By gathering 35 local scholars, experts, and civil society activists specialized in racism and human rights, the fifth edition of the European Islamophobia Report addresses a still timely and politically important issue. All 32 country reports included in this book follow a unique structure that is convenient, first, for comparing countries and, second, for selected readings on a particular topic such as politics, employment, or education with regard to Islamophobia across Europe.

The present report investigates in detail the underlying dynamics that directly or indirectly support the rise of anti-Muslim racism in Europe. This extends from Islamophobic statements spread in national media to laws and policies that restrain the fundamental rights of European Muslim citizens and threaten the whole of society. As a result, the European Islamophobia Report 2019 discusses the impact of anti-Muslim racism on human rights, multiculturalism, and the state of law in Europe.

This fifth edition of our report highlights how European societies are progressively overwhelmed by the Islamophobic discourse of the “Great Replacement” and other far-right conspiracy theories. The 32 country reports demonstrate how governments and mainstream media participate in reproducing such discourses that put the fundamental rights of millions of European citizens in jeopardy and how one can counteract these developments. This compendium of useful insights and data aims to provide European policy-makers, institutions, and NGOs with recommendations on how to tackle anti-Muslim racism in Europe seriously.

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

Anti-Muslim bigotry and negative trends towards Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina were evident mainly in the educational, political, and media sectors. As in previous years, the main generators of Islamophobic discourse and anti-Muslim bigotry are the Bosnian Serb politicians, media and academic circles. In addition, the year 2019 saw a large increase in anti-Bosnian and anti-Muslim bigotry by the Bosnian Croat and Croatian political establishment and by regional political actors. These actors continue to present Bosnia and Herzegovina as a failed state which is harboring extremists and which needs to be territorially divided in order to secure peace and security. The Bosnian Serb and Serbian authorities continued their institutional denial and revisionist activities aimed at creating their own narrative about the genocide committed against Bosniaks during the 1992-95 period.

This year also saw the continuation of the denial of genocide and war crimes by the Serb authorities. The local and regional media contributed to anti-Muslim bigotry with reports about terrorist threats and radical ideology, connecting it with the Bosniak political and religious establishment. In 2019, Islamophobic and anti-Muslim rhetoric was centered around the return of former foreign terrorist fighters from Syria and the so-called migrant crisis.

Lastly, this year saw a continuation of physical and verbal attacks on mosques and imams, mostly in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian entity Republika Srpska but also in Croat-majority areas. Additionally, anti-Muslim hatred was visible at football matches and in graffiti in Serb-dominated towns.
Sažetak

Anti-muslimanska netrpeljivost i negativni trendovi prema muslimanima u Bosni i Hercegovini se uglavnom očituju u obrazovnom, političkom i medijskom sistemu. Kao i u prethodnim godinama, glavni generatori islamofobije i anti-muslimanske netrpeljivosti su čelnici bosanskih Srba - politički, medijski i akademski nosioći politike. U 2019. godini došlo je do porasta anti-bosanske i anti-muslimanske retorike od strane Hrvatskog političkog rukovodstva i od strane regionalnih aktera. Ovi akteri prikazuju Bosnu i Hercegovinu kao propalu državu koja je sjedište ekstremista i koja treba biti teritorijalno podijeljena kako bi se očuvao mir i sigurnost.

Ove godine se nastavilo negiranje genocida i ratnih zločina od strane srpskih zvaničnika. Domaći i regionalni mediji doprinijeli su anti-muslimanskim netrpeljivostima kroz izvještavanje o terorističkim prijetnjama i radikalnoj ideologiji, povezivajući ih s bošnjačkim političkim i vjerskim zvaničnicima.

Konačno, ove godine je vidljiv nastavak fizičkih i usmenih napada na džamije i imame, većinom u bosanskohercegovačkom entitetu Republika Srpska.. Dodatna anti-muslimanska mržnja bila je vidljiva na fudbalskim utakmicama i na grafitima u pojedinim gradovima.
Country Profile
EIR 2019

Country: Bosnia and Herzegovina
Type of Regime: Parliamentary representative democracy
Form of Government: Three-member presidential system
Ruling Parties: Party for Democratic Action (SDA), Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD)
Opposition Parties: Social Democratic Party (SDP), Serb Democratic Party (SDS), Croatian Democratic Union 1990 (HDZ 1990)

Last Elections: 2018 Presidential Election (Šefik Džaferović won 36.61% of the vote; Željko Komšić 52.64% of the vote; and Milorad Dodik 53.88% of the vote); Legislative Election (SDA: 9 seats, HDZ: 5 seats, SNSD: 6 seats)

Total Population: 3,511,372 (in 2013)
Major Languages: Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian
Official Religion: No official religion (secularism)

Statistics on Islamophobia: In 2019, the Commission for Freedom of Religion reported 13 anti-Muslim attacks.

