



Observatory for  
Sociopolitical Developments  
in Europe

## Muslim Social Welfare in Europe

Variety of social services and public funding  
in Austria and the Netherlands

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## Index of abbreviations

- AJÖ – Alevi Youth Austria  
ATIB – Turkish-Islamic Union (Austria)  
B-JFG – Federal Law on the Advancement of Young People (Austria)  
BAG – Federal Association of Non-statutory Welfare (Austria)  
BAGFW – Federal Association of Non-statutory Welfare (Germany)  
BAMF – Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (Germany)  
BSK – Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian  
BMASK – Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (Austria)  
BMFJ – Federal Ministry of Families and Youth (Austria)  
BJV – Austrian Youth Association  
BMG – Federal Ministry of Health (Austria)  
BMEIA – Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (Austria)  
CMO – Contactorgaan Moslims en Overheid  
CGI – Contactgroep Islam  
DIK – German Islam Conference  
DITIB - Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (Germany)  
ECN – Educatieve Centra Nederland  
AIGÖ/ALVI - Alevi faith community  
IF – Islamic Federation  
IGGiÖ – Islamic Faith Community of Austria  
IHSAN – Islamitisch Instituut voor maatschappelijke activering  
ISBO – Islamitische Schoolbesturen Organisatie  
ISN – Islamitische Stichting Nederland  
JIGGiÖ – Youth Council of Islamic Faith Community of Austria  
JMÖ – Young Muslim Women of Austria  
MJÖ – Muslim Youth Austria  
MOBiN – Marokkaanse Ouderenzorg in Nederland  
NAP.I – National Action Plan for Integration (Austria)  
NISBO – Nederlandse Bond voor Oudere Migranten  
PVV – Partij voor de Vrijheid  
SECU – Stichting Educatie Centrum Utrecht  
SMN – Samenwerkingsverband van Marokkaanse Nederlanders  
SPIOR – Stichting Platform Islamitische Organisaties Rijnmond  
SPÖ – Social Democratic Party of Austria  
UMMON – Unie van Marokkaanse Moskee Organisaties in Nederland  
WMO – Wet maatschappelijke ondersteuning

## 1 Introduction

*"There is a need for Muslim social welfare services for Muslims in our country" (Federal Minister Manuela Schwesig, 10 November 2015)"*<sup>1</sup>

There are between 3.8 and 4.3 million Muslims living in Germany<sup>2</sup> making up approximately 5% of the population. Other European states also have a high proportion of Muslims in their populations<sup>3</sup>: approximately 850,000 Muslims live in the Netherlands (5% of the population)<sup>4</sup>, 570,000 in Austria (7%)<sup>5</sup> and 2.71 million in England and Wales (4.8%).<sup>6</sup> The proportion of Muslims in the French population is estimated to be 4.7 million (7.5%).<sup>7</sup> The increasing number of refugees from Muslim-majority countries is a Europe-wide phenomenon as a result of which the proportions of Muslims in the population will increase. European states will therefore experience increased demand for religiously and culturally sensitive services for Muslims. Much like Christians or Jews, Muslims have religious and cultural requirements with regard to social services, for instance in the care sector. There is an above-average increase in the number of people aged 65 and over from a Muslim background. Families are not able to provide the necessary care, or prefer not to. In order to comply with the legally enshrined right of citizens to freely choose their service providers, there must be services offered that take into account the requirements and cultural backgrounds of Muslims<sup>8</sup> in need of care (cf. Section 2 of the Social Code, Book X1). This includes, for example, taking into consideration (religious) dietary habits or providing Muslim prayer rooms at in-patient institutions. Native-language communication is also very important for many Muslims in need of care. With ad-

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<sup>1</sup> Steering committee of the German Islam Conference (DIK) dated 10/11/2015, available at <https://t.co/4jYrMfN9rZ> (in German).

<sup>2</sup> People from Muslim countries of origin who describe themselves as Muslims (cf. Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) 2009). Other information suggests 4.8 million Muslims in Germany in 2010, and anticipates a rise to 7 million by 2050 (PEW) [www.globalreligiousfutures.org](http://www.globalreligiousfutures.org)).

<sup>3</sup> An overview is provided by [www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/11/17/5-facts-about-the-muslim-population-in-europe](http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/11/17/5-facts-about-the-muslim-population-in-europe).

<sup>4</sup> (Version 01/2007) [www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/themas/bevolking/publicaties/artikelen/archief/2007/2007-2278-wm.htm](http://www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/themas/bevolking/publicaties/artikelen/archief/2007/2007-2278-wm.htm).

<sup>5</sup> Austrian Federal Ministry of European and International Affairs (BMEIA) 2015: *Islam Law 2015 Summary*.

