

AT HOME IN  
EUROPE



# Muslims in Marseille



# Muslims in Marseille

At Home in Europe Project

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# Open Society Foundations Mission Statement

The Open Society Foundations work to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. Working with local communities in more than 70 countries, the Open Society Foundations support justice and human rights, freedom of expression, and access to public health and education.

## Acknowledgements

This city report was prepared as part of a series of monitoring reports titled “Muslims in EU cities”. The series focuses on eleven cities in the European Union (EU) with significant Muslim populations. Each report focuses on the following neighbourhoods within each city: Slotervaart, Amsterdam; Borgerhout, Antwerp; Kreuzberg, Berlin; Norrebro, Copenhagen; Hamburg-Mitte, Hamburg; Evington, Spinney Hills, Stonegate, Leicester; 3<sup>rd</sup> Arrondissement, Marseille; 18<sup>th</sup> Arrondissement, Paris; Feijenoord, Rotterdam; Jarvafaltet, Stockholm; the London Borough of Waltham Forest, London.

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Under their supervision the interviews and focus groups were conducted by a team based in Marseille. The team is comprised of the following: Nacer Abbaci (†), Ameziane Amenna, Michael Béchir Ayari, Nil Khelif Belaadi, Cherif Dris, Gérald Gardier, Julie Gauthier, Nassurdine Haidari, Loïc Lepape, Youssef Mammeri, Nandziwa Saïd Mohamed, Abdelatif Benomar Taïf

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The At Home in Europe Project has final responsibility for the content of the report including any errors or misrepresentations.

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## Preface

A central belief of the Open Society Foundations (Foundations) is that all people in an open society count equally and should enjoy equal opportunities. The Foundations works to mitigate discrimination, in particular harm done to minorities through discriminatory treatment, and to ensure that access to equal opportunities for all is an integral part of social inclusion policies of governments.

The At Home in Europe project of the Open Society Foundations focuses on monitoring and advocacy activities that examine the position of minorities in a changing Europe. Through its research and engagement with policymakers and communities, the project explores issues involving the political, social, and economic participation of Muslims and other marginalized groups at the local, national, and European levels.

Whether citizens or migrants, native born or newly arrived, Muslims are a growing and varied population that presents Europe with one of its greatest challenges: how to ensure equal rights in an environment of rapidly expanding diversity. Europe is no longer – if it ever was – a mono-cultural and mono-faith continent; its emerging minority groups and their identities as Europeans are an essential part of the political agenda and discourse.

Through its reports on Muslims in EU cities, the At Home in Europe project examines city and municipal policies that have actively sought to understand Muslim communities and their specific needs. Furthermore, the project aims to capture the type and degree of engagement policymakers have initiated with their Muslim and minority constituents by highlighting best practices in select western European cities. An underlying theme is how Muslim communities have themselves actively participated in tackling discrimination and whether the needs of specific groups warrant individual policy approaches in order to overcome barriers to equal opportunities.

The city reports build upon Foundations' earlier work on minority protection, in particular the EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program reports on the situation of Muslims in France, Italy, and the United Kingdom. All of these studies make it clear that further research is needed. The limited data currently available on Europe's Muslim populations are extrapolated from ethnic and country of origin background. This lack of precise data limits the possibilities for creating nuanced, specific policies on the most relevant issues for Muslims, and developing sensitive and integrated social inclusion policies.

The At Home in Europe report series includes an overview and individual reports on 11 cities in seven European countries. The project selected the cities on the basis of literature reviews conducted in 2006, taking into account population size, diversity, and the local political context. All 11 city reports were prepared by teams of local experts on the basis of the same methodology to allow for comparative analysis.

Each city report includes detailed recommendations for improving the opportunities for full participation and inclusion of Muslims in wider society while enabling them to preserve cultural, linguistic, religious, and other community characteristics important to their identities. These recommendations, directed primarily at specific local actors, will form the basis for the Foundations advocacy activities.

# Muslims in Marseille

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## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

### Research Institutions and Bodies, Academic Institutions

CEREQ – Centre for Research and Studies on Qualifications (*Centre d'études et de recherches sur les qualifications*)

INED – National Institute for Demographic Studies (*Institut national d'études démographiques*)

INSEE – National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (*Institut national de statistique et des études économiques*)

ISTR – Institute for Science and Theology of Religions (*Institut de science et théologie des religions*)

MGIS – Geographical Mobility and Social Inclusion (*Mobilité géographique et insertion sociale*), a unit of INED (see above) dedicated to studies on migration

### Other Institutions, Bodies and Entities, Governmental and Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs)

ACSE – Agency for Social Cohesion and Equality of Opportunities (*Agence pour la cohésion sociale et pour l'égalité des chances*)

AFNOR – (*Agence française de normalisation*), a public entity managing norms and standards. AFNOR instituted a diversity label to promote good practices regarding inclusion and diversity among business owners and managers.

CCIM – Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Marseilles (*Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Marseille*)

CCIMP – Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Marseille Provence (*Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Marseille-Provence*)

CFCM – French Council for Muslim Worship (*Conseil français du culte musulman*)

CRAN – Representative Council of Black Associations (in France) (*Conseil Représentatif des Associations Noires*)

CRCM – Regional Council for Muslim Worship (*Conseil régional du culte musulman*)

CRFOM – Representative Council of French Citizens of Comorian Origin (*Conseil représentatif des Français d'origine comorienne*)

CRIF – Representative Council of French Jewish Institutions (*Conseil représentatif des institutions israélites de France*) ; dating back to the time of the Resistance, and acting as the main mediator between the French government and the Jewish community, the CRIF served as a model to design Muslim representative and consultative bodies. Also modelled on the CRIF were the CRAN (Representative Council of Black Associations in France) and the CRFOM (Representative Council of French Citizens of Comorian Origin)

DIV – City Interministerial Directorate (*Direction interministérielle à la Ville*)

FACE – Foundation for Acting against Exclusion (*Fondation agir contre l'exclusion*)

FASILD – Help and Support Fund for Integration and the Struggle against Discrimination (*Fonds d'aide et de soutien pour l'intégration et la lutte contre les discriminations*)

FIPD – Interministerial Fund for the Prevention of Delinquency (*Fonds interministériel de prévention de la délinquance*)

HALDE – High Authority against Discrimination and for Equality (Haute autorité de lutte contre les discriminations et pour l'égalité)

IMEM – Mediterranean Institute for Muslim Studies

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OFII – French Office of Immigration and Integration (*Office français de l'immigration et de l'intégration*)

RTM – public transportation authority for Marseille (*Régie des transports marseillais*)

UOIF – Union of Islamic Organisations in France (*Union des Organisations Islamiques de France*)

### **Political parties**

UMP – Union for a Popular Movement (*Union pour un Mouvement Populaire*)

### **Territorial Units**

DOM-TOM – Overseas *départements* and territories. The former are fully fledged *départements*, thus directly integrated into the administrative structures of France's central system, while the latter enjoy a greater degree of territorial autonomy.

IRIS – A standardised unit of territory used by the INSEE for statistical purposes (see above, INSEE).

MPM – Marseille-Provence-Métropole, the wider urban metropolitan area of which Marseille is part.

PACA – Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur region

### **Urban Policy and Housing**

AGAM – Marseille Metropolitan Agency for Urbanism (*Agence d’urbanisme de l’agglomération marseillaise*)

AMPIL – Mediterranean Association for Housing Inclusion

ANRU – National Agency for Urban Renewal (*Agence Nationale pour la Rénovation Urbaine*)

APL – Personal Assistance for Housing (*Aide Personnalisée Au Logement*)

CIQ – Committees for Neighbourhood Interests (*Comités d’intérêts de quartier*), Marseille’s old neighbourhood committees

CLARB – Local Action Committee for Eradicating Slums (*Comité local d’action pour la résorption des bidonvilles*)

CUCS – Urban Contract for Social Cohesion (*Contrat urbain de cohésion sociale*)

DALO – The right to enforceable housing, made into law by the DALO Act (*loi DALO*) of 5 March 2007 (*Droit au logement opposable*)

EML – Municipal Commitment to Housing (*Engagement municipal pour le logement*)

FIPD – Fund for the Prevention of Delinquency (*Fonds de prévention de la délinquance*)

HLM – Subsidised social housing or community housing (*Habitat à Loyer Modéré*)

ONZUS – National Observatory for Sensitive Urban Areas (*Observatoire national des zones urbaines sensibles*)

OPAC – Office for Social Housing (*Office public d’aménagement et de construction*), a public body in charge of social housing

OPAH – Housing improvement operations (Opération Programmée d’Amélioration de l’Habitat)

PLAI (*prêt locatif aidé d'intégration*) and PLUS (*prêt locatif à usage social*) – a system of loans, supplemented with state grants, aimed at helping lower and middle classes access private-sector housing.

PLUS See above, PLAI

PRI – programmes for rehabilitation of built-up areas (*Programme de restauration immobilière*)

SRU, Law No. 2000–1208 of 13 December 2000 on solidarity and urban renewal (*Loi n° 2000–1208 du 13 décembre 2000 relative à la solidarité et au renouvellement urbains*) –. Under the provisions of the SRU law, cities of more than 3,500 inhabitants must have a 20 per cent rate of social housing among their housing stock.

ZUP – area targeted for priority urbanisation (*Zone à urbaniser en priorité*)

ZUS – sensitive urban area (*Zone urbaine sensible*); see also above, ONZUS

## Employment

ANPE – National Employment Agency (*Agence nationale pour l'emploi*); tasked with matching job-seekers and potential employers, this public body was recently merged with ASSEDIC, the agency in charge of unemployment benefits. The merged entity is known as *Pôle Emploi*.

ASSEDIC – Association for Employment in Industry and Trade (*Association pour l'emploi dans l'industrie et le commerce*); public body in charge of collecting social charges and paying unemployment benefits, now merged with the ANPE to form a new entity, *Pôle emploi* (see above, ANPE)

CAE – Contract of Accompaniment towards Employment (*Contrat d'aide à l'emploi*)

CDD – Short-term (fixed-term) contract (*Contrat à durée déterminée*)

CDI – Long-term contract (*Contrat à durée indéterminée*)

CEREQ – Centre for Research and Studies on Qualifications (*Centre d'études et de recherches sur les qualifications*)

CIVIS – Contract of Integration into Social Life (*Contrat d'Insertion dans la vie sociale*)

COPEC – Joint Committee on Equal Opportunities (*Comité Paritaire de l'Égalité des Chances*), a scheme designed to bring together partners in civil society organisations and public services and address equality of opportunities

ILO – International Labour Organisation

MRS – Recruitment-by-simulation method (*méthode de recrutement par simulation*)

PLIE – Local Programme for Integration and Employment (*Plan local pour l'insertion et l'emploi*)

PME – Small and medium-sized businesses (*petites et moyennes entreprises*)

RMI – Minimum Integration Income (*Revenu Minimum d'Insertion*); a social allowance providing a minimum income for the impoverished. As of 2010, these benefits were gradually replaced with a new scheme, the RSA (see below).

RSA – Active Solidarity Income (*Revenu de Solidarité Active*); a new allowance replacing the former RMI; the idea behind the RSA is to offer an additional incentive for returning to work, by complementing the income of impoverished workers so that someone who takes up a job is guaranteed to earn more than the minimum allowance.

SMIG – Minimum wage (*salaire minimum interprofessionnel garanti*)

## Education

ALEM – Learning and schoolwork assistance scheme (*Ateliers de lecture, écriture et mathématiques*)

*Bac* – short for *baccalauréat*, or high-school graduation. This degree is so central to the French school system that it has become a kind of national obsession; although it was originally only intended to be a condition of entrance into French universities, it is frequently required to enter the job market as well, and the official guidelines from the Ministry of Education call for raising up to 80 per cent of the student body to *bac* level. As a consequence, one's education level is often expressed as *bac + n*, meaning *n* years of formal education or training after the *bac*. For example, a *bac + 2* degree is equivalent to two years of higher education or training after high-school graduation

BEP, CAP – Professional degrees (Brevet d'études professionnelles, Certificat d'aptitudes professionnelles)

BTS – Specialised technological degree (*Brevet de technicien supérieur*)

CELEM – Learning and schoolwork assistance scheme (*Coup de pouce lecture, écriture et mathématiques*)

- CIO – Educational guidance and career advice centre (*Centre d'information et d'orientation*)
- CPE – Senior education adviser (*Conseiller principal d'éducation*)
- DEUG – 1st and 2nd year college (university) degree (*Diplôme d'études universitaires générales*)
- ELCO – an educational scheme aimed at teaching the languages and cultures of origin (*Enseignant ou Enseignement de langue et culture d'origine*)
- IEN – school inspector (Inspecteur de l'Education nationale)
- IUFM – University Institute of Teacher Training (*Institut universitaire pour la formation des maîtres*); teacher training colleges, affiliated to universities, which train teachers for primary and secondary school as well as higher education.
- LGT – general and technological high school (*Lycée général et technologique*)
- PACQUAM – learning and schoolwork assistance scheme for lower secondary schools in priority areas (*Promotion d'Associations Collège-Quartier à Marseille*)
- PAEJ – reception and advice centres for youths (*Points d'accueil écoute jeunes*)
- PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) – a general survey, based on a worldwide assessment of 15-year-old school pupils' scholastic performance, and conducted every three years under the aegis of OECD to evaluate and rank the achievements of the Member States' school systems.
- PRE – educational achievement programmes (*Programmes de réussite éducative*)
- RAR – “Ambition Success” Networks, new name of the most prioritised education areas (*Réseaux Ambition Réussite*)

## Health

- AP-HM – *Welfare Services of Hospitals in Marseille*, the public body managing the city's hospitals (Assistance publique-Hôpitaux de Marseille)
- ARH – Regional Agencies for Hospitalisation (*Agences Régionales d'Hospitalisation*)
- ASV – City Health Workshops (*Ateliers Santé Ville*)
- CMU – Universal Health Care, a social protection programme providing basic health care for disenfranchised citizens (*Couverture Maladie Universelle*)

DRASS – Ministry of Labor, Employment and Health, Regional Office for Health and social Affairs (*Direction régionale des Affaires sanitaires et sociales*)

DREES – Ministry of Labor, Employment and Health, Office of research, studies, assessment and statistics (*Direction de la recherche, des études, de l'évaluation et des statistiques*)

ESJ – Youth Health Centres (*Espaces Santé Jeune*)

GCS – Groupings for Medical Cooperation (*Groupements de coopération sanitaire*)

MPP – community-based preventative medicine (*Médecine préventive de proximité*)

PASS – Basic Service of Access to Health Care (*Permanences d'accès aux soins de santé*)

SROS – Regional Schemes for the Organisation of Health Care (*Schémas Régionaux d'Organisation Sanitaire*)

### **Policing and Security**

ALMS – local mediators (*Agents locaux de médiation*)

AS – security adjuncts (*Adjointes de sécurité*)

BAC – crime-fighting units specifically tasked with tackling urban crime day and night (*Brigades anti-criminalité*)

CCPD – City Council for the Prevention of Crime (*Conseil communal de prévention de la délinquance*)

CLS – local contract for security (*Contrat local de sécurité*)

CLSPD – local council for security and prevention of delinquency (*Conseil local de sécurité et prévention de la délinquance*)

CLST – local contract for security in transportation

CRS – national anti-riot police units (*Compagnies républicaines de sécurité*)

CS – local police units intervening in sensitive areas (*Compagnies de sécurisation*)

DCRI – Central Agency for Internal Intelligence (*Direction centrale du renseignement intérieur*)

DST – Internal Intelligence Service (*Direction de la surveillance du territoire*)

EPM – prison centre for juvenile offenders (*Etablissement pénitentiaire pour mineurs*)

PJJ – judicial protection of youth (*Protection judiciaire de la jeunesse*)

RG – an internal intelligence service collecting general-purpose information about socially active individuals and organisations (*Renseignements généraux*); now merged with the DST within the newly created DCRI.

UTEQ – police units assigned to working-class neighbourhoods (*Unités territoriales de quartiers*)

### Media

LCM – La Chaîne de Marseille, a local TV channel.

PQR – regional daily press (*Presse quotidienne régionale*)

### Other Useful Terms

*Bled* from the Arabic *balad*, land. In French, the term is frequently used by migrant populations when referring to the country of origin. As a side note, it is also commonly used by Frenchmen as a slang word for a village or small town in France.

FLN – Algerian National Liberation Front (*Front de Libération Nationale*); one of the leading forces (and the winning faction) in the struggle for independence in Algeria.

OAS – (*Organisation armée secrète*), a far-right militia that fought against the independence of Algeria and for “*Algérie française*” through guerrilla actions, political assassinations and terror bombings.

## DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

The following are definitions for terms used throughout this report, as well as in the other reports in the “Muslims in EU Cities” series.

**Discrimination:** The term “discrimination” is used throughout this report; it includes harassment and direct and indirect discrimination. Articles 1 and 2 of the EU Race Directive expressly prohibit both “direct” and “indirect” discrimination. Direct discrimination occurs “where one person has been treated less favourably than another person is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation on grounds of racial or ethnic origin”. According to the Directive, indirect discrimination occurs “where an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice would put persons of a racial or ethnic origin at a particular disadvantage when compared with other persons unless that provision, criterion, or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary”.

**Ethnic or racial profiling:** Describes the use by law enforcement officers of race, ethnicity, religion or national origin rather than individual behaviour as the basis for making decisions about who has been or may be involved in criminal activity.

**Ethnicity:** Membership of a group which may share language, cultural practices, religion or common identity based on a shared history.

**EU-born:** In the context of this report, a distinction is made between foreign-born and EU-born respondents. The latter refers to participants in the Open Society Foundations’ research who were born in the country where the research was undertaken. Therefore, a participant in the research on Paris who was born in Poland would be identified as foreign-born.

**Harassment:** Conduct which creates “an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment”.

**Integration:** The definition used in this report is “a dynamic two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of the European Union” as stated in the Common Basic Principles. In the Explanation to the EU Common Basic Principles on Integration 2004, “Integration is a dynamic long-term and continuous two-way process of mutual accommodation, not a static outcome. It demands the participation not only of immigrants and their descendants but of every resident. The integration process involves adaptation by immigrants, both men and women, who all have rights and responsibilities in relation to their new country of residence. It also involves the receiving society, which should create opportunities for the immigrants’ full economic, social, cultural and political participation. Accordingly, Member States are encouraged to consider and involve both immigrants and national citizens in integration policy, and to communicate clearly their mutual rights and responsibilities”.

**Islamophobia:** Irrational hostility, fear and hatred of Islam, Muslims and Islamic culture, and active discrimination towards this group as individuals or collectively.

**Marginalised:** Marginalised groups can be part of an ethnic or racial minority and a subcategory of minority groups. They can also be characterised and distinguished from other groups by suffering socio-economic disadvantage and a powerless position in society or in a group. This report defines marginalised groups as those who experience social exclusion, be they part of a minority or majority group in society.

**Migrant:** The United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation definition of the term refers to a “person who has moved temporarily or permanently to a country where he or she was not born and has acquired significant social ties to this country”. This includes students, children and family dependants. A distinction is made in which this term does not include asylum seekers, refugees and stateless persons. However, in some countries “migrant” also refers to those who are born in the country to which their parents migrated.

**Minority:** Under international law, there is no agreed definition of this term. Some countries define a minority as that which is recognised as such by national laws. In this report, the term refers to ethnic and religious groups that are not the dominant group in society.

**Muslim:** This group is diverse and although there are common belief systems and possibly experiences as Muslims, this report relies on its Muslim respondents’ identification of themselves as Muslims. Furthermore, this term includes Muslims who view themselves in a cultural rather than a religious context.

**Nationality:** Country of citizenship.

**Non-Muslim:** For the purpose of this report, a non-Muslim is anyone who does not define himself or herself as belonging to the Islamic faith.

**Race:** The term “race” is used in the context of discrimination on the grounds of race, which occurs when people face discrimination because of their presumed membership in groups identified by physical features such as skin colour, hair or physical appearance. References to race in this report should not be taken to suggest that there are distinct human races.

**Racism:** Where used in this report, “racism” will be defined as “racial discrimination”, which according to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination “shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction of preference based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social or cultural or any other field of public life”. Racial discrimination can also be based on markers of visible difference due to membership of a cultural group.

**Social inclusion:** The provision and promotion of equal rights and access in the fields of education, employment and decision-making. Overcoming discrimination is implicit throughout policies and practices to realise inclusion.

**Third-country national:** An individual who is not a national of an EU Member State.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The port city of Marseille in the south of France has a long history of migration, and its complex and cosmopolitan character reflects the successive waves of migrants who have settled there. Starting in the 1970s, immigration from the Maghreb in North Africa increased, and more recently a large Comorian community has also become part of Marseille's demographic picture. Official data on religion are generally not collected in France, on the principle of *laïcité*, or secularism, and therefore the precise number of Muslims in Marseille is not available. However, research suggests that somewhere between 30 per cent and 40 per cent of the population is Muslim. The population of Marseille's 3rd *arrondissement*, where research for this report was conducted, is generally less well off and less well educated than the average resident of Marseille, even as the number of inhabitants is increasing due to a higher birth rate and migration from both within France and from abroad.

City policies for integration are governed by the *Contrat urbain de cohésion sociale* (Urban Contract for Social Cohesion – CUCS), a programme of cooperation between all levels of public authorities and private partners. Worth noting also in Marseille is *Marseille Espérance*, an initiative of the mayor's office to bring together religious communities for dialogue and common action.

The Open Society Foundations' research in Marseille found a strong sense of belonging to the city among both Muslims and non-Muslims, even as feelings of belonging to France or to the specific neighbourhood surveyed were not nearly as pronounced. The city's diversity was a significant part of its appeal for respondents from all groups; the city as a multicultural, Mediterranean space was a common theme among respondents. Nevertheless, the extent of actual interaction between groups appears more limited, with people of different ethnic or religious backgrounds living alongside one another without having regular interaction or exchanges with each other. This divide runs through all sectors and affects many aspects of life, particularly for Muslims.

Children from Muslim families are more heavily represented in schools in the northern districts of Marseille. While there is no specific research indicating that children from a migrant background underperform in education, the schools in these northern districts have lower rates of students passing the national secondary exam and overall lower graduation rates. The situation in Marseille is of course framed against the broader national debate over religious expression in schools and the prohibition of the veil and other religious symbols. While some concerns about racism and disadvantage in schools have been voiced, Muslims in Marseille tended to express a positive view of education, those from a Comorian background more so than those of Maghrebi origin. Marseille boasts an increasing number of teachers from a Muslim background, while at the same time some Muslim families are choosing to send children to Catholic schools, which may be seen as more open to discussion of religion and other faiths.

Data on the employment situation among Muslims in Marseille, and even data disaggregated by family origin, are quite limited. Poor levels of education may contribute to the higher levels of unemployment in areas with greater concentrations of migrants. At the national level, several studies have confirmed that it is more difficult for people of North African origin to find work, and once employed, to reach more elevated positions. Discrimination in the workplace remains a factor, although French and European Union initiatives to enhance diversity in employment have been carried out. In Marseille, the approach towards addressing inequalities in the workplace has turned towards mentoring and training programmes.

Much of the housing in the 3rd *arrondissement* is older and in poor condition. Regional surveys carried out in the past ten years show that less than a quarter of immigrants from the Maghreb live in houses. While most such migrants do live in apartment blocks, they are less likely than EU immigrants to live in subsidised housing. Increasing housing costs have exacerbated the divisions in Marseille, which the city claims to combat by constructing additional social housing in areas where there is little accessible housing stock. Civil society organisations have been very active in working to ensure equity and transparency in housing issues.

While Marseille has an exceptionally high number of certain medical specialists and highly-rated health services, it falls short in terms of providing care for the disadvantaged population. Health-care reform has emphasised a focus on profit-driven medical practice, and in Marseille there have been allegations that patients on the basic state coverage have been turned away. At the same time, free health care is provided on a geographic basis, which may reinforce the ethnic divisions in the city. Nevertheless, a majority of all respondents to the Foundations' survey expressed satisfaction with health-care services, including almost two-thirds of Muslim participants. They also acknowledged that some efforts to recognise the needs of Muslims were being made, if without a real understanding of the community's specific requirements.

Marseille includes two neighbourhoods that have been selected under a national policing scheme that aims to enhance security in deprived areas. This approach includes more community-based policing, and while it is not an explicit aim of the programme, the recruitment of officers of migrant origin appears to be part of its strategy. All respondents to the Foundations' survey indicated they felt unsafe in some parts of the city, but more Muslims reported lower levels of trust in the police. Greater efforts to improve diversity in the police force may be one means to build a better relationship with Marseille's Muslim communities.

It has been over 20 years since the first representatives of migrant background were elected to office in Marseille. More recently, Muslim candidates have been included on many different party rolls. The level of representation is still low, however, and is concentrated in areas with a large proportion of immigrants. Studies indicate Muslims do not vote as a block, and indeed a high proportion of the Muslim respondents to the Foundations' survey had not voted in the last national election. Trust in political

institutions among participants was also limited, with Muslim respondents expressing frustration that they were still viewed as outsiders or as having divided loyalties.

The media in Marseille have played a central role in shaping public opinion about migrants generally and Muslims in particular. The anti-immigration rhetoric popularised by the far right in the 1980s and 1990s has since given way to discussion of a French Muslim identity as such. Muslims have expressed concerns about the limited coverage of their neighbourhoods and communities in local media, except when focusing on crime or poverty. Mainstream media outlets employ few Muslim journalists, and community media initiatives have sprung up to try to fill this gap.

Marseille has adopted a number of innovative strategies that aim to make the city's diversity a positive value. However, there is still a need to engage further with Muslim residents and to ensure their contribution and inclusion. Racial and ethnic division remains an entrenched problem that affects many sectors, from education to housing. The city could support the many community-based initiatives that have taken up these issues, which would both address specific needs and foster better relations between Muslim residents and their city.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report sets out to understand the everyday experiences of ordinary Muslims living in the 3rd *arrondissement* in Marseille, with a particular focus on the impact of public policies aimed at improving integration and social inclusion. Integration here is understood as a dynamic two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of the European Union (EU).<sup>1</sup>

A report that places its focus on Muslims as a group faces the challenge that Muslims are not a fixed group with defined boundaries but rather a diverse set of individuals with different religious practices and attachments, who are currently defined and marked as such externally. This group can include those who adhere to the religion of Islam as well as those who, because of their cultural or ethnic background, are perceived as Muslims by others in society despite their personal and religious beliefs.

The identification of a person – whether by self- or external ascription – as a Muslim is not a neutral matter, as it can entail identification with a group. In the context of this report, the identification of a person as a Muslim has been left to the self-perception of the interviewee and has not been associated with any predetermined religious or cultural definition. In part this is because the primary focus of this report is not on issues of religious practice or belief but instead on the everyday experiences of those who define themselves as Muslim, in four areas of life that are crucial for social integration: education, employment, health, and civic and political participation. This report examines the effects of marginalisation and discrimination and explores the different ways in which local policies address issues of integration. Being Muslim is understood as a social category and a question of labelling rather than a religious category in this context.

Another consequence of focusing on the category of “Muslim” is the interdependence of this supposedly religious marking of difference with social, ethnic, gender and other categories. The Open Society Foundations’ research is cognisant of this issue and is therefore reluctant to draw any clear conclusions in terms of the ethnic, social or religious nature of unequal treatment experienced by participants. At the same time, the self-perception of discriminatory experiences by participants is in no way negated or minimised but rather taken as serious and relevant information about the reality experienced by the people interviewed. It can, however, be generally suggested that the real experience of unequal treatment may be higher than what is normally found through surveys, as many incidents that would be defined as discrimination are perceived as normal everyday experiences by the interviewees, who have often been living with these experiences all their lives.

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<sup>1</sup> The EU Common Basic Principles on Integration 2004.  
[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressData/en/jha/82745.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_data/docs/pressData/en/jha/82745.pdf) (accessed, 20 July 2011)

## 1.1 Examining the Local Level

A focus on action and social realities at the local level allows for a closer examination of the interaction between residents and policymakers in districts such as the 3rd *arrondissement* in Marseille. The population in this area has increased in the last six years, partly due to growth in birth rates and partly due to the presence of individuals who have migrated to the district, both from within France and from abroad. It is a part of the city which is known for its deprivation and growing poverty in comparison with other parts of Marseille. Faced with serious unemployment rates, low levels of education and dilapidated housing, it is nonetheless a very vibrant and diverse part of Marseille. By monitoring at the local level the report examines whether these demographic circumstances at the district and neighbourhood level have encouraged the development of practical solutions to social policies that respond to the needs and views of local Muslim residents. It is important to stress that while this study is attempting to capture a snapshot of the key issues facing Muslim and non-Muslim residents in Marseille, the 3rd *arrondissement* is not representative of the situation of these groups in the city. While the research on the district level can be viewed as comparable with other districts in Marseille and France, the specific context of the 3rd *arrondissement* must be borne in mind before findings can be translated and transferred as representative of the city and country.

## 1.2 Methodology

### 1.2.1 Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample

This report includes findings based on a representative – although small-scale – survey of 100 Muslims and a comparison group of 100 non-Muslims,<sup>2</sup> as well as six focus groups with Muslims. It also includes numerous interviews with individuals from local government in Marseille, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), members of Muslim communities and other connected fields. The final report includes feedback from a variety of participants from a roundtable held in October 2009 in Marseille.

The 200 interviews were based on a quota sample which seemed more viable given the context and frame of the research. The targets for the quotas were based on a sample frame that identified characteristics of the sample in terms of age, gender, ethnic group and religious self-identification. Apart from these fixed categories, care was taken to incorporate differences in social or income level, regional dispersion and representation of different degrees of religious identification.

A great challenge lay in obtaining data based on ethnic and religious affiliations in France. Information for national statistical data is not collected based on these factors, which is also the case for most countries in the EU. In France, data are categorised according to the acquisition of French citizenship. One is either French or foreign-born. The exact number of Muslims in Marseille can therefore not be determined and

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<sup>2</sup> For the full Open Society Foundations questionnaire see Annex 3.

even rough estimations, generally done on the basis of statistics for foreigners from a country with a Muslim majority in combination with naturalised people originating from these countries, are highly problematic. Some of those emigrating from countries with a Muslim majority do not have a Muslim affiliation and people of the second and third generation with French nationality are often not counted. This makes the available numbers more than questionable.

### 1.2.2 3rd Arrondissement sample frame

Interviewees were selected according to their declared origin. Six categories of origin had been distinguished on the basis of Marseille's demographic characteristics: three for Muslims and three for the non-Muslim groups. The Muslim groups were broken down into the following: Algerians (36), Moroccans and Tunisians (32), and Comorians and other sub-Saharan Africans (32). For the non-Muslims, the following categories were interviewed: French of non-immigrant descent (48), Europeans of various origins (26) and sub-Saharan Africans (26). For each subcategory, the interviewers seeking respondents had to vary socio-economic status, age and citizenship.

The respondents interviewed displayed the following characteristics:

*Age:* Muslims and non-Muslims had a varied range of ages but the Muslims were noticeably younger. Their average age was 35.7 years old while that of non-Muslims was 43.5 years. The population of Marseille is heterogeneous in age, with retired and ageing residents being over-represented, and an emerging presence of a younger population with large families, with a national or international immigration background. This is particularly true in the 3rd *arrondissement*. The Foundations' sample reflects the matrix population. Moreover, in each of the two subsamples, women were slightly younger on average than men.

*Countries of birth and origins:* Half of the interviewed population was born in France. However, only 32 per cent of the Muslim subsample and 69 per cent of the non-Muslim subsample were born in France. The Foundations' sample was therefore marked by international mobility. In the Muslim subsample, 45 individuals were born in the Maghreb<sup>3</sup> and 19 in the Comoros. In the non-Muslim subsample, those who were born abroad were mainly of African origin. Responses to the question on belonging to a cultural or ethnic group showed that 62 individuals identified with the Maghreb and 27 with the Comoros and sub-Saharan Africa. Four respondents did not answer. This correspondence could be less for the non-Muslim subsample. Indeed, if 47 individuals could be identified as non-immigrant French and 23 as other European, one can only identify 16 individuals of African origin out of the expected 26 and there were 13 no-answers. The sex category was regularly distributed over the various origin categories.

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<sup>3</sup> The Arabic name for the northwest of Africa. This includes Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia and sometimes Libya.

**Nationality:** Three-quarters of the sample said they were French citizens. Some of them declared a second or dual citizenship: French-Algerian (10), French-Swiss (1), which represented two thirds of the Muslim subpopulation (65), and more than three-quarters of the non-Muslim subpopulation (4 did not answer). A second or other citizenship was scattered in the non-Muslim subpopulation and seemed more concentrated in the Muslim subpopulation: 24 had Maghreb citizenship and 7 stated Comorian. On the whole, there were about three times more foreigners in the sample than on average in Marseille. This is mostly true for the non-Muslims and even more so for the Muslims.

**Marital status:** Members of the Muslim subsample were largely married (1st time) or single; members of the non-Muslim subsample were more often divorced or widowed and, in particular, more often cohabiting (20, compared with 2 in the Muslim subsample).

**Level of education:** More than half of the sample had a secondary education (119 respondents) and a quarter had reached university level (52). Less than 10 per cent had no formal education (16). When examining social and gender variables, women generally had either a secondary education or no formal education. Origin revealed variations as well. French of non-immigrant descent and other Europeans had more often than not achieved secondary education whereas those from the Maghreb or Africa had either a university education or no formal education at all. This was also true for religious categories: the secondary level was more frequent among non-Muslims (68) than among Muslims (51), whereas the university level was a little bit more frequent in the Muslim category (29) than in the non-Muslim (23); the lack of formal education was a little more frequent in the Muslim category than in the non-Muslim category. One cannot compare this structure with the *Institut national de statistique et des études économiques* (National Institute of Statistics and Economical Studies – INSEE) data because INSEE takes into account levels of diplomas which the Open Society Foundations’ question on level of education achieved does not.

**Socio-economic status:** When collecting data on the questions concerning employment and current employment status, in order to obtain an image of the social structure of the Open Society Foundations’ population of respondents, compatible with INSEE categories, the following was noted (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Socio-economic structure of the Open Society Foundations' sample**

	No of people	%
Agricultural	0	0
Artisans, business owners	21	10.5
Professional and managerial	10	5.0
Lower-level professional	20	10.0
White-collar employees	36	18.0
Blue-collar employees	13	6.5
Retired	16	8.0
Unemployed or inactive	77	38.5
No answer	7	3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations, 2008

Table 1. may be compared with the structure of the 3rd *arrondissement* population over 15 years of age, according to INSEE – see Table 2.

**Table 2. Socio-economic structure of 3rd arrondissement population, %**

Category	%
Agricultural	0.1
Artisans, business owners	2.8
Professional and managerial	2.1
Lower-level professional	8.2
White-collar employees	17.8
Blue-collar employees	14.6
Retired	20.7
Unemployed or inactive	33.8

Source: INSEE 2006, 2009 data

The Open Society Foundations' sample has the following characteristics: artisans and business owners are over-represented, while blue-collar workers and retired persons are under-represented. Other categories are reasonably reflected. These biases are unequally marked in the subsamples of Muslims and non-Muslims, which give them different socio-economic profiles (Table 3).

**Table 3. Socio-economic structure of Muslim and non-Muslim categories, %**

Category	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
Artisans, business owners	6,0	15,0	10,5
Professional and managerial	3,0	7,0	5,0
Lower-level professional	7,0	13,0	10,0
White-collar employees	17,0	19,0	18,0
Blue-collar employees	7,0	6,0	6,5
Retired	4,0	12,0	8,0
Unemployed or Inactive	50,0	27,0	38,5
No answer	6,0	1,0	3,5
<b>Total</b> %	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations data

In short, artisans and business owners are over-represented mostly in the non-Muslim subsample, while the economically inactive are under-represented. In the subsample retired Muslims are still fewer than expected, while the economically inactive rise to 50 per cent (40 per cent for men and 60 per cent for women). These two points may have some validity for this subpopulation in the 3rd *arrondissement* context, but this report is unable to verify or take this information further.

## 2. POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Marseille, with 839,000 inhabitants in 2006, is France's second-largest city. It is also a major port, the fourth-largest in Europe. In comparison with any other major French city, the proportion of Marseille's population that has a Muslim background is high, although official statistics do not record religious identity as there is no category of religion in French public censuses. A survey of high-school students carried out in 2000–2001 suggests that 30–40 per cent of young people have a Muslim background. Interviews with senior city officials also suggest a working assumption that around a third of Marseille's population has a Muslim background.

This section begins by outlining the general demographics of Marseille, noting the major changes that have taken place since the Second World War. It also provides some indication of the diversity of Marseille's Muslim population in terms of its migration and ethnic background.

### 2.1 The Demographics of Marseille in the Last 40 Years

The changing demographics of Marseille in the last 40 years bear the mark of a deep economic crisis, with far-reaching repercussions for both society and institutions.

In the span of a mere 15 years, between the 1975 census and 1990, the city lost over 100,000 inhabitants, that is, around 12 per cent of its population. It appears, however, that this decline has now stopped; in recent years the city's population has increased by 5,000 per year. The actual impact of this renewal varies widely across different areas in the city. From its period of crisis, Marseille has inherited a social and spatial structure characterised by strong polarisation between the prosperous south and the poorer districts in the north. The city centre is rather run down and impoverished, but major plans for urban renewal are now being implemented in and around an area known as Euroméditerranée.

The Open Society Foundations' research focuses on the residents of the 3rd *arrondissement*, which borders on the city centre and intersects the Euroméditerranée area. The population of this district is, in general, poorer than the average even by Marseille standards, with a narrow range of incomes. While this population does not represent a broad range of socio-economic groups, generally belonging to the lower classes, there is much more variation in terms of origin and cultural background among Muslims as well as non-Muslims.

## 2.2 The Marseille System in Crisis: Deindustrialisation, Depopulation, Unemployment<sup>4</sup>

The Marseille system (*système marseillais*) is a phrase coined by economists to describe the social and economic arrangements on which Marseille's prosperity was founded at the end of the 19th century. The Marseille system remained dominant between the First and Second World Wars, although some signs of a slowdown were already manifest at the time. Marseille lay at the heart of the French colonial system. The Marseille system typically combined port activity geared towards the export of goods to the colonial empire,<sup>5</sup> a naval industry that supported the port activity and a food-processing industry, based in part on raw materials imported from the empire only to be exported again after processing (soap, sugar, pasta, etc).

In 1938, colonial trade accounted for 31 per cent of Marseille's imports and for 65 per cent of its exports. In 1906, and again in 1922, the city celebrated its ties to the French empire through widely publicised colonial fairs and exhibitions (it was not till 1931 that Paris was to host a similar colonial fair). The city also played host to the empire's support infrastructure with institutions such as hospitals specialising in the treatment of tropical illnesses, and headquarters of religious congregations involved with evangelisation. Marseille's workforce was plentiful, with many of its workers hailing from various regions of France and Europe (Italy being a major provider), most of them unskilled. The city's infrastructure showed few signs of modernisation since the 19th century: the road network and housing facilities were outdated and dilapidated, with the exception of the fast-developing southern half of the city, which was quickly turning into the residential area of the upper classes.

North of the famed Canebière Boulevard<sup>6</sup> lie areas known as *les enclos* (enclosures), which foreshadowed the *bidonvilles* (shanty towns) of later times. The city's capitalistic structure, too, showed few, if any, signs of change: all in all, the economic activity was still dominated by a few families of shipowners and manufacturers. Keeping full control over the local chamber of commerce, they worked with the city's political leaders.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The following paragraphs are heavily indebted to the works of economists and sociologists specialising in urban studies (André Donzel, Mario Isaac, Bernard Morel, César Centi, Pierre-Paul Zalio). Statistical data are from the INSEE, available at [www.insee.fr](http://www.insee.fr) (accessed July 2009).

<sup>5</sup> Algeria was a full French *département* at the time, while Tunisia (1881) and Morocco (1912) were protectorates under a French mandate. South of the Sahara, the French-occupied territories were divided into two blocks, French West Africa (AOF) in 1895 and French Equatorial Africa (AEF) in 1910.

<sup>6</sup> The famous Canebière is Marseille's main central axis, oriented along a west–east line and separating the *quartiers sud* (south districts) from the *quartiers nord* (north districts).

<sup>7</sup> Pierre-Paul Zalio, *Grandes familles de Marseille au XXe siècle. Enquête sur l'identité économique d'un territoire portuaire* (Important families of Marseille in the 20th century. An investigation into the economic identity of a harbour territory), Belin, Paris, 1999.

The 1968 census provided the first indication of a significant fall in Marseille's population; the steep decline in population continued from 1975 to 1990. The 1999 census indicated an end to the decline of the population.

These demographic markers of Marseille's urban crisis had been preceded by a notable fading of the city's economic strength. Decolonisation was the primary cause of the economic downturn. This was, however, exacerbated by a lack of initiatives aimed at managing the postcolonial conversion of the Marseille system, if not by altogether counterproductive decisions. For instance, the strategic choice made by the Gaullist state administration to develop a regional metropolis in the wider Marseille area ultimately resulted in draining Marseille of its more recent industrial establishments, which relocated to the periphery, while major port activities (notably the oil trade) shifted towards Fos-sur-Mer, some 50 kilometres away from the city centre. In 1985, an economist, looking at the different models of development that the city could potentially implement, remained pessimistic about its future prospects:

The Marseille of today is nothing more than some obscure annex of a wider port area. It is not a major city in terms of the services sector, nor is it an unchallenged regional metropolis. And Marseille does not lie at the crossroads of a new network of trade in the Mediterranean area. It is neither a centre of technology nor a magnet for business- or leisure-oriented tourism on the model of the Côte d'Azur.<sup>8</sup>

During this period of population decline, unemployment increased significantly, from 3.9 per cent in 1973 to 25 per cent in 1999. This overall figure conceals variations within the city, with unemployment rates reaching 40 per cent in some working-class neighbourhoods.<sup>9</sup> The rate of economic activity stagnated at 39 per cent between the 1960s and the 1990s. Gross employment decreased during this period, especially in the manufacturing sector. The services sector grew during this period and offered jobs in the unskilled and semi-skilled categories. Marseille thus turned into a city where the structure and the make-up of the workforce were dominated by public-sector jobs; meanwhile, the unemployment rate exploded and the proportion of the non-working population stood at high levels.

Public housing estates were built in the 1970s in order to replace the older housing units that were dilapidated and deemed unfit for habitation, and to reincorporate the shanty towns and absorb the influx of migrants, mainly from Algeria. For the most part, these public housing estates belonged to the category known in French as *cités*, huge complexes of subsidised housing with more than 500 individual housing units in each; these were generally built in the northernmost parts of the city, with poor access

<sup>8</sup> Mario Isaac, "Marseille et la fin du XX<sup>ème</sup> siècle. Crise d'un système urbain, économique et politique" (Marseille and the end of the 20th century. Urban, economic and political crisis), in *Marseille ou le présent incertain* (Marseille or the uncertain present), Cahiers Pierre-Baptiste, Actes Sud, La Tour d'Aigues, 1985, p. 77.

<sup>9</sup> Available at [www.statistiques-locales.insee.fr](http://www.statistiques-locales.insee.fr) (accessed July 2009).

to public transportation services. The *cités* did not age very well, and their state of disrepair was soon to become an aggravating factor of the city's troubles. Marseille's first subway line was not built before 1978, and it did not reach the north district.

### 2.3 Signs of Renewal in the Demographic and Economic Spheres since 2000

Since the early 2000s, the statistical data show signs of economic renewal. The unemployment rate, which peaked at 25 per cent in 1999, was down to 18.2 per cent in 2006. This is still a high level of unemployment, and we should now expect these figures to be worsened by the global financial crisis that hit France in 2008. Nevertheless, the perceptible trends of the city's evolution are pointing upwards.

While the decline in blue-collar employment continues (falling from 25.7 per cent of the workforce in 1990 to 15.2 per cent in 2006), the economic and labour market structure of Marseille is no longer strikingly different from that of a city like Aix-en-Provence, a medium-sized city that forms part of the extended metropolitan area of Marseille, but is typically associated with white-collar workers and senior executives (see Table 4).

**Table 4. Labour market structure in Marseille and Aix-en-Provence, 2006, %**

Category	Marseille	Aix
Self-employed craftsmen, shop owners, heads of small businesses	5.5	5.4
Executives and independent professionals	18.4	24.3
Mid-level professionals	29.2	28.9
White-collar employees	31.7	27.9
Blue-collar employees	15.2	13.1

Source: INSEE

The educational structure is also changing, albeit at a slower pace. In 1982, nearly one out of two Marseille residents did not have any degree, and this was still the case for 35 per cent of the population in 1990 and 25 per cent in 2006. In 2006, 25 per cent of the population held at least a *bac* + 2 degree (that is, more than two years of studies or training after the *lycée*). For comparison, the rate stands at 40.5 per cent in Lyon and 41 per cent in Aix.<sup>10</sup>

The roots of Marseille's renewal lie in the recognition since the 1980s of its impoverishment among both public (state and city hall) and private actors (*Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Marseille*, Chamber of Trade and Industry of Marseilles –

<sup>10</sup> Available at [www.statistiques-locales](http://www.statistiques-locales), [www.insee.fr](http://www.insee.fr) (accessed July 2009).

CCIM).<sup>11</sup> This led to crucial public investments, such as the extension towards Marseille in 1992 of the fast-train track (TGV)<sup>12</sup> from Paris and Lyon, and major plans for social and economic integration, carried out through public-private partnerships, of which the most visible and most emblematic example is the Euroméditerranée project. It combines a large public investment by the central state authorities (€37 million in 2000–2006, €22 million slated for 2006–2012), together with a complex engineering effort joining various institutional, technical and social forces. It aims to bring about a comprehensive regeneration of some 313 hectares (ha) of densely built-up areas at the very heart of Marseille, forming a triangle between St-Charles train station and the port areas of Arenc and La Joliette.

The plans include newly-built offices, housing units and amenities (public services, shops, hotels). Its first phase, which generated more than €1 billion in private investments, led to the building of more than 2,100 housing units and the refurbishment of 2,300 existing ones; it also created 6,800 jobs.<sup>13</sup> Euroméditerranée is France's largest city centre renewal project. Although much uncertainty still surrounds its next stages, the success of Marseille's candidacy as "European Capital of Culture 2013", confirmed in May 2009, certainly endows the project with a new horizon of utopia.

#### 2.4 Social Profile of Marseille's 3rd *Arrondissement*

While some revitalisation is taking places across all parts of the city, Marseille still bears the mark of poverty, especially in areas with significant numbers of Muslim residents. The focus of the fieldwork for this report is in the 3rd *arrondissement*.

This *arrondissement* intersects the perimeter defined for Euroméditerranée, and covers a total area of 44,650 hectares. In recent years the population of this area has been growing by 1 per cent per year. The population growth is partly due to the neighbourhood's birth rate: at 20 per 1,000 it is above the Marseille average of 13.8 per 1,000.<sup>14</sup> The size of families in the neighbourhood is larger than the Marseille average: 20 per cent of families have three or more children under the age of 25 (compared with Marseille's average of 11.3 per cent). Migration, either from other regions of France or from other countries, is another factor contributing to the 3rd *arrondissement's* population growth.

<sup>11</sup> The body or association of Marseille employers.

<sup>12</sup> Estimates anticipated that around 14 million travellers would use the train every year.

<sup>13</sup> André Donzel and Nicolas Maisetti, "Réseaux politiques locaux et internationalisation des villes: Marseille et le projet euroméditerranéen" (Local political networks and the internationalisation of cities: Marseille and the Mediterranean Project), paper presented to the AFSP Congress, Grenoble, 2009.

<sup>14</sup> The countrywide average is 13.1. For comparison, the Algerian rate in 2008 was 17.3 and the Moroccan rate was 21.

The district is generally poor. While in Marseille as a whole the median income stands at an average of €4,795 per year in 2006, in the 3rd *arrondissement* the median income was only €6,981 in 2006. One of the city's poorer IRIS neighbourhoods,<sup>15</sup> Bellevue-Pyat, is in this *arrondissement*, with a median income of €2,270 in 2004; and in fact even the 3rd *arrondissement*'s richer IRIS (Ricard-Guigou, with a median income of €1,720) is still below the Marseille average. While this *arrondissement* cannot be considered representative of the city as a whole, in fact, socio-economic disparities are so deeply entrenched in different areas in Marseille that no single area can be construed as typical. There is no such thing as an average or median neighbourhood, and current trends only tend to accentuate these disparities;<sup>16</sup> compared with Marseille as a whole, the 3rd *arrondissement* appears even more impoverished.

Fewer than 10 per cent of local residents hold a *bac* + 2 degree or higher, compared with the citywide average of 24 per cent; 40.6 per cent do not hold any degree at all.

Housing is dense and rather dilapidated, with about one half of the neighbourhood's homes built before 1949; most of the housing supply consists of small apartments, most of them rented.

Overall, the quality of the living environment is poor; for the most part, the road network consists of small, winding streets in a dire state of maintenance; moreover, the spatial layout of the neighbourhood was upset by modern highways that cut right through the area; the Rocade Nord, a large bypass road, overlaps the neighbourhood's western parts, and a flyover bridge passes over its northern tip. On the district's periphery lies the Friche de la Belle de Mai, a space dedicated to media and arts production. There are no hotels in the district. Marseille's Salafi mosque is located in the vicinity. The district was also chosen to host the headquarters of several NGOs and charities serving the homeless. All in all, it is a territory characterised by a working-class atmosphere and a homogeneous urban environment, where social and economic contrasts and disparities are less far-reaching than elsewhere in the city, and the population hails from a wide array of geographic areas.

This neighbourhood was chosen for the implementation of the questionnaire by defining *a priori*, on the basis of Marseille's demographic history, six categories of origin that the Foundations and the researchers considered relevant to the research framework of the programme: Muslim individuals of Algerian descent / of other

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<sup>15</sup> "In order to prepare for the dissemination of the 1999 population census, INSEE developed a system for dividing the country into units of equal size, known as IRIS2000. In French, IRIS is an acronym of 'aggregated units for statistical information', and the 2000 refers to the target size of 2,000 residents per basic unit." See <http://www.insee.fr/en/methodes/default.asp?page=definitions/iris.htm> (accessed April 2011).

<sup>16</sup> Median income in Marseille stood at €2,837 per household in 2001. In the 3rd *arrondissement* median income was €6,300 in 2001 (INSEE, Statistiques locales, Marseille).

Maghreb origins / of African or Comorian descent; non-Muslim individuals of French descent / other European descent / African descent.

## 2.5 Marseille's Migrations and Population Settlements: The Issue of Nationality

In Marseille, local history almost entirely merges with the history of contemporary influxes of migrants, to the point that the history of migrations pervades the city's territory, its demographics, its mentality, its customs and traditions, its habits of speech and its dialect, like the concentric circles on a centuries-, or even millennia-old tree-trunk:

To one who studies it at some distance, Marseille looks like a melting pot, like a mirror reflecting, more or less faithfully, all the major waves of migration across the Mediterranean area. The diverse strata, overlaying each other, that one may even discern in the make-up of Marseille's modern-day population, closely correspond to those major waves.<sup>17</sup>

Latin migrations, multi-layered migrations stemming from the disruption of the Mediterranean world in the wake of the First World War (Armenians, Lebanese, Syrians), political exiles and waves of refugees fleeing the rise of fascism in the 1930s (from Italy, Spain and so on), and more recently, waves of migrations originating from the Maghreb, from sub-Saharan Africa, or from the Indian Ocean (Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius or Réunion Island), and closely linked to the decolonisation process; not to mention the most recent influxes of migrants resulting from European unification (Bosnians, Serbs, Poles, Romanians, etc.) or from the globalisation of trade (ethnic Chinese from the mainland or from Taiwan). All of this led the historian Emile Témime to conclude: "There are few events in the political or economic spheres that would not significantly reverberate on Marseille's demographics."<sup>18</sup>

In fact, the migratory reality is an integral part of Marseille's political and cultural identity, and it is not even possible to talk about the city, to film it, to sing or write about it, without paying tribute to its legendary cosmopolitanism, or at least making reference to it.<sup>19</sup> The brand of cosmopolitanism specific to Marseille remains problematic; as individuals, social groups, affirm it or claim it for themselves, it continues to produce paradoxical effects in the sphere of representations, or in the public discourse carried on by opinion leaders: Marseille's cosmopolitanism is at once a

<sup>17</sup> Emile Témime, "Marseille, ville de migrations" (Marseille, city of migration), *Vingtième siècle. Revue d'histoire* 7(1) (1985), p. 46 (hereafter Témime, "Marseille, ville de migrations").

<sup>18</sup> Témime, "Marseille, ville de migrations".

<sup>19</sup> Yvan Gastaut, "Marseille cosmopolite après les décolonisations: un enjeu identitaire" (Cosmopolitan Marseille after decolonisation: an identity issue), *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* 67 (2003), available at <http://cdlm.revues.org/index134.html> (accessed January 2011) (hereafter Gastaut, "Marseille cosmopolite").

source of pride, in the framework of a local identity promoted as that of a welcoming, tolerant host city, and a subject of shame (perceptions of invasion and insecurity).

As a consequence of this paradox, the migratory facts on the ground generate ambivalent attitudes, behaviours and responses: on the one hand, public leaders would like to draw on them to promote the city as a tourist destination and as an economically vibrant and dynamic place; on the other hand, they strive to remove at all costs the stigmatising label of a city of migrants, and they try to revive the myth of Marseille, a city of Provence, cultivating a nostalgia centred on the old village cores, with their church steeple, parish hall and market square.

While most large European cities today include one or several so-called ethnic neighbourhoods, these are generally confined to specific areas that are limited in size. In Marseille, by contrast these ethnic neighbourhoods are found across the whole of the city's central area, adjoining the places where administrative, political and police headquarters are concentrated. As a consequence, foreign residents, or residents of foreign descent, are clearly visible, although they are not necessarily more numerous than their counterparts in other major European cities (Madrid, Barcelona, Rome, Paris, Birmingham, London, Berlin, etc.): the clear visibility of the residents of foreign descent is less the result of their actual demographic weight than of their concentration in the most central areas, between the port of La Joliette, the Canebière Boulevard and St-Charles train station.

The presence of migrants in the central districts contributes to the persistence of clichés of Marseille as a city of migrants, an Arabic city and today, of course, a Muslim city. New migrant communities settled into the city centre's working-class neighbourhoods, because they provide an ample supply of run-down, cheap housing. In doing this, migrants from the Maghreb, sub-Saharan Africa, Comoros, and more recently Turkey, Kurdistan and mainland China take their turn in a continuous, long-term process of migration, which has deeply imprinted Marseille's cityscape since the 19th century.

The first wave of migration in contemporary times started in the middle of the 19th century. It lasted until the eve of the First World War (1914). It is closely linked with the French colonial venture in North Africa (beginning with the conquest of Algeria in 1830), whose needs called for the refurbishment and the extension of Marseille's port and industry areas further north in the city (where the neighbourhood of La Joliette now lies). In 1851, foreign residents made up around 8 per cent of Marseille's total population, a very significant figure at that time. But the foreign presence continued to grow steadily and at a dazzling pace, with the massive influx of Italian migrants: in 1914, more than 100,000 Italians were settled in the city, which was 20 per cent of the population. With one inhabitant out of five of Italian descent, Marseille was perceived

by the French residents as an Italian city.<sup>20</sup> Nationalistic and xenophobic movements rushed in to denounce the Italian invasion.<sup>21</sup>

Marseille's Italians were for the most part a migrant workforce, taking up jobs in the neighbourhoods adjoining the port, and the positions in the labour market that they occupied were linked to Marseille's new industry and docking activities. As Témime observed, in the Marseille of the 1920s the word "Italian" was synonymous with "foreigner", and vice versa:

One sees well what the Italian "invasion" stands for. Other minorities end up being forgotten in the process, to the point that "Italian workforce" and "foreign workforce" are often conflated notions. The Italian presence makes itself felt everywhere, in the port, in practically every industry, and in some sectors they have a quasi-monopoly of the employment.<sup>22</sup>

To this main wave of Italian migrants one should add a small Algerian colony, hailing for the most part from the poorer Kabyle hinterland, which were to be famously used by the employers between 1889 and 1906 to break the frequent strikes of the Italian workers, who were very rights-conscious: "The introduction of the first Kabyle workmen before 1914 (numbering no more than a few thousands in the whole country) was indeed driven by a conscious will to recruit workmen who would be easier to control, and who would enjoy no job security at all."<sup>23</sup>

The second wave of migration started after the First World War and concerns "France as a whole from 1920 onwards, since the country was in need of more labour for the rebuilding and the restarting of the industry, while the effects of the demographic decline, made worse by the heavy human losses of the First World War, began to be felt".<sup>24</sup> In Marseille, Italian immigration remained prevalent, but new groups were also arriving: colonial workers (usually single men) and Armenians (political refugees with their families fleeing persecution in Turkey). For the Armenian community,

the role of Marseille as a port city, at once a city of transit and a safe harbour, appears primordial; indeed, what we are talking about is the massive arrival, essentially concentrated in a few year's span between 1922 and 1927, of a mass of migrants, rejected by their country and subjected to persecution, forced into

<sup>20</sup> Pierre Milza (ed.), *Les Italiens de France de 1914 à 1940* (Italians in France from 1914 to 1940), Ecole française de Rome, Rome, 1986.

<sup>21</sup> Témime, "Marseille, ville de migrations", p. 40.

<sup>22</sup> Témime, "Marseille, ville de migrations", p. 41.

<sup>23</sup> Emile Témime, "Marseille XXe: de la dominante italienne à la diversité maghrébine" (Marseille in the 20th century: from Italian predominance to North African diversity), *Revue européenne des migrations internationales* 11(1) (1995), p. 13.

<sup>24</sup> Abdelmalek Sayad, Jean-Jacques Jordi and Emile Témime, *Migrance. Histoire des migrations à Marseille* (History of migration to Marseille), vol. 4, Edisud, Aix-en-Provence, 1991 (hereafter Sayad et al., *Migrance*).

exile; they arrive dejected and destitute, sometimes in situations of extreme misery.<sup>25</sup>

Between 1925 and 1930, foreign residents in Marseille numbered 200,000, which was more than 20 per cent of the population. Marseille, Italian city, diversified itself, turning into a cosmopolitan city. More than one out of five Marseillais were migrants.

Moreover, one should not forget to mention the contribution of internal migration to the population of Marseille. The most telling example is, of course, the massive influx of Corsicans after the 1920s:

Among the newcomers of French origin, a special space should be reserved for the Corsican community. The Corsican migration is quite ancient, and the port had already attracted migrants from the Cap Corse villages at a much earlier stage. With the weakening of the island's economy at the end of the 19th century, the trend grew steadily stronger; but it is mostly after 1920 that this movement was to become systemic, impacting more or less the whole island.<sup>26</sup>

Corsicans famously settled in the Le Panier neighbourhood. Even today, it is often described as a Corsican enclave, although its actual population has grown more diverse, with the settlement of Comorians in the 1970s and 1980s, joined by white upper classes in the 1990s and 2000s.

A third major wave of migration came with the reconstruction policies after the Second World War, and to an even greater extent following the decolonisation process (accession of the former French colonies of sub-Saharan and North Africa to independence). In concrete terms, this period saw the arrival of large numbers of immigrants from the Maghreb (a majority of them from Algeria); simultaneously, a large number of Europeans repatriated from formerly French Algeria also settled in Marseille, along with Sephardic Jews, originating from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, who chose to leave with the French colonists. The social and professional integration of the returnees was not without its fair share of hurdles, all the more since their arrival in Marseille was concomitant with the first signs of the city's economic downturn: "Their inclusion would not always be easy, the newly available workforce being out of proportion to Marseille's actual level of economic development. In this case too, communal solidarities as well as personal choices would play their part; and the city's physiognomy would be forever transformed".<sup>27</sup>

At the beginning of the 1970s, there were around 100,000 returnees from North Africa in Marseille. This significantly altered the numbers of foreign residents and residents of foreign descent in the city. Marseille changed from being seen as an Italian city to an

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<sup>25</sup> Témime, "Marseille, ville de migrations", p. 42.

<sup>26</sup> Témime, "Marseille, ville de migrations", p. 42.

<sup>27</sup> Témime, "Marseille, ville de migrations", p. 44.

Algerian city, although the proportion of Algerians remains lower than that of the Italians in their time. According to Témime,

the most visible phenomenon is the change in the dominant trend. More than 50 per cent of the foreigners come from the Maghreb. In the [1975] census, they would account for 60 per cent of foreign-born residents, and they often took over, both in the geographic map of Marseille as well as in the labour market, the space that not so long ago was occupied by the Italians.<sup>28</sup>

This influx of migrants from the Maghreb with their families is also at the root of significant changes affecting Marseille's urban fabric, as it gave birth to the social and spatial North–South divide still prevalent today:

The presence of those newcomers, by the tens of thousands, forced the city into a process of self-transformation, as there was no choice but to make some space for them. The building of the new housing estates known as the “*cités*” was thus accelerated, with a view to reabsorbing the shanty towns and other urban areas, deemed unfit for habitation, where a large share of the migrants had long been crammed into, and to providing housing for the latest waves of newcomers. Housing estates mushrooming at too fast a pace, provisional by their very nature, open by priority to the least advantaged, they would soon be abandoned by the least destitute among their residents. The “*cités*” were zones of marginalisation, lacking public amenities, like the “*cités*” of Font-Vert, of Frais-Vallon or Bellevue... where living conditions were to become more and more difficult with the passing of the years, when buildings got run-down and jobs became scarce.<sup>29</sup>

Is it advisable, or even possible, to mention a fourth wave of migration in Marseille? One thing is certain, at any rate: whereas in the past historians could point out an Italian dominant trend or an Algerian dominant trend, it seems now more difficult to use the notion of dominant trend in terms of nationality of origin. This observation, however, does not preclude some significant phenomena coming up, such as, for example, the demographic power of the Comorians, or the prevalent role of Chinese migrants in the commercial activity in the city centre.

Marseille is said to be the second capital of Comoros.<sup>30</sup> Although there are no official census data, various estimates put the Comorian population of Marseille between

<sup>28</sup> Témime, “Marseille, ville de migrations”, p. 44.

<sup>29</sup> Témime, “Marseille, ville de migrations”, p. 16.

<sup>30</sup> The Comoros archipelago, located in the Indian Ocean north of the Mozambique Channel, is a former French colony that reclaimed its independence in 1975, with the exception of the island of Mayotte (Maore). In 1976, the latter became a full territorial collectivity of the French Republic. In 2009, Mayotte became France's tenth overseas *département*. The three other islands, Grande Comore (Ngazidja), Anjouan (Ndzواني) and Mohéli (Mwali), together form the République fédérale des Comores, or Union of the Comoros, the capital of which, Moroni, is located on Grande Comore.

30,000 and 80,000,<sup>31</sup> 80 per cent of whom are French citizens. The exact size of the Comorian population in Marseille is unclear. The differences in the estimates of the population arise for two reasons. First, migrants from the island of Mayotte (now a fully-fledged French *département*), known as the Mahorians, are not counted as foreigners. Second, many Comorians lack residence permits. Due to the combination of these two factors, a large part of Marseille's Comorian population is invisible in official data. In the city, the Comorian community is concentrated for the most part in central neighbourhoods (Le Panier and Belsunce), in the port area (La Joliette), in semi-peripheral neighbourhoods (Boulevard National, St-Mauront and Félix Piat), and in working-class housing estates in the city's northern half (Frais Vallon, La Savine, Plan d'Aou, La Castellane and La Bricarde).

On the symbolic level, the status of the Comorian community testifies to some significant new developments in recent years. Contrary to the communities from the Maghreb, often subjected to a racist, xenophobic discourse, Marseille Comorians are the objects of a much more ambivalent set of representations, perhaps reminiscent of colonial prejudices setting blacks against Arabs. These prejudices were instrumental in shaping the image of the Comorian community as a passive one, introverted and conservative, keeping to itself, with its own customs and traditions, and thus appearing less aggressive or dangerous than the Maghrebis and Arabs, despite being a Muslim community.<sup>32</sup> However, this image is changing: the representations of Comorians as passive are being replaced with the image of "an occult, secretive community", providing a source of fresh concerns for institutional actors, policymakers and security officials. It is as if the very secrecy of the Comorians, which used to be valued and to provide a sense of security, has now become a basis for suspicions. The discourse centres on claims of "failed integration, polygamy, single (female) parents, trafficking in forged papers, which form the widespread image about Comorian immigration in Marseille".<sup>33</sup>

Increasing Chinese migration has also been an issue that has emerged in Marseille since the 1990s. Until the 1980s, Chinese migration to Marseille was limited to a few dozen families, mostly as a consequence of political upheavals. Marseille did not have a Chinese neighbourhood on a par with the one in Paris (the "Chinese triangle" in the 13th *arrondissement*), much less an actual Chinatown on the scale and model

<sup>31</sup> If the number of 80,000 Comorians and French citizens of Comorian descent in Marseille were confirmed, it would amount to 10 per cent of the general population. We would then be able to speak of a Comorian dominant trend in the same way as an Italian or Algerian/Maghrebi dominant trend.

<sup>32</sup> The vast majority of Marseille Comorians are Sunni Muslims of the Shafi'i school. See Amélie Barbey, "Institutions et acteurs religieux chez les Comoriens de Marseille" ((Religious figures and institutions in Marseille's Comorian community), *Migrations Société* 19(111–112) (May–August 2007), pp. 17–39.

<sup>33</sup> Sophie Blanchy, "Les Comoriens, une immigration méconnue" (The Comorians, a little known immigration), *Hommes & Migration* 1215 (September–October 1998), pp. 5–21.

commonly found in North American cities (New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles).<sup>34</sup> Since the beginning of the 1990s, however, the number of continental Chinese settling in Marseille has increased. The size of the Chinese population remains unclear, since many do not have legal papers (*cartes de séjour*, or residence permits). Until recently, most of the Chinese tended to establish themselves in the La Joliette neighbourhood, on the Boulevard des Dames and in Le Panier.

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<sup>34</sup> Barbara Baille, “Chinois de Marseille” (The Chinese of Marseille) (research notes), *Revue européenne des migrations internationales* 11(1) (1995), pp. 115–124.

### 3. CITY POLICY

#### 3.1 National Context: Republicanism, *Laïcité* and Islam

France is often described as a single and inseparable republic, according to the constitution's formula, which would point to a system in which the *laïque* (secular) and republican tradition bans any sign of ethnicity and religion from the public sphere.<sup>35</sup> Thus, the French republican pattern of integration contrasts with a community-based Anglo-Saxon approach recognising the distinctive identities of foreigners and minorities and including them as constituents in the national community.

This assertion does not capture the practical and symbolic complexity of cultural and religious belonging in France, and it conceals certain arguments about minority religion in numerous fields, such as education, housing, policing, and political participation and arrangements. Indeed, the formal speech of intellectuals, political leaders and the media currently sidesteps the notions of minority and community, which are thought to be contrary to republican universalism. At the same time, they regularly ascribe deep otherness to residents with postcolonial origins (African, Maghrebi and those from French overseas *départements*), and this inserts ethnicity into the public debates on social issues and in policies aimed at these people. Therefore France's distinctive political feature is less strict state neutrality, as it is an ongoing tension between the ideal of national unity and the recognition of plural cultures. This kind of tension was described earlier in French history. It applied successively to Jews after the 1789 Revolution (politics of regeneration)<sup>36</sup> and to colonialism (politics of assimilation),<sup>37</sup> and it does now to immigrants and their descendants (politics of integration).<sup>38</sup> Integration policies deny that minorities exist, yet at the same time foster the categorisation of ethnic and religious minorities as others in various practical and symbolic ways.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Dominique Schnapper, *La France de l'intégration. Sociologie de la nation en 1990* (The France of integration. Sociology of the nation in 1990), Gallimard, Paris, 1991; Yves Lacoste, *Vive la Nation. Destin d'une idée géopolitique* (Long live the nation. Fate of a geopolitical idea), Fayard, Paris, 1998.

<sup>36</sup> Pierre Birnbaum (ed.), *Histoire politique des juifs de France* (Political history of the Jews of France), Presses de Sciences Po, Paris, 1990.

<sup>37</sup> Nicolas Bancel, Pascal Blanchard and Françoise Vergès, *La République coloniale. Essai sur une utopie* (The colonial republic. Essay on a utopia), "Introduction", Albin Michel, Paris, 2003.

<sup>38</sup> Vincent Geisser, "L'intégration: réflexion sur une problématique post-coloniale" (Integration: reflections on a postcolonial problem), in Pascal Blanchard and Nicolas Bancel (eds), *Culture post-coloniale 1961–2006* (Postcolonial culture 1961–2000), Autrement, Paris, 2006, pp. 145–164.

<sup>39</sup> See generic psychosocial explanations of the process of "othering" in Michael Schwalbe, Sandra Godwin, Daphne Holden, Douglas Schrock, Shealy Thompson and Michele Wolkomir, "Generic processes in the reproduction of inequality: An interactionist analysis", *Social Forces* 79(2) (December 2000), pp. 419–452.

This *a priori* logic may explain the charges of communalism (*communautarisme*) which are often made against Muslims and Arabs, and more widely against groups of postcolonial background. *Communautarisme* is not a common word in French; it is a neologism that has only recently gained currency. It may be defined as the alleged propensity of individuals to group together and to avoid ethnic mixing. It is typically applied to people of the ethnicities noted above, who are suspected of not being individual enough, not sufficiently imbued with French values, and who could cause French unified society to become like a mosaic.<sup>40</sup> However, research suggests that minority organisation and activism is in fact rather underdeveloped in France, compared with England or Germany.<sup>41</sup> The Open Society Foundations' survey shows that Muslims' communal activism and organisation are not radicalised. Indeed, if any communal ethnicity has become prominent in France during the last decades, it is that of the French majority. As in other European countries, France is exhibiting growing nationalism, and various political leaders – not only those on the far right – emphasise France's own deep identity.<sup>42</sup>

The discussion of *laïcité* has paralleled the rise of Islamic organisations in France<sup>43</sup> and the increase of young people's identification as Muslims. The first case of the politicisation of *laïcité* in this new context happened in a secondary school (*collège*<sup>44</sup>) near Paris, in autumn 1989. The government called upon the Conseil d'Etat (State Council) to make *laïcité* explicit in positive law. Taking into account previous French law as well as international human rights instruments, the State Council formulated a liberal conception of *laïcité*, which grants individuals the right to express religious and other belonging as long as this does not injure anyone or hamper the smooth

<sup>40</sup> In the course of this process, the word “mosaic” itself has acquired a negative, “communalist” connotation. See Michel Wieviorka (ed.), *Une société fragmentée? Le multiculturalisme en débat* (A fragmented society? Multiculturalism in debate), La Découverte, Paris, 1996.

<sup>41</sup> See Laurent Lévy, *Le Spectre du communautarisme* (The ghost of communalism, Amsterdam, Paris, 2005; Fabrice Dhume-Sonzogni, *Racisme, antisémitisme et “communautarisme”. L'école à l'épreuve des faits* (Racism, anti-Semitism and “communalism”. Putting schools to the test), L'Harmattan, Paris, 2007; Vincent Tiberj, *La Crispation hexagonale* (France's state of tension), Plon, Paris, 2008. (See also *At Home in Europe* Muslims in Berlin, Muslims in Hamburg and Muslims in Leicester reports, available at [www.soros.org/initiatives/home](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/home)).

<sup>42</sup> The French government organised a public debate on national identity in 2009, just after the Open Society Foundations' questionnaire was circulated in Marseille. It produced a flow of racist statements, so that the dedicated website had to be closed after a few months with no definitive conclusion.

<sup>43</sup> See Jonathan Lawrence and Justin Vaisse, *Integrating Islam. Political and Religious Challenges in Contemporary France*, Brookings Institute Press, Washington, DC, 2006.

<sup>44</sup> *Collège* is lower secondary education, for ages 11–15. See [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/eurybase/national\\_summary\\_sheets/047\\_FR\\_EN.pdf](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/eurybase/national_summary_sheets/047_FR_EN.pdf) (accessed April 2011).

functioning of public services. This remains the constitutional principle of *laïcité*,<sup>45</sup> which has not changed during two decades of political debate about it. However, the right-wing government and Parliament (across party lines) passed a law to prevent students from wearing religious symbols in primary and secondary schools in 2004. Moreover, political discourse about *laïcité* continued to grow after 11 September 2001 (hereafter, 9/11), reaching a high point in 2003, but it is still simmering.<sup>46</sup> *Laïcité* is commonly regarded as a major component of national identity, resulting from national history and culture, thus implying a thick ethnic-like conception of the republican principle, an interpretation that seems distant from the legal meaning of *laïcité*.<sup>47</sup>

These reflections illuminate the complexity of political practices and discourse relating to the Islamic faith and Muslim citizens in France. On the one hand, French authorities continuously call for the acceleration of integration in national society by calling upon Muslim leaders, imams and mosques to be more French. The topic of French Islam instead of Islam in France has become the new creed of political actors since the 1990s, which means that Islam is no longer a foreign “transplanted” religion,<sup>48</sup> but also a national “integrated” denomination. On the other hand, Muslims’ perceived otherness remains, due to their relatively recent arrival in French society, the lack of corporate organisation, and, most of all, the concern that the Muslim faithful have not yet incorporated republican values well enough, notably *laïcité* and gender equality.

### 3.2 Perception of Muslims

In December 2001, the then mayor of Marseille, Jean-Claude Gaudin, was quoted in an interview to the newspaper *La Tribune*: “The Marseille of the people, it is not the Marseille from the Maghreb, it is not the Comorian Marseille. The centre was invaded by foreign residents, the true Marseillais are gone”.<sup>49</sup> It would be mistaken to take this statement of the city’s foremost political figure at face value, as the expression of a racist worldview, discriminating against some ethnic constituents among the population of Marseille (Maghrebis, Comorians, Turks, black Africans). The mayor’s statement seems revealing of the local ideology still conveyed, to a large extent, by

<sup>45</sup> Conseil d’Etat, *Rapport public 2004. Jurisprudence et avis de 2003. Un siècle de laïcité* (Public report 2004. Jurisprudence and recommendations of 2003. A century of secularism), La Documentation française, Paris, 2004.

<sup>46</sup> See Claire de Galember (ed.), “Le voile en procès” (The veil on trial), special issue, *Droit et société* 68 (2008); John Bowen, *Why the French Don’t Like Headscarves. Islam, the State, and Public Space*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2008.

<sup>47</sup> Cecile Laborde, *Critical Republicanism. The Hijab Controversy and Political Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2008.

<sup>48</sup> Felice Dassetto and Albert Bastenier, *L’Islam transplanté. Vie et organisation des minorités musulmanes de Belgique* (Islam abroad. Life and organisation of Muslim minorities in Belgium), EPO, Antwerp, 1984.

<sup>49</sup> *La Tribune*, 5 December 2001.

political and media actors, sometimes even by leaders of civic organisations such as the *Comités d'intérêts de quartier* (Committees for Neighbourhood Interests – CIQ), which were supposedly representative of Marseille's civil society. It creates a representation of Marseille's citizenship that is at once ethnicising and hierarchical, and in which the position held by Muslims is ambivalent: they are not totally excluded from the life of the city, but they are perceived as half-citizens whose integration is still a work in progress, and whose legitimacy on the local stage is subject to debate and to antagonistic questioning. From this point of view, despite the persistence of a number of ethnic, racial and religious stereotypes of the Muslims of Marseille, their image in the city's public space has evolved over recent years in a broadly positive direction, and they have been able to enjoy some degree of political recognition and media visibility. However, this evolution took place at a slow pace, with periods of regression: legitimacy gained on one day could be put into question the next day under the pressure of local, national or even international events (like the Iranian revolution of 1979, the Gulf war in 1991, or the 9/11 attacks).

