

France: The French Republican Model of Integration. A Potential Driver for Extremism

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Abstract. *Perhaps only in the time of the crusades the Western rhetoric has been more concerned with the people of Muslim origin. With the Middle East turned into a warring zone by various factions, and the Western world scared of the menace Islamic extremists present, the subject discussed in our paper is very timely. Thousands of people have fled to fight alongside extremist organizations such as ISIS, European far-right parties are on the rise and refugees are washing off the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. But no Western country is under greater distress than France with its nation troubled by terrorist attacks and by the latest outburst of protests. Analyzing the legal framework within which the French Model of integrating immigrants works, we attempted to assess its effectiveness and lack thereof, in order to try and explain why France is only preceded by Russia when it comes to the number of Westerners joining the rows of ISIL. Our findings include clear evidence about the low quality of life that people of immigrant descent have, the lack of possibilities to overcome their condition, the lack of sustainability that the model exhibits and the escalating effect that the current State of Emergency has on it all. And since all of these constitute drivers for extremism, we consider France to be in urgent need of policy developments that would slow down and even stop the radicalizing trends that we believe are in motion.*

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Keywords: *France, immigrants, French Model of Integration, Contract of Integration.*

Introduction

France is a country that is home to over six million Muslims which account for almost 10% of the population. Unlike the *multi-culturalist* approach that countries like the

Conflict Studies Quarterly
Issue 16, July 2016, pp. 17-45

United States have on immigration, France has a specific *Republican Model* that aims to *dissolve* the immigrant population within the French nation. The Model relies on three important pillars, the first being the Principle of secularity, which entails that all cultural and religious practices or beliefs are allowed and respected as long as they are practiced in private. The French State does not take into account, nor even ask to know the ethnic, cultural or religious characteristics or preferences of its citizens. The second principle is that individual rights prime over the collective rights. That is to say that no separate group of people, such as minorities or ethnic communities are favored, discriminated against or even recognized by the French Republic. The State only sees French citizens and non-citizens, and that is the end of its interests. Thirdly, the model promotes the separation of the public sphere from the private sphere, and emphasizes on the social inclusion role of the schools. Through this Model, the Republic aims to accomplish a high homogeneity of the population, which is not to be segregated between various groups.

The problem regarding France's Integration Model has been studied by Bertossi (2011), Blau (2006), Borowiec (2004), Gatto, Dambrun, Kerbrat and Oliveira (2009), Hem-Reun (nd.), Maillard, (2010), Ramadan, (1998), Alba and Foner (2015), Rudiger and Spencer (2003), Wesby (2015), Vladescu (2006), Viorst (1996), Algan, Bisin, Manning, and Verdier (2013), among others. However, our paper brings two unique elements, the first being that we take into account the escalating effects of the prolonging of the State of Emergency from November, 2015 until July, 2016 and the second, that we rely on empirical data obtained from policy reports, official French statistics and the actual body of laws rather than solely on academic sources. In addition, our paper emphasizes on the probable connection that exists between the failures of the Republican Model of Integration, the rise of Le Front National and the thickening of the rows of jihadist fighters by French nationals.

The author relies on the assimilation theory (Algan *et al.*, 2013) and the following methods have been used:

1. analysis of the legal framework regarding immigration in France;
2. analysis of international European Union reports regarding immigrant integration in France and other member states;
3. analysis of statistics regarding the socio-economic status of people of immigrant (Maghrebian) origin;
4. analysis of terrorism drivers as described by the Global Terrorism Index.

We also rely on the support of the academic community in defining some of the key-terms such as *national model*, *citizenship* and *integration* as recommended by scholars such as Cristophe Bertossi, T.H. Marshall and Didier Lapeyronnie, but rather than stopping at a purely theoretical discussion, we link together documented facts, establishing causalities and possible implications of their continued existence.

The hypothesis of this paper is that The French Republican Model of Integration is inherently discriminatory. The authors claims that the French Republican Model of integration is inherently discriminatory and that its shortcomings result in, and constitute a driver for extremism through the rise of Le Front National and the radicalization of French fighters joining ISIS. The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the efficiency of the Republican Model of Integration in integrating people of immigrant descent, along with lining out a possible connection between the internal deficiencies the Model and the increase in the number of French youngsters joining jihadist organizations.

With this aim, in the first section, we will start by mapping a brief historical introduction onto France's immigration waves and policies over the past century. Then, we will analyze the actually body of law that represents the framework within which the French immigration policy presently works, introducing the existing debate and criticism around it. In the second chapter, we will focus on the socio-economic implications of the Model as it is now. From its financial sustainability, to its discriminatory effects, the connection with the violent outbursts and finally, placing France within the European context by comparing its achievements in the matters of equality, unemployment and anti-discriminatory policies with the European Union average.

The third section will focus on the actual effects that the French policy has on the immigrant population and on the persons of immigrant descent. Throughout the paper, we will attempt to use the terminology as clearly as possible, but because the French legislation does not allow for researchers to inquire about a respondent's ethnicity, some sources use the term *non-EU-born*, *people of immigrant descent*, *immigrants*, *Muslims*, *people of North African origin* etc., attempting to accurately showcase the situation, while also involuntarily referring to their status. Thus, *non-EU-born* and *immigrants* would refer to newcomers who have yet to receive French citizenship and *people of immigrant descent* would encompass those who have been in France for one or more generations already. Finally, the fourth section will briefly present those who most clearly have something to gain from the shortcomings of the French Model, thus we will refer to the rise of Le Front National and to Jihadist organizations recruiting European fighters.

In the end, we will connect all the presented facts in a comprehensive chapter which will link all the elements, ramifications and implications of the presented facts, along with a series of concluding remarks and recommendations.

I. The French Republican Model of Integration

1. Historical Background

The modern law of citizenship in France began with the Republic, in 1790-1791 when the French citizenship was defined in the Constitution. Until 1795, two ways of obtaining French nationality were stated: the first was through "honorary citizenship" and the second was through automatic neutralization. In 1803, the definition of nationality was

included in the French Civil Code, based on *jus sanguinis*, as opposed to what Napoleon favored: *jus soli* as during the period 1803-1889 *jus soli* was the basis of French nationality. Starting from 1889 until 1940, France had a relatively flexible policy in order to ensure the naturalization of the immigrant workforce, and to counterbalance the aging of a population whose birth rate was too weak to match the mortality rate, which was extremely high. In addition, the Republic also required strong workers to repair the destruction produced during the First World War (Maillard, 2010).

The years 1940-1943 were characterized by a racist policy of citizenship, instituted by the Vichy regime through a proposed new Code of French Nationality which was ultimately cancelled but which proposed to prevent "the undesirable" from becoming French nationals and to denaturalize those "Jews" who already had French nationality. However, it was not easy to revoke the policy of the Vichy regime even after the Second World War; i.e. ethnic-based separation of naturalization quota was not abolished until the New Nationality Code and the liberal naturalization policy between 1953 and 1973.

The second ethnic crisis of the French Republic was entangled with the independence of Algeria. France implemented laws during 1974 and 1984 to ensure the legal rights of North African nationals in France, to support the integration of the second generation and to handle the issues brought up by the nationality matter (Maillard, 2010). In 1945, the French government issued a decree enlisting the basic principles of the immigration policy, aimed at encouraging and aiding the migration from Europe to France. Given that the Algerians fought in the two world wars alongside France, they were given the right to pass freely between France and their home country. Also, they benefited from "automatic assimilation", meaning that those who had received residence in France automatically became citizens of the French Republic.

