



# **PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO ISLAMOPHOBIA IN SCOTLAND**

## **Initial findings:**

- Quantitative Analysis and Basic Descriptive Statistics
- Qualitative Analysis and broad themes in respondents' comments

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# THIRD OF MUSLIMS SAY ISLAMOPHOBIA IS 'EVERYDAY ISSUE' IN SCOTLAND

## Media release

The first ever public inquiry into Islamophobia in Scotland has found it is an 'everyday issue' for more than a third of Muslims.

Nearly four-fifths of Muslims said Islamophobia is getting worse in Scotland, and over 80 per cent said they have experienced it.

The most common form of Islamophobia was verbal abuse, mainly at work and on social media.

Key findings from written submissions:

- 35.5% of Muslim respondents said Islamophobia was an everyday issue, and 41.3% said it was a regular issue.
- 83.4% of Muslim respondents said they had experienced Islamophobia.
- 78.8% of Muslim respondents said Islamophobia is getting worse in Scotland.
- 76.5% of Muslim respondents reported being verbally abused.
- 36.6% of Muslim respondents reported being abused at work and 32.6% of Muslim respondents reported being abused on social media.
- 92.3% of Muslims said they feared experiencing Islamophobia.
- 60.5% of Muslim respondents said they had altered their behaviours as a result of experiencing Islamophobia.
- 93.9% of Muslim respondents think that the print media increases Islamophobia; 90.4% said the same for broadcast media; and 88.7% said the same for social media.

The public inquiry into Islamophobia in Scotland was launched last June by Holyrood's Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Tackling Islamophobia, in conjunction with Newcastle University.

It sought written responses from individuals, employers and organisations about experiences.

An initial analysis of the results has been released today, compiled by Professor Peter Hopkins of Newcastle University, which includes a total of 435 respondents, with 344 describing their faith as Muslim.

The written responses will now be followed by verbal evidence sessions and outreach across the country on key areas, as part of an ongoing inquiry.

It will address the findings and seek to identify recommendations for the Scottish Government and other bodies.

Asked about some of the problems created by Islamophobia, respondents highlighted societal division, which leads to a range of negative consequences for Muslims such as feeling unwelcome in Scotland and withdrawing from public life.

There was widespread dismay that Muslims feel they are being prevented from contributing positively to a country they want to be a part of because of Islamophobia.

Participants felt that Islamophobia was particularly prevalent in the workplace, creating difficulties in

finding and retaining employment in Scotland.

Respondents highlighted Islamophobia in schools as particularly challenging, commenting that children were often excluded from the everyday activities of school life such as representing their school or taking part in sports activities.

Many participants, especially women, reported that they are unable to feel safe outside of their homes, and others highlighted incidents such as one person who had milkshake spat at them.

Female respondents discussed a specific fear of having their hijab pulled off in public, and some said they feared being accused of being terrorists or extremists in public spaces.

People taking part in the inquiry said they have resorted to dressing differently, changing their accents, avoiding city centre streets, public transport and swimming pools, and some even said they had changed their name to sound 'less Muslim'.

The most prominent fear raised was the risk of experiencing physical assault, along with the onset or worsening of mental health problems.

Ultimately, there was a general fear that Muslim children and young people in Scotland will grow up in a society that increasingly marks them as outsiders, with some commenting that Scotland is becoming a more racist country.

Addressing what action the Scottish Government and other bodies should take, respondents called for tougher law enforcement and punishments for Islamophobia, greater education about Islam and Muslim beliefs and practices, a recognition by the government of the scale of the problem, and positive changes to the language used by politicians and the media.

**Anas Sarwar, Labour MSP and chair of the Cross-Party Group on Tackling Islamophobia, said:**

"The early findings following the launch of this public inquiry make for sobering reading.

"We pride ourselves on being a welcome and tolerant country, but this demonstrates how much more work we have to do.

"There are people in Scotland who feel scared to leave their homes for fear of verbal or physical attack; are withdrawing from public services with devastating knock-on consequences on their health and education; and feel they are outsiders in their own country. This should shame us all.

"We have already established that Scotland is not immune from Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred, and now we know just how widespread it is.

"These findings will be used in the next stage of the inquiry, in which we must redouble efforts to challenge and overcome hatred and prejudice.

"This requires politicians to come together on a cross-party basis, because the fight against hate is a fight for all of us.

"We need to come together to address this. Education is the key to defeating prejudice and discrimination, but we also need to build a more diverse workforce and work harder to bring communities together."

**Professor Peter Hopkins of Newcastle University, who has been researching issues of racism and Islamophobia in Scotland for nearly 20 years, said:**

"The initial findings emerging from the inquiry demonstrate that Scotland has a serious issue when it comes to everyday racism and Islamophobia.

"Those who suffer Islamophobic abuse are often left feeling fearful, anxious and worried, with nearly 80 per cent feeling that the situation is getting worse.

"There is a lot of work to do - across many different sectors - in order to address the problem of Islamophobia in contemporary Scotland."

## **Background**

In June 2019, the first ever public inquiry was launched into Islamophobia in Scotland. Holyrood's Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Tackling Islamophobia, in conjunction with Newcastle University, published a request for written responses from individuals, employers and organisations about experiences and consequences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred. The CPG also requested views about what steps should be taken to tackle Islamophobia in Scotland.

The CPG invited evidence to be submitted about:

- The current nature and extent of Islamophobia in Scotland (including gendered Islamophobia and intersections with other prejudices).
- The role of the media (print, broadcast and social media), the public sector and politicians.
- The impact of Islamophobia on children, young people and families.
- The steps that could be taken to challenge and overcome Islamophobia.

# Quantitative Analysis and Basic Descriptive Statistics

## Sample Description

- A total of 450 responses were submitted to the online survey. Of these, 448 were valid responses (2 responses were by organisations submitting written evidence to the inquiry, and who therefore did not fill in the survey).
- 13 duplicate responses were identified through comparing names, ages, and email addresses. In these cases, the first response chronologically has been taken forward to the final dataset, and the subsequent responses have been removed.
- *As a result, the final dataset has a total of 435 respondents.*
- Of those 435 respondents, 186 (42.8%) identified as female, and 242 (55.6%) identified as male. 2 respondents identified as 1) queer and 2) they, while 1 respondent identified as 'binary'. 4 respondents chose not to describe their gender.
- The youngest respondent was 13, and the oldest respondent was 87. Broadly, there were more respondents in the age bracket 30-50 than any other, but no particular age group is roundly missing from the sample.
- Respondents described a range of faiths. 344 (79.1%) respondents described their faith as Muslim, although this is an aggregate figure composed of different self-descriptions including Islam, Muslim, Practicing, Sunni Muslim, and Scottish Muslim. 91 (20.9%) respondents did not describe as Muslim, with a range of faiths including Christian (in some cases specific denominations such as CofE and Unitarian), Agnostic, Atheist, No Religion/Irreligion, and 'Science'.
- As much as can be determined from self-reported postcodes, the vast majority of respondents are residents of Scotland. 267 respondents gave a Glasgow postcode, 65 respondents gave an Edinburgh postcode, 16 respondents gave an Aberdeen postcode, and 11 respondents gave a Dundee postcode. Also represented are the FK (Falkirk), KY (Kirkcaldy), and ML (Motherwell) postcodes. The map below shows the geographical distribution of postcodes, showing the majority of responses from Scotland with some from England, especially London and the Midlands.



### **To what extent do you consider Islamophobia to be an issue in Scottish society?**

- Of the 435 respondents, 144 (33.1%) responded that Islamophobia was an everyday issue and 177 (40.7%) responded that it was a regular issue. 85 respondents (19.5%) said it was an occasional issue, while 27 (6.2%) said it was not an issue at all.
- 122 Muslims (35.5% of total Muslim respondents) replied that it was an everyday issue, and 142 Muslims (41.3% of total Muslim respondents) replied that it was a regular issue. In other words, 264 Muslims (76.8% of total Muslim respondents) believe Islamophobia is a regular or everyday issue in Scottish society.
- Contrarily, of the 27 respondents who said Islamophobia was not an issue at all, 17 did not identify as Muslim. 10 (2.9% of total Muslim respondents) Muslims said Islamophobia is not an issue at all in Scottish society.
- Perceptions of Islamophobia as an issue in Scottish society were distributed fairly evenly among those who identified as male or female. 58 females (31.2% of all female respondents) and 85 males (35.1% of all male respondents) said Islamophobia is an everyday issue, while 79 females (42.5% of all female respondents) and 98 males (40.5% of all male respondents) said it is a regular issue.

### **Do you think Islamophobia is getting worse, staying the same, or declining in Scotland?**

- 326 respondents (74.9%) replied that Islamophobia is getting worse. 74 (17%) said it is staying the same, while 25 (5.7%) replied that it is declining.
- There is a clear difference in responses based on faith. Of the 326 who said Islamophobia is getting worse, there were 271 Muslims (78.8% of total Muslim respondents) and 55 non-Muslims (60.4% of total non-Muslim respondents). In addition, of the 25 who said it was declining, 11 identified as Muslim (3.2% of total Muslim respondents), but 14 identified as non-Muslim (15.4% of total non-Muslim respondents). In other words, despite there being a significant majority of Muslims in the entire dataset, more non-Muslims believed Islamophobia is declining in Scotland.
- There was less difference in responses based on gender. Of the 326 who said Islamophobia is getting worse, 191 were male (78.9% of total male respondents) and 133 were female (71.5% of all female respondents). Interestingly, more females (40) believed Islamophobia was staying the same than males (32), despite males comprising more of the sample overall. These 40 females represent 21.5% of the total female number of respondents, while the 32 males represented 13.2% of male respondents.

### **Have you ever directly experienced Islamophobia?**

- Of the 435 respondents, 319 (73.3%) responded yes, while 88 (20.2%) responded no. 28 (6.4%) either responded that they weren't sure or did not answer the question.
- These responses were fairly balanced across genders. Of the 319 respondents who had experienced Islamophobia, 134 were female (72% of total female respondents) and 183 were male (75.6% of total male respondents). Of those who said they had not experienced Islamophobia, 40 were female (21.5% of total female respondents) and 44 were male (18.2% of total male respondents).
- Broken down by faith, 287 Muslims (83.4% of total Muslim respondents) said they had experienced Islamophobia, while 36 Muslims (10.5% of total Muslim respondents) said they had not. 21 Muslims (6.1% of total Muslim respondents) said they weren't sure.

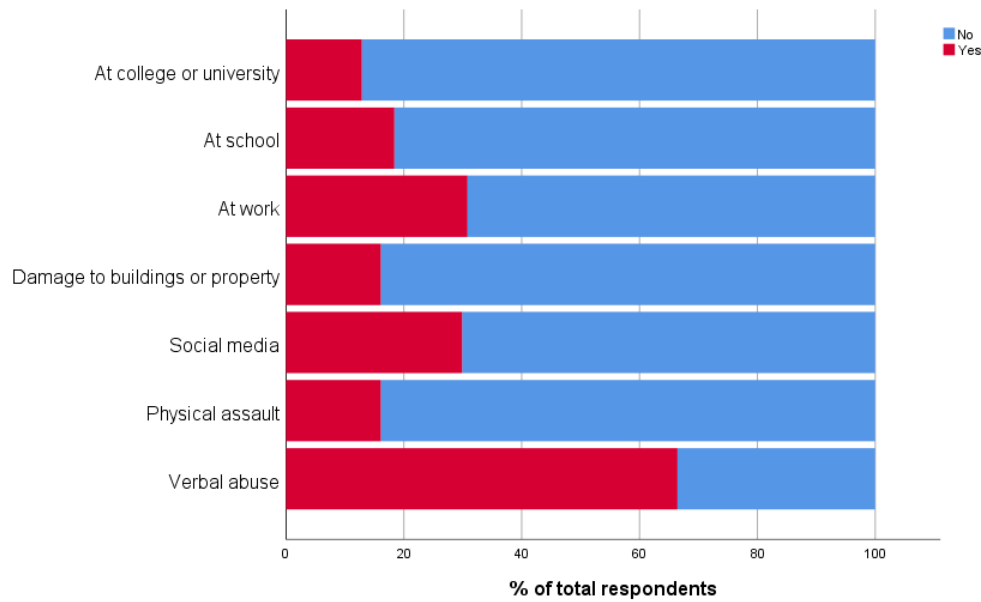
- Non-Muslims still reported experiencing Islamophobia. 32 non-Muslims (35.2% of non-Muslim respondents) responded that they had, while 52 non-Muslims (57.1% of total non-Muslim respondents) responded that they had not experienced it.
- Of those who had experienced Islamophobia, in total 90% were Muslim, 10% were non-Muslim.
- Of those who had not reported experiencing Islamophobia, 59.1% were non-Muslim, 40.9% were Muslim.