Statistics on Racism and Discrimination: N/A

Major Religions (% of Population): Islam (50.11%), Serbian Orthodoxy (31%), Catholicism (15%), Others/None/Not stated (3%)

Muslim Population (% of Population): 1,769,592 (50.11%) in 2013 (Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in Bosnia and Herzegovina - 2013 Final Results)

Main Muslim Community Organizations: Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Main NGOs Combating Islamophobia: Riyasat Commission for Freedom of Religion; NAHLA

Far-Right Parties: SNSD - Savez nezavisnih socijaldemokrata (Alliance of Independent Social Democrats); SDS - Srpska demokratska stranka (Serb Democratic Party); SRS - Srpska radikalna stranka (Serb Radical Party); HDZ - Hrvatska demokratska zajednica (Croatian Democratic Union)

Far-Right Movements: Serb Nationalists Chetnik Movement, Croat Neo-Ustaša Movement

Far-Right Terrorist Organizations: N/A

Limitations to Islamic Practices:
- Hijab Ban: None
- Halal Slaughter Ban: None
- Minaret Ban: None
- Circumcision Ban: None
- Burka Ban: None
- Prayer Ban: None
Introduction

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a specific case of Islamophobia. Anti-Muslim bigotry has been present in Bosnia and Herzegovina for a long time. This Islamophobia reached the highest peaks with mass atrocities including genocide; Islamophobia was present during World War II and during the Bosnian War (1992-1995). Although anti-Muslim bigotry has deep roots, the first contemporary Islamophobic statements appeared in the late 1980s and were made by scholars, Orientalists, and self-proclaimed Islam experts at the University of Belgrade. Slavic Muslims were represented as traitors of Orthodox Christianity, people with weak genes who converted to Islam. This is an interesting case of Islamophobia where hatred is aimed mainly at Slavic Muslims. After the Serbian aggression and genocide of 1992-95, Islamophobia has been present in the country and in the region. Islamophobia is manifested through political statements, in the media, and in physical attacks. Most of the attacks are aimed at Bosniak returnees in Republika Srpska and in Croat-majority areas. The largest concentration of Bosniaks is in the federation where there are almost no attacks other than occasional Islamophobic statements or writings. Research for this report was based on available reports, media analysis, and interviews with important stakeholders. People and institutions were contacted in order to gain relevant information on different topics that included the media, justice, education, etc.

It is generally accepted that Islam arrived in Bosnia with the Ottoman Empire in the fifteenth century. Today, Bosnian Muslims are overwhelmingly Sunnis. Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks) are an indigenous Slavic ethnic group. More than 55 years of communism (1945-1990) in Yugoslavia kept religion in the dark. However, after Yugoslav President Josip Broz Tito’s death in 1980, a rise of Serb nationalism first incited anti-Albanian and later anti-Muslim rhetoric. Centuries-old ideas of establishing a homogenous greater Serbian state were revived by the Yugoslav regime under Slobodan Milošević. During 1992-95, an international armed conflict and genocide (the aim of establishing a Greater Serbia and Greater Croatia meant dividing Bosnia and Herzegovina and getting rid of its Muslim population) caused the deaths of at least 100,000 people, 30,000 enforced disappearances, and the rape of 30,000 women and girls. The vast majority of the victims were Bosniaks whose remains were buried in hundreds of hidden mass graves throughout the country. In addition to this, an estimated 600 mosques and a variety of Islamic religious objects were deliberately destroyed by the Bosnian Serb Army and the Croatian Defence Council. A decade of communism followed by genocidal massacres of the Bosniak population resulted in today’s situation where interreligious understanding and tolerance are fragile and complex. The 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement brought an end to the war entrenching the results of genocide, and cementing the divide in the country.

