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ARTICLE



## Compliance gaps and the failed promises of religious freedoms

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### ABSTRACT

Previous research has established the striking disconnect between states' constitutional promises of religious freedoms and their actual practices for supporting such freedoms. Yet, past research has not fully explained, measured, or tested the extent of why the disconnect occurs for protections of religious freedom. Using the Religion and State Collection (Round 3) and other country level data, we construct two measures for the discrepancy between constitutional promises of religious freedom and the level of restrictions placed on religions. Building on previous research and theory, we argue, that these discrepancies represent a compliance gap, and can be explained through social, economic, governance, and global dimensions. We conclude that although promises of religious freedom signal a commitment to protections, upholding these promises is reliant on the religious economy of the nation (e.g. social pressures) and the specific types of governance used (e.g. free elections and an independent judiciary). Despite the influence of global and economic factors in explanations of other compliance gaps, these were insignificant in understanding why religious freedom compliance gaps emerge.

### ARTICLE HISTORY

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### KEYWORDS

Religion and state; religious restrictions; constitutional promises; compliance gap

Past research has established that the protections provided by governments often fall short of the promises made in national constitutions and international agreements. Several areas reviewed in detail include gender equality (Avdeyeva 2010), business practices (Prakash and Schepers 2014) and international treaties (Cole 2015; Goodman and Jinks 2008; Von Stein 2015). Each study finds that governments often fail to practice what they promise. This disconnect between the formal promises made and the actions taken is frequently referred to as the compliance gap and is recognised as a global problem (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005). Seeking to understand the growth in compliance gaps, researchers stress the importance of economic development (Cingranelli and Richards 2010; Mitchell and McCormick 1988), state capacity and governance (Cardenas 2007; Chayes and Chayes 1991; Cole 2015), and global connections (Avdeyeva 2007; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005).

Despite a growing literature seeking to explain the compliance gaps between human rights promises and practices, little attention has been devoted to religious liberties. Researchers regularly identify the vast gap between religious freedoms promised in

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constitutions and the actual freedoms supported (Chilton and Versteeg 2016; Grim and Finke 2011; Law and Versteeg 2013) and Fox and Flores (2009) have found that more democratic, populous and economically developed countries are more likely to follow their constitutional promises. Yet, much work remains.

We build on these initial efforts by expanding on the theoretical explanations for the occurrence of compliance gaps and test models with two compliance gap measures. We assess three prior explanations found in compliance gap literature (1) economic development; (2) political and governance dimensions; and (3) importance of global enforcement and a fourth drawn from literature on religious economies. The religious economy approach offers a unique explanation directed at the importance of religious favouritism and social restrictions for improving the competitive advantage of specific religious groups while restricting others. Our models utilise multiple cross-national datasets, including the Religion and State (RAS) Constitutions Dataset for the constitutional clauses on religious practice, the Religion and State Round 3 (RAS3) dataset that offers detailed measures on state violations of religious freedom, and economic, demographic, and governance measures from other sources. We find that not only are constitutional promises of religious freedoms increasing globally, but so too are violations of these promises, representing a patterned increase in the size and frequency of the compliance gaps. Of the explanations we review, the religious economy (e.g. social restrictions) and governance dimensions (e.g. free elections and an independent judiciary) are ultimately the key factors for explaining the gap between constitutional promises and state practices.

## Religion and the compliance gap

Compliance gaps are common, particularly with regards to national government policies and practices of protecting human rights. While compliance gaps occur at various levels, such as a single business disobeying a regulation (Kotabe and Czinkota 1992) or the compliance of institutions and actors at subnational levels (Kapiszewski and Taylor 2013), one of the more frequent concerns is the failure of national governments to comply with national and international promises (Prakash and Schepers 2014). The common thread between these assessments is the failure of an actor to follow through with promises. Thus, we define compliance gaps as *the disconnect between the legal protections promised and the subsequent actions supporting these promised protections* (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005; Neumayer 2005).

The presence of compliance gaps highlights two interrelated aspects of international law and practice: commitments and violations. First, it demonstrates a willingness of national governments to join in discussions and to formally support human rights practices, such as the adoption of human rights protections treaties. These are regularly considered commitments made by each country to demonstrate their willingness to support their promises. Second, the compliance gaps demonstrate violations, or the failure and unwillingness to follow through with the promises made. Violations are particularly problematic among human rights concerns. Despite the prominent increases in human rights protections or signing of treaties, 'violations of human rights is epidemic' (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005, 1374).

The compliance gap ‘epidemic’ is clear regarding religion. Religious freedom is considered a human rights initiative (Office of International Religious Freedom 2016), is protected by the United Nations in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*,<sup>1</sup> and as presented below, is promised in more than 90% of all national constitutions. Despite these constitutional promises, however, governmental repression of religion is prevalent across the globe (Finke and Martin 2014; Finke et al. 2017; Fox 2008; Grim and Finke 2011). Moreover, the presence of governmental restrictions on religion frequently foreshadows increased levels of religious persecution and violence (Akbaba and Fox 2011; Finke and Harris 2011; Finke and Martin 2014; Grim and Finke 2007, 2011).

Like other compliance gaps, there is a clear disconnect between the protections promised and the practices enacted to support these promises. Recent data collections have documented that government restrictions on religion take many forms, ranging from limits on public religious speech to the operation of religious organisations, and are especially harsh on religious minorities. Even seemingly benign behaviours, such as registration requirements for organisations (Finke et al. 2017), precede more restrictive practices.

Previous attempts to document the disconnect between the state’s constitutional promises and practices relied heavily on simple comparisons. After comparing constitutional promises of religious freedoms with legislation restricting religious freedoms, Grim and Finke (2011, 28) conclude that ‘[o]f the 130 countries promising religious freedom, 86% [...] have at least one law denying a religious freedom and 38% have four or more such restrictions.’ Based on a series of descriptive tables, Fox and Flores (2009, 1505) explain that ‘a large majority of states with religious freedom clauses in their constitutions engage in actions which are counter to these clauses.’ When Fox and Flores used constitutional clauses to predict religious discrimination and legislation, they concluded that the ‘clauses have at best a limited impact on government behavior (1499).’<sup>2</sup> These studies have clearly established that there is a large gap between what state constitutions promise and what is being delivered; but none of the studies offer a measure for the extent of the gap between religious freedom promises and practices. We offer two approaches to the measurement of this gap and draw from diverse research sources to better understand why the gap occurs.

