

Muslim Community Issues

Local Muslim Community

There is general satisfaction with the local Muslim community in terms of religious leadership, programs for families and youth, and outreach to the non-Muslim audiences. The predominant local concern is about discrimination and Islamophobia, especially among women and youth.

LOCAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT. This year's survey explored how people feel about aspects of their local Muslim community. Results reveal a general level of satisfaction with how local communities are supported in a number of areas. Roughly six in ten say they are very or somewhat satisfied with their community's outreach to other religions and the wider community (65%), with their Muslim leaders (Imams and clergy, 63%), with opportunities for women to play leadership roles in local Muslim organizations (60%), with programs for families (59%) and with programs for youth (59%). In each area, less than one in five expresses dissatisfaction, with the balance unable to comment due to lack of familiarity with what their local community currently provides.

Across the five areas, satisfaction with community supports is most widely expressed by individuals in the youngest age cohort (18 to 34), along with those who are Canadian-born, and those who visit mosques at least once a week. Dissatisfaction with Muslim leaders is most pronounced among individuals 60 years and older (28%) and those in the top income bracket (with \$80K or more in household income) (24%). Dissatisfaction with community outreach to other religions and the wider community is most evident among those with the most education and income (but doesn't exceed 20% in either group). Men and women are equally satisfied with the opportunities for women to play leadership roles in their community.

Satisfaction with local Muslim community



Q.18a-e

From what you know or have heard, are you very, somewhat, not very, or not at all satisfied with each of the following aspects of your local Muslim community? Muslim leaders, including Imams and clergy ... Programs for Muslim youth ... Programs for Muslim families ... Outreach to other religions and the wider community ... Opportunities for women to play leadership roles in Muslim organizations?

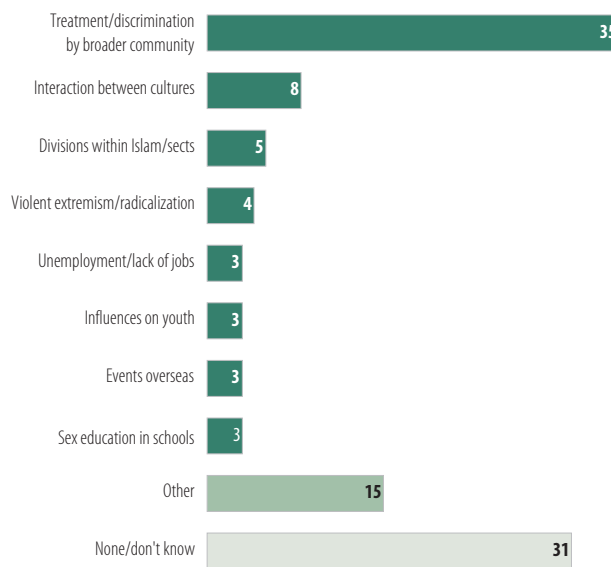
MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING THE COMMUNITY. The general level of satisfaction with community supports does not mean there are no concerns. When asked to identify (unprompted) the most important issues facing Muslims in their local community today, most identify at least one issue, and by far the dominant concern is about treatment by the non-Muslim community. More than one in three identifies the top issue facing their community to be how it is treated by broader society, including discrimination or poor treatment (15%), Islamophobia (13%), stereotyping by the media (12%) or related issues, such as fear for one’s safety in public (e.g., being attacked on the street).

Other issues – each identified by fewer than one in ten – include the challenge of cultural integration, divisions within the Muslim community, violent extremism and

radicalization, unemployment, and influences on youth, followed by a further list of issues mentioned by three percent or less. Three in ten (31%) do not believe there are any particular issues facing the community, or declined to provide a response to the question.

Concerns about discrimination/stereotyping and personal safety is the most prominent theme identified across the population, and especially so among those who are Canadian-born (78%), identify primarily as Muslim (58%), women (55%, versus 35% among men), and those 18 to 34 (54%, compared with 28% among those 45 years and older). Not surprisingly, it is also the primary concern among those who have personally experienced discrimination due to their religion (59%) and those who have felt inhibited to express their views on social or political issues because of who they are (51%).

Most important issues facing Muslims in your local community today



Q.17
What do you believe are the most important issues facing Muslims in your local community today?

