

## Muslims in the European Union: discrimination and Islamophobia

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# MUSLIMS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

## DISCRIMINATION AND ISLAMOPHOBIA





# Muslims in the European Union

## Discrimination and Islamophobia

EUMC 2006



# Foreword

The disadvantaged position of Muslim minorities, evidence of a rise in Islamophobia and concern over processes of alienation and radicalisation have triggered an intense debate in the European Union regarding the need for re-examining community cohesion and integration policies. A series of events such as the September 11 terrorist attacks against the US, the murder of Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands, the Madrid and London bombings and the debate on the Prophet Mohammed cartoons have given further prominence to the situation of Muslim communities. The central question is how to avoid stereotypical generalisations, how to reduce fear and how to strengthen cohesion in our diverse European societies while countering marginalisation and discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion or belief.

European Muslims are a highly diverse mix of ethnicities, religious affiliation, philosophical beliefs, political persuasion, secular tendencies, languages and cultural traditions, constituting the second largest religious group of Europe's multi-faith society. In fact Muslim communities are no different from other communities in their complexity. Discrimination against Muslims can be attributed to Islamophobic attitudes, as much as to racist and xenophobic resentments, as these elements are in many cases inextricably intertwined.

The first part of the report provides contextual information on the situation of Muslims in key areas of social life, such as employment, education and housing, as well as a discussion of key issues and debates. The second part contains a comprehensive overview of the available information and data on manifestations of Islamophobia in all EU Member States. It also examines the quality of data and identifies problem areas and gaps. Finally, the report takes stock of existing government and civil society initiatives targeting Muslims and concludes with a number of opinions for policy action by EU Member State governments and the European institutions to combat Islamophobia and to foster integration and community cohesion.

This report is complemented by a qualitative study into "Perceptions of discrimination and Islamophobia", based on in-depth interviews with members of Muslim Communities in ten Member States. The interviews indicate that Islamophobia, discrimination, and socio-economic marginalisation have a primary role in generating disaffection and alienation. Muslims feel that acceptance by society is increasingly premised on 'assimilation' and the assumption that they should lose their Muslim identity. This sense of exclusion is of particular relevance in the face of the challenges posed by terrorism. Muslims feel that since 9/11 they have been put under a general suspicion of terrorism.

Terrorism puts our democracy and fundamental principles to a test. Muslims in general want to be seen as partners who have much at stake in ensuring community safety. Security measures are needed, but they must be weighed against their impact on all communities and their human rights implications. Policy responses for

community cohesion and integration risk being based not on the promotion of equality and fundamental rights, but on the prevention of terrorism. It is important that Muslim communities do not become double victims – first of terror attacks and then of policy responses to these attacks. There is a need for more dialogue, social inclusion and non-discrimination policies in support of minority groups, which will ultimately have benefits for the entire society.

Many Muslims acknowledge that they themselves also need to do more to engage with wider society, to overcome the obstacles and difficulties that they face and to take greater responsibility for integration. However, engagement and participation need also encouragement and support from mainstream society that needs to do more to accommodate diversity and remove barriers to integration.

Political leaders and the institutions have a particular responsibility to send a clear message of respect to all communities and provide convincing answers. Now more than ever they must establish meaningful intercultural dialogue and promote practical initiatives to bring communities together and tackle prejudice, disaffection and marginalisation. Policy responses need to acknowledge that Muslim communities in general have experienced long-standing discrimination, whether direct or indirect, which has impacted on employment opportunities, education standards and social marginalisation. Policy responses need to react to the diversity of Muslim communities and be complemented by supporting action in communication, awareness-raising, capacity building and outreach. It is imperative that all Member States of the European Union apply the anti-discrimination Directives and make fuller use of their potential and provisions to address discrimination and promote equality.

Also the media can play an important role in enhancing mutual understanding between communities of different religions and beliefs, cultures and traditions. The media has much to gain from working more closely with civil society and faith-based organisations, to counter stereotyping.

The EUMC will for its part follow-up on this report updating the available data and providing advice to key stakeholders on how to turn equality principles into practice. I hope that the report will contribute to an open public debate on ways in which we can live peacefully together while respecting fundamental rights and cultural, ethnic and religious diversity without denying the existence of problems. It is also my hope that this report will be used by EU Institutions, governments, faith leaders, civil society organisations and the media as a constructive contribution to an inclusive Europe, which values its diversity while addressing the inherent challenges.

Finally, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the EUMC staff and the National Focal Points for their thorough research for this report. I would also like to thank the Management Board of the EUMC for their comments and feedback.

Beate Winkler  
EUMC Director

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# Executive Summary

## History and structure of the Report

A key finding of all EUMC work on anti-Muslim discrimination and manifestations of Islamophobia since 2001 has been the shortage of adequate, reliable and objective data on religious groups. In response, the EUMC intensified its RAXEN<sup>1</sup> data collection effort using more ambitious guidelines in the preparation of this report. The data collection reports delivered by the EUMC's National Focal Points in May 2005 were subsequently updated through additional data and material in November 2005 and January 2006; these were analysed by Professor Dr. Åke Sander of Göteborg University and the EUMC Services drafted the present report consisting of three parts:

- **The first part** tries to put into context the data and information on manifestations of Islamophobia, presented in the second part, by providing an overview of the demographic situation of Muslims in the European Union, the legal status of Islam and the work of Muslim organisations, as well as an assessment of discrimination in employment, education and housing. In addition some key issues and debates are briefly examined (e.g. Muslim women and the headscarf, Islam in public discourse, marginalisation and alienation and the cartoon controversy).
- **The second part** presents country by country evidence of manifestations of Islamophobia examining data sources and data availability on the basis of a preliminary discussion on the use of the term 'Islamophobia'. The available data and data collection mechanisms are critically assessed in the concluding section.
- **The third part**, which in many ways is the heart of this report, presents some key government and civil society initiatives targeting specifically Muslims and aimed at promoting integration and combating Islamophobia. The report concludes with EUMC opinions addressed to European institutions, the Member States, civil society and the media.

## Key findings

- Muslims, like other religious groups remain inadequately recorded statistically and even demographic data relies often on unofficial estimates that vary, sometimes substantially. More international survey research is

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<sup>1</sup> According to its founding Council Regulation (EC) No 1035/97 of 2 June 1997 the EUMC has set up and coordinates a Racism and Xenophobia European Network (RAXEN) composed of 25 National Focal Points (NFPs), one in each EU Member State, selected through open international competition and contracted by the EUMC. The core task of RAXEN is to provide the EUMC with objective, reliable and comparable data (including examples of and models for "good practice") on phenomena of racism and xenophobia.

therefore essential particularly in order to record attitudes and the extent of Muslims' victimisation.

- Muslims are often victims of negative stereotyping, at times reinforced through negative or selective reporting in the media. In addition, they are vulnerable to manifestations of prejudice and hatred in the form of anything from verbal threats through to physical attacks on people and property.
- Many Muslims, particularly young people, face limited opportunities for social advancement, social exclusion and discrimination which could give rise to hopelessness and alienation.
- Research and statistical data – mostly 'proxy' data, referring to nationality and ethnicity – show that Muslims are often disproportionately represented in areas with poor housing conditions, while their educational achievement falls below average and their unemployment rates are higher than average. Muslims are often employed in jobs that require lower qualifications and as a group they are over-represented in low-paying sectors of the economy.

Their poor situation in the labour market is a particular cause for concern given that unemployment is a key factor affecting integration. This was recognised in November 2004 by the EU leaders during the Justice and Home Affairs Council<sup>2</sup>, who included employment as one of the eleven common basic principles for community and national integration policies.

## European Muslim communities

Although Muslims have lived in the Baltic and Balkan regions, on the Iberian Peninsula, in Cyprus and in Sicily for centuries, the largest part of the Muslim population in the European Union arrived as migrant workers from the 1960s and a smaller number as asylum seekers in the 1990s. Most Muslims are Sunnis, although there is a Shiite minority, as well as other strands, like Alevis and Sufis. Ethnic and sectarian differences can be important, because they can impact on attitudes concerning, for example, integration and relationships with non-Muslims.

Muslims are inadequately captured in demographic statistics: the most conservative estimate based on official and, where they are not available, unofficial data is of a Muslim population of around thirteen million, around 3.5 per cent of the total population of the European Union, but with great variations between Member States. The demographic profile of the Muslim population is reportedly younger than the general population, indicating that policy interventions aimed at young people should have a strong impact.

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<sup>2</sup> Presidency Conclusions – Brussels, 4/5 November 2004, *The Hague Programme strengthening freedom, security and Justice in the European Union*, 14292/04 11 ANNEX I, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/news/information\\_dossiers/2005-2009/docs/presidency\\_conclusions\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/news/information_dossiers/2005-2009/docs/presidency_conclusions_en.pdf) (12.05.2006)

## **Legal status of Islam – Muslim organisations**

The legal status of Islam differs between Member States depending on the legal relationship between state and religion. Some Member States have legislative instruments regulating religious practice including the operation of mosques, preaching and proselytising practices, halal slaughter and the public use of religious symbols. In some countries there is no formal recognition of Islam, but this does not necessarily impact negatively on the rights of Muslims.

A variety of Muslim organisations exists in all Member States, but many Muslims, particularly those with a more secular outlook, are not involved in them. The participation of Muslim organisations in social and political life is important for social cohesion. The non-hierarchical organisation of Islam, combined with the ethnic, cultural and theological diversity of Europe's Muslim communities, presents particular difficulties to the formation of 'umbrella' organisations. There is evidence to suggest that community representation is gradually changing with younger generations that see themselves collectively as Muslims and therefore generate more interaction among ethnically different Muslim communities, with knock-on effects for established Muslim organisations and the potential establishment of new organisations.

## **Issues and debates**

### **Marginalisation and alienation**

In the European context, a central question is whether Muslims feel well integrated in European societies, or whether some experience marginalisation and alienation. Discriminatory practices resulting from intolerant and prejudicial attitudes towards different cultures reinforce social exclusion and alienation.

There is little research work in this area: Pilot studies on migrants' experiences of racism and xenophobia in different areas of economic and social life conducted by the EUMC in several European countries between 2002 and 2005 showed that while Muslim migrants seem to be more vulnerable to experiencing discrimination than non-Muslims in some countries, e.g. Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Portugal, for other countries, e.g. Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, France and Ireland, religious faith alone cannot explain rates of perceived discrimination.

The diverse history of Muslim communities in Europe, as well as the diverse approaches of Member States in dealing with religious minorities, must also be taken into consideration. Nevertheless, it can be stated on the basis of the existing evidence that members of Muslim communities are potentially affected by discriminatory practices that, in turn, could provoke them into alienation from the wider society in which they live.

## **Opinion polls**

National as well as international opinion polls invariably show a negative picture of general public opinion towards Muslims, but with considerable variations between Member States. The 2004 GfK Custom Research survey showed that over 50 per cent of Western Europeans considered that Muslims living in Europe today are viewed with suspicion. The 2005 Pew Survey presented a varied picture with the majority of respondents stating that “Muslims want to remain distinct” and that “they have an increasing sense of Islamic identity”. However a majority of respondents in France and Great Britain expressed a favourable view of Muslims. The latest 2006 Pew Survey covering Germany, Spain, Great Britain and France described its findings as “more mixed than unremittingly negative”. One of its key findings was that in a number of respects Muslims are less inclined to see a clash of civilizations and often associate positive attributes with Westerners – including tolerance, generosity, and respect for women. The survey also found that majorities in France and Great Britain retained overall favourable opinions of Muslims. However, positive opinions of Muslims have declined sharply in Spain over the past year (from 46 to 29 per cent), and more modestly in Great Britain (from 72 to 63 per cent), while respondents in Germany and Spain expressed much more negative views of Muslims than in France and Great Britain.

## **Muslim women - the headscarf**

The social status of Muslim women varies depending on their social class and educational background, whether they came from rural or urban areas in the country of origin and other factors.

Muslim women are at the centre of heated public debates concerning the role of religion, tradition and modernity, secularism and emancipation, and are often singled out as victims of oppression attributed to Islam.

An issue that has been publicly debated in recent years in many Member States concerns the wearing of a headscarf, which is often interpreted by non-Muslims as a symbol of oppression and subordination. The issue of the headscarf is complex and multifaceted. Many Muslim women may indeed wear a headscarf involuntarily, because of social pressure by family or even harassment by their peer group, but others choose to wear it either on religious grounds, as an assertion of Muslim identity or as a culturally defined display of modesty.

Other issues affecting the lives of a number of Muslim women particularly in some European countries, e.g. Belgium, France, Germany, Austria and the UK are *forced marriages* and *honour murders*. Such unacceptable practices have been publicly condemned and the 2006 Austrian Presidency of the European Council took the initiative to develop the ‘*Network Against Harmful Traditions*’ proposing legal measures as well as protection of victims and awareness campaigns.

While acknowledging that the social status and life conditions of many Muslim women must be considerably improved to achieve gender equality, it should also be

recognised that to consider all Muslim women as passive victims is not an accurate reflection of how many Muslim women see their lives. In other words, to focus solely on negative issues such as forced marriages and honour killings, without denying that they exist, is only to scratch the surface of Muslim women's diverse experiences across Europe.

### **The 'cartoons' controversy**

The reactions and counter-reactions sparked by the cartoons in a Danish newspaper raised concerns about a possible negative impact on the integration of Muslims in the European Union. In this respect, public statements by politicians and opinion leaders pointed to the pivotal importance of re-establishing a climate of intercultural respect.

The hard-won contest of freedom of expression is part of the principles and values that the EU is founded upon, and a fundamental cornerstone of European societies that is not negotiable. However, freedom of expression does not preclude the protection of people from racist and xenophobic language. Freedom of expression is not an absolute right; international law and the legal order of EU Member States lay down certain limits that our democratic societies consider are justified in order to protect other fundamental rights. Freedom of expression and the protection against racist and xenophobic language can, and have to, go hand-in-hand – the two together make democracy meaningful.

There is much to be gained by the media working more closely with civil society and faith-based organisations, for example, to counter deliberate or inadvertent stereotyping and present a more complete picture of the various communities.

### **The situation in employment, education and housing**

This section explores the available data and information on conditions affecting Muslims in the areas of employment, education and housing. In the absence of data on specifically Muslim populations, nationality and/or ethnicity are used as the closest proxy categories available.

#### **Employment**

Differences in wages, type of employment and unemployment rates of migrants, of which a significant proportion belong to Muslim faith groups, indicate persistent exclusion, disadvantage and discrimination.

In some Member States Muslims tend to have low employment rates. Lack of success in the labour market can often be related to levels of skill and qualification, but that cannot account for all these results. For example, in the UK, in 2004 Muslims had the highest male unemployment rate at 13 per cent and the highest female unemployment rate at 18 per cent. Muslims aged 16 to 24 years had the

highest overall unemployment rates. In Ireland, the 2002 census revealed that 44 per cent of Muslims in contrast to 53 per cent of the total population were in work, and 11 per cent of Muslims were unemployed as opposed to a national average of 4 per cent.

There is also a large body of non-official evidence that demonstrates the persistent scale of discrimination in employment derived from controlled experiments in employers' recruitment practices ("discrimination testing"), opinion surveys on discriminatory attitudes, and surveys of subjectively perceived discrimination against migrants. Muslims appear to be particularly affected, while Muslim women face a 'double' discrimination on account of both their gender and religion.

There is increasing concern, about the integration of Europe's Muslim population into society and workplaces without discrimination. The Employment Equality Directive forbids discrimination on the grounds of religion, and there is also a growing awareness of the benefits of making cultural/religious allowances in workplaces.

## **Education**

Muslim pupils have been present in the educational systems of several Member States, such as Belgium, France, Germany, Austria, Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom for some time. On the other hand, in Member States such as Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Finland, Ireland, and, to some extent, Denmark, the Muslim pupil population has only recently began growing, as immigration reached these countries much later.

Due to the lack of educational statistics based on religion or ethnicity an assessment of the educational situation of Muslim pupils can be inferred mainly indirectly by looking at data referring to nationality or country of origin. These do not reveal the effects of a complex array of other factors contributing to school performance and educational attainment.

The results of the 2000 and 2003 OECD PISA studies and the 2006 OECD report on migrant student performance show that non-native born pupils have much lower literacy scores than native pupils. Particularly in countries where the educational and socio-economic status of migrant families – many with Muslim background – is comparatively low, the performance gaps between students with and without migrant backgrounds tends to be larger. The 2006 study suggested that although students with migrant origins generally have strong learning dispositions, the performance differences between native and such students are significant, particularly in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany and the Netherlands.

The provision of religious education varies across different Member States: various methods are used – formal secular religious education; cross-curriculum teaching of Islam; separate Islamic teaching provided within or outside the state school context. Muslim communities also provide supplementary classes in Islamic religious instruction, but there is concern over the common practice of inviting Imams from

third countries without formal qualifications and little, if any, understanding of the local social and cultural context. Independent Muslim schools providing religious education within a broader curriculum are increasingly being established in a number of EU states, including Denmark, France, Netherlands, Sweden and the UK.

## **Housing**

Official and research based data at national level on housing rarely target specifically religious groups, but, nonetheless, common themes do emerge. It should again be noted, however, that it is not always possible to distinguish religion and ethnicity as causes of discrimination.

Migrants, including those from predominantly Muslim countries, generally appear to suffer higher levels of homelessness, poorer quality housing conditions, poorer residential neighbourhoods and comparatively greater vulnerability and insecurity in their housing status. Very serious housing problems include lack of access to basic facilities such as drinking water and toilets, significantly higher levels of overcrowding than for other households, and exploitation through higher comparative rents and purchase prices. There has been some improvement in patterns of housing conditions, but relative housing inequalities remain largely due to the inadequate stock of social housing for low income groups, such as migrants or migrant descended persons, whose income often does not allow them to find affordable accommodation in the private housing market.

Residential segregation is often equated with failure of integration, but more commonly, discussion revolves around minority ethnic dispersal aimed at reducing residential segregation. This is intensified by a social housing shortage, increasing property prices, or simply the desire of members of minority ethnic groups to live together.

## **Manifestations of Islamophobia**

### **Defining Islamophobia**

Islamophobia is a much used but little understood term. Although there is currently no legally agreed definition of Islamophobia, nor has social science developed a common definition, policy and action to combat it is undertaken within the broad concepts of racism and racial discrimination, which are universally accepted by Governments and international organisations. The EUMC therefore bases its approach to identifying the phenomenon and its manifestations on internationally agreed standards on racism and the ongoing work of the Council of Europe and United Nations.

The Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) has published two relevant General Policy Recommendations: General Policy Recommendation No. 5 combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims (CRI (2000) 21) and General Policy Recommendation No. 7 on national



legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination (CRI (2003) 8). In addition, ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 8 on combating racism while fighting terrorism (ECRI (2004) 26) notes that "*As a result of the fight against terrorism engaged since the events of 11 September 2001, certain groups of persons, notably Arabs, Jews, Muslims, certain asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants, certain visible minorities and persons perceived as belonging to such groups, have become particularly vulnerable to racism and/or to racial discrimination across many fields of public life including education, employment, housing, access to goods and services, access to public places and freedom of movement*".

ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 5 recognises that Muslim communities are subject to prejudice, which "*may manifest itself in different guises, in particular through negative general attitudes but also to varying degrees, through discriminatory acts and through violence and harassment*". ECRI General Policy recommendation No. 7 defines racism as "*the belief that a ground such as race, colour, language, religion, national or ethnic origin justifies contempt for a person or a group of persons, or the notion of superiority of a person or a group of persons*".

A distinction must also be made between attitudes and actions against Muslims based on unjust stereotypes and criticism of Muslim beliefs that can be seen as undermining fundamental rights. The common fundamental principles of the European Union and its Member States under Community law, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention for Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, must be respected.

These values include respect for the uniqueness and freedom of the individual, freedom of expression, equal opportunities for men and women (including the equal right of women to make individual choices in all areas of life) and equal treatment and non-discrimination on a number of grounds, including, for example, sexual orientation. Efforts to protect those principles may at times clash with the perceptions of religious duties of certain individuals or faith groups. However, this perspective is of fundamental importance and Member States have a positive duty under international human rights law to protect and promote these values, while ensuring that a potential critical stance towards certain attitudes of other groups in society respects the principle of equal treatment.

## **Sources of data: focusing on racist violence and crime**

Reports of 'racist violence and crime' are the richest source of information on direct manifestations of Islamophobia, such as incitement to hatred, threats, and acts of violence of an Islamophobic nature. However, it is often difficult to distinguish Islamophobic actions and other incidents in the absence of concrete criminal justice data based specifically on Islamophobic incidents.

The RAXEN National Focal Points have collected both official criminal justice data – such as police reports, prosecution reports and case files and other data – including NGO reports, research reports, victim surveys, and the media. Their reports indicate that police and criminal justice data identifying – specifically – Muslim victims is absent in all but one EU Member State, the United Kingdom.

Other criminal justice data on Islamophobic incidents is under-developed and cannot fill the gap left by inadequate official data collection. The absence of adequate data seriously hampers the development of informed policy responses.

## **Official criminal justice data sources**

At present, most Member States' laws do not specifically refer to religiously motivated or aggravated offences – including offences against Muslims. Instead, legislation in most Member States lumps together racist, xenophobic and religiously motivated crimes under generic 'hate crime' legislation. Furthermore, official criminal justice data collection mechanisms do not always collect information on the identity of victims of a racist crime.

## **Other data sources**

Reflecting patterns in official data collection, unofficial data collection on anti-Muslim or Islamophobic incidents is still in its infancy across the EU. However, it appears that Muslim organisations are beginning to establish some mechanisms to record, more systematically, incidents against Muslims.

Given the absence of official criminal justice data, NGOs currently provide a valuable source of information on a variety of incidents ranging from violent attacks against individuals to vandalism against mosques. NGOs tend to provide a list of all relevant incidents that come to their attention; not all of which are reported to the police. However, the EUMC cannot verify the accuracy of this information.

## **Country data**

Data is limited to those Member States that record or report data on anti-Muslim incidents either through official or other sources. Most of what is related in this report refers to the situation of Muslim communities in the 'old' EU15 – where the bulk of the EU's Muslim population lives. Muslim communities do exist in the 'new'

Member States, but as their populations are relatively small there is an absence of information about both their situation – economic and social – and their experiences of Islamophobia.

**In Denmark**, the police file reports to PET (Danish Civil Security Service) any crimes that are under suspicion as racist or religiously aggravated crimes. PET's records refer only to 'racist/religious' incidents without further categorising them. In 2004, the PET database recorded 32 'racist/religious' incidents. On reading through these incident reports, the EUMC's Danish NFP (National Focal Point) identified some incidents as possibly 'Islamophobic'. DACoRD (Documentation and Advisory Centre on Racial Discrimination) recorded in the period 1 January-13 October 2005, 22 Islamophobic incidents.

**In Germany**, in the period covering the January-October 2005, NGOs recorded 13 incidents of violence against people from predominantly Muslim backgrounds. Violent attacks against fast-food stands owned by Muslims are also a regular occurrence in parts of Germany. Four attacks on mosques were also reported by the German NFP, as well as Islamophobic statements and campaigns by public officials/political parties:

**In Greece**, the NFP noted four incidents of desecration of mosques and cemeteries.

**In Spain**, the Dirección General de la Policía and the Dirección General de la Guardia Civil provided the NFP on request with a list of 30 possibly Islamophobic incidents for the period January 2004-May 2005: three against persons, five against property and 22 threats and verbal abuse. The NGOs 'SOS Racismo' and 'Movimiento contra la Intolerancia' recorded a wide range of violent incidents against persons and property. Many of these incidents are targeted at Muslims, with some perpetrated by public officials.

**In France**, data on racist violence and crime is collected by the police and entered into the 'STIC' database operated by the DCRG (Direction Centrale des Renseignements Generaux). Data collection on anti-Muslim incidents is not obligatory. As a result police databases contain only a partial account of reports where the victim's origin or religion – as Muslim – might be noted: 131 such incidents were reported in 2004 and 65 in 2005.

**In Ireland**, during 2004 the Islamic Foundation received 14 reports of incidents involving violence and assault against Muslim people. The National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism – an independent government-funded body – has also recorded a range of incidents that can be considered 'Islamophobic'.

**In Italy**, the NFP recorded one incident involving violence against Muslims, four involving property and four cases of verbal threats and abusive behaviour – including action by public officials.

**In the Netherlands**, following the murder of Theo van Gogh, the NFP recorded 106 violent anti-Muslim incidents in the period 2-30 November 2004. According to NGOs and media reports, migrants were confronted with name-calling in the streets, on public transport and during sports events. Leaflets bearing anti-Muslim sentiments were distributed in Rotterdam, Den Bosch and in the northwest of the country, and were also seen in Amsterdam, and graffiti was targeted at mosques, Islamic schools, and Muslim-owned shops. The KLPD (the National Dutch Police Services Agency) recorded in the period 23 November 2004-13 March 2005 44 violent incidents against Muslim properties. In 2004 and 2005, the so-called 'Lonsdale' youth group became synonymous with right-wing extremism. 14 incidents apparently involving 'Lonsdale' youth as perpetrators have been noted by a number of sources, including the NFP in 2005.

**In Austria**, the NGO ZARA that collects allegations and information on discrimination and racist violence against all vulnerable minorities reported a small number of incidents against Muslims.

**In the Slovak Republic**, the NFP reported that physical attacks against Muslims or Muslim targets declined. However, several verbal attacks were registered involving women wearing the headscarf.

**In Finland**, the annual police reports on racist crime incorporate a broad range of incidents from discrimination to incitement to racial hatred, provide comprehensive information on incidents with a breakdown of victims according to nationality. The 2005 Annual Police Report noted that victims of racist crime born in a predominantly Muslim country made up 40 per cent of around 400 victims of racist crime during 2004.

**In Sweden**, the Chancellor of Justice in Sweden keeps records of cases, which can include references to incidents of an anti-Muslim nature. Having examined the list the NFP identified a number of anti-Muslim incidents and also collected information directly from the umbrella organisation 'Swedish Muslim Council'. In 2005 one assault and two attacks on a mosque and a Muslim property were reported and in 2005 a mosque was vandalised.

**In the United Kingdom**, according to the Crown Prosecution Service's (CPS) 'Racist Incident Monitoring Annual Report 2003-2004' covering the period 1 April 2003 - 31 March 2004) in England and Wales in 22 cases out of 44 reported to the Director of Public Prosecutions the victim's actual or perceived religion was Muslim. In the CPS's report 2004-2005 (covering the period 1 April 2004-31 March 2005 in England and Wales), in 23 out of 34 cases reported to the Director of Public Prosecutions the victim's actual or perceived religion was Muslim. In the aftermath of the London bombings on 7 July 2005 – there was an upsurge in 'faith hate' incidents recorded by the London Metropolitan Police Service. The number of reported incidents reduced to normal levels a few weeks after the bombings. The Home Office British Crime Survey found Pakistanis and Bangladeshis consistently to be more at risk of being a victim of racially motivated crime than the other ethnic groups surveyed. FAIR, the UK's leading NGO on Islamophobia recorded in the period 2004-2005 over 50 cases of violence against Muslim property, including

places of worship, and over 100 cases of verbal threats and abusive behaviour aimed at members of the Muslim community.

### **Data availability and policy implications**

The paucity of official criminal justice data on religiously motivated incidents means that the criminal justice authorities – from the police through to prosecutors – are currently working without informed criminal intelligence about the number and nature of incidents against religious groups, including Muslims.

Social, economic and political integration policies are also currently under-informed by specific data on the communities concerned. In view of the urban deprivation and scenes of social unrest, which have emerged in Muslim communities in recent years, urgent consideration should be given by Member States to the desirability and feasibility of studying and collecting data and information on both “Islamophobic” incidents as well as discrimination directed specifically against Muslims in the key areas of employment, education and housing – at least in Member States with sizeable Muslim populations. Such data collection and accompanying policies should be developed, where appropriate, with the active cooperation of Muslim communities.

### **Promoting integration - combating Islamophobia**

The principle of integration as “*a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States*” was adopted by the European Council in its Thessaloniki meeting in June 2003. In the context of its 2005 Communication “Common Agenda for Integration Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union” the European Commission proposed to facilitate intercultural and inter-religious dialogue at European level, and to develop the Commission’s dialogue with religious and humanist organisations. At national level it proposed developing constructive intercultural dialogue, as well as promoting inter- and intra-faith dialogue platforms between religious communities and/or between communities and policy-making authorities.

A variety of Community measures, e.g. Action Program Combating Discrimination, EQUAL, SOCRATES, YOUTH, provide funding for projects that facilitate directly or indirectly intercultural dialogue.

Many Member States have also developed policies and initiatives to improve integration specifically directed at Muslims. In addition, Member States with sizeable Muslim communities have also put in place community cohesion policies and measures in support of their minority ethnic or religious communities.

## Conclusions

Muslims in the Member States of the European Union experience various levels of discrimination and marginalisation in employment, education and housing, and are also the victims of negative stereotyping by majority populations and the media. In addition, they are vulnerable to manifestations of prejudice and hatred in the form of anything from verbal threats through to physical attacks on people and property.

Discrimination against Muslims can be attributed to Islamophobic attitudes, as much as to racist and xenophobic resentment, as these elements are in many cases inextricably intertwined. Racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia become mutually reinforcing phenomena and hostility against Muslims should also be seen in the context of a more general climate of hostility towards migrants and minorities.

Yet, given this situation, the true extent and nature of discrimination and Islamophobic incidents against Muslim communities remains severely under-reported and under-documented in the EU. There is a serious lack of data or official information on, first, the social situation of Muslims in Member States and, second, on the extent and nature of Islamophobic incidents.

As a reflection of this, policy makers are not well informed at both national and EU level about the specific situation of Muslims in the areas of employment, education and housing, as well as about the extent and nature of discrimination, incidents and threats targeted at Muslims.

The EUMC finds that Member States need to develop, reinforce and evaluate policies aimed at delivering equality and non-discrimination for Muslim communities, particularly in the fields of employment, education and access to goods and services. In this regard, monitoring and data collection are an indispensable tool to inform effective policy development.

The EUMC believes that measures and practices which tackle discrimination, address social marginalisation and promote inclusiveness should be integrated policy priorities. In particular, the EUMC finds that accessibility to education as well as equal opportunities in employment need consideration. Access to housing and participation in civic processes are further key issues to be tackled, particularly at the local and regional level. The EUMC encourages positive action initiatives to create an enabling environment for Europe's diverse Muslim communities to participate fully in mainstream society.

The EUMC welcomes Community initiatives to enhance co-ordination and exchange of good practices with regards to integration policies at national and local level, as outlined in the European Commission's Communication "Common Agenda for Integration Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union". The Common Basic Principles on Integration (CBPs), adopted by the European Council in November 2004, recognise that participation and equality are fundamental for better integration and a more cohesive society.

The EUMC welcomes the growing awareness of discrimination against Muslims and manifestations of Islamophobia in Member States, as well as the development of positive initiatives, some of which are highlighted in this report. The analysis of the available data and information, however, pointed to a number of areas where further initiatives could be taken including legislation, employment, education, the role of the media and the support of civil society. In addition, the EUMC is of the opinion that Member States should introduce or make use of existing legislative and/or administrative provisions for positive action.

On this basis and according to its role under Article 2 (e) of its founding Regulation to “formulate conclusions and opinions for the Community and its Member States”, the EUMC proposes a number of opinions within a general framework of measures against racism, xenophobia, antisemitism, Islamophobia and related intolerances. The opinions are listed at the end of this report.