## Explaining compliance gaps

There are generally three proposed explanations for why compliance gaps occur: (1) economic development, (2) governance structures, and (3) global networks (Avdeyeva 2010; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005; Hillebrecht 2012). Drawing on the extant literatures, we explore each of the explanations in greater detail below. But first we propose a fourth explanation for the state’s religious freedom compliance: the religious economy of the nation. This explanation proposes that both state and non-state actors can influence the extent of the compliance gap because of social pressures on some religions and favoured status for others. The religious economy approach also explains variance left in countries where alternative explanations suggestion that compliance gaps should be minimal (e.g. high economic development in western, democratic countries).

## **Religious economy**

Religious economy explanations stress the competition between religious organisations for resources and support (Finke 1990; Finke and Stark 1992; Iannaccone 1991; Stark and Finke 2000). At the national level, an alliance between the state and a select religion(s) can provide the religion with more resources and formal supports from the state. For the state, this alliance with the dominant religion can provide increased popular support and increased legitimation from religious people and institutions, as well as increased loyalty from both (Baradaran-Robinson, Scharffs, and Sewell 2005; Billings and Scott 1994; Shterin and Richardson 2000).<sup>3</sup> For the dominant religion, the alliance gives it a competitive advantage over other religious and cultural groups by providing more resources and formal support for institutions and imposing restrictions on religious competitors (Finke and Martin 2014; Grim and Finke 2011; Koesel 2014; Yang 2012). As a result, the religious economies model suggests that government favouritism for one or a select group of religions will result in fewer resources and more restrictions on others.

We propose that this explanation also helps us to understand compliance gaps between the state's promises and practices. When the state and the dominant religion (s) form an alliance, the state will be under increased pressure to restrict the activities of the minority religions perceived as unwanted religious competitors. Sometimes these restrictions will come in the form of openly repressive actions against religious minorities, other times the restrictions will be far subtler. Registration requirements by national governments are an apt example of the relationship between seemingly benign practices and subsequent restrictions. For example, requiring religions to legally identify as a religion, are associated with subsequently higher levels of restrictions in years following the registration requirements (Finke et al. 2017; Gill 2008; Jahangir 2005; Koesel 2014; Sarkissian 2015). Thus, even when a state argues that their actions are beneficial to a religion (e.g. registration for tax benefits), the consequences are beneficial for the dominant religion and result in increased restrictions for the minority (Grim and Finke 2011; Kolbe and Henne 2014; Fox 2015). We argue that as governments favour a dominant religion, the gap between promised freedoms and enacted freedoms will increase for minority religions.

*Hypothesis 1a: Heightened levels of government favouritism towards specific religious organisations will result in larger compliance gaps for religious minorities.*

A second factor proposed by the religious economies model is that restrictions on minority religions can come from non-state actors. Social and cultural pressures, from the actions of organised movements to the pervasive norms of the culture, can serve to restrict the practice, profession, or selection of religion in a country. These pressures are felt most acutely by the 'non-traditional' and minority religions.

Past research has found that these social restrictions can have direct and indirect impact on religious freedoms (Finke and Martin 2014; Grim and Finke 2007, 2011). Along with taking actions that directly limit the practice, profession, or selection of religion, they place pressures on the state to control the activities of the minority religions, especially for religions perceived as a threat to the state or society (Fox, Finke, and Eisentein 2018). As a result, social pressures can increase the compliance gap. Rather

than strictly enforcing the religious freedoms promised in the constitution, violations are permitted or simply overlooked. Minority religions face the brunt of these restrictions (Grim and Finke 2011) and like the state's restrictions, societal restrictions will increase the gap between promised freedoms and enacted freedoms for religious minorities.

*Hypothesis 1b: Heightened levels of social restrictions against religious minorities will result in larger compliance gaps for minority religions.*

Although our hypotheses and past uses of the religious economies model stress the restrictions placed on minority religions, gaps between promised freedoms and enacted freedoms also occur for majority religions. Yet, both the model and past research would suggest that the largest compliance gaps will occur for minority religions.

### **Economic explanations**

Economic development within a country might also explain the failure of countries to protect constitutional promises and compliance with promised human rights. Mitchell and McCormick (1988) argue that economic poverty results in political conflict that prevents compliance, while others suggest that advanced economies may have fewer human rights violations because political stability is more easily achieved (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005). These explanations argue that economic development is necessary to achieve and maintain compliance because the more developed countries can support the programmes needed to uphold the constitutional promises (Avdeyeva 2010; Cingranelli and Richards 2010; Law and Versteeg 2013). Based on this research we expect economically developed nations to have a lower compliance gap because they are more capable of upholding constitutional promises of religious freedoms.

*Hypothesis 2: Economically developed countries will be associated with lower religious freedom compliance gaps.*

### **Governance explanations**

Governance dimensions are also prominent explanations of compliance gaps (Cardenas 2007; Chayes and Chayes 1991; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005). Countries offering more protections for human rights and reduced levels of conflict are regularly associated with the democratic institutions within a country (Poe and Tate 1994; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005; Avdeyeva 2007; Hollyer and Peter Rosendorff 2011; Prakash and Schepers 2014). Early research relied on summary measures of democracy to establish the relationship, and recent work has highlighted the importance of measuring specific dimensions or institutions of democracy (Davenport and Armstrong 2004; Finke and Martin 2014; Henderson 1991; Hill and Jones 2014).

We expect that both open and free elections and the independence of the judiciary will be associated with the enforcement of constitutional promises. The open and free elections will give citizens greater voice in the polity and ensure more government protections. The independent judiciary will be even more critical for ensuring that constitutional promises are protected. Previous research regularly identifies these

complementary political institutions as enforcers of freedoms in general, and religious equality specifically (Finke and Martin 2014; Finke, Martin, and Fox 2017; Hill and Jones 2014). Together they should help to reduce the gap between promises and practice.

*Hypothesis 3a: States with free and open elections will be associated with lower compliance gaps.*

*Hypothesis 3b: States with an independent judiciary will be associated with lower compliance gaps.*

### **Global explanations**

State governments are not isolated; and the global networks they hold have important implications for compliance gaps. Two explanations have been proposed on why global networks are associated with compliance gaps. We focus on the second explanation,<sup>4</sup> which stresses the importance of nations joining government and non-government organisations (NGOs) that supervise and enforce human rights protections. As globalisation increases, the presence or membership in these international organisations strengthens the networks between countries, effectively holding governments accountable for their promises. One frequent example is the association between the presence of women's rights NGOs and significantly reduced levels of women's rights compliance gaps (Avdeyeva 2007, 2010; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005). The monitoring by international organisations and their members reinforces states' commitments to their promises. We expect that membership in international organisations increases opportunities for agency monitoring of a state's behaviours, enforcing constitutional promises and ultimately resulting in reduced compliance gaps.

