



Summary: „Muslim Life in Germany“



First study giving evidence on diversity of Muslim life in Germany

The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees is presenting the first nationwide representative study comprising people from 49 Islamic countries and thus offering an extensive view of Muslim life throughout Germany. The research commissioned by the Deutsche Islam Konferenz (DIK; hereinafter referred to as the German Conference on Islam) gives unprecedented insight into the diversity of Muslim life in Germany as people from different contexts of origin were questioned about religion in everyday life and about aspects of structural and social integration. A total of 6,004 people aged 16 and above were surveyed by telephone; together with the information provided about other household members the analyses are based on data of almost 17,000 people.

Germany is home to some 4 million Muslims

The study conducted by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees puts the number of Muslims living in Germany at between 3.8 and 4.3 million. Expressed as a percentage of Germany's total population of around 82 million, the proportion of Muslims is between 4.6 and 5.2 per cent. Of all Muslims living in Germany with a migration background and originating from the countries of origin included in the study, some 45 per cent are German nationals while around 55 per cent are foreign nationals.

The Muslim section of the population is thus larger than has been assumed in previous estimates which ranged from 3.1 to 3.4 million. These estimates were based on an indirect method whereby nationals from 20 predominantly Muslim countries living in Germany were added together with nationals from these countries who were naturalised between 1988 and 2005. By contrast, the study commissioned by the Federal Office also takes account of immigrants from a large number of other countries and descendants of naturalised persons.

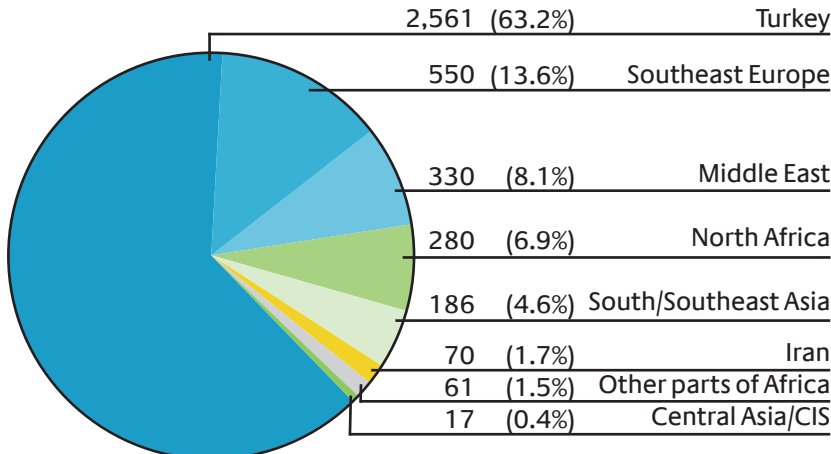
The new results also show, however, that a substantial percentage of persons with a migration background from some of the countries of origin are not Muslims. For example, almost 40 per cent of the migrants from Iran claim to have no religious affiliations. Those who have immigrated from other predominantly Muslim countries, such as Iraq, are increasingly religious minorities which do not come under the umbrella of Islam. As such, the religion of migrants living in Germany cannot be automatically inferred from the religious composition of the population of their respective countries of origin.

Table 1: Household members classified by religion and region of origin (in per cent)

	Southeast Europe	Turkey	Central Asia/CIS	Iran	South/Southeast Asia	Middle East	North Africa	Other parts of Africa	Total
Muslim	37.2	81.4	1.2	48.7	57.2	59.3	74.6	22.1	52.0
Christian	34.1	2.7	55.7	10.3	8.8	17.4	3.4	59.2	22.1
Jewish	0.1	0.0	3.0	0.7	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.8
Other	0.6	1.2	2.0	1.9	13.9	2.8	0.0	1.4	1.9
None	27.9	14.7	38.0	38.4	20.0	19.5	22.0	17.1	23.3
Total in %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total (n)	2,226	2,401	2,864	753	2,551	3,064	1,786	1,347	16,992

Source: MLD 2008, data including all household members, weighted; number of unweighted cases: 16,992

The study concludes that, on the basis of regional origins, the Muslim population in Germany is highly heterogeneous. The dominant group, as might be expected, is the large group of citizens of Turkish descent. Indeed, almost 2.5 to 2.7 million of the Muslims living in Germany (around 63 per cent) have Turkish roots. Between 496,000 and 606,000 persons (around 14 per cent) hail from the southeastern European countries of Bosnia, Bulgaria and Albania. The third largest source of Muslim immigrants in Germany is the Middle East with 292,000 to 370,000 migrants (around 8 per cent). Between 259,000 and 302,000 (approx 7 per cent) of the Muslims living in Germany come from North Africa, the majority of them from Morocco. The rest come from Central Asia/CIS, Iran, South/Southeast Asia and other parts of Africa (about 8 per cent in total).

