Five years ago, the launching of the *European Islamophobia Report* responded to an urgent need to demonstrate the very presence of Islamophobia across the European continent in different fields such as media, politics, legislation, employment, and the Internet. We felt obliged to produce a European-wide solid report to unmask the key issues at hand. We are happy to present the fifth edition of the annual *European Islamophobia Report* (EIR). The *EIR 2019* includes a general assessment of Islamophobia in Europe in the year 2019 and 32 country reports that include almost all EU member states and additional countries such as Russia, Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Montenegro. The EIR 2019 brought together 35 scholars, experts, and civil society activists from various European countries who are specialized on racism and Islamophobia studies. They cover various issues from media, politics, and the justice system to the Internet, and offer concrete policy recommendations for civil society and politics. As our audience grows to include practitioners, scholars, and the general public, our website has acquired an audience from 165 countries, and the EIR and its findings have been cited frequently by international organizations, politicians, NGOs, scholars, and local and international media outlets.

The year 2019 was an eventful year for Islamophobic developments both on a global and a European level. Apart from the Islamophobic terror attacks in Christchurch, New Zealand and Hanau, Germany, the most striking example of the normalization of Islamophobia in 2019 in Europe was the scandal around the Nobel Committee’s decision to award Peter Handke the Nobel Prize in Literature. One cannot imagine that in the contemporary world a Holocaust denier can receive any Nobel Prize, let alone the Nobel Prize in Literature. No matter the literary faculties of an author, such an act is unimaginable. Yet the Austrian author Peter Handke was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature despite the outcry from sound intellectuals across the world. This revealed again how insensitive and ignorant important global institutions are to the long history of Islamophobic ideology, in this particular case...
in the heart of Europe. Handke has a long history of genocide denial, as the author of this year’s report on Kosovo, Adem Ferizaj, demonstrates. During the Kosovo War, Handke expressed his wish to be “a Serbian-Orthodox monk fighting for Kosovo.” In 2006, Handke gave a eulogy at the funeral of Slobodan Milošević, the Serbian dictator responsible for the genocides against Albanians and Bosnians in the 1990s. As Ferizaj suggests, “Awarding the most important literary prize to such a writer not only suggests a deeply rooted Euro-Atlantic indifference towards the fate of Muslim-majority European countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina or Kosovo, it also represents a fit occasion for the normalization of Islamophobic attacks against Kosovo’s right to exist by European politicians.”

Working Definition of Islamophobia

There are numerous definitions of Islamophobia which are influenced by different theoretical approaches such as racism and prejudice studies or decolonial perspectives. As we have outlined already in the first edition of the EIR in 2015, we use a working definition of Islamophobia that theorizes Islamophobia as anti-Muslim racism. “When talking about Islamophobia, we mean anti-Muslim racism. [...] Islamophobia is about a dominant group of people aiming at seizing, stabilizing and widening their power by means of defining a scapegoat – real or invented – and excluding this scapegoat from the resources/rights/definition of a constructed ‘we’. Islamophobia operates by constructing a static ‘Muslim’ identity, which is attributed in negative terms and generalized for all Muslims. At the same time, Islamophobic images are fluid and vary in different contexts, because Islamophobia tells us more about the Islamophobe than it tells us about the Muslims/Islam.”

Combating Islamophobia in European and International Institutions

In 2019, European and international institutions attempted to assess anti-Muslim racism worldwide. Their surveys and reports warned world leaders about the dangers for democracy and public order posed by three main aspects of Islamophobia:

3. For more information see the report on Kosovo by Adem Ferizaj in this volume.
The State of Islamophobia in Europe in 2019

- International far-right networks that trigger Islamophobic terror attacks.
- Institutional racism, i.e. structural forms that discriminate against Muslim citizens.
- The impact of counterterrorism policies on human rights.

The following paragraphs put forth the ways in which leading European and international institutions draw on these three dimensions of Islamophobia. Following this, their actions to combat Islamophobia will be analyzed.

International far-right networks and Islamophobia

The UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Racial Intolerance E. Tendayi Achiume reported on the rise of neo-Nazi movements and “other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.”6 In another report, she warned readers about the rising recruiting efforts of neo-Nazi groups among young people.7 Achiume also pointed out the fact that the rise of white supremacist groups leads to violent attacks such as the “Islamophobic attack in Christchurch, New Zealand in 2019, and the anti-Semitic attack in Pittsburgh, United States in 2018.”8 Yet, she noticed that such groups have been tolerated in Europe until today, neo-Nazi and far-right ideologies being “part of mainstream discourse” and receiving “political endorsement.” Achiume concluded, “The Radicalisation Awareness Network Centre of Excellence has noted that in Europe, the main difference in status between neo-Nazi-inspired extremism and Islamist extremism is that the latter is ‘quite clearly and broadly rejected within communities.’”9

The Council of Europe, through its European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), also underlined the risk inherent in the banalization of far-right and white supremacist ideologies in Europe, and the bloody consequences that might occur as a result. In the ECRI’s annual report on 2019 activities, Marija Pejčinović Burić, secretary general of the Council of Europe, claimed, “Europe is facing a shocking reality: antisemitic, anti-Muslim and other racist hate crimes are increasing at an alarming rate, the most recent example being the extremist shooting in Hanau, Germany, in which nine people were killed and several wounded. Such heinous acts are often precipitated by poisonous words and conspiracy theories spread on social media and the internet.”10

8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
In its *12th Report on Islamophobia* (March 2019), the Islamophobia Observatory of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation highlighted the connections between far-right movements that pave the way for the spread of hate ideologies. The report focuses particularly on the links between the UK Independence Party, Marine Le Pen’s French National Rally, Geert Wilders’s Dutch Freedom Party, the Italian Lega (League), the Alternative for Germany, the Hungarian Fidesz party, and also Steve Bannon, the American activist and former advisor to Donald Trump. The report notices that all those parties are on the rise according to the latest elections. All these actors share similar anti-EU, anti-Muslim, and anti-immigration ideology.11

In its report *Countering Racism and Xenophobia in the EU* (March 2019), the European Commission highlighted the connection between the normalization of Islamophobia, online far-right networks, and violent attacks against Muslims. Hence “surveys published in 2018 show that within the EU, on average 37% of the population admits to having unfavourable views of Muslims.”12 Similarly, “a study by the European Parliament Research Service shows that the perception of incidence of anti-Muslim hatred by the Muslim community rose from 12% in 2010 to 25% in 2016.”13

The *Annual Activity Report 2019* of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe Dunja Mijatović also warned against “the growing political and societal acceptance of racism” as “Antisemitism, Islamophobia and anti-Gypsyism have reached alarming levels.”14 Following the commemoration of the Srebrenica genocide on 11 July 2019, Mijatović published an op-ed in the *Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso*15 in which “she expressed concern about the resurgence of nationalistic movements which fuel anti-Muslim feelings and practices in Europe and about the hate incidents occurring against Roma and Jews.”16 In this piece, she claimed the Srebrenica genocide was the result of a long process of “dehumanising the Other,” a process that she believes nowadays is on the rise.

**Institutional racism**

The UN special rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and racial intolerance in a visit to the United Kingdom and Northern

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13. Ibid.
15. Dunja Mijatović, “Srebrenica: Dehumanising the Other”, Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso, 10 July 2019, Transcenariohttps://www.balcanicaucaso.org/eng/Areas/Bosnia-Herzegovina/Srebrenica-dehumanising-the-Other-195579, (Access date: 10 May 2020)
16. Ibid.
Ireland underlined the importance of addressing “structural forms of racial discrimination and inequality” that lead “persons belonging to racial and ethnic minorities [to] have poorer outcomes in many areas of life.” Achiume advised countries to assess “the racial impact of laws and policies on austerity measures, criminal justice, counter-terrorism and immigration.” By “racial impact” we should understand here the discriminative impact on individuals based on race, religious identity, gender, etc. Achiume noticed that these factors are often conflated in daily discrimination. In the specific case of the United Kingdom, the rapporteur reported that the criminal justice process targets “ethnic minority communities […] disproportionately.” She shows for instance that “Muslims, who are about 5 per cent of the United Kingdom population, now make up about 15 per cent of the prison population. This dramatic rise is not associated with terrorism offences.” Achiume concluded that “racial and ethnic minority offenders are overrepresented in both the adult (25 per cent) and youth (40 per cent) prison estates” and “overrepresentation is more acute among Black, Muslim and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller youth.”

In its annual report on 2019 activities, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) showed how the normalization of xenophobic nationalism tends to structurally discriminate Muslims in Europe. “Xenophobic nationalism frequently continues to portray Islam as a religion alien to the national culture and identity of many member states. Anti-Muslim rhetoric makes Muslims wearing signs of their religion far more vulnerable, while multiple discrimination worsens the situation further, notably for Muslim women.” The ECRI noticed that discriminating laws are not only backed by ultra-nationalist parties: “The elections to the European Parliament and to several national parliaments saw a further rise in popularity of ultra-nationalist parties in some countries. Yet, merely looking at the number of seats gained in parliamentary elections is not enough. What is remarkable is that a growing number of mainstream political parties adopted restrictive policies regarding migration and integration that were previously associated with right-wing parties.”