When it comes to the population of Muslims in B&H, according to the census conducted in 2013, 50.11% (1,769,592) of inhabitants declared themselves to
be Bosniaks (out of a total of 3,531,159). A slightly larger percentage (50.70%) stated that their religion is Islam. Since, in the case of all three constituent ethnic communities in Bosnia, the ethnic and religious identities overlap to a large extent, this figure is usually taken as indicative of the number of adherents to Islam. Due to war-related death, expulsion, and internal and external migration in the 1992-1995 aggression against B&H, the numbers and demographic distribution of ethnic groups have significantly changed.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a secular state with no state religion. In today’s post-war B&H, the increased presence of religion in the public arena is evident. Some welcome the religious revival as a healthy assertion of identity after the decades-long de-Islamization process that occurred during the communist period, while others see it as a rising threat to the secular and politically fragile state.

Annex 1 of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina includes 15 main documents on human rights. The constitution states that the rights and freedoms set forth in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Protocols shall apply directly to Bosnia and Herzegovina. A special law providing for the freedom of religion and religious non-discrimination, as well as the legal status of churches and religious communities was adopted in 2004. This is the Law on Freedom of Religion and the Legal Position of Churches and Religious Communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to this law everyone has the right to freedom of religion or belief, including the freedom to publicly profess, or not profess, a religion. Along with this, the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination was also adopted in 2009. According to this law, discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief consists of any differential treatment, including any type of exclusion, limitation or preference based on real or assumed features towards any person or group of persons on grounds of religion or belief, and every other circumstance with a purpose or a consequence that inhibits or endangers recognition, enjoyment or realization of rights and freedoms in all areas of public life (Article 2.1).

Hate crime as a specific crime is motivated by intolerance towards certain groups in society. Some of the several criminal codes in B&H contain limited provisions that allow more severe punishment to be imposed for crimes committed with a motivation of bias. Use of these provisions is inconsistent and relatively rare. For example, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FB&H) and the Brčko District Criminal Codes include aggravated forms of some criminal acts, such as murder, rape, or causing grievous bodily injury when committed with a motivation of bias. The FB&H Criminal Code also includes an aggravated form of malicious mischief. Many laws on peace and public order at the cantonal level also include minor offences, punishable with a fine, which encompass insulting behavior based on national, racial, or religious grounds. The FB&H, Republika Srpska, and Brčko
District Criminal Codes also include provisions on incitement to national, racial, or religious hatred, discord, or hostility. According to the statistics for hate crimes of the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe), hate crimes in B&H often target returnee communities (who are often isolated and vulnerable) and religious and sacred objects (mosques, churches, and graveyards), as well as private property belonging to returnees or members of minority communities. The OSCE B&H also records hate crimes through the Hate Monitor. More than 85% of all hate crimes registered through the Hate Monitor target are due to ethnicity/religion. Unfortunately, the statistics are not segregated by religion. When it comes to hate speech regulations, the FB&H and Republika Srpska laws do not specifically proscribe hate speech, but prohibit acts that cause ethnic, racial, or religious hatred. Nevertheless, usage of incendiary language (in the media, by politicians, and others) usually goes unpunished.

Islamophobic hate speech is particularly common online. To this date, no procedures have been initiated that would limit or sanction such activities. More information on hate speech in the media will be given in the report’s Media section.

Some of the main events that sparked Islamophobic rhetoric in Bosnia and Herzegovina were related to political instability and the so-called migrant crisis. First, the state-level government could not be formed for more than a year after elections were held due to the disruptive efforts of various political parties. This was in relation to the refusal of the Serbs to send the Annual National Programme (ANP) to NATO. Similarly to previous years, this year saw a high level of anti-Bosnian rhetoric from Croatia and Serbia. Bosnia and Herzegovina is portrayed by them as a failed state which is a safe haven for terrorists. B&H entity Republika Srpska continued its separatist policy in 2019 announcing that it is preparing the grounds for succession and for eventually joining Serbia.

The second event is the rising so-called migrant crisis which initially had not affected Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since Serbia and Hungary closed their borders, the migrants found their way through Bosnia and Herzegovina. In most cases, Serbian authorities encourage them to go to Bosnia and Herzegovina with the aim of easing the Serbian migrant issue. On the other hand, the migrants which the Croatian police capture are sent back over the border to Bosnia and Herzegovina. This influx of migrants was one of the main causes of Islamophobia and conspiracy theories pushed by the Bosnian Serb politicians and media.

