By gathering 35 local scholars, experts, and civil society activists specialized in racism and human rights, the fifth edition of the European Islamophobia Report addresses a still timely and politically important issue. All 32 country reports included in this book follow a unique structure that is convenient, first, for comparing countries and, second, for selected readings on a particular topic such as politics, employment, or education with regard to Islamophobia across Europe.

The present report investigates in detail the underlying dynamics that directly or indirectly support the rise of anti-Muslim racism in Europe. This extends from Islamophobic statements spread in national media to laws and policies that restrain the fundamental rights of European Muslim citizens and threaten the whole of society. As a result, the European Islamophobia Report 2019 discusses the impact of anti-Muslim racism on human rights, multiculturalism, and the state of law in Europe.

This fifth edition of our report highlights how European societies are progressively overwhelmed by the Islamophobic discourse of the “Great Replacement” and other far-right conspiracy theories. The 32 country reports demonstrate how governments and mainstream media participate in reproducing such discourses that put the fundamental rights of millions of European citizens in jeopardy and how one can counteract these developments. This compendium of useful insights and data aims to provide European policy-makers, institutions, and NGOs with recommendations on how to tackle anti-Muslim racism in Europe seriously.

About SETA
Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA) is a non-profit research institute based in Turkey dedicated to innovative studies on national, regional and international issues. SETA is the leading think tank in Turkey and has offices in Ankara, Istanbul, Washington D.C., Berlin and Brussels. The objective of SETA is to produce up-to-date and accurate knowledge and analyses in the fields of politics, economy, and society, and inform policy-makers and the public on changing political, economic, social, and cultural conditions. Through research reports, publications, brain storming sessions, conferences and policy recommendations, SETA seeks to guide leaders in government, civil society, and business, and contributes to informed decision making mechanisms.
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Executive Summary

Similarly to previous years, Islamophobia shaped French society in 2019. The normalization of Islamophobia through endless controversies did not only legitimize the systemic discrimination French Muslims experience but also paved the way to physically violent acts. Two symptomatic examples are the gunshot attack against the mosque of Brest and its popular imam Rachid Eljay (27 June), and the attack against the mosque of Bayonne (28 October) that wounded four. Inquiries for both attacks are still ongoing. Moreover, French intelligence keeps monitoring and dismantling far-right groups that plan attacks against Muslims and Jews. The Collectif contre l’islamophobie en France (CCIF) received 789 report forms referring to 1,043 Islamophobic incidents that occurred in 2019.

In October and November 2019, a significant “terror attack – Islamophobia sequence” took place after an attack on Paris Police Headquarters on 3 October by a convert to Islam (4 dead, 4 wounded). Following this incident, President Macron started a campaign targeting the whole Muslim population. Calling for a “watchdog society” and inciting the French people to check “weak signals of radicalization,” Macron and Minister of Interior Christophe Castaner connected terrorism with regular Muslim behaviors and culture (such as having a beard, praying five times a day, eating halal food, not kissing the opposite gender, etc.). The government and many media organs implicitly presented the Muslim communities as responsible and accomplices of the attack, jumping from controversy to controversy. However, the inquiry is still underway.

This sequence also exposed the ambiguity of the French antiterrorism policy that stands officially on two main principles: (1) “combating violent radicalization which can lead to terrorism (these individuals are monitored and prosecuted, if their dangerousness is established)”; and (2) “combating communitarianism (communautarisme) and a rigorous practice that deviates from Islam.” If the first principle corresponds to legitimate measures to maintain public order, the second is vague and unclear, and threatens the rights and way of life of French Muslim citizens. This report demonstrates this latter argument and discloses how Islamophobia works as a state racism in a multitude of ways.

At the same time, the French people also protested against the rise of Islamophobia in 2019 as illustrated by the “March against Islamophobia” (10 November) that gathered between 20,000 and 40,000 protestors in Paris (13,500 according to the Ministry of Interior).
Résumé

Entre octobre et novembre 2019, une importante séquence entremêlant attentat terroriste et islamophobie a eu lieu après l’attaque de la préfecture de police de Paris le 3 octobre par un musulman converti (4 morts, 4 blessés). Suite à cet incident, le président Macron a lancé une campagne visant l’ensemble de la communauté musulmane. Appelant à une « société de vigilance » et incitant les Français à signaler les « signaux faibles de radicalisation », le président Macron et son ministre de l’intérieur Christophe Castaner ont fait le lien entre le terrorisme et des traits culturels communs à l’ensemble des musulmans (comme porter la barbe, prier cinq fois par jour, manger de la nourriture halal, ne pas embrasser les femmes, etc.). A travers d’incessantes controverses, le gouvernement et de nombreux médias ont implicitement désigné les musulmans comme responsables et complices de l’attentat. Cependant, l’enquête est toujours en cours.

Cette séquence a également montré l’ambiguïté de la politique antiterroriste française qui repose officiellement sur deux grands principes : i) la lutte contre « la radicalisation violente qui peut conduire au terrorisme (ces individus sont suivis et judiciarisés, si leur dangerosité est établie) » ; ii) la lutte contre « le communautearisme et une pratique religieuse qui dévoie l’islam ». Si le premier principe correspond à des mesures légitimes de maintien de l’ordre public, le second est vague, peu clair et menace les droits des citoyens musulmans ainsi que leur mode de vie. Ce rapport discute ce dernier point et révèle comment l’islamophobie fonctionne, à bien des égards, comme un racisme d’État.

Néanmoins, les Français ne sont pas restés passifs face à cette situation et ont protesté contre la montée de l’islamophobie, comme l’illustre la « Marche contre l’islamophobie » (10 novembre) qui a rassemblé à Paris entre 20 000 et 40 000 personnes (13.500 d’après le ministère de l’intérieur).
Country Profile
EIR 2019

Country: France
Type of Regime: Unitary constitutional republic
Form of Government: Semi-presidential system
Ruling Parties: La République En Marche! (right)
Opposition Parties: Le Rassemblement National, Les Républicains, La France Insoumise

Last Elections: 2019 European Election (Le Rassemblement National (far-right) party won 23.34%, La Republic en Marche! (right) 22.42% and Europe Ecologie les Verts (green) 13.48%); 2017 Presidential Election (Emmanuel Macron won 66.1% of the vote against 33.9% of far-right leader Marine Le Pen); 2017 Legislative Election (La République En Marche! (Macron’s right): 297 seats; Les Republicains (anti-Macron’s right): 104 seats; Mouvement Democrat (pro-Macron’s right): 46 seats; Socialistes (left - ruling party in 2012-2017): 30 seats; UDI, Agir et Independants (right): 27 seats; Libertes et Territoires (center): 20 seats; La France Insoumise (far-left): 17; Gauche democrat et republicaine (far-left): 16; Without a group (many of far-right): 20)

Major Languages: French
Official Religion: No official religion (secularism)

Statistics on Islamophobia: The Collectif contre l’islamophobie en France (CCIF) received 789 report forms referring to 1,043 Islamophobic incidents. Among the 1,043 incidents mentioned above, 68 concern physical attacks (6.5%), 618 concern discrimination (59.3%), 210 concern hate speech and incitement to racial hatred (20.1%), 93 concern defamation (8.9%), 22 concern degradation of sacred places (2.1%), and 32 are linked to the fight against terrorism (3.1%).

Statistics on Racism and Discrimination: The number of racist and xenophobic incidents increased in 2019, with 1,142 incidents recorded (compared with 496 in 2018). Most of these incidents fall under the category of “threats” (977).

Major Religions (% of Population): The compilation of official statistics based on religious beliefs is not permitted by French law. Depending on the methodology applied by the surveys, the figures may differ. For example, according to a note published in GeoConfluences, 64% of the French are Catholics (of which 4.5% regularly go to Sunday mass), 63% have no religion, 6.4% are Muslims, and 0.5% are Jews (see various studies on this subject in “Statistiques sur la pratique religieuse en France”, GeoConfluences, December 2016).

Muslim Population (% of Population): The compilation of official statistics based on religious beliefs is not permitted by French law. According to the Pew Research Center, the Muslim population may stand between 5 and 6 million people (8.8%).
Main Muslim Community Organizations: CFCM (Conseil français du culte musulman), UMF (Union des mosquées de France), Islam de France, DITIB, Milli Görüş, L.E.S Musulmans, Association musulmane pour l’islam de France

Main NGOs Combating Islamophobia: CCIF (Collectif contre l’islamophobie en France), CRI (Coordination contre le racisme et l’islamophobie), CJL (Comité Justice et Libertés pour tous), ADM (Action Droits des Musulmans)

Far-Right Parties: The National Rally (Rassemblement national, RN), France Arise (Debout la France), The Patriots (Les Patriotes)

Far-Right Movements: Génération identitaire, Réseau Remora, Volontaire pour la France (VPF), Soldats d’Odin Breizh

Far-Right Terrorist Organizations: AFO (Action of Operational Forces)

Limitations to Islamic Practices:

- Hijab Ban: Ban of religious symbols including Muslim headscarf from primary school to high school (2004); “Chatel circular” prohibits parents who accompany children on school trips to display religious symbols (2013).
- Halal Slaughter Ban: None
- Minaret Ban: None (depends on local decisions)
- Circumcision Ban: None
- Burka Ban: Under a decree issued by French Prime Minister François Fillon women are banned from wearing the niqab in any public place (11 April 2011).
- Prayer Ban: None - depends on local decisions since the European Court of Justice ruled in March 2017 that employers can ban staff from manifesting visible religious expressions, including prayers.
Introduction

Anti-Muslim racism continued to increase in France in 2019. The Collectif contre l’islamophobie en France (CCIF) received 789 report forms referring to 1,043 Islamophobic incidents that occurred in 2019. Furthermore, one report form can list many incidents; in other words, a discrimination might be associated with an insult and an attack. The year before (2018), the CCIF collected only 676 report forms. There is thus an increase of 17% between 2018 and 2019. Among the 1,043 incidents mentioned above, 68 concern physical attacks (6.5%), 618 concern discrimination (59.3%), 210 concern hate speech and incitement to racial hatred (20.1%), 93 concern defamation (8.9%), 22 concern degradation of sacred places (2.1%), and 32 are linked to the fight against terrorism (3.1%).

