

IPYLC 2019

EU



Religion

***in the* European Union**

The controversy over religious wear and education

~Dais: Johann Boi, Felicia Lim and Ethan Chua

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Introduction:

Chair Foreword:

Johann Boi Yen Zhen

Johann is a year 4 student from ACSI, class 4.16, and is the appointed Head-Chair of the council. He is honestly rather fresh into the MUN arena and is grateful for this opportunity to make your IPYLC 2019 an enjoyable experience to remember. A rather gregarious individual, he looks forward to bringing his epic softball squad to its zenith yet again. If you want to contact him, you may do so at boiyenzhenjohann@gmail.com.

Felicia Lim Wan Xin

Felicia joined the MUN circuit in 2017, and enjoys reading just about anything related to history, politics and science. She finds pleasure in watching debates, drinking tea, shopping for fountain pen inks, listening to classical music, and having long conversations. If given the chance, she will happily ramble on for hours on end about how impossibly amazing the universe, human existence, and science is. You can generally find her curled up with her dog and a good book, or planning her retirement. Should you wish to contact her, you may email her at twinklefelicia@gmail.com

Ethan Chua

Ethan is an individual who doesn't particularly enjoy describing himself in third person. He has been studying German for three years and finds pleasure immersing himself in the language, experiencing intense irritation when people mispronounce German words. If he is not at school you could expect to find him repeatedly crashing remote-controlled aircraft at a local field or on a computer designing needlessly useful things to 3D print. Alternatively, send him an email @ethan.chua1604@gmail.com.

Note: For official purposes, kindly use the EU IPYLC2019 email : euipylc2019@gmail.com

Background:**History of the European Union:**

Founded in 1993 and comprising 28 member states, the European Union is a unique economic and political union that aims to ensure the free movement of people, goods, services and capital within the internal market, enact legislation in justice and home affairs as well as maintain common policies on trade, agriculture, fisheries and regional development. ¹In addition to being responsible for maintaining regional stability and economic growth, the EU maintains permanent diplomatic relationships throughout the world such as the United Nations, G20 and G7.

Its predecessor was created in the aftermath of the Second World War, wherein early members adopted the attitude of “never again war” and took steps to foster economic cooperation, with the ultimate intent that such economic interdependence would deter any interest of conflict. The result of that was the European Economic Community (EEC), and since then 22 other members have joined this huge single market. From then, its member states have turned towards establishing unity amidst the stark diversity of the region. The capital of the EU is Brussels, also the capital of Belgium.

Economy of the European Union:

Ranked as the second largest economy worldwide, the European Union generated an estimated \$18.8 trillion US dollars in 2017, thereby contributing 24.6% of the world's nominal GDP². In addition, the European Economic Area (EEA), an economic body of the European Union, is responsible for mediating trade agreements that include liberties on product, person, service, and money movement between countries. It is worth noting that Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland, although part of the EEA, are not members of the EU. The EEA allows the citizens of its 31 member states the freedom to work, study, establish business and reside in other member states. Undoubtedly, the hallmark of the EU is the monetary Union established in 1999 (Eurozone) which paved the way for a common currency in 19 of the EU's member states - the Euro. Being the second most traded currency, the Euro is the official currency of 19 out of 28 of EU member states.

¹ European Commission. "[The EU Single Market: Fewer barriers, more opportunities](#)". Europa web portal. Archived from [the original](#) on 1 October 2007. Retrieved 27 September 2007.

² "[Activities of the European Union: Internal Market](#)". Europa web portal. Retrieved 29 June 2007.

² "[World Economic Outlook Database](#)". [International Monetary Fund](#). 7 June 2018.

Demographics of the European Union:

As of 2019, the population of the EU is approximately 743 million, accounting for 9.83% of the World's population. The European Union now consists of 28 member states (27 after Brexit) and the official members of the EU in decreasing order of population are Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Poland, Romania, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Greece, Belgium, Portugal, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Sweden, Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Slovakia, Finland, Ireland, Croatia, Lithuania, Latvia, Slovenia, Estonia, Cyprus, Luxembourg and Malta.

Religion's Role in the European Union

The European Union at organizational level is a secular body, as there is a separation of church and state. There are no formal ties to any religion and no mention of religion in any current or proposed treaty³. Out of the Union's 28 states, only four have an official state religion, these being Denmark, Greece, Malta and England in the UK (as mentioned above). Throughout the 27 EU countries, only half of its people believe in God⁴ and 25.4% directly say that they have no religion⁵. 49.5% of the population of Europe say they are Catholic Christian, **15.7% say they're Muslim**, 12.7% say they're Protestant Christian, 8.6% say they're Orthodox Christian and 0.4% say they are Jewish.

Religion has played had an unarguably intertwined relationship with Europe. In AD380, Christianity was adopted as the official religion of the Roman Empire, and the 16th Century Reformation prompted the diversification of Christianity into its various confessions. Islam, on the other hand, first entered south-eastern Europe via the Balkan States through the Ottoman Empire's conquest of the region. Between the 6th and 7th Century, the empire was further expanded to include regions comprising modern-day Turkey, Greece, Albania, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Bosnia, Croatia and Hungary. In the early 20th Century, the empire allied itself with the German Empire to avoid economic isolation, thus entering the Great War on the side of the Central Powers in 1914. Following its subsequent defeat in 1918, the Ottoman Empire capitulated, giving rise to the establishment of the aforementioned independent nations, hence explaining Europe's diverse religious background.

Religious institutions, as with all other organizations, require monetary funding to operate; with an example being the cost required for the maintenance and upkeep of places of

³ "Consolidated Treaties on European Union and establishing the European Community". Eur-Lex. Retrieved 2007-06-25.

⁴ "[Eurobarometer 225: Social values, Science & Technology](#)". Published by Eurostat (2005) for the European Commission. Accessed 2008 Sep 01.

⁵ [National Secular Society](#) newsletter (2007 Mar 02), which included commentary on a Eurostat (2007) publication

worship. In 2016, Eurostat found that among EU countries, Hungary, Iceland and Estonia saw the greatest proportion of their GDP (3.3%, 3.0% and 2.1% respectively) channeled into into *recreation, culture and religion* out of EFTA (European Free Trade Association) member states⁶. In the European Union (EU), state churches (churches that are officially endorsed by the state) include the Orthodox Church of Greece, Church of England, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark and the Catholic Church of Malta. In each case, the state publically funds the state church, such as the £42 million Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme given by the government to support over 13,000 places of worship in the UK⁷ and Malta's €2.2 million fund to the archdiocese (Church administration)⁸. In addition, the average Dane contributes 130 Danish Kroner (~US\$23) annually in support of the state church regardless of creed⁹, whilst the Orthodox Church of Greece receives state funding via the salaries of its clergy¹⁰.

Countries with no state church also often levy a "church tax" on registered members of the church or across the board, with most of the latter offering the taxpayer the choice of religious organisation he/she wishes to support. For example, Italy imposes a "eight per thousand" (0.8%) tax and gives taxpayers the choice of giving the money to a religious organisation (including the Catholic Church, several Protestant groups and the Jewish community) or the state. According to the US state department, Spanish authorities allow taxpayers the option of allocating a percentage of their income to the Catholic Church but not other religious groups. In Finland, Sweden and Iceland, church taxes are collected from only registered members, whose contributions range from 1-2%¹¹. Therefore, it can be argued that state churches in certain EU countries enjoy exclusive funding from the state. **Given the growing trend of secularization sweeping across Europe and the increased proliferation of minority religious groups, most notably Islam, legislation that permits exclusive funding of religious organizations may become a point of contention in a diverse and cosmopolitan society.**

⁶https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Government_expenditure_on_recreation,_culture_and_religion#Expenditure_on_.27recreation.2C_culture_and_religion.27

⁷<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/support-for-churches-and-cathedrals-across-the-uk-announced-by-chancellor>

