

GLOBAL MUSLIM DIASPORA

Muslim Communities and Minorities in Non-OIC Member States



SPAIN

Country Report Series



ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION
STATISTICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH
AND TRAINING CENTRE FOR ISLAMIC COUNTRIES



GLOBAL MUSLIM DIASPORA:
MUSLIM COMMUNITIES AND MINORITIES IN NON-OIC MEMBER STATES



COUNTRY REPORT SERIES

SPAIN



Organization of Islamic Cooperation
Statistical, Economic and Social Research and
Training Centre for Islamic Countries



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Kudüs Cad. No: 9, Diplomatik Site, 06450 Oran, Ankara –Turkey

Telephone +90–312–468 6172

Internet www.sesric.org

E-mail pubs@sesric.org

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For additional information, contact the Research Department through research@sesric.org.

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Acronyms

CIE	Comisión Islámica de España, <i>the Islamic Commission of Spain</i>
FEERI	Federación Española de Entidades Religiosas Islámicas, the <i>Federation of Islamic Religious Entities of Spain</i>
GNI	Gross National Income
GMD	Global Muslim Diaspora Project
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
SP int.	Spain Interview, GMD Spain Field Study 2018
SP Sur.	Spain Survey, GMD 2019
SP dis.	Spain Roundtable Discussions, GMD Spain Field Study 2018
SSUA	Social Sciences University of Ankara
TFGMP	The Future of Global Muslim Population
WPR	World Population Review
UCIDE	Unión de Comunidades Islámicas de España, <i>the Union of Islamic Communities in Spain</i>

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Foreword

The SESRIC has launched the Global Muslim Diaspora (GMD) Project - a comprehensive research effort trying to analyse challenges, attitudes, experiences, and perceptions on a range of issues related to Muslim communities and minorities living in the non-OIC countries. The main objective of the project is to provide a range of useful comparative statistics and insights, which can help identify issues, initiate cooperation forums and shape future policy.

Islam is not only present in all continents as a religion but also as a cultural and civilizational value. Starting with the *Hijrah* of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Muslim migrants have laid the foundations for the spread of Islamic values, ideas, and habits in the regions where they are settled thus contributing to the cultural richness and economic development of these places.

Today, whenever we raise the point concerning Muslims communities and minorities living in non-OIC countries, we have in mind a context in which Islam is present through more recent migrations. However, we should keep in mind that many of these countries have also been the homeland of its Muslims for centuries.

Despite the recent growth of literature on Muslims living in non-OIC countries, our knowledge regarding this subject remains limited and fragmented. The GMD project intends to fill in this gap through engaging more closely with the representatives of Muslim communities and minorities in different countries.

In the context of the GMD project, it is with great pleasure that I present to you the report on Spain, which affords the political elites, policy makers, analysts, and general public the opportunity to understand how the Muslims in Spain view the most pressing issues they face today. The report on Spain is based on two basic pillars: desk research and fieldwork – conducted by traveling to Spain. The main components of this field study involved survey questionnaires and workshops with representatives of Muslim communities and minorities and in-depth interviews with Muslim and non-Muslim public opinion leaders. The results are integrated utilized and integrate throughout the report.

I would like to encourage the readers of this report to have a look at the GMD general report titled “Muslim Communities and Minorities in Non-OIC Countries: Diagnostics, Concepts, Scope and Methodology”, which inter alia provides a description of methodology and research activities applied when preparing the report on Spain.

The development of this report has involved the dedication, skills, and efforts of many individuals, to whom I would like to thank.

Amb. Musa Kulaklıkaya
Director General
SESRIC

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Ambassador Musa Kulaklıkaya, Director General of the SESRIC, provided pivotal leadership during the preparation of the report. Several SESRIC members also contributed to the finalization of the report, including Dr. Kenan Bağcı, Acting Director of Economic and Social Research Department, and Dr. Erhan Türbedar, Researcher, who coordinated the report on behalf of SESRIC. Kaan Namlı, Researcher, edited the report and Fatma Nur Zengin, Events and Communications Specialist, facilitated the fieldworks.

The SESRIC gratefully acknowledges local field workers and the institutions representing Muslim communities and minorities in Spain for their cooperation and extraordinary support, without which this project would not have been possible.

Executive Summary

This report aims to address a gap in the literature regarding the global Muslim diasporic community by providing a comprehensive outlook on the principal aspects of Spain's Muslim community. The data and information presented in this study were collected via a survey conducted in Madrid, Barcelona, and Valencia (in April 2019), a number of in-depth interviews, two roundtable discussions held in Madrid (between December 9-15, 2018) and a detailed investigation of secondary sources. The survey was conducted with the participation of 400 Muslim individuals and twelve Muslim NGOs, social activists, academics, students, and community representatives attended the roundtable discussions. A total of ten Muslims and non-Muslims participated in the interviews and contributed to the project.

The most up-to-date data on the number of Muslims is from 2016 by *Observatorio Andalusi* (OA), which gives an estimation of just under 2 million. The vast majority of the Muslim population in Spain has an immigrant background that does not go back more than three or four decades. In other words, the Muslim population in Spain has predominantly accumulated in the last few decades through immigration waves, particularly from Morocco. As indicated in Moreras (2019), 42% of the 2 million Muslims have obtained Spanish citizenship and about 1.5% of them are Spaniards who converted, or reverted in this context, to Islam. Making up to approximately 40% of the immigrant Muslim community in Spain, Moroccans are the largest ethnonational community. Proceeding the Moroccan community is the Pakistani (4%), Algerian (3.2%), and Senegalese (3.2%) Muslims. No official data is available concerning the sectarian break-up, but it is estimated that 95% of Muslims in Spain follow the Sunni sect of Islam (Moreras 2019: 640). The Muslim community in Spain is a very religious one. The level of religious commitment and halal consciousness observed to be very high among Muslim individuals.

The Spanish Muslim community is one of the fastest growing minority groups thanks to higher marriage and fertility rates among Muslims in comparison to other groups. It was observed during the field study and maintained in various studies, that the Spanish Muslim community is a young one. Not only has the Muslim community had enough time to fully integrate and overcome the problems that were present during the early stages but they also have a large young population in a fast-aging society. Initially the Muslim community was mostly composed of rural, young and uneducated working males. Over time, because of family reunions and the arrival of Muslim women this composition with all its unfavourable attitudes (less need for integration and interaction, more desire to return and reunite with the family, and the like) began to change. Today, the community is much more integrated, involved, and educated thanks to the stability and power brought by Muslim women.

Spain with its enduring legacy of Islamic civilization, presents a unique context for the Muslim community among other Western countries. . Long-denied and stigmatized Andalusian history is still there but the Spanish Muslim community has only formed in the last three or four

decades. It is also one of the most contested and problematical contexts. The Muslim community in Spain obtained constitutional recognition and relevant rights and freedoms granted to minority religions and communities as early as 1992. During the fieldwork and in the results of the *GMD Spain Survey* (SP Sur), it was observed that the Muslim presence in Spain's legal, administrative, and political context involves a set of issues pending for resolution for the last three decades. Among them are problems related to the operation and enforcement of the 1992 Agreement, the challenges of adaptation, the limited interaction between the immigrant Muslim community and the society at large, the provision of Islamic education for the Muslim students, rising discrimination and anti-Muslim rhetoric, particularly in the Spanish media and right-wing populist politics, and so forth.

On a more positive note, despite the challenges and problems concerning the politico-legal context, the level of confidence in both security forces and judiciary is very high among Muslims in Spain. Even more, their sense of belonging to Spain was significantly (at least 15 point) stronger than to their country of origin. For the majority of Muslims in Spain, immigration is linked to economic, familial, and educational reasons. More than three-quarter of the Muslims in Spain believe that economic prosperity, educational opportunities, and religious and cultural freedoms are the principle advantages of living in Spain, whereas racism, Islamophobia, unemployment, and discrimination by society are the biggest disadvantages.

The majority of the immigrant Muslims in Spain comes (mostly Moroccans) from an agricultural background with a modest amount of cultural, educational, and economic capital. Having mainly engaged in farming work, their major contribution to Spain is through cheap labour force in the farming and construction sectors. In this regard, the socio-economic status of immigrant Muslims is below the national average. Moreover, the level of educational attainment, economic prosperity, and electoral participation is also below the country average. This should not mean that the Muslim community's contribution is insignificant or insufficient; rather it is mostly limited to certain areas. The picture is improving with increasing number of younger generations who are fluent in the language, integrated into the system, well educated, and more ambitious to move forward. Given that, the Spanish society is aging and the upcoming generations of Muslims is predominantly young and well educated, diversification in the way Muslims will contribute to Spain is inevitable. In that respect, the Muslim youth in Spain appears as a powerful resource and a future advantage.

1. Introduction: Context and Background

Occupying about 85 % of the Iberian Peninsula and located on the tip of South-western Europe, Spain has a significant historical and cultural diversity, which played a considerable role in the formation of its socio-cultural fabric. The Castilians, Catalonians, Lusitanians, Galicians, Basques, Romans, Arabs, Jews, and Roma (Gypsies), together with other groups, contributed to the Spanish culture.

For decades, Spain had been one of the richest empires, and then it started to lose most of its



Figure 1: Spain's map. Source:

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Spain/media/557573/3588>

power in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Between 1936 and 1939, the Spanish Civil War pushed the country to the centre of international fora's focus (Bullock and Deakin, 1982: 652-695; Payne, 2011: 382-402).

Following this, under Francisco Franco's rule, until as late as 1975, Spain remained at the margin as a dictatorship in modern Europe. In 1975, after Franco's

death, Juan Carlos returned to the throne with constitutional monarchy. Since then, Spain has been ruled by a succession of democratically elected governments (Payne 2011: 436-489).

The country's official language is Castilian, which is also known as Spanish. The Spanish constitution recognizes autonomous communities' regional languages. These are called co-official languages, which are Catalan, Galician, Euskera, Bable, Aragonese, and Castilian. In terms of religion, after 1492 the Roman Catholic Church became the main identifier of Spain. Until 1834, the Church enforced religious uniformity. In the 20th century, with the Church's influence, the government declared Roman Catholicism as the official religion and even limited the practice of other faiths. This religious limitation continued during the Franco era but since

1978 Spain has no official religion (Radcliff 2017: 241-242). Today, the largest section of the Spanish society follows Roman Catholicism at around 67%, however, for a large section of Spanish people religion does not occupy a central place in their lives except for its rituals and socio-cultural tenets such as baptism, marriage and burial ceremonies. This is in parallel with the significantly high rate of Spaniards who do not follow any religion, as 20 to 22% of the Spanish population now identify as themselves as Atheist or Agnostic. In addition to Roman Catholics, the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Seventh-day Adventists, and the Mormons have been quite active since the 1970s. Islam is one of the largely followed religions in the country, with steadily increasing adherents in the last decades due to immigration (britannica.com).

Minority Religions in Spain		
Religion	Approximate figures	% of the population
Muslims	1.2 million	2,5
Evangelists	1.2 million	2,5
Orthodox Christians	100.000-200.000	0,2
Jews	40.000-60.000	0,1
Jehovah's Witnesses	110.000	0,2
Mormons	30.000	0,06
Buddhists	40.000-60.000	0,1
Hindus	25.000	0,05
New/alternative religions	100.000	0,2

Graph 1: Minority Religions in Spain. Source: Francisco Diez De Velasco, "The Visiblization of Religious Minorities in Spain".

Culturally, the Romans initially influenced Spain. This influence is particularly visible in language, religion, and architecture. The Roman influence was almost overshadowed by the Arab-origin Muslims, which dominated the country for almost eight centuries. The most apparent result was the number of words Spanish has taken from Arabic. This cultural amalgamation was further enriched by Jewish influence during the medieval ages. Subsequently, Castilian, Galician, and Basque effects became heavier in the Spanish cultural fabric (Philips & Philips 2016: 115-183).

1.1. Spain: A Brief Historical Context

In ancient times, different communities, from North Africa to Western Europe, including Celts, Basques, Phoenicians, and the Greeks inhabited the Spanish peninsula. This mosaic of people is known as Iberians. The Romans established their rule over Iberia in 200 BCE. During the 5th century, Visigoths invaded the peninsula and the Visigoth King Leovigild brought all groups in Spain under his rule, which brought Christianity to the country. In 711 CE, Muslims arrived at the peninsula and established a long flourishing civilization until 1492 (Philips & Philips 2016: 24-114).

From the 16th century onwards, for almost four centuries, Spain remained a country of emigration. In the 20th century, the number of Spanish emigrants gradually fell. From the 1960s to the financial crisis in 1973, emigration numbers were reduced from 100,000 to about 25,000. Despite this reduction and an additional return of 650,000 immigrants since 1975, approximately two million Spaniards are dispersed around the globe (González-Enríquez 2005: 8). In 1981, only 200,000 foreigners were resident in Spain, and the majority of these were Europeans from Germany, the United Kingdom and other countries of Central and Northern Europe, who were mainly retirees and had settled permanently on the Spanish coasts and islands (González-Enríquez 2005: 8). Besides them, there was a small group of Latin Americans, most of whom had fled from the dictatorships of South America. After Spain's European Union membership in 1986, the number of immigrants continuously increased. Parallel to this, in 1991 the number of Spanish emigrants reduced to 10,000. Between 2000 and 2004, the number of immigrants has triplicated. At the beginning of 2004, foreigners represented 7% of the total number of persons included in the Local Registers in Spain, and throughout 2003 and 2004, following Italy, Spain was the main host country for immigrants in the European Union (González-Enríquez 2005: 8).

Between 2000 and 2007, Spain experienced a broad immigration boom. In these years, Spain



Figure 2: The Alhambra, an Andalusian palace and fortress complex in Granada, one of the majestic sites of Islamic history of Spain

was the second largest recipient of immigrants, after the US, among the OECD countries. The obvious reason was the level of Spanish, labour-intensive economic growth, which was above the EU average and the rapidly aging population which brought about a need for foreign labour. In 2007, the economic

crisis curbed immigration to Spain, although a substantial flow persisted until late 2008. Since the Spanish economy could not accommodate the increased number of immigrants, unemployment rates increased significantly (Arango, et.al. 2011: 3-4). The main reason was that the economic crisis badly hit the very industry that was accommodating the biggest number of migrants- the Spanish construction sector. In 2009, incoming migrant flow decreased, which stabilized the immigrant population size. Some of them returned home, but many stayed despite unemployment. As a result, male immigrants have been much more affected by job destruction than their female counterparts, reversing previous trends (Arango, et.al. 2011: 3-4).

Top 10 immigrant communities residing in Spain (2013)			
Country of origin	Total amount	%, foreign-born population	%, total population
Romania	801,412	12.1%	1.7%
Morocco	777,603	11.7%	1.6%
Ecuador	456,233	6.9%	1.0%
United Kingdom	385,588	5.8%	0.8%
Colombia	370,823	5.6%	0.8%
Argentina	271,149	4.1%	0.6%
Germany	236,031	3.6%	0.5%
France	221,925	3.3%	0.5%
Peru	195,488	2.9%	0.4%
Bolivia	185,194	2.8%	0.4%

Graph 2: Top 10 immigrant communities residing in Spain (2013), Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE), Pasetti 2014.

Another feature of Spanish migrants is that most of them are workers and young adults. Most immigrants have come in search of employment, or as relatives accompanying migrant workers, and filling in vacancies. Family reunion flows, especially after 2000, increased the number of children and youngsters of immigrant background. Yet, the size of the second generation, (children born in Spain to immigrant parents) is still limited. Asylum seekers and refugees represent a minor component of these flows (Arango, et.al. 2011: 3-4). The proportion of immigration to Spain from developing countries has substantially increased over the last decades; however, this trend was not comparable to the increase in the number of immigrants from undeveloped or underdeveloped countries. At the end of the 1980s, the EU migrants' numbers were half of the total; in 2003, they fell to 22% (Arango, et.al. 2011: 4).

The immigration to Spain, after the mid-1980s, demonstrates a very visible geographical variety with Moroccans, Chinese, sub-Saharan Africans, Ecuadorians, Colombians, Dominicans, Western and Eastern Europeans, being the top emigrating groups. The share of

national groups in this composition changed over time. In the 1990s, Moroccans were the biggest group of non-EU immigrants, with the 2000s they were overrun by Latin Americans. In the composition of 2000s, Ecuadorians and Moroccans were dominant, totalling 18%, followed by the Colombians (11.7%), Rumanians (6.6%), Argentineans (5.2%), Peruvians (2.7%), Bulgarians (2.5%) and Chinese (2.5%) (National Institute of Statistics [INE] 2003). At the beginning of 2011, the Spanish municipal population registers showed that the number of foreigners at 5.7 million, or 12.2 % of the total population. Out of this number, 2.4 million were EU citizens and 3.3 million from the rest of the world. These numbers include immigrants in irregular condition, but not the ones born outside of Spain who have acquired Spanish citizenship (Arango, et.al. 2011: 3).

As indicated by many scholars, Spain has a short yet intensive history of immigration. According to the *INE*, in 10 years, between 2000 and 2010, the number of foreign residents rose from 900,000 (making up 2.2% of the population) to 4.9 million in 2010 (10.3% of the population) (Pasetti 2014: 8). Ending up with a large immigrant community in less than two decades, Spain has been experiencing many challenges in meeting the needs and demands of the new ethnonational and religious groups. According to Pasetti, “charging regional and local governments with the task of identifying concrete immigrant groups at risk of social exclusion, the political discourse is focused on specific communities that are considered particularly problematic in terms of integration (Zapata-Barrero and Garcés-Mascreñas): Latin Americans, particularly with regard to issues of youth violence and street gangs; Muslims, concerning conflicts around mosques, education and dress code; Romanians, especially in matters related to the Gypsy community” (2014: 9).

1.2. Islam in Spain

Muslim presence in Spain could be categorized under four profiles: (a) *Muslims of Spanish birth*, viz., the residents of Muslim origin in the cities of Ceuta and Melilla, in Northern Morocco, (b) *Naturalized Muslims*, persons of Muslim origin, particularly Moroccans who has



Figure 3: Gardens of Alcazar in Cordoba, another majestic site from Arabic history of Spain

acquired Spanish citizenship, (c) *New Muslims*, Spanish citizens who converted to the Muslim faith, and (d) *Resident Foreigners*, primarily immigrant workers—mostly from Morocco, sub-Saharan Africa and Pakistan (Morera 2002: 132). However, similar to many European countries, finding the exact number of Muslims in Spain is difficult since censuses do not include questions related to religion. Article 16.2 of the 1978 Spanish constitution categorically states that ‘no-one can be obliged to declare their ideology, religion or beliefs’. Although the other groups now include a substantial number of Muslims, the increase in Spanish Muslims’ numbers was firstly and foremostly due to the mass immigration in the early 1980s particularly from Morocco. With continuing economic migration, Spanish Muslims number reached 800,000 in 2005. The 1985 Immigration Act enabled Muslim immigrants to unite with their families. With the increase and diversification of Spanish Muslims, the necessity for religious education and practice has emerged and this necessity has marked the Spanish Muslim space for the last two decades (Arigati 2006: 566).

Even if there has been a long history of Islam on the Iberian Peninsula, Spain’s Muslim population is relatively small compared to other European countries. There are two main reasons for this, ideological and economic. Ideologically, Franco’s imposed state Catholicism delayed the institutionalization of Spanish Islam. Relatedly, from the early 1970s onwards, people from Arab countries, with which the Franco regime had established cordial political relations, began to settle in Spain. Although they did not have a specific legal status when they first arrived, these early newcomers were the embryo of the Muslim minority. Most of them studied at Spanish universities, and after completing their degrees, they settled in Spain and became citizens. With the 1970s, these pioneers were followed by immigrants from Muslim countries, who also became Spanish citizens. Moreover, Ceuta and Melilla, the two Spanish enclaves in northern Morocco, engendered a particular set of population and identity dynamics and played an important role in the process of the legal recognition of Islam in Spain. Ceuta and Melilla Communities did not only mediate with the Spanish state but also made great efforts to promote the first associations and places of worship. With the mid-1980s, Spain’s economic development brought a high number of North Africans, followed by sub-Saharan African and Asians, specifically from Pakistan (Contreras 2015: 311-13).

Although religion-oriented research was officially prohibited, there were non-official researches carried out to quantify Spanish Muslims. The *Andalusian Observatory* (AO, Observatorio Andalusi), an institution created by the *Union of Islamic Communities in Spain* (UCIDE, Unión de Comunidades Islámicas de España) is perhaps the most prominent of them. A report of AO distinguished nationalized Muslims and their descendants, called “Hispano-Muslims” which were estimated at 413,178 (a figure that includes the residents of Ceuta and Melilla), and citizens from the OIC countries who were granted Spanish nationality. This differentiation eased the quantitative analysis of Spanish Muslims but a blanket categorization about the religious identities of the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of Muslims who have been in Spain since the 1950s, which is more problematic, is also required (Contreras 2015: 312-13).

According to other non-official statistics on Muslim-origin foreign residents, there were 1,174,437 Muslims in Spain as of June 2013. This shows that despite the economic crisis in 2012, which slowed down the migration to the country, there was still a small increase in numbers. Another 160,982 people of Muslim origin who have acquired Spanish nationality from 1958 to 2012 should also be added to this figure. This means the total number of Muslims in Spain is 1,335,419, amounting to 2.8% of the total Spanish population. In 2014, the AO suggested another estimation for the number of the Muslim population, 1,732,191 (3.6% of the total Spanish population) with the following components: *Muslims of Ceuta and Melilla* (31,383 and 31,952, respectively); *Muslim converts* (21,176); *foreign residents of Muslim origin* (1,163,839); *naturalized Muslims* (162,754); and the *descendants of Muslim families* (314,147). According to the estimates in this report, 32.8% of the Muslim population residing in Spain are Spanish citizens (Moreras 2014: 555-556).

In 2016, the decline in Muslims' numbers continued from 1,037,290 in 2015 to 1,034,116. The main reason is the demographic decline in the number of Moroccans (from 770,735 in 2014 to 756,796 in 2016), although Pakistani and Senegalese increased their numbers. There is also a decrease in the number of Moroccans obtaining Spanish citizenship—34,807 in 2014 to 23,052 in 2016 (Moreras 2019: 628). Overall, as of 2019, the Muslim population in Spain is estimated to amount to 1.9 million, making up around 4% of the total population of Spain which is reported to be around 46.5 million (Moreras 2019: 640).

According to the estimates in the 2013 report by *Immigration Observatory*, Ministry of Employment and Social Security (MESS), “32.8% of the Muslim population residing in Spain are Spanish citizens [around 568,000 citizens]” (Moreras 2014: 555-556). Regarding age-gender-ethnicity distribution, Spain has a large number of Muslim immigrants from North Africa, particularly Morocco—which presents the highest ratio of Muslim men to Muslim women in Europe (about 190 Muslim men for every 100 Muslim women). That ratio is projected to narrow by 2030 to about 133 Muslim men for every 100 Muslim women, as families join Muslim men who immigrated alone in search of employment (pewforum.org 2011:133).

As already noted, the number of individuals involved is difficult to specify, though an estimate of around 1 million seems reasonable, taking into account the statistics on migrants from different OIC countries. Moroccans are the most numerous (746,760 according to the December 2010 census), followed by Senegalese (61,383), Pakistanis (56,402), and Algerians (56,129) (www.ine.es 2011).

Country of Origin	Foreigners	Spaniards
Morocco	644,688	103,249
Algeria	51,145	5,740
Pakistan	46,649	1,746
Senegal	46,077	1,527
Mali	19,439	98
Gambia	19,233	969
Mauritania	9,805	433
Bangladesh	7,833	149
Other (Egypt, Iran, Syria, Turkey, Tunisia, Libya, Jordan, Iraq)	14,654	8933
Total	859,520	122,844

Graph 3: Comparison of Foreign vs Spaniard Muslims – Country of Origin. Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística (census 2010) (<<http://www.ine.es>>)

The presence of Islam in Spain is a “migrant Islam,” which affects both the practice of Islam in Spain and its management by the government. It affects issues such as religious authority, community leadership, and the presence of actors in public debates. Several Spanish departments are related to migration and Muslims. Among them is the *Foundation for Pluralism and Coexistence* (Fundación Pluralismo y Convivencia, FPC), which is a public entity, created by the Council of Ministers on 15 December 2004 with a proposal from the Ministry of Justice. It aims to promote freedom of religion, support certain projects by religious groups and denominations who have signed a cooperation agreement with the Spanish state to provide a space for reflection and debate on religious freedom and its place in the development of an adequate framework for living together and to promote the standardization of religion in society. To achieve these objectives, the *Foundation* works with three types of partners: with religious denominations, providing support to their representative bodies and activities, as well as with communities, churches and local entities; with society in general, as initiator of public debate and as a space for social cohesion and living together; and with governments, generating policies, ensuring rights are guaranteed, managing various aspects of diversity and plurality throughout the national territory (www.eurel.info).

Another department is the MESS (Ministerio de Empleo y Seguridad Social) which is responsible for employment, social security, immigration, labour, hygiene, and inspection. A more relevant body is the *Secretary-General of Immigration and Emigration* (SGIE, former the Secretaría de Estado de Inmigración y Emigración, renamed as the Secretaría General de Inmigración y Emigración in 2012) which is responsible for immigration and emigration policies, as well as immigrants’ integration. The *Ministry of the Interior* is also an important

figure in the administration of immigration and immigrants, since it performs specific management functions for security, migratory control, and asylum policies. Finally, the *Ministry of Justice* is responsible for granting Spanish Citizenship.



Figure 4: The Center of Islamic Culture, also M-30 Mosque, in Madrid

organizational and religious bodies. At the end of 2013, there were around 1,300 Islamic religious institutions in the Register of the Ministry of Justice, and 42 Muslim federations—although how many of them are proactively involved is disputed. According to data from the *Observatory of Religious Pluralism*, there were 1,274 mosques in Spain as of June 2013. The *Observatorio Andalusí's* 2016 report confirmed this with estimating that in Spain there are some 1,508 Muslim places of worship, fourteen of them were major Muslim centres (Moreras 2019: 637; www.observatorioreligion.es). *As-Salam Mosque*, *Omar Mosque*, *At-Taqwa Mosque*, and *The Islamic Cultural Centre in Madrid*, alias the *Mezquita M.30* (M-30 Mosque), which is

The Organic Law 4/2000 on the Rights of Aliens in Spain and their Social Integration regulate the rights of foreigners. According to this law, the non-Spaniards, or aliens, who have a residence permit in Spain, have the right to meet, demonstrate, associate, and join a Trade Union and professional organizations. For electoral political participation through active and passive suffrage at the municipal and Autonomous Community elections, only the nationals of countries, which Spain has reciprocal agreements with, are entitled. This includes all citizens from the EU. The right to vote in the national elections is only granted to nationalized aliens (INE 2003).

Spanish Muslims have managed to establish a high number of representative,

named after the motorway it stands by, are some of the most important mosques in Spain. Catalonia (299 mosques), Andalusia (225 mosques), and the Valencian Community (209 mosques) are the top three regions with the highest number of mosques (Morera 2019: 637).

To these organizations and institutions, one can add functioning social centres, mostly providing Islamic education and recitation activities to Spanish Muslims. Between 1988 and 2000, three Sufi centres were established in Catalonia, catering mainly to non-immigrant Catalan congregations and providing devotional practices consisting of recitation and meditation. Some activities also take place in social centres, private homes, and three centres belong to different tariqas: *Darqawa*, *Mevlevi*, and *Naqshbandi* (Estruch et al 2006). The Darqawi centre is the oldest and run by several dozen Spanish converts organizing recitation activities and Islamic training. The Mevlevi centre offers courses in calligraphy, recitation, and Islam, and attracts almost only Spanish followers, as does the Naqshbandi centre. Although no specific and detailed research was carried out on these centres, one clear point is that the number of people involved in their activities is limited and they often appeal to non-Muslim Spaniards who show a keener interest in the spiritual aspects of Islam or Islamic philosophy, mainly *tasawwuf* (Contreras 2015: 324-325).