Similarly to 2018, the Islamophobic rhetoric by political figures and media is on the rise. In relation to physical attacks, 2019 was a year in which attacks were slightly higher than in 2018.

The following incidents were collected through media reports, direct reporting to the commission, and personal contacts. The Commission for the Freedom of Religion and the Interreligious Council of B&H also published a report on the monitor-
ing and the responses to attacks on religious buildings and other holy sites in B&H. When this report was being written, the data for 2019 had not yet been published.

Discussion of Islamophobic Incidents and Discursive Events

Physical and Verbal Attacks

On 6 January, the Srebrenica Genocide Memorial in Potočari was desecrated with the bag of pork intestines. Nisvet Mujanović, chairman of the Board of Directors of the Srebrenica Memorial Center stated that it was the period of Orthodox holidays, so slaughter of pigs is very common, and it is hard for those working in the Memorial Center to know that their Serb neighbors use their holidays to commit such acts.1

On 7 January, Aleksandar Mladenović, a local Orthodox priest from Srebrenica, can be seen on a video leading a group of people on Christmas Eve singing Chetnik songs. Mladenović can be seen singing songs about Kosovo and greeting Kosovo Serbs for “Serbs’ Srebrenica”. Just a month before this provocation, the priest shared a photograph of himself together with a local imam and another priest with a caption “Today in Srebrenica this photograph was made as a symbol for a better and prettier part of our everyday lives that we rarely see in media” on his Facebook profile.2

On 8 January, two Serb members of the B&H Armed Forces were seen on a video singing songs containing hate speech toward Muslims. The video was shared on their Instagram social media account. Some of the lyrics that soldiers sang stated, “I will not give three Christmas days for thousands of Ramadans...”3

On 13 January, Tomislav Zelenika, a young Bosnian Croat, updated his status on his Facebook profile, claiming that Bosniak Muslims are the biggest and most dangerous threat: “Muslims, Bosniaks, are your greatest and most dangerous threat” adding that “Bosniaks are genetically predetermined for treason, what to expect from people whose ancestors betrayed their faith.” This post was later published on a website with close ties to the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ).4

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On 3 March, Bosnian Croat carnivals were held in several towns in Herzegovina, where the Bosniak Muslim identity and Islamic values were ridiculed.\(^5\) (Fig. 1)

![Figure 1: Bosnian Croat carnival in Ljubuški taunting Bosniaks.\(^6\)](image)

On 3 March, the entrance to the women’s section of the Čaršijska Mosque in Prijedor and the garage belonging to the mosque were vandalized with offensive Serb nationalist graffiti.\(^7\) The perpetrators were not apprehended.

On 11 March, in Kozarac near Prijedor, a Bosniak returnee Azrin Hodžić, was attacked both physically and verbally by Renato Marjanović. After threats and abuse, Marjanović pulled out a phone to record the victim as he promised to remove a sticker of the B&H flag from his truck, and humiliated him.\(^8\) On 13 March, Marjanović was arrested by Prijedor police and released after 24 hours.\(^9\)

From 3 March to 21 September, Imam Emir Nuhić from Blagaj, Bosanski Novi received death threats from Daniel Rajković via Facebook. Imam Nuhić reported everything to the police who eventually arrested Rajković.\(^10\)

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\(^{6}\) “Zavadi Pa Vladaj: Hrvati vole ismijavati bošnjačko-muslimanske vrijednosti!”.


On 10 March, members of the Ravnagora Chetnik Movement, a neo-fascist Serb nationalist paramilitary organization, paraded through the town of Visegrad. They sang songs threatening Bosniaks with lyrics such as “It will be hell and bloody Drina, here come the Chetnik from Serb mountains.”

On 10 April, while still under construction, the mosque Arnaudija in Banjaluca was vandalized. The perpetrator(s) among others graffitied enormous Nazi swastikas and the Serb nationalist four S symbols. (Fig. 2)

On 5 May, Bosniaks in a local mosque in Obradovac in Bosanska Gradiška were exposed to threats and Serb nationalist Chetnik songs on the eve of Ramadan. A column of cars circled around the mosque in broad daylight, mimicking weaponry in their hands while aiming at the mosque and shooting.

