THE STATE OF ISLAMOPHOBIA IN EUROPE IN 2018

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We are delighted to present the fourth edition of the annual *European Islamophobia Report (EIR)*, this time in cooperation with the Leopold Weiss Institute and with generous funding by the European Union, the Civil Society Dialogue Between EU and Turkey (CSD-V). The *EIR 2018* is an overall evaluation of Islamophobia in Europe in the year 2018, as well as 34 country reports that include almost all EU member states and additional countries, which we had not covered in previous years, such as Montenegro and Moldova. This year’s *EIR* represents the work of 39 scholars, experts, and civil society activists from various European countries.

The year 2018 was a year of unrest within and at the borders of Europe. We witnessed the populist grassroots yellow vests movement (*Mouvement des gilets jaunes*) in France, which protested for economic justice and against authoritarian structures, the uncertainty surrounding Brexit and the worsening situation at the borders of Europe with the drowning of many adults and children in the Mediterranean Sea.1

More importantly, all over Europe far-right parties and far-right narratives are on the rise and in some countries such as in Italy and Austria they are already in power. The cover picture we have chosen for this year shows three ministers of interior: Matteo Salvini, who is also the leader of the right-wing Lega; Herbert Kickl, who is one of the most important figures in Austria’s right-wing Freedom Party; and Horst Seehofer, a hardliner within Angela Merkel’s centrist-right Christian democratic party (representing the Bavarian Christian Social Union). They stand for a tougher refugee and asylum policy, teaming up to demonstrate that Europe is not willing to accept more refugees. With the strengthening of nationalist positions, a new front for the isolation of Europe (“Fortress Europe”) has been created. “Europe That Protects” was the official motto of the Austrian EU Council presidency in 2018. In this

endeavor, Austria’s then-head of government Sebastian Kurz was casting himself as Europe’s security chancellor.\(^2\) Islamophobic arguments and narratives have played a central role in this story.

At the same time, there have been small but important attempts in combating Islamophobia. The existing research on Islamophobia is growing. In Austria, an NGO the Dokustelle Muslime published an annual report documenting anti-Muslim racism; in the UK, the National Union of Students (NUS) published a report to foster a better understanding of the range of issues facing Muslim students in higher education and to contribute to the fight against the normalization of Islamophobia; in France, activists conducted a France-wide survey (“Consultation of Muslims”) on the situation of Muslims in France leading to debates in 57 mosques and collecting answers from 24,029 individuals.

Also on a political level, a modest progress can be observed in some areas. Worth mentioning is the attempt of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims, which presented an inquiry into a working definition of Islamophobia\(^3\) to be adopted by the British parliament in order to institutionalize the struggle against Islamophobia. While the APPG was not able to convince the majority of the parliament and especially not the Conservative Party, some first steps were taken by the Labour Party\(^4\) and others such as the mayor of London,\(^5\) who adopted the definition of Islamophobia. The Conservative Party has adopted the definition so far only in Scotland, although many have called for an official inquiry into Islamophobia within the Conservative Party.\(^6\)

### Combating Islamophobia at the European and Supranational Levels

The European Commission appointed its new coordinator on anti-Muslim hatred, an institution that was created on December 1, 2015. Tommaso Chiamparino succeeded David Friggeri on July 1, 2018. The coordinator’s main mandate is to address anti-Muslim hate speech, hate crime, and discrimination; the key

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stakeholders are organizations that deal with anti-racism and non-discrimination policy at the European and national level. A newly formed platform, the European Coalition against Islamophobia, raised its structural concerns before the new person was nominated. They criticized that this position lacks a clear mandate as to “what the role of the coordinator entails in terms of representation, official communication and actions that can be undertaken, also defining the remit of issues to be covered.”

Chiamparino set up a European Commission high-level meeting in December 2018, which was attended by member state representatives and NGOs working in the field of anti-racism and Muslims. The meeting produced concrete recommendations and the commitment of the representatives of the Netherlands and Spain to secure and build on the legacy of the present commission after the 2019 European elections, with the view to develop concrete measures against Islamophobia. The intention has been uttered by many to develop a common working definition of Islamophobia to support policy and advocacy work. These are important steps by the coordinator together with member states and NGOs to institutionalize further the struggle against Islamophobia. With Ursula von der Leyen as the first elected female European commission president, there might be some hope that the German political will to combat Islamophobia at a state level might also be transferred to the European level. While different NGOs are increasingly coordinating their efforts, as the European Coalition against Islamophobia shows, the involvement of international as well as supranational institutions such as the EU, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and the UN are essential.

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) organized a meeting in Frankfurt, Germany in co-operation with the Goethe University’s Academy for Islam in Science and Society, on June 25-26, 2018. The meeting had the purpose to work on a draft of the practical guide being developed by the ODIHR on understanding hate crimes against Muslims and addressing the security needs of Muslim communities. ODIHR Adviser on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims Djermana Seta argued that the guide will support governments in assessing the specific security needs of Muslim communities and improve responses to hate crime by local authorities and law enforcement agencies. In fact, according to the OSCE database, currently only 16

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states officially document anti-Muslim hate crimes and even in these cases, there is a lot of room for improvement.

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and the Council of Europe’s annual report for 2018 stresses that “Islamophobia is still prevalent […] In public discourse, Islam and Muslims continue to be associated with radicalization, violence and terrorism. There is, generally, only very little positive media coverage of Muslim communities in Europe. Islamophobic hatred is often spread via the Internet. Anti-Muslim sentiments are also regularly manifested in petitions and protest rallies against the construction of mosques. In many member states a dangerous ‘normalisation’ of Islamophobic prejudice can be observed.” The ECRI especially stresses that Black Muslims and Muslim women suffer from multiple discrimination. The ECRI’s General Policy Recommendation No. 5 which deals with combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims, adopted on March 16, 2000, is still an important legislation which – if followed – would allow Muslims to live in a much safer space.

In 2018, the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations, which monitors state parties’ adherence to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights found that France violated the human rights of two women by fining them for wearing the niqab, a full-body Islamic veil. This intervention is important, giving weight to the rights of marginalized women in France and beyond.

In March 2019, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) published the 12th Report on Islamophobia that lists anti-Muslim events between June 2018 and February 2019. The report provides a general analysis of Islamophobia in European countries. Similarly, the OIC’s Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) in collaboration with the Republic of Turkey, held its 5th Annual Seminar on the subject of “Islamophobia: A Human Rights Violation and a Contemporary Manifestation of Racism” in Istanbul on October 17-18, 2018. Besides commission members, the event brought together relevant experts from academia and international organizations such as the Office of the UN High Commissioner

for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the European Commission (EC), and the OIC Women Advisory Council. A large number of OIC member and observer states and representatives of their National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) also participated in the seminar.15

The Rise of the Far Right in Europe

During the last decade, nationalist, populist, and far-right movements increased their influence in Europe. Using concerns about immigration, globalization, and religious terrorism, far-right extremist political parties seized power in Austria (October 2017) and Italy (March 2018) alongside previously elected nationalist governments in Poland, Hungary, and Serbia. In countries that are not yet ruled by nationalists, far-right movements are also growing. In September 2017, the populist right-wing extremist party Alternative for Germany (AfD) entered the German parliament for the first time and became the third party in the Bundestag with 12.6% of votes. Similarly, for the first time since the end of the Francoist dictatorship (1975), the Spanish electors sent several politicians of the far-right extremist party VOX to parliament in April 2019.16

Far-right extremist parties are also benefiting from social anger towards mainstream politics. In the German city of Chemnitz, protests against Merkel's immigration policy led to mob-like street violence (September 2018). Likewise, many protests occurred in France and Belgium against the Marrakech Migration Pact in December 2018, mixing anti-immigration and anti-Muslim resentment. European liberal and centrist parties seem unable to counter nationalistic discourse. On the contrary, some of them even use far-right arguments for electoral purposes such as in Norway with the Progress Party, the third largest party in parliament and part of the governmental coalition, in Denmark with the Venstre party, and in France with Les Républicains (The Republicans). Yet, by spreading ideas and expressions that were previously tied to far-right extremist parties, those mainstream parties are actually legitimizing the hatred against the other, i.e. all those who look like an immigrant, a gypsy, a Muslim, etc.

In fact, Muslims are among the first victims of the rise of far-right extremism in Europe. In Austria, the Dokustelle Islamfeindlichkeit und antimuslimischer Rassismus (Office for Documenting Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Racism) recorded an

increase of approximately 74% of documented anti-Muslim racist acts in its report for 2018: 540 cases of Islamophobia were recorded in 2018 compared to 309 cases in 2017. In France, the Collectif contre l’islamophobie en France (CCIF) recorded 676 Islamophobic incidents in 2018 against 446 in 2017 (increase of 52%). In the UK, the upward trend in Islamophobic incidents continued in 2017-18 (the typical census period for official government data), with the number of cases recorded in official statistics rising by 17% and religion-specific cases by a staggering 40% (double the figure of 2015/16). Instances of vandalism directed at places of worship also recorded a significant (50%) rise in the same period. Finally, in the Netherlands, the Anti-discrimination Agencies (ADVs) announced that 91% of a total of 151 incidents of religious discrimination reported to the police were related to Muslims. The Anti-discrimination Agencies received 304 reports of religious discrimination, two thirds of which were directed against Muslims. Women constitute the majority of the victims of Islamophobia, especially when they wear headscarves. For instance, the Collectif contre l’islamophobie en France (CCIF) notes that 70% of the victims of Islamophobic acts in France are women. In her report on Islamophobia in Belgium, Amina Easat-Daas demonstrates how “attacks against Muslim women range from verbal aggressions, denial of access to services, Muslim women forcibly having the headscarf removed, and go as far as attempted rape” and physical attacks.