This report does not aim to report all incidents related to Islamophobia but instead to highlight the main underlying dynamics related to anti-Muslim racism in 2019. We can summarize those dynamics into three main issues:

- The normalization of hate speech against Muslims that paves the way to physical attacks.
- Islamophobic incidents that reflect a systemic racism or even state racism.
- The vicious intertwining of Islamist terrorist attacks, French antiterrorism policy, and Islamophobia.

First, attention needs to be drawn to the fact that there is an ongoing normalization of hate speech against Muslims through endless controversies in the media and the political arena. This normalization of Islamophobia does not only legitimize the systemic discrimination that French Muslims experience but also paves the way to physically violent acts. Two symptomatic examples are the gunshot attack against the mosque of Brest and its popular imam Rachid Eljay (27 June), and the attack against the mosque of Bayonne (28 October) that wounded four. The motives behind both attacks have not been clarified and inquiries are still ongoing. Moreover, French intelligence keeps monitoring and dismantling far-right groups that plan attacks against Muslims and Jews at an alarming level. Even if it is difficult to prove the link between the normalization of Islamophobic speech and terrorist attacks, we should not forget that the terrorist behind the shootings at the Christchurch mosques (15 March), who killed 51 and wounded 49, revealed...
he was influenced by the French thinker Renaud Camus and his idea of the Great Replacement.3

Secondly, the nature and numbers of Islamophobic incidents interrogate the very quiddity of this racism. Do French Muslims face a state racism (racisme d’Etat), 4, a systemic racism,5 or just an individual racism6 that does not go beyond the individual experience? For sure, we must exclude the third option since statistics show the extent to which Islamophobia shapes the job market, real estate, education, and politics. As a result, Islamophobia is a systemic phenomenon that structures society. Yet, can we speak of “state racism”? On the one hand, the French state does not officially base its actions upon a discriminating corpus of law such as the Nuremberg laws, the Apartheid system, or the racial segregation in the United States. On the other hand, major aspects of Islamophobia in France originate in relations to the state:

- The French government partially bases its antiterrorism policy on Islamophobic misconceptions such as “combating communitarianism (communautarisme) in French suburbs (banlieues).”
- The French Parliament debates bills to ban the burkini, the hijab, and “communitarian” habits in certain public services and/or public places.

3. The Great Replacement is “a racist conspiracy theory […] which was popularized by right-wing French philosopher Renaud Camus. An extension of colonialisit theory, it is predicated on the notion that white women are not having enough children and that falling birthrates will lead to white people around the world being replaced by non-white people.” For more information, see: Nellie Bowles, “Replacement Theory’, A Racist, Sexist Doctrine, Spreads in Far-Right Circles’, The New York Times, 18 March 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/18/technology/replacement-theory.html, (Access date: 4 March 2020).

4. This term regularly triggers debates in France. “If the terms ‘state racism’ are still so much debated today, it is because, unlike ‘institutional racism’, they imply not only the responsibility of the state, but also a form of intentionality.” For more information, see: Pierre Ropert, “Racisme d’Etat’: derrière l’expression taboue, une réalité discriminatoire”, France Culture, 24 October 2017, https://www.francetvinfo.fr/societe/education/France/UN-crise/20171024/France-sociologie-Racisme-Etat-expression-tabou-discrimination (Access date: 22 March 2020).

In November 2017, the Education Minister Jean-Michel Blanquer brought a defamation lawsuit against the SUD Education 93 teachers union because the latter “has decided to talk about state racism.” The announcement in front of the National Assembly was greeted with a standing ovation from the deputies. For more information, see: Frantz Durupt, “Blanquer porte plainte contre un syndicat qui a utilisé l’expression ‘racisme d’Etat”, Liberation, 21 November 2017, https://www.liberation.fr/france/2017/11/21/blanquer-porte-plainte-contre-un-syndicat-qui-a-utilise-l-expression-racisme-d-etat_1611537, (Access date: 22 March 2020).

5. “Systemic Racism includes the policies and practices entrenched in established institutions, which result in the exclusion or promotion of designated groups. It differs from overt discrimination in that no individual intent is necessary.” For more information, see: “Individual and Systemic Racism”, Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre http://www.aclrc.com/forms-of-racism, (Access date: 22 March 2020).

A study conducted by the Ombudsman office in January 2017 shows that out of a sample of 5,000 people, 80 percent of those who fit the profile of “young man perceived as black or Arab” reported having been stopped by the police in the last five years, compared to 16 percent of the rest of the respondents. For more information, see: Leila Khoulil, “Jeunes noirs ou arabes, vous êtes 20 fois plus contrôlés que la moyenne (mais ce n’est pas une surprise)”, BondyBlog, 20 January 2017, https://www.bondyblog.fr/societe/police-justice/jeunes-noirs-ou-arabes-vous-etes-20-fois-plus-controles-que-la-moyenne-mais-ce-nest-pas-une-surprise/, (Access date: 22 March 2020).

• Prominent figures of the French government took Islamophobic positions these last months such as the Minister of Education Jean-Michel Blanquer who on several occasions repeated that the headscarf was not welcome in France.

• The statistics show that Muslims primarily face discrimination in the public service (59%). Hence, the major expression of anti-Muslim racism takes place in the public sector, which emanates from the state itself.

• One of the daily expressions of Islamophobia comes from interactions with the police. The state of emergency following the 2015 terror attacks has only worsened this fact.7

We should also mention that this state racism takes place in the more general context of the securitization of the public sphere in France, mainly due, first, to the Islamic terrorist attacks and antiterrorism policy8, and, second, to the yellow jackets movement and the hard security response chosen by Macron’s office.9

The tension between Islamist terrorist attacks and Islamophobia is the third aspect of anti-Muslim racism in 2019. This issue is at the heart of the debates on Islamophobia in France and has already been analyzed in the previous reports.10 Every Islamist terrorist attack – or presumed as such when the motives of the attack are unclear – triggers xenophobic campaigns against the Muslim community as a whole. Such campaigns directly impact the life of millions of French citizens who experience a resurgence of discriminations, insults, and physical assaults. Yet, it is not easy for French people – and even worse when they are Muslims – to counter such Islamophobic campaigns as they are immediately labeled “traitors of the nation” or/and “supporters of terrorism” if they “dare” to criticize. Moreover, as we just described above, Islamophobia in France is structural and thus partially shapes society. As a result, it is very difficult to counter a racism that takes many different forms according to the context (job, public place, school, media, etc.). In 2019, a significant “terror attack – Islamophobia sequence” took place after the attack on the Paris Police Headquarters on 3 October by one of its employees, a convert to Islam (4 dead, 4 wounded). Following the incident, President Macron started a campaign targeting France’s entire Muslim population. Calling for a “watchdog


8. For more information, see: Ibid.


society” and inciting the French people to check “weak signals of radicalization,”11 Macron and Minister of Interior Christophe Castaner connected terrorism with regular Muslim behavior and culture (such as having a beard, praying five times a day, eating halal food, not kissing the opposite gender, etc.).12 The government and many media organs implicitly represented the Muslim communities as responsible and accomplices of the attack, jumping from controversy to controversy.13 Meanwhile, the inquiry is still underway.

This sequence shows the ambiguity of the French antiterrorism policy that officially stands on two main principles: (1) “combating violent radicalization which can lead to terrorism (these individuals are monitored and prosecuted, if their dangerousness is established)”); and (2) “combating communitarianism (communautarisme)”14 and a rigorous practice that deviates from Islam.”15 If the first principle corresponds to legitimate measures to maintain public order, the second is vague and unclear, and threatens the rights and way of life of French Muslim citizens. Indeed, we can refute the accusation of “communitarianism” in this simple way: first, if there is a criminal offence, then criminals can be put on trial. In this case there is no need for the expression “communitarianism” since both the existing law and the existing vocabulary are operative. Second, if there is no criminal offence and no one is harmed, then what is the problem with being “communitarian” (communautaire)?16

Ironically, this sequence triggered the organization of one of the greatest manifestations against Islamophobia from common people, activists, and scholars. The “March against Islamophobia” took place on 10 November in Paris and gathered

13. For an analysis of the controversies related to this sequence, see sections below. The homemade bomb attack in the center of Lyon on 24 May (13 light injuries) also triggered such a hatred sequence. The motives of this attack are still unclear. For more information, see: “Explosion à Lyon: le suspect a avoué avoir conçu la bombe”, Le Parisien, 30 May 2019, http://www.leparisien.fr/faits-divers/explosion-a-lyon-le-suspect-a-avoue-avoir-concu-la-bombe-29-05-2019-8082699.php, (Access date: 22 March 2020).
16. We can present the exact same argument against the claim that “many among Muslims put the law of God above the law of the Republic.”
between 20,000 and 40,000 people (13,500 according to the Ministry of Interior).\textsuperscript{17} Although the protest was the target of virulent controversies, it constituted a strong signal for the political elite and the rest of the French society that the current spread of Islamophobia is not normal and will not be accepted without dissent.

