive the experience seems to be. The length of a camp also links to positive attitudinal changes in relation to church and faith (Ilg/Schweitzer 2010a; Niemelä 2010; Niemelä 2008). In this chapter this analysis will be expanded by analysing the use of various teaching methods in different physical spaces and their linkage to the experience of confirmation work.

Teaching methods are typically categorised into two approaches: teacher-centered and learner- or student-centered approaches (see, e.g., Brown 2003; McCombs/Whisler 1997; Slavin 2012). Teacher-centered approaches are characterised by teachers' formal authority and an expert role. Learners' primary

task is to passively receive information through lectures and direct instruction and it is the teachers' role to pass knowledge onto their students. In learner- and student-centered approaches teachers and learners play an equally active role in the learning process. The focus is on individual learners and their needs are central. The teacher is seen merely as a coach whose task is to facilitate students' learning. The learner is seen as unique and her/his background, interests, abilities and experiences are respected (McCombs/Whisler 1997; Brown 2003; Slavin 2012).

Different teaching methods have been reported to lead to different learning outcomes. Previous studies show that the effectiveness of different methods varies considerably. Student-centered, participatory teaching methods tend to lead to notably higher learning outcomes than passive teaching methods. The Learning Pyramid produced by The National Training Laboratories has often been used to demonstrate the effectiveness of different methods. Even though the pyramid has been criticised for not taking into account various other influential matters, it offers a good basis for evaluating and discussing the effectiveness of different methods. After teaching others, the retention rate has been found to be as high as 90%. On the other hand, learning outcomes after using passive methods are notably lower. After listening to a lecture, the retention rate has been only around 5%. Reading is slightly more effective. The usage of audiovisual methods raises the retention rate up to about 20% and demonstration up to 30%. Active methods like group discussion and practical experiences are notably more effective (retention rates 50 to 75%; cf. Hall 2012) The main reason for the difference between the learning outcomes is most likely linked to the extent of reflection and deep cognitive processing the method requires.

However, these results and debates as above are usually discussed concerning education in school, but not concerning non-formal education. Therefore there is only little research on such questions in the field of confirmation work where the basic setting may vary considerably.

1.2 Research Questions

In this chapter the effects of different physical learning spaces and teaching methods in confirmation work are analysed with the following questions:

1. What are the different physical learning spaces in confirmation work? What kind of teaching methods are employed in different physical spaces?
2. How can confirmation groups be categorised based on the methods in use? How are these groups linked to physical spaces?
3. How are different physical spaces and teaching methods linked to confirmation experiences (satisfaction and learning outcomes)?

These questions can be applied to all countries involved in the study except for Poland, because the Polish dataset does not provide information from the workers.

1.3 Different Physical Spaces

In most groups at least part of the confirmation time took place in a camp setting. In only 14% of the groups no camp took place at all; most of these groups were in Denmark. One third of the groups (37%) had a very short camp (1 to 2 days) and one fourth had 3 to 4 days in a camp. In one fourth of the groups there was a longer camp (at least five days). Longer camps were most typical in Finland and Sweden.

Table 26: Confirmation groups and the length of a camp in international comparison (%)

	Total	DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU	DE
		EKD								EmK
No camp (0 days)	14	8	0	8	86	0	0	0	32	17
Camp 1-2 days	37	48	63	25	14	0	41	4	30	28
Camp 3-4 days	26	27	22	36	0	2	44	46	12	30
Camp 5-6 days	9	9	11	21	0	6	12	21	24	12
Camp 7-8 days	10	5	0	8	0	72	0	14	2	5
Camp more than 8 days	5	3	4	4	0	21	3	14	0	9
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

N (total) = 1078; N (countries) = 27-439.

Furthermore confirmation work can take place in various settings, regardless of whether there is a camp or not. It took place most often in the parish house (for 84% of the groups). The church building was used in 17% of the parishes. Other places play a less important role (often used: minister's house 9%, school rooms 2%, nature 1%).

1.4 Teaching Methods in Confirmation Work

The most widely used teaching methods in confirmation work were discussion, group work, lecturing, singing together and prayer which were used »often« in about half of the groups. Methods that were reported to be used typically

»sometimes« include: games and play; stories and storytelling; and painting, drawing and other visual methods. About 20 % of the groups used these methods »often«. Other methods were used more seldom.

Table 27: The usage of different teaching methods, ordered by descending mean values

	Used often % of groups	Mean (1-4)
VH02: discussion	57	3.54
VH15: group work	52	3.44
VH10: working with biblical texts	37	3.29
VH01: lecture of the main responsible person	47	3.28
VH09: prayer	42	3.19
VH13: singing together	47	3.12
VH06: games and play	21	2.95
VH07: stories and storytelling	21	2.91
VH08: painting, drawing and other visual art	19	2.82
VH11: working with other written texts	13	2.58
VH03: drama, role play	10	2.54
VH05: quizzes	9	2.53
VH12: reciting texts learnt by heart	16	2.47
VH16: visits and excursions	6	2.37
VH18: meeting people from the parish	5	2.36
VH27: silent times, meditation	9	2.29
VH28: experiential education; adventure-based learning	8	2.18
VH04: learning paths	7	2.05
VH17: talking with experts	3	1.98
VH37: project work	4	1.97
VH25: making music	7	1.96
VH32: working with the internet	2	1.54
VH34: social media (e.g., facebook group)	5	1.45
VH36: learning diaries	5	1.35
VH33: working with SMS	4	1.32

N (total) = 1085; N (countries) = 26-453; scale: 1 to 4 (1 = never, 2 = seldom, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often).

Factor analysis was used in order to analyse the connections between different methods and to simplify the analysis of the teaching methods for further ana-

lysis. Using factor analysis, teaching methods were classified into five groups. The five groups are:

- 1) Active participatory methods (Cronbach Alpha = 0.69)
 - VH03: drama, role play
 - VH15: group work
 - VH08: painting, drawing and other visual art
 - VH06: games and play
- 2) Visits and meetings with parish people and experts (Cronbach Alpha = 0.65)
 - VH16: visits and excursions
 - VH18: meeting people from the parish
 - VH17: talking with experts
- 3) Music and meditation (Cronbach Alpha = 0.62)
 - VH13: singing together
 - VH25: making music
 - VH09: prayer
 - VH27: silent times, meditation
- 4) Teacher-centered methods (As Cronbach Alpha was below 0.50, no sum variable was formed based on the factor)
 - VH01: lecture by the main responsible person
 - VH11: working with other written texts
 - VH05: quizzes
 - VH10: working with biblical texts
 - VH12: reciting texts learnt by heart
- 5) Computer/mobile-assisted methods (Cronbach Alpha 0.68)
 - VH32: working with the internet
 - VH33: working with SMS
 - VH34: social media (e.g., facebook group)

1.5 Teaching in Different Physical Spaces

The next step in the analysis was to find out what kind of linkage the physical design of the learning space in confirmation work has to certain teaching methods, especially the role of camps for the experience of confirmation time. The results show that camp setting is likely to be linked especially to various student-centered methods. However, some methods are used widely regardless of the setting.

Spearman's rho was used to analyse the linkage between the length of a camp and various teaching methods. The results illustrate that certain methods are more likely used in certain physical spaces. The length of a camp correlated most clearly with various student-centered methods. The linkage was strongest

to active participatory teaching methods ($r = .26^{**}$). The camp setting offered a space where these methods were most likely used. The correlation was strongest with the following methods: drama, role play (.22^{**}); games and play (.21^{**}); group work (.20^{**}); experimental education; adventure-based learning (.19^{**}); learning diaries (.19^{**}); learning paths (.18^{**}) and painting, drawing and other visual art (.14^{**}).

The following examples illustrate the differences between groups with a long camp and no camp at all. For example, of the groups with no camp only 10% were such that games and play were used often, while of those groups with more than 8 days in a camp, games and play were used often in 43% of the groups. Group work was used often in one third of the groups with no camp (31%) and almost twice as much (60%) in the groups with a long or fairly long camp (5 days or more).

The length of a camp also correlated with the use of music and meditation (.19^{**}) in confirmation work. The correlation was strongest with making music (.29) and with the use of silent times and meditation (.12^{**}). However, singing together was used regardless of the length of a camp (.02).

Furthermore, computer/mobile-assisted teaching methods were used slightly more often in groups with a long camp. However, the correlation was low (from .10^{**} to .13^{**}).

On the other hand, teacher-centered teaching methods are to some extent negatively linked to the length of a camp. This was true with the use of quizzes (-.10^{**}) and reciting texts learnt by heart (-.19^{**}), which were used more often in groups with no camp. Of the groups with no camp, reciting text learnt by heart was used often in one fourth of the groups (28%) while in groups with more than 6 days in a camp, it was used more seldom («often» in 6% of the groups). However, there was no correlation between the length of a camp and the use of lecturing (.03), the use of stories and storytelling (-.05), discussion (-.02) and the use of prayer (.01) which were typically used fairly often regardless of the learning space. The same – no linkage between the method and the length of a camp – applies to working with biblical texts (.06) and working with other written texts (.03).

1.6 Confirmation Groups with Different Teaching Methods and Their Linkage to the Experience of Confirmation Work

The next step of the analysis was to find out if the confirmation groups could be classified into different groups based on the teaching methods used and to see how these groups link to different physical spaces and to see if these groups would differ in terms of their experience of confirmation work. K-means clus-

tering was used for this purpose. Three of the sum variables formed on the basis of the factor analysis (participatory methods, visits and excursions and music and meditation) and several single items measuring the use of teacher-centered methods were used in the analysis (reciting texts learned by heart, lecture, quizzes and stories and storytelling).

Using cluster analysis the confirmation groups were classified into four clusters based on the use of teaching methods. The four groups were:

1) Groups with a wide range of teaching methods (32 % of the groups)

The biggest cluster consists of confirmation groups with a wide range of different teaching methods. These are groups with a strong use of participatory methods, but also with multiple teacher-centered methods and with an active use of various visits and excursions. Various active student-centered methods are very widely used, but teaching is not restricted to them and lecturing is also actively used. These groups are most likely to be found in Sweden, least likely in Denmark. These are most likely groups with a long or a medium-length camp.

2) Groups with participatory methods and low use of lecturing (23 % of the groups)

The next cluster consists of groups with a strong use of participatory methods. This includes the use of drama, role play, games and play, art, group work, learning paths, making music. Also music and meditation are strongly used. The use of lecturing is notably low. These groups are most often groups with a long camp or no camp at all, and found most likely in Denmark and Finland.

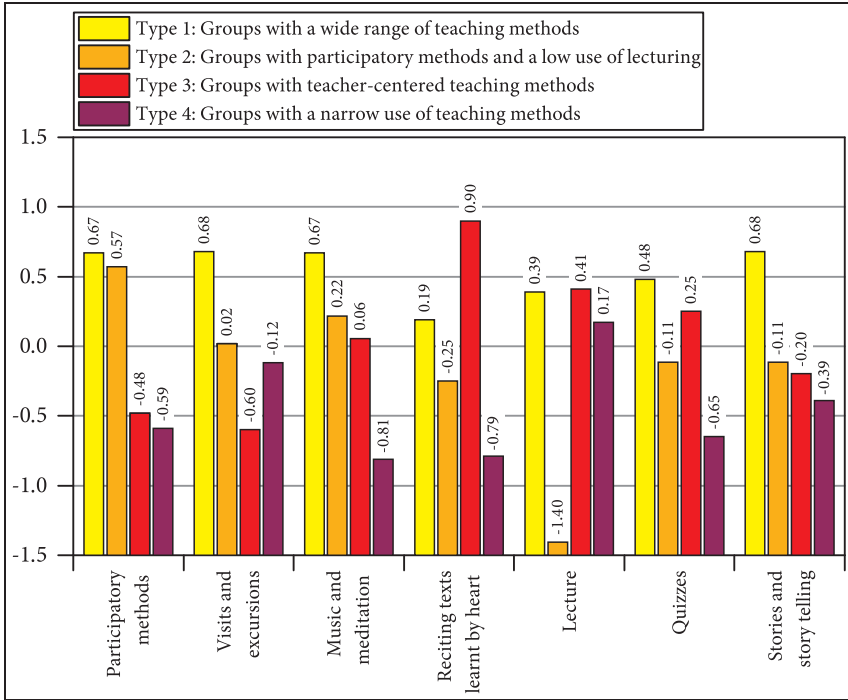
3) Groups with teacher-centered teaching methods (29 % of the groups)

The third (and second largest) cluster consists of groups with a strong use of various teacher-centered methods. This includes the use of lecturing, reciting texts by heart and quizzes. These groups are most likely found in Germany (both in the EKD and among the Methodists) and in Austria and least likely in Sweden. These are typically groups with a very short camp or no camp at all.

4) Groups with a narrow use of teaching methods (16 % of the groups)

The smallest cluster consists of groups with a more narrow use of methods. The main method in teaching is lecturing and other methods are used more seldom. These groups are equally likely to be groups with no camp, a short camp or a medium length camp. These groups are most often found in Switzerland.

Figure 16: Confirmation groups with different teaching methods: group centroids (standardised means)



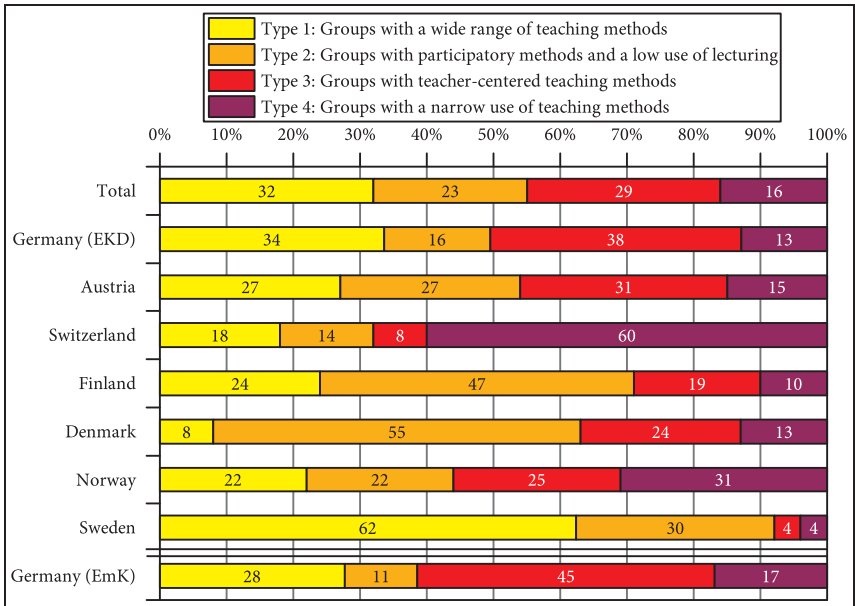
N = 1085; unit-level data.

1.7 Physical Learning Spaces, Teaching Methods and the Experience of Confirmation Work

The next step is to analyse the influence of the physical learning space and the teaching methods used in confirmation satisfaction. Previous studies show that confirmation time with a camp-form of learning space generally leads to more positive outcomes (see Ilg/Schweitzer 2010a; Niemelä 2010), but there is little knowledge about the influence of various teaching methods.

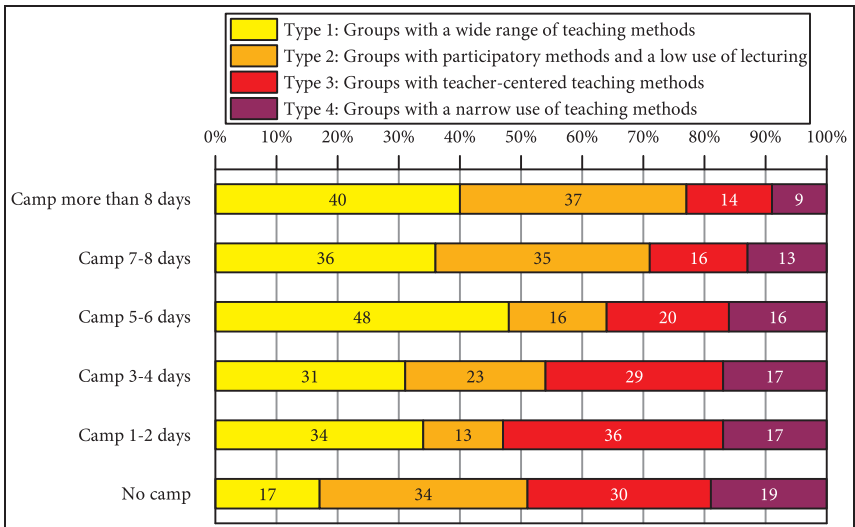
The results from our study show that also groups experiencing certain teaching methods are groups with more positive outcomes. The groups with a narrow use of teaching methods are groups with lowest satisfaction rates and lowest experiences of growth in faith as well as weakest experiences related to church services. Table 28 shows the results; the differences are rather small though.

Figure 17: The confirmation group types in different countries (%)



N (total) = 1085; N (countries) = 26-453; unit-level data.

Figure 18: Confirmation group types and the length of a camp (%)



N = 928; unit-level data.

Table 28: Confirmation experience in confirmation groups with different teaching methods (mean values)

	iKN3: Satisfaction with confirma- tion time	iKB1: Experience of growth in faith	iKK3: Involvement and participation	iKS1: Positive experiences with church services
Type 1: Groups with a wide range of teaching methods	5.20	5.01	4.73	4.28
Type 2: Groups with participatory methods and a low use of lecturing	5.24	4.98	4.79	4.18
Type 3: Groups with teacher-centered teaching methods	5.12	5.09	4.57	4.22
Type 4: Groups with a narrow use of teaching methods	5.03	4.72	4.65	3.96
Total	5.14	4.94	4.68	4.15
ANOVA (F)	6.97	17.91	6.34	12.91
sig	.000	.000	.000	.000

N = 1055; unit-level data. Mean values on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not applicable at all, 7 = totally applicable/1 = not satisfied, 7 = totally satisfied).

The results of the regression analysis show that the length of camp has a positive relation with confirmation experiences on all four measured levels (indices). These are satisfaction with the confirmation time, experience of growth in faith, involvement and participation and positive experiences of church services. Moreover, the method factor »music and meditation« shows a positive relation with all of the four indices. At the same time, a higher amount of lectures is connected to lower satisfaction and to a smaller degree of involvement and participation. An interesting result is that reciting texts by heart shows a positive relation with the perceived growth in faith while at the same time, it is connected to a lower degree of satisfaction and to a lower degree of participation. This supports the view that although reciting texts by heart is not loved by the confirmands, it seems to have a deeper meaning by providing something that can also strengthen the faith (cf. Härtner 2014).

Table 29: Beta values of regression analysis of the factors explaining confirmation experiences and satisfaction.

	Satisfaction (iKN3)	Experience of growth in faith (iKB1)	Involvement and participa- tion (iKK3)	Positive experiences with church services (iKS1)
Length of a camp	.17**	.09*	.21**	.15**
Active participatory methods	-.01	.03	.02	.01
Visits and meetings with parish people and experts	-.03	-.05	-.03	.02
Music and meditation	.19**	.12**	.20**	.18**
Lecture	-.12**	-.05	-.07*	.01
Reciting texts learnt by heart	-.07	.15**	-.12**	.01
R/R ²	.32/.10	.23/.05	.36/.13	.26/.07

N = 928; unit-level data, The *, **, *** show significances at the .05, .01, and .001 level.

1.8 Conclusion

Physical space and teaching methods are interwoven and can hardly be separated from each other. Looking at the analysis of the confirmands' experiences, it seems, that the number of days in camp is the most powerful tool for a confirmation work that leads to satisfaction, growth in faith, the feeling of participation and allows positive experiences of church services. As the results above show, the »positive camp effect« is not just an issue of being in a special location. It is rather the case that being in a camp influences the teaching methods. The longer the camp period, the more participatory methods are used while the amount of teacher-centered methods declines. Thus, the strong influence of camp on the criteria variables should not be seen as proof that physical learning spaces are more influential than teaching methods. It is rather the case, that good learning spaces entail a shift in teaching methods towards more promising activating methods. While moving confirmation work from classroom to camps, the teaching methods undergo a shift from a teacher-centered towards a confirmand-centered style.

At the same time, teaching methods themselves have an influence: regardless of the physical setting, teacher-centered methods, especially high amounts of lecturing are linked to lower satisfaction and lower levels of involvement and participation, while especially the use of music and meditation has many positive influences on confirmation experience. This is a noteworthy result in relation to any youth ministry.

2. Giving Least to Those Who Need It Most? How Gender, Social and Religious Background Influence the Attendance and Experience of Confirmation Time

BERND KRUPKA, WOLFGANG ILG, AND FRIEDRICH SCHWEITZER

2.1 Introduction

Sociological research on youth and religion has shown that a major predicting factor for religiosity in adolescence and adulthood is religious background experience in terms of religious practice in the family in childhood as well as childhood experiences with the church, mainly in the context of programs for children and youth (cf. Biesinger et al. 2005, Harbo 1989, Høeg/Krupka 2014). Does this also hold true for how confirmation time is experienced? Does religious background influence the outcome of confirmation work in such a way that confirmands without prior religious socialisation profit least from it?

While in some countries, more or less all of the Protestant adolescents take part in confirmation work, a growing number of Protestant adolescents actually take other choices, resulting, for example in Sweden, in declining participation rates. In section 2, this pre-selection will be discussed, while section 3 will compare subgroups of the participating confirmands in order to assess the effects of educational and religious background on the outcome of confirmation work.

2.2 Effects of Pre-Selection

By comparing countries and areas where only part of the Protestant adolescents participate in confirmation work with the rest of the sample of the present study, some inferences can be made on adolescents who do not participate in confirmation work.

The less confirmation time is a matter of common practice for the age group, the higher the proportion of girls among the participants. In countries with high attendance rates among Protestant adolescents there is gender balance among the confirmands (Austria, Switzerland, Denmark, Finland, Poland, Western Germany). With declining or low participation rates, more boys than girls are not taking part. Norway has 54 % female confirmands, Eastern Germany 55 % and Sweden 62 %. Possible reasons are the higher disposition of girls for religious activities or a hesitance of male adolescents to engage in activities that are not so common for the age group (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2013, 19).

Furthermore, general participation goes down in urban areas, so that, in

some areas, confirmation no longer is a general rite for the large majority of the relevant age group (cf. p. 147 ff.).

Low participation rates go together with high satisfaction rates. The confirmands' satisfaction is higher in urban areas where participation rates are declining. Swedish confirmands – a minority in their age group – are the happiest confirmands in the participating countries. Firstly, the least motivated confirmands will be most likely not to participate in confirmation time. Secondly, an individual decision to participate will often be accompanied by a focus on rewarding experiences (e.g., the fantastic confirmation camp) that itself boosts satisfaction rates. Finally, urban parishes with higher populations in the relevant age group may have more resources to assign to confirmation work.

2.3 Effects of Different Background Factors

Gender

According to their own views, boys and girls have different religious backgrounds, their motivation for confirmation work is also somewhat different while gender differences in satisfaction and attitude change in confirmation work are less pronounced (see p. 59 ff.).

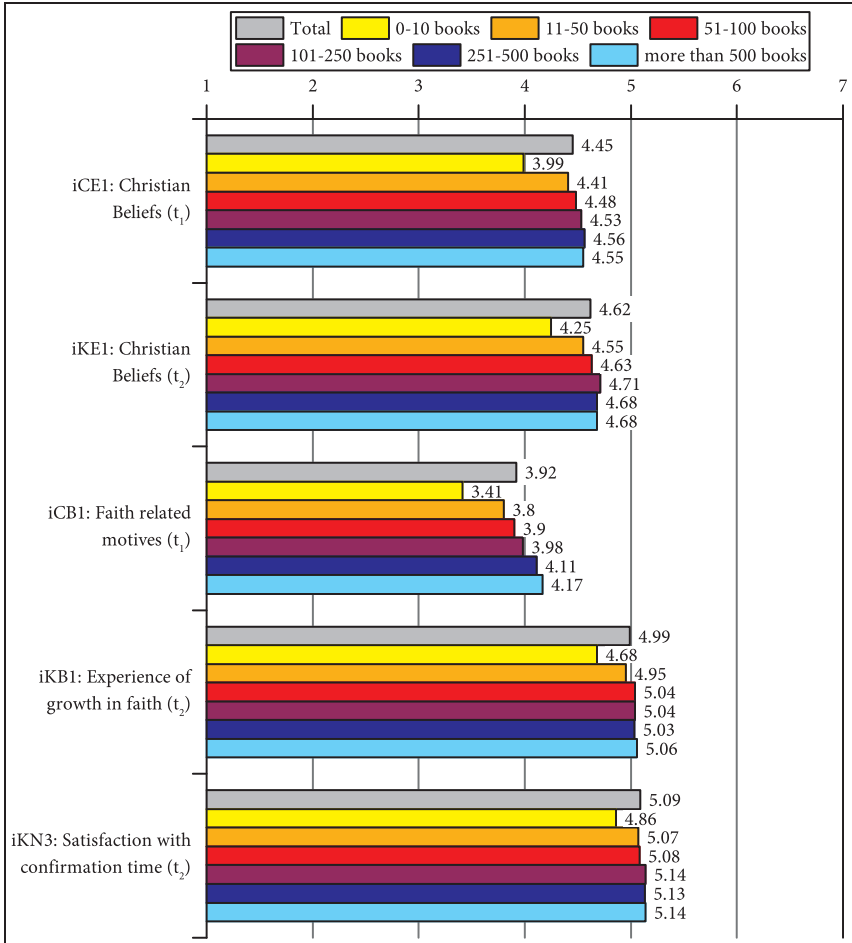
Girls generally report a more religious upbringing than boys: 60% of the girls were in contact with the church during childhood (CM11/CM12; boys: 47%); 37% experienced some form of evening prayer during childhood (CJ02; boys: 31%). While girls generally have a slightly higher intrinsic motivation for confirmation work and slightly higher expectations, they are much more interested in questions of everyday life conduct than boys and they have higher expectations concerning community in the group of confirmands.

Against the background of these findings, one could expect girls to benefit more from confirmation work than boys. However, looking at the outcome variables in t_2 , there are only minor differences between boys and girls. This raises the question whether girls get their fair share during confirmation time.

Educational Background

Confirmands' religious attitudes and beliefs correlate with the educational level of the family. Both, consent to Christian attitudes or beliefs and satisfaction with confirmation work are higher among confirmands from more educated families. The measure used to estimate the educational level of the family was the so-called book-item, a widely accepted measure for social status and social background. The question about the number of books at home was posed in all countries except Denmark and Sweden where it was considered too sensitive. As Figure 19 shows, there is a strong connection between educational back-

Figure 19: Educational background and motivations, attitude changes and experiences in confirmation time

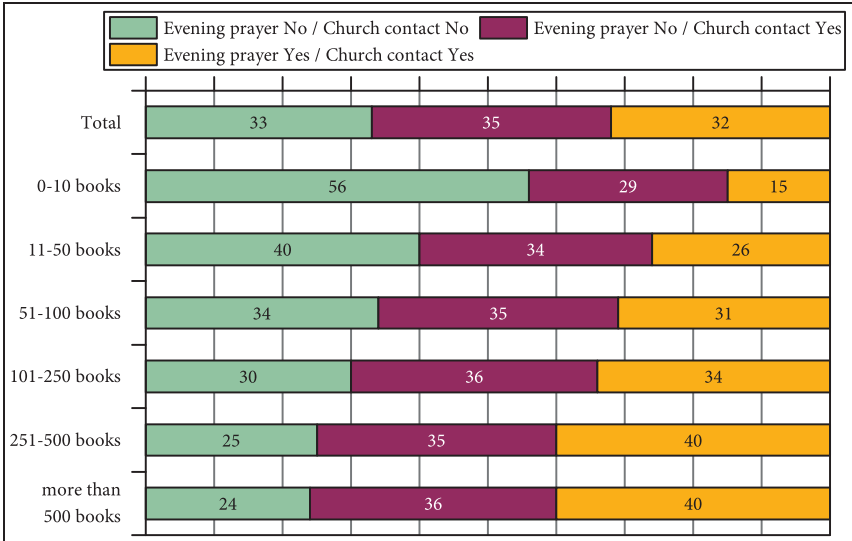


N (total) = 13840-19604; N (groups) = 1245-3322; mean values of indexes on a scale from 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest).

ground and expectations and experiences in confirmation time. Confirmands from families with almost no books have significantly lower satisfaction rates than the others.

Figure 20 compares three groups of confirmands in terms of previous religious experience in relation to the book question: those who grew up with both religious practices at home and church contact during childhood (orange bars),

Figure 20: Number of books at home, religious practice at home and church contact during childhood (%)



N(total) = 5339-5848; N (groups) = 236-1333; The background variables are CM11/CM12 (church contact), CJ02 (evening prayer at home) and CM04 (number of books at home).

those that grew up without religious practice at home but with church contact (purple) and confirmands who grew up with neither (green).

Social background (measured in terms of the number of books at home) and religious background are strongly connected, giving a better understanding of the findings from the preceding section. Only 44% of the confirmands from families that possess no more than ten books, report church work experience from childhood, while the same applies for approximately 76% of the confirmands with the highest number of books. 15% of the confirmands in the least educated group have grown up with at least occasional bedside prayer while this applies for 40% of the confirmands in the most educated families.

The results underline the general importance of childhood religious socialisation and demonstrate the influence of educational background (which will be discussed later in this chapter).

Baptism

Confirmation time is the most prominent occasion for baptism among those who are not baptised as infants. The total number of baptisms during confirmation time amounts to tens of thousands in Europe every year. 5% of the confirmands in the present study were not baptised at the beginning of confir-

mation time. Their share varies between the different Churches, ranging from 2% (Finland) to 24% (EmK), mirroring differences in the theological status of infant baptism between the Lutheran (e.g., Denmark where the question was not included) and the Reformed or Methodist Churches (e.g., Switzerland, EmK).

Baptism is largely considered as a »hard«, reliable membership parameter in sociological studies on religious affiliation. The present data do not support this. Even with the Methodist confirmands left out, childhood contact with the church is more prominent amongst unbaptised confirmands (62%, vs 57% among the baptised). Their satisfaction with confirmation time (mean iKN3: 5.22) and consent to Christian beliefs (iKE1: 4.68) also tend to be higher than average (iKN3: 5.13; iKE1: 4.57).

This observation needs further clarification which goes beyond the scope of this chapter. In any case, the assumption that unbaptised confirmands come from a more secular background than their baptised peers turns out to be a prejudice.

Religion in the Family and Childhood Contact with Church Programs

On the whole, one third of the confirmands recall at least occasional bedtime prayer, one third report no bedside prayer at all, whereas the remaining third is uncertain. However, there are major country-specific differences: 80% of the Methodist and Polish Protestant adolescents grew up with bedside prayer in some form or other, whereas the same applies to 40% in most of the participating countries and churches. Bedside prayer is least common in Denmark and Sweden where only 17% of the confirmands report such an experience.

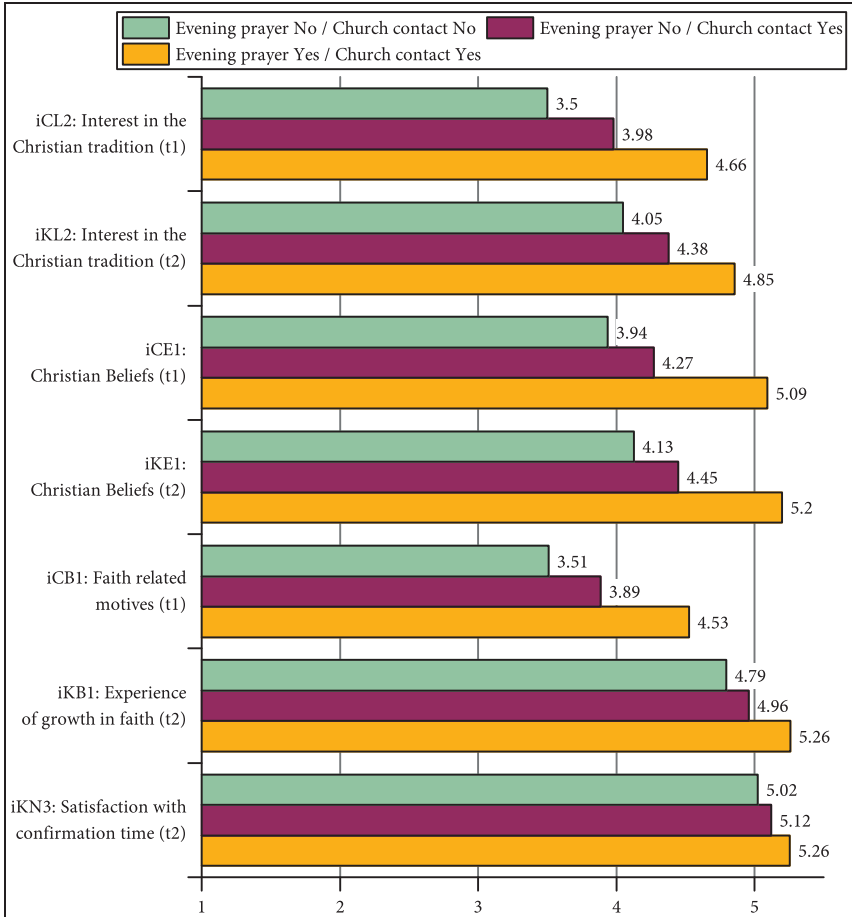
Religious socialisation in childhood is highly correlated with beliefs in adolescence and also with a positive experience of confirmation time.

Experience with church-related programs (CM11/CM12) before confirmation time is more common among the confirmands than bedside prayer. 54% participated in such programs before confirmation time. Again, there are major differences between the countries. Previous church-contact is shared by most confirmands among the Methodists as well as in Switzerland, Germany and Poland, whereas the same applies for approximately 40% of the confirmands in Finland, Norway and Sweden, and 30% in Denmark.

Even though previous experience with church-related programs is more common than religious practice in the family, the overlap is considerable: 69% of the confirmands who experienced daily bedtime prayer, participated in church-related youth work before confirmation time, while the same applies only to 44% of those who did not grow up with any form of bedtime prayer.

The connection between previous religious experience and religious attitudes at the beginning and at the end of confirmation time is very strong. The

Figure 21: Interaction of religious socialisation and motives, beliefs and satisfaction in confirmation work



N (total) = 4175-9114; mean values of indexes on a scale from 1-7.

mean score of Christian beliefs at both t_1 and t_2 is 1.1 points higher for the group with regular evening prayer in childhood than for the group without church contact.

The effect of religious childhood experiences on satisfaction with confirmation time is much lower. Statistically significant differences between the groups were found only in Germany, Switzerland, Finland and Norway. The experience of growth in faith during confirmation time is less influenced by the religious background of the confirmands than their expectations in the same field, the

indexes differing in much the same way as concerning educational background (the number of books) in Figure 20. Previous church experience and educational differences have a higher effect on religious beliefs than on satisfaction with the confirmation experience.

In spite of the relevance of educational background and religious experience in childhood, the experience of the confirmation time plays an important role. A partial correlation (Table 30) shows confirmands' satisfaction to be more correlated with Christian beliefs and the experience of growth in faith at the end of confirmation time than with educational background and religious experience in childhood. While educational and mainly religious background play a decisive role for confirmands' religiosity in absolute terms, the confirmation time experience gives a boost to confirmands with less church affiliation in relative terms.

Table 30: Correlations: satisfaction in confirmation time (iKN3, t_2), Christian beliefs (iKE1, t_2), experience of growth in faith (iKB1, t_2) and background variables

	iKB1	iKE1	Number of books (CM04)	Religious experience in childhood (inverted scale)
iKB1: Experience of growth in faith (t_2)	1.00	.51***	.06***	-.16***
iKE1: Christian beliefs (t_2)	.51***	1.00	.07**	-.28***
iKN3: Satisfaction with confirmation time (t_2)	.57***	.32***	.06***	-.11***
<i>Correlation controlled for »book question« and »religious experience in childhood«.</i>				
iKN3: Satisfaction with confirmation time (t_2)	.57***	.30***		

N = 11833-11835. Partial correlation; ***: significant at .001-level.

2.4 Conclusion

When participation rates in confirmation go down, it is the boys who leave first. The falling of participation rates goes together with higher satisfaction rates. Among the participating adolescents, educational status of the family and previous religious experience are strongly interlinked. The share of confirmands having grown up with religious practice in the family and/or church contact increases with the educational status of the family. Previous religious experience and thus, also educational status, make a big difference for confir-

mands' beliefs both at the beginning and at the end of confirmation time. Its effect on confirmand satisfaction and the confirmands' experience of growth in faith is much weaker.

The importance of social and religious background in absolute terms comes as no surprise in confirmation work and applies to a wide field of youth activities. A soccer club, for example, will mainly be attractive for adolescents with prior sports experiences and will usually give most satisfaction to the athletic ones. Similarly, confirmands with a religious background are more likely to choose confirmation work and to get something out of it. But for the church, this pre-selection of adolescents creates a problem. The ability to reach out to groups in society with low church affiliation is vital for mainstream Protestant Churches. Reaching out to all groups in society – not only the religiously brought up or the more »civilized« ones, let alone the more religiously »able« individuals – is a central part of the theological heritage of all churches, either in the shape of a diaconia appeal to include everyone in the sharing of Christian fellowship and care or as a missionary appeal to spread the Gospel. Historically, confirmation as a common Protestant rite for all was introduced in the pursuit of the very same theological appeals.

On the other hand, reaching out is also vital in times of changes in religiosity, when groups with traditional church affiliation are naturally declining in numbers. A church that does not want to embark on an open-ended shrinking process, has to focus on reaching out to groups with low church-affiliation. The general appeal of confirmation work and confirmation beyond those adolescents with a strong church affiliation from childhood, is vital to its existence. In part, confirmation work is doing well in this respect. In other respects, more efforts are needed to give more to those who need it most.

3. Minding the Gap: Overall Satisfaction and Perceived Daily Life Relevance of Confirmation Work

CHRISTOPH H. MAASS AND HENRIK SIMOJOKI

3.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out to discuss what can be called the »satisfaction-relevance-gap« of confirmation work in Europe. A short glance back to the first study provides a first indication to what is meant with this slightly unusual sounding term.

In one important sense, the main outcome of the first study on confirmation work in Europe was vastly encouraging. In all seven countries where the survey was conducted, the confirmands were highly satisfied with the status quo of confirmation work. They had a lot of fun and experienced good community in their confirmation group. Particularly positive is, all in all, that 72 % of the confirmands were satisfied with the confirmation time in general (Schweitzer et al. 2010, 316).

There is no question that confirmation work is popular among the confirmands. But is it also relevant? Only 37 % of the respondents felt that their own questions concerning faith were addressed (Schweitzer et al. 2010, 315). What was even more worrying: more than four confirmands out of ten stated that what they learned during confirmation time had little to do with their everyday life. All in all, overall satisfaction and perceived daily-life relevance seemed to diverge quite a bit.

3.2 Gap Confirmed. Changes Between 2008 and 2013

In a first step, the new results are compared with those of the first study. Has the »satisfaction-relevance-gap« identified in the 2007/2008 study then stayed the same? Has it become smaller or even grown larger? A closer look at the data shows that things have not really changed that much.

Altogether, 45 % of the confirmands state in the second study that what they learned during confirmation time had little to do with their everyday life (KK35). Switzerland and Germany have the highest proportion, Poland and Hungary the lowest proportion of participants sharing this view. In all Scandinavian countries slightly more confirmands state that what they learned during confirmation time has little to do with their everyday life. The biggest change is in Sweden, which has moved closer to the European average. In Germany and Zurich there is almost no alteration at all, whereas Austria makes a leap of 9 percent points towards less perceived irrelevance.

Table 31: Perceived daily life relevance of confirmation work (t_2) 2008 and 2013 (%)

»What I learned during confirmation time has little to do with my everyday life« (KK35)	First Study (2008)			Second Study (2013)		
	Yes	Neutral	No	Yes	Neutral	No
Total (comp. overall)	43	25	32	44 45	27 27	29 29
DE (EKD)	47	24	29	47	26	28
AT	51	24	25	42	26	32
CH (ZH overall)	53 –	22 –	– 25	50 53	23 22	27 25
DK	38	28	34	39	30	30
FI	40	30	30	44	29	27
NO	38	28	34	44	26	29
SE	29	23	48	38	27	35
PL	–	–	–	34	20	45
HU	–	–	–	28	20	52
DE (EmK)	–	–	–	34	23	44

N (total) = 22705; N (countries) = 292-8972; scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; Yes = 5, 6, 7; Neutral = 4; No = 1, 2, 3. The first study did not include Poland, Hungary and DE (EmK). In 2008, the Swiss data were limited to the Canton of Zurich (ZH). Total (comp.) includes only the countries and regions that participated in the first study; total (overall) comprises all countries that participated in the second study, minus Hungary and DE (EmK).

The general tendency becomes even clearer when focusing on those participants who did not find confirmation work to be of little relevance. All in all, less than 30% of the confirmands expressed a positive view on the meaningfulness of confirmation work for their everyday lives. There are only small differences between the countries that already participated in the first study. In the minority churches of Poland, Hungary and the German Methodists (Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche), the share of confirmands that do assign confirmation work daily-life relevance is considerably higher.

The, once again, low overall score in perceived relevance is even more remarkable considering that, compared to the first survey, the overall satisfaction has risen significantly or at least slightly in most of the participating countries.

As Table 32 shows, the satisfaction of the confirmands with their experiences during confirmation time has grown and exceeds the already high satisfaction rates of 2008. The rise in satisfaction is particularly big in Austria (13 percent points), Denmark (9 percent points), in the Swiss Canton of Zurich (9 percent points), and Germany (8 percent points). In Sweden and Norway the confirmands are non-significantly more satisfied than they were five years earlier.

Table 32: Overall satisfaction with the confirmation time 2008 and 2013 (%)

»To what extent are you satisfied with the whole confirmation time?« (KN01)	First Study (2008)			Second Study (2013)		
	Pos.	Neutral	Neg.	Pos.	Neutral	Neg.
Total (comp. overall)	72	18	10	76 76	15 15	9 9
DE (EKD)	67	20	13	75	14	10
AT	68	19	13	81	8	11
CH (ZH overall)	66 –	18 –	16 –	75 71	13 18	12 12
DK	63	24	12	72	22	6
FI	87	9	4	79	14	7
NO	72	19	9	73	20	7
SE	88	7	5	90	7	3
PL	–	–	–	86	6	8
HU	–	–	–	90	6	3
DE (EmK)	–	–	–	81	12	8

N (total) = 22654; N (countries) = 295-8945; scale: 1 = not satisfied at all; 7 = totally satisfied; Positive = 5, 6, 7; Neutral = 4; Negative = 1, 2, 3. The first study did not include Poland, Hungary and DE (EmK). In 2008, the Swiss data were limited to the Canton of Zurich (ZH). Total (comp.) includes only the countries and regions that participated in the first study; total (overall) comprises all countries that participated in the second study, minus Hungary and DE (EmK).

Only in Finland, which had a very high satisfaction rate in 2008, have the numbers gone down quite a bit. 79% of the Finish confirmands were satisfied with the experiences they made during confirmation time. That is still 3 percent points over the average, but 8 percent points less than in the first study.

All in all, the new findings confirm the existence of a »satisfaction-relevance-gap« in confirmation work in Europe. Due to the increased contentment with confirmation work in 2013, overall satisfaction and perceived daily life relevance were even farther apart than five years before.

The divergence between satisfaction and relevance is problematic in more than one respect. If confirmation work lacks apparent relevance and connection to everyday life, sustainable learning is hindered (cf. Adam 1998, 180f.; Pruuki/Tirri 2004). Apart from such pedagogical concerns, there are also good theological reasons for feeling irritated by the satisfaction-relevance-gap. Confirmation work as it is currently practiced in Europe strives to support young people in finding their own faith and way in life. To succeed in this, the learning processes should be in touch with central questions of the confirmands and possess strong relevance to their everyday lives (cf. Schlag 2009).

In the following, the relation between expressed satisfaction and perceived

relevance is explored more thoroughly; first by international comparison and then by asking for possible factors influencing this connection.

3.2 The Relation of Expressed Satisfaction and Perceived Relevance in International Comparison

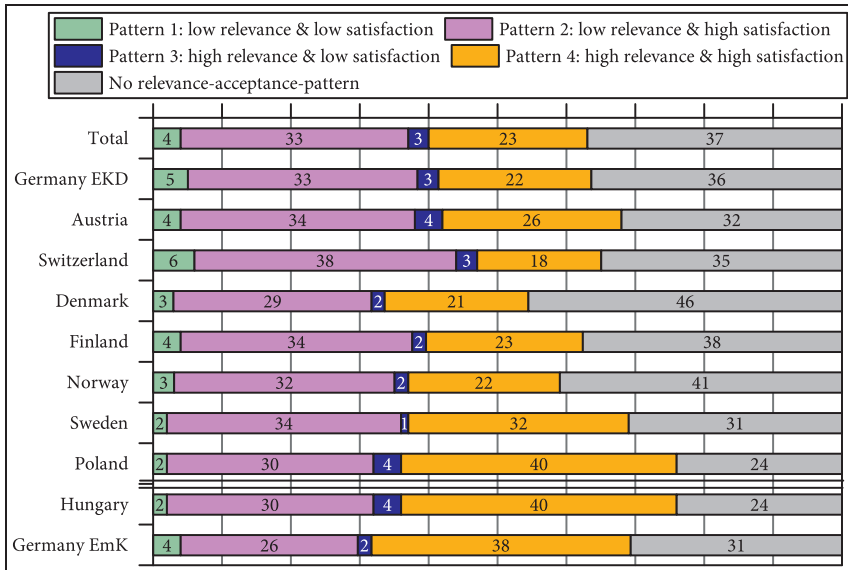
How do overall satisfaction (KN01) and perceived daily-life (KK35) relevance interrelate among the confirmands? For the purpose of a more detailed understanding of this relation, five possible attitude patterns are distinguished: low relevance combined with low satisfaction (AP1), low relevance combined with high satisfaction (AP2), high relevance combined with low satisfaction (AP3) and high relevance combined with high satisfaction (AP4). Additionally, the neutral answers (point four on the seven-point Likert scale) that cannot be assigned to such a pattern have to be taken into account (no satisfaction-relevance-pattern).

The overall results presented in Figure 22 reveal two marginal and two dominant attitude patterns. The most dominant attitude pattern is characterised by a high overall satisfaction and low values for perceived daily-life relevance (AP2). All in all, one third of the confirmands that participated in the study are satisfied with their confirmation time as a whole but simultaneously feel that what they learned during confirmation time is remote from their everyday life. In this regard, the findings seem to back up the observation of a »satisfaction-relevance-gap« in current confirmation work. It should not be overlooked, however, that with 23 % a considerable number of the confirmands are both content with their confirmation time and positive about the daily-life importance of what they learned during this period (AP4). By comparison, the number of confirmands who are both dissatisfied with their confirmation time and state that what they learned during this period had little to do with their everyday life (AP1) is remarkably low (4 %). Not surprisingly, the rate of those who attest confirmation training to be relevant for their everyday life and are at the same time discontent with their confirmation time (AP3) is even lower (3 %).

The comparative analysis shows some interesting similarities and differences. In six of the nine countries, attitude pattern 2 (low relevance combined with high satisfaction) dominates clearly over attitude pattern 4 (high relevance combined with high satisfaction). This applies in particular to Switzerland where the values for AP2 are more than twice as high as those for AP4 (38 % to 18 %), and, to a lesser extent, also for Germany (33 % to 22 %), Finland (34 % to 23 %), Norway (32 % to 22 %), Denmark (29 % to 21 %) and Austria (34 % to 26 %).

There are, however, some exceptions from this general tendency. The first one corresponds with the general picture delivered in this study. In Hungary

Figure 22: Satisfaction-relevance-relation (based on KN01 and KK35) in international comparison (%)



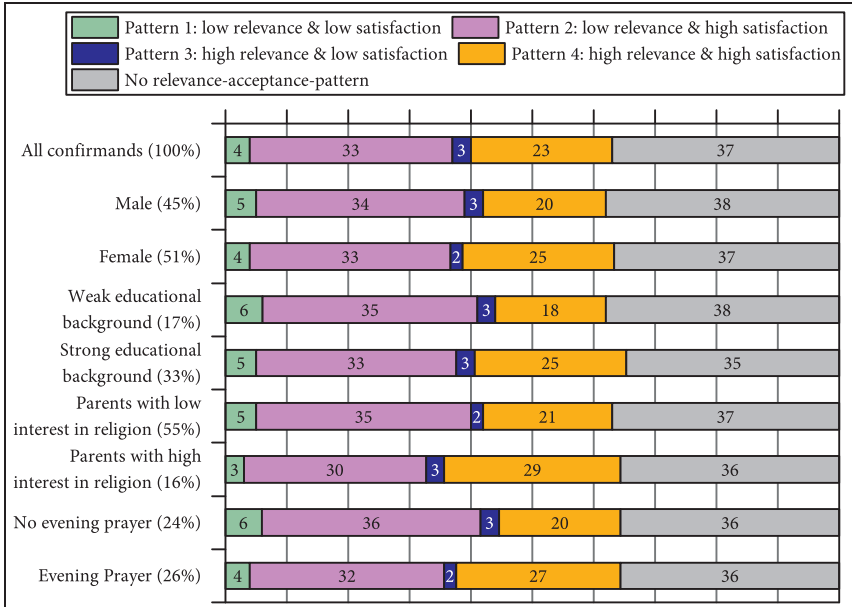
N (total) = 22400; N (countries) = 291-8861.

and Poland the percentages for AP 4 clearly exceed those for AP 2. Again their values are much closer to those of the minority church of the German Methodists than to the other churches. Much less expectedly, the Swedish results also fall out of line. Here AP2 and AP4 are separated by the margin of only 2%. Again with Hungary and Poland, Sweden also has the lowest scores for AP 2 (2%, compared to 6% in Switzerland and 5% in Germany). Apparently, the divergence between the satisfaction and relevance rates cannot be attributed solely to societal issues or the cultural and religious situation, in which Sweden is quite similar to the other Scandinavian countries.

3.3 Factors Influencing the Satisfaction-Relevance-Relation

The last observation leads on to the next research question: Which factors influence the relation between overall satisfaction and perceived daily-life relevance? At first the possible effects of personal and contextual factors like gender, educational background and religious socialisation are highlighted.

Figure 23: Satisfaction-relevance-relation (based on KN01 and KK35) by gender, educational background and religious socialisation (%)



N = 22400. Items used: CM01 (sex); CM04 (number of books at home); CJ01 (parents interest in religion); CJ02 (evening prayer with mother or father as a child). 4% of the respondents gave no response on CM01.

Figure 23 shows that the four attitude patterns vary just a little by gender. Here, the only significant difference concerns AP4: 25% of the female confirmands were both satisfied with the whole confirmation time and rated the learning processes as relevant for their everyday life, compared to 20% among the boys.

The educational background seems to play a more important role, again especially with regard to AP4. 25% of the confirmands with a higher educational family background took a positive view both to satisfaction and to daily-life-relevance – that is 7 percent points more than among confirmands who are less privileged in this regard.

Both factors are less relevant for AP2, which constitutes the »satisfaction-relevance-gap« that lies at the centre of this chapter. In this regard, parental religiosity and religious upbringing seem to be central aspects. The »satisfaction-relevance-gap« is lower among respondents whose parents are quite or very interested in religion (AP2: 30%) than among confirmands with parents who have little or no interest in religion (AP2: 35%). Moreover, 29% of the confirmands with religiously interested parents were not only satisfied with

their confirmation time, but also felt that the learning processes during this time were meaningful for their daily life, in contrast to 21% among the confirmands whose parents have only little or no interest in religion. As Figure 23 reveals, the results are very similar when highlighting the role of evening prayers in the religious upbringing. Of course, the linkage between such aspects of religious socialisation with the satisfaction-relevance-relation is not that surprising. If young people have not experienced religion as a relevant part of their upbringing, they are presumably less inclined to find the educational or theological content of confirmation work to be particularly meaningful for their daily life. This observation indicates that a low rate in KK35 does not automatically mean that confirmation work as it is experienced by the respective confirmand fails to address the sphere of everyday life. It could just stem from the simple fact that, in this confirmand's view, religion and faith in general have little to do with his or her everyday life.

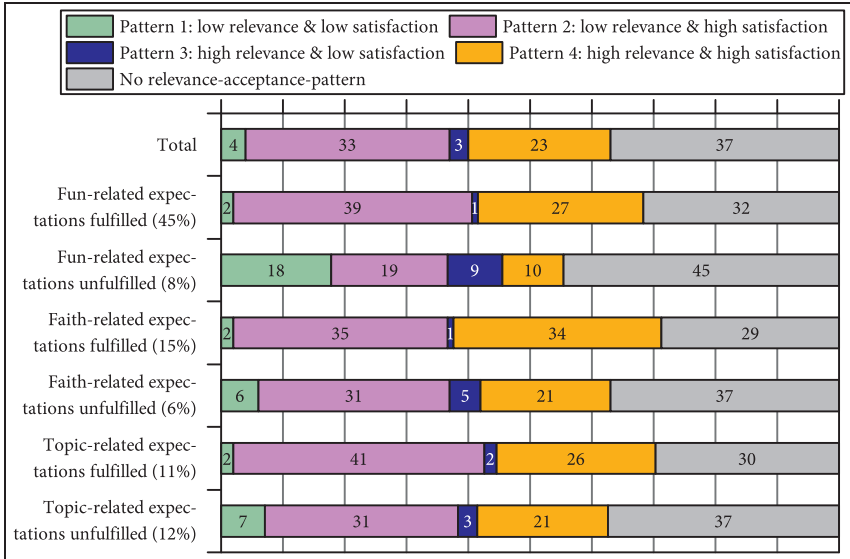
In a next step, the focus moves to processes and experiences during confirmation time. How do fulfilled and unfulfilled expectations influence the satisfaction-relevance-relation? In t_1 , the confirmands were asked three questions about aspects that are of particular importance to them during confirmation time, one being related to fun, one to faith and one to the topics.

- 86% of the confirmands expressed that, for them, it was important to have a lot of *fun* during the confirmation time (CK05)
- for 39% it was important that their own questions about *faith* were addressed (CK11),
- 35% of the confirmands found it important to be allowed to decide about the topics together with their fellow confirmands (CK04).

Figure 24 shows that it does indeed make a difference whether such expectations are met or not. This holds true particularly for those confirmands whose fun-related wishes were fulfilled: 27% of them comply with AP4 (high relevance & high satisfaction) and 39% with AP3 (low relevance & high satisfaction). Both scores lie well above the average. Pointedly put: the satisfaction-relevance-gap is indeed bigger within this group, but mainly because of the higher satisfaction, not due to less perceived relevance.

There are some interesting implications to this observation. Confirmands understandably want their confirmation time to be exciting and fun. However, sometimes it is feared that a fun-oriented approach were at the cost of the substance of confirmation work. The analysis does not confirm such concerns. On the contrary, it seems that confirmands who wished to have fun during confirmation time and perceive that this expectation is met, are not only more satisfied with the confirmation time as a whole but also find the learning experiences during this period more meaningful. Conversely, there is a dramatic

Figure 24: Satisfaction-relevance-relation (based on KN01 and KK35) by fulfilled expectations (%)



N = 22400. Items used: CK05 (fun-related expectations), CK11 (faith-related expectations), CK04 (topic-related expectations), KK05 (fulfilment of fun-related expectations), KK11 (fulfilment of faith-related expectations) and KK04 (fulfilment of topic-related expectations).

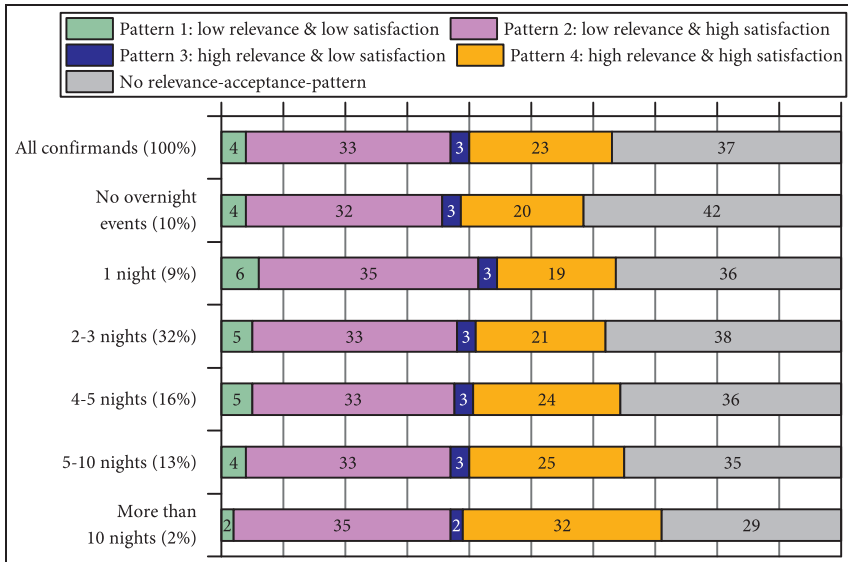
decline in both satisfaction and perceived relevance among those confirmands who felt disappointed in this respect.

In the case of faith-related expectations, there are also clear differences between the dissatisfied and those whose expectations were met. More than one third of the latter expressed a positive opinion both on overall satisfaction and on daily life relevance. The score is 13 percent points lower among the confirmands whose wish that in confirmation time their faith questions would be addressed was frustrated. In regard to the content-related expectation expressed in CK04, the analysis shows a similar distribution, with particularly high differences in AP2.

In all three cases, the fulfilment of central expectations goes along with a disproportionately high share of AP4 (high relevance & high satisfaction) and, more notably, with significantly higher proportions of AP3 (low relevance & high satisfaction).

In a final step, one specific form or setting of confirmation work and its possible effects on the satisfaction-relevance-relation are highlighted. Again, the analysis builds on findings and insights of the first study. In her comparative analysis of religious change of confirmation work, Kati Niemelä pointed to the

Figure 25: Satisfaction-relevance-relation (based on KN01 and KK35) by the length of overnight events (%)



N = 22400. Item used: VQ05 (number of overnight events).

impact of long camp periods. She found out that »the length of a camp period correlates positively with both religious change and satisfaction« (Niemelä 2010, 253; cf. also Ilg/Schweitzer 2010a, 171). This observation leads to the last research question. How does the length of overnight activities (outings and camps) effect the relation of overall satisfaction and perceived daily life relevance?

Bearing in mind that these findings do not allow for a causal interpretation, the general tendency mirrored in Figure 25 is quite remarkable. The longer the camp period, the bigger the share of confirmands who are both satisfied with their confirmation time as a whole and affirm the daily life relevance of confirmation work.

3.4 Conclusion

Drawing on the empirical findings of the first study, this article explores the relation between overall satisfaction and perceived daily-life relevance among today's confirmands in Europe.

In a first step, the results of the second study were compared with those of the

first. In sum, the findings confirmed the existence of a satisfaction-relevance gap. On one side, the overall satisfaction remains impressively high. In most of the participating countries, the confirmands are even more content with their confirmation time as a whole than they were five years ago. At the same time, though, almost half of them state that what they learned during confirmation time has little to do with their everyday life – slightly more than 2008.

In the subsequent comparative analysis distinctive similarities and differences between the studied countries were highlighted. In a majority of them, the attitudes of the confirmands are to a large extent characterised by high overall satisfaction and low values for perceived daily-life relevance. But there are also noticeable exceptions from this general trend. In Poland, Hungary and, somewhat surprisingly, also in Sweden the most dominant attitude pattern is constituted by confirmands who take a positive view both on overall satisfaction and daily-life relevance.

In a last step, these findings were analysed with respect to a number of personal and contextual factors and then in relation to some aspects that are more directly linked with confirmation time. Three aspects seem to be of particular importance: the religious socialisation of the confirmands, the extent to which their expectations were met during confirmation time and the length of the camp period. With regard to the second aspect, the analysis led to a more positive evaluation of the satisfaction-relevance-gap.

4. Developing a (Religious) Identity during Confirmation Time

THOMAS SCHLAG, MURIEL KOCH AND CHRISTOPH H. MAASS

4.1 Introduction

Confirmation time takes place in a phase of the adolescents' life which is characterised by their search for and development of individual identity. In terms of personal life orientation, adolescence is a period of intense transition.

In terms of faith and religiosity, important transformations take place, e. g., the demythologisation of »childhood faith« and a possible further development towards more mature faith. Such transitional processes occur not only in a narrow perspective on faith issues but also regarding the whole complexity of finding out »Who am I?«, »What is the goal of my life?«, etc. Thus, religion can be seen as one of many systems of reference that lead to certain orientating answers on life-related questions in a broader sense (Saroglou 2012).

Consequently, confirmation time is one of many »systems« which can support and influence confirmands in developing their identity. According to a Protestant theological understanding, the act of confirmation is understood as a ritual of transition through which the adolescents become conscious members of their church as a faith community. Therefore, this ritual can on the one side be combined with the development of religious identity, on the other side confirmands can experience this ritual in a more family-tradition-oriented way without connecting it – at least explicitly – to religious development.

Grace Davie refers to this openness concerning the motivation for confirmation and notes that nowadays the meaning of confirmation has changed. It is no longer understood as a *rite de passage* in the sense of an expression of growing up, but the aspect of experience has become more important (Davie 2006). These experiences are probably, compared to the ritual in a classical institutional sense, more meaningful for the adolescents because they can connect to them in a personal way. What changes probably most for the confirmands is their status in the church. They may well be aware of the fact that their position after confirmation is different in the sense of being full and responsible members of the church. But it is not clear whether this status change also has an influence on their religious identity. In general, it has to be asked whether confirmation time does make a difference compared to other identity-shaping fun- and peer-community experiences in an adolescent's life.

This article will analyse whether confirmation work contributes or is linked in any sense to the development of personal (faith- and church-related) religious identity – bearing in mind that the results of the present study indicate a

high level of satisfaction with experiences like fun, good community, etc. in all the examined European countries. This question is particularly important since in many countries, confirmation time is the last mandatory »offer« by the churches concerning religious education. After confirmation time, the adolescents are independent and responsible themselves for their further church- and religious practice. So does confirmation work use this last chance?

4.2 Identity and Religious Identity

Individual religious identity is the result of a larger process of building and rebuilding identity. This process contains different experiences related to the self and other(s). With the increasing ability of a more complex perception of reality, adolescents realise some discontinuity and inconsistency between their own images, views and – so to say – the world around them. Following the thesis of Saroglou (2012), these questions can be located in a religious horizon. This does not necessarily imply that religious identity must be the result, but it means that religion gives some insight to questions about the self.

Just as important is the ability to understand one's own personality as part of a development process, which forms itself consistently from experiences of the past and anticipations of the future in the present (Keupp 1991). Reasons for this thinking of the adolescents that encompasses different times, are questions about the conduct of life, meaning of life, connections to certain important persons and – concerning religious identity – the ability to link these questions to the dimension of religious orientation. Finally, religious socialisation within one's own family or experiences with the church (e.g., baptism) also shapes religious identity.

For a closer examination it is helpful to differentiate more clearly between religious orientation and religious identity:

Religious orientation consists of religious practice, the personal development of religious attitudes and reflection of religious contents.

Once such religious orientation is realised by a person, it can lead to a person-related religious identity (in the sense of believing) and to an institution-related identity (in the sense of belonging), which together builds one's own religious identity.

Religious identity therefore consists of two different aspects:

- 1) Personal experience of the importance of faith for one's own life, which expresses itself in the self-orientating practice of faith, e.g., prayer, belief in God, self-description as a religious person, etc.

- 2) Institutional faith experience, in which church rituals like baptism, confirmation, etc., play a bigger role and the question of belonging to the church is positively rated and also connected to a form of personal commitment.

Both aspects are important for the following analysis.

Davie's description of today's religiosity shows a programmatic difference between believing and belonging. According to her distinction, personal faith and institutional commitment are not necessarily connected to each other. That is, the combination »belonging without really believing in Christian contents« is quite widespread. This leads her to the assumption that individual faith and the identification with the institutional church can widely diverge. But whether this is true for the phase of developing a (religious) identity in adolescence, has to be further explored. According to Erikson (1980), the adolescent search for identity is to be characterised mainly by exploration and commitment. Critical thinking about established ideologies or beliefs on the one hand, and at the same time, the strong wish to find a or *the* place to fit in and be committed are often combined.

Thus, the leading research questions are:

- Does confirmation time have a positive influence on the development of religious identity?
- Is it customary for today's confirmands to distinguish between a personal self-orientation (in the sense of believing) and the institutional identification (belonging)?
- Is confirmation time especially important for (religious) identity development processes among adolescents who are already religiously nurtured and – in terms of education – well brought up, whereas it leaves the others unaffected?

4.3 Analysis

Possible Development of a Religious Identity

For observing and detecting the possible development of a (religious) identity during confirmation time several items referring to personal faith experience, institutional belonging to the church and about the interest in questions about the meaning of life are relevant. In this respect the t_1 and t_2 items are used to map the possible changes during that time. The selection of items corresponds to the working definition of religious identity mentioned above. Therefore, according to Davies' distinction one must differentiate between believing and belonging. In addition to that, a third perspective referring to interest in life orientation without believing and / or belonging is used. Behind this third

perspective »life orientation« stands the conviction that adolescents in any case have and use the potential to orientate themselves for their conduct of life. So this term does not mean that religious identity is not related to life-orientation, but that life-orientation can well go without religious identity!

The selection of items for this approach is narrow with only 3 items for the reason of focused and distinct insights. From there five basic patterns of potential identity-development, whether religious or not are identified.

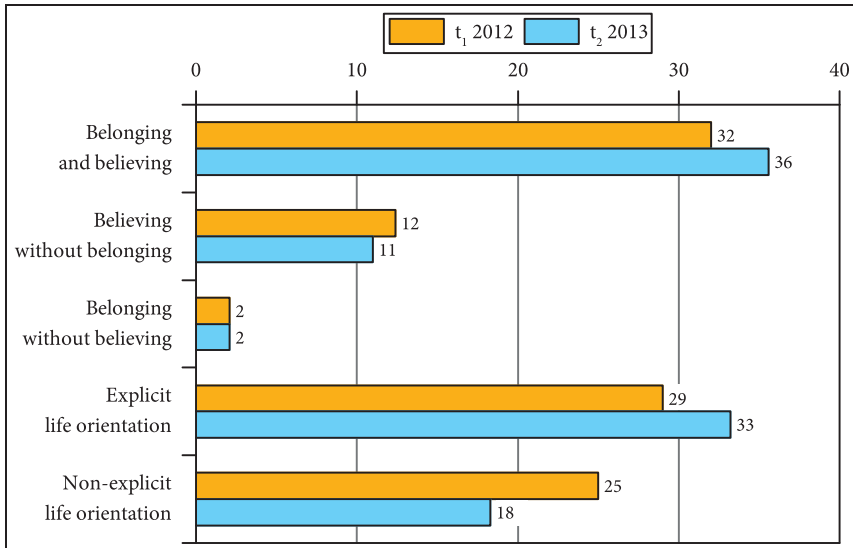
- (1) Believing and belonging: In this positive combination confirmands respond to both aspects, the one concerning personal faith (CE/KE09) and the other concerning the attitude towards the institutional church (CG/KG01) positively.
- (2) Believing without belonging: Confirmands following this pattern, react to the question about personal faith (CE/KE09) positively, whereas their attitude towards the institutional church (CG/KG01) is negative.
- (3) Belonging without believing: This pattern is characterised by those confirmands who react positively to questions about their current attitude towards the Protestant Church (CG/KG01) and the importance of belonging to the church, but more negatively to the question about their faith in God (CE/KE09).
- (4) Explicit life orientation (interest in life orientation without believing and/or belonging): Confirmands who are counted to this pattern do not show any specific personal or institutional religious identity-development. But nevertheless they show an explicit interest in the question concerning life orientation, in this case about »meaning of life« (CL/KL11), so one can assume that these confirmands are involved in processes of identity-development – probably in a more secular sense.
- (5) Non-explicit life orientation: In this pattern confirmands show no specific positive and/or negative interest in either personal and/or institutional faith – it could well be named a mild agnosticism. One can call this »non-explicit« instead of »no life-orientation« for the simple reason that one should be very hesitant to say that any adolescent could just not be interested in life-orientation questions or not being able to cope with these questions!