## History of the Report

The primary task of the EUMC is to collect reliable, objective and comparable data and information on racism and xenophobia in the Member States of the European Union, analyse this information and produce practical and effective policy proposals for the EU and Member States. Following the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington the EUMC instructed its National Focal Points (NFPs) of the RAXEN network to monitor and report on incidents against Muslims in all Member States. Shortly afterwards it reported that Muslim communities were increasingly becoming targets of hostility in many Member States.

Following up these findings the EUMC subsequently organised, together with the European Commission, a series of round tables bringing together key actors to discuss the situation and propose solutions. Later significant events, such as the Madrid attacks, the Van Gogh murder in the Netherlands and particularly the July 2005 London bombings were also closely monitored and reported by the EUMC.

A key finding was the paucity of data regarding Islamophobic incidents and the situation of Muslim communities. The EUMC decided therefore to intensify its RAXEN data collection effort using more ambitious guidelines. The NFP data collection reports were delivered in May 2005 and were updated through additional data and material in November 2005 and January 2006.

The data available (statistics, numbers or lists of incidents) were categorised in the following groups:

- A. Violence against person/s (members or perceived members of Muslim communities, and/or those working on behalf of Muslim communities) – Information on perpetrators and on prosecution of offences, where available.
- B. Violence against property (Muslim property, mosques, cultural centres, etc) – Information on perpetrators and on prosecution of offences, where available.
- C. Verbal threats and abusive behaviour aimed at members or perceived members of Muslim communities, and/or those working on behalf of Muslim communities – Information on perpetrators and on prosecution of offences, where available.
- D. Islamophobic literature.

One feature of the country reports is that due to the different reporting systems, there is only limited comparability between them. The EUMC commissioned Professor Dr. Åke Sander of Göteborg University to provide a comparative analysis of the data collected by RAXEN and the EUMC services drafted the present report.

Following the practice adopted in the 2004 EUMC Antisemitism Report, it was decided to commission an additional study to produce qualitative, subjective material to complement the quantitative data in this report presenting a valuable overview of opinions, feelings, fears, frustrations and also, the optimism and vision of the future that many European Muslims share.



# PART I – The social context

## 1. European Muslim communities – the background

Islam's association with Europe is very old. Muslims<sup>3</sup> have lived in the Baltic and Balkan regions, in the Iberian Peninsula, in Cyprus and in Sicily for centuries. Several European countries have a long history of contact with the Muslim world as colonial states. Large parts of the colonial territories of Britain, France and the Netherlands were in regions with significant Muslim populations.

Most Muslims living in countries of the European Union arrived during the economic boom of the 1960s: the first as migrant workers, who were later joined by their families during the 1970s and 1980s, and later other groups, such as asylum seekers in the 1990s. Former colonial ties also played a significant role. In France, migration was largely from the former colonies and protectorates of the Maghreb, particularly Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. In the Netherlands, Muslims arrived from the former colonies in parts of what is today Indonesia. In the UK, Muslim migrants came mainly from Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Europe's need for cheap, unskilled or semi-skilled labour meant that migrants came typically from rural rather than urban areas. Thus, the dislocation they experienced was not only that of arriving in a different country, but also of migration from rural villages to the industrial towns and cities.

The majority initially settled in capital cities and large industrial areas. In Germany, Muslims settled around Berlin, Cologne, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Dortmund, Essen, Munich and Hamburg; in the Netherlands, in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Utrecht; in France, in Ile-de-France, Provence-Alpes, Cote d'Azur, Rhone Alpes and Nord-Pas-de-Calais. In the UK, large Muslim communities are found in London, the West Midlands, West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and the west coast of Scotland. The concentration of Muslims in industrial areas means that while the overall Muslim population in each country is relatively low, they are a significant and visible presence in particular cities and neighbourhoods.

By the mid-1970s, the economic recession and concerns regarding the growth in the number of migrants combined initially to restrict and then end primary labour migration into northern Europe. Migration up until this point had mainly been of young working-age men. Following this, a process of longer term settlement and of family reunification began. As the predominantly male migrants were joined by their

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<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that, as in the case with any religion, persons identified as "Muslims" either because of their nationality, ethnic, cultural or family background and affiliation may not define themselves as such. Research shows that most European Muslims, as is the case with other religions, has a secular lifestyle and values.

families, attention turned to the development of community infrastructure. Family settlement and reunification began to alter the demographics and the social and political dynamic of Muslim communities.

In the 1980s, Muslims also arrived in northern Europe as refugees seeking asylum; initially from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Lebanon, and then, in the early 1990s, from the former Republic of Yugoslavia and Somalia. In many cases these people were skilled professionals arriving from urban centres. In addition to these groups, there have always been Muslims arriving in northern Europe as students. Although small in number compared to the economic migrants, their educational skills ensured that this group played an important role in the process of interaction between Muslim communities and wider society.

In a number of EU Member States, such as Greece, Spain, Cyprus and others, Muslim communities have a long historical presence. In Spain, for example, a Moroccan Spanish Muslim community has always been present in the two North African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla. In Greece, the region of Thrace, in the northeast, has been home to a Muslim community with Greek citizenship whose history can be traced back several centuries and is closely linked to the Ottoman presence in South Eastern Europe. The majority is of Turkish descent. A second group consists of Muslims from the Roma community. A third group are Pomak, Muslims of Bulgarian Slavic descent. Two small communities also live on the islands of Kos and Rhodes, but do not enjoy the status of a religious minority, with recognised religious and educational rights.

Since the 1990s, Greece, Italy and Spain have been receiving large numbers of new Muslim migrants. Greece experienced migration of mainly Albanian Muslims, but also Muslims from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Iraq. In Spain the Muslim migrants are mostly from Morocco and sub-Saharan Africa. Most enter Spain illegally through Andalusia and either work there as agricultural labourers or migrate further north for employment in the industrial areas around Madrid or Barcelona. In Italy, large numbers of Muslim migrants also arrive illegally from North Africa and Albania.

Since the early 1990s, migration from predominantly Muslim countries into Europe can be broadly characterised as follows:

- (1) In the north of Europe, Muslim migration has been dominated by, largely, legal entry through refugee/asylum applications and employment opportunities; motivated by war and civil unrest at Europe's borders and associated economic push and pull factors.
- (2) In the south of Europe Muslim migration has been dominated by, largely, illegal entry (including trafficking in human beings) as a reflection of the geographical proximity of countries with Muslim populations to southern Europe, and motivated by the same factors as migration to the north of Europe.

In sum – the history and pattern of Muslim immigration into Europe is diverse, reflecting a wide range of cultures and countries of origin, and the various ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors influencing people’s decision to migrate.

## 1. 1. The demographic situation

Muslim communities in the Member States are ethnically diverse. Muslims from Turkey, the Maghreb, and former Yugoslavia predominate among the Muslim populations of Europe, which now include significant numbers of migrants and refugees from the Middle East. Muslims in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Austria are descended primarily from Turkey. In Belgium and Spain most are descended from Morocco, and they also constitute the second largest group in France and the Netherlands. In France the largest group within the Muslim community is descended from Algeria. Around half of the Muslim population of the United Kingdom was born in the country, ten per cent in Africa, and the remainder in Asia; with the largest Muslim groups originating from Pakistan and Bangladesh. In Italy and Spain, the majority of the Muslim population is composed of mainly 'first generation' male migrants. In Greece, there is both the long-standing Muslim population in the Thrace region, and the recent Muslim migrants who are predominately first generation male migrants.

It should be noted that the national origin of these groups conceals a variation of diverse 'ethnic' backgrounds: Muslims from Turkey include both Turks and Kurds, Moroccans include those with Arab and Berber heritage, and Pakistanis include Punjabis, Kashmiris, Pathans, etc. According to the EUMC's National Focal Point (NFP) reports, the majority of Muslims in Europe are Sunnis, although there is also a small Shi'ite minority, as well as other strands, like Alevis and Sufis. There are also significant differences among Sunnis along ethnic lines, as there are several schools of law within Sunni Islam. Sunni Muslims from sub-Saharan Africa are also strongly influenced by various strands of Sufism. These ethnic and sectarian differences can be very important, because they impact on Muslim communities' different attitudes and practices concerning, for example, integration and relationships with non-Muslims.

In northern European states where Muslims arrived in the 1960s, there are now 'second' and 'third generation' European born Muslims who have acquired the citizenship of their country of birth – in the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden. Demographers have predicted that their numbers will continue to increase in the coming decades largely as a result of migratory flows essential for many European economies and a relatively high birth rate.

The high birth rate is reflected in the demographic profile of the Muslim population, which is reportedly younger than the general population. In the UK, for example, in 2001, one third of the Muslim population was under the age of 16 compared to one fifth of the UK population as a whole. The average age of the Muslim population in the UK is 28, 13 years below the national average.<sup>4</sup> On 1 January 2004 some 38 per cent of Muslims in the Netherlands were not migrants, but of migrant descent<sup>5</sup>. This younger age profile means that policy interventions that are aimed at young people

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<sup>4</sup> United Kingdom, Office of National Statistics (2004), *Focus on Religion*, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Statistics Netherlands (2004) Web magazine, available at [www.cbs.nl/en-gb/menu/themes/mens-maatschappij/bevolking/publicaties/artikelen/archief/2004/2004-1543-wm.htm](http://www.cbs.nl/en-gb/menu/themes/mens-maatschappij/bevolking/publicaties/artikelen/archief/2004/2004-1543-wm.htm) (22/11/2005)

and in the area of education have a disproportionate significance and impact on Muslim groups.

Muslims are inadequately captured in statistical representations, with great variation between Member States. A recent European Commission report corroborates this view arguing that: “... *in several EU-25 countries there are serious deficiencies in the availability and quality of demographic data. Currently the situation varies a lot between European countries, and the trend in many countries seems to be for the worse. The key worries here concern migration data, and therefore also the size of the working age population.*”<sup>6</sup>

Legal barriers to data collection on 'ethnicity', including religion, are provided in many Member States with reference to legislation on data protection and constitutional barriers, many of which refer back to abuses of data collection under former dictatorships. General concerns for privacy and the protection of personal data, in particular sensitive data, prohibit in principle the collection of information revealing racial or ethnic origin or religious belonging in Member States such as France, Belgium, Denmark, Italy, and Spain. On the other hand other Member States, such as Austria, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Slovenia and the United Kingdom, allow exceptions to that principle on the basis of consent, and collect voluntary census data on religious identity or affiliation. In some Member States data on religious affiliation is collected by religious communities, for example in Germany and Sweden.

According to the 1995 Directive on data protection<sup>7</sup> “*Member States shall prohibit the processing of personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin ... religious or philosophical beliefs...*” However, it should be noted that the Directive applies to the processing of personal data, defined as “*any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person*”. It also states in its preamble that “*the principles of protection shall not apply to data rendered anonymous in such a way that the data subject is not identifiable*”. In other words, the 1995 Directive does not prevent data collection on ethnicity and religion where this is undertaken for aggregate statistical purposes and the individual is not identified directly or indirectly at the time of collection. In this regard, there is scope for anonymous data collection for statistical purposes in Member States that could provide a wealth of information, which does not identify the individual and is collected under strict codes of conduct, about the social situation of Muslim communities with respect to, for example, employment, housing and education.

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<sup>6</sup> Namkee Ahn, Juha M. Alho, Herbert Brücker, Harri Crujisen, Seppo Laakso, Jukka Lassila (coordinator), Audronė Morkūnienė, Niku Määttänen and Tarmo Valkonen (2005) *The use of demographic trends and long-term population projections in public policy planning at EU, national, regional and local level*, p. 3

<sup>7</sup> Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council *On the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data*, Official Journal No L. 281, 1995

The 2005 European Commission proposal for a Regulation on “Community statistics on migration and international protection”<sup>8</sup> noted that “*acting individually, and despite extensive non-legislative attempts by the Commission to improve coordination in this domain, Member States have been unable to supply to the Commission the harmonised data necessary for comparable Community statistics on migration and asylum*”. The proposal therefore seeks to establish a common framework for the collection and compilation of Community statistics on international migration and asylum in an attempt to reconcile the great differences that exist across Europe in terms of administrative systems and data sources, with the increasing need for comparable migration statistics for the European Union and its Member States. The proposal was scheduled to be discussed at the European Parliament in September 2006<sup>9</sup>.

Given the various barriers in place for comprehensive and common demographic data collection, the following table presents the ‘best available’ information to hand on the extent of the Muslim population in Europe, with a breakdown between individual Member States. As the comments relating to the following table clearly indicate, information sources on Muslim populations are varied, with some countries having official sources and others having only NGO data or estimations.

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<sup>8</sup> European Commission, *Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Community statistics on migration and international protection*, Brussels, 14.9.2005 COM(2005) 375 final, 2005/0156 (COD)

<sup>9</sup> Legislative Observatory of the European Parliament, available at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/FindByProcnum.do?lang=2&procnum=COD/2005/0156> (12.03.2006)

**Table 1: Muslim populations in the EU Member States**

COUNTRY	Official Data	Unofficial Data	Comments
CZECH REPUBLIC	3,700		Czech Republic, Statistical Office, Census 2001; other estimates indicate a number from 20,000 to 30,000, e.g. US Department of State - International Religious Freedom Report 2005 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51548.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51548.htm</a>
BELGIUM		360,000	Estimate by the interdisciplinary Centre for Religious Studies, University of Leuven, Belgium, more information at <a href="http://www.kuleuven.ac.be/icrs/home/engindex.htm">http://www.kuleuven.ac.be/icrs/home/engindex.htm</a> (21-02-2006)
CYPRUS	4,182		Republic of Cyprus, National Statistical Service, Population Census; the number concerns the part of the island under the control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and not the territories occupied by the Turkish army and governed by a Turkish Cypriot administration.
DENMARK		150,000	Jensen, T. (ed.) <i>Religionsguiden.</i> , Dansk Flygtningehjælp. 2000; other sources indicate an estimate of 180,000, e.g. US Department of State - International Religious Freedom Report 2005 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51549.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51549.htm</a>
GERMANY		3,400,000	Theological Media and Information Service REMID at <a href="http://www.religion-online.info/islam/islam.html">http://www.religion-online.info/islam/islam.html</a> ; it should be noted that the Central Register of Foreigner (AZR) lately corrected the number of foreigners from 7.3 million to 6.7 million, thus the real size of the Muslim population probably lies below the originally estimated 3.4 million.
GREECE		360,000	Estimate provided by the National Focal Point includes migrants and 80,000 - 120,000 Greek Muslims of Turkish, Roma and Pomak ethnic descent
SPAIN		1,064,904	Observatorio Andalusi (Unión de Comunidades Islámicas de España), EL ISLAM EN ESPAÑA, Cifras y datos, available at <a href="http://mx.geocities.com/hispanomuslime/cifras.htm">http://mx.geocities.com/hispanomuslime/cifras.htm</a> (19-03-2005); similar figure estimated by the Federation of Spanish Islamic Entities (FEERI)

ESTONIA	1,387		2000 Population Census: Education and Religion, IV, Table 92, Statistical Office of Estonia
FRANCE		3,516,824	Borrel C. and P.Simon (2005) <i>Les résultats de l'enquête Famille de 1999</i> , Les Cahiers de l'INED, n° 156, p.425-442; Other estimates indicate a number around four million, e.g. Jocelyne Cesari, CNRS-GSRL at <a href="http://www.euro-islam.info/pages/france.html">http://www.euro-islam.info/pages/france.html</a> , or five to six million, e.g, BBC at <a href="http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4385768.stm">http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4385768.stm</a> and US Department of State - International Religious Freedom Report 2005 at <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51552.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51552.htm</a>
HUNGARY	5,777		Hungary, Hungarian Central Statistical Office, Population census 2001
IRELAND	17,979		CSO, Census 2002 - Religion, Table 15, p. 107
ITALY		723,188	Dossier statistico immigrazione "Caritas Migrantes", 2004, p. 216; Other estimates indicate 825,000, e.g. UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office at <a href="http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagina=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&amp;c=Page&amp;cid=1007029394365&amp;a=KCountryProfile&amp;aid=1019061811914">http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagina=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&amp;c=Page&amp;cid=1007029394365&amp;a=KCountryProfile&amp;aid=1019061811914</a> or one million, e.g. US Department of State - International Religious Freedom Report 2005 at <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51560.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51560.htm</a>
LATVIA	355		Estimate by the Ministry of Justice, Board of Religious Affairs, Latvia; other estimates indicate a number around 5,000, e.g. ENAR Shadow Report (2005) Racism in Latvia, at <a href="http://www.enar-eu.org/en/national/latvia/Latvia_2005.pdf">http://www.enar-eu.org/en/national/latvia/Latvia_2005.pdf</a>
LITHUANIA	2,860		Statistics Lithuania, Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania 2004, Table 13.1. p. 296
LUXEMBOURG		8,898	Sesopi-Centre Intercommunautaire and Centre Culturel Islamique (2004)
MALTA		~3,000	Estimate by the US Department of State - International Religious Freedom Report 2005, available at: <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51568.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51568.htm</a>

THE NETHERLANDS	945,000		Statistics Netherlands, StatLine, Muslims and Hindus in the Netherlands, estimated based on ratio in countries of origin (01-01-2004)
AUSTRIA	338,988		Republic of Austria, Statistik Austria (2002) Volkszählung 2001 Hauptergebniss I – Österreich, Tabelle 15
POLAND	5,123		Central Statistical Office - Statistical Yearbook 2003 – available at <a href="http://www.stat.gov.pl">http://www.stat.gov.pl</a>
PORTUGAL	12,014		Portugal, Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2001 Census; other estimates provided to the National Focal Point were: Comunidade Islâmica de Lisboa 15,000-20,000; Lisbon Mosque 30,000-35,000; other estimates indicate approximately 35,000, e.g. US Department of State - International Religious Freedom Report 2005 <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51574.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51574.htm</a>
SLOVAK REPUBLIC		~3,000	Estimate provided by the National Focal Point (around 2,000: Bureau for the Relations between State and Denominations; around 3,000: Community of Friends of Islamic Literature; around 5,000: Slovak Islamic Foundation); other estimates indicate 200-3,000, e.g. US Department of State - International Religious Freedom Report 2005 at <a href="http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51580.htm">http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51580.htm</a>
SLOVENIA	47,488		Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Slovenia 2003, Table 4.6, Population by religion
SWEDEN		400,000	Estimated figure, Sveriges Muslimska Råd / Swedish Muslim Council
FINLAND	2,833		Statistics Finland, Population Structure and Vital Statistics 2004 – registered in congregations; the National Focal Point estimates around 24,000 (own calculations extrapolating on the basis of ethnic descent from official immigration data)
UNITED KINGDOM	1,588,890		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>~ 13,000,000</b>		<b>This figure is a conservative approximation based on official and unofficial data available.</b>



## 1. 2. The legal status of Islam

Religious freedom is constitutionally guaranteed in all Member States, but the legal relationship between the state and religion varies considerably. In a number of Member States there are legislative instruments in place regulating religious practice including the operation of mosques, preaching and proselytising practices, halal slaughter and the public use of religious symbols. However, most countries still lack a clear legal framework regarding some key issues that impact upon religious practice, as well as social cohesion, such as:

- the recognition and training of imams;
- the provision and monitoring of religious instruction courses in schools;
- the recognition of Muslim organisations eligible for public financial support.

Many countries have had a pre-existing historical relationship with religious institutions, principally the Catholic, Protestant or Orthodox Churches, but the contemporary nature of this relationship in terms of the public and legal life of the state varies considerably. In many countries, recognition is given to a religion, but particular authority is attributed to specific organisations, which become representative bodies. The issue of representation is important especially where there is significant diversity of Muslim communities that cannot establish such a representative body. Some established Muslim communities, however, do have 'umbrella' representation covering a wide range of ethnic, cultural and theological groups.

In some countries formal recognition of religion does not exist, but this does not necessarily impact significantly on the rights and privileges of Muslims. In states where recognition has not been formally granted, Muslims still have significant access to such privileges, often through lobbying and representation. Likewise, formal representation to government varies between countries and is largely determined by the ethnic, cultural and religious profiles of the Muslim communities concerned. In Austria, Belgium and Spain, representation is made through unitary Muslim bodies, whereas in other countries there are competing bodies which lobby and liaise with government. A particular exception is the Muslim minority in Greece that has formal representation through government appointed Muftis, under the Lausanne Treaty of 1923<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations (Appendix A, Article 2), Lausanne January 30, 1923 between the Government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and the Greek Government

### 1.3. Muslim organisations

Community representation, through civil society organisations<sup>11</sup>, is an established route through which Muslims can become more directly involved in mainstream society's social and political life. Many Muslims, particularly those with a more secular outlook, are not involved in Muslim organisations. The participation of Muslim communities in social and political life through representative organisations is important for determining the extent to which mainstream politics can adequately deal with religious difference and equality issues. Such issues should be embedded as part of an overall policy concerning ethnic minorities. The key issue is thus to ensure that the 'antenna' of the policy-making process can pick up any signal pointing to the need for a more targeted approach concerning the issue of religious difference and (in)tolerance. The active and direct involvement of Muslim communities in the process of policy making can be one strategy to ensure this.<sup>12</sup>

The non-hierarchical organisation of Islam, combined with the ethnic, cultural and theological diversity of Europe's Muslim communities, presents particular difficulties to the formation of national representative organisations, which are able to 'speak' on behalf of Muslims. However, there is evidence to suggest that the face of community representation is gradually changing as younger Muslims move away from self-identification primarily on ethnic or national lines, or on the basis of their own or their parents' country of origin. Today many see themselves collectively as *Muslims* – thus generating more interaction among ethnically/nationally-identified communities, with knock-on effects for established Muslim organisations and the potential for the establishment of new organisations.

At present, the wide variety of Muslim organisations can be broken down in terms of size and geographical coverage into (1) small local organisations engaged mainly in religious activities and social events with an ethnically uniform membership, and (2) national umbrella organisations with an ethnically diverse membership, a formal structure, and sometimes an established formal link to the government. In some cases local and sometimes national level organisations have contacts with regional or international organisations.

## 2. Issues and debates

Particularly in the aftermath of September 11 Islam and Muslim values and patterns of social interaction have increasingly been at the centre of a debate concerning their compatibility with "western values". Muslims are often stereotypically portrayed in media reports as a devoutly religious and undifferentiated group sharing a fundamentalist version of Islam. This image conceals major differences in religious beliefs and practices resulting from Muslims' different national, cultural and religious backgrounds. It also conceals the fact that Muslim identities, especially among the younger generation, have undergone and are undergoing important

<sup>11</sup> See Annex 1 for a list of Muslim organisations in EU Member States.

<sup>12</sup> EUMC (2001) Situation of Islamic Communities in five European Cities, p. 32

transformations in response to developments both within and external to Muslim communities.

A number of international events have led to a deterioration in the climate towards Muslims in European countries. The issue of Islam and its “challenge to the West” has become a matter of enduring preoccupation in Europe fuelled by events, like the Rushdie affair, the September 11 terror attacks, attacks in Bali, Madrid, the murder of Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh and the July 2005 London bombings. The November 2005 riots in France also served to enhance negative representations of 'lawless' Muslim youth. And the cartoon controversy also demonstrated an apparent popularity of the perception that “*Muslims are making politically exceptional, culturally unreasonable or theologically alien demands upon European states*”.<sup>13</sup> The notion that the presence of Islam in Europe, in the form of its Muslim citizens and migrants, is a challenge for Europe and European norms and values, has taken a strong hold in European political discourse and has also created a climate of fear.

## 2. 1. Marginalisation and alienation

The central question to be considered is whether Muslims feel integrated in European societies, or whether sections of Muslim communities and individuals experience social exclusion, marginalisation and alienation. Such a consideration is central to the role of the EUMC, where the overall focus of our work is on vulnerable groups who are victims of racism and discrimination. The marginalisation and alienation of individuals or groups from society is a central issue for the EUMC.

In addition to thematic reports on the situation of migrants and minorities in the areas of employment, housing and education in the EU, the EUMC has also conducted pilot ‘discrimination studies’ on migrants’ experiences of racism and xenophobia in different areas of economic and social life. These pilot studies were conducted in several European countries between 2002 and 2005 among selected migrant groups using a range of sampling techniques and methodologies. Although the results are not directly comparable, they provide useful background information that is able to inform on the experiences of selected migrant groups and, in some countries, the experiences of Muslim groups.

The overall outcome of these studies was that migrants throughout Europe experience discriminatory practices to a significant extent, particularly with regard to employment and in the sphere of commercial transactions. Nearly one third of respondents stated that they experienced discrimination through being refused access to jobs, missing promotions, or being harassed at work. More than one in four respondents claimed to have experienced discrimination in commercial transactions, either through denial of access to housing, or credit or loans.

Such high rates of experienced discrimination should be regarded as both cause and expression of dissatisfaction among migrants with regard to their current status within

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<sup>13</sup> Modood, T. (2003) *Muslims and the Politics of Difference*, *Political Quarterly* 74 (1), p. 100

society. Moreover, the perception of being systematically discriminated against on racist or xenophobic grounds could potentially contribute to the marginalisation and alienation of affected groups with respect to mainstream society and its political system. That is particularly relevant with respect to Muslim communities: As an illustration, the Dutch study on migrants' experiences of racism and xenophobia, conducted on behalf of the EUMC, reveals a relationship between the amount of discrimination perceived by migrant groups and their integration in Dutch society (expressed through their feeling of belonging to the Netherlands, their socialising habits and opportunities). Those groups that feel most discriminated against, e.g. Turks, Moroccans and Surinamese, are also the groups that seem to be least integrated and/or most isolated in Dutch society. According to the survey, these same groups also socialise less often with 'Dutch' people, and display the strongest sense of belonging to the country of origin of their parents.

The study raises an interesting "chicken and egg" issue: Do higher rates of discrimination lead to a feeling of isolation and lack of integration, or does a lack of integration make migrants more vulnerable to discrimination? Whichever is true, it presents policy makers with an urgent need to consider effective measures countering discrimination and simultaneously stimulating integration in all areas of social life.

In the case of the Netherlands, the discrimination study also reveals that the two groups feeling most discriminated against, Turks and Moroccans, predominantly consist of Muslim people. This raises the question as to whether Muslims are particularly vulnerable to racist discrimination and, as a result, are becoming alienated.

While the suggestion that Muslims are particularly vulnerable to experiencing discrimination seems to be true for some countries, according to the studies conducted in Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Portugal, the majority of country studies on migrants' experiences of racism and xenophobia do not support such an assumption.

For example, in the Austrian study, of three groups who were interviewed, the group with the highest share of Muslims displayed the lowest rate of perceived discrimination, while the highest rate of discrimination was reported by migrants from Africa, who are predominantly of Christian faith. Also, the Belgian, German, Greek, French and Irish studies suggest that religious faith alone cannot explain rates of perceived discrimination.

In this regard, the diverse history of Muslim communities in Europe, as well as the diverse approaches of Member States in how to deal with religious minorities, must be taken into consideration when exploring levels of actual and perceived discrimination. In addition, it seems that other factors have as much or even more explanatory power than religious faith as regards vulnerability.

While, on the basis of the above limited results, one should be careful about singling out Muslims as the group only or even most affected by discrimination, it can be concluded that Muslims are potentially affected by discriminatory practices that, in turn, can put them at risk of alienation from the wider society in which they live.

## Public opinion polls

Opinion polls provide some insight as to trends regarding Islam and Muslims, although they are clearly no substitute for scientific research. They should therefore be interpreted with caution, because the opinions and beliefs they try to capture are often complex, conditional and in flux – an instant snapshot of a situation. Given these limitations, however, the selection of polls presented below show a rather negative picture of public opinion towards Muslims and Islam in Member States.

### *Selection of international opinion polls*

→ December 2004 GfK Custom Research survey<sup>14</sup>:

Over fifty per cent of Western Europeans agreed that Muslims living in Europe today are viewed with suspicion. This was particularly true of Sweden (75 per cent) and the Netherlands (72 per cent). Two in three respondents agreed with the proposition in Austria, Belgium, Denmark and Germany. Among Western European nations, the lowest number of people who felt this way was in the UK. Also in Central and Eastern European countries only three in ten believed that Muslims living in Europe are unwelcome.

→ Spring 2005 Standard Eurobarometer Survey<sup>15</sup>:

Across the EU25 – 41 per cent of respondents agreed with the statement that “*Turkey’s accession to the EU would favour the mutual comprehension of European and Muslim values*”; with agreement ranging from a low of 24 per cent in Austria to a high of 60 per cent in Sweden. By contrast, 54 per cent of respondents agreed with the statement that “*the cultural differences between Turkey and the EU Member States are too significant to allow for this accession*”; with agreement ranging from a high of 73 per cent in Austria to a low of 41 per cent in the UK.

→ May 2005 US-based Pew Global Attitudes Survey<sup>16</sup>:

The survey presented a varied picture of public opinion towards Muslim communities and the threat of Islamic extremism in the six Member States. The majority of respondents believed that “*Muslims want to remain distinct*” and that “*they have an increasing sense of Islamic identity*” (Table 3). Also, the majority were “*concerned about Islamic extremism*” (Table 4). Nevertheless, as Table 3 shows, the majority of respondents in France and Great Britain and a significant number in the other countries had a favourable “*view of Muslims*”.

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<sup>14</sup> GfK Custom Research survey on behalf of The Wall Street Journal Europe. More information at <http://www.gfk.com/index.php?lang=en&contentpath=http%3A//www.gfk.com/english/presse/pressemeldung/contentdetail.php%3Fid%3D642%26lang%3Den> (14.05.2006)

<sup>15</sup> More information at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb63/eb63\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb63/eb63_en.pdf) (12.05.2006)

<sup>16</sup> More information at <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?PageID=809> (12.05.2006)

Table 2 – Perceptions of Muslims in six EU Member States

<b>Perceptions of Muslims</b>	<b>They want to remain distinct (per cent)</b>	<b>They have an increasing sense of Islamic identity (per cent)</b>
Germany	88	66
Spain	68	47
Netherlands	65	60
Great Britain	61	63
France	59	70
Poland	42	20

Source: Pew Global Attitudes Project, Public Opinion Survey – May 2005 report

Table 3 – Views of Muslims in six EU Member States

<b>Views of Muslims</b>	<b>Favourable per cent agreeing</b>	<b>Unfavourable per cent agreeing</b>
Germany	40	47
Spain	46	37
Netherlands	45	51
Great Britain	72	14
France	64	34
Poland	46	30

Source: Pew Global Attitudes Project, Public Opinion Surveys – May 2005 report

Table 4 – Concern about Islamic Extremism in six EU Member States

<b>Concerned about Islamic Extremism – In Your Country</b>	<b>Very Concerned per cent agreeing</b>	<b>Somewhat Concerned per cent agreeing</b>
Germany	35	43
Spain	43	34
Netherlands	32	44
Great Britain	34	36
France	32	41
Poland	7	30

Source: Pew Global Attitudes Project, Public Opinion Surveys – May 2005 report

→ June 2006 US-based Pew Global Attitudes Survey<sup>17</sup>:

The 2006 survey covered four Member States, Germany, Spain, Great Britain and France with a booster sample of Muslim minorities. Its findings were described as “more mixed than unremittingly negative”. One of its key findings was that in a number of respects Muslims are less inclined to see a clash of civilizations (Table 5) than are some of the general public surveyed ; and that Muslims often associate positive attributes to Westerners – including tolerance, generosity, and respect for women (Table 6).