Nevertheless, the denunciation of Islamophobia in France will have to overcome a huge obstacle: the condemnation for “communitarianism” and/or “indigenism.” Indeed, this condemnation is a rhetorical weapon to prevent anti-racist movements from claiming justice and equality. Any complaint against a discriminative stance is depicted as being a “communitarianism-based demand” that threatens national unity and the common good. As a result, most politicians and intellectuals agree to condemn any movements that - according to them - fall into these two categories. Even the Fondation Jean Jaures\textsuperscript{18} that in November 2019 published a survey on anti-Muslim racism depicts other anti-racist groups such as the CCIF as “indigenist, communitarian, [and] Islamist.”\textsuperscript{19}

Discussion of Islamophobic Incidents and Discursive Events

Physical and Verbal Attacks

For 2019, the Ministry of Interior reported 154 incidents, consisting of 63 actions and 91 threats.\textsuperscript{20} Officially, the French government severely condemns anti-Muslim racism. The \textit{Collectif contre l’islamophobie en France} (CCIF) reported many more incidents since this organization collects report forms sent to its services instead of complaints made at police stations (and thus preserving its monitoring from many biases just mentioned above). The CCIF received 789 report forms referring to 1,043 Islamophobic incidents that occurred in 2019. It should be noted that one report form can list many incidents, for example a discrimination might be associated with an insult and an attack.\textsuperscript{21}

The CCIF highlights three major tendencies in Islamophobia in 2019. First of all, Islamophobia is a gendered racism since 70% of the incidents concern women.


\textsuperscript{18} The Fondation Jean Jaures is a French “independent, Europeanist and Social-Democrat” think tank, created in 1992 and close to the French Socialist Party (PS). For more information, see: https://jean-jaures.org.


Secondly, in most instances, Islamophobia takes the form of discrimination (59% of incidents). Finally, public services are those who discriminate the most against Muslims (59% of all discriminations). The survey conducted by the Fondation Jean Jaures in November 2019 confirmed these tendencies. It shows, first, that women feel much more discriminated against and report being victims of racism because of their religion much more often than men. Forty-two percent of Muslims living in France have experienced at least one form of discrimination related to their religion in their lifetime; this holds true for 35% of men and 45% of women. This overvictimization of women is also pulled upwards by the record rates of discrimination observed among women wearing a headscarf: 60% of women who “often” wear a headscarf report having been the victim of at least one form of discrimination in their lifetime, compared with 44% of women who have never worn it and 38% of men. Furthermore, the survey shows that there is a significant gap concerning the report of discrimination between Muslims and non-Muslims: 42% of Muslims living in France have experienced at least one form of discrimination related to their religion during their lifetime. That is 5.25 times higher than the national average (8%). Finally, the survey also confirms that public services systemically discriminate against Muslims. Eleven percent of all Muslims report that they have been discriminated against at least once in their lives by public officials (e.g. at the mayor’s office, prefecture, etc.), with this rate reaching a record high among women who “often” wear a headscarf (21%) and among Muslims living in rural areas or in areas with a low proportion of immigrants (19%). Discrimination by the police appears to be proportionally the most frequent (28% among the 44% of Muslims who have ever been stopped by police).

These figures show that Muslim women are the most targeted. We must connect this tendency to French public debates that especially attacked the way of life of Muslim women. Those controversies diabolize the burkini, sports hijab, or Muslim women accompanying school trips on a national scale and legitimize attacks and discrimination against Muslim women (see Politics and Media sections).

Moreover, there are many other examples of discrimination on the local level. On 8 and 9 March 2019, the event *Salon de la Femme et du Bien-être* was held in Béziers. The mayor of Béziers (South France) refused to allow a manager of a cloth-

22. Ibid.

23. Ismail Ferhat and François Kraus, “Etat des lieux des discriminations et des agressions racistes envers les musulmans de France”, Fondation Jean Jaures, 6 November 2019, https://jean-jaures.org/nos-productions/etat-des-lieux-des-discriminations-et-des-agressions-racistes-envers-les-musulmans, (Access date: 20 March 2020). This study was conducted in cooperation with an “Interministerial delegation for the fight against racism, anti-Semitism and anti-LGBT hate” (Dilcrah) and Ifop. The study was carried out among 1,000 persons of the Muslim faith.

24. Ibid.
ing store to participate because she was wearing a headscarf.\textsuperscript{25} The mayor, Robert Menard, is a famous figure of the Islamophobia network, close to the National Rally. Similarly, in April, the president of Association R’éveil\textsuperscript{26} refused to sell a garage sale site to two women on the grounds that they wore Islamic headscarves. Under pressure after the publication of a video of the incident on social media, the association decided to dismiss the president a few days later.\textsuperscript{27}

Regarding verbal attacks, the survey by the Fondation Jean Jaurès shows that a quarter of Muslims have been insulted because of their religion (24\%) during their lifetime, a proportion twice as high as that observed among non-Muslims residing in France (9\%). The apparent religiosity of individuals increases the risk of insult: 42\% of women who wear a hijab have already been victims of a religious insult, compared to 27\% of women who do not wear it and 19\% of men.\textsuperscript{28} The CCIF monitored 210 incidents related to hate speech and incitement to racial hatred in 2019, which corresponds to 20.1\% of all reported Islamophobic acts.

Physical attacks are also another trend of anti-Muslim racism in France. On this matter, both the CCIF and the Fondation Jean Jaurès underline the link between the spread of Islamophobia across society and the increasing risk of violent aggressions or/and anti-Muslim terror attacks. The survey of the Fondation Jean Jaurès indicates that 7\% of Muslims have been physically assaulted because of their religion at least once in their life, compared to 3\% of non-Muslims. The CCIF monitored 68 physical attacks, i.e. 6.5\% of all Islamophobic reported acts. Among them, there was Sylvia, a woman wearing hijab who was insulted and stabbed seven times by an unknown man in front of her two children after she parked her car in Sury-le-Comtal (small village near Lyon).\textsuperscript{29}

On 27 June, the famous imam of the Sunna Mosque in Brest, Rachid Eljay, and one of the worshippers were victims of several shots in front of the mosque, injuring them both. Rachid Eljay was shot four times, two in the abdomen, two in the legs. The worshipper was shot twice in the legs. Despite the violence of the act and its resemblance to the Christchurch terror attack earlier that year, mainstream media and


\textsuperscript{26} Local NGO (North of France) that aims at “changing the image of coma and brain injury to the public and governments. […] To promote self-help and moral support among traumatized people and their families.” It is a well-known NGO supported by public institutions. For more information, see: “Bienvenue sur le site de l’Association R’éveil!”, l’association R’éveil, https://reveil-coma5962.org, (Access date: 20 March 2020).


politics remained relatively silent. The assailant was found dead in his car 500 meters away. The motive of the attack is still unclear. A letter by the attacker was found that allegedly shows signs of mental illness.\(^{30}\)

On 28 October, a supporter of the National Rally (far right) attempted to set fire to the mosque of Bayonne and shot two individuals in front of the mosque, severely wounding one. (Fig. 1) The attacker was then arrested at his home and charged with attempted murder and destruction of property committed for reasons of race or religion by dangerous means to persons. In February 2020, he died in custody.\(^{31}\) The motive behind this attack has not been clarified yet and the inquiry is still underway.\(^{32}\)

![Figure 1: Front of the Mosque of Bayonne. On 28 October, a supporter of the National Rally (far right) attempted to set fire to the mosque of Bayonne and shot two individuals in front of the mosque, severely wounding one.](image)

Following the attack at Christchurch, the Minister of Interior Christophe Castaner was heard by the commission of inquiry on the fight against far-right groups (9 May). He stressed that the rhetoric of these groups “is particularly marked by Islamophobia: it evokes the ‘Muslim invasion’ and the ‘Great Replacement’ with violent intentions.”\(^{34}\) To the question of whether an attack like the one in Christchurch is likely to occur in France, the Minister of Interior replied, “You want to know if


people carrying this far-right ideology are still likely to carry out attacks against a mosque: yes, it is possible.”35 We should not forget that the terrorist of Christchurch had donated more than 2,000 euros to the French far-right group Generation Identity (GI).36 In fact, French intelligence announced in June 2019 that they had dismantled far-right groups that plan attacks against Muslims and Jews.37

Verbal and physical attacks also took place within the “terror attack – Islamophobia sequence” that followed the attack on the Paris Police Headquarters by Mickaël Harpon, a Muslim convert. This incident fuelled a series of verbal attacks, instances of physical aggression and defamation against the entire Muslim community. One of the discriminating incidents during this period occurred on 11 October 2019. During a meeting of the regional council of Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, Julien Odoul, a local representative of the far-right party National Rally, verbally attacked a woman in the public that had come accompanying her son’s class on a school trip. He asked the rest of the assembly to expulse the woman from the council because she wore a headscarf, claiming this piece of cloth was against democratic and secular values. The mother was also violently attacked and prosecuted in the corridors of the council.38 (Fig. 2)

Figure 2: Drawing of the mother that was forced to leave the regional council meeting in Bourgogne Franche-Comté embracing her son in tears.39

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35. Ibid.
Employment

According to the survey of the Fondation Jean Jaures, nearly a quarter (24%) of Muslims who have ever looked for a job in their lives report having been discriminated against because of their religion, including 16% in the last five years. Similarly, nearly one in four Muslims who work (23%) reports having been discriminated against in the last five years of their working life (26% for women, 20% for men), a proportion five times higher than that of the French population as a whole (5%).

Surprisingly enough, the greater number of Muslims reach higher ranks in the professional world, the more they experience discrimination and racism. This point refutes one of the major ideals of the French Republic, i.e. a meritocratic system and the promise of success through education and work. Indeed, 44% of adults aged 25-44, 48% of the most highly educated (at least MA level), and 63% of managers and senior professionals report racist experiences in their professional life. This indicates that the categories that should be the most integrated in society (young adults, university graduates, higher professions) are precisely those who are the most exposed to racism. In other words, Islamophobia cannot be confronted through a “better integration” or even “assimilation.”

