
EUROPEAN
ISLAMOPHOBIA
REPORT

2015

ENES BAYRAKLI • FARID HAFEZ (Eds)

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INTRODUCTION

ENES BAYRAKLI • FARID HAFEZ

In June 2014, the website for reporting hate crimes to the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) went public. In 2014, only five states officially reported on hate crimes against Muslims, whereas civil society reported in 21 countries. Still, for the majority of the 57 member countries of the OSCE, there is no official information available. Furthermore, if one were to assess the quality of these state reports, it becomes apparent that the collected data does not always rely on a comprehensive systematic collection.

Since Islamophobia or anti-Muslim racism has become a growing threat in European societies, we – the editors – felt an urgent need to address this problem. In fact, there are still people denying the very existence of racism against Muslims. Many state and civil society institutions have done priceless work to prove and establish the opposite: from the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) to the countless civil society organisations throughout Europe. Yet, institutions like the FRA publish only irregular reports on a restricted number of countries while most civil society organisations tackle racism in general and only few focus on Islamophobia in specific - this is the urgent gap our report wishes to fill.

The *European Islamophobia Report* (EIR) is an annual report, which is presented for the first time this year. It currently comprises 25 national reports regarding each state and the tendencies of Islamophobia in each respective country. The current report features the work of 37 extraordinary scholars. In the years to come we will attempt to cover even more countries. This report aims to enable policymakers as well as the public to discuss the issue of Islamophobia with the help of qualitative data. At the same time, several of its unique characteristic features make a difference to the current state of the debate on Islamophobia.

Contribution of this report

The national reports in the EIR look at significant incidents and developments in each country during the period under review. The authors look at the employment sector: has there been any discrimination in the job market based on the (assumed) Muslimness of a person? They look at education: has Islamophobic content become part of any curricula, textbooks, or any other education material? The political field in a narrow sense is also a central aspect of the EIR: has Islamophobia played any role in politics, from election campaigns to political programmes to personal statements, etc., be it on a regional or national level? Authors also take a close look at a central force where Islamophobia has spread: the media. Which media events have focused on Islam/Muslims in an Islamophobic way? The justice system is also featured in the national reports: are there any laws and regulations that are based on Islamophobic arguments or any laws restricting the rights of Muslims in their religious lifestyle? Cyberspace as a central space for spreading hate crime is also examined: which web pages and initiatives have spread Islamophobic stereotypes? In addition, central figures in the Islamophobia network are discussed: which institutions and persons have, among others, fostered Islamophobic campaigns, stirred up debates or lobbied for laws?

Since the EIR is not content with pointing a finger at the problem, the reports also look at observed civil society and political assessment and initiatives undertaken to counter Islamophobia in the aforementioned fields. This will empower politicians and NGO activists, who want to tackle the issue. Since the EIR is not a purely scholarly work, at the end of every report, authors offer policy recommendations for politics and NGOs. An executive summary at the beginning and a chronology at the end of every report give the reader an overview on the state and the development of Islamophobia in the respective countries.

Since the single reports share broadly the same structure, the EIR offers the possibility to compare Islamophobia in these countries. Despite the fact that the data in specific fields is not available in an identical way for all countries, the report still facilitates an impulse for identifying research gaps.

Studies on Islamophobia have in the past predominantly concentrated on Western Europe. This is especially the case with reports focusing on Islamophobia. The EIR is the first to cover a wide range of Eastern European countries like Serbia, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, or Latvia. This will enrich the debate on racism in general and Islamophobia in Europe in specific.

What is Islamophobia?

Although the term 'Islamophobia' has become widely recognised in the Anglo-Saxon world and has become established in academia as can be seen by the numerous conferences, journals, and research projects dedicated to it, in many European countries, there is still a great amount of opposition to the term. One can understand the opposition expressed by the public not merely as an academic debate, but, in fact, as a sign of the hegemonic power of Islamophobic prejudices. Acknowledging this situation,

at the heart of this project lies the following working definition of Islamophobia:

“When talking about Islamophobia, we mean anti-Muslim racism. As Anti-Semitism studies have shown, the etymological components of a word do not necessarily point to its complete meaning, nor to how it is used. Such is also the case with Islamophobia studies. Islamophobia has become a well-known term used in academia as much as in the public sphere. Criticism of Muslims or of the Islamic religion is not necessarily Islamophobic. Islamophobia is about a dominant group of people aiming at seizing, stabilising 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 generalised for all Muslims. At the same time, Islamophobic images are fluid and vary in different contexts as Islamophobia tells us more about the Islamophobe than it tells us about the Muslims/Islam”.

Central findings

That Islamophobia works without Muslims and tells us more about the anti-Muslim racists than it tells us about Islam and Muslims, can best be seen in the eastern region of Europe. In countries like Hungary, Finland, Lithuania, or Latvia, where only a small number of Muslims live, Islamophobia functions as a successful means to mobilise people. People not only greatly overestimate the country's Muslim population but, although Muslims have not committed any violent acts in most countries in the name of Islam, they are still often deemed violent and are considered to be terrorists.

It could be observed that both attacks in Paris, which happened in 2015, became a discursive event that shaped the debates on Islam and Muslims throughout Europe. Above that, the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ was a central topic, which many actors linked to the issue of Muslims invading Europe. For example, the leader of the Hungarian Fidesz’ parliamentary club Antal Rogán warned of a future ‘United European Caliphate’,¹ while former Secretary of State László L. Simon urged Hungarians to return to their Christian spirituality and make more babies in order to counter the negative cultural effects of mass migration such as the envisioned ‘impending victory of Islamic parties imposing polygamy and destroying the remainder of European culture’.² This strong Islamophobic rhetoric is not restricted to the extreme right. In fact, the *refugee-migration-Islam-terrorism nexus* became the standard argument justifying a number of domestic and international measures. The social democrat Czech President Miloš Zeman claimed the influx of refugees into Europe was masterminded by Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood as “an organised invasion” to “gradually control Europe”.³

1. Károly Villányi, “Azt akarjuk, hogy unokáink egy európai kalifátusban éljenek?”, *Magyar Idők*, 14.11.2015, accessed 03.01.2016, <http://magyaridok.hu/belfold/azt-akarjuk-hogy-az-unokaink-egy-europai-kalifatusban-eljenek-5035/>.

2. “L. Simon: Szaporodjunk!”, *Népszabadság Online*, 05.09.2015, accessed 03.01.2016, http://nol.hu/video/lSimon-a-szaporodasban-latja-a-jovot-1573295?utm_source=mandiner&utm_medium=link&utm_campaign=mandiner_201601.

3. Agence France-Presse, “Integrating Muslims into Europe is ‘impossible’, says Czech president”, 18 January, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/18/integrating-muslims-into-europe-is-impossible-says-czech-president> (accessed 8 March, 2016)

Policy Recommendations

Islamophobia poses a great risk to the democratic foundations of European constitutions and social peace as well as the coexistence of different cultures throughout Europe. Both civil society actors and states should acknowledge the seriousness of this issue and develop concrete policies to counter Islamophobia. Here we have summarised some of the important policy recommendations from the national reports.

- Islamophobia should be acknowledged as a crime and should be included in all national statistics throughout Europe.
- Hate crime legislations should be adopted in all European countries that acknowledge one's religious identity as being a basis upon which one may be targeted.
- In order to collect data about Islamophobic incidents, victims registers must be introduced in all European states.
- In order to help the victims of Islamophobic attacks, counseling services for victims must be established in all European states.
- Journalists, lawyers, Police (security officials) and legal authorities in all European countries should be educated by qualified personnel in regards to Islamophobia.
- Muslim civil society has to be empowered with information to combat Islamophobia, especially in the direction of the creation of a consciousness of the illegality of hate crimes.
- Educational institutions and stakeholders have to work towards creating an alternative narrative of Muslims in the respective countries which will work to dispel the widely accepted negative image of Islam.
- Civil society actors must also push for legislative change in the context of school enrolment policies so that all members of the respective societies are treated fairly when accessing education.
- Governments must draft a policy that ensures that the rights of religious minorities to manifest their faith are respected in education and the workplace; this must not be left to the preferences of individual boards of management or principals.
- Discrimination on the job market towards Muslims and especially Muslims who wear veils is a widespread phenomenon. This should be recognised and seriously addressed by better legal regulations and the creation of a relevant consciousness.
- Civil society actors must engage with media actors/outlets in terms of the publication and broadcasting of standards in order to reduce/minimise the use of racialising discourses vis-à-vis Muslims and other minority communities.
- The civil rights violations experienced by women wearing headscarves should be addressed by lawmakers and politicians.
- An independent media watchdog should be established in order to monitor media reports in real time in all respective countries.

ISLAMOPHOBIA IN
SWEDEN
NATIONAL REPORT 2015

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THE AUTHORS

Aroma Abrashi is a former student at Gothenburg University, from where she obtained a MA degree in Global Studies. Having a BA in law from the University of Hull, she always had a keen interest in justice and equality. The combination of her two degrees resulted in a MA thesis discussing Islamophobia in the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights, defended in November 2015- a topic she had first written about during her law degree. She has a multidisciplinary understanding of global political economy, and sees a future in the research field of Islamophobia. Currently Aroma is also admitted to the Granada Summer School teaching 'Critical Muslim Studies' organized by UC Berkley professor Ramon Grosfoguel. In this report Aroma has been supervised by Prof. Åke Sander and Prof. Göran Larsson from the Department of Literature, History of Ideas, and Religion at Gothenburg University. aroma_abrashi@hotmail.com

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Göran Larsson, Dr., Professor in Religious Studies, Gothenburg University. While Larsson's research is focused primarily on Islam and Muslims in Europe, he has also written about Islamic theology, Quranic studies and issues related to religion and the media. In addition to his academic work he was also secretary to the Ministry of Education's 2008-2009 inquiry into the training of Imams in Sweden. Larsson's most recent publications are the edited volume, *Muslims and the New Information and Communication Technologies: Notes from an Emerging Field*, published by Springer in 2013 (edited together with Thomas Hoffmann) and *Muslims and the New Media: Historical and Contemporary Debates*, published by Ashgate in 2011. He has also collaborated with professor Åke Sander on the publication *Islam and Muslims in Sweden: Integration or Fragmentation? A Contextual Study*, published by Verlag in 2007. goran.larsson@religion.gu.se

Disclaimer: Statements of fact and opinion in the national reports of the European Islamophobia Report are those of the respective authors. They are not the expression of the editors or the funding institutions. No representation, either expressed or implied, is made of the accuracy of the material in the national reports. The editors of the European Islamophobia Report cannot accept any legal responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions that may be made. The reader must make his or her own evaluation of the accuracy and appropriateness of those materials.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Negative and/or discriminating trends towards Islam and Muslims in Sweden are generally evident in every aspect of society included in this report: media, legal, political, and school systems, the labour market and in public attitudes. Despite this, it remains difficult to draw solid conclusions about the presence, and, perhaps more so, the extent of Islamophobia in Sweden. Part of these difficulties rest with the lack of research on the topic, and part lie with the nature of the existing research. It is difficult to conclude what discriminatory phenomena are brought into light, as most research has focused on factors such as ethnicity or race rather than on religion. In addition, issues of intersectionality are not often discussed. This has a serious impact upon the mapping and quantifying of Islamophobia. This is not to say that there is an attitude in Sweden that Islamophobia is not a problem - both government initiatives and civil society actions suggest the contrary. The Swedish government has called for an increased focus on Islamophobia, especially from the Equality Ombudsman in Sweden, but also from organisations such as EXPO, Forum for Living History and the Commission for Government Support for Faith Communities (SST). The civil society actors who have been interviewed are all of the opinion that Islamophobia is a serious matter that needs to be combated with more action and greater resources. For now, however, all informants feel that there remains a lack of engagement both from the government and from other relevant actors.