*Hypothesis 4: Increases in the number of memberships with international government organisations subsequently increases the opportunities for international monitoring, reducing the compliance gap.*

### **Measuring compliance gaps**

Measuring human rights compliance gaps contains several challenges (see Chayes and Chayes 1991; Goodman and Jinks 2008; Hathaway 2002, 2003; Hollyer and Peter Rosendorff 2011; Robertson 1994; Simmons 2010). Hathaway (2002, 1964) explains that compliance can have several different dimensions: 'compliance with procedural obligations, such as the requirement to report; compliance with substantive obligations outlined in the treaty; and compliance with the spirit of the treaty.' Hathaway went on to advocate for focusing on the countries' actual treatment of their inhabitants, rather than their cooperation with procedural requirements. Chayes and Chayes (1991) have also warned that perfect compliance is rare, and thus some gap should be expected. One way to overcome concerns of perfect compliance is to look at the general and overall extent of promises and violations rather than counting individual events (Cardenas 2007; Lopez and Stohl 1992).

These challenges also apply to measuring constitutional compliance gaps, such as those supporting religious freedom. Constitutional compliance gaps look at the specific promises and guarantees made by a country and their subsequent action, signalling the failures or unwillingness to uphold promises made by the country itself for its citizens (Law and Versteeg 2013).

Two factors are essential to measuring compliance gaps: (1) an assessment of *commitment* by a national government to declarations; (2) measures of *violations* corresponding to the government's declarations. Commitment corresponds with efforts to reinforce or signal promises made by a government (e.g. creating institutions to uphold promises or outlining protections) (Cardenas 2007). Violations are the instances or extent of a state breaking the promises. Building on prior compliance gap measurement, we measure the discrepancy between the constitutional promises of religious freedom and the actions taken by the state against religious groups and participants (Fox and Flores 2009; Law and Versteeg 2013). Once determining the compliance gaps, we answer questions of 'why' and under what conditions these gaps between promises of freedom and repressive actions occur.

We also account for the expectation that perfect compliance is rare (Cardenas 2007; Chayes and Chayes 1991) by grouping countries based on categorical levels of compliance, thus comparing differences between countries of relatively low compliance to those with relatively high compliance.

## Data and methods

Our analyses use the RAS3 and the RAS Constitutions datasets to compute our measure for the compliance gap. Several other cross-national datasets provide measures for our independent variables. The RAS Project now covers 24 years, 180 countries, and has been used extensively in past research (see Fox 2011b, 2018). We restrict analyses to the 164 countries with a population of 500,000 or more, limiting the biases and insufficient data among small countries.

## Dependent variable

Two factors comprise our compliance gap measure. The first is a count of the number of explicit guarantees of religious freedom made within a country's constitution. This measure represents the *commitments* made by a country in upholding efforts of religious freedom. Taken from the 2008 RAS's Constitutions Dataset, constitutional promises correspond with 'types of religious freedom explicitly mentioned in the constitution.' The initial index identified 21 types of freedoms promised, ranging from 'freedom of religion or conscience' to 'freedom from coercion regarding religion.' The promises vary largely based on their protections, such as an individual's right to express religious opinions or the ability to form religious groups. Promises must be made for *all* religions, such that variation in commitments is not reliant on a specific religious group, but general protections of religious freedoms. In 2008, the average number of constitutional promises was 3.9. Only eight countries, with constitutions, did not explicitly promise at least one type of religious freedom, while the majority of countries made at least two promises.



The second component of our religious freedom compliance gap accounts for the extent of religious restrictions within a country, rather than a count of unique events that occur during a year. State restrictions on religion are derived from the RAS3 (see Fox 2011b, 2018). Specifically, we utilise two types of violations: (1) Restrictions on Minority Religions and (2) Restrictions on All Religions. The minority restrictions index consists of 36 items, resulting in values ranging from 0 to 78 in the models. The items in this index include several restrictions on religious practice originating from the state, such as conversion campaigns, mandatory education, or limitations on disseminating religious texts. Each item has four potential values, ranging from 'not significantly restricted for any [religion]' to 'the activity is prohibited or sharply restricted.' The restrictions on all religions index consists of 29 items, resulting in values ranging from 0 to 56. The restrictions on all religions include items such as restrictions on formal religious organisations and restrictions on religious speech. Each item in this second index also has four potential values, ranging from 'no restrictions' to 'the [religious] activity is illegal'. For both indexes, higher values correspond with more frequent violations of religious freedoms.<sup>5</sup>

Using the raw values from these measures introduces a few concerns. Promises and violations are not always equal in type or severity. Although some commitments overlap with specific types of restrictions (e.g. protections and restrictions on spreading religions), others have limited direct relation (e.g. registration requirements).<sup>6</sup> Since 90% of the countries make at least one promise of religious freedom, we constructed two compliance gap dependent variables that correspond with comparisons between the levels of commitment to religious freedoms and restrictions on religious practice. First is a range of values measuring the difference between the number of promises and restrictions. We computed this measure for countries that made at least one promise of religious freedom and consists of a comparison of standardised values for both the number of promises in a country's constitution and the extent of religious restrictions. Standardised values corresponding to a country's religious restrictions are subtracted from the standardised number of constitutional commitments of religious freedom.<sup>7</sup> The final distribution for restrictions on minority religions compliance gap is  $-4.66$  to  $3.02$ , and  $-4.44$  to  $3.22$  for all religions. Values nearest zero correspond with nearly equal levels of promises and restrictions. Countries with larger, positive values correspond with greater promises of religious freedom than state restrictions on religion.

The above variable measures the gap between promises and restrictions, but it cannot provide an avenue to explore why some countries making frequent promises of religious freedom also have high levels of restrictions. Our second measure places countries into one of four categories based on their level of promises and restrictions. Each country is categorised as 'Low' or 'High' for commitments and as 'Low' or 'High' for violations.<sup>8</sup> Countries below the mean are considered 'Low' while those above are considered 'High.' This produced four categories: (1) low commitments and low violations; (2) high commitments and low violations; (3) low commitments and high violations; and (4) high commitments and high violations. Countries in category '4' feature the greatest compliance gap, as they not only make the most number of promises to protect religious freedom, but also have the highest extent of religious restrictions. For our analyses, the primary comparison of interest is between countries making frequent promises of religious freedom but differing on the number of restrictions present in a country (categories 2 and 4). About 33% of the countries

fall into the ‘high commitments/low violations’, while about 13% are categorised as ‘high commitment/high violations.’ See [Appendix 1](#) for each country’s categorisation.

