Ethnicity, religion and social disadvantage in the formation of education policy: the case of French speaking Belgium

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report looks at the question of migration-related diversity at school from the vantage point of policy formation. Our concern is on how public policies have faced the issue of ethnicity, minority cultures, minority religions and social disadvantage in the educational field in French speaking Belgium. As previously discussed in WP1, Belgium may be classified as an old immigration country. However, specific policy developments have been introduced on this matter belatedly. The area of multicultural education is, as we will show, no exception to this general observation.

Belgium is also a complex multinational and federal country caught in far-reaching linguistic divisions and conflicts. In order to grasp its recent evolution in the face of migration related educational challenges, it is important to remind that the competence over education was centralised at the national level until 1988 and has been devoluted to the French-Speaking and
Flemish Communities after a constitutional reform in 1988. Although our focus in this report is on the French Speaking Community, one has to clearly state that two divergent approaches co-exist within the same country as far as education policy is concerned.

In addition to this linguistic cleavage, the Belgian education system has been historically shaped by philosophical divisions which led to the co-existence of two officially recognised school networks: the so-called public and private networks respectively. These contextual elements are briefly introduced in this report as they structure the background against which issues of migration-related diversity have been considered in Belgian educational policies.

During the last decade, minority religion, and more specifically Islam, has dominated much of the debate on diversity in the field of education. There is no doubt that the Belgian media have contributed to focus on Islam and Muslims the broader challenge of migration-related diversity. In the same time, however, this is part of a broader development. The international context, the rise of the extreme-right in Flanders, the French debate on the headscarf, the issue of the institutionalisation of Islam have also played a role in raising the issue of multicultural and multifaith education on the mediatic and political agenda. As we will show in the last part of this report, the issue of the headscarf, the provision of halal food at school, are among the hot issues currently being debated in Belgium.

This report is divided into three parts. The first section is a theoretical discussion of how ethnicity, religion and social disadvantage have come to dominate the agenda of educators across many advanced democracies. The second section offers an exploration of Belgian policy initiative of the last two decades dwelling on a review of existing literature and relevant documentary sources. The third section presents the main findings of a qualitative research based on face-to-face interviews and which aimed at analysing the main cleavages and policy-ideas at play within the Belgian political and policy debate on multicultural education.

II. EDUCATION POLICIES IN FRENCH SPEAKING BELGIUM: AN OVERVIEW.

II.1. A note on the education system of the French Community of Belgium

The shape of the Belgian education system takes its roots in the former Belgian unitary State. Before the devolution of education to the French and Flemish communities in 1988, Belgian education had been structured essentially along philosophical lines of division. The School Pact (1958) which brought the School War to an end decisively shaped the architecture of the Belgian educational landscape. This political agreement which was turned into a fundamental piece of legislation enacted in 1959 recognised the co-existence of two school networks: the so-called official and free network. Whereas the first is organised and managed by the State, the provinces or the municipalities, the second one is essentially, but not exclusively, organised by the Catholic Church and its dependent orga-
nisations. The end result of the School Pact was to strongly harmonise the school system in terms of public funding, curriculum and internal functioning.

The Belgian French Speaking education system is one of the least efficient among OECD countries. That is the alarming finding brought to the public in 2003 by the OECD PISA survey. While Belgium positioned itself on the 8th position overall, this was mainly due to the excellent performances of the Flemish education system. The Francophone one showed huge deficiencies. This is not the place to analyse the causes for this handicap, but it is certainly a factor that needs to be taken into consideration when analysing policy debates on migration related diversity at school in the Southern part of the country. In comparison to the bad results obtained by French speaking pupils, those of immigrant’s offspring are even more alarming and are held to be a major cause for the bad performances of French-speaking schools as a whole.

II.2. Generic policies indirectly impacting on migration-related diversity.

To get a better insight on the major education policies implemented in Belgium and the policy-ideas underpinning them, it is worth reminding the context and changes that occurred during the 80’s and 90’s. In 1986, a broadly discussed international report, known as the Mc Kinsey Report provoked a policy earthquake by concluding that the Belgian education system was the most expensive in Europe. The reason was mainly due to the introduction of a very ambitious and costly reform of secondary education known as the ‘renovated education’ (1971). This latter aimed at enhancing school democratisation and fostering the principle of equal of opportunities. Using the so-called differentiated pedagogy, it aimed at ensuring equal access to all forms of education for all people whatever their social origins. In practice, however, the renovated education proved the converse. It was less equitable and less efficient than the previous system. It is in this gloomy context that the Flemish and French Communities will be made responsible for managing their own education policy.

During the same period, a shift can be observed in public policies regarding migration and integration. These were given two main priorities: integration and struggle against insecurity. The 1991 urban unrest in the Brussels borough of St Gilles and Forest brought the notion of youth crime prevention center stage in the public discourse on immigrant integration. In the educational field, this was translated into policies seeking to improve the socio-professional integration and to struggle against the schooling setback of immigrant’s offspring (Florence 2007). Coping with the turmoil caused by these violent urban events was all the more difficult since the government of the French Community was facing a severe budgetary crisis.

In the wake of the financial restrictions faced by the French Speaking Community, schools on the ground faced different problems with immigrant origin pupils. Those were ranging from increasing dropouts, lower educational attainments and exclusion, to violence (Ouali 2004). The first reaction of public authorities was to transfer a French policy concept known as ZEP (Priority Education Areas). The idea was to implement positive action measures targeting territories rather than groups. Although the actual target were massively composed of disadvantaged pupils of immigrant origin, the ZEP strategy consistently opted for a socio-economic and territorial categorisation. A similar approach will be adopted with the successor of the ZEP, namely the Positive Discrimination Decree. In a way, this
Francophone strategy has facilitated an analytical shift in the education strategies targeting the children of immigrants. If during the previous two decades (1970s and 1980s) the causes of schooling setbacks were mainly associated with the pupils’ foreign nationality and lack of proficiency in French, an institutionalist turn is observable during the 1990s. Institutional factors, such as the effect of school strategies and the impact of broader education policies, start coming into play in the policy debate. This argument coexist, sometime compete and often conflict with culturalist advocates, which have remain influential in this policy arena up until now even if it is less the case in the Francophone than in the Flemish part of the country (Florence 2007).