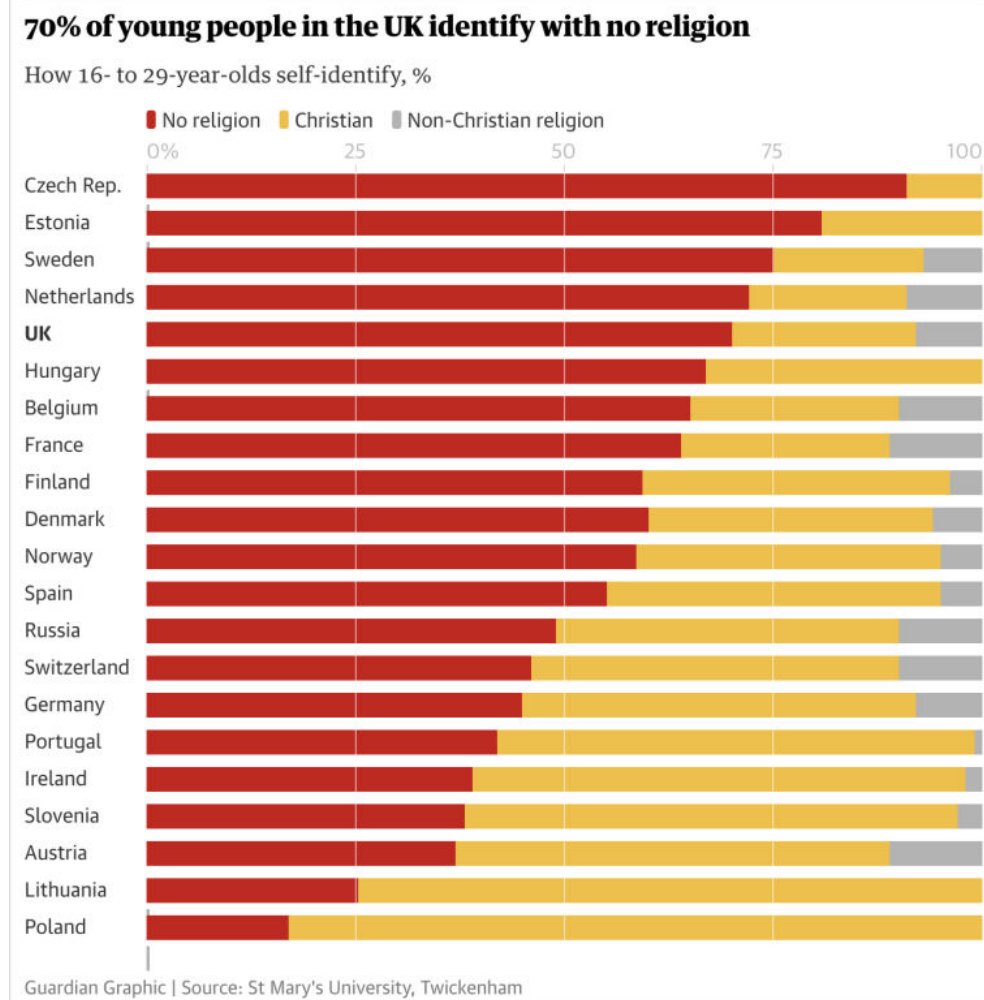
⁸<https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20180508/local/church-gets-22-million-in-eu-funds-for-conservation-works.678578>

⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_Denmark#Membership

¹⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_Greece

¹¹ <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/09/22/in-some-european-countries-church-membership-means-paying-more-taxes/>

A 2016 survey by British Social Attitudes has shown that 53% of adults have no religious affiliation, the highest since BSA began surveying in 1983¹². In addition, majority of young people have expressed increasing secularization, with 7% of young adults identifying as Anglican, fewer than the 10% as Catholic. *Muslims, who constitute 6%, are on the brink of overtaking those who consider themselves part of the country's "established church"*¹³.

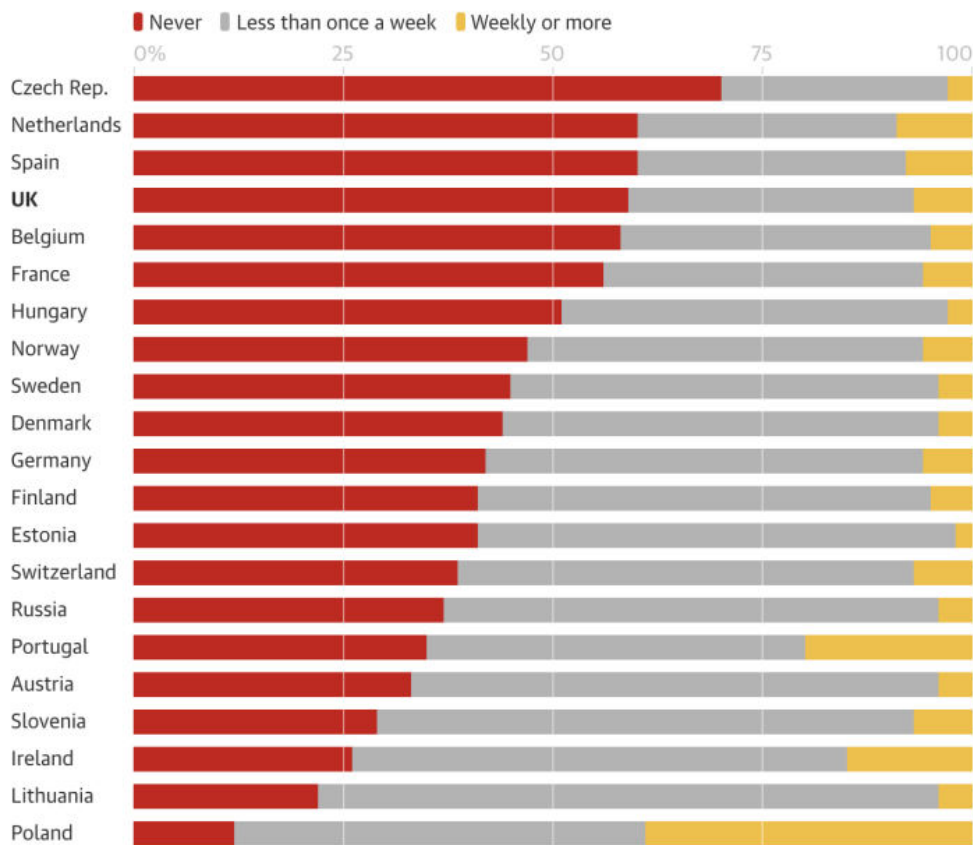


¹²<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/sep/04/half-uk-population-has-no-religion-british-social-attitudes-survey>

¹³<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/21/christianity-non-christian-europe-young-people-survey-religion>

59% of young people in the UK never attend religious services

Frequency of attendance, outside of special occasions, 16- to 29-year-olds



Guardian Graphic | Source: St Mary's University, Twickenham

Source : <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/21/christianity-non-christian-europe-young-people-survey-religion>
Survey results by European social survey 2014-16.

Therefore, the dais sincerely hopes that delegates will tackle the issues of exclusive funding to certain religions in the light of growing globalization and religious diversity, as well as whether the support rendered to religious organizations and public policies are fair representations of religious diversity, faiths and beliefs of the people.

Precursors to the Conflict:

The EU Migrant Crisis and the rise of foreign influx onto European soil is inarguably the main driving force behind the growing racial and religious tensions in Europe.

At the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, brutal conflict, political instability and harsh living conditions have spurred refugees from the region into undertaking the precarious journey to seek a better life in Europe, which unlike the surrounding Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan, would grant them rights under the 1951 Refugee Convention. This has unsurprisingly led to the mass influx of displaced people moving either through Turkey to reach Greece or sailing from Libya to Italy.