**If yes, what form did it take?**

- The easiest way to report this data is in the following table:

	No	Yes
Verbal abuse	146	289
	33.6%	66.4%
Physical assault	365	70
	83.9%	16.1%
Social media	305	130
	70.1%	29.9%
Damage to buildings or property	365	70
	83.9%	16.1%
At work	301	134
	69.2%	30.8%
At school	355	80
	81.6%	18.4%
At college or university	379	56
	87.1%	12.9%

- The table shows that the most common form of Islamophobia experienced by respondents was verbal abuse, with two thirds – 66.4% - saying this had happened. This was the only responses where the majority of respondents reported experiencing it.
- Next most common were at work (30.8% of total respondents) and on social media (29.9% of total respondents).
- Of the 289 who experienced verbal abuse, 263 identified as Muslim. This means that 76.5% of total Muslim respondents reported being verbally abused. In addition, this means that of the 289 who experienced verbal abuse, 91% were Muslim. 26 respondents who did not identify as Muslim experienced verbal abuse, 28.6% of total non-Muslim respondents.
- Similarly, 65 of the 146 who did not experience verbal abuse were non-Muslim, 71.4% of all non-Muslim respondents.
- This pattern was repeated across other forms of abuse. Of the 130 who experienced Islamophobia on social media, 112 (or 86.2%) were Muslims. Put differently, 32.6% of all Muslim respondents reported being abused on social media.
- Similarly, of the 134 respondents who experienced Islamophobia at work, 126 (or 94%) were Muslim. Put differently, 36.6% of all Muslim respondents reported being abused at work.
- Of the 56 who reported being abused at college or university, 52 (92.9%) identified as Muslim. Of the 80 who reported being abused at school, 76 (95%) identified as Muslim.



- Of the 70 who had experienced damage to buildings or property, 65 (92.9%) identified as Muslim. Of the 70 who had experienced physical assault, 62 (88.6%) identified as Muslim.
- Of the 289 respondents who experienced verbal abuse, 167 (57.8%) were males and 121 (41.9%) were females. This is fairly balanced across the sample, in that 69% of total male respondents experienced verbal abuse, while 65.1% of female respondents experienced verbal abuse.
- Of the 130 respondents who reported being abused on social media, there were 36 females (27.7%) and 94 males (72.3%). This is a stark difference: 19.4% of total female respondents experienced abuse on social media, but 38.8% of males experienced abuse. Similarly, 80.6% of total female respondents reported not experiencing abuse on social media, compared to 61.2% of males. In other words, more males than females experience Islamophobic abuse on social media.
- This pattern was repeated at work. Of the 134 respondents who experience abuse at work, 42 (31.3%) were females and 90 (67.2%) were males. This equates to 22.6% of total female respondents experiencing abuse at work, compared to 37.2% of total male respondents. Similarly, 77.4% of total female respondents reported not experiencing Islamophobia at work, while a lesser figure of 62.8% of males reported not experiencing it.
- At school and college/university the figures were extremely similar. Of the 80 who experienced Islamophobic abuse at school, 35 (43.8%) were females and 45 (56.3%) were males. Put differently, 18.8% of total female respondents are abused at school, and 18.6% of males are abused at school. Of the 56 who experienced Islamophobia at college/university, 23 (41.1%) were females and 33 (58.9%) were males. This equates to 12.4% of total female respondents experiencing abuse at college/university compared to 13.6% of males.
- Physical assault was experienced more by males. Of the 70 who said they had experienced physical assault, 16 (22.9%) were females and 53 (75.7%) were males. This means that 21.9% of all male respondents experienced physical assault, while 8.6% of all female respondents experienced it.
- Lastly, damage to buildings or property was also experienced more by males. Of the 70 respondents who experienced this, 15 (21.4%) were females and 54 (77.1%) were males. This equates to 8.1% of total female respondents experiencing damage to buildings or property, compared to 22.3% of total male respondents.



### **If you have directly experienced Islamophobia, did you report it to the police?**

- 287 (66% - exactly two thirds – of respondents) responded no, while 76 (17.5%) responded yes. 72 participants (16.6%) did not reply to the question, presumably because they had reported not experiencing Islamophobia in the prior question. The difference between 72 and the 88 who responded that they had not experienced Islamophobia is possibly explained by respondents answering this question in terms of if they would report it to police or not if they experienced it.
- Calculated differently, 363 respondents answered this question. Of these 363, 287 (79.1%) responded that they did not report it to the police, and 76 (20.9%) said they did.
- Similar numbers of males and females answered the same for this question. Of the 287 who responded that they had not reported Islamophobia to the police, 117 (40.8%) were female and 167 (58.2%) were male. This means that 69% of total male respondents experienced Islamophobia but did not report it to the police, compared to 62.9% of total female respondents.
- Of the 76 who had reported it to the police, 32 (42.1%) were females and 42 (56.6%) were males. This equates to 7.4% of female respondents experiencing Islamophobia and reporting it to the police, compared to 9.9% of total male respondents.
- Of the 287 who had not reported Islamophobic abuse to the police, 243 (84.7%) identified as Muslim while 44 (15.3%) identified as non-Muslim. This means that 55.9% of the total sample were Muslim, experienced Islamophobic abuse, but did not report it to the police.
- Of those who did report to the police, 9 (11.8%) were non-Muslim and 67 (88.2%) were Muslim. This means that 15.4% of the total sample were Muslim, experienced Islamophobic abuse, and did report it to the police.

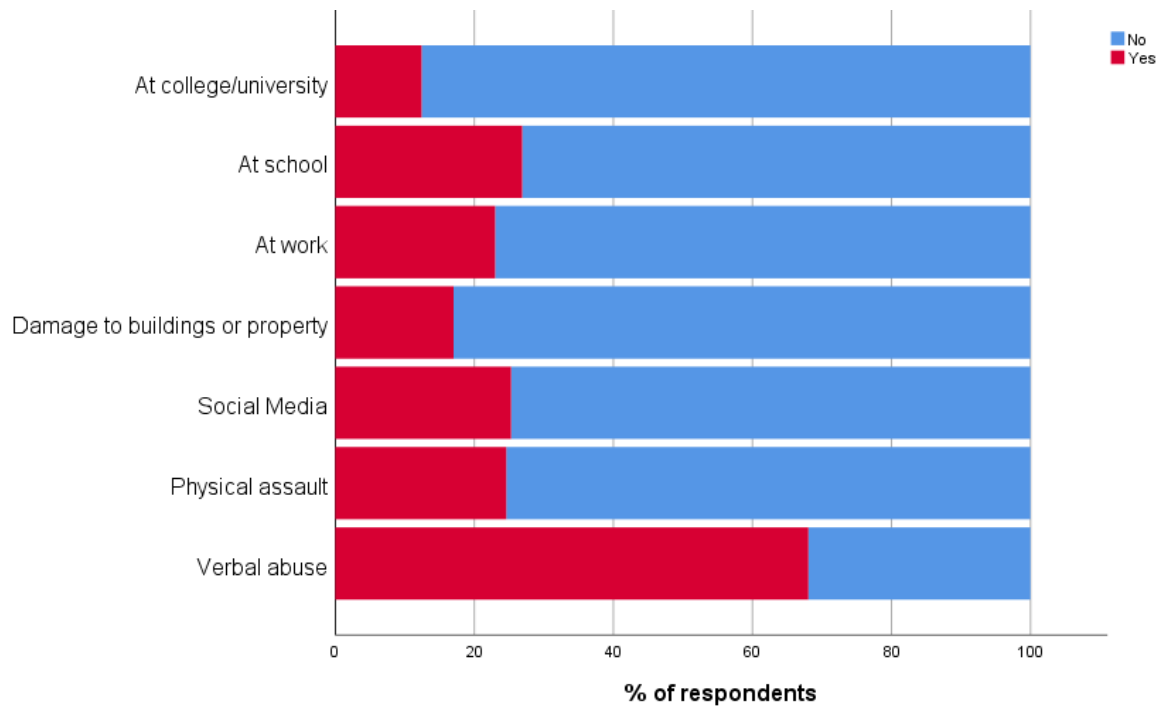
### **Have any of your family members or friends experienced Islamophobia?**

- 315 respondents (72.4%) replied yes, while 52 (12%) replied no. 68 (15.6%) of respondents either said they weren't sure, or did not reply to the question.
- Of the 315 who said friends or family members had experienced Islamophobia, 131 (41.6%) were female and 182 (57.8%) were male. This means that 70.4% of all female respondents have a friend or family member who has experienced Islamophobia, and 75.2% of all male respondents have.
- More females than males said they weren't sure or didn't answer the question: of the 68, 37 (54.4%) were females and 29 (42.6%) were males. This means that 19.9% of all female respondents either didn't answer the question or weren't sure, compared to 12% of males.
- Of those 52 who said no, 31 (59.6%) were male and 18 (34.6%) were female. This equates to 12.8% of total male respondents to the survey saying their family members or friends had not experienced Islamophobia, compared to 9.7% of females.
- Of the 315 respondents who said yes, 280 (88.9%) were Muslim and 35 (11.1%) were non-Muslim. This means that 81.4% of all Muslim respondents to the survey have a friend or family member who has experienced Islamophobia, while 38.5% of all non-Muslim respondents have also got a friend or family member who has experienced it.
- Of the 52 who said no, 35 (67.3%) were non-Muslim, and 17 (32.7%) were Muslim. In other words, only 4.9% of Muslims who responded to the survey do not have a friend or relative who has experienced Islamophobia, and 38.5% of all non-Muslim respondents to the survey does not have a friend or relative who has experienced Islamophobia.

**If yes, what form did it take?**

- See table and graph below:

	No	Yes
Verbal abuse	139 32.0%	296 68.0%
Physical assault	328 75.4%	107 24.6%
Social Media	325 74.7%	110 25.3%
Damage to buildings or property	361 83.0%	74 17.0%
At work	335 77.0%	100 23.0%
At school	318 73.1%	117 26.9%
At college/university	381 87.6%	54 12.4%



### If yes, where did it take place?

	Frequency	Percent
Not applicable / friends and family have not experienced it	128	29.4
All of the below	9	2.1
At college or university	3	.7
At home	2	.5
At school	26	6.0
At work	27	6.2
Car park	2	.5
Damage to buildings or property	11	2.5
Driving	1	.2
In a public building such as a shop, restaurant or pub	46	10.6
In the street	115	26.4
Multiple places	23	5.3
On public transport	40	9.2
On social media	2	.5
Total	435	100.0

### Do you have a fear of experiencing Islamophobia?

- 298 (68.5%) of respondents replied that they did have a fear of experiencing Islamophobia, while 103 (23.7%) replied no. 23 (5.3%) said they did not know, while 11 (2.5%) didn't answer the question.
- Of the 298 who responded that they feared experiencing Islamophobia, 275 (92.3%) were Muslim, 23 (7.7%) were not. This means that of the total sample, 79.9% of Muslims reported that they fear experiencing Islamophobia, while only 14.5% said they did not fear it. 4.9% responded that they don't know or did not answer the question.
- In addition, 25.3% of non-Muslim respondents reported that they have a fear of experiencing Islamophobia. 58.2% of non-Muslim respondents replied that they do not fear experiencing it.
- Of the 298 who fear experiencing Islamophobia, 132 (44.3%) were female and 164 (55%) were male. This means that 67.8% of all total male respondents to the survey fear experiencing Islamophobia, and 71% of all total female respondents fear experiencing it.
- Of those 103 who replied no, 37 (35.9%) were female and 62 (60.2%) were male. This means that a higher proportion of males do not fear experiencing Islamophobia – 25.6% of total male respondents do not fear experiencing it, compared to 19.9% of total female respondents.
- Of the 23 who did not respond or replied that they do not know, 11 (47.8%) were female and 12 (52.2%) were male.

**Have you altered any of your behaviours as a result of experiencing Islamophobia or as a result of fear about experiencing it?**

- 225 (51.7%) of respondents said they had altered their behaviours, while 141 (32.4%) responded that they had not. 46 (10.6%) of respondents said they didn't know, while 23 (5.3%) didn't answer the question – possibly because they believed it didn't apply to them.
- Of these 225, 208 (92.4%) identified as Muslim, while 17 (7.6%) did not. In other words, 60.5% of total Muslim respondents said they had altered their behaviours as a result of experiencing Islamophobia.
- Of the 141 who responded they have not changed their behaviour, 94 (66.7%) identified as Muslim while 47 (33.3%) identified as non-Muslim.
- There were also 37 (10.8% of total Muslim respondents) Muslims who replied that they did not know or did not answer the question.
- Of the 225 respondents who said they had altered their behaviours, 99 (44%) were female and 125 (55.6%) were male. This means that 53.2% of females in the total sample had altered their behaviours as a result of Islamophobia, and 51.7% of males altered their behaviours.
- Of the 141 respondents who replied they had not altered their behaviours, 55 (39%) were females and 82 (58.2%) were males. This means that slightly more of total male respondents (33.9%) did not alter their behaviour, compared to 29.6% of female respondents.

