

Women Against Islamophobia

Key recommendations from the hearing, European Parliament 2nd March 2016

In the light of growing Islamophobia in Europe and its disproportionate impact on women, we urge:

The European Parliament:

- to adopt a resolution including: recommendations on the role of the EC coordinator, a working definition on Islamophobia, the need for national strategies to combat Islamophobia and the official recognition of 21/09 as the European day against islamophobia, with a specific focus on the gender aspect of Islamophobia;
- (via ARDI and the working-group against Islamophobia) to work in collaboration with the FEMM committee to explore potential work on the intersectionality between discrimination on the basis of gender/religion/ethnicity;

The European Commission:

- to propose a framework for national strategies/policy commitments to combat Islamophobia with specific and concrete goals according to each national context, in areas such as education, housing, health, employment, policing, security, justice systems, exercise of freedom of religion;
- to ensure that the European Strategy for equality between women and men include multiple discrimination aspects, acknowledging obstacles of women not only within their own cultural group but also in relation to the majority population, especially in the case of Muslim women;
- (via the EC coordinator), to establish an internal roadmap on Islamophobia, dedicated to delivering clear and tangible results to shape future policies;
- to identify areas that could lead to infringement proceedings on the basis of the Employment Equality Directive (to challenge systemic restrictions to the right to wear religious symbols in national laws and practices), the Framework Decision on racism and xenophobia (hate crime/speech) and the Victims' Rights Directive;

The Member States:

- to ensure that existing anti-discrimination laws better address multiple discrimination and to collect data on the gender dimension of Islamophobia (with the support of equality bodies);
- to make sure that bias is properly investigated and prosecuted in cases of hate crime against Muslims and to collect data on Islamophobic crime;
- to officially recognise Islamophobia as a specific form of racism (not to be mixed up with a criticism of religion) and its impacts on Muslims and those perceived as such;
- to adopt a national strategy to combat Islamophobia or include specific objectives on combating Islamophobia in the national action plan against racism.