YES TO MUSLIMS, NO TO ISLAM?

Knowledge protects against Islamophobia.

What dimensions of Islamophobia are found in young people's attitudes? Can the manifestations of Islamophobia be differentiated. What relationships are found between Islamophobia, the socio-structural conditions in which young people grow up, and their lifeworld experiences? What do young people know about Islam?

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Introduction

Anti-Muslim racism is deeply rooted in German and European socie-
ties (Attia 2015; Espisoto and Kalin 2011) and rejection, devaluation,
exclusion and violence against Muslims have increased noticeably in
recent years. Public debate in Germany is characterised by a running
discourse about the place of Muslim life and whether Islam belongs to
Germany. The societal context for this development includes discussion
about migration and coexistence in society, racist attacks on refugees
and migrants, right-wing populism in many European countries, and
heightened security discourses in the light of acts of violence by Isla-
mist organisations. Those regarded as Muslims experience prejudice
and discrimination. They are disadvantaged in the education system, in
the labour market and in the housing market; they are denied belonging,
deprived of participation, and accused of backwardness and violence
(Uslucan 2014). Studies find reservations and stereotypes about Muslims
and Islam among large parts of the non-Muslim population (for example
Loginov 2017; Zick 2017). Given that background, what do non-Muslim
young people think about Islam and Muslims? What forms does Islam-
ophobia adopt as an ideology of inequality among young people? And
what opportunities does the education system offer for prevention and
intervention against anti-Muslim racism?

We examined these questions in a research collaboration at the Universities of Duisburg-Essen and Bielefeld, funded from 2017 to 2020 by Stiftung Mercator. As well as producing knowledge about the significance of anti-Muslim attitudes among young people, it also contributes to the development of suitable research instruments and pedagogical concepts for dealing with this phenomenon.

This publication presents the findings of an explorative survey of about five hundred young people at general and vocational secondary schools in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia, which was conducted as part of the research project. In the following chapters we investigate the dimensions of Islamophobia found at the level of young people's attitudes. We inquire which experiences and background conditions are significant for anti-Muslim attitudes and go on to formulate input for educational practice and civil society.

Our Project

The research project "Islamophobia and the Youth" investigates how non-Muslim young people relate to Islam and Muslims. The research interest is directed towards the question of how young people perceive, assess and judge Islam and Muslims. We also investigate which issues (dimensions) most strongly shape ideas about Muslims and Islam. Both empirical questions are also directed towards identifying input for developing new measures against discriminatory stereotypes, attitudes and images.

In the first phase of the investigation we built on studies identifying anti-Muslim racism as a historical constant of European intellectual history and investigating its contemporary media manifestations (for example, Allen 2016; Attia 2015; Esposito/Kalin 2011; Hafez 2017). Building on these perspectives we conducted and analysed twenty interviews with non-Muslim young people in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia, seeking the fundamental forms and issues of the Islam discourse among the youth. In this first phase we were interested in understanding the similarities and differences between how young people think about Islam and Muslims and the wider public discourse. We were also interested in the question of which lifeworld experiences play a role in young people's positioning towards Islam. Initial findings on these analyses are described in our publication "… You Immediately Think of Islamic Fundamentalism".

The second phase of our project focussed on using data from interviews and discussions to develop (new) attitude measures suitable for larger samples, in order to investigate prevalence among young people. We developed a questionnaire, building on the latest findings in prejudice research, the experience with research into group-focused enmity at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence (Zick, Küpper and

»…MAN DENKT IMMER SOFORT AN ISLAMISMUS«*

Islamfeindlichkeit im Jugendalter

Wie beziehen sich junge Menschen in Deutschland auf den aktuellen Diskurs über den Islam und die Muslime? Welche Narrative der Islamfeindlichkeit kommen dabei zum Ausdruck? Wie werden islamfeindliche Positionen für junge Menschen anschlussfähig?

Hövermann 2011; Zick and Klein 2014), and the findings from our own qualitative interview study (phase one of the project). The questionnaire contained a **sophisticated survey instrument** on Islamophobia, as well as questions on experiences with Islam and Muslims, on knowledge about Islam, on a few other attitude dimensions and on some personal details. Almost five hundred school students at four selected secondary schools in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia (comprehensive, vocational, selective) completed the questionnaire. The present publication presents first results from these analyses.

Year One (May 2017 – 2018)

What are the contours of Islamophobia among young people?

→ Qualitative study analysing twenty biographical interviews with young people
→ Differentiated description of the Islam discourse and Islamophobia
→ Expert interviews with international researchers on Islamophobia

Findings
- Topoi of the Islam discourse
- Narratives of Islamophobia
- Young people's positions
- Biographical embedding

Year Two (May 2018 – 2019)

How are Islamophobic attitudes of young people structured and what forms do they take?

→ Standardised questionnaire survey of approximately five hundred young people in secondary schools
→ Description of the structure and social conditions of Islamophobic attitudes
→ Islamophobia in the context of other attitude dimensions

Findings
- Characterisation of Islamophobia
- Identify interaction with other attitudes
- Identify social conditions

Year Three (May 2019 – 2020)

How can school act against Islamophobia?

→ Develop preventive approaches on basis of curricular guidelines and didactic perspectives

Findings
- Identify suitable approaches for educational work to prevent Islamophobia

In a third and concluding phase of the project we will build on the findings from the first two phases to develop approaches and recommendations for racism-critical education work to prevent Islamophobia. This will focus on the institution of school, which has a special role to play in questioning, critiquing and rebuffing the anti-democratic hate-driven positions that are gaining currency in the current political and social atmosphere.

Anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia

The concept of "anti-Muslim racism" describes the historic and socio-cultural devaluation of people categorised as Muslims, in which "religious aspects meld with social, cultural, societal, political and other differentiations and positionings" (Attia 2013). Using the term "Islamophobia" emphasises our social-psychological standpoint, which builds on the current of research into attitudes and prejudices towards Muslims.

Narratives of Anti-Muslim Racism – Findings of the Qualitative Study

The findings of the interview analyses in the first phase of our project reveal that young people relate to Islam and Muslims in eight thematic fields **(topoi of the Islam discourse)**. Most of their statements in this context involve negative stereotypes und generalisations concerning Islam. There are to a lesser extent also positive references, for example in critical perspectives on media reporting about Islam, in reflections on students' experiences of racism and exclusion, and in expressions of solidarity with them. As such, the eight observed topoi reflect the broader public discourse on Islam in Germany.

Closer examination of the anti-Muslim positions among non-Muslim young people – on which our study focuses – reveals four conspicuous concentrations of negative assertions about Islam and Muslims. In line with other studies in the research field, we term these **narratives of anti-Muslim racism** (for example Spielhaus 2010; Shooman 2014; Attia 2015). In these narratives, negative and homogenising assertions about Islam and Muslims coalesce into the patterns of explanation and interpretation through which young people make sense of their social reality.

What do young people connect with Islam? How do they relate to it?