By the mid-1950s, France was again in need of workforce, thus in 1954 when France sent troops on the ground in the Algerian Civil War, they also offered political asylum to those Algerians who fought alongside the French troops once Algeria had been declared independent. As a consequence, the largest immigration wave in the French history lasted from around 1956 to 1973, when the country enacted "zero immigration" laws because of its suffering economy, similar to the other European countries' policies. Nevertheless, its Muslim immigrant population continued to grow due to their high birth rates, to the family reunion exception and to illegal immigrants.

The French Immigration Act promulgated in 1998, stated that "children of foreign nationals would be given French citizenship when they reach adulthood" which has been the subject of extensive debate. The fact that children of foreigners, who were born in France and often spoke only French, were forced to wait until "adulthood" (18 years of age) to *become* French was the subject of heated debates. As France was one of the first nations to develop such a strong sentimental attachment to everything they deemed

“French”, the traditional sense of French nationality plays an important role in the pressure that is placed on immigrants by the French policy.

On one side, the immigrants have to prove their “Frenchness” in order to become naturalized, but on the other hand even when they do, they are never fully recognized as such. As researchers have found, especially older and more traditional French people still feel that the presence of immigrants threatens the existence of the native people. They often perceive immigration as being the root cause of many of the problems France is facing, including a staggering economy and an increase in violent crimes.

France and the Muslim world had always had close cultural and political relations throughout history, especially during the Ottoman Empire. Even though those relations intensified during the colonization of Algeria and parts of Africa in the 1830s, France was not prepared to manage the presence of four million Muslim immigrants on its territory (Maillard, 2010). Thus, because the presence of the Muslim population in the metropolitan area of the 1960s was small, practically no Muslim place of worship had been constructed since the church and the state separated in 1905.

The public’s memory was deeply marked by the colonization and decolonization of Algeria by a mixture of feelings, as the Algerian use of terrorism and the French use of torture had made the Algerian independence war into a gruesome memory. “And then France cultivated for a long time the amnesia over the war in Algeria; she embraced, plowed, subjugated, exploited, fought in Algeria and then abandoned it permanently” (Maillard, 2010, p. 7).

Meanwhile, as the French government was aware of the difficult conditions in which the Algerian workers had to live in France, it initiated projects to build them homes. Yet, the number of supporters of the Algerian independence cause continued to grow. The assimilation policy was soon replaced by a policy of “control” upon the Algerian immigration in 1957-1958. When Maurice Bouges Maunory said in 1958, “population of Algerian origin would have unwavering membership in the national [French] community” the feeling of “otherness” became clear. He was referring to the people who were supposed to “melt” into the French population. The Muslim community became a foreign body within the nation, composed of a different nature.

In the 1970s, when the French economy started to collapse, many immigrants were left unemployed and were depending on the State for their survival. At that time, the French government built large housing projects, named HLM – in order to accommodate them. Over time, the living conditions in these “projects” deteriorated as there wasn’t enough funding to maintain them. As those workers made use of the family reunification law, the number of people raised but often the living space remained the same. This led to overpopulation which added to unemployment, leading to the outskirts of the major cities being crowded with unemployed, discontent minorities.

The French government prioritized the single Algerian workers and basically ignored the problem of family housing, even if the tensions in Algeria in the 1950s increased migrations of Algerian families to France, from 3.000 people in 1953 to 20.000 in 1960 (Maillard, 2010). Thus, these families could not receive low-income housing (HLM) from the state, as the demand was high and they did not meet the criteria to be granted one. So the banks issued special loans to build low-rent housing that these families could afford. Meanwhile, the French government intended to use the improvement of conditions for Algerian immigrants in France as a bargaining chip in negotiations with F.L.N. and to secure the status of Europeans living in Algeria. In addition, the Algerian immigrants had become indispensable to the French economy in certain sectors such as public work, steel and textiles. On the basis of free movement of migrants between France and Algeria, the Europeans had their civil rights, religion, language and property respected in Algeria while the Algerians enjoyed the same rights as the French natives, apart from the political rights. The principle of free movement was then extended to all African countries through “special agreements” (Maillard, 2010).

While all these positive measures were taken during the “Glorious Thirty Years”, the early 1970s brought the French economy into recession. This affected negatively the social benefits of immigrants and provoked a debate regarding the French immigration policy. The workforce immigration stopped and the migration flows declined. Although France initiated a policy to assist the immigrants’ return, the goal was not reached. During the first decade of the 20th century, the main loophole for immigration was the “family reunion”, which allowed the workers’ family to migrate to France to reunite with him.

Nevertheless, with the economic crisis in the mid-1970s, the legal immigration was stopped. There were strong political reactions and the repulsion between the natives and the immigrants came out in the open.

Many of those people living in the “banlieues” feel that the State should be responsible for ensuring them a decent standard of living. While the European and Asian immigrants are the best integrated, Arab-Muslim and especially Maghrebians are the worst, i.e. they have the highest unemployment rates. This leads to the creation of a vicious circle, in which Maghrebian immigrants resort to crimes because they are unemployed and are unemployed because employers are convinced that they will commit crimes. In addition, there is also the matter of young Muslim whom “the state pushes ... toward Koranic schools—thus separating them and their families from public schools and the mainstream. The result could be insularity and ultimately, perhaps, radicalism” (Ramadan, 1998).

2. Legal Framework

A national model of integration and citizenship, as gathered by Bertossi (2011) is commonly defined as a *public philosophy, a policy paradigm, an institutional and discursive*

opportunity structure or a national cultural idiom. Within the perspective of how social reality is structured by preexisting ideas, France is perceived as an assimilationist country (unlike a multiculturalist country such as Britain and the Netherlands) whose national identity is founded on a universalistic public philosophy. But as France is a republican country, the republican principle encompasses all: separation between the public and the private spheres (through a color blind approach to ethnicity and race) and between the state and the church (through the secularism philosophy). All of this is underpinned under the concept of citizenship and immigrant inclusion through nationality (Bertossi, 2011).

The French Republican Model of Integration is based on the following principles:

- a. Separation of the public sphere from the private sphere;
- b. Individual rights prime over the collective rights;
- c. Secularism: the cultural differences are respected as long as that they are practiced in private. This model is focused on intentionally disregarding the ethnic, cultural or religious traits of its citizens. It was elaborated by Schnapper Dominique (among others) and it is inspired by the theory claiming the integrative function of the society for its members (Hem-Reun, nd.).

Its basis lies within the republican principles:

- a. a national body seen as homogenous;
- b. participation to public life essentially founded on vote and representation, and
- c. social inclusion through the school, army, workplace, family etc.; along with
- d. the centralized State (uniform organization of the public power).

However, its profound origin within the “French” identity may be at peril with the diversification of the individual sense of belonging. People today hold multiple identities (within their families, religions, sexual orientations, workplaces etc.), which eventually leads to disaffiliation especially for those who are not integrated in vital spheres such as a work field. Even putting the individual inequalities aside, after the 2008 economic crisis there has been an increase in inequalities between different regions of France. Thus, even if the GINI inequality coefficient of France is 0.3% (where 0 is perfect equality), 88% of the population thinks that inequalities are picking at the French society (General Commissariat of Strategy and Prosperity, 2013).

