

JUNE 2018 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# Attitudes and perceptions towards migrants among French Catholics



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Issues of identity and belonging have dominated the public sphere in France over the last few years. Faced with acute economic and political uncertainties, the French need to feel reassured about who they are and their place in the world. This renewed focus on identity poses considerable risk to social cohesion and to French society's ability to take in immigrants and refugees. Catholics, who make up over half of the French population, cannot avoid these debates.

— Ten years after the financial crisis, France has only recently started to emerge from economic decline. Significant economic transformations are already taking shape coupled with a wider transformation of society. Fast changes cause considerable anxiety: many people feel unable to keep up with the pace of change and develop a feeling of loss of meaning and a sense of loss of control. Institutions are the victims of this turbulence: they are seen as slow, inefficient and powerless. Recent elections in France have swept aside the traditional political establishment. The French, since the 2015 terrorist attacks, are acutely aware of the vulnerability of the country. The terrorist threat is no longer distant or virtual. It is a lived experience. With this mass of uncertainties, people hold on to an idealised notion of their national identity. In times of change, identity becomes a refuge.

This retreat into identity politics is understandable, but is fraught with risks as people

are drawn towards “us versus them” narratives. Withdrawing into closed circles, online and in real life, can seem reassuring. Everyone now has their own channel and vision of the world, shaped by their own anger and their own concerns. It has become difficult if not impossible to communicate across divides.

To reinforce a narrow version of the “us”, we tend to point a finger at a “them”: this reflex is easily applied today to millions of refugees who are fleeing conflicts, poverty and climate change to find refuge in Europe. This phenomenon is likely to remain if not addressed properly.

This reaction seems even more dangerous for the future of France as public opinion shows a worrying level of distrust towards others: according to More in Common's 2017 national survey, only 16% of people in France considered the impact of immigration in France as positive.

It is in this context of opposition that Pope Francis launched his appeal to “welcome, protect, promote and integrate” migrants and refugees. Relayed to parishes all over France and acted upon by Christian grass-roots organisations, this appeal has caused considerable controversy among the public. One might have expected it to receive broad support, since it is faithful to the spirit of the Scriptures, conforms to the social doctrine of the Church and comes with the authority of the Pontiff himself. In reality, the issue is far more complex and the Pope’s message far less unanimously well received.

On the one hand, Catholics in France are not disconnected from the world: their faith makes up part of their identity, but it is not the only part. Their concerns as Catholics are combined with other concerns - economic or cultural - and other affiliations - political, social or regional. On the other hand, Catholics are also experiencing a specific identity crisis.

About half of the French people (54%) today self identify as Catholic, of which 24% are practising Catholics. In a secularised society, where different religions coexist, some Catholics are still trying to find their place. Those who are more comfortable

with this new situation are more open to others. They have more positive attitudes. Those who worried about - or even hostile to - this new state of affairs are predictably reluctant to welcoming others. The revival of the debate about recognising France’s “Christian roots” (a widely used expression in French political debate) resonates with some Catholics who are hostile towards welcoming migrants, particularly Muslims. In this context, the rhetoric of the “*grand remplacement*” (replacement by immigrants), promoted by the far-right, acts as a powerful frame for many. In short, there is considerable animosity among French Catholics between those who welcome migrants in the name of the Gospel and those who demand border closures in the name of protecting a supposedly endangered Christian identity.



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# Methodology

— This survey was carried out by the polling firm IFOP for Caritas France (Secours Catholique), More in Common France, CCFD-Terre Solidaire, the Migrants Pastoral of the French Bishops Conference and the Jesuit Refugee Service France. This survey is part of a larger program of work led by these organizations aimed at evaluating and improving outreach programs and communications strategies.

The quantitative phase was carried out over the phone from 11 to 18 December 2017 on a sample of 1002 people aged 18 and over, representative of the French Catholic population. To ensure the representativeness of the sample, the quota sampling method (gender, age and profession of the person surveyed) was used after stratification by region and type of urban area. Data regarding the organisation of the Catholic population stems from a compilation of studies carried out by IFOP using national representative samples in 2017 (a total of 9,724 interviews).

In order to highlight how opinions and attitudes blend, a typological or segmentation analysis was conducted. The sense of belonging to Catholic identity was measured using socio-demographic indicators and level of religious practice. The people surveyed had to answer questions about

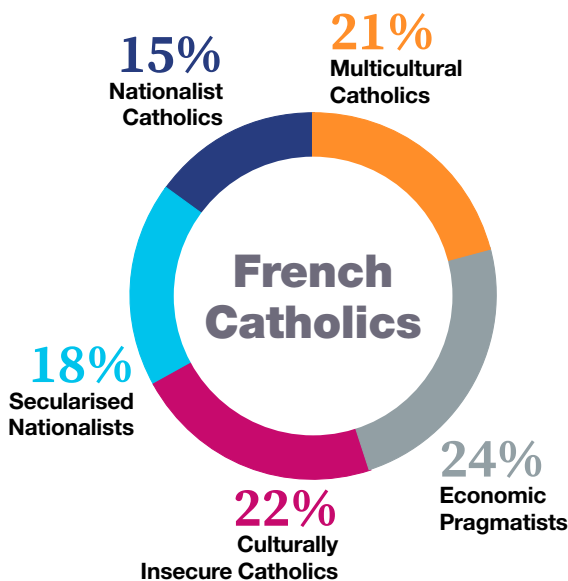
their perception of the situation in France, migrants and immigration policies and about the actions they had personally taken. Finally, they were asked to comment on a series of statements about Islam in France.

A second qualitative phase was conducted between the 7 - 15 March 2018. Four groups, representing segments from the quantitative phase, were surveyed. They were asked to speak about their understanding of Catholicism, their perception of migrants and the welcome policies led by the government and associations, and their reaction, as Catholics, towards the situation of refugees. Messages, articles and videos were also used in the discussion.