In the 1970s, the colonial prism shaped the perception of the Muslim population, especially as Marseille at the time was home to a strong community of European repatriates from North Africa, known as the *pieds-noirs*, still nurturing feelings of resentment towards the Arabs who had chased them from "their" lands.<sup>50</sup> The racism of the Marseillais, primarily directed at Algerian workers, was much reported in the press, especially in the columns of the newspaper *Le Méridional*, which positioned itself as an echo chamber for the city's conservative and xenophobic circles.<sup>51</sup> This was a form of postcolonial racism fomented by those who had a direct personal experience of French colonisation in North Africa (*pieds-noirs* and former state employees in the French colonies), and who were now holding key positions in the local institutions (administration, police, social security, schools, etc.):

Those great shocks of history cannot subside overnight. It was unavoidable that the Algerian War and the 1962 exodus would leave deep marks, both material and moral ... Political life in Marseille remains imprinted by the violent confrontations that took place on both shores of the Mediterranean. Here, the great delusions of the past are slower to dissipate than in the rest of France ... The imperial illusion has left a persistent imprint on the city, and passions aroused by the process of decolonisation fade slowly, all the more since Marseille has become a major *piéd-noir* city.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Jean-Jacques Jordi, *1962: l'arrivée des Pieds-Noirs* (The arrival of the *pieds-noirs*), Autrement, Paris, 2002.

<sup>51</sup> van Gastaut, "Marseille, épice de la problématique du racisme en 1973" (Marseille, epicentre of the racism problem in 1973), *Migrance* 25 (3rd trimester 2005), pp. 20–21 (hereafter Gastaut, "Marseille, épice").

<sup>52</sup> Abdelmalek Sayad, Jean-Jacques Jordi and Emile Temime, "Des mots et des hommes" (Words and men), in Sayad *et al.*, *Migrance. Histoire des migrations à Marseille*, vol. 4, Edisud, Aix-en-Provence, 1991, pp. 99–100.

The racism imported from the former colonies also found an echo with some Marseillais whose origins lie in the city itself or in the local region (Provence). However, this postcolonial racist atmosphere, also found in many major cities of the south (Marseille, Toulon, Nice, Montpellier, etc.) has led to the mobilisation of anti-racist activists. Since the 1970s, Marseille has therefore been a battleground where racists and anti-racists confront each other,<sup>53</sup> while prominent figures in the local public sphere have often tried to keep a neutral profile. The Arab presence in the city was conceived of as temporary. And it was precisely inasmuch as it was perceived as temporary that people tolerated it, hoping that the immigrants would not settle permanently in the territory of Marseille. Many Marseillais expected them one day to return to their countries. At the time, Islam was not a significant feature of public debate. Islam began to come to prominence in the wake of the Islamic revolution of Iran (1979). The mayor of Marseille, Gaston Defferre, who was also the minister of the interior from 1981 to 1984, denounced the threat that Islamic fundamentalism posed to the cohesion of local society:

For example in Marseille, in the mosques, they used to just celebrate the culture and it was an excellent thing. In neighbourhoods where mosques have been established, the French residents protested a lot in the beginning, but later they told me: "It brings calm, it eases tensions, etc.!" But slowly, radicals are gaining a foothold in the mosques, they become the managers or the leaders, they proselytise, they spread propaganda. This is dangerous, because the mosques may become intermediaries for those who perpetrate attacks and bombings, and this cannot be tolerated.<sup>54</sup>

The climate of xenophobia was here to stay: in the 1980s and 1990s, Marseille became an electoral stronghold of the far-right extremist party, the *Front National*. Its leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen, dreamed of making Marseille into a symbol of national reconquest from migrant invaders. While this anti-migrant discourse was fiercely opposed by some of Marseille's democrats, who responded by setting up an informal group with an anti-racist, humanist platform, *Marseille Fraternité*, the *Front National's* propaganda helped radicalise public opinion on the issue of immigration.<sup>55</sup> From then on, Marseillais of Maghrebi background in general, and Algerian immigrants in particular, turned into the scapegoats of the public discourse; they were targeted by political leaders and local newspapers, such as *Le Méridional*, faithful to its long-standing xenophobic and anti-

<sup>53</sup> Yvan Gastaut, "La flambée raciste de 1973 en France" (France's racist flare-up in 1973), *Revue européenne des migrations internationales* 9(2) (1993), pp. 61–75 (hereafter Gastaut, "La flambée raciste").

<sup>54</sup> G. Defferre, *Les Temps Modernes* (Modern times) 452–454 (1984), pp. 1573–1574, cited in Jocelyne Césari, *Être musulman en France. Associations, militants et mosques* (Being Muslim in France. Associations, activists and mosques), Karthala, Paris, 1994, p. 126 (hereafter Césari, *Être musulman en France*).

<sup>55</sup> Jean Viard, "Marseille: quand Le Pen occupe la ville" (Marseille: when Le Pen occupies the city), *Le Journal des élections* 1 (April–May 1988).

Arab editorial line (see Chapter 11). Of course, not every Marseillais accepted the racist discourse of the *Front National*, but the party's powerful presence in the city, both politically and electorally, was an indirect factor in delaying the symbolic inclusion of immigrant residents in the public sphere. Ideas from the far right were soon entering the discourse of main opinion leaders in Marseille. On the right and the far right of the city's political chessboard, Maghrebi and African immigration remained synonymous with invasion. Arab neighbourhoods in the city centre (Noailles, Belsunce, Porte d'Aix) were described as an authentic Kasbah planted on Provençal soil.<sup>56</sup> The political left, while officially fighting the racist discourse of the *Front National*, refrained from pushing Maghrebi leaders into the limelight, for fear that they would deter voters. Arab Muslims were almost suspected of being partly responsible, by their deviant attitudes and behaviours, for the racism of which they were the first victims.

By the end of the 1980s, the Maghrebi residents of Marseille were increasingly seen as illegitimate, even though a large proportion were French nationals and asserted their Marseillais identity loud and clear. Local media were emblematic of the way migrant populations were denied fair representation: Maghrebis, Arabs, Comorians and so on only showed up in news items about crime and violence in the North districts. The media treatment of these residents, even by moderate newspapers like *Le Provençal* (centre left) or *La Marseillaise* (Communist), showed that they were not yet considered completely legitimate in the public sphere of Marseille, from which they were generally absent, except as fear-inducing representations (the figure of the delinquent).

At the start of the 1990s, when a new municipal team came to power, led by a prominent local citizen and professor of medicine, Robert-Paul Vigouroux (mayor from 1989 to 1995), a significant change in the public image of the residents of Maghrebi and African background was noticeable. For the first time in the history of Marseille, there was a strong feeling that Muslims were being treated as fully-fledged citizens of Marseille and full members and participants in the city's public sphere. Indeed, the new mayor favoured a form of official, city-supported multiculturalism, setting up a council for dialogue between communities (*Marseille Espérance*, or Hope for Marseille, established in 1990 – see below), in which secular and observant Muslims sat alongside Jews, Armenians, Catholic and Protestant Christians, Buddhists and so on. In addition, the mayor pledged to build a great mosque for Marseille's Muslims, as if to signal through a symbolic gesture that Muslims were now permanently anchored in local society.<sup>57</sup> Although the plans for the mosque would never be realised (they were abandoned in 1991), they nevertheless fostered a process of

<sup>56</sup> Philippe Samarco and Bernard Morel, *Marseille. L'Etat du futur* (Marseille: the future state), Edisud, Aix-en-Provence, 1988 (hereafter Samarco and Morel, *Marseille. L'Etat du futur*).

<sup>57</sup> Bruno Etienne, "Marseille comme exemple d'interaction ville/religions: l'association Marseille Espérance" (Marseille as an example of interaction between the city and religions: the Marseille Espérance organisation), in Franck Frégosi and Jean-Paul Willaime (eds), *Le religieux dans la commune. Les régulations locales du pluralisme religieux en France* (Religion at the municipal level. Local management of religious pluralism in France), Labor et Fides, Geneva, 2001, p. 165.

institutionalisation of the Muslim reference in the local public sphere, which the regional press (*La Marseillaise*, *Le Provençal* and *Le Méridional*) would largely echo. The downside of this recognition of residents of Maghrebi or African background in the political sphere and in the media was the danger of a double confinement to the community and to religion: the Maghrebis of yesteryear had become the Muslims of the day, and all their actions, big or small, were scrutinised through the prism of Islam. It created a form of forced Islamisation,<sup>58</sup> without reference to individual choices and personal inclinations. The public recognition of Muslim identity by Marseille's opinion leaders can also be seen as a form of ethnic and religious confinement and an overall perception of the diverse communities.

In 1995 Jean-Claude Gaudin was elected mayor of Marseille. Although a conservative or centre-right politician from the *Union pour un Mouvement Populaire* (Union for a Popular Movement – UMP), he took full responsibility for the legacy of municipal multiculturalism and backed the principle of the dialogue between communities, confirming support for *Marseille Espérance*, and drawing on the theme of a cosmopolitan and fraternal Marseille in the media. Cultural and festive events were launched, which, in the guise of urban carnivals (“*La Massilia*” in 1999 and “*Marcéleste*” in 2000), were aimed at showcasing Marseille's diversity and the peaceful coexistence between the city's communities. Moreover, from June 2001, the planning for the Great Mosque of Marseille was restarted. In spite of numerous ups and downs and some resistance to the plans, the mosque should soon break the ground in the working-class neighbourhood of Saint-Louis (15th *arrondissement*), with full backing from city hall. The municipality has provided the Muslim organisation managing the place of worship with a plot of city-owned land and technical logistics.

Furthermore, local UMP circles no longer hesitate to have Muslim candidates running for them in every election, so as to win over voters in working-class neighbourhoods. Thus, the municipality, with the support of the local media (such as the regional newspaper *La Provence*), uses the theme of Marseille's cosmopolitanism not only as a factor of social cohesion, but also as a tool to sell the city's image and lure tourists and new upper-class residents (the neo-Marseillais), who come in ever increasing numbers to visit or to set up house in the city. The diversity of the city's cultures has become a central theme around which public relations efforts are structured.

One might be led to believe that this full political recognition for Muslims has led them to be seen as Marseillais citizens like any other. But the multiculturalism made in Marseille has its own inherent limits: speeches and political discourse on Marseillais Muslims are still marked with ambivalence and convey a sense that, as of 2009, they were still perceived as outsiders, whose legitimacy as citizens remains frail. Public discourse on the Muslim community often gives weight to a black-and-white view,

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<sup>58</sup> Vincent Geisser and Aziz Zemouri, *Marianne et Allah. Les politiques français face à la “question musulmane”* (*Marianne and Allah. French political leaders confronting the Muslim question*), La Découverte, Paris, 2007 (hereafter Geisser and Zemouri, *Marianne et Allah*).

opposing good moderate Muslims to bad fundamentalist Muslims, the trouble being that the latter category is most of the time applicable to devout Muslims, who come to be considered extremist because they are seen as too active and too visible in the local public sphere.

### 3.3 Institutional Context

The issues examined in this report fall within the area of competence of five different public entities: the city hall of Marseille (the city), the Marseille-Provence-Métropole (the Métropole – MPM) (consisting of Marseille and 17 neighbouring municipalities), the General Council (*Conseil général*) of the Bouches-du-Rhône (the *département*), the *Conseil régional* (Regional Council) Provence Alpes Côte d’Azur (the region, whose territory is made up of six *départements*) and finally the state, through its local representative, the *préfet*.

All these authorities have their base in Marseille, as do the local offices of state administrations that have been devolved under the law of decentralisation. As a result of this multilayered structure, boundaries of intervention have become entangled. The state’s plays the leading role in three key areas: education, policing and health.<sup>59</sup> In addition, the state acts as a central force of regulation and mediation for employment (the public service has just undergone organisational reform). Three other domains fall under private initiative: identity, civic and political participation, and the media. Actors in those fields may be eligible for public grants and subsidies allocated by city hall and local authorities, or even by the central administration (ministries) in the framework of specific programmes. Finally, housing comes under complex partnership regimes. These institutional arrangements are currently under review as part of a general review of public policies, a comprehensive reorganisation of the devolved administrations being carried out under the authority of the *préfet*. This reform is changing the corporatist routines of state officers, drastically transforming procedures and practices.

As the institutional context of each domain is specific, though sometimes shifting, further details are provided in the thematic chapters below. This section provides a brief outline of the ambivalent position of city hall with respect to key programmes. This section also focuses on the form of governance that was introduced starting in 1988 under the name of urban policy, to promote the management of social and economic development issues on a local, territorial basis and through partnerships. Urban policy virtually encompasses all programme areas in so far as actions in these domains are articulated around a common goal of territory-based development. The section ends with a discussion of the institutional invisibility of Muslims, and considers how this is partly counterbalanced by certain agencies, most notably the *Agence pour la*

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<sup>59</sup> Private actors also play a major part in the education and health domains.

*cohésion sociale et pour l'égalité des chances* (Agency for Social Cohesion and Equality of Opportunities – ACSE).<sup>60</sup>

### 3.4 City Hall's Ambivalent Position

Within its own territorial boundaries, city hall has broad competences. According to the law of 5 April 1884 it is expected to deal with “all affairs of the municipality”. Therefore, nothing that happens within city limits is deemed outside the competence of city hall. The mayor may be called upon to answer questions on any local matter. Added to this is Marseille's tradition of great mayors, dominant figures with a strong political image. For example, Jean-Claude Gaudin, who first came into office in 1995 and has since been re-elected twice, is also a politician on the national stage. He is a senator in the National Assembly and deputy chairman of the UMP. He was a minister for urban policy, integration and regional development in the national government from 1995 to 1997. He played a key role in the creation of free zones and *zones urbaines sensibles* (sensitive urban areas – ZUS) in the framework of urban policy (1996). He was also the president of the Regional Council of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur before it was won by the left in 1998.<sup>61</sup>

While the mayor and city hall involve themselves in a large range of issues, since intermunicipal cooperation has been expanded (1999), the fields of action that fall under city hall's exclusive competence are more limited compared with the challenges of urban development. Various powers pertaining to housing, transportation, road maintenance, economic development, urban policy and the living environment have been in fact transferred to MPM, which covers an area with over a million residents.<sup>62</sup> In these areas, the city does not have exclusive competence; however, it is still a part of the decision-making process. Marseille has 14 of the 33 seats of the managing board of MPM, seven of which are occupied by members of the city's centre-right governing majority. Furthermore, representatives from UMP, the party that controls city hall, or their allies dominate most committees concerned with urban development: communication, culture, port authority, transport, finance, European funding and employment. Representatives from the Socialist Party, all from Marseille, have responsibility for urban policy, social housing, cleanliness and waste management. Decision-making in these sectors therefore requires balancing powers and bargaining.<sup>63</sup>

The city has also lost exclusive competence and power over the General Council for the Bouches-du-Rhône *département* and the Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur Regional

<sup>60</sup> See below.

<sup>61</sup> Gaudin's predecessors as mayors of Marseille include Gaston Defferre who inaugurated this tradition of emblematic mayors. He stayed in office for 33 years (1953–1986), and was also a minister from 1981 to 1986: first, minister of the interior and decentralisation (1981–1984); then minister in charge of economic planning and regional development (1984–1986).

<sup>62</sup> Figures from 2006.

<sup>63</sup> In addition, the political right, against all odds, also lost the chairmanship of MPM in 2008.

Council. Social issues are, on the whole, a competence of the General Council; the Regional Council has responsibility for the *Revenu de Solidarité Active* (Active Solidarity Income – RSA) scheme.<sup>64</sup> In education, for example, the building and maintenance of *collèges* falls under the competence of the General Council; however, the Regional Council is in charge of vocational training.

### 3.5 The Urban Contract for Social Cohesion

In France, urban policy (*la politique de la ville*) refers to a range of schemes and interventions specifically designed to improve disenfranchised urban areas and reduce territorial inequalities. Actions and initiatives developed under urban policy are aimed at complementing and supporting general policies which continue to be implemented in these areas. Urban policy also aims at directing general policies to ensure that they have an impact in priority areas.<sup>65</sup> Urban policy covers a wide range of issues: housing and the living environment, employment and professional integration, academic achievement, prevention of crime, citizenship and access to rights, health and culture.

Since 2006, the *Contrat urbain de cohésion sociale* (Urban Contract for Social Cohesion – CUCS) has been the mechanism governing and regulating urban policy in Marseille.<sup>66</sup> The first contract covered the period 2007–2009, and is now being assessed and reviewed.

The CUCS aims to promote strategic action across the various sectors of state intervention; it is based on a contract of cooperation between public authorities at all levels and private partners; it is territory-based, because urban issues are framed in global and spatial terms; and participative, involving the residents of these areas. The role of residents' participation has, however, been watered down, since it is one avenue for social issues among others and not the most prominent. Policymakers also recognise the need to focus on economic regeneration and acknowledge that the aims of urban development in priority areas must relate to the city as a whole or even to a wider region. This has led to the responsibility for urban policy shifting to the Métropole.

The state has also become an increasing presence in urban policymaking. The state's representatives in the regions have been given responsibilities to monitor and ensure consistency in urban policies; deputy *préfets* for equal opportunities have been appointed to the *préfectures* of the most affected *départements*. In Marseille, the deputy *préfet* appointed ten delegates, each of them posted to one of the priority sectors

<sup>64</sup> The RSA is the “active solidarity income”, aimed at providing destitute individuals over 25 years old with a minimum income that remains guaranteed if and when the person eventually returns to the labour market. The RSA was substituted for RMI on 1 June 2009.

<sup>65</sup> *Conseil interministériel des villes* (Interdepartmental committee for cities), 20 June 2008.

<sup>66</sup> This paragraph draws on documentation released by the *Délégation interministérielle à la Ville, Ministère de la Ville (DIV)* and by the *Groupement d'intérêt public* (Group of public interest – GIP) *Politique de la Ville* (Urban policy) of Marseille. The Marseille GIP is a group tasked with piloting activities targeted at urban policy development.

targeted by urban policy; they work in connection with the city-appointed operational teams of each sector. A *Groupement d'intérêt public* (Group of public interest – GIP), chaired by an elected representative of the municipal majority, is tasked with the strategic piloting of the whole system.

In Marseille, the 3rd *arrondissement* is one of the sectors for urban policy, and a project manager is appointed to and has offices in the neighbourhood; there are also two officials in charge of neighbourhood development. The booklet published by the CUCS of Marseille stipulates: “These teams are in charge of identifying territorial issues and the collective needs of the residents, and then of developing, encouraging, prompting or federating initiatives and schemes implemented at the local level, in connection with the local actors, in order to address those difficulties.” In the 3rd *arrondissement*, where a major operation of urban renewal is at the planning stage, action is focused on a reception centre, health care (with backing from the neighbourhood’s social centres) and academic achievement, with a partnership scheme to tutor children and teenagers with difficulties outside school hours.

### 3.6 The Institutional Invisibility of Muslims

In France, groups defined by faith, including Muslims, cannot be the targets of public action in any field, including urban policy.<sup>67</sup> Muslims are therefore absent as subjects and partners for public policy. The absence of reference to Muslims is a taboo that is vigilantly enforced in the sphere of public action while commonly crossed in ordinary social life. The research for this report suggests that social representations of Islam and Muslims are salient in everyday life. Urban policy aims to develop an approach to problems that is realistic and pragmatic. Through a focus on neighbourhoods it aims to recognise issues related to the characteristic features of the targeted areas, and to take these into account in the policies that are carried out.

In urban policy the themes of citizenship, access to rights, and culture provide an opportunity for public policies to address Muslims’ institutional invisibility, and to take into account the problems encountered by individuals because of their minority status. In practice, significant restrictions operate in the selection of civil society organisations carrying out initiatives, and in the choice of projects eligible for grants and subsidies. In particular, organisations that refer to religion or faith are excluded. Young Muslims stand little chance of securing any funding if they openly act as Muslims, and proposed actions are unlikely to attract financial support if they suggest any connection with Islam (even cultural or linguistic).

The CUCS of Marseille specifies: “As a priority, for each proposal of action, we will look into how the issues of integration, of the fight against discrimination, and of

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<sup>67</sup> Issues of religious practice are recognised as an aspect of religion with repercussions in terms of public order. For Muslims these issues are organised through an institutional body, the CFCM, and the CRCM in the regions.

equality of opportunities are taken into account.”<sup>68</sup> Since it was established in 2006, the ACSE<sup>69</sup> has been specifically tasked with this dimension of public action. In 2009, its mission of integration was halted, to be transferred to a new office, the *Office français de l’immigration et de l’intégration* (French Office of Immigration and Integration – OFII).<sup>70</sup> The ACSE has been refocused on its capacity as an operator of programmes of social development carried out for the residents of sensitive urban areas, and has responsibility to the *Fonds interministériel de prévention de la délinquance* (Interministerial Fund for the Prevention of Delinquency – FIPD).<sup>71</sup> It retains competence for the prevention of discrimination,<sup>72</sup> and the promotion of equality and diversity, but within a much weakened organisation.

### 3.6.1 Marseille Espérance

*Marseille Espérance* is a unique scheme set up by the mayor in 1990, at the time of the Gulf war and against the backdrop of a rise of the far right. *Marseille Espérance* is described by city hall as a “unique formula” allowing the mayor to “gather the representatives of the city’s main religious denominations: Buddhists, Armenian Christians, Catholics, Orthodox Christians, Protestants, Jews and Muslims, so as to interact in our ‘common home’ in a spirit of dialogue and respect for an open-minded and pacified *laïcité*”.<sup>73</sup>

This scheme has continued since then and it comes to the fore each time tensions arise between communities,<sup>74</sup> thus making good use of what was primarily an official gesture to symbolise the solidarity of Marseille’s residents as apprehended through their religious affiliations. The formula is indeed unique in several ways. First, *Marseille Espérance* does not speak as much as put itself on show. The calendar it produces features on its cover personalities including Imam Béchir Dahmani, who represents the first generation of blue-collar imams with strong ties to Algeria. The official caption reads: “The foundations of our organisation lie in respect for everyone through frequent exchanges relating to inter-communal harmony, without entering into inter-faith dialogue”. The mechanism of representation is also original. Each community is

<sup>68</sup> Marseille CUCS booklet.

<sup>69</sup> See above.

<sup>70</sup> The OFII is answerable to the Ministry of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Mutually Supportive Development.

<sup>71</sup> This fund collects money from several *départements* in order to sustain policies against delinquency.

<sup>72</sup> “Prevention” and not “fight against” discrimination. For the latter, action has been transferred to the *Haute autorité de lutte contre les discriminations et pour l’égalité* (High Authority for the Fight against Discriminations and for Equality – HALDE), established in 2005 as an independent administrative authority, in accordance with European directives.

<sup>73</sup> See City of Marseille website at [www.marseille.fr](http://www.marseille.fr).

<sup>74</sup> See the website of the Marseille diocese, which details the current make-up and functioning of *Marseille Espérance*: <http://marseille.catholique.fr>.

represented in *Marseille Espérance* by one dignitary (a person of religious status) and one delegate (a person of secular status). Of course the diversity of the Muslim community and the absence of a hierarchical organised structure presented difficulties in identifying participants. The Muslim dignitary was therefore co-opted in 1990, and his presence was given a *de facto* legitimacy by the weight of the population of Algerian background in Marseille.

Although the creation of the *Conseil régional du culte musulman* (Regional Council for Muslim Worship – CRCM) in Marseille in 2003 provided an opportunity for a representative with a clearer legitimacy from the community, *Marseille Espérance* preferred to retain Imam Dahmani as the Muslim dignitary, and the delegate remained as the official representative at the mayor's office. An incumbent representative has been added, Abou Diarra, a chartered accountant with a strong involvement in Marseille's network of civil society organisations.<sup>75</sup> This suggests a conscious choice to prioritise Islam as a culture as opposed to Islam as a faith, a choice that avoids controversy with the wider population, and which is politically easier to justify.

*Marseille Espérance* lacks any legal status, and each particular occasion may thus be tackled in specific ways: "At the heart of *Marseille Espérance's* actions lies a sense of brotherly unity when mutual understanding and respect are threatened in Marseille".<sup>76</sup> A recent example illustrates this adaptability: in July 2009, 60 Comorians of Marseille died in a plane crash while on their way to a summer vacation in their country of origin. Families of victims demonstrated to express their emotion and their anger. *Marseille Espérance*, through the representative at the mayor's office, was quick to organise a memorial ceremony in front of city hall, with a few brief speeches and a public reading by a Comorian writer of Marseille, Salim Hatubou. The chairman of the *Conseil français du culte musulman* (French Council for Muslim Worship – CFCM), which is closely linked with the Marseille CRCM, asked to partake, and was allowed to do so.

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<sup>75</sup> He was among the stakeholders interviewed for this report.

<sup>76</sup> See *Marseilles Esperance's* website: [www.marseille.fr/sitevdm/jsp/site/Portal.jsp?page\\_id=689](http://www.marseille.fr/sitevdm/jsp/site/Portal.jsp?page_id=689) (accessed April 2011).

#### 4. EXPERIENCES OF MUSLIM COMMUNITIES: IDENTITY

Identity is neither something you are, a state of being, nor something you possess. It can only be seized in a state of crisis, and can only sustain itself through an act of taking or holding (a charge, a positioning, a role, a speech). It always needs to rest on renewed identifications.<sup>77</sup>

This evocative statement by the sociologist Pierre Tap emphasises that identity is by no means static, fixed, or acquired once and for all; on the contrary, it is variable, changing depending on the context; it is dependent on the situations in which it is constructed. Identity is, in part, a social construct. Thus, identity relates to an individual's path in society (to some extent, social identities are historically determined); but it also relates to what the individual is experiencing here and now, to the ways in which his or her personal plans are inscribed in the current format of society.<sup>78</sup> This chapter discusses identity in relation to the social logic that governs the way one can hold on to it, and what makes identities relatively stable for a group of individuals at a given time.

There are four distinct dimensions of the processes.<sup>79</sup> First is identification: how individuals answer the question: "Who am I?" or related questions, when these were asked in the framework of the Foundations' survey, through questionnaires, focus group discussion or stakeholder interviews. Each of these situations provided opportunities for the participants to explicitly hold on to identity. The statements constituted the identification side of social identities. The second dimension consists of social relationships, the social ties that individuals maintain, and about which they reported and produced assessments in the survey. The third is concerned with what could be called the experience of minority. How did the Muslims<sup>80</sup> surveyed become aware of the fact that they were (or may be) viewed as different, or troublesome, or inferior (which is precisely what being part of the minority, in the sociological sense, entails); and how did Muslims live with this awareness in today's Marseille. Among other themes, the section focuses on the experience of stigmatisation and racism, which Muslims reported on in the research. The fourth dimension is discussed in the section focusing on the various actions undertaken in today's Marseille in order to earn collective recognition for Islam.

<sup>77</sup> Pierre Tap, "Identité", *Encyclopaedia Universalis*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Chicago IL, 1989, p. 899.

<sup>78</sup> C. Dubar, *La Crise des identités: l'interprétation d'une mutation* (The crisis of identities: interpretation of a transformation), PUF, Paris, 2000.

<sup>79</sup> On this analytical breakdown of the concept of identity, see also Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond Identity", *Theory and Society* 29 (2000), pp. 1–47.

<sup>80</sup> It will be clear from the context whether the Muslim sample is being discussed, or Muslims generally.

#### 4.1 Identification

Identification with religion was much stronger in the Muslim subsample than in the non-Muslim. Almost all Muslims chose Islam in response to the question: “What is your religion?” (See Table 5.) The number was strikingly high. In a survey conducted in 2000–2001 with a sample of 1,130 high-school students from Marseille, the same question appeared in a slightly different form: “Do you have a religion? If yes, which one?” Among children of Maghrebi descent, 81 per cent answered “Islam”, while 13 per cent answered “No” or declined to answer.<sup>81</sup> Thus, the particularly high rates that the Foundations obtained in this survey may be the consequence of the survey method. In fact, the category of Muslims, as well as the categories of cultural or ethnic background, were used as filters at the start of the Foundations’ survey.

**Table 5. What is your religion?, %**

	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
Catholicism	0.0	60.0	30.0
Judaism	0.0	1.0	0.5
Islam	98.0	0.0	49.0
Protestant Christianity	0.0	3.0	1.5
Other	0.0	10.0	5.0
No religion	2.0	26.0	14.0
<b>Total</b>	%	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations

Three-quarters of the Muslim interviewees considered themselves actively observant Muslims, one-quarter responded no, and three respondents declined to answer. Of those who considered themselves actively observant, 40 per cent stated that they prayed, and 11 per cent added that they attended a mosque on a regular basis. The intensity of religious practice does not appear to be gender-related; a few more women indicated they actively practised (39, in comparison with 35 men). Through these answers, the Muslim subsample appears strikingly differentiated from the non-Muslim subsample.

<sup>81</sup> F. Lorcerie, *Cités cosmopolites. Sur les identités sociales des lycéens marseillais* (Cosmopolitan estates. On the social identities of high-school students of Marseille), Report for FASILD, IREMAM-CNRS, Aix-en-Provence, January 2005. Survey carried out with V. Geisser and L. Panafit (hereafter Lorcerie, *Lycéens marseillais*).

A question further exploring identity produced an unexpected result. Respondents were asked to rank up to four answers to the following question in order of agreement: “If you were to describe yourself, which of the following would say something important about you: your family, the kind of job you do, your age, your interests, your level of education, your nationality, your gender, your income, your religion, your social class, your cultural or ethnic background, the colour of your skin, any disability you may have.” The first-rank answers are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6. What says something important about you? First-rank answers, %**

	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
No answer	0.0	1.0	0.5
Your family	64.0	65.0	64.5
The kind of work you do	0.0	3.0	1.5
Your age and life stage	1.0	13.0	7.0
Your interests	1.0	3.0	2.0
Your level of education	1.0	2.0	1.5
Your nationality	1.0	3.0	2.0
Your gender	3.0	1.0	2.0
Your level of income	0.0	4.0	2.0
Your religion	24.0	0.0	12.0
Your social class	0.0	1.0	0.5
Your ethnic group or cultural background	4.0	1.0	2.5
The colour of your skin	0.0	2.0	1.0
Any disability you may have	1.0	1.0	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>

**Source:** Open Society Foundations

Family was overwhelmingly favoured, exactly in the same proportions in both subsamples and consistent across all ethnic backgrounds. Religion follows among Muslims, but twice less often than family, and age is the second answer among non-

Muslims (four times less often). Few respondents selected ethnic background as a first-rank answer.

Second-rank answers are more scattered, as shown in Table 7.

**Table 7. What says something important about you? Second-rank answers, %**

	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
No answer	2.0	3.0	2.5
Your family	23.0	7.0	15.0
The kind of work you do	10.0	26.0	18.0
Your age and life stage	8.0	11.0	9.5
Your interests	2.0	8.0	5.0
Your level of education	5.0	5.0	5.0
Your nationality	6.0	12.0	9.0
Your gender	1.0	5.0	3.0
Your level of income	1.0	9.0	5.0
Your religion	26.0	4.0	15.0
Your social class	1.0	5.0	3.0
Your ethnic group or cultural background	10.0	2.0	6.0
The colour of your skin	4.0	2.0	3.0
Any disability you may have	1.0	1.0	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations

Here, one-quarter of the Muslims mentioned religion, significantly more than other respondents, whereas non-Muslims tended to select functional determinants: job or income. But nearly all of the Muslims who chose religion as their first-rank answer selected family as a second choice, which raises the share of Muslims holding family as something important for them to 87 per cent (72 per cent among non-Muslims), and the rate of Muslims defining religion as important stands at 50 per cent. Cultural background (origin) was also selected more often by Muslim respondents; still, only 14

respondents chose origin as first or second answer (compared with three among non-Muslims).

In summary, 98 per cent of the Muslim sample considered themselves to be Muslims in the religious sense, 75 per cent considered themselves practising Muslims and 50 per cent self-identified through religion. Earlier observations of Marseille's Muslim high-school students were similar.<sup>82</sup>

The most remarkable finding on the issue of identification is the prominent choice of family, favoured by nearly 90 per cent of Muslims and by 75 per cent of non-Muslim respondents. Family may be the main source of social capital for poorer segments of the population; however, analysis of additional questions suggests that it is not the pragmatic, instrumental dimension of family that is paramount.

#### 4.2 Belonging and Attachment to the Neighbourhood, to Marseille and to France

As the Gallup Coexist Index 2009<sup>83</sup> and the Brouard and Tiberj survey<sup>84</sup> demonstrate, attachment to religion does not bring about a lesser sense of belonging to the area of residence, to the city or to the country of which one is a national or a resident. Those dimensions of identity are by no means antagonistic or conflicting. Findings in F. Lorcerie, *Cités cosmopolites. Sur les identités sociales des lycéens marseillais*, were similar. In the Foundations' survey, feelings of belonging to the area of residence that the respondents expressed through the questionnaires were less marked than those expressed in the focus groups and in stakeholder interviews.

A sense of belonging to the neighbourhood was not very strong in the surveyed population and only half of the sample expressed it, more or less warmly. In the Muslim subsample, six out of ten respondents stated that they did not have a strong feeling of being members of the neighbourhood, which is significantly more than in the non-Muslim subsample. This opinion does not vary in accordance with demographic characteristics, nor according to nationality. Yet only one-third declared

<sup>82</sup> Lorcerie, *Lycéens marseillais*.

<sup>83</sup> Gallup, *The Gallup Coexist Index 2009, A Global Study of Interfaith Relations – With an In-depth Analysis of Muslim Integration in France, Germany and the United Kingdom*. Muslim West Facts Project, available at <http://www.muslimwestfacts.com> (accessed May 2011) (hereafter Gallup report).

<sup>84</sup> Sylvain Brouard and Vincent Tiberj, *Français comme les autres? Enquête sur les citoyens d'origine maghrébine, africaine et turque* (French like everyone else? Survey of citizens of Maghrebi, African and Turkish origin), Presses de Sciences-Po, Paris, 2005 (hereafter Brouard and Tiberj, *Français comme les autres?*). This survey was based on a sample of 1,003 individuals of French nationality who self-identified as Muslim. The individuals selected were of Maghrebi, African or Turkish origin, either directly (they had themselves immigrated) or via an immigrant parent or grandparent. Therefore this sample was appreciably different from the Foundations', where one-third of Muslims did not have French nationality, and none was of third-generation immigrant descent. Moreover, the Foundations' survey included no Turkish respondents.

that they did not like living in their neighbourhood: while still very significantly higher than in the non-Muslim subsample (of which only 14 per cent did not like living in the neighbourhood), the figures suggest that two-thirds of the Muslim respondents liked, definitely or to some extent, living in the neighbourhood.

A sense of belonging to France was not strongly pronounced in the sample either, with figures similar to those for neighbourhood belonging. Muslims declared significantly less attachment to France than non-Muslims; ethnic origin, background and gender had no significant bearing on this response, whereas among non-Muslims women expressed less attachment to the country than men. In contrast, declared attachment to the country in the Muslim subsample did vary along lines of age: younger people were significantly more attached to the country, while among the non-Muslims, younger generations expressed less attachment to the country than older ones. Another variable is nationality: Muslims holding French citizenship expressed significantly more attachment to the country.

The sense of belonging to Marseille was, as expected, more marked in the sample as a whole and in each subsample (see Table 8). Among Muslims, 55 per cent and nearly 70 per cent of non-Muslims indicated that they belonged to Marseille. Correspondingly, more than four out of ten Muslim respondents did not affirm a clear sense of belonging to Marseille, compared with only three out of ten in the non-Muslim subsample.

**Table 8. Sense of belonging to Marseille, %**

	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
Strongly	55.0	68.0	61.5
Not strongly	43.0	32.0	37.5
Don't know	2.0	0.0	1.0
<b>Total</b>			
%	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Number	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations

Among Muslims, this feeling did not follow nationality and did not vary with gender either (while it did so among non-Muslims: women were less inclined to claim that they belonged to Marseille).<sup>85</sup> It did vary with age: 62 per cent of Muslims younger than 40 answered that they belonged to the city, compared with 58.5 per cent non-

<sup>85</sup> Lorcerie, *Lycéens marseillais*, gives the same information.

Muslims, which is a significant difference; only 44 per cent of Muslims over 40 years old expressed such feelings.

Youths with a migrant background and their sense of belonging to the city where they live form a common topic all over Europe, and it is certainly not specific to Marseille; still, it does have a distinct flavour here, because “cosmopolitanism is at the foundations of the city’s constructed identity”.<sup>86</sup> Since the beginning of the 1980s, this relationship has been a major communication theme in the city’s public relations efforts. Moreover, this view of the city is kept alive in artistic circles and widely supported by individual residents. The daily TV show *Plus belle la vie*<sup>87</sup> demonstrates the power this view of Marseille exerts over its residents, and is instrumental in sustaining this view of cosmopolitanism in French society at large, not only in Marseille. In the course of our research, the women’s focus group produced the following exchange.

**Participant:** For me, Marseille, it’s the most beautiful city in France.

**Moderator:** And if tomorrow they make you an offer to move to another city?

**Participant:** No, no, I’m staying in Marseille, it’s the Mediterranean, it’s the sun, it’s Algeria, well it’s like Algeria. It really looks like Algeria, like Oran. I love Marseille. It’s very cosmopolitan, it’s great, and it’s very rich. As for me, I love it. (Open Society Foundations focus group)

A similar exchange also took place in the younger women’s focus group, where the participants’ analysis reached deeper and addressed the issues of relationships between communities in Marseille: do they mix or do they only live side by side? The participants’ opinions were divided. One participant mentioned the powerful grip of the territory in Marseille, as an anchor in one’s life even in the absence of a subjective identification. She stated that she does not feel Marseillaise but is still definitely “from Marseille”:

**First participant:** I don’t know if you already saw this picture: in the schoolyards, it is a bit like the ads from Benetton, there is one representative of each community, there’s the Chinese, the Arab, the Turk, and together we mix, we grow up like this ...

**Second participant:** Can you give me examples of intermingling in Marseille?

**Third participant:** Communities live in close contact without really intermingling. They do not learn to really know each other.

**Fourth participant:** As for me, I did not grow up in a neighbourhood of Arabs. There were a lot of French people, of Spaniards, even at school we made

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<sup>86</sup> Gastaut, “Marseille cosmopolite”.

<sup>87</sup> Its screenwriters are in fact Parisians.

excursions together, there were Chinese, blacks, in Marseille I think people feel more Marseillais than French, the identity is more Marseillais than French. When you go to the Stade Vélodrome, you see Chinese, Arabs. This is representative of Marseille.

**Second participant:** There is an identity I guess, not Marseillais in the sense that we would feel Marseillais, but more related to the territory where we live. There was once a sociologist who came to give a speech about “*indomitable Marseille*”, I think it was the title of his book, and he said that the fact was that we have the sea. I know I am very fond of the sea. In my neighbourhood, even though it’s a difficult one, I had a view of the sea, I felt I was privileged. We certainly got this feeling. Even though we may not be extremely rich, we still have some privileges of the rich. A view of the sea, we have the sun, we are just half an hour from the southern neighbourhoods. We were mixed a little bit (Open Society Foundations focus group)

Several stakeholders shared this sense. If they are quite passionate about identifying as citizens, they are somewhat reluctant to claim that they are French and consider themselves Marseillais. This echoes their feeling of belonging to the minority, which is a painful experience (see below). However, one of the Open Society Foundations interviewees, a young Comorian rapper from the North districts, drew a sharp line between feeling French and feeling Marseillais. Feeling French never really happened to him that much, he said, because people did not make him feel French:

I am French, I was born here. My father’s uncle, he went to the war, he died for this country. Those who fought for France, the recognition they got from the French, it was to give French papers to their descendants. Thus my father got nationality. They always talk about the people from Senegal. But the Comorians did it too! ...

The second time I really felt good to be French, it was when my colleague went to England for six months, to learn the language. There, same thing, it’s good to be French. The girls, they come to you because you are French, as if it was something uncommon, and good. In the Comoros too, when you bring a little money, and it’s a poor country, you feel powerful!

That’s the strangest thing, when we are abroad we do feel French, but here, frankly, I’ve never felt it. It’s not that I hate it, it’s just because here, people never make me feel that way.<sup>88</sup>

In terms of his sense of belonging to Marseille, the rapper said,

Ah, I feel Marseillais even before feeling I am a Comorian. When you see this big mix of communities in Marseille, in the rue d’Aubagne or at Porte d’Aix, you say to yourself: ‘We are not in France here!’ I like it because it’s contrasted,

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<sup>88</sup> Open Society Foundations focus group, Marseille, Daymone, 26, hip-hop singer.

there's the North, the South. It's just one city, but it's cut up like a puzzle. Well, what I do not like that much, it's the bad sides, the contrast between the North and the South. When you see how they are so well off over there, how they've got all the means, while right here nothing gets done, actually.<sup>89</sup>

In his opinion, in Marseille, the status of belonging to the minority is part of one's experience and feelings, but the cosmopolitan, multicultural mix of migrant residents transcends all of this. This mature sense of belonging, half emotional and half intellectual, is distinct from that of young children who have grown up in Marseille; for them, a sense of Marseillais identity is self-evident:<sup>90</sup>

There was a friendly football game between Algeria and Marseille, a few years ago. [Usually] I don't go to the stadium, but it was free, so I went with my kids and some friends of theirs. We see the game, a nice game, and Algeria loses 2 to 1. I turn towards the children and I say: 'Listen, we played well, but we lost.' They stared at me in amazement: 'But we won!' And I said to myself: 'That's it, I'm the one who came from Algeria, but these kids, they are Marseillais. They are French kids.' (Open Society Foundations focus group)

### 4.3 Attachment to the Country of Origin

Attachment to the country of origin is yet another aspect of the identification processes experienced by Muslims in Marseille, which became strikingly manifest during the stakeholder interviews. Family ties are a main factor in this attachment: when close relatives still live in the country of origin and most of all when parents return to live there or have never left, Marseillais keep in touch with them by every possible means. Comorians, for example, use the telephone, but above all video and the Internet. The cost of travel often prevents families from visiting their relatives on a regular basis, and so the journeys back home are infrequent. The situation of people from the Maghreb is different, as their countries are within easy reach of Marseille and at a reasonable price. As a consequence, a sizeable number of Maghrebi families travel to their country of origin during their summer vacations. Brouard and Tiberj suggest that religious factors play a decisive part in determining a sense of belonging to the country of origin.<sup>91</sup> This does not appear to be the case in our survey. Family ties, and nothing else, structure the transnational bonds that individuals wish to maintain. Of course, this does not preclude ties of a religious nature from being established between both shores of the Mediterranean. Countries on the southern shores do interfere with the religious organisation of their diaspora, and the Muslims of Marseille may or may not distance

<sup>89</sup> Open Society Foundations focus group, Marseille, Daymone, 26, hip-hop singer.

<sup>90</sup> This aspect has also been pointed out in a survey conducted among middle-school students in the North districts: A. Moreau, "L'importance de l'identité locale chez les adolescents marseillais" (The importance of local identity for Marseille's youth), *Faire savoirs* 5 (2005), pp. 33–38.

<sup>91</sup> Brouard and Tiberj, *Français comme les autres?*, p. 123.

themselves from such interventions. The following statement from a focus group participant made this distinction clear:

Every summer, at holiday time, we go straight to Algeria. I am keen on that because of the children, so that they may have ties with the family, and practise the language, even though it's dialectal. They talk, they have friends. At the institutional level, I partake in a trend where the Islamic bond transcends the national bond. We try to stress that here in France we are Muslims, there is no reason to struggle with each other, national conflict is stupid. Even from the point of view of Muslim values, it doesn't work!<sup>92</sup>

#### 4.4 Social ties

Immigrants expressed two major concerns with respect to their own involvement with society, and what makes a difference here is not religion, but the course of one's personal or familial life, and the sacrifice that has been accepted at the moment of leaving one's country in search of a better life. Those two concerns are, namely, a yearning for social success, which is the impetus behind the decision to emigrate, and a strong desire to integrate into the host society, which would bring about well-being and a more dignified social position. The Brouard and Tiberj survey highlights the wish for success.<sup>93</sup> In this endeavour, religion may actually constitute support for some individuals: "I am very ambitious and very devout," a Marseille female representative of Comorian background said. Up to 83 per cent of the French Muslims in the Gallup survey as well as in Brouard and Tiberj indicated a wish to mix with the rest of society, particularly in housing.<sup>94</sup> This aspect was presciently highlighted by Hubert Cukrowicz and J.-M. Duprez's 1992 study on the city of Roubaix.<sup>95</sup> When people with a migrant background (Muslims among others) become part of the elite, they tend to move towards the South districts as soon as they can. There, they do not choose to live in luxury condominiums, but prefer a mixed neighbourhood dominated by single-family houses, where they become actively involved in fostering an atmosphere of neighbourly relationships.<sup>96</sup>

Our survey in the 3rd *arrondissement* does not contradict those rules, but illustrates in a concrete way how the rules combine or interplay with each other when the human environment is not only one of mixing but also one of poverty, and when the urban

<sup>92</sup> Muslim association manager, in his 40s, born in Algeria, French nationality. Open Society Foundations focus group, Marseille, 2009.

<sup>93</sup> Brouard and Tiberj, *Français comme les autres?*, p. 73.

<sup>94</sup> Brouard and Tiberj, *Français comme les autres?*

<sup>95</sup> Hubert Cukrowicz and J.-M. Duprez, "Les représentations des rapports sociaux entre communautés nationales. Le cas des jeunes de Roubaix" (Representations of social relations between national communities. The case of young people in Roubaix), *Revue française de sociologie* 30(2) (April–June 1992), pp. 257–279.

<sup>96</sup> Source: Fieldwork in Marseille.

environment is dilapidated and poorly maintained. Such a context tends to bring about feelings of bitterness. Yet while one would sense that ethnic boundaries are a sensitive reality in this neighbourhood – and even more so, a combination of ethnic and generational boundaries – residents also share a common culture of public institutions. Moreover, they emerge as united when they protest against the situation of the neighbourhood.

#### 4.5 A Shared Use of Space

The questionnaire consisted of a set of questions that were designed to evaluate how frequent are mixed interactions between people of different ethnic backgrounds and between people of different religions. As mentioned above, the Muslims of Marseille do not lack opportunities to meet people of different origins and the same religion. Thus, only encounters between individuals of various religions will provide information about how the majority and the minority interact.

The use of public spaces was one measure of the extent of mixed interactions. Places themselves, according to their specific functions, have a different role in the lives of both subpopulations. There is a variation between subsamples, but not much between genders. One should be cautious about these figures, as some part of the observed variation (the extent of which cannot be evaluated) is probably the outcome of the different socio-demographic profiles of both subpopulations. The places where mixed encounters happen rank as follows (Table 9).

**Table 9. Ethnically mixed encounters: frequency, sorted by location, %**

Places	Every day		Never	
	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Muslims	Non-Muslims
Place of education, workplace	59	63	17	20
Shops	29	51	24	10
Public transport	37	33	29	26
Market	20	31	34	15
At home	9	25	46	14
Cafés, restaurants	8	18	52	18
Sports, leisure activity	4	12	55	43
Parks, public spaces	6	9	40	42
Places of worship, other religious centre	8	2	48	70

Source: Open Society Foundations

The sample does not conform to the cliché of Marseille in popular books and movies like those of Marcel Pagnol: respondents do not go to cafés often, but only 18 per cent of non-Muslims never experience ethnically mixed meetings in cafés, compared with one half of Muslims, and men do not spend more time in cafés than women. Similarly, markets and shopping venues provide far fewer opportunities for mixed meetings for Muslims than for non-Muslims: could this mean that both subpopulations do not frequent the same places for their daily supplies and their moments of leisure and conviviality? As expected, the most frequent opportunities for ethnically mixed encounters are provided by schools and workplaces, and there is no difference between subsamples in this respect. The same can be said for public transportation, although less so across the board than schools and workplaces. Places of worship provide very few opportunities of encounters for non-Muslims, who are generally not religiously observant; they provide more opportunities for Muslims, but it seems that half of them either do not to attend a mosque at all, or go to ethnically homogeneous places of worship (see Table 10).

**Table 10. Interaction with people of different religions: frequency, sorted by location, %**

Places	Every day		Never	
	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Muslims	Non-Muslims
Place of education, workplace	53	57	23	22
Shops	28	51	20	9
Socially, outside school or workplace	14	45	34	7
At home	5	26	48	12

Source: Open Society Foundations

Places of leisure, sports centres or parks provide very few opportunities, here again with no clear variation between both subsamples. The 3rd *arrondissement* is not typically an area where residents stroll or relax outside the home or outside shops. Finally, home, as a place of planned meetings falls somewhere in between: although not altogether closed to ethnically mixed meetings, among Muslims planned meetings at home are significantly less frequent.

On the whole, places where the structure of encounters is common to both subsamples are all functional locations (school, work, transport), while places where this structure differs are rather marked by affect and conviviality (home, shops), which suggests that the two subsamples live side by side but do not really mix. The residential structure shows that they probably do not live in exactly the same places in the *arrondissement*.

The Muslim subsample is more concentrated in the ZUS, which lies on the western side of the *arrondissement*.

The questionnaire also called for individuals to state whether there are specific places in the nearby area or elsewhere in the city where they would “feel uncomfortable” (Table 11). Half of the sample answers “Yes”, significantly more among non-Muslims than Muslims. Analysis of the variation by gender, age and ethnic origin shows that age does not impact the outcomes, but non-Muslim women and Maghrebis more frequently declared that they feel uncomfortable in some places, whereas 65 per cent of Africans claimed that there is no place where they feel uncomfortable.

**Table 11. Are there places in your neighbourhood or in your city where you feel uncomfortable?, %**

		Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
Yes		49.0	57.0	53.0
No		51.0	43.0	47.0
Total	%	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Number	100	100	200

Source: Open Society Foundations

Places where respondents mention feeling uncomfortable are distributed over the whole urban area, from North districts to South districts, including the city centre, which is the place that people mentioned most frequently. As the questionnaire was circulated in an area that is actually part of the city centre, it reveals a feeling of discomfort in the most immediate surroundings. There is no noticeable variation between Muslim and non-Muslim categories, nor between different origins. Women were more inclined to mention specific (dark) streets, while men tended to mention wider areas. Half of the sample offered some elements of explanation along with their answer: for two-thirds of them (regardless of category), the reasons they cited had to do with security. For the population sampled, perceived danger and feelings of fear at night begin just outside the home.

#### 4.6 Access to Services and Information

The questionnaire investigated the way individuals relate to public services with a set of questions evaluating the needs of the samples in terms of specific services and their level of satisfaction. The answers do not reveal much variation between the subsamples: 80 per cent (regarding education) and 62 per cent (for housing and employment) of the respondents declared that they did not need advice or information in these domains. Those who did indicate a need remained a minority, Muslims a little more

often in education (23 per cent) and mainly housing (37 per cent), non-Muslims a little more often for health (34 per cent) and employment (37 per cent). No variation emerges in relation to gender or origin, except that Maghrebis were slightly more inclined to ask for advice on housing (41 per cent). Explanations provided along with the answers demonstrated that the respondents were informed about the relevant specialised institutions, be they public or private: the *Agence nationale pour l'emploi* (National Employment Agency – ANPE), the *Office public d'aménagement et de construction* (Office for Social Housing – OPAC), social security, local social services, rental agencies, the *Conseiller principal d'éducation* (school guidance counsellor – CPE) and others. Somewhat more surprising is the widespread use of the Internet (at least among those who chose to clarify their answers), and the relatively sparse mention of friends or family as a source of advice or information. If self-identification with family is very high, it is not for these reasons.

In addition, the questionnaire used open-ended questions to explore the sources from which people generally obtain the information that they need about the local area, Marseille and France. Answers revealed an array of information sources: gossiping and chatter, media, friends or family, poster advertising, cafés, the Internet and specific institutions (including city hall and social centres), as shown in Table 12.

**Table 12. Where do you get information about the neighbourhood/Marseille/France?**

	Neighbourhood		Marseille		France	
	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Muslims	Non-Muslims
Chatter, gossip	45	41	17	13	2	0
Media	9	19	47	65	79	85
Internet	4	3	17	14	18	13

Source: Open Society Foundations

It also appears that men, compared with women, and people of French origin, compared with groups of other origin, are more inclined to collect information from the media. But on the whole, the figures display the same general picture. Again, the Internet is quite well-established as a source of information, and even a little more so among Muslims.

#### 4.7 Ambivalence Towards the Neighbourhood

The questionnaire provides interesting insights into the interviewees' experience of the neighbourhood. In the sample, 27 per cent of non-Muslims had been living in the neighbourhood for more than 20 years, as opposed to only 5 per cent of Muslims.

Nevertheless, it is a neighbourhood where both subsamples experience considerable housing mobility: 41 per cent of Muslims and 35 per cent of non-Muslims had been around for less than five years. Overall, 80 per cent of Muslims and 55 per cent of non-Muslims had been living in the area for less than ten years. Barely half of the total sample lived in private rented accommodation, with slightly higher figures among Muslims (50 per cent) than non-Muslims (45 per cent). In the context of the 3rd *arrondissement*, this situation may be the most difficult due to the dilapidated and run-down status of some privately rented properties. On the contrary, more non-Muslims lived in *Habitats à Loyer Modéré* (subsidised social housing or community housing – HLM), at 23 per cent, compared with 16 per cent of Muslims. Furthermore, non-Muslims were three times more likely than Muslims to privately own their home (23 per cent compared with 8 per cent), whereas Muslims were four times more likely than non-Muslims to live with their parents (18 per cent compared with 4 per cent). Thus, residential profiles in both subsamples were significantly different. This diversity is reflected in the reasons that individuals put forward for living in this neighbourhood. A greater number of Muslims said they did not choose the area or that they were here because of lower housing expenses (43 per cent), while non-Muslims gave reasons such as staying near their family, or being close to public services (60 per cent).

For all groups, the neighbourhood is a place that individuals generally enjoy, even if a significantly greater number of Muslims stated that they did not like living here, as shown in Table 13.

**Table 13. Would you say that you enjoy living in this neighbourhood?, %**

	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
Yes, definitely	22.0	36.0	29.0
Yes, to some extent	45.0	50.0	47.5
No	32.0	14.0	23.0
No answer	1.0	0.0	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations

What people liked above all was that the neighbourhood was functional and close to the centre (mainly indicated by Muslims), and that the atmosphere was nice, reminiscent of a village. What they reported not liking was dirtiness, insecurity (these two points were each cited by more than a quarter of respondents, with greater frequency among non-Muslims), followed by noise, pollution, poverty, the dilapidated

state of buildings (mentioned a little more frequently by Muslims), and last, incivility and the lack of some public services (equally mentioned in both subsamples).

An open-ended question asked what the city council should do to improve the neighbourhood. Respondents were not short of ideas, as presented in Table 14.

**Table 14. Actions to make the neighbourhood provide more activities for youth, %**

	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
Clean up the streets, rubbish disposal	62.0	55.0	58.5
Better public services, public amenities	43.0	45.0	44.0
More police presence, security	43.0	42.0	42.5
Renovate more social housing	37.0	24.0	30.5
More activities for youth	21.0	29.0	25.0
Control noise, increase green spaces	23.0	25.0	24.0
Social and ethnic mixing, participation	14.0	17.0	15.5
Renovation of St-Charles train station	5.0	9.0	7.0
Protection for elderly residents	1.0	6.0	3.5
Building a mosque	4.0	0.0	2.0
Festivities	0.0	2.0	1.0

Source: Open Society Foundations

Ideas about what should be done were abundant in both subsamples: on average, each respondent gave 2.5 suggestions. This gives some indication of the level of discontent with the neighbourhood among residents. Recommendations were specific and did not vary much from one subsample to the other: cleanliness of the streets, garbage collection, security, police presence, management of idle youth, noise. Muslims were more concerned with the renovation of housing and the building of more social housing, from which they do not frequently benefit.

#### 4.8 Support for Greater Diversity

Respondents had a wide range of views on ethnic or religious mixing, and apparently understood the concept in different ways. Respondents were asked about their

perceptions of who are the neighbourhood's residents, with the results shown in Table 15.

**Table 15. Who are the residents of the neighbourhood according to your perceptions?, %**

		Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
Relatives		6.0	3.0	4.5
Same ethnic and religious background		19.0	0.0	9.5
Same religion, different ethnic background		13.0	1.0	7.0
Same ethnicity, different religion		0.0	1.0	0.5
Different ethnicity and religion		21.0	12.0	16.5
Mixture of different backgrounds, ethnicities and religions		41.0	83.0	62.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations

Whether the two leading answers were correctly distinguished by the respondents is far from certain. Nevertheless, answers stressing the melting-pot perception were clearly prevalent: 62 per cent in the entire sample. But while 83 per cent of non-Muslims chose those answers, figures were half that in the Muslim subsample. It is not easy to read anything from such a significant difference. Part of the explanation lies perhaps in the 19 per cent of Muslims who felt that they were living in a segregated environment (as opposed to none among non-Muslims).

This difference is also reflected in the opinions that individuals expressed about opportunities for shared activities in the neighbourhood. People were not divided by their basic values: 66–67 per cent of each subsample stated that “people in this neighbourhood share the same values”, a score that is unexpectedly high. Personal situations and diverging life paths are what divide residents. The next question, whether “The residents of this neighbourhood work together to improve it”, elicited the following reactions (Table 16).

**Table 16. Do the residents of this neighbourhood work together to improve it?, %**

		Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
Agree		39.0	70.0	54.5
Disagree		49.0	21.0	35.0
Don't know		11.0	9.0	10.0
No answer		1.0	0.0	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations

Among non-Muslims, 70 per cent of respondents agreed, compared with 39 per cent in the Muslim category, or nearly half; on the contrary, half of Muslims disagreed. A very asymmetrical vision of the neighbourhood as a collective actor emerges from these data. Possibly, non-Muslims display a higher tendency to bring their vision in line with the expectations that they perceive the questionnaire sets; or perhaps they experience fewer social difficulties and are therefore more optimistic. As longer-term residents and homeowners, they may be more inclined to see the neighbourhood as attractive.

The gap between religious categories is smaller in responses to another question in the survey, "Is this a close-knit neighbourhood?" (Table 17).

**Table 17. Is this a close-knit neighbourhood?, %**

		Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
Agree		60.0	46.0	53.0
Disagree		33.0	39.0	36.0
Don't know		7.0	15.0	11.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations

The non-Muslim category seemed puzzled when faced with this statement: many answered "Don't know", less than half agreed, and a good third disagreed. The Muslim

responses offered a more positive perspective. On the question whether “More needs to be done to encourage people from different backgrounds to mix together”, 80 per cent of the respondents responded yes (87 per cent among non-Muslims, 70 per cent among Muslims). Table 18 presents the respondents’ opinions on how to improve interaction.

**Table 18. What should be done to encourage people from different backgrounds to mix together?, %**

	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
Festivals, outings, shared activities	17.0	33.0	25.0
Create places for meeting	18.0	18.0	18.0
Fight prejudices, understanding	13.0	13.0	13.0
Reinforce everyday relationships	6.0	16.0	11.0
Establish Sports clubs, more organised leisure activities	5.0	5.0	5.0
Efforts of integration	5.0	5.0	5.0
Places of worship, inter-faith dialogue	5.0	3.0	4.0
Education, prevention of crime	2.0	1.0	1.5

Source: Open Society Foundations

#### 4.9 Relationships between Non-Muslims and Muslims: Minority Experience

Various signs of the ethnic and religious boundaries that exist in the neighbourhood emerged in the responses to the Foundations’ questionnaire. Those boundaries have no legal existence, and they are often ignored or denied by the dominant ideology. A British sociologist of Pakistani descent, and an observer of the integration of Muslims in Europe, described how he understood the French dominant ideology:

In France, you can be of any descent but if you are a French citizen you cannot be an Arab. Composite identities like Arab French are ideologically impossible. The giving up of pre-French identities and assimilation into French culture is thought to go hand in hand with the acceptance of French citizenship. If for some reason assimilation is not fully embraced – perhaps because some people want to retain pride in their Algerian ancestry, or want to maintain ethnic

solidarity in the face of current stigmatisation and discrimination – then their claim to be French and equal citizens is jeopardised.<sup>97</sup>

This statement reflects the finding of the Foundations' survey. Indeed, ethnic boundaries do exist; they are entrenched in social representations and social practices take them into account. Feelings or perceptions of discrimination are salient among the second-generation migrants, but those feelings of inequality are combined with common values. The ethnic boundaries do not rule out a shared culture; in fact, they are part of a common culture.

#### 4.9.1 Shared values, different feelings: the issue of visibility

Respondents were asked to rank the four most important values in France; Tables 19a and 19b summarise the answers.

**Table 19a. The four most important values in this country: first-rank answers, %**

	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
Respect for the law	72.0	68.0	70.0
Tolerance towards others	14.0	17.0	15.5
Freedom of speech and expression	9.0	13.0	11.0
Respect for all faiths	0.0	1.0	0.5
Speaking the national language	2.0	1.0	1.5
Equality of opportunity	2.0	0.0	1.0
Pride in this country/patriotism	1.0	0.0	0.5
<b>Total</b>			
%	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations

The list of outcomes does not display any significant variation, and answers are impressively concentrated. The grading of the answers in both subsamples or groups is unambiguous. Respect for the law comes first: 70 per cent of the general sample cited this value, with similar figures among Muslims and non-Muslims. Regardless of category or nationality, people acknowledge that they live in a state of law, and that

<sup>97</sup> Tariq Modood, "Muslims and European Multiculturalism", in Richard Lewis (ed.), *Multiculturalism Observed*, VUB Press, Brussels, 2006, pp. 107–132 (hereafter Modood, "Muslims and European Multiculturalism").

they have rights that they may claim accordingly. An underlying reference to law and order may also exist, together with a sense that individuals have a right to their security. The next highest values are tolerance towards others and freedom of speech. A high proportion of both groups place freedom of speech in second position (see table 19b). On average, taking into account the first- and second-rank answers (relevant lines in tables 19a and 19b combined), the value of freedom of speech is quoted by 52 per cent of the sample. Tolerance comes third, cited on average by 42 per cent of the respondents. But the respective ranking of these values varies from one group to the other: freedom of speech was chosen on first or second place by 60 per cent of the Muslim sample and 45 per cent of non-Muslims, a very significant variation; and tolerance was selected by 55 per cent of the non-Muslims, with the highest rates among Europeans (French or other), compared with 28 per cent of Muslims, again a very significant variation. It may be that tolerance is considered by white non-Muslims not only as a French value, but also as a virtue they make their own in the context of their diverse neighbourhood, whereas for Muslims freedom of speech is of special importance to individuals belonging to a minority group.

**Table 19b. The four most important values in this country:  
second-rank answers, %**

	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
Tolerance towards others	14.0	38.0	26.0
Freedom of speech and expression	51.0	32.0	41.5
Respect for all faiths	14.0	13.0	13.5
Justice and fair play	1.0	7.0	4.0
Speaking the national language	10.0	3.0	6.5
Respect of people of different ethnic groups	1.0	4.0	2.5
Equality of opportunity	4.0	3.0	3.5
Voting in elections	3.0	0.0	1.5
Freedom from discrimination	1.0	0.0	0.5
No answer	1.0	0.0	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations

Table 19b shows that the respondents' answers were broadly convergent on the major values that they acknowledged and, without a doubt, to which they adhere.

There is a parallel divergence in the perception of French nationality (see Table 20). Nearly a quarter of Muslims had French nationality but did not perceive themselves as French. Among them, individuals of Maghrebi origin were statistically more highly represented. At the same time, 17 individuals who did not hold French nationality saw themselves as French anyway. Among non-Muslims, there was less of an imbalance between legal national belonging and perceptions of belonging. The 17 Muslims who considered themselves French while not holding French citizenship were nationals of countries once colonised by France, and these postcolonial ties could induce feelings of belonging. For those who were French nationals but did not regard themselves as French, it could be their way of conveying a sense of pique. It is likely that most of them belonged to the second generation (as such feelings may stem from experiences of hostility and prejudice), which, as a group, is more prone to openly pronouncing such views.

**Table 20. Do you see yourself as French? Muslim respondents, breakdown by nationality, %**

Muslim respondents	Yes	No	Total
No answer	2.0	0.0	2.0
Algerian	3.0	9.0	12.0
French	41.0	24.0	65.0
Comorian	3.0	4.0	7.0
Moroccan	5.0	1.0	6.0
Tunisian	2.0	4.0	6.0
Other	2.0	0.0	2.0
<b>Total</b>	%	<b>58.0</b>	<b>42.0</b>
	Number	<b>58</b>	<b>42</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations

In terms of how others perceive them, individuals of Maghrebi descent were distinguished from other minorities by a strong tendency to believe that others did not regard them as French, an opinion shared by 82 per cent of them, compared with 66 per cent for Muslim Africans.

But do respondents actually wish to be seen by others as French? Once again there is a striking difference in the Muslim sample between Maghrebis and Africans-Comorians, 85 per cent of whom would like to be seen as French, in contrast with only 58 per cent of Maghrebi-origin respondents. This is a clear-cut majority.

Moreover, 39 per cent of individuals of Maghrebi descent, while believing that they were not seen as French, stated that they would enjoy being regarded as French (24 individuals), and half of the Africans-Comorians fell into this category (14 individuals). Expanding on their answers, respondents focused on skin colour, appearance or their name. While one respondent observed, “People consider me an Arab. We don’t get the impression of being on the same level footing. Equality of chances is a myth”, another wrote, “I am Tunisian and proud to be so. I do not want to change [my cultural identity] or be considered anything but Tunisian”. A few replies mentioned faith, “I’m Muslim, and in France there’s too much overlap between religion and politics”, and “I’d prefer not to be perceived as being French for religious reasons”.

Several stakeholders and participants in the focus group did express themselves on the question of visibility, some of them eager to say that they were lucky because their physical type was not marked. But the lack of inclusion was a problem for all. One of them went as far as to say: “I would love living in the United States! You’re American first, and then Chinese. Here it is the opposite, your origin comes first, and after this, only, you are French, – or it depends”. A man who declared that he did not to feel French but “a citizen of this country”, added, “As for me, faith is the last of my concerns, except when I am ill”, and “Today, we as Muslims wear the yellow star, tomorrow others will!”

These feelings were reflected in responses to the questionnaire through the question addressing perceived barriers to being French. Half of the French non-immigrant respondents answered that not speaking the national language was the main barrier. Other responses were far behind. Individuals of Maghrebi origin put being born abroad and not being white at the top of the list, followed by not speaking the national language, and then not being Christian (this answer was quite specific to Maghrebi-origin respondents). For Africans, not being white clearly took the lead position. While comments show that minority individuals had a sound knowledge of the principle of state neutrality, their answers in this instance were more in line with sociological realities.

Most survey participants reported not feeling more at home in their countries of origin, notably because of their institutions and values. One man said,

Sometimes I go back to Tunisia: Long live France! In 1987, I’ve seen the homeless people in the States. We have social security, the 35 hours [working hours per week]! Unfortunately we have sold the clash of civilisations to society and we sold it well. As a reaction, Muslims took it too.

(Open Society Foundations focus group)

A young woman expressed how she had come to terms with the fact that she would never feel at home anywhere in the world, and how she overcame this feeling by appealing to the universality of Islam.

We ask ourselves: what is our country, what is our land where we really can say: that's ours? I've come to say: I don't feel French. Wait a minute, this is hypocritical, you live here, you are supposedly campaigning [she is trying to be accepted at work with her scarf], but if you die tomorrow, you don't know where you will be buried. If you want to attend the mosque, you cannot [no facilities for women], if you want to work, you cannot. So what is your land? This kind of struggle brings us back to our faith, and we wonder where is the land that God would like us to live in. And we learn by reading that the earth is a mosque, there are no [special] places to pray to God, we can pray everywhere. It made me feel better. I said to myself: I am a citizen of the world. My home is my land, period. Besides this, it's true that, wherever you go, there will be difficulties. That's why I don't agree with going to a so-called Muslim country. When you know that Muslim religion is also justice, equality, is there justice in Tunisia, is there justice, equality, democracy? I don't know! And in Morocco? Can women live freely in Saudi Arabia? Isn't it in European countries, Western countries that I am perhaps best represented with respect to those values, justice, equality? That's why I hesitate. I cannot say that only praying counts, I know that it's important but it's possible to make arrangements. While the religion itself is very easy to live, the context makes it clear to us that if you really want to be a Muslim, it's going to be hard for you.

#### 4.9.2 Prejudice and discrimination

While recognition of racial and religious prejudice is part of the common culture, just as ethnic and religious boundaries are, prejudice affects the daily life of each subpopulation in very different ways.

More than 40 per cent of the sample as a whole agreed that there is prevalent and widespread racial prejudice, without variation between the subsamples or based on gender. A little more than 30 per cent felt that there was a fair amount of prejudice, and 18 per cent a little. Both subsamples were distributed in the same way on the question of how prejudices had evolved in the last five years: one-third of each category believed that they are rising, another third that they are more or less stable. The remainder was distributed between other possible answers, with Muslims slightly less inclined to believe that prejudices were subsiding. Figures were about the same for religious prejudice.

There was an agreement between both subsamples on ranking based on ethnic, religious and racial characteristics: Arabs headed the poll, cited by 65 per cent of the sample, then black people (55 per cent), Muslims (38 per cent), Eastern Europeans and Jews (14 per cent each). Variation between subsamples was minimal: typically, the

Muslim subsample was slightly more likely to feel that Arabs (70 per cent), blacks (60 per cent) and Muslims (43 per cent) were victims of racial prejudice, while non-Muslims believed a little more often that Eastern Europeans and Jews were (18 per cent). Analysis of the variation according to origins was equally predictable: people of Maghrebi origin were more inclined to believe that Arabs were subject to racial prejudice (71 per cent) and, in addition, half of them mentioned Muslims and black people, while Muslim Africans unanimously cited blacks among victims of racial prejudice, and ranked Arabs in second position, followed by Muslims. The perceived hierarchy of groups falling victim to religious prejudice was identical in both subsamples: first Muslims, cited in more than 80 per cent of answers, then Jews. But Jews were cited six times less than Muslims in the Muslim subsample, compared with only 2.5 times less in the non-Muslim subsample.

Other questions aimed at outlining the respondents' personal experience on these matters. In particular, they were asked to state how often they had been treated unfairly over the previous year on the grounds of several criteria: gender, age, ethnicity, religion, colour, or the place where they live. The distribution of answers about unfair treatment on the grounds of gender showed no variation in relation to the respondent's gender; 66 per cent of the total sample answered never. Similarly, few respondents complained of discrimination on the grounds of age (75 per cent answered never), and again outcomes did not vary according to the respondents' age. As for unfair treatment on the ground of ethnic origins, a variation in relation to the respondent's ethnic background was registered in the outcomes: non-Muslim French were very significantly more likely to answer never, while individuals of Maghrebi and African-Comorian descent felt more often that they were sometimes or very often victims of unfair treatment. The experience of unfair treatment on religious grounds again reveals a split between non-Muslim French respondents and their Muslim counterparts.

On the whole, combining categories of origin and religion resulted in a difference in the experience of unfair treatment on the grounds of the mentioned criteria. Table 21 summarises the answers for some categories. The basis for the ranking is the "Never" answer, which is the most shifting in the distribution. Ranking the outcomes on the basis of the answers "Almost all the time + Very often" would not modify the order.

**Table 21. Ranking criteria prejudice for three categories of respondents**

Never ranking	Sample N = 200	%	Muslims N = 100	%	Maghrebis N = 62	%	Africans (Muslims and non-Muslims) N = 43	%
1	Gender	73	Gender	71	Age	77	Age	67
2	Place of residence	69	Place of residence	65	Gender	72	Gender	63
3	Skin colour	63	Skin colour	51	Place of residence	71	Place of residence	53
4	Religion	61	Age	48	Skin colour	66	Religion	49
5	Ethnic background	51	Religion	40	Religion	42	Ethnic background	26
6	Age	37	Ethnic background	33	Ethnic background	39	Skin colour	19

Source: Open Society Foundations

According to Table 21, Africans were the most often exposed to unfair treatment. Only 19 per cent of them stated that they never experienced unfair treatment or prejudice on the grounds of skin colour, and 26 per cent on the grounds of ethnic background, whereas 39 per cent of Maghrebis stated that they never experienced unfair treatment on the basis of origin, and 66 per cent on the basis of colour. For Africans and Maghrebis, Islam was one of the most frequently quoted bases for unfair treatment, just slightly below ethnic background (or skin colour for Africans-Comorians).

In contrast, the question on actual and specific experience of a discriminatory incident drew only limited insights – see Table 22. Respondents probably focused on the words “violent assault”, as they did not understand the precise meaning of “offence”. But it is well-known among legal experts that discrimination is difficult to establish factually. Perceptions of discrimination far exceed the ability to empirically prove it has taken place.

**Table 22. Victims of a crime, a violent assault, or an offence motivated by discrimination, %**

		Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
No answer		88.0	74.0	81.0
Yes		2.0	4.0	3.0
No		10.0	22.0	16.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations

The no-answer rate to this question was around 80 per cent, and nearly 90 per cent among Muslims; only six affirmative answers were given, mostly concentrated among non-Muslims.

#### 4.9.3 Use of social institutions

In the section of the questionnaire on the use of social institutions, respondents were asked to assess whether schools, employers and health services showed adequate respect for the religious customs of people belonging to different religions. Health services garnered the most frequent positive opinions: 57 per cent of the respondents were satisfied, without variation between categories; still, 16 per cent of Muslims answered “too little” (compared with 8 per cent of non-Muslims). Schools came second, with 40 per cent of the sample expressing satisfaction, again without too large a variation between categories. There was some difference between both subsamples on the answers “too much” and, most of all, “too little”. Among non-Muslims, 13 per cent answered “too much” (compared with 2 per cent among Muslims), and 35 per cent of Muslims answered “too little” (compared with 18 per cent non-Muslims). In employment, uncertainty dominated the distribution of outcomes: a large number of respondents answered that they “didn’t know”, most of all among Muslims (47 per cent), while others were equally split between “about right” and “too little”. Many more non-Muslims responded that the level of respect for minority religious customs was “about right”.

A closer examination of the explanatory comments to this question demonstrates that Muslims mainly had in mind things like getting leave for Muslim holidays and the observance of food prescriptions. Both Muslims and non-Muslims had varied experiences, some finding the situation acceptable, while others indicated that accommodations needed to be made. For some of the respondents this question

touched an emotional chord on the relationship of majority to minority, although this dimension was not well captured by the questionnaire.<sup>98</sup> The question on what prevents interviewees from feeling Marseillais brought out, typically among people from a minority background, remarks on the ethnic discrimination that prevails in Marseille, in a context where a strong feeling of belonging was dominant (55 per cent of the Muslim category). The 40 per cent of Muslims who did not strongly feel that they belong to Marseille gave the following examples.

- Racism felt on the part of municipal services
- Preconceptions about people of Maghrebi origin
- The political choices of my fellow citizens. Lack of awareness about Muslim places of worship (there is not a single mosque worthy of the name)
- I don't share the same ways of behaviour with the (ethnically white) Marseillais
- I am Comorian, they don't want people like me here. I was born here but it's hard to be a Muslim because whenever I look for work, my beard is a barrier<sup>99</sup>

Some respondents, however, were able to relate their feeling of non-belonging to objective criteria (being naturalised, or having resided in the area for too short a time), which recalls the socio-demographic diversity of the sample.

Those who felt that they experienced differential treatment on the grounds of ethnic background or religion were generally prone to express criticism of *laïcité*. In theory, they pointed out, *laïcité* should ensure that the state remains neutral towards all religions and protects freedom of faith. There is a strong degree of adherence to this principle among the young generations, which is confirmed by all the other surveys on the topic.<sup>100</sup> But in practice, they think that *laïcité* turns out to be a “flexible principle”, or they deem that the principle is not applied to all religious groups in the same manner:

It is good for everybody except Muslims. The CRIF [French Jewish representative council] OK, the pope OK, Buddhism, that's nice. But Islam: terror. It gets mixed up with Iran, with war.

