

Austria

Kerem Öktem¹

Introduction

The year 2015 was the *annus horribilis* of Muslims in Europe and in Austria: The year began with the attack on the *Charlie Hebdo* offices in January, witnessed the mounting migrant and refugee crisis throughout the summer, and was punctuated by the Paris attacks in November and the widespread occurrence of gendered violence during New Year celebrations in Cologne. With the exception of the migrant and refugee crisis, none of these events were connected to Austria, but taken together they had far more impact on the debates and perceptions of Muslims in Austria than local issues related to Islam and Muslims. These events and their public perception have further decimated the discursive space in which a cool-headed, policy-oriented discussion of Islam and Muslims in Austria, beyond short-sighted policies of securitisation, takes place.

Xenophobia, Islamophobia,² and racism by state agencies and citizens are structural components of public debates and everyday encounters between Muslims and non-Muslim Austrians.³ Racist and Islamophobic attacks rose significantly in 2015, causing considerable concern *inter alia* to the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance of the Council of Europe (ECRI), which notes that “several political parties and other organisations cultivate and

1 Kerem Öktem is Professor for the Study of Southeast Europe and Modern Turkey at the Centre of Southeast European Studies, University of Graz (*Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz*), and Associate of the Centre of International Studies, University of Oxford. I would like to thank Güler Alkan (University of Graz) for her meticulous research for this entry and for the kind assistance of Anastasia De Vries (University of Groningen).

2 See Hafez, Farid (ed.), *Jahrbuch für Islamophobieforschung 2014* (Vienna: New Academic Press, 2014); Müller-Uri, Fanny, *Antimuslimischer Rassismus* (Wien: Mandelbaum, 2014); Bunzl, John, and Farid Hafez (eds.), *Islamophobie in Österreich* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2009); Bunzl, Matti, *Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Hatreds Old and New in Europe* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2007).

3 The racism monitoring agency ZARA testifies to a significant rise in racist and Islamophobic attacks between 2014 and 2015. Gießelmann, Bente, and Teresa Frankenberg, “Rassismus Reloaded—Hetze gegen Geflüchtete”, in Claudia Schäfer (ed.), *Rassismus Report 2015: Einzelfall-Bericht über rassistische Übergriffe und Strukturen in Österreich* (Vienna: ZARA—Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit, 2016), p. 71.

disseminate racist, xenophobic, and neo-Nazi ideas.”⁴ This may not be surprising, as the public debate on Islam and Muslims is framed by the prevalence of two right-wing populist institutions, which follow a decidedly anti-Muslim and anti-immigration discourse: a tabloid newspaper (*Kronenzeitung*) with a daily circulation of over 800,000 copies and hence a penetration rate of 40% of Austrian society, and the extreme right-wing Austrian Freedom Party (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, FPÖ) with electoral support rates of up to 30%.⁵ With its growing support rates, the Freedom Party has been able to position itself as the hegemonic actor that is able to frame debates about Islam and immigration, with all other political parties (with the exception of the Green Party) gravitating towards the FPÖ’s Islamophobic and anti-immigration positions.

Islamophobic reactions also shaped public debates on the *Islamgesetz* (Islam Law) that was enacted in February 2015 and controversies over Muslims’ alleged lack of “willingness” to integrate. The *Islam Law* 2015 “contains several controversial restrictions to freedom of religion,”⁶ but also reaffirms the recognition of Muslims by the Austrian state, which has its roots in an initial law dating back to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It may have the potential in the medium term to create a framework whereby Muslims are eventually placed on an equal footing to other religious communities.⁷ For now, the most immediate result of the Law is a new insecurity for imams and religious personnel, whose salaries used to be paid by third country institutions like Turkey’s Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*) and the *Österreich Türkisch-Islamische Union* (Austrian Turkish Islamic Union, ATIB), a practice made illegal by the new law, even though a grace period will be in place until 2016.

The idea that Muslims not only do not belong to Austrian society but also that they fail to make an effort to belong, is captured in a neologism imported from the German anti-immigration debate: *Integrationsunwilligkeit* or “the lacking willingness to integrate.” In public debates, such euphemisms have largely supplanted more meaningful and policy-relevant discussions on discrimination, racism, class-biased access to education, and constraints on social capital in the domain of less audible experts. These developments have

4 European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, “ECRI Report on Austria”, adopted on 16 June 2015 (Strasbourg: ECRI Secretariat, 2015), p. 9.

5 Kremling, Lisa, “Feindbild MuslimInnen: Zur Konstruktion anti-muslimischer Fremdbilder”, in Schäfer, *Rassismus Report 2014*, pp. 64–65.

6 European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, “ECRI Report on Austria”, p. 10.

7 Kifayat, Adnan, *A New Model for Integration: Austria’s New Law on Islam* (Washington: The German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2015), www.gmfus.org/blog/2015/04/09/new-model-integration-austria’s-new-law-islam, accessed 10 April 2015.

consolidated the idea that Islam does not really belong in Austria, with more than 50% of Austrians supporting the statement that “Islam is a danger for Austria’s culture.”⁸

This combination of an overall unwelcoming and unsympathetic public opinion and the series of symbolic events associated with Islam and Muslims created the conditions for a discursive re-articulation of the field, which was particularly pushed by the Freedom Party. In this re-articulation the so-called refugee crises was defined as a crisis of Muslim immigration, while Islam-related terrorism became synonymous with Muslims. In a significant part of the Austrian public domain, the term “refugee” is now synonymous with “Muslim men” and the latter is equated first with sexual violence and then with terrorism.

At the same time as the Austrian public debate has been growing hostile, longer-term societal and demographic trends have continued what could be understood as a consolidation of Muslim communities in the country. A rising trend towards naturalisation meant that the citizenship ratio of Muslims in Austria increased from below 30% in 2001 to over 50% in 2015.⁹ This process has already led to a growing number of Austrian citizens with a Muslim heritage to assume political office and positions of power, following the patterns of Muslims in Germany and other European countries in the last decade. It also adds relevance to societal institutional issues such as Muslim schools and kindergartens, a theme controversially debated after the publication of a study by Austria’s leading expert on Islamic pedagogy, Ednan Aslan, which claims that many Islamic kindergartens have a Salafi bent or encourage children to disassociate from society.¹⁰

8 See Seidl, Conrad, “Jeder zweite sieht Islam als Gefahr für Österreichs Kultur”, *DerStandard.at*, 9 January 2015, <http://derstandard.at/2000010210943/Jeder-Zweite-sieht-Islam-als-Gefahr-fuer-Oesterreichs-Kultur>, accessed 10 January 2015.

9 According to Aslan and Yıldız, the ratio of naturalised Muslims reached 49% in 2012. As circumstantial evidence strongly suggests, this trend has continued since, resulting in a citizenship ratio above 50% in 2014. See Aslan, Ednan, and Erol Yıldız (eds.), *Muslimische Alltagspraxis in Österreich: Ein Kompass zur religiösen Diversität. Zwischenbericht für das Projektjahr 2013* (Vienna: Universität Wien, Institut für Islamische Studien, 2014), pp. 19–22.