<sup>17</sup> More information at <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=253> (22.06.2006)

The survey also found that the views of each toward the other are far from uniformly negative. For example, majorities in France and Great Britain retained overall favourable opinions of Muslims. However, positive opinions of Muslims have declined sharply in Spain over the past year (from 46 to 29 per cent), and more modestly in Great Britain (from 72 to 63 per cent) despite the impact of the 2005 London bombings.

**Table 5 – Conflict between Islam and modernity**

Is there a conflict between being a devout Muslim and living in a modern society?				
	Mainstream population		Muslim population	
	NO	YES	NO	YES
Germany	26	70	49	47
Spain	36	58	57	36
Great Britain	35	54	72	28
France	74	26	71	25

*Source: Pew Global Attitudes Project, Public Opinion Surveys – June 2006 report*

**Table 6 – Positive characteristics associated with "Westerners" (Muslim respondents)**

	Respectful of women	Generous	Tolerant	Honest	Devout
Germany	73	45	62	56	36
Spain	82	69	70	66	26
Great Britain	49	56	48	42	37
France	77	70	65	51	26

*Source: Pew Global Attitudes Project, Public Opinion Surveys – June 2006 report*

**Table 7 – Positive characteristics associated with "Muslims" (Non-Muslim respondents)**

	Respectful of women	Generous	Tolerant	Honest	Devout
Germany	85	40	21	52	85
Spain	86	29	20	43	86
Great Britain	84	34	35	56	84
France	69	63	45	64	69

*Source: Pew Global Attitudes Project, Public Opinion Surveys – June 2006 report*

Overall, the respondents in Germany and Spain expressed much more negative views of Muslims than in France and Great Britain. Only 36 per cent in Germany, and 29 per cent in Spain, expressed favourable opinions of Muslims in contrast to France and Great Britain. These differences are reflected also in opinions about negative traits associated with Muslims. 83 per cent of Spanish and 78 per cent of German respondents said they associate Muslims with being fanatical. But that view was less prevalent in France (50 per cent) and Great Britain (48 per cent). Most Muslims also expressed favourable opinions of Christians, and while their views of Jews are less positive than those of Western publics, they are far more positive than those of

Muslims living in Muslim countries. In France, 71 per cent of Muslims stated that they have favourable opinions of Jews.

### *Selection of national opinion polls*

In **Denmark**, a 2004 opinion poll<sup>18</sup> by Rambøll Management on behalf of the newspaper Jyllands-Posten showed that one in four Danes believed that Muslims will become the majority population in Denmark.

In **Germany**, two opinion polls published by the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ) in late 2004 asked respondents what they associate with “Islam”: The most common concepts were “*suppression of women*” (93%) and “*terror*” (83 per cent); only 6 per cent of the respondents described the Islamic faith as “*likeable*”<sup>19</sup> In a second opinion poll 29 per cent stated that “*peaceful co-existence of the Christian and Islamic faith*” is possible, while 55 per cent considered that these religions are too different and severe conflicts will continue.<sup>20</sup>

In **Spain**, the June 2004 public opinion barometer of the Elcano Royal Institute on “*Islamic terrorism and religious fanaticism*” found that 80 per cent of the respondents would regard anyone practising Islam as “*authoritarian*” and 57 per cent as “*violent*”.<sup>21</sup>

In **Italy** UCEI (Unione delle Comunità Ebraiche Italiane) commissioned a group of experts of “La Sapienza” University in Rome to conduct a survey on intolerance among young people. More than 50 per cent of the sample (2,200 aged between 14 and 18 in more than 100 towns in Italy) stated that Muslims have “*cruel and barbaric laws*” and “*support international terrorism*”.<sup>22</sup>

In the **Netherlands**, in one of the first polls<sup>23</sup> after the murder of Theo van Gogh, over 80 per cent of the interviewees stated that additional measures are needed to combat Islamic extremists. There was a strong call for increasing sentences for (contemplating) terrorist acts (62 per cent), for deporting militant imams (60 per cent), for holding parents accountable for behaviour of their under age children (59 per cent), for better surveillance of what is practiced and preached in mosques (52 per cent), for abolishing the right to hold multiple nationalities (48 per cent) and for establishing institutes for re-education for young offenders (33 per cent). According to almost half of the interviewees the integration of the Moroccan community in the Netherlands has failed. Another poll by Onderzoeksbureau Labyrinth focused on the opinion of Moroccans regarding the effect of the Theo van Gogh murder on their community. One third claimed to currently feel unsafe in the Netherlands. Almost one

<sup>18</sup> “Islam: Danskere frygter muslim-dominans”, Jyllands-Posten 23.05.04

<sup>19</sup> Noelle, E. (2004) „Der Kampf der Kulturen“, in: *FAZ* (15.09.2004), p. 5

<sup>20</sup> Köcher, R. (2004) “Die Mehrheit erwartet immer wieder Konflikte”, in: *FAZ* (15.12.2004), p. 5

<sup>21</sup> Available at [http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/200405brie\\_eng.asp](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/200405brie_eng.asp) (31.05.2005)

<sup>22</sup> Available at: <http://www.ucei.it/uceinforma/rassegnastampa/2005/marzo/unita/210305.asp> (02.05.2005)

<sup>23</sup> (2004) “Enquête : samenleving voorgoed veranderd”, in: *Algemeen Dagblad*, ( 6.11.2004)



in four felt threatened and almost three out of four felt that as much as 90 per cent of native Dutch citizens have a moderately to very negative attitude towards Muslims.<sup>24</sup>

In **Austria**, a survey by Denz (2003)<sup>25</sup> on the development of the rejection of different groups as neighbours in three surveys carried out in 1994, 1999 and 2002 shows that the rejection of Muslims as neighbours went from 19 per cent in 1994 to 15 per cent in 1999 and 25 per cent in 2002.

In **Finland**, the 2003 Church Research Institute opinion poll showed that 50 per cent of the respondents had a negative attitude towards Islam and 10 per cent a positive attitude.<sup>26</sup>

In **Sweden**, the Intolerance Report, carried out by the Living History Forum in collaboration with the National Council for Crime Prevention based on a survey of 10,600 pupils in the upper level of compulsory school and the upper secondary school showed that 7.7 per cent of pupils harboured some degree of intolerance towards Muslims, while 14 per cent had a very high degree of intolerance.<sup>27</sup>

In the **United Kingdom**, research by York University in April 2005 found 43 per cent of youths in regional towns and cities becoming more Islamophobic. Ten per cent of 13-24 year olds supported the BNP and nearly a quarter opposed Muslim women wearing the head scarf.<sup>28</sup> A Mori poll for the BBC conducted on 8-9 August showed that 32 per cent thought that multiculturalism “*threatens the British way of life*”.<sup>29</sup>

## 2. 2. Muslim women

Gender equality is a core value of the European Union. The European Commission highlighted in its proposal for a community framework strategy on gender equality (2001-2005) that “*considerable progress has been made regarding the situation of women in the Member States, but gender equality in day-to-day life is still being undermined by the fact that women and men do not enjoy equal rights in practice. Persistent under-representation of and violence against women, inter alia, show that there are still structural gender inequalities.*”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Available at [www.stogodataservice.nl](http://www.stogodataservice.nl) (06.06.2005)

<sup>25</sup> Denz, H. (2003) “Solidarität in Österreich. Strukturen und Trends”, in: *SWS-Rundschau* 3/2003, pp. 321-336, available at [http://www.uibk.ac.at/c/c4/c408/denz/denz\\_sol2002.pdf](http://www.uibk.ac.at/c/c4/c408/denz/denz_sol2002.pdf) (13.04.2005)

<sup>26</sup> Finland, Church Research Centre (2004) “Kirkko muutosten keskellä. Suomen evankelis-luterilainen kirkko vuosina 2000-2003”, Tampere: Kirkon tutkimuskeskuksen julkaisuja p. 89, Available at: [http://www.ev1.fi/kkh/ktk/nelivuotiskertomus2000\\_2003/kertomus.pdf](http://www.ev1.fi/kkh/ktk/nelivuotiskertomus2000_2003/kertomus.pdf) (10.05.2005)

<sup>27</sup> Sweden, Living History Forum and Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (2004), “Intolerans. Antisemitiska, homofobiska, islamofobiska och invandrarfientliga tendenser bland unga”, Stockholm

<sup>28</sup> Available at [http://www.blink.org.uk/bm/manifesto\\_section.asp?catid=27](http://www.blink.org.uk/bm/manifesto_section.asp?catid=27) (12.05.2006)

<sup>29</sup> Available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4137990.stm> (12/08/05)

<sup>30</sup> Brussels, 7.6.2000 COM(2000) 335 final 2000/0143 (CNS) Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee of the Regions, *Towards a Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005)*

Nevertheless, it is often Muslim women that are singled out as victims of oppression and discrimination attributed to 'Islam', rather than to particular ethnic cultural practices seeking to control and subordinate women. The most visible symbol of female Muslim identity, the headscarf, is thus often interpreted solely as a sign of gender inequality and used on occasion as justification for social exclusion – ignoring its multiple cultural dimensions.

Since traditions vary considerably between different Muslim cultures, and since the Islamic religion is, like all other religions, subject to varied interpretations, it is a highly contested question as to how far patriarchal traditions among Muslim communities are part of, or in opposition to basic Islamic values. The enforcement of certain behavioural rules in patriarchal family structures can be extreme, but Muslim women are developing responses. An example is the Muslim Women's Helpline, founded in 1989 in Britain, providing a counselling service with an Islamic ethos over the telephone. Another example is the movement "*Ni Putes, Ni Soumises*"<sup>31</sup> developed in 2002 by a group of young French Muslim women. Members of the movement staged a march entitled '*la Marche des femmes des quartiers contre les ghettos et pour l'égalité*' through France in 2003.

An important issue affecting some Muslim women in a number of Member States is that of *forced marriages*. The 2005 Council of Europe report<sup>32</sup>, while stressing that the term has no explicit legal meaning and is defined differently in different countries, cites a number of studies in some EU Member States<sup>33</sup>: In Belgium, an exploratory study among pupils aged 15-18, found that 74 per cent of pupils believed that forced marriages continued to be practised, while a 16 per cent added that they knew of cases of marriage under coercion within their circle of acquaintance and 7 per cent said they were aware of it within their own family. Knowledge of actual cases of forced marriage appeared more common among young people attending an Islamic religious education class and particularly among those who said they wanted their own marriage to be conducted by an imam. In Germany, a government study found, "*a particular problem of violence in couple relationships and in the family for Turkish migrant women ... (is) ... in connection with forced or arranged marriages*". Furthermore, 17 per cent of the sample had the feeling of being forced into marriage. In France, the 2003 report of *Le Haut conseil à l'intégration*, estimates that more than 70,000 ten to 18-year-olds of migrant origin experienced problems with a forced or arranged marriage, more often found among communities from Mali, Mauritania and Senegal, but also the Maghreb, Turkey and Pakistan. In Portugal, Alexandra Carvalho reports that forced marriage takes place in the Hindu and Ishmaelite communities. In the Netherlands Aydogan Sezai of the "Transact" Foundation arguing that forced marriages are an issue among the largest groups of migrants such as the Turks and Moroccans. Finally, for the United Kingdom the report suggests that there were by 2002 around 1,000 such cases.

<sup>31</sup> More information available at <http://www.niputesnisoumises.com/>

<sup>32</sup> Edwige Rude-Antoine (2005), *Marriages in Council of Europe member states: A comparative study of legislation and political initiatives*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, available at [http://www.coe.int/T/E/Human\\_Rights/Equality/PDF\\_CDEG%282005%291\\_E.pdf](http://www.coe.int/T/E/Human_Rights/Equality/PDF_CDEG%282005%291_E.pdf) (12.05.2006)

<sup>33</sup> *ibid* p. 24

Such unacceptable practices have already been publicly condemned: the 1981 Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights<sup>34</sup> in article XIX (i) Right to Found a Family and Related Matters states that “*No person may be married against his or her will, or lose or suffer diminution of legal personality on account of marriage.*” The Council of Europe has condemned forced marriages in Resolution 1468 (2005) on *Forced marriages and child marriages* proposing specific measures to be taken by its Member States to eradicate this practice. Recently, the 2006 Austrian Presidency of the European Council, stressing that “*harmful traditional practices*” affecting women are not necessarily linked to a specific religion, but rather to certain cultures, took the initiative<sup>35</sup> to develop the ‘*Network Against Harmful Traditions*’ proposing legal measures as well as protection of victims and awareness campaigns.

While acknowledging that the social status and life conditions of many Muslim women must be considerably improved to achieve gender equality, it should also be recognised that to consider all Muslim women as passive victims is not an accurate reflection of how many Muslim women see their lives. In other words, to focus solely on negative issues, such as forced marriages and honour killings, without denying that they exist, is only to scratch the surface of Muslim women's diverse experiences across Europe.

### **The issue of the headscarf**

The wearing of the headscarf is a complex and multifaceted issue that is often raised in public debate in most European countries during recent years particularly in the areas of education and employment. It is in these areas that the issue of the headscarf has become controversial, as it is seen as a symbol of female oppression and gender inequality.

The actual motivations for wearing a headscarf can vary significantly. Some Muslim women are obliged by family or peer group pressure to wear it. In some instances, wearing a headscarf could even facilitate younger women to gain a freedom of movement in an environment, where social and family expectations would otherwise force them to stay at home. Some Muslim women wear the headscarf as an assertion of Muslim identity, which may be rooted in a number of factors, both personal or political, of which the wearing of a headscarf may be only one expression. Others may wear the headscarf, because they consider it as their religious duty.

Legal issues concerning the wearing of the headscarf have arisen in some Member States – particularly in relation to wearing a headscarf in schools, by students or teachers. Policies in Member States range from nationwide prohibition of displaying any religious symbol in public schools, to complete freedom of pupils and teachers to wearing any religious symbol. In between are policies that leave decisions to federal states or individual schools or that prohibit only certain religious symbols, while others are not considered as subject for regulation.

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<sup>34</sup> Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights, 19 September 1981 available at <http://www.alhewar.com/ISLAMDECL.html> (12.06.2006)

<sup>35</sup> More information available at <http://www.naht.info> (12.05.2006)

National differences in policies regarding the headscarf seem to be reflected in public opinion. In the 2005 Pew public opinion survey, in answer to a question on “whether there should be a ban on the wearing of headscarves by Muslim women in public places including schools”, 78 per cent of respondents in France and 54 per cent in Germany saw this as a “good idea”, compared to 29 per cent in Great Britain.<sup>36</sup>

In **France**, the wearing of signs or clothes by which a student manifests his or her religious beliefs is not permitted in public schools, except for “discreet religious signs”. The law<sup>37</sup> also instructs schools to adopt in-house regulations setting up internal procedures to ensure it is enforced by a process of mediation and dialogue rather than disciplinary procedures. Administrative instructions<sup>38</sup> have defined specifically the Islamic *hijab* (headscarf), the Jewish *kippah* (cloth skullcap) and Christian crosses of excessive dimensions as prohibited religious signs. According to the Ministry of Education, in the academic year 2003-2004, 1200 young girls came to school on the first day of class wearing a headscarf<sup>39</sup>, but most removed it after consultation with the school. In June 2005, Hanifa Chérifi, General Inspector of National Education submitted a first positive evaluation regarding the application of the law<sup>40</sup> showing for the school year 2004-05 a 50 per cent reduction in wearing religious symbols over the previous year. According to the report, the majority of pupils removed religious signs voluntarily. Of the 143 pupils who refused to conform, 47 were suspended by decision of the disciplinary board and 96 transferred to private education. The report, however, also notes that some pupils put on the headscarf immediately after school. Several NGOs have also been critical of the law.

In **Belgium** decisions are left to the individual school to ban certain religious symbols. In the Flemish community schools must respect the religious and moral convictions of parents and students, thereby allowing for the headscarf. As regards the school teachers, there seems some ground to allow religious teachers to wear the headscarf, although here again different schools have different rules.

In **Germany** the Länder regulate the display of religious symbols by teachers or other state officials in public service. In September 2003, the Federal Constitutional Court ruled that states are only entitled to ban Muslim teachers from wearing a headscarf during work at state schools if the state legislature has passed a “sufficiently clear” legal foundation for the ban.<sup>41</sup> Subsequent to this court decision, several state governments have introduced such legal provisions. In June 2004, the Federal Administrative Court confirmed the right to ban the headscarf along with

<sup>36</sup> Pew Global Attitudes Project: Islamic Extremism – Common Concern for Muslim and Western Publics, available at <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?PageID=809> (12.05.2006)

<sup>37</sup> France / Loi n° 2004-228 du 15 mars 2004 encadrant, en application du principe de laïcité, le port de signes ou de tenues manifestant une appartenance religieuse dans les écoles, collèges et lycées publics (17.03.2004) (published in JORF n° 65 du 17 mars 2004, p. 5,190)

<sup>38</sup> France / Circulaire du 18 mai 2004 relative à la mise en oeuvre de la loi n° 2004-228 du 15 mars 2004 encadrant, en application du principe de laïcité, le port de signes ou de tenues manifestant une appartenance religieuse dans les écoles, collèges et lycées publics (published in JORF n° 118 du 22 mai 2004, p. 9,033) [www.education.gouv.fr/bo/2004/21/MENG0401138C.htm](http://www.education.gouv.fr/bo/2004/21/MENG0401138C.htm) (03.05.2005)

<sup>39</sup> Libération (03.09.2004) *Un lendemain de rentrée calme sur le front du voile*

<sup>40</sup> Bronner, L. (2005) “Un rapport dresse un bilan positif de la loi sur le voile à l’école”, in *Le Monde* (27.08.2005)

<sup>41</sup> Germany / BVerfG / 2BvR 1436/02 (24.09.2003)

any other religious symbol, noting that unequal treatment of religiously motivated clothing would not be in accordance with the Constitution (Art.3).<sup>42</sup> Legislation banning the wearing of headscarves by teachers has been introduced in Saarland and Lower Saxony, yet Christian and Jewish symbols are excluded from the bans.

In the **Netherlands**, schools are allowed to prohibit religious symbols if they can provide objective justification as to why these pose problems. As a rule, veils which cover the face are prohibited in schools, whereas schools can only prohibit the headscarf when it contradicts the religious principles of the school, where these are actively promoted. A specific case concerned an Islamic school that turned down a Muslim female applicant for an Arabic language position, after she made clear that she did not want to wear a headscarf whilst teaching. The Equal Treatment Commission ruled that the school had no legal grounds for turning down the applicant.<sup>43</sup>

### 2. 3. The cartoon controversy

On 30 September 2005, *Jyllands-Posten*, a Danish newspaper based in Århus, published a series of cartoons depicting Prophet Muhammad. In the accompanying text, it read: *"Some Muslims reject modern, secular society. They demand a special position, insisting on special consideration of their own religious feelings. It is incompatible with secular democracy and freedom of expression, where one has to be ready to put up with scorn, mockery and ridicule."*

On October 9, Muslim religious leaders in Denmark called for *Jyllands-Posten* to make an apology. On October 14, some 5,000 Muslims demonstrated in Copenhagen. Also in mid-October, two of the artists were sent death threats. One week later, diplomats from 11 Islamic nations complained to the Danish prime minister about the cartoons. The prime minister's initial reaction was that it was inappropriate for the government to become involved in an issue of press freedom and that those who felt offended should bring their complaints to the courts. Several Muslim organisations brought forward legal charges against *Jyllands-Posten* in October 2005 that were eventually dismissed at the beginning of January 2006 by the public prosecutor of the Danish town Viborg on the grounds that the publishing of the cartoons did not violate laws on religious or racial discrimination or on blasphemy. A group of Danish imams put together a "Dossier about championing the prophet Muhammad peace be upon him" consisting of letters from Muslim organisations, clippings and images from the newspapers *Jyllands-Posten* and *'Weekendavisen'*, hate-mail allegedly sent to Muslims in Denmark, clippings from and three additional images, which were allegedly sent anonymously by mail to Muslims. The imams toured the Middle East presenting their case to religious and political leaders. The dossier was distributed also during the Summit of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in December 2005. On 10 January 2006, a Christian publication in Norway (*Magazinet*) reprinted the images. There were more diplomatic protests. On January 30, the Danish prime minister expressed his regret

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<sup>42</sup> Germany / BVerwG / 2 C 45.03 (24.06.2004)

<sup>43</sup> More information available at <http://www.cgb.nl> (25.01.2006)

at the offence caused to Muslims. Separately, the *Jyllands-Posten* did likewise. However, these regrets triggered a backlash by a number of European newspapers which decided to republish the images. That decision sparked angry and partly violent protests around the Muslim world. The EU and major intergovernmental organisations, including the UN and the OSCE, published statements in which they expressed their support for freedom of speech, while at the same time speaking out against the infringement of religious beliefs. Muslim communities in Europe called for peaceful protests. In March 2006, Muslim organisations from France filed an application to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) asking it to declare the publications of the caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad in French newspapers an infringement of the non-discrimination provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The reactions and counter-reactions sparked by the cartoons in *Jyllands-Posten* raised concerns about a possible negative impact on the integration of Muslims in the European Union. Public statements point to the pivotal importance of re-establishing a climate of intercultural respect. During a meeting of media professionals hosted by the International Federation of Journalists on 15 February 2006, amongst other things, the following statement was agreed upon: “All media, on all sides, must act professionally in dealing with religious and cultural issues and rights of minorities, and should not do anything that would create unnecessary tension by promoting hatred or inciting violence.”<sup>44</sup>

Recent legislation in the UK is especially noteworthy in this respect: the Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006<sup>45</sup> applies to intentional acts of threatening words or behaviour and the display, publication, broadcast or distribution of threatening material that is likely to stir up religious or racial hatred.

The hard-won contest of freedom of expression is part of the principles and values that the EU is founded upon, and a fundamental cornerstone of European societies that is non negotiable. However, freedom of expression does not preclude the protection of people from racist and xenophobic language. Freedom of expression is not an absolute right; international law and the legal order of EU Member States lay down certain limits that our democratic societies consider are justified in order to protect other fundamental rights. Freedom of expression and the protection against racist and xenophobic language can, and have to, go hand-in-hand – the two together make democracy meaningful.

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<sup>44</sup> See Press release by the International Federation of Journalists; available at: <http://www.ifj.org/default.asp?index=3718&Language=EN> (10.04.2006)

<sup>45</sup> More information at <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2006/20060001.htm> (22.06.2006)

### 3. The situation in employment, education and housing

The following section is based on data and information provided by the RAXEN National Focal Points and presents the situation concerning Muslims in Europe in the areas of employment, education and housing. As noted earlier in this report in relation to other areas of research, the available statistical information refers in general terms to broad categories of migrants or breaks information down according to nationality or ethnicity. Nationality and/or ethnicity are usually the closest proxy categories available in the absence of specific data collection on religious groups.

Qualitative research – such as this report’s twin study on ‘Perceptions of Islamophobia in the EU’ (published simultaneously) – shows clearly that religion and ethnicity are often inextricably connected, making it impossible to distinguish between them clearly as grounds for discrimination. There is, nevertheless, some evidence that certain aspects of discrimination could be directly related to religious affiliation and practices, such as the refusal to accommodate Muslim holidays or Muslim prayers and the banning of the headscarf in the workplace, when similar accommodation is provided to other religious groups.

#### 3. 1. Employment<sup>46</sup>

Official and research based data at national level on key employment indicators do not normally target Muslims. Although differences in wages, type of employment and unemployment rates of migrants, of which a significant proportion belongs to Muslim faith groups, indicate persistent exclusion, disadvantage and discrimination, it would be misleading to attribute this only to religious or cultural differences. A variety of interrelated factors, such as human capital (educational and professional qualifications, language skills, etc.), structural changes in the economy, and the increasing importance of informal social networks, serves to impact on the employment opportunities and performances of migrant groups. Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest that religion does play a role in employment discrimination.

For example, in the UK the BBC's Radio Five Live programme carried out an exercise where 50 firms received applications from six fictitious candidates with names strongly suggesting white British, African or Muslim background. The white candidates were more likely (25 per cent) than the black (13 per cent) applicants to be invited to interview, but those with a Muslim name (9 per cent) had the least success of all. In France in 2004 the Monitoring Centre on Discrimination<sup>47</sup> at the University of Paris sent out different standard *curricula vitae* in response to 258 job

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<sup>46</sup> For background material - see 2003 EUMC report 'Migrants, Minorities and Employment: Exclusion, Discrimination and Anti-Discrimination' - [www.eumc.eu.int](http://www.eumc.eu.int)

<sup>47</sup> The Research Centre on Organisation and Social Relations Management (CERGORS) initiated this new monitoring centre to develop studies and research in all kinds of discrimination

advertisements for a sales person<sup>48</sup>. It was found that a person from the Maghreb had five times less chance of getting a positive reply.

In most Member States Muslims tend to have low employment rates, e.g. Turks in Germany, North Africans in France, Bangladeshis and Pakistanis in the UK have employment activity rates that are 15 to 40 per cent below that of natives. This lack of success in the labour market cannot be simply put down to human capital issues.

In **Belgium**, the most recent statistical research<sup>49</sup> shows that the unemployment rate for Moroccan and Turkish nationals (38 per cent) is more than five times higher than the unemployment rate for native Belgians (7 per cent).

In **Germany**, the unemployment rate of 'foreigners' in 2004 (around 20 per cent) was almost twice as high as the general average (around 10 per cent).<sup>50</sup>

In **France**, research in 2005<sup>51</sup> showed that people of foreign origin are faced with an unemployment rate far higher than that of people born in France, and that the employment situation is notably worse for young people of Maghrebian origin.

In **Ireland**, which, like the UK, also breaks down unemployment figures according to ethnicity/religion, the 2002 census revealed that 44 percent of Muslims were in work in contrast to 53 per cent of the total population, and 11 per cent of Muslims were unemployed as opposed to a total average of 4 per cent<sup>52</sup>.

In the **Netherlands**, 16 per cent of those with migrant descent (*allochtonen*) were unemployed in 2005 in contrast to 6.5 per cent of the total labour force.

In the **UK**, where detailed information is available about people's unemployment according to ethnicity and religion, it was revealed in 2004 that **Muslims** had the highest male unemployment rate at 13 per cent and the highest female unemployment rate at 18 per cent. Muslims aged 16 to 24 years had the highest unemployment rates.

A variety of non-official data also points to the presence of discrimination against Muslims in employment. In **Denmark**, a survey<sup>53</sup> revealed that the proportion of migrant respondents who felt that they had been discriminated against was one in

<sup>48</sup> Study carried out between April 13 and May 14, 2004.

<sup>49</sup> Okkerse, L. & Termote, A (2004) *Statistische studiën nr 111: Hoe vreemd is vreemd op de arbeidsmarkt / Etudes statistiques n° 111: Singularité des étrangers sur le marché de l'emploi*, Brussels: Nationaal Instituut voor de Statistiek / Institut National de la Statistique

<sup>50</sup> Germany, Federal Statistical Office (2005), *Strukturdaten und Integrationsindikatoren über die ausländische Bevölkerung in Deutschland 2003*, p. 127

<sup>51</sup> Lainé F., Okba M. and Rosbapé S. (2005) *Les difficultés des étrangers sur le marché du travail: effet nationalité, effet quartier?*, in *Premières synthèses informations*, DARES ; Lainé F., Okba M. (April 2005) *L'insertion des jeunes issu de l'immigration : de l'école au métier*, CEREQ

<sup>52</sup> Central Statistical Office (2002) *Usually resident persons aged 15 years and over classified by religion, sex and ILO economic status*, CSO Census 2002, available at [http://www.cso.ie/census/documents/vol12\\_entire.pdf](http://www.cso.ie/census/documents/vol12_entire.pdf) (12.03.2006)

<sup>53</sup> Catinét Research, quoted in *Copenhagen Post* 30 Nov - 6 Oct 2005



three, a rise from one in four in the previous year. In **Germany**, in a survey<sup>54</sup> of 1,000 Turkish people in 2004, 56.5 per cent of the interviewees stated that they had experienced discriminatory treatment at their work place and 48.4 per cent stated that they had faced discrimination while they were looking for a job. In **Spain**, a project interviewed 1,860 migrants of Arabic-Muslim origin in Catalonia<sup>55</sup>. The main conclusion was that although people arriving in Spain represent a wealth of human resources, the Spanish labour market tends not to exploit this by ignoring migrants' formal and informal training and work experience<sup>56</sup>. Reflecting this, many migrants are driven to poorly skilled jobs that do not reflect their high level of cross-cultural abilities such as a good knowledge of languages<sup>57</sup>, labour flexibility and mobility.

Despite signs of increasing diversity, national labour markets are still highly segmented along ethnic lines, and migrants are disproportionately employed in low-skilled and low-paid jobs, which tend to be more precarious. Migrants are still heavily concentrated in certain industrial sectors (e.g. manufacturing, construction), parts of the service sector (e.g. personal services, cleaning, catering, caring) and sectors that are subject to strong seasonal fluctuations (e.g. tourism and agriculture).

There is a large body of evidence that demonstrates the persistent scale and dimension of discrimination in employment: derived from controlled experiments in employers' recruitment practices ("discrimination testing"), opinion surveys on discriminatory attitudes, and surveys of perceived discrimination against migrants. Data on work-related complaints are perhaps the most important source of qualitative evidence. Complaints concerning discrimination in employment typically refer to wages, non-payment of overtime, (oral) contracts, ethnic harassment, and job advertisements. The data show that not all migrants are equally exposed to racism and discrimination in employment. Muslims appear to be particularly affected, while Muslim women face a 'double' discrimination on account of both their gender and their ethnicity/religion.

But against this background, only a small number of discrimination cases result in formal complaints and even fewer cases are brought to court. This is expected to change in the future, as the Community anti-discrimination legislation begins to be brought into effect and used; namely, Directive 2000/43/EC, the Race Equality Directive, and Directive 2000/78/EC, the Employment Equality Directive. In Member States that already have a more refined anti-discrimination legislation, high fines have been imposed and significant financial compensation awarded to victims.

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<sup>54</sup> ZfT Multi-Topic Survey: Goldberg, A.; Sauer M. (2004) Die Lebenssituation von Frauen und Männern türkischer Herkunft in Nordrhein-Westfalen. Ergebnisse der 6. Mehrthemenbefragung, Duisburg-Essen: Stiftung ZfT

<sup>55</sup> AMAL Project: Migration and the Labour Market 2001-2005, available at: <http://www.pcb.ub.es/crea/amal/index.htm> (14.06.2005).

<sup>56</sup> 43 per cent of the interviewees stated that they were working in jobs under their level of training or their labour experience.

<sup>57</sup> In addition to Catalan and Spanish, 41 per cent of the interviewees spoke two other languages and 36 per cent three languages.

## Religious and cultural allowances in the workplace

The issue of making cultural and religious allowances in the workplace has come on to the European workplace agenda for a number of reasons. Workplaces are becoming more multicultural, and there is also the Employment Equality Directive which forbids discrimination on the grounds of religion. There is also a growing awareness of 'diversity management' in Europe, which draws attention to the benefits of making cultural or religious allowances in workplaces. In most EU Member States there is now either government/legal encouragement to make cultural and religious allowances in the workplace, or many signs that it happens in practice at an enterprise level. However, in a minority of Member States there is little sign of either.

