

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN AND ISLAMIC CULTURES

Hate Crimes against Muslim Women: Australia

Dr. Suad Joseph, General Editor

Distinguished Professor of Anthropology and Women and Gender Studies, University of California, Davis

EWIC Staff: Datasheet

- ❖ Following the Paris attacks that occurred in November 2015, the reported incidents of Islamophobia in Australia more than doubled from 17 to 37 based on the number of hate crimes that were reported to the Australian Islamophobia Register. Furthermore, the majority of the victims were women wearing the hijab.¹
- ❖ In September 2014, the Australian Federal Police carried out anti-terrorism raids to target Islamic radicals. Following the raids, there were 30 reported attacks on Muslims and these attacks were primarily against women wearing the hijab.²
- ❖ Although the number of anti-Muslim hate crimes increased in late 2015, Islamophobia is a historical issue in Australia. For example, the Committee on Discrimination against Arab Australians (CDAAA) compiled a report in 1990 which documented detailed incidents of vilification, harassment, and abuse towards Muslim women.³
- ❖ Through a twelve-year national study from 2001-2013, the University of Western Sydney found that nearly half of Australians describe themselves as having anti-Muslim attitudes.⁴
- ❖ Beginning in 2014, anti-Islamic groups campaigned against Australian food companies that certified their food as halal as they argued that the cost of certification not only increases the prices of food to all consumers, but is used to fund terrorism.⁵
- ❖ On April 4, 2015, Reclaim Australia, a group that is fighting against Islam and its growth in Australia, organized anti-Islam rallies in 16 cities across Australia to protest Islam and Muslims in the country.⁶
- ❖ In 2015, the University of Queensland conducted a survey which reported that 75 percent of Australians Muslims believe they are unfairly targeted by anti-terrorism laws.²
- ❖ The Western Sydney University and Islamic Sciences and Research Academy's (ISRA) "Resilience and Ordinarity of Australian Muslims" 2015 report, which contained a survey of almost 600 Muslims in Sydney, found that Muslims in Sydney experience discrimination at three times the rate of other Australians⁷
- ❖ Created in 2015, the Voices against Bigotry website and network was developed by academic researchers, Susie Latham and Linda Briskman, in order to fight against Islamophobia by encouraging ordinary people and community leaders, particularly politicians, to collaborate and speak out on the issue.⁸

¹ <http://www.amust.com.au/2015/12/dramatic-increase-in-islamophobia/>

² <http://www.smh.com.au/national/dozens-of-antimuslim-attacks-as-islamic-leaders-warn-of-community-fear-20141009-113tmk.html>

³ Faces of Hate: Hate Crime in Australia (1997).

⁴ http://www.uws.edu.au/school-of-social-sciences-and-psychology/ssap/research/challenging_racism/findings_by_region

⁵ <http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2014/s4133082.htm>

⁶ <http://www.rt.com/news/246757-australia-islam-protests-violence/>

⁷ http://www.uws.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/990129/Sydney_Muslims_report.pdf

⁸ <http://www.voicesagainstbigotry.org/>