10 Aslan, Ednan, *Vorstudie—Muslimische Kindergärten und Gruppen in Wien: Für eine pluralitätsfähige religiöse Erziehung in der Elementarpädagogik* (Vienna: Universität Wien, Institut für Islamische Studien, 2015).

Public Debates

The year saw an increasing securitisation of the public debate on Islam and Muslims in Austria, even though most important events framing the debate with an exclusively negative subtext happened elsewhere, in France and Germany. The emerging pattern is that of a local Austrian debate, that is overdetermined by a general sense of insecurity—and increasingly Islamophobia—after the *Charlie Hebdo* shootings and the Paris attacks. The most important crystallisation points of this securitising debate were a nation-wide discussion on *Integrationsunwilligkeit* or “the lacking willingness to integrate,” a series of trials against suspected jihadi fighters, and the Muslim kindergarten debate.

In January 2015, the head of the Styrian State government, Klaus Voves, suggested that the “lack of willingness to integrate” should become a punishable offense entitled “Integrationsunwilligkeit.”¹¹ While the content of the offense remained confused—ranging from parents not attending school meetings, to fathers refusing to shake hands with female teachers, or mothers not allowing their daughters to participate in swimming classes—it was clear that it was against Muslims and their lack of effort to “integrate” that these measures were to be brought.¹² The attempt to criminalise an undefined (and for that matter, undefinable) set of behaviour does not appear to be reconcilable with the principles of the rule of law. Above all, the episode was an example of a Social Democrat politician appropriating a classic theme of the far right to ensure re-election. While the strategy of fighting the extreme right by using its language did not work out in this particular case, the dictum that cultural difference can be penalised if it is deemed unwelcome is now part of the public debate and used regularly by members of the Freedom Party.

Court cases against suspected jihadi fighters and supporters of terrorism in Vienna, Krems, and Graz attracted much public scrutiny and debate. Particularly the Graz case came to be referred to as the “largest process against jihadis” in Austria and carried on into 2016.¹³ The trials in 2015 only led to

11 “Voves will gegen Integrationsunwilligkeit vorgehen”, *DerStandard.at*, 20 January 2015, <http://derstandard.at/2000010649361/Voves-will-gegen-Integrationsunwilligkeit-vorgehen>, accessed 1 April 2015.

12 Other Social Democrats accused Voves of using racist language. “Häupl kritisiert Voves: Sozialdemokrat redet nicht wie Pegida”, *DiePresse.com*, 30 January 2015, http://diepresse.com/home/politik/innenpolitik/4650875/Haeupl-kritisiert-Voves_Sozialdemokrat-redet-nicht-wie-Pegida, accessed 25 March 2015.

13 “Islamisten: Die ersten Anklagen sind fertig”, *Kleine Zeitung*, 10 November 2015, www.kleinezeitung.at/s/steiermark/chronik/4862308/GRAZ_Islamisten_Die-ersten-Anklagen-sind-fertig; “Österreichs größter Jihadistenprozess: 13 Islamisten vor Gericht”, *DerStandard.at*,

minor charges of “membership in a terrorist organisation,” “recruitment for a terrorist organisation,” and “participation in a terrorist organisation,” carrying possible sentences ranging from less than one year to five years imprisonment. Despite these relatively minor cases of involvement with the so-called Islamic State, the court cases did expose politico-religious milieus in Austria’s larger cities, Graz and Vienna, where Salafi preachers and sympathisers of the so-called Islamic State have built up a considerable support base, particularly within the Chechen and Bosniak communities.¹⁴ Interestingly, and in keeping with linguistic convention, jihadis from Austria are called “Austro-Jihadisten.”

The kindergarten debate was one of the more insightful public debates concerning Islam and Muslims in Austria in that it brought to the attention both the issue of faith-based pre-school education, and the Government’s mode of decision-making. The debate began with the publication, by the country’s foremost expert of Islamic pedagogy Ednan Aslan, of the results of a preliminary study on Muslim kindergartens.¹⁵ The brief summary suggested that there were about 150 Muslim kindergartens, some of which were believed to educate children in a fashion non-conducive to life in a pluralistic society. The debate, however, ignited when Sebastian Kurz, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Integration, quoted Aslan’s work and suggested that many kindergartens had Muslim Brotherhood and Salafi leanings and should immediately be closed down.¹⁶ The debate died down eventually, but the suspicion that Muslim kindergartens could be “incubators of terrorism” became a mainstay of public debate.¹⁷

Transnational Links

Transnational links pertaining to Muslim networks are varied, multifaceted, and complex. Almost all of Austria’s Muslims are embedded in transnational, or at least bi-national, spaces of cultural, economic, and political interaction. The

2 February 2016, <http://derstandard.at/2000030192328/Oesterreichs-groesster-Jihadisten-prozess-13-Islamisten-vor-Grazer-Richter>, both accessed 12 May 2016.

14 “Unter uns: Dschihadisten in Österreich”, *profil.at*, 25 November 2015, www.profil.at/oesterreich/unter-uns-dschihadisten-in-oesterreich-6108322, accessed 12 May 2016.

15 Aslan, *Muslimische Kindergärten und Gruppen in Wien*.

16 “Kurz: Viele Islam-Kindergärten ‘sollten wir sofort schließen’”, *Kurier.at*, 5 December 2015, <http://kurier.at/politik/inland/kurz-viele-islam-kindergaerten-sollten-wir-sofort-schliessen/167.826.741>, accessed 12 April 2016.

17 Ednan Aslan’s study was most probably misquoted, and we will need to wait for the final study to be published in 2016 to draw meaningful conclusions about the situation in Muslim nursery schools in Austria.

countries of origin of the first generation like Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina, or Macedonia, play important roles for the identification of young Muslims and their cultural and political socialisation. Yet, it was particularly the transnational nature of global jihadi mobilisation and the pull of the Syrian war that attracted public interest.

Existing transnational jihadi networks in Austria in 2015 have been invigorated by the civil war in Syria, the anti-Russian struggle in the North Caucasus, the networks of jihadi mobilisation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and aggressive recruitment by the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). According to the Federal Agency for the Protection of the Constitution and the Fight against Terrorism (*Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz und Terrorismusbekämpfung*), 259 Austrian residents are considered jihadi fighters who have left the country to fight for ISIS or other jihadi groups. Almost 80 of them were returned from Syria, 41 were intercepted on their way to Syria, and 43 were killed in combat.¹⁸ This is a relatively high number considering the size of the Austrian Muslim population.¹⁹ Around half of these fighters are thought to be Chechens holding Russian passports.²⁰

Law and Domestic Politics

The amendment of the *Islam Law (Islamgesetz)*, enacted by the Austrian government in February 2015, constituted not only the most important, but also the most contested development in the legal sphere. In response to the growing activity of jihadi networks, the Government also stiffened criminal law and passed several measures aimed at reducing the likelihood of the radicalisation of young Muslims.