**In Belgium**<sup>58</sup>, beyond the importance attached to the principle of neutrality in the provision of public services, which implies a ban on all public displays of religious or moral conviction, recently more openness to diversity has resulted in certain concessions (holidays, work schedules, food requirements), provided these do not interfere with the good functioning of public service and the stipulations of the individual labour contracts. Requests for short periods of prayers during office hours are usually denied. In the private sector, concessions can be negotiated as long as they respect the labour contract and security and hygiene prescriptions, but, in practice, the situation differs considerably from workplace to workplace. Neither employer, nor employee representative organisations advocate legally binding initiatives in this sphere. A recurrent issue has to do with patients refusing to be treated by health care personnel of a different sex. Most of the hospitals try to be flexible; however, sometimes they are organisationally unable, or philosophically opposed to such requests, although they make use of intercultural mediators and external translation services.<sup>59</sup>

**In Denmark**, few positive measures address needs of minority groups at the workplace, apart from a few companies allowing headscarves with the company logo on. But in 2005 the Danish Supreme Court decided that the dismissal of an employee of a supermarket for having worn a head scarf for religious reasons - in disregard of company clothing rules - did not amount to discrimination. The Court recognised that the prohibition of wearing a head scarf when having direct contact with customers would affect mainly Muslim women but found the clothing rules were '*objectively justified*'.<sup>60</sup>

In **Germany**, the needs of religious minorities do not seem to lead to serious difficulties at the workplace in the case of Muslims. According to the German Association of Trade Unions<sup>61</sup> (DGB), problems between Muslim employees and

<sup>58</sup> CEOOR (2005). *Bevraging: Actieve publieke uiting van religieuze en levensbeschouwelijke overtuigingen: Voorstellingen en analyse / Consultation: Expressions actives de convictions religieuses ou philosophiques dans la sphère publique*, p.20-58.

<sup>59</sup> Intercultural mediators are people that focus on the accessibility and the quality of health care. In 2004, eighty-five intercultural mediators accounting for 60,000 interventions in 19 different languages, were subsidised by the Federal Ministry of Health.

<sup>60</sup> Supreme Court UfR 2005.1265H

<sup>61</sup> DGB Bildungswerk/Migration und Qualifikation (2004), *Islam und Arbeitswelt. Muslimische Arbeitnehmende in der Arbeitswelt – islamische Organisationen*, p. 42

their employers are usually resolved on an individual basis and are only rarely brought to court<sup>62</sup>. Most companies have individual agreements with Muslim employees regarding religious holidays, enabling them to take those days off or to take unpaid leave<sup>63</sup>. In a few companies, for instance, Ford in Cologne and Fraport in Frankfurt<sup>64</sup>, special spaces for prayer have been set up for Muslims and consideration is given to their dietary requirements in canteens. In some companies (e.g. Ford, Opel) canteens remain open after sunset during the time of Ramadan.

**In Greece** there are no positive measures to facilitate religious activities of minority groups at the workplace. The NGO Migrants' Forum during the past years has asked for the recognition of Muslim festivities as grounds for legitimate absence from work.

**In Spain**, trade unions have been successful in making many enterprises more flexible towards cultural differences amongst their staff. An example is the 11<sup>th</sup> article of the collective agreement for the hotel and catering sector in Ceuta<sup>65</sup>, which approves the replacement of any festivities established at the national or local level by Muslim festivities. According to a recent publication<sup>66</sup> there is only one company in Spain which has taken religious festivities explicitly into account, the hotel chain NH. NH is present in 16 countries, and has staff made up of workers from 99 nationalities.

**In France** institutionalised responses to religious and cultural diversity are rare, reflecting the secular republican tradition. Religion is very rarely taken into consideration within companies' diversity initiatives (the charter for diversity implemented by companies does not include religious questions), and the majority of the population would seem to accept that religion belongs to the private sphere of life<sup>67</sup>. In 2005, some official regulations defined the limits of expression of religious identity in the workplace, especially in public services. For example, an administrative instruction regarding secularism in public health establishments emphasised that the personnel within the health sector must not wear religious signs<sup>68</sup>. A 2002 government Circular<sup>69</sup> allows absences requested for religious

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<sup>62</sup> Lemmen, T.; Miehl, M. (2001) *Islamisches Alltagsleben in Deutschland*, Bonn: FES, pp. 31-32

<sup>63</sup> DGB Bildungswerk/Migration und Qualifikation (2004), *Islam und Arbeitswelt. Muslimische Arbeitnehmende in der Arbeitswelt – islamische Organisationen*, chapter 4.3.1

<sup>64</sup> Information on Fraport AG stems from an inquiry by the National Focal Point at the company itself (30.09.2005). Information on FORD by Cözmez, M. (2002) "Betriebliche Partizipation und Integration am Beispiel der Ford-Werke Köln, in: Hunger, U. (ed.) *Einwanderer als Bürger. Initiative und Engagement in Migrantenselbstorganisationen. Münsteraner Diskussionspapiere zum Non-Profit-Sektor*, pp.17-21

<sup>65</sup> Collective agreement for the sector of hotels and catering in Ceuta, available at: <http://www.ciceuta.es/boletin/2004/bol4343/bol4343.htm> (01.06.2005)

<sup>66</sup> Pin, J. R. (dir). (2004), *Libro Blanco sobre las mejores prácticas para la integración del trabajador inmigrante en las empresas españolas*, Pamplona: IESE; Creade; Sagardoy Abogados.

<sup>67</sup> Brouard, S. and Tiberj, V. (June 2005) *Rapport au politique des Français issus de l'immigration*, CEVIPOF Point, S. et Singh, V. (2005) *Defining and Dimensionalising Diversity: Evidence from Corporate Websites across Europe*, European Management Journal, Vol.21, No 6, pp. 750-761, p. 759.

<sup>68</sup> Circulaire DHOS/G n° 2005-57 du 2 février 2005 relative à la laïcité dans les établissements de santé <http://www.sante.gouv.fr/adm/dagpb/bo/2005/05-02/a0020035.htm> (14.10.2005)

<sup>69</sup> Circulaire FP/7 no 2034 du 16 octobre 2002

reasons, but evidence suggests it has had little impact<sup>70</sup>. Religion is rarely taken into consideration within companies' diversity initiatives and the majority of the population would seem to adhere to the idea that religion belongs to the private sphere of life<sup>71</sup>. The major trade unions are also signatories of the charters for diversity<sup>72</sup>, but none of these charters recognises specifically the principle of the acceptance of cultural or religious rights for foreigners<sup>73</sup>.

In **Ireland** the Department of Justice publication 'Promoting Equality in Intercultural Workplaces' recommends "making cultural allowances" for minority ethnic groups by, for example, providing flexible holidays or unpaid leave to allow for longer visits to countries of origin for marriages or other significant family events or holidays, providing space and flexibility around working time for observation of religious duties, and acknowledging and accommodating national, ethnic or religious holidays or festivities.

In **Luxembourg**<sup>74</sup> some firms have introduced positive measures relating mainly to Muslim customs (no meetings during Ramadan, breaks for prayer, cooking with respect to dietary requirements, and easy access to holidays during Eid ul-Fitr).

In the **Netherlands** an advisory report by the Equal Treatment Commission<sup>75</sup> sets out rules employers may lay down concerning the religion of their employees; these stress that employers may not make selections based on religion or the wearing of religious symbols.

In **Austria**, the Federal Ministry of Defence issued guidelines<sup>76</sup> regarding the treatment of members of religious minorities in military service regulating food, time of prayer, rooms of prayer, and special provisions regarding obligatory times of prayer or observance of religious events and holidays. Furthermore, the wearing of religious headgear and beards are permitted. In March 2005, a regulation concerning the working hours of staff employed in the Federal Ministry of Defence included provisions that regulate leave of absence with regard to religious holidays of different religious groups<sup>77</sup>.

<sup>70</sup> Katz, C. (2005) *Entreprise et religion : quelle disposition pour une liberté fondamentale?*, in *Hommes et Libertés*, no 129/jan-fev-mars 2005

<sup>71</sup> Brouard, S. and Tiberj, V. (June 2005) *Rapport au politique des Français issus de l'immigration*, CEVIPOF - Point, S. et Singh, V. (2005) *Defining and Dimensionalising Diversity : Evidence from Corporate Websites across Europe*, *European Management Journal*, Vol.21, No 6, pp. 750-761, p.759

<sup>72</sup> *L'entreprise prend des couleurs*, *Libération*, dossier emploi, 26.09.2005

<sup>73</sup> *La lutte contre les discriminations : initiatives publiques et pratiques d'entreprises*, Colloque du 9 décembre 2004, DARES

<sup>74</sup> Besch, S., Bodson L., Hartmann-Hirsch C., Legrand M. (2005, to be published) *Discrimination à l'emploi*, Luxembourg, Ministère de la Famille

<sup>75</sup> Commissie gelijke behandeling (Equal Treatment Commission) (2004). *Advies inzake Arbeid, religie en gelijke behandeling*, Utrecht: Commissie gelijke behandeling

<sup>76</sup> Österreich, Bundesministerium für Landesverteidigung, 65. Dienstbetrieb; Behandlung religiöser Minderheiten – Einberufung und Verwendung; zusammenfassende Richtlinien – Neufassung, GZ S93109/7-FGG1/2004, VBI I 65/2004

<sup>77</sup> Österreich, Bundeskanzleramt (2005), *Rückmeldung zum Informationssuchen Focal Point 2005*, Wien, unpublished manuscript, p. 9 and phone call to representative of the Federal Ministry of Defence, (05.10.2005)

In **Sweden** in December 2004, the Ombudsman for Ethnic Discrimination published recommendations based on legislation focusing on ethnic or religious clothing, and the right to vacations and leave of absence from work on religious holidays<sup>78</sup>. The review by the Ombudsman of central government authorities showed that 28 out of 30 did not comply with the law.

In the **UK** the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 apply to discrimination on grounds of religion in employment and vocational training. Whilst the Regulations do not require that employers must provide time and facilities for religious observance in the workplace, the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) recommends that employers should consider whether their policies, rules and procedures indirectly discriminate against staff of particular beliefs and if so whether reasonable changes might be made<sup>79</sup>. There are examples of firms that try to accommodate the religious needs of their staff, such as the Edmonton branch of IKEA that developed a headscarf bearing the firm's logo for the uniform of its Muslim female staff.<sup>80</sup>

### 3. 2. Education<sup>81</sup>

Muslim pupils have been in the educational systems of several Member States, such as Belgium, France, Germany, Austria, Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom for many years. In other Member States such as Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Finland, Ireland, and, to some extent, Denmark, the Muslim pupil population has only recently begun growing, as immigration reached these countries much later.

The lack of educational statistics based on religion or ethnicity has been highlighted in several EUMC reports. No specific statistics are collected relating solely to the attainment of Muslim pupils per se, although several countries do keep statistics on the performance of migrants. The absence of relevant data or studies makes the distinction between religion and ethnicity as causes of discrimination practically impossible to measure accurately.

Results of the 2000 OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)<sup>82</sup> allows a comparison of performance between migrant, migrant descended and native pupils. Overall, study results showed that non-native born pupils had

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<sup>78</sup> Swedish Ombudsman for Ethnic Discrimination (2004) *Etnisk/religiös klädsel*. Available at [http://www.do.se/upload/do/policy/etnisk\\_religios\\_kladsel.pdf](http://www.do.se/upload/do/policy/etnisk_religios_kladsel.pdf) (17.09.2005)  
Swedish Ombudsman for Ethnic Discrimination (2004) *Rätten till ledighet från arbete vid religiösa helgdagar*. Available at [http://www.do.se/upload/do/policy/ledighet\\_religiosa\\_helgdagar.pdf](http://www.do.se/upload/do/policy/ledighet_religiosa_helgdagar.pdf) (17.09.2005)

<sup>79</sup> ACAS (2004) *Religion or belief and the workplace: A guide for employers and employees*. Accessible at <http://www.acas.org.uk/publications/pdf/religion.pdf> (14.1.2005)

<sup>80</sup> More information available at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/england/london/4179930.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/london/4179930.stm) (04.05.2006)

<sup>81</sup> For background material - see 2004 EUMC report 'Migrants, Minorities and Education: Exclusion, Discrimination and Anti-Discrimination', and 2005 EUMC report 'National Strategies for Minority Schooling: A Comparative Analysis' - [www.eumc.eu.int](http://www.eumc.eu.int)

<sup>82</sup> Available at <http://www.pisa.oecd.org> (02.06.2005)

much lower literacy scores than native pupils with no foreign background. The 2003 PISA study<sup>83</sup>, focusing on mathematics, found that in a number of Member States, e.g. France, Germany, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, a comparison of the performance of “first generation” students (those born in the country but with parents born outside) with that of native students tends to show large and statistically significant differences in favour of native students. The study points out that these are troubling differences because despite the apparent similarity of educational history, being a “first generation” student leads to a relative disadvantage in these countries. Non-native students tend to lag even further behind, with the largest performance gap found in the Flemish Community of Belgium, although the French and German Communities scored far better. PISA 2003 confirmed the findings of the 2000 PISA study.

While it is difficult to assess whether differences in the educational attainment of various ethnic groups can be traced back to discrimination or whether they are caused by other factors, such as different social backgrounds, or language, religious and cultural differences, some indicators point more clearly to the possibility of discriminatory practices. Among the main issues are residential segregation and overrepresentation in special education<sup>84</sup>.

The 2006 OECD report<sup>85</sup> on the performance of migrant students in mathematics indicates that first-generation and second generation students often report consistently high levels of interest and motivation and positive attitudes towards schooling. The finding suggests that migrant students generally have strong learning dispositions, which schools can build upon to help them succeed in school. However, the report also points out that the performance differences between native students and migrant students are most pronounced in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany and the Netherlands. Furthermore, the report notes that more than 40 per cent of first generation students in Belgium, France, and Sweden and more than 25 per cent of first generation students in Austria, Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands perform below the baseline level of mathematics proficiency on the PISA scale (Level 2), whereas only small percentages of native students fail to reach it.

In the **Flemish community of Belgium**, non-Belgians are twice as likely as Belgians to leave school before obtaining a certificate in secondary education<sup>86</sup>.

In **Denmark**, migrants and descendants from third countries show lower completion rates compared to the whole population at all educational levels, while also having a much higher dropout rate than average<sup>87</sup>. Dropout rates from compulsory education for male ethnic minority students is 38-48 per cent compared to a majority average

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<sup>83</sup> OECD (2004) *Learning for Tomorrow's World: First Results from PISA 2003*, Paris

<sup>84</sup> EUMC (2005) Annual Report, p.69

<sup>85</sup> OECD (2006) *Where Immigrant Students Succeed: A comparative review of performance and engagement in PISA 2003*, Paris, p. 8

<sup>86</sup> EUMC (2004) *Migrants, Minorities and Education: Exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination* p.44

<sup>87</sup> EUMC (2004) *Migrants, Minorities and Education: Exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination* p.45

of 20 per cent, while dropout rates from vocational upper secondary education is higher than 60 per cent for ethnic minority males<sup>88</sup>.

In **Germany**, migrants attain on average lower qualifications and tend to leave education earlier. A recent study commissioned by the Hamburg State Office for Education shows that Germans with a migrant background and foreign migrants perform worse and have less chances of securing an apprenticeship<sup>89</sup>. The 2004 federal report<sup>90</sup> also noted that young migrants were underrepresented in the sought after sectors of information and communication.

In **France**, studies<sup>91</sup> have underlined the role of indirect forms of school segregation in reproducing inequalities. The proportion of pupils with foreign nationality in vocational secondary schooling is much higher than the general average. In the 2000 PISA study, native pupils with at least one of the parents born in the country achieved better results in the combined reading, mathematical, and scientific literacy scales than pupils who were born in the country with two foreign born parents. A 2005 survey<sup>92</sup> on ethnic segregation highlighted that 40 per cent of pupils with migrant descent concentrate in 10 per cent of middle schools. The effects of ethnic segregation in schools were discussed in a survey<sup>93</sup> assessing the impact of *Zones d'Éducation Prioritaire* (Priority Education Zones). The survey questions the effectiveness of these 'Zones', pointing out that parents often try to avoid these schools. In January 2004 the SIGNA<sup>94</sup> project began recording violent incidents in schools and identifying 'racist motivation'. During the 2004-2005 school year some 1.700 racist acts were recorded<sup>95</sup> in secondary education.

In the **Netherlands**, ethnic segregation in schools is often greater than residential segregation. The number of primary schools with more than 70 per cent ethnic minority students rose from 129 in 1986 (of the 8,300 total) to 343 in 2003<sup>96</sup>. Although measures differentiating between ethnic and native pupils contravene the Dutch Equal Treatment Act, schools have been known to revert to such measures, e.g. the introduction of waiting lists for ethnic minority pupils to counterbalance any 'disproportion' in an individual schools' pupil numbers.

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<sup>88</sup> Dahl, K.M. (2005) *Etniske minoriteter i tal*, Socialforskningsinstituttet, p.p. 21, 22

<sup>89</sup> Lehmann, R. et al. (2005) ULME I. Untersuchung der Leistung, der Motivation und Einstellungen zu Beginn der Ausbildung, pp. 105-114

<sup>90</sup> Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (2004), *Berufsbildungsbericht 2004*, pp. 173-174

<sup>91</sup> Payet J.-P. (2002a) *The Paradox of Ethnicity in French Secondary Schools* in C. Stack, L. Roulleau-Berger (Eds) *Urban Youth and Unemployment in United States and Europe*, Academic Publishers Brill

<sup>92</sup> Georges Felouzis, Françoise Liot, Joël Perroton (2005) *L'Apartheid scolaire, enquête sur la ségrégation ethnique au collège*, Editions du Seuil, Paris

<sup>93</sup> R. Bénabou, F. Kramarz, C. Prost (2005) *Zones d'Éducation Prioritaire : Quels moyens pour quels résultats?*, Économie et Statistique, Paris

<sup>94</sup> Signalement des actes de violence par les établissements du second degré (Description of violent acts in public secondary schools)

<sup>95</sup> Ministère de l'Éducation National, Note d'information *Les actes de violence à l'école recensés dans SIGNA en 2004-2005*, November 2005

<sup>96</sup> The Netherlands, Letter to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in the Lower House, 23 April 2004, PO/00/2004/19279

In **Austria**, migrant pupils are still over-represented in lower levels of education, and in special needs education<sup>97</sup>. Data on the qualification level of the foreign-nationality population older than 14 years shows that migrant groups from former Yugoslavia and Turkey (without reference to religion), attained lower education levels than the majority group. According to this data, 80 per cent of the Turkish population in Austria have only completed compulsory schooling and have not received any further education. The PISA results revealed comparatively large and statistically significant differences in favour of native pupils: Minority language pupils are 2.3 times as likely to be among the 25 per cent of lowest performers in reading literacy compared to native German speakers.

In **Sweden**, increased segregation in housing is also reflected within the school system. In 2003, the Government commissioned the National Agency for School Improvement to amend the situation in both pre-schools and compulsory schools in segregated areas. There is social and ethnic segregation in many municipalities and a concentration of students who are under-achievers. The majority of these students have foreign backgrounds<sup>98</sup>.

In **Finland**, the highest educational level attained by most migrants was three years of vocational training at the secondary level<sup>99</sup>.

The **United Kingdom** presents a rare example of educational data collection that specifically identifies students as Muslim. In 2001, there were 371,000 school-aged (5 to 16 year old) Muslim children in England. In 2004 there were four Muslim state-maintained schools, catering for around 1,100 children. In 2004 a third (33 per cent) of Muslims of working age in Great Britain had no qualifications – the highest proportion for any religious group. They were also the least likely to have degrees or equivalent qualifications (12 per cent).

## Islamic education

The provision of Islamic religious education varies across Europe, ranging from formal secular religious education – which is multi-faith in nature – to cross-curriculum teaching of Islam, and separate Islamic teaching provided within or outside the state school context. Aspects of Islam are also taught within history curricula and, to a lesser extent, Islamic themes are also covered in some language and literature curricula<sup>100</sup>. On the whole, teaching of a multi-faith nature is not widely accepted as 'Islamic education' by Muslim communities, due to the non-specialist nature of teaching staff, and the objective perspective often taken to the subject matter. Separate classes for the teaching of Islam (usually negotiated at the

<sup>97</sup> Österreich, Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur, *Statistisches Taschenbuch 2005*, pp. 31-37

<sup>98</sup> Sweden, Ministry of Education and Science (2003), Promemoria. Bilaga till regeringsbeslut 2003-05-28, nr 26. Uppdrag om förbättrad förskole- och skolsituation i segregerade områden.

<sup>99</sup> EUMC (2004) *Migrants, Minorities and Education: Exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination* p.45

<sup>100</sup> Ian Draper and Jørgen S. Nielsen (2004) *Working paper on the legal situation of Muslim Communities*, EUMC, p.19



local level), can however be found in countries such as Belgium, parts of Germany, Spain, Finland, Sweden and Austria.

Outside the mainstream school system many Muslim communities provide supplementary classes in Islamic religious instruction at a local level. Such classes are usually held either on weekday evenings or at weekends, and focus on basic theology, instruction in prayer, and recitation of the Qur'an. Often mother-tongue instruction is also provided. Teachers have a varying range of experience and qualifications, though in some cases they lack any formal qualification. The local nature of the provision ensures that the content of teaching matches the particular theological adherence of the parents of the students. However, the practice of inviting Imams from third countries to function as teachers without formal qualifications and with little, if any, understanding of the local social and cultural context, is questionable. Funding is usually provided by parental contributions or by the mosques.

Independent Muslim schools, which provide religious education together with a broader curriculum, are increasingly being established in a number of EU states, including Denmark, France, Netherlands, Sweden and the UK. Most are self-funded, but some are either partly or wholly funded by the state and are then usually subject to state scrutiny, as in the UK, to ensure that standards of education are maintained and that the entitlement of Muslim children to a broad and full curriculum is met.

### 3.3. Housing<sup>101</sup>

Official and research based data at national level on housing do not specifically target Muslims, but, nonetheless, common themes do emerge from reviewing the existing national evidence related to country of origin. It should be noted, however, as in the previous sections, that it is not always possible to distinguish between Islamophobia and xenophobia or racism as causes of discrimination.

Migrants – among them many Muslims – do generally appear to suffer higher levels of homelessness, poorer quality housing conditions, poorer residential neighbourhoods and comparatively greater vulnerability and insecurity in their housing status. Very serious housing problems include lack of access to basic facilities such as drinking water and toilets, significantly higher levels of overcrowding than for other households, and exploitation through higher comparative rents and purchase prices. There has been some improvement in patterns of housing conditions over time, but relative housing inequalities are highly durable largely due to the inadequate stock of social housing – affecting particularly low income groups, such as migrants or migrant descended persons, whose income often does not allow them to find affordable accommodation in the private housing market. As access to housing becomes more market driven these groups become increasingly vulnerable to forms of indirect economic discrimination.

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<sup>101</sup> For background material - see 2005 EUMC report 'Migrants, Minorities and Housing: Exclusion, Discrimination and Anti-Discrimination' - [www.eumc.eu.int](http://www.eumc.eu.int).

In most countries there are serious gaps in data related to migrants and minority ethnic or religious groups in the housing sector, both regarding discrimination and structural inequalities. There is also a paucity of data on discrimination in the private market. In the public sector, which is better monitored, data is unsystematic and sometimes inconsistent. Nevertheless, **France** and **Italy** have carried out discrimination testing showing evidence of discrimination in housing; in **Sweden**, testing is currently being considered by the authorities.

The establishment of Equality Bodies in accordance to the Community's Race Equality Directive<sup>102</sup> should improve data collection and monitoring in the future, provided these bodies are empowered and adequately resourced to receive, record and follow up complaints. Special care should also be taken to address issues of underreporting: this can be a major problem in measuring racial, ethnic or religious discrimination.

In several Member States<sup>103</sup> government housing policies, and policies on aspects of housing finance and associated personal tax and benefit matters, may be producing a complex set of structural barriers that exclude minorities from decent housing. The poor fit between the stock of social housing and the needs of larger minority families is a barrier to finding adequate accommodation. Residential segregation is often equated with failure of integration, but more commonly, discussion revolves around minority ethnic dispersal aimed at reducing such segregation or simply the desire of members of minority ethnic groups to live together. In the UK, particularly since the 2001 urban disturbances in north-west English cities with large Muslim populations, community cohesion strategies are partly based on assumptions about the dangers of an assumed "self-segregation" by minority communities. In France, recent legislation aims to integrate migrants by giving them rights of access to social housing, rather than housing them separately, as in the past, despite opposition by local authorities<sup>104</sup>.

In **Belgium**, migrant and minority ethnic households often tend to be in poor quality, over-priced private rented housing. Despite some improvements for specific minorities, there have been increases in housing costs and a persistent gap in quality compared to mainstream Belgian households<sup>105</sup>. CEOOR, the official Equality Body, reported that during 2004 most housing complaints in Brussels and Antwerp were lodged by persons of Moroccan or Turkish origin, although not all were related to discrimination on religious grounds. A limited discrimination test carried out by CEOOR in collaboration with ALARM<sup>106</sup> found that 58 per cent of callers with a "foreign sounding name" or foreign accent were told that the property was not available.

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<sup>102</sup> Some Member States had already established Equality Bodies.

<sup>103</sup> EUMC (2005) *Migrants, Minorities and Housing: Exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination*, p. 72

<sup>104</sup> EUMC (2005) *Migrants, Minorities and Housing: Exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination*, p. 91

<sup>105</sup> EUMC (2005) *Migrants, Minorities and Housing: Exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination*, p. 60

<sup>106</sup> Action pour le logement accessible aux réfugiés à Molenbeek (Action for accessible housing for refugees in Molenbeek)

In **Denmark**, ‘ethnic markers’ – such as accent, religious clothing or non-Danish names – may result in individuals experiencing discrimination in housing<sup>107</sup>. A 2002 report<sup>108</sup> concluded that migrants and their descendants from non-Western countries are discriminated against. Data revealed sharp variations in tenure by ethnic origin, with around 60 per cent of migrants and their descendants living in rented public housing in comparison to a general average of 17 percent<sup>109</sup>. The 2005 report of the Building Research Institute on the social and ethnic development in the social housing area<sup>110</sup> also found that the Danish housing market is ethnically and socially segregated with ethnic minorities and socially vulnerable groups concentrated in public rented accommodation. Nevertheless, another survey<sup>111</sup> showed that the majority of respondents with migrant backgrounds were not refused accommodation nor did they experience discrimination in renting or buying property.

In **Germany**, the de-segregation of migrants is a key concern. Migrants are more likely to be found living in overcrowded conditions<sup>112</sup>, with less access to amenities and paying comparatively higher rents<sup>113</sup>. They have greater insecurity of rental contracts, live in poorer quality residential environments, and are less likely to be home owners<sup>114</sup>. It is also found that migrants still have significantly less space at their disposal than Germans without a migration background. The 2005 report<sup>115</sup> of Planerladen indicates that cultural differences and language issues often cause conflicts between companies managing housing properties and migrants.

In **Greece**, the housing situation of the Greek Muslim minority in the Thrace region, especially in remote villages, is poor. There is little information regarding the housing of Greek Muslims that relocated to other areas, or that of the migrant population, as public authorities apparently view housing as a private rather than a state matter. Although housing segregation is reportedly<sup>116</sup> not an issue, high levels of homelessness have been noted amongst migrants and asylum seekers, with large numbers living in 'squatter' environments of various types<sup>117</sup>. Eligibility conditions

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<sup>107</sup> EUMC (2005) *Migrants, Minorities and Housing: Exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination*, p. 18

<sup>108</sup> Academy for Migration Studies in Denmark, AMID, (2002), *Integrationsforskningen i Danmark 1980-2002*

<sup>109</sup> The Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs, *Udlændinge I danske kommuner og amtskommuner pr. 1. januar 2001*.

<sup>110</sup> DK/Statens Byggeforskningsinstitut, Hans Skifter Andersen (2005) *Den sociale og etniske udvikling i den almene boligsektor*, Copenhagen, AKF Forlaget

<sup>111</sup> Togeby, Lise and Birgit Møller (1999), *Oplevet discrimination*, Nævnet for Etnisk Ligestilling, Copenhagen

<sup>112</sup> Frick, J.R. (2004) *Gutachten zur „Integration von Migranten in Deutschland“ auf der Basis nationaler und international vergleichbarer repräsentativer Mikrodaten*, Berlin, DIW

<sup>113</sup> Bremer, Peter (2000), *Ausgrenzungsprozesse und die Spaltung der Städte – Zur Lebenssituation von Migranten*, Opladen

<sup>114</sup> EUMC (2005) *Migrants, Minorities and Housing: Exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination*, p. 60

<sup>115</sup> Planerladen e.V. (ed.) (2005) *Migranten auf dem Wohnungsmarkt: Befragung von Wohnungsunternehmen zu „Migranten als Mieter, Käufer, Kunden“*. *Ergebnisbericht*, Dortmund

<sup>116</sup> EUMC (2005) *Migrants, Minorities and Housing: Exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination*, p. 20

<sup>117</sup> EUMC (2005) *Migrants, Minorities and Housing: Exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination*, p. 62, 71

for social housing available from the Workers' Housing Organisation indirectly exclude most migrants.

In **Spain**, migrants in both rural and urban areas reportedly face serious housing problems, including: homelessness; substandard makeshift accommodation; illegal boarding houses; and overcrowding. Data availability, according to the National Focal Point, is very poor. A survey<sup>118</sup> of Moroccan migrants' housing in Almeria (Andalusia) found that 75 per cent had no hot water, 57 per cent were in very damp accommodation, 49 per cent had no toilet, 45 per cent no kitchen and 40 per cent no running water. A 2005 study<sup>119</sup> noted that North African migrants particularly in rural areas faced serious difficulties in accessing housing. The 2004 Survey<sup>120</sup> of the National Statistics Institute notes that 16.8 per cent of third country families own property in comparison to a national average of 83.8 per cent and that 23.3 per cent compared to a national average of 9.1 per cent do not have adequate heating.

In **France**, a 2005 INSEE report<sup>121</sup> indicated that migrant households, particularly from the Maghreb, tend to live in overpopulated households and their residential mobility is circumscribed. The National Observatory of Sensitive Urban Areas<sup>122</sup> indicated in its first report<sup>123</sup> that twice as many foreign households are resident in such areas, while 51.5 per cent of foreign households occupied social housing in comparison to 31.7 per cent of French households. In January 2005, public officials inspecting<sup>124</sup> 24 hostels for migrants found that the living conditions were precarious and insecure. In March 2005, the *Le Haut conseil à l'intégration* (Council for Integration) noted<sup>125</sup> that 537,000 retired migrant workers live in precarious conditions, do not always receive the benefits they are entitled to, and have a life expectancy 20 years lower than the national average.

In **Italy**, a 2005 *Medicin Sans Frontieres* report<sup>126</sup> found that 40 per cent of seasonal agricultural workers (mostly migrants, many Muslims) lived in abandoned houses, 35 per cent in rented accommodation and 5 per cent were homeless. Rented accommodation was of low quality: 50 per cent had no water supply, 30 per cent no

<sup>118</sup> Arjona, A and Checa, J. C (2002) *Exclusión residencial de los inmigrantes marroquíes en Andalucía*, in F. J. Garcia and C. Muriel (eds) *La inmigración en España. Contextos y alternativas*, Granada: Universidad de Granada, Laboratorio de Estudios Interculturales

<sup>119</sup> Edgar, B. (2004), *Policy measures to ensure access to decent housing for migrants and ethnic minorities*, Joint Centre for Scottish Housing Research, available at: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/social\\_inclusion/docs/decenthousing\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/social_inclusion/docs/decenthousing_en.pdf) (30.12.2005).

<sup>120</sup> Instituto Nacional de Estadística (2005), *Encuesta de condiciones de vida 2004*, Madrid

<sup>121</sup> *Les immigrés en France*, INSEE REFERENCES, Edition 2005

<sup>122</sup> Created in August 2003 the *Observatoire national des zones urbaines sensibles* (National Observatory of Sensitive Urban Areas) is tasked to examine social inequalities and development discrepancies in the sensitive urban areas (Zones urbaines sensibles - ZUS), as well as monitor and assess relevant public policies.