4.4 Results

General Attitude towards (Religious) Identity

First findings lead to a picture that allows the mapping of the confirmands according to these five patterns about (religious) identity and the developments in respect of changes between t_1 and t_2 .

Figure 26: Five identity patterns in the beginning (t_1) and in the end (t_2) of confirmation time (%)



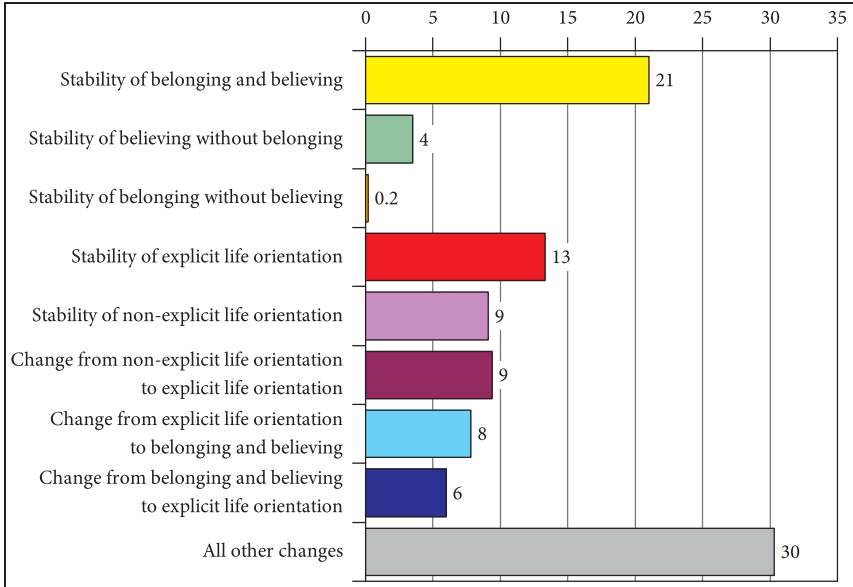
N = 16065. Only confirmands showing identity patterns in t_1 and t_2 are taken into account. Reading note: 32% of the confirmands exhibit a pronounced religious identity (»believing and belonging«) in t_1 and 36% in t_2 .

Two patterns show a higher similarity than others: pattern 1, including those confirmands who correspond to the terms of believing and belonging, shows 32% (t_1) and 36% (t_2) and contains those confirmands with a pronounced religious identity. Pattern 4 shows the confirmands with a measurable interest in identity-issues without a religious attitude. As in pattern 1, there are 4% more in t_2 in this pattern. Pattern 5 also shows a remarkable percentage with 25% (t_1) respectively 18% (t_2), but differently to pattern 1 and 4 not increasing but decreasing by 7% during confirmation time.

Patterns 2 and 3 show a certain religious identity, but it appears as if the individualised religiosity, that implies believing without belonging or even more distinctly belonging without believing, is less common among confirmands. This is an important finding, because it relativises Davies' thesis about the supposed current tendencies to divide between membership and faith. For adolescents like the confirmands believing and belonging seem to correspond. This makes sense, if we remember Erikson's thesis about the importance for the youth not only of exploring, but also of finding the place to commit to.

Counting those confirmands with a religious identity at t_2 (patterns 1-3) makes 49%, those with an interest in identity-questions without a specific reli-

Figure 27: Stability of identity patterns and changes between identity patterns during confirmation time (from t_1 to t_2) (%)



N = 16065. Only confirmants showing identity patterns in t_1 and t_2 are taken into account. Only changes referring to at least 5% of the confirmants are reported, all other changes are subsumed under »all other changes«.

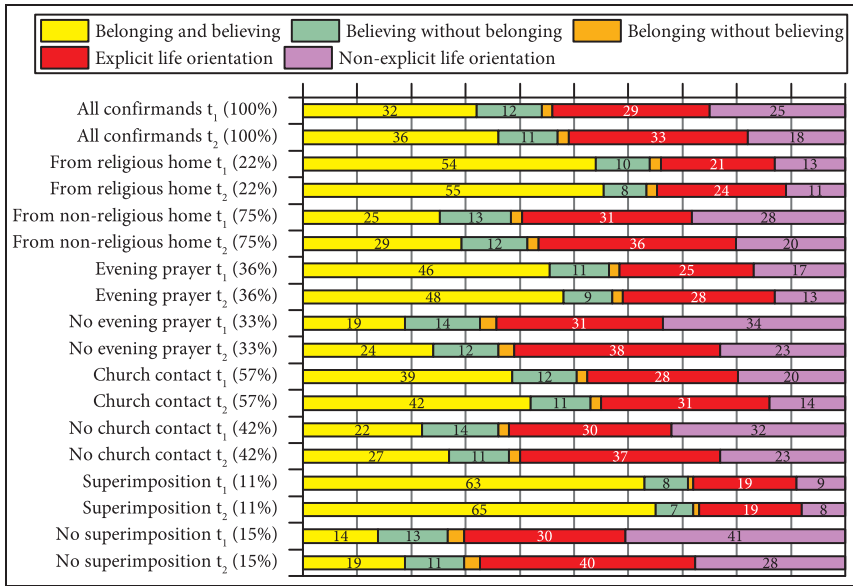
gious orientation are 33% and those without measurable interest in identity are 18%. Therefore it can be said that identity-issues are an important subject to confirmants, whether they refer to them in a religious or in a non-religious way.

It seems that confirmation time positively influences the development of religious identity and identity in general as both patterns are increasing during the year.

Taking a closer look at the change from one pattern to the other allows for a more precise picture. Altogether, for 47% of the confirmants stability of identity during confirmation time can be identified and for 53% a change – so to say – from one identity pattern to the other. So more than half of the adolescents were obviously motivated to change (even if they did so unconsciously) from their »original« viewpoint to a different position.

Stability is the highest among those with a religious identity and those with an explicit life-orientation identity. On the other hand, the processes of transition and change are slightly higher among those with non-explicit life orientation towards explicit life orientation than from those with a religious identity towards explicit life orientation.

Figure 28: The relationship between indicators of religious socialisation and identity patterns (%)



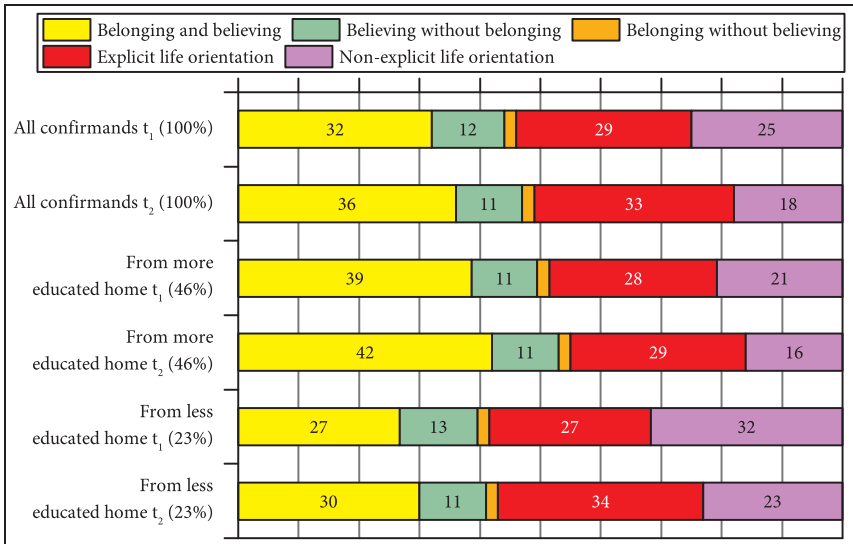
N = 16065. Only confirmands showing identity patterns in t₁ and t₂ are taken into account. Items referring to religious socialisation: CJ01 (Interest of parents in religion), CJ02 (parents say an evening prayer in childhood) and a combination of CM11 and CM12 reflecting contacts with the church before confirmation time. Positive responses to these indicators: A positive response (YES) to CJ01 is assumed when the parents of the confirmands are at least quite interested in religion. YES to CJ02 is assumed when parents said an evening prayer at least sometimes. YES to CM11 or CM12 is assumed when the confirmands had contact with the church before confirmation time. A negative response (NO) to CJ01 is assumed when the parents are only somewhat or not interested at all in religion. NO to CJ02 is assumed when parents did not say an evening prayer. NO to CM11 and CM12 is assumed when there was no contact to the church or no memory of such a contact.

Of course, it can not be said in a monocausal sense that transition from non-religious to religious identity is a result of confirmation time. But it can clearly be said that confirmation time takes part in a stage of life in which the adolescents encounter many changes and do a lot of orientation work, which can lead them on very different paths in searching for religious identity as a consequence of confirmation time.

Background Factors

As is known from other approaches and results of this European study, it is worthwhile to integrate some background factors for better understanding

Figure 29: The relationship between education and identity patterns (%)



N = 16065. Only confirmands showing identity patterns in t₁ and t₂ are taken into account. Education is operationalised by CM04 (How many books does your family have at home?). Confirmands whose families had none-50 books at home are regarded as coming from a less educated home; confirmands whose families had 101-500 books at home are regarded as coming from a more educated home.

and interpreting of the respective findings. This is also true for the question of religious identity.

Gender

Looking at the question of the relation of gender and religious identity shows that identity seems to be an issue of adolescents to which slightly more girls are open to than boys. For both sexes, pattern 5 is decreasing by 7% during confirmation time. On the other hand, one can say that religious identity (patterns 1-3) is found slightly more often among male than female confirmands. The girls show instead a higher rate in pattern 4 (non-religious identity).

Religious Socialisation

22% of the confirmands taking part in t₁ and t₂ 22% come from a rather religious home or show interest in religion. During confirmation time a slight increase of religious identity within this group from 54% to 56% can be identified.

Superimposing the indices of religious socialisation, which means focusing on those coming from a religious background at all levels explored, 63% (t₁) /

65% (t_2) show a pronounced religious identity, a stable percentage of 19% (t_1/t_2) keep the non-religious identity. The other patterns show less than 10% change.

It can be stated that the confirmands who are already religiously socialised show a higher rate in religious identity and develop this even during confirmation time.

Interestingly, it seems as if those confirmands who are not or weakly religiously socialised show larger changes in religious and non-religious identity. Superimposing the NO-answers shows a massive decrease in non-explicit life orientation among the confirmands, 12% more show an interest in identity-development after confirmation time.

This leads to the assumption that confirmation time influences those from religious homes and at the same time those from non-religious background both positively in the meaning of developing an identity. Whether this identity is religious or not, depends obviously on the religious background. On the other hand, one should not say that confirmation time only supports the already religious ones.

Educational Background

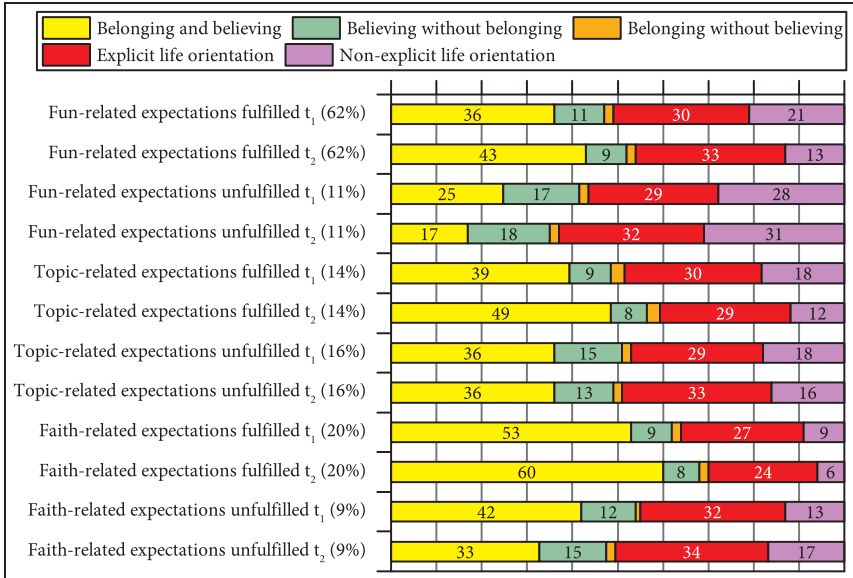
Regarding the educational background of the confirmands a rather unsurprising picture is revealed. Confirmands from more educated homes show a higher percentage in religious and non-religious identity while confirmands from less educated homes make the largest share in pattern 5 with non-explicit life orientation. But focusing on the development-aspect in comparing t_1 and t_2 , confirmands from less educated backgrounds show a higher development in religious and non-religious identity. Also the group of non-explicit life orientation (pattern 5) decreases among the adolescents from less educated homes by 9 percent points.

Those confirmands with a stronger educational background seem to already bring a certain level of reflection to confirmation time and show development during the year, but those confirmands starting with a weaker premise develop much more.

Satisfaction and the Development of a Religious Identity

As is known from the overall results of the participating countries, having fun during confirmation time is rather important for confirmands throughout the different contexts. One can divide the confirmands in those with expectation of fulfilment of their expectations and those without these expectations in the beginning (t_1). The expectations may be fun-related, topic-related and faith-related. Identity-development shows differently among those two groups and leads to different kinds of satisfaction in t_2 , as the following Figure 30 shows.

Figure 30: The relationship between satisfaction in confirmation time and identity patterns (%)



N = 16065. Only confirmands showing identity patterns in t₁ and t₂ are taken into account. Obviously, expectations were not fulfilled in t₁. The short-hand description in the figure means that t₁-results are shown for confirmands who said in t₂ that their expectations were fulfilled. Items: CK05 (fun related expectations), CK04 (topic-related expectations), CK11 (faith-related expectations), KK05 (fulfillment of fun-related expectations), KK04 (fulfillment of topic-related expectations) and KK11 (fulfillment of faith-related expectations). Reading note: 73% (62% + 11%) of all confirmands taking part in t₁ and t₂ express an expectation of »having fun« (CK05) in t₁. 62% of all confirmands experienced that their fun-related expectations were fulfilled in confirmation time. 36% of those confirmands have a pronounced religious identity (»belonging and believing«) in t₁ and 43% have such an identity in t₂.

Lacking satisfaction concerning the experience of fun has the largest negative impact on the identity development (religious/non-religious). For the religious identity (pattern 1-3) most important is satisfaction concerning the upcoming of faith-related topics and issues. The development of a religious identity (pattern1) between t₁ and t₂ is most negatively affected by lacking satisfaction in faith-related topics and fun-related aspects. Surprisingly, topic-related dissatisfaction barely influences the pattern 1, but very positively influences it in case of satisfaction. On the other hand, the largest decrease in pattern 1 happens when confirmands' satisfaction concerning faith-related needs is missing. Religious identity (pattern 1-3) is higher among those confirmands who are satisfied in all three areas.

Summarising the positive effects concerning satisfaction for the development

of a religious identity one can say that dissatisfaction concerning the topics leads to no bigger damage, while when faith-related needs are unsatisfied or fun in general is missing, religious identity decreases. So increasing religious identity is clearly supported by a positive experience of interesting topics (+ 10%), faith-related issues (+ 7%) and fun in general (+ 7%).

4.5 Conclusion

Several interesting findings can be summarised from the approach to the question of the contribution of confirmation work for (religious) identity development.

From the perspective of the institutional church, it can be stated that adolescents seem to have a very low interest in such forms of individualised religiosity where they either face the option »believing without belonging« or »belonging without believing«. If there is a measurable religious identity, it comes along with a positive attitude towards the church in general.

This corresponds also with Saroglou's (2012) findings that at the age of confirmation time the youth is looking more for a place to commit to than to explore various religious offers independently of the institutional offers.

Thus, it can be said that identity-development is an important issue for adolescents in confirmation time. During confirmation time we see an increasing interest in both identity and religious identity. Half of the confirmands seem to change during confirmation time in their approach to religion. This leads to the assumption that confirmation time in any case, no matter if it affects directly and positively the development of a religious identity or not, contributes in a supporting and continuous way to identity-issues of adolescents.

Having the background of the confirmands in mind, it can be stated that a religious home and a higher educational level of the family strengthen religious identity. But also less socialised and educated confirmands seem to not get lost concerning their life orientation needs and potentials during confirmation time.

From the perspective of this educational field of the Protestant Churches, it can be pointed out that confirmation time can have a positive influence on developing a religious identity and it might make a difference for those who have not yet had the chance to get in touch with religious contents and practices.

Last but not least, the question about identity-development is close to the one about the confirmands general satisfaction. Satisfied confirmands tend to have a religious identity and/or higher interest in identity. So besides exploring and experiencing fun etc., it is important for the adolescents during confirma-

tion time to find a place in the church where they feel comfortable, are taken seriously in their needs and search for identity and to be supported and inspired in their individual and collective processes of life-orientation.

5. The Postsecular City and Confirmation

HENRIK REINTOFT CHRISTENSEN AND KATI NIEMELÄ

5.1 Introduction

Since the inception of the social sciences the distinction between the rural countryside and the urban metropolis has been of prime importance. Cities have been regarded as the incubator of ideas and trends from which novelties spread later on to other areas. Georg Simmel described the individualising forces at large in the metropolis as early as in 1903. In the metropolis the individual can distance him or herself from others and observe or pursue the social life according to individual taste and wishes. The metropolis offers hedonistic indulgence in the social life: cafes, theatres, businesses, and all matter of voluntary associations. In the metropolis the most intensive social life and the most excruciating loneliness is found (Simmel 1950 [1903]).

5.2 The Rural-Urban Distinction and Confirmation

Rural sociology was one of the first distinctive branches of sociology establishing their own journal in 1937 addressing the issues of the particularity of rural life. In their review of the urban-rural research, Nelsen and Storey write that »by the 1950s the concept of increasing interdependence and/or urbanisation of rural areas had largely been accepted by rural-urban researchers« (Nelsen/Storey 1969, 47). However, they also argue that the increasing affluence and cultural opportunities in the urban areas from the 1960s onwards might again have increased the differences between rural and urban youth (ibid.). In a number of later studies in the 1970s, Nelsen focused especially on rural/urban differences in the religiosity among American youth showing that youth from rural and intermediate areas have more »conservative religious beliefs« than youth from metropolitan areas, but also that much of this relationship disappears when class and socio-economic status are taken into account (Nelsen/Potvin 1977, 112). Today, it is class and socio-economic status that are the most predominant predictors of differences between rural and urban populations (for more on a theoretical discussion of rural and urban, see the final report from the European Spatial Planning Observation Network ESPON, Bengs/Schmidt-Thomé 2005).

However, most sociology has focused on the city. The societal change brought about by industrialisation and urbanisation inspired all the founding fathers of

sociology, and this distinction has been inherited by later generations. It is especially the young age-groups in the cities that are seen to be most susceptible to new ideas and influences (Mikkola et al. 2007, 9; Mäenpää 2006, 318; Mikkola 2003, 16; Durkheim 1990, 318). Research shows that the general level of religiosity, especially in its traditional forms, is lower in urban spaces than in rural areas. It is visible both in belonging, participation and believing. The religious participation and believing are lower among the urban citizens and among them, lowest among the young adults (Mikkola et al. 2007). Also confirmation attendance rates have declined notably faster in many urban areas. For example, attendance rates in the capitals of the Nordic countries are much lower than in other areas (see Table 33). This is not only due to a higher rate of immigrants but also to endogenous dimensions of church and city life. For example, the confirmation rate is also lower for the native, non-immigrant part of the population. In Sweden the national rate for youth whose parents are church members is 40 %.

Table 33: Confirmation rates in the Nordic countries, 2013 (%)

	Capital area	National share
Finland	65	85
Sweden	18	30
Norway	32	64
Denmark	43	71

Sources: Finland: Church council/Church statistics; Sweden: Svenska Kyrkan; Norway: Statistics Norway, Denmark: Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs.

From the literature it is expected that differences between rural and urban confirmands can be found. Consequently it is pertinent to identify such differences in order to discuss possible explanations. More specifically, the following questions are addressed: 1) How do the motives for attending confirmation work differ among urban and rural confirmands? 2) How do the experiences of confirmation time differ among the rural and urban confirmands and how can these differences be explained?

There are many ways of differentiating between rural and urban, and the countries in the study are of such different sizes with regard to both population and area that it is potentially difficult to agree what is urban and what is rural. Many studies use the number of inhabitants or population density as a measure of rural/urban (cf. Nelsen/Potvin 1977, 109; OECD 2006, 25; Sørensen 2012, 880). In the present study, the parishes are placed in three categories: rural, mixed, and urban. In some countries it is the ministers who have identified the category (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Denmark, Poland, and Hungary).

In other countries the categorisation was made by the researchers based on the statistical data available (Sweden, Norway and Finland). The following Table 34 shows the share of confirmands by area category in each country.

Table 34: Share of confirmands by area category (rural, urban and mixed) (%)

	DE EKD	AU	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK
Rural	52	36	50	25	29	34	27	18	30	39
Mixed	24	11	34	46	52	14	53	0	42	49
Urban	24	53	16	29	19	52	20	82	28	12
N	11659	592	8437	2592	2710	3284	1678	489	938	784

In the countries with a Protestant minority church, the share of confirmands coming from the urban areas is larger than in the other countries. This is related to the fact that churches in a clear minority situation mainly operate in larger cities and less often in rural areas or middle size (mixed) areas. However, it needs to be kept in mind that the categorisation is not fully comparable since in some countries it was done by ministers and only in some countries based on area statistics. In the following analysis, the confirmands coming from mixed areas are omitted from the analysis and only the responses of confirmands coming from urban or rural areas are analysed and compared.

5.3 Results

Background

With regard to religious background, only small differences between rural and urban confirmands can be found, but at least one background variable shows a statistical significant difference in each country. Most notable is the difference related to prior attendance to children's activities.

In most countries, the rural confirmands attended children's activities more often than urban confirmands, and also the parents of the rural confirmands did evening prayers with their children more often than urban parents. In most countries rural confirmands are also more likely to be baptised before the start of confirmation time. However, the parents' general interest in religion does not differ consistently in rural and urban areas. In most countries gender is evenly distributed, but in three of the four Nordic countries female confirmands are overrepresented among the urban youth. One must also keep in mind that this study examines youth that have enrolled in confirmation time.

Table 35: Religious background of the rural and urban confirmands (%)

		DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK
Gender: Female	Rural	51	50	50	53	46	49	60	54	53	52
	Urban	51	49	50	50	53*	57***	67	48	54	53
Parents inter- ested in religion	Rural	26***	38*	17	27	19	20	19	81	96*	78
	Urban	25	26	18	26	21*	22*	22	73	91	83
Evening prayer (every or almost every night)	Rural	27**	25*	28**	8	22*	29	9	72*	31	67
	Urban	23	19	24	8	21	28	6	51	39***	73
Attended age 5-9	Rural	50***	49*	49	22	39*	39**	41*	93	41	71
	Urban	45	44	47	20	31	34	27	83	44	70
Attended age 10+	Rural	54**	50	63	29**	15*	23**	26*	26	54	72
	Urban	50	43	63	23	12	22	17	17	45	67
Baptized	Rural	94***	97*	95**	96	98	97	95	–	96**	75***
	Urban	91	96	92	96	95	97	99	–	94	55

The *, **, *** show a significant difference between rural and urban confirmands at the .05, .01, and .001 level (X^2 -test).

Therefore, it is not possible to conclude anything about young people in urban and rural areas in general.

Motives for Participating in Confirmation Work

The adolescents were asked about 16 different motives for taking part in confirmation work, and it turns out that rural and urban confirmands differ on some motives. The biggest difference is related to tradition vs. one's own will. Tradition – because it has always been like that in their family and because they were baptised as children – is more important for rural confirmands while urban confirmands emphasise their own decision. The rural confirmands also tend to regard money and presents as more important than urban confirmands as well as confirmation as an important step in growing up. Apart from emphasising their own decision, urban confirmands also emphasise religious motives slightly more, and in many of the countries, they have heard also that confirmation is fun and they want to experience community in the confirmation group.

Apart from distinguishing between motives emphasised by rural and urban confirmands, Table 36 also shows which countries exhibit significant differences. Overall, Germany and Sweden show the most significant differences. At the other end we find that the Austrian confirmands only differ on one motive, and there is no difference among Danish confirmands at all.

Experiences of Confirmation Work

Concerning experiences with confirmation work, the differences among the rural and urban confirmands are more significant. The experiences are measured with various indices. Overall, these experiences and general satisfaction with confirmation work are more positive among the urban confirmands than among the rural confirmands.

In the total sample urban confirmands score significantly higher on all these experiential measures. The last column shows which countries evidence significant differences between urban and rural confirmands. In Norway and Sweden urban confirmands score significantly higher on all five measured items. For Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Finland a difference is found on three of the items. In Denmark, Poland and Hungary, the urban and rural confirmands did not differ significantly from each other. Finland is the only country where the rural confirmands score significantly higher than urban confirmands, and only on one question: satisfaction with the overall confirmation time. In the next section, the factors behind satisfaction are examined in more detail.

5.4 Modelling Satisfaction

The previous sections have identified a number of differences between urban and rural confirmands. In this final section the relationship between the differences is analysed. According to the theories cited above, urban confirmands could be assumed to differ from rural confirmands, but following the taken for granted notions of the secularisation paradigm, urbanism supposedly shapes and furthers secularity. So far this chapter has shown that the background of the confirmands is not that different. Rural confirmands attended church slightly more frequently than urban confirmands and were more accustomed to evening prayer. They have been motivated by a combination of similar and different motives, rural confirmands being slightly more motivated by tradition and presents, and urban confirmands by fun and their own will. Furthermore with regard to experience, the urban confirmands are significantly more positive than rural confirmands. However, this might not have anything to do with the rural-urban-distinction but be related to other factors. To measure the independent impact of background and religious socialisation factors as well as specific experiential factors related to confirmation time regression analysis was performed.

Table 38 presents three models for predicting satisfaction. All effects are given as standardised regression coefficients making comparisons between the individual effects easier. The first model analyses the influence of background factors in satisfaction and shows that area and gender as well as religious socia-

Table 36: Motives for attending confirmation time among urban and rural confirmands. Mean values (t-test, weighed data for overall results)^a

	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>sig</i>	<i>Countries with significant difference</i>
MOTIVES EMPHASISED BY RURAL CONFIRMANDS					
to make an important step in growing up.	3.82	3.62	6.67	.000	DE (EKD)***; CH**; NO*, HU**
to get money or presents at the end.	4.24	4.17	5.28	.000	DE (EKD)**; SE***; FI**; PL**, HU***
because I was baptized when I was a child.	4.67	4.52	4.63	.000	DE(EmK)**; DE (EKD)***, CH*; NO***; HU***
because it has always been like that in my family.	4.28	4.18	3.15	.000	DE (EmK)**; HU***; DE (EKD)***; NO**; PL*
to have a beautiful celebration with family and friends.	4.59	4.65	-1.98	.047	DE (EKD)*; PL*; HU***
MOTIVES EMPHASISED BY URBAN CONFIRMANDS					
because I wanted it myself.	5.32	5.46	-4.69	.000	urban: SE***; NO*; rural: HU*
to experience community in the confirmation group.	4.13	4.23	-3.43	.001	FI***; NO**; SE***
to learn more about God and faith.	3.93	3.99	-2.12	.034	DE (EKD)*; FI***; SE***
because I have been told confirmation training is fun.	3.64	3.63	-.084	.933	DE (EKD)***; CH*; FI***; NO*; SE***
because my family wanted me to do so.	3.15	3.23	-2.48	.001	CH*
to be strengthened in faith.	3.73	3.72	.145	.885	FI***, SE*
to come to my own decision about my faith in God.	4.13	4.14	.40	.691	AT*; FI**; SE***
MOTIVES EMPHASISED BY BOTH GROUPS OR MIXED RESULTS					
because I felt obliged to take part	2.25	2.40	-5.36	.000	urban: CH*; rural: FI***; NO***; HU***
because my friends did so as well.	3.30	3.19	3.79	.000	urban: FI ***, NO***; rural: SE***; PL***; HU**

	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>sig</i>	<i>Countries with significant difference</i>
to think about what is good or bad for me and my life.	3.50	3.40	-3.53	.000	rural: DE (EKD)***; HU**; urban: FI**; SE*
to receive a blessing on the day of confirmation.	4.24	4.17	2.23	.026	rural: DE (EKD)**; HU***; urban: SE**

N = 17795.

^a Pooling all national scores can yield insignificant results for the total sample because motivations point in different directions in various countries, although there are significant differences within most of the countries.

Table 37: Experiences with confirmation work among urban and rural confirmands. Mean values (t-test, weighed data for overall results)

	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>sig.</i>	<i>Countries</i>
Experience of growth in faith (index KB1, t ₂)	4.95	5.05	-4.04	.000	NO*; SE***
Involvement and participation (index KK3, t ₂)	4.54	4.67	-7.34	.000	DE (EKD)**; AT*; CH***; NO***; SE***
Satisfaction with confirmation time (index KN3, t ₂)	5.07	5.17	-5.29	.000	DE (EKD)*; AT*; CH**; NO**; FI* (rural); SE***
Positive experiences with church services (index KS1, t ₂)	4.09	4.23	-5.89	.000	AT**; FI***; NO***; SE**
Sense of security & well-being in the group during services (index KS2, t ₂)	4.95	5.05	-9.46	.000	DE (EKD)*; AT*; CH*; FI***; NO***; SE***

N = 14943. The *, **, *** show a significant difference between rural and urban confirmands at the .05, .01, and .001 level.

lisation are significantly and independently related to satisfaction: rural confirmands and boys are less satisfied than urban confirmands and girls. Also if parents have been interested in religion and the confirmand has attended church activities in childhood, the more satisfied he or she is with the confirmation training in the end.

The second model adds the length of camp to the model. This model shows that one of the reasons behind the higher satisfaction among urban confirmands is related to the length of a camp. Urban groups typically have longer camps: this is the case in Germany (both EKD and EmK), Switzerland, Norway,

Sweden and Hungary. In Finland and Austria, rural parishes have longer camps. In Denmark there is typically no camp, neither in urban nor in rural setting (for more information on the influence of camps cf. p. 106 ff.).

The last model adds the experience variables. When adding this experiential dimension it turns out that area becomes insignificant along with most of the socialisation variables. Satisfaction is most importantly a consequence of positive experiences of the confirmation time itself. It can take place in any setting. In other words, it is not the background variables that primarily explain satisfaction, but it is the experience itself. However, these background variables are still important in predicting satisfaction as such as model 1 and 2 show, but model 3 suggests that there seems to be a better fit between the motives of the urban confirmands and their experiences of the confirmation time that makes them more satisfied. The most important predictors of overall satisfaction were the experiences of growth in faith and experiences of involvement and participation. These are also aspects that the urban confirmands were more often looking forward to when starting the confirmation time.

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, the motivation and experiences of confirmands from rural and urban parts of the participating countries have been examined. Theoretically, rural and urban confirmands should differ with regard to their background, but they turned out to be rather similar in most countries. Rural confirmands are slightly more socialised into church and religion. Furthermore, they tend to emphasise traditional motives, i. e., because they were baptised, because it has always been like that in their family, or because it is an important step in growing up. The urban confirmands, on the other hand, are more motivated by learning more about God, experiencing community and having fun. It turned out that meeting these motives and fulfillment of them – experiences of growth in faith and involvement and participation – are strong predictors for satisfaction with the confirmation time. Meeting these motives seems to take place more often in urban settings. One of the reasons for this is that camps in urban settings are typically slightly longer than in rural setting which as the earlier chapters have shown is one of the key factors explaining confirmation satisfaction.

Further examination of the confirmation time itself would help to understand these patterns more deeply. Several factors would be of interest. First that the pastors and other workers in urban settings might be different from those in rural areas, and consequently, that the contents and/or the forms of the confirmation time are different in urban and rural areas. Second, that the confir-

Table 38: Linear regression predicting confirmation satisfaction (Index KN3) (β -values, weighed)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Constant	5.28	4.41	1.61
Background			
Area: Urban	.05***	.04***	.01
Gender: Female	.03**	.02	.03***
Religious Socialisation			
Parents interested in religion (1 = not interested, 4 = very interested)	.10***	.10***	.01*
Has attended church age 5-10 or 10 on (0 = no, 1 = either 5-10 or 10 on, 2 = both)	.06***	.07***	.01
Length of a camp		.09***	.02**
Confirmation experience			
Growth of faith (index)			.30***
Involvement and participation (index)			.37***
Positive experience with church services (index)			.02*
Sense of security and well-being in the group*			.11***
R	.13	.16	.68
N	12672	10902	10769

The *, **, *** show a significant difference between rural and urban confirmands at the .05, .01, and .001 level.

mands in urban areas are different, not necessarily because they are urban but because they are motivated differently. Perhaps the difference has to do with the distinction between potential and actual confirmands. At the beginning of this chapter it was made clear that this study focuses on youth who have already registered for confirmation work, and that it will not be possible to say anything on youth in general. However, given the discrepancies between confirmation rates in the capitals and nationwide shown in Table 33 and given the fact that urban youth is not equally distributed with regard to gender, it is possible that they are not equally distributed on other dimensions as well. It is entirely plausible that a greater selection process takes place in the cities than in the rural areas, i. e., more or less everybody attends confirmation work in the rural areas whereas it is a more selected group in the city. If this is the case, it might explain

why they found it more fun, why they are more focused on learning about God and faith, and are more satisfied with the confirmation time. In short, it is possible that the cities have become post-secular and confirmation time has become a context for post-secular reflection – at least among the young people who have signed up for confirmation.

6. Is Small Beautiful? Potentials of Confirmation Work in Minority Situations

TOBIAS BEISSWENGER, ELŻBIETA BYRTEK, ACHIM HÄRTNER AND
DAGMAR LAGGER

6.1 Introduction

The characteristics of a minority can at first be defined by quantitative factors. Demographic or social indicators are constitutive for the definition. As a consequence of this attribution, disadvantage and discrimination are possible. Therefore the protection of minority rights is an important issue of international organisations. The actual agreements about minorities published by the European Union primarily refer to ethnic groups. Within these defined segments of the population in a particular country, individual rights are manifested. Every individual belonging to an ethnic minority has the right to practice his or her language, religion, culture, etc. The Conference of European Churches (CEC) recommends two main lines of reflection concerning the Minority-Majority Church Relationship. First, the dialogue between minority and majority Churches should be supported and secondly, the discourse should be conducted with reference to the human rights.

Minority situations also have to do with qualitative factors, such as political, ideological or religious aspects with their consequences for a person's or group's behavior and lifestyle. In the case of religion, a qualitative factor of a minority situation can be seen in the fact of an individual or social group (e.g., a denomination) openly dissenting from the majority's religious convictions. Church history is full of such instances; in some cases dissenting from the »mother religion« (e.g., a mainline Church) has led to the formation of a new denomination. Many reasons could be identified as motives for an individual's stance for dissenting from a dominant religious conviction. In the view of theology, a key motivation factor can be seen in the fact that religion touches the center of a person (cf. Fowler 1981).

Recent research on minority situations in social psychology has put a focus on group size, social status and power (cf. Lücken/Simon 2005). Experiments have proven that the awareness of being in a minority situation influences the individuals' thoughts and feelings. Probands belonging to a social minority were more intensively occupied cognitively with their situation compared to those who belonged to a majority. On a social level, tests indicated that, in general, members of minority groups show higher identification with other like-

minded persons. Additional research proved that this effect is not primarily due to emotions but to cognitive reflection (*loc. cit.*, 175).

6.2 Minority Churches in Europe – Three Examples

With regard to the quantitative factors, the members of a minority Church represent only a small percentage of the population in a country. The present study includes some countries where Lutherans, Methodists or even all Protestants are in a minority situation. This article exemplarily explores if given minority situations have specific effects on confirmation work; the examples examined are (for more details cf. the country reports in this volume):

- Lutherans and Reformed in Austria: 3.75 % of the population,
- Lutherans and Reformed in Poland: 0.2 % of the population,
- United Methodists in Germany: 0.067 % of the population.

Within the framework of the study as a whole, the Protestant Churches in Hungary which are in a minority situation as well, should also be kept in mind (cf. the report on Hungary, p. 266 ff.). Due to organisational reasons it was not possible to include the Hungarian data in the present article; further studies on the subject are suggested.

When it comes to the three minority situations indicated above as examples, the following research questions have been posed: How do the confirmands of minority Churches perceive themselves and how do they cope with the given situation? Which differences between minority- and majority-situations can be detected concerning their attitudes towards Church and faith? Do confirmands of minority Churches show specific interest in topics concerning the history and tradition of their own religious belonging?

Austria

In Austria all accredited religious denominations have the same rights independent of their size. This means that the government supports their activities in Religious Education at school and their cultural contribution to society. Some decades after Reformation the influence of Counter-Reformation spread out in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Edict-of-Tolerance in 1781 allowed Protestant and Orthodox Churches to practice their religion, in 1782 followed by an Edict for the Jewish denomination. In 1912, Islam was accredited as well. At that time, the area of the Monarchy also included southern parts of Poland, another country with a Protestant minority. (cf. Lagger 2010, 74-75). A Protestant core group of about 4 % of the population remained stable after several changes in Austrian Protestantism. Migration of people from eastern European

countries as well as individuals who converted from Catholicism raised the number of Protestants. Apart from that a growing number of members have been leaving the Church especially over the past 40 years. Today, 16 denominations are accredited and the majority of Roman Catholic Christians dropped to two thirds of the population. The second largest group consists of people without any religious membership, the third largest is Islam, and the Protestants are fourth. Law specifies several rights for minorities, like special religious holidays. Most of the Austrian Protestants are proud of their church membership and categorically refuse conversion to another denomination or religion.

According to the motto »small is beautiful«, the Austrian confirmands and workers show a high interest in meeting each other. Making acquaintance with other Protestants enlightens the self-understanding as a member of a minority. Developing identity seems important for workers and especially the adolescents when religion and faith come to a point of increasing reflection. The interest in getting in touch with other Protestants and the involvement in common activities speak for a hopeful future for the church. The numerous voluntary workers contribute to the success of confirmation work. Due to the fact that membership is voluntary in minority Churches, there is a larger need for commitment and also a broader culture of voluntarism than in majority Churches.

Poland

The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession (Lutheran Church) in Poland is a minority Church and its history is rooted in the time of the Reformation – the idea of the Reformation reaches Gdańsk in 1518, few years later Poznań, Wrocław, Królewiec, Cieszyn. The Sandomierz Agreement in 1570 was a contract between Lutherans, Reformed and Czech Brethren on the issue of the unity of the Reformation in Poland. After success of the Counter-Reformation in 1606–1610 and persecution of Protestants, there was time for building of the so-called »Peace Churches« in »Low Silesia«, etc. The Edict of Tolerance in 1781, issued by Joseph II, made it possible to build a »house of prayer« in Cieszyn, Silesia. During the Partition of Poland the Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession and the Evangelical Reformed Church of Poland were administered by one consistory as ordered by the Emperor. In 1917 the Synod of the Church meeting in Łódź approved the structure of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland.

Nowadays, the Lutheran Church in Poland with about 70000 members, is still the largest Protestant Church. Poland is a country with a share of nearly 95.5% Roman Catholics, Protestants encompass only 0.2% of the total population. For both the Lutherans and the Reformed in Poland a Protestant education is very important and is offered at various levels by the Church, in forms like Sunday school and confirmation work, or in connection with public

schools, where Religious Education is part of the curriculum. In some Lutheran congregations confirmation takes place only once in a few years with a small group of 2 to 3 confirmands. Some other congregations have about 20 to 30 confirmands every year.

Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche in Germany

With a percentage of 0.067%, the Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche (United Methodist Church) covers a very low share of Germany's population, of which 62% (2012) belong to a Christian Church, predominantly one of the two large majority Churches, the Roman Catholic Church or the Protestant Church (EKD). These figures clearly indicate a quantitative minority situation. Regarding qualitative aspects of a religious minority, a brief look into history is of help. The Methodist missionaries in the mid-19th century perceived the homeland of Reformation to be a mission field (Klaiber 2011, 141–157). This, of course, led to confrontations with the established Churches and public authorities who looked at that »Anglo-Saxon growth« (Steckel/Sommer 1982, 86) with suspicion. Methodists were seen as religious non-conformists and often put into the »sect« corner. Today, the EmK can be described as a numerically small, but widely accepted denomination. Professing to be a Methodist in public may still cause knitted brows, the experience of open hostility, however, has become a rare exception. The climate between the EmK and its ecumenical partner Churches can be described as warm and trustful. Since 1987, a pulpit and altar fellowship exists between the EmK and all member Churches of the EKD. The EmK's parishioners, congregations and officials are actively engaged in all kinds of common projects and working parties on various levels, nationally and internationally (cf. Klaiber 2011). Although many Methodist Christians very actively contribute to the benefit both of Church and society, generally speaking there is very little public awareness of the EmK as a Church or knowledge of its rich theological legacy. This is particularly true among the younger generation. Which effects does this have on confirmation work within the EmK?

6.3 Confirmands and Workers in a Minority Situation – The Example of the Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche in Germany

Since confirmation work (*Kirchlicher Unterricht*, cf. the report, p. 280 ff.) in the EmK differs in some points from the other countries and Churches represented in this volume, an additional questionnaire for Methodist confirmands and workers was developed in order to address both groups specifically in terms of their given minority situation. Of course, the following results first of all con-

cern the EmK, nevertheless, they might also be helpful for interpreting the results regarding young people in other minority situations.

How Do Confirmands Handle Their Minority Situation?

At the beginning of confirmation time, the adolescents were asked for their reasons to participate. Only 18 % of the adolescents ticked »because my friends did so as well« (CA01; N = 735). This is the second lowest value in Europe and indicates two things: At first, this low value has to do with the minority situation. Due to the small number of Methodist youth in Germany, most of them do not have any experience of friends or classmates taking part in confirmation work with them. One adolescent wrote: »I don't have real friends here. They are all in my class and will be confirmed in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church« (CM16). Secondly, the low share of 18 % also points at the fact that the relationship to the other Churches is perceived as very good and easy. Methodist parishes do not shut themselves up but are ecumenically open.

Today, Methodist adolescents do not experience rejection by their peers. However, their experience is often that class-mates as well as adults do not know the EmK and some of them may consider it to be a sect. One adolescent therefore asked: »Why aren't we just an Evangelical Church?« (CZF40). In t_1 and t_2 the adolescents were confronted with the following statement: »It feels strange for me to belong to a Church that many in my environment don't know« (CZF17/KZF17). Both in t_1 and t_2 only about one third of the adolescents agreed with that statement. So, for a vast majority of the youth it seems to be no problem that they belong to a confessional minority. However, there are adolescents who do suffer from the minority situation: 10% tick the highest value (7) in CZF17, another 11 % mark value 6. One would expect that especially those adolescents would have problems with their minority situation who do not have a particularly close relationship to their Church. In order to find out whether this assumption is correct, the values of items CZF17 and CZF14 »I'm glad to be in the EmK« were compared. The result, however, shows that it is just the other way round. Young people who have a rather reserved relationship to the EmK, in t_1 seem to have less problems with their minority situation (25 %) than young people who already appreciate the EmK (33 %). Concerning the reasons for this result, another finding is helpful: There is clearly less agreement from adolescents who did not take part in any church activities for children prior to confirmation time (CZF03), to the statement in CZF17 (21 %) than from young people who took part in such activities (31 %). A t_1 - t_2 -comparison shows that the values equalise at the end of confirmation time. This indicates that adolescents who have a positive relationship to the EmK and have already attended church activities, have simply been confronted more often with the fact that they belong to a church that many people do not know. Ado-

lescents whose first close contact with the EmK was during their confirmation time, recognise just then that they attend a Church that is unknown to many. This means: Only if the young people are aware of the minority situation, this can become a problem. Confirmands who ticked value 7 in CZF17, also remarkably often (42 %) chose the highest value for the statement: »It is important for me that the EmK is a worldwide Church« (CZF15). Therefore, for some of the adolescents it seems to be helpful to make use of the argument that Methodism is one of the large, worldwide Church-families, which may be small on a local, but is sizeable on a global level.

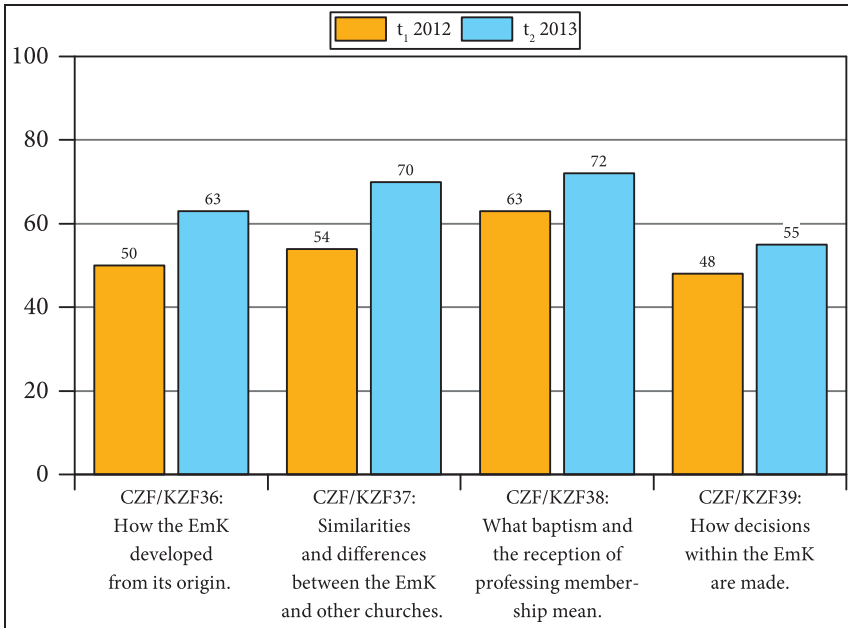
Again, this aspect could also be helpful for interpreting the results concerning confirmands in comparable minority situations in other denominations, showing them that people of their faith and religious belonging are part of the majority in other places. Thus, confirmands can be made aware of the fact that the question if one belongs to a majority or to a minority, can depend very much on the geographical and social situation. Moreover, the insight can be conveyed, that majorities are not correct just because they have a numerical superiority.

Looking at the interest of the confirmands concerning specific Methodist topics in confirmation work, it is noticeable that the increase is considerable between t_1 and t_2 (Figure 31).

In t_2 , 70 % of the confirmands consider questions concerning similarities and differences between the EmK and other denominations interesting (KZF37), 72 % say this about the meaning of baptism and professing membership (KZF38) and 63 % indicate interest even in Methodist Church history (KZF36). These values could suggest that young people are interested in the history and topics related to their denomination if they frequently have to explain to others to which Church they belong. One girl (13), stated in t_2 which topics she would like to talk about during confirmation time: »Methodist topics; since I often have to explain that I am Methodist, but didn't know what that exactly is« (KZF42). Confirmation work in a minority situation should therefore enable the young people to get profound knowledge about their denomination. For the youth work within minority Churches, it is of great importance to help the adolescents to develop a sense of becoming »indigenous« within the denomination and to become able to communicate about it so that misunderstandings can be overcome and the specifics of their confession can be explained.

How Do Leaders and Workers Handle the Minority Situation?

In t_1 leaders and workers were confronted with the following statement: »It is an important aim for me that the adolescents can cope with their minority situation (confirmation work in a small Church) in a positive way« (WZF38).

Figure 31: Interest of the confirmands in Methodist topics (t_1 and t_2) (%)

N = 716-725 (t_1), N = 513-539 (t_2); the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not interested, 7 = very interested).

On the seven-point-scale, the importance of the topic was on the average ticked slightly higher by lay workers ($M = 5.12$) than by ministers ($M = 4.84$). These findings can be read as an indicator of the following: Ministers who have been engaged in this field for a while and furthermore are known as Methodists in their environment, consider this topic as less important than workers who probably experience more often in everyday life that people do not know the EmK. Therefore, it is important that both leaders and workers in a small denomination are aware of the fact that young people can consider it unfortunate to belong to a relatively unknown denomination. But how can they address the adolescents concerning this issue? One answer has already been shown above: to enable young people to get profound knowledge about their denomination and becoming articulate about it.

6.4 Common Features and Differences between Minority Churches

Comparing different countries and Churches in the present study, are there any general indicators and factors characterising confirmation work in a minority-

situation? Table 39 displays a comparison of selected indices, showing where the results from Germany (EmK), Austria and Poland differ from other countries.

Table 39: Selected indices (t_1 and t_2) in international comparison (2012/2013) (Means)

	total M	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	DE EmK
iCB1: Faith related motives (t_1)	3.91	4.16	4.11	3.43	4.10	3.23	3.46	3.66	6.12	5.19
iCE1: Christian beliefs (t_1)	4.37	4.68	4.78	4.11	4.49	3.66	4.11	3.72	6.42	5.95
iKE1: Christian beliefs (t_2)	4.54	4.77	4.83	4.13	4.54	4.10	4.34	4.01	6.23	5.94
iCL1: Interest in conduct of life (t_1)	5.07	5.17	5.30	4.90	5.20	4.51	5.08	5.01	5.46	5.56
iKL1: Interest in conduct of life (t_2)	5.40	4.45	5.76	5.15	5.65	5.31	5.38	5.59	5.86	5.83
iCL2: Interest in the Christian tradition (t_1)	3.94	4.33	4.40	3.57	3.99	3.30	3.52	3.47	5.40	5.25
iKL2: Interest in the Christian tradition (t_2)	4.36	4.58	4.66	4.05	4.52	4.00	4.07	4.03	5.67	5.33
iKK3: Involvement and participation (t_2)	4.62	4.46	4.87	4.66	4.39	4.96	4.63	5.27	4.99	4.85
iKN3: Satisfaction with confirmation time (t_2)	5.10	5.00	5.31	4.97	5.01	5.33	5.20	5.72	5.71	5.36
iKS1: Positive experiences with Church services (t_2)	4.09	4.14	4.32	3.82	3.87	4.14	4.31	4.42	5.12	4.76
iKS2: Sense of security and well-being in the group during services (t_2)	4.91	4.89	5.23	4.64	4.64	5.08	5.29	5.50	5.23	5.43

N (total) = 22683-26245; N (countries) = 296-10158; mean values on a scale 1 to 7 (not applicable at all – totally applicable/not satisfied – totally satisfied/not interested – very interested).

The t_1 data show noticeable differences between the countries in some indices, e.g., iCE1 (Christian beliefs), iCL1 (interest in conduct of life) and iCL2 (interest in the Christian tradition). At the end of confirmation time (t_2), the means in general indicate more homogeneity. It is striking that Poland, the EmK in Germany and Austria – both in t_1 and t_2 – display the highest values regarding the confirmands' assent to Christian beliefs (iCE1/iKE1), their »interest in conduct of life« (iCL1/iKL1) and their »interest in the Christian tradition« (iCL2/iKL02). These findings can be read as indicators of a given minority si-

tuation, where belonging to a non-mainstream Church does require a deliberate decision of those concerned.

Of course, when referring to iCE1 in this concern, the results can be interpreted in different ways. The data clearly indicate that confirmands who tick high values concerning Christian beliefs, are also more interested in various aspects of confirmation work compared to those with lower consent. This inevitably brings up the question which results are caused by the minority situation and which by the higher assent to Christian beliefs. It is not easy to answer this question; but even if it is true that the minority situation is affecting the religious conviction as well, a clear delineation between these two factors is hardly possible on the basis of these results.

Churches in minority situations evidently can draw from a minor potential of supporters and therefore have to be intentional about engaging in attracting volunteers, including those for confirmation work. Therefore, there is an expected intention of motivating adolescents for volunteer work. At the same time, confirmation time seems to provide promising opportunities for parishes to win young people to involve themselves and participate in church work as volunteers. This is shown by a comparison of the values of iKK3. It is striking that Sweden has the highest value in this index while the Finish YCV(»Young Confirmed Volunteer«)-concept is generally perceived as a best-practice model. It seems as if the parishes in Sweden have responded in a meaningful way to the decline of the numbers of confirmands (cf. the report, p. 93 ff.).

When it comes to the index »positive experiences with church services« (iKS1), the three countries or Churches studied in this article show high values. This might not be too surprising, since the data above indicate confirmands of minority Churches as being religiously motivated and interested. But taking into account the comparatively low values for iCE1/iKE1 in Sweden in relation to the highest value in iKS1, it seems reasonable to assume that the assent to Christian beliefs in itself does not lead towards a high satisfaction with church services. Then, which other factors may play a role here? The correlation analysis, displayed in Table 40, indicates discernable connections between three relevant factors.

Alongside the Christian beliefs (iCE1/iKE1), a »sense of security and well-being in the group during services« (iKS2) seems to be a key factor for satisfaction (Table 40). In the context of worship services, the confirmands touch base with other parishioners. Churches in minority situations often have a family-similar structure and celebrate their worship services in small units. The church settings often allow a kind of a living-room-feeling, which can be perceived as a safe and welcoming atmosphere. Another critical, possibly underestimated factor in this concern is the feeling of adolescents that they could play an active role in the parish (Table 40). Because parishes in a minority situation should

Table 40: Correlation of selected indices (t_2)

	r with iKE1: Christian beliefs	r with iKK3: In- volvement and participation	r with iKS2: Sense of security & well-being in the group during services
iKS1: Positive experiences with church services	0.50**	0.67**	0.67**

N (total) = 27060-27224; N (countries) = 288-8001; r = Pearson Coefficient.

and could invest more in this matter, the satisfaction with church services could increase.

Which factors play a key role regarding the identification of adolescents with their Church and the Christian faith in general? Comparing the confirmands' attitudes towards »the Christian faith« (CF01) and »our Church« in general (CF02) an invigorating effect becomes evident, as Table 41 displays.

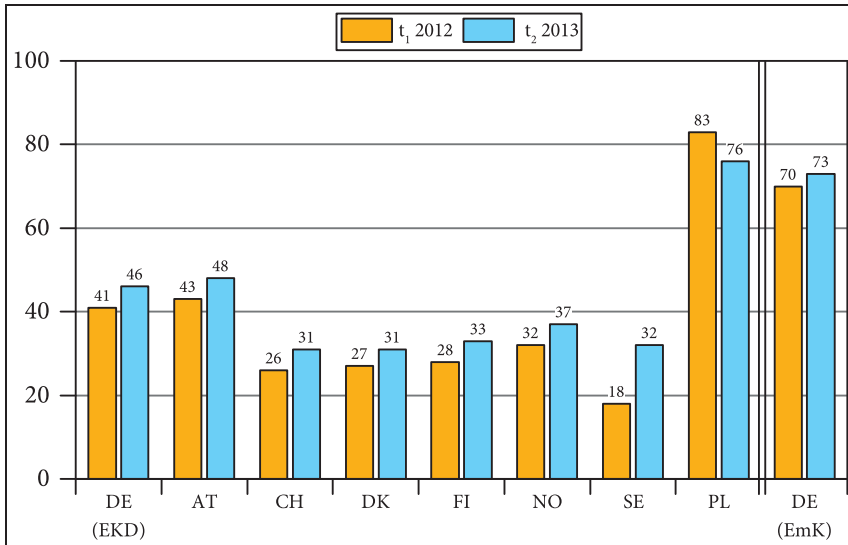
Table 41: Identification with the Christian faith and the own Church (t_1) in international comparison (Means)

	Total M	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	DE EmK
CF01: How would you describe your current at- titude towards the Chris- tian faith in general?	3.65	3.79	3.86	3.62	3.67	3.28	3.44	3.35	4.04	4.21
CF02: How would you describe your current at- titude towards our Church in general?	3.70	3.89	4.24	3.59	3.50	3.26	3.46	3.57	4.17	4.27

N = 288-8001; mean values on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = very negative; 7 = very positive).

At first sight, both items show comparable values. But in half of the participating countries (Germany [both EKD and EmK], Austria, Sweden, Poland) the item focusing on »our Church« finds a higher assent. Alongside the minority Churches exemplified in this chapter, the Swedish and German EKD confirmands indicate their affinity towards »their« Church. Those Churches mentioned should discern the prioritised identification of the confirmands with their religious belonging as a promising »social capital«.

Figure 32: Importance of church belonging in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time (CG01/KG01: It is important for me to belong to the Church) (%)

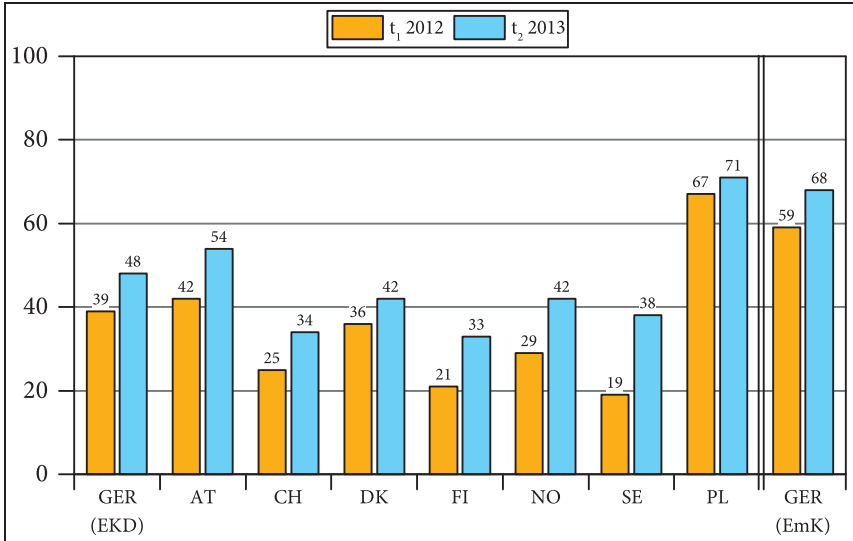


N (total) = 26067 (t₁), 22614 (t₂); N (countries) = 314-10074; the share of those with positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not applicable at all, 7 = totally applicable).

In most of all of the countries, the figures concerning the importance of the confirmands »to belong to the Church« (CG01/KG01) increase in t₂. This means that confirmation time has a positive effect in strengthening the confirmands' sense of belonging to the Church. Only in Poland does a negative turn emerge. One reason for this change might be found in the remarkably high expectations in t₁, while the reduced values in t₂ may correspond with the fact that now the confirmands know more about the Church's reality. In Sweden, a country with a Lutheran majority, but minor participation-rate in confirmation work, there is a remarkable change, indicated by low values in t₁ and an increasing attractiveness of the Church according to t₂.

A comparison of the values also reveal that the confirmands in minority situations are more interested in belonging to their local parish (CL04/KL04) compared to those in majority contexts. In explaining this finding, arguing just with a more prominent religious conviction (iCE01/iK01) seems to be too short-sighted. Belonging to a minority Church often requires from the young people to be informed and articulate about their religious belonging, including the main similarities and differences concerning other denominations. Confirmation work can equip them to be able to argue for the advantage of their specific Church and speak out for diversity and plurality in talking to others.

Figure 33: Interest in the topic »own parish« in the beginning and in the end of confirmation period (CL04/KL04) (%)



N (total) = 25799 (t₁) – 22598 (t₂), N (countries) = 304-10010; scale 1-7; the share of those with positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not interested, 7 = very interested)

For Austrian and Polish confirmands, a distinct challenge lies in the obvious majority of the Roman-Catholic Church, while the Methodist confirmands in Germany find themselves in a situation of belonging to a marginal Church within the Protestant spectrum, in which the EKD represents the vast majority.

6.5 Conclusion

A general observation within this chapter is that confirmation work has the capacity to increase the confirmands’ sense of belonging to the Church (CG01/KG01). This encouraging finding is relevant, both for Churches in majority and minority situations. Studying confirmation work in three exemplary minority situations also has verified that belonging to a marginal Church encompasses a (more) thorough reflection on faith-related issues and a conscious decision about church membership. Protestants in minority situations have to explain their peculiarities and distinct Church traditions more frequently than those in majority situations. This explains, for instance, the remarkable interest of Germany’s Methodist confirmands in their religious heritage (see above, 3.). These findings suggest being transferable on other Churches in minority situa-

tions, as well. Generally speaking, it appears to be an important task for confirmation work to help the confirmands to become conscious and articulate about their religious belonging. Further chances and challenges of confirmation work in minority Churches are:

- In the familiar atmosphere of a small Church, the confirmands experience personal contact, friendly reception and are encouraged to proceed in their individual development, including faith.
- In smaller units the need for individual acceptance, participation and involvement can be realized more easily.
- The attitudes towards the home parish and the church services are influenced distinctly.
- The intensive engagement in believing and belonging often leads to a stronger identification with the Church and faith.

7. Youth and Church Services

BERND KRUPKA AND IDA MARIE HØEG

7.1 Introduction

In the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, the Sunday worship is considered to be the heartbeat and the centre of the Christian community and church life. An introduction to Christian worship belongs to the key aspects of confirmation work. Therefore, the first international study on confirmation work from 2008 attracted a certain amount of attention about the confirmands' approach to worship and identified a need for further investigation. In the second international study from 2013 several aspects of worship have been placed under scrutiny.

Looking back at the 2008 survey data, at the end of confirmation time approximately half of the confirmands were satisfied with church services and the same percentage with the experience of prayers in the group. However, there was considerable variance between the countries: the Finnish and Swedish confirmands being most content with worship, while the Swiss and Danes are at the other end of the scale (Schweitzer et al. 2010, 316). Looking at the figures from 2008, there are two other factors to keep in mind: firstly, worship satisfaction scored lower than the satisfaction with group experiences and experiences of growth in faith (ibid., 306). Secondly, both at the beginning and at the end of confirmation time, a majority of confirmands had a general assessment that church services were boring. The number of confirmands who shared this feeling, actually increased during confirmation time (ibid., 309,314). To sum up, the 2008 survey pointed out worship as one of the most challenging aspects of confirmation work, significant dimensions being the confirmands attachments and contributions to worship service.

In sociology of religion, worship is usually looked at to investigate ritual's place in social life and its impact on social status and group identity. In this respect worship is a key objective due to its capacity to transmit values and meaning, particularly to new generations. Accordingly, worship and service attendance are relevant for the study of religious socialisation for children and youth. Leslie Francis, a sociologist of religion, points out how important frequency of church attendance is for personal and social values among young people (Francis 2001). Gender, class and ethnicity also have a significant impact on how young people approach public worship (Wilkins 2008). Very little reliable empirical research on adolescents' experiences of religious services or motives to attend has been conducted. An important exception in this regard is sociologist Chris-

tian Smith who finds that adolescents who no longer go to any church do not state hostile feelings for either religion or church, but simply do not find it attractive or compelling (Smith/Denton 2005, 105-106). For the youth, relevant strategies might be to continue to distance themselves from worship service or participate actively in developing them. Characteristics for the worship young adults develop according to their preferences are forms of multisensory worship open for both new and old spiritual elements where warmth and feeling of community is underscored (Miller/Miller 2000, 10). Even young people who do not consider religion to be very important for them but do take part in church activities after confirmation, underline the emotional worship experiences and an atmosphere of community (Høeg 2012, 209). These findings indicate that worship has to be studied with regard to relational factors.

How worship creates commitment and stimulates participants to offer reflections over time has been the main focus of the German religion educator Karlo Meyer. He is among the few scholars who have dedicated attention to worship and worship experience of confirmands. His findings show that the sermon has a marginal effect on the confirmands, both regarding what they remember from the service and the content of the sermon. His conclusion on worship learning of confirmands points out factors that give confirmands a better worship experience. The possibility to contribute their own ideas to the service made them more pleased with them, particularly, if they had this possibility right from the beginning of confirmation time. In line with the scholars mentioned above, most important for a good worship experience is, according to Meyer's results, a feeling of being at home in the service. This feeling of belonging is strengthening by the social aspects and the atmosphere related to the service (Meyer 2014, 14).

Worship services, like other rituals, are primarily something you do and not something you talk or write about. It is embodied participation which activates emotions, memory and reflections. The first international confirmation study, applied to the Nordic sample, also explored the meaning of worship participation and active involvement. The Nordic confirmands who have helped to prepare sermons had significant more positive worship experiences than those who did not contribute (Høeg 2010, 118, 124).

In the following the confirmands' relation to worship experiences will be examined. How does it change during confirmation time? Which didactical/liturgical approach gives confirmands a good worship experience? A more sophisticated view of the confirmands' gender and socio-cultural background may also give the possibility to discern background factors and their impact on confirmands worship experience.

7.2 Worship Expectations and Experiences

When comparing results related to worship from 2012/2013 to those from 2007/2008, the general trend is towards greater satisfaction. Generally, worship satisfaction has increased from 52% in 2008 to 59% in 2013 (KN10). This change to the better has happened in all the countries except Finland, where worship satisfaction decreased dramatically. The increase was highest in Austria, Denmark, and Germany. Another characteristic for the confirmands and worship services is that in 2013 the confirmands are more positive towards service participation (see Table 42).

Even though nearly 60% of the confirmands were happy with their service experience, the number of confirmands who felt bored by worship services constitute 50% in the beginning and increases during confirmation time to 54% (CG04/KG04). Only in Finland the number of confirmands who did not feel bored increased by a significant 6%, whereas in the German EKD the number of confirmands who felt bored increased by 7%, followed by 6% in Denmark. However, instead of looking at why worship services make the confirmands feel bored, the chapter will rather examine the confirmands positive experiences with services and why it increases during confirmation time.

The overall picture is that the confirmands are more likely to have positive worship experiences than their expectations. Comparing the worship service expectations with the service outcome shows that on almost all of the topics concerning service participation, the worship experiences are on a higher level than the expectations (see Table 42). The exception that weakened the general trend of improvement is whether the confirmands were able to experience youth services or forms of worship adequate for young people. When the confirmands started their confirmation time they expected to experience these kinds of services. This expectation was not met. 46% of the confirmands had this kind of experiences, while 50% were expecting them.

This general trend of an improvement of the worship situation in confirmation time needs to be further examined. In the following this chapter will explore according to geography (countries), gender, religious, and cultural background to understand who the young people are and what contributes to positive worship experiences.

7.3 Country Differences

As the studies on youth and worship mentioned above indicate, the community dimension is crucial for the confirmands' worship experience. In the present

Table 42: Expectations (t_1) and experiences (t_2) of church services

What are your wishes concerning church services? / What do you think about church services during your confirmation time?	Yes		Mean			N
	t_1	t_2	t_1	t_2	Diff	
CS04/KS04: to meet ... / I met nice people.	50%	67%	4.49	5.23***	.74	16 183
CS02/KS02: to contribute ... / I had the opportunity to contribute my own ideas to the services.	20%	27%	3.09	3.36***	.27	16 147
CS03/KS03: to have ... / I had tasks in the services (for example, do a reading).	17%	45%	2.67	4.12***	1.45	16 125
CS05/KS05: to listen to ... / I listened to interesting sermons.	39%	40%	4.00	3.99	-.01	16 159
CS01/KS01: to experience ... / I experienced forms of worship adequate for young people (e.g., youth services)	50%	46%	4.64	4.33***	-.31	16 112

N (countries) = 289-10018; scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; Yes = Positive response (5, 6, 7). The means of individual differences are computed as t_2 value minus t_1 value. Only matched cases were used. Sig. (paired t-test): N = 16 112-16 183, * $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$.

study, the confirmands seem to consider the worshipping community to be friendly territory (see Table 43). On the average, 2 out of 3 felt they had met nice people in the service (KS04). Two out of three confirmands, on the average, felt secure in the group (KS15). Approximately half of the confirmands appreciated their being part of the worshipping community (KS16). Generally speaking, the community dimension was experienced especially positive in the Protestant diaspora churches in Poland and Austria and the Methodist Church in Germany, sometimes followed by Sweden, while it is not experienced equally pleasant for the confirmands in some of the larger Churches like in Denmark and Switzerland, and sometimes Finland.

