

# Minister warns that French secularism can be counter-productive

Posted: Mon, 1st Jun 2015

The French education minister has cautioned against France's secularity rules suppressing the rights of religious people to freedom of expression.

Najat Vallaud-Belkacem warned that the way in which France manifests secularism has occasionally been "counter-productive" and has limited the rights of religious school pupils.

"We have to be careful not to have a form of militant secularity in our country, which is counter-productive for children we would like to see adhere to secularity," she said.

"In recent years, we have reached levels of unwarranted tension, which go a long way in explaining the misunderstanding surrounding the notion of secularity, and the reason why some young people don't associate with it.

"How can a child adhere to school and the notion of secularity when they see their mother rejected from a school outing, stigmatised, left on the sidelines, just because she has a scarf on her head?"

Vallaud-Belkacem added that secularism should not be seen as a "strict rule."

She also cautioned against proselytising in schools but said she was against an "ultra-rigid" implementation of secularism.

- [Share on What's App](#)
- [Share on Facebook](#)
- [Share on Twitter](#)
- [Share on Email](#)
- [Subscribe to RSS Feed](#)

Tags: [FoRB](#)

## Related Campaigns

•

### [Freedom of religion or belief](#)

Secularism protects freedom of religion or belief for all.

[Read More](#)

## Related Articles

### [The universality of human rights needs defending](#)

Seventy-five years on from the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, its promise of freedom and equality remains a distant dream for those living under religious rule, says Stephen Evans. [Read More »](#)

### [Freedom of religion or belief must include the freedom to 'blaspheme'](#)

The freedom to question and criticise religious ideas in the same manner as any other kind is foundational to a democratic... [Read More »](#)

### [Established church hinders religious freedom, NSS tells UN expert](#)

The NSS has told a UN expert that lack of separation between Church and state is undermining freedom of religion or belief in the UK. [Read More »](#)

### [Study: Jurors could be biased against people who don't swear to God](#)

Bias against people who don't swear a religious oath in court may lead to hundreds of additional convictions, researchers... [Read More »](#)

### [NSS welcomes shelving of Bill of Rights](#)

The National Secular Society has welcomed the government's decision to shelve its plan to replace the Human Rights... [Read More »](#)