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On 13 May, unknown perpetrators destroyed the flags of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Islamic Community in front of the mosque in Nova Kasaba during Ramadan.\(^{15}\)

On 1 June, in Rogatica, the Bosniak returnee Elvir Bahto was attacked by his neighbor with a shovel. Bahto was on his way to break his fast during Ramadan, when he was greeted outside his house by a neighbor who cursed his “Turkish” mother, and soon after vandalized his car. Bahto contacted the police immediately and the drunk abuser was arrested.\(^{16}\)

On 8 June, several perpetrators destroyed four tombstones in the Muslim cemetery Kazanbašča in Zvornik. The police station of Zvornik condemned this criminal act and promised to bring the perpetrators to justice.\(^{17}\)

On 6 June, several Serb nationalistic stickers referring to the Srebrenica genocide and other offensive writings were stuck on Muslim religious objects in Bičeljina.\(^{18}\)

On 19 July, a group of young Serb nationalists, gathered in front of the Majlis building in Trebinje and sung nationalistic songs.\(^{19}\)

On 25 July, an hour after midnight, five young men (three of them underage) vandalized a fence of the mosque in Zvornik. The officials identified and apprehended the five young men.\(^{20}\)

On 13 August, a Serb man in Nevesinje beat a Roma man cursing his “Muslim and balija [derogatory term for Bosniaks] mother.” The attack was filmed by bystanders and shows two RS policemen standing by and not intervening.\(^{21}\)

On 17 August, the officials from the police station in Banja Luka arrested a man with initials “D.V.” for verbally abusing the local imam of the Islamic community in front of the mosque.\(^{22}\)
On 24 September, Danel Rajković was arrested for relieving himself in front of the mosque in Gacko. The Prosecutor’s Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina filed an indictment against Daniel Rajković from Gacko for sending disturbing and threatening messages to Imam Emir Nuhić from Blagaj, Bosanski Novi.23

Employment
On another note, a worrying fact is that the number of Bosniaks living and working in Republika Srpska is decreasing. For example, in Republika Srpska institutions, out of a total of 5,066 employees, only 43 are Bosniaks. 24 This trend of Bosniaks leaving Republika Srpska is the result of the perpetually uncomfortable and discriminatory atmosphere against Bosniak employees.

Education
The year 2019 saw a continuity in denying Bosniak returnees the right to learn the Bosnian language in Republika Srpska. This is a serious violation of Bosniak children’s constitutional right to be taught as a “national group” in schools in the Serb-majority entity. As a result of this discrimination, in 2016, several Bosniak returnee communities refused to enroll their children in school. As a result, the Islamic Community provided temporary improvised schools where children are taught according to the national B&H curriculum and teachers are brought in from the Federation B&H. The issue of discrimination in education is also visible in Croat-dominated areas where the concept of “two schools under one roof” exists. This is an apartheid-style segregation, where in Kiseljak, for example, Bosniak and Croat children attend school separately.25

Politics
In 2019, there was a rise in statements from local and regional political actors who used Islamophobic rhetoric to undermine Bosnia and Herzegovina, and portray it as a radical Muslim safe haven. This was spearheaded by Bosnian Serb and Bosnian Croat politicians as well as Serbian and Croatian politicians. However, the most dangerous rhetoric came from foreign dignitaries.

Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović during a meeting in Israel with Israeli President Reuven Rivlin claimed that Bosnia and Herzegovina “was very unstable, and had in some respects been taken over by people who have connec-

tions with Iran and terrorist organizations. The country is now controlled by militant Islam.26

French President Emmanuel Macron stated 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.”27

While attending the Jahorina Economic Forum on July 9, Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic referred to the Srebrenica genocide as a “misunderstanding.”28

One of the most worrisome events was a Croatian intelligence agency false flag operation which was uncovered by the Bosnian-Herzegovina intelligence agency in March 2019. Sarajevo web portal Zurnal published evidence which claims that Croatian intelligence, with the help of Croatian diplomats in Bosnia, intended to discredit Bosnia and Herzegovina as a “land of radical Islamic terrorism” by planting weapons in several mosques in Bosnia and Herzegovina.29