### ***Independent variables***

Independent variables correspond with the four theoretical expectations described above: (1) Religious Economies; (2) Economic Development; (3) Governance; and (4) Global Connections.

#### ***Religious economies***

Two measures are used to understand a country’s religious economy. First is a measure of social restrictions, which captures the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours of non-state actors directed at religious practice. We use the Social Restrictions Index (SRI) from the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA) coding of the International Religious Freedom Reports (Grim and Finke 2006, 2011). This index is the summation of five items and ranges from 0 to 10, where higher values correspond with higher levels of societal restrictions on religious practice. The second is the Governmental Favouritism Index (GFI). Also derived from the ARDA coding of the IRF reports, the GFI accounts for state level favouritism and benefits provided for certain religious groups (Finke and Martin 2014; Grim and Finke 2006, 2011). Items in this index include the balance of government funding to measures of whether there is a ‘favoured religious brand.’ The final additive index ranges from 0 to 10, where higher values correspond with greater favouritism towards specific religions by the state.

#### ***Economic development***

Economic development provides governments the resources and ability to maintain compliance with the commitments they promise. To test the impact of economic development on religious freedom compliance gaps, we utilise the log of each country’s gross domestic product in current US dollars as reported by the World Bank (2017). Higher values correspond with greater economic development.

#### ***Governance***

Governance is measured with two dichotomised items: independent judiciary and free and open elections.<sup>9</sup> We utilise the Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Data project (Cingranelli and Richards 2010) for both. A country has an independent judiciary if they generally had a judicial system separate from external control or influence by other branches of government or military. It is important to note that the CIRI measure of independent judiciary includes all levels of the judiciary within a country and does not account for variations across different regions in the country. It also excludes the influence of international courts. A country is considered as having a free and open election when political participation was at least moderately free and open.

#### ***Global connections***

We utilise a count of the total number of a country’s international government memberships to test the influence of international monitoring. The data are derived from the International Organisations Dataset as part of the Correlates of War Project (Pevehouse, Nordstrom, and Warnke 2004). The dataset consists of all organisations with at least

three nation-state members and identifies the country memberships in each organisation. We constructed a continuous measure from the total number country memberships out of a total 496 IGOs. The more memberships a country has, the more likely they will interact with and subsequently be exposed to monitoring.

### *Other controls*

Also included are four control measures of social, political, demographic, and religious contexts of each country. The first is a measure of religious diversity, calculated from the Religious Characteristics of States Dataset (Brown and James 2015) and downloaded from the Association of Religion Data Archives (theARDA.com). We constructed a Herfindahl index to measure the diversity of religious groups within a country by adding the squared proportion of each religious group within a country and subtracting this value from 1. Higher values correspond with greater levels of religious diversity.

Previous explanations of state conflict and restrictions are frequently linked to a country's demographics and youth bulge; the proportion of young adults to all adults within a country (Hill and Jones 2014; Nordas and Davenport 2013; Urdal 2006). We use the World Population Prospects (United Nations 2017) to calculate a country's youth bulge by comparing individuals aged 15–24 to the total number of all adults (aged 15 and above). Higher values correspond with a greater proportion of youth within a country.

Finally, we included two additional measures of government characteristics. The first is a measure of government effectiveness (World Bank 2014), ranging from  $-1.72$  to  $2.13$ . Higher scores equate to greater effectiveness at implementing policies than other countries. The second is whether a state had a communist government at some point in time (InfoPlease 2011).

### *Methods*

Our analysis occurs in two distinct steps. First, we utilise OLS regression to test the country characteristics that best predicts the distribution of the compliance gap measure (Table 2). Using these models, we identify the characteristics that are significantly associated with the difference between promises and restrictions, while providing evidence for when countries are more likely to make more promises than restrictions, or vice versa.

Second, we use multinomial logistic regression to test the difference between countries with both high levels of constitutional promises of religious freedom compliance, but varying levels of restrictions (Table 3).<sup>10,11</sup> We converted the logistic coefficients to odds ratios to predict the odds of each gap category compared to a reference category (Long 1997). This allows us to identify which country characteristics are most likely to increase the odds of a high promise-high restriction country compared to a high promise-low restriction country. Thus, our two measures provide insight into two important dimensions of compliance gaps. Our initial approach is designed to determine the extent of the gap between commitment and violations, while the second highlights why countries make both high levels of promises, but some have high restrictions.

State practices are not always immediate, and often there is a lag between the implementation of policies and the actions by the state (Finke et al. 2017), as such we also account for time-ordering. Our dependent variables are constructed using 2008 values,<sup>12</sup> while our

independent variables correspond with the country's characteristics in 2005. We selected 2008 for the dependent variables as it provides the most recent available assessment of compliance gaps. Further, situating the dependent variables in 2008, and the independent variables in 2005 allows for the inclusion of the ARDA's religious economies measures and consistent lags for all measures. Few countries had missing data, which we addressed through multiple imputation in Stata 15. We generated  $m = 20$  complete datasets using a chained imputation model including all the dependent and independent variables used in the models (Allison 2002).<sup>13</sup> Imputed datasets were combined to produce the estimates found in Tables 2 and 3. Table 1 presents summary statistics and brief descriptions of each variable.

