



MUSLIM AMERICANS: *Faith, Freedom, and the Future*

Examining U.S. Muslims' Political, Social, and Spiritual Engagement 10 Years After September 11

August 2011

A decade following September 11, 2001, Muslim Americans still face some public distrust and are more skeptical of law enforcement than are other U.S. faith communities. Despite these challenges, American followers of Islam are optimistic about their future, and they embrace their country's civic institutions and religious pluralism.

مرکز غالوب أبو ظبي

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C E N T E R

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FOREWORD

A decade after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, researchers at the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies and the newly established Abu Dhabi Gallup Center saw a need to measure the progress made and yet to be made regarding Muslim-American engagement. Building on our early 2009 report on America's Muslim community, *Muslim Americans: A National Portrait*, this analysis tracks change since 2008 and delves into new social and political research topics reflecting current public debates.

Our last report measured the opportunities and challenges facing a community that had been pushed into the limelight after Sept. 11 from its place of relative anonymity. We discovered an educated, employed, entrepreneurial, and culturally diverse community, whose strengths and struggles reflected America's as a whole. At the same time, our researchers found that young American Muslims, who had spent their formative years during the "war on terror," were less likely than their generational peers to be classified as thriving and more likely to experience negative emotions, such as anger.¹

Since 2008, Americans have elected their first African-American president, a Christian with Muslim family roots. President Barack Obama, who enjoys an approval rating of 80% among Muslim Americans, identified improving relations with Muslim communities as a top priority early in his campaign. Obama was the first U.S. president in history to mention Muslim Americans in his inaugural speech, and he has since made repeated references to U.S. Muslims, including in his 2009 Cairo address. He continues to affirm that Muslims are now and have always been a part of America.

At the same time, the controversy over the proposed Islamic Community Center near Ground Zero, New York Rep. Peter King's

1 *Muslim Americans: A National Portrait*, Gallup 2009

hearings on “Muslim Radicalization,” and “anti-Sharia” legislation in a number of states puts the Muslim-American community tensely in the headlines. Moreover, a string of domestic terrorist attacks, both realized and attempted, have punctuated the past two years. Muslims are not associated with the majority of these plots, and other Muslims provided crucial information to law enforcement about those who were. However, these events have often put the Muslim-American community on the defensive.

With these complex dynamics as the backdrop, this report explores questions of Muslim Americans’ political, social, and spiritual engagement. Additionally, our analysts offer a number of evidence-based recommendations to government and civil society leaders working on Muslim-American integration.

This report would not have been possible without important contributions from Steve Crabtree, Sofia Kluch, Nicole Naurath, and Mohamed Younis. Data analytics were provided by Ken Kluch, Kyle Nemeckay, and Eric Olesen. Jon Clifton, Lymari Morales, Gale Muller, and Frank Newport provided collaborative review and feedback. The editing team including Ben Klima and Susan Sorenson ensured accuracy throughout the report. Design and layout were completed by Samantha Allemang and Molly Hardin. Special thanks to Jeff Bechtolt for operations management. Large portions of the data in this report come from the Gallup Nightly poll. Many thanks to Patrick Bogart, Jeff Jones, Frank Newport, and the entire Gallup Nightly poll team for providing an impressive amount of content.

We are delighted to have collaborated on this research with Dr. Jocelyne Cesari from the Islam in the West Program at Harvard and Dr. Justin Gest from the Department of Government at Harvard University. Their insight, expertise, and analysis were invaluable to this report.



**About the Abu Dhabi
Gallup Center**

The Abu Dhabi Gallup Center is a Gallup research hub based in the capital of the United Arab Emirates. It is the product of a partnership between Gallup, the world's leading public opinion research firm, and the Crown Prince Court of Abu Dhabi.

Building on Gallup's seminal work in the field of Muslim studies, the Abu Dhabi Gallup Center (ADGC) offers unmatched research on the attitudes and aspirations of Muslims around the world. In addition to its worldwide scope, the ADGC focuses on the specific priorities of its regional base and presents innovative analysis and insights on the most important societal challenges facing the United Arab Emirates and the Gulf Cooperation Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the past two years, the percentage of Muslim Americans considered “thriving” has increased more than that of any other major American religious group.

While they continue to experience some perceived bias, both in their interactions with other Americans and in their exchanges with law enforcement, Muslim Americans are satisfied with their current lives and are more optimistic than other faith groups that things are getting better.

One possible explanation for Muslim Americans’ rising life evaluations is that their perception of the economy has improved more than that of other groups, after a more negative outlook in the downturn of 2008-2009. Another is that Muslim Americans, who tend to register as Democrats, are optimistic about the political climate in the U.S. in a way they have not been for the better part of a decade. Nearly 8 in 10 Muslim Americans approve of Obama’s job performance, by far his highest rating from all the major religious groups.

Political Engagement

Muslim Americans have the most confidence of any major U.S. religious group in the honesty of the country’s elections. However, they are less confident than Americans of other faith groups in the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and military, among the U.S. institutions closely associated with what has been known as the “war on terror” since the aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks.

Muslim Americans are the least likely members of any major religious group to be registered to vote (65%, compared with 91% of Protestant Americans and Jewish Americans). This may be because, though the majority of Muslim Americans were born in the U.S., many are first-generation immigrants and may not yet be citizens. With an average age of 36, Muslim Americans are also significantly younger than people of other religions — another trait often associated with low voter-registration levels.

Their skepticism about the military extends to U.S. military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan. While a substantial proportion of Americans of all major religious groups now see the Iraq war as a mistake, this view is most prevalent among Muslim Americans (83%). U.S. Muslims are also the most likely (47%) to believe it was a mistake to send forces into Afghanistan.

Although it is sometimes suggested that America's unpopularity in majority-Muslim countries is a result of misinformation spread by those countries' leaders to deflect attention from their own repressive policies, most Muslim Americans do not believe this. Sixty-five percent say the distrust is based on what the U.S. has done. A much smaller proportion of Muslim Americans — roughly one in four — says the U.S.'s negative image in majority-Muslim countries stems from misinformation spread by those countries' leaders.

Muslim Americans and Jewish Americans — the two major U.S. religious groups with the biggest stake in the decades-long Middle East conflict — have similar views about how that conflict might be resolved. A substantial majority of Muslim Americans (81%) and Jewish Americans (78%) support a future in which an independent Palestinian state would coexist alongside of Israel.

Jewish Americans are also among the least likely religious groups to believe that Muslim Americans sympathize with al Qaeda. Seventy percent of Jewish Americans say they do not believe Muslim Americans feel this way. The only religious group more certain that Muslim Americans do not sympathize with al Qaeda is Muslim Americans themselves, at 92%.

Underscoring their lack of sympathy for al Qaeda, Muslim Americans are also the least likely major religious group in the U.S. to say there is ever a justification for individuals or small groups to attack civilians. Roughly 1 in 10 Muslim Americans say such attacks are sometimes justified. In every other major religious group except Mormons, the proportion of people who say such attacks are sometimes justified is at least twice that.

Social Engagement A majority of Americans of every faith see Muslim Americans as being loyal to their country, with Muslim Americans and Jewish Americans the most likely to hold this view. Ninety-three percent of Muslims, 80% of Jews, 59% of Catholics, and 56% of Protestants in the U.S. say this.

Americans are divided on whether Muslim Americans are more obligated than other groups to speak out against terrorism. Muslim Americans themselves disagree on this, with about the same percentage saying they are more obligated to speak out as saying they are not.

At least 4 in 10 in every major religious group in the U.S. say Americans are prejudiced toward Muslim Americans, with Jews (66%) saying this in slightly higher numbers than Muslims (60%).

The presumed target of terrorist “profiling,” Muslim Americans are also the most likely religious group (81%) to say that profiling does not work. Americans of other major faiths are split on whether or not it is possible to profile a terrorist on the basis of traits such as gender, age, or ethnicity. Forty-nine percent of Jews, 46% of Catholics, and 44% of Protestants in the U.S. do not think profiling is possible.

Despite believing that they are often the victims of intolerance, Americans who practice Islam are among the most tolerant of U.S. faith groups studied. Muslim Americans’ combined integration-tolerance scores — a measure of their appreciation for religious pluralism — are higher than those of Protestant Americans, Catholic Americans, and Jewish Americans and are matched only by those of Mormon Americans.

Spiritual Engagement Muslim Americans who attend religious services at least once a week have higher levels of civic engagement and report less stress and anger than do other U.S. Muslims who attend religious services less frequently. This raises the possibility of community leaders using mosques as a mobilizing platform to push Muslim Americans toward greater civic engagement.

Muslim Americans are generally less likely than Americans of other major religions to take unpopular stands to defend their faith, despite their relatively high level of religious commitment. However, the willingness to do this is higher among Muslim Americans who are comfortable interacting with people of other religions.

Technical Note Since January 2008, Gallup has been interviewing a minimum of 1,000 U.S. adults nightly. The Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index (also referred to as the Gallup Nightly or G1K) was developed to obtain statistics on the state of wellbeing for adults in the United States. The data included in this report come from the Gallup Healthways Well-Being Index, as well as two independent Gallup studies of the Muslim-American population.

The data from the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index are reported out using aggregated data, as well as most recent data. For purposes of this study, aggregate data refer to interviews conducted from January 1, 2008-April 9, 2011. The total sample based on aggregate data is 868,264 adults, of which 3,883 self-identified as Muslim Americans. In the study, most recent data are based on interviews conducted from January 1, 2010-April 9, 2011. The total sample based on these data is 336,888 adults, of which 1,492 self-identified as Muslim Americans. Data from the Muslim American population were collected from February 10, 2010-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010. The total sample based on the combined Muslim-American polls is 2,482 adults, of which 475 self-identified as Muslim Americans.

In this report, we analyzed the data according to the major religious groups in the U.S.: Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Muslims, and Mormons, as well as No Religion/Atheist/Agnostics. For our reporting purposes, we did not include Other Christian or Other non-Christian religions. Respondents' religious classification is based on self-identified religious affiliation when asked the following question:

What is your religious preference — are you Protestant, Roman Catholic, Mormon, Jewish, Muslim, another religion, or no religion?

(INTERVIEWER NOTE: If respondent names “another religion,” ask: Would that be a Christian religion or is it not a Christian religion?)

Gallup’s Global Practice Leader for Faith Communities, Dr. Albert L. Winseman,² developed the Religious Tolerance Index in 2002 with Gallup scientists Dr. Jim Harter and Julie Hawkins to measure Americans’ attitudes toward religious faiths that are different from their own. The index is based on respondents’ level of agreement with the following five statements on a scale of “1” (strongly disagree) to “5” (strongly agree):

- I always treat people of other religious faiths with respect.
- Most religious faiths make a positive contribution to society.
- I would not object to a person of a different religious faith moving next door.
- People of other religious faiths always treat me with respect.
- In the past year, I have learned something from someone of another religious faith.

From the combination of their answers, Gallup classifies populations as:

Isolated: Isolated individuals tend not to be members of any particular faith group, but if they are, they tend to believe in the truth of their perspective above all others. They do not want to know about other religions. They also neither respect nor feel respected by those of other faiths.

Tolerant: Tolerant individuals have a “live-and-let-live” attitude toward people of other faiths, and they generally feel that they treat others of different faiths with respect. However, they are not likely to learn from or about other religions.

² Winseman leads Gallup’s research and consulting services that assist faith communities in helping their members become more engaged. He authored *Growing an Engaged Church*, which was written to help congregational leaders identify and harness the power of engagement in their churches. Winseman coauthored *Living Your Strengths*, which was written to help members of faith communities discover and use their talents and strengths in their congregations. Before joining Gallup, he was a pastor in the United Methodist Church for 15 years.

Integrated: Integrated individuals go beyond a live-and-let-live attitude and actively seek to know more about and learn from others of different religious traditions. They believe that most faiths make a positive contribution to society. Furthermore, integrated people not only feel they respect people from other faith traditions, but they also feel respected *by* them.

For complete details on the study, please refer to the methodology section of the report.



Photo courtesy of Aatif Abdul-Qadeer.



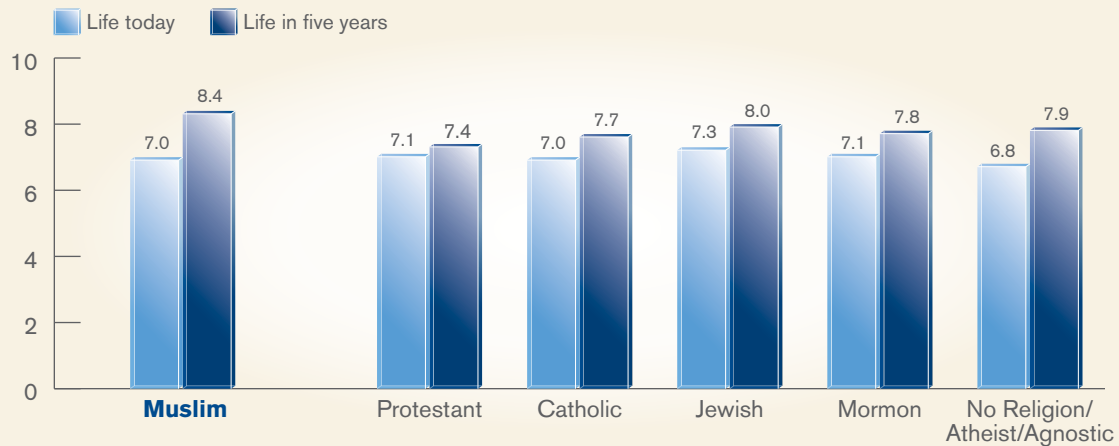
EVALUATIONS OF *Life and Community*

Muslim Americans See Their Lives Improving

While Americans in every major religious group rate their current lives about equally, Muslim Americans are unique in the level of optimism they express about the future. Regardless of religious affiliation, Americans rate their lives about a “7” on a 0-to-10 ladder scale³ and expect to be even more satisfied five years from now. No other religious group, however, expects things to improve as much as do Muslim Americans. On average, they expect their lives to be an 8.4 out of 10 in five years.

Muslim Americans Rate “Life in Five Years” More Highly Than Do Other Religious Groups

Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom to ten at the top. Suppose we say that the top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you, and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time, assuming that the higher the step the better you feel about your life, and the lower the step the worse you feel about it? Which step comes closest to the way you feel? Just your best guess, on which step do you think you will stand in the future, say about five years from now?



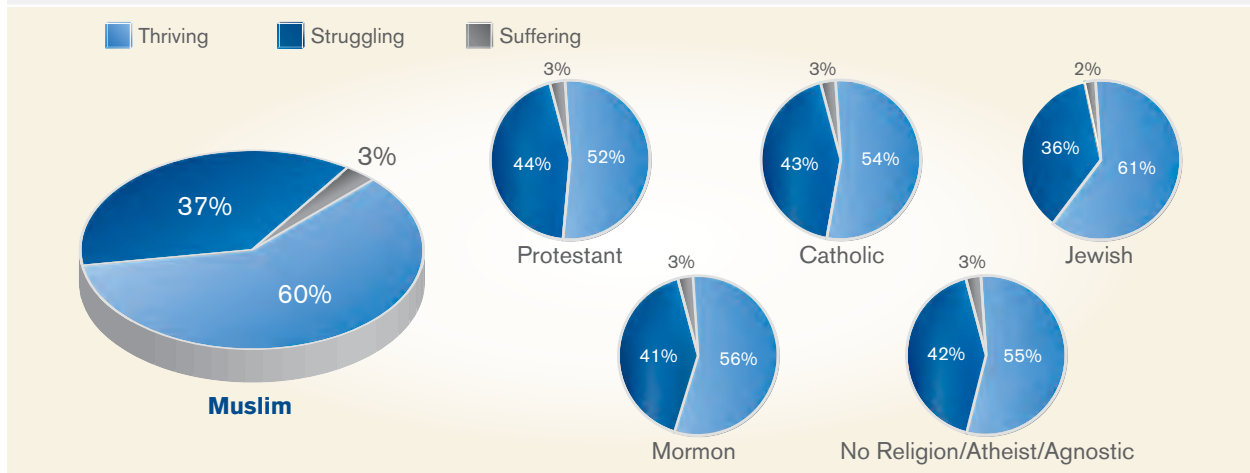
Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2010-April 9, 2011.

