

The National Forum for Cooperation of
Religions in Finland –
CORE Forum

Islam in Finland

- Present and challenges

Aino Vihonen & Sharmarke Said Aw-Musse

USKOT - RESA - CORE



ISLAM IN FINLAND

– Present and challenges

© CORE Forum – The National Forum for Cooperation of Religions in Finland
(USKOT-foorumi ry)
Helsinki 2024

ISBN 978-952-65581-0-3 (pehmeäkantinen)
ISBN 978-952-65581-1-0 (PDF)

Layout: Elina Iskala

Content

Introduction	2
Interviews	4
Muslims in Finland: history	5
Muslim communities in Finland	6
Islamic communities and prayer rooms in Finland	8
Helsinki Metropolitan Area	8
Other regions in Finland	9
Islamic associations and organizations in Finland	9
Collaborative networks	9
Muslim women's organizations	10
Youth organizations	10
Educational organizations	11
Facilities	11
Activities	13
Funeral service	14
The significance of voluntary work	15
Multilateral cooperation	15
Interfaith cooperation	16
Muslims as part of the society	17
Prejudices	18
Islamophobia	19
Media portrayal	20
Discrimination	21
Harassment	22
Labor market	24
Opportunities to influence in society	26
Challenges faced by communities	27
Support from the state	27
Literature and sources	29
Literature	29
Websites	30
Attachments	31
Interview questions	31

Aino Vihonen & Sharmarke Said Aw-Musse

ISLAM IN FINLAND

Introduction

Muslims have been actively involved in the interfaith dialogue work of the religions' collaboration organization CORE Forum since its establishment. Member communities form the CORE Forum. There is a representative from the Finnish-Islamic Congregation on the board and negotiations are currently underway to include another representative from the Muslim communities. Many Muslims serve as invited experts in the various committees of the CORE Forum. The Forum builds a network for interfaith dialogue in Finland, ensuring that the voices of its members are heard.

The aim of the CORE Forum is to promote societal peace by fostering dialogue, cooperation, and mutual respect between religions. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is supporting the CORE Forum's project to strengthen Nordic religious cooperation in 2023–2024. This report on Islam in Finland is part of that project. The report aims to listen to Muslim communities regarding matters that affect them and to build mutual trust.

Muslims are the second-largest religious group in Finland after Christians. To maintain and develop the welfare state and societal peace, it is important to hear the experiences and needs of Finnish Muslims. This will also enable the development of cooperation with authorities in a way that benefits both sides. Interfaith cooperation provides opportunities for dialogue and can help find solutions to broader societal problems. Effective interfaith collaboration reduces polarization and misinformation. Religions can be seen as a positive resource and a factor that enhances resilience. Everywhere in society where work on equality is done, religions should also be

addressed. Democracy is strengthened by bringing the voices of minorities to the forefront.

The CORE Forum is mapping Islam in Finland through interviews and creating a list of mosques with contact information. The purpose is to provide up-to-date information for use by authorities and decision-makers. In these interviews, the voices of Muslims are heard on issues concerning them. The interviews have mapped the forms and origins of five Islamic communities, as well as the experiences of hate speech and harassment faced by members. In this report, summaries of the researcher's findings and the consultant's recommendations are highlighted in boxes separate from the main text.

It is recommended that future interviews be expanded to cover a wider area of Finland to diversify the research material. This report focuses almost entirely on the Helsinki metropolitan area, except for Turku, but still provides valuable information on the communities operating in these regions and the racism and harassment encountered. Notes were taken from the interviews, and the interviewees had the opportunity to comment on them. The background material for this report was collected, interviews conducted, and the text written by Aino Vihonen, Master of Theology, and consultant Sharmarke Said Aw-Musse, at the invitation of the CORE Forum.

Interviews

A small group of Islamic communities was interviewed for the survey. A total of five interviews were conducted, focusing on the Helsinki metropolitan area and Turku. The communities interviewed include Resalat, Rabita, and the Helsinki Islamic Center (Pasila Mosque) in Helsinki, Koivukylä Mosque in Vantaa, and the Turku Islamic Congregation. The interviews involved members of the boards of these religious communities, chairpersons, and other leaders familiar with the activities and membership of their respective communities. The interviews were conducted via Teams and in-person meetings, and notes were taken, which were later shared with the interviewees for their comments.

Name of the community	Location	Founding year	Registration as a religious community	Estimates of membership numbers
Rabita	Helsinki	1982	1987	approx. 4860
Turku Islamic Congregation	Turku	1992	2008	approx. 1000
Resalat	Helsinki	2004	2004	approx. 1600
Helsinki Islamic Center	Helsinki	1994	1994	approx. 4000
Koivukylä Mosque	Vantaa	2012	2012	approx 400

Table of basic information about the interviewed communities.

All the interviewed communities are over ten years old. The oldest of the mosques interviewed was established in 1982, and the newest in 2012. The time between founding and registration varies; some communities were registered only a few years after their establishment, while for others, the process took several years. For example, the Turku Islamic Congregation began operating as an association in 1992 but was registered as a religious community in 2008.

The need to establish the community has been justified on both spiritual and communal grounds. The desire to maintain their own culture has also motivated the establishment of communities, bringing together people from similar backgrounds.

As immigration increased in the 1990s, the need to preserve the culture and religion grew as well.

Muslims in Finland: history

Muslims have been present in Finland for over a hundred years. Finland's oldest Muslim minority, the Tatars, arrived in Finland in the 19th century as soldiers in the Russian army. Finland's first Islamic congregation was founded in 1925, two years after the Freedom of Religion Act came into effect in 1923. For a long time, the Tatars were the only significant Muslim community in Finland. After the 1980s, the number of Muslims began to grow due to Muslim immigration, particularly from refugees. Similarly, in the 1980s, the first non-Tatar Islamic congregation was established in Finland. Initially, refugees primarily arrived from Somalia, and later from other Muslim-majority countries like Iraq and Iran. The majority of Finland's Muslims are refugees who arrived in the 1990s and their children. Islam can no longer be considered only a religion of immigrants, as a large portion of Finland's Muslims were born in Finland and have always lived here. Thus, Islam is also part of Finnish identity. The number of Muslims in Finland is influenced by global conflicts, such as wars. For example, a significant portion of the refugees who arrived in 2015 were fleeing ISIS and other extremist groups. (Hämeen-Anttila 2017, 166; Pauha, Onnisekä & Bahmanpour 2017, 104; Pauha & Konttori 2022, 14).

