

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)
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Data in Focus 2 - Muslims

FRA's European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS)

Today (28 May 2009), the FRA presents the second in a series of “Data in Focus Reports”: “**Data in Focus Report 2: Muslims**”. This EU-MIDIS report on Muslims provides data on how Muslims across the EU experience discrimination and victimisation. It covers Muslim respondents with diverse ethnic origins in 14 Member States. See <http://fra.europa.eu/eu-midis>

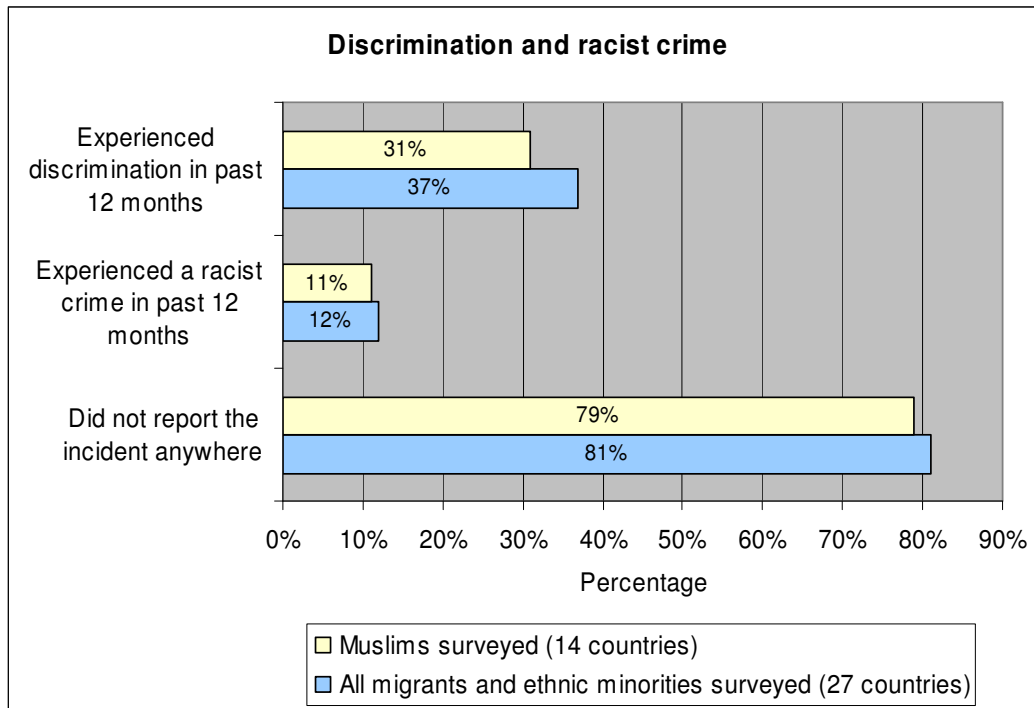
EU-MIDIS aims to provide evidence-based information that supports policy-makers and other key stakeholders to address discriminatory, racist practices, and improve support structures for victims of discrimination and racially motivated crime.

KEY RESULTS

Racist crime, harassment and discrimination grossly under-reported

1 in 3 Muslim respondents were discriminated against in the past 12 months and 11% experienced a racist crime. The highest levels of discrimination occurred in employment (when looking for work 18%; at work 13%), and in private services (at a bar restaurant, shop, by a landlord; total 14%). In comparison, of all ethnic groups surveyed within EU-MIDIS, 37% experienced discrimination, and 12% had been a victim of a racist crime.

Muslims aged 16-24 experience more discrimination in comparison with other age groups, with overall discrimination rates declining with age.