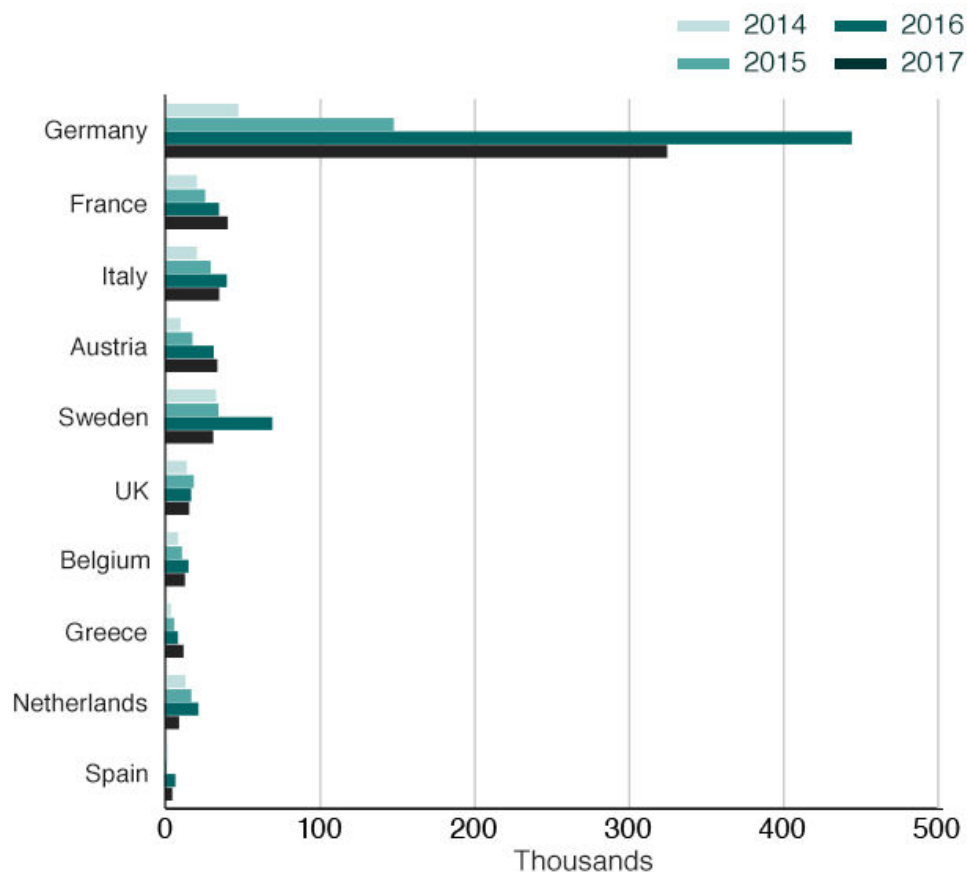
At the end of 2016, (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) estimated that the number of forcibly displaced people had reached 65,600,000, of which 3.9 million were Syrian Refugees (a 1.3 million increase from the previous year). As a result, the number of applicants for International Protection in the EU surged to 1.3 million in 2016 which was followed by a decrease of 44% in 2017¹⁴ due to more stringent border control.

The influx of migrants has had a large impact on European Politics and the increasing trend of islamophobia. Germany is the member state which has absorbed the most number of refugees following Merkel's 2015 *Wir Schaffen Das* (*We can do it*) assertion (707,116 applicants since 2011¹⁵).

¹⁴<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20170629STO78630/eu-migrant-crisis-facts-and-figures>

¹⁵<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/08/28/world/europe/countries-under-strain-from-european-migration-crisis.html>

Successful asylum applications, 2014-17



Source: Eurostat

BBC

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44660699>

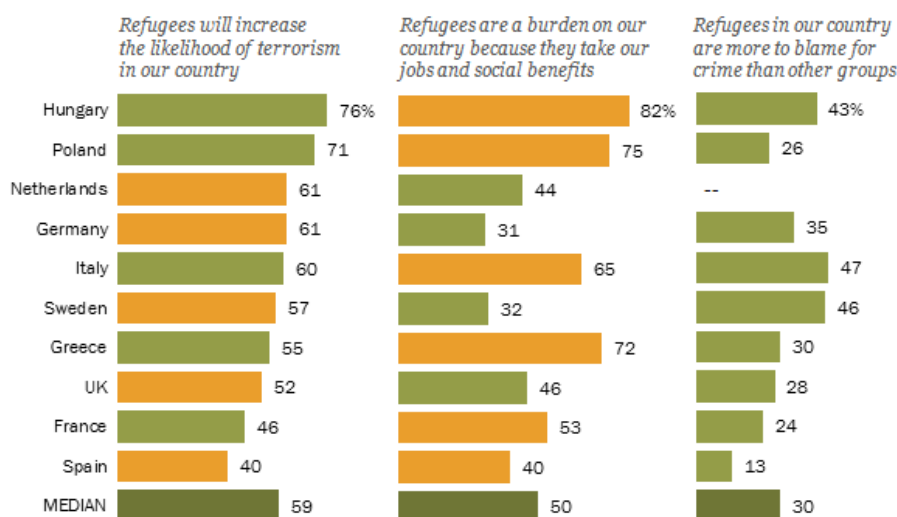
However, growing tensions as a result of the increase in migrant influx have resulted in Merkel's CDU party losing votes to the far-right anti-migrant AfD party, weakening her foothold. In Italy, anti-immigrant sentiments have picked up with the elected deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini threatening migrants to "pack their bags" as Italy bears the brunt of about 700,000 migrants since 2013. The societal unrest and growing anti-immigration sentiments also culminated in violence and rioting all over Europe, such as when the stabbing of a Cuban-German man by an Iraqi and Syrian national in Chemnitz reignited anti-immigration sentiments and sparked far-right riots which turned violent, resulting in 20 injuries.

Furthermore, the growing migrant population in EU has also raised concerns with regards to the passage of radicals under the guise of refugees into EU member states. In the

Netherlands, Germany, Greece, UK, Sweden and Spain, the threat of increased terrorism in the country was the top concern of residents¹⁶. This growing fear has been further exacerbated by the recent terror attacks such as the 2017 London Bridge stabbings and 2016 Berlin Christmas Market attack. Despite this, studies have shown that the vast majority of terror attacks in Europe are carried out by Europe citizens. A report by the Danish Institute for International Studies found that between January 2016 and April 2017, no refugees were involved in terror attacks in Europe¹⁷. Four asylum-seekers (three of whom had their asylum requests rejected, and two of whom arrived before the refugee crisis started in 2015) were involved in attacks, hence concluding that the bigger threat by far comes from homegrown extremists. Nevertheless, growing anti-islamic and immigration sentiments still plague European politics as member states grapple with drawing the line between accommodating refugees and ensuring that their party remains in power.

Many Europeans concerned with security, economic repercussions of refugee crisis

■ Top choice



Note: Netherlands excluded on question about crime (Q51b) due to administrative error.

Source: Spring 2016 Global Attitudes Survey, Q51a-c.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Source: <http://www.pewglobal.org>

The growing tension and anti-migrant phobia have therefore set the stage for increasing islamophobia and religious intolerance in the EU.

¹⁶<http://www.pewglobal.org/2016/07/11/europeans-fear-wave-of-refugees-will-mean-more-terrorism-fewer-jobs/>

¹⁷<https://www.diis.dk/en/research/european-citizens-not-refugees-behind-most-terrorist-attacks-in-europe>

Religious Conflict in the EU: Controversy over Religious Wear

Under Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights, all EU residents have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Kommentar [1]: (I would suggest giving a background information on the events leading to the ban due to the ban in EU)

On March 2017, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled that workplace bans on the wearing of "any political, philosophical or religious sign" such as headscarves need not constitute direct discrimination¹⁸.

Long before the ruling, many EU countries have passed laws empowering companies and institutions with the power to ban religious wear on the grounds of workplace neutrality. Among those most affected are Muslim women, as the *Hijab* they wear constitute a crucial part of their faith. France was the first European country to ban the full-face Islamic veil in public places. Under the ban passed on April 2011, no woman, French or foreign, is allowed to leave their home with their face hidden behind a veil without running the risk of a fine. As of the spring of 2011, when the law entered into full effect, women who violate the law will be subject to a fine of up to 150 Euros (\$209) and/or compelled to attend a "citizenship" course.

