

# Being Muslim in the EU

## Findings questions & answers

<b>Being Muslim in the EU</b> .....	1
What are the main changes compared to the last survey in 2016? .....	2
How common is discrimination against Muslims? .....	2
How common is anti-Muslim racism? .....	3
Do Muslims report discrimination? .....	4
How common is racist harassment? .....	4
How common is racist violence? .....	4
How does the police treat Muslims? .....	5
How common is racism in education? .....	5
What is the educational attainment of Muslim respondents? .....	6
How common is racism in the job market? .....	6
What are Muslims' career prospects? .....	7
How does the wearing of religious clothing affect people's experiences? .....	7
What is the housing and poverty situation? .....	8
How common is discrimination in healthcare? .....	9
How aware are Muslims of their rights? .....	9
What are the experiences of Muslims with disabilities? .....	9
What can be done to improve the situation? .....	10

## **What are the main changes compared to the last survey in 2016?**

The 2022 survey findings show that more Muslims in the EU now face discrimination and racism than in 2016:

- Overall, almost half of Muslim respondents (47%) experienced racial discrimination in the five years before the survey and over a third (35%) in the year before the survey. This is a sharp rise compared to 2016 (5 years: 39% and 12 months: 25%).
- Muslims now encounter more discrimination especially in the job and housing market. For example, close to 2 in 5 Muslim respondents (39%) experienced racial discrimination when looking for work in the five years before the survey, up from 31% in 2016.
- Young Muslims who were born in Europe and particularly young women wearing religious clothing are at higher risk of discrimination and abuse. For example, 58% of young women (aged 16-24 years) who wear religious clothing felt discriminated against when looking for work in the five years before the survey, compared with 38% women of the same age who do not wear such clothing.
- There has been no progress in tackling racist harassment or violence against Muslims. As in 2016, over 1 in 4 (27%) respondents say they experienced racist harassment and 4% a racist attack in the five years before the survey.
- More Muslims now think they were a victim of discriminatory police profiling. Half (49%) of those stopped in the year before the survey think it was due to their immigrant or ethnic background (up from 42% in 2016).
- Reporting of discrimination, harassment and violence remains extremely low. Most people still do not report it to any official body. But 30% of victims reported the most recent racist attack to authorities, up from 23% in 2016.

## **How common is anti-Muslim racism?**

- Racial discrimination is discrimination based on skin colour, ethnic or immigrant background and religion.
- Almost half of Muslim respondents (47%) experienced racial discrimination in the five years before the survey and over a third (35%) in the year before the survey. This is a rise compared to 2016 (5 years: 39% and 12 months: 25%).
- The highest levels of racial discrimination are in Austria (12 months: 62% and 5 years: 71%), Germany (12 months: 54% and 5 years: 68%) and Finland (12 months: 57% and 5 years: 63%).
- Compared to 2016, Muslims now face more racism especially in the job and housing market.

## How common is discrimination against Muslims?

- Discrimination is a recurring experience. Most victims (75%) experienced it more than twice in the year before the survey.
- One in two Muslim respondents (50%) say they experienced discrimination on any ground in the five years before the survey. Over a third (38%) felt discriminated against in the year before the survey.
- In comparison, only 21% of the general population say they experienced discrimination in the 12 months before the [2023 Eurobarometer](#).
- The highest levels of discrimination on any ground are in Austria (12 months: 66% and 5 years: 74%), Germany (12 months: 57% and 5 years: 71%), Finland (12 months: 60% and 5 years: 64%) and Denmark (12 months: 51% and 5 years: 64%).
- The lowest rates are in Sweden (12 months: 18% and 5 years: 23%), Spain (12 months: 18% and 5 years: 31%) and Italy (12 months: 23% and 5 years: 34%).
- Discrimination is a recurring experience. Most victims (75%) experienced it more than twice in the year before the survey.
- Ethnic or immigrant background and religion are the most common grounds for discrimination mentioned by Muslim respondents. In the year before the survey, 30% of Muslim respondents said they were discriminated against because of their 'ethnic or immigrant background', and 17% because of their 'religion or religious belief'.
- Young people, people with higher education, people with disabilities, as well as people who wear traditional or religious clothing or self-identify as a minority (e.g., LGBTIQ or disability), experience more discrimination.
- Muslims from African countries south of the Sahara, many of whom are Black, experience higher levels of discrimination than Muslims from North Africa, Türkiye or Syria in the countries where these groups were surveyed simultaneously.