Figure 1: Number of Muslims classified by their regions of origin (in thousands, in per cent)

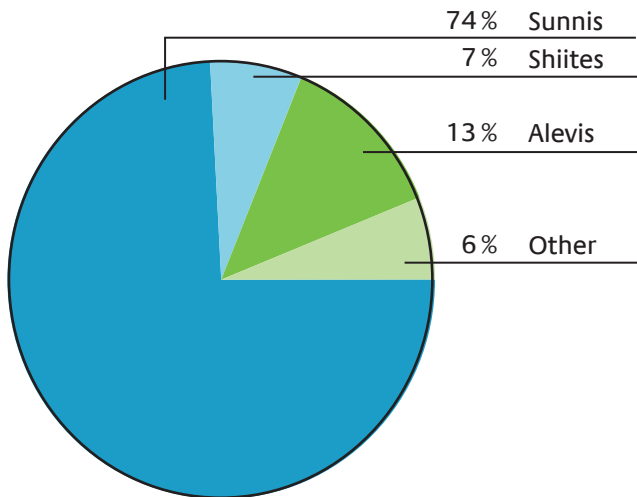
Source: Extrapolated on the basis of the MLD 2008 data including all household members (mean) and the AZR data as of June 30, 2008

98 per cent of the Muslims in Germany live in the former West Germany, including East Berlin. The Muslims are widely scattered across the various federal states of the former West Germany. The highest percentage in any one federal state is found in the heavily populated state of North Rhine-Westphalia. One in three Muslims in Germany resides there. The federal states with the next highest percentages are Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria and Hesse, all with over 10 per cent. The remaining seven federal states of the former West Germany, most of them relatively small, are home to some 25 per cent of the Muslims.

Wide Range of religious orientations

The Sunnis form the largest denominational group among the Muslims in Germany with 74 per cent. The Alevis account for 13 per cent which makes them the second largest Muslim faith community. The next largest group with 7 per cent is the Shiites. Other small Muslim groups in Germany belong to the Ahmadis, Sufis/Muslim mystics, Ibadis and other unspecified denominations.

Figure 2: Muslims in Germany classified by denominations (in per cent)



Source: MLD 2008, data including all household members, weighted; number of unweighted cases: 6,669

Strong sense of religiosity, major differences in everyday religious practices

The majority of Muslims are religious. Overall, 36 per cent would describe themselves as very religious. A further 50 per cent claim to be rather religious. Religiosity is particularly evident among Muslims of Turkish descent and Muslims of African origin. The picture is different among Muslims of Iranian descent, almost all of them Shiites, where just 10 per cent regard themselves as very religious but about a third claim to have no religious faith at all. Muslim women tend to be more religious than Muslim men in almost all of the different groups of origin.

Table 2: Religiosity of the Muslims surveyed, classified by regions of origin (in per cent)

	Southeast Europe	Turkey	Central Asia/CIS	Iran	South/Southeast Asia	Middle East	North Africa	Other parts of Africa	Total
Very religious	15.4	41.4	5.0	10.1	35.9	23.0	34.3	46.7	36.0
Rather religious	63.0	47.1	95.0	34.8	53.0	60.2	58.1	40.0	50.4
Rather not religious	18.8	8.4	—	24.6	8.5	8.9	5.2	6.7	9.6
Not at all religious	2.7	3.1	—	30.4	2.6	7.9	2.3	6.7	4.0
Total (N)	227	587	17	139	442	496	417	92	2,417

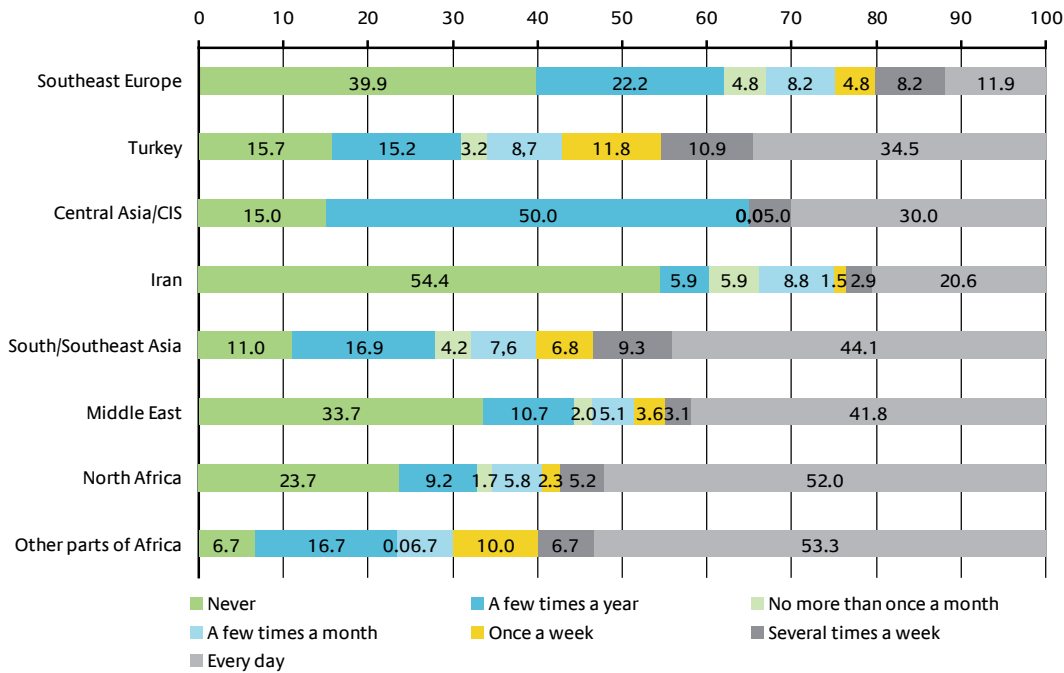
Source: MLD 2008; data of surveyed persons aged 16 and above, weighted. Number of unweighted cases: 2,417