**Do you think Islamophobia has an impact on the educational outcomes of Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslim) in Scotland?**

- 325 respondents (74.7%) replied that Islamophobia does have an impact on the educational outcomes of Muslims in Scotland, while 38 (8.7%) replied no. 66 (15.2%) of respondents said they didn't know, which 6 (1.4%) did not answer the question.
- Of these 325, 272 (83.7%) identified as Muslim. 53 (16.3%) identified as non-Muslim. This means that 79.1% of total Muslim respondents believe that Islamophobia has an impact on the educational outcomes of Muslims in Scotland.
- Of the 38 who replied that it has no impact, 21 (55.3%) identified as non-Muslim while 17 (44.7%) identified as Muslim. This means that 23.1% of total non-Muslim respondents believe Islamophobia has no impact on educational outcomes of Muslims in Scotland. Only 4.9% of total Muslim respondents believe it has no impact.
- In addition, of the 66 who replied that they don't know, 52 (78.8%) were Muslim, meaning that 12% of total Muslim respondents replied that they don't know whether Islamophobia has an impact on educational outcomes of Muslims in Scotland.
- Of the 325 respondents who said Islamophobia does have an impact on educational outcomes, 147 (45.2%) were females and 177 (54.5%) were males. This means that more females believed that it did: 73.1% of total male respondents believed Islamophobia has an impact on educational outcomes for Muslims, compared to 79% of females.
- Of the 38 who said there is no impact, 9 (23.7%) were females and 25 (65.8%) were males.

**Do you think Islamophobia has an impact on the employment opportunities of Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslim) in Scotland?**

- 367 (84.4%) responded yes, while 31 (7.1%) responded no. 30 respondents (6.9%) said they don't know, while 7 (1.6%) did not answer the question.
- Of the 367, 306 (83.4%) identified as Muslim and 61 (16.6%) identified as non-Muslim. This means that 70.3% of total Muslim respondents think Islamophobia has an impact on employment opportunities of Muslims in Scotland.
- Of the 31 who replied no, 22 (71%) identified as non-Muslim, while only 9 identified as Muslim. This means that only 2.6% of total Muslim respondents asserted that Islamophobia has no impact at all on the employment opportunities of Muslims. 7.3% of total Muslim respondents said that they didn't know.
- Of the 367 who responded yes, 166 (45.2%) were females and 198 (54%) were males. This means that 89.2% of all female respondents to the survey believed that Islamophobia does have an impact on employment opportunities, while 81.8% of all male respondents to the survey believe it has an impact.
- Of the 31 who said no, 6 (19.4%) were female and 22 (71%) were male.

**Do you think Islamophobia has an impact on the ability of Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslim) to access public services in Scotland?**

- 277 (63.7%) of respondents said Islamophobia does have an impact on the ability of Muslims to access public services in Scotland. 69 (15.9%) of respondents said it doesn't, while 82 (18.9%) of respondents said they don't know. 7 (1.6%) didn't answer the question.
- Of these 277, 232 (83.8%) identified as Muslim and 45 (16.2%) identified as non-Muslim. This means that 53.3% of total Muslim respondents to the survey think that Islamophobia has an impact on the ability of Muslims to access public services in Scotland.
- Of the 69 who said no, 40 (58%) identified as Muslim and 29 (42%) identified as non-Muslim. This means that 9.2% of total Muslim respondents believe that Islamophobia has no impact on the ability of Muslims to access public services in Scotland.
- Of the 82 who said they didn't know, 68 (82.9%) identified as Muslim. This means that 19.8% of the total number of Muslim respondents said they didn't know whether accessing public services is impacted by Islamophobia.
- Of the 277 who said yes, 123 (44.4%) were female and 153 (55.2%) were male. This means that 66.1% of all female respondents to the survey said yes, and 63.2% of all male respondents said yes.
- Of the 69 who said no, 25 (36.2%) were female and 40 (58%) were male.

**Do you think you are at a higher risk of facing Islamophobia if you are (gender):**

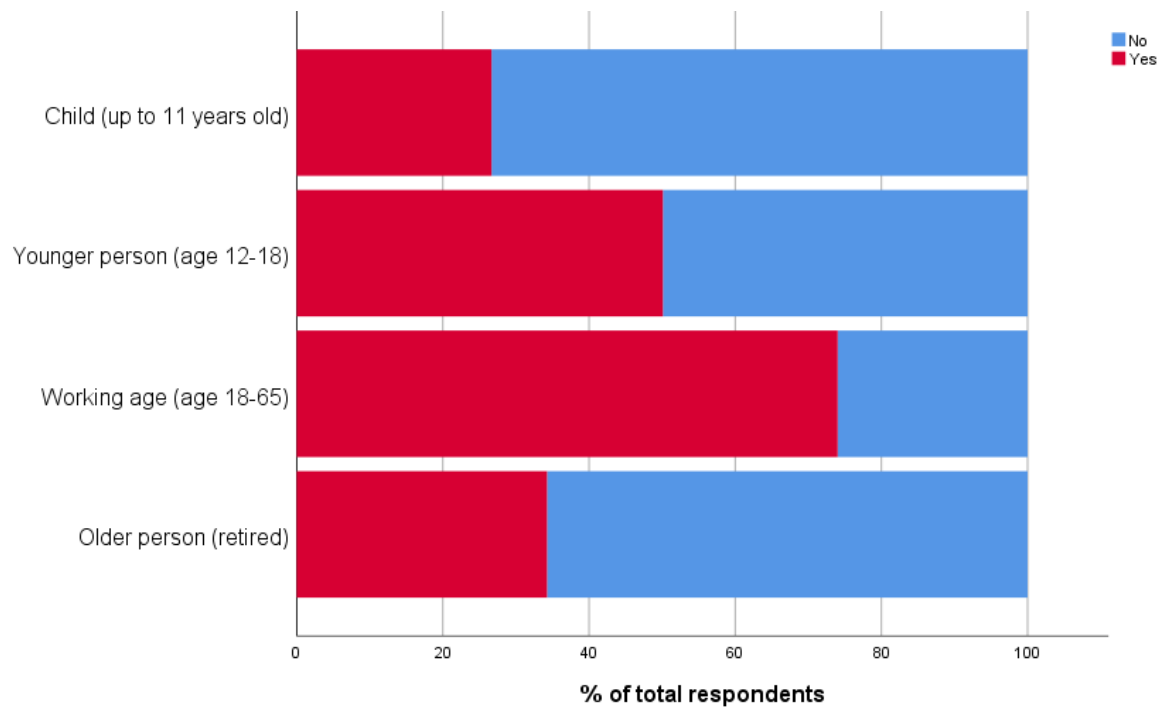
- Of the 435 total respondents, 236 (54.3%) said females are at a higher risk of experiencing Islamophobia. 172 (39.5%) said the risk was the same no matter if male or female, while only 16 (3.7%) said you were at a higher risk if you are a male.
- Of the 236 who said females are at higher risk, 199 (84.3%) identified as Muslim and 37 (15.7%) identified as non-Muslim. This means that 40.7% of total non-Muslim respondents believed females are at higher risk, while a higher percentage of 57.8% of total Muslim respondents believe females are at higher risk. In other words, proportionally more Muslims believe that females are at higher risk of Islamophobia than non-Muslims.

- Of the 172 who said the risk is the same, 43 (25%) were non-Muslim and 129 (75%) were Muslim. This means that 47.3% of total non-Muslim respondents believe the risk is the same, while 37.5% of Muslims believe the risk is the same.
- The picture here is therefore that Muslims are more likely to believe that females are at greater risk of Islamophobia, while non-Muslims are more likely to believe that the risk is the same for males and females.
- Of the 16 who thought men were at higher risk, 4 (25%) identified as non-Muslims and 12 (75%) identified as Muslim.
- Of the 236 who said females were at higher risk, 110 (46.6%) were females and 124 (52.5%) were males. This means that 59.1% of total female respondents thought females were more at risk of Islamophobia and 51.2% of males thought females were more at risk from Islamophobia.
- Of the 172 who said the risk is the same, 71 (41.3%) were females and 100 (58.1%) were males. This equates to 38.2% of total female respondents and 41.3% of total male respondents who thought the risk was the same.
- Of the 16 who thought men were at higher risk, 4 (25%) identified as female and 11 (68.8%) identified as male.

**Do you think you are at a higher risk of facing Islamophobia if you are (age):**

- The best way of presenting this data is in table form (see graph below):

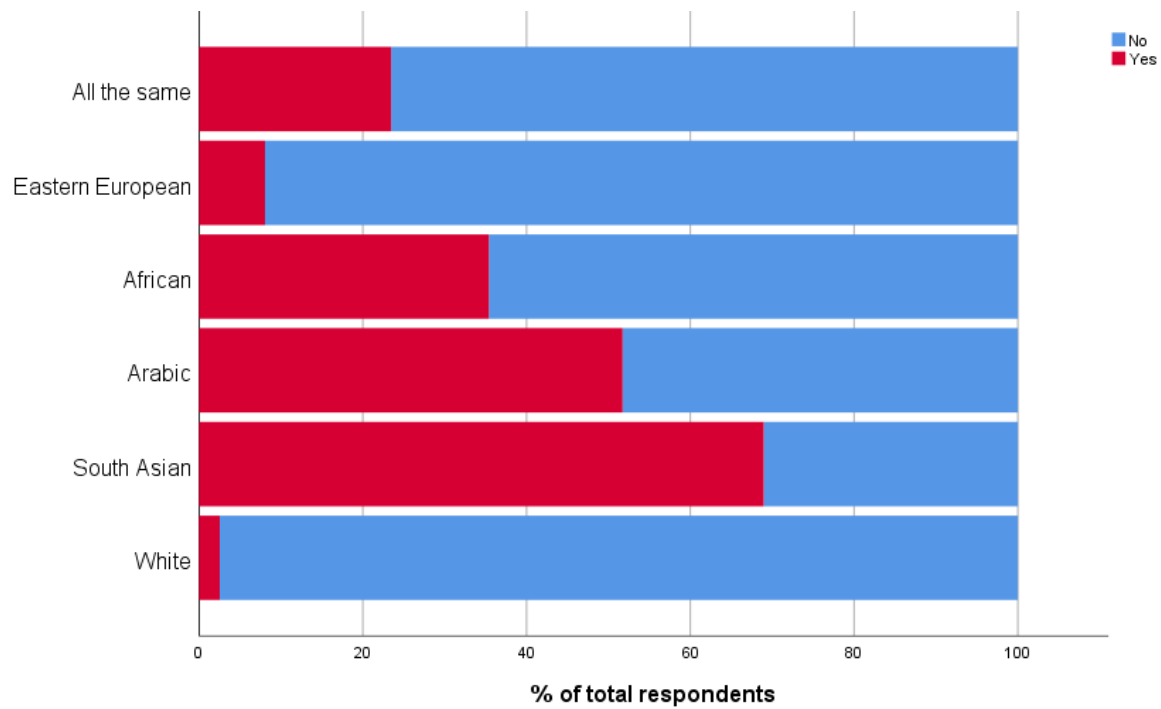
	No	Yes
Older person (retired)	286	149
	65.7%	34.3%
Working age (age 18-65)	113	322
	26.0%	74.0%
Younger person (age 12-18)	217	218
	49.9%	50.1%
Child (up to 11 years old)	319	116
	73.3%	26.7%



**Do you think you are at a higher risk of facing Islamophobia if you are (ethnicity):**

- As above, see table and graph:

	No	Yes
White	424	11
	97.5%	2.5%
South Asian	135	300
	31.0%	69.0%
Arabic	210	225
	48.3%	51.7%
African	281	154
	64.6%	35.4%
Eastern European	400	35
	92.0%	8.0%
All the same	333	102
	76.6%	23.4%

