

Country Report on Islamisation: Norway

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Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for this opportunity for me to present a short briefing on the status of the islamization of Norway.

Norway has had Muslim immigration since 1974. No one knows the exact number of Muslims living in Norway, but a conservative estimation would place the figure at around a **120 000** individuals, at present. Which means that Muslims now constitute roughly **2,5 %** of Norways population of 4,7 million.

No one knows exactly how many Muslims immigrate to Norway each year, since National Statistics Norway does not register the religious denomination of immigrants, only their country of origin. What we do know is that Norway receives around **7000** immigrants a year from countries where Islam is the dominant religion. This figure has been steadily rising for over 30 years.

While non-western immigration to Norway has been skyrocketing in the last few years due to work-force immigration from Eastern Europe, Muslim immigration appears to display a rather *steady growth rate*.

About 7000 Muslim immigrants a year might seem like a modest figure in comparison to what other countries have to cope with, but the impact this has on Norwegian society is actually quite dramatic. 7000 people is about the size of a small Norwegian village – and so we are receiving one such village of Muslims per year, most of them actually coming from villages in underdeveloped countries. Also, most of these immigrants settle in the capital, Oslo, where children of immigrant background now make up more than 1/3 of all pupils enrolled in first grade, a majority of whom are Muslim. Obviously, this is bringing about some dramatic changes to the environment of our nation's capital, and is changing the atmosphere and the quality of growing up, living and going through school in that city.

Looking at the *growth rate* of Muslim immigration, **we went from roughly 6000 individuals in 1990 to 7500 in 2006**. This might appear to be a rather modest increase, but the growth rate between those figures is actually 25%. So we have had, roughly, a 25 % increase of Muslim immigration in 16 years. If the growth continues in that way, we will soon enough experience a much more rapid increase in the absolute numbers of Muslim immigrant influx as well. And unless this trend is halted, we will see a Muslim majority population in our country in the course of the 21st century.

Now, there is reason to believe that we will be seeing acceleration in Muslim immigration in the years, even decades to come. The reason for this lies in a combination of demographic and family reunion trends. The growing wave of second generation immigrants in Norway has only barely started founding families. Considering solely the group of nationalities that typically practice arranged/forced marriages on behalf of their children, almost all of whom are Muslim, Norway has at present 80 000 individuals in that group, aged 1-19 years old.

Those immigrant populations that have this tendency to arrange/force marriages on behalf of their children, not only have a tendency to arrange for them to take place within their own ethnic group, they also have a conspicuous tendency to arrange these marriages with clients, often relatives, in their respective home countries. For some ethnic groups, like the Pakistanis, this runs at over 70 % of all marriages taking place within the group. So 70 % of young Pakistanis marry with an individual from their country of origin – which is then brought in to Norway through family reunion.

And so, **unless we reform our immigration laws**, then based on what we know of these particular immigrant population's marriage patterns, we are confronted with an upcoming wave of immigration through family reunifications, caused by the practice of arranged marriages in, predominantly, our Muslim immigrant population.

So much for demographics. Now let's have a look at the religious aspect of islamization.

The largest mosques and Islamic institutions in Norway are what we could call Islamist. By Islamist I mean any orientation within Islam that considers Islam to be the organizing principle of society. So by Islamist I mean political Islam – not necessarily violently political Islam, but just some sort of program to impose Islam on the judicial and political order of society. Most Islamic institutions in Norway are Islamist.

According to Norwegian anti-terror experts, "only" a couple of hundred Muslims living in Norway support or would be willing to engage in Islamic jihad in the West (I mean violent jihad here). Of course, a much larger number support jihad in Afghanistan and Irak, not to mention Israel – which is actually quite interesting: when researchers try to get a grip of the level of support for Islamic jihad among Muslims living in Norway, support for Hamas or Hezbollah does not count. If you support Hamas or Hezbollah in Norway (as does large parts of our atheist political elite too, by the way), you are not counted in as a supporter of terror organizations.

Anyway, though the situation calls for serious concern, it is quite clear that Norway does not suffer from nearly the same degree of Islamist radicalization as does, e.g., Great Britain.

How about peaceful support of sharia laws? How strong is Muslim support for the democratic introduction of sharia? The best answer to that question is, I think, that we do not know. A poll conducted in 2006 came up with 14 % support, but the design of that survey was such as to make its results unreliable. Probably the real figure is somewhere between the 14 % shown in that survey and 40 %, which appears to be the support level for sharia laws among British Muslims.

What strands of Islamism are most prevalent among Norwegian Muslims? As far as I am able to discern, two movements stand out. One is the **Jamaat-i-Islami** which is, for one, the largest religious party in Pakistan, but also a religious movement with a large following on the Asian continent. Jamaat-i-Islami was founded by the radical and revolutionary ideologist **Abu Ala Mawdudi** and displays a close resemblance to the ideology of the Muslim brotherhood. Predictably Jamaat-i-Islami has its largest following among immigrants of Pakistani descent, Norway's largest immigrant group altogether.

The second most prevalent Islamist movement appears to be the Muslim brotherhood, or rather mosques and institutions with an ideological affinity to the brotherhood movement. Brotherhood-style Islamism seems to be in vogue primarily among Muslims of Arab and North-African descent, but also attracts some Norwegian converts. A figure of immense influence within this branch of Islamism is **Yussuf al-Qaradawi**, among others head of **The European Council for Fatwa and Research**. (– And mind that organization: The European Council for Fatwa and research is an essential player to look for for anyone monitoring the advances of legal Islamism on the European continent).

Conclusion

All in all, the islamization of Norway, solemn and troublesome though it is, is not very far advanced compared to most other nations of Western Europe. Neither demographically nor in terms of religious radicalization, is the situation by us nearly as grave as it is in, e.g., Sweden, the Netherlands, Great Britain, Germany or France. And what is more, we have the means of tackling the budding islamization of our nation at our disposal.

First and foremost, we can simply restrict our immigration laws. An essential step in that regard would be to follow in the footsteps of Denmark and tighten the conditions for family reunifications. This is something my organization, **Human Rights Service**, actively works to promote.

Secondly, we can stop government support of organizations that support Islamic terror.

Thirdly, we can abandon the ridiculous idea that all religions are equal, and, consequently, the principle that all religions should be treated equal. We can face up to it that we are a country with a specific cultural heritage, that our values and the norms we want to uphold in our society are shaped by Christianity and by humanist enlightenment, and we can acknowledge that this is an heritage we want to preserve. We can, democratically, demand that those values and those norms, not those of Medina, be preserved as the foundations for our society. It shouldn't really be that hard to do.

So it will be my conclusion that, at present, **the greatest threats concerning the islamization of Norway do stem from the Islamists themselves, but from relativism, multiculturalism and political correctness within our own ranks.**