In its report Counteracting Racism and Xenophobia in the EU (March 2019), the European Commission noticed that “people from ethnic or racial minorities in the EU experience higher risks of economic hardship, poor quality housing, residential segregation, unemployment and assault, whose individual impact is quantifiable in

18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
22. “Annual Report of ECRI Activities Covering the Period from 1 January to 31 December 2019”, ECRI.
23. Ibid.
lost earnings from €1.8 billion up to €8 billion.”24 The report also refers to the study of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU MIDIS II) published in 201725 that “indicated that almost one in three Muslims felt discriminated against when looking for a job.”26 The report adds that “there is evidence that candidates who openly identify as Muslim in their CV receive fewer invitations to a job interview compared to equally qualified candidates with a religiously neutral CV. Muslim women remain the most vulnerable victims in this regard.”27

The Democracy and Human Rights in the OSCE report published by the OSCE-ODIHR in 2019 took an intersectional perspective and focused on the multiple bias motivations (gender, religion, race, class, etc.) in structural discrimination in Europe. The report showed that racisms are most of the time gendered ideologies that first and foremost target women. This only confirms other reports and observations that institutional Islamophobia primarily impacts women.28

In her Annual Activity Report 2019, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe Dunja Mijatović drew similar conclusions. Mijatović demonstrated how “Muslim women have been the targets of assaults for wearing face veils or headscarves.”29 Yet, she also pointed out how structural discrimination negatively impacts all Muslims. “Discriminatory practices in certain contexts have made it difficult for Muslims to get a job, a house, or citizenship. Patterns revealing unspoken biases have persisted, with law enforcement officers still engaged in the illegal practice of profiling Muslims.”30

**Impact of counterterrorism policies on human rights**

The UN special rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and racial intolerance stressed how “counter-terrorism laws and policies have vastly exacerbated Islamophobic sentiment” in the UK. Actually, the situation described by Achiume is also valid for other European countries, i.e. “national panic regarding security” and outrageous public discourse against Muslims following “terrorist attacks by individuals purporting to act in the name Islam.”31 Similarly, her

27. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
concerns regarding the impact of the government’s policy against extremism on human rights can be applied for everywhere else in Europe.

Leading concerns over the Prevent Strategy relate to the lack of clear, workable definitions of “extremism”, “terrorism” and “British values”, as well as the criteria used to refer individuals considered at risk of radicalization. Among other national and international stakeholders, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has expressed serious concern that the “prevent duty” creates an atmosphere of suspicion towards members of Muslim communities, that it leads to increased profiling of individuals on the basis of ethnicity and/or religion and that it adversely affects the rights to freedom of expression, education and freedom of religion (CERD/C/GBR/CO/21-23, paras. 18–19). The Special Rapporteur shares these concerns, which were reiterated during many of her consultations with civil society representatives. She is especially concerned that uncertainty and ambiguity in terminology have serious consequences for racial equality as they create a wide scope for discretionary interpretation.32

The recommendation Achiume provided to the UK government is valid for other European governments analyzed in the EIR 2019, namely “the Government must urgently confront the exclusionary, divisive and discriminatory environments its policies are generating.”33

Linked to counterterrorism policy is the growing use of artificial intelligence (AI) by governments to control citizens. In her Annual Activity Report 2019, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe Dunja Mijatović warned authorities about “the risks that unregulated uses of digital technologies and artificial intelligence pose to human rights, in particular privacy, equality, freedom of expression and assembly.”34 She called for a “right balance between technological development and human rights protection.”35

Recommendations and responses to Islamophobia in European and international institutions

The UN special rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and racial intolerance called on governments to assess the impact of their counterterrorism policies on human rights. She especially urged them not to “disproportionately target groups on the basis of religious and ethnic belonging.”36

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) calls the members states of the Council of Europe to work in cooperation with the commis-

32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
sion in order to apply its recommendation against the “right-wing threat.”37 Among the recommendations, we underline:

1. “A more pro-active approach and support for inclusive education are necessary.”

2. A protective and supportive approach towards grassroots NGOs and people “who advocate the interests of vulnerable groups, the national equality bodies, [who] are still lacking financial resources and staff.”

3. The acknowledgment of civil society organizations that help victims both legally and financially.

4. A careful use of artificial intelligence (AI) in security policies. AI should not lead to discrimination in societies.38

Besides these recommendations, the ECRI has also led concrete actions on the ground. Celebrating the 25th anniversary of the organization, the ECRI organized an international high-level conference entitled “On the Road to Effective Equality” in Paris under the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. The ECRI published guidelines for the coming years and started to actualize some of its General Policy Recommendations, including General Policy Recommendation No. 5 on combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims (originally published on 27 April 2000). The ECRI also cooperated with equality bodies through numerous workshops and panels such as the 80th plenary meeting (10-13 December 2019) or the meeting with the European Court of Human Rights (10 December 2019) on combating anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim hatred.

On 15 November 2019, the OSCE ODIHR published hate crime records for the year 2018 as reported by 42 states and 178 NGOs. This data is precious since without data there is no problem and without a problem there can be no policy to address it. Besides the publication of data, the OSCE organized a series of events such as the “Youth Activist Forum: Engaging the OSCE to Address Racism and Xenophobia” (Warsaw, 23 September 2019); the “Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting (SHDM) I - Upholding the Principles of Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Including in the Promotion and Protection of Freedom of Religion or Belief” (Vienna, Hofburg, 1-2 April 2019); or the workshop “Combatting Intolerance against Muslims through Education” (Istanbul, 15 April 2019). In all the events, the OSCE worked together with grassroots NGOs and activists in order to draw pro-active solutions to tackle racism, discrimination, and Islamophobia. Following the “Consultative Expert Meeting on Understanding Anti-Muslim Hate Crimes and Addressing the Security Needs of Muslim Communities” (Oslo, 9-10

37. “Annual Report of ECRI Activities Covering the Period from 1 January to 31 December 2019”, ECRI.
38. Ibid.
December 2019), the OSCE ODIHR published a guide “to aid governments in their actions on preventing and combating hate crimes including by an analysis of security risks and the necessary actions required, with the aim of improving the capacity of the police and other institutions to meet the security needs of Muslim communities and individuals.”

The EU Commission supported the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) as it provides an “online repository of case law, reports and knowledge on cases of anti-Muslim hatred in the Member States.” The EU Commission started to fund projects to prevent and counter anti-Muslim hatred through the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme. Furthermore, “several projects on promoting religious tolerance and inclusion have been sponsored under the Erasmus+ programme.” In a general manner, the EU Commission focused its efforts on education, and positive narratives of tolerance and cooperation with civil society actors and national authorities.

In February 2019, the EU Commission presented in Brussels the results of the 4th monitoring exercise on the implementation of the Code of conduct. Among the defined targets were “fighting racism and xenophobia, which requires authors of illegal hate speech offences - whether online or offline - to be effectively prosecuted.”

Yet, one of the EU Commission’s most effective actions regarding the fight against anti-Muslim hatred has been through the actions of the Coordinator on Combating Anti-Muslim Hatred Tommaso Chiamparino. Among the different initiatives taken by Chiamparino was the organization of the “Workshop on Synergies and Good Practices on Tackling Anti-Muslim Racism and Discrimination” (Madrid, 24-25 June). More than 100 NGOs and national authorities met at this event to discuss how to make concrete progress on tackling anti-Muslim hatred and discrimination. “The program included not only keynote speeches and round tables, but workshops where civil society actors, state officials and people from bureaucracy came together to exchange experiences, ideas, and best practices examples.” One of the main concerns expressed by the participants was that “fighting Islamophobia has not been

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41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
dealt with at the same level as fighting other forms of racism such as antisemitism or Anti-Ziganism (also known as Romaphobia or anti-Gypsism). For example, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on combating Antisemitism on 1 June 2017 that entails specific policy recommendations for the EU level as well as national level. As well, the European Parliament passed a resolution to combat anti-Gypsyism with specific policies, but has yet to pass one for combatting Islamophobia. During this event, dozens of civil society organizations shared their recommendations for combating Islamophobia with member states and European institutions.

There have been other actions taken regarding anti-Muslim hatred as well. For the first time, the European Parliament acknowledged the European Day of Action against Islamophobia and Religious Intolerance on 21 September. On the Islamic New Year, the first vice president of the commission sent a strong statement to tackle anti-Muslim hatred. On 23-26 September 2019, the European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI) organized the EU Anti-Racism and Diversity Week in the European Parliament. Finally, Equinet Europe published infographics in February 2019 on World Hijab Day (1 February).

Anti-Muslim Attitudes High in Europe

A report published by the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) in April 2019 showed that ahead of the elections for the European Parliament, while there was no single issue on voters’ minds, large segments of the voters were concerned about so-called Islamic radicalism. While 15% of the voting of the EU highlighted migration as one of the top threats to Europe, 22% of the EU voting population is concerned about so-called Islamic radicalism, which ranks highest amongst all threatening images. According to this study, so-called Islamic radicalism is a greater preoccupation for people aligned with center and center-right parties than necessarily for those aligned with far-right parties.

Given that “Islamic radicalism” is itself a peculiar notion that invites the amalgamation of a variety of terms that are (often misguidedly) related to Islam with no differentiation between the spheres of politics, society, and religion, this poll reveals the centrality of Islamophobic discourses in political debates all across Europe. The fact that this “fear” also exists among pro-European parties and not only among anti-EU, far-right political parties tells us something about the relative hegemony of Islamophobia.

45. Ibid.
The Eurobarometer reveals something similar. In the latest poll published in September 2019, 71% of respondents said that they would feel comfortable working with a Muslim colleague, which simultaneously implies that 29% do not feel comfortable. Still, countries with a high rate of acceptance like the UK (93%), the Netherlands (91%), France, and Sweden (both 87%) stand in contrast to countries with a very high aversion like the Czech Republic (35%), Hungary (37%), and Lithuania (47%).