¹⁹But what seems to be the motivation behind such a ban? Well, in most EU countries, bans on headscarves or face veils were promoted primarily by nationalist and far-right political parties. In actual fact, many of the legislative proposals for these bans were initiated and sponsored by these parties. This has been the case in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Common justifications for legal bans on religious clothing proposed by politicians and considered by judges, among others, often overlap in a given national or transnational debate on religious dress restrictions. These commonly cited justifications include the need for integration and assimilation, the imperative to provide security and counter-terrorism, the drive for equality between men and women, the pursuit of "neutrality" and "secularity," and the desire for homogeneity. The assertion that those who wear a headscarf and/or face veil are unable to integrate into Western culture and society is often made by supporters of bans, most prominently in Ireland, Finland, the Netherlands, and the Czech Republic. In other countries, such as France and Spain, the justification is slightly different: face veils, specifically, undermine the possibility of "living together" in society. Similarly, Austria has argued for the concept of an "open society" that,

¹⁸ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-39264845>

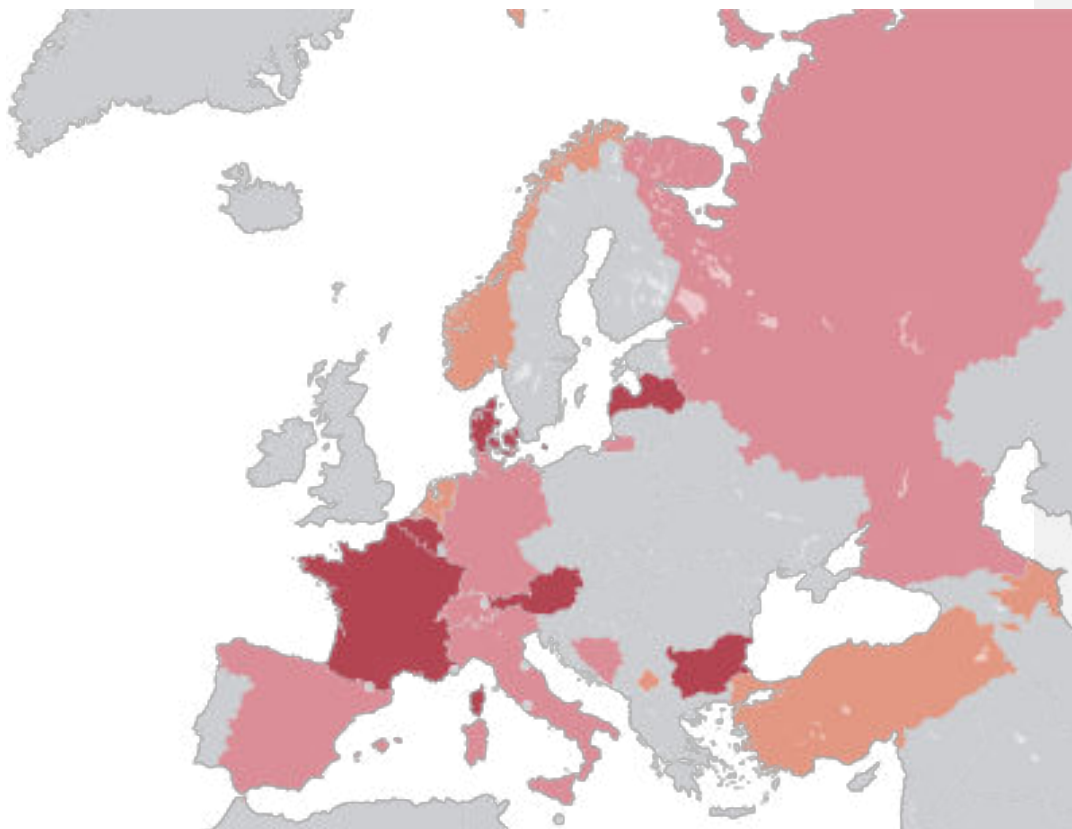
¹⁹ <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/restrictions-on-womens-dress-in-28-eu-member-states-20180709.pdf>

the argument goes, cannot be achieved if face-concealing practices are permitted. Face veils are also said to threaten public and national security. This appears to be the most popular grounds for a ban on face veils in many EU states, including Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, and Spain. The idea that Muslim women are forced to wear headscarves or face veils against their will is particularly persistent in public debates and in mainstream media, but this argument can also be found in some legal justifications. Muslim women's religious dress is said to "degrade" women's dignity, and these women therefore need to be "freed." This belief became the basis for bans or proposed bans in a number of EU states, including Belgium, France, Luxembourg, and Spain. In *S.A.S. v. France*, discussed further below, the ECtHR did not accept the "respect for equality between men and women" as a legitimate justification for France's 2010 national ban on full-face covering veils. Many bans are justified as a means to promote "neutrality" and/or "secularism," which, some argue, is undermined by Islamic dress. This reasoning is particularly popular in certain municipalities, and has been applied to areas that range from courtrooms to classrooms, from public to private sector. The need for "neutrality" or "secularism" even trumped individual rights to religious freedom in decisions from the CJEU and ECtHR. Lastly, homogeneity or the rejection of diversity also became a motivation for banning religious clothing. In the town of *Asotthalom* in Hungary, a push for a ban on face veils was explicitly motivated by the desire for a homogeneous society. Although this motivation is usually not expressed overtly, it is implicit in many EU countries.

And of course, one cannot exclude the ever-present argument of terrorism in relation to the Muslim headdress, however fragile the opinion may be. Take France for example. Since the late 1980s, France has continually dwelt in a tense relationship with the Islamic realm. For instance, in the spring of 2003, France's Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy, a front-runner to be his country's next president, made a famous speech denouncing Muslims who did not follow a French law requiring the removal of head coverings for identity photos. He drew a link between Muslim women wearing a headscarf and the failure of Muslims to embrace the Republic. According to political commentary, this speech gave rise and fueled a new media bandwagon, and eventually political opinion turned into massive favor of moving towards the ban.

With all this in mind, concerns have been raised with regards to the social implications of authorities giving companies the free hand to outlaw religious clothing from the workplace, with the ECJ ruling inciting dismay from some religious groups such as the Conference of European Rabbis, which commented that Europe was "sending a clear message that its faith

communities were no longer welcome”²⁰. Despite claims put forth by supporters of the ruling asserting that the recent rulings were made in the interest of “workplace neutrality” and “as part of general policy covering religious and political symbols” which would treat all races and religions equally, fears still linger that this has given companies the green light to pass racial and religious prejudice off as an “occupational requirement”²¹



Europe Burqa Bans. Map current as of 2018

■ National ban – country bans women from wearing full-face veils in public

■ Local ban – cities or regions ban full-face veils

■ Partial ban – government bans full-face veils in some locations

Source: dailystar.co.uk & edition.cnn.com

²⁰<https://www.theguardian.com/law/2017/mar/14/employers-can-ban-staff-from-wearing-headscarves-european-court-rules>

²¹<https://www.theguardian.com/law/2017/mar/14/employers-can-ban-staff-from-wearing-headscarves-european-court-rules>

Religious Education in the European Union:

Religious Education has been a longstanding controversy in the European Union. One of the key aims of Education in the EU laid out since its founding, as further exemplified by the message from the European Council in Lisbon 2000, is “to make Europe by 2010 the most competitive and knowledge-based economy in the world”²². In the light of modernization and increased emphasis on maximizing human capital, does religion have a significant part to play in the EU’s education system?

²³The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (Article 14.3) provides parents the right to ensure that the education and teaching of their children conforms to their religious, philosophical and pedagogical convictions. Religious Education has long been taught and administered as a compulsory or optional subject in EU member states, with France being the most recent nation to introduce secular teaching of religious faiths.

However, controversy has arose with regards to Slovakia’s 2016 decision to “ban Islam from being registered as a religion”, thereby depriving its 5000 Muslims, 0,1% of the populace, the right to religious education. In addition, religious education has been the subject of much contention, as member states such as the UK, Italy, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia and Iceland lack the offering of religious education in public schools except for Islamic education. With the population of Europe gradually shifting, with the Muslim population expected to at least double to 10.2% by 2050, the non-inclusive nature of the religious education system in Europe may be a hotbed for religious tensions and racial unrest.