This “Social model” was created during the post Second World War years, based on the notion that all French citizens should “live with dignity”, along with the economic and social reform program, adopted by the National Council of the Resistance *Les Jours Heureux*. The 1946 Constitution stipulates that “The Nation shall provide the individual and the family with the conditions necessary to their development”, in addition to “collective national insurance funded by contributions based on employment”, “means-tested assistance benefits, funded by taxes and duties, and managed by the State and

regional authorities”, “free and universal public services [education and health] funded and organized by the State”. While from 1984 on, the French government gave stable residence cards to all citizens who had lived in France for at least 10 years, since 2003 this precondition was replaced by the necessity of “integration”. That is to say, immigrants have to “prove” their “Frenchness”. This regulation also applies to renewals of residency. Another modification is the conditions regarding the family reunions. While before, children rejoining their families were given ten years long residency, after 2003 they only receive it for one year, to be revised afterwards on the “precondition of integration” (Sinemensuel, 2013).

At this point, the law regulating the multiannual stay for foreigners after 1 year in France stipulates that the acquiring of the Contract of Integration (CAI) is mandatory (law nr. 2006-911/24.07.2006) and also that the respecting of the Contract will be taken into account when prolonging the residence permit. Then, the law 2011-672/16.07.2011 specifies what the CAI will contain. According to art. L.311-9 from CESEDA, the CAI “is destined for newly arrived foreigners” and it comprises three elements:

- a. the civic formation – presentation of the French Republic values and the explaining of the role of the institutions;
- b. linguistic formation, proven by “title of diploma recognized by the State” and
- c. a summary of professional competences. The only foreigners who do not need a CAI are: people who have completed at least 3 years in a French secondary school abroad; children born in France; foreign workers deployed in France; foreigners who have a work contract for at least 1 year.

Adult immigrants with no knowledge of the French language or culture are required to attend a free language course of maximum two months (180 hours) and/or a half day civic orientation course before coming to the country.

However, the CAI has been criticized for being too ambiguous, as the administration is not obliged to renew the CAI on the sole reason that it has been respected, which means that it cannot refuse its renewal based solely on its breaching. Also, 70% of surveyed foreigners stated that at the end of the linguistic formation, the attained level is not sufficient (Senat, 2016).

Until April 2003, only those benefiting from reunification with their families in France, families of refugees and foreign members of French families were eligible for a CAI. The law has been adjusted to all the CAI to be granted to all refugees, immigrants who have the right to work and others. Initially, the law had been specifically aimed at attracting new talent in France, but also to limit the family reunion policy. The waiting period was extended from one to two years and the partner’s acquisition of French citizenship would be more difficult. In addition, before being granted residence, the law requires three years minimum of cohabitation and adherence to the CAI. Subsequently, children

born in France only become citizens at the age of 18 years old, and only if they can prove constant residence in France, namely that they had been living in France continuously for at least five consecutive years since the age of 11 (Blau, 2006).

Summary

Over the past centuries, France oscillated between liberal immigration policies when they needed the workforce (1889-1940, 1945, 1953-1973), restrictive policies in times of economic recession (1957-1958, “zero immigration” in 1973) and even a racist policy (1940-1943). Since the end of the Second World War, its policy has been known as the *Republican Model of Integration*, a social model based on secularism and the homogeneity of the national body. Starting from 2003, the naturalization of immigrants is done based on a Contract of Integration, where candidates are required to prove their “Frenchness”: professional competences, knowledge of the language and of the Republican values.

II. Socio-economic implications of the French Model

1. The Model's sustainability

While regular people suffer because of the Model of Integration's shortcomings, the system itself is under a great pressure, especially from the point of view of the financial sustainability. Studies show that underemployment and poor growth reduce the social contribution in revenue. The four branches of the basic compulsory social security system are expected to be €9.3 billion in deficit by 2017, according to the assumptions on which the 2013 French Social Security Financing Act is based.

The Model's founding principle of labor market participation, is in decay – France's unemployment rate of +7% since the 1980s is not decreasing; duality between permanent contracts and fixed-term contracts (increased proportion since 2000, reaching 82% in 2013) and the weighting of temporary jobs has increased from 6% in 1982 to 15,1% in 2012 and the rate of transition to sustainable employment is at 10,6% in 2010, as opposed to the EU average of 25,9% (General Commissariat of Strategy and Prosperity, 2013).

The problem with this state of affairs is that because social rights in France are being linked to the employment status, and with the fragmentation of working patterns, there is an issue of the appropriateness of the terms by which employment maintains a central role in the model. However, even with this apparently ‘reckless spending’ that the State is thought to be doing, a million people in employment still live below the poverty line (half of the average income) – with the benefits and the spouse's income included – and the number has increased by 83.000 between 2003 and 2010. This adds to the existing criticism that the Model is focused more on curative, rather than preventive measures (General Commissariat of Strategy and Prosperity, 2013).

2. Discriminatory implications

In 2015, MIPEX France was ranked the 77th country out of 100 in regards to its level of “anti-discrimination”. A first aspect that proves that there is a trend of discrimination against the people of immigrant descent is the proposal to amend the constitution to allow declaring a State of Emergency without needing the Parliament’s approval. President Hollande proposed a bill of stripping double-citizens of the French citizenship if convicted of terrorism-related crimes. French Justice Ministry Christiane Taubira resigned in response to the proposal, deeming it of “absolute pathetic inefficiency” and warning that it would divide the French nation into two categories with the “pure” French being superior to those of mixed backgrounds (Chrisafis, 2016). Similarly, the French President also proposed and then had to withdraw his proposal of a Constitution amendment allowing the State of Emergency to be more easily instated, without the permission of parliament (Willsher, 2016). Also, the proposal encompassed a law allowing the punitive forfeiture of the French citizenship from dual-citizenship residents.

The proposal encompassed two provisions: the first was constitutionalizing the state of emergency which was only regulated by ordinary legislation. In this way, the triggering conditions of the state of emergency could not be easily modified. The initial text of the draft Constitutional Law referred to a law, regulating administrative measures that authorities can take during the state of emergency. The second article of the original text allowed for the forfeiture of nationality of the French nationals with double citizenship. This was stated to intend only to punish the perpetrators of the most serious crimes. Following the constitutional revision, ordinary legislation was intended to determine the terms of application of these provisions, including the list of crimes that could lead, if convicted, to the forfeiture of nationality (Vie-publique, 2016).

President Francois Hollande had declared a state of emergency on November 14, 2015 following a terrorist attack in Paris that led to the death or injure of 130 people. The legal framework is the emergency law created in 1955, at the time of France’s war in Algeria. On November 20, 2015, the Parliament approved the extension of the State of Emergency for another three months until February 26, 2016. Then it was prolonged twice more, first until May, 26 and then until July 26, 2016. The law authorizes the prefect of every French department to order warrantless searches at any time and place “when there are serious reasons to believe that the place is frequented by a person whose behavior constitutes a threat to public order and security” and to be given access to copy digital data saved on electronic devices at the place of the search. But in an expansion of the 1955 law, the State of Emergency empowers the interior minister to place under house arrest “against whom there are serious reasons to believe his or her behavior constitutes a threat to public order and security”. The authorities can place them under house arrest for a maximum of 12 hours a day, but also restrict their movement outside their house and require them to check in at a police station up to three times a day.