They also considered that there is a gap between the principle and what happens in practice, or that *laïcité* in its true sense is not actually implemented:

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<sup>98</sup> Similar data are found in Roland Cayrol, "Présentation d'un sondage d'opinion sur l'identité nationale" (Presentation of an opinion poll on national identity), in Islam & laïcité.org, *Islam et identité nationale. Identités, appartenances, diversités* (Islam and national identity. Identities, appearances, diversities), L'Harmattan, Paris, 2009, pp. 43–58.

<sup>99</sup> Open Society Foundations data.

<sup>100</sup> Lorcerie, *Lycéens marseillais*; Brouard and Tiberj, *Français comme les autres?*; Gallup report.

*Laïcité* means respect for all faiths, that's my view of things. It's France's strength: liberty, equality, fraternity. Why do we never see it in practice? That's why I say I don't feel French in France. The country is beautiful! Those who rule it [are the problem]. There is a discrepancy between text and reality.

Open Society Foundations focus group

Awareness of this discrepancy among the young generations was raised, or revived, during 2003–2004, when the issue of the Islamic veil became heavily politicised, and “*laïcité* became a politically correct way of saying malicious words, and of maligning the Muslim community in particular”.<sup>101</sup> Participants in the younger women's focus group contrasted the law on secularity with the manner in which the principle is implemented in the framework of French social habits and political life.

**First participant:** We are in a so-called *laïque* country, fortunately some thinkers teach us, enlighten us. *Laïcité* is not what is really implemented right now in France. *Laïcité* means the respect of all faiths, and the opportunity for all cults to be present, without having to side with one. This is what *laïcité* really means, but unfortunately that's not the case.

**Second participant:** *Laïcité* is not respected, above all at school. They proclaim with a loud voice “*laïcité, laïcité*”, but concretely, practically, it is not implemented. One must not forget that we are in a Catholic country, an old Catholic country. When one walks in the street, there are a lot of churches, of relics, the school schedule follows and acknowledges Catholic religious festivals, in the schools they put up Christmas trees, they write letters to Santa Claus, they eat fish on Fridays, there are a lot of signs of non-*laïcité*.

**Third participant:** Actually, it is as if *laïcité* had become this country's faith.

**Fourth participant:** *Laïcité* has been there since 1905. If they needed to have a new law [she alludes to the law of 15 March 2004 banning religious signs at school], it is because the veil was stigmatised, that's all. It's a racist law that was passed, not a *laïque*, or secular law. *Laïcité*, people have fought for it. We, as Muslims, do favour *laïcité*. But it dates back to 1905, Muslims didn't ask to change it or [to have] a new *laïcité* designed for them. (Open Society Foundations focus group)

#### 4.10 Recognition at Stake: Enforcing the Principle of Equality

In today's Marseille the salience of minority experience leads to an almost all-encompassing search for recognition. As one focus group participant expressed it,

<sup>101</sup> Daniel Weinstock, “Identités et sociétés multiculturelles” (Identities and multicultural societies), in Islam & *laïcité*.org, *Islam et identité nationale. Identités, appartenances, diversités* (Islam and national identity. Identities, appearances, diversities), L'Harmattan, Paris, 2009, p. 81.

A multicultural Marseille, it's not a matter of choice, it's just like that. So now they'll ask you: "Do you agree that there are communities?" We can't help! Because of the history of the neighbourhoods, it is all mixed. On the other hand, regarding political or religious recognition, nothing ever happens. I am not proud of my mayor, the city is beautiful, it is nice to live in, but representatives don't do all that they should do. (Open Society Foundations focus group)

This pattern of reasoning was also evidenced in the Brouard and Tiberj survey: if Muslims adhere to secularity, "the religious question serves as a basis for their demands that the place French of immigrant descent occupy in French society be fully recognised, and, in parallel, it brings to light the Islamophobia of a significant component of the French population".<sup>102</sup> By doing so, Muslims significantly alter the current understanding of the principle of equality. From an understanding of equality centred on individualism and assimilation, the concept is shifting towards one that takes social identity into account. "This perception of equality means that one does not need not to hide or apologise for one's origins, family or community, and requires others to show respect for them".<sup>103</sup>

Fundamentally, this shift took place following the internal social patterns that are specific to French and Marseillais society. But external experiences may also have contributed. Several influential individuals in Marseille, including local representatives or decisionmakers interviewed for this report, were approached by the campaign team of the U.S. president, Barack Obama, and this example of a success story appeals to them. A few also brought up the experience of foreign countries, such as the UK and Belgium:

There were calls for joining the police typically directed at Muslims. I saw a poster: "You are Muslim, you feel British, join the police." I was shocked, I wasn't used to that. Here one always sees snapshots of whites: "Come and join the national police." With my republican mind, I felt a gap. I realise now. And I saw it also in Belgium. They have recruitment campaigns aimed at Muslims, with a fierce will to include them. On the other hand, in France we have a completely different ruling system. We are in a republic where there are values, basics which are equality, social justice, and we realise that these are still more discriminatory than Anglo-Saxon countries that are based on discrimination.

While certain prominent individuals stakeholders may now turn their attention and their means of action towards the recognition at stake, some of them, in fact, expressed some regret about this evolution. Two of them stated that they were longing for the times when organisations focused on social universalist aims, such as fighting exclusion. Today, they all seek recognition, albeit by deploying their actions in a wide range of methods. There is no unity in the lines of action that are adopted, neither *de facto* nor

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<sup>102</sup> Brouard et Tiberj, *Français comme les autres?*, p. 44.

<sup>103</sup> Modood, "Muslims and European Multiculturalism", p. 114.

in intention, especially when it comes to religion. On the contrary, there seems to be a kind of containment strategy on organised Islam.

#### 4.10.1 Protesting through rap music

As one expert has noted, Marseille is an “authentic goldmine of creation” in the field of rap music.<sup>104</sup> Daymone is a young rapper hailing from a large housing estate in the North districts. While he still struggles with financial troubles, his creative line is clear-cut: a rap that is influenced by Muslim ethics (“I have Koranic verses in the (“my”) heart, it (“they”) slows (“slow”) me down (offer reflection)”), fuelled by the experience of being a Comorian from Marseille. He has issued his first album and was able to place it in shops in the area of Marseille where rap music is popular.

The concept behind the CD, *Between Hatred and Love*, is that I am looking for myself. I don't know who I am. Am I French? Am I Comorian? When I am in France, they call me an immigrant. When I go to Comoros, they say: ‘Oh, Frenchie, go home’. I went there only once, in 1999. So I feel hatred for one side and love for the other, and it can change any time. Sometimes I feel hatred for France and love for Comoros. That's how I feel. When I position myself vis-a-vis France and Comoros, I am stuck between hatred and love.<sup>105</sup>

Daymone's rap tells how much he owes his father and mother, and he is eager to restore the pride and dignity of Marseille's Comorian community. The title of the first song is “Comorian”, and it recalls a range of customs that would remain impenetrable to French ears:

I wanted to show that, even though we are a discrete community, we have things that are ours, even if I am a bit disappointed with what we have become. In Marseille, we have done nothing to gain economic or political power. I've wanted to make a song that gives us a little pride.

Daymone graduated from a business school two years ago, and he is the only student from his class who has not found a job in his field; he was also the only black student. He is currently employed on a state subsidised job in the social centre of the housing estate where he lives:

Compared with our parents, I believe that we've failed. Our parents, though they were illiterate, they've managed to get work, to get housing, and to make us into what we are. I have [a degree], but I can't find a stable job. I don't know whether I'll get married. At the moment I don't even feel the need for it because I can't take responsibility for myself.

<sup>104</sup> Suzanne Gilles, “L'économie urbaine des mondes de la musique. Le district rap marseillais” (The urban economy of the music world. The Marseille rap district), *Les Annales de la recherche urbaine* (101) (November 2006), pp. 75–81.

<sup>105</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Daymone.

A muffled voice of protest can be heard in Daymone's rap, but the tone of his music is not one of revolt, it is not protest music in the strictest sense, of the kind put forth by Funky Family or Psy4 de la Rime, another Comorian rap band from the North districts. Songs from these groups also echo their lower status in society, but denounce it, like in the hit song "Jeunesse France", by Psy4 de la Rime. The song is "dedicated to young foreigners living on French soil". The themes are dark, as is the place where the video clip was shot: "Projects for the future are set aside, because we live in urgency one day at a time", "Roads are full of hurdles", but "we want to pull through".<sup>106</sup>

#### 4.11 Diversity

In 2005, the French government, together with private-sector representatives, introduced a new "republican" catchword: "diversity". Prominent public figures of postcolonial immigrant descent do not hesitate to define themselves as, quite literally, "descended from diversity" ("*issus de la diversité*"). The word strongly implies that, on a symbolic and perhaps also on a pragmatic level, diverse and plural subpopulations coexist among the French population without specifically designating anyone. The risk of assigning individuals to their supposed difference is thus avoided; critics have used this perceived danger to disparagingly confront assertions of a right to difference, as it was debated in the 1980s and the 1990s.

##### 4.11.1 The Diversity Club

*Marseille Espérance*, set up in 1990, well before formal talks on diversity had begun, is now placed under the banner of diversity and has apparently become more legitimate. Pierre N'Gahane, who was in Marseille at the time as a deputy to the *préfet* in charge of equality of opportunities, took it upon himself to bring together public figures belonging to visible minorities, and encouraged them to set up a scheme that could become a driving force in the right direction. The Diversity Club (*Club Diversité*) of the Bouches-du-Rhône was born. It was registered in the *Journal Officiel* on 16 August 2008 with the following statement:

*Aim:* promoting the diversity of the national population, so that this diversity may become visible and take an active role in all spheres of society: audio-visual, cultural, political and economic, in accordance with republican tradition; making sure that human rights as well as the rights of citizens are respected.<sup>107</sup>

In practice, "the Diversity Club strives to bridge the gap between individuals from minorities on the one hand, republican institutions and private bodies on the other hand",<sup>108</sup> and has two major objectives:

<sup>106</sup> Available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gcnbWwLS1ek>.

<sup>107</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 16 August 2008.

<sup>108</sup> *Journal Officiel*, 16 August 2008.

First, employment and entrepreneurship, by encouraging firms and businesses to implement a Diversity Charter, and by sponsoring young graduates towards employment; second, political life, by promoting a charter for political diversity, and by ‘campaigning in favour of a greater involvement of individuals with a diverse background’.<sup>109</sup>

It also aims to invest in cultural life and take part in the festivities of Marseille 2013, an event celebrating Marseille as a European cultural capital.<sup>110</sup> The president of the club is Abou Diarra, a public accountant of Malian origin. Diarra, a religiously observant Muslim, is also currently a Muslim delegate to *Marseille Espérance*.<sup>111</sup>

#### 4.11.2 Med’in Marseille

Med’in Marseille is an Internet media outlet which also aims at promoting diversity, while focusing more on its dimensions within civil society and working-class culture (see Chapter 11, Media). Its manager, Ahmed Nadjar, has said that “Marseille is Arab too”.<sup>112</sup> Supported by ACSE and urban policy bodies, Med’in Marseille does not have an activism-oriented profile, and its editorial line closely follows the analysis that the team makes of the current situation. It positions itself “at the crossroads of institutions, residents and policymakers, so as to give people a voice”<sup>113</sup> and open a debate. On the whole, Med’in Marseille chooses to “work with those visible minorities that are the most removed from equality: African, Maghreb, also Muslims somewhat, because now, since the fall of the Eastern bloc, we are stigmatised as the new foes of civilisation”.<sup>114</sup> It does not intend to represent or promote the interests of any particular Muslim community, but on the contrary, to “unfragment Marseille”. “Residents of the suburbs are my community”, Nadjar stressed. He grew up in the ethnically mixed suburbs of Paris and remains nostalgic for the intermingling that he experienced as a child, at middle school and in the neighbourhood of his youth. “All that I am doing, I view it as a tool”, he added. He observed that other communities only act for themselves in Marseille, and political leaders are only too eager to anticipate their demands. “We must have tools to balance this situation. Actually, we have to fight”, Nadjar said. But lobbying on behalf of a community is not the final aim. On the contrary, the goal is to bring back some vigour to the France of human rights.

<sup>109</sup> From the opening speech, in Club Diversité, *Bilan de l’année 2008*, special file (2008 Report).

<sup>110</sup> The city of Marseille has been designated a European cultural capital for the year 2013.

<sup>111</sup> See Section 3.3, Institutional Context.

<sup>112</sup> Interview with Ahmed Nadjar, April 2009. See also Chapter 11, Media.

<sup>113</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Ahmed Nadjar.

<sup>114</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Ahmed Nadjar.

#### 4.11.3 Espace des Franco-Algériens et Algériens de PACA-Méditerranée

In the spring of 2009, a group was formed in Marseille under the heading “PACA-Mediterranean Space of French-Algerians and Algerians” (*Espace des Franco-algériens et Algériens de PACA-Méditerranée*; PACA is the Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur region). The term “*espace*” (space) was obviously chosen because this concept is as open-ended as can be; it does not imply any specific model of organisation or a specific objective, and only creates geopolitical frames of reference: France (PACA region), Algeria and the Mediterranean. The group’s statement of 17 October 2008 is its founding document. The statement points out how crucial the historical dimension is for the new group.<sup>115</sup> It aims to foster participation in the social and cultural life of France, while supporting the identity and rights of “French-Algerians and Algerians in France”.<sup>116</sup>

It is too early to assess how this initiative will turn out. Its founders aim to become actors both in France and in Algeria, and to “explain that France has a French-Algerian community which is not what it is thought to be”, because it is a large community rich in various competences in every domain.<sup>117</sup> Publicly affirming such a positioning, which departs from the idea of assimilation, was previously unheard of within a population (the French elite of Algerian descent) which has retained from colonial experience a marked predilection for assimilation. Akim Allik, the co-founder of *Espace*, explained:

France has asked us to integrate, to belong to France, and belonging to France meant to be like the French. The same lines were not taken for other communities [which had arrived more recently]. To other communities, they’ve said: “Organise yourselves into communities, and we will discuss.” There was a kind of schizophrenia in the French Algerian community, because three-quarters of the people in the community were born in France, and in France this non-acceptance always remained. Then there were mixed marriages, all the strategies that could allow to “integrate”, inside quotation marks. There were generations where many of us were students. At the same time, we were almost obliged, we felt that we were asked somehow to deny our past.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>115</sup> This date is not coincidental; it is the anniversary of the huge demonstration that was organised by pro-FLN Algerians in Paris, on 17 October 1961, when the war in Algeria was coming to its end. The demonstration was quelled with bloodshed, when the Parisian police, under the command of its chief Maurice Papon, used force to disperse the demonstrators. The number of casualties remain unknown because corpses were thrown into the River Seine.

<sup>116</sup> Statement tract received from Akim Allik, co-founder of the *Espace*, 31 March 2009, on file with the Open Society Foundations.

<sup>117</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Akim Allik, May 2009.

<sup>118</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Akim Allik.

According to Allik, two factors combined to raise consciousness that this positioning was inadequate. The first factor, in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks in the United States, was fear. These fears fed the rise of Islamophobia in France during the crisis about the Muhammad caricatures,<sup>119</sup> with that controversy followed by the debate about the veil, and increasing levels of anti-Muslim hype in the media. About all of this, Allik noted:

Caricatures are of no importance, a mere drop of water. Veil wearing, youth (we are potential rapists); Islamism (all our wives are veiled, tortured, hit by husbands, we go and choose them, and then force them into marriage), the works!

Allik described some French-Algerians as feeling increasingly powerless, as they watched Marseille's communities from other Maghrebi countries pursue organizing efforts structured by initiatives from their home governments.

The Moroccans have their consulate, and Tunisians also. This gave them dynamics: they had meetings and places where they could discuss how their community was dealt with. Algerians did not have any of this.<sup>120</sup>

Hence came the idea of a kind of return to roots neither directed at religion nor an allegiance to the parents' country of origin, but rather roots pointed towards pledging allegiance to France through a composite identity on the Anglo-Saxon model, a hyphenated identity which would lay the cornerstone of a new community. Allik, himself the son of FLN activists, believes that this community may rely on the long history of the relationship between France and Algeria, which needs to be passed on to the next generations.

#### 4.12 "Socialising Islam"

The phrase "socialising Islam" was coined during the survey by a human rights activist, Saïd Boukennouche, to describe how one of the first independent radio stations in Marseille, Radio Gazelle (established in 1981), related to Islam. As he explained, the station's founders, who were all just over 20 years old at the time, refused to create an Arab radio station. This was happening at a time when young people with a migrant background from Algeria had just begun to claim their identity as French, stepping away from the discourse of their parents, which was still centred on the idea of return. They wanted to be assertive, and to convey a sense of belonging to Marseille and to France, but did not want to stand alone in doing so, which was why they wanted to set up an intercultural radio station.

<sup>119</sup> In 2005, the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* published a series of cartoons showing the Muslim Prophet Muhammad in situations many Muslims found offensive. Protests against the cartoons were held in Europe and across the world, sometimes turning violent. See the BBC summary at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in\\_depth/4677976.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_depth/4677976.stm) (accessed April 2011).

<sup>120</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Akim Allik.

We used to bring up issues of faith during Ramadan only. Many of us were indifferent towards the religion. We've tried to socialise Islam. During Ramadan, we used to celebrate the breaking of the fast live on radio, people used to listen to Radio Gazelle to know when they were supposed to break the fasting, and afterwards, there was a social and cultural moment, Ramadan nights, music, society debates, cultural debates, games.

We used to ask for an imam to be present once a week, a progressive one, Imam Seck.<sup>121</sup> He held live consultations on the radio. He always said, I remember: 'In Islam nothing is always forbidden. There is no coercion in Islam.' Religion was not at the heart [of the station], not at all.<sup>122</sup>

In this context, the first meaning of socialising Islam was to give space to Islam in the station's schedule, in order to move closer to the audience.

In a wider sense what was involved in the concept of socialising Islam was trying to firmly establish a space for it in Marseille's landscape, taking into account the values of democracy and tolerance in Islam itself, in order to counter the stereotypes that run deep in a society shaped by the majority. It also entailed trying to ensure that religious observance modernised and respected common values. In other words, the process was all about affecting the representations and practices of Muslims themselves. The young people who carried out this strategy were not observant Muslims, and their struggle was mainly concerned with social inclusion and political issues (against authoritarian regimes in the countries of origin). Many displayed indifference towards Islam as a faith, but they maintained some ties to Islam because of their upbringing and out of respect for their families.

A *laïque* and feminist activist who is an active member (and a deputy treasurer) of the association in charge of Marseille's Great Mosque got involved because what is most important to her is taking action in favour of an "open-minded Islam of France", and "countering [fundamentalists and Salafis] on their grounds" even though, as she makes clear, she is not observant.<sup>123</sup> Through her choice of words, another dimension of socialising Islam emerges, a need to socialise Islam's religious leaders and to help them have professional relationships, for instance with Salah Bariki, a representative to the mayor's office who, as a secular Muslim and a leading figure of *Marseille Espérance* since its founding, echoed these sentiments.<sup>124</sup>

The most significant action is "Eid in the City", promoted by Marseille's Union of Muslim Families and financially supported by ACSE. For five years, the association has annually implemented a broad range of activities designed for a wide Muslim as well as

<sup>121</sup> From Senegal, a place where Islam is traditionally imbued with Sufism, Imam Seck was a Muslim representative to *Marseille Espérance* from the start and up to his death.

<sup>122</sup> Open Society Foundations interview with Saïd Boukenouche, April 2009.

<sup>123</sup> Open Society Foundations interview with Fatima Orsatelli, April 2009.

<sup>124</sup> He is also one of Radio Gazelle's founders and, later, managers.

non-Muslim audience, around the concept of “sharing the festive atmosphere of the holiday” at the period of the Eid:

In an open and friendly atmosphere, setting up moments of information and communication about Muslim culture and traditions: a big festival geared to families, in an atmosphere of sharing, concerts and shows, movies, debates, exhibition and a workshop in Arabic calligraphy, a tea dance for the seniors.<sup>125</sup>

Thirty activity leaders are mobilised, most on a voluntary basis. In 2008, 106 associations were partners in the event, with over 100 voluntary workers, and 25,000 persons took part in one activity or another. The event’s organisers emphasize that “Eid in the City is a great opportunity for gatherings and friendly encounters, in a festive context, which helps play down all the drama around the Muslim reality”.<sup>126</sup> In 2008, the rap group Psy4 de la Rime sponsored the festival and gave a concert at the Dôme.

#### 4.13 Organising Islam in Marseille

While not a focus of the Foundations’ questionnaire, religious organisation is undoubtedly one of the key modalities of the recognition of Muslims in Marseille, which is both fragmented and characterised by competing struggles for social and political legitimacy. Marseille’s population of Algerian descent is estimated to be at least 150,000. Despite various attempted takeovers in the 1980s and 1990s, and despite enjoying full support from both France’s centre-right governments and Marseille’s city hall, the Algerian networks centred on the Great Mosque of Paris have not managed to emerge as the organising power for integrating Islam in Marseille.

When the Minister of the Interior in 1999 revived the idea of setting up a representative authority for the Islamic faith in France that would liaise with the public authorities, a representative of Marseille’s El-Islah mosque was included in the national consulting pool that was set up, thus positioning El-Islah as one of France’s most important mosques. The leaders of El-Islah won twice in the CRCM polls, heading a list that proclaimed its independence from countries of origin. In 2008, they lost their seats in the CRCM,<sup>127</sup> but remain represented at the Paris-based executive bureau of the CFCM. In Marseille, they faced accusations of fundamentalism, although they identify with reformist trends.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> ACSE form (Agency for Social Cohesion and Equality, the scheme in charge of funding NGO activities aimed at migrant integration).

<sup>126</sup> ACSE form.

<sup>127</sup> Since the 2008 polls, the CRCM-PACA has been dominated by a list led by the RMF (Rassemblement des Muslims de France), supported by Morocco. Moussaoui was the chief candidate, and was subsequently elected as president of the CFCM.

<sup>128</sup> Reformism is an Islamic movement which strives to read Islamic tradition in light of a contemporary context.

The non-profit organisation behind the planning of Marseille's Great Mosque (the cornerstone of which has yet to be laid) consisted of, under the aegis of city hall, various individuals more or less representative of the diversity of Marseille's Muslim communities.<sup>129</sup> It is presided over by a leader of Algerian descent, Nourredine Cheikh, who is also a member of the network of the Great Mosque of Paris. Research suggests that the non-observant Muslim elite of immigrant descent, the ones who strive to socialise Islam, have the biggest investment in Marseille's Great Mosque project. It is clear that they make up a majority of Marseille's Muslim elite, and the endorsement of the project by city hall echoes their views. But the plans have also received a warm welcome on the part of Marseille's minority Muslim communities, such as the Comorian community, seemingly more concerned with the pragmatic opportunity to embody the universal dimension of the *umma* in Marseille that the whole endeavour provides.

In this fragmented environment, where city hall maintains its control, the Comorian community demonstrates high internal integration and autonomy. Children attend *shioni* (Quranic school), at the expense of the family, much more often and much longer than in any other group (up to the age of 15), families and young people maintain tight relationships with imams, and they frequently hold large religious gatherings for people from the same villages. The community's means and resources are heavily invested in development initiatives in the country of origin. These economic, religious and festive forms of integration are enduring in Marseille, but signs of a decline are manifest among the second generation of Marseille's Comorians. Notably, families provide less support for Quranic schools, and the quality of Quranic education does not always give satisfaction.<sup>130</sup> New sorts of integration into the community are emerging among young people which are neither religious nor village-based, but rather focused on promoting the Comorian community in the wider context of Marseille.<sup>131</sup>

#### 4.14 Conclusion

To conclude, the Foundations' research demonstrates how complex Muslim identity actually is in Marseille. While residents of Muslim background are not prone to betray their ties to Islam, even when they are not observant, they are also not very likely to bring this frame of reference to the fore. The questionnaires clearly show that self-identifying as a Muslim does not preclude experiencing other feelings of belonging, most notably a sense of belonging to the territory of Marseille. Moreover, self-identifying Muslims stated that adhering to the rule of law and to republican values is

<sup>129</sup> On the phenomenon of the "Mayor's mosques" in France and the range of strategic options that go with it for the Ile-de-France region, see the field research by Françoise Duthu, *Le maire et la mosquée. Islam et laïcité en Ile-de-France* (The mayor and the mosque. Islam and secularism in the Ile-de-France), L'Harmattan, Paris, 2008.

<sup>130</sup> Fieldwork in Marseille.

<sup>131</sup> Open Society Foundations' interviews with Daymone, Elisabeth Saïd, March–April 2009.

very important to them, just as it is to other subpopulations covered in the survey. Concerns about *laïcité* are also prevalent among Muslims, who often resent the gap between the principle, to which they adhere, and its actual implementation where Islam is concerned.

Moreover, the Foundations' survey reveals that in Marseille feelings of affiliation to Islam are strongly tied to ethnicity. In the framework of social interactions, they function as a marker of non-native identity and a source of disadvantage, almost as much as ethnic origin or non-white colour. Being perceived as a Muslim is also liable to make one be seen as non-French. Muslims and non-Muslims tend to live side by side in the neighbourhood, without really mixing together or getting to know each other. Nevertheless, their knowledge of institutions and their urban culture are broadly similar, in spite of the huge living difficulties that the Muslim subpopulation faces in the 3rd *arrondissement*.

On a final note, while new approaches in the quest for recognition are emerging among public figures, Islam plays only a side role in the process. Generally, when Islam intervenes at all in the search for recognition, then it is about socialising Islam, to quote an interviewee, and making sure that Marseille's environment is inclusive of Islam, rather than a desire to set up some kind of integrated Muslim lobby.

## 5. EXPERIENCES OF MUSLIM COMMUNITIES: EDUCATION

Marseille's school system mirrors the city itself. Social divides are patent, and replicate the major split between the North districts (*quartiers Nord*), together with the city centre, and the South districts (*quartiers Sud*). While students from Muslim families can be found on both sides of this divide, they are particularly concentrated in the North side, in the working-class districts of the city. This chapter begins with an overview of this divide, and examines its impact on the school experience of Muslim students. There follows a general picture of how the French school system welcomes and accommodates Muslims as such. In general, like all public bodies, the French school system does not use faith as a category of classification. But in practice it will become apparent that this system is far more complex than it is supposed to be according to republican ideology. The chapter looks at the arrangements that come under affirmative action *à la française*, that is to say, on a socio-territorial basis and not on the grounds of ethnicity. A description of private state-agreed schooling is included. The final part of the chapter looks at local dynamics on schooling of Muslim children, drawing on the various components of the Foundations' survey.

Marseille's school system is polarised, with a strong divide between the North and South districts. Children from Muslim families are concentrated in the North district. Concerns have been raised about this divide since the beginning of the 1980s (section 5.1). It is not a surprise that this division affects academic achievements; however, it should be placed in the broader context of data available for France as a whole which suggest that, once other factors are taken into account, children of Muslim families and immigrant descent do not underachieve in secondary schools, compared with their non-migrant peers. As these data are not well-known, they are presented below, although the situation they describe is not exactly that of the specific context of Marseille.

### 5.1 A Split School System

There are two statistics that provide important information on education in Marseille. First, 27 per cent of Marseille *collège* students, more than 13,000 individuals, attend privately run *collèges* with the agreement of the state. This is greater than the French average, which stands at about 20 per cent for secondary education. These schools have a student body that has been selected both socially and educationally. There are exceptions, and Marseille is known precisely for these exceptions. But as in the rest of France, private schools are naturally and functionally selective: naturally, because they welcome families that apply voluntarily, and functionally, because the demand exceeds the number of places.

Second, 10,777 pupils in Marseille were enrolled in a *collège* (secondary school) designated as "*Ambition réussite*" (Aiming for Success) for the 2008–2009 school year.

These are *collèges* that are identified as seriously underperforming. This figure represents 22 per cent of all Marseille *collège* pupils (public and private sectors combined) and about 30 per cent of Marseille *collège* pupils in the state-run school system.<sup>132</sup> These are large figures. Across France as a whole only one in 20 pupils attends a *collège* of this category. Thus we see in Marseille the massive presence of two extremes in the school spectrum, two diametrically opposed school formulas at the *collège* level, which is the level that experiences the most pressure in the French school system. All 21 *Ambition réussite collèges* in Marseille are located in the North district; again, this figure is significant, as there are only 253 *Ambition réussite collèges* in France. Most of the state-supported private schools lie in the city centre and the South districts. In the Marseille-Centre school basin (an administrative unit that is made up of Marseille's city centre and the South districts), the rate of *collège* students sent to state-supported private schools is only 42 per cent.

Academic achievement reflects the great divide. In 2008, 62 per cent of North districts pupils and 83 per cent of pupils in the South successfully passed the *brevet*.<sup>133</sup> And 65 per cent of the candidates for the general *baccalauréat* graduated in the North districts, compared with 89 per cent in the South districts. Moreover, numbers of drop-outs and students referred to vocational schools or technical courses are likely to be much higher in the North districts, but are not released. Overall, the city is characterised by a strong socio-academic heterogeneity that is anchored in the territorial divide.

Research by Aletta Grisay suggests that this heterogeneity is also likely to affect the atmosphere in schools,<sup>134</sup> a phenomenon called the “aggregation effect”. Academic achievement is seen as the product of both individual factors associated with pupils and collective factors associated with academic institutions. The size of the aggregation effect depends on the various national school systems. In the French system, the effect appears to be highly pronounced. “From the point of view of cognitive learning, inequalities between pupils from different *collèges* or different classes are mainly explained by the conjunction between the characteristics of the population and those of

<sup>132</sup> All figures for this paragraph are taken from the website of Aix-Marseille regional education authority, Rectorat, available at [http://www.ac-aix-marseille.fr/wacam/jcms/c\\_89333/l-etat-de-l-academie-2010-2011](http://www.ac-aix-marseille.fr/wacam/jcms/c_89333/l-etat-de-l-academie-2010-2011) (accessed April 2011).

<sup>133</sup> The *brevet* is a national degree which concludes the first stage of secondary education.

<sup>134</sup> See Aletta Grisay, “Evolution des acquis cognitifs et socio-affectifs des élèves au cours des années de collège, Ministère de l'éducation nationale, de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche” (The evolution of cognitive and socio-emotional experiences of pupils throughout secondary school, Ministry of national education, higher education and research), *Note d'information* 97–26 (hereafter Grisay, “Evolution des acquis cognitifs”). This is also confirmed by the OECD PISA surveys, which are carried out every three years. Educational atmosphere is measured through questions about the “general feel” of a school (the opinions of pupils as well as teachers are collected), discipline, time management, how well the curriculum is implemented in class (did the pupils review in class the elements of the curriculum on which they will be graded?), and the teachers' expectations of their pupils (are they confident about their ability to succeed?).

the educational atmosphere of the said *collège* or class".<sup>135</sup> The research for this report suggests that the educational atmosphere in North districts schools stands in stark contrast with that of South districts, and contributes to the underachievement generally recorded in North districts schools. In general schools catering to students from disadvantaged sectors are very likely to be affected by an overall deterioration in the educational atmosphere. Policies of priority education, and notably nowadays the "Aiming for Success" label, aim to reduce those inequalities.

Pupils from Muslim families are affected by the aggregation effect, as they are overrepresented in underperforming North districts schools (see Table 23).

**Table 23. Distribution of foreign pupils in Marseille schools, 1981, %**

Of total	North-Centre <i>arrondissements</i> 1, 2, 3, 13, 14, 15, 16			Other <i>arrondissements</i>	
	Foreigners	From Muslim countries	From Algeria	Foreigners	From Muslim countries
<i>Ecoles maternelles</i> (pre-schools)	24	19	15.5	5.7	3.9
Primary schools	25.3	20	16.6	6.5	4.5
<i>Collèges</i> (lower secondary schools)	13.7	12	10.1	4.5	3
<i>Lycées</i> (upper secondary schools)	3.6	2.6		2.5	
<i>Lycées professionnels</i> (vocational upper secondary schools)	28.5	26.5		11	9.5

Source: Calculations based on data from CLARB-AGAM, a municipal agency in Marseille, 1981

In spite of this, there is no proof that pupils from a migrant background underachieve at school in comparison with other children in the same circumstances, as is suggested by other studies.

<sup>135</sup> Grisay, "Evolution des acquis cognitifs".

## 5.2 How Does Migrant Background Affect School Careers?

There are no data specific to Marseille, although national data may be analysed. The Ministry of Education has collected statistical samples of students who started their first year in school in 1989 and 1995. These data allow for longitudinal analysis of their school careers (panels of pupils who started year one respectively in 1989 and in 1995). Analysis of these data shows that the social stratification of immigrant families is different from that of the general population. A large majority of immigrant families had a low or very low social status. For example, in the 1995 cohort in the general population the social background of families was 18.9 per cent managers and 32.5 per cent blue-collar workers, while among immigrant families 0.7 per cent were senior officials and 80 per cent were blue-collar workers. The structure of the population sorted by the parents' level of training was also contrasted.<sup>136</sup> The data from the sample surveys confirmed that school careers, evaluated by looking at the position of the students seven years after completing their first year of secondary education, were heavily dependent on family social status.<sup>137</sup>

However, when one controls for all other variables and checks for the statistical impact of family migration background alone, the finding is that the correlation is weak, and sometimes positive. Table 24, with calculations based on the 1995 sample, indicates that, contrary to popular belief, students of North African origin are not more often assigned to vocational *lycées* than their peers, all else being equal. By contrast, seven years after year one, they find themselves more often in the general-education *lycées* and, above all, more often in technical training courses, but less often in apprenticeships (where training depends on signing a contract with a private employer, referred to as "*maître de stage*"). They tend to leave school without any degree less often than their peers, all else being equal. For example, given comparable family and social situations at the beginning of year one, children of Maghrebi origin are more likely to find themselves in a general *lycée*.<sup>138</sup>

<sup>136</sup> L.-A. Vallet and J.-P. Caille, "Les élèves étrangers ou issus de l'immigration dans l'école et le collège français. Une étude d'ensemble" (Students from abroad or of a migration background in French schools and colleges. A general survey), *Education & formations* 67 (April 1996) (hereafter Vallet and Caille, "Les élèves étrangers").

<sup>137</sup> These findings are also confirmed by PISA surveys on the skills acquired by 15-year-old students. France ranks within the average of OECD countries for its students' average performance, but well below the average in terms of equity. The pupils' skills are very unequally distributed depending on their social background. See the results of the 2009 survey on the PISA website, available at [www.pisa.oecd.org](http://www.pisa.oecd.org) (accessed January 2011).

<sup>138</sup> J.-P. Caille, "Perception du système éducatif et projets d'avenir des enfants d'immigrés" (Perceptions of the education system and future prospects of migrant children), *Education & formations* 74, April 2007, pp. 117–142.

**Table 24. Impact, all else being equal, of students' origin on their academic position seven years after first grade, %**

modalities		General <i>lycée</i>	Technological track	Vocational <i>lycée</i>	Apprentice	Left school
reference: <i>Non-immigrant family</i>	Probability of reference	20.7	26.4	32.9	13.4	7.2
	<i>Marginal effect</i>					
	Mixed family	6.2			-5.2	
	From North Africa	5.9	14.1		-10.5	-3.9
Active modalities	From Black Africa		18.5		-7.9	
	From Portugal or Spain	8.7		-5.7		-3.4
	From South East Asia	16.9			-8.8	-5.1
	From Turkey	-8			-7.5	

**Note:** Children in grade one of North African descent with similar family and social situations are more likely to be in general *lycée*. The difference between the active modalities and the non-immigrant family of this group is estimated at +5.9 points. In this way, the probability of their being in a general *lycée* reaches 20.7 + 5.9 (or 26.6 %).

**Source:** Jean-Paul Caille (DEP), "Perception du système éducatif et projets d'avenir des enfants d'immigrés", *Education & Formation* (74), April 2007

In general, girls from immigrant families perform better in the educational system than boys. Compared with boys, girls are more likely to be found in general *lycées* and less often in technical courses, vocational *lycées*, apprenticeships, or leaving school without a diploma.<sup>139</sup>

Data on the impact on education of the language spoken at home are limited. Analysis of the 1989 sample suggests that speaking a language other than French at home

<sup>139</sup> See also Michèle Tribalat, "La réussite au bac des jeunes d'origine étrangère" (Success in the *baccalaureat* for young people of foreign origin), *Hommes et Migrations* 1201 (September 1996), pp. 35-43.

correlates with a slightly positive effect.<sup>140</sup> Further analysis of these data shows that French pupils born in France, whose parents do not speak a language other than French, and the pupils who speak another language than French with their parents are always slightly advantaged, whether they are born in France or not.<sup>141</sup> These findings run counter to mainstream representations.

Before reporting on the findings from the Foundations' research on the social dynamics of the schooling of children from Muslim families in Marseille, a brief introduction is needed to outline what the French system has to offer Islam in school. The organisation is more complex than it seems. The French school system does not provide a single formula of *laïcité*, but three different ones, of which two are present in Marseille. It is also necessary to outline education policies in the state-run system which may have the most effect on Muslim children: this includes the policy on religious neutrality and policies of priority education to tackle with underachievement.

### 5.3 Models of Religious Diversity in French schools

France does not have one model to regulate the expression of religious diversity at school, but three distinct ones, each of them the outcome of specific political history, and each endowed with a strong institutional consistency. After a period of mutual conflict, the principle and character of their coexistence are now well established.

#### 5.3.1 The republican model: no religion, not even ethics teaching

The first model of managing religious diversity at school, to which the “French model” is sometimes reduced, is a derivative of the principle of state disentanglement from religion (or *laïcité*) which was legally devised and extended to state education in the 1880s, at the beginning of the 3rd Republic. It rests on positivist epistemology, according to which schools must only concern themselves with scientific knowledge, and faith does not come within its scope except in some points of history. Religious authors (Pascal, Bossuet) or religious works (Racine's *Esther*) were not excluded from the teaching of French literature, but they were read in the context of the history of ideas (nowadays, they are scarcely read in class, if at all). In primary school, ethics lessons included teaching the duties of man towards God, but this disappeared from

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<sup>140</sup> The result emerges from checking for the impact of a number of variables on the marker: “Having received a proposition for attending a general or a technical *lycée* in year five, four years after year one”. This indicator implies a school career with no repeated year and a level of achievement and acquired skills sufficient to allow for a *lycée* assignment.

<sup>141</sup> Vallet and Caille, “Les élèves étrangers”, p. 111.

the curriculum at the beginning of the 1920s,<sup>142</sup> and ethics itself was dropped from the curriculum at the beginning of the 1970s.<sup>143</sup>

### 5.3.2 The contract of association model: religious environment, optional faith

The second model of the educational management of religious diversity was instituted by a law proposed by Michel Debré (called the *loi Debré*, the Debré Law) and voted in on 31 December 1959 by the Gaullist majority in Parliament, at the beginning of the 5th Republic. The law was necessary to help the state to cope with swelling numbers of pupils in secondary schools. At that time, a process of mass democratisation of secondary education was under way (the exam for entering secondary education was cancelled at about the same time). The law permits private schools to sign agreements with the state for the purpose of the public interest. State-supported private schools must teach the official curriculum, and pupils cannot be selected by criteria of faith or origin. In return for state support, teachers are paid by the state and their career is brought into line with that of state teachers. They are inspected by state inspectors. But contrary to the state school system, teachers in private schools are not necessarily secular. Religious activities may be offered optionally to pupils in accordance with the schools' "proper character" as stated in the Debré Law of 1959. Religious symbols are not forbidden in the school environment.

Private state-supported schools under the Debré Law are predominantly managed by the Catholic Church. They accommodate, on average, 20 per cent of secondary-school students (more in Marseille, as has been pointed out), and fewer at primary level. By law, their overall growth now matches that of the state system countrywide, but it cannot exceed it. It has been estimated that about 50 per cent of French families resort to private state-supported schools at some point in their children's school careers.<sup>144</sup> This framework was questioned in 1981, when a left-wing coalition took over after 22 years of the Gaullist Republic, and planned a "great unified and secular state service of national education", decentralised, in which private state-supported schools would have been included.<sup>145</sup> The plan failed, and whereas the duality of models and their competition remain controversial, the regime of state support seems to be sustainable.

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<sup>142</sup> It was re-established by Philippe Pétain during the Second World War, and voided again when France was liberated.

<sup>143</sup> The latest primary school programmes include a subject called history-geography, civic and moral instruction, given 78 hours per year: *Ministry of national education, BO (Official Bulletin)*, 19 June 2008.

<sup>144</sup> A. Léger and G. Langouët, *Le choix des familles: école publique ou école privée?* (Families' choice: public school or private school?), Faber, Paris, 1997.

<sup>145</sup> See François Mitterrand's 110 propositions for France (*110 Propositions pour la France*), 1981, as part of the Socialist Party's programme for the 1981 presidential election campaign.

Families make multiple use of this network; their motives may be moral and religious or social or academic.<sup>146</sup>

### 5.3.3 Alsace-Moselle local law: four recognised denominations

The third model of managing faith diversity at school does not exist in Marseille, but is mentioned here to complete the analysis.<sup>147</sup> It is the model established in Alsace-Moselle. In this area, the faith regime is close to the one organised by Napoleon at the beginning of the 19th century. There are four recognised faiths, Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist and Jewish. They are state-funded and their heads are nominated by the president of the republic. State schools are bound to teach these religions, which are taught by teachers or chaplains. These opportunities do not extend to non-recognised faiths (like Islam).

To conclude, three models of school secularism coexist in the French Constitution, two of which affect Marseille, and these provide resources sufficient to address the demands of Muslim families.

## 5.4 Debates on Religious Neutrality at School

The accommodation of religion in the republican model has often been debated. The two main issues are both concerned with the concept of school *laïcité*. The first issue marking the start of political debate was whether Muslim students could wear a headscarf in school. The response of the courts, outlining compatibility of the wearing of the scarf with laicity, given in 1989 did not meet the expectations of the political right and it divided the left wing. The issue returned to the political agenda when a legal ban was proposed in 2004. Second, some republican intellectuals argued for a greater recognition of religion in the school curriculum, but they failed to bring about any change in practice.

### 5.4.1 Wearing Islamic headscarves at school

In November 1989, the State Council held that *laïcité* would tolerate female students wearing a headscarf at school and allow them to invoke their faith in refusing to take it off.<sup>148</sup> If necessary, the question had to be dealt with by each school on an individual basis. This liberal position had implications far beyond the issue of *laïcité*, as it suggested that students had the protection of a whole range of rights and liberties. This presented a challenge to the traditional management of order in French schools which is noticeably

<sup>146</sup> Chloé Tavan, "Ecole publique, école privée. Comparaison des trajectoires et de la réussite scolaires" (State school, private school. Comparison of pupils' careers and scholastic success), *Revue française de sociologie* 45(1) (2004), pp. 133–165.

<sup>147</sup> But certain Marseille inhabitants may have known about it. This is the case of a focus group participant, who was born and sent to school in Lorraine.

<sup>148</sup> Conseil d'état, 27 November 1989.

authoritarian and often distances itself from common law.<sup>149</sup> The decision had a strong political impact, for it challenged the trend towards assimilation and cultural nationalism underlying the French ideology of integration that the school system conveys.

The then socialist education minister introduced regulations reflecting the State Council's advice. Opposition continued to be expressed by political leaders, jurists and ideologists. At the same time, the position was only defended by a few voluntary groups led by an "Islam and laïcité" committee, which was set up by the *Ligue de l'enseignement* (League for Teaching).<sup>150</sup> Muslim organisations agreed on a "no duty, no ban" position, but could not overcome their divisions and forge an alliance. In 2003, at the time when the *Conseil français du culte musulman* (French Council for Muslim Worship – CFCM) was established, the opposition to the liberal position of the State Council gained momentum and gathered the public and political support needed to introduce a law banning religious symbols worn by students in state schools (Law of 15 March 2004). This law for schools also contributed to prejudice and hostility towards women wearing the veil in other areas of public life like the workplace. A new debate was raised at the end of 2009 about wearing the *burqa* (full-face veil). On 11 April 2011, legislation prohibiting the wearing of the full face veil came into effect.<sup>151</sup>

#### 5.4.2 Enriching the curriculum with religious facts

The new religious behaviour (imbued with a dimension of self-affirmation and protest) of some students, as well as the common ignorance of religious facts (these two points only outwardly contradictory), led some experts to lobby for an end to the absence of religion in the curriculum. In 2002, the philosopher Regis Debray, known as a republican, argued that a "laïcité of intelligence" should replace a "laïcité of ignorance". He argued that factual information about religion be taught in every subject of the curriculum (he rejected that it be a new subject). His report<sup>152</sup> led to the establishment of a European Institute of Science of Religions (2003), chaired by Debray, but he was

<sup>149</sup> On this tension, see F. Lorcerie, "Laïcité 1996. La République à l'école de l'immigration?" (Secularism 1996. The republic schooled by immigration?), *Revue française de Pédagogie* 117 (Oct.–Nov.–Dec. 1996), pp. 53–85. On the way schools distance themselves from the law, see for example P. Merle, *L'Élève humilié. L'école un espace de non-droit?* (The humiliated pupil. School – a no rights zone?), PUF, Paris, 2005.

<sup>150</sup> M. Morineau, "Laïcité et Islam. Conception, naissance et disparition d'une commission engagée" (Secularism and Islam: Conception, birth and death of a committed commission), *Diasporiques/Cultures en mouvement* 4 (December 2008), pp. 79–85.

<sup>151</sup> See Open Society Foundations report *Unveiling the Truth: Why 32 Muslim Women Wear the Full-Face Veil in France*, Budapest, April 2011. Available at [http://www.soros.org/initiatives/home/articles\\_publications/publications/unveiling-the-truth-20110411](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/home/articles_publications/publications/unveiling-the-truth-20110411)

<sup>152</sup> R. Debray, *L'enseignement du fait religieux dans l'École laïque* (Religious education in secular schools), La Documentation française, Paris, 2002.

disappointed by its low practical impact and gave up the chairmanship. This cautious approach to reforming the curriculum did not have very much impact. It is not even clear what changes this approach could have led to in practice.

### 5.5 The Policy of Priority Education

An area-based policy of affirmative action was first introduced in 1981, aiming in part at avoiding the need for approaches that referred to ethnic or cultural background. The schools located in the most disenfranchised districts were to get assistance in order to “deflect the effects of social inequality” in the students’ rates of achievement (Circular of 1 July 1981). This policy has lasted with revisions for about 30 years. The initial assessments of pupils have shown negative aggregation effects: pupils in priority education areas were achieving rather less than their peers with similar characteristics attending schools out of these areas.<sup>153</sup> The assistance needed by schools in order to help students perform better had not been thought through enough. In particular, a report by general inspectors stressed that strategic piloting was needed at all levels, which is not the prevailing mode of management in the French school system.<sup>154</sup>

The education priority policy was restated last in 2006. These guidelines take into account the previously noted limits, but without promoting any fresh approaches. Its main arrangements are as follows:

1. Focusing additional resources on the most disenfranchised areas. The label “*Ambition Réussite*” is now affixed to places where achievement is the lowest and social difficulties the most acute. A school cluster labelled “*Ambition Réussite*” is composed of a *college* and the primary schools in its vicinity. Together they form an integrated education network (*Réseaux Ambition Réussite*, Aiming for Success Networks – RAR). The RAR policy has not been assessed as yet.
2. Focusing on teaching methods and pupils’ learning skills. Two mechanisms have been introduced. First, innovative teaching methods are encouraged. The RAR receive additional teachers and education assistants, whose role is to support and encourage teachers to think about the approach to education in the school. In line with this objective, school inspectors now place greater

<sup>153</sup> Denis Meuret, “L’efficacité de la politique des zones d’éducation prioritaire dans les collèges” (The efficiency of the priority education zones policy), *Revue française de pédagogie* 109 (Oct. – Nov.–Dec. 1994), pp. 41–64.

<sup>154</sup> C. Moisan and J. Simon, *Les déterminants de la réussite scolaire en zone d’éducation prioritaire* (The determinants of scholastic success in priority education zones), IGEN-IGAEN, Paris, September 1997.

emphasis on student achievement and on classroom learning arrangements.<sup>155</sup> Second, students (on a voluntary basis) are provided with educational support after school hours (homework, cultural activities, sports).

3. Giving individual assistance to the most underachieving students. This principle was formulated recently for the French school system as a whole, particularly at primary school. It is implemented in priority education, where it is reinforced by out-of-school schemes and other programmes implemented by urban policy, like the *Programmes de réussite éducative* (educational achievement programmes – PRE), launched in 2006 to provide support to the most vulnerable students and their families.

## 5.6 Schooling of Muslim Students in Marseille: Some Fieldwork Remarks

National education authorities are reluctant to say anything about the policies of Marseille's school system for students from Muslim families. According to an education inspector for the region, "This is an issue that does not exist. This way into the questions is not that of national education".<sup>156</sup> A similar view was held by all the national education officials interviewed and by interviewees who were responsible for publicly funded extra-school activities in Marseille.

The paragraphs below raise and develop various points that came up in the course of the survey. They must be interpreted in the light of what has just been said about the great divide of Marseille's school system and the French institutional context. They provide a snapshot of Muslim children's school experience in Marseille.

### 5.6.1 The educational challenge: diversity and equality

Most education officials interviewed recognised religious identity in the area and among the students. A belief that it is competing with republican values prompts them to believe that it is necessary to react. All the officials emphasise the need to enforce the current law; others seek to strengthen republican values in school.

One response to the supposed competition between Islam and republican values consists of organising activities that stress gender equality and the struggle against homophobia. A non-governmental organisation (NGO) called "Neither Whores Nor Submissives" (*Ni putes ni soumises*) is invited into the schools for this purpose.

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<sup>155</sup> A. Armand and B. Gille, "La contribution de l'éducation prioritaire à l'égalité des chances des élèves" (The contribution of priority education to the equal opportunities of pupils), *Rapport au ministre de l'Éducation nationale, de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche* (Report for the minister of national education, higher education and research), IGEN-IGAEN, Paris, 2006.

<sup>156</sup> Open Society Foundations' telephone interview with a national education official, France (2009).

Some headteachers take a more complicated position. The director of a Centre-South *lycée* in Marseille wanted schools to positively implement education that encourages living together while respecting difference:

I believe that the mission of the state school system is also to educate; and there, state schools must be challenged, they can do better, they have much to do to bring back the values that they previously exemplified, the struggle for an open-minded *laïcité*, which allows pupils to live together while respecting their faith. With Islam, religious matters have come back very strongly in the debate, through the presence of Islam – I am talking of France globally. But now, our schools have become sanitised at all levels. It is a kind of free-of-cost standardisation.<sup>157</sup>

The interviewee noted the lack of initiatives supporting people living together while respecting their faith and the opposition of the teaching unions which are, in his opinion “very conservative with respect to new ways of viewing students”. His position echoes that of Jacques Berque, who asked in his 1985 report, *Immigration in the State School*,<sup>158</sup> for a political project able to “foster a solidarity of presence” (i.e. on French soil), and wished that the school system would promote “the Islamic-Mediterranean dimension of France”.

Another interviewee, a *lycée* director (vocational *lycée*, Marseille 15th *arrondissement*) held a position which is both ethical and pragmatic. She believed that strict neutrality is an integral part of the educational space: “Here, *laïcité* is expressed by absolute neutrality. Religion does not exist, it is not tackled”. This position would be ordinary in the educational context. But this director extends it. For her, neutrality implies not only taking away references to identity, but also referring to an ethos of the body as well. Thus she banned from her school not only religious symbols but any headgear and piercings for both students and teachers. This ban, she argued, will facilitate professional training and even access to employment:

Someone who is going to show up as a clean person, with an open face, and someone who will arrive with piercings everywhere: who is going to be selected for the job? So we train ourselves. Training begins here: we are a vocational school after all.

Putting identities outside the educational arena becomes a principle of justice and respect embodied by the director herself:

This gives us authority towards the students, when they argue among themselves. Once, there were two girls: ‘I don’t like Arabs!’, ‘I hate Kabyles!’

<sup>157</sup> Yves Rollin, director of a *lycée*, at the debate organised by the *Ecole de la 2ème chance* on “Religion in the North district”, Marseille, 23 April 2009. Rollin is one of the leaders of a French union of school directors, *Education et devenir*.

<sup>158</sup> Jacques Berque, *L’Immigration à l’école de la République* (Immigration in the state school), La documentation française, Paris, 1985.

They had never been to Algeria! I punished them, but they were only repeating what they've heard. I spoke to the parents, they were in shock. This neutrality gives us enough distance to deal with those kinds of issues. The students agree. What's most important for them is justice and setting an example. This is very important for them. They need a role model. And the school model must be embodied in physical persons.

### 5.7 Conflicts over Students' Religious Practices

The law now prohibits wearing signs that are symbols of belonging to a religion. Accommodation of the pupils' religious holidays is also prohibited by the law. But certain religious holidays are recognised as a legitimate cause of absence, like the celebration closing Ramadan (Islamic month of fasting). The prohibition of pork is usually respected and accommodated with an offer of alternative meals. Similarly, fasting during Ramadan is allowed. In fact, where advance warnings are given, families are refunded meal charges when their children skip lunch. This regime of prohibitions mixed with tolerance defines a strict framework for the expression of the students' freedom of conscience at school, without suppressing it altogether. By and large, students and families abide by these regulations.

Nevertheless, some conflicts do arise. Some students and families sometimes put the system's boundaries to the test. Examples given in interviews include students taking their veil off at the school gate and putting it on again just as they leave. A college director (Marseille 2nd *arrondissement*) mentioned a family whose girls and boys (four students) organised themselves to defy the prohibition. Some requested that halal food be served at lunch. Ramadan can be a sensitive period in schools where the majority of pupils are Muslim. Those who fast during Ramadan may put pressure on those who eat. In order to prevent this, the 2nd *arrondissement collège* mentioned above sent fasting students outside the school grounds at lunchtime. Students may be absent for two days around the end of Ramadan.

### 5.8 Scarcity of Arabic Language Courses

Paradoxical as it may seem, Arabic is a rare language in Marseille schools. At most 100 pupils learn the language at *collège*, and even fewer at *lycée*. The low social and educational status of the Arabic language may explain this situation: there are no Arabic courses in vocational *lycées*, where a majority of North district students are assigned; it is rarely taught in *lycées*, and knowledge of Arabic does not yield the advantages expected from knowing English, for instance. Moreover, schools suffer from the competition of mosques and Quranic schools, which teach Quranic Arabic in the neighbourhoods.

The regional inspector for Arabic has made efforts to improve the status of Arabic in the school system. First, she is trying to create meaningful options in secondary schools in order to attract pupils from the North districts. Thus, three RAR *collèges* now offer

special bilingual streams in year one, in which one may learn Arabic in parallel with another language like English. In year three, these streams include “*sections orientales*” (streams specialising in the cultures and languages of the Orient), where the teaching of Arabic is reinforced (pupils spend five hours per week learning the language). This was introduced in an RAR *collège* in 2009.

The inspector is also trying to support teaching Arabic earlier on in the educational system. She maintains ties with Arabic courses provided by the consulates of the countries of origin at primary-school level (developed under ELCO, *Enseignements de langues et cultures d'origine* – Teaching of the languages and cultures of origin), which were set up in France and other European countries in the 1970s by treaty. Currently, these courses may concern a few hundred pupils in Marseille under the aegis of the Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian consulates. The Algerian authorities, recruiting their teachers in France (instead of sending them from Algiers) are particularly cooperative in the proposals of closer coordination suggested by the inspector. The Moroccan authorities can also be responsive. Thus it was possible to organise continuity between certain ELCO Arabic courses and *collège* Arabic courses on two sites in the North districts, at Barnier and Massenet *collèges*. In addition, a *collège* teacher was allowed to give Arabic lessons in another school near Barnier *collège*, as part of his duties.

But the determination of the inspector is undermined by a lack of enthusiasm from the parents. Despite Marseille’s huge social and economic potential for Arabic learning, demand for the courses remains subdued.

### 5.9 Teachers of Muslim Origin

There are an increasing number of teachers with a Muslim background in Marseille: for example, there are 10 Muslims out of 60 teachers in the 15th *arrondissement* vocational *lycée*. It is not clear how this new composition of the teams will affect the everyday social representation of Islam. A member of the Foundations’ education focus group was a Muslim convert and a school teacher. She explained that she told her colleagues about her conversion once she felt she could trust them: “They were respectful, perhaps some of them did not understand, but I didn’t get criticism”. Conversely, a teacher was accused by his colleagues of promoting tribal parochialism (*communautarisme*) because he had welcomed into the computer room pupils who were waiting outside at lunchtime during Ramadan: “Because I was, so to speak, the Arab teacher who took the Arab pupils with him during the month of Ramadan”.

A survey carried out in Créteil (Paris region) on a cohort of IUF Marseille student teachers showed that teachers with a Muslim background were very conscious of republican values and eager to integrate into the teaching teams, but some of them

were more open culturally.<sup>159</sup> The Foundations' survey points to the same conclusion. An *Inspecteur de l'Éducation nationale* (school inspector – IEN) of Algerian immigrant descent, who identifies herself as “a woman and a citizen, born in Marseille”, but neither as “Muslim” nor as belonging to Marseille (being a Marseillaise), explained how much she feels indebted to the education she received at school:

I fondly remember an argument that took place between my father and my teacher of the time. I am left-handed, and my father said, ‘It’s out of the question that you be left-handed’ because it is the devil’s hand. My teacher told him: ‘She’ll be what she’ll be. I’ll not forbid her anything.’

She went on: “I owe so much to education that, even when I was a student in Aix, I used to walk all the way to Besson [a large housing estate far away from the university] in order to freely help children with their homework, as a volunteer”. These individuals display an empathy with Muslim pupils that may not often be found among their colleagues. An English teacher and NGO activist of Algerian descent, who is not religiously observant, said that he feels bitter at the way the affair of the veil was managed in 2003. His point of view echoes the concerns of a citizen anxious not to burden the future:

In my opinion, it was a very aggressive period towards Muslims, a time when racists could find an excuse to have it their own way. It was a time when people were put into categories: the good ones (SOS Racisme), the bad ones (the “savages”). I took part in many debates. I considered the case of a young child whose mother had been excluded from school: what will these girls convey to their children? They will have nothing positive to say about France. Resentment will flow from them to their children. It is very clear to me that those for whom it was a traumatic event will long bear the consequences. It was devastating for those who could not maintain a distance.

Heckled by aggressive parents, the school inspector perceived their violence as a symptom of suffering. She wishes to convert these feelings into synergies for the benefit of the children’s education:

I once had an idea for an investigation: namely, to interview the parents whom I found somewhat vindictive towards school, and to have them report on how their own school failure interfered with the education of their child. The rudest words about my origins did not come from Frenchmen, but from young second-generation immigrants because, being a member of national education, I reminded them of their own school failure, that they had not accepted. It was sometimes really wild. However, as I understood the situation, I could maintain

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<sup>159</sup> F. Charles and F. Legendre, *Les enseignants issus des immigrations. Modalités d'accès au groupe professionnel, représentations du métier et de l'école* (Teachers with a migration background. Ways of accessing the professional group, representations of the profession and school), Sudel, Paris, 2006.

enough distance, and above all I tried not to place the child in the middle of the issue.

This concern about the vulnerability of the parent, imbued with the sense that one must assist the parent in positioning himself vis-a-vis the school, is shared by the head of the 15th *arrondissement* vocational *lycée*. Her family life had brought her into extended contact with Algeria:

Some parents are so intimately intertwined with their child that if one criticises the child, they take it personally. These people are vulnerable. We have many of them. I learned that. I tell parents: I need you, it is about your child. Together, we'll be able to make your child progress. So I've already distanced her from her child, and she has become my ally. Then when the child goes beyond the limits, I have no problem. I don't call the mother to blame her; I call to tell her that I need her because her child behaves like that. Then she is at once on my side. I take the parent's vulnerability into account.

Refusing to ensnare themselves in a coercive view of *laïcité*, these individuals do not want *laïcité* to be the "school's religion", in the words of a focus group participant. They would like *laïcité* to become meaningful for everyone. For example, the school inspector quoted above noted:

At the school of education, I once had to give a presentation on the religious facts and *laïcité*. I stressed the fact that those who must be *laïque* are mainly the state employees. That it was our interest to assist those young girls with the veil, to help them find a meaning for their scarf, why they were wearing it, what was behind that – more than just condemning a visible symbol.

Thus, these people, who strongly adhere to the educational message, are convinced that the school system can do better, and they strive for the best. One of them, a coordinating teacher in year four, vehemently opposes the current conditions of career guidance for *collège* students, and the way those viewed as the weakest achievers are in his view pushed towards vocational *lycées*. "It's a scandal", he repeated, stressing that the training offers are unsuitable and that students are forced into streams that have nothing to do with their skills or their interests. Another pointed out that teachers are prone to mock the students' lack of culture, while they are the ones responsible for providing the youths with access to culture:

We were working on the movie *Dead Poets Society*. Colleagues told me: You'd better show them *Rambo*. It's more their culture. I told them: it's not up to them. We must be ambitious for them. It's too easy to judge them.

When the teacher was asked at the end of the interview about which challenges she feels the most responsible for, she answered:

To garner still more achievement. In ethical terms, I cannot accept that a child leaves primary school without being able to read and write. The school system should recapture its ambition.

### 5.10 Catholic Schools: Enrolment without Distinction of Denomination

The Debré Law of 1959 offered private schools the opportunity to sign agreements with the state. In return for having the employees' salaries funded by the state, they had to enrol students, "without any distinction of origin or denomination", and teach the official syllabus. As a result, Catholic schools modified their religious curriculum,<sup>160</sup> and put the children in a climate where religion is recognised as a value and where there are religious signs (crosses in the classrooms), but no Catholic proselytising. The network of Catholic schools in Marseille enrolls a few thousand students from Muslim families; heads of Catholic schools welcome Muslim students both as a duty towards the state and as a church mission. The diocese has appointed a referee for this mission.

What is specific to Marseille is that in various schools in the Centre-North district, 80 to 90 per cent of their pupils are from Muslim families, mainly of North African and more recently of Comorian origin. Five of the primary schools in this area were classified as priority-education schools in 1997. The same socio-academic criteria apply to state schools and to private schools, and since 2008, three Catholic *collèges* have the "*Ambition Réussite*" label as well. These three *collèges* enrolled a total of 613 students in 2008–2009. Their functioning is strictly *laïque*, but religious affiliations are respected as such. Dialogue about religion may sometimes take place within the school, religious signs are accepted, and on the occasion of Eid (a three day celebration to mark the end of the month of fasting) the head of a school may send a "Happy Eid" postcard to Muslim families.

The *Institut de science et théologie des religions* (Institute for Science and Theology of Religions – ISTR) provides volunteers with training sessions on Islam, and has plans to open an academic track. One of the RAR-classified Catholic *collèges* has launched a bilingual Arabic-English year 1 (16 students were enrolled in 2008–2009), thanks to the intervention of the inspector of Arabic, and with support from a neighbouring state *collège*, also labelled RAR, whose own bilingual year one was declining.

### 5.11 Muslim Schools in Limbo

The school system in France allows for the creation of Muslim schools and possible state support for them on the same basis as funding for state-supported Catholic schools. It is not clear whether there is a demand for Muslim schools. During a debate at Marseille's *Ecole de la 2ème chance* on the subject of religion in the North districts, Imam Farid Amri argued that "Muslims are divided on the issue of education". While

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<sup>160</sup> As the director of the *Ecole de la 2ème chance* (see Chapter 6) pointed out during the debate on religion in the North district (23 April 2009).

some do not feel the need for private Muslim education, preferring to send their children to state schools or to Catholic schools, a demand for Muslim schools is emerging, particularly among Muslim professionals and business owners.<sup>161</sup> The imam noted that any private Muslim school would be in the same position as “all the other schools, having to follow the national curriculum, but would have religion and Arabic language as options”. Marseille has one Muslim primary school, L’Olivier, located in the neighbourhood of Le Canet: the school also provides a nursery school and pre-school classes. As the school does not have state support, it faces financial difficulties. However, according to one interviewee, a Muslim NGO stakeholder, the school has a long waiting list of families wishing to enrol their children. Another team, supported by the *Union des Organisations Islamiques de France* (Union of Islamic Organisations in France, UOIF), opened a *collège* in the 15th *arrondissement* in September 2009 called Ibn Khaldoun Collège. After operating for five years the school will be able to apply for state support.

The challenges of securing financial sustainability remain a key obstacle to the development of Muslim schools. Plans of the Muslim Assembly for the Creation of Schools, a voluntary association that did not last, to set up a Muslim *lycée* were abandoned in the absence of secure funding.

## 5.12 Social Use of the School System by Muslim Families: Great Expectations and Mixed Feelings

The focus in this section is on the experience of Muslims in their interaction with the educational system, as pupils, parents or local residents. The two issues that emerge from the research are the support and encouragement given to students and experiences of discrimination and prejudice.

### 5.12.1 Thwarted ambitions

The research evidence suggests that the educational aspirations of children from migrant backgrounds are high. Analysis of the data from the 1995 cohort shows that children of migrant families aim at passing the *bac* as much as children of non-immigrant families.<sup>162</sup> Analysis by the 1989 panel exploring the frequency of these students attending general and technical *lycées*, all else being equal, showed that this was due to their parents’ ambition and demand rather than a higher level of skills or

<sup>161</sup> M. Bassiouni, “La naissance du collège-lycée al-Kindi à Decines: une réussite conflictuelle” (The birth of the al-Kindi middle and high school in Decines: a difficult success), *L’Année du Maghreb 2008*, CNRS Editions, Paris, 2008, pp. 401–422.

<sup>162</sup> J.-P. Caille, “Perception du système éducatif et projets d’avenir des enfants d’immigrés”, *Education & formations* 74 (April 2007), pp. 117–142.

teachers' bias in favour of these students.<sup>163</sup> Together with ambition, perseverance is also a feature of the school careers of these young people.<sup>164</sup>

The findings from the Foundations' research are consistent with other research. Participants in the focus group and stakeholders recalled struggles at various moments of their education careers in the face of unfavourable decisions from schools. As a consequence few followed the shortest routes into their current careers. One interviewee recalled how, sensing his teachers' negative judgement of him, especially that of a math teacher, he left school without any diploma and pursued his career outside formal institutions. Through his own efforts he secured a position as an MP's assistant.

Low expectations from teachers was a frequent theme. Many research participants felt that they had to fight against the unconscious desire of teachers to keep them in their place:

I had a schoolmate in year two. The teacher looks at his hands, he knew that his father was a bricklayer: Yeah, you have bricklayer's hands!

Such attitudes lead to feelings of frustration and pessimism towards the school system. However, it should be recognised that such feelings are not specific to the children of immigrants. Aletta Grisay's works on French *collèges* suggest that by the end of their time in education: "Only the best achievers have a positive self-image, a positive sense of motivation and a positive vision of the future."<sup>165</sup> However, even against this background of general pessimism, children of immigrants show a tendency to be even more pessimistic. J.-P. Caille's surveys of children of immigrant school experience show that they are more critical of schools than others.<sup>166</sup>

The Open Society Foundations' questionnaire asked participants about their satisfaction with local education services. In comparing Muslims and non-Muslims, at first Muslims are less often "rather unsatisfied" and more often "rather satisfied" than non-Muslims.

<sup>163</sup> A. Vallet and J.-P. Caille, "Les élèves étrangers".

<sup>164</sup> Y. Brinbaum and A. Kieffer, "D'une génération à l'autre, les aspirations éducatives des familles immigrées: ambition et persévérance" (From one generation to the other, the educational aspirations of immigrant families: ambition and perseverance), *Education & formations* 72 (September 2005), pp. 53–75.

<sup>165</sup> Grisay, "Evolution des acquis cognitifs".

<sup>166</sup> J.-P. Caille, "Perception du système éducatif et projets d'avenir des enfants d'immigrés", *Education & formations* 74 (April 2007), pp. 117–142.

**Table 25. Level of satisfaction with local primary schools**

	No answer	North Africans	Native French	Black Africans	Others	Total no. of people
Very satisfied	3	6	3	5	1	18
Fairly satisfied	6	17	15	22	5	65
Very dissatisfied	0	2	3	1	2	8
Fairly dissatisfied	2	7	8	1	5	23
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	1	11	15	8	5	30
Don't know	5	20	17	6	8	56
<b>Total numbers</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>200</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations

But on closer scrutiny, if one checks on the range of origins, it appears that this relative optimism of Muslims may be attributed mainly to Comorians. Maghrebis are statistically more often “uncertain”, and less often “rather satisfied”.

**Table 26. Level of satisfaction with local secondary schools, %**

MUSLIMS ONLY	Algeria	Comoros	France	Morocco	Tunisia	Africa (excl. Comoros)	North, Central & South America	West Indies	Total
Very satisfied	4.3	5.3	3.1	8.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.1
Fairly satisfied	13.0	15.8	12.5	25.0	18.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.5
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	13.0	26.3	43.8	25.0	9.1	100.0	0.0	0.0	27.8
Fairly dissatisfied	17.4	0.0	6.3	8.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	8.2
Very dissatisfied	8.7	5.3	9.4	8.3	27.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.3
Don't know	39.1	47.4	21.9	16.7	45.5	0.0	100.0	0.0	34.0
Did not answer	4.3	0.0	3.1	8.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Open Society Foundations

### 5.12.2 Feelings of being discriminated against among second-generation young adults

The research suggests a significant difference in the attitude of second-generation parents towards schools compared with that of first-generation parents. Research on differences in the cultures of home and school of parents of Comorian background in Marseille resulted in conceptualising three approaches among immigrant parents:<sup>167</sup>

1. Those who maintain more or less open relationships with French society, for whom the educational requirements of the children are at the centre of family interactions and relationships.
2. Those who maintain social forms and educational practices within the family circle which are incompatible with school rules.
3. Those whose family rules are tied to traditional values and to religious ethics of the country of origin.

In numbers two and three, parents oppose, whether unintentionally (no. 2) or intentionally (no. 3), the school's acculturation efforts. The consequence is that children's school careers are more likely to be poor. In number one, by contrast, children are more likely to have a good school career. Although this typology is based on immigrant families only, it remains relevant to the educational context of Marseille.<sup>168</sup>

Parents from generation 1.5 (arrived in France before the age of ten) and the second generation (those born in France) view school education as a social elevator and as an essential resource for social mobility. They are less likely to challenge school values directly, but rather articulate their criticism towards the way these values are implemented. In interviews and discussions they drew on their own experience of "feeling or being perceived as "other", that they suffered at school, which they felt had created a gap between themselves and their teachers.

There are a lot of stereotypes, there is a huge gap between teachers and Muslim communities they teach to, they don't make an effort (that's what I think) to simply learn to know the other. (Open Society Foundations focus group)

For them, the schooling process emphasised their difference in French society; in the words of one research participant, "I learned to be an Arab at school".

<sup>167</sup> H. Zakaria, *Familles comoriennes face au collège* (Comorian families confronted with high school), CIEMI/L'Harmattan, Paris, 2000.

<sup>168</sup> See also Amélie Barbey, "La Socialisation des Comoriens à Marseille. Conservation et métamorphose des rôles et des usages sociaux en migration" (The socialisation of Marseille's Comorians. Preservation and transformation of social roles and customs in migration), PhD thesis in Ethnology, Aix-Marseille I University, 2008.

They sometimes refer to experiences or feelings that they faced racism, but find it more difficult to identify incidents or events. Typically racist remarks attributed to teachers (like “Look at these Arabs, they don’t wash their children, they bring diseases to the school”) are very rare. It is in retrospect that they feel that they did not gain from school a sense of belonging to a community of French citizens, which is supposedly one of the school’s missions:

Frankly, I don’t remember a single course of civic education. All that I have learnt about citizenship, is through reaction. I had to find it by myself; I asked myself what my role in society could be. At school, I learned to read and write, my brain was stuffed with French, maths, English, all that, I could obtain many diplomas, but that’s all. (Open Society Foundations focus group)

Some went as far as to state that they felt excluded from citizenship at school:

School gave me working methods, resources for understanding, methods to comprehend things, but from the point of view of citizenship, zero. I have the feeling that school excluded me from the French community rather than bringing me closer to it. Because until today, I am rather French but I don’t vote. I don’t care, contrary to my wife who never skips an election. To her utmost distress, I have never voted. I feel French without really being French. (Open Society Foundations focus group)

One focus group participant pointed to the way in which education on gender equality was seen as a priority for Muslim pupils and was delivered in a way that was alienating, that it was felt to be focused on stereotypes of Muslim family life:

I’ve often been shocked by teachers’ behaviour regarding the Muslim question. Once, I was teaching year four pupils, we took them to the cinema during their French class. It was in the middle of all the frenzy with the headscarf, at the time the law was passed, and we took them to see a movie called *Samia*. It was once again the story of an ill-treated second-generation girl. When they came back from the cinema, all the girls were incensed, shocked,: why do they always believe that it’s like that at home, that our father or elder brothers are always oppressing us? The film made these 15- or 16- year-old girls uncomfortable in relation to their other classmates, because they felt stigmatised, they didn’t understand why they had gone to see this film, what was the academic purpose. (Open Society Foundations focus group)

Two female focus group participants suggested that the concentration of minority pupils in their school protected them from prejudice, discrimination and feelings of exclusion:

What I wanted to say is that living in ghettos solves many problems. All these problems of being discriminated against, we don’t have them because we are all together. And the teachers who have decided to be there, in the neighbourhood, who have accepted to be there and to work with those children and those

parents, it is because they have agreed to this. I remember my first-grade teachers, I remember their names and first names, they had a nice relationship with our parents, we saw each other during the celebrations of the carnival. It all went very well. But afterwards, when I went on to university, then I saw the real world, it was not the same thing. (Open Society Foundations focus group)

For others, experiences of prejudice and discrimination started with their decision to adopt a more visible and public Muslim identity because “in Marseille, it is not a problem to be an Arab”:

As for me, I feel I didn't experience it [racism], I feel I was prepared to be an Arab in French society. When we were at school, we knew we had to be the best. Racism does exist and we had the feeling to be prepared for that: mind yourself, when you go out into society. ‘You are an Arab’, my daddy said, ‘you know what happens on the building site, the Arabs are like that, the French are like that’. However, it was not difficult to be an Arab in the neighbourhood. And the time came when I had to go out of the neighbourhood. In my neighbourhood, there was the nursery school, the primary school, the *collège*, the *lycée*. We really left the neighbourhood at the age of 17. Then the questions arose. And even then, in Marseille there is no problem being an Arab. As long as you are a good consumer, you can enter the shops you want, you don't have to worry. It changes afterwards. There is an evolution. Faith evolves with age, you arrive in the society where you really want to contribute, and there, it's difficult. (Open Society Foundations focus group)

### 5.13 Conclusion

Though the Muslims of Marseille are now socially diversified, they are still massively concentrated on the lower rungs of the society. As a consequence, they are concentrated in the North districts, the poorest part of the city (see Chapter 7 on housing); there, they attend schools where academic achievement is poor, and where individual school experiences are marked by the negative aggregation effects generated in these conditions. Attempts to address these problems are being made through affirmative action policies (RAR, see above) outside the schools, carried out voluntarily by various support and assistance programmes. But evidence of their impact and success remains weak.

Muslim families display high educational aspirations for their children's school careers and at the same time a certain degree of frustration and a sense of unfairness. But they react in different ways. Families originating from the Comoros are less critical than those from the Maghreb, and second-generation individuals (young parents as well as children) voice more criticism and appear more pessimistic regarding education than those of the first generation. In particular, they complain of the distance that teachers, in their opinion, maintain from them. This may lead some of them to enrol their children in Catholic schools, which they perceive as more welcoming.

Interviews with state school officials suggest that the perception of Islam is that it is antagonistic to the values of the republic, especially in relation to gender equality. They are also concerned about the increasing identification of people by their faith. The main response they provide to the presence of large numbers of students with a Muslim cultural background is education against sexism and homophobia. Some of the students resent these activities as implicitly taking aim at their family cultures.