SAMMANFATTNING PÅ SVENSKA

Tecken på negativa attityder mot, och/eller diskriminering av, Islam och Muslimer i Sverige existerar generellt i varje aspekt av samhället som har inkluderats i denna rapport: media, cyber-rymden, rättsväsendet, skolsystemet, politiken, arbetsmarknaden och bland allmänna attityder. Trots detta är det svårt att dra grundliga slutsatser av islamofobins närvaro och utsträckning i Sverige. Svårigheterna att dra slutsatser beror dels på bristen av forskning om ämnet, och dels på innehållet av existerande forskning. Det är inte alltid tydligt vilket diskriminerande fenomen som framhålls eftersom forskningen fokuserat på faktorer så som etnicitet och ras snarare än religion. Frågor som rör intersektionalitet diskuteras sällan. Detta har givetvis konsekvenser över kartläggningen och mätningen av islamofobi. Detta är dock inte att säga att det finns en attityd i Sverige att islamofobi inte är ett problem - snarare talar både statens och civilsamhällets handlingar om det motsatta. Svenska staten har begärt ett ökat fokus på islamofobi, framförallt från Diskrimineringsombudsmannen, men även från organisationer som EXPO, Forum för Levande Historia, och Nämnden för Statligt Stöd till Trossamfund. Aktörer från civilsamhället som blivit intervjuade delar alla åsikten att islamofobi är ett seriöst problem som måste bekämpas med fler åtgärder och ökade resurser. För tillfället är dock alla informanter ens om att engagemanget brister både från andra aktörer i civilsamhället och från regeringen.

INTRODUCTION

Though Islamophobia is, by and large, an acknowledged phenomenon in Sweden, the research on Islamophobia has been little and inconclusive.¹ The Swedish Equality Ombudsman released a report in 2014 which collected and reviewed available research on discrimination against Muslims in Sweden. However, a consensus among researchers about the definition of Islamophobia is weak. Concepts of ethnic racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia sometimes overlap; informants often refer to these phenomena interchangeably, causing analytical difficulties.² For these reasons, it has not always been possible to identify if an incident is based on Islamophobia, as defined by the European Islamophobia Report-project, or some other related phenomenon. Moreover, a gap between official data and literature produced by Muslims - or 'so-called grey literature' - has been the concern of Swedish scholars.³ In this study, the references have not been evaluated or criticised in a manner that would solve such problems, but have been used thematically in order to give an overview of how Islamophobia has been studied and addressed in Sweden.

Additionally, the sources and references are described in general terms, as a detailed account of existing research is out of the scope of this report. Similarly, not all literature can be covered, nor can all points of view be discussed. Precedence has been given to literature from 2005 and onwards. Much weight has also been given to the three organisations that have chosen to participate in this study. Although not many in number, these organisations have significant insights into the topic as they have actively worked to reduce Islamophobia. Of course, this does not mean that they represent civil society in Sweden as a whole, but they can give a good insight into those parts that do consciously and actively work to combat Islamophobia.

THE INTERVIEWEES

A request for participation was sent by email to 20 different organisations and civil society actors working on the topics of racism, discrimination and inequality. Due to time constraints, the aim was to interview between 7 and 10 civil society actors. A request was therefore sent to the top 20 actors working in these fields. These 20 actors were chosen based on their profile and experience in the field. 15 did not respond, 2 declined, and 3 agreed to participate. It is unclear why the responses remained few in number. The

1. Larsson Göran, Simon Stjernholm. "Islamophobia in Sweden: Contrasting Images from Muslim Advocacy Groups and Official Hate Crime Statistics". Working Paper, Gothenburg University 2016.

2. Larsson, Göran, Åke Sander. 2015. "An Urgent Need to Consider How to Define Islamophobia." *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* 44 (1): 13-7.

Larsson Göran, Simon Stjernholm. "Islamophobia in Sweden: Contrasting Images from Muslim Advocacy Groups and Official Hate Crime Statistics". Working Paper, Gothenburg University 2016.

Larsson, Göran, Åke Sander. 2007. *Islam and Muslims in Sweden. Integration or Fragmentation? A Contextual Study*. Berlin & Geneva: Lit-Verlag.

3. Larsson Göran, Simon Stjernholm. "Islamophobia in Sweden: Contrasting Images from Muslim Advocacy Groups and Official Hate Crime Statistics". Working Paper, Gothenburg University 2016.

organisations were found via Google. Only results in which lists of different organisations could be extracted were considered. By limiting each search combination to the three first pages of Google results, four lists of organisations were identified.⁴ The lists were then compared to one another. Organisations focusing on discrimination on other grounds than race, ethnicity or religion (such as sexual orientation) were excluded.

Details about the Three Informants:⁵

1. EXPO⁶ is a Swedish NGO that aims to combat and inform about racism and xenophobia in Sweden by producing research on these topics. EXPO works primarily through its magazine of the same name, and also by keeping an archive called EXPO Research. EXPO also holds seminars. Sara Duarte represented EXPO.
2. Gothenburg's Human Rights Centre⁷ (GHRC) is a non-profit anti-discrimination agency in Gothenburg, Sweden's second largest city. Their primary work is to offer legal counselling and education about human rights and discrimination. The centre was established in 2010. Amanj Aziz represented GHRC.
3. Ibn Rushd⁸ is a national adult educational association accredited by the Swedish state. Their vision is to make Islam a part of Swedish society, and that there should be nothing unusual about being a 'Swedish Muslim'. Ibn Rushd organises seminars and lectures on different societal levels and for different actors. Mustafa Tumturk spoke for Ibn Rushd.

SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN SWEDEN IN THE LAST 5 YEARS:

In general, 47% of Swedes feel negative about religious diversity in society.⁹ Studies of attitudes towards Muslims in Sweden have demonstrated that Islamophobic

4. The lists were found on the following sites; the first is from a public authority, and the three latter are from civil society actors: <http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/vasternorrland/Sv/manniska-och-samhalle/manskliga-rattigheter/Pages/organisationer-mot-framlingsfientlighet.aspx>, <http://www.immi.se/organisationer/antirasistiska-organisationer>, <http://www.immi.se/rasism1/raslinks.htm>, <http://folkbildning.net/amnen/samhalle/mangkulturellt-samhalle/rasism/organisationer/>
The following search combinations were used:

In English	In Swedish
Organization* + Islamophob* + Sweden	Organisation* + Islamofob* + Sverige
Organization* + Racism + Sweden	Organisation* + Rasism + Sverige
Organization* + Discrimination + Sweden	Organisation* + Diskriminering + Sverige
Anti- Discrimination + Sweden	Antidiskriminering + Sverige

5. The three informants that participated in this report were asked how their respective organizations defined Islamophobia, and if they differentiated the concept from similar concepts such as xenophobia or racism. In general, it seems none of the interviewees had any working definition of Islamophobia which they used. However, Gothenburg Human Rights Centre (GHRC) said they perceived Islamophobia as a form of racism, while Ibn Rushd connected the term to xenophobia. All three informants, however, agreed that Islamophobia is a serious problem in Sweden.

6. More information about EXPO can be found at: http://expo.se/2010/about-expo_3514.html

7. In Swedish: Göteborgs Center Mot Diskriminering. More information is available at <http://gbgrc.se/en/>

8. For more information about Ibn Rushd (only in Swedish): <http://www.ibnrushd.se>

9. Mella, Orlando, Freshteh Ahmadi, Irving Palm. 2013. *Mångfaldsbarometern*. Gävle: Gävle University Press.

attitudes are evident throughout the country.¹⁰ More generally, negative attitudes towards immigrants have stayed at a fairly stable level - 6%.¹¹ However, negative attitudes towards the Islamically motivated headscarf are more common; 64.4 % of the Swedish population believes Muslim women are oppressed. The tolerance of Muslim coverings in public spaces has, however, increased overall.¹² Swedes have different attitudes towards different forms of covering; around 83% are against the niqab and burka, but 65% accept the hijab and shayla.¹³ However, given the current globalised information age and the impact of incidents such as the recent attacks in Paris in November 2015, attitude surveys need to be constantly updated and trends need to be monitored. Recent events, such as the Paris attacks and the military and political actions undertaken as a response, or the on-going refugee crisis, need to be factored into contemporary attempts to analyse and understand Islamophobia not only in Sweden, but globally.

Incidents which are believed to have a significant correlation with either Islamophobia specifically, or racism and xenophobia generally in Sweden cannot all be covered. A politically significant development is the right-wing populist Sweden Democrats (SD) becoming the third largest party in Sweden in 2014, winning almost 13% of the votes and 30 new parliamentary seats. Despite having anti-immigrant policies (often with a significant anti-Islam/Muslim focus) as their foremost agenda¹⁴, the party has denied accusations of racism or xenophobia.¹⁵ To rebuke SD's disassociation from racism, EXPO conducted a mapping of the history of SD and its specific members, revealing incidents of clear racist or discriminatory content, and some less explicit, but nonetheless suspicious activities.¹⁶ One of very many examples listed is from 2010 when SD's party secretary stated:

10. Larsson, Göran. 2004. Nämnden för Statligt Stöd till Trossamfund, Report.

Vergara, Daniel. 2015. "Hets Mot Muslimer i Terrordådets Kölvatten." *EXPO*, January 8. Accessed February 4, 2016. http://expo.se/2015/hets-mot-muslimer-i-terrordadets-kolvatten_6756.html

Borell, Klas. 2012. *Islamofobiska Fördomar och Hatbrott: En Kunskapsöversikt*. No. 1. Stockholm: Nämnden för Statligt Stöd till Trossamfund (SST).