The consecutive prolonging of the State of Emergency leads to what Amnesty International has deemed as “abuses”. Firstly, on the side of the police, who was already accused of racial profiling. In fact, in 2012 when President Hollande was elected he vowed to “fight racial profiling by police” and promised a new mechanism to protect the equal rights of French citizens. He did not appear to follow through, but in June, 2015 a French appeals court condemned the French executive of police racial profiling during identity checks. The complaint had been initially dismissed in a 2013 trial, but the final ruling was in favor of the plaintiff. Additionally, a study done by sociologists in 2009 proved that a Black or Arab person had a 6, 2% and a 7, 7% greater chance respectively of being stopped by the police than a white person (Gatto *et al.*, 2009).

According to a government official report, between November 14, 2015 and February 25, 2016 in the context of the State of Emergency, the police had completed 3427 raids, which led to the uncovering of 588 weapons and to the discovery of 528 crimes. From a total of just 3023 searches, 593 resulted in legal action, out of which 222 for crimes against the gun legislation, 206 for crimes related to drugs and 165 for other crimes. The same document asked for the renewal of 103 of the house arrests, and the additional arrest of two people. Out of the 103, 33 had been rejected for insufficient reasons, and 72 had been renewed as on February 26, 2016. As two of those had been suspended by a judge and one of them was withdrawn, there were 69 house arrests in place on May 4, 2016 when the document was presented which showed significant decline from the 198 people who were in that situation on February 26, 2016.

At the beginning of the State of Emergency, when the Human Rights Watch interviewed 18 people who claimed that they have been the target of abusive searches or placed under house arrests, the results were concerning to say the least. On one side, those who were subjected to the police treatment said that they had appeared into their homes, restaurants or mosques, destroying their belongings, terrifying their children and restricted people’s movement which led to important income losses and physical as well as mental trauma. Even if they are found innocent, these operations leave them with considerable loss, tarnished reputations and regarded as second-class citizens.

According to the Humans Rights Watch (HRW), in one of the house raids, the police broke four of a disabled man’s teeth until they realized he was not in fact the man they were searching for. In another case, a single mother’s children were placed into foster care, following a police investigation. Many of those interviewed are said to be shunned by their neighbors as a consequence of the police raids. Although the French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve declared that ‘emergency powers’, allowing the police to search homes and restrain people into house arrest without requiring judicial approval “do not signify abandonment of the rule of law” and although on November 25, 2015 he issued a directive to local authorities warning against abuses, the situation remains of real concern (Human Rights Watch, 2016).

At the time of the article, February 3, 2016 the French human rights ombudsperson had already received around 40 complaints about the emergency measures, relating to unjustified searches, insufficient evidence and raids on the wrong addresses. Being interviewed by the HRW, he said that while the measures are not targeting specific groups, “in reality these measures are aimed at a specific movement and at very observant Muslims”. The Collective Against Islamophobia in France, an organization that was assisting HRW in finding the people targeted by the raids, said that they had documented 180 cases of abusive house arrests and raids, by February, 2016.

As it has also been noticed by scholars, that the vast majority of French terrorist suspects are arrested and detained under “association with wrongdoers”, which provides a wide net to be cast, allowing an extensive pre-trial detention and under which anything could be included, from speech, to merely knowing the other persons. Moreover, the very definition of terrorism is wide enough so that judicial actors could easily abuse the punitive forfeiture of citizenship, leaving people country-less and highly vulnerable.

Another interesting fact is that the majority of those targeted by the measures of the State of Emergency were Muslims and people of North African descent. All the measures that HRW had managed to document targeted Muslim people and establishments. On January 12, 2016 the Council of Europe commissioner for human rights, Nils Muižnieks had also raised concerns about the possibility of ethnic profiling. However, on January 19, five UN special rapporteurs, including those on the protection and promotion of human rights while countering terrorism urged the government not to extend the State of Emergency beyond February 26 (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, nd.). Also, the UN General Assembly has warned that security measures that endanger human rights and rule of law are drivers of terrorism in themselves: “In a context of growing Islamophobia, the French government should urgently reach out to Muslims and give them assurances that they are not under suspicion because of their religion or ethnicity” (United Nations, nd.).

3. Connection with violent behavior

France has known a period of violent outbursts and riots especially in its capital, Paris and across its suburbs starting from the 2005 riots, to the more recent terrorist attacks and protests. A prominent factor behind them is the discrepancy between the low-income suburban residents and the rest of the French society. In Paris especially, there is a notable segregation between the upper- and middle- class inhabitants living in the west, while most of the low-income population resides in the northeast part of the capital. Thus, the structure physically alienates low-income Parisians, most of who live in housing projects, built as stated above in the postwar period to accommodate the incoming working-class. Although they were originally intended to be open spaces that encouraged open interaction facilitating the commute to and from the nearby

factories, now the buildings turned into ghetto structures, cradling frustrations and perpetual marginalization.

In the beginning, the residents were both working-class French and immigrant people. There were plenty of jobs, education was free and there was a feeling of hope for the upcoming generations. But when a government-sponsored home-buying program gave the opportunity for many native French nationals to move away, their immigrant correspondents could not afford to do the same. The factories have closed since then, leaving their children without opportunities of work, education or respectable conditions that were available for their French co-nationals.

A lack of opportunities in the early 1980s, which led to a rise in delinquency among the young population, triggered a strong police presence which increased the general sentiment of suspicion between immigrants and native French. After the 1983 riots, the then-President Francois Mitterrand declared a renovation of the low-income areas: renovating the walls, repairing the elevators, establishing programs for the youth in the area and so on. But when Jacques Chirac became president, the program was quickly cancelled. Instead, his then-interior minister, Nicolas Sarkozy increased the police presence around the housing projects (Wesby, 2015). In the years afterwards, from this combination of increased police confrontations, rise of unemployment and awful economic conditions following the 2008 financial crisis, demonstrations and violence resulted. With no educational or occupational opportunities, residents turn to drugs and crime to release frustrations and make ends meet. Others have turned to religion.

But France is a highly secular country. In some places, it is illegal to display one's faith, a habit that contradicts Islamic customs. France's 1905 separation of church and state became the basis for a 2004 ban on religious symbols in schools, the 2010 ban on publicly wearing the *niqab* and the establishment of a 2013 program enforcing the prohibition of religion in school. These measures although intended to unite the French nationals by emphasizing on its commonalities, have stigmatized even further the Muslim population. And even with these violent outbursts, it would be possible to bridge the differences. However, the government's response accounts for much of its escalation. In the 2005 riots for example, when two French youths died electrocuted as they fled the police in a Parisian suburb sparking three weeks of riots in 274 towns within the Paris region and beyond, the French government response was hasty.

The then-Interior Minister N. Sarkozy declared a "zero tolerance" policy against urban violence, and a year later when civil unrest lit up again in the same areas, he returned to his "law and order" commands. But ever since, the government's discourse was amplified by a range of opinions trying to link the riots with illegal immigration, Muslim separatism and polygamous practices. While in fact, at the time, most of those rioting had been second generation immigrant youths. The underlying issue behind these vio-

lent outbursts is clearly more complex and it is highly linked to the social and economic exclusion, the prominent racial discrimination and to the capacity of the French State to respond to the challenges it faces while maintaining its official commitment to integrating all individuals regardless of their skin color or faith.