Experiences related to music in worship services vary from country to country. In a number of countries and churches confirmands strongly prefer modern songs, with the very clear exception of the Finns who appreciate the new ones even less than the old, and the Polish, who are happy to sing both (for explanations of why the Finnish confirmands seem to prefer old church hymns to modern church songs see the Finnish country-chapter). On average, 53% of the confirmands enjoy the new songs, while only one out of three appreciate the old church hymns. Three out of four confirmands in Denmark and four out of five confirmands in Switzerland turn their backs on the traditional

Table 43: Worship experience (t_2) in international comparison (%)

	Total	DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK
KS04: I met nice people.	67	66	77	61	56	73	75	78	68	83	80
KS15: I felt secure in the group.	65	62	68	63	58	72	69	85	70	71	71
KN10: Satisfied with church services.	59	57	70	53	60	62	59	68	83	86	74
KS13: Singing modern church songs was nice for me.	53	58	56	45	34	44	51	69	66	65	82
KS16: I liked being part of the worship community.	48	50	59	39	37	39	58	51	54	67	69
KS01: I experienced forms of worship adequate for young people (e.g., youth services).	46	48	56	49	40	44	49	45	57	52	60
KS03: I had tasks in the services (e.g., do a reading).	45	47	54	33	29	54	54	43	37	39	49
KS05: I listened to interesting sermons.	40	39	43	33	35	37	46	51	78	74	57
KS14: The services usually dealt with things that concern me and my life.	33	34	45	30	28	30	36	33	68	39	47
KS12: Singing old church hymns was nice for me.	33	30	31	22	26	48	36	41	62	60	33
KS02: I had the opportunity to contribute my own ideas to the services.	27	28	39	27	21	33	22	24	25	21	33
KS17: I felt uncomfortable.	15	15	18	16	13	15	20	15	14	14	11

N (total) = 22336-22563; N (countries) = 288-10018; scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7).

hymns. This is somewhat surprising in the case of Denmark, where confirmation staff does a lot more singing in confirmation work than in the other countries.

In terms of youth-friendly worship, it is again the diaspora churches that have the highest score. The Danes (especially), the Finns and the Swedes find their worship experience least adequate. On the whole, less than half of the confirmands consider their worship experience as adequate for young people.

On the average, only 40% of the confirmands heard interesting sermons

Table 44: Worship experience (t_2) by gender and background (%)

	Total	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Girls	Boys	Less than 50 Books	50 Books and more
KS04: I met nice people.	67	72	66	64	69	66	67	68
KS15: I felt secure in the group.	65	71	65	62	67	63	63	66
KN10: Satisfied with church services.	59	65	59	54	59	59	53	61
KS13: Singing modern church songs was nice for me.	53	56	56	44	61	44	49	57
KS16: I liked being part of the worship community.	48	58	48	40	49	47	45	50
KS01: I experienced forms of worship adequate for young people (e.g., youth services).	46	56	49	39	49	44	42	50
KS03: I had tasks in the services (e.g., do a reading).	45	53	48	40	46	45	44	50
KS05: I listened to interesting sermons.	40	47	38	32	38	42	34	41
KS14: The services usually dealt with things that concern me and my life.	33	42	31	25	33	33	29	35
KS12: Singing old church hymns was nice for me.	33	37	32	28	35	31	31	33
KS02: I had the opportunity to contribute my own ideas to the services.	27	31	27	22	25	29	27	27
KS17: I felt uncomfortable.	15	12	14	16	13	17	16	14

N = 13680-21795; scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7).

Group 1 grew up with evening prayer and prior contact with church child programmes.

Group 2 grew up without evening prayer, but did have prior contact with church child programmes.

Group 3 grew up without evening prayer and without contact with church child programmes.

(KS05), whereas only one out of three considered the service to be relevant for everyday life (KS14). The diaspora churches and the Methodists tended to have the strongest positive experiences with the services' personal relevance, and the Methodist and the Polish confirmands when it comes to experiences with interesting sermons.

In none of the countries, the confirmands' participation is prominent in the

making of the service (KS02). The Austrian Church is by far most open for confirmands' ideas in service preparation, where 39 % of the confirmands felt their own ideas were included. On the average, 27 % share this experience, while it is most seldom in Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

7.4 Gender, Religious and Cultural Background

Many indicators which measure adolescents' religiosity show that gender plays a significant role. Indeed, as evident from the 2008 data, there is a significant difference between males and females (Schlag/Christensen 2010). There are some relevant gender differences when it comes to worship experiences in 2013 as well (see Table 44). Girls and boys are equally satisfied with their worship experience (KN10), but significant gender differences concerning several dimensions of worship occur.

Girls have better social experiences than boys. They have experienced more forms of worship that were adequate for young people (KS01), have met more often nice people in the service (KS04), they liked singing the old church hymns better (KS12), they enjoyed modern church hymns a lot more (KS13, especially in Sweden), they felt more secure in the group (KS15), they enjoyed the worship community more (KS16) and a smaller amount felt uncomfortable in the services (KS17). Boys, on the other hand, reported more often that they have been able to contribute their own ideas to the service (KS02, especially in Norway), and were more likely to find the sermons interesting (KS05). The differences between the sexes are less prominent in the diaspora churches and among the German Methodists where the general level of religiosity is higher among the confirmands.

Cultural background plays an important role for the worship experience, too. Pierre Bourdieu (1986) argues in accordance with Karl Marx, that capital forms the foundation of social order and dictates one's position in social life. According to Bourdieu, cultural capital comes in three forms – embodied, objectified, and institutionalised. One's material belongings like books are an example of cultural capital in its objectified state. In this study the number of books symbolises cultural competence and authority, and is an indicator for the confirmands cultural background. In all the majority Churches where the book question was asked, confirmands with 100 or more books at home (Switzerland: 50 or more books) have a worship experience (iKS1) above the national average, whereas those reporting less books are below average. On the average, 48 % of the confirmands with 10 books or less at home are satisfied with worship in general (KN10), while the same applies to 64 % of those with 251 to 500 books in our study.

Studies in religious socialisation have concluded that religious upbringing at an early age has effects on the attitude to religious education in school (Bertram-Troost 2009, 419), as well as in confirmation (Niemelä 2008, 145; Hauge 1983, 124-128). The religious orientation of the confirmands' parents does also influence the confirmands' approach to worship. The impact of religious background is linked to prior church experience. 65% of the confirmands that grew up both with evening prayer and prior contact with church youth work (Group 1), are satisfied with their worship experience (KN10). Among confirmands who grew up without evening prayer or contact with church youth work (Group 3), the satisfaction rate lies by 54%. The group of confirmands without evening prayer experience but with contact with church youth work (Group 2) represents the average of 59% in the survey.

Interest in sermons, old hymns, the worshipping fellowship and everyday life relevance, are among those items where the three religious background groups differ most. This finding underlines the impression that worship appreciation to a large extent is a matter for insiders, for those who are familiar with the »tribal codes« of the church. Previous experience with church contributes to familiarity with worship, but to a much lesser degree than family religiousness. Singing modern songs seems to be an important domain of the confirmands who grew up without evening prayer but in contact with church youth work (Group 2). The difference between group two and confirmands without evening prayer experience or contact with church youth work (Group 3) is not so prominent on the above mentioned items.

7.5 Active Participation and Contribution

What makes better worship experiences for the confirmands? Is there any connection between taking an active part and having good worship experiences? What kind of effect does developing the service and active participation in performing of the service have on service experiences? Confirmands who take an active part in these regards appear to be, in general, more satisfied with the worship and the different worship dimensions than confirmands who did not. This is in line with previous introduced research on young people/confirmands and worship experiences. Service involvements which address a practical, cognitive, emotional, and social level increase the positive experiences of services.

Concerning the different worship dimensions there are significant differences between the confirmands who participated with tasks and those who did not ($p < .001$), and those who contributed ideas and those who did not ($p < .001$). In general, having tasks in the services has a less positive effect on experiences than to contribute own ideas. However, the data provide evidence

Table 45: Service assessments (t_2) according to tasks and contributions to the church services (%)

What do you think about the church services during your confirmation time?	Had tasks	No tasks	Own ideas	No own ideas
KN10: Satisfied with church services.	67	52	71	52
KS13: Singing modern church songs was nice for me.	65	44	71	45
KS16: I liked being part of the worship community.	64	33	73	35
KS14: The services usually dealt with things that concern me and my life.	46	23	59	21
KS05: I listened to interesting sermons.	52	30	61	29
KS12: Singing old church hymns was nice for me.	42	21	50	21
KS15: I felt secure in the group.	80	55	84	58
KS04: I met nice people.	77	59	82	60
KS17: I felt uncomfortable.	19	13	23	13

N = 22008-22341; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7).

that tasks and the contribution of own ideas for some confirmands is a personal burden. More confirmands who have tasks or contributed ideas felt more uncomfortable in the service than those who did not make a special effort. The burden refers not only to lack of initiative, creativity and cooperation, but probably the fact that task and contribution in the services make young people feel exposed. Confirmands with natural shyness, reservedness or lack of self-esteem may feel that this costs more than it tastes.

A Spearman's rho correlation analysis of the data shows that the strongest correlation exist between the contribution with own ideas and services that concern me and my life (.44**), being part of the worship community (.37**), listen to interesting sermons (.34**), singing old church hymns (.34**). Concerning tasks in the services, this item correlates strongest with being part of the worship community (.33**) and feeling secure in the group (.30**). This supports previous research that a stronger participation in the service tends to make a stronger attachment to the service, particularly the social aspect of the worship – the community and safe surroundings. Another interesting finding is that a strong Protestant worship element – the sermon – has an appeal to the active participating confirmands, together with singing old church hymns.

These results indicate that taking an active part in the service increases the sympathy for the traditional dimensions of the service.

7.6 Conclusion

The results challenge the bodily aspect of ritual. Rituals are primarily something being performed and not planned at the desk or constructed in thoughts. The bodily aspect of ritual involves the participants on several levels and integrates thoughts, beliefs and actions. These findings point to the cognitive contributions as more important for positive service experiences than actually performing the actions, in this case the tasks. In order to understand the impact of one's own ideas to the service, contextual knowledge and the didactical approach to the issue of confirmands and services has to be taken into consideration.

Meyer underscores that there are several ways to contribute with tasks. Indeed, as evident from Meyer's data the worship very easily reduces the confirmands to statisticians and does not give them the possibility to actually pick out tasks or develop the tasks from their own preferences (Meyer 2014, 11). On the other hand, coming with ideas which can be accepted and integrated in the development of the service seems to involve the confirmands on a more personal level. A challenge for the confirmation work leaders and workers could be to involve the confirmands on a more personal level when they have tasks in the services. Tasks and ideas could be two sides of the same coin. The situation could be that performing tasks for which the ideas came from the confirmands themselves or with which the confirmands have the possibility to perform in a way they find adequate, would give them strong attachments to the service.

Cultural capital and prior experience with church and religious practice play a significant role for the worship experience of confirmands, giving those familiar with the codes a head start. While the satisfaction rate of confirmands without prior religious and church practice implies that this is by no means a necessary precondition to enjoy worship, a run through the various sides of the worship experiences shows however, that knowledge of the codes is important for the appreciation of the more traditional aspects of church worship.

The increase in active participation and contribution underline the general picture in the present study that confirmation work does quite well for confirmands. Confirmands who have contributed to the services with ideas and tasks have significantly more positive service experiences than those who have not contributed. In terms of service integration however, confirmation work will not take you all the way. In spite of the documented increase in positive service experiences, this implies that worship education remains one of the more challenging areas for confirmation work.

Country-Specific Articles

IV. Country-Specific Articles

1. Confirmation Work in Germany

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1.1 Introduction

The first study on confirmation work in Germany showed a very positive picture for this field of work, with high and stable participation rates and much satisfaction, among the confirmands as well as among the workers and the parents (Ilg et al. 2010b, cf. Ilg et al. 2009). According to the results of the current study, this situation has basically remained the same (Schweitzer et al. 2015). Germany belongs to the group of countries where confirmation work obviously continues enjoying a broad acceptance as is expressed by the fact that more than 90% of all Protestant youth in the respective age group take part in this program.

This does not mean, however, that there have been no changes in the situation of the church altogether in recent years. Three interrelated tendencies deserve special mention here. First, there are the demographic changes. The German birthrate is stable at a very low level of approximately 1.4 (Statistisches Bundesamt 2015). Among the Protestants, it is even lower. This explains why the absolute number of the 14 years old Protestants has gone down by more than 10% during the five years between the first and the second study on confirmation work. Second, together with the continued loss of adult members dropping their membership, the Protestant Church in Germany (as well as the Roman Catholic Church, the other major Church in this country) is dwindling in size. Germany keeps seeing a fair amount of immigration but the immigrants tend to either be Catholics or to belong to non-Christian religions. Observations concerning the shrinking size of the Church explain why – third – financial constraints make themselves felt more strongly now than in the past. Recent publications on the future of the Church tend to describe a grim picture, especially concerning younger age groups. According to the latest study of this kind (EKD 2014), the younger the respondents, the less they feel related to the church.

Against this background the results from the first study on confirmation work were mostly received as a hopeful sign. High participation and satisfac-

tion rates were viewed as a basis for encouragement. At the same time, the critical issues emerging from the study, for example, concerning the confirmands' often negative views of worship services, were also addressed, among others, in the ongoing training for pastors and other workers. Moreover, all newly developed guidelines of the regional Churches within the Protestant Church in Germany make explicit reference to the findings of the first study (for detailed references: Schweitzer et al. 2015). Finally, there also is a tendency for church leaders to expect educational programs like confirmation work to contribute to a stronger identification with the church and with church membership in particular.

In Germany, the second study on confirmation work was conducted by a team of researchers at the Theological Faculty of the University of Tübingen – in a manner very similar to that of the first study. Again all of the regional Churches took part in it. The sample of parishes was selected by an independent social science institute (GESIS – Leibniz Institute for Social Sciences). The resulting random sample can be considered representative. 583 parishes had the questionnaires filled in by the confirmands resulting in a return rate of almost 45 % of the original sample (for more details cf. p 332 f.). According to the international agreements for the second study, new items were introduced especially concerning worship services and the question of voluntarism. A t_3 -study was conducted in spring/summer 2015 and will be published in a book in 2016/17. The following Table 46 shows the sample sizes for the first and second study.

1.2 Overview on data

Table 46: Number of questionnaires (Germany) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013

	First study 2007/2008			Second study 2012/2013			
	t_0	t_1	t_2	t_0	t_1	t_2	percentage matched (basis: t_2)
units	635	634	613	573	576*	517	97%**
confirmands		11 513	10 961		10 191	9096	81 %
workers		1601	1444		1667	1336	65 %

* The N of t_1 is higher than N of t_0 because not all parishes participating in t_1 gave their t_0 -data.

** The value is < 100 % because some parishes did not start answering the questionnaires until t_2 .

1.3 Major Results

As mentioned above, participation rates have been very stable in Germany. More than 90 % of the 14 years old Protestant adolescents take part in it. Compared to the population in general in 2012, this equals almost 30 % of all Germans at this age. There are major differences, however, between the situation in Eastern and in Western Germany. In Eastern Germany, 14 % of the respective general population take part in confirmation work while the figure for Western Germany is 31 %. These differences are due to the different rates of church membership in Eastern and Western Germany. The lower numbers in Eastern Germany can be considered a lasting effect of the times of the Socialist GDR and of its atheist education and indoctrination.

Attitudes Concerning Faith and Church

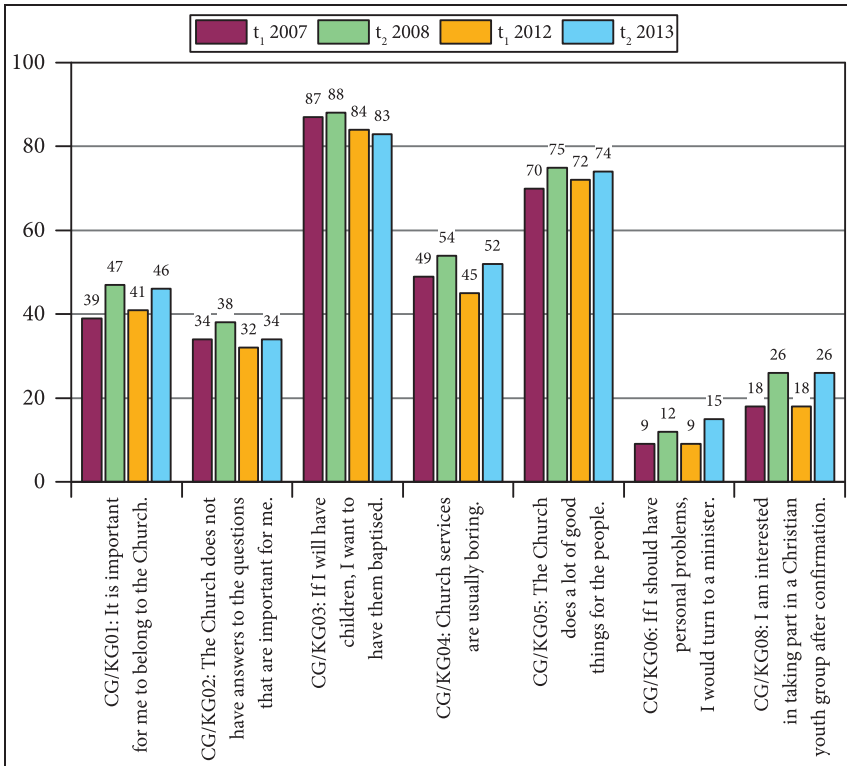
General attitudes concerning the Christian faith and the Church were addressed by a number of questions concerning the adolescents' »current attitude in general«. Figure 34, Figure 35 and Figure 36 summarise the results.

The design of the study with its questionnaires at the beginning (t_1) and towards the end of confirmation time (t_2) makes it possible to ask about changes during this time. Considering the aims of confirmation work and its focus on giving young people an opportunity to become clear about their own faith, this question applies first of all to religious attitudes in general and especially to their attitudes towards the church.

Concerning religious attitudes, the changes during confirmation time are rather moderate. With some of the items, there are practically no changes (2 percent points or less, CE01/CE03/CE04/CE09). Correspondingly, on the basis of the indexes relating to faith, there are only small changes from t_1 to t_2 (M for iCE1 = 4.68 and for iKE1 = 4.77). As far as there are bigger changes, they tend to go into the direction intended by the workers (whose intentions are known from the questionnaire concerning the aims of the workers).

- The biggest change can be found with the question »I know what the Christian faith entails« (CE/KE10, 11 percent points increase). This result shows that confirmation work is indeed effective in terms of one of its core aims – orientation in relationship to the Christian faith.
- Also, the sense that one's faith is of help in difficult situations increases during confirmation time (6 percent points increase, CE/KE08).
- The belief that there is life after death, increases as well (CE/KE02, plus 7 percent points) while faith in the resurrection of Jesus only goes up by 2 percent points (CE/KE04).

Figure 34: Attitude towards the Christian faith and the church in a cross-temporal comparison (both for t₁ and t₂ and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Germany (%)

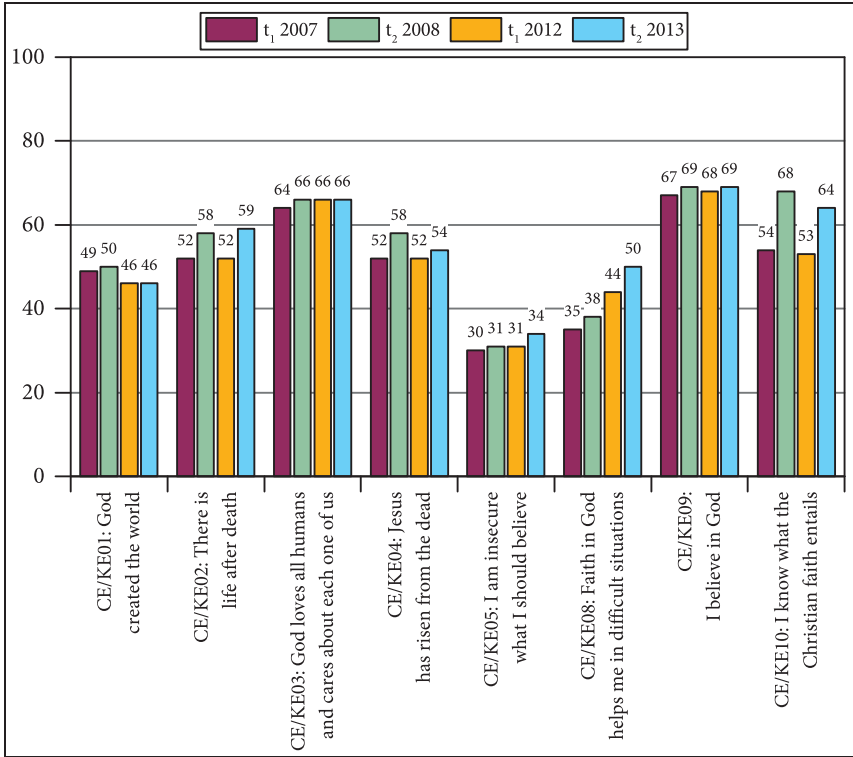


N = 11170-11340 (t₁/2007); N = 10574-10694 (t₂/2008); N = 9829-10074 (t₁/2012); N = 8864-8964 (t₂/2013)

- Although knowledge of the contents of faith increases, the feeling of being »insecure what I should believe« does not decrease but goes up by 3 percent points (CE05/KE05).

According to the results, there were more changes between t₁ and t₂ concerning the attitudes towards the church than concerning faith. The statement »The Church does not have answers to the questions that are really important to me« received with 34% even 2 percent points more agreement in t₂ than in t₁ (CG/KG02). One has to keep in mind that, in this case, an increase clearly contradicts the aims of confirmation work as viewed by the workers or set down in respective statements by the Church. For one third of the confirmands confirmation work seems to not succeed in making clear the relevance of perspectives

Figure 35: Findings concerning religious beliefs in intertemporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Germany (%)

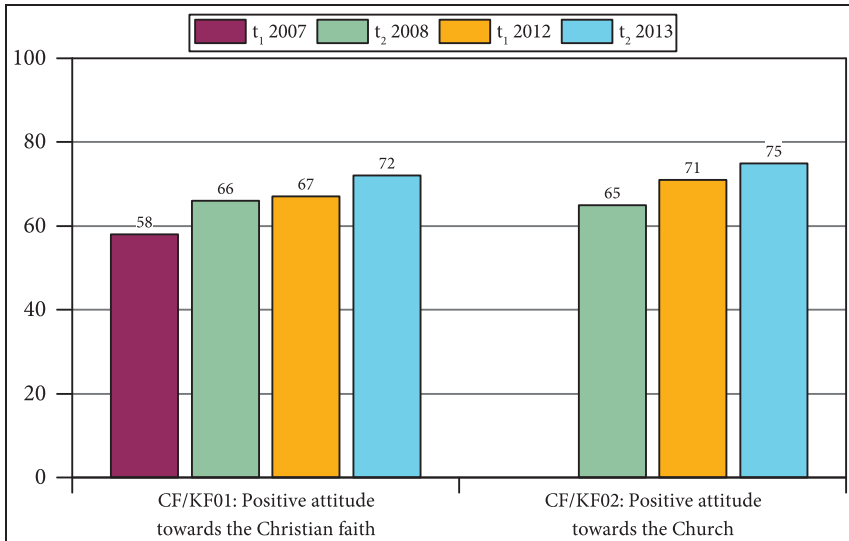


N = 11267-11 365 ($t_1/2007$); N = 10618-10727 ($t_2/2008$); N = 10006-10092 ($t_1/2012$); N = 8885-8962 ($t_2/2013$).

maintained by the Church for their own lives. The other results within section CG of the questionnaire refer to positive changes in relationship to the Church:

- The image of the church that confirmands have, is rather positive from the beginning. At the end of confirmation time, 74% of the adolescents agree that the »Church does a lot of good things for the people« (KG05) – this means an increase by 2 percent points. Also, the positive rating of the Church increases between t_1 and t_2 from 71 % to 75 % (CF/KF02).
- The importance of belonging to the Church increases by 5 percent points to 46 % (CG/KG01).
- The tendency to address a minister in case of personal problems, went up from 9 % agreement to 15 % (CG/KG06).

Figure 36: Attitude towards the Christian faith and the Church in a cross-temporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Germany (%)



N = 10550 (t_1 /2007), 10023-10563 (t_2 /2008); N = 9937-9957 (t_1 /2012), 8004-8012 (t_2 /2013). CF02 was not asked in the study 2007/2008.

- A noteworthy change can also be found with the item »I would be interested in taking part in a Christian youth group after confirmation« (8 percent points increase, CG/KG08).

Confirmands' Views on Worship Services

Introducing young people to worship services is an important aim in German confirmation work. According to the information from the parishes, attending a certain number of services during confirmation time is mandatory in most parishes. The concrete number of mandatory services during confirmation time, however, varies from parish to parish (WG02: In 50% of the parishes confirmands have to attend 16-25 worship services, in 33% of the parishes 26 and more services).

At the same time, adolescents tend to be sceptical regarding worship services. In the first study, 49% said that worship services are »boring« (t_1) and this percentage increased markedly during confirmation time (t_2 : 54%). Accordingly, experiences with worship services were called a neuralgic point in confirmation work (Ilg et al. 2009, 225). This pattern holds true in the second study on a slightly lower level (45% in t_1 , 52% in t_2). In order to find out more about the background of these perceptions, the second study put special emphasis on

the confirmands' views of worship services, with a number of additional items. Table 47 presents selected results concerning the confirmands' views of worship services (for more details on worship cf. p. 170 ff.).

Table 47: Confirmands' expectations and experiences with worship services (t_1 and t_2) in Germany

		M	SD	Yes
CG04	Church services are usually boring.	4.34	1.82	45 %
KG04	Church services are usually boring.	4.62	1.74	52 %
CS01	I (wish) to experience services adequate for young people.	4.94	1.83	60 %
KS01	I experienced forms of worship adequate for young people (e. g., youth services).	4.31	2.06	48 %
CS02	I (wish) to contribute my own ideas to the services.	3.36	1.88	27 %
KS02	I had the opportunity to contribute my own ideas to the services.	3.42	1.87	28 %
CS05	I (wish) to listen to interesting sermons.	4.22	2.14	47 %
KS05	I listened to interesting sermons.	3.98	1.79	39 %
KS14	The services usually dealt with things that concern me and my life.	3.84	1.67	34 %
KS15	I felt secure in the group.	4.98	1.66	62 %
KS16	I liked being part of the worship community.	4.53	1.65	50 %
KS17	I felt uncomfortable.	2.54	1.76	15 %

N = 10004-10017 (t_1); N = 8877-8934 (t_2); scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation; Yes = Positive response (5, 6, 7).

Experiences and Satisfaction with Confirmation Time

Some of the experiences during confirmation time are a positive surprise for the confirmands. The experiences (KB) are better than their expectations or aims (CB) stated at the beginning of confirmation time.

- 75 % of the confirmands report positive experiences concerning the community within the group (KB02). At the beginning, only 44 % viewed that as an explicit aim.
- 70 % of the confirmands say that they got to know more about God and faith (KB01). 65 % felt that they were enabled to come to a decision about their own faith (KB03).
- 59 % felt strengthened in their faith (KB08).

At the same time, the confirmands report less positive impressions concerning the openness of confirmation work in relationship to their questions and ideas.

The same is true concerning the relevance of the contents discussed for everyday life. Only 39% of the confirmands feel that their questions concerning faith were taken up (KK11) and only 32% agree that they had a chance to influence the choice of topics (KK04). For 47% of the confirmands, the relationship of what they learnt to everyday life is not clear (KK35).

In 49% of the parishes, confirmands do not have the chance to try out helping with one of the parish's programs (internships, etc.) (VQ06) and only 35% of the confirmands report that they have taken part in such programs (KK26). Yet the confirmands view their relationship to the parish positively in most cases. 67% of the confirmands felt welcomed and accepted in the parish (KK37). Concerning the satisfaction of the confirmands with various aspects of their confirmation time, a number of items were used. Table 48 presents the results.

Table 48: Satisfaction of the confirmands with different aspects in confirmation time (t_2) in Germany

To what extent are you satisfied with ...?		M	SD	Yes
KN01	the whole confirmation time	5.31	1.41	75%
KN03	content/topics of lessons in confirmation work	4.77	1.31	59%
KN07	minister/person primarily responsible for confirmation work	5.45	1.62	75%
KN08	other teachers/workers	5.26	1.57	73%
KN10	church services	4.65	1.49	57%
KN11	camp(s)	5.37	1.73	73%
KN14	music, songs and singing	4.60	1.67	55%
KN20	working methods (for example, working with biblical texts, group work, etc.)	4.67	1.39	56%

N = 8172-8991; scale: 1 = not satisfied at all; 7 = totally satisfied. M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation; Yes = Positive response (5, 6, 7). The statement »we didn't have that« was treated as missing. The proportion of those confirmands who made this statement to a greater extent affects the following items (proportion of all confirmands making statements towards the items KN): KN08 (7%); KN11 (5%); KN14 (3%).

75% of the confirmands were satisfied with their whole confirmation time (KN01). A similar value is only reached concerning the satisfaction with the ministers or other full-time workers. The satisfaction rate with other workers and with camps also reaches 73%. While 90% of the confirmands indicated that they want to have fun (CK05), 68% felt at the end that this was actually the case (KK05).

Results Concerning Employed Workers and Volunteers

One of the facts that the first study on confirmation work in Germany brought to light was the high number of volunteers who are active in this field. On the basis of the current study, their number was calculated as 62 000. This means that their number increased by more than 3 % during the five years between the first and the second study although the number of confirmands decreased by more than 10 %. In other words, the role of voluntary workers in confirmation work has become even more important. Statistically, there is one volunteer per every third or fourth confirmand now. There are certainly differences between the parishes and also between different regions. Especially Eastern Germany has fewer voluntary workers than Western Germany.

Many of the volunteers are still in adolescence themselves. More than 60 % are under the age of 18 years and another 10 % are under 21 years. This implies that most of them are still attending school. In Germany, becoming a volunteer with confirmation work can be an important answer to the question what could come after confirmation.

Concerning the aims of the workers, it is interesting to compare the voluntary workers' aims with those of the main responsible persons. Many aims are actually shared by the two groups, for example, that the confirmands should experience that their questions related to faith play a role (WC15), that they can come to a decision concerning their own faith (WC01) and will be supported in their personal and social development (WC04). Moreover, both groups agree that the confirmands should experience community (WD03), increasingly feel at home in the parish (WC16) and participate actively in the worship services (WD10). In other respects, the aims differ between the two groups. The volunteers put more emphasis on the possibility for the confirmands to influence the topics to be treated (WB09) and that the confirmands have fun (WD07). The ministers give more weight to the confirmands meeting people who find faith important for themselves (WB10), learning by heart central texts (WC03), getting to know silence and contemplation (WC10) and that the confirmands develop a faith related to their everyday life and its challenges (WC11). It must be mentioned critically that only 41 % of the pastors consider it important that confirmands can influence the topics to be taken up in confirmation time (WB09).

Ministers and volunteers are showing high satisfaction with their work (VM01). While 78 % of the ministers say that they are satisfied, 89 % of the volunteers say so.

1.4 Changes between the First and the Second Study

The results of the first and the second study on confirmation work differ in many respects. Yet in even more respects the differences are marginal so that the general conclusion must emphasise aspects like continuity and stability. In this section, we consequently limit ourselves to major changes between the two studies.

- A very positive development can be seen in the further steps on the way from confirmation instruction to confirmation work that have been taken during the five years between the two studies. There are more internships for the confirmands now (13 percent points increase) and there is more cooperation with youth work (14 percent points increase). The tendency towards having special days for confirmation work with a broad variety of activities instead of the traditional type of instruction has also continued.
- Satisfaction rates have gone up even further, although they were very high already with the first study (satisfaction with the whole confirmation time among the confirmands is now 75 %, compared to 67 % in the first study).
- The interests expressed by the confirmands have changed. There is less interest in other religions (CL07: 39 %) and also in environmental issues (CL16: 34 %).
- The number of volunteers (who often are older adolescents) went up from 60 000 in 2007/2008 to 62 000 in 2012/2013 – despite a shrinking number of confirmands.
- The views of worship services have become less negative although they still indicate problems in this respect. Alongside this finding, the confirmands report slightly more experiences with services suitable for young people (48 %, plus two percent points).
- In most cases, the religious attitudes of the adolescents remained unchanged. The only exception is the view that one's faith is of help in difficult situations. There is a remarkable increase concerning this view (CE08, up 9 percent points).
- Attitudes relating to the church show similar stability. In this case, differences between 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 reach a maximum of 4 percent points (CF02). It is interesting to note that the differences indicate a slight tendency towards a closer relationship to the church (increases with CG01 and CG05, less assent for negative statements about the church with CG02 and CG04). The only exception is the negative tendency for the intention of having one's own children baptised (CG03, 4 percent points less), although still at a very high level.

1.5 Challenges and Questions for the Future

In the evaluation of the results of the Germany study, the following challenges for the future were identified:

- From traditional instruction to creative variety: The transformation of traditional confirmation instruction to confirmation work with its broad spectrum of youth-oriented activities has continued (more internships, more camps, more non-school-type activities). At the same time, this transformation is still not complete and has not been accomplished in all of the parishes. Consequently, the respective efforts in this direction should continue in the future.
- Demographic change: Responses to the challenge of the declining absolute numbers of confirmands still have to be developed. Examples might be more cooperation between confirmation work and other forms of Christian youth work as well as cooperative programs of several parishes. In any case, the demographic change includes new challenges that should be evaluated very carefully and the parishes should be supported in developing new strategies in line with the local and regional situation.
- Worship services: An important task for the future will be to create more possibilities for young people to contribute their ideas for worship and to have more services that are suitable for them. The importance of the sermon should not be underestimated in this context. Having sermons that are of interest to them, is a clear demand of the confirmands.
- Relevance for life: Especially those confirmands who have not experienced more intense forms of religious socialisation prior to confirmation time, feel that their questions concerning faith were not addressed during their confirmation time. The confirmands will only have a chance to understand the meaning of the Christian tradition for them if their questions are addressed.
- What comes after confirmation? Do the parishes have programs for young people? Are there attempts to relate to these programs already during confirmation time?
- Research: Efforts should be made to bring praxis and theory closer together in confirmation work. Moreover, there are still many questions waiting to be researched empirically.

The results of the second study for Germany are published in two books. In summer/spring 2015 the results for t_1 and t_2 were published in »Konfirmandenarbeit im Wandel« (Schweitzer et al. 2015). In summer 2015, the third wave of questionnaires (t_3) was sent out. The results from this last part of the study will be published in 2016. More information about the German study can be found on: www.konfirmandenarbeit.eu.

2. Confirmation Work in Austria

STEFAN GRAUWALD AND DAGMAR LAGGER

2.1 Introduction

Confirmation work in Austria is the responsibility of the ministers. The official guidelines have not changed since the first study (c.f. Lagger 2010), but the awareness of working with the youth has received more attention and publicity; the Church published an Education Report (c.f. Schiefermair/Krobath 2015). A practical consequence of the first study was the implementation of a minister with the special duty concerning confirmation work in the diocese Burgenland responsible for more intensive development and reflection of concepts. The cooperation between two or more parishes in a certain region is a new phenomenon: 70% partly or fully had programs with another parish (VR33).

In 2013, the year of this study, 2488 young people had their confirmation celebration in one of the 205 parishes, belonging to the *Evangelische Kirche A.B.* (Lutheran Church) or *Evangelische Kirche H.B.* (Reformed Church). The share of the Protestant population in Austria is about 4% (ca. 300 000 of more than 8 mill.). The absolute number of 14-year-olds is decreasing steadily. But the number of Protestant 14-year-olds is stable at about 3800 (c.f. www.statistik.at). So their percentage in this age-group is increasing slightly (2004: 3.89%; 2008: 4.09%; 2012: 4.29%).

During the last ten years the participation rate in confirmation declined from 80% to 70%. In 2013 one fifth of the Austrian confirmands were part of this survey. The sample includes 25 Lutheran and 3 Reformed units. Concerning the settlement area of the parishes, 50% are in urban, 35% in rural and 15% in mixed regions.

The 2012/2013 study was conducted in the same way as the study in Germany (cf. p. 182 ff.). In spring 2015 another confirmands questionnaire will give insights into effects two years after confirmation. Therefore a separate publication is planned. In distinction to the first study in 2007/08, the parents were not included in the survey. The following Table 49 gives an overview on the data.

2.2 Major Results

The following observations try to characterise the findings in the Austrian data in exemplary manner. The actual study from 2012/13 will be considered as well

Table 49: Number of questionnaires (Austria) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013

	First study 2007/08				Second study 2012/13			
	t ₀	t ₁	t ₂	percentage matched (basis t ₂)	t ₀	t ₁	t ₂	percentage matched (basis t ₂)
units	29	29	28	100 %	29	28	28	100 %
confirmands		540	487	79 %		495	463	80 %
workers		118	98	71 %		126	117	80 %
parents			240	73 % with confirmands				

as the changes since the first study from 2007/08. Some typical results will help to understand the country-specific situation of confirmation work.

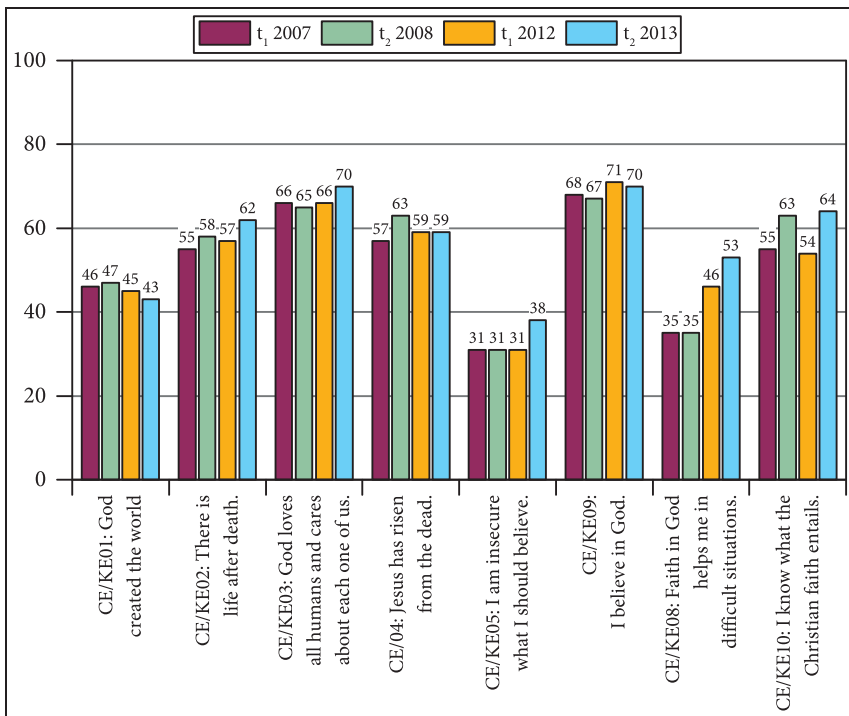
Confirmands' Attitudes, Expectations and Experiences

Every confirmand received a personal letter as an invitation at the beginning of their confirmation time (WG10: 100 %). An intensive relationship in rather small confirmation-groups endures during and nourishes the whole confirmation time until the blessing at the confirmation celebration. They experienced good community (KB02: 78 %), learned more about God (KB01: 69 %) and were enabled to come to an own decision about faith (KB03: 68 %). The confirmands learned to think about themselves and became more mature and autonomous. The most important expectation on confirmation is the celebration with the family (KB09: 79 %), followed by a festive confirmation service (KB17: 70 %), the blessing (KB11: 63 %) and the presents (KB10: 54 %). In the first study these values were lower (KB09: 67 %, KB11: 59 %, KB10: 60 %). Astonishingly the t₁-responses show a tendency with higher expectations in 2007 and lower ones in 2012 (CB09: 51 % to 43 %; CB11: 50 % to 46 %; CB10: 51 % to 41 %). Do the young people have less interest or less trust in the church, especially in confirmation than five years earlier?

Working on relationships is only one (important) part of confirmation work. Contents, substance and topics of confirmation work also matter to the confirmands. The values rise from t₁ to t₂ for individual and relational topics like »Faith in God helps me in difficult situations« (CE08), »God loves all humans« (CE03) and »There is life after death« (CE02) which indicates that these topics are considered especially important. When confirmands say that they have become more insecure about what they should believe (CE05), this can be considered a change towards a feeling of anxiety but also of maturity. Confirmation work as a step from children's belief to a mature faith also has to critically question old images of religious belief and liquefy crusty dogmas. The most obvious

gap concerns knowing what Christian faith is about (CE10) which does not automatically correspond with personal belief (CE05). The biggest change with 10 percent points increase can be found with the question »I know what the Christian faith entails« (CE/KE10). This result shows that confirmation work is indeed effective in terms of one of its core aims – orientation in relationship to the Christian faith. Also, the sense that one’s faith helps one in difficult situations increases by 7 percent points during confirmation time (CE/KE08). The belief in life after death increases as well (CE/KE02), while faith in the resurrection of Jesus shows no change (CE/KE04).

Figure 37: Findings concerning religious beliefs in intertemporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Austria (%)

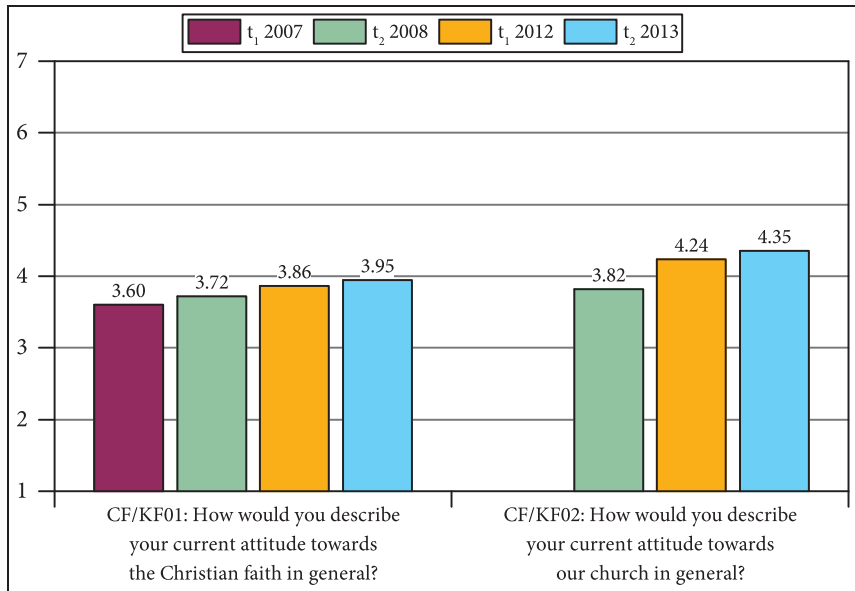


N (2007/2008) = 524-532 (t_1), N = 456-466 (t_2); N (2012/2013) = 482-489 (t_1), N = 456-461 (t_2); share of those with positive response (5, 6, 7).

The confirmands distinguish between the church and Christian faith. In the new study the item CF02 makes it clearer. Already at the beginning of confirmation time the young people are more positive towards their own church than towards the Christian faith. The changes between t_1 and t_2 are positive anyway

and on a rather high level regarding the mean in the international comparison ($M_{\text{total}} 2012/13$: CF01: 3.62; CF02: 3.69; KF01: 3.74; KF02: 3.76). The comparison between the first and the second study shows rising values as well. The importance attributed to the Church by the confirmands most likely refers, on the one hand, to their interest in community and on the other hand, to the improvement of their knowledge about the main issues in belonging to a minority Church.

Figure 38: Attitude towards the Christian faith and the Church (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Austria



N (2007/08) = 419-494, N (2012/13) = 402-478, mean values on scale; 1 = very negative; 2 = rather negative; 3 = neither negative nor positive; 4 = rather positive; 5 = very positive.

Confirmation work is very effective and holds remarkable potential. The mean of every index, resulting from the factor analysis, goes up in the comparison between t_1 and t_2 . Confirmation work contributes to growing in faith and Christian beliefs as well as to the interest in conduct of life.

Volunteers and Workers in General

Numerous workers take over responsibility in confirmation work. In every parish there is at least one person who works with the confirmands on a professional basis. These workers are supported by additional staff, like employed youth workers or deacons and volunteers. The mix of more male ministers

and more female workers with different theological-pedagogical qualifications shows the typical gender segmentation. The balance between male and female volunteers looks very delightful. The mean age of the volunteers with 21 years refers to the involvement of young people and to the connections to youth work. The majority of the volunteers are really young, 50 % are 15 or 16 years old (WF02).

Table 50: Number, gender and profession of workers in Austria

Function in confirmation work	Gender of the workers	
	male	female
minister	29	11
minister in training	1	1
deacon, youth worker	9	22
other full- or part-time worker	1	4
volunteer	26	28

The most important aims for confirmation work among workers are the experience of community (WD03: 98 %) and the relationship to God. The confirmands should get answers to questions concerning faith (WC15: 92 %) and be strengthened in their faith (WC02: 92 %). Becoming familiar with the hymn book (WB27: 32 %) and learning Christian texts by heart (WC03: 42 %) are regarded as less important. This last item shows a considerable standard deviation ($M = 3.92$; $SD = 2.18$; scale 1-7) due to the differences between rural or mixed and urban areas ($M_{\text{rural}} = 4.65$; $M_{\text{mixed}} = 4.72$; $M_{\text{urban}} = 3.91$).

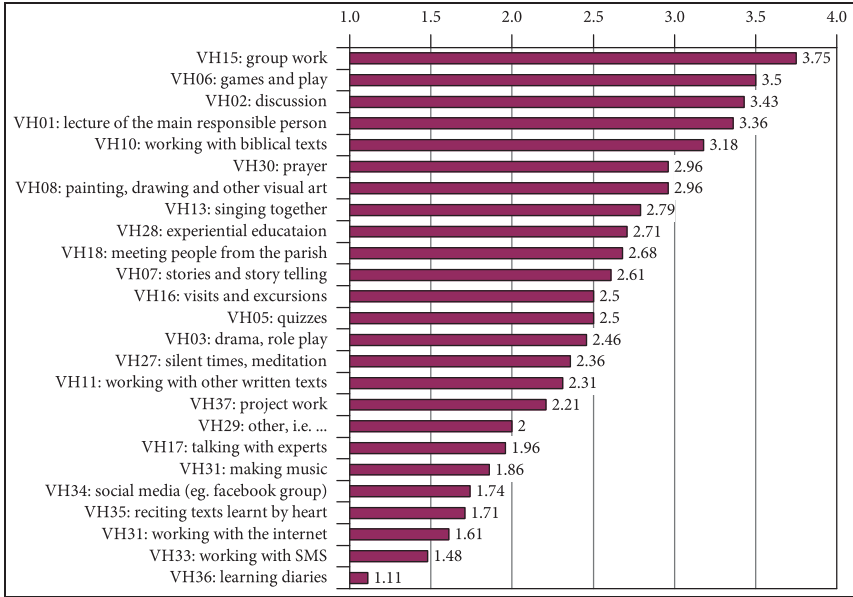
The overview of means concerning the methods and media used (VH) point out the preference for interactive forms in direct contact with the confirmands. The use of new media, like SMS, internet and facebook-groups, is lowest. The various methods indicate diversified programs in confirmation time.

Competences in theology as well as in pedagogical respect were estimated rather positively by the workers. The differences between ministers and the other workers changed slightly in theological competence. While the workers state more knowledge and ability than in the first study, the ministers' self-estimate declined. So the gap between the workers with studies in theology and workers without becomes very narrow.

Satisfaction

The great majority of both confirmands (81 %) and workers (91 %) show high satisfaction in general. Looking more precisely into the data the confirmands express extraordinary satisfaction with the workers, main responsible persons as well as the others. The workers are interested in a good climate in the groups

Figure 39: Working methods (t₂) in Austria



N = 28; »How often did you use these pedagogical measures in teaching the current confirmation group?« Mean values on scale 1 = never; 2 = seldom; 3 = sometimes; 4 = often.

Table 51: Competence of workers in t₁ (2007 and 2012) in Austria

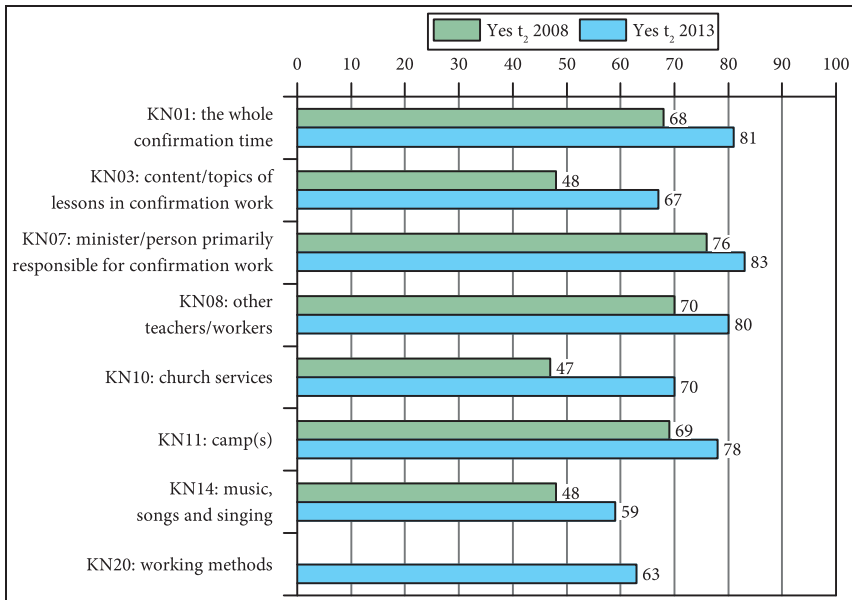
t ₁ (2007)	N	M		SD
		ministers	workers	
WE09: I consider my pedagogical competence for confirmation work as adequate.	116	5.63	5.53	1.31
WE10: I consider my theological competence for confirmation work as adequate.	113	6.52	5.12	1.64
t ₁ (2012)	N	M		SD
		ministers	workers	
WE09: I consider my pedagogical competence for confirmation work as adequate.	117	5.63	5.60	1.25
WE10: I consider my theological competence for confirmation work as adequate.	116	6.16	5.49	1.45

N = 113-117; scale: 1 = not satisfied at all; 7 = totally satisfied.

by supporting a comfortable working situation. The small size of the confirmation groups requires mutual appreciation and respectfulness. Even the church services receive a positive response. Only working with music leads to the impression that there is space for improvement. But nevertheless, a positive change in comparison with the first study in 2007/08 can be stated for all items.

The workers express high satisfaction, too. They like confirmation work in general and the team-work very much. The ministers, youth workers and numerous volunteers get financial support as well as the structural assistance of the presbytery. Comparing the Austrian workers' satisfaction with the other countries higher rates stand out for all items; satisfaction with the support by the presbytery is especially remarkable. It is worth to invest in confirmation work – with money as well as acknowledgment!

Figure 40: Satisfaction of the confirmands in t_2 (2008 and 2013) in Austria (%)

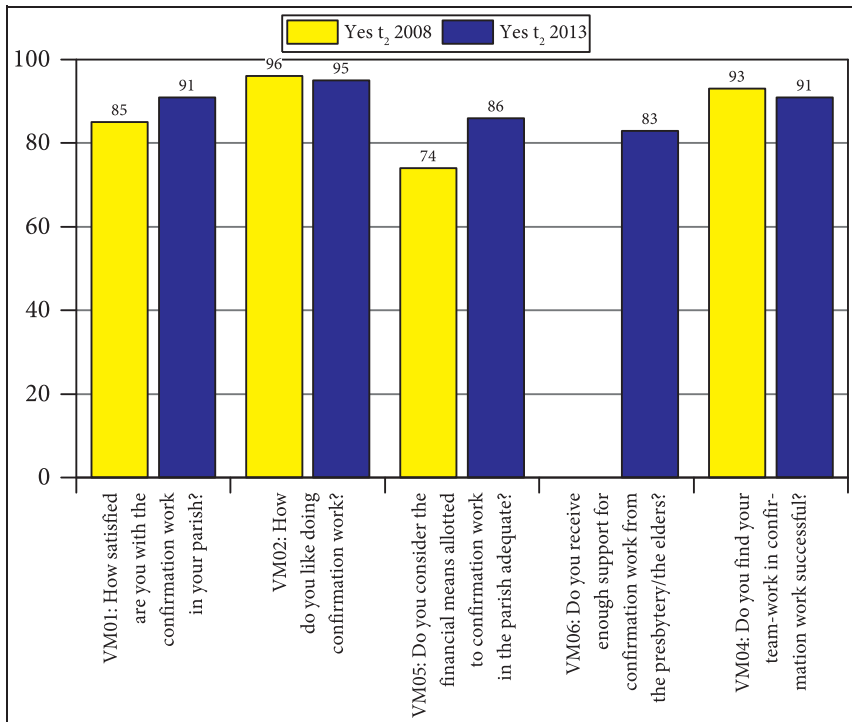


N = 400-468 (2007/2008), N = 441-458 (2012/2013); the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7). KN20 was not asked in the study 2007/08.

Church Services

After the first study in 2007/08 the results about church services were considered surprising which initiated more attention to this very important segment of confirmation work. To get a better understanding of the confirmands' relationship to church services some additional questions tried to identify what

Figure 41: Satisfaction of the workers t_2 (2008 and 2013) in Austria (%)



N = 81-95 (2007/08), N = 105-105 (2012/13); the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7). VM06 was not asked in the study 2007/08.

confirmands think about and experience with worship services. 39% of the confirmands said that they had the opportunity to contribute their own ideas to the services (KS02). Compared to the other European countries in the study (total: 28%), the view of Austrian services turns out to be better. This indicates the possibility as well as the need for having more chances for confirmands to make active contributions to worship services with their own ideas.

The workers also expressed their views on what the confirmands should experience in church services during confirmation time. Interestingly the main focus addresses social relations, i.e., being part of a community (WB31: 93%) and experience a friendly atmosphere (WB33: 90%). The confirmands should be given the opportunity to contribute their own ideas to the preparation of services (WB28: 90%). Even the lowest result, which concerns an item about the liturgy (WB34: 60%), seems fairly high.

Linked to the expectation of meeting nice people (CS04) is the impression of security in the group (KS15: 68%) and the satisfactory feeling of being part of

Table 52: Worship services (t₁ and t₂) in Austria

t ₁ : What are your wishes concerning church services?		M	SD	Yes (%)
t ₂ : What do you think about the church services during your confirmation time?				
CG04	Church services are usually boring.	4.20	1.85	42
KG04	Church services are usually boring.	4.45	1.75	47
CS01	to experience services adequate for young people.	4.55	1.95	51
KS01	I experienced forms of worship adequate for young people (e. g., youth services).	4.66	1.00	56
CS02	to contribute my own ideas to the services.	3.55	1.95	32
KS02	I had the opportunity to contribute my own ideas to the services.	3.93	1.93	39
CS03	to have tasks in the services (for example, do a reading).	2.81	1.93	20
KS03	I had tasks in the services (for example, do a reading).	4.49	2.18	54
CS04	to meet nice people in the services.	5.02	1.79	62
KS04	I met nice people	5.66	1.72	77
CS05	to listen to interesting sermons.	3.82	2.08	38
KS05	I listened to interesting sermons.	4.17	1.80	43

N = 478-488 (t₁ 2012), 453-457 (t₂ 2013); scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation; Yes = Positive response (5, 6, 7).

the worship group (KS16: 59%). One of the most surprising results delivers the item »Church services are usually boring« which made a pleasant change compared to the first study (CG/KG04 in 2007/08: 47%/60%).

Holy Communion in Austria is open to children and already 96% of the confirmands had participated in the Eucharist before confirmation time. Therefore the confirmation service itself changed from a ritual as admittance to Holy Communion to an individual blessing which is important on confirmation day (KB11: 63%).

2.3 Changes Between the First and the Second Study

In the new study more details and certain spotlights could be brought forth. Some differences between the first and the second study were mentioned above. The changes among the confirmands are higher than the changes among the workers, which stands to reason, as many of the workers participated in the first study as well.

Intriguing key results like the experienced and affirmed boring church services (CG04) led to an important awareness in parishes as well as with the workers and obviously helped to improve confirmation time. It stands to reason that here still lie idle possibilities – some/more contribution of own ideas, words and media in services as the *ipsissima vox*, the authentic voice of the confirmands (CS/KS02).

Concerning participation in decision-making about contents and the confirmands faith-questions (CK/KK11), the new study brought up a more positive response (KK04: + 14 percent points, KK11: + 13 percent points). The workers data support this impression as well (VB09: + 25 percent points). More self-determination of the young people brings more fun (CK/KK05: + 25 percent points).

Regarding the differences in the types and profiles of the parishes, considering the diverse agendas, curricula and aims they have in their confirmation work and the spiritual, theological, historical and pedagogical approach, the high average satisfaction is obvious – and even has increased significantly since the last study. This might be an impact of the first study which put a finger on weaknesses and encouraged the church as a whole, the parishes and their workers to personally, professionally and financially support, strengthen and value confirmation work. When parishes as a whole feel responsible for their confirmands, then a real feeling of being welcome in services as well as in the whole parish becomes possible.

The changes between the first study and the second study allow for the impression of a successful field of church work. Nevertheless the continued adoption of survey results and the discussions about them can contribute to the further improvement and effectiveness of confirmation work.

2.4 Challenges and Questions for the Future

Confirmation work needs resources, awareness and committed parishes, in regard to workers, confirmands and parents. The high satisfaction rates cannot, however, hide that challenges throughout all spheres should be faced. Can the decline of the participation rate in the last 10 years from 80 % to 70 % be stopped and do the young people only frequent a church because they want spiritual counselling concerning their *rites de passages*?

An increase in satisfaction rates only depicts how the (shrinking) milieu which is still addressed and approached by an institution like the Church, responds to the church programs. It does not depict the discontent or lack of interest of those who do not join confirmation time any more. Did the critical voices among the confirmands who were reached in 2007/2008, get lost? Prob-

ably; so maybe the increase of satisfaction only shows that a small in-group indeed feels at home, while at the same time the fact must be faced that this in-group is dwindling.

Confirmants want to and can be active participants in services, as a part of a friendly community – not only as bored visitors on exhibition. Then they might not just »experience« and observe adequate forms of services but be part of them, value them as their own personal deed and activity. Con-forming and per-forming with them in church services and not only confirming the adolescents offers an encouraging model in confirmation work.

The methods used oscillate between social orientation and content orientation. The confirmants value getting acquainted with other Protestants, who are a minority in Austria, and the increase of knowledge about the Christian faith, especially characteristic Protestant topics in distinction from the Roman-Catholic tradition (cf. the chapter on minority churches, p. 157 ff.).

The need for multi-methodical and structural confirmation work can only be realised with a good number of workers and volunteers. Investing in financial, emotional and personal resources pays off. The improvement and expansion of workshops and courses for confirmation and youth workers could support youth-adequate and tradition-adequate confirmation work. Moreover, general guidelines could display the main contents and aims.

Austrian parishes put trust in individual and personal relationships from the beginning (invitation, services, camps, celebration, etc.). Therefore a high number of workers seem absolutely essential.

The questionnaires in t_3 will bring even more insights on effects of confirmation work, whether or not confirmation work is not just a time to meet nice people, to have fun and to have a nice family celebration, but to become familiar with volunteerism in church.

3. Confirmation Work in Switzerland

THOMAS SCHLAG AND MURIEL KOCH

3.1 Introduction

For the first time ever, confirmation work in the whole of Switzerland has been examined in a representative study. Thus, after a first study, which was conducted in 2007/2008 only in the canton of Zurich (cf. Schlag/Voirol-Sturzenegger 2010), it is now possible to obtain a broader picture of the current situation, the various frameworks, expectations and experiences of the participating actors as well as of the profile and the different forms and the outcomes of confirmation work in the different Reformed cantonal Churches.

As it is already well known from the political situation, the background and characteristics of the Swiss Reformed Churches are highly plural in themselves (cf. Schlag 2014). In the whole country around 30% of the Swiss people are Reformed. But one also has to have in mind the fact of a massive decline of membership in both the Catholic and the Protestant Churches over the last forty years from more than 90% to currently around 60% of the total population with a generally strong tendency of religious individualisation and de-institutionalisation (cf. Stolz/Ballif 2010; Stolz et al. 2014). In some of the cantons there is still a stable number of Reformed, so for example, in the canton Bern or also in Basel-Land, whereas especially in the urban regions and cities like Basel, Zurich – not to mention Geneva – the Reformed population is clearly on its way to a diaspora situation: being only about 10% in Geneva, less than 20% in Basel and about 25% in the city of Zurich.

But not only the religious demography varies in the different cantons significantly, but also the understanding of the meaning of confirmation work and due to this, the shape of the concrete programs in the different cantonal Churches. One key challenge and also a factor for recent developments of confirmation work is the widespread withdrawal of the Churches from the public school which opened up the question of where and when to provide alternative forms of religious education and socialisation (cf. Helbling et al. 2013; Schlag 2013).

Thus, it is not easy to draw a clear picture of this plurality – which will be done in a more detailed way in a separate volume on Swiss confirmation work, where also the results of this study will be examined more in depth.

Despite and beyond these cantonal differences, there is one common ground of the meaning and aim of confirmation work in Switzerland: in a programmatic sense confirmation time should help young people to develop not only their individual understanding of the Reformed faith and tradition but to fully be-

come mature individuals concerning their membership within the Reformed Church. This general approach is highly reflected in the answers of the confirmands as well as of the workers, which will be presented in the next sections.

3.2 Participation in the Study

Altogether 477 (t_1) resp. 426 (t_2) parishes from 24 (out of 25, the canton Uri did not participate) Evangelical-Reformed cantonal Churches took part, as shown in Table 53.

Table 53: Number of questionnaires (Switzerland) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013

	First study 2007/2008 (Canton of Zurich)		Second study 2012/2013			
	t_1	t_2	t_0	t_1	t_2	percentage matched (basis: t_2)
Units	39	37	492	477	426	96 %
Confirmands	598	578		7217	6437	77 %
Workers	64	55		905	688	76 %

In preparing the study in summer 2012, all Reformed parishes in Switzerland – about 1400 – were invited to take part. About a third of all the parishes reacted positively to the invitation and were willing to take part. That means that German, French and also some Italian speaking parishes were included. Due to the fact that in each cantonal church a person had been chosen to accompany the study and encouraged the ministers and groups to be part of the project, it can be assumed that not only well-meaning workers or parishes with a positive attitude participated in the study.

Compared to the questionnaires in the other European countries the number of items was higher: about 150 questions each in t_1 and t_2 for the confirmands; about 140 questions for the workers in t_1 and 50 questions in t_2 ; beyond that the voluntary workers received another 70 questions in t_2 . In addition to the items in the common questionnaires of the European study, some specific items and batteries were included: some items from the Bertelsmann Religionsmonitor (Huber 2009), items on diaconical and ethical issues and also on personal expectations for the future. The following will mainly concentrate on the results comparable with the other European countries, but also some indications of the specific Swiss items, sometimes also related to specific cantonal results, wherever they differ significantly.

3.3 The Confirmands

Results at the Beginning of Confirmation Time

Motives of Participation

The confirmands, who were at the time of t_1 between 14½ and 15 years old, took part in confirmation time mainly for individual reasons. Beside the fact that for 57 % the motive for registering was »because it has always been like that in my family« (CA03), 53 % noted as an important aspect »because I wanted it myself« (CA11). Only 14 % felt »obliged to take part« (CA05) – a rather low number compared to the other countries. 42 % notice as an important reason for participation »to come to my own decision about my faith« (CB03).

Questions related to aspects of faith and church in a more explicit sense, are only important for a clearly smaller number of the confirmands: So only 25 % of them stated that they wanted to »learn more about God and faith« (CB01). Only 22 % affirmed »that they want to be strengthened in their faith« (CB08) and only 14 % registered »because I am in a good personal relation to my parish« (CH-specific item). »To receive a blessing on the day of confirmation« (CB11) was an important motive only for every third confirmand; although here it has to be said that the blessing in the sense of a firm and traditional confirmation ritual – like in the Lutheran churches – is not as common and established in the Reformed tradition. In any case, the most important motives for registering for confirmation time are very concrete benefits: for 62 % taking part is important »to have a beautiful celebration with family and friends on the day of my confirmation« (CB09), for 59 % »to get money or presents at the end« (CB01) – in the canton Zurich the latter percentage is particularly high at 63 %. The fact that these percentages rise at the end of the year – close to the confirmation – is hardly surprising.

Interest in Topics and Forms

The interest of the confirmands in their confirmation time concerning topics and forms is clearly oriented towards life-related aspects – also: 89 % of them hoped for »fun« (CK05) during confirmation time. For 56 % of them it was important »to be allowed to decide about the topics together with my fellow confirmands« (CK04). Concerning the range of different topics (CL01-CL23) there was high attraction in »friendship« (77 %), »drugs and crime (57 %), »justice and responsibility for others« (52 %), »love and sexuality« (50 %) and »care and protection of the environment / ecology« (38 %). The interest in »other religions« was with 43 % also quite high. Especially all questions about the »meaning of life« with 58 % and interestingly also about »death« with 57 %

were important topics for the confirmands, which they wished dealt with during confirmation time.

In contrast to this, tradition-related topics found less interest. So only 37% were interested in »Jesus Christ«, 29% in the »Holy Spirit« and 26% in »Last Supper«, but at least 51% in »baptism«. Concerning the forms of confirmation work (CS07-CS11) it becomes very obvious that the confirmands favor »camps« with 75% compared to »weekends« (41%), »projects/practical experiences« (34%) and especially compared to weekly lessons (24%) and »compact longer lessons/modules« (16%).

Interest in Worship Services

The interest of the confirmands in worship services, which has been a major element of the survey, is generally not as negative as one would expect (CS01-CS06). Almost every third confirmand states that it was »unclear to me what one can expect from a worship service«. On the other hand, 56% wished that they »experience services adequate for young people«, in Zurich even 63%, in the canton Thurgau 67%. 48% noted that they liked meeting »nice people« in church services and 41% that they liked listening to »interesting sermons«. It is interesting that 23% were willing »to contribute my own ideas to the services« – which is compared especially to the Scandinavian countries (all between 8% and 17%) quite high. On the other hand, when it comes to »concrete action«, only some 11% wanted to take over tasks in the services (»for example, do a reading«) – which is one of the lowest values in European comparison.

Faith and Religiosity

The confirmands' answers on faith attitudes differ quite significantly depending on the concrete issue (CE1-CE10). The statements »God loves all humans and cares about each one of us«, »I believe in God« and »There is life after death« are acknowledged positively by every second confirmand, whereas the others did not believe in this or were just indifferent. »God created the world«, »There is life after death« and »Jesus has risen from the dead« was not affirmed by 50% of the confirmands. 38% were »insecure what I should believe«.

One central interest of the study was to find out, if and in which sense confirmation time influenced the attitudes of the confirmands. Of course, it would be presumptuous and also a kind of excessive demand, if one would expect groundbreaking effects of this typically one-year offer. But nevertheless it is revealing to look at the results at the end of the year.

Results at the End of Confirmation Time

Satisfaction

Looking at the numbers (Table 54), the satisfaction of the confirmands with their confirmation time is with 71 % considerably high – in Zurich with 75 % even higher. 73 % had »fun« (KK05), 79 % »experienced good community in the confirmation group« (KB02), und 60 % approved the statement that they learned »more about God and faith« (KB01) and that they were enabled »to come to my own decision about my faith« (KB03). The satisfaction with camps (81 %), with the main responsible workers (ministers, catechists, youth workers, 75 %), and »other workers« (73 %) is high. But also the »content/topics of lessons« and the »working methods (for example, working with biblical texts, group work, etc.)« find a positive echo with 60 % resp. 55 %.

Table 54: Satisfaction of the confirmands with different aspects in confirmation time (t_2) in Switzerland

To what extent are you satisfied with ...		M	SD	Yes
KN01	the whole confirmation time	5.08	1.32	71 %
KN03	content/topics of lessons in confirmation work	4.69	1.27	60 %
KN07	minister/person primarily responsible for confirmation work	5.38	1.55	75 %
KN08	other teachers/workers	5.24	1.47	73 %
KN10	church services	4.49	1.39	53 %
KN11	camp(s)	5.76	1.61	81 %
KN14	music, songs and singing	4.58	1.56	55 %
KN20	working methods (for example, working with biblical texts, group work, etc.)	4.61	1.37	55 %

N = 5593-6379; scale: 1 = not satisfied at all; 7 = totally satisfied; M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation; Yes = Positive response (5, 6, 7).

