

Religiosity and Vaccine Hesitancy: Evidence from COVID-19 Vaccinations in Poland

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between religiosity and vaccine hesitancy. Firstly, we reveal a robust negative and non-linear correlation between COVID-19 vaccination rates and church attendance across Polish municipalities, with the most religious municipalities driving this link. Secondly, we use an instrumental variables model to exploit a sharp variation in religiosity due to the historical partitions of Poland. Our analysis indicates a large negative impact of religiosity on vaccination rates in the areas in the proximity of long-gone borders. Finally, utilizing survey data, we find that more religious individuals are less likely to get vaccinated, with distrust in the media, scientists and European Union playing a mediating role in the relationship between religiosity and vaccine refusal.

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