Shortly after the State of Emergency was ended in January 2006, a new set of protests began this time made up largely of white young people. The manifestations were in response to a law, the First Employment Contract that they believed compromised job security and the rights of French workers. The unrest escalated and comprised violent rioting, strikes and occupations of French universities. As a result, the government revoked its employment law (Sahlins, 2006). But in the previous year, there had been no parliamentary commission called to understand the riots, no major policies had been proposed to answer the signaled social problems and unlike in 2006, no major action had been taken to address the grievances of the young people of immigrant decent. This serves only to further inflate the issue, because through its inaction, the government shows its distance from the problems of these people. And perhaps at a societal subconscious level, although the claim is that the Republic does not see color, the truth is that it does not see these people at all.

4. France in the European context

According to the 2015 Migrant Integration Policy Index, within the EU, nearly 20 million residents (4%) are non-EU, and the number of newcomers was relatively steady between 2008 and 2013.

Since the 2008 crisis, non-EU citizens' employment rates aged 20-64 dropped 6 points on average in the EU, to 56,5% in 2014, and their risk of poverty or social exclusion +4% to 49%, twice the level for EU citizens.

Policy Developments

Since 2012 newcomers are expected to benefit from equal housing rights, improved targeting in the education support for their children, the right to family reunion (extended) for LGBT married couples and clearer requirements for attaining French citizenship and a greater commitment to promote equality through public service (Migrant Integration Policy Index, 2015).

According to the 2015 Migrant Integration Policy Index, France "restricts and delays labor market integration" to a greater extent than most European countries, an estimated 5.3 million jobs being unavailable for non-EU immigrants. Most public sector jobs and additional 50 professions in the private sector are "closed" to them. However, since 2000 the government offers preparatory courses for civil service competitions, open to those living in 'priority' neighborhoods as defined by urban policy" (Rudiger & Spencer, 2003). But few of these immigrants access education or training in France.

The country also “restricts and delays” family reunions, thus the non-EU citizens are less probable to reunite with their family in France than in most European countries. France is situated 40 points below the international average on access, as most countries grant equal access to private sector jobs.

Although according to the French law all people who are legal residents with 3 or more years of domestic or foreign professional experience have the legal right to the Validation of Acquired Experiences (VAE), the procedure takes a minimum of one year, is demanding and sometimes difficult. In contrast, the procedure to recognize non-EU qualifications “can be long, costly and even impossible in some sectors” (Migrant Integration Policy Index, 2015). While the law allows non-EU citizens to access training and higher education, most of them are not included in the study grants that French citizens can use, with the exception of international protection beneficiaries and “certain international students”. But once they manage to find a job, non-EU immigrants generally enjoy the same rights as workers in the same job of French ethnicity. All legal residents are now also guaranteed equal access to housing after a 2007 restriction was removed by Decree 73 of 15 March 2010 and Decree 36 of 13 February 2013.

On the other hand, France is the only MIPEX country that denies the equal rights of workers’ representation since 2004, when non-EU citizens lost the right to be elected to ‘Prud’homme’ Councils and Chambers of Commerce and Professions.

Family reunion

In the MIPEX report, France ranked 30th out of 38, meaning that families have better legal opportunities in most other countries to live together; although the opening to same-sex married couples in 2013 was an improvement but the family reunion remains a delayed process, with the term being extended from 12 in 2006, to 18 months and a restrictive one, providing no entitlement for adult children, parents or grandparents. The Report also states that “no other developed country follows FR in imposing so many job, language and integration requirements for family reunion”. Chances that families will be granted the right to reunite even if they meet all the burdensome criteria are still low, due to the discretion in the procedures of France, as in most countries. Thus, permits can be denied or withdrawn on vague grounds or suspicions of fraud (e.g. suspicion of marriage of convenience). According to estimates from 2011-2012, nearly ½ of working-age non-EU citizens in France are neither in employment, nor in education or training (Migrant Integration Policy Index, 2015).

The results of the MIPEX 2015 Report clearly show that at least within the European context, France has still a long way to go in regards to achieving its Model’s purpose of assimilation. But keeping the Model in mind, one may argue that integration is an unsuitable term as it evokes a “one-way assimilation” whereas when the new popula-

tion, especially when we speak of such an abundant presence, in the case of the French Muslims, wishes to integrate into the “host-culture” it inevitably leaves its own marks and traces, modifying the characteristics it had previously had. Therefore, we argue that a more appropriate term and policy goal for that matter should be “inclusion” and “participation”.

It is true that social inclusion is a clearly stated policy goal for governments within the EU, directed at eliminating the separation and exclusion of disadvantaged groups, attempting to enable a feeling of “belonging” available to everyone. However, if the integration is estimated and measured in relation to an existing social order with its values and culture, than the focus will always stay on the adaptation of the migrants, rather than on the actions that may be required to facilitate the *inclusion* and *participation* of the newcomers.

Integration must be conceived as a two-way process, and its failure can be the result of a resistance on part of the receiving society. While the immigrants have to take an active role in the integration process, this is impossible if the existing structures are overly rigid. Also, levels of integration may vary in different aspects of the society. There can be integration in the civil society, and not in the labor market, or vice versa. Which can all be deemed as integration failures but which would require different policy responses?

In this sense, the Republican French Model of Integration is based on the complete assimilation of individuals into a national unity based on values and rights that are binding for all can be achieved thorough citizenship – when the individual enters a relationship with the state, which should not be mediated by any third-party and which should rule out ethnic, religious or cultural belonging which exceeds the immediate personal sphere.

Summary

From an economic point of view, since the Social Model is founded on labor market participation, the high unemployment rates put it under pressure. The Model is expected to be around 9 billion euros in deficit by 2017. And even now, its achievements are overshadowed by the around 1 million people living below the poverty line. The public discourse is also full of controversy, as the current State of Emergency inflates the conflict. International human rights organizations signal abuses and some public figures agree with them. One may argue that the police are merely sanctioning suspicious behavior, but this behavior would originate in the socio-economic conditions from the HLM projects. Residents there experience a strong alienation and lack of opportunities and the French police has been found guilty of racial profiling. Amid the EU context, France’s attitude towards non-EU newcomers has ranked fairly low. With ethnicity questions forbidden from surveys, this study is as close as one can get to statistical data.

III. The Integration of Immigrants and People of Muslim Immigrant Descent

1. Definitions and general data

The French Sociology scholar Didier Lapeyronnie distinguishes two elements within the general concept of “integration”: (1) participation – covering the economic, political and national inclusion and (2) cultural integration – concerning cultural conflicts (Hem-Reun, nd.). The most widely used indicators of integration are the socio-economic status of target groups, and focus on equal treatment and social inclusion. Indicators referring to cultural and religious aspects are popular with approaches emphasizing assimilation, diversity of target groups or factors influencing integration outcomes.

In 2009, immigrants – with and without French citizenship – represented 8, 4% of the population; 43% of them identified as Muslims; around half of the 8, 4% (5.4 mil.) arrived before 1974; in 1999, around 45% of immigrants were from Europe, 39% from Africa and 13% from Asia. Ten years later in 2009, 38% were coming from Europe, 43% from Africa and 14, 5% originated in Asia (decrease from Europe, increase from Africa and Asia).

The *assimilation theory*, on which the French Model is based on, is opposed to the *multiculturalism theory*. The assimilation process is built upon three major pillars: diverse ethnic groups begin to share the same culture with the autochthonous population after a natural process along which they enjoy the same access to socio-economic opportunities. Second, this process leads to the gradual disappearance of original cultural patterns, in favor of the new ones. And thirdly, once set in motion, the process moves inevitably towards the “melting” of the newcomers into the mainstream culture (Algan *et al.*, 2013).

