Current research on the relevance of religious affiliation for educational success is scarce in Europe. We focus on differences between Protestants and Catholics in educational success in West Germany, as both denominations are more or less equal in size overall, but there are strong regional variations, allowing for research on minority status. According to the literature differences in educational success by religion might be due (1) to specific values, and beliefs, (2) their minority status, as religious minorities close ranks and/or are more ambitious to get ahead in the majority society. (3) But it might be, that parts of the population in a diaspora are highly selective. Career ambitions might cause spatial mobility and increase the probability of living in a diaspora. To test these explanations we use data from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP) collected in the years 1997, 2003, 2007 and 2011 and enrich these data with regional information on the proportion of Protestants and Catholics. The dependent variable is enrolment at the most demanding and prestigious school type (“Gymnasium”) at the ages of 13 to 16 years. We use linear probability models to estimate school attendance with fixed effects for districts and cross-level interactions between parents’ religion and the share of Protestants (Catholics) in the district. All in all, differences in the belief system of Catholics and Protestants do not seem to produce different educational success in West Germany. But belonging to a regional denominational minority group leads to higher success for Protestants as well as for Catholics (net of parents’ highest educational level, SES, cultural activities, migration status, child’s gender, etc.). But this is only the case, if parents do not live any more at the place of their childhood. Obviously, parents’ unobserved aspirations lead to higher spatial mobility and to higher success of their off-spring.

**Key words:** educational inequality, religion, diaspora, context research