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.
ABOUT EDITORS

Enes Bayraklı
Mr. Bayraklı earned his BA, MA and PhD from the Department of Political Science at the University of Vienna, and conducted research for his PhD thesis at the University of Nottingham in Britain between 2009 and 2010. He took office as a deputy director at Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center in London in 2011-2013. Mr. Bayraklı also served as the founding director of Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centers in Constanta and Bucharest during the period of August-December 2012. Mr. Bayraklı has been a faculty member in the Department of Political Science at the Turkish-German University since 2013. His fields of research include the Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy, Cultural Diplomacy, Foreign Policy Analysis, German Politics and Foreign Policy. bayrakli@tau.edu.tr

Farid Hafez
Farid Hafez, PhD (Political Science, University of Vienna), is a political scientist and non-resident senior researcher at Georgetown University’s “The Bridge Initiative” at the School of Foreign Service. He defended his habilitation thesis on “Islam Politics in the Second Republic of Austria” at the University of Salzburg in 2019. In 2017, he was a Fulbright visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley and in 2014, he was a visiting scholar at Columbia University, New York. Since 2010, he has been the editor of the Islamophobia Studies Yearbook, and since 2015 the co-editor of the European Islamophobia Report. Hafez has received the Bruno Kreisky Award for the “Political Book of the Year” for his anthology Islamophobia in Austria (co-edited with John Bunzl). He has more than 100 publications in leading journals such as Politics and Religion, Patterns of Prejudice, and German Politics and Society. His latest publications are Islamophobia in Muslim Majority Societies (Routledge, co-edited with Enes Bayraklı, 2019) and Feindbild Islam. Über die Salonfähigkeit von Rassismus (Islamophobia. On the Acceptance of Racism. Bohlau, 2019). Email: farid.hafez@sbg.ac.at

For more information about the EIR:
www.islamophobiaeurope.com
islamophobia@setav.org
The Author

Enrique Tessieri is a sociologist and former journalist who writes and researches immigration topics. As a journalist, Tessieri worked in countries like Finland, Spain, Italy, Argentina, and Colombia writing on topics including human rights, business, and foreign investment. Tessieri is editor of Migrant Tales, a community blog he founded in 2007. He is chairperson and founder of the Anti-Hate Crime Organisation Finland and vice president of Rom-Mikkeli, an association founded in 2015 to further the rights of the Roma minority of Mikkeli, a city located in Eastern Finland. Tessieri works at Otava Folk High School near the city of Mikkeli, and is an advisor for the Master in Conflict, Peace and Security at the Open University of Catalonia. Email: editor@migranttales.net

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Executive Summary

Last year was especially challenging to Muslims in Finland because it was an election year. As in the parliamentary elections of 2011 and 2015, anti-Muslim rhetoric played important roles in attracting voter support for the Islamophobic Finns Party (PS). Last year, the sexual assault cases that took place in the northern Finnish city of Oulu provided the PS with an election lifesaver. Support for the PS in opinion polls stood at 8.6% in December 2018 but soared to 22.7% a year later.

The big prize for the party came in the parliamentary elections of 14 April when it won 39 seats and came in second place losing only by a hair to the Social Democrats. The European Parliament (MEP) elections (26 May) a month later were a sad example of the hostile attitude some candidates expressed concerning asylum seekers. As many as 36.3% (85/234) of the Finnish MEP candidates disagreed or were neutral in an election compass that the EU is obliged to save people from drowning in the Mediterranean Sea. Anti-Muslim sentiment lifted its head again at the end of the year when a heated political debate took place on the repatriation of 11 women and their 30-odd children to Finland from the al-Hol refugee camp in northeast Syria.