In the analysis below, a reference is made to More in Common's 2017 study on "Attitudes Towards Refugees, Immigrants, and Identity in France". This survey (available on [www.moreincommon.com](http://www.moreincommon.com)) was carried out by IFOP via a self-administered online questionnaire between the 20 - 27 September 2016, on a representative sample of 2002 people. The questionnaires of the two surveys are similar, however, given that the methodologies used are different, the results were only compared when there are major differences.

## Presentation of the groups

— Within the Catholic population, five segments have been identified. Two groups are hostile towards welcoming migrants, making up one third of the total. Among those, only the Nationalist Catholics, representing 15% of the Catholic population, are overcome by fear as they perceive that French identity is disappearing as a result of the arrival of migrants. The anxieties expressed by the other closed group, Secularised Nationalists (18%) are mostly economic in nature. They describe migrants as direct competitors for jobs and benefits. Two other categories show a real openness towards hospitality. They represent 45% of Catholics. It is their level of economic optimism, the nature of their commitment and their political preferences, which sets them apart. A final group, equivalent to 22% of our sample, feels strong ambivalence: the Culturally Insecure Catholics feel caught up between their concerns about Islam and their compassion towards displaced persons.



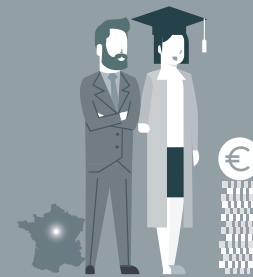
## Multicultural Catholics



Younger  
More qualified  
Low to middle income  
More left-wing voters  
One quarter are practising Catholics  
More in the West and in Paris region

- Migrants make an effort to integrate.
- They enrich France's identity: the country should not lean on its Christian roots.
- It is France's duty to take them in and respect their rights.
- The Pope is right with his appeal to take them in.

## Economic Pragmatists



Younger  
More qualified  
Higher income  
20% are practising Catholics  
More En Marche/Macron voters  
More in Paris region

- France is moving in the right direction, globalisation is enriching it.
- France would not be what it is without immigration.
- Migrants make an effort to integrate particularly through work.
- Even if Islam is not a problem, Muslim migrants should keep a low profile.
- Catholic identity is a humanist heritage and a matter of education and individual freedom.



## — Secularised Nationalists

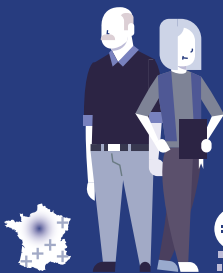


More people aged  
between 35 and 49  
Less qualified  
Middle income  
Non-practising  
Catholics  
More Front National  
voters



- The situation in France has deteriorated: the impact of globalisation on the country's economy is extremely negative.
- The State prioritises migrants to the detriment of people like them.
- Islam is not incompatible with French society, but not close to them.
- Catholic identity is part of the French landscape, but it is not central to it.

## — Nationalist Catholics



Older  
Half are retired  
Low income  
One third are practising  
Catholics  
More Front National  
voters  
Less in Paris region



- The situation in France has deteriorated: it must protect itself from the rest of the world.
- France is flooded with immigrants: we must completely close the borders.
- There is no France without Christianity, but Christians are endangered.
- We must reaffirm France's Christian identity.

## — Culturally Insecure Catholics



More women  
More people aged  
between 50-75  
Middle income  
One third are practising  
Catholics  
More traditional  
right-wing voters  
A little less in the  
North West



- France's identity is disappearing. Faith holds an important place.
- Islam has an increasingly strong influence, but the majority of Muslims have similar values to Catholic values.
- We have to be reasonable with regards to immigration, and Pope Francis was not wrong with his appeal to take in migrants.

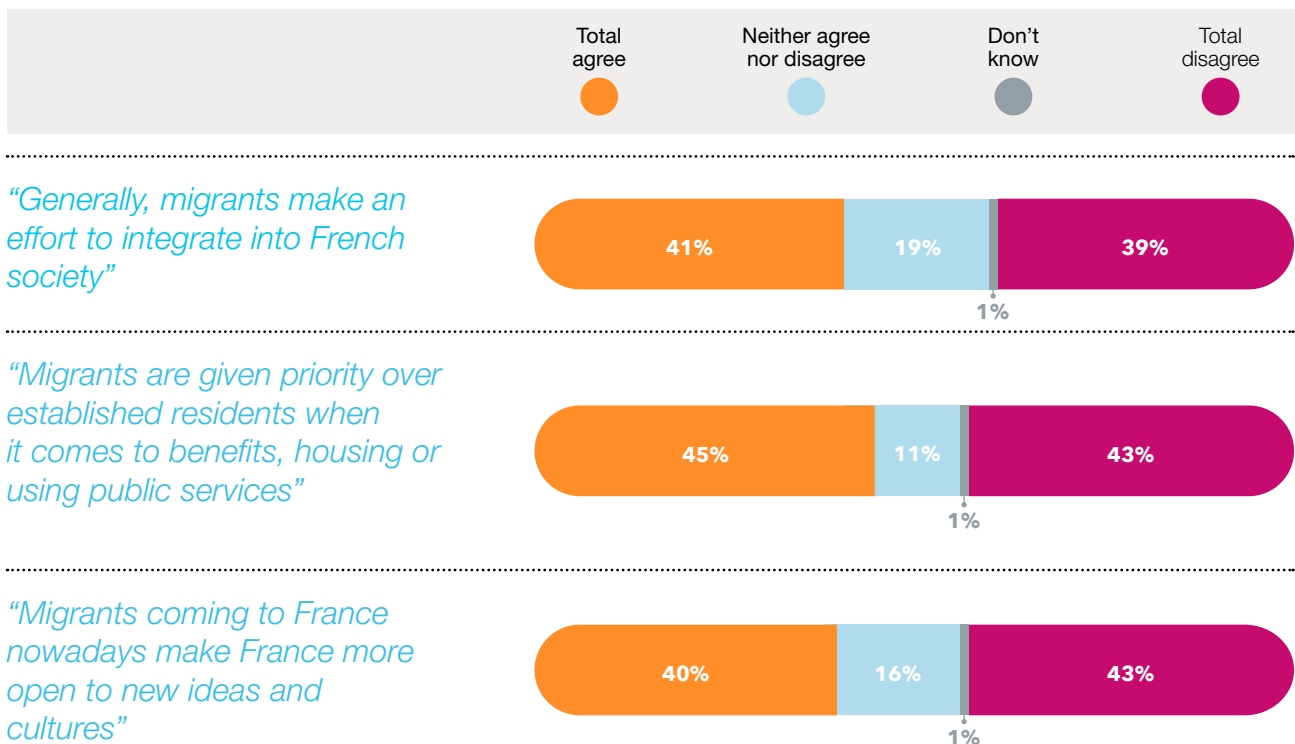
# Key findings

## 1. ON THE SURFACE: AN OPEN VS. CLOSED DEBATE

— Public debate in France about migrants centres around three key questions:

