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# Reflections for the study: "Non-religion in Norway, a sociological approach."

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## Résumé

One of the most substantial tendencies related to religion in Norway is the increasing number of individuals without religious beliefs, practices or membership in religious organizations. In this paper I present the main findings from my Ph.D.-thesis, "The non-religious in Norway. Sociological analyses of individuals without religion". I start by giving an overview of the tendencies from Norwegian context regarding the religiously unaffiliated. This is based upon statistical analysis that identify important social factors in understanding this category. Thereafter I present results from a study to identify the social factors related to the non-believers in Norway. This study is also based upon a quantitative data that makes it possible to identify individuals without any religious to explore their social background and how they relate to religion. In addition to the statistical analyses, I present different categories of non-religious from a qualitative study. An interesting finding in my study is that a proportion non-religious still insist on celebrating transitional rites in a religious manner. Finally, I discuss the challenges of applying the notion of "non-religion" within the Norwegian context. The Norwegian state-church relationship has been, and to some extent still is, very much dictating how religion is understood; both on the level of government, but also how it's studied empirically. This has consequences for understanding the notion of "non-religion". I have identified different categories/types of how non-religion is operationalized within recent research before discussing them in relation to my own studies.

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