

## A Comparative Study of the British, German and French Governments' Strategies Concerning Muslims and Their Consequences

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### Abstract

The European countries have adopted a particular policy and manner to conflict with Muslims in their countries. These policies are classified into three behavioral patterns of British, German, and French. The British model is cultural pluralism, the German is Muslims' integration in German society, and the French are melting melt pot. In their belief, Muslims must be dissolved in French culture and eliminated their religious identity. Other European countries follow one of these three models. The present study aimed to answer the following questions: 'What effect have these strategies and patterns had on the living conditions of Muslims and the whole society of that country?' 'Were the approaches a plan or practical?' 'Which policies have been more successful quickly or strictly in confronting Islamic extremism (Takfiri terrorism) and Secular extremism (European terrorism)?' 'What was the practical result of these approaches in the Western European countries' social and security conditions?'

**Keywords:** Europe, Muslims, European Muslims, Islam, European Islam, Islamophobia.

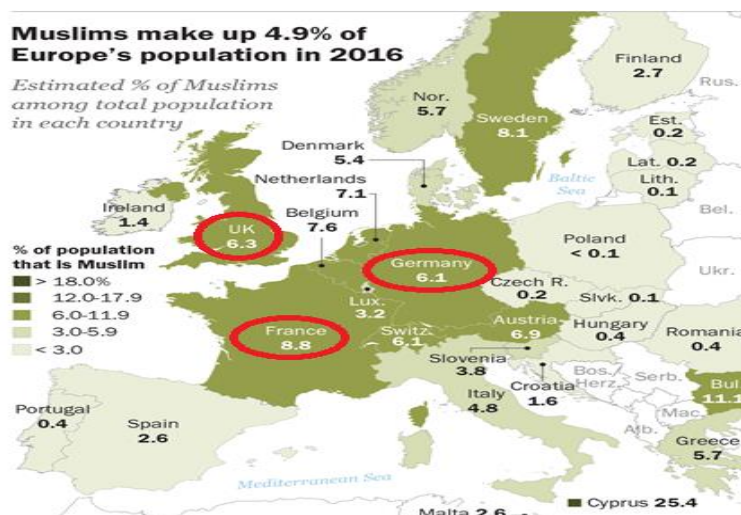
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### Introduction

The Muslim population of Europe is about 25 million (approximately 5% of the total European population). In the European Union (28 members), France and Germany have the most prominent Muslim people. France's Muslim population is about 5.7 million (8.8% of the French population) and a maximum of 10 million. Germany has the second-largest Muslim population in Western Europe after France, with nearly 5 million Muslims, 6.1% of the German people. Approximately 3 million German Muslims are Turkish. The United Kingdom is the third most Muslim country in Europe, with about 3 million Muslims (6.3% of the total population) (<https://www.pewforum.org/29/11/2017/Europe's-growing-Muslim-population>).



In 2016, the average age of European Muslims was 30.4 years old, which was 13 years younger than other Europeans who are 43.8 years old. In other words, 50% of European Muslims are under 30, while this number is only 32% for non-Muslim Europeans (<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/11/29/5-facts-about-the-muslim-population-in-europe/>). Muslim women in Europe have almost 2.6 children, one child, more than the average non-Muslim European woman with 1.6 children (<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/11/29/5-facts-about-the-muslim-population-in-europe/>).

With the growing Muslim population in Western Europe, each of these countries has adopted a specific policy to deal with Muslims in their country. Considering the ever-increasing population and manifestation of Muslim identity in their countries, Western European

governments should answer: 'How to interact with Muslims in rising political tensions?' 'How to integrate them into the social body and maintain social unity and internal security.'

### **1. Attitudes of Western European Governments towards Muslims**

Western European governments have a standard discriminatory view and literature against Muslims in their policies and general situation.

Each of these countries has different approaches to confronting Muslim minorities.

These approaches differ based on several factors. These include the political tradition of each country encountering with the religious role in political and social life, the part of minorities and the amount of minorities recognition, the multi-culturalism of countries that have been the native land of Muslim immigrants, history and the reason of their presence (as workers, immigrants, refugees, etc.) and the type of relationship with the immigrant-sender country (colonial history) and finally, the number of Muslims to the total population and their geographical distribution (Majidi and Sadeghi, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 261).

Some important questions will be answered in this paper: 'What effect did these approaches have on the living conditions of Muslims?' 'Have been these approaches plan or practical?' 'Which policies have been more successful quickly or strictly in confronting Islamic extremism (Takfiri terrorism) and Secular extremism (European terrorism)?' 'What was the practical result of these approaches in the Western European countries' social and security conditions?'

Western countries analyze the Islam and Muslim issues with two different, not necessarily contradictory, political tendencies; neo-conservatism and liberalism. Following the clash of civilizations theory, neo-conservatives consider the whole of Islam challenging. Liberals deprecate Islamism, social Islam, or political Islam. In Europe, neo-conservatives are inventing the concept of "Eurabia." Liberals divided Islam into good Islam and evil Islam; instead of the modern Western's alleged claim of "Multi-culturalism," they emphasize "Religious Management," "Government Interference in Religion," and the "Islam Nationalization." (cf: Khani, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 45-53)

We can categorize European governments' approaches to Muslims and controversial issues such as the establishment of mosques and policy-making on the religious needs of Muslim citizens and public policy goals towards them into three behavioral models of English, German and French. Other European countries are following one of

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these three main models.

<b>Policies of Western European Governments towards Muslims</b>	<b>European Governments’ Patterns of Behavior towards Muslims</b>
multi-culturalism	British: a policy of cultural diversity
forced equalization policy in Western society	Germany: convergence and integration
secularization of Islam (European Islam) and gradual unification	France: a policy of melting and unification

**1.1. The English Approach: The Politics of Cultural Diversity (multi-Culturalism)**

"Multi-Culturalism" is the policy of managing a multicultural society concerning the different cultures of that society, creating equal opportunities for other ethnic groups to display customs, and accepting different identities. This strategy is known by metaphors such as "Salad Bowl" or "Cultural Mosaic."

This policy is based on flexibility to the beliefs and Muslims' rituals and supplying their cultural and religious needs. The history of multi-culturalism policy in Britain back to the 1960s, when the country faced a wave of immigrants. Ray Jenkins, a senior British government official, emphasized the importance of integrating ethnic minorities. He defined that based on "Cultural Diversity," not "Equality," which should be based on respect for minorities' rights (Rex, 1996: 237).

In the multi-culturalism of Laissez-Fair<sup>1</sup>, the government seeks to avoid interfering with social unification while respecting the different cultures of society. In this type of culturalism, none of the existing cultures is "more Important" or "more Valuable" than other cultures.

After accepting the United Kingdom cultural diversity in governmental schools in the 1970s, compulsory religious education programs in the country's schools also included Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Sikhism.

Muslim girls are allowed to wear the hijab in public schools provided that it complies with the color requirements of school uniforms. Since 1998, the U.K. government has allowed religious

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1. It is a French phrase meaning "Let It Be Free." In economics, the concept of Laissez- refers to a system of free economics in which the government intervenes minimally. Here the pattern of British multi-culturalism, in which ethnic groups are free to express their culture and the government does not interfere in their integration based on their accepted values, is called Laissez-fair.

schools to receive government grants after years of efforts by Muslims to recognize Islamic private schools.