Interview results: Representatives of the Resalat Mosque emphasized in the interview that their communities have grown particularly due to immigrants who arrived in the 1990s. For them, the mosque has been a central religious and communal support pillar. In the Turku Islamic Congregation, the interviewees noted that being a refugee has been an important background factor in the lives of many members, and the mosque also provides them with social support.

Researcher's and consultant's conclusions and observations:

1. The researcher has noted that the establishment of Islam in Finland is a result of immigration after the 1980s. The consultant emphasizes that the Muslim population that came with the refugees has shaped the role of Islam as part of Finnish culture.
2. The researcher sees that Islam has transitioned from being an immigrant religion to becoming part of the broader Finnish society, especially

through young Muslims born in Finland. According to the consultant, this younger generation will strengthen Islam's role as part of everyday life and culture in Finland.

Muslim communities in Finland

It is difficult to estimate the exact number of Muslims in Finland, since not all Muslims living in Finland are registered with a congregation, and therefore do not appear in official statistics. In the early 1990s, there were an estimated 1,000 Muslims in Finland. However, the situation has changed, and the number of Muslims has increased. (Pauha, Onniselkä & Bahmanpour 2017, 105). In 2019, the number of Muslims or people of Muslim background living in Finland was estimated to be over 120,000, while only about 19,000 people were members of registered Islamic congregations. Thus, there is a significant gap. Religious activity varies greatly among different groups and individuals, and the Muslim population is diverse and varied. Approximately half of Finland's Muslims live in the Helsinki metropolitan area, including Helsinki, Vantaa, and Espoo. (Pauha & Konttori 2022, 11–14). The number of Muslims is expected to grow in the future. The American PEW Research Center has predicted that by 2050, between 4.2% and 15% of Finland's population will be Muslim. (Pauha, Konttori 2022, 11).

Unlike in many other European countries, the Muslim population in Finland consists of Muslims from a wide range of countries, and no specific countries or ethnicities are overrepresented in the statistics. (Pauha 2018, 4). In Finland, the Muslim population can be divided into three groups: 1) immigrants, 2) Tatars who hold the status of a national minority, and 3) converts and the children of immigrants who were born or raised in Finland. (Pauha, Onniselkä & Bahmanpour 2017, 110). In Finland, some Muslims are converts. In the past, conversions often occurred among women who married Muslim men. Nowadays, more people, including men, convert as a result of religious searching, for example, without the influence of a partner. Most commonly, people convert to Sunni Islam due to its wider recognition. Additionally, there is more information available online about Sunni Islam. (Pauha 2022, 12, 37).

All the interviewed communities are highly multicultural, with members from many different countries. The most commonly mentioned cultural backgrounds are Arabs, Somalis, Afghans, Kurds, Kosovars, Turks, Pakistanis, and Indians. Similarly, there are multiple languages spoken within the communities. However, in all the communities, the main languages used are Finnish, Arabic, and English. Other mentioned languages include Farsi, Somali, and Dari.

The largest branches of Islam are Sunni and Shia Islam, along with various sub-branches and schools of thought. It is estimated that about one-quarter of Finnish Muslims are Shia, and the majority of these are Twelver Shia. When comparing the proportion of Shia Muslims in Finnish Islam to the global ratio, Shia Islam is more prominent in Finland. Due to discrimination and oppression faced by religious minorities, these minorities are overrepresented among immigrants. For example, among the refugees who came to Finland from Afghanistan, there have been many Shia Hazaras. Although Shia Muslims are a large and socially significant minority group, little research has been conducted on Shia Muslims in Finland, with most research focusing on Somalis and Tatars, who represent Sunni Islam. (Bahmanpour & Pauha 2022, 36–37).

The interviews revealed that, particularly in the oldest Islamic communities, no specific branch of Islam is represented. When these communities were established, the number and diversity of members were so great that it was difficult to form separate communities. However, communities founded later may focus more on a specific demographic. Attendees of events are not divided according to schools of thought. For example, the Turku Islamic Congregation has not adopted any specific school of thought in its rules or activities. Resalat, on the other hand, is the largest Shia community in Finland and supports smaller Shia communities, but it does not function as an official umbrella organization.

Interview results: In the interviews, mosque representatives emphasized that the number of participants is often larger than the official number of members. For example, the Helsinki Islamic Center is estimated to have about 4,000 members, but Friday prayers often attract more people. In the Koivukylä Mosque in Vantaa, it was estimated that their membership is around 400, but during major celebrations, the number of participants can be up to three times higher.

Researcher's and consultant's conclusions and observations:

1. The researcher emphasizes that the religious activity within Muslim communities varies greatly, making it difficult to record in statistics. The consultant points out that the gap between registered members and actual participants makes it challenging to estimate population numbers accurately.
2. The researcher notes that Muslim communities are diverse, and the concentration of these communities in the Helsinki metropolitan area brings specific needs. The consultant stresses that this requires special attention in societal decision-making and planning.

Islamic communities and prayer rooms in Finland

According to the *Religions in Finland* database, maintained by the Church Research Institute, there are over 100 Islamic congregations in Finland (*Communities, Religions in Finland*, sa.). There are approximately 80 functioning mosques, most of which are located in the Helsinki metropolitan area. Below is an overview of the largest Islamic congregations, with information sourced from the congregations' and organizations' own websites or from *uskonnot.fi*.

Helsinki Metropolitan Area

The *Finnish-Islamic Congregation* consists solely of Tatars, and its activities are concentrated in Helsinki and Tampere. The second-oldest Islamic congregation is the *Islamic Society of Finland* on Lönnrotinkatu in central Helsinki. The congregation was established in the 1980s and has about 3,000 members, with attendees representing various ethnicities. (Islamic Society of Finland, sa.).

There are about ten registered Shia congregations in Finland, the largest of which is the *Resalat Islamic Congregation*, with around 1,000 members. The congregation has its own prayer hall and cultural center in Helsinki. (Resalat Islamic Congregation – Suomen Ähl-Beit, sa.).

The *Helsinki Islamic Center* was founded in the 1990s. With approximately 3,000 members, it is one of the largest Islamic congregations in terms of membership. The center has its own prayer hall in Pasila. The membership is now ethnically diverse, although it was previously predominantly Somali. (Helsinki Islamic Center, sa.).

The *Helsinki Islamic Congregation* was established in 2006. Alongside the congregation operates the *Islam Kültür Merkezi Birliği Finlandiya*. The congregation has its own prayer hall, and its goal is also to promote knowledge of the Turkish language and culture in Finland. They have about 500 members. (Helsinki Islamic Congregation, sa.).

The *Islamic Center of Finland* was founded in the 1990s and has a few hundred members, most of whom are of Pakistani origin. The center also has a prayer hall, located in Kallio, Helsinki, where sermons are delivered in Urdu. (Salminen & Pietarinen, 2015).