For a long time, Austria has been marked by an intriguing contradiction. Despite a generally unsympathetic sentiment towards immigrants and Muslims in Austrian society, the country possessed quite a unique legal framework for the incorporation of Muslim communities into state structures. This exceptional situation was the result of the county's imperial past and the aim of the Austro-Hungarian state to control and manage Muslims in annexed

18 *Verfassungsschutzbericht 2015* (Vienna: Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz und Terrorismusbekämpfung, 2016), p. 25.

19 Weissensteiner, Nina, "Terrormitgliedschaft: Verfahren im Vorjahr mehr als verdoppelt", *DerStandard.at*, 20 January 2015, <http://derstandard.at/2000010603446/Oesterreich-269-Verfahren-wegen-Terror-Mitgliedschaft>, accessed 23 February 2015.

20 Chechens comprise around 3.6% of the Muslims in Austria and thereby constitute the fourth largest such group. "Österreichs größter Jihadistenprozess: 13 Islamisten vor Gericht."

Bosnia and Herzegovina.²¹ First promulgated in 1912 and obsolete well into the 1960s with the arrival of the first Yugoslav and Turkish immigrants, the *Islam Law* (henceforth also referred to as the Law) created a sense of legal certainty and formal structures for Muslim communities. Since 1979, an officially recognised Muslim community exists, the *Islamische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich* (Islamic Religious Community of Austria, IGGiÖ), established according to the provisions of the *Islam Law*.²² Unlike in annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the Law was successful in establishing a single catch-all Islamic Community representative of all Muslims, diversity in Austria's modern immigrant society made such a goal unattainable. Debates for an amendment of the Law had been going on since 2012 and included representatives of the existing Muslim communities. However, it was only after a heated debate, and its rejection by most Muslim communities, that the Austrian parliament eventually passed the Law in February 2015.²³

The Law, in its 2015 version, is characterised by two conflicting logics, an integrative and a securitising one. Following the first logic, the Law includes positive gestures, ranging from the recognition of the Islamic Religious Community of Austria, to the safeguarding of Islamic dietary requirements in public institutions, the provision of pastoral care to Muslims in hospitals, prisons, and in the army, to the right to attend Friday prayer and take leave for religious celebrations. The Law also explicitly stipulates the right of the Islamic Community to regulate the production of meat and other products and to ensure the availability of halal meat. The second logic is at least as consequential and is rooted in the general suspicion that Muslims constitute a substantial security threat to the country's internal security.²⁴ In consequence, the Law obliges the Islamic Religious Community of Austria to declare the primacy of the laws and values of the state and makes it impossible for Muslim groups not

21 For a concise discussion of the *Islam Law's* history, please consult Schmidinger, Thomas, "Austria", in Jørgen S. Nielsen, Samim Akgönül, Ahmet Alibašić and Egdunas Račius, *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*, vol. 5 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 47–64 (49–51).

22 Heine, Susanne, Rüdiger Lohlker and Richard Potz (eds.), *Muslimen in Österreich: Geschichte, Lebenswelt, Religion. Grundlagen für den Dialog* (Innsbruck, Vienna: Tyrolia-Verlag, 2012), p. 56.

23 "Nationalrat beschließt neues Islamgesetz", *parlament.gov.at.*, 25 February 2015, www.parlament.gov.at/PAKT/PR/JAHR_2015/PK0152/, accessed 12 April 2015. "Bundesgesetz über die äußeren Rechtsverhältnisse islamischer Religionsgesellschaften" (446 d.B.), *parlament.gov.at.*, 25 February 2015, www.parlament.gov.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/I/I_00446/index.shtml#tab-Uebersicht, accessed 12 April 2015.

24 Gasser, Florian, "Generalverdacht. Ein Gespräch mit Politikwissenschaftler Fared Hafez", *Zeit Online*, 5 March 2015, www.zeit.de/2015/10/islamgesetz-muslimen-oesterreich-fared-hafez, accessed 12 March 2015.

associated with the official IGGiÖ to continue their religious services. Most controversially, it explicitly outlaws the funding of religious services by bodies outside Austria.²⁵

Legal experts and the Council of Europe's Commission against Racism and Intolerance of (ECRI) pointed out that the clause prohibiting foreign funding violates the principle of equal treatment, since such a prohibition does not apply to any other religious group in Austria.²⁶ Yet, the ban also constitutes a blatant interference in the autonomy of a religious community, and it is unlikely that the current amendment would hold up to scrutiny by the Austrian Constitutional Court, or failing that, by the European Court of Human Rights. Despite the positive signals which the *Islam Law* also sends to Austria's Muslims,²⁷ it may have created more problems than it promised to solve. It has snubbed the country's largest Muslim association ATIB, whose very existence is based on Turkish funding and on being part of the larger structures of Turkey's Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*).²⁸ In June 2015, ATIB filed for a cancellation of the Law at the Constitutional Court, but a decision has not yet been made. For smaller associations not affiliated with the IGGiÖ, the situation will dramatically worsen, as they will be explicitly banned from operating prayer rooms after 2015. Religious personnel funded by third countries will not be allowed to work in Austria after a grace period ending in 2016. This will also apply to all imams who are employed by ATIB.

In response to the growing number of "foreign fighters" in Syria hailing from Austria, the Government passed a set of legal initiatives with the intent of fighting jihadi recruitment and incitement to terrorism.²⁹ In a move exemplary

25 Minister of Foreign Affairs and Integration Sebastian Kurz justified this choice in stark words: "With other religions, there is not the challenge that we have to fear influences from abroad and therefore have to be stricter with the funding. . . . We want an Austrian form of Islam." Bell, Bethany, "Austria's Muslims fear changes to historic Islam law", *BBC News*, 4 November 2014, www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29814688 accessed 5 December 2014.

26 European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, "ECRI Report on Austria", p. 10.

27 Aslan, Ednan, "Der Islam wird heimisch", *Zeit Online*, 3 March 2015, www.zeit.de/gesellschaft/zeitgeschehen/2015-03/islamgesetz-oesterreich, accessed 10 April 2015.

28 An influential commentator suggested that the ban on foreign funding might have been an explicit riposte to perceived (and real) Turkish interventions in the Austrian debate. See Neuhold, Clemens, "Der Halbmond hängt schief", *WienerZeitung.at*, 27 February 2015, www.wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/oesterreich/politik/737835_Der-Halbmond-haengt-schief.html, accessed 1 April 2015.

29 "Verhetzungsparagraf wird verschärft", *news.orf.at*, 14 October 2014, <http://orf.at/stories/2249580/2249578/>, accessed 23 February 2014. "Anti-Terror-Paketim Nationalrat beschlossen", *news.orf.at*, 10 December 2014, <http://orf.at/stories/2257176/>, accessed 23 February 2015.

of Austrian ambiguities towards inclusive notions of citizenship, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Integration Sebastian Kurz was considering a change in the citizenship law to ensure that “Austro-Jihadists” found to be fighting abroad can be stripped of their Austrian passports.³⁰

Activities and Initiatives of Main Muslim Organisations

Muslim organisations in Austria have to negotiate in a public sphere shaped by populist tabloids overwhelmingly hostile to Muslims and immigrants. Muslim organisations and their representatives are therefore generally called upon to apologise, or at least to express their shock at atrocities committed by global jihadi groups. They will, from time to time, respond to Islamophobic public debates (i.e. “Integrationsunwilligkeit”), or comment on legal initiatives like the *Islam Law* or the measures against jihadi radicalisation. In this sense, Muslim organisations are held captive by the agenda, fears, and animosities of the majority of society. More often than not, they lack the personal capacity and commitment to develop positions of their own and act as vocal partners in relevant public debates.