The reality is that this theory has not been functioning in France. In 2011, 51% of the surveyed French population thought that Muslims form a “separate” group (against 44% in 2009), showing a clear increase in islamophobia. One year later, “the [Muslim] veil” represented a problem for 75% of the French respondents, against 68% in 2011 (General Commissariat of Strategy and Prosperity, 2013).

Research from INSEE, France’s national statistical agency, indicates that in 2013, the unemployment rate for all immigrants was approximately 17.3%, nearly 80% higher than the non-immigrant rate of 9.7%, and that descendants of immigrants from Africa have a significantly more difficult time finding work. The report found that the education and skill levels only explained 61% of the difference in employment rates between descendants of African immigrants and those whose parents were born in France” (Journalist's Resource, 2015). Thus, the immigrant population does not seem to enjoy “the same access to socio-economic opportunities”.

In addition, the proportion of Europeans that perceive the presence of people from minority groups as a cause of insecurity increased from 37% in 1997 to 42% in 2000.

It seemed that after 9/11, the trend has been to regard religion as a primary reason for cultural and social conflict and while European Muslims were perceived before as racial, ethnic or national minorities, their identity is now entangled with their faith. This is also the case with the self-perception of Muslim groups, particularly the young, who often emphasize religion above racial identity (Rudiger & Spencer, 2003).

In 2003, the target population for socio-economic integration policies accumulated to roughly 13 million people (around 3, 4% of the EU population at the time) who were third-country nationals, to which naturalized migrants and ethnic minorities are to be added, on which there were no European-wide figures available. Thus, Europe was hosting 12-18 million Muslims, which was (and still is) the second largest religion in Europe. Most of these people of Muslim religion lived (and continue to live) in France, which was home to 3.5-4 million of them, followed by Germany with 2.5-3 million at the time and Britain with only 1,5 million in 2003 (Rudiger & Spencer, 2003).

Socio-economic data for employment, education, health and housing demonstrate that equal inclusion of migrants and ethnic minorities in important spheres is yet to be achieved. Migrants suffer from:

- Concentration in specific segments of the labor market;
- Low employment rates;
- Low wages;
- Poor working conditions;
- Underrepresentation in senior positions;
- Educational attainment is on average lower than that of other groups;
- They are underrepresented in higher education;
- Tend to be concentrated in poorly resourced, ethnically homogenous schools;
- Are generally in worse health;
- Have higher death rates;
- Are more likely to be exposed to risk than the general European population;
- Often live in poorer housing, overcrowded conditions;
- Are less likely to own properties;
- Tend to reside in poorer urban districts with a high proportion of migrant residents.

Though there are also integration successes, it is very difficult to assess any policy impact, because there are almost no statistics available on how certain factors impact the integration of certain groups. Because the ethnicity or religion inquiry is forbidden in surveys, migrants “merge” with the general population as soon as they become naturalized, this means that second-generation migrants are very hard to identify for research or policymaking.

2. Quality of Life

A 2012 survey shows that 90% of the French citizens believe that their country has its own specific social model, and that this is a positive thing in terms of social protection, 86% say that it is an important part of the social identity and 82% feel a degree of attachment to it (General Commissariat of Strategy and Prosperity, 2013). Nevertheless, the same French nation expresses distrust when surveyed in the 2010 Eurobarometer. The abundance of social protection arrangements seemed to be the reason, but 78% of French citizens believed that inequalities and poverty were being poorly dealt with. In 2012, the French Directorate General for Social Cohesion showed that 80% of French citizens believed that social cohesion in France was poor (General Commissariat of Strategy and Prosperity, 2013).

A study done by the EU Accession Monitoring Program (EUMAP) found that “though the majority of Muslims living in France are French citizens, segments of the public continue to consider Maghrebi Muslims— unlike immigrants from other countries such as Italy, Spain or Portugal—to be immigrants even after four generations in France” (Vladescu, 2006, pp. 8-9). Also, “Muslims find few precedents for cultural adaptation” (Vladescu, 2006, p. 10). Alongside all the cultural, religious and social elements associated with their assimilation, Muslims are also poorly represented in the French government, partly because “many of the local and national representatives of French Muslims are tied to religious organizations, making it difficult to enter politics, again, because of the separation of church and state”, leading back to the difficulty in assimilation.

In addition, people of immigrant descent face many additional difficulties:

- Very few working-age non-EU men and women are accessing adult education and training in France, lower than the average in similar EU countries;
- Only 17% were recently enrolled in education or training in EU;
- Around 50% of unemployed working-age non-EU citizens in France were able to count on the support of unemployment benefits (access for women 46% and for men 60%);
- Immigrants in France are not more likely to use social/unemployment/family benefits than the French people in similar circumstances;
- In France, the long-settled non-EU born, who have been there for more than 10 years, are only 10% less likely to have a job than non-immigrants with the same level of education;
- Around 50% of the low-educated non-EU and French-born have a job (about 60% of men from both situations but women non-EU are 20% less likely to have a job than low-educated French women);
- Within the university educated, 75% of the non-EU born are employed compared to 82, 5% of the French-born;

- Employment quality: the low-educated non-EU born people are nearly 3 times as likely to experience in-work poverty (wage and benefits are not enough to fully escape poverty).

Education

France was ranked one of the least successful OECD countries in 2009 with regards to limiting the impact of parents' socio-economic background on the child's academic success and therefore, on their professional success. Thus, pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds were deemed 2.68 times more likely to achieve poor results than those from privileged backgrounds, which they claimed could be explained by the way learning is approached by different children (General Commissariat of Strategy and Prosperity, 2013, p. 8).

The educational career and orientation process is different for young people of immigrant descent, as they finish school more often without a diploma; they have lower average education levels and have lower scores than those of native students (France Strategie, 2015). These facts are essential, as 2012 PISA data showed that foreign-born citizens made up around 5% of all 15-year-old pupils in France, around the same level as in other Western EU countries (Migrant Integration Policy Index, 2015).

Social mobility

Social mobility has progressed very little, as since the 1980s, around 1/3 of individuals have belonged to the same socio-professional category as their father (General Commissariat of Strategy and Prosperity, 2013). There is also the matter of *spacial segregation* as young people of immigrant descent tend to often be discriminated against based on their area of residence which is often "neighborhoods subject to multiple social and economic difficulties [with] high unemployment, longer distance from areas with jobs, inadequate transport network, lower density of certain public services etc". (France Strategie, 2015).

Political Life

Around 2, 2 million non-EU adults, aged 15 or higher, are not French citizens and therefore were disenfranchised in France's 2014 local elections. That accounts for 4, 2% of the population, and is one of the highest levels of disenfranchisement among developed democracies. Even though local voting rights were promised by former President Mitterrand in the 1981 elections, his proposal was not continued by the following French presidents. While President Sarkozy promoted voting rights as a "factor of integration" in 2005, he dropped it from the agenda during his mandate, labeling it as a "communitarian risk" in the 2012 election.