Islamophobia is not only a threat for Muslim communities established in the old continent but also for the security and the stability of European states. The section below on Islamophobic terror attacks illustrates the extent to which anti-Muslim racism promoted in far-right and nationalistic circles represents a concrete danger to human rights, national security, and the European model of coexistence.

The Right Wing in Opposition

Although the far right does not rule the majority of European countries, figures and movements related to nationalistic or nativist ideology keep imposing their Islamophobic agenda on European politics. Actually, the immediate goal of far-right movements “is to influence and drive debate rather than win power or join a coalition.”17 There are many examples of this trend such as Angela Merkel’s announcement of setting “transit camps” for migrants along the German border in July 2018; Emmanuel Macron’s focus on French identity in his decisive speech on the yellow vests movement in April 2019; or Lars Løkke Rasmussen’s promotion of the Danish “anti-ghetto laws” – that betrays the fundamental principle of equality of all citizen in front of the law – in January 2018. In other words, far-rights ideas extend their reach into political mainstream movements. This “lepenization of minds” (lepenisa-

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tion des esprits)¹⁸ that has spread throughout Europe makes any attempt to deconstruct nationalistic arguments difficult.

Most of the far-right opposition parties manage to put pressure on the liberal governments because of their ability to seize any discourse regarding the “we.” They claim to defend national sovereignty against the European Commission, the national welfare state against globalization, national culture against immigration, and national religious, cultural, and secularist heritage against Islam.

This ideological “success” also triggered the emergence of new far-right figures in recent years. In the Netherlands, for instance, Thierry Baudet who created the party Forum voor Democratie in 2016, appeared to gain popularity with his anti-Islam attitude. The Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz or the newly established Spanish VOX party (created in 2013) are also good examples of this new far-right generation.

Finally, all these movements try to constitute a social support at grass-roots level. On December 2018, Belgian far-right networks organized the protest La Marche contre Marrakech - the same way the German AfD party had triggered Chemnitz mobs in September 2018. Similarly, the French National Rally, formerly the National Front, has been the party that benefitted the most from the yellow vest movement according to opinion polls in December 2018 (i.e. when the movement was at its peak).¹⁹

The Right Wing in Power

Once in power, far-right extremist parties do not only incriminate foreigners in the public debate but also directly attack the fundamental rights of minorities, in general, and of Muslims, in particular. In other words, far-right governments jeopardize the fundamental principles of the constitutional system. In his report on Islamophobia in Austria, Farid Hafez writes,

“After the ÖVP and the FPÖ formed a coalition in December 2017, several anti-Muslim laws were introduced and Islamophobic policies were implemented in 2018. First, the government implemented a hijab ban for children in kindergarten. This act was legitimized by presenting it as a measure against so-called political Islam. The symbol act was also presented as a measure to fight “political Islam.” Secondly, the government attempted to close mosques and the Arab Islamic Community of the Islamic Religious Authority (IGGÖ). […] Thirdly, the general secretary of the governing ÖVP even demanded to ban fasting in school for pupils.”²⁰

¹⁸. The meaning of “lepenization” is the “minds that get shaped by J.M. Le Pen’s ideas and worldview.” The term is constructed from the famous French xenophobic leader’s name (Le Pen) and from the suffix of “action -ation”. See: Pierre Tevanian and Sylvie Tissot, Les mots sont importants, (Libertaria, Paris: 2010).


²⁰. In the present edition see Farid Hafez, “Islamophobia in Austria: National Report 2018”.

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Anna Piela reports similar dynamics in the report on Islamophobia in Poland. She underlines the “large discrepancy between the lived experiences of Polish Muslims who feel threatened by the sheer scale of anti-Muslim verbal and physical violence in Poland on the one hand, and the claims made by the Polish state apparatus which insists that the problem of anti-Muslim hate crime is declining.” Piela reminds us that hate crime in Poland is heavily under-reported with only 5% of those targeted reporting hate crime to the police. According to Piela, the denial of anti-Muslim racism goes along with the dismantlement of mechanisms protecting minorities in Poland. In sum, anti-Islam propaganda allows far-right governments to attack the constitutional system as a whole.

Nadia Jones-Gailani and Gabi Göbl draw an analogous conclusion in their report on Islamophobia in Hungary. They show how xenophobic attitudes towards Muslims and migrants occupied a great part of the April 2018 countrywide elections campaign, and how the government multiplies restrictions on many fundamental rights such as applied rule of law; academic freedom; human rights of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees; women’s and gender protections; rights of minority groups; and the functioning of an independent judiciary system. Again, attacks against Muslims’ rights and bodily integrity jeopardize the fundamental rights of any citizen - Muslim or not.

Finally, the xenophobic and anti-Islam climate fostered by far-right governments paves the way for physical and terror attacks against Muslims or people who might be taken to be Muslim. In Italy, Alfredo Alietti and Dario Padovan report an increase of physical and verbal attacks on immigrants, asylum seekers, refugees, and Muslim citizens since the formation of far-right coalition in 2018, leading to dramatic events such as the wounding by gunshot of six migrants from Nigeria in Macerata on February 3 and the murder of a Senegalese street seller, Idy Diene (54), in Florence on March 5. Likewise, Ivan Eujb Kostić shows how since they came to power in 2012, nationalists in Serbia have been rehabilitating Islamophobes, who are among those responsible for crimes against Muslims during the civil war.

The Co-option of Islamophobia by Centrist Parties

As has been mentioned above, centrist parties do not manage to counter far-right discourse and often even fall into their trap by adopting their xenophobic approaches on security, immigration, and diversity issues. For several years now, the “lepenization of minds” (lepenisation des esprits) has taken over European politicians and media regardless of their position on the political spectrum. As a result, Islamophobia has become the new normal in Europe among politicians of any ideology.

For instance, Austrian governmental measures and laws against Muslims were discursively supported by the majority of the political opposition parties. Likewise, discourses and politics that depict the Danish Muslim minority as incompatible with Danish values and “Danishness” have been widely relayed in circles where mainstream liberal politicians outshine such as the governmental coalition, the parliament, and media. In his report on the Czech Republic, Selma Muhič Dizdarević brilliantly underlines that “Islamophobia is not a phenomenon related only to certain politicians and parties.” Besides the Direct Democracy Party (SPD), which is leading the way regarding Islamophobia in the Czech Republic, she notes that “we find Islamophobes both in the left (Communist Party, Social Democratic Party) and the right (Civic Democratic Party). Particularly encouraging for Islamophobes is that the Czech president himself [Miloš Zeman from Strana Práv Občanů – Civil Rights Party] supports and promotes such views.” She concludes that in the Czech Republic it is almost impossible to have a political career and hold a positive attitude towards minorities and, in particular, Muslims.

Even among political parties who claim that they are fighting the far-right wing we find patterns of Islamophobic discourse and approaches. The French presidential party Republic on the Move (La République en Marche, right-wing liberal), for example, has an ambiguous position on Islam. While President Macron seemed first to promote a liberal interpretation of laïcité and the 1905 Law on the Separation of the Churches and State, he kept repeating that Islam in France must be reorganized by the state in order to prevent radicalization. Moreover, Macron and the presidential party took decisions that strengthen an exclusively security-based approach towards Muslim people. The counterterrorism law of October 2017 has been widely implemented throughout the year 2018. The United Nations, the Human Rights League, and the French Supreme Court (Conseil Constitutionnel) raised concerns about the consequences of this law on Muslim people.

The (Mis-)Use of Education and Academia
Teaching and public schools constitute some of main tools in the hands of nation-states for transmitting general ideologies to a great number of their citizens. Therefore, they play a role in structural racism and the pervasive Islamophobia in Europe.

This year, many reports underline the role of courses and schoolbooks’ content in the rise of Islamophobia at the national level. Adem Ferizaj reports that narratives of “Al-

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24. Ibid.
badian and European” lead to biased approaches towards Islam and Muslims in Kosovo’s high schools. He shows how these narratives “drastically sanction voices criticizing national figures which are at the same time represented as ‘defender[s] of Christianity in the Balkans’ or as ‘magnificent patriotic and European figure[s]’ in school books. Moreover, the complexity of the Albanian history during the Ottoman Empire is ignored at the expense of the focus on a Eurocentric account of history.”

Likewise, Anna Piela underlines the lack of proper education on Islam – and any religion other than the Roman Catholic one – in Polish state schools. She adds that teachers only evoke Islam when they come to historical accounts of war and conflict such as the battles of Poitiers (AD 732), Lepanto (AD 1571), and Vienna (AD 1683).

In his report on Islamophobia in Slovakia, Jozef Lenč offers some more general factors for the biased approach to Islam in Slovakian schools. According to Lenč, “The insufficient hourly subsidy for the humanities, the lack of education on world religions, and the low qualifications of teachers for teaching religion and civic or political education can be seen as the source of the problem [i.e. the spread of Islamophobia].” On the same topic, Ivan Ejub Kostić highlights problems concerning history textbooks in Serbia, especially the “distorted representations of the Ottoman period and the depiction of the basics of Islamic faith and culture.” He also notes that these textbooks “are widely in use not only among Serbian Orthodox children but among Albanian, Bosniak, and Roma children as well.”