**Table 1.** Summary statistics and descriptions.

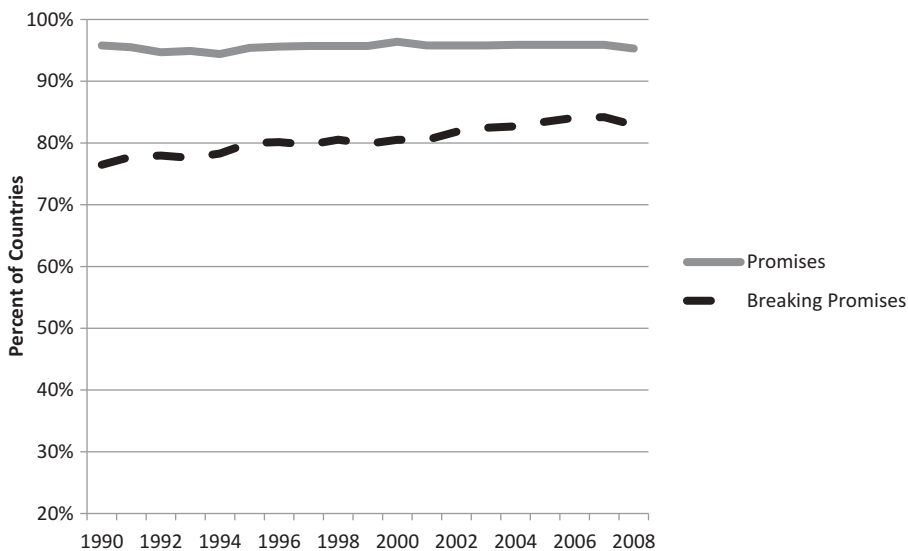
	<i>N</i>	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max	Description
<i>Promises to Minority Restrictions</i>	164	.00	1.47	-4.66	3.02	Standardised difference between number of promises and restrictions on minority religions
<i>Promises to All Restrictions</i>	164	.00	1.53	-4.44	3.22	Standardised difference between number of promises and restrictions on all religions
<i>Compliance Gap Category (Minorities)</i>						
High-Low	164	.34	.47	0	1	High Promises-Low Restrictions
Low-High	164	.18	.38	0	1	Low Promises-High Restrictions
High-High	164	.15	.35	0	1	High Promises-High Restrictions
<i>Compliance Gap Category (All)</i>						
High-Low	164	.34	.48	0	1	High Promises-Low Restrictions
Low-High	164	.19	.39	0	1	Low Promises-High Restrictions
High-High	164	.14	.35	0	1	High Promises-High Restrictions
Government Favouritism	160	5.32	2.65	0	9	Level of government favouritism
Social Restrictions	160	4.05	3.15	0	10	Level of social restrictions
Log GDP	161	8.00	1.66	5.01	11.56	Log of GDP in current US dollars
Free Elections	160	.825	.38	0	1	Presence of free and open elections
Independent Judiciary	160	.69	.46	0	1	Presence of independent judiciary
IGO Memberships	161	63.98	19.27	7	109	Number of memberships with international governmental organisations
Religious Diversity	164	.38	.25	.01	.98	Proportion of unique religious groups in a country
Govt. Effectiveness	163	-.10	.99	-1.72	2.13	Quality of government in implementing and maintaining policies
Communism	164	.27	.44	0	1	Whether a government is/was communist
Youth Bulge	161	.28	.08	.12	.42	Proportion of youth (15 to 24) to all adults (15 and above)

Note: Dependent variables are italicised.

## Predicting promises and violations

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the per cent of countries making promises of religious freedom (about 95) and the per cent of countries breaking promises between 1990 and 2008. Although the per cent of countries promising religious freedom remains relatively flat, the per cent of countries breaking promises increases.<sup>14</sup> However, this figure is descriptive and does not explain the conditions that are contributing to the compliance gap.

### *Deviation between promises and restrictions*



**Figure 1.** Per cent of countries with promises and breaking promises, 1990–2008.

To test when compliance gaps are most likely, the first step is to understand the conditions that are associated with promises and restrictions of religious freedom. Positive scores of this measure correspond to countries with more promises than restrictions, thus positive coefficients in the model represent a predicted higher level of promises. Negative coefficients suggest countries will have more restrictions than promises. Model 1 in [Table 2](#) provides an assessment of the country conditions predicting the difference between promises and government restrictions on minority religions. Model 2 predicts the differences between promises and government restrictions on all religions. Interestingly, when predicting the differences between the number of constitutional promises and the extent of violations within a country, the governance measures were the most consistent predictors. Specifically, we found that free and open elections as well as an independent judiciary were significantly associated with more promises of religious freedom than both restrictions on minority or all religions. In countries with a free and open election, the expected number of promises to restrictions of religious freedom is 1.27 standard deviations higher than restrictions on minority religions and 1.67 standard deviations than restrictions on all religions.

**Table 2.** OLS regression predicting the standardised difference between number of religious freedom commitments and violations.

	Model 1 Minority restrictions		Model 2 All restrictions	
	<i>B</i>	SD	<i>B</i>	SD
Government Favouritism	-.021	.045	.022	.047
Social Restrictions	-.096*	.038	-.051	.040
Log GDP	-.034	.150	.066	.156
Free Elections	1.274***	.320	1.667***	.341
Independent Judiciary	.731**	.266	.906**	.280
IGO Memberships	.001	.006	.002	0.006
Religious Diversity	.188	.471	.400	.487
Govt. Effectiveness	-.018	.220	-.125	.227
Communism	.086	.282	.189	.290
Youth Bulge	1.441	2.600	1.474	2.678
Constant	-1.362	2.048	-3.260	2.132

Notes \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .  $N = 164$  countries.  $mi = 20$  imputations.

Independent judiciary is similar, albeit the predicted effect is slightly weaker than free and open elections. Countries with an independent judiciary are expected to increase the number of promises compared to restrictions on minority religions by about 0.73 standard deviations. When comparing promises to restrictions on all religions, the presence of an independent judiciary is expected to have 0.91 standard deviations more promises than restrictions. The importance of an independent judiciary and open elections are clear; countries with these two dimensions of governance are significantly more likely to have more promises of religious freedom than state restrictions on religious practice. Conversely, a government's effectiveness at implementing human rights policies was insignificant, suggesting that while the state makes promises, its practices rely on separate actors (judiciary and voters) to monitor the actions rather than an overall ability to maintain the promises.

Religious economy explanations are, in part, supported. We find that each increase in social restrictions corresponds with a 0.10 decrease in the standard deviations of promises compared to restrictions on minority religions (fewer promises than restrictions). Although appearing small, a change from the lowest level of social restrictions to highest corresponds with an increase in the number of restrictions on minority religions compared to promises of religious freedoms by about 1.00 standard deviations. Contrary to expectations, however, government favouritism was not a significant predictor of our compliance gap measure for minority religions. It seems that the majority religions use their position and level of social discrimination to influence the state to impose additional restrictions despite the level of promises. The insignificance of these factors for all religions is expected because it would be counterproductive for the majority religion to use its position to encourage greater restrictions that may harm its access to resources and position.

Despite the expectations of past research that economic and global connection measures would predict compliance gaps, neither was significant. Although research suggested economic development allowed the state to maintain promises, this was not the case in our models. Similarly, our measure of global connections did not account for the compliance gap, despite the expectation for increased monitoring by other governments. In summary, open elections and independent judiciary predict more promises

than restrictions and social restrictions predict fewer promises than restrictions for minority religions. Only open elections and an independent judiciary were significant predictors of the compliance gap for all religions.