Comparisons between Muslims and members of other religious groups also show that strong religiosity is not specific to Muslims. There are only minor differences in terms of religiosity between Muslims and members of other religious groups in respect of most of the different contexts of origin. There are, however, major differences depending on the region of origin and - in the case of Muslims - depending on denomination when it comes to everyday religious practices, such as prayer, celebrating religious festivals, and obser-

ving religious laws on food and fasting. Although religiosity and religious practices are highly developed in Muslims, the levels of membership in a religious association or community are lower than is the case for members of other religions.

People from Southeast Europe pray comparatively seldom, although people from this region are mostly Sunnis who pray more frequently than members of other faith groups. In almost all the different groups of origin the majority decide either to pray every day or never to pray. There is a distinct difference between Muslims from Africa and Turkish Muslims. The latter, by their own admission, are around 20 per cent less likely than their African counterparts to pray every day.

Figure 3: Prayer frequency of the Muslims surveyed, classified by regions of origin (in per cent)



Source: MLD 2008, data of surveyed persons aged 16 and above, weighted. Number of unweighted cases: 2,443

There is clear evidence of a gender gap in the frequency of attendance at religious events. Only 26 per cent of Muslim women attend religious events a few times a month or more. The equivalent figure for Muslim men is 43 per cent. The gender gap spans all different regions of origin. It is particularly pronounced among Muslims from other parts of Africa where 52 per cent of men but only 29 per cent of women frequently attend religious events.

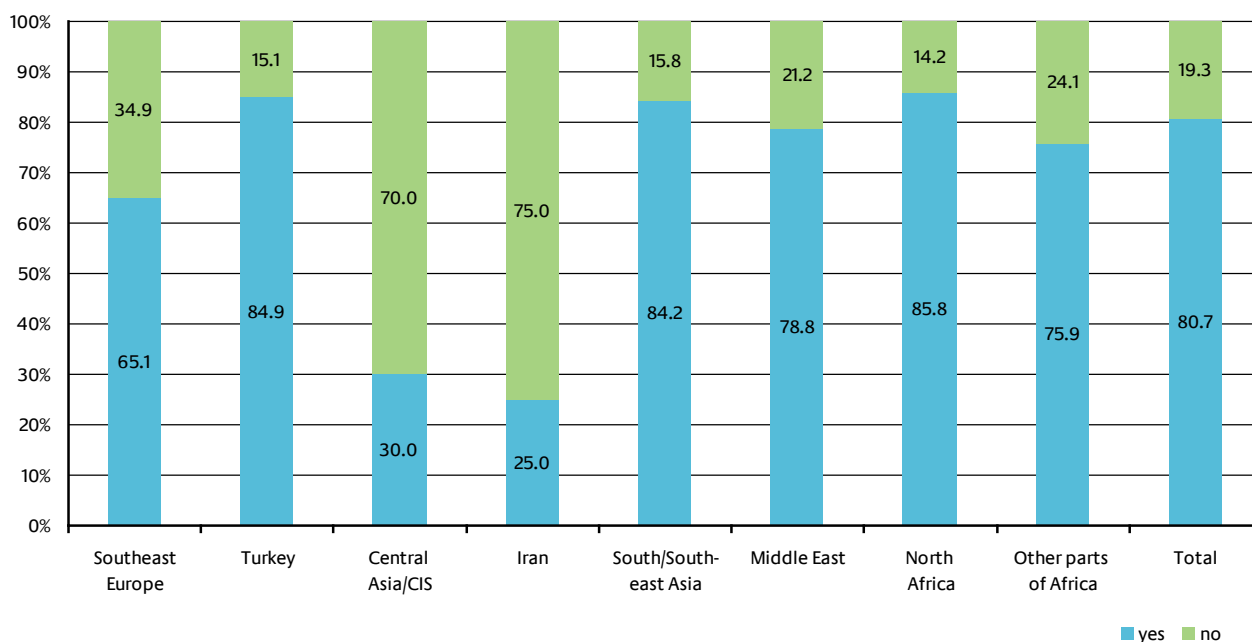
Table 3: Attendance at religious events among the Muslims surveyed, classified by regions of origin and gender (in per cent)