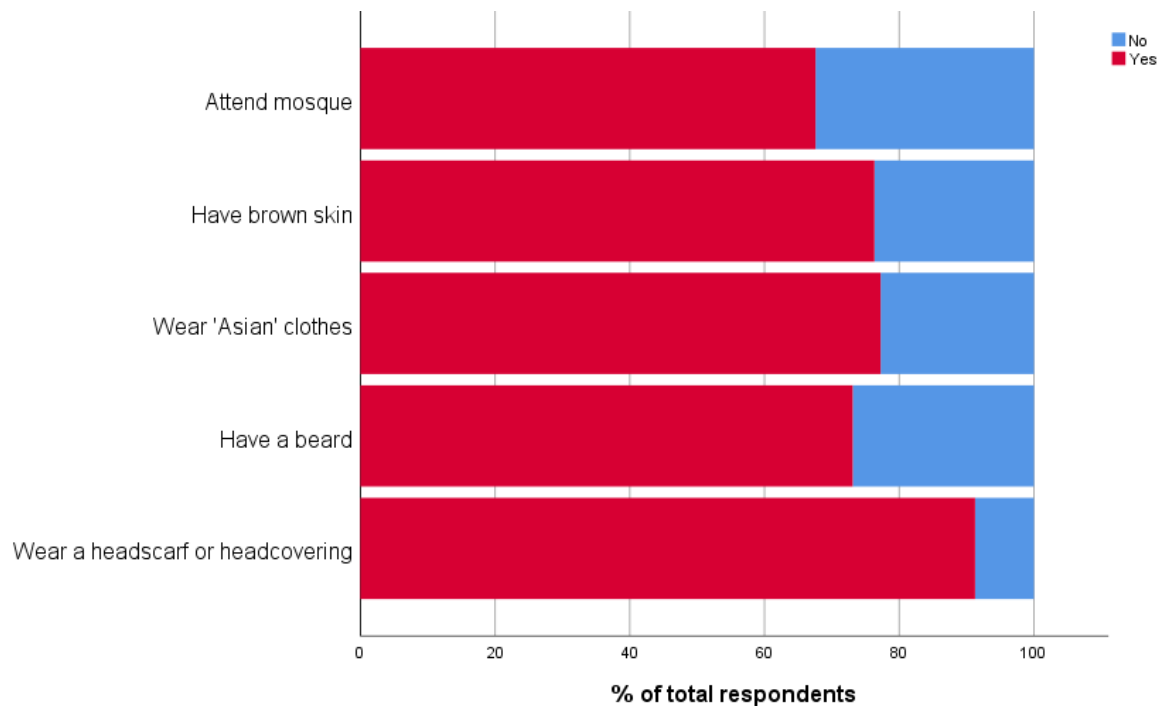


**Do you think you are at a higher risk of facing Islamophobia if you are (appearance):**

- As above, table and graph below:

	No	Yes
Wear a headscarf or headcovering	38 8.7%	397 91.3%
Have a beard	117 26.9%	318 73.1%
Wear 'Asian' clothes	99 22.8%	336 77.2%
Have brown skin	103 23.7%	332 76.3%
Attend mosque	141 32.4%	294 67.6%





**What impact do you think the print media (e.g. newspapers, magazines, etc) has on Islamophobia?**

- 391 respondents (89.9%) responded that the print media increases Islamophobia. 4 (0.9%) and 13 (3%) responded that it decreases it or has no impact respectively. 19 respondents (4.4%) said they didn't know, and 8 (1.8%) didn't answer the question.
- Of the 391 who said print media increases Islamophobia, 323 (82.6%) identified as Muslim, 68 (17.4%) identified as non-Muslim. This means that a large number of Muslim respondents, 93.9% of total Muslim respondents to the survey, think that the print media increases Islamophobia.
- In addition, it also means that 74.7% of total non-Muslim respondents believe that the print media makes Islamophobia worse.
- Of the 391 who said print media increases Islamophobia, 173 (44.2%) were female and 215 (55%) were men. This means that 93% of total female respondents to the survey believed Islamophobia is increased by print media, and 88.8% of total male respondents believed the same.
- Of those who said it had no impact, 10 out of 13 (76.9%) were male.

**What impact do you think the broadcast media (e.g. radio, TV etc.) has on Islamophobia?**

- 375 respondents (86.2%) responded that the broadcast media increases Islamophobia. 8 (1.8%) and 21 (4.8%) responded that it decreases it or has no impact respectively. 23 (5.3%) of respondents said they don't know, while 8 (1.8%) didn't answer the question.
- Of the 375 who said the broadcast media makes Islamophobia worse, 311 (82.9%) identified as Muslim and 64 (17.1%) did not. This means that 90.4% of all, total Muslim respondents to the survey believe the broadcast media makes Islamophobia worse.
- In addition, it also means that 70.3% of total non-Muslim respondents also believe that the broadcast media makes Islamophobia worse.
- Of the 375 respondents who thought broadcast media increases Islamophobia, 167 (44.5%) were female and 205 (54.7%) were male. In other words, 89.8% of all female respondents

and 84.7% of all male respondents to the survey thought broadcast media increases Islamophobia.

- Of those 21 who said it has no impact, 16 (76.2%) were males and only 4 (19%) were females. In other words, more total male respondents believed the broadcast media has no impact (6.6%) than total female respondents (2.2%).
- Of those 8 who believed Islamophobia is decreased by broadcast media, 3 (37.5%) were female and 4 (50%) were male.

#### **What impact do you think social media has on Islamophobia?**

- 370 respondents (85.1%) responded that social media increases Islamophobia. 11 (2.5%) and 14 (3.2%) responded that it decreases it and has no impact respectively. In addition, 33 (7.6%) of respondents said they don't know, and 7 (1.6%) didn't answer the question.
- Of the 370 respondents who said that social media increases Islamophobia, there were 162 females (87.1% of total female respondents) and 206 males (85.1% of total male respondents). Of the two LGBTQ respondents, one respondent said that it increases it and one responded that it decreases it.
- In other words, there was a fairly even split between males and females on the impact of social media on Islamophobia.
- There was a more significant difference breaking this down by faith. Of the 370 who said social media increases Islamophobia, 305 were Muslims (88.7% of total Muslim respondents) and 65 were not (71.4% of total non-Muslim respondents).
- In addition, 7.7% of total non-Muslim respondents thought social media had no impact on Islamophobia, compared to 2% of total Muslim respondents, while 12.1% of total non-Muslim respondents said they didn't know, compared to 6.4% of total Muslim respondents. In other words, there is a small difference here in that a larger percentage of Muslims thought social media increased Islamophobia than non-Muslims.

## Qualitative Analysis and broad themes in respondents' comments

### What are some of the problems you see Islamophobia creating in Scottish society?

- Societal division, which leads to a range of negative consequences for Muslims such as marginalisation, retreat from public life and accessing public services, feeling unwelcome, isolation, a restriction of social mobility, and negative presumptions being made about the character, abilities, and skills of Muslims.
- Mutual resentment between Muslim and non-Muslim communities.
- The worsening and normalisation of a hostile environment for Muslims, refugees, and those who are perceived to be non-white or Muslim.
- The normalisation of racism, bullying, and discrimination against Muslims in everyday life.
- A disintegration of trust in Scottish public institutions, especially the police, the legal system, the political system, and the media, which are perceived to all be contributing to and fuelling Islamophobia.
- The rise of far-right discriminatory politics, whose members feel emboldened by the lack of consequences of Islamophobic behaviour and the fuelling of Islamophobic narratives in politics, media, and society. This rise is demonstrated by some respondents to the survey.
- An increase in verbal and physical abuse of Muslims, and more broadly an increase in criminal activity such as vandalism targeted at Muslims or spaces/places that are deemed to be representative of Muslims (particular shops, mosques, Muslim residences).
- An increase in the physical assault of women based on dress, and an increasing intolerance towards and abuse of Muslims based on their dress and physical appearance.
- Increasing exclusion from public services and public goods, such as healthcare, transport, and politics.
- Increasing marginalisation of Muslims in the workplace and in school, leading to unemployment, under-employment, and mental health problems among Muslims.
- An increasing under-representation of Muslims in positions of prominence in public services and institutions, including parts of civic society such as sport.
- The normalisation and embedding of Islamophobia in schools, both by non-Muslim pupils and teachers, leading to a range of problems for Muslim children and young people such as withdrawal from public education (often into home schooling), social isolation, truanting, and resentment towards Scottish society.
- The hiding or non-expression of faith in public spaces, including a fear of openly practicing in mosques and attending other spaces/events perceived to be Muslim.
- Lastly, a misunderstanding and public ignorance of what some participants perceive to be 'real' or 'truthful' interpretations of Islamic doctrine; that it is a peaceful, tolerant, and open religion that does not condone violence.

## **What barriers, if any, do you think Islamophobia causes in Scotland?**

### **Employment/workplace barriers**

Participants felt that Islamophobia was particularly prevalent in the workplace and finding/retaining employment in Scotland. Specifically, participants felt that they were less likely to be shortlisted for jobs or considered for promotion because of their Muslim faith.

*Discrimination at job interviews, in the work[place], in [the] justice system. (12)*

*Barriers in the workplace- particularly Muslims wearing hijabs or burkas feel alienated and treated with suspicion. Less likely to be promoted because of stereotypes. (32)*

*Islamophobia results in fewer opportunities for Muslims to gain employment... [I h]ave no statistics on this but for example there are too few nurses teachers child care workers and possibly other professions, what about skilled tradespeople? Where are the Muslim painters decorators electricians joiners? (38)*

*Getting a job. Those that cover their head would be considered 2nd in comparison to one that doesn't cover their head. One that covers her face is no way going to get a job even if it was a non customer facing role. Call centre job. It is 100% that they wont get a job apart from a Asian owned company. As they are considered non human from the others. (304)*

Others said they had experienced both overt discrimination and microaggressions at work:

*Within the workplace, people can be more reserved around you. They may hesitate to ask questions in order to know the truth, because they may think it would come across as offensive. (352)*

More broadly, participants indicated that discriminatory workplace practices were not just bad for those who suffered them, but also for the Scottish economy and for unemployment, because they pushed Muslims into unemployment and prevented Muslims from making positive economic contributions to society:

*Lack of employment; feelings of the other; emotional issues; vulnerability; upset etc. (258)*

*Will create economic barriers as people affected by Islamophobia won't receive fair opportunities to contribute or progress to or in society (382)*

### **Education barriers**

Participants felt that Islamophobia creates barriers in all tiers of education, from nursery right through to university/college and adult education:

*Islamophobia will make it difficult for young Muslims to feel integrated within Scottish society. Muslims are already at the bottom in educational attainment and income levels so this will further hamper progression within education and employment. (427)*

*Makes it difficult to settle in through uni, find a job, prove yourself as 'one of them' (323)*

Participants highlighted Islamophobia in schools as particularly challenging, commenting that children were often excluded from the everyday activities of school life such as representing their school or taking part in sports activities, and that as a consequence Muslim children do not have positive educational experiences that inevitably leads to poorer life chances and a possible withdrawal from engagement with education in general:

*In schools, or workplaces, I think it's more unlikely that Muslims will be chosen to represent their school or to be chosen for an important position in a job. I also think it starts making Muslims feel inferior about themselves. (370)*

*It prevents the submersion of muslims into scottish society in general , and undoubtedly can reduce their children's future life opportunities in our country. (116)*

*Barriers to a safe and inclusive education for children and overall barriers to peaceful enjoyment of life. (395)*

### **Barriers to friendship and social inclusion**

Participants reported that Islamophobia erects barriers to creating and maintaining sustainable and equitable friendships as well as barriers to feeling included/able to access social spaces, events, and activities that should be part of their normal day-to-day lives:

*Barriers for friendships, exclusion out of groups, etc., abuse. (299)*

*It causes differences and can stop Muslims from progressing in many aspects such as careers and socially. (264)*

*Not feeling as your a part of this country rather feeling like an outsider which i have all my life and have accepted it even though i was born here 44 years ago. (14)*

### **Barriers to health and wellbeing**

Participants reported that Islamophobia created barriers to health and wellbeing. For some, this was in the form of access to healthy fitness activities, most prominently partaking in sport:

*Islamophobia can lead to marginalisation. The knock-on people perhaps not going to their Drs, not taking up preventative test available on the NHS and generally not being aware of help they can get. (156)*

*Makes it feel less safer for communities to raise children and also affects people's mental health and well-being, people feel vulnerable. (254)*

More prominently, participants also highlighted that Islamophobia led to social deprivation, mental health problems, and barriers in accessing adequate healthcare:

*It causes social deprivation and mental instability for man . Many psychological issues also ensue from Islamophobia as well as racism eg in schools in the workplace and at times of leisure - shopping etc . Bans are set in place in many places re the hijab for example in other countries we fear it wont be long till such acts are adopted here. And this is a religious right so essentially it's not allowing the freedom of religion in Scotland. (266)*

*Barriers to employment, positive education experiences, barriers to health and wellbeing, barriers to safety and trust in a Scotland. (80)*

### **Barriers to leading a normal life**

An extremely prominent theme in participants' responses was how Islamophobia erected barriers in almost every part of their everyday lives. Many participants, especially women, reported that they are unable to feel safe outside of their homes:

*I think it inhibits a lot of the female population as they feel more vulnerable, because of their immediate recognition due to the wearing of the hijab (442)*