### *Increasing the odds of a compliance gap*

The results from Table 2 identify the predictors of the distribution in promises-restrictions, yet this measure alone fails to account for why the gap might occur. For example, a small compliance gap distribution can result from countries having few promises of freedoms and few violations; or, it can result from countries having a high level of violations but making many promises. For both, the distribution between promises and restrictions is close to zero. Our second measure overcomes this limitation and groups nations into four categories: (1) low commitments and low violations; (2) high commitments and low violations; (3) low commitments and high violations; and (4) high commitments and high violations. Relying on this measure and using multinomial logistic regression, we assess why countries holding high promises and low violations (#2) differ from those with high promises and high violations (#4).

The results of the multinomial logistic regression analyses are presented in Table 3. Model 3 assesses the odds of each religious freedom compliance gap category to countries with high promises and low government restrictions on minority religions. Model 4 compares the odds to countries with high promises and low government restrictions on all religions. The high promises-high restrictions group corresponds with the largest compliance gap; they make multiple promises of religious freedom, but also enact multiple restrictions denying the promised freedoms. In contrast, the high promises-low restrictions group of nations are those with the lowest compliance gap, offering high constitutional promises of freedoms and few restrictions that curtail these freedoms. Results are presented in odds ratios, where values above one correspond with an increase in the odds of a country categorisation compared to the reference category (reference category is high promises-low restrictions). Values less than one correspond with a decrease in the odds.<sup>15</sup>

**Table 3.** Multinomial logistic regression predicting religious freedom compliance gap categories.

	Model 3 Compliance Gap Minority Restrictions	Model 4 Compliance Gap All Restrictions
	<i>OR</i>	<i>OR</i>
<i>High Promises-High Restrictions</i>		
Government Favouritism	1.23	1.32
Social Restrictions	1.76***	1.31*
Log GDP	.99	.55
Free Elections	.19	.19
Independent Judiciary	.29	.18*
IGO Memberships	1.00	.99
Religious Diversity	.89	1.97
Gov. Effectiveness	1.22	1.46
Communism	9.25*	1.93
Youth Bulge	.00	1.93
Constant	.16	89.86

Notes: \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ . Reference category is 'High Promises, Low Restrictions'. Odds of other categories presented in Appendix 2.  $N = 164$  countries.  $mi = 20$  imputations.

When predicting the odds of a compliance gap against minority religions (Model 3), only two measures were significant. As predicted by hypothesis 1b, and the religious economy model, the measure for societal restrictions was highly significant. Specifically, we find that the odds of a country having both high promises of religious freedom and high restrictions on religious minorities increases by a factor of 1.75 as the level of social restrictions on religion increases. This result tells us, that for each increase level in social restrictions, we expect the odds that a country would have both high promises and high restrictions will increase by about 75%. Government favouritism (hypothesis 1a), however, was not a significant predictor.

The other significant predictor of countries with high promises-high restrictions compared to those with low restrictions is the current or former presence of a communist government. We expect that the presence of communist governance increases the odds of a country also having high promises-high restrictions compared to those with low restrictions is about 800% higher than those countries that never were communist. Interestingly, despite the significance of free and open elections as well as independent judiciary in predicting the distribution of compliance gaps against religious minorities (hypotheses 3a and 3b), neither was significant in predicting the odds of high promises-high restrictions compared to countries with high-promises-low restrictions in Model 3.<sup>16</sup>

When we predict the odds of a compliance gap against all religions (Model 4), the presence of an independent judiciary is significantly associated with differences of categorisation. Specifically, the presence of an independent judiciary is expected to decrease the odds of a country being categorised as high promises-high restrictions on all religions by about 83%. This important result suggests that the presence of an independent judiciary keeps a state honest with regards to their promise; however, it seems to be exclusive to the occurrence of restrictions for all religions rather than just the minority group.

Like Model 3, our measure for social restrictions was significant in Model 4, though much weaker than when predicting the compliance gap for minority religions. Interestingly, the presence of communism within a country does not significantly predict a change in the odds of countries with high promises-high restrictions of all religions and countries with high promises-low restrictions. For these models, our measures for economic development (hypothesis 2) and global connections (hypothesis 4) were insignificant.

Overall, the results in [Table 3](#) highlight and confirm two important findings. Societal restrictions increase compliance gaps by encouraging (or expecting) states to ignore constitutional promises. Conversely, an independent judiciary monitors the state, ensuring that the constitutional promises are upheld.

## Discussion and conclusions

Many countries regularly promise religious freedoms, however the gap between promises and practices continues to grow, with the majority of countries both promising religious freedoms and subsequently breaking these promises. The goal of this research was to understand the disconnect between states' constitutional promises of religious



freedom and their actual practices by identifying the country characteristics associated with this disconnect.

Situating our argument in line with previous explorations of compliance gaps (Avdeyeva 2007; Cardenas 2007; Chayes and Chayes 1991; Cingranelli and Richards 2010; Cole 2015; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005; Mitchell and McCormick 1988) provided both strong theoretical expectations for when compliance gaps occur and important considerations for measurement. We tested three key explanations introduced in past compliance gap research: economic, governance, and global connections. We also introduced a fourth explanation, religious economies, arguing that compliance gaps will be most common in countries with state favouritism and social restrictions. Relying on two different measures for the compliance gap and using two different analytical strategies, we found no support for the economic development or the global connections explanations. We did, however, find partial support for both the governance and religious economy explanations.

Our governance measures for free and open elections as well as an independent judiciary were strong predictors of our measure for the distance between the level of promises given in a constitution for religious freedom and the level of state actions violating these promises. In other words, they were significant predictors of the distance between the promises and practices of the state. When using our categorical measure of nations holding a high compliance gap, however, the governance measures contributed little to explaining the odds of a country having both high promises of religious freedom and high restrictions when compared to countries with high promises of religious freedom and low restrictions. Despite this, an independent judiciary was significantly associated with a difference in the odds when measuring the compliance gap for all religions.

Our test of the religious economy argument found that social restrictions rather than government favouritism contributed the most to explaining the compliance gap. As expected, the impact of societal restrictions was most evident for minority religions. For our measure of the distance between the level of promises given in a constitution for religious freedom and the level of state actions violating these promises, social restrictions were significant in the model for minority religions, but not the model for all religions (see Table 2). When explaining the odds of a country having both high promises of religious freedom and high restrictions (Table 3), the social restrictions measure was significant for both minority religions and all religions; but was a stronger predictor for the minority religions. Overall, the findings support our argument that social pressures can influence the willingness or ability of a state to enforce their own promises of religious freedom, especially for the promises granted to minority religions.