Asked about having sons or daughters in a romantic relationship with people from other religions, again Muslims were the least favored when compared to Jews, Buddhists, Christians, and atheists. Only 53% would feel comfortable if one of their children was romantically involved with a Muslim, again with the highest number in the UK (82%), followed by France (68%), Ireland, and Sweden (66%). The respondents that were least favorable to such a notion were in the Czech Republic (18%), Lithuania (22%), Cyprus, and Hungary (each 23%). The fact that the least favorable positions vis-à-vis Muslims can be found in countries in Eastern Europe, where the least number of Muslims live, confirms the theory that racism operates with an imagined rather than a real figure of the other.

Other research reveals even stronger anti-Muslim attitudes. Political scientist and sociologist Jørgen Goul Andersen conducted a survey of over 5,900 Danes in 2019, where he found that about 28% agreed/partly agreed that Muslim immigrants should be deported.

This shows that anti-Muslim attitudes go so far as to restrict Muslims’ civil rights, as the author of the Danish report Amani Hassani reveals.

The spread of Islamophobia, however, also generates acts of solidarity. On 10 November 2019, the historical “March against Islamophobia” took place in Paris, which gathered between 20,000 and 40,000 people (13,500 according to the Ministry of Interior). In the Czech Republic, over 200 families volunteered to accept children and young adult immigrants from overcrowded refugee camps in Greece. Yet, as the author of the Czech report reveals, the initiative was sabotaged by the prime minister and other politicians. Up to and including 2020, the minister of interior said no children would be admitted. This shows how little compassion there is following campaigns that dehumanize Muslims.

Hate crime
As a consequence of the spread of anti-Muslim attitudes, data on hate crime only confirms the rise of anti-Muslim attitudes in many European countries. The overwhelming majority of European states do not record Islamophobic incidents as a separate category of hate crime. The recording of anti-Muslim/Islamophobic hate crimes by the police as a separate category of hate crime is essential in uncovering the real extent of this problem and developing counterstrategies to combat it. At the same time, we all know that it is only a small minority of around only 12% of Muslims who say they have reported cases of discrimination, as the European Union’s Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) had found in a report. In Belgium, 278 Islamophobic incidents were documented, including physical attacks on individuals and Muslim spaces. As the author of the report on Belgium shows, these hate crimes include acts such as vandalism of mosques, leaving pig heads at Muslim residences, and leaving excrement and urine at a Muslim home accompanied by swastikas being graffitied onto the Muslim family’s car. What has already become

55. Ibid.
obvious in many ways is that anti-Muslim hate crimes have continued to increase steadily and that they are distinctly gendered in nature. As the report on Belgium reveals, stabbings of Muslim women, the forced removal of Muslim women’s hijabs, Muslim women being pushed onto metro tracks, and being denied employment and education are largely part of the documented cases. Examples of direct discrimination are also revealed in the report on North Macedonia by Orhan Ceka. Ceka shows that Muslims are rejected service in restaurants, face petitions to lower the volume of adhan, and are attacked when wearing a hijab.

Media

The media alongside politics are the most influential spaces where Islamophobia can be either challenged or disseminated and further strengthened. While in some countries, the media challenge power structures to some extent, in most countries, the media are very much connected to power structures and represent different camps along ideological lines.

The year 2019 was no exception in terms of the central role of certain journalists in spreading Islamophobia. On Albanian television channel Ora News, a journalist suggested undertaking similar action in Albania to the Christchurch terrorist attacks. In Bosnia, the newspaper Novosti RS falsely claimed, “Hundreds of Jihadists Are Arriving to B&H.” On Finnish television, sexual assaults were connected to the “too many asylum seekers.”

The yellow press continue to produce headlines such as that of the German Bild “Out of Respect for the ‘Salvation’ Day-Care Centre Takes Pork from the Menu,” which suggests a subversive Islamization of German society. Meanwhile far-right newspapers openly foster fearmongering with headlines such as “Islam Invaded Athens. Fears about a Terrorist Attack during Christmas,” while nothing of the like happened. When certain press outlets construe false ideas about Muslims or Islamic institutions, politicians act accordingly. In the Netherlands, a report falsely claimed that a newly established Muslim school had ties with Salafism, which led the prime minister to declared in public that he “wouldn’t send his child there.”

The opinion section is often the place where the most blatant anti-Muslim positions can be read. In Austria, opinion pieces were published where authors denied the existence of anti-Muslim racism or framed the “Islamic tradition” as a “unique anti-Jewish tradition.” In Croatia, a theologian argued that Islam is masculine to the

59. For more information see the report on Belgium by Amina Easat-Das in this volume.
60. For more information see the report on North Macedonia by Orhan Ceka in this volume.
61. For more information see the report on the Netherlands by Amina Smits Akılma in this volume.
point of being brutal (as opposed to the feminized Europe), and that it takes advantage of the surrounding commotion to sneak up on the “woman” Europe.

Established newspapers such as the Spanish *El-País* published an op-ed where the right of self-determination of Muslim women was questioned. The article stated, “The importance of a piece of cloth: [t]hose who want to convince us of the innocuousness of the hijab are precisely those who do not understand that the dignity of women is above all consideration and, if necessary, of any divine text.”

### Online Islamophobia

In most European countries, a great proportion of Islamophobic attacks against individuals takes place on the Internet. In France, around 20% of Islamophobic incidents reported by the *Collectif contre l’islamophobie en France* (CCIF) referred to online harassment or threat. Besides attacks on individuals, online Islamophobia also spreads conspiracy theories about the so-called Islamization of Europe. One of the most striking examples, is the online activity of the European network Generation Identity (GI), which is present in several countries such as France, the UK, Germany, Austria, Slovenia, and Hungary. “GI openly promotes the belief that Muslims are being brought into Europe illegally by liberal politicians to ‘replace’ Europeans in Western countries (referred to within the group as the ‘Great Replacement”).” Other groups spread this white supremacist ideology, such as “the youth branch of the FPÖ, the RFJ, that posted an ad on its social media channels stating, ‘Mohammed most popular name for newborns in three Viennese districts.” In France, websites such as “FDeSouche, Resistance Républicaine, Riposte Laïque, Boulevard Voltaire, TVLibertés, Breizh-info, or Observatoire de l’Islamisation openly claim being Islamophobic and base their discourse upon the ‘clash of civilization’, ‘Great Replacement’, and ‘reverse colonialism’ theories.”

Yet, it is not easy to analyze the extent of online Islamophobia with the rise of social media and the darknet. “According to the [Dutch] General Intelligence and Security Service’s report extreme-right groups such as Pegida, Identair Verzet, Rechts in Verzet, NVU, Erkenbrand, and Voorpost are usually active on the large platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. The growth of right-extremist content is said to have stagnated on their own websites, as is the short-lived boost in their followers. However,  

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63. For more information see the report on Spain by Aurora Ali in this volume.
64. For more information see the report on Hungary by Nadia Jones-Gailani and Gabi Göbl in this volume.
65. For more information see the report on Austria by Farid Hafez in this volume.
66. For more information see the report on France by Léonard Faytre in this volume.
67. For more information see the report on Germany by Enes Bayraklı in this volume.
the focus seems to be shifting to international alternative forums, platforms, and chat apps such as 4Chan, 8kun, and EndChan, where a lot of right-extremist content is being shared, creating an international community. They use Gab (instead of Twitter), Minds and VKontakte (instead of Facebook), Telegram (instead of WhatsApp) and Bitchute (instead of YouTube) as these are less restrictive in their policy when it comes to violent or extremist content than Facebook, Twitter, or Google."  

However, online Islamophobia also comes from so-called mainstream media or political parties. In the UK, “the Conservative Party was repeatedly put in the spotlight for the anti-Muslim [online] content made by a number of its MP candidates, councilors, and ordinary members.”  

In France, “online activities of NGOs such as Printemps républicain (Republican Spring) and Comité Laïcité République (Laicité – Republic Committee) do not attack Muslim people straightforwardly but hide their anti-Muslim racism under the veil of secularism, women’s rights, and Jacobin ideology.”

Politics

Islamophobia is also normalized by a discourse used by those in power. In Romania, the former president Traian Basescu, who was elected to the European Parliament for the center-right party PMP, argued on a live show on the television channel Digi24 that his motivation for going to Brussels is to protect Europe’s border of the “Muslim invasion.”

In November 2019, the French minister of interior stigmatized Muslim people by using a rhetoric that stems from the far-right ideology of the Great Replacement, which is central to Islamophobic terror today. He said, “As Minister of the Interior, and in charge of relations with religions, it is not the debate around the headscarf that concerns me, but rampant Islamism, in certain neighbourhoods, which wants to be a political system competing with the Republic.”

He thus invoked the phantasm of an “Islamist parallel society.” He also announced that he had closed 12 places of worship, four private schools, nine associations, and nearly 130 pubs because of radicalization and political Islam, claiming the “Re-

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68. For more information see the report on the Netherlands by Amina Smits Akılm in this volume.
69. For more information see the report on the UK by Aristotle Kallis in this volume.
70. For more information see the report on France by Léonard Faytre in this volume.
publican Reconquest of Suburbs” (Quartiers de la Reconquête Republicaine)\textsuperscript{74} which also fits into this racist discourse.