Topoi and narratives of the Islam discourse
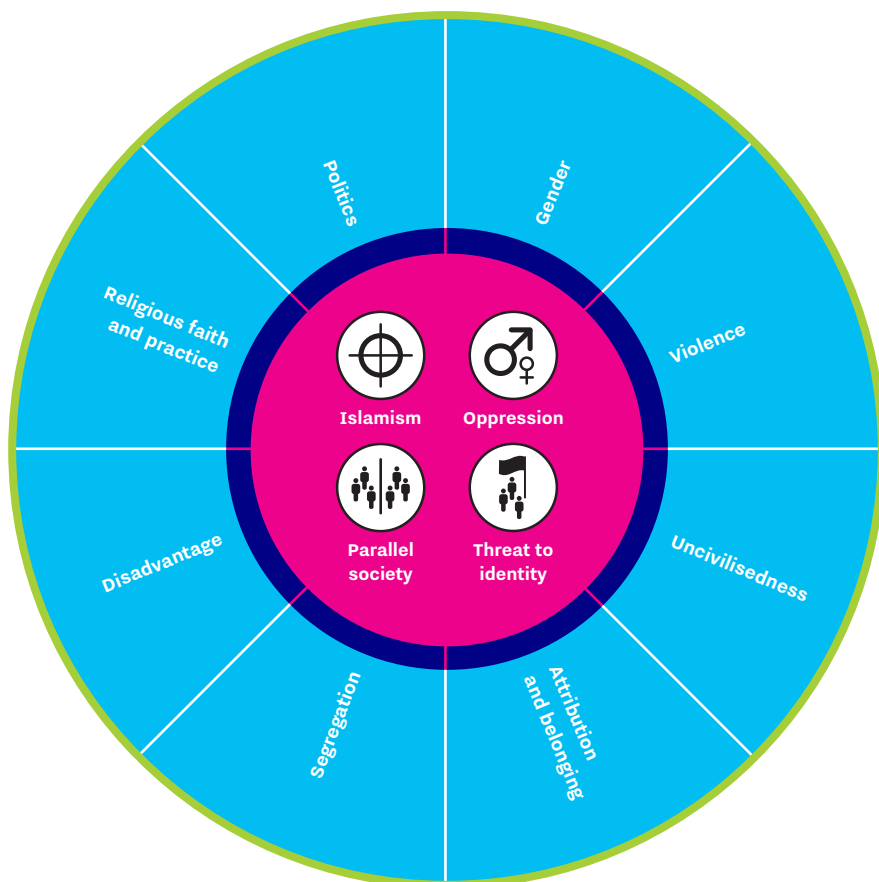
In the **narrative of oppression,** anti-modern, outdated gender relations are attributed to Islam. The Muslim male is constructed as a dominant, potentially violent patriarch who refuses to accept women as equals. On the other side, Muslim women are perceived as powerless subjects who are dominated by their males relatives and whose radius of social activity is restricted to the family. The narrative of oppression also includes a construction of the non-Muslim majority society as being comprehensively modern without a vestige of sexism.

The **narrative of threat to identity** asserts that Islam as a religion and world order threatens the democratic way of life of modern European societies, in a set of ideas that are especially prevalent in right-wing populist discourses. Here Islam is constructed as an overpowering ideology that threatens values like equality, political autonomy and liberty. The narrative is dominated by fears about uncontrolled immigration, loss of cultural identity and failure of political instances.

The **narrative of Islamism** draws on heightened security discourses, focussing above all on fear of Islamist terrorism. Here Islam is construed as a violent religion that rejects the norms and values of society. All Muslims are regarded as potentially violent, while differences in the practice of Muslim faith are completely ignored.

The **narrative of a parallel society** combines negative perceptions of coexistence with an expectation that integration means change only on the part of the Muslims. It is the least prevalent of the four narratives in our sample of young people. Cultural belonging, nationality and religion are understood as immutable characteristics that make Muslims into strangers who are seen as living separate lives. The modern plurality of values and lifestyles is experienced as socio-spatial segregation and rejected.

These interpretive models are characterised by negativity towards Islam and Muslims. In the context of specific lifeworld conditions and personal experiences they become interpretations of the world that present Muslims as "others" who endanger "our" life and societal order. But there are also clearly critical positions towards the narratives of anti-Muslim racism, which can be characterised as a "counter-discourse". In the following we examine how these knowledge complexes operate at the level of young people's opinions and attitudes.
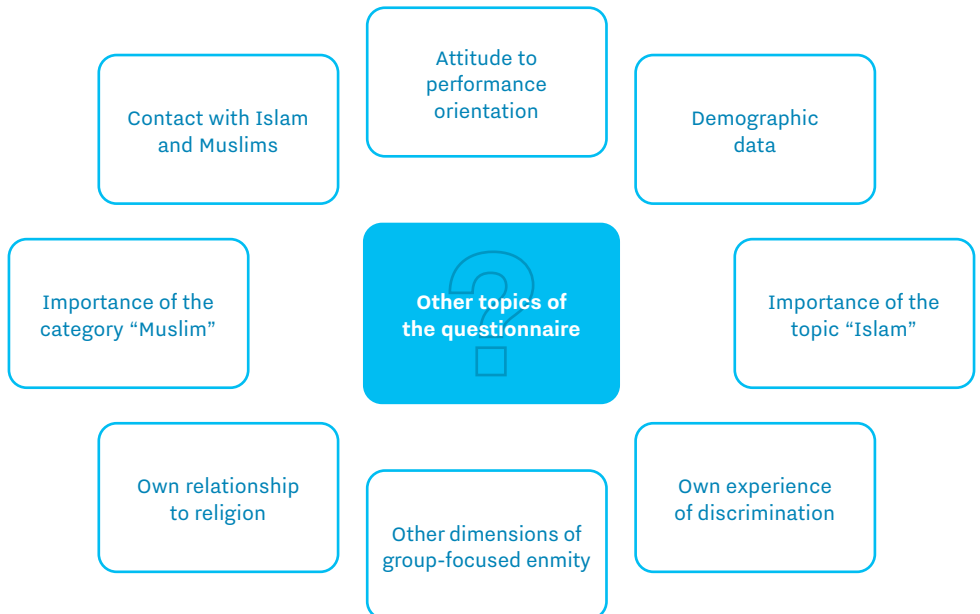
The Questionnaire

The central objective of the quantitative study was to capture the four described narratives and investigate the extent to which the interpretations associated with them are found among young people. First of all, we screened the items used in existing quantitative studies. Suitable items were assigned to the corresponding narratives, unsuitable ones were excluded.

The second step was to construct new questions on the basis of the qualitative findings. This involved condensing formulations from the interviews with young people to express typical perspectives. So the instruments used to survey the narratives are based on a **combination of new and established questions**. However, transposing the narrative patterns concerning Islam and Muslims into statements (items) for the questionnaire cannot do justice to the complex discursive structure of anti-Muslim racism. In the following discussion of the quantitative study, we refer to these strands of discourse reduced to the aspect of attitudes as "dimensions".

At the end of this process we had six statements for each narrative, which the respondents were asked to rate on a five-point scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The findings of the interview study also produced other inputs for the questionnaire. For example, knowledge about Islam was repeatedly found to be important in the interviews, and was therefore included in the questionnaire.

Structure and content of the questionnaire

The questionnaire began with two open-ended questions and a quiz block on knowledge about Islam and Muslims in Germany. In this section respondents were asked to respond with "true", "false" or "don't know" to ten statements about the religious faith and practice of Muslims. The questions were designed to be open and playful in order to reduce inhibitions. The quiz was followed by four blocks of questions on the dimensions of anti-Muslim racism (threat to identity, parallel society, oppression and Islamism) and a block on critical responses to these. Established and tested statements from various studies were also included, to enable a comparison between the new and existing instruments. That allows the results of this study to be compared with those from other studies.