Unlike some other European countries, building a mosque in the U.K. was not controversial. The decision to issue a permit to build a mosque was handed over to the local authorities. As a result, some Muslim women's veil (niqabs) is permitted in Britain (Gallis et al., 2005: 12).

Some examples of this approach are as follow: licensing the mosques building and private Islamic schools, lodging the educational courses to familiar with Islam like other religions in the school curriculum, freedom in the clothing of Muslim women, etc.

At the same time, there are still many legal, social, and economic constraints on British Muslims. In Britain, a convergence policy caused Muslim immigrants to accept primary British institutions and learn English. British Muslims are far behind British and even non-Muslim immigrants in economic well-being, job opportunities, and education.

Disclosure of British government report in 2004 indicated that Muslims in comparison to the country's total population are faced three times more likely to unemployment, lower economic activity, higher age disproportion of employed people, and higher concentration in disadvantaged areas<sup>2</sup>.

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2. Many British Government documents on Relations with the Muslim Community were leaked to the media between April and May 2004. See for Example: Winnett, 2016: 1.



The British Home Office report on religious discrimination confirms that Muslims, more than Christians, Jews, or Buddhists, suffer unjust behavior in schools and protests (Weller et al., 2001: 23).

One of these reasons is related to the "Race Relations Act." Based on this law, the British government forbade race discrimination; while considered the Jews and the Sikhs to be one race and did not consider the Muslims race. The British government has refused to extend anti-racism law to religion-based discrimination, a key concern for Muslims.

This policy has been criticized and changed over the past decade, especially since the July 2005 London bombings. After that, the secular extremist attacks began to introduce the British cultural diversity policy as a factor in overemphasizing the preservation of individual and collective identity at the cost of sacrificing common British identity and values (Shirgholami, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 405).

### **1.2. The French Approach: The Policy of Melting and Assimilation**

The policy of "multi-Culturalism" is the opposite of the assimilation policy, known as the "Melting Pot."

Despite Muslims' problems and restrictions in Britain, their life conditions and rights in France are not comparable to Britain. The French government, known for its laicism tendencies, does not allow religious interests in public schools, does not even sponsor an Islamic school in the country, and has been prevented from building mosques by Muslims.

Based on the French extremist interpretation of laicism as the foundation of the French Republic, the extremist policy of unification was used through educational institutions and other organizations. Their purpose was to make the culture of Muslim immigrants and their children through compulsory laws, non-Islamic and French.

France has rejected the pattern of cultural diversity in its governmental schools, and French students have no education about Islam. It is against wearing prominent religious symbols and considers it anti-laicism. These policies caused the prohibition of the Islamic hijab in schools (since 2004). The ban on hijab in schools and at work became one of the biggest problems for French Muslim girls and women. Hundreds of Muslim girls have been expelled from public schools for refusing to remove the hijab. They have been forced to study virtually or by private tutors, and some prefer to drop out of school. After that, the French government banned face and head coverings (niqabs) in public places and prohibited prayers in universities. The strangest law was the ban on Islamic swimwear and swimming with the hijab on the beach

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(<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/9/4/2021/a-law-against-Islam>).

Muslim men also face restrictions and even suspension and dismissal for performing their daily worship at work. Muslims' attempts to build large mosques or turn some buildings into places of worship have failed. They force to perform their rituals in garages and parking lots.

The social and economic well-being of French Muslims is much lower than that of the host society. Few Muslims are present at the highest levels of French politics, media, judiciary, commerce, and public services. Despite the millions of Muslims, there are no Muslims in the French parliament. According to statistics, 30% of young Algerians (between 18 and 30 years old) and 28% of Moroccans living in France are unemployed (Gallis et al., 2005: 24).

Decades of French struggle with the hijab and Islamic symbols have led to similar French-style bans in some European countries, including Bulgaria, Austria, Belgium, and Denmark.

### **1.3. German Approach: The Interface between Assimilation and Cultural Diversity: Integration and Convergence**

Germany representative the interface between the French and British policies and the convergence policy. Integration is the process of cultural and political alignment and consensus on shared values. This concept is the contrast of disintegration. The literal meaning of integration in the Oxford Dictionary is:

- 1) Combining two things so that one becomes an inseparable part of the other;
- 2) Full membership of an individual in a community.

For a long time, this country had adopted an indifference and non-intervention towards Muslims; because German officials considered the existence of a Muslim minority as a temporary phenomenon that could be ignored.

Until 2000, German citizenship laws were based on the blood principle.<sup>3</sup> According to German politicians, Germany was not an immigrant country. So, the immigrants were guest workers, and their length of stay in Germany did not matter. But in 2000, Germany changed its citizenship laws to allow those born in that country to acquire citizenship.

Germany has not yet formalized Islam (<https://uu.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1325847/FULLTEXT01.pdf>), but it was

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3. A Method of Granting Citizenship According to Which each Person's Nationality is Determined by the Nationality of one or both of his or her Parents.



eager than France to supply its Muslim population's cultural and religious needs. Those are establishing Islamic welfare, social and cultural institutions, and Islamic schools for Muslims, facilitating the construction of mosques with traditional or modern architecture, etc. German officials believe that teaching Islam in religious lessons in public schools allows Muslims to formally learn about their religion with an interpretation consistent with liberal democracy and not be attracted to extremist groups. Germany has pursued an active integration policy since 2005 that new and unemployed immigrants have been forced to take compulsory courses in the German language, culture, law, and history. The German "National Integration Plan" includes more than 400 actions for government, businessmen, and social workers focusing on education, the development of language skills, and immigrants' integration into the labor market (<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/datablog/2014/nov/26/UK-germany-ipsos-mori-poll-attitudes-immigration>).

The Germans consider language integration as the first step in integration and have had some success. For example, three-quarters of Muslims born in Germany grow up with the German language as their first language, and 46 percent of all Muslims say their national language is their first language. This figure is 37% in Austria and 34% in Switzerland (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/nana.1269126>).

Germany has also launched propaganda campaigns to encourage its people to integrate the process of immigrants and Muslims. For example, the country has been awarded the "National Integration Prize" for the proper treatment of its German citizens to immigrants and the willingness of the Germans to help them (<http://p.dw.com/p/2d7LS>). However, the hijab for schoolgirls and their female teachers following the atmosphere in other Western European countries has been tense in recent years. Teachers in Hamburg and Brandenburg are free to wear the hijab, but Baden-Württemberg and Saxony have banned hijab as a violation of government neutrality against religions. The German constitution also protects the right of individuals to freedom of religious ritual, not complete spiritual freedom, which is a combination of pluralism and integration. Therefore, Muslims have complained of numerous violations of their religious freedom.

Muslims' religious beliefs are often at odds with German rules on family rights, burial rules, animal sacrifice, and identify religious holidays. German Muslims have not been able to gain the status of a public institution for their institutions (<https://www.hrw.org>

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/report/26/02/2009/discrimination-name-neutrality/headscarf-bans-teachers-and-civil-servants-germany).

