

Losing My Religion: The Long Run Impacts of Imposed Atheism

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joint work with Richard Murphy, Department of Economics, UT at Austin

Abstract

Historical as well as current differences in economic fortunes across countries are frequently (and controversially) attributed to socio-cultural factors. One of the most prominent of these is religion. This paper investigates the relationship between religion and economic prosperity. Our innovation takes advantage of a unique natural experiment: Albania's decision in 1967 to declare itself the first Atheist country in the world, and ban all forms of religious expression. Employing a difference in difference approach and a unique archive data, we find that religion ban raised economic prosperity. Our initial estimates indicate that the level of education, and industrial production were increased. In addition, our findings suggest that female participation in education and labour market were the main mechanisms through which the ban affected prosperity.

***Shqiponja Telhaj** is an Associate Professor (Reader) in Economics at the Economics Department, University of Sussex, UK, and an Associate at the world renowned Centre for Economic Performance, London School of Economics. Her primary research interests are in Applied Microeconomics, especially Education and Labour Economics. She was appointed a Member to the Technical Advisory Group at the UK's Ministry of Education, providing guidance and recommendations on recent UK government interventions on increasing the supply of teachers, closing the recruitment gap and improving the quality of teaching. Her research has appeared in leading economics journals such as Journal of Public Economics, Economic Journal, Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics, Oxford Economics Papers, etc. It has also informed bodies such as the UK Department for Education; Higher Education Funding Council, Prince's Trust; the World Bank; Future Leaders Trust, etc. Prof. Telhaj's work has featured in numerous national and international media outlets such as: BBC Radio 4's Today Programme; The Financial Times; BBC News, The Guardian, The Huffington Post, The Independent, The Observer, The Times, Daily Telegraph and many others. It has also featured in many blogs/networks/magazines such as: VoxEU, LSE Business Review, The Conversation UK, LSE British Politics and Policy, Adam Smith Institute, ESRC Annual magazine, etc.*

Wednesday 24 April 2019

1:00 - 2:00 pm

Location

162a, av. de la Faiënerie
L-1511 Luxembourg
**Bâtiment des Sciences
Room BS 001**

Language

English

Registration

- Free seminar
- Registration to crea@uni.lu (please specify full name and institution)
- Lunch is planned for registered participants

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