Yet it should be noted that, beyond education, hatred against Muslims remains a general problem in Serbia mainly due to nationalist ideology of great Serbia, decades of ethnic cleansing and the Bosnian genocide in the 1990s.

Governments are sometimes even more active in the spread of negative approaches towards Islam in national education. This is, for example, the case of the Albanian project to train 22,000 teachers to fight extremism. In his report, Olsi Jazexhi discloses the xenophobic character of this program that presents “Islam as the only source of violent extremism” and depicts “in negative terms traditional events such as the Shariah, the Caliphate, the Hegira, etc.” Jazexhi mentions that many imams and Muslim activists – among them the Albanian League of Imams – denounced this project by claiming, “it was aimed to scare the students of Islam and turn teachers into spies against their Muslim students.”

Disputes about the place of Islam in education are not the prerogative of governments but also filter upwards from society. In Bulgaria, for example, the positive proposition made in 2018 to include the assimilation policy of the totalitarian communist regime against Muslims and Turks in history textbooks fueled a virulent debate in Bul-

27. In the present edition see Anna Piela, “Islamophobia in Poland: National Report 2018”.
garian society as it turned out that many were opposed to the idea. Likewise, in Greece, with the support of extreme-right groups and the Church, hundreds of parents protested against textbook reforms that include more information about other religions and Islam. In Italy, where education gives a great space to multiculturalism, much polemics occurred in 2018 about history textbooks that supposedly “promote Islam.”

In Denmark, private Muslim schools are targeted and placed under strong surveillance because of supposed “links with extremism.” Sibel Özcan and Zeynep Bangert report that in May 2018, “the government inserted background checks and deprived state aid from several Free Schools that were not meeting the requirements of the Free School Law. This meant the closure of certain Muslim Free Schools.”31 In the UK, similar debates took place and between 2014 and 2018, the authorities conducted an inquiry to inspect private Muslim schools in Birmingham. Aristotle Kallis, the author of the Islamophobia report on the UK, notes that “in the end, although the investigation did uncover evidence that some schools ended up being run as faith institutions, there was no proof of an organised ‘conspiracy’, as right-wing press and the government had alleged. Of the expected 100 or more cases of professional misconduct, only 15 ended up with charges - and all but one eventually collapsed in bitter recriminations.”32

Online Islamophobia

It is well-known that Islamophobia is particularly rooted and spread on the Internet. The Collectif contre l’islamophobie en Belgique, one of the main organizations that fight Islamophobia in the kingdom, mentions that 29% of reported Islamophobic incidents in 2018 pertain to Islamophobia in the media and online. We can certainly explain this situation by the fact that the Internet allows people to express freely their ideas under anonymous accounts.

As a result, almost all reports give examples of hate speech in social media. In his Kosovo report, Adem Ferizaj mentions anti-Muslim racist accounts that are followed by hundreds of thousands of people on Instagram and Facebook such as FMimaghes Albania (more than 100,000 followers) and Fëja e shqiptarit është Europa (The religion of Albanians is Europe, around 40,000 followers). In these pages, Islam and Muslim people are presented as “premodern”, “aggressive”, or “non-rational.”33 The author of the report on Albania, Olsi Jazexhi gives examples of pages that promote conflict between “Catholic nationalism” – represented by the figure Scanderbeg, a priest who fought the Ottomans in the 15th century – and other nations and religions such as Turks, Greeks, Slavs, Orthodoxy, and, of course, Islam. Olsi Jazexhi indicates

32. In the present edition see Aristotle Kallis, “Islamophobia in the UK: National Report 2018”.

that “their ideology is similar to the ideology of the Australian terrorist Brenton Tarrant, who committed the New Zealand massacre on March 15, 2019.”

Amina Easat-Daas, author of the report on Belgium, insists on the fact that all these examples “point to the mainstreaming and banalisation of Islamophobic hate speech in the virtual world.” Yet, online Islamophobia is not separate from the other spheres of social life. In his Islamophobia report on France, Léonard Faytre shows how the social media, politics, and traditional media are intertwined in Islamophobic polemics. He claims that in 2018, “Islamophobic controversies often started from social media before getting debated in mainstream media and triggering reactions among politicians.” The role of these three actors is, of course, open to change and not necessarily hostile. In Austria, for instance, while the ÖVP-FPÖ government had announced new regulations to challenge online hate, the FPÖ went online with an Islamophobic video. A commercial, which was removed from the Internet the same evening due to criticism, presented Muslim men as social parasites. The video also includes a statement from Social Affairs Minister Beate Hartinger-Klein (FPÖ). Even Chancellor Kurz called the video “unacceptable.”

The feeling of impunity that anonymous platforms offer does not only permit Islamophobes to personally attack Muslims and to make general racist comments on Islam and Muslim people, but also to organize larger xenophobic protests like the Marche contre Marrakech – a march against the EU migration pact - that gathered 5,500 individuals on the streets of Brussels in December 2018. On the other hand, we should not forget that the Internet is also a secure way for victims of Islamophobic attacks to report and share their experiences. Amina Easat-Daas underlines the fact that “the Internet permits the vast sharing of news stories detailing Islamophobia in the nation, thus sharing an understanding that Islamophobia is very much a real phenomenon in Belgium that affects real individuals.”

Legalizing Islamophobia

By the expression “legalizing Islamophobia” we understand the way some European governments validate Islamophobic ideas by promulgating and applying laws that directly or indirectly restrict the rights of Muslim people. Since Islamophobia is not a fantasy restricted to xenophobes but an ideology shared by a large range of the European political spectrum, both far-right and centrist governments have “legalized Islamophobia” in 2018.

36. The secretary general of the FPÖ argued that it was “a fact” that primarily “immigrants and foreigners are abusing our social system,” hence the video featured a stereotyped cartoon character named Ali sinistfully laughing, who could no longer abuse the social welfare system due to the new regulation that shows a photo of the person on the insurance card. (2018), “Rassistisches FPÖ-Video: Hofer hat damit keine Freude”, ORF, 14.11.2018, https://orf.at/m/stories/3100680/, (Access date: September 2, 2019)
We already mentioned some measures the Austrian coalition government of the ÖVP and FPÖ implemented, i.e. the hijab ban for children in kindergarten, the attempt to close mosques and the Arab Islamic Community of the Islamic Religious Authority (IGGÖ), and the call to ban fasting for pupils in school. The author of the report on Austria, Farid Hafez, indicates that “most of these attempts were made based on the proclamation to fight ‘political Islam’, while they are in fact against Muslims in general and especially against organized Muslim civil society.”

This shows how governments try to hide or disguise their xenophobic actions in order to legitimize them. In this case, the Austrian government does not openly attack Muslim people but “only ‘political Islam.” Moreover, Hafez discloses the attempt by the state-related Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF) to produce knowledge in order to provide policies against “political Islam” with arguments.

Similarly, in Denmark, the widespread rhetoric on the supposed incompatibility of Islam to “Danishness,” the constant division made between “us” (white ‘native’ Danish people) and “them” (colored Muslim ‘migrant’ foreign people) paved the way to a series of discriminatory laws. According to the latest edition of the journal SOS Racism this distinction refers more to “ethnocracy” than to democracy since “in democracy, all citizens are equal in the eyes of the law, while in ethnocracy the power is placed in the hands of one particular group.” In fact, some xenophobic and Islamophobic laws have been designed upon a similar distinction:

- **Reform of the law on day care** (adopted in December 2018). The new law refuses Muslim parents their right to choose freely where their children will go to day care.

- **Burqa ban** (put into practice in August 2018). Sibel Özcan and Zeynep Bangert indicate that “a violation of the ban triggers a fine of 1,000 Danish Kroner (134 EURO), and the fine will increase if the ban is subsequently violated again.” On the other hand, it is estimated that only between 100 and 200 women wear the burka/niqab in Denmark.

- **Anti-ghettos Laws.** “In early 2018, the Danish government introduced a new set of laws to regulate life in low-income and heavy Muslim enclaves, known as the ‘Ghetto Package’. Some of the proposals were rejected as being too radical, such as one saying that ‘ghetto children’ should have curfew after 8 p.m. and should be fitted with electronic ankle bracelets. The purpose of the Ghetto Package is claimed to be to reduce the effects of parallel society and create better integration. The government may implement this package with, among others, the following initiatives: greater penalties for crime, less money from the public sector, and restrictions on how to raise children.”

38. In the present edition see Farid Hafez, “Islamophobia in Austria: National Report 2018”.
(school and day care, etc.). In total, there are 22 initiatives that it is believed will contribute to achieving the government’s desired goals.”

- Handshake with local mayor (approved in December 2018). “Handshakes with the local mayor are mandatory at the citizenship ceremony if one wants to be a Danish citizen. The law has the undertones of being aimed at Muslims because a share of Muslims refuses to shake hands with the opposite sex.”

The Danish report includes many other law proposals that target Muslims that were rejected in 2018 such as the ban of the headscarf in photographs for driving licenses and prohibiting the use of significant religious symbols for students and teachers in primary and lower secondary school.

Besides Denmark, other European countries have directly or indirectly restricted fundamental rights of Muslim people in 2018. Kosovo limited the police officers’ rights to attend prayers during their working hours. Furthermore, polemics took place about possible limitations of the wearing of headscarves and burqas in public institutions. On June 5, the Norwegian parliament passed a bill banning cloth covering of the face during classes at educational institutions and day care centers, which included face-covering Islamic veils such as the burka and niqab. On June 20, 2018, the Fundamental Law of Hungary (known as the Constitution prior to 2011) was amended for the seventh time. Changes included that foreign populations cannot be settled in the country and that all state bodies are obliged to protect Hungary’s identity and Christian culture.