11. Mella, Orlando, Freshteh Ahmadi, Irving Palm. 2013. *Mångfaldsbarometern*. Gävle: Gävle University Press.

12. Mella, Orlando, Freshteh Ahmadi, Irving Palm. 2013. *Mångfaldsbarometern*. Gävle: Gävle University Press.

13. Ibid

14. Åkesson, Jimmy. 2009. "Muslimer är Vårt Största Utländska Hot." *Aftonbladet*, October 19. Accessed December 25, 2015. <http://www.aftonbladet.se/debatt/debattamnen/politik/article12049791.ab>

15. Tuvhag, Emmylou. 2014. "Svårare för SD att Förneka Rasismen." *Svenska Dagbladet*, August 2. Accessed December 25, 2015. <http://www.svd.se/svarare-for-sd-att-forneka-rasismen>

EXPO 2013. "Hjälp Oss Påminna om SD:s Historia". February 2, 2013. Accessed: 1 September, 2015. http://expo.se/2013/hjalp-oss-paminna-om-sds-historia_5655.html

Vergara, Daniel. 2012. "Åkesson Tonar Ner Rasismen i Partiet." EXPO, June 1. Accessed December 25, 2015. http://expo.se/2012/akesson-tonar-ner-splittring-och-rasism-i-partiet_5175.html

16. EXPO 2013. "Hjälp Oss Påminna om SD:s Historia". February 2, 2013. Accessed: 1 September, 2015. http://expo.se/2013/hjalp-oss-paminna-om-sds-historia_5655.html

Just like Nazism was overturned, so does Islam need to be overturned...¹⁷

Generally, the autumn of 2015 is considered to be one of the most successful periods for SD and their policies.¹⁸ SD's party leader, Jimmie Åkesson, stated that he wanted to map out the opinions of (all) Muslims in Sweden in order to identify radical opinions among them.¹⁹ The other political parties have also sharpened their attitudes towards policies concerning asylum, to which Åkesson stated:

“(But) we have always said that there is a need for a serious situation in order for the other parties to wake up, so sure, from that perspective we are pleased.”²⁰

When asked about the responsibility of Åkesson's party not to contribute to the idea of a war between 'East' and 'West' or 'Muslims' and 'Christians', Åkesson replied in the same interview:

“We can, to some extent, discuss whether we do not find ourselves in a situation of war already, even if it does not look like war traditionally has done.”²¹

During the autumn of 2015, SD's spokesperson also confirmed that the party stood behind fliers that were handed out on the Greek island of Lesbos discouraging refugees to make their way to Sweden (Helmerson 2015). Despite being an overseas action, the attack on burqa, niqab, halal slaughter, polygamy and forced marriages and the alleged banning of the first three items speak volumes about SD's plans for domestic policies in



NO MONEY, NO JOBS, NO HOMES

You might have heard positive things about our country and the Swedish people. That we are friendly, generous and hardworking. This might be true, but our society is falling apart.

Our wealth is gone. We have borrowed money to provide education and basic health care for our citizens. Due to decades of mass immigration our previously safe country is not safe anymore. Not only do we have a very high number of shootings and gang related violence, where grenade attacks in public spaces are no longer surprising, but Sweden now also demonstrates the second highest number of rape reports in the entire world.

Sweden is temporarily helping those who flee war and terror, but we can currently only offer tents and camp beds. And you will eventually be sent back home. Sweden is a modern Western country. Here, women and men are equal. Forced marriages and polygamy will never be accepted. Halal slaughter, wearing niqab or burqa in public places will be forbidden in our country.

Sweden Democrats SD - Women The People of Sweden

Flier found on the Greek island of Lesbos. Source: Helmerson 2015

this area. It also strongly suggests ties between their migration policies and Islamophobia. Below is a picture of a flier, and a clarification of its content.

Looking beyond politics, data from the Swedish public agency for monitoring and combating crime in

17. Westergren, Andreas. 2010. "Sd: Islam Måste Bekämpas." *Smålandsposten*, September 9. Accessed December 1, 2015. <http://www.smp.se/valet/sd-islam-maste-bekampas/>

18. Brandel, Tobias. "Åkesson Vill Kartlägga Svenska Muslimers Åsikter." *Svenska Dagbladet*, November 26. Accessed February 6, 2016 <http://www.svd.se/jimmie-akesson-vill-kartlagga-svenska-muslimers-asikter>

19. Ibid

20. Ibid "Men vi har alltid sagt att det behövs ett väldigt allvarligt läge för att de andra partierna ska vakna upp, så visst, i det perspektivet är man nöjd"

21. Ibid. I någon mening kan man diskutera om vi inte redan befinner oss i ett krig, även om det inte ser ut som krig traditionellt har gjort.

Sweden, BRÅ, shows that between 2010 and 2014 reports of hate-crimes with an identified Islamophobic motivation have increased 81%. Methodologically however, due to overlaps with other phenomena, Islamophobic crimes are difficult to capture statistically (SST 2014, 22-23). Data for 2015 is not yet available from BRÅ.

Mosques and Muslim prayer-facilities throughout Sweden have also faced violence that has Islamophobic motivation (assumed or confirmed).²² They have been vandalised or been subject to arson²³ and these attacks are an on-going trend.²⁴ Examples of this can be found from the very beginning of the year. In January alone, the Gothenburg Mosque received a bomb threat,²⁵ a mosque in Uppsala was attacked with a firebomb (SVT 2015), a mosque in the small town of Järva was threatened by mail, including pornographic images²⁶, and a masjid in Mariestad was attacked with canned pork.²⁷ In February, the imam of the Stockholm Mosque and his family faced death threats (Salö 2015).²⁸

Parallel to these damages are the attacks and incidents involving asylum housing. By October 2015, around 20 fire-related incidents, suspected to be arson by the police, have taken place.²⁹ By December, the number was up to 50.³⁰ The connection between asylum-fires and Islamophobia has little empirical grounding; however,



A Mosque in Mariestad vandalised by graffiti saying 'go home' in Swedish (El Mochantaf 2015)²⁸

the suspicions of racial or Islamophobic motivations behind these acts are common, as the majority of asylum seekers are from Muslim-majority countries.³¹

22. Borell, Klas. 2012. *Islamofobiska Fördomar och Hatbrott: En Kunskapsöversikt*. No. 1. Stockholm: Nämnden för Statligt Stöd till Trossamfund (SST).

23. Gardell, Mattias. 2010. *Islamofobi*. Stockholm: Leopard Förlag.

Larsson, Göran. 2006. *Muslimerna Kommer! Tankar om Islamofobi*. Göteborg: Makadam förlag.

24. Ljunggren, Petter and Mikael Funke. 2014. Stor ökning av moskéattacker 2014. SVT December 29. Accessed November 1, 2015. <http://www.svt.se/ug/stor-okning-av-moskeattacker-2014>

"Fakta: Moskéattacker 2014." *Göteborgs Posten*, January 1. Accessed November 1, 2015. <http://www.gp.se/nyheter/sverige/1.2589194-fakta-moskeattacker-2014>

25. "Bombhot mot Göteborgs." 2015. *Dagens Nyheter*, January 9. Accessed February 4, 2016. <http://www.dn.se/nyheter/sverige/bombhot-mot-goteborgs-moske/>

26. Edström, Johanna. 2015 "Moskéer Hotade med Porr brev" *Mitt I*, February 2. Accessed February 4, 2015. <http://gamla.mitti.se/moskeer-hotade-med-porr-brev/>

27. El-Mochantaf, Christer. 2015 "Moskelokal Attackerad med Fläsk i Mariestad." *Expressen*, January 8. Accessed February 4, 2016. <http://www.expressen.se/gt/moskelokal-attackerad-med-flask-i-mariestad/>

28. El-Mochantaf, Christer. 2015 "Moskelokal Attackerad med Fläsk i Mariestad." *Expressen*, January 8. Accessed February 4, 2016. <http://www.expressen.se/gt/moskelokal-attackerad-med-flask-i-mariestad/>

29. Lindström, Nils. 2015. Grafik: Bränder på asylboenden i år. *Sveriges Radio*, October 20. Accessed November 1, 2015. <http://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=83&artikel=6283376>

30. Färnbo, Mikael. 2015 "Mest Intensiva Attackvägen mot Asylboende Någonsin". *EXPO*, December 8. Accessed: December 25. Available at: http://expo.se/2015/mest-intensiva-attackvagen-mot-asylboenden-nagonsin_6986.html

31. Ibid



Asylum housing after a fire in Munkedal in October 2015 (Ihse, 2015)³²

A last important incident mentioned in this report is the attack in Trollhättan where a masked 21-year old entered a primary school and stabbed two students and a teacher who were of a Muslim cultural background. The 21-year old, named Anton Lundin Petterson, who was said to have had far-right sympathies, was later shot dead by the police. Peter Adlersson,³² the spokesperson for the West-Swedish police, stated that the police are convinced the 21-year old's motives were racist, and that he had selected his victims (although it remains unclear under what criteria this was done or if Anton knew the victims were of a Muslim cultural background).³³ This analysis is not uncommon.³⁴

ISLAMOPHOBIA IN SWEDISH SOCIETY

Discrimination in the Labour Market Based on (Assumed) Muslimness of a Person

Discrimination in the job and labour market has been researched in Sweden for some time. Research has indicated that employers tend to refrain from hiring those who are perceived to be non-European, Muslim or Jewish.³⁵ Agerström, Carlsson and Rooth³⁶ were interested in explicit and implicit prejudice towards Muslim men. Their study, based mostly on association-tests, concluded that 49% of employers had explicit and 94% had implicit prejudice towards Muslim men. These prejudices are believed to have an impact upon employers' decisions to hire.³⁷

Looking at the other side of the employment process, Carlsson and Rooth³⁸, as well

32. Ihse, Adam. 2015. "14 Flydde Asylbrand: "Samvetslöst" *Metro*, October. Accessed February 5, 2016. <http://www.metro.se/nyheter/14-flydde-asylbrand-samvetslost/HdzojtlvqFQqGkMsnQ@dLniM@jQg/>

33. Ahola, Teresa. 2015. "Polisen: Han Valde Ut Sina Offer." *Svenska Dagbladet*, October 27. Accessed November 1, 2015. <http://www.svd.se/polisen-det-ror-sig-om-ett-hatbrott>

Orange, Richard. 2015. "Swedish School Killer Watched Nazi Videos Before Attack." *The Telegraph*, 23 October. Accessed November 1, 2015. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/sweden/11949104/Swedish-school-killer-watched-Nazi-videos-before-attack.html>

34. See for example Cabero, Maria-Pia, Jonathan Leman, Alex Bengtsson. 2015. "Skolmördaren Visar Högerextrema Sympatier på Sociala Medier" *EXPO*, October 22. Accessed: December 25, 2015.

http://expo.se/2015/skolmordaren-visar-hogerextrema-sympatier-pa-sociala-medier_6954.html

Poohl, Daniel. 2015. "Ensamvargarna Lever inte i ett Vakuum." *EXPO*, October 25. Accessed: December 25, 2015. http://expo.se/2015/ensamvargarna-lever-inte-i-ett-vakuum_6959.html

35. Diskrimineringsombudsmannen. 2014. *Forskning om Diskriminering av Muslimer i Sverige: En Översikt av Forskning Publicerad Vid Universitet och Högskolor i Sverige Sedan år 2003*. Stockholm: Oxford Research AB.