3 This refers to the Cantril Self-Anchoring Striving Scale.

Muslim Americans' assessments of their current and future lives also put them near the top of U.S. religious groups in terms of Gallup's Life Evaluation Index. Sixty percent of Muslim Americans are thriving, virtually the same as the percentage of Jewish Americans who are thriving and slightly higher than the percentage of Catholic Americans (54%) and Protestant Americans (52%). Three percent of Muslim Americans are suffering, about the same proportion as in every other major religious group.

Muslim Americans as Likely as Other Faith Groups to Be Thriving

Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom to ten at the top. Suppose we say that the top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you, and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time, assuming that the higher the step the better you feel about your life, and the lower the step the worse you feel about it? Which step comes closest to the way you feel? Just your best guess, on which step do you think you will stand in the future, say about five years from now?



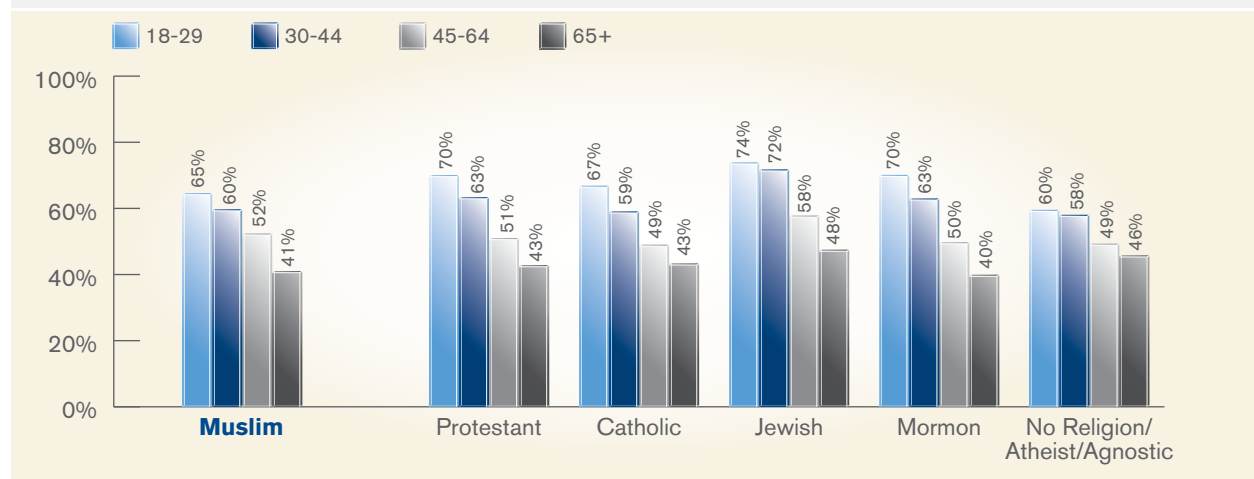
Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2010-April 9, 2011.

Of particular note is the improvement in Muslim Americans' life evaluations between 2008 and 2011. While the thriving percentage increased among all U.S. religious groups during this period, it jumped the most — 19 percentage points — among Muslims, at least double the increase of any other major religious group.

In addition to the overall improvement in Muslim Americans’ thriving, there is a specific increase among Muslim American youth. In *Muslim Americans: A National Portrait*, young Muslims’ thriving (those aged 18 to 29) was at 40%. This was the lowest of all young Americans in major religious groups. In 2008, Muslim-American youth were the exception to the trend of a “youth bonus” in thriving, where young populations are typically higher in thriving compared with older populations. In contrast, 2010-2011 data suggest that Muslim-American youth are now thriving at a proportion similar to their peers — on par with young Catholic Americans, Mormon Americans, and people of no religion. And they share the trend of being more positive about their lives today and in the future than older members of their faith group.

Muslim Youth Thriving Back on Track

Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom to ten at the top. Suppose we say that the top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you, and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time, assuming that the higher the step the better you feel about your life, and the lower the step the worse you feel about it? Which step comes closest to the way you feel? Just your best guess, on which step do you think you will stand in the future, say about five years from now?

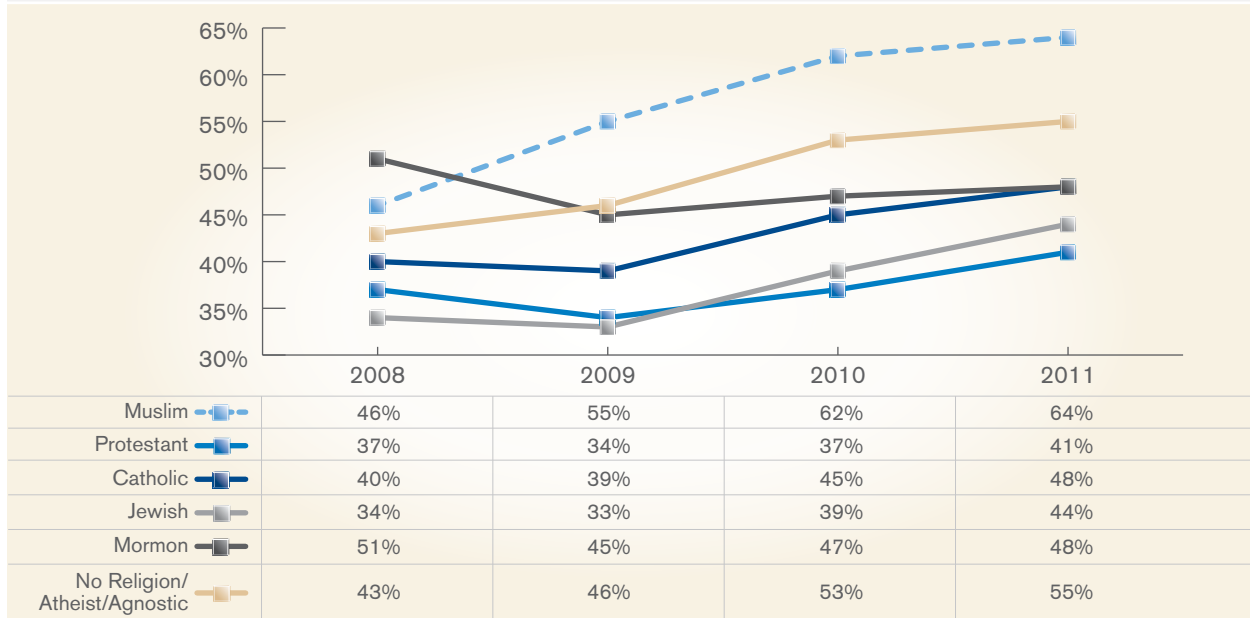


Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2010–April 9, 2011.

The percentage of Muslim Americans who say their standard of living is getting better (64%) is also higher than that of any other major religious group in the U.S. This percentage increased by 18 percentage points between 2008 and 2011 as economic conditions stabilized.

Muslim-American Standard of Living Increases From 2008 to 2011

Right now, do you feel your standard of living is getting better or getting worse?



Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2008-April 9, 2011.

In a broadly diverse population such as the U.S., it can be somewhat misleading to group people's attitudes or experiences solely on the basis of religious affiliation. This is particularly the case with Muslim Americans, as they represent the most racially diverse religious community in the U.S.⁴ Race is another factor that might separate the attitude of one Protestant or Catholic American from another, and it figures into the experiences and challenges of America's Muslim population. For instance, Asian Muslims are easily the most likely in America to be thriving. Black Muslims report more financial hardship than do white Muslims, and black Muslims are somewhat less likely than other Muslims in the U.S. to be satisfied with their standard of living.

Black Muslims are more likely than white or Asian Muslims to say they lack enough money to buy what they need or to make major purchases.

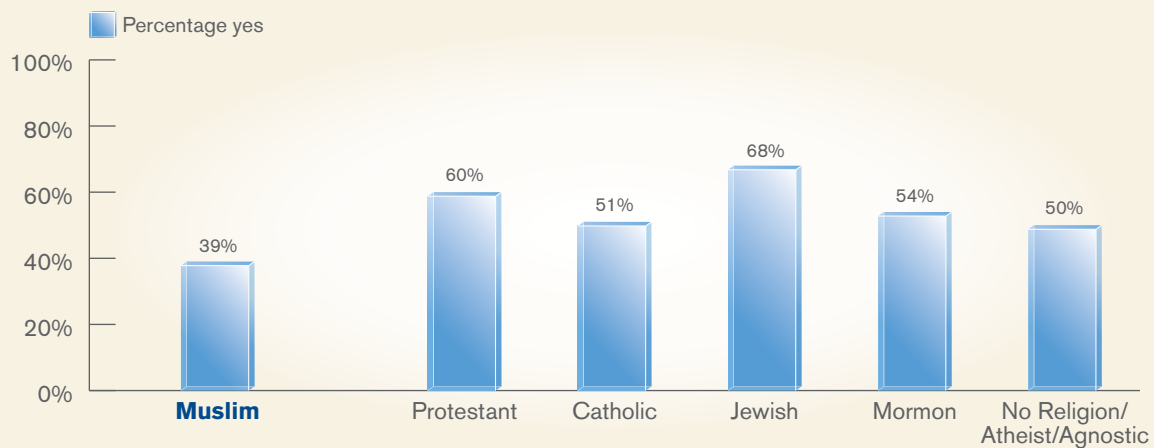
However, U.S. Muslims as a group do seem to be somewhat more vulnerable to financial difficulties than Americans of other faiths.

⁴ *Muslim Americans: A National Portrait*, Gallup 2009.

Higher rates of Muslims say there have been times in the past year when they were unable to afford basic necessities such as food, shelter, and healthcare. Muslims are also the only major U.S. religious group where less than one-half say they would be able to make a major purchase if they needed to.

Muslim Americans Least Likely to Be Able to Make Major Purchases

Would you be able right now to make a major purchase, such as a car, appliance, or furniture, or pay for a significant home repair if you needed to?



Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2010-April 9, 2011.

Muslim Americans' Optimism May Reflect Affinity for Obama

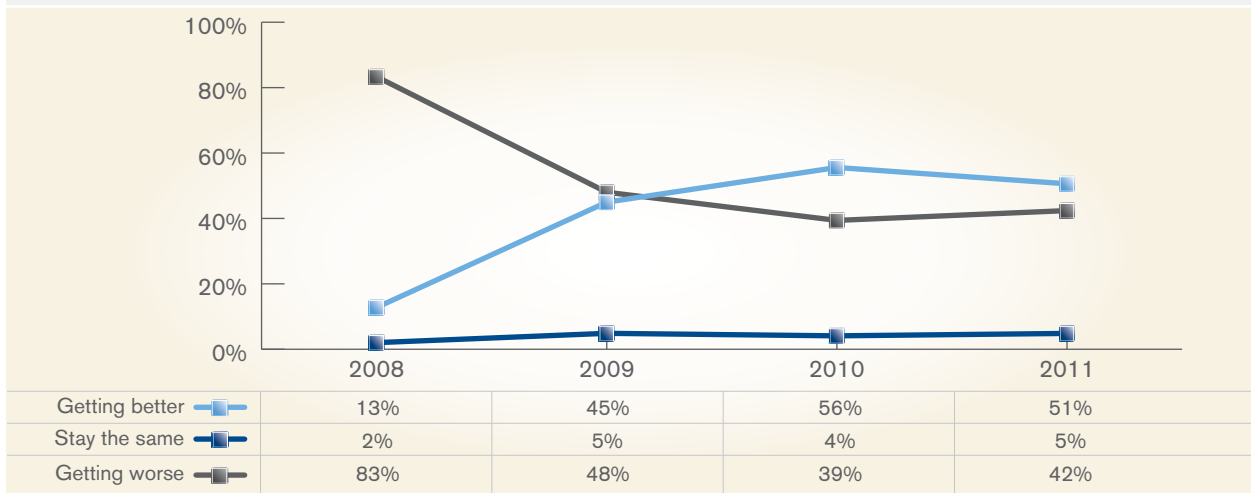
Muslim Americans' optimism about the future, despite their seemingly greater economic challenges, is striking. One possible explanation is that Muslim Americans were hurt more than other major religious groups by the recession, and have therefore experienced more improvement as the recovery has begun. The steady increase in Muslim Americans' levels of thriving and their increased economic optimism since 2008 seem to support this conclusion. Another factor may be the change in the U.S. political climate. Muslim Americans tend to identify as Democrats (46%) or independents (35%), with a smaller percentage (9%) saying they are Republicans.

They may see Obama as promoting policies that are more in keeping with their own political views than those of former President George W. Bush. In 2009, Obama's first year in office, the percentage of

Muslims who said they thought the economy was getting better more than tripled, to 45%. Part of that improvement was a lessening of the sense of crisis that enveloped the U.S. in the fall and winter of 2008. But Muslims are still the most likely of any major U.S. religious group to say that national economic conditions are good or excellent and that the economy is getting better.

More Muslim Americans See the Economy as Improving Today Than in 2008

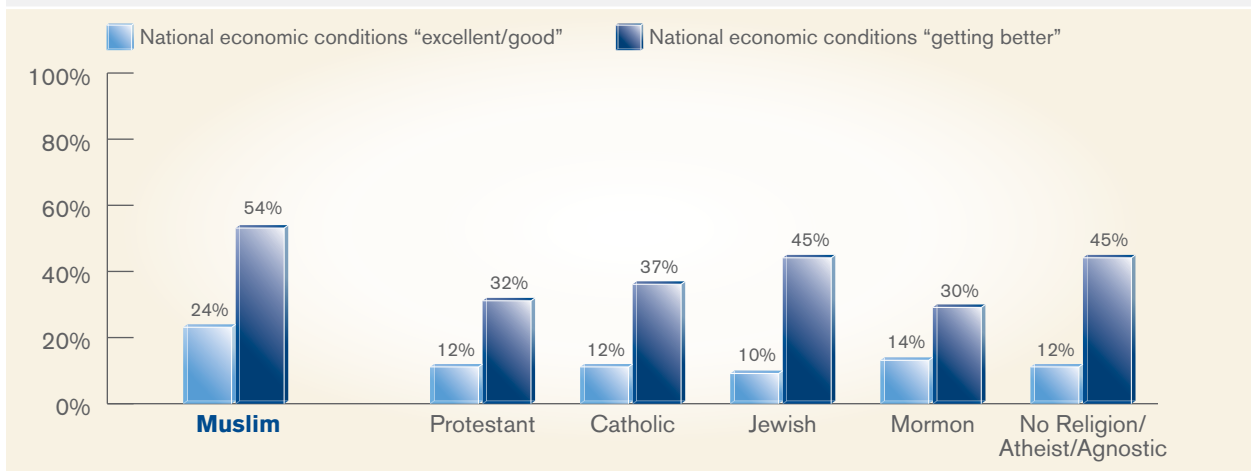
Right now, do you think that economic conditions in the country as a whole are getting better or getting worse?



Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2008-April 9, 2011.

Muslim Americans Are More Positive About National Economic Conditions

How would you rate economic conditions in this country today — as excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

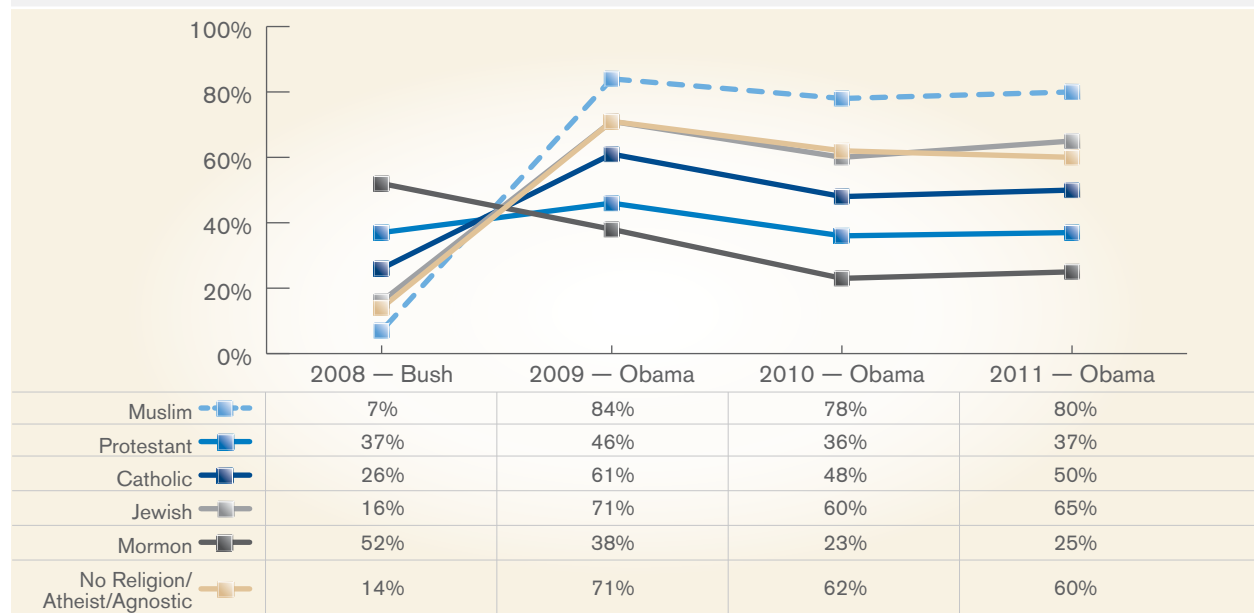


Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2010-April 9, 2011. Data includes 2010 and 2011.