Other regions in Finland

Outside of the Helsinki area, there are prayer halls in Tampere, Turku, Lahti, Lohja, Jyväskylä, Kuopio, Vaasa, Seinäjoki, Lappeenranta, Joensuu, Oulu, Kajaani, Kemi, and Rovaniemi. In addition to registered congregations, there are unregistered Islamic congregations and Muslim associations that operate either as unregistered or registered associations.

Islamic associations and organizations in Finland

Associations are also an essential part of the Islamic landscape in Finland. Their number and activity have grown in recent years, responding to the needs of Finland's Muslim population. These organizations are not religious entities themselves, but their activities are based on Islamic principles. Broadly speaking, they can be divided into organizations that build connections among Muslims and those focused on Muslim women or youth.

Collaborative networks

The *Muslim Union of Finland* was established in 2011. Its members include other Muslim organizations, Islamic congregations, and individual members. The union's primary task is to advocate for the rights of Muslims in Finland. It also organizes joint training and activities for Muslims. The union operates on voluntary efforts and

individual donations. Due to a lack of funding, its activities have dwindled, and the union is no longer active.

The *Islamic Council of Finland (SINE)* was a collaborative network of Muslims that is no longer operational. SINE was established in 2006 and served as an umbrella organization representing dozens of different congregations until 2023. The organization was active in the Finnish organizational field and was also a founding member of the CORE Forum.

The *Muslim Forum of Finland* was established in 2020 in response to the need for a collaborative body and expert organization to strengthen the sense of community and belonging among Muslims. The Muslim Forum of Finland aims to promote the well-being of the Muslim population and support future generations' Islamic identity by developing the activities of Islamic communities and supporting the education of the Muslim community. Its central task is to foster unity within the Muslim community by creating a discussion forum open to all Muslims, whether or not they belong to Islamic congregations.

Muslim women's organizations

The *Finnish Muslim Women's Association* is a registered organization, though it does not have a website or other publicly available information. *Amal ry* is an association whose purpose, based on Islamic values, is to support girls and women in finding suitable assistance in difficult situations, to promote the well-being of girls and women, and to develop support services for women and girls, especially those in vulnerable positions. This is achieved by offering guidance, counselling, multidisciplinary support, peer support, and education.

Youth organizations

Youth organizations share a common goal of building bridges between multi-identity and multicultural challenges faced by young Muslims in their everyday lives in Finland. *Young Muslims ry*, established in 2012, is a nationally active and well-known Muslim youth organization that acts as a bridge between Muslim communities and other population groups. The *Young Muslims Forum*, registered in 2004, envisions itself as the voice of Muslim youth in Finland by empowering, encouraging, and engaging youth for a common future. The association's goal is to

provide a platform through which young people can combine their rich cultural backgrounds with the rich Finnish culture. *Mahdin Nuoret ry* is a youth organization operating alongside the Resalat community. Its activities include communal events and celebrations, as well as evening events during major Finnish holidays.

Educational organizations

Pilarit ry is a registered association founded in 2007 to support Islamic education. The association's goal is to provide information about Islamic education and support those working with children and young people in their ability to engage with Muslim children/youth. *Pilarit ry* encourages Muslim youth to be active in society while maintaining their Muslim identity.

Interview Results: Muslim organizations operating in Finland, such as *Amal ry*, *Young Muslims ry*, and the Muslim Forum, focus on supporting the well-being of Muslim communities and their integration into society. These organizations provide support especially to women, youth, and families, and promote cultural and religious values. The role of these organizations is crucial in supporting Muslim identity and the integration process.

Researcher's and Consultant's Conclusions and Observations:

1. The researcher emphasizes the importance of Muslim organizations in empowering the community and integrating Muslims into Finnish society.
2. The researcher notes that Muslim organizations act as important bridge builders between different cultures. The consultant suggests closer cooperation between municipal services and the organizations.

Facilities

Finland differs from other European countries in that its capital, Helsinki, does not have a mosque with a minaret that was specifically built to serve as a mosque. The mosque built in the 1940s in Järvenpää by the Tatar Finnish-Islamic Congregation is the only building in Finland specifically constructed as a mosque with a minaret. (Moisio, 2013). Plans for a grand mosque in Helsinki were proposed in the late 2010s when the Muslim Union of Finland, Finnish Muslim Women's Association, and Cultural and Religious Forum *Fokus ry* submitted a land reservation application to the Helsinki City Council in 2015. The purpose of the grand mosque was to be

open to everyone. However, the project sparked extensive, mostly negative discussion, and in 2017 the plan was rejected, primarily due to unclear funding. In addition to the unclear funding, there were fears that the grand mosque could radicalize Muslims. (Konttori, 2022, 23-24).

According to the interviews, many communities are struggling with inadequate facilities. More space is needed not only due to the growing number of participants but also to accommodate the increasing range of activities. Mosques often operate in rented spaces. Communities with a longer history of renting have had to move several times since their founding. For example, the Helsinki Islamic Center has moved five times over the past 30 years until it bought its own space in Pasila in 2002. The biggest challenge in acquiring spaces is related to fundraising, so that the community can afford its own property. Spaces that function as mosques were not originally built for that purpose, which leads to issues such as arranging the direction of prayer.

According to the interviews, the best spaces to serve the community would be multifunctional, not just for religious practice. Ideally, these spaces could generate additional income so that the community is not entirely reliant on donations and membership fees. The community could, for example, organize courses and educational activities, some of which could be paid. Communities are also open to offering contracted services to the municipality, as they reach many potential clients. In this way, the municipality could also benefit from the activities of the mosques.

Interview results: The interviews revealed that many mosques face space challenges. For example, in the Resalat Mosque in Helsinki, it was emphasized that the current facilities are not sufficient to meet the needs of all attendees, and in the Turku Islamic Congregation, the need for larger spaces was highlighted to accommodate the increase in both religious and communal activities.

Researcher's and consultant's conclusions and observations:

1. The researcher notes that Islamic congregations in Finland are highly multicultural, which is reflected in the diversity of languages and cultures in the prayer halls. At the same time, mosques suffer from space constraints, which limit the number of participants and the organization of events. The consultant emphasizes that this diversity poses challenges to maintaining community activities but also strengthens the sense of

community. The consultant also recommends that mosques receive more support in addressing space issues.

2. The researcher observes that older Islamic communities, such as the Tatar community, have maintained their position as important actors, but newer mosques have quickly increased their influence. The consultant sees this development as an opportunity for stronger cooperation between different Muslim groups.