Challenges facing Canadian Muslims

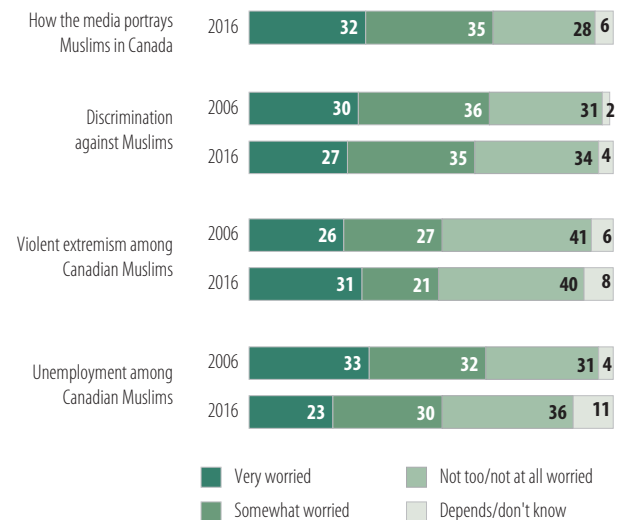
There are widespread concerns about various issues facing Muslims in Canada, most notably their portrayal by the media and discrimination generally, followed by violent extremism, unemployment, and secular influences on youth. However, concern levels are down modestly since 2006.

The survey asked participants about the extent to which they are worried about each of seven issues related to Muslims living in Canada. All are considered issues to be concerned about, but to varying degrees. Moreover, the strength of concern in some cases is now lower than a decade ago.

People are most likely to say they are very or somewhat worried about how the media portrays Muslims in Canada (67%, new item) and discrimination against Muslims (62%, down 4 points from 2006). Small majorities express this level of worry about violent extremism among Canadian Muslims (52%, down 10) and unemployment among Canadian Muslims (53%, down 10). Fewer than half are very or somewhat worried about the influence of music, movies and the Internet on Muslim youth (43%, down 6), a decline in the importance of religion among Canadian Muslims (42%, down 6), and being stereotyped by neighbours and colleagues (39%, new item).

How the media portrays Muslims. Two-thirds are very (32%) or somewhat (35%) worried about how the media portrays Muslims in Canada, compared with 28 percent who are not worried and another six percent who do not offer an opinion. Such worry is especially widespread among those born in Canada (80%) or Africa (77%), those who have experienced bad treatment due to their religion or ethnicity (80%), and those who feel inhibited to express themselves on political or social issues (89%). This view is also more commonly shared by women, those aged 45 and younger, and those who identify primarily as Muslim. It is least evident among Muslims aged 60 and over (50%).

Concern about issues facing Muslims in Canada



Q.25,d,e,f,h

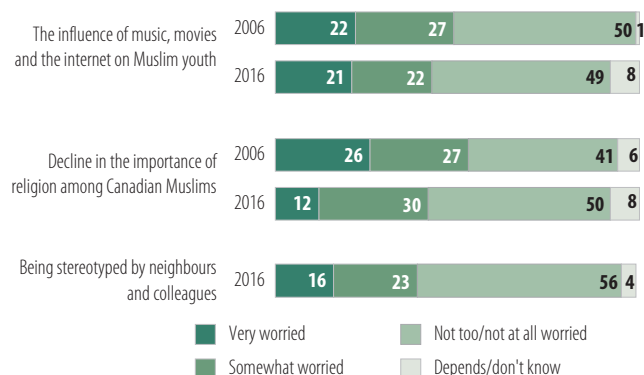
Please tell me how worried you are about each of the following issues related to Muslims living in Canada. Are you very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried about...?

Discrimination against Muslims. About six in ten are very (27%) or somewhat (35%) worried about discrimination against Muslims in Canada, with this proportion down modestly since 2006 (when 66% expressed this view). Concerns about discrimination vary widely across the population, being most prominent among Canadian-born (83%), those experiencing discrimination because of their religion (83%) and/or ethnic background (82%), but is also emphasized by, younger individuals, those with a college or some university education. Declining concern about discrimination since 2006 is evident across most groups but most noticeably in Quebec and in the west, among men, older Muslims, and those who identify primarily as Canadian.