Muslim Americans are the most likely of any major religious group to approve of Obama’s job performance (80%). This compares with 7% who approved of Bush’s job performance in late 2008. Jewish Americans are the only other major religious group where a majority approve of Obama; all other groups are at 50% or below.

Muslim Americans Have Highest Approval of Obama With the Largest Increase From Approval of Bush

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?
Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president?



Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2008-April 9, 2011.

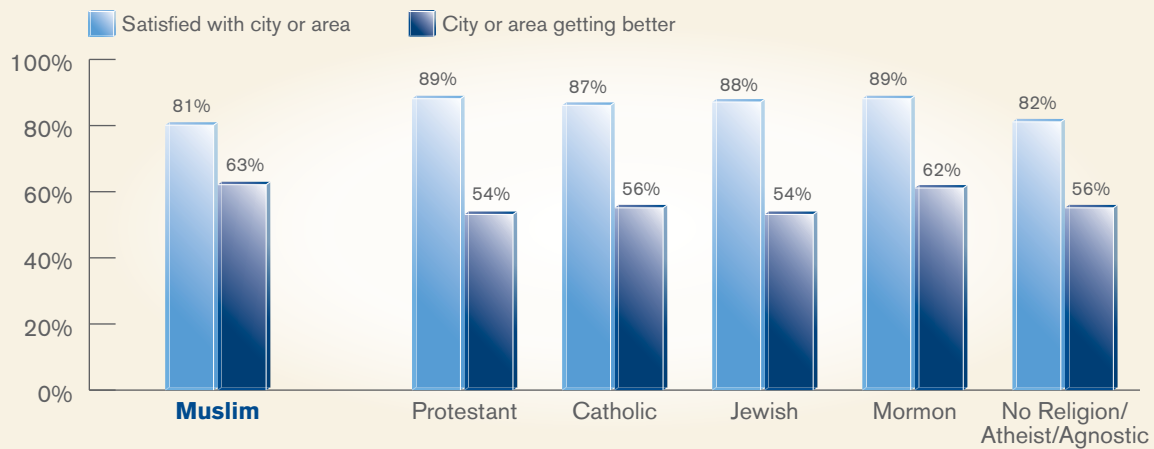
Muslim Americans Are Optimistic About the Communities Where They Live

Muslim Americans’ sense that a better future lies ahead extends to their attitude toward their cities, towns, and neighborhoods, with 63% saying their area is getting better as a place to live. This is noteworthy because, for most of the past four years, fewer Muslim Americans than any other religious group have expressed satisfaction with their local communities. Eighty-one percent of Muslim Americans say they are satisfied with the place where they live, compared with 88% or more of Protestant, Mormon, and Jewish Americans. These are all relatively

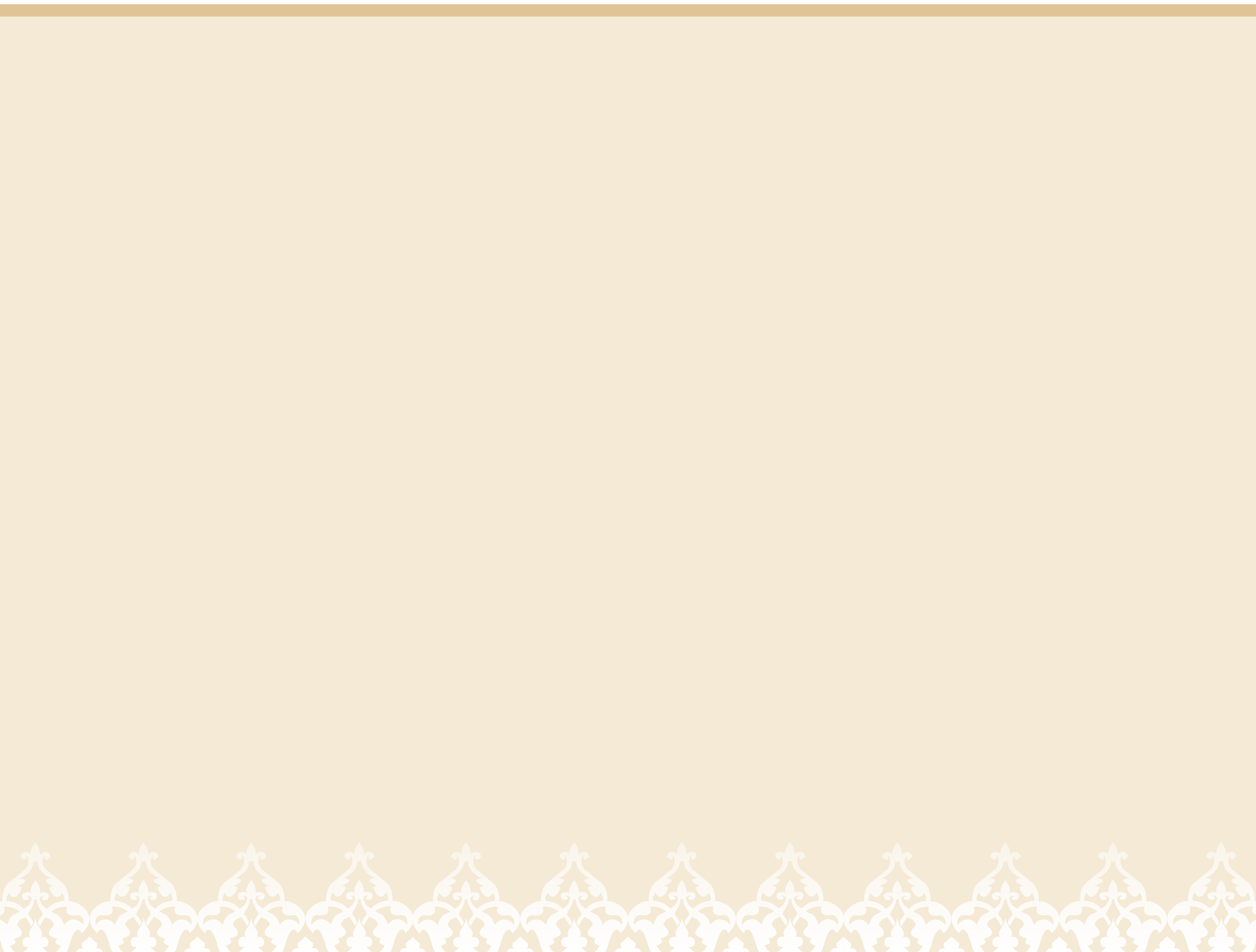
high numbers. Still, one might expect that Muslim Americans, the group expressing the least satisfaction currently, would also have the least optimism about their communities becoming better places to live in the future. Yet Muslim Americans, along with Mormon Americans, are the most likely to say that their communities are getting better as places to live.

Muslim Americans Among the Least Satisfied With Their Community but Most Optimistic About Its Improvement

Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the city or area where you live?
Is the city or area where you live getting better or getting worse as a place to live?



Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2008-April 9, 2011.



Muslim Americans are at least as likely as Americans of other major faiths to have confidence in civic institutions. They are the most likely faith group studied to reject violence targeting civilians, despite their more critical view of the country's foreign policies.



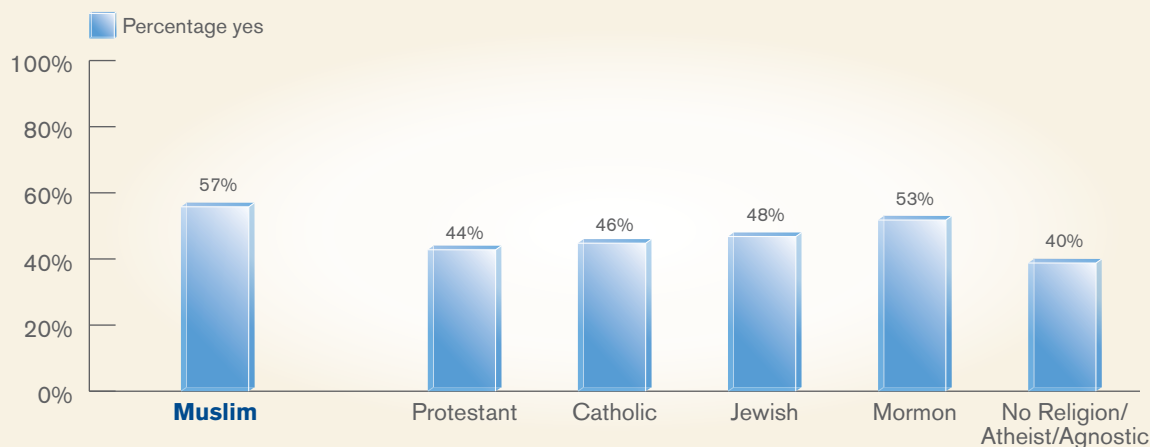
POLITICAL *Engagement*

Muslim Americans Have More Confidence in Elections, Less in the Military

Muslim Americans are the most likely of any religious group in the U.S. to say the country's elections are honest. Fifty-seven percent of Muslim Americans say this, versus 44% of Protestant Americans (the religious group least likely to express such confidence). Moreover, Muslim Americans are just as likely as other religions to say they have confidence in the U.S. media and judicial system.

Muslim Americans Are Most Likely to Have Confidence in Honesty of Elections

In the United States, do you have confidence in each of the following, or not? How about honesty of elections

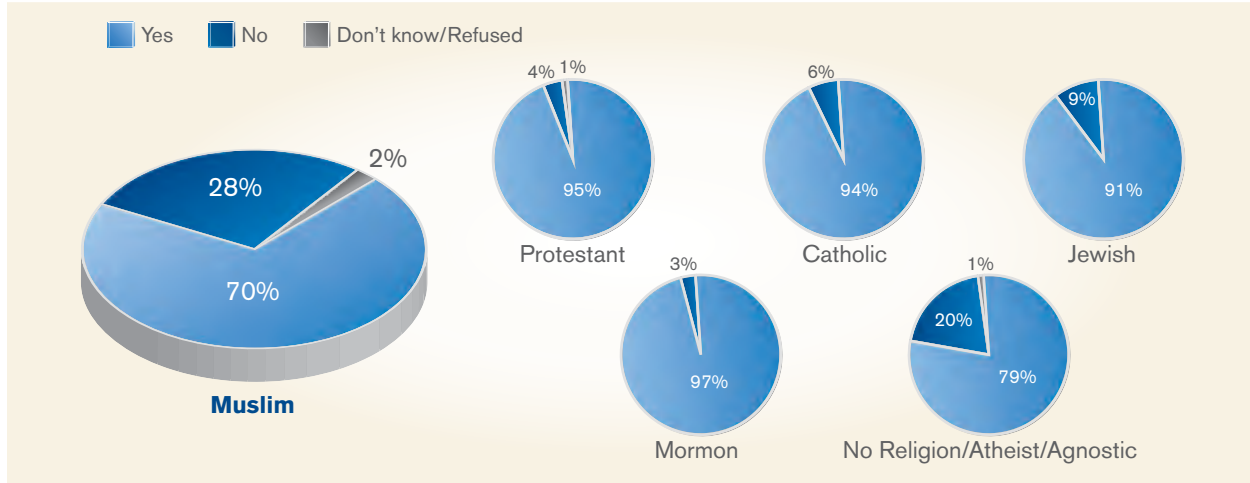


Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

Muslim Americans express less confidence than other major U.S. faith groups in two government institutions involved in the “war on terror.” Seventy percent of Muslim Americans say they have confidence in the U.S. military, lower than the 91% or more of Americans in other religious groups who say this. There is also a split in attitudes toward the FBI, with 60% of Muslim Americans saying they have confidence in the FBI, versus 75% or more of Americans of other faiths who say this.

Muslim Americans Have Lowest Level of Confidence in Military

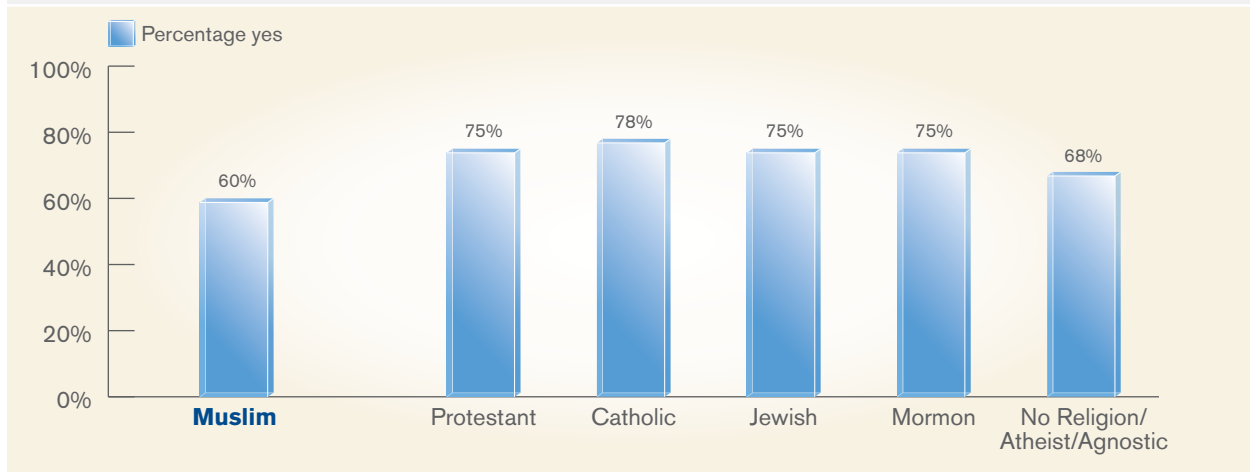
In the United States, do you have confidence in each of the following, or not? How about the military



Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

Muslim Americans Have the Lowest Level of Confidence in FBI

In the United States, do you have confidence in each of the following, or not? How about national security organizations, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation

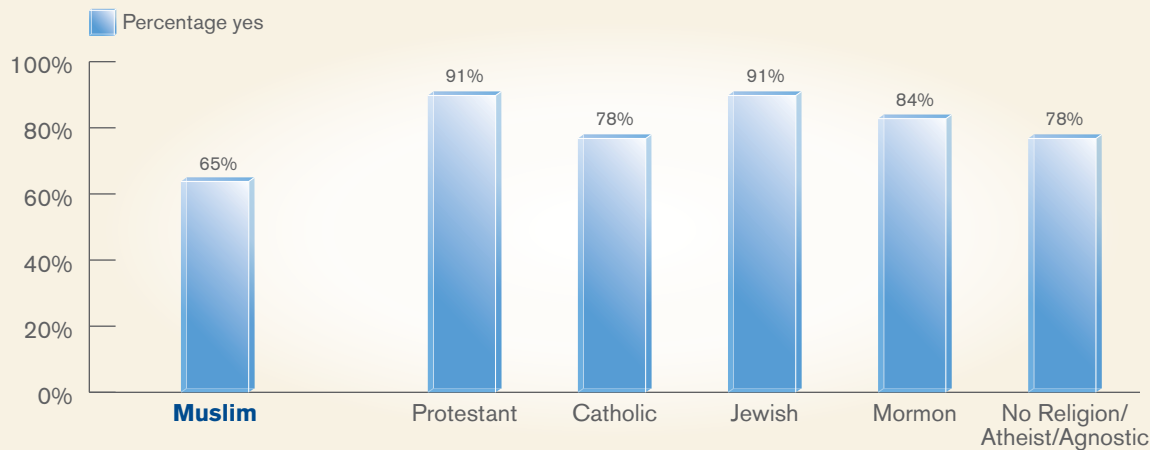


Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

Of all the major religious faiths in America, Muslims are the least likely to be registered to vote. Sixty-five percent of Muslim Americans are registered, compared with 91% of Protestant and Jewish Americans.