- Who should take responsibility for integration: migrants or the host society?
- Who has priority when it comes to access to benefits and public services - migrants or “natives”?
- Do migrants present a threat or a contribution to France’s identity?

There is every reason to think, at first glance, that we are witnessing a battle between open-values and closed-values two closed and static groups of people - as illustrated below:





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## 2. HOWEVER, OUR SEGMENTATION ANALYSIS PROVES THAT THE OPINION OF FRENCH CATHOLICS GOES BEYOND A 50/50 SPLIT

— The segmentation analysis shows that this polarisation is only on the surface and that it only concerns the two most extreme groups. Each group has its own opinion about these three key questions and sometimes are more closely aligned with one side, or the other, and sometimes find themselves in the middle.

### CATHOLICS ARE UNSURE ABOUT WHO BEARS THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR INTEGRATION.

— With regards to migrants making an effort to integrate into society, only Multicultural Catholics and Nationalist Catholics have strong views. Among the open-values Multicultural Catholics group, we observe kindness on principle. The most closed-values group, the Nationalist Catholics, show strong mistrust on principle. The other three groups are more ambivalent.

Kindness dominates among Economic Pragmatists. It is rooted in a certain understanding of human nature: highlighting individual effort, promoting the ability to take charge of your own life. This kindness, however, is tainted with concern, linked to the way in which they feel French society appears to mistrust migrants. In their eyes, an inability to integrate new arrivals represents a high risk to national cohesion.

Among Secularised Nationalists, on the contrary, mistrust dominates. If migrants do not integrate, it is because they do not need to: we assume they are only passing through («it's nomadism" (male, 35-49 years old)<sup>1</sup> and they form a solid, united group that does not need to or want to integrate. They also show a sense of mild admiration for the perceived solidarity and homogeneity among immigrant groups while Secularised Nationalists themselves feel abandoned and left behind. This is punctuated though by «there are migrants and migrants»: Secularised Nationalists express more willingness to be kind towards refugees, in particular towards families and unaccompanied minors, while single men trigger real hostility.

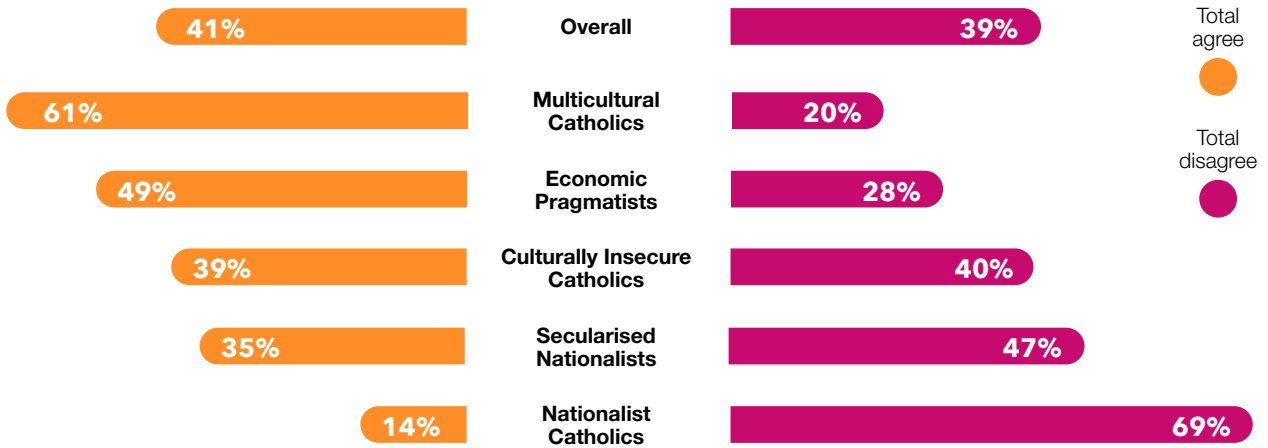
Amongst Culturally Insecure Catholics, it is neither kindness nor mistrust which dominates, but ambivalence itself. The words they use to describe the situation of migrants are radically different from other groups. While Economic Pragmatists insist on the "distress", "suffering" and "poverty" of new arrivals, and Secularised Catholics speak of "invaders" and of "profiteers", Culturally Insecure Catholics more instinctively mention the "complexity" of the issue.

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(1) Quotes are taken from the focus groups.

