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Islamophobia in Europe

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I Introduction

Muslims in Europe are estimated at a population of at least 15 million in Western Europe, to a total of 50 million in Western, Eastern, Northern and Southern Europe.[1] Islam is the second largest religion after Christianity in Europe and the fastest growing religion in Europe.

European Muslims are a diverse and vibrant community and they form an essential part of Europe's multi-ethnic, multi-cultural society. Muslims have been in Europe for centuries and their contributions have been fundamental to the development of science, arts and civilisation.[2] Despite this however European Muslims have suffered significantly from various forms of alienation, discrimination, harassment and violence rooted in misinformed and stereotyped representations of Islam and its adherents - the irrational phenomenon we have come to know as Islamophobia**.**

The term Islamophobia denotes the fear and/or hatred of Islam, Muslims or Islamic culture. It is viewed as a new form of racism whereby Muslims, an ethno-religious group, not a race, are nevertheless constructed as a race. Muslims hence suffer multiple discriminations which with their religion include their gender, ethnicity, hijab/veil or the beard, Arabic names and furthermore the misperceptions of Islam and Muslim. A set of negative assumptions are made of the entire group to the detriment of members of that group.This intolerance and stereotypical views of Islam manifest themselves in a number of ways from double standards, verbal/written abuse, discrimination at schools, workplaces and housing, psychological harassment/pressure and outright violent attacks on mosques and individuals to institutional discrimination and media prejudices.

Several studies have been conducted reflecting the term Islamophobia and its effects on society which have been a point of reference for this research. Initial investigations into Islamophobia began in the UK with the Runnymede Trust. In 1997 they produced the document 'Islamophobia: A Challenge For Us All' and then in 2004 'Islamophobia: Issues, Challenges, and Action'.[3] These papers reflected on how the public domain misunderstands Islam as the 'other', undemocratic, unresponsive and aggressive religion. Further notable reports have been that of the European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) with "Summary Report on Islamophobia in the EU after 11 September 2001" (May 2002) and **"**The impact of 7 July 2005 London bomb attacks on Muslim Communities in the EU" (November, 2005).[4] Both these reports provided country reports of discriminatory acts and responses from government, media, the public and organisations. They also provided essential recommendations and

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[1] http://www.islamicpopulation.com/europe_general.html
[2] http://www.muslimheritage.com
[3] http://www.runnymedetrust.org
[4] http://eumc.eu.int/eumc/index.php

good practices essentially for the EU member states, media and Muslim community.

Another vital report, the "Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims in the EU", conducted by the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF, March 2005), reviewed the general situation of Muslims in Europe and the growing discrimination in both public and private sphere.[5] It stated that a growing number of attacks on Muslims have been registered, ranging from verbal harassment, physical assaults, vandalism, racist attacks and anti-Muslim sentiments across Europe. The report stated that Muslims of immigrant background have a higher unemployment rate and a comparatively lower standard of housing than members of the majority population. Muslims are reportedly subjected to discrimination in employment, at schools and universities and when seeking access to service in places such as town halls, hospitals, shops and banks. In Sweden, the report said, studies have shown that up to every fifth job is closed for people with Arabic-sounding names because of discriminatory hiring practices. In the UK, Muslims have the lowest employment rate of any religious group, and their unemployment rate is three times the national average and twice the level of other religious minorities. The report further said Muslim women wearing the veil/hijab and Muslim men with turbans and long beards were often the victims of harassment. Because of the discriminatory treatment often faced by veiled Muslim women, public employment offices reportedly consider the use of the headscarf a 'disability' in the job search process and incompatible for the public domain.

The Report makes several recommendations to deal with the various issues. It encourages the EU member states to recognise "the diversity of the Muslim minorities and take care to grant voice to representatives of different groups within these minorities." It also recommends that the EU countries should promote tolerance among their citizens and "raise awareness of positive contributions of Muslims and other minority members to society."

In the aftermath of the September 11th 2001 attacks in the USA and the religious symbols ban in France in 2004, the social climate facing Muslims has deteriorated. 2005 reached unprecedented levels of Islamophobia. This has been attributed to the London 7th July bombings, the Danish magazines offensive publication of cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammed in September, the French suburbia riots in October, the Australian racists attacks in December and the rise in racist national parties against immigrant influx and the Muslim community.

This Shadow Report researches Islamophobia in 2005. Unfortunately there is a scarce amount of quantitative and qualitative research on the Muslim community in Europe and a lot of information is based upon assumptions that migrants equate Muslims. Hence on reflection, this does not give justice to namely the population statistics or how Muslims are affected in the public services, nor the

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[5] http://www.ihf-hr.org

reporting of Islamophobia incidents which tend to be labelled as racial discrimination. Previous research has not accounted for second and third generation Muslims and converts who are active citizens in their countries and still face discrimination in all spheres of their lives. Subsequently, this research attempts to provide and overview of this rise in Islamophobia, the discrimination manifested in the institution, community and media and concludes with several recommendations for positive change. As this report is limited in scope it will focus primarily on Western Europe and in particular on the following EU countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

II Legislation and Discrimination towards Muslims

The rise of intolerance and discrimination has been dramatic and in particular towards Muslims in Europe. Official statistical data is very limited regarding particular acts of Islamophobia in Europe and its member states during 2005. However, there have been thousands of reported cases of discrimination on individual and institutional levels. The following aims to be a brief overview highlighting how certain political contexts and legislations have discriminated against those who are Muslims.

In Austria, whilst the government provides religious freedom for all, threatening and offensive comments against Muslims have become more common (International Helsinki Federation – IHF, 2005). Women with headscarves have had difficulties finding jobs and social acceptance of the headscarf has decreased in recent years. This has occurred to the degree that employment offices have sometimes considered the headscarf as a disability in a job search. It does not appear that any Muslims have been elected to the national or European legislatures.

The number of complaints in Belgium about racism has increased over the last years, particularly with regards to employment problems (Centre for Equal Opportunity and Opposition to Racism). There are six Muslims serving in the national parliament and one in the European Parliament. However despite them being on the political scene, this has not prevented such policies as headscarves and other traditional Muslim dress being banned at the local level in most of the schools in Belgium (IHF, 2005). Following which there were several cases reported of women and girls wearing traditional dress or headscarves being publicly insulted. Those of foreign origin in Belgium are reportedly subjected to discrimination in employment, in housing, in access to public services and in contacts with police.[6] Continuing reports suggest police misconduct, including offensive language, arbitrary identity checks and violence may be relatively common (IHF).

