TransAtlantic Council on Migration
A Project of the Migration Policy Institute

Policy Brief

Managing Religious Difference in North America and Europe in an Era of Mass Migration

By Demetrios G. Papademetriou, Richard Alba, Nancy Foner, and Natalia Banulescu-Bogdan

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary[1]

The global refugee crisis has reignited long-standing debates about how to successfully integrate religious minorities into liberal democratic societies. While the United States and Europe share many of the same challenges, there are fundamental transatlantic differences in how religious difference is managed. In Western Europe, cultural fears continue to dominate, with many seeing Islam as a direct threat to the norms and values that bind their societies together. In contrast, security fears, particularly surrounding terrorism, are predominant in the United States. While these differences have blurred slightly in the wake of the recent Paris, San Bernardino, and Brussels attacks—which have heightened anti-Muslim hostility on both sides of the Atlantic—key distinctions continue to be relevant.

There are fundamental transatlantic differences in how religious difference is managed.

Countries across Europe have experimented with various approaches to manage these challenges over the past several decades, with deep disagreements over what works and what does not. At one end of the spectrum, countries have made efforts to accommodate and even adapt to minority practices, or to incorporate minority practices into the mainstream (for instance granting permission to build mosques and establishing local Islam councils). At the opposite end of the spectrum, laws restricting or even prohibiting certain Muslim cultural practices (such as wearing the veil) have proliferated.

At their core, debates over how to manage Muslim integration in Europe are driven by three broad concerns:

- ***Cultural incompatibility.*** Some Europeans fear that, at heart, Islam is incompatible with European values, culture, and norms—particularly free speech, gender equality, and equal rights for minorities.
- ***Social cohesion.*** In more secular societies, some have expressed concern that deeply held religious beliefs detract from strong national identities and allegiances.
- ***Security.*** Particularly in light of recent terrorist attacks, there is a growing fear that fundamentalist Islam fosters exclusion, separation, and even terrorism.

In the United States, religion *in and of itself* is generally not seen as a threat to American institutions or identity. Hostility to Islam is largely focused on national security issues, rather than framed as a fundamental threat to American core values and institutions. There are four main reasons for these differences: demographics, the religiosity of the native majority population, the historic role of religion in society, and more inclusive national identities. Although the post-9/11 environment has produced instances of discrimination and even violence against Muslims in the United States, the frame has remained consistent: fears are largely focused on an external threat, such as the risk of outsiders committing terrorist acts.

Persistent immigrant integration challenges on both sides of the Atlantic have led to renewed thinking over how to more effectively manage large-scale immigration in ways that bring benefits to both immigrants and the societies that receive them. Successful integration is not linked to policy interventions alone;

1 This policy brief draws from a series of international lectures given by Migration Policy Institute (MPI) President emeritus Demetrios G. Papademetriou as well as a recently released book by Richard Alba and Nancy Foner, *Strangers No More: Immigration and the Challenges of Integration in North America and Western Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015).

institutional frameworks are also highly influential, including the extent to which countries are able to select substantial proportions of their immigrant populations, the existence of ethnic social capital to support new arrivals, the removal of barriers to the success of the second generation, and the acceptance of minority religions and identities. Policymakers can take several steps to proactively influence how host communities relate to those of immigrant origin in schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods:

- ***Ensure that migration is managed in a responsible, orderly way.*** Publics expect legal immigration flows to be carefully paced so as not to exceed the ability of institutions and infrastructure to receive and incorporate newcomers.
- ***Help immigrants demonstrate their commitment and value to their host communities.*** Societies should provide immigrants the tools and conditions to be able to contribute as early as possible, demonstrating they are an asset rather than a burden.
- ***Take host-community concerns about immigration seriously.*** Ignoring or dismissing fears and failing to respond appropriately will only entrench anxieties.

I. Introduction

In less than a generation, large-scale immigration has led to unprecedented levels of ethnic, racial, and religious diversity across most of the developed world, transforming the face of communities. Ethnic and racial minorities—including both immigrants and their offspring—now make up significant proportions of the population across North America and Europe.[2] One in four U.S. residents today is an immigrant or has at least one immigrant parent;[3] in Germany the figure reached one in five by 2014[4] with the proportion likely to increase further in light of the ongoing migrant influx. And, as always, averages hide wild variations in thousands of localities, where immigrants and their descendants are close to becoming (or are already) the majority. The cities of Amsterdam, New York, and Toronto epitomize this change: more than half their populations are comprised of immigrants and their second-generation children.[5]

This increase in diversity enriches the life of communities in many ways, and in some parts of Europe there is a hope that newcomers will add an essential demographic dynamic in the context of a fertility

2 As William Frey explains, 22 of the United States' 100 largest metropolitan areas were "majority minority" in 2010, up from just 14 in 2000 and five in 1990. See William Frey, "A Pivotal Period for Race in America," in *Diversity Explosion: How New Racial Demographics Are Remaking America*, ed. William Frey (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2014), www.brookings.edu/~/media/press/books/2013/diversityexplosion/chapter-one.pdf.