Lower discrimination of Muslims with citizenship and longer period of residence

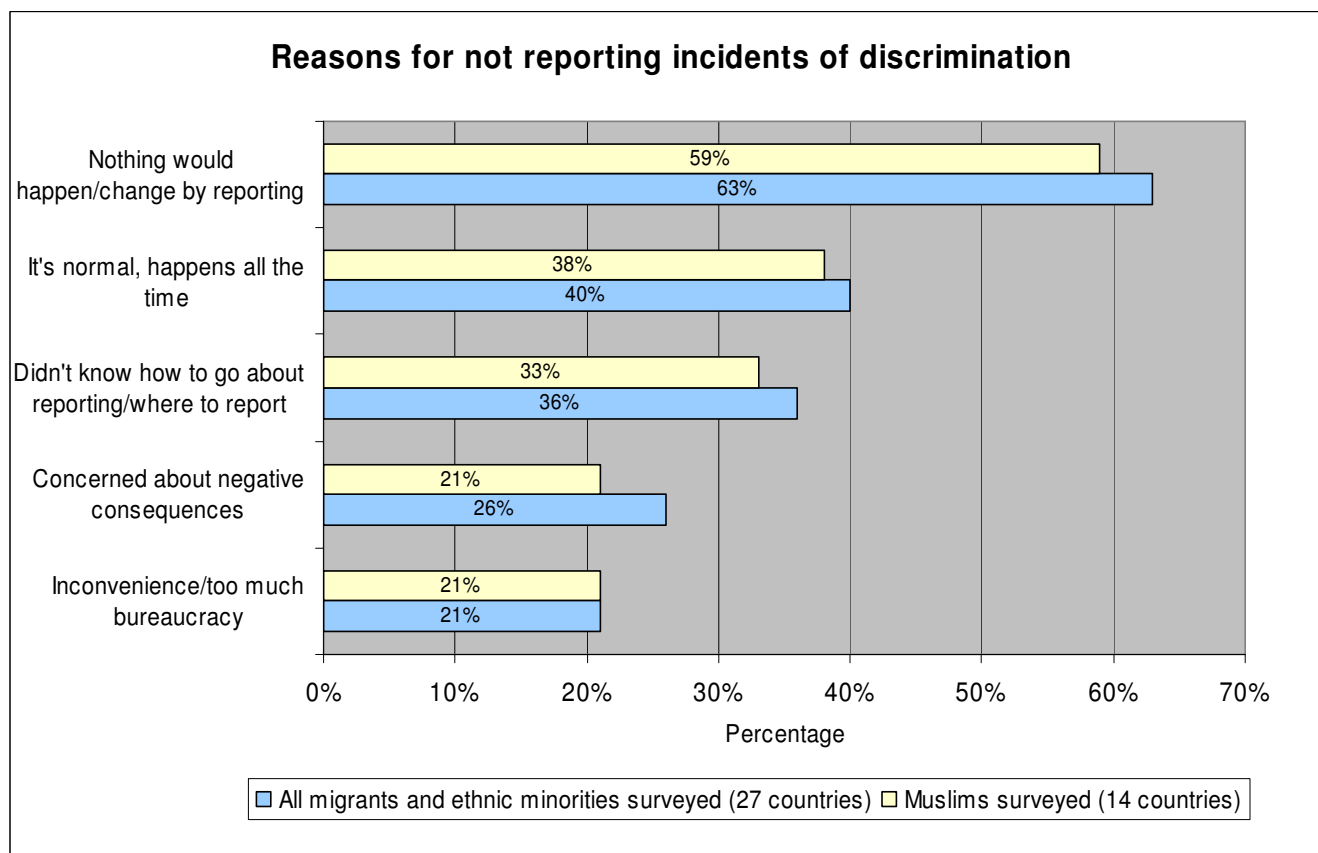
The length of stay in the country also affected levels of discrimination experienced. Those who have lived in a country for longer experienced less discrimination. On average 45% of those who lived in the country for 1-4 years experienced discrimination in contrast to 25% of those born in the country. 29% of youths aged 16-24 who are citizens of the Member States in question experienced discrimination, in contrast to 48% of youths who are not citizens.

On the whole, there are only small differences between Muslim men and women's experiences of discrimination.

Overwhelming majority do not report their experiences of racism

On average, 79% of Muslim respondents, particularly youths, did not report their experiences of discrimination. This means that thousands of cases of discrimination and racist crime remain invisible, and are therefore not recorded in official complaints and criminal justice data collection mechanisms. People without citizenship and those who have lived in the country for the shortest period of time are less likely to report discrimination.