It is of little surprise that this discourse is still very much fed by far-right political parties and their representatives such as Karla Maříková, an MP for the Czech Freedom and Direct Democracy party (SDP), who invoked an openly racist argument by saying, “It is forbidden to import invasive, non-indigenous species of plants and animals to the European Union. Muslim immigrants are also non-indigenous inhabitants in Europe and the same way as other invasive species they represent the unexpected expansion and gradual supplanting of the indigenous inhabitants of Europe. Therefore, they should be forbidden from entering the EU.”\textsuperscript{75} Certain far-right political parties also made huge gains, such as the far-right Vlaams Belang in Belgium. This translated into more anti-Muslim legislation. The Flemish governmental agreement set out controls of “outward signs of … personal conviction” including the hijab in Flemish governance and education. The agreement states, “External symbols of philosophical, religious, political or other beliefs are therefore not worn with direct customer contact… We also guarantee neutrality in education. In provincial and community education, we ensure the philosophical neutrality for teachers and students.”\textsuperscript{76} Far-right parties drawing on anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim mobilization also grew in parts of Europe with little to no immigrants and Muslims, thus following an Eastern European trend.\textsuperscript{77} In the 2019 elections in Estonia, the far-right nationalist Conservative People’s Party of Estonia (EKRE) became part of the ruling coalition.

The European Parliament held elections in 2019. Currently, the European Parliament has seven groups and while the far-right group Identity and Democracy (formerly Europe of Nations and Freedom group) did not become the third-strongest to destabilize the old establishment parties in the parliament, it now does not come in last either. Ranking after the traditionally strong Christian Democratic European People’s Party (EPP), the Social Democrats (S&D), the liberal Renew Europe, and the Greens, Identity and Democracy now has 73 MEPs – only one less MEP than the Greens. The far-right group has thus overtaken the European Con-

\textsuperscript{74} For each ‘Republican Reconquest of Suburbs’ the French government plans to assign 10 to 35 additional police or gendarmerie personnel. These additional personnel will be immediately operational and will go into the field. Each of these districts also has an anti-trafficking unit (CLT) adapted to each territory and local situation. By the end of the five-year period, 60 Republican Reconquest districts will be set up. By 2018, 15 neighborhoods have been set up and 326 staff members have been assigned to them.” For more information see “Effectifs de juin 2019 dans les quartiers de reconquête républicaine”, interieur.gouv.fr, 21 June 2019, https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/fr/Le-ministre/Dossiers-de-presse/Effectifs-de-juin-2019-dans-les-quartiers-de-reconquete-republicaine, (Access date: 26 March 2020).

\textsuperscript{75} For more information see the report on Czech Republic by Selma Mujic Dizdarevic in this volume.


The State of Islamophobia in Europe in 2019

Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) as well as the Left (GUE/NGL). This is already a remarkable success for the radical right parties, who have come together with their new focus on Islamophobia. They have not only overcome the split within the right-wing and Eurosceptical/anti-EU camp (which is primarily due to the external factor of Brexit anyway), but, and more importantly, they were able to get close to the fourth rank in the European Parliament. It therefore seems that for the first time in the history of the European Parliament, radical right-wing parties have succeeded in forming a strong group that will be able to draw on more financial and human resources than ever before.

Justice System

The spread of anti-Muslim attitudes and the rise of anti-Muslim forces in politics also translate into legislation and administration. At the same time, examples show that the rule of law can still defend basic liberties such as the freedom of religion and belief.

In Greece, an NGO visited the Foreigners’ Administration of Attica on Petrou Ralli Avenue in Athens where an official public complaint was made by refugee women being held there. A Muslim woman mentioned that “they forbade us to wear our headscarves and they told us ‘outside of this place you can be Muslims, but not in here! Here you are Christians…” and another Muslim woman complained that police officers took off a Syrian woman’s hijab. Similarly, in Lithuania, Muslim immigrants staying in a Foreigners Registration Center in Pabradė were not offered an alternative to pork dishes; the Seimas Ombudsman protested against this.

In Flanders, in January 2019, and in Wallonia, Belgium, in September 2019, a ban of halal and kosher slaughter was implemented. In Denmark, legislation was introduced to deprive dual citizens of their Danish citizenship easily by political means. The author of the Danish report sees a problematic precedence for how the government deals with dual citizens in general, particularly Muslim dual citizens. While in the past, judicial procedures would determine citizenship rights, now the possibility of depriving citizenship in the case of dual citizenship goes through the immigration

and integration minister.82 While the United Nations criticized Denmark’s “ghetto” policies, it was revealed that a category named “non-Western immigrants and descendants” is used in the national register on unemployed Danish citizens, without the consent or knowledge of the citizens identified as such. This category can only be withdrawn, if the person affected contacts the respective governing bodies.

On the contrary, in Italy, the Constitutional Court rejected a provision adopted by the region of Lombardy which was designed to hinder the construction of new mosques. Most important in this case is the fact that the Constitutional Court explicitly referred to the principle of religious freedom that is enshrined in the Italian Constitution.83 In Switzerland, the Federal Supreme Court confirmed again that wearing the hijab was protected by the freedom of religious belief which is enshrined in the constitution. The verdict came after an appeal by the initiators of a hijab ban at schools in the canton of Valais.84

As these few examples show, the fight against Islamophobia should be continued on a legal basis through the courts as well. At the same time, the struggle against anti-Muslim discrimination with legal means has to be understood as a way of protecting the constitutions which include legislation on anti-discrimination and freedom of religion or belief.

The Rise of Islamophobic Terror

The editors of this report have already warned in the European Islamophobia Report 2018 that Islamophobic ideology plays a central role in white supremacist terrorist groups.85 On 15 March 2019, in Christchurch, New Zealand, the world witnessed what this means. The Christchurch terrorist attacks that left 51 people dead in two mosques revealed the strong connection to European white supremacist and especially anti-Muslim groups and ideology. The terrorist’s actions were part of a transnational subculture of anti-Muslim white supremacist groups, especially online forums from Europe. Certain circles in Europe even openly praised these attacks.

In 2019, several attacks took place on German soil, from the synagogue attack in Halle to the murder of Walter Lübcke. The suspect in the Walter Lübcke attack,86 who

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The State of Islamophobia in Europe in 2019 is believed to have had connections with a number of far-right organizations including the militant Combat 18, the National Democratic Party (NPD), and the neo-Nazi group *Autonome Nationalisten* (Autonomous Nationalists), admitted to killing the famous pro-immigrant politician. More importantly, the German public was only recently informed about the existence of white supremacist groups that are operating underground. Network Hannibal, which operates in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, is a network that was founded in 2015 and recruits former and active security service agents, soldiers, and police officers along with right-wing individuals to prepare them for a “Day X,” i.e. a military coup d’état. While only the German daily *TAZ* published a long piece on this issue early on, the case has since been handed over to the federal prosecutor and several people were taken into custody. The police investigation has revealed that the network had created a “kill list” including more than 20,000 names with high-ranking politicians who are seen as having “pro-immigration” stances.

In Poland, far-right activists expressed their praise and admiration for the Christchurch terrorist Brenton Tarrant. As the author for the report on Poland Anna Piela shows, nationalist websites and their Facebook profiles enthusiastically encouraged their audiences to download and read the terrorist’s manifesto. One famous far-right activist published a YouTube video praising the terrorist and high school pupils staged an execution with a replica of a gun used by the killer at the Christchurch mosque in March, which bore the Islamophobic statements written on the gun used in the actual terrorist attack.

The author of the Czech Republic report Selma Muhič Dizdarevič reports that in the Czech Republic following the terrorist attacks, there was a flood of comments on social media, which approved of killing worshipers. Many claimed it was a justified revenge for terrorist attacks committed by Muslims in the West. One person commented on the Facebook page of the far-right leader Tomio Okamura: “I do not condemn this!!! At least he showed them we are not afraid of these cripples!!!!”

In Norway, 21-year-old far-right terrorist Philip Manshaus had planned an armed assault on the Al-Noor Islamic Centre Mosque in Bærum near Oslo. Before going to the mosque, he shot his sister, who had been adopted from China as an infant, in a racially motivated murder. Manshaus was equipped with a shotgun, two rifles, a nail gun, a bulletproof vest, and a GoPro camera intended for live streaming on social media mimicking Tarrant, whom he had lauded in an online forum shortly before the assault.

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87. For more information see the report on the Czech Republic by Selma Muhič Dizdarevič in this volume.


89. For more information see the report on Norway by Vemund Aarbakke in this volume. Also see, for example, Andreas Økland, “Kommentar: Moskeangrepet i Bærum. Vi må ta et nådeløst oppgjør med haten”, Dagbladet, 11 August 2019.
In the UK, the first physical attacks occurred within only a few hours after the Christchurch terrorist attack and the second-highest spike in anti-Muslim hate crimes across the UK was recorded since 2012. As a response, then home secretary Sajid Javid announced the increase of funding for the security at UK mosques. While this was welcome news, the author of our UK report Aristotle Kallis contends that this financial support still remains limited in comparison to a separate government scheme protecting synagogues and Jewish schools - £14 million versus £2 million for all other faiths combined.

Following the terrorist attack in Christchurch, French Minister of Interior Christophe Castaner was heard by the commission of inquiry on the fight against far-right groups in May 2019. He confirmed that the rhetoric of these groups “is particularly marked by Islamophobia and evokes the ‘Muslim invasion’ and the ‘Great Replacement’ with violent intentions.” Following the question, whether an attack similar to the one in Christchurch might occur in France, the Minister replied, “You want to know if people carrying this far-right ideology are still likely to carry out attacks against a mosque: yes, it is possible.” As the author for the French report Léonard Faytre tells us, in June 2019, French intelligence announced that they had dismantled far-right terrorist groups that had planned attacks against Muslims and Jews.