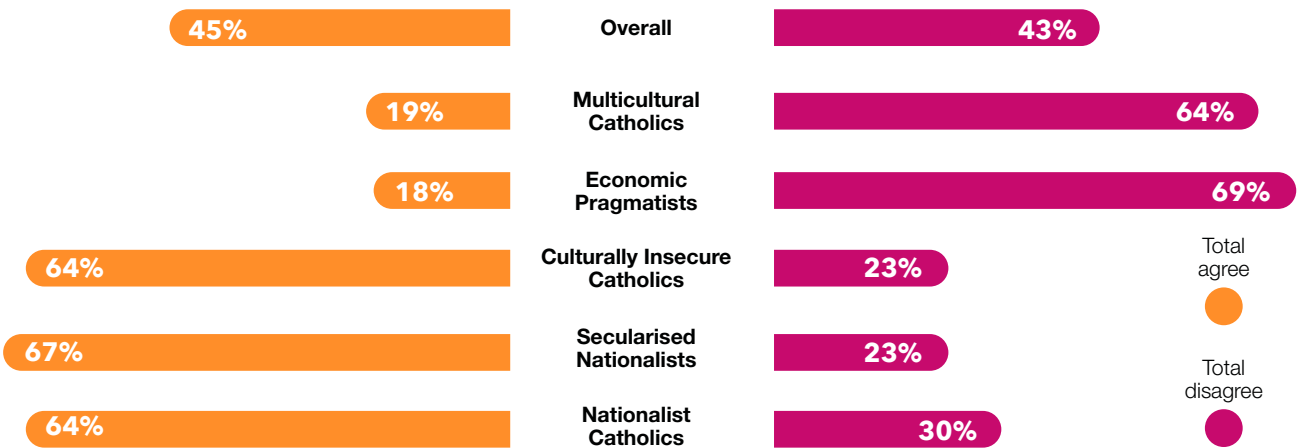


*“Generally, migrants make an effort to integrate into French society”*



**DIFFERENT RESPONSES WITH REGARDS TO BENEFITS**

*“Migrants are given priority over established residents when it comes to benefits, housing or using public services”*





— The Multicultural and Economic Pragmatists share the same values: they outright reject this argument, both on principle - that would be ruling in favour of groups which are most against taking in migrants - and on the basis of their observations - if migrants were really prioritised, there would not be so many on the street. For Secularised Nationalists, the social issue is at the heart of the problem. They blame public authorities for prioritising migrants' problems, to the detriment of the poorest French people. They do not deem this priority as justified, from a political point of view and an ethical point of view. From a political point of view, help given to migrants creates, in their eyes, an "appel d'air" (a widely used expression among those who oppose immigration. It denotes a vacuum: If refugees are treated well, more will come.) From an ethical point of view,

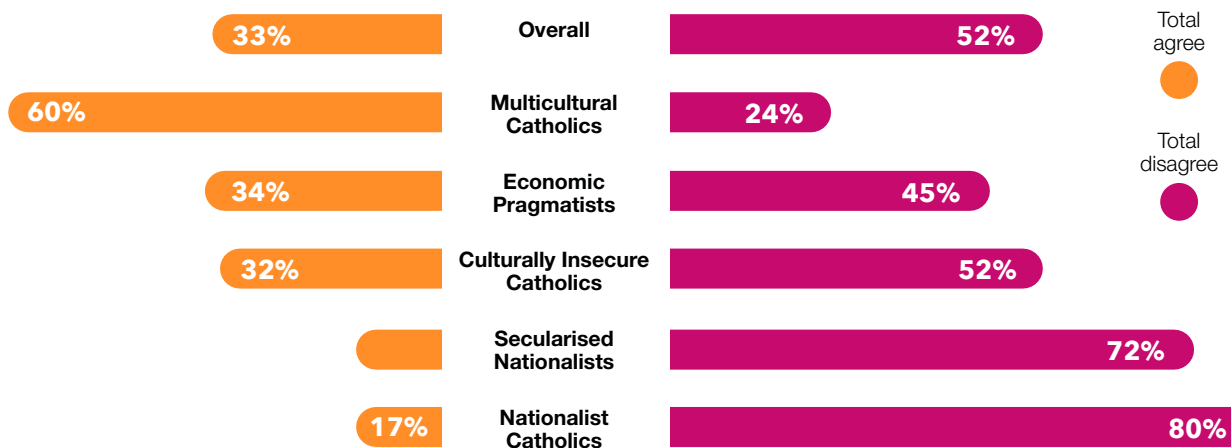
they believe that migrants do not deserve the attention that is given to them because they do not respect social norms or the values that, according to this group, warrants that help from the state.

The Nationalist Catholics use similar arguments, but they are more opportunistic: for them, help for migrants is mainly given for electoral purposes by those wanting to make political gains.

As for Culturally Insecure Catholics, they are concerned about the capacity of the social model to support the migrant flow, which is seen as considerable. The discussion over the last decade on "the problem of public spending", which concerns the French, has influenced public opinion on this issue: for many, taking in migrants will be to the detriment of someone else.

## IDENTITY: EVERY GROUP HAS ITS OWN DEGREE OF CULTURAL OPENNESS

*"Migrants coming to France nowadays make France more open to new ideas and cultures"*



Are migrants an opportunity or a threat to France's identity? This is the most divisive question we asked.

The Nationalist Catholics have strong views on this matter. It is not so much the fact that migrants bring new ideas or cultures which draws their attention, it's rather the fact that France's identity seems to be threatened: *"France is becoming culturally and religiously poorer."* (female, 50-64 years old). Multicultural Catholics express the exact opposite position based on two arguments: a part of them advocate supporting cultural rights for migrants; another part champion a universal approach, which supports the idea that French citizenship is not based on cultural cohesion criteria but on political criteria.

In the three middle groups, we can see a decline in cultural openness. There is a real difference of opinion between Multicultural

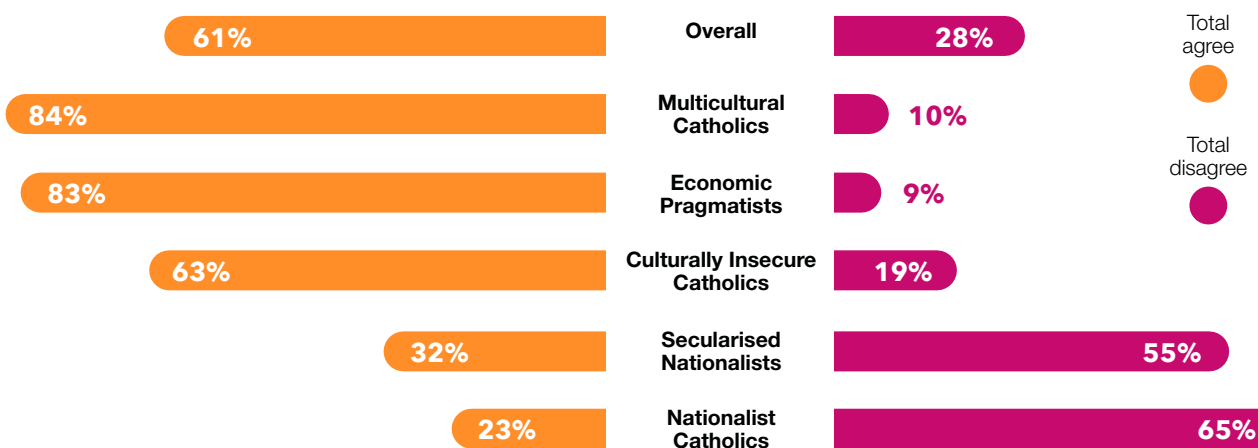
and Economic Pragmatists. Economic Pragmatists tend to welcome diversity with kindness, but they plead for newcomers to be discreet, worried about maintaining social cohesion. For them, the cultural issue is a source of tension that is more important than the social issue.