3 According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014 American Community Survey (ACS), U.S. immigrants and their U.S.-born children now number approximately 81 million persons, or 26 percent of the overall U.S. population. See Jie Zong and Jeanne Batalova, "Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration in the United States," *Migration Information Source,* April 14, 2016, www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states.

4 In 2014, 16.4 million of Germany's 81.2 million inhabitants had a migration background—the official umbrella term that includes both the foreign born and their children, specifically children with at least one migrant parent or with at least one parent born in Germany but holding a foreign passport (the so-called "option children"). See Statistisches Bundesamt, "Migration, Integration," accessed January 28, 2016, www.destatis.de/EN/FactsFigures/SocietyState/Population/MigrationIntegration/PersonsMigrationBackground/PersonsMigrationBackground.html.

5 And in Amsterdam, an estimated 14 percent of the population in 2012 was Muslim (more than twice the figure for the Netherlands as a whole). See Nancy Foner, Jan Rath, Jan Willem Duyvendak, and Rogier van Reekum, eds., *New York and Amsterdam: Immigration and the New Urban Landscape* (New York: NYU Press, 2014).

slowdown in native majority groups.[6] At the same time, the rapid pace of change is causing ripples across the social fabric, all too often fueling anxieties about social and cultural change and bringing to the fore insecurities about national identity. At the root of this anxiety is the fact that many (and in some areas *most*) immigrants are at a significant social, cultural, and ethnic remove from their host society. Moreover, many immigrants and their offspring lag behind their native-born peers in key indicators of integration, such as host-country language acquisition, educational achievement, labor market access and outcomes, and political engagement.[7] The lingering effects of the global economic crisis have only exacerbated these gaps, furthering cumulative disadvantage and breeding mutual wariness between many immigrants and natives.

The rapid pace of change is causing ripples across the social fabric, all too often fueling anxieties about social and cultural change.

In recent years, religious difference has defined much of this anxiety. This has been especially true in Western Europe, where many natives see minority religions, particularly Islam, as challenging the norms and values that bind liberal democratic societies together. General fears of immigration are closely linked to specific anxieties regarding Muslim immigrants and their progeny on cultural, but also increasingly, security grounds. The January and November 2015 terrorist attacks in Paris, followed by similar attacks in Brussels in March 2016, intensified fears in Europe of terrorism and homegrown extremism. Anti-Muslim hostility in the United States has also been heightened in the wake of the attacks in Paris as well as the December 2015 San Bernardino, California attack, but, to a large extent, its focus has been on *external* security threats, including from potential Syrian refugees, rather than on marginalized and radicalized Muslim youth, as is more common in Europe.

Other contrasts between the United States and Europe also remain. Immigration debates in the United States have not been Islamicized—that is, systematically connected with anti-Islamic rhetoric—the way they have been in Western Europe.[8] Unlike secular Western European societies, religion plays a more central role in American life, and minority religions are not seen as a significant threat to American identity and values. In fact, religiosity and membership in religious institutions are often perceived as *furthering* integration into the American mainstream. As two of this brief's authors write in a recently published book, "By and large, religion is an accepted avenue for immigrants' and their children's inclusion in American society... hostility to Islam [in the United States]… tends to be more focused on security concerns. In Western Europe, by comparison, threats to civilizational and core values loom larger."[9]

6 Germany, for example, faces a dramatic population decline that some politicians have suggested could be reversed through immigration. See, for example, Jörg Luyken, "Migrants reverse German population decline," *The Local*, September 24, 2015, www.thelocal.de/20150924/migrants-spur-german-population-surge. This is not without controversy, however, as many analysts point out that immigration will have at best short-term demographic benefits (until this population ages as well), plus the volume of newcomers needed to boost growth is perhaps larger than society is prepared to manage. See Elizabeth Schumacher, "Immigration not going to stop Germany's demographic problem," Deutsche Welle, January 20, 2016, www.dw.com/en/immigration-not-going-to-stop-germanys-demographic-problem/a-18993548.

7 Here, integration refers to those processes by which immigrants and their children may attain the goods and positions valued by a society and gain acceptance in a broad range of mainstream institutions. For an extended discussion of the concept, see Alba and Foner, *Strangers No More*.

8 Jocelyene Cesari, *Why the West Fears Islam* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 2,11. To be sure, the crop of Republican candidates running for the presidency has raised the political salience of the Islamic terrorist threat, with widely publicized proposals targeting Muslims, such as calls to bar them from entering the United States. Whether—and to what extent—these proposals and public discussions will have enduring consequences on the U.S. political discourse, including on immigration, is not clear.

9 Alba and Foner, *Strangers No More,* 118-19.

This policy brief focuses on the different policy frameworks and practices governing Muslim integration in North America and Europe, using them as windows into how receiving governments and societies manage fundamental change in an era of large-scale, and at times massive, immigration. As Muslim minorities continue to grow in size and influence—particularly in light of unprecedented flows to Europe—governments face the critical challenge of creating a narrative about immigration that embraces religious difference and builds rather than detracts from community cohesion. The brief concludes with recommendations on ways governments can manage immigration more effectively, turning the influx of culturally different newcomers from a challenge into an opportunity.