Contact with Islam and Muslims

Attitude to performance orientation

Demographic data

Importance of the category "Muslim"

Other topics of the questionnaire

Importance of the topic "Islam"

Own relationship to religion

Other dimensions of group-focused enmity

Own experience of discrimination

How did Muslim students respond?
In order to avoid excluding school students who see themselves as Muslims – but without asking them to read and assess potentially hurtful opinions about Muslims and their beliefs – we trialled an innovative approach.

Before the blocks with questions about attitudes to Muslims and Islam, the respondents were asked whether they were Muslim themselves. If they responded that they were, for the blocks in question they were asked to say how they thought most non-Muslims in Germany would respond to the statements. The idea behind this was to capture how Muslims themselves believe they and their religion are viewed by the majority society. Respondents who indicated that they belonged to a different religion or none at all were asked to rate the extent to which the statements were true in their own personal opinion.

This approach was designed to avoid offending the participating Muslim school students while at the same time gathering data about their own perspectives on the majority society. Nevertheless a number of Muslim and non-Muslim respondents perceived some of the statements in the questionnaire to be racist.

In practice it became apparent that abstracting the assessment of societal perceptions in this way does not solve this problem. On the one hand, Muslim respondents still felt the instruments to be objectionable, and rejected them. And on the other hand, some Muslim respondents also wanted to express their own views about Muslims. Here there is a need for further development work in standardised prejudice research to include critical perspectives of respondents.

This publication focuses on the Islamophobia of non-Muslim young people. We believe it would be highly relevant to include the perspectives of Muslim young people in further research.

A page from the questionnaire

6. **Gehören Sie einer Glaubensgemeinschaft an?**

○ muslimische Glaubensgemeinschaft   ○ andere oder keine Glaubensgemeinschaft

Wenn Sie selbst Muslim*a sind würden wir gerne wissen wie Sie die Meinung der nicht-muslimischen Mehrheitsgesellschaft einschätzen.

Was denken Sie, wie würde die Mehrheit der Nicht-Muslim*innen in Deutschland antworten?

Inwieweit treffen die folgenden Aussagen auf die Mehrheit der Nicht-Muslim*innen zu?

Wenn Sie selbst keiner muslimischen Glaubensrichtung angehören, würden wir gerne Ihre eigene Meinung erfahren.

Was denken Sie über die Mehrheit der Muslim*innen in Deutschland?

Inwieweit treffen die folgenden Aussagen Ihrer Meinung nach zu?

7. **Denken Sie bitte an die in Deutschland lebenden Muslim*innen.**
Bitte setzen Sie ein Kreuz in jeder Zeile.

		die Aussage trifft … zu			
		über- haupt nicht	eher nicht	teils/ teils	eher	voll und ganz
a)	Muslim*innen setzen sich für unsere offene Gesellschaft ein.	○	○	○	○	○
b)	Muslim*innen bedrohen viele Dinge, die ich in dieser Gesellschaft für gut und richtig halte.	○	○	○	○	○
c)	Muslim*innen bedrohen unsere Freiheiten und Rechte.	○	○	○	○	○
d)	Muslim*innen sind nicht fremd in Deutschland.	○	○	○	○	○
e)	Wegen der muslimischen Männer kann man als junge Frau nicht mehr alleine durch die Straßen gehen.	○	○	○	○	○
f)	Wegen der Muslime kann ich mich in bestimmten Stadtteilen nicht mehr bewegen.	○	○	○	○	○

The Sample

The findings reported below report the attitudes of non-Muslim respondents towards Muslims and Islam. The analysis therefore includes only the responses from non-Muslim respondents.
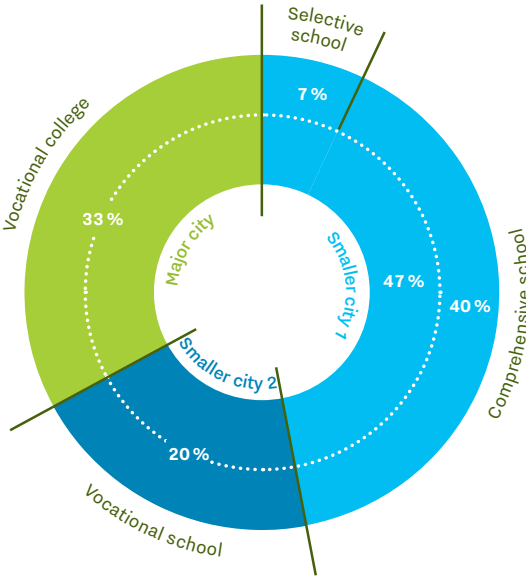
The questionnaire survey was conducted in years **11 – 13 in four schools** in three cities in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia.
→ The data is based on the responses of 480 respondents.
→ One-third of respondents (33 percent) went to school in a major city (at least 100,000 inhabitants).
→ Two-thirds of respondents (67 percent) attended schools in two smaller cities (20,000 to 100,000 inhabitants).

The four participating schools also represent four different school types
→ In the major city the survey was conducted at a **vocational college.**
→ In one of the smaller cities
   → ione **selective secondary school** (7 percent)
   → and one **comprehensive secondary school** (40 percent) participated in the survey.
   → Together these two represented almost half of the sample (47 percent).
→ In the second smaller city the survey was conducted at a **vocational school**, with the respondents representing one-fifth of the sample (20 percent).

Size of city, type of school

Selective school

Vocational college

7 %

33 %

Major city

Smaller city 1

47 %

40 %

Comprehensive school

Smaller city 2

20 %

Vocational school

Gender

47 %
male

1%
other

52 %
female

Age

Mean
18.3 years

Min.
15 years

Max.
31 years

The survey was not designed to be representative of all schools in the state and the findings cannot be generalised. The sample was not selected randomly among all schools in North Rhine-Westphalia (which would be the criterion for representativeness) but intentionally to maximise heterogeneity. For that reason we ensured that the sample included different regions, sizes of city and types of school. The sample therefore included classes in comprehensive and selective general secondary schools as well as in vocational schools. The schools were also spread among different regions of the state and located in settlements of different sizes. This variation is crucial for the validity of the data, whose prime objective is to create a comprehensive and detailed description of the phenomenon of Islamophobia by combining qualitative and quantitative methods. In the study we investigate whether the perceptions about Muslims and Islam – the narratives identified using qualitative methods in the interview study – are replicated in a larger sample using quantitative methods. Because the sample was comparatively small it made sense to select the schools and colleges intentionally in order to cover the span of criteria. On the other hand, because the research was not seeking to quantify the prevalence of Islamophobia the criterion of representativeness was not absolutely crucial.

The relationships reported here are not causal. In other words they do not explain how the identified knowledge assertions and attitudes came into being. In most cases they represent the simultaneous occurrence of different phenomena (correlations), whereby the strengths of the relationships vary (in most cases moderate to weak). So they describe tendencies and do not apply to all respondents.

To investigate whether different groups (for example men and women) have different attitudes, mean differences were calculated. The statistical significance of correlations and mean differences was tested. This means using statistical methods to determine how likely it is that the correlations and differences in the data are attributable to real phenomena rather than produced by coincidence. In this publication we report only correlations and differences where the likelihood that they are real is at least 95 percent ($p \leq 0.05$). In the statistical results, eta squared (η^2) represents the strength of mean differences. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r) and Spearman's rho (r_s) indicate the strength of correlations.