Culturally Insecure Catholics seem to be tilting more towards hostility: the majority of them reject the idea that immigration is a synonym of openness to new cultures and new ideas. They believe that society cannot function without shared cultural codes and that it is difficult to find things in common with the new arrivals.

For Secularised Nationalists, cultural considerations do exist, however they are generally placed after economic and social considerations: migrants are welcome to have their own culture, there are simply no points in common with them.

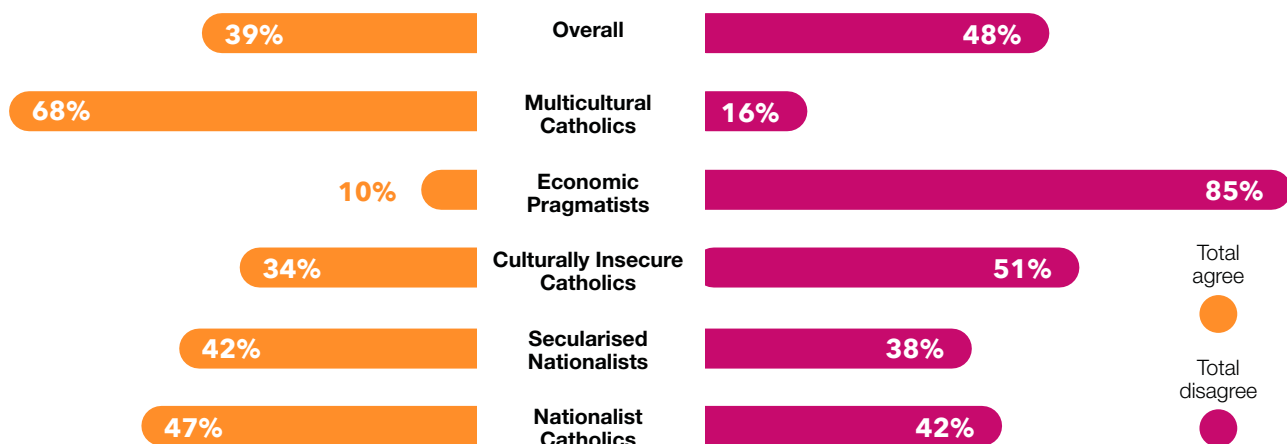
### MIXED REACTIONS TO THE POPE'S APPEAL

*Last February, Pope Francis spoke about the situation of refugees. He said that the response to the arrival of migrants in Europe should be based on four actions: "to welcome, protect, promote, integrate", and that it was today a "duty of justice, civilisation and solidarity". Do you agree or disagree with Pope Francis' statement about welcoming migrants?*





*“In France, there is a lot of pressure to either support or oppose migrants, you cannot sit on the fence.”*



— The Pope’s words seem to hold some kind of authority over Culturally Insecure Catholics: he contains their feelings of rejection and reluctance and guides them towards the most open-values groups. This is also the group most sensitive to the Gospel’s call. The qualitative research revealed that the Pope’s words triggered different concerns in each group. Nationalist Catholics question the legitimacy of the Pope’s commitment to this issue. They understand he is aiming for an ideal, but for them, he seems disconnected from reality. They also feel the Pontiff’s commitment to refugees seems exaggerated in relation to other issues. Secularised Nationalists wonder who the Pope’s target is: they exclude themselves from the Christian “community” which Pope Francis is speaking to and invite the Church to do themselves what they have recommended to others: “charity begins at home”. “The Pope says we should take them in, but the Vatican only took a few families. Why is that?” (woman, 39-50 years old). Economic Pragmatists support the Pope’s message, but they think that he is not the right messenger. They ask for a more secularised social commitment from leading figures.

**POLARISATION IS MAINLY A PROBLEM FOR THE MOST POLARISED.**

— Faced with this range of attitudes, polarisation should therefore be put into pers-

pective. Extreme positions are mainly held by the two groups most attached to questions “identity” – on either side of the spectrum: Multiculturals (who are very attached to an open identity) and Nationalist Catholics. There is considerable and vocal distrust between these two groups; the most open-values are those who feel most like a minority among Catholics.

A significant proportion of the French Catholics believe that there is pressure to maintain an unwavering position on immigration issues. Economic Pragmatists are an exception: they don’t feel at all concerned about the polarisation. The first explanation is political: in this group, the majority voted for Emmanuel Macron. The president has built his political strategy on the idea of “en même temps” (literally, at the same time), in other words refusing polarisation and encouraging compromise. The second explanation correlates to the first: we see in this group a type of disengagement, particularly politically. Its members consider him, and the Church, as progress: “There is a revival: Priests, like the Pope, are closer to me. There is a lot of support, more empathy and kindness on a daily basis in comparison to what I found 20 years ago, when it was more exploited, more politicised.” (female, 35-49 years old).

### 3. DIFFERING WORLDVIEWS

— These opinions come from differing worldviews, sometimes radically different: every group highlights different cultural or economic elements. In relation to globalisation, one group clearly differentiates itself from the others: the Secularised Nationalists. Many of them believe that globalisation has a very negative impact on France's economy. Economic Pragmatists stand out as having the opposing view, with their strong attachment to economic openness. For them, globalisation is good, and it has benefited France economically.