Following the Christchurch terrorist attacks, the Organization of Islamic Conferences (OIC) held an emergency meeting and called on the United Nations and other international and regional organizations to adopt 15 March as the International Day of Solidarity against Islamophobia. Also, the organization demanded the UN secretary-general “to convene a special session of the UN General Assembly to declare Islamophobia as a form of racism and to assign a special rapporteur for monitoring and combatting Islamophobia.”

At the same time, the anti-Muslim genocide in Srebrenica is still being denied not only by the Nobel Prize winner Peter Handke, but also by leading politicians.

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93. For more information see the report on France by Léonard Faytre in this volume.


The strategy of belittlement is part of this denial. During the Jahorina Economic Summit on 9 July, Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic referred to the Srebrenica genocide as a “misunderstanding.” Such rhetoric is not rare among Serbia’s highest officials. At the same time, certain European politicians reframe the past and/or present of Muslims’ realities in Europe and make today’s Bosnia the problem. The most outstanding example of this was a remark by French President Emmanuel Macron who said in an interview with the Economist: “If you’re concerned about this region, the first question is neither Macedonia, nor Albania, it’s Bosnia-Herzegovina. The time-bomb that’s ticking right next to Croatia, and which faces the problem of returning jihadists, is Bosnia-Herzegovina.” Macron neglected to mention the white supremacist ideology that is not only represented by far-right groups, but also by some of the top European leadership.

**White Supremacist Movements and Ideology**

Clearly, the ideas of terrorists such as Breivik or Tarrant have been revealed to stem from white supremacist ideological movements such as the Identitarian movement. Ideas such as the “Great Replacement” are by no means only part of the far right, as has been shown before. In a subtle way, as mentioned above, these ideas are also present in much higher political circles that are widely regarded as nominally “mainstream.” Key to this strategy is to see the attack on Muslims and their political infringement as a natural defence, an act of defending freedom and so-called Western values.

A prominent example therefore would be the French polemist Eric Zemmour. In September 2019, he gave a public speech at the Convention of the Right where he stated, “Today, we are experiencing a demographic inversion that is leading to a reversal of migratory flows, which is leading to a reversal of colonization. I’ll let you guess who will be their ‘Indians’ and their ‘African slaves’. It will be you. […] The question we have to ask ourselves is will young French people accept to live in a minority on the land of their ancestors? If so, they deserve to be colonized. If not, they will have to fight for their liberation. But how do we fight? Where to fight? What to fight for?”


Another aspect at the intersection of white supremacist armed struggle and state administrations is the relationship between white supremacists and terrorists, on the one hand, and their infiltration of the state system, on the other. In France, a 54-year-old member of the far-right, anti-Muslim Identitarian movement was fined EUR 30,000 and convicted to seven years imprisonment in 2017 for buying more than 500 weapons, out of which six were used by the Jihadist Amedy Coulibaly. According to the police, the member of the Identitarian movement was a confidential informant for the French secret service.100

The author of the North Macedonian report Orhan Ceka mentions a case of a member of the army of the North Macedonian Republic. A professional soldier called the Nobel Prize in Literature to be given to the Christchurch terrorist. While the army proposed the termination of her engagement,101 no concrete measure was taken thereafter.102 This instance poses a question concerning the spread of white supremacist ideology within the ranks of important state institutions.

Education

Education is still a central space for the practice and dissemination of Islamophobia. The French NGO monitoring body CCIF report published in 2019 reveals that 22.5% of its cases pertained to Islamophobia in education.103 In Albania, the minister of education, sport and youth close three private schools including one religious Islamic school claiming that “minor girls have to wear the hijab during the class.”104 The school decided to sue the minister.105 Also centrist-left parties mobilize against Muslims in the education sector. In 2019, the Danish Social Democrats campaigned in the general elections with the promise to remove public funding of Muslim independent schools because of a suspicion they are not sufficiently promoting so-called Danish values of freedom, democracy, and gender equality.106 After winning the elections, the government implemented an audit of 17 independent schools, out of which seven were Islamic schools. Also, Muslim pupils beyond a 9th grade level


105. Ibid.

whose parents are not fluent in the Danish language are forced to attend mandatory day-care for at least 25 hours per week.107

In Catalonia, Spain, PRODERAEV108 (Detection, Prevention and Intervention in Processes of Radicalization and Violent Extremism) was introduced in 2016, following the British PREVENT structure.109 Part of the program is that Catalan police officers and civil servants from the departments of Internal Affairs and Education train schoolteachers in so-called “radicalization detection” tools. A leaked document by the newspaper LaDirecta110 shows that radicalization indicators were, among others, to be “born in a family from a Muslim-majority country,” hijab-wearing, asking for halal food at school, neighbourhood of residence, and not drinking Coca Cola. Also in the French University of Cergy-Pontoise, an email was sent to the teaching staff asking them to list students and teachers who show “weak signals of radicalization” such as they “stopped drinking alcohol”, “suddenly stopped eating pork”, “recent consumption of halal food”, “behavior changes towards women”, “prayers in the buildings of the university”, “sudden interest in national politics and international relations”, and “sudden interest in religion.”

Step Forward and Policy Recommendations

As the Islamophobic terror attacks in Christchurch, New Zealand and Hanau, Germany demonstrated, the physical security of Muslims and their institutions have become an urgent issue in Europe. The spread and increasing activity of Islamophobic terror groups and networks in Europe are alarming and should be taken seriously by the EU, the European states, and their security institutions. All the signs indicate that an Islamophobic terror wave is about to hit Europe. Christchurch and Hanau are not isolated incidents but a strong wake-up call for Europe and beyond. Therefore, as the editors of the European Islamophobia Report we feel the need to warn that this kind of attacks might happen anywhere, anytime in Europe if the necessary measures are not taken.

In the report “Understanding Anti-Muslim Hate Crimes - Addressing the Security Needs of Muslim Communities: A Practical Guide Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe” (May 2020), the OSCE-ODIHR calls on European

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governments to take strong measures to guarantee the security of all citizens, including Muslims. The report provides ten recommendations, which we strongly support.

- Acknowledge the problem [of anti-Muslim hatred].
- Raise awareness.
- Recognize and record bias motivation of anti-Muslim hate crime.
- Work with Muslim communities to identify security needs.
- Build trust between national authorities and Muslim communities.
- Identify security gaps to assess risks and prevent attacks.
- Provide extra protection to Muslim communities when necessary.
- Set up crisis response systems.
- Reassure the community if an attack takes place.
- Provide targeted support to victims.111

Apart from the above measures, it is urgent to fight Islamophobia on the discursive level. Measures should be taken against politicians and media organs that spread Islamophobic rhetoric and/or even explicitly trigger hatred against Muslims. This can be achieved through stricter legislation against hate speech and the application of penalties and sanctions in case of offense, while at the same time protecting freedom of speech. Yet, we are aware that Islamophobia in the form of structural racism shapes European societies and embraces the entire political scope. As a result, without far reaching that incorporate all spheres of society such as employment, education, and the justice system, there cannot be effective action against Islamophobia. In other words, it is important to challenge the white supremacist narrative of the Great Replacement that paves the way to Islamophobic attacks. Unfortunately, the 32 reports compiled here indicate that such narratives are becoming popular in Europe. Especially given the rise of violent activities perpetrated by white supremacist against minorities such as Jews, Muslims, and Roma as well as against politicians who represent the humanitarian politics of welcoming refugees and celebrating diversity, there is a need to reassess the work of security agencies in general and secret services in particular with regard to their focus on societal threats.

As stated in previous reports there exists a need to tackle Islamophobia systematically on a European level. We are happy that some of the recommendations have been put into practice like setting up a European-level conference on Islamophobia with the support of at least one EU member state or the European Parliament. Also, we welcome the latest steps towards creating a working definition of Islamophobia. This should lead, as we stated in the introduction to the *European Islamophobia Report 2017*, to the adoption of a resolution towards combatting Islamophobia with

111. “Understanding Anti-Muslim Hate Crimes - Addressing the Security Needs of Muslim Communities: A Practical Guide”, OSCE.
concrete policy recommendations and ways forward as witnessed in the European Parliament’s efforts to combat anti-Semitism and anti-Gypsyism.112

We also welcome the fact that certain European governments such as Germany have included the fight against Islamophobia in their National Action Plans against Racism, as we recommended in EIR 2017.113 Still, many more countries should follow this example and these action plans have to be developed further and backed by resources.

It is very much true that Europe needs courageous leaders and activists in all spheres of life who are willing to confront the Islamophobic discourses and narratives, and especially to stand up to the exclusion of Muslim women from access to employment.


113. Ibid.
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. 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. The diverging numbers in the countries hint to a different degree of awareness and organization.” (EIR 2018)

BELGIUM

• **According to** the Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities (UNIA), there were **278 cases of Islamophobia** in 2018.

• **The CCIB registered 80 cases of Islamophobia** in 2018.

AUSTRIA

• **The NGO Dokustelle documented 1,051 cases of anti-Muslim hate crime**, which is nearly twice as many compared to 2018 (540 cases). The majority consists of the spread of hate (757 cases), followed by **118 cases of insult, and 43 cases of discrimination**. (Source: Dokustelle)

• **The NGO ZARA documented 1,950 racist acts**. According to the organization, 385 of the 1,950 documented acts were anti-Muslim. (Source: ZARA)

BOSNIA

• **Thirteen Islamophobic incidents** were documented in 2019. (Source: Commission for Freedom of Religion – Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina)
The State of Islamophobia in Europe in 2019

**Germany**

- In 2019, 871 hate crimes against Muslims were reported to the police. Fifty-eight of them were crimes against Muslim religious sites and in 46 crimes Muslims were physically injured by anti-Muslim racists.

