By gathering 39 local scholars, experts, and civil society activists specialized in racism and human rights, the fourth edition of the European Islamophobia Report addresses a still timely and politically important issue. All 34 country reports included in this book follow a unique structure that is convenient, first, for comparing country reports and, second, for selected readings on a particular topic such as politics, employment, or education with regards to Islamophobia across Europe.

The present report investigates in detail the underlying dynamics that directly or indirectly support the rise of anti-Muslim racism in Europe. This extends from Islamophobic statements spread in national media to laws and policies that restrain the fundamental rights of European Muslim citizens. As a result, the European Islamophobia Report 2018 discusses the impact of anti-Muslim discourse on human rights, multiculturalism, and the state of law in Europe.

This fourth edition of our report highlights how European societies are challenged by the rise of violent far-right groups that do not only preach hatred of Muslims but also participate in the organization of bloody terror attacks. The rise of far-right terrorist groups such as AFO (Action of Operational Forces) in France or the network Hannibal in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland confirms EUROPOL’s alarming surveys on the growing danger of right-wing terrorism.

This year, SETA worked in cooperation with the Leopold Weiss Institute, an Austrian NGO based in Vienna dedicated to the research of Muslims in Europe. In addition, the European Union has funded the European Islamophobia Report 2018 through the program “Civil Society Dialogue Between EU and Turkey (CSD-V)”.

About SETA
Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA) is a non-profit research institute based in Turkey dedicated to innovative studies on national, regional and international issues. SETA is the leading think tank in Turkey and has offices in Ankara, Istanbul, Washington D.C. and Cairo. The objective of SETA is to produce up-to-date and accurate knowledge and analyses in the fields of politics, economy, and society, and inform policy makers and the public on changing political, economic, social, and cultural conditions. Through research reports, publications, brainstorming sessions, conferences and policy recommendations, SETA seeks to guide leaders in government, civil society, and business, and contributes to informed decision making mechanisms.
ABOUT EDITORS

Enes Bayraklı

Enes Bayraklı earned his BA, MA and PhD from the Department of Political Science at the University of Vienna, and conducted research for his PhD thesis at the University of Nottingham in Britain between 2009 and 2010. He was a deputy director at the Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center in London in 2011-2013. Bayraklı also served as the founding director of the Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centers in Constanta and Bucharest, Romania in August-December 2012. He has been a faculty member at the Department of Political Science and International Relations at the Turkish-German University since 2013. Currently he is also the coordinator of SETA Brussels office and director of European Studies at SETA Foundation. His fields of research include Islamophobia in Europe, far-right movements in Europe, the transformation of Turkish foreign policy, foreign policy analysis, and German foreign policy.

Farid Hafez

Farid Hafez, PhD (Political Science, University of Vienna), is currently lecturer and researcher at the University of Salzburg, Department of Political Science and Sociology and senior researcher at Georgetown University’s “The Bridge Initiative” at the School of Foreign Service. He defended his habilitation thesis on “Islam-Politics in the Second Republic of Austria” at the University of Salzburg. In 2017, he was a Fulbright visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley and in 2014, he was a visiting scholar at Columbia University, New York. Since 2010 he has been the editor of Islamophobia Studies Yearbook, and since 2016 the co-editor of European Islamophobia Report. Hafez has received the Bruno Kreisky Award for the “Political Book of the Year” for his anthology Islamophobia in Austria (co-edited with John Bunzl). He has more than 80 publications in leading journals such as Politics and Religion, Patterns of Prejudice, and German Politics and Society. His latest publications are Islamophobia in Muslim Majority Societies (Routledge, co-edited with Enes Bayraklı) and Feindbild Islam. Über die Salonfähigkeit von Rassismus (Böhlau).