II.2.a. The Strategy of Priority Education Areas

The policy-thinking at the heart of the ZEP strategy is strongly influenced by the spirit of the Coleman report (1966) which highlighted the correlation between social origins and educational attainments. This report was frequently used to justify the necessity of providing extra funding to schools in deprived areas (Florence 2007). The prevailing rationale that permeated the ZEP experiments was one hinged on local development. The underlying idea was to make use of all resources available in a defined area and to target not only migrant population but more generally disadvantaged groups. The concept originated from France. It is indeed in 1987 that the national Belgian Ministry of Education commissioned a study on the ZEP policy implemented in French suburbs. The conclusion was favourable and it was decided to transfer the concept.

Six zones in Liège, Charleroi, and Brussels were determined by a national commission and defined as geographic areas where a differentiated education policy would be necessary. Those areas have to concentrate factors such as poverty, unemployment, non-adaptation to language or culture, low level of education of parents, degraded housing, etc. Practically these measures allowed schools to be conferred additional public funding, not on the strict basis of the foreign nationality of their pupils but on the criteria that they belonged to a disadvantaged area as specified above.

On closer inspection of the documents upholding the ZEP policy, one can observe the prominence of the thesis of the ‘cultural handicap’. This should not be understood however as a cultural factor linked to any particular ethnicity. The ZEP policy planners took this notion as a form of colour-blind socio-cultural handicap which call for adapting schools to the child, their family environment and their district. The cultural factor is therefore understood in a broader sense than just ethnic, embodying as much popular, administrative and institutional cultures. This is why public authorities and the education policy actors involved in the ZEP experiment sought to develop a multilvel approach simultaneously aimed at improving the general level of educational attainment, enhancing the integration of families in the educational process as well as upgrading the quality of reception in schools.

These projects were upheld till 1999. The evaluation of their results did not trigger much debate within political spheres, perhaps, as argued by Demeuse (2002), because of the weakness of a tradition of evaluating public policies in the French Community of Belgium (Florence 2007). Nonetheless, some scholars published analyses commenting on both their positive and negative effects (Florence 2004). If these experiments managed to develop increased interest for reading, fostered better command of the French language and succeeded sometimes in increasing children’s motivation, it appears nevertheless
that it also produced a stigmatisation of these areas. This led to devaluation effects and to increased schooling segregation and exclusion (Ouali 2004, Leunda 1997).

II.2.b. The Positive Discrimination Decree.

With the aim to promote social advancement of every pupil, the French Community of Belgium adopted in 1998 the so-called Positive Discrimination Decree. This legislation has a much broader scope than the ZEP strategy. The concept of positive discrimination central to this legislation has to be read in relation to schools and not to their public. The idea is to allow compensatory programmes by providing disadvantaged schools with additional funding. In comparison to the ZEP, there is a shift in the funding strategy. Whereas the indicator used for defining priority education areas relied mainly on neighbourhood socio-economic data, the Positive Discrimination Decree dwells on a more sophisticated indicator where the make-up of the school population is more central. The socio-economic characteristics of the school population are identified and taken into consideration with the objective to implement a set of actions concerned with struggling against low educational attainments and school dropout, fighting against absenteeism and preventing violence.

The focus placed on violence prevention, absenteeism and dropouts has generated amalgams between these issues and the delinquency of disadvantaged people, including those of immigrant origin. The securitarian character of this approach is perceived by some scholars as leading to a further stigmatisation and to undermine the original objectives that were the enhancement of the performances and equal opportunities of the pupils (Ouali 2004). If the positive discrimination policy sought to offer financial means to counterbalance the effects of the schooling market, it did not address the issue of segregation on the basis of ethnic origin.

The color-blind character of the French-Community educational policy should be once again underlined. As argued by Verlot, the institutional and territorial approach perfectly fits the idea according to which social criteria should defeat ethno-cultural ones (Verlot 2003). Marco Martiniello points out a similar issue by saying that the use of a vocabulary based on ethnicity is often condemned as being politically hazardous and scientifically invalid (Martiniello 1998). A quick look at the policies held in Flanders since 1990 is particularly illuminating. The Flemish region indeed designed educational policies directly related to the ethnic minority pupils and aimed at specifically supporting schools gathering many of them (Van der Straeten and Jacobs 2003).

Florence (2007) analyzed the parliamentarian debates leading to the enactment of the Positive Action Decree and pointed out the reasons that made the ethnocultural factor unwanted. Among the elements he identifies is the willingness of Francophone politician to avoid the stigmatization effect that such focus could generate. They also argue that the identification of a positive discrimination as a specific assistance for people of foreign origin could generate racist and xenophobic reactions. Finally, they do argue that placing the focus on ethnicity is unnecessary because there is a sufficient correlation between the children of immigrant families and the pupils with low educational attainments. This tends to show quite straightforwardly that within the policy-field of argumentation, the French Speaking Community tend to generally conflate ethnicity and social disadvantage.

II.2.c The Contract for School and the Enrollment Decree.
A third generic policy implicitly concerned with migration-related diversity is the Contract for School (2004) and the subsequent Enrollment Decree (2007). This policy was voted in the wake of intense debates on the need to increase the socio-economic ‘heterogeneity’ within schools. The emphasis placed on the enrollment phase was also a way of acknowledging the existence of discrimination mechanisms intervening at the point of entry. Tackling this question of ‘heterogeneity’ was a top-ranked priority and was already set out in the policy paper, the Contract for School, issued by the government of the French Speaking Community. Intended to act as a blueprint for the educational field, the Contract for School pointed out the need to struggle against the so-called ‘ghettos schools’, a phenomenon disproportionately affecting Brussels. Endeavors would consist of a package of various measures –hence, by no mean a one-fits-all measure– to be studied and weighed up most likely according to a negotiation process involving all relevant actors.

One of the major measures to come into force was thus the Enrollment Decree, which main point was to impose on schools to enroll children following the chronological order of every demand (first come first served), along with the obligation to hold a register and provide rejected candidates with a certificate justifying their eviction. Alongside a second objective aimed at prohibiting any move between high schools during first years of attendance to classes, the Decree project triggered debates within both parents and schools circles. Among parents, the constitutional freedom of parental choice was put centre stage while relayed by right-wing political strands. The issue of parental choice has a special relevance and is quite sensitive in a country like Belgium where the consecration of such a right also makes the educational field function as a ‘schooling market’. Nonetheless, parents’ standpoints regarding the Decree were divided along philosophical lines, depending on affiliation to the free (mainly catholic) or secularist network; those speaking in the name of the latter gave support to the project. Schools belonging to the free network put forward the teaching freedom argument when defending that the Decree prevented them from either organizing enrollment processes and conducting own pedagogical project. Notwithstanding the dispute, the ‘Enrollment’ Decree was finally adopted but in conjunction with the introduction of a typology of exceptions to the basic rule. As it will be shown in the fieldwork, debate remains open about its efficiency.