Although the Spanish context for the Muslim community is highly contested one and many issues, particularly educational ones, remain unresolved, the 1992 Agreement of Cooperation between the community and the state was one of the earliest recognition of the Muslim community by a European country.¹ For the first time in modern Spanish history, Islam received official recognition and its public practice was to be protected; the Agreement's preamble recognized and underlined Islam's "important role in the formation of Spanish identity," as well. The Agreement granted imams special privileges, offered tax relief to groups registered with the Ministry of Justice, and conferred legal protections on Islamic religious buildings and cemeteries as sacred spaces. It also recognized Islamic marriage, with the exception of polygamy, on an equal footing with Catholic and civil marriage. The government agreed to accommodate Muslim religious practices—like dietary restrictions—in prisons, hospitals, schools, and other public institutions, including the military. Finally, the Agreement recognized religious festivals, the need to regulate halal food production, and the need to preserve Spain's Islamic artistic and historic heritage (Guia 2015: 101). The Cooperation Agreement has recognized the right of Muslims to make use of sites in public cemeteries. Currently, there are twenty-nine Muslim burial places around the country (Morera 2014: 561).

Spanish Muslims also suffer from similar challenges of Muslim communities in other non-Muslim countries. Their leaders were often unsuccessful to present a united front. For

¹ Law 24/1992, of 10 November, approving the Agreement of Cooperation between the State and the Federation of Evangelical Religious Entities of Spain; Law 26/1992, of 10 November, approving the Agreement of Cooperation between the State and the Islamic Commission of Spain (BOE no 272, 12 November 1992).

example, during negotiations to establish the *Federation of Islamic Religious Entities of Spain* (FEERI), which took place in 1989, disagreements among Muslim community members emerged. Riay Tatory Bakry, a Syrian-born physician and the imam of Madrid's largest mosque at the time, decided to create an alternative group called *the Union of Islamic Communities in Spain* (UCIDE) (Guia 2015: 101). This caused the government to refuse to deal with two separate and feuding organizations. Instead, the government forced them to merge under one banner, *the Islamic Commission of Spain* (CIE, Comisión Islámica de España). The Agreement stipulated that the CIE would be in charge of monitoring its implementation with the oversight of two secretary-generals, one from FEERI and the other from UCIDE. Yet, as time has proved, this compromise was destined to fail (Guia 2015: 101).

One main discussion within this agreement for merging was its funding. Mansur Escudero, a psychiatrist from Córdoba who led Spanish converts and was the Secretary-General of the CIE from 1991 to 2006, blamed Tatory, his co-secretary-general, for forcing Spanish Muslims to rely on foreign capital for their religious needs (González 1999). According to Escudero (1998), since Tatory was a member of the Ministry of Justice's Advisory Commission on Religious Freedom, he had direct access to government funding. Yet Tatory did not view foreign funds as an issue as long as they came from a variety of sources (2006). Escudero believed that without state funding, Spanish Muslims would be entirely dependent on foreign donors, and would thus have to accept whatever theological or political interference was involved (Guia 2015: 78-87). Even though the Spanish Constitution guarantees equal treatment of minority confessions by the state, the imbalance between Christians, Jews, and Muslims remains egregious. In 2005, the Catholic Church received 141 million € in tax revenue, compared to a mere 3 million € for Jewish, Muslim, and Protestant groups combined (Guia 2015: 83-84, 102). Another imbalance was government funding of religious education. The government paid the salaries of 15,000 Catholic schoolteachers, only 100 Protestant and 36 Islamic teachers were hired with public funds. As for private schools receiving public subsidies, a similar imbalance exists, with 1,860 Catholic schools versus just four Protestant and two Jewish schools. This financial gap kept growing (Guia 2015: 83-84, 102).

Another disadvantage was regarding the application of the above-stated agreement in 1992. Spanish governments' lack of will in implementing the Agreement disillusioned Muslim representatives, who now describe it as a "papel mojado", a worthless piece of paper that failed to protect Muslim rights (Escudero 1998: 12). The founder of the immigrant association Ibn Battuta, and a Socialist member of the Catalan Parliament from 2003 to 2011, Mohammed Chaib, described Spanish governments' treatment of religious minorities as "chaotic and catastrophic." As he pointed out, "[n]one of the points fleshed out in 1992 when the Islamic Commission of Spain was created has been fulfilled. Not religious teaching in schools, not freedom of religion—not one" (Guia 2015: 83-4, 102; Chaib 2005: 42).



Figure 5: The patio of Centro Cultural Islámico de Madrid (the Center of Islamic Culture in Madrid)

Although there is no legal restriction prohibiting the wearing of traditional Muslim dresses in public places, for example schools and workplaces, since 2002, some controversy regarding hijab in schools have started. There were some complaints about the police's refusal to photograph Muslim women wearing a hijab for identity cards, which was alleviated with the Ministry of Interior's regulation in November 2009 allowing Muslim women to wear hijab identity photographs. Yet, in 2007 the xenophobic party, Platform for Catalonia (Plataforma per Catalunya), put forward a motion to ban burqa in Vic (Barcelona). The representatives of other political parties also announced their preference to limit the use of the burqa (Morera 2014: 563-566). In 2010, fifteen municipalities in Catalonia passed motions against the use of face covering in public spaces. The first was Lleida, which included in their municipal laws a ban on the niqab in public buildings such as municipal offices, schools, and hospitals. The motions against the burqa became a part of a restrictive immigration policy strategy during regional and municipal elections, even if only a very small number of Muslim women wore the niqab (Morera 2014: 563-566). The Catalan Autonomous Government (Generalitat of Catalonia) submitted a draft law to ban the wearing of the niqab or full face covering in public spaces, based on security reasons and personal identification (Morera 2014: 563-566).

Another challenge has been establishing physical residences for representative bodies. Notwithstanding protections at the federal level, some minority religious groups experience difficulties receiving building and other permits for places (www.state.gov 2015). Muslim groups continue to report similar difficulties regarding permits for new mosque construction, especially in central and urban locations. One main difficulty is that local municipalities delay decisions for years on requests for land. For example, several municipalities in Catalonia stated that their city councils needed more time to study the impact of new places of worship on such land (www.state.gov 2015: 6-7). Another challenge is the continuing funding problems of Islamic education in public schools. Regarding public schools, in 1996 the Spanish state and the Islamic Commission of Spain signed an agreement to include Islamic religious education in

the national educational system. According to the agreement, the teaching should have begun in the 1996–97 school year, but it was delayed until the 2003–2004 school year, when it began in some Autonomous Communities (regional authorities) to which the transfer of responsibility for education had not yet taken place (Ceuta, Melilla, Aragon, Valencia, and Madrid).

Although with the Socialist government in 2004, the funding of Islamic education in schools became mandatory whenever at least ten students request it as an elective, regional governments enforced it reluctantly and unequally, especially since most regional governments have to pay teachers of Islam from their own budgets (Lorenzo and Peña 2004; Álvarez et al. 2009). In some areas, educational authorities bend the law on religious education by doing away with Islamic and Catholic instruction altogether and offering a joint secular course in history of religion instead. Only in Ceuta, Melilla, and Andalusia— where the national Ministry of Education pays salaries directly- teachers of Islam were hired according to the law. By 2005, only 36 teachers of Islam were active in the public system across Spain (Guia 2015: 83-84). Ten years later, in 2015, the number of teachers of Islam has only reached 46 even if the demand requires approximately 450 (Berglund 2015: 28)

A similar situation has been valid regarding the funds given to the Islamic Commission of Spain to finance its chaplaincy services in prisons where there are 7,200 Muslim. The budget of the Commission in 2016 was 9,000€ compared to the Catholic Churches of 598,500€ (Moreras 2019: 635). This underlines the above-mentioned imbalance between Catholicism and Islam in Spain. In 2012, there were 2,953 teachers of Catholicism in Spain, at a cost to taxpayers of 94.2 million € (EFE ECONOMIA 2013).

Some Muslim organizations tried to overcome the problems of Islamic education via lobbying. In 2014, the ICS, led by Mounir Benjelloun and Educaislam, a convert, educator, and activist, Natalia Andújar, have successfully pressured the government to pass a resolution detailing an official curriculum for Islamic religious instruction at Spanish primary schools (Guia, 2015: 106). That was the first step towards securing Muslim children’s right to receive Islamic instruction in Spanish schools. However, no private Islamic school receives public funding unlike thousands of Catholic schools (Guia, 2015: 106). Despite the attempts, it was observed during the field study in December 2018 that the most pressing issue for the Muslim community in Spain is the education of young Muslims.

One of the major observations of the field study related to the Spanish-Muslim context was that the legacy of history is still very powerful and it is certainly a distinguishing feature of the Spanish context for the Muslim community. Taher, an Islamic instructor who participated in the roundtable discussions, summarized the Spanish-Islamic context as unique in the Western world. According to him, Spain presents a different context in comparison to other European countries where a Muslim might face social or political discrimination and prejudice. In Spain, in addition to these, Muslims face the legacy of history in religious prejudice. Spanish people still think in the limited frame of Conquista vs Reconquista, and see Muslims as “invaders,” he

stated. “They consider us as the ‘Moros’ and that we should always be inferior. We should always work in the services sector, not finish university” (SP, dis). According to Zahra and Halifa, although the legacy of history and the religious prejudices hold sway in the outlook of the Spanish society, the role of lack of knowledge and the media and politics are equally important. Halifa stated that “Spain is not like other countries where people fact-check and try to know,” thus whatever the media offer them on Islam and Muslims become the truth, the reality for them (SP, dis.).

Expressing very similar views, Yusuf, an accomplished social and humanitarian activist and a translator of Moroccan origin, stated that Spain is a special country because it is different from the rest of Europe because it is one of the few countries that have a Muslim past. He argued that this past has been minimized, for different reasons and factors, and reduced 800 years of Islamic history to two pages and probably two images: one is the mosque in Córdoba and the other one is Alhambra in Granada and that is all about it.

They came, they invaded us and we kicked them out through the *Reconquista*, that is how history is told here in Spain. Although, I think Muslim culture and Muslim civilization permeates all aspects of life here in Spain. The culture, the vocabulary, traditions, even religion has been, you know, permeated by the Islamic religion. If we talk about huge Catholic mystics, they had been influenced by Sufi Muslim, mystics, here in Spain and so forth. (Yusuf, int.).

From his particular point of view, although the Islamic history of Spain is seen as something negative and has equated the image of Muslims to the invader, it also gives the Spanish people a proximity to Islam. “They already know more or less what Muslim, you know, are about and what they think, what they believe” (Yusuf, int.).

From this perspective, although some pointed the challenges they encounter and reported sporadic discrimination and incidents of Islamophobia, the majority of respondents in the interviews and the roundtable discussions, emphasized that Spanish people, in general, are very well intended, understanding, and helpful. Some participants in the roundtable discussions, Humbert, Halifa, Zahra, and Taher, often pointed out that the lack of knowledge about the others and their religion, is not only Spanish people’s problem, and Muslims, too, have very little knowledge on Spanish people’s religion. Zahra argued, “we always complain that they don’t want to know us. That they know nothing about Islam. However, what do we know about them? We have fear, as well, it is a mutual fear.” She added that because of her activities she visits churches often, even attending excursions with Spanish people. They are so helpful that “heir priest shows me the *Qibla* to pray; he looks for it and helps me find it” (SP, dis).

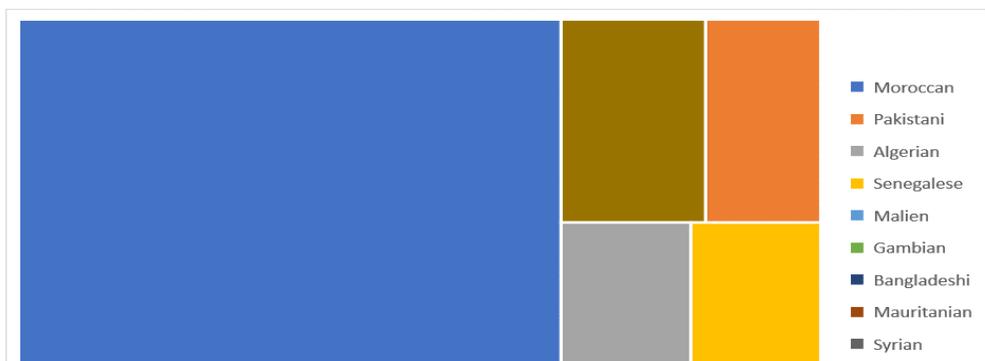
Robab, a non-Muslim Spanish academic and a researcher in an Islamic foundation states, the Spanish Muslim community is a living reminder of the Islamic and Arabic past of Europe and its civilization. One of the most pivotal contributions of the Muslim community to Spain and Europe, in that sense, he reported, is inviting both the Spanish and European societies to face their Arabic and Islamic past (Robab, int.). Robab further stated that it was their aim and

mission, as an Islamic foundation, to underline the importance of cultural patrimony, to invite people to make peace and reunite with their Al-Andalusian roots and past. This, in his opinion, “can help to break the prejudices and bring forward a dialogue between civilizations, between different cultures and create an understanding that we are pretty much all the same.” Robab added that they, as an Islamic foundation, have been emphasizing the fact that both the Andalusian heritage and Islamic culture are not values and gifts for only Muslims or Spanish Muslims, they are for all Spaniards, for every European, and the whole humanity. This is why they called one relevant project on this mission as “Islam: Patrimony of All” (Robab, int.).

According to Farhad, the general director of an important Islamic cultural centre in Madrid and an ex-diplomat, Spain is an open society and in their day-to-day lives, Spanish people really do not care about the religious identity of people. They do not put any specific emphasis on faith and religious, ethnic or cultural identity when they befriend or socialize with others. Religiosity used to play a greater role in Spanish people’s lives, Farhad continued, when the whole society was officially Catholic, but those days are past now. In his opinion, today, religion does not really play a decisive role in social interaction and communication in the Spanish society. Whether someone is Catholic or Muslim, whether he/she is originally from Turkey or Tunisia is only his/her private business, and Spanish people have respect for that. Spain is a diverse society and it is rich in this diversity. The future for both Muslims and the society, he stressed, will be bright if they work together towards creating a well-integrated and harmonious co-existence (Farhad, int.).

2. Demographic Profile

This chapter provides an outline of the demographic profile of the Spanish Muslim community by utilizing the available statistical data concerning their numbers, their ethnic and racial breakdown, geographical distribution in Spain, and the like. According to the data by OA (2016) which provided the latest estimation for the size of the Spanish Muslim community, there were 1,919,141 Muslims in 2016. According to Moreras, 42% of these (804,017 persons) were



Graph 4: Largest Ethnic/National Groups in Spain. Source: Observatorio Andalusí, Estudio demográfico de la población musulmana, 2016

Spanish citizens and 23,624 of them, (about 1.5%) were converts. In 2016, the largest ethnic/national sub-groups in the Muslim community, were listed as follows: Moroccan (39.2%), Pakistani (4%), Algerian (3.2%), Senegalese (3.2%), Malian (1.2%), Gambian (0.9%), Bangladeshi (0.7%), Mauritanian (0.4%), Syrian (0.2%) and others (5%). The majority of these Muslims are Sunnis, although no official data concerning the sectarian break-up is available. There are four main regions that the Muslim population are concentrated in: Catalonia, Andalusia, Madrid, and Valencia (Moreras 2019: 640).

During the field study, in the interviews and the roundtable discussions, the members of the community were asked to estimate the size of the Muslim population. Although certain individuals suggested unrealistic numbers, as many as 10 million, the majority of the respondents estimated a number between 1.5 and 2 million, which was quite close to the real numbers. Yusuf made one such accurate estimation. When asked to paint a demographic picture of the Muslim community in Spain, he reported that the number of Muslims in Spain is approximately 1.8 million, and in a country of 45 million, the Muslim community makes up around 4% of the total population. He stated that the great majority of Muslims is from Morocco. Other sizeable communities are Algerians, and Muslims of Sub-Saharan countries such as Senegal, Gambia and others. To these, one can add Pakistanis, who are concentrated especially in Catalonia. The number of Spanish converts, or reverts in this specific context, Yusuf estimated to be around 80 to 100 thousand. As for the number of mosques, like many other participants in the workshop and interviews, he too, estimated it to be 1200. He stated that the Spanish Islamic space is free of sectarian conflict with around 95% of the community

following Sunni order and around 5% from Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon following the Shia sect (Yusuf, int.).

One point emphasized by many during the interviews and discussions was that the numeric size of the community is an extremely important factor for both challenges and solutions. As many have repeatedly mentioned, the majority of the problems the Muslim community in Spain face are partly due to the fast-growing population, which was not foreseen by the Spanish authorities. For quite many respondents, the rising numbers are a guarantor of the future changes for the better. Naim, for instance, argued that as the number of Muslims increase, so does the impact and significance of their demands. When there are thousands of them, it is more efficient and sensible to demand a cemetery or religious holiday from authorities, for instance. Necessities and demands are expressible and are taken seriously only when there are a high number of claimers. "I always say this, the thing is, Spaniards are classists, and they discriminate by the social class not by the religious one. But they are classists, like many Islamic peoples" (Naim, int.).



Figure 6: Masjid al-Falah of Comunidad Mussulmana de Getafe, A masjid in Getafe, Madrid

These arguments should not mislead one into thinking that the Muslim contribution to Spain is only in one way. According to Yaqut and Taher, the Muslim community has contributed to contemporary Spain mainly in two ways: through labour force during the (re)construction of Spanish infrastructures and through solving the natality (low birth rate) problem thanks to the influx of immigrant youth and higher fertility rate among them (SP, int.). Zahra added the diversity, religious and cultural diversity that was brought by Muslims and other immigrants

to Spain. According to Humbert, Muslims also push Spain to mature and get out of their shell and open up (SP, dis.)

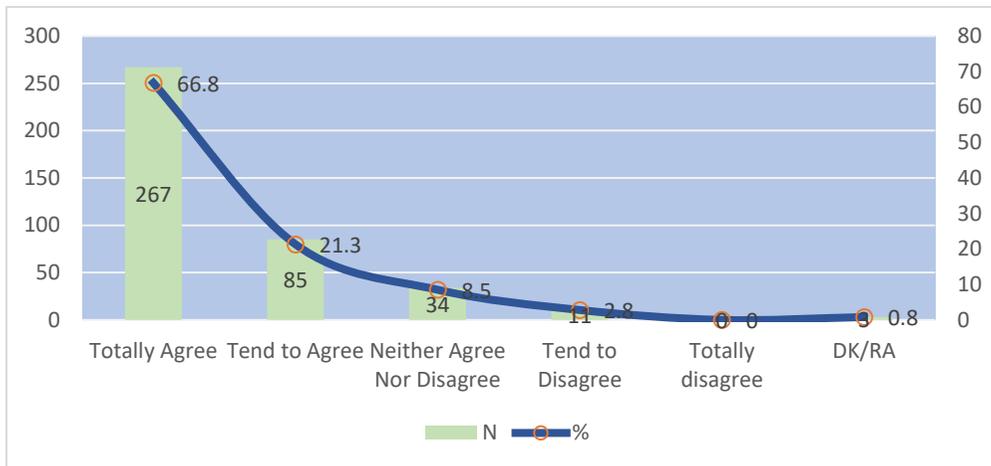
Another key point of the demographic profile of a minority community is its level of religiosity, although this is quite a subjective and potentially contentious concept. In order to measure relevant attitudes and outlooks, the participants in the SP Sur were asked to provide their own self-evaluations to understand how religious they believe they are (without offering a definition of religiosity). They were asked to describe to what extent they believe they fulfil the religious requirements of being a Muslim. It can be safely suggested that overall, the survey respondents claimed to be quite religious. While 50% of the respondents suggested

that on average, they fulfil the religious requirements of being a Muslim, a large majority of the other half, some 41% of the respondents, believed that their level of fulfilling Islamic religious requirements was either “above average” (22.8%) or “very high” (18.5%). Totalling just above 5%, the number of those who reported their level of religious commitment to be “very low” or “below average” was observed to be disproportionately low (SP Sur.).

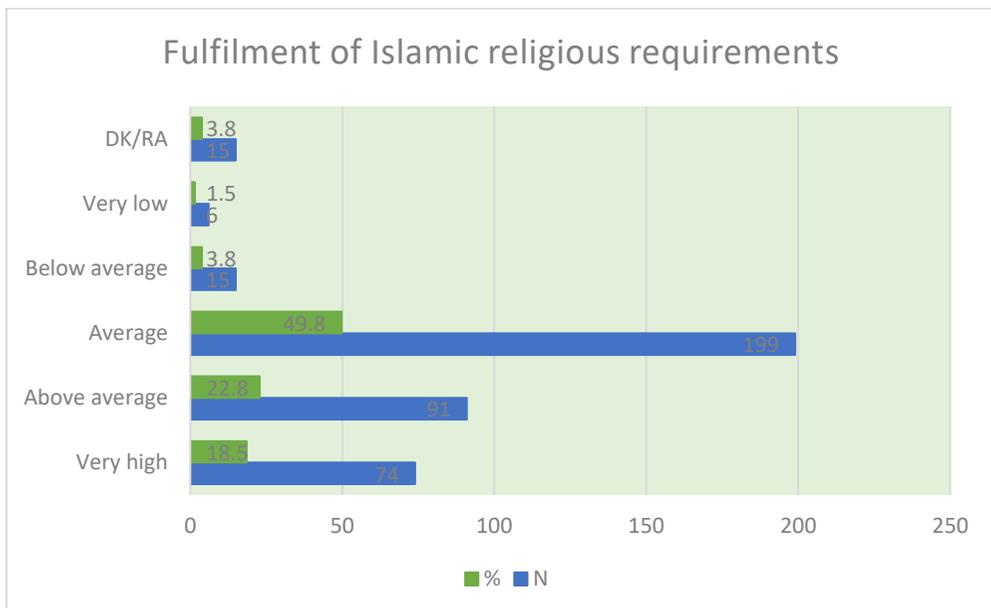
	N	%
Always	252	63.2
Frequently	85	21.3
Sometimes	39	9.8
Rarely	12	3
Never	10	2.5
DK/RA	1	0.3
Total	399	100

Graph 5: When you purchase food in the supermarket, how often do you look at the labels to see whether it is halal food?, SP Sur 2019

Considered as a significant key indicator for the Muslim religiosity and the religio-cultural identity, one increasingly popular subject is the *halal* food. This subject however is no longer a mere concern of the Muslim community. Because of the both fast-growing Muslim population across the globe and the increasing number of touristic or commercial links with the Muslim world, many non-Muslim countries are trying to increase the halal food options. Still, finding good, fresh, and affordable halal food is a challenge for many Muslim minorities around the world. Therefore, this issue was also asked to the survey respondents to reach a comprehensive demographic profile. According to the findings, the issue of halal food is quite important for Muslims in Spain. When asked, “When you purchase food in the supermarket, how often do you look at the labels to see whether it is halal food?”, a vast majority of the respondents suggested that they either always (63.2%) or frequently (21.3%) check the labels of food products. At 3% for those who said they “rarely” check the labels and 2.5% for those who reported they “never” did label inspection and reading for halal food, the number of those who had a low halal consciousness remained insignificantly low (SP Sur). This high level of halal awareness was fully projected in the follow-up question as well. When further asked whether they would be willing to pay more for halal food, again, a very high number of the respondents, at more than 87%, answered in the affirmative (SP Sur).



Graph 6: To what extent would you agree with the following statement: I am ready to buy halal food products even if they cost more? SP Sur 2019.



Graph 7: The level of fulfilment of religious requirements, SP Sur 2019.

The main demographic findings of the GMD Spain field study can be summarized in four main points. First, the Spanish Muslim community is a growing one and most of this growth has occurred in the last three decades, with the Spanish immigration boom between the late-1990s and 2010. As of 2019, the number of Muslims in Spain reached 2 million and their numbers continue to grow thanks to the higher marriage and fertility rate among Muslims. There has been a slight drop in the number of Moroccans over the past few years, which points to an increase in the number of return migrants and a decrease in the fertility rate among Moroccan Spaniards. Second, the Spanish Muslim population used to be predominantly male, young, less educated and less engaged but a contributing one. This pattern has begun to change following family unions and the arrival of Muslim women who created a stronger

demand and desire for more established and integrated lives, education of youth, and social engagement. Third, two groups make up the Muslim community in Spain: the smaller group of Spanish converts who are referred to as the established community and the larger group of immigrants who are referred to as the new Muslims. The largest sub-group in the latter is Moroccans. In fact, the Muslim community in Spain often associated with the Moroccan community, as they constitute more than half of the Muslim population. Fourth, the Muslim community in Spain is a religious and devoted one with a very high level of commitment to Islamic values, orders, and basic acts. Halal awareness and demand for halal products were also observed to be very high.

3. Views on Migration and Integration

Tarek, a tutor of Islamic teaching and the director of an Islamic centre in Madrid, outlined the Spanish legal, political, and social context for the Muslim community particularly well. According to him, the context could be inspected in three periods: before Franco's reign, during the Franco regime, and post-Franco Spain. Today's Spain is this last democratic context, in which the Islamic reality in Spain was opened to discussion and negotiation towards the end of the 1980s. During this time, individuals from particularly the border area of Morocco, but also from other Muslim-majority countries in North Africa, the Middle East and Western and Southern Asia, began to come to Spain to work on jobs called *los servicios*. These are jobs that were considered difficult and not dignified enough by the Spaniards, thus left to be taken by immigrants (Tarek, int.). This wave of Muslim immigrants, Tarek reported, was followed by a more convenient kind of immigration with students, professionals, and families. When the Spanish authorities came to understand that, the immigrants were to remain, and need religious, cultural, and educational facilities to establish a life for themselves. A new politico-legal process, including the *notorio arraigo* (meaning deeply rooted) agreement of November 26, 1992, started.

Despite the agreement, which marked the first official recognition of Islam and the Muslim community by a European state, following Austria, Spain recognized the Islamic reality with 14 articles dedicated to rights, benefits, and protection of the Muslim community. According to Tarek, it is true that Muslims have cemeteries and mosques, and access to halal food in Spain thanks to those 14 articles, however, the reality is different: Rights are given only on paper. Tarek gave the example of Islamic education for Muslim students. Accordingly, despite the fact that there were 300 thousand Muslims living in Madrid, and there were almost 40 thousand Muslim students, only two instructors of Islam were available to them. Further, he stated that the Muslim students made up around 25% of all Catalanian students and no Islamic education instructor was available in Catalonia. "You have an official law, but there is no practice of this official law," he concluded (Tarek, int.).

Despite the long-standing historical legacy of Islamic civilization, Spain presents one of the most current and contested European contexts for the Muslim community. Aiming at portraying the legal, political and civic framework of the country, this chapter particularly focuses on the process of migration and integration of Muslims in Spain with a specific eye towards the advantages, challenges, and issues that the Spanish context harbours. In addition to these, the chapter also attends to the relations between the Muslim community and the society in Spain and the perceptions of Muslim individuals and organizations regarding their own status and civic engagement in the country. Lastly, the chapter closes with Spanish Muslims' attitude and outlook towards the utilization of the concept of diaspora when discussing the political, social, cultural, and religious standing of both their own and other Muslim communities in non-OIC member countries. Throughout the fieldwork, it was

observed that three issues have been framing the Muslim presence in the Spanish civic and legal context in the last decades: (i) the implementation, operation and enforcement of the rights attained in the 1992 Agreement, (ii) integrational challenges and identity question engrossing newly-arrived Muslims, (iii) the limited interaction between the Muslim community and the Spanish society.