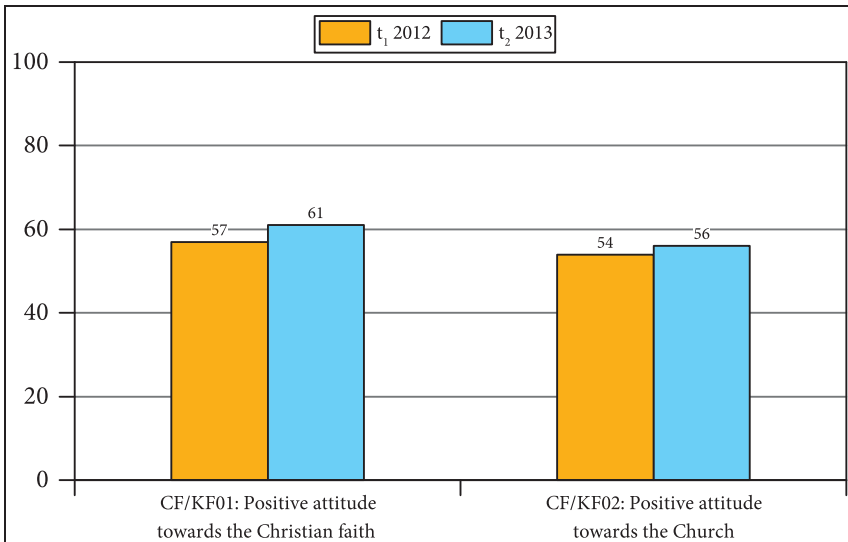
Perception of Worship Services and the Church

Concerning the satisfaction with services (KS01-KS17), 57 % approve that they have experienced »forms of worship adequate for young people (e.g., youth services)« and 33 % that they have experienced »interesting sermons«. Almost a third approves, »to have contributed to services with their own ideas«. Not unimportant is the fact that 39 % confirm: »I liked being part of the worship community« and only 16 % felt uncomfortable in the services. Concerning participation, 37 % of the confirmands had tasks in the services (for example, do a reading).

Faith and Identification with the Church

Over the year the knowledge about »what the Christian faith entails« (CE/KE10, from 46 % to 51 %) rose significantly. Concerning faith and identification with the church a growing positive perception can be seen. The confirmands were asked at the beginning and at the end of the year: »How would you describe your current attitude towards the Christian faith in general?« (CF/KF01) and »How would you describe your current attitude towards the church?« (CF/KF02). To the first question, 55 % responded positively at the beginning of the year and 60 % at the end. To the second question about the perception of the church, 53 % responded positively, at the end 55 %. The approval to the sentence »It is important for me to belong to the church« rose from 26 % to 31 %.

Figure 42: Faith and identification with the Church in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time (t_1 and t_2) in Switzerland (%)



N = 6886-6955 (t_1); N = 6077-6128 (t_2); the share of those with a positive response (4 or 5) on a scale 1-5 (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

It is encouraging for the importance of confirmation work that at the end of the year around half of the confirmands affirmed that they »got to know the parish better« (KB19, CH-item). Even two thirds had the impression that »in our parish I feel welcome and accepted« (KK37). Almost as many affirmed that »I came into good personal contact with the leaders and workers« (KK03).

Even if only on a low level, there is also a certain rise concerning the ques-

tions »If I should have personal problems, I would turn to a minister« (KG06, from 7 % to 13 %) and »I am interested in taking part in a Christian youth group after confirmation« (CG/KG08, from 11 % to 16 %) – the number is of course higher where actually such groups and offers exist. Somewhat surprising seems to be the fact that the fraction of confirmands who wish their future children to be baptised (CG/KG03) goes down from 81 % to 78 % at the end of the year; by the way, the same decline happened in almost all the countries and churches participating in the research.

And obviously during confirmation time a more intense reflection about »what is good or bad in my life« occurred (CB/KB07, from 25 % to 52 %), and the whole time was also experienced as an »important step in growing up« (CB/KB04, from 35 % to 49 % at the end of the year). But in this respect, it has to be taken into consideration that the confirmands' expectations might have been so low at the beginning just for the mere fact that they did not know what to expect of the whole time.

All the aspects mentioned above can be interpreted in the sense that confirmation work as a whole somehow contributes to a positive stabilisation and in a certain sense, also to a certain affirmation or confirmation of their own habits and attitudes towards faith and church. 37 % confirmed at the end of the year that their faith will »always play a role in my life« (KP47, CH-item), compared to the cantonal Church of Thurgau with 47 %.

At the same time, uncertainty about »what I shall believe« (CE/KE05), stayed stable at 38 %. The item »The church does not have answers to the questions that are important for me« (CG/KG02) is affirmed by 36 % at the beginning and at the end of the year. It is undoubtedly alarming to read that at the end of the year half of the confirmands stated »What I learnt in confirmation time has little to do with my everyday life« (KK35) and 39 % of the confirmands approve the sentence »I would prefer being confirmed without the confirmation time beforehand« (KK41).

Voluntary Work

In the Swiss political and social self-concept, voluntary work is of crucial importance for daily democratic life. This is due to the fact that public responsibility for or in a certain institution – be it the political community, the school, the church or any association – is always understood as an individual public duty. Therefore such public responsibility has to be carried out by the citizens themselves and is not be handed over to professionals in the sense of fully paid representatives.

This self-concept is somehow also reflected in the results of the confirmation study. More than half of the confirmands do some kind of voluntary work, be it in the school or in associations, and almost as many can imagine carrying on

with this voluntary commitment. But although 61 % of the confirmands affirmed that »the church gives young people possibilities to become a voluntary worker« (KP03) only 21 % »can imagine working in the church as a volunteer after confirmation time (for example, in youth work or confirmation work)« (KP01). So the rate of potential young volunteers for the church is significantly lower than for other public institutions.

3.4 The Workers

The results of the workers' questionnaires show, in general, that they are mostly very satisfied with the work they are doing in this field. Most of them perceive confirmation work as a core area of their professional parish work. They consider their theological as well as their pedagogical competence as extremely high. 82 % are satisfied with the confirmation work (VM02), interestingly enough also a broad majority of 82 % are satisfied with the financial support for their work from the parish (VM05, CH-item) and 77 % say that they get the necessary support from their parish administration (VM06).

Concerning forms of confirmation work, it can be seen that the didactical approach is dominated by group discussions and working with texts – by the way, mainly not the Bible or certain workbooks but their own collected and selected materials. The use or integration of digital or social media is not yet widely common, except for establishing some Facebook groups. It seems that the workers appreciate the camps almost as much as the confirmands themselves. Looking at the average number of days which are spent in camps, they seem to put a significant amount of time and energy into the preparation of these camps; at least the relation of regular lessons and camp days shows a tendency towards the latter.

Especially the motives of the workers for conducting confirmation work show clearly that on one side, their interest in raising classic theological issues is – not astonishingly – much higher than the confirmands' interest; on the other side, they are very sensitive towards the young people's needs and interests. It is impressive that more than 80 % – the highest percentage among the churches participating in this research – »had at least one personal conversation with each confirmand during confirmation time« (VD05). So without any doubt the empathy and willingness of the workers to involve themselves into this program is quite high.

3.5 Challenges and Questions for the Future

Even if these somewhat sporadic results have to be interpreted in their relation to each other and also in their contextual dependency, it can be said in a sense of a preliminary conclusion that during the confirmation year a lot of positive experiences seem to happen to, for and with the Swiss confirmands.

The results show that the workers put a lot of attention and dedicated effort into confirmation work and that a large part of the confirmands are quite open and willing to involve themselves with the topics as well as to engage and contribute to the dynamic of their confirmation group. The full range of results indicates that most of the workers are well aware of the specific challenges of adolescence and that they try to cope with them in a very active and almost passionate sense. They intend to take on these challenges in most productive and creative ways. And it is obvious that this positive approach is well acknowledged and appreciated by many of the young people.

The fact that life-related issues and experiences, like community in the group, are obviously of greater interest than tradition-related issues, is nothing Swiss-specific – and of course, the results especially concerning the issue »Christian beliefs« is compared on the European level somewhat low (cf. pp. 33–35).

But at least two reasons could be named, why especially such results, that show a more critical approach compared to the other European countries, are considerably high. One is that Swiss confirmands are on average about ½ to 1 ½ years older than the confirmands in the other countries. This means that a certain critical attitude towards certain faith rules or an authoritative set of beliefs can well be connected with their adolescent development. The other reason for these findings can be that due to the Reformed self-understanding the tradition of firm confessions and therefore forms of catechetical learning are less important and less distinct than in the other more Lutheran-rooted Churches – not to mention the fact that the number of services which the Swiss confirmands have to attend is clearly lower than in any other country.

At the same time, almost all of the results indicate that in the perspective of theological »substantial« learning and communication about the Gospel in its meaning for daily life, there is still a lot of potential for improvement and innovation. From the results especially on their experiences during the year the strong assumption can be drawn that the confirmands make their decisive experiences of orientation well before and probably almost independently of their experiences during confirmation time, which strongly questions the common understanding of confirmation time as rite of passage.

Especially worrying is that about a third of the young people seem to more or less slip away from the offers or at least seem to be cognitively and emotionally

untouched by confirmation work. It can not be ignored that in Switzerland there is a significant gap between the satisfied and the unsatisfied confirmands; and even more demanding is the fact that the religious and family background is of high importance for the question of overall satisfaction.

From the Swiss results it can be learned that the motivation, integration and inclusion of the young people who feel a severe distance to the church is one of the major challenges of future confirmation work. A certain challenge lies in the fact, that in some other Swiss-specific items it turned out that a large number of the Swiss youth do not really struggle with their live and future in an existential sense. 73 % are confident, that they will have a safe job in the future (KP42), 39 % say that they are worried about their future (KP39) – compared to 50 % that are worried about the future of the whole world (KP40); 39 % wish for more security for their own life (KP41). »Only« 12 % say that there is nobody to speak to when they have a problem (KP45). And for 86 % »life« is to be enjoyed (KP46)!

Looking at these results one of the major challenges for confirmation work in Switzerland will be to take these perceptions seriously and use these hopeful potentials also as strong positive forces for church, parish and group work. But from there it is also necessary to look closely after those who do not belong to the group of these optimistic and privileged ones, be it inside or outside the concrete setting of confirmation work.

In any case, confirmation work as one of the main characteristics of the Reformed Church in its public educational appearance can and should continue to be professionalised in its pedagogical and theological dimensions, including improving and enlarging the opportunities for focused advanced training for the professionals as well as for the voluntary workers.

Concerning materials for confirmation work, it has to be mentioned that in accordance with the 2007/2008 study in the canton Zurich, a voluminous set of materials for confirmation work has been developed and only just recently been published (cf. Evangelisch-reformierte Landeskirche des Kantons Zürich 2014). Currently in a lot of the cantonal Churches this material is presented and finds intensive interest among the ministers and catechists who also think of using this material in their context.

For non-Swiss readers, this does not seem to be surprising; but in fact it indicates almost a paradigm shift within Switzerland insofar as for the first time there is a broader border-crossing interest and attention for confirmation work in »other« cantonal Churches beyond the specific »Kantönli-Geist« (a metaphor for a specific cantonal, almost spiritual identity) also in this field of church practice. By the way: this growing sensitivity for the common challenges and chances of confirmation work is probably triggered by the development and the results of the study itself.

4. Confirmation Work in Denmark

HENRIK REINTOFT CHRISTENSEN AND LEISE CHRISTENSEN

4.1 Introduction

Confirmation as a church celebration was reintroduced in Denmark in 1736 under the influence of the pietistic movement. Confirmation as a church rite had been abandoned from the Lutheran Danish church during the Reformation 200 years earlier. However, due to both the newly introduced pietism and the general lack of knowledge of Christian basics within the Danish youth, it was decided to take up catechism again in the form of Lutheran confirmation work. For the next almost 200 years confirmation was connected to certain civil rights in society – no confirmation, no rights – but the last reminiscence of civil rights being connected to confirmation was gone by 1909 when confirmation and confirmation preparation became a solely religious manifestation. During all these years confirmation time in Denmark has been led by ministers of the church. Being Lutheran confirmation is obviously not a sacrament, but it is still one of the most popular church celebrations in Danish society (Christensen 2010).

A Short Outline on Danish Confirmation Work Today

When the present study was undertaken, it was still common for the majority of Danish parishes to have their confirmation time with two lectures a week for seven to nine months. It usually took place in the morning but sometimes also in the afternoon – but always within school hours. Supplementing this kind of confirmation time with whole days of confirmation work and other slightly alternative ways has been seen in recent years.

The Royal Decree concerning the ordinary confirmation time has undergone changes since the beginning of this study. In the Decree that was in force from 1990 until October 2014, it was specifically mentioned that confirmation work should take place with two lectures per week during the year when the confirmands attended either 7th or 8th grade. As an exception to the weekly class the notion of a confirmation camp in which the entire confirmation time could take place was mentioned. This could, however, only take place under »very special circumstances«. In the new 2014 decree this has been changed. Confirmation work can take place with two lectures a week as previously but also in longer sessions consisting of half or whole days. For confirmation camp it is no longer demanded that the circumstances be very special. Common ground for the two decrees is the minimum amount of lectures which are still the equivalent of 36 hours.

School Reform and Confirmation Time

The recommendations for the new Decree were drawn up during the years 2010-2013 when the Danish school seemed to be carrying on in its usual tracks. However, a new and very comprehensive school reform rather suddenly appeared in 2014 with implementation at the beginning of the new school year in August 2014. This school reform means that all Danish youth in 7th and 8th grade must have 35 lessons per week although the school days used to be somewhat shorter. This number is difficult to reach if the pupils at the same time are to have two lectures a week of confirmation work during school hours. The School Law clearly states that confirmation work must take place within school hours. School hours are now from 8am until 4pm. Many creative solutions to this problem have seen the light of day but one thing stands clear: The tradition of confirmation work from 8 to 10 in the morning which has existed for years all over the country apart from the capital area, has been discarded. Now confirmation work takes place on whole days or even outside of school hours even if this is not legal according to the School Law and the Decree. It is difficult at the present to say anything about how the situation will end other than it probably will be very different from deanery to deanery (the Danish Church is organized in districts called deaneries) and sometimes even from parish to parish.

Description of the study

The first questionnaire was distributed in September 2012 and the second in April 2013.

Table 55: Number of questionnaires (Denmark) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013

	First study 2007/2008			Second study 2012/2013			
	t ₀	t ₁	t ₂	t ₀	t ₁	t ₂	percentage matched (basis: t ₂)
units	–	34	–	–	61	43	91%
confirmands		1193	1014		2024	1507	48%
workers		46	36		80	69	71%
parents					1362		

Because it is impossible to make a valid list of the entire confirmands' population in Denmark, a variation of the cluster sampling technique was used. From each of the ten dioceses in Denmark a deanery was identified, and all parishes in each of these ten deaneries were invited to participate in the study.

In these ten deaneries, 61 parishes participated in the first round with a total of 2024 confirmands. At one of the first introductory meetings their parents were

also asked to fill in a small 25 item questionnaire and 1362 have done so. The data from the parents are not reported in this chapter but will be published later.

It is probably worth keeping context effects in mind as the questionnaires have been distributed by the minister and either filled in during the confirmation work for the confirmands or during the information meeting for their parents. However, the size of this context effect is unknown.

For many reasons it is always difficult to have the same people fill in another questionnaire half a year after the first one. Ministers might be on leave, have found a new job or for other reasons they might not respond to the second round. Confirmands might be sick that day or on vacation. However, in Denmark a more structural problem in the collection of data arose as teachers from all state schools were locked out by their employers on April 1 and for the following three weeks. Even though confirmation work takes place in school time it is independent of school. However, a lot of the confirmands connect school with confirmation work and thus did not attend the training, and the response rate suffered as a consequence of this. In the end, 1507 questionnaires were collected from 43 parishes. It was possible to match 727 of the questionnaires (for a match of 48 % of t_2). Potentially it should be possible to reach a match of 66 % because 994 confirmands stated that they remember filling in the first questionnaire. Due to confirmands not filling in the anonymous code or doing it wrong, it was not possible to improve the match beyond 48 %.

4.2 Major Results

The following section describes some of the major results of the study. First a closer look will be given to the background, the motivations, attitudes, and experiences of the confirmands before looking at the ministers. Second, the findings from the 2013 study will be compared with the findings from the 2008 study, primarily highlighting the continuity between the two studies.

Background

Our sample consists of 49 % boys and 51 % girls. 96 % of them had already been baptised before confirmation time. This is above the national share, but is owed to the fact that confirmation work appeals to a certain segment of adolescents. In Denmark, pupils in fourth grade can join junior confirmation (*minikonfirmand*) offered by the church in order to familiarise the children with the church and its activities. 53 % of the confirmands remember taking part in junior confirmation work four years earlier, 40 % remembered that they did not take part in that program, and the rest did not remember if they took part or not.

There are other elements that can give a hint of their religious socialisation.

Only 5 % reported that their parents said bedtime prayer with them every night and 12 % report that they did it sometimes. Almost half of them never had bedtime prayer at home, and a third of them did not know if they did. Personal prayer was a more common practice than bedtime prayer. 11 % told that they pray on a weekly basis.

Looking at the sources of their knowledge on Christianity and whether they consider themselves to be Christian, 60 % identified the school as their primary source of knowledge. Then followed mother, father, and grandparents with 54 %, 42 %, and 31 % respectively. 16 % of the confirmands actually said they were not Christian, and 30 % said they were Christian only occasionally.

Motivation

There were 16 questions referring to motivation for participation in confirmation work, and in Table 56 the four motives that confirmands find most and least important are listed.

Table 56: Most/least important motives (t_1) in Denmark

	Yes (%)	M	SD
Most important			
CA11: I wanted it myself.	83	5.94	1.50
CB09: to have a beautiful celebration.	63	4.95	1.93
CB11: to receive a blessing on my confirmation.	53	4.58	1.74
CA04: I was baptised when I was a child.	52	4.46	2.01
Least important			
CA01: my friends did so as well.	8	2.22	1.43
CA08: because confirmation training is fun.	12	2.42	1.63
CA05: because I felt obliged to take part.	21	2.85	1.90
CA06: because my family wanted me to do so.	21	2.92	1.89

N = 1994-2012; Yes = Positive response (5, 6, 7); scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation.

The motives illustrate a strong individualistic tendency. The most important motive is their own free choice and among the least important is pressure from friends and family. Looking at the motives from a gender perspective, there is almost no difference between boys and girls. Girls score higher on the most important motive (mean = 6.12), but they are ranked in the same order. However, boys have another motive as the fourth most important: »CA03: because it has always been like that in my family«. The least important motives are the same, and ranked in the same order. Compared to the other countries Danish

confirmands are the only ones to emphasise the blessing, and like German, Austrian and Swiss confirmands baptism is also very motivating for them. In contrast to Swedish and Finnish confirmands who find the idea that confirmation time is fun a very motivating factor, it is one of the least affirmed motives among Danish confirmands. The other least important motives they share with confirmands from all countries except Finland.

Attitudes

The way the study was designed makes it possible to track changes in a number of attitudes among the confirmands from the beginning to the end of confirmation time.

Table 57: Changes in church relations between t_1 and t_2 (paired t-test) in Denmark

	Yes (%) t_1	Yes (%) t_2	t
CG/KG01: Important for me to belong to the Church.	27	31	2.85**
CG/KG02: It doesn't have answers to my questions.	25	24	1.42
CG/KG05: The church does a lot of good for people.	64	66	2.23*
CF/KF02: Positive attitude towards the Church.	48	53	.48

$N = 1961-2005$ (t_1); $N = 1439-1456$ (t_2). The paired t-test compares the mean values of these answers from only the confirmands who have answered both the t_1 and the t_2 questionnaire ($N = 692-708$). * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. For CG01-CG05: Yes = Positive response (5, 6, 7 on a seven point Likert scale). For CF02: Yes = Positive response (4 or 5 on a five point Likert scale). Although the share that agrees and the means of the *independent* t_1 and t_2 samples show that more are positive at t_2 , the t_2 -mean of the *paired* sample is not significantly different from t_1 .

Only the importance of belonging to the Church and the notion that the Church does a lot of good things changed significantly. For both questions more confirmands agreed at the end of confirmation time than in the beginning. On the other hand, the attitude towards the Church and the confirmands' view that the Church has answers to important questions (or not), did not change significantly between the first and second round. Overall, it seems that the Church affirms itself during confirmation time. More confirmands reported finding it important to belong to the Church and thought that the Church does a lot of good things.

Turning to more doctrinal aspects of confirmation work, the confirmands had to respond to a number of religious statements. Again a seven point Likert scale was used and the Table 58 shows mean values for t_1 and t_2 respectively and a test for significant differences between the two.

Looking at changes in the responses concerning belief, it is interesting that none of them have changed in a significant way between the beginning and the end of confirmation time, and neither does the aggregated belief index. Never-

Table 58: Changes in belief questions during confirmation time between t_1 and t_2 (paired t-test) in Denmark

	Yes (%) t_1	Yes (%) t_2	t
CE/KE01: God created the world.	37	39	.31
CE/KE02: There is life after death.	56	56	1.12
CE/KE03: God loves all and cares about each one of us.	64	68	.85
CE/KE04: Jesus has risen from the dead.	42	46	1.56
CE/KE09: I believe in God.	67	65	1.07
iCE/KE1: Christian Belief Index	40	42	.88
CE/KE10: I know what the Christian faith entails.	45	68	13.84***

N = 2003-2027 (t_1); N = 1461-1477 (t_2). The paired t-test compares the mean values of these answers from only the confirmands who answered both the t_1 and the t_2 questionnaire (N = 709-725). *** $p < .001$. Yes = positive response (5, 6, 7 on a seven point Likert scale).

theless, the confirmands are significantly more certain what the Christian faith entails, even if they have not changed significantly with regard to each doctrinal element. Additionally, 56% agreed that they have been strengthened in their faith. It does not necessarily mean that 56% have become more religious in the sense that more of them believe regarding the belief questions in the table. Rather, it could be understood as an improved sense or feeling of their faith. In this way, »strength« is not the same as »growth« but more a kind of embeddedness or maturity.

Experiences

35% of the confirmands found confirmation time to be more interesting than school (a country-specific question asked in Denmark), and 58% found confirmation work to be fun. Looking at some more specific elements, only 36% found that their questions about faith were addressed, and 39% reported that the confirmation training had little to do with their life in general. In order to examine these expressions of relatively lacking relevance in greater detail it is appropriate to compare the confirmands' priorities of topics with the priorities of the ministers. The questionnaire lists a number of topics, 13 of which were used in both the questionnaires for the confirmands and the ministers. They were asked how interested they are in each topic.

Almost all 13 topics are found on this list. Two of the issues that the confirmands find most interesting are on the list of the least interesting topics among the ministers (friendship and love/sexuality). Similarly two of the topics that ministers find most important are on the list of the least important to the confirmands (the Last Supper and the Bible). In some ways there seems to be a discrepancy between the interests of the confirmands and the ministers.

Table 59: Topics of most and least interest in confirmation training (t_1) in Denmark

	<i>Confirmands</i>	<i>Pastors</i>
Most interesting	1 Friendship	1 God
	2 Meaning of Life	2 Jesus Christ
	3 Justice and Responsibility	3 The Bible
	4 Love and Sexuality	4 The Last Supper
Least interesting	1 Meaning of Sunday service	1 Other Religions
	2 The Last Supper	2 Love and Sexuality
	3 My own parish	3 Meaning of Sunday service
	4 The Bible	4 Friendship

N = 1994-2012.

However, looking at the satisfaction with confirmation time, the discrepancy does not have a huge impact. Overall, the confirmands are very satisfied with the confirmation time. 54% of them are satisfied with the devotions conducted during the confirmation work, and between 72% and 77% are satisfied with the topics of the lessons, the ministers themselves, and the confirmation time as a whole. The perceived lack of relevance, and the discrepancy between prioritized topics do not seem to influence satisfaction.

The fact that the devotions score lower than the other parts, makes it relevant to examine how the confirmands experience the mandatory church services. 56% reported that church services were boring, and this probably had an impact on satisfaction. It turned out that 59% were satisfied with the services, but, not surprisingly, there is an inverse correlation between the two. The least satisfied confirmands were the ones who found it most boring and vice versa ($r_s = -.27, p < .001$). It is more difficult to identify why confirmands were satisfied with the church services. Neither sermons nor hymns were perceived that positively (35% found the sermons interesting and 34% found modern songs interesting). Overall, 28% found the church services relevant to their life in general, and only 18% felt they had the opportunity to contribute their own ideas to the services. In fact it turns out that having such an opportunity is significantly and positively correlated to finding sermons interesting and the church service relevant to their life as well as to like singing both hymns and modern songs ($r_s = .25$ to $.37, p < .01$ or better for all).

The Workers' Perspective

81 and 69 ministers participated in t_1 and t_2 . It is a relatively small group, but it is still possible to say something about them as a group. 63% (or 50 women in the first round and 42 in the second) are women. The average age for men is 51

years and 45 years for women. On the average, men have taught confirmands for 17 years and women for 12 years. A quarter of the men and almost half of the women did not know any confirmands before embarking on confirmation work.

Above, the experience of church service among the confirmands was examined. Looking at the ministers in t_1 , 71% of them agreed that active participation of the confirmands is important or very important, and a similar share of the ministers found it important that the confirmands have actual tasks during services. Finally 62% agreed that it is important that the confirmands be given the opportunity to contribute their own ideas. When looking back at the actual confirmation time in t_2 , a similar share reported that their confirmands did take part in the preparation of church services. Again there is a discrepancy as a massive 82% of the confirmands did not think they had an opportunity to contribute.

Almost all ministers like doing confirmation work. Only six ministers (9%) do not like doing it, although twice as many agree that they would like to be relieved from it. There might be many reasons for this. Two ministers reported that they sometimes had problems with parents, and four ministers did not think that the financial means were adequate. 32% found that they sometimes or often had too little time to prepare the meetings. And 25% reported that there were often or sometimes problems with keeping discipline. Nevertheless, 49 of the 67 pastors (73%) who answered the second round of questions were satisfied with the confirmation work program in the parish.

4.3 Changes between the First and the Second Study

In the second study many of the questions from the first study were asked again. In 2007/2008, 1181 confirmands participated in the first wave and 980 in the second for a total of 1637 individuals, divided equally between boys and girls.

The major results from the recent study and the results from the first study show a considerable continuity. Looking at the patterns in bedtime prayer and praying in general there is next to no difference between 2008 and 2013.

Looking at motivation, the results are also strikingly similar. There was, however, one major difference. Possibly because the most important motive in the 2013 study (»because I wanted to myself«) was not part of the first study, money and presents made the list in 2007/2008. Otherwise it is the exact same motives that made both the most and least important list, and more or less the same share that agree (for example, beautiful celebration 69%; baptised 55%; obliged 26%; and fun 11%).

Examining the attitudes of the confirmands, the similarities between 2008

and 2013 are also similar. The confirmands show the same attitude towards belonging to the church, to its capacity to answer questions, and how positive they feel towards it.

Finally, with regard to their experiences the results are also similar. In 2008 the confirmands were not asked about their opinion towards devotions, but about their opinion concerning praying together during confirmation time. Apart from this difference, the questions are the same.

The satisfaction levels are almost identical between the two studies. Also in 2008, the confirmands were most satisfied with the minister (72 %) and least satisfied with the devotional elements during confirmation time (46 %). However, the only difference we do find actually relates to satisfaction. Although it is the same share of confirmands that found the church services boring in 2008 and 2013 (56 %), general satisfaction with the church services increased by more than a third from 44 % to 59 % from 2008 to 2013.

4.4 Challenges and Questions for the Future

Pedagogically there will be quite a few challenges in the future for Danish confirmation work. There is probably not much doubt left that the new framework for confirmation work which follows as a result of the school reform also in time will change the pedagogical approach to confirmation time. Confirmation time classes that take place on half or whole days, in confirmation camps or in the very late afternoon will point to the testing of new pedagogical forms and means. In a few years' time things will be clearer – in regard to content, to pedagogical measures and to the extent of enrollment. One guess is that much less of the typical school-type setting and more of a youth-work type setting will be used in the future. But still, confirmation work in Denmark will at all times, to a certain extent, find its orientation towards the school for the simple reason that school and church, due to the mention of confirmation work in the School Law, still have a certain kinship.

It should also be mentioned that a new aspect of confirmation work which has found its way into the Decree of 2014 is the brand new requirement that is voiced in §8: »The goal of the confirmation preparation must be reached by building a bridge between the life world of the confirmand and the Gospel and by practicing the order of service.« For the first time in a Decree it is clear that the confirmand also has something to offer when the big questions of life are on the line. It will be interesting to see how this will be addressed pedagogically in real life in the Danish church halls.

5. Confirmation Work in Finland

KATI NIEMELÄ AND JOUKO PORKKA

5.1 Introduction

The results of the first study on confirmation work painted a very positive picture of the state of confirmation work in Finland. Participation rates were high as were the satisfaction rates among both the confirmands and the workers (Schweitzer et al. 2010b; Innanen et al. 2010a, 139-161; Innanen/Niemelä 2009). Confirmation attendance has been regarded as an important part of youth culture and as one of the most important activities of the Church both by church members and church personnel (Monikasvoinen kirkko 2008, 51; Kirkko muutosten keskellä 2004, 59). In the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF), young people usually take part in confirmation the year they turn 15. In the ELCF, confirmation is required for a church wedding. This is one of the factors that has kept confirmation attendance popular in Finland.

However, since the previous study some changes have taken place. First of all, there has been a slight decline in confirmation attendance. From 2007 to 2012, the rate of attendance has decreased by three percentage points (from 88.5% to 85.6% of all 15-year-olds). This decline is linked to a decline in Church membership rates. Especially since 2010 the number of people leaving the Church has been very high in Finland (an annual rate of 1-2% of church members). The majority of those leaving the Church have been young adults. Of those who are in their late twenties or early thirties, as many as one fourth have resigned from the Church after turning 18 (Community, Participation and Faith 2013, 50-51; Church statistics 2012; Niemelä 2015).

Since 2007 when the data collection of the first international study of confirmation work started, the church membership rate has declined from 81.7% in 2007 to 76.4% in 2012. The decline is mostly due to member resignations, but a decreased rate of baptisms further compounds the numbers (baptism rate has declined from 84.0% in 2007 to 75.2% in 2012). An even clearer decline can be seen in church wedding rates. A huge plummet has taken place, from 70% in 2000 to 49% in 2013 (Church statistics 2013). These changes are linked to attitudinal changes among Finns. Nationwide surveys reveal a gradual decline – and an accelerating decline over the last years – in the number of people who are committed to maintaining their church membership as well as those whose beliefs line up with the teachings of the Church (Community, Participation and Faith 2013, 38-39, 56).

Table 60: Confirmation attendance, church membership and baptism rates in Finland 1975-2014 (%)

	Share of confirmed of 15 year olds in Finland	Church membership (% of population)	Baptised of new- born babies	Camp form of all confirmands
1975	89.5	92.2	92.2	42.4
1985	94.1	89.1	89.9	68.1
1995	89.6	85.6	85.6	86.0
2005	87.9	83.1	85.0	91.2
2007	88.5	81.7	84.0	90.5
2010	87.1	78.2	79.3	91.1
2012	85.6	76.4	75.3	91.8
2013	84.6	75.3	75.2	91.2
2014	84.1	74.0	72.0	91.7

About 92% of the confirmands attend a confirmation group in which most of the instruction takes place during a camp period. This figure has remained stable during the beginning of the 21st century. The camps last for approximately 8 days. According to the confirmation plan, each group should last for at least six months and include 80 hours of instruction. The most typical way of organising the confirmation time of a group is to start with several day meetings typically during the latter half of the winter and over the spring. The intensive part of confirmation work usually takes place at a point over the summer or during the winter vacation at a camp.

In Finland the second study was conducted by the Church Research Institute. Altogether 2436 confirmands, 510 volunteers and 169 workers replied in the t_1 and 2298 confirmands, 506 volunteers and 156 workers in t_2 . Volunteers and workers had separate t_2 questionnaires but t_1 was integrated although there was a large number of country-specific items for the volunteers only in it. The country-specific items were measuring the attitudes and work of the young volunteers (YCVs) participating in the same confirmation groups with the workers and confirmands because they are an important institution in the Finnish confirmation work. Table 61 shows the sample sizes for the first and second study.

Table 61: Number of questionnaires (Finland) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013

	First study 2007/2008			Second study 2012/2013			
	t ₀	t ₁	t ₂	t ₀	t ₁	t ₂	percentage matched (basis: t ₂)
units	*	80	80	*	111	111	100 %
confirmands		2176	1747		2436	2298	73 %
workers		157	212		169**	156	73 %
YCV (volunteers)		336	429		510**	506	73 %

* The information for t₀ was available through general church statistics

** Workers' and volunteers' t₁ was integrated, but t₂ was conducted separately

5.2 Major Results

Motives

The chance to have a church wedding has for a long time been regarded as the single most important reason for attending confirmation – only confirmed people can have a church wedding in the ELCF. It was the case in this study as well; 70 % of Finnish confirmands regarded it as an important reason for attending (a country-specific question). Of all the motives asked, this was ranked as the most important one.

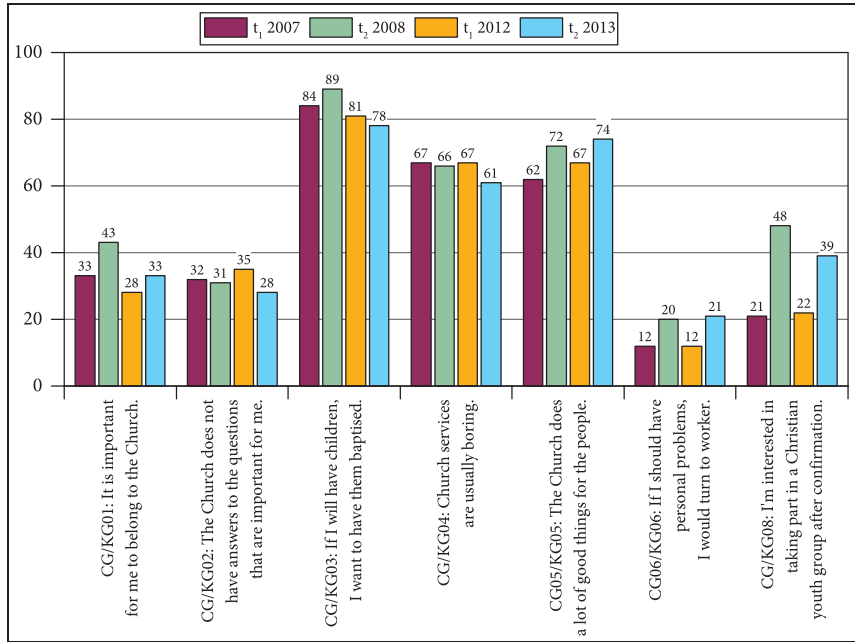
The other characteristic reason Finnish confirmands had for participating in the confirmation period was that they had been told that confirmation time is fun (61 %). Only in Sweden was this more important than in Finland. Finnish confirmands also tend to highlight the importance of getting money and presents in the end as a motive – as many as 65 % considered them important. On the other hand, Finnish confirmands tend to highlight religious motives less than the confirmands in other countries. Only 20 % of the confirmands told that they attended confirmation time in order to learn more about God and faith or to be strengthened in their faith.

Attitudes Concerning Faith and Church

General attitudes concerning the Christian faith and the church were addressed by a number of questions concerning the adolescents' current attitudes. Figure 43 shows that the Finnish confirmands attitude change towards the church is rather moderate during their confirmation time. With some of the items the change is more positive than it was five years before (CG02/KG02; CG04/KG04 and CG05/KG05). However, on the item related to church membership (CG01/KG01) the change is 10 percent points less positive than in the first study and on the item concerning the confirmands' plan to baptise their chil-

dren if they were to have any (CG03/KG03), the percentage of positive answers decreases by three percent points during the confirmation time. The confirmands' interest in taking part in a Christian youth group after confirmation (CG08/KG08) increased strongly from 22% to 39% during the confirmation time but the increase is more moderate than five years earlier.

Figure 43: Findings concerning attitudes towards the church in a cross-temporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Finland (%)

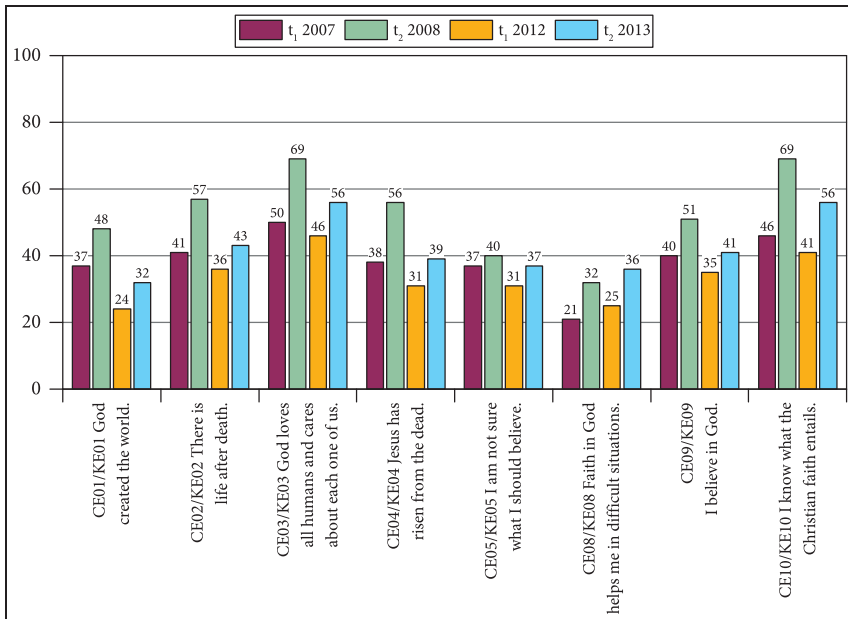


N = 2100-2125 (t_1 2007); N = 1665-1681 (t_2 2008); N = 2291-2309 (t_1 2012); N = 2257-2273 (t_2 2013).

According to the results on items related to religious beliefs the Finnish confirmands turned out to be among the least-believing in the study at the beginning of confirmation time (mean value for iCE1 = 4.46 in the whole survey; in Finland mean value for iCE1 = 3.66). The share of confirmands believing in God and other Christian beliefs in the beginning of confirmation time is overall lower in Finland than in most of the other countries studied. However, the attitude change towards the traditional teaching of the Church is also the biggest among the Finnish confirmands (mean value for iKE1 = 4.54 in the whole survey; in Finland mean value for iKE1 = 4.10). This means that confirmation time tends to change attitudes towards the positive in Finland more often than in most other countries in the study.

Despite the remarkable positive change, the Finnish confirmands' attitude related to religious beliefs remained at the bottom end of the study, equal with Swiss confirmands and slightly more positive than in Sweden, which scored the lowest. Figure 44 shows that the positive change in the faith related items is smaller than it was five years earlier in every other item but CE08/KE08. Confirmands reported slightly stronger trust in God both in the beginning and at the end of confirmation time than they had reported five years earlier. Figure 45 is overall similar to Figure 44: there were less confirmands who described their attitude towards both the church and faith positive in the beginning and at the end of confirmation time than there had been five years earlier.

Figure 44: Findings concerning religious beliefs in a cross-temporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Finland (%)



N = 2086-2104 (t₁ 2007); N = 1668-1682 (t₂ 2008); N = 2284-2271 (t₁ 2012); N = 2257-2273 (t₂ 2013)

Confirmands' Views on Worship Services

Confirmands attitudes towards Sunday services are slightly more critical in Finland than in other countries. As many as 67% of the confirmands consider them boring in the beginning and 61% at the end of confirmation time (CG04/KG04). On the other hand, 62% of the confirmands are satisfied with the church services during confirmation time (KN10). This percentage is high-

er than among most of the countries in the survey ($M = 4.72$ in the whole survey; in Finland $M = 4.88$). The confirmands' expectations are lower when it comes to services in general but the experiences related to services during confirmation time are more positive in Finland than in other countries.

The confirmands seem to have received a lot more than they expected from service life during confirmation time in Finland. Confirmands seem to have had an active role in the services which has been a good experience for the majority of them. The Finnish confirmands seem to prefer old church hymns to modern church songs. This result is unique among all the churches in the study. However, it seems obvious that by »old church hymns« confirmands are actually also referring to mostly modern hymns sang from a youth hymnal book. This young people's hymnal was developed together with the camp-form confirmation work and consists of songs written by gospel musicians and the young people themselves. Table 62 presents selected results concerning the confirmands' views of worship services (for more details on worship cf. p 170 ff.).

Table 62: Confirmands' expectations and experiences with worship services (t_1 and t_2) in Finland

		M	SD	Yes
CG04	Church services are usually boring.	5.22	1.69	67 %
KG04	Church services are usually boring.	5.03	1.60	61 %
KN10	Looking back to your confirmation time, to what extent are you satisfied with church services.	4.88	1.36	62 %
CS01	(I wish) to experience services adequate for young people.	3.35	1.77	24 %
KS01	I experienced forms of worship adequate for young people (e.g., youth services).	4.30	1.77	44 %
CS02	(I wish) to contribute my own ideas to the services.	2.28	1.50	8 %
KS02	I had the opportunity to contribute my own ideas to the services.	3.86	1.74	33 %
CS03	(I wish) to have tasks in the services (for example, do a reading).	2.04	1.46	7 %
KS03	I had tasks in the services (for example, do a reading).	4.61	2.12	54 %
CS04	(I wish) to meet nice people in the services.	4.86	1.79	58 %
KS04	I met nice people.	5.59	1.62	73 %
CS05	(I wish) to listen to interesting sermons.	2.92	1.86	21 %
KS05	I listened to interesting sermons.	3.97	1.75	47 %
KS12	Singing old church hymns was nice for me.	4.39	1.86	48 %
KS13	Singing modern church songs was nice for me.	4.24	1.87	43 %

		M	SD	Yes
KS14	The services usually dealt with things that concern me and my life.	3.75	1.66	30%
KS15	I felt secure in the group.	5.43	1.53	72%
KS16	I liked being part of the worship community.	4.20	1.65	39%
KS17	I felt uncomfortable.	2.73	1.74	15%

N = 2297-2309 (t_1); N = 2238-2272 (t_2); scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation; Yes = Positive response (5, 6, 7)

Experiences and Satisfaction with Confirmation Time

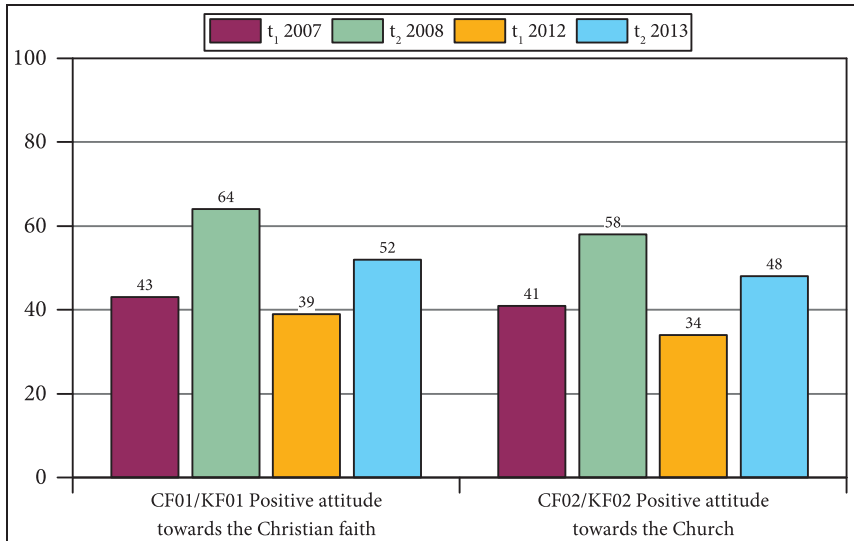
The majority of experiences during the confirmation time appear to be a positive surprise for a large number of the confirmands.

- 78 % of the confirmands report positive experiences concerning the community within the group (KB02). At the beginning, only 30% viewed that as an explicit aim (CB02).
- 76 % of the confirmands say that they got to know more about God and faith (KB01). At the beginning only 20% viewed that as an explicit aim (CB01).
- 81 % felt that they were enabled to come to a decision about their own faith (KB03). At the beginning only 59% viewed that as an explicit aim (CB03).
- 50 % felt strengthened in their faith (KB08). At the beginning only 18% viewed that as an explicit aim (CB08).
- 68 % felt that they have made an important step in growing up after their confirmation time (KB04). At the beginning only 40% viewed that as an explicit aim (CB04)
- 55 % said that they had been thinking what is good or bad for them or their life (KB07). At the beginning only 33 % viewed that as an explicit aim (CB07).

47% of the confirmands felt that they were able to influence the decision of topics discussed (KK04) and 53% that their questions concerning faith were addressed (KK11) during confirmation time. 44% felt that what they learned during confirmation time had little to do with their everyday life (KK35). Fun and social community is an important part of the confirmation time in Finland and the confirmands are mostly satisfied with it. 80% of them felt that they had fun (KK05), 71% that they had good personal contact with the workers (KK03), 77% made new friends in the group (KK56) and 69% that they felt welcome and accepted in their parish (KK37).

A number of items were used to measure the satisfaction of the confirmands with various aspects of their confirmation time. These results are compiled in Table 63.

Figure 45: Attitude towards the Christian faith and the church in a cross-temporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Finland (%)



N = 2139-2154 (t_1 2007); N = 1726-1731; (t_2 2008); N = 2224-2293 (t_1 2012); N = 2262 (t_2 2013). CF01/KF01 »How would you describe your current attitude towards the Christian faith in general?« CF02/KF02: »How would you describe your current attitude towards our church in general?«

Results Concerning the Employed Workers and Volunteers

Multi-professional teamwork is one of the characteristics that separate the confirmation work in Finland from most of the Churches participating in this study. Typically there are three workers and between five and seven young confirmed volunteers (YCVs) in a group of 25 confirmands (which is the recommended size of a confirmation group). Current developments seem to be leading towards an even greater variety of workers and volunteers participating in confirmation work. The number of adult lay people participating in the confirmation work is also surprisingly high: 40% of the groups contain a lay adult, giving individual lessons in some groups while the figure is 21% for the groups taking part in the camp and 13% for being involved for the whole confirmation time.

Practically every confirmation group has YCVs. During the last few years the YCVs have become more and more involved in the whole confirmation time, not only the camp period. According to the results, 60% of the YCVs participate in the whole confirmation time and 40% only during the camp period.

The career of a YCV typically lasts only from one to three years in Finland. Their mean age in the sample was 16.4 years. 50% of the YCVs were first-

Table 63: Satisfaction of the confirmands with different aspects in confirmation time in t_2 (2012/2013) in Finland

To what extent are you satisfied with ...?		M	SD	Yes
KN01	the whole confirmation time	5.60	1.35	79%
KN03	content/topics of lessons in confirmation work	4.76	1.32	57%
KN07	minister/person primarily responsible for confirmation work	5.57	1.40	77%
KN08	other teachers/workers	5.66	1.33	80%
KN10	church services	4.88	1.36	62%
KN11	camp(s)	5.80	1.36	82%
KN13	devotions	5.18	1.39	70%
KN14	music, songs and singing	5.49	1.40	76%
KN20	working methods (for example, working with biblical texts, group work etc.)	4.95	1.31	63%

N = 2194-2291; scale: 1 = not satisfied at all; 7 = totally satisfied. M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation; Yes = Positive response (5, 6, 7). The statement »we didn't have that« was treated as missing.

timers, 27% were YCVs for the second time and 17% were third- or fourth-timers. Only 6% were YCVs for more than four times (see more Porkka 2012).

5.3 Changes between the First and the Second Study

As mentioned in the beginning, some noteworthy changes have taken place between the first and the second study. The number of people leaving the church has been high, the baptism rate has declined and the basic attitudes towards the church have changed. Similar changes are visible if the results of the first and second study are compared. Among others, Christian nurture in the family and childhood participation in parish activities have declined among the confirmands. Almost half (47%) of the confirmands have grown up entirely without an evening prayer while the number five years earlier was 30% (CJ02). An increasingly critical attitude towards the Church in the media and society as a whole probably explain partly why only 22% (CN02) replied that they trusted the Church. However, twice that number trusted the ministers (42%, CN04) and the youth workers (46%, CN04). This question was asked in t_1 in the beginning of confirmation time and therefore it does not reflect the confirmands' experiences but rather of their initial image.

Comparing these results to the previous study from 2007/2008 reveals a de-

cline on all items that cover motives to attend confirmation work, except the share of those who stated that they attended confirmation work because they felt obliged to take part (CA05: 14 % in 2007; 35 % in 2012). When comparing the experiences of the obliged attendees in t_2 to the rest of the confirmands, it was recognized that the obliged experienced their confirmation time as more stressful (KK10). They were also more critical on their experiences towards worship life during the confirmation time than the others.

The family tradition does not seem to be as important a motive as it was five years earlier: only 44 % of the confirmands listed it as one of their motives to attend although the number had been 60 % five years earlier. Instead the majority of the confirmands emphasised that attending was their own decision (67 %, CA11). Also the fact that one has been baptised in early childhood seems to have dramatically less meaning for adolescent in their decision to attend confirmation work (CA04; in 2007 81 %, in 2012 only 52 %). This seems to be in line with the growing importance of the confirmands' own will and the weakening of the family tradition, and in general with the developments occurring in Finnish society.

Finnish confirmands 2012/2013 were slightly more skeptical towards Christian beliefs than they had been five years earlier. This applies especially to the share of those who believe that God created the world. This has declined from 37 % to 24 % among those starting their confirmation period. In other belief items the decline is less visible. For example, the share of those believing in God was 35 % while five years earlier it had been five percentage points higher.

The data show that partly similar changes have happened for the volunteers (YCVs) as well as for the confirmands. The YCVs in 2013 had less private spiritual activity but on the other hand, they participated more in the parish activities than the YCVs in 2008. There is an increase in the YCVs' desire to continue church activities after their time as an YCV (44 % to 58 %) and in the YCVs' trust in turning towards workers about their personal problems (29 % to 36 %).

5.4 Challenges and Questions for the Future

The changes related to confirmation work in Finland raise questions for the future of confirmation work. The first and the biggest concern is related to the decline in the church membership, confirmation attendance rate and attendance in other church rites. The confirmation rate has declined little, but still remained high even while church membership rate, church wedding rate and several other markers have been decreasing more clearly. The clear decline in church membership rate will have obvious consequences for the confirmation rate. The decline has been especially strong among young adults. The member-

ship rate among young men of the age of 25-32 has dropped close to 60% and among young women to 70%. The membership rates among these age groups have gone down by 20 percentage points in only 10 years. These young adults will be future parents of those who are to attend the confirmation period. It is easy to predict a decline in confirmation attendance simply based on those figures. The influence of the lower membership rate among the young adults has already been visible in the recent fast decline in wedding rates and in baptism rates. The decline in church wedding rates is also likely to affect the desire to take part in confirmation time due to the church wedding being for decades the single most important reason to participate.

These changes also challenge the curriculum development: should church membership and church rituals be highlighted more clearly also in confirmation teaching? It is obvious that a good confirmation experience, the feeling of community and knowing the parish activities are important for young people's relation to parish and church. They are, however, not sufficient to keep young people as members of the church or having their children baptised (see more Niemelä 2015).

Other important factors are religious upbringing at home and religious socialization in general. Their importance cannot be overestimated. However, the share of parents offering Christian nurture at home has been clearly declining and this has and will have direct consequences for confirmation. Activities aiming at supporting parents in their parenting and Christian nurturing should be placed among the high priorities of the church and parishes.

Furthermore, the clear decline in the number of church members among young parents and the decline in the percentage of baptised children challenges the traditional ways of marketing confirmation attendance. One important channel for informing about confirmation has been school Religious Education. However, it is mostly only those young people who belong to the church who attend. Secondly, many church workers do not feel comfortable with the idea of marketing and actively promoting confirmation work. However, it should be given more emphasis when an increasing number of potential confirmands are neither church members nor baptised.

6. Confirmation Work in Norway

IDA MARIE HØEG AND BERND KRUPKA

6.1 The Cultural Context of Confirmation

Confirmation as a »rite de passage« is holding a strong position in the Norwegian culture. The long and deep Lutheran tradition, where confirmation matured young people and qualified them for the adult life, is still influencing the Norwegian culture. The cultural position of confirmation today and in the future is highly bound to secularisation and religious pluralisation of the Norwegian society. Relevant questions are society's valuation of religious education as a natural part of childhood and particularly connected to adolescent's coming of age.

Structural frameworks that have impact on confirmation work in the Lutheran majority Church, the Church of Norway, are the Church's resources to provide religious education to children and youth. The parishes' educational program for the younger generation, alone or in cooperation with the school and Christian organisations, is particularly important for young people's approach to confirmation work. Another structural factor of significance is Religious Education in school, which in turn depends on religious education during teacher training. Over the last decades, religious traditions and communities have gained a new political importance in Norwegian society. Both the school subject Religion and religious education in the framework of the Church have undergone major changes where the state plays a vital role.

The recent political decisions aim at reinforcing religious education in teacher training and strengthening teaching in Christianity. In 2010 the school subject Religious and Ethical Education (REE) was made an optional part of teacher training. In 2015 the government decided that half of the subject's content must be devoted to Christianity, and that the subject will be compulsory for all teacher students. The political argumentation to boost the subject is the need for both ethnic and non-ethnic Norwegians to better understand Norwegian society's culture and history.

For the Norwegian Church an opportunity for the renewal and expansion of Christian education came in 2003. The Storting parliament voted to fund a Christian Education Reform for children and young people affiliated to the Church. With this parliamentary decision all the parishes were obliged to develop a systematic and coherent offer of Christian education (NOU 2000:26, St.meld. nr. 7, 2002-2003). The main reason the Christian Education Reform was approved by the Storting was that the Church's education for children and

adolescents had been weakened by changes in the law on primary schools. Religion was no longer part of church's education. Moreover, the Storting considered that it was obliged to comply with international declarations and conventions on human rights, which stress that children have the right to spiritual development (Innst. S. nr. 200, 2002-2003, 1). The Christian Education Reform gave the church an opportunity for a renewed thinking about confirmation work and the development of a new curriculum.

Over the last decades, Norway has become a cultural heterogeneous society where many different religious traditions and worldviews are represented in private as well as in public. In May 2012, the ongoing pluralisation process and the critique of the state for favouring one denomination resulted in the separation of church and state: the Church of Norway is no longer a state church but turned into a national ›folk church‹ financed by the state. The new relation between the state and the Church of Norway does not influence the Christian Education Reform. The reform remains state funded with broad political consensus and confirmation work still benefits from the reform.

The Church of Norway attracts 64% of young people (15 years old) to confirmation work while 75% of the Norwegian population is affiliated to the Church. In 2001, 68% were confirmed and 87% were affiliated to the Church. The dropping numbers of church members and members who take part in services connected to life's transitions, reflect the variety of worldview/religious belief (Holberg/Brottveit 2014, 29-30). Also a growing number of confirmation arrangements by different denominations and worldviews reflect the pluralisation. In 2013, approximately 15% in the age group had a humanist confirmation while only 2.5% had a Catholic confirmation. In terms of confirmation, not only the religious and worldview plurality but also the dropping numbers of parents who have their children baptised, cause the decline in numbers of confirmands in Norway. Among 14 year olds affiliated to the Church, 87% were confirmed. This number has for the last four years dropped approximately by one percent point per year.

The Church seems to have a policy to counter the pluralisation of society. According to the last information brochure for the adolescents of the age group: ›If you're not baptised, you may take part in confirmation time, become familiar with the faith and choose to be baptised during the confirmation time‹ (Konfirmanten 2015). Adolescents who were baptised in connection to confirmation have for the last four years constituted between 2 and 3.5% of the number of annual baptisms.

6.2 Major Results

Participation

An increasing number of confirmands start their confirmation time around New Year and more and more confirmation programs offer weekends and camps. The confirmation surveys were conducted among confirmands and workers in the beginning of confirmation time (spring and autumn 2012) and in the end (spring and autumn 2013). The study encompasses 54% girls and 46% boys who came from small and big confirmands' groups from all over the country with different teaching programs; with a total number of 58 parishes. The study was conducted by KUN, Northern Norway Training Centre for Practical Theology, IKO – Church Educational Centre, and KIFO, Institute for Church, Religion and World View Research.

Table 64: Number of questionnaires (Norway) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013

	First study 2007/2008				Second study 2012/2013			
	t ₀	t ₁	t ₂	percentage matched (basis: t ₂)	t ₀	t ₁	t ₂	percentage matched (basis: t ₂)
units	65	62	60	100 %	47	48	49	90 %
confirmands		2296	2343	53 %		2337	2166	56 %
workers		130	120	60 %		105	130	98 %

Religious Attitudes

What characterises the Norwegian confirmands' religious attitudes is the belief in a loving God with individual connections to every human being. Even though belief in God and belief in God as the creator are not obvious for the Norwegian confirmands, 60% of them tend to have this image of God. This image and the belief in life after death (51%) are among the religious attitudes most Norwegian confirmands have when they start and end the confirmation time.

In the beginning of confirmation time, half of the confirmands share the opinion that they know what the Christian faith entails. The effect of confirmation time is evident in the sense of religious knowledge. At the end of confirmation time, 63% say they know what the Christian faith entails. Besides this dimension, only one attitude has the same increase during confirmation time: In the beginning, 30% have experienced that God helps in difficult situations, in the end it is 38%. Confirmation time does strengthen the Norwegian confirmands' religious attitudes.

Table 65: Religious attitudes in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time (t_1 and t_2) in Norway

		Yes		Mean		
		t_1	t_2	t_1	t_2	Change
CE/KE01	God created the world.	35%	38%	3.82	3.98	0.16
CE/KE02	There is life after death.	46%	51%	4.37	4.74***	0.37
CE/KE03	God loves all humans and cares about each one of us.	60%	59%	5.00	5.05	0.05
CE/KE04	Jesus has risen from the dead.	40%	46%	4.02	4.35***	0.33
CE/KE05	I am insecure what I should believe.	44%	42%	4.23	4.12	-0.11
CE/KE09	I believe in God.	46%	46%	4.29	4.42	0.13
CE/KE08	Faith in God helps me in difficult situations.	30%	38%	3.39	3.85***	0.46
CE/KE10	I know what the Christian faith entails.	51%	63%	4.55	5.00***	0.45

N = 1160-1180; scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable. The means of individual differences are computed as t_2 value minus t_1 value. Only matched cases were used. Sig.(paired t-test); * $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$.

The religious change is also evident when the confirmands were asked about their attitude towards the Christian faith in general. During confirmation time, the differences are significant ($p < .001$) for their attitude towards the Christian faith but not towards the Church.

Table 66: Attitude towards Christian faith and Church in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time (t_1 and t_2) in Norway

		Yes		Mean		
		t_1	t_2	t_1	t_2	Change
CF/KF01	Positive attitude towards the Christian faith in general	46%	53%	3.49	3.57***	0.09
CF/KF02	Positive attitude towards our church in general	47%	52%	3.49	3.54	0.05

N = 1168-1174; the means of individual differences are computed as t_2 value minus t_1 value. Only matched cases were used. Sig.(paired t-test); * $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$

Educational Program and Interest in Certain Topics

Most of the Norwegian confirmands had a good confirmation time. 73% report that they are satisfied with the whole confirmation time, while only 7% say that they not are satisfied (applicable 1, 2, 3) and 20% were in the middle cate-

gory (applicable 4). It is the confirmation staff and particularly the persons responsible for confirmation work together with the camps, and not the working methods, that the overall majority have had good experience with. 59 % are satisfied with the church services, which is an notable statement – taken into consideration the fact that for half of the confirmands church services are usually boring (KG04; 54 %). The persons who think that the church services are usually boring correlate with adolescents who are not satisfied with church services (-.124**).

Table 67: Satisfaction of the confirmands with different aspects in confirmation time in t_2 (2013) in Norway

	To what extend are you satisfied with ...	Yes	M
KN07	Minister/person primary responsible for confirmation work	81 %	5.75
KN11	Camp(s)	80 %	5.79
KN08	Other teachers/workers	74 %	5.37
KN01	The whole confirmation time	73 %	5.37
KN03	Content/topics of lessons in confirmation work	66 %	5.04
KN14	Music, songs and singing	61 %	4.90
KN10	Church services	59 %	4.82
KN20	Working methods (for example, working with biblical texts, group work etc.)	55 %	4.70

$N \geq 2140$; scale: 1 = not satisfied at all; 7 = totally satisfied; Yes = Positive response (5, 6, 7).

Confirmation seems to stimulate the Norwegian confirmands with a greater interest in a wide range of topics. This goes for topics which can be understood in a strictly religious, but also in a social and political perspective. In the beginning and in the end of confirmation time, the confirmands were asked about their interest in different topics, like friendship, the meaning of life, justice and responsibility for others, love and sexuality (CL/KL). Most confirmands are interested in these four topics in the beginning as well as in the end of confirmation time. In the end, 80 % had special interests in friendship, while between 66 % to 67 % had a special interest in the other mentioned topics. However, it was other topics that had the highest growth of interest among the confirmands during confirmation time. Care for the environment increased from 31 % to 49 %. The two other topics with highest increase were the interest for Jesus from 31 % to 39 % and the interest for other religions from 21 to 35 %. For these three topics the difference is significant ($p < .001$).

Church Services

Eight services are the minimum Norwegian confirmands have to attend during a confirmation time of at least eight months. The Christian Education Reform and another implemented church reform, the Service Reform are calling for a stronger commitment to church services. Involvement, flexibility and local contextuality characterise the resource materials and the principles for the development of services. Confirmation work is considered to be a time of learning which implies active participation in services. »That the confirmands are involved in planning and holding services is beneficial for the confirmands themselves and for the whole congregation as a learning community« (Plan for Christian Education. God gives – we share 2010:24).

According to the confirmands approximately half of them have positive experiences with being part of the worship community. 66 % have met nice people and have felt secure in the group. The Church of Norway's explicit aim of involving young people in service preparation does not seem to be implemented according to confirmands' assessment. 43% contributed with tasks and duties for the service, and only 28 % had the opportunity to contribute with their own ideas to the services.

6.3 Workers

With 105 respondents in t_1 and 130 respondents in t_2 , our findings on workers give an explorative account of workers in confirmation work and their aims and attitudes, even if the results do not have the same representativity as those on confirmands. The team-work-approach to confirmation work is mirrored by the fact that one third of the sample is ministers, one third catechists, educational staff or deacons, and one third other workers in t_1 , with the number of educational staff and deacons being even higher in t_2 . 87% of the workers in t_1 work in a team while 94 % consider the community with their fellow workers to be important (WE12, WE13). In t_2 , 80 % consider their teamwork to be successful (VM04), and 83% did not experience any conflicts in their team (VN10). However, team work only seems to imply a minor amount of common preparation of confirmation work. Only 25 % report that they often prepared lessons in a team (VN13).

In terms of aims and content, Norwegian workers have a somewhat higher focus on faith- and tradition-related aims than the international sample. They are more preoccupied with the traditional catechism topics: 95 % of the Norwegian workers have the aim of strengthening the confirmands' faith (WC02), 10 percent points more than the international average, and 97% consider the Bible to be an important topic in confirmation work, (WA22, + 9 percent

points above the international average). Life-world and particularly the topics of other denominations (WA10, - 16 percent points) and other religions (WA11, - 17 percent points) score lower than the international average, possibly as a reaction to the comparative approach of Religious Education in school. However, Norwegian workers have a much higher concern than average for environmental issues (WA12, + 28 percent points) and Love and Sexuality (WA17, + 16 percent points), which are important for 69% respectively 68% of the workers – the latter topic being traditionally of high concern in the moral teachings of the Church of Norway, while the former is figuring highly in recent church documents, as for example, the new plan for diaconia from 2007.

99% of the Norwegian workers consider it important that the confirmands receive answers to their own questions concerning faith in confirmation work (WC15). However, the workers are far less willing to enter into dialogue with the confirmands about their questions. Only 34% let the confirmands have a say about the choice of topics (WB09), which is 27 percent points less than the international average. And while 64% of them (14 percent points more than the international average) express the aim of having at least one personal conversation with each of their confirmands, only 25% of them actually reach this aim (WD/VD05, 37 percent points below international average). In short, the focus of Norwegian confirmation workers mirrors the educational focus that characterises much of Norwegian church education, where perspectives of knowledge transfer and socialisation into church practice dominate, whereas active participation only occasionally is given high attention (Fuglseth et al. 2012, 136).

The time squeeze seems to be somewhat more pressing in Norwegian confirmation work than on the average; Norwegian workers report somewhat more often that confirmands can not concentrate after long school hours, are having difficulties concerning the time needed for confirmation work, but also they themselves find it difficult to reserve the time for preparation. All this happens »sometimes« but not »often«.

In all, Norwegian workers are more satisfied with their confirmation work leader than workers in the other European countries (VM01, 92%, 9 percent points above average), but fun is far less important for them (WD07, 67%, 25 percent points below average).

6.4 Changes Between the First and the Second Study

The Church of Norway's »aim for confirmation time is to revive and strengthen the life of faith given in baptism, so that young people can live their lives in renunciation of the devil and faith in Christ, in worship and services as disciples

of Jesus Christ at home, in church and in society» (Plan for Christian Education. God gives – we share 2010:23). Comparing the first and the second study, more confirmands are fulfilling the aims of confirmation work in 2013 according to their own assessment than in 2008. The second study shows that they tend to achieve more positive experiences than five years earlier. While the satisfaction rate is on the same level (2008:72 %; 2013:73 %) and the confirmands tend to be neither more nor less motivated, the share of confirmands with positive experiences is at a higher level. More confirmands tend to be interested in certain topics, in knowledge, in attaining religious maturity and more have had positive experiences of social life during confirmation time.

Social experiences and experiences of learning were both in 2008 and 2013 dimensions that most confirmands attached importance to during confirmation time. In this five year perspective, the impact of these dimensions has increased. Knowledge of Christianity and the social experiences with peers have been positive experiences for the majority of Norwegian confirmands. However, while more confirmands report that they have gained knowledge and awareness of their individual religious orientation, they would not say the same about strengthening their faith. Approximately half of the confirmands report in 2008 and 2013 that they have been strengthened in their faith during confirmation time.

Table 68: Confirmands' experiences with worship services (t_2) in Norway

	What do you think about church services during your confirmation time?	Yes	M
KS04	I met nice people.	66%	5.64
KS15	I felt secure in the group.	65%	5.34
KS13	Singing modern church songs was nice for me.	52%	4.48
KS01	I experienced forms of worship adequate for young people (e.g., youth services).	48%	4.49
KS16	I liked being part of the worship community.	47%	4.89
KS03	I had tasks in the services (for example, do a reading).	43%	4.61
KS05	I listened to interesting sermons.	39%	4.35
KS14	The services usually dealt with things that concerns me and my life.	33%	3.89
KS12	Singing old church hymns was nice for me.	31%	3.79
KS02	I had the opportunity to contribute my own ideas to the services.	28%	3.04
KS17	I felt uncomfortable.	16%	2.89

$N \geq 2089$; scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; Yes = Positive response (5, 6, 7).

Table 69: Experiences with confirmation (t_2) in cross-temporal comparison (2008 and 2013) in Norway

During my confirmation training ...		2008		2013	
		Yes	M	Yes	M
KB02	I have experienced good community in the confirmation group.	79%	5.48	82%	5.78
KB01	I have learnt more about God and faith.	64%	5.28	73%	5.41
KB03	I have been enabled to come to my own decision about my faith.	56%	4.99	62%	4.99
KB07	I have been thinking about what is good or bad for me and my life.	49%	4.45	56%	4.74
KB08	I have been strengthened in my faith.	45%	4.49	46%	4.25
KB15	I have learnt more about other religions.	19%	3.42	24%	3.12

$N \geq 2315$ (t_2 2008); $N \geq 2147$ (t_2 2013); scale: 1 = not applicable at all, 7 = totally applicable; Yes = positive response (5, 6, 7).

The Norwegian confirmands' religious attitudes at the beginning of confirmation time are more or less on the same level as they were in 2008. However, one significant change between 2008 and 2013 has occurred. More confirmands tend to start the confirmation time with personal experiences with Christian belief. This means that 23% (CE13, 2007:17%) report that they got help when they pray and 30% (CE08, 2007:23%) that faith in God helps them in difficult situations.