Violent extremism among Canadian Muslims. Just over half say they are very (31%) or somewhat (21%) worried about violent extremism among Canadian Muslims; this overall proportion is essentially unchanged since 2006, but the percentage who are very worried is up five percentage points. Worry about violent extremism has increased modestly in western Canada, among men, Muslims 18 to 34, those Canadian-born and those who identify primarily as Muslim, while declining in Quebec, among older Muslims and those who identify primarily as Canadian. Worry about extremism is currently most pronounced among Canadian-born individuals (72%) and those who have experienced discrimination because of their ethnicity (68%), and is least evident among those 60 plus (41%).

Unemployment among Canadian Muslims. A small majority are very (23%) or somewhat (30%) worried about unemployment among Canadian Muslims, and this represents a significant decline from 2006 when 63 percent expressed such concern (a notable shift given that the current economy is much less robust than it was a decade ago). This downward trend is evident across most of the country, but especially among men, older Muslims, those with the least education, and those who identify primarily as Muslim. Worry about unemployment among Muslims is now most widespread among those who have experienced discrimination (64%), difficulties in crossing borders (70%), and least evident among Muslims 60 plus (46%) and those born in the Middle East or West Asia (41%).

Concern about issues facing Muslims in Canada



Q.25a,c,g

Please tell me how worried you are about each of the following issues related to Muslims living in Canada. Are you very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried about...?

Influences on Muslim youth. About four in ten say they are very (21%) or somewhat (22%) worried about the influence of music, movies and the Internet on Muslim youth, with this proportion down six percentage points since 2006. This worry is down among most groups, but especially in Quebec, among men (although increasing among women), individuals 18 to 34, the Canadian-born and those who pray at mosques at least once a week. Concern about influences on youth are now most widespread among women (52%) and those with the lowest incomes (53%), and least evident among Quebecers, men, and those who identify equally as Muslim and Canadian (all 35%, respectively).

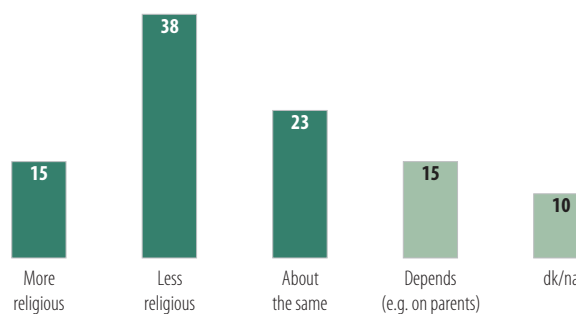
Being stereotyped by neighbours and colleagues. While there is widespread concern about media stereotypes of Muslims, there is less worry about being misjudged by ones' neighbours and colleagues. Four in ten are very (16%) or somewhat (23%) worried about this, compared with a majority who are not very (26%) or not at all (30%) worried. This concern is most evident among the Canadian-born (64%) and those who have experienced discrimination due to ones' religion (67%), and to a lesser extent by women (48%) and Muslims 18 to 34 (50%). This is least apt to be a worry among Muslims 60 plus (20%).

Decline in importance of religion. Four in ten are very (12%) or somewhat (30%) worried about a decline in the importance of religion among Canada's Muslims, down six percentage points since 2006. This downward trend is evident across most of the population, but most significantly in Quebec and western Canada, among men, Muslims 18 to 34, those born in Africa, and those who pray at mosques at least once a week. Concern about declining importance on religion is now most apt to be expressed by women (50%), those with a college or some university education (56%) and those born in Canada (54%); this view is least apt to be shared by Muslims 60 and older (30%) and those born in the Middle East, West Asia or Africa (31%).

Are Muslim youth today seen as more or less religious than their parents? There is no consensus on this question among the country's Muslim population. The plurality view is that youth are less religious than their parents (38%), with fewer than half as many taking the opposite view (15%). However,

one in four (23%) believe youth are about the same as their parents in terms of being religious, while 15 percent say it depends (e.g., on the parents' adherence to Islam), and another one in ten (10%) cannot offer an opinion. Views on this question are generally similar across the country, and notably among age cohorts (Muslims under 35 share the same perspective as that of their parents and grandparents). The belief that youth are more religious than their parents is somewhat more prevalent among Pakistanis, long term immigrants, and those who identify primarily as Muslim.

Are Muslim youth today more or less religious than their parents?



Q.21
Do you believe that Muslim youth today tend to be more religious, less religious, or about the same as their parents?