

### Muslim Women Demographics in China

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- ❖ The largest Muslim minority in East Asia lives in China and has lived there for over 1,400 years.<sup>1</sup> Two percent of the population in China is Muslim. The population is expected to be the 19<sup>th</sup> largest Muslim population in the world by 2030. In 2010 there were 23.3 million Muslims in China; by 2030 the number is expected to be 30 million.<sup>2</sup>
- ❖ The Uygurs (sometimes spelled Uigurs) are a Turkic ethnic group living in China. The Uygurs are primarily Sunni Muslims. They live in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in China (pop 10 million)<sup>3</sup>, Kazakhstan (pop. 223,000), Uzbekistan (pop. 55,000), Kyrgyzstan (pop. 49,000), Turkey (pop. 19,000), Russia (pop. 3,700), Pakistan (pop. 3,000), and the Ukraine (pop.197).<sup>4-5</sup>
- ❖ The Hui people, who are predominantly Muslim (96%), live throughout China but are generally concentrated in the Western provinces in the same region as the Uygurs. There are nearly 13 million Hui in China and almost all are Sunni Muslims.<sup>6-7</sup>
- ❖ The Uygur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang is an autonomous region of China; occupying the northwestern corner of China.<sup>8</sup> The Chinese government discourages women from wearing the veil. In institutions ranging from gas stations to hospitals, banks, and administrative buildings women must remove their veils or headscarves if they expect to be served.<sup>9</sup>
- ❖ There has been a revival of Islamic schools in China. These schools are largely founded and run by young rural women in the countries' poorest regions. Mosques in China organize Arabic and Islamic studies classes for students of all ages.<sup>10</sup>
- ❖ In China Hui Muslim women act as imams and manage mosques for women. There are hundreds of female imams leading mosques, educating both sexes, and organizing social services in their communities.<sup>11</sup>
- ❖ In the Xinjiang region, 39% of the Muslim population is female. Of the 25 million people in the region, 8.6 million are Muslim women.

<sup>1</sup><http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=164869>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.pewforum.org/2011/01/27/future-of-the-global-muslim-population-regional-asia/>

<sup>3</sup> Stanley W. Toops (5 Dec 2013). "Chapter 4 - Where Inner Asia Meets Outer Asia". In Susan M. Walcott, Corey Johnson. *Eurasian Corridors of Interconnection: From the South China to the Caspian Sea*. Routledge. p. 65.

<sup>4</sup>[http://www.rferl.org/content/Chinas\\_Uyghurs\\_A\\_Minority\\_In\\_Their\\_Own\\_Land/1772366.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Chinas_Uyghurs_A_Minority_In_Their_Own_Land/1772366.html)

<sup>5</sup><https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>

<sup>6</sup><http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/275064/Hui>

<sup>7</sup><http://www.everyculture.com/Russia-Eurasia-China/Hui.html>

<sup>8</sup><http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/546118/Xinjiang>

<sup>9</sup><http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-2507435/Uighur-women-defy-Chinas-government-continuing-wear-tiny-Taipak-hats.html>

<sup>10</sup><http://web.archive.org/web/20070928055702/http://www.asiaquarterly.com/content/view/166/43>

<sup>11</sup>[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/10/world/asia/10iht-letter10.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/10/world/asia/10iht-letter10.html?_r=0)