Starting with the problems regarding the application of the agreement, four main reasons were voiced by the participants to the interviews and the round-table discussions. These were: (I) the ever-fast growth of the Muslim population and Spain being caught off balance by this growth; (II) the lack of knowledge and conscious or unintentional ignorance of the Spanish and Muslim authorities, individuals, institutions, and organizations; (III) the official and societal reluctance towards the implementation mainly due to the rising anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim sentiments and the internalized discrimination; and (IV) the prevailing disengagement and the lack of assertion among certain sectors of the Muslim community because of the learned helplessness, marginalization and discrimination.

Naim, the president of a Muslim association, stated that the issues that are encountered in the process of implementation of the Agreement are largely caused by the swiftly increased number of the Muslim population. He reported that when the Agreement was signed in 1992, the number of Muslims in Spain was around 200 thousand, today it is 2 million. Similarly, while at the time of agreement there were four burial sites for Muslims, now there are 34 of them. Moreover, there are another 10 in the process of becoming Muslim cemeteries. There are approximately 1200 places of worship for Muslims in Spain. “Naturally, he continued, “many issues need to be revisited and negotiated” (Naim, int.).



Figure 7: The exhibition hall of the Centre of Islamic Culture and M:30 Mosque, in Madrid

Karim, the president of an association of Muslim youth in Madrid, shared similar views with Naim, stating that the fast numeric growth brought about many different challenges. According to him, Muslims are still looking for stability; they still need to establish their own infrastructures. With the numeric growth come different needs such as educational, cultural,

economic, organizational, and social needs. Thus, it is the responsibility of Muslim individuals and organizations to implement that philosophy of stability and integrity. It is their responsibility to convince even those who wish to return to their countries of origin to help the Muslim community to establish an Islamic life here for Muslim children. “We, the first generations,” maintained Karim, “have a country to return and readapt, but our children have no other country than Spain, so we have to set up Islamic infrastructures for them to protect and help them (Karim, int.).

According to Asma, the Secretary General of an Islamic foundation in Madrid, “besides the fast growth of the community, another point that should be considered is the fact that Spain, unlike many other European countries, has very limited experience as a country of immigration”. She stressed that immigration is a new phenomenon in the historical, cultural, religious, legal and political context of Spain. “Our framework is a good one, however. It is at a European level, open and inclusive.” But it needs improvement, to be developed to tailor to the educational demands and needs of immigrants, she added (Asma, int.). According to her, apart from the swift increase in the number of Muslims over a relatively short period and Spain’s lack of experience in dealing with immigration and immigrant communities, the other root cause for the problems faced by Muslims is the lack of overarching representation. Asma maintained that the small communities are capable of solving their problems at the local level; however, at the national level a stronger body of representation is needed. The two Islamic organizations *FEERI* and *UCIDE*, that are responsible for representation at the national level are in fact falling short –they represent only 10% of the community, she argued (Asma, int.).

Yusuf, an impressively well-informed scholar and a humanitarian activist, argued that the main obstacle for the implementation of the agreement is the mere ignorance. According to him, both the Spanish authorities and Muslim individuals are not knowledgeable enough about the legislation and rights that are granted to the Muslim community by the agreement. This, in his opinion, points out that there is a lack of interaction and dialogue between the Muslim community and the Spanish authorities. He added that most of the time decisions concerning the Muslim community are taken without involving the Muslim community. Another obstacle for effective implementation, Yusuf argued, is the electoral concerns of the Spanish politicians. “There are some people that know about the law and they tell the Muslim community ‘yes, you are right but we are not going to do the right thing because people are not going to vote for us if we do the right thing, which is giving you your rights’” (Yusuf, int.).

Omar, the Director of a Muslim relief organization and a social and humanitarian activist of Moroccan origin, stated that, despite the fact that the Spanish society had very limited knowledge about Muslims, despite a deep ignorance on Islam, the first Muslims, including him, never felt rejection from Spanish people. When he arrived at the country to study, within the university space and with teachers, students, and the staff, he never felt rejected. There was a very good relationship with everybody, and everybody supported him and showed respect. He further said that his case is representative of many Muslim students who studied here (Omar, int.). Omar stated that as of today, the situation is changing rapidly and to the worse. One indicator, in his opinion, is the result in the elections in Andalucía, and the fact that people of Andalucía voted for a fascist party, and even if it is just 10%, he said, the anti-Muslim view

is consolidating its base. According to him, this base, which is nourishing on phobia is expanding and is affected by things that are going on not in Spain specifically, but in Europe and the whole world. "It is a direction or an inclination towards the demonization of Muslims" (Omar, int.).

According to Asma, a reluctance to integrate is prevalent among Moroccan Muslims in Spain. In her view, this is partly due to the proximity of Morocco. She argued that the majority of Moroccan Muslims are transient workers, coming to Spain only because of economic reasons, thus, reluctant to adapt to the new environment. In time, however, a significant portion of them stayed in Spain. With family reunions, a new set of challenges appeared. Integration becomes more urgent than ever. The language barrier, cultural differences, and education appear as the main challenges. Fortunately, for second and third generations, these challenges are not as grave as they had been for the first one (Asma, int.).

Yusuf argued that the reluctance to integrate is partly caused by unfair and discriminatory approaches against Muslims in the process of naturalization and the attainment of Spanish citizenship. Accordingly, for immigrants coming from Spanish speaking countries and old Spanish colonies, the residency requirement in Spain is only two years before an application for citizenship is made. Immigrants from the rest of the world, for example for Moroccans it is 10 years, because most immigrants come from Morocco. "They give a justification for this discrimination. They say, 'because they have more in common with us: language, culture and they are old colonies.'" This justification, in Yusuf's opinion, is not convincing. Because Morocco, historically, culturally, and geographically, is closer to Spain than any other country in the world. "In northern Morocco" he added, "most families are from Andalusian descent.

Tetouan, Fez, Chefchaouen (also known as Chaouen), and a lot of cities in northern Morocco, they were founded by people from Grenada or Córdoba, from Spain. Further, there was the colonization of northern Morocco, in 1860, and remained so until 1956. So, how do you discriminate? Why does a Peruvian person have the right to apply for citizenship after two years but a person from that Spanish protectorate in Morocco has to wait for 10 years. Peru got its independence from Spain way before, you know? Two centuries ago. Northern Morocco, as late as 60-70 years ago was still Spanish territory! (Yusuf, int.).

In addition to this discrimination, another difficulty of getting the citizenship, Yusuf stated, is that the post-application process takes quite long and Muslims are paid official visits from authorities and Homeland Security, to check if they are law-abiding citizens (Yusuf, int.).

Nevertheless, Yusuf stated that he could not generalize and say the Spanish people are Islamophobic. "That would be a blanket statement and it would be completely false. But there are sectors in the Spanish society that are highly Islamophobic." He maintained that Spain is a context where the ghost of a dictatorship is still lurking and the dictator is still alive in the mentality of people. According to him, the civil war and its legacy and memories are still fresh. "The French War for Revolution happened quite a long time ago. In Spain, we are talking about a generation. The dictatorship means that there are people still walking around that have lived part of their lives under dictatorship" (Yusuf, int.). Apart from the legacy of history, according

to Yusuf, negative reactions to the implementation of the rights of the Muslim community, such as establishing mosques, are sometimes motivated by economic interest. “Imagine a neighbourhood, and I come as a Muslim and put a mosque there. Now the value of property in that neighbourhood is going to rise or fall. A flat that has a certain price, say 200,000 Euros, will reduce to 150,000 Euros,” and that is not desirable for many people. So not all Spaniards object opening Islamic centres and establishing mosques because they are racist or Islamophobic (Yusuf, int.).

Layla, the President of an Islamic institution of halal certification, reported that to solve the problems that impede the integration process, it is imperative to bridge the gap between communities and enhance the inter-communal and inter-religious dialogue through outreach activities. In but one such attempt that is called “Nights of Ramadan,” she stated, throughout the month of Ramadan, many events such as cultural, musical, and spiritual activities or *dhikrs* are organized in the *Casa Árabe (CA)* to introduce Islam and Muslim culture to others. We also organize silent meditation sessions as a part of the inter-communal encounter and inter-faith dialogue, in which people from different faith groups meditate in silence about the spiritual and transcendent experience of the human being and exchange their thoughts and feelings (Layla, int.). According to Layla, what they have been trying to do, as an institution, is to generate debate and to foster a reflection on their own reality. This is why they were going to hold a special congress on hot topics of Islam and Muslims in Spain, such as mixed families (Muslims in non-Muslim families or *vice versa*), honour crimes in the Muslim community and sharia in a non-Muslim majority context along with others.

In the views of many participants despite the being caught unprepared for such a big religious minority, Spain has been performing rather well in terms of integration and immigration management. For many, this success is overshadowed particularly by the questions and challenges regarding the education of Muslim children whose further implications and underpinnings are observable in the obstinate problems of identity construction and weakening sense of belonging towards the adopted country. Karim, the president of an association of Muslim youth in Madrid, for instance, stated that, in his view, Spain is a very favourable ground for the development of Islamic religious freedom. In certain departments, there is much to fight for, much to claim or much to defend (*e.g.*, there are emerging radical trends within the political framework despite the constitutional bindings and the agreement between the state and the Muslim community does not apply in its entirety). In general terms, it is a favourable legal framework. When asked to name some of the main challenges, he stated that the education of the new generations is the most pressing issue for them. He maintained that the main problems that rob Muslims of their sleep are the education of their children. Although there are other fronts, after all, everything flows in raising those new, well-formed, and well-qualified generations that have and know their rights, have an ethical participation, feel part of this society, and do not have any problem of identity that leads them to confusion, to radicalization, to losing their roots, *etc.* The global challenge is summarized in the theme of education, at the individual and the community level. “To maintain the Islamic identity and pass it on to Muslim children, “inculcate them the values of the religion when educating them according to values that free them from any complex so that they feel full citizens with full rights, and that they maintain their roots” he reported is their central concern. “The challenge

is to equip our future generations with tools that make their life easier as Muslim citizens of the future” (Karim, int.).

Tarek pointed the absurdity of formulating a geographical and national question in a civilizational and religio-political dilemma. In his opinion, especially the first generation Muslim immigrants while still dreaming of returning to their home countries one day often see Spanish citizenship at contradiction with their religious identity. For this first generation, Islam is confined to the Muslim-majority countries, which obviously contradicts the true nature and teachings of Islam. “We are Muslims coming from a Moroccan background, and we are Spanish and European” (Tarek, int.).

According to Tarek, and many other participants, one part of the question is that Muslims are still trying to maintain their attachments to their countries of origin and the sectional loyalties. This, however, opens them and their political and organizational presence here to the intervention of those countries of origin that are quite eager to have control over their overseas communities (Tarek, int.). In summary, as Tarek and others agreed, the more pushed and marginalized the community in Spain, the closer it falls toward the intervention and control of the country of origin, and *vice versa*. It is, as seen in many other contexts, a tiring catch-22 that the Muslim communities find themselves in, caught between prospects, claims, expectations, promises, suspicions, stigmatizations, links, and attachments of their home countries and of their host countries.

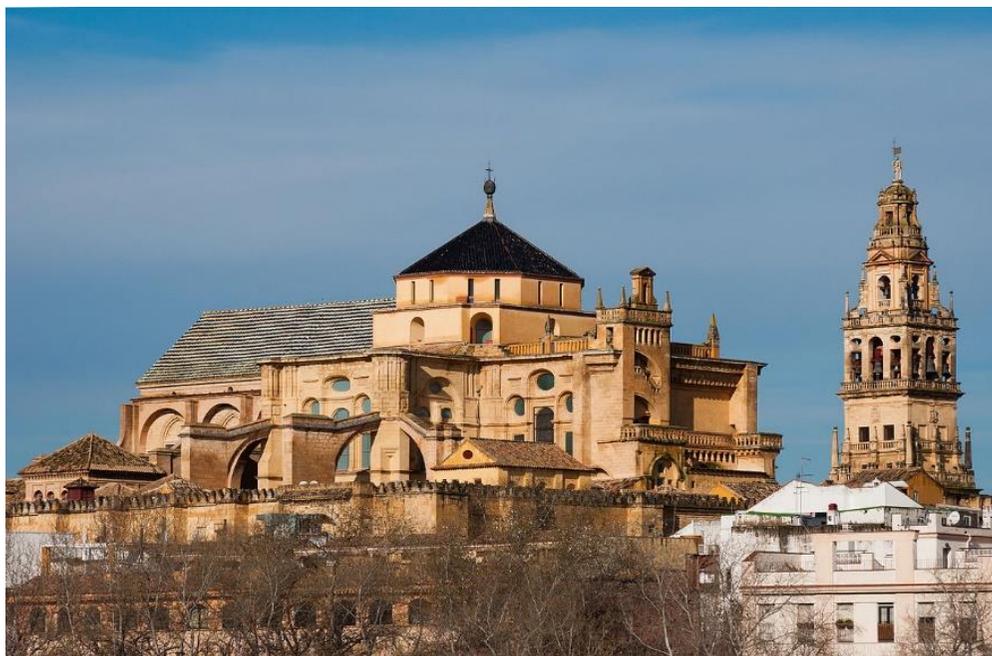


Figure 8: The Cathedral Mosque, also known as Mezquita Cordoba, an Andalusian historical site in Cordoba

I belong to this state, to this patria, to this land, we are here, but some parties treat us as foreigners, and they say go back to your countries. We go, in August, for the official

holidays to Morocco and they treat us as foreigners, too. So, which one is our nation? And our kids are getting lost, and it is very dangerous if you don't have the right answers for the identity of your kids (Tarek, int.).

Farhad, the general director of an important Islamic cultural centre in Madrid and an ex-diplomat, maintained that it was their responsibility to present Islam to the Spanish citizens as an internal aspect of Spanish society and culture, not only as an issue of foreign policy. According to him, the Muslim community, is no longer a tiny minority group; it has grown very big over the past 20 years. Thus, it is important to introduce Islam to Spanish people, to show them the peaceful and tolerant faces of Islam, which is not sufficiently known in Spain and other European countries (Fardad, int.).

Voiced during the interviews, these views were largely resonated with those expressed during the round table discussions. In the opinions of the participants in the discussions, the agreement has marked a great improvement in the establishment of Islamic life in Spain. Little has been achieved, however, since the agreement was signed and it is both Spanish authorities and Muslim leaders and organizations responsibility to take action for further improvement. Taher, a Moroccan man of mature years, stated that Spain is one of the few countries that recognize Islam in its legal framework. More than a quarter of a century has passed since the 1992 agreements he added, and "if we review what has been achieved since then, one is left dissatisfied." "But do not forget that the legal framework itself is an achievement. You have to see what has been accomplished and what has not been fulfilled of those 14 articles. We also have to propose new articles that cover new fields. Now is the time for the Islamic Commission to open up, be democratic, and try harder to comply with those articles" (SP, dis.).

Agreeing mostly with Taher, Zahra, a 51 years old divorced mother, stated that she saw a deficiency in the Muslim community's part. In her opinion, the Muslim community, as a minority, and its members, are viewed as some kind of currency, used for political interests. However, she added, it is not fair to blame only the Spanish authorities and politicians. "We have our weight here as Muslims, and the responsibility falls on our shoulders. What are we doing in order to make them listen to us?" According to her, Muslims are not working sufficiently and not doing their part as institutions and organizations. As associations and organizations, she argued, Muslims are present yet absent at the same time. "We are present when it comes to Islamic celebrations, but we are always within an Islamic framework, we do not go out. Nobody knows us because we work amongst ourselves. [...] This is a personal and inner challenge we have. We have to demand our right; that is true. However, what about us? What do we do?" (SP, dis.). Halifa, a student of law, agreed with Zahra, maintaining that the majority of Muslims are either unaware of the rights that were granted in the 1992 agreement, or simply making excuses instead of demanding them. Halifa argued that, in this sense, there is a connivance prevalent among Muslims when it comes to claiming for their rights (SP, dis.).

Feeling slightly disturbed by overcritical lens directed at the community, Taher maintained that Muslims do not try harder to integrate because they do not feel included in the first place. Here, Taher argued that the difficulties and challenges faced during the attainment of the citizenship and right to get involved politically make Muslims detached and disengaged

socially. When Humbert asked had they been granted those rights at the beginning, would it be easier for them to integrate, Taher's response was:

Rights go together as a whole. It goes from voting to speaking the language. If this is achieved then as an immigrant one will feel that this country considers them just like the rest, regardless of their ethnicity, color or religion. If we are in an aconfessional country, and then because of your religious beliefs or hijab or clothes you feel excluded, then there is a mindset to change. As a Muslim here in Spain, do I feel that my culture is respected? When I ask Spanish people, especially speaking to the elite such as politicians, journalists, *etc.*, I ask them, what are the pillars of Spanish identity? They answer that being Spanish is being Greco-Roman and Judaeo-Christian, a closed quartet. But why not Muslim? It should be included not just because of our notorious historical roots but also because of our present. (SP, dis.).

Humbert objected this and reminded Taher that the most critical part falls upon the Muslim community, that the community should be ready for rights and demands them through dedication and rightful claim. Taher agreed on this point and stated that integration is a complete pack and the right to vote and civic engagement is only one aspect. In his opinion, with a population of near 2 million, if the representatives and leaders of the community do not have clear notions and objectives of integration and engagement, we [Muslims] will continue to just apply Band-Aids to our problems. Joining the discussion at this level, Yaqut stated that he did not like the word integration with all its implications, connotations, and vagueness. According to him, it is true that the Muslim community had a flaw that is remaining too closed, even at the local level. The accusation of remaining disintegrated is a kind of blame shifting, however, in his opinion, what is meant by integration is never clear enough. "What does integration mean? Is it to eat paella? Is it to like bullfighting? To like things that Spanish people normally like. It is a term that needs to be defined more precisely" (SP, dis.).

To the discussion over integration, Zahra and Halifa approached more optimistically and emphatically. According to Zahra, human beings are sociable by their nature, and integrational problems will work out gradually in time. Halifa, agreed that it was only a matter of time, patience, and dedication. She pointed out that the younger generations have already taken huge steps in that direction. "I think the youth are making more room in society for themselves. I think we, the youth, are more normalized in society, associations, NGO's, university, there are Muslims in every faculty now. We are finding more room and it will take some time" (SP, dis.). As for Rateeb, it was not sensible and right to expect only Muslims to integrate, in his opinion; a better coexistence is only possible with the active participation of both parts - Muslims and Spaniards. That is to say, the Spanish society too needs to adapt itself for the new reality of the country, to its diversity with all immigrants and Muslims. In order to achieve that, according to Rateeb, knowledge about (the culture, identity, environment, framework, and the like) one's own self and others is the key (SP, dis.).

, To sum up before moving to the findings of the SP Sur, it was observed in the interviews and the roundtable discussions, that both the newly arrived Muslims and more established ones, were in general quite satisfied with their lives and status as Muslims in Spain. In addition to a stricter commitment to the 1992 agreement, the fast increased population, in the opinions of

many, brought about a need for expansion and further improvements in this agreement. Towards this, it is imperative that the Muslim community, leaders, institutions, and organizations collaborate with the Spanish authorities and take an active part in pushing for necessary regulations and the implementation of relevant legislation and policies. These findings were largely in parallel with the findings of the SP Sur.

A massive 85% of the respondents in the sample suggest that they have at least one family member who had previously migrated to Spain before them. When further asked about the motivations of these previous migrants for leaving their respective countries of origin, the most important issue appears to be economic reasons. The respondents were asked to provide multiple answers if they wished; their answers were combined in a single table below to see why they thought previous Muslim migrants moved to Spain. This table is important for comparison with the reasons that current Muslim migrants in Spain suggested as reasons for their movement into Spain.

Reasons for Migration of Previous Muslim Migrants to Spain	N	%
Economic Reasons	253	58.9
Reasons Concerning the Family	64	14.9
Educational Reasons	62	14.5
Political Reasons	26	6.1
Religious Reasons	2	0.5
Other Reasons	22	5.1
Total	429	100

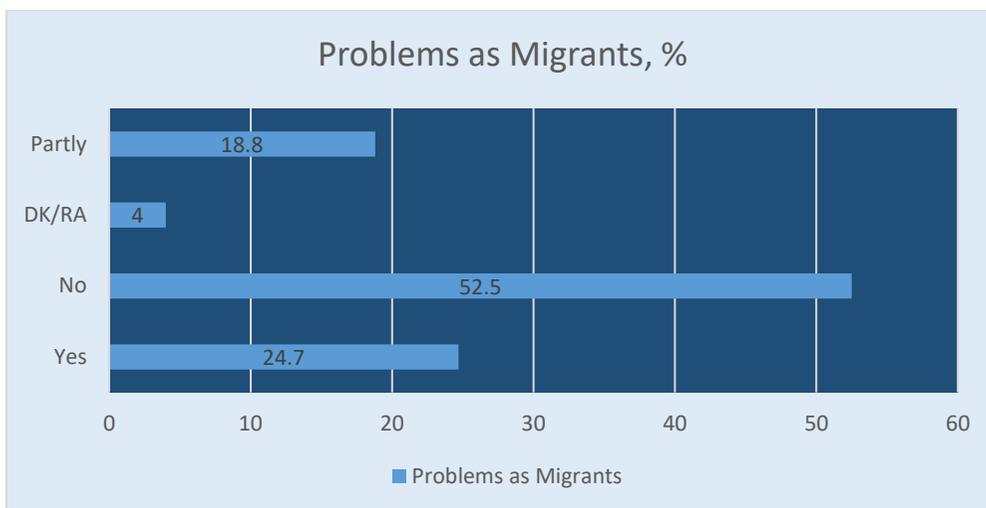
Graph 7: Reasons for Migration of Previous Muslim Migrants to Spain, SP Sur 2019

Reasons for Migration of Survey Respondents to Spain	N	%
Reasons Concerning the Family	113	44.5
Economic Reasons	85	33.5
Educational Reasons	29	11.4
Political Reasons	8	3.1
Religious Reasons	5	2
Other Reasons	14	5.5
Total	254	100

Graph 8: Reasons for Migration of Survey Respondents to Spain, SP Sur 2019

Before making this comparison and drawing conclusions, it should be noted that the data presented in Graph 8 is gathered from a question that was only asked to those who reported that they have family members who had previously migrated to Spain. Therefore, that question was asked to 342 individuals in the sample. Graph 9, however, presents data drawn from the question that was only asked to those who reported their status as immigrants, which were 168 individuals in the sample. When we look at the suggested reasons of Muslims' migration to Spain, it appears that while economic reasons were suggested to be the most important factor for earlier generations, reasons concerning family has become more pivotal a motivation for the current immigration. Economic reasons are still regarded to be important motivators for migration to Spain; however, current immigrants seem to be more concerned with providing a better, safer, and more prosperous life for their families. Although it should be noted that familial motivation is often the underlying reason why immigrants prioritize economic factors as the main reason for migration.

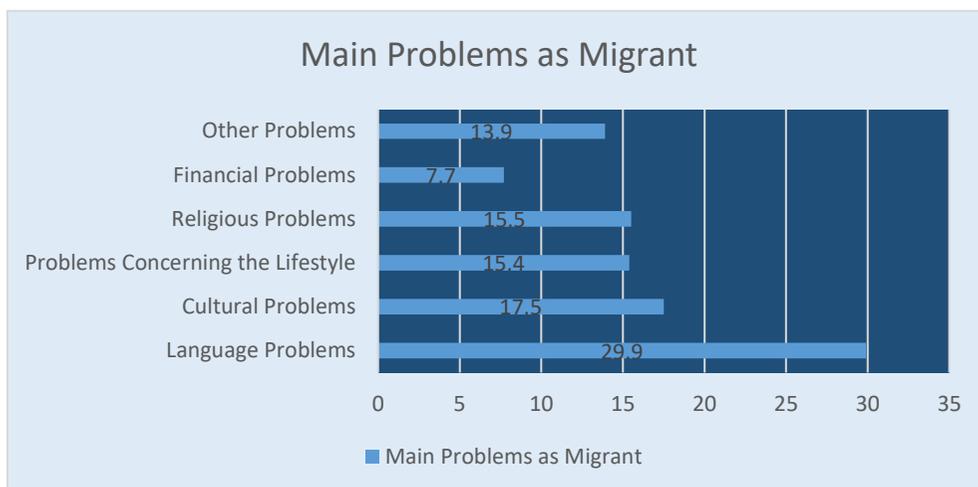
When asked whether they experienced problems as immigrants in Spain, a slight majority of the respondents reported no problems. While 52.4% of the respondents suggested that they have not experienced problems in the country because of their status as an immigrant, a quarter of them stated that they in fact, experienced significant problems. In addition, around 18% of the respondents reported having had a mixed experience suggesting that they partly had problems as immigrants (SP Sur).



Graph 9: Have you had problems as immigrants in Spain? SP Sur 2019.

When those respondents who reported having experienced problems as migrants were asked about the types of problems they had, almost one-third of the responses voiced by them were language related. The respondents were able to give multiple answers and all of the answers were combined in a single table below. As can be seen in the table, the most frequently cited problem as a migrant in Spain concerns interaction, communication, and the language. 'Language problems' constitute almost one-third of all the responses, which does not appear to be a special case for Muslims but rather a general problem most likely to be shared by other immigrant groups in the country. The next three most expressed problems reported by the

respondents appear to be more related to the respondents' Muslim identity. 'Cultural problems', 'problems concerning the lifestyle', and 'religious problems' are all mentioned quite frequently, all above 15% in the overall responses, by the Muslims in Spain.



Graph 10: Main Problems as Migrant in Spain, SP Sur 2019

The survey respondents were asked to evaluate Spain as a non-OIC member context for the Muslim community. To this end, they were first asked about the perceived advantages of living in Spain for a Muslim. Once again, they were given the chance to provide multiple answers and all the answers given by the respondents were aggregated in the below table and presented altogether.

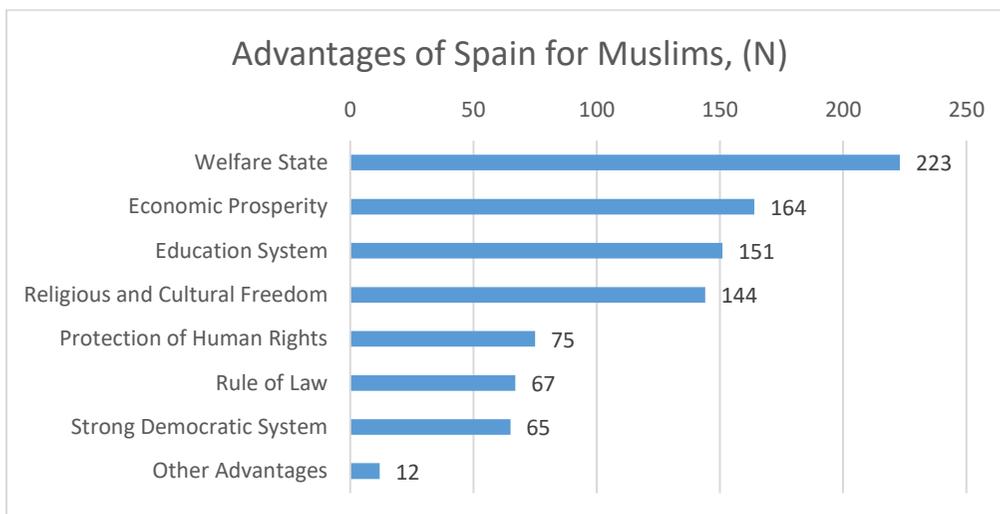
Advantages of Living in Spain for Muslims	N	%
Welfare State	223	24.5
Economic Prosperity	164	18
Education System	151	16.6
Religious and Cultural Freedom	144	15.8
Protection of Human Rights	75	8.3
Rule of Law	67	7.4
Strong Democratic System	65	7.2
No Advantages at All	8	0.9
Other	12	1.3
Total	909	100

Graph 11: Advantages of Living in Spain for Muslims (multiple answers), SP Sur 2019.