It would, however, be misleading to think of Muslim organisations in Austria as lacking agency. Despite an overall reactive attitude in responding to Islamophobia and xenophobia, Muslim organisations have been active in a wide range of fields, from community and spiritual work and dialogue events with other religious communities in Austria, to mobilisation for transnational “Muslim interest issues.”

The most visible organisations were the official Islamic Religious Community (IGGiÖ) and its two largest constituent members, *Österreich Türkisch-Islamische Union* (Austrian Turkish Islamic Union, ATIB) and *Islamische Föderation Wien* (Islamic Federation, IF), as well as *Muslimische Jugend Österreich* (Muslim Youth of Austria, MJÖ), and the two organisations representing Turkish and Kurdish Alevis, *Islamische Alevitische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich* (Islamic Alevi Religious Community in Austria, IAGÖ) and *Föderation der Aleviten Gemeinden in Österreich* (Federation of Alevi Communities in Austria, AABF). Despite a significant presence of Muslims from the ex-Yugoslav space and the growing influence

30 Aichinger, Philipp, “Minister Kurz will Jihadisten ausbürgern”, *DiePresse.com*, 19 January 2015, <http://diepresse.com/home/politik/innenpolitik/4642366/Minister-Kurz-will-jihadisten-ausbürgern>, accessed 12 April 2015.

of Muslims with a Bosniak heritage, the IGGiÖ and its affiliated communities are still dominated by Muslims from Turkey.³¹

The celebration of religious festivities and community work are the main areas of activity of all Muslim organisations in Austria and elsewhere. They include the celebration of Muslim holidays, collective dinners during Ramadan, and particularly in the Turkish-Hanafi tradition, the celebration of the Prophet's birthday and the "Holy Birth Week," complemented by Qur'an recitation events. During the month of Ramadan, many Muslims donate their *zakat* to Muslims in poorer countries, an activity that also serves to create a sense of commitment to the concerns of Muslims elsewhere.³² Crucial community services extend from language and religious courses, to the "burial funds" by ATIB or the Islamic Federation.³³

The IGGiÖ, as the only Sunni Muslim umbrella organisation, has a particular role as a semi-corporate body of the State reminiscent of imperial Habsburg traditions, a position which has been reinforced with the new *Islam Law*. Austria's first military imam since the demise of the empire, Abdulmedjid Sijamhodzić, was introduced to the public in Vienna's Maria-Theresien barracks in June 2015.³⁴ He took part in the swearing in ceremony of new recruits in September 2015, which the IGGiÖ celebrates on its webpage as a "festive moment with great symbolism," pointing out that "there is now Muslim pastoral care as was the case during the monarchy."³⁵

This overly eager approach, together with the IGGiÖ's initial support for the *Islam Law*, have been criticised within the community. Many Muslim activists express frustration at what they see as an uncritical relationship with the Austrian state, where a stronger position vis-à-vis some of the provisions of the Law (particularly the financing of religious personnel and the future of religious organisations not registered with the IGGiÖ) might have been needed. This criticism notwithstanding, the IGGiÖ as a large umbrella organisation and its charity *Hilal* became particularly visible during the migrant and

31 Heine et al., *Muslimen in Österreich*, p. 58.

32 I would like to thank Dudu Küçükgöl (formerly of Muslim Youth Austria) for her valuable contributions to this section.

33 Especially Turkish Muslims up to the grandchildren of immigrants tend to opt for a burial in Turkey rather than in Europe. Burial funds hence play an important social, cultural, and religious function. In Vienna, approximately 70% of all deceased Muslims are transferred to their country of origin. See Heine et al., *Muslimen in Österreich*, p. 134.

34 "Erster Imam für die islamische Militärseelsorge", *bundesheer.at*, 15 June 2015, www.bundesheer.at/cms/artikel.php?ID=7774, accessed 12 June 2016.

35 "Angelobung unserer Rekruten auf dem Sportplatz des FAC Wien", *IGGiÖ*, 1 September 2015, www.derislam.at/index.php?f=news&shownews=1977, accessed 12 April 2016.

refugee crisis in the summer 2015, when tens of thousands of mostly Syrian refugees were arriving in Austria on a daily basis.³⁶

The IGGiÖ has also been the main provider for pastoral care in public institutions since the late 1990s. As the *Islam Law* of 1912 did not contain any stipulations regarding such services, pastoral care was provided on the basis of bilateral agreements between state agencies and the IGGiÖ since the 1990s. This was achieved through dedicated voluntary care associations established by the Islamic Community.³⁷ With the *Islam Law* of 2015, all such services have gained the status of legal rights for members of the Muslim community. The IGGiÖ is now the sole body which may authorise chaplains and provide pastoral care.

Muslim Youth Austria, which is one of the few associations not shaped by strong links to the “country of origin”—at least among Turkish and Balkan Muslim associations—is particularly committed to a bottom-up framework of dialogue and cooperation with other religious communities, and initiatives against racism and xenophobia. The organisation is a member of the National Youth Representation (*Bundesjugendvertretung*) and hence shares a platform with young Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Buddhists, and other religious groups. This is particularly important from a medium-term perspective, as it is in such forums that young people are socialised into modes of collective belonging that are more inclusive and culturally more promising than the tendentially exclusivist structure of Austrian society.

Muslim Population: History and Demographics

Austria’s history with Muslim communities and some of its current institutional arrangements are rooted in the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austro-Hungary in 1878 and its subsequent annexation in 1908. The *Islam Law* of 1912 was a comprehensive attempt at governing the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina in a semi-colonial arrangement³⁸ that aimed at minimising the influence of the Ottoman *shaykh al-islam* and other institutions in the Ottoman Empire. The Law only recognised the majority Sunni-Hanafi tradition, which created a certain institutional bias in favour of this particular school.

36 “IGGiÖ startet Hilfsaktion für Flüchtlinge”, *IGGiÖ*, 3 September 2015, <http://derislam.at/index.php?f=news&shownews=1979&kid=1>, accessed 12 April 2016.

37 Aslan, Ednan, Magdalena Modler-El Abdaoui and Dana Charkasi, *Islamische Seelsorge: Eine empirische Studie am Beispiel von Österreich* (Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien, 2015), pp. 183–191.

38 Detrez, Raymond, “Colonialism in the Balkans”, *Kakanien-Revisited*, 15 May 2002, www.Kakanien-Revisited.at/Beitr/Theorie/Rdetrezi.Pdf, accessed 15 June 2016.