For more information about the EIR:
www.islamophobiaeurope.com
islamophobia@setav.org
ISLAMOPHOBIA IN PORTUGAL
NATIONAL REPORT 2018

ALI MURAT YEL
The Author

Ali Murat Yel is a social anthropologist working at the School of Communication at Marmara University, Istanbul. He received his PhD from the London School of Economics, London University. His first degree was in Islamic Theology and his research interests include religion, and the social and cultural aspects of religion in “lived” form. Yel carried out his field research at the small Portuguese town of Fátima and during his stay of more than two years, he conducted an ethnographic survey of the pilgrims visiting the shrine from all over the world. He has published numerous books and articles on this pilgrimage town and on Portuguese popular Catholicism. He is also interested in the manifestations of the Turkish popular understanding of Islam and the area where religion, politics, and gender intersect.

Email: alimuratyel@marmara.edu.tr

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Executive Summary

Compared to other Western European states, Portugal presents a unique case regarding Islamophobia since official anti-racist bodies have received only a few cases of complaints about anti-Muslim incidents. This report discusses the reasons for this lack of racial attacks or lack of complaints about them. First of all, the official narrative from the state stresses the successful integration of Portuguese Muslims who are presented as people who have a good education and high-ranked positions. In addition to this narrative, the Portuguese state backs these immigrants and provides them the necessary assistance for their social inclusion through political, legal, and sociocultural bodies. In 2016, Prime Minister Antonio Costa said Portugal would receive “10,000 Syrian refugees – double the number it might have taken under the EU’s relocation programme.”

This report provides both elements that support this discourse and elements that interrogate it. On the one hand, it shows how the arguments of “Lusotropicalism” and the narrative of “pluri-religious Portugal” are widespread in the Portuguese society. On the other hand, it warns against a deep-seated anti-Muslim sentiment that emerges at any moment when a so-called Muslim threat appears on the horizon. Indeed, the invisibility of the number of Muslims (currently, some 0.6% of the national population) and their silence in political, social, cultural, and public affairs appear to create an image of a well-integrated community. Due to lack of data concerning the discriminations Muslims face in their everyday lives - for example, the Muslim associations do not keep statistical data on any kind of violations - it would be easy to claim that Portugal is free of Islamophobia. Despite the fact that political authorities, journalists, and academics believe and want us to believe that Portugal is a paradise for Muslims, there are still instances of verbal abuse on the streets towards people who appear to be Muslims (intersection of race, gender, Islamophobia), vandal attacks on places of worship, and dissident voices from within society that claim that Muslims pose a threat to society’s secular base.
Sumário Executivo

Em comparação com outros estados da Europa Ocidental, Portugal apresenta um caso único quanto a Islamofobia desde que os corpos antirracistas oficiais receberam só alguns casos de reclamações sobre incidentes anti-Muçulmanos. Este relatório discute as razões desta falta de ataques raciais ou reclamações sobre eles. Em primeiro lugar, a narrativa oficial do estado realça fora a bem-integração de Muçulmanos Portugueses que são apresentados como gente que adquire boa educação e altas posições de fila. Além desta narrativa, o estado português suporta esses imigrantes e fornecê-los ajuda necessária da sua inclusão social por corpos políticos, legais, e socio-culturais. Em 2016, o primeiro-ministro Antonio Costa disse que Portugal receberia “10 mil refugiados Sírios - o dobro do número que poderia ter recebido no programa de recolocação da UE”.