As underlined above, this Decree was just a one of various measures that supposedly would foster the struggle against segregation in French Speaking Belgium. Taking into account the effects that engender parental choice and partial freedom for schools to select pupils leading to an educational system where market regulation predominates, another project partly echoing the French ‘school card’ system has also been discussed in the public arena - though unsuccessfully up until now (see further). An analysis of the forces at play in the educational field – partly illustrated through the political episode aforementioned- makes clearer the existing difficulties holding back Francophone public authorities.

II.3. Specific policies aimed at managing migration-related diversity

Leunda (1997) and Ouali (2004) shed light on the long-lasting process that led Belgian authorities to put the educational multicultural challenge higher in the political agenda since the first immigrant students entered Belgian schools in the beginning of the 60’s. Endeavors to promote family immigration back in that period not only modified the Belgian demographic structure but also transformed the sociological profile of the population at school, especially in Brussels. It should be reminded here that the quality of the schooling and professional training for children was a cornerstone argument in Belgium’s overall argument to convince workers to move to Belgium with their families when Belgium
needed them back in the fifties and sixties. Nonetheless, education was far from being central in subsequent immigration policies.

As Leunda (1997) argues, they confronted two main difficulties. First and foremost was the fact that the stabilization and settlement pattern of immigrants was not immediately perceived by the authorities. Thus, the immigration issue did not give rise to specific educational policy-measures. Belgium limited itself to adopt provisional projects designed to fit what was perceived as a temporary phenomenon. So was for example the Italian Language course held in the course of the mid 60’s, on demand of the Italian authorities, that aimed at preserving the linguistic unity of the Italian immigrant family and facilitating the socio-professional resettlement in the country of origin. Secondly, communitarian problems intrinsic to Belgium, namely the conflict between the French and Flemish parts of the country – if allowing a flexible definition of the Nation –, did not let much space to define the social, political and cultural place of immigrant groups. As Leunda argues, it is sound to say that the EEC initiatives and their idea of minority rights played a significant part in helping educational issues to be raised in other terms than only palliative, especially in the French-speaking part of the country. Nonetheless, many critics were voiced by scholars, as described further, on the manner Belgium caught the opportunities this context opened up.

In 1976, the Council of Europe advanced the concept of intercultural education. In its first meaning, this education aimed at reaching all students and covering all educational contents, in order to acknowledge the multicultural dimension of immigration societies. Ministers in charge of Education in Belgium, if not in all Member States, unfortunately interpreted this education in its narrowest meaning, limiting it to migrants’ children (Ouali 2004 and Leunda 1997).

Instead of mainstreaming intercultural education, the option was taken to follow another path in 1977 by focusing specifically on migrant’s children. The EEC Directive of 25 July 1977 on the schooling of migrant workers’ children compelled Member States to organize free education including (1) training classes of the official language(s) of the country, (2) an initial and continued training for teachers in charge of imparting these classes, (3) a class of mother tongue and culture of origin (LCO).

**II.4. Outline of the three main specific policy frameworks.**

**II.4.a. LCO classes**

If these latter were organized since 1966 in cooperation with Italy, it was through the Directive that Belgium committed itself to authorizing the presence in its schools of teachers of language and culture of origin of migrants’ children (Florence 2007). Six countries signed bilateral agreements with Belgium to set up such classes: Spain, Greece, Italy, Morocco, Portugal and Turkey. Since a return to the sending country was progressively deemed as improbable, Ministries of Education valued much more ‘their cultural and psychological aspect’ than their effectiveness in the educational process. As a matter of consequence, these classes were provided low support from the part of the authorities (Ouali 2004).

LCO concept and perception would however evolve over time. Cultural Agreements with Morocco, Greece, Portugal and Turkey incorporated in 1987 an objective of integration and improvement of educational attainment rates. Later, Partnership Agreements 97-2000 brought about new changes. LCO
classes included Belgian and European Citizenship education. Recruitment of teachers of immigrant origin was also prioritized, as these latter were considered as ‘models of positive integration and successful individual stories’.

The LCO classes form currently part of the overall aims of the French speaking educational policy, set for compulsive schooling in the so-called Missions Decree of June 1997 (Décret Missions). Practically, LCO classes are divided into two sections: an ‘acquisition of the language’ class and ‘openness to other cultures’ class. The first one is added to the standard compulsive program, and can be accessed by all children whatever their culture of origin is, on demand of the parents. The second one, if organized by the school on demand of the School Board or relevant Organ involved in the decision-making process, proposes activities ‘of cultural diversity education according to an intercultural pedagogy’. In this case, it is incorporated in the standard compulsive program for all children, and is imparted in French language. According to available data, LCO classes are organized in 71 schools (De Villers).

II.4.b. Intercultural Pedagogy and Intercultural Training for Teachers

The Ministry of Education started up in 1982 a pilot-experiment for Intercultural Education, funded by the European Commission. It aimed at disseminating the intercultural pedagogy, improving educational attainments of children rooted in a foreign culture, and contributing to the integration of those children as well as their families into the Belgian social environment. However, different elements led to discredit what was portrayed by some as ‘entertainment pedagogy’ (CRPI 1990). One of them is the use of a compensatory pedagogy to address low educational attainments in place of an intercultural pedagogy (Berwaert, 1992).

As Florence argues, this concept launched by the European Commission lacked an accurate definition. The shape of the intercultural education was blurred. As it was touched upon above, its interpretation has been reduced to migrant’s children. As a result of this deficiency, the implementation of this pedagogy has often been given a ‘juxtaposition’ form ‘of different literary elements, historic, or folkloric meant to represent the culture of origin of the children’ (Anciaux et Boulangier 1996: 19).

In spite of the 486/77 Directive above mentioned, advice given by the Commission and the Council of Europe, concerns voiced by researchers as well as actors working in the field, pilot experiments alike, the cultural diversity approach was much later included in the training package of the teachers, through the 12/12/2000 decree organizing their basic formation. The political willingness to set the conditions for a real intercultural approach through a reference to cultural diversity in the teacher’s curriculum was for the very first time translated into the new legislation (Lucchini 2007).