	Southeast Europe	Turkey	Central Asia/CIS	Iran	South/Southeast Asia	Middle East	North Africa	Other parts of Africa	Total
	Total								
Frequently	10.4	40.0	4.8	4.4	46.7	24.5	36.0	46.7	35.0
Seldom	39.7	37.1	57.1	23.5	29.2	28.1	33.1	26.7	35.9
Never	49.8	22.8	38.1	72.1	24.2	47.4	30.9	26.7	29.0
	Men								
Frequently	13.1	49.4	12.5	5.7	51.3	27.8	42.1	52.2	42.5
Seldom	51.0	32.8	25.0	25.7	27.5	28.6	31.6	26.1	33.6
Never	35.9	17.7	62.5	68.6	21.3	43.6	26.3	21.7	23.9
	Women								
Frequently	7.5	30.5		3.0	37.5	17.5	25.0	28.6	26.4
Seldom	28.1	41.5	76.9	21.2	32.5	27.0	36.7	28.6	38.7
Never	64.4	28.0	23.1	75.8	30.0	55.6	38.3	42.9	34.9
Total (N)	230	589	18	139	453	512	424	92	2,457

Source: MLD 2008, data of surveyed persons aged 16 and above, weighted. Number of unweighted cases: 2,457

Religious laws on food and fasting

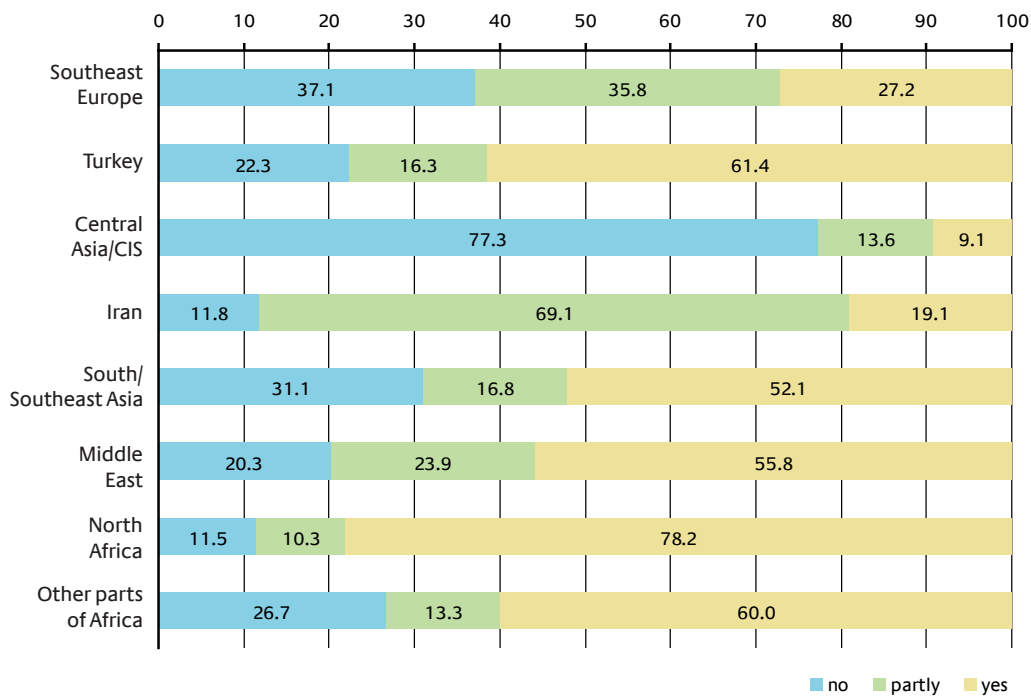
With the exception of Iran and Central Asia/CIS, the overwhelming majority of the Muslims surveyed abstain from certain foods and drinks for religious reasons. A comparative analysis of the Muslim denominations indicates that the Sunnis take the food laws most seriously. Almost all the interviewees from this group (91 per cent) adhere to Islamic dietary laws. Following these regulations is far less important for Shiites (60 per cent) and Alevis (49 per cent).

Figure 4: Observance of Islamic food and drink laws among the Muslims surveyed, classified by regions of origin (in per cent)

Source: MLD 2008, data of surveyed persons aged 16 and above, weighted. Number of unweighted cases: 2,265

A differentiation by regions of origin puts Muslims from North Africa at the top of the ranking, with 78 per cent claiming to observe the Islamic fasting rules. At the other end of the scale, Muslims from Central Asia/CIS fast far less often than Muslims from other regions of origin. There is an almost equal split among Muslims from Southeast Europe in terms of those who always fast and those who occasionally or never fast. Although 30 per cent of Iranian Muslims describe themselves as “not at all religious”, nevertheless just under 90 per cent claim to observe the fasting requirements at all times or sometimes.