Este relatório fornece os dois elementos que suportam esse discurso e os elementos que o interrogam. Por um lado, mostra como os argumentos do “Lusotropicalismo” e a narrativa do “Portugal pluri-religioso” são difundidos na sociedade portuguesa. Por outro lado, adverte contra um profundo sentimento anti-Muçulmano que surge a qualquer momento quando uma ameaça chamada Muçulmana aparece no horizonte. De fato, a invisibilidade do número de Muçulmanos (atualmente, cerca de 0,6% da população nacional) e seu silêncio nos assuntos políticos, sociais, culturais e públicos parecem criar uma imagem de comunidade bem integrada. Devido à falta de dados sobre as discriminações rosto de muçulmanos em suas vidas cotidianas – por exemplo, as associações muçulmanas não manter dados estatísticos sobre qualquer tipo de violação — portanto, seria fácil dizer que Portugal está livre de Islamofobia. Apesar do fato de que as autoridades políticas, jornalistas e académicos que acreditam e querem que acreditemos também que Portugal é um paraíso para os muçulmanos, existem ainda verbais abusos nas ruas nas pessoas que parecem ser os Muçulmanos (interseção de raça, sexo Islamofobia), vandalizado ataques sobre os lugares de culto e dissidente vozes da sociedade que os Muçulmanos pausar uma ameaça à base da sociedade secular.
Country Profile

Country: República Portuguesa (Portuguese Republic)
Type of Regime: Democratic republic
Form of Government: Semi-presidential system
Ruling Parties: Partido Socialista (PS), Bloco de Esquerda (BE, Left Bloc), Partido Comunista Português (PCP), and Partido Ecologista “Os Verdes” (PEV, The Greens).

Last Elections: October 4, 2015, Legislative Elections: António Costa formed a Socialist-led coalition with PS 32.3%, B.E. 10.2%, PCP-PEV 8.3%; seats by party - PaF 102, PS 86, B.E. 19, CDU 17, PPD/PSD (Azores and Madeira) 5, PAN 1; composition - men 158, women 72; percent of women 31.3%.
January 24, 2016, Presidential Elections: Marcelo Nuno Duarte Rebelo de Sousa (Social Democratic Party) won 52% of the vote; António Manuel Seixas Sampaio da Nóvoa (Independent) 22.88% of the vote; and Marisa Isabel dos Santos Matias (Left Bloc) 10.12% of the vote.

Total Population: 10,31 millions (in 2017)

Major Languages: Portuguese

Official Religion: No official religion (dominantly Catholic, est. 81%)

Statistics on Islamophobia: N/A
Statistics on Racism and Discrimination: N/A

Major Religions (% of Population): Catholic Church (81%), Other Christian Denominations (3.3%), Buddhism (0.6%), Islam (0.6%), Hinduism (0.1%), and “Popular-Folk Religiosity” (0.5%).

Muslim Population (% of Population): 60,973 (0.6%) in 2019 (Number of followers estimated by CountryMeters, Monday, August 19, 2019)

Main Muslim Community Organizations: Comunidade Islâmica de Lisboa (CIL – Islamic Community of Lisbon) situated at the Mesquita Central de Lisboa (Central Mosque of Lisbon).

Main NGO’s Combating Islamophobia: N/A

Far-Right Parties: Partido Nacional Renovador (National Renewal Party), founded in 2000. Its highest percentage of votes was 0.50% in the 2015 elections.

Far-Right Movements: Nova Ordine Social (NOS, New Social Order) and the nationalist Portugal Hammerskin (PHS).

Far-Right Terrorist Organizations: N/A
- Limitations to Islamic practices
- Hijab Ban: No
- Halal Slaughter Ban: No
- Minaret Ban: No
- Circumcision Ban: No
- Burka Ban: No
- Prayer Ban: No
Introduction

Portugal, which is located in the westernmost part of the European continent, is one of the smallest countries in Europe with a population of approximately 10 million; according to the latest 2018 data this number is 10,276,617.¹ Despite the fact that Portugal remained under the rule of Muslims for six centuries (AD 711-1349) and even claimed to be influenced by Islam culturally, only a few architectural masterpieces have been preserved from this period. Perhaps in this reality they see themselves as one of the important elements of Christianity, and as a result of their hostile attitude, resentment and anger towards Muslims for six centuries, together with the “Reconquista,” everything that is left in the name of Islam has been destroyed.² Compared to the Spanish, the Portuguese were less belligerent towards both Muslims and Jews as there was a relative lack of anti-Semitism before the end of the fifteenth century. In the past, the three religions used to enjoy a better relationship.³ There is also relatively less academic or scholarly research on Islam and on the country’s Islamic past as compared to Spain.⁴ Islam and its inalienable civilizational elements like history, culture, language (there are some Arabic courses but no course for other languages like Turkish and Persian in Portugal), archaeology, or architecture are not studied in detail except in some exceptional academic courses like history or anthropology. Despite a very distant memory in the past, today one might encounter Portuguese individuals who are still afraid of Muslims and consider them as aliens due to the misrepresentation of Islam and Muslims as irreconcilable with contemporary “European values.”