II.4.c. Adaptation to the teaching language and Gateway classes

The first actions in this respect were taken in the end of the 60’s, providing children of foreign nationality - and whose language was different from French - with classes allowing a progressive adaptation to the teaching language. In 1989, the Royal Commissioner for Immigrant Policy issued recommendations underlining the necessity to enhance the French language as a second language by appointing teachers of immigrant origin. A large training program for teaching French as a second language was eventually set up involving different Belgian universities. However, the results of the evaluation
regarding these classes were mixed. The lack of coherence and continuity of the programme was pointed out, as well as the absence of official documents defining and encompassing the specific educational bases for these classes (Forges 2005 : 216-217).

Practically, the 1998 decree on the organization of ‘fundamental education’ specifies as prerequisites to organize such a class, that stateless or adopted children should account for 10 pupils in the school as a minimum: who have been living in Belgium for less than 3 years (1), without knowledge of the French language (2) and whose parents of a foreign nationality (3) reside in Belgium (4). Moreover, the French Speaking Community took a few years ago a step further. Indeed, a decree enacted in 2001 concerning schooling of incoming children aims at organizing ‘gateway classes’. Those ones are given the opportunity to transit through *ad hoc* classes for a period varying from one week up to six months.

### III. MIGRATION RELATED DIVERSITY AT SCHOOL: AN ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL AND POLICY DEBATE IN FRENCH SPEAKING BELGIUM.

#### III.1 Methodology

In order to map the main lines of policy standpoints, we have conducted a small qualitative research. The fieldwork included interviews with 18 people representing 4 different categories of actors. The idea behind this methodological option was to capture the views, opinions and experiences of the main actors influencing debates on education and diversity. As indicated in Box 1, the four categories are made of policy-makers, stakeholders, civil society organizations and experts from both the media and academica. The interviews were conducted between May and June 2007 mainly in Brussels.

**Box 1. Fieldwork design.**

#### III.2. Education, Intercultural relations and Citizenship.

The promotion of harmonious intercultural relationships in Belgium gives rise to a multidimensional debate in the educational field. The first dimension of the debate to single out is the notion of the struggle against segregation. It is seen, without any doubt, as the most salient concern by our respondents. Intercultural and democratic education through the curriculum is also perceived as a challenge. The Belgian school system displays a number of historical peculiarities that makes it distinctive among its European counterparts.

In the following, we have decided to focus on a number of specific concerns raised by our respondents. Firstly, we considered important to look at the challenge of recognition and the claims for a better representation of the culture of origin in the curriculum. Next to this, we look at the question of religion classes which have raised numerous debates. Linked to this, we will review the argument of those who consider that philosophical classes should be introduced as a tool to promote democratic
citizenship and enhance comparative knowledge of religions. Finally, the training of teachers as well as their profile turns out to be an important concern for our respondents.

III.2. a. Heterogeneity: a central concern.

As Vedder argues, ‘it is often assumed that an increase of intergroup contact is needed to improve intergroup relations but research has shown that contact by itself is insufficient. It is important that groups enter the contact situation with equal status […]. School segregation is often perceived as negative and efforts are usually made to undo or avoid ethnic and religious segregation among schools. However these attempts often fail because of demographic processes, housing policies, and parental school choices that are strong forces very hard to counteract by schools or national educational policies’ (Vedder 2006). This development is particularly challenging in the Belgian case, for it is clear that school segregation is a central concern in the respondent’s perception of the overall challenges faced by schools. Segregation is understood in socio-economic and socio-cultural terms, highlighting the generally assumed correlation existing between both of them. However, in line with the observations mentioned in previous sections, policy-measures taken by the French speaking Community remain essentially socio-economically based.

Aside from the fieldwork, a recent political initiative reflects particularly well the central focus on heterogeneity. The Report on Intercultural Dialogue (2005) identified as the most problematic issue of multiculturalism in the educational market the emergence of ghetto-schools where children combine social and cultural disadvantage. The policy recommendations of the Report focus, on the one hand, on the coordination and cooperation between schools of the same area to reach a better distribution of pupils and, on the other hand, on the financial resources necessary for increasing socio-cultural diversity.

Endeavors to limit this phenomenon face a three-dimensional problem:

- The territorial concentration patterns (see WP 2).
- The issue of parental choice of the school as a constitutional freedom, leading to a system of ‘schooling market’.
- The discrimination operating at the enrollment phase.

Three attempts are nonetheless worth reminding (also see section I). One failed project contemplated by the Ministry of Education was to set up kind of a ‘school zone’ (’bassins scolaires’). Thought to rationalize resources, limit competition between schools and increase heterogeneity, this system would schematically suppose to gather schools into geographical clusters, allowing parents to choose different schools, ranked by preference. Final decision to accept the enrollment of a child in the first-choice school would be attributed to an official organ depending on the number of vacant places (known as collective processing of preferences). Expectedly it has faced a huge controversy among parents and networks, since parental choice and network structures were thought to be challenged. These two forces were repeatedly pointed out by the overwhelming majority of respondents as inhibiting factors in the educational field. This immediately left the project battered, remaining the issue politically unresolved. However, enacted in 2004, the so-called ‘differentiated funding’ (’financement différencié’) awoke hopes; although it is too soon to make any comment on the changes this measure has brought or will bring about. According to this system every child, on socio-economical grounds, can additively subsidize his school: in other terms, ‘the poor pupil will make his school richer’. Finally, the enactment of the ‘Decree on Enrollment’ (Décret à l’Inscription) was devised to counteract anticipated en-
rollment. However, the effects on discrimination of this new Decree remain unclear according to the overwhelming majority of respondents. Two explanations were put forward: first, the socio-economic situation of the parents leading to a better access to information on schools - including the way it is taken advantage of - and second, the existence of a set of beliefs among more disadvantaged populations that famed schools are just unreachable for them. The broad issue of discrimination was more strongly focused on by the group of stakeholders, while insisting on the need to deepen research on the matter. A survey was in this sense undertaken by anti-racist organizations in an attempt to register all parameters leading to the eviction of a pupil. It is expected to culminate in pushing policy-makers to raise the issue higher within their diversity-related set of concerns.

Regarding the issue of parental choice, the feeling of a clash between inclusiveness and individual accomplishment (Tyack 2004) is well documented by the responses of our interviewees. It is most clearly illustrated by the following quote of a respondent: ‘it is hard to be at the same time a good parent and a good citizen’.

