



# Freedom of Religion must include right to legally assert Irreligion

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**Abstract:** Irreligion means person's lack of adherence to any religion in practice. Now Freedom of Religion is considered to be fundamental human right by most nations of the world. Freedom of religion means the liberty to practise any religion, subject perhaps to public order. However while this freedom of religion does include freedom not to practise any religion, this does not explicitly include the right to legally assert non practise of any religion. This legal assertion of Irreligion is important and must be included in Freedom of Religion.

## I. Introduction

Religion unlike law is not mandatory even in theological nations of world. A person cannot be compelled to pray, or read scriptures or follow morality entirely. People practice religion to the extent they want or they can. Some people read scriptures often, some not so often and some rarely. Some people pray often, some less often and some rarely.

There are at least some people who do not practice religion at all. This number is almost 25% of world's population. While freedom of religion does include the freedom of not practising religion, most nations do not allow the option to legally assert

the lack of practice of any religion. This discriminates against Irreligion in as much as people who practise religion are allowed to legally assert their religious status; the people who practise Irreligion are not allowed to legally assert their irreligious status.

## Irreligion – Growing Number

Irreligion is absence or rejection of religion. Irreligion takes many forms from casual to atheism, agnosticism, secularism and antitheism. The broadest and loosest definition, serving as an upper limit, is the lack of religious identification, though many non-identifiers express metaphysical and even religious beliefs.

According to Pew Research's 2012 study of 230 countries almost 16% of world's population does not identify with any religion. This number is growing and in many nations it is the majority preference

WIN/Gallup International Association has also conducted study but their study adds atheists to religiously unaffiliated, whereas Pew Research study only includes religiously unaffiliated. However for purposes of our study we will only include religiously unaffiliated.

Nation	Percentage of Population Irreligious according to Pew 2012 study
Argentina	12
Brazil	8
Canada	24
China	52
Czech Republic	76
France	28
Germany	25
Japan	57
Netherlands	36
Nation	Percentage of Population Irreligious according to Pew 2012 study
Russia	16
Sweden	27
United Kingdom	21



United States	16
Uruguay	40
Venezuela	10
Vietnam	30
Turkey	1
Saudi Arabia	1
India	1
Fiji	1
Ireland	6
Israel	3
Mexico	5
Poland	5
Tanzania	1
Thailand	1

Source: Pew Research Data

Clearly the irreligious number varies drastically from nation to nation. Irreligious figure is rather large in some nations of world. Of course in many nation such as India or Thailand or Saudi Arabia the number is rather small.

#### References:

- [1]. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irreligion#By\\_population](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irreligion#By_population)

#### Why a Survey – Why not Government Data

But the very fact that Pew had to conduct a survey proves that while Irreligion is widely prevalent, it is not accepted choice and governments do not permit it to be not entered in forms for passport, social security, employment, id cards etc.

Irreligion is something that is permitted but in a hidden manner. This is rather unfair. Is Irreligion some sort of a crime? After all what people considered religion can be considered superstition. Indeed religions are responsible for hatred and violence. And a religious person can be immoral and bad and an irreligious person can be moral and good. Indeed till recently almost third or the world was communist where religion was considered opium of masses and religions almost banned. But should Irreligion be banned in nations that are not communist?

#### II. Conclusion

While freedom of religion does include irreligion, the right to legally assert irreligion is not recognized. This discriminates against those who reject religion or are unaffiliated to religion or do not practise religion. Unless the freedom of religion includes the right to legally assert irreligion, the freedom of religion is rather incomplete and discriminatory. Hence freedom of religion must include the right to legally assert irreligion.