Of all the 909 answers provided for this question, almost a quarter emphasized the perceived advantage of the Spanish welfare state. Although Spain is not particularly known for its strong welfare system, the welfare state appears to be considered as a major advantage for the

Muslims living in this country. The second most frequently mentioned answer for this question was economic prosperity, with 18% of all the answers. A closely following third was the education system, which is consistent with the finding that Muslims in Spain are very much concerned with the education of their children. It is also consistent with the finding that for quite a few Muslim immigrants, education was one of the primary motivations for choosing Spain as the country of destination (see Graph 11 and 12 above). A notable contradiction comes to the forth here, and needs clarification. As mentioned repeatedly, numerous individuals who participated in the interviews and roundtable discussions stated that the most urgent and critical challenge they face in Spain is the education of the Muslim youth. It should be noted that the educational motivations and advantages, in the SP Sur are related to higher education, which as mentioned earlier was one of the main reasons for the Muslim pioneers to come to Spain. In other words, a significant number of the first Muslims came to Spain for university education, and higher education is still seen as an advantage the country offers for Muslims. Nonetheless, education and particularly the Islamic education of the Muslim children remains a serious problem.

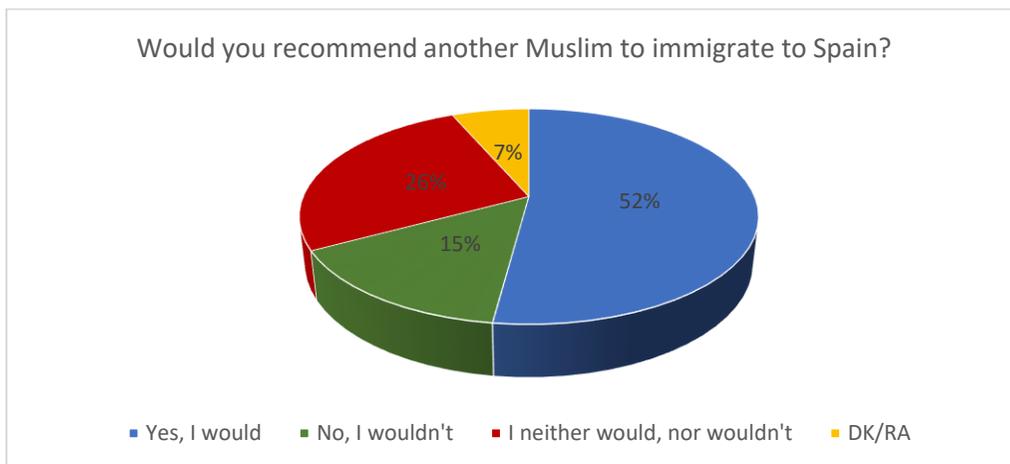
The next four most frequently named advantages, making up more than 38% of all the responses provided for this question, include ‘religious and cultural freedom’ (15.8%), ‘protection of human rights’ (8.3%), ‘rule of law’ (7.4%), and ‘strong democratic system’ (7.2%). This shows that for Muslims in Spain, the democratic and rule-based system is also considered as a major strength. The number of responses that suggested that there is no advantage of living in Spain for Muslims whatsoever is almost negligible, which constituted less than 1% of all the responses given to this question.



Graph 12: Advantages of living in Spain for Muslims, SP Sur 2019

When the respondents were asked whether they would recommend another Muslim individual to immigrate to Spain and live in this country, a slight majority (52.1%) said that they would, while only a small minority (15%) stated they would suggest otherwise. A significant proportion (26.4%), displayed a more neutral stance and said they would neither encourage

nor discourage him/her (SP Sur). It can be inferred from this data that a majority of Muslims are overall content with their lives in Spain.

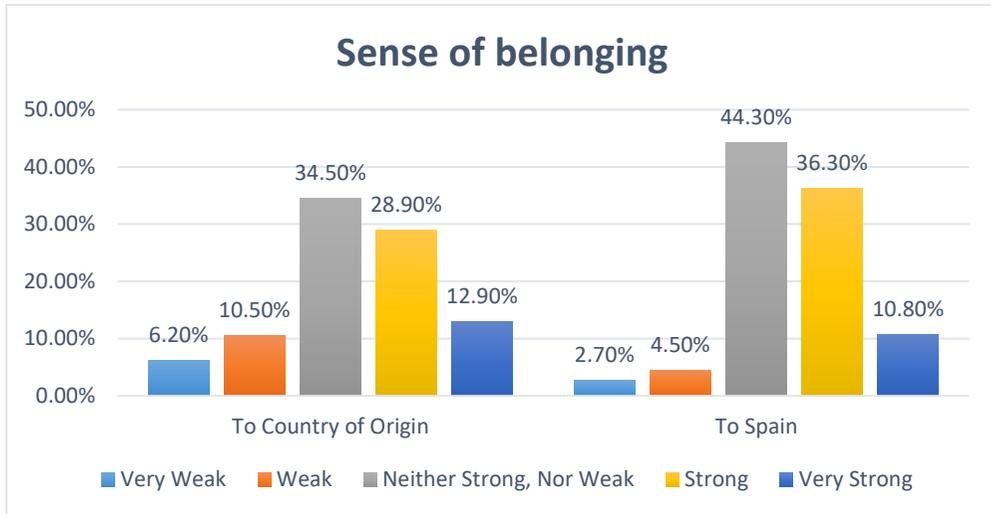


Graph 13: Would you recommend another Muslim to immigrate to and live in Spain, SP Sur 2019.

One concept that became increasingly important in diaspora studies is the sense of belonging. There are growing and often controversial debates concerning the where the sense of belonging of diasporic communities lie and what this means for the integration policies of the immigration countries. To shed light on this, the respondents were asked about their sense of belonging to both Spain and to their respective countries of origin. Overall, in the Spain sample, the respondents reported a stronger sense of belonging to Spain than their countries of origin. To be precise, while around 47% of the respondents suggested that their sense of belonging to Spain was either very strong (10.8%) or strong (36.3%), slightly more than 41% reported a very strong (12.9%) or strong (28.9%) sense of belonging to their respective countries of origin. A similar picture was repeated at the other end of the spectrum. While a combined 7.3% of the respondents suggested a weak or very weak sense of belonging to Spain, this combined figure was 16.6% for their respective countries of origin. In both cases, the largest group of respondents suggested that their sense of belonging was neither strong nor weak - 44.3% for Spain and 34.5% for origin countries.

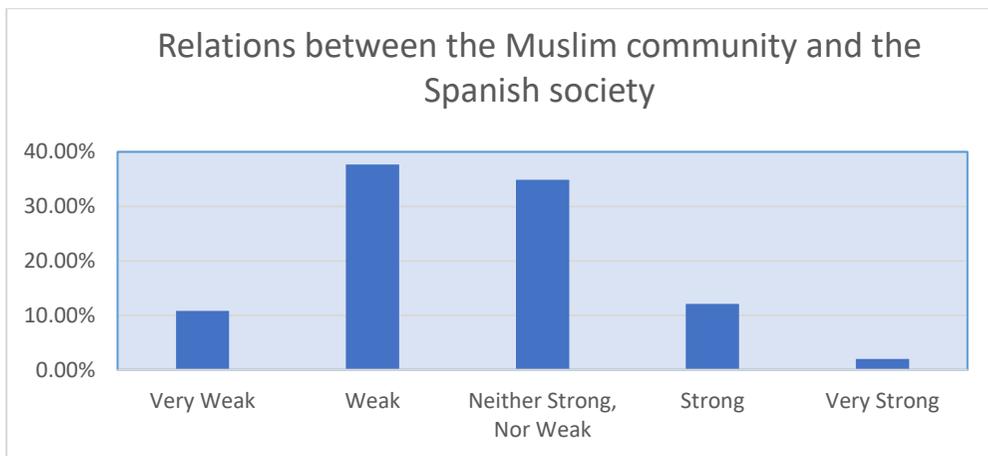
Sense of Belonging	To Spain		To the Country of Origin	
	N	%	N	%
Very Strong	43	10.8	44	12.9
Strong	145	36.3	99	28.9
Neither Strong Nor Weak	177	44.3	118	34.5
Weak	18	4.5	36	10.5
Very Weak	11	2.7	21	6.2
DK/RA	6	1.4	24	7.0
Total	400	100	342	100

Graph 14: Sense of Belonging to Spain and the Country of Origin, SP Sur 2019



Graph 15: Sense of Belonging to Spain and the country of origin, SP Sur 2019

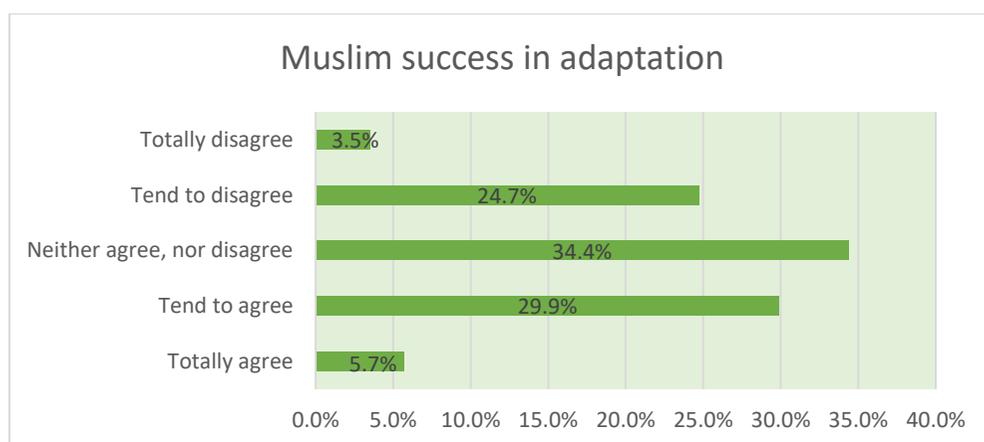
Next, the respondents were asked to evaluate the strength of the relations between the Muslims in Spain and the wider Spanish society from a scale ranging from ‘very strong’ to ‘very weak’. Here, the opinion of the respondents seems to reflect that the relations are not very strong. In fact, while only 14.1% of the respondents believed that the relations between the Muslims in Spain and the Spanish society were either ‘very strong’ (2%) or ‘strong’ (12.1%); at the opposite end, a combined 48.5% of the respondents suggested that they are either ‘weak’ (37.7%) or ‘very weak’ (10.8%) (SP Sur).



Graph 16: How strong are the relations between the Muslims in Spain and the Spanish society? SP Sur 2019.

It appears that Muslims consider the relations they have with the wider Spanish society to be not very strong. Do they, then, believe that the Muslim minority in Spain adapted successfully to the way of life in this country? The respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the following statement: “most Muslims in Spain have successfully adapted to customs and way of life here”. The responses do not provide a very clear picture on this point. In fact,

they display an even distribution. While slightly more than one-third of the respondents either totally agreed (5.7%) or tend to agree (29.9%) with the statement; slightly less than one-third (28.2%) disagreed and the other one-third picked the middle point suggesting they neither agreed nor disagreed (SP Sur). Therefore, at least partly, it can be suggested that the challenges the Muslims are experiencing with adaptation to Spanish customs and way of life might be one of the reasons why so many Muslims believe that the relations between the Muslim community and the Spanish society are not very strong.



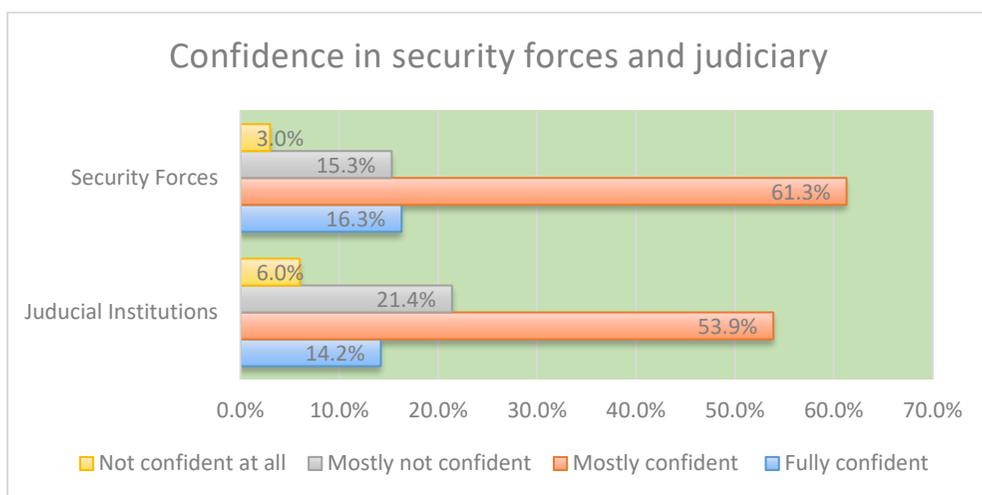
Graph 17: To what extent do you agree that most Muslims in Spain have successfully adapted to the customs and way of life here? SP Sur 2019.

Apart from their relations with society, it is very important to get a sense of how much trust diasporic communities have to institutions in the host country. Therefore, the participants were asked how much confidence they had in two very important sets of institutions in Spain: the courts and the judiciary on the one hand, and the security forces on the other. The responses were highly consistent with the earlier responses concerning the advantages of living in Spain as a Muslim. There, the respondents had displayed a quite positive view of the Spanish state, democratic system, and rule of law (see Table 5 above). For these questions, as well, they displayed a very strong level of confidence to both the judicial institutions and the security forces in Spain.

Level of Confidence	In Courts and Judicial Institutions		In Security Forces	
	N	%	N	%
I have full confidence	57	14.2	65	16.3
Mostly I have confidence	216	53.9	244	61.3
Mostly I don't have confidence	86	21.4	61	15.3
I don't have any confidence at all	18	4.5	12	3
DK/RA	24	6	16	4.1
Total	401	100	398	100

Graph 18: Level of Confidence in Judicial Institutions and Security Forces, SP Sur 2019.

While the high level of confidence in the courts and judicial institutions could be anticipated by the earlier findings about the positive view on the legal system in the country, the more striking finding here is the even stronger level of confidence in the security forces. This is because, in many countries, the security forces could be seen as the strict and cold face of a state. What is more, many minorities around the world tend to have tense relations with the national security forces as they can be the target of a securitized discourse that often points at immigrants and minorities as scapegoats, criminals, and even potential terrorists. However, Muslims in Spain do not appear to have a negative view of the security forces at all. To the contrary, they display a very high level of confidence in them. More than 77% of the respondents suggested they are either fully confident (16.3%) or mostly confident (61.3%) in the security forces in Spain.



Graph 19: To what extent do you have confidence in judicial institutions and security forces in Spain? SP Sur 2019

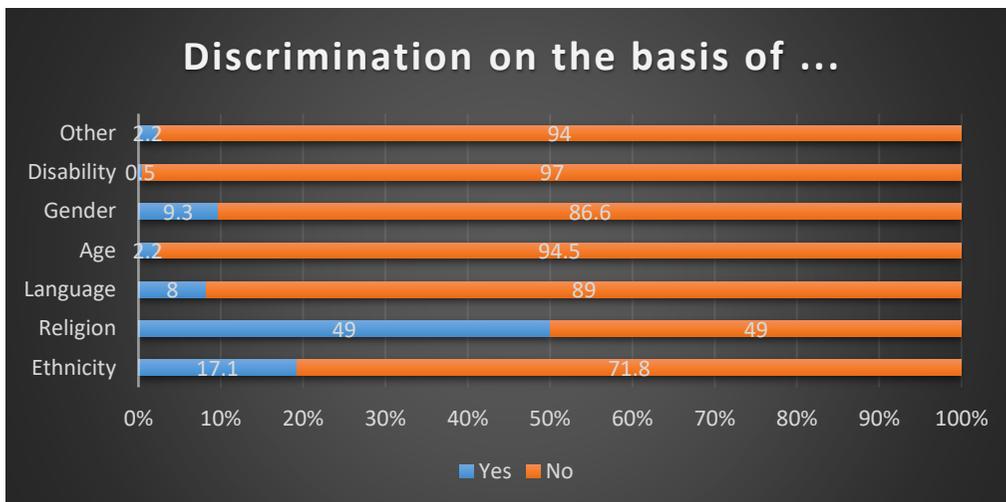
What about the problems and challenges that Muslims face in their daily lives in Spain? The respondents were asked about the most important problems of Muslims in Spain and to capture a comprehensive picture, they were allowed to provide multiple answers. In an earlier question, the respondents were asked to list problems that Muslim immigrants experience in Spain as migrants. This time, the question aimed to address more general problems experienced by all Muslims in Spain. In addition, the previous question was only asked to the respondents who mentioned their status to be immigrants, this one was asked to the whole sample. Their responses are aggregated in the table below.

What are the most important problems of Muslims in Spain?	N	%
Racism and Islamophobia	227	22.1
Unemployment	145	14.1
Cultural differences and problems concerning the lifestyle	138	13.4
Discrimination by the society	114	11
Lack of solidarity among the members of the Muslim community	112	10.9
Economic situation	107	10.4
Language problems	89	8.7
Inability to practice religion freely	39	3.8
Discrimination by the state	39	3.8
Lack of protection of human rights	7	0.7
Other	11	1.1
Total	1,028	100

Graph 20: What are the most important problems of Muslims in Spain? (multiple answers), SP Sur 2019

The data shows that the number one problem of Muslims in Spain is perceived to be ‘racism and Islamophobia’, which was most frequently mentioned by the survey participants. Unemployment is the second most-cited problem, although when it is combined with the concerns over the ‘economic situation’, another popular response, they make up one a quarter of all the responses provided for this question. ‘Cultural differences and problems concerning the lifestyle’ were cited third most frequently, which is consistent with the immigrants’ perceived problems as migrants in the country. There are two items containing the word ‘discrimination’ in the list, one concerns discrimination by the society and the other by the state. As shown above, discrimination by the society is perceived to be a major problem by a significant number of Muslim individuals while discrimination by the state is far less frequently mentioned. This is consistent with the earlier findings that there is a positive view of the Spanish state in the eyes of many Muslims while the relations with society appear to require significant improvement and strengthening.

It appears that racism, Islamophobia, and discrimination are considered to be the most pressing concerns and problems of Muslims living in Spain. Have the individual respondents actually and personally experienced any discrimination? Moreover, if they have, on what basis were they discriminated against, was it their religion, ethnicity or language? In fact, almost half of the respondents that answered the question, i.e. 175 of the 361, reported having experienced discrimination based on their religion at least once. In other words, half of the respondents in the Spain survey sample suggested that they have personally suffered discrimination in one way or another because they were Muslims. As it might be expected, the second major basis for the experienced discrimination was ethnicity, although to a much smaller, yet still significant extent. 17.1% of the respondents suggested that they were discriminated against because of their ethnicity at least once in Spain (SP Sur).



Graph 21: Have ever been discriminated on the basis of the following factors, SP Sur 2019.

In summary, the Spanish-Muslim context in relation to immigration and integration is marked by a set of challenges and questions. First, the short history of immigration receipt, the fast growth in immigrant Muslim population over a very short period, the influences of right-wing populist politics and anti-immigrant/Muslim discourse, and the like are some of the reasons for the problems faced by the Muslim community during the integration. Despite the official recognition of Islam and the 1992 Agreement between the state and the Muslim community, Muslim individuals and organizations have to push constantly and demands for their constitutionally given rights. The lack of knowledge and reluctance to cooperate, on the part of both the local authorities and the Muslim organizations and individuals, the growth of the community which was unforeseen back then when the agreement was signed, the society's outlook to Islam which was often accompanied by *Islamophobia* and *Morophobia* are also to blame for the implementation problems. The biggest setback in the integration, adaptation, harmonization, and cooperation process is the education of the Muslim youth. Because of the problems in the implementation of the 1992 Agreement, the educational challenges (religious education, the lack of Islamic teaching instructors, the provision of halal food in school cafeterias for Muslim students, etc.) have long been pressing.

The integration and adaptation problems faced by Muslims, most of whom are Moroccans, cause confrontation between the immigrant Muslim community and both the established Muslim community and Spanish authorities. The established Muslims, Spaniard Muslims, or converts, often blame the immigrants or Moroccans for being reluctant to adapt, to integrate, and leave the cultural-traditional ways. They demand the immigrant Muslims adopt a vernacular Islam more appropriate to Spain and Europe. According to them, it is certain that the lack of integration brings about a lower level of interaction and dialogue between the Muslim community and the larger society, and they do not want to feel responsible for the failure of the immigrant Muslims since their failure in the eyes of the society and authorities, is the failure of Islam and all Muslims.

Another common problem is the extra challenges and discriminatory differences enforced during the naturalization process. According to many Muslim individuals, particularly Moroccans, in the process of citizenship application, Muslims face far more difficulties and have to go through a longer and stricter process that is unequal and unfair. This also has a negative impact on the desire and enthusiasm towards adaptation and integration. Despite all the challenges and difficulties, the Muslim community in Spain has a quite high level of confidence in both security forces and judiciary. Their sense of belonging to Spain is far stronger (by 15%) than to their country of origin. Most of them came to Spain for economic, familial, and educational reasons, the great majority of them think the economic prosperity, educational opportunities, and religious and cultural freedoms are the principle advantages that Spain offers to Muslims and immigrants while racism and Islamophobia, unemployment and discrimination by society are the biggest disadvantages.

4. Perceptions on Socio-Economic Status

The majority of Muslim immigrants in Spain are in the lower strata of the socio-economic ladder, doing mainly agricultural and constructional works. There are small pockets of professionals, academics, and business people however; the largest segment of the new Muslim community is employed in un-wanted and un-demanded works (Asma, int.). Providing a brief overview of the socio-economic profile of the Muslim community in Spain, this chapter discusses the general economic status of Spanish Muslims, the main occupation and employment types that are taken by them, the Muslim contribution to the Spanish economy, the main challenges and problems encountered by Spanish Muslims in the workplace and job market, and so forth. Since the question of education, employment, and socio-economic status and challenges in Spain are inextricably intertwined; the chapter also attends to the educational profile of the Spanish Muslim community. The key elements and characteristics of Muslim socio-economic engagement and status could be pinpointed in three main headings.

(I) ***Humble socio-economic backgrounds and cheap labour force:*** As maintained by many, Muslims in Spain are mostly coming from humble backgrounds. They generally, come from rural areas. Yusuf, a social and humanitarian activist, when asked to evaluate the socio-economic profile of Muslims in Spain, reported that the Spanish context is different than other countries in Europe, especially the UK, he maintained. “And even more so than other countries across the Atlantic, Canada and the US. Because Spain is the farmhouse of Europe. Spain is an agricultural country. Who works there? Mostly Moroccan farm workers.” They came from rural areas of Morocco, especially, the northern parts of Morocco, the Reef, which is a mountain range in northern Morocco. Yusuf stated that these Muslim farm-workers are not well educated and that makes the Muslim community completely different from the Muslim communities in the US or Canada where you probably have brain drain. A socio-economic outcome of this demographic and educational profile is that in Spain, concerning the wages and earnings, the average for Muslims is below the national average (Yusuf, int.).

Agreeing with Yusuf’s points, Layla stated that apart from the historical and civilizational legacy, the main contribution of Muslims to Spain is through cheap labour force, through doing jobs that Spanish people will not take anymore. True, there are few entrepreneurs and business people, but their number is small, the majority of Spanish Muslims clusters around the bottom socio-economic hierarchy. According to her, the Muslim contribution to Spain is not visible and promoted sufficiently. This is partly due to the emphasis Muslims often put on the historical Andalusian legacy, instead of focusing on today. The longing for the glorious Islamic past is no use. That past, in her view, had its own contradiction and that is why it

disappeared. “Al-Andalus has become a myth, a national myth, and what is important now, is what we can learn from that myth for the future” (Layla, int.).

(ii) ***Less integration brings about less economic commitment:*** According to numerous participants in the roundtable discussions and the interviews, politically, civically, and socially less adapted Muslims are often also less integrated, involved and committed economically. Halifa, a female university student, for instance, argued that the majority of Moroccan Muslims want to return to their country and invest there instead of remaining in Spain and establishing a life and business. According to her, many problems and challenges that are encountered in integration and the betterment of educational profile and socio-economic status are posed by and rooted in this mentality. In Halifa’s view, compared to Syrians or Pakistanis, Moroccan Muslims are more reluctant to stay and flourish in Spain. “They [Syrians and Pakistanis] open their own companies because they have a hunger for success. We are more conformist. ‘I get paid 1200 Euros a month, it’s good enough’ [we say].” Zahra pointed out that the Muslim community needed time to grow and better itself in terms of socio-economic status and educational profile. “We have to wait for a fourth or fifth generation. In France, the first generation had the same frustrations, but now their grandchildren are different. My son completed high school. Probably his children will complete university. It takes generations. We are talking about something new and we cannot reap the fruits right now” (SP, dis).

(iii) ***From a socio-economic perspective, the Muslim youth as a potential for future leverage:*** According to many interviewees and respondents, thanks to the Muslim fertility rate, youth and educational opportunities (*i.e.*, opportunities that will be granted to the Muslim youth providing that they continue their education to earn professional and academic skills), the future prognosis of the community in Spain, in terms of socio-economic betterment, is quite promising. In the opinion of almost all participants, the Muslim youth in general is doing much better than their parents in terms of educational attainment and achievements, and this trend will result in positive changes in the socio-economic status of Muslims. Considering much lower natality among Spaniards, according to some respondents, unless they are socio-economically marginalized, a significant portion of the future professionals, technicians, and skilled workers will be Muslims.

According to Karim, there are small clusters of professional business people and academics, but the majority of Spanish Muslims are struggling with limited resources, fighting to reach the end of the month and fulfil their personal obligations. He maintained, “When we speak about the Muslim community in Spain, we are not talking about an economically strong community that can represent an economic lobby” (Karim, int.). Karim reported that the new generations are capable of overcoming these barriers and better themselves economically, particularly because more and more Muslim parents are investing in the education of their children. There is a philosophy of investing in education, this philosophy is crosscutting all Muslim groups. But, at the organizational level, because of the resource limitation, there is not much to do (Karim, int.).

Yusuf argued that from this vantage point, the economic crisis in Spain was a blessing to some extent, because it woke up the Muslim community to the importance of education. “Because they were making a lot of money out of working in farming and constructions, doing jobs that did not require a lot of education. So, the crisis came and forced those fathers and mothers to take their kids to school and focus on education. Ever since the crisis, education became a prerequisite to go far in life” (Yusuf, int.).