Figure 5: Observance of Islamic fasting laws among the Muslims surveyed, classified by regions of origin (in per cent)

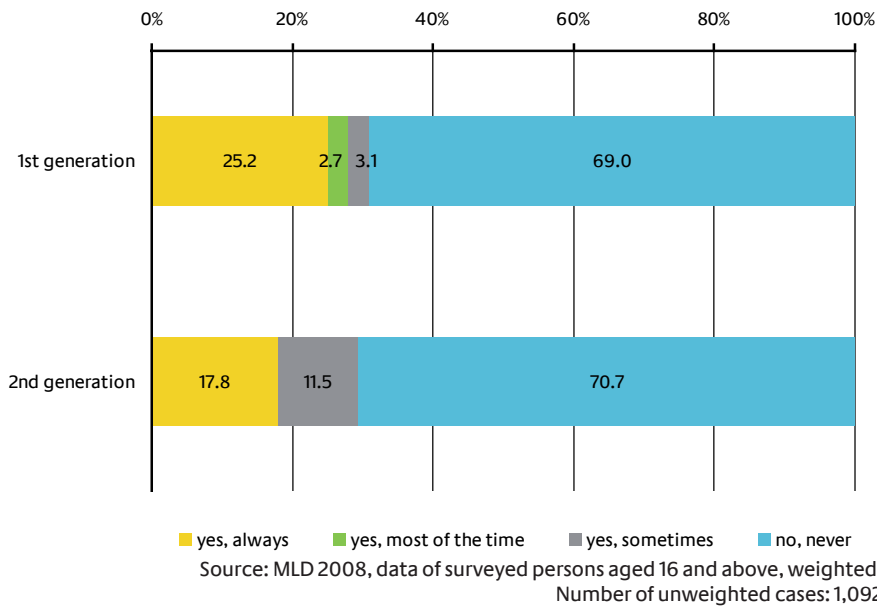


Source: MLD 2008, data of surveyed persons aged 16 and above, weighted. Number of unweighted cases: 2,468

Wearing of the headscarf less widespread in the second generation

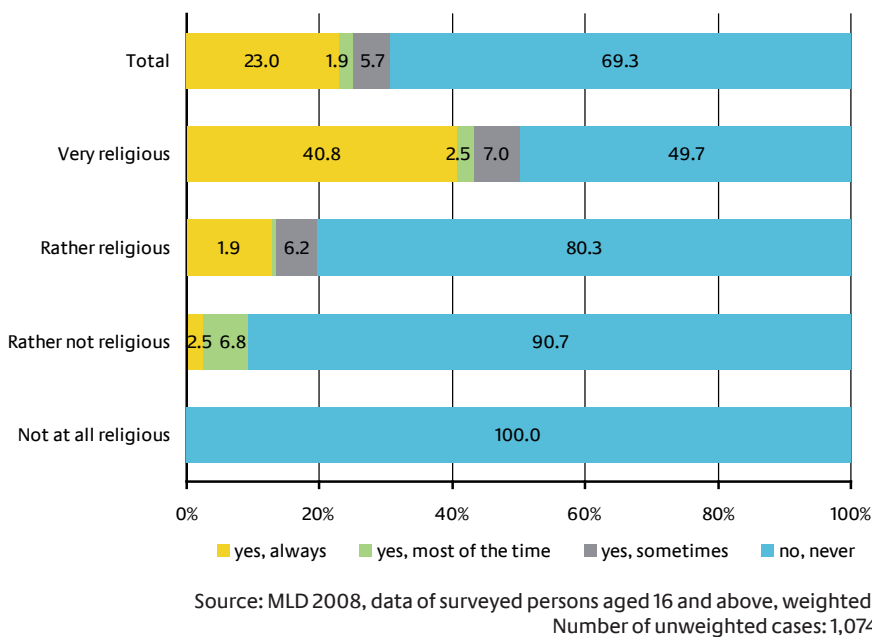
When it comes to debated integration issues, such as wearing the headscarf or attending available educational opportunities at school, the picture which emerges is highly complex in terms of the importance of religion. There is a clear link between age and the proportion of women who wear a headscarf. In addition, there is also a significant decrease in the second generation in terms of the frequency with which a headscarf is worn. The contingent of second-generation women who always wear a headscarf is 7 percent lower than among women of the first generation. However, the percentage of those sometimes wearing a headscarf increases to 12 per cent. About 70 per cent of both groups never wear the headscarf.

Figure 6: Wearing of the headscarf of Muslim women aged 16 and above, classified by generation (in per cent)



The analyses support the view that there is a decidedly positive link between religiosity and the wearing of the headscarf. None of the Muslim women surveyed who described themselves as not religious ever wears a headscarf, whereas one in every two deeply religious Muslim women wears a headscarf at all times, most of the time or sometimes. At the same time, however, it is evident that a strong religiosity does not necessarily go hand in hand with wearing a headscarf. Indeed, every other deeply religious Muslim woman does not wear a headscarf.