While not hypothesised, a current or former communist government was also a strong significant predictor when explaining the odds of a country having both high promises of religious freedom and high restrictions (Table 3). Countries that were once communist generally have increased promises of religious freedom as well as higher restrictions on minority religions. Further, when comparing country categories of compliance gaps, communist countries were identified with higher odds of having a large compliance gap. A similar finding is also frequent among other research on compliance gaps, such as authoritarian regimes and promises against torture (Hollyer and Peter Rosendorff 2011) or 'sham constitutions' (Law and Versteeg 2013), leading the authors to

conclude that states use promises as a signal to actors and other countries. For former communist countries these promises serve as a 'signal' or evidence of commitment towards democracy and the human rights associated with democracy.<sup>17</sup>

These findings confirm that the religious freedom compliance gap is occurring, and that it is related to religious economies and governance dimensions. However, the findings also raise additional questions. First, economic and global dimensions regularly predict the occurrence of compliance gaps (Avdeyeva 2007, 2010; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005; Mitchell and McCormick 1988), yet we do not find a significant pattern. One potential explanation could be that these factors are not important in determining religious freedom compliance gaps. Another, that remains unanswered here, is whether their impact would be significant when measuring forms of commitment beyond explicit guarantees of religious freedom. For instance, countries with higher economic development might also have organisations dedicated to monitoring and maintaining religious freedom while less developed countries do not have the resources to maintain such an organisation. Moreover, it is possible that it is the type of organisation and not the number of memberships that matter most when testing international government agencies' ability to monitor and influence promises and action. Measures for membership in specific international governmental organisations or the presence of an international non-governmental organisation for religious freedom may instead be necessary to predict a difference in the religious freedom compliance gap.

Our findings on former and current communist nations also raise important questions. As suggested by previous research this might result from former USSR nations signalling their commitment to democracy. Closely related to this argument, we suggest that the finding might also be the result of when the constitutions were written. Fourteen of the 15 former USSR nations adopted a new constitution in 1992 or later and 10 of the 14 added an amendment later. The UN's 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 18) and the 1981 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, as well as increased pressures from other human rights and government agencies (e.g. US International Religious Freedom Office) monitoring religious freedoms, all increase the pressure on governments to adopt constitutions that conform to international expectations. This raises another question: is there something distinctive about being a former or current communist nation or is the communism measure a proxy for the recency of the constitution?

Ultimately, this paper contributes to a much larger discussion of compliance gaps often overlooked in international research and documents the large gap between state promises and practices regarding religious freedom. Moreover, this research demonstrates the importance of social pressures and governance dimensions in predicting gaps between a state's promises of human rights and subsequent action.

## Notes

1. Available in full at: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>.
2. Fox (2011a, 61; Fox 2015) also notes that constitutional clauses on religion do hold a significant relationship with religious legislation, but concludes that 'the influence is small compared to structural factors' and that it is limited to clauses on 'established religions' and on the 'separation of religion and state.'

3. The state's willingness to form an alliance is particularly likely when political leadership is unstable or the culture is dominated by a single religion (Gill 2008).
4. The first emphasises the consequences of globalisation and exploitation of workers (see Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005; Mitchell and McCormick 1988), however this offers few insights into compliance gaps between the constitutional promises for religion and the state's protection of these promises.
5. Although the range for both restriction indexes have the potential for higher values (108 for restrictions on minorities; 87 for restrictions on all), no country experienced 'the activity is prohibited [...] for every index item, reducing the highest score for restrictions.
6. See the RAS Codebooks at [www.thearda.com/ras/downloads](http://www.thearda.com/ras/downloads).
7. We account for the different index scales for the number of constitutional promises and state restrictions through z-score transformations, changing the distribution to how many standard deviations a country is above or below the mean values. The transformation allows us to compare the two distributions. For example, the United States made one promise of religious freedom in 2008, which coincides with about a 1 standard deviation below the mean across all countries in 2008. Conversely, the United States also had four identified restrictions against minorities in 2008, corresponding with .6 standard deviations below the mean number of restrictions. These values were then subtracted, restrictions from promises, providing the overall score. In 2008, the United States, therefore has a compliance score of  $-0.46$ , or slightly more restrictions than the number of promises.
8. Countries without a constitution or those that did not have a constitutional promise of religious freedom were excluded from analyses. Since compliance gaps are dependent on commitments, these countries without a constitution and/or no promises are not actively making commitments to protect religious freedom and thus would not factor into why compliance gaps emerge.
9. Aggregate measures of democracy and polity have been used widely among research on state restrictions and repression, however, concerns have been raised about using aggregates in place of component measures (Gleditsch and Ward 1997; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005; Hill and Jones 2014). As such, we rely on two components of democracy in our governance measures.
10. Despite an ordering to the difference between promises and restrictions (e.g. ranging from low to high), our second measure specifically looks at groupings of countries, requiring multinomial logistic regression to compare the odds of each category (Long 1997).
11. Although the multinomial logistic models include all four of the categories for the analysis, Table 3 only presents the odds of a high promises-restrictions country compared to high promises-low restrictions country since our interest remains with the comparisons between categories '2' and '4'. Full results are presented in Appendix 2.
12. The RAS3 provides the level of state restrictions on religion through 2014, thus we were also able to test the lag between our final measure of constitutions (2008). This varying lag did not change the patterns discussed.
13. Like Von Hippel (2007) and Finke and Martin (2014) all RAS3 countries ( $n = 183$ ) are used to impute the data. Once imputed, we then removed the countries that did not have a constitution present nor made a promise of religious freedom in 2008, resulting in complete data for 164 countries. Prior to our imputation, no countries had missing data for the dependent variable. We verified the robustness of this imputation by comparing the results with pre-imputed models, which were consistent between pre- and post-models.
14. Constitutional promises are generally consistent over time; however there is fluctuation, especially among global regions (Figure A1). In addition to our compliance gap models, we also tested the factors predicting constitutional promises and restrictions independently. Countries with free and open elections were both significantly associated with frequent promises of religious freedom, and fewer restrictions. The religious economies measures were significantly associated with high levels of restrictions on religions directed at minority and all religions.
15. We only discuss the results for High Promises-High Restrictions compared to High Promises-Low Restrictions due to our interest in why compliance gaps happen. More

specifically, we wanted the attention placed on the differences between countries with high levels of promises, where the expectation is that these countries would also have low restrictions but do not. Full results are presented in [Appendix 2](#).

16. Despite this result, we do find that free and elections are significantly associated with a decreased odds of countries having low-promises and high restrictions compared to countries with high-promises and low-restrictions of minority religions. We believe this finding reinforces the importance of governance when both the promises and restrictions vary ([Appendix 1](#)).
17. [Figure A1](#) demonstrates this pattern following the dissolution of the USSR. The average number of promises is highest right around the collapse of the USSR, remaining higher than all other regions between 1990 and 2008. Yet, despite the promises of religious freedom and signals to other countries, the restrictions remain high.