(Source: German Federal Government)

**France**

- The Collectif contre l’islamophobie en France (CCIF) received 789 report forms referring to 1,043 Islamophobic incidents. Among them, 68 concern physical attacks (6.5%); 618 concern discrimination (59.3%); 210 concern hate speech and incitement to racial hatred (20.1%); 93 concern defamation (8.9%); 22 concern degradation of sacred places (2.1%); and 32 are linked to the fight against terrorism (3.1%). (Source: Collectif contre l’islamophobie en France [CCIF])

**Italy**

- According to a social research project on the condition of Islam in Italy, 65% of people interviewed declared to have suffered violence, prejudice or discrimination because of being Muslim; the percentage rises to 70% among women while wearing a veil represents the trigger for verbal or physical assault both at work and in daily life.

(Source: Fabrizio Ciocca, L’Islam italiano. Un’indagine tra religione, identità e islamofobia)

**Slovenia**

- In 2018, there were 15 reported cases of discrimination based on disability (9.62%), followed by ethnicity, race, and ethnic background (14 cases or 8.24% of which 8 cases are related to race and 4 cases are related to race or ethnic background). Gender-based discrimination occurred in 8 cases (4.71%), followed by religion or belief (7 cases or 4.12%); age and sexual orientation (5 cases or 2.94% each); social status, financial situation, and place of residence (2 cases or 1.18% each).

NORWAY
• In a report about attitudes towards hate speech and discrimination from 2019, 44% of those asked consider that Muslims are targets of hate speech. (Source: Guri Tyldum, Holdninger til discriminering, likestilling og hatprat i Norge 2. Ut-gave. Fafo-rapport [2019]: 26)

DENMARK
• A survey of over 5,900 Danes concluded that about 28% agreed/partly agreed that Muslim immigrants should be deported. (Source: Mandag Morgen)

FINLAND
• Hate crimes retreated in 2018 by 22% to 910 cases from the previous year, according to the latest figures. The lion’s share was due to ethnic or national origin (69.7%) and religion (17%). Sixty-seven percent of hate crimes due to ethnic or national background were reported by men and 33% by women. The most effected group by nationality were Iraqis. After rising by 58% in 2017, hate crimes due to religious background fell by 34% and the most affected were Muslims. (Source: Police University College [Polisiammattikorkeakoulu])

BULGARIA
• According to the Chief Mufti’s Office, 2 Islamophobic incidents were documented in 2019. Both of them concern physical attacks on buildings (a mosque and a mufti office) related to the Muslim community. Acts concerning discrimination, and hate speech are not part of any official statistics.
UNITED KINGDOM

- The upward trend in Islamophobic incidents in the UK continued in the figures for 2018-19, with the number of cases recorded in official statistics rising by 10%, religion-specific cases by 3%, and those recorded under the racial flag up by 11%. There were 3,530 recorded cases of Islamophobic hate crime, representing 47% of all recorded religiously motivated hate crime offences.
- The percentage of Muslim adults (16 or over) who were victims of religiously motivated crime in 2017-18 was nearly double that recorded for any other religious group (0.8%). In the London metropolitan area, Islamophobic hate crimes fell by 10% in 2019 (average of 100 incidents per month), albeit against the backdrop of a larger-than-usual rise in 2018. Still, ‘racist and religious hate crime’ overall figures grew by 11% in 2019. (Source: Metropolitan Police, Hate Crime Dashboard)

THE NETHERLANDS

- According to Nieuwwij’s report, 99% of the articles on terrorism in the newspaper De Telegraaf related to “Muslim terror,” while articles on Islamophobia made up only 0.7% of all articles related to Muslims. (Source: Nieuwwij.nl)

LITHUANIA

- In the period of January-November 2019, a total of 31 criminal offenses were registered on the grounds foreseen under Chapter XXV of the Criminal Code “Crimes and Misdemeanours against a Person’s Equal Rights and Freedom of Conscience.”
- Twenty-eight were on the grounds foreseen under Article 170 “Incitement against Any National, Racial, Ethnic, Religious or Other Group of Persons.” Three were based on incitement against religion and two on the grounds foreseen under Article 171 “Disturbance of Religious Ceremonies or Religious Celebrations.”
- There were no registered criminal offenses based on Article 169 “Discrimination on Grounds of Nationality, Race, Sex, Descent, Religion or Belonging to Other Groups” during the reported period. (Source: Data on criminal offences committed in the Republic of Lithuania)
- Sixteen complaints of discrimination on the grounds of religion, belief, convictions and views were received in 2019, eight of them on the grounds of religion. (Source: Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson)
**SPAIN**

- **According to the data** provided by the Ministry of Interior and Administration, the number of hate crimes against Muslims investigated in 2019 in Poland was 32, down from 53 in 2018. These statistics are likely to be grossly underestimated – according to the Polish Ombudsman’s Office, only 5% of hate crime is reported to the police in Poland. *(Source: The Ombudsman’s Office and the Ministry of Interior and Administration)*

**IRELAND**

- **According to official police data**, as published by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, 15 anti-Muslim hate crimes were recorded for the 2018 period. *(Source: OSCE ODIHR)*

**POLAND**

- **There was an overall 11.6% increase in hate crime**: out of 1,598 complaints, 69 related to religion (33% less than in 2017) and 524 to racism and xenophobia (1.3% more than in 2017). No segregated statistics for anti-Muslim bias are available. *(Source: The National Office for Hate Crimes 2018 Report)*
ROMANIA

- Survey results by the National Council for Combatting Discrimination reveal that 68% of Romanians have a lack of trust in relation to people of Muslim faith, while 62% of those interviewed think that Muslims are potentially dangerous. Around 39% of the respondents would not accept having a Muslim relative, 28% would not accept having a Muslim friend, and 19% would not accept a Muslim co-worker. (Source: National Council for Combatting Discrimination [NCCD])

SWITZERLAND

- The KONID Survey 2019, a representative survey on the role of religious and social identities, revealed that one in two Muslims stated that they had been discriminated against based on their religious identity. (Source: KONID Survey 2019)

CZECH REPUBLIC

- According to the Ministry of Interior in the first half of 2019 there were 90 hate-motivated crimes. (Source: Ministerstvo vnitra)
VIOLENT ACTS AGAINST MUSLIMS IN EUROPE

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

BELGIUM

• Muslim woman stabbed by her mother because she converted to Islam. (Source: DH Net)
• Muslim woman stabbed in front of her three young children in Anderlecht. (Source: SudInfo)

BOSNIA

• In Rogatica, Elvir Bahto, a Bosniak returnee, was attacked by his neighbor with a shovel. (Source: AFP)

DENMARK

• Violent attack against a hijab-wearing 17-year-old girl. Her hijab was ripped off, she was verbally assaulted with racist slurs and physically assaulted with kicks to her head and punches to her body. The attack happened in the afternoon and perpetrator was a Danish man in his 30s or 40s. (Source: TV2)

ESTONIA

• Woman wearing a hijab was spat on in Tartu. (Source: Johannes Mihkelson Centre)

FINLAND

• Left Alliance candidate for parliament, Suldaan Said Ahmed, was physically attacked and harassed verbally while waiting for the metro. (Source: Yle)

FRANCE

• A supporter of the National Rally (far right) attempted to set fire to the mosque of Bayonne and shot two individuals in front of the mosque, wounding one severely. The attacker was then arrested in his home
and charged with attempted murder and destruction of property committed for reasons of race or religion by dangerous means to persons. (Source: France Info)

GERMANY

• CDU politician Walter Lübcke who campaigned for the admission of refugees was murdered by a right-wing extremist.

GREECE

• In May, an attack took place in the Muslim cemetery of the city of Alexandroupolis. Nazi symbols were written on tombs and leaflets with the slogan “Greece belongs to the Greeks” were thrown throughout the cemetery. The act was perpetrated by Golden Dawn supporters as was clear from the leaflets. (Source: Efimerida ton Syntaktion)

HUNGARY

• Four young people were severely beaten at a summer music festival in Hungary for being considered “migrants.”