It is also interesting to note that the Law on the Restriction on Wearing Face Coverings was not approved during the previous parliamentary term in Latvia. In the same vein, the UN Human Rights Committee criticized French justice on August 2018 for not having condemned the dismissal of an employee wearing the hijab from the private nursery where she was working. The committee considered this dismissal as unfair and as a discrimination based on religion. On October 2018, a group of UN experts condemned France for having banned the niqab in 2010.

Islamophobic Terror and Violent Attacks against Muslims

Last year, we received criticism and sarcasm from European right-wing circles for including the section “Terrorist Attacks against Muslims” in the introduction of the 2017 European Islamophobia Report. According to these circles, “Islamophobic terror” was an oxymoron as Muslims are supposed to be the only people responsible of terror attacks in the world and are certainly not the targeted victims of

such violence. This is unfortunately not an isolated view as researchers from Georgia State University and the University of Alabama showed in a study published in *Justice Quarterly* on March 2017 that “attacks by Muslim perpetrators received, on average, 357% more coverage than other attacks” in the United States.\(^4\) Thus, both the public and opinion makers are consciously or unconsciously inadequately aware of anti-Muslim terrorism.

Yet, the multiplication of terror attacks specifically targeting Muslim people – such as the Christchurch terror attacks (New Zealand) on March 15, 2019 – led several international organizations and institutes to focus more on this particular kind of terrorism. Although most of the studies do not describe Islamophobic attacks as “terrorism,” they still warn about the danger far-right terror represents for European societies.

The Global Terrorism Index 2018, published by the Institute for Economics and Peace, underlines that “the majority of [non-jihadist terror] attacks were carried out by lone actors with far-right, white nationalist, and/or anti-Muslim beliefs.”\(^4\) The 2019 edition of the EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT), published by EUROPOL, discloses in detail the growing danger of right-wing terrorism even if the study never mentions the anti-Muslim ideological framework working behind this trend.\(^4\) Similarly, in the 2018 report by the UN Secretary-General on terrorism it is claimed that not only jihadist groups such as ISIL and Al-Qaida promote a destructive narrative but also “violent extremist groups such as racial supremacists, far-right groups and other religiously or politically motivated groups.” According to the same report, those groups “pose a significant threat to the cohesion and safety of our societies and communities.”\(^4\)

Here, in the *European Islamophobia Report 2018*, authors approach Islamophobic terror in three different ways:

- Firstly, they underline the rise of Islamophobic extremist groups and networks that call for and plan terror attacks against Muslims.
- Secondly, they list attacks or failed attacks that are considered terrorist due to the assailant’s background, preparation, or link to an extremist network.
- Thirdly, they list Islamophobic attacks or failed attacks that are more difficult to depict as terrorist but remain extremely violent. These attacks reflect


the thin border between injury and death, between hatred, racist attack, and Islamophobic terrorism.

1. Islamophobic Terror Groups and Networks

Many authors report the rise of structured Islamophobic terror groups in Europe. In the Islamophobia report on the Netherlands, Leyla Yıldırım notes that the three major researches on national security and terrorism – i.e. the Verwey-Joncker Institute, the Dutch Security Agency (AIVD), and the National Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (NCTV) – underline the growing influence of extreme and armed far-right groups on Dutch society. They add that their essentialist negative judgement on Islam justifies attacks against Muslim people and buildings. A concrete example of this terrorist threat is the case of Vincent T, who has been sentenced by the court in Zutphen to 40 months of unconditional prison. The 44-year-old man is suspected of preparing a terrorist attack on Muslims. Vincent T. has been detained in the heavily guarded prison in Vught since May 2018. He was active in the Facebook group ATB Special Forces. His expressed goal was to set up a civilian watch “to protect the Dutch people against Muslims.”

In France too, terrorist far-right groups become progressively more structured. In 2018, several groups planned or called for planning terror attacks against Muslim people such as the AFO (Action of Operational Forces) that was about to physically attack hundreds of imams, Muslim women, and mosques in the summer of 2018. The French police partly dismantled the group between June and August 2018, before the attacks could take place. Ten people were arrested, all huntsmen or sport shooters. Police also found weapon facilities such as explosives laboratories in different locations. They seized 15 handguns, some legally owned by their respective owners. According to police, the AFO is a network of around 100 members that planned terror attacks and trained to “resist Islam.” The AFO was linked to Voluntaries for France (VPF) that also calls for “defending French identity” and “fighting against the Islamization in France.” The group registers between 200 and 800 members including many retired soldiers and French generals and officers. Meanwhile, Remora Network openly attempts to organize “civil resistance” and paramilitary operations against Muslims in France. The group split the map of France in 15 areas, all supervised by “former experimented army officers.” Other groups such as Soldiers of Odin Breizh, a French version of a Finish far-right group, and Generation Identity aim to fight against the “Great Replacement” by organizing actions such as patrols in French cities or national borders. In total, the web media Mediapart revealed that French intelligence is following around 350 radicalized far-right members who have one or several firearms.


Another transnational armed right-wing extremist group is the network Hannibal, which operates in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. The network was founded in 2015 and recruits former security service agents, soldiers and policemen along with right-wing individuals to prepare them for a “Day X,” i.e. a military coup d’état.\textsuperscript{46} The German daily \textit{TAZ} published a long piece on this issue,\textsuperscript{47} but a public outcry did not follow.

In Slovenia, public and political figures condemned the formation of paramilitary groups under the leadership of Andrej Šiško, which gathered and performed exercises in the woods of the Štajerska region. Ana Frank, the author of the report on Slovenia, adds that there are charges against the movement with “the allegation of a threat to national security.” She explains that “Andrej Šiško is known for his nationalist and xenophobic views. He also announced that similar groups and activities will soon be held in other regions of Slovenia. Andrej Šiško was a candidate in the presidential elections in 2017, while in the past he was sentenced to imprisonment for attempted murder.”

The authors of the \textit{European Islamophobia Report 2018} underline the fact that most reports on far-right terrorism do not make the connection between the rise of far-right attacks and Islamophobic debates that have been fueling European public opinion for years now. In his report on France Léonard Faytre points this out and claims that “although it is possible to make the distinction between those who spread Islamophobic rhetoric and ideas and those who plan or call for terror attacks against Muslims, the boundary between both categories is not impermeable.” A good example of the permeability between terror attacks and public debates centered on anti-Muslim hatred occurred in the Czech Republic, where a terrorist incriminated in two attacks has close relationship with the anti-immigration and anti-EU movement Freedom and Direct Democracy (SPD), which has 22 MPs in the Czech parliament.\textsuperscript{48} In the summer of 2017, Jaromír Balda (72) chopped down trees on two occasions so that they fell across a railway line in order to fake jihadist attacks and Muslim infiltration. Nine passengers were on the first train, while the second - with six passengers and three staff - hit the tree at 80km/h.\textsuperscript{49} Selma Muhič Dizdarević, the author of the report on the Czech Republic, indicates that “Jaromír Balda was also involved in the dissemination of threatening flyers in which the perpetrator


pretended to be a jihadist planning assaults on Czech citizens.”

Balda is a fanatical supporter of Tomio Okamura, leader of Direct Democracy (SPD) - so much so that he plastered Okamura’s portrait on his house. The Czech justice sent Balda to jail for four years in January 2019.

Another example of the intertwining relations between terrorist activities and political circles is the sentence of the Court of Appeals of Belgrade that upheld the acquittal of the members of the paramilitary unit Sima’s Chetniks. In July 1992, the unit had demolished a mosque and murdered 27 Roma civilians in the village of Skočić in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

2. Islamophobic Terror Attacks
Authors of the European Islamophobia Report 2018 also list Islamophobic terror attacks that occurred in 2018. In Italy, for instance, a man shot and killed a Senegalese street seller, Idy Diene (54), a well-known member of his local mosque in Florence (March 5). The murderer was an Italian man, Roberto Pirrone, retired and 65 years old. Still in Italy, a gunshot targeted six migrants from Nigeria in Macerata (February 3). Gratefully no one died in the attack but some of the migrants were wounded. The assailant was a young Italian citizen, Luca Traini, ex-candidate in the administrative election with the League North and close to neo-fascist groups. Here again, we can see clearly the relation between terror attack and the spread of hate speech against immigrants and Muslims in the public debates.

In France, on July 23, French police arrested three people suspected of belonging to the already mentioned AFO group. They were planning to assassinate the singer Medine and jihadist Djamel Beghal after his release from prison. A few weeks later, French intelligence warned Medine that a terror attack had been planned against his future concert in Bataclan Concert Hall. The French singer announced the concert’s cancellation on September 21, 2018, on Twitter.

In Greece, far-right groups attacked Afghan refugees, including women and children, who gathered and protested in the central square of Lesvos about the delay in getting their asylum cards. During the attack racist slogans like “burn them all” were heard. In total, 28 people were injured and hospitalized during this attack.

In Finland, three Finnish youths brutally attacked a Pakistani migrant in Vantaa, stabbed him 20-30 times and repeatedly wounded him with an axe causing, among other injuries, a fractured skull.