<sup>6</sup> Figures for 2011: [www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MCBCensusReport\\_2015.pdf](http://www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MCBCensusReport_2015.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> The French government does not record the religious affiliation of its citizens due to the policy of laicism. France will therefore not be considered in the present article as, due to its strict laicism, it must be assumed it has no measures in place to support any specific religious group in the population.

<sup>8</sup> Muslims are generally defined as members of Islam. The word *Muslim* must therefore be interpreted as "relating to Islam". In political discussions, the word *Muslim* is often used synonymously with *Islamic*. The use of the term also differs among European states. A clear distinction between the terms *Muslim* and *Islamic* would be desirable, but it is seldom made in practice. This working paper predominantly uses the term *Muslim*, although *Islamic* is used synonymously in some cases, if for example it would otherwise result in misunderstandings because of the sources. It remains the case, however, that Muslims cannot be viewed as a homogeneous social group and therefore also have differing requirements. Please note at this point also that people from Muslim majority states - but that consider themselves without religious beliefs - also have needs in terms of access to social services which are often attributed collectively to Muslims. These include, in particular, requirements which are cultural or linguistic in nature, such as language barriers, or care provided by a person of the same gender. From a pragmatic research perspective, the term *Muslim* is used here as an analytical category which not only includes individuals which follow the Muslim faith, but also people from Muslim countries or with this type of cultural influence, for example as a result of the migration of parents or grandparents. This lack of clarity in terms of definition is explicitly accepted here in order to be able to encompass the entire political discussion.

vanced dementia, loss of the second language may mean that patients are no longer able to communicate if the care staff are unable to speak their native language.

The expansion of childcare in Germany and many other European states (cf. Ferragina/Seeleib-Kaiser 2013) has also led to an increase in the need for childcare institutions which are aware of the religious requirements of Muslims. Hiring Muslim or specially trained staff means that it is possible to respond to requirements such as observance of dietary rules during Ramadan. The right of citizens in Germany to choose their service provider freely (Section 5 of the Social Code Book VIII) also applies to childcare. There are no more than a few providers of social services in Germany that offer childcare or elderly care explicitly meant for the Muslim target group and that offer specialist services in the markets concerned.<sup>9</sup> Some mosque associations and Muslim organisations are also involved in the area of youth work in Germany. They offer young Muslims the opportunity to take advantage of confessionally-oriented training courses and to influence youth policy together with other youth organisations such as Regional Youth Rings (Landesjugendringe).<sup>10</sup>

It is certainly evident today that Muslim citizens make use of social services, both from non-Muslim providers and from mosque communities or Muslim providers. However, at the same time it can be said that, on average, people from migrant backgrounds use social services less than non-migrants (cf. BMG 2011). This points to the existence of specific barriers to access social services – for instance language barriers, absence of religiously sensitive services (prayer rooms etc.), staff who lack intercultural training, lack of information, or fear of discrimination and intervention from the authorities (cf. Schirilla 2011; Schenk et. al 2011: 114). As Muslims are one of the largest population groups from so-called migrant backgrounds, this affects them particularly. Many European states face similar challenges to Germany in terms of providing social services for Muslims. The question inevitably needs to be asked as to whether religiously and culturally sensitive social services should be delivered, organised and funded for Muslims in European societies and, if so, which types of services? This working paper will consider this question.

For some time, German policy-makers have considered, on the one hand, how access barriers to social services for Muslims can be reduced, and on the other, how culturally and religiously sensitive services can be expanded. Here the discussion often refers to the intercultural opening of social services and providers.<sup>11</sup> The German Islam Conference (DIK) has

<sup>9</sup> Some examples: [Deta Med](#) – culture-specific care (for Muslims) in Berlin, which offers home care, e.g. to dementia patients, and which operates living communities and, since 2015, a hospice; [Medicus](#) – an intercultural out-patient care team with a focus on care for dementia sufferers; [Halima](#) – an independent kindergarten for Muslims in Karlsruhe; [Alibaba und seine Räuber day care centre](#) in Berlin Neukölln.

<sup>10</sup> Of note here is the Alevi Youth Association in Germany which is a member of the German Youth Ring, and of some Regional Youth Rings, and also numerous DITIB (Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs) regional youth organisations which are members of Regional Youth Rings in Rhineland-Palatinate, Lower Saxony and Baden-Württemberg.