The mean age of the respondents was 18.3 years (N = 475, SD = 2.14, min. 15, max. 31). The age most frequently named was 17 years (mode).
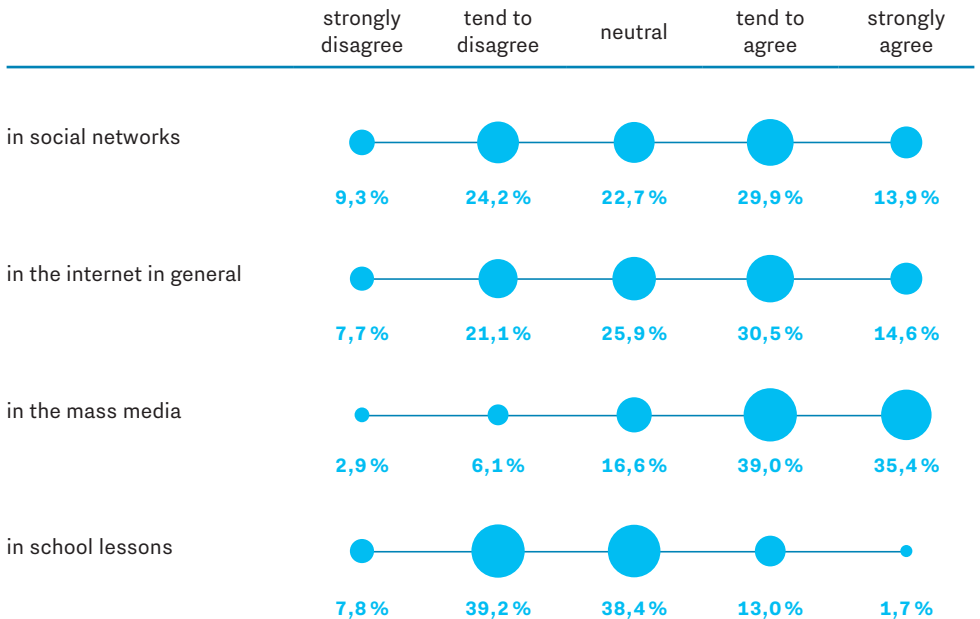
The gender balance was roughly even with 248 respondents indicating "female" and 226 "male". Five respondents selected the option "other" indicating a non-binary gender category.

Findings of the Quantitative Survey
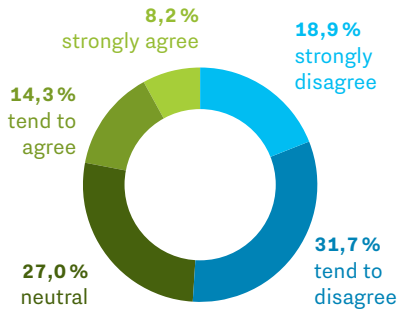
Encountering Islam

Respondents encountered Islam principally in the mass media, but also in social networks and the internet. **School was not experienced as a place of active contact with Islam and Muslims,** nor was Islam a big topic of conversation with friends and family.

I often encounter Islam ... (N = 475 – 478)

	strongly disagree	tend to disagree	neutral	tend to agree	strongly agree
in social networks	9,3 %	24,2 %	22,7 %	29,9 %	13,9 %
in the internet in general	7,7 %	21,1 %	25,9 %	30,5 %	14,6 %
in the mass media	2,9 %	6,1 %	16,6 %	39,0 %	35,4 %
in school lessons	7,8 %	39,2 %	38,4 %	13,0 %	1,7 %

Islam is a topic I discuss with my friends.
(N = 477)

8,2 %
strongly agree

14,3 %
tend to
agree

27,0 %
neutral

18,9 %
strongly
disagree

31,7 %
tend to
disagree

Islam is a topic I discuss with my family.
(N = 478)

9,2 %
strongly agree

14,9 %
tend to
agree

26,2 %
neutral

20,5 %
strongly
disagree

29,3 %
tend to
disagree

Mosque visit (N = 480)

46,5 %
I have visited
a mosque

53,5 %
I have never
visited a mosque
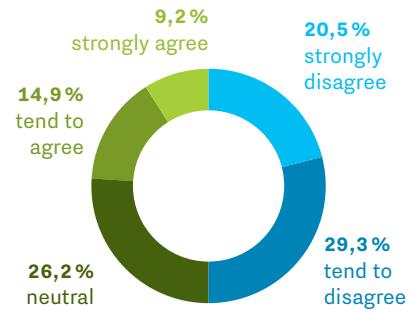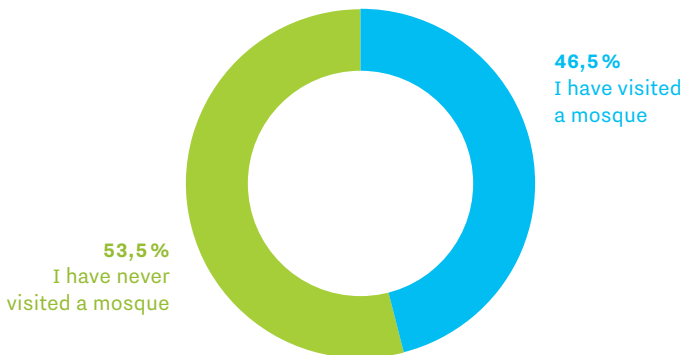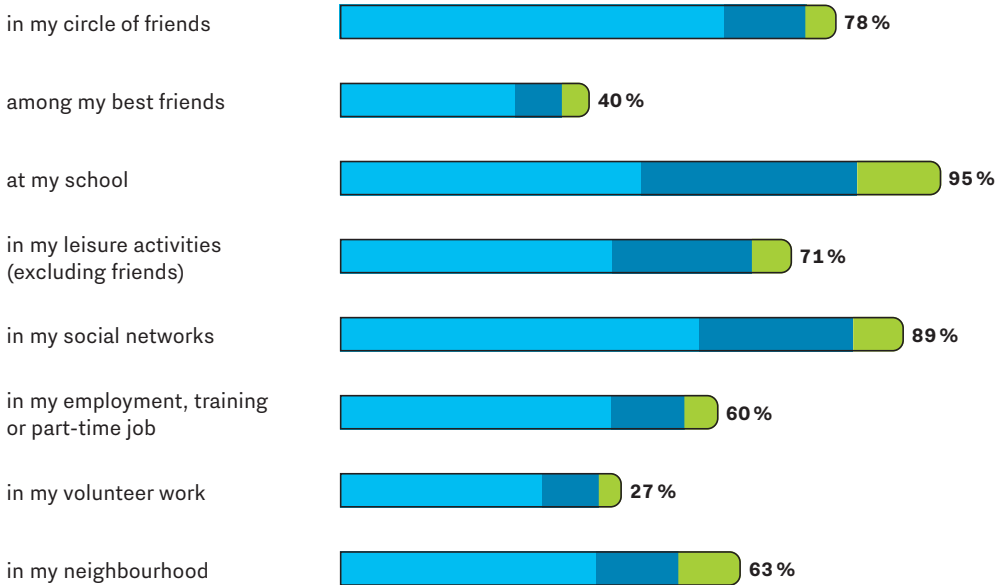
There were certainly potential opportunities for discussions with peers,
however. Large proportions of respondents reported encountering Mus-
lims at school (95 percent), in social networks (89 percent), in their
circle of friends (78 percent), in leisure activities (71 percent), in the
neighbourhood (63 percent) and in work situations (employment, train-
ing, part-time job) (60 percent). Although the figure was lower, **more
than one-third of respondents (40 percent) said they had Muslims
among their best friends.**

Aside from school and lifeworld, non-Muslim young people may also en-
counter Islam in places of worship. **About half of respondents (47 per-
cent) had visited a mosque at least once.**

I have contact with Muslims ... (N = 399 – 478)

in my circle of friends	78 %
among my best friends	40 %
at my school	95 %
in my leisure activities (excluding friends)	71 %
in my social networks	89 %
in my employment, training or part-time job	60 %
in my volunteer work	27 %
in my neighbourhood	63 %

Muslim people represent ... ■ less than half ■ roughly half ■ more than half

Where figures do not add up to 100 percent, the difference is attributable to those who responded
"not at all" or "don't know".