Muslim Americans Least Likely to Be Registered to Vote

Are you now registered to vote in your precinct or election district, or not?



Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2008-April 9, 2011.

Muslim Americans' lower voter registration numbers may be partially explained because many more of them are first-generation immigrants than those in other major U.S. faith groups. Additionally, Muslims in the U.S. are less established; at an average of 10.5 years, they have lived in their current cities and areas the shortest amount of time of people of any major religious group.

Another challenge to political mobilization is that many Muslims do not feel there is a national Muslim-American organization that represents them. When asked which of a list of national Muslim-American organizations represents their interests, 55% of Muslim men and 42% of Muslim women say that none do.

No National Muslim American Organization Represents a Large Percentage of the Community

Which national Muslim American organization, if any, do you feel most represents your interests? (Open ended)

Organization Cited	% Males	% Females
Council on American-Islamic Relations	12	11
Islamic Society of North America	4	7
Muslim Public Affairs Council	6	1
Muslim American Society	0	2
Imam Warith Deen Mohammed Group	3	1
Islamic Circle of North America	2	0
Other	6	20
None	55	42

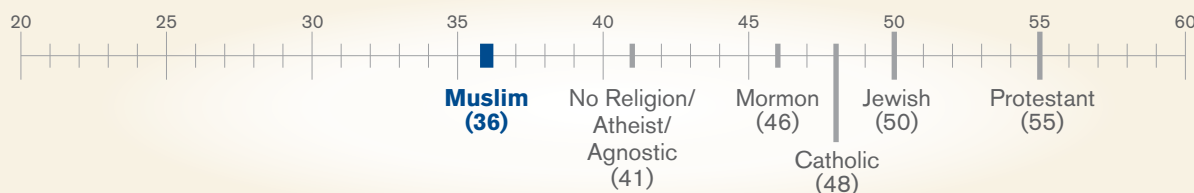
Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2008-April 9, 2011.

Muslims Are the Youngest of Any Major Religious Group in the U.S.

Another possible explanation for lower political involvement is that Muslim Americans are more likely to be young people — a demographic that tends to be less politically active across faith groups. With an average age of 36, Muslims in America are considerably younger than Americans of other major faiths. Across all other major religious groups in the U.S., the average age is 46 to 55.

Muslim Americans Are the Youngest of the Major Religious Groups

What is your age? (Average age)



Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2010–April 9, 2011.

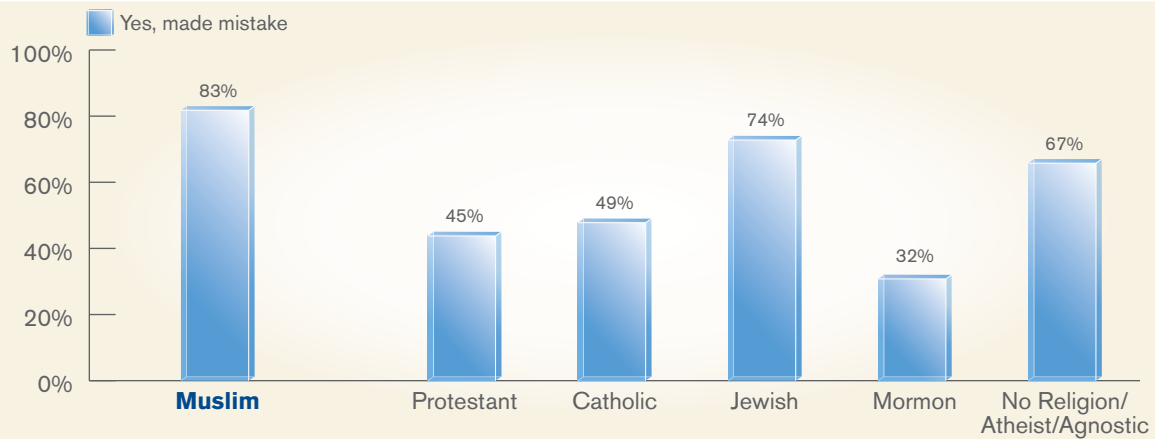
With such a young population, Muslim Americans can be expected to have different needs and priorities. In particular, they are most likely to be focused on getting an education, entering a career, getting married, and starting a family.

U.S. Muslims Most Likely of All Faiths to Call Iraq, Afghanistan Wars “Mistake”

Looking back on the events following the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, a substantial proportion of Americans in most major religious groups surveyed now say the Iraq war was a mistake. At 83%, Muslim Americans are by far the most likely to hold this view. A majority of Jewish Americans (74%) also say the war was a mistake. Mormon Americans are the least likely to say the U.S. made a mistake in sending troops to Iraq.

Muslim Americans Are the Most Likely to Cite Iraq War as a Mistake

In view of the developments since we first sent our troops to Iraq, do you think the United States made a mistake in sending troops to Iraq, or not?

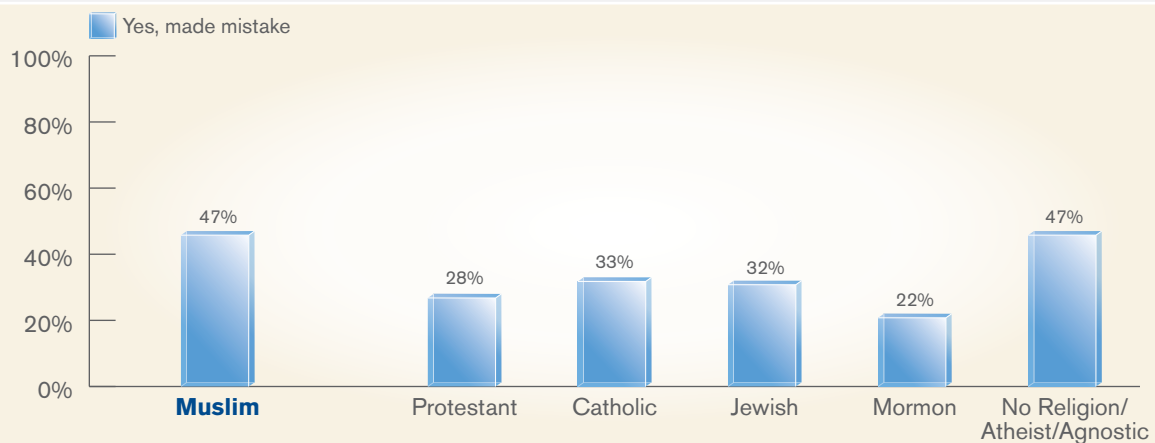


Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

Likewise, Muslim Americans are the most likely of the major religious groups surveyed to have reservations about the war in Afghanistan. Two-thirds or more U.S. Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and Mormons support the war in Afghanistan, but Americans with no religion are as likely as U.S. Muslims (47%) to say the war was a mistake.

Muslim Americans and Those With No Religion Are Most Likely to Cite Afghanistan War as a Mistake

Thinking now about the U.S. military action in Afghanistan that began in October 2001, do you think the United States made a mistake in sending military forces to Afghanistan, or not?



Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

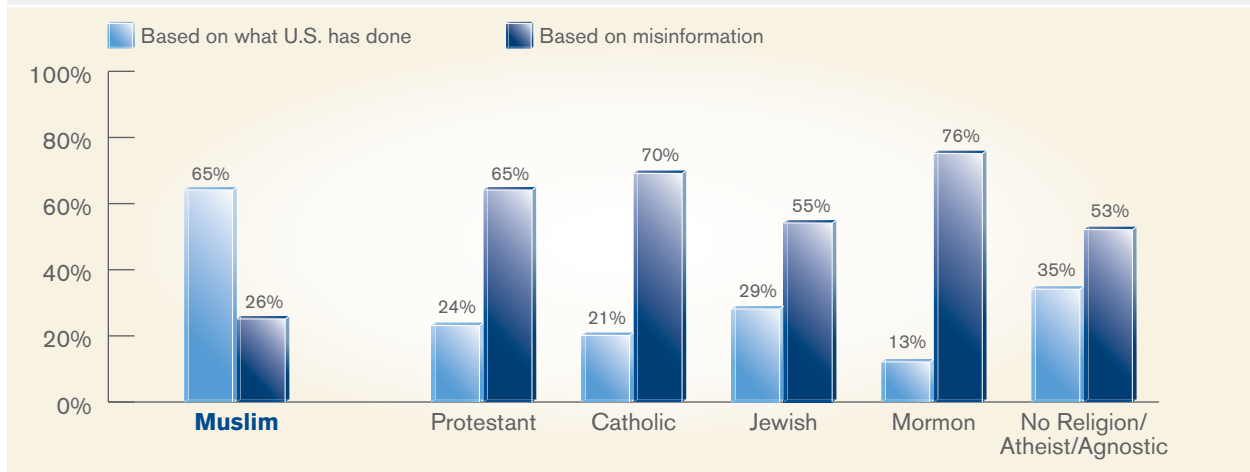
Muslim Americans Blame U.S. Actions Not Misinformation, for Majority-Muslim Countries' Distrust

Most Americans in all faith groups studied say the U.S. has a negative image in predominantly Muslim countries. To explain the U.S.'s negative image, in most of the religious groups studied more than one-half of those who are pessimistic about America's standing among Muslim communities say the media and governments in those countries spread misinformation that fosters unfavorable views of the U.S.

Muslim Americans, on the other hand, see it differently. Of those who say the U.S. has a negative image in majority-Muslim countries, about one in four say this is the result of misinformation, while 65% of the same sub-group of Muslim Americans say it is based on what the U.S. has actually done.

Muslim Americans Are the Most Likely to See U.S. Actions as Causing Unfavorable Views of U.S. in Muslim Countries

Do you think the unfavorable views people in Muslim countries have of the United States are based mostly on what the U.S. has done or based mostly on misinformation provided by the media and government about what the U.S. has done? (Asked of those who said people in Muslim countries have very unfavorable, or somewhat unfavorable views of the United States.)



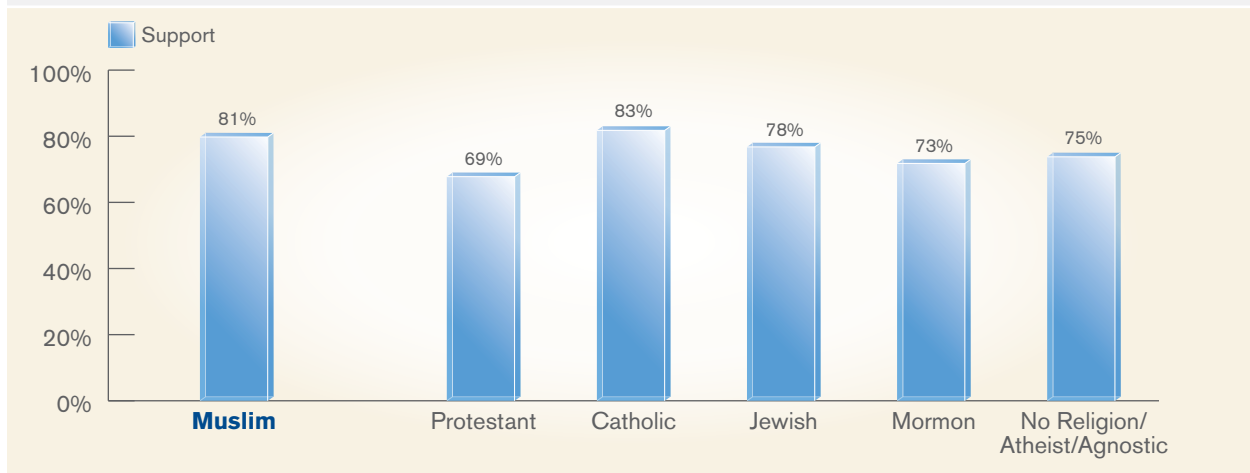
Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010. This question was asked of a subset of the population.

Muslim Americans and Jewish Americans Support “Two-State Solution” in Middle East

In roughly the same numbers, U.S. Muslims (81%) and Jews (78%) — two of the faith groups most closely associated with the Middle East’s enduring conflict — support a future in which an independent Palestinian state would coexist alongside of Israel. Catholic Americans (83%) also strongly support the two-state approach. U.S. Protestants are the least likely of the major religious groups surveyed to back a two-state solution. Protestant Americans’ relative resistance to a two-state solution is significant because of the political influence wielded by this faith group, which represents a little more than one-half of the U.S. population.

Regardless of Religious Affiliation, Most Support a Two-State Solution to Palestinian-Israeli Conflict

Would you support or not support a two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict? By “two-state” solution, I mean an independent Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel.



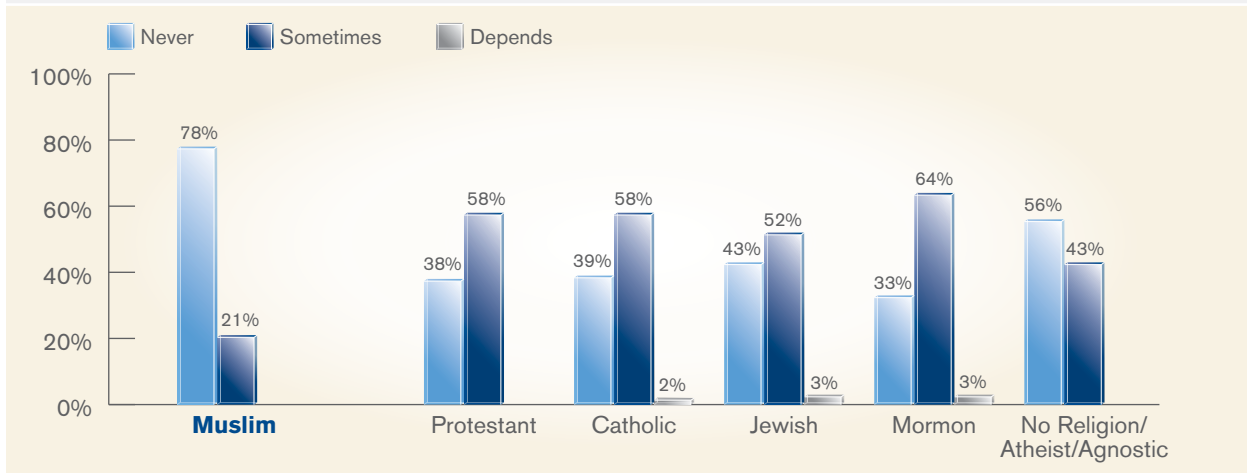
Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from October 1-21, 2010.

U.S. Muslims Are Most Likely to Say Military Attacks on Civilians Never Justified

Of the major religious groups studied, Muslim Americans are the staunchest opponents of military attacks against civilians, with 78% saying such attacks are never justified. Muslim Americans are unique in the numbers in which they oppose such attacks. A majority of Americans in the other faith groups say military attacks on civilians are sometimes justified, with Mormon Americans the highest at 64%.

Muslim Americans Are Most Likely to Reject Violent Military Attacks on Civilians

Some people think that for the military to target and kill civilians is sometimes justified, while others think that kind of violence is never justified. Which is your opinion?



Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

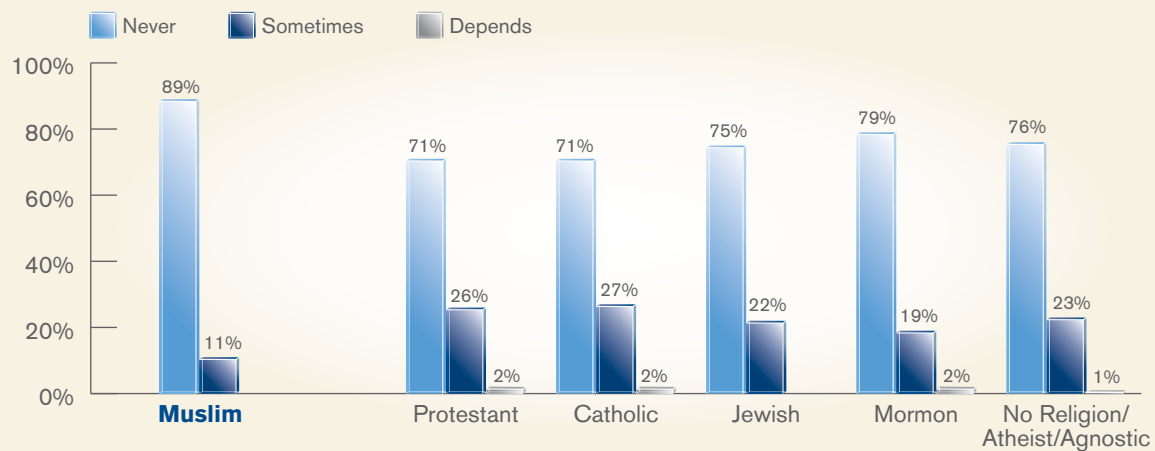
Neither U.S. Muslims nor U.S. Jews Say Muslim Americans Sympathize With Al Qaeda

Even before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, Americans have debated whether Islam as a religion innately encourages violence and terrorism and whether Muslim Americans secretly sympathize with organizations and movements such as al Qaeda.