## How common is anti-Muslim racism?

- Racial discrimination is discrimination based on skin colour, ethnic or immigrant background and religion.
- Almost half of Muslim respondents (47%) experienced racial discrimination in the five years before the survey and over a third (35%) in the year before the survey. This is a rise compared to 2016 (5 years: 39% and 12 months: 25%).
- The highest levels of racial discrimination are in Austria (12 months: 62% and 5 years: 71%), Germany (12 months: 54% and 5 years: 68%) and Finland (12 months: 57% and 5 years: 63%).

- Compared to 2016, Muslims now face more racism especially in the job and housing market.

### **Do Muslims report discrimination?**

- Most Muslims do not report any incident of discrimination or racism because they do not think anything would change.
- Only 6% of victims reported discrimination or made a complaint in the year before the survey, and very few reported incidents to an equality body (4%).
- Sweden records the highest reporting rate at 21%; Austria and Italy recorded the lowest rates at 3% and 2%, respectively.
- Those who experienced racism show lower trust in the police (with a score of 5.7 on a scale of 0–10) than those who did not (with a score of 7.0).

### **How common is racist harassment?**

- Racist harassment remains widespread. It includes offensive gestures, inappropriate staring, offensive comments or threats of violence.
- More than one in four Muslims (27%) experienced racist harassment in the five years before the survey; and one in five (22%) in the year before the survey.
- The five-year rates are highest in Finland (49%) and Germany (39%).
- Muslim respondents from African countries south of the Sahara, many of whom are Black, face more racist harassment than other groups.
- Young women, people with higher education and those wearing religious clothing are harassed more. For example, some 26% of Muslim respondents (27% of women and 24% of men) who wear religious clothing in public were harassed in the year before the survey, compared with 18% of Muslim respondents who do not wear such clothing in public.
- Only 12% of victims reported the most recent incident of racist harassment to any official body.
- Many Muslims worry about being attacked or harassed. The highest rates are among Muslims who were born in Europe - 52% worry about experiencing verbal insults or offensive comments in public.

### **How common is racist violence?**

- Racist violence is physical violence motivated by people's ethnic or immigrant background. It includes hitting, pushing, kicking or grabbing.

- Muslims from countries south of the Sahara, who are mostly Black, face most violence. Young Muslim men who were born in Europe and people who wear religious clothing experience more violence.
- 4% of Muslim respondents experienced a racist attack in the five years before the survey and 2% in the year before the survey.
- The highest 5-year rates are in Finland (12%), Germany (7%) and Ireland (6%). The lowest are in Spain (1%) and Italy, Greece and Sweden (all 2%).
- 30% of victims reported the most recent incident of racist violence, up from 23% in 2016.
- Most victims of racist violence (55%) suffer from psychological aftereffects, such as depression or anxiety, and 22% are afraid to leave the house.

### **How does the police treat Muslims?**

- The police stopped 27% of Muslim respondents in the five years before the survey and 13% in the year before the survey.
- Young people (36%), men who wear religious clothing (42%) and Muslims coming from African countries south of the Sahara who are mostly Black (40%) are more likely to be stopped. Men are three times more likely to be stopped than women (5-year rates: 38% compared with 14%).
- Among those, who were stopped by the police in the 5 years before the survey, more than the majority (56%) say they were treated respectfully.
- Half (49%, up from 42% in 2016) of those stopped in the year before the survey think it was due to their immigrant or ethnic background. The 5-year rate is 42% (up from 32% in 2016).
- The highest 5-year rates of discriminatory ethnic profiling are in Greece (75%), Denmark (56%) and Sweden (55%), and the lowest in Austria and Ireland (both 29%).
- Muslim men are more likely to perceive their recent stop as racial profiling than women (46% compared with 27%).
- Those who perceive their stop as profiling also show much lower trust in the police (with a score of 4.2 on a scale of 0–10) than those who do not experience racial profiling (with a score of 6.1).

### **How common is racism in education?**

- 1 in 5 Muslim respondents (22%), compared to 13% in 2016, felt racially discriminated against when in contact with school in the five years before the survey and 17% in the year before the survey (6% in 2016).