In addition, the glorification of war criminals was also a center of some politicians in 2019 Jelena Trivić, a member of the RS Assembly with the Party for Democratic Progress (PDP), published a photo of World War II Nazi collaborator and war criminal General Draža Mihailović on her Facebook account.30

Media

The anti-Bosnian sentiment in the media was usually followed by Islamophobic rhetoric. The statements made in the media usually associated B&H, Bosniak politicians, or former Army officers with radical extremism. These analytical statements were made by a group of already well-known self-proclaimed experts. Two main events which raised Islamophobic and anti-Muslim rhetoric in 2019 were the so-called migrant crises and the return of former fighters from Syria. Additionally, anti-Bosnian and anti-Muslim rhetoric was triggered by the Peter Handke Nobel prize affair.31

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In January 2019, the newly appointed Banja Luka Mufti Nusret Abdibegović was proclaimed as a “mujahedeen” and “British spy” by Serb tabloid Vesti. This was then republished by several Bosnian Serb web portals including the Republika Srpska Radio and Television website.32

RS President Milorad Dodik used the event of the return of former fighters from Syria in order to heighten tensions in the country.33

In November 2019, a book by Ilija Branković, a former Yugoslav People’s Army general, was launched at a Serbian Defence Ministry venue, the Central Military Club in Belgrade, Serbia, with a large media coverage.34 The book claims that the Bosnian Army shelled its own citizens in Tuzla in May 1995, in order to blame it on the Serbs. This kind of denialist rhetoric is similar to Serbian political and media attempts to deny the genocide in Srebrenica and the siege of Sarajevo.

Justice System

Overall, hate crimes in Bosnia and Herzegovina are underreported and rarely prosecuted.35 Dragica Tojagic, a spokesperson for the Republika Srpska public prosecutor’s office, stated that in 2018 and 2017 there were “no upheld or confirmed indictments for hate crimes.”36

However, two judgements were issued which can be viewed as positive signs. In October 2019, the European Court of Human Rights issued a decision that the Serbian Orthodox church which was built illegally in the backyard of a house owned by Bosniak woman Fata Orlović in Konjevic Polje, near Srebrenica, must be removed within three months.37

The RS Supreme Court in December 2019 issued a decision that Bosniak children in Sveti Sava Elementary School in Vrbanjci, Kotor Varoš can learn the Bosnian language.38 This was a result of a six-year legal battle by the Bosniak returnees whose children are attending the school.
Internet
Social media remain the main source of anti-Muslim bigotry and Islamophobic rhetoric online. Several Facebook pages, mainly representing Serb nationalistic groups, published articles which spread fear of Bosniaks and included genocide denial. One such example is “Srbija naša zemlja” (Serbia is our country) which closed down in 2019. These social media pages remain the same as in previous years. Additionally, several Bosnian Croat web portals such as Poskok.info continued their anti-Bosniak discourse using Islamophobic rhetoric. One of the most infamous examples is “Remove kebab,” by which “kebab” is used as a synonym for Muslims. This rhetoric is used by white extremists throughout the world.

Central Figures in the Islamophobia Network
The central figures in spreading Islamophobia in B&H can be divided into three categories. First, the academic and semi-academic circles in Serbia and Republika Srpska, most notably Serbian “experts” on security, terrorism, and Islam such as Predrag Ceranić, Miroljub Jevtić, Dževad Galijašević, and Darko Trifunović. Second, several high-ranking officials from the Serb Orthodox Church such as Bishops Amfilohije and Patriarch Irinej. The third category is politicians and include local Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats, as well as Croatian and Serbian politicians such as Milorad Dodik and Mario Karamatić. In the majority of cases, these are elected MPs in the parliamentary assemblies. These political subjects give statements which are anti-Muslim and Islamophobic aimed at Bosniak Muslims, and their political and religious establishments.

Observed Civil Society and Political Initiatives to Counter Islamophobia
The Commission on Freedom of Religion (Komisija za slobodu vjere) is a commission of the Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina which is active in helping secure religious freedoms and battling Islamophobia. Members of the commission took an active role in monitoring cases of violation of religious freedoms and have provided legal advice to several appellants.

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Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

In 2019, the number of Islamophobic attacks on people and property was slightly higher than in 2018. Similarly to 2018, there was an overall increase in regional political anti-Bosniak and anti-Muslim activities. Bosnia and Herzegovina was once again presented as an unstable state which harbors extremists.