Knowledge about Islam and Muslim life

Respondents' knowledge about Muslims in Germany and Islam is comparatively good, on average answering six of the ten knowledge questions correctly.

There were five questions about Islam and five about the real lives of Muslims. Differentiating between them produces interesting findings.

In the section on beliefs, respondents were on average able to answer four out of five questions correctly. For questions on the real lives of Muslims in Germany the figure was just three out of five. This corroborates the finding of the qualitative interviews, where the interviewed non-Muslim young people had a comparatively clear understanding of Islam as a faith, but fewer had a realistic idea about the real lives of Muslims in Germany. **This finding suggests that Islam as a religion is discussed more widely in society than the real lives of Muslims, and that young people know more about it.**

Ø 6 out of 10 questions
correctly answered

If we connect the data on these two spheres of knowledge with other questions from the questionnaire start to get an idea about why this is the case. The statistical analyses reveal the following correlations with knowledge about Islam and Muslims' lives:

The more contact a respondent had to Muslim people

→ among their best friends,
→ in leisure activities (not including friends)
→ and employment, training or part-time job

the more they knew about the real lives of Muslim people (r = .10 to .12/ N = 356 – 466). But there was no correlation with the frequency of contacts among friends, in social networks or in the neighbourhood.

→ Respondents who spoke more often about Islam with their friends showed more knowledge about the real lives of Muslims (Pearson's r = .14/N = 473). This did not apply to discussion in the family.
→ Respondents who had visited a mosque answered more questions correctly (η^2 = .02/N = 476).
→ There was no correlation between the number of correct answers and the frequency with which respondents encountered the topic of Islam in social networks, the internet in general, the mass media or school.

However, these statistical correlations are not strongly significant. In other words, there are also many other factors that affect knowledge about Islam and Muslims. None of these correlations are found in relation to knowledge about beliefs. **What that suggests is that knowledge about Islam is an aspect of general knowledge, whereas knowledge about how Muslims actually live is acquired at least partly through contact and conversation.**

Dimensions of Islamophobia

The items from the questionnaires were analysed using an exploratory factorial analysis to identify distinct dimensions. The analyses showed that four dimensions can be differentiated:
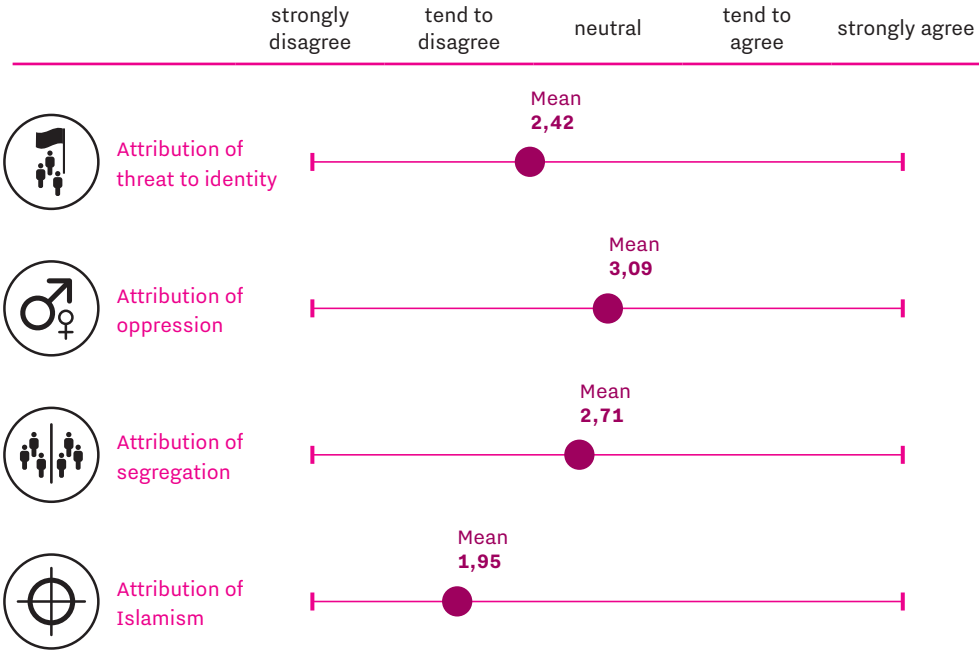
1. **Attribution of threat to identity**
2. **Attribution of oppression**
3. **Attribution of segregation**
4. **Attribution of Islamism**

For the analyses we built reliable scales for each dimension using those items that load on the dimension. The means of the dimensions "attribution of threat to identity" and "attribution of segregation" are negative. So the average respondent does not feel any particular threat to identity from Muslims.

The value for "attribution of Islamism" is even more negative, with the mean figure corresponding to the response "tend to disagree". The least negative is "attribution of oppression", where the mean figure corresponds to "neutral/undecided".

In other words, many of the surveyed non-Muslim young people believe that patriarchal structures and gender relations characterised by male dominance exist in Islam and among Muslims in general. But they do not see Muslims and Islam as a threat to their identity and personal safety, nor do they regard Muslims as a "parallel society". The fear of terrorism is also weak.

Dimensions of Islamophobia (N = 471 – 479)

	strongly disagree	tend to disagree	neutral	tend to agree	strongly agree

Attribution of threat to identity
Mean
2,42

Attribution of oppression
Mean
3,09

Attribution of segregation
Mean
2,71

Attribution of Islamism
Mean
1,95

Islamophobia and knowledge

Knowledge about Islam and the real lives of Muslims in Germany is relevant to the dimensions.

Knowledge about real lives shows clear correlations with all the dimensions. The more correct answers a respondent gave, the weaker their rejection of Muslims and Islam (r = -.27 to -.36/N = 467 – 475).

The same does not apply to knowledge about the religion, however. In fact there is a weak correlation in the opposite direction: More correct answers correlates with a stronger attribution of threat to identity (Pearson's r = .11/N = 474). In other words, **knowledge about Islam as a religion appears – counter-intuitively – to correlate with concern over loss of identity.** In our interviews we encountered many young people who drew sweeping conclusions about the way of life of Muslims in Germany from their knowledge about Islam – and inferred that this meant they had different values to the German majority society.