It is too early to say whether the small but increasing number of teachers with a Muslim background will lead to changes in the design and delivery of education.

## 6. EXPERIENCES OF MUSLIM COMMUNITIES: EMPLOYMENT

Participation in the labour market is crucial to integration. The focus on this chapter is on the experiences of Muslims in Marseille when seeking employment and careers. The issue of ethnic, racial and religious discrimination in the labour market and employment is at the heart of this chapter. This was a significant topic in focus group discussions and stakeholder interviews. One of the stakeholders, a young female graduate, resorted to changing her first name in order to secure job interviews. Another graduate of a Marseille business school with a 98 per cent professional integration rate had not found a job two and a half years after graduating, according to the school's director. He is now sponsored and supported by the *Fondation Agir contre l'exclusion* (Foundation for Acting against Exclusion – FACE). He spoke about the ordeal he went through:

I've faced many difficult situations. I've had phone interviews with firms that have gone rather well. But when I arrived at the office, face to face, their expression changed. The first problem is that I have an Arabic name. Then, when I go to interviews, people see I am black. Another problem is that people talk with me and probably start to think: 'On top of all this he is Muslim. And he lives in a rough area.' We can't cope any more. It is so difficult to enter the labour market that I swear, the day a firm will take me in, I'll finish at the top. I've had so much trouble that if I must work 65 hours instead of 35 to beat a colleague, I'll do it! (Open Society Foundations focus group)

Another interviewee, a female graduate of Algerian descent who wears a headscarf, held a temporary position in an organisation. Her manager, also of Algerian descent, urged her to stop wearing the headscarf because of comments from his funders. Prior to this post, she was unemployed for six years.

So either we give up, we think that the way we dress it is not that important in our faith, that earning one's living and being self-sufficient is the priority. Or we think, if only for freedom's sake it is really a serious issue, it is a right that is infringed on, they infringe on the right to dress as you like. (Open Society Foundations focus group)

Prior to the economic downturn, the trend in Marseille since the 2000s was positive: the city had gained 4,000 jobs and some 8,000 inhabitants each year.<sup>169</sup> But at the

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<sup>169</sup> See section 3.5.

same time, it was also estimated that 4,000–4,500 students left school without educational qualifications.<sup>170</sup>

As labour market data are not collected on the basis of religious identity, there are no data on the position of Muslims. Even information on the national background of individuals, which could serve as a proxy for religion, is scarce. This report therefore divides the issue into two parts. First, differences in the respective rates of unemployment of Muslims and “non-Muslims” are pointed out. Second, there are also differences in job levels. Discrimination against minorities by employers is not the single factor explaining these disparities, but it is certainly one. The chapter highlights initiatives in France – especially in Marseille – that aim to address the impact on employment of discrimination and other barriers to labour market participation.

## 6.1 Statistical Data

There are some data from which it is possible to gain insights into the situation of Muslims in Marseille’s labour and employment market. It is suggested that even before the labour market produces its own discriminatory effects, Muslims are already in a disadvantaged position in relation to employment. They are more likely to live in deprived areas, where the overall employment situation is bad. They also have lower levels of education and training than their peers when they first enter the labour market. The data point to a range of individual and geographic factors that contribute to the challenges Muslims face in seeking employment. The chapter explores policies for addressing these individual and area-based disadvantages. The final section of this chapter examines statistical data on employment discrimination, which are drawn from a number of national surveys and a survey carried out through situation-testing procedures following International Labour Office methodology. Education and training levels suggest that the situation is less favourable for Muslims right from the start.

### 6.1.1 Study by Alain Frickey and Jean-Luc Primon on the Professional Integration of Youth of Migrant Descent in the PACA Region (2005)

A study of the integration of minority populations in the PACA region, using data from the *Centre d’études et de recherches sur les qualifications* (Centre for Research and Studies on Qualifications – CEREQ) shows that the educational level of North African youth as they leave the school system is often low or very low compared with that of

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<sup>170</sup> Lionel Urdy proposed this estimate during the visit to Marseille of a French senate information mission on vocational training schemes in 2006 (taken from the senate website, available at <http://www.senat.fr/commission/missions/Formation/marseille.html>). Urdy is the head of Marseille’s *Ecole de la 2ème Chance*.

their peers.<sup>171</sup> More than half of North African youths (53.6 per cent) leave school with a qualification at level V or below, compared with 39.8 per cent of young people of South European origin and 30.3 per cent of young people of French origin.<sup>172</sup> At the other end of the spectrum, only 18.2 per cent of North African students leave education with a qualification at level III or above, compared with 28.9 per cent of youths of South European origin and 39.7 per cent of French youngsters of non-immigrant families. (See Table 27.)

**Table 27. Educational levels broken down by origin, %<sup>162</sup>**

Parents' birthplace	Levels I, II	Level III	Level IV Sup.	Level IV Sec.	Level V	Level V Bis	Level VI	Total
South Europe	14.6	15.2	12.1	18.3	33.0	4.5	2.3	100
France	19.8	19.9	12.0	17.9	24.0	3.6	2.7	100
Maghreb	8.5	9.7	15.7	12.5	34.8	10.1	8.7	100
Other countries	17.1	12.4	12.7	14.2	24.9	8.4	10.4	100
Generation	18.6	18.6	12.3	17.4	25.2	4.4	3.5	100

**Source:** A. Frickey and J.-L. Primon, *Jeunes diplômés issus de l'immigration: insertion professionnelle ou discrimination?* (Graduates from immigrant families: Labour market integration or discrimination?), La Documentation française, Paris, Collection Etudes et Recherches, 2005, p. 86.

<sup>171</sup> A. Frickey and J.-L. Primon, *Jeunes diplômés issus de l'immigration: insertion professionnelle ou discrimination?* (Graduates from immigrant families: Labour market integration or discrimination?) La Documentation française, Paris, Collection Etudes et Recherches, 2005, p. 86 (hereafter Frickey and Primon, *Jeunes diplômés*).

<sup>172</sup> The educational levels are as follows:

Levels I and II: Leaving with a diploma higher than *bac* + 2 (Licence, Master's, PhD).

Level III: Leaving school system with a *bac* + 2 diploma.

Level IV Sup: Giving up post-*bac* education before level III.

Level IV Sec: Leaving second cycle after terminal year (*bac* level).

Level V: Leaving school after terminal class of short vocational second cycles (CAP, BEP, professional degrees), giving up second cycle before terminal year.

Level V bis: Leaving school after general 3rd grade, technological 3rd and 4th grades and short vocational second cycles before terminal year.

Level VI: Leaving school after secondary first cycle and one year of pre-vocational training.

The research by Frickey and Primon also assessed the level of education on leaving the school system, broken down into various subpopulations, in the PACA region.

**Table 28. Educational levels in PACA, broken down by origin, %**

Parents' birthplace	Levels I and II	Level III	Level IV Sup.	Level IV Sec.	Level V	Level V bis	Level VI	PACA	France
France	85.2	84.9	73.4	80.1	67.0	46.5	58.7	75.0	83.0
South Europe	7.2	4.8	6.1	5.9	6.0	3.7	2.5	5.8	5.3
Maghreb	4.3	7.0	15.8	10.5	21.5	43.6	35.4	15.0	7.0
Other countries	3.4	3.3	4.8	3.5	5.6	6.2	3.4	4.3	4.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
No.	8,782	7,920	6,622	8,329	14,324	1,613	2,411	50,001	741,725
PACA (%)	17.6	15.8	13.2	16.7	28.6	3.2	4.8	100	

Source: A. Frickey and J.-L. Primon, *Jeunes diplômés issus de l'immigration: insertion professionnelle ou discrimination?* (Graduates from immigrant families: Labour market integration or discrimination?), La Documentation française, Paris, Collection Etudes et Recherches, 2005, p. 86.

The data in Table 28 show that in 1998 youths from Maghrebi families made up 4.3 per cent of students leaving education at levels I and II, compared with the overall rate of 15 per cent for the population of PACA. They are therefore strongly under-represented at this level. Also, 17.6 per cent of students in PACA left education in 1998 with a qualification at level I or II. Young people of North African or Maghreb descent are, however, over-represented among those who leave education with qualifications at levels VI and V, where their rate is twice their demographic weight in the general population. These levels, offering very few opportunities of employment, comprise (fortunately) few people. Youngsters of Maghrebi background are also over-represented at level V, which provides access to blue-collar jobs, and at level IV (having dropped out of university before obtaining a degree): these youngsters have passed the *bac*, but have been unable to meet requirements for university entry.

This profile of education and training reflects educational careers that are often mediocre and marked with difficulties at all levels of the school system (*collège*, *lycée*, university). However, as noted in Chapter 5, students from North African families do not have poorer school careers (primary and secondary) than their peers, all else being equal. These poor outcomes in general are the result of social origin and the negative

aggregation effects observed in disadvantaged schools. For example, Frickey and Primon's analysis of the CEREQ data shows that the fathers of North African youth in PACA are concentrated in blue-collar jobs, as shown in Table 29.

**Table 29. Social stratification of fathers in PACA, broken down by origin, %**

Social group of father	Parents' birthplace			Average
	South Europe	France	Maghreb	
Craftsmen, small business owners	20.3	14.3	9.5	13.8
Professional and managerial	11.1	21.5	4.3	18.1
Lower-level professionals	8.2	8.9	4.1	8.0
White-collar employees	22.3	31.4	21.2	29.1
Blue-collar employees	27.6	12.9	40.6	18.0
Unknown	10.5	11.1	20.4	13.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.1</b>	<b>100.1</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>2,882</b>	<b>37,497</b>	<b>7,487</b>

**Source:** A. Frickey and J.-L. Primon, *Jeunes diplômés issus de l'immigration: insertion professionnelle ou discrimination?* (Graduates from immigrant families: Labour market integration or discrimination?), La Documentation française, Paris, Collection Etudes et Recherches, 2005, p. 86.

In another research study which analysed data on six French cities in 1999, in order to look at the labour market discrimination faced by visible minorities, Marseille stood out as the city where the unemployment rate of individuals aged 20–24 of French nationality and non-European origin was by far the highest.<sup>173</sup> (See Table 30.)

<sup>173</sup> Eric Cedey and François Foroni, *Les discriminations à raison de l'origine dans les embauches en France. Une enquête nationale par tests de discrimination selon la méthode du BIT* (Ethnic discrimination in the recruitment process in France. A national survey through discrimination testing according to the BIT method), ILO Report, March 2007 (hereafter Cedey and Foroni, *Les discriminations à raison de l'origine*).

**Table 30. Unemployment rate of 20–24-year-olds active in 1999 for six urban areas, according to nationality at birth, %**

Nationality	Lille	Lyon	Marseille	Nantes	Paris	Strasbourg
Born French	29	19	33	24	17	16
French by naturalisation:						
of European origin	(26)	20	(31)	(46)	15	(24)
of non-European origin	42	37	58		29	37
Foreign nationals	48	34	51	(49)	28	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>

**Note:** Rates in brackets are not fully reliable due to smallness of numbers.

**Sources:** INSEE; 1999 Census data provided for Cedey and Foroni,  
*Les discriminations à raison de l'origine.*

### 6.1.2 Report of the National Observatory of Urban Sensitive Areas (ONZUS), 2008<sup>174</sup>

The *Observatoire national pour zones urbaines sensibles* (National Observatory for Sensitive Urban Areas – ONZUS), covers the year 2007, and monitors a range of indicators, including those relating to employment, that define the social and economic situation of sensitive areas. Although its data are for the population in sensitive (deprived) urban areas (ZUS) as a whole rather than specific areas like Marseille, they nevertheless provide some indication of the particular characteristics of the areas designated as ZUS. The *Observatoire* report found that among the ZUS population, the economic inactivity rate, at 33.8 per cent, was eight points above the national average; the unemployment rate was twice the national average. The unemployment rate for 15 to 24-year-olds was 33.7 per cent (males) and 30.4 per cent (females). For older workers (aged 50–59) the unemployment rate was 17.3 per cent. The unemployment rate of ZUS residents remains higher than the national level even when people with a similar level of education are compared.

<sup>174</sup> See <http://www.ville.gouv.fr/?Rapport-2008-de-l-ONZUS-novembre> (accessed April 2011) (hereafter ONZUS, 2008 Report).

**Table 31. Educational structure of ZUS and non-ZUS job-seekers, %**

	Levels I, II, III ( <i>bac</i> + 2 or more)	Level IV ( <i>bac</i> )	Level V (CAP or BEP)	Level V bis (Brevet des collèges)	Level VI (leaving before end of college)	Total
In ZUS	13.9	16.6	39.1	9.8	20.6	100
In agglomerations including a ZUS	25.2	19.1	35.7	7.4	12.7	100

Source: ONZUS, 2008 *Report*, p. 27, available at <http://www.ville.gouv.fr/?Rapport-2008-de-l-ONZUS-novembre> (accessed April 2011).

The *Observatoire* provides data on unemployment rates of immigrants in ZUS, who make up 23 per cent of individuals aged 15–59 and 25.2 per cent of ZUS job-seekers. In 2007, their unemployment rate was 22.8 per cent, which should be compared with an unemployment rate of 18.9 per cent for immigrants in non-ZUS districts of the same cities.

ZUS residents with jobs are concentrated in unstable jobs (interim, temporary and part-time work), and 10 per cent of male workers are in part-time employment. This has direct consequences on their living standards. Nearly 28 per cent of ZUS wage-earners have a monthly salary below the low salary threshold,<sup>175</sup> although this rises to 39 per cent among the female ZUS population due to the prevalence of part-time work in this category.

### 6.1.3 ZUS and Non-ZUS indicators for Marseille's 3rd *Arrondissement*

Although not representative of Marseille as a whole, the 3rd *arrondissement* is in fact quite typical of Marseille working-class areas. It has a rich working-class tradition, and has been marked for decades as an arrival point for newcomers in the city, either in transit or on long-term stays. The neighbourhood has lost most of its blue-collar workers (although they still make up 20.5 per cent of the neighbourhood's active population, more than Marseille's average), who have been replaced by a population of skilled white collar employees (34.7 per cent) and intermediate professionals (26.4 per cent), which means that most of the area's workforce is split between the low-range and the medium-range in terms of social status; 90 per cent of the neighbourhood's workforce is employed in the service sectors, of which more than two-thirds hold public-sector jobs – just slightly below the citywide average. The unemployment rate

<sup>175</sup> "Low salary" means lower than 66 per cent of the median salary for full-time employment.

stands at 19.1 per cent and levels of poverty are high: more than 70 per cent of households are below the tax threshold.

Among the poorest areas in the 3rd *arrondissement* is the ZUS St-Mauront-Bellevue-Cabucelle, which has a concentration of Muslim residents and is also home to a significant number of the Muslim respondents to the Open Society Foundations' questionnaire.

**Table 32. Socio-economic profile of 3rd *arrondissement* ZUS, compared with 3rd *arrondissement* as a whole and with Marseille**

	ZUS St Mauront Bellevue Cabucelle	3rd <i>arrondissement</i> Marseille	Marseille
Population (2006)	11,726	44,651	839,043
Unemployment (1999) (%)	45.5	37.5	23.6*
Unemployment (2006) (%)	37,6	19.1	18.2*
No diploma (1999) (%)	43.9	34.0	25.2*
Less than 25 years old (1999) (%)	42.0	33.7	33.3*
Foreigners (1999) (%)	20.3	13.8	7.2*
Single-parent families (1999) (%)	30.4	26.6	19.9*
HLM (social housing) (1999) (%)	28,6	15.1	17.3
Households exempt from income tax (2008) (%)	76.1	72.5.	38.6*
Median income per unit of consumption (2008) (€)	5,430	7,396	14,795
Beneficiaries of CMU ( <i>Couverture Maladie</i> Universelle – universal free health care) (%)	46.2	40.8	Not available

\* Values marked with an asterisk are calculated for the Marseille-Aix-en-Provence urban unit. HLM = *habitation à loyer modéré*

Source: SIG CIV (Interministerial Council for Cities)

Table 32 shows that in the 3rd *arrondissement*, which is Marseille's poorest, the ZUS is the area where social and economic difficulties are the most severe: 50 per cent of households have an income of less than €4,614 per year, far below the poverty line. However, only a small proportion of residents (15 per cent) have access to social housing. In fact the proportion with access to social housing is the same as for the *arrondissement* as a whole, and is in fact lower than for Marseille. A higher proportion

of households are single-parent families in the ZUS (30 per cent) compared with the 3rd *arrondissement* (26.6 per cent) and the city (19.9 per cent).

## 6.2 A Statistical Picture of Ethnic Disadvantage in Employment

### 6.2.1 Minority disadvantage in occupational integration: CEREQ data

All available data show that integration into the labour market is more difficult for minorities, especially those with a Maghrebi or African background (even when comparing individuals with the same educational background). (See Table 33.)

**Table 33. Percentage of “Generation 2001”: youths having obtained a job rapidly and durably, according to educational level and parents’ origins, %**

Educational level	Both parents born in France	One/both parents born abroad
No diploma	47	31
Secondary diplomas	73	61
<i>Bac</i> +2 diplomas	81	78
<i>Bac</i> +3 or more diplomas	77	72
Average	71	57

Source: Cediey & Foroni, 2007, from CEREQ, Generation 2001 Survey

For some ethnic backgrounds, the penalty effect is even stronger. Frickey and Primon’s analysis of the CEREQ data for PACA examines the labour market position of young people holding at least a *bac*-level diploma, three years after leaving the education system, for three categories of origin and three levels of education and training (Table 34).

**Table 34. “Generation 1998”: professional positions after three years, broken down by educational level and parents’ origins**

Parents’ birthplace		Indep.	Managers	Lower-level prof.	Managers + lower-level prof.	Low-level staff	Blue-collar workers	No.
		%	%	%	%	%	%	
Southern Europe	Levels I, II	0.5	53.7	22.2	75.9	22.5	1.0	590
	Level III	2.5	6.7	53.9	60.6	27.7	9.2	358
	Level IV+	7.5	5.4	27.1	32.5	46.4	13.6	332
	Total	2.9	28.0	32.3	60.3	30.2	6.6	1,280
France	Levels I, II	1.0	50.7	34.6	85.3	11.5	2.2	6,616
	Level III	1.7	6.4	60.5	66.9	25.4	6.0	6,079
	Level IV+	2.1	6.4	36.7	43.1	43.7	11.1	3,729
	Total	1.5	24.2	44.7	68.9	24.0	5.6	16,424
Maghreb	Levels I, II	1.0	37.1	44.0	81.1	16.9	1.0	302
	Level III	0.0	3.6	65.6	69.2	23.3	7.5	494
	Level IV+	0.8	5.3	43.0	48.3	34.5	16.4	847
	Total	0.6	10.7	50.0	60.7	27.9	10.9	1,643

Source: Frickey and Primon, *Jeunes diplômés*, “Generation 98” Survey, CEREQ: Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur (PACA)

Frickey and Primon’s analysis also finds that three years after leaving education, among students with level I and II qualifications, the percentage holding managerial jobs is higher for those of French origin (50.7 per cent) than for those of North African descent (37.1 per cent). Proportionally, they tend to hold more lower-level professional jobs (44), and nearly 17 per cent of them work as low-level staff (compared with 11 per cent of French-origin individuals at the same level of education and training). By contrast, with only a *bac*, youths of Maghrebi origin are more likely than their French peers to hold intermediate-type jobs and on the whole, they are less likely to be managers or executives. (See Table 34.)

### 6.2.2 From immigrants to children of immigrants

Research by the *Institut national d'études démographiques* (National Institute for Demographic Studies–INED) found that the labour market situation of the second generation was better than that of the first.<sup>176</sup> Compared with the first generation, the second generation has lower rates of unemployment, less concentration in blue-collar jobs and a broader range of trades. However, the risk of being unemployed remains higher among children of immigrants compared with their peers without an immigrant background; the risk is especially pronounced among males of Algerian descent (compared with females of Algerian descent and with those of Tunisian and Moroccan background).

The INED study also found that access to insecure forms of employment (interim and temporary work, state-subsidised contracts and short-term contracts) is more frequent in the first generation, with African men the most disadvantaged. Insecure forms of employment remain more frequent in the second generation compared with the general population, but the disparity is smaller.

The study also showed that in civil service employment, across all levels of education, individuals of immigrant descent, with the exception of males born to mixed couples, reach a status of permanent civil servant less often than their peers.

A survey on the workplace, based on situation testing,<sup>177</sup> found evidence of discrimination against candidates from ethnic-minority backgrounds. It found only 11 per cent of employers treated minority candidates the same as majority candidates; 70 per cent favoured the majority candidates, and 19 per cent favoured the minority candidates. This evidence of discrimination revealed by situation testing appears to support the perceptions of discrimination that are reported by individuals of minority background. Frickey and Primon's analysis of the CEREQ data found that North Africans were the more likely than respondents of French or South European

<sup>176</sup> Dominique Meurs, Ariane Pailhé and Patrick Simon, "Persistence des inégalités entre générations liées à l'immigration" (The persistence of intergenerational inequalities linked to immigration), *Population* 61 (5-6), 2006, pp. 763–802. The study compares the respective positions of individuals in the labour market, according to the generation of migration, i.e., whether they are immigrants (G1) or children of immigrants (G2) (G1 = first generation; G2 = second generation). The study was drawn from INSEE data, in particular from a survey called *Etude de l'histoire familiale* (Study of family history), coupled with 1999 census data.

<sup>177</sup> Cediey and Foroni, *Les discriminations à raison de l'origine*. The study involved 2,440 job offers in six locations in France, including Marseille. In each site, 350 tester candidates (specifically trained professional actors) responded to offers of low and intermediate level jobs in the following sectors: trade and sales, hotels and restaurants, transport or building, and civil engineering for males; trade and sales, health, human services, hotels and restaurants, reception and secretarial work for females. All candidates were French and had equivalent CVs and they engaged in the same process of candidacy for the same job; they were only distinguished by their names (suggesting either old hexagonal (i.e. French) origin, like Marion Roche, Jérôme and Emilie Moulin, or a Maghrebi or black African origin, like Kader or Farida Larbi, Kofi or Binta Traoré).

background to say that they had faced discrimination in the workplace, with 70 per cent saying that the discrimination was based on their name.<sup>178</sup> (See Tables 35 and 36)

**Table 35. “Generation 1998”: feelings of discrimination at the workplace among *bac* graduates**

Parents' birthplace		Perception of workplace discrimination	
		%	No.
South Europe	Levels I, II	8.9	5,733
	Level III	10.5	5,971
	Level IV+	9.3	4,753
	Total	9.6	16,457
France	Levels I, II	8.2	122,079
	Level III	8.4	122,650
	Level IV+	11.1	73,914
	Total	8.9	318,643
Maghreb	Levels I, II	23.5	4,425
	Level III	35.1	5,012
	Level IV+	38.3	8,126
	Total	33.7	17,563
South Europe	Female	9.9	9,324
	Male	9.2	7,133
France	Female	11.4	172,897
	Male	6.0	145,746
Maghreb	Female	29.1	10,358
	Male	40.2	7,205

Source: Frickey and Primon, *Jeunes diplômés*

<sup>178</sup> Frickey and Primon, *Jeunes diplômés*.

**Table 36. Perceived reasons for workplace discrimination, according to interviewees**

Interviewees' origin and gender	Name	Skin colour		Accent	Place of residence	Gender	Look	Physical peculiarities	Age	Family status	Level of education	Origins (ethnic, religious)	No.
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%		
Southern Europe	F.	10.6	0.7	1.0	19.3	47.7	6.3	17.2	11.0	5.2	7.2	4.3	922
	M.	12.1	7.1	3.3	17.1	13.1	12.1	9.1	14.4	2.1	1.2	9.4	659
	T.	11.3	3.4	2.0	18.4	33.3	8.7	13.9	12.4	3.9	4.7	6.5	1,581
France	F.	3.9	5.0	3.4	9.0	53.7	5.6	7.2	15.6	5.6	7.6	0.7	19,760
	M.	7.0	10.5	4.7	13.4	9.3	20.3	12.4	18.6	0.1	10.9	1.8	8,743
	T.	4.9	6.7	3.8	10.3	40.1	10.1	8.8	16.5	3.9	8.6	1.0	28,503
Maghreb	F.	70.9	28.0	2.0	8.1	20.0	5.4	6.1	3.2	0.8	0.3	16.7	3,018
	M.	72.7	47.3	4.7	17.7	5.0	10.0	8.5	0.8	0.0	1.9	15.6	2,899
	T.	71.8	37.5	3.3	12.8	12.6	7.6	7.3	2.0	0.4	1.1	16.2	5,917

Source: Frickey and Primon, *Jeunes diplômés*

Note : F. – Female, M. – Male, T. – Total

### 6.3 Measures to Support Labour Market Participation

This section provides an overview of measures taken to support labour market participation, including initiatives to move the unemployed closer to the labour market by providing them with soft skills. There are fewer measures to prevent employers from discriminating on the grounds of ethnicity or race. Another aspect is of interest for this study: this is the religious (or confusingly ethnic-religious) dimension of discrimination, specifically wearing the Islamic headscarf or growing a beard. Though it is broadly recognised that such discrimination takes place, there have not been any measures to address this in Marseille. Instead, those who support individuals in finding jobs try to encourage job-seekers to remove any visible religious signs.

#### 6.3.1 Integration: gaining access to the job market by acquiring the codes of the workplace

An official from the public service for employment interviewed for this report estimated that 75 per cent of job-seekers in Marseille are Maghrebi or of Maghrebi ancestry, and among them 75 per cent have their roots in Algeria. These are groups that are over-represented among those with low levels of qualification (level V and below), as well as among students who leave university without a degree.

### 6.3.2 ANPE, local missions, PLIE

The National Employment Agency (ANPE) is the central public policy body for getting people into the labour market. Its mission is to support entry into occupations and the reintegration of job-seekers into the labour market. All job-seekers have to be registered with ANPE as this is a precondition for access to various rights as workers.<sup>179</sup> But ANPE only receives a minority of the job vacancies, 30–35 per cent according to a union official, which is one of the reasons why people who appeal to the service in order to find a job are often disappointed.<sup>180</sup> ANPE also employs counsellors who can help job-seekers improve their applications, and plan training to improve employability. In the words of one interviewee: “The employment counsellor is a like a doctor. He greets people, he listens to them, he makes a diagnosis, and then he sends them to the specialist or to the pharmacist”. ANPE also issues tenders to implement actions that it considers to be urgently needed (training, mobilising, qualifying, pre-qualifying, accompaniment, sponsorship schemes, etc.). As a consequence, a number of civil society organisations and subsidised schemes revolve around ANPE and are involved in its aim of getting people into the labour market.<sup>181</sup>

Local missions for integration (routinely referred to as local missions), set up after the Schwartz report,<sup>182</sup> are in charge of helping young people over the barriers to labour market and social integration. They provide them with information and guidance to meet their employment goals. The missions are targeted at all disenfranchised youth aged 16–25 who face barriers to access the employment or training market. Young people who are registered at local missions have the status of a trainee enrolled in a vocational training scheme.

One of the integration programmes is the *Plan local pour l'insertion et l'emploi* (Local Programme for Integration and Employment–PLIE). This provides reception services and long-term individual support towards employment, targeted at lower-level job-seekers (level IV maximum) facing difficulties of integration. The urban community, the city, the region, the state and the EU are associates in the PLIE programmes. In Marseille, the PLIE was set up in 1994.

PLIEs need to coordinate local public actions, in order to implement measures of assistance for integration and return to work. Therefore, they mobilise all the

<sup>179</sup> Eligibility for rights however, is not contingent upon registration for the Minimum Integration Income (RMI)/Active Solidarity Income (RSA).

<sup>180</sup> See Chapter 4.

<sup>181</sup> These structures provide help to individuals of immigrant ancestry. See Marnia Belhadj, “Quelle professionnalisation dans le travail social pour les diplômés issus de l’immigration?” (What professional development in social work is there for graduates with a migration background?), *Formation Emploi* 94 (April–June 2006), pp. 73–92.

<sup>182</sup> Bertrand Schwartz, *Rapport sur l'insertion professionnelle et sociale des jeunes* (Report on the social and labour market integration of young people), La Documentation française, Paris, 1982 (new edn, Apogée, 2007).

stakeholders of employment and integration: local authorities, firms, training and integration bodies, economic integration structures, civil society organisations active in the field of housing and health.<sup>183</sup>

### 6.3.3 A wide range of actions

Schemes for supporting labour market integration often involve individual counselling and targeted training sessions for particular routes into the market. The Marseille PLIE mentions a programme of six stages: “getting actively involved; receiving guidance; skills assessment; training; getting work experience; looking for a stable job”.

For those furthest from employment, an ANPE official said that the agency has developed specialised programmes, which may include training on integration worksites, on three-month contracts, with social support and adapted working conditions, followed by working at an integration firm; then, joining a temporary work integration firm, where one is sent to work in private firms on temporary assignments; and finally (at least ideally) accessing the normal labour market.

Since 2005, local missions have used a *Contrat d’Insertion dans la vie sociale* (Contract of Integration into Social Life – CIVIS). The CIVIS is targeted at young people aged 16–25 with no qualification at all or with a *bac +2* not validated by a degree. It aims to provide disenfranchised youth with support towards secure employment (i.e., employment on a long-term contract or fixed-term contract of more than six months). Every young applicant is allocated a counsellor, with whom they have regular appointments.

Young people who have not studied further than level V (level V with no diploma) receive further support (a “reinforced CIVIS”). They meet face-to-face with their counsellor each week during the first three months, and then every month. A reinforced CIVIS lasts one year and may be renewed as many times as necessary up to the applicant’s 26th birthday; by contrast, the ordinary CIVIS lasts one year, and can only be renewed once.<sup>184</sup>

ZUS urban policies also provide a further layer of support for job-seekers in their area. They are entitled to three forms of support: social support (health, housing, psychological care), support towards employment (helping applicants work on a professional project); and support in searching for job or training opportunities.<sup>185</sup>

<sup>183</sup> See Marseille PLIE website, available at [http://www.ville-emploi.asso.fr/annuaires/fiche.php?id\\_str=679&retour=1](http://www.ville-emploi.asso.fr/annuaires/fiche.php?id_str=679&retour=1) (accessed April 2011).

<sup>184</sup> DARES (Direction de l’animation, de la recherche, des études et des statistiques, Ministère du travail), *Premières synthèses Informations* (Preliminary Findings Synthesis), “Le CIVIS”, January 2008, available at <http://www.travail-emploi-sante.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/2008.01-02.2.pdf> (accessed April 2011) (hereafter DARES, *Premières synthèses Informations*).  
DARES, *Premières synthèses Informations*.

<sup>185</sup> ONZUS, *2008 Report*, p. 29.

#### 6.3.4 Subsidised and common-law contracts

A key question is whether the result of this support is the placement of young people into secure, mainstream employment or the creation of a cycle of dependence on state assistance. The danger is that individuals are given training and employment opportunities under subsidised (state-aided) contracts and remain on a constant cycle of these contracts without obtaining a secure, normal employment contract. Individuals helped in this way often complete a support scheme only to enter another one or begin yet another training session. Initial data from the evaluation of CIVIS suggest that a majority of CIVIS beneficiaries find themselves in such a cycle when their CIVIS contract comes to an end. In June 2007, 18 months after entering CIVIS programmes, 56 per cent of young people had left the scheme (142,000 individuals), but only 22 per cent of them had succeeded in getting a secure job. Fewer than one in five leaving the reinforced CIVIS scheme had found a job.<sup>186</sup>

The 2005 Plan for Social Cohesion modified the available range of state-aided contracts in the private sector and in the non-profit sector. In the non-profit sector, the contract for the future, directed at the beneficiaries of basic welfare benefits, was created; and a *contrat d'accompagnement dans l'emploi* (contract of support towards employment – CAE) was developed for unemployed individuals with social and educational problems. In the private sector, a contract termed “Youth in Enterprise” was set up in order to encourage the hiring on long-term contracts of young, less employable people, supported by the state (a lump sum is given to the employer). A professional contract has also been devised, which is an integration contract for both young people and adults, alternating training sessions and full-time work; it also provides employers with an exemption from social security contributions.

Evaluations show that ZUS residents are still much more likely to sign work contracts in the non-profit sector than in the private sector.<sup>187</sup> As a consequence ANPE is encouraging employers to use a new procedure of recruitment, the recruitment-by-simulation method (*méthode de recrutement par simulation* – MRS), which aims to reduce bias against candidates who have the ability to succeed but no formal qualifications.

MRS suggests reversing traditional patterns of recruitment, by considering that the ability to hold certain jobs is actually less dependent on technical knowledge, which may be acquired on the spot, than on underlying aptitudes, or skills, such as being able to understand professional behaviour and orders and abide by them, or to work as a team. These abilities may be developed at work as well as outside the workplace. They cannot be read on candidates' résumés. These ideas have led ANPE to develop a method in several stages: the nature of the job position is analysed, exercises are built based on the core work to establish whether the candidate has the required abilities; the

<sup>186</sup> DARES, Premières synthèses Informations.

<sup>187</sup> ONZUS, 2008 Report, p. 35.

test is calibrated by employees currently holding the same job position; last, candidates are submitted to the test. When the test is successfully passed, an interview focused on motivation is conducted, and specific technical knowledge required for the job may be provided, if needed, before taking the job. Around 150 exercises have been prepared, which allow for pattern-modelling and further development of the tool. Due to its higher cost, the method has been used for collective recruitments (30 persons on average). In 2004, 10,000 recruitments were carried out following this method; the target was to carry out a further 50,000 in 2005, notably by expanding the method to skills assessment of young people on vocational courses.<sup>188</sup>

### 6.3.5 The Défi Jeunes initiative and the *Ecole de la 2ème chance* in Marseille

The *Défi jeunes* (Challenge for Youth) initiative and the *Ecole de la 2ème chance* (Second Chance School) exemplify local creativity in the field of integration. They were both noted on the occasion of a visit made to Marseille in 2006 by a French Senate information mission concerning professional training schemes.

*Défi jeunes* is an initiative developed in the CIVIS framework in order to bring youths closer to the world of enterprise and to bring companies closer to young people with no diplomas. In partnership with the Société Générale Bank, the local mission designed a training track alternating courses and work placements, aimed at unskilled youth, leading to a level III diploma in four years. The aim was for the training track to be connected to a position in sales, through a BEP training course offered by the Marseille Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIM), followed by the acquisition of a level IV vocational *bac*. Out of 60 young people who passed the pre-selection, 17 were presented to the bank, and 12 were selected. The initiative showed how difficult it was to sustain this type of voluntary action in the long term, as it relies heavily on both young people's desire for a professional challenge, and a sense of social responsibility on the part of the employer.

The *Ecole de la 2ème chance* in Marseille was the first site of a network that now consists of 14 schools in France. Putting into practice a concept promoted by Edith Cresson while she was European Commissioner (1995), the school was launched with European funding, but today it is funded by a variety of partners. The school enrolls disenfranchised young people without diplomas. Mostly, these are young adults who left the school system three years before entering the programme. The initiative aims at giving them fresh motivation, getting them acquainted with the world of business, leading them towards developing their employment goals and integrating them into the labour market. Just over half (55 per cent) of the young people enrolled in the *Ecole de la 2ème chance* in Marseille come from the North districts.

<sup>188</sup> Roger Fauroux, *Lutte contre les discriminations ethniques dans le domaine de l'emploi* (The struggle against ethnic discrimination in the labour market), High Committee for Integration (HCI) Report, 2005, p. 29 (hereafter Fauroux, *Lutte contre les discriminations*).

*Les écoles de la 2ème chance* draw their primary inspiration from the experience of accelerated schools. They alternate training and internships in the enterprise, right from the very first weeks of school; this is managed in a gradual manner, so as to avoid destabilising both students and their host firms. The instructors assess the students' acquired skills and follow them up between each period of internship. Direct confrontation with the working environment provides a sense of reality which is essential to structure the professional project. The integration period is critical. From the onset, the young people must produce an assessment report to highlight their current abilities. This leads to drawing up one or more employment projects. Training is individualised, which means that courses are carried out in small groups. Each student benefits from accompaniment by a mentor, who follows 12–15 students. The school makes systematic use of information and communication technologies. Each youth is considered as an intern in employment training. His salary varies according to his financial family status, and is in the range of €300–600.<sup>189</sup>

Evaluations of this programme have been positive so far. In the 2006 academic year alone, the school enrolled 410 interns. Enrolment figures have been constantly increasing since 2002. Since its inception, almost 2,500 young people have been interns of the *Ecole de la 2ème chance* in Marseille. Over 1,700 firms, for the most part small or very small, are partners with the *Ecole*. Of the 1,600 interns who left the programme between April 1998 and the end of 2006, 66 per cent were employed.<sup>190</sup>

#### 6.4 The Role of Employers in Preventing Ethnic and Racial Discrimination in the Workforce

The struggle against discrimination, especially in the labour market, became an issue of public debate in France in October 1998, thanks to a speech made by Martine Aubry, then Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, to the Cabinet (*Conseil des Ministres*). This policy has since been made law, and discrimination is now an offence subject to sanctions. In response to the requirements of EU law, France created an independent administrative authority, the *Haute autorité de lutte contre les discriminations et pour l'égalité* (High Authority against Discrimination and for Equality–HALDE), which guarantees the durability of public action in this domain (law of 31 December 2004).

In the workforce, public action favoured prevention and strategies of instruction to combat discrimination, before letting civil society partners take over. There is very little litigation with respect to ethnic and racial discrimination in the recruitment process or at work, but there are many charters. Even more so since the positive term, “diversity”,

<sup>189</sup> *Mission commune d'information sur le fonctionnement des dispositifs de formation professionnelle* (Joint fact finding mission on the functioning of vocational training schemes), Senate field visit to Marseille, 2006.

<sup>190</sup> *Mission commune d'information sur le fonctionnement des dispositifs de formation professionnelle* (Joint fact finding mission on the functioning of vocational training schemes), Senate field visit to Marseille, 2006.

emerged in 2004–2005, shedding a benevolent light on a policy previously thought of as a hard sell. Due to the success of this new term, the word “discrimination” has almost disappeared from the spheres of public policy, both at the national level and in Marseille.

#### 6.4.1 From fighting discrimination to promoting diversity

The term “diversity” implies social as well as ethnic and racial pluralism, but it does so without really making clear what diversity is about and without referring to anyone specifically: this way, the ideology underlying the republic goes largely unchallenged. Diversity has therefore become a consensual theme across the political spectrum. The trade unions signed a Trade Union Charter for Equal Treatment, Non-discrimination and Diversity.<sup>191</sup> Private firms wrote their own *Charte de la Diversité* (Charter of Diversity),<sup>192</sup> reportedly signed by 2,250 firms by April 2009,<sup>193</sup> proclaiming an ethical and political commitment “in favour of cultural, ethnic and social diversity” in firms, through six commitments.<sup>194</sup>

A diversity label has also been crafted under the aegis of the *Agence française de normalisation* (French agency for standards – AFNOR).<sup>195</sup> Securing the label involves going further than the charters discussed above as it requires a diversity audit based on an agreement and the mobilisation of managers and trade unions. The label is the result of a government initiative, which is awarded by the national organisation of personnel managers. Since July 2009, 20 French firms have this label.<sup>196</sup> These developments suggest that in some French management circles there is an ethical mobilisation with respect to these questions, together with an effort to re-articulate the culture of enterprise for the “social and environmental responsibility” of private

<sup>191</sup> It was signed on 2 January 2005 by the following unions: CFDT, CFTC, CGT, UNSA.

<sup>192</sup> It was signed on 16 November 2004 by around 40 large firms

<sup>193</sup> Available at *Charte de la Diversité* website, <http://www.charte-diversite.com> (accessed July 2009).

<sup>194</sup> 1. Raise awareness and train managers/associates in the hiring procedures, training and career advancement, to take non-discrimination and diversity into account.  
2. Respect the principle of non-discrimination in all its forms and promote its implementation at all stages of human resources management (hiring, training, advancement and professional promotion).  
3. Strive to build a working community that reflects the diversity of French society, especially its cultural and ethnic diversity, at all levels of qualification.  
4. Communicate to all associates the commitment to non-discrimination and diversity, and circulate information.  
5. Foster dialogue with the representatives of personnel on diversity policies.  
6. Include a chapter in the annual report describing the commitment to non-discrimination and diversity: actions taken, practice and outcomes.

<sup>195</sup> AFNOR is an international services delivery network that revolves around four core competency areas: standardisation, certification, industry, press and training (see AFNOR website [www.afnor.org](http://www.afnor.org)).

<sup>196</sup> Available at *Charte de la Diversité* website, <http://www.charte-diversite.com/> (accessed July 2009).

firms.<sup>197</sup> However, it is more difficult to see whether and how this commitment is reflected in hiring and promotion practices. Unions appear to have a difficult time conveying the message against discrimination and for diversity. Reviewing hiring practices are not at the heart of union activities, and moreover, practices of family preference are deeply entrenched in the hiring customs of private firms, whether for internships or long-term recruitment.<sup>198</sup> There is also resistance among managers, even when the charter has been signed. A survey<sup>199</sup> of 20 private firms that were signatories to the charter in the north of France suggests that while the discourse has changed and the rhetoric of diversity is firmly in place among officials in charge of human resources, actions remain limited and are never aimed at ethnic and racial diversity. They are concerned first and foremost with disabilities (a line of action supported by fiscal incentives), and to a lesser extent with gender parity. Action supporting ethnic and racial diversity is more likely to be found outside the world of business, through organisations such as FACE, created by Martine Aubry, which are employed as consultants by firms. A civil society organisation, *IMS-Entreprendre pour la cité* (Business in the City), also intervenes in this respect and its premises also host the secretarial staff of the Diversity Charter.

From 2001 to 2006, the EU-funded EQUAL Initiative gave impetus to new trends in the struggle against ethnic and racial discrimination in hiring practices. It trained the staff of public employment services, and provided a space for young people who were victims of discrimination to talk about their experience to personnel managers and human resources officers.<sup>200</sup> At the same time, the *Fonds d'aide et de soutien pour l'intégration et la lutte contre les discriminations* (Help and Support Fund for Integration and the Struggle against Discrimination – FASILD) and the *Direction interministérielle à la Ville* (Interministerial Office for Cities – DIV)<sup>201</sup> supported area plans to tackle labour market discrimination, in order to organise the mobilisation of social and economic partners in a specific areas, including *petites et moyennes entreprises* (small and medium-sized businesses – PME). In many places, these voluntary lines of action have

<sup>197</sup> Note Patrick Simon's analysis in his "Comment la lutte contre les discriminations est-elle passée à droite" (How the fight against discrimination moved to the right), *Revue Mouvements* 52 (December 2007), available at <http://www.mouvements.info/Comment-la-lutte-contre-les.html> (accessed July 2009).

<sup>198</sup> Fauroux, *Lutte contre les discriminations*, p. 10.

<sup>199</sup> Milena Doytcheva, *De la lutte contre les discriminations ethno-raciales à la "promotion de la diversité". Une enquête sur le monde de l'entreprise* (From the fight against ethno-racial discrimination to the "promotion of diversity". A survey of the business world), MIRE Report, December 2008 (hereafter Doytcheva, *De la lutte*).

<sup>200</sup> See for example the Equal Accede Project, City of Villeurbanne, *Les discriminations: faire face!* (Tackling discrimination), DVD, City of Villeurbanne, 2008.

<sup>201</sup> FASILD became ACSE (*Agence pour la cohésion sociale et pour l'égalité des chances* – Agency for Social Cohesion and Equality of Opportunities) in 2006 and was merged in a new state regional office for youth and social cohesion in 2010. The DIV is the interdepartmental office for urban issues.

failed to affect the practical realities of employment: when the EQUAL programmes ended they were not taken up by others, except in a few instances. The area-based plans to tackle discrimination were so few (no more than 28 in 2005, out of 243 c

ity contracts) that the official report issued in June 2006 by the national operators of this policy could virtually be read as an epitaph.<sup>202</sup>

-1+In Marseille, discrimination is no longer a subject of discussion. Among the interviewees, Larbi Saoudi was alone in thinking that the struggle against discrimination had to be taken literally. “It’s an abject feeling, a real trauma. It reminded us of the feelings connected with the yellow star, we were truly banished. It was done backstage, it was done stealthily, surreptitiously”, he said, as he recalled his earlier work bringing this to light.

The word “discrimination” does not appear in the policy document known as CUCS (Urban Contract for Social Cohesion) of 2007–2009.<sup>203</sup> The *Commission pour l’égalité des chances et la citoyenneté* (Committee for equal opportunities and citizenship – COPEC), a scheme designed to bring together civil society organisations and public services and address the issue of equality of opportunities, remains dormant. The ANPE/Pôle Emploi no longer mentions discrimination among the actions it requires from private firms.<sup>204</sup> In 2001, Marseille was the recipient of an EQUAL programme, Solimar, which was concerned with an initiative to prevent discrimination in the hiring process, for which Marseille was seen as a pilot site in France. In 2005, an analysis of the situation in the Bouches-du-Rhône noted the unequal mobilisation of public and private actors: “A strong mobilisation as far as the state, the SPE, local missions and integration operators are concerned; a weaker one for local authorities; mobilisation among school representatives is limited, and marginal among private company managers”.<sup>205</sup>

Despite the lack of explicit reference to discrimination, it is possible that some private firms are sensitive to the issue. One interviewee said that 80 firms in Marseille were signatories to the Diversity Charter.<sup>206</sup>

<sup>202</sup> The Report, dated June 2006, was co-signed by DIV, ACSE, DPM, DGEFP, ANPE and CNML. The 2008 ONZUS report includes a map of the cities where such plans were set up.

<sup>203</sup> See section 3.5 for further information.

<sup>204</sup> Although its website still states that ANPE counsellors are trained in discrimination, <http://www.pole-emploi.org/communication/index.jsp?id=40108>.

<sup>205</sup> AMNYOS, *Diagnostic sur les discriminations ethniques ou raciales dans l'accès à l'emploi et le monde du travail dans les Bouches-du-Rhône* (Diagnosis of ethnic or racial discrimination in accessing employment and the world of work in the Bouches-du-Rhône), Report for FASILD, summary, April 2005.

<sup>206</sup> Interview with Samira Agem, April 2009.

## 6.5 The Ban on Islamic Signs at the Workplace: Unlawful but Prevalent

In France, the right to freely wear religious signs is legally recognised and protected by the principle of *laïcité*, which applies to everyone anywhere. There are two exceptions: students at primary and secondary schools, inside school grounds (since the law of 15 March 2004) and public servants (since the law of 9 December 1905, detailed by abundant case law). In practice, the political debate on banning the veil in 2003 has meant that the issue of wearing religious signs at work has become a heated one. This episode resulted in halting progress in the accommodation of religious practices, which had previously been gaining ground (including at school), on the basis of rulings by the *Conseil d'état* (State Council), after the 27 November 1989 Advice regarding the headscarf in schools.<sup>207</sup> In society at large, the debate on the veil increased hostility towards Islam. Tariq Modood's perception of the process is very much to the point:

The French conception of the republic, moreover, also has integral to it a certain radical secularism, *laïcité*, marking the political triumph over clericalism. The latter was defeated by pushing matters of faith and religion out of politics and policy into the private sphere. Islam, with its claim to regulate public as well as private life, is therefore seen as an ideological foe and the Muslim presence as alien and potentially both culturally and politically inassimilable.<sup>208</sup>

Since then, HALDE has been tasked with affirming the law. But case law with respect to wearing Islamic religious signs at the workplace remains uncertain. Employers allege commercial (respecting the culture of customers) or social (maintaining a peaceful atmosphere in the workplace) reasons to justify a ban on religious signs. Although those reasons are devoid of legal value in themselves, they are sometimes accepted by the courts. A campaign led by Dounia Bouzar and her agency, together with a group of managers, to promote the principle of accommodation met great resistance.<sup>209</sup> Milena Doytcheva states: "Religious diversity is not a goal for the firms; it is not even really accepted, or only with the precondition that it is made invisible". To illustrate her point, she quoted the following excerpt of an interview with a human resources manager:

**Human resources manager:** At the workplace, religion is a big no! Of course I have my personal convictions, but at work, no.

**Interviewer:** But actually from a legal standpoint...

**Human resources manager:** I don't even consider the question. We are in a firm where it's all about relations.

<sup>207</sup> See Chapter 5.

<sup>208</sup> Modood, "Muslims and European Multiculturalism".

<sup>209</sup> See Dounia Bouzar, *Allah, mon boss et moi* (Allah, my boss and I), Editions Dynamiques Diversité, Paris, 2008. Dounia Bouzar was initially a youth worker. After her book *L'Islam des banlieues* (Islam in the suburbs, 2001) became widely read, she focused on Islamic issues and set up the organisation, Dynamiques Diversité.

**Interviewer:** So for you, diversity does not include religion?

**Human resources manager:** No, because for me it's just the opposite of freedom. We are in a firm, a site of collective life. The most important thing, is to respect others, we respect the other as he is, and since we are all different, at a certain point you must be able to compromise so that there is respect. Therefore where we go from one extreme, whether the veil for me, or crosses everywhere, which is another manifestation of extremism, it's not respecting others! We must compromise.<sup>210</sup>

In Marseille, the prevailing position among employment agencies seems to echo this opinion of the personnel manager; expressing one's Islamic faith is likely to bring about workplace harassment of unskilled immigrants who do not understand or accept that *laïc* France continues to follow the Roman Catholic calendar;

One must negotiate all the time; the fact that Christmas and Easter are marked as holidays, but not Eid or the end of the fast [of Ramadan]. Every time, we need to explain that we must ask for a day off, because according to the calendar it's a normal working day. In a workplace which has diversity policies, there is more flexibility for people who want to practise their faith, without any real opposition. Whereas in private firms, if you want [holiday] leave, you have to ask for a day off, then it's either yes or no. It's up to the boss, if he doesn't want it, we can't have it.<sup>211</sup>

Larbi Saoudi believed that neither individuals nor integration associations can change the rules when it comes to social demands and to expectations about the physical appearance of applicants:

As for the bottom line, it's still about a way of living together, by observing the rules. Yet we are confronted by a society that doesn't want it [the headscarf], and by people who won't budge from their positions. So what can we do? For people with disabilities, there is the COTOREP, the AGEFIPH,<sup>212</sup> but when physical appearance and religion are concerned, nothing exists. Shall I call *Marseille Espérance*? What should I do? Shall I tell the person: 'Listen, you must take off your veil if you want to find work?'

His approach is therefore to place the individual in a position where they may think about the situation in terms of their own priorities, keeping in mind that the mandatory status of wearing the veil is contentious even among Islamic clerics:

Why is the headscarf an obligation? Back when I founded Oracle, sometimes I invited an imam to speak about the meaning [of wearing the veil]. Is it for the

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<sup>210</sup> Doytcheva, *De la lutte*, p.124.

<sup>211</sup> Open Society Foundations interview with ANPE trade-unionist, April 2009.

<sup>212</sup> These are measures for employing people with disabilities.

family? Is it because of the environment? The youth want to place themselves in the footsteps of the Prophet, but representing the Prophet is prohibited in Islam, the *Shahada* [means]: do not adore me!

These were Tupperware-like get-togethers, so that the imam could answer – a trick to try to engage the young women – we are in a phase of remobilisation. In Arab countries it is the opposite way. Here, is it a regression, an affirmation linked to a phase of marginalisation, along the line of: ‘Since I’m rejected, I’m going to affirm myself? A desire to find spheres where I can exist as I am?’

Regarding men with Islamic beards, Saoudi noted:

Employment agencies have sometimes drawn my attention to instances of discrimination, but then I would say: ‘You can shave your beard’; I would always have pictures of Arab princes ready, so that I could argue: ‘He is as Muslim as you, but does not need a beard! Slightly provocative, but I use it to show that even if you are close-shaven, you are still a Muslim!’

The Nice-Côte d’Azur PLIE (*Le Plan Local pour l’Insertion et l’Emploi à l’échelle de la Communauté Urbaine*—Local Plan for Integration and Employment across the Urban Community) took a public stand on this issue. It stated the principle of universal welcome, regardless of any religious signs a person might wear: “At the reception desk, the veil is not an obstacle, in accordance with the principle of neutrality”. This was followed by a statement in which advice is offered and defined as that which is in the best interests of the client:

The adviser’s work is drawn from a principle of reality and from the concept of employability. In this context, he is responsible for talking with the beneficiary about potential hindrances that wearing ostensible signs may bring about for him/her.

The adviser must know how the beneficiary positions himself/herself with respect to his/her religious practice and possibly to the hurdles he/she meets when looking for a job. In this case, the referent works on the question of ostensible religious signs just like he does on other issues, in a perspective of global care.<sup>213</sup>

Hence the rule: “Veil wearing should not be mentioned on the beneficiary’s acceptance form, but must be addressed during the first interviews”.

Moreover, a key objective of the Nice-Côte d’Azur PLIE is to fight all forms of discrimination in the hiring process, and they undertook to compile a comprehensive

<sup>213</sup> Frame of reference of Nice-Côte d’Azur PLIE, “*La lutte contre la discrimination: Port des signes ostentatoires*” (Fight against discrimination: Wearing ostentatious signs), *Communauté urbaine Nice Côte d’Azur*.

list of discriminatory experiences and practices that its clients were victims of and of potentially discriminatory hiring processes. Nothing similar seems to exist in Marseille.

## 6.6 Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates the segregated structure of the city. All the ZUS are located in the North (and East) districts (see Chapter 7 on housing). Residents of immigrant and Muslim background are mostly concentrated in these neighbourhoods, where young people leave initial education at low and very low levels. Given the state of the employment market in Marseille, it is therefore not surprising that their integration into the labour market meets hurdles. Is there evidence of ethnic discrimination in the labour market? There is a lack of clear data. Among existing data, the most relevant relate to the PACA region as a whole, and focus on young people of Maghrebi descent, holders of the *bac* degree. The data provide some indications of an ethnic penalty in the labour market for that category of youth, actually an already privileged minority among youths of Maghrebi descent leaving initial education. A broad majority of them expressed feelings of being discriminated against, mainly on the grounds of their name and skin colour. This outcome confirms that experiencing discrimination, or feeling discriminated against, is integral to the social identity of Marseille Muslims (see Chapter 4 on identity).

Yet very few initiatives carried out in Marseille, whether public or private, have chosen to address this issue. Nearly all funding is directed at helping job applicants go into integration schemes, i.e., initiatives aimed at adapting applicants to the assumed needs and demands of employers. Marseille's *Ecole de la 2ème chance* is exemplary of such initiatives. By contrast, there is little action to prevent ethnic and racial discrimination. The tools that are available are neglected. As for religious discrimination in employment, it is generally perceived as the applicants' problem, even though the law guarantees the right for anybody to freely express his/her religious beliefs (within the limits of public order). It is left for job applicants to accept the fact that signs of Islam are rejected by employers, and case law on the issue is ambiguous.

## 7. EXPERIENCES OF MUSLIM COMMUNITIES: HOUSING

In Marseille, a common narrative of housing is widely shared by the offspring of Algerian workers born around the 1960s and by several stakeholder interviewees. They were born into slums and shanty towns (or they arrived there as toddlers); while they were at school they grew up in transitory settlements. Then, when their family got an HLM apartment (public subsidised housing) in one of the large social housing estates in the North districts, they made their first forays into activism. Eventually, after they had started a family of their own, they left the housing estates and moved to the suburbs.

This pattern is the result of responses to the housing problem that emerged in the 1960s. As migrant workers, who were accommodated in migrants' dormitories (*foyers*) or furnished hostels (*meublés*), were joined by their families, few preparations were made to host these families, so they had to build their own makeshift houses. They were soon placed in temporary settlements and had to wait much longer than expected before being granted access to HLM apartments. Integrating immigrants into the HLM was controversial, and faced hostility and practical hurdles. Before 1977, many immigrant families were excluded from HLMs as their income was too low. This changed with the introduction of the *loi Barre* which created the system of *Aide Personnalisée Au Logement* (personal assistance for housing– APL).<sup>214</sup> At this time, apartments in HLM became vacant as middle-class residents – and, in Marseille, repatriates – gained access to credit that allowed them to move to owner-occupied homes. The North districts were shaped by these conditions. They developed as a string of massive social housing estates, established on the margins of older built-up areas (the village cores abutting the city centre); the North districts were seen as having been invaded by immigrant families, and were regarded as a problem by public authorities.

The crisis of immigrant housing, which combined social and political factors, was at the heart of initial debates about an integration crisis in the 1980s and 1990s. In Marseille, it quickly developed into a wider urban and social crisis, in a context of a growing economic crisis. The first experimental initiatives, known as housing and social life operations, took place in Marseille in 1976. In retrospect, they were forerunners of urban policies later implemented countrywide.

The housing crisis is still a relevant issue in Marseille today, but it has evolved over the last 30 years. This chapter looks at the experiences of Muslims in housing. Once again it is important to note that this category, based on minority religious affiliation, is not used as such by French policymakers. The experience of Muslims can only be

<sup>214</sup> On the history of social housing in France, see Noémie Houard, *Droit au logement et mixité. Les contradictions du logement social* (Accommodation rights and diversity. The contradictions of social housing), L'Harmattan, Paris, 2009 (hereafter Houard, *Droit au logement et mixité*).

examined through looking at proxy in public data. As in previous chapters, it is possible to use categories of national origin, and examine the potential impact of visible religious affiliation. In contrast to education and employment, in this area the research did not find any indication of situations or processes where individuals would have recourse to religious affiliation in the course of their social interactions regarding housing. Organisations active in integration also confirm that housing operators typically use ethnic-racial categories. The market is markedly ethnicised, but “this has nothing to do with religion”, “being Muslim is not a category of disadvantage” in housing.<sup>215</sup>

The chapter begins by drawing a detailed picture of the situation of Muslim immigrants and families of immigrant descent in the residential space, relying on data collected at national, regional and local levels. There is also an indication of emerging trends that have been observed both in the social housing market and the private housing market. In Marseille, patterns of segregation and relegation are pervasive. The chapter gives an overview of measures and initiatives taken on housing; this requires taking into account the complex interactions between the varieties of actors in the field, as housing is managed by a wide and diverse array of actors who shape the field through numerous structures of incentives rather than coercive measures. The private sector is dominant in the housing market. Cities, including Marseille, have taken a leading role in social housing policies. However, the *Plan local d'habitat* (Local Housing Plan) is actually drafted by the Marseille-Provence-Métropole, while funding for building social housing comes from the state. The state also maintains responsibility over the *Agence Nationale pour la Rénovation Urbaine* (National Agency for Urban Renewal – ANRU) sites. There are 20 HLMs in Marseille. There is growing demand for mediation in disputes over housing. This is carried out by publicly funded civil society organisations. However, in order to maintain the independence of these NGOs, the funding does not come from the city. The city of Marseille recently issued a municipal commitment for housing, which will be compared here with the priorities and issues that are raised in the research with local residents.

It is unfortunate that a recent study on immigrant housing in PACA chose to focus for the most part on a generic category of immigrants, which has little sociological consistency. After a review of these data, the chapter describes the situation in Marseille, followed by an analysis of the social residential trends in the patterns of segregation all over the city.

## 7.1 Immigrant Housing in France

There are few studies of the housing situation of immigrants and individuals of immigrant descent, as this would require collecting data by categories other than nationality and refining the analysis of origins. Until the outcomes of the T&O

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<sup>215</sup> Open Society Foundations interview with Fethi Bouaroua, regional manager of the *Fondation Abbé Pierre d'aide au logement des plus défavorisés* (Abbé Pierre Foundation), April 2009.

(Trajectories and Origins) survey undertaken by INED and INSEE (2008) become available,<sup>216</sup> the only extensive source of information on the question is the *Mobilité géographique et insertion sociale* (Geographical Mobility and Social Inclusion – MGIS, a unit of INED dedicated to studies on migration) survey (1992), which suggests that once immigrants have accessed “normal housing”,<sup>217</sup> they follow two distinct types of housing tracks. The first, common among families from the Iberian Peninsula and from Southeast Asia, involves a move to home ownership. The second model common among immigrants from Algeria, Morocco, Turkey and sub-Saharan Africa is based on social housing. According to Patrick Simon, the latter “have only limited opportunities on the private housing market. In a context of decreasing supply of housing and low credit ratings, obtaining quality housing and good living conditions, for the most stigmatised groups, those with the lowest resources, is possible only through social housing”.<sup>218</sup> (See Table 37.)

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<sup>216</sup> The National Institute for Demographic Studies (Institut National d’Etudes Demographique – INED) and National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques – INSEE), see <http://www.insee.fr>.

<sup>217</sup> This section and the following tables are based on the study “Le logement des immigrés” (Immigrant housing), carried out by P. Simon, *Populations & Sociétés* 303 (July 1995), p. 4 (hereafter Simon, “Le logement des immigrés”).

<sup>218</sup> Simon, “Le logement des immigrés”.

**Table 37. Dwelling status and housing type of Muslim immigrants in 1992 (%)**

	Algeria	Morocco	Turkey	Africa	All France
Owners	17	13	16	10	56
Well-maintained HLM	29	32	33	23	14
Well-maintained private housing	19	19	21	24	19
Dilapidated HLM	17	16	18	12	3
Dilapidated private housing	9	10	12	16	2
Dormitory	6	5	0	13	0
Free housing	3	5	1	3	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total dilapidated</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>7</b>
HLM	55	54	55	37	36
<b>Total poorly housed households</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>11</b>

Source: MGIS survey, from P. Simon, “Le logement des immigrés” (Immigrant housing), *Populations & Sociétés* 303 (July 1995), p. 4, completed from P. Simon “Les immigrés et le logement: une singularité qui s’atténue” (Immigrants and housing: a fading peculiarity), *Données sociales 1996*, INSEE, pp. 421–428.<sup>219</sup>

The MGIS survey found that in 1992 close to half of immigrant households from Turkey (51 per cent), Morocco (48 per cent) and Algeria (46 per cent) and a third from sub-Saharan Africa (35 per cent), lived in HLM at the time (compared with 17 per cent for the total population). However, this general picture conceals the fact that these groups often lived in the most dilapidated, poorly maintained HML housing stock. They also experienced overcrowding. The MGIS survey found that the rate of poorly housed households among these immigrant categories was in excess of 40 per cent across all categories of rental housing (HLM, dilapidated or not, and private housing, damaged or not), reaching 70 per cent or more in the private damaged housing stock. The average rate of poorly housed households by category of national or continental origin is given in the last row of Table 37.

Moreover, whether in social or private housing stock, immigrants from Muslim countries or from Africa were often found to live in housing blocks where there was a concentration of other immigrants. The MGIS survey calculated the frequency of such

<sup>219</sup> Patrick Simon, “Les immigrés et le logement: une singularité qui s’atténue” (Immigrants and housing: a fading peculiarity), *Données sociales 1996*, INSEE, pp. 421–428.

concentrations (Table 38). Between a third (among Africans) and a half of households of African, Maghrebi or Turkish background lived in housing blocks where more than one-third of residents were themselves immigrants. Such concentrations may indicate either that these households express a desire to keep to themselves, or that the majority population and the HLM bodies are keeping them at a distance. The second explanation probably prevails in the observed regroupings: what we have here is the first statistical picture of the process of segregation that residents from Maghrebi, African and Turkish experience (See Table 38.)

**Table 38. Breakdown of interviewees from Africa and Muslim countries according to the number of immigrants in the residential block, 1992 (%)**

	Algeria	Morocco	Turkey	Africa
0–10%	12	15	13	18
10–20%	17	18	16	24
20–34%	27	26	21	23
More than 34%	44	41	51	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: MGIS survey, from Simon, “Le logement des immigrés

The 1996 housing survey of INSEE confirmed the propensity of immigrants to settle in social housing. This is notably the case for families originating from Maghreb, who at that time represented one out of two households in the social housing stock (a figure slightly on the rise).<sup>220</sup> This type of housing is overwhelmingly preferred by families with children. One reason for this is that the proportion of household income spent on housing costs by immigrant families is significantly lower in the social housing sector (6.7 per cent) than in the private sector (22 per cent).<sup>221</sup> Many of those who moved into social housing were previously living in furnished hostels or other precarious housing (including the notorious shanty towns).<sup>222</sup>

<sup>220</sup> Julien Boëldieu and Suzanne Thave, “Le logement des immigrés en 1996” (Immigrant housing in 1996), *INSEE Première* 730 (August 2000) (hereafter Boëldieu and Thave, “Le logement des immigrés”).

<sup>221</sup> Boëldieu and Thave, “Le logement des immigrés”.

<sup>222</sup> Simon, “Les immigrés et le logement”. Comparing the 1975 and 1990 censuses, Simon finds that in 1975, 26 per cent of Algerian households lived in precarious housing; they were only 7 per cent left in 1990. Similarly, the process of family reunification led men to leave the dormitories: 13.8 per cent of Algerian households were housed in dormitories or collective hostels in 1975, compared with only 7.6 per cent in 1990. The same evolution is noticeable among immigrants from Morocco and Turkey (the exit from the dormitories took place even faster for Turkish men: 25 per cent of Turkish households were in collective-style housing in 1975, but only 3.8 per cent in 1990).

The INSEE 2006 housing survey focused on the housing conditions of immigrants in PACA,<sup>223</sup> which confirmed that the tendencies observed in 1992 at the national level endured and were apparent at the regional level.

Maghrebi immigrants are distinguished from the population as a whole, including European immigrants, by worse socio-economic characteristics and housing conditions. They are younger, less educated, and also poorer. They face multiple hardships with respect to housing. Maghrebis are more likely to live in apartment blocks, they are more often tenants, and live more frequently in overcrowded apartments. They tend to live in social housing more often [than the average population], even though, given their socio-economic status, they should statistically reside in social housing even more often [than they currently do].<sup>224</sup>

Unfortunately, the survey's data were not broken down and analysed by subcategories of immigrant population; nevertheless, they provided some fresh information on the situation of immigrants from the Maghreb.<sup>225</sup> It found that 22.4 per cent lived in houses (rather than apartment blocks), compared with over half of EU immigrants (52.4 per cent). Of those living in apartment blocks, only 45 per cent were in HML housing. Immigrant Maghreb households in PACA were in fact 40 per cent less likely to rent an HML flat than the general population.<sup>226</sup> Over thirty-seven per cent of the apartments where PACA Maghrebis lived were overcrowded, 7.2 per cent extremely so. Maghreb immigrants were less satisfied with their housing conditions than EU immigrants: 30 per cent saw them as insufficient compared with 6 per cent of EU migrants. Demand for social housing among Maghrebi households appears to be subdued in PACA, where the gap between demand and supply is particularly important. In 2007, 116,525 applicants from all backgrounds were on a waiting list for social housing; only 12,446 apartments were allocated.<sup>227</sup>

There are insufficient data to provide an accurate picture of the situation of residents originating from Muslim countries in Marseille.

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<sup>223</sup> Jean-Claude Jaillet, *Logement des immigrés en Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur: une réalité contrastée* (Housing of immigrants in Provence-Alpes-Côtes d'Azur: a contrasting reality), INSEE/ACSE, Report of the Study, September 2008 (hereafter Jaillet, *Logement des immigrés*).

<sup>224</sup> Jaillet, *Logement des immigrés*, p. 58.

<sup>225</sup> They make up 39 per cent of PACA immigrant population (those originating from the EU are 38 per cent) and they are twice more likely to be unskilled workers (48.5 per cent) than those from the EU.

<sup>226</sup> Jaillet, *Logement des immigrés*, p. 20.

<sup>227</sup> Abbé Pierre Foundation, *L'état du mal-logement en France* (The state of poor housing in France), Annual Report 2009, p. 176 (hereafter Abbé Pierre Foundation, *L'état du mal-logement en France*).

## 7.2 Socio-residential Boundaries in Marseille

A breakdown of the distribution of social housing rates between the *arrondissements* provides a map of the socio-residential boundaries in the city. In some areas of the city there are *arrondissements* with no ZUS,<sup>228</sup> which form (with the exception of the 2nd *arrondissement*) a contiguous area, the South districts. The remaining *arrondissements* are those with ZUS.<sup>229</sup> Table 39 shows that the ZUS areas divide into three types. First, there are *arrondissements* where ZUS consist of precarious or outdated housing units, with only few social housing units: these *arrondissements* are found in the city centre (1st and 3rd) and the northernmost *arrondissement* (16th). Second, there are *arrondissements* where ZUS are mainly social housing estates (30–40 per cent for the whole *arrondissement*, and 50–60 per cent in the ZUS); this sector typically corresponds to the area known as the North districts, the 13th, 14th and 15th *arrondissements*. Last, the 9th *arrondissement* has little social housing except for an enclave with 64 per cent of social housing (See Table 39).

**Table 39. Social housing rate in Marseille arrondissements and in the ZUS of each arrondissement**

Arrondissement	% of social housing in arrondissement as a whole	% of social housing in ZUS of arrondissement	Arrond	% of social housing in arrondissement as a whole	% of social housing in ZUS of arrondissement
1	6.1	13.1	9	13.6	64.9
2	16	–*	10	15.3	–
3	15.1	15.3	11	31.2	59.4
4	8.9	–	12	14.5	–
5	5.5	–	13	35.7	57.3
6	3.4	–	14	39	48.4
7	5.6	–	15	37.8	55.7
8	10.7	–	16	22	11.6
ZUS of Marseille		40.6		City of Marseille	17.3

Source: From SIG CIV (Interministerial Council for Cities), 1999 census data (\*no data available)

<sup>228</sup> The *arrondissements* in question are the 2nd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 10th and 12th.

<sup>229</sup> The ZUS city and the non-ZUS city roughly mirror the RAR city and the non-RAR city mentioned in Chapter 5.

Using the socio-demographic characteristics of the city's IRIS<sup>230</sup> in the 1990 and 1999 censuses, a four-category typology of Marseille's socio-residential areas has been identified as having evolved over time.<sup>231</sup> The 1999 census highlighted the emergence of two major trends. On the one hand, "socio-residential mixing, when measured at the scale of connections between IRIS, has decreased and working-class areas, in a downward trend, have become more socially homogeneous".<sup>232</sup> But at the same time there was "a tendency towards spatial contraction of the socio-residential complexes of the lower classes, under the pressure of the expanding residential space of middle and upper classes". Furthermore,

The strong demand for housing led to an increase in housing costs, which in turn reduced the residential opportunities of lower classes. Entire sections of the South and East of the city became inaccessible to them. We are witnessing a continuous rise of middle and upper classes, pushing towards places which until then were not attractive for them, or not open to urbanisation. For instance, the working class is losing ground in the Huveaune valley, because the area's stock of social housing is becoming more and more attractive. According to the same logic, sharp social contrasts are now visible in the North districts or in areas bordering on the impoverished social housing complexes, where new individual housing schemes make their appearance, giving middle and upper classes access to a suburban type of environment. [There is also a] form of gentrification of village cores. On the contrary, we note that the worst social housing complexes and the old dilapidated housing stock of North peri-centre (1st, 2nd, 3rd *arrondissements*) receive the most precarious segments of the population.<sup>233</sup>

There are insufficient data on the more recent changes affecting Marseille's socio-residential system, which are connected to the improvements of the 2000s. However, it is likely that these trends have endured during the last decade.

<sup>230</sup> IRIS are statistical units comprised of adjoining housing blocks/units totalling 1,800–5,000 inhabitants, and homogeneous with respect to the type of housing. They serve as a basis for spatial or territorial processing of data. There are 393 IRIS in Marseille.

<sup>231</sup> Thomas Bresson, "Les mutations des structures socio-résidentielles marseillaises entre 1990 et 1999" (The changing socio-residential structures of Marseille between 1990 and 1999), *Faire savoirs* 5 (2005), pp. 21–32 (hereafter Bresson, "Les mutations des structures socio-résidentielles").

<sup>232</sup> The question of the scale on which social mixing is measured is a very important one. Depending on the chosen scale, it is possible to come to conflicting conclusions. For instance, Edmond Preteceille and Eric Maurin had an argument about the Paris region, the latter concluding that segregation was on the rise, while the former disagreed. See E. Preteceille, "La ségrégation ethno-raciale a-t-elle augmenté dans la métropole parisienne?", *Revue française de sociologie* (50-3), 2009, p. 489-519; E. Maurin, *Le Ghetto français. Enquête sur le séparatisme social*, Paris, Seuil, 2004.

<sup>233</sup> Bresson, "Les mutations des structures socio-résidentielles".

### 7.2.1 Isolated Maghrebi workers of the city centre

A further feature of the housing situation of the North African communities is the number of older immigrant workers who are living without their families in dormitories or furnished hostels mainly in the 1st and 3rd *arrondissements*. In 2000, there were estimated to be 3,500 of them, accommodated in 17 migrant workers' dormitories, which were being gradually transformed into social housing<sup>234</sup> and 233 furnished hostels. The furnished hostels, while located in dilapidated buildings, were properly run. Moreover, they were frequently visited by inspectors.<sup>235</sup> Most residents were men over the age of 50 who arrived in the 1960s, often with families that are still in the country of origin, whom they continue to support and visit. Most were no longer working and therefore had limited resources of a monthly income below the *salaires minimum interprofessionnel garanti* (minimum wage – SMIG), sometimes even below €400. They have few affective ties with their peers, but rather maintain *de facto* neighbourly relationships, including those based on religious kinship.<sup>236</sup> Individuals in this group were participants in the older male focus group. The discussions with participants suggested a life that revolves around financial and administrative concerns.

### 7.3 Socio-residential Boundaries along Ethnic Lines

A high proportion of 83 per cent of French Muslims surveyed by the Gallup poll expressed a strong desire to live in ethnically mixed neighbourhoods.<sup>237</sup> This wish is rarely met in Marseille.

The increasing cost of housing in the private sector has placed the private housing market out of the reach of families with average or low incomes.<sup>238</sup> As a result, the competition for social housing has intensified. This has been exacerbated by a rise in the income level at which individuals are eligible for social housing. This has meant that middle classes previously excluded from social housing have now opportunities to enter this market. Interviews suggest that social housing landlords have given precedence to these new classes applying for social housing. As a consequence, poorer applicants are only offered worse housing. Previously, the specialised areas that reflected the image of a Marseille of the poor, where certain residents were concentrated and contained, allowed social mixing. In fact this contributed to the image of a brotherly Marseille, without real ghettos, where ties between diverse social

<sup>234</sup> See Gilles Desrumaux, "Que sont les foyers devenus?" ("What became of the hostels?"), *Plein droit* 68 (April 2006), pp. 11–15.

<sup>235</sup> Failure to meet standards can lead to enforcement which includes a termination of government rental subsidy to landlords/owners.

<sup>236</sup> Gilles Ascaride and Salvatore Condro, *La ville précaire. Les «isolés» du centre-ville de Marseille*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 2001, pp. 106–107.

<sup>237</sup> Gallup report. "Cited *supra*".

<sup>238</sup> Bresson, "Les mutations des structures socio-résidentielles".

groups were enduring. By 1999, this social mixing between class neighbourhoods with more affluent housing blocks was being replaced by residential polarisation.

Between the spaces that emerge from such socio-residential constructs, boundaries are drawn along ethnic lines. This phenomenon is certainly not unique to Marseille, but it is deeply pronounced.