### 2. Common Policies of Western European States towards Muslims

The specific approaches of these three countries have not been formulated or become operational in a pure and absolute way. Instead, the strategies and behaviors of these governments show that, despite their reputation for these three approaches, they have adopted standard and unified policies towards Muslims.

#### 2.1. The Politics of mono-Culturalism Instead of multi-Culturalism

Western countries and the three most powerful countries in Western Europe, Germany, the United Kingdom, and France, do not have a common approach to European Muslims. Still, all European governments agree upon opposition to the "Identity-Seeking" of European Muslims (Majidi and Sadeghi, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 261). Today, shifting the policy of multi-culturalism to mono-culturalism is the aim of Europeans. Most Western governments' cultural programs and executive policies regarding Muslims aim to "Individualizing" and "Secularizing" Islam.

Under various executes, including the aftermath of September 11 and the 2005 London underground bombing, the British government has changed the "Laisse-Fair multi-Culturalism" policy to another form of multi-culturalism emphasizing secular Islam.

#### 2.2. Promoting Secular Islam (European Islam)

Western governments, despite differences in their declared strategies, consider Islam and Muslims as a stranger. They claim the coexistence of religions and pluralism and the freedom of cultures, but they do not look neutral or optimistic, and with their Islam phobia, try to change Islam and Muslims at will. One of the cultural and discourse-building actions is the idea of "European Islam" and secular Muslims' discourse against the Islamist cult. According to the Western statesmen belief, it can reduce the range and power of the genuine Islamic cult and keep Muslims busy. Therefore, "Pluralism" (the usual slogan of Europeans) was replaced with "Religious Management" and "Interference in Religious Affairs." (ibid., 306)

The "European Islam" project is one of the main cultural projects of Western governments, which is designed and implemented to individualize the religious beliefs of Western Muslims.

The central concept in the idea of European Islam is divided into four categories: secular Islam, nationalized and institutionalized Islam, recreated Islam in the West, and committed Islam to the explicit or

implicit covenant of coexistence. But there are some overlaps in these perceptions.

The critical common denominator of European Islam idea is the secularization of the European Muslims' behavior and beliefs. This idea of Islam merely combines its practical manifestation and historical experience and from Europe, theoretical and academic teachings.

European Islam has been sacrificed in line with the West guided policy in "Word-Making," the dignity and position of theological and jurisprudential debates in this sense (ibid., 330).

There is no the equal interpretation of "European Islam," but its scheme there is in the works of "Manuel Castells," "Jorgen Nielsen," "Ingmar Carlson," "Olivier Roa," "Babi Salman Saeed," "Ayhan Kaya," "Sarah Sylvester," "Bernard Lewis," "Jürgen Habermas," "Bassam Tibi" and "Tariq Ramadan."

"Babi Saeed" has a critical view of European Islam and considers it a continuation of European Orientalism. Tariq Ramadan tries to justify European Islam from an inter-religious point of view by referring to "Fiqh al-Aqaliyyah." The position of Muslim writers is significant for Europe. So, the idea of "European Islam" is widely promoted by people like Bassam Tibi, in addition to Europeans (Sadeghi, (2011 AD/1390 SH), <https://www.porseman.com>).

In Istanbul, Ayhan Kaya, Professor of International Relations at Bilgi University, believes that European policy towards European Islam includes two simultaneous and contradictory approaches: "Individualization" and "Institutionalization" of Islam in Europe. According to Kaya, the generation of Muslim immigrants in Western European countries is being destroyed between personalizing and institutionalizing Islam (Kaya, 2010: 47).

Some European Muslim writers, who are among the promoters of European Islam, with contorted arguments from the history of Islam, make evidence to justify secular Islam. For example, "Bassam Tibi," a Syrian professor living in Germany, takes secular Islam from the history of Islam.

He says: "As a Muslim immigrant living in Europe, I wish Islam was included in Europe, not vice versa, that Europe becomes a part of Dar al-Islam. European identity is not Islamic or Christian, but secular and based on civic culture." (Tibi, 2009: 204 – 224)

Based on the idea of "European Islam" or "Secular Islam," European governments try to change the Muslims' identity. They do not even refuse cult-making and the conflict between secular Islam and genuine Islam. For example, in the official and governmental

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conferences on "Islam in Germany," German government officials try to bold liberal and secular Muslims and put them in front of the

Citizenship Principles	Definition	Related Institute
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Islamic Muslims and incite Muslim religious strife by cult-making. For example, by confronting the representatives of Muslim associations in Germany, such as the heads of the "Central Council of German Muslims" and the "Turkish-Islamic Association in Religious Affairs." (Ditib) with artificial institutions such as the heads of liberal mosques (mosques with female imams or gay mosques, etc.) (<https://p.dw.com/p/38zM>)

**2.3. Islamophobia and anti-Islamism**

Islamophobia is a common feature of all Western European governments and official media. The induction of panic from Muslims for non-Muslims, the collapse of trust between them as ordinary citizens of a country, and the spread of the morbid state of "Islamophobia" are seriously pursued among non-Muslims in all Western European countries.

Various media are trying to create a state of panic and hatred towards Muslims and expand their activities. The induction of panic among Muslims for any widespread propaganda in favor of Islam is another part of Islamophobia politics. Before September 11, the Muslim movement was overall in the West. Instead of spreading their Islamic activities, Muslims are now waiting to pass the time. They should be aware of all government programs in dealing with Muslim issues while creating a balanced state. Islamophobia and anti-Islamism in Western Europe take place on three levels:

- 1) Public space level, in the form of verbal and physical violence;
- 2) Media level, in the form of negative imagery;
- 3) Government level, in the form of discrimination in civil rights and services (e.g., discrimination in employment, litigation, education, religious freedom, etc.) (Sabbaghian and Khaksar, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 142).

Civil rights	necessity rights for individual liberty, personal discretion, expression freedom, thought and religion, ownership of property, the conclusion of legal contracts, and right of withdrawal	Judicial court
Political rights	The participate right in the exercise of political power, as a person to whom political power has been delegated or as a voter to the members of such a body	Parliament and councils
Social rights	The right to have some economic and security well-being	Educational facilities and social welfare

**The Division of Citizenship Principles according to Citizenship Rights based on the De La Paz**

For the past two decades, Islamophobia has been the main content and function of racial hatred and has affected public perceptions of Islam and Muslims. It represents media encounters, blocks Muslims' access to the labor market, and maintains discriminatory actions in the private domain. With scandals and widespread propaganda, the media tries to instill in people four beliefs about immigrants and Muslims:

- 1) Muslims and immigrants are dangerous;
- 2) They prioritize receiving welfare services and violating the rights of indigenous peoples;
- 3) They impose their culture on society;
- 4) Finally, various institutions and organizations do not create any obstacle on this route and allow immigrants and Muslims to maneuver (<https://pe.annabaa.org/culture/2772>).

Threats to Muslims, insults and closing mosques, etc., are the consequences of this approach. France is at the top of anti-Islamic countries with the most apparent forms of Islamophobia and anti-Islamism, i.e., insulting the Prophet of Islam and Muslims (<https://www.iribnews.ir/00C706>).