For centuries, Christians and Jews lived side by side (convivencia) in religious tolerance under the Muslim rule of this land called al-Andalus. However, following the Crusades, numerous battles were fought between the Muslim and Christian forces

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³. François Soyer, The Persecution of the Jews and Muslims of Portugal: King Manuel I and the End of Religious Tolerance (1496–?), (Brill, Leiden: 2007). Perhaps, the Portuguese territories were far away from the center of the Islamic kingdom and they felt the Muslim influence less during that period. Today, when they express their thoughts about Islam, they claim they are proud of their so-called Islamic past and they begin to count a few words that they think are of Arabic origin. First and foremost is the word “Oxalá” (pronounced “oshala” which means “God willing”, originally, inshallah). And some words starting with the Arabic prefix al- that are still in use like aldaia (al-day’ a, “village”), Faro (the city named after a local Muslim qadi called Haroon), Algarve (the southernmost part of Portugal, rooted in al-ḡarb, “the west”). They also amuse themselves that the name of the country comes originally from the Arabic al-Bortugal (the orange fruit), but this is only a phonetical coincidence as the name was derived from Porto Calle, probably from Port of Gallaecia.

to expel Muslims from the Iberian Peninsula. The so-called *Reconquista* was realized in a similar spirit to free Jerusalem from the Turks and the Christian forces fought against the Muslims in the West.

The Portuguese started maritime activities with Spain as the Mediterranean had become an “Ottoman lake” in the 14th and 15th centuries. With the efforts to reach India and the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope and ultimately the Americas, these two countries reached the highest levels of colonial activities in that period. On the one hand, they tried to spread Christianity by claiming that they brought “civilization to the newly discovered continent” and on the other hand, they carried all the riches of the colonies to their countries.

**Colonization Legacy and Relations with Muslims in Portuguese Society**

Unlike other countries with a colonial tradition, such as Belgium, France, or the Netherlands, Portugal claims to have an approach towards its colonies which they call “Lusotropicalism.” This concept essentially supposes that the Portuguese can easily adapt to tropical climates and thus communicate more comfortably with the indigenous people they exploit, and that they are better colonists than other European states. However, in the history of colonialism, it is a well-known fact that indigenous peoples do not always have good feelings towards their masters. Although they did not face sharp resistance in their colonies in Brazil or Asia, especially during the dictatorship, Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau in Africa, and until recently, the island of Timor (specifically East Timor), bloody uprisings were organized and independence struggles systematically surfaced. Under the dictatorial regime, it was unimaginable to offer freedom to religions other than the Catholic Church,


except for those who could establish close relations with the administration. It is understandable that one cannot establish friendly or brotherly relationships with everybody but in the case of Portugal it was expected that all religious groups would receive an equal treatment from the state due to the lusotropicalist claims. If Portugal was to be a casa grande (great house or the quarter of the ‘white’ ruler) that would keep everybody under its roof, even in a senzala (slave quarter), the relationship between the conquerors and conquered could not be of an equal nature. Yet, Freyre’s claims that because of the scarcity of white women, an inevitable miscegenation and racial crossing occurred between the Portuguese colonists and the native Brazilians. The result was that a different type of relationship developed to bridge the gap between the rulers and the colonized. Therefore, it is not surprising that even today research is being carried out at a micro-regional scale to uncover genetic backgrounds at places where Muslims used to live centuries ago in the Iberian Peninsula like Mértola, Southern Portugal. Nonetheless, lusotropicalism cannot and would not provide “immunity or protection against negative intergroup attitudes. But as a social representation, lusotropicalism could provide the properties to prevent people from the impression of falling into a non-desirable prejudiced expression.” The term could have been useful in the past when the racial paradigm was in use, today culture has become the most important form in expressing racism or xenophobia.

