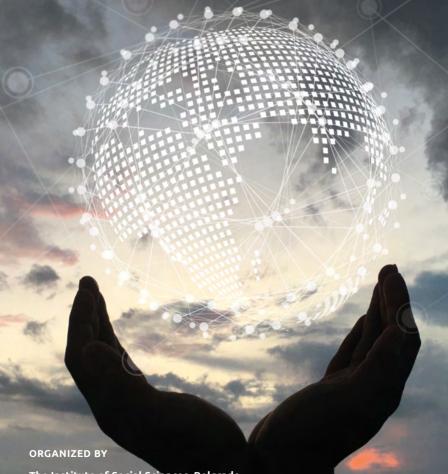




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CHALLENGES FACING RELIGION AND THE CHURCH IN POSTMODERN DIGITAL SOCIETY

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(ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE)

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS





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TRENDS OF SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE OF HOMOSEXUALITY ACROSS EUROPE

In this paper, we explore trends in the social acceptance of homosexuality across European countries. We analyze the direction of these changes and the differences in trends between countries. This topic is crucial in current political, societal, and scientific debates concerning the rights of sexual minorities across Europe. Additionally, such attitudes may influence various discriminatory and even aggressive behaviors, and consequently, largely impact the well-being of members of these minorities. We use data from the European Social Survey (ESS), covering 17 countries (with more than 350,000 respondents) and eleven time points between 2002 and 2023. During this period, countries were affected to varying degrees by economic downturns, increasing inequalities and insecurities, the refugee crisis, and the rise of far-right movements, and it has been expected that such changes would be reflected in the attitudes toward sexual minorities. Social acceptance of homosexuality in the ESS is measured through agreement with the attitude that "Gavs and lesbians should be free to live life as they wish." The results of the latent growth curve modeling indicate that social acceptance of homosexuality clearly increases across Europe – the linear component of the trend is significant and positive (.051, p<.001.). while the quadratic component is not significant. Additionally, only Hungary and the Czech Republic deviate from the observed positive trend. Finally, the acceptance of homosexuality was consistently lower in Eastern European countries compared to the Western during the entire observed period.

Key words: trends, homosexuality, European Social Survey