Despite claiming religious freedom, Britain has the most significant Islamophobia films (Cultural Islamophobia) (Sabbaghian and Khaksar, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 142). Germany, under the discourse of integration (which beliefs in the integration of Muslims in itself and a kind of cultural superiority), with racist contexts, has emerged new forms of Islamophobia and anti-Islamism.

Islamophobia is one of the most destructive forms of contemporary racism in Germany and is a pervasive and inclusive phenomenon that flows without any challenge in the mainstream media, the internet, and social media. Racism in Germany has been caused after living in Germany for several generations. Muslims should not be included in Germany's nation and national image and be humiliated as immigrants

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and outsiders. Muslims are regarded as problematic factors related to the ancient temporal space through the intermingling of racial discourses and integration (cf: Ameli et al., 2021:1-190).

Manufacturing Country	Title	Manufacturer	Date
USA	Mohammad: the last prophet	Fine media group	14, 2004
USA	Mohammad: the legacy of a prophet	PBS	December 17, 2002
UK	Mohammad: Biography	History channel	unknown
USA	Islam: empire of faith	PBS	2000, March 5, 2005
USA	Story of Islam	Mpi home video	March 12, 2002
Turkey	Understanding Islam: the signs of the last day	Quantum leaps; EDS	September 25, 2006
U.K.	An Islamic history of Europe	BBC (BBC four)	2005
UK	A Muslim in the family	BBC	May 2, 2004
U.K.	The smell of paradise	BBC	Unknown
U.K.	Why did we choose Islam- the enlightenment	Unknown	Unknown
USA	Inside Mecca	National Geographic	October 21, 2004
U.K.	Me and the mosque	BBC	Unknown
USA	The past secrets of the Koran	Towers productions	March 2, 2006
UK	Mohammad: mercy to humankind	Unknown	Unknown
U.K.	The life of Mohammad	BBC	July 18, 2011

**List of anti-Islamic and anti-Islamic films made by Britain and the United States (Sabbaghiyan and Khaksar; 2016: 142)**

Classification of manifestations of anti-Islam	Behavioral examples
Verbal and physical violence	Attack to Muslims, especially veiled women and Muslim mosques
Intimidation	Intimidating Muslims in public spaces from physical and financial harm
Damage to Muslim property	Damage to Muslim equipment in schools and streets

**Examples of anti-Islamism in Europe**

45List of anti-Islamic, anti-Islamic, and anti-Muslim films made by Britain and the United States

**2.4. Continued Pressures and Restrictions against Immigrants and Muslims**

After World War II, Europe forcibly got help from Muslim immigrants to provide its labor force. Therefore, the onslaught of immigration to Europe intensified, and immigrant rights gradually became a challenging issue in Europe. Hence, formed immigration and citizenship laws. Since the beginning of the 21st century, especially after September 11, the pressure on immigrants and Muslims in Western Europe has increased with all its ambiguities. The

monthly of Le Monde in March 2004 called Europe an "Immigrant Rights Cemetery," and in an article by Alain Morice criticized France's new immigration law (Majidi and Sadeghi, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 237).

These issues have led some analysts to consider migration to the West as "New Colonialism." "Every colonialism is replaced by a newer version, commensurate with the time and demand of the colonial economy. Slavery becomes drudgery, and drudgery becomes work with knowledge and expertise. Finally, the confrontation between the "Colonizer and the Colonized" is replaced by the "Worker and the Employer." In the post-colonial era, old colonialism has returned with new faces (ibid.).

The result of restrictions is discrimination. Occupational, housing, and school discrimination are Muslims problems, and Muslim women regarding their hijab have more experience these discriminations.

### **3. Consequences of Western Governments' Strategies towards Muslims**

The statements of Western officials and their views reflect the West's pluralism towards Islam and Muslims and generally include three main perspectives:

- 1) Separating Islam from extremist Muslims and inclining to cultural pluralism, cooperation, and coexistence with Muslims;
- 2) Believing in the superiority of Western civilization over Islamic civilization;
- 3) Accusing Islam: the third view directly targets Islam and accuses it of being a religion that encourages terrorism and supports terrorists. These politicians condemn Islam and denounce it due to its teachings, which have confirmed al-Qaeda, the Taliban, ISIS, etc.

Despite their differences, Western European governments' strategies are similar to standard anti-Islamic policies such as monoculturalism, the promotion of secular Islam, Islamophobia, increasing pressure and restrictions on immigrants and Muslims. These orientations and approaches have had disturbing consequences in these countries against Muslims and all Western European societies. Some of these consequences are as follows:

#### **3.1. Increase in Violence and Crimes Related to Hatred and Racism (Decrease in Security)**

The first effect of monoculture, Islamophobia, anti-Islamic policies and anti-immigration laws in Western Europe is to increase nationalist and racist sentiments and escalate violence and hate-related crimes.

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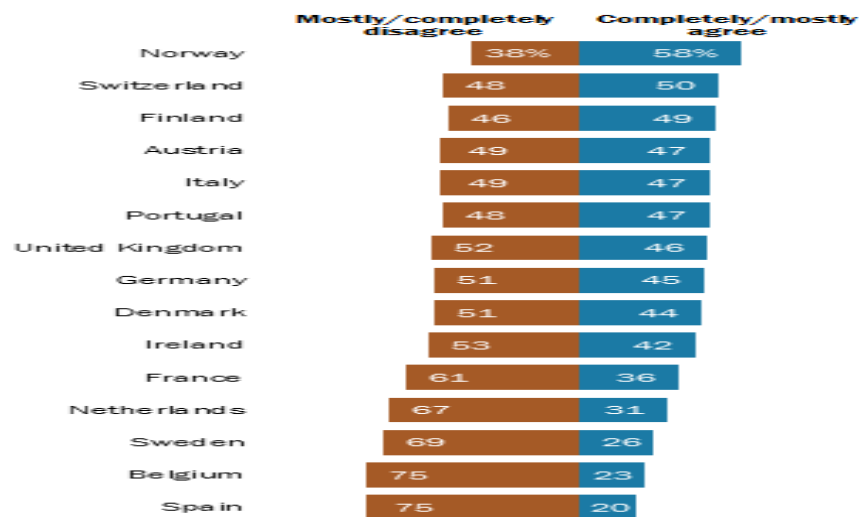
Crimes of Islamophobia range from violent behavior to insults to Islam and Muslims to physical attacks.

Naturally, the growth of negative attitudes against Islam has led to increased attacks on Islamic centers and Muslims.

Nationalist propaganda caused a wide range of Western European societies proud of their national superiority, even more than their religious affiliations. For example, 61% of French, 52% of British, and 51% of Germans believe that they carry a culture of superiority over other nations and ideologies. It suggests that media propaganda focuses on nationalism, national and ethnic supremacy, and even racism, rather than cultural pluralism, equality and humanity, and coexistence and peace. The result of such policies is the cultural divergence of society, not social unification and empathy.