Activities

An essential part of mosque activities is organizing prayer times. However, the activities are not limited to this and based on the interviews, can be divided into three areas: spiritual activities, communal activities, and societal activities.

Spiritual activities

None of the mosques interviewed offer only religious services; they also provide social and societal services. These diverse services increase the number of participants in the mosques. Spiritual activities include prayer times, with Friday prayers attracting the most attendees. The mosques also organize Islamic teaching. The small size of the facilities in relation to the number of participants becomes especially apparent during major celebrations, such as Eid at the end of Ramadan.

Communal activities

Islamic congregations are not established solely to serve the spiritual needs of Finnish Muslims. The spaces are not used only for prayer but also for cultural and societal activities. Mosques often function as low-threshold cultural and educational centers. The congregations and their facilities also cater to the social and societal needs of Finnish Muslims. For example, the Helsinki Islamic Center also houses a café-restaurant, a halal grocery store, and facilities for washing and blessing the deceased. In addition to burial services, there are also event spaces for celebrations.

Societal activities

Congregations have various committees that ensure the broad participation of the community. These include, for example, youth and women's committees. The Helsinki Islamic Center also has a reconciliation committee that handles internal

community disputes, provided they do not involve crimes. In the case of crimes, the police are contacted, and there is sometimes cooperation with the police to resolve the issue. The center also has an information desk that provides translation assistance, such as with dealing with Kela (the Finnish social security agency) and writing job applications. At the Turku Mosque, the imam also makes visits to prisons, which is arranged in cooperation with the authorities.

Interview results: In the interviews, mosque representatives emphasized the importance of offering a wide range of services in addition to religious events. For example, at the Helsinki Islamic Center, in addition to prayer times, there is a café and a halal grocery store, and at the Turku Mosque, the imam makes visits to prisons.

Researcher’s and Consultant’s Conclusions and Observations:

1. The researcher has observed that mosques are not only centers for spiritual activities but also places of social support and communal activities. The consultant highlights that this helps immigrants integrate more effectively into Finnish society.
2. The researcher notes that the activities of mosques also include handling official matters and providing translation services, which assist communities in dealing with daily challenges. The consultant sees an opportunity to strengthen cooperation between authorities and mosques.

Funeral service

The cemetery areas available for Muslims in Finland are insufficient. The parishes of the Helsinki metropolitan area—Helsinki, Vantaa, and Espoo—have three cemetery areas reserved for Muslims. Elsewhere in Finland, cemeteries in Kirkkonummi, Järvenpää, Porvoo, Turku, Tampere, Lahti, Oulu, Kuopio, and Joensuu have provisions for Muslim burials. (Cemeteries, n.d.).

In Helsinki and Turku, the Finnish-Islamic Congregation owns and maintains cemeteries for its own members. At the Hietaniemi Cemetery in Helsinki, there is an area reserved exclusively for members of the Finnish Islamic Congregation. Muslims can purchase burial plots in these cemeteries for a fee. The cemeteries are owned by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, with some sections designated solely for Muslim use. In many cemeteries, the area is also available for the deceased of other religions and for those without a religious affiliation (Cemeteries, n.d.).

The significance of voluntary work

Except for Resalat, the mosques interviewed operate entirely on voluntary work. Occasionally, volunteers are offered one-time payments, free meals, and travel reimbursements. In addition to their volunteer work at the mosque, the active members usually have day jobs, which limits their time and resources. Nonetheless, their commitment to community activities is significant, and much of the socially important work is done without pay. For example, the Pasila mosque provides translation assistance for dealing with authorities and completing paper applications.

All mosques have good relationships with authorities, municipalities, and cities, making collaboration easy and natural. However, the mosques hope that cooperation requests originating from the mosques themselves would also be received and acted upon. The interviewees expressed a desire for more concrete cooperation, where the role and significance of mosques and religious communities are recognized in both the community and society.

Multilateral cooperation

All the Islamic communities interviewed are active in multilateral cooperation, not only with other religions but also with municipalities, cities, the state, and authorities. Cooperation with other mosques in the region is especially common when a ministry or city wants to communicate information to local Muslims. In such cases, the congregations organize information sessions or seminars, inviting the target audience. For example, the youth group at Resalat participated in a roundtable discussion with the Prime Minister. There is also collaboration with universities, and the congregations are open to research on Islam in Finland.

Some congregations have seen the formation of other Islamic associations or congregations, such as youth organizations. For instance, this has happened with the Turku Islamic Congregation, but the ties with these offshoot communities remain good.

The interviews revealed that while there is a desire for broader cooperation, the congregations' own resources are often insufficient, as they need to keep their own operations running. It was also mentioned that compared to other countries, there is relatively little cooperation between mosques in Finland. The main problem is the

lack of resources and the small size of the congregations. The larger mosques manage cooperation better, but it can be difficult to get smaller mosques involved. The interviews highlighted the need for leaders and imams who were raised in Finland and understand how Finnish society works and how they can serve it through their activities.

There is a desire for more reciprocity in cooperation with authorities. While cooperation works well, the communities feel that their concerns, such as those regarding radicalization, were not considered early enough in collaborations with authorities. Warning signs and concerns raised by the community were not properly addressed until the authorities themselves became more concerned about radicalization. Therefore, cooperation requires time, resources, interest, and reciprocity from the authorities as well. The 2023 government racism scandal also fits into this category, where the concerns of mosques about the societal situation and government actions, and their effects on the lives of Muslims in Finland, were not adequately considered.

Interfaith cooperation

Many of the interviewed mosques felt that there is still room for improvement in interfaith cooperation. In the interviews it was indicated that all religious communities are doing important work, and in many ways, they share the same goal: protecting religious freedom and opposing extremism, threats, and religious harassment. However, there is room for improvement in terms of mutual support and jointly applying for state funding. Interfaith cooperation can also serve local communities and meet their everyday needs. Theoretical discussions about reciprocity are not helpful if they are not reflected in practical actions. For broader cooperation to be possible, Islamic congregations must first stabilize their own activities. Organizing events outside the Helsinki metropolitan area is not considered a problem if travel expenses can be reimbursed.

Although the organization of cooperation between mosques and Islamic congregations is still developing, the interviewed communities are nonetheless active in interfaith dialogue in Finland. For example, Rabita has been involved in the activities of the CORE Forum since its establishment in 2001. Before the founding of the CORE Forum, Rabita participated twice a year in meetings of religious leaders

hosted by the President. The communities are eager to create dialogue, discussions, and understanding between people.

Interview results: In the interviews, representatives from the mosques highlighted the need to strengthen cooperation with authorities. For example, at the Resalat Mosque in Helsinki, the necessity of improving dialogue with authorities was emphasized, particularly concerning issues related to radicalization, where the mosque has hoped for earlier intervention.