36. Agerström, Jens, Rickard Carlsson, Dan-Olof Rooth. 2007. *Etnicitet och Övervikt: Implicita Arbetsrelaterade Fördomar i Sverige*. 2007:19. Uppsala: Institutet för arbetsmarknadspolitisk utvärdering (IFAU).

37. Agerström, Jens, Dan-Olof Rooth. 2009. "Implicit Prejudice and Ethnic Minorities: Arab-Muslims in Sweden." *International Journal of Manpower* 30 (1/2): 43-55.

38. Carlsson, Magnus, Dan-Olof Rooth. 2007. "Evidence of Ethnic Discrimination in the Swedish Labor Market Using Experimental Data." *Labour Economics* 14 (4): 716-29.

as Bursell³⁹, conducted research on the likelihood of getting called for an interview; jobs were applied for using the same CV, but with different names. The results showed that names that were perceived to be ethnically Swedish were twice as likely to be called for an interview compared to the others, despite identical qualifications. In a later study, the level of experience was increased on CV's with Arabic-sounding names to see if the 'discriminatory factor' could be 'mitigated'. Two years of additional work experience did make a positive impact, but only for female applicants.⁴⁰ A similar study⁴¹ used Arabic and Swedish-sounding names; the Arabic-sounding applicants were made to appear particularly competent or charismatic. The replies increased for the Arabic-sounding applicants, but never reached the level of the Swedish-sounding ones.

In general, Swedish Muslims in Cooperation Network Alternative Report (SMCNAR)⁴² concludes that figures from the Municipality in Stockholm suggest 'there is an alarming amount of discrimination against Muslims in the labour market' (2013, 29). SMCNAR mentions a case handled by the Equality Ombudsman where a Muslim man's refusal to shake the hands of women was seen as lack of cooperation by the Swedish Unemployment Office, who consequently kicked him out of one of its employment programs. The court ruled in favour of the man in question.⁴³

Despite the above studies, the Equality Ombudsman has concluded that contemporary research is in a weak position for producing any concrete evidence of Islamophobia from employers. According to the Equality Ombudsman, research in this area has used methods that could make the employer presume ethnic, cultural or religious affiliation with the applicant.⁴⁴ This in turn has made it difficult to distinguish any identifiable Islamophobic element.

In 2015, however, a few cases have been brought to the attention of the Equality Ombudsman. The first concerns the Karolinska Institutet (KI) and their refusal to mitigate their policies concerning hygiene and clothing for one of their Mus-

39. Bursell, Moa. 2007. *What's in a Name? A Field Experiment Test for the Existence of Ethnic Discrimination in the Hiring Process*. Working paper 2007:7. Stockholm: Stockholms University, Linnaeus Center for Integration Studies (SULCIS).

40. Arai, Mahmood, Moa Bursell, and Lena Nekby. 2008. *Between Meritocracy and Ethnic Discrimination: The Gender Difference*. Discussion Paper Series 3467 (4). Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA).

41. Agerström, Jens, Fredrik Björklund, Rickard Carlsson, Dan-Olof Rooth. 2012. "Warm and Competent Hassan = Cold and Incompetent Eric: A Harsh Equation of Real-life Hiring Discrimination." *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 34 (4): 359-66.

42. SMCNAR is a report written in collaboration between Swedish Muslim organizations. 17 Muslim organizations and actors in Sweden financially contributed to the report. The report is a response to the Swedish government's 19th, 20th and 21st periodic report to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). It represents the point of view of some of the leading Swedish Muslim organizations concerning racism and Islamophobia in Sweden.

43. Benaouda, Helena, Fatima Doubaki, Elvir Giovic, Omar Mustafa and Ahmed Siraj. 2013. *Swedish Muslims in Cooperation Network Alternative Report*. Stockholm.

44. Diskrimineringsombudsmannen. 2014. *Forskning om Diskriminering av Muslimer i Sverige: En Översikt av Forskning Publicerad Vid Universitet och Högskolor i Sverige Sedan år 2003*. Stockholm: Oxford Research AB.

lim dentistry students. The Equality Ombudsman concluded that the student's requests would not disproportionately infringe upon KI's policies, and that she had been indirectly discriminated against due to her religion; it has now been decided to sue KI.⁴⁵ Another case, brought up by media, concerned the first hijab-wearing policewoman in Sweden; she reported that her employer subjected her to harsher treatment and examinations compared to her co-workers. The matter has now been brought to the Equality Ombudsman.⁴⁶ Finally, a trainee contract was revoked after the employer found out the trainee was a practicing Muslim. The man was called in to a meeting after he had informed his employer, who had already signed the trainee contract, that he wanted to practice his daily prayers, including the Friday sermon at the mosque, while working. During the meeting, the CEO and one of the managers discussed the difficulties his religious practices would cause, and revoked his employment. The man contacted his union, who are now planning to sue the company for discrimination.⁴⁷

Islamophobia in the Curricula, Textbooks and Other Educational Material

There is little information available about racism and Islamophobia in the Swedish education system and the teaching materials used. EXPO's recent report finds that both school staff and teaching materials are deficient in avoiding discrimination and stereotypes.⁴⁸ In an early study, Härenstam⁴⁹ contended that the picture of a militaristic Islam which is often depicted in textbooks used for teaching civics and social sciences can create a barrier for students in dealing with intolerance and xenophobia, even though dealing with these phenomena is part of the Swedish curricula and intended learning outcome. EXPO's representative holds that the Swedish schools have failed to fulfil the claim that the Swedish curriculum is a neutral place which forwards critical thinking.⁵⁰ This can be compared to the results of the Kittelmann⁵¹ study, in which she discovered a form of secular standpoint that paints religious individuals as 'tricked'

45. Diskriminerings Ombudsmannen. 2015. *Karolinska Institutet- Indirekt Diskriminering*. Case code: ANM 2014/1987. Accessed February 6, 2016. <http://www.do.se/lag-och-ratt/diskrimineringsarenden/karolinska-institutet/>

46. "eslöjad polis anmäler sin arbetsgivare" 2015. LT, June 8. Accessed February 6, 2016. <http://lt.se/nyheter/soder-talje/1.3002166-beslojad-polis-anmaler-sin-arbetsgivare>

47. Vene, Elisabeth. 2015. "Arbetsgivaren Nobbade Praktiserande Muslim." *Lag Och Avtal*, August 25. Accessed February 5, 2016. <http://www.lag-avtal.se/nyheter/avtal/stamningsansokan/article3925239.ece>

48. Vergara, Daniel. 2015. "Hets Mot Muslimer i Terrordådets Kölvatten." *EXPO*, January 8. Accessed February 4, 2016. http://expo.se/2015/hets-mot-muslimer-i-terrordadets-kolvatten_6756.html

49. Härenstam, Kjell, and Islam in Textbooks (project). 1993. *Skolboks-islam: Analys av Bilden av Islam i Läroböcker i Religionskunskap*. Gothenburg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.

50. Ibid. No information could be found that indicates Islamophobia as part of any curricula; rather most research on the topic has focused on the content of the textbooks. In addition, much of the research has focused on the ethnic aspect of the topic, making it difficult at times to disentangle different forms of racism and misrepresentation.

51. Kittelmann Flensner, Karin. 2015. "*Religious education in contemporary pluralistic sweden*." PhD diss., Gothenburg: Department of Literature, History of Ideas, and Religion, University of Gothenburg.

or ‘unintelligent’ in the high schools she studied; a standpoint that, according to Kittelmann, makes it difficult to reach the outcomes of understanding and respect intended for studying religion in school.

Similarly, the Equality Ombudsman’s report concludes that studies have found an excluding attitude in which a construction of some groups as the ‘other’ is reinforced by some of the materials used in Swedish schools (DO 2014). Examples of this can be found in Kamali’s⁵² research on seven history books used for teaching history and religion in high school. Kamali and Sawyer⁵³ found that the dichotomy is especially evident between the ‘good and civilised West’ and the ‘different’ Islam, and that Islam is at times discussed as a synonym for Muslims as a group or Muslim countries. Otterbeck’s (2006) study of books used for teaching religion in high school came to similar conclusions; it was found that authors of schoolbooks submitted many stereotypes about Islam.

The people interviewed for this report held a parallel view to that expressed in the academic research. All interviewees report that Islam is given a negative image and that stereotypes and generalisations are common in schoolbooks. For example, EXPO referred to a book (which has now been taken off the shelves) which had a picture of a ‘Muslim’ - a woman in a bomb-belt. In addition, Islam is, according to Ibn Rushd, not taught as part of the Swedish landscape, but as something different and ‘foreign’. The informant from GHRC argued that there is an absence of the complex history of Islam as a civilisation; instead, the focus is on explanations of Islam which confirm stereotypes. Two of the informants (EXPO and GHRC) also voiced concern over the way these schoolbooks depict Sweden and Swedes - as the epitome and yardstick of ‘goodness’. These informants criticised the Eurocentric approach to Sweden’s own history where Sweden’s relationship to slavery, colonialism and Sweden’s minorities take the backseat.