With the end of World War I and the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Austria lost the territories where most of its Muslim citizens lived. It was only after labour migrations from Turkey and former Yugoslavia beginning in the 1960s that Muslim communities re-emerged, this time in the industrial centres and larger cities of post-World War II Austria. As in most European countries, Austria's current Muslim communities are based on these more recent migratory processes. The institutional arrangement of their religious presence, however, is unique in that the *Islam Law* of 1912—in disuse since the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire—was revived in 1979 to establish the Islamic Religious Community (IGGIÖ).³⁹ Since then, the number of Austria's Muslims has increased steadily, while the Muslim communities also became more diverse thanks to an extension of the geographical scope of the countries of origin.

The last available census data using the explicit category of religious affiliation dates back to the micro-census of 15 January 2001.⁴⁰ According to the 2001 census, 338,988 residents of Austria were identified as Muslims, which corresponds to 4.2% of the total population. A large majority of them (71.7%) held citizenships of other countries. A 2009 study by Stephan Marik-Lebeck, a demographer with the state demography agency Statistics Austria, estimated the country's Muslim population to be at 515,914.⁴¹ The most recent projection from January 2012 was compiled by Ednan Aslan and Erol Yıldız.⁴² The following data is based on Aslan and Yıldız projection and on Marik-Lebeck's study, which they take as the point of departure.

Muslim Population	573,876 (6.8% of the total population, in 2012). ⁴³
Ethnic/National Backgrounds	49% of Muslims in Austria hold Austrian citizenship (in 2009). ⁴⁴

39 Kreisky, Jan, "Historische Aspekte des Islam in Österreich: Kontinuitäten und Brüche", in Alexander Janda and Matthias Vogl (eds.), *Islam in Österreich* (Vienna: Österreichischer Integrationsfonds, 2010), pp. 10–18.

40 Statistik Austria, *Bevölkerung 2001 nach Religionsbekenntnis und Staatsangehörigkeit* (Wien: Statistik Austria, 2007), www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/bevoelkerung/volkszaehlungen_registerzaehlungen_abgestimmte_erwerbsstatistik/bevoelkerung_nach_demographischen_merkmalen/022894.html, accessed 10 March 2015.

41 Marik-Lebeck, Stephan, "Die muslimische Bevölkerung Österreichs: Bestand und Veränderung 2001–2009", in Janda and Vogl, *Islam in Österreich*, pp. 5–9 (7).

42 Aslan and Yıldız, *Muslimische Alltagspraxis in Österreich*, pp. 19–22.

43 Aslan and Yıldız, *Muslimische Alltagspraxis in Österreich*, p. 20.

44 Marik-Lebeck, "Die muslimische Bevölkerung Österreichs", p. 7. Please note that the percentage points add up to slightly more than 100% due to the separate rounding off of each country's figure.

Largest ethnic/national groups:⁴⁵

Turkish: 21.2%

Bosniak: 10.1%

Montenegrin, Serbian, Kosovar: 6.7%

Russian: 3.6%

Macedonian: 2.7%

Afghan: 0.8%

Egyptian: 0.8%

Iranian: 0.8%

Pakistani: 0.5%

Tunisian: 0.3%

Iraqi: 0.3%

Bangladeshi: 0.3%

Other countries: 3.2%

Inner-Islamic Groups

Most Muslims in Austria belong to the Sunni-Hanafi school prevalent in Turkey and most Balkan countries. There is a sizeable Alevi community with origins in Turkey, which is estimated at 10–20% of the total Muslim population.⁴⁶ Roughly 1% of all Muslims in Austria emigrated from countries with a Shi'i majority population.⁴⁷

Geographical Spread

Most Muslims in Austria live in the Northern states on the German border, with 38% or 216,345 in the capital Vienna alone. 30% live in the states of Upper- and Lower Austria.⁴⁸

45 These figures are based on citizenship and not on ethnic or linguistic roots. Turkish passport holders, for instance, can be Turks or Kurds. Based on the available data, a further distinction into ethnic and linguistic groups is therefore not possible.

46 Medien-Serviceestelle Neue ÖsterreicherInnen, *Türkische Community—Zahlen und Daten* (Vienna: MSNÖ 2011), http://medienserviceestelle.at/migration_bewegt/2011/08/17/turkische-community-zahlen-und-daten/, accessed 12 March 2015. Thomas Schmidinger suggested in 2008 that the share of Alevis may be as high as 25–30%, even though this is probably an overestimation. Schmidinger, Thomas, "Islam in Österreich—zwischen Repräsentation und Integration", in Andreas Khol, Günther Ofner, Stefan Karner und Dietmar Halper (eds.), *Österreichisches Jahrbuch für Politik 2007* (Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2008), pp. 235–256 (242).

47 Aslan and Yıldız, *Muslimische Alltagspraxis in Österreich*, p. 21.

48 Aslan and Yıldız, *Muslimische Alltagspraxis in Österreich*, p. 21.

Number of Mosques

There are 248 mosques registered with the official Islamic Religious Community in Austria (*Islamische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich*, IGGiÖ),⁴⁹ and several hundred non-registered prayer rooms. Four mosques in Vienna, Telfs, Bad Vöslau, and Saalfelden are purpose-built structures with minarets. The fifth such structure is awaiting completion in the country's second largest city, Graz.

Muslim Burial Sites

- Muslim Cemetery Vienna (*Islamischer Friedhof Wien*, Großmarktstraße 2a, 1230 Wien, Cemetery Administration: Ali Ibrahim, tel.: ++43 06764706920, islamischer.friedhof@gmx.at). Operated by the Islamic Religious Community in Austria (IGGiÖ), 4,000 burial grounds.
- Muslim Cemetery Altag (*Islamischer Friedhof Altag*, Schotterried 1, 6844 Altag, Cemetery Administration: Ali Can, tel.: ++43 6644355927, <http://altach.at/buergerservice/bestattungen/islamischer-friedhof-altach>). Public cemetery, 700 burial grounds.
- Interconfessional Cemetery Graz (*Interkonnfessioneller Friedhof Graz*, Alte Poststrasse 343, 8020 Graz, bestattung@holding-graz.at, www.holding-graz.at/bestattung/friedhoefe-in-graz/interkonnfessioneller-friedhof/muslimisches-graeberfeld.html). Public cemetery, contains a Muslim section with 200 burial plots.
- Central Cemetery Vienna (*Zentralfriedhof Wien*, Simmeringer Hauptstraße 234, 1100 Wien, +43 01 534 69—28405). Public cemetery, contains several sections for Muslims and one specifically for Egyptian Muslims. Since 2011, the Islamic Alevi

49 www.derislam.at/?c=content&p=suchen_moschee&v=vereine&cssid=Moscheen&navid=420&par=40&cssid=Moscheen&navid=1175&par=40. Schmidinger estimates the number of prayer rooms at 260–280. Schmidinger, “Austria”, pp. 47–64 (56). The relative rise from 205 mosques in 2014 to 248 mosques is a function of the *Islam Law*, which outlaws any Sunni religious organisations outside the IGGiÖ and thereby creates a strong incentive for such organisations to seek membership in and recognition by the IGGiÖ.

