

# French politics and the emergence of homegrown jihadism : 2012-2016

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Follow up of our recent book on the French djihadist movement



# Analysis based on the DYNAMOB project

<http://blogs.sciences-po.fr/recherche-dynamob/>



**DYNAMOB**

Dynamiques  
de mobilisation

Figure 2:

## Dynamob timeline :

- ▶ V1 - V7 : before 2015
- ▶ V8 - V11 : between january and november 2015
- ▶ V12 - V13 : since november 2015

# The emergence of homegrown jihadism in France

- ▶ 03/2012 : Mohammed Merah
- ▶ 05/2014 : Mehdi Nemmouche
- ▶ 01/2015 : Charlie Hebdo and Jewish supermarket Hyper Cacher
- ▶ 11/2015 : Bataclan shooting
- ▶ 07/2016 : Nice attack
- ▶ summer 2016 : Local attacks in Magnanville (couple of policemen), Saint Etienne du Rouvray (Catholic Priest)
- ▶ Several aborted plots : Thalys, Gay clubs, Churches

## How does the threat of terrorism impact political attitudes and behavior in France ?

- ▶ Attacks that were different in nature : (lonewolf attack, different techniques, different targets from mass shooting to bombing to targeted assassination).
- ▶ January 2015 : dividing the french society by targeting specific groups.
- ▶ Fall 2015 and 2016 : Mass shootings and suicide bombing, no specific targets or targets that are disapproved by a significant number of jihadist groups across the globe.
- ▶ Underlying issues in the french context : Immigration and xenophobia, violence in deprived neighborhoods, postcolonial issues, expression of faith (so called “islamophobia debate”).

## Hypothesis : non linearity of the political impact of terrorism

There is *no* linear nor continuous impact of terrorism on French citizens attitudes and behavior.

- ▶ The general impact in changing through times as attacked are repeated while evolving in their nature
- ▶ Specific subgroups may react in different ways

# Long term trends in attitudes towards muslims in France

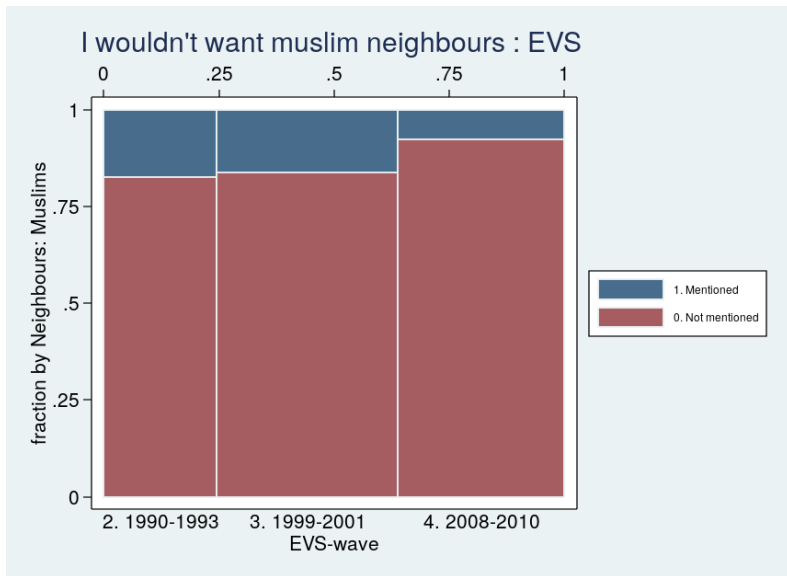


Figure 3: EVS trends



## A rise in authoritarianism after 2015 ?

- ▶ Threat should increase authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 2006)
- ▶ There may be some kind of “authoritarian dynamic” (Stenner, 2005)
- ▶ Yet first survey ran after the January attacks show a decrease in prejudices (Mayer, Tiberj, May 2015)
- ▶ Likely : different effects on different parts of the population
- ▶ Consequence : increased polarization by reinforcing existing positions

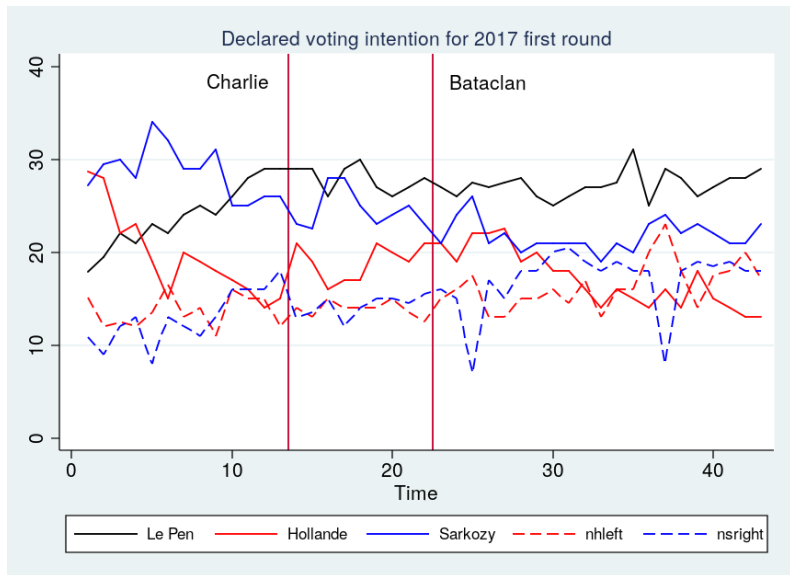
## Dynamob : no significant impact on “traditional” authoritarianism

- ▶ Death Penalty (Cramer's V 0.03 from v1 to v13)
- ▶ Immigration (Cramer's V 0.04 from v1 to v13)
- ▶ French muslims are as french as anyone else (Cramer's V 0.04 from v1 to v13)