Researcher's and consultant's conclusions and observations:

1. The researcher has observed that Islamic communities collaborate with other religious groups and authorities, but a lack of resources limits participation. The consultant emphasizes that more support and resources are needed to expand cooperation.
2. The researcher notes that Islamic communities seek greater reciprocity in their cooperation with authorities, especially in preventing radicalization. The consultant recommends earlier dialogue between communities and authorities.
3. The researcher has found that Islamic communities have a strong desire to participate in societal discussions, but their contributions are not always recognized. The consultant sees this as an opportunity to enhance the position of Muslim communities in society.

Muslims as part of the society

The minority status of Muslims and the general perception of Muslims as foreign and different lead them either to define their identity as countercultural or to assimilate into the dominant culture. Islam is thus othered from Western culture, and it is not given adequate space to integrate. Neither of these extremes serves Finnish society; rather, they create a divide between Muslims and other residents of Finland. Additionally, the media portrayal of Muslims exacerbates this divide.

All interviewees placed the image of Muslims in Finland between neutral and negative. Prejudices are often perceived to be related to violence and extremism and are frequently negative. In the news, Muslims often appear only in a negative context, leading to a perception that individuals are not seen as distinct but rather that their actions are generalized to the entire community. Prejudices also arise from the use of public space, with the belief that Muslims bring their religion into public

spaces. The discussion centers on the boundary between public and private space, with Finnish culture generally perceiving religion as a private matter that should not be visible in dress or appearance. In the interviews, this is seen as an obstacle to integration. For example, at the Koivukylä Mosque during Friday prayer times, someone may call the police due to the crowd size. There is also a shortage of parking near the mosque, and not everyone can park well in the area, leading to fines for improper parking. This example illustrates how much space Islam has to manifest in public spaces and how the community's facilities are not always suitably located in relation to the number of participants.

Prejudices

Muslims encounter prejudices that may have religious, cultural, political, economic, or racist roots. Often, the underlying reasons for these prejudices overlap. Prejudices create a one-sided image of Islam and Muslims. Another reason for widespread islamophobia is the general resistance to immigration. Islam is commonly perceived as non-Finnish and as the "religion of immigrants," leading negative attitudes toward immigration to be directly reflected onto Muslims. Stereotypes, or simplified portrayals of groups of people, are generally unconscious and contain both negative and positive preconceptions. However, everyone can strive to become aware of the stereotypes in their own thinking and to engage with others as individuals. (Pauha, Onniselkä & Bahmanpour 2017, 111–112).

Polarization and outright hostility towards Islam hinder the integration of Muslims. Most Finnish Muslims still represent the first generation of immigrants, many of whom accept that they are not seen as Finnish. However, there are also many Muslims who are not from immigrant backgrounds but were born or raised in Finland from a young age. For many young Muslims, it is difficult to understand why they are not treated as equals in society. (Pauha, Onniselkä & Bahmanpour 2017, 113).

Seeing a person solely through their religion and viewing Muslims as a single group defined by their religion is problematic. (Hämeen-Anttila 2017, 165). In Finland, Muslims experience islamophobia and are viewed exceptionally negatively and dismissively even from an international perspective, despite Muslims having been in Finland since the 1800s, when the Tatars settled in Finland.

Islamophobia

Muslims in Finland encounter significant islamophobia in their daily lives, which is a form of racism. Islamophobia refers to violence, discrimination, and hate speech directed against Muslims or individuals perceived to be Muslim, as well as against groups or communities. Islamophobia stems from negative stereotypes associated with Muslims and Islam, leading to the exclusion and dehumanization of Muslims.

Teemu Pauha, a university lecturer in Islamic theology, states that according to several international studies, attitudes towards Islam in Finland are exceptionally negative compared to the European—and perhaps even global—scale. Finland ranks highly in several international studies measuring anti-Islamic attitudes. Pauha refers to a study conducted in 2018, where Finnish respondents most commonly agreed that Islam is fundamentally incompatible with the culture and values of their country.

These negative attitudes are partially reflected in discriminatory behavior. According to a report by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Finnish Muslims experience harassment and direct discrimination more than Muslims on average in Europe, Pauha says.

The Ministry of Justice's report on "Utilizing Artificial Intelligence in Monitoring Hate Speech" (2021) reveals that islamophobia is actively spread on social media. In hate speech, the term "Muslim" appears in as many as 26% of the comments identified by artificial intelligence. Statistics show that there were a total of 20 criminal convictions related to islamophobia in Finnish district courts between 2012 and 2022. In 2018, the police recorded 155 reports of hate crimes, one-third of which targeted Muslims or the Islamic faith.

Although racism and hate speech have been widely discussed recently, islamophobia is not recognized in Finland as a sufficiently serious problem, and not enough concrete measures have been taken to combat it.

Report: Islamophobia is a common phenomenon that manifests as hostility and prejudice against Muslims. This can manifest as public harassment, threats, or negative media coverage. Islamophobia hinders the full participation of Muslims in society and fuels polarization.

Interview Results: In the interviews, representatives from the Resalat Mosque and the Helsinki Islamic Center reported that islamophobia often appears as threats and vandalism against mosques. They highlighted that the media often portrays Muslims negatively, which increases the prevalence of islamophobia.

Researcher's and Consultant's Conclusions and Observations:

1. The researcher emphasizes that islamophobia is a significant barrier to Muslims' belonging to and participating in society.
2. The researcher notes that islamophobia creates a constant sense of alienation for Muslims. The consultant suggests that the dialogue between communities and authorities should deepen to combat islamophobia.
3. The researcher observes that young Muslims are particularly vulnerable to islamophobia. The consultant recommends a broader educational program that addresses islamophobia and its effects on communities.

Media portrayal

One reason for islamophobia is likely the one-dimensional media portrayal: news coverage typically associates Islam and Muslims with various conflicts and violence. In entertainment, such as films, Muslims are often depicted in distorted ways, frequently portrayed as excessively religious and behaving in ways that are inappropriate for Western countries. Various extreme phenomena, such as terrorism, receive significant media attention, but it is essential to remember that they do not represent the whole truth. Very few Muslims, for example, support various extremist movements.

In the interviews, it was also perceived that the media plays a significant role in shaping the image of Muslims. One interviewee emphasized that Islam is not misrepresented, but it usually only receives coverage in the media when something negative occurs. An article in a Finnish newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* about Ramadan was mentioned. This was seen as an important highlight of Islamic culture,

but there was also frustration that fasting was presented through the lens of problems. Additionally, it was felt that the article made generalizations about fasting.

