

American Muslim Poll 2017: *Muslims at The Crossroads*

Key Findings:

From early on in a deeply divisive presidential election cycle through the first weeks of a new administration, American Muslims have been at the center of heated social and political debates. Rarely, however, are Muslims themselves centered as participants in these conversations, and even rarer are their attitudes and behaviors systematically examined. To help narrow this knowledge gap, the following analysis of data from our American Muslim Poll 2017: Muslims at the Crossroads offers public officials, civil society stakeholders, and other interested parties a multi-dimensional portrait of the American Muslim community. Our poll was conducted between January 4th and January 23rd, 2017; with 2,389 nationally representative respondents.

Muslims Disproportionately Feel Negative Effect of Political Climate

- More than **two in five** (42%) Muslims with children in K–12 school report **bullying** of their children because of their faith, compared with 23% of Jews, 20% of Protestants, and 6% of Catholics.
- A **teacher** or other school official is reported to have been involved in **one in four** bullying incidents involving Muslims.
- Muslims (38%) and Jews (27%) are most likely to express **fear for their personal safety** or that of their family from **white supremacist groups** as a result of the 2016 elections. This compares with 16% of people not affiliated with a faith, 11% of Protestants, and 8% of Catholics.
- Muslims are more than twice as likely (30%) as Jews (13%), Catholics, and Protestants (11%) to be stopped at the border for additional screening.
- Most Muslims (67%) stopped at a U.S. border say they were easily identified as a member of their faith group, compared with 32% of Jews and none in other groups.
- Muslims are the most likely faith community to report religious-based discrimination (60%) in the past year. This compares with 38% of Jews and less than 20% among all other groups studied.
- The majority of nonwhite Muslims (56% of black Muslims, 60% of Arab Muslims, and 63% of Asian Muslim) report some frequency of race-based discrimination in the last year.

Muslims Respond to Prejudice with Resilience and Solidarity

- Muslims are the most likely faith group (66%) to support the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. This compares with roughly 58% of Jews and individuals not affiliated with a faith, and less than 39% of Catholics and Protestants. The highest support for BLM is among Muslims who are black (72%), Asian (76%), or young (72%).
- Muslims are most likely to consider bigotry and civil rights as the most important issue

facing our country today.

- Nearly a quarter (23%) of Muslims increased their giving to organizations associated with their faith community and 18% joined, donated to, or volunteered at a civic organizations for the first time as a result of the elections.

Muslim Women Defy Stereotypes, Suffer, Resist Most

- Muslim women are more likely than Muslim men to achieve higher education (73% of women vs. 57% of men with post-high school education or higher).
- Nearly one in five (19%) Muslim women say they have stress and anxiety enough to believe they need the help of a mental health professional as a result of the 2016 elections, compared with 9% of Muslim men.
- Muslim women are more likely than Muslim men to report experiencing religious discrimination in the last year (68% vs. 55%).
- Muslim women are more likely than Muslim men to fear for their safety from white supremacist groups (47% vs. 31%).
- Despite this deficit in security and greater likelihood for experienced religious-based discrimination, Muslim women are no more likely than Muslim men to change their appearance to be less identifiable as a Muslim (16% vs. 15%).
- Instead of hiding, Muslim women responded to a Trump win with greater giving. Nearly 30% of Muslim women vs. 19% of Muslim men have increased their donations to an organization associated with their faith community.
- Three in four Muslim women support the Black Lives Matter movement.

American Muslims Are the Most Ethnically Diverse, Youngest Faith Community Surveyed

- Muslims are the only faith community surveyed with no majority race, with 25% black, 24% white, 18% Asian, 18% Arab, 7% mixed race, and 5% Hispanic.
- Half of Muslims are native born and half are foreign born, but most (86%) are citizens.
- Muslims are the most likely faith community to report low income, with 35% reporting a household income less than \$30,000 compared with 18% or less of all other studied groups.
- Black and Arab Muslims (44% and 37%, respectively) are more likely to report a household income of less than \$30,000 compared with white and Asian Muslims (28% and 30%, respectively).
- Muslims, Protestants, and Catholics have similar education levels.
- Muslim women are more likely than Muslim men to achieve higher education (73% of women vs. 57% of men with post-high school education or higher).
- Muslim women are more likely than Muslim men to report living in a middle-class household (28% vs. 19%).
- Like other faith groups surveyed, roughly nine in ten Muslims identify as “straight” with the remainder identifying as either bisexual, “something else,” or refusing to answer.