Considering the state of Islamophobia in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the following policy recommendations to combat Islamophobia effectively can be made:

• Cooperation between governments (state level, entity level, and district Brčko level), the Islamic Community, and NGOs in fighting discrimination against Muslims should be fostered.
• Public awareness of human rights and freedom of religion and belief should be raised by NGOs, media, etc. The methods of documentation of cases of violation of the rights of Muslims should be enhanced by the Islamic Community, NGOs, the police, and judiciary.
• Awareness of hate crimes against Muslims, and their proper registration and prosecution should be raised by the Islamic Community, NGOs, the police, and judiciary.
• Awareness of hate speech (online and offline) by media, politicians, etc. should be raised.
• Awareness about Islamic practice (prayer, jumaah, and the headscarf) and available ways to accommodate this in education and employment should be raised. Regulations should be adjusted accordingly.
• Laws that stipulate that public officers or officials “shall refrain from public manifestation of their religious beliefs” (Zakon o policijskim službenicima Bosne i Hercegovine), which discriminate against Muslim employees in fasting, taking a break for daily prayers, or wearing the headscarf, should be amended. The most flagrant cases should be referred to the HJPC (High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council).
• Awareness among citizens and NGOs about reporting offensive media language to the Press Council in B&H and the Communications Regulatory Agency should be raised.
• Awareness among citizens and NGOs about filing complaints related to human rights violations to the B&H Ombudsman’s office, the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, and in regular courts should be raised.
• Commitment to countering violent extremism, but not at the expense of freedom of religion and not solely focusing on Islam or Muslims, should be developed.
Chronology

- **07.01.2019:** The Srebrenica Genocide Memorial in Potočari is desecrated with a bag of pork intestines.
- **07.01.2019:** Aleksandar Mladenović, a local orthodox priest from Srebrenica, is seen leading a group of people on Christmas Eve singing Chetnik songs.
- **08.01.2019:** Two Serb members of the Armed Forces BiH are seen on video singing songs containing hate speech toward Muslims.
- **13.01.2019:** Tomislav Zelenik uploads a dangerous and hurtful status on his Facebook profile, where he claims that Muslims/Bosniaks are the biggest and most dangerous threat.
- **14.02.2019:** Bosniak children are forced to sing songs about Saint Sava before icons in a primary school in Srebrenica.
- **05.03.2019:** The entrance to the women’s section of the Čaršijska Mosque in Prijedor and the garage belonging to the mosque are vandalized with offensive Nazi graffiti.
- **07.03.2019:** A Croat carnival is held in a few cities in Herzegovina, where Bosniak-Muslim identity and Islamic values are ridiculed.
- **11.03.2019:** Azrin Hodžić, a returnee, is attacked in Prijedor.
- **13.03.2019:** Renato Marjanović is released after attacking a returnee.
- **17.03.2019:** Imam Emir Nuhić receives death threats.
- **10.04.2019:** The mosque Arnaudija in Banjaluka is vandalized.
- **04.05.2019:** Safeta and Senad Ganibegović seek protection from Slavko Pena and his son Marko, who have been harassing them physically and verbally for the last two years.
- **05.05.2019:** Muslim believers are exposed to threats and Chetnik songs on the eve of Ramadan in Obradovac in Bosanska Gradiška.
- **12.05.2019:** Unknown perpetrators destroy the flags of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Islamic Community in front of the mosque in Nova Kasaba during Ramadan.
- **01.06.2019:** A car of the Bosniak returnee in Rogatica, Elvir Bahto, is destroyed by his neighbor with a shovel.
- **12.06.2019:** Nationalistic stickers referring to the Srebrenica genocide and other offensive writings are posted on Muslim religious objects in Bijeljina.
- **25.07.2019:** Five young men (three of them underage) vandalize a fence of the mosque in Zvornik.
- **07-08.06.2019:** Unknown perpetrators destroy four tombstones in the Muslim cemetery Kazanbašća in Zvornik.
• **16.08.2019**: A citizen of Banja Luka “D.V.” is arrested for verbally attacking the imam of the Islamic community.

• **24.09.2019**: Danel Rajković is arrested for relieving himself in front of the mosque and many other offenses committed between the period of 3 March and 21 September.