II. Religious Difference: Vehicle for Integration or Threat to Social Cohesion?

A. Islam in Europe: An Uneasy Relationship

As of 2010, Muslim immigrants made up nearly 40 percent of all non-European migrants in the European Union; their largest populations are found in France and Germany.[10] In four countries in Europe (Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden), Islam has superseded Christianity as the predominant religion among the first generation.[11] And this trend promises to continue. Considering the significant rates of family reunification, the remarkably high recent flows of Muslim migrants and asylum seekers, and the fact that recent Muslim immigrants tend to be younger and have more children than natives, the Muslim share of Europe's population is expected to reach or exceed 8 percent by 2030, according to an estimate from the Pew Research Center. In 1990, Muslims comprised 4 percent of the European population.[12]

The educational and labor market outcomes of Muslim immigrants in most Western European countries are worrisome.

Muslim immigrants face several challenges. First, the educational and labor market outcomes of Muslim immigrants in most Western European countries are worrisome, and challenges often persist across generations, including among youth who have grown up in the societies in question. Disadvantages are often perpetuated by educational systems that steer minorities toward lower-value tracks and by

10 According to the Pew Research Center, Germany and France have the largest Muslim populations among European Union (EU) Member States. As of 2010, there were 4.8 million Muslims in Germany (5.8 percent of the total population) and 4.7 million Muslims in France (7.5 percent). See Conrad Hackett, "5 facts about the Muslim population in Europe" (Pew Research Center Fact Tank, November 17, 2015), www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/11/17/5-facts-about-the-muslim-population-in-europe.

11 Teresa García-Muñoz and Shoshana Neuman, "Is Religiosity of Immigrants a Bridge or a Buffer in the Process of Integration? A Comparative Study of Europe and the United States" (Discussion paper no. 6384, Institute for the Study of Labor, Bonn, February 2012), www.iza.org/en/webcontent/publications/papers/viewAbstract?dp_id=6384.

12 Hackett, "5 facts."

employers who have a clear preference for job applicants with mainstream names.[13] The cycle can be hard to break, as each degree of disadvantage propels people even further outside the mainstream.

A second challenge lies in the realm of cultural integration. The past two decades have been checkered by deep—and at times vehement—disagreement over the extent to which Islamic religious practices should be accommodated, even facilitated, and the extent to which mainstream society should be open to the mutual accommodations that all integration processes imply. Countries across Europe have experimented with various approaches that include, most notably:

- ***Accommodation and adaptation.*** This is defined by communities' tolerance of minority practices and the efforts of mainstream institutions to accommodate minority cultures. By now, most countries have accommodated at least some Islamic practices, such as granting permission to build mosques. Several permit ritual animal slaughter. The United Kingdom recognizes Islamic law, or *sharia*, in cases where it does not conflict with local or national law.

- ***Incorporation.*** These are efforts to bring minority practices into the mainstream. A number of governments have established local and national Islam councils, in part to diminish foreign ties and to encourage religious practices compatible with national policies and principles. The French Council of the Muslim Religion, for example, which has a mandate to negotiate issues affecting Islamic religious practice with the French state, represents the government's attempt to establish a *French Islam* rather than merely tolerate Islam *in* France—thus seeking to imbue religious practice with aspects of French norms and national identity.[14]

- ***Restriction.*** At the opposite end of the spectrum from accommodation, laws restricting or even prohibiting certain Muslim cultural practices have proliferated. The most visible laws prohibit the wearing of headscarves or the full-face veil in certain public places (such as schools and hospitals), as enacted in France and Belgium.

All three approaches appear to have stirred additional anxiety and at times virulent discourse in both public and private spheres, stoked by prominent politicians and the media. Dutch politician Geert Wilders, for example, is known for his brazen Islamophobia, calling Islam a backward religion and advocating banning the Koran. Right-wing parties have exploited anti-Muslim sentiment for political gain, with some politicians, most notably in Eastern Europe, saying they will refuse to accept Muslim refugees in their countries. And several times in the past decade, these tensions have bubbled into violence, as in the riots in the Paris banlieues and in Stockholm.[15]

Anti-Muslim sentiment in Western Europe is distinct from, though closely linked with, anti-immigration anxiety, and its roots can be traced to three broad causes:

1. ***Concerns that, at heart, Islam is incompatible with European values, culture, and norms.*** Much of the anxiety surrounding Muslim immigrants in Europe boils down to the question of whether Islam, and the cultural practices associated with it, are compatible with fundamental European values. Some Europeans, including many public commentators on the left and right,

13 Resume tests are a common tool to uncover employers' bias against foreign-sounding names; see Alba and Foner, *Strangers No More*, chapter 8. A 2010 study of the French labor market looked specifically at anti-Muslim discrimination, finding that a Muslim candidate was 2.5 times less likely to receive a job interview callback than is his or her Christian counterpart. See Claire L. Adida, David D. Laitin, and Marie-Ann Valfort, "Identifying barriers to Muslim integration in France," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America,* vol. 107, no. 52 (2010): 22384-390, www.pnas.org/content/107/52/22384.full.

