



# REPORT ON RACISM AND ISLAMOPHOBIA IN EUROPEAN FRENCH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

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JUIN 2015

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## Institutions, public and political speech

### *Paris, France - 4th June*

The first meeting of the political party *Les Républicains*, new name of the UMP, was held behind closed doors between some leaders of the group with an intention to boycott some leaders such as Alain Juppé, Bruno Le Maire and François Fillon. The discussed subject-matter of this meeting was the role of Islam in France – indeed, the meeting has been named by the former French President Nicholas Sarkozy « *journée nationale de l'Islam* » (National Day of Islam).

### *Meaux (Seine-et-Marne), France – 10th juin*

Four militants of ages 19-25 from the FN party of the Val d'Oise and Seine-et-Marne divisions were arrested by police for destruction by arson in organised gang and calumnious denunciation, following an investigation conducted after a denunciation from the FN party itself to the authorities. Among the accused persons, Mr Desport Adrien, former number two of the FN 77.

The four are suspected to have burned or damaged many vehicles during the night between 6 and 7 April under the influence of drugs and alcohol, before denouncing the increase of insecurity and crime rates in the town.<sup>1</sup>

Hearings of their case will be held at the Meaux Criminal Court.

### *Vienna, Austria – 25th June*

The FRA (Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union) has published its 2014 report *Fundamental rights: challenges and achievements in 2014*, which analyses the developments in the EU during last year in different fields: *equality and non-discrimination* ; *racism, xenophobia and associated intolerance*; *Roma integration*; *asylum, borders, immigration and integration*; *information society, privacy and data protection*; *rights of the child*; *access to justice, including the rights of crime victims*; and *EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and its use by the Member States*.<sup>2</sup>

The agency here expresses its concern regarding the rise of hate crimes and dedicate a paragraph to *Antisemitism and Islamophobia on display*<sup>3</sup>.

### *Nice, France – 26th June*

Following the attack to the gas company in Isère Saint-Quentin Fallavier, the MP and Mayor of Nice Mr Christian Estrosi has tweeted again on the alleged presence of a "*5th column composed of Islamists in France*", a controversial terminology which had already been utilised just after the attacks of Charlie Hebdo in Paris during last January 2015.

Valérie Pécresse and Gérard Larcher, both members of the UMP party, have openly targeted the expression as scandalous. In this regard, even the vice President of the National Front Florian Philippot had spoken about "verbal outrage".

Long before this incident, the Mayor of Nice had already stated during a broadcast on France 3 on April 26th: "*The Judeo-Christian civilization of which we are the heirs is threatened. Today, all those people who have a different worship, such as the vast majority of Muslims in France, they consider the laws of the Republic being inferior to their religious laws. They try to seek refuge because they feel threatened by what I call Islamofascism, which can be found either in the Islamic State (sic), Iraq, Syria and elsewhere, but also through the fifth column and its networks in our cellars and in our garages (...)*"<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See Dominique Albertini, *Le militant FN incendiaire voulait «tester les gens»*, [http://www.liberation.fr/politiques/2015/06/11/le-militant-fn-incendiaire-voulait-tester-les-gens\\_1327403](http://www.liberation.fr/politiques/2015/06/11/le-militant-fn-incendiaire-voulait-tester-les-gens_1327403).

<sup>2</sup> The report in English version can be downloaded at [http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-annual-report-2014\\_en.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-annual-report-2014_en.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Section 2: 'Racism, xenophobia and associated intolerance', 'Antisemitism and Islamophobia on display' at p. 52.

<sup>4</sup> See the video of the interview on France3 last 26th, [http://www.francetvinfo.fr/faits-divers/terrorisme/attentat-dejoue-a-paris/video-estrosi-denonce-des-cinquiemes-colonnes-islamistes-en-france\\_887303.html](http://www.francetvinfo.fr/faits-divers/terrorisme/attentat-dejoue-a-paris/video-estrosi-denonce-des-cinquiemes-colonnes-islamistes-en-france_887303.html).

### Paris, France – 30th June

Two days after the attacks in Isère Saint-Quentin Fallavier, Prime Minister Manuel Valls has said in front of the National Assembly that he was ready to shut all the mosques and organizations suspected of financing *jihadism*. « All options to obstruct terrorism are explored and implemented » affirmed during the session of questions to the government. Manuel Valls spoke about measures to fight against Islamist terrorism. Among them, closing mosques and associations suspected of complicity with radical Islamism



and jihadism. « *If we have to dissolve them, we will do* ». Thus, « [t]he Minister of Interior will continue to act first with the arms of law (...) to shut down the mosques when needed, to tackle the economic activities which are supporting financially this terrorism »<sup>5</sup>. Furthermore, other measures to be adopted will be the expulsion outside French territory, loss of French citizenship, prohibition of entry and exit off the country. In addition, the Vigipirate plan will be reinforced with an increased number of troops deployed in public places and the capacity of law enforcement and intelligence will be strengthened.