Figure 9: Casa Árabe (the Arab House), a centre of Arabic-Islamic culture in Madrid

In addition to these headings, albeit not as grand as the labour provided in the construction and farming sectors, another area that Muslims have been contributing to the development of the Spanish economy is through halal business. Layla, the president of an Islamic institution of halal certification stated that there were three major halal certification and accreditation bodies in Spain, and their institution has official certification branches in Mexico and is now preparing to open branches in Guatemala and Argentina. She reported that there are over 450 companies that have

attained halal certification from them and there are around 2000 halal products in the Spanish market. According to her, around 1000 people trained and accredited only by their institution as either human resource team members and supervisors or slaughterhouse workers in the halal business and services throughout Spain. Layla maintained that the impact of halal business and services was great with over 50.000 people involved in the process as either permanent employees or temporary workers. Apart from opening creating new employment opportunities, particularly during the economic crises, the halal certification and services had another positive contribution- that is providing us with an opportunity to speak about Islam in Spain. The halal business helped us to demonstrate that Islam and Muslims will contribute to the Spanish society and economy (Layla, int.).

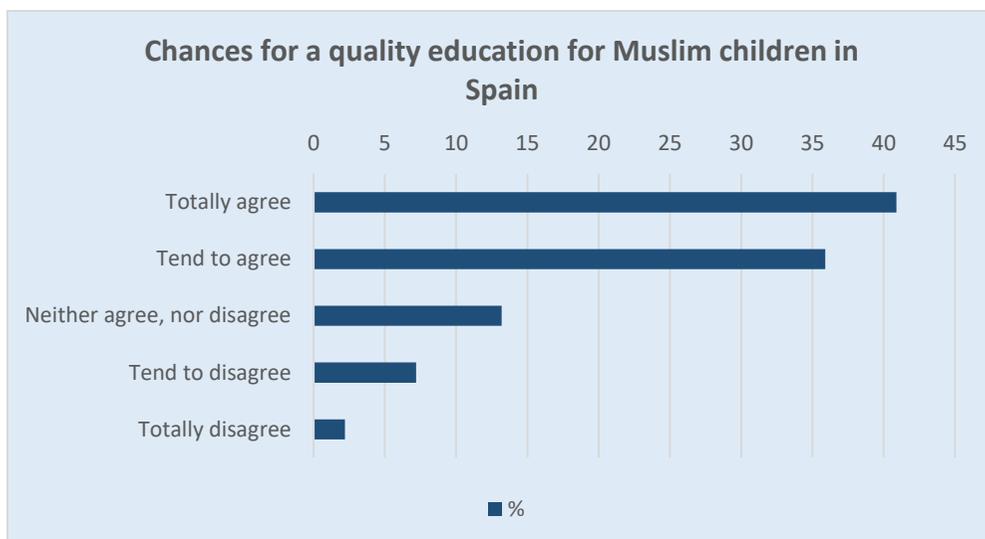
The findings of the SP Sur provided a more detailed outlook and insight into the socio-economic and educational profile of Muslims in Spain. Before asking questions about how the

respondents perceive the socioeconomic status of the wider Muslim community in Spain, it would be necessary to take note of the educational attainment level of the respondents themselves. It appears that the Muslim individuals in the survey sample were mostly well-educated people. The combined proportion of individuals with less than a secondary school degree is merely above 10%. However, those with a university degree or beyond constitute half of the sample. This indicates that educated ones have gradually replaced the first generation of Muslims with humble backgrounds. It is also important to take into account that an important number of the first generation Muslims arrived in Spain for educational purposes as well.

Educational attainment levels of the survey sample in Spain	N	%
Illiterate	6	1.5
Literate but not graduate of any school	17	4.3
Primary school graduate	24	6
Secondary school graduate	147	36.8
University graduate	172	43
Graduate degree (Masters, PhD, etc.)	28	7
DK/RA	6	1.5
Total	400	100

Graph 22: Educational attainment levels of the survey sample in Spain, SP Sur 2019.

The SP Sur also aimed at measuring Muslims' overall satisfaction with educational opportunities, and whether they consider their children are being exposed to an educational marginalization in Spain. As it is a very important concern for immigrant and diasporic communities everywhere, the respondents were first asked whether they believed their children had the same chances for quality education as Spanish children. A vast majority stated that they believed Muslim children had equal access and equal chances with Spanish children for quality education in Spain. To be more precise, when asked to what extent they agreed that Muslim children had equal access to quality education, 40.9% totally agreed while another 35.9% tended to agree with only less than 10% of the respondents disagreeing with this statement (SP Sur).



Graph 23: To what extent do you agree that Muslim children have the same chances for quality education as other children in Spain? SP Sur 2019

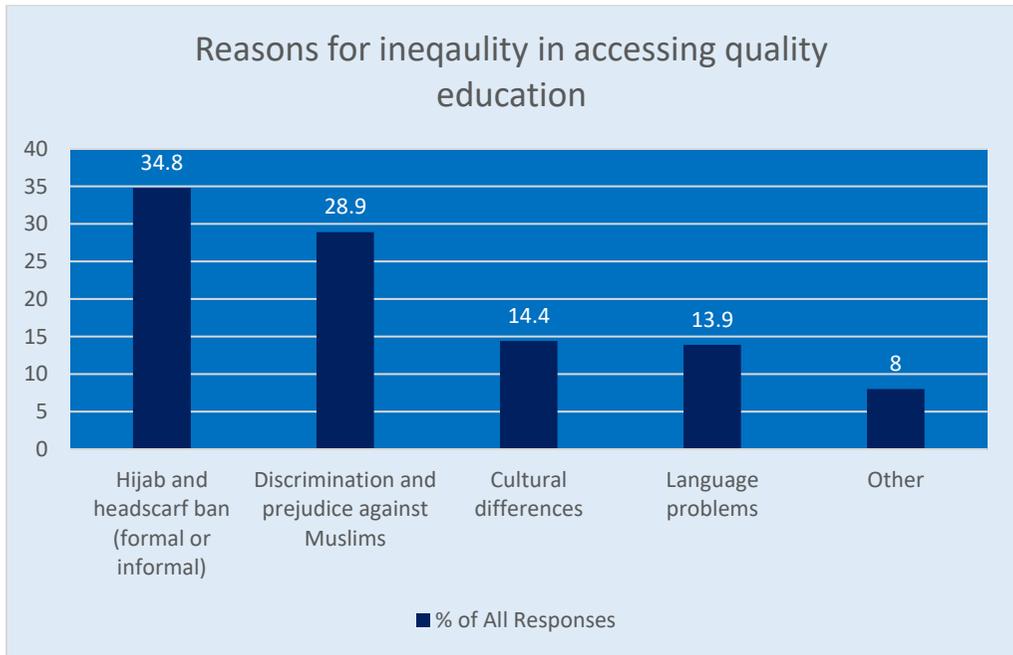
Those who did not agree with the above statement about the Muslim children's equality of access to quality education were asked to list the main reasons that prevent Muslim children from having the same chances in accessing quality education. The multiple answers they provided were put together in the below table.

Why do you think that Muslim children are not offered with an equal chance for quality education in Spain?	N	%
Hijab and headscarf ban (formal or informal)	65	34.8
Discrimination and prejudice against Muslims	54	28.9
Cultural differences	27	14.4
Language problems	26	13.9
Other	15	8
Total	187	100

Graph 24: Why do you think that Muslim children are not offered with an equal chance for quality education in Spain? SP Sur 2019.

It could be deduced from this data that banning of religious identity markers which mostly affect Muslim female students are considered as the most popular reason and way of educational marginalization. More than one-third of the reasons suggested for this question was 'hijab and headscarf ban (formal or informal)'. Since in many cases, hijab or headscarf-wearing individuals can be subjected to several forms of pressure or oppression, even when there may be no formal ban, the question explicitly included 'informal' bans, as well. Put

differently, even when there is no official ban on these sorts of public expressions of religion and culture, individuals might experience intense psychological inhibitions due to unfavourable attention in a disapproving environment. Related to this, a significant number of individuals reported that Muslim children were negatively affected in education due to discrimination and anti-Muslim prejudices.



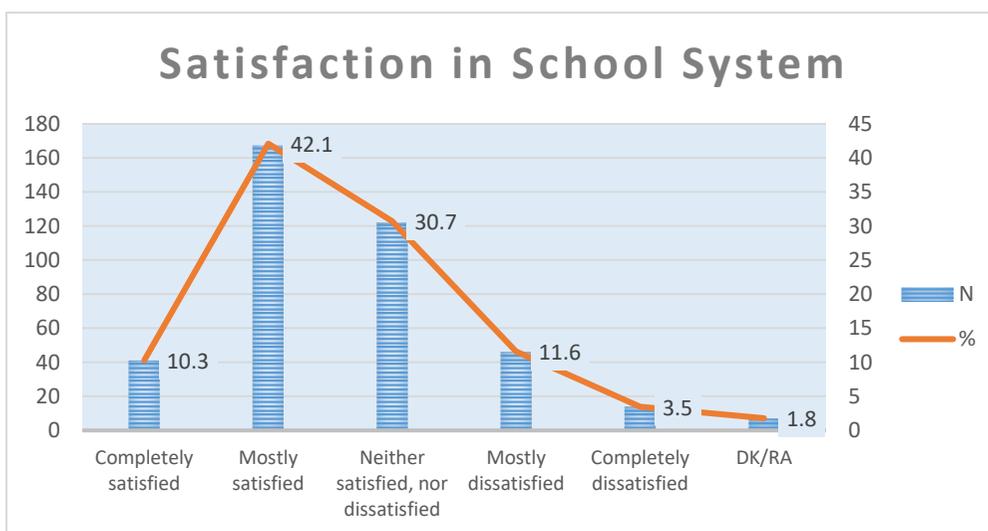
Graph 25: Why do you think that Muslim children are not offered with an equal chance for quality education in Spain? SP Sur 2019.

Continuing on the issue of education, the respondents were asked whether they believed that the Spanish government should adopt certain measures to provide equal access and opportunities for Muslim individuals, particularly when applying for a secondary school or university. It appears that a significant majority of the respondents do believe so. In fact, almost half of all the respondents totally agreed with that statement while another 15% of the respondents reported that they tend to agree with it.

Extra-measures to provide equal access for Muslim individuals	N	%
Totally agree	197	49.6
Tend to agree	59	14.9
Neither agree nor disagree	63	15.9
Tend to disagree	19	4.8
Totally disagree	37	9.3
DK/RA	22	5.5
Total	397	100

Graph 26: To what extent would you agree that the Spanish government should adopt extra-measures to provide equal access for Muslim individuals when applying for a secondary school or University? SP Sur 2019

It needs to be highlighted that while a vast majority of the respondents, more than 76%, suggested that they believed that the Muslim children in Spain have equal access to a quality education as the Spanish children (SP Sur), here a slight majority reported the need for special and additional measures for Muslims so that they have equal opportunities at the high school or university level. This seems to suggest that while Muslims are comfortable with the equality in opportunities and channels to reach them in the earlier stages of education, they are more concerned about the higher stages of education. When the respondents were asked about their level of satisfaction with the overall quality of schools and the education system in Spain, more than half reported their satisfaction. In fact, the proportion of those respondents who were either mostly or completely dissatisfied with the quality of schools and the education system in Spain remained low at 15% (SP Sur).



Graph 27: How satisfied are you with the quality of schools and the education system in Spain? SP Sur 2019.

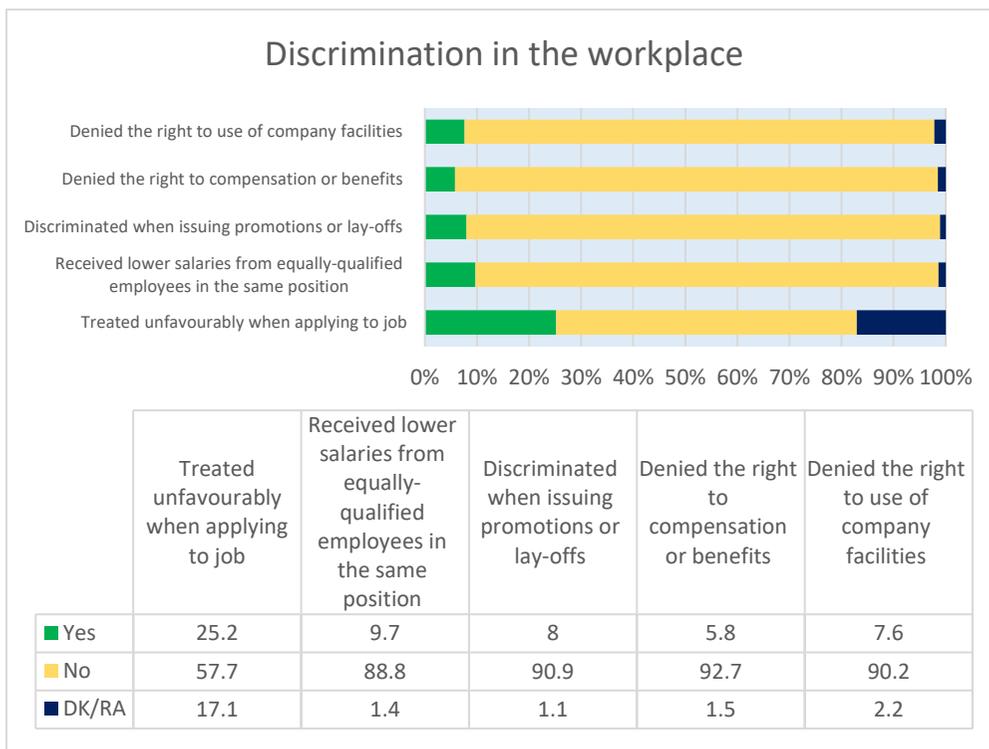
The findings of the SP Sur concerning the overall Muslim satisfaction with the education system in Spain reveals an important contradiction at the manifest level and this contradiction (*viz.*, being both satisfied with the educational quality, equality, and opportunities, as were the respondents in the SP Sur, while voicing strong concerns and criticisms on the educational system, as did participants in the interviews and the roundtable discussions) requires further elucidation. Indeed, one of the main observations of the Spain field study was that the Spanish context is marked predominantly by the educational challenges—just as it was the security problems, economic disparities, and interracial tensions that mostly shaped the socio-political and economic presence of Muslims in South Africa; the halal business and tourism in Japan, and negative representation and anti-Muslim politics in the US. It was also observed that the majority of socio-economic challenges and problems faced by Muslims in Spain had educational underpinnings, ramifications, and associated complications and implications. It is concluded that the challenges and problems faced are involved and related to the political and legal configurations and regulations of Islamic education, rather than the quality and equality of education, itself. In other words, as parents, the participants are generally satisfied with the quality and equity of schooling in Spain but as Muslim parents, they are not.

In line with this, Tarek, a tutor of Islamic teaching and the director of an Islamic centre in Madrid, maintained that the most pressing and discouraging of issues that the Muslim community in Spain face is the education of their children. He reported that the public schools, despite the relevant articles in the agreement, do not provide halal food and authorities ignore their applications and complaints. In Spain, as a whole he added, more than 300 thousand Muslim students are enrolled and for all students there were only 56 instructors accredited for Islamic education (Tarek, int.). As many others reported similar incidents, cases, and stories, it is clear that the Muslim students are facing an educational and religio-cultural marginalization in Spain (Tarek, int.).

The SP Sur directed many other questions in order to measure the attitudes and views on certain issues related to the socio-economic status, satisfaction, and well-being of the Muslim community in Spain. Firstly, they were asked about their experiences of discrimination in the workplace. Further, they were asked to report specific discrimination experiences such as if they have ever been denied the right to use of company facilities, denied compensation or benefits, discriminated when promotions or lay-offs were distributed, discriminated regarding their salaries or treated unfavourably when applying to a job. The findings revealed that in all but one of these questions, the experience of discrimination is quite low, with under 10% of the respondents reporting having experienced them. The only exception to this was the experience of discrimination when applying to a job, which was mentioned by one out of every four respondents in SP Sur. In other words, more than 25% of the respondents claimed that they have been treated unfavourably in a workplace due to their religious identity when applying for a job.

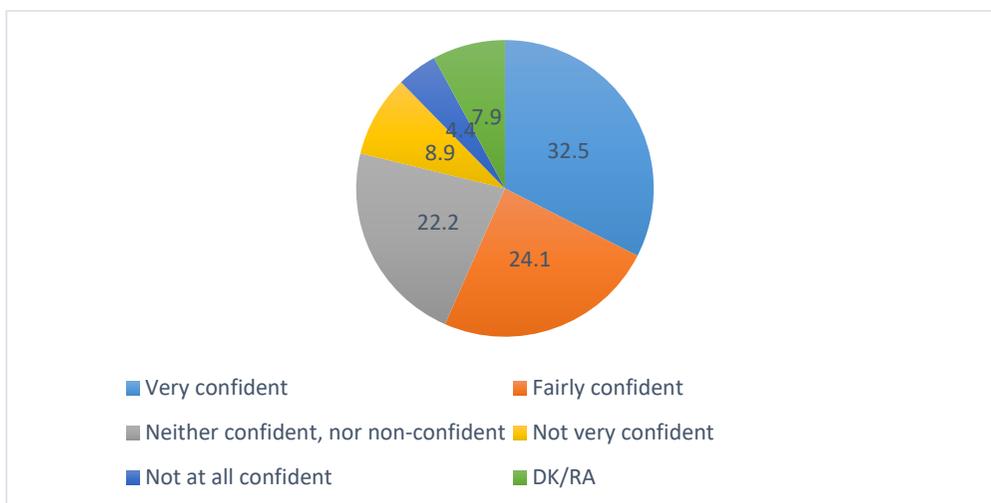
This means that Muslim individuals face more difficulties and challenges in getting a job rather than in the workplace, or after getting a job. This may be explained by the fact that in many

cases discrimination arises out of prejudices that are formed and/or reinforced in contexts of no contact, lack of knowledge and ignorance. In other words, it is more likely for the members of a group to form a predisposition against another group if they do not have actual contact with them and if they do not know much about the other group. Once they get to know an individual many of the prejudices prove to be cultural misconceptions thus eliminating discrimination and prejudices.



Graph 28: Have you ever experience discrimination in the Workplace in the following ways? SP Sur 2019.

In line with this post-employment change towards the positive, the findings of SP Sur also revealed that Muslim individuals do not appear to be worried about their job security. When asked how confident they are about keeping their current jobs in a year, more than 56% suggested that they were either very confident (32.5%) or fairly confident (24.1%). At the other end of the spectrum, only 8.9% of the respondents voiced concern about their future in keeping their jobs, saying that they were ‘not very confident’. While at 4.4%, a disproportionately lower number of the respondents reported that they were ‘not at all confident’ about remaining employed in the coming 12 months another 7.9% either refused to answer or said they did not know.



Graph 29: How confident are you that you will keep your job in the coming 12 months? SP Sur 2019.

What are the most important assets for a Muslim to find a job in Spain? This question was asked to respondents and they were given the chance to list multiple answers. All of the responses were then combined and are presented in the Table below. The two main assets, according to these answers, appear to be the qualifications and professional experience of the individuals, voiced by 33.6% and 29.5% of the respondents, respectively. At 12.7% language skills come in third place. It needs to be noted however that for many respondents speaking Spanish and having sufficient language skills could be considered a part of having qualifications.

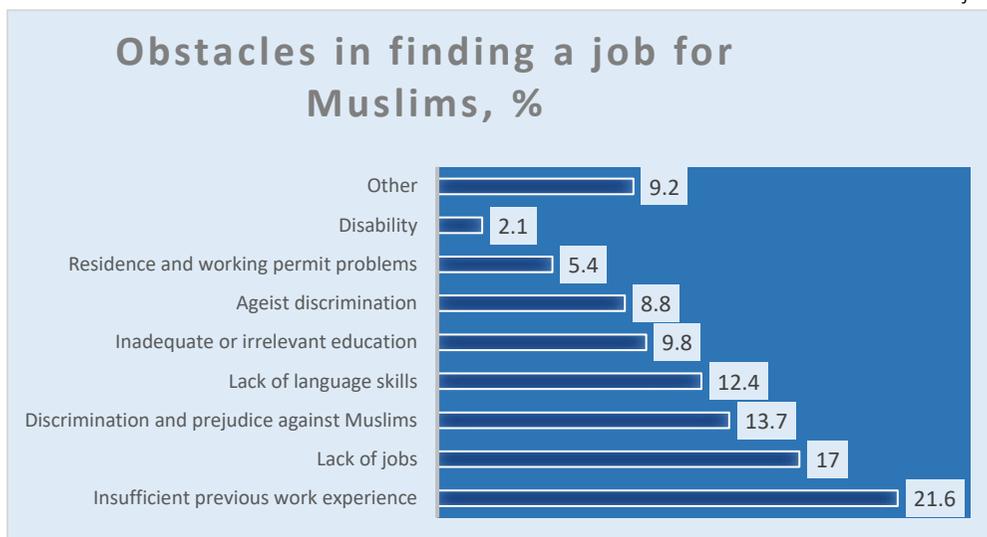
Most important assets for a Muslim to find a job in Spain	N	%
Qualifications	249	33.6
Professional experience	218	29.5
Language skills	94	12.7
Residence and working permit	54	7.3
Ability to adapt	51	6.9
Personal contacts	39	5.3
The network of family and friends in high places	22	3
Computer skills	5	0.7
Other	8	1.1
Total	740	100

Graph 30: Most important assets for a Muslim to find a job in Spain (multiple answers), SP Sur 2019.

The other assets mentioned frequently include a residence and working permit (7.3%) and the ability to adapt (6.9%), which is crucial particularly for any individual with immigrant origins because most of their qualifications, professional experience, professional code of conduct

and work ethic might have been formed elsewhere. Then comes two responses that focus on the so-called social capital of Muslim individuals. Both ‘personal contacts’ of the individuals themselves (5.3%) and the networks of their families and friends (3%) were suggested as important assets that have a potentially great impact on finding a job for Muslims in Spain (SP Sur.).

If these were the main assets that could significantly increase the likelihood of a Muslim to find a job, what were the main obstacles that prevent them from finding employment? In the same manner, as the main assets, the respondents were asked to provide a list of main obstacles. The responses are aggregated below in Table 14. While some of the popular answers were in line with the above discussed earlier question, such as the ‘lack of previous work experience’ and ‘language problems’, there were also some irrelevant obstacles to the individual qualifications of Muslims. For instance, one of the most frequently given answers concerned about the job market and the Spanish economy. Accordingly, at 21.6%, the most voiced obstacle in finding a job for a Muslim individual is the lack of jobs in Spain. Almost as frequently mentioned was a factor that was exclusively related to religious identity: discrimination and prejudice against Muslims, at 13.7%. This is in line with the finding above that a significant number of Muslims report having experienced discrimination when applying for



Graph 31: Main obstacles before those who are unable to find a job in Spain, SP Sur 2019.

To summarize discussions and observations made in this chapter, the majority of the immigrant Muslims in Spain come from a rural background and have quite humble cultural, educational, and economic capital. Their major socio-economic contribution to the country is through the provision of the cheap labour force in the Spanish farming and construction sectors. In that respect, the Spanish Muslim context is akin to that of the German one, rather than those of the UK, the USA and Canada where the Muslim communities are very well educated and contribute in various ways—professionally, academically, and financially. It was

observed that the integration problems that are faced mostly by the Moroccan immigrants have socio-economic resonances, as well. In the views of the established Muslim community, the failure and disinclination in socio-cultural integration and adaptation causes less socio-economic involvement and commitment. “Come-work-earn-return and investigate there,” is a common narrative course for many Muslim immigrants and this must change if the Muslim community want to prove itself and improve its socio-economic profile.

According to many others, however, the socio-economic picture is less gloomy and more promising. The Muslim population is young and getting more and more educated and involved. Given the fact that the Spanish society is getting older with life expectancy going up and having children becoming less attractive, the Muslim community stands as a future leverage for the Spanish economy and socio-economic welfare, as well. Although Muslim individuals are more likely to suffer from economic marginalization, discrimination in employment, and a higher rate of unemployment and underemployment, it was observed that Muslims are confident in keeping their jobs and faring better economically in the future. Many respondents claimed that Muslim individuals encounter discrimination rather in the pre-employment processes; once they are employed it does not take long for them to prove their worth and capacity.

5. Attitudes on Visibility and Representation of Muslims

One of the participants during the interviews summarized the Spanish context and the main challenges relevant to the visibility and representation of Muslims particularly well. When asked to evaluate the level of political representation and visibility for the Muslim community in Spain, Karim stated that the representation is almost null; there are cases of some Muslims adhered to political parties or some who have become councillors or deputies, but this remains as individual cases, the community does not enjoy any representation. In the media, reporting on Muslims and Islam is also almost null. When there is any reporting it is about attacks. Lately, according to Karim, Muslims have been given a little more space in comparison with the past. “I believe that there is a lack of clear political will on the part of the state to give us the visibility that will normalize the situation and relations. On the part of the Muslim community, we have not done much in terms of political representation and visibility to have means to be present, to remain informed, and to open ourselves to others.” Muslims lack sufficient financial resources and infrastructures to create such means. In his opinion, Muslims still do not have political representation and visibility that is consistent with their proportional size (4% to 5% of the population) and importance (Karim, int.).

This chapter discusses the visibility and representation of Spanish Muslims with a specific eye towards their social, political, and civic engagement and representation. Based on the observations recorded during the field study and the findings of the SP Sur, the Spanish context vis-à-vis the visibility and representation of the Muslim community and Muslims political involvement could be summarized in following headings:

(i) ***Muslims’ limited participation and engagement in political life:*** Although changing towards the positive, the Spanish Muslim community’s level of public and political engagement was observed to be far from ideal. Three primary reasons could be identified for the low level of engagement, which many times, observed to dissatisfy Muslims themselves: The first one is the retaining of attachment to the country of origin, especially in the case of Moroccan Muslims. The second is the cultural and religious inhibitions as in the opinion of some Muslims, participating in the politics of a non-Muslim country or even showing interest in politics itself, does not quite reconcile with Islamic teachings. The third reason is the failure or ineffectiveness of the Muslim organizations and institutions, partly due to the lack of financial resources and support, partly due to the lack of solidarity and strong leadership.

For instance, Naim, the president of a Muslim association reported that one of the obstacles for sufficient political visibility and representation is the mentality of Muslims. Accordingly, the largest Muslim group in Spain is from Morocco and Moroccan Muslims often preserve the attachment and wish to return to their home country. Because of this the geographical proximity of Morocco to Spain, Naim pointed, is a disadvantage since strong links to Morocco

prevent them to settle down and integrate, which bring about disproportionately low citizenship attainment when compared with the size of the Moroccan population in Spain. He further emphasized that the history of the Muslim community in Spain is relatively short and the community started to thrive really after the family unions began in 2004. Previously, Naim maintained that the majority of Muslims in Spain was predominantly male students. When Muslim women arrived, thanks to the family unions and a higher rate of marriage among Muslims, the community became more settled and integrated “because women force stability” (Naim, int.).

According to Yusuf, there is not enough participation from the Muslim community in the political game because some ideologies that have come from overseas have a very clear anti-democratic predisposition. “So, you have some Islamic ideologies which tend to be very textualist and literalist. They say that it is *haram* to participate in elections and how can you vote for a *kafir*, for a person who is not a Muslim. And, you know, that kind of interference tends to work as an obstacle towards active participation of Muslims as candidates and voters, in politics” (Yusuf, int.).

As mentioned, an important reason for the low level of political and social activism and engagement, according to some of the respondents, is the Muslim organizations and institutions’ incapacity in terms of influence and financial resources. Many participants in the roundtable discussions and the interviews argued that in the absence of governmental and official financial support, the majority of the Muslim organizations find themselves in a catch-22, turning to overseas for such resources at the risk of losing their independence and falling under strict surveillance or becoming dormant and dysfunctional.