14 See, for example, Jonathan Laurence, *The Emancipation of Europe's Muslims: The State's Role in Minority Integration* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012); Jonathan Laurence and Justin Vaisse, *Integrating Islam: Political and Religious Challenges in Contemporary France* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2006).

15 See, for example, Sofie Fredlund-Blomst, "Assessing Immigrant Integration in Sweden after the May 2013 Riots," *Migration Information Source,* January 16, 2014, www.migrationpolicy.org/article/assessing-immigrant-integration-sweden-after-may-2013-riots.

see Islam as a direct threat to Western Europe's core liberal pillars of free speech, gender equality, and equal rights for previously stigmatized groups such as homosexuals. These fears have played themselves out in recent conflicts. Many Europeans have fought against self-censorship by defending the right of satirical newspapers and cartoonists to depict the Prophet Mohammed (punctuated by the 2015 *Charlie Hebdo* murders in Paris, and the earlier fallout from the 2005 *Jyllands-Posten* controversy in Denmark that led to reprintings of the cartoons in major European newspapers).

Meanwhile, many European publics are deeply concerned about what they perceive as Muslim intolerance of core societal values; they have bristled against practices that some Muslim immigrants have brought with them from their countries of origin—female genital mutilation, arranged marriages, honor killings—and their antagonism has been generalized to the wider Muslim population. Added to this are passionate debates in some countries about the place of visible religious symbols in public places and institutions. Most notably, the French principle of *laïcité* (or state secularism) is thought to be threatened by the wearing of headscarves in schools to say nothing of the niqab in public. In all such controversies, Islam is presented as antimodernist and the very antithesis of European values and norms.

2. ***Concerns that religious identity undermines national identity and social cohesion.*** Another pervasive belief is that a strong Muslim identity competes with (or may even replace) national identity. This "either/or" thinking contrasts with that prevalent in the United States, where asserting a religious or ethnic identity goes hand in hand with being an American.

3. ***Fear that fundamentalist Islam fosters exclusion, separation, and even terrorism.*** Finally, there is deep concern that some second-generation Muslim young adults who turn to fundamentalist Islam have been involved in—and will again perpetrate—terrorist attacks and other violent acts. These fears were tragically borne out in the Brussels attacks of March 2016, the Paris attacks of January and November 2015, the 2014 murders at the Jewish Museum of Belgium in Brussels, and the 2005 London underground bombings. In the two most recent attacks, in Brussels and Paris, a central role was played by radicalized Belgian nationals who fought in Syria, stoking anxiety about the growing participation of European-raised Muslims in Islamist military groups fighting in the Middle East (the so-called foreign fighter phenomenon).

The hostility to Islam so prevalent in much public discourse in Western Europe obscures some encouraging developments.

Nonetheless, the hostility to Islam so prevalent in much public discourse in Western Europe obscures some encouraging developments. According to a Pew Research Center survey conducted in spring 2015, a few months after the January attacks in Paris, 76 percent of those surveyed in France had a favorable view of Muslims, alongside 72 percent in Britain and 69 percent in Germany.[16] Moreover, religion can play a *bridging* role in certain contexts, bringing immigrant populations closer to the mainstream and forging tighter bonds among different minority populations.[17] Islam, for example, supports and connects those of immigrant origin from diverse national and linguistic backgrounds. For newcomers, membership or participation in religious institutions can provide access to networks and critical assistance (such as help finding jobs and housing), as well as psychological support to mitigate the stress of adapting to a new

16 Michael Lipka, "Muslims and Islam: Key findings in the U..S. and around the world" (Pew Research Center Fact Tank, December 7, 2015), www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/12/07/muslims-and-islam-key-findings-in-the-u-s-and-around-the-world/.

17 See Alba and Foner, *Strangers No More*; Nancy Foner and Richard Alba, "Immigrant Religion in the U.S. and Western Europe: Bridge or Barrier to Inclusion," *International Migration Review* 42, no. 2 (2008): 360–92.

place. For second-generation youth, religious allegiance may offer a sense of collective self-worth and discourage delinquency; it can also serve as a refuge from the discrimination encountered in mainstream institutions. Such viewpoints, however, are not the ones most often broadcast in media accounts of Islam in Western Europe.

It is also important to note the difference between the everyday interactions of Muslim immigrants and the communities in which they live on the one hand, and the lightning-rod cultural clashes portrayed in the media on the other. Cultural practices that once seemed foreign or threatening often become familiar in the context of daily life.[18]

B. The United States and Islam: Building Bridges

Muslim immigrants and their children in the United States also face considerable challenges to integration, but, on the whole, religion is a less severe barrier to inclusion than in Europe.