*In effect Islamophobia can be a barrier to allowing someone to fulfil their full potential. (156)*

Others reported that they don't feel 'safe' anywhere, and that being at home was no guarantee of feeling comfortable or shielded from Islamophobic abuse:

*It affects everything. The most important thing for me is the feeling of safety and the creation of division amongst communities. (182)*

*It makes it considerably harder for muslims to access the same opportunities as others or to feel comfortable in their own homes or places of work. (61)*

Pivotal to this was a sense that all of the spaces and places of everyday life – streets, shops, home, public transport, etc – can at any time and without any warning become possible spaces where Islamophobia occurs. This was discussed by participants as a constant feeling of fear and foreboding in their everyday lives and the feeling that abuse was latent at any given moment when it was not already occurring. Several participants attested to this, and some of the most arresting comments are below:

*It could be general safety as anyone who identifies themselves as Muslim or its obvious from their appearance, I think would be susceptible to a hate crime. This means anyone vulnerable may fear facing violence when just walking along the street. Most of the time it may be verbal abuse and not result in violence, but its a bad state of affairs when that seems like the best case scenario. (429)*

*It absolutely causes barriers for the Muslim community; in the workplace, in the justice system, in education and in social engagement. It simply is a barrier to a healthy and safe existence. (357)*

*Leading a normal life (430)*

*Where do you want me to start. My rights are violated every day. I [can't] pray as there is no place to pray in my work. I can't use the canteen as there is no halal products. (77)*

*For those experiencing it or who worry they might experience it, I imagine it is a barrier to them feeling they can safely and comfortably exist and live their lives peacefully in their community. Feeling safe and comfortable being yourself in the place where you live should be a right of everyone in Scotland. (47)*

### **Barriers to integration, friendship, and bonding between communities**

Participants also reported that Islamophobia erected barriers to co-existence, friendship and bonding between different communities, and the integration or cohesion of Muslim communities into Scottish society in general. It is important to note here that integration and friendship was seen as desirable by the majority of respondents to the survey, and many lamented that Islamophobia was an insurmountable barrier that prevented them from contributing, or wanting to contribute, to something worth contributing to (i.e. Scottish society):

*Islamophobia stops people integrating and prevents a sense of community, people will not feel connected if they don't speak to their neighbours. This can lead to more isolation and resentment and causes stereotypes and views that Muslims are "coming here and taking jobs and houses". (124)*

*It causes divisions in communities and in schools. It means that people who would otherwise get along very well and generate positive energy through meaningful, co-operative interaction, do not get the opportunity to meet and get to know each other. (389)*

*Prevents better integration of our society. We all should be accepting and tolerant of each other. Fear of Islam only leads to hatred. (255)*

*Islamophobia if left untreated causes division in society. It breeds hate and distrust and it stops integration. If one side has a perception of, I don't feel as I belong here, how can integration take place? (365)*

### **Barriers to accessing housing**

Participants reported that accessing housing was made more difficult by Islamophobia:

*As above, islamophobia causes barriers towards Employment, education and housing which in turn prevents Muslims from integrating into Scottish society. (423)*

*Jobs, Social connections, Friends, Housing, Social mobility (62)*

*Difficulty in getting social housing (245)*

### **Barriers to accessing politics and taking part in politics**

Finally, participants highlighted Islamophobia as a reason why they did not engage with politics, or as a reason why they could not access politics:

*Fear of entering politics and the media especially. (15)*

*Barriers to employment, promotion, election, political engagement, social interaction and familial bonds. (256)*

*Barriers to access to jobs, access to health, access to political representations and participation, barriers to right to religion, right to live without fear especially when travelling in public transport. Barriers to community spirit and Harmony. This is because islamophobic "spreads", "breeds" fear. (413)*

### **If you have experienced Islamophobia and did not report it to the police, why?**

#### **No confidence that it would be addressed or taken seriously by police**

The most common response by far by participants to this question was that they had no confidence their reporting of Islamophobia would be taken seriously by police:

*At the time I did not feel it would be treated seriously by the police and it was a very busy period for me so I thought I could do without the extra hassle. I personally know many other Muslims who have not reported incidents of Islamophobia because they do not have faith in the police or legal system that they as Muslims do not have the same legal protections as members of other minority communities. (410)*

*It seems as though the police don't do enough to stop Islamophobia and therefore people like myself feel as though theres no point taking the matter to the police. (230)*

*Due to numerous failing by the pool upon reporting anti Islamic incidents, I consider the police are not fully able to manage a complaint that is relating to islamophobia and do not consider it serious enough. (423)*

*It didn't seem like there was any point. Police don't have the greatest reputation and almost feel as though it's not a priority for anyone. (255)*

Some extended this lack of confidence to the justice system in general, commenting that they had no reason to believe that reporting Islamophobia would result in any kind of due legal process or prosecution:

*No confidence in justice system (284)*

*Because it's my word against theirs and no faith in justice system anymore (104)*

In addition, some participants also referenced the amount of time it often takes to process complaints as reasons why they did not report Islamophobia to the police – these participants believed that Islamophobia was not taken seriously and would therefore not be investigated punctually, meaning that it was not worth reporting it at all:

*The verbal abuse received in many occasions hasn't been reported. Firstly due to the time it takes to report a crime and secondly as the perpetrators are long gone, nothing could be done in my opinion. (314)*

*I didn't have enough time to find out who the people [were] and they were ready to wait for the police to come. (152)*

#### **No witnesses or evidence to corroborate**

Numerous participants commented that they did not report Islamophobic abuse because they had no witnesses or evidence to the abuse taking place, and that therefore they believed that it would be impossible, or too difficult, to prove. Often, this was connected to cases where verbal abuse took place in the street and there was no-one else present, and others specifically referenced a perception that even if police took the complaint seriously, no prosecution would convict based on the evidence that the participant had of being abused:

*Did not feel it will help as had no evidence... (216)*

*Islamophobia is not taken seriously and would be very difficult to [prosecute] such actions. (368)*

*No one spoke up for me on public transport and I had no proof either. (106)*

#### **'It's not worth it'**

Respondents made a cluster of comments that can be grouped under the larger category of 'it's not worth it'. Here, respondents indicated ways they justified to themselves and to others that it was not worth reporting their abuse to the police. Most prominent in these responses was that the crime wasn't 'serious enough', either because it was a verbal comment in the street that was over in a second or because verbal abuse (for example) is not as important or serious as other crimes that the police may be dealing with:

*I've learned from experience that the police are not interested in dealing with anything but the most 'serious' crimes. (171)*

*They tried to pull off my scarf and walked off saying incomprehensible things. Another time some kids shouted something about pork at me in Glasgow Green. It's usually low level and not worth reporting. I don't know who those people are. (103)*



Other respondents said they did not report their abuse because they were sometimes not sure if it was a crime; some said they didn't know if verbal abuse, for example, constituted a form of abuse that the police would investigate or action:

*I was not sure what shall I do. There was no direct insult. An egg throwing on me while walking on street. However, it did not reach me. (101)*

*No point because it's always 'just a wee joke' and the perpetrator is always sorry they upset you (never sorry that they said offensive things) (260)*

*Its stranger in the street... What can police do (407)*

Others, meanwhile, said their abuse was 'too subtle' to be addressed by police, and these were sometimes instances where respondents reported they had been subject to forms of Islamophobia like 'funny looks' and microaggressions that they believed the police would not or could not investigate:

*Trivial nature of the incident (378)*

*Because it was low level jokey barely 'offensive'....a wee joke about my clothing being 'the same' as a Muslim standing beside me....I am not a Muslim....nonetheless this was a low level example of belittling and disrespect and in my own personal experience, it is this sort of endemic repeated belittling and labelling and stereotyping attitude which is creating a society where Muslims are seen as Very Different. (38)*

### **Someone else was told (i.e. teacher, employer) who took no action**

Several participants reported that, in cases where they had suffered Islamophobic abuse in the workplace or at school, they had informed a superior or responsible person of the abuse instead of police. However, in almost all cases respondents reported that their complaint was not taken seriously; they were either promised an investigation that never occurred, told to shake hands with the perpetrator and move on, or simply dismissed:

*It was reported to colleagues, who appeared sympathetic, though there was no consequence. A hate incident was also reported to a senior manager and there was an inadequate response or action taken. (441)*

*I expected my complaint to be addressed through the formal party political channels. I am still waiting a year later to be updated of the process. (74)*

However, it is worth noting that a smaller number of participants did not report Islamophobic abuse in the workplace to police because it was dealt with in a way that they believed was adequate at work:

*It was resolved at work and was dealt sensitively. (115)*

*I did complain to the manager and he dealt with it. (268)*

### **It happens all the time**

Depressingly, many participants commented that they did not report Islamophobic abuse because it happened to them with too high a frequency to be worth doing so. These participants had sometimes accepted the inability of the police to do anything about the frequency with which they experienced Islamophobia and, in a couple of sardonic comments, suggested that if they reported all of the Islamophobia they faced they would have no time to do anything else:

*I don't all ways report it because I would constantly be at the police station and proving verbal abuse is hard (36)*

*Regular occurrence (303)*

### **The police are racist**

One of the most prominent themes in participants' responses to this question was a belief that the police are racist, and that reporting Islamophobia to them is therefore worthless:

*Didn't think I would be listened to, as some police quite Islamophobia and racist. (400)*

There were several different ways the police were discussed that are worthy of further analysis, but the main sub-themes were as follows. Firstly, some participants commented that they did report Islamophobia to the police, but the police then actively worsened the situation or submitted them to what they felt was additional Islamophobia after they reported it. It is problematic to reproduce such language but I do so to faithfully represent what the participant commented:

*Several incidents were reported serious incidents neighbour dispute the police took their side to be honest I live my whole life police are suppose to protect you not come AGAINST YOU I WAS ALSO ATTACKED BY THE POLICE TWO CHRISTIAN OFFICERS i was listening to music outside someone phoned police they swore at me you black nigge ..... I'm not even black I'm telling it's spreading like a disease even the police is coming against us. (58)*

Other participants commented on what they perceived as the institutional nature of racism and Islamophobia in the police, shifting the focus away from the particular interactions Muslims had with police to the structure and nature of the police as an organisation:

*We all know what the inquiry found in the Martin Lawrence case and what the inquiry said which is the the police are institutionally racist so I don't trust them. (151)*

*Police is institutionally islamophopic. (132)*

*It is a waste of time and efforts because British police is a home of institutional racism. (28)*

Lastly, one participant commented that they had been subject to racial profiling and racism at an airport, questioning how it can be reported if it is reproduced by the police themselves:

*Islamophobia at airport searches: when the airport immigration officers - the police - are making Islamophobic assumptions about you, questioning your humanity because of your background, how exactly are you supposed to report it and hold them accountable? The state is complicit in the spread and perpetuation of anti-Muslim racism, especially through its hostile environment and Prevent strategies. (80)*

### **I did report it, but the police did not act**

Even those participants who did report Islamophobia to the police commented on this question to say that no action was taken by the police after their report was received. This was highlighted as a reason why they would not have confidence in reporting abuse to the police in the future:

*Did report years ago but nothing was taken seriously. So now don't believe the police will take the incidents seriously or pursue it. Police brush it off. (292)*

*The police in Aberdeen told me that it was just a case of 'sticks and stones' (i.e it wasn't a big deal) and that there was nothing that could be done about it. I said that I wanted the incident logged by the police. (176)*

*Reported it a few times but no action is taken which deters you to report it in the future. (94)*

### **Fear of reprisal**

Finally, some participants said they did not report their abuse to the police because they feared that they would be subject to further discrimination and possibly violence if they did:

*Risk of further discrimination. (90)*

*Lack of confidence and fear of losing job. (223)*

*Sir to fear of reaction from the offenders and also don't know it will create any difference. Moreover it will be very difficult to prove. (333)*

### **What do you fear most about experiencing Islamophobia?**

#### **Physical assault / violence**

The most prominent fear raised by participants was the fear of experiencing physical assault:

*I have a fear of experiencing it more and more as time goes by due to the fact that the actions being taken are becoming worse and worse. They are extremely dangerous and could endanger one's life which is why the fear of experiencing it is there. There are many dangerous actions that take place e.g. acid attack. (73)*

*Group of people could attack physically (379)*

There were many sub-themes to this, the most numerous of which was that respondents said they feared not only or primarily for their own safety, but for the safety of friends and family members, particularly wives and children:

*Being physically abused, being targeted. My family and children being physically abused, verbally abused. (412)*

*I fear for my young family. My wife and 3 young daughters wear head scarves and all have experienced Islamophobia. As Islamophobia becomes more common place on social media and amongst our ruling classes I foresee Islamophobic attacks becoming more frequent and severe. (209)*

In addition, many participants said that they feared not only being seriously assaulted for their faith, but also being killed because of the emboldening of Islamophobia and racism in Scotland:

*I fear it getting to the point where my life would be in danger. Knife crime is on the rise and Islamophobia could be an excuse for someone to use a knife. (230)*

*I fear one day the abuse will turn to physical and I only steer clear of abuse and not to aggravate it as I have a young child and I know the law is soft in this land, so I'm not risking my life. (179)*

Physical assault was also extended to attacks on places perceived to be Muslim, most obviously mosques:

*Fear of someone hurting or throwing acid on an innocent person. Or someone doing something to or in a mosque. (404)*

### **Mental health problems**

Participants reported that they feared they, or friends and family members, would experience the onset or worsening of mental health problems as a consequence of the severity of the Islamophobia they experience:

*Physical harm, mental trauma to my children if they are with me. (162)*

*I feel scared for both me and my family. We should not be picked on because we are Muslim. When my children were small we were so scared as we were constantly being abused due to being Muslim. It caused so many problems as a family, i got depression, I even contemplating suicide due to a racist neighbour making our life hell. It still happens and I am still scared. Our life has been adversely affected by racism. I am too scared to leave the house in case of abuse. I go out due to necessity and sometimes due to the social groups at SCOREscotland. (125)*

### **Discrimination in the workplace**

Participants also feared abuse and discrimination in the workplace, encompassing fears as to finding a job or the longevity of their current employment because of Islamophobic hiring practices or senior managers, and also fears of being abused in the workplace by colleagues or members of the public because of their faith.

