

Muslims face high rates of discrimination in Canada

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One in five Muslim Canadians say they have experienced discrimination due to their religion, ethnicity or culture at least once in the past five years.

A recent study from the University of Waterloo also found that among the general adult population in each Canadian region, Muslims were the least liked group when compared to caucasians, catholics, Indigenous people, members of the LGBTQ community and [racial minorities](#).

"There are negative attitudes towards Muslims in Canada as a specific group and they themselves are experiencing higher rates of discrimination than most other demographic groups in Canada. That is the reality," said Sarah Wilkins-Laflamme, assistant professor of sociology at the University of Waterloo and author of the study.

"However, residents of Quebec, older respondents and persons who favour Conservative politics were found to be more likely to have greater negative feelings towards Muslims than towards members of other social groups."

The study drew on information from the 2011 Canadian Election Study and the 2014 General Social Survey by Statistics Canada.

The election study, which surveyed a total of 4,202 individuals 18 years and older, asked people to choose a number between zero (really dislike) and 100 (really like) to represent their feelings towards various groups living in Canada.

Rates of significantly more [negative feelings](#) towards Muslims than towards other racial minorities varied by region among the general population, with 31 per cent of respondents in British Columbia expressing such feelings, 38 per cent in the Prairies, 33 per cent in Ontario, 50 per cent in Quebec and 33 per cent in Atlantic Canada.

The General Social Survey asked 831 individuals aged 15 and older who identified as Muslim whether they have experienced discrimination.

Rates of self-identified discrimination also varied by region, with 35 per cent of Muslims in Atlantic Canada, 22 per cent in the Prairies and British Columbia, 22 per cent in Quebec, and 18 per cent in Ontario indicating they have experienced [discrimination](#) at least once in the past five years.

"The results from this study indicate that educational measures and open dialogue with Muslims and Muslim communities to combat the closed views of Muslims and prejudice need to focus on more than just educational institutions," said Wilkins-Laflamme. "A serious effort should also be made to bring the dialogue to social settings where Quebec residents, older adults, those without a university education, and those with a more conservative value orientation can also benefit from them."

The study was published recently in the scientific journal *Canadian Review of Sociology*.

Provided by University of Waterloo

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