The fact that the PS is the biggest opposition party in parliament with 39 MPs means that the following three and half years will be especially trying for the center-left coalition of Prime Minister Sanna Marin, a Social Democrat. The fact that the PS led in the polls at the end of the year has not emboldened the party but is proof that xenophobia and anti-Muslim racism will continue to dominate political discussion in Finland. The awaited reforms to relax asylum policy may take longer than expected due to strong opposition from the PS and other opposition parties like the National Coalition Party (Kokoomus) and the Christian Democrats.
Tiivistelmä
Country Profile
EIR 2019

**Country:** Finland

**Type of Regime:** Parliamentary Republic

**Form of Government:** Republic

**Ruling Parties:** Social Democratic Party, Centre Party, Green League, Left Alliance, and Swedish People’s Party

**Opposition Parties:** Finns Party, National Coalition Party, Christian Democrats, and Movement Now


**Total Population:** 5,527,573 (in 2019)

**Major Languages:** Finnish and Swedish

**Official Religion:** N/A

**Statistics on Islamophobia:** The latest Police University College hate crime report for 2018, the only source for hate crime in the country, showed suspected hate crimes decreased by 22% to 910 cases from the previous year, while Muslims continued to be the most affected group. Police sources state that there is a sharp drop in asylum seekers entering the country after 2015. The lion’s share of hate crimes 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 affected 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. Like in many EU countries, hate crime cases are underreported and represent only the tip of the iceberg.

**Statistics on Racism and Discrimination:** Different studies show that labor market discrimination is a problem in Finland. Akhlaq Ahmad’s study in October confirmed what we have known for a long time: if you have a Muslim foreign-sounding name, your chances of getting a job interview may be difficult. Organizations like the Council of Europe Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) have called on Finland to take a tougher stance on hate speech and racism.

**Major Religions (% of Population):** Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church 3,853,106 (69.7%); Islam est. 110,000-120,000 (2-2.2%); Finnish Orthodox Church 59,560 (1.08%); Jehovah’s Witnesses 17,303 (0.31%); Finnish Free Church 15,312 (0.28%); Catholic Church 14,357 (0.26%); Pentecostals 11,237 (0.20%);
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Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints 3,275 (0.6%); Buddhist 1,777 (0.03%); Baptist Church 1,568 (0.03%); United Methodist Church 1,381 (0.02%); Judaism 1,096 (0.02%)

**Muslim Population (% of Population):** Estimated at 110,000-120,000 (2-2.2%)

**Main Muslim Community Organizations:** Federation of Islamic Organizations of Finland (Islamilaisten järjestöjen liitto); **Suomen Islamilainen Yhdyskunta;** Islamic Council of Finland (Suomen Islamiainen Neuvosto); Resalat Islamiainen Yh Dyskunta (Resalat Islamic Society); **Suomen Islam-Seurakunta; Helsinki Islam Keskus; Suomen Muslimilliitto; Nuoret Muslimit; Nuorten Muslimien Forummi; Tampeeren Islamin yhdyskunta, Islamic Society of Northern Finland (Pohjois-Suomen Islamilainen Yhdyskunta), The Islamic Rahma Center in Finland, Turun Islamilainen Yhdyskunta, and Suomen Islamilainen Diyanet Yhdyskunta.

**Main NGOs Combating Islamophobia:** Finland does not have a specific NGO that combats Islamophobia. Some that address the issue are the Islamic Council of Finland, The National Forum for Cooperation of Religions in Finland, **Nuoret Muslimit, Helsingin Muslimit, Anti-Hate Crime Organisation Finland, Anti-Racist Forum, Liikkukaa -Sports for All, and Migrant Tales.**

**Far-Right Parties:** The Finns Party, Suomen Kansa Ensin, Reformi puolue (not a registered party yet).

**Far-Right Movements:** Kohti vapautta! (formerly Kansallinen Vastarinta/ Suomen vastarintaliike), Soldiers of Odin, Finnish Defence League, Suomi Ens (Finland First), Suomen Sisu