Similarly, President Hollande promised it in the 2012 elections, and promised to act on it before his 5-year period ended. Immigrant associations continue to militate for these

rights, although even under this law proposal, 1, 8 million voters would be excluded. However, as currently none of the non-EU citizens are enfranchised in the French elections, neutralization is essential for their political democratic participation. In spite of this fact, non-EU born who have more than 10 years of residence are 10% less likely to participate politically than French-born people. Data collected in the 2000s showed that 45% of the long-settled (+10 years) non-EU born have recently been involved in a civic act such as a political party, association, petition, demonstration or contacting a politician, which closely compared to 49% of the French-born people.

Naturalization

Around 700.000 foreign residents are expected to benefit from the intermediate multi-annual permit. Today, until the newcomer becomes eligible for a ten-year card, she must renew the temporary permit yearly. This regulation puts excessive work on the state prefectures, which receive 5 million visits annually by France's 3, 7 million foreigners, out of which only 1% are refused. In addition, this system places excessive difficulties for newcomers to obtain jobs and housing. The government has proposed that newcomers with one-year permits receive upon their first renewal a permit until their application for the 10 year card, i.e. two years for parents or spouses of French citizens, four years for other family reunion cases, four-year 'talent passport' for 'high-achieving' immigrants and student permits covering their entire program.

The requirements of integration may also be revised during the first and up to the fifth year, with a higher demanded level for French language fluency. These 'higher' requirements are said to be intended to "match the government's greater offer of French courses to A2 level, according to its 2014 integration strategy" (Migrant Integration Policy Index, 2015).

Naturalization can happen after five years of residence, but according to MEPIX 2015 over the past decade, access to nationality has been undermined as a tool for integration. France's discretionary procedure does not treat all applicants the same, nor does it encourage them to apply, and its demanding requirements – compared to other West European countries – do not provide all with the necessary effort to succeed. On one side, eligibility rules are similar to other countries of immigration, but French immigrants face unmatched naturalization conditions. The citizenship status is conditional upon a person's employment situation, on their B1 level of language fluency (highest in Europe) and since July, 1 2010 prefects in France have a great discretion under this decentralized procedure. In addition, in 2011 and 2012, prefectures were instructed to "use their discretion to restrict naturalization". But because of potential unfair verdicts, in 2013, a circular demanded that prefects be more "flexible in the professional integration and good character requirements" (Migrant Integration Policy Index, 2015).

Young People with Immigrant Backgrounds

Immigrants, especially those of African descent, experience difficulties in education, employment, housing and living conditions, which reflect the socio-economic situation of their families, exposed to “the shortcomings of our public policy: labor market entry barriers for the young and less-skilled, strong influence of the socio-economic background of students in their academic achievement, lack of fluidity in the housing market and discrimination in society”. These disparities cannot be explained solely by socio-demographic factors (France Strategie, 2015).

The unemployment rate for descendants of African immigrants (workers under 25 years old) was 42% in 2012, against 22% for descendants of European immigrants and natives. Studies have shown that on average, the descendants of African immigrants experience greater job insecurity (fixed term contracts, temporary work) and are more exposed to experiencing periods of unemployment after finishing school. On the contrary, descendants of immigrants from Southern Europe for example, experience access to employment that compares with that of young people not directly descended from immigrants. However, it is the young Maghreb descendants who have the largest gap between their level of diploma and the qualification for the position they hold (France Strategie, 2015).

Two out of three descendants from two immigrant parents have a father who works manual labor, while only half of the descendants from couples with only one immigrant parent face the same situation. When it comes to non-immigrant parents, only one in three face the same issue. Consequently, over 20% of the young people of immigrant descent live below the poverty line, 10% of French people not directly descended from immigrants, especially when the youngsters are still living along with their parents (France Strategie, 2015).

Summary

As more immigrants come from Africa than anywhere else, more than half of the French population considers Muslims to be a separate group. And indeed they seem to be, as they experience 80% higher unemployment rates than non-immigrants, they are three times more likely to experience in-work poverty than them, and have an overall lower quality of life. The socio-economic background highly affects the children's school success, and a third of individuals belong to the same professional category as their parent. Young people of immigrant descent have 50% higher unemployment rate and a high risk of poverty. Around 2 million of the people in France do not have citizenship and thus cannot vote, while France has been found by MEPIX 2015 to undermine the access to nationality.

IV. Thriving Third-Parties

1. The Rise of *Le Front National*

The rise of *Le Front National* (FN) was based on the general discontent of the French population. The economic situation in the 1970s brought to the forefront of political debates in the early 1980s issues such as immigration, the breakdown of law and order, and unemployment. Many voters accused France's traditionally strong parties of not having addressed their concerns. The party benefitted from this failure and from the outspread discontent with the government and with the other major political parties, which Le Pen dismissively termed *la bande des quatre* (the gang of four, i.e. PS, PCF, RPR, UDF). "To put it simply then, the Front National was quick to say out loud what large sections of the French population were thinking" (Vladescu, 2006).

In relation to the media representations, there is a concern about the role the media plays in shaping the popular support for the extreme-Right. But studies have shown that it is not the media coverage of the Front National per-se that raises their popularity, but the coverage of "immigration". For instance, the massive media coverage of the first Islamic headscarf affair in 1989 culminated in the FN winning a parliamentary election near Paris with 61% in the second-round vote. Although the FN was not a major actor in the media reports, as the focus was on mainstream politicians and intellectuals, the emphasis on the anxiety aroused in the majority ethnic population by the presence of Third World immigrants made their supporting appear like a more favorable choice and alternative (European Monitoring Centre of Racism and Xenophobia, 2002).

2. Jihadist Organizations

According to the 2015 Global Terrorism Index, the flow of foreign fighters to Iraq and Syria to fight along extremist organizations between 2011 and 2015 is of around 25,000-30,000 fighters. The total number of foreign fighters believed to have joined armed groups in Iraq and Syria more than doubled from December 2013 to October 2015. While Europe comprises 21% of all foreign fighters, a large majority from them are from France.

The Report also states that the most prominent drivers for terrorism in the developed countries lie in the socio-economic factors, such as youth-unemployment, distrust in democracy and attitudes towards immigration (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2015). Other major drivers for extremism in Western countries are: the lack of social opportunities, marginalization, discrimination, poor governance, unresolved conflicts, radicalization in prisons and perceived lack of alternatives for achieving personal and professional success. Among non-majority Muslim countries, France has the second highest number of nationals who have travelled there to fight, preceded only by Russia.

In addition, terrorist organizations such as ISIS make smart use of the social media tools they have at their disposal. It is widely known that through their Twitter accounts, they spread their ideology and propaganda, making their message heard and appealing to people around the world. Even if Twitter manages to close their accounts, another series of them appear. They show how “normal” and “pure” the life of those who join them is, by having women post about their daily lives, routines, much like any other lifestyle promoter. They “humanize” their organization while inserting the “divine” element alongside their name. They emphasize on the “holiness” of their mission, on their victories, putting their God in the middle of the rhetoric. A message like this may not be so appealing to a person who is already satisfied with their life, beliefs and range of chances. But to the alienated French young person of immigrant descent, constantly blamed by the society, who has to apologize all the time for their own name, skin color or religion, being somewhere where all of this would be unnecessary seems dreamy.

In assessing the “driver” effect of islamophobia, as a policy and as a public discourse, we must take into consideration the powerful basic human need of belonging and to realize that while addressing the effects – the terrorist attacks all over the world, we must not neglect the causes, the core drivers and enablers of such acts and organizations.