If the distribution of migrants’ offspring is far from being equal between schools, similar patterns can be observed internally between schooling tracks. Lower performances interact with an orientation bias more quickly relegating those children to professional and technical tracks (Manço 2000).

The issue of performance was focused on in the PISA research. Its conclusions are worth bearing in mind before sketching a list of perceived causes based on the fieldwork. The language spoken at home has a clear consequence on performance, with lower scores for pupils speaking their language of origin. Regarding the different schooling tracks, pupils in vocational or technical have significant lower scores than those in general education. Nevertheless, the differences between natives and pupils from immigrant families persist across all types of education. Finally, the socio-economic position of the family also has a clear influence. Employee’s children, whatever their origin, obtain better scores than manual workers. Within the same socio-professional group, the differences remain between natives and newcomers. In the French-speaking part, the differences between natives and second-generation pupils remain between the highest and lowest level socio-economic group but no longer in the intermediate. To sum up their point, the authors draw upon these findings to target the Belgian system as such, assuming it does not favor social mobility. Indeed, the spoken language at home and the socio-economic groups of parents can only partially explain these results. There are thus other factors at play and there should be acknowledged the existence of a specific problem with regard to pupils from immigrant families.

Comprehensive researches tend to demonstrate that integrated schooling systems favoring heterogeneity and not selection based on knowledge prove to be more efficient in reducing performance inequalities (Crahay 2000). At the core of this analysis is the relevancy if the ‘peer-driven effect (or implicit lateral learning)’ considered in many PISA countries as more important than the social origin as such. Following this line of reasoning, this latter could explain that in low heterogenic systems it is the selection patterns based on knowledge levels that leads to large gaps between most and less performing students. By contrast, the average performance can be considered as satisfactory in heterogenic systems, the proportion of less performing students is reduced while most performing account for the same number. Differences between knowledge and inequalities due to social origin are minor (Lafontaine 2001). Finally, ‘representations’ that teachers can have of their students should not be set aside but be subject to in-depth researches (Lucchini 2007).
Regarding the perceived causes of lower performances, language proficiency comes to the forefront while the Belgian educational system as such stands among the most salient concerns. The insertion of families within the educational field - for instance within parents associations - and their involvement abilities in the follow-up of their children’s schooling path remain problematic. The importance of supervisory staff within schools or coaching staff after compulsive hours is perceived as insufficient. The training for teachers, that is to say, the need for an adequate training that could help teachers to face with difficult situations, is equally underlined. The shortage of candidates to teach classes in such schools concentrating many of those children is highly problematic since it leads to a situation where teaching hours are being lost for both the students and the school. Finally, there is a fear of a growing *schooling apartheid* particularly in Brussels (Ahmed Medhoune 2007). People from immigrant families make up the majority in the schools educating future teachers. We already know that they will most likely be appointed in downgraded urban schools. In addition, Medhoune argues that some of the students currently being trained as teachers suffer themselves from an alarming lack of proficiency in the national language. This would thus lead to a vicious circle likely to go bluntly against the public efforts made to enhance pupils’ performances and increase school heterogeneity.

Political actions taken until now to deal with the issue of performance raise some more comments. Dealing with the language proficiency issue, the ethnic identity model (Alkan, 1998 quoted in Vedder 2006) is interesting to understand the Belgian model. It assumes that immigrant grows up between at least two cultures, which lead to an identity confusion and adaptation problems if the children experience a lack of appreciation for the skills, knowledge and feelings that are typical of their ethnic background. Lessons in student’s first language and classes on the students’ cultural heritage (LCO as described above) are seen important for preventing or overcoming adaptation problems. ‘Such lessons are deemed to allow migrant youth experience appreciation for their parent’s language and culture. The assumptions are that language maintenance and a good knowledge of one’s own culture contribute to the adolescent’s ethnic identity, and a strong identity is conducive to well-being and social adjustment’ (Vedder 2006). Nonetheless, if this model stresses the role of attitudinal factors for learning, and not only language learning, it does not perfectly stick to the Belgian model. Indeed, one of the purposes of the LCO classes is clearly to foster the first language spoken at home for it is expected to enhance at turn the second language (French or Flemish in this case) (Lucchini 2007). However, reactions gathered in the fieldwork call for an improvement of LCO classes by providing a better pedagogical material and facilitating its access to everyone. By and large, it is unclear if information on the aims and practical set up of these classes are perfectly disseminated in schools.

Secondly, the Positive Action Decree that constituted the major political framework up until now is seen by the overwhelming majority as an insufficient response. Some of them voiced more critics on the vicious circle that it can entail. Positive action may be seen by respondents as likely to provoke some kind of stigmatization by a ‘promotion’ of difficulties. Hence, this does not constitute any response to the issue of parental choice. The ‘differentiated funding’ action is in this sense a try to answer the problem by giving to every kind of schools financial incentives that could end up rebalancing their heterogeneity rate. However, critics are raised on its little effect on most rich and famed schools that would perpetuate the dual character of the educational system.

III.2.b. Citizenship and Intercultural Education.
Violence in schools, outbreaks of racism and xenophobia, political absenteeism and the existence of a powerful extreme-right movement are some of the many parameters calling for an educational response (Naval, Print, Veldhuis 2002). A decree on Citizenship has been enacted in 2007 that reflects that concern. Political divide between left and right did not play any significant role in the matter. However, ecologists remain a bit aside, underlining that the new decree did not constitute any real innovative element but is nothing more than an official formalization of the many actions already taken by schools. A quick cross-analysis of the decree, schooling programs and the fieldwork responses allows us to get a better insight into the Belgian model and debate.

First, the provision of a new text book called ‘Become and be a citizen’ to be used in a range of disciplines such as French Language, History or Geography depicts well the transversal character of Citizenship Education favored until now. There is a wide consensus among respondents that the topic should not give rise to an ad hoc class in the curriculum.

Secondly, the notion of ‘active’ citizenship through student’s participation into the daily-running of the school itself is widely promoted in the educational field. The most common mechanism is to set up democratic elections of students in order to participate in the various organs involved in the decision-making process. However, some respondents voiced concerns on the need to make clear that a school cannot and must not be a ‘full democracy in the common sense’, putting the stress on the danger to do so and to think so both for schools and students.