<sup>123</sup> Observatoire national des zones urbaines sensibles (2004) *Rapport 2004 de l'Observatoire national des zones urbaines sensibles*, La Plaine Saint Denis : Observatoire national des zones urbaines sensibles, 252 p.

<sup>124</sup> Sylvia Zappi, *La suroccupation, fléau des foyers de travailleurs migrants*, Le Monde, 06.01.2005

<sup>125</sup> Available at [http://www.premier-ministre.gouv.fr/IMG/doc/Avis\\_HCI\\_vieux\\_trav\\_migrants.doc](http://www.premier-ministre.gouv.fr/IMG/doc/Avis_HCI_vieux_trav_migrants.doc) (22.11.2005)

<sup>126</sup> MSF (2005), *I frutti dell'ipocrisia. Storie di chi l'agricoltura la fa. Di nascosto*, Research Report, March 2005, available: <http://www.msf.it> (07.09.2005)

electricity, and 43.2 per cent no bathroom. Over-crowding was found to be a major problem: 70 per cent of the sample shared the room where they lived with at least 4 other people, and 30 per cent shared a bed with another person. Although, according to Italian legislation, employers must provide seasonal workers with reasonable accommodation, only 3.4 per cent of the survey was provided with accommodation.

In the **Netherlands**, ethnic minorities<sup>127</sup> (groups such as Surinamese, Moroccans, Turks and Antilleans or Arubans) occupy on average lower quality and more overcrowded housing than the mainstream Dutch population and depend heavily on subsidised rented housing<sup>128</sup>. The housing market is strictly regulated, thus limiting direct racial or ethnic discrimination, but the application of criteria, such as 'residence history' could result in indirect discrimination<sup>129</sup>. The segregation of ethnic minorities into specific areas is a serious concern and local authorities in Amsterdam and particularly Rotterdam are taking action to ensure minority ethnic dispersal.

In **Austria**, the initiative *Wohndrehscheibe* reported extensive **Islamophobic** discrimination in particular against Chechnyan refugees in the private housing market<sup>130</sup>. The report also noted that new criteria for social housing in Vienna, introduced in 2004<sup>131</sup>, created serious difficulties for naturalised migrants who have been joined by their families under provisions for family reunification. Families have to prove common residence at the same address for two consecutive years before being eligible to apply, and are therefore forced to wait for long periods in overcrowded privately rented accommodation before being given appropriate social housing.

In **Sweden**, 'West Asians' (particularly Iranians) are concentrated in lower quality rental housing, specifically tenement blocks in undesirable areas<sup>132</sup>. The 2004 report<sup>133</sup> of the Integration Board shows that ethnic residential segregation has intensified in large cities and is evident also in smaller cities. In a 2004 survey<sup>134</sup>, however, only 15 percent of the migrant population questioned suggested that they had been discriminated against in the housing market. The Integration Board is now planning to use discrimination testing to establish the extent of direct discrimination.

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<sup>127</sup> The term *alloctonen* used in the Netherlands embraces foreigners, migrants and aliens including origins and parentage.

<sup>128</sup> Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (2004), *Alloctonen in Nederland 2004*, Voorburg/Heerlen: Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, p. 23 – 29

<sup>129</sup> Lindner, L. (2002) *Ruimtelijke segregatie van afkomstgroepen in Den Haag. Wiens Keuze?*, The Hague: Bureau Discriminatiezaken Haaglanden, p. 13

<sup>130</sup> Volkshilfe Österreich, *Wohndrehscheibe, Jahresbericht 2004*, Wien: Volkshilfe, available at: [http://www.volkshilfe.at/contentthema/download/wds\\_jahresbericht\\_2004\\_web.pdf](http://www.volkshilfe.at/contentthema/download/wds_jahresbericht_2004_web.pdf), (06.10.2005), p.41

<sup>131</sup> Volkshilfe Österreich, *Wohndrehscheibe, Jahresbericht 2004*, Wien: Volkshilfe, available at: [http://www.volkshilfe.at/contentthema/download/wds\\_jahresbericht\\_2004\\_web.pdf](http://www.volkshilfe.at/contentthema/download/wds_jahresbericht_2004_web.pdf), (06.10.2005), p.45

<sup>132</sup> EUMC (2005) *Migrants, Minorities and Housing: Exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination*, p. 61

<sup>133</sup> The Swedish Integration Board (2005), *Statistikrapport 2004*, pp. 47-51

<sup>134</sup> Antidiskrimineringsbyrån i Stockholm (2004), *Om diskrimineringens omfattning och karaktär – En undersökning om diskriminering i Stockholms stad Del 1-2*

In the **United Kingdom**, predominantly Muslim communities are more likely to be living in overcrowded and poor housing conditions. A recent Home Office report<sup>135</sup> suggests that minorities are less likely to be living in ‘decent’ property, adding that one in five Bangladeshis see racial harassment as a major problem in their area. The social rented sector is subject to extensive regulatory oversight, so that overtly racist practices are now hard to find, but racist hostilities do persist at grass roots, restricting choices of neighbourhoods open to lower-income minority ethnic households. Research from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has also indicated that British Pakistanis have been persistently disadvantaged in housing, experiencing poor conditions and lack of access to social housing.

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<sup>135</sup> Race Equality in Public Services (2005)  
[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs4/race\\_equalitypublicservices.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs4/race_equalitypublicservices.pdf) p.38, 39 (10.01.1006)

## PART II – Manifestations of Islamophobia

### 1. Defining ‘Islamophobia’

Islamophobia is a much used but little understood term. Although there is currently no legally agreed definition of Islamophobia, nor has social science developed a common definition, policy and action to combat it is undertaken within the broad concepts of racism and racial discrimination which are universally accepted by Governments and international organisations. The EUMC<sup>136</sup> therefore bases its approach to identifying the phenomenon and its manifestations on internationally agreed standards on racism and the ongoing work of the Council of Europe<sup>137</sup> and United Nations<sup>138</sup>.

The Council of Europe’s European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) has published two relevant General Policy Recommendations: General Policy Recommendation No. 5 on combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims (CRI (2000) 21) and General Policy Recommendation No. 7 on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination (CRI (2003) 8). In addition, ECRI’s General Policy Recommendation No. 8 on combating racism while fighting terrorism (CRI (2004) 26) notes that *"As a result of the fight against terrorism engaged since the events of 11 September 2001, certain groups of persons, notably Arabs, Jews, Muslims, certain asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants, certain visible minorities and persons perceived as belonging to such groups, have become particularly vulnerable to racism and/or to racial discrimination across many fields of public life including education, employment, housing, access to goods and services, access to public places and freedom of movement"*<sup>139</sup>.

ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 5 recognises that Muslim communities are subject to prejudice, which *"may manifest itself in different guises, in particular through negative general attitudes but also to varying degrees, through discriminatory acts and through violence and harassment"*. ECRI General Policy

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<sup>136</sup> For more information on concepts and definitions used by the EUMC please consult [http://eumc.europa.eu/eumc/index.php?fuseaction=content.dsp\\_cat\\_content&catid=43a80527705e6](http://eumc.europa.eu/eumc/index.php?fuseaction=content.dsp_cat_content&catid=43a80527705e6)

<sup>137</sup> ECRI general policy recommendation N°7 on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination, adopted on 13 December 2002: "... racism [1]" shall mean the belief that a ground such as race[2] , colour, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin justifies contempt for a person or a group of persons, or the notion of superiority of a person or a group of persons."

<sup>138</sup> International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, adopted and opened for signature and ratification by General Assembly resolution 2106 (XX) of 21 December 1965, entry into force 4 January 1969, in accordance with Article 19: " In this Convention, the term racial discrimination" shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life."

<sup>139</sup> Available at [http://www.coe.int/t/e/human\\_rights/ecri/1-ECRI/3-General\\_themes/1-Policy\\_Recommendations/Recommendation\\_N8/2-Recommendation\\_8.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/e/human_rights/ecri/1-ECRI/3-General_themes/1-Policy_Recommendations/Recommendation_N8/2-Recommendation_8.asp)

Recommendation No. 7 defines racism as “*the belief that a ground such as race, colour, language, religion, national or ethnic origin justifies contempt for a person or a group of persons, or the notion of superiority of a person or a group of persons*”. Direct and indirect racial discrimination are defined under paragraphs 1 b) and c). The Recommendation further identifies a list of acts under its provisions relating to criminal law (paragraphs 18-23) which should guide the identification of manifestations of Islamophobia.

Another important reference point are the eight features attributed to Islamophobia in the 1997 publication by the UK-based NGO the Runnymede Trust ‘Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All’<sup>140</sup>. In the report, Islamophobia is characterised with respect to:

1. Islam is seen as a monolithic bloc, static and unresponsive to change.
2. Islam is seen as separate and “other”. It does not have values in common with other cultures, is not affected by them and does not influence them.
3. Islam is seen as inferior to the West. It is seen as barbaric, irrational, primitive, and sexist.
4. Islam is seen as violent, aggressive, threatening, supportive of terrorism, and engaged in a clash of civilizations.
5. Islam is seen as a political ideology, used for political or military advantage.
6. Criticisms made of 'the West' by Islam are rejected out of hand.
7. Hostility towards Islam is used to justify discriminatory practices towards Muslims and exclusion of Muslims from mainstream society.
8. Anti-Muslim hostility is seen as natural and normal.

Since the Runnymede Trust’s publication, discussions about Islamophobia have intensified particularly after September 11 2001, and in the light of subsequent terrorist attacks in Europe and debates about Islam and freedom of speech. In 2005 another Council of Europe publication ‘Islamophobia and its consequences on Young People’ referred to Islamophobia as “*the fear of or prejudiced viewpoint towards Islam, Muslims and matters pertaining to them. Whether it takes the shape of daily forms of racism and discrimination or more violent forms, Islamophobia is a violation of human rights and a threat to social cohesion.*”

The term Islamophobia has been criticised by a number of commentators for its loose definition and broad application and its use remains a contested issue. Countering these criticisms, Muslim and human rights organisations have argued that the presence of Islamophobic sentiments and action is a real problem that needs addressing<sup>141</sup>. Bearing in mind these debates concerning the definition and application of the term ‘Islamophobia’, this EUMC report tentatively explores ‘manifestations of Islamophobia’ broadly based on the definitions of racism and racial discrimination outlined above, and through a critical assessment of available data and information on the phenomenon.

<sup>140</sup> More information at <http://www.runnymedetrust.org/publications/pdfs/islamophobia.pdf> (12.06.2006)

<sup>141</sup> See USA-based NGO ‘Human Rights Watch’ report on ‘A History of Backlash Attacks against Arabs and Muslims in America’: [http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/usahate/usa1102-03.htm#P287\\_44212](http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/usahate/usa1102-03.htm#P287_44212)



The European Union and its Member States make significant efforts to promote, protect and preserve an open secular society with equal rights and opportunities. Thus, a distinction must be made between attitudes and actions against individuals or groups of individuals of Muslim faith, based on unjust stereotypes and generalisations on the one hand, and a critical stand towards religious manifestations in our society that do not respect fundamental rights on the other. The common fundamental principles of the European Union and its Member States under Community law, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention for Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, must be respected. These values include respect for the uniqueness and freedom of the individual, equal opportunities for men and women (including the equal right of women to make individual choices in all walks of life) and equal treatment and non-discrimination on a number of grounds, including, for example, sexual orientation. Efforts to protect those principles may at times clash with the perceptions of certain individuals or faith groups. However, Member States have a positive duty to ensure that a potential critical stance towards certain religious manifestations respects the principle of equal treatment.

## 2. Focusing on racist violence and crime

The richest source of information on direct manifestations of ‘Islamophobia’ are reports of ‘racist violence and crime’, which can reveal incidents directed against Muslims – including incitement to hatred, threats, and actual acts of violence. The following section focuses specifically on manifestations of ‘Islamophobia’ in the area of racist violence and crime.

### **Interpreting an incident as ‘Islamophobic’**

It is often difficult to distinguish ‘Islamophobic’ incidents from other incidents. Many of the incidents in the following sections cannot be definitively characterised as ‘Islamophobic’ – either in a court of law or in ‘layman’s’ terms:

- In accounts of incidents against people who are Muslim, or who are characterised as Muslim because of their appearance or country of origin, the absence of direct insults could make it difficult to label an event as Islamophobic. In comparison, an attack on a mosque or graffiti with anti-Muslim statements or drawings is clearly Islamophobic.
- Incidents or crimes that are against people who are Muslim may be driven by motives other than Islamophobia. These can range from general anti-foreigner/anti-migrant or anti-refugee/anti-asylum seeker sentiments – which might be labelled as a ‘hate crime’ – coming from a desire to commit crime against any target.

The identification of specific manifestations of Islamophobia with respect to crime can be supported by the following:

- A victim's perception of a crime as 'Islamophobic' is the first step towards acknowledging that an incident *might* be Islamophobic.
- An incident can also be labelled Islamophobic, if the perpetrator perceives a target for abuse as a Muslim, although he/she is actually not Muslim. In the aftermath of the London bombings, as reported by the EUMC (2005), there was some indication that non-Muslims were also victims of anti-Muslim abuse.

Given that police and criminal justice data identifying Muslim victims specifically is absent in all but one EU Member State, most of what is reported in this section refers to incidents against people from countries of origin that are predominantly Muslim (using country of origin or nationality as a proxy for Muslim).

### 3. Data collection

Given the above, there are two main channels through which to gather information on crime against Muslims and Muslim targets:

- (1) **Official criminal justice data** – including police reports, prosecution reports and case files;
- (2) **Other related data** – including NGO reports, research reports, victim surveys<sup>142</sup>, and the media.

As indicated in the EUMC's report on 'Racist Violence in 15 EU Member States' and the Racist Violence chapter in Part II of the EUMC's 2005 Annual Report, the current status of data collection on 'racist crime' remains inadequate in the majority of Member States. This absence of adequate data seriously hampers the development of informed public policy responses.

#### 3.1. Official criminal justice data sources

Few Member States have data collection mechanisms in place that are able to capture a range of racist or religiously motivated crimes. Many Member States have inadequate mechanisms in place that, at best, can only report on a handful of cases that have reached the courts. There are also some Member States that have no publicly available official data on racist violence and crime.

Where Member States do collect data on racist violence and crime they tend to categorise this information in accordance with specific legislation. In this way Member States can report on the number of people who were brought to court under a specific item of law, or can group offences together into categories such as 'acts' or 'threats'. In other words, current categorisation of racist crimes is usually limited

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<sup>142</sup> Victim surveys are not classified as 'official' data sources because, although some victim surveys are formally managed and published by Member States' governments (such as the British Crime Survey), they are not based on information collated from criminal justice data sources.

in most Member States to making an incident 'fit' a specific offence – as defined in law.

Similarly, most Member States' laws do not specifically refer to religiously motivated (or aggravated) offences. Consequently, data collection mechanisms do not separately identify religiously motivated offences – including offences against Muslims. Instead, legislation in most Member States lumps together racist, xenophobic and religiously motivated crimes under generic 'hate crime' legislation. Some Member States do collect official criminal justice data on antisemitic incidents according to violations of specific offence categories (such as Holocaust denial).

In general, official criminal justice data collection mechanisms do not collect information on the identity of victims of racist crime. This is, primarily, due to two factors:

- The general failure of criminal justice systems to examine racist crime and collect relevant data with respect to its impact on victims and specific victim groups.
- A long-held resistance to data collection on 'ethnic identity', which can encompass religion, considerations of data protection legislation and/or a country's constitution allegedly prohibiting any sort of processing of such sensitive information.

The European Union 1995 Directive on Data Protection<sup>143</sup> lays down rules and conditions for the processing of personal data, meaning "*any information relating to an identified or identifiable individual*". The processing of anonymous data where the individual cannot be identified directly or indirectly falls out of the scope of the Directive. Where the data collected refer to identified or identifiable individuals, the Directive does prohibit in principle the processing of personal data revealing that individual's racial or ethnic origin or religious beliefs.

However, even in those cases, exceptions are provided for. One is the possibility for Member States to lay down exceptions for reasons of substantial public interest, subject to suitable safeguards. The fight against discrimination constitutes undoubtedly a substantial public interest. At the same time, the Race Equality Directive<sup>144</sup> states that information about indirect discrimination can be gathered for statistical purposes.

In summary, data collection on ethnicity is desirable, provided that the individual cannot be identified directly or indirectly at any stage (including the data collection stage). If at any of the stages individuals can be identified, that individual should explicitly consent to be identified, while suitable safeguards must be built in to protect those individuals against discrimination.

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<sup>143</sup> Council Directive 95/46/EC of 24 October 1995 *On the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data*, Official Journal L 281, 1995

<sup>144</sup> Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 *Implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin*, Official Journal L 281, L180/22, 2000

A Community Action Programme followed in the footsteps of the Race Equality Directive. One of its principle objectives is to increase understanding of discrimination and assess the effectiveness of anti-discrimination policies through data collection on, amongst other things, ethnic and racial discrimination<sup>145</sup>. If the criminal justice system is viewed as a public service, then anonymous data collection that is able to look at people's treatment at the hands of the police or prosecution service according to their ethnicity – including religion – would seem a desirable goal. In contrast to these barriers to ethnic data collection, a number of Member States collect data on people's nationality, country of birth, or country of birth of their parents.

Given the current barriers that are put in place against 'ethnic identity' data collection, what follows is a brief introduction to the different ways in which researchers and policy makers can – in some Member States – gather information about the extent and nature of crime against Muslim targets.

Currently, there are four different ways in which official criminal justice data is collected, or could be collected, on the extent and nature of crime against Muslim targets; namely:

1. Official data identifying *specifically* Muslim victims
2. Official data on 'faith hate' crimes
3. Using nationality or ethnicity as a proxy for 'Muslim'
4. General data on racist/religious incidents – extracting information on potentially Islamophobic incidents

### ***Current limitations of official data sources***

In Member States that collect data on racist violence and crime, incidents specifically targeted against Muslims will be included under general headings such as 'incitement to racial hatred'. As police report forms do not have a section to complete that can identify a Muslim victim or target, this information is missing in most official police data collection registers. In turn, when the police fail to record incidents as potentially 'Islamophobic' or 'anti-Muslim', victim information does not generally come to light further on in the criminal justice process.

Rigorous research through individual police reports or court cases *can* identify incidents where the victim is identified as Muslim. However, looking through individual police reports or court cases is both a labour intensive and potentially inaccurate means of assessing the extent of racist crime against Muslims. Because of this, it is not possible currently to gauge accurately the extent of racist or religiously aggravated crime that is targeted against Muslims in the EU, and which might come under the general heading of 'Islamophobia'.

We conclude that criminal justice intelligence on Islamophobic incidents is inadequate. The absence of informed intelligence, based on targeted data collection,

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<sup>145</sup> Council Decision of 27/11/00 (2000/750/EC)

is particularly problematic in those Member States that have significant Muslim populations.

### 3.2. Other data sources

In the absence of comprehensive official criminal justice data sources on (1) crime against Muslims, and (2) specifically Islamophobic crime, other data sources currently provide the bulk of information on manifestations of racist crime against Muslims in the EU.

Reflecting patterns in official data collection, unofficial data collection on 'Islamophobic' incidents is in its infancy across the EU. However, it appears that Muslim organisations are beginning to establish mechanisms to record, more systematically, incidents against Muslim people and Muslim targets.

Only a handful of Member States have NGOs that specifically collect information on incidents against Muslim targets. Most NGOs pick up on incidents against Muslims as part of their general monitoring and advocacy work. The EUMC is alerted to these incidents by its RAXEN National Focal Points, which provide the Centre with a breakdown of information in consideration of both antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents recorded by official and unofficial sources – both in their annual data collection reports and every two months in their “Bulletins”.

The range of incidents registered by NGOs is diverse – from violent attacks against individuals through to vandalism against mosques – with each NGO having its own method for collecting and recording incidents. In general, as a reflection of NGOs' limited resources, no detailed categorisation takes place. Instead, NGOs tend to provide a list of all relevant incidents that come to their attention; some of which are reported to the police.

Given the absence of official criminal justice data on incidents against Muslims, NGOs currently provide a valuable source of information on incidents. However, the EUMC cannot verify the accuracy of this information.

## 4. Manifestations of Islamophobia: focusing on violence and crime

This section contains a selection of incidents – presented country-by-country and collected by official and unofficial sources – which were targeted against Muslim people or property, or against nationalities from predominantly Muslim countries (used here as the ‘best available’ proxy for the category ‘Muslim’). Where no official sources are given, this is because they do not exist.

In the main, data presented in this section covers the years 2004-2005, which is the latest period covered by the RAXEN NFPs. Data availability varies from country to country and in addition some countries provide statistical data earlier than others. As data is generally very limited throughout the EU, reference is also made to important research data from earlier periods, where this is available in some Member States. Data is limited to those Member States that record or report data on 'Islamophobic' incidents either through official or other sources.

## Denmark

### Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from official sources

The Danish police are under instructions to file a report to PET (Danish Civil Security Service) of any crimes that are under suspicion as racist or religiously aggravated.

PET's records refer only to 'racist/religious' incidents without categorising them as anti-Muslim, antisemitic, or anything else. The ethnic origin or religious affiliation of victims is seldom referred to in these incident reports. However, reading through the PET database does allow for the extraction of information from individual cases where the victim's Muslim identity is directly identified or can be assumed.

In 2004, the PET database recorded 32 'racist/religious' incidents. On reading through these incident reports, the EUMC's Danish NFP identified the following incidents as possibly Islamophobic:

- 16.01.04: A person of Danish origin received an anonymous letter with the words "*Traitor. Your treasonable operation is registered*". The victim had on 03.11.03 written a letter to the editor of the newspaper "Jyllands Posten" in which he stated that he was opposed to a ban on the headscarf.
- 21.05.04: A person of ethnic origin other than Danish reported that an unknown perpetrator for a long period of time had put racial material in his mailbox, among other things notes with skulls and the text "*Read Islam's principal work, the Koran. Principal for decapitation of the infidels' heads*" and "*Denmark is a gift from Allah*".
- 28.06.04: A person of ethnic origin other than Danish reported that an unknown perpetrator had vandalised the main entrance to a property belonging to a group and had thrown a piece of paper through the door with a racist text which said "*You black pigs, we shall smash up your Islamic shit and fuck Osama Bin Laden plus Allah, thank you USA for invading Iraq etc.*". The text was signed "*Sig Heil Iron Hand*".
- 29.06.04: A police officer of an ethnic origin other than Danish was verbally attacked by an ethnic Dane during a police operation on Christiania (alternative commune in Copenhagen). The police officer was met by expressions such as '*Perkere [negative slang for people of Turkish or Pakistani origin] do not eat bacon*' and '*in this country we eat bacon and pork*'. The perpetrator threw a piece of bacon before the victim's feet and said "*this is for the dog*".

- 05.08.04: A person of Danish origin reported that he had repeatedly received propaganda material in his mailbox from the association “*Holger Danske 2004*”. In this material it was mentioned that people are giving up Danish territory if they say ‘yes’ to mosques in Denmark, and that buying halal-slaughtered animals is supporting animal abuse.
- 10.11.04: Vandalism was committed against a minority association. Pork grease was rubbed on the entrance door and doorbell of the association.

### **Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from other sources**

**DACoRD (Documentation and Advisory Centre on Racial Discrimination)** collects information on a range of racist and xenophobic incidents, including Islamophobic and antisemitic incidents. DACoRD receives information from sources, such as PET (the Danish Civil Security Service), directly from victims, newspaper articles, web searches and word of mouth.

In the period 1 January-13 October 2005, DACoRD recorded 22 Islamophobic incidents. Two of the 22 incidents recorded by DACoRD have been attributed to a group calling itself the ‘August 29 group against Koran fascism’, which has not yet been identified by Danish police. Both incidents involved threatening letters, one to an Arab group in the town of Holstebro and another to a Muslim organisation in the town of Odense. In 2004, two similar letters were forwarded by this group to an Islamic school and mosque.

The following list refers to incidents recorded by DACoRD that have not been reported by PET (the Danish Civil Security Service)<sup>146</sup>.

- June 2004: An Iraqi family was threatened and harassed by a group of Danish people. The family had experienced some problems with a neighbour, who, among other things, had placed a sign in front of the victims’ house saying “*Blacks no entry*”. The case culminated in an incident where the Danish neighbour and a group of his friends entered the family’s house, were violent, and vandalised the house by breaking windows. The offenders were convicted, but the judgement did not take the racist motive into consideration.
- 21.12.04: It was reported that stickers containing quotes from the Koran regarding honour killing and a supplementary text stating that 99.8 per cent of the Turkish population is Muslim had been distributed around the city of Copenhagen.
- 04.01.05: A politician wrote a contribution to a debate in a local newspaper containing discriminating and degrading expressions about Muslims. The article stated that Muslims belong to a ‘*warrior culture*’ and that they behave like wild animals. DACoRD reported the incident to the local police in the beginning of February 2005.
- 04.01.05: DACoRD received an email containing a fake primary school ‘reform’. In the e-mail it was stated that the Ministry of Education had changed the curriculum to ensure that migrant children could relate to it. The e-mail contained an attachment with a fake test in mathematics. “*Jamal has*

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<sup>146</sup> More information available at [www.drcenter.dk](http://www.drcenter.dk) (12.05.2006)

*an AK47 with a 30-shot magazine. If he misses 6 out of 10 shots and he wants to hit each cup 13 times, how many cups can he shoot before he needs to reload?"* The email was sent from a group calling itself "Frit Danmark" (Free Denmark).

- 08-09.01.05: A Muslim burial site in Copenhagen was vandalised. Fifty tombstones were destroyed and another 50 tombstones were pushed over.
- January 2005: During an election campaign, a parliamentary candidate of Palestinian origin received several letters containing racist material.
- 13.04.05: Seven young men were arrested for assaults against a Somali family that had for a long time been persecuted by the group. They were in possession of baseball bats inscribed with swastikas and racist slogans.
- 03.05.05: DACoRD was informed about a website containing Islamophobic material ([www.glistrup.com](http://www.glistrup.com))

## Germany

### Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from other sources

In the period covering the January-October 2005, the following NGOs recorded incidents of violence against people from predominantly Muslim countries:

- Opferperspektive (Brandenburg) – 9 cases
- AMAL (Saxony) – 1 case
- Mobile Opferberatung (Saxony-Anhalt) – 3 cases

Violent attacks against fast-food stands owned by Muslims are also a regular occurrence in parts of Germany, and in 2005 attracted public attention; for example:

- 30.03.2005: A Turkish-Kurdish fast-food stand in Rheinsberg (Brandenburg) was completely destroyed by an arson attack – reported in a press release by the NGO Opferperspektive<sup>147</sup>.
- Mid-March 2005: A Turkish fast-food stand was covered with 20 swastikas and extreme right-wing slogans near Bernau (Brandenburg). However, the perpetrators' attempt to set the fast-food stand on fire failed. According to the owner, neo-Nazis had attacked the stand several times<sup>148</sup>.

Attacks on mosques and other Muslim-owned establishments occurred in 2004 with the following notable incidents reported by the German NFP:

- Between November and December 2004 four attacks on mosques were noted: Sinsheim (arson), Usingen (arson), and Schwäbisch-Hall (gun shot). In Berlin a Swastika was painted at the entrance area of the Sehitlik mosque. The state security department has started its investigations<sup>149</sup>.

<sup>147</sup> Press release Opferperspektive e.V. 01.04.2005, Berliner Zeitung 06.04.2005

<sup>148</sup> *FR* (22.03.2005), p.4

<sup>149</sup> Berliner Zeitung 02.10.2004, p.19



- In November 2004 there was an arson attack on a Muslim butcher shop in Asslar. Shortly before the attack the owner had applied for a special permit to slaughter animals, according to Muslim rites, at the Administrative Court Kassel<sup>150</sup>.

Islamophobic statements and campaigns by public officials/political parties have also been recorded:

- 09.04.2005: The Cologne police department started internal disciplinary action against its vice-president, because of Islamophobic statements made during a speech in the city of Emden. The vice-president had alluded to Huntington's expression of a "*clash of civilisations*"<sup>151</sup>, and drew a menacing scenario of Islam taking over political power in Germany. He later publicly expressed his regret that his statements had been interpreted as xenophobic<sup>152</sup>.

## Greece

### Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from other sources

The Greek NFP report noted the following incidents<sup>153</sup>:

- March 2004: parts of a mosque in Toxotes village (Xanthi district) were set on fire. Arrests have been made, but with no result or penal action.
- 03.02.2005: a Muslim grave in Komotini, which dates back to the period of the Ottoman Empire, was destroyed. To date nobody has been arrested. However, the Ministry of Public Order suggests that the perpetrators were looking for gold and the crime was not motivated by Islamophobia.
- 09.02.2005: in Venna at a village in the Rodopi district a Muslim monument was completely destroyed by fire. This monument dates back to the period of the Ottoman Empire. Nobody has been arrested.
- February 2005: some parts of the oldest mosque in Europe, located at Poliskio village in Xanthi, were damaged by gunshots. No one was arrested.

## Spain

### Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from official sources

There is no readily accessible official statistical data in Spain on racist crime. Given this, there is no specific data readily available on crime against Muslims. However, at the request of the Spanish NFP, the Dirección General de la Policía and the

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<sup>150</sup> Press statement (Pressemitteilungen des Regierungspräsidiums Gießen) available at [www.rp-giessen.de/me\\_in/info/pm/2004/b\\_pm\\_2004\\_093.htm](http://www.rp-giessen.de/me_in/info/pm/2004/b_pm_2004_093.htm) (04.05.2005)

<sup>151</sup> Klinger used the German translation of Huntington's book "Kampf der Kulturen" ("struggle between cultures")

<sup>152</sup> *taz Köln* (28.04.2005), p.1

<sup>153</sup> Documentation and correspondence between Muslim MP, Mr. Ilhan, and Ministry of Public Order

Dirección General de la Guardia Civil provided the NFP with a list of ‘Islamophobic’ incidents for the period January 2004-May 2005.

Dirección General de la Policía collected information on 21 incidents that could be described as ‘anti-Muslim’: one against person/s; two against property; 18 threats and verbal abuse; for example:

- 15.01. 2005: The Policía Autonómica de Cataluña arrested six members of a neo-Nazi group, three of them minors, for allegedly attacking mosques. The group, known as “Frente Negro”, was hierarchically divided into four sub-groups and several storm groups tasked with the aggressions and the production of xenophobic graffiti.
- February 2005: Azzouz Housni, a Moroccan farm labourer, was killed at El Ejido (Almería). He was allegedly beaten up and killed by a group of people. Four youngsters, two of them underage, were arrested. According to NGOs working on migrants’ protection, the event had clear racist and xenophobic connotations, similar to previous vengeful attacks against migrants that had taken place at El Ejido.

Dirección General de la Guardia Civil has collected information on nine incidents that could be described as ‘anti-Muslim’: two against person/s; three against property; and four threats and verbal abuse; for example:

- August 2004: A mosque in Reus (Tarragona) was vandalised by a neo-Nazi group. The mosque’s facade and interior were desecrated by graffiti depicting swastikas, and slogans such as “*Wake up and Fight*”, “*Skins Tarraco*”, “*Fucking Moors*”, “*Juvenile Revolution*”, and “*Skins NS 88*”.
- 26.04.2005: The Guardia Civil arrested five young people, five of them minors, who were accused of racism, causing serious injuries, acts in violation of moral integrity, and proffering threats and insults against three Moroccans at Cartaza (Huelva).