The Danish constitution prohibits the enactment of laws targeted at religious groups and there has been no review despite the social climate for Muslims declining substantially over the last few years. Incidents of harassment have increased substantially (IHF, 2005). In September 2005, cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammed in an insulting way were published in a Danish magazine causing uproar amongst the Muslim community. The anger spread quickly throughout the world with marked protests and boycotts against Denmark. No apology was received by the Muslim community on the offence it caused and instead the rift between Muslims and non-Muslims in Denmark grew. Reports before the cartoon saga had already shown the growing Islamophobia in the

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[6] "Fear of Islamists Drives Growth of Far Right in Belgium" *New York Times* February 12, 2005.

community with many Danish Muslims having difficulties gaining access to public places such as restaurants and clubs and women wearing headscarves being denied transportation on public buses. Somalis in particular have had difficulties in Denmark, being both Muslims and asylum seekers therefore facing multiple-discrimination. Media and politicians have contributed to a widespread view that Somalis are not able to integrate into Danish society and this has had a negative effect on the self-perceptions of the community. High unemployment and low hopes have led high numbers of students to drop out (ECRI Report on Denmark). As in most of the rest of Europe, there have been some conflicts over the veil/hijab. The Danish People's Party has suggested a ban on the veil/hijab in schools and other public places. Their proposal would prohibit the wearing of "culturally specific" headgear, but exempt Christian and Jewish culture. They argued that the hijab has a "disturbing" impact on "ordinary people" and slows integration of Muslim girls into Danish society. This proposal has not yet been brought for decision in Parliament, but the government appears to be rejecting the idea.[7] There is apparently only one Muslim member of the national legislature and none were elected to the European Parliament.

Over the last few years in France, incidents against Muslims have increased dramatically.[8] In particular the controversial law prohibiting the wearing of all ostensible religious symbols in state schools has in turn been confirmed by several organisations as having made Muslim children suffer disproportionately as a result.[9] Other concerns have been that Muslim cemeteries have been desecrated, such as that in Alsace. Furthermore, the French government ministers, judges and senior police officers are allowing members of the police force to use excessive and sometimes lethal force against suspects of Arab and African-origin (noted by Amnesty International Report April 2005).

The National Committee for Police Practices claimed in its annual report that abuses by police had almost doubled in the last few years. The uprisings across France in October and November 2005 saw anger on unprecedented levels. Residents of the deprived banlieues (suburban ghettoes) on the outskirts of towns and cities, where many of France's ethnic minorities live, were outraged by the deaths of two teenagers of African origin. It was claimed that they were electrocuted and died while taking refuge in an electricity substation in Clichy-sous-Bois (Seine-Saint-Denis) on 27 October whilst trying to run away from police officers. The riots that spread throughout France aimed at raising the institutionalisation of racist discrimination within its political, social and economic structures, instead they were just percieved as radical Islamists or hooligans causing trouble as the 'enemy within'.

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[7] "Dutch Government Passes New Terror Bill." *Associated Press* March 4 2005.
[8] "Caught up in a Circle of Hate." *Time Europe* May 5 2005.
[9] . "Muslims in France Open Own Schools to Thwart Hijab Ban." *Reuters* March 31 2005.

With regards to the general practise of Islam, building new mosques has been difficult and there have been protests from local communities and arbitrary blocking of efforts by local authorities. While cemeteries are secular, provisions have been made by local authorities to allow for Islamic burial practices. However, a lack of space leads to the granting of burial rights only for some specified period of time. As this is contrary to Islamic practice, the policies have generated protests from the community.

In Germany, there is a rising number of Turks who feel they are being discriminated against. The murder of Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands in November 2004 also seemed to spark some violence. There were a number of assaults and several mosques were targeted by arson even throughout 2005. The government increased the power of police and military intelligence to demand and search records from various sources using a controversial search method called the 'grid-search' as a possible way to identify terrorism suspects who may be undercover as students. The government also extended its powers to ban organisations, even if religious, which could be a possible threat to security, be that domestic or foreign. Certain Muslim organisations have been seen as radical and therefore potentially terrorist, this in turn creating problems for them to have basic prayer facilities without being suspiciously pondered upon.[10] These problems have created a situation in which Islam receives little help from the federal government, a distinct contrast to Protestants, Catholics and Jews. Muslims have been forced to negotiate individually for benefits from the government.[11] Furthermore, in various states laws have been passed banning the veil/hijab for teachers and the state of Hessen has banned it for all public officials.

In Greece, Islam has been given a legal categorisation that entails some of the privileges given to Judaism and the Orthodox Church. Due to the presence of a substantial indigenous Muslim (and generally Turkish-speaking) population in Thrace, there is a special agreement between the Greek and Turkish governments known as the Treaty of Lausanne, established in 1923. The treaty provides language, religious and education rights to the Thracian community, but the Government claims that those outside Thrace are not covered by the agreement. Thus, Muslims in other parts of the country often have to travel to Thrace to obtain state-recognised functions such as marriage and funerals which can be a burden for the less wealthy. The Greek government also maintains the right to appoint the religious leaders for the community in Thrace and there has been some controversy over this policy. In general, public encouragement to hatred or violence against a person or a group of persons on the grounds of race, national origin or religion is criminalised. However, there have been reports of police bias towards Muslims, especially in the run-up to the Olympic Games (IHF, 2005). There is currently only one Muslim as a member of the parliament.

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[10] Al-Matboli, A. "Building Mosques No Easy Job in Germany." *Islam Online* April 17 2005.
[11] "The Battle for German Muslim Minds." *Deutsche Welle* February 7 2005., Lutz, M.

In Italy, laws ban the dissemination of ideas of racial superiority or ideas that are based on hatred on the basis of race or ethnic origin and instigation to discriminatory or violent acts on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality and religion. The rights of Muslims who are Italian citizens are regulated by the legislation that applies to all citizens. However, the problem of proper representation is cited as the chief cause for the lack of recognition of Muslims as a religious community in a State agreement. After the London bombings of 2005, new laws were enforced to confront the threat of terrorism. These laws were criticized by various Muslim organisations for their focus on after-the-fact remedies rather than action oriented towards preventing the problems from arising.[12] Furthermore, there have been reports of opposition to funding by local authorities for mosque building. For instance, there has been rising opposition from the church and local residents to the construction of a mosque in Naples, for which 2 million Euros was granted by the regional authorities.