In addition, parents frequently find themselves unable to access their local schools, or the best school in their area, due to religiously selective admissions policies. Certain countries have also shown bias towards certain religions when it comes to selecting students for school places. For example, Irish schools have had a long history of prioritising children who have been baptised as opposed to those who have not. The sacrament -- and the certificate that comes with it - has long held the key for parents hoping to secure a place for a child's first day at school in Ireland, where about 97% of public schools in Ireland are funded by the government but run by religious groups – predominantly the Catholic Church.. Although those schools are state-funded, their Catholic Church patrons set the admission guidelines, giving Catholic children priority enrollment over non-Catholics in a crowded system. In

²² Schreiner, Peter. (2013). Religious Education in the European Context. Hungarian Educational Research Journal. 3. 10.14413/HERJ2013.04.01.

²³ http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf

2015, the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights criticized the Irish educational system, citing a lack of access to secular, state-funded education. That same year, Dublin resident Nikki Murphy raised a complaint that her son Reuben was rejected at 13 different schools because he hadn't been baptized, but she was opposed to baptising her son just so he could get into a school.

But another issue worth discussing is the converse problem, namely that parents often end up having their child allocated a faith school by the state against their wishes, as sources have found that almost half of the parents in Ireland who have school-age children would, if they had the option, not send them to a Christian school. There is no clearly established legal right for parents to not have their child allocated a faith school by their local authority, and this frequently occurs when faith schools are undersubscribed, or have open admissions policies.

Even more importantly, this system discriminates against those who are not religious or who do not wish for their children to receive a religious education.

Recent legislation has removed the rule explicitly making a religious education obligatory in schools – but barriers remain for non-Catholic families. Supporters of secular movements in schools have cited concerns over the ostracization students who choose to exempt themselves from religious classes may face in schools. In addition, chapel services in school are still mandatory in most schools, even for non-believers.

And why does this matter? Well, it is openly written in article 10 of the EU's charter of fundamental rights that "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion". This right encompasses the freedom to change religion or belief as well as freedom, to manifest religion or belief via worship, teaching, practice and observance, openly or in confidence. Furthermore, "The right to conscientious objection is recognised, in accordance with the national laws governing the exercise of this right." is guaranteed within the same article.

The inherent contradiction between EU's affirmation of religious freedoms and the policies implemented by schools and religious institutions under its roof suggest the inefficiencies and loopholes associated with enforcing these fundamental freedoms, hence presenting itself as a noteworthy issue of debate and re-evaluation.

QARMAs (Questions a Resolution must answer)

Taking into consideration global trends of increasing secularization and globalization:

- 1. Given the increasing secularisation of the European Union, is religious education still necessary or relevant?**
 - 2. How should the policies governing religious education and wear in the various countries mentioned be reformed?**
 - 3. Is there substantial ground for the ban on religious wear in the European Union? Where should the line be drawn?**
-

Individual Stances and Bloc Positions:

In arbitrary order:

 French Republic	<p>France, like many in the EU bloc, maintains the same non-discriminatory approach towards the prohibition of religious and ethnic wear on the grounds of occupational neutrality.</p> <p>In France, state and religion are almost completely separate entities following the 1905 law. Only since the 1990s, and in particular since 2002, has the school curriculum been opened up, not to religion as such, but to knowledge of 'religious facts'.</p>
 The United Kingdom	<p>As of May 2018, employers in Britain are to be "flexible in their approach to religious symbols and dress" and are to grant employees the freedom to display such symbols so long as it does not interfere with their duties²⁴ and should a ban be inevitable, "must demonstrate that they have a legitimate reason for doing so". However according to a <i>YouGov</i> poll in 2016, 57% of the British public supported a burka ban in the UK²⁵.</p> <p>Having an official religion (Church of England), religious education has been a longstanding aspect of education in the UK. Under the Education Reform Act 1988 and School Standards and Framework Act 1998, all state schools are to offer religious education, whose syllabus is determined by local education authorities²⁶. Additionally, all schools are required by law to provide a daily act of collective worship, of a "broadly Christian character" over the course of the academic year²⁷. In total, there are 6,800 faith schools (denominational schools) in the state school system - but only 30 of them are Muslim. In terms of the Muslim population, estimated at 2.7 million and with a third aged 15 or under, the number of Muslim state schools is disproportionately small²⁸.</p>
 Federal Republic of Germany	<p>Article 4 of Germany's constitutional law (<i>Grundgesetz</i>) states that religious freedom is a fundamental right; "Freedom of faith and of conscience, and freedom to profess a religious or philosophical creed, shall be inviolable."²⁹ In 2015, the Constitutional Court ruled that headscarves being banned in schools was unjustified unless the garment "constitute a sufficiently specific danger of impairing the peace at school." However the European Court of Justice's (ECJ) ruling (above) directly opposed this ruling, and in the same year, Bavarian lawmakers passed a law prohibiting the use of full-face burqa (Islamic veil), viewing it as a threat to the German "culture of communication" and democracy.</p> <p>Germany is a federation of 16 states, upon which the responsibility of</p>

²⁴<https://humanism.org.uk/2018/05/14/government-clarifies-law-relating-to-religious-dress-in-the-workplace/>

²⁵ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-13038095>

²⁶ <https://www.bbc.com/news/education-41282330>

²⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/jul/17/religious-education-needs-overhaul-to-reflect-uk-says-report>

²⁸ <https://www.bbc.com/news/education-37484358>

²⁹ <https://www.thelocal.de/20170704/when-muslim-women-may-wear-headscarves-in-germany-an-ongoing-debate>

	<p>Education rests. However Article 7 defines RE as an 'ordinary school subject' that must be taught 'in accordance with the principles of the religious communities'. In some states, the state is in-charge the delivery of the curriculum while in others, this is given to faith communities. It is worth noting that Hamburg and Bremen are the only two states that have unified religious lessons that include different faiths. Meanwhile, in all eastern German states except Berlin, there is no Islam option in religious classes at all³⁰.</p>
 <p>Republic of Ireland</p>	<p>The debate over barring Islamic headwear continues to dominate academic and political forums and has attracted much media attention in Ireland. A recent public statement in support of burqa bans by German Chancellor Angela Merkel revived the discussion on banning the Islamic face veil in Ireland. However, the issue has not yet been commented on at the governmental level.</p> <p>Education in the republic of Ireland is mainly denominational at primary and secondary school; which means goes to say that most primary schools (90% Catholic, 6% Protestant and 2% multi-denominational³¹) are affiliated with a particular religion (mostly Christian denominations). This has resulted in many parents struggling to find a multi-denominational school that is aligned with their ideological beliefs. In October 2018, a directive passed by the Department of Education mandated that students' participation in religious <i>instruction</i> will be based off an opt-in, rather than opt-out basis. However controversy has arose as the new directive also ruled that students would be unable to opt-out of examinable State-approved curriculum on religious education, which atheist movement supporters believe is utilized by Catholic schools to preach rather than teach the religion³².</p>
 <p>Kingdom of Spain</p>	<p>The Spanish Constitution of 1978 abolished Catholicism as the official state religion, while recognizing the role it plays in Spanish society. As of May 2018, there are no plans for a national ban of religious wear in Spain. The city of Barcelona announced a ban on full Islamic face-veils in 2010 which covered public spaces.</p> <p>Religious Education in Spain is offered in all state schools but is however optional.</p>
 <p>Italian Republic</p>	<p>Several towns have implemented bans on religious symbols and garments, most notably the north-western town of Novara which has brought in rules to deter public use of the Islamic veil.</p> <p>Article 36 of the Concordat of 1929 between Italy and the Holy See provided for a "compulsory Catholic education in all the degrees of State educational system". As a result, religious education in Italy is heavily dominated by Catholicism, with Catholic religion lessons being viewed as "normal". In addition, the establishment of private multi-denominational schools has never been seen as a real necessity.</p>