Education

According to the survey of the Fondation Jean Jaures, the rate of victims of discrimination by teachers in an educational establishment (e.g. college, high school, university, etc.) in the last five years is higher among Muslims (7%) than among the rest of the population for all reasons combined (5.4%).

An example of such discrimination – and of its institutionalization – is the form sent by email by the University of Cergy-Pontoise (near Paris) to all academic staff asking them to list students and colleagues who show “weak signals of radicalization” (14 October). Among the possible signals, we find: “stopped drinking alcohol”, “suddenly stopped eating pork”, “recent consumption of halal food”, “behavioral changes towards women”, “prayers in the buildings of the university”, “sudden interest in national politics and international relations”, “sudden interest in religion.”

In the period and Islamophobic sequence described above, three mothers wearing hijabs were abused by the rector of the Academy of Versailles (near Paris). On 10 October 2019, activities were organized with parents at the Charles de Gaulle nursery school in Clamart as part of the National Anti-Harassment Day. An official visit by the rector of the Academy of Versailles, the academic director, and the
mayor took place in order to promote “mutual aid and respect for others.” But once they saw three mothers wearing hijabs among the mothers accompanying the pupils, they shortened their visit and stopped the workshops under the name of secularism. The rector claimed that “the rule is clear, inside the school, religious signs are not allowed.”43 Similarly, on 14 October 2019, a school trip to a fire station was cancelled in Creil (North Paris) because two mothers who were escorting the class wore hijabs. The fire station’s officials announced later that their teams made a “mistake in the interpretation” of laïcité.44

A few days later, the teacher union SUD Éducation 93 denounced the growing Islamophobic atmosphere in education and announced that it stands with colleagues, students, and parents of students who may be its victims. They especially criticized the Minister of Education Jean-Michel Blanquer who spread the fake news that in some schools little boys “refuse to hold the hands of little girls” and claimed that “the headscarf would not be desirable in our society.”46 This same minister had also strongly criticized the decision of the left-wing parents’ association FCPE to

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launch a campaign supporting the right of Muslim mothers to accompany school trips wearing their hijabs. (Fig. 4) Similarly, thousands of people signed the petition “No to Islamophobia in education” after the escalation of Islamophobic discourse and acts following the attack on the Paris Police Headquarters.47

In January 2019, Aala Abdelgadir and Vasiliki Fouka, two researchers at Stanford University, published an article assessing the effects of the hijab ban at school (voted in 2004). The article “Political Secularism and Muslim Integration in the West: Assessing the Effects of the French Headscarf Ban” shows that the law reduces the secondary educational attainment of Muslim girls, and impacts their trajectory in the labor market and family composition in the long run. The authors state, “We provide evidence that the ban operates through increased perceptions of discrimination and that it reduces assimilation by casting religion and national identities as incompatible.”49


Politics
Like the previous years, in 2019, politicians and political debates exacerbated the Islamophobic discourse in society. Any topic, any issue can be a pretext for scapegoating Muslims in the name of identity, public order, secular values, or women rights. Actually, the “Lepenization of minds” is such that defending the Muslim way of life in the name of human rights and multiculturalism is now depicted as treason to the French nation. Anti-racist activists hardly find support in political parties whether from the right or the left, from nationalists or liberals. Examples of Islamophobic controversies that animated the year 2019 follow below.

In October and November 2019, while political parties were preparing for the local elections of spring 2020, a debate arose about “communitarian party lists” (listes communautaristes). Presented as party lists that would defend communitarian and particular interests against majority interests, these few lists were actually attacked because Muslims were on top of them and/or their candidates did not hide their belonging to Islam. In other words, this expression was used by the government and other politicians to exclude the legitimate formation of a representative party. The debate was focused above all on the party Union of French Muslim Democrats (L’Union des démocrates musulmans français) that had already presented a list at the European election in spring 2019. (Fig. 5) The government spokesperson Sibeth Ndiaye advocated for “a high degree of severity with regard to these communitarian lists.”

As early as 16 June, the Minister of Action and Public Accounts Gérald Darmanin proposed to extend “the obligation of neutrality to all local elected officials” in order to “defend the Republic” from “communitarian lists.” On 8 November 2019, the senator of Les Republicains (right) Bruno Retailleau presented a bill “to ensure respect for the values of the Republic in the face of communitarian threats.” According to the bill, parties that have the “intention to run for elections with the aim of undermining the unity of the Republic” will be deprived of financing and excluded from the elections. The whole bill is then based on the very vague concept of “inten-

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50. The meaning of “Lepenization” is the “minds that get shaped by Jean Marie Le Pen’s ideas and worldview.” The term is constructed from the famous French xenophobic leader’s name (Le Pen) and from the suffix of action “-ation”. For more information, see: Pierre Tevanian and Sylvie Tissot, Les mots sont importants, (Libertaria, Paris: 2010).
51. For more information, see: statements by Sebastien Lecornu, the minister responsible for local and regional government, in “Listes communautaires, ça existe vraiment?” BFM TV, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Zno-f8_qfE, (0’44), (Access date: 29 March 2020).
55. Ibid.
ISLAMOPHOBIA IN FRANCE

The “communitarian” lists for the next municipal elections. Christophe Castaner himself conflated those lists, French suburbs, communitarianism, Islam, and anti-Semitism in an interview on 17 November. Finally, the President of the Republic Emmanuel Macron rejected any ban of these lists during the French Mayors Congress on 19 November. Yet, he stressed that the government will fight “political Islam” and “political Islamism” that have “a project of separation from the Republic.” In conclusion, the head of the state participated in this Islamophobic discourse over the “communitarian party lists” but did not go as far as banning them.

Figure 5: Picture of members of the party Union of French Muslim Democrats.

56. Ibid.
This debate takes place in the “terror attack – Islamophobia sequence” described above. Actually, the sequence opened the doors to explicit racism without any limits or feeling of shame. In this way, fake news and provocations became the new standards. On 7 October, the deputy of Les Republicains Valerie Boyer said that “50% of Muslims consider the Shari’a more important than the law of the Republic.”60 The survey she is referring to mentions 27% of Muslims in France think so - not 50%. Furthermore, we could even interrogate the meaning of such poll questions and in specific, the very question “Do you consider the Shari’a more important than the law of the Republic?”60 Indeed, as long as the citizens of a country respect the laws of that specific country it is of questionable worth to inspect what they personally believe about ethics and norms. In another example of Islamophobic provocation, on 13 October, the Minister of the Education Jean-Michel Blanquer claimed on BFM TV that “the headscarf is not desirable in our society, it is not something to be encouraged. What it says about the status of women is not in line with our values.”62 Politicians well known for their Islamophobic positions applauded the statement. Eric Ciotti, deputy of the Les Republicains, wrote on Twitter that “Jean-Michel Blanquer is right, the Islamic headscarf is not desirable in France. I applaud the courage of this stance.”63 (Fig. 6) Such statements directly undermine the liberal aspect of the French state and deny the basics expressions of freedom of thought. In other words, it is an unacceptable intervention from politics into private life.

Figure 6: The tweet by Eric Ciotti, deputy of the right-wing party Les Republicains, applauding the Islamophobic comment of the Minister of Education: “Jean-Michel Blanquer is right, the Islamic headscarf is not desirable in France. I applaud the courage of this stance. I hope he will be listened by President Macron who is currently under pressure of leftists.”64

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63. Ibid.
In 2019, one can claim that there was a competition between politicians regarding who will push the limits of Islamophobia further. The examples are countless and on most occasions concern Muslim women. On 23 June, a dozen women of the civil association *Alliance citoyenne de Grenoble* entered the swimming pool of Grenoble (Southeast France) wearing burkinis in order to claim the right to bathe in this attire. Covering clothes such as the burkini are not allowed in most local swimming pools in France. Most French journals and TV channels spoke of a “provocative operation,” while some politicians even evoked an action of “Islamist activists” and “fundamentalist Muslim women.” The government through the Secretary of State to the Minister of the Interior Laurent Nunez shared the same view in the French Senate and depicted the incident as a “political provocation” that threatened French Republican values (i.e. public order and *laïcité*). He maintained that the burkini is forbidden because of hygienic and security issues. He finally stated, “You can trust our determination to eradicate these kinds of ‘communitarian actions’ (replis communautaires)” under the governmental program of prevention against radicalization. However, we must keep in mind that the French Council of State (*Conseil d’Etat*) in a ruling of 26 August 2016 considered that the ban of the burkini constitutes a serious and illegal infringement of fundamental freedoms. Earlier in the year, at the end of February, a controversy started on Twitter over the promotion of a hijab designed especially for running by the company Decathlon (Fig. 7). The retailer planned to sell this product on March 2019. Government members and politicians from the left to far right competed in messages of consternation and rejection of this product. Arulore Bergé, spokesperson and deputy of the ruling party LREM, claimed, “Sport emancipates. It does not submit. My choice as a woman and a citizen will be to no longer trust a brand that breaks with our values. Those who tolerate women in

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65. Eric Ciotti: “The #Burkini has no place in France where women are equal to men. Letting these Islamist activists in #Grenoble as everywhere in France is to renounce the Republic. I will never accept it.” For more information, see: Elisa Frisullo, “Tout comprendre à l’opération burkini qui provoque une vague de réactions”, 20 Minutes, 24 June 2019, https://www.20minutes.fr/societe/2547983-20190624-grenoble-tout-comprendre-operation-burkini-provoque-vague-reactions, (Access date: 22 March 2020).