### **Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from other sources**

The NGOs ‘**SOS Racismo**’ and ‘**Movimiento contra la Intolerancia**’ record a wide range of incidents against migrants and foreigners. Many of these incidents are targeted at people from Muslim countries, with some perpetrated by public officials.

#### Violence against persons:

- March 2004: A man snatched the headscarf from a Muslim woman in Zaragoza (Aragón), and in the process pulled some hair from the woman.
- April 2004: During this month there were reports of Moroccan citizens being attacked by police who made references to the terrorist attacks in Madrid, in March 2004, and to the victims’ Moroccan nationality.
- June 2004: A girl of Moroccan origin was attacked by ten school-children in Algeciras.

- June 2004: An Algerian man was hit and left unconscious by six neo-Nazis after he'd been praying in a mosque in Madrid. He was admitted to hospital in a critical condition.
- August 2004: A car driver shot and killed a Moroccan pedestrian after an argument in which the car driver was alleged to have uttered the words '*Go home, bloody Moor!*' The incident occurred in Tortosa (Catalonia) in a neighbourhood with a large Muslim population.
- December 2004: The Public Prosecution Office in Barcelona requested an eight-year prison sentence for a young skinhead who had knifed a Moroccan man in the Barcelona underground in March 2003, calling him a "*bloody Moor*". In February 2005, the perpetrator was sentenced to spend five years in prison by a Barcelona-based court on a charge of attempted murder aggravated by racism. He was given the lowest possible penalty because of having been a minor when he committed the offence, and for having no previous criminal record.<sup>154</sup>
- February 2005: The director's board of Pozo Estrecho High School, in Cartagena, has opened a file on several non-Muslim Spanish students for allegedly beating up a 17 year old Moroccan girl. The event took place after school, and witnesses have declared seeing the same group of alleged perpetrators walking around with sticks and baseball bats looking for migrants<sup>155</sup>.
- February 2005: The Moroccan Workers Association in Spain (Atime) has condemned the local police in Beniajan (Murcia) concerning their "*racist and xenophobic*" aggression against a Moroccan citizen. The Association declared they would bring a case against the officers involved. Allegedly, two police officers approached Mohammed Yaquti and, when he opened his car door and without him saying a word, hit him, causing injuries, while at the same time verbally insulting the victim.

Violence against property:<sup>156</sup>

- March 2004: Agents of the Civil Guard of Cartagena (Murcia) arrested three minors on suspicion of having damaged the home of a family from the Maghreb. They were also accused of having damaged the car of a person from an 'Arab' country by painting the word 'Moor' and a Nazi symbol.
- September 2004: The mosque of Reus (Catalonia) was vandalised on two occasions; glass was broken, its walls were sprayed with Nazi symbols, and there was an attempt to set carpets on fire.
- December 2004: The Catalan police intervened against a Neo-Nazi gang that, among other crimes, had attacked mosques in Girona. The gang, consisting of seven young people, operated under names such as '*Black Front*' and '*Catalan Revolutionary Alliance*'. Objects were taken from the gang, including baseballs inscribed with the words 'Moor killer'.
- March 2005: Premises purchased by the Islamic Cultural Centre in Valencia, for use as a mosque, were damaged by unknown perpetrators who painted

<sup>154</sup> Information provided by the NGO Movimiento contra la Intolerancia.

<sup>155</sup> "A file opened to several Pozo Estrecho High students for beating up a Moroccan", in: *La Verdad de Murcia*, (4.2.2005)

<sup>156</sup> Information provided by the NGO Movimiento contra la Intolerancia.

graffiti with references to the March 2004 Madrid bombings. The graffiti included a swastika.

### **The March 2004 Madrid bombings**

Looking at the dates and descriptions of incidents against Muslim targets noted by the Spanish NGOs, it appears that some incidents may be related to the March 2004 bombings in Madrid, in which nearly 200 people were killed. However, there is no systematic data count by these NGOs, or official sources, that allows the number of incidents against Muslim targets in the period after the bombings, and on their anniversary one year later, to be compared with other periods.

## **France**

### **Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from official sources**

Data on racist violence and crime is collected by the police and entered into the 'STIC' database, which was established in 2005 and is due to be operational nationwide in 2006. The DCRG (Direction Centrale des Renseignements Generaux) is responsible for both the data and the database. When someone lodges a complaint with the police it is normally registered in the police database, with details specified in relation to the date, place, description of the incident etc. The police can also specify the victim's 'origin' and religion when entering information into the database, but it appears that data collection on anti-Muslim incidents is not obligatory; as a result, what the police database contains is only a partial account of reports where the victim's origin or religion – as Muslim – might be noted. 131 such incidents were reported in 2004 and 65 in 2005.

The DCRG passes the information contained in the database to the Home Office, which then communicates the information to the CNCDH (Commission Nationale Consultative des Droits de l'Homme). The police do not publish this information themselves, but it is published through the CNCDH's annual report. Thus, although the database contains case reports where a victim's identity as Muslim might be referred to, this information is not reported systematically.

According to CNCDH's 2005 Annual Report on Combating Racism, Anti-Semitism and Xenophobia, there was a total of 352 violent acts and threats against North African or Muslim people/targets, of which 266 were threats and 64 were violent acts. Table 8 presents a selection of 'anti-Muslim' incidents extracted from the CNCDH Annual Report for 2004.

**Table 8:** France: Selection of apparently anti-Muslim incidents extracted from the CNCDH Annual Report (2004)

Date	Location	Facts
12.01.2004	Manosque	Damaged Halal butcher shop
19.01.2004	Angers	Damaged mosque
15.02.2004	Pertuis	Damaged worship place
16.02.2004	Porto-Vecchio	Attempted attack against a Halal butcher shop
22.02.2004	Vierzon	Punitive raid organized by high-school pupils against the North African population after a conflict with a pupil of North-African origin
05.03.2004	Annecy	Two mosques burnt and a Celtic cross painted
11.03.2004	Comines	Damaged mosque
16.03.2004	Bastia	Punitive raid by 15 high-school pupils against North African pupils from another high-school
16.03.2004	Clichy	Desecration of six Muslim tombs
24.03.2004	Clichy	Desecration of three Muslim tombs
29.03.2004	Bussy-Vecqueville	Attempted arson against a place of worship
29.03.2004	Oberhaus, Bergen	Damaged Muslim funeral parlour
31.03.2004	Creil	Attempted arson against a mosque
03.04.2005	Oberhaus Bergen	Damaged Muslim funeral parlour
05.04.2004	Strasbourg	Five steles (four Muslim ones and a Jewish one) damaged in the military cemetery of Cronenbourg
14.04.2004	Haguenau	In the night, the Moroccan mosque was covered with racist inscriptions
20.04.2004	Strasbourg	The entrance of the Turkish mosque Eyyub Sultan in the La Meinau neighbourhood of Strasbourg covered with tags "Death on the Arabs!" and swastikas.
24.04.2004	Alencon	Three places of worship damaged, one North African and one Turkish mosque
23.05.2004	Porto-Vecchio	Damaged Halal butchery
26.05.2004	Ile-Rousse	Aggression against man who was coming from the mosque
31.05.2004	Strasbourg	The home of a member of the Regional Council of Muslim Faith in Alsace was covered with racist inscriptions
09.06.2004	Marseille	Three Muslim graves damaged in the Cannet cemetery
14.06.2004	Strasbourg	Three graves in the Muslim part of the Le Meinau cemetery desecrated. Swastikas and neo-Nazi tags painted on about fifty graves and on the cemetery wall, along with threats against the president of the Regional Council of Islam and the president of the Regional Council of Alsace.
17.06.2004	Escaudain	Three shots were fired against the mosque and the walls covered with racist inscriptions

24.06.2004	Haguenau	Around fifty tombs of Muslim soldiers, mostly Moroccans, who died for the liberation of Alsace in 1944-45, desecrated. Seven steles knocked over and 48 others covered with swastikas, Celtic crosses and SS signs, in red. The inscription "HVE junior" is a reference to a neo-Nazi group founded in 1988.
26.06.2004	Nanterre	Xenophobic inscriptions on the walls of the mosque
18.07.2004	Lyon	Damaged office of a Muslim association
06.08.2004	Strasbourg	Desecration of 15 Muslim graves in the military cemetery of Cronembourg
30.08.2004	Evry	Aggression against an imam
04.09.2004	Strasbourg	Damaged mosque in Cronembourg
03.04.2004	Villeurbanne	Damaged mosque in the street of May 8th 1945
06.10.2004	Schiltgheim	Attempted arson of the mosque, references to the American movement "World Church of the Creator"
09.10.2004	Wattwiller	Desecration of a Muslim grave in the military cemetery of Wattwiller
16.10.2004	Chambéry	Damaged mosque in Italy street
24.10.2004	Ile-Rousse	Damage to the mosque of the "Union des Marocains de Balagne"
18.11.2004	Vescovato	Damaged Halal butchery
26.11.2004	Vecqueville	Damaged worship place
27.11.2004	Sartene	Attempted murder of an imam
02.12.2004	Ajaccio	Damaged room occupied by three Muslim pupils
16.12.2004	Mulhouse	Aggression against a woman wearing headscarf
28.12.2004	Denain	Aggression against a woman wearing headscarf

## Ireland

### Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from other sources

During 2004 the Islamic Foundation of Ireland received 14 reports of incidents involving violence and assault against Muslim people. A number of these included instances of women being verbally abused and/or having their headscarf removed.

#### Anti-Muslim violence:

- A twenty-three year old Irish born man with North African parents was severely beaten up by a group of boys who repeatedly called him '*Nigger*' and '*bin Laden*'. He was told to '*go back home*'. When he was taken to the hospital for treatment he had cuts and bruises on his face, neck, head, abdomen and right shoulder. The attending doctor considered the wounds to be quite serious.
- A middle aged Arab Muslim man was beaten by neighbours and had to flee his council house (State housing) in West Dublin.
- A 38 year old (white) Muslim woman who had been shopping wearing a headscarf and *jilbab* (long coat covering the body) had her headscarf pulled from behind by some young teenagers.

#### Anti-Muslim threats and insults:

- A 15 year old Irish female, with an Irish mother and Jamaican father, was called '*Osama bin Laden*' by a group of young men when she went shopping. She believed that the comment was made because she was wearing a headscarf. On a separate occasion she was called a '*nigger*' and an '*atomic bomb*' by a young boy. The incident was not reported as the girl thought that it was a common event.
- A 40 year old Irish woman suffered an incident when she was walking in the park with her children. A man accompanied by his bull dog approached them; he let the dog loose to scare the children and called them '*Arab shit*'. The woman believed that the incident occurred because she was wearing a *hijab* and *jilbab*, which made her look like an Arab.
- A 23 year old Irish Muslim woman was subjected to comments when she went for job interview. During the course of the interview, the interviewer asked mockingly, referring to her *headscarf* '*Are you allowed to work in that?*'. At a later stage, he commented, '*You're never going to get that job with that thing on*' once again referring to her headscarf.
- On a city bus in Dublin a middle aged Irishman stood up and pointed at a teenage Irish Muslim girl and abruptly said, '*terrorist*'.
- In November 2004 a Pakistani Muslim woman was verbally abused in her car with her children by a group of boys in a car alongside her. There was a joke made about her headscarf<sup>157</sup>.

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<sup>157</sup> Incident report to the NCCRI, not yet published.

According to a report prepared by the **Islamic Foundation of Ireland** (pp.2-3) (referred to in the Irish NFP's report on Islamophobia, May 2005): *“For many Muslims, the experience of discrimination and hostility has become so commonplace that they tend to ignore it and not report it, either to appropriate agencies in order to seek a remedy or to monitoring organizations, or to a third party and victim support schemes”*.

Apart from the Islamic Foundation of Ireland, the **National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism** – an independent government-funded body – has also recorded incidents of racist crime and violence that can be considered Islamophobic; for example:

- An Iraqi Muslim suffered damage to her property which she considered to be an Islamophobic attack as the culprit had scraped *‘Paki shit’* onto her car<sup>158</sup>.

## Italy

### Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from other sources

The NFP COSPE recorded the following incidents:

#### Violence against people or property

- 1<sup>st</sup> March 2004, Turin: During an anti-war demonstration, the police and Carabinieri attack a group of Muslims with truncheons and teargas. The group included about 50 women and children.
- 24<sup>th</sup> April 2004, Rimini: Unidentified persons smear pork fat all over the main door of the mosque and write *“Christ the King”* on it.
- 31<sup>st</sup> July 2004, Montefano (Macerata): Racist graffiti praising Nazism found on the main door and on the walls of the Islamic Cultural Centre.
- 25<sup>th</sup> November 2004, Molinella (Bologna): Threatening and insulting graffiti found on the front of the premises of the Islamic community: *“Death to Islam, we will kill you...”*
- 27<sup>th</sup> February 2005, Sovilla (Treviso): The entrance of the Islamic Cultural Centre is damaged by an explosive device<sup>159</sup>.

#### Verbal threats and abusive behaviour – including action by public officials

- 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2004, Italy: The Minister for Internal Affairs orders searches and controls to be carried out on 161 Muslim migrants, on grounds of suspicion, during an anti-terrorist operation. There are 3 arrests for violation of immigration laws and 15 expulsions for lack of a legal title to stay in the country. Nobody is held on terrorist charges.

<sup>158</sup> NCCRI (2004) Report on incidents relating to racism in Ireland, available at: [www.nccri.ie](http://www.nccri.ie) (05.05.2005)

<sup>159</sup> *La Tribuna di Treviso*, (28.02.2005)



- 18<sup>th</sup> April 2004, Rome: The Minister of Reforms and a member of the Northern League Party, was noted as saying: *“For every day the hostages are kept prisoners in Iraq, each EU country should revoke the residence permits of 1000 Muslim migrants from so-called rogue-states and expel them. Lex taglionis may be a cruel law, but it is the only one these criminal brutes are capable of understanding”*.

## Netherlands

### **Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from other sources**

On 2nd November 2004 Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh was murdered in Amsterdam. Van Gogh was an outspoken critic of Islam and was known for making controversial statements about the faith, including a film, with Dutch member of parliament, Hirsi Ali, on the subject of domestic violence against Muslim women. His attacker was a 26 year old man with dual Dutch and Moroccan citizenship.

Following the murder of Theo van Gogh, the NFP “Dutch Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia” (DUMC) recorded a significant number of racist incidents, the majority of which were against Muslims. There were also a number of incidents against ‘Dutch’ targets.

- 2-30 November 2004, there were 174 violent racist incidents.
- Of these – 106, or 61 per cent, involved anti-Muslim violence.
- Mosques were the target of violence on 47 occasions.

Alongside violent racist incidents and arson attacks, the murder stimulated more ‘moderate’ racist sentiments. According to NGOs and media reports, migrants were confronted with name-calling in the streets, on public transport and during sports events. Leaflets bearing anti-Muslim sentiments were distributed in Rotterdam, Den Bosch and in the northwest of the country, and were also seen in Amsterdam, and graffiti was targeted at mosques, Islamic schools, and Muslim-owned shops.

In the five days following the murder (2-7 November), the Dutch Complaints Bureau for Discrimination on the Internet (MDI) received a disproportionate number of complaints about internet sites praising the murder and making death-threats against other people. At the same time, the DUMC notes that there were thousands of anti-Muslim and anti-Moroccan expressions on non-extremist Dutch web discussion groups. For example, in the first days after the murder the owner of a site for posting condolences about the murder had to remove more than 5,000 anti-Muslim and anti-Moroccan statements.

The KLPD (the National Dutch Police Services Agency) recorded the following information, which was made known to the Dutch NFP (DUMC); however, this information has not been published through the KLPD, but was reported by the Dutch NFP:

- In the period 23 November 2004-13 March 2005, there were 44 violent incidents against Muslim properties.
- Mosques and Islamic schools were the target of violence on 31 occasions.

In 2004 and 2005, so-called ‘**Lonsdale**’ youth became synonymous with right-wing extremism. The following are a list of incidents apparently involving ‘Lonsdale’ youth as perpetrators, which have been noted by a number of sources, including the Dutch Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, in 2005<sup>160</sup>:

- February, Venray: Violent confrontation between Turkish and Lonsdale youth
- February, Veenendaal: Violent confrontation between Lonsdale youth and Moroccan youth
- March, Venray: Assault on Moroccan children
- March, Geldrop: Violent confrontation between Muslim youth and Lonsdale youth
- April, Venray: Violent confrontation between Muslim youth and Lonsdale youth
- April, Berlikum: Racist vandalism by Lonsdale youth
- January, Venray: Vandalism against Turkish mosque
- February, Venray: Vandalism against Turkish mosque
- February, Haarlem: Arson attempt against Islamic school
- February, Roelofarendsveen: Vandalism – three times – against a Muslim family home
- March, Oldenzaal: Arson attack on mosque
- March, Uden: Arson attack on Islamic school
- April, Harderwijk: Racist graffiti on mosque
- February, Hilvarenbeek: Threatening letter received by Muslim family

## Austria

### Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from other sources

The NGO **ZARA** collects allegations and information on discrimination and racist violence against all vulnerable minorities. In its 2004 and 2005 Racism Reports ZARA referred to the following incidents, among others:

- A Jordanian man suffered discrimination and abuse at work. Whereas other employees received full time contracts, he was kept in a part time position. His colleagues regularly assaulted him verbally as “*camel driver*” and “*Arab-arse*” and made fun of him for not drinking alcohol. The situation escalated when he was badly beaten up by two colleagues during lunch break, leading to a six week sick-leave. He and the employer agreed on terminating his

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<sup>160</sup> See for more information on the problems with “Lonsdale-youth” in the Netherlands: Van Donselaar, J. and Rodrigues P. (2004) *Monitor Racisme & Extreem Rechts, zesde Rapportage*, Amsterdam/Leiden: Anne Frank Stichting/Universiteit Leiden; Van Donselaar, J. and Rodrigues P. (2004) *Annex. Monitoring racism and the extreme right, sixth report: Developments following the murder of Theo van Gogh*, Amsterdam/Leiden: Anne Frank Stichting/Universiteit Leiden.

- contract. In January 2005, a case for discrimination on ethnic and religious grounds was made before the Equal Treatment Commission.<sup>161</sup>
- A woman wearing an Islamic headscarf reported repeated experiences of racism: At a bus stop, a drunken man told a bystander that she was a shame for Austria wearing the headscarf and she had better bugger off somewhere else. In the street, she was abused as “dirty sow” and “Turkish pig”, people threw money before her feet, while others spat at her<sup>162</sup>.
  - In 2004, 2 per cent of all graffiti brought to the attention of ZARA was Islamophobic in character. In addition, 3 per cent of all graffiti brought to the attention of ZARA was specifically hostile to Turks. In 2003 the figure was 2 per cent, and in 2002 3 per cent<sup>163</sup>.
  - A Muslim woman wearing a headscarf was attacked in a store by the shop assistant who kicked and punched her in the face. The incident was reported to the police and court proceedings were instigated.<sup>164</sup>
  - September 2005: A stone was thrown by unknown perpetrators through the window of a mosque in Linz during morning prayers. The incident was reported to the police<sup>165</sup>.
  - December 2005: A Muslim woman wearing a headscarf was insulted by another woman in Innsbruck “Barbarian with no culture, go back home!” and, “You certainly bought your visa, you terrorist!”<sup>166</sup>

## Poland

### Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from other sources

The following incidents were reported directly to the Polish NFP - the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights:

- The Muslim Students Society informed the Polish NFP about three letters received in 2005 containing information on the bad treatment of Muslims detained for investigation purposes. The first letter described a case of detaining an individual innocent of charges. The second concerned two persons forced to eat pork and punished upon refusal. The third described the circumstances of a person mistreated by jail officials and fellow inmates. The Muslim Students Society representatives received no response to respective queries addressing jail management, and therefore have decided not to pursue the action further.
- Part of the Polish Muslim Association’s website is devoted to media reports on Islam. Some of the articles referred to on the website are considered by the Association to be offensive; for example – one article contained suggestions

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<sup>161</sup> ZARA Racism Report 2004, case No 121, p.26

<sup>162</sup> ZARA Racism Report 2004, case No 19, p.7 (no date provided)

<sup>163</sup> ZARA (2005), *Rassismus Report 2004. Einzelfall-Bericht über rassistische Übergriffe und Strukturen in Österreich, Schwerpunkt-Thema: Rassismus & Wirtschaft*, Wien, p.17

<sup>164</sup> ZARA Racism Report 2005, case No 22, p.14 (no date provided)

<sup>165</sup> Initiative muslimischer ÖsterreicherInnen (25.09.2005), „Steinwurf auf Linzer Moschee“, available at: <http://mund.at/archiv/september5/aussendung270905.htm#04>, (06.10.2005)

<sup>166</sup> ZARA Racism Report 2005, case No 9, p.8

about the Association's close ties with terrorist organisations, including the suggestion of links between the Association's on-line web service and the recruitment methods used by fundamentalist sects<sup>167</sup>.

## Slovak Republic

### Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from official sources

On the basis of interviews with the representatives of the Muslim community in the Slovak Republic<sup>168</sup>, the Slovakian NFP concluded that physical attacks against Muslims or Muslim targets are declining due to increased police action against extremist groups. However, there were several verbal attacks registered involving women wearing the headscarf – mainly on public transport – but none of these instances were reported to the police.

## Finland

### Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from official sources

On the basis that particular countries – such as Morocco, Pakistan and Turkey – have majority Muslim populations, incidents against people from these countries can be extracted from existing police or prosecution/court files and used as a rough indicator – or proxy – for incidents against Muslims.

The annual police reports on racist crime, which incorporate a broad range of incidents from discrimination to incitement to racial hatred, provide comprehensive information on incidents with a breakdown of victims according to nationality. In addition, the Finnish data is available in an easily accessible form that does not require a formal request for data to the relevant ministry.

For 2004 the Finnish Annual Police Report figures indicated that the largest victim groups by nationality were, in declining order<sup>169</sup>:

- Finland: 253 incidents (representing 46.5 per cent of cases) – a little under 50 per cent of Finnish citizens were of foreign background, and a little less than 33 per cent were Finnish Roma.
- Somalia: 57 incidents (representing 10.5 per cent of cases)
- Russia: 34 incidents (representing 6.3 per cent of cases)
- Turkey: 28 incidents (representing 5.1 per cent of cases)
- Iraq: 26 incidents (representing 4.8 per cent of cases)

<sup>167</sup> Amendment to an article by Paulska, A. (2005) "Polskie dzieci Allaha" ["Allah's Polish Children"], in: *Nowe Państwo*, 03.2005

<sup>168</sup> Slovak Republic NFP, personal interview conducted with Mr Hasna and Mr Sbenaty on 04/05/2005.

<sup>169</sup> Keränen, T. (2005), *Poliisin tietoon tullut rasistinen rikollisuus Suomessa 2004*, pp.25-26. Espoo: Poliisiammatikorkeakoulun tiedotteita 40:2005

- Iran: 16 incidents (representing 2.9 per cent of cases)

For 2004 the Finnish annual police report figures indicated that victims whose country of birth is a predominantly Muslim country were from<sup>170</sup>: Somalia (81); Iraq (31); Turkey (31); Iran (18); Afghanistan (9); Ethiopia (9); Sudan (8); Morocco (7); Egypt (4); Saudi-Arabia (4); Syria (3); Algeria (2); United Arab Emirates (2); Kuwait (2); Pakistan (2); Tunisia (2); Jordan (1); Lebanon (1); Turkmenistan (1); Uzbekistan (1).

In summary, the 2005 Annual Police Report for Finland indicates that victims of racist crime who were born in a predominantly Muslim country made up 40 per cent of all victims of racist crime in 2004.

It may be worth repeating some words of caution:

(1) Using nationality as a proxy for ‘Muslim’ does not indicate that an incident was Islamophobic in nature. There is no evidence of the victim actually being Muslim. However, it can present a general guide to incidents against Muslims in the absence of anything else.

(2) Finally, data based on ‘nationality’ by country of birth has to be interpreted with caution for the following reasons:

- It excludes Muslims who were born in an EU Member State
- It should not be confused with data collection on ‘national minorities’, which is a specific term applied to recognised national minorities in some Member States
- There is no guarantee that people of a certain nationality would self-identify as ‘Muslim’.

### **Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from other sources**

Finland, like the UK, has a tradition of research in the area of crime and victimisation. As noted earlier, Finnish police crime statistics are broken down to provide great detail about the characteristics of both offenders and victims – this in itself is a rare undertaking in the EU25.

Following in this research tradition, in 2001 an independent victim survey was conducted on six migrant groups – Albanians, Arabs (this group consists of migrants from Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria), Somalis, Vietnamese, Russians and Estonians<sup>171</sup>.

The survey found that 55 per cent of those respondents who had been a victim of an assault and battery offence at least once during the past 12 months could be considered as Muslim – that is, they were either Somalian or “Arab”. 38 per cent of

<sup>170</sup> Keränen, T. (2005), *Poliisin tietoon tullut rasistinen rikollisuus Suomessa 2004*, pp. 58-59. Espoo: Poliisiammatikorkeakoulun tiedotteita 40:2005

<sup>171</sup> Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., Liebkind, K. & Vesala, T. (2002), *Rasismi ja syrjintä Suomessa: Maahanmuuttajien kokemuksia*, Helsinki: Gaudeamus.

those respondents who had been a victim of a malicious damage offence at least once during the past 12 months could be considered as Muslim.

## Sweden

### Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from official sources

The Chancellor of Justice in Sweden keeps records of cases, which can include references to incidents of an anti-Muslim nature. Having gone through this list of cases, the Swedish NFP identified a non-exhaustive list of anti-Muslim incidents; for example:

- 2004: A leaflet containing Islamophobic messages was sent to a prison. The Chancellor of Justice's office passed the case on to be dealt with further by the local police authority.
- 2004: A leaflet from a local political party about Islam – Skånepartiet, which is based in the south of Sweden – was reported by the local police authority as “*incitement to racial hatred*”. The Chancellor of Justice passed the case back to the local police authority to be dealt with further.

### Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from other sources

The Swedish NFP has collected information on anti-Muslim incidents directly from four major Muslim organisations, which come under the umbrella organisation ‘**Swedish Muslim Council**’. The NFP also looked at two media databases for reports on anti-Muslim incidents (Presstext and Medieakivet); the following is a selection of anti-Muslim incidents identified from these various sources.

- Gross assault (2005): Muslim men beaten badly in the street. A 21 and 22 year old man, with connections to the Nazi organisation Sweden Resistance Movement, were sentenced to one and half years imprisonment<sup>172</sup>.
- Vandalism (2004): The windows of a Stockholm mosque were smashed. The incident was reported to the police<sup>173</sup>.
- Vandalism and incitement to hatred (2005): Stickers with anti-Muslim messages were put on the outside of a mosque. Some of the stickers were produced by the National Socialist Front. Stickers bore the messages “*Keep Sweden Swedish*” and “*mosques in Sweden – no thanks*”. The incident was reported to the police<sup>174</sup>.
- Vandalism (2005): The windows of the Söderhamns Islamic Culture society's meeting place were broken<sup>175</sup>.

<sup>172</sup> Sundsvalls Tidning (local newspaper).

<sup>173</sup> The incident was reported to the Swedish NFP by the Stockholm mosque.

<sup>174</sup> The incident was reported to the Swedish NFP by the Stockholm mosque.

<sup>175</sup> Hälsingekuriren (local newspaper)

## United Kingdom

### Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from official sources

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) publishes information on its website, for England and Wales, about the number of cases dealt with by the service in which the victim's actual or perceived religion was noted.

This data refers only to cases that have come to the attention of the prosecution service. Therefore, the numbers below represent only the 'tip of the iceberg' when it comes to the actual number of religiously aggravated incidents against Muslims and other religious denominations.

According to the Crown Prosecution Service's 'Racist Incident Monitoring Annual Report 2003-2004' (covering the period 1 April 2003-31 March 2004), the following cases were recorded under the section of the report on 'religiously aggravated crime' in which the victim's actual or perceived religion was Muslim.

**Table 9:** Crown Prosecution Service – cases, under 'religiously aggravated crime', where victims' religion is identified (2003-2004)<sup>176</sup>

Victim of the following offence	Muslim	Hindu	Sikh	Christian	Jewish	Jehovah's Witness
Public order	6		1	3	2	
Assault	8	1	1	1		1
Criminal damage	1	1		1	2	
Harassment	6	1		2	1	
Other	1			1		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	3	2	8	5	1

The actual or perceived religion of the victim in 22 of the 44 cases reported to the Director was Muslim (50 per cent) (in 40 cases religion was identified and in four cases it was unknown).

According to the Crown Prosecution Service's 'Racist Incident Monitoring Annual Report 2004-2005' (covering the period 1 April 2004-31 March 2005), the following cases were recorded under the section of the report on 'religiously aggravated crime' in which the victim's actual or perceived religion was Muslim.

<sup>176</sup> Available at <http://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/reports/rims03-04.html#41> (15.11.2005)

**Table 10:** Crown Prosecution Service – cases, under ‘religiously aggravated crime’, where victims' religion is identified (2004-2005)<sup>177</sup>

Victim of the following offence <sup>178</sup>	Muslim	Christian	Hindu	Mormon	Religion Unknown
Public order	9				2
Assault	7	1		1	2
Criminal damage	6	1	1		
Harassment	1	2	1		
Other					
TOTAL	23	4	2	1	4

The actual or perceived religion of the victim in 23 of the 34 cases reported to the Director was Muslim (67%).

A word of caution – although the above presents information on Muslim victims in specific cases, under the category ‘religiously aggravated crime’, it does not indicate specifically that these cases were Islamophobic in nature.

### ‘Faith hate’ crimes – the London bombings

Data collected by the London Metropolitan Police Service on 'faith hate' incidents presents some interesting findings which can be cautiously interpreted as an indicator of increased incidents against Muslims in the immediate aftermath of the London bombings.

This data refers to incidents that are initially recorded by the police as potentially ‘faith hate’ crimes. In other words, incidents that have not definitively been recorded as faith hate crimes in a court of law. As a reflection of this, faith hate incidents as recorded by the police exceed those recorded by the CPS.

Unfortunately, publicly available police data on reported faith hate includes incidents against Muslims alongside other faith-related incidents. In the same way, publicly available police data on 'hate crime' incorporates all incidents that can come under this generic heading; namely – race hate, faith hate, homophobic hate crime etc.

In the aftermath of the bombings – 7 July 2005<sup>179</sup> – there was an upsurge in 'faith hate' incidents recorded by the London Metropolitan Police Service, as indicated

<sup>177</sup> Available at: <http://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/docs/rims04-05.pdf> (30/10/06)

<sup>178</sup> A case may have more than one victim (just as it may have more than one defendant).



below. The figures below do not distinguish between different types of 'faith hate' incidents – for example, between antisemitic and anti-Muslim incidents.

**Table 11:** Sample of 'faith hate' incidents, recorded on a weekly basis, after the July 2005 London bombings<sup>180</sup>

'Faith Hate'	2004	2005
20 - 26 June	14	16
27 June - 3 July	8	15
4 - 10 July	11	68
11 - 17 July	22	92
18 - 24 July	20	67
25 - 31 July	19	79
1 - 7 August	7	60
8 - 14 August	9	35
15 - 21 August	10	28
22 - 28 August	6	21
29 Aug - 4 Sep	8	19
5 Sep - 11 Sep	23	17

The above figures show a marked increase in the number of recorded 'faith hate' incidents in the period immediately following the bombings compared with the same period in 2004. These figures do not distinguish between different types of 'faith hate' incidents – for example, between antisemitic and anti-Muslim incidents. However, given the supporting evidence from NGOs of increased anti-Muslim incidents in the aftermath of the bombings, we can assume with some degree of certainty that the great proportion of this marked increase was the result of incidents against Muslim or assumed Muslim targets. Most of the reported incidents were classified as verbal or minor physical assaults, with some property damage and attacks on mosques according to Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner Tarique Ghaffur<sup>181</sup>.