Regarding the reasons for not reporting incidents, 59% of Muslim respondents believe that 'nothing would happen or change by reporting', and 38% say that 'it happens all the time' and therefore they do not make the effort to report incidents.



Vulnerable groups are not informed about their rights

This survey provides evidence that victims of racism in the EU are not informed about their rights. For example, only 41% of those Muslims surveyed knew that there is a law that forbids discrimination against people on the basis of their ethnicity when applying for a job. 80% did not know of any organisation that can offer support or advice to people who have been discriminated against. This demonstrates an urgent need for better information. In addition, this could reflect a real absence of support services in many Member States.

What can policy-makers do about this?

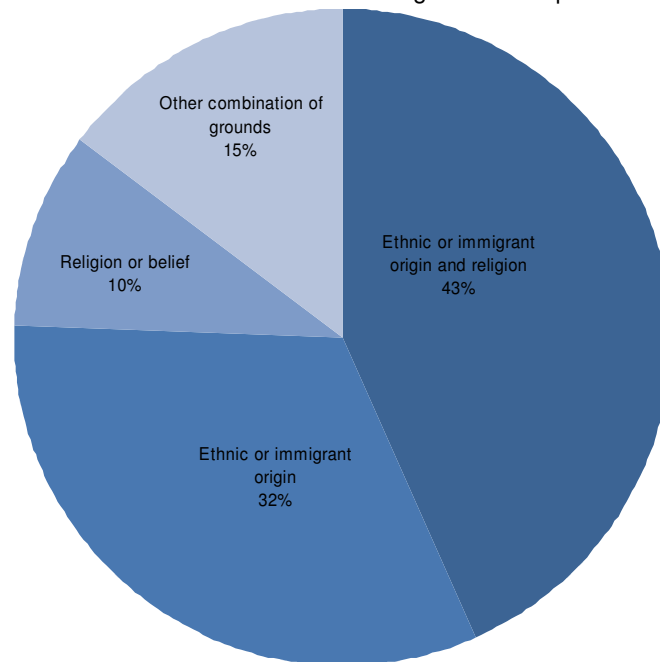
- The data from this survey can be used as a basis for developing targeted and evidence-based policy responses. In particular, discrimination in employment and in services must be addressed, and sanctions agreed and applied.
- The data also calls for the introduction of adequate mechanisms for reporting and recording discrimination and racist crime to enhance evidence-based policy development.
- Invest resources to make those who are vulnerable to discrimination aware of where they can turn to for support and advice.
- Allocate resources to organisations that are tasked with offering assistance to people who have been discriminated against.

- Advise people on where and how to make complaints. Encourage those who have been discriminated against or harassed to report their experiences to a competent authority in the knowledge that their complaints will be taken seriously.

Ethnicity is the main reason for discrimination

Of those Muslim respondents who experienced discrimination in the past 12 months, the majority believed that this was mainly due to their ethnic background. Only 10% stated that they thought that the discrimination they experienced was based solely on their religion. However, 51% of Muslims compared to 20% of non-Muslim ethnic minorities surveyed believe that discrimination on grounds of religion or belief is “very” or “fairly” widespread.

Discrimination by ground or combination of grounds
Those who have been discriminated against in the past 12 months



