

# European Muslims pushed into alienation, study says

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**Around 13 million Muslims living in Europe experience various forms of discrimination - mainly affecting their job and education prospects, as well as housing conditions - which tends to alienate them from society, according to a new report.**

The study published by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) on Monday (18 December) found that there are "persistent" trends of discrimination of the Muslim community in Europe while evidence of Islamophobia ranges from verbal threats through to physical attacks on people and property.

The statistics differ on various aspects of discrimination in different countries, with the survey in the four biggest EU states showing that German and Spanish respondents have "*much more negative views of Muslims*" than their French and British counterparts.

The public image of the Muslim communities have been recently affected by the terrorist acts carried out by Islamic radicals, as well as headscarf debates and discussions on forced marriages and honour killings practised by some Muslims.

While in some countries, Muslim migrants tend "to be more vulnerable to experiencing discrimination than non-Muslims", such as in Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Portugal, in others - like Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, France and Ireland - "religious faith alone cannot explain rates of perceived discrimination," the paper says.

## Jobs and education

In terms of job prospects "differences in wages, type of employment and unemployment rates of migrants, of which a significant proportion belong to Muslim faith groups, indicate persistent exclusion, disadvantage and discrimination."

The study highlights the UK case where in 2004 Muslims had the highest male unemployment rate at 13 percent and the highest female unemployment rate at 18 percent, with the UK average jobless rate at 5.5 percent.

On education, the report concluded that "*although students with migrant origins generally have strong learning dispositions, the performance differences between native and such students are significant,*" mainly in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany and the Netherlands.

In housing statistics it is also hard to distinguish the impact of ethnicity and religion on discrimination, but overall the study's authors suggested Muslim migrants experience higher levels of homelessness, poorer quality housing and residential neighbourhoods.

They are also more vulnerable in securing their housing status and face problems such as lack of access to

drinking water and toilets and exploitation through higher comparative rents and purchase prices.