(Photo credit: RTL.fr)

## Islamophobia in mass media and culture

### Prunelli-Di-Fiumorbo (Corse), France

Two teachers have received several menaces because of their intention to make their pupils sing John Lennon's *Imagine* in Arabic at the final school party. The song was translated into several languages, including French, Corsican, Arabic, Spanish and English which represents somehow the different languages spoken by the pupils of the institution. Nevertheless, despite the intercultural character of the school, some parents who did not want their children to learn Arabic were hostile to the project and confronted directly the teachers, leading the board of the school to cancel the festival and courses for a few days.

### Website Marmiton.org, France - 18th/20th June

The famous recipes website was the target since Thursday, June 18th – the starting day of Ramadan – of a multitude of Islamophobic hate comments after having shared and wished « *Good Ramadan to all!* » on social networks such as Facebook and Twitter and having published a selection of recipes, including a list of exotic, typical and traditional dishes for the *Iftar*<sup>6</sup>. Marmiton has received several messages of hatred and insults against Islam, such as « *Good Ramadan to all 'ALL' ?????????? ????????* No, I'm not Muslim and don't want to be in the future!!!! I respect those who respect me! I appreciate exotic recipes! But in this case we need more equality ... », « *I do not care (sic) of Ramadan, I am a Christian. Let's go, it's time for me to delete this App* », « *Ah bastards! Now you are into Ramadan ...* », « *Marmiton = accomplice ...* », etc.

The most negative comments were deleted and others have received balanced response from site administrators who are in charge of the animation and moderation of its pages on social media. Many followers have shown support and gratitude.

(Photocredit: Metronews)

<sup>5</sup> See VIDEO. *Islamisme radical : Valls prêt à fermer des mosquées et à dissoudre des associations*, [http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/politique/islamisme-radical-valls-pret-a-fermer-des-mosquees-et-a-dissoudre-des-associations\\_1694900.html](http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/politique/islamisme-radical-valls-pret-a-fermer-des-mosquees-et-a-dissoudre-des-associations_1694900.html) et *Manuel Valls prêt à fermer des mosquées suspectées de complicité avec l'islamisme radical*, <http://www.rtl.fr/actu/societe-faits-divers/valls-pret-a-fermer-des-mosquees-suspectes-de-complicite-avec-l-islamisme-radical-7778941351>.

<sup>6</sup> Daily fast-breaking meal during the holy month of Ramadan.



## Good news

### Paris, France – 6th June

The Minister of Interior Mr. Bernard Cazeneuve has received at place Beauvau a panel of thirty readers and listeners of Muslim faith selected by eight media (Radio Orient, France Maghreb, Beur FM, Atlas Info, Courier Atlas, Zaman, Umma and Saphirnews) in order to « *deepen the relationship with the French Muslims, an exchange that has become a necessity after the attacks in Paris, the rising tensions in society and the concerns for the increase of anti-Muslim acts* ». The main arguments, that have been discussed, include the *Halal*<sup>7</sup>, the head covering at university<sup>8</sup>, the funding of Muslim worship<sup>9</sup>, head-covered mothers in school trips<sup>10</sup>, Islamophobia, protection of mosques<sup>11</sup>, secularism and Islam, criticism against the CFCM<sup>12</sup>, Muslim schools<sup>13</sup>; many questions to which the Minister Bernard Cazeneuve has given answers in a serene and relaxed atmosphere.

### Nice, France – 9th June

The Nice Administrative Court ruled in favour of a mother who had sued in January 2014 the school authorities for not allowing her to accompany her child during school trips because of her *hijab* "We no longer have the right to be accompanied by head-scarfed mothers, until they will uncover" had replied the administration of the school in the child's liaison diary<sup>14</sup>. The mother had filed a complaint in administrative court of Nice to cancel this decision.

The court ruled in its favour 18 months later, while asking the State to pay her the sum of 1,000 euro.