66. Local opposition: “Following the new intrusion of fundamentalist Muslim women in the municipal swimming pool, I ask Eric Piolle @EricPiolle (city mayor) to stop these provocations, to enforce the rules that apply to everyone. His laxity goes beyond the Republican limits.” For more information, see: Elisa Frisullo, “Tout comprendre à l’opération burkini qui provoque une vague de réactions”, 20 Minutes, 24 June 2019, https://www.20minutes.fr/societe/2547983-20190624-grenoble-tout-comprendre-operation-burkini-provoque-vague-reactions, (Access date: 22 March 2020).


the public space only when they are hiding are not lovers of freedom.” 69 Nicolas Dupont-Aignan, president of Republic Arise (Débout la France, far right) added, “I have two daughters and I don’t want them to live in a country where the place of women in society is regressing like in Saudi Arabia. I call for a boycott of the #Decathlon brand that markets this type of clothing.” 70 Within a few days, Decathlon had to cancel its project to sell this product in France after having received hundreds of insulting and threatening emails. Once again, this controversy politicizes and stigmatizes Muslim women’s right to participate in activities – in this case sports – that are taken for granted by the majority. 71

![Figure 7: Tweet that launched the polemic over Decathlon’s 'sports hijab'. Lydia Guirous, a member of the party Les Republicains (right) wrote, “Decathlon also submits to Islamism which only tolerates women with their heads covered with a hijab to affirm their belonging to the ummah and their submission to men. #Decathlon therefore denies the values of our civilization for the market and community marketing.”](http://example.com/image.png)

The organization of the “March against Islamophobia” (10 November) was paradoxically a great moment of Islamophobic expression too. Naturally, politicians of right-wing and far-right parties depicted this rally as a provocation and denounced the presence of so-called Islamists. A few days before the rally, the Minister of the Education Jean-Michel Blanquer described it as “pathetic” and “a fight against secularism.” 73 Even among leftist politicians who first supported the rally the debate was intense. For instance, the deputy of Unsubmissive France Alexis Corbière who had signed the manifesto calling for the rally, later told the right-wing newspaper Le Figaro, “I will not go there on Sunday because I’m playing football.” 75

Education Jean-Michel Blanquer described it as “pathetic” and “a fight against secularism.”73 Even among leftist politicians who first supported the rally the debate was intense. For instance, the deputy of Unsubmissive France Alexis Corbière who had signed the manifesto calling for the rally, later told the right-wing newspaper Le Figaro that he thought that “the Human Rights League was behind the initiative of this protest.”74 In other words, he regretted having signed the manifesto. Another emblematic leader of the far-left movement, François Ruffin, when asked whether he will attend the rally alongside the CCIF, replied, “I will not go there on Sunday because I’m playing football.”75 Victims of Islamophobia must feel content to hear such euphemisms from people who present themselves as protectors of the oppressed. As for the leader of the Green party Yannick Jadot, he refused to attend the rally even if he had signed the manifesto, and mentioned, “I have never considered that there was state racism in our country... I don’t see any oppressive laws today against Muslims in our country.”76

All the messages of hesitation and rejection highlight the contradiction in French politics towards Muslims. On the one hand, they do not want to see the rise of an autonomous Muslim agency, independent from their political influence. On the other, they do not want to endorse the cause of Muslim people.

Regarding the government’s approach towards Islamophobia, we must stress two main tendencies. First, despite its tolerant appearance, Macron’s office relies on conservative discourse on identity and immigration. For instance, Macron is the one who included the question of “immigration and identity” in the grand debate following the yellow vest movement that was grounded in social and economic claims.77 This hostile approach towards diversity and multiculturalism clearly discloses the government’s understanding of the Muslim question. The quotations of ministers mentioned above provide examples. Second, the government maintains an Islamophobic stance on issues concerning Muslims through its antiterrorism policy. This latter has two dimensions:

76. Ibid.
1. “Combating violent radicalization which can lead to terrorism (these indi-
individuals are monitored and prosecuted, if their dangerousness is established).”
2. “Combating communitarianism (communautarisme)\textsuperscript{78} and a rigorous prac-
tice that deviates from Islam.”\textsuperscript{79}

Relying on the second principle, Macron takes a stance against “people who in
the name of a religion are pursuing a political project, a political Islam that wants to
secede from our republic.”\textsuperscript{80}

If the first principle corresponds to legitimate measures to maintain public or-
der, the second is vague, unclear, and threatens the rights and way of life of French
Muslim citizens. Indeed, we can refute the accusation of “communitarianism” in
this simple way: if there is a criminal offence, then criminals can be put on trial.
In this case there is no need for the expression “communitarianism” since both
the existing law and the existing vocabulary are operative. If there is no criminal
offence and no one is harmed, then what is the problem with being “communitar-
ian” (communautaire)?\textsuperscript{81}

As a result, beyond Macron’s call for a “watchdog society” (on 8 October, see
above), the institutionalization of Islamophobia in France takes its roots in this sec-
ond dimension of French antiterror policy, i.e. misconceptions about a so-called
communitarianism and related security measures to tackle it. In fact, the term “com-
mitarianism” conflates a wide range of meanings that do not help to understand
the issue of radicalization nor terror: namely political Islam, Islamist parallel society,
Islamism, obscurantism, parallel economy, inequality between women and men,
Shari’a laws above those of the Republic…\textsuperscript{82} Again, these expressions are vague and
target a way of life (religious and not secular) more than real offenses.

Put differently, the term “communitarianism” refers \textit{in fine} to the far-right ideol-
ogy of “reverse colonization” or “Great Replacement.”\textsuperscript{83} The boundary between anti-
terror policies and far-right ideology then becomes thin and permeable. So, when the
president and the minister of interior announce that since the beginning of the year
they have closed 12 places of worship, 4 private schools, 9 associations, and nearly
130 bars/pubs because of radicalization and political Islam, we do not know if we

\textsuperscript{78} For more information, see: footnote 14.
\textsuperscript{79} “Islamisme et repli Communautaire”, Comité interministériel de prévention de la délinquance et de la radi-
calisation, https://www.cipdr.gouv.fr/islamisme-et-repli-communautaire/, (Access date: 22 March 2020); Laurent
Nunez, Twitter, 24 October 2019, https://twitter.com/NunezLaurent/status/118729036406864512, (Access date:
22 March 2020).
\textsuperscript{80} “Conférence de presse à l’issue du Grand Débat national”, Elysee, 25 April 2019, https://www.elysee.fr/emman-
\textsuperscript{81} For more information, see: footnote 16.
\textsuperscript{82} Christophe Castaner, Twitter, 29 November 2019, https://twitter.com/CCastaner/status/1200375164325773313,
(Access date: 25 March 2020).
\textsuperscript{83} For more information, see: Leonard Faytre, “Islamophobia in France: National Report 2018”, \textit{European Islam-
should see in those measures the success of war on terror or the progress of far-right ideology. Yet, the government applies many policies based on this understanding such as circulars to prefects or the “Republican Reconquest of Suburbs” (Quartiers de la Reconquete Republicaine). It is exactly on this issue that Fionnuala D. Ní Aoláin, the UN special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, published a report on 8 May 2019, where she warns that the new antiterrorism laws (i.e. SILT law) risk undermining fundamental rights and freedoms. The report states, “The Special Rapporteur highlights the potentially disproportionate effects of administrative measures on individual and collective rights occasioned by the SILT law. She is particularly conscious of encroachment on religious freedom implicated by the closure of some mosques, allied with the broader social and religious consequences of judicial power over religious exercise, and recalls that any restriction on the right to freedom of religion or belief must strictly comply with the limitation regime stipulated by international human rights law (A/73/362 and A/HRC/31/65).”

Similarly, the French NGO Action droits des musulmans (ADM) published a report on 13 June that counts seven mosque closures since the SILT law came into force (October 2017). The NGO denounces the use of an administrative and non-judicial procedure for this, and calls for “stopping to conflate Islam and terrorism.”

Media

Like in the previous years, in 2019, Islamophobic controversies often started from social media before being debated in mainstream media and triggering reactions among French politicians. It is not always easy to untangle these three spheres. Yet, mainstream media (i.e. books, TV, radio, and newspapers) greatly participated in


85. “For each ‘Republican Reconquest of Suburbs’ 10 to 35 additional police or gendarmerie personnel will be assigned. These additional personnel will be immediately operational and will go into the field. Each of these districts also has an anti-trafficking unit (CLT) adapted to each territory and local situation. By the end of the five-year period, 60 Republican Reconquest districts will be set up. By 2018, 15 neighborhoods have been set up and 326 staff members have been assigned to them.” For more information, see: “Effectifs de juin 2019 dans les quartiers de reconquete republicaine”, interieur.gouv.fr, 21 June 2019, https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/fr/Le-ministre/Dossiers-de-presse/Effectifs-de-juin-2019-dans-les-quartiers-de-reconquete-republicaine, (Access date: 26 March 2020).


creating a negative newspeak related to Islam and Muslims. We can define this Islamophobic newspeak as a process of keeping French Muslims within a degrading linguistic framework. The main expressions of the Islamophobic newspeak in the 2019 French media follow.