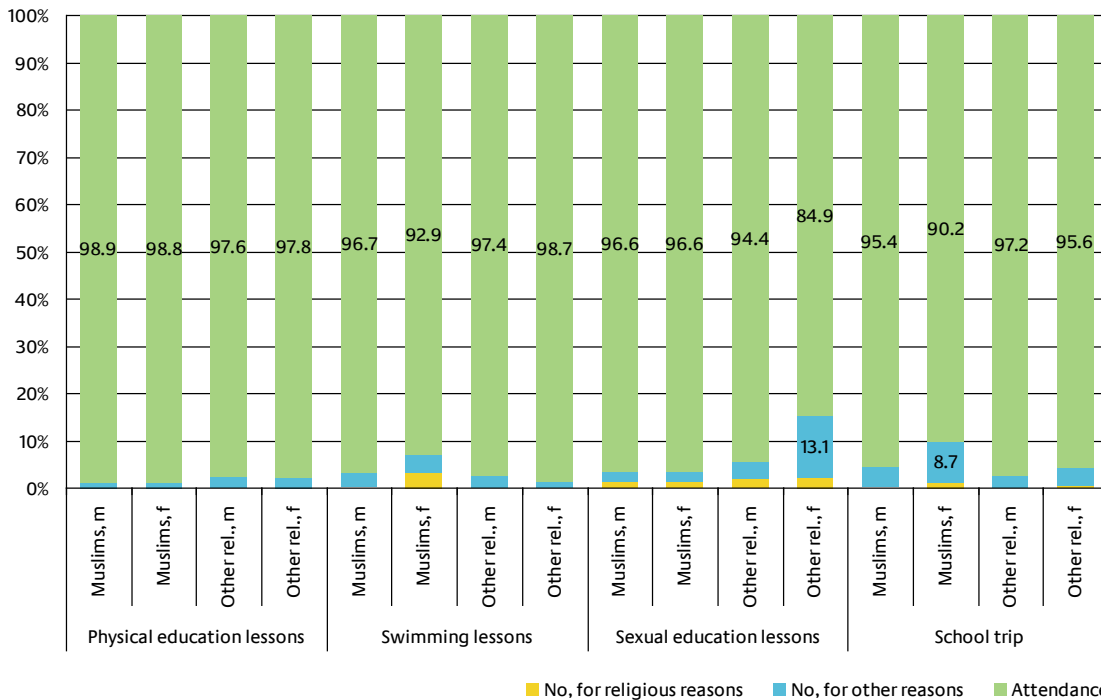
Figure 7: Wearing of the headscarf among Muslim women aged 16 and above, classified by religiosity (in per cent)



Attendance at educational opportunities at school

Other aspects of school life which often become an issue for Muslim schoolgirls are swimming lessons and school trips. The results show that, where such opportunities exist, the proportion of Muslim schoolgirls who do not take up the offers are 7 and 10 per cent respectively. The analyses on attendance at mixed physical education and swimming lessons and on school trips do show, however, that the vast majority of schoolchildren from predominantly Muslim countries living in the households take advantage of these opportunities.

Figure 8: Attendance at available mixed physical education, swimming lessons, sexual education lessons and the last school trip by the pupils, classified by religious affiliation and gender (in per cent)



Source: MLD 2008, data including all household members, schoolchildren aged between 6 and 22, weighted.

Attendance at religious education lessons

The project results are relevant for policy-making and public administration as a basis for precise planning - for example in terms of making pronouncements about the potential requirement for Islamic religious education. The results show, for example, that 25 per cent of the Muslim schoolchildren attend ethics lessons, 5 per cent attend Catholic and 3 per cent Protestant religious education lessons respectively, and 11 per cent Islamic religious education when offered. More than half of the Muslim pupils attend no religious education or ethics lessons. This may be due to the fact that there is insufficient provision. This assumption is backed up by the fact that the majority of the Muslims (76 per cent) advocate the introduction of Islamic or Alevitic religious education. The number of those who are in support of such measures is particularly high among the Sunnis (84 per cent) and a little lower among the Shiites (71 per cent), the Ahmadis (79 per cent) and the other Islamic denominations (69 per cent). Only 54 per cent of Alevi are in favour of bringing in Islamic religious education as a school subject. Alevi were also asked whether they were in favour of the introduction of separate Alevitic religious education in state schools. 64 per cent of Alevi answered in the affirmative.

Degree of organisation among Muslims in Germany

In total, 20 per cent of the Muslims are organised into religious associations or communities. The number of Alevi and Shiites who are registered members of a religious association (10 per cent in each case) is lower than among the Sunnis (22 per cent). The equivalent figure among those who belong to other smaller Islamic denominations, such as the Ibadi or the Ahmadis, is 29 per cent.

Degree of representation of Muslim organisations in Germany

Various Muslim associations are represented at the German Conference on Islam. The most well-known among them is the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DİTİB) which was named by 44 per cent of all Muslims. The number of people with a Turkish migration background who have heard of the DİTİB is 59 per cent, while the number of Sunnite Turks who have heard of the DİTİB is slightly higher than 65 per cent. About a quarter of the Muslims claim to know one of the following associations: Zentralrat der Muslime in Deutschland (ZMD; Central Council of Muslims in Germany), Verein islamischer Kulturzentren (VIKZ; Association of Islamic Cultural Centres), Alevitische Gemeinde in Deutschland (AABF; Alevi Movement in Germany). Only 16 per cent of all those questioned had heard of the Islamrat für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland (IRD; Council on Islam for the Federal Republic of Germany). Set up as recently as 2007, the Koordinationsrat der Muslime in Deutschland (KRM; Coordinating Council of Muslims in Germany) was known by only 10 per cent of the Muslim interviewees.