#### In many countries, people are split on whether their culture is superior to others

*% who agree/disagree with the statement, "Our people are not perfect, but our culture is superior to others"*



#### A sense of cultural superiority (<https://www.pewforum.org/29/05/2018/nationalism-immigration-and-minorities>)

Racial and cultural arrogance caused hatred, hostility, and antipathy of other cultures and races, especially foreigners and immigrants. Therefore, in all cases, the intensity of hate experiences in Western European countries is significant. A common type of social hatred, known as "Discrimination" in education, employment, and social relations, has more severe effects than other types of hatred due to its long-term adverse effects. In addition to the hate crimes in everyday life, there is another type of Islamophobia hate experience in which Islam or Muslims are directly humiliated, hated, or blamed. We call these kinds of hate experiences "Hate Ideologies."



The practical reflection of hatred has led to increased crimes of anti-Islamic hatred and antipathy in recent years. In France, for example, there were nearly 400 attacks on Muslims in 2016 (because of their religion) ([https://www.bbc.com/persian/world/160120/01/2016\\_the\\_France\\_hate\\_crime\\_against\\_Muslims](https://www.bbc.com/persian/world/160120/01/2016_the_France_hate_crime_against_Muslims)), which is the result of spreading hatred and increasing anti-Islamic emotions in this country.

In the U.K., three-quarters of Muslims believe that hatred against them increases in society; 68% have experienced a different form of Islamophobia daily ([www.irna.ir/news/84309371](http://www.irna.ir/news/84309371)). In the U.K., even health centers have become a place for repressing Muslims. The British counter-terrorism police force people to go to mental health centers. They refer the person to the racist deterrence plan with the least tolerance of mental distress. Muslims are directed to a mental health center at least 23 times more often than whites for extremism (<http://www.shabestan.ir/mobile/detail/news/1059969>).

The annual "State of Terrorism" report published by Europol states: "No other country in the European Union had more than two right-wing terrorist attacks in 2019, but in Britain, three terrorist attacks planned and one carried out." The "Stanley" terrorist attack happened a day after the terrorist attacks on Christchurch mosques in New Zealand. In the episode, Vince Fuller attacked cars driven by blacks and then beheaded a Bulgarian teenager. Fuller targeted Muslims in this attack, and he was shouting: "All Muslims must die and white supremacists must rule. I want to kill a Muslim." (<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/Vincent-fuller-jailed-sentence-christchurch-mosque-shooting-prison-latest-a9099266.html>;<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/stanwell-attack-stabbing-kill-muslims-christchurch-shooting-vincent-fuller-terror-latest-a9062181.html>)

According to the announced statistics, in 2019 and 2020, targeted Muslims and Islamic centers in Germany by 950 and 901 racist attacks. Meanwhile, many people who target racist attacks and behaviors do not report them to the authorities. In 2020, the non-governmental organization "e.V" founded to combat Islamophobia, received 228 reports of various Islamophobia attacks in Germany. 48.7% of mentioned islamophobia attacks occurred on the streets or public vehicles, and other attacks occurred at work and in educational and service environments. Muslim women, due to their hijab, are two-thirds of the people targeted by islamophobia attacks (<https://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/id/eprint/2016/1/80451hargreavesphd.pdf>: 179).

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Discrimination-based hatred experience is relatively less intense in German society. Due to the nature of the law in Germany and Germany's primary motivation for attracting immigrants and Muslims, namely "Labor Supply." At the same time, among these four types of experience, the experience of discrimination in schools and universities with 46.6 shows the highest level of expertise ([www.irna.ir/news/84309371](http://www.irna.ir/news/84309371)). Right-wing extremists attacked more than 100 mosques and religious institutions in Germany in 2018 ([shia-news.com/000rcW](http://shia-news.com/000rcW)).

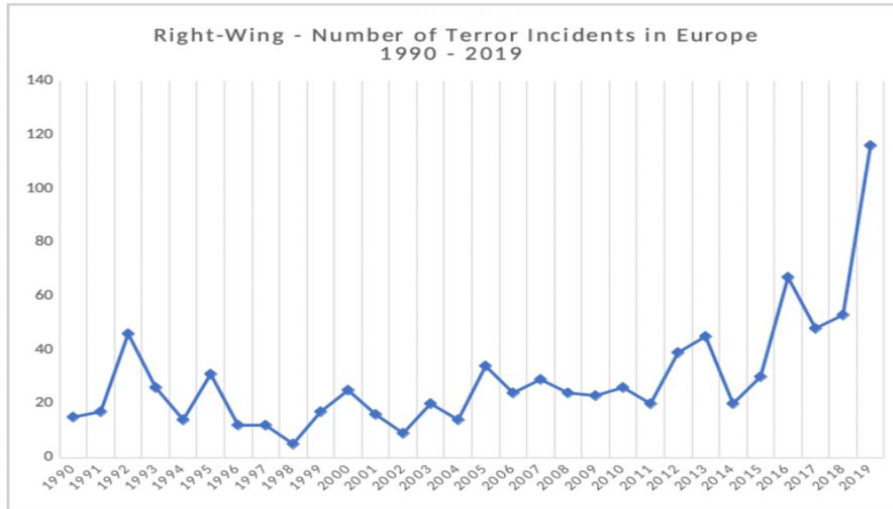
Muslims are constantly exposed to hatred through language, social symbols, and relationships. So, these countries, especially Germany, have witnessed the growth of racism and Islamophobia in recent years and even the formation of racist and fascist parties. The rise of racist groups, neo-Nazis, and far-right parties such as PEGIDA<sup>4</sup>, Ubyk, the German Alternative Right Party, the French National Front, etc., are the consequences of such unilateral and Islamophobia policies.<sup>5</sup>

In recent years, right-wing extremists have been on the list of perpetrators of terrorist attacks in Europe. Their attacks caused the death of 190 people between 1990 and 2015, such as the deadly terrorist attack on the Christmas market in Berlin on December 19, 2017.

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4. The fascist group PEGIDA, which stands for "Patriotic Europeans Anti-Islamizing the West", is a racist and fascist movement founded in 2014 at the invitation of Lutz Bachmann. PEGIDA took its first step in criticizing Germany's population and immigration policies, but its main image gradually emerged and became a full-fledged anti-Islamic movement. The leaders of this extremist group protested against the presence of immigrants in Germany, using the issue of immigration in Germany and the growth of the immigrant population and the consequent decrease in the growth of the German population. But after a while, the main purpose of this extremist group emergence in Germany became clear, and Islamists were targeted by the protests of this group and its supporters, and the members of this group called for stopping the growth of Islam in Germany and chanted slogans against Islam.

5. For more information, Cf: Hate Crime Studies in the United States (Ameli, Merali and Mohseni Ahooi, 2013), Hate Crime Studies in the United Kingdom (Ameli, Mohsenia Ahoi, Shah Ghasemi and Rahimpour, 2011; Ameli and Merali, 2015), Crime Studies Hate in France (Ameli, Merali and Shahghasemi, 2014) and Hate Crime Studies in Austria (Ameli, Mohseni Ahoui and Merali, 2020).