- **Hysteria over the “Islamic Headscarf”**

Following the aggression of Julien Odoul, a local representative of the National Rally, towards a woman wearing a hijab in the regional council audience, mainstream TV channels kept debating this issue for days. Surprisingly enough, they did not discuss the violence of Julien Odoul but the legitimacy of wearing a hijab in a public place – here the council of the region of Bourgogne-Franche-Comté. Around 85 debates were organized in just a week on the channels LCI, CNews, France-Info, and BFMTV. This media frenzy led to many excessive statements. For instance, while the journalist Olivier Galzi and his guests were discussing the possibilities of banning the hijab in public places (i.e. everywhere but inside people’s homes) on a talk show, Galzi stated, “Shouldn't we move it [the problem] and say: it’s not a religious sign that we want to ban but a political signal, just as we banned SS uniform, that’s all.” In most media broadcasts, the hijab became a sign of aversion and repugnance. A few days before, during a similar talk show on the same channel about the same topic, the deputy editorial director of the newspaper *Le Figaro* Yves Thréard claimed, “There were times in France when I took a bus or a boat and then I saw someone with a headscarf, and I got off.” He then added, “I hate the Muslim religion... You have the right to hate a religion, you have every right to say so.” There was the same hysteria about the sports hijab, a controversy we already mentioned in this report. On a talk show on CNews (26 February), the speaker Laurence Ferrari could not bear listening to one of her guests defending the right of Muslim women to wear a hijab. She tried to refute him and then shouted, “It’s freedom! Freedom! Freedom not to wear the headscarf!” This hysteria over the headscarf also informed the topic

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92. Ibid.

of the book by Fatiha Agag-Boudjahlat, *Fighting Veiling - Islamist Entryism and Multiculturalism.*

(Fig. 8)

- The Alleged New Muslim Anti-Semitism

The thinker Alain Finkielkraut was verbally attacked during a yellow jacket rally in the streets of Paris on 16 February 2019. Some protesters shouted to him “Fucking Zionist, go away! […] Palestine! Fucking Racist! Get out of here! You will go to Hell, God and the people will punish you!” Finkielkraut is a well-known thinker, author of philosophical books, who often intervenes on TV, radio, and newspapers. He also supports contested ideas on French identity, Israeli current policy in Palestine, and on multiculturalism. The verbal attack he experienced was recorded and broadcasted on media and social media, triggering a new debate on the so-called Muslim anti-Semitism. On CNews, the columnist Jean-Claude Dassier claimed, “We are facing an Islamo-Muslim...


anti-Semitism, some say ‘Islamo-leftist’ […] It is a form of anti-Semitism that rises in the suburbs (banlieues).”98 Eric Zemmour, polemist and supporter of the infamous French Nazi-collaborator Marechal Petain, stated on the channel LCI that “this anti-Semitism is the fruit of Islamic culture.”99 The leader of the National Rally, Marine Le Pen, claimed that “the most obvious danger comes from Islamo-leftist anti-Semitism.”100

- The Muslim Brotherhood’s Hidden Project: Reverse Colonization

Like in previous years, the French media organs spread conspiracy theories about the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim organization is suspected of weaving its way into French society secretly by opening schools, entering companies, unions, and political parties - a multi-tentacle monster! This conspiracy theory is close to the far-right theory of “reverse colonization.” Popularized by the polemist Eric Zemmour, this theory claims that France

100. “Zapping de l’actualité islamophobe de la semaine…”, CCIF, 22 February 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hOHbY2cnAEA. This video of CCIF collects the most outrageous statements of that period.
101. For more information, see: Marianne: https://www.marianne.net/magazine/freres-musulmans-leur-strategie-de-conquete, (Access date: 3 April 2020).
ISLAMOPHOBIA IN FRANCE

is being colonized by hordes of African migrants and by Muslim culture. In October, the weekly Marianne (nationalist left) published a series of articles on the topic “Muslim Brotherhood: Their Strategy of Conquest.” (Fig. 9) Similarly, the monthly La Revue des Deux Mondes dedicated its November edition on the Muslim Brotherhood movement, with the following title: “Muslim Brotherhood, Their Strategy for France.” Some of the articles trigger conspiracy feelings. Some of the authors are also well known for their Islamophobic views, including Zineb El Rhazoui and Fatiha Boudjahlat. (Fig. 10)

DOSSIER : LA STRATÉGIE DES FRÈRES MUSULMANS

« L’Etat n’a pas à s’adapter à l’islam » – Zineb El Rhazoui – Valérie Toranian
Histoire et stratégie de la confrérie des Frères musulmans – Michael Prazan
« Ce sont les Frères musulmans qui vous choisissent, et non l’inverse » – Mohamed Louizi
L’islam politique à la conquête des quartiers – Michel Aubouin
Le piège de l’islamophobie – Fatiha Boudjahlat
« Je conseille aux musulmans de France de s’intégrer dans leur société » – Rachid Ghannouchi
L’engouement de nombreux Franco-Maghrebins pour Erdogan, leur « frère musulman » – Ariane Bonzon
Le prophète, le poète et le psychanalyste : sur l’islam et la violence – Véronique Taquin
Les accommodements déraisonnables : de la démission à la soumission – Josepha Larroche
Le multiculturalisme contre la démocratie – Jérôme Maucourant

Figure 10: Articles in the Revue des Deux Mondes on “Muslim Brotherhood, Their strategy for France”:
- “The State Does Not Have to Adapt to Islam”…
- “History and Strategy of the Muslim Brotherhood”…
- “It Is the Muslim Brotherhood That Chooses You, Not the Other Way Around”…
- “Political Islam Conquers French Suburbs”…
- “The Trap of Islamophobia”…
- “I Advise Muslims in France to Be Integrated in Their Society”…
- “The Enthusiasm of Many Franco-North African for Erdogan, Their ‘Muslim Brother’”…
- “The Prophet, the Poet and the Psychoanalyst: On Islam and Violence”…
- “Unreasonable Accommodations: From Resignation to Submission”…
- “Multiculturalism against Democracy”…


- Alleged Islamist Radicalization in Public Services

In May 2019, for days the French media covered a controversy in public services that supposedly demonstrated the spread of “radical Islam”: a bus driver of the city of Paris was accused of refusing to let two women enter the bus because of their miniskirts. It finally transpired that one of the girls had made a slanderous denunciation, i.e. this incident never occurred. Meanwhile, the media got into frenetic debates over the Islamization of public services. A sample of random titles follows: “How Islamism Settles in France” (Figaro Blog, 6 May); “The Miniskirt and the Paris Bus Network: The Expansion of Cultural Islam” (Valeurs Actuelles, 10 May); “Paris Bus Drivers: The Scandal That Hides a Deeper Reality” (Causeur, 10 May). This controversy took on a second life after the publication in June 2019 of an inquiry of two French deputies on the “Islamist radicalization in public services.”

- Grand Finale: Zemmour’s Speech Broadcasted Live on Television

On 28 September 2019, the polemist Eric Zemmour, who ten days earlier was condemned for “incitement to racial hatred,” gave a public speech at the “Convention of the Right” organized by supporters of Marion Maréchal Le Pen (alt-right). (Fig. 11) This speech that includes all the worst Islamophobic claims one could imagine, was broadcasted without interruption by the right-wing news channel LCI. Extracts of his delirious and extreme speech follow.

“Today, we are experiencing a demographic inversion that is leading to a reversal of migratory flows, which is leading to a reversal of colonization. I’ll let you guess who will be their “Indians” and their “African slaves.” It will be you.

Thus, they [immigrants] behave as if they were in conquered land, as Pieds Noirs did in Algeria or the English in India: they behave as colonizers. Big shots and their gangs join forces with the imam to bring order to the streets and to people’s consciences according to the old alliance of the sword and the papists, in this case the Kalashnikov and the djellaba.

The question we have to ask ourselves is: will young French people accept to live in a minority on the land of their ancestors? If so, they deserve to be colonized. If not, they will have to fight for their liberation. But how do we fight? Where to fight? What to fight for?

In the street, women in hijab and men in djellaba are propaganda in fact, an Islamization of the street. [They wear] uniforms of an occupying army [that] reminds the defeated his submission. The old expression “Immigration, Integration, Assimilation” has been replaced by “Invasion, Colonization, Occupation.”

The native French who must submit or resign… [has the choice between] living under the domination of Islamic morals and halal, or fleeing.”

Despite this scandal, the competitor channel CNews nominated Zemmour as the head polemist on the show “Face à l’info” on 14 October. Islamophobia has probably never been as explicit and widespread as today.

***

One of the consequences of this Islamophobic newspeak is the rejection of Muslims by the rest of society. A survey published by the *Journal du Dimanche* shows that 61% of those questioned think that “Islam is not compatible with the values of the French society.” This percentage was 26% in 2011 and 46% in 2015. In the light of the information provided in this report, we consider that this rejection is not only the fruit of the bloody attacks committed by Muslim terrorists but also of the constant Islamophobic propaganda.

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Justice System

The French state already bans several aspects of the Muslim way of life such as the hijab ban from primary school to high school (2004), and the ban of niqab in public spaces (2011). Moreover, other restrictions occur on the local level (ban of burkini in local swimming pools) or in private contexts (companies’ regulations that forbid prayer or hijab for instance). In 2019, members of the French Parliament passed many bills that aimed at restricting the freedoms of Muslims. These bills are examples of attempts to legalize Islamophobia in France. Some of the official motives introducing these bills are in line with Zemmour’s racist vision of society outlined above. A sample of these bills follows:

- Bill of 9 July 2019 to ensure the religious neutrality of persons contributing to the public service of education [i.e. banning headscarf in those services]. This bill was drafted by the Senate. The Senate, with a right-wing majority, adopted the bill on 29 October 2019, at the first reading. The National Assembly has still to discuss the bill.\(^\text{114}\)

- Bill of 15 October 2019 to ban burkini-type clothing in swimming pools open to the public and to forbid any discrimination between the sexes with regard to opening hours. This bill was drafted by the Senate. This bill has not passed yet. Abstract of the motives that introduce the bill:

> “In the past, immigrants who came to France did their best to integrate into our society. Today, certain migratory flows lead to radically different behavior. [Immigrants] create communitarian clusters that reject our way of life and would even like to impose their habits and customs on us. It is therefore regrettable that, under the guise of an extravagant conception of individual freedom, political leaders tolerate such attitudes.”\(^\text{115}\)

- Bill of 18 October 2019 to react against communitarian practices, such as the wearing of the Islamic headscarf in the assemblies of local and regional authorities by persons accompanying young schoolchildren on school trips. This bill was drafted by the Senate. This bill has not passed yet. Abstract of the motives that introduce the bill:

> “Immigrants and people with an immigrant background must not impose their habits and customs on us. On the contrary, if they come to our country, they must adapt to our way of life and the rules of our society.”\(^\text{116}\)

- Bill of 6 November 2019 to ban the wearing of signs or clothing explicitly


indicating religious affiliation on school trips and during school activities. This bill was drafted by the National Assembly. This bill has not passed yet.\textsuperscript{117}

- Bill of 8 November 2019 to ensure respect for the values of the Republic in the face of communitarian threats. This bill was drafted by the Senate. This bill has not passed yet.