In the United Kingdom, three young men deliberately drove a stolen vehicle into pedestrians heading into the Al-Majlis Al-Hussain Islamic Centre (Cricklewood, London) on September 19, injuring three worshippers. The author of the report on the UK, Aristotle Kallis, adds that the “hit-and-run attack was preceded by


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serial verbal taunts directed at Muslim passers-by.” Still in the UK, David Parnham – a 35-year-old British white supremacist with a long history of sending out hundreds of abusive, racist, and Islamophobic letters – was arrested and charged with soliciting murder and orchestrating a campaign of intimidation with intent to cause distress to Muslim communities (June 12).

Finally, in Ukraine, nationalist groups attacked Muslims in Kyiv (May 26). Mykhaylo Yakubovychi, the author of the report on Ukraine, writes that “a brawl broke out in the market close to Lisovaya metro station (where an old man was beaten by some merchants); part of the market has been destroyed by pro-nationalistic forces (‘C14’ and other groups) insulting black people (churki, the offensive word used mostly for Middle Eastern and Caucasian nationalities).”

These attacks prove that Islamophobic terrorism is not a fancy concept but a real threat to the life of millions of European Muslims and to the cohesion of European multicultural societies.

3. Extremely Violent Attacks Targeting Muslims

Finally, authors of the European Islamophobia Report 2018 list Islamophobic attacks or failed attacks that are more difficult to depict as terrorist since they are not directly linked to a particular network or extremist background. Yet, the violence of the attacks is such that no one can totally distinguish them from the general rise of Islamophobic terrorism. It is also important to note that all the attacks mentioned here are based on anti-Muslim ideology.

In Poland, over ten men attacked three Arab students at the Katowice Central Rail Station. They hit the students’ heads and pushed them onto the train tracks. The security guards who were present did not intervene (December 21). The attack was reported to the police with the assistance of the Turkish Embassy officials but the attacker was not tracked down and the investigation was discontinued. Still in Poland, five supporters of Legia Warsaw football club attacked two passengers of Turkish background in a bus in Warsaw. They sang a racist song and shouted slurs, and then one of them hit one of the targets on the face. The attackers fled after the bus driver reluctantly called the police. The attacked man tried to report the incident at three police stations, but the officers in charge refused to file the report citing “the lack of time.” Eventually, the attackers were detained and charged. In Serbia, a brutal physical assault took place in Novi Sad, when two young men of Albanian ethnicity were beaten up by four men of Serbian ethnicity. As a result of the attack, the life of one of the Albanians was in danger (October 7). It is important to note that one of the young men who were attacked said that they were assaulted when a group of young men standing nearby heard him speak to his friend in Albanian.

In France, three members of the far-right group Generation Identity (Génération Identitaire) physically attacked a young woman using tear gas and punched her four times (January 10). In Spain, neo-fascists attacked two Moroccan men in Denia (November 16). In Belgium, a nineteen-year-old Muslim woman was attacked and faced an attempted rape in Anderlues, near Brussels (July 3). The attackers made racist and Islamophobic comments to the victim. Anna Pła, the author of the report on Poland, reveals that a Polish-Egyptian married couple were attacked in their restaurant in Krasnystaw. The attackers repeatedly threatened them with death, spat at them, and hit them with their fists. Similarly, Alfredo Alietti and Dario Padovan mention that an Italian man threatened, insulted, and pushed a young Moroccan girl onto the metro because she was wearing the Islamic veil. Still in Italy, the keeper of the local mosque, an Italian convert, was brutally beaten and offended while walking on the street. In Ukraine, two citizens of Vinnytsia severely beat the spouses of Ukrainian women from the UAE and one of the men’s sons.

Many violent attacks against Muslims occurred in the UK, too. In October 2018, a video surfaced online showing a “waterboarding”-style torture ritual carried out by a 16-year-old boy against Jamal, a schoolboy of 15 years of age whose family had arrived in the UK fleeing persecution from the Syrian regime back in 2010. As it transpired, Jamal had suffered chronic abuse since arriving in the UK, including an incident of inflicted injury to his hand only weeks before the attack recorded on the video.

Many attacks against mosques could have led to physical injuries or deaths in the UK. In Leeds, an arson attack was carried out against the Jamia Masjid Abu Huraira Mosque, causing damage to its entrance, as well as to the Guru Nanak Nish-kam Sewak Jatha Gurdwara nearby (June 5). In Birmingham, the mosques Masjid Qamarul Islam and Al-Hijrah had their windows smashed after a coordinated attack carried out with catapults (August 16). In Cheetham Hill, Manchester, an arson attack was carried out against the Al-Falah Masjid (December 10). A similar incident occurred in North Macedonia, where a 350-year-old mosque in the village of Erekovci, in the municipality of Prilep, was burnt (October 2018).

All these Islamophobic acts demonstrate how violence against Muslims becomes more and more banalized in Europe. Finally, yet importantly, such incidents demonstrate how thin the line is between injury and death, between hatred, racist attack, and Islamophobic terrorism.

Threatening the Religious Infrastructure

As Bülent Senay, personal representative of the OSCE Chair-in-Office on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims, argued during the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2018 of the OSCE’s ODIHR, “Securitarian policies continue to raise significant problems concerning the collective and insti-
tutional dimension of the right to freedom of religion and depart from the principle of equal treatment of religious communities.”

Beyond the implementation of anti-Muslim legislation that threatens religious freedom, many countries are also following a policy of creating a national Islam, disconnecting the global nature of religion, and, thus, cutting transnational cooperation, when it comes to financial and organizational support. On the other hand, Christian churches and other religious communities are not facing similar restrictions.

**Steps Forward and Policy Recommendations**

As the year 2018 reveals, the urgent need to counter anti-Muslim racism is still there. Many of the recommendations, which were presented in the *European Islamophobia Report 2017*, are as momentous as before. In this section, we will not deal with recommendations on a national level since the authors of the national reports present their thoughts in their respective reports. Here, we especially deal with recommendations for supranational and international organizations and those that target European-wide trends:

- Today, the legal recognition of the specific form of racism targeting Muslims (or those perceived as such) is still crucial. We need a working definition of Islamophobia/anti-Muslim racism to challenge Islamophobia at a legal level. Willing national institutions as well as supranational and international institutions such as the European Commission, the European Council, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe and the OSCE, the UN, and others have to work in this field. Existing efforts should be supported and enhanced.

- We have to reiterate that the European Parliament should adopt a resolution on combating Islamophobia with concrete policy recommendations and ways forward - as it did to combat anti-Semitism, anti-Gypsyism, and Afrophobia.

- As discussed above and argued last year, the recording of anti-Muslim/Islamophobic crimes as a separate category of hate crime by the police is essential to uncover the real extent of this problem and to develop counter-strategies to combat it.

- There is also a need for nation states and/or the European Commission to create spaces in which national and local governments can meet with anti-racist NGOs to share their experiences and work together on how to tackle Islamophobia.

- The EU should encourage governments and cities to adopt national and local action plans against racism with specific measures or strategies to count-

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er Islamophobia, including measures to tackle intersectional discrimination targeting Muslim women, by opening specific funding grants for the implementation of such plans. The Barcelona action plan against Islamophobia\textsuperscript{53} can be used as a model.

- There is a need for more research that analyzes Islamophobia’s impact on children, health, mental illness, etc.

- EU budget negotiations should support the development of funding programs enabling civil society working against Islamophobia to develop long-term projects for capacity building, advocacy for equality, strategic litigation, educational programs, etc. Facilitating access to these funds is also crucial to allow civil society to benefit from them. Improving eligibility criteria to suit the realities of small NGOs is crucial to allow them to benefit from such funds.

- Following the Council of Europe’s example, the European Day against Islamophobia on September 21 should be established as a date for raising awareness across Europe on the challenges faced by Muslims and the need for their protection. Similar national initiatives, such as July 1 in Germany, should be established and used by NGOs as well as authorities to create awareness in their countries.

- With the support of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights and the ODIHR at the OSCE, governments should develop and promote the harmonization of data collection in areas of hate crime and equality, recognizing anti-Muslim bias as a category. This data should be disaggregated according to the multiple grounds of discrimination, including gender, race, ethnicity, and religion.

- In addition, in order to identify racial discrimination patterns and the groups that are most disadvantaged and most privileged in society and institutions, equality data disaggregated according to gender, disability, sexual orientation, and migration status should be collected. Member states should be obliged to collect comparable and reliable equality data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, religion, and gender.

- Given the rise of right-wing extremism and especially the increased armament of these groups, programs tackling right-wing extremism have to be implemented. The neglect of right-wing terrorism has to be counteracted. This starts with countering right-wing extremist ideology and especially its mainstreaming in a watered-down form. In particular, security agencies have to focus more on these extremist groups.

• Given the rise of violent attacks on mosques, authorities in dialogue with the communities involved have to ensure the safety of Muslim places of worship.

Last but not least, we reiterate the following recommendations from last year’s report (EIR 2017) which we think are still important today:

• “Muslim women’s access to employment should be improved since they are the most discriminated group among Muslims. Gender equality departments and the corresponding committees of EU institutions should give specific attention to situations of discrimination affecting Muslim women by documenting the issue and pushing for specific programs and measures to combat it. Furthermore, in order to counter the systemic discrimination in employment faced by Muslim women wearing the hijab in many EU member states, the European Commission should initiate infringement proceedings based on the Employment Directive.

• Discrimination in the workplace should be tackled to address the low level of economic activity among Muslims through targeted interventions at the stages of recruitment, job retention, and promotion.