Ethno-racial discrimination in the private housing market is a well-established fact. Testing carried out by HALDE in the housing market in several cities found that in one case out of three (and even more in the Ile-de-France region), private rental agencies discriminate against visible minorities, notably on the basis of the applicant's name. Minorities also face discrimination in accessing social housing. A study of Africans in the Ile-de-France shows how one consequence of such discrimination is the residential segregation of visible minorities.<sup>239</sup> Residential boundaries are kept in place, particularly by private and social market operators, and are strongly racialised. A similar process may explain the racial division of Marseille between the North districts and South districts. Such divisions condition not only the place of residence, but also the residential environment, the sociability of the residents. In the focus groups, participants provided accounts of "white" residents arranging the visits of "black" friends to the "white" space, or on the contrary, hesitating to take this risk. Sitting right on the border between the two Marseilles, the Centre Bourse residential tower is split lengthwise: bottom floors are left to the minorities, top floors are "white".<sup>240</sup>

#### 7.4 Interaction between the HLM Bodies, the State and the City

There are various actors that shape the social housing market. This creates potential for conflict and confrontation in the decision-making process, with decisions subject to revision when alliances shift. However researchers have found a degree of cooperation across diverging interests:

The political and administrative cluster that governs social housing is made up of a number of actors: civil servants and local authorities, members of the prefectural body, local elected representatives, HLM bodies, civil society organisations active in the field of integration-through-housing, etc. Behaviours of the various units (and their members) are interdependent, as if they were playing the same game. The seeming hostility of the mayors towards members of the prefectural body and HLM bodies, criticism sent by the latter to mayors, actually hide deep complicity. There is probably interdependence. The most

<sup>239</sup> Christian Poirer, *Familles africaines en France* (African families in France), CIEMI L'Harmattan, Paris, 1996.

<sup>240</sup> A participant in the women's focus group of Tunisian origin explained that she was able to buy a flat in the top floors of the tower thanks to a friendly and complicit relationship that she had established with a Jewish landlady of Tunisian origin.

influential among the notables play a direct role of systemic coordination and integration.<sup>241</sup>

In the conflict between different actors, social mixing directs the standards for all actors. The idea of social mixing was initially brought to the fore by HLM bodies in the debates on the housing crisis in the 1980s. Refusing to be landlords of the poor, they invoked a universal conception of social housing to confront the civil society organisations upholding the right to housing. This line of reasoning led to constructing high-risk categories, whose acceptance in the social housing system required screening. Immigrants, along with the unemployed, the beneficiaries of the *Revenu Minimum d'Insertion* (minimum income for inclusion – RMI) (or RSA), those with low-paid or insecure work and those from outside the municipality were among the high-risk categories.<sup>242</sup> This policy is flexible, if not hazy. It varies from city to city, under the aegis of local representatives, and even from neighbourhood to neighbourhood.

The effect is that there is significant local discretion in offering housing to individuals in these groups based on local understanding of the social mix in any given area. This appears as if the state accepts local interpretations of social mixing. As a consequence, the question of social housing – that is, that priority should be given to those most in need of housing – is marginalised.<sup>243</sup>

*Préfectures* see their applications constantly returned by HLM bodies, which invoke the social occupancy of their clients to reject persons they judge “disenfranchised”, oftentimes immigrants. By anticipating these reactions, *préfectures* only seem to confirm these discriminatory practices.<sup>244</sup>

In Marseille, conflict is further avoided when officials devolve the management of the prefectural quotas to the municipalities.

In the 1970s, the Marseille city council invoked social mixing as a way to address the image of the city. But it is suggested that in practice social mixing has not been used to

<sup>241</sup> Houard, “Logement social, droit au logement, et mixité”, p. 442.

<sup>242</sup> See Patrick Simon, “Le logement social en France et la gestion des ‘populations à risques’” (Social housing and the management of populations at risk), *Hommes et Migrations* 1246 (Nov.–Dec. 2003), pp. 76–91. See also Patrick Simon and Thomas Kirszbaum, “Les discriminations raciales et ethniques dans l'accès au logement social” (Ethnic and racial discrimination in accessing social housing), *Note 3 of the Groupe d'Etude et de Lutte contre les Discriminations* (Group for the study of and fight against discrimination – GELD), Paris, 2001. The “immigrants or supposed immigrant” category is drawn from this work. The HALDE uses this category too. This category serves to highlight that the observed trends are fed by social stereotypes.

<sup>243</sup> Houard. This observation is shared by this report's researchers.

<sup>244</sup> Houard, *Droit au logement et mixité*.

diversify the population of neighbourhoods but rather to contain racial minorities and prevent them from moving towards less segregated areas.<sup>245</sup>

According to our interviewees, there is very little mobility, since housing for different population groups has effectively ended, exacerbated by the extremely tight local social housing market. The shortage on the supply side has led to a tenant turnover rate of only 2 or 3 per cent, while there are 30,000–35,000 pending applications.<sup>246</sup>

There are suggestions from interviewees that this situation suits the bureaucracy well, as it provides greater power to housing allocation committees and the officers who formulate how the social mixing code gets to be translated into practice. One of our stakeholders who has worked in this sector for many years recalled the ordinary racism of the employees. “There was Le Pen’s racist equation: 30 per cent immigrants equals 30 per cent unemployed, plus 30 per cent insecurity. It came up constantly. The rejected applications were sent directly to the second-rate social housing stock”.

### 7.5 What Measures are Being Taken?

No detailed report on the situation of housing in Marseille is available to date. In the absence of proper documentation, figures gathered during the research provide some insight into the nature of the problem and its extent. Of Marseille households (from all backgrounds), 70 per cent have a level of income that makes them eligible for HLM housing. The cost of housing on the private rental market has increased so that households with two individuals earning the minimum wage cannot afford it.<sup>247</sup> Each year, 5,000 persons are taken to court for unpaid rent.<sup>248</sup> There are 30,000–35,000 applicants for social housing, that is eight applications for each vacant apartment, and 80 per cent of applicants’ incomes are less than 60 per cent of the HLM eligibility ceiling.<sup>249</sup> Although there is increased construction of new housing, it is not sufficient to meet demand. Only a few hundred new social housing apartments are built in Marseille each year. Even then, some have rents exceeding the HLM standard,<sup>250</sup> and in any case the latter is often above the financial reach of most applicants.<sup>251</sup> Moreover, state funding and financial assistance for building (brick-and-mortar aid) has decreased.

<sup>245</sup> Valérie Sala Pala, “La politique du logement social est-elle raciste? L’exemple marseillais” (Is the politics of social housing racist? The example of Marseille), online review, *Faire Savoirs* 6 (May 2007), available at <http://www.amares.org/> (hereafter Sala Pala, “La politique du logement social”).

<sup>246</sup> Figures: MPM and various interviewees.

<sup>247</sup> Open Society Foundations interview with Myriam Salaheddine, Marseille MPM representative, member of the High Council for Integration, April 2009.

<sup>248</sup> Interview with Fethi Bouaroua, regional manager of Abbé Pierre Foundation, April 2009.

<sup>249</sup> *Agence régionale des organismes HLM* (Regional Agency of Social Housing – ARHLM), PACA Corse.

<sup>250</sup> These are PLS rents (social rental loans).

<sup>251</sup> PLUS price. These applicants should pay the PLAI price (integration-aided rent).

It is suspected that vacancies on the private market number in their thousands, although precise figures are not known. The city announced plans to make an inventory of vacant apartments in the city centre, with the idea of helping owners put them back on the market.<sup>252</sup> This operation will take time. It should also be recalled that about 5,000 new inhabitants arrive in Marseille every year.

The situation in Marseille echoes that found across France where the construction of social housing for the most needy is slow compared with HML housing for the middle classes.<sup>253</sup> At the local level, this tendency is most visible in the city's peri-centre area.

Today, the city of Marseille shows more commitment to addressing the issue of housing than it has in the past.<sup>254</sup> However, the city has not fulfilled its obligations under the Solidarity and Renewal Law (2000) to have social housing constitute 20 per cent of its housing stock.<sup>255</sup> At present, social housing makes up 18.1 per cent of Marseille's total housing stock.<sup>256</sup> But the city now insists that the other municipalities of the metropolitan area of MPM should live up to their responsibilities: some are quite far from the required 20 per cent.

The city has been paying more attention to its housing policies. In 2008, a strengthened *Engagement municipal pour le logement* (Municipal Commitment for Housing – EML) was introduced. This included five goals: the creation of 5,000 housing units per year, including 1,500 social housing units per year; the renovation of 2,000 apartments per year; the creation of a “House of Accommodation” to provide information and support in the housing application process; and the introduction of schemes to encourage and support ownership for first-time buyers. The scheme included personal financial assistance, co-funded by the city and partner banks, and free car parking for 15 years, funded by the Caisse des dépôts et consignations (a public bank).<sup>257</sup>

The renewed efforts in housing should be seen in the context of the regeneration brought to Marseille by the economic success of the *Euroméditerranée* operation<sup>258</sup> and the preparation for Marseille as the European Capital of Culture in 2013. These placed

<sup>252</sup> EML press kit, 11 December 2008.

<sup>253</sup> Abbé Pierre Foundation, *L'état du mal-logement en France*, p. 160.

<sup>254</sup> Sala Pala, “La politique du logement social”.

<sup>255</sup> Law of 13 December 2000, on urban solidarity and renewal (SRU). It reaffirms the importance of social rental housing and the role of HLM bodies in the right to housing and social integration. The 20 per cent target is a requirement for cities of more than 3,500 inhabitants.

<sup>256</sup> 68,000 social apartments out of a total of 375,000 apartments. CRPV-PACA (*Centre de ressources pour la politique de la ville-PACA*), April 2006.

<sup>257</sup> EML press kit.

<sup>258</sup> An urban renewal and economic development project begun in 1995 by the French national government, the City of Marseille, the Marseille Provence Metropolitan Urban Community, the Provence Alpes Cote d'Azur Region and the General Council of the Bouches-du-Rhône. It is supported by the European Fund. See <http://www.euromediterranee.fr/districts/introduction.html?L=1> (accessed April 2011).

housing policy above politics and involved extensive central state support through direct ANRU funding in certain areas<sup>259</sup> and various partnership mechanisms designed for private housing improvements.<sup>260</sup>

Some of the measures that have been taken relate to the relegated areas and the areas of poor housing with large concentrations of immigrants trapped in substandard living conditions. Other measures address the issue of social mixing in the city's residential fabric, which are in their early stages and suggest that a policy of population balancing is being applied to Marseille's South districts. At the same time, there has been significant criticism by HALDE of the discriminatory interpretation of the principle of social mixing. It is also important to highlight some of the mechanisms through which those in poor housing are given a voice (and some influence) in Marseille.

## 7.6 Regulating Relegated Areas

Public operations carried out in Marseille in order to regulate relegated housing fall into two main categories: the first is specifically directed at the large social housing complexes (public and private); the second targets dilapidated housing blocks. They are respectively known as ANRU and OPAH operations, the latter of which aims to renovate existing dilapidated housing in the city centre.<sup>261</sup>

### 7.6.1 ANRU's operations in Marseille

Programmes to rehabilitate the large social housing estates have been carried out in Marseille without interruption since the end of the 1970s. But the programme now under way under the aegis of ANRU displays a fresh ambition. A comprehensive design underlies ANRU operations, with dimensions ranging from technical (residential and urban design) to social and economic aims. These dimensions are articulated in a broad set of interventions: demolition, recreation of housing supply, modification of use, requalification, rehabilitation, residential improvement, improved services, refurbishment, landscaping, equipment, creation of commercial spaces and engineering.<sup>262</sup>

There are, at present, four ongoing ANRU operations in Marseille, and another one is pending (see Table 40).

<sup>259</sup> The ANRU was created by the orientation and programming law for the city and urban renewal, of 1 August 2003. The same law created the ONZUS.

<sup>260</sup> Not taking into account the devolution of the management of the *préfet's* quotas to the city and of the brick-and-mortar aid: theoretically, these need to be renewed.

<sup>261</sup> *Opération programmée d'amélioration de l'habitat* (Planned Operations for Housing Improvement – OPAH). This tool dates back to 1977, and several sorts of OPAH exist. Typically, they involve the city, the state, the region and the National Agency for Housing (ANAH), which join forces in order to “requalify or rehabilitate a built-up neighbourhood”.

<sup>262</sup> ANRU regulations, cited in the ONZUS 2008 Report.

**Table 40. ANRU agreements in Marseille, 1 July 2009**

	Status	Budget for project, €million	ANRU's contribution, €million
ANRU Convention –Marseille GIP GPV	Signed	7	4
Marseille – Les Flamands, Les Iris	Signed	98	27
Marseille – 15°–16° Consolat, Viste, Ayalades, Créneaux	Signed	36	8
Marseille 15° – St Antoine Est: La Savine, ND Limite, quartier La Savine	Signed	81	25
Marseille 3° and 15° – St-Mauront, Bellevue, Cabucelle	Pending approval	65	16
Marseille 13 – St Paul	Signed	39	10

Note: means arrondissement

Source: ANRU, “Progress of the Urban Renewal Programme”<sup>263</sup>

ANRU provides only a minor share of the funding for an operation.<sup>264</sup> However, it does design and evaluate the operation, so that sometimes the term “ANRU enclave” is used.

The EML focuses on quantitative aspects for the ANRU agreement:

The figures of apartments planned for rehabilitation in the framework of ANRU agreements that have been signed or projected reach 5,255, while the target was 5,000.

Only 45 of these agreements have reached the operational stage, which will result in deliveries of housing stretched over a longer period of time than initially planned.

ONZUS notes that ANRU programmes are viewed positively by residents and economic operators, and they are incentives for new enterprises to be set up in the targeted areas.<sup>265</sup>

<sup>263</sup> Since that date, other agreements have been signed, as well as the St-Mauront project. See ANRU, “Progress of the urban renewal programme, 24 March 2011”, available at [http://www.anru.fr/IMG/pdf/Etat\\_du\\_PNRU\\_mars\\_2011.pdf](http://www.anru.fr/IMG/pdf/Etat_du_PNRU_mars_2011.pdf) (accessed April 2011).

<sup>264</sup> On the Flamands/IRIS operation, for instance, social landlords announced an investment of €48 million, the city €5.2 million, the *Conseil d'état* (which manages the *département*) €0.5 million, the regional council €4.8 million and MPM nearly €1 million (source: CRPV-PACA).

<sup>265</sup> ONZUS, *2008 Report*, p. 119.

### 7.6.2 Renewal operations on dilapidated housing blocks

The EML includes a statement about the reclamation of the city centre through the elimination of dilapidated housing blocks. The objective of taking back the city centre has been pursued by Marseille's municipality since the 1930s, and the renewed commitment of city hall to this programme is asserted through housing rehabilitation and urban renewal to an unprecedented extent. The topic once had racist connotations, and is not entirely free of these nowadays. But there is a consensus that the city centre is in dire need of renewal, and that this must be done while respecting the rights of disenfranchised residents.

Renovations are implemented in the framework of the ongoing programme of renewal in the city centre. They are carried out on a small scale, building by building. In 2004–2007, over 9,000 apartments were renovated.

There are several types of housing renovation in the city centre:

- housing units located in buildings where the common areas are targeted for rehabilitation;
- housing units improved at the owners' initiative without an agreement (the property remains at their free disposal);
- housing improved by owners in the framework of an agreement (asset remaining at the disposal of landlords-lessors for nine years).<sup>266</sup>

### 7.7 Towards a Fair Approach to Social Mixing

The EML also includes an effort to boost social housing, which should result in increasing the pace of building housing units. On average, 1,500 social apartments were funded yearly in 2006 and 2007, compared with some 700 before the EML was in place. An overall budget of nearly €7 million in brick-and-mortar aid was announced by city officials. Taking into account the three-year gap between funding and delivery, the city expected the supply of new social housing units to rise from 393 in 2007 to 1,139 (for 2008) and 1,975 (for 2009). The breakdown of these new units according to rent levels remains unfavourable to the lower classes, since more than half of these units would be inaccessible to them: 40 per cent would be PLS (*prêt locatif social* – rental loans for public agencies and organizations as well as some individuals) type apartments, and the rent of the remaining 60 per cent would be set at the standard HLM rate or at the PLAI-aided rate (*prêt locatif aidé d'intégration* – rental assistance loans) (the percentage of PLAI housing was not specified).

The most outstanding feature of this planning is perhaps the apparent willingness of the municipal authority to address the issue of an equitable geographical distribution of social housing over the city. The city was divided into five sectors: Hyper-centre,

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<sup>266</sup> EML press kit.

Centre, South, East and North.<sup>267</sup> The 2009 provisions for social housing took the current disparities into account by allocating newer units to Centre and Hyper-centre *arrondissements*, which lack social housing at present; and to South *arrondissements* which are almost devoid of public housing units; the North *arrondissements*, already with a significant social housing stock, were allocated fewer new units. The proportion of social housing stock in the eastern *arrondissements* was kept at the same level. (See Table 41.)

**Table 41. Geographical distribution of social housing stock and social housing funded in 2006–2007**

	Hyper-Centre 1st–3rd	Centre 4th–7th	South 8th–10 <sup>th</sup>	East 11th–13rd	North 14th–16th
SRU housing stock 1 January 2007	12	7	16	32	33
Funded social housing (2006–2007)	24	15	18	28	15

Source: EML, Press kit (SRU-DDE, DRE PC-SITADEL Report)

The proposed distribution of social housing was more equitable than before. However, the new social housing will not dramatically redress the balance of the social mix in the city. Moreover, the distribution of PLAI-type housing units in the areas should be made public to assess if they are really consistent with the stated social aims.

## 7.8 Giving the Ill-Housed a Voice

Consultation with the residents has been integral to the urban renewal process in Marseille from early on. At the *Petit Séminaire* housing estate, in the beginning of the 1980s, efforts were made throughout the renovation of the brick-and-mortar buildings to also involve the neighbourhood's residents (Roma, Maghrebis and others) in the process and supervise their participation.<sup>268</sup> At the start of the 1990s, Jo Ros launched the Citizen's University, which aimed to help social housing residents develop the skills and abilities to act as stakeholders vis-a-vis authorities in matters important to them. Today, consulting with the residents is one of ANRU's methods.

<sup>267</sup> The MPM Communist group proposed that the division would follow *arrondissements*' limits, in accordance with the law, so that the geographical distribution of the social housing effort was fairer.

<sup>268</sup> Michel Anselme, *Du bruit à la parole. La scène politique des cites* (From noise to words. The political scene on the estates), Ed. De L'Aube, La Tour d'Aigues, 2000.

HALDE also views residents' participation as a crucial element in the policy of diversity in social housing. However, those in poor housing are often absent from a discussion of housing policies.

Marseille has two modes of participation in the social housing decision process for those in poor housing. The first is an indirect mode and consists of civil society action with and for the ill-housed.

### 7.8.1 Enforceable right to housing

For those in poor housing, the enforceable right to housing is the direct mode of action in the decision-making process as it is a right that is enforceable by administrative courts. Although the mechanism is very recent and it is too early to thoroughly evaluate it, Wafa, a participant in the housing focus group, described a satisfying experience appealing to the mediation committee:

I am going to tell about another experience, which was concomitant with the new [housing rights] law; in that particular instance, I had access to HLM housing within a year of request. I didn't have to renew my request, thanks to the law on the *justicible* right to housing. I appealed to the committee, and within three months I was offered housing, which I accepted. Things went pretty well; but then again, the law was a valuable intermediary. Otherwise I would still have problems.<sup>269</sup>

The enforceable right to housing was introduced on 5 March 2007, as the DALO (*Droit au logement opposable*) law, and it came into force in 2008. It makes housing or accommodation a state-guaranteed right, able to be recognised and enforced by administrative courts. When a person is recognised by the departmental mediation committee as deserving priority, he can petition the court to have his right enforced.<sup>270</sup>

Aspects of this law remain unclear. For instance, the state is responsible for enforcing the right to housing, but the city government has control over the prefectural quota of social housing. However, as Wafa's story suggests, the new configuration of the system will not necessarily remove the interdependency of the state, the city and the landlords, which today underlies the housing policy and structures it in practice. At any rate, prefectural quotas are insufficient to address the needs of all those in poor housing. According to estimates by INSEE, 600,000 households (or 1.7 million persons) are in poor housing, whereas prefectural quotas consist of no more than 60,000–65,000 apartments.<sup>271</sup> It will be necessary to resort to other solutions. There are indications

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<sup>269</sup> Open Society Foundations Housing & Health focus group participant named Wafa, born in Marseille, unemployed.

<sup>270</sup> See *La lettre du cadre territorial* (professional journal for local civil servants) no. 367, October 2008, "DALO: premiers retours d'expérience"

<sup>271</sup> *La lettre du cadre territorial* no. 367.

that the DALO law could tip the balance of power between actors in the social housing system in favour of the rule of law:<sup>272</sup>

For now, the PACA region tops the list in France for the number of applications filed under the provisions of the DALO law, just lower than the Ile-de-France region.<sup>273</sup> A vast majority of the families who have recourse to this mechanism are of immigrant origin, and their requests are based notably on excessive delays for access to housing (years on a waiting list, renewing applications every year), overcrowding, insalubrities.<sup>274</sup>

### 7.8.2 Civil society action for the ill-housed: organisations working towards integration through housing

Two major organisations are active in integration through housing in the Bouches-du-Rhône *département*, the PACT-ARIM, an affiliate of the PACT movement,<sup>275</sup> and the *Association méditerranéenne pour l'insertion sociale par le logement* (the Mediterranean Association for Housing Integration – AMPIL), based on the model of a similar organisation in Lyon. They operate together with social landlords, the General Council and the state. “We are ‘activist professionals’,” said Kader Attia, the general manager of AMPIL. In fact, these organisations are unique because they link professional competence with a commitment to stand up for the ill-housed. The AMPIL staff, for instance, combines three competences, those of architect, jurist and social worker; this allows the organisation to take responsibility for the whole urban renewal process, on behalf of public operators concerned with housing, to which the organisation is accountable.

These organisations maintain direct relationships with owners of damaged buildings. A good illustration of their approach is the mechanism called *portage solidaire*, through which the organisation, acting as an umbrella group, takes responsibility for maintaining housing units that their owners are unable to keep up:

The insolvent owner, at risk of being evicted, gives up ownership of his home before a notary, transferring it to the organisation for 15 years; the association

<sup>272</sup> “One of the merits of DALO is to pressure the operators lagging behind in the implementation of the SRU law. Deficiencies will be reported increasingly until the day comes when the government allows the  *préfets*  to step into action with respect to land rights, whereas for now some local officials invoke the preservation of the environment to avoid dealing with their duties regarding social mixing.” “It is a long process. From year to year, constraints are more pressing, the law becomes more restrictive, and the mayors eventually take responsibility and update their practices,” affirms the Secretary General of a  *préfecture*  directly concerned with the issue.  *La lettre du cadre territorial*  no. 367, October 2008, “DALO: premiers retours d’expérience”.

<sup>273</sup> Abbé Pierre Foundation,  *L’état du mal-logement en France* , p. 192.

<sup>274</sup> Open Society Foundations interview with Kader Attia, April 2009. Attia is a member of the DALO departmental committee.

<sup>275</sup> Launched in the 1940s, available at <http://www.pact-arim.org> (accessed June 2011).

rehabilitates the unit and lets the former owner occupy the house. This programme may benefit the elderly, the sick, or widows. After 15 years, the former owner receives his house back in full ownership.<sup>276</sup>

Similarly, they can assume a pedagogical relationship to households applying for rental housing, allowing those lacking experience as tenants to learn the correct practices. This principle underlies the concept of rental intermediation, through which the organisations sublease apartments to families which were previously housed in hostels or in emergency accommodation centres, on behalf of the landlords, who are therefore guaranteed that their rights will not be compromised. Such is notably the function of the *bail glissant* (literally “sliding lease”, i.e., a transitional, transferable subtenancy lease). AMPIL uses this mechanism to administer a stock of some 200 apartments. The organisation signs a leasing contract with the landlord and a subleasing contract with the subtenant. The approach

provides a progressive pedagogy, which gradually puts the households in a position to manage their relationships with a private or public landlord and with society. Learning to pay rent, to manage a budget, to take responsibility for one’s commitments, to live in society ... this is the objective of the ‘transferable lease’ mechanism.<sup>277</sup>

Furthermore, as the organisation is the titular tenant until the lease is eventually transferred to the subtenant, it takes full responsibility for the rights and duties of the tenant. It is financially and legally in charge of paying rents and service charges and of taking care of the apartment, and is responsible for damage and problems with neighbours. The landlord receives a guarantee of rent during the probationary period during which the tenant is guided by social workers. For the subtenant, the probation period (subleasing) serves as a test, during which tenant duties are shared with and supported by the organisation. If the outcome of this test is positive, a direct, common-law lease is signed. This new situation functions as a gesture of social recognition towards the household. It shows that they are from now on responsible with respect to accommodation. The subleasing period may last one or two years.<sup>278</sup>

In Marseille, AMPIL also helps ageing workers. To this end, it uses a scheme that was first created by the Abbé Pierre Foundation, the *maisons relais* (foster homes). “Foster homes take in the most disenfranchised individuals, who have no access to ordinary housing. The goal is for the beneficiary to settle down permanently in the foster home.” This form of housing is designed to deal with individuals whose priority is not integration. The foster home is managed by a host, or a couple of hosts. The host is in

<sup>276</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Kader Attia. This is one of the forms that the *portage solidaire* mechanism may take. The AMPIL uses this mechanism on behalf of about 20 owners in Marseille.

<sup>277</sup> For AMPIL website see [http://association.118000.fr/v\\_marseille\\_13/c\\_association-humanitaire-entraide-action-sociale/e\\_ampil\\_0491599271\\_C0000128635](http://association.118000.fr/v_marseille_13/c_association-humanitaire-entraide-action-sociale/e_ampil_0491599271_C0000128635) (accessed April 2011).

<sup>278</sup> Open Society Foundations interview with Kader Attia.

charge of managing day-to-day organisation; creating a good atmosphere in the communal spaces; listening to the residents; and maintaining contacts with external partners.<sup>279</sup>

In addition, AMPIL gives breakfasts to isolated individuals in the city centre, some of whom used to have only one meal per day; 30–40 persons arrive at the office every day to receive a full breakfast. The association had this initiative validated and supported by social assistance services: it has just been granted the confirmation of the General Council.

### 7.8.3 Civil society mobilisation with the ill-housed: *“Un centre-ville pour tous”*

The civil society organisation “*Un centre-ville pour tous*” (City Centre for All) was created in 2000, in response to plans for urban renewal that city hall was drafting at the time. The organisation’s objective is to “have public authorities respect the right [of all residents] to live in the city centre of Marseille”. Its founders are former public servants (some of them actually still in the same positions), well known and respected in Marseille.

By alerting the media and undertaking litigation, the organisation calls for the respect of three principles: the citizens’ right to information and transparency; the right to housing of those currently living in the area; and collective action directed towards public authorities.

- **The citizens’ right to information and transparency**

City Centre for All considers that all operations of urban renewal carried out by the city must be transparent vis-a-vis citizens and representatives. To this end, the organisation has conducted a detailed analysis of audits concerning the *Panier* rehabilitation operation, of public interest statements, and of administrative notes and circulars; the organisation then broadly circulated the results and received significant attention from local and national media.

- **The right to housing of people currently living in the area**

City Centre for All defends the right to housing and to rehousing of people affected by rehabilitation programmes. To this end, it has given active support to residents housed in poor conditions. Faced with threats from unscrupulous owners trying to evict them from their apartments, the residents of buildings numbered 9, 8, 6 in the rue de la Fare, for instance, received assistance from the organisation so that they could undertake legal action. The rue de la Fare lawsuits also resulted in the landlords being convicted and the buildings’ residents rehoused or compensated. In rue de la République, residents won four lawsuits against their landlords. To sustain these legal actions, the organisation is

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<sup>279</sup> Excerpt from Abbe Pierre Foundation form, available at <http://www.fondationabbepierre.org> (accessed April 2011).

launching a public subscription to financially support a solidarity fund for litigation and emergency assistance.

- **Collective action directed towards public authorities**

In Marseille, City Centre for All circulated a petition defending the right to housing of residents directly affected by the rehabilitation of the city centre, and launched another petition that was signed by over 1,300 people to support the residents of Belsunce furnished hostels, who received eviction notices from the Marseille tax offices.

As it has grown in strength, the organisation now meets the authorities on a regular basis to reaffirm its will to have the rights of residents respected. The organisation is particularly vigilant about the conditions of the decision-making process regarding statements of public interest and the rehousing measures that they may entail.<sup>280</sup>

City Centre for All would like to mobilise more members and affiliates. But while it is easy to have residents vocally react on these critical issues, the organisation's main mode of action is not street demonstrations, but legal action. If the action undertaken against the Marseille tax offices was successful, it is because the association petitioned HALDE and secured its support. On this occasion, HALDE described the illegal decision of the tax services as an instance of indirect discrimination – a first in France. The legal action on behalf of the rue de la République tenants is in full swing.

The organisation believes it has modified the imbalance of power in the city centre, challenging the established authorities on the issue of housing. Since city hall, under pressure from the Chamber of Commerce, is now determined to be a team player on these issues, it has just brought City Centre for All on board to play a part in remodelling the city centre, in the preparation for Marseille 2013.

## 7.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has highlighted two features of the housing of Marseille Muslims. First, residential space in Marseille is segregated and ethnicised, with well-marked social and ethnic boundaries, which are only becoming more severe at present. The city is split between a ZUS city, in the North districts, densely populated by Muslims, and a non-ZUS city, from which Muslims tend to be excluded. Second, Marseille's housing market is extremely tense, and competition is particularly sharp in the social housing market, as Marseille residents are rather poor on average. Each year, there is a tenfold ratio of social housing applications to allocations. Therefore, all the ingredients are here for a socio-ethnic hierarchy of social housing programmes to come into place.

In this tough environment, the state has initiated important programmes of urban rehabilitation and renewal, driven by ANRU. City hall, for its part, passed a new

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<sup>280</sup> From the organisation's website, <http://www.centrevillepour tous.asso.fr> (accessed January 2011).

housing policy, the EML. The stated goals of these policies are: the rehabilitation of the large, outdated social housing estates on the one hand, and on the other hand the building of new housing units (notably social housing) at a faster rate, with a higher turnover rate and fewer vacancies in existing units.

These initiatives are expected to help regulate the living environment in the less favourable and ethnicised areas. But very few housing units are built for the most disenfranchised residents, even though there is significant demand. Moreover, little is done to improve the spatial layout of residents citywide, and the ethnicised socio-residential divide will remain.

There are remedial measures, limited as they may be: the new provisions of the law giving guarantees to ill-housed residents who are recognised as particularly disadvantaged, so that their housing applications will be taken seriously (under the DALO law); and in the city centre, the work of an NGO actively committed to preventing urban renovation programmes from infringing on the rights of the residents.

## 8. EXPERIENCES OF MUSLIM COMMUNITIES: HEALTH AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

### 8.1 Marseille: High Levels of Health Care and Poverty Side-by-Side

The health-care system in general and public hospitals in particular provide a vantage point to comprehend the social history of a city over the long term, revealing the troubles that it goes through, its divides, its disparities, but also its wealth in terms of human, ethnic and social diversity. From this point of view, the issue of health care in Marseille may serve to reveal the social condition of the city, bringing to light the capacity of the local institutions to manage and to integrate the new influx of migrants, as one of our interviewees, a health professional at the city's North Hospital, accurately pointed out:

Here we can feel this poverty and this precariousness, especially when we look at this showcase of the hospital colloquially known as “emergencies”, the casualty department. “Emergencies” are the mirror of the conditions in which the population lives. Moreover, in the “emergencies” unit, the successive waves of migrations are very visible. During my 20 years of work at the casualty department, I saw the various waves going by one by one: the North Africans, the settled Gypsies from the North districts, the Comorians, the Poles, the Romanians and lately mostly Turks and Kurds.<sup>281</sup>

One is inevitably confronted with a sense of the poverty and precariousness that pervades the local medical and health-care landscape, more so than in any other French city. Marseille's health-care system is characterised by the variety of available medical specialties, by the over-representation of health practitioners in some sectors, by high-performing casualty departments, good management of patients' reception and a level of investment in high-tech medical supplies that concedes nothing to other major French cities. In some medical sectors (cancer prevention, treatment of children's diseases, heart transplants, traumatology)<sup>282</sup> Marseille ranks among the outstanding centres of excellence in Europe. But behind this front of high-tech medicine, challenges remains which have led some local representatives to state that Marseille experiences two-tier health care:

The issue of health is also an issue of urban planning, of territorial development, and of public services. The social disparities that we witness with respect to

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<sup>281</sup> Open Society Foundations interview with Jeannette Belaadi, health-care executive at the Hospital of Marseille, May 2009.

<sup>282</sup> Assistance publique des Hôpitaux de Marseille [APHM], the body in charge of public hospitals in Marseille, available at <http://www.ap-hm.fr> (accessed January 2011).

health are markers of the living conditions, of employment or unemployment, the willingness of some to tear democracy into pieces.<sup>283</sup>

In Marseille, health care ranges from some of the best to some of the worst in France: the great overall performance of the public service of health care, working every day to reduce the medical divide, sits alongside discriminatory attitudes on the part of some private practice physicians, who refuse to treat poor patients, on the pretext that they cannot pay for medical consultation.

This chapter begins by examining the social duality that appears to exist throughout the local health-care system and seems to reflect the very history of the city. Since the end of the Second World War, private operators have invested in the health sector, creating a situation that is unusual for France: the number of private clinics in the hospital system is much more pronounced here than in other French cities. Of course, this privatisation of hospital medicine is not necessarily a synonym of social inequalities, in as much as the private sector continues to fulfil missions of public service, and takes equal care of disadvantaged, impoverished residents. However, this dual health-care system ensures that the medical treatment of the most vulnerable patients is a constant problem in terms of medical democracy: in Marseille, the social divide is also a medical divide. This gap appears to be deepening under government reforms aimed at liberalising the health sector and favouring a form of hospital governance.<sup>284</sup>

The second part of this chapter examines how the dual health-care system in Marseille has the greatest impact on new migrants. As they enjoy less socio-cultural capital as well as fewer financial resources, they are not in possession of the social networks that would allow them to choose how they will be treated and where they will be hospitalised, and they are subjected to forms of medical marginalisation or exclusion more frequently than other Marseille citizens. While it would sound excessive to speak of institutional racism in the local health system, it is nevertheless possible to pinpoint ethnic,<sup>285</sup> racial and religious prejudices that facilitate discriminatory behaviour towards patients with Arab-Muslim migrant backgrounds. In this respect, most

<sup>283</sup> Philippe Massi, deputy mayor of Septèmes (in the metropolitan area of Marseille), “Quand les professionnels, syndicalistes et politiques parlent de santé” (When professionals, trade unionists and politicians speak of health), from the Attac-Marseille website, 2009, available at [http://www.local.attac.org/marseille/article.php3?id\\_article=990](http://www.local.attac.org/marseille/article.php3?id_article=990) (accessed January 2011).

<sup>284</sup> “Réforme de l’hôpital: modernisation et rationalisation ou simple recherche d’économie?” (Hospital reform: modernisation and rationalisation or basic cost-cutting?), *Vie publique*, 27 July 2009, available at <http://www.vie-publique.fr/actualite/dossier/plan-hopital-2009/reforme-hopital-modernisation-rationalisation-ou-simple-recherche-economies.html> (accessed January 2011).

<sup>285</sup> Marguerite Cognet, “Quand l’ethnicité colore les relations dans l’hôpital” (When ethnicity colours relations in the hospital), *Hommes & Migrations* 1233 (2001), pp. 101–107.

measures suggest that the social segmentation which permeates the local health-care system does entail an ethnic<sup>286</sup> segmentation as well.

The third part describes a controversial issue – the creation of a Muslim chaplaincy in Marseille’s public hospitals – which provides an insight into the latent, unstated ethnic patterns which cut across the local health system. In theory, every patient should be able to claim his right to observe the precepts of his religion during his stay in hospital. However, in practice, in Marseille, this principle is very unevenly implemented, depending on the denomination that the patient belongs to. For now, the development of this Muslim chaplaincy faces numerous obstacles, and the food restrictions of Muslim patients (*halal* meals) are rarely respected by the public health authorities. In health care, the Muslim identity of patients is still thought of as a form of foreign and illegitimate interference, even though substantial improvements have been observed in the last few years.

In principle there is no reason to isolate the local health-care system from the major trends and from the significant reforms that presently affect the medical and health-care sector nationally, and which entail a twofold process of sectorisation on the one hand and of liberalisation on the other. It is clear that French health authorities are mainly concerned with bringing the management of public health in line with a free market enterprise performance model (drawing on the theme of new hospital governance). In this respect, Marseille is all the more relevant as an area for experiment, given the fact that the private sector has been playing a major part in the city’s health-care system for a long time. In these conditions, one may wonder whether the local health-care system had not in fact anticipated, a few years in advance, the new configuration of health care in France, with some progress in terms of territorial coordination of medical services, but also regression with respect to the fair and equal treatment of all patients.

## 8.2 Marseille, a Flagship of the New Hospital Governance: the Rationalisation and Profitability of Health Care

In the last 20 years, France has been through a far-reaching reform of its health-care system, the main objective of which was to improve the coordination between the various medical services and units at department and local level, and to reinforce the complementarity of the public and private health sectors. Of course, these reforms were not without consequences for the medical treatment of the most vulnerable in general and for those of immigrant background in particular. In brief, policymakers aimed to rationalise the organisation of health care in France by reducing the costs supported by

<sup>286</sup> *Circulaire no. DHOS/E1/DGS/SD1B/SD1C/SD4A/2006/90 du 2 mars 2006 relative aux droits des personnes hospitalisées et comportant une charte de la personne hospitalisée* (Circular/Bill no. DHOS/E1/DGS/SD1B/SD1C/SD4A/2006/90 dated 2 March 2006 relating to the rights of hospitalised persons and including a patient’s charter), available at [http://www.sersante.com/chartepatient/texte\\_charte/articles.html](http://www.sersante.com/chartepatient/texte_charte/articles.html) (accessed January 2011).

the state and by urging health institutions and practitioners to embrace methods of management derived from the practices of free-market enterprise, while upholding their mission of public service, that is, the principle of adequate access to health care for all citizens. In keeping with this perspective, most of the health-care reforms undertaken in France have tried to find a subtle balance between the imperative of profitability and respect for the principle of equality. Thus, the Hospital Law of 1991 set new conditions for the planning of medical services by calling for the implementation of the *Schémas Régionaux d'Organisation Sanitaire* (Regional Plans for the Organisation of Health Care – SROS).<sup>287</sup> In 1996, there were further reforms of hospitals in the public and in the private sector and the creation of the *Agences Régionales d'Hospitalisation* (Regional Agencies for Hospitalisation – ARH).<sup>288</sup>

The law of 2 July 2009 on the reform of the hospitals, the patients, health and local territories<sup>289</sup> recommended the creation of “local communities of hospitals”, so as to “foster the development of complementarities and connections between the various public hospitals, and to unite them around projects that are relevant in terms of medical activity”. Furthermore, “public and private institutions may pool their equipment and further cooperate in the framework of the *groupements de coopération sanitaire* (Groups of Medical Cooperation – GCS), the creation of which will be made easier.”<sup>290</sup>

Last, in keeping with the doctrine of new hospital governance,<sup>291</sup> hospital directors became actual managers, who were urged to run their public institutions in the same way that they would run a private enterprise, therefore reducing the room for manoeuvre of elected representative, unions of health professionals and organisations of patients, and limiting the ability of the last to exert democratic control on local health policies. The reform is intended to foster an increased complementarity between public

<sup>287</sup> *Schémas Régionaux d'Organisation Sanitaire* (Law on hospital reform, 31 July 1991).

<sup>288</sup> Law on Hospital reform, 31 July 1991: These are in charge of defining and implementing the regional policy in terms of availability of medical treatment, of analysing and coordinating the activity of public and private health centres, to determine their resources, taking into account the priorities for public health set forth by each Regional Health Conference. Multi-year contracts are signed between medical institutions and the regional agencies to set objectives and resources, to fit the system to the needs of the population, and to increase the responsibility taken by the various actors of the hospital in the organisation of the institution and in the improvement of the quality of medical treatment.

<sup>289</sup> “Loi 2009-879 du 21 juillet 2009 portant réforme de l'hôpital et relative aux patients, à la santé et aux territoires” (Law 2009-879 of 21 July 2009 concerning hospital reform relating to patients, health and the districts), *Journal officiel de la République française* 0167, 22 July 2009, available at <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000020879475&dateTexte=&categorieLien=id> (accessed January 2011).

<sup>290</sup> Law 2009-879 of 21 July 2009 – see above.

<sup>291</sup> Observatoire régional de la santé PACA (PACA Regional Health Observatory), “Les équipements hospitaliers” (“Hospital provision”), *Tableau de bord Marseille* 2003, available at [www.se4s-orspaca.org](http://www.se4s-orspaca.org) (accessed January 2011).

and private health sectors. Critics see this as a latent process of privatisation of medical services and health care in France, which runs the risk, sooner or later, of giving legitimacy to a commercial view of medical treatment and speeding up the gradual transformation of the patient's status into that of a client. Some of our interviewees, health professionals, were critical of this gradual transformation,<sup>292</sup> and of what they perceived as the establishment of a two-tier medical system, a trend all the more worrying since Marseille is already a poor city:

It is true that today, we may notice a drift towards commercialisation, which is widely encouraged by governmental politics; the reasoning behind these politics goes systematically along the lines of costs and profits.

There is a risk in bringing back the dispensaries, the free health centres: that this would become synonymous with creating 'hospitals for the impoverished'. They will be funded by a solidarity fund, but it will only serve to reinforce the duality, the two-tier system between those who can take out mutual or private health insurance, and those who are forced to resort to public medicine. I do not agree with this system, this commercialisation. Moreover, you can feel this commercialised mentality even among the nursing staff: their own comfort comes first, before that of the patient. It is so old-fashioned to be altruistic today!<sup>293</sup>

But it is true that in Marseille this situation of blurred borders between the public and the private health sectors (see Table 42) has been a fact for years, since private-sector hospitals have always held an important position in the local medical landscape. In the beginning of the 2000s, more than 50 per cent of hospitalisations in Marseille took place in the private sector.

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<sup>292</sup> Marcel Touati (doctor, leader of the collective Health and Social Protection"), "Quand les professionnels, syndicalistes et politiques parlent de santé" (When professionals, trade unionists and politicians talk about health), available at [http://www.local.attac.org/marseille/article.php?id\\_article=990](http://www.local.attac.org/marseille/article.php?id_article=990) (accessed January 2011) (hereafter Touati, "Quand les professionnels").

<sup>293</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Jeannette Belaadi, health-care executive at the North Hospital, May 2009.

**Table 42. Hospitalisations in Marseille: breakdown between public and private sectors, by number of cases**

	Public sector	Private sector	Total including other cases
Short-term treatment	11,188	144,615	256,992
General medicine	57,981	65,085	123,066
Surgery	44,238	65,967	110,205
Gynaecology	9,658	13,563	23,221
Follow-up and rehabilitation treatment	569	12,370	12,939

Source: DRES SAE, 2000 (Office of Research, Surveys, Assessment and Statistics / Annual Statistics of Hospitals)

In this sense, the local health-care system has, to a large extent, anticipated the national trend, and in Marseille the business dimensions of the medical sector have been commonplace for a long time. As one doctor, active at the head of a civil society organisation working for the equality of all citizens in health care, has argued:

One of the most illustrative examples of the blurring between private and public, is the fact that missions of public service are entrusted to private operators, the primary objectives of which are the dividends that they will pay to their shareholders, which is totally incompatible with a mission of public service. Marseille is a laboratory for experimentation. Marseille is the only major city in France where the private sector outclasses the public sector. The *Générale de Santé* [a private health firm] plays a prominent part.<sup>294</sup>

The provision of health care in Marseille can be divided into three sectors. First is the public hospital sector, centred on the AP-HM, *Assistance publique – Hôpitaux de Marseille* (Public Assistance for Marseille Hospitals), a public body with a budget of €1.1 billion. It is responsible for 3,500 beds in four main public hospitals,<sup>295</sup> one of which, the North Hospital, located in the heart of the North districts, accommodates the vast majority of patients of Maghrebi, African and Comorian background. To this sector one may also link the non-profit private hospital sector, that is, medical institutions run by civil society organisations or mutual benefit insurance companies, like, for instance, the Red Cross health Centre (Le Camas), which is not part of the for-profit private sector.

<sup>294</sup> Touati, “Quand les professionnels”.

<sup>295</sup> La Conception, La Timone, the Hôpitaux Sud (South Hospitals) and the Hôpital Nord (North Hospital).

Second is the private hospital (for-profit) sector, which is remarkably well developed in Marseille and in this respect, is almost similar to the U.S. health-care system. A few major private companies, like *La Générale de Santé*, are dominant in the health-care market through a network of clinics across Marseille. The over-representation of the private sector in the Marseille health-care system is sometimes vocally opposed by civil society organisations and NGOs active in promoting a fair public health system equally open to all:

The politics of the hospital that have developed in Marseille, in line with the general privatisation of public services, are a de facto institutionalization of two-tier medicine where only those who have the financial means will receive adequate medical treatment, while the poor will be excluded. This evolution runs contrary to the fundamental principles of the right to health, a fundamental human right affirmed by the United Nations, and recognised by regional treaties (European Social Charter) and many international institutions.<sup>296</sup>

In spite of the economic crisis, the private medical sector continues to expand and, according to some sources, its profits have increased by 50 per cent in less than five years.<sup>297</sup>

Third is the private practice sector consisting of most of Marseille's private health practitioners: GPs, specialists, medical and paramedical practitioners. Contrary to popular misconceptions, Marseille, even though it is considered a working-class city, experiences no shortage of private medical practitioners. GPs and specialists are actually over-represented, as PACA's Regional Health Observatory points out: "With 416 private doctors per 100,000 inhabitants, Marseille has a density of medical practitioners well above that of the *département*, the region and France as a whole. The disparity is especially pronounced for specialists ... For all medical specialties, the density of private practitioners is well above the national average".<sup>298</sup> (See Table 43.)

The same is true of paramedical practitioners: "In Marseille, respective densities of nurses, masseurs-physical therapists, speech therapists, dental surgeons and midwives are largely above national averages".<sup>299</sup>

<sup>296</sup> Attac-Marseille, "A Marseille, des liens entre élus et cliniques privées" (Links between elected representatives and private clinics in Marseille), *Le Petit Alter marseillais*, December 2006, available at [http://www.local.attac.org/marseille/IMG/pdf/petit\\_alter\\_Hopital\\_verso.pdf](http://www.local.attac.org/marseille/IMG/pdf/petit_alter_Hopital_verso.pdf) (accessed January 2011) (hereafter Attac-Marseille, "A Marseille, des liens entre élus et cliniques privées").

<sup>297</sup> Attac-Marseille, "A Marseille, des liens entre élus et cliniques privées".

<sup>298</sup> Observatoire régional de la santé PACA, "Les médecins", *Tableau de bord Marseille 2003*, available at [http://www.se4s-orspaca.org/presentation/ors\\_paca/pdf/RA2003.pdf](http://www.se4s-orspaca.org/presentation/ors_paca/pdf/RA2003.pdf) (accessed January 2011).

<sup>299</sup> Observatoire régional de la santé PACA, "Les professions paramédicales" (The paramedical professions), *Tableau de bord Marseille 2003*, available at [http://www.se4s-orspaca.org/presentation/ors\\_paca/pdf/RA2003.pdf](http://www.se4s-orspaca.org/presentation/ors_paca/pdf/RA2003.pdf) (accessed January 2011).

**Table 43. Number of private health practitioners (doctors per 100,000 inhabitants)**

	Marseille	Département (13)	France
General practitioners (GPs)	170	151	114
Specialists	246	152	87
<b>Total private practice doctors</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>202</b>

Sources: DRASS; DREES; INSEE 2003

**Table 44. Number of private-practice nurses and physical therapists (per 100,000 inhabitants)**

	Marseille	Département (13)	France
Nurses	247	217	101
Physical therapists	141.4	129.1	75.6

Sources: DRASS; DREES; INSEE 2003

One of Marseille's outstanding characteristics seems to be that health practitioners in some medical and paramedical specialties are rather over-represented. However, this general picture is misleading, and conceals numerous social disparities and health care divides. The very dynamism of the local health-care system encompasses forms of social segmentation, which confirm, at least in part, that the system works in a dual way. In Marseille, social disparities and territorial segregation are easy to discern in the way health care is organised, or in the attitudes and behaviours of health practitioners, which are generally a far cry from the stated ideal of a health democracy.<sup>300</sup>

### 8.3 Social Segmentation, Medical Segmentation: A Health-Care System Where Poverty Takes Its Toll

In Marseille, the most prevalent illness may well be poverty. And from poverty there follow many pathological conditions that local health practitioners encounter in their work. Indeed, the rate of beneficiaries of social assistance (in the form of various social aids, benefits and allowances) is well above *départementale* and national averages. At the

<sup>300</sup> *Loi no. 2002-303 du 4 mars 2002 relative aux droits des malades et à la qualité du système de santé, Titre II* (Law 2002-303 of 4 March 2002, Title II on patients' rights and quality of the health system), available at <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000227015> (accessed January 2011).

beginning of the 21st century, all the social indicators of poverty and precariousness are apparent in the city. (See Table 45.)

**Table 45. Rate of social beneficiaries in the population aged 18–59 years (%)**

Type of benefit	Marseille	<i>Département</i> (13)	France
Allowance for disabled adult	2.6	2.0	2.1
Single parent allowance	1.1	0.7	0.5
RMI (Minimum Income for Integration)	10.0	6.5	2.9
Integration allowance	0.2	0.1	0.1
Specific solidarity allowance	1.7	1.4	1.1
<b>Total social benefits</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>6.6</b>

Sources: CAF, MSA, DRASS, UNEDIC, INSEE, 2001  
(consortium of specific health operators)

The occurrence of illnesses linked to extreme poverty has not diminished in Marseille. For instance, tuberculosis, which was believed to have been eradicated, is now present. There are estimated to be 18 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, and even more in some *arrondissements*, compared with 10.8 per 100,000 in the *département* and a national average of 10.5 per 100,000 inhabitants. Tuberculosis remains a condition linked to poverty and all that it entails: overcrowded apartments, inadequate housing, lack of hygiene and difficulties accessing health care.<sup>301</sup> (See Table 46.)

<sup>301</sup> Bernadette Spagnoli, “Marseille, la tuberculose touche les quartiers pauvres” (In Marseille tuberculosis hits deprived neighbourhoods), *La Provence*, 16 April 2008, available at <http://www.laprovence.com/article/sante/a-marseille-la-tuberculose-touche-les-quartiers-pauvres> (accessed January 2011).

**Table 46. Breakdown of confirmed cases of tuberculosis by Marseille *arrondissements*, 2008**

Arrondissement	Per 100,000 habitants*	No. of confirmed cases
1	64.2	24
2	77.3	19
3	31.2	13
4	11.4	4
5	12.1	5
6	12.1	5
7	2.8	1
8	6.6	5
9	4.1	3
10	20.3	10
11	7.5	4
13	17.5	14
14	24.7	14
15	31.0	22
16	6.1	1
<b>Total no. of cases</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>149</b>

**Note:** Nos. 13–15 are the city's lower-class *arrondissements*.

\* The number of confirmed cases, in each *arrondissements*, were multiplied to give a comparable number for 100.000 people.

**Source:** Department for Sanitary and Social Affairs (DDASS, 2008)

Analysing the breakdown by *arrondissement* of confirmed tuberculosis shows that it is in the city's lower-class neighbourhoods (*arrondissements* in the North, East and city centre) that the rate of tuberculosis is the highest. These neighbourhoods are also the ones where migrant residents originating from the Maghreb, Africa or Comoros are concentrated, as well as new migrants (Turkish, Kurdish and Eastern Europeans – Romanians, Poles, and Bosniaks). This is confirmed by one interviewee, a health-care executive working at the North Hospital:

Yes, we see [such] pathologies, but these are not linked with an ethnic group, they are linked with precarious conditions in France, for instance, the outbreak of mange, the resurgence of tuberculosis, or the lead poisoning of children. It happens that pathologies result from immigration waves – people were already ill and brought their diseases with them; or, [we are speaking of] people who have

lived in France for a long time, whose living conditions have become precarious, who have become homeless, and who are very likely to contract these types of disease.<sup>302</sup>

Such pathologies are not due to the ethnic background of the residents, but rather to their poverty. The situation is, however, made worse by the discriminatory behaviour of some practitioners, notably in the private practice medicine sector, where there is evidence suggesting that practitioners are excluding the most disenfranchised patients.

#### 8.4 How Discriminatory Behaviour by Some Doctors Regarding the CMU Reinforces Inequalities in Accessing Care

In 1 January 2001, *Couverture maladie universelle* (Universal Health Coverage – CMU) was created by the French government. It aims to provide “access to health coverage for every individual who has resided in France in a stable and regular way for more than three months, and who is not entitled to health coverage on another account (professional activity, etc.)”.<sup>303</sup> In addition to the basic CMU, a supplementary (“*complémentaire*”) CMU was created to guarantee “the right to free supplementary health coverage, which means that the patient has access to doctors, to the hospital, etc., without incurring expenses or having to make upfront payments”.<sup>304</sup> The schemes aim to facilitate access to health care for the most disadvantaged. In 2002, nearly 70,000 Marseillais were enrolled in the basic CMU and nearly 150,000 benefited from the supplementary CMU, that is 18.4 per cent of the population, compared with 12.7 per cent in the *département* and 7.4 per cent in France. (See Table 47.)

**Table 47. Rate of beneficiaries of basic CMU and supplementary CMU (%)**

Type of CMU	Marseille	<i>Département</i> (13)	France
Basic CMU	8.4	7.4	1.5
Supplementary CMU	18.4	12.7	7.4

Source: CAF, MSA, DRASS, UNEDIC, INSEE, 2002  
(consortium of specific health operators)

But for the CMU scheme to work smoothly, it is also necessary for health practitioners to agree to receive and treat patients without asking them for payments upfront. In

<sup>302</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Jeannette Belaadi, May 2009.

<sup>303</sup> Caisse nationale de l’Assurance-maladie des travailleurs salariés, *Historique complet de la CMU*, 2009 (Complete history of the CMU), available at <http://www.ecosante.fr/FRANFRA/582.html> (accessed January 2011) (hereafter Caisse nationale de l’Assurance-maladie des travailleurs salariés, *Historique complet de la CMU*).

<sup>304</sup> Caisse nationale de l’Assurance-maladie des travailleurs salariés, *Historique complet de la CMU*.

Marseille, however, there is evidence to suggest that some general practitioners and specialists refuse to treat CMU patients.<sup>305</sup> This appears to happen more frequently in Marseille than in other French cities. One explanation of this is that health care in Marseille has always been the focus of commercial, for-profit activity, and that the commercial attitudes of some health practitioners are long-standing and sometimes given legitimacy in local political circles. This discrimination has a particular impact on women of foreign background who need to consult a gynaecologist, and who are denied treatment because they are on CMU.<sup>306</sup> (See Tables 48 and 49.)

**Table 48. Survey of doctors refusing to treat CMU patients in Marseille (patients without “Carte Vitale” or CMU certificate) (%)**

Type of doctor	Accepts CMU	Refuses CMU	Accepts under conditions
GP	30	59	11
Specialist	23	52	25

Source: Survey by civil society organisation *La Main Blanche*, carried out between December 2008 and February 2009.

**Table 49. Survey of doctors refusing to treat CMU patients in Marseille (patients with “Carte Vitale” and CMU certificate) (%)**

Type of doctor	Accepts CMU	Refuses CMU	Accepts under conditions
GP	39	42	19
Specialist	35	53	12

Source: Survey by civil society organisation *La Main Blanche*, carried out between December 2008 and February 2009.

The survey by *La Main Blanche*, a civil society organisation, shows that this type of medical discrimination affecting poor people is widespread in Marseille. These practices are more commonplace in the private hospital sector and the private practice sectors than they are in the public sector, as hospitals run by AP-HM have a duty to

<sup>305</sup> Association La Main Blanche, “Refus de la CMU sur Marseille” (Refusal to treat CMU patients in Marseille), “Rapport d’enquête sur le refus de la CMU par les médecins marseillais” (Report of inquiry into the refusal of CMU by Marseille doctors), 2009, available at <http://www.lamainblanche.free.fr/spip.php?article5> (accessed January 2011).

<sup>306</sup> Karine Portrait, “A Marseille un gynéco sur deux refuse les patients CMU” (In Marseille, one in two gynaecologists refuses to see CMU patients), *La Provence*, 27 May 2009, available at <http://www.laprovence.com/article/region/a-marseille-un-gyneco-sur-deux-refuse-les-patients-cmu> (accessed January 2011).

accept anyone, irrespective of the patients' social situation or income level. One stakeholder interviewee, a health-care executive at La Conception Hospital, confirmed that discrimination against CMU beneficiaries is frequent locally:

As for the private sector, measures must be taken against those doctors who don't treat patients, who don't see them, because they are on CMU. This has to stop. Every individual on French soil has a right to health care. Yes, there are doctors who deny treatment to patients on CMU, and this creates a situation of congestion and saturation for the other doctors. We must make things clear. We need to engage in situation testing to spot the doctors who deny treatment to the most disadvantaged. Not necessarily with repressive aims. It would be of no avail. But we need to launch first a good campaign of information, of prevention.<sup>307</sup>

There are many schemes and initiatives to secure access to health care for the most disadvantaged residents, for instance the *Permanences d'accès aux soins de santé* (Basic Service of Access to Health – PASS), the *Points d'accueil écoute jeunes* (Reception and Advice Centres for Youth – PAEJ), the *Ateliers Santé Ville* (City Health Workshops – ASV) and the *Espaces Santé Jeune* (Youth Health Centres – ESJ), not to mention the action of NGOs such as *Médecins de Monde*. There is local mobilisation of civil society for the right to health, often led by health practitioners, activists or ordinary citizens who refuse to accept the current situation of inequality in health care. The initiative “Health in St-Mauront/Belle-de-Mai: All United!” is a good illustration of this collective mobilisation around the challenges of health-care democracy, which takes place in a lower-class neighbourhood of the 3rd *arrondissement*. This programme, supported by several partners,<sup>308</sup> aims at “contributing to reduce inequalities with respect to health. It envisions, notably, the development of health promotion programmes and of actions aimed at educating children, youth and families in the disenfranchised neighbourhoods and larger areas about health. It is necessary to act early on to reduce social disparities with respect to health and especially to prevent psychological suffering”.<sup>309</sup> The initiative is inspired by the approach of community medicine, which was tested during the 1960s and 1970s in a number of third-world countries, the main objective of which was to bring health and medical infrastructures closer to the population, to have the hospital break off the rigid structure of its institutional walls and meet the residents directly where they are:

<sup>307</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Kader Mostefaoui, health-care executive at La Conception Hospital, May 2009.

<sup>308</sup> Haut commissariat aux solidarités actives, Groupe régional de santé publique (Commission for active solidarity, regional public health group), City of Marseille, *Conseil général*, AP-HM (Assistance publique- Hôpitaux de Marseille).

<sup>309</sup> See the official presentation of the community medicine initiative in St-Mauront/Belle de Mai at <http://www.smtbdm.org/presentation> (accessed January 2011).

From the onset, the implementation of the initiative draws on the mobilisation of the residents/parents in order to get them actively involved in the effort. A civil society organisation with expertise in the field (Université du Citoyen – Citizen’s University) is in charge of initiating this mobilisation by sending a professional to immerse himself in the neighbourhood for a period of time (three months).<sup>310</sup>

These initiatives of community medicine remain infrequent in Marseille. Critics have argued that they legitimise the two-tier medical system in Marseille as they reinforce the structural and systemic inequality in health care, without providing a sustainable alternative. Such criticism of the potentially pernicious effects of community medicine schemes certainly deserves attention:

This kind of solution will not make up for an effort, on the part of medical practitioners, to look at the stranger [face to face]. I’m not sure that reopening the dispensaries is necessarily the right answer. I don’t know. In any case, I have seen that local, community-based structures still exist for ‘small care’, what we also call ‘bobology’.<sup>311</sup> But I’m not sure that reopening the dispensaries to bring care to the disadvantaged residents is an ideal answer. Here at the hospital, we only take care of the medical treatment, and not of ‘health’, a much more far-reaching field. What we monitor here is the medical treatment. True, we also spend some time talking to patients, maybe half an hour: it’s part of our job. But precisely, what does it mean, being disenfranchised? Those are people who also need to speak, they also need moral support. This is integral to ‘health’ but it is not addressed by medical treatment. I would say that, instead of speaking about reopening dispensaries, we should also focus on the general practitioners, who are in close contact with the families, who see the children grow up.<sup>312</sup>

Behind the fear of seeing a both dual and unequal local health-care system gradually taking root, with high-performance hospital equipment for the rich on one side, and community-based medical structures for the poor (neighbourhood dispensaries, community health centres) on the other, another concern may be growing: an increasingly ethnic management of health care on Marseille’s territory. One wonders whether the medical divide, an obvious result of the social divide, may not also be to some extent a by-product of the ethnic divide that runs through the urban fabric?

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<sup>310</sup> Official presentation of the community medicine initiative in St-Mauront/Belle de Mai (see note 306).

<sup>311</sup> In French, *bobo* is a childish word for a minor scratch.

<sup>312</sup> Open Society Foundations interview with Jeannette Belaadi, May 2009.

## 8.5 Managing Health Care along Ethnic Lines: An Analysis of Representations and Practices in Marseille

The relevance of ethnicity to health care is a sensitive and complex issue. Often it may be implied rather than explicit. For all these reasons, a great deal of caution is required when accounting for issues of ethnicity in the local health-care system; Often unfair treatment or discrimination may not be the result of explicit racism, but of modes of interaction in the social communication between patients, families, health practitioners, hospital authorities, policymakers and so on, who all contribute, each in their own way, to ethnicising social relations inside the local health-care system.

### 8.5.1 Sectorisation of hospital care: a step towards an unavoidable segmentation of the local health-care system along ethnic lines

Since the 1990s (with the 1991 hospital law instituting the SROS), health-care provision has been divided into geographical districts or sectors with patients assigned to health-care units according to their place of residence. For instance, a resident of the North districts of Marseille (14th, 15th or 16th *arrondissements*) will very likely be taken to the North Hospital, unless he suffers from a condition that requires specific hospital equipment or medical specialties absent from that hospital. This sectorisation policy is aimed in part to address health inequalities, in part to avoid the emergence within one area of different hospitals for the rich and the poor. But, just as is the case in the school system, this apparently egalitarian system leads to residents of the same (or similar) social levels being concentrated in the same hospital.

In Marseille, this translates into an over-representation of patients from poorer socio-economic backgrounds (blue-collar workers, Job-seekers, the unemployed) in the North Hospital, while those from middle- and upper-class backgrounds are found in the hospitals in the South districts. As an interviewee, who is a health-care professional, noted, this was not the aim of sectorisation:

At the outset, the objective was not ‘ghettoising’, not at all! The initial objective of ‘sectorisation’ was to make the patients’ treatment more consistent, i.e., that the same medical team will take care of the same patient, whether for routine care, or during hospitalisation. But in practice, given the unequal distribution of residents in the territory, there is ghettoisation.<sup>313</sup>

In Marseille, policies of hospital sectorisation in fact facilitate a phenomenon of double segmentation along social and ethnic lines. This is not the result of a conscious, thought-out policy aiming at ghettoising poor and immigrant residents with respect to health care; it is, rather, the indirect fall-out from the patterns of urban segregation that characterise Marseille in all fields of social activity: health care, schools, housing and employment. In all these areas, territorial issues constantly intersect social and ethnic issues, and vice versa:

<sup>313</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with a health-care professional, April 2009.

I don't think we need to be that positive about it. It's not a policy that was thought out and planned as such. To speak of 'ethnic sectorisation' by health-care personnel sounds a bit overstated to me. These collective tendencies to ethnicisation and sectorisation result from a series of individual, small-scale behaviours. But it is not the product of a policy that would be defined as such. Honestly, this topic would require a precise survey, otherwise we run a risk of legitimising our own clichés in turn.<sup>314</sup>

In this respect, it appears that issues of ethnicity are closely linked to issues of social and territorial ranking: patients perceived as Arabs, Muslims or immigrants are, first and foremost, poor patients living in lower-class neighbourhoods. However, the social stigma is also constructed from ethnic and racial prejudices, which exert a direct influence on the relationships between the caring staff and patients, or between the citizens and the authorities.

#### 8.5.2 Relations between the care providers and patients: a latent racism?

On the whole, the Foundations' survey shows high levels of satisfaction with local health-care services among Muslim (66 per cent) and non-Muslim (71 per cent) respondents.<sup>315</sup> Only a small minority identified the hospital as a place where they encountered discrimination and prejudice (3 per cent compared with 1 per cent).<sup>316</sup> The results suggest a positive picture among Muslims of the local health-care system.

However, interviews with health-care professionals would suggest some caution in interpreting these generally positive findings. While it would be excessive to speak of direct racism in Marseille hospitals, some discourses, attitudes and behaviour suggest some prejudices towards patients of Arab-Muslim background among the medical staff. Some staff in the hospitals may entertain a form of latent racism towards these patients, which is never professed or admitted as such:

It's not that direct. It's more 'subtle'. But it's true that sometimes I noticed remarks that I perceived as weird, or peculiar, but which didn't shock my colleagues. For instance, in the medical file of a young female patient, a case of schizophrenia, in the 'clinical evidence' part, among signs and symptoms it was written: 'Algerian father'. What could that mean in the minds of those who wrote it in her medical file? I mean, it was among the clinical symptoms! Maybe

<sup>314</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with a health-care professional, April 2009.

<sup>315</sup> Question G1: "Dans quelle mesure êtes-vous satisfait ou mécontent de ces différents types de services?" (To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with these different types of services?).

<sup>316</sup> Question H8: "D'après vos expériences personnelles au cours des 12 derniers mois, avez-vous fait l'objet de préjugés ou avez-vous été traité injustement à cause de votre religion par les personnes ou dans les lieux suivants?" (Thinking about your personal experiences over the past 12 months, have any of the following x (list of workplaces and institutions) shown prejudice against you or treated you unfairly because of your religion?).

to them it meant, that because her father was Algerian, she was persecuted or battered or whatever? It's true that imaginations run wild, there are fantasies, and my colleagues sometimes end up thinking rather dark things about the patients of Maghrebi background. Some of my colleagues project their own prejudices on to the patients, and that's what I'm fighting against. It's more a lack of understanding, a lack of knowledge, than racism.<sup>317</sup>

The interviews suggest that increasing fear and hostility towards Muslims in French society also affects health-care professionals, and this is translated into a growing mistrust of persons perceived as Muslims. Another interviewee suggest that in health care, as in other areas, a form of forced Islamisation has taken place, in the sense that Muslim identity has been forced on individuals identified as Muslims by the majority population; Maghrebi immigrants and French nationals of North African background are sometimes pictured as Muslim activists, or even potential Islamic radicals:

Yes, I would say that I felt the impact in the aftermath of 9/11. Before, a Maghrebi patient was not seen in connection with a religion: he was an Arab, that's all! By contrast, in my opinion, two events have contributed to changing this view: the hostage-taking in Marignane in December 1996 [during the civil war in Algeria] and the New York attacks. Today, the nursing staff and the doctors tend to view Arabs as Muslims. They are automatically linked to a religion. And it's really ill-founded, because there are many Maghrebis who are not Muslims. But both are being confused, a confusion that is useful [for some]. Yes, I notice that there is this sort of fear of terrorism, which is kept alive. We feel the consequences of the Vigipirate plans [counter-terrorism], the memorandums that are sent to the hospital, or sometimes phone calls from the police asking to check the luggage of some patients, notably homeless persons who were suspected of being terrorists. Minds have been worked up, so to speak, to give credence to the idea, the fantasy of terrorism in the hospital.<sup>318</sup>

And, of course, this phenomenon of Islamophobia in the hospital has the greatest impact on those who are most visibly Muslims. But here, too, the interviewees suggest that the perception that staff project on to patients varies according to the age of the patients and whether they are first- or second-generation migrants. A veil worn by a young woman tends to be seen as frightening, because it conjures up the spectre of Islamic radicalism, of fundamentalism or terrorism; an old lady's headscarf (the *hayed*) seems indifferent, or even reassuring, to a nursing staff accustomed to older immigrants (the *chibanis*), whom they tend to treat with paternalistic compassion:

Now, you must distinguish between the way the elderly are treated, and the way youths are. For the elderly, the nursing staff doesn't care about them [religious signs]. I would not say that they are transparent, but almost. With the youths,

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<sup>317</sup> Open Society Foundations interview with a health-care professional, April 2009.

<sup>318</sup> Interview with Jeannette Belaadi, May 2009.

by contrast, it's different. You get the feeling that the collective unconscious has been permeated. As soon as you have to deal with a young guy with a beard or a young woman wearing a scarf, then there's a good deal of questioning among the medical staff.<sup>319</sup>

The young Muslim is the one who crystallises anxieties and the fears among care providers, because he is supposedly more proselytising, more aggressive than the traditional Muslim of the *chibanis*.<sup>320</sup> It is also true that media reports about Muslim demands in the public hospitals have also affected the situation, even though such conflicts are in fact extremely rare. The discussion with interviewees working in health care in Marseille suggests that few incidents or antagonisms between a health practitioner (nurse, doctor, etc.) and a Muslim patient have been reported in the AP-HM Marseille network of hospitals in the last 10 years. The concerns noted above do not appear to have led to a denial of care:

No, I never witnessed someone being denied care because they were wearing the veil. But it's also true that, being a Muslim myself, I am both judge and jury.

Therefore, these kinds of remarks would only be uttered between the initiated: they won't do it in my presence. But I have never heard any rumour of denial of care either. I think that this latent racism has been present for a long time. Its expression is different, but it's not recent.<sup>321</sup>

The handling of the issue of the Muslim chaplaincy to the public hospitals of Marseille seems telling of the deeply ambivalent way in which health-care authorities and care providers relate to Islamic particularism: muslims chaplains are increasingly tolerated in the name of freedom of belief and out of respect for the patients' fundamental rights (see the *Charte du patient hospitalisé* – Charter of the Patient in Hospital), it is also a source of mistrust and lack of understanding, causing tensions of identity (see below).

## 8.6 Religious and Spiritual Rights of Muslim Patients in Marseille Hospitals

Contrary to popular misconceptions, French *laïcité* does not prohibit the expression of religious beliefs in public services and institutions. On the contrary, *laïcité* protects religious beliefs within a framework of regulations. On this account, Article 2 of the law of 9 December 1905 is clear:

The Republic does not recognise any denomination, nor does it provides salaries or subsidies. In consequence, starting from January 1st after the present law is enacted, all expenses pertaining to various religious worships will be erased from

<sup>319</sup> Interview with a health-care executive, May 2009.

<sup>320</sup> Isabelle Lévy, *La religion à l'hôpital. Laïcité et respect du culte, refus des soins, interdits alimentaires, rites funéraires* (Religion in the hospital. Secularism and respect for religious traditions, refusal of care, dietary restrictions, funeral rites), Presses de la Renaissance, Paris, 2004.

<sup>321</sup> Interview with a health-care executive, May 2009.

the budget of the State, of the *départements* and of municipalities. However, there may remain included in the said budgets, expenses pertaining to chaplaincy services, and aimed at ensuring the freedom of religious practice in public establishments such as *lycées* [high schools], *collèges* [secondary schools], schools, hospitals and prisons.<sup>322</sup>

In other words, the patients' right to the respect of their religious belief and practice(s) in public or private health-care institutions is guaranteed, and any hospital administration that does not strictly abide by this principle acts in defiance of the law. Since it was passed, the 1905 law has been supplemented by regulations and circulars defining how it should be implemented. These regulations further reinforce the right of any patient to practise his religion, through the appointment of chaplains to some public establishment.<sup>323</sup> The law of 20 December 2006 specifies under what conditions the chaplains are to be recruited and to carry out their office in health-care institutions:

Chaplaincy services, as defined by Article 2 of the law of 1905, may be set up for any denomination that makes a request for it, according to needs perceived or registered by the hospital, social or social-medical institutes in question. Whatever denomination they belong to, chaplains are recruited or approved by the head of the institute, following a proposal by relevant religious authorities, and depending on the internal organisation of each faith: Bishopsrics, national, regional or local Israelite Consistories, national chaplain to the hospitals of the French Council for Muslim Worship or of the Regional Councils for Muslim Worship, national or regional committees of health care chaplaincies.<sup>324</sup>

The references in the regulations to the right of individuals to practise the worship of their choice at the hospital must also be understood as part of a wider framework in which the patient is viewed less and less as just an ill person, and more as a citizen with rights and duties. It is in this spirit of establishing a sense of citizenship for patients that a Charter of the Patient in Hospital (*Charte du patient hospitalisé*) was adopted in May 1995, which includes an article on the patient's freedom of religion:

Every patient must be able, within reason, to abide by the precepts of his/her religion (prayer and meditation, presence of a religious minister of his/her denomination, food requirements, freedom of action and of expression ...). Exertion of these rights must respect the freedom of other patients. Proselytising,

<sup>322</sup> *Loi du 9 décembre 1905 concernant la séparation des Eglises et de l'Etat* (Law of 9 December 1905 on the separation of church and state), available at <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006070169&dateTexte=20090818> (accessed January 2011).

<sup>323</sup> Ministerial circular of 6 May 1955, text available at [www.aumonieriedeshopitaux54.fr/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=7:charte-du-patient-hospitalise-abregee-&catid=10:textes-officiels&Itemid=12](http://www.aumonieriedeshopitaux54.fr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7:charte-du-patient-hospitalise-abregee-&catid=10:textes-officiels&Itemid=12) (accessed January 2011).

<sup>324</sup> Available at [http://www.droitsdesreligions.net/rddr/aumerie\\_hopitaux.htm](http://www.droitsdesreligions.net/rddr/aumerie_hopitaux.htm) (accessed April 2011).

whether on the part of a person treated in the establishment, a volunteer, a visitor, or a member of staff, is strictly prohibited.<sup>325</sup>

#### 8.6.1 A belated awareness of the rights and duties of the Muslim patient: better late than never

French Muslim institutions have begun to show an interest in chaplaincy services in the hospital setting. For a long time, the issue was perceived as marginal in comparison with central issues such as the building of mosques, the management of cemeteries or the regulation of ritual (*halal*) slaughtering. Even today, the involvement of different Muslim organisations remains uneven. In the PACA region (of which Marseille is the *préfecture*), the Muslim chaplaincy to the hospital is still being developed, and its achievements are modest, not to say insignificant. By contrast, in some other French regions, like Rhône-Alpes, the Regional Council for Muslim Faith (CRCM) has shown a full commitment to the issue of the Muslim chaplaincy to the hospitals, going as far as specifying its principles, its aims and even its actual *modus operandi*.<sup>326</sup>

The Charter of the Muslim Chaplaincy to the Hospitals was proclaimed at around the same time as the issuing of the Charter of the Patient in Hospital. While it draws

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<sup>325</sup> Extrait de la circulaire ministérielle no. 95-22 du 6 mai 1995 relative aux droits des patients hospitalisés (Extract from ministerial circular no. 95-22 dated 6 May 1995 relating to the rights of hospital patients), available at [http://www.aumonieriedeshopitaux54.fr/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=7:charte-du-patient-hospitalise-abregee-&catid=10:textes-officiels&Itemid=12](http://www.aumonieriedeshopitaux54.fr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7:charte-du-patient-hospitalise-abregee-&catid=10:textes-officiels&Itemid=12) (accessed January 2011).

<sup>326</sup> “Chaplains are in charge of conducting the service of worship in all health care establishments, and assisting patients who make such a request, either by themselves or through their families. He also makes his presence felt among the care providers, in the form of a cooperation aiming at the ‘well-being’ of the patient. The essential role of the chaplain entails a discreet, steady and faithful presence alongside the sick or the elderly who are staying in the hospital, in order to alleviate the psychological pain, and to safeguard the dignity of the patients, as well as to provide support to the family. How long the chaplain stays near the patient may vary; sometimes the chaplain only comes to greet the patients, but most often he will stay beside them, listening to them and sharing some of their everyday life and of their thoughts. Sometimes patients will voice requests for prayers.” CRCM Rhône-Alpes, “Aumônerie des hôpitaux” (Hospital chaplaincies), available at [www.crcm-ra.org/pdf/aumonerie.pdf](http://www.crcm-ra.org/pdf/aumonerie.pdf) (accessed January 2011).

inspiration from the patient charter, it strives to be more specific about the rights and duties of the Muslim patient.<sup>327</sup>

In this process of rationalisation of the way the religious and spiritual life of Muslim patients is organised in the hospital, Marseille seems to have been left behind. The backwardness of Marseille may be explained, to a large extent, by resistance and reluctance on the part of the local health-care authorities, but also by the many conflicts between the city's Muslim actors, for whom symbolic and actual power is at stake in the chaplaincy debate.