But knowledge about and insights into real lives do correlate negatively with respondents' agreement with the dimensions of Islamophobia. **Our qualitative study also found that young people who have Muslim friends make fewer sweeping judgements about Islam and have broader insights into the lifeworlds of Muslims.**

Islamophobia in connection with belonging, lifeworld, values

Differences between male and female responses

Differences between male and female respondents are found for "attribution of oppression" and "attribution of Islamism" (η^2 = .02 to .03/ N = 465 – 471). In these two dimensions female respondents show more negative attitudes than their male counterparts. **In our interviews, non-Muslim young women inferred fears and concerns about their personal safety from the tendentious public discussions about sexualised violence.** The same also appears to be reflected in the survey data.

Belief and dialogue

We asked the respondents how important their own religious belief is, and found that **the more important their own non-Muslim faith (as a rule Christian), the more negative their attitudes** in the dimensions "attribution of threat to identity" and "attribution of Islamism" (r = .12 to .14/ N = 388 – 396). But the data also reveals the positive value of interfaith and intercultural dialogue. Respondents who had visited a mosque showed significantly more positive attitudes in the dimensions "attribution of threat to identity" and "attribution of oppression" η^2 = .02/N = 477 – 478).

Contact and categorisation

The more contact with persons of Muslim faith, the more positive the attitudes towards Muslims and Islam. This applies to all four dimensions in relation to contact with Muslims among friends, in leisure activities and in social networks (r_s = .11 to -.32/N = 439 – 471).

These findings are in line with the contact hypothesis, which suggests that prejudices towards a group are reduced by contact with members of that group (Allport 1954). Numerous studies have confirmed the fundamental theory, although the conditions under which contact occurs are relevant (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006).

Our data also confirms that contact is not always associated with reduced prejudice. Although the hypothesis holds for the dimensions "attribution of threat to identity" and "attribution of segregation" (r_s = -,12/ N = 457 – 458) in the case of contact in the neighbourhood, the effect is not confirmed for contact in school or in employment/training/part-time job. This finding is of interest in the context that the proportion of respondents who report contact with Muslims in the neighbourhood is very high, but even higher in school.

Wagner, Hewstone and Machleit (1989) also identified differences between the forms of contact in Germany at the end of the 1980s, finding that contact in leisure contexts – but not school or neighbourhood – had positive effects on opinions about Turkish fellow school students. This distinction between the forms of contact is also confirmed in our investigation, but with different results for different dimensions. This has implications for further research around the contact hypothesis.

In our interviews there were suggestions that **close friendships with Muslims** enable young people to gain insights into Muslims' experiences of discrimination and to learn what they share in common. These factors are **associated with expressions of solidarity towards their Muslim peers**.

If the question of whether a person is Muslim is significant for the respondent or in their circle of friends, this has implications for attitudes. The more importance the category possesses the more negative the attitudes in all four dimensions. In other words **if it plays a role that someone is a Muslim then the attitudes are more negative** (r = -.30 to r = -.47/N = 469 – 478). From research on the effects of categorisation patterns and categorisations in social life we know that negative public references to individual social groups reinforce racist thinking (for example Hall 1980, Zick 1997). Accepting the category "Muslims" thus also means acknowledging and applying the interpretations attributed to it in discursive contexts.
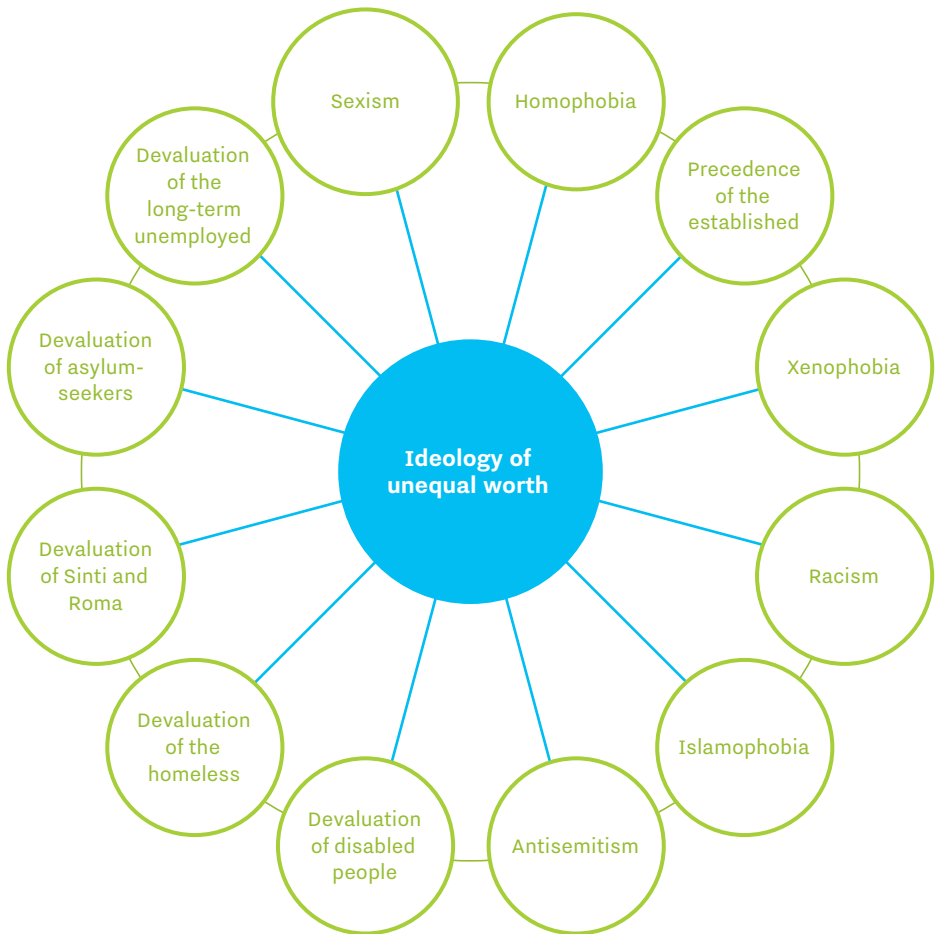
Dimensions of Group-Focused Enmity

The dimensions of Islamophobia correlate with some of the manifestations of group-focused enmity [1].The correlation is closest for "xenophobia", 2 confirming findings from other studies on the connection between Islamophobia and "xenophobia" (r = .52 to .65/N = 459 – 465). The statistically strong correlations indicate that the attitudes are closely related.

Close correlations are also found with the concept of precedence of the established (r = .38 to .54/N = 468 – 474). This can be described as the "preference and predominance claimed by the established over 'outsiders', 'incomers' and 'non-conformists'" (Zick et al. 2016, 41).

Racism (r = .27 to .36/N = 429 – 434) and antisemitism (r = .23 to .36/N = 453 – 459) show medium-strength correlations with the four dimensions. At the level of attitudes, rejection of Muslims is thus associated above all with rejection of immigrants and assertions of privilege over them. Racism and antisemitism are also associated with dimensions of Islamophobia, although to a lesser extent.

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[1] Where people are identified as being of unequal value on the basis of chosen or attributed group membership and exposed to hostile mentalities of devaluation and exclusion, we speak of **group-focused enmity**" (translated from Heitmeyer 2006, 21).

[2] **Xenophobia** refers in general to prejudice and discrimination against persons "on the basis of their actual or supposed membership of cultural groups" – which can be attributed flexibly according to the context (Zick, Küpper and Hövermann 2011, 45). In the context of prejudice it generally refers to immigrants, who are defined as "foreign" (ibid.).