Abstract of the motives that introduce the bill:
- “The rise of radical Islam, which seeks to isolate Muslims from the rest of the national community and to substitute the laws of the Republic with religious laws, is the most worrying illustration of this [the threat of the dissolution of the society].”\textsuperscript{118}

Unfortunately, according to opinion polls published by the Fondation Jean Jaures (May 2019) a majority of the French people backs such bills.\textsuperscript{119} (Figs 12 & 13) For instance, 78% of the French people agree with the municipal bylaws that forbade the burkini (swimming attire that covers the whole body) in certain French beaches in 2016, and 62% agree with the calls for boycotting companies that sell “sports hijab” (see the Decathlon controversy in Politics section). The fact that a large majority of those who voted for Macron in 2017 and who planned to vote for his party in 2019 European elections agreed with both the above indicates that this rejection is not only by far-right factions of French society.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure12.png}
\caption{Extract from the survey “French People, Secularism and the Place of Religion in Society” (May 2019): 78% (54% highly agree + 24% agree) of the French people agree with municipal bylaws that forbade the burkini in certain French beaches in 2016; 78% of those who voted for Macron in 2017 and 78% of the those who planned to vote for his party in 2019 European elections agree with this ban. Sixty-two percent (35 highly agree + 27% agree) agree with the calls for boycotting companies that sell “sports hijab“. Fifty-six percent of those who voted for Macron in 2017 and 53% of the those who planned to vote for his party in the 2019 European elections agree with this boycott.\textsuperscript{120}}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{120} Ibid.
Figure 13: Extract of the survey published by the Fondation Jean Jaures (May 2019) on the opinion of the French about the following banning measures:

- Banning prayer or religious ceremonies on the streets: 58% very favorable, 26% favorable (total: 84%).
- Banning ostensible religious signs for public services users: 46% very favorable, 30% favorable (total: 76%).
- Banning ostensible religious signs in classes at university: 45% very favorable, 31% favorable (total: 76%).
- Banning ostensible religious signs for people accompanying pupils in school trips: 45% very favorable, 31% favorable (total: 76%).
- Banning ostensible religious signs for people working in private companies: 41% very favorable, 33% favorable (total: 74%).
- Abrogation of the concordat in Alsace-Moselle region, which allows public funding for Catholic, Lutheran, Reform and Israelite places and ministers: 28% very favorable, 34% favorable (total: 64%).
- Suppression of the possibility for local authorities to facilitate the acquisition of land for the construction of places of worship on their territory: 26% very favorable, 34% favorable (total: 60%).
- Suppression of religiously inspired holidays (Christmas, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, Assumption, All Saints’ Day): 5% very favorable, 11% favorable (total: 16%).\(^{121}\)

Internet

The CCIF registered 210 incidents concerning hate speech and incitement to racial hatred which accounted for 20.1% of all incidents reported. According to the NGO, most of these incidents occurred on the Internet. Moreover, Islamophobic controversies often started on social media before being debated in mainstream media and triggering reactions among French politicians. In sum, the Internet plays a great role in the formation and diffusion of Islamophobic discourse.

\(^{121}\) Ibid.
In last year’s report, we distinguished Islamophobic discourse rooted in the left tradition and Islamophobic discourse in the far-right tradition. Currently, we find it more accurate to split Islamophobic discourse between mainstream Islamophobia and hard Islamophobia.

- **Websites**

Online activities of NGOs such as *Printemps Républicain* (Republican Spring) and *Comité Laïcité Républicaine* (*Laïcité – Republic Committee*) do not attack Muslim people straightforwardly but hide their anti-Muslim racism under the veil of secularism, women’s rights, and Jacobin ideology. This is the reason why their Islamophobia looks acceptable and easily convertible to political measures. This is mainstream Islamophobia.

Websites such as *FDeSouche*, *Resistance Républicaine*, *Riposte Laïque*, *Boulevard Voltaire*, *TVLibertés*, *Breizh-info*, or *Observatoire de l’Islamisation* openly claim being Islamophobic and base their discourse upon the “clash of civilizations”, the “Great Replacement”, and “reverse colonialism” theories. This is hard Islamophobia.

*FigaroVox* is an influential platform that uses its reputation of respectful mainstream media for spreading Islamophobic and nationalistic contents. Websites of far-right parties such as National Rally, *Debout la France, Parti de la France* are also active voices of Islamophobia online.

- **Social Media Accounts**

Twitter and Facebook platforms give the floor to mainstream Islamophobic accounts that constantly attack the headscarf and “Muslim backwardness” in the name of secularism and the French “way of life.” This is the case of activists such as Laurent Bouvet and Gilles Clavreul, co-founders of *Printemps Républicains*; and of polemists such as Zohra Bitan and Celine Pina.

There are also Islamophobic accounts on social media that refer to the far-right xenophobic tradition, among them accounts of politicians such as Jean Messiha (National Rally), Patricia Guilbaud (Republic Arise), and Eric Ciotti (The Republicans), and also famous polemists such as Gilles-William Goldanel or Damien Rieu. In their tweets, anti-Muslim racism is connected to anti-immigration and nationalism discourses.

122. *Le Figaro* is a famous historical right-wing newspaper.
123. Polemist at the popular “Les Grandes Gueules” talk show on BFM TV.
124. Politician, engaged in the Socialist Party (PS) for years and often invited on TV shows.
125. Jurist, writer, and activist.
126. Real name Damien Lefevre, far-right activist close to the National Rally.
Finally, there are self-proclaimed ex-Muslim activists such as Majid Oukacha and Waleed Al-Husseini who conflate regular Muslim activities (headscarf, prayer, etc.) and radicalization in their lawful criticism of religion. According to them, any Muslim is intrinsically a potential terrorist, or at least abides by the “barbaric” corpus of Shari’a law.

These accounts are just some (of many) well-known names and widely followed accounts. Their ideas are supported and retweeted by a number of anonymous accounts and common users.

Central Figures in the Islamophobia Network

Since Islamophobia in France is a systemic racism – or even a state racism – it is difficult to give a clear picture of the Islamophobia network. Should we list members of the government, politicians who design discriminatory bills, or bureaucrats who discriminate against Muslim people in public services on a daily basis? The difficulty of drawing a clear network that shapes and feeds Islamophobia in France becomes apparent.

Therefore, we prefer to give an indicative table where major actors of the Islamophobia networks are split into subcategories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fields</th>
<th>Examples of Actors</th>
<th>Examples of Islamophobic Behaviors/Actions (2019)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutions</td>
<td>1. Members of the government (e.g. Macron, Blanquer, Castaner)</td>
<td>1. Conflating common cultural features and terrorism (second aspect of antiterrorism policy); scapegoating Muslims in an effort to hide social problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Right-wing members of Parliament (mostly from <em>Les Republicains</em> &amp; National Rally)</td>
<td>2. Bills on burkini ban, hijab ban; “communitarian party lists” ban.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Local initiatives (Grenoble swimming pool, rector of the Academy of Versailles, etc.)</td>
<td>3. Hijab ban in local swimming pools; cancelling school trips.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political arena</td>
<td>Politicians: Eric Ciotti, Jean Messiha, Sebastien Chenu, Valerie Boyer, etc.</td>
<td>Spreading hate speech against Muslims. Conflating Muslim regular habits and terrorism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>Citizens who share Islamophobic ideas</td>
<td>Physical and verbal attacks on individuals; degradation of mosques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Governmental Groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Leftist anti-Muslim NGOs: Printemps Républicain, Comité Laïcité Républicaine, etc.</td>
<td>1. Lobbying, trolling, publishing &amp; conferences: Islamophobia hidden behind “laïcité” discourse.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Rightist anti-Muslim NGOs: Riposte laïque, Résistance Républicaine</td>
<td>2. Lobbying, trolling, publishing &amp; conferences: Islamophobia as an extension of racism-xenophobia.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. TV, radio, newspapers: CNEWS and Zemmour’s show, LCI, BFM TV, Le Figaro, Valeurs Actuelles, etc.</td>
<td>1. Islamophobic front covers, editorials, articles, talk shows, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Accounts on social media: @DamienRieu, @F_Desouche, etc.</td>
<td>3. Trolling, sharing hate content.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Observed Civil Society and Political Initiatives to Counter Islamophobia**

The most sticking initiative to counter Islamophobia in 2019 was the organization of the “March against Islamophobia” in Paris on 10 November that gathered between 20,000 and 40,000 people – or 13,500 according to the Ministry of Interior. Although this protest was the target of virulent controversies (see Politics section), it constituted a strong signal for the political elite and French society as a whole that the current spread of Islamophobia is not normal and will not be accepted without dissent. (Fig.14)