*I fear passing Islamophobic comments that are made in the work place. (423)*

*I have a beard and my wife had a scarf. We physically look Muslim. I fear being physically attacked on the street. I fear being discriminated against whilst at work, or at a restaurant. Is fear discrimination to the point we have seriously discussed leaving the country. (368)*

*Impact on my employment (90)*

### **Verbal abuse**

Concern and fear was also frequently expressed at receiving verbal abuse, and again this was typically extended to concerns that friends and family would also experience it:

*My fear is that if someone were to verbally abuse me or say something that this could escalate to an argument. I find it is hard to know whether someone is speaking from racism, Islamophobia or is generally just rude. (124)*

*People starting to verbally abuse me in public, or that I don't get a fair chance in the workplace as I get older (370)*

### **Having hijab pulled off, and abuse specifically because of hijab**

Female respondents, and some male respondents discussing their female friends and family, discussed a specific fear of having their hijab pulled off in public:

*Having my hijab pulled off. (271)*

*Hijab pulled off (374)*

*I fear someone pulling my hijab off again. I hated that, felt really offended. It was in public. (296)*

They also displayed fears of being physically assaulted in public or abused specifically because of their hijab:

*My daughter is 13 years old ,would love to wear a headscarf but cant because she takes a bus back and forth to school, she has seen me first hand being verbally abused, even seen men tower over me as they say insults. Can you imagine how a 13 year old would deal with that? This is what it's becoming, children and woman being bullied into what others want because people are ignorant and uneducated. And these same people tell us we are oppressed, we are only oppressed by them! (135)*

*I fear experiencing verbal and physical abuse, especially in the presence of my child and I fear for my child's safety when with me, as I am visibly Muslim due to my Hijab. (99)*

### **General feeling that it is on the increase**

Less prominently, participants expressed fear that Islamophobia was generally on the rise in Scotland:

*We feel that the environment has become more and more hostile for our communities, especially for our Muslim clients. Brexit most definitely has not helped. It has given a bigger voice to those who hate and even a excuse to promote their hate. ALL BME communities are suffering. Under reporting of hate crime is a major issue. Communities need reassurance that HELP is available and perpetrators will be dealt with by the law. (173)*

### **Social exclusion in own country**

Participants also discussed a more general fear of being excluded from public life and public spaces in Scotland. This was sometimes matched with a dismay that they are being prevented from contributing positively to a country they want to be a part of by Islamophobia:

*Being excluded from general society and being unsafe in my house (83)*

*It's just an underlying lack of confidence in being accepted as being equally justified in calling myself Scottish and living here as the next person. A Polish or Romanian or any other white immigrants Scots child will be accepted as pure Scots. Muslims stick out even if they've been here many more generations. (103)*

### **Accusations of terrorism/extremism**

Some participants said they feared being accused of being terrorists or extremists in public spaces, which amounts to verbal abuse but which they highlighted as a specific fear:

*Being challenged on my beliefs and being aligned to extremist groups based on my physical appearance. (164)*

*I'm afraid of people stopping me and accusing me of being a terrorist (152)*

### **Being denied my rights and the ability to practice my religion**

Numerous participants did not focus on physical abuse or verbal abuse, but instead highlighted a fear of being increasingly restricted in practicing their religion and/or having their rights curtailed:

*Discrimination in opportunities on all areas of my life. (379)*

*I am scared of getting stopped under Schedule 7 which targets Muslims as was reported recently by Cage. 88% of all those stopped were Muslims. (159)*

### **Future generations**

Some participants discussed fearing for the future. This manifested not just as fearing Islamophobic abuse occurring in public or for their friends and family, but a more general fear that Muslim

children and young people will grow up in a society that increasingly marks them as outsiders and increasingly abuses them:

*I fear for the future generation of Muslims who are increasing in number which most people feel threatened by. (259)*

*Children's future (208)*

*I fear for my children who are growing up in a society where they cannot celebrate their faith because they feel they might be discriminated against because of it. (32)*

### **Future of Scotland**

Similarly, some participants discussed this in terms of fearing for the future of the Scottish state and/or nation, commenting that Scotland is regressing and becoming a more racist country:

*Personally, I have no fear of it for myself, but I have two children who are both under the age of 3 and I fear for them growing up in a Scotland where there is increasing Islamophobia and them being made to feel like foreigners in their own country. (410)*

*I fear for the environment my grandchildren will grow up in within Scotland. One is a toddler and the other who is less than 2 months old. (427)*

*Fear that society is being turned against Muslims through an Islamophobic industry that includes politicians and the media. Fear for my children's future. (15)*

### **Rise of the far right**

Finally, this was not as prominent as might have been expected, but some participants did discuss fearing the rise of the far right in politics and the detrimental impact this would have on their lives.

*Rise of the far right (239)*

### **Have you altered any of your behaviours as a result of experiencing Islamophobia or as a result of fear about experiencing it?**

#### **Hiding and/or not expressing my religion publicly**

Numerous participants discussed actively hiding their faith and not expressing it, especially in public, as a result of experiencing Islamophobia or fearing experiencing it if they did so. This took a few forms, such as not attending mosque and hiding their visibly Muslim name on job applications:

*Communicating that i am a muslim to wider institutions for fear of being discriminated against. (300)*

*I don't feel comfortable showing of my Muslim identity. (102)*

#### **Constant vigilance, alertness, and caution in everyday places and spaces**

Alongside not expressing or hiding their faith in public spaces, participants also frequently reported a heightened sense of alertness, awareness, and vigilance as they moved through public spaces. This was discussed in subtle and nuanced ways, and manifested primarily as a constant feeling of 'watching your back' and continually re-assessing their surroundings for small indications that an Islamophobic incident may occur or be latent:

*More vigilant when outside, ready to record incidences on my mobile phone, watching who is near me and what cars are near me. (376)*

*I have to take extra precaution when walking alone and have to adopt a more assertive manner just in case i come across as vulbervale to islamophobic attack. (326)*

*I have to be cautious and risk assess all the time (85)*

The places and spaces where Muslims reported doing this were varied, with some emphasising doing it in the street, others on public transport/when they were travelling home, at night, and indeed at all times and in all places:

*I am more vigilant at train stations when travelling home, I report any racist comments made at my school to the school. I have also altered the way I look to some degree to avoid become a target for Islamophobia. Other women I know have decided to remove their headscarf (hijab) to do fear for their safety in today's climate. (214)*

*I'm just more careful when I'm out at late hours (323)*

*Yes I was spat on one time travelling to England. Never seen it coming , never even seen they guy who done it until I was soaked in his milkshake he spat over me. Thought at first maybe it was a bird that's how sly and fast he was. I now have become aware of all my surroundings, I'm suspicious of everyone , always expecting the unexpected, eyes basically on the back of my head. I'm on alert of any sudden movements especially when I have my kids around me. No one should have to live like that or teach their kids that's the way they should be. (135)*

#### **Not wearing Muslim dress or dress that could be perceived to be Muslim**

Participants reported not wearing Muslims dress or dress that could be perceived to be Muslim for fear of it marking them as Muslim in public spaces:

*I discourage my husband from wearing Islamic Dress in public because he is often targeted. I don't go out as much as I use and have become very vigilant (118)*

*I feel unsafe to wear my religious dressing, so at times I am fearful to walk in the street wearing it. I feel as individuals know they won't be questioned and it is acceptable/normal to make remarks, they are able to get away with these comments. (381)*

Specifically, female participants, as well as male participants talking about female family members, discussed that they had stopped wearing a hijab because of the extent it made them a target for abuse:

*Wearing hat not Hajab especially at night (101)*

*I used to wear a hijab but I've taken it off as I was too anxious about going out with it on (17)*

*Not wearing hijab in certain areas, and refraining from walking alone at night in certain areas. (424)*

Male participants also said they had shaved off their beards because it marked them out as a Muslim in public spaces:

*I am now not outwardly Muslim in appearance. I do not keep a beard. I now pass myself off as a Caucasian. (423)*

### **Changing language, mannerisms, and accent when with non-Muslims**

Numerous participants reported changing their posture, the way they spoke, and their mannerisms more generally to appear 'less Muslim' when faced with social situations in public spaces that involved interacting with non-Muslims. In some cases this was discussed as a way of sounding or looking 'more British' in order to make oneself less likely to experience abuse:

*I've changed the way I act around non Muslims for example the way I talk and talk about stuff I don't tend to talk about Islam too often in front of any non Muslims and the way I dress. (129)*

*In certain situations or areas, I may not make it overtly obvious that I'm Muslim, I obviously can't change my skin colour and people may assume based on my race that I'm Muslim, but I may try to act more 'british' to avoid confrontation. I'd also refrain from wearing traditional clothes in certain settings to avoid abuse. (429)*

### **'Street behaviour'**

'Street behaviour' is an inadequate shorthand for a range of small behaviour changes that participants reported when in public places. The changes that participants described were quite numerous and complex, and I can only give a broad indication of what they were here. They can be thought of as 'tactical' changes in behaviour to make oneself less likely to be subject to Islamophobic abuse, or less likely to find oneself in situations where abuse could occur.

For example, participants talked about avoiding particular times of the day or week, such as late evening/night'; weekends; or days when certain events such as Rangers football matches or Orange gatherings were happening:

*Don't walk alone at night. (425)*

*We do not go out in the evening, and the weekend, there are some areas we do not drive through (142)*

*Not travel at certain times, not be open about my religion in public spaces, deleted my Facebook account. Stopped reading newspapers and listening to morning news at one point due to the islamophobic headlines and news items causing stress and worry. (413)*

*I don't go out alone at night. I don't take the underground if I know that a rangers match is on that day. I avoid the city centre when there's an orange walk. (347)*

*I avoid traveling to football games, I avoid debate with my white neighbours and friends and I keep my political opinions to myself, (179)*

Participants also discussed staying in well lit areas, walking faster in certain streets, and both staying in crowds and staying away from crowds:

*Just quieter, tend not to go out late at night when people are likely to be drinking. Try not to be alone at night if possible, and stay in well lit areas. (226)*

*Walking faster (402)*

*Try to be less noticeable and keep quite, mind my own business and don't speak up, make sure I'm always in a crowded place and not to take any quiet streets in case anything happens and by watching what time I'm out till and making sure I'm not out late and limiting the amount of time I leave the house only leaving if it's necessary. (119)*



*Stay away from large groups. Don't shop at peak times (364)*

Other participants talked about avoiding public transport and air travel:

*Avoid city centre streets where it's quite, safer indoor shopping centre. Avoid travelling on my own on public transport. (94)*

*I rarely travel by air due to stress of questioning (161)*

*I do not like using public transport. Everyone looks at me like as if they've never seen a lady in a hijab before. It's the norm now with the amount of muslim population in Scotland but for some people the way they look at you is like as if you're an alien from planet Mars. Like, what is this creature? (Lol, literally). (352)*

Many discussed avoiding being out alone in any circumstance:

*I ensure that if I am out, it is always with a group. I also tend to come home earlier if I am by myself. (74)*

*I wear a hijab and feel uncomfortable with people's unfriendliness so do not go out in the evenings as much and when I do I will always be accompanied by a friend (312)*

Meanwhile, a smaller but not insignificant number of people discussed other small behaviour changes, such as having their phones fully charged so that they were ready to call for help or record Islamophobic abuse if it occurred:

*I do not let my family go out alone. I will always be with them, unless they are taking the car. We make sure we have our phones fully charged when going out for a walk or when we intend to use the public transport. (216)*

*More vigilant when outside, ready to record incidences on my mobile phone, watching who is near me and what cars are near me (376)*

I stress again that these small changes in behaviour that were talked about by a large number of participants were extremely nuanced and many reported doing many/multiple of what is listed above, and will reward deeper analysis and thematic coding.