**Far-Right Terrorist Organizations:** N/A

- **Limits to Islamic Practices:** None
- **Hijab Ban:** None
- **Halal Slaughter Ban:** None. There were plans by the former government of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä to ban halal slaughter from 1 January 2021 with the Animal Welfare Act. The draft law became redundant after Sipilä’s government resigned in March 2019.
- **Minaret Ban:** None
- **Circumcision Ban:** None
- **Burqa Ban:** The far right and Islamophobic parties like the Finns Party (PS) and Finnish People First have tried to ban the burqa and the niqab. PS First Vice-President Riikka Purra stated before the parliamentary election that the party wants to ban the use of the burqa, niqab, and girls using hijabs.
- **Prayer Ban:** None
Introduction

After four years of tougher immigration policy spearheaded by the previous right-wing government of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä, there was renewed hope that matters would change with the new government led by the Social Democrats and formed by the Centre Party, Green League, Left Alliance and Swedish People’s Party. According to Prime Minister Sanna Marin’s government program, human rights and respecting international agreements on refugees are high priorities. The program states: “Human rights and human dignity belong to us all. We pledge to build a Finland that is tolerant and respects and promotes everyone’s human rights. Our country has zero tolerance for bullying and racism. We want to build a nation that is equal, accessible and supportive”. While the Muslim community hopes that the government will take bolder steps to challenge racism and discrimination, the big question is how far it will go in light of the Finns Party, which is the biggest opposition party and is openly hostile to Muslims and people of color.

Discussion of Islamophobic Incidents and Discursive Events

Physical and Verbal Attacks

In January 2020, there was a plot by a 22-year-old Latvian national to kill Muslims and migrants in Helsinki on New Year’s Eve 2018 with a homemade bomb. Unfortunately, the Latvian construction worker, who denies such plans to kill people, is not being charged with plotting a terrorist act but for preparing “a serious crime that threatens life and health.” The suspect will be indicted in February by a court and faces a four-year prison term.

After being vandalized nine times since September 2017, the Oulu Mosque did not suffer any new attacks after 26 February 2019. The Al-Ikhlas Mosque in the Helsinki suburb of Espoo saw fireworks thrown at it on 10 May and 23 May 2019. Another mosque in the eastern Helsinki neighborhood of Mellunmäki was smeared a number of times with hate graffiti. (Fig. 1)


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Oulu Mosque’s imam Dr. Abdul Mannan said that the hostile environment in Oulu caused by the sexual assault cases involving former asylum seekers, and which brought Islamophobes like Katie Hopkins to the city in January, made Muslims feel unsafe, and that some avoided going to the city center. Despite the hostile environment experienced by some Muslims in Oulu, matters calmed down after the 14 April parliamentary elections, according to Dr. Mannan. The Christchurch attack was another factor that instilled fear. Members of the Oulu mosque guarded the building during Friday prayers because their request for security by the police was turned down. Other hostile acts against the Muslim community of Finland were seen before the European Parliament elections of May when a far-right Finland First candidate desecrated the Koran in public.

Even if suspected hate crime cases retreated by 21.9% in 2018 compared with the previous year, or a total of 910 versus 1,165 cases, the lion’s share (86.8%) of all

hate crimes were motivated by national-ethnic origin and religion. The Iraqis faced the highest frequency of hate crime due to national and ethnic origin; the majority of hate crimes due to religious backgrounds were against Muslims. An intense public debate at the end of the year, which almost turned into a political crisis, surrounding the repatriation of 11 Finnish women and about 30 children from the al-Hol refugee camp in Syria. This was reported to have impacted Muslim women in Finland who wear a niqab negatively as they were harassed publicly for being “ISIS wives.”

The European Court of Human Rights announced in November that Finland was guilty of violating Articles 2 and 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Article 2 guarantees that everyone has a right to life, while Article 3 prohibits inhumane treatment like torture. The decision was seen as a visible thumbs down against Finland's strict asylum policy. The case involves an Iraqi national who was denied asylum in 2017 and who was allegedly killed few weeks after he returned to his home country. The majority of asylum seekers who came to Finland (1 January-6 December 2015) were from Muslim-majority countries like Iraq (20,031 or 64% of total), Afghanistan (4,816 or 15%), Somalia (1,954 or 6%), and Syria (785 or 3%).