#### 8.6.2 The hardships of building up a Muslim chaplaincy in Marseille: between Islamophobic prejudices, administrative hurdles and internecine quarrels

The first Muslim chaplaincy service was set up in a Marseille hospital (La Timone) in the late 1990s by the En Nasr mosque of the La Capelette neighbourhood (10th *arrondissement*).<sup>328</sup> At that time, the Catholic chaplain acted as a mediator, and was eventually successful in convincing the governing board of the AP-HM Marseille that Muslims had a right to enjoy the same religious freedoms as the city's other denominations and communities. In this perspective, the first contractual position for a Muslim chaplain was created in 1999, and a small chamber was prepared as a prayer room in the basement of La Timone Hospital, next to the Catholic chapel and the synagogue. At first, the initiative of a Muslim chaplaincy was welcomed by hospital authorities, who viewed it favourably and displayed a rather open-minded attitude, as they were aware that it filled a previous void: it was about responding to an ever more pressing spiritual demand among patients of Muslim faith in Marseille:

The patients' reactions to my presence were very positive, until problems came up with the administration. By the way, I never spoke of 'sick persons' but always of 'patients'. I always paid great attention to the use of concepts. One

<sup>327</sup> "The Muslim chaplain cooperates with the staff of the health care units he visits. His approach is envisioned as complementary to the medical treatment, and consistent with it. The imperatives of medical care take precedence over religious obligations. The Muslim chaplain must produce religious answers that allow the patient to experience a more productive visit to hospital, such as the recourse to exemptions, or lightening of religious duties. This will allow the Muslim patient to comply with both his religious convictions and the prescriptions of the medical staff. The very first role of the chaplaincy is the attention to the well-being of the person; the chaplaincy is attentive to all that may facilitate healing or alleviate suffering. The chaplain listens to and provides attention and friendship to all sick persons. He must respond, with appropriate discretion, to the spiritual needs of the patients who request this, by supporting them, comforting them through a few words or a religious liturgy, or merely by listening to them. He also makes himself available to the patients' families or to the hospital staff, to explain, to accompany and to offer help." Charter of the Muslim Chaplaincy to the Hospitals, available at <http://aumonerie-musulmane.over-blog.com/article-18547203.html> (accessed January 2011) (hereafter Charter of the Muslim Chaplaincy).

<sup>328</sup> The En Nasr mosque in Marseille has ties with the network of the Paris Great Mosque.

never speaks of ‘sick’ or ‘ill’ persons, except in the case of mental illnesses, and even then! By the way, I actually turned some of my attention to intervening in the psychiatric unit. For the patients, the creation of the Muslim chaplaincy was an extraordinary [development]: to see someone visiting them, reminding them of the prayer times, and so on. Yes, the Muslim chaplaincy was very well received. There were a lot of requests from patients and families. Even among the medical staff, many attended the prayer room.<sup>329</sup>

But the relations between the Muslim chaplain and the hospital’s managers soon deteriorated. Beyond the personal aspects, it was the growing visibility of Muslims in a public hospital that began to cause trouble, as some of the hospital executives deemed that it was a foreign intrusion, similar to activism and proselytising:

Yes, [at first] everything went smoothly. The conflict began because I learned, almost by chance, that a Muslim chaplain had existed before, for 20 years, but he was never seen at the hospital. He had other activities, probably, but he was never present beside the Muslim patients. Precisely what created a bit of a conflict with the hospital administration, was the fact that with me, they went from a total invisibility to a permanent presence [of the Muslim chaplain]. They were not used to it.<sup>330</sup>

It is also true that the Muslim chaplaincy in Marseille was set up in a social-political context where passions were running high, in the middle of debates on Islamic radicalism and Islamic terrorism, extensively reported by local and national media. Hence, the Muslim chaplain was not seen merely as a religious minister, but first and foremost as a religious and political activist:

One day the Catholic chaplain suggested to me that I should go around the various medical units to introduce myself. On that occasion, I came across a staff member [she was the head of a unit] who said to me: ‘Oh, you are the fundamentalist?’ Even the Catholic chaplain felt obliged to retort that I was not a ‘fundamentalist’, but a ‘Muslim cleric’.<sup>331</sup>

Such stories notwithstanding, the reactions among the health-care staff to the Muslim chaplaincy have been generally more diversified and nuanced. The accounts given in interviews suggest four types of attitudes.

First, there are those who are hostile, to whom the very presence of a Muslim chaplain in the hospital forms an obvious risk of proselytising and fundamentalist propaganda. A wholesale refusal to consider the imam as a religious cleric like any other is found among health-care professionals who believe that the fight against Islamic radicalism

<sup>329</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Ben Omar Taif, former Muslim chaplain to AP-HM, May 2009.

<sup>330</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Ben Omar Taif, May 2009.

<sup>331</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Ben Omar Taif, May 2009.

justifies the fact that the spiritual and religious rights of patients may not be totally respected.

Second, there are people who are indifferent, who do not display any particular reaction to the presence of the Muslim chaplain – neither hostility nor empathy. This group makes up the majority of the nursing, medical and managerial staff, whose attitude is one of *laissez-faire*, and do not interfere in the daily functioning of the chaplaincy.

Third, there are those who are altruistic, for whom establishing a Muslim chaplaincy represents a sort of exotic curiosity, and who sometimes express a true desire to cultivate their own minds and learn about the tenets of the Muslim faith; some of them are eager to know about the specific religious rules regarding the treatment of the sick, or the rituals for the deceased. They are health-care professionals steeped in the values of multiculturalism, and who want knowledge and information about the Muslim faith.

Finally, there are the followers and fellow travellers of the Muslim chaplaincy. A minority among the medical staff, they use the chaplaincy as they are themselves believing Muslims. Some nursing auxiliaries, nurses or doctors come to consult the Muslim chaplain and attend the prayers at the Muslim chapel of the hospital. Hospital authorities have sometimes become alarmed over this mobilisation of part of the staff around the Muslim chaplaincy. They have perceived it as the early stirrings of an Islamic collusion that would be detrimental to the good functioning and to the religious neutrality of health-care services:

[There are] those among the hospital staff who are tempted to participate in the activities of the Muslim chaplaincy, because they are Muslims themselves. And then, it becomes problematic. Yes, it's true, there were staff members who had begun to take an active part in the life of the chaplaincy: they came to pray, to ask me for advice, etc. The management of the hospital didn't like it. Yes, some among the staff, including doctors, began to be involved in the life of the Muslim chaplaincy.<sup>332</sup>

Through these examples and testimony, it is apparent that the issue of Muslim worship in the hospital is still arousing fear and questions among the nursing and medical staff, so that problems about *halal* meals have lately intensified.

### 8.6.3 The controversial issue of *Halal* meals in Marseille public hospitals

The question of the respect of patients' dietary rules remains a subject of friction, even though it has become in recent years more and more trivialised in French public debate. On the whole, public hospital services do respect the particular food

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<sup>332</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Ben Omar Taif, May 2009.

requirements of patients (vegetarians, vegans, salt-free diets, etc.), if only to comply with the food restrictions connected with certain medical conditions or treatments. But as regards religious food restrictions strictly speaking (*kosher, halal...*), French law remains hazy, and hospital practices could be best described, in most instances, as arrangements and compromises between patients and health-care administrations. For instance, regarding *halal* food, health-care services usually make do with offering a so-called Muslim dietary option, which is, in fact, meals without pork. It is, a sort of *halal* option by default:

Regarding food, there's a sort of automatism among my colleagues in the hospital staff. When we have a patient with a Muslim name or first name, for them, it matches with the 'Muslim diet'. It's motivated by good intentions, but it leads to putting all those who have an Arabic-sounding name (or so perceived) on the 'Muslim diet'. Besides, their conception of the 'Muslim diet' is a bit odd. For them, the 'Muslim diet' means that the patient can eat everything except pork. I tried to explain to them that *halal* is not only about the prohibition of pork, but it was too complicated for them to understand. So I gave up. But very often, the patients themselves are responsible for this ignorance of the *halal* prescriptions. Often they insist on eating *halal*, but they explain to the staff that it's merely the prohibition of pork. Therefore, you shouldn't be surprised if the staff are a bit confused about the notion of *halal*, since even some Muslim patients do not really know what it entails exactly. That's the reason why I gave up on stepping into the issue personally. So I tell myself that the request for *halal* is an individual business. If they want to have their right to eat *halal* at the hospital enforced, they have to request it; it's not up to me.<sup>333</sup>

This practice in the hospitals of a specific diet mistakenly called Muslim is confirmed by another health-care executive. According to her, most of the hospital staff displays a total ignorance on the issue of *halal*, which for them boils down to a sketchy and caricatured prohibition of pork and alcohol, thus echoing Western clichés about Islam as a religion of privation.<sup>334</sup> When asked whether Muslim patients make specific requests, as for *halal* food, she observed:

Yes of course, we have these kinds of demands on the part of the patients. But at the time, there is no *halal* diet on offer at a public hospital like the North Hospital. We have a diet without pork, but not *halal*. Generally, we substitute fish for meat. By the way, it's becoming a reflex for all the staff, including Westerners: when they see a patient who looks Muslim, they order a diet without pork. It's not ethnic profiling [a *délit de faciès* in French], that's life!<sup>335</sup>

<sup>333</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with a health-care executive, May 2009.

<sup>334</sup> In Arabic, the word *halal* means lawful or permitted. Under Islamic dietary rules, derived from the Quran, red meat and poultry should be slaughtered in the name of Allah thereby ensuring that the meat is *halal*. Certain foods are not permitted namely pork and alcohol.

<sup>335</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Jeannette Belaadi, May 2009.

But beyond the ignorance, or lack of knowledge, about Islamic dietary precepts, there is also a fair amount of resistance to change. The interviews suggest that a few senior executives in the hospital administrations do not want to cede ground on the issue of *halal* meat, which they perceive as a contestation of the principles of *laïcité*: for them, accepting the introduction of *halal* meals in the public hospital would be tantamount to caving in to the pressure and to the demands of Muslim radicals. This is notably illustrated by the experience suffered by the former Muslim chaplain to the AP-HM, when he proposed to the management that the hospital establish a system of providing *halal* meals to self-identifying Muslim patients:

The managers were really embarrassed when I began to discuss the ‘halal issue’. I even wanted to launch the idea of a call for tender, so that private firms could deliver *halal* meals to the Muslim patients. But they really didn’t want to hear anything about it, whereas Jewish patients had access to *kosher* meals. The Israelite Consistory of Marseille had even produced posters where one could read that they were able to deliver 13,000 *kosher* meals per year.<sup>336</sup>

The existence of a system of *kosher* meals on the one hand,<sup>337</sup> and a flat refusal to introduce *halal* meals on the other hand, led Muslims in the community to experience this situation as a denial of rights, and a policy of double standards encouraged by the decision-makers in the local health-care system. But this uneven, unfair treatment is also a telling demonstration of the state of powerlessness of the local Muslim community, unable to organise and to push its religious and spiritual requests forward until they are met:

We need a real recognition of the right to difference at the hospital. A Muslim patient is not your average patient. The precondition is that the request must come from the patient himself. It is not up to any authority, whether institutional or religious, to determine who is a ‘Muslim patient’ and who is not. Once he self-identifies as ‘Muslim’, he must benefit from the right to eat *halal* and not just the ‘porkless diet’ which constitutes a sort of *halal* by default. The second right of the Muslim patient is the possibility of being visited by a qualified chaplain, specifically trained to work in the hospital. Last, real status for the Muslim chaplain to the hospitals must be enacted. We need more chaplains than we have now. It’s a scandal that the other denominations have chaplains in all Marseille hospitals, whereas Muslims have only one or two. We must also encourage volunteer chaplains, who may assist the professional chaplains. But hospital authorities do not want to hear about this.<sup>338</sup>

<sup>336</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Ben Omar Taif, May 2009.

<sup>337</sup> *The Israelite Consistory of Marseille has made a partnership agreement with the Welfare Services of Hospitals in Marseille (AP-HM) to distribute daily meals to Jewish patients who request kosher meals. This agreement also applies to the private hospital sector and military hospitals.*

<sup>338</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Ben Omar Taif, May 2009.

## 8.7 Conclusion

The findings from the research suggest that discriminatory treatment of Muslims by the local health-care system is mainly concerned with the issue of the chaplaincy and the sensitive question of delivery of *halal* meals in public hospitals, two problems directly pertaining to the denominational and religious identity of the patients. In all the other fields, the poor treatment that Muslims experience is connected to wider social trends. From this point of view, experience as a Muslim in the local health-care system is first and foremost linked to a greater probability of belonging to a disadvantaged social class, and therefore of facing the same inequalities as other Marseille residents belonging to the same social circles. Indeed, the city's Muslims are predominantly concentrated in working-class neighbourhoods (North, East and centre), where many families experience precarious living and social conditions. In this respect, it is their position in the city's social hierarchy, rather than their religious identity, that serves as a factor of exclusion, or of marginalisation, in the local health-care system.

However, it is impossible to totally ignore patterns of ethnicisation that contribute directly or indirectly to reinforce feelings of exclusion or marginalisation. On this account, the interviews and questionnaire highlight persistent ethnic and racial prejudices among health-care professionals, which make the situation all the more complex. Since the tragic events of Algeria (1990–1998) and the 9/11 terror attacks, patients of immigrant background and of Maghrebi, African and Comorian origins tend to be perceived through the prism of their Islamic identity, whatever their actual degree of belief or their observance of the Islamic faith. Like other sectors of local society (housing, security, education, media), health care is not immune to this tendency of forced Islamisation, that is, the external imposition of an Islamic identity upon individuals. The Muslim patient is gradually taking the place of the immigrant patient or the “North African” of the 1970s and 1980s. Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that Muslim residents have a strong, visible presence in the urban fabric, there have been very few examples of conflict over the accommodation of religious beliefs, and most health-care professionals interviewed were positive that they had never heard of such episodes taking place in Marseille public hospitals:

No, personally, I never witnessed such a thing. As for me, in the medical units that I have managed for a number of years, I have never seen cases of men not allowing a male doctor to take care of their wife. I did hear a story that happened in the gynaecology unit. A woman wearing a *burqa* refused to take it off when she was about to give birth to her child. But it's the one and only story of this kind that I have heard at the North Hospital.<sup>339</sup>

On balance, the position of Marseille Muslims in the local health-care system is connected with a complex array of sociological variables, where social and territorial

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<sup>339</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Jeannette Belaadi, May 2009.

factors weigh as much as, if not more than, community and identity. Poverty and disenfranchisement serve here as vectors for the levelling down of a health-care situation that is gradually deteriorating for individuals and families hailing from Marseille lower-class social circles.

## 9. EXPERIENCES OF MUSLIM COMMUNITIES: POLICING AND SECURITY

### 9.1 Immigration and Insecurity – A Bygone Era

The historian Emile Témime highlights how the French collective imagination tends to associate Marseille's multiculturalism with insecurity, thus fuelling its reputation as a violent city, where the law of the *Milieu*, the local underworld or Mafia, reigns supreme: "The city is perceived, simultaneously, as a place of migration and a place of insecurity. A port city, open to people of all races, an area of encounter and transit, the Phocian city is also reflected, in the legend shaped by novels and movies, as the city of the *Milieu*, of prostitution and drugs. Both phenomena – danger and migration – would seem naturally related."<sup>340</sup>

This imaginary link between insecurity and immigration has developed in response to successive waves of migration and the demographic concentration of alien communities in working-class neighbourhoods of the city centre. The violence and petty crime that used to be associated with Italians and Corsicans are now frequently linked with the prevalence of Arab-Muslim immigration, which feeds the news and crime and justice columns in the local press:

The Arab, the Maghrebi, have all but replaced, in this distorting, twisted picture of the reality, the Italian of the turn of the century; he takes center stage and partakes, in turn, in the 'saga of violence' fuelled, at a distance of a century, by terror attacks, even though the root causes of those attacks are rather dissimilar and rather heterogeneous.<sup>341</sup>

However, as Témime points out, this representation of the facts belongs for the most part to the realm of myths and legends, sometimes exploited by politicians playing on their voters' fear of the "other", and also picked up by filmmakers or writers of detective stories.

In reality, its position in relation to crime and security is the same as that of other major French and European cities: "in the field of petty crime, there is no difference between Marseille and the average small- or medium-sized city in France."<sup>342</sup>

Nevertheless, the city's history, the centrality of migration and the urban layout (with the strong North–South divide) all contribute to maintaining some features that are specific to Marseille. This has consequences at all levels of security and law enforcement, which do not necessarily result in more crime. However, they do entail

<sup>340</sup> Témime, "Marseille, ville de migrations", p. 37.

<sup>341</sup> Témime, "Marseille, ville de migrations", p. 37.

<sup>342</sup> Michel Péraldi and Michel Samson, *Gouverner Marseille. Enquête sur les mondes politiques marseillais* (Governing Marseille. An investigation into the political world of Marseille), La Découverte, Paris, 2005, p. 62 (hereafter Péraldi and Samson, *Gouverner Marseille*).

specific representations, attitudes and behaviours among law enforcement authorities (security officials, police forces, mediators, etc.) as well as petty criminals. This needs to be addressed, but without falling back on stereotypes depicting Marseille as a dangerous life-threatening place.

Although France experienced a process of territorial decentralisation in 1982–2009, the organisation of the police forces remains highly centralised. Unlike the United States or the United Kingdom, most security and crime prevention operations are conducted by the national police (state police), placed under the authority of the *préfet*, the state's representative in the *département*. There is some adaptation to local conditions and some cooperation between the national police, municipal police and local elected representatives. In addition, law enforcement has local characteristics specific to Marseille, with both innovations and flaws in the security apparatus. The organisation of the police forces on the ground is complex and some local improvisation is often necessary.

There are also issues which affect the way local people react to police action. While it is not uncommon for Marseillais of African or Maghrebi descent to denounce police racism and misuse of authority, a charge also echoed by human rights NGOs,<sup>343</sup> by general admission the overall picture is far from negative. Many interviewees argued that policing in Marseille is more flexible compared with that of other French cities, most notably when compared with the suburbs of Paris, where violent incidents between police forces and youngsters from working-class neighbourhoods are more frequent. In Marseille, relations between the police and the residents of working-class neighbourhoods seem more peaceful.

## 9.2 Organisation of the Police Forces and Local Schemes in the Fight Against Delinquency

The security apparatus is organised in Marseille in broadly the same way as in other major French cities. Most policing operations are carried out by the national police, while municipal police, under the authority of the mayor, are responsible for petty crime, traffic offences, and other minor misdemeanours in connection with maintaining the peace in the city. However, Marseille is often used as a field of experiment by the national police for testing new law enforcement procedures. Marseille is a national security laboratory, in which new methods of building relations between the police and the residents of disenfranchised areas are tried out.

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<sup>343</sup> *Observatoire des violences policières illégitimes of the Bouches-du-Rhône* (Observation of illegitimate police violence in the Bouches-du-Rhône – OVPI), *Rapport 2006/2007* (Report 2006/2007), Marseille, April 2008.

### 9.2.1 A national police formatted for Marseille

In conformity with the *Jacobin* (highly centralised) organisation of French police, the *préfet* is the key person for security and crime prevention. He is assisted in this task by the *préfet de police*, who is more specifically in charge of monitoring and following up security affairs at city and *département* levels. The *préfet* has overall responsibility for the preservation of republican law and order. During a crisis he is empowered to take measures to safeguard democratic institutions and maintain the vital functions of the state. Article 34 of the 2 March 1982 law specifies that “only the *préfet* is competent to take any measures pertaining to good order, public safety and salubrity, when the territory on which they are applicable exceeds the territory of a municipality”.<sup>344</sup>

In the past few years, the role of the *préfet* has focused increasingly on preventing urban violence in deprived areas and addressing a range of new security threats, from urban riots to human trafficking to terrorism:

The *préfet* is confronted by evolving needs in terms of safeguarding law and order. Predictable and massive riots require the mobilisation of established units, and so do the events likely to arise in sensitive areas of major towns in the Bouches-du-Rhône. At the same time, in recent years, as regards social expression as well as trouble in sensitive areas, new modes of actions have emerged, which are more spontaneous, more frequent, and tend to develop on a lesser scale. Thus, assessing the seriousness of the threat is made more difficult. In the municipalities where the state police is established, ‘the task of quelling infringements on the tranquillity of the public’ as well as safeguarding public order ‘on the occasions when a large number of men are gathered’ falls to the *préfet*. In the case of a gathering falling under the provisions of article 431-3 of the penal code, the *préfet* or one of his representatives must be on the spot so that he may decide, if and when it is necessary, to resort to the use of force after the standard warning has been given (twice). The warning is given by the *préfet* himself or his representatives. The *préfet* may also intervene by decree (for explicit purposes) ‘if law enforcement is threatened in one or several neighbouring municipalities’. He may thus by decree substitute himself for the mayor.<sup>345</sup>

These new priorities reflect a view of deprived neighbourhoods as crime-inducing areas, which must therefore be kept under close watch.

The *préfet* commands a force of some 4,000 police officers in the Bouches-du-Rhône, a majority of them in Marseille. The city has 16 national police stations (one for each *arrondissement*), three *Compagnies républicaines de sécurité* (republican security

<sup>344</sup> *Loi no. 82-213 du 2 mars 1982 relative aux droits et libertés des communes, des départements et des régions* (Law no. 82-213 of 2 March 1982 relating to rights and freedoms of communes, departments and regions), available at <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006068736&dateTexte=20090828> (accessed January 2011).

<sup>345</sup> Website of the *Préfecture* of the Bouches-du-Rhône, website: <http://www.paca.pref.gouv.fr>.

companies – CRS)<sup>346</sup> anti-riot units, one local *Brigade anti-criminalité* (anti-crime brigade – BAC) which is specifically tasked with tackling urban crime,<sup>347</sup> one *Compagnie de sécurisation* (security company – CS), comprising around 100 men and women,<sup>348</sup> who intervene in the sensitive areas, as well as two *unités territoriales de quartiers* (neighbourhood units – UTEQ) of 20 officers each, which, as their name suggests, are police units attached to particular neighbourhoods. Since 2008 Marseille has been the centre of an experiment to test the efficiency of UTEQ.

Two of Marseille's neighbourhoods were selected by the Ministry of Interior for UTEQ testing: La Cayolle (9th *arrondissement*) and Félix-Pyat/St-Mauront (3rd *arrondissement*). These are also neighbourhoods which are the focus of this report. The UTEQ have an unstated objective of restoring "neighbourhood-based policing" (*police de proximité*), which Nicolas Sarkozy hoped to abolish as Interior Minister, blaming them for a lack of enforcement efficiency. The work of the two UTEQ mirrors that of the earlier *police de proximité*, as the neighbourhood's police superintendent stated: "The goal, is to work on a day-to-day basis, and to make sure that the relationship between the population and the police is the best possible. It's a *police de proximité*."<sup>349</sup> The Minister of the Interior has confirmed this goal, but emphasises the enforcement dimension of the UTEQ, calling for a better collaboration between police officers and neighbourhood residents to drive out delinquents:

I decided to go and meet people in the neighbourhoods where there are troubles. The UTEQ are among the things that I want to set up, but there's more than this. I also want to secure the support of the population, in order to move the offenders aside, to isolate them. Everyone must understand that the police are here to protect.<sup>350</sup>

<sup>346</sup> Compagnies républicaines de sécurité.

<sup>347</sup> "Locally-based BAC operate in an urban context. Their work cycle and working hours are adapted to crime patterns, which are analysed daily through computer-aided cartography. The BAC gives priority to catching offenders in the act": available at [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brigade\\_anticriminalité](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brigade_anticriminalité) (accessed January 2011).

<sup>348</sup> "The *Compagnies de sécurisation*, commonly referred to as *Compagnies de Sécu*, are urban police units under the supervision of the central direction of public security at the Ministry of the Interior. Created in 2003, they were revived in 2008 in order to "reinforce social cohesion in the neighbourhoods (Nicolas Sarkozy, 30 September 2008)", available at [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compagnie\\_de\\_sécurisation](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compagnie_de_sécurisation) (accessed January 2011).

<sup>349</sup> Isabelle Mandraud, "Marseille, police des cités" (Marseille: policing the estates), *Le Monde*, 25 June 2009.

<sup>350</sup> Romain Luongo, "MAM expérimente sa police de quartier à Félix-Pyat. Le ministre de l'Intérieur a lancé son plan anti-délinquance dans la cité de St-Mauront" (MAM tests its district police at Félix-Pyat. The minister of the interior launched his anti-delinquency plan at the St Mauront estate), *La Provence*, 9 June 2008; see also Sophie Manelli, "Marseille: la police de proximité sera bientôt de retour" (Marseille: neighbourhood police to come back soon), *La Provence*, 4 June 2008.

This policy trend of trying to make the disenfranchised districts with a strong concentration of immigrants safer has also been echoed in the last 10 years by the setting up of the specific positions of police auxiliaries and security mediators, who are supposed to assist the national police in its missions of prevention and repression, for example, the *adjoints de sécurité* (security adjuncts – AS) and the *agents locaux de médiation* (local mediators – ALMS); they are not salaried state employees of the national police, but are hired on a contract basis to assist law enforcement forces and public authorities in managing “troubled” residents:

The security assistants reinforce the police teams in charge of this mission. Potentially, their knowledge of foreign languages and more generally of diverse social circles contribute to greater efficiency in the delivery of public service. They take part in the development of a real policy of providing help and assistance to victims, plaintiffs and vulnerable individuals.<sup>351</sup>

While it is not explicitly acknowledged, there is evidence to suggest a focus on recruiting officers of Maghrebi and African background as part of a strategy to improve policing and order in areas with migrant communities. There are, however, concerns that this risks giving legitimacy to new forms of tribal isolationism and sectarianism represented by sending in Arab security officers to deal with Arab-Muslim residents. Such officers are not often given posts of responsibility, and are often confined to subordinate functions. The ethnicisation of security functions risks reinforcing ethnic hierarchies in the police force, with few Arab and black officers in senior positions.<sup>352</sup>

In the context of Muslims, it is important also to note the role of the national police in relation to intelligence gathering. Since 2008, there has been a comprehensive overhaul of French intelligence services. The internal intelligence service, the *Renseignements généraux* (General Information – RG), merged with the *Direction de la surveillance du territoire* (DST) to form the *Direction centrale du renseignement intérieur* (Central Agency for Internal Intelligence – DCRI), which has branches in each region and *département* of France.<sup>353</sup> Marseille, as the administrative centre of both a region and a *département*, has a DCRI office. The reforms aimed to improve the efficiency of internal intelligence functions by uniting them in a single body, similar to the American FBI.<sup>354</sup> Among the new priority missions of the DCRI is the fight against terrorism and the monitoring of radical Islamic movements and Muslim organisations in general. One journalist has expressed concerns about the concentration of power in these new arrangements:

<sup>351</sup> Website of the *Préfecture* of the Bouches-du-Rhône, website: <http://www.paca.pref.gouv.fr>.

<sup>352</sup> Eric Marlière, *La France nous a lâchés! Le sentiment d'injustice chez les jeunes de cités* (France has dropped us! The feelings of injustice among young people on the estates), paragraph “La police”, Fayard, Paris, 2008, pp. 34–44.

<sup>353</sup> Patricia Tourancheau, “La réunion RG-DST: un vieux rêve de Sarkozy” (The RG-DST merger: Sarkozy’s old dream), *Libération*, 8 October 2007.

<sup>354</sup> Press release from the Ministry of the Interior, 2 July 2008.

The internal intelligence service (i.e., the reinforcement of the DST of old) will be able, when it feels necessary, to monitor, infiltrate, question individual Muslims, or organisations, or mosques, the practices of which annoy the French services. If this reading were true, it would mark a turning point in the practices of French security services. Which maybe it is not much of a surprise, at a time when it only takes a slip of paper to blur the boundaries between national defence and internal security.<sup>355</sup>

In reality the monitoring and infiltration of mosques, Muslim organisations and, more generally, of circles of believers, are far from novel in Marseille. Since the civil war in Algeria (1990–1998) and the 9/11 events, the Marseillais of Muslim background who are involved in civil society organisations have been subjected to special monitoring, or even manipulated and blackmailed so that they may be coerced into collaborating with intelligence services. Leaders with a reputation of being conservative or fundamentalist have been summoned by the RG on a regular basis,<sup>356</sup> and asked to provide the most recent information on the local Muslim scene and activities taking place in the communities. Those who refused to cooperate with the “services have been subjected to reprisals: pressure at the workplace, threats of deportation or cancellation of residency permits”.<sup>357</sup> One Muslim activist described the situation as this:

Marseille’s residents of Muslim background are not a threat, and it is precisely because they are not dangerous that they may be subjected to all kinds of abuse, because there is all this fever of the fight against terrorism in the media. I observed some behaviour among the policemen, they earn cheap and easy media exposure by arresting Muslims who have nothing to do with any of this. They are released a few days later, but in the meantime it causes a stir in the press. I noticed this phenomenon at the time when I held responsibilities in the French Council of Muslim Worship, I witnessed how the RG worked: they said to journalists, Mr. so-and-so is a fundamentalist, and when the article was out, when we made use of our right of reply and went to the courts, we discovered that in fact the journalists could only say: ‘We didn’t know you, the police gave us a tip about you.’ I think the situation [of the Muslim community] is extremely weak and precarious, and this allows for a large number of abuses.<sup>358</sup>

Officers of the RG were often of Maghrebi descent, and their ethnicity was seen as helping to develop contacts with Muslim circles and to infiltrate Marseille’s mosques.

<sup>355</sup> Alain Gresh, *Monde Diplomatique* blog, 20 June 2008, available at <http://blog.mondediplo.net/2008-06-20-Les-musulmans-francais-sous-surveillance> (accessed January 2011) (hereafter Gresh, *Monde Diplomatique* blog).

<sup>356</sup> Franck Frégosi (ed.), *L’exercice du culte musulman en France. Lieux de prière et d’inhumation* (Muslim worship in France. Places of worship and burial), Etudes et Recherches du FASILD, La Documentation française, Paris, 2006.

<sup>357</sup> Gresh, *Monde Diplomatique* blog.

<sup>358</sup> Interview with Youcef Mammeri, political activist, leader of a Muslim organisation, April 2009.

In fact, Marseille has a long-standing tradition of cooperation between French intelligence agencies and their counterparts in the countries of origin (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia). For example, a report on an imam and leader of a Muslim organisation may be made by an officer working for France and his country of origin at the same time.<sup>359</sup> These security links between French police and police forces in the countries of origin were particularly developed with Algeria,<sup>360</sup> to the point that Algiers has long viewed Marseille as a fully-fledged Algerian *wilaya* (administrative region).

This privileged relationship between the city of Marseille and the FLN state system in Algeria had one major effect: it gave the Algerian authorities a quasi-complete right of interference over ‘their’ community residing in the Phocian city and its suburbs, through the Consulate and, above all, the Friendship Association of Algerians in Europe, which provided both educational services and security monitoring – not to say actual police control. According to some sources, the SM<sup>361</sup> and the DRS<sup>362</sup> always had a very public and obvious presence in Marseille, closely monitoring the commercial, civic and political activities of Algerian citizens, as well as French citizens of Algerian descent, in Marseille, since the big city of the South was considered a strategic place for the crucial interests of the Algerian state. It is no longer a secret for anyone: security officials sent by Algiers operate freely, under the watch of the French police, and they exert full-time monitoring of the central neighbourhoods of Noailles, Belsunce and Porte d’Aix, where residents of Maghrebi descent gather.<sup>363</sup>

The same could be said of the Tunisian secret services, and, to a lesser extent, of Moroccan officers, who closely monitor their respective communities. Since the end of the 1980s and with the new fear of fundamentalist contagion, the monitoring of mosques and of practising Muslims has become a priority for these security services.

The creation of the DCRI and of its Marseille branch is a sign that these tactics of monitoring and infiltration of Muslim organisations and leaders will only continue, and could even increase in coming years.

### 9.2.2 Municipal Police

While the national police, with 2,000–3,000 officers, may appear omnipotent in the territory of Marseille, one must not forget that in France the mayor also holds police powers inside the borders of the municipality:

<sup>359</sup> Vincent Geisser, “L’islam consulaire” (A consular Islam), *oumma.com*, June and July 2004, available at <http://oumma.com/L-islam-consulaire-1er-partie> and <http://oumma.com/L-islam-consulaire-2eme-partie-et> (Accessed 11 June 2011).

<sup>360</sup> “De Defferre à Gaudin: une laïcité très “marseillaise””, (From Defferre to Gaudin: a very Marseillais secularism), in Geisser and Zemouri, *Marianne et Allah*.

<sup>361</sup> *Sécurité Militaire* (Military security).

<sup>362</sup> *Département recherche et sécurité* (Research and Security Department).

<sup>363</sup> Geisser and Zemouri, *Marianne et Allah*.

The mayor contributes, through his power of police, to the operations and missions of public security. He is responsible, under the administrative control of the state's representative in the *département*, for the municipal police, the rural police, and watches over related actions for the state.<sup>364</sup>

It is therefore important to examine the municipal contribution to law enforcement and crime prevention operations.

The Marseille municipal police in 2009 consisted of 259 officers for a city of more than 840,000 inhabitants, and had an annual budget of € million, covering wages, equipment, vehicle maintenance and training. In brief, the city relies on the national police and on the security apparatus supervised by the *préfet de police*. The municipal police force has been reduced to the minimum in terms of staffing, and their focus is on parking, minor driving offences, public hygiene and, most of all, being present at public functions (political events and patriotic commemorations).<sup>365</sup> The low-profile security policy of the current municipality is sometimes virulently criticised by the left (see the petition circulated by Patrick Menucci, the socialist mayor of the city's 1st district, to request more municipal police officers<sup>366</sup>) or by conservative and far-right circles:

Today, there are 250 fewer police officers in Marseille than in 1981. It is not enough to promote a policy of active video-surveillance, if there are no officers to watch the screens. To prevent insecurity, equipment and adequate staffing go hand in hand. With 250 municipal police officers for 840,000 inhabitants, Marseille pales before Lyon, which has 364 policemen for 450,000 inhabitants. Furthermore, what about the necessary coordination between the municipal police staff and the forces of the national police?<sup>367</sup>

The city tried to make up for the small size of the municipal police by acquiring a video-surveillance system in 2003–2004. The pilot site targeted to test the system was the Noailles market, located in the city centre (1st *arrondissement*), a few metres away from the Canebière. The vast majority of shoppers and shop-keepers alike are

<sup>364</sup> *Loi no. 2007–2007, les pouvoirs de police du maire* (The powers of the municipal police), *Journal officiel de la République française*, 7 March 2007, available at <http://www.police.online.fr/maire.htm> (accessed January 2011).

<sup>365</sup> Séverine Pardini, “Les polices proximité au cœur de des municipales” (The police close to the heart of the local elections), *La Provence*, 28 February 2008.

<sup>366</sup> “Une pétition pour un poste de police municipale sur La Canebière” (A petition for a municipal police station on La Canebière), *La Provence*, 15 January 2009, available at <http://www.laprovence.com/actu/une-petition-pour-un-poste-de-police-municipale-sur-la-canebiere> (accessed January 2011).

<sup>367</sup> “Sécurité à Marseille: le sous-effectif des agents de police rend les transports en commun peu sûrs” (Security in Marseille: the understaffing of police officers is making public transport unsafe), *Blog Marseille, un autre regard*, 26 January 2009, available at <http://marseilleunautre regard.wordpress.com> (accessed January 2011).

Maghrebi immigrants, some newly arrived from the countries of origin.<sup>368</sup> Setting up the first video cameras in a neighbourhood seen as an ethnic enclave was sometimes interpreted as revealing the municipality's wish to draw a causal link between insecurity in Marseille and the presence of Arab-Muslim immigrants. Furthermore, the outcomes were rather inconclusive: the operation ended up monitoring the neighbourhood's Maghrebi shop-keepers more than delinquents. Furthermore, about 30 cameras were turned on only a few hours a day,<sup>369</sup> and were not connected to the national police station, which significantly restricted the ability to intervene and catch offenders. In spite of these mixed outcomes, the municipality wishes to carry on with the experiment and expand it to more neighbourhoods in the centre.<sup>370</sup> The aim is to have 24-hour CCTV cameras, connected to a new command centre in the 15th *arrondissement* which can be used by both municipal and national police forces. Video-surveillance is becoming one of the leading lines of action of the municipal security policy, on the model of London, according to Caroline Pozmentier, Marseille's deputy mayor in charge of security:

Video-surveillance is a crucial tool of information. Ambitious plans are needed in Marseille. Until now, the project was experimental, but for all its faults we were still able to pass on to the police, in 2008, 1,200 recorded incidents. It can only grow more efficient, since the new command centre to be soon established in avenue Roger Salengro will work on a 24/7 basis, which was not the case until now.<sup>371</sup>

Beyond its financial cost, the video-surveillance plans have not won the unanimous support of the public. There are concerns about the infringement of civil liberties and the potential stigmatisation of certain parts of the population. Some local intellectuals and political and media activists have criticised the Big Brother-like trend of emphasizing security:

<sup>368</sup> Laetitia Sariroglou, "220 caméras à Marseille: pour quoi faire?" (220 cameras in Marseille: what for?), *La Provence*, 27 March 2009, available at <http://www.laprovence.com/article/region/220-cameras-a-marseille-pour-quoi-faire> (accessed January 2011) (hereafter Sariroglou, "220 caméras à Marseille: pour quoi faire?"); Sophie Manelli, "Marseille: 300 caméras braquées sur la ville" (Marseille: 300 cameras fixed on the city), *La Provence*, 17 June 2008, available at <http://www.laprovence.com/article/region/marseille-300-cameras-braquees-sur-la-ville> (accessed January 2011).

<sup>369</sup> Sariroglou, "220 caméras à Marseille: pourquoi faire?"

<sup>370</sup> Rue Saint-Ferréol, Cours Estienne d'Orve, La Joliette, Cours Julien, rue de la République, St-Charles train station and Vieux Port: "Extension de la vidéosurveillance à Marseille" (The expansion of video surveillance in Marseille), *Marseilletv.fr*, Web TV officielle de la ville de Marseille, March 2009, available at [http://www.marseilletv.fr/sitevideo/jsp/site/Portal.jsp?document\\_id=190&page\\_id=11&autostart=1](http://www.marseilletv.fr/sitevideo/jsp/site/Portal.jsp?document_id=190&page_id=11&autostart=1) (accessed January 2011).

<sup>371</sup> Caroline Pozmentier, deputy mayor in charge of security, responding to Sariroglou, "220 caméras à Marseille: pourquoi faire?", *La Provence*, 27 March 2009.

[The point is] to unite people around fear. Whether effective or not, the cameras are comforting for many people... [they are] the benevolent gaze of the authorities. Political lobbies, economic lobbies, they have understood this full well. The former pander to voters, the latter open huge new markets for themselves. Considering how much the Noailles cameras have cost, we can tentatively put at €1.04 million the investment for the 29 new cameras that the municipality is announcing, and €197,000 every year for maintenance. Those cameras are not ineffective for everyone.<sup>372</sup>

Nevertheless, in spite of the criticism, one has to admit that Marseille is a far cry from espousing the tendencies towards hyper-security that one may observe in other major European cities. The city's security policies are based for the most part on the *Contrat local de sécurité* (Local Contract for Security – CLS), signed in March 1999, and on the *Conseil communal de prévention de la délinquance* (City Council for the Prevention of Crime – CCPD), relying on partnerships to bring on board various national, regional and local actors, some from the security domain and some connected to education and prevention:

Noting that there seemed to be a rather strong discrepancy between the citizens' legitimate expectations and public action, and assuming that police and *gendarmerie* services alone could not respond in a more effective and visible manner, public authorities took it upon themselves to set up a permanent, active partnership with all those who may, at the local level, contribute to security, notably mayors and actors in social life. The CLS is the basic tool of this policy of partnership. It is jointly taken care of by the *préfet*, the attorney-general [*procureur de la République*] and the mayor, and chief education officers [*recteurs d'académie*] or their delegates are also associated. It draws upon joint work between the partners to balance security measures with policies of prevention.<sup>373</sup>

Even more unusual is the *Contrat local de sécurité et de prévention de la délinquance* (Local Contract for Security and Prevention – CLSPD) focused on public transportation, signed in 2009. Marseille is one of the few cities to have put in place such an agreement. The contract was developed by local and national authorities in response to the case of a young Marseille girl of Senegalese origin who was murdered on a city bus on 28 October 2006.<sup>374</sup> The contract focuses on crime in public transport, including petty crimes as well as fare dodging. Operations for transport safety under the contract are targeted at working-class neighbourhoods, which are seen as the main localities for the perpetration of misbehaviour and offences on public transport.

<sup>372</sup> Philippe Pujol, "Des caméras en chocolat pour napper l'électorat" (Cameras in chocolate to fool voters), *La Marseillaise*, 2 March 2007.

<sup>373</sup> Website of the *Préfecture* of the Bouches-du-Rhône., website:<http://www.paca.pref.gouv.fr>.

<sup>374</sup> "Jeune femme brûlée dans un bus à Marseille: les deux premiers ados jugés s'excusent" (Young woman burned on a bus in Marseille: the first two sentenced teenagers apologise), AFP, 25 September 2007.

### 9.2.3 Regulation of the crime situation: Marseille, a city like any other

Marseille no longer stands out among other French cities in terms of crime. But implicit in this is a recognition that it used to be distinct from other French cities. In fact, Marseille went through two particularly difficult decades in the working-class neighbourhoods, characterised by widespread drug trafficking, and many deaths either due to overdoses or HIV and AIDS contracted by drug users who shared needles. In the working-class neighbourhoods North and East of the city, many families have been affected, directly or indirectly, by drugs and HIV and AIDS. Interviews with stakeholders and local residents testify to the terrible marks that this period left in residents' minds:

During the 1980s, Marseille was invaded by all kinds of hard drugs. It was endemic. A whole generation was decimated. I lived with them. And it is true that if you conduct a poll in the Northern neighbourhoods, you will quickly discover that very few families were left untouched by this problem. Every family was affected: a brother, a cousin, a friend ... Hard drugs on the one hand, the AIDS on the other: both took a terrible toll. What has changed today, it's the experience of 'older brothers' and 'older sisters' who went through all this and bailed themselves out: they passed on their experience, so that the younger generation will not fall, and will escape this scourge. Today their motto is: 'Never again!' It's true that the situation is not the same. Today the youth tend to use on hashish, the effects of which are not so catastrophic. Honestly, it is nothing compared to hard drugs!<sup>375</sup>

Drug trafficking did not only affect the city's peripheral neighbourhoods, but also, to a large extent, the working-class neighbourhoods in the city centre, where older trafficking rings inherited from the Mafia years (mostly Corsican and Italian) recombined themselves with newer networks of drug dealers stemming from the poorer sections of the population, notably Maghrebi immigrants. Nassurdine Haïdari, who grew up to become a Socialist deputy mayor in the 1st and 7th *arrondissements*, recalls the terrible years he went through as a child and a teenager when his family, of Comorian descent, was settled in the heart of the historical neighbourhood known as the *Panier*:

From 1980 to 1990, the *Panier* was still a rough neighbourhood. The police did not come. And when they came, I often saw cops being beaten up. The Corsican ring was responsible for the trafficking in hard drugs: cocaine, everything. The context was quite tough. At the time it was not about 'shit' [a derivative from cannabis]. It was really about hard drugs. It was the reign of narco-trafficking. I remember, we lived in a building where five families shared the same bathroom.

<sup>375</sup> Interview with Sélim Grabsi, member of the *Quartiers Nord/Quartiers Forts* association, May 2009.

Drug addicts came to shoot up in our toilet. I really wonder how we managed to avoid getting sick.<sup>376</sup>

In the 1980s and 1990s, Marseille was considered a disaster-stricken city, where large numbers of youngsters from the working-class neighbourhoods gave in to the scourge of drugs, died from overdoses or ended up in prison or psychiatric wards, sometimes both, their prison time leading up to their committal to psychiatric care, or the other way round. At the beginning of the 2000s, the situation appeared to have considerably changed for the better, not because drug trafficking had totally disappeared from Marseille, but because it had taken on softer, less destructive ways, costing less in human lives:

Older brothers and sisters did intervene. Those who went through all these dramatic situations and bailed themselves out, they could bear witness, they brought in their disillusionment, their misfortunes. The situation of the years 1980 to 1990 left so many marks on the families, that the motto ‘Never again’ became effective. Today, there is less violence. Before, people would break into your car just for a car radio. Now it is over!<sup>377</sup>

These accounts bear witness to some normalisation of the crime situation in Marseille, and they are partly confirmed by official data released by the national police and the *préfecture* of the Bouches-du-Rhône.<sup>378</sup> At the *département* level, and this is also confirmed in Marseille proper, the general crime rate has been constantly decreasing in the last few years (see Table 50).

**Table 50. General crime: reported incidents**

January 2002	January 2003	January 2004	January 2005	January 2006	January 2007	January 2008	January 2009
15,697	14,937	14,628	13,511	14,816	15,522	15,429	14,176

**Source:** Préfecture des Bouches-du-Rhône, “Evolution de la délinquance et activité des services”, (Evolution of crime and activities of services), press briefing, Marseille, 26 February 2009

Hence the rather optimistic comments from law-enforcement officials:

The total sum of reported incidents for the month of January has not been so low in four years. At the *département* level, for this year’s start, only crimes and offences against individuals register a growth of +7.35. Their relative contribution to the general crime level is also increasing (+ 1.42): those offences

<sup>376</sup> Interview with Nassurdine Haïdari, political activist, deputy mayor of the 1st district of Marseille, May 2009.

<sup>377</sup> Interview with Sélim Grabsi, May 2009.

<sup>378</sup> *Préfecture* of the Bouches-du-Rhône, “Evolution de la délinquance et activité des services” (Evolution of crime and activities of services), press briefing, Marseille, 26 February 2009.

make up 9.89 of reported incidents. This slight increase in the rate of physical violence against individuals results, for the most part, from acts of physical violence without villainous intent (+14.40) and from sex-related violence (+14.81).<sup>379</sup>

A similar downward trend is noticeable for neighbourhood petty crime, that is, for the most part robberies, burglaries in houses and flats, and acts of vandalism (see Table 51).

**Table 51. Neighbourhood petty crime: reported incidents**

January 2002	January 2003	January 2004	January 2005	January 2006	January 2007	January 2008	January 2009
10,367	9,464	8,677	7,498	8,288	8,046	8,481	7,831

Source: Préfecture des Bouches-du-Rhône, “Evolution de la délinquance et activité des services”, (Evolution of crime and activities of services), press briefing, Marseille, 26 February 2009

**Table 52. Markers of neighbourhood-based policing, January 2008–January 2009**

Type of offence	% rise or fall
Theft inside parked cars	-19.76
Vandalism	-19.72
Pickpocketing	-11.15
Car theft	-6.20
Theft of two-wheeled vehicles	-3.64
Armed robberies	+73.91
Burglaries	+13.32
Robberies with physical violence	+2.06

Source: Préfecture des Bouches-du-Rhône, “Evolution de la délinquance et activité des services”, (Evolution of crime and activities of services), press briefing, Marseille, 26 February 2009.

In Marseille proper, it appears that the rates for petty crime more or less reflect the trends observed at the *département* level, with a striking improvement in the working-class neighbourhoods north of the city centre: -7.18 per cent for general crime and -0.55 per cent for neighbourhood petty crime. Even the police authorities are keen to point out that the North districts, despite their reputation of being unsafe areas, are now making a positive contribution to the general improvement of the crime situation citywide (See Table 51).

<sup>379</sup> *Préfecture* of the Bouches-du-Rhône, “Evolution de la délinquance et activité des services”, (Evolution of crime and activities of services), press briefing, Marseille, 26 February 2009.

Despite these positive developments, many challenges remain. Alongside armed robbery there is particular concern about the growth in youth delinquency. There was a 10 per cent increase in youth delinquency in 2008–2009 and one in three offenders caught by the police were minors, “hence the wish demonstrated by the *préfet de police* Jean-Luc Marx to set up a diagnosis in order to try to curb the trend. Offending minors are younger and younger. Sometimes nine or ten years old. This used to be unheard of in Marseille”.<sup>380</sup>

According to the accounts of some police officers, this increase in youth delinquency could be in part fuelled by young foreigners who have been left without support or supervision; most arrived in Marseille as unaccompanied minors from the Maghreb or Eastern Europe:

They have no ties, no parents, and no regular place to live, often they are illegal migrants without residence permits and they know that anyway, they can't be expelled. Around Noailles, they live with a feeling of absolute impunity. Police presence makes no difference to them at all. In the worst case, they lose a bit of time because of us. Pickpockets from Romania, errant youngsters stealing with violence, car-jacking, they would mug anyone.<sup>381</sup>

It is of course advisable to exert some caution in interpreting these accounts, as police officers sometimes tend to over emphasize or exaggerate the ethnic dimension of urban crime; it is important to note that among the offending minors in Marseille are also youngsters of French nationality and other origin.

While the extent of this problem can be questioned, there is little doubt that tackling juvenile crime has become a priority for the police forces and municipal authorities. Here too Marseille is the location for an experiment in new approaches. One example is an initiative aimed at preventing violence at school. There are transition classes for students with difficulties, as well as educational mediators facilitating relations between families and schools, and a range of measures to address truancy. Actions aimed at preventing violence in the school environment are placed under the direct supervision of the *préfet*, who has made it one of his major endeavours:

Youth in danger of dropping out will be dealt with individually, also within their families, in association with social workers in the neighbourhoods. Some of

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<sup>380</sup> Denis Trossero, “Le visage inquiétant de la délinquance des mineurs” (The worrying face of juvenile delinquency), *La Provence*, 26 January 2008, available at <http://www.laprovence.com/article/region/le-visage-inquietant-de-la-delinquance-des-mineurs> (accessed January 2011) (hereafter Trossero, “Le visage inquiétant”).

<sup>381</sup> From the anonymous testimony of a BAC police officer, cited in Trossero, “Le visage inquiétant”.

those students will join the 150 youths already assigned to transition classes. Others will be assigned to streams leading to working lives.<sup>382</sup>

Three schools in Marseille have been targeted by this initiative.<sup>383</sup>

Marseille was also one of the first cities selected by the state to host an *Etablissement pénitentiaire pour mineurs* (Prison Centre for Juvenile Offenders – EPM), with a capacity for 60 detainees. Offenders are sent there by a judge. They are closely supervised with a view to facilitating normal reintegration into society. The staff of the Marseille EPM consists of 36 educators from the *Protection judiciaire de la jeunesse* (Judicial Protection of Youth – PJJ), 10 full-time teachers and 57 prison guards. But even though rehabilitation is given priority over coercion, “the EPM is still a prison. The disciplinary unit, a bare cell, without shower or window, and with only a minuscule courtyard for recreation, is used to isolate the teens who have committed a serious offence, like attacking a staff member, for which the term is seven days in a disciplinary unit, which was fifteen days just a few months ago.”<sup>384</sup>

This policy of repression towards minors arouses much criticism. At the local level, it has been criticised strongly by Robert Bret, a senator for Marseille. He denounces the drift towards a prison-centred approach which, in his opinion, does not help juvenile offenders escape the spiral of crime, but contributes to further entrenching them in it, and to making them into lifelong delinquents:

How could you possibly believe that by putting young offenders behind bars, by restraining them, you will be able to ‘mend’ or ‘put right’ in three months those broken childhoods, often wrecked by so many problems, emotional, psychological, social, not to mention severe educational shortcomings, and unstructured, disenfranchised families. Unlike this policy, if you actually want to address the upsurge of crime among minors, even though I know that a policy of social progress and education is not by itself sufficient to solve security issues, it is still essential, to begin with, to connect the dots, to see the link with the deterioration of the social fabric in the last 15 years. How can you pass over this in silence: the worsening of unemployment, of disenfranchisement, of poverty, but also the deterioration of living conditions and housing? How can you not consider those neighbourhoods, those housing estates, where residents feel

<sup>382</sup> The *préfet* of the Bouches-du-Rhône, quoted by Sophie Manelli, “Inquiétant regain de la violence dans la région” (Worrying rise in violence in the region), *La Provence*, 26 January 2009, available at <http://www.laprovence.com/article/region/inquietant-regain-de-violence-dans-la-region> (accessed January 2011).

<sup>383</sup> The *collèges* Jean Moulin, Arenc-Bachas and Arthur Rimbaud.

<sup>384</sup> Fred Dumas, “Une prison nouvelle génération à Marseille” (A new prison generation in Marseille), *Var Matin*, 19 April 2007.

abandoned? This bears consequences for the behaviour of those children, and for the urban violence that we all witness today.<sup>385</sup>

Despite the increase in the number of armed robberies of small businesses and the surge in juvenile delinquency, in the last four or five years Marseille's security situation has certainly improved. In some respects, the Phocian city may even seem quiet, and much less violent than some suburbs of Paris and Lyon. However, it is debatable whether this lessening of delinquency also results in improvements in relations between the police and the citizens, in general, and residents of Maghrebi and African background in particular. On this point, the outcomes are contrasting and relations between the police and citizens in Marseille are still in flux.

### 9.3 Marseille Muslims and the Police: an Ambivalent Relationship

It may seem risky to analyse the relations between the Marseille police and some constituents of the city's population in ethnic terms. To speak of Muslims risks lending legitimacy to prevalent ethnic representations. However, it is difficult to deny that these ethnic interactions do take place in Marseille, and that they have a role in shaping representations, attitudes and behaviours of individuals and social groups. In this sense, security matters are not immune from the trend of ethnicisation that can be found in other parts of French society. In fact, the construction of relations between the police and citizens in ethnic terms is not a recent phenomenon but has roots in the city's history.

#### 9.3.1 Marseille Muslims and security: sharing the fears and expectations of the rest of Marseille

Responses to the Foundations' questionnaire found that Muslim and non-Muslim respondents held similar views on policing and security. A majority said that they were happy to live in their neighbourhood, and they trusted their fellow residents. In this sense, nothing dramatic can be found from the way they relate to the life of the neighbourhood.

Fewer Muslims than non-Muslims participate in action or take part in meetings aiming to improve living conditions in their daily environment (7 per cent of Muslims partake in meetings, as opposed to 29 per cent of non-Muslims).<sup>386</sup> On this account, Muslim respondents could rather be characterised by their passive positioning, standing back

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<sup>385</sup> Robert Bret, "Non à l'enfermement des jeunes délinquants" (No to the detention of juvenile delinquents), *La Marseillaise*, 3 July 2005.

<sup>386</sup> Answer to Question F6: "During the last 12 months, have you taken part in a consultation or a meeting regarding city services or neighbourhood issues?" (Au cours des 12 derniers mois, avez-vous pris part à une consultation ou une réunion à propos des services municipaux ou des problèmes dans votre quartier?)

from the various consultative bodies operating in neighbourhood life and housing renovation.

In Marseille, *Comités d'intérêts de quartier* (Committees for Neighbourhood Interests – CIQ) have existed for a very long time. These committees are the representatives of local civil society, and are mediators in its relations with the authorities and the municipality. CIQ are supposed to run like neighbourhood assemblies, where residents can raise issues of concern relating to daily life in the neighbourhood, such as noise, sanitation, road traffic, security, municipal police and public transport. The actual ability of CIQ to address these issues remains limited, but they do operate a lobby of the residents vis-a-vis public authorities. Despite the multicultural identity of the population of Marseille, CIQ remain surprisingly white: residents of Maghrebi, African and Comorian background are rarely found on the governing board (the Marseille Federation of CIQ), and are under-represented on the committees themselves. This lack of representation of Marseille's diversity on these boards may be connected to the ambiguities in the status and the inner workings of the CIQ. While the CIQ raise the demands of the residents, they also act as interfaces with the municipality, which can create a system of clientelism connected with local power structures. In fact, the under-representations of minorities in CIQ reflects the unequal balance of power in Marseille: individuals of Arab-Muslim background are still maintained in a position of political subordination, kept away from the city's main governing bodies.<sup>387</sup>

Muslim respondents share the same concerns as non-Muslim respondents in matters of public security: 49 per cent say that they do not feel comfortable in certain places in their neighbourhood.<sup>388</sup> The responses to the questionnaires show that feelings of insecurity are commonly shared by the residents, cutting across ethnic and religious boundaries. Indeed, these feelings are found across all social groups in Marseille, notably among residents of postcolonial immigrant background, who as much as any other residents would like police and law enforcement forces to be better staffed. The demands for security and protection are as strong among Muslim respondents as among non-Muslims. Being of Arab or African background does not make anyone immune to insecurity. A similar proportion of Muslims (48 per cent) as non-Muslims (56 per cent) are dissatisfied with law enforcement in Marseille.<sup>389</sup>

While there is a strong demand for protection, Muslims also express mistrust of the police. On this account, one should distinguish between having the same security demands as other residents and the personal experience of the individuals (dramatic or

<sup>387</sup> Convention citoyenne, "Les Comités d'intérêt de quartier" (Citizens Convention, Committees for neighbourhood interests), Atelier "Quartier", 26 October 2001.

<sup>388</sup> Question E5: "Are there places in your neighbourhood or your city where you feel uncomfortable?" (Y a-t-il des endroits dans votre quartier ou votre ville dans lesquels vous ne vous sentez pas à l'aise?)

<sup>389</sup> Question G1.5: "In what measure are you satisfied/dissatisfied with law enforcement?" (dans quelle mesure êtes-vous satisfait ou mécontent du maintien de l'ordre?)

traumatic encounters with the police). An analysis of the qualitative data from the focus groups and stakeholder interviews provides further insight into the conflicted and contradictory relationship between Muslims and the police, and suggests that this is connected to specific history and the “shock of the decolonisation process.”<sup>390</sup>

### 9.3.2 Police racism in Marseille

Analysis of the Foundations’ questionnaire outcomes demonstrates that Muslim respondents have less trust in the police than the non-Muslim respondents: 36 per cent had “some trust” (as opposed to 44 per cent among non-Muslims), 38 per cent “not much trust” (compared with 27 per cent), 20 per cent “no trust at all” (compared with 14 per cent) and 10 per cent “little trust” (compared with 13 per cent).<sup>391</sup> A sense of discontent between Muslims and the police is therefore manifest, the reasons of which are both long-standing and cyclical, and not necessarily specific to Marseille. As A. Sayad, J.-J. Jordi and E. Témime state, “it is obvious [in Marseille] that anti-Arab prejudices are, for the most part, connected with the relations of domination that existed in Africa during colonial times.”<sup>392</sup> Without overstating the current impact of the decolonisation process on relations between police and Muslims, the relations of domination are present in the minds and memories to the point that today’s heirs of postcolonial immigration refer to them as one of the main explanations behind the enduring unease and mistrust:

Regarding the issue of how police forces relate to Marseillais of Muslim background, what I wanted to say, is that Marseille is first and foremost a city of migration. You cannot address the question of Islam in France without first giving some background about why so many people of Muslim culture are in France, and without mentioning the anchor in that history that is immigration. The majority of Muslims in Marseille are Algerians, therefore it’s a kind of special relation to the ‘otherness’. If you are not aware of those historical links between France and Algeria, especially in the manifestation of police violence – what was known as ‘pacification’ in other times – then you cannot understand the particular relation that the police forces have to the Maghrebis, and also the Maghrebis to the police. I think it’s really an inheritance from colonial history, and from the history of the immigrant families in France, i.e., most of the

<sup>390</sup> A. Sayad, J.-J. Jordi and E. Témime, *Migrance, Le choc de la décolonisation et les données nouvelles de la migration* (Migrancy: the shock of decolonisation and the new data on migration), Vol. 4 of *Migrance* (migrancy) series, available at <http://www.wanted-rare-books.com/histoire-des-migrations-a-marseille-echinard-temine-lopez-attard-maraninchi-sayad-jordi-migrance-4-livres.htm> (accessed April 2011) (hereafter Sayad et al., *Migrance*).

<sup>391</sup> Question F11.1: “Would you say that you have much trust, some trust, little trust, or no trust at all in the police?” (*Diriez-vous que vous faites beaucoup, assez, pas beaucoup, pas du tout confiance à la police?*)

<sup>392</sup> Sayad et al., *Migrance*, p. 108.

children have inherited that fear of the police forces; is it right or wrong, that's another question.<sup>393</sup>

Indeed, in Marseille the decolonisation process was no theoretical matter; its impact on the demographics of the city was very real: from the end of the 1950s onwards, many *pièds noirs* (former European colonists of North Africa)<sup>394</sup> landed in Marseille, some of them reinstating themselves in the workforce by joining the police or various security-related businesses (in the public and private sectors), and sometimes nurturing feelings of revenge towards residents of Arab background, especially Algerians. Survey respondents aged 30–45 had personally experienced as children or teenagers the *pièd-noir* spirit that prevailed in the national police. Their anger returned when they recalled incidents:

The issue of the *pièd-noir* policemen? Actually, I have lived in *Le Panier* for a long time, near the *Evêché*,<sup>395</sup> it was the headquarters of the *pièds-noirs*. There were bars where cops would hang out and chat among themselves. And actually, yes, it was endless [in racist comments], it is always the same old stuff, I used to drink my coffee over there. It is true that Marseille as a city is full of paradox, in my view: the atmosphere may be either very brotherly, or very racist, in the sense of a primal racism: 'He is an Arab, he is almost inferior to me, almost'. Because I am convinced that those who think that the Arab is inferior to them, well, they do not even know that this is the very definition of racism: a race that is superior to the other one. Often, they say to me: 'Of which race are you? In Marseille, it's always like, 'What's your race?' or, 'You are of the Arab race?!' Like we were animals!<sup>396</sup>

Over time, however, relations between the police and Muslims have become more normal: historical traumas have subsided in memory, and most of the security officers who had direct experience of the colonial period have retired. Interviewees admitted that the *pièd-noir* spirit in the national police has gradually died down, and cannot by itself explain current police racism:

Not long ago, the national police decided to send into early retirement the police officers of *pièd-noir* origin, because they realised that in their capacity as policemen they had taken revenge on the youths of immigrant descent, especially the young Algerians. When the latter were under police custody, those

<sup>393</sup> Interview with Samia Chabani, sociologist, chairman of an organisation working on memory and immigration, April 2009.

<sup>394</sup> Historians put the *pièd-noir* population at 60,000–100,000 settled in and around Marseille (around Marignane, Berre, Vitrolles, Aix-en-Provence, etc.) after leaving North Africa: see Sayad et al., *Migrance*, Vol. 2, Chapter 3: "Le grand exode. L'arrivée des rapatriés" (The great exodus: the arrival of the repatriated), pp. 84–99.

<sup>395</sup> The former palace of the bishop, now headquarters of the Marseille police.

<sup>396</sup> Interview with Kader Boufercha, political and civil society organisations activist, manager of the local mission for integration, April 2009.

police officers gave free rein to their resentment, especially the ones who defined themselves as veterans of the OAS [a far-right paramilitary organisation that fought for 'French Algeria']. It has been a recurring problem for years, and only now it is being dealt with.<sup>397</sup>

Interviewees feel that the police have changed. In fact, many interviewees of postcolonial immigrant background had one or several police officers in their family. It seems that joining the police is no longer perceived as a disgrace or an act of treason, but a professional career like any other. It is true that in the 1980s, some Maghrebi families viewed their sons' recruitment into the national police as a challenge to their personal history and to their identity (Arab, Muslim, resistant to French colonisation); it is no longer the case today, and when a son or daughter joins the ranks of the national or municipal police, it is generally perceived as a career achievement:

Yes, I would say that in the past, in the years from 1980 to 1990, we ran into trouble with law enforcement. It used to be the police of the South, truly. Old-generation police, with an awful lot of *pieds-noirs*. For example, the central police station of Marseille, near the *Préfecture*, was famous for beatings. There were rooms where police officers would quietly beat people up, often for no reason. But today, it has really changed. In the last decade or so, the police opened up. I think that it's more representative of the French population at large. I can see it through my own family: my sister is a police officer, the sons of one of my uncle are police officers. The police have opened up, whereas it used to be tough. I remember a mate who passed the exam to become a police lieutenant. He went through the written part successfully and was admitted to the oral exam. It was at the time of [Charles] Pasqua and they asked him bluntly what he thought of the 'charter flights' [the policy of chartering planes to mass-deport irregular migrants]: 'What do you think of the charter flights? What do you think of the policies of Mr Pasqua? Are you married? Does your wife wear the headscarf?' Yes, it never made the headlines but it used to be always like that.<sup>398</sup>

However, the apparent perpetuation of relations of dominance between the police and Muslims tempers this optimism. While no longer a relation of colonial domination, like in the years from 1960 to 1970, it is still present as a more diffuse and sometimes unconscious relation reproducing ethnic and religious divides inherited from France's conflicted history. Respondents highlight the constant discrepancy between the declared cosmopolitanism of Marseille and the rather weak impact of multiculturalism in political and security institutions. In Marseille, cosmopolitanism remains theoretical, a byproduct of tourism marketing. As a result, social and cultural diversity is almost absent from the composition and working of institutions:

<sup>397</sup> Interview with Omar, political and civil society activist, April 2009.

<sup>398</sup> Interview with Sélim Grabsi, May 2009.

Still there is something that is long-lasting in Marseille. When you look into it, over a few decades, you come to the realisation that the slightest indication of ‘Muslimness’ arouses in local political circles reactions of suspicion, of withdrawal, of dissociation. It’s rather difficult to draw up an inventory of initial motivations behind those attitudes. There is an international context, especially recent events connected with the crisis in Algeria that contributed to fuelling the fear, to mixing up Islam and politics, but there are also more ancient factors, which are more specific to Marseille. You must not forget that the South [of France] in general, and Marseille in particular, are home to large numbers of repatriates from Algeria who have settled here. There is also a strong Jewish community in Marseille. The city is always portrayed as the cosmopolitan city par excellence, the city that achieved this kind of multiculturalism, but actually it’s a city where so many prejudices are voiced, so many exclusions pronounced in connection with ethnicity and religion.<sup>399</sup>

While relations with the police tend to get closer to the norm, so does racism. This means that conflicting relations with the police no longer boil down to a replay of colonial history, but reflect more complex relations of power, factoring in ethnic background, age, social class, territorial divides. It is a somewhat more conventional racism, in line with the situation in other major French cities which did not share Marseille’s colonial history. The accounts from interviewees in Marseille echo those found in Open Society Foundations research on racial profiling in Paris.<sup>400</sup> Marseille police officers, like their Parisian peers, are more likely to stop young people of Arab, black and mixed background than other groups:

When I was a teenager I was living in Bassens [housing estate in the North districts], as soon as I went out of the neighbourhood, I was stopped by the police. Once, I said to myself, ‘It’s normal, they [police officers] check me, they see everything is OK, and then I go to sit with my mates.’ We were sitting in the shade, it was summertime. Then, the police officers come along again, the same ones, and they stop and check us again. I say to myself: ‘Well, they it’s just that they didn’t recognise us, it’s OK.’ Then they stop us a third time. It was sort of that same feeling – that they’re just doing their job, everybody understands – but why do they stop us once, twice, three times? They know full well that we are the same ones, they know us. This was in the 1970s. And I see that in 2005, the central issue of the riots, apart, of course, from unemployment, was that of relationships between the police and young Arabs and blacks.<sup>401</sup>

<sup>399</sup> Interview with Youcef Mammeri, Muslim civil society leader, May 2009.

<sup>400</sup> Open Society Institute, *Profiling Minorities: A Study of Stop-and-Search Practices in Paris*, Open Society: Justice Initiative, June 2009, available at [http://www.soros.org/initiatives/justice/focus/equality\\_citizenship/articles\\_publications/publications/search\\_20090630/search\\_20090630.Web.pdf](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/justice/focus/equality_citizenship/articles_publications/publications/search_20090630/search_20090630.Web.pdf) (accessed January 2011).

<sup>401</sup> Interview with Saïd Boukenouche, *collège* teacher, civil society activist, April 2009.

The interviews suggest that police find it difficult to address Muslims as victims of crime, as people who need protection, advice or support. Accounts from interviewees suggest feelings of bitterness; the majority of Muslim interviewees want their concerns about crime and security to be recognised, and they commonly express disappointment about the lack of efficiency of national and municipal police forces:

Today, victims are necessarily WASP [white], a priori non-Muslim. On the other hand, there are many hardships of which persons of foreign origins may be the victims. For me, I did experience it in a very concrete way, I had my car stolen, a burglary, so I go to the police to file a complaint, and there's an officer in charge of recording the complaints, and he tells me: 'But Madam, those who did this, they are your cousins [Arabs like you].' Very very calmly, he says this, without joking, perfectly at ease. It took him two hours to record the complaint. Beyond the prejudiced view that this officer held, it's about the mental divide between the offenders, who are necessarily of foreign origin, and the rest of the French people. We are in a country where on the evening TV news, they feel they must specify the ethnic background of the offender, as if it gave a piece of information. It still surprises me, always.<sup>402</sup>

There is, by contrast, one field where the relations between police and immigrant residents are still hardly improving: namely, Islam. Since the recent Algerian events (1990–1998) and the 9/11 attacks, Marseille Muslims conveyed a sense that they are being watched more closely now than ever before.

### 9.3.3 Police Islamophobia

Muslim interviewees feel that Muslim organisations, mosques and community leaders are under constant monitoring:

Today the big issue is Islamic radicalism. This is why I was led into working with services which are specialised in the question of radical Islam. Those who are very good at manipulating, it's the DST [internal intelligence service].<sup>403</sup>

But beside the policy of monitoring and infiltration of Muslim activist circles by internal intelligence services, interviewees felt that the national police were often ignorant about Islam and Muslims:

I believe there is racism, but also ignorance of Islam, which is a culture that you rub shoulders with every day, to the point that you believe you know something about it, but in fact you don't. For example, I have a friend who wears the veil [*bijab*] and she told me that during Ramadan, she was stopped and checked by the police. The officers told her, 'Go ahead, blow into the balloon!' [to test

<sup>402</sup> Interview with Samia Chabani, sociologist, chairman of an organisation working on memory and immigration, April 2009.

<sup>403</sup> Interview with Omar, political and civil society activist, April 2009.

alcohol level]. She answered: ‘But I am a Muslim, I don’t drink alcohol, and moreover I’m fasting, I haven’t even drunk a drop of water!’ But the officers insisted: ‘No no, you will blow in the balloon, it’s the same for everyone!’ There are dozens of incidents like this that highlight ignorance of Islam.<sup>404</sup>

Efforts have been made by the national police to create training sessions for recruits to give them some basic knowledge about Islam, the history of immigration and the sociology of the *banlieues* (suburbs, often understood to be ghettos). Sociologists, street workers and educators take part in this training, as well as veteran police officers who share their personal field experience. This kind of training was piloted in Marseille National Police School (colloquially known as *Chemin de Sainte-Marthe* School) at the start of the 2000s. It is not clear how successful it has been in changing preconceptions and prejudices that may be found in the minds of police recruits. In fact, the post-9/11 security context and the riots in the *banlieues* in 2005 may have strengthened negative representations of working-class neighbourhoods and suburbs. These negative perceptions can be reinforced by some police unions, whose ideas and demands mirror those of the far right. There appears to be a long-standing tradition of xenophobia in some police unions in France (anti-Semitism and anti-migrant racism in general preceded Islamophobia), even if it is only representative of a minority.<sup>405</sup> One interviewee, who worked directly with the police in his professional and civil society activities, reflected on the xenophobia he encountered in some police unions:

One day I went to a police station. I found myself standing in front of the union notice board. There was a poster of the National Union of Police Officers, it read: ‘No to Islamisation of the national police’. I found that disgraceful. The poster raised the idea that Muslim police officers might force mosques on us in the police stations. They were attacking their own colleagues of Muslim background! It was the psychological shock of my life, I told myself, this is not possible. They were taking aim at the Muslim officers, saying that they were infiltrators, undercover agents of radical Islam.<sup>406</sup>

As in other sectors of French society, there appears to be a trend to reference the religious identity of individuals of postcolonial immigrant background as soon as they are perceived to be disturbing public order. Interviewees noted that the trend of wrongly and unfairly “Islamicising” individuals leads to unexpected and comical situations, as in the case of this secular civil society activist, who was charged with

<sup>404</sup> Interview with Houria, civil society activist, April 2009.

<sup>405</sup> Sihem Souid, *Omerta dans la police. Abus de pouvoir, homophobie, racisme et sexisme* (Code of silence in the police. Abuse of power, homophobia, racism and sexism), Le Cherche Midi, Paris, 2010; Nolwenn Weiler, “Le racisme ordinaire de la police française décrit de l’intérieur” (The common racism of the French police is a description of the interior), *Bastamag*, 18 October 2010, available at <http://www.bastamag.net/article1232.html> (accessed January 2011).

<sup>406</sup> Interview with Omar, political and civil society activist, April 2009.

accusations of fundamentalism because she made herself publicly visible in Marseille by speaking out on controversial issues:

There are assumptions of intentions, false charges of radical Islam. As for me, I fell victim of it personally when I became interested in the issue of older migrants in the migrant workers' hostels, because I was involved with that stuff that they tried to set up for the plans for the Marseille mosque.<sup>407</sup>

It will take many more years for the relations between the police and residents of postcolonial immigrant background to be fully normal. One wonders whether the recruitment of police forces could be part of the solution, namely, incorporating more police officers of Muslim culture into the French police until their presence is eventually perceived as commonplace.

#### 9.4 Conclusion

Although in Marseille the weight of colonial history is probably more heavily felt than in other major French cities, it is not the whole explanation. Most police officers who were directly involved during colonial times are now retired. The staff and hierarchy of Marseille police (national and municipal) have been renewed to a large extent. And yet the relations between police and residents of working-class neighbourhoods remain persistently evocative of colonial practices, although it is not clear whether this phenomenon may be ascribed to filiation (inherited practices) or to the analogy (similar practices) of situations of dominance. The majority of respondents to the Foundations' research expressed a rather tempered and qualified view on police actions: they tried to understand the internal resistance that may block Marseille police from fully and truly reflecting the city's multiculturalism. At the same time, they suggest that police racism only echoes the manifestations of xenophobic rejection that may be recorded in all sectors of local society. In this sense, the police department is no worse than other local institutions. And some of the respondents said that the police were in fact better than the political leadership and regional media, both of which remain astonishingly white:

Whether it is the BAC [Anti-crime Brigade] or the neighbourhood police, these groups know their environment very well. Here, in Marseille, the police know who to target. There's no collateral damage, at least it's quite rare. The topography of Marseille is different from Lyon or Paris. In Marseille, it's like little village cores, it's quite familial. Marseille has a specificity as regards organised crime. When Marseille makes the headlines, it's mostly in relation to high-profile gangsterism, Corsican or other. There are social problems, a concentration of social distress, and all those little unlawful trades that go with this. But not on the scale of Lyon or Paris.<sup>408</sup>

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<sup>407</sup> Interview with Samia Chabani, April 2009.

<sup>408</sup> Interview with Sélim Grabsi, May 2009.

Many Muslim interviewees expressed the wish for the Marseille police to obtain greater knowledge of its area of deployment, and to be more diverse: most would like the police forces in Marseille (both national and municipal) to deal more effectively with the real issues of social cohesion, without falling into the trap of endorsing security ideology:

We need to move forward, to insist that there must be more Maghrebis in the police, people of foreign origins, to do away with the issue of racism. It's beginning to change a bit. In the suburbs of Paris, for example, the police are more diverse: quite a few come from different origins. The mindset of police officers has begun to change a little bit. There used to be many *pieds-noirs* in the police, now there are Africans, blacks, Arabs, Chinese, you name it. There is still racism, but less than before.<sup>409</sup>

At the same time, respondents remain sceptical about what recruiting more officers of postcolonial migrant background alone will achieve. Worse, some are concerned about the potential unintended consequences of ethnicising some sectors of national and municipal police, and worry about a possible hidden purpose: to better control impoverished neighbourhoods.

