



ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN AND ISLAMIC CULTURES

Muslims as Minorities

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EWIC Staff: Datasheet

- ❖ One-fifth of the world Muslim population (more than 300 million people) live as religious minorities in their home countries.¹
- ❖ Three-quarters of Muslims living as religious minorities are in five countries: India, Ethiopia, China, Russia, and Tanzania.¹
- ❖ Though the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region has the most countries with majority Muslim populations, some Muslim-minority countries actually have larger Muslim populations by number. For example, Germany (4,119,000 Muslims) has more Muslims than Lebanon, Kuwait, or Oman; China (23,308,000) more than Syria; and Russia (16,379,000) more than Jordan and Libya combined.²
- ❖ India is a significant Muslim-minority country. With 160,945,000 Muslims, India has the third-largest population of Muslims worldwide. India alone constitutes 10.3% of the entire world Muslim population. Yet only 13.4% of the population of India is Muslim, making the religion a minority to the more common religion of Hinduism.¹
- ❖ Within Islam, there are two main sects: Sunni and Shia. Shia is the minority. Out of the global Muslim population 10-13% is Shi'ite while 87-90% is Sunni. Shi'ite Muslims live as minorities in most countries, except Iran, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, and Iraq. Most of the world's Shi'ites live in Iran, Pakistan, Iraq, and India.¹
- ❖ There are an estimated 6-7 million Muslims in the U.S., making them a religious minority in the country.³ Most of the US Muslim population is made up of three ethnicities: African-American, South Asian-American, and Arab-American. Therefore, American Muslims are not just religious minorities but also ethnic minorities.⁴
- ❖ The Muslim population in Europe, while expected to remain a minority, is projected to exceed 58 million by 2030. Muslims will make up 10.3% of France's population and 14.4% of Russia's population.⁵
- ❖ Like other minority groups, Muslims living as minorities are subject to discrimination and hate crimes. Anti-Muslim hate crimes have been documented in the US, France, Germany, the UK, Russia, and the Netherlands, to name a few – all countries with minority Muslim populations.⁶

¹ <http://www.pewforum.org/2009/10/07/mapping-the-global-muslim-population/>

² <http://features.pewforum.org/muslim-population/>

³ <http://www.cair.com/american-muslims/about-islam.html>

⁴ <https://www.du.edu/korbel/hrhw/researchdigest/minority/Muslim.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.pewforum.org/2011/01/27/future-of-the-global-muslim-population-regional-europe/>

⁶ <http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/3-2010-muslim-factsheet-update.pdf>