Sexism
Homophobia
Precedence of the established
Devaluation of the long-term unemployed
Xenophobia
Devaluation of asylum-seekers
Ideology of unequal worth
Racism
Devaluation of Sinti and Roma
Islamophobia
Devaluation of the homeless
Devaluation of disabled people
Antisemitism
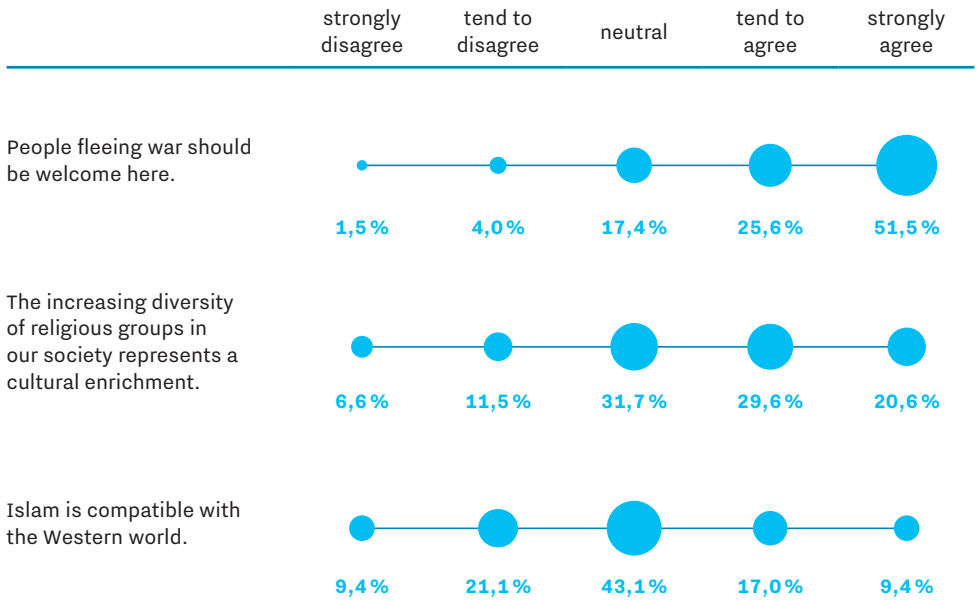
Elements of GFE
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Openness to diversity and recognition of human rights

The interviews in the qualitative study showed that young people – as well as negative, generalising and homogenising positions – also take a critical stance on public attributions and racism. This is replicated in the questionnaire survey data.

More than 70 percent of respondents agreed with the statement that people fleeing war should be welcome in Germany. About 50 percent welcomed increasing diversity and fewer than one-third rejected out of hand the statement that "Islam is compatible with the Western world". Especially in relation to refugees the respondents are open and support the right to asylum.

In all the dimensions: The more strongly respondents believe that people fleeing war should be welcome in Germany, that increasing diversity of religious groups enriches society, and that Islam belongs in the Western world, the less they reject Islam and Muslims (r = -.54 to -.68/ N = 467 – 475). The strength of the correlation underlines the closeness of the connection between Islamophobia and attitudes on asylum rights and immigration.

Openness to diversity (N = 459 – 470)

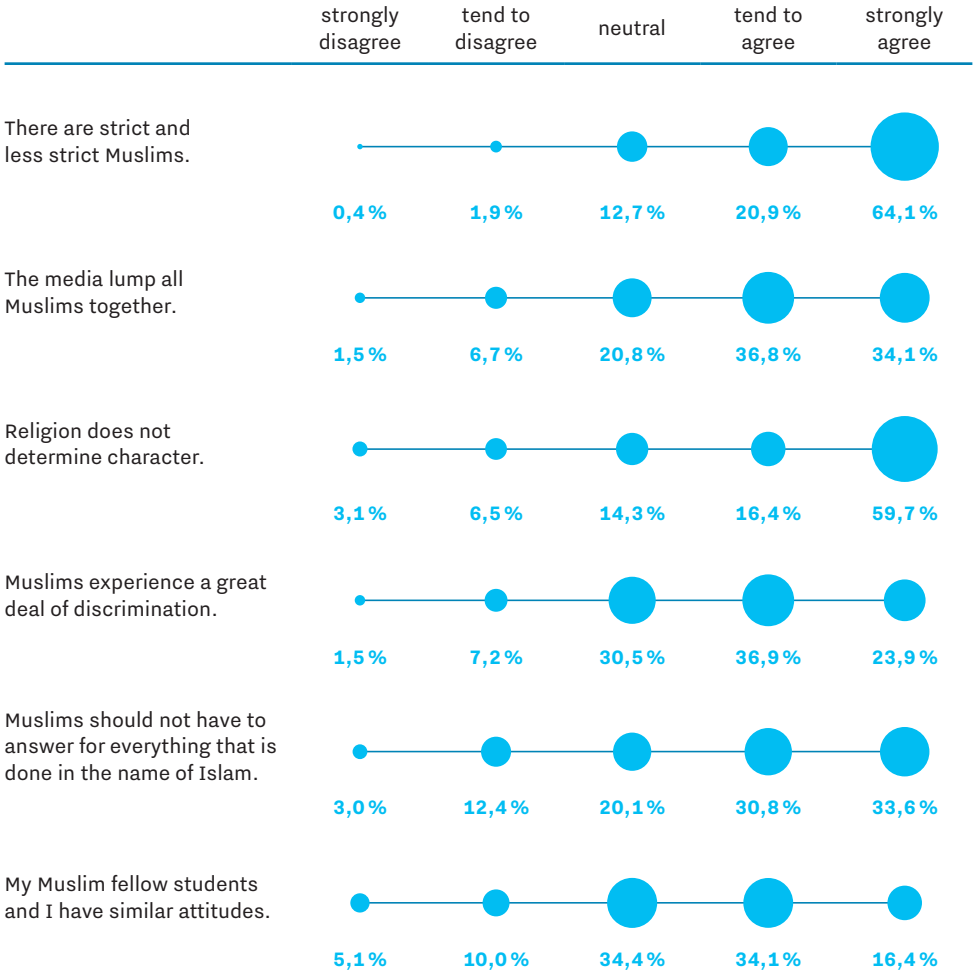|	strongly disagree	tend to disagree	neutral	tend to agree	strongly agree
People fleeing war should be welcome here.	1,5 %	4,0 %	17,4 %	25,6 %	51,5 %
The increasing diversity of religious groups in our society represents a cultural enrichment.	6,6 %	11,5 %	31,7 %	29,6 %	20,6 %
Islam is compatible with the Western world.	9,4 %	21,1 %	43,1 %	17,0 %	9,4 %

Criticism of Islamophobia

In the qualitative interview study we found that young people are critical consumers of media treatments of Muslims and Islam. They recognise negative stereotypes and racism in media reporting, show solidarity with Muslims and are aware of their experiences of discrimination.

This critical attitude towards the narratives is also reflected in the questionnaire study. We found that a majority of respondents are aware of differences in the practice of the Muslim faith. About 85 percent agree with the statement: "There are strict and less strict Muslims."

There is also awareness of the homogenisation of Muslims in the media, with 70 percent of respondents agreeing that the media lump all Muslims together. Awareness of the discrimination experienced by Muslims is also confirmed: About 50 percent of respondents agreed that: "Muslims experience a great deal of discrimination." And a clear majority also rejected religion as a relevant distinction between people, with 75 percent of respondents agreeing that religion does not determine character.