In the Netherlands, following the murder of Theo Van Gogh, the government proposed new anti-terrorism laws to make it easier to arrest terrorist suspects and to hold them for up to two years prior to court dates (IHF, 2005). Newly restrictive immigration laws have prompted protests from Muslim groups.[13] Foreign imams are now to be investigated by the Dutch Security Service (AIVD). The law is currently being revised to allow mosques to be searched as well as better intelligence coordination outside databases to profile suspects. A report from the Anne Frank Foundation found 106 violent anti-Muslim incidents in the month following the Theo van Gogh murder, while anti-discrimination bureaus recorded 40-50 attacks on individual Muslims during the same period. Most of these were verbal.

Under Spanish law similar efforts seem to have taken place after the attacks in Madrid 2004. Individuals may be expelled for actions that are considered threatening to Spain's external relations or public order even if they are not charged with any criminal acts. Government sources were quoted as pointing out how these laws were part of an effective anti-terrorism policy (IHF, 2005). Although there were reports of anti-Muslim violence in Spain after September 11th, it does not appear that it was very widespread. After the attacks in Madrid there were also isolated reports, but the scale of the problems were fortunately less than many had expected or perhaps not reported. However, despite the legal status of Islam, recognised in 1992, there have been difficulties with getting the state to follow through on its policy.[14] Muslims have had some difficulties with establishing chaplains in prisons and in the military.

The Swedish government has similarly adopted a number of new anti-terrorism and immigration provisions over the last few years which have been criticized by local and international groups. The office of the Swedish Ombudsman against

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[12] 'Italian Muslims say new terror measures fall short' *New York Times* July 26, 2005.
[13] 'Moroccans, Turks rally against Dutch immigration plans' *Expatica* June 13, 2005.
[14] Davies, B.T. 'Spain's Struggle between Church and State.' *Times (UK)* March 19 2005.

Ethnic Discrimination registered that most of the recent allegations in Sweden were related to employment and the labour market, the housing and law enforcement system and finally to service in general.

In the United Kingdom, anti-Muslim sentiment, while problematic prior to September 11th, seems to have worsened in particular after the 7 July bombings in London and the implementation of new anti-terror laws allowing police to have greater power to stop and search. A study by the Institute of Race Relations suggests that the anti-terrorism statutes have been used overwhelmingly against Muslim defendants. Of the hundreds of arrests only a few have to this date led to convictions. The increase in the number of Asians stopped and searched has also been disproportionately high at 28% in England and Wales. In London, there was a massive 40% increase in Asians stopped and searched - the largest increase ever recorded in a single year for any group. Nationally, Asians are now 2.5 times more likely to be stopped and searched than Whites. After the bombings in London, at least 500 suspected extremists were deported in the weeks after the attacks. The government also proposed shutting down objectionable mosques, banning radical parties, reinstituting secret terrorism trials, treason laws and internal scrutiny units to monitor Muslims. The policy of shoot-to-kill terrorism suspects by UK police caused huge controversy in particular when a Brazilian immigrant was killed mistakenly. In turn, there have been problems with attacks on asylum seekers and increasing Islamophobia. Up to a third of Muslims say they or their family members have been victims of hostility. Assaults, arson and other violence seem to have been highest immediately after the attacks, but to have stayed high since (IHF, 2005).

The Islamic Human Rights Commission attributed these changes both increased hostility and an increasing awareness of discrimination among Muslims. After the July 2005 bombings, bias crimes increased greatly in London. Scotland Yard reported 269 crimes in the three weeks following the attacks, while only 40 had been recorded during the same period one year earlier. In just the month of July the UK Muslim News headlines highlighted: an attack student and mosque; mosque vandalised; Muslim women attacked; animal parts left at mosque; four mosques attacked; Muslim spat at; Muslim killed; Imam beaten unconscious; Islamophobic graffiti and arson attack on mosque. [15]

Because Muslims are not considered a racial group in the UK, there is no law protecting them against incitement to hatred. Many have questioned whether the government's decision to join with the United States in the invasion of Iraq may have contributed to the problem of radicalism. The invasion of Iraq was substantially unpopular and much of the suggesting is probably coming from individuals who were opposed to Britain's involvement. However, a memo endorsed by Jack Straw, the foreign secretary, also supported this view. The Federation of Islamic Student Societies took a poll in August 2005 among Muslim students and found 95% were opposed to British foreign policy and 66% believed

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[15] http://www.muslimnews.co.uk/archives/paper.php?issue=195.

that the invasion of Iraq contributed to the problem of domestic terrorism.[16] Muslim leaders have emphasised their desire that the existing legislation on blasphemy, which had only been applicable regarding blasphemy against the Anglican Church, be extended to incorporate the Muslim minority (and all other minorities). This evolution towards a more pluralistic conception of the dominant culture now appears as a key topic within the debate about British identity. There are four Muslim Members of Parliament and one Member of the European Parliament.

In summary, Muslims have had the basic fundamental right of freedom to practice their religion hindered through political legislations of their given countries. They have been discriminated against in many aspects of communal life. Issues of access to public services, employment and education to name but a few have raised enormous concerns amongst the Muslim communities. Whilst there have been some initiatives by certain countries to address the issue, there is still a long way before Muslims are able to access their rights like any other citizens. The law does not protect them either as individuals, communities or as a people of faith. Muslims are also under-represented in policy making levels considering their population and concerns. This is attributed to the difficulties of attaining active political participation as a Muslim and furthermore to the prejudices that occur having reached such positions. There is a need for more Muslims to be encouraged and supported in such spheres so as to reflect equal opportunities, the diversity of communities and address the issues at stake.

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[16] http://www.fosis.org.uk/resources/general%20_literature/FullReport.pdf.

III Manifestations of Islamophobia

Islamophobia has been exemplified in Europe in many ways and forms and in different contexts of the public sphere with repercussions affecting individual and institutional levels. The three main areas of review in this section are that of employment, education and housing. These best illustrate that even with a lack of research on how Muslims are being discriminated against in these areas, the visible surface of Muslim concerns provides a glimpse of the underlying problem that accessibility, provisions and laws need to be readdressed.