The Muslim associations represented in the German Conference on Islam do not represent the majority of Muslims in Germany. Less than 25 per cent of all Muslims feel that their interests are represented unreservedly by those Muslim umbrella and head associations represented in the German Conference on Islam. Of the associations which participate in the German Conference on Islam, the DİTİB achieves the highest degree of representation, with 16 per cent of all Muslims in Germany feeling that it is representing their interests. The figure rises to 23 per cent if account is only taken of Muslims with a Turkish migration background. The number of all Sunnis of Turkish descent who feel that their interests are represented by the DİTİB is 28 per cent. The Alevi community reaches a comparatively high degree of representation if observation is restricted to the actual target group. 19 per cent of the Alevis claim to feel represented by the Alevi community. One in ten Muslims from Turkey feels represented by the VIKZ. Only 2 per cent of the total number of Muslims surveyed feel represented by the KRM on religious issues. (Multiple answers were possible.)

Differences between Muslims and non-Muslims - also in terms of integration

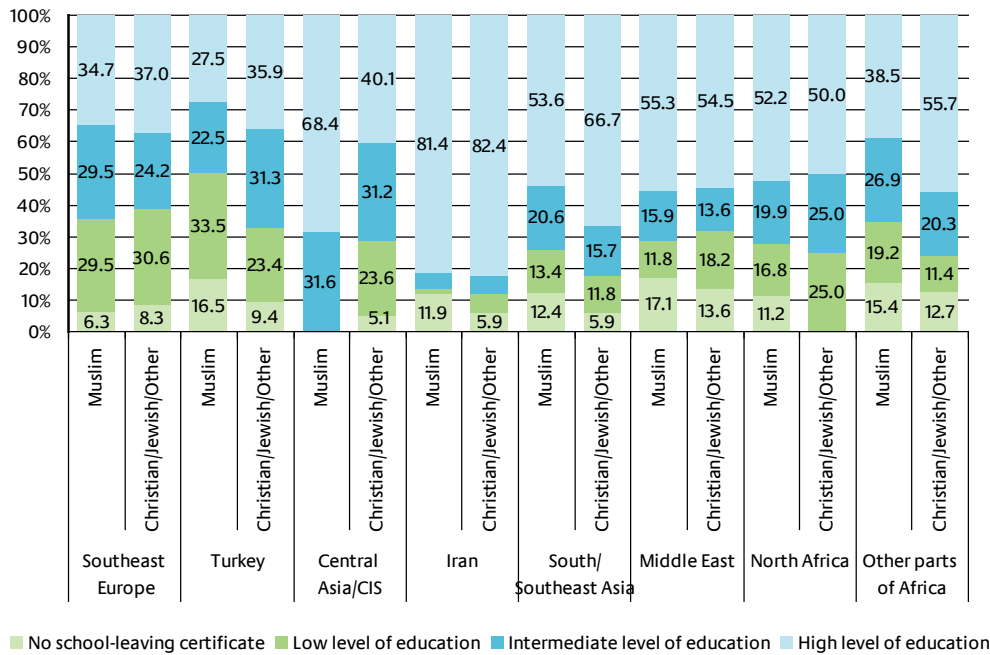
With integration in mind, the findings also indicate that there are differences both between Muslims from different regions of origin and between Muslims and non-Muslims from the same country of origin in any given case. Difficulties tend to come to light among the Muslim interviewees in the area of linguistic and structural integration whereas the picture of social integration appears more positive than often assumed. Overall, various indicators suggest that Muslims are less well integrated than members of other religions from the same countries of origin.

A direct link between an affiliation to Islam and integration cannot be established in view of the great differences between Muslims from different countries of origin. Differences in educational achievement between the religions and denominations are primarily associated with the historic circumstances surrounding the recruitment of migrant workers from Turkey, the former Yugoslavia, Morocco and Tunisia. Most of these migrant workers and their dependants came from educationally marginalised and disadvantaged social classes. Low levels of education and low rates of employment are particularly striking among migrants of the first generation of immigrants.

In education challenges of structural integration come to the fore

Various studies have highlighted deficits among the group of Turkish migrants in terms of structural integration. The results of the study conducted by the Federal Office provide additional evidence of relatively low levels of education across the board among migrants from Muslim countries of origin. Indeed, in terms of education Turkish migrants come off relatively badly, not only in comparison to migrants from southern European recruitment countries and to ethnic German migrants ("Aussiedler") but also in comparison to migrants from other Muslim countries of origin. This is primarily accounted for by extremely low levels of education among Turkish women of the first generation of immigrants.