The interviews indicated that islamophobia and ignorance become evident when examining cases from the perspective of freedom of religion. Questions related to religious practices are presented negatively concerning Muslims, even when they pertain to matters of religious freedom. For example, an event organized for girls where they could pray together led to a social media storm regarding forced hijab wearing. The media interviewed the community based on this, and ultimately the article was perceived as poorly written with the rhetoric of “why Muslims must teach Islam to their children.” The interviewee emphasized that the use of the hijab and its significance is discussed within the community's teachings. Everyone has the opportunity to decide for themselves how they wish to wear their headscarf.

Discrimination

A summary of findings from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) EU-MIDIS II report on minorities and discrimination provides a comprehensive picture of the discrimination experienced by young Muslims. The research found that younger individuals experience hate-based harassment more than older populations. (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2018, 45) The EU-MIDIS II study found that among the surveyed youth, as many as 16 % had been stopped by the police, with 42 % believing it was due to their ethnicity or immigrant background. Those who were younger or wore some form of religious clothing, such as a headscarf, were stopped even more frequently. The fact that young Muslims are stopped solely because of their ethnicity damages cooperation between the Muslim community and law enforcement and decreases trust in them. (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2018, 17).

In the five years preceding the EU-MIDIS II study, four out of ten Muslim respondents (39 %) reported experiencing discrimination due to their ethnicity or immigrant background—including skin color, ethnic origin, or immigrant background, as well as religion or belief—across one or more areas of daily life. One in four (25 %) had experienced such discrimination in the 12 months prior to the study. About 17 % of Muslim respondents reported experiencing discrimination based on their religion or belief during the five years preceding the study, whereas in

the 2008 EU-MIDIS I study, this figure was 10 %. (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2018, 13–14, 26).

The "vulnerability to marginalization" of immigrants contributes to building a picture of Muslims as unable to adapt, even though the underlying issues stem from structural factors: racism and discrimination. (Tokola et al. 2019, 24–25). The risk of marginalization and difficulties increases if harassment and disadvantage faced by children from immigrant backgrounds are not addressed. These problems have received too little attention in Finland.

In one interview, it was described how racism in Finland is alternatively either straightforward and shameless or covert racism and socially acceptable prejudice and discrimination. This phenomenon is described as being widespread across Europe. The interview noted that most European and Finnish Muslims feel the effects of islamophobia and inequality. Often, when it comes to Muslims, issues related to them are also seen as problems. This is exacerbated by the interviewee's experience that knowledge and education about Islam are very limited in schools and various professions, resulting in a lack of diverse representations of Muslims.

Harassment

Harassment based on ethnicity or immigrant background often includes offensive gestures or inappropriate staring, experienced by 21 % of respondents in the study during the past 12 months. Young people experienced personal harassment and online harassment even more than older Muslims. In the last 12 months, 2 % of respondents experienced physical violence, with younger individuals having experienced it more than older counterparts. Muslims from Sub-Saharan Africa reported experiencing more physical violence than, for example, those from South Asia. (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2018, 47–48).

All interviewed communities stated that Muslims face racism. The distinction between racism and islamophobia was not elaborated upon. The interviews noted that racism does not arise in a vacuum. It is considered to develop when prejudiced information about behaviors reaches people through the media and public figures. For communities, this is evident through threats, vandalism, and harassment on social media. Harassment also affects participation in activities, as many do not want

to be visible in community actions. Many fear being targeted online, in social media, and in everyday life. Women's religiosity is more visible on the outside, leading to more religion-based harassment directed at them. However, the color of one's skin is perceived to signify more than religious affiliation in cases of harassment. Negative attitudes are perceived to be present in daily life and the workplace.

Harassment has also affected the organization of larger events, where attention is drawn to security arrangements organized by volunteers. In these cases, there are often individuals at the entrance of the center monitoring arriving participants. When organizing events, the center must also consider what time to hold them. Sometimes, the center has to close the mosque's external doors during prayer times, even though the mosque is intended to be an open space. For example, after the armed attack on a mosque in New Zealand, prayer times felt unsafe.

The communities were satisfied with the police response to murder and bomb threats. For example, Rabita received a bomb threat, and the community filed a police report. The police took the situation seriously, and it was resolved peacefully. In some cases, harassment is also linked to international political influences, such as regarding Iran and Shia Muslims.

Interview results: In the interviews, representatives of the Muslim communities reported that experiences of discrimination and racism are common, particularly among Muslim women who wear headscarves. The study revealed that discrimination impacts the well-being of young people and their relationship with both Finnish identity and Islamic identity.

Researcher's and consultant's conclusions and observations:

1. The researcher notes that the discrimination faced by young Muslims can undermine their social and psychological well-being. The consultant recommends increasing awareness of the discrimination faced by Muslim youth in schools and youth work.
2. The researcher emphasizes that discrimination can manifest as subtle microaggressions, which hinder Muslims' sense of belonging to the Finnish community. The consultant suggests stronger preventive measures and programs that support Muslim participation in society.
3. The researcher observes that Muslim women who wear headscarves face particularly high levels of discrimination. The consultant recommends establishing peer support groups for Muslims and providing safe spaces for them to share their experiences.

Labor market

In Finland, Somalis, Iraqis, Arabs, and Muslims experience significant discrimination in the labor market, which manifests as limited job opportunities, even though their education and work experience match those of Finnish applicants.

Several studies, such as the field experiment conducted by Akhlaq Ahmad (2019), demonstrate that discrimination based on ethnic origin and religion is widespread and systematic. Ahmad's research reveals stark statistical differences in employment opportunities among various ethnic groups, particularly regarding Muslim immigrants.

In Ahmad's study, 5,000 job applications were sent from representatives of five different ethnic groups: one Finnish, one English, one Russian, one Iraqi, and one Somali. The applicants were identical in terms of education, work experience, and skills, with the only differences being their names and native languages. The results clearly show that Somali and Iraqi applicants receive significantly fewer invitations to job interviews than Finnish or English applicants.

Somali and Iraqi applicants, in particular, face severe discrimination. For Somali applicants, interview invitations were received in only 9.9 % of applications, while for Iraqi applicants, the corresponding figure was 13.4 %. For Finnish applicants, this figure was 39 %. This means that a Somali applicant must send nearly four times as many job applications as a Finnish applicant to receive the same number of interview invitations. Similarly, an Iraqi applicant must send nearly three times as many applications. This disparity in discrimination is also reflected in how English applicants receive 26.9 % of contacts, which is closer to Finnish applicants than to other immigrant groups.