To that end, it is worth noting that Muslim Americans are the least likely of all major religions in the U.S. to justify individuals or small groups attacking civilians. Eighty-nine percent of Muslim Americans say there is never a justification for such attacks, compared with 79% of Mormon Americans, 75% of Jewish Americans, and 71% of Protestant and Catholic Americans. Moreover, the frequency with which Muslim Americans — or any other faith group — attend religious services has no effect on whether they justify violence against civilians.

Muslim Americans Are Most Likely to Reject Violent Individual Attacks on Civilians

Some people think that for an individual person or a small group of persons to target and kill civilians is sometimes justified, while others think that kind of violence is never justified. Which is your opinion?



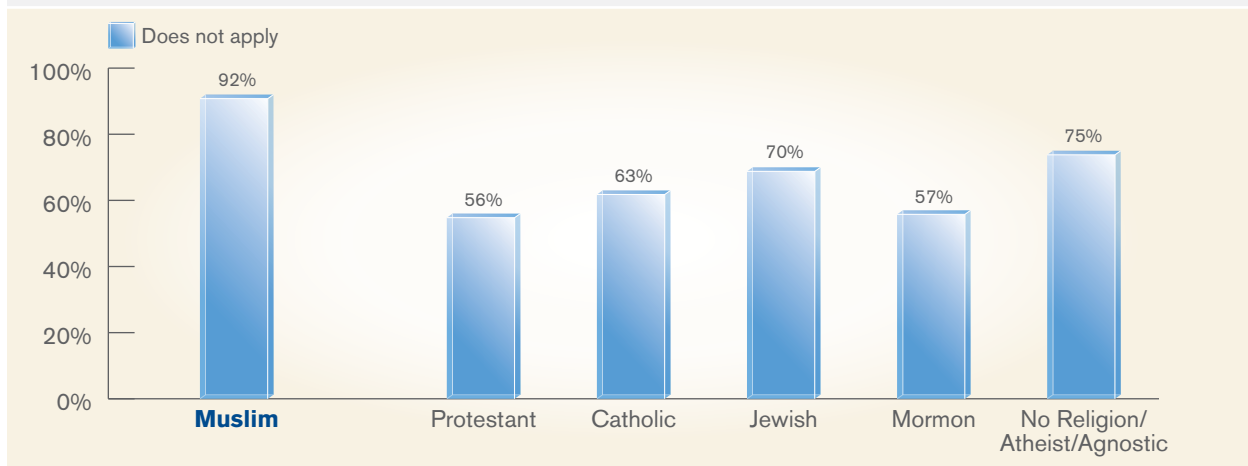
Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

U.S. Muslims are also the most likely (92%) of the major religious groups studied to say that Muslims who live in America have no sympathy for al Qaeda. Majorities of those in the other U.S. faith groups share this view, though a significant minority of U.S. Protestants and Catholics (33%) and Mormons (31%) do not dismiss the possibility that Muslim Americans harbor some sympathy for al Qaeda.

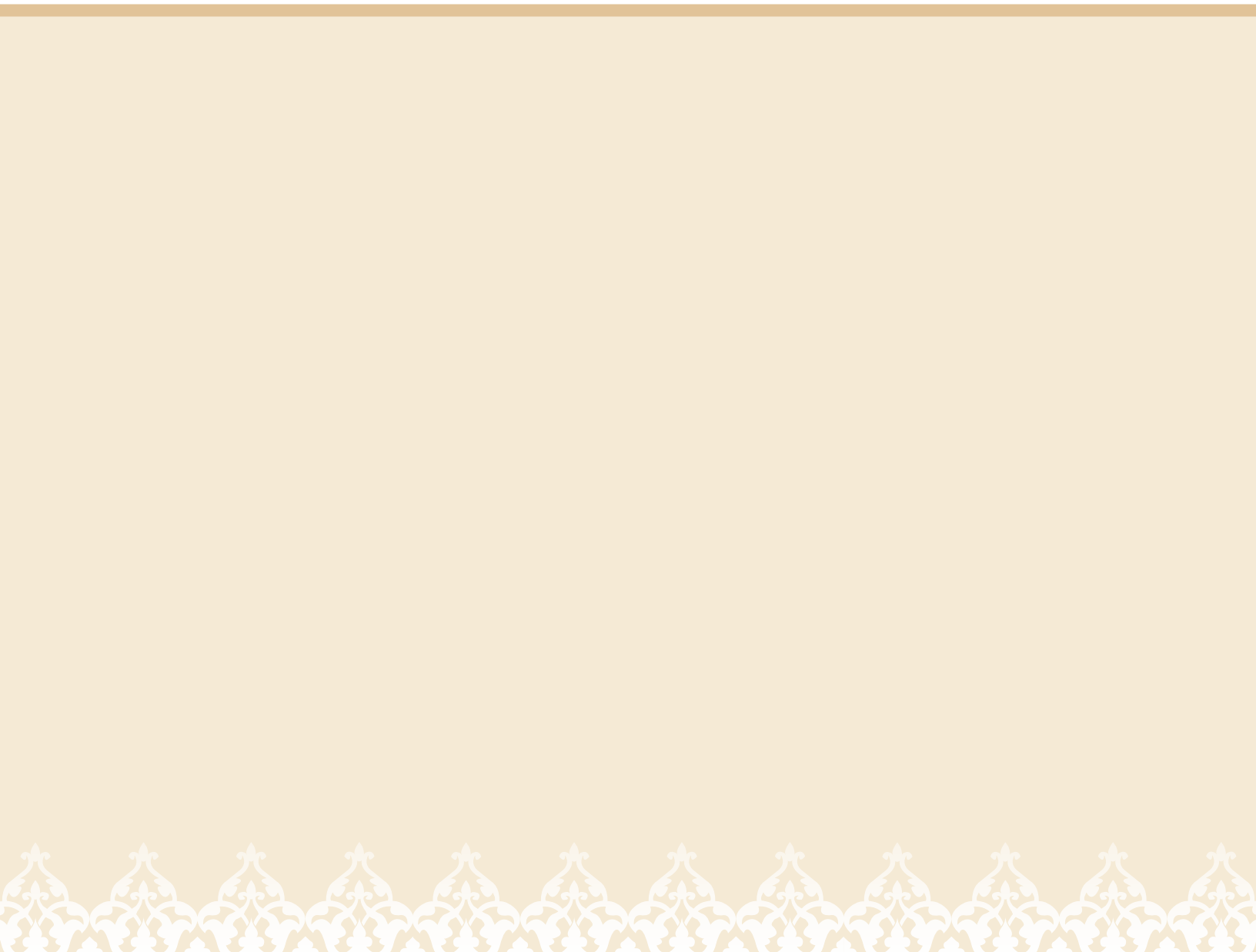
Jewish Americans are the least likely religious group, after Muslim Americans, to believe that Muslim Americans sympathize with al Qaeda. Although U.S. Jews and Muslims often have sharply divided views on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and some of the most outspoken critics of the Muslim American community are prominent Jewish Americans, most Jewish Americans seem to have shrugged off these views. Seventy percent say they do not believe Muslims in the U.S. sympathize with al Qaeda.

Muslim Americans, Those With No Religion, and Jewish Americans Are More Likely to Believe Muslims Have No Sympathy for Al Qaeda

Now thinking specifically about Muslims, do you think each of the following applies, or does not apply, to Muslims living in this country? Muslims living in THIS COUNTRY are sympathetic to the al Qaeda terrorist organization?



Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from October 1-21, 2010.



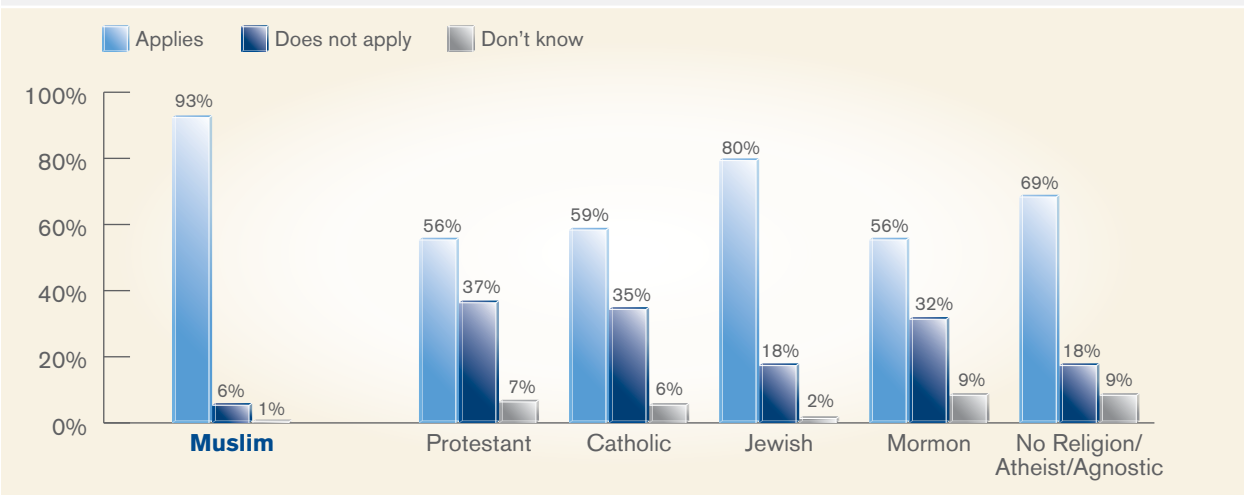
SOCIAL *Engagement*

Nearly All Muslim Americans Say Their Faith Group Is “Loyal” to U.S.

The national uproar generated in 2010 over plans to build a mosque and cultural center near Ground Zero made it apparent that some in politics, the media, and the general public continue to question where Muslim Americans’ loyalties lie. Nonetheless, a majority of Americans in all major faith groups say U.S. Muslims are loyal to their country, though they are far less likely to say this than Muslim Americans themselves. Almost all U.S. Muslims (93%) believe other Americans who share their faith are loyal to the country; U.S. Protestants (56%), Mormons (56%), and Catholics (59%) are the least likely to say so. Jewish Americans are much more likely than those of other non-Muslim faiths studied to see U.S. Muslims as loyal (80%).

Majorities of All Religious Groups Say Muslim Americans Are Loyal to the U.S.

Now thinking specifically about Muslims, do you think each of the following applies, or does not apply, to Muslims living in this country? Muslims living in THIS COUNTRY are loyal to this country?



Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from October 1-21, 2010.

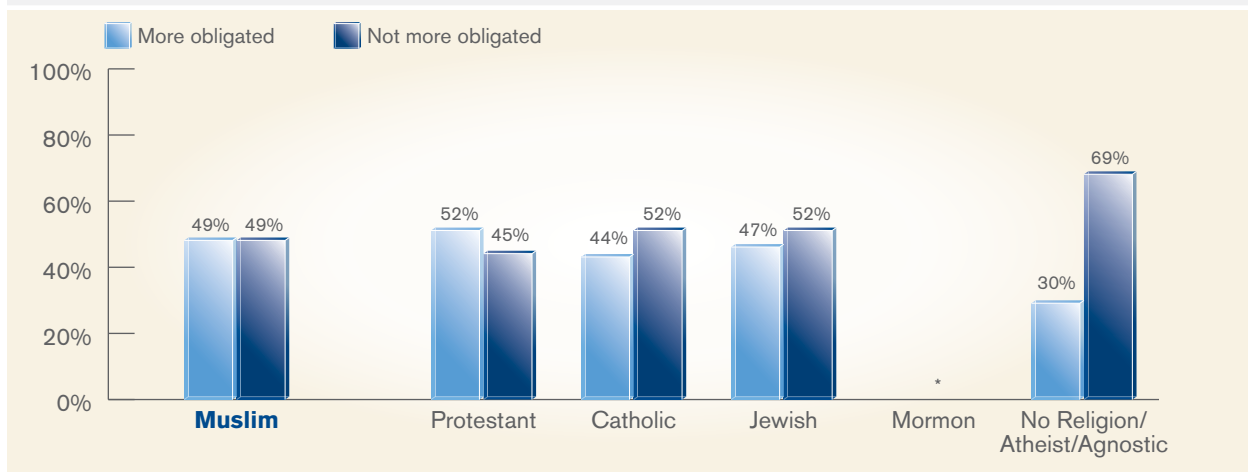
Must U.S. Muslims Speak Out Against Terrorism? Americans Are Divided

That a significant minority of Americans doubt U.S. Muslims’ loyalty to their country seems to suggest they may expect Muslim Americans to somehow prove their loyalty. Similarly, members of the media and the public often ask why Muslim Americans do not speak out against

terrorist attacks more often, as if their silence somehow condones such acts. Most major religious groups (including Muslims themselves) are split on this question, with about one-half in each faith group saying U.S. Muslims are obligated to speak out more than others, and one-half saying they are not.

U.S. Faith Groups Divided on Need for Muslim Americans to Speak Out More Against Terrorism

Some people say that Muslim Americans are more obligated to speak out against terrorism than other groups. Others say Muslim Americans are NOT more obligated to speak out against terrorism than other groups. Which comes closer to your point of view?



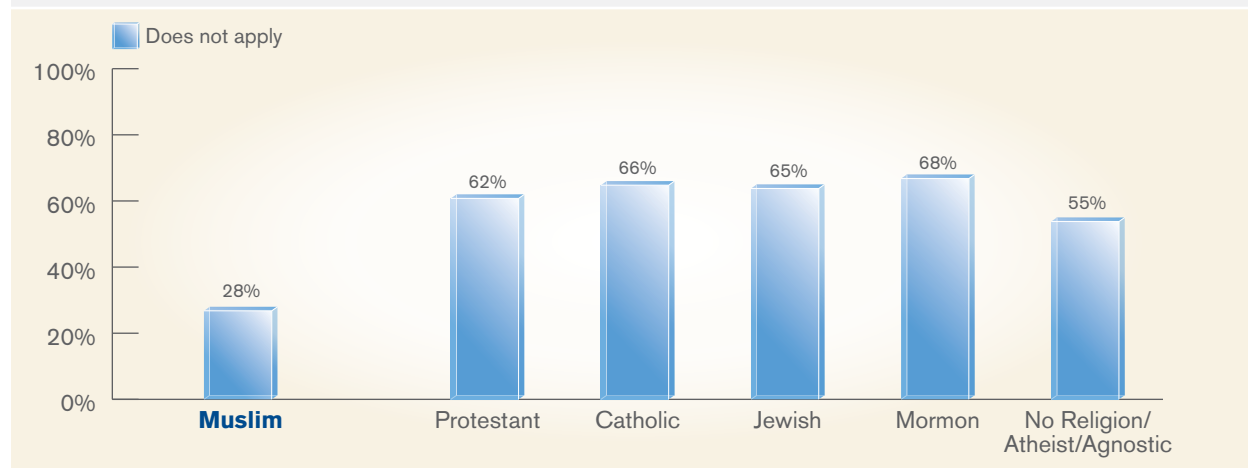
Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010.

*Mormon population too small to report results

If Americans of most faiths are split in their perception of Muslim Americans' obligation to speak out against terrorism, they are not divided in their perception of whether Muslim Americans do so often enough. Most believe they do not. Among Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and Mormon Americans, no more than about one-third and as few as one-quarter believe U.S. Muslims are sufficiently vocal in condemning terrorism. That compares with 72% of Muslim Americans, a mismatch suggesting U.S. Muslims have not found the right "bullhorns" to make themselves heard. It also reflects the frustration Muslim Americans often express that their repeated condemnations of terrorism seem to go unheard.

Most Religious Groups Say Muslims Not Speaking Out Enough Against Terrorism

Now thinking specifically about Muslims, do you think each of the following applies, or does not apply, to Muslims living in this country? Speaking out enough against terrorism



Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from October 1-21, 2010.

It is possible that Muslim-American organizations rely too heavily on websites and email lists to speak out against terrorism. Such electronic methods are immediate, easy, and inexpensive to use, yet they tend to be homogenous and thus result in “preaching to the choir.” The websites where condemnations are posted are generally of most interest to U.S. Muslims and may not be seen by a wider audience.