The Official Discourse on Multiculturalism and Muslims in Portugal

The official discourse of the Portuguese state is that it is an open society with religious pluralism. The Portuguese Empire of the past could have been a multireligious, multi-language and multicultural society but during the Estado Novo regime it became a fascist dictatorship with a monocultural structure. So, the Portuguese have the ability to adapt to changing situations in the state structures; they colonized almost half of the world and claim they had all along been benign towards the natives and when they lost this empire they developed a longing for their glorious past (saudade). After the 1974 Revolution, they had to come to accept the release of their former colonies by giving them their independence. The result was that some students and then their

10. Abdool-Karim Vakil, “From the Reconquista to Portugal Islâmico: Islamic Heritage in the Shifting Discourses of Portuguese Historiography and National Identity”, Arqueologia Medieval, 8 (2013), p. 5-15. The author correctly interprets the situation that the regime further advertised that Portugal was a multicontinental, multiracial, and pluri-religious society.
families immigrated to the “mainland” and established their new lives in Portugal. As their origins were from mainly Mozambique (they had immigrated earlier from India and Goa) and Angola and other former colonies, they were mostly Muslims. The official discourse goes that since they could speak the language and were familiar with the culture, they did not have any difficulty in adapting - or rather assimilating - into Portuguese society. If the recent immigrants are also well-integrated in society, there would be no problems and there would be peace in society. The simple result was that there is no racism, xenophobia, and Islamophobia. It seems that as long as the latecomers accept obtaining Portuguese citizenship or naturalization, they can continue to be Portuguese and Muslims. So, the lack of research on racism, in general, or on Islamophobia, in particular, could be explained by the unwillingness to deal with the issue of the Muslim identity in an elaborate way. Therefore, if we are to understand and deal with Islamophobia beyond the shallow statements like “Islam is a religion of peace” or “The majority of Muslims are moderate,” such declarations themselves clearly indicate a relationship of domination. These kind of statements are themselves a challenge to Islamophobia as they implicitly proclaim that Muslims are both violent and radical. They are other attempts to define Muslims by domi-neering powers à la Saidian mode. Similarly, the regular use of the term “presence” implicitly refers to something alien like in the formulations of “the Muslim presence in Europe or Portugal,” etc. The “new presence” ultimately refers to the fact that these people are not supposed to belong here (Europe or West) and that (“hopefully”) they will go back to where they came from.

Absence of Islamophobia or the Silence of Muslim People?

The claim that “there is no Islamophobia in Portugal” is nothing more than an acknowledgement of the silence of the Muslim community living in the country. Consequently, addressing this lack of interest and research on the subject, some researchers have begun to address the issue with an interesting title: the counternarrative to Islamophobia. The challenge is to answer whether if there is no narrative on something does that mean it does not exist? In last year’s report, I referred to this fact by stating

that there was a lack of institutional (at the state level) and organizational attempts to report racist, xenophobic, or Islamophobic cases on the communal level. Compared to other European countries, Portugal seems to be slow in arranging and organizing the necessary bodies to tackle such violations. It is obvious that some more empirical research is needed to delineate the problem of xenophobia or hate crime at large.