<sup>11</sup> Intercultural opening is defined as measures or approaches which change the provision and staffing structure of social services so that specific barriers to access for people from migrant backgrounds are removed. For users from migrant backgrounds, barriers include lack of information, language barriers, and fear of discrimination. Among the providers, barriers to access seen by users include prejudices, communication problems and cultural stereotypes. Tools to support intercultural opening include advanced and continuing education and training in the

joined this discussion and, in 2014 and 2015, it focused on the issue of social welfare services for Muslims.<sup>12</sup> The Federal Government's 8<sup>th</sup> Integration Summit addressed the care requirements of people from migrant backgrounds and called for an intercultural opening of care services and providers.<sup>13</sup>

In Germany, social welfare services are one of the key areas in which the state cooperates with religious communities and their social organisations as well as with ideological organisations. The aim here is to provide social services which are accessible to all. The focus is on citizens' right to choose their service providers freely to ensure that every individual can take advantage of the offers he/she chooses, for example within a religious institution. Key areas of work for social welfare services include child and youth welfare as well as elderly care. The requirements of Muslims described above prompted an exchange of ideas within the DIK by the Federal Association of Non-statutory Welfare<sup>14</sup>, Muslim umbrella organisations<sup>15</sup> and government institutions. The aim is to "further improve the range of culturally and religiously sensitive social welfare services for Muslims", and to discuss opportunities for representation of interests vis-à-vis the federal government, the states and the municipalities (DIK 2014: 1). Often discussions regarding Muslim social welfare services are watered down to the question concerning a Muslim umbrella organisation. However, the Federal Association of Non-statutory Welfare and the Muslim organisations are also in discussions regarding sharing knowledge in order to develop professional structures and cooperation agreements with a view to delivering the services required.<sup>16</sup>

The present comparative European analysis has two main areas of focus which are also of interest for the German discussion. In an initial step, the aim is to show the variety of Muslim social services offered in the Netherlands and Austria. The focus here is on child and youth welfare as well as on elderly care. *Muslim social services* are defined as services provided by Muslim institutions. Social services which are provided by non-Muslim providers, but which are explicitly tailored to the needs of the Muslim target group, are also included as

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area of intercultural competence, multi-lingual offerings and information and networking among autonomous migrant organisations and other social service providers (Schirilla 2011).

<sup>12</sup> cf. in this regard both studies on behalf of BAMF (BAMF 2015 and Halb/Sauer 2015) and, for general information, the homepage of the DIK <http://www.deutsche-islam-konferenz.de/DIK/EN/Startseite/startseite-node.html>.

<sup>13</sup> cf. [www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Pressemitteilungen/BPA/2015/11/2015-11-17-integrationsgipfel.html](http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Pressemitteilungen/BPA/2015/11/2015-11-17-integrationsgipfel.html), German.

<sup>14</sup> The six umbrella organisations of non-statutory welfare in Germany (the Workers' Welfare Association – AWO, the Paritätische Gesamtverband [an umbrella organisation for associations focusing on social services], the German Red Cross – DRK, Diakonie [Social Services of the Lutheran Church], Caritas, Central Welfare Office of the Jews in Germany ZWST) have merged into the Federal Association of Non-statutory Welfare (BAGFW) in order to jointly represent their interests.

<sup>15</sup> Currently, ten Muslim or Islamic umbrella organisations are represented in the DIK: Ahmadiyya Muslim Community (AMJ), Alevi Community Germany (AABF), Islamic Community of Bosniaks in Germany (IGBD), Islamic Community of Shiitic congregations of Germany (IGS), Islamic Council for the Federal Republic of Germany (IRD), Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DITIB), Turkish Community in Germany (TGD), Association of Islamic Cultural Centres (VIKZ), Central Council of Moroccans in Germany (ZRMD) and Central Council of Muslims in Germany (ZMD).

<sup>16</sup> At the invitation of the BAGFW, the umbrella organisations of non-statutory welfare and nine Muslim associations met on 8 September to exchange views on intercultural opening and the organisational support for Muslim associations (<http://www.bagfw.de/aktivitaeten/detail/article/treffen-mit-muslimischen-verbaenden>, in German).

Muslim social services (in other contexts these are referred to as religiously sensitive services). Including non-Muslim institutions which operate in an explicitly religiously sensitive manner and, for example, employ staff with a Muslim background, Arabic language skills or intercultural training allows us to consider the entire breadth of Muslim provision. Due to the exploratory nature of the study, the overviews presented here serve as examples only and are not conclusive. Here, as far as possible, the type of provider, type of funding and personnel (voluntary/full-time) are considered. The main sources have predominately been (umbrella-) organisations and their member organisations.

In a second step it would seem relevant to look at whether and how government institutions and policy-makers treat and support social services that take into account the culturally sensitive and target-group specific requirements of Muslims. The following questions are of interest in this respect:

- 1) Funding: Are efforts being made by governments or are programmes in place for the provision of Muslim social services (which frequently start or exist on a project or self-funded basis) which can be funded publicly on an ongoing basis?
- 2) Information and counselling: Are there specific information programmes or campaigns for providing information to Muslims as well as to Muslim institutions regarding social services, access to these services and the necessary requirements? Is information available in foreign languages?
- 3) Cooperation and participation: Are Muslim institutions integrated within existing structures? Is cooperation between Muslim and non-Muslim providers of social services encouraged and supported by the state?
- 4) Volunteers, full-time staff, training: Are there government-initiated or government-funded projects or programmes to provide specialist and organisational training for personnel working on a largely voluntary basis?