III.i Employment

In general, there are very limited statistics on how many Muslims are in employment in Europe, rather there are some estimates of those in unemployment in certain countries. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) does publish data on the unemployment levels for the foreign born in participating nations in its annual Trends in International Migration Report. In the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark and France, unemployment rates showed that for the foreign born they were more than twice as high as that of natives. However, although these are the only substantial numbers available, it fails to recognise second and third generation native Muslims and also of those who have converted to Islam. Furthermore, there is no research to date analysing how the wearing of a scarf/hijab by Muslim women or even for Muslim men having beards affects possibilities for employment. In France, the United Kingdom and Sweden, employment agencies have conducted studies to explore how names affect the employment process and that Arabic or Asian names were substantially less likely to receive positive responses than French, English or Swedish names. The following is an overview of the situation where information is available on the unemployment levels in given countries.

The unemployment rates in Austria are more than 1.5 % times as high for the foreign-born, of which a substantial proportion are Muslim. Similarly in Belgium, the foreign-born have unemployment rates more than twice that of indigenous Belgians. In Denmark, the Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs, give an unemployment rate of 12% for immigrants and their descendents but only 4% for native Danes. In response, Denmark enacted the Act on the Prohibition of Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation to combat discrimination in employment, but few cases have been brought before the magistrates and they have been criticized for not dealing with discrimination. A report from the French National Institute for Demographic Studies showed that Muslims with equivalent qualifications were twice as likely to be unemployed than non-Muslim immigrants. Unemployment rates were also consistently twice as high for non-Germans. However, for countries with an apprenticeship system (primarily German-speaking), unemployment rates among the second generation

are three to four times lower than in France, Belgium or the Netherlands. For individuals with lower qualifications, this system seems to work substantially better. Higher status employment lags in the apprenticeship countries, so there is some tradeoff perhaps between the goals of high employment and employment in high places.

Italian research has shown that those of Moroccan heritage face substantial discrimination in employment. They are also clustered in low-skilled positions and reportedly experience difficulties in obtaining skilled positions despite sufficient professional and linguistic qualifications. In Spain, Muslim immigrants tend to be employed in the lower sectors of the economy, such as service and labor. Sweden's Muslims have unemployment rates four to ten times higher than non-Muslims, depending on ethnicity. In the United Kingdom, Indian Muslims have had more time and resources to leverage into prosperity. But even in Britain, for individuals of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage, unemployment rates run as high as 40% and up to 60% live in low income households. There is also a substantial gap in earnings.

In general, the unemployment rate of Muslims is outstandingly high and even more so for those of immigrant backgrounds. There is a desperate need for quantitative and qualitative research to be conducted on how many Muslims are in employment and what their experiences have been with regards to finding work and being in work in the context of being a Muslim, be that by their name, dress or race and so forth.

III.ii Housing

As with statistics regarding employment, there is minimal information regarding religious background of housing allocation. Moreover, the only studies that have been conducted merely analyse the distribution of housing to those of migrants where assumptions are that the majority are Muslim depending on their country of origin. Such results fail to asses the second and third generation of native Muslims and converts in the given countries and areas in which they reside. The following countries exemplified particular concerns regarding the imbalance of housing distribution amongst their communities.

In Belgium, ALARM (Action pour le logement accessible aux réfugiés à Molenbeek) ran a survey on housing showing substantial bias against asylum seekers in searching for housing. 40% of North Africans reported being victims of housing discrimination (ECRI Report on Belgium). In Denmark, more than half of Danes own their own homes, but only 13% of refugees and 18% of immigrants between the ages of 15 and 66 are owner-occupiers. Individuals may have a difficult time renting due to housing restrictions, prices and discrimination. This has led to the creation of ghettoes around the major cities with poor housing and high numbers of minorities (ECRI Report on Denmark). In France, there is no

official data on housing discrimination, but census data suggests that Europe's largest Muslim population tends to live in urban ghettoes mostly centred in the larger cities such as Paris and Marseilles (ECRI Report on France). In Italy, a number of small-scale studies showed a tendency of Muslims to live in overcrowded conditions in substandard housing and that people of immigrant origin are charged higher than average rents than native Italians (ECRI Report on Italy). Sweden has seen significant problems with segregation in neighbourhoods in both the larger and medium sized cities (Swedish Integration Board). In the United Kingdom, the largest groups of Muslims from Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds live in much poorer conditions than the average Briton. Over two thirds live in low-income households (Household Below Average Income Series, Department of Work and Pensions). Nearly a quarter live in overcrowded houses, while only 2% of white Britons do the same (Harrison & Phillips). One of the forces engendering ghettoisation is the desire to live in ethnic enclaves. However, some research in the United Kingdom designed to test whether choice is the major factor has determined that the poor housing is more a function of structural conditions and discrimination.

III.iii Education

There is no specific research analysing how many Muslims are in education, let alone their competences. The only existing material revolves around the number of immigrants in or out of primary education. Information collated focuses on elementary education and there is no substantial detail on higher education and universities. For young Muslims, the education system is their earliest and most significant point of contact with the wider community. The messages that the school system provides in respecting and accommodating their needs will be of vital influence on their attitude to integration and participation in society. The majority of Muslims continue to be educated in non-Muslim State schools and many Muslim community organisations express concern about the ability of these schools to meet the needs of Muslim pupils. The following is a review of some countries perspective on the matter and how Muslims, where they have concerns, have sought alternatives.

The Austrian government provides funding for instruction in all state-recognised religions at public schools and instruction in Islam has been offered at public schools. There are specific organisations that improve students' knowledge of Islam and encourage them to reflect upon and discuss issues related to religious identity and living as a Muslim in Austria. However, there have been complaints that some of the teachers were not exemplifying an accurate image of Islam. Among recent measures taken are the establishment of the Islamic Religious Academy and the appointment of a commission to develop a new curriculum for instruction in Islam which will offer teachers "practical and detailed guidance."

In Belgium public school students under the age of seventeen must choose between religious instruction in recognised religions and non-denominational ethics classes. For older students, these classes are voluntary. The Muslim community has the right to provide teachers at government expense for religious instruction. Presently, teachers are appointed by the state upon recommendation of the Muslim Executive. The curriculum is developed by officials proposed by the Executive and then subject to approval by the State. Religious communities have the right to establish private schools that can receive state funding. There is currently one private Muslim school that is supported by the state (IHF). Furthermore, there is currently a plan underway for the training of Imams which would establish an Institute of Islamic Studies with the assistance of faculties from various educational institutions. The League of Imams also put forward a plan for continuing in-service training which would incorporate learning in the local language. However, there are a number of schools that have already banned the wearing of the veil/hijab and it is feared that a new law, similar to that in France, may come into force prohibiting the wearing of religious symbols.