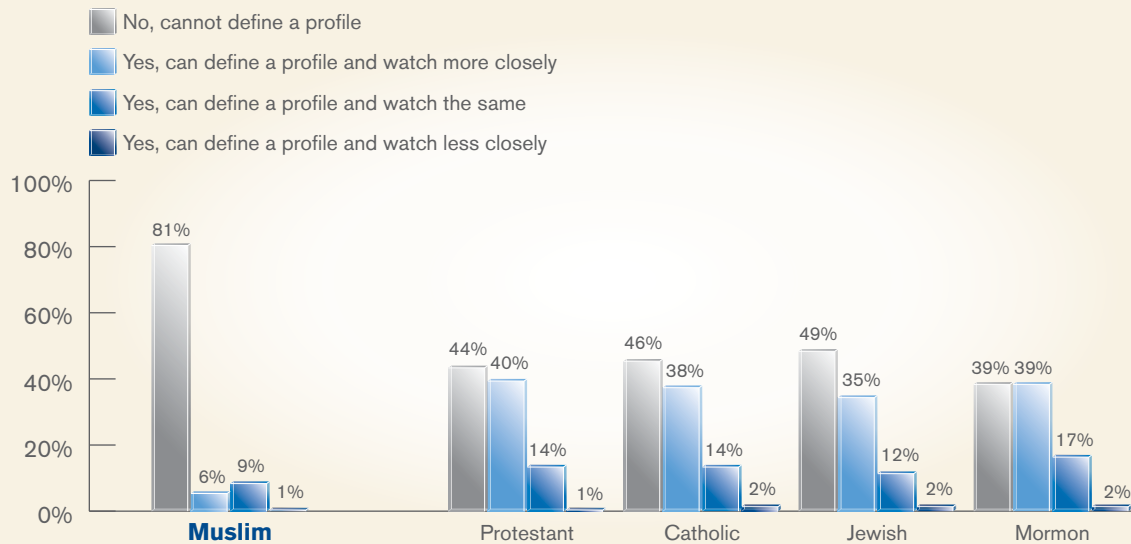
As Main Target of Profiling, Muslim Americans Are Least Likely to Favor Its Use

Despite the debate over the past decade about whether law enforcement should profile potential terrorists based on visible traits such as gender, age, and ethnicity, many members of major religious groups in the U.S. do not agree on the efficacy of this tactic. Most of these groups are split on the issue, but Muslim Americans — the presumed targets of profiling — express the least confidence in this method by far. The percentage of Muslim Americans (17%) who say it is possible to effectively profile is far lower than that of U.S. Protestants (55%), Catholics (54%), Mormons (58%), and Jews (49%).

Slight Majority of U.S. Christians Say It Is Possible to Profile Terrorists

Do you believe it is possible to profile a terrorist based on gender, age, ethnicity, or other demographic traits, OR do you believe that it is NOT possible to profile a terrorist based on gender, age, or ethnicity, or other demographic traits?

Should people who fit the profile be watched by law enforcement more intensely, less intensely, or the same as those who don't fit the profile? (Asked only of those who say you can profile a terrorist.)



Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

Not only are many major American religious groups divided on the possibility of assigning risk based on demographics, but not all who believe in the efficacy of profiling think law enforcement should scrutinize these individuals more closely. However, a significant minority of Protestant, Catholic, Mormon, and Jewish Americans (between 35% to 40%) believe it is possible to profile a terrorist and that law enforcement should watch individuals fitting the profile more closely. This view is far less common among Muslim Americans (6%).

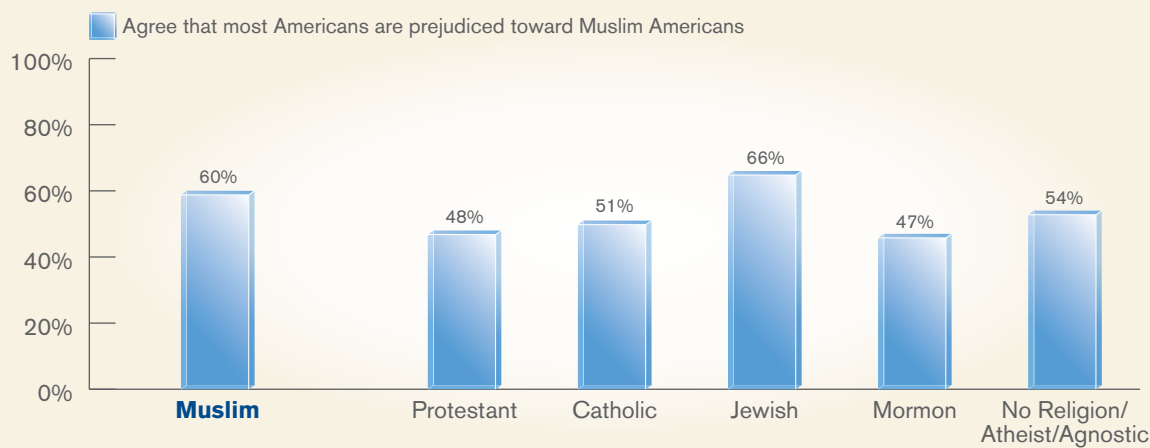
Most U.S. Muslims Say Other Americans Are Prejudiced Toward Them

Sixty percent of U.S. Muslims say they face prejudice from most Americans. However, far fewer Americans of other faiths believe this to be true. U.S. Protestants, Catholics, and Mormons are the least likely (48%, 51%, and 47%, respectively) to say that Americans are prejudiced

toward Muslim Americans — the groups also least likely to believe that Muslim Americans are loyal to the U.S. and most likely to believe a terrorist can be profiled. Surprisingly, American Jews agree that there is prejudice toward U.S. Muslims in even higher numbers (66%) than do Muslims themselves.

Jews Most Likely to Agree Muslims Face Prejudice

I am going to read you two statements. Please tell me for each whether you agree or disagree with it. In general, most Americans are prejudiced toward Muslim Americans.

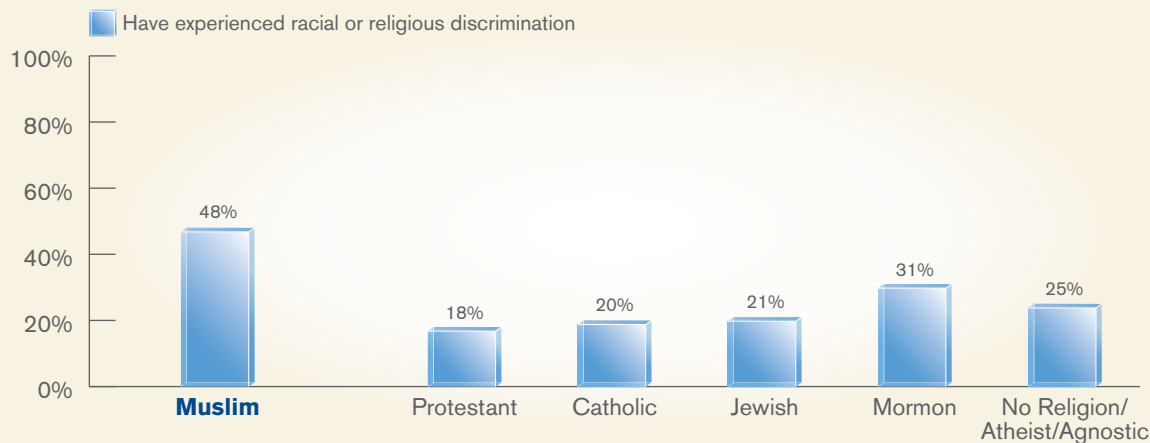


Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

At 48%, Muslim Americans are by far the most likely of major faith groups surveyed to say they have personally experienced racial or religious discrimination in the past year. The next most likely are Mormon Americans, although less than one-third of U.S. Mormons say this. The numbers of U.S. Protestants, Catholics, and Jews who report experiencing discrimination in the past year are far lower, about one in five in each of these groups. Though Jews and Catholics historically have been the most frequent targets of religious discrimination in the U.S., these data suggest that Muslim Americans now perceive themselves to hold this dubious distinction.

Muslims Most Likely to Have Experienced Racial or Religious Discrimination

Have you personally experienced racial or religious discrimination in the past year?

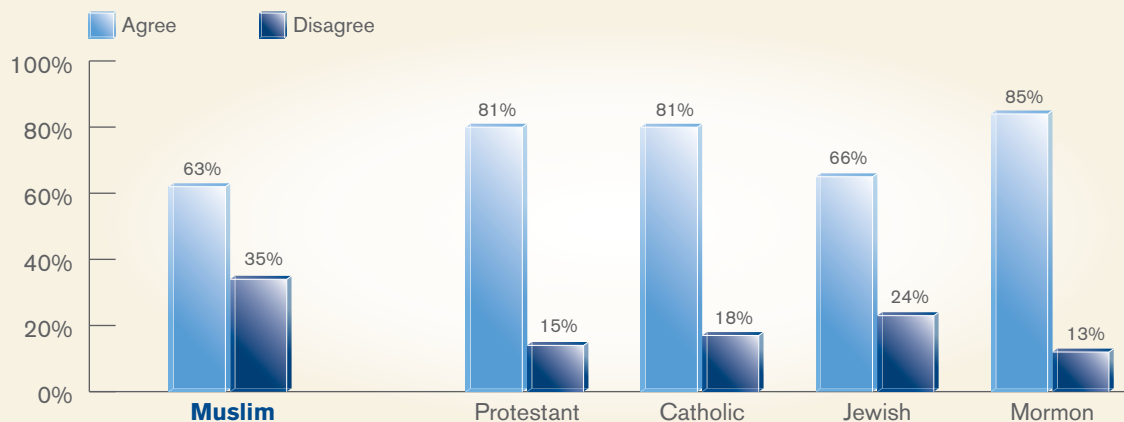


Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

Higher levels of perceived prejudice may influence U.S. Muslims' feelings about practicing their religion in public. While a majority (63%) of Muslim Americans say they feel respected when they practice their religion in public, this number is much lower than that of U.S. Protestants and Catholics (both 81%) and Mormon Americans (85%).

Muslim and Jewish Americans Are Less Likely Than Protestant and Catholic Americans to Feel Respected When Practicing Their Religion in Public

Now, I will read you a list of statements. Please tell me for each whether you agree or disagree with it. I am respected when I practice my religion in public.



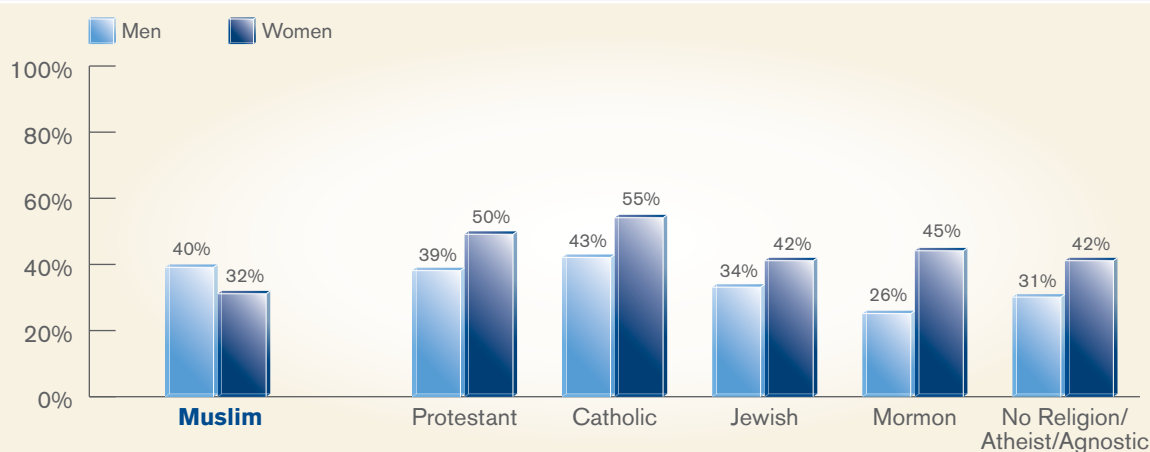
Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

Muslim Women More Likely Than Men to Say They Feel Disrespected in U.S.

When it comes to respect, Americans of every faith say they show more of it to others than others show to them. The sense that they are not respected is higher among those whose religions make them a minority in the country — such as U.S. Mormons, Jews, and Muslims — and is also generally higher among men than women. American Muslim women are an exception to this gender rule. This may be because women are more visibly identifiable as Muslim if they wear *hijab*, a practice that most who adopt say is a religious obligation.

U.S. Muslims Are Only Religious Group in Which Women Say They Are Shown Less Respect Than Men by Other Faith Groups (% Strongly agree shown)

People of other religious faiths always treat me with respect.



Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

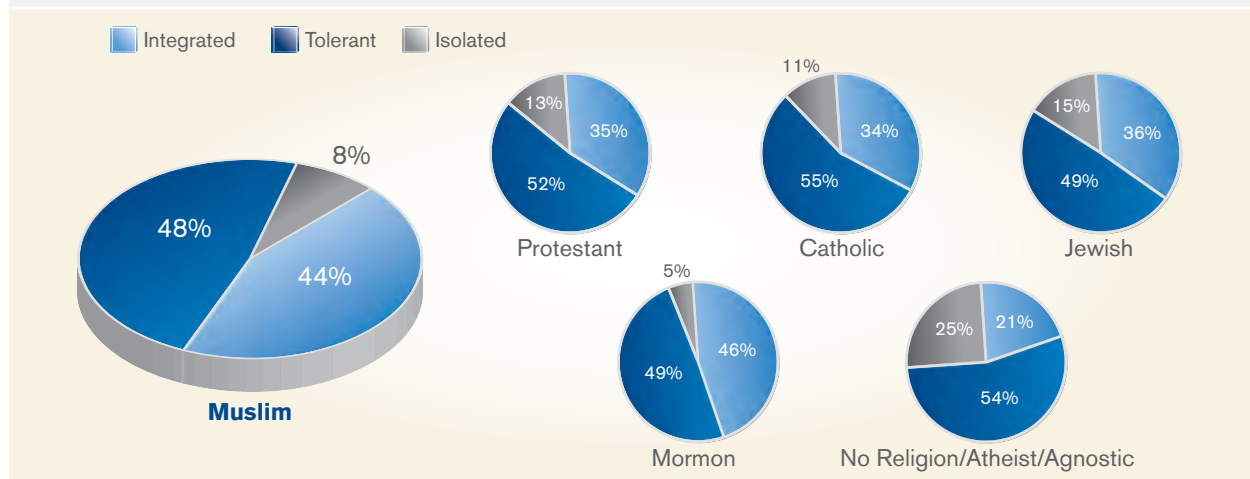
Muslim Americans Are Among Most Tolerant of Other Faiths in U.S.

Despite believing that they are often the victims of prejudice, Muslim Americans are among the most tolerant of all major faiths in the U.S. Their attitudes toward other religious groups qualify 44% of them as being “integrated,” the highest possible level on a continuum of acceptance of other faiths. Another 48% of Muslim Americans qualify

as “tolerant,” with 8% being “isolated.”⁵ Their combined integration-tolerance scores — in effect, a measure of their welcoming of religious pluralism — is higher than that of U.S. Protestants, Catholics, and Jews and is matched by that of Mormon Americans.

Mormons and Muslims Highest in Integration Among U.S. Religious Groups

Religious Tolerance Index



Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

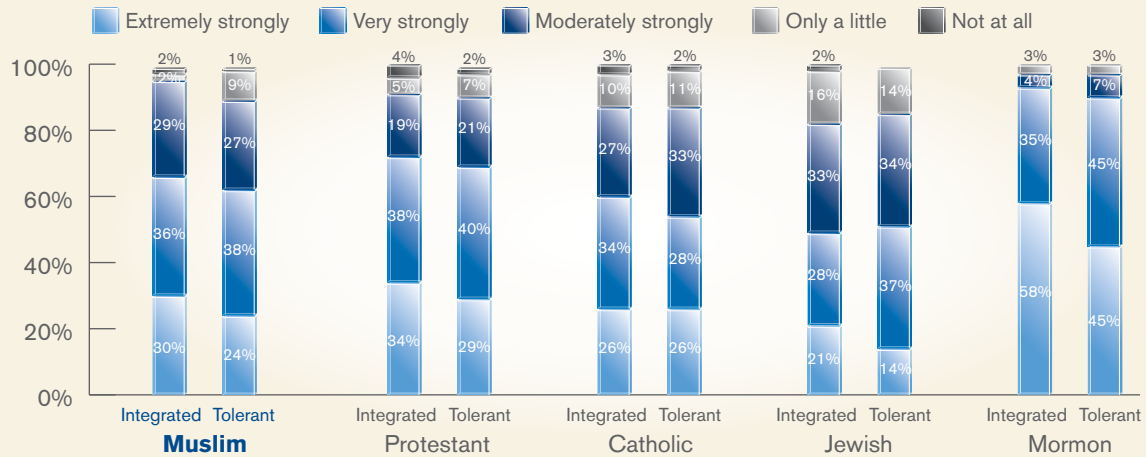
One might expect Americans who are more accepting of those of other faiths to be less connected to their own faith and fellow believers. However, this is not the case. An examination of responses from Americans of all major faiths studied shows that no matter how passionately they feel about their own religion, it does not prevent them from being open to those of other faiths.