This working paper seeks to complement the work by DIK on the topic of Muslim social welfare services by providing a European comparison. For this reason, questions have been prepared covering all the areas of activity of the DIK<sup>17</sup>. Each of the following chapters focuses on one of the states and looks at the questions outlined above in the different sections. There will be a comparative summary of the study at the end.

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<sup>17</sup> The steering committee noted the following areas of activity in their conclusions on 13 January 2015: understanding and removing reservations, information and counselling, cooperation and participation, voluntary work, professional work, training; funding (<http://tinyurl.com/zxvoquk>, in German).

## 2 Austria

An Islam law was passed in Austria as early as 1912. It gave Islamic religious communities state recognition, thus placing them on an equal footing with the Catholic and Protestant church. A consequence of recognition as a public corporation is the right to publicly practice religion – supported by teaching in schools – and the right to independent administration. The Islamic faith community of Austria (IGGiÖ) has been recognised as a religious community since 1979 and Islamic religion has been taught in schools since 1982. Since 2013, the Alevi faith community (IAGÖ/ALEVI) has also been recognised by the state as a public corporation. In 2012, the *Islam Dialogue Forum* was convened by the then Secretary for Integration and current Integration Minister, Sebastian Kurz, and by the president of the IGGiÖ Fuat Sanaç. It was similar to the DIK, and its main purpose was the draft reform of the Islam Law of 2015 and a general dialogue between state institutions and Muslim organisations.<sup>18</sup> A central point was the training of imams at Austrian universities. Pastoral training was also addressed. Following the final report in 2013, however, the Dialogue Forum was not continued on an institutionalised basis; as of 2014, it was broadened to include all churches and religious societies.

### 2.1 The variety of Muslim social services provided in Austria

A 2014 study by the university of Vienna entitled “Imams and Integration” highlights, amongst other things, the variety of social services provided in Muslim associations (cf. Aslan et al. 2015).<sup>19</sup> Although Muslim organisations and mosque communities in Austria mainly focus on religious practice, social services are increasingly being made available. Homework support and language courses are often provided. Some organisations focus on specific target groups such as young people or women. Muslim-oriented services funded by institutions exist mainly in the Vienna area. For example, Vienna has approximately 150 Muslim childcare facilities. As in Germany, the organisations and mosque communities and their interests are represented by a range of Muslim organisations. These organisations see themselves mainly as supporters and contact partners in relation to religious questions. However, they are increasingly providing structures to support social work in the various organisations and mosque communities. The individual umbrella organisations and their involvement in the social area is presented below by way of example in order to show which social services are provided by and for Muslims, how these are funded and how these services are staffed.

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<sup>18</sup> In February 2015, the Islam Law of 1912, which had consisted of only two pages, was reformed and updated. It now includes references to the right to meals in line with religious requirements, and the right to Muslim pastoral care in state institutions. Chaplains must be recognised by a state recognised Islamic religious community (i.e. IGGiÖ or ALEVI). The ban on foreign funding for imams and associations and the requirement of obedience to state law are disputed. This is not explicitly expected of other religious societies.

<sup>19</sup> The study is similar to the 2012 study undertaken on behalf of the BAMF which investigated Islamic community life in Germany (BAMF 2012). One result of the Austrian study is the [Islamkarte](#) (*Islam Map*), an online platform listing Muslim or Islamic organisations and mosques in Austria and providing short analyses relating to them.

The [Islamic Faith Community of Austria](#) (IGGiÖ) regards itself as a joint umbrella organisation for all Muslim organisations with the exception of the Alevi faith community.<sup>20</sup> As a religious community, and therefore a public corporation, it has been officially recognised since 1979. It is funded by member donations. It does not utilise the option of raising taxes (Bauer 2015: 17ff).