Commenting on this point, Layla, stated that a positive outcome of the halal certification business, for her organization, is the economic independence that they have been enjoying thanks to the financial benefits they have accumulated through their services. While there are many Islamic organizations in Spain, she pointed, only a few are active because of the lack of financial resources. In such context, for organizations, there are two paths, either accepting financial support from outside and losing their independence because with support comes control and interference, or becoming inactive. Thus establishing income-generating mechanisms is the only plausible solution to both maintain your independence and remain active. She also stressed that after the 9/11 and similar bombing incidents the Spanish state and governments have introduced a very strict control over the financial resources of the Muslim organization, the sources of money, both inside and outside, are closely monitored and scrutinized. In terms of financial resources and operational performance, all Muslim organizations are under profound surveillance in Spain (Layla, int.).



Figure 10: M-30 Mosque of Madrid, one of the largest and recent religious and cultural establishments of the Muslim community in Spain

Although not pointed out by many, according to few participants another reason for the low level of visibility and participation was the power of the Church and the Military. Accordingly, as Yusuf argued, the two institutions had a great impact on the visibility and representation of the Muslim community through their huge influence in the political arena, although they do this often, indirectly and invisibly. “You cannot mess with the church or the military because they have far reaching powers. And parties, if they are not based on religion, at least, they are not hostile or they do not show a public hostility towards the Church because that is not going to play in their favour” (Yusuf, int.). He continued, “Spain is a confessional, it does not have an official religion on paper or in the Constitution [*España es un estado aconfesional*, Spain is a secular state]. However, in practice, it is different because political institutions, they do fear the power and the influence of the Church (Yusuf, int.). In such a context, Yusuf reported, the visibility and political representation of Muslims is overwhelmingly limited. Quite a limited prominence, even in the City Councils. According to him, when a Muslim individual takes a prominent position in politics, he/she draws a lot of attention. The main problem, however, he continued, is the low level of political awareness and participation among Muslims. Accordingly, the number of Muslims who hold the right to vote is around 700,000. The electoral participation rate for Muslims, however, is significantly below the average, the Spanish average (Yusuf, int.).

(ii) ***Quite a high level of interest in politics contradicting an equally low level of active engagement:*** Demonstrated clearly in the findings of the SP Sur, one of the principal conclusions of the field study was that Spanish Muslims harbour a great interest in political and social engagement, however, they fell overwhelmingly short in projecting their interest and capacity in reality. Only a very small number of the participants were satisfied with both the level and the manner of political representation Muslims have in the country, and a

notably high number of them reported that further political involvement would benefit Muslims, but they also accepted that the present level of engagement and participation is undesirably low. Some improvements have recently been made.

On a positive note, for example, Tarek pointed out that a Muslim woman has been elected to the Catalan Parliament for the first time, which brought visibility to the community, albeit very limited. “The first Muslim woman in the Catalan Parliament, it is history. Something is happening, changing mentalities and changing realities. I am always optimistic. Already you see a lot of students at universities, and you see student organizations; there is an improvement, you can see and that brings you an optimistic feeling.” According to him, it was normal to have reservations but “with 2 million people, I would say change is inevitable” (Tarek, int.).

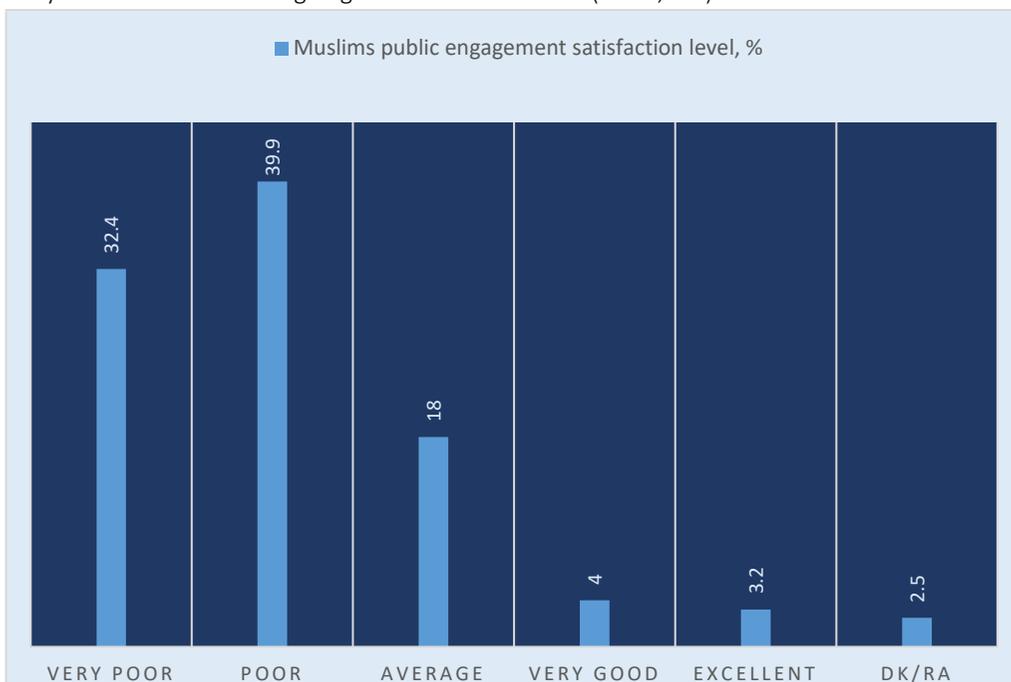
(iii) Muslims’ negative representation in the media and dramatically low level of trust in Spanish media and its objectivity: Both the findings of the SP Sur and the discussions during the roundtable meetings, as well as the interviews, revealed an overwhelmingly low Muslim satisfaction with their public image in the Spanish media. Yusuf reported that Muslims portrait in the media from a security point of view. “Are they peaceful? Are they belligerent? Are they extremists? This is prevalent and so obvious in many programs that have been aired lately on national TV that claim to portrait the reality of the Muslim community. They are always reporting about the Islamist extremists and their illegal activities or negative news about this or that mosque, he said. “They do not talk about the reality, what we are about, what we think, what we believe, how we treat each other, our children, our dreams, and so forth” (Yusuf, int.).

According to Layla, what deteriorates the situation is that the negative image and narrative cannot be challenged and countered. In her view, one outcome of communal, organizational, and economic marginalization and surveillance is that the Muslim community and organizations have not managed to establish their own media infrastructures to fight against the rising Islamophobia and anti-Muslim politics. The Muslim community, in other words, lacks the capacity to challenge the stereotypic accounts and reports on Islam, and present a counter-narrative to anti-Muslim rhetoric. Communities are afraid of each other, not because they know each other, but because they are strangers to one another. Thus, it is important to have that capacity to introduce Islam and promote it; to show that Muslims are just everyone. Otherwise, the news and reporting channel offer very limited and manipulated visibility to Islam and Muslims. When there are bombings and deaths associated with Islam and even in those cases, they would prefer, for instance, a woman in hijab or a man with a thick beard as commentator or advocate for Islam and Muslims. If you are not in hijab and speak Spanish very well, then, your chance to appear in those programs as a representative of Islam, as it happened to me numerous times, is very small (Layla, int.).

Commenting on the issue of Muslim representation in the Spanish media, Farhad, the general director of an important Islamic cultural centre in Madrid and an ex-diplomat, stated that in

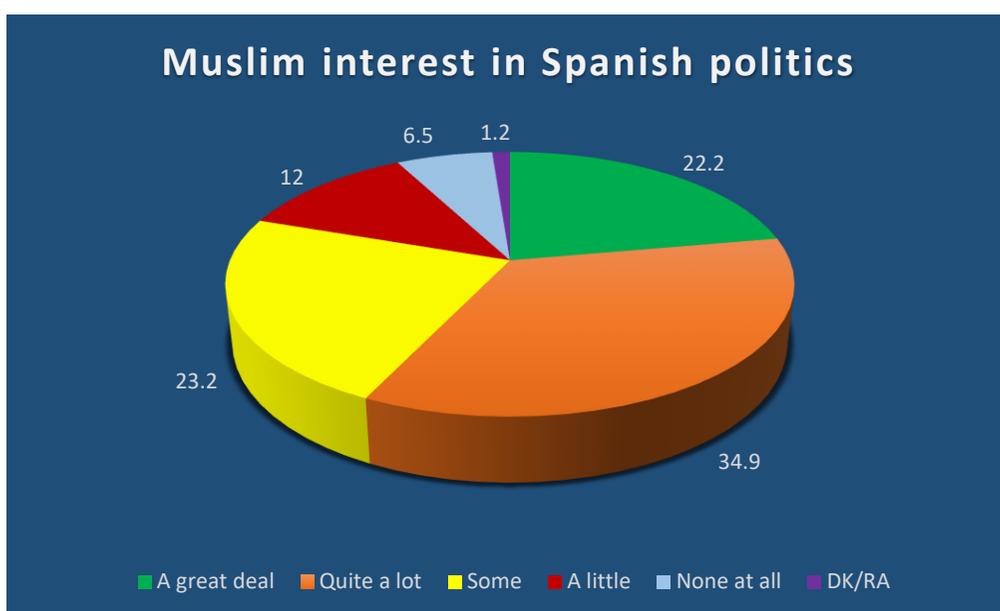
the representation and visibility of Muslims, certain circles might put extra effort to link the Muslim community with the fundamentalist groups. Extremism is present in any religious community. It is not fair and realistic to frame and reduce the Islamic presence and the Muslim community to cases of security and criminality because of such fundamentalist groups and their radicalism. These groups abuse and exploit religion for their crimes and other purposes. They have nothing to do with Islam and the Muslim community. To Farhad, it is also Muslims' responsibility to prevent such groups and activities from gaining any social impact in the Islamic space (Farhad, int.).

According to Yusuf, the role of centre-right politics and parties in the rise and prevalence of anti-Muslim sentiments is immense. In the last elections, the *Vox*, an extreme-right populist party, achieved a concerning rise in votes in Andalusia, and "their discourse is based on hate to Muslims, specifically, and then less so to immigrants. Because they say 'No, we are not against immigrants, we just would like more South American immigrants and less of Muslims.'" This, he added, is on their website, in their electoral program. South American immigrants, they argue, "are more adaptable and integrate better, and have the same religion with us, etc." And one of the first proposals this party made on their website, Yusuf reported, is that Spanish people need to kick out extreme imams from Spain. "Now who defines 'extreme'? They are the ones that are going to define extremism" (Yusuf, int.).



Graph 32: How would you describe the level of Muslim engagement (effective participation) in public life in Spain? (for example as local mayors, State officials, lawyers, members of the university, teaching staff, etc.)? SP Sur 2019.

The findings of the SP Sur were in agreement with the points of the participants in the interviews and the roundtable discussions, as here, too, the high level of the Muslims' interest and emphasis on the need for further political engagement were in contradiction with the prevailing reality. In order to measure Muslims' attitudes related to the political representation, engagement, and visibility the respondents in the SP Sur were asked a series of question. First, they were asked to assess the level of Muslims' public engagement, which in turn revealed an overwhelming dissatisfaction. In fact, more than 72% of the respondents characterized the level of engagement to be either poor (39.9%) or very poor (32.4%). While a significant percentage of the respondents, at 18%, believed that the level of engagement was "average." Those who believed that the level of Muslim engagement in the Spanish public life was either "very good" or "excellent" remained notably low at 7.2%, in total.

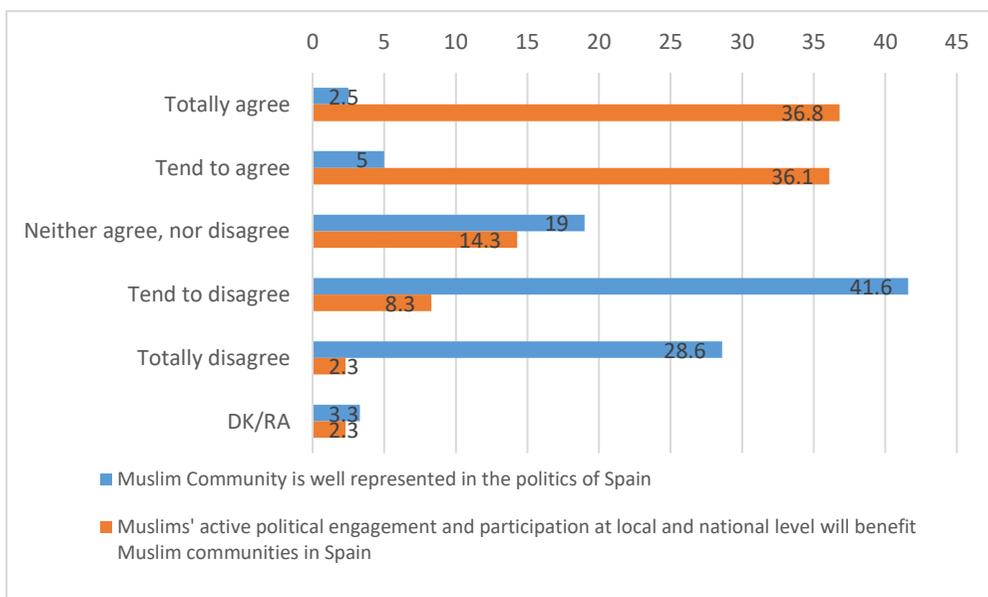


Graph 33: How much interest do you have in politics in Spain? SP Sur 2019.

What about Spanish politics and Muslims? How much interest do Muslims have in the politics of the country? It turned out that politics was quite a popular subject for Muslims. While more than 22.2% of the respondents suggested that they have a great deal of interest in Spanish politics, another 34.9% reported having "quite a lot" of interest. When combined, more than half of the respondents suggested they have an above average interest in the national politics of Spain, which is an important finding given that in many countries diasporic communities in general, and Muslim communities in particular, display a significantly low level of interest in the politics of their adopted country. In countries such as Germany and the UK, politics might be an uncomfortable or even seemingly dangerous topic for immigrant communities (see the *GMD Country Reports on Germany and the UK*). However, Muslims in Spain display a contrary and dynamic attitude. It should be noted that at 18%, the figure for those who reported that they had only little or no interest in politics of Spain was also significantly high (SP Sur.).

Following this, the respondents were also asked to evaluate the political representation of the Muslim community in Spain. Unlike the findings of above, the results for Spain were not different from those of Germany, the UK, or the US. Accordingly, at almost 70%, a vast majority of the respondents believed that the Spanish Muslims are not well represented in the country’s politics at all. The number of those who had a more positive outlook was recorded overwhelmingly low, with only 7.5% of the respondents stating that Muslims were well represented in Spanish politics (SP Sur).

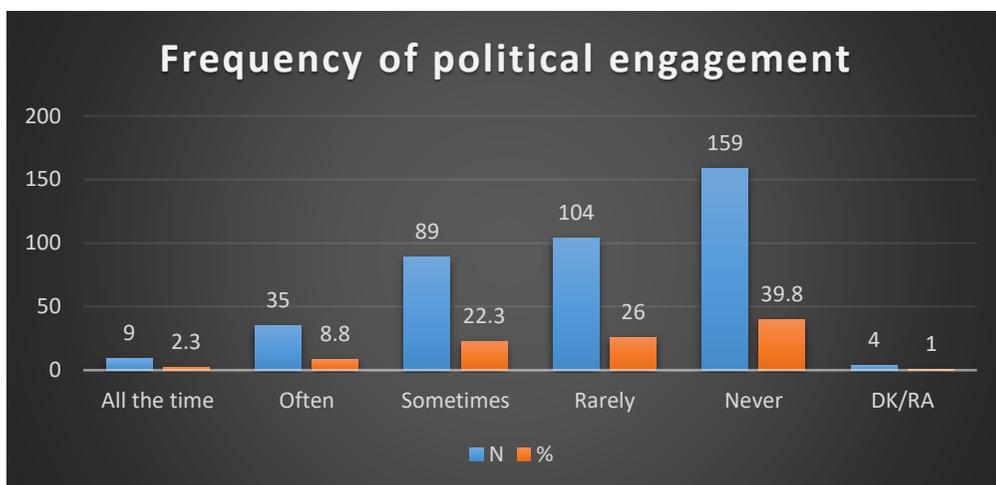
To recapitulate on the findings so far, it seems like Muslims in Spain are quite interested in Spanish politics and believe that the Muslim community is under-represented in politics. Do Muslim individuals believe that more involvement that is political will do any good for the Muslim community? The respondents were asked the relevant question: “To what extent do you agree that Muslims' active political engagement and participation at the local and national level will benefit Muslim communities in Spain?” The results indicated a consensus with almost 73% of the participants responding in the affirmative (36.8% for “totally agree” and 36.1% for “tend to agree”). In contrast, the number of those who did not believe that further involvement will bring any good remained just above 10% (8.3% for “tend to disagree” and 2.3% for “totally disagree”) (SP Sur.).



Graph 34: To what extent do you agree with the statement that (I) Muslim Community is well represented in the politics of Spain? (II) Will Muslims' active political engagement and participation at the local and national level will benefit Muslim communities in Spain? SP Sur 2019.

The respondents were asked questions aiming to evaluate their political behaviour, as well. Firstly, they were asked about how often they attended political events. Revealing a sharp contradiction with the previously covered findings, the largest group of the respondents reported having never attended any political event with the members of the Muslim

community in Spain. One might expect more active participation from such highly politically interested individuals, who are also very concerned about the under-representation of Muslims in politics and who believe that more political participation will benefit the Muslims in Spain. As discussed above, possible reasons for this contradiction are the low level of political integration and active involvement. It is highly probable that Muslims might be feeling politically inhibited due to the strict surveillance and rising anti-Muslim discourse and they might be underestimating their power and capacity to influence the Spanish politics. They might also be maintaining a stronger attachment towards the politics of the country of origin, which, in turn, lessens the urge to take an active part in the politics of the adopted country.



Graph 35: How often do you attend political events with members of the Muslim Community in Spain? SP Sur 2019.

As it is seen in the figure, almost 40% said they never attend political events. Another 26% suggested that they only rarely attend such events. Those who mention that they either often (8.8%) or all the time (2.3%) attend such political events with members of the Muslim community barely made up 11% of the respondents (SP Sur). Obviously, attending political events such as meetings or demonstrations is merely one way of participating in politics. Therefore, the respondents were also asked about other political behaviours. For instance, they were asked if they have ever done something that could affect any of the government decisions related to the Muslim community. In particular, the question aimed to understand whether Muslim individuals were trying to become a part of the public debates and discussions, or at least, trying to make their voices and concerns heard in one way or another. In order to get a comprehensive view and considering the fact those responses were not mutually exclusive, the respondents were once again permitted to provide multiple answers, which are all gathered and presented in the table below.

	N	%
Yes, I took part in public debates	60	13.4
Yes, I gave my comments on social networks / elsewhere on the internet	92	20.6
I only discuss it with friends, acquaintances, I have not publicly declared myself	149	33.6
I do not even discuss it	91	20.4
Other	12	2.7
DK/RA	42	9.3
Total	446	100

Graph 36: Have you ever done something that could affect any of the government decisions related to the needs of the Muslim Community? (Multiple answers), SP Sur 2019.

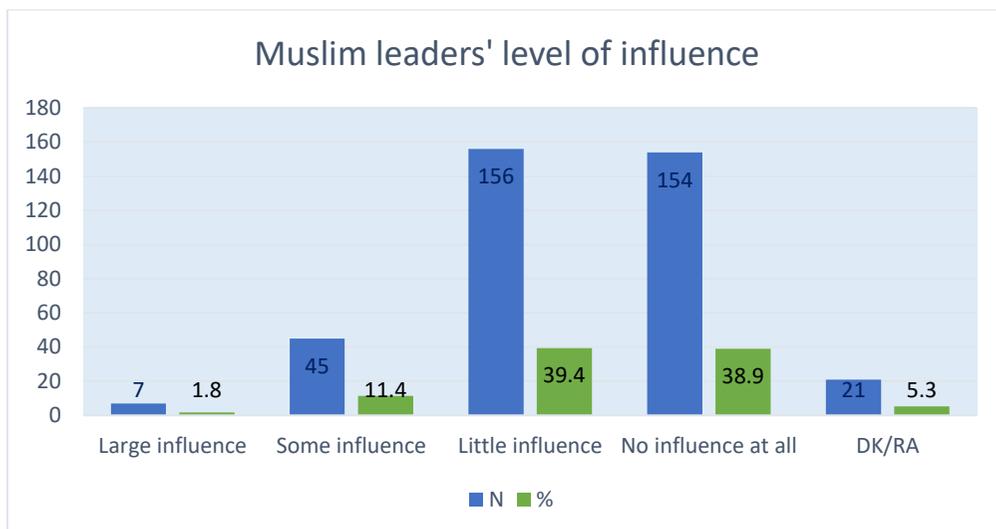
A large number of respondents mention taking an active part in public debates. In addition, it appears that Muslims use social networks and other cyberspaces on the internet to make their voice heard. The most frequently given response, however, included not declaring their opinion anywhere apart from discussing it with friends in private. When combined with another very popular response of “I don’t even discuss it,” this question appears to manifest a rather low level of engagement for the Muslims in the public debates. When those individuals who said they were not involved in public debates were further probed as to why, the main reason appears to do with individual efficacy. In other words, 42.4% of those who suggest that they would not publicly declare their opinions on matters of the public debate think that their views cannot have a significant influence anyway. 19% of them, however, deliberately choose not to be exposed publicly to protect themselves from any potential harm that might arise from their involvement in such debates.

	N	%
I as an individual cannot influence government decisions	114	42.4
I don't want to be publicly exposed	51	19
I don't care about it at all	31	11.5
Other	18	6.7
DK/RA	55	20.4
Total	269	100

Graph 37: What is the main reason why you are not actively involved in these processes?

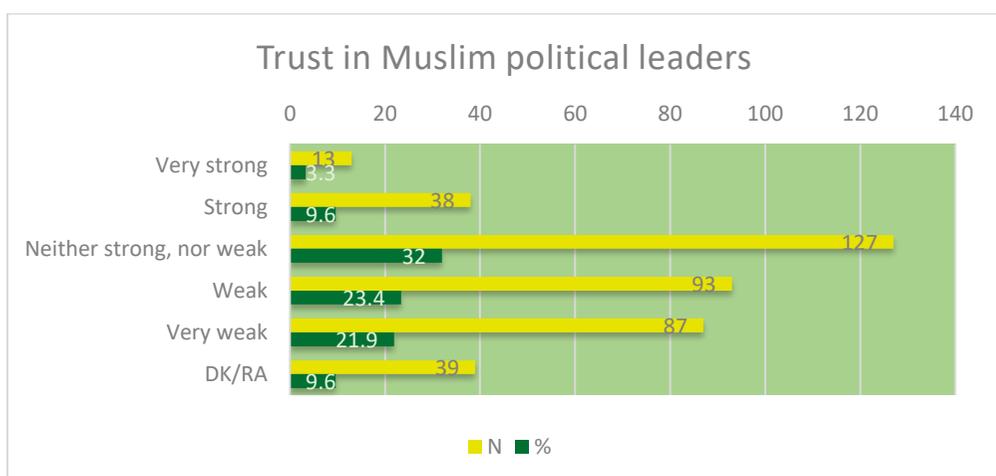
Another point of interest was the influence that the official religious leaders of the Muslim community enjoy in political matters in Spain. Although there are some influential Muslim umbrella organizations in Spain and some individual leaders who are recognized by the Spanish political establishment, the Muslim community appears to believe that their leaders bear very little influence. According to the survey data, almost 80% of the respondents believe that Muslim leaders in Spain either have “little influence” (39.4%) or “no influence at all”

(38.9%) in Spanish politics. The number of those who believed that Muslim religious leaders have a large influence was observed to be almost negligible (SP Sur).



Graph 38: In your opinion, how much influence do official religious leaders of Muslim Community have in political matters in Spain? SP Sur 2019.

Another essential issue in terms of the political engagement of Muslims in Spain is the level of trust in their Muslim political leaders. When asked to describe their level of trust, Muslim respondents in the SP Sur displayed a rather low level of trust in Muslim political leaders. In fact, close to half of the respondents suggested that their level of trust to the Muslim political leaders was either “weak” (23.4%) or “very weak” (21.9%). On the other side of the coin, the number of those who reported a “very strong” (3.3%) or “strong” (9.6%) level of trust in Muslim political leaders remained disproportionately low (SP Sur.).



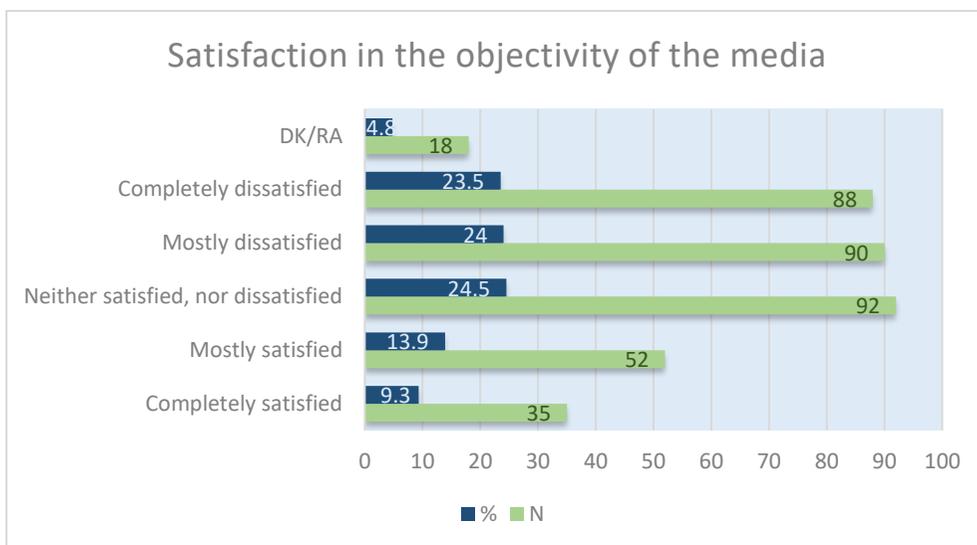
Graph 39: How would you describe your level of trust to political leaders of the Muslim Community in Spain? SP Sur 2019.

A very important topic for all the Muslim diasporic communities in various countries is their media representation. In most contexts, Muslims suffer from a lack of representation. Moreover, the limited amount of media coverage they get is increasingly becoming biased. Therefore, the question on media was also asked to the survey participants in Spain. Perhaps not surprisingly, the Muslims in Spain were observed to be not happy about the representation of Muslims in the Spanish media. When asked whether they believed the Muslim community is well represented in the Spanish media, an almost 80% majority of the respondents objected, while only 7% responded affirmatively.

	N	%
Totally agree	8	2
Tend to agree	20	5
Neither agree nor disagree	56	14
Tend to disagree	117	29.3
Totally disagree	192	48.1
DK/RA	6	1.5
Total	399	100

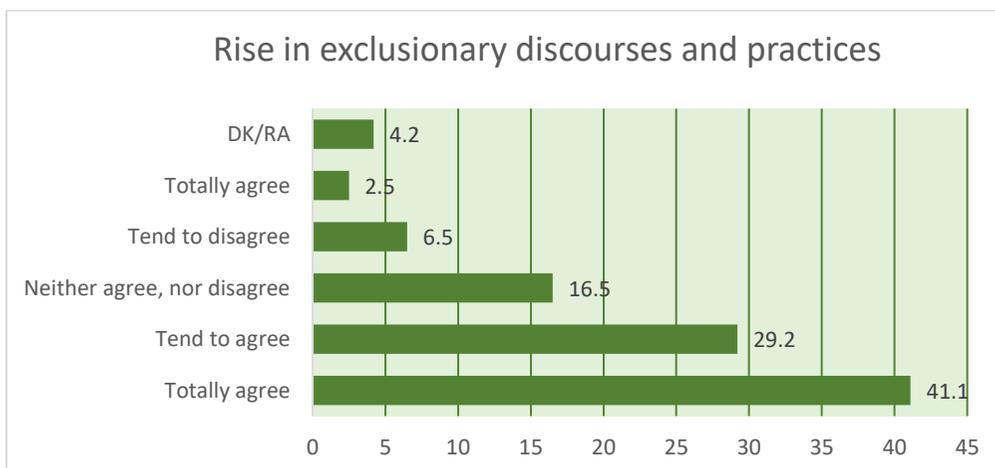
Graph 40: To what extent do you agree that the Muslim Community is well-represented in media in Spain? SP Sur 2019.