The march was organized by Madjid Messaoudene, a local official, the Collectif contre l’islamophobie (CCIF), the New Anticapitalist Party (NPA), Le Comité Adama, the NGO L.E.S Musulmans, the Libertarian Communist Union (UCL), the National Union of French Students (Unef), and the journalist Taha Bouhafs. The march was preceded by a manifesto published in the newspapers Liberation and Mediapart signed by hundreds of activists, scholars, politicians, journalists, and well-known personalities. Before the march, in October and November, other demonstrations were organized to contest the rise of Islamophobia. On 21 October, the Collectif de défense des jeunes du Mantois (Youth Defense Collective of Mantes-la-Jolie) organized a rally against Islamophobia in Paris. The media barely covered the organization of the rally. As a result, there were less than a thousand participants in attendance. Similarly on 15 October,


90 personalities signed a manifesto asking President Macron to put an end to the rise of Islamophobia.\textsuperscript{131}

The Collectif contre l’islamophobie en France (CCIF) developed a new platform against hate speech online. The project HATEMER is funded by the European Commission and aims at fighting Islamophobic messages on social media. The platform monitors and automatically analyzes data on Islamophobia online.\textsuperscript{132} Generally speaking, the NGO monitors Islamophobic acts and provide legal assistance to victims. The CCIF publishes the most reliable records on Islamophobia in France. The organization also assists victims in their cases and regularly organizes workshops and training on French legal procedures. Alongside the CCIF, the Coordination against Racism and Islamophobia (CRI) and the Action for Muslim Rights (ADM) work significantly towards assisting victims and denouncing anti-Muslim racism in the public sphere. Similarly, the NGO Committee Justice and Liberties (CJL) conducts several actions and studies analyzing the relations between terrorism, counterterrorism, and Islamophobia in France.

Moreover, the regular analysis of the Islamophobic newspeak by journalists such as Samuel Gontier and Clément Viktorovitch is a precious tool to counter the “Lepenization of minds.”\textsuperscript{133} In the same way, the heads of the state-funded Observatory of Laïcité Jean-Louis Bianco and Nicolas Cadène continued to promote a liberal understanding of French secular order which does not discriminate against Muslim people, especially women.

Concerning Muslim empowerment, the umbrella platform \textit{L.E.S. Musulmans} that connects hundreds of local mosques and organizations under one roof launched a program to train 100 Muslim citizens to become future spokespeople of Muslim communities. This program takes place within a broader project to raise awareness of Islamophobia among French policy-makers.\textsuperscript{134} This issue is one of the first concerns of French Muslims since in most Islamophobic debates and controversies non-Muslim polemists speak in the name of Muslims and distort the reality of their conditions. In this regard, the intervention of the citizen Sara El Attar in the TV talk show “l’heure des Pros” on CNews (October 2019) was a promising premiere as a woman wearing a hijab expressed her point view in front of thousands of viewers.\textsuperscript{135}


\textsuperscript{133} For more information, see: footnote 51.


similar issue, the feminist NGO Lallab organized the “Muslim Women’s Day” for the second time on 27-29 March 2019.136

Regarding Muslim representation, the movie Soumaya that tells the story of a Muslim woman facing Islamophobic violence and discrimination during the state of emergency (2015-2017) was released. An official tour took place between September and December 2019. However, the public screening of the movie at the prestigious Parisian theater hall Grand Rex was cancelled after a far-right campaign against it (15 March).137

The state also developed a platform to monitor online hate speech. The program PHAROS aims at harmonizing, analyzing, crosschecking, and directing alerts. In 2019, the program received more than 200,000 alerts.138 The ruling party also designed a bill to combat hate content online. Yet, deputy Laetitia Avia who promoted the bill finally withdrew the mention of “Islamophobia” from the bill as one of the categories of online hate speech. It is clear that the government and mainstream politicians never choose to fight Islamophobia.139

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations
Since in France Islamophobia is a state racism it is difficult to provide recommendations strong enough to counter its multilayered consequences. In fact, the French state must rebuild a relation of trust between its institutions, French Muslim communities, and the rest of French society by fighting discourses, actions, and policies that participate in ostracizing the Muslim minorities in French society. Recommendations regarding trust building, security policies, and hate discourse follow below. Some of them are directly taken from the reports of previous years.

Recommendations Regarding Trust Building

- Abandon top-down policymaking that aims at engineering “French Islam” irrespective of civil society initiatives and networks.
- Support the bottom-up building project which benefits from popular recognition and a wide network of mosques and civil organizations.
- Promote a liberal and inclusive understanding of laïcité such as that defined by the Observatory of Laïcité in education, media, and state institutions.

• Launch a nationwide assessment on the effects of the 2004 ban on headscarves in public schools.

Recommendations Regarding Security Policies

• Redefine the antiterrorism policy by avoiding the use of far-right concepts and newspeak such as “communitarianism” and “political Islam.”
• Involve grassroots organizations, community leaders, and education personnel to elaborate more effective counterterrorism.
• Publicize this cooperation with grassroots organizations in order to deconstruct negative stereotypes that depict Muslims as supporters of terrorism.
• Rely on investigation and proof rather than mere suspicion in prosecuting individuals.
• Abolish the adopted measure in the 2017 antiterrorism law that allows arbitrary closing down of places of worship unless a clear definition of radicalization is adopted and alternatives are offered to the affected communities. Freedom of speech is a fundamental right even in places of worship on the premise that there is no disruption of public safety.

Recommendations Regarding Hate Speech

• Protect freedom of speech by pressing state-owned media to adhere to a charter of plurality and promote Muslim visibility to normalize their presence.
• Cancel state subsidies to media outlets that promote individuals condemned of incitement of hatred, calling for discrimination, violence against individuals, or who have been found guilty by courts of promoting racism.
• Facilitate the right of reply to individuals or organizations when attacked on media platforms.
• Train top management of state-owned media on Islamophobia, its consequences, and on how they can protect social cohesion by combating it.
• Include discrimination cases in official statistics of anti-Muslim racism.
• Apply existing laws against discrimination at work and increase fines for companies.
• Grant freedom of religion and thought in workplaces.
• Train school teachers on Islamophobia, strengthen an anti-racism approach in education programs, and promote a liberal and inclusive understanding of laïcité.

Chronology

• 08-09.03.2019: The mayor of Béziers (South France) refused to allow a manager of a clothing store to participate in the event Salon de la Femme et du Bien-être because she was wearing a headscarf.
• **08.05.2019**: Fionnuala D. Ní Aoláin, the UN special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, published a report where she warns that the new antiterrorism laws risk undermining fundamental rights and freedoms.

• **23.06.2019**: A dozen women of the civil association *Alliance citoyenne de Grenoble* entered the swimming pool of Grenoble (Southeast France) wearing burkinis in order to claim the right to bathe in this attire.

• **27.06.2019**: The famous imam of the Sunna Mosque in Brest, Rachid El-Jay, and one of the worshippers were victims of several shots in front of the mosque, injuring them both.

• **09.07.2019**: The Senate debated a bill to ensure the religious neutrality of persons contributing to the public service of education (i.e. banning headscarf in those services).

• **28.09.2019**: The polemist Eric Zemmour gave a public speech at the “Convention of the Right” organized by supporters of Marion Maréchal le Pen (alt-right). This speech was broadcasted without interruption by the right-wing news channel LCI.

• **03.10.2019**: An employee of the Paris Police Headquarters, Mickaël Harpon, burst into his workplace armed with a knife, and injured several policemen. Four policemen died and a fifth was wounded. The assailant, a convert Muslim, was also killed.

• **05-30.10.2019**: Dozens of police officers were suspended for being suspected of radicalization.

• **08.10.2019**: The President of the Republic Emmanuel Macron promised a “relentless fight against Islamist terrorism,” calling on “the entire nation” to “mobilize” in the face of the “Islamist Hydra.” He also called for a “watchdog society.”

• **08.10.2019**: The Minister of Interior Christophe Castaner gave a speech at the French National Assembly about the attack on the Paris Police Headquarters. He called on the French people to report to the police any “weak signals of radicalization,” i.e. “having a beard; an exaggerated practice of religion especially during Ramadan; ostentatious prayer; not kissing the opposite gender; not wanting to work with women.”

• **11.10.2019**: Julien Odoul, a local representative of the far-right party the National Rally, verbally attacked a woman in the public that came accompanying her son’s class on a school trip in the regional council of Bourgogne-Franche-Comté.

• **14.10.2019**: The University of Cergy-Pontoise (near Paris) sent a form by email to all academic staff asking them to list students and colleagues who show “weak signals of radicalization.”
• **14.10.2019**: A school trip to a fire station was cancelled in Creil (North Paris) because two mothers who were escorting the class wore hijabs.

• **15.10.2019**: The Senate debated a bill to prohibit the wearing of burkini-type clothing in open swimming pools.

• **18.10.2019**: The Senate debated a bill to ban “communitarian practices” such as the wearing of the Islamic headscarf in the assemblies of local and regional councils and among people accompanying young schoolchildren on school trips.

• **28.10.2019**: A supporter of the National Rally (far right) attempted to set fire to the mosque of Bayonne and shot two individuals in front of the mosque, wounding one severely.

• **29.10.2019**: The French Senate voted in favor of a bill for banning headscarves on school trips at the first reading.

• **06.11.2019**: The National Assembly debated a bill to ban the wearing of signs or clothing explicitly indicating religious affiliation on school trips and during school activities. This bill has not passed yet.

• **08.11.2019**: The Senate debated a bill to ensure respect for the values of the Republic in the face of communitarian threats. This bill has not passed yet.

• **10.11.2019**: The “March against Islamophobia” took place in Paris gathering between 20,000 and 40,000 people (or 13,500 according to the Ministry of Interior)