



European Muslims Show No Conflict Between Religious and National Identities

Surveys in London, Paris, and Berlin indicate resident Muslims at least as likely as general public to identify with country

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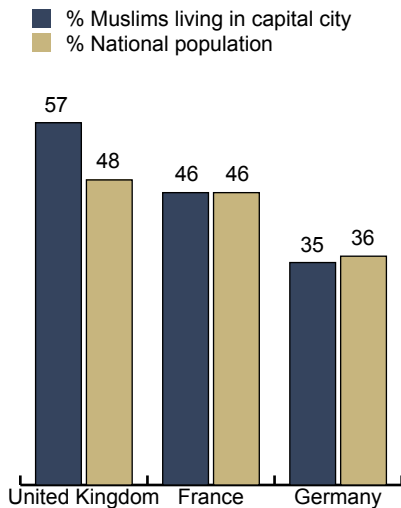
There are two extreme viewpoints on the issue of Muslim integration into Europe. On the one hand, Muslims are accused of resisting peaceful integration into European society, as evidenced by events such as the bombing in London and the riots in France in 2005. On the other hand, Europeans are accused of being increasingly hostile toward Muslims and other immigrants, as evidenced by the popularity of European anti-immigration parties or the growing number of legislative attempts to limit the use of religious symbols, including the veil worn by Muslim women.

Poll results provide very limited support for either of these extreme positions. Rather, our data reveal that, while religion remains an important part of their identity, Muslim residents of London, Paris, and Berlin also identify strongly with the country in which they live. In all three cities, strong majorities of Muslims -- 68% in Paris, 85% in Berlin, and 88% in London -- say religion is an important part of their lives. These figures stand in stark contrast to those found among the general population: only 23% of French, 36% of British, and 41% of German respondents overall consider religion to be an important part of their lives.

However, the idea that their higher religiosity implies a weaker sense of national identity is simply false. In London and Paris, when Muslims were not forced to choose between religious and national identity, they tended to associate themselves with both. In fact, in none of the three countries were Muslim residents significantly less likely than the populations at large to say they identify strongly with their country. (In the United Kingdom, they were actually somewhat more likely to do so.)



How strongly do you identify with each of the following groups?... Your country? (Percentage saying "extremely strongly" or "very strongly")



November 2006 - February 2007

These results contrast with how the general public in Germany, France, and the United Kingdom perceive Muslims' degree of loyalty to the countries in which they live. When asked directly whether they think Muslims living in their countries are loyal to the country, between 35% and 45% of the Germans, French, and Britons overall responded affirmatively. However, the overwhelming majority of Muslim residents themselves in all three cities studied maintained that Muslims are loyal to the countries in which they live: 73% in Paris, 74% in London, and 72% in Berlin.

Survey Methods

Surveys of Muslims in London, Paris, and Berlin were all conducted between November 2006 and February 2007. In London and Paris, probability samples were used in neighborhoods where Muslim penetration was 5% to 10% or more. All interviews in London and Paris were conducted face-to-face in respondents' homes. In Berlin, random digit dialing was used with a sample that used first names and family names to increase the probability of reaching a Muslim household. Sample sizes were 512 in London, 502 in Paris, and 504 in Berlin. The associated maximum sampling error is ±5 percentage points for each survey. General public surveys were all conducted between December 2006 and January 2007, using random digit dialing in each country to reach representative sample of the total 15

and older adult population. Sample sizes were 1,204 in the United Kingdom, 1,220 in France, and 1,221 in Germany. The associated maximum sampling error is ±3 percentage points for each survey.

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