⁵ In Gallup’s methodology, people’s position with respect to other faiths is characterized as *integrated*, *tolerant*, or *isolated* based on the extent to which they say they agree with five statements: 1. “I always treat people of other religious faiths with respect.” 2. “Most religious faiths make a positive contribution to society.” 3. “I would not object to a person of a different religious faith moving next door.” 4. “People of other religious faiths always treat me with respect.” 5. “In the past year, I have learned something from someone of another religious faith.”

Integrated Religious Groups Are No Less Likely Than Tolerant Religious Groups to Identify Strongly With Their Religion

Religious Tolerance Index

How strongly do you identify with each of the following groups? Extremely strongly, very strongly, moderately strongly, only a little, or not at all? Your religion

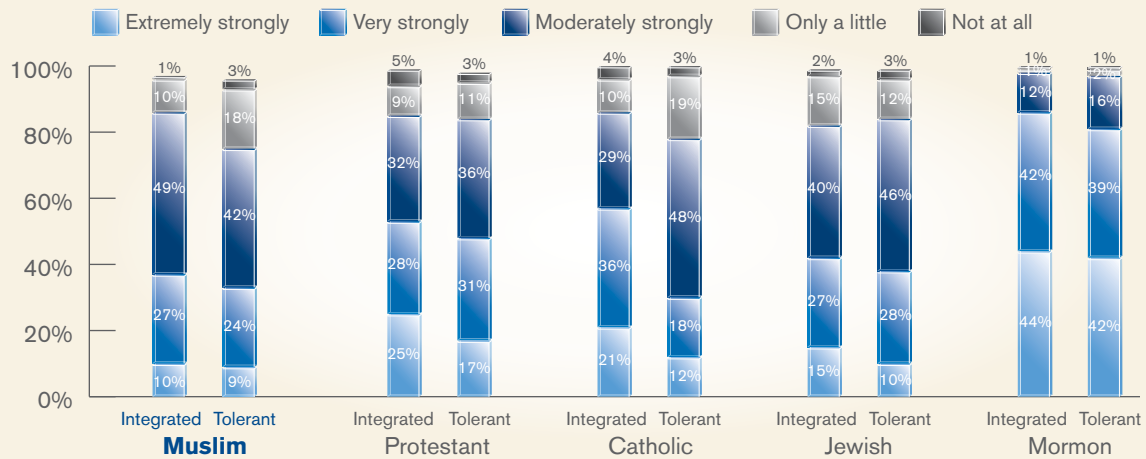


Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

Integrated Religious Groups Are No Less Likely Than Tolerant Religious Group to Identify Strongly With Those Who Share Their Religious Identity Worldwide

Religious Tolerance Index

How strongly do you identify with each of the following groups? Extremely strongly, very strongly, moderately strongly, only a little, or not at all? Those worldwide who share your religious identity



Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.

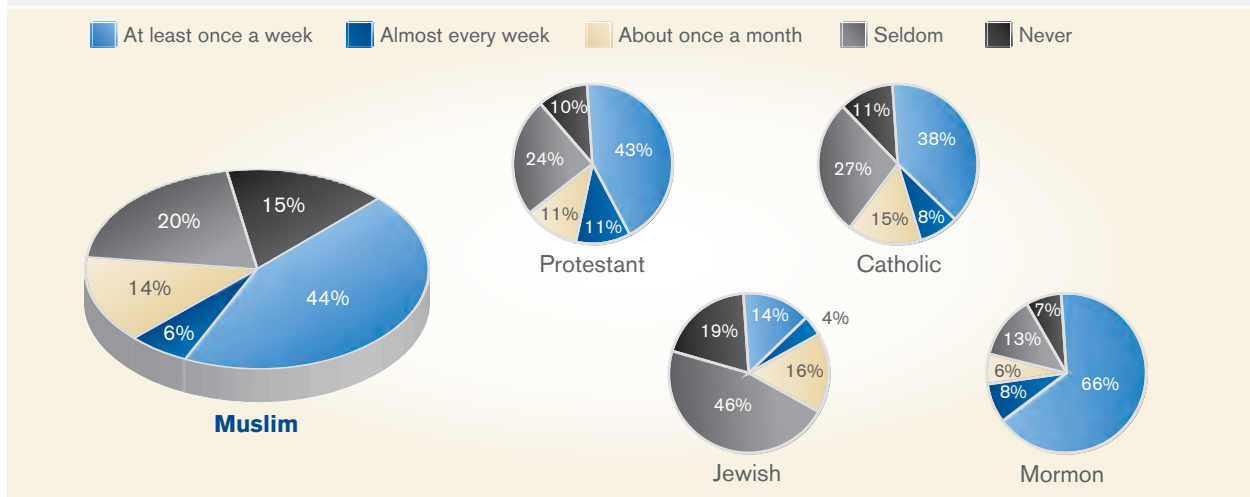
SPIRITUAL *Engagement*

For U.S. Muslims, Mosque-Going Often Means More Engagement, Less Stress

Muslim Americans report attending a religious service frequently about as often as Protestant Americans. Majorities of Americans in most of the religious groups studied say they attend religious services roughly once a month or more. This is the case with 65% of U.S. Protestants, 61% of U.S. Catholics, and 64% of U.S. Muslims. Mormon Americans are the most frequent attendees — 80% say they attend services once a month or more — and Jewish Americans are the least frequent. Forty-six percent of Jewish Americans say they seldom attend religious services, and 19% say they never do.

Muslim Americans Are Similar to Protestant Americans in Their Religious Service Attendance

How often do you attend church, synagogue, or mosque — at least once a week, almost every week, about once a month, seldom, or never?



Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2010–April 9, 2011.

More than 80% of Muslim Americans say religion is an important part of their daily lives. As such, to understand this community it is important to examine the correlations between those who take religious observation seriously and their other behaviors and attitudes.

One correlation that seems to exist is in the area of political participation.⁶ This report has already noted that Muslim Americans are much less likely to be registered to vote than those in other major religious groups, despite strong confidence in the fairness of elections in the U.S. And it has suggested that the high proportions of recent immigrants and relative youth in the Muslim-American population may explain the low registration numbers.

These deterrents notwithstanding, it is interesting to note that higher levels of religious observance among U.S. Muslims do seem to be associated with higher levels of political participation. Among Muslim Americans reporting only “seldom” religious attendance, 22% are in the “high political participation” category. In contrast, almost double that (40%) are “politically active” among those who report attending religious service at least weekly. This raises the possibility of community leaders using mosques as a mobilizing platform to push Muslim Americans toward greater civic engagement.

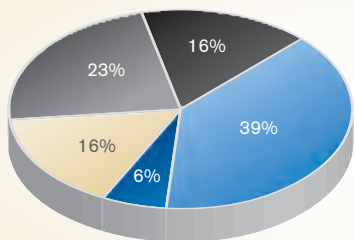
Besides being more politically engaged, the most frequent mosque-goers also seem to experience less stress and anger. Of those who reported they experienced no stress the day before, 47% attend a religious service at least once a week. Those who said they did experience stress were less likely to attend that often (39%). The same pattern applies to anger — those who reported feeling no anger the day before were more likely to have attended a religious service at least once a week than those who said they did experience anger. Furthermore, Muslim Americans experiencing these negative emotions were equally likely as those who did not experience them to attend a religious service once a week or less. In other words, these data suggest that the effectiveness of religious practice in reducing stress and anger requires high doses.

⁶ We define “Political Participation” as: 1. Registered to vote. 2. Worked for the government. 3. Served in the military. 4. Party affiliation (if one party is selected). Respondents who answer “yes” to *one or none* of these four civic activities may be classified as demonstrating “Little/No Political Participation.” Respondents who answer “yes” to *two* of these four civic activities may be classified as demonstrating “moderate political participation.” Respondents who answer “yes” to *three or four* of these four civic activities may be classified as demonstrating “High political participation.”

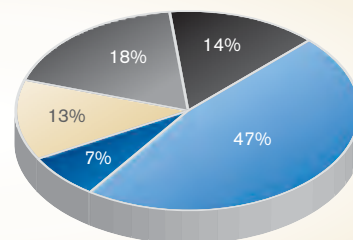
Muslim Americans Who Report Feeling Stress Are Less Likely to Attend Religious Service Frequently

How often do you attend church, synagogue, or mosque — at least once a week, almost every week, about once a month, seldom, or never? Did you experience the following feelings during A LOT OF THE DAY yesterday? How about: Stress

■ At least once a week
 ■ Almost every week
 ■ About once a month
 ■ Seldom
 ■ Never



Experienced stress yesterday



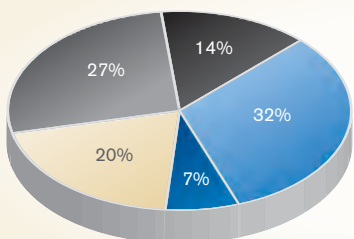
Did not experience stress yesterday

Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2010-April 9, 2011.

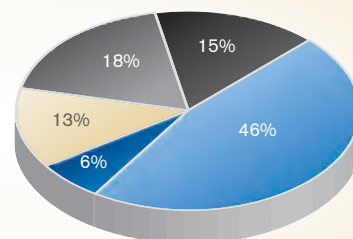
Muslim Americans Who Report Feeling Anger Are Less Likely to Attend Religious Service Frequently

How often do you attend church, synagogue, or mosque — at least once a week, almost every week, about once a month, seldom, or never? Did you experience the following feelings during A LOT OF THE DAY yesterday? How about: Anger

■ At least once a week
 ■ Almost every week
 ■ About once a month
 ■ Seldom
 ■ Never



Experienced anger yesterday



Did not experience anger yesterday

Surveys conducted via Gallup Nightly Poll from January 1, 2010-April 9, 2011.

That frequent mosque attendance might lessen stress and anger is an intriguing finding, given that the experience of anger is slightly more common in the Muslim-American population than in other major religious groups in the U.S. It also takes away from the theory that mosque attendance stokes Muslims' anger and radicalizes them. Rather, Muslim Americans are no different from other major U.S. religious communities who appear to draw peace of mind from their faith. Gallup researchers have documented a relationship between religiosity and wellbeing in general⁷ across faith groups.

Indeed, the data suggest that some of the anger felt by Muslim-American men and youth in particular (those in the 18- to 29-year-old age cohort) results from the relatively small amount of time they spend socializing, and that the mosque may help fill this void. Muslim Americans are significantly more likely than Americans in other major religious groups to be young and unmarried; in some cases, this reduces their sense of social support and connectedness. They are also somewhat less likely than Americans in other major religious groups to say they have friends or relatives they can count on in times of need, and Muslim Americans report spending less time than other religious groups socializing, an average of six hours a day.

**“Thriving” U.S. Muslims
Likely to Be College-
Educated, Have
Confidence in FBI**

A regression analysis sheds light on the traits most closely associated with thriving in every major American religious group. Among U.S. Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and Mormons, a college education, a high level of religious observance (attending services at least once a week), and confidence in national security organizations such as the FBI are all predictive of thriving. These same traits plus a few others — including strongly identifying with the U.S. — are also predictive of Muslim Americans' likelihood to thrive.

⁷ *Very Religious Have Higher Wellbeing Across All Faiths*, by Frank Newport, Sangeeta Agrawal, and Dan Witters, Gallup, January 6, 2011

Regression Analyses Predict Factors That Likely Relate to Thriving for Muslim Americans

Muslim Americans Overall

- Confident in the FBI
- Attend mosque at least once a week
- Strongly identify with the U.S.
- Strongly identify with those worldwide who share religious their identity
- College educated

Muslim American Men and Women

MEN

- Confident in the FBI
- Strongly identify with the U.S.
- College educated

WOMEN

- Strongly identify with those worldwide who share their religious identity

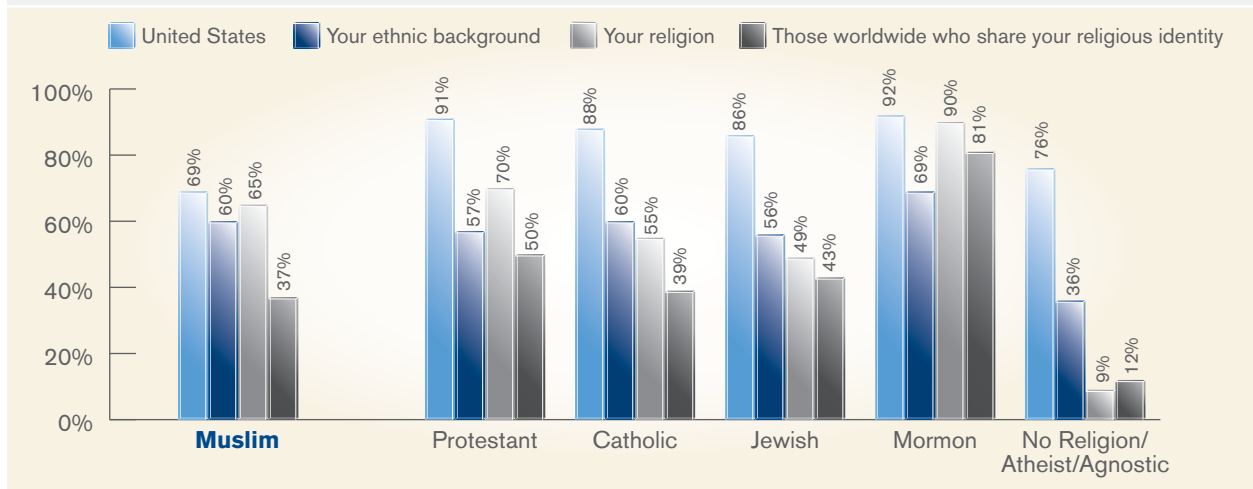
Muslim Americans are somewhat less likely than U.S. Protestants and Mormons to say they have an “extremely” or “very” strong identification with the United States and those around the world who share their religion. In no major U.S. religious group is there a conflict between loyalty to the U.S. and identifying with others around the world who share the same religion. Rather, in every group, including Muslim Americans, people who identify extremely strongly with the U.S. are also more likely to identify strongly with their worldwide religious identity.

Moreover, U.S. Muslims who have a strong identification with the broader Muslim world, sometimes known as “the Ummah,” are more likely to be thriving. The connection between identification with the global Muslim community and thriving is somewhat stronger among Muslim American women than it is among men.

Muslim Americans Identify With the United States and Their Faith Equally

How strongly do you identify with each of the following groups? Extremely strongly, very strongly, moderately strongly, only a little, or not at all? (Read A-D) [Combining those saying “very strongly” and “extremely strongly” identify with...]

- A. The United States
- B. Your ethnic background
- C. Your religion
- D. Those worldwide who share your religious identity



Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-October 21, 2010.