Looking at the classroom, Otterbeck⁵⁴ found that Muslim students have felt both offended and bewildered by the depiction of Islam in the schoolbooks. This is a concern brought up by the interviewee from Ibn Rushd, who says that Muslim students sometimes cannot relate to what is being taught about them and their religion. Similarly, during the Human Rights days at the end of 2015, the university lecturer Zahra Bayati was concerned about the feeling of exclusion among university students from minority groups (in particular immigrants) who were studying

52. Kamali, Moursi. 2006. *Den Segregerade Integrationen: Om Social Sammanhållning och dess Hinder*. Rapport av Utredningen om Makt, Integration och Strukturell diskriminering. SOU 2006:73. Stockholm: Fritzes.

53. Sawyer, Lena, and Masoud Kamali, eds. *Utbildningens dilemma: demokratiska ideal och andrafierande praxis*. Norstedts Juridik AB, 2006.

54. Otterbeck, Jonas, Pieter Bevelander, 2006. *Islamofobi – En Studie av Begreppet, Ungdomars Attityder och Unga Muslimers Utsatthet*. Stockholm: Forum för Levande Historia.

to become educators. Her study refers to earlier studies⁵⁵ in which it was pointed out that students from these groups experience exclusion and discrimination. The students believe these experiences are related to their ethnic background and to stereotypical beliefs held of ‘them’ in society and in their programs. Bayati’s own study found similar concerns in teacher education and writes:

...racialized segregation in society is reconstructed in education, for example in group work or work placements⁵⁶

Despite this, Bayati also highlights that her study:

...reveals resistance–agents from different ethnic backgrounds who acknowledge the existence of institutional, inequality creating and discriminatory discourses, and fight them.⁵⁷

Bayati’s solution is that teacher education must “actively counteract the monocultural and Eurocentric knowledge construction that dominates the system, so as to live up to the democracy and equality-promoting claims of its policy documents.” EXPO’s representative, whose overall suggestions are similar to Bayati’s, stated that teachers need to increase their competence and knowledge about racism and Islamophobia, and that more inclusion is needed in education. On the HR-days in Gothenburg⁵⁸ however, Bayati stated that there is a lack of inclusion in the pedagogic departments under her studies, and that there is no mandatory literature or course in the teacher program at Swedish universities that addresses issues of representation and inclusion.⁵⁹ Ibn Rushd’s representative stated that the above concerns have been raised, but that these matters are still being explained in the same way. It is unclear to whom these concerns were raised or in what way.

Swedish Media and Islam/Muslims

Given the present levels of globalisation, Sweden, like other countries, is not exempt from the impact of foreign events. The civil wars in Syria and Iraq, the on-going ref-

55. Fazlhashemi, Mohammad. 2002. *Möten, Myter och Verkligheter: Studenter med Annan Etnisk Bakgrund Berättar om Möten i den Svenska Universitetsmiljön*. 2002:1. Umeå: Universitetspedagogiskt Centrum, Umeå Universitet. Fridlund, MariAnne. 2010. *Se Människan i Var och en av Oss. En Studie om Likabehandling av Studenter med Annan Etnisk Bakgrund i Högskolan*. Ma diss., Göteborgs Universitet.

Åberg-Bengtsson, Lisbeth. 2005. *Hur Roligt är det att Vara Student? En Undersökning av*

Soltani, Sofie. 2008. *Mötet med det Nya: En Studie om Utländska Lärarstudenter med Tidigare Lärarutbildning från ett annat Land och Deras Upplevelser vid en Svensk Universitet (Bachelorthesis)*. Göteborg: Institutionen för Pedagogik och Didaktik, Göteborgs Universitet.

56. Bayati, Zahra. 2014. “Den Andre’ i Lärarutbildningen: En Studie om den Rasifierade Svenska Studentens Villkor i globaliseringens tid.” PhD diss., Göteborgs Cabero Universitet.

57. Ibid.

58. Kittelmann Flensner, Karin. 2015. “*Religious education in contemporary pluralistic sweden*.” PhD diss., Gotgenburg: Department of Literature, History of Ideas, and Religion, University of Gothenburg.

59. “Ett Mörkt Årtusende eller en Gyllene Tidsålder”- Panel discussion during the annual *Human Rights Days* conference, Gothenburg, November 10, 2015.

ugee crisis, the attacks on Charlie Hebdo and the recent Paris attacks are some of the events most frequently reported. In many ways, these events, directly or indirectly, concern or are related to Islam and/or Muslims. More domestically, issues relating to the burning of mosques, the burning of refugee camps and the school attack in Trollhättan in October 2015 show direct or indirect connections to racism, and especially to Islamophobia. The media reporting on these and similar issues has raised concerns about the way Muslims and Islam are represented in the Swedish media.⁶⁰

Acknowledging a gap in research, the Equality Ombudsman requested a report on how Muslims are depicted and perceived in the Swedish media. The report, released during the winter of 2015, presents some of the most up-to-date information available. In the report a reservation about previous research is expressed in that such research has mostly focused on the representation of ‘immigrants’.⁶¹

Having said this, some information can be drawn from past studies. Research from the past 10 years has generated fairly similar and consistent results. During 2005 Brune aimed to study how minority ethnicities are presented in Swedish media. Examining the major newspapers in Sweden (Dagens Nyheter, Sydsvenska Dagbladet and Aftonbladet)⁶² Brune⁶³ found that Muslims in particular face serious representations as the ‘other’ and are described with stereotypes often connected to violent behaviour. 2005 was also the year Jyllandposten published its Muhammad-caricatures. In 2007, Fazlhashemi argued that these caricatures were used to create and reinforce a picture of ‘us’ versus ‘them’ in which Muslims represent a threat. Graf⁶⁴ studied the representation of Radio Islam (a webpage producing, among other content, anti-Semitic material) in other media outlets. Graf⁶⁵ found that the media outlets that he studied represented Radio Islam in a way that created an image of Islam and Muslims as a collective negative ‘other’, rather than isolating these views to the one webpage, Radio Islam.

In general, the Ombudsman’s report concludes that the representation of Muslims in Swedish news media reinforces the conclusions of previous studies (national

60. See for example: Diskrimineringsombudsmannen, 2015. *Representationer, Stereotype och Nyhetsvärdering: Rapport från Medieanalys om Representationer av Muslimer i Svenska Nyheter*. Rapport 2015:1. Ödeshög: DagnagårdLiTHO.

EXPO, Civil Right Defenders. 2015. *Stängda Dörrar* (Report Part of the Project *Alla Människors Rätt- Sveriges Ansvar*). Stockholm: Norra Skåne Offset.

61. Ibid

62. Delin, Mikael. 2015 ” Nu Utreder Säpo Hoten på Internet.” *Dagens Nyheter*, January 4. Accessed February 4, 2016. <http://www.dn.se/nyheter/sverige/nu-utreder-sapo-hoten-pa-internet/>

63. Brune, Ylva. 2006. “Den Dagliga Dosen. Diskriminering i Nyheterna och Bladet.” In *Mediernas vi och dom: Mediernas Betydelse för den Strukturella Diskrimineringen.*, edited by Leonor Camauër and Stig Arne Nohrstedt. Stockholm: Fritze. SOU 2006:21; 89-122.

64. Graf, Heike. 2009. “How do Mainstream Media Communicate Minority Media? A Difference-theoretical Study on Radio Islam and AYPÄ-TV.” *Research Reports 2009:1*. Huddinge: Söderströms Högskola.

65. Ibid.

and international). The study concludes that the terms Islam or Muslim are used as a 'group marker'.⁶⁶ The study shows that the representation is more nuanced when Muslims are reported on by the Swedish media, however, at times negative stereotypes can still be reinforced. Despite some outlets aiming to steer away from narratives of an essential separation between 'us' and 'them'⁶⁷, the Equality Ombudsman finds that such efforts tend to lead to a dichotomy where Muslims are categorised as 'good' or 'bad'. According to the Equality Ombudsman,⁶⁸ although this brings a nuance, it simultaneously reinforces the original narrative.

The Ombudsman's study also conducted interviews with news editors; it was found that 'the editors perceive the media image of Muslims as problematic, but still find it difficult to see how to shape more systematic work for change'.⁶⁹ Despite this, editors believe in the quality and honesty of the craftsmanship of their profession and that the problem lies rather with the 'mixture of staff in the news rooms and among the sources'.⁷⁰

Islamophobia in the Swedish Justice System: Laws, Regulations, Justice Processes and Actors

There are no current laws or regulations in Sweden that explicitly target Muslims on the basis of being Muslim. However, the Muslim civil society has voiced serious criticism towards the Anti-Terrorism Act (2003) adopted in Sweden.⁷¹ SMCNAR (2013) criticises the 2003 act for being too vague on its definition of terrorism, and also for being too broad in defining conduct that can be charged under the act. Muslim civil society argues that the relationship to anti-Muslim sentiment and the act becomes clearer in its practical application. All those indicted under the act so far have been Muslim, which strengthens Muslim civil society's perception that the act is 'designed' to target Muslims specifically.⁷² The report demonstrates that the burden of proof in these cases seems to be substantially lower than under other charges which might lead to jail-time for the defendant. This brings the function and drafting of the law into doubt. The charges under the act, however, remain very few in number; the law

66. Diskrimineringsombudsmannen, 2015. *Representationer, Stereotype och Nyhetsvärdering: Rapport från Medieanalys om Representationer av Muslimer i Svenska Nyheter*. Rapport 2015:1. Ödeshög: DanagårdLiTHO.

67. Diskrimineringsombudsmannen, 2015. *Representationer, Stereotype och Nyhetsvärdering: Rapport från Medieanalys om Representationer av Muslimer i Svenska Nyheter*. Rapport 2015:1. Ödeshög: DanagårdLiTHO.

68. Ibid.

Axner, Marta. 2013. "Religions and Swedish Media: A Study of Religious Actors on Three Newspaper Debate Pages 2001-2011." PhD diss., Uppsala Universitet.

69. Diskriminerings Ombudsmannen. 2015. *Karolinska Institutet- Indirekt Diskriminering*. Case code: ANM 2014/1987. Accessed February 6, 2016. <http://www.do.se/lag-och-ratt/diskrimineringsarenanden/karolinska-institutet/>

70. Ibid.

71. Benaouda, Helena, Fatima Doubaki, Elvir Giovic, Omar Mustafa and Ahmed Siraj. 2013. *Swedish Muslims in Cooperation Network Alternative Report*. Stockholm.