Some immigrants practicing non-Western religions, specifically Islam, undoubtedly confront prejudice and unease in the United States. In a 2014 Pew Research Center survey, Americans rated Muslims most negatively compared to other religious groups, and in a national poll conducted right before the 2015 San Bernardino attacks, which were carried out by the U.S.-born son of Pakistani immigrants and his Pakistani immigrant wife, 46 percent had an unfavorable view of Muslims.[19] There have been many cases of discrimination, bias incidents, and hate crimes, including vandalism of mosques and even occasional violence against Muslims, as well as pervasive state surveillance since the September 11 attacks. Most recently, anti-Muslim incidents have been on the rise in the backlash after the 2015 attacks in Paris and California, and some Republican presidential candidates have ramped up anti-Muslim rhetoric—what the Council on American-Islamic Relations has called "the mainstreaming of Islamophobia"[20]—with Donald Trump calling for the creation of a national database to register U.S. Muslims, Ben Carson saying a Muslim should not be president, and Jeb Bush arguing that American aid to Syrian refugees should focus on Christians.

In the United States, religion in and of itself is generally not seen as a threat to American institutions or identity.

Despite this rhetoric and the increase in anti-Islam sentiment—with pernicious effects on the social fabric of some communities—there are deep transatlantic differerences in the approach to religion and in the centrality of religion as a divide between natives and immigrants.[21] A key difference is that, in the United States, religion *in and of itself* is generally not seen as a threat to American institutions or identity. Hostility to Islam is largely focused on national security issues, rather than framed as a fundamental threat to American core values and institutions. Nor is Islam a central issue in debates about immigration

18 Alba and Foner in *Strangers No More*? cite the following example: when the Dutch government was considering banning burqas in public spaces, the biggest supermarket chain in the Netherlands introduced headscarves in company colors for Turkish and Moroccan cashiers, with muted public reaction.

19 Pew Research Center Forum on Religion and Public Life,"How Americans Feel About Religious Groups," July 16, 2014, www.pewforum.org/2014/07/16/how-americans-feel-about-religious-groups/; Shibley Telhami, "What Americans Really Think about Muslims and Islam" (Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, December 11, 2015), www.brookings.edu/blogs/markaz/posts/2015/12/09-what-americans-think-of-muslims-and-islam-telhami?.

20 Kirk Semple, "'I'm Frightened': After Attacks in Paris, New York Muslims Cope with a Backlash," *New York Times*, November 29, 2015, www.nytimes.com/2015/11/26/nyregion/im-frightened-after-paris-terrorist-attacks-new-york-city-muslims-cope-with-a-backlash.html.

21 The section draws extensively on Alba and Foner, *Strangers No More*, chapter 6.

and immigrant integration, as in Western Europe; in the United States, these debates tend to focus on unauthorized immigrants (very few of whom are Muslim).

There are four main reasons for these differences: demographics, the religiosity of the native majority population, the historic role of religion in society, and more inclusive national identities. The demographic landscape in the United States may be more favorable to the integration of Muslim immigrants because: (1) they are a small minority of immigrants (about 8 percent of all new U.S. permanent residents between 1992 and 2012 were Muslim; close to two-thirds were Christian);[22] (2) the Muslim immigrant population in the United States is more diverse in national and regional origin than is the case in European countries (a 2011 estimate found that Muslims in the United States came from 77 different countries, with no single origin responsible for more than 14 percent of the total; in Germany about half of Muslims are of Turkish origin); (3) more than one-third of U.S. Muslims were born in the United States, and many are African Americans who are in many cases *converts* to Islam,[23] while the great majority of Muslims in Western Europe are of recent immigrant origin; and(4) Muslims in the United States tend to have greater socioeconomic success than those in much of Europe, who are at the bottom of the ladder in terms of education, employment, and poverty rates.[24]

The second factor is that Americans are considerably more religious than their European counterparts, and thus less likely to view religious immigrants with unease and suspicion.

The third and related point is that the U.S. history of religious pluralism and its success in incorporating Judaism and Catholicism into its predominantly Protestant national narrative—and into the fabric of mainstream institutions—provide a platform for the easier acceptance and integration of non-Christian religions. Western European nations, even if now highly secular, have deeply ingrained and almost exclusively Christian religious identities. Despite the breaking of many links between church and state, the institutional context in Western Europe continues to favor Christianity in many ways—for example, many governments fund religious schools that are overwhelmingly Christian—and to marginalize Islam. The end result is that Muslim immigrant communities in the United States, unlike in Western Europe, can find common ground with the mainstream through the *shared experience of religious belief and practice*. Moreover, places of worship offer opportunities to learn how to successfully negotiate the host environment. In this way, religion contributes to, rather than impedes, the Americanization process for immigrants.

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A final factor is related to the historical context as it has shaped national identities: the United States treats *all* legal permanent residents as Americans in the making, thus creating opportunities for emotional bonds to the host society very early in the immigration process. It also recognizes the legitimacy of multiple or

22 Pew Research Center Forum on Religion and Public Life, "The Religious Affiliation of U.S. Immigrants: Majority Christian, Rising Share of Other Faiths," May 17, 2013, www.pewforum.org/2013/05/17/the-religious-affiliation-of-us-immigrants/#about; Besheer Mohamed, "A new estimate of the U.S. Muslim population" (Pew Research Center Fact Tank, January 6, 2016), www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/01/06/a-new-estimate-of-the-u-s-muslim-population.