The number of right-wing extremist terrorist attacks over three decades (<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/countering-radical-right/western-europe-right-wing-terrorism-rise/>)

Deadly RTV events by country 1990-2015		
Country	Deadly RTV events (number killed)	Deadly events per average million inhabitants 1990–2015
Austria	1 (4)	0.1
Belgium	3 (5)	0.3
Denmark	1(1)	0.2
Finland	-	-
France	9 (11)	0.1
Germany	82 (104)	1.0
Greece	6 (7)	0.6
Iceland	-	-
Ireland	3 (4)	0.8
Italy	5(6)	0.1
Luxemburg	-	-
Netherlands	3 (3)	0.2
Norway	3 (79)	0.7
Portugal	3 (3)	0.3
Spain	22 (22)	0.5
Sweden	17 (20)	1.9
Switzerland	1 (1)	0.1
United Kingdom	31 (33)	0.5
Sum	190 (303)	

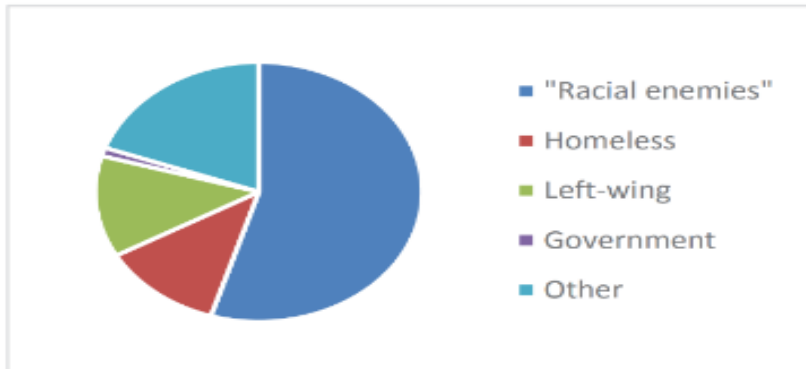
Graph of the people killed number in right-wing extremist terrorist attacks from 1990 to 2015 (Ravndal, 2016: 10)

Killed people in Germany with 82 deaths, the United Kingdom with 31, and France with nine show that racism is spreading rampantly in these countries.

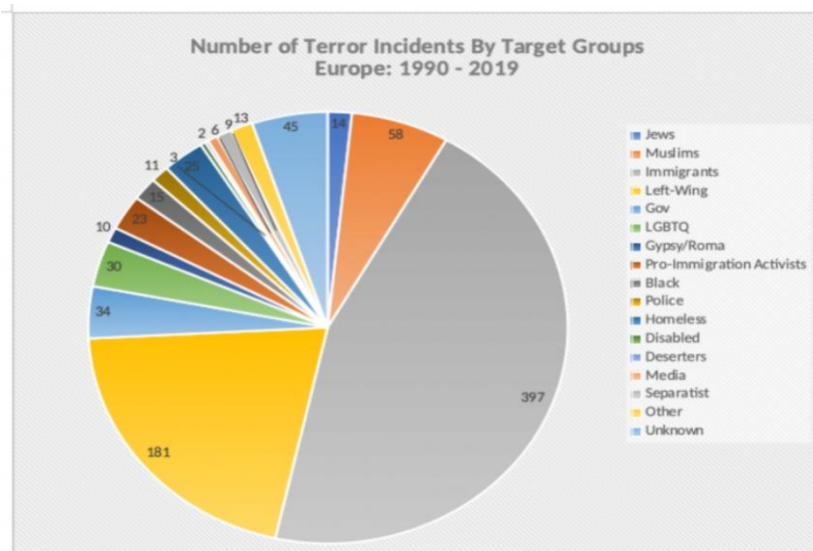
### A Comparative Study of the British, German and French Governments' Strategies Concerning Muslims and Their Consequences

A brief look at the range of the victims of racist terrorist attacks shows that non-racial immigrants, the homeless, the left-wings, and finally, the government have been angered and hated by the perpetrators of terrorist acts.

#### Western Europe: targeting (deadly events)



**Targets and victims extreme-right terrorist attacks**  
(<https://icct.nl/app/uploads/09/2019/Extreme-Right-Violence-and-Terrorism-Concepts-Patterns-and-Responses-4.pdf>: 12)



**Chart of accurate victims of racist terrorist attacks by religion and race**  
(<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/countering-radical-right/western-europe-right-wing-terrorism-rise/>)

Immigrants, Muslims, and pro-immigration activists have been at the forefront of the targets and victims of racist terrorist movements.

### 3.2. Leading Muslims and Immigrants to Extremism and Terrorist Attacks

Social scientists believe that in a society where the culture of equality

and brotherhood is institutionalized despite all the differences, we will see less violent movements. On the contrary, discrimination and socio-economic constraints provide caused the dissemination of extremist ideologies. Researchers in counter-terrorism admit that young people who engage in violent and extremist movements have been expelled from society and seek belonging and affiliation in Islamic jihadist networks and a solution that gives meaning to their lives. Isolation provides the best ground for extremist ideas and thoughts (<https://p.dw.com/p/3kr0u>).

The European crisis is derived from society's discrimination and rejection of a significant part of European citizens. Without tangible change, will grow terrorist operations in Europe. According to the research, Islamophobia, pressure, and restrictions on Muslims, and interference in Islamic countries do not weaken Muslims' beliefs; instead, they disturb the atmosphere of reconciliation and peace between them and other citizens. It has led some of them to extremist ideas and terrorist groups. Hence, Europe has been one of the main targets of Islamist terrorists in recent years. Terrorist attacks in Europe have increased significantly, especially after the Western intervention in Syria and the rise of ISIS. London, Manchester, Stockholm, Berlin, Nice, Brussels, Madrid, etc., are among the European cities where terrorist attacks have taken place in recent years.

The most prominent terrorist attacks in Europe since 2004 are as follows:

- March 11, 2004, Madrid. Four explosions on the Madrid metro during rush hour killed 191 people;
- July 7, 2005, London. Four blasts on London Underground killed 52 people;
- July 22, 2011, Oslo. "Anders Behring Breivik" first bombed Oslo and then attacked a youth camp, killing 77 people, most of them teenagers.
- May 22, 2013, London. Two al-Qaeda members have killed a British soldier on the streets of London;
- On May 24, 2014, four people were killed in an attack on a Jewish Museum in Brussels;
- January 2015, Paris. The attack on the offices of Charlie Hebdo in Paris left 17 dead;
- February 14, 2015, Denmark. Two terrorist attacks killed five people in two consecutive days in Copenhagen;
- November 13, 2015, Paris. Terrorist attacks across Paris, in concert, in front of the football stadium and left 130 dead;
- March 22, 2016, Brussels. Suicide bombings at Brussels airport and

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metro killed 32 people;

- July 14, 2016, Nice. A truck attack on a French National Day celebration in Nice has killed at least 86 people;
- December 19, 2016, Berlin. Someone got into a truck in a Christmas shop and killed 12 people;
- March 22, 2017, London. A man drove into the Westminster area, killing four people;<sup>62</sup>
- April 7, 2017, Stockholm. A man in a stolen truck entered the store;
- May 22, 2017, Manchester. A suicide bomber blew himself up at the Ariana Grande Concert Hall, killing at least 22 people;
- June 3, 2017, London. Terrorist attacks in London have killed at least seven people and injured 48 others (<https://www.ilna.news/fa/tiny/news-496799>).