Employment
Finding work is one of the biggest challenges migrants in general and Muslims specifically face in Finland’s racialized and segregated labor markets. Unemployment of people who don’t speak Finnish, Swedish, or Saami as their mother tongue, stood at 22.4% against the national average of 10.48% for 2017, according to the latest Statistics Finland figures. Some of the groups with the highest unemployment rate were Arabic speakers (50.9%), Somali speakers (43.5%), Pastu Afghan speakers (41.4%), Persian Farsi speakers (36.5%), Turkish speakers (24.3%), and Urdu speakers (19.5%). By sex, national unemployment rates for men and women were 11.8% and 9.1%, respectively. That compares with 65.4% for women who are Arabic speakers and 49.5% for Somali speakers.

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It is important to note that the most vulnerable groups in the Finnish labor market are immigrants from the Middle East, Northern Africa, Somalia, and those who have arrived as refugees. Moreover, women from these groups suffer higher unemployment than their countrymen even if they have the same level of schooling. Of all the Nordic countries, Finland has performed the worse when it comes to employing migrant women. The employment rate of migrant women was 55% while for migrant men it was 72%.

A study published in October by Akhlaq Ahmad showed again that having a foreign-sounding name puts you at a clear disadvantage in the low-skilled Finnish labor market. All of the applicants had the same qualifications and spoke the same level of Finnish. Those with Finnish names scored the highest (390 people out of 500), with the corresponding figure for Iraqi and Somali being 134 and 99, respectively.

While it is possible to get employment with a hijab, the religion of the person can be a hindrance. In September, the district court of Helsinki ruled in favor of a Muslim against the City of Helsinki for discrimination and paid him 36,000 euros in damages. The worker, who was hired, was turned down for the job after he asked if he could get 5 minutes unpaid prayer time and one hour on Fridays.

Education
One particular complaint from Muslim parents is that their children are not getting the right Muslim education at school because teachers are not Muslim or are not qualified. Some imams considered the *Salam* series, which was published by the Finnish National Agency for Education (Opetushallitus) for comprehensive and middle school as steps in the right direction for teaching Islam. The new *Salam* series for 7-9 graders will be published in spring.

20. For more information, see: Helsingin Muslimit, “Islamin opetus kouluissa”, Islamin Opetus Kouluissa, https://helsinginmuslimit.fiislamopetu kouluissa/___cf_chl_sc_hl_trk__=09a829b5688e043ee0181645d09096c2010d8-1579457438-0-Aap514p-A-LDdmxKxnVv2u-E1hdGIT5bhZ4CnOKNWMReQE6ZfyoduQ3_WrEiwuyzkoBh6a4sD7989U3yX exploitsDRep0t7qp7b2Us6ETZvuBd0G9GPewnRzGq9Tyf4s0-O9qQNQF92R ja3iR7W0bogY45VTvhYAY0f6cqN59suZMjiuoepNXP6W70NbhX7R7RkZk4NhgMyxUuU7DzKVxGNj5rZ7TU8ndnR0_i7KpTMbpZjaPDW3ahDrnakumHC0Nrbt0Z61yiWEdpOpTsT-JZn0Z3Z0fPZv6D1weMy, (Access date: 19 January 2020). Also telephone conversation with Imam Abbas Bahampour (31 December 2019).
Politics
After four years (2015–2019) of a conservative government headed by Prime Minister Juha Sipilä that tightened immigration laws like family reunification in 2016, there is hope that matters may improve with the new government. The biggest obstacle to any loosening of asylum laws is the Finns Party (PS), which is openly hostile to what it calls “harmful” immigration, which is code for Muslim asylum seekers. One of the anti-Islam claims is to “stop all harmful immigration” to Finland. Some interpret this to mean leaving the Geneva Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights.

