

10 Essential Facts about the American Mosque in 2020¹

AMERICAN MOSQUE SURVEY

1 THE NUMBER OF MOSQUES CONTINUES TO GROW.

In 2020, the US Mosque Survey counted 2,769 mosques, a 31% increase from the 2010 count of 2,106 mosques. The primary factor driving the increase of mosques is the steady expansion of the American Muslim population due to immigration and birth rate.

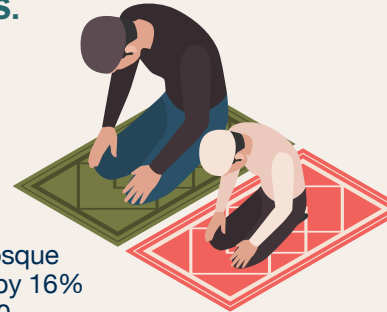


2 MOSQUE PARTICIPANTS CONTINUE TO GROW IN NUMBERS.

Using the Eid prayer count, the number of “mosqued” Muslims is approximately

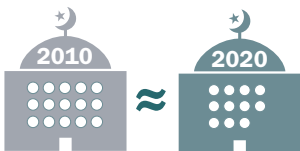
4,000,000.

16% The total number of mosque participants increased by 16% between 2010 and 2020.

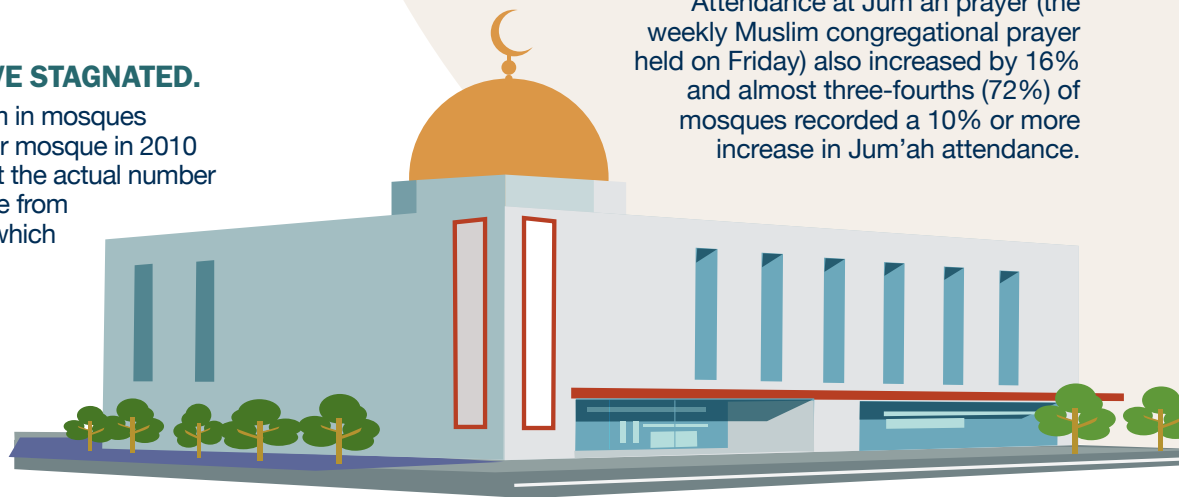


3 CONVERSIONS HAVE STAGNATED.

The number of converts to Islam in mosques declined, from 15.3 converts per mosque in 2010 to 11.3 in 2020. This means that the actual number of converts has stayed the same from 2010 to 2020 – around 31,000 which remains a healthy number.



Attendance at Jum’ah prayer (the weekly Muslim congregational prayer held on Friday) also increased by 16% and almost three-fourths (72%) of mosques recorded a 10% or more increase in Jum’ah attendance.



4 YOUNG ADULT MUSLIMS BUCK TRENDS, BUT STILL AREN’T ATTENDING MOSQUES IN SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS.

Almost one-fourth (24%) of mosque participants of all ages are aged 18-34. This is a very respectable percentage when compared to churches where about 11% of their attendees are 18-34 years old. But the US Mosque Survey 2020 estimates that 29% of adult mosque attendees are 18-34, which is far below ISPU’s finding that 54% of the American Muslim population are between those ages. Based on this large difference, mosques are not attracting a significant percentage of Generation Z and young Millennials.