72. Ibid.

has also been criticised for being so vague that it becomes difficult to apply in practice, keeping prosecutions under the act low.⁷³

The justice system as an institution has been criticised by other sources as well. BRÅ conducted a study that aimed to identify and map discrimination in the Swedish justice system - *Diskriminering i Rättsprocessen*;⁷⁴ according to this, Muslims are less likely to receive an objective treatment, especially in criminal cases.⁷⁵ Informants to the study expressed that there is a tendency to distrust Muslim suspects, especially if they are men. The study found that stereotypes against Muslims are present throughout all instances of the Swedish justice system. BRÅ's report confirmed the results of an earlier study conducted by the Swedish Department of Labour in 2006 which concluded that Muslims in particular face discrimination in the Swedish justice system.⁷⁶ In this study, Petterson⁷⁷ found that terms such as Muslim 'culture' or 'tradition' were used to explain the conduct or acts of the defendant. During interviews with prosecutors and lawyers Du Rées⁷⁸ learned that Islam is seen as a religion with certain tendencies that discriminate against women; they believe that these perceptions can lead to (Muslim) defendants being less objectively treated, especially if facing sexual charges.

Swedish legislation and regulations which are less directly connected to Islam and Muslims have also been highlighted as marginalizing Muslims. For example, both Jews and Muslims have expressed that the current regulations on slaughtering animals in Sweden pose an obstacle to enjoying their rights under international conventions (and obligations due to Sweden's membership in the EU) to perform their religious rituals, including slaughter. The Equality Ombudsman has pointed out that these concerns should be investigated by the Swedish Animal Protection Agency (DO 2005)⁷⁹ in order to ensure the legal rights of Jews and Muslims. Circumcision (male and female) has also been debated (Nupponen 2012; Hedner Zetterholm 2012; Ullenhag 2011), and the Swedish Medical Association issued an opinion stating that non-medically motivated circumcision on boys is difficult to reconcile with the child's

73. Bering, Sofia. 2015. "Därför Åtals så få för Terrorbrott." SVT, November 23. Accessed December 25, 2015. <http://www.svt.se/nyheter/inrikes/darfor-atalas-sa-fa-for-terrorbrott>

74. Martens, Peter, David Shannon, Nina Törnqvist, and Brottsförebyggande Rådet. 2008. *Diskriminering i Rättsprocessen: Om Missgynnande av Personer med Utländsk Bakgrund*. 2008(4). Stockholm: Brottsförebyggande rådet.

75. Ibid.

76. SOU. 2006. *Är Rättvisan Rättvis? Tio Perspektiv på Diskriminering av Etnisk och Religiösa Minoriteter Inom Rättsystemet. Rapport av Utredningen om Makt, Integration och Strukturell Diskriminering*. 2006:30. Stockholm: Fritzes.

77. Pettersson, Tove. 2006. "Särbehandlas Gärningspersoner med Utländsk Bakgrund Vid Anmälningar om Våldtäkter, Grov Misshandel och Eget Bruk av Narkotika?" In *Är Rättvisan Rättvis? Tio Perspektiv på Diskriminering av Etniska och Religiösa Minoriteter Inom Rättsystemet. Rapport av Utredningen om Makt, Integration och Strukturell Diskriminering*, SOU 2006:30, 111-145. Stockholm: Fritzes.

78. Du Rées, Helena. 2006. "Åklagares och Advokaters Syn på Likabehandling i Domstolen" In *Är Rättvisan Rättvis? Tio Perspektiv på Diskriminering av Etniska och Religiösa Minoriteter Inom Rättsystemet. Rapport av Utredningen om Makt, Integration och Strukturell Diskriminering*, SOU 2006:30. 257-282, Stockholm: Fritzes.

79. Diskrimineringsombudsmannen. 2005. *Remissvar. Djurskyddsmyndighetens Redovisning av Regeringsuppdrag om Religiös Slakt* (dnr Jo2005/1112). Stockholm 2005-09-27.

legal rights to his own body and the UN's Declaration of the Rights of the Child, especially if the child cannot consent to the procedure (Werner and Thunströ 2014).

Cyber-Space: Webpages and Initiatives with Islamophobic Content

According to Larsson,⁸⁰ internet and social media online have had a hand in spreading and accelerating prejudice towards Islam and Muslims. The Living History Forum, a Swedish government body that works on discrimination, tolerance and human rights, writes that 'perhaps the biggest problem when it comes to spreading anti-Semitism and Islamophobia happens through internet and social media'.⁸¹ According to Larsson,⁸² the Islamophobic content found on online pages, such as Wikislam, often presents stereotypes as facts. In another study, Lagerlöf⁸³ found that the contents among such sites present a picture of a warlike struggle between 'Islam' and 'Sweden'.

Keeping up with the increased trend of blogging, Ekman⁸⁴ carried out a discourse analysis on three of Sweden's largest blogs that are seen to have xenophobic or racist contents. According to Ekman, these blogs often frame racist or xenophobic standpoints as a question of freedom of speech and a critique against religious extremism.

The mapping of anti-Muslim, anti-Islamic sentiment in cyberspace has been less direct, focusing more on racism and xenophobia in general. A good example of this is the site Politism.⁸⁵ On December 2014, one of Politism's editors, Margaret Atladottir, published an article warning people of racist and xenophobic sites 'you would not want to accidentally share on Facebook'. The following eight sites were listed:

- www.samtiden.nu
- www.d-intl.com
- www.nyheteridag.se
- www.avpixlat.info
- www.realisten.se
- www.exponerat.net
- www.friatider.se
- www.nyatider.nu

80. Larsson, Göran. 2007. "Cyber-Islamophobia? The case of WikiIslam." *Contemporary Islam* 1 (1): 53-67.

81. Löwander, Birgitta, Mirjam Hagström. 2011. *Antisemitism och Islamofobi - Utbredning, Orsaker och Preventivt Arbete*. Forum för Levande Historia: On Behalf of Departement of Labour: A2011/1622/DISK.

82. Larsson, Göran. 2007. "Cyber-Islamophobia? The case of WikiIslam." *Contemporary Islam* 1 (1): 53-67.

83. Lagerlöf, David. 2007. "Intolerans i Cyberrymden och Konsten att Bemöta den. I Integrationsverket" *In Rasism och Främlingsfientlighet i Sverige: Antisemitism, Antiziganism och Islamofobi 2006*. Integrationsverkets rapportserie 2007:03.

84. Ekman, Mattias. 2011. "Online Islamophobia: The Relation Between Elite News Discourse and Increasing Xenophobia in Swedish Blogs." *Internet Consequences on Political Parties and Activism*. Stockholm: Stockholms Universitet.

85. Politism is initiated by, but independent of, one of Sweden's largest newspapers *Aftonbladet*, the umbrella-organization for 14 Swedish unions LO and Swedens largest union Kommunal.

Relevant to this report are Atladottir's remarks about Dispatch International. According to Atladottir, Dispatch International describes itself as being critical towards Islam, however, it is more accurate to describe it as racist. Atladottir adds that Fria Tider and Nya Tider might sound 'harmless', but are infused by racism and Islamophobia; she points out that they have been listed as part of the 'radical leftist virtual environment'.⁸⁶ Avpixlat, also on Atladottir's list, is perhaps one of the most famous sites in the (Swedish) Islamophobic cyber-space. Avpixlat has been mentioned by all three civil society organisations that took part in this report, being discussed as facilitating the spread of Islamophobia in Swedish society. During the interview, the informant from EXPO referred to Avpixlat as SD's 'megaphone' on the Internet, one which aims to draw people into a polarisation in which Muslims represent a 'threat'.

Overall, the terror attacks of 2015 have been used as a catalyst to spread hate, and as a source of collective blame on Muslims. An example is the spreading of Facebook comments supposedly celebrating the Charlie Hebdo attack by Muslims; these were published by Fria Tider in January. The Avpixlat's spokesperson, Mats Dagerling, called for an end of all public Islamic practices in Sweden, saying that the religion is a 'direct threat to' Sweden.⁸⁷ Dagerling wonders if the time has come to close all avenues for Muslims to organise themselves, including shutting down mosques and ending any financial aid to Muslim organisations.⁸⁸ Facebook and other social media outlets have also been part of spreading Islamophobia. An example is a fake video of Muslims celebrating the attacks in Paris that was spread on social media. The video was in fact Pakistani fans celebrating a victory in cricket.⁸⁹

All three interviewees are of the opinion that there are plenty of sites, blogs and forums on the web which express anti-Muslim sentiments. Some of these, according to EXPO, are less directly connected to Islamophobic actors, but nonetheless express Islamophobic attitudes. The representative from GHRC claimed that many of these virtual outlets are piloting 'research' and 'reports' on Islam and Muslims with Islamophobic connotations.

Overall, the impact of the cyber-space seems to be regarded as serious in Sweden, with political and societal consequences. Already in 2006 Otterbeck and Bevelander remarked that webpages can "coordinate marginalised ideologies and confirm" racist

86. Atladottir, Margaret. 2014. "Rasistiska Sajter Du Inte Vill Råka Dela på Facebook". *Politism*, December 14. Accessed November 1, 2015. <http://www.politism.se/story/rasistiska-sajter-du-inte-vill-raka-dela-pa-facebook/#post-20059>

87. Vergara, Daniel. 2015. "Hets Mot Muslimer i Terrordådets Kölvatten." *EXPO*, January 8. Accessed February 4, 2016. http://expo.se/2015/hets-mot-muslimer-i-terrordadets-kolvatten_6756.html

88. Ibid

89. Fagerlund Jerrstedt, Karin. 2015. "Stor ökning av falsk information på nätet." *Sveriges Television*, December 16. Accessed February 5, 2016. <http://www.svt.se/articles/falsk-information-sprids-pa-natet/>

and Islamophobic worldviews.⁹⁰ Despite the fact that the so-called new media clearly have a potential for spreading anti-Muslim, xenophobic and racist opinions, Larsson⁹¹ adds a nuance to the discussion by pointing out that the Internet and digitalisation of information has also given Muslims increased opportunities to express themselves and for people to gain a more informed and nuanced picture of Muslims and Islam.