The desire for protection from the rest of the world is therefore unsurprisingly high amongst those who feel left behind. But it is stronger in groups which are “cultural worriers” - Culturally Insecure Catholics and Nationalist Catholics.

The relationship with Islam is another marker of difference between the groups: Multicultural Catholics feel they share common values with the majority of Muslims. The Economic Pragmatists feel the same. The group most worried about Islam is the Culturally Insecure Catholics. However, they do not express this concern by stigmatising Muslims, with whom they believe they share similar values. Therefore, there is room for manoeuvre to reassure them.

Nationalist Catholics generally express more hostility and describe a cultural battle between “Christianity” and “Islam”, which they describe as a “conquering” religion and “the most extreme that exists” (male, 50-64 years old). As for Secularised Nationalists,

they feel they have nothing in common with Muslims, who they believe to be a separate community, evolving with their own rules: “They are very kind, they say hello, but the women do not eat at the same time as the men” (male, 35-49 years old).

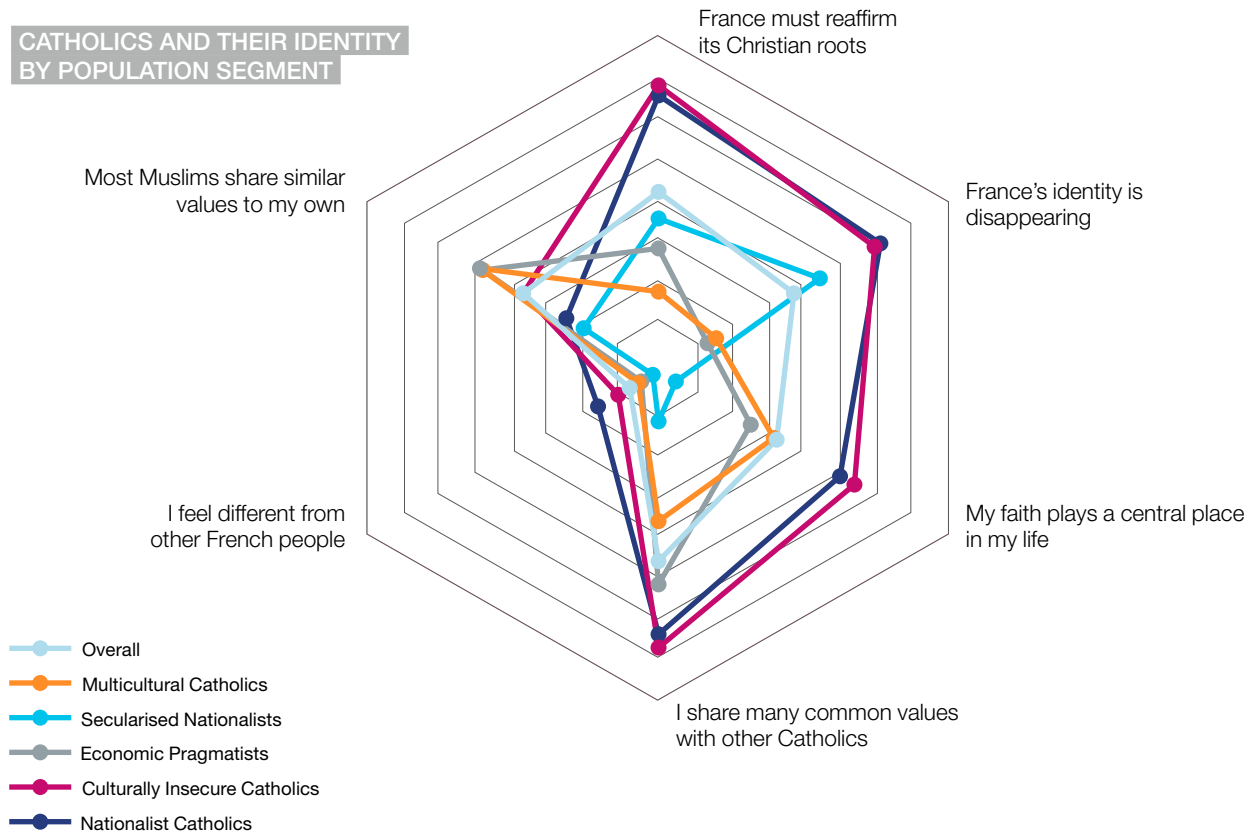
This study also measures, for the first time in France, the level of belonging that Catholics feel to their community. It firstly shows that there is no Catholic tribalism: Catholics do not feel different from other French people. It does highlight, however, an awareness amongst Catholics that they are a minority. The study shows three models of belonging.

The first model of belonging, which is “moderate and calm”, dominates among Multicultural and Economic Pragmatists. The positive values of taking in migrants and accepting otherness are highlighted. These sometimes meld with a certain humanist tradition, particularly for Economic Pragmatists for whom religious faith is less central. These groups do not feel that their group-identity is threatened, which explains in part why they are more welcoming.

A second model, of “identity as refuge”, brings together Nationalist Catholics and Culturally Insecure Catholics. For Nationalist Catholics, they express themselves through cultural customs: baptisms, mass, funeral rites. For fear of disappearing, the Catholics in this group connect to practices which were always part of the landscape. Their situation is more related to “thick identity”. Culturally Insecure Catholics connect this identity more to