In Denmark, the inclusion of Islam as a major component of religious education has been prepared for the upcoming school years. Muslim organisations have suggested that there should be cooperation between the education ministry and themselves in the curriculum development. The country also allows religious communities to establish private schools, which can receive state funding if the curriculum and practice meet state guidelines. There are approximately twenty Islamic schools in Denmark, with about half in Copenhagen.

In France, equal access to free public education is guaranteed for all and all children (including foreigners) of school age are under an obligation to attend school. The sphere of education is framed and regulated by the principle of laïcité and by the 1989 Law on Orientation in Education, which affirm the individual right to freedom of conscience. Yet, local officials have the competence to regulate the public expression of religious belonging in schools. The conflict over the banning of the veil/hijab illustrates the tension between public space and private choices; the difficulties inherent in balancing the requirements of laïcité against the needs of Muslim students. The debate over the hijab has provided impetus for the establishment of state-approved general Islamic schools such as those in Lille and and La Reunion.

The lack of qualified teaching staff and the need to provide training to Imams have become increasingly important issues. The private European Institute of Social Sciences opened an Islamic theological training institute in Saint-Léger-de Fougeret, near Château-Chinon (Nièvre) for Imams and religious educators. The institute aims "to give Islam stable structures responding to the needs of Muslims while taking into account the specificity of their surroundings." The Institute has 160 students from France and other European countries. Currently there are several training institutions which have neither been recognised nor funded by

the French state and new training programmes oriented towards the creation of 'French' Imams are currently being established.

In Germany, it has been extremely difficult for Muslims to establish religious instruction due to regional governments failing to recognise Islam as a religious community, since there is no consensus organisation. With government fears raising that those students who are not in supervised religious courses may be exposed to extremism in unsupervised Quran classes, there has been some impetus for authorities to act.[17] Training is provided for Islam at three major institutions: the Muslimische Akademie für Religiöse und Soziale Bildung, DITIB and the Institut für Islamishe Bildung. There are several other smaller institutions. There has however been political pressure for the training of more Imams in German universities, championed especially by Claudia Roth of the Green Party.

With regards to Greece, the Treaty of Lausanne dictates that schools should be established for children from the Muslim community in Western Thrace in both Turkish and Greek. In general these are considered poor schools which handicap the ability of the students to succeed in the labour market. Recently, the Greek government has attempted to improve the educational opportunities of the members of the Muslim minority in Western Thrace. Economic incentives, preferential admissions policies at universities and quota systems for jobs and schools have been instituted. However, the schools remain in poor condition, leading many Muslim families to send their children to the general public schools. Students in these schools receive instruction in Islam, but such instruction has not been available for communities of Muslims outside Thrace. Although Muslims are allowed to opt out of instruction in Greek Orthodoxy, various organizational issues sometimes make this difficult. Western Thrace also maintains two high schools to prepare Muslim students for higher level studies in Islamic theology.

In Italy, emerging patterns of lower than average attendance and achievement and higher drop-out rates among immigrant children, indicate that full and equal access to public education for all children in practice has yet to be achieved. There is little research on the problems experienced by individual Muslim students in schools, although there is some evidence that those of migrant backgrounds experience certain discomfort vis-à-vis State educational establishments, with a negative impact on attendance and academic progress. Some Muslim representatives asserted during interviews that State schools do not manifest a sufficiently inter-cultural approach: while Catholic religious education is a mandatory part of the curriculum, little information is provided about other religions; moreover, images of Islam in text books are reportedly distorted and sometimes inaccurate. School cafeterias often do not take into consideration the dietary requirements of Muslim pupils. Further, there have been reports that occasionally parents and even teachers display intolerant attitudes towards Muslim pupils; such attitudes became more noticeable following the events of September 11th.

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[17] "Pushing for Islam in German Schools." *Deutsche Welle* March 5 2005.

No data has been collected concerning the demand for public education (including provision of foreign language classes) in Arabic or other languages spoken by Muslims and no efforts have been made to develop initiatives in this area. No legally-accredited Islamic schools have been established. Muslim representatives have asserted that, as a group that is not recognised as a minority, they are at a disadvantage in obtaining State funding to establish and support their own educational establishments. The issue of Islamic education in public schools is likely to increase in importance as the number of Muslim students continues to grow. It is almost inevitable that in a short time public school authorities will be confronted with a strong demand for classes in Islam and Arabic as a foreign language, according to the pattern already established for other religious groups and by older Muslim communities in other EU countries. However, there have been no State initiatives in this area as of yet.

In the Netherlands, public schools which are governed by the municipalities allow for parents to organise religious lessons which fall outside the school's responsibility. This means that the parents have to find and pay the teacher. Muslim parents use this legal opportunity only in exceptional cases. Some municipalities (like Rotterdam) however, subsidise this activity. There are 37 Islamic primary schools and one secondary school which are recognised and financed by the state. The courses offered must follow a national curriculum that fills most of the available time, while a few hours per week are allotted to religious lessons and ceremonies. For higher education, there is a privately-funded Islamic University of Rotterdam (IUR) and an Islamic University of Europe in Schiedam, as well as some smaller training institutes. There is also a four-year training programme in the Education Faculty of Amsterdam to train teachers for secondary schools. In February 2005, a grant was awarded by the Ministry of Education for the establishment of a programme for training Imams at Amsterdam Free University. This program will also train imams in Dutch culture and Christianity.

In Spain, the agreement between the state and the Islamic Commission authorises Islamic religious education in public schools. However, there has been little implementation of this right. One of the ongoing debates is the state's role in funding Islamic education in the public school system. While Spain is a secular state, it does enter into reciprocal relationships with religious organisations, including the funding of schools. Muslims are arguing that Catholic schools receive preferential treatment in state support. In the islands of Ceuta and Melila, which are predominantly Muslim, disagreement has arisen over the certification necessary to teach Islam in schools. The Spanish government wants religious education teachers to receive the same level of certification as teachers in the secular school. However, since the change in government in 2004, there has been a noticeable shift in the state's approach to the Muslim minority. The new government has made efforts to implement the agreement and give equal treatment to Muslims in education. A pilot programme of religious education is

underway, with a more substantial implementation expected as more teachers are trained and other organisational difficulties are worked through.