54%
AGE
18 - 34



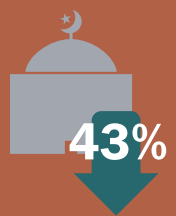
ADULT MOSQUE ATTENDEES

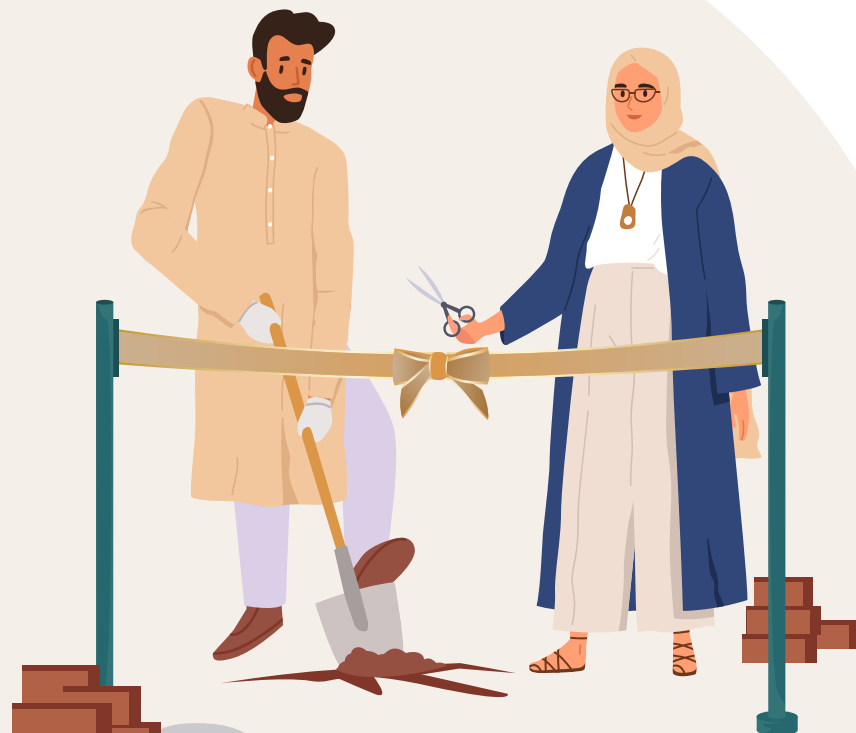
29%
AGE
18 - 34



5 THE NUMBER OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MOSQUES AND ATTENDEES ARE ON THE DECLINE.

In 2020, African American mosques² comprised 13% of all mosques, but in 2010 African American mosques accounted for 23% of all mosques—a 43% decrease. In 2020, African American Muslims comprised 16% of all attendees in mosques, but in 2010 that figure was 23%—a 33% decrease. In both cases, there is a decline in the actual number of African American mosques (from 484 in 2010 to 360 in 2020) and the number of African Americans mosque attendees (from an average of 85 Jum’ah attendees in 2010 to 66 average Jum’ah attendees in 2020).





6

THE NUMBER OF PURPOSE-BUILT MOSQUES CONTINUES TO GROW.

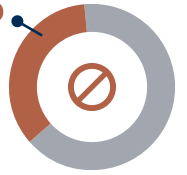
37% of all mosques were built as a mosque in 2020. This is a substantial increase from 2010, when 30% of mosques were purpose-built.



7

RESISTANCE TO MOSQUE DEVELOPMENT HAS INCREASED.

Between 2010-2019, **35%** of mosques encountered **significant resistance** from their neighborhood or city when seeking permission to move, expand, or build.

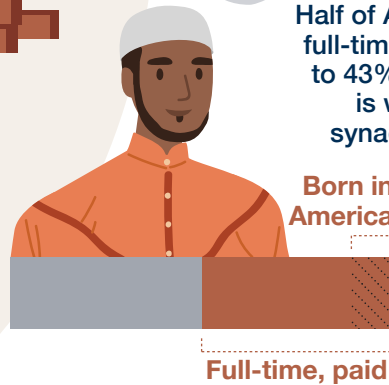


In comparison, from 1980-2009 25% of mosques met resistance.

8

MORE IMAMS ARE FULL-TIME AND PAID, AND MORE ARE AMERICAN-BORN.

Half of American mosques have a full-time paid imam as compared to 43% in 2010. This percentage is well short of churches and synagogues that have full-time paid religious leaders. Nevertheless, it shows **steady progress**.



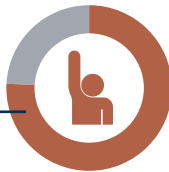
Of full-time paid imams, 22% were born in America which is an increase from 15% in 2010.

9

MOSQUE GOVERNANCE IS STILL VARIED AND EVOLVING.

