

UNITED KINGDOM: Gendered anti-Muslim hatred and Islamophobia

An interim report (January – June 2018) by Tell MAMA

Executive summary

Tell MAMA (29.11.2018) – <https://bit.ly/2zFH4zc> – Between January to June 2018, Tell MAMA recorded a total of 685 reports. Of these reports, 608 were verified as being anti-Muslim in nature and as having occurred in the UK. The majority were street-based ('offline') (65.9%, n=401), meaning that they occurred in-person between a victim and a perpetrator, or include acts of property damage or discrimination. Incidents of an online nature totalled 207, or 34% of verified cases in this reporting period.

Abusive behaviour continues to form the majority of 'offline' incidents by category, accounting for 45.3% (n=182). Many of these are characterised as occurring on a daily basis, suggesting that anti-Muslim incidents for Muslim communities have become normalised.

The rise in reports of discrimination is a trend Tell MAMA has observed since 2015 (detailed further in the report) and demonstrates how discriminatory attitudes and practices hinder the career and educational aspirations of Muslims. Institutional and structural forms of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred are insidious and often unspoken forms of prejudice. An intersectional analysis of discrimination

demonstrates how there are ethnic and religious penalties for Muslim women of various backgrounds in the workplace[1]. Muslim men are also held back in the workplace due to racism, Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim prejudice.[2]

The statistics demonstrate the gendered nature of anti-Muslim incidents with over half of victims, where data was available, were Muslim women. The 'normalisation' of anti-Muslim and Islamophobic incidents is also reinforced by the most common locations for these incidents, which are public areas, place of work and household or private property.

By applying a 'differentialist' model of racialisation, which concerns "cultural factors in addition to traditional, physical markers of race and ethnicity"[3] we can understand how the exclusion of Muslims is due to 'essentialised' forms of cultural differences.[4]

Verified anti-Muslim incidents between January to June 2018

The majority of anti-Muslim incident reports received by Tell MAMA between January to June 2018 were street-based ('offline') (65.9%, n=401), meaning that they occurred in-person between a victim (or property) and a perpetrator.

Tell MAMA received 229 online reports in the first half of 2018 and verified 207 reports. Consistent with previous annual reports, most took place on Twitter (59.9%, n=124), with 49 reports of Islamophobic content having occurred on Facebook (23.6%), and a further 28 reports (13.5%) taking place on other platforms, out of which a small proportion of reports concerned offensive content on YouTube (1.5%, n=3) and Instagram (0.96%, n=2).

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[1] Ganesh, Bharath, and Imam Abou Atta. "Forgotten Women: The impact of Islamophobia on Muslim women in the United Kingdom." European Network Against Racism (ENAR), 2016. https://www.enar-eu.org/IMG/pdf/forgotten_women_report_united_kingdom_-_final.pdf.

[2] Asthana, Anushka. "Islamophobia Holding Back UK Muslims in Workplace, Study Finds." The Guardian. Last modified June 26, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/sep/07/islamophobia-holding-back-uk-muslims-in-workplace-study-finds>.

[3] Selod, Saher, and David G. Embrick. "Racialization and Muslims: Situating the Muslim experience in race scholarship." Sociology Compass 7, no. 8 (2013): 644-655.

[4] Balibar, Étienne, "La construction du racisme." Actuel Marx 2 (2005): 11-28.

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