There are no Islamic schools in Switzerland. Thus, the religious socialisation of young Muslims is mostly performed by the families and local associations. The foundation of the Geneva Mosque intends to create an institute to train Imams. The students will take university-level courses for a minimum of two years. The teachings will be particularly geared towards young Muslims born in Switzerland of second or third generation. The goal is to have people educated in religious matters as well as being integrated in local life. Alongside classes on the Islamic teachings, the students will also follow courses in judicial decisions and comparative law, thus enabling them to profess an Islam adapted to the Swiss laws and way of life.

With regards to the United Kingdom, research by the Muslim Council of Britain found that Muslims identified access to quality education as the issue most important to them; it was more important than all other issues put together. The diversity of the Muslim communities means that there is no single "community language" in which education should be delivered. Thus, access to primary, secondary and tertiary education in a single minority language is not a specific concern of Muslim communities, although it may be an issue for particular Muslim communities that are also minority linguistic communities such as the Bangladeshi or Turkish communities. The more important issue for Muslim communities is access to classes for learning Arabic. Schools are required to offer pupils the option of studying an official EU language, but it is left to their discretion to offer other languages. Learning Arabic might be an option but the availability of such classes is dependent upon circumstances and resources. Many Muslim children will learn to read Arabic in order to read the Qur'an, irrespective of its availability as a curriculum option. Such classes take place in mosques but the quality of the language tuition is unregulated.

Religious communities have a right to establish their own independent schools, although such schools must be registered with the Registrar of Independent Schools and must meet certain minimum standards. There is State funding for Muslim schools across the country and there are those that are privately funded, there are one hundred Muslim schools in the UK. Proposals to increase the role of faith schools in the State education sector have generated much debate. The Commission for Racial Equality has expressed concern that single faith schools could damage multiculturalism and the Cantle Report cautioned that funding of faith schools would increase social segregation between different minority communities. One response to this is a proposal by faith communities for "multi-faith" schools that would appreciate faith but would not be targeted at a particular faith. Furthermore, there are several institutions dedicated to the training of Imams and education of those, most notably the Muslim College in London, and the Markfield Institute of Higher Education in Leicestershire with an ambitious set of courses.

Thus, in summary, Muslims identify two issues of particular importance to their communities in the area of education. First, they seek adequate religious instruction for their children and improved education on the history, culture, and contributions of Islam for all public school pupils. Second, they are concerned to ensure adequate training for teachers, religious instructors and Imams. The religious education of young Muslims in the past has generally been provided either by the family at home or by associations and mosques in the framework of Islamic teaching courses, independently and outside of regular school hours. The research exemplifies that there is a dire need for information not only on how many Muslims are in fulltime education, but also on issues of accessibility to education, Islamophobic attitudes or actions towards pupils and teachers and furthermore whether the needs of Muslims in mainstream education are being fulfilled for example prayer facilities, permission to veil, exams not coinciding with Islamic festivals and so forth. Instead of such issues being addressed by authorities, what we see is a rise of Muslims establishing their own Islamic schools as an alternative where their needs can be met and respected.

IV Assessing the Response

The reactions to events in 2005, be they the London bombings in July, the Danish cartoons in September or the French riots in October, all have in some way or another led to various degrees of Islamophobic connotations. The manipulations of these unfortunate circumstances were demonstrated most vividly in the media and through reactions by politicians. However, there were positive responses of some European Institutions and NGOs to install clarity on these misconceptions and eliminate prejudices with subsequent examples of good practice.

IV.i Role of the Media

Whilst poor socio-economic conditions, questions of identity, lack of mutual integration into mainstream society, negative perceptions of Islam and youth alienation are contributing to the dire situation, the greatest challenge facing them is biased media coverage. Unfortunately in the media, Islam is often presented in terms of problems, discrimination, violence and terrorism. As a direct consequence, Islam generally has a negative image in the public opinion. Rare is it that information speaks positively of Islam or Muslims in general or to find the daily life of ordinary Muslim figuring in newspapers or on TV. The media seem concerned mainly with Islam only for big debates such as religious extremism, the veil, cemeteries or ritual slaughter. For example, during the first few days following the bombings in London, there was extensive coverage of the events, reactions by politicians, opinion leaders and Muslim community representatives. Later, the focus shifted largely to reporting on the security situation, the development of terrorist organisations and the relationship between Islam and terrorist violence. The events triggered a renewed interest in Islam, with media reporting on the situation of Muslims in Europe and the possible causes for the radicalisation of certain members of the Muslim community.

Media Watch challenges abusive stereotypes and biased images in the media which, from its reports, has shown an enormous increase in the portrayal of Islamophobia. For example in Denmark between January to September 2005, whilst the Muslim communities account for 3% 5.4 million of the Danish population, Islam in the Danish media received 35% of total coverage of which 67% were negative aspects.

Derogatory and provocative terms against the Muslim community have been widely used in the media under the banner of freedom of speech. One historian has stated that what was said during Nazi propaganda against Jewish people in the 1930s and 1940s is similar to the comments used against the present day Muslim community. The use of negative terminology range from " terrorist, primitive, fundamentalist, Islamist, extremist, intolerant, authoritarian, militant,

medieval, women oppressive, radical, menacing, aggressive, patriarchal, backward, tyrannical" to terms such as "Militant Islam, Islamist, fundamentalist Imams, Radical Islamic Cleric, Jehadist movements, Fascio-Islam and Quran-fascism".

The International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF) released its report on "Intolerance and discrimination against Muslims in the EU-developments since September 2001" in Vienna on 7 March 2005. The report not only documents that the majority of Europeans consider Islam as the source of terrorism, oppression of women and extremism but also states that unbalanced and stereotypical media reports portraying Muslims as "alien" to EU societies and as "an enemy within", is creating widespread negative attitudes towards Muslims. The July 2005 events in London have further galvanised the issue.

IV.ii Political Reactions

In Belgium, there has been a move by the administration of the Flemish region to attempt at integrating Muslims more into mainstream society. In January 2005, it mandated that mosques will be required to meet certain conditions for public funding. Outside of Arabic rituals, Dutch should be used; there must be tolerance for women and homosexuals and no preaching of extremist ideas. This applies only to Islam. Furthermore, there were also important symbolic moves by the King of Belgium, such as when he lent his support to an employer who had received death threats for defending a Muslim woman wearing the veil/hijab.

In France more recently there has been some pressure for the state to begin funding mosques and a foundation was established for this purpose in March of 2005. This institution will be funded by private money, but maintained in a state-owned bank to guarantee the ability of the state to examine contributors.[18] However the Muslim community have argued that the impetus for this is coming primarily from a desire by the state to have more control over the religious ideology in mosques.