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## Appendix

**Appendix 1.** Country categories of religious freedom compliance gaps. (1 = low promises-low restrictions; 2 = high promises-low restrictions; 3 = low promises-high restrictions; 4 = high promises high restrictions).

Country	Minority Religions	All Religions
Afghanistan	3	3
Albania	2	2
Algeria	3	3
Andorra	1	1
Angola	1	1
Argentina	1	1
Armenia	4	2
Australia	1	1
Austria	3	1
Azerbaijan	4	4
Bahamas	2	2
Bahrain	1	3
Bangladesh	2	4
Barbados	2	2
Belarus	4	4
Belgium	1	1
Belize	2	2
Benin	1	1
Bolivia	1	1
Bosnia	3	1
Botswana	2	2
Brazil	1	1
Brunei	3	3
Bulgaria	4	4
Burkina Faso	1	1
Burundi	1	1
Cambodia	1	3
Cameroon	2	2
Canada	1	1
Cape Verde	2	2
Central African Republic	1	1
Chad	1	3
Chile	1	1
China	3	3
Colombia	2	2
Comoros	3	1
Congo-Brazzaville	1	1
Costa Rica	1	1
Croatia	2	2
Cuba	4	4
Cyprus, Greek	2	2
Cyprus, Turkish	2	2
Czech Republic	2	2
Denmark	1	3
Djibouti	1	1
Dominican Rep.	1	1
Ecuador	1	1
Egypt	3	3
El Salvador	1	1
Equatorial Guinea	1	1
Eritrea	3	3
Estonia	2	2
Ethiopia	2	4
Fiji	2	2
Finland	2	2

(Continued)



**Appendix 1. (Continued).**

Country	Minority Religions	All Religions
France	3	1
Gabon	2	2
Gambia	1	1
Georgia	3	1
Germany	4	2
Ghana	1	1
Greece	3	1
Guatemala	2	2
Guinea	2	2
Guinea Bissau	1	1
Guyana	2	2
Haiti	2	4
Honduras	1	1
Hungary	2	2
Iceland	1	1
India	4	4
Indonesia	3	3
Iran	4	4
Iraq	3	1
Ireland	2	2
Israel	1	3
Italy	2	2
Ivory Coast	1	1
Jamaica	2	2
Japan	1	1
Jordan	3	3
Kazakhstan	3	3
Kenya	2	2
Kuwait	3	3
Kyrgyzstan	3	3
Laos	3	3
Latvia	3	1
Lebanon	1	1
Lesotho	2	2
Liberia	1	1
Libya	3	3
Liechtenstein	1	1
Lithuania	4	2
Luxembourg	1	1
Macedonia	4	4
Madagascar	1	1
Malawi	1	1
Malaysia	4	4
Maldives	3	3
Mali	1	1
Malta	1	1
Mauritania	3	3
Mauritius	2	2
Mexico	1	3
Moldova	4	4
Mongolia	1	1
Montenegro	2	2
Morocco	3	3
Mozambique	2	2
Myanmar (Burma)	3	3
Namibia	1	1
Nepal	4	2
Netherlands	1	1
New Zealand	2	2
Nicaragua	2	2
Niger	1	3

*(Continued)*

**Appendix 1. (Continued).**

Country	Minority Religions	All Religions
Nigeria	4	2
North Korea	3	3
Norway	3	1
Oman	3	3
Pakistan	4	4
Panama	1	1
Papua New Guinea	2	2
Paraguay	1	1
Peru	2	2
Philippines	1	1
Poland	2	2
Portugal	2	2
Qatar	3	3
Romania	4	2
Russia	4	4
Rwanda	2	4
Saudi Arabia	3	3
Senegal	2	2
Serbia (Yugoslavia)	4	2
Sierra Leone	2	2
Singapore	4	4
Slovak Republic	4	2
Slovenia	2	2
Solomon Islands	2	2
South Africa	1	1
South Korea	1	1
Spain	2	2
Sri Lanka	2	2
Sudan	4	4
Suriname	1	1
Swaziland	2	2
Sweden	2	2
Switzerland	2	2
Syria	3	3
Taiwan	1	1
Tajikistan	2	4
Tanzania	1	1
Thailand	1	3
Togo	2	2
Trinidad & Tobago	1	1
Tunisia	3	3
Turkey	4	4
Turkmenistan	4	4
UAE	3	3
USA	1	1
Uganda	2	2
Ukraine	2	4
Uruguay	1	1
Uzbekistan	4	4
Vanuatu	1	1
Venezuela	2	2
Vietnam	3	3
Yemen	3	3
Zaire (Dem Rep Congo)	2	2
Zambia	2	2
Zimbabwe	2	4

**Appendix 2.** Multinomial logistic regression predicting religious freedom compliance gap categories.

	Model 3	Model 4
	Compliance Gap Minority Restrictions	Compliance Gap All Restrictions
	<i>OR</i>	<i>OR</i>
<i>Low Promises-Low Restrictions</i>		
Government Favouritism	.90	.94
Social Restrictions	.99	.97
Log GDP	1.25	1.39
Free Elections	2.18	11.22
Independent Judiciary	.54	.43
International Org. Memberships	.99	.98
Religious Diversity	1.03	1.40
Government Effectiveness	.86	.53
Communism	.22*	.22*
Youth Bulge	.59	.03
Constant	.67	.20
<i>Low Promises-High Restrictions</i>		
Government Favouritism	1.17	1.09
Social Restrictions	1.53***	1.32**
Log GDP	1.45	.79
Free Elections	.14**	.05**
Independent Judiciary	.33	.16**
International Org. Memberships	.98	.98
Religious Diversity	.82	.54
Government Effectiveness	1.18	3.49
Communism	3.59	1.21
Youth Bulge	1.40	85.02
Constant	.04	25.52
<i>High Promises-High Restrictions</i>		
Government Favouritism	1.23	1.32
Social Restrictions	1.76***	1.31*
Log GDP	.99	.55
Free Elections	.19	.19
Independent Judiciary	.29	.18*
International Org. Memberships	1.00	.99
Religious Diversity	.89	1.97
Government Effectiveness	1.22	1.46
Communism	9.25*	1.93
Youth Bulge	.00	1.93
Constant	.16	89.86

Notes: \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ . Odds ratios of country compliance gap categorisation compared to reference category ('High Promises, Low Restrictions').  $N = 164$  countries.

**Figure A1.** Average number of constitutional promises of religious freedom by region.