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Paper title: Secularisation or Revival? Generational Trends in Religiosity in Post-Communist Eastern Europe

Abstract: The collapse of communism ending the epoch of atheist state repression has naturally sparked a vibrant and ongoing debate on the direction religiosity has taken in Eastern Europe. Although the debate has continued for almost two decades, the question about the overall character of trend in religiosity in post-Communist Eastern Europe remains unanswered: some arguing that these countries are undergoing the same process of secularisation as the West (Norris and Inglehart 2004; Pickel 2009, Stolz 2009), while others insisting that the entire region is experiencing a religious revival (Greeley 1994, 2002, 2004; Tomka 2011). I will address this debate by examining generational trends in religious participation and beliefs using six waves (1990-2010) of the World Values Surveys. The analysis will apply the age-period-cohort (APC) model which will enable distinctions between the impact of life cycle and generational effects on religiosity. This distinction is crucial to testing the secularisation thesis according to which successive generations should lose their religiosity as societies modernise. In making the distinction between life cycle and generational effects, I hope to show that the Orthodox and Catholic countries are experiencing different processes –the first are undergoing revival whereas the second secularization- and that thus the current debate has taken a mistakenly general approach in studying religious trends in the region.