Third, the need for compulsive inter-disciplinary activities enacted in the new decree is illustrated in the fieldwork by numerous examples of initiatives taken by schools. These range from a visit to the Strasbourg European Parliament, a simulation of what could be life in a non-democratic regime, to a visit of concentration camps. At this point the most interesting question is which class these activities should take place in, or even within which disciplinary realm is the broader citizenship challenge more likely to be dealt with. Interestingly there is a clear reference, both in the decree and in one group of respondents, to the ‘philosophical classes’ (that is to say non confessional moral, Catholic, Islamic, Jewish, Protestant or Orthodox religion). The substance of these classes, their function in the curriculum regarding issues like citizenship are challenged by the fieldwork. A first group of respondents valued the integration of the ‘citizenship’ issue in the religious curricula as the best common denominator for all, may they be Muslims, Christians or Jews. A second group, more likely to stand among secularist strands, highlighted the relative inadequacy of the religious realm to touch upon citizenship issues. If still advocating a transversal approach, some defend the setting up of classes of philosophy as one of the best response both to citizenship issues as well as mere intercultural elements. By intercultural, they tend to put the stress on a philosophy-based comparative knowledge of religions.

As we will see here, curriculum-related issues take on local colors. The absence of philosophy classes issue sometimes parallels the compulsive religion class issue. No one dismisses the very interest of a philosophy class. However, its place in the curriculum and the future of the so-called philosophical classes fuel existing tensions among actors. A previous attempt to reduce religion classes in order to make room for philosophy triggered huge debates. Years after, shadows of the ‘Schooling War’ still seems to loom large. The networks-based schooling organization is one more time put center stage by respondents. If the divide between secularist and catholic actors is theoretically salient, it cannot elude the existence of pragmatic stances among secularist actors. Weighing up the feasibility of rebalancing the curriculum, they highly value the historical difficulty that stops short of giving classes of philosophy the place it would deserve. Moreover, the very existence and aim of religion classes in the curriculum is sometimes challenged by some actors in the field. Nonetheless, this debate should better not be
raised in the broad citizenship discussion since it can introduce a bias in the analysis. Should or not the State promote religion classes, and if so what should be the educational target of these? The next point on Muslims offers a better context to answer Belgian responses to this. Alongside the citizenship-related challenge, a second focus of research deals with the cultural elements integrated in the curriculum. The Foundation King Baudouin recently commissioned a report on the relevance ‘of fostering the study of other civilizations contribution in the curriculum’ (2007). The comments that emerged from the research are worth analyzing here, as they fruitfully complement the fieldwork. While bearing in mind the important Muslim features of Belgian immigration, the initiative targeted a promotion of diversity, as well as the valorization of Muslim culture and its contribution to European societies (literature, mathematics, etc). Interestingly, it was quickly amended. According to its opponents, too strong a focus on the promotion of Muslim culture could provoke stigmatization, if not alarming withdrawn attitudes. Thereby was it transformed into a ‘need for addressing the migratory reality and the students’ own path for the sake of recognition’. Recognition was in turn perceived as a controversial idea. In this line of reasoning, knowledge should remain the primary educational aim, from which recognition as citizens may emerge at a second stage. A fear for some kind of ideological use as well as a potential backward jerk of official and secularist strands would help to explain this standpoint. A second concern was raised regarding the existing risk of confusion between civilization and religion. Third, just it was observed in the fieldwork, the training for teachers is a pervasive concern. The Belgian system allowing flexibility to teachers – they can for example choose from a set of suggested texts - suppose a rigorous formation first to secure the utilization of materials touching upon such matters, second to prevent misguided uses or practices. Folkloric initiatives aimed at discovering other ‘cultures’ - also ending up assigning a simulacrum of the culture of origin to a child - were often reported through the fieldwork.

This leads us to a second question regarding whether there is or not demand in the educational field for bigger contents in the matter. According to the majority, the initiatives taken by schools are to be highlighted on the one hand. Too many guidelines recommendations issued by authorities would probably not be the best way to deal with the matter. Injecting more content does not mean that teachers would appeal to, either. Current practical conditions are repeatedly said to allow little more space. By contrast, the stress should be put on the training for teachers. The difficulty to touch upon matters like immigration – for instance- raises sometimes questions for teachers fearing comments that would not respect some kind of ‘political correctness’, or that would not escape from ethnocentrism. In the same way, for those who deal with disciplines like “First Language”, the opportunity and the willingness to successfully introduce authors from Maghreb - for example - also depends on the abilities of the teacher. On the other hand, as suggested in the Foundation King Baudouin report, the lack of cultural knowledge would entirely justify putting the stress on such contents. However, as it was said above, the recognition challenge should not be put at the forefront.


We should take the headscarf controversy as a convenient starting point for it raises multiple concerns in the educational landscape that go beyond the simple issue of the wearing of ostensible religious signs. Of course, this very debate remains central, especially when taken as part of a set of demands likely to be placed by Muslims on Belgian government, namely specificities ranging from halal meat in schools, religion-based days off, or even reticence towards biology classes. In this case, the upsurge of religion (Islam), whether influenced by international events or evolving patterns linked to the defi-
nitive settlement of migrants and their offspring, is the common backdrop against which respondents analyze and try to answer these elements. Religion in the curricula should be an issue analyzed aside, as Belgium already considers it as a right and an obligation.

Nonetheless, the most striking feature of the fieldwork is the prominence of another dimension viewed as a possible effect of the current legislation framing the ostensible religious signs issue in schools: schooling segregation. Harmonious intercultural relationships appear to be strongly premised upon the promotion of intergroup contacts in schools, referred to as heterogeneity promotion. In this sense, a further setting up of Muslim faith schools – only one is registered on Brussels soil - tend to be considered at first sight as a reaction to a specific context as well as a factor countering attempts to enhance intercultural education.

Further dimensions of the issue raised by respondents regard the holders of the claims above mentioned, the way they mobilize, those voicing these demands and how they actively intervene in public debate, questions that some media respondents came to call ‘Muslim citizenship’. Last but not least is the question of the bearer of decisional powers in the educational landscape, that is, the set of sometimes conflicting interests that interact to shape outcomes. Belgian repartition of powers in this field has indeed often been pointed out as a difficulty of its own to come to terms with issues as curricula contends particularly when involving religion.

III.3.a. Wearing ostensible religious signs.