• Preserving the Human Rights Act and the protection of minority rights including religious slaughter, circumcision, and the wearing of religious attire or symbols are imperative for a multicultural Europe.”

ISLAMOPHOBIA IN NUMBERS

• “The overwhelming majority of European states do not record Islamophobic incidents as a separate category of hate crime. The recording of anti-Muslim/Islamophobic crimes by the police as a separate category of hate crime is essential to uncover the real extent of this problem and to develop counter-strategies to combat it.

• In the EU, only 12% of Muslims who have been discriminated against report their cases to the authorities. (FRA) The non-exhaustive list that follows hints at the extent of underreporting of anti-Muslim hate crimes in Europe by states and NGOs, which has serious implications regarding the awareness of Muslims and the bureaucracy to tackle these issues.” (EIR 2017) The diverging numbers in the countries hint to a different degree of awareness and organization.

BELGIUM

• 70 cases of Islamophobic incidents were recorded in 2018
• 76% of victims of reported Islamophobia were female and 24% were male
• 84% of reported workplace discrimination pertained to Islamophobia
• 29% of reported Islamophobia took place online.
(Source: CCIB, 2018)

AUSTRIA

• 540 cases of Islamophobic incidents were recorded in 2018 compared to 309 cases in 2017, which equals an increase of approximately 74% of anti-Muslim racist acts.
(Source: Dokustelle Islamfeindlichkeit und antimuslimischer Rassismus)

BOSNIA

• 12 anti-Muslim attacks were reported
(Source: The Commission for Freedom of Religion)
THE STATE OF ISLAMOPHOBIA IN EUROPE IN 2018

FRANCE

- **676 islamophobic incidents** were documented in 2018 against 446 in 2017 (increase of 52%).
- Among these 676 incidents, 20 concerned physical attacks (3%), 568 concerned dis-crimination (84%), and 88 concerned hate speech (13%).
  (Source: Collectif contre l'islamophobie en France, CCIF)

GERMANY

- In 2018, according to police statistics there were
- 678 attacks on German Muslims;
- 40 attacks on mosques;
- 1,775 attacks on refugees;
- 173 attacks on asylum homes; and
- 95 attacks on aid workers.
  (Source: Deutscher Bundestag, "Islamfeindlichkeit und antimuslimische Straftaten", ad "Proteste gegen und Übergriffe auf Flüchtlingsunterkünfte")

ITALY

- According to a report on hate speech in social media there has been an increase of **hate tweets in 2018** (36.93%, March - May) compared to **2017** (32.45%, May – November).
  (Source: Vox Diritti report)
NORWAY
• **120 formal complaints** to the police based on religion were recorded in 2017, up from **97 cases in 2016**. It is not specified how many were related to Islam.
  
  *(Source: Politidirektoratet)*

FINLAND
• **In 2017**, in relation to the number of foreign citizens who live in Finland, Afghans experienced the highest frequency of hate crimes motivated by ethnic or national origin.
• **Hate crimes based on religion** rose by **58%** compared to **2016**.
• **The most frequent victims** were Muslims.
  
  *(Source: Finnish Police University College)*

BULGARIA
• **8 cases** of Islamophobic incidents **were recorded**
  
  *(Source: Muslim denomination in Bulgaria)*
THE STATE OF ISLAMOPHOBIA IN EUROPE IN 2018

UNITED KINGDOM

- Religiously motivated crime in England and Wales has risen by 415% between 2011 and 2018.  
  (Source: Grahame Allen, Yago Zayed, The Crime Statistics)

- 52% of the 5,680 religiously aggravated recorded offences involved people who identify as Muslims.  
  (Source: Home Office)

- Nearly half of the voters of the governing Conservative Party believe that Islam is incompatible with ‘the British way of life.’  
  (Source: HopeNotHate)

NETHERLANDS

- 21 out of 55 respondents from 18 different mosques reported that their mosque had occasionally been the target of hostile attacks.

- In total, these mosques had to deal with 47 incidents, including 11 threats, the deposition of a pig’s head (7 times), and hurtful statements and symbols drawn on the mosques and verbal aggression towards mosque visitors (6 times).

- Only four of the 21 respondents communicated with the media about the incident and only 1 reported the incident to the local anti-discrimination provision.  
  (Source: Research office Labyrinth, 2018).

- 7% of reported discrimination was related to religious discrimination.

- 91% of a total of 151 incidents of religious discrimination reported to the police was related to Muslims.  
  (Source: Discriminatie Cijfers, 2018)
VIOLENT ACTS AGAINST MUSLIMS IN EUROPE

Violent acts are an outcome of the violent ideology of racist dehumanization. Muslims are increasingly becoming victims solely because of their faith.

AUSTRIA
• An 18-year-old conscript in basic military service, Mario S., fired a gun in front of a school. A pupil with an Arab background was injured, while the police excluded a racist motive.

BELGIUM
• A nineteen-year-old Muslim woman was attacked and faced an attempted rape in Anderlues. The attackers made racist and Islamophobic comments to the victim.
• In Charleroi, two Muslim women were attacked in front of a two-year-old infant. Both were verbally attacked and one had her headscarf removed.

BOSNIA
• Several shots were fired at the newly rebuilt Ferhadija Mosque in Banja Luka.
• The property of a Bosniak returnee in Sokolac, Hamed Vražalica, was destroyed in an arson attack.

BULGARIA
• The Muslim cemeteries of Gradnitsa village and Dobrich were desecrated.

CROATIA
• On Savudrijska Street in Borongaj, Zagreb, an unknown perpetrator placed lumps of lard on the death notices of two Muslims.

CZECH REPUBLIC
• A senior citizen, Jaromír Balda (72), chopped trees on two occasions so that they fell across a railway line. Meanwhile, he was involved in the dissemination of threatening flyers in which the perpetrator pretended to be
a jihadist planning assaults on Czech citizens. The goal of his activities was to fake terrorist attacks and Muslim infiltration.

DENMARK
• A victim was asked by three men whether he was a Muslim, to which he answered “yes.” The men attacked him by hitting him across his body.

ESTONIA
• An anti-Islam slogan was written on the façade of the Estonian Islamic Centre in Tallinn. The slogan contained the message “Bomb it! Isolated Islam, don’t remember their sins? In God we trust. Why?”

FINLAND
• A Pakistani migrant was brutally attacked in Vantaa by three white Finnish youths who stabbed the victim 20-30 times and repeatedly wounded him with an axe causing, among other injuries, a fractured skull.

FRANCE
• French police arrested several members of the far-right terrorist group Action of Operational Forces (AFO) that was planning to commit terror attacks against French Muslims such as poisoning halal foods, killing of hundreds of imams, physical attacks against Muslim women, and the degradation of what they considered “radical” mosques. Ten people were arrested, all huntsmen or sport shooters. Police also found weapon facilities in different locations such as explosive-manufacturing laboratories. They seized 15 handguns, some legally owned by their respective owners. According to police, the AFO is a network of around 100 members that planned terror attacks and training sessions to “resist Islam.”

GERMANY
• Over the course of several days those deemed as “immigrants” and “refugees” were chased through the streets by violent street mobs in the city of Chemnitz.

GREECE
• Afghan refugees, including women and children, gathered and protested in the central square of Lesvos about the delay in getting their asylum cards. Extreme-right groups attacked them during the night. Racist slogans like “Burn them all” were heard during the attack, which resulted in 28 people being injured and taken to hospital.
HUNGARY
• Members of the Muslim community report verbal insults, slapping, and spitting mostly targeting Muslim women wearing headscarves. These incidents remain unreported to the authorities.

IRELAND
• A Muslim doctor was subjected to repeated verbal abuse and harassment on public transport due to being identifiably Muslim.

ITALY
• An Italian citizen shot and killed a Senegalese street seller, a well-known member of his local mosque.
• Six migrants from Nigeria were wounded by gunshot in Macerata on February 3. A young Italian citizen, Luca Traini, an ex-candidate in the administrative election with the League North and who is close to neo-fascist groups, carried out the terror attack.
• A young Moroccan girl was pushed into the metro by an Italian man who threatened and insulted her for wearing the Islamic veil.
• The keeper of a local mosque, an Italian convert, was brutally beaten up and offended while walking in the street.

KOSOVO
• Graffiti was sprayed on a building of the University of Prishtina and on different mosques throughout the city. The messages stated, “There will be no Turkish mosque in Dardania [a neighborhood close to the city center]” and “Death to Naim Tërnava [Grand Mufti of Kosovo] and Hashim the Turk [an allusion to Hashim Thaçi, Kosovo’s president].”

LATVIA
• Muslim women were subjected to verbal attacks in public places, aimed at violating personal dignity, intimidation, and creating a hostile and degrading atmosphere.

MOLDOVA
• Tatiana, a Muslim convert, was confronted with repeated verbal and physical attacks in public places; one woman shouted at her in a supermarket for donning the veil, another poked her in a market for the same reason, while a group of young men threw walnut shells at her and her child on the street.
NETHERLANDS
- Vincent T, was sentenced by the court in Zutphen to 40 months of unconditional prison. The 44-year-old man is suspected of preparing a terrorist attack on Muslims.

NORTH MACEDONIA
- A 350-year-old mosque in the village of Erekovci, in the municipality of Prilep, was burnt.

NORWAY
- Incidents occurred on the streets of Oslo where Muslim women were spat on and verbally abused.