The study also found that men face greater discrimination than women. For example, only 6.8 % of Somali male applicants received an invitation to a job interview, whereas the figure for women was slightly higher at 13 %. This gender difference clearly indicates that ethnicity and religion significantly influence the discrimination experienced in the labor market, especially when it comes to Muslim men.

Ahmad's research also highlights that an Islamic background can be a significant disadvantage in employment. According to a study conducted in Finland (Pew Research Center, 2018), 62 % of Finns perceive Islam as incompatible with Finnish

culture and values, which reflects the discrimination experienced by Muslim immigrants. This negative attitude manifests in the labor market as concrete discriminatory situations, where Muslim immigrants are left without job interview invitations or face discriminatory recruitment practices.

Employers' attitudes significantly affect the employment opportunities for Muslims, particularly Somali and Arab immigrants. A clear ethnic and religious hierarchy exists in the labor market, where immigrants from outside Europe are treated unjustly. For example, Iraqi and Somali applicants receive significantly fewer contacts than Russian applicants, even when all other personal characteristics are identical.

In summary, immigrant-background Muslims, particularly Somalis and Arabs, face substantial discrimination in the Finnish labor market. This discrimination manifests as concrete barriers to employment and is part of a broader structural problem, where employers' prejudices and attitudes prevent Muslim immigrants from fully participating in working life.

The interviews also revealed how global events quickly reflect in the daily lives of Muslims, including their working life. Most often, news about Muslims appears in headlines only in a negative context, leading to the perception that Muslims in the workplace are expected to be experts on the issues. One interviewee also noted how transitioning to working life after studying can be challenging. There is a perception that there are obstacles in becoming a full member of society.

Some Muslims visually differ from the majority. In particular, the headscarves worn by some Muslim women have sparked discussions about visible religiosity and its acceptability. The practice of Islam is emphasized in daily prayers and women's dress. Many Muslim women have found it challenging to find employment in positions that match their qualifications. However, attitudes are gradually changing, especially in the healthcare sector, where many headscarf-wearing Muslim women have been hired due to a labor shortage. For example, in the Helsinki and Uusimaa Hospital District (HUS), headscarves have been offered as part of work attire since the early 2000s. The representation of Muslims in various professional groups is increasing. The challenge remains that Muslims are not always hired for positions that match their qualifications, including in academic fields and expert roles. The

responsibility for this lies within the labor market sector and with employers. As Muslim women enter the workforce and network within Finnish society, they can strengthen the position of their religious community. Discussion about freedom of religion and its positive significance requires active input from the Muslim community as well. (Pauha, Onnisekka & Bahmanpour 2017, 109).

Researcher's and consultant's conclusions and observations:

1. The researcher emphasizes that discrimination in the workplace hinders the professional advancement of Muslims and negatively impacts their economic well-being. The consultant recommends providing training on diversity and non-discrimination for employers.
2. The researcher notes that the use of headscarves is often perceived as problematic in the labor market. The consultant suggests increasing religious awareness and understanding in workplaces to promote diversity.
3. In addition to workplaces, the researcher and consultant recommend expanding the research to educational institutions.

Opportunities to influence in society

In the interviews, Muslims were seen as a clear part of Finnish society. Muslims live in Finland and are Finnish citizens, paying taxes and serving in the military.

However, a common experience that emerged from the interviews is that society itself does not always view them this way, which is evident in the direct and structural racism that Muslims encounter in their daily lives. There is a recurring feeling in the interviews that a Finnish Muslim must always prove themselves, their Finnish identity, and sometimes even their humanity as a Muslim. The measure of Finnish identity varies based on appearance. For young Muslims, the experience of belonging to society may be stronger, but as they grow older, pursue education, and transition to working life, they begin to face increasing obstacles. After many setbacks, their ability to persevere decreases, and they develop a sense that they cannot fully integrate into society.

One interviewee feels that Muslims have minimal opportunities to influence issues that affect them. Part of this is due to demographics, as it is difficult for a one-percent minority to enact significant social change on their own. Muslims have not had much representation, especially in decision-making processes that affect them.

The Muslim community is rarely involved in the discussions where decisions regarding them are made. Decisions and announcements are simply relayed from elsewhere, and Muslims are not included in the decision-making process. On the other hand, the interviews highlighted experiences where individuals can make an impact within their own community if they are active, organized, and pay membership fees. However, cooperation with authorities is perceived to be developing all the time.

The interviews revealed that society needs to engage in a proper discussion about freedom of religion, what it truly means, and how it is implemented in practice. In Finland, there are also political parties whose activities and leadership clearly reflect islamophobia and racism. According to the interviewees, this diminishes the sense of influence Muslims feel they have. For example, asylum seekers feel that they can practice their religion in Finland, but in practice, this is not the case. There should be more discussions in Finland about how minorities want to be treated.

Challenges faced by communities

The biggest challenge faced by the communities is a lack of resources. This complicates the organization and development of activities. In particular, the ability to hire staff for mosques would facilitate operations and development. The state should provide more equitable support for religious communities. Currently, the support is dependent on applications and is not always guaranteed. According to one interviewee, the best support would be to recognize all the work that mosques do. This work includes the many different services that the municipality or city should provide instead of the mosque. The interviews highlighted a feeling that municipal and city projects and social counselling are disconnected from some groups of people who need and would use these services. The interviewee hopes that authorities would come to the mosque to learn about its activities. The mosque is not a closed space but a meeting place and supporter of the community.

Support from the state

There is a call for more support from the state and recognition of the significance of the work being done. The interviews expressed a desire for the state's attitude toward supporting Islamic communities to be less critical. The support received from the

state is insufficient compared to how many resources the communities have put into building cooperation. At times, it feels like there has even been systematic and intentional hindrance to the equality and inclusion of religious communities. Some communities are larger and older, while others are still forming. Due to these size differences, the communities have varied needs.

In the interviews, the Finnish support system for religious communities was compared to those in other Nordic countries. The interviewees felt that other Nordic countries have better support models, where funding is provided based on membership numbers, and some religious communities have tax rights. Interviewees pointed out that in Finland, it is possible to apply for small general funding, but receiving it is not guaranteed. The support does not adequately cover activities, as it is nominal assistance. There are perceived inconsistencies in the distribution of security funding. The interviews revealed a sense that the supports do not distribute evenly among religions, even if the problems and threats are of similar magnitude.

The interviews also highlighted the joy that there are rights in Finland that are not always present in their countries of origin or in other European countries, such as France. According to the interviewees, being actively engaged in interaction facilitates cooperation the most.