The brainchild of the PS’s anti-Islam message is its leader Jussi Halla-aho, who was convicted of ethnic agitation and breaching the sanctity of religion in 2012. In an interview with Danish daily Politiken, published a day before the April parliamentary election, Halla-aho said that his only aim in politics is to change immigration policy and convert the Finns Party into such a powerful political force that other parties will have no choice but to accept their policies like the Danish People’s Party did in Denmark. Halla-aho’s comments are no surprise, considering that the Finns Party has been a close ideological ally of the Danish People’s Party which was instrumental in making Denmark a hostile country for Muslims. In light of the present situation and political landscape of the country, anti-Muslim rhetoric will continue to dominate Finnish politics for the time being.

Media
Stories about Muslims in the Finnish media are too often biased and unbalanced. Likewise, there is little trust among certain leaders of the Muslim community of the media, where there are very few, if any, Muslims working as reporters, never mind as editors. Two cases of biased reporting were the sexual assault cases of

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Oulu\textsuperscript{28} that came to public light at the end of November 2018, and at the end of last year, the repatriation of 11 women and about 30 children in the al-Hol refugee camp in northeast Syria. During a 79-day period \textit{YLE} alone published 77 stories (27 November 2018 - 13 February 2019) about the sexual\textsuperscript{29} assault cases;\textsuperscript{30} in the case of al-Hol, \textit{YLE} published 71 stories and \textit{Helsingin Sanomat} 36 stories during a twenty-day period (2-21 December 2019).\textsuperscript{31} While some believed there was “a sexual assault epidemic of minors” by Muslims, only eight were found guilty and handed prison terms.\textsuperscript{32}

Negative and overzealous reporting by the media had an especially negative impact on the Muslim community of Oulu. The media’s reporting and public outrage, fueled by politicians and even the police, encouraged knee-jerk responses by govern-


ment politicians who demanded asylum seekers be given tests on Finnish values, the loss of citizenship if convicted of a serious crime, and brought about recommendations by city officials to momentarily ban asylum seekers from visiting day care centers and elementary schools.

Justice System

Juho Sipilä’s government (2015-2019) aimed at changing laws that would impact migrants but they never came into force due to time constraints and because his government resigned in March.

In light of the Oulu sexual assault cases, former National Coalition Party Interior Minister Kai Mykkänen stated that on top of deportations, a person guilty of a serious crime, like gross sexual assault, could lose his citizenship. Mykkänen suggested that all asylum seekers who are 16 years old and above must take a course on Finnish values and sign an agreement that they will abide by the law.

Internet
One of the biggest hate crime stories last year was the abrupt 59.2% fall in ethnic agitation cases in 2019 from the previous year due to a drop in police funding. Måns Enqvist of the National Board of Police of Finland said that there are at most 10 police officers monitoring online hate speech. According to the justice ministry, ethnic agitation cases that were taken to court in 2018 numbered 31, up 138.5% from 13 in the previous year. The corresponding figures for 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016 were 4, 3, 1, and 5, respectively. Even if the number of ethnic agitation cases fell sharply, they are only the tip of the iceberg.

Concern about hate speech was brought up by President Sauli Niinistö in his New Year’s speech. He stated, “Online shaming and hate speech are new concepts in public debate. However, our legislator has been far-sighted. For example, incitement to ethnic hatred and offences against personal reputation, dignity or privacy of the individual are already criminalized by law. A person committing a crime against another person is liable to prosecution. This has no connection to freedom of speech, let alone its limitation.”

Another challenge to growing online hate speech is the founding on 25 December of the Silakkaliike, or Baltic Herring Movement. Just like Italy’s Sardines Movement, its Finnish counterpart has no political affiliation and aims to be a “non-violent counterforce to populist, hate, and racist-provoking policies.” Despite its popularity, the

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jury is still out on how successful it will be. After two weeks of its founding (6 January), it had over 24,000 followers on Facebook and over 13,700 on Twitter. 45

Ilja Janitskin, the former editor of the online MV-lehti publication who was sentenced in 2018 to a 22-month prison term for aggravated defamation, ethnic agitation, and copyright infringement, and ordered to pay 136,000 euros in damages to his victims, was unsuccessful in getting the court to reverse the convictions he received last year. 46 New charges were brought against Janitskin by Hanna Huumonen, who was attacked by social media mobs for campaigning successfully in 2016 for advertisers to stop placing ads in MV-lehti. 47 Janitskin died of cancer on 7 February 2020. 48

