



The EU vs. the Nation State?

by **George Igler** • December 28, 2016 at 5:00 am

- The question remains, however, why any nation would want to throw out its sovereignty to institutions that are fundamentally unaccountable, that provide no mechanism for reversing direction, and whose only "solution" to problems involves arrogating to itself ever more authoritarian, rather than democratically legitimate, power.
- Previous worries over unemployment and the economy have been sidelined: the issues now vexing European voters the most, according to the EU's own figures, are mass immigration (45%) and terrorism (32%).
- The Netherlands' *Partij Voor de Vrijheid*, France's *Front National* and Germany's *Alternativ für Deutschland* are each pushing for a referendum on EU membership in their respective nations.
- Given that the EU's institutions have been so instrumental as a causal factor in the mass migration and terrorism that are now dominating the minds of national electorates, some might argue that the sooner Europeans get rid of the EU, which is now doing more harm than good, the better.



In the 2017 elections in the Netherlands and France, Geert Wilders (left) and François Fillon (right) have good chances of being elected.

Attention is beginning to focus on elections due to take place in three separate European countries in 2017. The outcomes in the Netherlands, France and Germany will determine the likely future of the European Union (EU).

In the Netherlands, on March 15, all 150 members of the country's House of Representatives will face the ballot box. The nation is currently led by Prime Minister Mark Rutte, whose VVD party holds 40 seats in the legislative chamber, ruling in a coalition with the Dutch Labour party, which holds 35 seats.

In contrast, the Party for Freedom – *Partij Voor de Vrijheid* (PVV) – led by Geert Wilders, currently holds 12 seats.

According to an opinion poll, issued on December 21, Wilders's party has leapt to 24% in the polls, while Rutte's party has slid to 15%. Were an election to happen now, this would translate to 23 MPs for Rutte's VVD, and 36 MPs for Wilders's PVV.

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The Islamists of Sweden

by Nima Gholam Ali Pour • December 28, 2016 at 4:00 am

- It seems clear that Muslim civil society in Sweden has an ideological direction that is close to the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology, while they criticize the laws and measures that prevent Islamic terrorism.
- The Islamic Association of Sweden (IFIS) writes on their website that they are members of the Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe (FIOE). There are strong links between FIOE and the Muslim Brotherhood. When the United Arab Emirates decided to list the Muslim Brotherhood and all branches of the movement as terrorists, they also listed IFIS as terrorists.
- The strength of the political influence of Sweden's Muslim civil society is evidenced by a 1999 agreement between the Muslim Council of Sweden and the Social Democrat party, that "Muslims' participation in social democracy will evolve so that: in 2002 there should be among social democratic elected representatives Muslims in 15 municipal lists, 5 county lists and on the parliamentary lists in at least five counties."
- When a debate started in 2014 on making it illegal for Swedish citizens to travel to other countries to participate in jihad, the Muslim Human Rights Committee claimed that such a law would be racist. Furthermore, they argued that people who fought in jihad abroad were not even a threat against Sweden.
- The greatest threat from Islamism comes not from the suicide bombers who carry out spectacular attacks, but from Islamists quietly infiltrating our democratic institutions and normalizing their ideas among us. It is a threat that must be recognized and addressed.



Mehmet Kaplan was a minister in Sweden's government until April 2016, when he was forced to resign after revelations that he compared Israel's treatment of Palestinians to that of the German Nazis' treatment of Jews. (Image source: Wikimedia Commons/Jan Ainali)

In Sweden, there are a number of Muslim organizations that together constitute what is known as "Muslim civil society" (*Muslimska civilsamhället*). What is important, when discussing Muslim civil society in Sweden, is their political influence, their ideology and their structure.

IFIS

One of the most important organizations in Sweden's Muslim civil society is the Islamic Association of Sweden (*Islamiska Förbundet i Sverige* -- IFIS), established in 1981. Some of the goals of IFIS, which you can read about on their website, are to "influence and form opinions on issues that concern the Muslim group and its interests in Sweden" and "increase participation, influence and representation of Muslims in public institutions and bodies". In other words, IFIS works as a lobby organization for Muslims in Sweden.

It is a lobby organization that has been successful.