IGGiÖ is very actively involved in youth work. Until 2012, [Muslim Youth Austria](#) (MJÖ) was the official youth organisation of the IGGiÖ. In 2012, IGGiÖ formed the [Youth Council of the Islamic Faith Community in Austria](#) (JIGGiÖ) which integrated the youth organisations of Millî Görüş<sup>21</sup> and other Turkish-Muslim organisations, and since then has been regarded as the official youth organisation (Schmidinger/Cakir 2015). However, MJÖ continues to be a member of the Austrian Youth Association (BJV)<sup>22</sup>. It is funded by the Federal Ministry of Families and Youth (BMFJ) and also by the city of Vienna. The key tasks of MJÖ are the provision of alternative leisure and recreation activities (summer and winter camps, travel) and training for young people (seminars in public speaking, democracy, etc.). During Ramadan, MJÖ organises the project “[Fast. Share. Help.](#)” (FTH), which has existed since 2011: young people visit the elderly and also children in care homes and orphanages, cook for the homeless and collect donations. They are also offered training, e.g. in refugee work or in child care. The project visits and meals for the homeless are also aimed at non-Muslims and therefore extend to society as a whole. MJÖ cooperates with Austrian welfare organisations. Therefore, all non-statutory welfare organisations, including Diakonie, Caritas, Volkshilfe, Hilfswerk and the Red Cross, are partners of the FTH project. The independent womens’ organisation [Young Muslim Women of Austria](#) (JMÖ) is a partner organisation of MJÖ. It offers training for girls and young women and organises leisure and recreation activities specifically for young Muslim women. The youth work of IGGiÖ, MJÖ and JMÖ relies for the most part on individual volunteers. Funding is largely dependent on project funding. In the past, MJÖ and JMÖ have frequently run youth work projects that could not be continued following the end of the project funding which was, in most cases, provided by the relevant Federal Ministry and the municipalities. In 2013/2014, for instance, MJÖ offered a mentoring programme for young Muslim women to improve their opportunities in the labour market. Mentors included both Muslim and non-Muslim women. This project was funded by the BMFJ. In 2011, JMÖ ran the project “[Fatima](#)”, which provided training and support for young Muslim women and girls, who, it was hope, would then be able to pass on the skills they had learned. The projects were funded by the Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth (BMWFJ). JMÖ and MJÖ also ran the pilot project “Chai”. Here, the aim was to engage first-generation Muslim mothers who otherwise tend not to utilise social services. With the help of qualified trainers

<sup>20</sup> Following a ruling of the Constitutional Court, in 1987 IGGiÖ had to broaden their Sunni-Hanafi orientation to include all other Sunni and Shiite interpretations of the law. IGGiÖ's claim to sole representation of Muslims has been challenged since the Constitutional Court ruling in 2010. The court judged that the law did not prescribe there should only be one single Islamic religious community (Islamkarte: IGGiÖ).

<sup>21</sup> Millî Görüş is an active cross-border Islamic movement originally from Turkey. Many European states have national umbrella organisations which represent mosque communities and which are affiliated to the Millî Görüş movement.

<sup>22</sup> Similar to the German Youth Ring.

from MJÖ/JMÖ<sup>23</sup> an opportunity was provided to learn German in relaxed company, for example over a cup of “chai” (tea), and to share knowledge about the Austrian health, education and social system. The aim of this was to redress participants’ lack of information and improve their access to social services.

Since 2000, IGGiÖ has been developing a visiting and social service in hospitals, mainly in Vienna, and is developing this as a pastoral care service. Pastoral care services are also offered by IGGiÖ in the military and in detention centres. An agreement was signed in 2010 with the Federal Ministry of Justice to have Muslim pastoral care provided by IGGiÖ in detention centres in the future (Schmidinger/Cakir 2015: 59f). In order to train personnel in the health and care sector to deal with Muslims with culturally specific requirements, IGGiÖ has developed information materials for both Muslim and non-Muslim personnel (cf. Bauer 2015:23).

Member associations of IGGiÖ run nine kindergartens in Vienna for children aged between two and six.<sup>24</sup> IGGiÖ also runs the Islamic College for Social Education and Training (IFS [www.bif-fachschule.at](http://www.bif-fachschule.at)). This is a vocational school focusing on social occupations such as kindergarten assistant and nursing. Its purpose is to provide training for Muslim personnel in social services.

In addition to IGGiÖ, the Islamic Alevi Faith Community (IAGÖ/ALEVI) has been recognised as an independent religious community since 2013.<sup>25</sup> It represents nine Alevi associations. Under its constitution, it sets up houses of prayer, cultural centres as well as social institutions. IAGÖ/ALEVI offers pastoral care and support in hospitals and prisons according to the principles of Alevism and delivers Alevi religious education in state schools. IAGÖ/ALEVI has a youth organisation. As with MJÖ, Alevi Youth Austria (AJÖ) is also a member of the Austrian Youth Association and is supported by the BMFJ.

Besides these two umbrella organisations, there are other larger individual organisations whose activities provide some indication of the range of Muslim social services offered in Austria. The Turkish-Islamic Union (ATIB) is the largest Turkish-Islamic organisation; with 65 mosque associations, it has significant influence within IGGiÖ. ATIB is linked to the Turkish Presidium for Religious Matters (*Diyane*) and is subject to directives from the Turkish embassy (Islakarte: ATIB). It is a sister organisation of the German DITIB. ATIB’s NOKTA training institute runs childcare groups for children aged from 0 to 6. The daycare facility for children has government approval. NOKTA also provides numerous courses for young people, including homework support, vocational guidance, music, self-defence, etc. ATIB is therefore actively involved in youth work for young Muslim people.