³⁰ <https://www.dw.com/en/study-german-schools-need-more-islamic-religion-classes/a-43599147>

³¹ <https://www.teachdontpreach.ie/education-religion-school/>

³² <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/pupils-will-have-to-opt-in-for-religious-instruction-in-state-schools-1.3652119>

 <p>The Netherlands</p>	<p>Based on a census conducted by Statistics Netherlands, secularization accounts for 50.1% of the adult population.</p> <p>In addition, government officials have approved a ban on wearing “face-covering clothing” including the burqa and niqab in some public settings such as on public transport and in education institutions, health institutions such as hospitals and government buildings.</p> <p>Religious Education was introduced in 198 with the aim to enhance tolerance in Dutch society. Obligatory religious education is uncommon in public primary schools however non-obligatory Protestant, Roman Catholic, Islamic, Hindu or humanistic education is taught. Since 2009 this education is paid by the government, but the responsibility of delivering the curriculum rests upon the diverse religious societies³³.</p>
 <p>The Slovak Republic</p>	<p>The first mention of banning burqas came when the Slovakia National Party (SNS) chairman, Andrej Danko, announced his proposal to ban burqas and Islamic mosques in a press release in January 2015. After his public statement, the part of the proposal on burqas never made advanced.</p> <p>Religious Education is compulsory in Slovak Church schools, and can be swapped out for Ethical Education in Slovak State Schools. It is worth noting that Slovakia passed a law in 2016 that prevented Islam from being recognized as a state religion, sparking outrage. To date, there are approximately 5000 muslims living in Slovakia.</p>
 <p>Kingdom of Sweden</p>	<p>Despite various proposals, Sweden has no laws that prohibit the wearing of Islamic headscarves or face veils at the national level.</p> <p>Being the only Scandinavian country to lack an official religion, Sweden is experiencing rising secularism levels, as <i>Gallup's Voice of the People 2015</i> found that only 19% of Swedes claim to be religious³⁴. Recently, private religious schools have come under controversy following Sweden's Social Democrats proposed ban on religious independent schools in a bid to remove religious influence from schools. Since 1965, non-denominational religious teaching was proliferated in schools and was subsequently made compulsory in 1994³⁵.</p>
 <p>Kingdom of Denmark</p>	<p>The predominant religion of Denmark is and has been for almost 500 years a Lutheran variant of Protestant Christianity³⁶. Consequently, transmission of the knowledge of this religion is often seen as important, and main focus in Religious Education in Denmark. However, a 2016 poll conducted by <i>Epinion</i> concluded that more than 54% of Danes would prefer “Christianity Education”³⁷, as what RE is called, to be renamed to “Religious Education” in order to reflect the multi-denominational aspect of the study. However, Anni Matthiesen (Spokesman for Education), believes it sends an important signal that the course continues to be</p>




³³ http://mmiweb.org.uk/eftreold/reeurope/netherlands_2013.pdf

³⁴ <https://sweden.se/society/10-fundamentals-of-religion-in-sweden/>

³⁵ <https://www.thelocal.se/20180313/swedens-social-democrats-propose-ban-on-religious-independent-schools>

³⁶ RE in Denmark – Political and Professional Discourses and Debates, Past and Present

³⁷ <http://cphpost.dk/news/most-danes-want-christian-studies-to-be-renamed-religious-studies-at-public-schools.html>

	<p>called ‘Christian studies’ (‘kristendomskundskab’) to reflect the underlying Christian fabric of Danish society.</p> <p>Danish courts have passed a bill in August 2018 that would see anyone wearing a full-face veil with a fine.</p>
 Grand Duchy of Luxembourg	<p>In September 2017, Luxembourg abolished religious teachings in schools (mainly Christianity) and had them replaced with new “life and society” classes³⁸. The responsibility of providing Catechism will now fall on the shoulders of local parishes. In addition, a new funding plan released in 2015 severely restricted state funding to the Roman Catholic Church, causing its parishes to shrink from 243 to 33.</p> <p>On 26 April 2018, Parliament passed a bill prohibiting “concealing one’s face in certain public places” such as healthcare institutes, public transportation, schools etc. Offenders could potentially face fines of between €25 to €250³⁹.</p>
 Republic of Austria	<p>Religious Education is confessional in all public schools however parents and students have the option to opt-out on “grounds of conscience”⁴⁰. Being the first European Country to officially recognize Islam with the <i>Anerkennungsgesetz</i> (“Act of Recognition”) in 1912, Austria houses a large population of Muslim (nearly 8% of the population [2016]). In fact, the number of teachers and students involved in Islamic Religious Education is about 70000 (2017 estimates).</p> <p>Austria has also outlawed the niqab and burqa (full-face veils) in October 2017 and its leaders are also considering extending the ban on state employees wearing headscarves and other religious symbols.</p>
 Kingdom of Belgium	<p>In July 2011, Belgium passed a law banning the use clothing that would obscure the identity in public places such as parks and on the streets.</p> <p>In December 2018, Belgium’s Constitutional Court ruled that children should not be required to follow religion or ethics lessons in the country’s primary and secondary schools, leaving the door open for parents to simply request that their children not receive such lessons⁴¹. The European Value Study (EVS) of 2008 found that the percentage of Belgians declaring themselves to be part of the Catholic Church decreased from 75% (1997) to 50%, while the percentage of non-believers increased from 24% to 43%⁴². Additionally, most students studying in public schools in Brussels, attend Islamic religious education (primary 43%, secondary 41.4 %), followed by moral education (primary 27.9 %, secondary 37.2 %) and Catholic religious education (primary 23.3 %, secondary 15.2 %). The same cannot be said, however, for private schools as Catholic Religious Education is dominant and accounts for 92.7 % to 99.6 % of private schools (Godolt 2012) .</p>





³⁸ <https://www.secularism.org.uk/news/2017/09/luxembourg-abolishes-religious-education-in-schools>

³⁹ <http://delano.lu/d/detail/news/veil-ban-passed/177456>

⁴⁰ <http://www.readyproject.eu/uploads/files/1518966932Austrianwindow.pdf>

⁴¹ <http://www.flanderstoday.eu/education/lessons-religion-no-longer-obligatory-belgium>

⁴² <http://www.seekingsense.be/documenten/2014/REinBelgium2014published.pdf>

 Republic of Croatia	<p>As of April 2018, Croatia is one of six EU countries that has not banned Islamic headscarves or face veils in some form or discussed a proposal to do so⁴³.</p> <p>Religious Education has been taught in Croatia since 1990 which are attended by 86.10 percent by Catholics, 0.67% by Orthodox, 0.59% by Islamic studies and 17.94% by non-religious ethics students (Večernji List, November 23, 2016)⁴⁴.</p>
 Republic of Finland	<p>Religious Education in Finland is compulsory and non-confessional, with the option for secular ethical studies for non-believers. In 2012 91,9% of pupils in comprehensive school took part in Evangelical-Lutheran RE, 1,4% in Orthodox, 1,5% in Islam, 0,5% in other religions and 4% in secular Ethics⁴⁵.</p> <p>As of October 2017, Finnish lawmakers are looking to emulate their German and Netherland counterparts with regards to outlawing full-face veils and clothing from public institutions.</p>
 Hellenic Republic of Greece	<p>The most central and long-standing discussion relating to Muslims in Greece concerns the absence of mosques and Islamic cemeteries in Athens, for which Muslim leaders have criticized the government. The Islamic head covering was not an issue until 2004, when the French banned headscarves at public schools and institutions. This debate has intensified in the past few years, due to the increase in refugees from Muslim countries. However, the discourse has not reached the official forums of policymakers and lawmakers.</p> <p>Religious Education in Greece is compulsory and is disproportionately focussed on Christian Orthodoxy (only 10% is dedicated to other religious studies) throughout the 9 years of its instruction as the basic Law for Education (1566/1985) requires that all students on a mandatory basis have to have been taught the 'authentic' tradition of the Orthodox Church (article 1, paragraph 1)⁴⁶. Although exemption is offered for non-orthodox students, it is subject to the decision of the relevant school authorities and provisions in force.</p>
 Hungary	<p>In 2013, the Hungarian Government made the decision to transfer schools from state municipalities into the administration of the Church. In 2010 there were 572 communities where churches maintained schools. By the 2016/2017 school year that number had grown to 1,308. In 2010 112,500 students attended parochial schools; today their number is 207,800⁴⁷. In addition, the ruling party Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) attempted to make religious education the only available option under "certain circumstances".</p>