Religious Community in Austria has had its own section in the central cemetery of Vienna.⁵⁰

- Municipal Cemetery Pradl, Innsbruck (*Hauptfriedhof Ost, Pradl, Innsbruck, Kaufmannstraße 1, 6020 Innsbruck, www.innsbruck.gv.at/pagecfm?vpath=leben--soziales/tod/friedhoeft--stadt*). Public cemetery with a Muslim section.
- Municipal Cemetery St. Pölten (*Hauptfriedhof St. Pölten, Goldegger Straße 52, 3100 St. Pölten, www.st-poelten.gv.at/Content.Node/buergerservice/friedhofsverwaltung.php*). Public Cemetery with a Muslim section. Special provisions are in place for members of the Turkish Muslim community with a dedicated building for ritual purification and with graves orientated towards Mecca.

“Chaplaincy” in State Institutions

The *Islam Law* of 2015 defines pastoral care in state institutions as an explicit right of members of the Islamic Community (IGGiÖ). According to paragraph 11, the IGGiÖ holds the right to provide its members with chaplaincy services in military institutions, prisons, and hospitals. Such services need to be provided by individuals who hold a university degree in Islamic Theology, or an equivalent degree, and who are authorised by the IGGiÖ.

Even before the current law, pastoral care was delivered through voluntary care associations established by the Islamic Community.⁵¹ These include the Association for the Facilitation of Muslim Pastoral Care in Prisons in Austria (*Verein zur Förderung von muslimischen SeelsorgerInnen in Gefängnissen und Haftanstalten in Österreich*) and the Islamic Pastoral Care for Muslim Patients (*Islamische Seelsorge für Muslimische PatientInnen in Österreich*).⁵² Currently, there are 45 IGGiÖ voluntary chaplains who deliver

⁵⁰ www.aleviten.at/de/?p=90, accessed 24 July 2015.

⁵¹ Aslan, *Islamische Seelsorge*, pp. 183–191.

⁵² www.seelsorge.derislam.at/#, accessed 15 June 2016.

pastoral care to imprisoned Muslims.⁵³ Pastoral care in the army was extended by the appointment of a mufti for the armed forces, Abdulmedjid Sijamhodžić, in June 2015.⁵⁴

Halal Products

Halal slaughter and the sale of halal foods are permitted. While such products are widely accessible in Muslim immigrant businesses, public protests—mostly of a racist bent—have prevented some supermarket chains from offering halal products.⁵⁵ Other chains, however, have made a conscious effort to maintain their halal product lines.⁵⁶

Article 12 of the *Islam Law* is dedicated to dietary requirements and states that the IGGiÖ “holds the right to organise the production of meat products and other foodstuff in Austria according to their religious requirements.”⁵⁷ Military institutions, prisons, public hospitals, care institutions, and public schools are obliged to consider dietary requirements as regulated by the IGGiÖ.

Places of Islamic Learning and Education

– Academy for Muslim Religious Education (*Islamische Religionspädagogische Akademie, IRPA*, Eitnergasse 6, 1230 Wien, tel.: ++43 18674400, www.irpa.ac.at/). Private Degree Course for Islamic Education (*Privater Studiengang für das Lehramt Islamische Religion*). The Academy is run by the

53 <http://seelsorge.derislam.at/Gefaengnis/index-start.php?c=content&cssid=SeelsorgerInnen&navid=15&par=0>, accessed 15 June 2026.

54 “Erster Imam für die islamische Militärseelsorge”, *bundesheer.at*, 15 June 2015, www.bundesheer.at/cms/artikel.php?ID=7774, accessed 12 June 2016.

55 A leading supermarket chain in Austria, Spar, had to withdraw its recently introduced halal products after a massive anti-Muslim campaign in December 2015. “Nach Hasskampagne. Spar stellt Verkauf von Halal Fleisch ein”, *derStandard.at*, <http://derstandard.at/2000026874618/Nach-Hasskampagne-Spar-stellt-Verkauf-von-Halal-Fleisch-ein>, accessed 15 June 2016.

56 “Halal-Fleisch: Nach Spar-Rückzieher nun Kampagne gegen Merkur”, *derStandard.at*, <http://derstandard.at/2000027080862/Halal-Fleisch-Nach-Spar-Rueckzieher-nun-Hasskampagne-gegen-Merkur>, accessed 15 June 2016.

57 Translated from the original text, www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bund esnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20009124, accessed 17 June 2016.

Islamic Religious Community in Austria (IGGiÖ) and offers a three-year Bachelor's of Education in Islamic Religion for teaching Islamic religious education at the elementary and compulsory school levels.

- Private Degree Programme in Continuing Religious Education for Muslims (*Privater Hochschullehrgang für Islamische Religionspädagogische Weiterbildung*, IHL, Neustiftgasse 17, 1070 Wien, tel.: ++43 178632244, www.ihl.ac.at/). Like the Academy, the programme is administered by the IGGiÖ and offers further education and seminars for Islamic religious teachers.
- University of Vienna, Centre for Teacher Education (*Universität Wien, Zentrum für LehrerInnenbildung*, Porzellangasse 4, 1090 Wien, tel.: ++43 1427760060, www.islamische-religionspaedagogik.at/home.html). Two-year Master's Degree in Islamic Religious Education (*Masterstudium Islamische Religionspädagogik*). Graduates are qualified to teach Islamic religious education at secondary schools.
- University of Vienna, Institute for Islamic Studies (*Universität Wien, Institut für Islamische Studien*, IIS, Thurngasse 8, 1090 Wien, tel.: ++ 43 1427725202, <https://iis.univie.ac.at/home/>). The IIS was established as an interdisciplinary and cross-faculty research platform in 2012 with the aim of further research on Islamic religious pedagogy and Islamic theology. It does not offer degree programmes, but its faculty is involved in academic teaching at the University of Vienna.
- University of Innsbruck, Institute of Education (*Universität Innsbruck, Institut für Fachdidaktik, Bereich Islamische Religionspädagogik*, Karl-Rahner-Platz 1, 6020 Innsbruck, www.uibk.ac.at/irp/studium.html). Three-year Bachelor's in

Islamic Religious Pedagogy (*Bachelor Islamische Religionspädagogik*).

- University of Innsbruck, Institute of Education (*Universität Innsbruck, Institut für Fachdidaktik, Bereich Islamische Religionspädagogik, Karl-Rahner-Platz 1, 6020 Innsbruck, www.uibk.ac.at/studium/angebot/uf-islamische-religion/*). Four-year Bachelor's in Secondary Education, Teaching Subject Islamic Religion (*Bachelorstudium Lehramt Sekundarstufe, Lehramtsstudium Unterrichtsfach Islamische Religion*). Both degree programmes were inaugurated in autumn 2014, when Islamic religious pedagogy was introduced as a special area at the Institute of Education, including a new professorial chair.