**Figure 4:** Sira Moksi is a prolific anti-racism cartoonist. The cartoon was removed by Silakkaliike’s Facebook page. 49 In the cartoon, there is a Baltic herring fishing Finns Party leader Jussi Halla-aho. 50

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50. “AJAN KUVIA –poliittisia piirroksia”, Facebook, 30 December 2019, https://www.facebook.com/ajanKUVIA-poliittista-piirroksia-41508767274763/?__xts__[0]=68.ARBrhxICnH8b44hVzzuZkJHy5cTdJTCIOwtr9QXZ3wRKXIfq3w2DVY43IVfAW_jxb4skGyLjPzNhVykTCUPvOb8FHEu3paSVPJBxmswiSwdWzyOeAqgC7r3xOdML9Cjpee80bhsQNlf6ewTeGMAaEJkVoA7Qgsb2IRi__OedYQycq_pD9WZP9NqxA-uDx05AfpQAOJ1tMBrk1zFr8-i_5jevDdSvYvBu12OxvaaA-8muGxi-3yY25m6WAKZebsooe77WdhrV0s6x-O2yYNQegsQ3GPQBR_Tr7IVUc1agtAr8TA-1FC17qH79GYkFk46fz8IX1Rdw9O4U_4aGgwECK-S92i1ke4, (Access date: 4 February 2020).
Central Figures in the Islamophobia Network

The good showing of the Finns Party in the April parliamentary elections and its lead in opinion polls have emboldened the far-right party and forced opposition mainstream parties like the National Coalition Party (Kokoomus) and Christian Democrats to flirt with the PS. In many respects, Finland’s Islamophobia network is a cut-and-paste job of other similar-minded parties across the EU and using the same racist soundbites like “Vote Finland Back,” and “harmful” and “uncontrolled immigration.”51 Some “notable” PS Islamophobes in 2019 were Jussi Halla-aho, Riikka Purra, Sebastian Tynkkynen, Ville Tavio, Laura Huhtasaari, Juha Mäenpää, Ano Turtiainen, Jari Ronkainen, Matias Turkkila, Mauri Pelto kangas, Sanna Antikainen, and a long list of others like Asseri Kinnunen and Johannes Sipola of PS Youth. Among the other parties: Kokoomus’s Wille Rydman, Atte Kaleva, and Kai Mykkänen; Christian Democrats’ Sarah Essayah and Päivi Räsänen; and in far-right groups such as Finland First Marco de Witt, Junnes Lokka, and Tiina Wiik. Katie Hopkins, who was interviewed by the Finns Party and invited by Islamophobes like Lokka and Wiik, visited Oulu in January to “help” the municipality and police concerning the sexual assault cases that took place there.52 The mayor of Oulu turned down a meeting with Hopkins.

Observed Civil Society and Political Initiatives to Counter Islamophobia

The track record of combating Islamophobia and other forms of racism is mixed. The creation of a police group to monitor hate crime on the Internet was created in 2017 but suffered in the 2019 budget cuts, which led to a sharp drop in ethnic agitation cases brought to the attention of the public prosecutor. As a Nordic welfare state, Finland has good laws and programs, which if applied rigorously, would effectively challenge Islamophobia. In many respects, anti-Islamophobia initiatives hinge on political and civil will as well as leadership. This means that society must come to terms with its Muslim minority and stop seeing them as “good” (Tatars) and “bad” (Muslims). Tatars are an 800 to 900-strong Muslim community who emigrated to Finland at the end of the 19th century. Social Democratic Prime Minister Sanna Marin’s government has stated in the government program53 its willingness to uphold human rights and abide by international agreements that

protect refugees. When comparing the previous government’s program, terms like inclusion, asylum seekers, and racism appear in Marin’s government program more often than in Sipilä’s. In the face of hate speech, which impacts white Finns as well, it appears that Finland is slowly waking up with President Sauli Niinistö expressing concern about such social ills in his New Year’s speech. While such leadership is crucial in the struggle against Islamophobia, the jury is still out on how effective it will be.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

Finland’s Muslim community continues to believe that direct contact and open dialogue are crucial to challenging Islamophobia and fostering a more harmonious society that respects difference. Strong leadership is needed from all walks of public life, especially from the Muslim and migrant communities. Such efforts, however, face an uphill battle considering that Islamophobia is presently politically in vogue and exploited by parties like the Finns Party.