Compared to France or Germany, the Muslim population is almost negligible as it is estimated around 50,000 within the total population of 10,276,617 - this is only 0.4%. The relatively small size of the Muslim community could explain why there is little interest in studying Muslims. The research conducted on the Muslim population mainly falls into disciplines like anthropology, sociology, history, political science, and international relations. Studies that come from anthropology and sociology usually deal with issues like immigration, religious practices, identity formation, and gender issues. The majority of studies dealing with Muslims offer socio-demographic analyses that try to define minorities living in various parts of Portugal. Another type of study is the historical background of Muslims in Portugal, and finally, there are some works that have emerged after international threats of violence or terrorism. I agree with Marta Araújo, senior Researcher at the Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, that in most of these studies the concept of Islamophobia is either ignored or simply mentioned in a passing reference. If nobody mentions Islamophobia, it is perceived as non-existent. Yet, some previous work had to remark on certain Islamophobic instances like in education or in the media but they were not systematic studies on the subject. Nevertheless, new empirical research like Marta Araújo and Silvia Rodríguez Maeso is being carried out specifically on

16. The number of Muslims in Portugal varies according to which source is taken into consideration; for instance, the INE (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 20,640), the Church (26,782), or the CIL (Comunidade Islamica de Lisboa, 50,000). These figures are undoubtedly only estimates (José Pereira Coutinho, “Minorias religiosas em Portugal”, Rever, 19-1 (2019), p. 172.
Muslims and the potential threats of racism, hate crime, and Islamophobia. These fieldwork studies suggest that in the areas of employment, education, politics, media, and the justice system Muslims are not exposed to hatred in a significant manner. In the case of education, there are some restrictions as a result of being in a Catholic country, and the parents and school administration need to consult with each other. Interestingly, Muslims do not demand political visibility at all: they have neither founded political organizations nor are they involved with political bodies in terms of negotiations for further rights. Yet, if we subscribe to Sayyid’s wide understanding of Islamophobia as the “undermining of the ability of Muslims as Muslims, to project themselves into the future” beyond discrimination or hatred, then we can consider that Portuguese society keeps Muslims into an unfavourable environment.

The Positive Effects of Anti-racist Discourse on Religious Coexistence

Today, the understanding of anti-Semitism has established itself in a manner that Jews are not subjects of direct attacks or hatred; an attitude, sometimes a straightforward action, or even a police officer’s treatment can now be considered anti-Semitic. Of course, there have been violent attacks on Jewish cemeteries or kosher shops but anti-Semitism makes itself felt even in the minds of the perpetrators before they go into action. Islamophobia, however, has not established itself in a similar manner; if there is no direct attack on Muslims or discrimination against them, it is assumed that there is no Islamophobia. In the case of Portugal, unlike in other European countries, cases of hate crimes or religious discrimination have not been systematically and officially reported. The public appears to be unaware of the reality of Islamophobia and consequently denies it. Meanwhile, academic circles despite their empirical research and knowledge-production capacities, appear to lack the courage to declare the existence of Islamophobia in the Portuguese mind-set. The Portuguese grow with the historical fear of Muslims clearly exhibited in their school textbooks and with the fear of terrorist attacks, not only in their own country but in any European country, and their fear emerges to the surface and they begin to question whether Islam is compatible with Western values. As long as the common view of Islamophobia is a “hatred and fear of Islam,” society will claim that they do not treat Muslims in these terms and as a result Islamophobia does not exist. Nevertheless, this is a cynical approach and hides the truth that “Muslimness” is the main cause of exposition to discrimination.

Conclusion

Since Portugal was and is not an attractive country for economic migrants, the public might not consider Islam and Muslims as relevant to their individual lives. Furthermore, if the small number of Muslims do not excessively exhibit themselves in the public space, the discourse repeats itself: the Muslim minority is well-integrated into Portuguese society and they stand as proof that Muslims are compatible with the European identity. If the historical ties between Islam and Europe could truly be traced, they could definitely be found in the streets of Lisbon today. Apart from some negligible incidents, the Muslim community - whether third-generation immigrants from former colonies or recent refugees fleeing the monstrous warfare in the Middle East or economic difficulties in developing countries of Asia and Africa - has relatively better living conditions in Portugal. Yet, further empirical research is needed to analyse the everyday experiences of Islamophobia.