As a youth, I always had a bad image of the police! And it's not about to change if there are Maghrebis or blacks who stop and check us, because they will punish us even more. Between us there is no unity, be it between blacks, Arabs. Because the few who have power, they show it off: 'I'm above you!' I don't know whether it's because we have been colonised, but there's always that same feeling of superiority.<sup>410</sup>

If the focus on police diversity is not only to improve the effectiveness of various police strategies, but to also genuinely promote fair and equal security treatment for Marseille's working-class neighbourhoods, then the legacy of a repressive past may be replaced with the establishment of a truly republican police.

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<sup>409</sup> Interview with Samir, former security adjunct in the national police, April 2009.

<sup>410</sup> Interview with Saïd, political and civil society activist, hip-hop songwriter, April 2009.

## 10. EXPERIENCES OF MUSLIM COMMUNITIES: PARTICIPATION AND CITIZENSHIP

In March 2008, a major political upheaval sent shockwaves all over Marseille. For the first time in the city's history, a woman and socialist activist of Algerian origin, Samia Ghali, who grew up in one of the city's poorest neighbourhoods (Bassens) was elected mayor. Although the position to which she was elected was only mayor of the 8th sector (made up of the 15th and 16th *arrondissements*), and not the central city hall district, this is still one of the city's most significant sectors. A long-standing electoral stronghold of the Communist Party, the 8th sector contained 92,100 inhabitants, 10 per cent of Marseille's population. As a symbol, her election in the first round with more than 51 per cent of the votes was of far-reaching consequence. Moreover, the political success story of a woman of Algerian immigrant background was consolidated when she was also elected to the senate, the second chamber of the French Parliament, thus becoming the first representative of Marseille in parliament with a North African immigrant background.

Ghali officially rejects any ethnic reference, and refuses to be seen as representing any community (Muslims) or minority (Marseillais of North African background): "I do not want to be defined by my origin. Let's talk about schools, about educational support, about renovation of housing!"<sup>411</sup> Her positioning, which she often reasserts for the media, is unwaveringly universalist and republican: "I never wanted to play the community card, nor play the same game as other *Beur*<sup>412</sup> politicians, who wanted to set up networks, to join forces for the construction of a mosque, to act as a lobby."<sup>413</sup> In this respect, Ghali is emblematic of a political meritocracy often seen as typical of Marseille, which has allowed many among the descendants of the working classes (in former times Italians, Corsicans, Armenians, and today Maghrebis and Comorians) to pursue a political career both locally and nationally. Ghali, a Socialist activist since she was 17 years old, was elected district councillor in 1995, then city councillor in 2001, and became deputy president of the general council in 2004, a model political career for a young woman who did not attend the *grandes écoles* and whose professional life was entirely devoted to her party. Yet behind all of this, the issue of ethnicity is not absent from Ghali's political achievements, nor from her career in the party. Marseille's institutions and political parties, while not explicit in their public statements, have adopted strategies for courting and capturing the votes of specific communities, thus creating a system that could be best described as communal clientelism Marseille-style.

<sup>411</sup> "La trop longue marche des beurs", *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 1 November 2001, available at <http://www.nouvelobs.com/dossiers/p1930/a5829.html> (accessed April 2011).

<sup>412</sup> Translator's note: a *beur*, in the back-slang of the suburbs, is a person of Arab or North African origins. The term is common, and does not carry a racist connotation.

<sup>413</sup> Claude Askolovitch, "UMP ferme la porte aux beurs" (UMP closes its doors to *beurs*), *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 19 February 2004, available at <http://www.nouvelobs.com/articles/p2050/a233348.html> (accessed April 2011).

In this way communities have been made into political tools, and this electoral manipulation, an old Marseille tradition, is integral to local political customs:

The Italian immigrants certainly have no monopoly over the setting up of networks and clans. The French community of Corsican origin and the Armenian community also created networks of mutual aid and solidarity. In Marseille, these issues are still taboo as an object of study, as if the clannish organisation was by its very nature soiled, dirty, or as if the secret of the clans (a sort of *omerta*) still had to be maintained. There is no doubt that through its underground, occult dimension, the clan system could provide a cover for more or less suspicious activities. But this type of social structure reaches way beyond the realm of crime-related news. We speak, in fact, of a mode of social regulation that infiltrates all the official organisations. The political life, the trade unions, the clubs and societies were all dominated by such practices, the marks of which are still deeply imprinted in the realities of today.<sup>414</sup>

However, it is important not to accept too easily a cultural reductionist view, ascribing exoticism to the functioning of local political representation in Marseille. The segmentation of local society into communities is in part a political construct, reinforced by policymakers and opinion leaders with a view to exerting social control and gaining power. Some argue that these are imaginary communities as much as actual ones, although the communities end up becoming part of the local political reality:

It is a fact that there are in Marseille residents originally from abroad, whose children have taken root here; there are networks of affinities, of similar tastes, and sometimes enduring solidarities are maintained; but this does not imply that stable, well-organised communities live on, or even that they have ever been formed. These remnants, or traces, are more a product of myth and nostalgia than of sociological reality: Marseille's residents of foreign-origin mix, mingle, merge together and collide at almost every corner, in the large social housing estates of the North districts, in the residential suburbs of the East, or in the impoverished urban areas of the city centre. And the major ambivalence of the 'community' myth lies precisely in the fact that it presupposes a collective 'ethnic' nature of sorts, which would be naturally perpetuated. In other words, the legend of Marseille, once stripped of its emollient rhetoric, suggests that every newcomer arrives here as a 'stranger', and remains a bit of a stranger for ever.<sup>415</sup>

This notion of imaginary communities provides a way to analyse how the ethnicity issue shapes local politics. For residents of postcolonial immigrant background

<sup>414</sup> Philippe Sanmarco and Bernard Morel, *Marseille, l'endroit du décor* (Marseille, the place behind the curtain), Aix-en-Provence, Edisud, 1985, pp. 34–35.

<sup>415</sup> Péraldi and Samson, *Gouverner Marseille*, p. 265.

(Maghrebis, black Africans, Comorians), the issue of ethnicity is increasingly translated into religious terms: the Muslim voter has now replaced the Maghrebi voter.

This chapter begins by showing how the Muslim community became integrated into local politics. This process is by no means a linear one: attitudes of tolerance are often intertwined with forms of rejection and suspicion directed at those Muslims perceived as too visible. Some go as far as to mention a neocolonial management of the political integration of Marseille Muslims.

The second section examines the system of clientelism and capturing votes in Marseille. In particular, among the new generations of descendants of postcolonial migrants, controversy has arisen between those who want to break away from the tradition of clientelism, and those who are happy with diverting it for their profit, so as to make Muslims into a dominant community.

For a long time Marseille was viewed as the French exception, referring to the way local politics related to the various communities. The chapter concludes by considering whether this exception is not gradually becoming the national norm. In this sense, Marseille may have been ahead of its time in anticipating the ethnicisation of French politics.

## **10.1 The Political Representation of Muslims: from Denial to Ethnic-Religious Confinement**

Although their settlement in the city is ancient – colonial workers were listed as employees of Marseille’s industries at the beginning of the 20th century – it is only more recently that residents of Arab-Muslim background have gained some political visibility. In fact, Arab Muslims were for a long time viewed as electoral foils, objects of a local political discourse tinged with racist and xenophobic undertones. It was only in the late 1980s that Marseille’s political leaders began to turn their attention to them, as politicians became gradually aware that these residents might well be political tools – with all the ambiguities of such a notion.

### **10.1.1 A long way to go: the quest for political visibility**

Gaston Defferre, whose reign over the city was unchallenged for more than 30 years (he was mayor of Marseille from 1953 to 1986), was never really interested in the issue of the political integration of the Arab-Muslims, since he viewed them – like most political leaders at the time – as temporary immigrants, whose destiny was to return, some day in the future, to the country of their origins. Defferre was a politician of his times, whose relation to the Muslim faith was ambivalent: in his view, Islam was first and foremost the religion of indigenous and colonised residents, whom he regarded with a mixture of suspicion and benevolent republican paternalism, in the tradition of the Fourth Republic (1944–1958). Muslims are still perceived to a large extent as an

exogenous population,<sup>416</sup> whose Marseillais identity or belonging to the city is constantly questioned.<sup>417</sup>

The view of Muslims began to change in the late 1980s, during the period when Robert-Paul Vigouroux was mayor of Marseille (1986–1989 and 1989–1995). Vigouroux favoured multicultural policies at the local level; the Muslim community was publicly and formally recognised. The new ambivalent municipal multiculturalism, still in place in 2010, is founded on three main pillars, which are as much symbolic as connected to political practice.

First, the new mayor chose to begin an institutionalisation of inter-communal dialogue. The social impacts of this were limited as they largely involved elite and religious leaders, not ordinary Muslims. It nevertheless contributed to embedding in the political landscape the new municipal symbolism: dialogue between communities as a tool for social peace. The *Marseille Espérance* body aimed to organise the dialogue between the city's diverse communities and spiritual constituents (Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists) by giving them a semblance of reality or actuality. While most understood that decision-making powers lay elsewhere, it was still important symbolically as it was the first time Muslims had been included alongside secular and religious groups.<sup>418</sup>

The second pillar of the mayor's community policy was re-launching the plans for a Great Mosque. This initiative contains some ambiguities: it is possible to detect undercurrents of social control behind supporting the image of a mayor as a political leader caring for his fellow Muslim citizens, ensuring equality between the city's faiths. For some, the Great Mosque has come to symbolise the quasi-paternal relationship between the mayor and Muslims; the latter are still perceived as a troublesome community. The suggestion that its construction will ease conflicts and tensions implies a perception of Muslims as a dangerous class. The plans for the Great Mosque appear to express both a willingness to publicly recognise the legitimacy of the Muslim presence in Marseille and a desire for security, under the impression that a mosque will assist in maintaining social control.

Last, municipal multiculturalism is based on the co-optation and promotion of political figures from the Muslim community. Indeed, in March 1989, for the first time in the history of Marseille politics, four councillors of postcolonial migrant background were elected, two holding a seat in the central city council, and two in

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<sup>416</sup> Thomas Deltombe, *L'islam imaginaire. La construction médiatique de l'islamophobie* (Imaginary Islam. The media construction of Islamophobia), La Découverte, Paris, 2005 (hereafter Deltombe, *L'islam imaginaire*).

<sup>417</sup> Césari, *Être musulman en France*. See also Geisser and Zemouri, Marianne et Allah.

<sup>418</sup> See Chapter 3.6.1.

district councils.<sup>419</sup> In practice, their actual influence was rather limited and these first elected representatives from the Muslim community have all but disappeared from today's local political scene.

However, the Vigouroux era, although short-lived (1986–1995), was a decisive step in the process of political recognition for those of Marseille's citizens who stemmed from postcolonial immigration, as the French phrase goes. From that time on, the North African immigrants have become Muslim citizens of Marseille in the minds of local leaders, and the city's major political forces strive to capture their votes and their support.

When, in 1995, Jean-Claude Gaudin took over the municipality as mayor, most observers expected the multicultural policies to be radically questioned. The centre-right majority was initially more concerned about getting back voters from the far right (*Front National*), by re-centring the local political discourse on French identity and the true values of Provence, rather than multicultural values and cosmopolitan identities. However, the necessities of city governance required that they take an interest in the residents of postcolonial immigrant background. The consequence was an attempt by the centre-right politicians to regulate relations with Marseille's citizens of Muslim culture, by reappropriating for themselves the cosmopolitan and multiculturalist inheritance of the previous municipal teams. *Marseille Espérance*, which had been set to shut down, remained; the mayor had informal advisers from the Muslim community; the municipality worked with civil society organisations (sometimes chaired by individuals of Maghrebi or Comorian descent) to try to develop their own networks in the North districts.

This political regulation of the Muslim position gained further momentum during the conservatives' second term in office (2001–2008) (see Table 53).

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<sup>419</sup> In the municipal team of the new mayor, two city councillors (Nadir Zerdab and Brahim Akroun) and two district councillors (Linda Chérif Ben Yacoub and Abderazak Zéroual), elected in the 7th sector, located in the North districts, are of immigrant background. See Vincent Geisser, *Ethnicité républicaine. Les élites d'origine maghrébine dans le système politique français* (Republican ethnicity. Elites of North African origin in the French political system), Presses de Sciences Po, Paris, 1995.

**Table 53. Elected representatives of postcolonial immigrant background in Marseille, for the 2001–2008 municipal term of office**

Name and first name of elected representative	Municipal majority and opposition	Municipal appointment (including sectoral)
SALAH-EDDINE Myriam	Majority (RPR group)	17th deputy mayor of Marseille, appointed to Family Affairs and to the Rights of Women
GHALI Samia	Opposition (PS group)	District Councillor of 8th sector, appointed to Social Affairs and Day Nurseries
BENARIOUA Rébia	Opposition	District Councillor of 8th sector
RAHMANI Tahar	Opposition (PS group)	District Councillor of 7th sector, appointed to Large Urban Projects and to Large Structural Projects
BOUALEM Miloud	Majority (DL group)	6th deputy mayor of 1st sector, appointed to Social Affairs
BEN MRAD Nabil	Opposition (Ecologist)	District Councillor of 2nd sector, appointed to Animation, Communication and Living Environment
KAHOUL Mourad	Majority	District Councillor of the 2nd sector
LAQUHILA Mohamed	Opposition (Ecologist)	6th deputy mayor of 7th sector, appointed to Conservation of Nature, Landscape and Heritage and to Economic Solidarity
BARIKI Salah-Eddine	Majority	District Councillor of district of 7th sector
HAGOUG Nourreddine	Majority	District Councillor of 7th sector
LAAYSEL Nadia	Opposition	District Councillor of 7th sector
BOULAINSEUR Nadia	Opposition	7th deputy mayor of 8th sector, appointed to the Rights of the Child and to Solidarity
AYOUBA Fatima	Opposition	District Councillor of 8th sector

**Source:** © Geisser-Kelfaoui, “Marseille 2001: la communauté réinventée par les politiques. Enjeux municipaux autour de la communauté musulmane” (Marseille 2001: the community reinvented by politicians. Municipal stakes in the Muslim community), *Migrations Société* 13(77) (September–October 2001)

Candidates of immigrant descent began to show up on centre-right and conservative candidate electoral rolls; among them, a young woman, Myriam Salah-Eddine, was even appointed deputy mayor in charge of Family Affairs and the Rights of Women.

At the start of the first decade of the 21st century, both left-wing and the right-wing parties competed to showcase Muslim candidates on their electoral candidate rolls. In the 2001 municipal campaign, out of 86 candidates of Maghrebi, African or Comorian background put forward by the various political parties in Marseille, 13 were elected in the second round ballot, four sat on the city council.<sup>420</sup> The remainder sat on the district councils. While these were important symbolically, it should be placed in perspective. Elected representatives of Muslim background made up less than 5 per cent of representatives sitting on the various councils and local authorities, and Muslims make up almost one-third of Marseille's population.<sup>421</sup>

Jean-Claude Gaudin won a third term as mayor in the 2008 elections, which also saw an increase in the number of representatives of immigrant background (see Tables 52 and 53). In addition to the electoral achievement of Samia Ghali, seven city councillors (four women and three men) and 26 district councillors (16 women and 10 men) of immigrant background were elected. In spite of the progress made, the representativeness ratio remained very low, as this still only constitutes 6 per cent of elected representatives across the various bodies of municipal authority. Moreover, this under-representation was combined with a territorial confinement: elected representatives of Muslim culture represent the most working-class areas of the city (North districts and city centre), where ethnic minorities have a strong, visible presence. This gives the impression that political leaders put forward Arab and black candidates only in the ethnic neighbourhoods, suggesting that it would not be possible to put them forward in affluent residential districts (3rd, 4th and 5th sectors). It suggests that political candidates of postcolonial immigrant background are only of use, politically speaking, to capture voters resembling them, which is evocative of a neocolonial attitude: "White neighbourhood, white representative; Arab neighbourhood, Arab representative!" Principles of territory and ethnicity appear to combine to create a social-ethnic stratification of Marseille's political space, where upper-class sectors are reserved for the Marseillais of European origin, and the working-class neighbourhoods for the Marseillais of North African or African background. Furthermore, the senior decision-makers, including in the supposedly ethnic sectors, remain white elites. Indeed, irrespective of the territories in Marseille under discussion, with the exception of the 8th sector, the municipal power falls to elites of Provençal,

<sup>420</sup> Two women, Myriam Salah-Eddine and Samia Ghali, and two men, Tahar Rahmani and Rébia Benarioua.

<sup>421</sup> Vincent Geisser and Schérazade Kelfaoui, "Marseille 2001: la communauté réinventée par les politiques. Enjeux municipaux autour de la communauté musulmane" (Marseille 2001: the community reinvented by politicians. Municipal stakes in the Muslim community), *Migrations Société* 13(77) (September–October 2001), pp. 55–77 (hereafter Geisser and Kelfaoui, "Marseille 2001").

Corsican, Italian or Armenian origin, but almost never to those originating from postcolonial migrations.

**Table 54. Breakdown of the local elected representatives of postcolonial immigrant background, by electoral sector, for the 2008–2014 term of office**

Electoral sector of Marseille	No. of councillors of postcolonial immigrant background	Women	Men
1 <sup>st</sup> (impoverished)	4	2	2
2 <sup>nd</sup> (impoverished)	4	3	1
3 <sup>rd</sup> (mixed)	0	0	0
4 <sup>th</sup> (affluent)	0	0	0
5 <sup>th</sup> (mixed)	2	0	2
6 <sup>th</sup> (impoverished)	1	1	0
7 <sup>th</sup> (impoverished)	8	6	2
8 <sup>th</sup> (impoverished)	7	4	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: Researcher analysis of electoral results

**Table 55. List of the elected representatives of postcolonial immigrant background in the city council for the 2008–2014 term of office**

Name and first name of elected representative	Origin (according to parents' birthplace)	Political affiliation
1. BEN ARIOUA Rébia	Algerian	Parti Socialiste (left)
2. BOUALEM Miloud	Algerian	Modeme (centre)
3. BRIA Nadia	Algerian	Parti Socialiste (left)
4. GHALI Samia	Algerian	Parti Socialiste (left)
5. REMADNIA Nora	Algerian	UMP (right)
6. SAID Elisabeth	Comorian	Parti Socialiste (left)
7. ZERIBI Karim	Algerian	Parti Socialiste (left)

Source: Researcher analysis of electoral results

Note: Seven elected representatives out of a total of 101 local councillors.

The ambiguities of Marseille-style multiculturalism are also shown in the attitude displayed by local political leaders towards the Great Mosque plans. Officially, since the beginning of the 2000s, all local political forces, except for the far right (*Front National* and *Mouvement pour la France*), have backed the creation of a mosque that would be a prominent addition to the city. During his inauguration speech of June 2001, the mayor made clear his intention of supporting this plan:

The city of Marseille, in its broadest representation (republican<sup>422</sup> majority and opposition), should identify, through a series of consultations, representative interlocutors among the Muslim community. These interlocutors could then gather into a civil society organisation which, together with the city and according to the public regulations and ordinances governing land policy, would choose a plot of land to allocate to a future Muslim cultural centre, comprised of a large mosque, but also of a library and a school. It would be up to this representative organisation to come up with an architectural project, backed with the relevant funding plan.<sup>423</sup>

But the near unanimity on the project of the Great Mosque may also conceal an implicit desire for social control. There are indications that this project is seen as a way of securing the Muslims and preventing them from being influenced by Islamic radicals and fundamentalists. The benevolence of Marseille's politicians towards the Muslim community comes bundled with a security objective, shared by the left and right alike:

In different meetings, I have been told that certain demands have been expressed, that would undermine the *laïcité* and our republican values. I want to say it loud and clear, it is out of question that this cultural centre could operate under the rule of Shari'a or religious laws.<sup>424</sup>

The political recognition of Muslims by Marseille's parties and leaders is not exempt from the traditional vote-capturing reflexes of the politicians, and actually leads to strengthening their community confinement, as though part of their citizenship was negated in favour of a collective affiliation. Here the words of the mayor's principal private secretary betray a desire to indeed confine the Muslims, even against their will, to their community: "We will need to bring this Muslim community into reality, to prompt them into organising their representation, in the form of an association or a

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<sup>422</sup> Translator's note: in France, the phrase *les partis républicains* (republican parties) refers to all mainstream parties from left to right, as opposed to *les partis extrémistes* (extremist parties) of the far right and far left.

<sup>423</sup> Jean-Claude Gaudin (mayor of Marseille), speech detailing the main policies for the city (2001–2007).

<sup>424</sup> The mayor of Marseille quoted by Philippe Schmit, "Les musulmans confient leur mosquée à Jean-Claude Gaudin" (Muslims entrust their mosque to Jean-Claude Gaudin), *La Provence*, 15 November 2002.

group. This entity will become our interlocutor.”<sup>425</sup> Moreover, the Muslim policy of city hall<sup>426</sup> and of local political parties is not immune to strategies and electoral calculations of capturing Muslim votes by giving them symbolic satisfaction, “One vote, one mosque”. In other words, even if the Muslim vote does not exist, Marseille politicians give credence to this fiction.

### 10.1.2 The Muslim vote: a fiction ever more ingrained in the minds of politicians

In-depth sociological studies have found that there is no Muslim vote in Marseille or in other major cities in France.<sup>427</sup> Rather, the Muslim vote is a statistical construct, one that is widely entertained by politicians and political leaders, and by some Maghrebi and Comorian civil society organisations in the hope of negotiating material, financial or symbolic benefits. Further analysis finds that secular Muslim actors rather than religious clerics are at the forefront of trying to leverage the Muslim vote in the political arena:

On Marseille’s political stage, the instrumentation of the belief in a ‘Muslim vote’ mostly comes from secular elites yearning for political fame, and courting electoral resources and support. While, in a way, there is some satisfaction from this process of ‘trivialisation’ of the ‘Muslim fact’ in the public space, for it is instrumental in reducing the level of intolerance towards the minority religion, it is nevertheless unfortunate that community actors such as imams or chairmen of religious associations are not more closely included in the diverse negotiations. The various actors have their own strategies and diverging interests: while, on the one hand, Marseille politicians carry on courting the ‘Muslim vote’ (a mere figment of their own electoral imagination), on the other hand, imams and civil society leaders try to structure the rituals and the spiritual life of a long-existing community of faith.<sup>428</sup>

In other words, the Muslim vote, imaginary as it is, nevertheless produces political results: mobilisation, electoral propaganda, and negotiations.

<sup>425</sup> Claude Bertrand, principal private secretary of the mayor, *Comité de pilotage du projet de centre culturel et culturel musulman* (Minutes of the steering committee of the Muslim religious and cultural centre), 26 July 2001.

<sup>426</sup> Vincent Geisser, “La mairie de Marseille a-t-elle une politique musulmane?” (Has the city of Marseille a Muslim policy?), *Aujourd’hui Afrique*, May 2002.

<sup>427</sup> Césari, *Être musulman en France*; Vincent Geisser and Schérazade Kelfaoui, “Existe-t-il un ‘vote maghrébin’ à Marseille?” (Is there a “Maghrebi” vote in Marseille?), *Revue Méditerranéenne d’Études Politiques* 2 (1996), pp 149–169; Schérazade Kelfaoui, “Un vote maghrébin en France” (A Maghrebi vote in France), *Hérodote*, no. 80 (1st trimester 1996), pp. 130–155.

<sup>428</sup> Interview with Vincent Geisser by Angélique Schaller, “Municipales Marseille: le communautarisme instrumentalisé” (Municipal elections in Marseille: instrumentalised separatism), *La Marseillaise*, 18 March 2001.

Without accepting the idea of a Muslim vote, it is nevertheless possible to discern a few electoral patterns specific to Marseille residents of postcolonial immigrant background: they are generally young voters, with diverse national origins and heterogeneous religious practices, and they are not much involved with civil society organisations, trade unions or political parties; above all, they are allergic to nationalistic and far-right parties (e.g., the *Front National*). But beyond this rather sketchy silhouette, drawing further conclusions on a hypothetical Muslim vote in Marseille would seem highly dubious.

Among the respondents to the Foundations' survey, one-third of Muslim respondents (34 per cent) did not have the right to vote (as opposed to 15 per cent of the non-Muslim respondents).<sup>429</sup>

In many respects, it is possible to state that Marseille's Muslim population is characterised by partial exclusion from voting rights, due to the fact that French law does not grant any voting rights to non-European foreign residents. Thus, the potential pool of Muslim voters in Marseille is cut down by a third, notably older immigrants and newcomers who do not yet hold French nationality and therefore cannot vote (neither for national polls, nor local ones).

Many Marseille leaders of postcolonial immigrant background condemn this exclusion from voting:

As for us, it is really crucial: we call for the extension of universal suffrage, that is, that voting rights should be extended to foreign residents, at least in the local polls. But you will notice that, whenever negotiations are conducted with other political partners, this point does not come up as a fundamental concern.<sup>430</sup>

In my opinion, this question is difficult to approach if we don't start by mentioning the fact that we are experiencing a crisis of our representative democracy. If we want to mention the participation of the non-citizens or immigrants – because in this country, all governments have promised voting rights to the non-citizens, but none has ever put the promise into practice, so non-citizens still have no say. And this is about our parents' entire generation and it means something to us! Hence feelings of the illegitimacy to participate – it's already part of the legacy of immigration in France.<sup>431</sup>

Weak mobilisation in the polls seems to be another hallmark of Marseille Muslim voters. Among respondents to the Open Society Foundations' survey who were eligible to vote, the rate of voting in elections was lower for Muslim respondents than non-

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<sup>429</sup> Question F1 of the questionnaire "Muslims in EU Cities: Social Cohesion, Participation and Identity".

<sup>430</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Mohammed Bensaada, founder of the civil society organisation *Quartiers Nord/Quartiers Fords*, May 2009.

<sup>431</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Samia Chabani, April 2009.

Muslim respondents: 40 per cent of Muslim respondents voted in the national polls (2007) (as opposed to 76 per cent of non-Muslim respondents);<sup>432</sup> 66 per cent voted in the latest local polls (as opposed to 84 per cent of non-Muslim respondents);<sup>433</sup> only 34 per cent of Muslim respondents voted in the last municipal elections (compared with 67 per cent of non-Muslim respondents).<sup>434</sup> A complex combination of sociological factors may explain this under-participation in the polls: Marseille Muslims, in general, and those living in the neighbourhood surveyed (St-Mauront/Belle de Mai), in particular, have a number of social handicaps which contribute to political disaffection: poverty, unemployment, single-parenthood (women bringing up their children alone), and low income levels. There is no evidence that it was the Muslim faith of respondents that dissuaded them from voting. In reality, the political disaffection of Muslim voters is likely to be a reflection of a wider social disaffection. Interviewees also suggest that Marseille Muslims opt out of the political process because they are first and foremost economically excluded:

If we want to raise the political awareness of those activists in the working-class neighbourhoods, to get them politically committed, then there is only one true policy to this effect: it is to restore economic sovereignty to the residents, that is, to see to it that this no-man's-land is reinvested in by the economic actors. We need to pressure investors into committing to these districts. People need to be treated with dignity, we must stop treating them as though they were just recipients of assistance [unable to do anything by themselves]. It is a shame to let people believe, as Sarkozy does, that these persons live only from the handouts they receive. If people live on the RMI [on welfare], it is only because they did not succeed in finding their place in society. They did not choose to be on the RMI for life. What could make things change, politically speaking? The emergence of a middle class in these districts.<sup>435</sup>

The tendency for Muslims toward electoral auto-exclusion is corroborated by a weaker level of participation in civil society activities, and Muslims tend to rather remain in the background of the various forms of civil activism: 31 per cent take part in neighbourhood meetings (as opposed to 44 per cent of non-Muslims);<sup>436</sup> 32 per cent sign petitions (59 per cent of non-Muslims).<sup>437</sup> Marseille Muslims appear confined to a passive citizenship even more than their fellow working-class residents, and their participation in the public life of the city remains minimal. Yet there is one field where they appear more active than other citizens: 34 per cent said that they had taken part in

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<sup>432</sup> Question F2.

<sup>433</sup> Question F3.

<sup>434</sup> Question F4.

<sup>435</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Mohammed Bensaada, political and civil society activist, May 2009.

<sup>436</sup> Question F5.1.

<sup>437</sup> Question F5.3.

a protest in the previous 12 months, as opposed to 22 per cent of non-Muslims.<sup>438</sup> This finding is linked to the international crisis and the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. In Marseille, during the winter of 2008–2009, Muslims in working-class and residential neighbourhoods alike rose up to denounce the Israeli bombings in Gaza (December 2008–January 2009). The very strong mobilisation around the Palestinian cause<sup>439</sup> would contradict the theory that Marseille Muslims are depoliticised:

During the recent events in Gaza, there were elected representatives of Marseille who displayed a clear pro-Israeli bias. While at the same time, there were people in the streets calling for an end to the massacres – irrespective of their origins, social conditions or political affiliations. It was very diverse. And from the other side, there was this extremely “*communautariste*”, parochialist demonstration, in support of the aggressor state [Israel]. It was a sign of contempt for the people who voted these personalities into office. These elected representatives can act like they do because they are under the impression that people from the working-class districts do not vote. Now, in a representative democracy, if you do not vote, you do not exist! Some politicians in Marseille reason like shopkeepers, to them the complaints and demands coming from ‘those’ residents [about Palestine] do not deserve consideration, and they treat them offhandedly. In their minds, it’s not very important, because from an electoral point of view, they have no weight. There is an enormous pool of voters in the North districts, but the problem is how we can mobilise them.<sup>440</sup>

In fact, the issue is less one of depoliticised or under-politicised people than one of mistrust in traditional politics. Indeed, a majority of the Muslim respondents to the Open Society Foundations’ survey said that they had “little” or “no” trust in France’s main political institutions, whether local or national.<sup>441</sup> However, a similar level of distrust of the political institutions was reported by non-Muslim respondents. But in this respect, no huge differences are found between the answers of Muslims and non-Muslims: apparently, a deep mistrust of political institutions is a common feature of Marseille’s working class, and the lack of confidence in the official institutions and in the decision-making bodies cannot be explained by some religious or ethnic determinism (*Homo islamicus politicus*), but can be understood primarily through the social position of Marseille’s working-class residents, who display a fair amount of suspicion towards authority.

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<sup>438</sup> Question F5.2.

<sup>439</sup> Marseille is one of the French cities where street protests and demonstrations against the Israeli bombing of Gaza attracted the most people, several tens of thousands of all national origins. The proportion of “Arab -Muslim” residents among the protesters, around 50 to 75 percent, was extremely significant.

<sup>440</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Mohammed Bensaada, May 2009.

<sup>441</sup> Questions F11.3, F11.4 and F11.5.

It may in fact be better to read the distrust of political institutions as a form of counter-politicisation, not a synonym of isolation and withdrawal from public life, but a radical contestation of the current system.

## 10.2 Between a Radical Contestation of the Marseille System and the Temptations of Clientelism

A further trend that is apparent in Marseille is the political awakening of a new generation of postcolonial migrants, challenging existing political arrangements. Led by individuals hailing from the Muslim middle class (civil servants, teachers, professionals), this new generation wants to make a place for themselves in the political system of Marseille, questioning how it works in many ways – and bringing to light its dysfunctions.

### 10.2.1 Denouncing neocolonial management and clientelism

While they are unanimous in denouncing the social-political relations which are dominant among Marseille's immigrants with a postcolonial background, the leaders of the new generation stress that this situation is to a large extent sustained by the local political class, with a view to social control:

There is really a deficit of representation [of Muslims], which must be understood in a more global framework, a deficit of representation of the people. The core of representative democracy is in crisis; what we see here is politics going adrift, going downhill in many ways. In the end, because of the way political machines work, the people do not feel represented. In this framework, the Muslims are double victims: victims of this general context (the crisis of representative democracy), and victims of factors that are specific to them: [perceptions of] Islam, the conflict with Algeria, still recent in history; because of this, an active minority is dead set against the right for those residents to have a say.<sup>442</sup>

Many feel that the attitudes of local political leaders are also informed by France's colonial history. Some refer to feeling that they are treated like natives or indigenous people, insistently reminded of their supposedly radical "otherness" and of the political illegitimacy that it entails. One consequence is that any attempt to politically mobilise these Marseillais is systematically linked to a form of *communautarisme*, identity-based politics,<sup>443</sup> as if these 21st-century *indigènes* were incapable of political consciousness beyond tribal reflexes:

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<sup>442</sup> Open Society Foundations interview with Youcef Mammeri, May 2009.

<sup>443</sup> Translator's note: The French word *communautarisme* is not the equivalent of the English *communitarianism*; the latter denotes a political philosophy inspired by the American philosopher John Rawls; the former connotes parochialism and communal isolationism, a segmentation of the society into closed communities, which is viewed as the very opposite of the French republican ideal.

Political parties use a word that cuts short any discussion: ‘*communautarisme*’. We keep trying and explaining that it is not about *communautarisme*. But in all the political parties, including the right-wing ones, they consider that when two blacks or two Arabs discuss political issues between them, it is *communautarisme*, it is the ‘fifth column’. I know that what I’m saying here may sound exaggerated, but it is not that far from the everyday reality we live in. They charge you with *communautarisme*, as soon as there are two persons who socially have the same concerns and share the same origin. OK, except that ethnicity is not the reason why these persons enter politics, ethnicity doesn’t motivate or determine them into political commitment. And yet, [their] kind of approach is considered *communautarisme*.<sup>444</sup>

The charge of dual loyalty also frequently comes up in the discourse of Marseille politicians. Although local opinion-formers have supported the official multiculturalist discourse and the myth of Marseille’s cosmopolitanism, many among them still perceive Marseille Muslims as French on paper, that is, as citizens holding French nationality for administrative convenience and not out of conviction. This makes it difficult for the new generation of Muslims in Marseille to defend political positions that are perceived as particularist, parochialist or *communautariste*. Political activists of postcolonial immigrant background interviewed recall the real problems that arise for them caused by the suspicion that they constantly encounter, even in their own political party:

The party line, the slogan was: ‘Let’s open our minds to the society, let’s open our minds to the *quartiers* [working-class neighbourhoods].’ And yet, as soon as we manage to get new members – it was exhausting work – they [the white activists] said that they were false cards. Basically, they suspected us of fabricating ‘ethnic’ memberships, whereas the people we had recruited actually had a history of civil society activism before. There was even one [white activist] who eventually openly accused us of making community membership cards. It turned into a clash. We felt very weary in the end. Systematically, we had to justify our pedigree, to tell them again and again, ‘We are French, with full French citizenship!’ And that the fact our name sounded Arabic or African had nothing to do with it, that we were fully-fledged citizens! They looked at us as though we were the fifth column. And some of them even dared to say publicly that we were indeed the fifth column.<sup>445</sup>

From the beginning, I felt suspicion in the air. I could see it in the way people looked at me, or when they expressed reservations about one of my proposals, for example on the issue of school lunches and half-board [the issue of *halal* meals], or other similar ideas. I was the deputy president of the campaign team, and therefore I was a member of the group in charge of designing the party’s programme. I was

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<sup>444</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Mohammed Bensaada, May 2009.

<sup>445</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Sélim Grabsi, May 2009.

the only Maghrebi, and I could see full well that every time I took the floor, the atmosphere became somewhat uncertain, tense. I felt that the situation was really unequal when we began to talk about diversity on the party's list of candidates. There were clearly two groups: those who were watchful of keeping diversity in check, and those who were serving as tokens. There was such an asymmetry in the debates that sometimes we had to set the record straight, to state loud and clear that we were not second-rate actors who are here only to work as extras, for the sake of representation. The way we were integrated was a bit different, and we were subject to special treatment all along.<sup>446</sup>

These suspicions suggest that Marseille's political leaders should take a critical look not only at the general population of immigrant descent, but also at their own colleagues with a Muslim background. Even though the latter are experienced party activists and elected representatives just like others, they are continue to be viewed through a specific, particularist lens, whereas representatives of Corsican, Italian or Armenian origin are now considered real Marseillais. Nassurdine Haïdari, of Comorian origin, a Socialist Party activist and deputy mayor of the 1st sector (city centre), recalled the stigmatisation that he said has been largely internalised by fellow members of his community:

Yes, [the party] sees me as a black, as a poster boy. For instance, a fellow activist said in front of my wife (he didn't know that she was my spouse): 'Look, you see now, we've got our black!' It is explicit. They are forced to talk about those minorities on the political stage, but we are still not yet considered political actors like the others. They often tell themselves: 'A black who knows how to speak, this is not normal!' They ask themselves the question. But I also think that this reaction is normal, because the Comorian community used to be trapped in a system of clientelism – Comorians were the 'clients'. The community agreed to play the game, and we fell into that trap. As a result of this, they [white representatives and activists] are not used to coming face to face with a young black person who develops a thought and puts forth certain demands. They are surprised. There is a surprise, there is no outright rejection but there is no acceptance either. I know the political machine and I know what I have to do to be accepted, to have them accept me in spite of themselves.<sup>447</sup>

But even more than the discourse, the leaders of the new Muslim generation denounce the customs and practices of Marseille's political stage, as for example, the long tradition of clientelism, which permeates all political relations, as the political scientist Cesare Mattina pointed out:

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<sup>446</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Youcef Mammeri, May 2009.

<sup>447</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Nassurdine Haïdari, Deputy Mayor of the 1st sector, May 2009.

The customs of patronage (the relationship patron/client) are the traditional attribute of the notables, and therefore they do not disappear when politics become a matter for professionals: the tradition of patronage becomes integral to the trade of the elected representative. In Marseille, such practices were integrated into the municipal administration, by which they have been codified and endowed with legitimacy – this was rather frequent. Technical employees in the mayor’s offices and in the services of the municipality were instrumental in codifying unofficial (or half-official) rules that favoured, for instance, the children of city hall staff for recruitment into public offices. The system that allocates social housing by political affiliation was part of the same logic of patronage, raised to the status of a system inside the administration itself.<sup>448</sup>

Today, Marseille’s clientelism is in crisis – there are no more resources to hand out – and the current system rests to a large extent on ethnic middlemen and networks. Clientelism is met with strong criticism from those interviewed, as it is linked to political customs that they regard as shocking and immoral, such as, promises of employment or housing, inflated subsidies to neighbourhood associations or, worse, bags of rice and millet given out to needy African and Comorian families:

It is difficult to avoid mentioning clientelism. It is the reason why, in the working-class neighbourhoods, mainstream political leaderships and political machines hold the upper hand over the expression and the opinion of the residents. This works through a series of mechanisms, like the associations, which are not necessarily ‘bought’ or ‘corrupted’ – the word is a bit strong – but at least ‘controlled’. Their leaders are ‘controlled’ through a job given to them, or housing, or a grant. In every neighbourhood of Marseille, when there is a place for social life, a civil society organisation, generally, they are spotted by the political machines and quite rapidly put under control. During the campaign for the elections, I realised that the most important thing was not to spread a message of dialogue about ideas, values, or about a plan; but develop networks through which votes would be captured. Now, these networks, the most effective, the most powerful, they are activated by the major mainstream parties. I realised that even with the people I knew, it was not easy to discuss, because either they were ‘controlled’, in a soft manner and almost willingly on their part, or they were victims of threats, like cancellation of subsidies, or even more serious threats. I met people who smiled at me, but behind the smile, their message was that they were ‘trapped’ and that there was nothing they could do for me. Yes, this kind of clientelism, of patronage, is still deeply entrenched in Marseille; elsewhere in France, you won’t find this anymore. I realised that in

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<sup>448</sup> Cesare Mattina, “Mutations des ressources clientélares et construction des notabilités politiques à Marseille, 1970–1990” (Changing client resources and construction of political notabilities in Marseille, 1970–1990), *Politix* 17(67) (2004), p. 155.

Marseille, the level of politics is very low – a really appalling, frightening level of clientelism.<sup>449</sup>

This poor man's clientelism (which promises more goods and services than it is actually able to distribute) often goes hand-in-hand with a security-oriented management that consists mainly of buying social peace in the working-class neighbourhoods, thus preventing real collective and civil mobilisation, and further reinforcing the sense of widespread political apathy that so prevails in Marseille:

It is more than just barricades and barriers, it's actually a whole business that was instituted in Marseille's working-class neighbourhoods, and most of all in the North districts. A very simple business, in fact: you buy social peace with three or four representatives in the neighbourhoods. You try to have a semblance of calm and stability. You more or less buy people like this. The funny thing is that those people who are bought represent nothing; they do not represent the population of the lower-class neighbourhoods at all. Also, in our organisation *Quartiers Nord/Quartiers Forts*, we realised that people have long awakened from their slumber, and they see full well what's going on, the little games. The only thing that people in the working-class neighbourhood miss right now is a sound and positive alternative that may give them a long-term perspective.<sup>450</sup>

While all the political leaders of the new Muslim generations agree on the rejection of these neocolonial practices and ethnic clientelism, strategies to break away from this state of political subjugation are divergent.

### 10.2.2 Breaking away from political subjugation: strategies and views for the future

The stakeholder interviews and discussions in focus groups highlight three strategies for transforming Marseille's current political environment.

The first strategy, which we could best describe as utopian, aims at instituting a new balance of power between the working-class neighbourhoods and the local political establishment, by awakening political consciousness or raising political awareness. Supporters of this strategy do not believe that the process of depoliticisation of the socially disadvantaged areas is inevitable, even less so for residents with an immigrant background. According to them, a real potential for political action and contestation lies in these neighbourhoods, only waiting to be activated. This view on the issue is, most notably, publicised by the civil society organisation *Quartiers Nord/Quartiers Forts*. The organisation was launched in 2006 by middle-class activists from a Maghrebi background. After an initial political experience in mainstream parties (*Les Verts*, Socialist Party, *Modem*, etc.), the activists chose to create their own autonomous

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<sup>449</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Youcef Mammeri, May 2009.

<sup>450</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Sélim Grabsi, May 2009.

organisation. To protect their autonomy and freedom, they refuse to accept grants or subsidies from the city's public authorities:

We are clearly a political organisation. In fact, people living in the lower-class neighbourhoods, they are politicised, they have an opinion on everything. Our role, with the association, is to tell them: 'Make your voice heard! When there is something that you don't like, go and put a question to the elected representatives! Look at the election pledges, what they promised back then! Look at the political promises! See what was actually done by the politicians! Go and meet your elected representatives, be they your district councillor, the mayor, your deputy [member of Parliament]! Go and call out to them! They are there to represent you! You matter as much as the other residents of Marseille!' This is the message of *Quartiers Nord/Quartiers Forts*. The positive aspect is that, since we are independent, there are a great many people who have joined us, especially civil society activists. There was a breakthrough last year. People who were close to mainstream political machines resolved to get their independence back. Today, we comprise about fifteen civil society organisations in Marseille. We even worked out a platform for the European polls. This is really something new. People are amazed. They have a hard time believing that we are really independent.<sup>451</sup>

The demand for political autonomy is by no means to be confused with an ethnic *communautarisme*, a segmentation of society into tribal, closed communities. Quite the opposite: what the supporters of the utopian strategy want is to shatter the system of ethnic clientelism, which only perpetuates the humiliation of residents of postcolonial immigrant background:

The political destiny of these residents lies in their hands. We live in a representative democracy. A huge gap was created between this and direct democracy; to fill the gap, sooner or later we will have to move from indignation to action. What we do with our friends is nothing less than heckling people and telling them: 'Take your destiny in your hands!' And the basics, before anything else, is to go and vote. First: we need to make a difference in the ballot box, without proselytising for one party or another. Second: it is not only about moving from a status of consumer to a status of citizen, you have to become an activist! Today, we have a hard time reviving this tradition, this culture of activism, as in the times of the Communist Party. There was popular education back then. From the moment when the Communist Party lost its grip in the [working-class] neighbourhoods, there was a collapse of collective consciousness, of class consciousness. We need to set up organisations, to be militants.<sup>452</sup>

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<sup>451</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Sélim Grabsi, May 2009.

<sup>452</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Mohammed Bensaada, May 2009.

The second strategy may be called mixed, as it is one of multiple positioning: it consists of playing on several political registers at the same time, and making a place in both universalist and particularist structures, so as to take advantage of the fault lines and flaws of the local system. One of the upholders of this strategy is Nassurdine Haïdiri, who did not enter politics until very recently, quickly becoming, in 2008, deputy mayor of the 1st sector (the mayor was Patrick Menucci). A member of the Socialist Party (city-centre branch), he was actively involved in the presidential campaign (he ran a support committee for the socialist presidential candidate Ségolène Royal). To negotiate his position at city hall, he counted on both the internal networks of the party and ethnic, community-based organisations such as the Conseil Représentatif des Associations Noires (Representative Council of Black Associations in France – CRAN) or the Representative Council of French Citizens of Comorian Origin – CRFOM, which he founded. These activists model their actions on that of the *Conseil représentatif des institutions israélites de France* (Representative Council of French Jewish Institutions in France – CRIF), whose capacity to influence local decision-makers and to place its representatives within political parties and institutions they tend to exaggerate:

By joining the Representative Council of Black Associations in France (CRAN), I decided, at the end of 2006, to shift the battle lines. I was one of the founders of the Marseille office of the CRAN. We were mimicking the American model, to some extent. I knew of the struggles carried out over there, but here – nothing of the sort. So I started from an observation: there was a lack of representation of blacks in general, and in Marseille, of the Comorians in particular. For the Comorians, there was a real deficit. We were used as ‘good voters’, but now we want to be ‘good leaders. We need to tip the balance of power in our favour, just like Corsicans did, like Armenians, like the Jews. Yes, it’s a *communautariste* model. There are communities that play the game of *communautarisme*, and yet they are not perceived as such. And there are other communities that, even without playing that game, are viewed as playing it. There’s a great imbalance. The trouble is, we have no choice but to compromise with this. I advocate for a balance of power based on communities. When the Republic addresses individuals, well there are so many individuals that it’s like addressing no one! In Marseille, this *communautarisme* would rest on lobbies: a black lobby, a Maghrebi lobby, just as there is now in Marseille an Armenian lobby and a Jewish lobby. And we see them, these lobbies, each time there is an election, negotiating and bargaining like carpet-sellers. It’s not the best of solutions, but we’re getting to it! People have told me; ‘If you don’t do as others do, you’ll get nothing!’ I’m a utopian at heart, but I am forced to come to terms with reality; and that reality is based on communities.<sup>453</sup>

Finally, the third strategy could be summed up with the phrase “change in continuity”, in so far as it plans to take full advantage of Marseille’s clientelism, so as to change the

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<sup>453</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Nassurdine Haïdari, May 2009.

balance of power from the inside, tipping it in favour of Muslims. One of its supporters, Abel Jerari, of Algerian descent, was the deputy mayor in his sector for 12 years (1995–2001 and 2001–2008). He believes that for Muslims this strategy is the only way out of their current state of political subjugation, and that Muslims, just like other communities in the city, should rely on ethnic networks to advance their demands and to have their aspirations taken into account by local authorities. According to Jerari:

Candidates hailing from the Muslim community are taken seriously, but they are given a position depending on their representativeness. If I gather around me 1,500 Muslim voters in my district, and people notice that they have voted in the last polls, then I can apply for a top-five position on the roll. One who puts himself forward as candidate has to prove his strength. Politicians have their informers. They are quick to see what is your real weight, in terms of ballots.

As soon as the balance of power, in terms of voters, tips in your favour, you can impose conditions. It's true for the Muslims, as it's true for the fishermen. It's a question of networking. Jews, Corsicans, Armenians, Catholics, Freemasons, they have proved themselves already. They almost don't need to mobilise their folks specifically for the elections. The communities are well-organised year long, and politicians know this full well. For the Muslims, it doesn't work like that – not yet. We do not have this power at the moment. Electoral representation is a must, outside of it there's no hope. We have to show that we are powerful, and to maintain our network.<sup>454</sup>

The paradoxical moral of this overview of Marseille's political history could be formulated as this: It is precisely because until now Muslims have been too universalist, too republican, and because they refused to a large extent to play the community card and to rely on ethnic networks of influence, that they have remained subjected at the beginning of the 21st century to political domination. As a result, they are kept away from the institutions of local power, where their presence or influence remains insignificant.

### 10.3 Conclusion

Owing to the weight and influence of communities and to the tendency of local policymakers to rely on ethnically-based networks of clientelism and patronage (Corsicans, Italians, Maghrebis, Comorians), the city of Marseille was long seen as a political exception in France. But we should first see Marseille as an experimental laboratory, where modes of functioning are brought to light that may also be observed in other French cities. In this sense, Marseille would be less an exception than a magnifying glass of the facts of French politics, which have shown in recent years a

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<sup>454</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Abel Jerari, former Deputy Mayor of the 6th sector, May 2009.

tendency to wrongly put ethnic labels on working-class citizens in general, and especially on citizens of postcolonial migrant background (Arabs, Africans and *DOMiens*, i.e., residents from French overseas *départements* and territories). Whereas French political leaders do not lose an opportunity to denounce the dangers of Muslim *communautarisme* (with a connotation of parochialism and tribalism), it seems that they are often the ones rushing to activate community networks in order to get elected or to keep people in check. In this respect, Marseille may be viewed as a political model for the rest of the country, albeit a negative one, a counter-example and a symbol of the crisis facing representative democracy in France.

## 11. EXPERIENCES OF MUSLIM COMMUNITIES: THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA

### 11.1 The Objectification of Marseille Muslims in Media Discourse

In national and international media, Marseille is often portrayed as a multicultural city, comprising a plurality of ethnic and religious communities, among which Muslim residents (or residents identified as such) appear somewhat preponderant. But one should acknowledge that the reality of the city is quite different from the cliché; this is a result of persistent media stigmatisation. The distorted media image may be explained to a large extent by the fact that in Marseille, residents of African or Maghrebi background live right in the heart of the city, occupying a central position in the urban fabric, as one interviewee, recently settled in Marseille to work as a photojournalist, suggested:

I arrived in Marseille in 2004. Before this, I had worked in Paris as a newspaper photographer. I have eight years of experience in the field. But before [coming to Marseille], my work had never been concerned with the Muslim issue. It was only after I came to Marseille, that I started to take an interest in this question, even though my reports were not just about Marseille's Muslims, but about Muslims from all over France. In Marseille, one feels the presence of a strong Muslim community: it is right in the centre and it is visible; contrary to Paris, where they are less visible, except for a few neighbourhoods. Here in Marseille, at first sight, you can see that there are Muslims living in the city. I had felt this immediately, while in Paris, that image – Muslims in the city – we have it more present in the suburbs, not in the centre. In Marseille, you immediately get a sense that Muslims are central, that they are visible.<sup>455</sup>

This high media visibility of Marseille Muslims stands in striking contrast to their lower profile in local politics. In the regional press, Muslims are spoken about but not often heard from directly.<sup>456</sup> In recent years, however, some Muslims have emerged as important voices in the media and the public eye. They are seen as worthy of being interviewed and listened to. However, their presence is filtered through the lens of particularism, and is not immune to forms of ethnic confinement, seen in the topics chosen for discussion, such as the Great Mosque, urban policies and crime. This exclusion from the mainstream media of minorities is a long-standing and recurring phenomenon in the French media landscape, which is even more pronounced in the local and regional press.<sup>457</sup>

<sup>455</sup> France Keyser, press photographer based in Marseille, interview with the researchers, May 2009.

<sup>456</sup> Deltombre, *L'islam imaginaire*.

<sup>457</sup> Jean-Marie Charon, "La presse quotidienne régionale et l'immigration" (The daily regional press and immigration), *Les Cahiers du Journalisme*, ESJ de Lille 4 (June 1998), p. 40.

In Marseille, the exclusion of residents of Maghrebi and African background seems further reinforced by the local press, which is monolithic and firmly entrenched in a conservative tradition. The most telling illustration of these features is the editorial line adopted by the daily newspaper *La Provence* on sensitive issues. The paper is the region's leading daily (with a circulation of 170,000), created in 1997 by a merger between the editorial staffs of the *Provençal* (centre-left daily) and the *Le Méridional* (conservative), and has become the main carrier of news about lower-class neighbourhoods and the problems arising from the *vivre-ensemble*, the coexistence of diverse residents. *La Provence* holds a near monopoly on local information, hardly counterbalanced by another daily, *La Marseillaise*, a paper whose roots lie in the Resistance during the Second World War (1944), and which is politically slanted to the left; it is going through a severe financial crisis as it loses its readership at a steady pace. In spite of the apparent abundance of local papers, the media landscape of Marseille is poor and continually restructuring: there is one weekly, *Marseille L'Hebdo*, which belongs to the same press group as *La Provence*; a monthly devoted to satire and criticism of the political mores, *Le Ravi*, which is facing financial hardship; three periodicals linked with official authorities, *Accents* (General Council), *Région* (Regional Council) and *Marseille info* (municipality), and of course, since the beginning of the 2000s, free newspapers (*Métro Marseille*, *20 Minutes Marseille* and *Marseille Plus*), which attract a younger readership – one not accustomed to reading the traditional press – and give the free papers' their main competitive advantage.

By contrast, Marseille's broadcasting landscape seems more dynamic and, more importantly, closer to the local facts and to the everyday life of the people. Beside the local channel of France Télévision (France 3 Méditerranée), there are numerous civil society and community-based radio stations, which better mirror the diversity of local society: Radio Diva (Italian community), Dialogue (Christian non-denominational radio station), Galère (inter-communal), Grenouille (bringing together civil society organisations), JMarseille (Jewish radio station) and Gazelle (African, North African, Comorian). Also of note is the appearance in 2005 of a local television channel, LCM (La Chaîne de Marseille), which, has actually helped rejuvenate the cultural, civic and political news scene, featuring Marseillais of Maghrebi, African and Comorian backgrounds and the life of working-class neighbourhoods. LCM presents blacks, Arabs and Muslims on screen outside the usual stereotypes of petty crime, urban violence and criminality. The channel is supported by a staff of younger journalists and presenters who are well aware of the social movements taking place locally and provide their audience with a picture of Marseille more in line with the city's social and cultural diversity.

It is necessary to look at history in order to understand the image of Muslims as they are reflected in Marseille's print media, and investigate the deeper mechanisms at work in the collective imagination of local media actors, which have contributed in the long term to structure and crystallise representations, stereotypes and discourses.

Today, this historical legacy of the local media continues to influence the way the life of Muslim residents is portrayed locally. Patterns of news reporting are still permeated with the culture of the news-in-brief column, the culture of small crime-related incidents making the news and the habits of ethnic or religious confinement. As a result, these residents are still perceived through the lens of particularism: namely they are seen as Marseillais not quite like other Marseillais.

However, in recent years, strategies of autonomy and mobilisation have been used to turn the media stigma upside down. Faced with the general indifference of the local press and with the latent racism manifest in the media discourse, the second and third generations of Maghrebi, African and Comorians immigrants in Marseille are taking an interest in developing new communication tools, breaking free from the social control that was exerted by both local media and media in their countries of origin.

### 11.2 Three Defining Moments in the Media Narrative on Muslims

Representations in the media of Muslim residents and so-called immigrant neighbourhoods are to some extent defined by the political events that have shaken the city in the past 30 years. As one interviewee pertinently pointed out, the patterns that govern the politicisation of the immigration question on the one hand, and its media exposure on the other, are closely intertwined:

The discourse of the ‘official local press’ sounds like political propaganda, which is only confirmed in Marseille by the close links between political circles and media circles. For example the issue of the ‘Great Mosque of Marseille’. Often – if not to always – articles convey the messages coming from the city hall’s public relations teams. Other actors have never been able to voice their opinion on this issue.<sup>458</sup>

It is possible to highlight three decisive moments in the local political treatment of the immigration question, all of which were described in the local media. They were: the anti-immigrant “*ratonnades*” (violent racist assaults) of 1973, the radicalisation of local political discourse under the pressure of the rising *Front National* (1984–1994) and the Islamisation of the immigration question following the public debate on the Great Mosque (1995–2005). They may be interpreted as revealing moments, but they are also structural elements of the public debate on the legitimate or illegitimate presence of Arab Muslim immigration in the local space.

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<sup>458</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Youcef Mammeri, Muslim civil society activist in Marseille, May 2009.

### 11.2.1 The 1973 Crisis: political and media controversy about the influx of immigrants

On 25 August 1973, a psychologically disturbed Algerian immigrant stabbed a Marseille bus driver to death and wounded several passengers. Despite its dramatic nature, the murder was mainly an isolated incident, a “*fait divers*” (news item) just worthy of a brief mention in the press; and this is how it would have been treated, in principle, by the local press. But Marseille’s social and political context at the time changed this. A press campaign followed, prompting a series of hate crimes against Maghrebi residents. The local press played a fundamental part in fostering an atmosphere of xenophobia, conveying a broad range of stereotypes about Algerians and Arabs, and questioning the very legitimacy of the presence of Maghrebi immigrants in Marseille and in France. As historian Yves Gastaut recalled:

A dark climate of an ‘Arab hunt’ gradually spread all over the place; the context was especially tense and public opinion became heated. The local press played a major role in this affair, most notably *Le Méridional*, the right-wing daily, with a circulation of 80,000. The anti-Arab line taken by the daily was connected with the appointment in 1971 of a new chief editor, Gabriel Domenech, who had close ties with former members of the OAS, and was fiercely against any Algerian presence in France.<sup>459</sup>

The day after the bus driver’s murder, Domenech published an editorial that was actually a thinly veiled call to violence:

Folly is no excuse. That murderer, even if he is mad (and I would even say, *if* he is mad), makes the public authorities all the more guilty because they let him enter our territory. We have had enough. Enough of Algerian thieves, enough of Algerian thugs and vandals, enough of those bragging Algerians, enough of those Algerian troublemakers, enough of syphilitic Algerians, enough of Algerian rapists, enough of Algerian madmen, enough of Algerian killers. We have had enough of this savage, uncontrolled immigration that brings to our country all the riff-raff from the other side of the Mediterranean.<sup>460</sup>

Beyond the mere facts of the case, the 1973 events<sup>461</sup> are interesting in many respects, as a way of understanding the role of the local media in shaping the image of Maghrebi and African immigration in Marseille.

First, they reveal the close ties that existed between the regional press and local political circles: the daily newspaper *Le Méridional* was not only a press enterprise, but also the

<sup>459</sup> Gastaut, “Marseille, épicentre”, pp. 20–21.

<sup>460</sup> Gabriel Domenech, “Editorial”, *Le Méridional*, 26 August 1973.

<sup>461</sup> On the racist crimes of 1973 in Marseille, see also the documentary movie by Morad Aït-Habouche and Hervé Corbiere, “Marseille ‘73: la ratonnade oubliée” (Marseille ‘73: the forgotten racist crime), LPBV production, with the participation of CNC and FASILD, 2006.

carrier of a certain outlook, a political view of the public space of Marseille, where Arab Muslim immigration was seen as an illegitimate intrusion, if not a continuous invasion.

Second, the 1973 crisis underlines the role of the locality in structuring popular representations about Maghrebi and African immigration. While the influence of the press in shaping the attitudes and behaviour of ordinary citizens towards the immigration question should not be over-estimated, newspapers are nevertheless an important actor in the development of stereotypes and prejudices about lower-class neighbourhoods and immigrants, due to their frequent publication, their massive readership and, most of all, their ability to create a sense of closeness, of intimacy with their subscribers.

Last, the events of 1973 tested the capacities of local political elites, public figures embodying a certain sense of moral integrity (clerics, intellectuals, artists) and some sectors of the local public to resist and refuse to give in to the temptations of racism and xenophobia:

In the face of this upsurge of racism, voices of protest were heard among left-wing circles (mostly from the radical left) and among Christians. The Archbishop of Marseille, Monsignor Echegarray, took it upon himself to try to put the people's minds at rest, and condemned racism. Several groups of leftist activists bustled about to prepare an anti-racist counter-attack. With the support of leading intellectuals such as Maxime Rodinson, Maurice Clavel, Jean-Paul Sartre and Philippe Sollers, a fake 'pirate' copy of *Le Méridional* was issued and circulated around the city, with the subtitle: 'The leading racist daily newspaper', and they added the caption: 'Fantastic: today, your daily is not lying to you!'<sup>462</sup>

In this respect, it is also noteworthy that regional dailies such as the *Le Provençal* (centre-left) and *La Marseillaise* (Communist) spread the anti-racist campaign, condemning the atmosphere of xenophobia fuelled in the media by the conservative press nostalgic for French Algeria.<sup>463</sup>

The year 1973 may be considered a turning point in the history of the antagonistic relationship between the local press and Arab-Muslim residents, foreshadowing a polarisation of media and politics on the issue of immigration, which would come up again a decade later, when the *Front National* would emerge as the leading electoral force in the city of Marseille.

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<sup>462</sup> Gastaut, "Marseille, épigone", p. 23.

<sup>463</sup> Gastaut, "La flambée raciste", pp. 61–75.

### 11.2.2 The election breakthrough of the far right and the radicalisation of xenophobic representations in Marseille's public opinion (1984–1994)

From the early 1980s, tensions around the theme of more security for Marseille residents began to develop against the backdrop of the presence of a significant Maghrebi population in the city centre. On the political level, this fear translated into electoral success in 1981 for an independent electoral party *Marseille Sécurité*, led by a Marseille lawyer, Bernard Manovelli; its political platform made a link between the rise of insecurity and the presence of foreigners (especially Maghrebis) in the city's central areas:

The campaign theme is simple: Marseillais, and especially the people of limited means, are the victims of rising insecurity, of which the increase in the number of robberies, burglaries and assaults testifies; the government's permissiveness, and especially the amnesty law and the abolition of the death penalty, are responsible for the increasing disorder, of which the idleness of unemployed youth is the root cause; and those idle youth are mostly immigrants. Conclusion: fighting for security also requires fighting against immigration, QED, and there you are.<sup>464</sup>

Besides their somewhat unexpected election breakthrough, the arguments produced by *Marseille Sécurité* spread and succeeded in contaminating the debate: some local opinion leaders would soon make them their own, playing on xenophobic and anti-Arab themes that were thought to belong to the past. The moderate, liberal right was seen recycling slogans questioning the legitimacy of the Maghrebi presence in the city centre:

Discussions about economy, urbanism, everyday life all boiled down to talks about immigrants. It was about 'giving the Canebière back to the Marseillais', renovating the city centre, 'destroying the Belsunce Casbah'; building social housing was, of course, 'favouring the Maghrebis'. The right wing, for reasons that had merely to do with electoral ambitions, made immigration into the single central issue of the 1983 campaign. Certainly, it was not always that frank, because the right wing itself was divided into moderates and hardliners. But on the media stage, hardliners had the upper hand; to a large extent, it was due to the role played by the daily paper *Le Méridional*, which dumped, day after day, truckloads of calls to xenophobia, penned by its columnist and chief editor Gabriel Domenech, back then a supporter of Gaudin – later, he would become a regional councillor and a deputy, elected on a *Front National* ticket.<sup>465</sup>

The impact of such a political campaign on the image of the residents of Maghrebi origin was disastrous, as in the long term it shaped the representation of a large number

<sup>464</sup> Samarco and Morel, *Marseille. L'Etat du futur*, p. 62.

<sup>465</sup> Samarco and Morel, *Marseille. L'Etat du futur*, p. 63.

of Marseille citizens and voters, now convinced that the city was severely ill from immigration in general, and from Arab immigration in particular. According to the political scientist Jocelyne Césari, the local press and national media played a crucial role in fostering this fear-inducing atmosphere, paving the way for the *Front National*, which was to become the city's leading political force during the 1980s (gaining 25–30 per cent of valid votes):

The way these events were treated by the press (whether local or national) shaped the image of a city that was 'sick' from its population of Maghrebi origin, of a city that was 'a symbol of the invasion'. Left-wing parties, in this setting, adopted strategies that were merely defensive, which, paradoxically, only served to strengthen the politicisation of the immigration issue and, as an aftershock, limited the scope of opportunities for political proposals that would take into account the demands of the residents in question.<sup>466</sup>

As Césari noted, the political and media stigmatisation of immigration did not merely facilitate ordinary racism, but also resulted in delaying the process of civil and civic integration for residents of Maghrebi and African background, still widely perceived as "second-class citizens" or "50 per cent Marseillais".<sup>467</sup> In a paradoxical way, the issue of Islam and, to be precise, the public and media debate surrounding the plans for a "Great Mosque", will eventually contribute to speeding up the process of inclusion in the local public space. but in a particular manner where in a short timeframe the lable of maghrebi has been replaced by Muslim.

### 11.2.3 How Maghrebis in Marseille became Marseille Muslims: the forming of a community (late 1990–2009)

In the space of just a few years, residents of postcolonial immigrant background have become Muslims. This is an ambivalent status, pointing on the one hand to their admission and inclusion in the city, and on the other hand to the particularist treatment that they remain subjected to, which could be best described as a sort of paradoxical injunction to form (and be confined to) a community, a *communautarisme* enforced from the top down.<sup>468</sup> In Marseille this process of community forming affected nearly all the subsequent migratory waves:

At the risk of seriously breaching the official republican pact, and most of all to the benefit of classifying residents (implicitly but relentlessly), all the religious groups, with the exception of the Catholic group – which is never mentioned as a 'community' – are referred to as 'communities'. As a result, the word 'communities' becomes implicitly synonymous with 'minorities' in a political framework where Catholics implicitly play the part of a de facto majority – even

<sup>466</sup> Césari, *Être musulman en France*, p. 124.

<sup>467</sup> Césari, *Être musulman en France*.

<sup>468</sup> Geisser and Kelfaoui, "Marseille 2001", pp. 55–77.

though it is probable that, in terms of religious observance, they are not even the majority any more.<sup>469</sup>

Nineteen-eighty-nine perhaps provides the date of inception for the process of institutionalised community forming. The newly elected mayor, Vigouroux, introduced a mode of local governance based to a large extent on civil society and community networks. For the city's new leaders, there was a fully fledged local civil society, and ethnic, religious and philosophical communities were its main constituents and its living expression: therefore, it was necessary to help them structure themselves. A kind of council of the communities of Marseille was created in 1990, *Marseille Espérance*, with the objective of contributing to dialogue and social peace.<sup>470</sup>

The media responded to this top-down community forming with a large increase in the number of articles written on Muslim civil society organisations, or on the plans for a Great Mosque, which first emerged at the beginning of the 1990s, and which is still pursued today. At the same time, an Islamic identity was somewhat forced on the residents of migrant background, who were often confined and reduced to their Muslim component (a process that could be referred to as forced Islamisation). The process therefore unfolded in paradoxical ways: on the one hand, the so-called Muslims seemed to be ever more accepted, if not tolerated, as a community like any other community; but on the other hand, they were still arousing suspicion and fear. The representation of Muslims that was suggested in local media was binary, contrasting the vast majority of moderates with the fundamentalists potentially recruiting the youth of the North districts:

There is a fear of Islam connected with the politicisation of the immigration issue, and it shows through in the local press. A paradox therefore looms – paradoxical in appearance only – between, on the one hand, the relative civil peace within the housing units where the different constituents of Marseille's population coexist, and on the other hand, the media promotion of fear.<sup>471</sup>

At the beginning of the 2000s, this ambivalent view of Marseille Muslims in the media was being sustained, but was becoming more refined and subtle: the local press, and especially *La Provence*, was trying to report on the ordinary life of Marseille citizens of Muslim culture, still wavering between a fear-inducing discourse and a sincere desire to normalise the image of these residents. The discourse of the local media mirrors that of the municipality; the latter, while trying to mitigate the stigmatising, security-obsessed stereotypes about Marseille Muslims, also resorted to playing on the fear of radical

<sup>469</sup> Péraldi and Samson, *Gouverner Marseille*, p. 279.

<sup>470</sup> Marseille Espérance, “*Charte fondatrice*” (Founding Charter), Marseille, 29 June 1990. The *Charte* was signed by the following community personalities: Mgr Vartanian (Armenian), Venerable Thich Thien Dinh (Buddhist), Mgr Coffy (Catholic), the Chief Rabbi Jacques Ouaknin (Jewish), Imam Boughouma Seck (Muslim), Reverend Father Cyrille (Orthodox Christian), Pastor R. Dodré (Protestant) and Salah-Eddine Bariki (secular Muslim).

<sup>471</sup> Césari, *Être musulman en France*, p. 125.

Islam, insisting that the Great Mosque must by no means fall into the hands of fundamentalists.<sup>472</sup>

It is possible to highlight a convergence between the media discourse and the local political discourse towards an Islamisation of migrant identities – for better or worse. According to Rafi Hamal, an observer of local public life, who has been working as a journalist in Marseille for 10 years, there is no doubt that the population of Maghrebi and African immigrant background are ever more locked up in their Muslim identity by the local press:

You may notice a semantic shift – words and meanings have shifted. At first it was all about ‘immigrants’, ‘Beurs’ [Arabs], and now the prevailing word in the media is ‘Muslim’. In Marseille, these community-based identities are very present in the mental representations that public actors entertain. Up until today, in 2009, you will hear people in Marseille speak of Italians, Armenians, Corsicans as though these were ‘communities’. In Marseille even more than anywhere else, we like origins to be ‘traceable’. And Muslims are not exempt from this ‘traceability’. We force them into a community, just as we do with all other communities in Marseille.<sup>473</sup>

However, Islamisation does not cover the whole range of discourse and representations about residents of immigrant background. More conventional modes of ethnic confinement are still at work, affecting a local media landscape dominated by the culture of the news-in-brief (insignificant incidents turned into news items) and by the identification of the working-class neighbourhoods of the northern half of the city with areas outside the law, where rights do not apply.

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<sup>472</sup> See, for example P. Schmit, “La Grande Mosquée, dossier épineux mais incontournable” (The Great Mosque: a thorny case which must be addressed), *La Provence*, 21 June 2006; P. Schmit, “Mosquée: le maire a déclenché le processus” (The Mosque: the mayor has started the process), *La Provence*, 8 July 2001; Jean-Michel Gardanne, “Grande Mosquée: le processus suit son cours” (The Great Mosque: the process runs its course), *Marseille L’Hebdo*, 20 September 2001; Angélique Schaller, “Islam à Marseille ou Islam de Marseille?” (Islam in Marseille or the Islam of Marseille), *La Marseillaise*, 4 September 2001; Romain Luongo, “Grande Mosquée: la communauté musulmane doit réussir l’union” (The Great Mosque: the Muslim community must succeed at union), *La Provence*, 18 December 2001; P. Schmit, “Coup de frein à la Grande mosquée” (Putting the brakes on the Great Mosque), *La Provence*, 24 January 2002; Gilles Rof, “Une Grande Mosquée sans union sacrée” (A Great Mosque without a sacred union), *Marseille L’Hebdo*, 13 November 2002; P. Schmit, “Le mufti demande au maire de Marseille de choisir son islam” (The Mufti asks the mayor of Marseille to choose his Islam), *La Provence*, 13 November 2002; Christine François, “Un coin de voile sur la Grande Mosquée” (A shadow over the Great Mosque), *La Provence*, 19 February 2003.

<sup>473</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Rafi Hamal, journalist, May 2009.

### 11.3 Between Denied Representation and Media Stigma

The way residents of postcolonial immigrant background are portrayed by Marseille's media outlets is not immune from the trends that may be observed in other French regions: a permanent oscillation between indifference and the magnifying lens of security concerns.

#### 11.3.1 Thugs and assorted riff-raff: through the lens of *Faits-Divers*

Most of the media experts and communication sociologists who have studied the reporting of immigration in the local press have stressed that a security-oriented filter was predominantly applied to it; residents of foreign origin were often confined to the *faits-divers* column (brief crime-related news items):

When they are mentioned at all, Maghrebis play the bad parts, the villains, and they fill the news-in-brief columns; there are eloquent figures to prove the point. They are the 'unfortunate heroes' of violent social or political events, confrontations with the police in the suburbs, terror attacks, vandalism or, sometimes, armed robberies or other thefts. In the regional daily newspapers, which rely on columns such as 'Justice and Faits-Divers' to maintain a share of their regular readership, they appear first and foremost as the 'presumed guilty parties' of offences or crimes, or as the ones responsible for public disorders or breaches of the common rule (from violent rebellion to wearing the Islamic veil). In a far, far smaller proportion, they fall under the profile of victims of racist *faits-divers* or behaviour.<sup>474</sup>

The media do not seem to avoid this type of over-exposure through the *faits-divers*, certainly reinforced by a security-centred approach to immigration in line with the city's political history. In Marseille, indeed, as we have seen earlier, the local press has often served as an echo chamber for the political discourse, and especially for a rhetoric with neocolonial undertones that used to stigmatise North African immigration. Some observers of the local public scene go as far as to speak of well-planned media exposure, suggesting a collusion between the local press and political circles to pillory immigration and confine immigrants to discriminatory news:

I am going to speak bluntly: Mainstream local media do not see these residents. They totally ignore them. When they see them, it is only through the filter of the news-in-brief columns, petty crime, etc. They mention 'Maghrebi communities' only when some incident takes place in the North districts, namely an accident, a murder, a drug-related case. Nothing else is of interest to them. On all other issues, the lack of understanding, the lack of knowledge are abysmal. In this respect also, the history of Marseille is very specific. It's a city

<sup>474</sup> Anouar Moghira, "Immigration et médias régionaux: la vision maghrébine" (Immigration and regional media: the North African vision), *Les Cahiers du Journalisme*, ESJ de Lille 4 (June 1998), pp. 55–56.

with a significant *pied-noir* community [repatriates from Algeria]. And also a city where, until recently, the *Front National* and Jean-Marie Le Pen got their best results in the polls, countrywide. Here in Marseille, we live in a city where there is, deep down, an enduring distrust of the migrant residents hailing from the Maghreb. The invisibility in the media is intentional, organised. The only moment when there is finally some talk about [them], is when elections are scheduled. Immigration is a variable of adjustment for the political parties, which play the card of ‘insecurity’ during electoral campaigns. But outside those periods, it is never mentioned. You need to know that communities from the Maghreb are seen only through the filter of small incidents making it to the news-in-brief column. Outside that, they are not mentioned.<sup>475</sup>

Thus, while postcolonial immigration is over-exposed in the Marseille media concerning security issues, on the opposite side, positive initiatives seem to remain invisible, as the local press refuses to take any interest in the ordinary life of these people, as though they were living outside the normal social and neighbourly relationships, the kind of sociability that best defines the good life of Marseille. Only local radio stations linked to civil society networks would seem to make regular efforts to report on the life of the working-class neighbourhoods (Radio Galère and Radio Grenouille). In short, Maghrebis, Arabs and blacks, in the eyes of the media, exist only in a mode of exceptionality, through exceptional incidents, almost always dramatic:

The only picture of those neighbourhoods that they will show, it’s either the fabled ‘village cores’, or the *pétanque* clubs. They tend to ignore the residents of immigrant background living in the neighbourhoods, to leave them out of the picture completely, except through the lens of small news items and incidents (crime, drugs, violence). They never report on the life of working-class neighbourhoods, they are content with focusing on the village cores, where residents of immigrant background are less numerous.<sup>476</sup>

By contrast, according to this report’s interviewees, news reports on criminal activities in the wealthier districts never seem to feature in the local printed press, nor are they featured in broadcast media. This treatment is resented by many leaders of immigrant background as a policy of double standards, which carries the disastrous consequence of reinforcing the negative prejudices about residents of the working-class districts in the northern and eastern areas of the city, while covering up the phenomenon of ethnic discrimination and the patterns of territorial segregation:

Sadly, local media in Marseille only see the French residents of foreign origins through small incidents, brief news items: the cartography of drug trafficking, of petty crime. By contrast, these media never report on the cartography of insider trading in the city’s South district. Now, insider trading hurts French society

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<sup>475</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Rafi Hamal, May 2009.