With regards to Spain, the Socialist government has made moves to downgrade the special status of Catholicism and introduced the study of Islam to school curricula.[19] Workers are allowed time off for prayers and to take off an hour early from work during Ramadan.

In the Netherlands, the state does recognize certain groups and provide them with state resources for education and other activities. There is generally no difficulty in qualifying for this status, and Islam has been granted these privileges.

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[18] "Official Foundation Created to Finance Islam in France." *Middle East Times* March 22 2005.
[19] Davies, B.T. "Spain's Struggle between Church and State." *Times (UK)* March 19 2005.

In Sweden the Commission for State Grants to Religious Communities (Samarbetsnämnden för statsbidrag till trossamfund - SST) has the task of fostering communication between the state and the different communities in Sweden. The SST gives each community some financial support according to size and Islamic groups have received such support. Often this is used to cover administrative costs, but there is also special support available for communities to open up a new field of activity, such as Imams visiting the sick or prisoners, Muslim women's groups and adult education.

In the UK, according to Amnesty International, the most significant change in the 2001 law is the new powers for indefinite detention of foreign nationals. This portion of the act is clearly intended to address the problem of radical Muslims resident in the UK who have not been directly associated with any criminal acts. As this bill is associated with the threat of Islamic terrorism, the government also included new penalties for religiously motivated bias crimes. Previously, the bias crime laws covered only racially motivated violence. The inclusion of religion and the strengthening of the associated penalties intend to address the problems of prejudice and violence which UK Muslims may face in the heightened social tensions following the attacks of September 11th and July 7th.

IV.iii International Perspectives

Despite the initiatives made by certain governments to overcome discrimination towards the Muslim population, European institutions have held reservations. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance has criticised the tone of Austrian, Belgian and Italian politics to name a few for installing anti-immigrant and anti–Muslim sentiments (IHF, 2005). The following are examples of particular comments made by political parties which were highlighted by ECRI as exemplifying discrimination.

The Austrian Freedom Party and its leader, Jorg Haider, have made a great number of anti-Muslim comments, often understood as attempts to protect traditional Christian society such as: "the increasing fundamentalism of radical Islam which is penetrating [Europe], is threatening the consensus of values which is in danger of getting lost."

The Flemish separatist party Vlaams Blok ("Flemish Bloc" – now the Vlaams Belang) has depicted immigration as: "a threat to the Flemish people and culture." While speaking of the danger of religious fundamentalism, it has also protested against the growing number of mosques and state funding for Muslim organisations.

ECRI also expressed concern especially about the rhetoric of the Northern League in Italy, a member of the governing coalition. Issues such as the building of mosques and the wearing of the veil have been publicly associated with

concerns about terrorism. Prime Minister Berlusconi suggested publicly that western civilization is "superior" to Islamic civilization.

In the Netherlands in 2005, voters rejected the proposed European constitution, with more than sixty percent voting against. Much of the sentiment behind this result can be seen as a reaction against immigration. Precipitated by Islamophobic comments such as those of Geert Wilders that many Dutch were worried about "the country's identity slowly being eaten away" and that of Fritz Bolkestein the former European Union competition commissioner quoting Lewis in a speech and claiming that "Europe is being Islamicised".

Although the political discourse in the United Kingdom has generally maintained a tolerant tone, the British National Party has developed an increasingly anti-Muslim message. After the bombings, the approach of the government towards Muslim extremists also changed, with possible effects on the broader population. The bombers were all British residents. The government announced plans to deport those it considers radicals, ban political parties with objectionable messages and close down mosques where the message seems to be propagated. These proposals met with objections from various Muslim and non-Muslim politicians and other public individuals. United Nations and European Rights officials have questioned some of the policies, especially those leading to the deportation of radicals. The United Nations Human Rights Committee in its concluding observations on the UK's fifth periodic report has said that the UK should take steps "to ensure that all persons are protected from discrimination on account of their religious belief." The most immediate pressure for amendments to existing legislation and policy for tackling discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief come from the European Union.

IV.iv Non Governmental Organisation Initiatives

It is difficult and early to assess the impact of the 7 July attacks and their aftermath, in some cases proposals for an intensified dialogue between Muslim communities and the State or between faiths seem to have gained additional momentum. For instance, in Italy a Government initiative for a Consultative Council of Muslims was fast-tracked. In Germany, cooperation between the State and Muslim communities on security matters is being enhanced. Also, Muslim community organisations launched new initiatives highlighting their readiness to support integration across all communities and tackle radicalisation of certain members. In Sweden, the Muslim Council has decided to provide Imams with civic education classes. In the UK, the Home Office organised working groups alongside Muslim community representatives and youth organisations and produced recommendations for government initiatives in a concise report.

There are also several Muslim non-governmental organisations that focus specifically on monitoring Islamophobia. Islamophobia Watch was initiated in

January 2005 as a non-profit making project to document material in the public domain which advocates a fear and hatred of the Muslim peoples of the world and Islam as a religion. Islamophobia Watch regularly reports opinion columns and news items on their website that they believe advocate Islamophobia and those writers and organisations taking a stand against Islamophobia.[20]

In the United Kingdom, the Forum Against Islamophobia & Racism (FAIR) was founded in 2001 as an independent charitable organisation. Its aim is to work towards establishing a Safe, Just and Tolerant Britain in which Islamophobia and racism has no place. It deals with intolerances and stereotypical views of Islam from verbal/written abuse, discrimination in schools and workplaces, psychological harassment/pressure and outright violent attacks on mosques and individuals. FAIR address acts of discrimination but also work to ensure that recommendations put forward by the numerous reports on Islamophobia are implemented by the Government and that legislation should also ensure that Muslims are protected against the offence of incitement to religious hatred. [21]

The French organisation against Islamophobia (CCIF) was established in 2003 to monitor acts of intolerance and discrimination against Muslims. It reports on incidents of Islamophobia and also investigates websites propagating anti-Muslim sentiments.[22]

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[20] http://www.islamophobia-watch.com
[21] http://www.fairuk.org
[22] http://www.islamophobie.net

V Conclusions and Recommendations

The rise of intolerances and discrimination towards Muslims has risen in the last year and the underlying tones of Islamophobia have infiltrated all forms of public and private lives for Muslims in Europe. This research, whilst providing a brief overview of the direness of this growing phenomenon and its implications on the Muslim community, has also highlighted some prevalent concerns regarding information, action and legislation on these discriminations.