### **Restricting first language use**

One participant commented that they had refrained from using their own first language in public spaces because of the fear of experiencing Islamophobia if they did:

*I tend to feel embarrassed speaking me own language incase that makes me sound like a terrorist or like people will think I'm saying anything bad behind they're backs as I have become sensitive to others opinions due to this islamophobia. (336)*

### **Staying in and not leaving the house**

This was one of the most common ways that participants had changed their behaviour; they reported not going out and staying at home either a) far more frequently than they previously had or b) entirely, and not going out at all. This was often paired with comments about leaving the house only when absolutely necessary, and being extremely fearful of doing so:

*so many places. I don't go out as much as i am so scared especially in Wester Hailes. My children are scared to go out as well. They stay in doors. Its affecting their health and well being. They wont go out anymore. I don't like going out anymore. (125)*

*Dont go out as much. More vary of surroundings. (350)*

### **Withdrawal from public services**

Participants reported that, as a result of Islamophobia, they had wholly or partially withdrawn from different public services or public goods for fear of experiencing it. Some, for example, said they had withdrawn their children from public education to home school them, while others talked of discrimination leading them to withdraw from toddler groups, social media, or swimming in public swimming pools:

*I don't go swimming because I am scared of wearing the Muslim swim costume and getting abuse. (103)*

*I don't join toddler groups. I don't go to pta meetings. I don't leave the house most days. I rarely go out alone. I'm scared to go for a walk alone with my children. (407)*

In addition, this was extended by one participant to not applying for particular jobs for fear of experiencing discrimination in the workplace or in the hiring process:

*Avoiding certain places at certain times, avoiding applying for certain jobs, avoiding certain leisure activities, avoiding accessing many public services (23)*

### **Going 'out of my way' to show Islam as peaceful**

Some participants indicated they had changed their behaviour positively and were actively trying to communicate to wider society that Islam is peaceful and that their faith is inclusive and open. This was often represented by participants as a sad necessity that was nonetheless stimulated by their devotion their faith and their desire to counter false representations of Islam and Islamophobia:

*I have actually become openly resolved to do what I can in my small way to challenge Islamophobia. I am lucky that as a [recently retired] schoolteacher in a Special school.....that I was in a workplace which was very open and supportive of all faiths and none.....however I know that isn't always the case. (38)*

*I go out of my way to show my religion as peaceful. (15)*

*Try my best to make others aware of what real Islam is and it means peace. (138)*

### **Arguing more with those who are Islamophobic**

In contrast to those who said they were actively attempting to discuss their faith and their religion as peaceful, other respondents said they had changed their behaviour to become more defensive, argumentative, and in some cases aggressive towards those being Islamophobic. This was sometimes framed as a necessity by respondents; they believed they had to defend their faith and their prophet against untruthful and hurtful slurs and would often do so in the street:

*I am more defensive and dont wear a headscarf (83)*

*Well I'm ready to answer bak, as I have just as much right as anyone n uk, cus my grandfather fought the 11 world war in uk in early forty's (282)*

*I would say its made me more willing to argue or maybe be violent towards someone whereas before i would just brush it off (210)*

### **Changing my name to not appear Muslim**

Finally, some participants said that they had changed their name (although they did not mention whether they had done so legally or not) to sound 'less Muslim' on some official documents; especially on job applications:

*I have changed my name to a less Muslim sounding name to help with job searches which I found has vastly improved responses. (423)*

*I had to change my name when applying for Jobs (159)*

### **What actions, if any, do you think the Scottish Government should take to tackle Islamophobia?**

This question was by far the most commented upon by respondents, many of whom wrote full, detailed responses stretching to numerous paragraphs. Some suggested broad actions that needed to be taken while others discussed specific changes to policy or other specific steps that they believed were essential. The broad themes were as follows:

#### **Law enforcement**

Respondents discussed various ways that legal changes should be made to tackle Islamophobia.

Firstly, respondents believed that tougher forms of punishment, and therefore deterrence, were needed to combat Islamophobia. Many commented that existing legal definitions and frameworks were inadequate for protecting Scottish Muslims and that tougher sentencing, fines, and more broadly a 'zero tolerance' approach was required. For example:

*More harsh punishments and penalties on those who are found to have committed islamophobic crimes or hate crimes against muslims in any form. (231)*

*Start throwing these hate groups in jail. Make islamophobia an offence that could land you in prison. Hold these racist people accountable and punish them appropriately. Make the message clear that islamophobia is NOT tolerated. (6)*

However, not all framed this as a means of punishing and deterring perpetrators of Islamophobia. Some participants believed that rehabilitation must be foregrounded when imprisoning perpetrators. For instance:

*When found guilty there should be an educational part of the sentence. I am a great believer that people can change when they 'Walk in someone else's shoes'. Perhaps some schemes where they perpetrator sits down with the victim. (156)*

Secondly, aside from tougher forms of punishment and deterrence, respondents highlighted other specific changes that the Scottish Government could make in the legal realm. These can be grouped into two broad categories: 1) the creation of new laws and definitions that made it easier to prosecute and punish instances of Islamophobia, and 2) the revocation of Prevent and Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act.

For example, many participants commented that Islamophobia needed to be recognised as a specific form of anti-Muslim hatred on par with anti-Semitism. They believed that the current legal status of Islamophobia is inadequate and that making Islamophobia a specific and more severe offence would contribute towards tougher police/legal action, as well as demonstrating to Muslims in Scotland that the problem is being recognised and addressed (see below). For example:

*It has to protect people from different religions including Muslims. In the way protections in the law provided against anti-Semitic activity the same need to be provided to my sons. The*

*average Muslim does not know the detail of the different legal in the criminal input implications of races are versus anti-Semitism versus the slammer phobia. The principle of the matter is all prejudice of Allphones by anyone should be equally treated. But we know under the law that's not the case. Although I may be wrong in this, the simple member of the community feels a disparity in treatment and the feeling of the government not doing enough to address this. (202)*

*Class islamophobia the same as anti semetism (160)*

*Make it a criminal offence as it is to be anti-Semetetic (371)*

In addition, other respondents similarly indicated that new forms of anti-racism law needed to be devised and applied to Islamophobia. Respondents' comments on this were diverse, and require further analysis. Indicatively:

*A clear definition of what extremism, terrorism are and attempts to link to Islam should not be allowed. (368)*

*Label Islamophobia as a hate crime, this should be same at least as antisemitic crime. (412)*

*Introduce laws which recognise Islamophobia as a form of racism. (382)*

*policies to tackle islamophobia should be in line with policies to tackle racial discrimination. make islamophobia unlawful (409)*

Many respondents highlighted the importance of the Scottish Government adopting a formal definition of Islamophobia as a step towards recognising and addressing the severity of the problem. For example, some participants emphasised the importance of adopting the APPG's definition:

*Really important there is a real strategy with different agencies to acknowledge it is real, adopt the APPG definition and make sure people know the consequences. (224)*

While another respondent touched on the revocation of a different definition:

*They should criminalise acts of Islamophobia. They should review the adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism which is used to target and suppress support for Palestinians, who are predominantly Muslims. (159)*

The revocation of Prevent and Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act was seen as crucial by many respondents. These respondents felt that Prevent had led to the targeting and marginalisation of Muslims in schools and that Schedule 7 unlawfully discriminated against Muslims. There were numerous comments about this, such as:

*Facilitate it's reporting, ensure prosecution, get rid of Prevent and Schedule 7 legislation which are both based on, and encourage, institutionalised Islamophobia. (400)*

*The Prevent agenda should be scrapped and a community level effort should be made to challenge and report extremism of all kinds, Muslims shouldn't be singled out or given more scrutiny. (15)*

*Revoke Prevent (80)*

Furthermore, and linking to comments in the previous section about institutional Islamophobia in the police, respondents believed that the Scottish Government should introduce specialist training to the police force on how to deal with Islamophobia. This was discussed as a way of combatting

perceived prejudices in the police and/or as a way of disrupting the lackadaisical way the police handled complaints of Islamophobia:

*The fact that so many incidents of Islamophobia go unreported to the police needs to be addressed. Officers dealing with such incidents should be trained and it should be as cathartic an experience as possible. When I reported my incident, I was messed about and left feeling I was responsible, it added to the anxiety I was experiencing. (156)*

*I think they need to train and educate authorities like the police, schools and the Council (124)*

*Police should be controlled and have to justify their reasons for stopping or interrogating muslims. Police should be trained on the difference between a normal muslim and terrorist muslims and how to spot it. Police should not be able to hold a muslim in station if they cannot charge him within the hour. (161)*

*Better police training on how serious such incidents are on the individual and to root out Islamophobia in police. (300)*

Lastly, some respondents highlighted what could be called the 'lag time' between the reporting of Islamophobic crimes and the actioning/investigating of reports by police. They felt that this relayed a message that Islamophobia is not taken seriously by the police and led to a lack of closure over specific incidents and a loss of confidence in their legal protection:

*It should also help with the justice process as it take years before the PF even looks at breach of the peace cases or racially aggravated cases. There should be a fast track as being racially or faith based hate if say done by a neighbour can be hard to live with for years till it goes to court. (439)*

## **Education**

Educating people about Islam and Muslim beliefs and practices was seen as fundamental to the reduction and eradication of Islamophobia by participants, and they highlighted several ways they believed the Scottish Government could support this. Many gestured that the Scottish Government should raise awareness among the population of the severely detrimental impact of Islamophobia on Muslims, while also highlighting the positive contributions that Muslims make to Scottish society:

*I think it has to start with better education around the topic and to implement a general consensus that's it not ok to be prejudice against someone because of their religion, particularly Muslims given the degree of islamaphobia. Similarly to anti racism campaigns, I think more needs to be done to tackle the issue, and that starts with raising it to make it clear it is actually an issue. (429)*

*The Scottish government should work to raise awareness of Islamophobia. Just as degrading anyone's faith is wrong and unjust, so too those degrading the Islamic faith should also know it's wrong. (214)*

*The Scottish government should start by addressing the wider issues that lead to islamophobia, A good start would be to ask questions from a variety of Scottish sectors & people to give an overall picture. This should concentrate on why & how ideas are formed about other groups, what led to this & how the situation should or not be addressed. This could then form the basis of guidelines for government institutions, employers & other organisations. These guidelines should Includes ways as to spot behaviours that lead to or*

*are of an islamophobic nature and how to tackle them. For example employers could have regular group employee meetings where islamophobia is included amongst other topics. (309)*

Specifically, schools were highlighted as key institutions in which the Scottish Government could intervene to educate children about Islam and the contributions that Muslims make, and have made, to Scotland and Scottish society. They suggested curriculum changes and/or the addition of content to existing curricula to do this. Importantly, this was not always about portraying Islam positively or peacefully, but also about highlighting Islamic contributions to science, culture, and heritage – thus combatting prevailing Western stereotypes. It was also about providing additional training to teachers:

*Teach kids at nursery level that all are equal, humanity is what matters, colour, race, religion are all personal matters, how we treat each other is the real basis of developing close and friendly societies (360)*

*The anti radicalisation training for teachers should make it clear there are radicals of all faiths and no faith. Using words like “be on the lookout for sudden changes in appearance” are totally aimed at Muslims but nothing is mentioned that actually there would be a sudden change because a practising Muslim starts covering up after they hit puberty while before they wouldn’t be required to. That doesn’t mean they are being radicalised it just means they’re growing up. (103)*

*The government could ensure that Muslim scientists are recognised and taught in school, e.g. the golden age of islam led to many advancements pre-dating Europe's rise, Muslims scientists such as Ibn Khaldun described the theory of evolution approx 400 years before Darwin in his work Al Muqaddimah etc. A more rounded approach to history, including positive information across all cultures should be incorporated into school, as it is important to educate children. (294)*

*Educate people in school history lessons and general of the scrafices Muslims have made for this country in the world wars it have never heard of any history lessons about it (36)*

*I think that RME should be a requirement in all schools.....with some good resources on Islam and on "people of the Book"....ie the festivals and some of the stories.....and lets All start celebrating EID for example and lets make people aware that many Muslims celebrate Christmas as there is the Islamic version of the Vhristmas Story in the Koran (38)*