IRELAND

• Two Muslim men were attacked in a seemingly premeditated attack while on their way home from a mosque in the city. (Source: The Irish Examiner)

KOSOVO

• A historical mosque (xhamia e Namazgjahut) was vandalized in Prizren. (Source: inFokus)

MALTA

• Ivorian migrant Lassana Cisse was murdered in a racially motivated attack. (Source: UNHCR Malta)

THE NETHERLANDS

• A banner stating insulting phrases was placed on a window frame of the As-Sunnah Mosque in The Hague. In front of the banner a mannequin dressed in “Arab clothes” was placed, half uncovered and with a beard and a baby doll attached to his crotch. (Source: Republiek Allachtonie)
NORTH MACEDONIA
• Police with inspectors appeared at the mosque in Strumica to lower the volume of the adhan. (Source: Ina Online)

NORWAY
• An Islamophobic terror attack took place on the Al-Noor Islamic Centre – Mosque outside Oslo by the right-wing extremist Philip Manshaus on 10 August. He was disarmed by senior Muslims before he could inflict much damage, but one person was injured. (Source: All News Media in Norway)

POLAND
• In January, Paweł Adamowicz, the mayor of Gdańsk and a vocal advocate for receiving refugees, was fatally stabbed during an open-air event celebrating a nationwide charitable collection “in aid of paediatric hospitals.” (Source: AFP)

RUSSIA
• In May, a prayer house built on private territory was demolished in the village of Svoboda in the Kaliningrad region. (Source: Radio Svoboda)

SERBIA
• In April, a series of attacks took place targeting an Albanian bakery in the Belgrade neighbourhood of Borča. (Source: N1)

SPAIN
• In December, at least 7 individuals brutally beat an unaccompanied migrant minor in Zaragoza, sinking his skull and then fleeing, leaving the 17-year-old boy lying on the street. (Source: Heraldo)

SWITZERLAND
• In Lausanne, a 14-year-old schoolgirl wearing a headscarf in the metro was described by an elderly man as a “slut” and “Muslim filth.” He told her that she should “return to her country.” (Source: GRA Chronology)
UK

- On 21 March, five mosques are attacked and vandalized in Birmingham. (Source: Euronews)

- Hours after the massacre in Christchurch, New Zealand, a worshipper sustained head injuries outside Ashaadibi Centre Mosque in Whitechapel, London. (Source: Aljazeera)

- On 28 August, two women in traditional Islamic dress were viciously attacked and sustained serious injuries in South Ealing Underground Station in London. (Source: The Independent)

- In June, two security staff of the Dar Ul-Isra Mosque in Cardiff, Wales suffered minor injuries following an attack by two men armed with knives (Source: Wales Online)

- On 11 November, an arson attack occurred against a place of worship in Havenhill. (Source: Haverhill Echo)
ISLAMOPHOBIC STATEMENTS BY 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

- FPÖ Viennese chairman Dominik Nepp published a press release, in which he spoke about “Muslim sexual delinquents, who see our daughters and women as unprotected game from their misanthropic perception of women.” According to Nepp, Shariah would rule in schools, where Muslims make up the majority in Vienna.
- Chancellor Sebastian Kurz stated, “Politicians are urgently required to protect our free society from political Islam and its excesses, such as anti-Semitism.” (Source: Kleine Zeitung)
- During Austria’s most important weekly political debate on TV following the murder of four women within one week, State Secretary Karoline Edtstadler (ÖVP) argued that there was no patriarchy in Austria. Rather, this was due to “imported patriarchy” (from Muslim immigrants).

BELGIUM

- Local Koekelberg town councillor, Lucas Ducarme stated, “I don’t want Koekelberg to become Molenbeek.” (Source: La Capitale)

BOSNIA

- President of Croatia Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović referred to B&H as “very unstable, and [...] in some respects [has] been taken over by people who have connections with Iran and terrorist organizations. The country is now controlled by militant Islam.” (Source: Le Monde)
**BULGARIA**

- Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, and leader of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (IMRO) Krassimir Karakachanov stated, “Gypsies in Bulgaria have become extremely arrogant… It’s a fact that since the last year or two they have started adopting Islam.” *(Source: Deutsche Welle)*

- Member of the European Parliament and vice-chairman of IMRO Angel Dzhambazki stated, “We have always insisted that the (Roma) ghetto should be demolished. And we will demolish it. Because the ghetto is an ulcer. Because the ghetto is the soil in which the poisonous weeds of Islamic radicalism grow.” *(Source: Angel Dzhambazki’s blog)*

**CROATIA**

- In July 2019, President of the Republic of Croatia Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic, who won the 2014 presidential elections as a candidate of the right-wing Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), visited Israel on the occasion of the Holocaust commemoration. One of the most influential Israeli newspapers, *The Jerusalem Post*, published an article claiming that during the meeting of Croatia’s president with Israeli President Reuven Rivlin, Grabar-Kitarovic stated, “Bosnia and Herzegovina is a very unstable country and under the control of militant Islam; in some aspects it has been taken over by people associated with Iran and terrorists.” The president of the Republic of Croatia denied having said what was published in the *Jerusalem Post*. *(Source: Jutarnji.hr)*

- Presidential candidate Anto Djapic from the political party Right accused Muslims in Bosnia of cooperating with Serbs in the Islamization of Croatian territory. *(Source: Dnevno.hr)*

**CZECH REPUBLIC**

- MP for the Freedom and Direct Democracy party (SDP) Karla Maříková stated, “It is forbidden to import invasive, non-indigenous species of plants and animals to the European Union. Muslim immigrants are also non-indigenous inhabitants in Europe and the same way as other invasive species they represent unexpected expansion and gradual supplanting of indigenous inhabitants of Europe. Therefore, they should be forbidden from entering the EU.” *(Source: iRozhlas)*

**DENMARK**

- Referring to a survey that showed that 28% of Danes want to deport Muslims, Inger Støjberg (former integration minister and MP for Venstre) said, “When the survey shows this, it is probably because there are a lot of people who feel the way I do; I am so tired of hearing about Islam here
and there as a justification or poor excuse for everything from the craziest terrorist acts to so-called honor-related violence, the demand to curb freedom of speech and right to criticize religion, the lack of equality, the demand for special treatment in the workplace, the school, or the swimming pool.” (Source: B.T.)

ESTONIA

- Helle-Moonika Helme, the wife of the chair of the Far Right Party, stated the following: “They are Muslims, they carry another culture that is dangerous to us. They have already done their evil deeds.” (Source: Eesti Päevaleht)

- Member of the European Parliament Jaak Madison (EKRE) shared his opinion that the Notre-Dame de Paris fire could be an accident, but could also be the work of Muslims. He added that many Muslims were happy about the fire. (Source: Facebook)

FINLAND

- Petteri Orpo, chairperson of the National Coalition Party, stated, “One must have the ability and will to adapt to Finnish society. We do not have to change our own society because different people come here. We have to be tolerant of difference, tolerant of [people’s] background, but in Finland we live under Finnish laws.” (Source: Verkkouutiset)

FRANCE

- The Minister of Interior Christophe Castaner is heard by the French National Assembly about the attack on the Paris Police Headquarter. Following Macron’s speech, he calls on the French people to report to the police any “weak signals of radicalization,” i.e. “having a beard; an exaggerated practice of religion especially during Ramadan; ostentatious prayer; not kissing the opposite gender; not wanting to work with women.” A few days later, in the French Senate, he said that this was just a list of “signs that could help to identify a radicalization towards radical Islam, political Islam, and terrorism.” (Source: BFM TV)

GERMANY

- Thilo Sarrazin, former senator for finances in Berlin (Social Democratic Party) and author of Islamophobic books, stated, “In addition to the measures that we have to take in Germany and in European countries, we must make a very clear decision to prevent immigration from Muslim countries as completely as possible for many decades to come.” (Source: YouTube)
GREECE

- Kyriakos Velopoulos, leader of Elliniki Lyssi (Hellenic Solution) stated in parliament, “[Islam] is not a religion; it is a politico-religious ideology. It is a judicial system since the mufti is also a judge. As a consequence, it is a political-judicial system. Islam is incompatible with the legal culture and the morals of western societies. If you [i.e. the government] from the love you have for Ibrahim and Hassan [i.e. Muslim migrants] and not for Giorgos, Nikos, Stavros [i.e. Greeks] think that you can close your eyes, you are wrong. Don’t you know, gentlemen, what Islam says about homosexuals? You close your eyes? Don’t you know? They murder them. Don’t you know that? Don’t you know what Islam says about women? That they have to wear a burqa and that they have to accept clitoridectomy. You didn’t know that either?” (Source: Kathimerini)

HUNGARY

- PM Viktor Orban campaign speech for the European Election contained the following: “Our Christian civilization is at stake in the upcoming European parliamentary election.” (Source: Hungary Today)

IRELAND

- In August, video footage emerged on social media wherein member of Anti-Corruption Ireland Gemma O’Doherty stated that hijabs “should be burned.” (Source: Twitter)

ITALY

- The Minister of Interior Matteo Salvini stated, “We do not want to end up like Sweden, this is not integration! NO to the EURABIA. Oriana, look at us from heaven. SWEDEN ATTACKED. STOP EURABIA!” (Source: Twitter)

MALTA

- Maurice Mizzi, chairman of Guardian for Future Generations, which is a government-appointed commission intended to promote sustainable development in policymaking, stated, “We are living in a Catholic country, and when I die, I want to die in a Catholic country. At the moment, there are so many Muslims coming – they’re all having nine babies, next to our two – and they will take over eventually.” (Source: Times of Malta)

MONTENEGRO

- Andrija Mandic, MP (Democratic Front), strongly “advised” Muslims not to vote for the proposed Law on Freedom of Religion or Beliefs, other-
wise they will suffer horrific consequences. He concluded, “There are more hidden weapons in Montenegro than anywhere else; the weapons that will be unburied as soon as the first drop of blood falls. We will not seek justice through the legal system, but rather personally knock on the doors of those who did us injustice. That is the message you have to understand.” (Source: n1info.com)

THE NETHERLANDS

• Prime Minister Mark Rutte stated throughout the debate on the Cornelius Haga school that “he wouldn’t send his children there.” (Source: Het Parool)

NORTH MACEDONIA

• Dimitar Apasiev, a politician from the Left (Levica) stated, “There is no left-wing government in the world that has not banned wearing the headscarf/hijab! A right-wing feminist throws the headscarf with indignation, as a victory over patriarchal morality, and does not wear it. Only our NGO Sorospi ‘feminists’ are defending this religious seduction of women.” (Source: Republika Online)

NORWAY

• Progress Party leader Siv Jensen published a feature article on the “covert Islamization” of Norway. (Source: VG [Verdens Gang])