In addition to the issue of coverage and representation, respondents' opinions concerning the objectivity of reporting on Muslims in Spanish media were also surveyed. As it might be expected, Muslims were on the whole not satisfied with the neutrality of the media concerning Islam and Muslims, and the objectivity of reporting on Muslims. In fact, almost half of the respondents suggested they were either "mostly dissatisfied" (24%) or "completely dissatisfied" (23.5%) with the objectivity of reporting on Muslims in Spain. The number of respondents who were "mostly satisfied" (13.9%) or "completely satisfied" (9.3%) remained even lower than the number of those who took a neutral stand and stating that they were "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" (24.5%). Another 4.8% either refused to answer or stated that they did not know (SP SUR).



Graph 41: Are you satisfied with the objectivity of reporting on Muslims in general? SP Sur 2019.

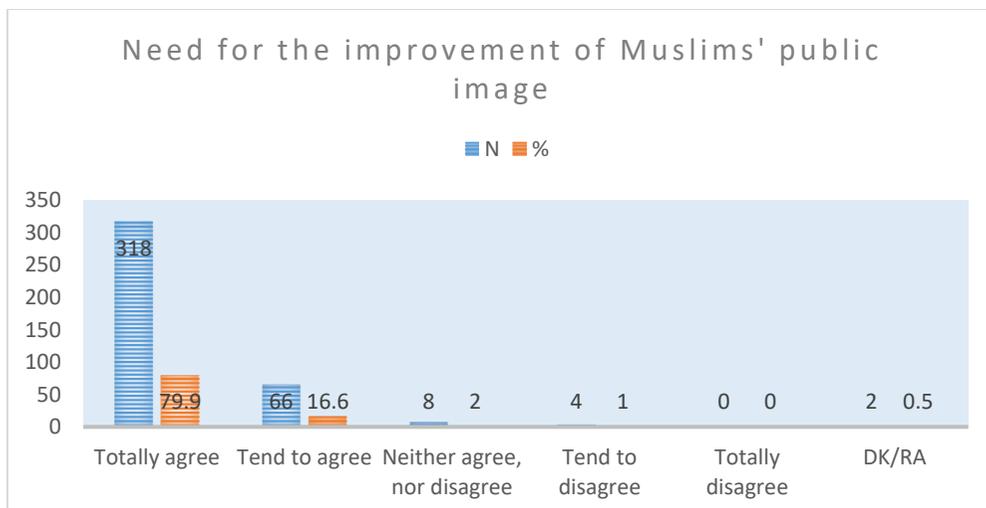
In parallel with the global developments in the world media, there seems to be a concern among the Muslims in Spain that things are deteriorating by the day through an increase in the exclusionary discourses and practices against Muslims in the media. When asked, “To what extent would you agree that there is a rise of exclusionary discourses and practices directed at Muslims in Spanish media?” 70% of the respondents agreed that such exclusionary discourses were in fact on the rise in Spain; while only just above 10%, in total, did not agree with the statement (SP Sur)



Graph 42: To what extent would you agree that there is a rise in exclusionary discourses and practices directed at Muslims in Spanish media? SP Sur 2019.

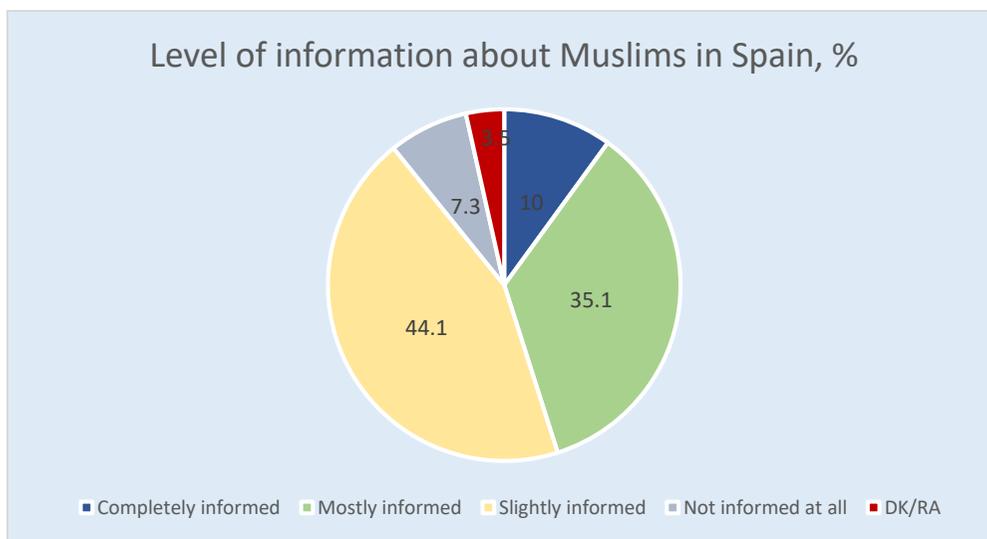
As a result, one might expect the Muslims in Spain to be worried about the public image of Islam and Muslims. This is exactly what the survey has found. When asked to what extent they would agree that there is a need to improve the public image of Muslims in Spain, almost all

of the respondents agreed with the statement. While 79.9% stated they “totally agree,” another 16.6% said they “tend to agree.” This means, in combination, a record high 96.5% of the survey participants believed that the public image of Muslims in Spain needs improvement (SP Sur).



Graph 43: To what extent would you agree that there is a need to improve the public image of Muslims living in Spain? SP Sur 2019.

If the representation of Muslims in the Spanish media is in such a problematic condition, where do the Muslim individuals turn to obtain information about the Muslim community in the country? Before inquiring about the channels of information for Muslims, the respondents were first asked to provide a subjective evaluation of how informed they are about the Muslim community in Spain. Here the respondents were divided roughly into two halves. On the one hand, there was the 45% of the respondents who consider themselves either “completely informed” (10%) or “mostly informed” (35%) about the Muslim community in the country. On the other hand, there were another 51% of the respondents who considered themselves “slightly informed” (44.1%) or “not informed at all” (7.3%). Another 3.5% did not share any opinion on the issue (SP Sur).



Graph 44: To what extent do you think that you are informed about the Muslim Community living in Spain? SP Sur 2019.

The next question, then, was about the channels of information of the Muslim community about other members of the community. Since it is perfectly possible for the individuals to have more than one information source, the respondents were asked to provide multiple answers to this question. At the top of the list was the Internet. 259 respondents, which are more than 64% of the sample, mentioned the Internet as one of their information feeds. Second in the list were the personal contacts of the individuals. In other words, presenting a 21.8%, a significant number of respondents suggested that they obtain information about the other members of the Muslim community through their contacts and conversations with other people. Coming in the third place, at 17.4% was television. What may be termed the “Muslim media,” the media outlets run by and focus on the Muslims in Spain was named as an important source of information by 13.7% (SP Sur).

	N	%
Internet	259	33.5
Talking to other people	169	21.8
TV	135	17.4
Media and publications on the Muslim community	106	13.7
Daily newspapers	64	8.3
Radio	20	2.6
Magazines and periodicals	14	1.8
Other	5	0.6
DK/RA	2	0.3
Total	774	100

Graph 45: What are the main information sources that feed you about the Muslim communities in the country? (multiple answers), SP Sur 2019.

Overall, the political representation, electoral participation, and positive socio-political visibility of the Muslim community need to be improved urgently. As an interviewee stressfully expressed that political representation and positive visibility is close to null for Muslims in Spain. The positive visibility of Islam is restricted to the Andalusian architectural legacy and the media reporting on Muslims and Islam is overwhelmingly framed by the scope of terrorism and security agendas. Further, the Muslim community is lacking capacity and infrastructure to fight against the anti-Muslim discourse and the narrative constructed by the Spanish media. The Muslim organizations and institutions are lacking enough financial resources and often pushed to turn to overseas support that in turn opens them to foreign interference and control and the weakening of trust. It was also observed that despite individuals' interest in politics, the level of formal and informal political engagement is low in the Muslim community, which might point to a self-marginalization because of the traditionalist-cultural misconception that Islam dictates its adherents to not get involved in politics. The stigmatization of Muslim political identity and Islam in the media is probably also very impactful in this. Integration and adaptation problems were observed to have political and representational ramifications, too. When it comes to political participation and active involvement, socially, culturally, and civically less-integrated individuals and groups are more likely to turn to the country of origin or never leave the country of origin, for that reason. On a less disheartening note, there is a strong belief in the need and importance of political engagement and the improvement of the public image of Islam prevalent among Muslims. More integrated, fluent in the language, well educated, and more engaged, the Muslim youth once again comes to the forth as a strong hope for changing the future.

6. Confidence in Relations among Muslim Communities

This chapter explores the relations and dialogue within the Muslim community in Spain. Within this scope, notable issues, *viz.*, the topics that divide the community and that unite them, which affect inter-relations among different Muslim groups, as well as possible strategies to address them are discussed. According to the observations of the field study and the findings of SP Sur, the Spanish Muslim context in terms of the relations between different racial, ethnonational, denominational, generational Muslim groups could be summarized in three main categories: (i) accumulating tensions between the established Spanish Muslims and newcomers, (ii) the lack of an effective leadership and organizational-wise dialogue and unity, and (iii) sectional loyalties and cultural differences.

Starting with the first, an accumulating inter-communal tension and contestation between the established Muslim community of Spain and the new Muslims, particularly the Moroccan Muslim community, was almost tangible during the field study. Reasons for the contestation were multiple, and many respondents in the interviews and the roundtable discussions provide a vast variety of them, but could be pinpointed, from the perspective of the established community, to the following five: (i) the integrational problems of the newcomers which often caused by a reluctance to adapt, a resistance towards the change, and a never-fading desire to go back, (ii) imported conflicts or issues that are brought from overseas, (iii) lack of education, (iv) lack of self-reflection and criticism, and (v) a staunch resistance against vernacularization. The problems, from the newcomers' perspective, on the other hand, were caused by the established Muslim community's (i) Euro-centric outlook and marginalizing discourse, (ii) ignorance of the fact that the new Muslims have not had enough time to fully integrate and adapt to the country and its way of life, (iii) reluctance to recognize the linguistic, cultural, and social challenges that the newcomers face in Spain.

When asked to indicate the main obstacles for a better and more effective inter- and intra-communal dialogue, Halifa stated that the members of the Muslim community stick to sectional lines and do not bother to socialize with others. In that respect, according to Halifa, racism, ignorance, conservatism, and ghetto mentality dominate the relations. Zahra objected this, arguing that uneducated people engender those outlooks and mentalities; people who are not accustomed to having relationships beyond their families. "So, asking them to get involved in associations and in their community is asking them a bit too much. We are getting ahead of ourselves. They are not bad people; they are just not prepared" she maintained. Agreeing with Zahra's point, Halifa stated that, nonetheless, even the youth shows a proclivity to segregate themselves and not reach out, but the community needs to open up (SP dis). Joining the discussion, Taher stated that he agreed with Zahra; the majority of Muslims in

Spain, with all due respect, is coming from an uneducated rural background and they feel lost outside of their own community. They probably felt quite the same if instead of coming to Madrid or Barcelona, they had gone to Casablanca or Rabat to work. He pointed that this phenomenon was, by no means, exclusive to Muslims and the Spanish people, in the 1960s, when they went to Switzerland and France for work were sticking to their local immigrant communities. “This is happening to us all. The first generation suffers from this most. The second generation knows the language and the social, economic and political context. They might have greater ease when it comes to connecting and starting a dialogue” (SP, dis).

Two participants to the roundtable discussion, Humbert and Zahra, argued that there are tensions accumulating between the more established Muslim community and the new Muslim community. In that sense, Halifa stated that the outlook of the members of the established community likens the outlook of the society at large: these new Muslims who cannot speak the language and are strange to this culture are going to claim our jobs and take them. According to Yaqut, there is no tension between the two, only a lack of interaction and dialogue. When the new Muslims are from the region or tribe of the established ones, the interaction and social exchange happen but when there are no such links and connections dialogue and interaction happen rarely (SP, dis). Naim agreed mostly with the above discussions stating that what unites Muslims all is faith. In the rows of the mosque, all Muslims are united. Muslims from different nations and countries pray in the rows of their mosques side by side. “This has been the case since the birth of the mosque; the mosque is a small UN, in itself” (Naim, int.).

Karim argued that, in general, communication between different Muslim groups is happening but not at a sufficient level. Each group works according to their means and according to their realities. There is not a structure and a well-defined organization that will unite them because there is still a lot of division, unfortunately. “We still need a lot of work to join efforts and join lines” (Karim, int.). According to him, the Spanish Muslim sector is abundant in intra-communal tension because of historical, ideological competitions and different agendas, *etc.* There is a representational division with two main bodies of organizational representation of Islam and these bodies cannot reach at an agreement because of the struggle for power and influence. “But as each community self-manages, this division doesn’t influence us locally; it influences us at a high level, with the state, with the laws, and the like.” (Karim, int.).

Omar, the director of a Muslim relief organization and a social and humanitarian activist, when recounting the story of the relief organization he directed, stated that the idea to found such an organization was inspired by a sister organization in Belgium. Because he considered the Muslim community was quietly settled and could go from receiving to giving in Spain, as well. Thus, he established a branch in Madrid. The aim of the organization is to give a helping hand to countries and communities in need, especially refugees and *etc.* (Omar, int.). According to Omar, the conflict is common to both inter-communal and intra-communal relations in the Islamic sector of Spain. The problems and conflicts do not surface only when however limited interactions take place between Moroccans and Pakistanis or Turks and Arabs, but between

different Moroccan groups, as well. The majority of problems, in his view, is posed by and rooted in the cultural differences and imported conflicts (Omar, int.).



Figure 7: Muslims praying during an Eid al-Fitr congregation in Madrid, September 10, 2010

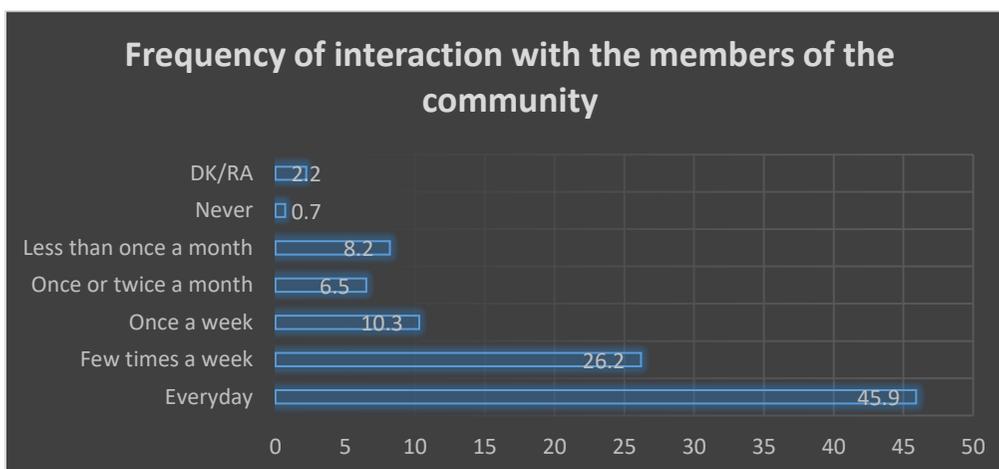
Asma reported that the crisis in the Middle East and the Arab world, as in the case of Yemen, represents Islam and Muslims in a very negative way. Accordingly, European people watch children dying of hunger on TV, and being told that Yemen is suffering because of the assaults of Saudi Arabia. “All these things, they make a deposit in your mind, you know? You ask yourself ‘why do you defend the Muslims’, they kill one another”. These types of negative representation, bring about false discourses and religious stereotypes: Muslims are violent, Islam is not a good civilization, Islamic religion accepts violence, *etc.* “People are influenced; they internalize these sort of discourses” (Asma, int.).

Yusuf stated that the lack of vernacularization plays a critical role in disunity and in the image of the Muslim community to the Spanish society. He reported that it is a pity that in the majority of Islamic religious centres and mosques the local languages are still dominate. Khutbas in the mosques are delivered in Arabic or local languages, and they are mostly irrelevant to the present situation and the reality of Muslim individuals and the communities. He added that he has delivered a *khutbah*, a couple of weeks ago, and he spoke about the Spanish constitution in his speech, which took many by surprise.

How can a khutbah cover such a topic? I started the khutbah by the normal introduction and then continued with the Spanish Constitution. I talked about the Spanish Constitution as a gift from Allah. Because it is thanks to that Constitution that we are able to practice our religion freely in this country, with more freedom than most Muslim countries. And then I told them constitutions are not something really strange for Muslims because we have the Constitution

of Medina. I talked about the Constitution of the Prophet and Medina and how it was inclusive with the Jewish community, etc. So then, that khutbah normalized something foreign for them, from an Islamic point of view. That is the type of discourse that we need and it is very rare to find. I can tell you two or three people who really include the Spanish discourse into their khutbahs. And the khutbah is not just important because a huge number of people are present, but also because it has a symbolic value. Spanish can be like a *lingua franca* for all Muslims here in Spain. So why not use that language to unify us? (Yusuf, int.).

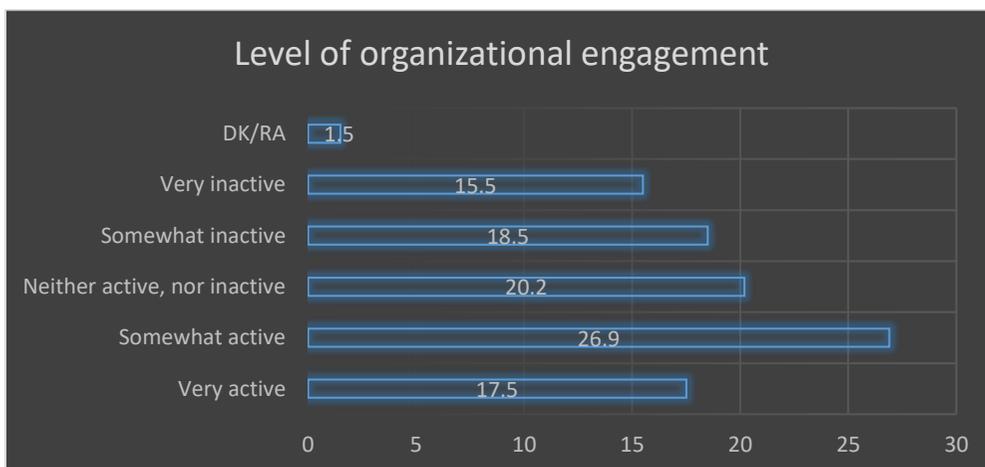
According to Layla, the Muslim community needs to look into themselves. “I think we sometimes give motives to generate those hate speeches. Moreover, it needs to put the humanity and values of humanity first. Those values are Islamic values, and we need to show that a democratic, open, and inclusive society and system is our mutual ideal. Because, Layla maintained, beyond socio-political and economic realities, and country-specific complexities, each country with a Muslim community share certain values and commonalities. International platforms such as the OIC, in that sense, has a pivotal role and responsibility to create opportunities to engage and discuss these values, commonalities, boundaries, problems, and the like (Layla, int.).



Graph 46: How frequently do you interact with members of the Muslim community in Spain (excluding your family/relatives and co-workers)? SP Sur 2019.

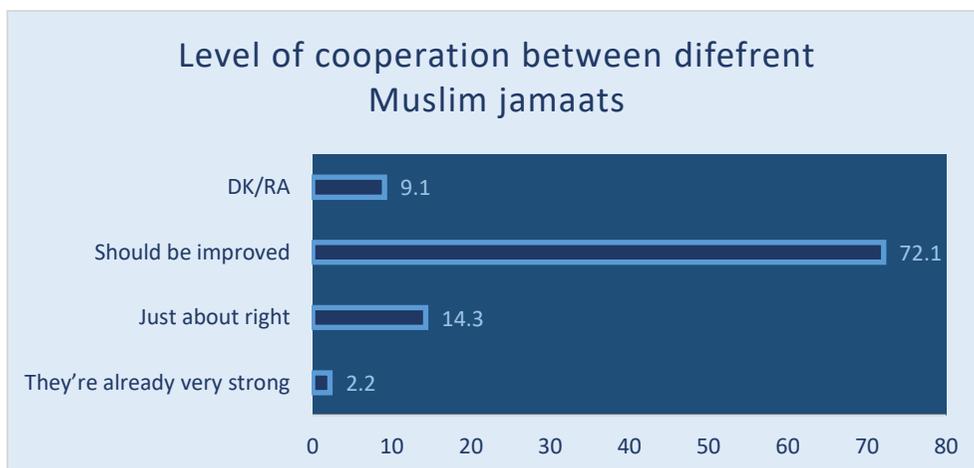
The SP Sur respondents were asked questions about their relations and interactions with other members of the Muslim community, and the findings indicate that the respondents were much more optimistic and positive concerning the level of intra- and inter-communal dialogue. In fact, more than 45% of the respondents reported that they interact with other Muslims, excluding their family members, relatives, and co-workers every day while another 26% stated that they have frequent social contact with other members of the Muslim community. The least frequent responses to the question were recorded for “never” at 0.7%, for “once or twice a week” at 6.5%, and for “less than once a month” at 8.2% (SP Sur.). Apart from these daily social contacts, the respondents were asked whether they were involved in Muslim civil

society organizations. Here, the respondents seem to present a more socially engaged picture. While a significant 17% of the respondents stated that they were very actively engaged in Muslim NGOs, another 27% reported being somewhat active (SP Sur).



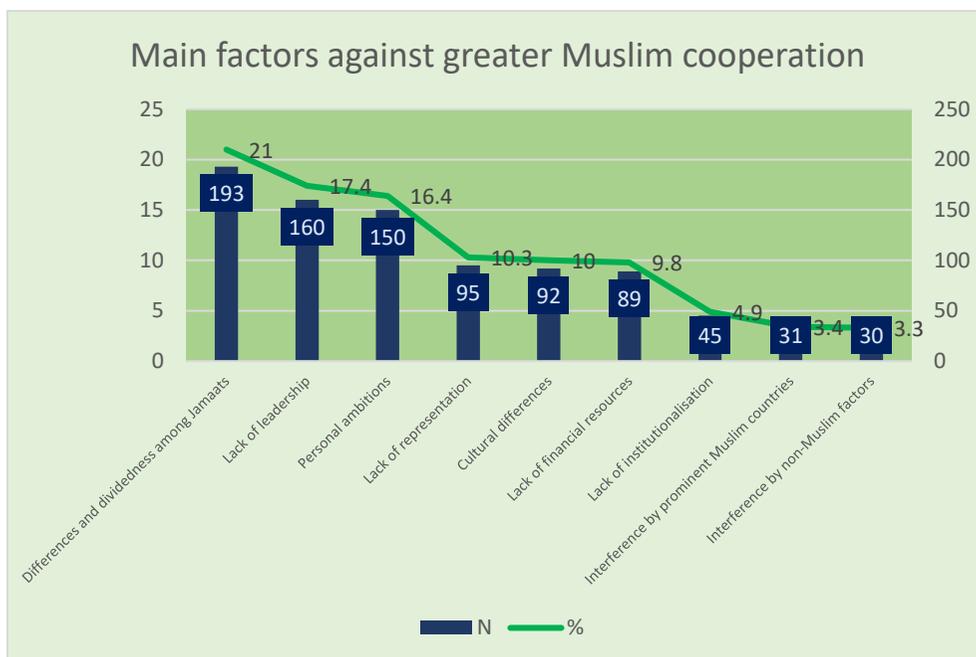
Graph 47: How engaged and active would you say you are in the voluntary organizations of Muslim Community registered in Spain such as associations and charities? SP Sur 2019.

An issue of major concern for Muslim diasporic communities everywhere is cooperation between different jamaats or its lack thereof. The survey respondents were asked how they would describe the level of cooperation between different jamaats in Spain. Again, confirming the findings in many other contexts, as well as above discussed findings and observations of the interviews and roundtable discussions, a huge majority of the respondents were not happy with the level of cooperation. In fact, 72% of them stated that there was a need for improvement in the interaction. When compared with the other contexts, quite a significant number of respondents, 16.5% in total, reported that the level of inter-jamaat cooperation in Spain was just about right (14.3%) or “already very strong” (2.2%) (SP Sur.).



Graph 48: How would you describe the level of cooperation between different jamaats of the Muslim community in Spain? SP Sur 2019.

What are the main factors that work against the greater cooperation and solidarity of Muslims in Spain? The respondents were once again given the chance of providing multiple answers to create a comprehensive list. It is noteworthy that this question drew a record high number of responses in the SP Sur. Accordingly, the number one factor that prevents greater cooperation and solidarity was related to the jamaats and the community themselves, namely the “differences and dividedness among jamaats” with 21% of the respondents naming this as a major obstacle. These findings also align with the findings from other *GMD* contexts, where the dividedness of the Muslim groups, institutions, and jamaats was also suggested as the main reason why Muslims could not achieve more influence in their respective countries. Stated by 17.4%, the second factor, again very familiar from other contexts, working against greater cooperation was suggested to be the lack of leadership. This means that according to many, the cultural, ethnic, linguistic, ideological and other forms of diversity within the Muslim community can be overcome only under strong leadership. Other factors listed by the respondents include personal ambitions (16.4%), lack of representation (10.3%), cultural differences among jamaats (10%), lack of financial resources (9.8%), lack of institutionalization (4.9%), and interference by outside actors, both non-Muslim actors within and beyond Spain (3.3%) and Muslim actors from outside of Spain (3.4%) (SP Sur).



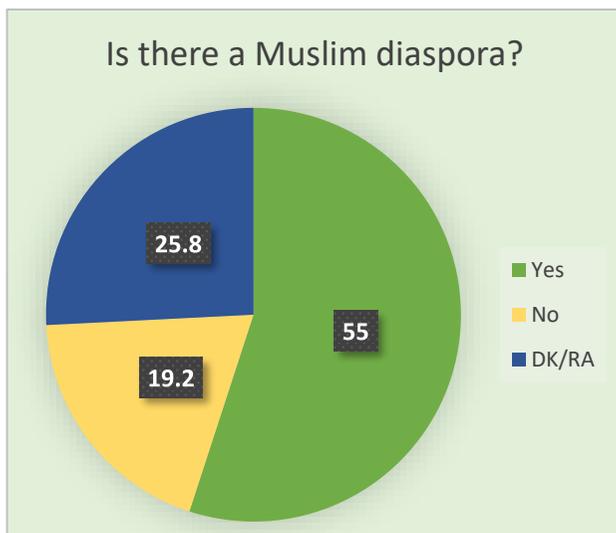
Graph 49: Main factors against the greater cooperation and solidarity of the Muslims in Spain. SP Sur 2019.

One of the central concepts, giving the project its very name, the *GMD*, of the SP Sur, was that of the Muslim diaspora. Without providing any explanation, the survey respondents were asked whether they believed there was a Muslim diaspora in Spain and in the world. To this, some 55% of the participants said “yes,” while more than a quarter of them did not answer, either potentially due to the lack of information about the concept or simply because the question required in-depth reflection (SP Sur.).