23 According to a 2011 estimate, 37 percent of Muslim Americans were born in the United States (though a significant proportion of these belong to the second generation, having at least one foreign-born parent). Among native-born Muslims, 40 percent describe themselves as black. See Pew Research Center, *Muslim Americans: No Signs of Growth in Alienation or Support for Extremism* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2011), www.people-press.org/2011/08/30/section-1-a-demographic-portrait-of-muslim-americans/#number-of-muslims-in-the-u-s.

24 Pew Research Center, *Muslim Americans: Middle Class and Mostly Mainstream* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2007), www.pewresearch.org/2007/05/22/muslim-americans-middle-class-and-mostly-mainstream/.

hyphenated identities, so that immigrants and their children can easily be American and "ethnic" or Muslim at the same time.

Although the post-9/11 environment, including the Paris and San Bernardino attacks, have produced instances of mistrust, discrimination, ethnic profiling, and even occasional violence against Muslims in the United States, the frame has remained consistent: fears are largely, though not exclusively, focused on an external threat (the risk of outsiders committing terrorist acts) rather than an "enemy from within" undermining national cultural values.[25] In fact, even the backlash against this new wave of discrimination can be seen as prototypically American: advocates for religious freedom, including protestors and leading public figures, have urged those discriminated against to claim their rights as Americans, thus encouraging them to draw themselves further into the national fold rather than separate from it.

III. Immigrant Integration in an Era of Rapid Change: What Are the Ingredients of Success?

There has always been a robust discourse about the efficacy and success of various integration policy responses to large-scale immigration. In Europe, integration efforts have spanned everything from targeted services meant to prepare newcomers for life and work in the receiving country (such as orientation programs or integration "contracts" in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and other EU Member States) to the "mainstreaming" of integration services to encompass all disadvantaged groups in particular geographic areas.[26]

The concept of mainstreaming has grown in popularity across Europe, though its definition varies somewhat depending on the national context and historical moment. Broadly speaking, it refers to reforming public services to meet the needs of diverse and mobile populations (both newcomers who may be "coming and going" as well as more settled groups).[27] Mainstreaming reflects the idea that effective integration policy requires a flexible, whole-of-government response, including strong cooperation across policy portfolios and between national and local actors. Often this involves a shift away from stand-alone policies that target newcomers toward more generic policies that take account of the diversity within society at large. For example, in the Netherlands, mainstreaming education policies can mean allocating resources based on students' neighborhood or parental education levels (broad proxies for disadvantage) rather than immigrant background.[28] These approaches contrast sharply with the racial equality framework

25 This is not intended to downplay the fact that the U.S. government is vigilant about the potential for radicalization of Muslim youth and the opportunities this provides for recruitment by foreign groups. In fact, the government at all levels engages systematically with communities thought to be vulnerable to radicalization and practices systematic surveillance of Muslim groups and communities by local police departments and federal agencies. See, for example, Center for Constitutional Rights, "Government Surveillance," accessed January 28, 2016, https://ccrjustice.org/home/what-we-do/issues/government-surveillance; American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), "Factsheet: The NYPD Muslim Surveillance Program," accessed January 28, 2016, www.aclu.org/factsheet-nypd-muslim-surveillance-program.

26 For a discussion of mainstreaming policies in Europe, see Elizabeth Collett and Milica Petrovic, *The Future of Immigrant Integration in Europe: Mainstreaming Approaches for Inclusion* (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, 2014), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/future-immigrant-integration-europe-mainstreaming-approaches-inclusion.

27 Meghan Benton, Helen McCarthy, and Elizabeth Collett, *Into the Mainstream: Rethinking Public Services for Diverse and Mobile Populations* (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, 2015), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/mainstream-rethinking-public-services-diverse-and-mobile-populations.

28 Ibid.

used by the United Kingdom for more than 40 years, which was established to ensure equal service provision for racial and ethnic minorities in such areas as health, education, housing, and employment.[29]

Traditional immigrant-receiving countries have adopted various forms of multiculturalism, loosely defined as a recognition and accommodation of minority rights. In Canada, for instance, multiculturalism is a constitutionally protected right. Australia's commitment to multiculturalism has been slightly more uneven, while in the United States multiculturalism evolved as a de facto practice, often led by court decisions, rather than an official policy. Most European countries that are in the early stages of receiving large-scale immigration (as in the southern and eastern flanks of the European Union) tend to have weak legislative frameworks and inadequate mechanisms for incorporating immigrant integration into institutional foundations. Portugal's "one-stop shop" for integration, meanwhile, is one system that appears to have integrated the best components of the various approaches into a whole-of-government and whole-of-society concept in which immigrants fully participate in decisions about the delivery of services.[30]

In recent years, publics on both sides of the Atlantic have criticized many of these approaches and frameworks—multiculturalism, for example, has been the subject of vociferous critique in Europe—for, among other things, not improving immigrant integration outcomes. The fact that immigrants and their children often continue to lag behind natives, as measured by key indicators of integration, has called into question the success of current practices. But concerns about scarce jobs in Western Europe, especially for young workers, and overburdened public services (such as education, health, transportation, and housing) pose obstacles to policies that might better support new and recent arrivals. These concerns fuel a simmering discontent about migration in general in Western Europe—and the purported "unassimilability" of Muslims in particular. Debates over Islam's compatibility with the letter and spirit of European laws and norms have led to an array of strategies to either accommodate or censure Muslim religious and cultural practices, as discussed earlier.