⁴³<https://qz.com/1264206/where-are-headscarves-and-face-veils-banned-in-europe/>

⁴⁴<https://www.total-croatia-news.com/politics/14965-86-of-pupils-attend-catholic-religious-studies-in-croatian-schools>
<https://www.total-croatia-news.com/politics/14965-86-of-pupils-attend-catholic-religious-studies-in-croatian-schools>

⁴⁵ <https://www.suol.fi/index.php/religious-education-in-finland>

⁴⁶ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282771234_Religious_Education_in_Greece_-_Orthodox_Christianity_Islam_and_Secularism

⁴⁷ <http://hungarianspectrum.org/2017/09/01/the-orban-governments-penchant-for-religious-educational-institutions/>



	In addition, Hungary is also inclined towards the banning of veils, in the supposed interest of forging a "homogenous" society.
 Latvia	<p>In April 2016, Latvia banned the use of full-face veils in public, despite allegedly only affected 3 people. Muslims in Latvia account for only 0.1% of the population (estimates). As part of the EU's efforts to resettle refugees, Latvia has agreed to accept 776 refugees over the next two years, feeding growing fears of terrorism in the region. According to former Latvian president Vaira Vike-Freiberga, those wearing a niqab or burqa "at a time of terrorism" presented a "danger to society."</p> <p>Having endured 50 years of atheism under Communist rule, Latvia is the eighth least religious country in the world, with 43.8% declaring themselves unaffiliated with religion in any way, according to PEW research centre (Research Entitled: <i>'The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050'</i>)⁴⁸. Nonetheless, majority of the Latvian population is Christian and hence all schools must offer a choice between a non-confessional course, "Christian Faith," and a course in "Ethics" in grades 1 through 4⁹.</p>
 Republic of Lithuania	<p>Lithuania has agreed with the European Commission to receive 325 refugees amidst growing concern and speculation in local politics that this will spell dishevel and unrest. There is already a sizeable population of Muslims residing in Lithuania (approximately 5000 Muslims) and according to reports, there have been no issues with regards to the wearing of burqas or full-face veils. Discussion are still ongoing as we speak.</p> <p>Under the 1992 constitution, "freedom of thought, religion, and conscience" are guaranteed to all and "traditional churches and religious organizations of Lithuania" are recognized. Religious education is also available in public schools at parents' request⁵⁰.</p>
 Republic of Poland	<p>Poland has not enforced or proposed bans against Islamic veils, however Polish lawmaker Dominik Tarczyński made it clear in August 2018 that it should be banned partly for security reasons, and partly to make it clear to Islamic radicals that they cannot demand more rights in Europe than Europeans have in Saudi Arabia⁵¹. Citing existing rules that restrict the wearing of clothing that obscures identification such as balaclavas, ski masks and motorcycle helmets, Dominik reinforced the notion that it was "wrong for religious fundamentalists to expect "more rights" than others".</p> <p>Poland can be said to be one of the more religious countries in Europe,</p>

⁴⁸ <https://eng.ism.lv/article/society/society/latvia-among-the-least-religious-countries-in-the-world.a135130/>

⁴⁹ <https://www.eastwestreport.org/articles/ew13404.html>

⁵⁰ <http://countrystudies.us/lithuania/11.htm>

⁵¹ <https://www.breitbart.com/europe/2018/08/28/polish-lawmaker-burqa-ban-no-saudi-arabia-mosques-europe-build-cathedrals/>




	<p>with 95% of the population identifying themselves as believers or strong believers, 54% of the population participating in religious practices once or a few times per week, and 69% declaring that they pray every day or at least once a week⁵². The predominant religion in Poland is Catholicism, accounting for approximately 95% of the population. The Constitution lays down general provisions regarding religious education (RE). According to Article 53, parents have the right to religious and moral upbringing and teaching of their children in accordance with their convictions. All religious organizations officially recognized by the state have the right to organize RE in schools, under the condition that schooling does not violate other people's freedom of religion and conscience. The two major providers of Islamic religious education in Poland are the Tatar led Muslim Religious Union (MZR) set up before the Second World War and registered in 2004 as denominational organization and the Muslim League (LM) that looks after approximately 300 students⁵³.</p>
 Portuguese Republic	<p>According to Article XX of the 1940 Concordat, religious schools managed by the Church are allowed to exist, and under supervision and in accordance with general law, may, under the same terms, be accredited with subsidiaries and financial aid. It is also stated that the enrollment in the teaching of Catholic religion and morals in non-higher public education establishments will be subject to the will of those involved⁵⁴.</p> <p>Similar to Croatia and Poland, Portugal has yet to propose concrete action against full-face Islamic veils.</p>
 Republic of Estonia	<p>The recent Burqa bans proposed early in 2016 have sparked controversy, with many claiming that the burqa hardly posed a problem and calling the discussions to ban it "absurd". This came after Social Protection Minister Margus Tsahkna asked Urmas Reinsalu, the justice minister, to analyze possible problems from the inflow of asylum seekers. Results concluded that the majority of asylum seekers coming to Estonia will be from predominantly Muslim nations and probability existed that some immigrants will want to observe strict religious rules, including clothing, causing Mr Tsahkna to propose a ban on clothing covering the face for security and identification purposes⁵⁵.</p> <p>Under 50 years of totalitarian Soviet regime, only 29% of Estonia's population identify themselves as religious (14% Lutherans and 13% Orthodox). Needless to say, Religious Education was implemented in 2010 at Primary and Secondary levels but remains almost non-existent in lower levels of schooling. The aims of RE in Estonia are nurture Respect towards Human rights and freedom of religion, support moral</p>

⁵² Rafał Boguszewski, *Dwie dekady przemian religijności w Polsce* (Warszawa: CBOS, 2009), 4-7

⁵³ Nalborczyk, Agata; Pędziwiatr, Konrad. *Between Old Traditions and New Diversities: Islamic Religious Education in Poland. European Perspectives on Islamic Education and Public Schooling*. Equinox eBooks Publishing, United Kingdom. p. Nov 2018. ISBN 9781781794845. <https://www.equinoxpub.com/home/view-chapter/?id=30261>. Date accessed: 30 Dec 2018 doi: 10.1558/equinox.30261. Nov 2018

⁵⁴ <http://www.o-re-la.org/index.php/analyses/item/1305-religions-and-secularism-in-portugal-mainly-a-lingering-monotheism>