## Yet high *levels* in authoritarianism

- ▶ 30 % believe that French Muslims are *not* as french as anyone else
- ▶ 37 % support death penalty
- ▶ 60 % say there are too many migrants in the country

# Who would you vote for if the presidential election were held today ?



# Combined results :

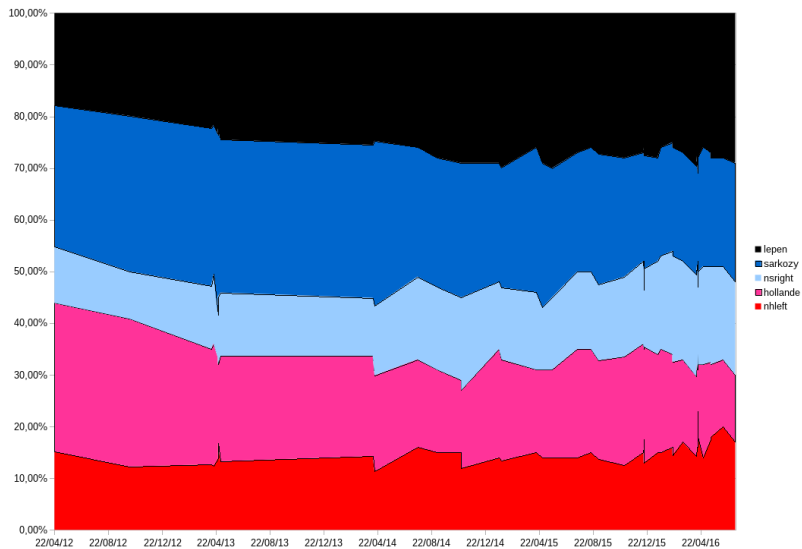


Figure 5: cumulative choices

# General trends : gaps relative to the national front :

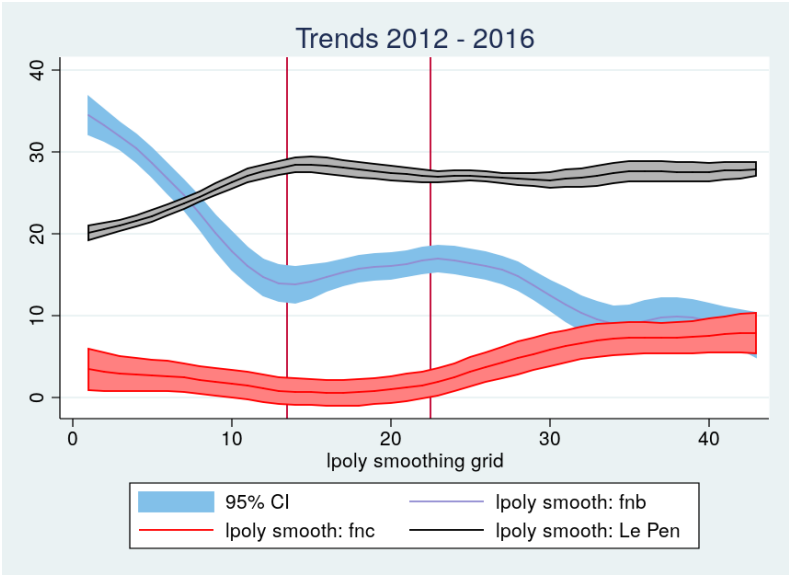


Figure 6: vote choice

# Google trends of french internet users (90% market share)

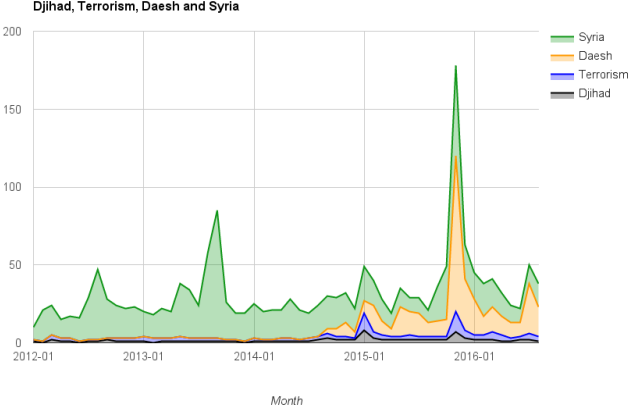


Figure 7: Internet trends

## Why should we care ?

- ▶ Those trends are likely to shape the next presidential election
- ▶ They are splitting up existing political parties that have to manage huge internal tensions
- ▶ Strategic issues : how to reach to muslim voters ? can it be done ? is it worth it ?
- ▶ Long term vs short term impact of terrorism : France is entering a new era



## Recent evolution (summer 2016) in perspective

- ▶ Decline in support for the government (not doing enough, “weak on terror”)
- ▶ Seemingly uncorrelated to international issues (hawkish international policy by F. Hollande : Mali, Lybia, Syria)
- ▶ Terrorism mainly perceived as a domestic issue
- ▶ Consolidated vote for the far right yet no specific rise
- ▶ Issue evolution in the context of the economic crisis (security vs jobs)

## To conclude

- ▶ Increase in support for National Front came *before* 2015 terror attacks
- ▶ Support for main candidates increased after the January 2015 attacks
- ▶ But has been declining since November 2015 attacks, voters are looking for alternatives
- ▶ Defiance against Hollande and Sarkozy does *not* translate into higher support for the National Front
- ▶ Increased saliency for security and cultural issue, yet the economy remains the most important factor
- ▶ Non-linearity of terrorism effects on attitudes: 2015-16 attacks were different in nature, had different impact
- ▶ Cumulative impact of different trends lead to consolidation in the FN electorate