- 16% of parents say their children were bullied at school in the year before the survey. In Austria (27%), Denmark (26%) and Germany (24%) over a quarter of parents mention such experiences. Most often, this happens to pupils of Syrian and Turkish background.

### **What is the educational attainment of Muslim respondents?**

- Roughly 2 out of 5 (40%) of Muslim respondents completed only lower secondary education compared to 25% of people generally.
- Young Muslims in the 13 EU countries are three times more likely to leave school early compared to all people in the EU (30% compared to 9.6%).

### **How common is racism in the job market?**

- Since 2016, there has been a surge in racial discrimination in the job market, both when looking for work and at work.
- **Looking for work:** close to 2 in 5 Muslim respondents (5 years: 39%, 12 months: 31%) experienced racial discrimination when looking for work, up from 31% of 5-year prevalence in 2016 (12 months: 13%). The 5-year rates are highest in Austria (61%), Germany and Denmark (both 55%) and the Netherlands (52%).
- **At work:** over 1 in 3 Muslim respondents (5 years: 35%, 12 months: 24%) experienced racial discrimination at work in the five years before the survey, up from 23% of 5-year prevalence in 2016 (12 months: 9%). The 5-year rates are highest in Austria (52%), Germany (51%) and Finland (51%).
- Racism in the job market affects Syrian and Turkish respondents more than other groups.
- Muslim women and Muslim men experience similar levels of racial discrimination in employment. However, Muslim women who wear religious clothing experience discrimination most often – nearly 1 in 2 (45%) were discriminated against when looking for work.
- Young women are most affected - 58% of young women (aged 16-24 years) who wear religious clothing reported feeling discriminated against when looking for work in the five years before the survey, compared with 38% women of the same age who do not such clothing.
- Muslims born in Europe face greater discrimination in the job market than Muslim immigrants. In the five years before the survey, 55% of second-generation Muslims reported experiencing racial discrimination while looking for work, compared with 32% of Muslim immigrants.

## What are Muslims' career prospects?

- The employment rate among Muslim respondents is significantly lower than among the general population (63% compared to 75%).
- More Muslim men have a paid job compared to Muslim women (73% compared to 53%). Muslim women who wear religious clothing are less likely to have a job than women who don't wear such clothing (46% compared to 61%).
- 27% of Muslim respondents work in elementary occupations, compared to 8% people generally.
- 28% of Muslim respondents have a temporary contract. This is about 2.5 times more often than people generally (11%).
- Muslim respondents are often over-qualified for their job (33% compared to 21% of people generally). The highest overqualification rate is among Muslims from African countries south of the Sahara (53%).
- The risk of overqualification is lower for respondents who are citizens of the survey country, among both Muslims (33%) and the general population (21%), than for those who are not citizens of any EU country (52% for Muslims and 39% for the general population in the EU-27).

## How does wearing of religious clothing affect people's experiences?

- Two in five Muslim respondents (40%) wear traditional or religious clothing at least sometimes in public and 60% don't.
- Women wear religious clothing more often than men (57% compared 26%). Muslim women who are immigrants wear religious clothing more often than women who were born in Europe (60% compared to 51%).
- Muslim respondents who wear religious clothing in public are more likely to face discrimination and harassment than those who do not. This is especially true for women. Wearing religious clothing in public can harm women's employment prospects.
- **Looking for work** – 45% of Muslim women and 35% of men who wear religious clothing in public experienced racism when looking for work in the five years before the survey compared to 31% of women and 40% of men who don't wear such clothing.
- Young women are especially affected - 58% of young women (aged 16-24 years) who wear religious clothing felt discriminated against when looking for work in the five years before the survey, compared with 38% women of the same age who do not wear such clothing.
- **At work** - Muslim women who wear religious clothing are less likely to be in employment than women who do not (46 % and 61 %). Young women who

were born in the EU and who usually wear religious clothing in public face more barriers.

- **Harassment** – Muslim women who wear religious clothing in public face more harassment than those who do not (27% compared to 16%). For Muslim men wearing religious clothing it is 24% compared to 20%.
- **Violence** – Muslims wearing religious clothing experience slightly more racist violence than those who do not – 6% compared with 3%.
- **Worry about crimes** - Muslim respondents who wear religious clothing are more worried about becoming a victim of inappropriate staring or offensive gestures in public than those who do not (51% compared with 42%).
- **Police stops** – the wearing of religious clothing doesn't have an impact on the frequency of police stops. But Muslim women who wear religious clothing in public are more likely than those who do not to perceive the most recent stop as discriminatory (31% compared with 23%). This is not the case for Muslim men (48% compared with 45%).