No one governance model typifies mosques. Almost half (48%) of mosques have one volunteer governing body (usually called a board of directors or an executive committee), which manages the day-to-day activities of the mosque. In larger mosques with Jum'ah attendance over 500, the more common governing structure is to have two bodies: a board of trustees and an executive committee.

The vast majority of mosques (**76%**) are managed **entirely by volunteers**.

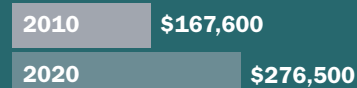


10

MOSQUE INCOME CONTINUES TO GROW.

The average mosque budget in 2020 was \$276,500 and the median budget \$80,000. This is a substantial increase from 2010's average budget of \$167,600 and the median budget of \$70,000. Mosque and church incomes are roughly the same, but churches achieve their income levels with far fewer people.

AVERAGE MOSQUE BUDGET



MEDIAN MOSQUE BUDGET



¹ Bagby, Ihsan. June 2021. The American Mosque 2020: Growing and Evolving Report 1 of the US Mosque Survey 2020: Basic Characteristics. The Institute for Social Policy and Understanding.

² Dominant ethnic groups within mosques are calculated as: any group over 55% of all mosque participants; 50%-59% of one group and all others less than 40%; 40-49% of one group and all others less than 30%; 35-39% of one group and all others less than 20%.

The US Mosque Survey 2020 is a comprehensive statistical study of mosques located in the United States. The survey is an ongoing decadal survey which was conducted previously in 2000 and 2010. Reports featuring the results will occasionally include results from a 1994 survey which was conducted by the Islamic Resource Center, using the same methodology as the US Mosque Surveys.

All of the US Mosque Surveys (2000, 2010, and 2020) were conducted in collaboration with a larger study of American congregations called Faith Communities Today (FACT), which is a project of the Cooperative Congregational Studies Partnership (CCSP), a multi-faith coalition of numerous denominations and faith groups headquartered at Hartford Seminary. The strategy of FACT is to develop a common questionnaire and then have the member faith groups use that questionnaire to survey their respective congregations. The US Mosque Surveys took the FACT common questionnaire and modified it to fit the mosque context.

METHODOLOGY

The first phase of the Mosque Survey was a count of all mosques, which was conducted from June to November 2019. Starting from the 2010 mosque database, an initial internet search was conducted to verify mosques, identify new mosques, and eliminate mosques that no longer exist. This internet search depended primarily on the excellent databases found on the websites of Muslim Guide and Salatomatic. Mosques were verified via the mosques' websites, Google Maps, and phone calls. The internet search resulted in an initial count of 2,948. After the internet search, a first-class (address correction) letter and a short questionnaire were sent to all mosques to solicit basic information. Various options for completing the questionnaire were offered, including an online version. Of the 2,948 mailings, 164 responses were received—a 5.5% response rate. This low response rate is the rationale for not depending on an online version for the comprehensive survey. Returned mail was checked with Google Maps and a general internet search. The final result was a count of 2,769 mosques.

The second phase was the comprehensive survey conducted via telephone interview of a mosque leader using a long questionnaire. The comprehensive survey entailed a random sampling from the list of 2,769 mosques. To achieve the goal of a margin of error of +/- 5%, 337 questionnaires had to be completed. The sample of mosques was stratified by state, such that each state had a set number of mosques for which the questionnaire had to be completed. The Mosque Survey randomly sampled 700 mosques; 470 questionnaires were completed, fulfilling the target for each state. The work of completing the questionnaires started in November 2019 and ended in October 2020. The COVID-19 crisis made the task of finding a mosque leader more difficult; thus, completion of the survey was delayed.

The results of the US Mosque Survey are all pre-COVID. Thus, interviewers asked mosque leaders about the situation of their mosques before the COVID-19 outbreak.

For the Mosque Survey, mosques were defined as a Sunni or Shia Muslim organization that organizes Jum'ah prayer, conducts other Islamic activities, and controls the space in which activities are held. This definition would include "musallas" which have an organization that does more than just conduct Jum'ah prayers. This definition excludes those places where only Jum'ah prayer is held, like a hospital or airport. Some Shi'ite religious organizations do not hold Jum'ah prayer due to the absence of a resident scholar or because they consider themselves an Imambargah or Hussainiya. These Shi'ite organizations were classified as mosques. The Mosque Survey did not include organizations outside of the Sunni and Shia American Muslim community like the Nation of Islam, Moorish Science Temple, Ismailis, and Ahmadiyyah.