Wearing traditional or religious clothing does not influence discrimination

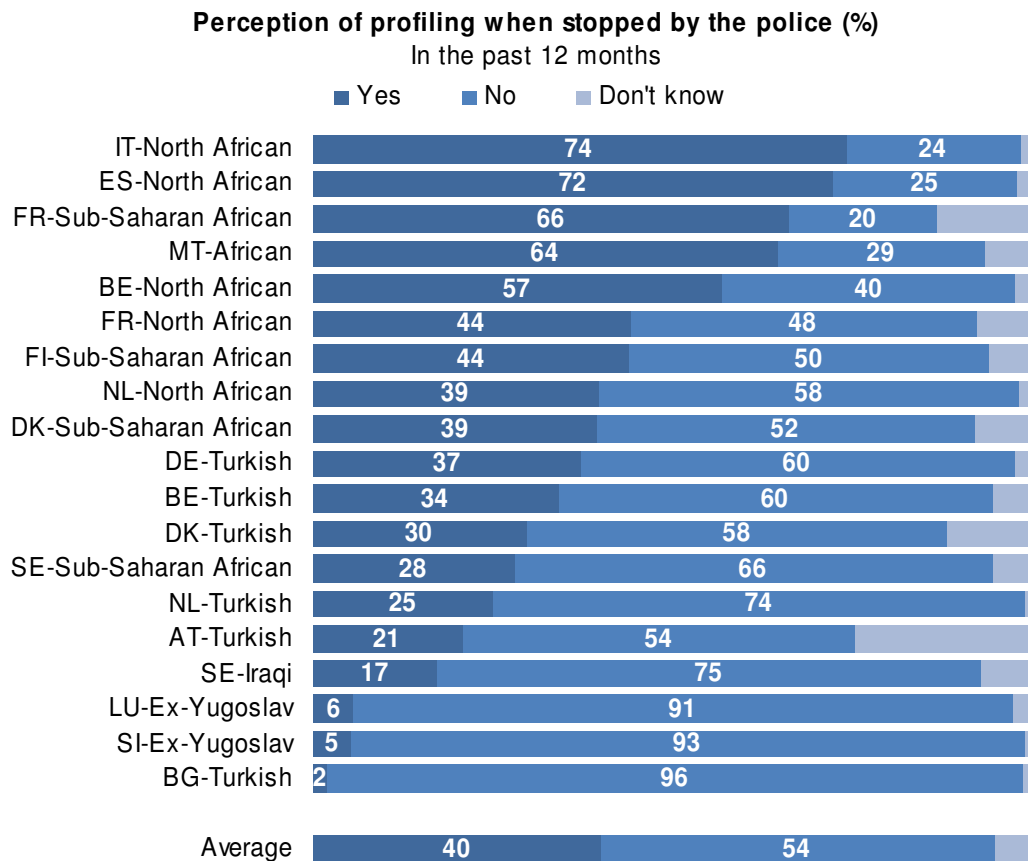
Wearing traditional or religious clothing (such as a headscarf) does not appear to increase the likelihood of being discriminated against. This finding contradicts common assumptions about the negative impact of wearing traditional/religious clothing, such as headscarves.

What can policy-makers do about this?

- Focus on implementing policies and follow-up mechanism that recognise the finding that ethnicity is the main ground for discrimination against Muslims – what does this mean for the policy debate?
- Further investigate the link between citizenship and lower discrimination rates.

Ethnic profiling widespread

The survey also asked questions about contact with law enforcement bodies, so as to identify possible experiences of discriminatory treatment. On average, 25% of Muslim respondents stated that they had been stopped by the police in the last 12 months. Of those who had been stopped, 40% considered that they were stopped on the basis of their ethnicity ('ethnic profiling'). However, this differs greatly depending on the Member State and group. While most respondents in Italy and Spain believe that they were stopped because of their ethnicity, in Bulgaria, Slovenia and Luxembourg this was not the case.



What can policy-makers do about this?

- Assess whether ethnic profiling by law enforcement, immigration, customs and border control effectively increases the identification of criminal activity, or whether it alienates and discriminates against Muslim communities?

FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions about the EU-MIDIS survey

The findings of the “Data in Focus Report 2: Muslims” form part of the first ever EU-wide survey on immigrant and ethnic minority groups’ experiences of discrimination and racist crime (“EU-MIDIS”). The FRA conducted this major representative survey in 2008, to examine experiences of discriminatory treatment, criminal victimisation including racially motivated crime, rights awareness, and reporting of complaints. Data is needed to measure social inclusion of ethnic minorities and immigrant groups, as well as the extent of discriminatory treatment and criminal victimisation, including racially motivated crime, experienced by minorities.

Why did the Agency undertake this survey?