### **What is the housing and poverty situation?**

- Compared to 2016, racial discrimination in the housing market sharply increased - from 22% to 35% (in the five years before the survey).
- Racism is more common in the private sector: 26% of respondents were prevented from renting by a private landlord in the 5 years before the survey.
- Muslims with disabilities experience the highest levels of racism in the housing market (46% compared to 30% of those without any limitations).
- Racial discrimination in the housing market is highest in Germany (54%), Austria (50%), Belgium (43%) and Finland (43%).
- Muslims are also at higher risk of poverty, social exclusion and energy poverty compared to people generally.
- 17% of respondents own a property compared to 69% of people generally.
- 40% of people living in the household of Muslim respondents live in overcrowded housing compared to 17% of people generally.
- People living in the households of Muslim respondents are twice as likely to face difficulties to make ends meet compared to people generally (18% compared to 9%).
- 18% of people living in the households of Muslim respondents cannot afford to keep their house warm compared to 9% of people generally.



## **How common is discrimination in healthcare?**

- Over one in 10 respondents (12 months: 11% and 5 years: 15%) felt racially discriminated against in healthcare in the year before the survey.
- The highest 5-year prevalence of racial discrimination in access to healthcare is in Austria (45%) and Germany (31%). The lowest rates are in France (6%) and Spain (7%).
- Muslim respondents are twice as likely to have had unmet medical needs compared to people generally (8% vs. 4%).

## **How aware are Muslims of their rights?**

- 36% know at least one equality body in their country of residence. This remains the same as in 2016 (35%).
- Awareness of equality bodies is highest in Denmark (55%), Finland (49%), Austria (46%) and France (44%).
- Awareness of equality bodies is lowest in Italy (17%), Luxembourg (18%) and Spain (20%).
- 27% of Muslim respondents are aware of any organisations in their country of residence that offer support or advice to people who have been discriminated against such organisations.

## **What are the experiences of Muslims with disabilities?**

- Muslim respondents with disabilities face more racism, discrimination and harassment than those without disabilities.
- Close to 1 in 3 (29%) Muslim respondents indicated some long-standing limitation in their usual activities. Among the general population this is 19%.
- 1 in 2 (50%) Muslim respondents with disabilities felt discriminated against on any ground in the year before the survey compared with 1 in 3 (33%) of those without disabilities.
- Over 2 in 5 (44%) Muslim respondents with disabilities felt racially discriminated against in the year before the survey compared with 1 in 3 (31%) of those without disabilities.
- Almost 1 in 2 (46%) Muslim respondents with disabilities felt racially discriminated against when trying to rent or buy a house in the 5 years before the survey, compared with 1 in 3 (30%) of those without disabilities.

- 1 in 3 (27%) of Muslim respondents with disabilities experienced racist harassment in the year before the survey compared with 19% of those without disabilities.
- Almost 1 in 2 (45%) Muslim respondents with disabilities left school early compared to 1 in 3 (30%) of respondents without disabilities.

## **What can be done to improve the situation?**

To tackle anti-Muslim racism and discrimination effectively, FRA calls on the EU and its Member States countries to:

1. **Tackling anti-Muslim racism specifically** - renew the EU anti-racism action plan beyond 2025 and include actions to specifically counter anti-Muslim racism.
2. **Collect equality data** - collect data on all grounds of discrimination to support better policymaking and develop benchmarks, targets and indicators for monitoring.
3. **Enforce laws** – properly enforce anti-discrimination laws as well as tougher sanctions for discrimination and hate crimes.
4. **Resource equality bodies** - implement the [directives on binding standards for equality bodies](#). Ensure that they have the necessary mandates and sufficient resources to tackle discrimination effectively and independently.
5. **Combat discriminatory profiling** – eradicate discriminatory institutional practices and cultures that lead to unlawful police profiling.
6. **Tackle racism in all areas of life** – this requires targeted efforts to combat racism in education, employment, housing and healthcare. For example, EU countries should focus on reducing the overqualification gap between non-EU nationals and the general population and encourage more Muslim pupils to finish school.