Literature and sources

Literature

- Ahmad, A. (2020). Kokeellinen tutkimus etniseen alkuperään perustuvasta syrjinnästä suomalaisilla työmarkkinoilla. In V. Kazi, A. Alitolppa-Niitamo, & A. Kaihovaara (Eds.), *Kotoutumisen kokonaiskatsaus 2019: Tutkimusartikkeleita kotoutumisesta* (Pages 15–27). Artikkelin 1 (TEM oppaat ja muut julkaisut; Nro 2019:10). Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö. <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-327-487-7>
- Ahokas, Anni ym. (2021). *Muslimit terveydenhuollon asiakkaina*. University of Helsinki, Faculty of Theology.
- Bayrakli, Enes ja Farid Nafez toim. (2022) *European Islamophobia Report*. Leopold Weiss Institute, Austria.
- Hämeen-Anttila, Jaakko (2017) *Uusi islamin käsikirja*. Helsinki: Otava.
- Pauha, Teemu, Onniselkä, Suaad & Abbas Bahmanpour (2017). Kaksi vuosisataa suomalaista islamia. *Monien uskontojen ja katsomusten Suomi*. Eds. Ruth Illman, Kimmo Ketola, Riitta Latvio, & Jussi Sohlberg. Kirkon tutkimuskeskuksen verkkojulkaisu; No. 48. Kirkon tutkimuskeskus. 104–115.
- Pauha, Teemu & Johanna Konttori (2022). Johdanto: keitä ovat suomalaiset muslimit. *Suomalaiset muslimit*. Eds. Teemu Pauha & Johanna Konttori. Gaudeamus. 8–19.
- Konttori, Johanna (2022). Suomalainen islam eurooppalaisessa kontekstissa. *Suomalaiset muslimit*. Eds. Teemu Pauha & Johanna Konttori. Gaudeamus. 20–30.
- Pauha, Teemu & Abbas Bahmanbour (2022). Shiialaisuus Suomessa. *Suomalaiset muslimit*. Eds. Teemu Pauha & Johanna Konttori. Gaudeamus. 31-44.
- Pauha, Teemu (2018). *Religious and national among young Muslims in Finland: A view from the social constructionist social psychology of religion*. Dissertation. University of Helsinki.
- Sipilä, Suvi (2012). Islam, identiteetti ja naiseuden tuottaminen suomalaisten musliminaisten blogeissa. Master's Thesis.
- Tokola, Nina, Tiina Rättilä, Päivi Honkatukia, Fath E. Mubeen & Irmeli Mustalahti (2019). ”Haluan tulla nähdyksi huiviltani”: nuorten musliminaisten kokemuksia kuulumisesta työelämässä. *Nuorisotutkimus* Vol 37. No. 2. Eds. Onodera Henri, Marja Tiilikainen & Helena Oikarinen-Jabai. Helsinki: Nuorisotutkimusseura. 21–35.
- Tuovinen, Meri (2015). *ELÄMÄNTAPANA ISLAM - Islamin ja uskonyhteisön ilmentäminen suomalaisten, islamiin kääntyneiden naisten haastatteluissa*. Master's Thesis.

Websites

Hautausmaat (sa.). *Islamilainen hautaus*.

<https://www.islamilainenhautaus.info/hautausmaat-suomessa.html>

Helsinki Islam Keskus (sa.). *Uskonnot Suomessa*. The Church Research Institute.

The Religion in Finland Project -database. <https://uskonnot.fi/yhteiso/helsinki-islam-keskus/>

Helsingin Islam seurakunta (sa.). *Uskonnot Suomessa*. The Church Research Institute. The Religion in Finland Project -database.

<https://uskonnot.fi/yhteiso/helsingin-islam-seurakunta/>

Moisio, Teppo (2013). Ainoa oikea moskeija on Järvenpäässä. *Helsingin Sanomat*.

<https://www.hs.fi/kaupunki/art-2000002660675.html>

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2018). *Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS II): Muslims - Selected findings* European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA).

<https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2017/second-european-union-minorities-and-discrimination-survey-muslims-selected>

Resalat Islamilainen Yhdyskunta – Suomen Ähl-e Beit (sa.) *Uskonnot Suomessa*. Kirkon tutkimuskeskus. Uskonnot Suomessa -tietokanta.

<https://uskonnot.fi/yhteiso/resalat-islamilainen-yhdyskunta/>

Salminen, Reeta & Eetu Pietarinen (2015). Kielimoskeija: Kallion moskeijassa lapsista kasvatetaan pakistanilaisia. *Yle*. <https://yle.fi/a/3-8374875>

Suomen Islamilainen Yhdyskunta (sa.). Islam. *Uskonnot Suomessa*. The Church Research Institute. The Religion in Finland Project -database.

<https://uskonnot.fi/yhteiso/suomen-islamilainen-yhdyskunta/>

Tietoa meistä (sa.) *Suomen Islam Keskus*. <https://www.hic.fi/fin/>

Yhteisöt (sa.). *Uskonnot Suomessa*. The Church Research Institute. The Religion in Finland Project -database. <https://uskonnot.fi/yhteiso-osasto/islam/>

Attachments

Interview questions

QUESTIONNAIRE I

When was the community established? When was it registered?

How was the community founded? What created the need for the establishment of the community?

How would you describe the community's doctrinal emphasis?

How many members/participants does the community have?

Who leads the community's activities? Is there turnover?

What is the cultural background of the community?

What is the linguistic background of the community? What language is used most?

Where is the activity located?

QUESTIONNAIRE II

What kind of facilities are available for activities?

Is the space owned or rented?

Have there been difficulties in establishing or maintaining the mosque?

What kind of facilities would be best for the community's activities?

QUESTIONNAIRE III

What activities does the community have?

What kind of volunteer activities does the community engage in?

How is the participation of youth/women/children reflected in the activities?

Is there collaboration with other mosques/organizations?

Is the mosque in contact with representatives of other religions?

Is there joint activity with the state/municipality/city?

QUESTIONNAIRE IV

Do you feel that the image of Muslims in Finland is positive/neutral/negative?

Why?

What kinds of prejudices against Islam and Muslims have you encountered?

What information and representation of Islam should be highlighted more?

QUESTIONNAIRE V

Do you feel that Muslims experience racist/religious discrimination and harassment?

Is there a distinction between racist and religious discrimination?

Does discrimination/harassment affect the activities of religious communities?

How?

QUESTIONNAIRE VI

Do you feel that the community has the opportunity to influence issues that concern it? Why? Why not?

Do you feel that Muslims are members of Finnish society? Why? Why not?

Do you feel that the support provided by the state to religious communities is adequate? If not, what more would you like to see?

How could interfaith cooperation benefit Muslims in Finland?

USKOT - RESA - CORE