### Paris, France - 24 June

For the first time the state was condemned on June 24 for "serious negligence" in five out of thirteen complaints for identity checks, judged then as discriminatory. A judgment which puts a spotlight on

<sup>7</sup> See the video of the declarations on Halal, [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2t6hcr\\_halal-c-est-aux-institutions-musulmanes-de-s-organiser-pas-a-l-etat\\_news#from=embediframe](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2t6hcr_halal-c-est-aux-institutions-musulmanes-de-s-organiser-pas-a-l-etat_news#from=embediframe).

<sup>8</sup> See the video on headscarves at university, [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2t86s0\\_b-cazeneuve-il-n-y-a-pas-de-probleme-avec-le-voile-a-l-universite\\_news?start=13](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2t86s0_b-cazeneuve-il-n-y-a-pas-de-probleme-avec-le-voile-a-l-universite_news?start=13).

<sup>9</sup> See the video of the declarations on the funding of Muslim worship, [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2t6jfa\\_islam-le-financement-sera-regle-par-la-transparence-selon-b-cazeneuve\\_news#from=embediframe](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2t6jfa_islam-le-financement-sera-regle-par-la-transparence-selon-b-cazeneuve_news#from=embediframe).

<sup>10</sup> See the video of the declarations on headscarved mothers in school trips, [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2t81io\\_b-cazeneuve-repond-sur-les-mamans-voilees-lors-des-sorties-scolaires\\_news#from=embediframe](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2t81io_b-cazeneuve-repond-sur-les-mamans-voilees-lors-des-sorties-scolaires_news#from=embediframe).

<sup>11</sup> See the video of the declarations on the protection of mosques, [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2t7ez6\\_b-cazeneuve-nous-protegeons-plus-de-800-mosques\\_news#from=embediframe](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2t7ez6_b-cazeneuve-nous-protegeons-plus-de-800-mosques_news#from=embediframe).

<sup>12</sup> See the video of the declarations on the criticism against the CFCM, [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2t60zh\\_cfcmon-ne-batit-rien-en-se-cristallisant-sur-les-critiques\\_news#from=embediframe](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2t60zh_cfcmon-ne-batit-rien-en-se-cristallisant-sur-les-critiques_news#from=embediframe).

<sup>13</sup> See the video of the declarations on Muslim schools, [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2t648c\\_b-cazeneuve-je-ne-suis-pas-favorable-aux-ecoles-confessionnelles-mais-je-nie-pas-leur-possibilite-d\\_news#from=embediframe](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2t648c_b-cazeneuve-je-ne-suis-pas-favorable-aux-ecoles-confessionnelles-mais-je-nie-pas-leur-possibilite-d_news#from=embediframe).

<sup>14</sup> See the article *La justice autorise une mère à porter le voile pour une sortie scolaire*, <http://www.metronews.fr/info/nice-la-justice-autorise-une-mere-a-porter-le-voile-pour-une-sortie-scolaire/mofj1bvhl7Wqqegco/>.

the absence of evidences left by identity checks, while reforms were planned to give to controlled people a receipt.

In April 2012, for the first time, thirteen black people or of Arabic origin aged 18 to 35 claiming to be victims of controls, made a complaint against the state. They had been rejected at trial in October 2013, but appealed and obtained the support of the *defenseur des droits*, Mr. Jacques Toubon. This 24th June, the Paris Court of Appeal ruled in favour of five of them and condemned the State for "serious negligence". An amount of 1,500 euro will be paid back as damages in each case. Several studies have shown that people from "visible minorities" were more controlled than their white counterparts.

## Our actions and progresses



### *Strasbourg, France – 24th June*

ORIW and COJEP International have jointly organised a side-event at the Council of Europe in occasion of the PACE (Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe) to discuss about the necessity of a global and shared definition of Islamophobia.

The discussion turned around the interventions of Mr. Yanis Mahil, islamologist, Ms Cinzia Mantoni and Ms Bianca Oneata, coordinators at ORIW, and Mr, Fatih Karakaya, moderator and member of COJEP International<sup>15</sup>.

(Photo credit : Medya Turk)

<sup>15</sup> See Claudine Girode, *Le Conseil de l'Europe doit agir pour que soit trouvée une définition de l'islamophobie (islamologues)*, [http://french.xinhuanet.com/2015-06/25/c\\_134354966.htm](http://french.xinhuanet.com/2015-06/25/c_134354966.htm) and also Bilal Muftuoglu, *Le Conseil de l'Europe appelle à une définition globale de l'islamophobie*, <http://www.aa.com.tr/fr/news/543719--le-conseil-de-leurope-appelle-a-une-definition-globale-de-lislamophobie>.