**CATHOLICS AND THEIR IDENTITY  
BY POPULATION SEGMENT**



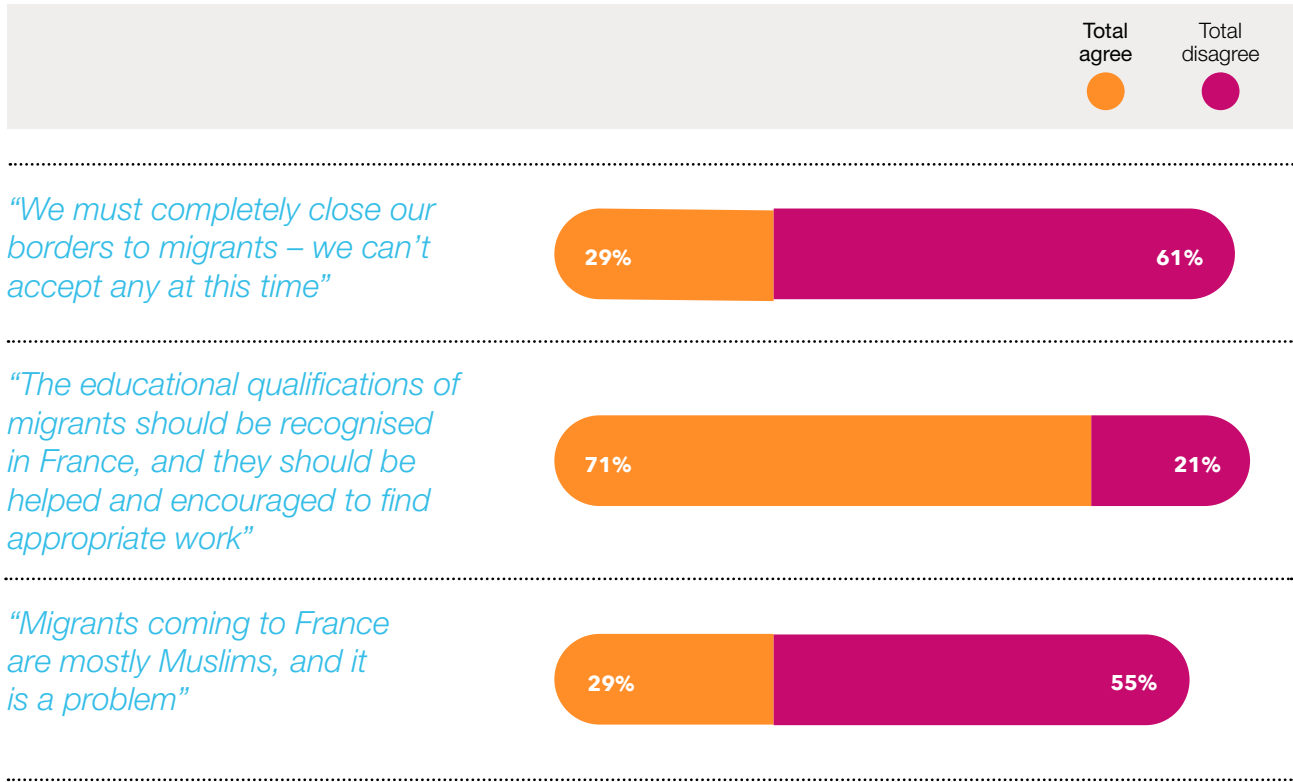
their faith. They feel like they are being asked to hide their Catholicism: the expectations they express are more related to “thin identity”.<sup>(2)</sup>

Secularised Nationalists experience a third model of belonging: they have the weakest feelings of affiliation towards Catholicism. Religion holds a marginal place in their existence. Their centre of gravity is more

national. Catholicism is part of the national past and this is why, first and foremost, they give it a certain importance.

The distinction between thin identity and thick identity was introduced by the sociologist Tommie Shelby to describe the creation of black identity. Thick identity is based on a history of values and (allegedly) common culture which differentiates this group from other groups, while thin identity is limited to an experience of discrimination and the awareness of this experience. See Tommie Shelby, « Foundations of Black Solidarity: Collective Identity or Common Oppression? », *Ethics*, 112, January 2002, p. 231-266.

## To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



#### 4. AIMING FOR A NEW MAJORITY

— These divisions can be overcome. There are some real points of agreement in support of hospitality and strategies can be developed in order to secure this majority over time.

##### POSITIVE ATTITUDES

— With regards to the border issue, Catholics stand apart from the overall population. We asked them, in 2016, to comment on the same statement. While 61% of Catholics disagree with closing the borders, only 29% of the French population overall disagreed. This difference of 32 points is particularly important. The difference is even more noticeable between the most open-values group of the French population and the most open-values Catholic groups: 34% of multicultural French people opposed the closure of borders. Amongst

Multicultural Catholics, 82% opposed it and amongst Economic Pragmatists, 86% - this difference of 50 points is extremely significant.

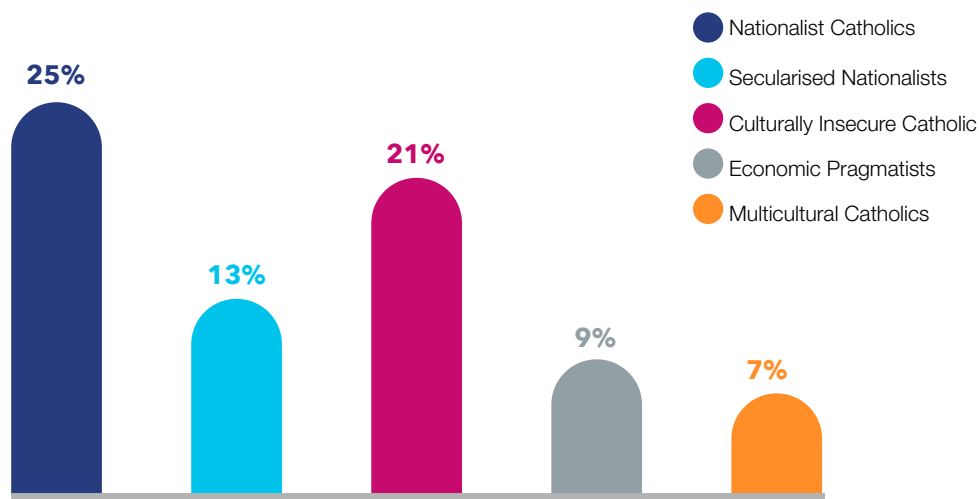
Catholics have also understood that the “refugee crisis” is not a temporary phenomenon, and that new arrivals are settling in for the long-term in France. Integration through work is therefore preferred: the host society always considers work as the best way to find your place in society.

Finally, we found that religion in society is not used as a criteria for drawing a distinction between migrants by a majority of Catholics: 55% refuse to make it a problem. Only a minority, particularly found amongst Culturally Insecure Catholics and Nationalist Catholics, feel they have more in common with Eastern Christianity.