More positively, the number of reported incidents reduced to normal levels a few weeks after the bombings, with 2005 faith hate figures in the week 5-11 September falling below those recorded in the same period in 2004.

<sup>179</sup> On 7th July 2005 a series of bombs were set off in the London underground and on a double-decker bus in a coordinated attack that killed over 50 people and injured hundreds. The bombers were young British-Muslim men, but their victims were representative of multicultural London, and included both Muslims and people of other faiths. On 21st July there were four more attempted attacks on London's public transport system, which resulted in no injuries or deaths.

<sup>180</sup> EUMC (2005) The Impact of 7 July 2005 London Bomb Attacks on Muslim Communities in the EU, Vienna: EUMC, p.14.

<sup>181</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/england/london/4740015.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/london/4740015.stm) (4/8/05)

The EUMC was thus able to report in November 2005<sup>182</sup> that “the strong stand taken by political and community leaders both in condemning the attacks and defending the legitimate rights of Muslims saw a swift reduction in such [racist] incidents”<sup>183</sup>. This message was picked up and repeated by the British and foreign media and helped prevent the demonisation of the Muslim community in Britain.

In contrast, in other Member States where data collection on ‘hate crime’ takes place, there is typically no breakdown of published figures with respect to religiously motivated or faith hate crime – the exception being data collection on antisemitic incidents in some Member States (reflecting the historical legacy of the Holocaust).

The UK Home Office currently conducts the largest victim survey of its kind in the world, the British Crime Survey (BCS), which directly asks a random sample of the population about their experiences of criminal victimisation. The survey moved to an annual cycle in 2001-02, and currently samples over 50,000 people each year. Within the survey's normal sampling framework few ethnic minority British citizens are selected at random for questioning about their experiences as victims of crime. Therefore, at different times, starting in 1988, the survey has been complemented by an ethnic minority booster sample. This entails over-sampling ethnic minorities in order to ensure sufficient numbers for a meaningful analysis of the findings according to different variables for ethnicity, as based on the UK census.

In accordance with the official UK census, the categories used to measure a respondent's ethnicity are: Black; White; Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Chinese; Mixed Race; Other. The categories 'Pakistani' and 'Bangladeshi' can be used as a proxy for 'Muslim'.

The core sample of the 2000 British Crime Survey captured at random only 92 respondents who considered their ethnicity to be 'Pakistani' and 70 respondents who considered their ethnicity to be 'Bangladeshi'. The booster sample captured an additional 676 Pakistani respondents and an additional 220 Bangladeshi respondents. Adding these samples together for each ethnic group, the total number of Pakistani respondents was 768, and the total number of Bangladeshi respondents was 290<sup>184</sup>.

The on-line results from the 2000 British Crime Survey (BCS) compares three sweeps of the BCS, 1994, 1996 and 2000, which respectively report on respondents' experiences in 1993, 1995 and 1999, and indicates the risk of being a victim of racially motivated crime according to ethnicity – in Table 12 below.

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<sup>182</sup> EUMC (2005) *The Impact of 7 July 2005 London Bomb Attacks on Muslim Communities in the EU*, Vienna

<sup>183</sup> EUMC (2005) *The Impact of 7 July 2005 London Bomb Attacks on Muslim Communities in the EU*, Vienna: EUMC, p.3.

<sup>184</sup> Home Office Research Study 223 'Crime, Policing and Justice: the experience of ethnic minorities. Findings from the 2000 British Crime Survey'; [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors223.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors223.pdf) - p. 2

**Table 12:** Percentage of respondents indicating they were victim of a racially motivated incident (including threats) – 1994, 1996 and 2000 BCS data<sup>185</sup>.

Respondents' self-defined ethnicity	Percentage respondents indicating they were victim of a racially motivated incident (including threats)		
	1993 (1994 BCS)	1995 (1996 BCS)	1999 (2000 BCS)
White	0.4	0.5	0.3
Indian	2.6	4.9	3.6
<b>Pakistani/Bangladeshi</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>4.2</b>
Black	3.7	3.9	2.2

As the table above shows, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, when grouped together as a single category (which is used here, cautiously, as a proxy for respondents' potential Muslim identity), were consistently found to be more at risk of being a victim of racially motivated crime than the other groups surveyed: Indian, Black (which incorporates Afro-Caribbeans and Black Africans), and White.

Many racist incidents are not isolated experiences, but are often part of repeated harassment, threats and victimisation experienced by an individual or a family. Given this, the same report calculated incidence rates for racist victimisation (that is, the number of racially motivated incidents per 10,000 adults) on the basis of the survey's results. Incidence rates were calculated for the 1994, 1996 and 2000 British Crime Surveys, each of which presents data for the previous year – see Table 13.

**Table 13:** Trends in rates of racially motivated victimisation per 10,000 adults<sup>186</sup>

Reported victimisation by respondents	Black			Pakistani/Bangladeshi		
	1993	1995	1999	1993	1995	1999
Vandalism <sup>187</sup>	230	132	113	550	620	358
Threats <sup>188</sup>	127	324	112	274	764	280
Violence <sup>189</sup>	237	197	174	311	364	129

Comparing combined figures for respondents with Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnicity with those of respondents with Black ethnicity indicates that - with the sole

<sup>185</sup> Home Office Research Study 223 'Crime, Policing and Justice: the experience of ethnic minorities. Findings from the 2000 British Crime Survey'; [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors223.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors223.pdf) - p. 23

<sup>186</sup> Home Office Research Study 223 'Crime, Policing and Justice: the experience of ethnic minorities. Findings from the 2000 British Crime Survey'; [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors223.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors223.pdf) p. 25

<sup>187</sup> Vandalism - meaning risk per household; Home Office Research Study 223 'Crime, Policing and Justice: the experience of ethnic minorities. Findings from the 2000 British Crime Survey'; [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors223.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors223.pdf) p. 25

<sup>188</sup> Threats - threats include any threats made to a respondent or threats made against a respondent to a third party; Home Office Research Study 223 'Crime, Policing and Justice: the experience of ethnic minorities. Findings from the 2000 British Crime Survey'; [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors223.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors223.pdf) p. 25

<sup>189</sup> Violence - comprises wounding, common assault, robbery and snatch thefts from the person; Home Office Research Study 223 'Crime, Policing and Justice: the experience of ethnic minorities. Findings from the 2000 British Crime Survey'; [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors223.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors223.pdf) p. 25

exception of 'violence' in 1999 – the former are more likely to be victims of racially motivated crime. The same general pattern applies when we compare respondents with Pakistani/Bangladeshi ethnicity with Indian or White respondents.

The more recent 2006 Home Office publication on 'Black and minority ethnic groups' experiences and perceptions of crime, racially motivated crime and the police: findings from the 2004/05 British Crime Survey' presents an overview of research findings based on broad ethnic classification categories used in the 2001 UK Census; for example, with respect to this report's interests, 'Asian' and 'Asian British'. Although the report does not offer a detailed breakdown of Pakistani or Bangladeshi respondents' experiences of criminal victimisation it provides some insights with respect to the more specific categories of 'Asian-Bangladeshi', 'Asian-Pakistani' and 'Asian-Indian' groups. For example, the report states that: "*Asian Pakistanis were at higher risk of total BCS [British Crime Survey] crimes than Asian-Bangladeshis and Asian-Indians. Asian-Pakistanis were also at higher risk of all BCS crime compared with the White group.*"<sup>190</sup>

In sum, the British Crime Survey currently provides the most detailed information in Europe about people's self-identified experiences of racially motivated crime according to self-identified ethnic groups. Although the survey does not look specifically at anti-Muslim or Islamophobic crime, it offers a valuable guide to crimes committed against respondents from a Pakistani or Bangladeshi background, which can be used as the closest proxy indicator to 'Muslim' in the absence of further data or analysis.

### **Information on potentially Islamophobic incidents from other sources**

In the UK, which is well-served by NGOs working to collect reports of anti-Muslim incidents, a number of organisations record incidents; for example: The Islamic Human Rights Commission, The Muslim Youth Helpline, and the Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR).

**FAIR** is the UK's leading NGO on Islamophobia, with the aim of both raising awareness and challenging the phenomenon. FAIR keeps an incident log on Islamophobic incidents, based on media reports and, to a lesser extent, FAIR's own advocacy casework.

FAIR recorded the following in the period 2004-2005<sup>191</sup>:

- Over 50 cases of violence against Muslim property, including places of worship.
- Over 100 cases of verbal threats and abusive behaviour aimed at members of the Muslim community.

<sup>190</sup> Jansson, K. (2006) Black and minority ethnic groups' experiences and perceptions of crime, racially motivated crime and the police: findings from the 2004/05 British Crime Survey', London: Home, p.9. Office; more information available at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/rdsolr2506.pdf>

<sup>191</sup> More information available at <http://www.fairuk.org/research/FAIRuk-ResearchData-IslamophobicIncidentLog.pdf>

## 5. Data availability and policy implications

As noted repeatedly earlier, there is generally a severe lack of official data collection throughout the EU on the extent and nature of criminal victimisation, including racially/religiously motivated crime in general. The barriers to ethnic and/or religious identity data collection that continue to be offered by many Member States make it difficult to gain insight into the extent of 'Islamophobic' incidents. Thus criminal justice authorities - from the police through to prosecutors - are currently working without informed knowledge about the number and nature of incidents against Muslims.

Furthermore, social, economic and political integration policies directed at Muslims need to be based on comprehensive and reliable data. Policy responses to urban deprivation and scenes of social unrest – which have emerged in Muslim communities in recent years – are currently under-informed by specific data on the communities concerned.

Urgent consideration should therefore be given to the desirability and feasibility of collecting information on “Islamophobic” incidents - at least in Member States with sizeable Muslim populations.

In an effort to ensure ‘good practice’ policy initiatives for Muslim communities, data collection and accompanying policies should be developed with the active cooperation of Muslim communities. In comparison with the present policy focus of governments and security agencies on radical Islam as a security threat there is a dearth of data on Muslim communities, in general, and on their experiences of Islamophobia, in particular.

## PART III – Promoting integration - combating Islamophobia

*“Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States”*<sup>192</sup>. This principle was identified and adopted by the European Council in the conclusions of its Thessaloniki meeting in June 2003. Action by Member States to ensure non-discrimination in key areas of social life and particularly employment and education is therefore crucial for the successful integration of all minority ethnic communities.

Although religion is not a competence of the European Union per se, both the European Commission and the European Parliament have stressed the importance of intercultural dialogue for community cohesion, while the Justice and Home Affairs Council in its December 2005 meeting specifically noted the need to develop dialogue with Muslim communities<sup>193</sup>. In October 2005 the European Commission adopted a proposal to declare 2008 “European Year of Intercultural Dialogue”<sup>194</sup>.

The 2005 European Commission Communication "Common Agenda for Integration Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union"<sup>195</sup> stressed under point 8 that *‘the practice of diverse cultures and religions is guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights and must be safeguarded, unless practices conflict with other inviolable European rights or with national law’*. In this context the Commission proposed to facilitate intercultural and inter-religious dialogue at European level, engaging various stakeholders including religious and humanist organisations. At national level it proposed developing constructive intercultural dialogue and thoughtful public discourse, as well as promoting inter- and intra-faith dialogue platforms between religious communities and /or between communities and policy-making authorities.

A variety of other measures, such as the Community Action Programmes to combat discrimination designed to support activities combating discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, the EQUAL Initiative, the Socrates and Youth Programmes provide funding for projects that facilitate directly or indirectly intercultural dialogue.

<sup>192</sup> Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European parliament, the European Social and Economic Committee and the Committee of the Regions, *A Common Agenda for Integration Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union*, Brussels, 1.9.2005 COM(2005) 389 final

<sup>193</sup> Council of the European Union, 14390/05 (Presse 296), Press Release, 2696th Council Meeting, Justice and Home Affairs, Brussels, 1-2 December 2005, p.9 available at [http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/87292.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/87292.pdf) (12.05.2006)

<sup>194</sup> Commission Proposal IP/05/1226 of 05/10/2005, available at <http://www.europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/1226&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

<sup>195</sup> Available at [http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2005/com2005\\_0389en01.doc](http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2005/com2005_0389en01.doc) (12.05.2006)

However, the concept of social integration and community cohesion is addressed primarily in the context of immigration and many Member States have developed relevant initiatives and policies. Nevertheless, Muslim communities in many Member States, such as France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, Greece, etc. are also composed of country nationals. Some Member States have therefore also put in place community cohesion policies and measures in support of minority ethnic or religious communities. Many of these initiatives are based in large cities and towns where migrants are concentrated, and where particular problems exist with respect to social marginalisation, unemployment and discrimination. However, most of these initiatives are general in nature and, although they can incorporate Muslim communities, they do not necessarily target them.

What follows is a list of selected 'good practice' initiatives undertaken in various contexts that specifically focus on Muslim communities aiming to promote integration and community cohesion policies, including initiatives that set out to either directly or indirectly combat Islamophobia. The list is not exhaustive, but provides an insight into an extensive range of initiatives reported by the RAXEN National Focal Point reports. The list of initiatives is divided between 'official' government initiatives, and other 'non-official' initiatives.

## 1. Selected official initiatives addressing Muslim integration and Islamophobia

### Belgium

#### *Intercultural dialogue*

- Immigration has changed the demographic composition of Belgium. There is currently a diversification of ideological, philosophical and religious inclinations. This new development generates a host of questions, difficulties and concerns among different groups in society. For certain groups this has resulted in a radicalisation of values, beliefs and action, sometimes leading to political and religious extremism. The Federal Government launched a dialogue addressing the core issues of interculturalism. This Inter-cultural Dialogue<sup>196</sup>, officially established on February 23 2004, focuses on four themes: the fundamental principles of the functioning of public services (equality, non discrimination and neutrality) and its implementation in an inter-cultural context; citizenship as a remedy against the fear of others; equality between man and woman as an emancipation value; and the place and recognition of the expression of religious belonging in a democratic and pluralist society.

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<sup>196</sup> The report on the intercultural dialogue is available at <http://www.divesite.be>, (05.05.2006)

## Denmark

### *Integration*

- On 18 April 2005 the Minister of Integration, Rikke Hvilshøj, met seven imams to discuss integration. The meeting was unique as it was the first time that a Danish minister had met officially with imams to discuss such a subject.
- Christian churches have been active in organising conferences, talks and inter-faith cooperation, including members from Muslim communities. Some of these networks and conferences have been financially supported by the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs.<sup>197</sup>

## Germany

### *Integration*

- The Federal Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration plays an active role in promoting the integration of Muslim communities. The Commissioner has called for further efforts to incorporate Muslims and the Islamic faith into society, for a open discussion about gender inequality in parts of the Muslim communities, and for a more determined fight against radical-Islamic tendencies<sup>198</sup>. Furthermore, the Commissioner has been involved in several expert conferences on these topics to increase public awareness and contribute to a more objective discussion on the integration of Muslims. In 2004, the Federal Commissioner initiated – in cooperation with the Theological Media and Information Service REMID – the Migration and Religion Network aiming to organise expert conferences on the Islamic faith and to establish a website providing a broad range of relevant information on, amongst other things, Islam and Muslims in Germany<sup>199</sup>.

## Greece

### *Political participation*

- PASOK, the Greek main opposition party, invited in May 2006 a Greek Muslim woman, 28-year-old lawyer Gulbeyaz Karahasan, to run as its candidate for the Drama-Kavala-Xanthi prefecture in north-eastern Greece. One member of the Greek Parliament is currently a Muslim, while around 250 Muslims are local authority elected representatives in Thrace.

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<sup>197</sup> More information available at <http://religionsmoede.dk> (12.05.2006)

<sup>198</sup> The most significant document published by the Commissioner is called “Fighting Islamism – Incorporating the Islam: 20 Suggestions”. For further relevant documents on “integration and Islam/religion” published by the Commissioner see: [www.integrationsbeauftragte.de/gra/themen/826.php](http://www.integrationsbeauftragte.de/gra/themen/826.php) (21.03.2006)

<sup>199</sup> Further details available at [www.migration-religion.net/netzwerk.html](http://www.migration-religion.net/netzwerk.html) (05.05.2006)



## France

### *Official support for Foundation for Islam*

- On 20 March 2005, the French Home Office Minister proposed to the “Conseil français du culte musulman” the creation of a foundation for the works of Islam in France (Fondation pour les oeuvres de l’Islam en France)<sup>200</sup>. According to Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin, it is “*the best legal tool to make possible the building of a true Islam of France*”. On the following day, the minister met the four presidents of the major Muslim federations in France who signed, as founders, the document for the creation of the foundation. The foundation will operate as a private institution financed by private donations, the financial management of which will be ensured by the “Caisse des Dépôts” (a major public financial institution). The funds collected by the foundation will allow for mosque building and training of French imams.

### *Inter-faith and inter-cultural initiatives*

- The regional Council of Alsace financially supports inter-cultural and/or inter-religious initiatives led by associations, local communities and religious groups. This is undertaken in an effort to promote dialogue and meetings between cultural and religious communities, with the objective to reinforce social cohesion, mutual respect, tolerance and comprehension. To be eligible, initiatives can take various forms; for example: cultural and festive events, meetings on various topics, charitable or humanitarian actions, and training courses. The projects must encompass at least three of the main religions present in Alsace: Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and Muslim. Initiatives selected by the Regional Council receive 1,500 Euros in funding<sup>201</sup>.

## Luxembourg

### *Education initiative*

- The *Ministère de l’Education Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle* have decided to provide final year pupils with a course on “instruction religieuse et morale” which focuses on inter-faith dialogue and explains the human values of non-Christian religions.

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<sup>200</sup> Official statement of the Home Office (21.03.2005)  
[http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/rubriques/c/c2\\_le\\_ministere/c21\\_actualite/2005\\_03\\_21\\_CFCM](http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/rubriques/c/c2_le_ministere/c21_actualite/2005_03_21_CFCM)  
(04.05.2005)

<sup>201</sup> Further details available at [http://www.region-alsace.fr/V2001/alsace/cdr\\_flash.htm](http://www.region-alsace.fr/V2001/alsace/cdr_flash.htm) (09.05.2005)

## Italy

### *Inter-faith and inter-cultural initiatives*

- The Ministry of the Interior engaged in dialogue with representatives from the Muslim community to enhance mutual understanding.

## Netherlands

### *Integration - municipal initiatives Amsterdam*

- In Amsterdam, the murder of Theo van Gogh (November 2004) was the catalyst for adopting a plan of action to prevent a wider rift between Muslim and non-Muslim native Dutch inhabitants. The action plan, called “Wij, Amsterdammers”<sup>202</sup> ('We, The People of Amsterdam') is aimed at preventing terrorist acts and radicalisation by, amongst other initiatives, combating discrimination and mobilising positive forces in the local communities. The city council has allocated 2.5 million Euros for the plan. The activities include inter-religious celebrations as part of the commemoration of the Second World War, open days in several mosques, and meetings under the motto 'Have lunch with your neighbour'.

### *Integration - municipal initiatives Rotterdam*

- In Rotterdam, the city municipality subsidises SPIOR, Stichting Platform Islamitische Organisaties Rijnmond (Platform Islamic Organisations Rijnmond). The organisation, which was founded in 1990, promotes the interests of Muslims in the city, and represents 42 organisations, ranging from eight ethnic communities to women's and youth organisations. In the recent past, an important task has been to promote better understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims.
- Concerned about the rise of radical Islam and the lack of understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims, Rotterdam council organised nine 'Islam Debates' between February and April 2005. During these debates several issues regarding Islam were discussed ranging from the height of the minarets of new mosques to education and the economic situation. After the final debate, in the presence of the Dutch prime minister, a charter laying out rules of behaviour was developed.

### *Integration - other municipal initiatives*

- Immediately after the murder of Theo van Gogh many city councils organised meetings with Muslim organisations and facilitated meetings between citizens

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<sup>202</sup> Further details available at [http://www.amsterdam.nl/gemeente/volg\\_het\\_beleid/wij\\_amsterdammers](http://www.amsterdam.nl/gemeente/volg_het_beleid/wij_amsterdammers) (06.06.2005)

of Muslim and non-Muslim origins with the emphasis on dialogue<sup>203</sup>. These meetings were aimed at strengthening relations and combating prejudice.

## Austria

### *Police-Islamic community initiative*

- In the framework of a voluntary in-service training course for law enforcement officials, the Islamic Faith Community organised six half day seminars in 2004. Thirty to 40 participants from various regions in Austria took part in these seminars, which were held inside a mosque in Vienna. The seminars aimed to inform participants about Islam and to provide a space for related questions and discussions. Following positive feedback from participants, the Minister of the Interior stated that similar seminars will be held in future<sup>204</sup>.

### *Guidelines on integration*

- The NFP reports that four cities in Austria have developed guidelines on integration: Krems<sup>205</sup>, Guntramsdorf<sup>206</sup> and Traismauer<sup>207</sup> (communes in Lower Austria) and Dornbirn<sup>208</sup> (city in Vorarlberg). Concrete aims and measures regarding Muslims are set out in three guidelines (Krems, Guntramsdorf, Traismauer).

## Portugal

### *Interfaith activities*

- The High-Commissariat for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities and the President of the Republic supported various interfaith activities in Portugal.

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<sup>203</sup> For instance: (2004) “Almelo gaat in gesprek met moslims” [Almelo has dialogue with Muslims], in: *Tubantia* (05.11.2004) and (2005) “Boxmeer praat met moslims” [Boxmeer holds talks with Muslims], in: *De Gelderlander*, (11.11.2005)

<sup>204</sup> RAXEN NFP interview with press officer of the Islamic Faith Community, (02.05.2005), and e-mail information, (05.05.2005)

<sup>205</sup> Further details at <http://www.krems.at> (03.05.2005). *Integrationsleitbild der Stadt Krems mit Maßnahmenplan* available at: <http://root.riskommunal.net/gemeinde/krems/gemeindeamt/download/LeitbildVersion211103.pdf>, (03.05.2005)

<sup>206</sup> Further details at <http://www.guntramsdorf.at>, (03.05.2005)

<sup>207</sup> Further details at <http://www.traismauer.at>, (03.05.2005)

<sup>208</sup> Further details at <http://www.dornbirn.at>, (03.05.2005), *Integrationsleitbild* available at: <http://dornbirn.at/cup/Z100/downloads/67.pdf>, (03.05.2005)

## Sweden

### *Analysing Islamophobia*

- The Integration Board has been given the task by the Government to analyse the situation and development of racism, including Islamophobia, in Sweden. In 2003, the Government decided that the Integration Board should support projects informing people about the dangers of Islamophobia and antisemitism in Sweden. A sum of 500,000 Swedish crowns was set aside for this task<sup>209</sup>.

## Finland

### *Interfaith activities*

- The Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Labour Market organised festivities marking the end of Ramadan. President Tarja Haalonen's invited leaders of the Christian Churches, the Jewish and Muslim communities to participate in a joint discussion.

## United Kingdom

### *Integration - general*

The Government's community cohesion agenda<sup>210</sup> aims to address and reduce Islamophobia at street, neighbourhood and local levels and, in doing so, involve local authorities and the voluntary sector in a range of valuable co-operative activities and programmes. Recent government-based programmes and initiatives focusing on integration Muslim communities include:

- Review of the Government's Interface with the Faith Communities, 29 March 2004: this was launched on 29 March by the Prime Minister, Home Secretary and Home Office Minister Fiona Mactaggart<sup>211</sup>.
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office: The FCO engages with the UK Muslim community on foreign policy affecting the Muslim world<sup>212</sup>.
- Local Government Association (LGA): The LGA has undertaken several initiatives to actively engage and consult with the Muslim community<sup>213</sup>.

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<sup>209</sup> Further details available at <http://samhallsguiden.riksdagen.se/debatt/fragor/svar.asp?rm=0203&nr=855> (05.05.2006)

<sup>210</sup> Further details available at [www.communitycohesion.gov.uk](http://www.communitycohesion.gov.uk) (05.05.2006)

<sup>211</sup> Further details available at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/faith/dialogue> (05.05.2006)

<sup>212</sup> Further details available at [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk) (05.05.2006)

<sup>213</sup> Further details available at [www.lga.gov.uk/Documents/Publication/Faith.pdf](http://www.lga.gov.uk/Documents/Publication/Faith.pdf) (05.05.2006)

### *Integration and equality*

- The Commission for Racial Equality is a publicly funded, non-governmental body set up under the Race Relations Act 1976 to tackle racial discrimination and promote racial equality. The CRE works closely with non-governmental organisations including FAIR (Forum against Islamophobia and Racism) and the Muslim Council of Britain on issues relating to Islamophobia and discrimination against Muslims in the UK<sup>214</sup>.

### *Political participation*

- Four Muslim peers now sit in the House of Lords. The four peers are key official channels of communication for the British Muslim community to be able to voice their opinion and lobby for change. Most importantly, the presence of Muslim peers in the House of Lords forms an important aspect of Muslim representation at political level<sup>215</sup>.
- There are also measures being taken to increase the number of Muslim candidates being selected for seats at the next general election. At present there are two Muslim MPs. Both the MPs represent the Labour Party<sup>216</sup>.

### *Police complaints initiative*

- The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC): 1st April 2004 saw major changes to the way the police complaints system worked in England and Wales. The new system now ensures that people's complaints against the police are handled in an open, efficient and fair way. The IPCC has new powers to supervise, and where necessary, conduct investigations. The IPCC works closely with FAIR (Forum against Islamophobia and Racism) and the Muslim Council of Britain on issues relating to Islamophobia and related racism towards Muslims<sup>217</sup>.

### *Police initiative*

- The London Metropolitan Police Service (the MET) worked extensively with FAIR (Forum against Islamophobia and Racism) and other key organisations on the recent campaign, 'Islamophobia – Don't Suffer in Silence'. This was a major national campaign launched by the MET to combat crimes against Muslims, provide assistance and help to victims of Islamophobia, to improve the MET's monitoring of Islamophobia, and improve relations with the Muslim community<sup>218</sup>.

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<sup>214</sup> Further details available at <http://www.cre.gov.uk/> (05.05.2006)

<sup>215</sup> Further details available at [http://www.parliament.uk/about\\_lords/about\\_lords.cfm](http://www.parliament.uk/about_lords/about_lords.cfm) (05.05.2006)

<sup>216</sup> Further details available at [http://icbirmingham.icnetwork.co.uk/0100news/0100localnews/page.cfm?objectid=12616780&met\\_hod=full&siteid=50002](http://icbirmingham.icnetwork.co.uk/0100news/0100localnews/page.cfm?objectid=12616780&met_hod=full&siteid=50002) (05.05.2006)

<sup>217</sup> Further details available at <http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/> (05.05.2006)

<sup>218</sup> Further details available at <http://www.fairuk.org/pressreleases/2004/pr20041116.pdf> (05.05.2006)

### *Muslim Police Officers*

- The Association of Muslim Police Officers is part of the Metropolitan Police (London). The Association assists Muslims in the police service to observe their faith, promote understanding of Islam within the police service and the wider community, to assist in the recruitment and retention of Muslim staff, and to create a fair and just working environment for all cultural minorities<sup>219</sup>.

### *Prosecution service initiative*

- The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) monitors religiously aggravated crimes, and has consulted with leaders of the Muslim community in improving the CPS's policies and procedures to assist the Muslim community<sup>220</sup>.

### *Education*

- Several local government authorities have developed written guidelines on meeting the pastoral, religious and cultural needs of Muslim pupils. One of the most detailed and helpful was produced in Birmingham in collaboration with Birmingham Central Mosque<sup>221</sup>.
- Several local authorities have developed good practices in addressing and challenging Islamophobia and refer to religious hostility and Islamophobia in their policy documentation. An example of this is Ealing Education Authority<sup>222</sup>.

## 2. Selected civil society faith and community initiatives

### Belgium

#### *Inter-faith dialogue*

- Muslims have been invited to take part in a think-tank working group that focuses on the relationship between Muslims and Christians. Lectures on the Koran and Islam were organised by Kerkwerk Multicultureel Samenleven (Church Work Multicultural Cohabitation) and Vereniging voor ontwikkeling en emancipatie van Moslems (Organisation for the development and emancipation of Muslims). Comparable initiatives are taking place in Brussels

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<sup>219</sup> Further details available at <http://www.metcareers.co.uk/default.asp?action=article&ID=104> (05.05.2006)

<sup>220</sup> More information at [http://www.cps.gov.uk/news/pressreleases/107\\_05.html](http://www.cps.gov.uk/news/pressreleases/107_05.html) (05.05.2006)

<sup>221</sup> More information at [http://salaam.co.uk/themeofthemonth/september03\\_index.php?l=9](http://salaam.co.uk/themeofthemonth/september03_index.php?l=9) (05.05.2006)

<sup>222</sup> More information at <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/LEAS/307.pdf> (05.05.2006)

and Liège. Concerning the Brussels-Capital region, special reference should be made to El Kalima, an organisation that together with its partners promotes inter-cultural dialogue<sup>223</sup>.

## Denmark

### *Inter-faith dialogue*

- In 2000, the Danish Bishops Islam Committee published a report called “Samtale fremmer forståelsen” (Conversation promotes understanding) on cross-cultural dialogue, including that between Muslims and Christians<sup>224</sup>.
- The Islamic-Christian Study Centre<sup>225</sup> (Islamisk-Kristent Studiecenter) works to promote inter-faith dialogue. The purpose of the centre is to strengthen relations and peaceful co-existence between people of Islamic and Christian faith. The centre is well established and publicly recognised.

### *Integration initiative*

- Muslims in Dialogue<sup>226</sup> (Muslimer i Dialog) is an NGO seeking to promote the integration of ethnic minorities and Muslims into Danish society through involvement in social and cultural work. The association works to strengthen human rights, cross-cultural understanding, inter-faith cooperation, and to engage in humanitarian and crime prevention work. The association has 140 members and offers activities ranging from sports to courses on Islam.

### *Inter-faith television debate*

- In 2004, the public service television channel DR2 (Danish Broadcasting Corporation, channel 2) broadcast a series of debates with the title “Talk to God”<sup>227</sup> (Tal med Gud). The programmes hosted a panel of representatives from four different religious beliefs, an imam, a priest, a rabbi and a representative from the Sikh community. The programmes were aired at prime-time and were rated 'very popular'.

## Germany

### *Inter-faith dialogue*

- Several ‘Islam Forums’ have been established with the explicit objective of reducing prejudices and fears towards the Muslim community, and at fostering a critical discussion between representatives of Muslim

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<sup>223</sup> More information at <http://www.elkalima.be>, (05.05.2006)

<sup>224</sup> <http://religionsmoede.dk/bund.php?mainid=7&subid=83> (04.05.05)

<sup>225</sup> <http://www.ikstudiecenter.dk/> (06.05.2005)

<sup>226</sup> [www.M-I-D.dk](http://www.M-I-D.dk) (05.05.05)

<sup>227</sup> More information available at <http://www.foreningen-nydanske.dk/index.html> (06.05.05)

organisations and representatives of the majority society. These forums do not have an official status, but were initiated by the NGO, Interkulturelle Rat<sup>228</sup>.