⁵⁵ <https://news.err.ee/116478/estonian-imam-against-burqa-ban>

	development and prepare the youth for dialogue and interactions in an increasingly pluralistic society ⁵⁶ . However to reflect Estonia's deep history of Catholicism, a historical-cultural argument does stand to have more Christianity in the contents.
 Slovenia	<p>Currently, there are no national laws that ban wearing face veils or headscarves in Slovenia.</p> <p>The dominant religion in Slovenia is Christianity, primarily the Catholic Church, the largest Christian denomination in the country. Other Christian groups having significant followings in the country include Eastern Orthodoxy and Protestantism (Lutheranism). Islam (2.4%). Judaism and Hinduism are small minorities in Slovenia. About 10% of the population are either agnostic or atheist. According to the Slovene Constitution, there is a separation of Church and State. For this reason, confessional religious instruction at public schools is explicitly prohibited by law.</p>
 Malta	<p>Malta has no law that prohibits the wearing of headscarves or face veils nationwide. That fact can be confused because Malta's Criminal Code forbids people from "wearing masks or disguising themselves" in public spaces "except at the time and in the manner allowed by the law." However, a police circular issued by the attorney general in February 2013 insisted that "there is no provision within Maltese law that prohibits the wearing of the burqa" and ordered the police force to not enforce the ban on masks in public.</p> <p>In Malta, the Church has a right to teach the Catholic faith in all schools. The State and the Holy See signed an agreement on Catholic religious instruction and education in Church schools in 1989. As a result of the agreement, Church schools' existence has been guaranteed and Christian events and messages have been able to be presented through religious education.</p>
 Czech Republic	<p>Discussions on Islamic face veils draw significant public attention in the country. At the political level, Czech President Milos Zeman, an active anti refugee advocate, claimed that it was "practically impossible" to integrate the Muslim community and that Muslims should be deported. Online, there is an influential Czech website advocating against Muslims and Islam, both within the Czech Republic and on a global level, with specific articles discussing the restrictions of women's rights as well as the security risks posed by the wearing of the veil. In addition to these articles, the website employs an image that is evocative of a woman being "imprisoned" by her hijab. In addition to the public debate on banning the Islamic headscarf and face veil, a dispute over banning the body-covering swimsuit, popularly referred to as a "burkini," in a Czech water park came up in July 2017.</p> <p>Religious instruction in State schools is a duty set down by the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Liberties. According to Article 16 Section 3</p>

⁵⁶ <http://eftre.weebly.com/eesti-estonia.html>

	<p>religious instruction at State schools should be set down by an Act. School Act No. 561/2004 Coll. regulates religious instruction at schools established by public authorities in its Art 15. Religious communities, which obtained “the special right to provide religious teaching” according to the Act on Churches No. 3/2002 Coll. (now 21 religious communities), have the right to organize religious classes as a non-obligatory subject at all public schools.</p>
 Cyprus	<p>In regard to Muslim women in Cyprus, there have been no physical assaults or verbal abuse reported or documented. When asked about the headwear of Muslim women, 53.2 percent agreed that Muslim women in Cyprus should be allowed to practice their face-covering tradition. No bans yet at the present.</p> <p>Cypriot schools teach religious education to all registered pupils. Religious education is a compulsory subject for pre-primary, primary and secondary education (Tapakis, 2003, p.13). According to the Ministry of Education and Culture and Cyprus, the aim of religious education in Cyprus is to enable children to realize that they are members of the Christian Orthodox Church, to meet the fundamental truths of Christianity and to experience a loving relationship with God (Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus, 1996, p.128). This has been met with much resistance by members of other religious groups.</p>
 Romania	<p>On the political level, even though there has been no talk of banning Islamic face veils, several highly ranked politicians have made anti-Islam comments, either through public or personal media channels. It is interesting to note that in December 2016, the nomination of the very first Muslim prime minister, Ms. Sevil Shhaideh, was opposed by President Klaus Iohannis. Despite the lack of stated reasons for the rejection, it was widely suggested by public media that the opposition was based on Ms. Shhaideh’s gender and religion.</p> <p>Under the 1995 and 2011 education laws, students were to attend religious classes by default, and those who wished to opt out of them could only do so through a written request to the school director. The National Council for Combating Discrimination criticized this as an infringement on children's freedom of conscience. On 12 November 2014, the relevant articles of law were ruled unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court of Romania, effectively abolishing the <i>de facto</i> compulsory religious education in Romania. The Romanian Orthodox Church protested against the ruling, claiming it is a "humiliation" for religious education, however it has no means to challenge the decision.</p>
 Bulgaria	<p>In 2016, the nationalist Patriotic Front coalition put forward a bill, “Wearing Clothing Covering or Hiding the Face Act” (Проект на Закон за носенето на облекло прикриващо или скриващо лицето), aimed at a nationwide banning of the wearing of face veils in public. In September 2016, the Bulgarian Parliament legalized the bill but left out a few proposed provisions, such as the suspension of social benefits as a punishment for violating the law. A proposal to criminalize the act of forcing people to wear veils was also not adopted into the Criminal Code.</p>

	<p>The introduction of religious education in public schools has provoked contradictory reactions in post-communist Bulgarian society. The return to religion has been not accompanied by a restoration of the pre-1947 confessional state, which “dominating faith” was Orthodox Christianity (Tarnovo Constitution, Art. 37), but takes place in a secular state. This situation has confused many people who are not able to distinguish the former rule atheism from the present one, guided by secular principles. As a result, they tend to regard both policies as a rejection of religion. In addition, the majority of Bulgarian citizens tend to identify religion with Orthodoxy, which creates conditions for an unequal treatment of religious minorities.</p>
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Bloc Positions:

Status:	Description:	Member States:
<i>Bans drafted and/or imposed:</i>	<i>The following member states have stood behind the ECJ ruling, imposing the relevant prohibitions restricting the use of full-face clothing</i>	<i>France, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Denmark, Luxembourg, Austria, Belgium, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Estonia, Malta, Bulgaria</i>
<i>No bans drafted and/or imposed:</i>	<i>The following member states have yet to implement official bans on full-face clothing.</i>	<i>Ireland, UK, Sweden, Croatia, Greece, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Romania</i>
<i>Limited restrictions / other:</i>	<i>The following member states have either imposed bans at the state level or have not fully implemented bans</i>	<i>Spain (Barcelona imposed) Hungary (discussions ongoing) Slovenia (discussions ongoing) Germany (some states) Italy (some towns)</i>

Status:	Description:	Member States:
Secular teaching of religious faiths in state schools with the option of private faith schools.	The following member states offer only secular teaching of religious faiths in schools (non-confessional teaching of religious facts)	France, Luxembourg, Sweden, Estonia, Slovenia
Confessional teaching of diverse faiths available in schools as well as secular ethics classes. Option of private faith schools.	The following member states offer confessional teaching of different faiths (eg Catholicism, Islam, Judaism etc) as well as secular ethics for non-believers.	Germany [#] , UK [*] , Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Croatia, Finland, Lithuania, Poland, Czech Republic,
Only confessional teaching of specific religions available in state schools, as well as secular ethics. Option of private faith schools.	The following member states offer only teachings of a specific faith (usually a denomination of Christianity)	Ireland, Italy, Slovakia, Denmark, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Portugal, Malta, Cyprus, Romania, Bulgaria

**The following countries have state schools and faith (denominational) schools*

The following countries do not have nationwide regulation regarding education due to state systems.

Appendix:

- <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/slovakia-bars-islam-state-religion-tightening-church-laws-robert-fico-a7449646.html>
 - <http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/X2H-Xref-ViewHTML.asp?FileID=11127&lang=EN>
 - <http://www.mei.edu/content/article/europe-s-islamophobia-and-refugee-crisis>
 - <https://www.australianislamiclibrary.org>
 - <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2017/mapping-minimum-age-requirements/religious-education>
 - <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2012/muslims-european-union-discrimination-and-islamophobia>
 - https://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/FS_Religious_Symbols_ENG.pdf
 - <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/08/25/europe/ireland-baptism-barrier-education-intl/index.html>
 - <https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/blog/modern-challenges-religious-education>
 - <https://www.degruyter.com/downloadpdf/j/mjss.2018.9.issue-1/mjss-2018-0004/mjss-2018-0004.pdf>
 - <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/51119278.pdf>
 - <https://www.thelocal.de/20170428/german-parliament-passes-partial-burqa-ban-for-officers-soldiers>
 - https://www.uni-trier.de/fileadmin/fb5/inst/IEVR/Arbeitsmaterialien/Staatskirchenrecht/Europa/Konferenz_2010/Czech_Republic.pdf
 - http://gozodiocese.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/06/religious_education_in_malta.pdf
 - <https://cyprus-mail.com/2015/12/13/the-burden-of-us-instruction/>
 - https://www.uni-trier.de/fileadmin/fb5/inst/IEVR/Arbeitsmaterialien/Staatskirchenrecht/Europa/Konferenz_2010/Czech_Republic.pdf
 - <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20160529/education/Religious-education-the-way-forward.613681>
 - <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/restrictions-on-womens-dress-in-28-eu-member-states-20180709.pdf>
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