National models of integration—such as de facto cultural pluralism in the United States or the French Republican ideal of linguistic and cultural assimilation—may shape policy frameworks and decisions, but they do not provide a satisfactory explanation for the successes and failures of integration. For example, the second generations of important immigrant groups in both the United States and Europe have persistently lower education outcomes than the native majority, a disadvantage that translates into inferior labor market and economic outcomes. Such ongoing disparity may be explained to a large degree by the very structure of these countries' educational institutions and labor markets. In general, a broad range of historically rooted social, political, and economic institutional arrangements and structures in each receiving country create barriers to integration in some ways —and bridges in others.[31]

29 The UK *Race Relations Act of 1976* (which incorporated the earlier *Race Relations Acts of 1965 and 1968*) sought to prevent discrimination on the grounds of "race, colour, nationality, ethnic and national origin in the fields of employment, the provision of goods and services, education and public functions." See *Race Relations Act 1976*, 1976 c. 74. (November 22, 1976), www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1976/74. It was later amended by the *Race Relations Act of 2000*, which was notable in that it required public authorities to proactively "promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups," and to demonstrate that procedures to prevent race discrimination are effective. See *Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000*, 2000 c. 34 (November 30, 2000), www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/34/section/2.

30 Portugal's National Immigrant Support Centers (CNAI) provide a single place immigrants can go to access a comprehensive range of free integration services and information from all relevant government ministries, including the Foreigners and Borders Service (SEF), Social Security (SS), the Authority for Working Conditions (ACT), the Central Registry (CRC), the Ministry of Education (ME), and the Ministry of Health (MOH). The CNAIs provide support and advice on anything from renewing residency permits, finding employment and housing, to appealing family unification decisions; they also employ intercultural mediators from many of the same backgrounds as the migrants. The European Commission recognized the One-Stop Shop service as a good practice that promoted consultation and cooperation between the government and immigrants. See Portal do Cidadau, "National Immigrant Support Centres (CNAI)," accessed January 25, 2016, www.portaldocidadao.pt/en/web/alto-comissariado-para-as-migracoes/centros-nacionais-de-apoio-ao-imigrante-cnai-; European Website on Integration, "One-stop-shop / National Immigrant Support Centres (CNAI)," accessed January 25, 2016, https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/intpract/one-stop-shop-/-national-immigrant-support-centres-cnai.

31 These conclusions and the ensuing discussion of factors influencing immigrant integration are drawn from Alba and Foner, *Strangers No More*, chapter 10. See also Richard Alba and Nancy Foner, "Comparing Immigrant Integration in North America and Western Europe: How Much Do the Grand Narratives Tell Us?" *International Migration Review* 48, no. 1 (2014): 263–91.

And in no small measure, the successful integration of immigrants depends on how immigration systems are managed.[32] Countries such as Canada and Australia that select immigrants based to a significant degree on their propensity to integrate well into society—namely through their language skills, education, and (in more recent years) ability to succeed in the labor market—have an easier time in many ways. Countries such as the United States and most EU Member States, which receive a large majority of immigrants through family channels (in the U.S. case) or through family and essentially uncontrolled humanitarian channels (in the EU case), exercise far less choice over who enters their territory—and as a result face greater integration challenges.[33] In the United States, the fact that more than one-quarter of the foreign born live in the country without legal authorization adds to the immensity of the integration challenges.

In no small measure, the successful integration of immigrants depends on how immigration systems are managed.

In general, the macrolevel factors that influence immigrant integration outcomes include the following:

- ***The selectivity of immigration policies.*** Countries that are able to select substantial proportions of their immigrants can better ensure that newcomers arrive with the linguistic, educational, and professional qualifications that will ease their entry into the middle or higher rungs of the labor market. New Zealand, Australia, and Canada are the greatest innovators in this regard; repeated refinements to their admissions policies have helped them avoid some of the integration challenges faced by the United States and much of Europe. Yet highly selective immigration policies are not a panacea. Developed economies still need migrant workers to fill numerous lower-skilled jobs, especially in the agricultural and service sectors. For example, in the United States, there is clear evidence that the supply of native-born workers willing to take low-end jobs is declining.[34]

- ***The existence of ethnic social capital.*** Coethnic communities, networks, and local institutions can serve as vital lifelines for new arrivals. They provide access to resources, information, and jobs; they also set migrants on a faster track to upward economic and, eventually, social mobility. This is particularly true where immigrant communities have significant social or financial capital (whether built before or after migration). Such capital, for example, allows second and subsequent generations to enter the mainstream as professionals or to hold on to or expand particular economic niches as owners of substantial businesses. Yet many immigrant groups lack these resources—for example, some newly arrived Central Americans in the United States—and require a different model of integration.