The BA track is the only Islamic religious pedagogy undergraduate degree at an Austrian public university and, like the private IRPA, qualifies graduates for teaching at elementary schools. The second Bachelor's Degree in Islamic Education, in combination with a second teaching subject, qualifies graduates to teach Islamic religious education at all types of secondary schools in Austria, including grammar and vocational schools. The introduction of a Master's Degree in Islamic Religious Pedagogy at the University of Innsbruck is being planned for 2016.⁵⁸

Alevi Religious Education

The Federation of Alevi Communities in Austria (AABF) established an intra-organisational Alevi Academy (*Alevi Akademisi*) in 2008 which prepares students to teach in AABF-affiliated Alevi Cultural Centres only, as the AABF is not entitled to teach religious education at public schools. Due to its status as officially recognised religious community,

⁵⁸ Author's interview with Martina Kraml, Assistant Professor at the Institute of Education, University of Innsbruck, 28 July 2015.

the IAGÖ is tasked to oversee Alevi religious education at public schools. The Islamic Theology Department will offer a new Master's Degree⁵⁹ in Islamic Religious Pedagogy with two tracks—one for Sunni and one for Alevi Islam—from January 2016.⁶⁰ For now, teachers of Alevi religious education can obtain their qualifications in two ways. The IAGÖ offers a four-month certificate programme which has been completed by more than 60 participants in Vienna, Innsbruck, and Vorarlberg.⁶¹

Furthermore, the IAGÖ cooperates with the Interreligious College for Teacher Education (*Kirchliche Pädagogische Hochschule Wien / Krems*, KPH), where prospective Alevi religion teachers can obtain a four-year Bachelor's Degree in Religious Pedagogy (combined with a second teaching subject) qualifying them to teach at elementary and secondary schools. In 2014, there were 32 teachers of Alevi religious education at public schools.⁶²

Confessional Schools

There are four Muslim elementary schools, and six high schools in Vienna. The majority of these educational institutions are private schools with public status in compliance with public education curricula. Teaching staff is usually mixed; non-Muslim students are also admitted. Confessional schools offer a combination of science curricula with a setting that respects Muslim religious values and enables children to live according to religious requirements through access to prayer rooms and the availability of halal food.

59 Until 2014, there was the possibility to enrol in a Master's of Religious Pedagogy at Innsbruck University with two tracks, one for Sunni and one for Alevi Islam. The Master's Degree was identical to the IRP and jointly operated by both Vienna and Innsbruck universities, but is not offered anymore.

60 Author's interview with Rıza Sari, press spokesperson of the IAGÖ, 28 July 2015.

61 Interview with Rıza Sari.

62 Interview with Rıza Sari.

- Al-Andalus Elementary and Middle School (Altmannsdorferstraße 154–156, 1230 Wien, tel.: ++43 12312035, <http://alandalus.at/>). Run by the Al-Andalus Association, which seeks to promote intercultural understanding and also operates two Muslim nursery schools.
- Austrian International Schools Vienna, AISV (previously Al-Azhar International Schools). The AISV operates an elementary and middle school (Weisselgasse 28, 1210 Wien, tel.: ++43 16077059) and an upper-secondary grammar school (Nordbahnanlage 4, 1210 Wien, tel.: ++43 16077059, www.aisv.at/en/). It has close ties to the Egyptian Al-Azhar University and offers teaching in Arabic as elective study. AISV has a stronger focus on the principles of Islam and until 2010 its curriculum included courses on Islamic law and the interpretation of the Qur'an.⁶³ In 2014, the AISV was accused of promoting radical Islam, and some of its students and staff of showing support for ISIS.⁶⁴
- Avicenna Elementary School (Pragerstraße 124, 1210 Wien, tel.: ++43 12700044, vs.avicenna@ai.net). This private school is for Muslim students only and was founded in 2014 by a group of parents and other individuals.⁶⁵
- Islamic Grammar School Vienna (*Islamisches Realgymnasium Wien*, Rauchfangkehrergasse 34, 1150 Wien, tel.: ++43 18972715, office@irgw.at, www.irgw.at/). Established and run by *SOLMIT-Solidarisch miteinander*, an association that promotes the integration of Muslims into Austrian society and intercultural understanding. The

63 Vasari, Bernd, "Islamschule im Kreuzfeuer", *Wiener Zeitung.at*, 12 November 2014, www.wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/wien/stadtpolitik/704035_Islamschule-im-Kreuzfeuer.html, accessed 28 July 2015.

64 Vasari, "Islamschule im Kreuzfeuer."

65 www.eslam.de/begriffe/p/private_volksschule_avicenna_wien.htm, accessed 28 July 2015.

school operates according to the public school curriculum.

- Isma Muhamed Asad Comprehensive School (Reschgasse 20, 1120 Wien, tel.: ++43 1235080808, schule@is-ma.at). This private confessional school was established in 2012 by the International Organisation for Science and Education (IOSE, www.iose.at/). Since 2012 the school is run by a self-governing body (*Isma—Verein zur Erhaltung Privater Schulen*) with a *waqf* foundation as its financial basis. Like the AISV, the Isma School has a stronger orientation towards Muslim values and principles than the other schools run by Muslim associations in Vienna. Isma has its own curriculum and offers comprehensive education for six to 14-year olds.
- Phönix Elementary School (*Phönix Volksschule*, Gudrunstraße 11, 1100 Wien, office@phoenixvs.at, tel.: ++43 1607950010, http://phoenixvs.at/).
- Phönix Grammar School (*Phönix Realgymnasium*, Knöllgasse 20–24, 1100 Wien, office@phoenixrealgymnasium.at, tel.: ++43 12084657, http://phoenixrealgymnasium.at/). Both schools are run by the Phönix Association and are affiliated with the movement of the charismatic Turkish preacher Fethullah Gülen. The Phönix schools offer teaching according to public curricula.

Muslim Media and Publications

- *Der Islam*—Quarterly e-magazine established by the IGGiÖ in 2012; no issues published since 2013.⁶⁶
- *Qalam*—Children’s magazine with a subscription fee. Published by Islamic Centre Vienna (*IZW Wien*), small selection of free issues available online: www.qalam.at/.

66 www.derislam.at/index.php?c=emagazine&o=emagazin&cssid=eMagazin&navid=1154&par=80, accessed 24 July 2015.

- *Eimaan*—Children's magazine (in German, first editions were in Bosniak), published by the Bosniak Islamic Cultural Centre Graz (*Islamisches Kulturzentrum Graz*), available both in print and online: <http://issuu.com/eimaangraz>, www.islamgraz.org/eimaan/
- *Dewa*—Online news portal (in Turkish) with a general focus, not limited to religious issues; published by Islamic Federation Vienna (*IF Wien*): www.dewa.at/
- *Der.Wisch*—special interest web magazine with a focus on Islam, politics, and culture; not affiliated to religious organisations, run by a student association (*Wiener Studentenverein, wsv*): <http://der-wisch.net/>.