The indexes of religious motives and belief are statistical measures that are useful in order to get efficient access to subsets of data. In the case of two datasets, the indexes facilitate analyses and comparisons between the confirmands in 2008 and 2013. As evident from the data reported here, the number of young people who are motivated by issues of faith is on the same level as it was in 2008. Less than one quarter of the confirmands have faith-related motives. At the starting point of confirmation time, only a small number of confirmands are motivated to learn more about God and faith, to come to a decision about faith in God and to be strengthened in their faith. But still, the experience of growth in faith during confirmation time is higher in 2013 than in 2008. This is also the case for the Christian belief.

Table 70: Religious motives, experiences and attitudes in a cross-temporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Norway

	2007/2008	2012/2013
iCB1 Faith related motives (t_1)	3.66	3.50
iKB1 Experiences of growth in faith (t_2)	4.66	4.96
Change	1.00	1.45
Sig.(paired t-test)	***	***
iCE1 Christian beliefs (t_1)	4.08	4.11
iKE1 Christian beliefs (t_2)	4.21	4.34
Change	.13	.24
Sig.(paired t-test)	***	***

N = 1181-1191 (2007/2008); N = 1201-1209 (2012/2013). The means of individual differences is computed as t_2 value minus t_1 value. Only matched cases were used. *** $p < .001$.

6.5 Challenges and Questions for the Future

The Church of Norway is facing dropping numbers of members who want to have their children baptised which in a long term perspective will most likely influence the confirmation rate. However, it can not clearly be foreseen that all young people who are baptised in the Church will be confirmed. So far, confirmation work in the Church of Norway has been a popular offer for their members. The Church has managed to compete with the next most popular confirmation program: the Humanists Association's humanistic confirmation. An important factor for the relatively high rate of confirmands (2014:63%), particularly compared to baptism (2014:59%), is the high share of confirmands who are satisfied with their confirmation time. In the future, in order to keep up the confirmation rate, the Church has to focus not only on quality and pedagogical development. Broad recruitment of young people not affiliated to the Church is also required. The parishes recruit on a low level non-baptised young people to confirmation and need to increase this share. As immigrants settle in the Norwegian society and, in particular after the second generation has reached confirmation age, many would like to assimilate to the landscape of the new homeland. The challenge for the Church will be how to approach Christian immigrants and how to communicate the confirmation tradition, program and aims in a way that makes confirmation work relevant.

Probably some of the confirmands who have taken part in confirmation work have been influenced by the Christian Education Reform. The reform started on a small scale in 2003 and is still under development. In 2013, 80%

of the population between 0-18 years lived in a parish which receives funding from the reform. Contact with the Church in childhood and in their teens before confirmation time together with young people's Religious Education in school may pave the way for confirmation work. Concerning motivation, the data show beyond a doubt that the young people are not more motivated in 2013 than in 2008. However, as evident from the Confirmation study 2013 data, the reform has an impact on the young people's experiences of confirmation time and the workers. The confirmands tend to have more positive experiences and the workers are more satisfied than in 2008. It is an open question whether the positive development, according to the confirmands' and the workers' assessments, and of course also to the Church of Norway's aims of confirmation, will continue in the future. A curriculum which stresses active participation in the Church by volunteering and service involvement will help confirmation work to make use of its potential to make the religious socialisation of values, faith and knowledge more engaging and applicable.

7. Confirmation Work in Sweden

ERIKA WILLANDER

7.1 Introduction

Participation in confirmation is declining in Sweden at the rate of about one percentage point per year (cf. p. 307). Today 29% of the 15-year-olds living in Sweden register for confirmation in the Church of Sweden. This means that if the current trend continues, this Church's tradition of confirmation will be a marginalised phenomenon in only a few decades from now. In the first study on confirmation work (e.g., Pettersson 2010) the tradition of confirmation was understood as a service offered by the Church to young people with a relation to the Church of Sweden. »Relation to the Church of Sweden« means that at least one of the parents of the young person is a member of this Church. Understood as a service on a market, confirmation rates would imaginably decline if the quality of confirmation was perceived as poor by the confirmands. However, the results from the first study showed that the young people participating in the first study were satisfied with their confirmation time. Similar satisfaction was expressed by the workers leading confirmation time. Because of this inconsistency between the declining rate of participation and the previously found satisfaction the present report aims to:

- follow up on the results about satisfaction from the first study,
- develop the concept of satisfaction by contextualising it in relation to the goals with confirmation in the Church of Sweden.

This will be done with a short presentation of the Church of Sweden's own guidelines and goals with confirmation work. Hereafter the presentation of the results from the first study (conducted in 2007/2008) and the second study (conducted in 2012/2013) will follow. Results from the workers (also from 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) will be used to contrast the results from the confirmands.

7.2 Quality and the Goals of Confirmation Work

Considering the long history of the Lutheran majority Church in Sweden, the practice of confirmation work has a fairly short life of approximately 200 years. A nationwide shift took place from traditional home schooling of children to confirmation work led by clergy after the change in the service book of the

Church of Sweden (comparable with the English »Book of Common Prayer«) published in 1811. According to Borgenstierna (1951), the intent underlying the introduction was not a wish to construct a new church act. Instead, confirmation was advocated for as a form of affirmation of the child's baptism and a celebration of the young in conjunction with their first communion.

After its introduction, Wallinder (1990) argues that four different pedagogical focuses became central for confirmation work. First, there was a focus on learning Luther's Small Catechism by heart. The second and third focus emphasised something that Wallinder describes as socialising into familiarity with rituals (e.g., being familiar with church life) and specific pedagogical techniques. Wallinder's fourth and final focus centers upon the confirmands' own needs as adolescents on their way to adulthood.

During the time passed since Wallinder published her study, new documents with guidelines have been formally accepted by the Church of Sweden. The current guidelines for the Church of Sweden confirmation (2008) emphasises the following goals:

The general goals of confirmation are to present the Church of Sweden's faith and life by offering the confirmands:

- knowledge of Christian faith and experience of the life of the Church's relevance for the life issues of the confirmands
- opportunities to explore and try out Christian faith with the confirmand's own life issues as the starting point
- familiarity with worship and devotions
- »tools« to construct an identity that make the confirmand feel confident and develop spiritually and emotionally
- joy and hope for the future
- experiences of community and friendship in the confirmation group and the parish
- possibilities to interpret the message of the church based on its presence in society and the world
- »tools« to relate Christian faith to other philosophies on life and to relate to people of other faiths with respect« (Guidelines for Confirmation work 2008:6, translation by the author).

In several of the guidelines' objectives there is an emphasis on the confirmands' own life issues. An assumption underlying the guidelines therefore seems to be that confirmands have their own, personal life issues and that these can serve as the basis for confirmation work. Compared with the focuses found by Wallinder (1990), the current guidelines also seem to refer to the confirmand-centered perspective that she mentioned as the fourth focus. The focus Wallinder described as familiarity with rituals seems also to be present in the current

guidelines. This is noticeable in the goal's mentioning of »familiarity with worship and devotions«. However, neither the by-heart-learning of Luther's Small Catechism nor specific pedagogical methods are mentioned in the current guidelines. It may therefore be concluded that the Church of Sweden's current goals for confirmation work target a confirmand-centered perspective but with some characteristics found that can be described as a focus on familiarity with rituals. It is noteworthy that nothing is said about learning outcomes in the form of accepting or learning articles of faith nor is there any mention of a future commitment to the church in the form of church attendance, participation in church rituals or membership. This observation will be taken up again in the analysis presented later in this chapter.

The ideas about the confirmation candidate-focus, necessary for quality in confirmation work, can be related to pedagogical changes taking place in Swedish schools (where a former focus on learning facts has been replaced by didactics focusing on the pupils own questions). Following this explanation, the goals of confirmation work adjust to the broader changes in Swedish society. There are items in the current guidelines (e.g., »tools to relate the Christian faith to other philosophies of life and to relate to people of other faiths with respect«) that also might be explained by changes of similar wide-ranging degree in Sweden. During the last decades (since 1990s) people of non-Christian faiths have moved to Sweden in much larger number than previously. Thus, the need for being able to relate to a multi-religious everyday life in an ethically sound way has increased.

Another aspect of a shifting social structure, which influences the confirmand-centered perspective might be the popular and wide-spread self-understanding among people living in Sweden that they live in one of the world's most secularised countries. But one has to be aware of the fact that arguing for a wide-spread self-understanding of Sweden being very secularised is not the same as arguing that Sweden, de facto, correctly should be described as secularised. Instead, what is at stake here can be understood with the use of Charles Taylor's (2007) words as a process from a time when belief in God was the default mode to a time when belief in God is one option among many. Under these conditions, Taylor reasons that the choice of belief in God is not the easiest one to embrace. This difficulty, he argues, is what is characteristic for a »secular age«. If Sweden presently is in a »secular age«, then this might have consequences for how the confirmands are able to talk to their peers about their choice to attend confirmation time. It also has consequences for how the Church of Sweden can in a legitimate and useful way convey, for example, »knowledge and experience of Christian faith and life«. That is, in this example, one part of the first general goal according to the present guidelines of the Church of Sweden. Following this line, the »secular age« might be the most

pressing social structure which is reflected in how the guidelines are formulated.

Broader changes in Swedish society may therefore influence the ways in which the goals for confirmation work are formulated. If this is the case, knowledge about the declining participation rates for confirmation work in Sweden may also be reflected in the goals.

Going back to the initial arguments for confirmation as a celebration of the young parish members' first communion, it can be stressed that confirmation is no longer a prerequisite for attending communion. The Church of Sweden lifted these regulations in 1979. This means that although the context of the confirmation as a form of affirmation and deepening of the child's baptism still constitutes a part of how confirmation work is justified, the focus on the confirmands' own experiences and needs is clearly central for how quality is defined within the Church of Sweden.

7.3 Description of the Swedish Study

The data were collected in two waves. The first wave conducted in 2007/2008 surveyed the confirmands at the beginning (t_1) and in the end (t_2) of confirmation time. Because individual changes were part of the international research project's interest, the confirmands answering both t_1 and t_2 were matched based on participation in the t_2 survey. The staff or workers (full-time as well as volunteers) were also surveyed and matched based on the same principle during this first wave of data collection. With the second wave of data collection conducted in 2012/2013, the procedure was replicated. Accordingly, there exist data from Sweden representing the confirmands and workers at t_1 and t_2 in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013. In order to draw relevant samples of confirmands and workers, there was also a sample of units (i. e., parishes) for each wave which is referred to in tables as t_0 .

Table 71: Number of questionnaires (Sweden) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013

	First study 2007/2008				Second study 2012/2013			
	t_0	t_1	t_2	percentage matched (basis t_2)	t_0	t_1	t_2	percentage matched (basis t_2)
units	–	33	34	97 %	80	59	42	71 %
confirmands		1082	1061	53 %		1381	779	62 %
workers		215	196	48 %		357	202	38 %

In 2007/2008 the data collection was a joint effort between Karlstad University and the Church of Sweden's Unit for Analysis (for details cf. Pettersson 2010). In 2012/2013, the data were collected by the Church of Sweden's Unit for Analysis. Because the Church of Sweden has a comprehensive register of all of its parishes and members, the data collection started with random sampling techniques using these sources of information. In this way, the sampling techniques supported representative samples suitable for generalisation.

7.4 Expectations on Confirmation Work

One goal of the guidelines for the Church of Sweden's confirmation work was for the confirmands to »experience friendship and community with the confirmation group and the parish«. This goal fits best with the confirmands' own expectations at the beginning of confirmation time. In 2012, 62% of the confirmands agree with this statement (see Table 72).

Table 72: Expectations on confirmation work. Comparison between t_1 (2007) and t_1 (2012)

I take part in confirmation time, ...	t_1 2007			t_1 2012			
	M	SD	Yes	M	SD	Yes	Diff.
CB02 to experience community in the confirmation group.	4.72	1.89	58	4.92	1.76	62	4
CB10 to get money or presents at the end.	4.14	2.26	46	4.68	2.15	56	10
CB09 to have a beautiful celebration with family and friends on the day of my confirmation.	4.12	2.07	45	4.48	2.03	53	8
CB03 to come to my own decision about my faith.	4.44	1.94	52	4.11	2.08	43	-9
CB01 to learn more about God and faith.	3.67	1.90	34	3.88	1.95	40	6
CB11 to receive a blessing on the day of confirmation.	3.41	1.85	28	3.65	1.86	32	5
CB07 to think about what is good or bad for me and my life.	3.21	1.84	24	3.32	1.82	26	1
CB04 to make an important step in growing-up.	2.99	1.81	22	3.00	1.79	22	0
CB08 to be strengthened in my faith.	2.75	1.76	18	2.95	1.80	21	3

N = 1047-1071 (2007); N = 1332-1366 (2012); scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation; Yes = Positive response (5, 6, 7); Diff. = difference between percentage »Yes« in 2007 and 2012.

In the lower half of Table 72, the statements »to think about what is good or bad in my life« and »to make an important step in growing up« are shown. Acceptance of these statements is within the range 20 to 30% and there is almost no difference between the first and the second study. The low acceptance rates of these statements are noteworthy because these can be interpreted as statements probing the confirmands' expectations of discussing their own life issues during confirmation time. Instead of expecting learning outcomes important for one's own life issues, the confirmands seem to expect to learn about God and faith. 43% of the confirmands in 2012 expressed that they expected to »come to a decision about my faith«. The decline between 2007 and 2012 for this item is most likely related to a slight change in the wording of the item (e. g., in 2012 the item ended with »in God«).

Confirmands therefore seem to lean towards expecting to experience community and learn about Christian faith, God and to come to a decision about one's own faith. This is all in line with the guidelines. Nevertheless, the confirmands do not (to the same extent) expect their own life issues to be at the center of confirmation work. This is challenging for the Church of Sweden since the guidelines so clearly presuppose that the young people will bring topics in the form of their own life issues to confirmation time. Instead, the confirmands expect to learn about faith and God on a general and a personal level.

The confirmands' expectations can be contrasted with the workers' expectations for confirmation time. Here, it might be interesting to notice that the workers in Sweden also value social aspects of the confirmation time, such as friendship and justice for others. The share who agree with these statements is actually as high as the share of those who agree with the statement that confirmands should learn about God.

At the bottom of the list of topics which the workers find important are »other religions« and »magic, esoteric, supernatural experiences«. The low importance placed on these topics is interesting in relation to the goal stating that the confirmands should be offered »tools to relate Christian faith to other philosophies on life and to relate to people of other faiths with respect« (see the guidelines above). It therefore seems that the tools planned to be offered are primarily based on teaching Christianity and hereafter relating the learning points from this to other religions.

7.5 Experiences of Confirmation Time

In the end of the confirmation time, a majority of 90% of the confirmands of 2013 were satisfied with what they had experienced. Their general attitude to-

Table 73: Expectations on confirmation preparation: Topics that the workers wish for the confirmands in (t₁) in Sweden

This topic I consider to be important	Yes	M	SD
WA23: God	89 %	6.25	1.24
WA16: Friendship	93 %	6.23	1.08
WA15: Justice and responsibility for others	91 %	6.09	1.13
WA07: Jesus Christ	86 %	6.08	1.37
WA14: The meaning of life	87 %	5.91	1.25
WA24: Death	88 %	5.87	1.18
WA03: Baptism	85 %	5.83	1.35
WA22: The Bible	85 %	5.82	1.34
WA04: The Lord's Supper	85 %	5.77	1.32
WA25: Resurrection	79 %	5.60	1.39
WA17: Love and sexuality	78 %	5.51	1.40
WA13: The social mission of the church	76 %	5.34	1.32
WA21: Your own parish	65 %	5.07	1.43
WA18: Drug abuse and criminal behaviour	59 %	4.90	1.63
WA05: Course and meaning of Sunday services	60 %	4.81	1.39
WA12: Care of the environment/ecology	56 %	4.63	1.62
WA10: Other christian denominations (e.g., catholics)	39 %	4.10	1.46
WA26: Angels	40 %	4.10	1.67
WA11: Other religions	35 %	3.94	1.64
WA19: Magic, esoterics, supernatural experiences	24 %	3.40	1.69

N = 349-357; scale: 1 = not important; 7 = very important.

wards faith and church had also changed and the confirmands were more positive towards the end of their confirmation time (see Table 74).

In the Swedish case, the goals for confirmation work are centered upon the confirmands' own life issues. For this reason, it is of special interest to compare the confirmands' experience of being able to influence the topics for confirmation work with the workers' view of who set the topics. According to the confirmands looking back on their own experience in 2013, 54 % said that they were able to influence the topics. This figure can be compared with answers from the workers, also in 2013, among whom 41 % agreed that the confirmands had a say in the choice of topics for confirmation time (VB09). The confirmands therefore experienced influence over the choice of topics where the workers did not. Instead, 91 % of the workers argued that the confirmands were introduced to the Christian tradition – its symbols, festivals and art (VB16).

Table 74: Comparison, positive attitude to faith and church in general (both for t_1 and t_2 , 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Sweden (% and difference in percent points)

	Positive attitude faith in general	Positive attitude church in general
t_1 2007	46	46
t_1 2012	41	54
t_2 2008	63	60
t_2 2013	57	60
Diff. t_1, t_2 2007/2008	17	14
Diff. t_1, t_2 2012/2013	16	6

N = 731-1077(2007/2008), 767-1358 (2012/2013).

These inconsistencies in what the confirmands, on the one hand, and the workers, on the other hand, experience as the teaching situation during confirmation time are noteworthy. One interpretation is that the inconsistency shows a tendency within the group of workers for a stricter self-assessment than called for (e.g., the confirmands were given more space to influence topics than the workers experienced). Another interpretation is that topics which the confirmands thought that they had chosen were actually chosen in advance by the workers and therefore, they reflect the introduction to the Christian tradition for the workers. In any case, since the confirmands' perspective is at the center of the current guidelines, it is of note that the workers experience that they set the agenda from the perspective of the Christian tradition.

7.6 Challenges and Questions for the Future

This report set out following up on the results from the first study conducted in 2007/2008 with results from the second study conducted in 2012/2013. The general impression from this comparison is that satisfaction rates are still high and comprise about 90% of the confirmands in 2013. The report was also intended to contextualise the meaning of quality in confirmation for the Church of Sweden. This was done by a presentation of the Church of Sweden guidelines found to place emphasis on a confirmand-centered pedagogy. When the results from two studies are interpreted through the lense of the Church of Sweden guidelines, it seems that several of the criteria which workers within this Church set for themselves were met. Thus, the declining rates of confirmation cannot, at least based on the results from this study, be explained by a lack of quality or a lack of satisfaction with confirmation work.

However, it can be noted that confirmands expect to learn about Christian faith and God while the guidelines for confirmation work speak of the confirmands' own life issues as the pedagogical starting point. This might indicate differences in expectations between the confirmands and workers. Possibly, since the confirmands expect to learn about God, this difference opens up space for the Church of Sweden to raise the bar for the goals set for confirmation work. Summarising the experiences of confirmation time, nonetheless, confirmands experience that they have influenced the topics discussed during confirmation time to a higher degree than the workers think that they have done. The workers, in turn, experience that they have introduced the confirmands to the Christian tradition. These somewhat differing experiences might hold keys for further improving the quality of confirmation work.

The introductory text of this report mentioned social structures outside the Church which may influence both the number of youth who participate in confirmation time and the goals that the Church of Sweden employees set for themselves and their work. Although the impact of social structures are outside the scope of the results presented here, they might hold explanatory value for understanding why confirmation rates drop when the confirmands are satisfied with confirmation time. Imaginably, therefore, future research should include the analyses of social structures such as the conditions for belief in a »secular age« and the changes in migration patterns to Sweden should be included when discussing how to do confirmation work in the future.

8. Confirmation Work in Poland

EŻBIETA BYRTEK

8.1 Introduction

Religion in Poland

Poland is a country in Central Europe, with a population of 38 million inhabitants (2014). During the last years the number of people leaving the country averaged more than 2 million.

Freedom of religion is guaranteed in the Polish Constitution. There are in fact a lot of different Churches in Poland. Altogether, there are more than 160 religious organisations, most of them Christian Churches of different denominations. Yet a very clear majority of the population belong to the Roman Catholic Church. According to official data, more than 35 million are Roman Catholics. Yet it must also be said that many of them, although they describe themselves as Catholics, do not regularly practice their religion. The Polish Orthodox Church is the second largest Church in Poland, with about 500000 members. Most of them live in the eastern regions of Poland.

Among the Protestant Churches in Poland, the largest one is the Lutheran Church of Augsburg Confession. Others are the Reformed, the Baptists, the Adventists, the Methodists and the Pentecostals; the smallest one is the Christian Congregation and Evangelical Congregation »Zion«. Among the non-Christian groups, there are Moslems and followers of Krishna, with about 5000 members each, as well as the members of the Association of Jewish Religious Communities in the Republic of Poland with about 1300 registered members (before 1939 there were more than 3.5 million Jews in Poland).

Clearly, the Roman Catholic Church has played a very important role in Polish history. Protestantism has never had a dominant role in Poland and its presence has been somewhat discontinuous. Studies on the history of the Reformation in Poland reflect this situation. Protestantism in Poland had its place in a diaspora context or in specific areas only. It was adopted as a main religion in the areas of the Duchy of Prussia, the Duchy of Pomerania, Lower Silesia and Cieszyn Silesia. Lutheranism in Polish areas has its origins in the 16th century. It was a movement that was mainly followed in larger urban centers. Its earliest phase was academic in nature, it consisted mainly of the opposition to ecclesiastical privileges. Secularising demands were announced, educational issues were discussed.

In the 20th century, the Roman Catholic Church became the numerically strongest faith in Poland and its role increased significantly. Despite the atheism

and anti-church pressure which increased after 1948, the Catholic Church gradually strengthened its influence in the society as the only organised institution able to resist Communist authorities.

Moreover, the new borders of the country after World War II were connected with the unification of a national structure that also had an impact on the religious structure. As a result of mass displacement, minorities that before 1939 represented 30% of the population, were reduced to about 2 to 3%. In addition to this, the shifting western borders of Poland and the creation of a unified country made it easier for the Communists to acquire power and strengthen it, both in terms of propaganda and in a practical sense.

The minority Churches found themselves in a very difficult position. With their small numbers, they did not constitute a significant power that could possibly support the Catholics in their activities against Communist authorities. However, against the identification of the Catholic faith with Polish nationality, the religious minorities used their right to existence to call into question that Catholics could represent the entire Polish population.

Common action against the atheistic authorities was also ruled out by a deep distrust of Catholics harboured by the Protestants, based on the negative experiences of the inter-war period. This distrust was further deepened by the events after World War II when hundreds of Lutheran Churches were taken over by Catholics. Moreover, the period of 1980/1981 was a time of rapid increase of the presence of the Catholic Church in the public sphere.

Polish Protestants felt that they were caught between two powers at war with each other – the state, led by the Communist party, and a triumphant Catholicism. However, it was the Catholics who were perceived as a real threat, not the Communists, as may be seen, for example, from a number of articles in the church magazine »Zwiastun«. The revival of the myth that every Polish citizen is a Catholic and, connected with this, putting Protestantism and the Polish nature of Lutherans in question, caused much anxiety. However, 85% of the Lutherans in Poland are descendants of the Polish Lutherans from the Reformation period, and only 15% of them go back to immigration in 18th and 19th century.

The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession (Lutheran Church) in Poland is a minority Church and its history is rooted in the time of Reformation (cf. p. 157 ff.). The Church consists of 133 parishes in 6 dioceses. The majority of the Lutherans live in the southern part of Poland (Cieszyn Silesia).

Religious Education in Poland

In 1990, religious education was re-introduced in public kindergartens and, as a voluntary subject, in schools. The Minister of Education has regulated the teaching of religion in respect to non-Roman Catholic Churches and other

non-Roman Catholic religious associations. An obligation to offer Religious Education has been imposed on public schools by the Education Act of September 7, 1991. The way in which this has to be done was decreed by the Ministry of National Education on April 14, 1992. Officially since 1961 but in fact even earlier (and until 1991), religion classes could only take place within the parishes' catechetical programs (in churches, parishes halls, private homes). Since 1991, religion lessons have been organised in schools or in catechetical centres.

Furthermore, the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of April 2, 1997, adopted in a referendum on May 25, 1997, introduced regulations concerning religious issues and also directly, the teaching of religion. Through this, a constitutional basis for the teaching of religion by churches and other religious organisations in Poland was created. Article 53 and Article 48 in the Polish Constitution refer to the teaching of religion. Article 53,2 ensures that everyone has the freedom of conscience and religion, including the right to teach their own religion. Article 53,4 ensures that Churches and other religious organisations which have legal status, have the right to teach religion in schools (as long as it does not infringe upon the freedom of conscience and religion of others). In Article 48,1, the Constitution obliges parents to take into account the degree of maturity of their child as well as his or her freedom of conscience and religion and his or her religious beliefs. Parents have the right to determine the religious upbringing of their children and to make sure that they receive teaching in accordance with the parents' convictions. It has not been decided who should arbitrate disputes between parents and children in this matter.

Further legal acts that have an impact on the regulation of teaching are found in the act from May 17, 1989, on the freedom of conscience and religion and in the act from September 7, 1991, on the Polish education system. Also, the act from January 26, 1982 (Teacher's Charter), and its change on February 18, 2000, also define, among others, the rights and responsibilities of teachers, including teachers of Religious Education. There is also an agreement between the Polish Ecumenical Council and the Minister of National Education from July 4, 2001, on the professional qualifications required for teachers of Religious Education.

8.2 Confirmation Work in Poland

In a religious sense, Protestant confirmation in Poland combined the Catholic celebration of the sacraments of first communion and *confirmatio* (bierzmowanie, Firmung). It can also be added that the Polish Roman Catholics were inspired by the solemn celebration of Protestant confirmation in Poland. This led

to similar habits with first communion. Tadeusz Stegner wrote on this subject that within the Catholic population in Poland, the habit of celebrating first communion became widespread only in the late 19th and in the 20th century and that this ceremony was modelled on Protestant celebrations (Stegner 2010).

Today, as in different church documents from the past, the Protestant statistics include information on the number of confirmands as well as the names of ministers, schools, number of baptisms, weddings and funerals and the number of people participating in the Lord's Supper during the service in a specific year.

Young people take part in confirmation work for about 19 months. In diaspore situations, the groups most often meet once a week for 2 hours. In larger congregations, meetings take place once a month for 2 hours and the adolescents have regular Religious Education at school (2 hours a week). The confirmation work curriculum is based on Martin Luther's Small Catechism which is used as learning material although there also is a special textbook. The lessons are always led by the ministers in charge of the parish. For the exam that precedes the confirmation, the confirmands have to learn all questions and answers of Luther's Small Catechism, some biblical texts, the confessional prayer and know the history of Reformation time (especially of Polish lands).

Among the Lutherans in Lodz, it is told that in the past, after confirmation classes all confirmands knew Luther's Small Catechism by heart. In Warsaw, in the Holy Trinity Lutheran parish, after the formal confirmation exam, the ministers and the parents took the confirmands to the church tower from where they admired the views of downtown Warsaw – a tradition that is still continued, but without an exam.

The exam took place with all members of the congregation present at the church or at the parish hall the day before confirmation (this tradition is still present in some congregations). The youth were placed next to the main altar, girls on one side, boys on the other. Participation of the faithful in the exam indicated the importance that confirmation had for the members of the congregation. Confirmation was a celebration of the whole parish, not just for the families concerned. It meant a ceremony of the whole congregation during which the confirmands acknowledge their faith and confirm the covenant with God. The act of confirmation meant that the confirmands acquired full ecclesiastical status. Additionally, after reaching adulthood, the faithful also acquired active and passive voting rights.

Confirmation was celebrated in Polish (and in German before World War II) twice a year – in spring and in autumn. After 1945, it became clear that Polish Lutheranism was not able to attract a broader social group. Due to emigration and conversion to Catholicism, the Lutheran Church in Poland declined in membership. Very often, for some of the adolescents, confirmation became

the last moment of their active participation in church life. As will be shown in the following, this certainly contradicts the theological understanding of confirmation as it is celebrated in Poland.

Firstly, confirmation means establishment and strengthening. At the edge of maturity, the young people can experience the assurance of faith. Having been baptised as infants, God received them as his children. Now it is their turn to acknowledge their faith officially. Confirmation is perceived as maturity of faith. Young members of the church should be aware of what church community, God's blessing and receiving God's gifts mean. In addition, the adolescents need to experience the presence of their brothers and sisters in faith who will guide them and become examples to follow in their mature Christian life.

Secondly, confirmation means acceptance of oneself. During the time of adolescence young people are often looking for answers to the questions »Who am I? What is the aim and meaning of my existence?« In order to support them in their search for meaningful answers, it is helpful to remind them of their baptism, in which God accepted them as they are and assured them that in God's eyes they all are precious as his children. In this sense, confirmation may help the young people discover their value and find the way to themselves and to the full acceptance of themselves.

Thirdly, confirmation means acknowledgement of faith. Being mature in faith means taking responsibility for one's own decisions and claiming the right to formulate one's own opinions in matters related to faith. Young people realise that their parents and godparents confirmed their faith in their name during baptism; now it is their time to confess it. The ceremony of confirmation should be preceded by teaching to help young people understand the importance of that event.

Finally, confirmation means acknowledgement of the church congregation. Young people experience the community of the church in the fellowship with other young believers as well as with the whole congregation which can also help them to learn how to overcome problems and difficulties together and to gain experiences concerning the Christian life. Young people are encouraged to take part in many church activities and contribute to the everyday life of the church. Christians need to experience the fellowship of other believers. For this reason, the confirmands are asked during the confirmation ceremony if they are ready to join the life of the congregation as mature Christians. The congregation needs the presence of the young members as well, because they can positively contribute to its life with fresh energy and precious ideas. This is why it is also very important that, during the ceremony of confirmation, the whole church community fully accepts its young members and prays for God's forgiveness and guidance. After confirming the faith and promising faithfulness to God and the

church, young people are allowed to take part in the Lord's Supper for the first time and they receive all rights in the Church as mature members.

The culmination point during the ceremony of confirmation is receiving the sacrament, because in this, the young people experience the presence of God as well as the fellowship with other members of the church congregation. In the Lord's Supper God gives us blessing and the believers, as his children, receive and accept all that he offers them. The Lord's Supper is preceded by the confession of sins which is deeply experienced by many parents and their children and which gives a new impulse to discover their own task in life once again.

8.3 The Polish Study

The present study was the first study of this kind to ever be carried out in Poland. This implies that Poland did not take part in the 2007/2008 study. The procedures are described in more detail in connection with the methodology of the study (cf. p. 338).

The Polish study contains only data from the confirmands. Replies from the ministers who are in charge of confirmation work in Poland, were not received.

Table 75: Number of questionnaires (Poland) in 2012/2013

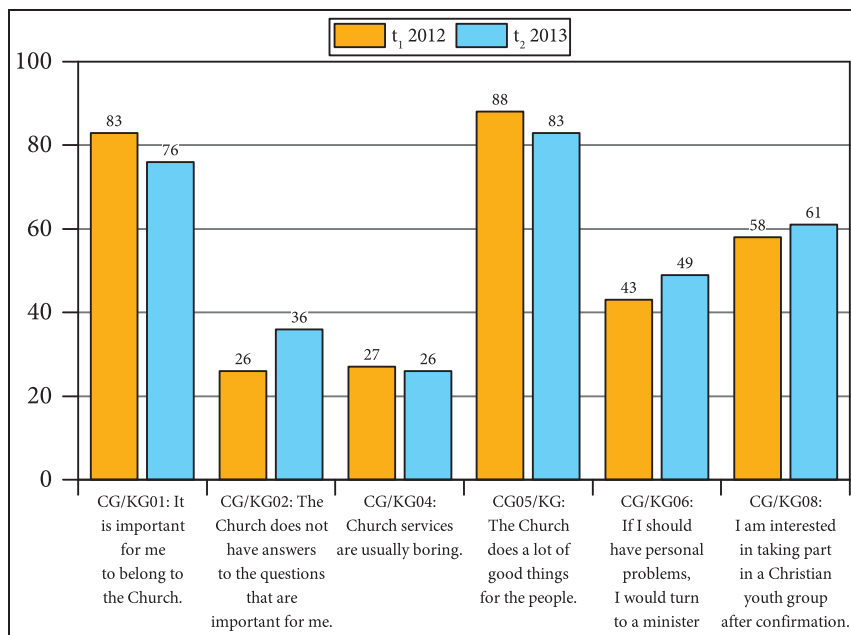
	t ₁	t ₂	percentage matched (basis: t ₂)
units	42	39	65 %
confirmands	362	305	57 %

8.4 Major Results

Attitudes Concerning Faith and Church

General attitudes concerning the Christian faith and the Church were in general very positive among the Lutheran confirmands in Poland. Figure 46 and Figure 47 summarise these results. In the beginning of confirmation time, about 90% of the confirmands agreed with different belief statements. More than 80% regarded it important to belong to the Church and almost 90% had a positive attitude towards the Christian faith. All of these figures are high above the average results in the international study. For example, while 92% of the Polish Lutheran confirmands agreed with the statement CE01 »God created the world«, the total share in the international study was 38%. Furthermore, 83% regarded it important to belong to the Church (CG01) while the total share in the international study was 33%.

Figure 46: Attitudes towards the Church in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time (t_1 2012 and t_2 2013) in Poland (%)



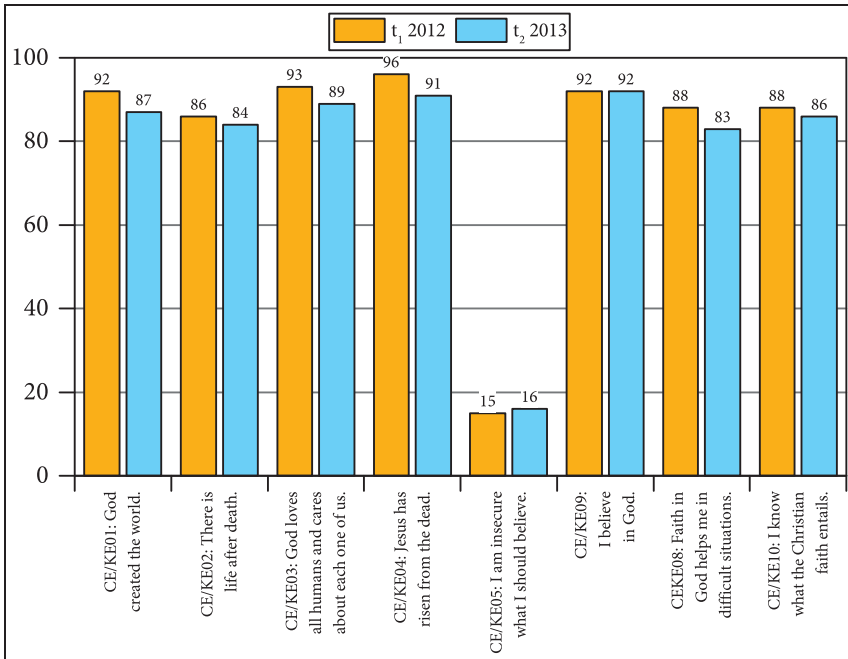
$N = 353-360$ (t_1 2012); $N = 290-293$ (t_2 2013); scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7).

The change in attitudes during confirmation time was rather small in Poland. At the end of confirmation time, contrary to the general results in the international study, the percentage share of confirmands who agreed with the belief statements (CE/KE01-10) was smaller than at the beginning. The same was true for the statements concerning the importance of belonging to the Church (CG/KG01) and that the Church has answers to the important questions of their life (CG/KG04). However, there is an increase in the positive attitudes both towards the Christian faith (CF/KF01) and towards the Church (CF/KF02), as well as in the number of young people who think that they could turn to a minister (CE/KE06) if they have problems or who are interested in joining a Christian youth group (CE/KE08).

Motivation, Experiences and Satisfaction of the Confirmands

Polish confirmands have a strong intrinsic motivation to take part in confirmation work. Asked for the reasons for taking part in confirmation time, 88% replied »because I wanted it myself« (CA11). Polish confirmands score highest in almost all items that measure motives for participating in confirmation time,

Figure 47: Religious beliefs in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time (t_1 and t_2) in Poland (%)

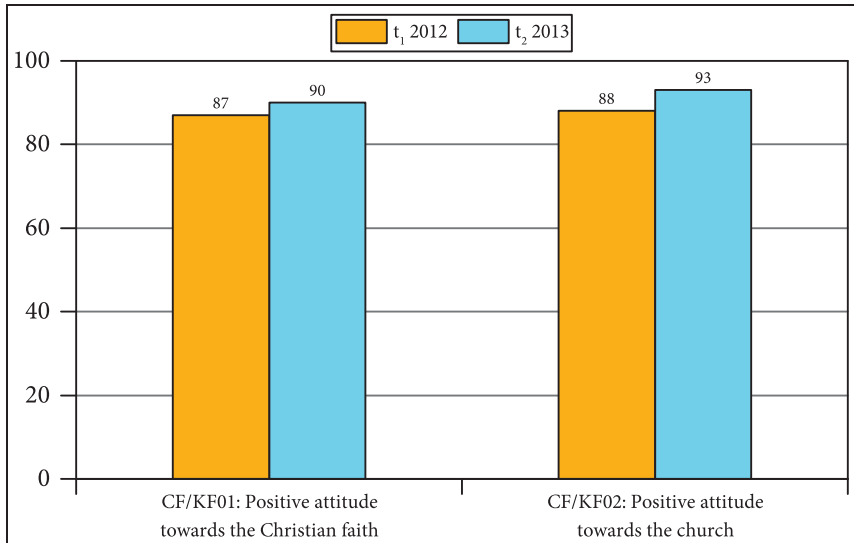


N = 357-361 (t_1 2012); N = 301-304 (t_2 2013).

with values that are often more than twice as high as the overall rates of the international study. The difference is particularly large with regard to faith-related motives: 89% of the Polish confirmands registered for confirmation time because they wanted to be strengthened in their faith, compared to 35% at the international level (CB08). 87% were motivated to learn more about God and faith (CB01; international percentage: 40%). The same share of confirmands wanted to come to their own decision about their faith in God (CB03; international percentage: 43). 85% took part because it was important for them to receive a blessing on the day of confirmation (CB11; international percentage: 43%).

Correspondingly, extrinsic motives play a rather small role. Only 28% of the Polish confirmands based their decision to take part in confirmation work with the wish to get money and presents at the end (CB10; international percentage: 51%). It is also noteworthy that fun was not a major factor either. Only 40% registered because they were told that confirmation time is fun (CA08; international percentage: 37%).

Figure 48: Attitude towards the Christian faith and the Church in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time (t_1 2012 and t_2 2013) in Poland (%)



N = 357-361 (t_1 2012); N = 288-290 (t_2 2013).

At the end of confirmation time, most of the expectations seem to have been met (Table 76).

Table 76: Experiences with confirmation training (t_2) in Poland

During my confirmation training ...	Yes	M
KB01: I have learnt more about God and faith.	88 %	6.08
KB02: I have experienced good community in the confirmation group.	79 %	5.67
KB03: I have been enabled to come to my own decision about my faith.	83 %	5.74
KB04: I have made an important step in growing up.	78 %	5.65
KB07: I have been thinking about what is good or bad for me and my life.	76 %	5.58
KB08: I have been strengthened in my faith.	86 %	5.89
KB15: I have learnt more about other religions.	67 %	5.02

N = 299-305; scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; Yes = positive response (5, 6, 7).

Again, the numbers stand out in international comparison. The only item in which Poland does not score highest is KB02. Interestingly, the lowest rate is probably the most remarkable one. Considering the traditional structures of confirmation work in Poland, it is noticeable that two out of three Polish con-

firmands state that they have learnt more about other religions, compared to 33 % at the international level.

The satisfaction rates at the end of confirmation time are also remarkably high. 86 % of the confirmands in Poland are satisfied with the whole confirmation time. As Table 77 illustrates, satisfaction is high with regard to all aspects of confirmation work.

Table 77: Satisfaction of the confirmands with different aspects in confirmation time (t_2) in Poland

To what extent are you satisfied with ...	Yes	M
KN01: the whole confirmation time	86 %	6.00
KN03: content/topics of lessons in confirmation work	81 %	5.79
KN07: minister/person primarily responsible for confirmation work	87 %	6.10
KN08: other teachers/workers	68 %	5.37
KN10: church services	83 %	5.88
KN14: music, songs and singing	74 %	5.44
KN20: working methods (for example, working with biblical texts, group work etc.)	72 %	5.37

N = 245-304; scale: 1 = not satisfied at all; 7 = totally satisfied. Yes = positive response (5, 6, 7). KN11 does not necessarily refer to camps in relationship to confirmation work but to camps in general, for example, summer camps.

This time, most scores are quite close to those of the other countries which also had high satisfaction rates. In international comparison one number clearly falls out of line: more than four out of five of the confirmands are satisfied with the church services that they experienced during confirmation time (international percentage: 59 %).

Confirmands' View of Worship Services

The confirmands' views of worship services do not only show – compared to the international study – a much higher rate of overall satisfaction but also depict a certain image of the services. The number of confirmands who said that they had the opportunity to contribute with their own ideas, is very low (25 %) compared to the other countries. 37 % reported that they had tasks in the services, which is well below the results from the other countries and does not indicate that the confirmands participated with their own ideas or were creatively involved in the whole procedure. Also, the experience of specific forms of worship for young people (57 %) is rather low in international comparison.

On the other hand, in no other country within the study, satisfaction with singing old hymns (62 %) and singing modern church songs (66 %) is as close

together as in Poland. And interestingly, the percentage of confirmands feeling uncomfortable with the services is more or less as low as in the other countries – even more interesting is the fact that the number of young people who said that the »services usually dealt with things that concern me and my life« (68 %) is by far the highest, and the number that listened to interesting sermons (78 %) is the highest in international comparison.

Table 78: Church services

What do you think about church services during your confirmation time?	Yes	M
KS01: I experienced forms of worship adequate for young people (e. g., youth services).	57 %	4.75
KS02: I had the opportunity to contribute my own ideas to the services.	25 %	3.36
KS03: I had tasks in the services (for example, do a reading).	37 %	3.60
KS04: I met nice people.	68 %	5.31
KS05: I listened to interesting sermons.	78 %	5.53
KS12: Singing old church hymns was nice for me.	62 %	5.04
KS13: Singing modern church songs was nice for me.	66 %	5.28
KS14: The services usually dealt with things that concern me and my life.	68 %	5.26
KS15: I felt secure in the group.	70 %	5.45
KS16: I liked being part of the worship community.	54 %	4.90
KS17: I felt uncomfortable.	14 %	2.45

N = 288-294; scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; Yes = positive response (5, 6, 7).

8.5 Challenges and Questions for the Future

Confirmation work is a possibility for the Church to help young people with finding a religious identity. This is very important for Polish Protestants because they often live in diaspora situations. In school, for example, this means being the only Lutheran. In addition, at least sometimes, there also are no religious »others« or the only »other« either belongs to Jehova's Witnesses or has been brought up without religion.

Therefore, young Lutherans often are asked »Do you believe in God? Do you have Christmas? Do you know how to pray? Are you allowed to wear an ornamental cross (like Catholic children receive it for First Communion)? Why don't you pray to the Polish Pope (John Paul II, 1920-2005)?«, etc.

This is why there are so few Polish confirmands in the study who do not know what to believe. Again and again, they have to defend themselves and

the importance of their faith and their Church. Consequently, many of them have a positive image of their Church. At the same time, it is an important challenge for the Church to offer more support to the adolescents concerning their minority situation.

It is a pity that there are so few outings with confirmands and no camps. The same is true for other special initiatives with confirmands. Only in one of the dioceses (Katowicka), there is an annual meeting for the confirmands. It is an important challenge for the future to create attractive forms of working with the confirmands – a task for which the ministers do not always have time because the minister is the only worker in the parish. Consequently, it would also be important to include more volunteers with confirmation work. More programs of youth work, with integrative methods and with space and time for developing new friendships are also needed very much. It is important for youth to belong to an »interesting group«. Confirmation work should be seen as the beginning of other forms of youth work.

Adolescence is a difficult time for youth, among others, in terms of puberty. The minister can play an important role in this respect which, at the same time, refers to another challenge for the future. Ministers should be trained for working with adolescents which requires becoming familiar with new methods, developmental psychology, contemporary religious topics, etc. According to the results of the study, the confirmands are very interested in religious topics, but in a broad sense and therefore not only in the perspective of Luther's Small Catechism. Many of the confirmands complained that the topics in confirmation time have little to do with their lives. In this context it must also be mentioned that, according to the study, the confirmands have barely any chance to influence the topics treated during confirmation time.

The adolescents are close to the Church during confirmation time but they are not invited to become active there. According to the study, the motivation for more involvement would be there but nevertheless, there are very few volunteers. In the future, this chance should be used. Allowing for the confirmands' active involvement with worship services much more than it seems to be the case now would also be an important possibility.

9. Youth and Confirmation Work in Hungary

ÁDÁM HÁMORI, BALÁZS SIBA, AND ÁGNES PÁNGYÁNSZKY

9.1 Introduction

Hungary is a minor Central-Eastern-European country with a relatively small and slowly decreasing population of less than 10 million. Although Hungary, a NATO-member since 1999 and EU member state since 2004, has a largely westernised culture, its Communist past has evidently left its mark on its society and mentality. After 1990, confiscated properties of the Churches were partly restituted and their social and educational institutions have not only been re-established but even their explosive growth has been witnessed for the past 25 years. State subsidisation of social and religious activities of major Churches stabilised their financial situation. At the same time, however, trends of religious affiliation and practice have not paralleled these changes; after a brief period of a moderate religious revitalising, the number of believers and church members has been continuously declining.

Confirmation has been a living tradition and an integral part of religious education of youth in many Protestant Churches in Hungary from the 16th century onwards. Its practice was first investigated countrywide and cross-denominationally by the second international study on confirmation work in 2012/2013 in which Hungary participated for the first time. Despite its methodological limitations, the results of this study can be regarded as an important possibility for seeing the Hungarian confirmation work in a European perspective.

9.2 Religions and Churches in Hungary

While the population in Hungary is predominantly Roman Catholic, it must be noted that a very significant Protestant minority lives in this region. The secularising impact of the four decades of the past Communist era is, however, still evident or even has become more visible only in the recent years by the successive generations (Tomka 1996; Tomka 2010b).

Religious Demography

Census data from 2011 offer a basis for estimating Hungarian denominational composition. These data show that while today 37% of the entire population claim to belong to the Roman Catholic tradition, the Reformed-Calvinist con-

fession – 12% of the population in about 1200 congregations – is also very significant or even composes a local majority in some townships in the eastern part of the country. The Evangelical Lutheran Church – composing at present 2% of the population in about 450 congregations – has a long historical tradition which is closely linked to the history of Slovak and German minorities since the Reformation period and is still culturally important and widely acknowledged. Methodists belong to the minority Churches in Hungary with a constituency of only 2416 according to the 2011 Census. However, while 18% claimed to be non-denominational, the unusually high share of non-respondents of 27% made the above estimations somewhat uncertain (Csordá ed. 2014). Moreover, the changed wording of the relevant 2001 census question – examining this topic for the first time since 1949 – evidently contributed to an apparent drop in recent church affiliation figures.

Religious change in Hungary can be characterised by the theories of religious individualisation and religious privatisation (Rosta 2012). Youth is, however, becoming more secularised – a truly worrisome consequence for churches in an already aging society (Hámori/Rosta 2014a). In spite of the Religious Education classes in denominational and now also in state-run elementary schools, these negative trends may result from a weakening impact of religious socialisation in the family (Hámori/Rosta 2014b).

Figure 49 of 13- to 14-year-old Protestants calculated from 2011 census data and Protestant confirmands based on available church statistics shows the pace of decline in numbers. Considering that the number of births is also declining in Hungary, this trend shows stagnation.

The gradual declining trends made clear by the above numbers have become a pressing issue for traditional Churches in Hungary in recent years, raising also questions of future financial sustainability of the inherited institutional structure. Vanishing congregations of depopulated communities in disadvantaged rural areas are especially a major concern.

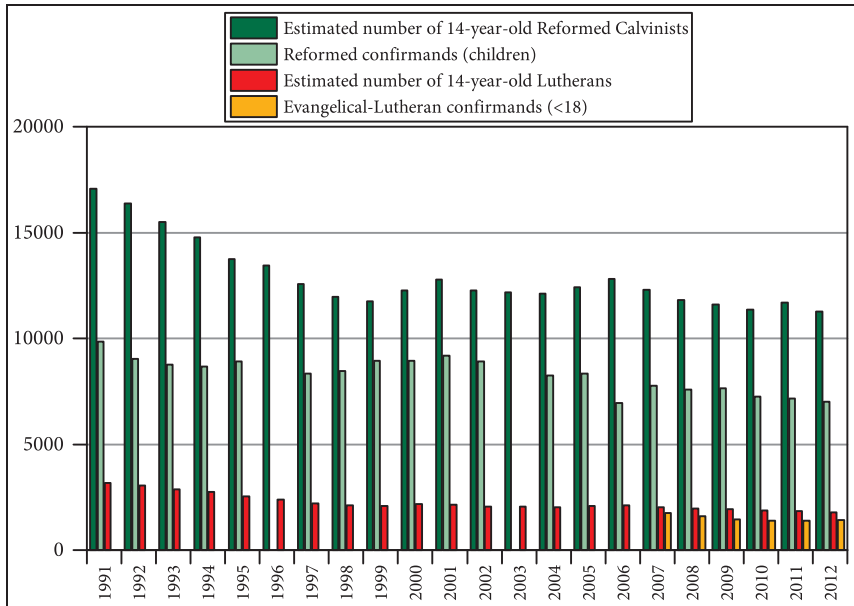
9.3 Confirmation Research in Hungary

Methodological Overview

During the research, the translated and localised versions of questionnaires of the International Confirmation Research in a paper-based, postal, self-administered form were used with stamped, addressed envelopes and detailed instructions included in the packages. As no time and resources were available to conduct a »t₀« survey to gather contextual and parish data, these items were included in the extended »t₁« questionnaires for pastors.

In addition to experts of the participating churches, many professionals, re-

Figure 49: Number of 13- to 14-year-old Protestants and Protestant confirmands in Hungary



Sources: Hungarian Census 2011, figures provided by the Synod Office of the Reformed Church in Hungary and the Administrative Centre of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary, own calculations.

representatives and volunteers of the Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, the Lutheran Theological University, the Reformed Pedagogical Institute, and the »Collegium Doctorem« (an academic circle of Hungarian Reformed theologians) have contributed to the preparation of the research. Offices in charge with catechetical and youth work of the participating churches provided administrative and logistical support for the implementation.

In spite of an initial extensive collaboration of many institutions concerned, the research was hampered by insufficient human resources for its entire duration. Methodological concerns experienced during the study particularly showcase some systemic distortions of Churches in post-Socialist countries. Readers are referred to the chapter on Methodology in this volume for further information about this issue (p. 328 ff.).

Description of the Sample

A total of 943 confirmands and 134 workers from altogether 160 congregations responded to at least one or both rounds of the questionnaires. Table 79 summarises the numbers of samples by denomination.

Table 79: Number of questionnaires (Hungary) in 2012/13 by denominations

		sample	t ₁	t ₂	Percentage matched (basis: t ₂)
Reformed sample	units	380	64	35	60 %
	confirmands		534	164	76 %
	workers		65	40	60 %
Evangelical Lutheran sample	units	450	65	27	59 %
	confirmands		315	140	71 %
	workers		45	19	84 %
Methodist sample	units	40	5	4	75 %
	confirmands		17	11	91 %
	workers		5	3	100 %

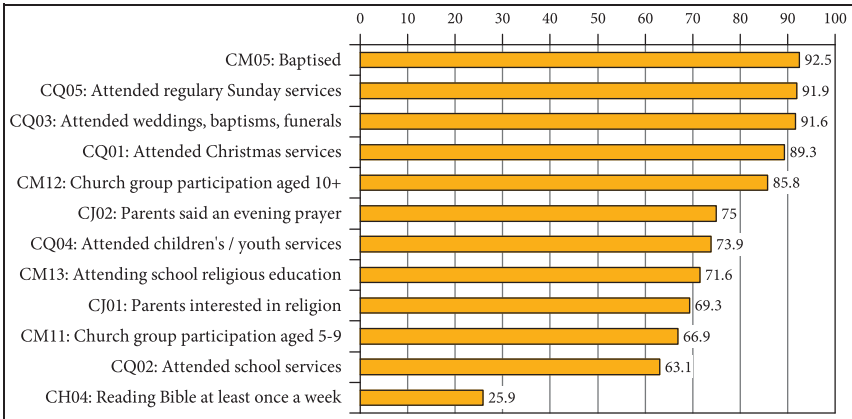
9.4 Major Results

Religious Background and Beliefs of Confirmands

Figure 50 shows that family acts as a significant religious socialisation background for the confirmands surveyed. A religious service in school was attended at least once by 63 % of respondents – the lowest value among indicators about previous religious experiences. Religious socialisation and religious family background and, as a consequence, participation in religious events, religious education, attending a denominational school, etc. go hand in hand and thus confirmation work is also embedded in a series of earlier religious experiences. Individual religious practice expressed by, for example, regular Bible reading is, however, not so typical at this age (26 %), a phenomenon explainable by generational characteristics.

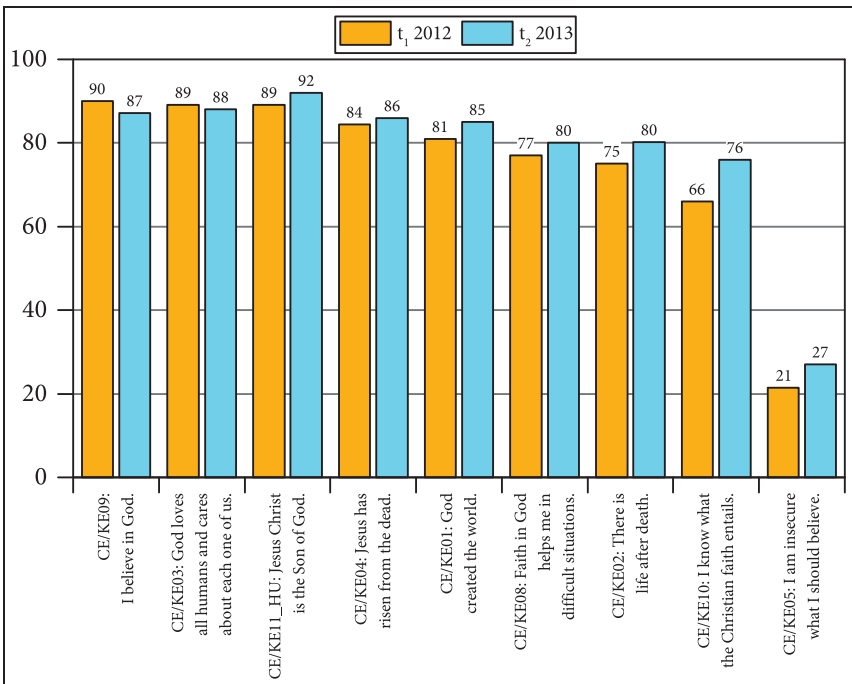
As revealed in Figure 51, key features of Christian teaching (belief in God, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, creation of the world, etc.) have been known and accepted by a large share of respondents already before confirmation time, probably because of their background. These patterns remained basically unchanged or even increased during confirmation time. The highest increase was produced in the case of item CE10 (»I know what the Christian faith entails.«), a comparably low value of 66 % within this item set growing by 10 percent points. However, admitting to have an insecure faith also went up by 6 percent points. At the same time, the relatively high level of acceptance of the two most highly approved beliefs (i. e., in a caring God) was reduced a bit by 1 to 3 percent points.

Figure 50: Religious experiences and family background of confirmands in Hungary (%)



N = 575-860; the share of those with a positive response (the scale varies).

Figure 51: Belief of confirmands (t₁ and t₂) in Hungary (%)

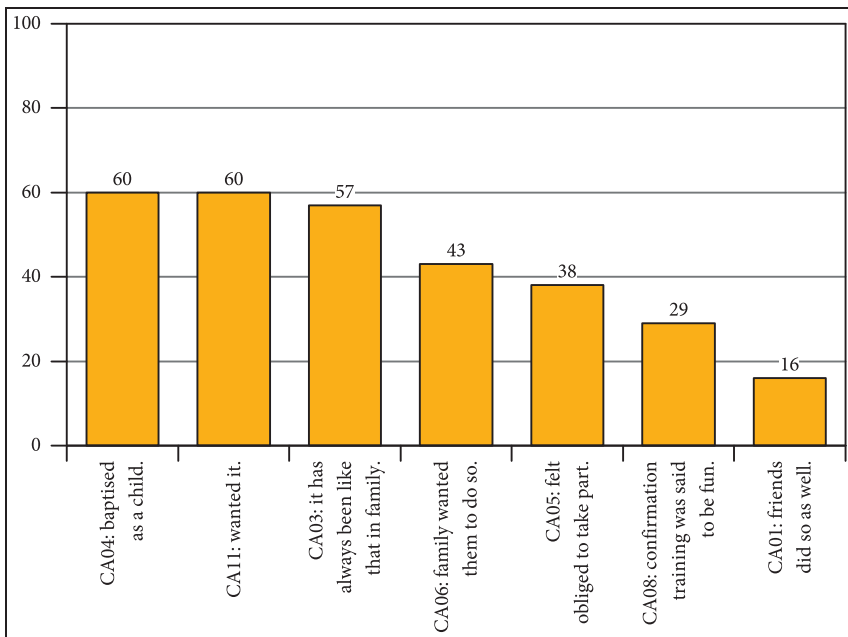


N = 229-237; the share of those with positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not applicable at all, 7 = totally applicable).

Motivation, Interest and Personal Purposes

External motives coming from peers, adults, parents or obligations did not apparently play an important role in enrolling in the confirmation group for most confirmands surveyed. For as many as 57-60%, family traditions or already being close to the church by baptism were as inspiring as their own will to participate (Figure 52). This result strengthens the importance of church and family traditions and shows the relevance of tradition in the missionary endeavours of the church. However, particularities of the age group in question, like the probability of a conformist response as well as the fact that a high share of respondents has been brought up in a religious family should also be taken into account here.

Figure 52: Motivations for participation (t_1) in Hungary (%)

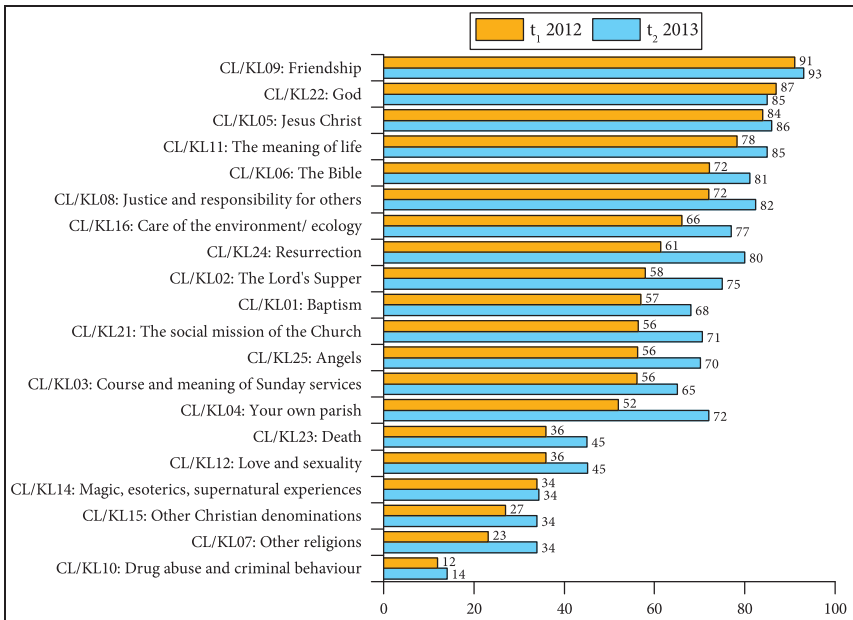


N = 839-843; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not applicable at all, 7 = totally applicable).

As Figure 53 displays, interest of confirmands in diverse topics included in or related to confirmation is rather multi-faceted and variable. The first group of topics which respondents are highly concerned with, included strictly church-related (God, Jesus Christ, the Bible) and more general ones (friendship, the meaning of life, justice and responsibility, ecology). The share of those being interested in these ranges from 66 to 93% at the beginning and from 77 to

91 % at the end of confirmation time. The second set of topics is which only 52 to 58 % of confirmands are interested in at the start, included church-related topics in the narrow sense. However, by the end of confirmation time, 65-79 % of the confirmands had become interested in these topics of a theological nature (resurrection, the Lord’s Supper, baptism, angels) and about the Church as an institution (the parish, the Sunday service, the social mission of the Church), what can be interpreted as a remarkable growth and a manifest success of confirmation work. Finally, the third group of topics appear to be rather unpopular both at the start and at the end of confirmation time, the share of those interested ranging only between 12-36 % and 14-45 %, respectively. While topics like death, magic, crime or other religions might sound sinister in a church environment, love and sexuality can be a topic which teenagers may find too intimate so that they prefer to discuss them in a more confidential setting.

Figure 53: Interest of confirmands in topics of confirmation work in Hungary (%)

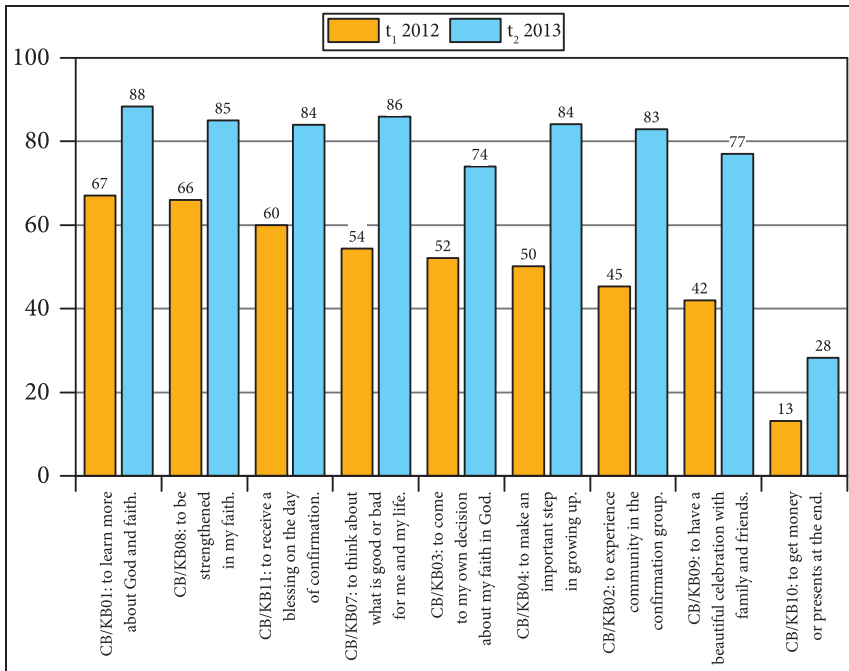


N = 213-237; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not interested, 7 = very interested).

Personal purposes also show a high awareness of the aims of confirmation time. More than 50 % of respondents think that faith-related educational aims are why they participate (or, maybe, have to participate) in confirmation time. External incentives like money or presents (a purpose for 13 % of the respondents)

as well as the family celebration after confirmation (42%) are mentioned among the least important ones. However, together with their own personal development (50%) and experiencing a good community (45%), these items display the highest increase of 30 to 40 percent points as experienced during confirmation time by about 80% of confirmands surveyed. This does not apply to the question of presents and money: only as few as 28% of respondents considered it important as the day of their confirmation approached (Figure 54).

Figure 54: Aims of confirmands and their fulfilment (t_1 and t_2) in Hungary (%)



N = 218-237; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not applicable at all, 7 = totally applicable).

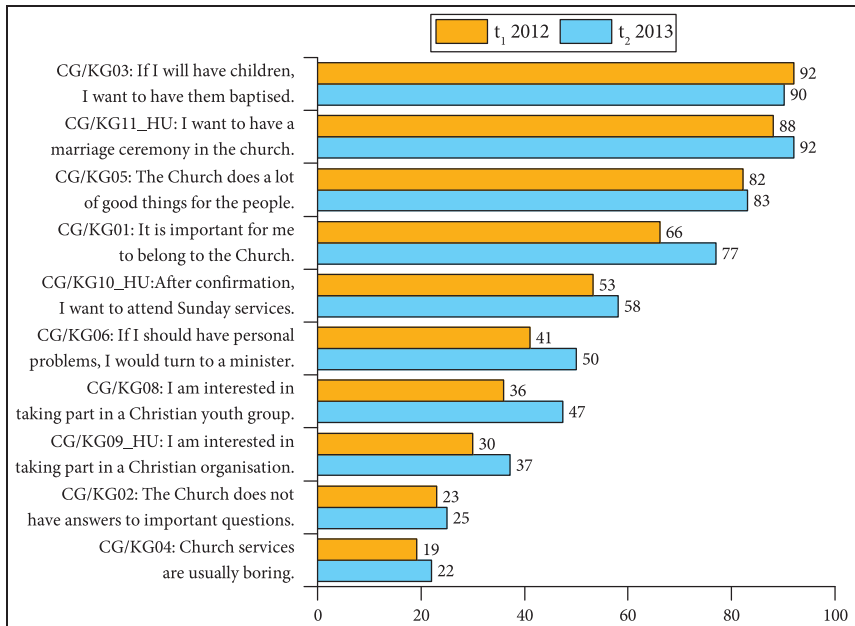
Attitude towards Faith and Belonging to the Church

Almost no change can be observed when comparing the responses of confirmands at the beginning and at the end of the confirmation time regarding their attitude towards Christian faith and the Church. Confirmands surveyed were highly accepting of the Church (with average points 4.12 at the beginning and 4.1 at the end of confirmation time on a 5-point scale) and open to faith (4.15 and 4.17, respectively) which could be a consequence of their family background and previous religious experiences. It must be added again, however,

that the possibility of conformist response schemes cannot be completely eliminated.

This openness does not apply to all analysed aspects of church life. Figure 55 summarises a set of opinions and impressions about church and worship services that indicate the attitude towards belonging to the church. With the exception of a minor decline in a variable that is otherwise the most approved one indicating the wish to have respondents' future children baptised (92% to 90%), all items are rated with higher acceptance at the end of confirmation time than at the beginning. However, interest in direct personal involvement in the church community characterises only a bit more or even less than half of the respondents after confirmation time despite an obvious increase (attending regular Sunday services: 58%, participation in a Christian youth group: 47%, membership of a Christian civil organisation: 37%, turning to a minister with personal problems: 50%). At the same time, the relatively low approval of statements expressing disappointment also increased during confirmation time. 25% of surveyed confirmands agreed that the church did not have answers for their questions and 22% found church services boring.

Figure 55: Opinions about services of and belonging to the Church (t₁ and t₂) in Hungary (%)

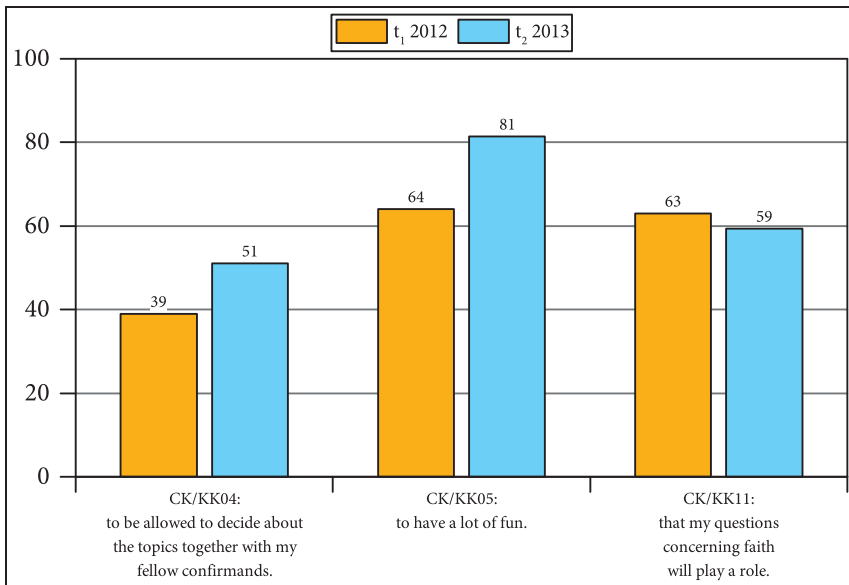


N = 227-237; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not applicable at all, 7 = totally applicable).