Muslim Americans Face Similar Social Challenges as Other American Faith Groups

- Muslims are as likely to report knowing someone who is a victim of domestic violence in their faith community (13%) as are Catholics (15%), Protestants (17%), and the general public (15%), compared with Jews (7%).
- Muslims are as likely as Americans of other faiths to report domestic violence to law enforcement (54% of Muslims and roughly the same percentage of Protestants, Catholics, nonaffiliated, and the general public, but only 35% of Jews).
- Muslims (51%) are as likely to report domestic violence to a faith leader as law enforcement (54%), and more likely than any faith group surveyed (28% of Jews, 23% of Catholics, and 35% of Protestants) to report this violence to their faith or community leader. This suggests Muslim victims of domestic violence are more likely to expect support from their faith community and regard the assault as a moral issue in addition to a legal one.
- A significant minority of Muslims of all races (33% of black Muslims, 26% of Arab Muslims, and 31% of Asian Muslims) report race-based discrimination in the last year from other Muslims, but the majority of Muslims (roughly 54%) report race based discrimination from the general public.
- Intra-community racism is not unique to Muslims; one-third of both African American Muslims and African Americans in the general public report race-based discrimination from members of their own faith.

Although They Are Less Politically Engaged, Muslim Are Equally Invested in the Country's Welfare

- Muslims who contribute to causes or institutions associated with their faith community are as likely to support overseas relief efforts (52%) as those working to alleviate domestic poverty (50%).
- Economy, bigotry, healthcare, education, and poverty top the list of “most important issues facing our country today” for Muslims.
- Muslims volunteer at equal numbers as members of other faith communities (44%).
- Muslims are the least likely faith group to favor a Trump win (15% vs. 23% of Jews, 26% of nonaffiliated, roughly 41% of Protestants and Catholics, and 34% of the general public).
- Apathy and dissatisfaction with choices were the top reasons for not voting (not religion).
- Muslims are the least likely faith community to have voted (61% vs. roughly 86% of all other groups surveyed).

Methodology

ISPU created the questionnaire for this study and commissioned two firms to conduct the survey: Social Science Research Solutions (SSRS) for a nationally representative survey of self-identified Muslims and Jews, and Triton Polling & Research for a nationally representative survey of the general American public. From the Triton sample, researchers examined the views of self-identified Protestants, Catholics, and those who were not affiliated with a faith. A total of 2,389 interviews were conducted. ISPU owns all data and intellectual property related to this study.

SSRS conducted a survey of Muslims and Jews for ISPU from January 4 through January 19, 2017. SSRS interviewed 800 Muslim and 340 Jewish respondents. Sample for the study came from three sources. SSRS telephoned a sample of households that was prescreened as being Muslim or Jewish in the SSRS weekly national omnibus survey of 1,000 randomly selected respondents ($n = 661$) and purchased a listed sample for Muslim and Jewish households in both landline and cell phone frames from Experian, a sample provider that flags specific characteristics for each piece of sample ($n = 129$). The SSRS omnibus survey completed half of all interviews with cell phone respondents, so prescreened respondents included those who had originally been interviewed on both landline telephones and cell phones. To supplement the number of Muslim interviews SSRS was able to complete in the given time frame and with the amount of available prescreened sample, SSRS employed a Web methodology panel and completed the final 350 interviews with Muslims via an online survey with samples from a nonprobability panel. The data from this project are weighted to match estimates of the Jewish and/or Muslim populations determined from 3 years of data collected through the SSRS omnibus and estimates from the Pew Research Center's 2011 survey of Muslim Americans. The telephone portion of respondents has a margin of error at a 95 percent confidence level of Muslims $\pm 5.1\%$ and Jews $\pm 6.5\%$.

Triton live-agent surveys were conducted by interviewers in an in-house, state-of-the-art call center located near Bend, Oregon. All surveys incorporated standard statistical methods to select a representative sample of the target population. Triton conducted this telephone poll of the general public, on behalf of ISPU, by live interviews with respondents via landline telephones and cell phones between January 4 and January 23, 2017, securing a sample size of 1,249 completed surveys with a margin of error at a 95 percent confidence level of $\pm 2.8\%$. The weighting applied was gender, age, region, and race.

For more details on polling methodology, visit www.ispu.org/poll.



Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, 2017

About ISPU

ISPU conducts objective, solution-seeking research that empowers American Muslims to develop their community and fully contribute to democracy and pluralism in the United States. Since 2002, ISPU has been at the forefront of discovering trends and opportunities that impact the American Muslim community. Our research aims to educate the general public and enable community change agents, the media, and policymakers to make evidence-based decisions. In addition to building in-house capacity, ISPU has assembled leading experts across multiple disciplines, building a solid reputation as a trusted source for information for and about American Muslims.

For more information, please visit: www.ispu.org

Institute for Social Policy and Understanding
info@ispu.org

Michigan

6 Parklane Blvd, Suite 510
Dearborn, MI 48126
(313) 436-0523

Washington, DC

1110 Vermont Ave. NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 768-8749