The Agency’s reports have consistently shown that there is a severe lack of data on minorities in many countries. As a result, policy-makers remain ill-informed about how minorities experience everyday life in the Member States. For example, on average only 11 EU Member States collect good, comprehensive data on racist crime that allows for a trend analysis over time. This continued lack of (comparable) data makes it difficult for policy-makers at national and EU level to develop and target interventions to combat discrimination and racist crime. EU-MIDIS can complement existing efforts in some Member States and at EU level to try and rectify the current lack of hard data on minorities’ experiences of discrimination and victimisation.

How was the survey conducted, and what were respondents asked?

The survey (executed by Gallup) conducted face-to-face interviews with a random sample of respondents from selected ethnic minority and immigrant groups in all 27 Member States of the European Union. 23,500 ethnic minority and immigrant people were interviewed. In addition 5,000 people from the majority population living in the same areas as minorities were interviewed in 10 Member States to allow for comparison of selected results.

EU-MIDIS surveyed between one and three immigrant, ethnic minority or national minority groups in each Member State of the EU, with a minimum of 500 people interviewed per group in each country. The survey used the same standard questionnaire in all EU countries.

The survey asked ethnic minority and immigrant people about their experiences of discrimination in nine different areas of life: (1) when looking for work; (2) at work; (3) when looking for a house or an apartment to rent or buy; (4) by healthcare personnel; (5) by social service personnel; (6) by school personnel; (7) at a café, restaurant, bar or club; (8) when entering or in a shop; (9) when trying to open a bank account or get a loan.

Experiences of criminal victimisation, including racially motivated crime, were asked about within five different areas: (1) theft of or from a vehicle; (2) burglary or attempted burglary; (3) theft of personal property not involving force or threat; (4) assault and threat; (5) serious harassment.

EU-MIDIS has tested a robust and comprehensive random sampling methodology, which any EU Member State can use to extend the survey's coverage to different groups and more respondents in a country, thus allowing for further comparison and analysis.

Who was interviewed, and how were the groups selected?

The survey sampled men and women who were at least 16 years old and identified themselves as belonging to one of the selected ethnic minority or immigrant groups. Respondents needed to have been residing in the respective Member State for at least 12 months. 24% of the Muslims surveyed were born in their EU country of residence, and 52% had lived there for more than 10 years.

Groups were selected for interviewing in each Member State on the basis of the following:

- Information supplied to the FRA by its Racism and Xenophobia Network (RAXEN) of 27 National Focal Points, which provide the Agency with detailed national annual reports on different minorities' vulnerability to discrimination and victimisation in each Member State;
- Identification of the largest minority group or groups in each country, which had to reach a minimum overall size of 5% to be sufficient for random sampling in specific areas;
- Availability to be surveyed in more than one Member State, which allowed for the creation of 'aggregate' groups – such as 'North Africans' – for comparison of results between countries.

The report on Muslims covers the following Member States and groups:

Austria – Turkish
Belgium – Turkish and North African
Bulgaria – Turkish
Denmark – Turkish and Sub-Saharan African
Germany – Turkish
Finland – Sub-Saharan African
France – North and Sub-Saharan African
Italy – North African
Luxembourg – ex-Yugoslavian
Malta – African (North and Sub-Saharan African)
Slovenia – ex Yugoslavian
Spain – North African
Sweden – Iraqi and Sub-Saharan African
The Netherlands – Turkish and North African

More EU-MIDIS reports: During 2009, the Agency will release further 'Data in Focus' reports on specific minority groups and key issues examined in the survey. A final report from the survey will be released in December 2009, and it is planned to release the dataset from the survey in the first half of 2010.

More reports from this survey can be found at <http://fra.europa.eu/eu-midis/>

- **"EU MIDIS at a glance"**
- **"Data in Focus Report 1 - The Roma"**
- **Technical Report, Questionnaire and Frequently Asked Questions**

Data in Focus Report 2 - Muslims can be found at: <http://fra.europa.eu/eu-midis/>

For further questions please contact the FRA Media Team:

Email: media@fra.europa.eu

Tel.: +43 1 58030-642