Expectations, Experiences and Overall Satisfaction

Items CK05/KK05 were asked in a slightly different wording (meaning »to have a good time«) because the literal translation of the original wording would sound odd in the context of confirmation work. Thus, Figure 56 reports that 81%, the overwhelming majority, of confirmands asked indeed had a good time despite their original expectations, as only 64% were looking for that at the start. Although 12 percent points higher than at the beginning, still only 51% of the respondents had a say in what topics were dealt with in the sessions. This is in line with the everyday experiences that confirmation work usually has its historically accepted educational aims. It is remarkable that a relatively high share of 63% of respondents who expected that their personal questions on faith would be addressed has dropped to 59% when asking about confirmands' experiences. This can be interpreted as a possible drawback of the pre-defined educational content and traditional methods.

Figure 56: Expectations of confirmands and their fulfillment (t_1 and t_2) in Hungary (%)

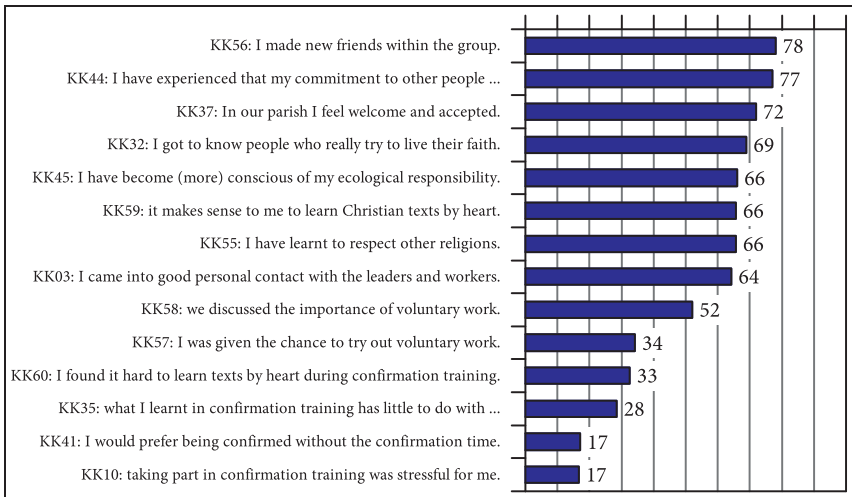


N = 216-236; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not applicable at all, 7 = totally applicable).

For most respondents confirmation time meant positive and enriching experiences as Figure 57 testifies. However, 17% of them reported that confirmation work stressed them or they would skip it completely, 28% could not relate its content to their everyday life and 33% found it hard to learn texts by heart

what, on the other hand, 66% found useful. It is even more telling that while more than half of them (52%) talked about volunteering, only a third of them (34%) had the opportunity to practice it during confirmation time. This empowering way of involvement is evidently still not a widespread popular method of church-related youth work and shows that confirmation and youth ministry are still two different branches of the overall ministry of the churches in Hungary.

Figure 57: Experiences from confirmation work (t_2) in Hungary (%)



N = 288-295; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not applicable at all, 7 = totally applicable).

High acceptance of the confirmation time even after it ends is also underlined by the high level of satisfaction with many elements of confirmation work (all items between 82% and 92%). The lowest shares of respondents are satisfied with the topics of lessons (87%), the church services (86%) and working methods (85%). While only 82% were satisfied with other workers, it should be noticed that in most parishes it is the only minister who leads and teaches confirmation groups, and the apparent relative dissatisfaction actually indicates that the confirmands miss other workers.

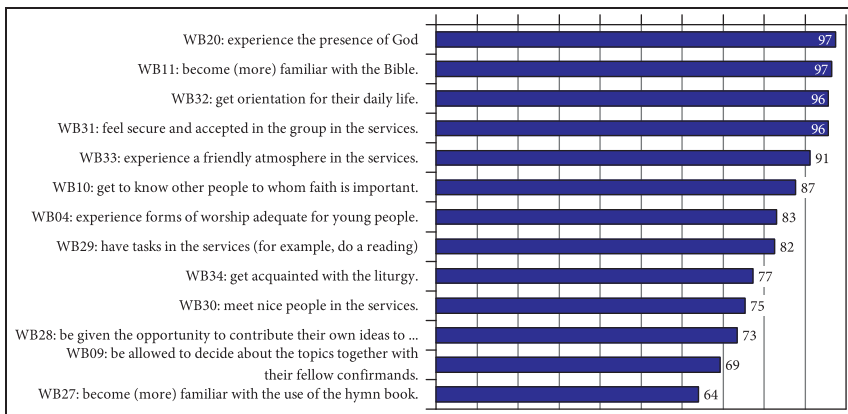
Workers and Ministers

Given the low number and high dropout rate of responding workers and ministers, only certain selected items that illustrate values and expectations at the beginning of the confirmation time will be briefly discussed here. It must be kept in mind that in Hungary, contribution or presence of volunteer workers is not

typical and both practice and canonical law prescribes that it is mainly the minister who is in charge of confirmation work. Lay members mostly help in organising camps before or after confirmation typically in urban congregations.

Most aims included in the questionnaires might sound appealing for the large majority of respondents. However, as it is presented in Figure 58, minor differences between their acceptance reveal an apparent priority. More than 90% of workers and ministers agree that confirmands should develop a personal relationship with God, the parish and to the Bible. Getting more acquainted with the liturgy and the hymn book as well as being personally involved in the services or confirmation work itself through their own thoughts or contribution are less recognised.

Figure 58: Aims of confirmation work (t_1) in Hungary (%)

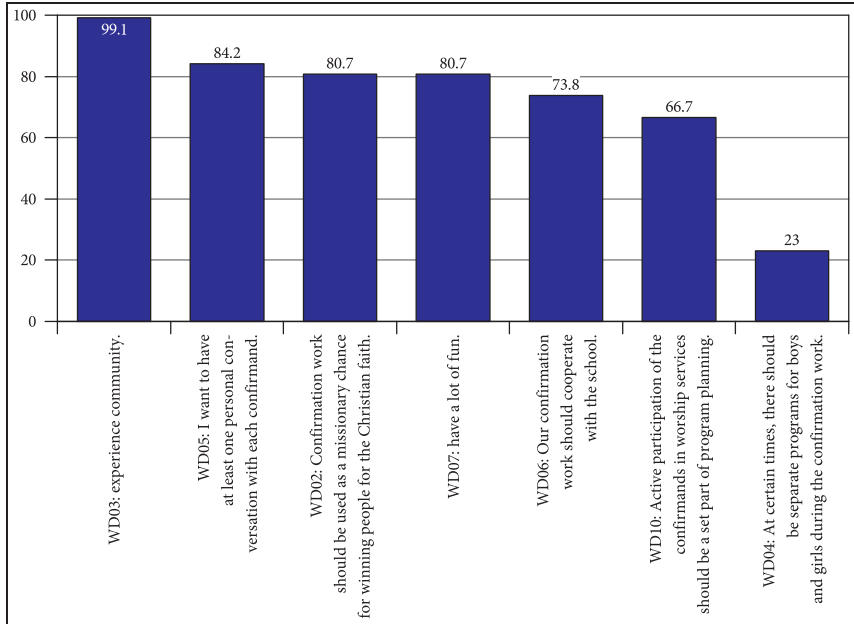


N = 112-114; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not important, 7 = very important).

Most workers consider faith-related aims important (WC-items were between 76% and 99%). As almost all respondents (99%) mentioned that confirmands should develop a sense of belonging to the parish, this can be regarded the most widely accepted aim of confirmation. In comparison, learning songs and key texts are considered to be of secondary importance only (76% and 78%, respectively). While emotional, community-related aims are of key importance in the view of more than 80% of the workers and 99% of respondents were of the opinion that confirmands should experience good community, it is peculiar that involvement through active participation in worship services was an aim for two thirds of the workers surveyed (67%). Whereas cooperation with schools, an aim of 74% of the respondents, certainly depends on local possibi-

lities, separate programs for boys and girls are hardly present; confirmation work in Hungary often takes place in a school-class-like form with a curriculum undivided by gender (Figure 59).

Figure 59: Aims of workers by confirmation training (t_1) in Hungary (%)



N = 107-114; the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7) on a scale 1 to 7 (1 = not applicable at all, 7 = totally applicable).

9.5 Challenges and Questions for the Future

Confirmation work is still a great opportunity for Hungarian Protestant Churches to address and educate young people as approximately two thirds of those belonging to the Reformed Church and three fourths of those belonging to the Evangelical Lutheran Church by baptism attend confirmation work. At the same time, the share of adult confirmands is growing. Although there are no reliable church-level statistics in the Reformed Church, some estimates report that about 20 to 25% of all Lutheran confirmands are adults (Sólyom 2010). It is reported that in some urban congregations there are now more adult confirmands than youth.

The Hungarian results of the international confirmation research indicate that for the most part, young people are satisfied with confirmation work. It is

also visible that there are certain models already in operation which advance integration of youth into the community of the parish. There is a need for personal connections after confirmation, for example, in the form of the confirmation group being turned into a youth group or receiving a mentor. Satisfaction regarding the leader of the confirmation group is an important factor in determining if the confirmands will stay in the denomination. This implies that a wider and more diverse methodological as well as personality development and a leadership and training oriented perspective should be implemented in the training of ministers and youth leaders (Hámori/Siba 2015).

Out of the worrying demographic tendencies, organising confirmation groups is a growing challenge for certain minor, especially rural, congregations. There are parishes where confirmation work is organised as early as at the age of 12-13 because children do not leave the community at that age. In several parishes, confirmation work can only be organised before the Sunday service. Nevertheless, due to the lack of alternative programs, group belonging is stronger in rural communities and therefore, it is easier to reach out, address and keep track of young people, whereas the challenge in urban congregations is to address young people because of the great variety of other options of free time activities (Molnár 1998).

Beside the congregations, schools are an important place for building community from the perspective of youth work as well. The recent introduction of elective Religious Education as alternative to compulsory Ethics in public schools raises further difficult questions regarding confirmation work and the integration of young people into the parish community. Due to this new form of Religious Education, more young people, children and families can be reached who did not have denominational relations before. But at the same time, Religious Education in the school also separates young pupils from the church community. It is still an open question whether confirmation work will become a part of this system on the long run.

The outstanding importance of family background also shows that confirmation work is never a solitary action but an important station of religious education. Therefore, it is important to learn to see confirmation work not as the end of religious education but as the beginning of youth work; especially because of its methods, confirmation work is not religious education in the traditional sense and does not only involve getting acquainted with the catechism and the credos, but is community building and addressing the actual questions of life as well (Nagy 1998).

10. Confirmation Work in the United Methodist Church in Germany

ACHIM HÄRTNER AND TOBIAS BEISSWENGER

10.1 Introduction

The Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche (EmK) in Germany is the only free church to participate in the European study on confirmation work (cf. www.ku-studie.de). Given the fact that this is the first-ever research project of this kind in the EmK, this chapter will slightly differ in length and structure from the other country reports.

The term »free church« refers to churches that have always been independent from the state. This explains their specific structure which is not based on a certain region like in the case of the German regional Churches that originated as state churches.

Basic Information about the Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche

The Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche – known worldwide as the United Methodist Church – has its historical origin in 18th century England (Schuler 2011). John Wesley, a minister in the Church of England, together with his brother Charles started an evangelistic-missionary movement with an emphasis on social-welfare work. Due to their rigorous daily schedule they were called names such as »Holy Club«, and since 1732 »Methodists«. The movement spread across Britain and to the colonies in North America, then back to continental Europe and even to other continents across the world (Klaiber 2011). Due to differences concerning questions of church organisation or ethical perceptions, other Methodist Churches grew out of the British and American Methodism. Almost all of them are members of the World Methodist Council (WMC; Yrigoyen 2010). Today, the WMC has more than 80 million members and unites one of the world's largest families of Christian churches. The United Methodist Church (UMC) with 12 million members is the largest of WMC's 76 member churches (UM Handbook 2014). It was established in 1968 as an international association of the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

Theologically, Methodism stands firmly on the legacy of the Reformation. It emphasises the extensive ministry of God's prevenient grace in the world from which a Christian way of life (»Living Grace«) is derived, focusing on individual and social sanctification (Klaiber/Marquardt 2001). A significant feature of the UMC is its ecumenical attitude and commitment to a fruitful cooperation of the churches in mission and social-welfare work.

In the German speaking parts of Europe, the UMC is called Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche (www.emk.de). The EmK in Germany in 2014 had 53 500 members and affiliates. As a Free Church, the EmK emphasises voluntary membership and the church's independence from the state. A pulpit and altar fellowship exists between the EmK and all member churches of the EKD.

Theology and Terminology

The educational work with children and youth has its indispensable position in Methodism since the beginning (Härtner 2010). The Kirchliche Unterricht (KU) has a long tradition in German-speaking Methodism as a fruitful form of work in youth ministry. In form and content, the KU is comparable to the confirmation work being practiced within the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD), as well as to the equivalent forms of Christian education in other Free Churches.

The KU is a deliberate offer of the congregations, attended by most of their youth. It usually encompasses close to two years of time and is aimed at young people aged between 12 and 14 years. Participation in the KU »is open to all adolescents, whether they are baptised or not, and whether they belong to the EmK or not« (VLO 2012, 231).

Once KU is completed, a ceremonial service is conducted (Agende 2014, 177). Since the adolescents receive an individual blessing for their future life, the service is also referred to as Einsegnung (benediction). The teenagers are not expected to make a confession of faith or affirm a religious obligation. Nonetheless, Einsegnung has a high relevance for them, their families and for the congregation as a whole. The »Agende« for the Einsegnung service summarizes the theological connection between baptism, KU and church membership: »The service indicates that this is not a confirmation. The actual confirmation is rather given in connection with a personal creed when one becomes a [professing] member of the church. Thus the EmK is convinced, that the personal affirmative response of faith cannot be demanded at a certain point in time. That is why a confirmation cannot be expected according to age groups. The highlight of the service is the blessing of the youth. They do not make a confession, rather the community asks God's blessing for their further way through life.« (ibid.)

Theologically, KU is closely related to baptism. For the adolescents who have been baptised as children, KU is regarded as a kind of »refresher« instruction on baptism that aims at encouraging and enabling them to make an independent confession of faith. Baptised children continue to be regarded as church affiliates even after the Einsegnung (baptised members).

Only after being admitted into full membership, they become professing members in the Church. Unbaptised adolescents may still remain so after the

completion of the KU if they wish to, keeping the status of an affiliate. Thus, the KU functions as instruction before baptism, while baptism itself may actually be postponed.

Kirchlicher Unterricht in Transition

In the post-1945 period of German-speaking Methodism, the usual teaching practice was mainly based on passing on knowledge about the faith, e.g., by using catechisms (Härtner 2014). From the 1960s, one asked how the issues of faith could be best adapted to the lives of the adolescents and the changing societal conditions. In the mid-1990s a nation-wide work group party started to develop a unified KU curriculum for the EmK in the reunited Germany. At the turn of the millennium a revised Order for KU was introduced. Compared to earlier editions, it manifested a new emphasis: KU was to consistently start from the angle of the young people and always keep this in view. Alongside with the new order, a new nation-wide curriculum was initiated, followed by the comprehensive KU handbook »Unterwegs ins Leben« (Härtner 2006).

Unlike the term Konfirmandenarbeit (confirmation work) used in the EKD (Schröder 2012, 481), the EmK retained the more traditional term Kirchlicher Unterricht (Church instruction). This term declares that KU is given permission to be educational. That manifests an interest in passing on content that also includes such topics as do not necessarily come up directly in the daily life of young people. KU hereby does not seek a premature acceptance of »ready-made« content; the teenagers are meant to personally grapple with central themes of Christian theology and faith in practice, involving participation in enjoyable projects along with learning, playing and celebrating. The goal is to stimulate and encourage development processes significant for life along the lines of »doing theology with young people« (Härtner 2012, 42), accordingly to John Wesley's dictum »think and let think« (Wesley 1742, 34).

10.2 Description of the Study: Procedures

In 2014 the EmK consisted of 520 local congregations, grouped in 245 circuits; it is obviously one of the minority Churches in Germany. Because of the small total sample, the study was carried out as a nationwide full-scale survey. The questionnaires follow the general scheme of the German EKD-study (cf. p. 182 ff.). However, some wordings had to be modified because of the different Methodist terminology described above. Additional questionnaires for workers and confirmands (t_1 , t_2) investigate the special situation of KU in the EmK. Since the EmK has a two-year curriculum, the t_2 questionnaires were filled in at two points in time (Einsegnung in 2013: t_{2a} and 2014: t_{2b}), as is shown in

Table 80. Using the international wording »confirmands« refers to the adolescents taking part in KU.

Table 80: Questionnaires in the Methodist study

	Date	Questionnaires for ...
t ₀	Spring/summer 2012	Leaders
t ₁	Autumn 2012	Workers & all confirmands
t _{2a}	Spring/summer 2013	Workers & confirmands: <i>Einsegnung</i> 2013
t _{2b}	Spring/summer 2014	Confirmands: <i>Einsegnung</i> 2014

Table 81: Number of questionnaires (Germany, EmK) in 2012/2013

Overview of data	t ₀	t ₁	t _{2a}	t _{2b}	Percentage matched
units	128	99	89	62*	98 %
confirmands	1048	761	346	282	84 %
workers	–	138	114	–	88 %

* In t_{2a} only those units with *Einsegnung* in 2014 were involved.

Setting of KU

In t₀ 226 circuits (92 %) nationwide responded, 166 (73 %) stated that they conduct KU, some in regional cooperation. In t₀ the leaders reported a total of 1048 confirmands in two KU cohorts. This amounts to an average number of 8 adolescents per group. But there is a large spectrum in this concern: the largest group has 20 members, while the smallest has just one. Most frequently there are fortnightly meetings of 90 minutes each. However, about a quarter of the groups have block-seminars of at least 180 minutes once a month. Weekend camps, excursions and »KU days« are typical in many circuits. On the average, a confirmand attends KU for 22 months. He or she attends 32 meetings, participates in 5 special days plus a one-day trip with the group and spends 3 or 4 nights at overnight events. But these average data offer only an approximate picture of a confirmand's pathway.

10.3 Major Results

Confirmands

General Characteristics and Background Information

Among the confirmands, 47 % are male and 53 % are female. 12 % have a migration background. In comparing the two cohorts, one can say that at the

beginning of the KU course approximately two thirds of the confirmands are 12 years old and 20-25% are 13. So Einsegnung, with few exceptions, takes place during the year in which the adolescents turn 14, which corresponds with the EKD findings.

77% of the Methodist adolescents say that their parents are quite or very interested in religion (CJ01). 81% remember that their parents said an evening prayer sometimes or almost every night (CJ02). 24% of the confirmands are not baptised (international average 6%). This is likely to be related to the fact that, in the EmK, a considerable number of parents decide to postpone having their children baptised in order to allow them time for an individual decision and have a personal experience on the day of their baptism. The study clearly shows that not being baptised does not have to be interpreted as an indicator for turning away from the church or the Christian faith. 27% of the unbaptised confirmands say that their parents are »very interested« in religion (baptised: 17%; CJ01, CM05) and 25% of the unbaptised confirmands read the Bible by themselves at least once a week (baptised 13%; CH04, CM05).

Concerning their goals in secondary education (CM07), 56% of the confirmands indicate that they want to finish school with a qualification for university admission (Abitur), 34% aim at the general certificate of secondary education (Realschulabschluss) and only 6% see the certificate of compulsory basic secondary schooling (Hauptschulabschluss) as their goal of formal education. Attending different types of secondary schools shows no significant influence on the adolescents' satisfaction with KU time.

Motivation for Participation

Asked for the reason why they joined KU, 73% of the young people replied »because I wanted it myself« (CA11). Asking what motivated them to want it themselves, one can find a surprisingly high intrinsic, religious impulse. In t_1 73% want »to learn more about God and faith« (CB01). 65% said they want »to come to my own decision about my faith in God« (CB03) and 71% want »to be strengthened in my faith« (CB08). These results show that most of the Methodist adolescents put high hopes on KU. They are really willing to learn something significant for themselves. It is also noteworthy that the family celebration linked to Einsegnung as well as the fact that the young people get gifts only plays a small role for their initial motivation. In t_1 only 36% (t_2 : 80%) said »I take part in confirmation time because I want to have a beautiful celebration« (CB09, KB09), and a remarkably low 24% (t_2 : 49%) took part because they want to »get money or presents at the end« (CB10, KB10). That shows that the assertion that young people attend KU only for the presents they expect is not true.

Attitudes towards Religion and Church

The Methodist confirmands mainly come from highly religious families and show an outspoken religious attitude. 90 % agreed with the statement »I believe in God« (CE09). 90 % affirmed the belief that »God loves all humans and cares about each one of us« (CE03), and 85 % agreed that »Jesus has risen from the dead« (CE04). Being asked »How would you describe your current attitude towards our church in general?« in t_1 a vast majority of 87 % ticked the boxes »rather positive« or »very positive« and only 1 % said that their attitude is »very« or »rather negative« (CF02).

Expectation and Experiences

As indicated above, young people in the EmK set high hopes on KU. At the same time, 93 % of the youth in t_1 affirmed the expectation »to have a lot of fun« (CK05). Perhaps it is a mistake frequently made by adults to separate learning from having fun.

46 % of the Methodist confirmands wanted »to be allowed to decide about the topics together with my fellow confirmands« (CK04), and for 68 % it was important that their »questions concerning faith will play a role« (CK11). The t_2 data suggest that not all of these expectations were met. Only 31 % of the teenagers stated that they »could influence the decision about the topics« (KK04), and only 52 % felt that their »questions concerning faith were addressed« (KK11).

73 % stated that they had a lot of fun during KU (KK05). This may be a fairly good figure, but it still means that the expectations of almost a quarter of the confirmands were not met. Nevertheless one can legitimately say that KU in the EmK is much better than its reputation. 84 % of the young people were satisfied with the person who was primarily responsible for KU (KN07). 81 % were satisfied with »the whole confirmation time« (KN10) and 78 % liked the camps they attended (KN11). All these results show that confirmation work is a model for success. But there is still some improvement to be made.

Leaders, Workers and Volunteers

Background Data

Among the workers the average age is 46 years and 32 % are women. Although there are no clear guidelines regarding this concern, KU in the EmK is typically the minister's task. The leaders rank KU third among their work priorities (VR28). 109 out of 138 workers in KU are ministers, 9 workers in KU are employed as deacons or as youth workers. A noteworthy result of the EmK study is the extremely low rate of voluntary workers. In t_1 only 15 volunteers filled in a questionnaire. This indicates that as to date, KU in the EmK is rarely carried out as teamwork.

Table 82: Satisfaction with confirmation time (t_2) in Germany (EmK)

To what extent are you satisfied with ...	M	SD	Yes	We didn't have that
KN01: the whole KU time	5.49	1.30	81 %	–
KN03: content/topics of lessons in KU	5.12	1.26	72 %	–
KN07: minister/person primarily responsible for KU	5.89	1.43	84 %	–
KN08: other teachers/workers	5.57	1.53	80 %	18 %
KN10: church services	5.14	1.42	74 %	2 %
KN11: camp(s)	5.60	1.63	78 %	4 %
KN14: music, songs and singing	5.11	1.68	67 %	5 %
KN20: working methods (for example, working with biblical texts, group work, etc.)	5.04	1.38	67 %	–

N = 364-619; scale: 1 = not satisfied at all; 7 = totally satisfied; M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation; Yes = Positive response (5, 6, 7).

Expectations and Goals

100 % of all leaders, workers and volunteers said they wanted the confirmands to »experience that their questions concerning faith play a role« (WC15). 93 % underlined the objective that the young people should »develop a personal point of view concerning their own life« (WC01). This shows that those who teach do not – at least in principle – simply want to impose matters of faith on others, but that they want to listen to the adolescents' questions and take them seriously. At the same time, though, it is striking that only 62 % of those questioned in t_1 wanted the young people to »be allowed to decide about the topics together with their fellow confirmands« (WB09). This suggests a discrepancy between intention and reality, which has to be kept in mind.

All those who were leading KU groups considered it important that the young people are »strengthened in their faith« (WC02: 96 %). For that reason they wanted them to meet people »to whom faith is important« (WB10: 95 %), »to experience the presence of God« during this time together (WB20: 94 %) and »to learn to live their everyday life in relationship to God« (WC11: 91 %). Moreover, 93 % said that the adolescents should »be supported in their personal and social development« during KU time (WC04).

Another essential objective for all those leading KU groups was to help adolescents to become more familiar with the Bible. The Bible is the KU topic, which was considered the most important (WA22: 99 %). Another vital aim of those teaching was that they wanted the young people to experience a sense of community (WD03: 99 %). In this context, however, it is striking that in t_1 »only« 66 % of the workers wanted to »have at least one personal conversation

with each confirmand during confirmation time« (WD05). Taking into consideration the high number of small KU-groups and the importance attached to the high aspiration mentioned above, one could have expected here an even higher value.

Experiences

86% of the leaders, workers and volunteers in the EmK »like doing confirmation work« (VM02), 69% were »satisfied with the confirmation work« in their parish (VM01). 98% of those interviewed were of the opinion that the leader has a strong or very strong influence on the topics and activities of KU (VJ01). Thus it can be stated that those who conduct KU are consciously aware of their influence and consider themselves to be in a position to carry out KU independently.

However, there are factors, which prevent them from doing KU in the way they would like to. What the workers regretted most is that the adolescents »could hardly concentrate on contents« of KU after a long school day. This was often the case in 18% of the groups and sometimes in 48% of them (VN12). Another disrupting component for those who conduct KU groups is the fact that »the time for the preparation of the meetings was too short for me« (VN01: »sometimes« - 42%, »often« - 9%). These values prove that in day-to-day life it is not always easy to follow through on the priorities set theoretically.

If one compares the intentions of the workers with their experiences, it can be noticed that their own expectations are surpassed at two points: Firstly, the percentage of those who make the adolescents learn central texts by heart is markedly higher in t_2 (VC03: 69%) than the share of those who intended that in t_1 (WC03: 56%). Secondly, in t_2 79% were of the opinion that they »had at least one personal conversation with each confirmand« (VD05), whereas only 66% had aimed for this in the beginning. Focusing on which intentions could not be put into practice, one figure stands out remarkably: Only 20% of the workers were of the opinion in t_2 that the adolescents »had a say in the choice of topics« for KU (VB09). This is a drastic drop, compared with 62% in WB09.

A further area with a wide gap between wish and reality is that of getting »to know what programs of youth work the church offers to them« (VC06). Only a good half (53%) of the adult interviewees at the end of KU time think that the young people have experienced youth programs run by church youth departments, although 85% had aimed for it in the beginning (WC06).

The fact that 69% of all EmK workers are satisfied with KU, is a relatively low percentage compared with the international figures. This might indicate that there should be more reflection in the future on what can help those who conduct KU to do what they would like to do (VM01). One key factor might be teamwork; the Methodist study shows that those ministers working in a team

tend to be more satisfied with KU (76 %) than those who are leading KU by themselves (67 %; VM01).

Didactics and Methodology

Materials and Methods

It appears that the teaching material of the EmK, »Unterwegs ins Leben« (see above), has been very well received. 75 % of the workers stated that they use it »sometimes« (20 %), »often« (17 %) or »very often« (58 %), (XZF43). 72 % used it as their prevalent or exclusive teaching material (XZF44). In general, the more conventional teaching measures still seem to prevail as today's KU's methodology. 69 % of the leaders stated that they »often« use the method »presentation by the main responsible person« (VH01). 68 % »often« used »discussion« (VH02) and 69 % »working with biblical texts« (VH10). At the same time, however, 13 different other methods (e.g., role play, painting, meeting people from the parish) were used by a good quarter of those asked at least »sometimes« or »often«. Frequently creative and activating forms of teaching such as play-acting or means of performance were practiced. Two thirds of the leaders state that experience-oriented programs (excursions, projects, etc.) took place in their KU groups (VH28). Regarding the involvement of digital media, leaders stated that they work »never« (55 %), »seldom« (35 %), »sometimes« (9 %) or often (1 %) use the internet (VH32). In view of the high significance of electronic media and social networks for young people today, more attention should be paid to this area.

Topics

Table 83 compares the importance attached to topics by workers and confirmands respectively in t_1 .

The dark grey shading indicates two topics that are emphasised considerably more (30 % and more) by workers than by the confirmands. The light grey shading marks two topics, which the confirmands consider more important than the workers.

The picture this table paints is very similar to the results of the first study in the EKD (Schweitzer et al. 2010, 69). Those who lead KU groups should be aware of the gaps indicated above and, together with the confirmands, should consider reasons why it is important to approach especially those topics that may not play a key role in the adolescents' everyday lives. As a result of the first study on confirmation work, a considerable amount of newly developed teaching material has appeared, for example, on friendship which the adolescents highlighted as one of their top interests (Ilg et al. 2009, 105). Hopefully, the topic of friendship will become a standard in KU.

Table 83: Comparison of importance of topics in t_1 (sorted by difference between workers and confirmands) in Germany (EmK) (%)

Importance of topic	workers	confirmands
Course and meaning of Sunday services (WA05, CL03)	80	50
The Lord's Supper (WA04, CL02)	93	63
God (WA23, CL22)	98	88
Justice and responsibility for others (WA15, CL08)	86	70
The meaning of life (WA14, CL11)	91	75
Friendship (WA16, CL09)	67	87
Other religions (WA11, CL07)	38	52

N = 136-138 (workers); N = 747-750 (confirmands); the share of those with a positive response (5, 6, 7), on a scale 1 to 7.

Effects of KU

In the following section three different aspects are examined: What kind of atmosphere did the confirmands perceive? What did they learn, in their opinion? And what was conveyed informally?

The adolescents saw KU time as a positive experience: 85 % confirm a good sense of community in their group (KB02), and 66 % (KK56) »made new friends within the group«. 69 % say that they »came into good personal contact with the leaders and workers« (KK03) and a very high 82 % »feel welcome and accepted in their parish« (KK37).

It is hardly surprising that at the end of KU time the vast majority of confirmands said they »have learned more about God and faith« (KB01: 80 %). But it is interesting to note that 74 % agreed with the statement »I have been enabled to come to my own decision about my faith« (KB03). This clearly indicates that KU does help young people on the way to develop their own faith. But there is still more work to do. As previously mentioned, only 52 % of the adolescents said that their questions about faith were addressed (KK11). KU is more than conveying theoretical or dogmatic knowledge. This is supported by the fact that 74 % said that they were strengthened in their faith (KB08), and 71 % found that their commitment to other people is important (KK44).

On the other hand, 34 % of the young people said that what they learned during KU has little to do with their everyday life (KK35). One could assume that this value would drop, given that the confirmands were able to decide about the topics. Interestingly, there is no correlation between this item and KK04 »we could influence the decisions about the topics« ($r_{KK04/KK35} = 0,07$).

This might suggest that in the eyes of these adolescents, the Christian faith as such seems to bear little connection with their everyday life.

A lot could be said about informal learning during KU time. For example, in t_2 a gratifying 82% of the adolescents stated that they felt welcomed and acknowledged in their parish (KK37). In contrast, only 33% stated they had the opportunity to contribute their own ideas to worship services (KS02), and 33% declared they had the chance to try out voluntary work within programs of the church (KK26). Findings like these indicate the need of further considerations and reflections concerning the image of the church conveyed to the adolescents.

10.4 Challenges and Questions for the Future

It is to be underscored that the first full-scale study in the EmK in Germany draws a generally positive picture of KU, both for adolescents and workers. Yet, there are challenges and questions that should be kept in mind for the future, as the following examples sketch out briefly.

Participatory Church

After the first review of the findings, the question arises if the young people get to know their Church during KU primarily as a place in which they are received kindly, but where their own ideas are only desired to a limited degree. This should be a starting point for further reforms for a church, which sees special priorities »in emphasising ›practical piety‹ [and] realising ›true Christianity‹ in the life of the believers« (VLO 2012, 31). How can KU help to enable the young people to experience the church as a space in which – more than before – they can contribute their own ideas and bring about change?

Relevant Worship Services

It is no surprise that another difficult area is worship. The number of those who find church services »usually boring« in t_1 may look comparatively low (CG04: 33%) but in t_2 the figure also rises within the EmK (KG04: 36%). Table 84 displays more detailed findings:

One surprising finding is the high regard for the sermons in correlation with KG04 »Church services are usually boring« ($r_{KG04/KS05} = -0.45$). The adolescents felt that they »listened to interesting sermons« if they had the impression that »the services usually dealt with things that concern me and my life« ($r_{KS14/KS05} = 0.52$). How can worship leaders and preachers respond to this encouraging signal?

Table 84: Worship services (confirmands, t₂) in Germany (EmK)

What do you think about the church services during your confirmation time?	M	SD	Yes
KS01: I experienced forms of worship adequate for young people (e.g., youth services).	4.93	1.80	60 %
KS02: I had the opportunity to contribute my own ideas to the services.	3.67	1.88	33 %
KS03: I had tasks in the services (for example, do a reading).	4.23	2.22	49 %
KS04: I met nice people.	5.75	1.47	80 %
KS05: I listened to interesting sermons.	4.72	1.72	57 %
KS12: Singing old church hymns was nice for me.	3.56	1.96	33 %
KS13: Singing modern church songs was nice for me.	5.86	1.57	82 %
KS14: The services usually dealt with things that concern me and my life.	4.35	1.59	47 %
KS15: I felt secure in the group.	5.38	1.52	71 %
KS16: I liked being part of the worship community.	5.17	1.51	69 %
KS17: I felt uncomfortable.	2.14	1.62	11 %

N = 522-619; scale: 1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable; M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation; Yes = Positive response (5, 6, 7).

KU as Teamwork

In the EmK, KU groups are predominantly lead by one clergy person. The data indicate that the »minister/person primarily responsible for confirmation work« (KN07) is the most influential factor for the satisfaction of the youth with their KU experience in general (regression analysis: $\beta = 0.24$). In KU groups with team leadership, the study shows, on the average, higher satisfaction rates on the part of the adolescents (KN01: M – with team = 5.65; without team = 5.36). Findings like these suggest that the EmK should reconsider its traditional leadership structure for KU. How can more pastoral leaders be disposed towards a team approach? How can youthful team members, in particular, be attracted to contribute to KU?

Receiving Members

Although the confirmands have a positive attitude towards religion and church and 96 % of the leaders regard the topic of »meaning of baptism and professing membership« (HZF32) as important, the number of adolescents who say they want to become professing members of the EmK at their Einsegnung or shortly afterwards decreases from 15 % in t₁ (CZF35) to only 8 % in t₂ (KZF35). The

EmK should reconsider the criteria being used regarding professing membership. Many, especially young people, perceive the current practice of linking full membership with a number of claims and obligations as a high threshold.

KU in a Church that is Growing Smaller

In the last two decades, the EmK has grown smaller; the declining membership has an effect on KU. A remarkable 26 % of the KU groups nationwide have four or fewer members. Surprisingly, most confirmands depict a positive rating of their KU group, no matter what size it is. Regardless of this fact, there are good reasons to give smaller groups the opportunity to experience larger gatherings, be it in cooperation with other KU groups or in attending a regional or national youth event. The experiences of an initial KU Camp indicate a high potential that should be developed further (Beißwenger 2014).

Outlook

Even if there is still a need for reform at some points and so further potential is in view, the EmK study shows that KU may, with good reason, be regarded as an auspicious field of congregational educational work within the EmK nationwide. The finding that a noteworthy 81 % of the adolescents surveyed are generally satisfied with their KU time (KN01) is an incentive for further commitment to this successful model of Free Church youth work.

Summary of the Results – Perspectives and Challenges for the Future

V. Summary of the Results – Perspectives and Challenges for the Future

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1. Introduction

This book holds the results of one of the largest studies on youth and religion in Europe. The focus of the study was on Protestant youth and confirmation work in nine European countries. The study is the second study of its kind. The first one was carried out in 2007/2008. The study analyses confirmation work and the role of religion, faith and the church from various perspectives among the confirmands, volunteers and employed workers. In the following, an overview on the main results concerning the present situation of confirmation work in Europe as well as of the changes that have taken place between the first and the second international study will be described. Furthermore, this chapter identifies challenges for the future, based on the results presented in this study. Moreover, the results also indicate the need for further research which will be discussed at least in a number of respects. The multiple and multi-faceted results of the study as well as the many interpretations presented in the different chapters of the book do not allow for simple conclusions. Nevertheless, the following description can at least recapitulate some of the major findings and indicate major challenges for confirmation work in the future.

Confirmation work does not take place in a vacuum but is tightly linked to general developments in society and to changes in the role of church and religion. The present research is focused on youth, religion and confirmation work in very different contexts. First of all, the study took place in contexts where the Protestant Churches operate in a clear majority position but where the share of members among the population has been declining (the Lutheran Churches in the Nordic countries). Secondly, the study took place in contexts where the Protestant Churches roughly have an equal number of members as the Catholic Church but where the situation varies greatly in different parts of the country (EKD in Germany and Reformed Church in Switzerland). Thirdly, the study took place in contexts where Protestant Christianity is in a minority position. This applies to the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in Austria and Hungary, the Methodists in Germany and the Lutherans in Poland. Fourthly, regardless of the general position of the Churches, the popularity of confirmation work can differ considerably between the contexts. There are contexts where almost all

young Protestants are confirmed (for example, Finland, Denmark, Germany), and contexts where confirmation work only reaches a minority, even though the Church is in a majority position (Sweden). The results of the study show that the context and the general situation of church and religion are an important factor explaining differences between the countries and Churches.

2. The Confirmands

The results show that the most important motive for attending confirmation time is linked to one's own will. Most confirmands attend simply because they want it themselves. Only a minority feel obliged to take part. Other motives for attending confirmation time are linked to tradition, fun and friendship, celebration and faith, in this order. For most confirmands, confirmation time itself is mostly about faith and fun. Most confirmands (72%) feel that during their confirmation time they have learned more about God and faith, and almost as many (69%) felt that they had lot of fun during confirmation time. The results show that confirmation time can have a positive influence on developing a religious identity, and that it can make a difference for those who had not had the chance to get in touch with religious contents and practices before confirmation time. Apart from learning about God and faith, two thirds of the confirmands also felt that they were able to come to a decision about their faith, and more than half of the confirmands felt that they were strengthened in their faith.

Confirmation time also tends to strengthen confirmands' relationship to church membership. The key issues explaining the change in their attitudes towards church membership were related to the extent to which they felt welcome and accepted in their parish and to the extent to which their own questions concerning faith were addressed. However, the results are different concerning the question of the confirmands' willingness to have their future children baptised. The share of those planning to do so, tended to decline during confirmation time. This is a critical message to those planning and developing confirmation work in the Churches.

The results also show that the adolescents are not very interested in forms of individualised religiosity characterised by the option of »believing without belonging« or »belonging without believing«. For them, believing and belonging are tightly linked. If there is a measurable religious identity, it goes along with a positive attitude towards the church in general or, at least to some degree, it is linked to the willingness to belong, although it also has to be said that the positive image of the church does not always imply an equally positive rating of

one's own belonging to it. In any case, the results concerning believing and belonging do not lend themselves to interpretations based on simple formulas.

Even though the focus of confirmation work is on learning from one's own religion, a third of the confirmands felt that they also learned more about other religions during confirmation time. More than half of the confirmands stated that they learned to respect other religions during confirmation time. This means that confirmation work also contributes to interreligious knowledge and understanding, although the efforts in this respect should and could be expanded in the future, as already shown by the first study. According to the confirmands' views, confirmation work fosters tolerance and respect for other religions but the increase of knowledge is more limited.

Identity development is an important issue for adolescents in confirmation time. The results of the study show that confirmation time may strengthen not only religious identity development but also the development of personal identity in a broader sense. During confirmation time, an increasing interest in both identity and religious identity can be noted.

In terms of satisfaction, confirmation work can be rated as a very successful form of non-formal education. More than two thirds of the confirmands expressed satisfaction with the confirmation time as a whole. The young people were especially satisfied with the camp period during confirmation time (if available) and the people working with them: the ministers, other teachers and volunteers. The results also show that in groups with team leadership, the satisfaction rates of the adolescents are typically higher.

Confirmation time obviously entails many positive experiences for dealing with faith- and life-issues important in adolescence. The results also make clear the connection between these experiences and satisfaction with confirmation work. The results of the study also confirm the importance of community: significant effects of experiencing good community in the confirmation group and feeling accepted in the parish underline this positive relationship in almost all of the participating countries. This sense of community seems to be reached most easily in camp-settings, as the results of the first study already showed. The results also show that by focusing on communal experiences, ethical commitment and, in particular, volunteerism, confirmation clearly contributes to preparing young people for active participation in civil society in important respects. However, in spite of the confirmands' high satisfaction, the perceived relevance of confirmation work for daily life was often rather low. This means that young people enjoy confirmation time but they do not always find it meaningful in relationship to their daily life. Yet there also are noticeable exceptions from this general tendency. In Poland, Hungary and among the Methodists in Germany, the most dominant attitude pattern is constituted by confirmands who take a positive view both on overall satisfaction and daily life

relevance. This concerns contexts where the Church operates in a minority position, and contexts where the values for believing and a positive view of the role of the Church were already high among the confirmands in the beginning of confirmation time. This implies that especially those adolescents who feel distant to church and faith in the beginning of confirmation time, more rarely experience a daily life relevance of confirmation time.

The cultural position of confirmation work is strongly connected to the meta-developments and meta-narratives of religion in postmodern societies. Even if the secularisation thesis probably has to be relativised, the influence of religious pluralisation within the European countries participating in this study can hardly be overestimated. It is also visible in the plural views of the young people when it comes to their views concerning religion and faith. At the same time, the changes in society in general are tightly linked to changes in the family. As the results of the study show at many levels, socialisation in the family is closely linked to the role of religion in the lives of young Europeans. Family background is one of the key factors explaining the confirmands' experience of confirmation time. This means that the experience of confirmation time does not take place in a vacuum at the individual level as well, but is linked to earlier experiences. The results show that, in many respects, those young people who had a religious upbringing at home and who had prior experiences with the church, benefit most from confirmation time. The connection between previous experiences and religious attitudes at the beginning and at the end of confirmation time is very strong. Results concerning Christian belief are higher for the group with regular evening prayer in childhood than for the group without contact to the church before confirmation time. These findings underline that a positive experience of confirmation time in general and, for example, positive experiences related to worship are to a large extent related to how much one is an insider or outsider – those who are familiar with the »tribal codes« of the church are much more likely to have a positive experience. Religion-related cultural capital and prior experiences with the church play a significant role for the confirmation time experience in general and for confirmands' experience of worship, giving those familiar with the codes a head start. The relevance and central importance background factors for the success of confirmation work can hardly be overlooked.

Also, gender matters. Female confirmands tend to be more religious than male confirmands, and their attitudes towards the church are also more positive. Girls seem to benefit more from confirmation time. The impact of confirmation work is stronger with girls than with boys, concerning their faith as well as their attitudes towards the Church. Furthermore, they have, for example, a better social experience than boys, they have experienced more worship adequate for young people, have met more nice people in the services, they liked

singing old church hymns more than the boys, they enjoyed modern church hymns a lot more, they felt more secure in the group, and they enjoyed the worship community more. Yet at the same time, gender differences in confirmation work in general are not as big as one might expect.

Confirmands belonging to a minority Church differ in many respects from those belonging to a majority Church. For example, confirmands belonging to a minority Church score higher on Christian belief items and are more strongly committed to church membership than confirmands from countries where Lutherans or other Protestants constitute a large proportion or the majority of the population. Minority situations obviously go along with thorough reflection of faith-related issues and a conscious decision about church membership. Protestants in minority situations often have to explain their peculiarities and distinct church traditions more frequently than those in majority situations.

The results also show that the educational level of the family has an influence. Families with a stronger educational background are more likely to transmit religion to their children, and young people from such families also have stronger faith-related motives and stronger experiences of growth in faith and are more satisfied in general.

Moreover, the region in which confirmation time takes place has an influence, and urban and rural confirmands also differ concerning their motives as well as their experience of confirmation work itself. The rural confirmands tend to emphasise traditional motives, such as being baptised, or because it has always been like that in their family, or because it is an important step in growing up. The urban confirmands are motivated more by having their faith strengthened, learning more about God, experiencing community or coming to their own decision. The general satisfaction and the experience in general are also more positive among the urban confirmands. This is partly linked to wider resources in urban parishes and to the possibility to organise groups with longer camps. Also in general, the results show that there is a better match between the expectations and experiences for the urban confirmands than for the rural. One of the reasons for this is obviously linked to different attendance rates. The participation rate is lower in many of the urban areas, which may mean that the group itself is pre-selected from the very start. Furthermore, the results show that the cities might have become spaces of post-secular reflection – at least among the adolescents who sign up for confirmation. The urban adolescents are more motivated by personal religious factors than the confirmands in rural areas.

However, regardless of the importance of various background factors, the experience of confirmation time itself is of most importance in explaining satisfaction. In spite of the relevance of educational background and religious experience in childhood, the experience of the confirmation time itself plays

an important role. For example, experiences related to involvement and participation and the experience of growth in faith at the end of confirmation time are much more meaningful in explaining satisfaction than, for example, gender or religious socialisation in childhood.

Expectations and experiences are also tightly linked. For example, confirmands who wished to have fun during confirmation time and perceived that this expectation was met, were not only more satisfied with the confirmation time as a whole but also find the learning experiences during this period more meaningful. Conversely, there is a dramatic decline in both satisfaction and perceived relevance among those confirmands whose expectations were not met.

3. The Workers

It is one of the remarkable developments highlighted in the first study that voluntary workers have come to play a decisive role for confirmation work in most of the countries participating in the study. Opposed to the traditional model of confirmation training or instruction in which the minister was seen as the one person in charge of the program, confirmation work now is most often done in teams, although there still are countries or churches and also individual situations for which this does not apply. According to the study, the largest group of workers are the volunteers (54%). Confirmation work meanwhile often means teamwork. 56% of the main responsible persons stated that there was confirmation work in teams. In connection to the share of the voluntary workers there also seems to be a gender effect. While 64% of the ministers were male and 36% female, within the group of the volunteers the distribution was almost the other way round; 37% of the volunteers were male and 63% female.

Altogether, the number of volunteers participating in confirmation work throughout the European countries involved in the study is higher than the number of »professionals«, be it ministers, deacons or other full- or part-time workers. It was not possible to calculate the number of volunteers for all of the countries. In Germany, however, the data allowed for a reliable extrapolation. According to this calculation, there were 62 000 volunteers actively involved in the confirmation year 2012/2013. This is an impressive figure in itself. It means that there was one volunteer per approximately 3.6 confirmands. Moreover, compared to the first study, the number of volunteers went up by 2000 workers in Germany, although the number of confirmands declined by 25 000 over the five years between the two studies. In Finland, there are proportionately even more volunteers: about one volunteer per 3.0 confirmands. Another important

aspect concerning the importance of the voluntary workers is related to their age. Many of them are adolescents themselves, which means that the confirmands can view them as somewhat older peers and, through that, most likely, also as role models. In any case, the confirmands greatly appreciate the participation of voluntary workers in confirmation time.

While the involvement of volunteers, then, is quite remarkable, it should not make one forget the importance of the full-time workers. Most of them appreciate doing confirmation work. They are satisfied with this field of work, and the confirmands respond to them with a high rate of approval as well.

The main aim of the workers in the different countries is obviously not a certain missionary form of confirmation work but rather the attempt to develop a livable and workable balance of questions and topics that are related to faith, life and adolescence. Their choices show a certain preference for topics that are clearly related to the Christian tradition. But the list of their most preferred topics also includes some ethical questions, like justice and responsibility, and existential questions, like the meaning of life.

Underneath the common tendencies and international averages, there is a considerable amount of variation between the countries, at least with some of the topics. In this respect, national and regional traditions seem to play a role. Moreover, the difference between the main responsible workers who often are ministers, and the volunteers comes into play here. Generally speaking, the voluntary workers' interests seem to be closer to those of the confirmands than to those expressed by the ministers. This observation is important because it shows the ability of the volunteers to make confirmation work more interesting for the confirmands. To put it differently: listening to the volunteers' ideas can help the full-time workers to make confirmation work more meaningful and relevant for the confirmands.

Comparing the two studies from 2007/2008 and 2012/2013, there are a number of changes in the workers' preferences. On the whole, traditional topics of the Christian faith, although still at a very high level, have lost some of their standing while topics closer to the lifeworld of the confirmands have gained in interest. This may be an indication of the attempt to get closer to the interests of the confirmands, although, at least in some countries, it is the confirmands themselves who expect to learn more about God and the Christian faith.

Looking at the motives for doing confirmation work, the aims related to personal growth and belonging were regarded as most important aims, both by workers and volunteers. The results show that the workers put a lot of energy and heartblood into confirmation work. The results indicate that most of the workers are well aware of the specific challenges of adolescence and try to relate to them in a very active and almost passionate sense. They intend to respond to these challenges in most productive and creative ways.

4. Confirmation Work

At least in some ways, the decisive question for the present study refers to the situation of confirmation work as a program offered to young people. What does it entail? How is it structured? What tendencies can be discerned?

One of the core findings of the previous study (2007/2008) referred to the changing nature of confirmation work. In ways that are markedly different from the traditional catechetical instruction of the past, confirmation work has taken on a new shape that makes it attractive to the young people of today. In the following, this shape will be described from a number of different perspectives. Before that, however, it must be emphasised that the different countries and Churches play an important role in this respect. It is not possible to identify something like a European standard model that, with few variations, could be found in all of the participating countries. Instead, it is more appropriate to speak of general tendencies that are similar in at least most of these countries, and many variations at the level of the actual practice. These variations and the varieties of the practice of confirmation work can not be captured in this summary chapter but may be found in the reports from the different countries (cf. above; for more details, also see Schweitzer et al. 2010).

Traditional confirmation instruction as it was called in the past, was based on the model of the school of earlier times. It entailed school-type 60 or 45 minutes-long lessons every week. While such lessons still exist as part of confirmation work, their number is clearly declining (during the five years between the first and the second study alone from 47 to 43 hours). Instead, the number of meetings with larger timeframes is growing (special days, etc.) which allows for more flexible and creative ways of working together. Moreover, the confirmation time has come to include outings and camps as well as internships, for example, in the parish or with social projects run by the church.

In terms of the teaching and learning methods used, similar observations can be made. Traditional methods like lecturing continue to play a role but the most popular methods are discussion and group work. Although used less frequently than these two, creative methods based, for example, on visual art and drama, playing together and listening to stories or to music, encountering experts, etc. also have come to be part of confirmation work.

Another perspective is related to the workers involved in confirmation work. Most clearly, it is no longer just the minister who is in charge of confirmation work. The minister still plays an important role and he or she may well be the main responsible person. Yet in most of the participating countries, there also is a whole team of workers which typically has turned confirmation work into a teamwork enterprise. It is of special interest and far-reaching importance that

these teams include a growing number of volunteers who often are older adolescents. To say it again, these volunteers are especially valued by the confirmands and they can serve as role models for them. Moreover, since more and more, there are, for example, special training programs offered for young volunteers, the teamwork setting of confirmation work implies a type of youth work geared to older adolescents. In other words, young volunteers are important as workers but it is also important to realise that voluntary work includes new possibilities for making church-related activities attractive for older adolescents who otherwise might not be interested in the church.

If one element in the new design of confirmation work deserves to be especially highlighted, it is most likely the camps where, in some of the countries, a considerable part of the confirmation time takes place. This is not only true in a temporal sense, i. e., because camps can sometimes last for a whole week or even longer; it is even more true because the time spent at camp is of special value and importance for confirmands as well as for the workers. In addition to this, it could be shown that camps can create a learning space that implies the use of a broad spectrum of youth-oriented activating learning methods.

However, the findings also indicate that regardless of the setting, certain methods seem to be more powerful than others. The narrow use of teaching methods is linked to lower satisfaction rates and lower experiences of growth in faith as well as to the weakest experiences concerning church services. According to the results, especially the use of music and meditation has many positive influences on the confirmands' experience. At the same time, using the method of lecturing to a high degree goes along with lower satisfaction and lower levels of involvement. This means that working towards a more meaningful experience of confirmation time does not necessarily require more camp days – and therefore more money. Strengthening the teaching abilities among the confirmation workers is of high importance as well.

In general, then, there is a clear over-all tendency away from a school-type paradigm to youth-work-type confirmation work that has deeply changed this program in many places. The new type is obviously attractive for the adolescents because it meets their interests and needs. In addition to this, a comparison between the results from the two studies from 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 shows that the transition to the new type has made further progress during the five years between the studies. This is a very encouraging result.

Yet not all results concerning confirmation work can be called encouraging to the same degree. One of the concerns raised by the first study was related to the experiences with worship services during confirmation time. Although about half of the confirmands said that they were satisfied with these services, this was not considered satisfactory, given the theological importance of the worship service as a central part in the life of a Protestant Church. It is encoura-

ging that the satisfaction rate has gone up in this respect as well with the 2012/2013 study. Yet it must also be said that every other confirmand considered worship services boring in the beginning of confirmation time and that the number of those who thought so, went up during confirmation time. It remains important for the future to involve confirmands more actively with worship services and to give them more chances to contribute their own ideas in the planning of these services.

Another problematic aspect has to do with the contents taken up in confirmation work. While most of the confirmands stated that they are quite content with their confirmation time, they also felt that what they could learn there was of little relevance for their everyday life. This corresponds with the feeling also expressed by many of the adolescents that their questions were not really addressed by the workers. Consequently, it can be no surprise that the number of those who think that the »church does not have answers to the questions that are important« to them did not decline during confirmation time but, in fact, increased slightly. This result indicates that confirmation work is not successful or at least, not sufficiently successful in terms of one of its aims that often is even considered the main aim of this program. It does not, or at least not sufficiently, make accessible the meaning of the Christian faith and of the biblical tradition in relationship to today's world.

5. Developments Between the First and the Second Study

One of the main aims of the study was to explore longterm developments in confirmation work in Europe. The question of continuity and change is consistently addressed both in the comparative chapters and the country reports, by comparing the findings of the present study from 2012/2013 with those of the first study that was conducted five years earlier (2007/2008).

Given the rather short time span of five years, it may not be surprising that the impression of overall stability prevails. Interestingly, this is particularly the case with regard to the confirmands. On the whole, there are no rapid changes in the expectations and experiences of the confirmands or in their attitudes toward religion, faith and church. This overall stability is quite remarkable because both, theorists and practitioners in the field of confirmation work often assume a declining religiosity among the young people attending confirmation work. The findings of this study do not support such a negative view. In fact, the data do not reveal any general tendencies in the sense of decline – or increase – on an overall level. On a national level, however, more significant changes can be noticed, for example, in Austria and Finland (see the respective country reports).

Nevertheless, it still is interesting to see where larger changes occurred. The following identically worded items of the two surveys show an increase or decrease by 5 percent points or more:

- KK26: During the time of my confirmation training, I temporarily worked in programs of the church (e. g., in an internship). (+ 11)
- KE08: Faith in God helps me in difficult situations. (+ 10)
- CE08: Faith in God helps me in difficult situations. (+ 8)
- KK44: I have experienced that my commitment to other people is important. (+ 8)
- KN10: Satisfied with church services. (+ 7)
- KK11: During the time of my confirmation training, my questions concerning faith were addressed. (+ 5)
- KK37: In our parish I feel welcome and accepted. (+ 5)
- KG03: If I have children, I want to have them baptised. (- 6)
- CL08: Interest in »Justice and responsibility for others«. (- 5)
- CL09: Interest in »Friendship«. (- 5)
- KE04: Jesus has risen from the dead. (- 5)

What stands out most, is the heterogeneity of these items. There is no clear pattern connected to them. Obviously, there was a clear shift towards projects and methods that actively involve young people with the programs of the church. More puzzling is the massive rise in the conviction of the confirmands that God helps them in difficult situations, both in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time. At the same time, significantly fewer confirmands believe that Jesus has risen from the dead.

The comparison of the results from the two studies also indicates that confirmation work now contributes more effectively to the ethical and social commitment of the young people involved. About half of the confirmands stated in 2013 that they experienced that their commitment to other people is important – 8 percent points more than in 2008. Interestingly, two of the four items that show a clear decline actually support this view: The confirmands interest in »justice and responsibility for others« and »friendship« is in 2012/13 significantly lower at the beginning of confirmation time than five years before. At the end of the confirmation time, the rate of approval is in both cases identical with that in 2007/2008.

From the point of view of the Churches, it is worrisome that 6 percent points fewer confirmands express the intention to have their future children baptised. But there are some particularly encouraging developments as well. In 2013, 5 percent points more confirmands felt welcome and accepted in their parish than in 2008. With regard to church services, the rise in satisfaction during is even higher. Finally, if it holds true that good confirmation work successfully

addresses the faith-related questions of the confirmands, then confirmation work clearly improved during the time between 2007/2008 and 2012/2013. In almost all of the countries that participated in the first study, significantly more confirmands stated in 2013 that their questions about their faith were addressed during their confirmation time – the only exception is Sweden where the values were very high in this respect in the first study.

Interestingly, the workers' survey shows a slightly different picture. In the following, again only differences between the first and the second study that exceed 5 percent points, are rendered:

- VC06: The confirmands got to know what programs of youth work the church offers to them. (+ 7)
- VC10: The confirmands experienced forms of meditation or prayer. (+ 7)
- WD02: Confirmation work should be used as missionary chance for winning people for the Christian faith. (+ 5)
- WE07: I want to be a role model for younger people. (+ 5)
- VC05: The confirmands got to know our parish better. (+ 5)
- WD05: I want to have at least one personal conversation with each confirmand. (- 17)
- WC11: During their confirmation training, the confirmands should learn to live their everyday life in relationship to God. (- 8)
- WE08: Faith in God is important for me. (- 8)
- WC10: During their confirmation training, the confirmands should be strengthened in their faith. (- 6)
- WA15: Important topic: Baptism. (- 5)
- VC12: The confirmands were enabled to make their own decision about faith. (- 5)
- VD05: I had at least one personal conversation with each confirmand during confirmation time. (- 5)

Contrary to the confirmands' survey, the table reveals at least one clear tendency. The approval of faith-related attitudes and aims is considerably lower in 2012/13 than it was five years before, at least in most cases. Compared to the first study, significantly fewer workers take the view that confirmands should learn to live their everyday life in relationship to God or that they should be strengthened in their faith during confirmation time. At the end of confirmation time, the number of workers who stated that the confirmands were enabled to make their own decision about faith is 5 percent points lower than it was in 2008. This decline seems to be mirrored in the attitudes of the workers. In the second study, 82% ascribed personal importance to faith in God at the beginning of confirmation time – that was 8 percent points less than among the workers five years before.

6. International Comparisons

Any international research project aims at additional insights that can not be achieved on a national level alone. It is easy to see throughout this volume that the cooperation of researchers across national borders has been very enriching – in terms of personal encounters, the continued exchange of ideas and, last but not least, the multiple international co-authorships in preparing this book. From the very beginning of the first study carried out in 2007/2008, the importance of this kind of cooperation made itself felt, for example, in the joint creation of an innovative research design that goes way beyond the standard one-time surveys, or in identifying research questions together that exceed the taken for granted state of the art in the different countries.

International cooperation also is the basis for international research that promises new results. As described in the introduction to this volume (p. 19 ff.) as well as in earlier publications in more detail (cf. Schweitzer et al. 2010, 207-211), there are a number of questions that can not be answered or even adequately addressed as long as only one Church or one country is in view. This holds especially true for questions concerning not only individual elements like, for example, certain teaching methods and materials but that refer to the effectiveness of whole systems. Often, there is only one system in use in a particular country, for example, in terms of the duration of confirmation work, the workers involved and the content covered. Consequently, it is impossible to evaluate this system based on national data alone because these data do not allow for the comparison of different systems. This is one of the main reasons why international-comparative research has become increasingly attractive in the field of religious education, just like in other fields of education.

The results from the present study can be read as additional evidence for the meaning and value of international research in religious education. Moreover and maybe even more importantly, given the still prevailing dominance of school-related international studies, these results show that such research can also be successfully done in the field of non-formal education and that it can in fact yield meaningful results.

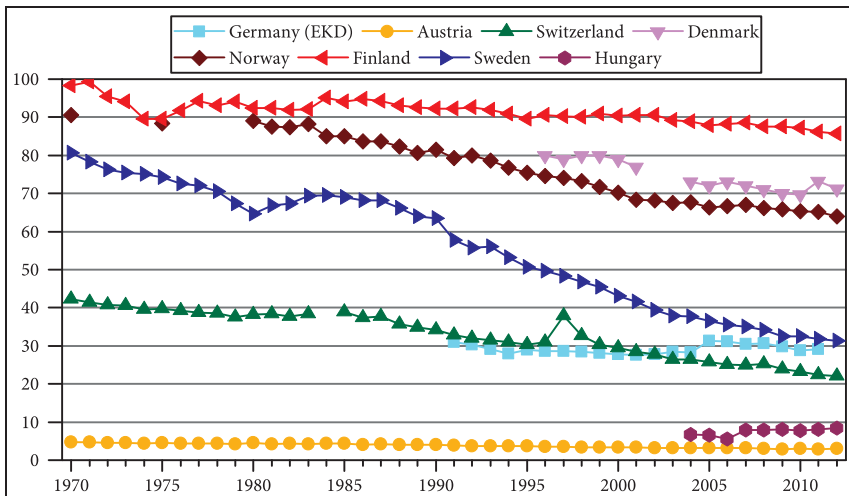
For a number of reasons described elsewhere in this book (p. 21 ff.), the study included a certain set of countries and a number of questions that refer to international comparisons. In the following, some of the comparisons made possible by the study will be pointed out. Each comparative aspect, however, would deserve a chapter of its own. In other words, it is not the intention of the present description to go into the details of comparative interpretations. Most of the comparative perspectives were taken up in different parts of the present book. At this point, a concentrated account on possible comparisons may be

useful as a guide for readers looking for such possibilities. Another intention refers to the identification of comparative perspectives that could be taken up in later research, with the data from the present study or with additional data. With the question of changes over time, one such perspective has already been addressed above. Such changes can be analysed in more meaningful ways on an international level.

6.1 Participation Rates in Different Countries

Since there is no special chapter in this book on participation rates, this question deserves treatment beyond a summary. Figure 60 presents the participation rates in terms of percentages of the whole population of the age group in the respective country.

Figure 60: Participation rates in confirmation work in percent of the whole population of the age group in the respective country



The information for Poland was not available.

As Figure 60 shows, the participation rates greatly vary between the countries. First of all, this variation corresponds to the different membership rates in the countries. In Germany, for example, about 30% of the population are Protestants. So a participation rate of 30% in confirmation work means that basically all Protestants at the age of 13 or 14 years participate. Other variations can be explained by the fact that not all Protestant adolescents take part in confirmation work (for details, cf. the reports from the different countries). What is

most striking, however, is the decline in participation over time in some of the countries while the rate remains rather stable in other countries. The clearest cases of declining participation rates are found in Sweden and Norway.

Such developments indicate that confirmation work may be a stable institution in some of the countries. Yet its future existence and stability can not be taken for granted. Instead, given the international data, it makes more sense to speak of a fragility of this field (cf. Schweitzer et al. 2010, 216). This insight is most worrisome for the Churches. In fact, one reason for their willingness to contribute financially to the present study can be seen in their worries about the future.

It is important to note that the decline, for example, in Sweden can not be explained by the dissatisfaction of the confirmands there. As shown above (p. 245 ff.), Swedish confirmands are satisfied and affirm the high quality of the confirmation work they experienced. The explanation of the decline obviously raises complex question that require more research.

6.2 Comparing Different Regions in Europe

One major step connected to the present study was to go beyond the countries that had participated in the first study from 2007/2008. In terms of countries, this meant that Hungary and Poland joined the study. Consequently, the study now allows for insights into the situation of confirmation work in two post-Socialist countries. The results from these two countries clearly are not identical, yet they show a number of similarities that might be characteristic of the post-Socialist situation in general.

Moreover, these two central eastern European countries can be compared to other groups of countries, for example, the German speaking countries or the Nordic countries. It is often said that the Nordic countries have come to share a common Nordic identity. Yet the results from the study do not always support the assumption of such similarity. Although in different ways, this also holds true for the German speaking countries which by no means are alike in all respects. It would be very interesting to evaluate the data in detail concerning the homogeneity of certain groups of countries as well as concerning the differences between these groups.

In many respects, the data presented in this book indicate that national and regional traditions also play a role. The data from each country obviously present a country-specific profile that points to such influences below national groupings. This is one of the reasons why the book contains so-called country reports that make the individual countries the main object of description.

6.3 Comparing Minority and Majority Situations

The study comprises countries in which the Protestants either have or had a majority position or at least a dominant position, but also countries in which Protestants are, and also have been for a long time, a small minority. Moreover, the German Methodists (EmK) have always been a small minority in this country. The differences between the countries and Churches allow for comparisons concerning the implications of minority and majority situations of Protestantism in particular countries. They also include the possibility of comparisons between different majority situations (Germany and Finland, for example) and different minority situations (Austria and Poland, for example).

It should not be overlooked, however, that in the field of confirmation work the question of majority and minority situations entails another dimension which is also of interest in terms of comparison. There are countries like Sweden with a Protestant majority but with only a minority of adolescents taking part in confirmation work. In this respect, comparisons between the presuppositions and implications of different participation rates are possible.

6.4 The Influence of Different Educational Structures

Confirmation work is a program of its own that, according to the results of the study, clearly deserves to be viewed in its own right. Yet it must also be understood in the context of a wider educational ecology that comprises the family and the school as well as other programs offered by the Churches in the participating countries. In many respects the study shows the strong lasting effects of religious education or nurture in the family during childhood, often in connection with children's participation in other programs offered by the Church. Confirmation work is strongly influenced by such presuppositions.

Another question of comparative interest concerns the influence of the school and of Religious Education as a school subject. The present study does not include results on this influence but it raises a number of questions in this respect. Given the comparatively low and obviously decreasing affirmation of faith in creation in many of the countries under study, for example, one may wonder if the confirmands experience a tension between creation faith on the one hand, and natural science on the other. How is this tension dealt with in the Religious Education classes that most confirmands attended before confirmation time? Are there differences between the countries in this respect? Can the different rates of affirmation of this faith (for example, much lower rates in Sweden than in Germany) be explained by taking different effects of Religious Education into account, i. e., the »objective« approach guiding Reli-

religious Education in Sweden and the denominational Religious Education in Germany?

The two countries with the strongest decline in participation in confirmation work in the study are Sweden and Norway. These countries have experienced a far-reaching move towards a kind of Religious Education at school that is no longer related to the Church or to theology. Is there a connection between the decline in participation rates and the type of Religious Education in these countries?

In some of the countries, especially in Norway and in Switzerland (canton Zurich), the Churches decided to develop comprehensive educational programs that aim at compensating the lack of religious education now prevailing in schools as well as in many families. Since these programs have been put into practice a number of years ago, the question can be asked if there are effects to be observed in the data from confirmation work that can be attributed to these programs. In this case, comparisons between the 2007/2008 and the 2012/2013 study could be telling, as well as comparisons between different regions with and without such programs. Moreover, comparisons can also be directed at different countries that are pursuing different approaches in this respect.

6.5 Effects of Different Church Structures

With the German Methodists (EmK), a Church took part in the study that, contrary to the other Churches in the study, has never been defined by a geographical reference. As a so-called »free church« (cf. p. 280 ff.), it depends on membership by personal choice. This particular structure opens up possibilities for all kinds of comparisons. Concerning all of the results it can be asked, be it with religious attitudes, views of the church, or church membership itself, how different church structures might influence the corresponding attitudes.