In 2017, there were nearly 205 terrorist attacks in E.U. countries, killing 68 people and injuring 844 others. Separatists have done almost 67 percent of these attacks, 16 percent by ISIS, 12 percent by left-wing groups, 2 percent by right-wing extremists, and the source of 3 percent of these attacks is unknown (<https://www.trt.net.tr/persian/jhn/21/06/2018/hmlt-trwrysty-dr-rwp-45-drdsd-fzysh-yft-996955>).

The rise of extremism and terrorist violence among Muslims caused Europeans to make up many of ISIS's foreign troops. Since the formation of ISIS in 2018, according to a British studying center, about 13,000 Europeans have gone to Syria and Iraq (<https://theArabweekly.com/europe-grapples-isis-returnees-and-their-families>). Among the 15 countries that played a significant role in supplying ISIS, soldiers are from four Western European countries (Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, and France). Most of the ISIS youth are in French-speaking or Francophone countries such as France and Belgium.

Ranking of ISIS Foreign Fighters by Country Based on Official Count

	Country	Count			Country	Count	
		Official	Non-Official			Official	Non-Official
1.	Tunisia	6,000	7,000	26.	Spain	133	250
2.	Saudi Arabia	2,500	.	27.	Canada	130	.
3.	Russia	2,400	.	28.	Denmark	125	125
4.	Turkey	2,100	.	29.	Australia	120	255
5.	Jordan	2,000	2,500	30.	Azerbaijan	104	216
6.	France	1,700	2,500	31.	Malaysia	100	.
7.	Morocco	1,200	1,500	32.	Philippines	100	.
8.	Lebanon	900	.	33.	Albania	90	150
9.	Germany	760	.	34.	Italy	87	.
10.	United Kingdom	760	.	35.	Norway	81	60
11.	Indonesia	700	500	36.	Finland	70	85
12.	Egypt	600	1,000	37.	Pakistan	70	330
13.	Belgium	470	470	38.	Sudan	70	100
14.	Tajikistan	386	.	39.	Switzerland	57	.
15.	Bosnia	330	217	40.	Israel	50	.
16.	Austria	300	233	41.	Ireland	30	30
17.	China	300	.	42.	India	23	45
18.	Kazakhstan	300	.	43.	New Zealand	7	6
19.	Sweden	300	300	44.	Brazil	3	.
20.	Kosovo	232	.	45.	Madagascar	3	.
21.	Netherlands	220	210	46.	Singapore	2	.
22.	Maldives	200	60	47.	Cambodia	1	.
23.	Algeria	170	225	48.	Moldova	1	.
24.	United States	150	250	49.	Romania	1	.
25.	Macedonia	146	100	50.	South Africa	1	.

Note: Based on data from Barrett (2014) and The Soufan Group (2015).

**List of countries where ISIS soldiers are from**  
 ([https://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/faculty/benmelech/html/BenmelechPapers/ISIS\\_April\\_13\\_2016\\_Effi\\_final.pdf](https://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/faculty/benmelech/html/BenmelechPapers/ISIS_April_13_2016_Effi_final.pdf): 16)

Based on the researches, at least 1,700 people from France, 800 from Germany, and 800 from the United Kingdom have joined ISIS, some of whom have held important positions.<sup>6</sup>

European security forces estimate the number of Europeans related to ISIS or ISIS returning from the Syria-Iraq war was about 50,000 people (<https://p.dw.com/p/3kr0u>).

New figures from the Egmont Institute show that at least 700 European children and more than 430 European ISIS members have been prisoned so far in northern Syria, about 90 percent of whom are still in Syria. Only 10 percent of whom have been transferred to Iraqi prisons (Statistics for 2019) ([https://www.egmont\\_institute.be/new-](https://www.egmont_institute.be/new-)

6. For Example, Reza Siam from Germany was the "Minister of Education" of the ISIL Terrorist group before he was killed in Iraq on December 24. It is believed that Mohammad Mahmoud, the leader of the forces recruited from Germany, who was born in Australia, first Worked in the Media Department of "al-Qaeda" and etc.

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figures-on-european-nationals-detained-in-syria-and-iraq).

Country	Adults (male and female)	Child
Austria	+3	0
Belgium	57	69
Denmark	+8	13
Finland	11-13	33
France	130	270-320
Germany	124	138
Italy	6	0
Netherlands	50	90
Spain	4	17
Sweden	31-45	57
Britain	+8	+10
Total	From 432 up to 448	From 697 up to 747
Total	From 1129 up to 1195	

**Number of European members of ISIS imprisoned in Iraq and Syria**  
(<https://per.euronews.com/17/10/2019/New-Figure-European-nationals-ISIS-Detained-Syria-Iraq>)

The Europeans' wrong regional and global foreign policy is the leading cause of the spread of terrorism.<sup>7</sup>

### 3.3. The Permanent Cycle of Violence and Declining Security in Western Europe

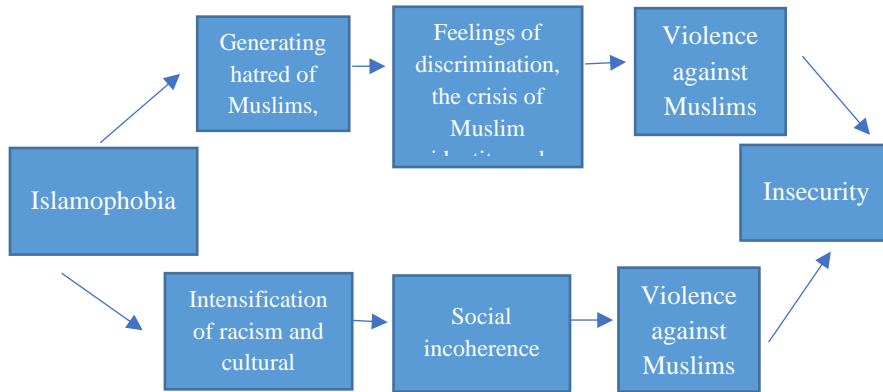
The divergent domestic policies of Western European countries, such as the Islamophobia and anti-Islamist approach, and the misguided and colonial foreign policy of Europe in West Asia, are two main factors in the spread of religious and racial extremism and the growth of various terrorist groups. On the one hand, Islamophobia is the driving force behind racist and right-wing extremists and their terrorist attacks on Muslims. On the other hand, it intensifies the religious prohibitions and restrictions of Muslims.

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7. European politicians themselves also emphasize this issue. For example, Ken Livingstone, the former mayor of London, says that if Western interventionist policies had not been adopted in the Middle East, terrorist attacks would not have occurred in Europe today. Britain, France, and the United States have intervened in the Middle East for the past 100 years by establishing dependent governments and regimes and controlling the arteries of oil production. If they had not done so, the world today would be a safer place for humans to live (<https://parstoday.com/dari/news/world-i34422>).