Belgian debate regarding headscarf was to a large extent influenced by France were it heated up in 2003. The existing permeability between France and French-speaking Belgium to this respect is worth bearing in mind as the analysis of the issue by respondents often ends up appealing to this model, opposing the two countries on their conception of laïcité. A double context shapes the current framework, namely the couple laïcité-neutrality and its interpretation, as well as the significance of negotiation between actors involved in the field to reach effective agreement on the prohibition of headscarf in schools.

Schools are indeed the ones entitled to take a decision through their internal rules, following a decision-making process involving among others relevant organs within its structure (i.e Participatory Council), parents and even consulting the Federal Organ Center for Equal Opportunities and Fight against Racism) enabled to give advice. It should be stressed that this latter does not show any clear position to this respect, co-existing in its very heart various divergent positions. Stemming from this situation, headscarf has been and still is dealt with on an ad hoc basis, sticking to the rhythm of headlines. It cannot be our aim here to draw an accurate typology of all the reasons justifying the prohibition to wear headscarf. Nonetheless, an interviews-based scanning can register parameters ranging from a much anterior decision linked to a ban on headgear - for example American flat cap - to alleged observations of proselyte behaviors, or an impressive modification of enrolled populations inside a school not banning it as a result of an increasing tendency of its counterparts to prohibit it (as set out in WP2). Nor can concerns about the image of the school in a nearly schooling “market” context be discounted. These two latter elements are the most pressing issues, as they potentially can set in motion a “segregation” process (see further).

Whether this framework simply has been convenient to political authorities up until now, is a question that largely came to the fore in the fieldwork. The spectrum of viewpoints remains large. By and lar-
ge, the possibility of a clear-cut political decision aimed at prohibiting it was frequently analyzed by respondents belonging to government spheres or close to them as just fitting France (Stasi Commission), insisting on the neutral character of Belgium. Negotiation process between those really concerned by the matter is highly valued, along with a fear of subsequent withdrawn attitudes. Respondent of the Executive of Muslims of Belgium also advocated this position, albeit it cannot merely summarize the positions of the majority of Belgian Muslims for its representativeness remains mitigated among them. It is worth reminding here that a Commission had been set up in 2005 to assess issues coming within the intercultural field. The section dealing with the religious signs in schools suggested three potential positions, thus leaving open the discussion. Political parties appear to be reluctant to touch upon the issue as confirmed in the fieldwork, although a quick look at the June 07 electoral program indicate that right-wing party advocates a freedom of principle in the schools, whenever security, attendance to all classes and non-proselytism are secured. Nonetheless, when faced with the growing number of schools banning the headscarf, respondents did not deny the potential necessity to legislate if the tendency was to keep on its ascending track.

The second group of respondents, gathering an increasing number of schools, the Association of the Parents of the Public Education, some media experts and the Movement against Racism and Xenophobia, called for a legislation reflecting a clear political stance: either to clarify the situation, to curb the influx of young women in the rare schools allowing the headscarf (in this case in pleas of an overall permission, but wary of the obligation to attend all classes), or simply because it is deemed to be the role of the authorities (casting doubts on the effectiveness or relevance of a negotiation process). Among this group, the "neutrality", is not challenged. However it has been many times identified as a factor allowing “political stasis” and ad hoc treatment.

Still, there is a concern among actors that a long-term effect of such non-decision, but de facto increasing ban, could result in driving out young girls from mainstream public schools – or at least trigger a process of segregation. The position articulated by Amy Gutmann clarifies theoretically the reasoning of those who explicitly express fears. Democratic education would not force the girls to give up wearing the headscarf in class, but it would expose them to a public culture of equality in schools. The democratic rationale for opening the schools to the display of religious difference is not to protect each particular way of life from criticism or even from erosion. The rationale is rather to encourage citizens to understand, appreciate and evaluate politically relevant differences among ways of life.

To sum up, one question is worth singling out and is the tension between the principle of laïcité and the principle of neutrality. In the educational landscape, these two notion encompass different realities and Belgian French-speaking authorities have to date been unable to clarify how these two notions should operate at school.

### III.3.b. Muslims faith schools: tensions between unity and diversity.

The first and unique Muslim school ‘Al Ghazali’ to be officially recognized by French-speaking was created in 1989 on the initiative of the Cultural and Islamic Center located in Brussels (nursery and first school). It thus took the form of a private confessional school entitled to public funding. At the time the school was set up, the stress was put on two key concerns about the existing concentration of migrants’ children in professional and technical tracks as well as perceived pressures from secularist circles on practicing populations.
Much later, in June 2007, the idea to create a Muslim faith-school (high school, known as *Projet Avicenne*) spread like wildfire through headlines and caused right-wing party to immediately express his concerns. Described as ‘likely to welcome covered up women’ and ‘provide them with general classes along with Arab and Islamic classes’, this project was given a reactive meaning to the banning context by respondents. If for instance Jewish or Protestant faith-schools do exist in Belgium alongside a powerful catholic network - acknowledged in their line of reasoning - the setting up of Muslim counterparts seems not to be assessed exactly the same way. International context, headscarf heating debate analyzed in line with a feeling of religious upsurge among Belgian Muslims, may explain the shaping of distinct reactions. Alongside these elements, such a fact was perceived by a majority of respondents as going against endeavors to promote heterogeneity whether socio-economic or socio-cultural - hence against intercultural education. Interestingly, the Movement against Racism and Xenophobia, highlighting the normal character of the emergence of such a Muslim faith-school with regard to other public-funded confessional ones, put however the stress on ‘the lack of dialogue’ that ‘logically ends up translating into similar projects’.

The right to educational authority is said to be an exemplary minority right, but in the set of rights likely to be claimed, this is the one difficult to justify (Van der Ploeg, 1998: 177). Collective rights in this case derive in Belgian law of the individual freedom of association, thus allowing private schools to be set up (ibid 181 see Kukathas). However, as it is clearly reflected in the fieldwork, the curricula such a school could promote is challenged. Liberal and civic risks are put center stage (explicitly illustrated by the words ghettos, segregation, specification, communitarian withdraws, openness promotion through curricula) and prompts respondents to underline the educational standards set in Belgium as well as the monitoring of education through inspections. Indeed, the funding of such a school depends on the compliance to program requisites elaborated by the French Community (‘mission-decree’ above described); the same goes for the homologation of diplomas delivered.

III.3.c. Hallal food and religion-based days off.