Respondents believed that the Scottish Government should also create, and fund, public campaigns highlighting the contribution of Muslims to Scottish society and the negative impact of Islamophobia. In addition, respondents also believed the Scottish Government should fund and support community engagement and events celebrating Muslim contributions to Scottish society:

*Some form of clubs or work shop which tackles the issue especially in local area and at work. (401)*

*Active community integration activities, working with Religious and Community leaders to break down barriers in the different communities (158)*

*The Government should hold events that aim to integrate people. For instance holding a cultural celebration that invites and encourages everyone to come and find out more. For instance at a school where I was a parent in London, parents of Muslim children held an Eid*

*Celebration and invited everyone to come as well as other cultural or religious celebrations which could help to integrate the community. (124)*

Respondents varied in how exactly they thought this could be achieved: some believed the Scottish Government could fund and support open days and/or outreach days in mosques:

*Open days at Mosques, joint gatherings in public places where cultural views can be expressed. Exchange (university, schools, workplace) opportunities with U.K. and countries with an Islamic heritage. (24)*

Others believed the Scottish Government should, generally, be providing more money and funding to community events and celebratory days of national significance:

*They need to invest money into raising positive awareness, they need to look at employing people from this faith - there are many Muslim community groups who could benefit from funding so they could raise positive awareness however funding is an issue. The government needs to get to the roots of the problem. Talk to Muslim youth - don't just focus in what part of SCOTLAND but raise positive awareness in smallest cities. Muslims contribute to SCOTLAND yet they are subject to abuse. (345)*

*The government should fund some sort of community integration programs, aimed at all age groups. I think some people's hatred derives from a fear of the unknown. Each age group has the same problems as their peers. Too often I have heard comments that are shocking and are purely from ignorance. (156)*

Lastly, and linking to comments in the previous section about the prevalence of discriminatory practices in the workplace, respondents emphasised the need for employer/workplace training and the possible need for the introduction of penalisation for employers who are consistently prejudiced against Muslims in hiring and promotion practices:

*Muslim staff in all workplaces should have some way of reporting Islamophobic incidents without fearing repercussions. (32)*

*urge workplaces to train and retrain staff about equality and racism (42)*

*Increase opportunities for Muslims to get promoted and do well in their careers. (374)*

## **Politics**

Respondents also suggested what may be termed 'political' changes made in, or by, the Scottish Government. Some of these changes related to the culpability of the Scottish Government in fostering, or at least not preventing, the rise of Islamophobia, while other comments related to policy. Prominently, many respondents believed a necessary first step for the Scottish Government was to recognise both the severity of Islamophobia, and the complicity of the Scottish Government in its rise. This was believed to be a necessary first step to restoring confidence in the Scottish Government among Muslims, and was more generally accompanied by a perception that Islamophobia cannot be tackled if the scale of the problem is not fully grasped by the Government:

*The issue of Islamophobia is one that should be given urgent attention. Firstly, the government needs to acknowledge the problem and admit they (and indeed every person in Scotland) is failing to ensure everyone (irrespective of race or religion) is as much a part of this nation as anyone else and as such deserves to be treated with equal respect and awarded the same rights. We need to hear more from those directly affected by hate crimes*

*and listen to any advice they can offer - after all, these people know better than anyone the damage caused by violent racists/islamophobes. (184)*

*The scottish government has to be a lot more serious in understanding the scope of islamophobia in this country, as well as taking cases of online islamophobia considerably more seriously. (61)*

*Start at grassroots. remove islamophobia from the government first, then, those you govern, and then wider public (349)*

*Not just outward empty words. Scottish Government needs to root it out firstly in it's own govt. Not be so lenient on the press. Take action. (350)*

Respondents suggested a number of ways that this could be practically achieved. Some argued for the creation of a special parliamentary advisor group composed of Muslims from 'across the spectrum':

*Form a body of Muslims , across the spectrum, men women secular traditional Sunni Shia etc and help with workshops how to tackle Islamophobia , and this body's chairman then meets police , government ministers , etc (285)*

Others advocated the creation of a formal investigation or enquiry into Islamophobia in Scotland, including how current laws contribute to it:

*A public inquiry into the death of Sheku Bayou would increase confidence that the Government takes the public outcry about the death of a Muslim in police custody seriously. (149)*

*there should be a full independent review into the government's counter-terrorism strategy (409)*

*Stronger legislation is needed to punish such hate crimes. A thorough investigation is needed to get to the root of the problem. Why islamophobia is on the increase. What's it links to social media, tv, poverty, education or lack of? What's the reason and how can we eradicate it? (347)*

In addition, several respondents commented that this first step could not be achieved without listening seriously to the concerns of Muslims, which was accompanied by the implication that thus far reports and stories of Islamophobia have not been appropriately recognised and/or dealt with by the Government:

*Investigate by interacting with Muslims and to gauge exactly what their sentiments are about school, work and business (263)*

*Development of specific policies and strategies should be informed by people with lived experience of Islamophobia (52)*

In a slightly different vein, and connecting to respondents' discussions about education, numerous participants believed that the Scottish Government should do much more to actively promote the contributions and inclusion of Muslims in Scottish civic society and political landscape:

*Muslim contribution to Scotland should be acknowledge and highlighted (216)*



Some believed that this should take the form of the Scottish Government leading by example and hiring Muslims for prominent public and/or political roles, and encouraging the employment or appointment of Scottish Muslims to prominent societal positions. This was connected to the perceived under-representation of Muslims both in government, and in Scottish society in general. Participants therefore highlighted that the creation of role models in prominent positions in Scottish society was a crucial step in normalising and celebrating the position of Muslims in Scotland:

*When an ethnic minority person stands for a position in politics the Unions are told to vote for the white candidate — this will be denied but I challenge anyone to do a survey. People don't want to lose Jobs. Anyone who is racist should not be aloud to hold a public post. (67)*

*Do all it can to ensure it's employees represent Scottish society which includes Muslims. Ensure our educators are themselves educated about all forms of racism, sexism etc. Politicians need to speak out more. (35)*

*There should be an emphasis on representation - more Muslims on public boards (406)*

Other respondents shifted the focus to 'Politics' and suggested policies that should be adopted by the Scottish Government to tackle Islamophobia. Importantly, some connected the rise of Islamophobia in Scotland to the politics and history of the United Kingdom as a whole, and the current state of the Union. Some thought that the Scottish Government should do more to promote Scotland as an inclusive country:

*they should continue to say people are welcome or that people are Scots After all many people are Scottish and were born her The perception by some people is that all moslems are foreigners etc (25)*

*Proactively advocate that we are 1 nation and 1 society (275)*

Others, however, believed that the Scottish Government should take more of a stand against what they perceived as the intrinsically Islamophobic nature of Boris Johnson and the current Conservative government, and that Brexit had inevitably contributed towards the rise of xenophobia and Islamophobia in Scotland. Inevitably, Scottish independence was also perceived as a policy that should be followed by the Scottish Government by some; independence was perceived as an amputation of the English/British Islamophobic limb that had infected the rest of Scotland:

*Get Scottish Independence so we can have our own media and be less affected by English prejudice? (8)*

*Use the mandate, leave the UK and stop partaking and contributing to making people homeless in the Middle East. (46)*

*Should try there best for Scotland and uk to separate! So we can make more choices wise choices and fix ones. like give everyone have there right to do want they want to do! (82)*

*The Scottish Government in particular should world to make a point of not supporting Boris Johnson's previous Islamophobia comments and show Scotland as inclusive and accepting. (214)*

More broadly, respondents also discussed the necessity for joined-up, long-term policy thinking on Islamophobia, which included investing more money in research, participation, and outreach:

*make strategies against anti-Muslim racism a top priority in every national policy, not just some tick-box exercise. Solutions need to be long term, consistent and involving the communities affected as well as holding perpetrators into account at all levels. (80)*

*MONEY - funding should be made available for proactive and reactionary work to tackle Islamophobia, racism and other forms of hate crime. Not small pots of money to touch on a subject, but a real commitment to make a difference over a period of years. 1 year grants or small grants are often not sustainable and change takes time. (173)*

## **Media**

Unsurprisingly, given the extent to which respondents believed the print/broadcast media and social media contributes to Islamophobia, a large number of participants called for greater regulation of 'the media' in general. These suggestions ranged from the general to the specific, and encompassed ideas as to the more consistent and forceful application of existing law, to the creation of new anti-discriminatory laws that could be applied to the media, to forcing newspapers to print redactions and apologies in the same font/with the same prominence that they reported Islamophobic stories. Some examples:

*The media regulatory bodies should monitor the media rather than waiting for a victim to complain the incidents of islamophobia in print or electronic media. The service providers of social media should be obliged by law to control the canbels they operate and take actions by closing the accounts and reporting to the law inforcement bodies. (223)*

*Easier to report, firmer guidelines for media and social media. (79)*

*Criminalise Islamophobia and bring to task those who promote here speech. Media should not be allowed to publish false info and glamorise stories. Stories featuring a muslim receive vastly disproportionate media attention in comparison to non muslim counterparts (12)*

*Greater monitoring of social media use and also of what is reported in the Mainstream Media ie to be balanced and not to only show brown coloured people as terrorists. And to show all white folk as suffering from mental illness even when they have clearly been of sane mind when carrying out a horrible act on innocent people. A terrorist should not be based in the colour of somebody's skin. (162)*

*Social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are rife with Islamophobic abuse, you only have to look at the comments sections on any story relating to Muslims or Islam. The Government should legislate to enforce social media platforms to take stricter action to police against all forms of racism, Antisemitism and Islamophobia. Greater press regulation. Media negativity has a huge impact on public perception and the current self-policing nature of press regulation is simply insufficient. (410)*

## **Language use**

Finally, respondents highlighted that changes had to be made to how Muslims, Islam, and politics was discussed in Scottish society, particularly in politics and the media. Many commented that some representatives of the Scottish government are/were complicit in the normalisation of Islamophobia by, for example, highlighting the Muslim identity of individual terrorists while highlighting the mental instability of non-Muslim terrorists:

*The government should stop saying on media if an attack happened it would be a Muslim terriost but if a white person attacked it would be because they were "mentally ill" (404)*

For many, this was indelibly connected to the representation and discussion of Muslims in the Scottish media, but the message from many participants was that representatives of the Scottish Government should be doing more to think about how their own ordinary, everyday languages and ways of describing Muslims contributed to Islamophobia more widely:

*Ensure politicians are taken to account and reprimanded for Islamophobic and derogatory comments (292)*

*Challenge ministers and governmental representatives who use inflammatory language. (307)*

### **Far-Right and Islamophobic Survey Responses**

Some survey respondents were antagonistic towards the aims and objectives of the survey. These respondents were overtly critical of the rationale behind the survey and left extremely racist comments in the open question fields. As requested, a selection of the most striking of these is below:

*"There's nothing called Islamophobia. Islamists are killers because their book asks them to do so and they are radicalized right from the birth, and everyone should fear." (445)*

*"There are no problems. Moslems want to take control of our society, Islamophobia is a reasonable reaction." (293)*

*"I think that the real problem facing the UK and the free world is the ongoing threat of Islam and especially Islamic extremism spreading like a deadly cancer throughout the world where Islam was simply a distant threat to humanity and civilisation." (169)*

*"Inventing a problem - Islamophobia - which barely exists is a waste of public money. In addition, use of this term is used to prevent discussion and debate around pertinent social and cultural issues. One example is male pressure from those with religious authority on women to dress in particular ways. This is a clear example of sexist cultural norms but proper debate of this issue is often mid-termed as Islamophobia." (16)*

*"Islam in its current form is a disgusting ideology that doesn't belong in our society because at its core, it teaches division and hatred. The government keeps telling our nation that islam is ok and accepting but is NOT!" (64)*

*"in a world where we should stamp out ANY antisemitism, ask any muslim to break bread with a homosexual and a jew at the same time and watch them implode. Muslims are openly antisemitic. Why is this never called upon?" (64)*

*"There are no anti Islam vigilantes in Scotland and Muslims already receive more protection than other groups. Most of the population is terrified to mention "Islam" or "Muslim" in case someone gets offended and they get arrested. The current climate including ludicrous surveys like this help to foster division rather than cohesion" (450)*

*"I fear for my country and future generations that Islam will poison and radicalise minds that up until now have been free from this awful and barbaric way of life, I fear for all the innocent animals that will be slaughtered in the name of Islam under halal barbarism." (169)*

*"Bulldoze all mosques, pass order in the same lines as China is doing to Uighurs - no beard, no mosque, no roza, no knife/machete, go school, work for your living." (445)*

*“The Scottish government should ban Islam before Islam bans all trace of humanity and the free world!!” (169)*

*“The government must address the hatred and division islam sows into our society with its fundamental teachings of segregation from non-believers, it's degradation of women and it's general un-Scotland-like attitude towards other human beings.” (64)*