**Which one of the following reasons best describes why you took, or would take, the actions you mentioned to help migrants?**

*“You feel connected to persecuted Christians as a Catholic”*



**A HIGH LEVEL OF COMMITMENT**

— Whatever their attitudes may be, Catholics act: one in two has taken action or made a donation in support of migrants in the last 12 months. Multicultural Catholics’ commitment is more political: they sign more petitions and do more volunteer work. Economic Pragmatists’ commitment is more financial. Culturally Insecure Catholics’ commitment is very much linked to the action of the Church and parishes: this is why this group has the highest number of people who have welcomed migrants. It is also definitive proof of the importance and effectiveness of the Pope’s appeal. Even a significant minority amongst the most closed-values groups made a donation.

The most cited reason for giving among Catholic donors is compassion towards migrants. However, it is not the most shared reason amongst the groups: the statement “Helping people in need is part of your religious beliefs and your faith” includes more Catholics from different groups.



Which of the following, if any, have you done in the last 12 months to help migrants in France? Have you...

Donated food, clothing or other items to help migrants?	49	45	37	28	23	40	38	18
Made a financial donation to a charity that helps migrants?	16	21	13	5	9	22	14	9
Welcomed one or more migrants into your parish?	15	9	16	4	7	25	11	-
Signed a petition to support migrants?	18	12	7	3	2	7	9	8
Volunteered some of your time to help migrants?	10	12	9	3	3	13	8	7
Shared positive stories online about migrants?	10	6	6	4	-	4	6	5
Welcomed one or more migrants into your home?	8	2	2	-	2	6	3	2
Contacted a politician to ask them to support migrants?	3	2	2	0	3	4	2	3
	Multicultural Catholics	Economic Pragmatists	Culturally Insecure Catholics	Secularised Nationalists	Nationalist Catholics	Practising Catholics	Overall Catholic Pop.	Overall French Pop. 2016 (refugees)

● > 40 % 
 ● > 25 % 
 ● > 15 % 
 ● > 10 %



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## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS: SECURE THIS MAJORITY BY ADAPTING ARGUMENTS TO EACH GROUP

— These research findings show paths to anchor a majority of Catholics towards hospitality in the long-term.

**1.** It is better to focus on the least polarised groups. Multicultural Catholics are already convinced that welcoming migrants is a necessity while Nationalist Catholics are too resistant to be persuaded to adopt new attitudes in the short-term.

**2.** Adapt the objectives to each group. Do not address Secularised Nationalists hoping that they will adopt all of the values and perceptions of Multicultural Catholics.

**3.** Appeal to each group. A message is better received when the people it is addressed to are part of it. It should therefore, at least partially, echo the perceptions and attitudes belonging to each group. Thus, in order to be heard by Culturally Insecure Catholics, embracing and talking about ambivalence will have a positive effect.

**Economic Pragmatists are looking for charismatic voices which are likely to mobilise them, and they prefer an «à la carte» commitment.** The Pope's call for commitment towards all the "peripheries" is also important: it's about minimising their hostility to those who today, are less in favour of welcoming migrants, notably Secularised Nationalists who may be in difficult situations. They can be reached via social networks and media, or via alumni associations.

**Culturally Insecure Catholics need to be reassured about their identity.** They show a relatively high level of commitment, but they are also dealing with a conflict of values. Promoting meetings and accounts of migrants and of Catholics with similar profiles to them, but who have experienced a change in attitude regarding Muslims, could be productive. They can be reached in the parishes.

**Secularised Nationalists need us to respond to their feeling of abandonment** and show them that they have the same concerns as migrants. Relaying the Pope's message to go towards all the "peripheries" and insisting on the universal dimension of support will be, without a doubt, better received. They can be reached via grassroots associations and non profits.

# Conclusion.

— Neighbours for some, a threat for others; migrants crystalize aspirations or fears. In reality, as soon as attitudes and values are involved, the image of migrants and refugees as people who face hardships and suffering fades away and gives way to controversy and tensions.

But the vocal controversy between the polarized masks the hopeful nuances of this debate. This close look at how French Catholics feel about refugees, migration and identity shows us the value of acknowledging and understanding ambivalence, for example between a profoundly Christian desire to provide hospitality to the stranger and concern about their strangeness. This tension reaches a climax among Culturally Insecure Catholics, the group with the most practising Catholics. But it also exists amongst other groups, in varying degrees. It is fed, for some, by the fear that Catholics are disappearing into a secular and multi-denominational society where they will have to find their place. This is reinforced, for others, by the uncertainties arising from globalisation, which fuels a growing feeling of powerlessness and detachment from the world's progress. The divisions among Catholics are caused by multiple differences.

We must not forget the many positive findings of this study: Catholics are committed and continue to give, volunteer and act. There are also many who consider their faith as vitally important and give merit to their values, even if they sometimes struggle to define them. A positive aspirational collective narrative could capitalise on this momentum. Offering hospitality and including people who follow different paths than you demonstrates trust and self-confidence in your values and your faith. Welcoming migrants is not a sign of weakness: believing that Catholic culture will fade away when interacting with other value systems is.

Of course, interaction and integration do not happen naturally. They require hard work. By promoting the Pope's appeal to go towards all the "peripheries" (and not just migrants), by supporting integration through work and strengthening dialogue with Muslims, the Church can alleviate concerns and forge a collective narrative in which everyone can legitimately find their place.

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**This report was written by Francois-Xavier Demoures for More in Common France. The author would like to thank Father Carlos Caetano, Tim Dixon, Stéphane Duclos, Anne-Christelle Febbraro, Jérôme Fourquet, Marie Gariazzo, Laurent Giovannoni, Stephen Hawkins, Míriam Juan-Torres, Mathieu Lefèvre, Philippe Lefilleul, Anne Laure Marchal, Pascale Novelli, Xavier de Palmaert, Anaiz Parfait, Claire Sabbah and Marcela Villalobos Cid for their support and many helpful comments along the way.**

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