If a few schools located in areas concentrating many Muslims offer *halal* meat in their menu (Molenbeek), menus just without pork are more easily taken into account according to the population enrolled in the school. The question is whether Muslims genuinely hold such a claim (*halal*). To the view of Parliamentarians it can be understood as a legitimate demand, yet it has not raised a real debate for requisites like traceability have not been compelling until now. Another interpretation given by anti-racist movements is the lack of strong Muslim organization likely to short-circuit their claims. Notwithstanding these comments, the issue has recently been filling headlines. How should thus be understood the gap between media life and main actors? Based on an official offer to provide some Brussels’ schools with *halal* meat, the issue triggered many reactions for local political authorities were believed to ‘instrumentalize’ a ‘would-be ethnic claim’ for electoral concerns. A quick look at the media coverage in 2006 indicates that the nature of the argument – that is, ‘instrumentalism’—was also largely extended to a whole debate on parties’ electoral strategy when these were criticized for attracting ethnic candidates at all costs (roughly, turning a blind eye at their basic competences).

Among respondents of left-wing and right Parties, the symbolism of such claim has come to the fore. When mixed in a set of claims such as headscarf or refusal to attend some classes as biology (see further), it would inevitably create tensions as Muslims ‘bring back shadows of the past’, or even ‘challenge the separation between State and Churches’. The practical feasibility taking into account the in-
creasing diversity has been raised while the rationale underlying specific food was pointed out, without setting aside a strategy that could end up in its effects reflecting communitarian patterns.

Regarding religious-based days off - for the time being in accordance with Catholic holy days - the issue has been easily sidestepped by the idea to match schooling rhythms with children’s own rhythms. Also, with every school allowed to arrange a few dates according to its own schedule, negotiation within schools can take place according to the population features (Aid El Kebir if many Muslims).

To sum up these claims appear to be more of a non-debate, anticipating what could be considered as potential claims but not strongly hold by Muslims. Things remain handled on the field according to each situation.

### III.3.d. Religion classes.

Whether religion classes should or not be part of the curriculum is an issue that at first sight is not relevant in Belgium as neutrality makes it compulsive two hours per week in public education. Their persistence in the curricula must also be understood in the light of an historical process confronting two networks, namely a private catholic one and a secular public one. As it was reflected above, the equilibrium between those two strands still proves to be fragile, thus making sensitive any potential debate on the issue. Islam classes appeared much later. It is only after Islam was officially recognized in 1974, that Muslims could call for the benefit of this system of State sponsored religious classes.

Another question deriving from the existence of religion classes in the curriculum is the place of the ‘truth’. While critical thinking is a typical hallmark of public education, creationism theory is a practical illustration. This question was raised by several of our respondents during our fieldwork. A research on beliefs regarding creationism and evolutionism of students in high-schools and Universities in Brussels pointed out that a majority of Muslim students choose creationist responses while 87% among them felt that their belief conflicted with the Darwinian theory of evolution. If creationist ideas are also to be noticed among Catholic students, it seems that the more educated they are, the more these ideas tend to decline; this correlation cannot apply to Muslims, some of them going for both explanations (Perbal 2005). A book dwelling on creationist theories wrote by Turkish author Harun Yahya was sent off in 2007 to various French-speaking schools. Reacting immediately, Education Minister warned schools on the values advocated in the book, “viewed as contrary to the values of the ‘Missions Decree’ and documents expounding competencies to be fulfilled by students as well as pedagogical programs.’

### IV. CONCLUSION

The first part of this report looked at the main policies implemented in French-speaking Belgium that deal with migration-related educational challenges. The priority education areas experiment (or so-called ZEP) followed by the Positive Action Decree make up the general policy framework indirectly impacting on migration related diversity. Their most striking characteristic is the use of socio-economic categories, while in practice they do largely target ethnic minority pupils. In this matter, the report focus on the French-speaking part of Belgium is particularly well justified by the existence of much different patterns in Flanders. The latter indeed designed educational policies directly related to ethnic
minority children and aimed at supporting schools gathering many of them. By contrast, we have recalled how how sensitive is the use of ethnocultural parameters among French-speaking authorities. Mostly pushed in the back by European Directives and recommendations, Belgian authorities came to devise specific policies aimed at managing migration-related diversity. LCO classes, Intercultural Pedagogy and Intercultural Training for Teachers, Adaptation to the Teaching Language and Gateway Classes were some of the policy-responses given to the issue and now shaping the educational landscape.

The empirical research following this overview was intended to capture the most important views, opinions and concerns influencing debates among main actors in the educational field, while particular attention was paid to Muslims. When touching upon the promotion of intercultural relations, respondents pointed out heterogeneity as a central concern. Endeavors to tackle the issue were said to face resistances from three powerful ‘counteracting forces’, namely the persistence of territorial concentration patterns, the issue of parental choice as a constitutional freedom leading to a system of schooling-market, as well as discrimination phenomena operating at the enrollment phase. If segregation among schools is to be observed, internal segregation within schools is equally disturbing. Lower performances of migrant’s children interact with an orientation bias more easily relegating them to professional and technical tracks. Regarding curriculum issues, the interview results echoed some recent concerns that led to the enactment of a new Decree on Citizenship. No cleavage was to be observed on the content as such but interestingly, its position within the curriculum layout triggered much debate. To deal with the broader challenge of the curriculum, the results of our fieldwork were used to analyse the need to introduce more intercultural contents.

The fieldwork report ended with a special focus on Muslims related issues. Debate on headscarf is still heating up in a context of ever-increasing banning in the schools. If responses were mostly polarized between those advocating a statu quo and those calling for a clear-cut political decision, fears of negative consequences resulting in a segregation process were pervasive. Alongside an issue clearly stealing the limelight to other demands, religion-based days off and halal food issues were also touched upon, mainly as would-be claims not likely to call for an urgent response. Respondents took a different interest in faith-school as intentions to set up another Islamic school were just announced in a context increasingly prohibitive with regards to headscarf. Islam classes were the last topic to be discussed as philosophical and religious classes are as much a right as an obligation in Belgium. Nonetheless, beyond the interest such classes theoretically may have when studying minorities related issues, we underlined the multidimensional character of a question that invited itself into the debate on citizenship and curriculum contents. Owing to historical events shaping Belgian educational landscape, it remains one of the most sensitive issues, still marked by power equilibrium between secularist and catholic strands.

V. REFERENCES


**VI. RESPONDENTS’ PROFILE.**

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