POLAND

• Law and Justice Member of Parliament Dominik Tarczyński stated, “We don’t want Poland to be taken over by Muslims, Buddhists, or anybody else… and nobody will ever force us to receive Muslims, Buddhists, and non-believers in huge numbers… For me, a multicultural society is not a worthwhile value… it is not a virtue.” (Source: Al-Jazeera)

ROMANIA

• Traian Basescu, the former president of Romania who was elected as a MEP in 2019, stated that he wants to get involved in protecting Europe’s borders from a “Muslim invasion” and that the European Union should work on stopping migrants from reaching Europe illegally, including in international waters. (Source: Digi 24)

• Mihai Chirica, the current mayor of Iași, made racist statements referring to Congolese, Somalis, Syrians, and people from other nations as “[nations] that just came down from the tree.” (Source: Digi 24)
The State of Islamophobia in Europe in 2019

SERBIA
- Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabić stated that political representatives of Kosovo Albanians “are people from the forest.” *(Source: Primer Minister statement for the press)*

SLOVAKIA
- Former Prime Minister and Chairman of Smer-SD: “Islam has no place in Slovakia!” *(Source: Nový čas)*
- “I don’t want a comprehensive Muslim community here. I don’t. Okay. And let everybody say what they want. They have coherent communities that change the nature of our lives. We can’t allow to change the character of the Slovak Republic. It is a Christian country. For God’s sake, however, let us guard some of the values on which we stand, because we will also start to question this elementary fact, which holds us anyway, so this country will go in a particularly bad way.” *(Source: týždeň)*

SPAIN
- Santiago Abascal, the leader of Vox party and a member of the Congress of Deputies stated, “Islamists want to destroy Europe and western society by celebrating the fire of #NotreDame. Take it into account before it’s too late.” *(Source: HuffPost)*

SWITZERLAND
- At the National Council, SVP National Councillor Erich von Siebenthal spoke out in favor of the initiative “No Muslim army chaplains in our army” because, according to him, the goal of Islam was “world domination.” *(Source: Official Bulletin of Swiss Parliament)*

UK
- A dossier containing 110 incidents of Islamophobic content posted online by Conservative Party members is passed on to ITV.
  The comments made by people alleging to be Conservative Party members include:
  - ”We are letting our children down by allowing this cult to take over our country.”
  - ”We don’t have a politician strong enough in the UK to lead us away from this infestation.”
  - ”They cause mayhem wherever they decide to invade.” *(Source: ITV)*
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

- After a hijab ban in kindergarten was already implemented in 2018, the ÖVP invited the anti-Muslim author Zana Ramadani as an expert to the education committee to expand the hijab ban up to 10 years of age. She argued, “Once you wear it [hijab, Farid Hafez] as a girl, you won’t take it off.” The proposed text bans “wearing ideological or religious clothing, with which a covering of the head is connected.”
- In September 2019, shortly before the new national parliamentary elections, the FPÖ submitted an amendment to change the School Teaching Act to include a hijab ban for pupils up to the age of 14 as well as for teachers. “The headscarf is a symbol of political Islam and has no place in educational institutions,” said FPÖ chairman Norbert Hofer. Due to considerations of fundamental rights, the initiative was postponed.

BELGIUM

- Halal slaughter ban introduced in Flanders (1 January 2019) and Wallonia (1 September 2019).
- Flemish governmental agreement limited visible faith symbols in education and employment in Flanders.

BULGARIA

- Prosecutor General Sotir Tsatsarov rewarded prosecutor Nedialka Popova from the Pazardzhik District Prosecutor’s Office for her performance during a case regarding the alleged spread of radical Islam, a year after she delivered an Islamophobic speech and was removed from the case.

CZECH REPUBLIC

- Repeated but unsuccessful attempts by the party Freedom and Direct Democracy to ban Islam and the hijab. The initiatives found no support in the parliament.
DENMARK
• On 1 January 2019, it became mandatory to shake public officials’ hands during citizenship ceremonies.

FRANCE
• A bill to ensure so-called religious neutrality of persons contributing to the public service of education (i.e. banning headscarf in those services) was drafted by the Senate. The Senate, with a right-wing majority, adopted the bill on 29 October 2019 at the first reading. The National Assembly has yet to discuss the bill.

IRELAND
• Cork-based independent local election candidate, Joe O’Callaghan, a former lord mayor of the city, called for a ban to be placed on Islamic face coverings in Ireland. O’Callaghan referred to such face coverings as “a joke in this day and age, particular in these dangerous times we live in… it’s a question of security and integration.”

ITALY
• In 2019, the Court of Appeal of Milan authorized the use of illustrated signs to prohibit access to health facilities of individuals wearing a burqa.

THE NETHERLANDS
• In May 2019, the PVV called for a ban on several Islamic expressions, such as the building of mosques and the printing of the Qur’an, informally referred to as the “Anti-Islam Law.”

SPAIN
• The Ministry of Education of the Autonomous Community of Madrid and the Ombudsman allowed schools to ban the Islamic veil.

SWITZERLAND
• In the canton of Geneva, a referendum approved a law prohibiting "visible religious features" in the civil service and in plenary sessions of the legislature. Events on public grounds may be prohibited if "conspicuous religious features" are displayed.
• The Geneva Constitutional Court partially revised the law on secularity in November 2019. Members of parliament may continue to wear signs of religious affiliation such as headscarves.
ISLAMOPHOBIA IN THE MEDIA

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

ALBANIA

On Ora News, Kastriot Myftaraj, a well-known Islamophobe, commented on the terrorist attack in Christchurch and indirectly suggested undertaking similar action in Albania. A visual analysis of the still image from the TV show, shows Scanderbeg, the Albanian national hero, pointing to a minaret with his sword, a clear indication of what the host of the show wanted to communicate to his audience.

AUSTRIA

In an opinion piece by Christian Ultsch in Die Presse, the author commented on the Christchurch terrorist attacks with the following: “Anyone who draws exaggerated conclusions about a ‘structural hatred of Islam’ from the bloody deed of a fascist in New Zealand is wrong.”

BOSNIA

The newspaper Novosti RS falsely claimed in a title, “Hundreds of Jihadists Are Arriving to B&H.”
CZECH REPUBLIC

*Reflex* published an article with the title “Muslims Are Conquering Czech Judiciary; Their Women in Hijab Will Sit in Our Schools.”

CROATIA

Ivica Sola, a Croatian theologian, professor, communicologist, and journalist for *Globus* wrote columns in which he argued that Islam is masculine to the point of being brutal (as opposed to the feminized Europe), and that it takes advantage of the commotion to sneak up on the “woman” Europe. (Source: Narod.hr)

FINLAND

In January, a commentator of Iltalehti TV claimed that the Oulu sexual assault cases are the result of immigration. He stated, “We received too many asylum seekers.”
FRANCE
On 28 September 2019, the polemist Eric Zemmour’s public speech was broadcasted by the right-wing news channel LCI. He stated, “In the street, women in hijab and men in djellaba are propaganda in fact, an Islamization of the street. [They wear] uniforms of an occupying army [that] reminds the defeated of his submission. The old expression ‘Immigration, Integration, Assimilation’ has been replaced by ‘Invasion, Colonization, Occupation.’”

GERMANY
The newspaper Bild reported on a daycare center which does not want to serve pork anymore with the title “Out of Respect the ‘Salvation’ Daycare Centre Takes Pork off the Menu.” The headline was on the front page of the print and online versions.

GREECE
The front page of the extreme-right newspaper Eleftheros Kosmos (Free World) states “Islam Invaded Athens. Fears about a Terrorist Attack during Christmas.”
HUNGARY

The article on news portal Origo features a conspiracy theory about the Hungarian Islam Advocacy Association (MUE) teaming up with human rights organizations Helsinki Committee and the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union, which the article refers to as the Hungarian lawyers of George Soros, to settle migrants in Hungary.

MONTENEGRO

The web portal in4s.net ran the headline “UN’s Says There Was No Genocide in Srebrenica.”
THE NETHERLANDS

The AIVD published its report on the newly founded Islamic school Cornelius Haga, falsely claiming it had ties with Salafism. It led to extensive debates and media coverage for the rest of the year. The premier Mark Rutte declared that he “wouldn’t send his child there.”

NORWAY

In September, Human Right Service published an article with the title: “Will Erna and Company Stop the Extremists’ Plan for a New Big Mosque and Proselyting Centre for Young People?”
ROMANIA

After a handball match between Romanian teams, *Pagina de Media* website stated that “AHC Olimpia Braila, a tiny Christian team had a match with the Muslim conglomerate of HC Dunarea Braila, who absorbs money from the Quran.” Comparing the game to a crusade, the publication added, “Victory was obtained by the team led by [Christian] God, in detriment to the Quran, who sponsored the team that was sold by the authorities to a sheik.”

SLOVENIA

Nova 24TV published an article condemning the possibility of halal food in a public elementary school claiming that children are treated unequally because the school has offered pork-free meal options for Muslim children.

SERBIA

*Informer* published a story on an alleged Muslim invasion of Bosnia. The title read, “It Smells Like the Nineties! Americans Insert Jihadists into BiH and Prepare ‘Alija’s Scenario’: Terrorism Expert Reveals What Lies Behind Muslim Invasion.”
Spain

El País published an op-ed questioning the rights of Muslim women. “The Importance of a Piece of Cloth. Those who want to convince us of the innocuousness of the hijab are precisely those who do not understand that the dignity of women is above all consideration and, if necessary, of any divine text.”