<sup>476</sup> Open Society Foundations’ interview with Rafi Hamal, May 2009.

much more than the small-scale trafficking in the working-class neighbourhoods. In the same spirit, these local newspapers never map discrimination by mentioning the firms that discriminate in Marseille. But they exist: personally, I was able to pinpoint them, and I could map them. Roughly speaking, journalists rush to denounce the petty trafficking, but never the large-scale crimes against the Republic: when there is power at stake, they do not want to broach the subject!<sup>477</sup>

Based on these accounts, the Marseille case does not appear to stand out when compared with other places in France, where regional media outlets are most often sociologically cut off from the lower-class neighbourhoods. Much more than an alleged racism on the part of journalists, the social distance would explain the persistence of stereotypes: today, immigrant neighbourhoods are stigmatised, just like blue-collar neighbourhoods were in the previous century, archetypal places where debauchery and overcrowding reign. The prevailing patterns that underlie the media's representation of lower-class neighbourhoods are ethnic as much as they are social. But unlike other French cities, marked by a neat divide between the centre and the periphery, Marseille prides itself on a multicultural, unifying identity, greatly cherished by political and media discourse ("Marseille, a city that symbolises integration"). What has become unbearable to some people of Maghrebi background who are committed to local public life is precisely this discrepancy between the media image of the city, sold through magazines and TV serials, and the discriminatory facts on the ground. According to them, Marseille's multiculturalism is all but a myth, or worse, a façade:

Over the decade, there is one constant trend we can highlight: and it is the tendency to exclusion. We lost count of all the press columns, op-eds, articles that convey this negative perception of Muslims, and which rush to justify the political state of things in Marseille, namely the lack of representation for the citizens of Muslim culture. One has the feeling that the local press justifies this exclusion and this under-representation by developing a negative image of the Muslim community. Always playing on the fear, on a sense of incongruity, of insuperable difference. Yes, this is the surprising aspect. We are in Marseille, a supposedly multicultural city, and yet when you read *La Provence*, you discover a newspaper conveying borderline racism.<sup>478</sup>

One of the major explanations for this permanent discrepancy would stem, precisely, from the sociological make-up of the regional media outlets and the local editorial staff. Journalists from lower-class neighbourhoods and from trans-Mediterranean migrations are strongly under-represented – if not to say completely missing.

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<sup>477</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Ahmed Nadjar, chief editor of the Med'in Marseille website, May 2009.

<sup>478</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Youcef Mammeri, Muslim civil society leader and political activist, May 2009.

### 11.3.2 Journalists of postcolonial migrant background

The management of media professionals also contributes to shaping representations of immigrant and minority residents. In general, Marseille's cosmopolitanism does not show through in the socio-cultural make-up of the local editorial staff. There are some exceptions: Hédi Dahmani, the chief editor of *La Provence*, Thierry Trésor (of West Indian Antillean descent), a commentator on the local TV channel LCM, and a few local correspondents of *La Marseillaise*. In general, however, French citizens of Maghrebi, African or DOM-TOM (French overseas *départements* and territories) origins are under-represented in the local press, to the point that it is possible to speak of a real culture gap between media staff and the city's sociological make-up. Editorial staff and teams of journalists remain surprisingly white in a city with such a reputation for diversity:

On the matter [of diversity], let me tell you a short anecdote. Today, one regional daily paper, *La Provence*, has a monopoly. When the new chairman [of the newspaper board] gave his press conference, he sold the image of a newspaper that was reflecting Marseille. One of his colleagues, a journalist of *Libération* [national left-wing newspaper], raised his hand to point out that there wasn't a single Arab or a single Comorian among the editorial staff of *La Provence*. Yet Marseille has a school of journalism that trains numerous young journalists from diverse backgrounds. But it is uncommon that they go past the status of trainees – they remain interns. This applies to all local newspapers: journalists who are ethnically diverse have a hard time getting accepted, because they are not considered representative of Marseille. Today, the readership of the regional daily press (*PQR*) is very well identified: they are ageing readers, and sometimes rather close to conservative, or even far-right ideas, and they are unlikely to want to see a journalist of Maghrebi origin. Local media, although they keep lecturing non-stop about openness, are not ready to integrate diversity into their own editorial teams.<sup>479</sup>

Forms of ethnic or communal confinement in journalistic work add to the phenomenon of under-representation of the Marseillais of Maghrebi or African background in the local media staff. Indeed, reporting assignments handed out to the few journalists of immigrant background who succeed in entering the local and regional media teams are frequently confined to news connected with their ethnic, racial or religious origin. Thus it would seem that in Marseille, like in many French cities, a kind of ethnic division of labour takes place in the local media, which significantly limits opportunities for career progress and advancement in the journalist trade. In most cases, an unconscious discrimination is at work here: editorial teams spontaneously assign journalists of immigrant background to cover ethnic issues, without perhaps being aware of the discriminatory repercussions:

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<sup>479</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Rafi Hamal, May 2009.

There is a real misunderstanding, a certain view about us as journalists of immigrant background. It is a point of view that assumes that we will, and should, reflect the image of the community to which we belong. Of course, the situation is changing. For instance, now there are new classes at the Marseille School of Journalism, there are more young students of immigrant background. But Marseille is still an island, immune to many of the countrywide trends. Both leading Marseille dailies have journalists who are specialised in North districts affairs. Recently, for instance, I have been assigned to report on the issue of sports halls reserved for Jewish and Muslim women. The editorial staff chose me for this particular assignment. Spontaneously, the editorial staff always tends to confine me to this kind of topic, especially issues connected with Islam, or with Jewish and Islamic radicalism. I don't think it's by coincidence. It's true that I take an interest in these subjects, but I still regret that they don't think of me to report on less stereotyped issues, less communal ones.<sup>480</sup>

To address these modes of ethnic allocation or confinement and these latent discriminations, setting up independent media outlets more in line with the sociological make-up of Marseille's population is one possible solution. Some local personalities, as we will see in detail below, have not been afraid of this venture, and have tried to launch new media that would better reflect the diversity of Marseille. But on that level too, reactions on the part of local editorial staff sometimes oscillate between indifference and contempt, as though journalists of postcolonial migrant background are not actual journalists, always suspected of not being professionally competent: second-rate journalists or amateur journalists, certainly exotic, but hardly credible from a professional standpoint. Ahmed Nadjar, founder and chief editor of the Med'in Marseille website, described the resistance and reluctance he encountered in the Marseille media when he decided to launch his diversity media, fully and firmly rooted in the public life of Marseille:

The way the media in Marseille greeted us – their reception, was dreadful! They looked down on us. Basically, they were wondering what we were up to in Marseille's media sphere. The attitude of local media towards us was haughty, not to say disgraceful. When, for instance, we threw a party for the election of Barack Obama, local media reported on the event, and they quoted us as a civil society organisation active in cultural mediation, which is to say, that they refused to see us as fully-fledged, regular media. Local media frequently plunder our sources of information, without even quoting us. We are reduced to the role of a civil society organisation, period. Their view of us is still colonial to some extent. For instance, *La Provence* sets up operations in partnership with the *Ecole de la 2ème chance*, but they always play it to the tune of victimisation, of failure. They refuse to view us as journalists. They believe that diversity people do not hold the required degrees to become journalists. Now, believe me, in my staff I had co-workers who attended Sciences-Po [School of Political Sciences], who

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<sup>480</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Rafi Hamal, May 2009.

have master's degrees in international relations, who are polyglot. Some of these co-workers are twice or three times more qualified than most of the journalists working in the mainstream media. But even so, they are always assimilated to a category of sub-journalists, as if they were not fully legitimate.<sup>481</sup>

A challenge facing new media initiatives in Marseille is how to promote an original, novel diversity, that will break both from the nostalgic ideology kept alive by the countries of origin and from the modes of political clientelism developed by local authorities. This media challenge is being taken up by a new generation of journalists and editors of Maghrebi and African migrant background.

#### 11.4 Community-Based Media in Marseille

Before examining the community dimension of the local media, it should be noted that Muslim Marseillais are, first of all, regular readers, listeners or viewers just like any other Marseillais. The analysis of responses in the survey reveals that Muslims use mainstream media sources to get their information about community life in the neighbourhood (3rd *arrondissement*), or to get news about the city and the country of France. The main sources are national television, commercial radio, the local printed press and websites. Contrary to a widespread misconception, the media habits of Muslims do not markedly differ from those of other Marseillais. The survey appears to contradict the claim that Muslims consume parallel communal or ethnic media (Arabic radio stations, satellite TV channels broadcast from the Persian Gulf or from the countries of origin, Arabic-language newspapers, etc.). There is no observable tendency of a media ghettoisation that would result in cutting Muslims off from the local, regional and national media. Much to the contrary, Muslim respondents have media consumption patterns similar to those of non-Muslim respondents. Many read the local newspaper *La Provence* or watch the local channel LCM, especially for OM-related shows, and they tune into television news on the major national channels (public or private: TF1, France 2, France 3, M6, etc.). There is some demand for specific media, more during religious holidays such as the month of Ramadan, when Muslims' media habits are more aligned with their religious and spiritual practices.<sup>482</sup> To a certain extent, some local media – particularly civil society radio – satisfy this demand by devoting some of their programmes to community musical, cultural or religious shows.

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<sup>481</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Ahmed Nadjar, May 2009.

<sup>482</sup> Katrine Romhild Benkaaba, "Communautés communicantes: étude de quatre radios à Marseille" (Communicating communities: a study of four radio stations in Marseille), *Revue européenne des migrations internationales* 2 (2003), pp. 127–140 (hereafter Benkaaba, "Communautés communicantes").

#### 11.4.1 A modest supply of community media and a situation of cultural domination

In spite of its appearance of dynamism, the supply of community-based media remains quite small. Certainly, since the beginning of the 1980s, many independent civil society-based radio stations have sprung up locally, giving a certain rhythm to the life of Marseille's ordinary citizens, especially those from the Maghreb, Africa and Comoros. Radio Gazelle, Radio Galère and Radio Grenouille have the largest audiences, even though their content and their broadcasting have been through ups and downs. There is one other station, Radio Soleil, but its programmes are produced in Paris and it no longer maintains a local editorial staff. Due to their status as civil society organisations, these local media are vulnerable economically. In order to survive in the Marseille media environment, these civil society and community-based radio stations can only hire employees on insecure and temporary contracts or as volunteers: there are almost no professional journalists on their editorial staff. Unlike Paris, which possesses two major professional radio stations targeting Arab-Muslim residents, Beur-FM and Radio Orient, Marseille has not experienced a similar media success story, and media initiatives directed at residents from Magrebi and African backgrounds mostly are makeshift, amateurish enterprises.

As a result, civil society- and community-based media are in a weak position, and lack real capability to counterbalance discourses and representations from other local media outlets. Due to the hegemony of the regional newspaper, *La Provence*, Marseille experiences a situation of near monopoly in local news so entrenched that it seems impossible – or at least difficult – to challenge. Community media like Radio Gazelle, the longest-standing of the community radio stations, are in a situation of being culturally dominated, and have to make do with their position on the margins of Marseille's media.

It's true that small media outlets have played a certain role [in Marseille], but they have a less powerful media impact than the leading regional daily. I have to admit that, thanks to radio stations, we were able to have an expression of the opinion that was a bit broader. This was positive. But these community radios did not have the means to go much further – because they are also very dependent on a system, on political machines, if they wish to survive.<sup>483</sup>

While Radio Gazelle is often cited as an example of a community media success, its achievements need to be placed in context. The station was launched in the early 1980s by young Marseillais of Maghrebi origin, who were highly politicised and well aware of the social stakes linked to racism and discrimination. With time, the radio followed a gradual process of normalisation, turning into a kind of exotic media, devoid of political content. The programme schedule has evolved in such a way that the proportion of political and cultural talk-shows has been gradually cut down in favour

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<sup>483</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Youcef Mammeri, May 2009.

of music shows (featuring Raï and popular music styles from the Maghreb, such as Chaabi, Chaoui or Mezoued) and, most of all, of religious shows (call to prayers, readings of the Quran with comments and lectures), which capture the largest audience:

Yes, Islam is present to a significant degree on community radios. These media outlets devote their Friday shows, all year long, to the *jummah* prayer and the city's religious life. In Marseille, we've got the only radio station in France that opens its morning programme with an imam, and concludes the day with Quran suras. For that matter, I would say that these community media report more on the religious than on the cultural life of immigrants.<sup>484</sup>

The idea that Radio Gazelle would represent the media expression of the newer, Marseille-born generations of Maghrebis, Africans and Comorians is by and large a myth. This period of media glory belongs to the past. While the growing share of religion in general and Islam in particular most certainly responds to a demand from the audience, it is certainly true that putting some Islam on air safely guarantees a wide audience. This religious dimension of community media is rarely expressed through debates or historical talk-shows about Islamic religion, but almost exclusively through calls to prayer and Quranic readings. For this reason, there is a discrepancy between what the current community media have to offer, and the more exacting demands and aspirations of the new generations of listeners who, albeit imbued with religion, also want to listen to something different.

#### 11.4.2 A media landscape out of sync with new generations

One of the outstanding traits of the local community media is the strong connection that it still maintains with the countries of origin. In fact, Marseille's community radio stations seem centred on the *bled*, the country of origin, to the point that Marseille seems all but an annex or extension of the media space of Maghrebi and other Middle Eastern states.<sup>485</sup>

There is no doubt that community radio stations contribute to passing on and keeping alive a collective imagination of the diaspora among residents of postcolonial immigrant background, which is connected to the politics at stake. From this point of view, it is noticeable that the managements of the religious field and of the media are in fact convergent: the states of origin use both in order to establish and retain their social control over their diasporas, and in order to monitor security. Some observers go as far as to call them radio stations of the consulates, community media overseen by foreign diplomatic representatives. Rafi Hamal, a professional journalist who worked for more than 10 years on both Radio Soleil and Radio Gazelle, was able to observe

<sup>484</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Rafi Hamal, May 2009.

<sup>485</sup> Benkaaba, "Communautés communicantes".

this strategy, which was deployed by the countries of origin in order to address their respective communities directly and send them political messages:

Marseille media are more or less monitored by the consulates (Algeria, Morocco). We could speak of consular radio stations, just like some speak of consular Islam. You can even see members of the Algerian parliament coming to Marseille to campaign on the radio – and yet these Marseille radio stations are supposed to be French-law civil society organisations (law of 1901). I will cite the example of 2004. At that time, I worked as a journalist for Radio Gazelle. We had to cover the Algerian polls and the French regional elections at the same time. I was not given the means to cover the French elections, while colossal resources, technical and journalistic, were allocated to the coverage of the Algerian polls. The year 2004 was a symptom of the tendency displayed by the community media of Marseille to turn towards the countries of origin, neglecting local public life.<sup>486</sup>

Youcef Mammeri, a Marseille civil society leader, confirmed this tendency towards instrumentalisation. As a local public figure who has hosted civic talk-shows on Radio Gazelle for several years, he has often had to struggle to maintain his independence from the political authorities of the states of origin:

It's true that these radio stations have many ties with the countries of origin and the consulates. As a result, they try to please everyone, they report on the facts of Marseille because they want an audience, but also, they try to spare the local authorities. They safeguard themselves by trying to appear innocuous, and effectively by playing the card of a nostalgic culture, music and that sort of thing.<sup>487</sup>

Beyond the political dimensions the collective imagination of the diaspora finds expression in the content of the programmes. Community radio stations are keen to cultivate nostalgia, as though they were keeping their audience inside an imaginary media space, neither France nor the country of origin, but a bit of both: oriental music, ads for *halal* shops, travel agencies advertising pilgrimages to Mecca, cooking tips, news from the *bled* – this content makes up most of the editorial line. It is just as if the persons in charge of these community media had not seen the new generations (those who were born and socialised in Marseille) grow up, as if they were still operating in the framework of the immigrant culture of the 1970s, one that was imbued with the myth of return:

I believe that there was a change of generation among the immigrants that was not accounted for by the community media. Because the managers of these radio stations still belong to the older generation of immigrants. They do what they

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<sup>486</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Rafi Hamal, May 2009.

<sup>487</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Youcef Mammeri, Muslim civil society activist and political activist in Marseille, May 2009.

know how to do, namely something nostalgic, something cultural. There is no willingness to try to fit the media to the new audiences of immigrant background. The community media in Marseille have never really managed to capture an audience of youngsters, of students. They have tried, but never succeeded because they are too much stuck in this tonality of nostalgia for the country of origin. We tried to air shows about movies to attract the youngsters. But it was a failure, in so far as we didn't have any experience in the field. In the end, the community media continue to focus on older audiences, often feminine and nostalgic. They hardly manage to capture listeners coming from the new generations of Maghrebi immigrants. It's a media landscape totally out of date with the new generations.<sup>488</sup>

Despite the flaws, it should nevertheless be acknowledged that community media such as Radio Gazelle,<sup>489</sup> whether in its civic incarnation of the 1980s or in its nostalgia for the *bled* flavour of later years (1990s and 2000s), have helped fill a void in Marseille's media landscape, where citizens of immigrant background are otherwise totally marginalised as objects rather than active participants in the public discourse. The programmes, centred on the promotion of Mediterranean culture, have allowed for instilling some socio-cultural plurality in the local media, which are still extremely monochromatic.

#### 11.4.3 The new community media: actors or subjects?

In the face of these nostalgic media, out of tune with daily life, journalists and editors from the new generations of postcolonial migrants are striving to develop independent media outlets, which will break free from both the tutelage of the countries of origin and the paternalism of local authorities.

Med'in Marseille, a website set up in 2007 by Ahmed Nadjar, a French national of Tunisian descent, is an example of a Marseille media outlet that epitomises this trend. With modest financial means (an annual state grant of about €50,000), the website was able to develop a multimedia approach, combining text, sound and image.<sup>490</sup> It has been instrumental in changing the image of the residents of immigrant background settled in Marseille, tackling a number of stereotypes and placing these populations at the heart of the issue of local citizenship. Publishing the success stories of Marseillais from Maghrebi, African or Comorian backgrounds is one of the priorities of Med'in

<sup>488</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Rafi Hamal, May 2009.

<sup>489</sup> Odile Albert, "Une radio multiculturelle à Marseille: Radio Gazelle" (Multicultural radio in Marseille: Radio Gazelle), in Pascal Berque, Evelyne Foy and Bruce Girard, eds, *La passion radio. Vingt-trois expériences de radio participative et communautaire à travers le monde* (Love of radio. Twenty-three experiences of participatory and community radio across the world), Syros/Alternatives, Paris, 1993, pp. 215–219.

<sup>490</sup> In 2007 the website Med'in Marseille ([www.med-in-marseille.info](http://www.med-in-marseille.info)) succeeded a previous attempt under the name *Phocée culturel* ([www.phocée-culturel.org](http://www.phocée-culturel.org)).

Marseille; by giving the floor to black, Arab and Muslim personalities active in politics and the arts, the website smashes miserable clichés. Nadjar described the evolution of Med'in Marseille:

Med' in Marseille, is the revival of an older website that was called Phocéé culturel, in reference to the Greek name of Marseille.<sup>491</sup> It was a kind of pun. The concept was born from the observation that there was a discrepancy between the media image of Marseille, sold and advertised as a multicultural city where people live together, and the facts that were far less glorious, and marked, in particular, by numerous cultural and social divides [*fossés*] between the residents. So I launched this idea of a website with my cousin. When I settled in Marseille, in 1998, I found a city that was heavily compartmentalised, unlike the Paris region. At first glance, it's a pleasant city: there's the sun and the beach. But quite rapidly, I was confronted by a rather crude racism. From 2000–2001, we were fed up, we couldn't put up any more with the images on television and generally in the media. We saw that we were filmed like animals in a zoo, we had to cope with media reports that were accusatory. So we thought of beginning to produce stuff in various domains, be it in the field of civil or political activism, or in the media sphere – a milieu that I had previously avoided. While we were at it, the idea took shape: setting up a website, making fictional and documentary movies. Eventually, we created a multimedia base that combined sound, image and text. We ironically nicknamed it 'multimedia of the multitudes'.<sup>492</sup>

With several thousand unique visitors daily, Med'in Marseille has gradually become an institution in Marseille's media, to the point that it is now acknowledged as a model by local political leaders, civil society organisations, social welfare bodies and other media outlets. Its coordinators face a major dilemma: how to account for Marseille's social and cultural diversity without falling into the *communautarisme* of conventional ethnic media. This editorial line, constantly juggling between cultural specificity and universalism, is sometimes difficult to uphold. According to Nadjar:

Our budget was relatively modest. This is the reason why I wanted to focus on the most disadvantaged, disenfranchised residents – those most remote from equality of opportunities. I became aware that we should not do multi-community stuff at all costs, but that it was about giving a voice to the diversities most remote from the centre, namely blacks and Arabs. That's our editorial line! Besides, we also wanted to bridge the gap with the other side of the Mediterranean, especially Africa. Last, and this is also one important

<sup>491</sup> The city of Marseille was founded in 600 BC, under the name Massilia, by Greek colonists from the city of Phocaea in Anatolia (this makes Marseille France's oldest city). Today, the adjective "*phocéén*" is frequently used as a synonym of "*marseillais*". Translator's note: as Nadjar mentions, "*Phocéé culturel*" is a pun: it sounds the same as "*fossé culturel*", French for "culture gap".

<sup>492</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Ahmed Nadjar, May 2009.

direction of our project: fighting the clash of civilisations. We do not want to join this Bush-ist trio [referring to the war against the Axis of Evil extolled by George W. Bush], of the crusade against Arabs and vice versa! We need to do this job by reconciling shared culture and diversity.<sup>493</sup>

The founders of Med'in Marseille have one outstanding reason to feel satisfied: they have been able to stir interest in local media among new Maghrebi and African generations. While conventional community radio stations experience a constant disaffection among younger listeners, a website like Med'in Marseille has been able to stand out by developing a journalism close to the people and reporting on the lower-class neighbourhoods often neglected by other local media:

We are well received, most of all by actors of diversity who are not yet well known, because they see us as a springboard. We fully take this springboard function upon ourselves. We get even more positive feedback from those who are not into politics: civil society organisations are really pleased with our work. We give them the floor. For them, we are a media connection. There is a strong demand for media recognition among these residents, and we are glad to fulfil it, at least partly.<sup>494</sup>

Med'in Marseille can be considered as a pioneer, likely to help Marseille residents of postcolonial immigrant background find new media vocations. For all that, many obstacles remain, if only because funding is difficult to secure (media initiatives are expensive), and local political leaders are always tempted to manipulate independent media so that they may serve as electoral agents with an ethnic or communal flavour. The many interactions between local political circles and the media remain a feature of Marseille and a cause of social immobility.<sup>495</sup> In this respect, the media treatment of Marseille's Arab Muslims is no exception to the rule: any innovation is seen as a threat to a local system of power-sharing that only strives to reproduce itself.

### 11.5 Conclusion: Getting Past the Media Paradox of Marseille

Since the late 1990s local opinion leaders have been desperate to erase the stigma of the *Front National* and to renew the city's image by playing on the themes of cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism and ethnic mixing. We have lost count of political, civic and media initiatives aimed at promoting the positive clichés of a melting-pot of people living the good life of Marseille together, embodying a model of inter-communal coexistence unique in France. Therefore, during the riots that shook French suburbs in the winter of 2005, local authorities and media outlets explained the absence of urban violence in the city by successful and efficient integration policies that have helped to bring about a permanent social peace. This Marseille myth is widely

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<sup>493</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Ahmed Nadjar, May 2009.

<sup>494</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Ahmed Nadjar, May 2009.

<sup>495</sup> Péraldi and Samson, *Gouverner Marseille*.

reproduced in the local printed press, especially in *La Provence*, even though these media outlets otherwise convey a dramatic vision of the city's North districts, frequently portrayed as crime-ridden areas outside the reach of law and order. Here we come to the paradox of Marseille, a city where the celebration of urban cosmopolitanism (of which the clubs of OM supporters are supposedly the emblem par excellence) coexists with strong patterns of discrimination and a thinly veiled neo-racism. The local press is, without a doubt, the public actor that most represents this Marseille paradox. Local newspapers display a certain conservatism in the way they report on the lower-class neighbourhoods and the residents of postcolonial migrant background, as well as in their recruiting policies, completely at odds with the recent changes that have affected local society. In many respects, reform of Marseille's printed press seems long overdue, even when compared with local politics, which was able to integrate a measure of cultural diversity:

Marseille's political actors are increasingly diverse: from the Muslim community, the city has a female senator, a general councillor, a member of the European Parliament, and several deputy mayors. Yet there is almost no diversity among the journalists in the regional press. Local media outlets, although they lecture nonstop about openness, are not ready to integrate their editorial teams. The media are even more close-minded than other social sectors. In Marseille, media are reactionary to the extreme. They are ready to speak about the subject [Muslims, Islam], but do not allow these subjects to actually participate in and contribute to columns, hence the absence of local journalists of Maghrebi or Comorian background.<sup>496</sup>

To transcend this Marseille paradox, some local actors try to develop autonomous media initiatives more in line with local civil society; but for all their good intentions, these initiatives remain fragile and marginal in the face of dominant media discourses. The chances are that the façade of cosmopolitanism, kept in place and largely legitimised by the local press, is alive and well, and that the battle lines of Marseille's media landscape will not budge for many years to come.

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<sup>496</sup> Open Society Foundations' interview with Rafi Hamal, journalist, May 2009.

## 12. CONCLUSIONS

Given the size of Marseille's Muslim community, its diversity and the length of its history of migration, it can be assumed that it is much more diverse than can be delineated in this report. It is not possible to account for this plurality in this research, and therefore the Open Society Foundations deliberately chose to circulate all 200 questionnaires and hold its focus groups in a distinct sector, namely the 3rd *arrondissement*.

Marseille's social and residential space can be divided into four major types. There are Muslims in varying proportions in each, mainly distributed between the lower and the middle classes. The 3rd *arrondissement* is an example of the social residential type characterised by precariousness and mobility. Owing to the wide array of origins that are to be found there, and the homogeneity of the neighbourhood's social classes, the aim of the questionnaire was to obtain an understanding of the cultural contrasts between Muslims and non-Muslims. In effect, this choice allowed for a degree of neutralisation of social variables, and served to test alternative factors, most notably gender and origin. Nonetheless, it is important to outline the limitations of the research.

A key finding is the considerable impact of origin in the social milieu that was investigated. Two-thirds of the respondents in the Muslim category defined themselves as Maghrebis while almost all the others were Comorians. Under closer scrutiny, the social experience of Maghrebis and Comorians proves to be starkly different. The research points to a greater degree of racism experienced and perceived by Comorians, whereas Maghrebis, while also the victims of racism, tend to be more outspoken and critical of the treatment meted out to them. The findings do not indicate gender as a significant factor in discrimination and does not bring out a distinct social experience among Maghrebis, Comorians or non-Muslims of the same social environment. In contrast, the history and length of migration does matter, and in this respect the outcomes from the focus groups and interviews complement those of the questionnaires.

It is possible to separate generations in relation to their arrival in France: generation 1, 1.5 and 2 or more. Generation 1 consists of individuals who migrated to France as adults. Generation 1.5 is made up of individuals who came to France before the age of 10, and thus completed most of their schooling on French territory, while the experience of migration was still fresh in the memories of their immediate family. Generation 2 are individuals born in France from parents who were born outside France. Generation 2 can be viewed as more vocal and able to make good use of participatory tools such as protest and demonstrations. At the same time, they have a greater affinity with Islam than generation 1 and generation 1.5, the latter being well-represented among the stakeholders interviewed. There is a stark contrast in the relationship with the educational system between generation 1.5 and generation 2. Individuals of Maghrebi descent in the generation 1.5 category generally embraced the

school system and adopted it with a degree of fervour; on the whole they have good memories of this time. Generation 2 is fiercely critical, even vindictive towards the teachers, and is very much inclined to suspect unfairness or disrespect, even when their school careers were in fact good.

The Open Society Foundations' research findings allowed for a close scrutiny of the current situation in various sectors of public policy. In each sector a disparate set of rules, laws and institutions has been erected to deal with the areas they cover. As they increasingly encountered Muslims among their users, each of them individually translated and created their own language to counter the problems those users were posing. The outcome of this translation process is that Muslims have seemingly officially vanished from all public-sector policies and strategies. The school system recognises only pupils/students, employment services recognize job-seekers and employers, housing services profess to know only users making requests and people in inadequate housing, health-care services only sick persons or persons whose health could deteriorate and so on. Moreover, the idea of *laïcité* guarantees in principle that the state remains strictly neutral towards all religions. Nevertheless, in all sectors, Muslims do in fact resurface as the source of trouble or of the radicalisation of pending problems. The findings in this research report point out the limitations inherent in the official invisibility of Muslims in the institutions governing the day-to-day life of citizens.

Yet there is one emergent issue for Muslims as a specific subject for public action, namely recognition of them as victims of ethno-racial and religious discrimination. It has taken a long time for France to come to terms with the reality of this discrimination, and the country remains reluctant to draw a precise picture of the situation. However, the law has come to the forefront: discrimination is now an offence, and institutions have a legal obligation to fully engage in preventing it. This research highlights that inequality remains apparent in all the domains this report covers. Experiences of discrimination, that is, unequal treatment in relation to an individual's origin, skin colour and/or religion can be identified in the fields of housing and employment. In all other fields, where decision-making is not binary, like it is in the fields of housing and employment, a discriminatory pattern can be discerned. But in Marseille ethnic-racial discrimination falls outside the scope of public action.

Despite the presence of discrimination, diversity is much talked about and corresponds closely to individual experiences. There are many mixed marriages in Marseille and numerous religious conversions, and social experiences are generally mixed as well, at least in three of Marseille's identified social and residential contexts, including the precarious, run-down neighbourhoods where the questionnaire was circulated. The fact that Catholic-run private schools are wide open to Muslim students, and that Muslim families have trust in these schools, is emblematic of the crossover and interferences that take place at the micro-social level. But this does not preclude some tense situations and interaction. Above all, this display of mutual tolerance and acceptance of diversity is absent at the macro-social level, where the prevalent vision is one of a city

deeply divided along social and residential lines of fracture that remain heavily racialised.

Muslim Marseillais, long considered outsiders, are now treated as fully fledged actors in the local public space. Their visibility increases yearly and now encompasses, to differing degrees, all fields of activity: politics, sports, culture and media, as well as the world of trade and entrepreneurship. Yet this visibility still limits the extent of their integration into the local environment. On this level, the Open Society Foundations' research highlights the systematic tendency of Marseille's opinion leaders to assign Muslims to their ethnic and religious identity, as if they constitute by definition a separate group, despite the insistent symbolical reference to Marseille's spirit of tolerance.

Viewed as Marseillais Muslims (emphasis on Muslims), rather than Muslim Marseillais (or Marseillais who just happen to be Muslim), Muslims are not yet accepted as citizens with full rights. In Marseille, prejudices and presuppositions against them are firmly entrenched: a tendency towards violence, self-isolation, and segregation and support of radical Islam. While the city remains deeply marked by its colonial history, most of the treatment currently meted out to Muslims is unrelated to the legacy of the past and can be construed as a result of the mechanisms of power: the treatment of certain classes by public institutions and authorities with subordination and dependency. In Marseille, the social question fully overlaps the ethnic question, and it may be difficult to clarify whether some attitudes stem from contempt for the poor or anti-immigrant sentiment or post-9/11 attitudes towards Muslims.

For Muslims who are viewed, and define themselves, more as Muslim Marseillais, the challenge is securing and establishing their right to be treated dispassionately, and therefore like any citizen of Marseille, or their right to peacefully preserve the cultural, linguistic and religious practices that are important to their identities. When assessing the right to equal citizenship, Muslims still appear to be permanently categorised as a group, and perceived by local authorities only through the prism of Islam. The right to enjoyment of all facets of one's identity needs to take into account the fact that Marseille, more than any other French city, has been affected by overseas events, be they colonial conflicts, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism or the consequences of pervasive political unrest in Arab countries. For many Marseillais local Muslims are only a natural expansion of Muslims from "over there", which is to say that they could represent a real threat to social cohesion. In Marseille, the origins of Islamophobia reach back in time far beyond the events of 9/11, and they are deeply rooted in the history of the city. Hence a last paradox, which sums up the previous one: whereas Marseille is often considered, rightly or wrongly, by other Frenchmen and foreign tourists as the "most Muslim city in Europe", it is certainly not, at present, a city where it is easy for one to define oneself as a Muslim, and even less so as a religiously devout one.

## 13. RECOMMENDATIONS

The city's administration is a key player in three programmes: identity, politics and participation, and housing. It plays only a minor role in the other domains, where either the state (education, health, police) or private actors (media) take the lead and have the upper hand. In the employment sector, private actors have a decisive role, but the public service acts as an organising force on the job market.

This section highlights the needs and concerns of Muslim Marseillais, and makes suggestions and recommendations based on the report's findings.

### 13.1 Identity: Secular Society with Space for Islam

The young Muslims of Marseille display a strong attachment to their city of residence, as is the case for other youngsters and would be equally true outside Marseille. Attachment to the country of residence is much less strong (even though the ties to the country are felt when people travel abroad), and the ties to Europe are even weaker. Nevertheless, the survey highlights a distinctive sense of emotional ambivalence. The individuals who were interviewed are unanimous in claiming citizenship, that is, affirming that they belong in a framework of rights and obligations where they should be recognised as actors. In this respect, they advocate, as do other respondents, a *laïcité* based on the rule of law, which does not persecute any religion or minority bond. Even though they love Marseille for its beautiful surroundings, not all of them wish to identify themselves as Marseillais. Some do but others express reservations. They say that, deep down, they do not feel truly at home. Others feel that there is no place that they can really call home. For some individuals, at the emotional level the sense of belonging to the city is not self-evident.

At the moment, city hall's response is essentially limited to the plans for the Great Mosque. Today, the main symbol of Marseille is the church of Notre Dame de la Garde overlooking the Old Port from the top of the hill. Tomorrow, therefore, the city will also own an element of visual identification with Islam, and it is expected that Muslim residents will consequently feel better connected to the city or identify with it. This project is in line with the *Marseille Espérance* scheme epitomising its religious plurality. However, the actual value of this project, in terms of identity and sense of belonging, remains uncertain, and the compound of political and religious motivations behind the project is somewhat ambiguous (see below). At any rate, the project of the Great Mosque does not meet all the needs of people with postcolonial migrant backgrounds, in terms of collective strengthening and promotion of those values which have been evidenced through our survey. The research encountered among its respondents a feeling of being collectively held suspect and stigmatised.

It is not the city's task to oversee the collective organisation of the Muslims of Marseille, even less to use them for political gain. The city would, though, be well-

advised to support and promote independent collective initiatives to re-establish the wounded dignity of postcolonial immigrants.

### Recommendations

1. The City Council of Marseille is urged to promote the notion of a composite society in terms of origins, religion and a common shared identity, in which Muslims are an integral part of the citizenry, the city and the country. These individuals are not foreign to the society they live in and are fully participating members. The survey's Muslim respondents had a fair level of knowledge and trust in public and societal institutions and were regular users of public services. The challenges and everyday concerns of respondents were pragmatic in nature and did not differ from other groups in society, namely adequate and suitable housing, clean and safe neighbourhoods, suppression of anti-social behaviour, and the need for public spaces for young people.
2. Employers in the public and private sectors should implement the principle of *laïcité*, which treats all religious denominations on an equal footing and also effectively protects religious practices important to people. Such practices include official holidays for important Islamic events such as Eid. The understanding and implementation of a secular society have given rise to the experiences and perceptions of unequal treatment of certain religions under this concept. This report finds that Muslims in Marseille are familiar with and subscribe to the principle of *laïcité* but are critical of the lack of will to individually negotiate the observance of Muslim calendar events with schools and employers.
3. The municipal government of Marseille has set out a number of initiatives and projects to address the issue of marginalisation on the grounds of colour, origin or religion. Some individuals holding French citizenship do not feel French, do not feel they belong or are recognised as French nationals. Public and private institutions and organisations should promote and foster efforts that create opportunities for disenfranchised individuals and increase their feelings of acceptance, including funding, and increased support.

### 13.2 Education

In the education sector, city hall has only minimal power. It is in charge of primary-school buildings and school lunches, and it also has some competences in after-school activities.

The question of school lunches often came up in the survey, and different views were expressed. While nobody requested fully *halal* food for the children, it is certain that children from Muslim families would not be able to eat if they were not sure whether the meal contained pork or not. The city's administration could establish clear

guidelines with respect to this issue, maybe in a joint effort with the CRCM, for example, as the city of Lyon did. This would also affect the feelings of recognition of the city's Muslims.

The survey revealed two prominent needs with respect to education. One relates to the students with a poor academic record, who are assigned to vocational *lycées*. The school careers that are open to them neither meet their interests and aspirations nor correspond to the actual opportunities of professional integration. Solving this issue would require, on the part of the state and the region, a comprehensive overhaul of these training courses, in partnership with key actors from different sectors of the economy.

The other crucial need that the research identified pertains to the relationship of teachers (and other education leaders) to Islam and Muslims. At present, this relationship is distant and tense, and pervaded with the idea that Islam and secularism or democratic values are naturally antagonistic. Much work is needed here, and the city could play a major role, as a first initiator and then later as a firm supporter.

### Recommendations

4. The Regional Education Authority should promote the long-standing presence and history in France of Mediterranean Islam in its curriculum and school books. There are a number of untapped resources locally and nationally, including academics, religious leaders and other professionals, who can contribute to creating educational materials that highlight the historical contribution and presence of French citizens from Islamic cultures. The Regional Authority, in conjunction with the relevant Marseille education department, could initiate educational projects in selected neighbourhoods that could be incorporated into schools and colleges.
5. The Ministry of Education, the municipal government of Marseille and relevant private individuals should work together to foster a sense of solidarity and unity that promotes an educational system in which people can live together with their differences.
6. The Ministry of Education should assess the nature and type of education available to students following a vocational stream in schools, with a view to offering a variety of courses, including academic, which meet aspirations and interests outside the strictly vocational. A focus on purely vocational training for students following such streams can be detrimental, as it can lead to lower levels of integration and participation in society later in adulthood. While understanding that such a recommendation is suggesting a review of French educational structures, regional and national education authorities are strongly urged to consider alternative curricula that provide opportunities to improve the integration and inclusion of all in society.

### 13.3 Employment

The two principal needs that come up in the employment of individuals with Maghrebi, African and Comorian backgrounds pertain first to the assistance that should be offered for the inclusion of those with low levels of qualification, and second to the struggle against ethnic, racial and religious discrimination.

#### Recommendations

7. In order to better understand and combat discrimination in the labour market, the French government, the Department of Employment and the Marseille City Council should commission research which evaluates the labour market experience of people from migrant backgrounds, including those from the Maghreb and the Comoros Islands. Such research, together with existing studies, would offer evidence for policymakers to initiate action to improve the employment prospects of the economically inactive and to better understand the barriers for particular individuals and groups. Earlier, the city's administration took part in a "territorial initiative to address ethnic and racial discrimination at the workplace", a plan that appears to have been dropped due to a lack of political will at the municipal level. This plan could be revived. It should make use of computing software to record job applications by neighbourhood and by origin, which was detailed by an expert,<sup>497</sup> and remains available.
8. A disproportionate number of individuals from Maghrebi and Comorian backgrounds leave the French educational system with poor education and training and are ill-equipped to enter the labour market. The Marseille City Council and the national government should encourage the public and private sectors to develop apprenticeships and training schemes that benefit individuals and, as a consequence, attract prospective employees from such backgrounds.
9. The Chamber of Commerce in Marseille Provence (Chambre de Commerce D'industrie Marseille Provence – CCIMP) and the Youth Economic Chamber (Jeune Chambre Économique – an association of 18–40-year-olds at all levels and in a variety of areas including employment, economic development and citizenship) should encourage the private sector and entrepreneurs to train staff from diverse backgrounds and to further promote the "Label Diversity" award scheme, an AFNOR-sanctioned award that rewards diversity-conscious employers from the business community.
10. Sponsoring activities could be developed through diversity candidates, supporting them into the labour market through training, which would make them more viable and attractive candidates. This could be carried out

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<sup>497</sup> Larbi Saoudi, who died in April 2009 during the Open Society Foundations' research period.

professionally, modelled on a number of NGOs committed to diversity inclusion that exist in other parts of France. At present, this is an open niche in Marseille, even though the city has a strong need for diversity inclusion organizations and activities.

### 13.4 Housing

Housing in Marseille is characterised by a racial divide between the North and South districts. There is segregation, especially for people originating from the Maghreb, other parts of Africa and the Comores. Many people remain captive in community-specific or ethnic areas, or in the most disadvantaged parts of the city. This entrenchment will not change overnight.

However, the city's administration seems determined to move forward. A municipal pledge has been drafted, which includes confronting the problem of inadequate housing, particularly in the city centre, by creating new strategies and collaborating in broad partnerships to improve housing; vacancies will be addressed by listing and mapping vacant properties. A new relationship is being established with the civil society organisations representing the inhabitants. There seems to be a consensus today that the residents whose apartments are slated to undergo renovation have a right to stay where they live.

Nevertheless, the city's housing policy remains limited with respect to the racial divisions that cut through the urban fabric. Policies governing the construction of new housing are mostly geared towards the needs of the middle classes, which do indeed exist. City hall continues to lack a strong policy on social housing, and it does not have a policy in which poorer residents would also be scattered across the South districts. These important factors should be integral to actions that would support the right to housing and a mixing of social classes.

#### Recommendations

11. The housing departments in the city of Marseille's administration should ensure the equitable distribution of social housing across the city in an effort to combat ethnic and social class segregation. Currently, there is a predominance of social housing in the north of Marseille that mainly houses residents from poorer classes and ethnic-minority backgrounds. Social housing should be accessible to all categories and origins, including in the southern districts of Marseille, ensuring access to adequate housing. Neighbourhoods with people from different backgrounds would combat class and ethnic divides.
12. In order to have better representation and effective information dissemination, Marseille's city administration and the relevant housing department should ensure a broad representation of residents on committees allocating public

housing. The model of the Commission départementale de médiation (departmental mediation committee) under the DALO law would be a good example to follow. In addition, Marseille city officials should create more effective channels of communication for residents from larger public housing estates to express their concerns about the quality of housing and living conditions.

13. ANRU and Marseille's municipal government should initiate the urban renewal programme for the 3rd arrondissement that is currently on hold. Such programmes aimed at improving and rehabilitating large social housing estates are effective for regulating living environments and, alongside three other areas that have been agreed upon, the 3rd arrondissement plan remains to be approved.
14. The state should review the impact of legislation stipulating that those individuals eligible to claim pension and retirement rights must reside in France for a certain number of months each year in order to claim them. This requirement places particular restrictions on single, elderly first-generation migrant males whose families are located outside France. In order to meet conditions for getting their rights, they are unable to freely choose their place of residency upon retirement. As a consequence, they continue to live solitary lives in their old age.

### 13.5 Health and Welfare

In the course of the last few years, there has been a certain amount of serious reflection at the national level regarding the inequality among citizens in health care and social security. Initiatives in preventative and community-based medicine have recently been the subjects of experiment in Marseille's working-class neighbourhoods, where large numbers of residents of Arab and Muslim backgrounds are concentrated. But, as we noted, Muslims experience the twofold penalising effects of poverty and ethnicity, a situation of double stigma which is often difficult to accept.

Marseille is one of the French cities where inequalities in the medical, health and social sectors are the most striking. While it is difficult for local authorities to take appropriate sanctions against those private-practice physicians or hospitals who do not respect the principle of equality in health care, particularly through the unequal implementation of the CMU, they can take a leading role in setting up preventative health programmes geared for the residents of working-class neighbourhoods.

#### Recommendations

15. This research found that issues around health care include a refusal from health-care professionals to offer medical treatment to those patients who have universal health-care insurance (CMU). In order to ensure that the right to

adequate health care is enjoyed by all, the city health department has initiated MPP programmes that offer preventative advice and medicine in various locations in Marseille, especially in the more disadvantaged areas. These sorts of initiatives can be further strengthened and sustained through the support of the medical establishment and other local health agencies and organisations. In this respect, the AP-HM could serve as the mediating institution and the main institutional referee.

16. It is important that solutions do not become alternatives to established medical facilities and professionals or create a two-tier system dividing health-care provision between the affluent and the less affluent. It is crucial that all new initiatives focused on community-based medical support are mainstreamed into existing health-care policies and that such community efforts integrate and deliver services to the system's neediest patients.
17. In coming years, Marseille could become a pilot city in the struggle against the so-called "medical fracture", or medical gap, and for the defence of health-care democracy. More specifically, it would be advisable that local decision-makers, notably the mayor, step in more decisively to have the patient's charter implemented in all city hospitals, especially with reference to the respect of the spiritual and religious rights of patients. While the requests from patients of Muslim faith cannot go against the principles of secularism in the hospitals, they must be met within the framework of the law. In this respect, the mayor can take on the function of a mediator, so that Marseille hospitals may better reflect the fraternal coexistence that exists in other sectors of the city. Marseille Espérance could lead to Hospital Espérance, in order for all religious and philosophical communities to benefit from equal treatment in Marseille hospitals.

### 13.6 Policing and Security

Discriminatory behaviour and stop-and-search of individuals by police officers based on their ethnic or racial origin has been the subject of recent research by the Open Society Foundation's Justice Initiative and by other organisations. Together with the findings from the Marseille study, there is a clear need for French institutions to address prejudice and discrimination in the police force. At the same time, the findings from the Muslims in Marseille report highlight a police force in Marseille that possesses a fair knowledge of its city and neighbourhoods and one which is aware of the need for a balanced and fair response in policing towards its various ethnic, racial and religious communities.

Strategies should also be cognisant of the need to ensure that all parts of a local area are included in community policing efforts and that no-go areas are not created. Community policing on the streets should not be seen as a symptom of a crime-ridden area and instead should increase the confidence of all residents to feel protected and included.

Although some improvements have been noticeable in the last five years, the relations between local authorities and the Muslims of Marseille are still dominated by security issues and an atmosphere of suspicion. This is an unfortunate situation, since Muslims make up nearly one-third of the population of Marseille. However, there is a real potential for change in three definite areas.

### Recommendations

18. City hall must open negotiations with all the representatives of Islam in the city, without prejudice to their particular religious or philosophical orientations. The scarecrow of fundamentalism and radical Islam must no longer delay advances on the question of Muslim places of worship in the city. The prospective Great Mosque should not be conceived only as an opportunity for more policing and control but rather as a place for exchange and dialogue. On a similar note, city hall could consider opening up Marseille Espérance to other and younger Muslim voices (secular and religious alike), instead of limiting its access to the representatives of official Islam, those who have close ties to the network of home country embassies and consulates.
19. It is crucial that the policy of urban security be based on universal principles in a bid to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of neighbourhoods reputed to be “ethnic”, “Arab” or “Muslim”. The policy of video-surveillance, the intensifying of which has recently been approved by city hall, must not be exclusively restricted to the areas perceived as ethnic, but must cover Marseille’s territory as a whole, including working-class neighbourhoods and affluent “white” and “coloured” areas. While it is legitimate for the local authorities to develop a security policy, it must protect and be applied to all citizens in an equal manner.
20. It is advisable that recruitment in the municipal police, which is placed directly under the authority of the Mayor, should more accurately reflect the cultural diversity of the city. Such a move is not recommended in order to create an ethnic police force modelled on the ethnic composition of each neighbourhood, but, on the contrary, in order to deploy a diverse municipal police force citywide, so that the residents of Marseille may realise that individuals of all backgrounds take part in the security of the city.
21. The Marseille police should systematically record its use of stops, identity checks and searches. This should be done through stop forms, which include for instance the date, time and place a police stop occurs, the name of the police officer, the legal ground of the stop, the ethnic origin and nationality of the person stopped. Stop forms can be used to monitor police practices and ethnic profiling, encourage officers to make well-grounded stops, help local communities holding the police accountable for their actions and be used as evidence in cases concerning ethnic profiling.

### 13.7 Participation and Citizenship

Marseille's Muslims are politically under-represented, and their position has hardly improved in recent years. There are fewer than 10 representatives at the city government level (seven, to be precise) and approximately thirty arrondissement councillors with a background related to postcolonial migration (Maghreb, Comores and sub-Saharan Africa). This situation is aggravated by subordination tactics that often reduce Muslims to electoral goods that politicians may trade, that is to say, to mere stocks of ethnic votes, deprived of any real opportunity to take part in electoral platforms or in political decision-making.

Some Muslims in this research expressed strong feelings of bitterness towards the political system of Marseille and believe that local political leaders have deliberately retained remnants of a system and tactics reminiscent of France's colonial past. There are fears that there is potential for these civic and political frustrations to lead to riots and social unrest, similar to the ones that shook the suburbs of Paris in the winter of 2005. It is therefore urgent that Marseille's political parties, trade unions and civic associations engage together in reflection on the political representation of working-class neighbourhoods in general, and of postcolonial residents in particular.

#### Recommendations

22. Representatives from municipal government should move across party lines to sponsor a wide-ranging civic consultation and encourage awareness-raising campaigns directed at working-class neighbourhoods as well as more affluent neighbourhoods, in which some residents believe they are the only true Marseillais, in contrast to the "imported" Marseillais (Arabs, blacks, Muslims). In this respect, one can only note with some regret that city hall in Marseille is more focused on inter-faith dialogue (through the Marseille Espérance scheme) than on political dialogue between various constituents of the population. The Muslims of Marseille should also strive to be considered as actors in the city's political life and not merely as religious subjects whose destiny could be put in the hands of ethnic leaders co-opted by the local powers that be.
23. The Marseille tradition of local democracy has a long history thanks to the establishment of the CIQ, which dates back to the end of the 19th century. These committees, made up of a very small share of the population and including elderly residents usually of a middle- or upper-middle-class background, are now viewed as significantly old-fashioned, in terms of both their internal functioning and representation. City hall and the relevant heads of these committees are urged to reconsider the composition and function of these committees, which could be revitalised with representatives from all the diverse groups in Marseille. A modernisation of the CIQ could constitute a first step in a wider campaign to restore local democracy and a more

representative set of local committees that reflect the background and issues facing the city today.

### 13.8 Role of the Media

At the beginning of the 21st century, the media plays a major role in shaping the prevailing sets of representations, attitudes and behaviours displayed towards the diverse constituents that make up the population of France, nurturing values of tolerance as much as encouraging rejection. In Marseille, it is indisputable that regional newspapers were leading actors in legitimising migratory waves, on the one hand, or propagating nationalistic and xenophobic trends on the other. Here the local press, even more than the national newspapers, has a crucial role to play in spreading the notions of local democracy.

Marseille is often portrayed as one of the very few cities to have accomplished cultural diversity in the media. A closer analysis of the situation in Marseille media shows that, on the contrary, Marseille lags well behind others in this field, and that the population with a postcolonial migrant background is generally invisible – or present only as ghosts – in the media sphere. Opinion leaders and local powers seem content with the existence of ethnic media that are stuck in subordinate positions, that cater exclusively to their own communities, and that focus on entertaining feelings of nostalgia among Muslim audiences. Communal media such as these are totally disconnected from the aspirations and demands of the younger generations of Marseille Muslims.

The few media outlets that give a voice to the working-class neighbourhoods and to the Marseillais of postcolonial migrant background experience significant material and financial difficulties. Their scarce resources are provided, for the most part, by national bodies and not by local institutions.

#### Recommendations

24. Local and national broadcasting organisations, newspapers, and publishing houses should take steps to ensure that their editorial staff and teams reflect the diversity of French society.
25. The Marseille School of Journalism should encourage the recruitment of qualified young journalists from diverse ethnic and social classes and support a new generation of media workers who reflect the diversity of French society. The school should be empowered as a pilot institution for increasing diversity among journalism professionals. This would be a significant step in helping prompt opinion leaders and local media to bridge the gap between themselves and Muslim residents.
26. More generally, journalism schools should consider setting up courses that emphasise journalism ethics and include anti-discrimination training.

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## ANNEX 2. LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS

- Abderrahmane Abou Diarra**, accountant, member of *Marseille Espérance*, president of Club Diversité
- Samira Agem**, former project manager at the local mission for integration of young people into the world of work and regional club of firms for integration (CREPI, Eiffage group)
- Azedine Aïnouche**, manager of the Mediterranean Institute for Islamic studies (IMEM)
- Achim Allik**, NGO activist, French-Algerian, Algerian chapter of PACA
- Frédéric Archelas**, DDE13, Housing and Town Department, Ministry of Equipment
- Kader Attia**, manager of an NGO for housing assistance
- Slah Bariki**, mayor's personal staff, member of *Marseille Espérance*
- Jeannette Belaadi**, health officer, Marseille North Hospital
- Mohammed Bensaada**, NGO activist, founder of *Quartiers Nord/Quartiers Forts* NGO
- Karima Berriche**, manager of a social centre in Marseille North district, NGO activist
- Mme Boilleau**, director of *La Viste* vocational school, Marseille, 15th *arrondissement*
- Fathi Bouaroua**, former manager of social centre, former director of an NGO for housing assistance, regional headquarters of Abbé Pierre Foundation
- Saïd Boukenouche**, NGO activist, former president of Marseille *Ligue des droits de l'homme* (Human Rights League), secondary-school teacher
- Samia Chabani**, NGO manager, party activist
- Jean Chamoux** director of St-Mauront private secondary school, Marseille, 3rd *arrondissement*
- Mohamed Ben Omar El Taief**, former Muslim chaplain of Marseille hospitals
- Patrick Demougeot**, deputy regional inspector in charge of migrant pupils and priority education, Ministry of National Education
- Rachida Dumas**, regional inspector of Arabic language, Ministry of National Education
- Salim Grabsi**, NGO manager, party activist, member of *Quartiers Nord/Quartiers Forts* NGO
- Nassurdine Haïdari**, party activist, Marseille 1st sector deputy mayor
- Rafi Hamal**, journalist on local weekly newspaper
- Abel Jerari**, NGO and party activist, former Marseille deputy mayor
- France Keyser**, photographer, author of the book *Nous sommes Français et Musulmans*, Autrement, Paris, 2010
- Youcef Mammeri**, Muslim NGO leader, party activist, former candidate in local elections
- Kader Mostafaoui**, health officer at psychiatric hospital, NGO activist

**Säïd Moussa**, rap musician, Marseille North district

**Ahmed Nadjar**, journalist, editor-in-chief of Med'in Marseille website

**Fatima Nasser**, local inspector, Ministry of National Education

**Jean Natourian**, in charge of educational extra-school activities, Marseilles city hall

**Fatima Orsatelli**, NGO activist, member of the Regional Council for Muslim Cult and of Marseille Mosque society, regional councillor (Socialist Party)

**Bernard Ravet**, director of Jean-Claude Izzo secondary school, Marseille 2nd *arrondissement*

**Jean-Marc Robert**, National Agency for Employment (ANPE-Pôle emploi)

**Elizabeth Säïd**, Marseille municipal councillor (Socialist Party)

**Myriam Salaheddine**, former member of the High Committee for Integration, Marseille, urban community counsellor

**Larbi Saoudi** (†), councillor for social and workforce integration, expert on discrimination in the workforce

## ANNEX 3. QUESTIONNAIRE

### Social Cohesion, Participation and Identity

#### A. Preliminary Information

[To be completed by the interviewer]

A1 Interview Number: \_\_\_\_\_

A2 Name of interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

A3 Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

A4 Location of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

- |    |                |    |           |
|----|----------------|----|-----------|
| 1  | Amsterdam      | 6  | Leicester |
| 2  | Antwerp        | 7  | Marseille |
| 3  | Berlin         | 8  | Paris     |
| 4  | Copenhagen     | 9  | Rotterdam |
| 5  | Hamburg        | 10 | Stockholm |
| 11 | Waltham Forest |    |           |

A5 Name of the local area/neighbourhood: \_\_\_\_\_

A6 Duration of the interview: \_\_\_\_\_

A7 Language interview conducted in: \_\_\_\_\_

- |   |         |    |         |
|---|---------|----|---------|
| 1 | Arabic  | 8  | German  |
| 2 | Bengali | 9  | Kurdish |
| 3 | Berber  | 10 | Swedish |
| 4 | Danish  | 11 | Somali  |
| 5 | Dutch   | 12 | Turkish |
| 6 | English | 13 | Urdu    |
| 7 | French  | 14 | Other   |

**B. Profile of the Interviewee**

[This page needs to be completed by the interviewer for every interviewee immediately after the interview.]

## B1 Interview Category

- 1 Muslim
- 2 Non Muslim

## B2 Sex

- 1 Male
- 2 Female

## B3 Any visible signs of religious identity?

- 1 Yes [*please specify*]
- 2 No

## B4 Recruitment Source:

**C. Neighbourhood Characteristics**

*This first set of questions is about where you live – your house, neighbourhood, local area, and what you feel about these things.*

[Explain that in these questions by 'local area' we mean the area within 15-20 minutes walk of where they live and by 'neighbourhood' we mean the 3 or 4 street immediately around where they live.]

## C1 Do you own or rent your home or have some other arrangement?

- 1 Own outright
- 2 Own – with mortgage/loan
- 3 Part rent, part mortgage (shared equity)
- 4 Rent public/social housing
- 5 Rent private landlord
- 6 Living with parents/siblings
- 7 Living rent free [*write in why*]
- 8 Squatting
- 9 Other [*specify*]

## C2 How many years have you lived in this local area?

C3 What is your main reason for moving to/living in this local area?

- 1 Did not choose
- 2 Cost
- 3 Near work
- 4 Near school
- 5 Near family
- 6 Near shops/other facilities
- 7 Reputation of the area
- 8 People from the same ethnic group as you
- 9 People from the same religious group as you
- 10 Nice area
- 11 Social housing was offered to me
- 12 Liked the house
- 13 Cheap affordable housing
- 14 Close to transport
- 15 Born here/always lived here
- 16 Lived here before
- 17 Parent's house/decision
- 18 Marriage living with partner
- 19 Close to place of worship
- 20 Multi-cultural area
- 21 Other [specify]
- 22 Don't know

C4 Are the people who live in this neighbourhood:

- 1 mainly your relatives
- 2 mainly people from your ethnic and religious background
- 3 mainly people who share your religion from other ethnic backgrounds
- 4 mainly people from the same ethnic background but different religion
- 5 mainly people from a different ethnic and religious background
- 6 from a mixture of different backgrounds, ethnicities and religions

C5 Would you say that this is a neighbourhood you enjoy living in?

- 1 Yes, definitely
- 2 Yes, to some extent
- 3 No [go to C7]

C6 What things do you like about the neighbourhood you live in?

C7 What things do you dislike about the neighbourhood you live in?

C8 What THREE things would you like to see done by the city council to improve your neighbourhood?

- 1:
- 2:
- 3:

C9 Would you say that ....

- 1 many of the people in your neighbourhood can be trusted,
- 2 some can be trusted,
- 3 a few can be trusted,
- 4 or that none of the people in your neighbourhood can be trusted?

C10 To what extent you agree or disagree with each of these statements

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
People in this neighbourhood are willing to help their neighbours?					
This is a close-knit neighbourhood?					
People in this neighbourhood share the same values?					
People in this neighbourhood work together to improve the neighbourhood?					

**D. Identity and Belonging**

*We will now ask some questions about your identity, and look at how much you feel a part of and belong to this local area and city.*

D1 Suppose you were describing yourself, which of the following would say something important about you? Please identify five options in order of importance, where number one is the most important

- |    |                                          |    |                      |
|----|------------------------------------------|----|----------------------|
| 1  | Your family                              |    |                      |
| 2  | The kind of work you do                  | 1: | <input type="text"/> |
| 3  | Your age and life stage                  | 2: | <input type="text"/> |
| 4  | Your interests                           | 3: | <input type="text"/> |
| 5. | Your level of education                  | 4: | <input type="text"/> |
| 6  | Your nationality                         | 5: | <input type="text"/> |
| 7  | Your gender                              |    |                      |
| 8  | your level of income                     |    |                      |
| 9  | Your religion                            |    |                      |
| 10 | Your social class                        |    |                      |
| 11 | Your ethnic group or cultural background |    |                      |
| 12 | The colour of your skin                  |    |                      |
| 13 | Any disability you may have              |    |                      |

D2 To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Strongly disagree
- 5 Don't know
- 6 Too few people in this local area
- 7 People in this area are all from the same background

D3 What sorts of things prevent people from different backgrounds from getting on well together in this local area?

D4 How strongly do you feel you belong to your local area?

- 1 Very strongly
- 2 Fairly strongly
- 3 Not very strongly
- 4 Not at all strongly
- 5 Don't know

D5 How strongly do you feel you belong to this city?

- 1 Very strongly
- 2 Fairly strongly
- 3 Not very strongly
- 4 Not at all strongly
- 5 Don't know

D6 How strongly do you feel you belong to this country?

- 1 Very strongly
- 2 Fairly strongly
- 3 Not very strongly
- 4 Not at all strongly
- 5 Don't know

D7 What, if any, are barriers to feeling that you belong to this city?

D8 Which four of the following, if any, would you say are the most important values of living in this country

- |    |                                              |    |                      |
|----|----------------------------------------------|----|----------------------|
| 1  | Respect for the law                          | 1: | <input type="text"/> |
| 2  | Tolerance towards others                     | 2: | <input type="text"/> |
| 3  | Freedom of speech and expression             | 3: | <input type="text"/> |
| 4  | Respect for all faiths                       | 4: | <input type="text"/> |
| 5  | Justice and fair play                        |    |                      |
| 6  | Speaking the national language               |    |                      |
| 7  | Respect of people of different ethnic groups |    |                      |
| 8  | Equality of opportunity                      |    |                      |
| 9  | Pride in this country/patriotism             |    |                      |
| 10 | Voting in elections                          |    |                      |
| 11 | Freedom from discrimination                  |    |                      |

- D9 Do you see yourself as [British, French, etc.]? [This question is asking for cultural identification with society rather than legal status]
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No
- D10. Do most other people in this country see you as [British, French, etc.]? ['Other people' refers to all other ethnic and religious groups to the respondent in the country]
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No
- D11. Do you want to be seen by others as [British, French, etc.]?
- 1 Yes [go to D13]
  - 2 No [go to D12]
- D12. If No to D10, please explain
- D13 Which do you think is the main barrier to being [British, French, etc.]?
- 1 Not speaking the national language/s
  - 2 Being born abroad
  - 3 Being from an ethnic minority/not being white
  - 4 Accent/way of speaking
  - 5 Not being Christian
  - 6 There aren't any barriers
  - 7 None of these
  - 8 Don't know
  - 9 Other [specify]

**E. Social Interactions**

*We now want to find out more about the people that you meet and interact with in this local area. We are interested in ‘meaningful interactions’, ones that involve more than a hello in the streets, that include some exchange of information.*

E1 In the last year, how often, if at all, have you met and talked with people from a different ethnic group to yourself, in the following places?

	Daily	At least weekly	At least monthly	At least once a year	Not at all	Don't know
At your home/their home						
At school, work or college						
Bar/club						
Café/restaurant						
Sport leisure activity						
Socially outside work/school						
Child's crèche, school, nursery						
Shops						
Street markets						
Place of worship or other religious centre						
Community centre						
Health clinic, hospital						
On public transport						
Park, out door space						
Neighbourhood group						
Youth group						
Educational evening class						
Other [specify]						
Nowhere						

E2 In the last year, how often, if at all have you met and talked with people from a different religion to yourself?

	Daily	At least weekly	At least monthly	At least once a year	Not at all	Don't know
At your home/their home						
At school, work or college						
Bar/club						
Café/restaurant						
Sport leisure activity						
Socially outside work/school						
Child's crèche, school, nursery						
At the shops						

E3 Do you think more needs to be done to encourage people from different backgrounds to mix together?

1 Yes

2 No

E4 If yes to E3, what do you suggest should be done?

E5 Are there any places in your local area or city that you feel uncomfortable to be in?

1 Yes

2 No [go to F1]

E6 If yes to E5, what are these places?

E7 If yes to E5, what are the reasons that you feel uncomfortable in them?

**F. Participation and Citizenship**

*We will now ask about your participation in organisations in this local area and your feeling about being able to influence and change what is happening in society.*

F1 Are you eligible to vote in national elections?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No [go to F3]

F2 Did you vote in the last national election?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

F3 Are you eligible to vote in local elections?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No [go to F5]

F4 Did you vote in the last local council election?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

F5 In the last 12 months have you been involved in any of the following activities?

	Y	N	How many times in the last 12 months?
Attended public meeting or rally			
Taken part in a public demonstration			
Signed a petition			

F6 In the last 12 months have you taken part in a consultation or meeting about local services or problems in your local area?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No [go to F8]

F7 If yes to F6, please give details about the nature and type of consultation.

F8 Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your city?

- 1 Definitely agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Definitely disagree
- 5 Don't know

F9 Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your country?

- 1 Definitely agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Definitely disagree
- 5 Don't know

F10 In the last 12 months have you played an active role in organising any of the following?

Organisation					
Organisation	Y	N	Based on own ethnicity or religion	Mixed	What did you do?
Children's education/schools (e.g. school governor, running an activity club, play group)					
Youth activities (e.g. running a youth club)					
Adult education (e.g. running classes, students' union official)					
Religion (e.g. official in mosque, Sunday school teacher)					
Politics (e.g. local councillor, political party member/activist)					
Social welfare (e.g. adviser/board member in voluntary groups concerned with social welfare)					
Office holders in a community organisation (e.g. cultural centre, community association)					
Criminal Justice (e.g. magistrate, special constable)					
Human rights (community or race relations officer, legal advice worker, worker with asylum)					
Trade union activist					
Housing/neighbourhood group (e.g. Active member of residents / tenants association,					
Organisation recreation, sports or hobbies					
Arts, music, cultural organisation					
Any other [ <i>specify</i> ]					

F11 How much do you trust the following?

	A lot	A fair amount	Not very much	Not at all	Don't know
The police					
The courts					
The national Parliament					
The government					
Your city council					

**G. Experience of Local Services**

G1 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with these different types of services?

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
Local primary schools						
Local High School (incl. gymnasiums, middle schools, lyceum, college and vocational schools from ages 11-16/18)						
Social housing						
Street cleaning						
Policing						
Health services						
Services for young people						
Public transport						

- G2 Where interviewees indicate that they were dissatisfied with a service, ask for details of why they were dissatisfied?
- G3 What THREE things would you like to see happen to improve any of these services in your local area?
- 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
- G4 To what extent do you think that schools respect the religious customs of people belonging to different religions?
- 1 Too much
  - 2 About right
  - 3 Too little
  - 4 Don't know
- G5 Why do you say that?
- G6 To what extent do you think that employers respect the religious customs of people belonging to different religions?
- 1 Too much
  - 2 About right
  - 3 Too little
  - 4 Don't know
- G7 Why do you say that?
- G8 To what extent do you think that hospitals and medical clinics respect the religious customs of people belonging to different religions?
- 1 Too much
  - 2 About right
  - 3 Too little
  - 4 Don't know
- G9 Why do you say that?

- G10 Have you been a victim of crime in the last twelve months?
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No [go to G16]
- G11 If Yes to G10, where did this happen?
- 1 Neighbourhood
  - 2 Local area
  - 3 City
  - 4 Elsewhere
- G12 Did you feel that it was motivated by discrimination?
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No [go to G16]
- G13 If yes to G12, what gave you this impression?
- G14 Did you report it to the police?
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No [go to G16]
- G15 If yes to G14, were you satisfied with the police response?
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No
- G16 Have you had any contact with the police (about any issue) in the last twelve months?
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No [go to G20]
- G17 If yes, did you initiate the contact or did the police contact you?
- 1 Interviewee initiated contact
  - 2 Police initiated contact
- G18 Were you satisfied with the conduct and outcome of that encounter?
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No

G19 If no, why were you not satisfied?

G20 In the last twelve months, have you needed advice or information in relation to any of the following issues?

	Yes	No
Education		
Employment		
Housing		
Health		

G21 If yes to G20, can you give some more details? What did you need advice and information about? How did you get it? Who helped and who didn't help?

G22 Where do you get most of your information about what is happening in your local area?

G23 Where do you get most of your information about what is happening in this city?

G24 Where do you get most of your information about what is happening in this country?

## H. Discrimination and Prejudice

*We will now ask about your experiences and perceptions of discrimination and prejudice.*

H1 How much racial prejudice do you feel there is in this country today?

- 1 A lot
- 2 A fair amount
- 3 A little
- 4 None [go to H4]
- 5 Don't know [go to H4]

H2 If 1-3 to H1, which groups do you think there is racial prejudice against?

H3 Thinking about racial prejudice in this country today, do you think there is now...

- 1 less racial prejudice than there was five years ago?
- 2 more than there was five years ago?
- 3 about the same amount?
- 4 don't know

H4 How much religious prejudice do you feel there is in this country today?

- 1 A lot
- 2 A fair amount
- 3 A little
- 4 None [go to H7]
- 5 Don't know [go to H7]

H5 If 1-3 to H4, which groups do you think there is religious prejudice against?

H6 Thinking about religious prejudice in this country today, do you think there is now...

- 1 less religious prejudice than there was five years ago?
- 2 more than there was five years ago?
- 3 about the same amount?
- 4 don't know

H7 Thinking about your personal experiences over the past 12 months, how often, if at all, has anyone shown prejudice against you or treated you unfairly for each of the following:

	Almost all of the time	A lot of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Gender					
Age					
Ethnicity					
Religion					
Colour					
Where you live					

- H8 Thinking about your personal experiences over the past 12 months, have any of the following shown prejudice against you or treated you unfairly because of your religion?
- 1 A local doctor's surgery
  - 2 A local hospital
  - 3 A local school
  - 4 A local council
  - 5 A landlord or letting agent
  - 6 A local shop
  - 7 Public transport
  - 8 Airline/airport officials
  - 9 The courts (Magistrates Courts and Crown Court)
  - 10 The police
  - 11 The immigration authorities
  - 12 A member of the public
  - 13 None of the above [go to H10]
- H9 What form did this discrimination or unfair treatment take?
- H10 In the last five years, have you been refused or turned down for a job in this country?
- 1 Yes [go to H11]
  - 2 No [go to H12]
  - 3 Don't know [go to H12]
  - 4 Not applicable [go to I1]
- H11 If yes to H10, do you think you were refused the job for any of the following reasons?
- 1 Your gender
  - 2 Your age
  - 3 Your ethnicity
  - 4 Your religion
  - 5 Your colour
  - 6 Where you live
  - 7 Other [specify]
  - 8 Don't know

- H12 In the last five years, have you been discriminated against at work with regard to promotion or a move to a better position?
- 1 Yes [go to H13]
  - 2 No
  - 3 Don't know
  - 4 Not applicable
- H13 If yes, do you think you were refused the job for any of the following reasons?
- 1 Your gender
  - 2 Your age
  - 3 Your ethnicity
  - 4 Your religion
  - 5 Your colour
  - 6 Other [specify]
  - 7 Don't know

### **I. Demographics**

*Finally, we want to ask you some more information about yourself and your personal circumstances*

- I1 Age: what was your age last birthday?
- I2 In which country were you born?
- I3 In which region in that country were you born?
- I4 Is that a rural or urban area?
- 1 Rural
  - 2 Urban
- I5 What is your nationality at the moment?
- I6 What would you say your religion is?
- 1 Buddhism
  - 2 Catholicism
  - 3 Hinduism

- 4 Judaism
  - 5 Islam
  - 6 Protestant Christianity
  - 7 Sikhism
  - 8 Other [specify]
  - 9 No religion [go to I9]
- I7 Do you consider that you are actively practising your religion?
- 1 Yes
  - 2 No
- I8 What are the ways if any, that you meet religious obligations/participate in your religion?
- I9 What is your marital status?
- 1 Single – never married
  - 2 Married – 1st and only marriage
  - 3 Married – 2nd or subsequent marriage
  - 4 Cohabiting
  - 5 Single but previously married and divorced/separated
  - 6 Single but previously married and widowed
- I10 Please tell me which ethnic group/cultural background you feel you belong to.
- I11 What is the highest level of education that you completed?
- 1 no formal education [go to I14]
  - 2 primary [go to I12 and I13]
  - 3 secondary (including gymnasium, lyceum, college, middle schools, or vocational schools from ages 11- 16/18) [go to I12 and I13]
  - 4 university [go to I12 and I13]
- I12 If 2-4 in I11, Where did you obtain this education?
- 1 in this country
  - 2 in another EU state [please specify]
  - 3 in a non-EU state [please specify]
- I13 If 2-4 in I11, how many years of formal education have you had?

- I14 Are you working for pay these days?
- 1 yes, full-time employee [go to I16]
  - 2 yes, part-time employee [go to I16]
  - 3 yes, self-employed [go to I16]
  - 4 no, working unpaid in family business [go to I16]
  - 5 no, retired [go to I15]
  - 6 no, on government employment or training programme [go to I15]
  - 7 no, unemployed and looking for work [go to I15]
  - 8 no, student [go to I15]
  - 9 no, looking after home or family [go to I15]
  - 10 no, permanently sick or disabled [go to I15]
  - 11 other [specify] [go to I15]
- I15 If options 5-11 in I14, have you ever previously worked for pay?
- 1 Yes, in the last five years
  - 2 Yes, over five years ago
  - 3 No [end of interview]
- I16 What is your main or primary job, or the last job that you did if you are not working right now?

I17 Can you choose a category that best describes the sort of work you do in your main job? If not working now please tick a box to show last job.

Modern professional occupations such as: teacher – nurse – physiotherapist – social worker – welfare officer – artist – musician – police officer (sergeant or above) – software designer	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Clerical and intermediate occupations such as: secretary – personal assistant – clerical worker – office clerk – call centre agent – nursing auxiliary – nursery nurse	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Senior managers or administrators (usually responsible for planning, organising and coordinating work and for finance) such as: finance manager – chief executive	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
Technical and craft occupations such as: motor mechanic – fitter – inspector – plumber – printer – tool maker – electrician – gardener – train driver	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Semi-routine manual and service occupations such as: postal worker – machine operative – security guard – caretaker – farm worker – catering assistant – receptionist – sales assistant	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Routine manual and service occupations such as: HGV driver – van driver – cleaner – porter – packer – sewing machinist – messenger – labourer – waiter / waitress – bar staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Middle or junior managers such as: office manager – retail manager – bank manager – restaurant manager – warehouse manager – publican	<input type="checkbox"/>	7
Traditional professional occupations such as: accountant – solicitor – medical practitioner – scientist – civil / mechanical engineer	<input type="checkbox"/>	8

I18 Is the person or group or organisation that you work for (or if currently not working, last worked for):

- 1 same religious and ethnic background as you?
- 2 same religious but not same ethnic background?
- 3 same ethnic but different religious background?
- 4 different ethnic and religious background?
- 5 other [specify]?
- 6 not applicable?

- I19 Among the people in your workplace, what proportion do you think are/were from the same religious and ethnic background as you?
- 1 more than a half
  - 2 about a half
  - 3 less than a half
  - 4 other [specify number]
  - 5 not applicable – working by myself
- I20 How did you find (get) your current main job (or most recent job for those not working at present)?

Whether citizens or migrants, native born or newly-arrived, Muslims are a growing and varied population that presents Europe with challenges and opportunities. The crucial tests facing Europe's commitment to open society will be how it treats minorities such as Muslims and ensures equal rights for all in a climate of rapidly expanding diversity.

The Open Society Foundations' At Home in Europe project is working to address these issues through monitoring and advocacy activities that examine the position of Muslims and other minorities in Europe. One of the project's key efforts is this series of reports on Muslim communities in the 11 EU cities of Amsterdam, Antwerp, Berlin, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Leicester, London, Marseille, Paris, Rotterdam, and Stockholm. The reports aim to increase understanding of the needs and aspirations of diverse Muslim communities by examining how public policies in selected cities have helped or hindered the political, social, and economic participation of Muslims.

By fostering new dialogue and policy initiatives between Muslim communities, local officials, and international policymakers, the At Home in Europe project seeks to improve the participation and inclusion of Muslims in the wider society while enabling them to preserve the cultural, linguistic, and religious practices that are important to their identities.