U.S. Muslims Who Are the Most “Open” Are Most Willing to Defend Their Faith

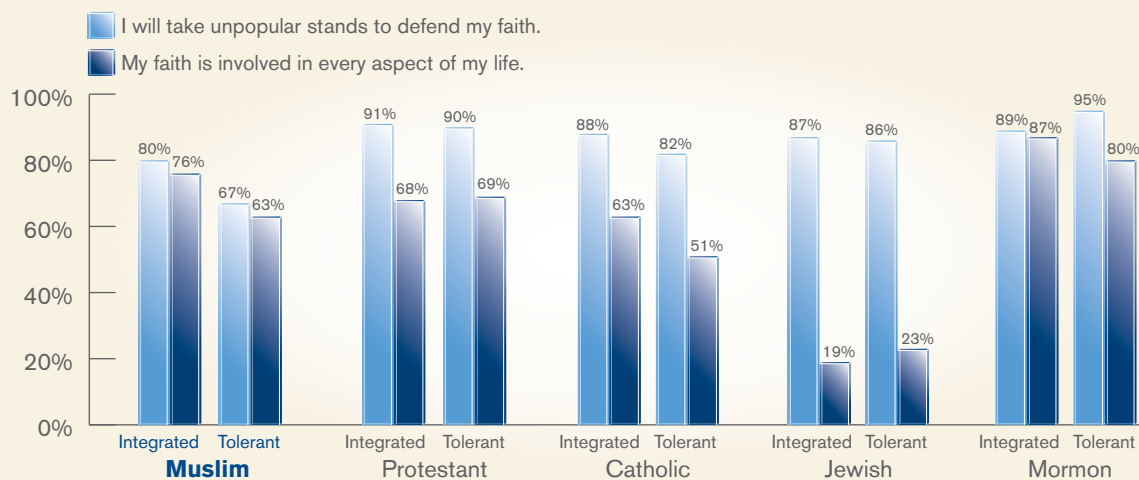
As they move along the continuum from tolerant to integrated (that is, from a moderate acceptance of those of other religious backgrounds to the highest level of acceptance), the attitudes of people in most religious groups do not change dramatically with respect to spiritual matters. For instance, U.S. Protestants and Catholics who are fully integrated are not significantly more likely to say they have forgiven people who have hurt them than are Protestant Americans or Catholic Americans who are merely tolerant.

There are some notable exceptions, however. Catholic and Muslim Americans who are more open to people of other faiths are also more likely to see their own faith as central to their lives. This is especially true for Muslim Americans; three-quarters of U.S. Muslims who are integrated say their faith is involved in every aspect of their lives, compared with 63% who say the same among those who are classified as tolerant.

Another area where there are some bigger differences among Muslim Americans depending on the degree of their openness to religious pluralism is in their willingness to take unpopular stands to defend their faith. It is worth noting that U.S. Muslims take such stands in the lowest numbers of Americans of any religion. However, their willingness to take a stand in defense of their faith rises as does their comfort in interacting with, and having respect for, those who practice other religions. This suggests that Muslim Americans speaking out in defense of their beliefs is a sign of more — not less — integration and sense of belonging.

Integrated Muslims Americans Are More Likely to Take Unpopular Stands for Faith

Religious Tolerance Index: Now, I will read you a list of statements. Please tell me for each whether you agree or disagree with it.
 I will take unpopular stands to defend my faith.
 My faith is involved in every aspect of my life.



Surveys conducted via Muslim American Polls from February 10-March 11, 2010, and October 1-21, 2010.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Our analysis suggests that policymakers and civil society leaders working to improve Muslim-American inclusion in their country should consider the following at the national, regional, and local levels.

Recommendations for Government

Assess the degree of anti-Muslim discrimination in America.

Almost one-half of Muslim Americans report experiencing racial or religious discrimination in the past year, significantly more than other religious communities. Mounting evidence suggests a link between Islamophobia and anti-Semitism.⁸ U.S. Muslims and Jews are also the two most likely religious groups to say there are times when they have to hide their religious identity. Government agencies should address this issue directly by first accurately measuring its severity. Some specific suggestions include:

- Treat Islamophobia and anti-Semitism as related phenomena. The State Department should expand its report on anti-Semitism to include Islamophobia.
- Track reports of discrimination against U.S. Muslims in a similar manner to reports of discrimination based on anti-Semitism.
- Raise awareness, particularly within Muslim-American communities, of the procedures required to file a complaint with the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice.
- Local and state police as well as the FBI should launch a national strategy to address the challenges in community-law enforcement relations. A major component of this could be multi-religious town hall meetings around the country to discuss civil liberties and discrimination, as well as law enforcement's role in protecting all Americans from hate crimes. This could increase trust in the FBI and the local police, two important national institutions in which Muslim Americans, in particular, have relatively low levels of confidence.

Engage and leverage Muslim Americans' expertise in the nation's foreign policy. Muslim Americans are among the most likely of all major religious groups in the U.S. to express trust in their country's national democratic institutions, including the courts, honesty of elections, and even the quality and integrity of the media. However, they are more likely than those of other major religious groups to be skeptical of some aspects of U.S. foreign policy. As the most culturally diverse religious community in America,⁹ significant minorities of the Muslim-American community may not only speak multiple languages but may have also traveled, worked, and conducted research and business globally. Such experiences and expertise should be more widely drawn upon in forming global policy.

In particular, Muslim Americans offer policymakers a valuable cultural and religious brain trust upon which to draw when engaging Muslims globally. They embody a concept Obama has repeatedly emphasized: Islam and America are mutually enriching, not mutually exclusive. With the president's renewed focus on supporting democratic transitions in the Middle East, it will be important to demonstrate the democratic process at home to these newly empowered publics by including, not marginalizing, Muslim Americans. This is especially important as almost 80% of Egyptians say that for Western societies to demonstrate respect for Muslim societies, it is "extremely important" to protect the rights of Muslim minorities in Western societies. Moreover, Americans of the Middle East Diaspora can offer insight on the best way to support new democracies such as in Tunisia and Egypt. Policymakers should make full use of this national resource, one of the country's most diverse and educated faith communities.

9 *Muslim Americans: A National Portrait*, Gallup 2009

Recommendations for Civil Society

Focus on the mosque as an important institution of Muslim-American mobilization. Islamic centers and mosques have emerged as important institutions in Muslim Americans' spiritual, social, and political engagement. The Muslim-American community would do well to invest in building the capacity of these institutions. This can be accomplished in a few ways, including by:

- Strengthening national organizations that connect and coordinate among mosques, and building robust databases of U.S. Muslim institutions and their members.
- Creating regional communication plans for local Muslim-American institutions, both to address security concerns and to mobilize higher levels of political participation on other matters that concern the community.
- Investing in capacity building by providing robust training¹⁰ for imams and other community leaders on the unique spiritual, social, and political challenges facing the Muslim-American community.

Increase opportunities for education and engagement in and among faith groups. Gallup's research uncovered a link between Muslim Americans' trust in their national institutions — a measure of integration — and the quality of interaction between Muslim Americans and people of other faiths.¹¹

10 The American Muslim Civic Leadership Institute at the University of Southern California and the Muslim Public Service Network based in Washington, D.C., are some examples of existing programs that leaders could scale up.

11 Interaction with ethno-religious diversity is solicited by the following three questions: 1. Other faiths treat me with respect. 2. Treat other faiths with respect. 3. Learned something from someone of another faith. Respondents should be labeled to have reported "generally positive interactions" with ethno-religious diversity if they answer "agree" or "strongly agree" to *all* of these three questions. Respondents should be labeled to have reported "mostly positive interactions" with ethno-religious diversity if they answer "agree" or "strongly agree" to *two* of these three questions. Respondents should be labeled to have reported "mostly negative interactions" with ethno-religious diversity if they answer "agree" or "strongly agree" to *one* or *zero* of these three questions.

Ten years after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, a significant number of Americans of diverse faiths report distrust of and prejudice toward U.S. Muslims, more so than toward any other major faith group studied.¹² Most Americans also admit to knowing almost nothing about Islam. This knowledge gap not only hurts Muslim Americans, but also American society as a whole, since the health of democracy depends on a well-informed citizenry. To help bridge the divide, civil society leaders should consider making the following investments and changes:

- Increase grants for journalists and educators taking university educational programs on Islam and Muslim societies.
- Monitor media coverage of Islam and Muslims, evaluating the volume of news, how that news is framed, and the sources reporters use.
- Increase multi-religious service opportunities focused on the needs or challenges of the larger local community. This approach can help build shared experiences based on shared interests and, therefore, trust between communities and individuals.¹³
- Treat Muslim religious identity and Muslim-American identity as mutually reinforcing, not competing, concepts.

¹² *American Religious Perceptions*, Gallup 2010

¹³ *United We Serve: Muslim Americans Answer the Call*, www.MuslimServe.org

REPORT *Methodology*

The data included in this report come from three independent sources based on self-identified religious affiliation: The Gallup Healthways Well-Being Index (also referred to as the Gallup Nightly or G1K), as well as two independent studies of the Muslim-American population.

The Gallup Healthways Well-Being Index (Gallup Nightly) Survey Process

The Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index was developed to obtain statistics on the state of wellbeing for adults in the United States. The endeavor accumulates responses from a random minimum sample of 1,000 U.S. residents, 350 days per year. On any given evening, approximately 250 Gallup interviewers conduct computer-assisted telephone interviews with randomly sampled respondents 18 years of age and older, including cell phone users and Spanish-speaking respondents from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The survey includes many of the standard demographics, including race, income, education, employment status, occupation, and household size (number of adults). Location data, such as zip codes, allow researchers to map the responses to particular parts of the country and accumulate data for local-level comparison and interpretation.

The survey methods for the Gallup Nightly poll rely on live (not automated) interviewers, dual-frame random-digit-dial (RDD) sampling (which includes list-assisted landline interviewing as well as wireless phone sampling to reach those in wireless-only and “wireless-mostly” households), and a random selection method for choosing respondents within the household. Starting in April 2011, Gallup switched from list-assisted RDD landline interviews to directory-listed landline interviews. Additionally, the survey includes Spanish-language interviews for respondents who speak only Spanish, and sample coverage in Alaska and Hawaii, and relies on a three-call design to reach respondents not contacted on the initial attempt. Nightly quotas ensure that the unweighted samples are proportionate by region and gender. The data are weighted daily to compensate for disproportionalities in selection probabilities and non-response. With

the inclusion of the cell-phone only households and the Spanish-language interviews, more than 90% of the U.S. adult population is represented in the sample. By comparison, typical landline-only methodologies represent less than 80% of the adult population. The AAPOR3 response rate has averaged 14%.

The sample itself is derived from Survey Sampling International. Individuals are called between the hours of 4:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., seven days a week, with additional afternoon hours on the weekends. The call design ensures that each call after the initial one takes place at a different time in the afternoon or evening, to maximize the likelihood of contact. The interview currently takes participants an average of 14 minutes to complete. Interview times can vary as additional questions are added, but never exceed 18 minutes, on average. Of the total number of individuals who are contacted, about 20% refuse to participate. Additionally, less than 3% of respondents are unable to complete the survey due to a language barrier.

Gallup interviewers are trained according to rigorous practices that have proved successful over the past 70 years of the company's polling and related survey work. In addition to full scope training on how to conduct the interviews before interviewers begin their work, they receive continuous training throughout the year. This training, combined with the experience of these callers and their above-average tenure, ensures they are uniquely successful at gaining trust and participation among the population.

The questionnaire, which is largely static in terms of day-to-day content, contains roughly 100 substantive variables (most related to health and wellbeing) and about 30 demographic variables.

Selection weights are computed to compensate for disproportionalities in probabilities of selection, based on household size (because only one adult per household is selected), number of phone lines per

household, and telephone status (landline only, cell phone only, and dual users that are either cell only or “cell mostly”). The latest available estimates from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) from the National Center for Health Statistics are used to determine the target proportions by telephone status. Post-stratification weights are then computed based on targets from the Current Population Survey (CPS) conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). An iterative proportional fitting (i.e., raking) algorithm is used to ensure the daily data match national targets for region by gender by age, age by education, race by gender, and ethnicity by gender. Finally, the weights are trimmed to reduce variance so that the maximum range of the weights is no greater than 12 to 1.

The majority of results in the report are based on an aggregate of daily telephone interviews with no fewer than 1,000 adults, aged 18 and older, conducted from January 1, 2010–April 9, 2011. The total sample based on these data is 336,888 adults, of which 1,492 self-identified as Muslim Americans. The report also includes trended results for some items. Trended results are based on interviews conducted from January 1, 2008–April 9, 2011. The total sample based on trended data is 868,264 adults, of which 3,883 self-identified as Muslim Americans. The margin of error is calculated at the 95% confidence level and is adjusted to reflect the design effect.

2010-2011 Gallup Nightly Poll

Religion	Number of Interviews	Design Effect	Margin of Error
Protestant	158,109	1.66	0.3
Catholic	102,396	1.64	0.4
Jewish	10,449	1.74	1.3
Muslim	1,492	1.43	3.0
Mormon	8,002	1.59	1.3
No Religion/ Atheist/Agnostic	56,440	1.62	0.5

2008-2011 Gallup Nightly Poll			
Religion	Number of Interviews	Design Effect	Margin of Error
Protestant	408,438	1.6	0.2
Catholic	271,017	1.61	0.2
Jewish	28,314	1.69	0.8
Muslim	3,883	1.44	1.9
Mormon	19,248	1.56	0.9
No Religion/ Atheist/Agnostic	137,364	1.6	0.3

The Muslim American Polls

The first study of Muslim Americans was fielded via telephone to Muslim Americans and a nationally representative sample of adults in the U.S. aged 18 and older. The Muslim-American sample was selected from self-identified Muslim Americans who agreed to be recontacted after participating in the Gallup Nightly polling. The general population sample included landline as well as cell-phone only respondents. The survey was administered from February 10, 2010-March 11, 2010, and featured a five-call design. Because of the low number of Jewish American respondents in the sample of U.S. adults, an oversample of the Jewish population was performed using recontacts from the Gallup Nightly polling. The data were weighted to correct for disproportionalities in probabilities of selection and response propensities. The data were then weighted to targets for age, gender, region, race, ethnicity, and education from the U.S. Census Bureau. Final weights were applied based on self-identified religious affiliation using targets from the Gallup Nightly polling. The response rate for the study was 21%.

The second study of Muslim Americans was fielded via telephone to a sample of participants from each of the major religious groups. The sample for this study was selected based on self-identified religious affiliation of those who agreed to be recontacted from the Gallup Nightly polling. The study featured a five-call design and had quotas of 200 for each major religious group other than Muslims. A random sample was chosen from eligible respondents of each of the major religious

groups other than Muslims, while a census was taken of Muslim-American respondents. The survey was administered from October 1–21, 2010. The data were weighted to correct for disproportionalities in probabilities of selection and response propensities. The data were then weighted to targets for age, gender, region, race, ethnicity, and education from the U.S. Census Bureau. Final weights were applied based on self-identified religious affiliation using targets from the Gallup Nightly polling. The response rate for the study was 34%.

Results in the report are based on the aggregation of the two Muslim American polls, yielding a total sample of 2,482 adults, of which 475 self-identified as Muslims. The data in the combined file were re-weighted to ensure the data were representative of the U.S. adult population and of the major religious groups. The margin of error is calculated at the 95% confidence level and is adjusted to reflect the design effect. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

Muslim-American Polls			
Religion	Number of Interviews	Design Effect	Margin of Error
Protestant	675	1.52	4.7
Catholic	436	1.84	6.4
Jewish	326	1.82	7.3
Muslim	475	2.15	6.6
Mormon	242	1.73	8.3
No Religion/ Atheist/Agnostic	328	2.06	7.8

Incentives for Participation

As a standard, Gallup does not offer respondents incentives for completing an interview. The chief methodological concern with offering incentives is the potential for inducing socially desirable responses. Socially desirable responses occur when a participant feels he or she should answer an item in the way that he or she perceives the interviewer wants to hear — or feels others may want to hear later.

This current study diminishes this issue because it does not include incentives for participation.

Non-Participation

Despite extensive interviewer training and multiple attempts to interview each individual, there are a variety of reasons why a person may opt not to participate in a poll. As the questions in these polls do not target Muslim Americans specifically, it is reasonable to assume that there is no compelling reason for Muslims to decide not to respond. Minority populations in general may have a lower response rate because of sensitivity to being asked personal questions over the phone or their individual or cultural preferences or familiarity with polling. It is reasonable to assume that the Muslims identified within this study are a representative portrait of the Muslim-American population; however, this general rule of representation should not be confused with the sampling errors and population response preferences of the general population and those of minority groups.

Muslim-American Sample

This study did not focus on immigrant populations, nor does it attempt or intend to provide a projected number of Americans who are Muslim. The Muslim Americans within the Gallup Nightly survey are a randomly selected, nationally representative sample who will be used to describe this diverse population and examine how it is similar to and different from the major religious groups in America. Only a census-style study that includes every household and inquires about religious affiliation, which is currently prohibited by law, would be able to provide such an estimate. Without the rigor of that model, we are limited to describing the Muslim Americans without providing the much-debated and discussed topic of the total number of Muslims living in America.