6.6 Comparative Study of Elements of Confirmation Work

A decisive advantage of international-comparative studies can be seen in the possibility of investigating research questions from different angles. This applies to most of the topics presented in this book, for the confirmands' and the workers' expectations and experiences as well as for the methods used in confirmation work, to mention just a few examples. In addition to this, more general aspects like the influence of gender or of educational background can be studied comparatively. Generally speaking, as becomes clear throughout the book, more possibilities for comparisons allow for a richer understanding. It

is especially easy to see the promise of comparative interpretation with the two topics that play a special role in the present study: worship services during confirmation time and the multiple relationships between voluntary work and confirmation work.

7. Conclusions and Challenges for the Future

Considering these results presented above, it has to be asked what this means for possible or even necessary improvements of confirmation work in the future.

The overall results depict confirmation work as a specific social setting in which young people develop a certain knowledge and understanding of faith, strengthen their »sense of community« and, to some degree, come to identify with the church. If it is true that positive experiences of such connectedness are an important resource both of individual well-being and of caring societies, then confirmation work obviously contributes to this and does it well. Or to put it the other way round: this kind of non-formal education is definitely not experiencing a crisis, neither in the confirmands' nor the workers' view.

Nevertheless, the results also show that this educational program and its attractiveness must not be taken for granted. And not to forget: the increase in satisfaction rates captured by the study may, at least in part, be due to the shrinking milieu which is still addressed and reached by an institution like the church, and to how people within this milieu respond to church programs. Therefore it would also be important to capture the discontent or lack of interest of those who do not join confirmation time any more, although this task is beyond the possibilities of the present study.

In any case, certain improvements are not just »nice to have« but rather can be viewed as a precondition for the future success and plausibility of confirmation work.

7.1 Confirmands' Needs and Potentials

Concerning the relevance of confirmation work, the results clearly indicate that the confirmands will only grasp at least an idea of the deeper meaning of the Christian tradition if their personal and existential questions are really addressed. The main aim of confirmation work must therefore be to build bridges between the confirmands' potentials of individual life orientation and the communication of the Gospel. In other words, it is all a question of successful and

credible relations. For a better knowledge of the Christian faith and more identification with the church, stronger connections between the confirmands and the parish during confirmation time are needed. Concerning the services a strong increase in active participation and contribution of the young generation is necessary.

The contribution of confirmation work to voluntary commitment and therefore to civil society is clearly visible but there is still a lot of individual and institutional potential that is not yet sufficiently used in confirmation work. There is a need for personal relations after confirmation that can be taken up, for example, by turning the confirmand group into a youth group or by providing youth with a mentor. Therefore, it is important to learn to see confirmation not as the end of religious education but as the beginning of youth work.

7.2 Forms and Competences of Teaching

Concerning the forms of teaching, it is important that the methods and topics of teaching correspond to the confirmands' personal needs, both in terms of participation and of individual identity questions. Confirmation work has to prepare confirmands for other forms and ideals of Christian fellowship than the ones the present generation of adult workers grew up with. From this point of view, confirmation work does not only mean teaching the basics of the Christian faith and tradition but giving space to the adolescents' personal reflection of their spiritual quest. Curricula which allow for active participation in the church by volunteering and service involvement, will help to make use of the confirmands' potentials and make the program more engaging and relevant, in terms of values, faith and knowledge.

Concerning the importance of credible workers and teams, the results also indicate the need for further improvements, be it for a clearer pedagogical connection between faith-, life- and youth-related issues, the team-building-factor or the continuous improvement of the individual pedagogical and theological competences required in confirmation work. Thus, further improvement of the workers' training is needed and more involvement of peer-oriented teams would be helpful as well. The need for multi-methodical confirmation work can only be fulfilled by a substantial team of employed workers and volunteers. This implies that a wider and more diverse methodological training is needed as well as personality development. The training of pastors and youth leaders should include preparation for leadership that encompasses the training and support of volunteers. The improvement and expansion of courses for the workers could support the development of a confirmation work that is adequate for youth and also can do justice to the Christian tradition.

7.3 The Importance of Religious Socialisation

It is obvious that positive experiences with confirmation work, the feeling of community and being involved in parish activities are important for young people's relation to parish and church. But they are not enough to keep the young people as members of the church or to support their willingness to have their future children baptised. This insight is also based on considerations of the wider ecology of religious education. In many European countries, Denominational Religious Education as a school subject faces severe threats or has already come to an end. Consequently, as can be seen from the results of the present study, religious socialisation has become tenuous. It will be a key question for the future of confirmation work, how it can contribute to religious socialisation. This implies that, more than ever before, confirmation work has to be seen as part of a comprehensive educational program to be offered by the Churches and parishes. If confirmation time is actually the first experience of young people with the church and its traditions, it is definitely too late.

7.4 Learning From Minority Situations

At first sight, the results of the study concerning Churches in minority situations may appear to be literally marginal. But in fact, one has to ask whether this minority situation might not be something that all Churches – even the very established ones – can and have to learn from. In a possibly not too far future, they could find themselves in a similar situation. As can be seen from the study, belonging to a minority Church requires that the young people are informed and articulate in order for them to be able to talk to their peers about their religious »homeland«, including the main similarities and differences concerning other denominations. Confirmation work in these Churches obviously equips them with the ability to point out the advantage of their specific Church and at the same time to speak out for diversity and plurality. These experiences should also be taken into consideration by Churches that (still) are in a more comfortable and privileged position.

Beyond this, in smaller units the need for individual acceptance, participation and involvement can be fulfilled more easily. In a familiar atmosphere of small Churches, the confirmands seem to experience deep personal contact and friendly reception while being encouraged to proceed in their individual development, including faith. The attitudes towards the home parish and the church services are clearly influenced by this experience. Why should the majority Churches not learn from the fact that more intense forms of commitment to

believing and belonging can lead to a stronger identification with church and faith?

7.5 Concerning Future Research

The need for future research is addressed in most of the chapters of the present book. Most of the questions discussed there are in need of further clarification that can not be reached without additional data. Moreover, the results of the study can be used as a basis for developing informed research questions, and they can also function as encouragement for doing more research in the still under-researched field.

Rather than trying to bring together the various research impulses from the individual chapters, it may be more meaningful to at least mention an additional aspect that may be important for future work. Although the impact of social structures is outside the scope of the results presented here, the reference to such structure might hold some explanatory value for understanding why confirmation rates decline although the confirmands are satisfied with confirmation work. Future research should include the analysis of social structures such as the conditions for belief in a »secular age«. Moreover, changes in migration patterns should also be included. Taking contextual factors into consideration might also be a relief for the workers because it allows them to realise that the responsibility for the weal and woe of confirmation work can never be seen exclusively with individual persons and their commitment but is also the result of many external influences.

7.6 Conclusion

Besides exploring and experiencing fun, etc., it is important for the adolescents during confirmation time to find a place in the church where they feel comfortable, are taken seriously with their needs and their search for identity and get supported and inspired in their individual and collective processes of life-orientation. Taking into consideration this subject-orientation and the relevance of faith-issues requires forms of sensitive and dialogical religious communication.

In today's Europe with its pluralising societies, fostering awareness and tolerance of religious difference is widely regarded as one of the most important tasks of religious education. Thus, the confirmands' knowledge and understanding of other religions is also a highly important contribution of confirmation work.

Although confirmation work in general is doing well for most of the confirmands, it can not be ignored that there is a significant gap between the satisfied and the dissatisfied confirmands in most of the participating countries. Even more challenging is the fact that the religious and family background is of high importance for the question of overall satisfaction. Consequently, the motivation, integration and inclusion of young people who feel a severe distance to the church, is one of the major challenges of future confirmation work. The general appeal of confirmation work and confirmation beyond the »insiders«, i. e., the adolescents with a strong church affiliation from childhood on, is vital to its existence. In other words, more efforts are needed to give more to those who need it most.

**The Confirmation Project
in the United States.
A Study of Confirmation and
Equivalent Practices
in the American Context**

VI. The Confirmation Project in the United States. A Study of Confirmation and Equivalent Practices in the American Context

KATHERINE M. DOUGLASS

1. Religious Life in the American Context

Congregations in the United States are voluntary and, with the exception of the Roman Catholic Church, there are no parishes or geographical boundaries that would lead individuals to attend one church or another (and even the Roman Catholics frequently attend a church outside of their assigned parish). Various sources say that participation in congregational life measured by weekly attendance includes 27 to 37% of the population. Mark Chaves found that when comparing the General Social Survey (GSS) to time diaries, Americans tended to overestimate their church attendance. In the GSS, they reported weekly Sunday morning church attendance rates around 37%, while time diaries showed that they actually attended at about 27% of the time. Chaves interprets this to mean that Americans value church attendance and therefore overreport their attendance (Chaves 2011, Pew Research 2014). These two factors, participation that is both voluntary and relatively high, play a significant role in determining who participates in confirmation work and their motivations for participation.

A note on language may be of help. In the US, the word »confirmation« is used to describe the work, process, and completion of the event of confirmation. Youth are usually referred to as »confirmands« and ministry leaders who lead this are called »confirmation leaders.«

Social pressure to participate in confirmation work begins when youth are in their early teenage years. For families who already attend church, they simply sign their child up to participate in their congregation's confirmation work program. There is also, a significant influx of non-regular church participants during these years. These youth might be friends with other youth in the church, or sometimes the church is known as having a good confirmation work program and this attracts newcomers. This means that confirmation leaders are frequently leading a heterogeneous group of youth through confirmation work, some of whom have had years of religious upbringing, attending worship services almost weekly, and others who have not. Youth in the American context have no resources for religious education other than those they receive through church participation or within the context of their home because religion is not taught in public schools due to national laws regarding the separation of church

and state. Where to begin teaching this mix of youth is one of the challenges that ministry leaders identified when they were interviewed in the preliminary study in 2013.

Related to this, in the survey questions about the motivations of youth were asked: Why they are participating? Ministry leaders were also asked how many of the youth they knew before confirmation time. It was hoped that these numbers will provide greater insight into who is attending confirmation work and why they attend.

2. Origins and Preliminary Findings of the Confirmation Project

After years of conversation about confirmation across the Atlantic Ocean with Friedrich Schweitzer in Germany, Richard Osmer (Princeton Theological Seminary) convened a team of researchers to begin to imagine what a study on confirmation work might look like in the American context. This planning team included Reginald Blount, Katherine M. Douglass, Jessicah Krey Duckworth, Gordon Mikoski, Richard Osmer. K. Douglass and R. Osmer now direct The Confirmation Project funded by a grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. This team applied for a planning grant to learn more about confirmation work in five mainline Protestant denominations and what might be worthy questions to research. The five denominations in the study include the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church USA, and the United Methodist Church. The study looked at congregations in these denominations that are in the US. Three of these denominations (the AME, Episcopal, and UMC) are not bounded by national borders, but rather are international denominations. These denominations were chosen because they all practice infant baptism and confirmation. There are, of course, other denominations that practice infant baptism and confirmation in addition to these five. Due to financial and time constraints these five were chosen to start with. The study could be expanded later on to include additional denominations if funding for our project is extended beyond the initial three years.

In addition to talking with ministry colleagues, a research team of four graduate students was formed, Kelsey Faul, Kristie Finley, Jon Reinink, and Julie Reishus who, along with the planning team, conducted interviews with ministry leaders in charge of confirmation time to ask:

1. What do you think works well in the practice of confirmation work or youth discipleship ministry?

2. What does not work well in the practice of confirmation work or youth discipleship ministry?
3. What do you need help with?
4. As a person who is teaching confirmation, what information would be helpful to learn from a national research study?
5. If you had to design a confirmation program today, what would you do?

Based on the answers, there was little uniformity around the practice of confirmation work and a high degree of frustration among some ministry leaders. There were also leaders who found confirmation work to be a significant and meaningful part of their ministry with youth. When ministry leaders talked about confirmation work they referred to youth being mentored by older members of the congregation, sharing a statement of faith with their congregation, participating in retreats and camps, mandatory worship attendance, Sunday school classes, reading chapters of the Bible, and studying three traditional topics of The Lord's Prayer, The Apostles Creed, and the Ten Commandments – and more. The breadth of what was included in confirmation work was extensive. Most confirmation programs seem to be offered for youth between the ages of twelve and fifteen, although some are offered through the age of eighteen or even into adulthood. Some ministry leaders also said that they were moving away from confirmation work, as their congregation had traditionally practiced it in the past, in order to offer something that would encourage the faith of any new Christian to the worshipping community, regardless of their age.

Two things overwhelmingly came through from the interviews with ministry leaders from the five denominations in the study in this initial phase. First, congregations seem to be quite varied in terms of what confirmation work means and how it is practiced despite standard denominational curriculum and traditions surrounding the practice. Many leaders said that they had pieced together their curriculum, frequently writing some of it themselves. Many also asked, »What do other people do?« One question for the research project will be if there is as much disparity as the leaders reported or if there is more unity than what they seemed to be indicating.

Second, there was a general dissatisfaction with the resources available for leading confirmation programs. This seemed to come from difficulty in finding material that was suitable for young people today. In the post-digital age people construct knowledge differently and ask different questions. Because of social media, relationships are different and exposure to a pluralistic world happens daily. Based on these insights, it appears appropriate not only to look at what is going on, but additionally, to identify some of the better and more creative ways confirmation work is happening today that are responsive to these epistemological and social shifts.

Another contributor to the feeling of dissatisfaction among ministers regarded a lack of agreement between parents, youth, and leaders over the purpose and desired outcomes of confirmation time. Some parents viewed this as their »last responsibility« in providing Christian education for their young people. Young people often looked at confirmation time as a time to be with their friends. Some ministers even said, »I don't know why I am doing this.« These kinds of responses contributed to a growing sense that it was time to carry out research on confirmation work. So the steering committee applied for and received a major grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. to study confirmation work over a three-year period. Upon the reception of this grant the research team was filled out by adding Kenda Dean, Terri Elton, and Lisa Kimball as well as six graduate student researchers, Peter Bauck, Sylvia Bull, Shonda Gladden, Kate Siberene, Jacob Sorenson, and Kate Obermueller Unruh and finally, Kristie Finley, the indispensable program manager.

Five denominations are studied that organise themselves with regional and national organisational structures. These denominations have offices or publishing houses that create resources for confirmation. Despite this, many leaders reported in a preliminary study that they do not use their denomination's curriculum. Instead, they *bricolage* together various experiential opportunities (such as service work, retreats, and worship experiences) and pieces of curriculum, from a variety of resources, often creating some of it themselves.

There also appears to be a broad spectrum of people in leadership roles in the confirmation program. The confirmation leader might be the senior minister, pastor, priest, or rector of a congregation, an associate pastor, the Youth Minister, the Christian Education Director, a volunteer, or a parent of one of the youth. Because of this diversity it has been somewhat challenging to get the surveys into the hands of the correct person to distribute it to youth. These complicating factors led to the decision to conduct a mixed method for research including both quantitative and qualitative research.

3. Methodology for the Confirmation Project

To study confirmation work in the US, it was decided to pursue the research question, »To what extent are confirmation and equivalent practices, in five Protestant denominations that practice infant baptism in the United States, effective for strengthening discipleship among youth?« The first goal of the research is to create a map of the various ways confirmation work is practiced within and across these five denominations. The phrase »and equivalent practices« is significant to this research, because it points to a trend among some

congregations to move away from the traditional practice of confirmation toward forms of education that focus on making disciples of Jesus Christ more faithfully within the particularity of their context. These equivalent practices will be included in the landscape to be described. The guiding interest is in learning how participation in confirmation training encourages discipleship to Jesus Christ. The term »discipleship« has been explicitly chosen to emphasize the theological purpose of confirmation work. Discipleship refers to the intensification of faith in youth and also, how confirmation training integrates youth into the body of Christ, the church. Evidence of faith intensification is expected to be seen in youth responses to questions that expose change in belief over time. Evidence of integration is expected to be seen through increased involvement in congregational life and volunteering over time. Similar to the European study, the Confirmation Project is interested in seeing how participation in confirmation training affects both believing and belonging.

In order to capture the diversity of practice and the wide-ranging opinions, motivations, and beliefs of parents, youth, and ministry leaders, it was decided to use a mixed method approach to gathering data. To gather quantitative data a web-based survey was distributed, inviting all congregations in these five denominations, with at least one confirmand in the last two years, to participate. One point person, usually the lead minister, was sent an email, inviting them into partnership with this research project by forwarding a survey link to all youth, ministry leaders, and parents involved in confirmation work in that congregation. The survey was used to collect details about the practice of confirmation work as well as the opinions, feelings, and beliefs of youth, parents, and ministry leaders. This survey has two waves, the first spanning from October 2014 through March 2015, and the second from May 2015 to July 2015.

The goal is to use the data to look within and across denominations to create a map of the variety of practices that constitute confirmation work. Another question refers to how participation in confirmation work affects the beliefs and practices of youth. To create the survey instrument, the European Questionnaire for Confirmands was used as a starting point and adapted to the American context. Since there is such extensive diversity of practice in the US, multiple sections were added. These go into detail about what youth believe theologically, their relationship to their congregation, their motivations for participation, their religious upbringing, and their beliefs about confirmation time.

Moreover, qualitative data are collected as well. This is being done through site visits that will be written up as »Portraits«. This method of gathering and reporting information, called Portraiture, was developed by Sarah Lawrence-Lightfoot and Jessicah Hoffman Davis (Lawrence-Lightfoot/Hoffmann-Davis 1997). When interviewing ministry leaders, parents, and youth the research

team is asking questions that will help them describe the context in which confirmation work occurs, the history of confirmation work in that place, the areas of challenge and growth this program has faced, and what confirmation work is in this place. The researchers also will operate reflexively, paying attention to their experience of the people and the place and exposing their personal voice as an active interpreter of their experience of this context. They will privilege the experiences of youth in order to highlight what the confirmation time experience means to them. In accordance with the portraiture approach, they are also looking for »goodness«. This means focusing on strengths, signs of resilience, and creativity, as well as noting the challenges faced in a particular context. At this point in the study over half of the twenty-four sites, twenty of which are churches and four of which will be camps, have been visited.

4. Emerging Challenges and Preliminary Findings

At this point in the study, about 4000 individuals have responded to our survey. The majority of these have been ministry leaders, which most likely is, in part, due to the way in which the surveys were distributed. After considering different options and talking with the research division of each denomination, it was decided to conduct a census in which every congregation, with at least one confirmand in the last two years, in each of the five denominations was invited to participate. Denominations do not keep contact lists of members or youth, but congregations often do. As an incentive to ministry leaders and parents we offered a free webinar where the first round of our results will be shared. After one month of the survey being open it was decided to add a \$ 5 gift card to Starbucks or amazon.com as an incentive for the youth.

According to Millar and Dillman, online surveys and mail surveys tend to have a similar response rate when surveying an internet literate demographic and the same patterns of reminder emails and letters are used (Millar/Dillman 2011). Based on this finding, and in consultation with the research company hired for the survey, it was determined that an online survey, conducted as a census, would provide the most meaningful data for the research. The questionnaires were distributed through email and, perhaps predictably, from the preliminary study, many ministry leaders responded who are hoping to have some more guidance in confirmation work and who want to share their stories of success or frustration – some have even sent the curriculum they have written. Before adding the gift card incentive, the response rate of youth was low, making up only 6% of respondents.

After distributing the first round of surveys, numerous ministry leaders re-

ported that their confirmation work programs did not begin until the spring. In order to capture these programs within our study, it was decided to extend the deadline of the survey through March 2015. Since adding the incentive, and likely due in part to the encouragement of confirmation leaders, youth now make up about 20% of those who have responded.

Even though the second wave of the survey is still open and not all of the congregations have been visited, it is possible to see some very interesting trends emerging. Looking at the age when youth begin confirmation time exposes the strong social pressure to participate in confirmation time in the US. The majority, over 80% of youth, begin confirmation time between the ages of 11 and 13. This shows that there is still strong social pressure to be confirmed around this age. What is very interesting as well, is that the additional 20% of individuals who fell outside of this age division ranged from as young as 5 years old to as old as 18, and even older. From the qualitative research, being conducted through site visits, one can see that some congregations are choosing to think of their entire Christian education program as a confirmation program, and therefore report youth beginning as young as 5 years old. Other programs, wanting to emphasize the freedom of youth to choose when they participate, welcome confirmands who are in their late teenage, or even adult years. These latter programs seem to be trying to recover a catechetical model of confirmation work from the early church, which was to prepare individuals to participate fully in the life of the church, regardless of age.

As will become clearer in the later reporting, the churches in each of these five denominations offer confirmation work programs that differ quite spectacularly, ranging from traditional to innovative. The AME denomination, for example, used to practice confirmation, but almost all churches have moved away from this toward different, but equivalent, rites of passage, many of which focus on empowering youth by giving them leadership opportunities within the church. In the Episcopal denomination, it is the bishop, who oversees regional churches, who is responsible for confirmation work. One unique program included in the study focuses on stewardship of the earth while other Episcopal confirmation programs take youth on a pilgrimage, to walk the Camino in Spain, for example. In one PCUSA church the language of »confirmation« is not used, and instead the church is thinking of their entire Christian education program as leading individuals toward »membership« in the body of Christ, the church. All new members to the church go through this program, regardless of age. Although it is not required, many churches in these denominations use the curriculum provided by the denomination and adhere closely to it.

Similar to the excitement in Europe, other denominations in the US have heard about the study and want to be included. To date there are requests from four other denominations to participate. Because of the structure of the fund-

ing and research design, it will not be possible to add these in to this current project, but should the project continue, additional denominations could be included.

This chapter is a report of work in process. The aim of the qualitative and quantitative research is to gain a better picture of what is actually taking place in confirmation work in five major denominations that practice infant baptism. Another aim is to evoke a dialogue about the challenges and opportunities associated with confirmation work today. Already, there are many expressions of interest in the study from ministers, denominational leaders, youth group leaders, and others. We are grateful to our European colleagues who encouraged us to explore the possibility of studying confirmation work in the US and look forward to comparing our data and insights with their study. All of this will be done with an eye to improving confirmation practice in the future.

Up to date information about The Confirmation Project can be found at www.theconfirmationproject.com.

Methodology

VII. Methodology

WOLFGANG ILG, CHRISTOPH MAASS, AND FRIEDRICH SCHWEITZER

This chapter offers an overview on the second international study on confirmation work in Europe. While the results of this study are presented in the preceding parts of the book, the emphasis in the following will be on the research questions, the design and the procedures of the project. As the methodology has remained the same as in the first study, some parts of this chapter refer to the methodology chapter in the earlier volume (Schweitzer et al. 2010, 32-48).

The introduction to this book provides a basic description of the study that will not be repeated here in detail. In order to make it possible that the present chapter can be read independently, however, some basic information must be given again.

1. Background, Research Questions, Design

The second study on confirmation work was planned as a continuation of the first study conducted in 2007/2008 on the one hand, and was intended to go beyond it by including different and additional questions on the other. In the first place, the new focus refers to the time after confirmation, especially concerning the transition from being a confirmand to becoming a volunteer. The results and the methodological aspects concerning the time after confirmation, however, are not reported in this volume but will be published in another book in the present series. Additional questions that were integrated in t_1 and t_2 , refer to worship services and how the confirmands experience them. This topic was identified as a special challenge in the first study which is why the second study aims at deeper insights in this respect by including additional items.

The present volume then has its focus on a repeated study which, for the first time in the field of confirmation work, makes possible comparisons over time. In other words, the main question refers to a comparison between the results of the two studies conducted in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013. Having data from the two studies greatly improves the possibilities for valid interpretations. As long as interpretations cannot be based on earlier data or on other external references, they will always be in danger of viewing certain results as »high« or

»low«, without being able to base this view on empirical evidence. Consequently, all judgments concerning tendencies or developments remain to some degree arbitrary or at least preliminary. In this respect, researching confirmation work repeatedly means a big step forward towards reliable insights. Comparative evaluations can now be based on reliable data.

The main aim of the first study was to achieve an empirically based description of the practise of confirmation work in Europe from the perspective of the confirmands as well as of the workers. The results were published in 2010 (Schweitzer et al. 2010). An important feature of that study were the questionnaires used at the beginning and at the end of confirmation time. This design avoided the weaknesses of snapshot-type surveys which are still fairly typical for many studies on youth and religion. Another basic decision concerned the representative character of the study and the corresponding samples. This is also true for the second study with its considerable samples that make this study one of the largest studies on youth in Europe available so far (t_1 : 27 969; t_2 : 23 974). The basic design of the second study follows that of the first study, most of all with its t_1 - t_2 -design. In addition to this, a third wave of questionnaires was introduced, concerning the attitudes of former confirmands two years after confirmation. The introduction of a third wave of questionnaires (t_3) follows the interest in the long-term consequences of confirmation work, among others for young people's relationship to the church.

The first international study was conducted in seven countries: Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland (canton Zurich). In order to also include experiences from different situations, the second study was broadened further. In addition to the countries of the first study that took part in the second study as well, Hungary and Poland joined the second study, and this time all Swiss cantons could be included. Moreover, with the Methodists in Germany (Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche/EmK) which is not a regional church but a so-called free or independent church with parishes all over the country (cf. p. 280 ff.), the second study allows for comparisons between different church structures in relationship to confirmation work.

The interest in making possible comparisons over time implies that many of the items from the first study had to be retained. Comparisons are only reliable if items do not change. At the same time, the new questions in the second study made additional items necessary. This is why some items had to be dropped and new items had to be developed. Items from the first study that proved hard to interpret or less meaningful than expected were taken out. New items were developed after extensive deliberation among the international team of researchers as well as in consultation with other experts from the field. The resulting questionnaires were again submitted to pretests with confirmands.

The first part of the study reported in this volume was conducted in 2012

(t_1)/2013 (t_2), the last part in summer 2015 (t_3). A graphic description of the different parts of the study as well as a table which presents the sample can be found in the introduction (p. 26).

2. Questionnaires

The study used a quantitative approach with paper questionnaires. Questionnaires were filled in at two points of time by the confirmands and by the workers. In some countries, structural information on the parishes was collected beforehand (t_0).

There are two different numbering systems for the items. Each questionnaire has an ascending question-number, mainly for the use of those who complete the questionnaires. As the questionnaires differ slightly in each country, these ascending numbers could not be standardised for all countries. The item-names that are used for the interpretation of the data, consist of two letters and a two-digit number, e. g., WB07. The first letter indicates the questionnaire (cf. Figure 61 on p. 342):

C = confirmands t_1	K = confirmands t_2	Q = confirmands t_3
W = workers t_1	V = workers t_2	

The second letter indicates the section within the questionnaire. Sections with the same second letter in t_1 and t_2 correspond with each other, for example, CE01 corresponds with KE01. The section-letters between confirmands and workers, however, are independent from each other. All data have been computed in such a way that they can be linked to the respective group. Due to this, it is, for example, possible to relate the methods named by the workers to the feedback of the adolescents. In some countries, the parish is not always the appropriate framework for describing a local confirmation work setting. The setting can also be a camp where confirmands come together from different regions (as it often is the case in Sweden). Thus, in the international context, the framework for one coherent confirmation work group (i. e., workers and »their« group of confirmands) is called a »unit«. The units are relevant especially for the analysis at the group level, for example, if effects of confirmation time on the confirmands are analysed against the influence of methods or structures (Is a camp included in confirmation time? Are there voluntary workers cooperating with the staff?, etc.).

All questionnaires were printed in the languages of the participating countries. Because all members of the team speak English, this language was chosen

for common communication. This allowed for direct exchange within the team but the translations always required an intermediate step from English into the vernacular. Experts in each country translated the questionnaires into their language from the common English versions, also making sure that confirmands could understand the wording. Some items turned out to be not appropriate for specific countries and consequently were left out; these are called »country-specific« items. For some areas of special interest, the four Nordic countries as well as Switzerland incorporated additional items for their contexts. Altogether, the questionnaires in the different countries share more than 80% of their items. They are identical concerning the layout and the order of item-sections. An English version of all questionnaires is available on the internet (www.confirmation-research.eu). One exemplary questionnaire (confirmands t_2) is printed on pp. 395-398 of this book.

Two special cases have to be noted as exceptions to the general set-up of the study. First, as reported below, in Poland it was not possible to have the workers complete the questionnaires. Consequently, the study only includes data from the confirmands there. Second, due to special circumstances, the data from Hungary became available much later than the data from the other countries. This is why they could not be included in the calculation of international means. In the appendix as well as in the tables and figures throughout the book, a double line separating the Hungarian data from the other results indicates this difference.

Finally, the results from territorial Churches and from the EmK (German Methodists) as a Church with different structures as described above (p. 280 ff.) raise special questions concerning possible comparisons. For this reason, the Methodist data were also not included with the calculation of international means. In the tables and figures they are presented after the double line, together with the Hungarian data.

3. Setup of the Samples in the Countries

3.1 General Description

Gaining a representative sample of confirmands was the aim for the selection of the samples in all the countries. As the situation in the countries involved differs concerning the existence of databases on parishes, appropriate procedures had to be chosen by the individual country teams and are reported in the following. For all the countries involved the procedure was such, that a selection of parishes – in some countries, all parishes – received an invitation to participate

in the study. In the parishes willing to take part in the study, the questionnaires were handed out to all confirmands of the cohort heading for confirmation in 2013. In addition, all workers in the parishes selected filled in a workers' questionnaire (with the exception of Poland). As the setting of filling in the questionnaires usually was a classroom-type situation, typically all confirmands and workers were reached, only with few exceptions of those who were sick on that day. Filling in the questionnaires (about 80 items) took less than 20 minutes. It was done on a voluntary basis, but only very few of the confirmands and workers refused to fill in their questionnaires. In contrast to studies where questionnaires are sent out to anyone willing to answer, this method of a full survey in a random sample of parishes guarantees for covering the whole range of confirmands, those that are highly satisfied as well as those who dislike their confirmation time. Through different measures (anonymous codes, rules for the re-collection of the questionnaires by confirmands and not by the minister, etc.) it was made sure that the confirmands could state their real opinions without having to be afraid that the ministers could attribute critical answers to specific persons.

Participation in the study was voluntary for the parishes. In all the countries, there was a dropout of the parishes willing to participate from t_1 to t_2 . Typically the reasons for these dropouts were unsystematic, like a change in the person responsible for confirmation work or simply the feeling of the people involved that, due to an overload of work, they could not manage to continue with the study. It is assumed that these dropouts follow no specific pattern so that they would not affect the representativity of the parishes involved.

An overview on the samples is printed on p. 25.

In the following, procedures in the participating countries are described in more detail.

3.2 Germany

All 19 territorial Churches (»Landeskirchen«) of the »Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland« (EKD) participated in the study, only the Reformed Church (which is not a territorial Church) did not take part. The territorial Churches vary in size very much, with a range from 180 confirmands up to 33 242 confirmands. As every church received an individual data report on the results, representativity was an aim for each of these regional Churches. Each Church delivered a list of all its parishes along with descriptive data like the parish size or regional information. An external social science institute (GESIS – Leibniz-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften) then drew a random sample out of these parishes. The parishes of the first study had the same chance to be selected again as all the other parishes.

Out of the 14769 parishes of the EKD, a random selection of 1299 parishes received an invitation letter to participate in the study (8.8 % of the total). Via phonecalls, the invitation to participate was repeated after some weeks. 45 % of the selected parishes were not able or not willing to participate, for example, because they had no confirmands in the current confirmation period or did not agree to participate. The other 55 % (710 parishes) received the t_1 -questionnaires in autumn 2012, out of which 583 finally took part in the study. This means a return rate of 45 % of the originally drawn sample and 82 % of the parishes that had received t_1 -questionnaires. Altogether 3.9 % of all parishes in the EKD took part in the study. It can be assumed that the sample of these 583 parishes is highly representative of all German parishes. In addition, the sample allows for representative results for each territorial Church.

Very small regional Churches were oversampled in the total in order to receive a sufficient number of confirmands involved in the study. The same applies for some Churches with an interest in a higher number of questionnaires for a more reliable report for their regional Church. The overall German results were weighted according to the proportion of the regional Churches.

The task of questionnaire handling (printing, sending, data transcription) was performed by a specialised company (Computer nach Maß), the same procedure with this company also applied for Austria and Switzerland.

3.3 Austria

The 2012/2013 study was carried out by the »Evangelische Kirche in Österreich«. An invitation letter was sent via mail to all 205 parishes. 3 of 9 Reformed (»Evangelische Kirche H.B.«) and 25 of 196 Lutheran (»Evangelische Kirche A.B.«) parishes signed up for participation in this study. 7 parishes, which took part in the study in 2007/2008, agreed to participate again. Only one parish was lost after t_0 . The participating parishes are representative for the Austrian situation concerning the following parameters:

- rural, urban and mixed area,
- minority and non-minority situations (in some regions there exists a Protestant majority),
- historical background (Edict-of-Tolerance-parishes, Away-from-Rome-Movement, foundation after World War II in consequence of immigration, suburban development areas).

The size of a confirmation group in Austria varies between 2 and 50 confirmands. In the year 2013, 2488 young people celebrated their confirmation and about 500, i. e., one fifth of them, were included in the study.

Working closely with the research team at the University of Tübingen and the Comenius-Institute in Münster, Austria used the same questionnaires for confirmands and workers as in Germany, with only some country-specific alterations, for example, concerning school types. The data were electronically registered and processed by the German research team.

3.4 Switzerland

In preparing the study at the beginning of 2012, all cantonal Churches were asked to participate in the study. All of the 24 cantonal Churches not only agreed to this but also named a contact person for supporting the study. The Swiss team decided to do a complete inventory count due to the fact that the cantonal Churches and the research team saw this as a chance to draw attention to the whole project in all the parishes. The cantonal Churches delivered lists of all parishes with contact addresses of the main responsible persons, who typically were not the ministers but the heads of the local church councils. In spring 2012, these persons received a letter in which they were invited to take part in the study. About a third of the almost 1400 parishes reacted positively to the invitation and were willing to take part.

Due to the fact that in each cantonal Church a person was chosen to accompany the study and encouraged the ministers and groups to be part of the project, it is by no means that only well-meaning workers or parishes with a positive attitude participated in the study. On the other hand, the commitment depended strongly on the knowledge and inner-cantonal publicity of the study, provided by those cantonal contact persons.

This means that German, French and also Italian speaking parishes were included. The cantonal Churches vary in size very much, with Bern and Zurich as the largest and also some Churches with only a very few parishes. The main part of participating parishes are located in the German speaking parts of Switzerland, from the Italian speaking area only one parish contributed, mostly because in this area the Catholic Church is more dominant. From the French speaking parishes, which with around 150 parishes comprise a bit more than 10% of all Swiss Reformed parishes, also about a third reacted positively. The mixture from urban, rural and mixed backgrounds of parishes is warranted, although the participation was voluntary.

In setting up the questionnaires and especially in translating them into French, some important differences in meaning, content and also in length of confirmation work had to be considered, which was also supported by the bilingual cantonal contact persons.

It can be assumed that the sample of the 477 (t_1) and 427 (t_2) participating parishes is highly representative of all Swiss parishes. In addition, the sample allows for representative results for at least the larger cantonal Churches. In t_1 , 7217 confirmands and 905 workers participated, the corresponding figures in t_2 were 6437 and 688.

The Swiss data-sets were processed by the Tübingen team, as the data-collecting-process concerning timelines followed the German model in most parts. The questionnaire handling was performed by a specialised company (Computer nach Maß). The overall Swiss results were weighted according to the proportion of the regional Churches.

3.5 Denmark

For most confirmands in Denmark, confirmation takes place in March, April, and May after seven to nine months of confirmation work, which normally starts in August or September the year before. In order to study the confirmands of 2013, the first questionnaire was sent out in September 2012 and the second questionnaire in April 2013. For data collection a variation of the cluster sampling technique was used. Of the 114 deaneries in Denmark one deanery from each of the ten dioceses was selected in order to cover the theological geography of the Church. All parishes in each of these ten deaneries were invited to participate in the study. There are some difficulties identifying the most relevant unit. Some parishes have more than one pastor and other parishes need to share one pastor. There are 236 parishes in these ten deaneries, but as some of them share the same minister, they were invited en bloc. A total of 97 invitations were sent out, but in some parishes the minister's position turned out to be vacant at the time and some pastors were suffering from long-term illness and did not respond. Responses were received from 61 ministers (covering almost twice as many parishes). The questionnaires were sent to the ministers who distributed them during confirmation classes. The number of confirmands in the parishes varied from a single confirmand to 145 confirmands. A total of 2024 confirmands filled in the first questionnaire.

In addition to the general difficulties with having people fill in questionnaires twice, the t_2 rounds of questionnaires suffered from a teachers' strike. Although confirmation work takes place during school time in Denmark, it is independent from the school. However, a lot of the confirmands connect school with confirmation work and thus did not attend classes, and the response rate suffered as a consequence of this. Only 70% of the parishes that participated in the first round also participated in the second, with an overall response rate of 53% of the original invited sample. 1507 questionnaires from the second round

were collected, and 727 of them could be matched (48% of t_2), although 994 confirmands state that they remember filling in the first questionnaire for potential matching of 66%.

3.6 Finland

In Finland, the 2012/2013 study was conducted by the Church Research Institute. The sample of parishes was selected by the researchers in collaboration with the staff of the Church Council of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The t_1 questionnaires were sent to the parishes in November 2012 and for t_2 in February 2013. Altogether 2436 confirmands, 510 volunteers and 169 main responsible workers replied in t_1 and 2298 confirmands, 506 volunteers and 156 main responsible workers in t_2 . Volunteers and main responsible workers had separate t_2 questionnaires but t_1 was integrated, although there were a large number of country-specific items for the volunteers. The country-specific items investigated the attitudes and work of the young confirmed volunteers (YCVs) participating in the confirmation groups together with the main responsible workers and confirmands because they are an important institution in the Finnish confirmation work.

The sample included confirmands, volunteers and main responsible workers from 13 parishes and one Christian association. Altogether, the sample consisted of 111 confirmation groups (= units). The Finnish confirmands were equally divided between males and females. The split of respondents for the questionnaire was likewise even (50%/50%). Most (98%) confirmands were 14 to 15 years old. About 6% of all the confirmands in Finland participate in the confirmation work organised by Christian associations and revival movements. In the sample there were 4.5% of the confirmands in t_1 and 6.5% in t_2 who participated in confirmation work organised by a Christian association. 10.3% of the respondents in t_1 and 10.7% in t_2 belonged to the Swedish minority, which is more than their share of the confirmands overall.

Comparing the results of this study to the previous study from 2007/2008, major changes can be observed. Some of these changes may be due to the fact that the parishes that took part in the new study are different. However, in both cases the sample includes the same share of small countryside parishes and large city parishes in different parts of the country, and the differences between the units do not seem to explain the changes. Because similar results can be found in other studies that took place in Finland at the same time as the present study, the results can be regarded as reliable and caused by the general changes concerning the relationship to the Church in Finland. The sample can be regarded as quite representative.

3.7 Norway

The aim of the study was to include 2915 confirmands, approximately 7% of the confirmands from each diocese in the Church of Norway. Based on the selection from the 2007/2008 study, a total of 65 parishes were initially invited to participate, the selection criteria being geographical differences and the different »religious landscapes« in the dioceses. Initial contact was made by a letter of invitation that included a recommendation from the head person of the bishops in the Church of Norway. Further contact was made by telephone. In the process, parishes from a surplus standby-selection were included to remain representative in all dioceses. In total, 79 parishes (or organisational units gathering several rather small parishes) were contacted, 19 of which declined to participate. In the end, the total figure for the confirmands was 3215, the smallest confirmation group counting 13 confirmands, the largest 230. Of these, 2337 questionnaires (73%), were received in t_1 and 2166 (67%) in t_2 . 38 parishes from the 2007/2008 study are included in the sample from 2012/2013. The study was registered with and approved by Norwegian Social Science Data Service (NSD). Data processing was carried out by the company Viascan AS.

3.8 Sweden

The Church participating in the Swedish study was the Church of Sweden. The Church of Sweden is regulated by Swedish law to be a country-based Church organised in more than 1000 parishes that together equals the territory within the Swedish borders. In order to achieve a representative sample that makes it possible to generalise concerning the population of confirmands and workers in the Church of Sweden, the first step of the sampling strategy included selecting a random sample of parishes. This was accomplished by using the comprehensive database of parishes which the Church of Sweden maintains as a sample frame. Out of all parishes, 238 parishes were randomly selected. The selected sample of parishes was invited to participate in the study. In total, 80 parishes chose to answer this invitation positively and all of them were included in the study. The response rate for this first call was 34%. When agreeing to participate, the parishes gave an estimate on how many confirmands and workers they would have at the respective time. Based on these estimates, the number of questionnaires was calculated. For confirmands the total number of questionnaires was 2958, whereas for workers the total number of questionnaires was 1082. Of the 2958 confirmands, 1381 chose to answer the questionnaire giving the t_1 study a response rate of 47%. In the case of the workers, 357 of the in total 1082 workers answered the t_1 study (33%). In comparison with the t_1 study, the

participation rates for t_2 study were lower. In total, 779 of the confirmands (26% of the population) and 202 of the workers (19% of the population) participated. No in depth analysis was performed in order to find out if there was any selection bias concerning the parishes, confirmands and workers that chose to participate or not to participate. However, there are no indications in the data that suggest they would not reflect the general population and Church of Sweden.

3.9 Poland

This was the very first study about confirmation work in the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland (Lutheran Church in Poland, Kościół Ewangelicko-Augsburski w RP). Before the survey started, it had to be endorsed by the Church consistory (by the bishop of the Church as well as by the diocesan bishops). The survey was financially supported by the Church. In 2012, every diocese of the Church was visited by the researcher who attended diocesan meetings of the ministers, informing them about the international study. Its goals, details, target group, expected outcomes, and deadlines for the questionnaires were introduced to the participants. After that, each parish minister decided himself if he wanted to take part in the study or not. However, they were not willing to fill out worker questionnaires. All parishes of the Church received a letter of invitation for participation in the study. This invitation was repeated after some weeks via phone. Confirmand questionnaires were sent to all parishes willing to participate. Some parishes were not able to participate, for example, because they had no confirmands at the time, others just were not willing to participate.

The Lutheran Church in Poland has 133 parishes, 50% of them had no confirmands in 2013. 30.8% of the parishes in Poland responded to the t_1 questionnaire and 27.5% in t_2 . All six dioceses of the Church were represented in the survey.

Parishes in Poland vary in size very much, with a range from 60 confirmands down to 1 confirmand in minority contexts. In the parishes that answered the questionnaire, the average number of confirmands is between 4 and 7. The majority of the confirmands live in small towns.

3.10 Hungary

A total of 943 confirmands and 134 workers from altogether 160 congregations responded at least in one or both rounds of the questionnaires. The participat-

ing parishes from the Reformed Church in Hungary were selected by disproportionate stratified random sampling by the 27 presbyteries (i. e., dioceses) and by settlement types. Although the capital Budapest is divided in two presbyteries, these were merged for sampling purposes. Within the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Methodist Church the total population was reached, that is, all parishes were approached where confirmation groups were presumably available. In line with the agreed international sampling procedures, participating parishes were requested to survey all confirmands in the groups for which the confirmation service was scheduled for spring 2013. However, it was not possible to control selection of the individual respondents.

A large number of congregations from all three denominations withdrew from participation. Very few indicated that they were not willing to be surveyed, and some, especially in minor settlements, replied that no confirmands were present or only in such a low number that the parish was unable to start a confirmation group either in the year of the study or already for a longer period. A considerable share of the parishes addressed did not respond at all. The low response rate and high share of drop-outs reflected the unexpectedly low level of trust and extreme workload of ministers in charge of confirmation work.

Sampling issues and response rates certainly raise questions concerning the validity, reliability and generalisability of the results. As the first large-scale survey of its kind, the study bears a good face-validity and mirrors certain Hungarian specificities which are known from everyday practice. Thus, it is arguable that the results provide a good basis for international comparison. However, high refusal and non-response rates imply that the confidence level cannot be measured. That is why also cross-denominational comparisons were not undertaken. It is a further problem that there are no reliable church-wide congregational-level statistical data available on the topic for proper sampling or comparison. Detailed results of diocesan annual data collections are treated as confidential and these are not available even for the Synod offices (only cumulate tables are public).

As the timing of the Hungarian study was different from the rest of the international study, the Hungarian results are not fully integrated in the total results, but stand for themselves (see pp. 331, 341).

3.11 The EmK Germany (Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche)

The Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche (EmK) in Germany, which is a part of the worldwide United Methodist Church (UMC), participated in a study on confirmation work (»Kirchlicher Unterricht«, KU) for the very first time. In

2014, the EmK nationwide had 53 500 members and affiliates in 520 local congregations, grouped in 245 circuits, obviously one of the minority Churches in Germany. Because of the small total sample, the study was carried out as a nationwide full-scale survey.

In t_0 (2012) the questionnaires were sent to all EmK circuits nationwide. There was feedback from 226 (92%), 166 (73%) of them stated that they conduct KU (Methodist confirmation work is called *Kirchlicher Unterricht*), some in regional cooperation. 99 units participated in the study. In t_0 the KU leaders stated a total of 1048 confirmands. In t_1 the study involved 761 confirmands and 138 workers from 89 units. In t_2 628 confirmands and 114 workers from 89 units filled in the questionnaires. These response rates provide a solid basis for statistical analysis of the assembled data.

Since the EmK has a two-year curriculum for KU, in t_2 the confirmands had to be grouped in two cohorts, celebrating their confirmation (*Einsegnung*) either in 2013 (t_{2a}) or 2014 (t_{2b}). While the EmK study followed the international research schedule as much as possible, in t_2 the inquiry needed to be divided up in two points of time, in order to achieve a sufficient number of cases. In t_{2a} all participating parishes were addressed; in t_{2b} only those with *Einsegnung* in 2014. This is why the number of KU units involved differs between t_{2a} (89 units) and t_{2b} (62 units).

Due to the special situation and structure of the EmK, the EmK results are not fully integrated in the total results, but stand for themselves (see pp. 331, 341).

4. Handling and Presentation of the Data

As described for the different countries above in more detail, the confirmands were asked to fill in the questionnaires in each parish, usually during a group meeting. Completing the questionnaires was voluntary for the confirmands as well as for the workers and parents. All of them were assured that the results would be anonymous. The respective codes of ethics and judicial guidelines were observed.

All questionnaires were recorded either manually or by a scanning system into the software SPSS. Plausibility analyses were performed, for example, to exclude questionnaires in which a confirmand had ticked the same box for all answers. These analyses, but also the feedback from workers in the groups, affirm that most confirmands were indeed very open to the questions and felt taken seriously by the questions about their experiences and opinions.

Technically, all data were stored in three different SPSS-data sets: a data set for the confirmands, a data set for the workers, and a data set on the unit level

storing structural data for each unit as well as the mean values of all confirmands' and all workers' items for the unit (aggregated data). Where there was only one leader per unit, his or her answers on the leaders' questionnaire were taken as structural data for this unit. In a unit with several leaders, a mean value of their answers was computed for the unit level data set. Most of the items in the study are listed with their detailed results in the appendix of this book (p. 363 ff.). Due to the large number of items, though, only the items with the (usually 7-point) Likert-scales typically used in the study are documented. Additional items, that were used only in selected countries, are not reported in the appendix.

The results in the appendix display all results for the individual countries as well as for the Total. The Total comprises the data from Germany, Austria, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Poland, Sweden, and Switzerland, and is weighted according to the number of confirmands in these countries. In other words, the Total mirrors the average answer of all confirmands in the named countries. Due to reasons explained above, the data from Hungary and the EmK were not integrated into the Total. This is the reason, why these results are printed in two separate columns in the appendix marked off by the double line.

5. Comparisons

The data from the present study allow for a number of comparisons: between the beginning and the end of confirmation time; between the results from the study conducted in 2007/2008 and the study from 2012/2013; between the results from different countries.

5.1 Comparisons between the Beginning and the End of Confirmation Time

The study worked with two sets of questionnaires, one in the beginning of confirmation time, the second one shortly before the day of confirmation. While it was possible to do the second round of interviews at the same time in all of the locations, the different durations of the confirmation time (between one and two years) created a problem concerning the first round of interviews that could not be solved. If all of the first interviews would have been done at the beginning of the confirmation time, the interval between t_1 and t_2 would have been very different. This is why t_1 was set for about 9 months (if possible) prior to t_2 thus mirroring the situation in the beginning phase of confirmation time

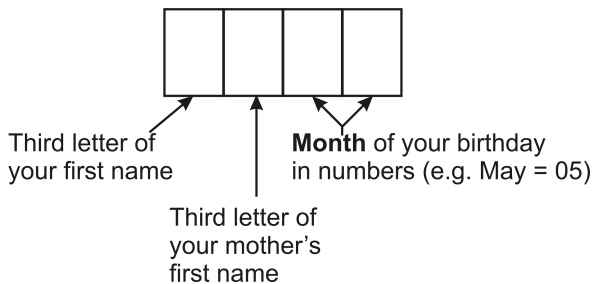
for some parishes and the situation »half way through« confirmation time in others (for the special way of t_2 data collection in the EmK see 280 ff.).

There are two kinds of correspondence between t_1 and t_2 :

- Items concerning personal attitudes towards faith and church have exactly the same wording in t_1 and t_2 . The difference between both indicates a change of attitude during confirmation time. These items can be found mainly in sections CE/KE, CF/KF and CG/KG.
- Other items relate an expectation (t_1) to an experience (t_2), like »During the time of my confirmation training it is important for me ... to have a lot of fun« (CK05) – »During my confirmation time ... I had a lot of fun« (KK05). These items can be found mainly in CB/KB, CK/KK and CS/KS for the confirmands and WB/VB, WC/VC and WD/VD for the workers. It is noteworthy that not all of the expectations are matched with a respective experience and vice versa.

The individual matching of the questionnaires of t_1 and t_2 was based on an anonymous code which remained the same over time (cf. Figure 61). This method makes it possible, for example, to analyse, on an individual level, the statements of those adolescents whose interest in youth groups increases strongly against those with whom it decreases. Altogether 16 991 pairs of t_1 - t_2 confirmands' questionnaires could be matched, accounting for 74% of all 23 039 t_2 -questionnaires. The exact percentages of questionnaires matched are given in the respective country reports. The use of the anonymous code has proven to be a very helpful technique. Most of the confirmands were able and willing to fill it in. As the code is invariant over lifetime, it is one of the easiest methods to match questionnaires individually without asking for the person's name.

Figure 61: Anonymous code (in some countries the layout was different)



As the matching rates certainly do not reach 100%, the existence of matched and non-matched questionnaires allows for two ways of presenting data. On the one hand, it is possible to compare the overall results in t_1 and t_2 for all

questionnaires. On the other hand, the comparisons between t_1 and t_2 become more precise if only matched cases are used because this guarantees for the same data base in t_1 and t_2 . In this book, results for all questionnaires are usually presented. Only when it comes to specific questions about changes from t_1 to t_2 , are the results based on »matched cases only« and can thus deviate slightly from the overall values. Practically, the difference between using all questionnaires and only the matched ones is not really that great as Table 85 shows for an exemplary item.

Table 85: Comparison between results of all vs. »matched only« questionnaires for CG01/KG01

CG01/KG01: It is important for me to belong to the Church.	N (all)	Mean (all)	N (matched only)	Mean (matched only)
CG01 (t_1)	26067	3.84	16674	3.97
KG01 (t_2)	22614	4.08	16674	4.13
Difference of mean values		(0.24; not used)		0.16

5.2 Comparisons between the Results from the Study Conducted in 2007/2008 and the Study From 2012/2013

Another major interest guiding the present study was to make possible comparisons over time. With the two parallel studies from 2007/2008 and 2012/2013, for the first time suitable data for such comparisons became available. In order to make sure that valid comparisons would be feasible, a number of steps had to be taken:

- The design of the two studies had to be identical.
- The samples in the different countries had to be as representative as possible.
- The questionnaires had to include identical questions – a requirement that the project fulfilled with about 60 % of the items.

Another challenge arises from the question how differences can be interpreted. In other words, what can be considered the threshold beyond which differences can be considered meaningful? In order to be consistent and follow transparent procedures it was decided that usually only differences of 3 or more percent points should be reported. Smaller differences can be taken as an indication of the possible direction of certain tendencies or developments but must be viewed as below the margins of robust results.

Comparisons could only be done concerning the countries that took part in both studies (Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden and, in the case of Switzerland, the canton Zurich). As far as comparisons are based on totals it was made sure that only the data from these countries were included in the calculations.

5.3 Comparisons between the Results from Different Countries

For an international project like the present one, international comparison naturally is one of the leading intentions. Making sure that the preconditions for such comparisons would be fulfilled, was, consequently, a constant aim of the whole study.

From the beginning, the emerging discussion on comparative religious education was taken up (cf. Schweitzer et al. 2010, 207-211, 212-221, also see Schweitzer 2013). On a more concrete level, the following steps were taken:

- As far as possible, the same or at least comparable procedures were followed in all participating countries and Churches. It has to be said, however, that this possibility was limited, due to the different situations and circumstances in the different locations.
- The team of researchers proceeded in line with agreements on details of the study (data handling, etc.) that were made during the regular international meetings of the group or through internet-based exchanges.
- It was important not to just use the data for comparative evaluation without paying heed to the different contexts from which they come. Contextually sensitive interpretation was another guiding principle.

For international comparison, the same margin of a minimum of 3 percent points was used for defining meaningful differences. This applied to international comparisons for developments over time, i. e., between the two studies conducted in 2007/228 and 2012/2013, as well as for comparisons between individual countries or Churches.

6. Indexes

Indexes are computed in order to facilitate analyses and comparisons and to improve the validity of interpretations. The present indexes were created by using factor analysis (Varimax with rotation). They are computed as the mean values of all the items enclosed in the index. Only indexes with Cronbach Alpha > 0.7 for the whole dataset and additionally with Cronbach Alpha > 0.6 in each of the participating countries were used. The index-name starts with an »i«, followed by two letters indicating the relevant item-section and a number (e. g., iCB1). The complete list of all indexes is given below. The overall Cronbach Alpha is stated in brackets. Cronbach Alpha for the individual countries is reported in Table 86. The results of the indexes of each country are printed in the appendix (p. 363 ff.).

iCB1

Faith related motives (t_1) (0.80)

- CB01: to learn more about God and faith.
- CB03: to come to my own decision about my faith in God.
- CB08: to be strengthened in my faith.

iKB1

Experience of growth in faith (t_2) (0.75)

- KB01: I have learnt more about God and faith.
- KB03: I have been enabled to come to my own decision about my faith.
- KB08: I have been strengthened in my faith.

iCE1

Christian beliefs (t_1) (0.86)

- CE01: God created the world.
- CE02: There is life after death.
- CE03: God loves all humans and cares about each one of us.
- CE04: Jesus has risen from the dead.
- CE08: Faith in God helps me in difficult situations.
- CE09: I believe in God.

iKE1

Christian beliefs (t_2) (0.89)

- KE01: God created the world.
- KE02: There is life after death.
- KE03: God loves all humans and cares about each one of us.

- KE04: Jesus has risen from the dead.
- KE08: Faith in God helps me in difficult situations.
- KE09: I believe in God.

iCL1

Interest in conduct of life (t_1) (0.71)

- CL08: Justice and responsibility for others
- CL09: Friendship
- CL11: The meaning of life

iKL1

Interest in conduct of life (t_2) (0.77)

- KL08: Justice and responsibility for others
- KL09: Friendship
- KL11: The meaning of life

iCL2

Interest in the Christian tradition (t_1) (0.91)

- CL01: Baptism
- CL02: The Lord's Supper
- CL03: Course and meaning of Sunday services
- CL04: Your own parish
- CL05: Jesus Christ
- CL06: The Bible
- CL22: God
- CL24: Resurrection

iKL2

Interest in the Christian tradition (t_2) (0.91)

- KL01: Baptism
- KL02: The Lord's Supper
- KL03: Course and meaning of Sunday services
- KL04: Your own parish
- KL05: Jesus Christ
- KL06: The Bible
- KL22: God
- KL24: Resurrection

iKK3

Involvement and participation (0.72)

- KK03: I came into good personal contact with the leaders and workers.
- KK04: we could influence the decisions about the topics.
- KK05: I had a lot of fun.
- KK11: my questions concerning faith were addressed.
- KS01: I experienced forms of worship adequate for young people (e. g., youth services).
- KK37: In our parish I feel welcome and accepted.

iKN3

Satisfaction (0.88)

- KN01: the whole confirmation time
- KN03: content/topics of lessons in confirmation work
- KN07: minister/person primarily responsible for confirmation work
- KN08: other teachers/workers
- KN10: church services
- KN11: camp(s)
- KN14: music, songs and singing
- KN20: working methods (for example, working with biblical texts, group work, etc.)

iKS1

Experiences with church services (0.83)

- KS01: I experienced forms of worship adequate for young people (e. g., youth services).
- KS05: I listened to interesting sermons.
- KS12: Singing old church hymns was nice for me.
- KS13: Singing modern church songs was nice for me.
- KS14: The services usually dealt with things that concern me and my life.
- KS16: I liked being part of the worship community.

iKS2

Sense of security & well-being in the group during services (0.72)

- KS04: I met nice people.
- KS15: I felt secure in the group.
- KS16: I liked being part of the worship community.

iWA1

Importance of Christian tradition (0.76)

- WA03: Baptism
- WA04: The Lord's supper
- WA07: Jesus Christ

iWB1

Faith-related aims (0.82)

- WB10: get to know other people to whom faith is important.
- WB20: experience the presence of God.
- WC02: be strengthened in their faith.
- WC11: learn to live their everyday life in relationship to God.

iWB2

Aim of focusing services (0.81)

- WB30: meet nice people in the services.
- WB31: feel secure and accepted in the group in the services.
- WB32: get orientation for their daily life.
- WB33: experience a friendly atmosphere in the services.
- WB34: get acquainted with the liturgy.
- WB04: experience forms of worship adequate for young people.
- WB28: be given the opportunity to contribute their own ideas to the preparation of a service.
- WB29: have tasks in the services (for example, do a reading).

iWP1

Encouraging voluntary work (0.79)

- WP11: get to know young people working in the church as volunteers.
- WP12: get to know parts, programs and tasks in the church where they can work as volunteers.
- WP13: be won for continuing as voluntary workers in the church.

Table 86: Cronbach Alpha for all indexes for all countries

Cronbachs Alpha Index	Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK
iCB1: faith related motives (t ₁)	0.80	0.79	0.77	0.79	0.74	0.83	0.83	0.81	0.80	0.83	0.79
iKB1: Experience of growth in faith (t ₂)	0.75	0.78	0.78	0.80	0.74	0.70	0.73	0.67	0.85	0.78	0.81
iCE1: Christian beliefs (t ₁)	0.86	0.85	0.85	0.87	0.81	0.91	0.88	0.84	0.78	0.86	0.86
iKE1: Christian beliefs (t ₂)	0.89	0.88	0.89	0.90	0.86	0.93	0.91	0.89	0.90	0.89	0.89
iCL1: Interest in conduct of life (t ₁)	0.71	0.68	0.71	0.73	0.69	0.80	0.73	0.70	0.76	0.69	0.63
iKL1: Interest in conduct of life (t ₂)	0.77	0.75	0.71	0.78	0.75	0.81	0.81	0.74	0.81	0.66	0.73
iCL2: Interest in the Christian tradition (t ₁)	0.91	0.89	0.89	–	0.88	0.94	0.92	0.92	0.91	0.90	0.87
iKL2: Interest in the Christian tradition (t ₂)	0.91	0.89	0.91	0.90	0.91	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.91	0.92	0.88
iKK3: involvement and participation	0.72	0.69	0.73	0.69	0.72	0.79	0.77	0.68	0.71	0.68	0.66
iKN3: satisfaction	0.88	0.87	0.92	0.89	0.85	0.91	0.90	0.88	0.91	0.90	0.89
iKS1: experiences with church services	0.83	0.81	0.83	0.84	0.85	0.88	0.88	0.80	0.79	0.79	0.77
iKS2: Sense of security & well-being in the group during services	0.72	0.72	0.76	0.70	0.71	0.72	0.77	0.61	0.79	0.73	0.77
iWA1: Importance of Christian tradition	0.76	0.67	0.64	0.71	0.78	0.81	0.74	0.81	–	0.77	0.65
iWB1: faith related aims	0.82	0.77	0.78	0.74	0.78	0.86	0.73	0.86	–	0.70	0.66
iWB2: aim of focusing services	0.81	0.79	0.82	0.77	0.72	0.86	0.76	0.80	–	0.79	0.74
iWP1: encouraging voluntary work	0.79	0.74	0.75	–	0.88	0.83	0.75	0.74	–	0.86	0.75

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IX. Appendix

In the following the items of the questionnaires are documented that were used in all of the countries in the study:

- Indexes of confirmands and workers (i_)
- Questionnaires of the confirmands (t₁: C_; t₂: K_)
- Questionnaires of the workers (t₁: W_; t₂: V_).

For all items with a rating scale, the mean values are reported. Most of the items had a seven-point scale; here also the number of respondents agreeing to the statement is given (percentage yes = percentage of answers 5, 6, and 7). The few items without a scaled answering format are documented at the end of each section (due to space, results can only be reported in selected cases). The layout and order of the items are not equivalent to those of the questionnaires that were given to the interviewees. An exemplary questionnaire is printed on page 395 ff.

The items printed in the appendix were asked in all (or most of) the countries involved. Additional country-specific items are not reported. Moreover, the results for a number of items and indexes referring to volunteers are not presented in this volume. They will be evaluated in another publication in this series that will focus on the results from the questionnaire two years after confirmation (t₃) and on the experiences of volunteers.

In order to facilitate comparisons between the countries and Churches, the mean values with a deviation of ≥ 0.4 above total mean are marked with a light grey background; those with a deviation of ≤ -0.4 are marked with a dark grey background. For the percentages: $\geq 66\%$ light grey background; $\leq 33\%$ dark grey background. These indications are only given for items with the seven-point scale as well as for the indexes based on them.

The results are reported in the following order: Germany (DE), Austria (AT); Switzerland (CH), Denmark (DK), Finland (FI), Norway (NO), Sweden (SE), Poland (PL), Hungary (HU), German Methodists (EmK).