In fact, a positive and reflected basic attitude on social diversity and the place of migration in society is found among young people, as manifested both in the broad support for the right to asylum and in the level of agreement with differentiated and discourse-critical statements about Muslims.

Counter-discourse (N = 451 – 479)

	strongly disagree	tend to disagree	neutral	tend to agree	strongly agree
There are strict and less strict Muslims.	0,4 %	1,9 %	12,7 %	20,9 %	64,1 %
The media lump all Muslims together.	1,5 %	6,7 %	20,8 %	36,8 %	34,1 %
Religion does not determine character.	3,1 %	6,5 %	14,3 %	16,4 %	59,7 %
Muslims experience a great deal of discrimination.	1,5 %	7,2 %	30,5 %	36,9 %	23,9 %
Muslims should not have to answer for everything that is done in the name of Islam.	3,0 %	12,4 %	20,1 %	30,8 %	33,6 %
My Muslim fellow students and I have similar attitudes.	5,1 %	10,0 %	34,4 %	34,1 %	16,4 %

Central findings

Young people have contact with the complex of Islam in all its facets **above all via the mass media, in social networks and on the internet.** Many young people encounter Muslims in those contexts, and also among their friends, in leisure activities and at school. In fact one respondent in three reported having Muslims among their best friends. But young people d**o not experience school as a place of active contact** with Islam and Muslims. **Half the surveyed young people had visited a mosque at least once.**

Young people do possess knowledge about Islam. In fact, **they know more about Islam as religion than about the real, diverse lives of Muslims.** Yet while knowledge about the real lives of Muslims correlates with less acceptance of anti-Muslim positions, general knowledge about Islam does not. In fact knowledge about the religion is associated with stronger agreement with certain negative statements. In other words, interest in the religion without reference to the lifeworld is associated with homogenisation and in some respects devaluation of Muslims. **Knowledge about the lives of Muslims in Germany is associated with less Islamophobia.** This everyday knowledge is reinforced by closer contact with Muslims, for example among friendship groups and in leisure activities – but not at school.

Which discursive constructions of anti-Muslim narratives are attractive to young people?

The research findings confirm empirical observations from other studies, which show that young people are open to diversity, and that it is part of their everyday lives. Yet despite their openness to diversity young people do adopt certain aspects of narratives of anti-Muslim racism. **Narratives about gender roles in Islam are where the strongest effect are found.** Young women in particular agree with statements describ-

ing Islam as a patriarchal space or practice. The feeling that Muslims threaten their identity and the idea that Muslims are socially isolated are present among young people but less strong. **Young people demonstrate comparatively little concern over the discursive spectre of Islamist terrorism.**

Alongside the differences relating to knowledge and gender there are also differences in acceptance of anti-Muslim narratives relating to the respondents' own beliefs. **Young people for whom their own religion is important tend to be negative towards Islam.** So non-Muslim faith appears as a context of othering and of devaluation of Islam as "the other's religion". Positive factors include – as expected – contact to Muslims and rejection of the category of "the Muslim". **Those who have more contact with Muslims and find it less important whether or not a person is a Muslim exhibit weaker prejudice.**

Rejection of Islam and Muslims correlates closely with other ideologies of hate. In relation to the surveyed young people this applies above all to rejection of new migrants. But in general an overwhelming majority of the young people defend the right to asylum and one in two welcomes increasing diversity in society. As in the qualitative study, we found widespread criticism of homogenisation of Muslims in the media and knowledge about the everyday nature of discrimination.

Inputs for Education and Civil Society

Our research shows that school is not a place where communities form between students from different backgrounds. **As outlined above, young people tend not to acquire their knowledge about Islam through school.** Instead they are influenced in different ways by dominant discourses. But they are more open to diversity than adults. That raises the following central questions for school as an institution: How can the formation of a community of all students at a school be promoted? How can school become a place where the categories of ethnicity and religion are irrelevant? How can critical stances towards ideologies of hate be supported in schools?

Integrating the qualitative and quantitative elements of our research on Islamophobia and young people, we propose the following pedagogical recommendations for education work to effectively counteract and prevent the phenomena of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism:

**1. Acknowledge the plurality of modern society –
demonstrate the diversity of Muslim lifeworlds**
Muslim lifeworlds are very diverse. But this is rarely acknowledged in public discourses and media representations. At the same time knowledge about the diversity of real Muslim lives correlates negatively with Islamophobia. The visibility of the diversity of Muslims in Germany should therefore be promoted.

2. Normality and acceptance of different lifeworlds
Lifeworlds in a pluralist modern society are diverse and hybrid. Preventing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism demands normalisation and acceptance of diverse lifeworlds. We recommend contextualising Muslim practices such as fasting not just in the theological debate but also more broadly in the lifeworld of the school students. Fasting can be discussed as a fundamental practice of renunciation – comparable

to forgoing social media or doing without plastic. This brings shared modes of thought and action to the fore and sidelines questions of belonging.

3. Schools as locales of intense encounter

Schools are not currently places of broad contact and exchange with Muslim lifeworlds and Islamic religion. Islam and Muslim life are not yet presented as a natural part of society in this context. In this respect, school also violates the right of Muslim school students to recognition. Different realities of life and faith must instead be recognised in school life and teaching and be able to enter into a dialogue of equals. For this, school must free itself from ideas about a homogenous society and – especially in cultural education – make social diversity the starting point.

4. Media reflection as cross-cutting pedagogical task

Non-Muslim young people acquire their knowledge about Islam primarily through the media. They often fail to critically reflect homogenising and tendentious reporting. Reflection on media should therefore be seen as a cross-cutting pedagogical task.

5. Solidarity not categorisation

Religious affiliation must not be a criterion for school activity, because all children and young people have a right to school education. At school the question of who is Muslim – or any other religion – should be irrelevant. Instead school can educate about the powerful effects of categories and reveal their homogenising and exclusionary effects.

6. Strengthening counter-discourses

Non-Muslim young people do also share positions from the counter-discourse that criticises and rejects homogenising and negative references to Islam and Muslims. These elements of counter-discourse need to be taken up and developed in pedagogical education work.

7. Sensitisation in Christian religious education

Non-Muslim young people who place great importance on their own non-Muslim faith (as a rule Christian) are more likely to adopt anti-Muslim positions. It is therefore especially important to critically address and rebut Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Christian religious education.

8. Anti-discrimination in teacher training

If they are to put these recommendations into practice, schools need teachers who are sensitive to diversity and critical of discrimination. Anti-discrimination needs to be structurally anchored in all teaching degree courses and long-term in-service training measures need to by established for teachers already working in schools

Input for Politics and Civil Society

Looking beyond the concrete findings of our study, it needs to be noted that school is embedded in an overall societal context, that it both reflects and shapes society. For this reason it is necessary to see anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia as institutional and structural phenomena that also surface in the school context. Anti-Muslim racism is not a marginal phenomenon, it is present and anchored **in the midst of society.** Anti-Muslim stereotypes and narratives are **accessible for all social and societal strata and political spectra.**

It is vital to counteract Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across society. That must include the systematic recording and prosecution of anti-Muslim racism. Establishing instances for political monitoring and tackling racism can also be a way to acknowledge it as a society and to bundle racism-critical measures. At the same time effective critical treatment of the topics of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the media and across society and their condemnation are essential to combating and preventing these phenomena.

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