POLAND
- Over ten men attacked three Arab students at the Katowice Central Rail Station. They pushed the students onto the train tracks. The security guards who were present did not intervene.

SERBIA
- Two young men of Albanian ethnicity were beaten up by four men of Serbian ethnicity. As a consequence of this attack, the life of one of the Albanians was in danger.
- The Court of Appeals in Belgrade upheld the acquittal of the members of the paramilitary unit “Sima’s Chetniks” for the demolition of a mosque and the murder of 27 Roma civilians in the village of Skočić, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in July 1992.

SLOVAKIA
- A Muslim woman with a stroller was attacked in Bratislava. The perpetrator punched her and swore at her.

SLOVENIA
- Paramilitary groups were founded under the leadership of Andrej Šiško that gathered and performed exercises in the woods of the Štajerska region. Charges were brought against the movement with the allegation of a threat to national security. Andrej Šiško is known for his nationalistic and xenophobic views. He also announced that similar groups and activities will soon be held in other regions of Slovenia.
SPAIN
• Two Moroccan men were attacked by neo-fascists in Denia.
• Vandal attacks against the mosques of Carrús, Hernani, Barcelona, and Valencia.

UK
• A video surfaced online showing a ‘waterboarding’-style torture ritual carried out by a 16-year-old boy against Jamal, a schoolboy of 15 years of age whose family had arrived in the UK fleeing persecution from the Syrian regime back in 2010. As it transpired, Jamal had suffered chronic abuse since arriving in the UK, including an incident of inflicted injury to his hand only weeks before the attack recorded on the video.
• Three young men deliberately drove a stolen vehicle into pedestrians heading into the Al-Majlis Al-Hussain Islamic Centre on September 19 in Cricklewood, London, injuring three worshippers. The hit-and-run attack was preceded by serial verbal taunts directed at Muslim passersby.
• Arson attacks were carried out against the Jamia Masjid Abu Huraira Mosque in Leeds and the Al-Falah Masjid Islamic Centre in Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

UKRAINE
• A mosque in Bilohir’sk/Karasubazar was vandalized by unknown persons; Nazi-related inscriptions were left on the wall.
ISLAMOPHOBIC STATEMENTS OF POLITICIANS

Islamophobic language by high-ranking politicians, mostly from the far right, normalizes a dehumanizing and racist language when it comes to the portrayal of Muslims. This reduces the threshold of what is considered utterable and overall acceptable in public discourse and legitimizes discrimination of Muslims as human beings and as citizens.

AUSTRIA
• Austrian Peoples Party’s (ÖVP) General Secretary Karl Nehammer: “I call for a prohibition of fasting for pupils who are clearly weakened and can no longer follow the lesson.”

BELGIUM
• Bart de Wever, NVA leader: “Jews avoid conflict that is not the case with Muslims.”

BOSNIA
• Republika Srpska President Milorad Dodik: “Imams in Bosnia who recite the adhan are howling.”

BULGARIA
• Prosecutor Nedyalka Popova: “At present, according to statistics, Muslims are 10-12% in Bulgaria, and we have no reason to think that they will become less... When they reach 30%, the state is already in danger. They are a monolithic mass, who are easy to manipulate during the elections, and they are almost like a militarized structure, if they have been told to go and vote, they go.”

CROATIA
• Ivan Pernar, a member of the Croatian Parliament, accused feminist organizations in Croatia of remaining silent in the face of the UN’s decision that wearing a burqa is a human right.
CZECH REPUBLIC
• Dominik Hanko, vice-chair of the SPD party in the Ústecký district: “According to them we are sinners, unbelieving dogs. The more of them there will be here, the more they will force their truth on us until it turns out like it does in their countries. They’re like locusts, they destroy everything around them wherever they are.”

DENMARK
• Erik Høgh-Sørensen, regional council member in Nordjylland and parliamentary candidate for the Danish People’s Party: “At Lindholm (detention center for rejected asylum seekers) pig should be on the menu. Every day. Morning, noon, evening. And for late night snack.”

FINLAND
• President Sauli Niinistö: “I read in a newspaper of an Iraqi who has lived a long time in Finland and he said that this [his culture] isn’t any problem. When I leave home for work, go to the store, anywhere, I behave like a Finn, as in this society following the rules of the [cultural] game. But when I come home, I have Iraqi culture – truly impressive.”

FRANCE
• Deputy of the Republican Party (Les Republiains) Eric Ciotti: “Some French areas are in the hands of Islamists.”
• Former French Interior Minister Gerard Collomb in his resignation speech: “Today we live side-by-side… I am afraid that tomorrow we will live face-to-face.” His statement implicitly portrayed French Muslims and French non-Muslims as enemies.

GERMANY
• In the wake of racist attacks on people of color and refugees in Chemnitz, German Minister of the Interior Horst Seehofer (CSU): “Migration is the mother of all problems.”

GREECE
• Ilias Kassidiaris, Golden Dawn MP: “Today we are in Propylaia [i.e. the old building of the University of Athens]: against the new religious textbooks which promote de-Hellenization and Islamization.”
HUNGARY
- Prime Minister Viktor Orbán: “We must state that we do not want to be diverse and do not want to be mixed: we do not want our own color, traditions, and national culture to be mixed with those of others. We do not want this. We do not want that at all. We do not want to be a diverse country.”

IRELAND
- Identity Ireland leader Peter O’Loughlin claimed that Islam was “destroying” cities in Europe and warned of the risk of “Sharia courts”, “rape gangs”, and “grooming gangs” should a mosque be built in Kilkenny.

ITALY
- The Minister of Interior Matteo Salvini declared that nowadays Islam is a danger and his future government would put a stop to the irregular Islamic presence in Italy.

KOSOVO
- Interviewed by a Western media outlet, Kosovo’s current Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj unequivocally expressed his loyalty to the West in July 2018 by refusing the Albanian Muslim identity (“I’m Albanian. I’m not Muslim.”)

LATVIA
- The parliamentary secretary of the Ministry of Justice stated that the ministry has not abandoned the idea of face-covering restrictions in public places.

MOLDOVA
- During the mayoral elections in Chisinau, opposition candidate Ion Ceban falsely accused pro-European candidate Andrei Nastase of planning a 50-year lease of Chisinau to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) if he were to be victorious.

NETHERLANDS
- Geert Wilders broadcasted a campaign video with horror music in the background and in red letters a text which read, “Islam stands for hate against Jews, Christians, women, and homosexuals.” At the end of the video ‘Islam is deadly’ was written in red letters, this time resembling dripping blood.
NORWAY

• Per-Willy Amundsen, MP for the Progress Party and former minister of justice: “I have the right to state that the migration from Muslim countries should stop.”

POLAND

• The Law and Justice Party released a fearmongering propaganda video which threatened that the rival Civic Platform Party is keen to open Polish borders to “Muslim refugees” who would cause a great deal of unrest in the country. The video presented a dystopian vision of Poland in 2020, after an imagined victory of Civic Platform: “enclaves of Muslim refugees… the tenth victim of an attack… people are afraid to leave home after dark… sexual assaults and muggings are happening everyday… Will we feel safe if Civic Platform makes this happen?”

ROMANIA

• Senator Vasile Cristian Lungu: “In European cities the ‘violent crimes’ - especially rape, crimes and robberies, and terrorist attacks - are committed in overwhelming numbers by Muslims.”

SERBIA

• President Vučić: “Milošević was a great Serbian leader, his intentions were certainly best, but the results were bad.”

• Prime Minister Ana Brnabić on Srebrenica “[it] was a terrible, terrible crime but… genocide is when you are killing the entire population, the women, children and this was not that case.”

SLOVAKIA

• MP Stanislav Mízik repeatedly “warned” against the threat of Islamization to Slovakia, which may also be caused by liberal legislation in the field of abortion. He said that the opponents of the law “protect the Islamic occupants of Europe who do not recognize abortion and the first whom they will exterminate when they enforce the Shari’a law, will be the exponents of wicked NGOs.”

SLOVENIA

• The president of the Slovenian National Party Zmago Jelinčič Plemeniti on migrants: “They cut heads, they rape young children of all sexes, slaughter on the streets - and they will do this even more. Great. Some people seem to prefer this.”
SPAIN

- Santiago Abascal, the president of VOX, shared his opinion that Islam is incompatible with Spanish traditions, distinguishing a more preferred group of immigrants (South Americans) instead of Muslims.

UK

- Boris Johnson: “If you tell me that the burka is oppressive, then I am with you. If you say that it is weird and bullying to expect women to cover their faces, then I totally agree – and I would add that I can find no scriptural authority for the practice in the Koran … I would go further and say that it is absolutely ridiculous that people should choose to go around looking like letter boxes.”
LEGALIZING ISLAMOPHOBIA

Governments and political parties implement or demand legislations that directly target Muslims as religious subjects, treating them differently than members of other religious communities.

AUSTRIA

- The Austrian government introduced a hijab ban for children in kindergarten.
- The Austrian government attempted to close mosques and the Arab Islamic Community of the Islamic Religious Authority (IGGÖ).
- The general secretary of the governing ÖVP demanded to ban fasting for pupils in school.