In Austria, the Mili Görüş movement is represented by the Islamic Federation (IF). It in turn represents 100 associations which mainly run kindergartens and daycare centres and offer

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<sup>23</sup> Volkshilfe works with some of these trainers, but on a private basis.

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.derislam.com/?c=content&cssid=Kinderg%E4ten/Hort%20&navid=460&par=40>. A kindergarten is due to be opened outside Vienna, in Graz. (Schmidinger/Cakir 2015: 57).

<sup>25</sup> “The Alevi are regarded as vehement advocates of the separation of state and religion as they regard a secular system of government as the only way to ensure the free observance of their faith (Islam Map: IAGÖ).

language courses and private coaching. One focus of their work is education and training. IF therefore also offers homework support as well as job application and computer courses. The youth and women's department offers education and training courses specially for Muslim youth as well as for young Muslim women and girls. It offers advice on school-based issues. IF is the second largest Turkish-Islamic organisation (after AITB), and it has a strong influence within IGGiÖ – it appointed the current president Fuat Sanaç (Islamkarte: IF).

In addition to Muslim organisations and their members, the Austrian Federal Association of Non-Statutory Welfare Services (BAG)<sup>26</sup> is also involved in the provision of Muslim social services. It is continually expanding its culturally sensitive activities and developing the relevant focus of social services. Besides including “intercultural competence” and “interculturality” in training courses for care personnel, BAG also runs some projects related to this issue. As part of the project “[Culturally sensitive care information](#)”, target-group specific information events have been offered to migrant groups since 2013. These provide information regarding services and opportunities for support where care is required. The aim of this is to remove barriers to information, in particular due to language problems and restricted access to information. The intention is mainly to provide individuals who are hard to reach, for instance women or mothers who are often isolated due to their work within the family, with information about benefits such as care allowances, home care and nursing care opportunities. The events are held in Turkish, Albanian, and Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian (BSC) and are therefore aimed at a Muslim target group. BAG cooperates with Muslim associations in the regional implementation of these events. The project receives funding from the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (BMASK), although funding has been significantly reduced recently. A low-threshold approach is also important in the "[MiMi - intercultural health guides](#)" project, which trains people from migrant backgrounds to become health guides on the basis of a programme of the same name in Germany. The "[Health Hand in Hand](#)" guide was prepared as part of the project. It provides information regarding health provision and is available in other languages, including Arabic and Turkish. The project is implemented by Volkshilfe. BAG also supports a project which recruits people from migrant backgrounds into the caring professions. The project "[Migrants Care](#)" counsels and trains people from migrant backgrounds towards gaining qualifications in the health and care sector. Information for interested parties is available in several languages, for example, in Turkish. Support is also offered in the search for apprenticeships. Follow-up support for participants is currently under development. The Austrian integration fund, a state-funded integration service provider, offers a vocationally specific German-language course entitled “Entering the care profession”. Following the success in Vienna, this is currently being extended into the other parts of the country. The projects “MiMi” and “Migrants Care” are funded by the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA) on an annual basis.

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<sup>26</sup> The BAG Austria is a platform for the five umbrella organisations Caritas, Social Services of the Protestant Church, relief organisations, the Red Cross and Volkshilfe. Its aim is to articulate joint social policy demands and to improve framework conditions for social work.

## 2.2 Government approach to Muslim social services in Austria

In the second step of the analysis, we shall examine whether and how the state supports the activities described above, or is active itself in these areas, in order that the culturally and religiously specific requirements of Muslims in the areas observed here are taken into account.

The Islam Dialogue Forum mentioned above was initiated by the government in 2012 and until 2013 discussed a range of issues in working groups including the issue of the state and Islam. In its conclusions, it found that “organisations and associations are a focal point of Muslim life” and a contact partner for the state (BMI 2010: 43).

In the area of elderly care, state institutions are increasingly beginning to respond to the specific need for culturally sensitive care. The city of Vienna is an example at municipal level. The city has currently commissioned a study into migration and care; it hopes to use empirical information to undertake a needs assessment and establish care provision requirements. The study also aims to identify barriers to access to social services for people from migrant backgrounds. Since 2008, the Austrian Federal government has viewed elderly care as part of integration policy for people from migrant backgrounds. In 2008, the coalition agreement stated that a National Action Plan for Integration (NAP.I) should be prepared. This was to be developed by a steering group in 2009 and 2010. Federal ministries as well as municipalities and social partners were involved in this.<sup>27</sup> The project was led by the BMEIA. The Action Plan covers seven central areas for action, including health and social matters. An expert council consisting of members of academic institutions and various organisations, the so-called Integration Advisory Body, assists the steering committee, which is made up of Federal Government and Länder representatives, the Association of Cities and Towns, social partners and industrial associations, as well as NGOs. The National Action Plan report includes targets set for the areas of health and social policy. One important target is generating awareness for migrant-specific problems. For example, the Plan states that the need for culturally sensitive care provision as a statutory benefit will increase and that the care sector will face new types of challenges, such as the loss of German-language skills among people from migrant backgrounds with dementia (Integration report 2015: 45). In addition to this, intercultural competence in health and care institutions is to be strengthened. The aim is both to advance this “intercultural opening” (*ibid* 44) as regards employees as well as to strengthen system competency among patients, i.e. knowledge of (partially-) state funded services. These goals related to integration are to be primarily funded and achieved through projects.<sup>28</sup> The projects referred to above – “MiMi intercultural health guides” and “Migrants Care” – are cited as examples and are explicitly linked to the aim of integrating people from migrant backgrounds. The projects are targeted at people from various migration backgrounds. However, there is a strong indirect focus on Muslims as the relevant target group, for example through the use of information campaigns in Turkish and BSC. The aim is to