OBSERVED CIVIL SOCIETY AND POLITICAL ASSESSMENT AND INITIATIVES TO COUNTER ISLAMOPHOBIA IN SWEDEN

There have been both civil society and political initiatives to combat Islamophobia on different societal levels. Reports have been published and conferences held, both within the EU and the OSCE, as well as by NGOs and other active organisations.⁹² Some of these efforts have been mapped by the Swedish agency, Forum for Living History, however they represent efforts from 2011 and earlier.⁹³ In Sweden, many of these are projects have finished, but some are still running. Ibn Rushd, for example, still works diligently to combat Islamophobia. One project run by Ibn Rushd is 'Islam - a natural part of Sweden'⁹⁴ while another effort, carried out in cooperation with Sensus,⁹⁵ later led to Muslim youth creating a peace movement called 'Swedish Muslims for Peace and Justice'.⁹⁶ Another project was 'Toolkit against Islamophobia and Racism'.⁹⁷ The aim of this project was to create instruments that could be used to combat Islamophobia and racism; the project eventually led to the virtual portal www.antirasism.info where information about the project can be found.

Slightly more updated information can, to some extent, be extracted from the interviews conducted for this report. All informants are of the opinion that it is important to work to reduce Islamophobia. All three civil society actors have conducted projects, research, classes and seminars with different actors on the topic. Ibn Rushd's informant explained that their most recent project launched an artificial anti-Islamophobia pill in order to use humour to reach people by likening Islamophobia to a headache that can be remedied by taking a painkiller. In connection to the launch, a

90. Bevelander, Pieter, Jonas Otterbeck. 2010. "Young People's Attitudes Towards Muslims in Sweden." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 33 (3): 404-25.

91. Larsson, Göran. 2011. *Muslims and the New Media: Historical and Contemporary Debates*. Farnham: Ashgate.

92. Löwander, Birgitta, Mirjam Hagström. 2011. *Antisemitism och Islamofobi - Urbredning, Orsaker och Preventivt Arbete*. Forum för Levande Historia: On Behalf of Departement of Labour: A2011/1622/DISK.

93. Ibid

94. Swedish title: Islam- en självklar del av Sverige.

95. Sensus is a national educational association in Sweden.

96. Ibid

97. This project was conducted in cooperation with Ibn Rushd, Forum for Equal Rights (in Stockholm), Swedish Muslim Council and Kista Folk High School.

series of seminars that discussed Islamophobia were held. During 2014 GHRC also held a project called ‘Gothenburg against Islamophobia’⁹⁸ together with Ibn Rushd and Puntland Community Organisation. The project compiled information about Islamophobia and testimonies from those who had experienced or witnessed Islamophobia in order to bring to light how Islamophobic actions affect the victims. The aim was to educate 80 people from various societal institutions by producing and distributing material on how to prevent and combat Islamophobia. Parallel to this, material in various languages containing information about rights and resources for victims of Islamophobia was distributed to Muslim civil society.⁹⁹

The informant from GHRC explained that seminars were held throughout the project. However, the informant expressed concern over some of the seminars, stating that sometimes they could end up feeling like forums where people could express their prejudice rather than as opportunities to gain new insights and knowledge. The informant remembered that actors from the police and the Swedish Migration Agency stood out negatively in this regard. The informant however added that the Centre continuously worked with Islamophobia and at times also brought cases to court.

When the informants were asked about the amount and quality of cooperation between civil society actors, all three initially held that they did feel there is cooperation and that it is working fairly well. EXPO’s representative stated that there are many initiatives working around Islamophobia in various ways. However, Ibn Rushd’s representative held that the civil society as a whole has yet to be engaged in these questions, and is of the opinion that they have not understood the gravity of these matters, or that they do not quite understand how to approach them. The interviewee from GHRC also made a criticism, saying that the cooperation can hardly be seen as cooperation; actors reach out to each other every now and then, but the cooperation remains shallow and poorly coordinated.

A further criticism, shared by all three interviewees, is that not enough is being done. EXPO’s representative sees the existing structures as too little and too late; there needs to be more efforts and resources invested in order for the situation to change. In general, Ibn Rushd is of the opinion that the resources have been weakly distributed, and that the organisations that are closest to the people should get increased support. The representative stressed that there is an overestimation of solutions being able to be produced by experts and institutions in Sweden. According to Ibn Rushd, resources need to be allocated to the Islamic civil society, religious institutions and religious communities. The cry for resources can be seen in Muslim civil society in general, where a collaboration of Muslim organisations in Sweden state that “the government fails to adequately fund the institutions and organisations”

98. Swedish title: Göteborg mot islamofobi.

99. More information about GHRC’s project can be found at: <http://gbgrc.se/projekt-kampanjer/goteborg-mot-islamofobi/>

that work with these matters in their report.¹⁰⁰ Focusing less on resources, the representative from GHRC states that Islamophobia needs to be dealt with in far more concrete terms. According to the Centre's representative, concretizing problems and figuring out solutions, especially for Muslim groups, are important steps to be taken in dealing with Islamophobia in Sweden.

Given this, the reason why such a small amount of actors responded to the request for participation in this report is unclear. It is necessary to consider this point, as it might indicate a lack of interest in the topic, or simply that interest to participate in activities not directly linked to the organisation itself is weak among the actors. It might also indicate that the actors are overworked and understaffed. These, of course, are only some possible causes, and no certain conclusions can be drawn.

In addition to civil society, the Equality Ombudsman has an expressed agenda to combat both Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. The Equality Ombudsman works primarily with accumulating, developing and spreading knowledge and understanding about different forms of discrimination. The Ombudsman also aims to influence different agencies, organisations and decision-makers by increasing their awareness of discrimination, pushing them towards equal rights and opportunities within their respective jurisdictions. Some of this work, often conducted in cooperation with other actors, is done through various activities, such as arranging or participating in debates, conducting or initiating investigations and research and suggesting legislative changes. Furthermore, the Equality Ombudsman can monitor the work of employees, educators and other community actors in order to ensure equal rights and opportunities and to combat discrimination. The Ombudsman also investigates suspected breaches of anti-discrimination laws in Sweden; this can lead to an acknowledgment of fault, recommendations or a decision by the Ombudsman to take the matter to the Swedish courts.¹⁰¹

It seems however, that assessments and evaluations of efforts on combating Islamophobia are largely lacking. Evidence of what constitutes good practices, or what efforts have actually contributed in the struggle to eradicate Islamophobia and other forms of discrimination in Sweden is weak.¹⁰² Complaints, as can be seen, exist, but there remains little information on how these are met. STT's report also shows that at times religious communities seem to be lacking awareness of the possible avenues for dealing with or combating hate-crimes.¹⁰³

100. Benaouda, Helena, Fatima Doubaki, Elvir Giovic, Omar Mustafa and Ahmed Siraj. 2013. *Swedish Muslims in Cooperation Network Alternative Report*. Stockholm.

101. More information about the Equality Ombudsman can be found at: <http://www.do.se/om-do/vad-gor-do/>

102. Löwander, Birgitta, Mirjam Hagström. 2011. *Antisemitism och Islamofobi - Utbredning, Orsaker och Preventivt Arbete*. Forum för Levande Historia: On Behalf of Department of Labour: A2011/1622/DISK.

103. Larsson, Göran. 2004. *Nämnden för Statligt Stöd till Trossamfund, Report*.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

From this report it can be concluded that Islamophobia in Sweden seems to be present in all areas of society that have been discussed. Despite this, it remains unclear when something can empirically be distinguished as Islamophobia, as opposed to similar related phenomena. This poses serious consequences for understanding the depth and extent of the phenomenon, which in turn can lead to poor conclusions. Although these problems remain relevant, it does not seem to have hindered the acknowledgment that Islamophobia needs to be combated in Sweden. This can be seen from the interviews conducted, as well as from the increased focus on Islamophobia from different public bodies such as the Equality Ombudsman and Forum for Living History.

Despite this increased focus, there seems to be dissatisfaction from civil society actors in Sweden when it comes to the funding, efforts and resources put into combating Islamophobia in the country. This can be seen not only from the interviews, but also from the SMCNAR report. However, whether or not these complaints have empirical support is less evident.

For these reasons, this report will conclude with the following policy recommendations:

Research

- Research, both within and outside academia, needs to be conducted with the clear aim of identifying Islamophobia. For this to be well executed, conceptual and theoretical starting points need to be clarified.
- Methodological tools with the above aim in mind need to be developed.

Public administration and policies

- Increased internal understanding of Islamophobia within different public bodies and agencies, especially within the justice system and the police, but also on a national level, needs to be achieved. Continuous and constant efforts to educate public authorities on all levels must be conducted with the aim of combating structural discrimination.
- Resources towards research on, and efforts and work towards combating, Islamophobia should be increased.
- Efforts and work aiming to combat Islamophobia need to be clearly evaluated.
- Relations to minority groups need to be improved in order to gain trust and also to increase awareness of avenues for such groups to combat all kinds of hate-crimes. Possible language barriers need to be overcome for this to be achieved.
- The relationship with civil society needs to be improved and constantly evaluated through continuous dialogue; there also needs to be an increase in the quality of avenues for complaints to be made by civil society.

Civil Society

Civil society actors are recommended to concretise their internal understanding and approach towards Islamophobia.

It is advisable for cooperation between civil society actors to increase and solidify in order to gain a stronger front when combating Islamophobia.

Civil society actors who are actively working with Islamophobia are recommended to continue with educating both the public and public agencies and authorities, but also to extend these efforts towards other civil society actors who are working to combat discrimination, but are not concretely working on the topic of Islamophobia.

Civil society needs to evaluate the possible avenues for complaint and criticism towards not only state policies, but also discussions of budget and allocation of resources.

Civil society actors are also recommended to exhaust all the possibilities for funding and other available resources in order to make sure they are making their utmost effort to improve their possibilities and working conditions. In addition, serious measures should be taken to make sure existing knowledge and resources are utilised, to avoid having to solve problems that might already have viable solutions.

CHRONOLOGY¹⁰⁴

January 2015

- Gothenburg Mosque is threatened by a bomb attack¹⁰⁵
- Mosque in Mariestad is attacked with canned pork and vandalised with graffiti stating 'go home' in Swedish.¹⁰⁶
- The Swedish Security Service (SÄPO) starts investigation on hate-messages in Cyber-Space following the celebration of attacks on mosques and prayer facilities and the spread of the message 'strike during the Friday prayer to be efficient' on social media¹⁰⁷
- A fire bomb is thrown at a mosque in in Uppsala¹⁰⁸
- A juryman in Huddinge calls Muslims 'imbeciles' and wants to forbid Islam following a manifestation in which citizens condemn the attacks on prayer facilities

104. Note that not all these incidents have a confirmed Islamophobic element to them, and many are still under investigation. However, they all demonstrate the landscape of the potential reach of Islamophobia in Sweden.