These findings were in line with the arguments and outlooks recorded in the interviews and roundtable discussions. According to many participants, the Muslim communities are experiencing very similar challenges and difficulties and they have very similar needs, agendas, demands, and values, and in that sense, they do constitute a global diaspora. However, both the nature of challenges and the perspectives of reality changes in every context despite the proximity and similarity of problems and demands. The similarities and commonalities do not change the fact that the approaches, perspectives, solutions are very different for each community and context, and for these reasons it could be a simplistic generalization to put all these communities under the banner of the diaspora concept.

When asked whether he conceives the Muslim communities scattered around the world and in Spain as a diaspora, Karim reported that it is possible to talk about a global Muslim diaspora, but each place has its own peculiarities. It is true that in certain aspects, like challenges and values, there are commonalities to all these communities, but “I think it would be a mistake to globalize the local experience or import solutions to our own reality.” “I believe” he

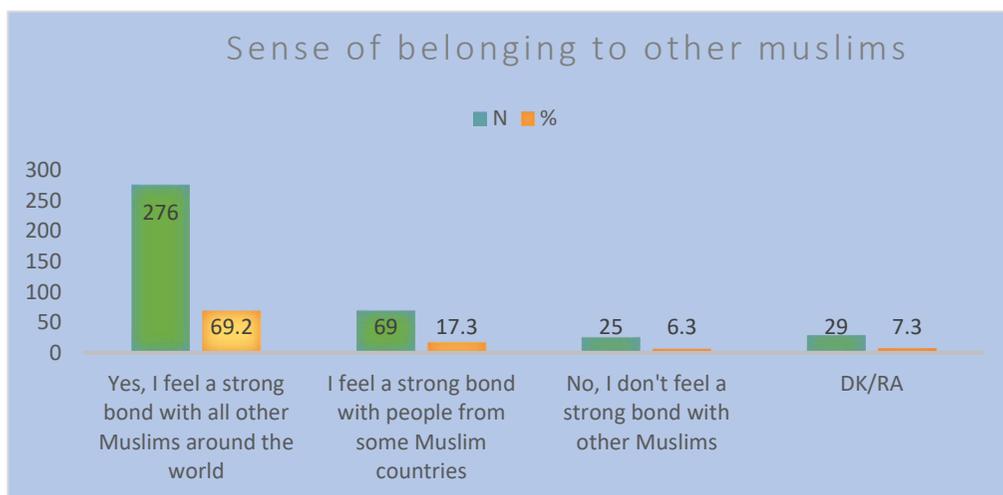
maintained, “that each community has to work to overcome its problems and challenges at the local level. We have the same problem of education in France and in Spain, but in France, there are already private Muslim schools, in Spain not yet, and the methodology that is used in France is not valid here in Spain, but the idea of having a school is shared. Here in Spain, we as a Muslim community have an excellent relationship with the administration but 14 kilometres from here, in Madrid, there are problems with the community” (Karim, int.).



Graph 50: Do you believe that there is a Muslim Diaspora? SP Sur 2019.

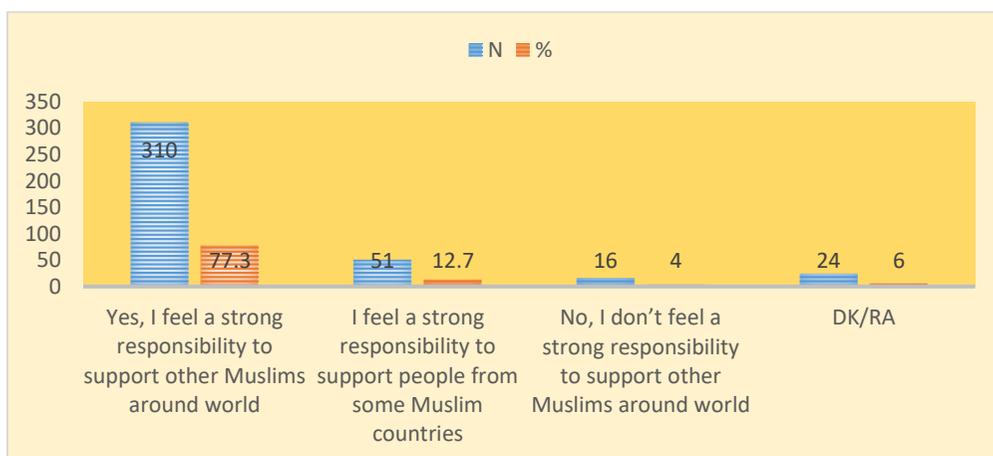
Aiming at seeing whether the Muslim identity creates such a transnational bond amongst all the Muslims across the globe, as a follow-up question, the respondents were asked: “Do you feel a strong bond with other Muslims around the world?”. Here, a large majority, at 69%, of the respondents confirmed that they feel a strong bond with other Muslims, no matter who they are or where they live. Some 17% of the respondents suggested that they feel a bond only with some Muslims from certain countries, not all Muslims irrespective of

where they live. The number of respondents who reported that they do not feel a strong bond with other Muslims around the world were observed to be disproportionately low at 6.3%. Another 7.3% either refused to respond or stated they did not know (SP Sur).



Graph 51: Do you feel a strong bond with other Muslims around the world? SP Sur 2019.

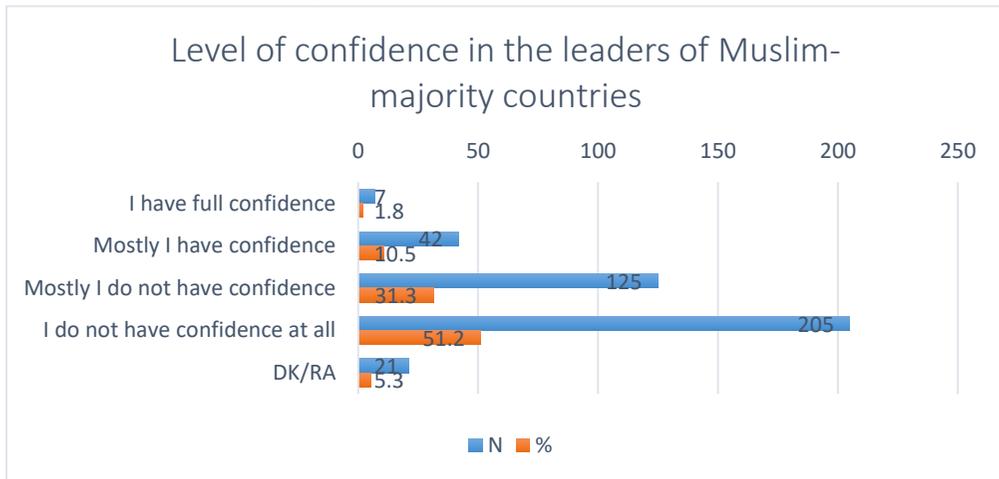
Does this feeling of a strong bond translate into a sense of responsibility to support other Muslims? The next question intended to measure such feelings of solidarity among Muslims. The findings were consistent with the figures of the previous question with a larger majority of 77.3% responding in the affirmative. While another 12.7% reported feeling such responsibility to support Muslim brothers and sisters from only certain countries, an insignificantly low 4% stated they did not feel any such responsibility (SP Sur).



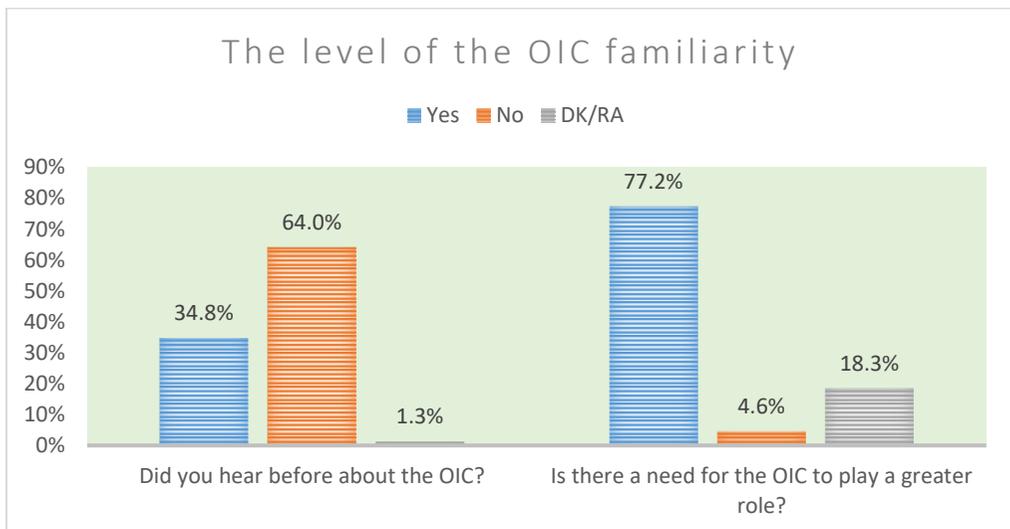
Graph 51: Do you feel a special responsibility to support other Muslims around the world? SP Sur 2019.

A number of questions in SP Sur intended to measure the level of confidence towards Muslim organizations and leaders both inside and outside Spain. The respondents expressed an overwhelmingly low level of confidence in the leaders of the Muslim-majority countries. When asked to report the level of confidence they have in the Muslim leaders of the Muslim-majority countries, the respondents painted a very gloomy picture, with a vast majority of 82% of them stating that they did not have any confidence (SP Sur).

It appears from this data that Muslim individuals in Spain do not trust the leaders of Muslim countries. However, do they trust Muslim international organizations? In order to see this, the respondents were first asked whether they knew about the *OIC*. Those who stated they did know about the *OIC* were then, asked: “Do you think that there is a need for the *OIC* to play a greater role in representing the rights of Muslims globally and promote cooperation and security among them?” Accordingly, while 34.8% said they were familiar with the organization, 64% of the respondents reported that they never have heard of it. More than 77% of those who reported that they have heard of the *OIC* answered affirmatively to the follow-up question, expressing unanimity on the need for the *OIC* to play a greater role in representing Muslims at the global scale (SP Sur).



Graph 52: How much confidence do you have in leaders of Muslim countries? SP Sur 2019

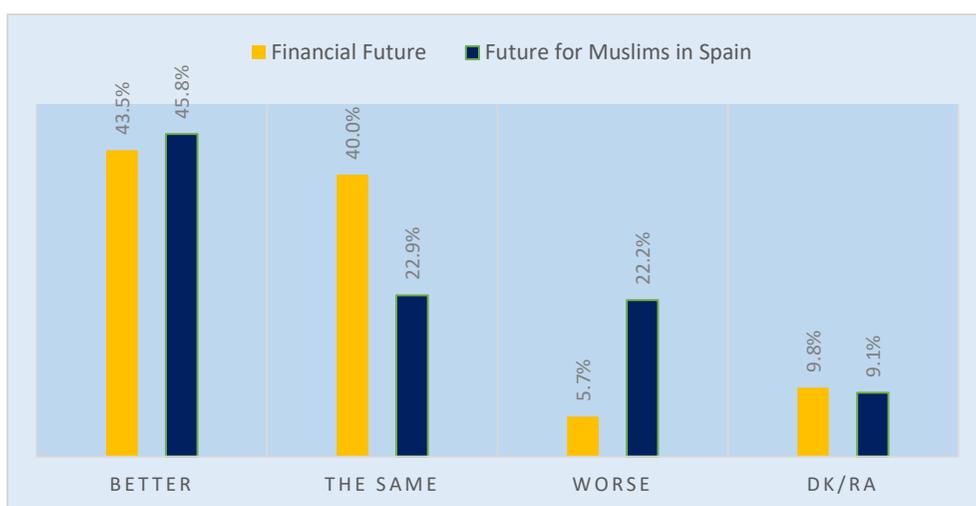


Graph 53: Awareness about OIC and views on its activity, SP Sur 2019.

To sum up, “the Muslim community is divided” between the established community of European converts and the new Muslims. The Muslim immigrants in many contexts call the converts as “new Muslims”. For the converts, the immigrants are new to the country, thus, they are “new Muslims,” whereas for the immigrants the converts are new to the religion and thus they are “new Muslims”. Either way, it could be argued that the demographic profile of the Muslim community is marked by two main groups and accumulating tensions between them. As scholars such as Rogozen-Soltar (2012) also investigated in the specific case of Granada community, “tensions reflect converts’ and immigrants’ vastly different access to social and political resources, a disparity produced by the different ways convert and immigrant Muslims are incorporated as minority subjects in Granada” and elsewhere in Spain (611-12). The disputes revolve around conflicting views and claims: “Converts often claim to practice a ‘culture-free’ Islam, which they contrast to Moroccans’ ‘traditions,’ using a discourse that cloaks convert religiosity within an unmarked category of ‘European’ and marks migrant Muslims as outsiders. Migrants, on the other hand, largely accuse converts of exclusionary social practices, and both groups worry about the other’s potential contribution to public perceptions of Muslim extremism” (Rogozen-Soltar 2012: 611-12)

7. Future Projections

When the survey participants were asked about their expectations for the future of Muslims in Spain, they drew an optimistic picture. At 45.8%, slightly less than half of the respondents believed that Muslims in Spain would be better off in the future. While just under 23% expected the situation of Muslims in the country to remain the same, another 22.2% of the respondents reported that they expect the future to be worse for Muslims in Spain (SP Sur).

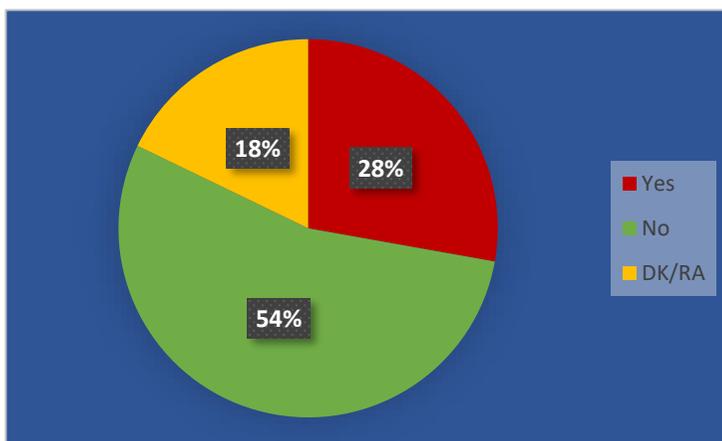


Graph 54: How will the situation of Muslims in Spain be in the future? SP Sur 2019.

A question that might be related to the future projections of Muslims concerns whether or not they would consider returning to their respective countries of origin. When asked so, the picture revealed to be very similar to that of the previous findings. While, at 54%, around half of the respondents stated that they would not consider a “return migration,” a significant proportion of the respondents, just under 28%, reported that they would. Recorded to be one of the highest among the *GMD* Surveys conducted in ten countries, this figure, needless to say, resonates with the above discussions on the integration problems of Muslims, as well (SP Sur).

The views and outlooks recorded during the interviews and roundtable discussions were very similar to those found in the SP Sur. A quite high number of the participants expressed their concerns about the future, although an optimistic approach was dominant. As prevalent everywhere and every context investigated in the *GMD*, the future prognosis for the Muslim community, in the opinions of the representatives, experts, academics, and NGOs is closely linked with the community’s (i) capacity to overcome internal and external challenges, (ii) dedication and perseverance to try to accomplish and excel themselves, (iii) ability to embrace their diversity, and (iv) commitment to engage socially, politically, and economically. As a specific topic, the education of youth presented itself as one of the key issues that will

determine the future for Muslims in Spain. Karim, for instance, stated, “sincerely, from my personal perspective, if we continue in the same situation where we are today, the future is a very dark one. If we work hard and invest more in education for future generations, and if we remain aware of the challenges that await us, both politically, culturally and economically, we can improve a lot and have a strong community, well entrenched and rooted in its reality” (Karim, int.).



Graph 55: Would you consider going back to your origin country to live there? SP Sur 2019.

According to Yusuf, the two main challenges for Muslims in Spain, at present and in the future, are the issue of education and the disunity among Muslims. Although the situation now is improving with younger generations, and the change is inevitable, the future prognosis for the Muslim community, in his view, is very much

dependent on the Muslim capacity to overcome these challenges. There were two other points that potentially might have a great influence on the future, according to him. The first is Muslim leaders and organizations’ reluctance towards the inclusion of genderal, ethnic, generational, and racial claims and rights. In those commissions of the Islamic organizations, no place is allocated for the youth or women—even when allocated, one or two positions, it is only to pay lip service to diversity and inclusion demands. The second is the global rise in anti-Muslim discourse and politics. He reported that the leader of the VOX has travelled to Southern Spain and met with Marine Le Pen. In his opinion, these anti-Muslim populist parties are joining forces and they have been emboldened and strengthened by the arrival of Trump to the White House. In that sense, he added, it is just an anecdote but not a coincidence that the VOX has the same motto with Trump. Trump says, “make America great again”, VOX says “*Hacer España grande de nuevo*” [make Spain great again] (Yusuf, int.). Yusuf concluded that he is not a pessimist but these factors are alarming. “I am not a pessimist and I do not see a grim future but I do think that the Muslim community needs to shake up and, as they say in English, “wake up and smell the coffee” (Yusuf, int.).

Two female participants in the roundtable discussions, Halifa and Zahra emphasized that the role and place of women in the Muslim association and organizations that claim to represent the Muslim community is simply “non-existent.” Zahra stated that seeking after a place or voicing a demand at the national level, to the umbrella organizations that allegedly represent Muslims is out of the question. “They have no time for me. I want to just work with the local ones, (meaning the local mosque)” she added, disappointedly. “The ones here will not let me participate. I just want to participate to feel fulfilled as a Muslim woman. I want to do

something because I like to be active. Allah has given me a mind, character and a common sense. I can get over a thousand men, within the rights that Islam underlies for me. However, they do not care about us. They do not count on us and that hurts.” She reported that the local representatives and leaders are more difficult to win or convince, to recognize and appreciate the female potential and claims. Muslim women, because of their hegemonic, patriarchist, and paternalistic outlook, feel excluded. “This happens in every local community. Women have no say. I want to gather all the men of the community, the men in general, and tell them, tell me why? Give me a reason.” Stating that she agreed verbatim with what Zahra has said, Halifa maintained that the Muslim men speak for Muslim women, and that was distressingly bad and unacceptable (SP, dis).

Taher and Humbert, two male participants in the discussion, agreed with Zahra and Halifa. Taher stated that the exclusion of Muslim women at representational and organizational level was an intellectual, cultural, and religious problem. “We have brought empty cultural traditions from our countries of origin. Hence, the woman is seen as something shameful, *etc.* For example, on Friday, money is collected from men and women. But do you know any mosque led by a woman? We have only one female president in Spain. According to Zahra and Halifa, another reason behind the exclusion of Muslim women in the leadership positions is that only men vote in the election of presidents and representatives because the elective boards are composed of men. According to Taher, women contribute and this grants them a voice and right to vote. What men fear perhaps is that if they vote they might elect a woman president. Humbert, on the other hand, emphasized that the same pattern of general discrimination is prevalent in almost all organizations and institutions of the Muslim community, particularly in mosques and schools. Women are tolerated to participate and help, behind the curtains, but are not allowed to lead. They can be teachers but not principles (SP, dis). In the view of the many participants in the roundtable discussions, a brighter future for the Muslim community in Spain depends very much on the recognition, actualization, and mobilization of the power of Muslim women.

Overall, it was observed during the field study and in the findings of the SP Sur that the Muslim community in Spain is one of the least optimistic ones. In comparison with all the other non-OIC countries covered in the *GMD*, in terms of the future projection for the Muslim community, Spain paints one of the most concerning and unpromising pictures. The majority of the community still believe that the future holds great promise and opportunities, providing that the Muslim community take action, engage proactively, and work diligently. In other words, even those who were more optimistic adopted quite a cautious and reserved outlook. The percentages of those who projected the future to be worse than now for the Muslim community in Spain and of those who would consider return migration observed to be overwhelmingly high in Spain, at 22,2% and 28%, respectively. In this prevailing despondent outlook, the concerning rise in the vote of the anti-Muslim far-right party in Andalusia and the general upsurge of the right-wing populism across the globe responsible held probably a big sway. Partly comforting was the fact that the faith in the potential and capacity of the Muslim youth was equally big and strong.

8. Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

The operational dysfunctionality of the Spanish politico-legal frameworks impedes the progress of integration: Towards an ideal symbiotic unity between the Muslim community and Spain and its society, it is imperative to overcome the implementation challenges and problems of the 1992 Agreement. Spain has a very short history of immigration and ending up with a big immigrant and Muslim community of nearly 2 million in a few decades poses a serious challenge for the legal, administrative, and political framework. Nevertheless, Spain has an ideally open, inclusive, and egalitarian structure. The only problem is to get this framework to operate efficiently, justly, and rightly. For this, the Muslim individuals and organizations have to claim their rights and push for their implementation. As many respondents voiced during the field study, behind challenges and problems that are faced during the application of these rights, often lay nothing but the lack of knowledge, misconceptions and prejudices, and reluctance to cooperate between the local authorities and the Muslim organizations and individuals. One prevalent issue begs for urgent attention and that is the education of the Muslim youth. Mostly a symptom of the malfunctioning of the 1992 Agreement, the educational challenges (the provision of Islamic and religious education, the lack of Islamic teaching instructors, providing of halal food in school cafeterias for Muslim students, *etc.*) were observed to stand as one of the biggest setbacks in the success of integration.

Disunity and accumulating tensions within the Muslim community due to integrational problems: The integration problems do not only affect the interaction and dialogue between the immigrant Muslims and the Spanish society but cause division and disunity within the Muslim community as well. The established Muslims, Spaniard Muslims, or reverts, often blame the immigrants, whose majority are Moroccans, for clinging to their cultural-traditional Islam and not adopting a vernacular that is more appropriate to Spain and Europe. The emancipation of Muslim women and gender equality is often the principle issue of debate. In this, it was observed that the established community adopts quite a Euro-centric rhetoric. The immigrant community on the other hand fails to understand the concerns of the established community, and only blame them for being hoodwinked by the anti-Islamic politics. The established community is quite right in pointing to the fact that the lack of integration brings about a lower level of interaction and dialogue between the Muslim community and the larger society, which results in greater socio-economic problems (*e.g.*, discriminating against Muslim workers, reluctance to employ Muslim individuals in the private sector) and political challenges (*e.g.*, low representation, the negative coverage, and the like). They are right in arguing that the failure of the immigrant Muslims in the eyes of the society and authorities is the failure of Islam and all Muslims. However, the imposing and accusing discourse that they adopt borders on the problematic dichotomy of insider-outsider and native-foreign.

Becoming a constructive and contributing part of the society instead of remaining a cheap source of imported labour: The Spanish Muslim community is observed to be different from those of the UK, the USA, Canada, and South Africa where the Muslim communities are very well educated and contribute to their adopted countries in various ways—professionally, academically, and financially. In Spain, the Muslim contribution to the country, apart from the historical and civilizational legacy of *al-Andalus*, is predominantly through cheap labour force. It is true that Muslim labour has a significant share in the development of Spain, one of the biggest farmhouses and construction sites of Europe. This contribution has to be diversified and promoted if the Muslim community wishes to claim its rightful share, place, visibility, and representation in the country and its society. Otherwise, for the Spanish authorities and society, the Muslim community will remain a cheap source of imported labour. Further efforts to integrate and interact, once again, gains importance. In the views of the established Muslim community, the failure and disinclination in socio-cultural integration and adaptation causes not only a delay in the establishment of Islamic infrastructures such as powerful and influential institutions and organizations but also brings about frail socio-economic presence, involvement, and commitment. “Come-work-earn-return and investigate there,” is a common narrative course for many Muslim immigrants and this must change if the Muslim community wants to prove itself and improve its socio-economic profile.

The Muslim youth makes the socio-economic and political picture less gloomy and more promising: It was encouraging to observe that the Muslim population in Spain is young and getting more and more educated and involved. Given the fact that the Spanish society is a fast-aging one with life expectancy going up and having children becoming less appealing, the Muslim community appears as an important power for the Spanish development in the future. Although Muslim individuals are more likely to suffer from economic marginalization, unemployment, underemployment, and discrimination, Muslims are confident in faring better economically in the future. As was expressed by many, prejudice and discrimination against Muslim individuals are mostly caused by the lack of interaction and knowledge. Successfully integrated, well educated, and involved, the Muslim youth will pull down the walls of socio-economic and political segregation and disintegration.

The Spanish context presents a very dark and despondent picture in the representation and visibility of the Muslim community: The political representation and (positive) visibility of Muslims are close to null. In the majority of the Spanish media, Muslims and Islam are overwhelmingly framed by and reduced to terrorism and security agendas. What deteriorates this picture is that the Muslim community is lacking capacity and infrastructure to fight against the rhetoric and the narrative constructed by the anti-Muslim populist media. Lacking financial resources, the Muslim organizations and institutions pushed to turn to overseas support. This however lay them open to foreign interference and control, which weakens the trust and cooperation between the Muslim community and the Spanish authorities and society. Muslims come out as losers from this vicious circle. Political marginalization is clearly reflected in the imbalance and contradiction between the high level of interest in the politics of the country and the low level of participation in it. Despite Muslim individuals’ common interest in politics, the level of formal and informal political engagement is observed to be notably low. This might indicate a self-marginalization because of the traditionalist-cultural misconception

that Islam dictates its adherents to not get involved in the politics, above all in a non-Muslim context, or socio-political inhibitions against engagement. The stigmatization of Muslim political identity and Islam in the media is probably another reason for this imbalance and contradiction. With their political and representational ramifications, integration and adaptation problems are argued to be also influential.

The Spanish Muslim community is one of the least optimistic ones among all the Muslim communities in the non-OIC member countries: Particularly in terms of the future prospects and optimism, the Muslim community in Spain paints one of the most reserved and concerning pictures. In fact, even those individuals who participated in the fieldwork activities and who were more optimistic about the future adopted quite a cautious and reserved outlook. According to this optimistic group, the future holds great promise and opportunities, providing that the Muslim community take action, engage proactively, and work diligently. The number of those who projected the future to be worse than now for the Muslim community in Spain was recorded to be quite high. So was the number of those who stated that they would consider return migration. In this despondent outlook, the concerning rise in the vote of the anti-Muslim far-right party and the general upsurge of the right-wing populism across Europe and the globe hold great sway. Nevertheless, it was comforting to observe that the faith in the potential and capacity of the Muslim youth is equally big and strong.

Annex: The List of Participants to the Interviews

	Pseudonym	Affiliation	Gender
1	Farhad	The general director of a Muslim institution in Madrid and an ex-diplomat who worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation in Spain (of Spanish origin)	Male
2	Naim	The president of a very important Muslim association in (of Syrian origin)	Male
3	Asma	The secretary general of an Islamic foundation in Madrid (of Spanish origin)	Female
4	Waleed	The vice-president of an Islamic education center in Madrid (of Moroccan-Spanish origin)	Male
5	Karim	The president of a Muslim youth association in Madrid and a social activist (of Moroccan origin)	Male
6	Layla	The president of a Muslim institution which has specialized in the halal sector in Cordoba (of Spanish origin)	Female
7	Robab	A researcher and academics at a Muslim cultural foundation (of Spanish origin)	Male
8	Tarek	A tutor, lecturer of Islamic teaching and the director of an Islamic center in Madrid	Male
9	Omar	The director of a Muslim relief organization in Madrid and a social and humanitarian activist (of Moroccan origin)	Male
10	Yusuf	A social and humanitarian activist and a translator (of Moroccan origin)	Male

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