There is literature and several reports on Islamophobia discussing its history, definition and briefly its manifestations. Yet, in order for Islamophobia to be measured and analysed, there is a serious need for more realistic quantitative and qualitative data to be collected on Muslims in all aspects of society and not based upon the assumptions that immigrant statistics account for Muslims when the majority of those in Europe are native active citizens of their domicile countries or converts to the faith.

Whilst non–governmental organisations and European institutions have compiled several reports, there is also a need to initiate further activities which are in partnership with their governments and authorities. An awareness of Islam needs to be encouraged not only through literary material, but also through more community interactions and cooperation. There needs to be a clear understanding of Islam not as a nationality or ethnicity but as a faith.

The educational curriculum should incorporate not only the teachings of Islam but also the contribution of Muslims in Europe to civilisation. In turn, there needs to be a positive reinforcement of the European Muslim identity being a form of active participation and democratic citizenship.

Regarding the media, a closer examination of the terminology and images used in its coverage of Islam and Muslims in general and how it is linked to terrorism in particular, needs to be addressed. An ongoing dialogue with the media on how to balance freedom of speech while covering events without prejudice is one form, but there also needs to be more lobbying through media monitoring groups against Islamophobia.

It is essential that governments take responsibility and provide strong legal measures to combat Islamophobia, protect Muslims from discrimination and provide equal access rights to all levels of public services as part of their fundamental Human Right. These can further be enforced by European and International institutions like the Council of Europe and United Nations in ensuring that member states have clear guidelines against Islamophobia.

European Muslims must be given the rights, the space, the means, the opportunity and the support to be part of society.

In Austria, it is estimated that there is approximately 200,000 Muslims, just over 4% of the population of which the two major ethnic groups are of Turkish descent, about 120,000, and Bosnian about 50,000.

In Belgium, the number of Muslims is estimated at around 400,000, which is about 4% of the total population of the country. As in the other countries of the EU, the Muslim population in Belgium is very young. Almost 35% of the Turks and Moroccans, the largest Muslim groups in the country, are below 18 years of age, compared with 18% of native Belgians.

In Denmark, there are approximately 150,000 Muslims, with those of Turkish heritage being the largest group at 36,000. Earlier migrants came primarily for economic reasons, but in the 1980's and 1990's, most migrants came as refugees. Those with refugee backgrounds currently constitute about 40% of all Muslims in Denmark. Approximately 25,000 were naturalised citizens by the late 1990's. (IHF)

In France, there are more than 4 million Muslims, with the great majority being from the Maghreb (1,550,000 of Algerian origin, 1,000,000 of Moroccan origin, and 350,000 of Tunisian origin). There are also 100,000 from various Middle Eastern countries, 315,000 from Turkey, 250,000 from sub-Saharan Africa, 100,000 Asians, and some 40,000 converts. There are also approximately 350,000 asylum applicants and illegal workers who are Muslim. An estimated three million of this population are French citizens.

In Germany, there are approximately 3.5 million Muslims. Of these, 70% are of Turkish origin. Other large groups come from the Balkan countries (Bosnia-Herzegovina and Albania) and the Middle East. A number of more secular Muslims came from Iran at the beginning of the eighties, while Bosnian and Kosovar Muslims fleeing the wars in the breakup of the former Yugoslavia generated large flows across Europe, with more than 300,000 fleeing to Germany.

In Greece, although the actual numbers are uncertain, there are an estimated 370,000 Muslims, approximately 3.5% of the population. Most are from Albania, although there is an indigenous Muslim community in Thrace of about 120,000 persons.

In Italy, the total Muslim population numbers approximately 700,000. About 40,000-50,000 (among them about 10,000 Christians who converted to Islam) are Italian citizens whose rights and obligations are protected and regulated by

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the same legal provisions that apply to other Italian citizens. However, the majority of Muslims are immigrants who arrived within the past ten to 20 years, and have not obtained Italian citizenship. Of these, approximately 610,000-615,000 persons have obtained "regular status," and have the legal right to reside and work in Italy. In addition, 80,000-85,000 persons are "illegal migrants" without residency or work permits. According to current estimates, persons coming from traditionally Muslim countries are the fastest growing immigrant group.

In the Netherlands, there are approximately 700,000 Muslims, representing nearly five percent of the population. Dutch Muslims come primarily from Turkey and Morocco, but there are substantial minorities from Surinam, Iraq and Somalia.

Spain's current estimates put the Muslim population of Spain at 500,000, predominantly Moroccan. Other points of origin include Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq whose citizens came as students and entrepreneurs. By 1979, these numbers expanded to include Palestinian and Iranian refugees. Moreover, an important group of Muslims in the country is composed not of migrants, but of converts. In the 1970s, there seems to have been a marked increase in the number of Spaniards accepting Islam. Various theories have been put forward as to why this might be the case, including the need to recover an authentic Spanish identity by looking back at the period of Muslim rule. The result has been that in the mid-1990s converts had founded over half of the Muslim groups. Current estimates place their numbers at 6,000 individuals.

In Sweden, nearly 4% of the population is Muslim, approximately 300,000 people. There is no dominant ethnic group, but the largest communities are from Iran, Turkey and Bosnia. There are also significant numbers of Iraqis, Palestinians and Albanians. As in the rest of Europe, labour migration was the primary reason for moving to Sweden in the 1960's and 1970's, while during the last twenty years, migration has been more due to family reunion and asylum.

In Switzerland, of the Swiss population of 7,288,010 the number of Muslims is at 310,807 based upon the 2000 Census. Thus, Muslims represent 4.3% of the total population. An element that is important and interesting to note is that of the 310,807 Muslims in Switzerland, only 36,481 have Swiss nationality, having been born Swiss nationals and/or converting to Islam (approximately one-half of the 36,481) or having gone through the process of naturalisation to become Swiss citizens (resident for 12 years or through bloodline). Of the overall number of Muslims in Switzerland, there are a majority of ex-Yugoslavians.

In the UK, there are currently more than 1.5 million Muslims, with the substantial majority being of South Asian heritage. In addition to the South Asian Muslim communities, there are also significant Arab, Kurdish, Nigerian, Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot communities. More recently, Muslims have arrived as refugees

from Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and the Balkans. There are also an estimated 5,000–10,000 Muslim converts, about half from Afro-Caribbean communities.

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