105. "Moské Attackerades med Fläsk." 2015. *Dagens Nyheter*, January 8. <http://www.dn.se/nyheter/sverige/moske-attackerades-med-flask/>

106. El-Mochantaf, Christer. 2015 "Moskelokal Attackerad med Fläsk i Mariestad." *Expressen*, January 8. Accessed February 4, 2016. <http://www.expressen.se/gt/moskelokal-attackerad-med-flask-i-mariestad/>

107. Delin, Mikael. 2015 "Nu Utreder Säpo Hoten på Internet." *Dagens Nyheter*, January 4. Accessed February 4, 2016. <http://www.dn.se/nyheter/sverige/nu-utreders-sapo-hoten-pa-internet/>

108. Ljunggren, Petter and Mikael Funke. 2014. Stor ökning av moskéattacker 2014. SVT December 29. Accessed November 1, 2015. <http://www.svt.se/ug/stor-okning-av-moskeattacker-2014>

and demand more security¹⁰⁹

- A mosque in Järva is sent mail containing pornographic images¹¹⁰

February

- The imam of Stockholm mosque and his family face death threats and white powder is sent to the mosque

March

- Asylum housing for refugee children is set on fire in Kolbäck. The reason for fire is unknown.¹¹¹

April

- A general practitioner refused to treat a patient who did not want to shake hands due to her Islamic faith. The health centre is being sued for discrimination¹¹²

May

- A Muslim employee at one of Lunds public health centres has allegedly been harassed due to his faith and comments mentioning terrorism and Daesh/ISIL are made. The Equality Ombudsman requests that the municipality of Lund make a statement regarding this.¹¹³
- Gävle mosque receives a phone call threatening that 'God's wrath will be upon you on Friday'.¹¹⁴

June

- Sweden's first hijab-wearing policewoman issues a complaint to the Equality Ombudsman that she faces discrimination and harsher examinations than her peers from her employer.¹¹⁵

109. Johansson, Henrik. 2015. "SD-politiker efter moskébrand – muslimer är kretiner och islam ska förbjudas." *Inre Rasist Men*, January 3. Accessed February 4, 2016. <https://www.interasistmen.se/granskning/sd-politiker-efter-moskebrand-muslimer-ar-kretiner-och-islam-ska-forbjudas/>

110. Edström, Johanna. 2015. "Moskéer Hotade med Porr brev" *Mitt I*, February 2. Accessed February 4, 2015. <http://gamla.mitti.se/moskeer-hotade-med-porr-brev/>

111. Even though it is impossible to state the extent to which attacks on asylum housing are acts of Islamophobia or 'just' general xenophobia, it is common knowledge that the majority of asylum seekers in Sweden during the last years have come from countries dominated by Islamic/Muslim cultural traditions. "Nya Asylbränder – Polisen Utreder 40-tal Incidenter" 2015. *Svenska Dagbladet*, December 20. Accessed February 4, 2016. <http://www.svd.se/over-40-asylboenden-har-brunnit>

112. Agerberg, Miki. 2015. "Läkare diskriminerade patient". *Läkartidningen*, April 8. Accessed February 5, 2016. <http://www.lakartidningen.se/Aktuellt/Nyheter/2015/04/Lakare-diskriminerade-muslimsk-patient/>

113. Svensson, G Mats. 2015. "Muslim Trakasserad inom Lundavården." *Skånska Dagbladet*, May 9. Accessed February 5, 2016. <http://www.skd.se/2015/05/09/muslim-trakasserad-inom-lundavarden/>

114. Åhman, Emma. 2015. "Hot mot Gävle Moské." *Gefle Dagblad*, November 18. Accessed February 5, 2016. <http://www.gd.se/gastrikland/gavle/hot-mot-gavle-moske>

115. "eslöjad polis anmäler sin arbetsgivare" 2015. LT, June 8. Accessed February 6, 2016. <http://lt.se/nyheter/sodertalje/1.3002166-beslojad-polis-anmalder-sin-arbetsgivare>

- A balcony is set on fire in an asylum housing in Vilhelmina and the asylum's bus has its tires slashed
- Two firebombs are thrown at a planned asylum housing in Filipstad

July

- Suspected arson on asylum housing in Bengtsfors¹¹⁶

August

- An employer revokes a signed trainee contract after the trainee asks to be allowed to perform his daily prayers and attend the mosque on Friday as prescribed by his Islamic faith. His union is now suing the employer for discrimination on religious grounds.
- Crosses are placed in front of an asylum housing in Malung and set on fire¹¹⁷
Suspected arson on housing for refugee children in Värnamo¹¹⁸

September

- The Swedish fashion chains H&M and Åhléns feature hijab-wearing women in their newest campaigns which creates debate regarding the hijab on ads specifically, and the hijab more generally.¹¹⁹
- Suspected arson at a camp ground which is partly used as refugee camp in Stenungsund

October

- Sweden's largest live debate program, SVT Debatt, features a debate about whether women in hijab should be allowed on the ads of fashion giants¹²⁰
- Gina Dirawi, a host on SVT complains about SVT Debatt, arguing that the topic of allowing women in hijab on ads itself is ignorant and discriminating.¹²¹
- The Swedish Member of Parliament, Gulan Avic, from the Liberal Party (Folkpartiet) argues that the hijab should not be normalised, and that H&M and Åhléns should refrain from using hijab in their campaigns. Avic holds that the hijab is being used as a tool to subordinate women and that mandating the hijab is one of Islamists' global goals.¹²²

116. Tuvhag, Emmylou. 2014. "Svårare för SD att Förneka Rasismen." *Svenska Dagbladet*, August 2. Accessed December 25, 2015. <http://www.svd.se/svarare-for-sd-att-forneka-rasismen>

117. Tuvhag, Emmylou. 2014. "Svårare för SD att Förneka Rasismen." *Svenska Dagbladet*, August 2. Accessed December 25, 2015. <http://www.svd.se/svarare-for-sd-att-forneka-rasismen>

118. Ibid

119. Canoilas, Viviana. 2015. "Gina Dirawis Kritik mot SVT: Diskriminerande." *Expressen*, October 3. Accessed February 5 2016. <http://www.expressen.se/noje/gina-dirawis-kritik-mot-svt-diskriminerande/>

120. Ibid

121. Ibid

122. Avci, Gulan. 2015. "Fel att se Slöjan som Vilket Plagg som Helst." *Aftonbladet*, October 8. Accessed February 6, 2015. <http://www.aftonbladet.se/debatt/debattamnen/samhalle/article21548120.ab>

- Sverige Demokraterna, a right-wing populist party, publishes a list of housing planned to be used as asylum residences in the future, encouraging people to issue complaints to their town building office.¹²³
- Anton Lundin Petterson attacked Kronan School in Trollhättan, Sweden, with a sword, killing two people. The police confirmed Petterson was motivated by racism and had chosen the school as his target due to its location in a neighborhood with a high immigrant population.¹²⁴
- A planned asylum housing in Upplands Väsby is vandalised¹²⁵
- A former school, planned as asylum housing, in Danderyd, is set on fire¹²⁶
- Planned asylum housing is set on fire in Eskilstuna¹²⁷
- Asylum housing in Munkedal is set on fire¹²⁸
- Suspected arson on housing for refugee children in Lund¹²⁹

November

- The Sweden Democrats party leader, Jimmie Åkesson, calls for the monitoring and mapping of (all) Muslim opinions.¹³⁰
- Fliers discouraging refugees to make their way to Sweden are found on the Greek island of Lesbos. The Sweden Democrats officially confirm that the party wrote the fliers (Helmersson 2015)
- Asylum housing in Boden is set on fire¹³¹
- Attempted arson on planned asylum housing in Forshaga¹³²
- Asylum housing in Tranås is vandalised¹³³
- A hand grenade is thrown at planned asylum housing in Kalmar¹³⁴

123. Linde Joel, Aron Andersson. 2015. "Här Sprider SD Adresser till Planerade Flyktingboenden." *Metro*, October 23. Accessed February 4. <http://www.metro.se/nyheter/har-sprider-sd-adresser-till-planerade-flyktingboenden/EVHojw!bwEhkU6On6f62/>

124. Ahola, Teresa. 2015. "Polisen: Han Valde Ut Sina Offer." *Svenska Dagbladet*, October 27. Accessed November 1, 2015. <http://www.svd.se/polisen-det-ror-sig-om-ett-hatbrott>

Orange, Richard. 2015. "Swedish School Killer Watched Nazi Videos Before Attack." *The Telegraph*, 23 October. Accessed November 1, 2015. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/sweden/11949104/Swedish-school-killer-watched-Nazi-videos-before-attack.html>

125. Ibid

126. Ahola, Teresa. 2015. "Polisen: Han Valde Ut Sina Offer." *Svenska Dagbladet*, October 27. Accessed November 1, 2015. <http://www.svd.se/polisen-det-ror-sig-om-ett-hatbrott>

127. Ibid

128. Ibid

129. Ibid

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December

- Housing for refugee children in Uppsala is burned to the ground¹³⁵
- Housing for refugee children in Södertälje is completely vandalised¹³⁶
- Suspected arson on housing for refugee children in Götene¹³⁷

January 2016

- Fire in Borås Mosque- unclear if arson or not¹³⁸

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Islamophobia or anti-Muslim racism poses a growing threat to the democratic foundations of European constitutions and social peace as well as the coexistence of different cultures throughout Europe. Both civil society actors and states should acknowledge the seriousness of this issue and develop concrete policies to counter Islamophobia.

As the leading think tank in Turkey, SETA felt an urgent need to address this problem. In fact, there are still people denying the very existence of racism against Muslims. Many state and civil society institutions, from the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) to the countless civil society organisations throughout Europe, have done priceless work to prove and establish the opposite. Yet, institutions like the FRA publish only irregular reports on a restricted number of countries while most civil society organisations tackle racism in general and only few focus on Islamophobia in particular -this is the urgent gap our report wishes to fill.

The European Islamophobia Report (EIR) is an annual report, which is presented for the first time this year. It currently comprises 25 national reports regarding each state and the tendencies of Islamophobia in each respective country. The current report features the work of 37 extraordinary scholars. In the years to come we will attempt to cover even more countries. This report aims to enable policymakers as well as the public to discuss the issue of Islamophobia with the help of qualitative data. At the same time, several of its unique characteristic features make a difference to the current state of the debate on Islamophobia. Studies on Islamophobia have in the past predominantly concentrated on Western Europe. This is especially the case with reports focusing on Islamophobia. The EIR is the first to cover a wide range of Eastern European countries like Serbia, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania and Latvia. This will enrich the debate on racism in general and Islamophobia in Europe in particular.

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