

Marginalization and alienation of Students according to their religion: The case of Muslims in Greece and in EU

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Abstract

Although Muslims have lived in the Baltic and Balkan regions, on the Iberian Peninsula, in Cyprus and in Sicily for centuries, the largest part of the Muslim population in the European Union arrived as migrant workers from the 1960s and a smaller number as asylum seekers in the 1990s. Most Muslims are Sunnis, although there is a Shiite minority, as well as other strands, like Alevis and Sufis. Ethnic and sectarian differences can be important, because they can impact on attitudes concerning, for example, integration and relationships with non-Muslims.

Muslims are inadequately captured in demographic statistics: the most conservative estimate based on official and, where they are not available, unofficial data is of a Muslim population of around thirteen million, around 3.5 per cent of the total population of the European Union, but with great variations between Member States.

The demographic profile of the Muslim population is reportedly younger than the general population, indicating that policy interventions aimed at young people should have a strong impact.

One of the major challenges of today's world is the issue of Islamophobia. In recent years, this phenomenon has assumed serious proportions and has become a major cause of concern for the Muslim world. As a result of this rising trend, Muslims, in the West in particular, are being stereotyped, profiled, and subjected to different forms of discriminatory treatment. The most sacred symbols of Islam are being defiled and denigrated in an insulting, offensive, and contemptuous manner to incite hatred and unrest in society. While Islam, as the religion of peace and tolerance, affirms moderation and balance and rejects all forms of extremism and terrorism, the proponents of Islamophobia continue their campaign in defaming Islam and Muslims.

Key-words: racism. Islamophobia, Muslim's students, stereotypes.