- ***The removal of barriers to the success of the second generation.*** Communities and countries that can disrupt the vicious cycle of intergenerational disadvantage and help second-generation youth access high-quality education and the mainstream labor market will greatly improve integration outcomes. Naturally, this requires identifying and countering discrimination in all its forms and regardless of origin, public or private. Affirmative action (or "positive discrimination") in the United States, while controversial, has been credited with

32 Demetrios G. Papademetriou, *Rethinking National Identity in the Age of Migration*, Council Statement from the Seventh Plenary Meeting of the Transatlantic Council on Migration (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2012), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/TCM-rethinking-national-identity-council-statement#overlay-context=programs/transatlantic-council-migration.

33 One has to be cautious here as families can also play a crucial role in the integration process.

34 Frank Bean, James Bachmeier, Susan Brown, Jennifer Van Hook, and Mark Leach, *Unauthorized Mexican Immigration and the Socioeconomic Integration of Mexican Americans,* US 2010 Report (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2013), www.s4.brown.edu/us2010/Data/Report/report05132013.pdf.

expanding opportunities for disadvantaged minorities to climb educational and occupational ladders, allowing many to achieve equality with their native peers. Several EU Member States have also experimented with variations on this model; for example, Sciences Po, one of France's most prestigious academic institutions, in 2001 created a selective admissions track for students from disadvantaged neighborhoods, many from immigrant backgrounds.

- ***The acceptance of ethnic identities.*** Efforts to suppress minority identity and culture typically backfire: restrictions often have the effect of imbuing controversial practices with greater salience and meaning than would otherwise be the case. Nations that instead accept dual, hyphenated, or fluid identities—and put in place adequate opportunities to obtain citizenship—are often rewarded with stronger allegiance to a national identity.

At the end of the day, any embedded narratives surrounding immigration are hard to change.

The mere existence of these elements, however, does not guarantee better integration outcomes; it simply fosters better conditions for immigrants and the second generation. In a period of rapid and massive change, the difference between a society undergoing a transition, however significant, and a crisis lies with how well change is *managed.* When politicians play to the fears of their electorate—and even exaggerate these for political gain—they also stoke the fears of immigrants and their children, and indirectly bolster demagogues' messages of fear and hatred. When this happens, it takes patience, wisdom, and goodwill for divisions to heal and communities to learn how to live and grow together.

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

The hardest task of any government is to effectively manage fundamental and rapid change. Large-scale immigration cuts to the heart of this challenge. Seemingly overnight, societies must develop new narratives, adapt institutions, and recalibrate how scarce public goods are allocated—and create a new "we." Success in this task generates opportunities for all stakeholders—long-established members of sending and receiving communities and the immigrants themselves—to draw out the benefits of migration. Careless or failed attempts at these goals, meanwhile, risk social unrest and political instability. They also provide fodder for the arguments of far-right and populist politicians and parties.

At the end of the day, any embedded narratives surrounding immigration are hard to change. But policymakers can take two initial steps to positively influence how host communities relate to those of immigrant origin in their schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods. The first is to listen carefully and respectfully to concerns and fears; ignoring them (or dismissing those who articulate them) and failing to respond appropriately will further entrench anxieties. The second is to slowly and gradually build a new narrative that threads together the desires and aspirations of both immigrants and natives, giving all members of the community and society a sense of ownership in the integration process, and an equal stake in defining the new "we."

In sum, to lay the foundation for turning migration challenges into opportunities, governments might consider three principles:

- ***Ensure that migration is managed in a responsible, orderly way.*** In essence, a successful migration policy serves to manage a regulated flow of legal immigrants, swiftly adapt to changes in circumstance, and control irregular immigration. Legal immigration flows must be carefully paced so as not to exceed the ability of available institutions and infrastructure to receive and incorporate newcomers.

- ***Help immigrants demonstrate their commitment and value to their host communities.*** Receiving communities and societies must find the policy tools to help immigrants demonstrate that they are respecting the host country's laws and customs, and are engaging constructively with their new communities. Critically, immigrants must be encouraged to contribute to the economy at the earliest possible point after arrival, thus demonstrating that they are assets to the local and broader economy and welfare.

- ***Take host-community concerns about immigration seriously.*** While integration remains a process of mutual adaptation in which both receiving communities and those of immigrant origin develop a shared understanding and respect, the concerns of overburdened host communities should be taken seriously. More concerted efforts on the ground will be needed to incorporate immigrants and their children in the local communities where their presence is felt most directly.

The only way to "succeed" in managing international migration is to meet challenges head-on and address them effectively, creating demonstration effects that foster better conditions for immigrants and host communities alike, and thus pave the way for immigrants' successful integration.

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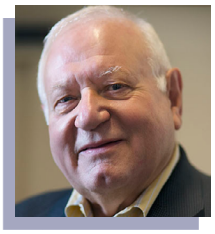

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