Figure 9: School-leaving certificate obtained in the country of origin or in Germany of interviewees with migration background, classified by region of origin and religion (in per cent)



Source: MLD 2008, data of surveyed persons aged 16 and above, weighted. Number of unweighted cases: 3,886

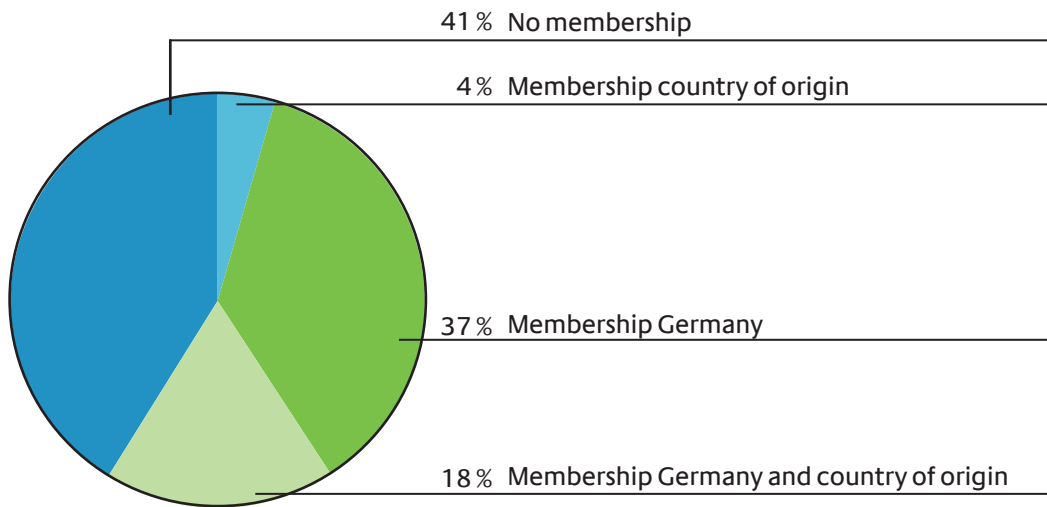
Differentiating between immigrants of the first and second generation there is evidence across all contexts of origin that second-generation immigrants are far more likely to leave the German school system with a certificate than members of their parents’ generation. This is especially true for female Muslims, among whom there is evidence of educational upward mobility. Despite this general educational upward mobility, the relatively high percentage of interviewees leaving school without a certificate and the comparatively low percentage of advanced level students indicate continuing shortcomings in the education sector.

Female migrants from Turkey are less likely to leave school without a certificate than male migrants from Turkey and often achieve an intermediate school-leaving qualification. This can be taken as evidence that a higher degree of gender equality can be achieved among migrants attending school in Germany compared with the school-leaving certificates attained by the migrants in their countries of origin.

No signs of separation in terms of social everyday contacts

Social contacts create a basis for societal cohesion, e.g. membership of associations is conducive to integration in the host society. More than half of the Muslims are members of a German association; only 4 per cent restrict their membership to associations connected with their country of origin, many of which were started in Germany. 18 per cent are members of associations related both to Germany and to their country of origin.

Figure 10: Membership of associations among the Muslims surveyed, showing membership of associations related with Germany and associations related with their country of origin (in per cent)



Source: MLD 2008, data of surveyed persons aged 16 and above, weighted. Number of unweighted cases: 2,448

The frequency with which those surveyed socialise on a day-to-day basis with people of German descent is relatively high, and Muslims from all regions of origin are more than willing to have more frequent contact with Germans. The number of Muslims from all contexts of origin who do not have, and do not wish to have, any day-to-day contact with Germans is not greater than 1 per cent.

Conclusions for integration policy

The findings make it easier to assess the social relevance of religious issues. It can be seen, for example, that the issues frequently aired in the integration debate, such as abstaining from mixed swimming lessons, are no “mass phenomena” but only affect a minority. Hence, they should not be overrated. Nevertheless, the results show that processes of self-separation exist and should therefore be considered when it comes to integration support.

The lack of structural integration should prompt greater efforts to promote integration. The integration of Muslims and other migrants from Muslim countries of origin must not be restricted to the religious target group, but the net must be cast more widely. One important starting point, besides the support with the language offered by the Germany-wide integration courses, is integration through education. In spite of a general educational upward mobility which can be traced in the course of generational change, the relatively high rate of pupils leaving school with no certificate and the comparatively low percentage of advanced level students indicate continuing shortcomings in the education sector. This will mean taking the measures which have already been subject of in-depth public discussion and consistently adopting them with a view to promoting pre-school provision, schooling and extracurricular education for migrants.

The widespread demand among Muslims for the introduction of Islamic religious education in accordance with the already existing offers of Christian religious education corresponds with the intensive engagement of the German Conference on Islam with this subject. These figures first and foremost constitute an appeal directed at Muslim organisations as well as at policymakers and public administration to quickly progress with the introduction of Islamic religious education in state schools, consistent with the German Basic Law, as well as with the establishment of departments for Islamic theology and religious education at German universities.