### *Integration*

- The event “Open Day at the Mosque” initiated by the Zentralrat der Muslime in 1997 takes place annually on October 3. The main focus is on providing information and getting the majority population acquainted with Muslim communities. Local contacts are fostered with the aim of promoting mutual understanding and reducing prejudice. In 2004, the “Open Day” took place under the motto “Muslims: Partners for Security”. An estimated 100,000 people responded to the invitation of the Zentralrat, the Islamrat, and the Association Verband der Islamischen Kulturzentren, with people visiting many of the approximately 1000 mosques which took part in the event<sup>229</sup>.

### *Integration and employment*

- The trade unions, especially the DGB Education Centre with its section 'Migration & Qualification', play a very active role in measures aiming at reducing prejudice in employment. On the basis of several handbooks on “Islam and Employment”, which were compiled by the DGB Education Centre, workshops are offered to members of the works council, shop stewards and representatives of welfare services. The workshop’s main objectives are to present basic information on the Islam and to address specific topics – such as the subject of religious duties (e.g. praying) in the workplace. The workshops explore typical conflicts with Muslim employees, and offer concrete solutions to these conflicts<sup>230</sup>.

### *Integration and education*

- One of the good practice initiatives in the school context was initiated by the Körber Foundation: “Learning from each other: Forum School and Islam”. With this initiative the Foundation – together with the Conference of the Ministers for Education (KMK) – publicly asked schools to present their own successful concepts of how to deal with Islam at school. Seventy-five contributions were handed in nation-wide; the Körber Foundation is planning to release the publication “Islam in the classroom – Impulses for educational work” based on these practical concepts<sup>231</sup>.
- The Abrahamic Forum was founded by the Interkultureller Rat in 2001 with the explicit objective of reducing prejudices against the Jewish and Islamic faiths. A core project within this Forum is the 'Abrahamic Teams', which are sent to schools to present information and launch an open dialogue on

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<sup>228</sup> Micksch, J. (2005) Islamforen in Deutschland. Dialog mit Muslimen, Frankfurt/Main: Lembeck

<sup>229</sup> Muslim-Zeitung, Nov. 2004, p. 1

<sup>230</sup> DGB Bildungswerk (2004) Islam in der Arbeitswelt, Stand (05.10.2004)

<sup>231</sup> More information available at [www.stiftung.koerber.de/praxisforum-schule-islam/presse](http://www.stiftung.koerber.de/praxisforum-schule-islam/presse) (12.05.2006)



theological and practical aspects of the three Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam<sup>232</sup>.

#### *Integration in social services*

- Between 1999 and January 2004 the organisation AktionCourage conducted a project, 'Integration of Muslims and Muslim Organisations in Germany'. This project set out to strengthen cooperation of general social (welfare) services and special social services offered by Muslim organisations. The core objectives were to improve the access of Muslims to social care and to establish permanent cooperation networks between Muslim organisations and those offered by the majority society<sup>233</sup>.

#### *Integration and health*

- Since its foundation in 1988, the Turkish-German Health Foundation (Türkisch-Deutsche Gesundheitsstiftung e.V.) has been examining the specific health problems of Turkish Muslims in Germany, and the implementation of appropriate preventive medical measures. The focus of the foundation is on information campaigns for the Turkish population on illnesses, their causes and methods to treat them, as well as on promoting the training of Turkish doctors and providing information for non-Muslim doctors on the specific needs of Muslim patients<sup>234</sup>.

## Ireland

#### *Educational initiatives on Islam*

- In December 2004 the Chester Beatty Library held a two day conference in Dublin with renowned specialists in Islamic Studies from Ireland, UK, North America and Germany. In January 2005 the Chester Beatty Library also hosted a lunchtime lecture series in association with the Islamic Cultural Centre on the personal experiences of being a Muslim in Ireland. In January 2005 the University College Cork held an 'Islam Awareness Week'. In January 2005 the National University of Ireland Galway held an 'Islam Awareness Week'. In February 2005 the Trinity College Dublin held an 'Islam Awareness Week'. In March 2005 the Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland held a conference on 'Islam and Muslims in Ireland Today'.

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<sup>232</sup> More information available at [www.interkultureller-rat.de/Themen/Abr\\_Forum/Abr\\_Forum\\_allgemein.shtml](http://www.interkultureller-rat.de/Themen/Abr_Forum/Abr_Forum_allgemein.shtml) (12.05.2006)

<sup>233</sup> More information available at [www.aktioncourage.org/ac/projekte/integrmusldeut.htm](http://www.aktioncourage.org/ac/projekte/integrmusldeut.htm) (30.04.2005)

<sup>234</sup> More information available at [www.tdg-stiftung.de](http://www.tdg-stiftung.de) (12.05.2006)

## Italy

### *Inter-faith dialogue*

- In March 2004, a major inter-faith dialogue event entitled “Architects of a plural community” brought together groups such as Italian Muslim Youth, the Union of Italian Jewish Youth, FUCI and the Youth section of the Association of Italian Catholic Workers (ACLI), and shared life experience on political, religious and fraternal issues. The 2004 event between these youth organisations was a continuation of an earlier initiative that started in 2002 and which has yielded a joint document on the rights of citizenship<sup>235</sup>.
- Muslims, Christians and Jews have organised discussions on inter-faith dialogue and peaceful co-existence. Most effort according to the NFP report from Italy was focused on youth.<sup>236</sup>

## Luxembourg

### *Education initiative*

- The school based initiative *médiateurs interculturels* was launched in 1999, at a time when asylum seekers from the former Yugoslavia were arriving in Luxembourg. The scheme was aimed at asylum seekers’ children in primary and secondary schools. The ‘médiateurs’ came from the Balkans, and were either Muslims themselves or were fully knowledgeable about those communities. They encourage communication and mutual understanding between school (teachers) and families (pupils and parents). The initiative has been assessed as ‘excellent’<sup>237</sup>.

## Hungary

### *Training on Islamophobia*

- In June 2004, a six-day training event on ‘Islamophobia and its consequences on young people’ was organised in Budapest by the Council of Europe’s European Youth Centre<sup>238</sup>.

<sup>235</sup> “Identità diverse, uguali diritti”. Open letter edited by Abdallah Kabakebbji (President of Young Italian Muslims), Andrea Causin (National coordinator of the youth of ACLI – Christian Association of Italian Workers), Diletta Cesana (President of the Union of Young Italian Jews), in: Allievi, S., Dal Corso M., (eds) (2005) *Verso i cantieri del dialogo*, Padova: Edizioni Centrooffset.

<sup>236</sup> At one of these meetings an open letter – *Identità diverse, uguali diritti* were edited by Abdallah Kabakebbji (President of Young Italian Muslims), Andrea Causin (National coordinator of the youth of ACLI – Christian Association of Italian workers), Diletta Cesana (President of the Union of Young Italian Jews).

<sup>237</sup> Rapport d’évaluation FER (Fond Européen pour Réfugiés), exercice 2000 et 2001, Claudia Hartmann, May 2002.

<sup>238</sup> More information available at [http://eycb.coe.int/eycbwwwroot/hre/open1.html?url=/eycbwwwroot/hre/eng/socialcoh\\_act.asp](http://eycb.coe.int/eycbwwwroot/hre/open1.html?url=/eycbwwwroot/hre/eng/socialcoh_act.asp) (27.04.2005)

## Austria

### *Inter-faith dialogue*

- An inter-religious commemorative hour for Tsunami victims was held in January 2005<sup>239</sup>, and Christian churches were invited to participate in the preparation of the *Sozialwort*, an initiative to speak out on issues of social concern, in 2004<sup>240</sup>.

### *Literature event*

- In March 2004, the annual event “Literature in March”, in Vienna, was dedicated to “Islam and the West”<sup>241</sup>.

## Poland

### *Inter-faith dialogue*

- The Joint Catholic and Muslim Council is the main organisation engaging in Christian-Muslim inter-faith dialogue. The Council was established in June 1997. It was the intention of the founders of the Council to foster peace, to promote non-aggression in mutual relations, and to prevent conflict through mutual acknowledgement and understanding. The Joint Catholic and Muslim Council was approved by the Conference of the Polish Episcopate, by the Chairman of the Papal Inter-Faith Dialogue Council, and by John Paul II. Muslims from Lithuania, Ukraine, and Belarus have joined the Council. In 2001, acting upon the Council’s initiative, the Polish Episcopate announced an official Islamic Day in the Catholic Church. Annual joint services are held for Catholics and Muslims, with readings from the Bible and the Koran. Academic sessions and a number of cultural events accompany the day.

### *Media initiative*

- A project operated by the “Bond” Association – *Fear Not Islam*<sup>242</sup> – addresses journalists with the goal of providing them with credible information about Islam and Muslims. As part of the project, Polish cities have hosted seminars for journalists and media representatives, attended by experts on Islam and by representatives of the Polish Muslim community.

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<sup>239</sup> Cf. *ORF ON* (19.01.2005) „500 Gäste bei interreligiöser Gedenkstunde für Flutopfer“, available at: [http://religion.orf.at/projekt02/news/0501/ne050119\\_flutgedenken2.htm](http://religion.orf.at/projekt02/news/0501/ne050119_flutgedenken2.htm), (03.05.2005)

<sup>240</sup> Sozialwort des Ökumenischen Rates der Kirchen in Österreich, more information at <http://www.sozialwort.at/>, (03.05.2005)

<sup>241</sup> Literatur im März: Islam und Abendland – der Ursprung des Westens, please see <http://www.alte-schmiede.at/lim2005.htm>, (21.03.2005)

<sup>242</sup> The project was run as part of the PHARE 2002 *Strengthening Anti-Discrimination Policies* programme.

## Slovak Republic

### *Information initiative*

- On 8<sup>th</sup> March 2005 an exhibit of posters and objects devoted to Islam, entitled 'Discover Islam', was put on display in one of Bratislava's shopping malls – Aupark – by the Islamic Foundation of Slovakia. The aim of the exhibit was to provide the public with authentic and credible information about Muslims and Islam. The exhibit aimed to challenge the myths and stereotypes Slovaks hold about Muslims and their faith. The exhibit set out to show that Muslims can enrich Europe and be an asset<sup>243</sup>.

## Sweden

### *Inter-faith dialogue*

- In Sweden, there is co-operation between groups of different religious persuasion – one such example is the project *'Tools for Peace'*<sup>244</sup>. The project was initiated by representatives of three religions in Sweden – Christianity, Islam and Judaism. The project was a follow up to an international conference held in Sweden in 2004 *'Tools for Peace – The role of religion in conflicts'*.

## Finland

### *Inter-faith dialogue*

- Since 2001, the leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran, Catholic and Orthodox Churches, together with the Jewish Community in Finland, the Imam of the Islamic Society of Finland, and the chairman of the Finnish Islam Congregation, have met on a regular basis<sup>245</sup>. In the press release concerning the group's meeting on 7/2/05, the religious leaders emphasised the importance of continuing and deepening inter-faith dialogue in Finland. They also expressed a shared vision of Finland as a multicultural and tolerant society, in which there is understanding between different religions and cultures. The religious leaders also expressed their wish to organise an interdenominational event at the World Athletics Championships, which were held in Helsinki on 6-14.08.2005<sup>246</sup>.

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<sup>243</sup> More information available at <http://www.islamweb.sk> (10.05.2005)

<sup>244</sup> More information available at <http://www.tools-for-peace.net/> (05.04.2006)

<sup>245</sup> More information available at <http://www.ekumenia.fi/index.htm> (10.05.2005)

<sup>246</sup> The press release is available in Finnish at: <http://www.ekumenia.fi/index.htm> (10.05.2005).

## United Kingdom

### *Inter-faith initiatives*

- Inter-faith Network for the UK: The Inter-faith Network runs information services on faith communities and inter-faith issues by linking national and local inter-faith initiatives in the UK, sharing good practice between them through meetings and publications. Their "Building Good Relations with People of Different Faiths and Beliefs" provides guidelines for positive inter-faith dialogue<sup>247</sup>.
- Leaders from the Muslim, Jewish and Christian faiths have now established the Three Faiths Forum which organises conferences, seminars and meeting with national and local politicians<sup>248</sup>.
- Maimonides Foundation: A joint Jewish-Muslim interfaith organisation, which fosters understanding, dialogue, and co-operation between Jews and Muslims through cultural, academic and educational programmes. Inter-faith programmes include, school visits and annual lectures on Islam and Muslims<sup>249</sup>.

### *Education initiatives*

- National Community Cohesion Week, Mon 02 Feb 2004: A national conference organised by The Association of Muslim Schools UK aimed at promoting the community cohesion programme among Muslim communities<sup>250</sup>.
- A number of organisations acts as advisory bodies for delivering best practices on education of Muslim pupils; namely: the Islamic Home Schooling Advisory Network (IHSAN)<sup>251</sup>; the Association of Muslim Schools<sup>252</sup>; the Muslim Educational Trust (UK)<sup>253</sup>.
- The Teachers Union promotes good practice in challenging Islamophobia in schools<sup>254</sup>.

### *Health*

- The Muslim Health Network (MHN) has been established to play a principle role in promoting, and preserving, health and health education amongst Muslim Communities in the UK<sup>255</sup>.

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<sup>247</sup> For further information please see <http://www.interfaith.co.uk/code.htm> (13.05.2006)

<sup>248</sup> More information at [www.threefaithsforum.org.uk](http://www.threefaithsforum.org.uk) (13.05.2006)

<sup>249</sup> FAIR has worked with the Maimonides Foundation on its annual inter-faith lecture series. Further information is available on <http://www.fairuk.org/awareness.htm>. For a full list of programmes organised by the Maimonides Foundation please see <http://www.maimonides-foundation.org/programmes.html> (13.05.2006)

<sup>250</sup> More information at [http://www.mcb.org.uk/mcbdirect/features.php?ann\\_id=215](http://www.mcb.org.uk/mcbdirect/features.php?ann_id=215) (12.05.2006)

<sup>251</sup> More information at <http://www.islamichomeeducation.co.uk/> (12.05.2006)

<sup>252</sup> More information at <http://www.ams.uk.net/> (12.05.2006)

<sup>253</sup> More information at <http://www.muslim-ed-trust.org.uk/> (12.05.2006)

<sup>254</sup> More information at [http://www.teachersunion.org.uk/shared\\_asp\\_files/uploadedfiles/per cent7BC8BC39B7-8CF8-4431-BFAE-168D5CFE2F3C per cent7D\\_Islamophobia.PDF](http://www.teachersunion.org.uk/shared_asp_files/uploadedfiles/per cent7BC8BC39B7-8CF8-4431-BFAE-168D5CFE2F3C per cent7D_Islamophobia.PDF) (12.05.2006)

### 3. EUMC contribution to the development of community integration policies

Community support is essential for the success of integration policies. This means engaging with representatives of community organisations and with members of communities who are often not represented by community representatives or spokespersons. In particular, the experiences, needs and ambitions of youth need to be taken on board when developing such policies.

Lessons can be learned from successful community-based integration initiatives carried out with other migrant and ethnic minority communities in Europe. When confronting the particular needs of young Muslim men, who are perhaps the most marginalised group in many Muslim communities throughout Europe – experiencing below average educational attainment and high unemployment rates – lessons can also be learned from successful policies that have addressed the feelings of marginalisation affecting youth among Europe's majority populations.

For community integration policies to succeed, multi-agency partnerships need to be in place, involving both Muslim and non-Muslim groups, that are able to address the diverse needs of Muslim communities. Public agencies, NGOs and religious organisations should work together to develop, promote, implement and follow through integration policies and initiatives.

To this end the EUMC, with the support of the Committee of the Regions, has organised a series of meetings on 'Integrating Muslim communities at the local level' between representatives of Muslim communities and local government from a number of European cities – namely: Bradford in the United Kingdom, Rotterdam in the Netherlands, Antwerp and Genk in Belgium, Mannheim in Germany and Århus in Denmark.

These meetings have been a follow up to an earlier EUMC project that resulted in the publication of the EUMC's report "Islamic Communities in Five European Cities". In addition, the EUMC's magazine 'Equal Voices' also regularly addresses the subject of Muslims communities, inter-faith community initiatives and integration. For example, Issue 17 was dedicated to the subject 'Religious Communities in the European Union – Managing diversity, facilitating inter-religious dialogue and combating discrimination'. Issue 18 brought together different views from NGOs, representatives of different religious communities, and media experts to explain how they think hate speech can be tackled.

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<sup>255</sup> Muslim Health Network <http://www.muslimhealthnetwork.org/> (12.05.2006)

## Conclusions

This report has gathered information from all EU Member States with widely different histories of, and responses to, issues related to religious diversity, and very different traditions of anti-racism and anti-discrimination awareness and activity. Despite the variety in the nature of the data and information collected, it is evident that Muslims often experience various levels of discrimination and marginalisation in employment, education and housing, and are also victims of negative stereotyping and prejudicial attitudes. It is difficult to attribute such discriminatory phenomena exclusively to religion, as Muslims are likely to become victims of multiple discrimination on the basis of their religion, race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, nationality, gender, and even legal status.

Policy responses to defining, identifying and combating the phenomena of Islamophobia and intolerance and discrimination against Muslims or those perceived to be Muslims should therefore be based on the equality and non-discrimination standards and policy advice of the Council of Europe and United Nations. This is particularly important for the European Union context as a directly relevant body of anti-discrimination legislation has been adopted at the European and national level.

Discrimination against Muslims can therefore be attributed to Islamophobic attitudes, as well as to racist and xenophobic resentment, as these elements are in many cases inextricably intertwined. Racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia become mutually reinforcing phenomena and hostility against Muslims should thus be seen in the context of a more general climate of hostility towards migrants and ethnic minorities.

This report finds that Muslims are vulnerable to discrimination and manifestations of Islamophobia in the form of anything from verbal threats through to physical attacks on people and property. The report presents research and statistical data – mostly through 'proxy' data, referring to nationality and ethnicity – showing that Muslims are often resident in areas with poor housing conditions, while their educational achievement generally falls below national averages and their unemployment rates tend to be higher than average. Muslims tend to be employed in jobs that require lower qualifications and as a group they are over-represented in low-paying sectors of the economy. Thus, many Muslims, particularly young people, face limited opportunities for social advancement and experience social exclusion and discrimination. Yet, given the paucity of available data, it is clear that the true extent and nature of discrimination and Islamophobic incidents against Muslims continues to be under-documented.

At the same time, there are developments which suggest that an awareness of discrimination and the need to react is growing in a number of Member States, including new initiatives to collect better official statistics or to commission research which will identify the scale and nature of the problem more accurately. One reason for this might be the transposition of the Race Equality Directive which has been

completed in some Member States and is still underway in others. One of the key elements of the Directive is the requirement to designate Bodies for the promotion of equal treatment. These bodies should provide independent assistance to the victims of discrimination, conduct surveys and studies, and publish independent reports and recommendations. In addition, the Employment Equality Directive provides a general framework for combating discrimination in employment, including on the ground of religion, and for improving the opportunities for minorities to realise their potential in the labour market. The Directive has also raised awareness of the need to introduce ‘diversity management’ practices drawing attention to the benefits of making cultural/religious allowances at workplaces.

### **Developing integrated policy initiatives aimed at promoting non-discrimination and integration of Muslim communities**

The EUMC believes that Member States need to develop, reinforce and evaluate policies aimed at delivering equality and non-discrimination for Muslim communities, particularly in the fields of employment, education and access to goods and services. The EUMC encourages positive action initiatives aimed at creating an enabling environment for Europe’s diverse Muslim communities to participate fully in mainstream society.

A central question is whether Muslims – secular and religious – feel well integrated in European societies, or whether some experience marginalisation and exclusion. Discriminatory practices resulting from intolerant and prejudicial attitudes towards different cultures could give rise to hopelessness and alienation, particularly among Muslim youth, with a corrosive effect on community cohesion.

Recognition of multi-cultural and multi-faith based societies and action based on this understanding should form the framework for the development of policy and practice. The EUMC believes that measures and practices which tackle discrimination, address social marginalisation and promote inclusiveness should be integrated policy priorities. In particular, the EUMC finds that accessibility to quality education as well as equal opportunities in employment need consideration. Access to public and private goods and services (in particular housing) and participation in civic processes are further key issues to be tackled, particularly at the local and regional level. The demographic profile of the Muslim population is reportedly younger than the general population, indicating that policy interventions aimed at young people should have a strong impact.

The EUMC welcomes Community initiatives to enhance co-ordination and exchange of good practices with regards to integration policies at national and local level, as outlined in the European Commission’s Communication “Common Agenda for Integration Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union”. The Common Basic Principles on Integration (CBPs), adopted by the European Council in November 2004, recognise that participation and equality are fundamental for better integration and a more cohesive society.



In this context it is important to stress that integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by both minority groups and the wider society and requires an effort by both.

### **Understanding and recording manifestations of Islamophobia**

As in previous reports, the EUMC has noted that there is a severe lack of data or official information throughout the EU on, first, the social situation of Muslims and, second, on the extent and nature of Islamophobia. As a result, policy development remains ill-informed due to the lack of reliable and comparable data. Urgent consideration should be given by Member States to the desirability and feasibility of collecting data and information on both “Islamophobic” incidents as well as discrimination directed against Muslims in the key areas of employment, education and housing. Data collection and accompanying policies should be developed, where appropriate, with the active cooperation of Muslim communities.

In the majority of Member States, official data collection sources do not provide detailed information that categorises people as Muslims. While non-governmental organisations provide limited information on the situation of Muslims communities and manifestations of Islamophobia, they cannot be expected to fill this knowledge gap.

The task of documenting manifestations of Islamophobia is particularly challenging in the absence of a common working definition that would facilitate the collection of comparable data.

The richest source of information on direct manifestations of Islamophobia currently rests with reports of racist violence and crime against Muslims – including incitement to hatred, threats and acts of violence of a potentially Islamophobic nature. Yet, few Member States’ criminal legislation includes provisions regarding religiously motivated or aggravated offences, including offences against Muslims. They thus fail to consider that violent or other racist crimes can be fuelled by prejudice towards or hatred of the victim’s faith.

In sum, the real extent of Islamophobic incidents is under-reported at Member State level for the following main reasons: firstly, because people are not encouraged to report such incidents; secondly, because there is no mechanism in place for recording such incidents in the majority of Member States; and thirdly, because victims in general lack confidence in the police.

It is often difficult to identify incidents as Islamophobic, since they may be driven by other motives. Nevertheless, reports of incidents against Muslims (or presumed Muslims) are the ‘best’ available information that can point towards the extent and nature of incidents that are suffered by Muslims across Europe.

## Opinions

The EUMC welcomes the growing awareness of the presence of Islamophobia in Member States and the development of positive initiatives, some of which are highlighted in this report. The analysis of the available data and information, however, pointed to a number of areas where further initiatives could be taken including legislation, employment, education, the role of the media and the support of civil society. In addition, the EUMC is of the opinion that Member States should introduce or make use of existing legislative and/or administrative provisions for positive action.

On this basis and according to its role under Article 2 (e) of its founding Regulation to “formulate conclusions and opinions for the Community and its Member States”, the EUMC proposes the following opinions within a general framework of measures against racism, xenophobia, antisemitism, Islamophobia and related intolerances:

### Implementing legislation

- The EUMC calls on the European Council of Ministers to adopt the Framework Decision (COM 2001/664) proposed by the European Commission in November 2001 on defining a common criminal law approach to racism and xenophobia in the EU and introducing, if adopted, a common framework for effective, proportionate and dissuasive criminal penalties.
- The EUMC calls on Member States to fully transpose the Race Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) and, specifically with regard to religion, the Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC). Member States should consider going beyond the minimum legal requirements and extend the protection against discrimination based on religion to other areas than employment, in particular with regards to education and access to goods and services.
- Member States should implement targeted information activities to ensure that groups vulnerable to discrimination, including Muslims, are fully aware of rights and mechanisms provided by the new anti-discrimination legislation and have confidence in challenging discrimination.
- Member States in their fight against Islamophobia and intolerance and discrimination against Muslims should be guided in their enactment of legislation and accompanying measures by General Policy Recommendations No.5, No.7 and No.8 of the Council of Europe’s European Commission against Racism and Intolerance.
- Member States should ensure that a positive action provision forms part of national legislation to promote racial equality and combat discrimination, particularly on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief. This provision at a minimum should cover the scope of Council Directive 2000/43/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin.

### **Recording Islamophobic incidents**

- The EUMC urges Member States to establish mechanisms to record incidents of racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and Islamophobia. Furthermore, Member States assuming their legal obligations under the Race Equality Directive should provide their specialised bodies with adequate resources to monitor discrimination, support victims and carry out research.
- Member States should consider the desirability and feasibility of specifically collecting information on anti-Muslim incidents.

### **Implementing social integration and inclusion policies for migrants and minorities**

- The EUMC calls upon Member States to implement support measures for migrants and minorities, including Muslims, in order to enhance their social situation, provide them with equal opportunities and prevent their marginalisation and exclusion from mainstream society.
- Member States should establish or support inter-departmental working groups tasked with ensuring that social and economic government policies deliver on the objective of promoting integration on the basis of equality and non-discrimination for all cultural, ethnic and religious minorities.
- Migrants and minorities, including Muslims, should be actively consulted in the formulation of policies and measures aimed at social integration.
- Effective social inclusion strategies should work with a concept of empowerment. Effective empowerment implies that migrants and minorities, including Muslims, are provided with rights and resources that enable them to take responsibility for enhancing their social integration.
- The EUMC encourages Member States to make use of the Common Basic Principles on Integration (CBPs), adopted by the European Council in November 2004, in their integration policies, in order to improve and diversify their integration programmes and policies.

### **Implementing community cohesion policies**

- The EUMC calls upon Member States to develop, where appropriate, community cohesion policies in order to prevent alienation and foster a sense of belonging for all communities by appreciating and valuing the diversity of the different cultures.
- Community cohesion policies should be based upon the respect of the fundamental values of the European Union and seek to build strong relationships between different communities at work, in schools and in residential areas, while utilising positive action in order to enhance equal access to services, housing, employment and education of those in marginalised position.
- Local authorities are closest to the European citizen and have therefore a particular role to play in enhancing effective implementation of community cohesion policies. A lead by local authorities in promoting community cohesion has a positive impact on inter-community relations.

### **Promoting measures in employment**

- The EUMC stresses the serious social consequences of unemployment, and particularly long-term unemployment, especially upon young Muslims. The EUMC welcomes the particular attention given to disadvantaged groups in the European Employment Strategy. Within National Action Plans on Employment, Member States should include specific operational measures against discrimination and exclusion.
- The EUMC calls on Member States to intensify their efforts to improve the situation, by targeting measures at minority youth in particular. Both the Racial Equality and Employment Equality Directives provide for positive action to prevent or compensate for disadvantages linked to racial and ethnic origin, or respectively religion. The EUMC encourages Member States to make use of positive action by encouraging minority youth, including Muslims, to apply for employment and offering targeted vocational training.
- The EUMC encourages public and private sector employers to draw benefits from ‘diversity management’ by making cultural and religious allowances at workplaces.
- National and local public authorities, as service provider and employer could lead on promoting equal access to employment by implementing specific measures to encourage minorities, including Muslims, to seek employment in the public sector. Such policy does have a further positive effect on enhancing equal access to employment for minorities in private enterprises.

### **Promoting education and training measures**

- The EUMC stresses the crucial importance of education and training measures in combating racism, xenophobia, antisemitism, Islamophobia and related intolerances. Equal access to quality education for all is a critical foundation for integration and community cohesion. In this respect, Member States should introduce policies to avoid that minority pupils are placed in separate classes. Segregated forms of education should be either completely abolished or reduced to short-term preparatory classes leading to the integration of minority children into regular schooling.
- Member States should undertake reviews of school textbooks in order to ensure that history of religious groups and migrant groups is presented in a balanced way.
- The EUMC suggests to the Member States to introduce into teacher training a compulsory component requiring them to raise awareness, understanding and respect of the diverse cultures, religions and traditions in the European Union. The discussion of racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and Islamophobia should be part of official school curricula.
- The EUMC encourages the Member States to incorporate anti-racism and diversity training in their police training programmes, including a focus on issues related to Islamophobia and antisemitism.

### **Engaging political parties and civil society**

- The EUMC calls on all political parties in Europe to sign and implement the “Charter of European Political Parties for a Non-Racist Society” which sets out a clear code of conduct for the fight against all forms of racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and Islamophobia.
- The EUMC encourages all religious communities, Non-Governmental Organisations, local authorities and other organisations involved to speak out against bigotry and hatred and to develop interfaith and intercultural dialogue through specific initiatives at local, national and European level. Such initiatives should be encouraged and actively supported by the Member States and the European Commission.
- Muslim communities should be encouraged to participate actively in political, economic, social and cultural institutions and processes. The EUMC calls on Muslim communities to strengthen or develop representative organisations that reflect the diversity of the communities while empowering women and youth in particular. The Member States and local authorities should examine ways to harness the active involvement of Muslim communities by supporting their self-organisation through capacity-building.

### **Involving the media**

- The EUMC recognises that mainstream and minority media play a key role in shaping social attitudes and behaviour. Further research is needed on both their content and the impact they have on society concerning racism, xenophobia, Antisemitism and Islamophobia. The EUMC for its part will reinforce its work on the media notably through media monitoring initiatives and expert meetings with media professionals.
- The EUMC encourages media organisations and Internet service providers to ensure that complaints procedures are accessible to vulnerable groups, and implement training programmes for journalists and other media professionals to be more reflective of diversity and prevent racist or discriminatory content in the media.
- The EUMC calls upon the Member States to enact or reinforce appropriate legislation on Internet service providers to prevent the dissemination of illegal racist, xenophobic, antisemitic and Islamophobic material, in accordance with article 14 of the EC Directive on Electronic Commerce (2000/31/EC).

### **Promoting research**

- The EUMC encourages the Member States to initiate and support research projects that could inform social, economic and political integration policies aimed at Muslim communities in a comprehensive and reliable way.

# ANNEX

## RAXEN National Focal Points

Detailed information available at <http://eumc.europa.eu>

Belgium	Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism (CEOOR)
Czech Republic	People in Need
Denmark	Documentation and Advisory Centre on Racial Discrimination (DACoRD)
Germany	European Forum for Migration Studies (EFMS)
Estonia	Legal Information Centre for Human Rights (LICHR)
Greece	Antigone - Information & Documentation Centre
Spain	Movement for Peace and Liberty (MPDL)
France	Centre d'Etudes des Discriminations, du Racisme et de l'Antisémitisme (CEDRA)
Ireland	National Consultative Commission on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) + Equality Authority (EA)
Italy	Co-operation for the Development of Emerging Countries (COSPE)
Cyprus	Cyprus Labour Institute (INEK/PEO)
Latvia	Latvian Centre for Human Rights (LCHR)
Lithuania	Institute for Social Research (ISR)
Luxembourg	Centre d'Etudes de Populations, de Pauvreté et de Politiques Socio-économiques / International Network for Studies in Technology, Environment, Alternatives, Development (CEPS/INSTEAD)
Hungary	Centre of Migration and Refugee Studies, Institute of Ethnic and Minority Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (CMRS)
Malta	Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice (JCFJ)
The Netherlands	Dutch Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (DUMC)
Austria	Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights + Department of Linguistics at the University of Vienna + Institute of Conflict Research
Portugal	Númena - Research center on human and social sciences
Poland	Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (HFHR)
Slovenia	Peace Institute - Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies
Slovak Republic	People Against Racism (PAR) + Institute for Public Affairs
Finland	Finnish League for Human Rights
Sweden	Expo Foundation
United Kingdom	The University of Warwick

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