Building and coexisting in a culturally diverse society is not easy but requires effective solutions like the enforcement of laws that discourage discrimination and hate speech. This long journey towards a better functioning, culturally diverse society will not materialize in a year, four years, or a decade, but will take generations. It is, however, important that we begin this journey for the sake of our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Chronology

- **31.01.2019**: In the face of political pressure and parental concerns due to the highly politicized sexual assault cases of Oulu, the city temporarily banned asylum seekers and refugees from visiting day care centers and schools. According to Mika Penttilä, the city’s director of education and culture, the ban would be lifted on 14 April, or after parliamentary elections. “This is not a ban,” he said, “but a recommendation that asylum seekers should not be allowed to visit day care centers and schools.”

- **22.02.2019**: “We want to prohibit the use of clothing that degrades women like the burqa, niqab veils (sic) as well as veils used by little girls. Forced

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56. Enrique Tessieri, “City of Oulu’s ‘Ban’ on Asylum Seekers Visiting Day-Care Centers and Schools”.
marriages, genital mutilation, and sending children [abroad] to be indoctrinated by Islam should be effectively punished”, according to PS First Vice-President Riikka Purra.57

- **16.03.2019:** “The New Zealand case shows ever-convincingly that multicultural society does not work,” said Lapland Finns Party Youth leader, Johannes Sipola, tweeting right after the Christchurch, New Zealand, mosque shootings. “When other people [of other backgrounds] rape and kill enough [people], it is only a question of time when there will be a reaction from the opposite side.”58

- **26.03.2019:** Finns Party MP Ville Tavio said that closing down the Oulu Mosque should be considered in light of the sexual abuse case of a minor there. Imam Abdul Mannan of the Oulu Mosque denies that a child was sexually abused in the mosque.59 An appeal was sent to the supreme district court to overturn the district court’s decision, which found the suspect guilty of sexually abusing a minor.

- **13.06.2019:** Finns Party MP Juha Mäenpää linked asylum seekers to an “invasive species” that should be repelled. The state prosecutor announced in January that Mäenpää would be charged for ethnic agitation but needed the approval of parliament. The Finns Party have enough votes to block the request that would remove the MP’s immunity.60

- **17.07.2019:** Finnish Party chairperson Jussi Halla-aho on being a white Finn: “I think we all have a relatively cohesive, intuitive understanding of whether or not someone walking towards us is a Finn. And this question is much more complicated than what’s that someone’s skin color or family background. We can’t even start by saying that everyone who was born in Finland is part of this group.”61

- **04.09.2019:** The Non-Discrimination Ombudsman recommended that all public swimming pool halls in Finland must permit the use of the burkini. The Ombudsman stated that public pool halls should build separate

showering quarters so that no group is discriminated. “Burkini bans can be discriminatory,” the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman stated.62

- **10-31.10.2019:** Two Finns Party politicians were convicted for ethnic agitation for social media postings in 2016 and 2017. MP Sebastian Tynkkynen was convicted for a second time of ethnic agitation for publishing on Facebook and Instagram racist and insulting posts about Islam.63 Finns Party Espoo city councilor, Teemu Lahtinen, was convicted for ethnic agitation and breaching the sanctity of religion for a tweet where he labelled Mohammed a pedophile and for denigrating Somalis.64

- **21.11.2019:** “The right of asylum seekers] to come to Finland and live off tax-payers’ money is not a human right,” said Finns Party chairperson, Jussi Halla-aho.65