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<sup>27</sup> The German integration indicator report acted as a model for the NAP.I indicators.

<sup>28</sup> A database for this can be viewed at the following URL: [www.bmeia.gv.at/integration/datenbank-integrationsprojekte](http://www.bmeia.gv.at/integration/datenbank-integrationsprojekte).

facilitate access to social services for people from a (Muslim) migration background by means of campaigns and information in foreign languages.

This increased focus on the provision of culturally sensitive services in elderly care is also evident in the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (BMASK), which is responsible for care and nursing in the areas of social services. It has supported the “culturally sensitive care information” project referred to above, which is implemented by BAG, since 2013. BMASK’s goal here is to use non-statutory care organisations and their cooperative arrangements with Muslim associations to provide information for Muslims who are hard to reach – such as first-generation women for example – regarding rights to, and opportunities for, the utilisation of social services and, therefore, to reduce barriers to access.

The need for awareness of culturally specific requirements has also been identified by the Federal Ministry of Health (BMG) in the training for social occupations since 2014. As a result, Universities of Applied Sciences are demanding that students doing bachelor degrees in healthcare and nursing should acquire intercultural competence in their studies. In 2014, for instance, information brochures on “Healthcare Professions in Austria” were also published in the key (native) languages of Muslims in Austria – Turkish and BSC – in a campaign to reduce language barriers and serve as incentives for people from migrant backgrounds to take up social work occupations.<sup>29</sup>

Many of the Muslim childcare facilities, which are available mainly around Vienna, are state approved and therefore benefit from statutory funding structures. Sebastian Kurz, the Minister for Integration, commissioned a study at the end of 2015 to investigate care concepts and their implementation in these childcare facilities. The results of the study (cf. Aslan 2016) are currently prompting political discussion. Amongst other things, Kurz calls for some institutions to be closed because children in these institutions are being “isolated” and protected “from the influences of mainstream society”.<sup>30</sup> As a consequence of this, he is calling for a new kindergarten law for Vienna. The governing SPÖ in the municipality of Vienna argues that controls are already in place. Guidelines for kindergarten operators on how to deal with religious aspects are currently being added to the Vienna education and training plan. If these are not adhered to, then funding may be withdrawn.<sup>31</sup> IGGiÖ and the Vienna branch of the SPÖ criticise the academic quality of the study, in particular its representativeness and the conclusions it draws. Discussions show that political stakeholders in Austria still need to develop concepts for dealing with Muslim childcare facilities. The debate is currently characterised by fears of radicalisation and is therefore linked to issues of internal security.

In the area of youth work, two Muslim youth organisations – MJÖ and AJÖ – are members of the Austrian Youth Association (BJV). They meet the requirements of the Federal Law on the Advancement of Young People (B-JFG) as officially recognised youth organisations and

<sup>29</sup> See <http://tinyurl.com/zkd46tr>.

<sup>30</sup> See interview (in German) with Integration Minister Sebastian Kurz in the newspaper Kronen-Zeitung (13 Dec. 2015): [www.krone.at/Oesterreich/Giessen\\_Sie\\_Oel\\_ins\\_Feuer\\_Herr\\_Kurz-Krone-Interview-Story-486614](http://www.krone.at/Oesterreich/Giessen_Sie_Oel_ins_Feuer_Herr_Kurz-Krone-Interview-Story-486614).

<sup>31</sup> Der Standard: „Wien: Religionsleitfaden für Kindergärten kommt“ (9 Dec. 2015), available in German at: <http://derstandard.at/2000027233352/Wien-kuendigt-Religionsleitfaden-fuer-Kindergaerten-an>.

therefore receive basic funding from BMFJ funds.<sup>32</sup> They are, therefore, integrated within the existing (funding) structure. This is therefore not basically target-group specific funding. However, since 2010, BMFJ has set one of its funding priorities for youth support on “peaceful coexistence”. This explicitly includes projects supporting the integration of young people with migrant backgrounds within Austrian society.<sup>33</sup> This results in funding opportunities for project ideas from Muslim associations and organisations.