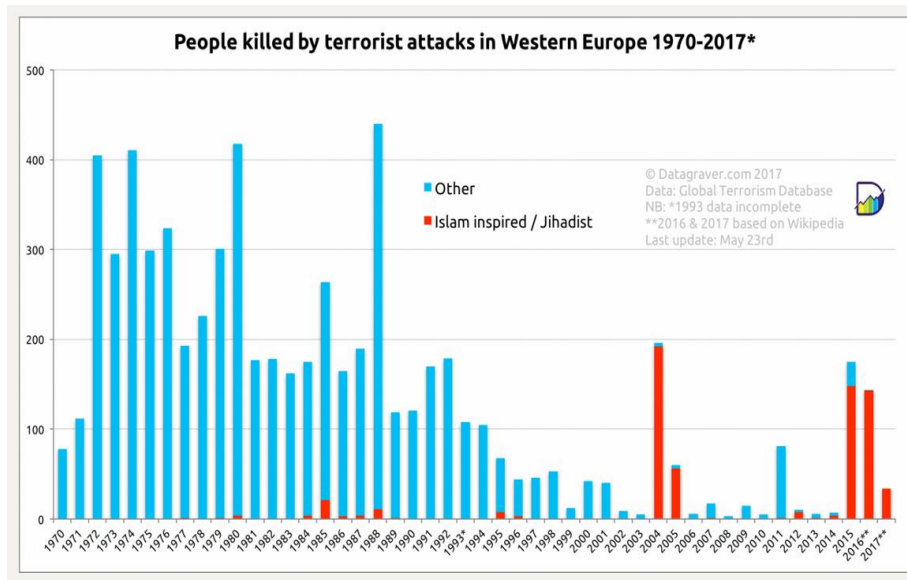
In conclusion, it caused the spread of the hatred and resentment of the two strata of European societies and the attacks, insults, and social



disunity. This cycle of hatred and panic production is constantly recreated and intensified. Reducing security and increasing concern in Western societies about terrorist attacks are obvious consequences of such a cycle.

Terrorist attacks have not been limited to racists or Islamists, but other motives, such as separatism, have led to widespread terrorist attacks.

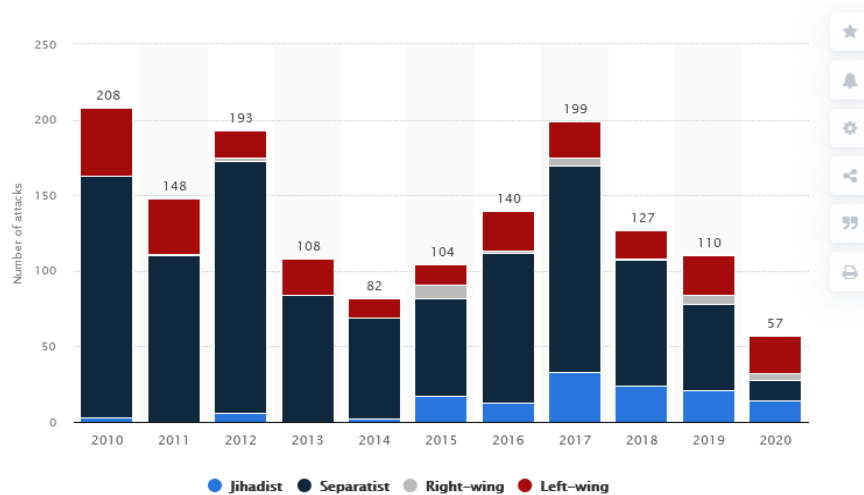
Contrary to mainstream media coverage in Western Europe, Islamist terrorists have carried out only a fraction of terrorist operations, which are less common than other terrorists.



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### Graph of the number of people killed in terrorist attacks in Western Europe (from 1970 to 2017) (<https://www.datagraver.com/case/people-killed-by-terrorism-per-year-in-western-europe-2015-1970>)

Islamist terrorists have been prominent in Europe since 2004. It means that their terrorist attacks were not natural and inherent but



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rather a reaction to violent platforms such as media Islamophobia, restrictions and pressures, and so on.

#### Violence and terrorist attacks (successful and unsuccessful) from 2010 to 2020

Also, most terrorist attacks belong to separatists and Islamist terrorist groups, and right-wing and left-wing terrorist groups had equal terrorist operations (<https://www.statista.com/statistics/746562/number-of-arrested-terror-suspects-in-the-european-union-eu>).

In conclusion, from 2002 to 2017, more than 2,200 people were killed in various terrorist attacks in Europe, and terrorist attacks in these 15 years have left 8,100 people injured ([https://farsi.iranpress.com/europe\\_and\\_america-i39568](https://farsi.iranpress.com/europe_and_america-i39568)).

Furthermore, terrorist attacks with any motive can reduce economic security and lead to a wide range of psychological effects to change the economic behavior of companies and individuals. For example, people open a little value for their future and live more in the present.

The economic costs of Western European countries from the violence of hatred are also enormous. According to surveys, from 2004 to 2016, E.U. member states suffered a loss of 180 billion euros from terrorist attacks. This study shows that Britain suffered the most financial losses with a total of 43.7 billion euros, and only five

terrorist attacks on Britain last year cost the country 3.5 billion euros. With 43 billion euros, France and Spain, with 40.8 euros, were second and third regarding the extent of economic damage from terrorist attacks.

This study found that terrorist attacks reduced investment in Europe, and people sought short-term profit rather than long-term financial gain through savings and investment (<https://www.rand.org/news/press/06/06/2018/.html>).

### Conclusion

European confrontation experience with refugee and immigration crisis and interaction with Muslims shows that Western European countries differ slightly in their declarative approaches. With the melting pattern, France tries to ignore Muslims' community. Britain claims it is multicultural and wants to be neutral between the followers of different religions and sects. Germany, between the two, believes that Muslims should be integrated into European and German society not to harm themselves. But policy-makers and politicians in these countries have security, threat-oriented (or at least challenge-oriented), and a pessimistic view of Muslims. The result of these views is the policies of Islamophobia and anti-Islamism, cultural unilateralism, the combination of Islam with secularism, and the increase of restrictions and prohibitions against Muslims. These policies caused the isolation and rejection of Muslims, the formation of racist and fascist extremist groups, the growth of social hatred, social divergence, and finally, the escalation of violence and hate crimes in these countries.

The three countries of France, the United Kingdom, and Germany differ slightly in violence. For example, the policy of ignoring Muslims in France has intensified the tendency of French Muslims to engage in terrorist movements such as joining ISIS. In contrast, the policy of integration in Germany (which has a kind of cultural arrogance) has intensified racist tendencies and secular terrorist movements against Muslims.

In Germany, there is less discrimination in the workplace due to the country's need for labor and the attraction of Muslim immigrants with the same motive. In the U.K., however, despite claims of cultural pluralism, Islamophobia, anti-Islamism, and systematic discrimination have increased discrimination among Muslims and extremist movements. As a result, as long as Western European countries continue their Islamophobia and anti-Islamic policies and do not

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implement religious and cultural pluralism, cultural freedom, and equal human rights, social divergence and violence will continue. And consequently, their social hatreds and their level of security will get worse and worse.

Reconsidering information-security policies can improve the social, economic, and political situation of Muslims and, consequently, of Western European societies as a whole. Any law, behavior, or action that endangers social coexistence is condemned. European officials should change their minds about the source of their security threats, take a right verbal action, and then raise public awareness. The recommendations are aimed primarily at national government institutions, then at the European Union, and following at smaller local communities.

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