Main Muslim Organisations

- Islamic Religious Community in Austria (*Islamische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich*, IGGiÖ, Bernardgasse 5, 1070 Wien, tel.: ++43 15263122, www.derislam.at/). The IGGiÖ was founded in 1979 and was the only Muslim public institution until the official recognition of the IAGÖ as a religious society in 2010. It is an officially recognised religious community endowed with special privileges and specified as one of two main public Muslim bodies in the *Islam Law (Islamgesetz)*.
- Austrian Turkish Islamic Union (*Österreich Türkisch-Islamische Union*, ATIB, Sonnleithnergasse 20, 1100 Wien, tel.: ++43 13346280, www.atib.at/). ATIB is the umbrella association of mosque societies supported financially and clerically by Turkey's Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*). It is Austria's largest Muslim organisation with 65 mosque associations at the time of writing.
- Islamic Federation Vienna (*Islamische Föderation Wien*, IF, Rauchfangkehrergasse 36, 1150 Wien, info@ifwien.at, www.ifwien.at/). The Islamic Federation is the Austrian branch of the Turkey-based but transnationally operating Islamic Community Milli Görüş (İGMG) with around 60 mosque associations.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ See Schmidinger, "Austria", pp. 47–64.

- Union of Muslim Cultural Centres (*Union Islamischer Kulturzentren in Wien*, UIKZ, Pelzgasse 9, 1150 Wien, tel.: ++43 19831295, www.uikz.org/jm/). The Union is affiliated with the Turkey-based Sufi *tariqa* of the followers of Süleyman Tunahan, often called *Süleymanlılar* or *Süleymanlılar*, and runs 44 prayer rooms.⁶⁸
- Initiative of Liberal Muslims in Austria (*Initiative Liberaler Muslime in Österreich*, ILMÖ, Hackingergasse 42–44/2/10, 1140 Wien, tel.: ++43 69910333243, www.initiativeliberalermuslime.org/home/). ILMÖ is a rather insignificant association with no claim to represent the interests of a particular faith group. Due to its criticism of IGGiÖ and ATIB for their ties to external countries like Saudi-Arabia and Turkey, however, its members are given visibility in Austrian media outlets.
- Muslim Youth Austria (*Muslimische Jugend Österreich*, MJÖ, Eitnergasse 6/5, 1230 Wien, office@mjoe.at, www.mjoe.at/). The MJÖ was the official youth organisation of the IGGiÖ until 2012, when under the then newly elected president Fuat Sanaç a new youth organisation of the IGGiÖ (*Jugendrat der Islamischen Glaubensgemeinschaft*, JIGGiÖ) was established. The estrangement between the MJÖ and the IGGiÖ intensified in 2014 during the debates on the new *Islam Law* with Sanaç accusing the MJÖ of having ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, provoking a prompt denial by the MJÖ.⁶⁹ The multi-ethnic and multi-national MJÖ has been, together with the recently established grassroots Network of Muslim Civil Society (*Netzwerk Muslimische Zivilgesellschaft*, NMZ, <http://dieanderen.net/>), one of the fiercest critics of the new *Islam Law* and the IGGiÖ. It is also one of the few organisations not shaped by bounds to a particular country of origin.
- Islamic Alevi Religious Community in Austria (*Islamisch Alevitische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich*, IAGÖ, Schererstraße 4, 1210 Wien, tel.: ++43 6764418468, www.aleviten.at/de/). The IAGÖ is the second officially recognised Muslim religious community (*Religionsgemeinschaft*) in Austria and has been promised equal status to that of the IGGiÖ in the *Islam Law*. The organisation itself now uses the acronym ALEVI and identifies with the principles of the Turkey-based *CEM Vakfi* (Cem Foundation). Both consider Alevism as a tradition that stands within Islam.
- Federation of Alevi Communities in Austria (*Föderation der Aleviten Gemeinden in Österreich*, AABF, Schererstraße 4, 1210 Wien, <http://aleviten.com/index.php/de/>). AABF is member of the European Alevi Confederation

68 www.uikz.org/jm/index.php/uikz/uikz-einrichtungen, accessed 11 April 2015.

69 “Muslimische Jugend wehrt sich gegen Vorwürfe”, *religion.orf.at*, <http://religion.orf.at/tv/stories/2692196/>, accessed 25 February 2015.

(*Avrupa Alevi Birlikleri Konfederasyonu*), which considers the Alevi faith as a distinct religious community outside Islam that does, however, share a Muslim heritage. AABF challenges IAGÖ's official status as sole representative community of Alevis in Austria and has applied for recognition as an official faith community (*religiöse Bekenntnisgemeinschaft*). A small Kurdish-Alevi organisation (*Alt-Alevitische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich*, AAGÖ), which stresses the pre-Islamic origins of Alevism and is based in Vienna, gained that status in 2013.

- Islamic Centre Imam Ali (*Islamisches Zentrum Imam Ali*, IZIA, Mollardgasse 50, 1060 Wien, tel.: ++43 15977065, info@izia.at). IZIA was established in 2000 and maintains close ties to Iran. It represents Twelver Shi'is in Austria. The IZIA operates a mosque and a cultural centre. The Ahl-ul-Bayt Federation of Shi'i Associations in Austria (*Islamische Vereinigung Ahl-ul-Bayt*, IVAÖ) is an umbrella organisation comprising six associations with 5000 members,⁷⁰ mostly from Iran and Afghanistan, and has its seat at the IZIA.
- Islamic-Shi'i Religious Community in Austria (*Islamische-Schiiitische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich*, Schia, Pezlgasse 58, 1170 Wien, tel.: ++43 69911979350, office@schia.at). The Islamic-Shi'i Religious Community was granted the status of an official faith community in 2013 and represents the Iraqi Shi'i *hawza 'ilmiya* tradition. It has its seat at the Ahl-ul-Bait Cultural Centre in Vienna which was established in 1992. The centre's Ahl-ul-Bait Mosque is also used as the main prayer room of the Al Mufid Centre (*Islamisch Kulturelles Zentrum Al Mufid*, IKZ).
- Federation of Bosniak-Islamic Associations (*Verband der Bosniakisch-Islamischen Vereine*, IZBA, Arndtstrasse 28/2, 1120 Wien, tel.: ++43 476236664, http://izba.at/). The federation serves as umbrella organisation for 40 Bosniak religious associations and was established in 2012. It is the largest Muslim umbrella organisation in Austria after ATIB, IF, and UKIZ.⁷¹
- FRIEDE—*Institute for Dialogue* (Rotenturmstrasse 1–3/3, 1010 Wien, tel.: ++43 19580021, http://derfriede.at/). FRIEDE does not present itself as an explicitly religious association but it is committed to the "furthering of intercultural and interreligious dialogue." It is affiliated with the Hizmet movement of the charismatic preacher Fethullah Gülen.

70 www.islam-landkarte.at/sites/default/files/Islamische%20Vereinigung%20Ahl-ul-Bayt_o.pdf, accessed 24 July 2015.

71 www.islam-landkarte.at/sites/default/files/Verband%20oder%20bosniakischen%20islamischen%20Vereine%20in%20%C3%96sterreich_o.pdf, accessed 24 July 2015.