1. Comparative Tables

Indexes of Confirmands and Workers

	M Total	DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE
		EKD									EmK
I take part in confirmation time, ... <i>(1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)</i>											
iCB1 Faith related motives (t ₁)	3.91	4.16	4.11	3.43	4.10	3.23	3.46	3.66	6.12	4.80	5.19
iCE1 Christian Beliefs (t ₁)	4.37	4.68	4.78	4.11	4.49	3.66	4.11	3.72	6.42	5.82	5.95
iCL1 Interest in conduct of life (t ₁)	5.07	5.17	5.30	4.90	5.20	4.51	5.08	5.01	5.46	5.83	5.56
iCL2 Interest in the Christian tradition (t ₁)	3.98	4.33	4.40	3.57	3.99	3.30	3.52	3.47	5.40	4.98	5.25
iKB1 Experience of growth in faith (t ₂)	4.99	4.98	5.04	4.52	5.09	5.20	4.88	5.01	5.90	5.82	5.40
iKE1 Christian Beliefs (t ₂)	4.54	4.77	4.83	4.13	4.54	4.10	4.34	4.01	6.23	6.00	5.94
iKK3 Involvement and participation (t ₂)	4.60	4.46	4.87	4.66	4.39	4.96	4.63	5.27	4.99	4.91	4.85
iKL1 Interest in conduct of life (t ₂)	5.45	5.45	5.76	5.15	5.65	5.31	5.38	5.59	5.86	5.94	5.83
iKL2 Interest in the Christian tradition (t ₂)	4.39	4.58	4.66	4.05	4.52	4.00	4.07	4.03	5.67	5.47	5.33
iKN3 Satisfaction with confirmation time (t ₂)	5.12	5.00	5.31	4.97	5.01	5.33	5.20	5.72	5.71	6.07	5.37
iKS1 Positive experiences with church services (t ₂)	4.13	4.14	4.32	3.82	3.87	4.14	4.31	4.42	5.12	4.79	4.76
iKS2 Sense of security & well-being in the group during services (t ₂)	4.96	4.89	5.23	4.64	4.64	5.08	5.29	5.50	5.23	5.52	5.43
iCREL Religiosity	4.14	4.42	4.44	3.77	4.29	3.45	3.79	3.69	6.27	5.32	5.57

	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU	DE EmK
iWA1 Importance of Christian tradition (t ₁)	5.89	6.03	5.89	5.49	6.15	5.76	6.05	5.66	6.59	6.18
iWB1 Faith related aims (t ₁)	5.58	5.77	5.69	5.63	5.43	5.19	6.16	5.43	6.41	6.13
iWB2 Aim of focusing services (t ₁)	5.60	5.61	5.68	5.46	5.40	5.51	5.86	5.70	5.77	5.75
iWP1 Encouraging voluntary work (t ₁)	5.25	5.50	5.34	5.10	3.26	5.07	5.47	5.10	5.28	5.39
iWP3 Workers perceived impact in confirmation work (t ₂)	5.42	5.39	5.48	5.64	5.54	4.74	5.28	5.28	6.40	5.57

Items in the Confirmands' Questionnaire t₁ (C₁)

I take part in confirmation time, ... (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU EmK	DE EmK	HU in %	DE EmK in %
CA01 because my friends did so as well.	3.29	3.34	3.48	3.35	2.22	3.75	3.08	4.02	3.99	2.49	2.67	28	16
CA03 because it has always been like that in my family.	4.18	4.05	4.38	4.64	4.32	4.14	4.80	3.97	4.95	4.64	4.25	46	57
CA04 because I was baptised when I was a child.	4.57	4.49	4.90	4.66	4.46	4.58	4.72	4.86	5.71	4.85	3.77	54	60
CA05 because I felt obliged to take part.	2.30	1.82	2.12	2.33	2.85	3.66	3.24	1.82	5.53	3.76	1.93	15	38
CA06 because my family wanted me to do so.	3.15	2.87	3.32	3.47	2.92	4.09	3.62	3.29	4.56	4.01	3.42	26	43
CA08 because I have been told that confirmation training is fun.	3.74	3.72	4.36	3.38	2.42	4.82	2.82	5.20	3.81	3.31	3.95	37	29

I take part in confirmation time, ... (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU EmK	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU EmK in %			
CA11 because I wanted it myself.	5.41	5.28	5.37	4.46	5.94	5.17	5.56	5.83	6.07	4.84	5.40	72	70	71	53	83	67	74	82	88	60	73
I take part in confirmation time, ... (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU EmK	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU EmK in %			
CB01 to learn more about God and faith.	3.93	4.15	3.93	3.25	4.26	3.02	3.53	3.88	6.09	5.00	5.33	40	45	41	26	45	20	33	40	87	63	73
CB02 to experience community in the confirmation group.	4.16	4.09	4.43	4.02	4.04	3.66	4.39	4.92	5.10	4.04	4.64	45	44	52	42	42	30	50	62	68	43	56
CB03 to come to my own decision about my faith in God.	4.11	4.28	4.42	4.01	4.08	3.74	3.61	4.11	6.08	4.42	4.98	43	47	50	42	41	31	32	43	87	50	65
CB04 to make an important step in growingup.	3.69	3.72	4.13	3.61	3.96	3.93	3.70	3.00	5.57	4.21	3.91	36	37	45	35	41	40	36	22	76	48	40
CB07 to think about what is good or bad for me and my life.	3.42	3.55	3.63	3.19	3.27	3.29	3.27	3.32	5.48	4.46	4.20	28	31	32	25	23	23	26	26	75	53	47
CB08 to be strengthened in my faith.	3.68	4.05	3.97	3.04	3.95	2.91	3.23	2.95	6.19	4.93	5.25	35	43	42	22	40	18	27	21	89	61	71
CB09 to have a beautiful celebration with family and friends on the day of my confirmation.	4.58	4.46	4.09	4.83	4.95	4.37	4.95	4.48	5.21	3.98	3.64	55	53	43	62	62	49	63	53	70	43	36
CB10 to get money or presents at the end.	4.43	4.36	3.88	4.72	4.01	5.07	4.31	4.68	3.16	2.28	3.00	51	50	41	59	43	65	49	56	28	15	24

I take part in confirmation time, ... (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU Emk	DE Emk	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU in %	DE Emk in %
CB11 to receive a blessing on the day of confirmation.	4.18	4.35	4.27	3.62	4.58	3.95	3.81	3.65	6.01	4.71	5.45	44	47	46	32	53	37	35	32	85	57	73

What do you think about the following statements? (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU Emk	DE Emk	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU in %	DE Emk in %
CE01 God created the world.	3.96	4.34	4.16	3.59	3.95	3.24	3.81	3.10	6.55	5.82	5.93	38	46	45	33	37	24	35	22	92	77	80
CE02 There is life after death.	4.53	4.59	4.75	4.56	4.81	3.91	4.33	4.62	6.18	5.52	5.64	51	52	57	52	56	36	46	56	86	74	75
CE03 God loves all humans and cares about each one of us.	4.98	5.17	5.26	4.60	5.13	4.28	4.94	4.70	6.52	6.08	6.32	61	66	66	53	64	46	60	55	93	85	90
CE04 Jesus has risen from the dead.	4.24	4.61	4.86	3.85	4.20	3.60	4.02	3.44	6.69	5.88	6.11	44	52	59	37	42	31	40	27	96	80	85
CE05 I am insecure what I should believe.	3.73	3.52	3.53	3.82	3.76	3.66	4.22	4.34	2.39	2.95	2.97	35	31	31	38	35	31	44	47	15	25	24
CE08 Faith in God helps me in difficult situations.	3.72	4.11	4.20	3.57	3.62	3.18	3.34	2.88	6.05	5.46	5.43	37	44	46	34	33	25	30	21	88	75	75
CE09 I believe in God.	4.81	5.30	5.41	4.50	5.23	3.76	4.25	3.61	6.52	6.15	6.29	58	68	71	51	67	35	46	30	92	86	90
CE10 I know what the Christian faith entails.	4.43	4.61	4.61	4.26	4.28	4.12	4.50	4.09	5.85	5.03	5.10	49	53	54	46	45	41	51	41	88	64	68

What do you think about the church? (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	EKD in %								Yes Total in %	EmK in %									
		DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL		DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE
CG01 It is important for me to belong to the Church.	3.84	4.16	4.26	3.42	3.60	3.62	3.65	3.18	5.76	33	41	43	26	27	28	32	18	83	63	70
CG02 The Church does not have answers to the questions that are important for me.	3.74	3.80	3.91	4.03	3.55	4.03	3.72	3.35	3.31	30	32	31	36	24	35	29	21	26	19	26
CG03 If I will have children, I want to have them baptised.	6.11	6.05	6.22	5.89	6.53	5.89	6.19	6.14	6.40	85	83	87	81	93	81	86	85	90	75	75
CG04 Church services are usually boring.	4.52	4.34	4.20	4.70	4.56	5.22	4.59	4.49	3.29	50	45	42	55	50	67	51	50	19	33	33
CG05 The Church does a lot of good things for the people.	5.30	5.34	5.16	4.96	5.06	5.20	5.40	5.53	6.02	70	72	67	62	64	67	72	75	79	83	83
CG06 If I should have personal problems, I would turn to a [country-specific]	2.24	2.15	2.41	1.99	2.01	2.66	2.37	2.45	4.12	10	9	12	7	6	12	12	12	37	17	17
CG08 I am interested in taking part in a Christian youth group after confirmation.	2.87	2.85	2.68	2.24	3.00	3.13	2.99	2.67	4.79	17	18	17	11	12	22	19	15			

During the time of my confirmation training it is important for me ... (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD										HU DE Emk	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	HU DE Emk in %							
		DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	DE	AT					CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	
CK04 to be allowed to decide about the topics together with my fellow confirmands.	3.95	4.26	4.46	4.65	3.18	3.96	3.39	3.60	5.07	3.94	4.31	36	43	49	56	19	34	24	28	61	40	46
CK05 to have a lot of fun.	6.08	6.27	6.38	6.14	5.56	5.71	5.61	6.49	5.39	5.19	6.48	86	90	92	89	75	79	76	93	71	68	93
CK11 that my questions concerning faith will play a role.	4.06	4.21	4.03	3.74	3.87	3.76	3.97	4.08	5.30	4.88	5.19	39	43	39	34	34	30	40	40	69	61	68

How about your interest in these topics? (1 = not interested; 7 = very interested)	M Total	DE EKD										HU DE Emk	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	HU DE Emk in %							
		DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	DE	AT					CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	
CL01 Baptism	4.34	4.53	4.62	4.47	4.41	3.63	4.10	4.19	5.23	4.61	4.86	46	50	50	51	49	30	40	42	69	53	60
CL02 The Lord's Supper	3.87	4.24	4.28	3.43	3.42	3.74	3.13	3.53	5.14	4.65	4.93	36	45	43	26	25	34	21	29	69	54	63
CL03 Course and meaning of Sunday services	3.50	3.83	4.06	3.25	3.38	2.97	3.03	3.04	4.84	4.41	4.48	26	34	39	23	20	15	17	17	60	53	50
CL04 Your own parish	3.77	4.01	4.10	3.36	4.08	3.23	3.58	3.10	5.03	4.43	4.83	33	39	42	25	36	21	29	19	67	51	59
CL05 Jesus Christ	4.21	4.69	4.80	3.82	4.27	3.19	3.61	3.50	5.91	5.69	5.91	46	56	60	37	47	23	32	31	85	80	85
CL06 The bible	3.74	4.09	4.05	3.25	3.77	3.02	3.27	3.32	5.64	5.04	5.54	34	42	40	26	34	19	25	26	81	66	78
CL07 Other religions	3.65	3.89	3.96	4.00	3.43	3.31	3.06	3.44	3.63	3.10	4.47	34	39	42	43	27	26	21	28	39	26	52
CL08 Justice and responsibility for others	4.60	4.75	4.90	4.43	4.64	4.01	4.64	4.47	5.03	5.33	5.21	54	57	60	52	54	39	56	50	65	71	70
CL09 Friendship	5.69	5.74	5.89	5.56	5.89	5.11	5.81	5.69	5.87	6.32	6.03	79	80	81	77	83	65	79	80	83	91	87
CL10 Drug abuse and criminal behaviour	3.94	4.06	3.88	4.56	3.68	3.70	3.76	3.79	3.72	1.90	4.23	42	46	42	57	34	34	39	40	44	12	51

How about your interest in these topics? (1 = not interested; 7 = very interested)	M Total	DE EKD		AT		CH		DK		FI		NO		SE		PL		HU EmK in %	DE EmK in %			
		EKD	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %					
CLL11 The meaning of life	4.91	5.02	5.08	4.70	5.08	4.40	4.77	4.89	5.47	5.81	5.45	61	64	62	58	63	49	57	61	76	82	75
CLL12 Love and sexuality	3.87	4.24	4.28	3.43	3.42	3.74	3.13	3.53	5.14	4.65	4.93	36	45	43	26	25	34	21	29	69	58	64
CLL14 Magic, esoterics, supernatural experiences	4.34	4.53	4.62	4.47	4.41	3.63	4.10	4.19	5.23	4.61	4.86	46	50	50	51	49	30	40	42	69	86	88
CLL15 Other Christian denominations (e.g., Catholics)	3.31	3.55	3.53	3.32	3.19	3.06	2.86	2.95	4.14	3.18	4.21	26	31	30	27	20	20	16	18	48	26	45
CLL16 Care of the environment/ecology	3.50	3.83	4.06	3.25	3.38	2.97	3.03	3.04	4.84	4.41	4.48	26	34	39	23	20	15	17	17	60	74	71
CLL21 The social mission of the Church	3.77	4.01	4.10	3.36	4.08	3.23	3.58	3.10	5.03	4.43	4.83	33	39	42	25	36	21	29	19	67	59	60
CLL22 God	4.53	5.05	5.11	4.59	4.59	3.33	3.81	3.73	6.02	5.86	6.19	53	65	65	54	54	26	39	37	86	82	88
CLL23 Death	4.48	4.60	4.59	4.61	4.33	4.15	4.32	4.48	4.63	3.99	5.00	52	55	53	57	48	43	48	52	58	43	64
CLL24 Resurrection	3.88	4.21	4.20	3.43	3.93	3.26	3.56	3.32	5.36	5.06	5.30	37	45	42	28	35	24	30	25	74	55	49
CLL25 Angels	3.81	4.10	4.16	3.52	3.52	3.35	3.46	3.55	4.77	4.80	4.89	37	43	41	29	27	27	30	31	59	67	68

What do you think about church services? (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD		AT		CH		DK		FI		NO		SE		PL		HU EmK in %	DE EmK in %			
		EKD	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %					
CS01 to experience services adequate for young people.	4.55	4.94	4.55	4.68	3.83	3.35	3.78	5.27	5.71	3.72	5.51	50	60	51	56	27	24	31	68	78	33	74
CS02 to contribute my own ideas to the services.	3.01	3.36	3.55	3.18	2.55	2.28	2.54	2.88	3.93	3.06	3.90	20	27	32	23	11	8	13	17	31	24	38
CS03 to have tasks in the services (for example, do a reading).	2.68	2.68	2.81	2.22	3.11	2.04	2.97	2.75	3.87	3.02	3.44	17	19	20	11	19	7	22	18	35	23	30

What do you think about church services? (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD										HU DE EmK	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %										HU DE EmK in %
		DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	DE	AT			CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE	EmK		
CS04 to meet nice people in the services.	4.49	4.32	5.02	4.32	4.19	4.86	4.73	5.13	5.14	4.66	5.65	50	47	62	48	40	58	57	64	66	55	78		
CS05 to listen to interesting sermons.	3.90	4.22	3.82	3.90	3.62	2.92	3.34	4.08	6.28	4.89	5.48	39	47	38	41	28	21	27	42	91	61	75		
CS06 It is unclear to me what one can expect from a worship service.	3.70	3.37	3.50	3.60	3.88	4.27	4.14	4.22	3.04	3.06	3.04	29	22	25	28	31	40	41	42	15	23	17		

Further questions with other answering formats

	M total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK
CF01 How would you describe your current attitude towards the Christian faith in general? (1 = very negative; 2 = rather negative; 3 = neither negative nor positive; 4 = rather positive; 5 = very positive)	3.62	3.77	3.86	3.59	3.67	3.28	3.44	3.35	4.04	4.09	4.21
CF02 How would you describe your current attitude towards our church in general? (1 = very negative; 2 = rather negative; 3 = neither negative nor positive; 4 = rather positive; 5 = very positive)	3.69	3.89	4.24	3.56	3.50	3.26	3.46	3.57	4.17	4.07	4.27
CH04 How often do you read in the Bible by yourself? (1 = (almost) never; 2 = at least once a year; 3 = at least once a month; 4 = at least once a week; 5 = every day)	1.39	1.51	1.34	1.26	1.28	1.26	1.33	1.17	2.71	1.85	2.37
CJ01 How interested are your parents in religion? (1 = not interested at all; 2 = somewhat interested; 3 = quite interested; 4 = very interested)	2.10	2.12	2.25	1.97	2.19	2.01	2.09	2.02	2.93	2.82	2.94
CJ02 Did your mother or father say an evening prayer for you when you were a child? (1 = never; 2 = sometimes; 3 = yes, every night or almost every night)	1.71	1.80	1.75	1.76	1.36	1.79	1.87	1.37	2.48	2.06	2.58

Items in the Confirmands' Questionnaire t_2 (K₂)

	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU EmK	DE EmK	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU in %	DE EmK in %
KB01 I have learnt more about God and faith.	5.28	5.17	5.14	4.72	5.43	5.48	5.41	5.63	6.08	6.16	5.53	72	70	69	60	77	76	73	78	88	89	80
KB02 I have experienced good community in the confirmation group.	5.50	5.34	5.62	5.48	5.56	5.55	5.78	6.11	5.67	5.72	5.80	77	75	78	79	78	78	82	89	79	82	85
KB03 I have been enabled to come to my own decision about my faith.	5.14	5.05	5.17	4.80	5.18	5.74	4.99	5.12	5.74	5.51	5.34	67	65	68	60	68	81	62	65	83	74	74
KB04 I have made an important step in growing up.	4.50	4.38	4.58	4.28	4.52	5.06			5.65	5.71	4.58	53	50	57	49	53	68			78	83	57
KB07 I have been thinking about what is good or bad for me and my life.	4.51	4.42	4.60	4.42	4.42	4.64	4.74	4.87	5.58	5.87	4.91	53	51	57	52	50	55	56	60	76	86	65
KB08 I have been strengthened in my faith.	4.56	4.71	4.82	4.04	4.65	4.37	4.25	4.27	5.89	5.79	5.31	55	59	63	41	56	50	46	48	86	85	74
KB15 I have learnt more about other religions.	3.59	3.79	3.70	4.03	3.69	3.14	3.12	3.07	5.02	4.67	3.93	33	37	37	42	34	22	24	23	67	59	42

What do you think about the following statements? (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DEK										HU Emk	DE Emk									
		DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	DE	EKD			in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU
KE01 God created the world.	4.01	4.26	4.09	3.50	3.93	3.63	3.94	3.24	6.27	6.04	5.82	40	46	43	31	39	32	38	24	87	84	79
KE02 There is life after death.	4.72	4.85	5.02	4.52	4.75	4.27	4.64	4.64	6.10	5.77	5.80	55	59	62	51	56	43	51	53	84	80	80
KE03 God loves all humans and cares about each one of us.	5.07	5.16	5.27	4.59	5.27	4.72	4.97	5.00	6.30	6.19	6.26	63	66	70	53	68	56	59	60	89	88	88
KE04 Jesus has risen from the dead.	4.42	4.66	4.84	3.89	4.37	4.04	4.30	3.72	6.38	6.12	6.06	48	54	59	37	45	39	46	33	91	86	84
KE05 I am insecure what I should believe.	3.81	3.64	3.73	3.85	3.67	4.03	4.14	4.50	2.45	3.01	3.20	37	34	38	38	34	37	42	49	16	26	27
KE08 Faith in God helps me in difficult situations.	4.11	4.39	4.44	3.81	3.77	3.81	3.83	3.53	5.82	5.65	5.45	44	50	53	38	36	36	38	32	83	81	76
KE09 I believe in God.	4.93	5.34	5.39	4.48	5.15	4.11	4.37	3.91	6.52	6.23	6.27	60	69	70	51	65	41	46	37	92	88	89
KE10 I know what the Christian faith entails.	4.97	5.01	5.12	4.47	5.18	4.70	4.98	4.96	5.89	5.60	5.34	63	64	64	51	68	56	63	62	86	78	73

What do you think about the church? (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU EmK	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU EmK in %
KG01 It is important for me to belong to the church.	4.08	4.30	4.35	3.67	3.80	3.85	3.94	3.68	5.64	5.51	46	48	31	31	33	37	32	76	76
KG02 The church does not have answers to the questions that are important for me.	3.87	3.93	4.02	4.05	3.65	3.81	3.94	3.69	3.64	3.04	34	37	36	24	28	34	27	36	24
KG03 If I will have children, I want to have them baptised.	6.04	6.08	6.21	5.79	6.31	5.83	5.86	6.02	6.40	5.59	83	85	78	87	78	77	82	90	73
KG04 Church services are usually boring.	4.71	4.62	4.45	4.76	4.84	5.03	4.75	4.67	3.49	2.96	52	47	56	56	61	54	53	26	21
KG05 The church does a lot of good things for the people.	5.41	5.41	5.55	5.11	5.18	5.50	5.43	5.72	5.87	5.79	74	76	68	66	74	72	79	83	81
KG06 If I should have personal problems, I would turn to a minister.	2.69	2.54	2.74	2.46	2.42	3.20	2.96	3.13	4.34	4.32	15	18	13	11	21	21	22	49	50
KG08 I am interested in taking part in a Christian youth group after confirmation.	3.28	3.28	3.21	2.58	2.75	4.03	3.17	3.42	5.03	4.07	26	26	16	11	39	23	29	61	46

During the time of my confirmation training ... (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	EKD										Yes Total in %	EmK									
		DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE		EmK	DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU
KK03 I came into good personal contact with the leaders and workers.	4.80	4.49	5.03	4.70	4.77	5.24	5.14	5.91	6.00	4.95	5.10	59	52	66	59	55	71	67	84	85	64	69
KK04 we could influence the decisions about the topics.	3.72	3.50	4.10	4.48	3.18	4.35	3.71	4.59	3.79	4.32	3.38	35	32	47	54	21	47	34	53	36	50	31
KK05 I had a lot of fun.	5.24	5.14	5.58	5.23	4.76	5.74	4.98	6.13	5.33	5.76	5.34	69	68	76	73	58	80	62	88	71	82	73
KK10 taking part in confirmation training was stressful for me.	3.02	3.11	3.12	3.08	2.48	2.95	3.48	2.73	2.48	2.34	2.86	20	21	25	20	12	21	30	19	16	17	17
KK11 my questions concerning faith were addressed.	4.23	4.14	4.26	4.08	4.01	4.82	3.99	4.66	5.18	4.75	4.53	42	39	45	39	36	53	38	53	63	58	52
KK26 I temporarily worked in programs of the church (e.g., in an internship).	3.43	3.39	3.33	2.91	3.23	3.76	4.09	2.92	4.46	3.30		34	35	32	24	28	34	45	27	51		33
KK32 I got to know people who really try to live their faith.	4.63	4.54	4.80	4.47	4.50	4.74	5.21	4.59	5.19	5.15	5.25	54	52	57	52	50	56	67	53	67	69	68
KK35 What I learnt in confirmation training has little to do with my everyday life.	4.38	4.45	4.28	4.62	4.19	4.40	4.37	4.04	3.59	3.38	3.90	45	47	42	53	39	44	44	38	34		34
KK37 In our parish I feel welcome and accepted.	5.32	5.18	5.53	5.10	5.47	5.30	5.44	6.14	4.85	5.43	5.82	70	67	75	66	71	69	72	86	57	72	82
KK55 I have learnt to respect other religions that are different from mine.	4.68	4.59	4.82	4.71	4.78	4.56	5.05	4.85	5.40	5.15	4.80	55	53	59	57	57	51	63	59	71	66	59
KK56 I made new friends within the group.	4.70	4.77	5.54	3.93	3.19	5.67	4.31	5.75	5.02	5.68	5.05	57	59	76	43	26	77	49	76	65	78	66

	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU EmK	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU in %	DE EmK in %	
During the time of my confirmation training ... (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)																						
KK57 I was given the chance to try out voluntary work.	3.63	3.57	4.06	3.18	4.02	3.33	4.16	3.43	3.25	3.47	35	34	47	27	42	27	44	31	28	34	33	
KK58 We discussed the importance of voluntary work for church and society.	4.07	4.22	4.55	3.57	4.26	4.01	3.38	5.24	5.24	4.41	40	44	54	27	46	38	27	70	52	45		

	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU EmK	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU in %	DE EmK in %	
How about your interest in these topics? (1 = not interested; 7 = very interested)																						
KL01 Baptism	4.62	4.79	4.73	4.58	4.90	4.14	4.28	4.18	5.18	5.18	53	57	54	55	61	39	44	42	68	66	62	
KL02 The Lord's Supper	4.21	4.38	4.50	3.75	4.12	4.27	3.78	3.85	5.37	5.35	44	48	52	33	40	45	34	34	73	72	61	
KL03 Course and meaning of Sunday services	3.87	3.98	4.15	3.61	4.05	3.57	3.63	3.62	4.99	4.94	34	37	42	29	35	24	29	29	64	62	54	
KL04 Your own parish	4.26	4.40	4.59	3.86	4.33	3.92	4.19	3.98	5.38	5.32	44	48	54	34	42	33	42	38	71	71	68	
KL05 Jesus Christ	4.68	4.95	5.02	4.30	4.92	4.03	4.25	4.17	6.22	5.96	56	63	64	48	62	39	47	45	90	85	85	
KL06 The bible	4.20	4.38	4.42	3.81	4.30	3.88	3.91	3.86	6.01	5.59	43	47	46	36	44	34	37	36	86	79	73	
KL07 Other religions	4.26	4.37	4.66	4.42	4.38	4.00	3.87	4.15	4.35	3.80	45	48	57	51	46	37	35	43	47	34	58	
KL08 Justice and responsibility for others	5.08	5.09	5.43	4.89	5.22	4.87	5.13	5.19	5.38	5.65	66	66	73	63	68	60	67	70	73	80	78	
KL09 Friendship	5.89	5.88	6.18	5.55	6.10	5.78	5.86	6.04	6.13	6.30	83	83	88	77	86	80	80	84	89	90	89	
KL11 The meaning of life	5.38	5.39	5.68	5.03	5.61	5.28	5.19	5.55	6.07	5.89	72	72	79	65	77	69	67	75	86	84	83	
KL12 Love and sexuality	4.92	4.70	5.05	5.16	5.17	5.21	5.31	5.11	3.99	4.66	60	55	62	65	65	68	66	69	64	43	56	
KL22 God	4.93	5.24	5.37	4.60	5.08	4.20	4.37	4.45	6.38	6.00	62	69	70	55	65	43	49	51	92	84	89	
KL24 Resurrection	4.37	4.53	4.56	3.89	4.49	4.02	4.16	4.13	5.87	5.38	47	52	54	37	48	38	41	42	83	74	73	

To what extent are you satisfied with ... (1 = not satisfied at all; 7 = totally satisfied)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK in %
KN01 the whole confirmation time	5.38	5.31	5.59	5.08	5.20	5.60	5.37	5.99	6.00	6.15	5.49	76	75	81	71	72	79	73	90	86	90	81
KN03 content/topics of lessons in confirmation work	4.88	4.77	5.07	4.69	4.99	4.76	5.04	5.60	5.79	6.01	5.12	62	59	67	60	66	57	66	82	81	87	72
KN07 minister/person primarily responsible for confirmation work	5.54	5.45	5.89	5.38	5.45	5.57	5.75	6.13	6.10	6.43	5.89	77	75	83	75	77	77	81	88	87	92	84
KN08 other teachers/workers	5.35	5.26	5.60	5.24	4.84	5.66	5.37	6.11	5.37	5.75	5.57	74	73	80	73	58	80	74	90	68	82	80
KN10 church services	4.73	4.65	5.02	4.49	4.79	4.88	4.82	4.99	5.88	6.02	5.14	59	57	70	53	60	62	59	68	83	86	74
KN11 camp(s)	5.55	5.37	5.63	5.76	5.16	5.80	5.79	6.23	5.54	6.40	5.60	76	73	78	81	69	82	80	90	74	90	78
KN14 music, songs and singing	4.84	4.60	4.77	4.58	4.82	5.49	4.90	5.55	5.44	5.95	5.11	61	55	59	55	60	76	61	77	74	88	67
KN20 working methods (for example, working with biblical texts, group work etc.)	4.77	4.67	4.94	4.61	4.86	4.95	4.70	5.19	5.37	5.95	5.04	58	56	63	55	62	63	55	69	72	85	67

What do you think about the following statements? (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK in %
KP01 I can imagine working in the church as a volunteer after confirmation time (for example in youth work or confirmation work).	3.47	3.56	3.67	3.00	2.47	4.27	3.11	3.75	4.47	4.46	4.40	30	32	36	21	11	45	23	36	49	49	50
KP03 The church gives young people possibilities to become a voluntary worker.	5.13	5.27	5.57	4.95	4.50	5.28	4.88	5.14	5.51	5.19	5.19	64	68	73	61	46	68	57	62	70	66	68

What do you think about the church services during your confirmation time? (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU Emk	DE Emk	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU Emk in %	DE Emk in %
KS01 I experienced forms of worship adequate for young people (e.g. youth services).	4.30	4.31	4.66	4.33	4.16	4.30	4.49	4.22	4.75	4.37	4.93	46	48	56	49	40	44	49	45	57	52	60
KS02 I had the opportunity to contribute my own ideas to the services.	3.39	3.42	3.93	3.33	3.11	3.86	3.04	3.26	3.36	2.79	3.67	27	28	39	27	21	33	22	24	25	21	33
KS03 I had tasks in the services (for example, do a reading).	4.10	4.11	4.49	3.38	3.37	4.61	4.61	4.04	3.60	3.50	4.23	45	47	54	33	29	54	54	43	37	39	49
KS04 I met nice people.	5.25	5.14	5.66	4.90	4.83	5.59	5.64	5.81	5.31	5.95	5.75	67	66	77	61	56	73	75	78	68	83	80
KS05 I listened to interesting sermons.	4.04	3.98	4.17	3.71	3.90	3.97	4.35	4.51	5.53	5.52	4.72	40	39	43	33	35	37	46	51	78	74	57
KS12 Singing old church hymns was nice for me.	3.66	3.50	3.43	3.09	3.51	4.39	3.79	4.04	5.04	4.80	3.56	33	30	31	22	26	48	36	41	62	60	33
KS13 Singing modern church songs was nice for me.	4.52	4.66	4.59	4.08	3.84	4.24	4.48	5.28	5.28	5.08	5.86	53	58	56	45	34	44	51	69	66	65	82
KS14 The services usually dealt with things that concern me and my life.	3.81	3.84	4.20	3.64	3.68	3.75	3.89	3.88	5.26	3.79	4.35	33	34	45	30	28	30	36	33	68	39	47
KS15 I felt secure in the group.	5.15	4.98	5.17	4.96	4.93	5.43	5.34	6.10	5.45	5.38	5.38	65	62	68	63	58	72	69	85	70	71	71
KS16 I liked being part of the worship community.	4.47	4.53	4.85	4.06	4.17	4.20	4.89	4.61	4.90	5.24	5.17	48	50	59	39	37	39	58	51	54	67	69
KS17 I felt uncomfortable.	2.62	2.54	2.61	2.65	2.60	2.73	2.89	2.69	2.45	2.15	2.14	15	15	18	16	13	15	20	15	14	14	11

Further questions with other answering formats

	M total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	PL	HU	DE EmK
KF01 How would you describe your current attitude towards the Christian faith in general? (1 = very negative; 2 = rather negative; 3 = neither negative nor positive; 4 = rather positive; 5 = very positive)	3.74	3.86	3.95	3.66	3.79	3.47	3.52	3.60	4.29	4.16	4.26
KF02 How would you describe your current attitude towards the church in general? (1 = very negative; 2 = rather negative; 3 = neither negative nor positive; 4 = rather positive; 5 = very positive)	3.76	3.95	4.35	3.59	3.54	3.44	3.51	3.71	4.38	4.09	4.33

Items in the Workers' Questionnaire t₁ (W₁)

This topic, I consider to be ... (1 = not important; 7 = very important)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU EmK	DE EKD in %	AT in %	CH in %	DK in %	FI in %	NO in %	SE in %	HU in %	DE EmK in %
WA03 Baptism	5.94	6.15	6.07	5.37	6.53	5.52	6.09	5.83	6.61	5.99	88	75	98	79	92	85	97	88
WA04 The Lord's supper	5.98	6.11	5.90	5.39	6.54	5.86	6.15	5.77	6.70	6.14	89	75	98	87	94	85	97	93
WA05 Course and meaning of Sunday services	5.35	5.63	5.63	5.07	5.73	5.27	4.53	4.81	6.11	5.54	75	82	71	84	51	60	91	80
WA07 Jesus Christ	6.33	6.48	6.25	6.22	6.81	6.08	6.86	6.08	6.97	6.80	92	91	99	88	99	86	100	98
WA10 Other christian denominations (e.g., catholics)	4.09	4.15	3.96	4.26	3.29	4.12	3.60	4.10	4.70	4.62	41	44	37	45	25	39	62	56
WA11 Other religions	3.77	3.83	3.71	3.93	2.61	3.74	2.95	3.94	3.96	3.99	34	36	34	39	17	35	37	38
WA12 Care of the environment/ecology	4.01	3.57	3.94		3.88	4.38	4.99	4.63	4.46	4.44	41	31	43	x	51	56	52	53
WA13 The social mission of the church	5.32	5.38	5.54	5.40	5.20	5.15	5.38	5.34	4.84	5.46	76	77	82	78	69	71	83	76
WA14 The meaning of life	5.62	5.39	5.40	6.14	5.95	5.72	5.84	5.91	6.10	5.99	81	75	75	92	90	84	89	87
WA15 Justice and responsibility for others	5.81	5.59	5.82	5.80	5.99	6.07	5.59	6.09	5.62	5.59	86	81	82	87	94	92	84	91
WA16 Friendship	5.55	5.13	5.85	5.45	5.18	6.06	5.22	6.23	5.40	5.09	77	67	85	75	64	92	72	93
WA17 Love and sexuality	4.46	3.74	4.45	4.39	4.10	5.21	5.00	5.51	4.69	4.52	52	34	55	51	38	73	68	78
WA18 Drug abuse and criminal behaviour	3.99	3.48	3.33	3.82	3.19	4.59	4.04	4.90	4.65	3.72	40	28	27	35	19	57	33	59
WA19 Magic, esoterics, supernatural experiences	3.02	2.63	2.88	3.31	2.57	3.66	2.68	3.40	3.95	2.77	20	13	18	24	6	32	12	24
WA21 Your own parish	5.45	5.62	5.87	5.27	4.50	5.62	5.22	5.07	6.18	5.60	77	83	83	73	51	82	78	65
WA22 The bible	5.96	6.03	5.62	5.79	5.95	5.91	6.47	5.82	6.83	6.65	88	90	81	84	89	87	97	85
WA23 God	6.40	6.49	6.38		6.75	6.24	6.71	6.25	6.94	6.75	94	96	93		99	92	99	89
WA24 Death	5.71	5.72	5.25	5.60	6.04	5.53	5.55	5.87	5.47	5.74	85	85	73	85	90	81	82	88
WA25 Resurrection	5.70	5.73	5.42	5.35	6.38	5.61	6.36	5.60	6.38	5.96	82	84	76	75	95	80	94	79
WA26 Angels	3.81	3.48	3.22		3.18	4.53	3.38	4.10	4.50	2.67	35	27	25		18	54	22	40

What do you think about church services? During their confirmation time, the con- firmands should ... (1 = not important; 7 = very important)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU Emk	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU in %	DE Emk in %
WB04 experience forms of worship ade- quate for young people.	5.70	5.87	5.89	5.69	4.99	5.48	5.88	5.57	5.87	87	86	83	66	82	93	82	83	88
WB28 be given the opportunity to contri- bute their own ideas to the prepara- tion of a service.	5.66	5.82	5.98	5.64	5.03	5.45	5.56	5.59	5.13	89	90	84	65	79	82	82	73	93
WB29 have tasks in the services (for exam- ple, do a reading)	5.55	5.63	5.73	5.23	5.15	5.51	6.03	5.43	5.66	84	82	74	71	81	90	75	82	85
WB30 meet nice people in the services.	5.27	4.97	5.27	4.97	5.75	5.35	6.25	5.81	5.32	65	72	64	84	76	96	83	75	76
WB31 feel secure and accepted in the group in the services.	6.20	6.08	6.28	5.74	6.11	6.31	6.44	6.49	6.26	93	93	86	95	94	96	96	96	96
WB32 get orientation for their daily life.	5.48	5.53	5.51	5.68	5.18	5.22	5.59	5.64	6.27	81	78	83	70	73	84	84	96	97
WB33 experience a friendly atmosphere in the services.	6.08	6.05	6.02	6.01	5.89	6.09	6.18	6.17	6.10	92	90	93	90	94	95	92	91	96
WB34 get acquainted with the liturgy.	4.87	4.94	4.71	4.69	5.06	4.70	4.90	4.88	5.50	66	60	60	69	60	67	64	77	55

During their confirmation training, the commandments should ... (1 = not important; 7 = very important)	M Total	DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU DE EmK	Yes Total in %	DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU DE EmK in %	
		EKD	EKD	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %			in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %		in %
WC01 develop a personal point of view concerning their own life.	6.03	6.02	6.12	6.31	5.73	5.92	5.86	6.19	5.88	90	90	89	95	86	88	89	92	89	93
WC02 be strengthened in their faith.	5.89	6.27	6.17	6.09	5.61	5.38	6.46	5.41	6.46	85	94	92	91	82	73	95	73	97	96
WC03 learn central Christian texts by heart (e.g., the Creed).	4.55	4.93	3.92	3.77	5.13	4.50	4.80	3.63	5.56	55	65	42	39	71	52	59	33	78	56
WC04 be supported in their personal and social development.	5.82	5.81	5.73	5.93	5.35	5.91	5.55	5.87	6.09	88	87	86	89	78	91	82	88	92	93
WC06 get to know what the youth work of the church offers to them.	5.69	5.70	5.82	5.32	4.97	5.81	5.72	5.73	5.65	84	85	88	76	68	89	87	82	85	85
WC09 learn to enjoy singing or making music.	4.59	4.48	4.38	4.31	4.43	5.13	4.08	4.46	5.33	54	51	50	49	49	71	39	50	76	58
WC10 experience forms of meditation or prayer.	5.12	4.92	4.74	4.98	5.01	5.41	5.28	5.35	5.74	70	65	59	66	73	78	72	74	86	66
WC11 learn to live their everyday life in relationship to God.	5.16	5.21	5.12	5.10	5.70	4.88	5.93	5.12	6.47	70	72	69	69	85	61	88	68	97	91
WC15 experience that their questions concerning faith play a role.	6.27	6.10	6.24	6.29	6.46	6.40	6.67	6.46	6.28	94	93	93	95	99	94	99	95	97	100
WC16 develop a sense of belonging to the parish.	5.56	5.74	5.93	5.22	4.60	5.58	5.51	5.34	6.63	81	85	87	72	55	82	87	76	99	89

During their confirmation training, the commandments should ... (1 = not important; 7 = very important)	M Total	DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU DE EmK	Yes Total in %	DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU DE EmK in %	
		EKD	EKD	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %			in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %	in %		in %
WD03 experience community	6.38	6.52	6.59	6.35	5.99	6.18	6.26	6.33	6.56	96	98	98	97	90	94	95	94	99	99
WD07 have a lot of fun.	5.98	5.83	6.13	5.45	5.35	6.16	4.83	6.54	5.61	87	84	91	76	75	91	61	96	81	73

How important do you consider these aims? (1 = not important; 7 = very important)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU	DE EmK	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU	DE EmK
WD02 Confirmation work should be used as a missionary chance for winning people for the Christian faith.	4.73	4.84	4.27	4.14	3.81	3.96	5.39	5.42	5.70	5.42	58	60	49	48	38	37	78	77	81	77
WD04 At certain times, there should be separate programs for boys and girls during the confirmation work.	3.29	3.08	3.37	3.38	3.94	3.10	3.80	3.82	3.10	2.90	29	24	29	32	47	24	36	42	23	18
WD05 I want to have at least one personal conversation with each confirmand.	4.38	4.43	4.69	5.14	4.00	4.29	4.90	4.19	6.03	5.07	50	51	59	66	46	48	64	45	84	66
WD06 Our confirmation work should cooperate with the school.	3.54	3.38	3.39	3.69	4.85	3.29	3.29	3.99	5.28		32	28	31	35	61	27	26	40	74	
WD10 Active participation of the confirmands in worship services should be a set part of program planning.	4.84	4.89	5.00		5.25	4.31	5.79	5.04	5.13	5.05	61	62	67		71	48	86	67	67	69

To what extent do these statements apply? (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU EmK	DE Total in %	AT in %	CH in %	DK in %	FI in %	NO in %	SE in %	HU in %	DE EmK in %
WE01 I know the official guidelines for confirmation work.	5.08	4.98	5.01	5.27	6.01	5.41	5.70	4.72	5.85	69	66	73	87	82	81	57	83	75
WE06 I would like to be relieved from working in confirmation training.	1.74	1.72	1.86	1.85	1.91	1.81	1.89	1.66	1.53	7	6	7	12	7	8	6	5	8
WE07 I want to be a role model for younger people.	5.92	5.89	5.84	5.61	5.27	5.78	6.16	6.28	4.48	87	87	79	72	85	92	93	50	89
WE08 Faith in God is important for me.	5.90	6.20	6.11	6.25	6.73	5.19	6.70	5.54	6.96	82	88	90	99	68	96	75	100	99
WE09 I consider my pedagogical competence for confirmation work as adequate.	5.50	5.52	5.60	5.34	5.08	5.31	5.73	5.70	5.11	81	82	84	75	69	75	85	70	79
WE10 I consider my theological competence for confirmation work as adequate.	5.31	5.33	5.49	5.50	6.32	5.02	5.94	5.25	5.85	74	75	78	81	96	67	85	88	90
WE11 The guidelines for confirmation work are helpful for me	4.57	4.34	4.46		4.19	5.25	5.19	4.43	5.75	56	49	53	45	77	68	51	82	63

If you have ticked »yes« How important do you consider being together with the fellow workers? Please put one cross (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU EmK	DE Total in %	AT in %	CH in %	DK in %	FI in %	NO in %	SE in %	HU in %	DE EmK in %
WE13 Being together with the fellow workers is important to me.	6.39	6.49	6.54	6.21		6.29	6.39	6.28	5.83	95	96	89	93	81	94	93	88	48

During their confirmation time, confirmands should ... (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU DE EmK	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU DE EmK in %
WP11 get to know young people working in the church as volunteers.	5.32	5.53	5.32	3.28	4.84	5.75	5.44	5.24	5.22	73	79	76	26	59	86	74	71	79
WP12 get to know parts, programs and tasks in the church where they can work as volunteers.	5.47	5.77	5.67	5.41	3.57	5.25	5.17	5.37	5.73	79	88	87	78	70	89	70	74	90
WP13 be won for continuing as voluntary workers in the church.	4.97	5.19	5.02	4.79	2.91	5.11	4.67	5.23	5.21	64	70	66	61	67	63	54	72	78

Items in the Workers' Questionnaire t₂ (V)

Looking back on confirmation time: What did the confirmands experience, learn and do according to your point of view? The confirmands ... (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU DE EmK	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU DE EmK in %	
VB04 had the chance to experience forms of worship attractive for young people (e.g., youth church services).	5.23	5.33	5.61	5.17	5.24	4.79	5.59	5.55	3.90	70	72	80	70	71	60	84	73	44	52
VB06 took part in the preparation of church services.	5.24	5.28	5.68	5.20	5.05	5.26	5.05	5.09	3.23	70	72	82	71	68	70	64	66	24	60
VB09 had a say in the choice of topics for the confirmation training.	3.45	3.18	3.61	4.31	3.36	3.64	3.21	4.03	3.32	29	24	34	50	30	30	21	41	26	20
VB16 gained an overall view of the Christian tradition, like symbols, festivals, art etc.	5.71	5.77	5.19	5.14	6.24	5.45	5.37	6.09	5.98	85	86	69	75	95	80	79	91	94	70
VB18 The confirmands' own questions about faith were addressed.	5.47	5.44	5.58	5.68	5.33	5.57	5.34	5.42	5.68	78	79	78	87	77	78	74	75	85	84

When you think of the church services during the confirmation time of the current confirmation group: What were your experiences? (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU EmK	DE Total in %	AT in %	CH in %	DK in %	FI in %	NO in %	SE in %	HU in %	DE EmK in %
VB28 I had the opportunity to contribute my own ideas to the services.	4.25	4.21	4.25	4.47	4.32	3.55	4.23	6.25	3.50	47	48	47	53	46	36	42	75	13
VB29 I had tasks in the services (for example, do a reading).	4.87	4.69	4.97	4.75	5.00	5.00	5.25	6.25	4.75	63	61	67	64	65	67	69	75	63
VB30 I met nice people.	5.74	5.54	5.65	5.78	5.95	5.82	6.07	7.00	5.00	81	78	79	82	83	91	86	100	38
VB35 I listened to interesting sermons.	5.09	5.24	5.14	5.21	4.76	5.00	5.29	7.00	4.63	70	74	65	76	59	64	75	100	50
VB36 Singing old church hymns was nice for me.	4.56	4.25	3.68	4.27	5.17	4.55	4.43	6.25	3.25	55	48	39	48	70	45	51	75	25
VB37 Singing modern church songs was nice for me.	5.69	5.88	5.21	5.61	5.44	6.09	5.61	6.50	5.25	81	86	75	78	76	82	75	100	75
VB38 I experienced forms of worship adequate for young people (e.g., youth church services).	5.44	5.46	5.37	5.42	5.17	6.27	5.93	4.75	4.00	73	74	75	74	69	91	81	50	63
VB39 The services usually dealt with things that concern me and my life.	4.73	4.96	4.86	5.11	4.32	5.40	4.77	6.00	4.00	58	63	62	68	47	80	60	75	25
VB40 I liked the feeling of being a community.	5.59	5.49	5.68	5.51	5.76	5.73	5.56	7.00	4.88	78	76	81	76	80	82	77	100	75
VB41 I felt secure in the group.	5.73	5.53	5.62	5.60	5.95	5.36	6.05	7.00	4.63	82	78	73	84	85	82	90	100	50
VB42 I felt uncomfortable.	2.09	1.90	1.58	2.00	2.41	1.70	2.18	1.00	2.13	11	9	5	9	13	10	12	0	0

Looking back on confirmation time: What did the confirmands experience, learn and do according to your point of view? The confirmands ... (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total	DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU DE EmK	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU DE EmK in %	
VC04 were supported in their personal and social development.	5.20	5.09	5.33	5.23	4.89	5.34	4.89	5.48	5.66 5.00	74	72	77	79	68	78	67	76	89	75
VC05 got to know our parish better.	5.61	5.73	5.84	5.26	5.08	5.47	5.24	5.64	5.60 5.19	84	87	90	77	71	83	75	82	81	73
VC06 got to know what programs of youth work the church offers to them.	5.27	5.13	5.49	4.87	4.95	5.56	5.09	5.53	4.58 4.58	74	71	83	64	62	84	70	77	56	54
VC10 experienced forms of meditation or prayer.	5.44	5.25	5.08	4.88	5.32	5.72	5.50	5.84	4.85 4.69	77	72	68	65	73	86	83	83	64	57
VC12 were enabled to make their own decision about faith.	5.42	5.48	5.38	5.48	5.27	5.03	5.89	5.79	5.07 5.13	78	82	80	83	78	63	89	87	70	73
VC17 were encouraged for voluntary work within the church (youth work, confirmation work, etc.).	4.96	4.82	5.20	4.47	2.11	6.03	3.93	4.57	4.32 4.18	64	62	70	51	8	89	36	51	50	47
VC18 were encouraged for voluntary work outside of the church (sport clubs, music, etc.).	3.33	2.91	2.78	2.95	2.53	4.29	3.36	3.56	3.55 2.25	25	15	19	17	11	46	25	29	26	4
VC20 worked in programs of the parish.	4.68	5.15	4.96	4.86	3.00	4.15	4.71	4.13	4.69 4.83	57	69	63	64	23	40	61	45	55	66

To what extent do these statements apply? (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total		DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU DE EmK	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU DE in % EmK in %	
	VD01 The confirmation church service has been (or will be) prepared together with the confirmands.	4.86	4.67	4.84	6.46	4.69	5.14	3.38	5.02	5.44	5.04	61	57	61	95	55	66	30	64	75
VD05 I had at least one personal conversation with each confirmand during confirmation time.	4.85	5.49	5.50	5.76	3.21	4.61	3.19	3.15	5.53	5.63	62	76	73	81	25	55	25	29	79	77
VD06 In the course of this confirmation class there was cooperation between school and confirmation work in our parish.	2.12	1.80	2.36	1.91	2.66	2.69	2.16	2.27	2.39	1.21	10	7	21	9	16	13	12	10	23	2
VD08 Our confirmation work has contributed to good contact between the church and the parents of the confirmands.	4.35	4.50	4.80	4.81	4.60	4.02	4.56	4.10	4.24	4.34	48	52	62	62	52	39	53	42	47	44
To what extent do these statements apply? (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total		DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU DE EmK	Yes Total in %	DE	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU DE in % EmK in %	
VE06 VE06: I would like to be relieved from working in confirmation training.	1.81	1.79	1.67	1.82	2.13	1.81	1.58	1.87	1.65	2.48	8	6	5	5	16	8	3	10	8	15

Some general questions: (1 = not at all; 7 = absolutely)	M Total		DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU	DE EmK	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU	DE EmK in %	
VM01 How satisfied are you with the confirmation work in your parish?	5.54	5.53	5.80	5.42	5.13	5.54	5.26	5.72	5.00	4.90	83	84	91	82	73	88	78	84	71	69		
VM02 How do you like doing confirmation work?	6.05	6.11	6.18	6.05	5.91	5.69	5.84	5.98	6.15	5.54	89	92	95	90	87	81	87	84	92	85		
VM04 Do you find your team-work in confirmation work successful?	5.92	6.07	6.17	6.02	5.56	5.66	5.50	5.58	4.69	5.60	89	91	91	91	88	86	80	83	66	80		
VM05 Do you consider the financial means allotted to confirmation work in the parish adequate?	5.55	5.64	5.85	5.74	5.47	4.89	4.75	5.56	4.95	5.61	79	82	86	82	76	71	60	76	67	79		
VM06 Do you receive enough support for confirmation work from the presbytery/the elders?	5.11	5.27	5.66	5.57	5.39	3.67	4.21	5.02	5.89	5.19	67	71	83	77	76	31	47	63	85	71		

To what extent do these statements apply? (1 = not applicable at all; 7 = totally applicable)	M Total		DE EKD	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU	DE EmK	Yes Total in %	DE EKD in %	AT	CH	DK	FI	NO	SE	HU	DE EmK in %
VL01 In our parish there are youth groups that are suitable for newly confirmed adolescents.	5.15	5.00	5.55	3.89	2.10	6.07	4.50	5.31	4.56	5.15	69	66	75	45	15	86	58	72	54	70	
VL02 If a confirmand likes to become a volunteer in our parish after confirmation, there are opportunities to do so.	5.98	6.29	6.59	5.57	2.25	6.10	4.57	5.83	4.94	6.13	84	90	97	78	13	87	54	82	63	90	
VL04 I often discuss issues concerning confirmation work with confirmation workers/colleagues from other parishes.	4.15	4.12	4.20	4.06	4.39	5.14	4.04	3.81	3.24	3.96	49	48	45	45	58	72	43	38	26	40	
VL15 It is easily possible within the church to discuss problems of confirmation work.	5.23	5.42	5.70	5.46	4.84	5.11	4.65	4.60	3.56	5.23	68	73	80	77	63	67	54	49	27	73	

Only fill in this battery (110-117) if you are a minister. Please weigh the importance of the following in your work in sum: (1 = not important; 7 = very important)	M		DE		AT		CH		DK		FI		NO		SE		HU		DE							
	Total	EKD	DE	EKD	AT	EKD	CH	EKD	DK	EKD	FI	EKD	NO	EKD	SE	EKD	DE	EKD	in %	EmK	in %					
VR25 preparing the services/preaching	6.45	6.44	6.44	6.44	6.21	6.69	6.44	6.26	6.44	6.26	6.44	6.26	6.44	6.26	6.44	6.61	6.61	97	97	96	94	100	84	91	100	99
VR26 working with the poor / >diaconical work (if applicable in your language)	4.51	4.29	4.81	3.93	5.25	5.25	5.76	5.65	5.76	5.65	5.76	5.65	5.76	5.65	5.76	4.26	4.26	51	45	67	35	75	56	83	36	47
VR27 working with elderly people	4.66	4.57	3.93	4.35	5.20	5.20	5.44	4.78	5.44	4.78	5.44	4.78	5.44	4.78	4.41	4.20	4.20	59	56	37	54	76	44	61	52	43
VR28 confirmation work	5.96	5.88	6.04	5.87	6.13	6.13	6.28	6.52	6.28	6.52	6.28	6.52	6.28	6.52	5.87	5.30	5.30	92	90	96	92	96	80	100	87	82
VR29 public relations	4.84	4.83	4.89	4.79	4.55	4.55	4.76	5.68	4.76	5.68	4.76	5.68	4.76	5.68	4.71	4.40	4.40	63	62	78	61	60	20	86	51	52
VR30 occasional services	6.11	6.25	6.41	5.97			4.76	5.26	4.76	5.26	4.76	5.26	4.76	5.26	5.96	5.16	5.16	91	95	96	90		36	70	83	68
VR31 pastoral care	5.93	5.97	5.96	5.62	6.02	6.02	5.67	5.87	5.67	5.87	5.67	5.87	5.67	5.87	5.54	5.89	5.89	88	90	85	81	91	63	83	78	89
VR32 teaching at school	3.76	3.52	5.73	3.24	5.37	5.37	3.52	5.02	3.52	5.02	3.52	5.02	3.52	5.02	5.02	1.06	1.06	45	40	88	37	72			67	0

2. Exemplary Questionnaire



Questionnaire for confirmands at the end of confirmation time (t2)



By completing this questionnaire, you help us to gain important information about confirmation work. Thank you for taking your time to support this study! Please read the instructions on the coloured information sheet first. Then start ticking:

LOOKING BACK...

To what extent are you satisfied with

Tick where applicable (one cross per line)

		not satisfied at all						totally satisfied		we didn't have that	
KN03	01	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
KN20	02	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
KN07	03	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
KN08	04	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
KN10	05	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
KN14	06	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
KN 11	07	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
KN01	08	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

During my time in confirmation training ...

Tick where applicable (one cross per line)

		not applicable at all						totally applicable			
KB01	09	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KB02	10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KB03	11	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KB04	12	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KB08	13	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KB15	14	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KB07	15	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

WHAT ARE YOUR EXPERIENCES?

During the time of my confirmation training ...

Tick where applicable (one cross per line)

		not applicable at all						totally applicable			
KK03	16	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK04	17	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK05	18	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK10	19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK11	20	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK32	21	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK55	22	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK26	23	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

KK56	24	I made new friends within the group.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK57	25	I was given the chance to try out voluntary work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK58	26	we discussed the importance of voluntary work for church and society.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

To what extent do these statements apply?

Tick where applicable (one cross per line)			not applicable at all				totally applicable				
KK35	27	What I learnt in confirmation training has little to do with my everyday life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK44	28	I have experienced that my commitment to other people is important.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK45	29	I have become (more) conscious of my responsibility for ecological problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK41	30	I would prefer being confirmed without the confirmation time beforehand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK37	31	In our parish I feel welcome and accepted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK59	32	It makes sense to me to learn Christian texts by heart during confirmation training (eg. the Creed, The Lord's Prayer etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KK60	33	I found it hard to learn texts by heart during confirmation training.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

WHAT CONFIRMANDS BELIEVE AND THINK ...

How about your interest in these topics?

Tick where applicable (one cross per line)			not interested				very interested				
KL01	34	Baptism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KL02	35	The Lord's Supper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KL03	36	Course and meaning of Sunday services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KL04	37	Your own parish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KL05	38	Jesus Christ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KL06	39	The bible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KL22	40	God	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KL07	41	Other religions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KL08	42	Justice and responsibility for others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KL09	43	Friendship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KL11	44	The meaning of life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KL24	45	Resurrection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KL12	46	Love and sexuality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What do you think about the following statements?

Tick where applicable (one cross per line)			not applicable at all				totally applicable				
KE01	47	God created the world.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KE02	48	There is life after death.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KE03	49	God loves all humans and cares about each one of us.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KE04	50	Jesus has risen from the dead.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KE05	51	I am insecure what I should believe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KE09	52	I believe in God.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KE08	53	Faith in God helps me in difficult situations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KE10	54	I know what the Christian faith entails.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

KF01 (55) How would you describe your current **attitude towards the Christian faith** in general?

- very negative rather negative neither negative nor positive rather positive very positive

KF02 (56) How would you describe your current **attitude towards the church** [Svenska Kyrkan/the Ev. Luth. Church of Finland; respective church] in general?

- very negative rather negative neither negative nor positive rather positive very positive

What do you think about the church?

Tick where applicable (one cross per line)

not applicable at all

totally applicable

KG01	57	It is important for me to belong to the church.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KG02	58	The church does not have answers to the questions that are important for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KG03	59	If I will have children, I want to have them baptised.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KG04	60	Church services are usually boring.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KG05	61	The church does a lot of good things for the people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KG06	62	If I should have personal problems, I would turn to a minister.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KG08	63	I am interested in taking part in a Christian youth group after confirmation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT CHURCH SERVICES?

What do you think about the church services during your confirmation time?

Tick where applicable (one cross per line)

not applicable at all

totally applicable

KS04	64	I met nice people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KS05	65	I listened to interesting sermons.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KS12	66	Singing old church hymns was nice for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KS13	67	Singing modern church songs was nice for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KS01	68	I experienced forms of worship adequate for young people (e.g. youth services).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KS14	69	The services usually dealt with things that concern me and my life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KS02	70	I had the opportunity to contribute my own ideas to the services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KS03	71	I had tasks in the services (for example, do a reading).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KS15	72	I felt secure in the group.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KS16	73	I liked being part of the worship community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KS17	74	I felt uncomfortable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Being at a church service, it is important for me...

Tick where applicable (one cross per line)

not important at all

very important

KQ06	75	to meet nice people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KQ07	76	to listen to the sermon.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KQ08	77	that I like the music.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KQ09	78	that I like the atmosphere.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KQ10	79	that I can pray there.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KQ11	80	to calm down.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KQ12	81	to feel secure in the group.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KQ13	82	to feel as a part of the worship community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KQ14	83	to receive the blessing at the end.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KQ15	84	to get through with it as soon as possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ADDRESS VOLUNTARY WORK IN THE CHURCH AND IN OTHER FIELDS:

Some people are helping out as volunteers, without being paid – for example, as voluntary leaders in confirmation or youth work, in a soccer club, a choir, animal care, etc. We are interested in what you know and think about them.

What do you think about the following statements? not applicable at all totally applicable

Tick where applicable (one cross per line)

KZ03	85	The church gives young people possibilities to become a voluntary worker.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KZ01	86	I can imagine working in the church as a volunteer after confirmation time (for example in youth work or confirmation work).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

KZ33 (87) Do you **work as a volunteer in other fields** than the church (e.g. in sports clubs, in music clubs etc.)?
 Yes. No.

KZ34 (88) **Can you imagine working as a volunteer** in other fields than the church after confirmation time?
 Yes. No.

Thinking about your confirmation day: What is important for you? It is important for me... not applicable at all totally applicable

Tick where applicable (one cross per line)

KB17	89	to celebrate a festive confirmation service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KB09	90	to have a beautiful celebration with family and friends on the day of my confirmation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KB11	91	to receive a blessing on the day of my confirmation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KB10	92	to get money or presents at the end.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

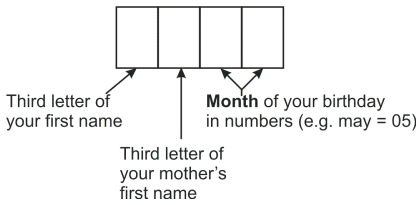
A COUPLE OF THINGS ABOUT YOU:

KM01 (93) your **sex**: male female

KM14 (94) **Anonymous Code**

This code helps us to match the questionnaires from the different surveys without identifying your name. Please use CAPITAL LETTERS.

*Example: John's mother is Sarah. John's birthday is 12 May. His code: **HR05***



KV01 (95) **How did you feel filling in this questionnaire?**
 I liked it. It was okay. It annoyed me.

KV05 (96) Have you filled in the **first questionnaire of this study** already last autumn?
 Yes. No. I don't know.

KM16 (97) **If you were a minister: What would you do with the confirmation time?**

– Thank you very much for completing the questionnaire! –

X. List of Figures

Figure 1: Overview on the different parts of the study	26
Figure 2: Mean score on belief index by country and gender, t_1	39
Figure 3: Development of belief (iCE1/iKE1) during confirmation time (t_1 to t_2) by country and gender (paired t-test)	40
Figure 4: Development of negative attitudes towards the church during confirmation time (t_1 to t_2) by country and gender in percent (paired t-test)	41
Figure 5: Religious beliefs in the beginning of confirmation time (t_1) in 2007 and 2012 (%)	42
Figure 6: Religious beliefs at t_2 2008 and 2013 »yes« (%)	43
Figure 7: Expectations and motives for attending confirmation in 2007 and 2012	60
Figure 8: Strengthened in faith – expectations and experiences (CB08/KB08)	63
Figure 9: »To come to my own decision about my faith in God«: Expectations and Experiences (CB03/KB03)	65
Figure 10: Expectations concerning the celebration on the confirmation day in the beginning (t_1) and in the end of confirmation time (t_2) .	67
Figure 11: Confirmands' satisfaction with the whole confirmation time (KN01)	69
Figure 12: Different workers in confirmation work in the participating countries (%)	72
Figure 13: Interest in topics at the beginning of confirmation time (t_1) among ministers, volunteers and confirmands	75
Figure 14: The share of those regarding church membership as important and those planning to baptise their future children in the beginning (t_1) and in the end (t_2) of confirmation period in different countries (%).	87
Figure 15: The connection between confirmands' previous experience with volunteering and confirmands' interest to volunteer either in the Church or other fields than the church (%)	102
Figure 16: Confirmation groups with different teaching methods: group centroids (standardised means)	113
Figure 17: The confirmation group types in different countries (%) . .	114
Figure 18: Confirmation group types and the length of a camp (%) . .	114

Figure 19: Educational background and motivations, attitude changes and experiences in confirmation time	119
Figure 20: Number of books at home, religious practice at home and church contact during childhood (%)	120
Figure 21: Interaction of religious socialisation and motives, beliefs and satisfaction in confirmation work	122
Figure 22: Satisfaction-relevance-relation (based on KN01 and KK35) in international comparison (%)	129
Figure 23: Satisfaction-relevance-relation (based on KN01 and KK35) by gender, educational background and religious socialisation (%)	130
Figure 24: Satisfaction-relevance-relation (based on KN01 and KK35) by fulfilled expectations (%)	132
Figure 25: Satisfaction-relevance-relation (based on KN01 and KK35) by the length of overnight events (%)	133
Figure 26: Five identity patterns in the beginning (t_1) and in the end (t_2) of confirmation time (%)	139
Figure 27: Stability of identity patterns and changes between identity patterns during confirmation time (from t_1 to t_2) (%)	140
Figure 28: The relationship between indicators of religious socialisation and identity patterns (%)	141
Figure 29: The relationship between education and identity patterns (%)	142
Figure 30: The relationship between satisfaction in confirmation time and identity patterns (%)	144
Figure 31: Interest of the confirmands in Methodist topics (t_1 and t_2) (%)	163
Figure 32: Importance of church belonging in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time (CG01/KG01: It is important for me to belong to the Church) (%)	167
Figure 33: Interest in the topic »own parish« in the beginning and in the end of confirmation period (CL04/KL04) (%)	168
Figure 34: Attitude towards the Christian faith and the church in a cross-temporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Germany (%)	185
Figure 35: Findings concerning religious beliefs in intertemporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Germany (%)	186
Figure 36: Attitude towards the Christian faith and the church in a cross-temporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Germany (%)	187
Figure 37: Findings concerning religious beliefs in intertemporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Austria (%)	195

Figure 38: Attitude towards the Christian faith and the Church (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Austria . . .	196
Figure 39: Working methods (t_2) in Austria	198
Figure 40: Satisfaction of the confirmands in t_2 (2008 and 2013) in Austria	199
Figure 41: Satisfaction of the workers t_2 (2008 and 2013) in Austria (%) .	200
Figure 42: Faith and identification with the church in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time (t_1 and t_2) in Switzerland (%)	209
Figure 43: Findings concerning attitudes towards the church in a cross-temporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Finland (%)	226
Figure 44: Findings concerning religious beliefs in a cross-temporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Finland (%)	227
Figure 45: Attitude towards the Christian faith and the church in a cross-temporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Finland (%)	230
Figure 46: Attitudes towards Church in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time (t_1 2012 and t_2 2013) in Poland (%)	260
Figure 47: Religious beliefs in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time (t_1 and t_2) in Poland (%)	261
Figure 48: Attitude towards the Christian faith and the Church in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time (t_1 2012 and t_2 2013) in Poland (%)	262
Figure 49: Number of 13- to 14-year-old Protestants and Protestant confirmands	268
Figure 50: Religious experiences and family background of confirmands in Hungary (%)	270
Figure 51: Belief of confirmands (t_1 and t_2) in Hungary (%)	270
Figure 52: Motivations for participation (t_1) in Hungary (%)	271
Figure 53: Interest of confirmands in topics of confirmation work in Hungary (%)	272
Figure 54: Aims of confirmands and their fulfilment (t_1 and t_2) in Hungary (%)	273
Figure 55: Opinions about services of and belonging to the church (t_1 and t_2) in Hungary (%)	274
Figure 56: Expectations of confirmands and their fulfilment (t_1 and t_2) in Hungary (%)	275
Figure 57: Experiences from confirmation work (t_2) in Hungary (%) . .	276
Figure 58: Aims of confirmation work (t_1) in Hungary (%)	277

Figure 59: Purposes of workers by confirmation training (t ₁) in Hungary (%)	278
Figure 60: Participation rates in confirmation work in percent of the whole population of the age-group in the respective country . . .	307
Figure 61: Anonymous code (in some countries the layout was different)	342

XI. List of Tables

Table 1: Sample sizes for the countries involved (t_1)	25
Table 2: Christian beliefs (t_1): approval rates in international comparison (%)	34
Table 3: Change in Christian belief (t_1 to t_2) in international comparison (Mean)	35
Table 4: Positive attitudes towards the church (t_1) in international comparison (%)	36
Table 5: Previous participation in group activities (t_1) in international comparison (%)	38
Table 6: Curricular Background of Confirmation Work between 2007/2008 and 2012/2013	46
Table 7: Changes in the practical framework of confirmation work between 2008 and 2013	52
Table 8: Study books in Confirmation Work 2008 and 2013	54
Table 9: Teaching structure in confirmation work (t_2) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 (average number per unit)	56
Table 10: Ministers, catechists, deacons, volunteers, others (t_2) in confirmation work in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 (average number per unit)	57
Table 11: Factor analysis (rotated factor matrix): Expectations and motives (t_1 , 2012)	61
Table 12: Confirmands' satisfaction with various aspects of confirmation time (t_2)	69
Table 13: Aims of the employed workers' and volunteers' (t_1)	77
Table 14: Share of employed workers in different countries (t_1) who regard different aims as important (%)	78
Table 15: Share of volunteers in different countries (t_1) who regard different aims as important (%)	79
Table 16: Share of the workers who are satisfied with the confirmation work in their parish (VM01) and who like doing confirmation work (VM02) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 (t_2) in different countries (%)	80
Table 17: The share of confirmands regarding church membership as important in the beginning of confirmation period (t_1) and the share of church members and the share of parents interested in religion in the different countries (%)	85

Table 18: Change in the importance of church membership during confirmation time. Mean values (t_1 and t_2) and the average change (paired sample t-test)	86
Table 19: Factors explaining the importance of church membership in the end of confirmation time (KG01) among confirmands in different countries (Linear regression)	88
Table 20: Factors explaining the change in importance of church membership in the end of confirmation time (diff_CG01) among confirmands in different countries (Linear regression)	89
Table 21: Confirmands' views of commitment at the end of confirmation time in 2008 and 2013 (t_2) in different countries (%)	95
Table 22: Confirmands' views on how they learnt to know and respect other religions during confirmation time (t_2) in different countries (%)	97
Table 24: Confirmands' experience with volunteerism in different fields of society prior to confirmation time (t_1) in different countries (%)	98
Table 23: Male and female confirmands' who are concerned about those less fortunate than themselves (CP04) in the beginning of confirmation time in different countries (%)	98
Table 25: The confirmands' willingness to volunteer in the church in the beginning (t_1) and at the end (t_2) of confirmation time (%). Matching respondents	100
Table 26: Confirmation groups and the length of a camp in international comparison (%)	108
Table 27: The usage of different teaching methods, ordered by descending mean values	109
Table 28: Confirmation experience in confirmation groups with different teaching methods (mean values)	115
Table 29: Beta values of regression analysis of the factors explaining confirmation experiences and satisfaction.	116
Table 30: Correlations: satisfaction in confirmation time (t_2), Christian beliefs (t_2), experience of growth in faith (t_2) and background variables	123
Table 31: Perceived daily life relevance of confirmation work (t_2) 2008 and 2013 (%)	126
Table 32: Overall satisfaction with the confirmation time 2008 and 2013 (%)	127
Table 33: Confirmation rates in the Nordic countries, 2013 (%)	148
Table 34: Share of confirmands by area category (rural, urban and mixed) (%)	149
Table 35: Religious background of the rural and urban confirmands (%)	150

Table 36: Motives for attending confirmation time among urban and rural confirmands. Mean values (t-test, weighed data for overall results) 152

Table 37: Experiences with confirmation work among urban and rural confirmands. Mean values (t-test, weighed data for overall results). 153

Table 38: Linear regression predicting confirmation satisfaction (Index KN3) (β -values, weighed) 155

Table 39: Selected indices (t_1 and t_2) in international comparison (2012/2013). Means 164

Table 41: Identification with the Christian faith and the own Church (t_1) in international comparison (mean) 166

Table 40: Correlation of selected indices (t_2) 166

Table 42: Expectations (t_1) and experiences (t_2) of church services. Percent (all) mean (only matched cases) 173

Table 43: Worship experience (t_2) in international comparison (%) . . . 174

Table 44: Worship experience (t_2) by gender and background (%) . . . 175

Table 45: Service assessments (t_2) according to tasks and contributions to the church services (%) 178

Table 46: Number of questionnaires (Germany) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 183

Table 47: Confirmands' expectations and experiences with worship services (t_1 and t_2) in Germany 188

Table 48: Satisfaction of the confirmands with different aspects in confirmation time (t_2) in Germany 189

Table 49: Number of questionnaires (Austria) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 194

Table 50: Number, gender and profession of workers in Austria 197

Table 51: Competence of workers in t_1 (2007 and 2012) in Austria 198

Table 52: Worship services (t_1 and t_2) in Austria 201

Table 53: Number of questionnaires (Switzerland) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 205

Table 54: Satisfaction of the confirmands with different aspects in confirmation time (t_2) in Switzerland 208

Table 55: Number of questionnaires (Denmark) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 215

Table 56: Most/least important motives (t_1) in Denmark 217

Table 57: Changes in church relations between t_1 and t_2 (paired t-test) in Denmark 218

Table 58: Changes in belief questions during confirmation time (between t_1 and t_2 ; paired t-test) in Denmark 219

Table 59: Topics of most and least interest in confirmation training (t_1) in Denmark 220

Table 60: Confirmation attendance, church membership and baptism rates in Finland 1975-2014 (%) 224

Table 61: Number of questionnaires (Finland) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 225

Table 62: Confirmands' expectations and experiences with worship services (t_1 and t_2) in Finland 228

Table 63: Satisfaction of the confirmands with different aspects in confirmation time in t_2 (2012/2013) in Finland 231

Table 64: Number of questionnaires (Norway) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 236

Table 65: Religious attitudes in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time (t_1 and t_2) in Norway 237

Table 66: Attitude towards Christian faith and Church in the beginning and in the end of confirmation time (t_1 and t_2) in Norway 237

Table 67: Satisfaction of the confirmands with different aspects in confirmation time in t_2 (2013) in Norway 238

Table 68: Confirmands' experiences with worship services (t_2) in Norway 241

Table 69: Experiences with confirmation (t_2) in cross-temporal comparison (2008 and 2013) in Norway 242

Table 70: Religious motives, experiences and attitudes in a cross-temporal comparison (both for t_1 and t_2 and 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Norway 243

Table 71: Number of questionnaires (Sweden) in 2007/2008 and 2012/2013 248

Table 72: Expectations on confirmation work. Comparison between t_1 (2007) and t_1 (2012) 249

Table 73: Expectations on confirmation preparation: Topics that the workers wish for the confirmands in (t_1) in Sweden 251

Table 74: Comparison, positive attitude to faith and church in general (both for t_1 and t_2 , 2007/2008 and 2012/2013) in Sweden (percent and difference in percentage points) 252

Table 75: Number of questionnaires (Poland) in 2012/2013 259

Table 76: Experiences with confirmation training (t_2) in Poland 262

Table 77: Satisfaction of the confirmands with different aspects in confirmation time (t_2) in Poland 263

Table 78: Church services 264

Table 79: Number of questionnaires (Hungary) in 2012/13 by denominations 269

Table 80: Questionnaires in the Methodist study 283

Table 81: Number of questionnaires (Germany, EmK) in 2012/2013 . . . 283

Table 82: Satisfaction with confirmation time (t_2) in Germany (EmK) . . . 286

Table 83: Comparison of importance of topics in t_1 (sorted by difference
between workers and confirmands) in Germany (EmK) (%) . . . 289

Table 84: Worship services (t_2) in Germany EmK 291

Table 85: Comparison between results of all vs. »matched only«
questionnaires for CG01/KG01 343

Table 86: Cronbach Alpha for all indexes for all countries 349

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