BULGARIA

- Municipalities periodically hand out fines for the Friday sermons and calls for prayer. A member of the European Parliament and deputy chair of the VMRO party sent a formal request for control and a ban.
- The municipal council in Stara Zagora decided to resume the activity of renaming the Turkish-Arab toponyms in the territory with Bulgarian ones. As a result of the initiative, 838 toponyms of lands and sites with Turkish-Arab origin were replaced.
- Archaeologists from the National Archaeological Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences started new excavations in the local Kurshun Mosque (built in 1485) by order of the Ministry of Culture and the Municipality of Karlovo. According to the Office of the Grand Mufti, the new excavations in the historical mosque aimed to stop the Muslim community’s attempts to restitute the property and to replace its function by another. As the lawsuit continued, the mosque was excavated by archaeologists, and an attempt to turn it into a museum of religions was made by the municipality.

CZECH REPUBLIC

- The SPD (Freedom and Direct Democracy) proposed a law to forbid veiling.

DENMARK

- The Danish government introduced a new set of laws to regulate life in low-income and heavy Muslim enclaves, known as the “Ghetto Package.” The government may implement this package with, among others, the following initiatives: greater penalties for crime, less money from the public sector, and restrictions on how to raise children. In total, there are 22 initiatives that are believed will contribute to achieving the government’s desired goals.
• Reform of the law on day care. The new law prevents Muslim parents their right to choose freely where their children will go to day care.

• Burqa ban. A violation of the ban triggers a fine of 1,000 Danish Kroner (134 €) and the fine will increase if the ban is subsequently violated again.

• Handshake with local mayor (approved in December 2018): “handshakes with the local mayor are mandatory at the citizenship ceremony if one wants to be a Danish citizen. The law has the undertones of being aimed at Muslims because a share of Muslims refuses to shake hands with the opposite sex.”

• The Danish People’s Party also demanded serving pork in schools and public institutions. At the same time, they wanted a ban on halal meat in public institutions; however, this was rejected by the Minister of Education Merete Riisager.

FINLAND
• The Diakonia College of Finland, located in Helsinki, bans students from wearing niqabs and burkas but allows hijabs on campus.

FRANCE
• At the French Assembly, Eric Ciotti (The Republicans) proposed to ban exterior religious signs for workers in public companies and for users of public services - today there is only a ban for workers in public services.

• The UN Human Rights Committee criticized French justice for not having condemned the dismissal of an employee wearing the hijab from the private nursery where she was working. The committee considered this dismissal as unfair and as a discrimination based on religion.

• A group of UN experts condemned France for having banned the niqab in 2010.

GREECE
• The New Right Party made a series of suggestions in order to confront immigration:
  - Ban of funding coming from foreign Islamic organizations.
  - Exclusive use of the Greek translation of the Koran.
  - Ban of religious symbols used in public places.
  - Ban of use of any kind of head covering (meaning especially the headscarf and all its variations) deriving from a religious obligation in public and private places and of all clothing that conceals the face. High fines in case of violation of this legislation.
  - Investigation on the legality of purposes and activities of every organized Islamic structure, e.g. unions, clubs, associations, etc.
- Ban of Sharia law in every part of the country. In the case of the implementation of Sharia, the consequence will be the removal of citizenship, if this is the case, and immediate deportation.
- Closure of every illegal mosque.
- Annulment of the first (official) mosque of Athens.

**HUNGARY**

- MP Dúró Dóra, formerly of Jobbik Movement for a Better Hungary, suggested a draft law on the banning of burkas in public.
- The Fundamental Law of Hungary (known as the Constitution prior to 2011) was amended for the seventh time. Changes included that foreign populations cannot be settled in the country and that all state bodies are obliged to protect Hungary’s identity and Christian culture.

**KOSOVO**

- Kosovo limited police officers’ rights to attend prayers during their working hours.

**NETHERLANDS**

- The SGP (Reformed Political Party) filed a motion regarding the right to refuse participation in school trips which involve visiting religious institutions (like mosques, churches, and synagogues) which is part of the school curriculum. Parents can apply for an exemption for their children but the schools are not obliged to comply with the exemption request. By calling a ban on Muslim call for prayer, issuing the manifesto, and excluding visiting mosques, it is apparent that the SGP is attempting to split society in general and exclude Muslims in particular.
- Restrictions on ritual slaughtering have been discussed for years. According to the new law, if an animal is not insensitive to pain within 40 seconds of slaughter, based on measures called “induced eyelid reflex” and “corneal reflex,” it must be shot.

**NORTH MACEDONIA**

- The primary school Krste Petkov Misirkov in Radovish was fined for allowing an iftar dinner to be organized on the school premises.

**NORWAY**

- The parliament passed a bill banning cloth covering of the face during classes at educational institutions as well as day-care centers, which included face-covering Islamic veils such as the burka and niqab.
SLOVAKIA

- Amendment of Law No. 308/1991 Coll. on Freedom of Religious Faith and the Status of Churches and Religious Communities. The law: (a) increased the number of signatures required to register churches and religious communities in Slovakia from 20,000 to 50,000; (b) determined that the signatories must be citizens of the Slovak Republic who are members of the church or the religious community; (c) the signatories must confirm their signature by submitting personal data. These conditions of registration are discriminatory because only four churches from the 18 currently registered churches and religious communities in Slovakia meet the conditions.
ISLAMOPHOBIA IN THE MEDIA

The media plays a crucial role in the reproduction and normalization of anti-Muslim racism.

ALBANIA
In an article of the newspaper Koha Jone, Gjet Ndonji, the ex-director of the National Archives of Albania, described Albanian Muslims as barbarians and Asian colonists suffering from “Asiatic infection.”

AUSTRIA
Right-wing media outlet Wochenblick published several articles on an alleged Islamization of society. Here the article states, “Rehabilitation in Austria: Woman Has to Submit to Islamic Prayer Times.”

BOSNIA
The Serbian PRVA TV in its evening news broadcasted a story about the “Green Transversal” - a Serb propaganda about the unification of Muslims in the Balkans - a claim used by Serb nationalist leaders in order to justify the genocidal violence in the 1990s.
CROATIA

The Internet news portal www.dnevno.hr published an article about the supposed danger of halal food for Catholics. “Catholics Beware, This Is Being Kept from You: Stores Flooded with Food Sacrificed to Idols!”

DENMARK

Danish-Iranian Jaleh Tavakoli wrote a post on her blog titled “Even Baby Sex Is Mainstream Islam”. The blog post was published in Jyllands-Posten (right wing).

FRANCE

The satiric Charlie Hebdo (left wing) published a caricature of Maryam Pougetoux, one of the leaders of UNEF student union (left-wing). The cover states “French University Application Process (Parcoursup) Is Sh***, They Accepted Me as Leader of UNEF.” The cartoon face has been drawn to look like a monkey.
IRELAND
The Irish Sun published an article titled “HIDING’ At least 150 Islamic Extremists Living in Ireland, Claims Friend of Terrorist Involved in Last Year’s London Bridge Attack.”

GREECE
The newspaper Eleftheri Ora (far-right) published a cover with the following Islamophobic message “Hardcore Headscarves of Islam Are Shocking Piraeus.”

HUNGARY
The newspaper Magyar Idők warns about the so-called Islam threat: “Islam Invades Hungary with Building Mosques.”
ITALY

Libero (right-wing) published an article that connects the collapse of the bridge in Genoa (August 14, 2018) with Islamophobic fake news. According to this latter, Muslims consider this collapse as Allah’s will since the construction of mosques face great obstacles in Italy: “For Muslims [the collapse] came from Allah. ‘The bridge collapsed because you did not build mosques’.

KOSOVO

The news portal Insa-jderi published an article based on the fake news that “radical” imams were visiting Kosovo. It was entitled “Radical Imam Announces His Visit and Lecture in Kosovo.”

LATVIA

The online newspaper pietiek.com (radical populist) published the following cartoon illustrating the article entitled “UN Refugee Pact. Gambles of the Left Multiculturalists Continue.”
MOLDOVA
The Moldovan newspaper *Jurnalul MD* featured a story on the fake news regarding Andrei Nastase, a candidate in the Chisinau mayoral elections, accused of leasing Chisianu to Arabs.

NETHERLANDS
*De Telegraaf* (right wing) published a cover page in which it explains how to recognize a “Muslim terrorist.”

*De Telegraaf* published an article about a doctoral research on Salafists to convince Dutch people that Salafists in the Netherlands are dangerous and are not integrated into society. The headline used for the article read, “Mosque Visitor: ‘The Netherlands Is a Venomous Snake That Is Constantly Lurking.’”
POLAND

The TV channel TVN (liberal) broadcasted a pseudo-documentary series about Muslim refugees: “Go Back to Where You Came From.”

ROMANIA

The online newspaper EVZ (liberal/tabloid) published the following article: “The Silent Jihad. Alarming Discoveries about the Muslim Immigrants, in an Undercover Investigation. Radical Islam and Hatred towards Europeans.”

The online newspaper Orthodox Info (right wing) published the article: “PRO-ISLAM Manipulating Advertising Panels in Large Cities. Do the Authorities Notice to Take Them Down?”
SLOVAKIA

The Slovak internet portal datel.sk, led by the head of the counterintelligence service of the Slovak Secret Service (SIS), supported former Prime Minister Robert Fico’s position on Muslim community in Slovakia: “United Muslim communities in Slovakia are really undesirable”.

SLOVENIA

Demokracija (centre/right-wing) published an article on the threat of migrations and Islam for Europe and European civilization.

SPAIN

Caso Aislado (extreme far right) published an article based on fake news: pork has been forbidden in Andalusian school menus in order not to offend Muslims and the rest of students are forced to eat halal food.
UK

The Telegraph (right-wing) published Boris Johnson's article on the burka.