V. Concluding Remarks

The French Republican System of Integration, a color-blind policy that is supposed to achieve the “perfect” assimilation, the melting of a completely different population into the French nation has failed. It is failing economically, with its social benefits pillar collapsing under the strain of raising unemployment of over 10% and strong criticism. But even with its present generosity, it barely keeps floating the large number of people needing it. In France, around 1 million people live below poverty line, struggling to make ends meet. And even though the other millions struggle under the burden of heavy taxes, the System cannot help them with more.

However, the low educated non-EU born people are three times more likely to experience in-work poverty. That is a fact, even though 50% of the low educated non-EU French people are employed. Meaning that even with their salaries added, they still cannot make half of the average national income. Rightfully enough, 78% of French people believe that inequalities and poverty are poorly dealt with, especially when taking into consideration that over 20% of the young non-EU originating people aged 25 and less live below the poverty line, compared to 10% of the French people. This is not an astonishing gap, but the percentage is doubled and it is quite concerning, given that it happens within a system that does not recognize minority groups and claims to promote equality in all senses. An effective system that does not “see” color, race, or religion, should not have such a large gap.

As mentioned above, most French people believe that poverty is poorly dealt with, but at the same time statistics show that around 80% perceive the Social French Model as being a positive factor, an important part of their social identity and say they are attached to it to some degree. The very social system that is so much a part of their identity is incapable of fulfilling its role. Around 88% of the population thinks that there are inequalities within the French society. But the current Integration Model does not provide the necessary tools for leveling them out.

Whenever there's a discussion about the French Republican Model of Integration, the subject of unemployment invariably comes up. That is because one of the strongest indicators of social inclusion of the immigrant population is their ability to find work, and thus provide for themselves and their families. But also, in order to be able to assist the population, the public budget needs financial contributions to feed the demand for social benefits. And thus, employment becomes the center of the immigration narrative in France, much like in other countries.

The segregation is very real, with the people of immigrant origin still living in *the projects*, those *banlieues* that are still in crisis even after 11 years since the 2005 riots. The "wake up call" went to *snooze* and now more than 4, 4 million people live in the toughest of the ghettos where they face what President Holland had called "unbearable discrimination". The French nation does not see color, or religion, but it definitely sees the address. For example in Grigny, a Parisian suburb where over 27.000 people live, 60% children live below poverty line, and unemployment is 22%, two times the national average and over 40% among young people.

That makes it difficult for them to receive proper education and overcome their condition. French pupils coming of disadvantaged families are 2, 68 more likely to achieve poor results in school. And even if they did manage to overcome this obstacle, the French-born will never send their children to the same school as them, and the school will become a cradle for criminality. But even if they somehow escape all that, they will not find work either because businesses are reluctant to set up shop around the *ghettos* and the commute would be too expensive for the income to be worth it, or they will be seen as *immigrants* and refused on some politically correct pretext. So because only 50% of the non-EU originated could count on unemployment benefits, they will get involved in some criminal activities in order to make a living. Then they will go to prison and in prison they will find a few *likeminded* men who will make them feel understood, who share their sentiment about inequality, humility and injustice. So they will be invited to join some organization where they will *belong* and that will be the birth of an extremist. And that can happen to all those 50% of working-age non-EU people who are not in employment, education or training. But even if they manage to find work, in spite of the 5,3 million jobs that are unavailable for non-EU people, France is one of the countries that has the lowest rate of social mobility, with around 1/3 of individuals belonging to

the same socio-professional category as their father. So if it was difficult growing up, the problems will not soon ameliorate.

And on top of everything, until July, 2016 every person of immigrant background will be in danger of being investigated, raided, or put under house arrest within the current State of Emergency. Without the necessity of proof, the police will be able to obtain a warrant for virtually anyone they deem suspicious. And this is the same police that has been condemned in June, 2015 of racial profiling, with a 2009 study showing that Black people were 6,2% more likely to be stopped by the police and Arab people 7,7% respectively. And that was before the *Charlie Hebdo* and *November, 2015* events in Paris. Nowadays, every mosque is presumed to be a terrorist nest, and every Muslim wearing a vest is reason for caution.

Since the instating of the State of Emergency in November, 2005 there have been an official number of 3427 raids and 3023 searches that led to 593 legal actions. That means that around a fifth of the searches actually led to the discovery of criminal activity. The other 2430 war presumably left with their reputation tarnished, with broken valuables in their houses, terrified children, regarded as pariahs by their neighbors, and perhaps layering up to file a complaint against the abuses. But because of the State of Emergency, the conditions and reasoning for the raids can be vague and even discretionary. There are still people who are held under house arrest and those who have to report daily or multiple times per day to a police section. This may involve a costly commute to the appointed police section, financial loss from not being able to go to work or open the business for multiple days in a row and a moral toll that leaves the *suspects* scarred for a long time to come.

The political scene is flourishing with initiatives aimed to tap into people's fears of immigrants: on one side, there is President Hollande's proposal for the punitive stripping of the double-citizenship people of their French citizenship in the case of terrorism-related convictions and the propaganda of Le Front National that hopes to take the lead in the fight against the dangers Muslim immigrants present. Placed in the international context of the refugee crisis, terrorism attacks and the US Presidential elections with Trump's anti-Muslim discourse, the wave of fear spreads over Muslims everywhere. But nowhere as much as in France, where there is the largest non-EU immigrant population.

All of these factors give room for extremist organizations such as ISIS to attract the youngsters to join their rows. France already is the European country from where the most people flee to fight alongside jihadists in the Middle East. And the triggers are clear. With the perceived lack of opportunities they face in their home country, the immigrants feel a strong need to find a place where they are accepted. Islamophobia is growing all over the world, and the window of chance is closing for Muslims all over. The only ones who seemingly want to welcome them with open arms are the terrorist organizations who share their contempt and distrust of the Western world.

National models determine the way in which the newcomers become part of their new societies, as they not only shape the 'willingness' of nation-states to acknowledge immigrants "as ethnic minorities with distinct needs and cultural rights" but they also have an influence on policies and political decisions (Alba & Foner, 2015). Now returning to our **hypothesis** in the beginning, if the Republican Model of Integration is as ineffective as presented above, and through its color-blindness it fails to account for the needs of those who are different from the typical-French culture, then it is a failed model. Can it exist without its discriminatory effects? Our answer is no, because in order to tend to the needs of the disadvantaged, it would need to acknowledge their existence. It would be time for France to modify its societal rules to face the fact that its population is no longer as homogenous as it imagines it be. There is another considerable part of the population, which feels neglected at this point, that may need special attention.

Another clash happens when the French culture and the Model, in fact, are very much secular but two thirds of the French people associate Islam with religious fanaticism. They may be more religious than the average French person and those that are religious feel that this is their primary identity, above their ethnicity or nationality, but now France should make a first step to approach this community. Starting with the *veil matter* which made a clear statement of France's allegiance, and ending with the everyday religious needs that are not taken into consideration, the country needs to face the reality. In order for the *inclusion* of these people, the French society needs to adjust as well.

That would require the modifying of the media discourse, of the political agenda, and the humanizing of the French citizens that are of immigrant descent. And one of the most important steps would be the better political representation for these communities, along with the enfranchisement of the over 2 million non-EU originating adults who do not benefit from voting rights. The basis of democracy and the essence of the French Republic should be representativeness and the possibility to elect. Otherwise, France remains a promoter of *freedom, equality and fraternity* only in theory and betrays its creed for the sake of a utopian preservation of its culture.

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