### 2.3 Conclusion

The preceding overview shows that Muslim associations and organisations in Austria provide social services. They are particularly active in youth work and offer opportunities for personal development, school support, and vocational education for young Muslims. The most common types of organisations and clubs are involved in youth work, also specifically for girls. Youth work is funded largely on a project basis and only for fixed periods, while basic funding for AJÖ and MJÖ under the Federal Law on the Advancement of Young People (B-JFG) is provided at institutional level. Most programmes are delivered on a voluntary basis. In this manner, associations and organisations support youth training on the one hand, and on the other, seek to encourage young people to get involved as volunteers. There is an increasing number of Muslim childcare facility providers, though this trend is primarily limited to Vienna. Elderly care services specifically devoted to the Muslim target group, as in Berlin for example, were not identified during the research. Only the religiously sensitive opening of care services, in particular in state-run institutions or institutions operated by non-statutory welfare organisations, is being encouraged in isolated cases.

The non-Muslim organisations of BAG support the development of Muslim social services. They cooperate with regional Muslim associations in various projects in order to reach the target group and reduce access barriers to care services for Muslims. The information they provide regarding the provision of such services is increasingly multi-lingual. In addition, non-statutory welfare organisations have been focusing on intercultural training and recruitment of (Muslim) staff into the care sector. However, the efforts made so far do not extend beyond individual measures.

The majority of the offerings covered by the present study are delivered in urban areas, primarily in and around Vienna. This is barely surprising since approximately half of Austrian Muslims live in Vienna.

Overall, no overarching strategic approach for supporting Muslim social services can be identified from government institutions. Different federal ministries are responsible for the sub-areas concerned: BMFJ for childcare and youth work and BMASK for elderly care services and nursing. In addition to this, BMEIA – in view of its responsibility for integration –

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<sup>32</sup> The requirement is that youth organisations must be organised into associations which are formed for the entire federal territory, are active in at least five Länder (federal states) and have at least 3000 members nationally. The organisation must also have existed for ten years (cf. BMFJ 2015). The basic funding is structured according to a scale depending on membership and consists of a minimum of approximately €15,000 and a maximum of approximately €145,000 (cf. B-JFG; BGBl. No. I 126/2000).

<sup>33</sup> [www.bmfj.gv.at/jugend/jugendfoerderung/foerderschwerpunkte.html](http://www.bmfj.gv.at/jugend/jugendfoerderung/foerderschwerpunkte.html).

supports additional projects. However, NAP.I, initiated and supported by BMEIA, integrates many projects supporting Muslim social services as a higher level strategy for the integration of people from migrant backgrounds. Among other things, the integration report identifies an increasing demand for religious and culturally sensitive elements in the provision of social services. Discussions about Muslim childcare institutions in Vienna at the end of 2015 resulted in (conflict-laden) debate regarding the government's approach to Muslim providers of social services. The joint Islam Dialogue Forum was not continued after the Islam law reform was completed. But it remains to be seen in how far political stakeholders see the need for further discussion which also includes the umbrella organisations in order to advance appropriate concepts for the necessary approach to and support of Muslim social services.

With regard to the four questions set at the start reflecting the areas of activity of DIK and which are used here for comparative purposes, it can be said that regular (partial) funding is available only for youth organisations, with the examples of institutional funding and government approved childcare institutions in Vienna. Other offerings (youth work and work with girls and women) are funded by the relevant federal administration and the City of Vienna in most cases as fixed-term projects, or they rely on the financial means of the mosque community and on volunteers (Question 1: Funding). For the area of elderly care in particular, there is evidence, however, of growing state support with respect to the other three questions. Since this is the area where, so far, the fewest services are available, but also for which the greatest need will exist in the future, this seems to be consistent from a state perspective. This means that barriers to accessing care services can be removed by ensuring that the target group of older Muslims is better informed. For this purpose, individual projects implemented mainly by BAG organisations in cooperation with Muslim associations are being supported. The Muslim associations act as intermediaries for providing information to target groups which are hard to reach, in particular older women in the home. This process will be supported by foreign-language brochures or mentors who in turn receive training in their own projects (Question 2: Information and counselling). It is very clear in the area of youth work that MJÖ and AJÖ are integrated within the existing BJV youth work structure as government-approved youth organisations. Active participation in youth work is funded in this way. The cooperative approach taken by BAG vis-à-vis Muslim associations within individual state-funded projects represents a further way of integrating Muslim social services into existing structures. In this case BAG may be regarded as an intermediary between the state and the Muslim associations (Question 3: Cooperation and participation). The need for qualification and recruitment of culturally sensitive personnel identified by state authorities, for example in NAP.I, is met by projects such as "Migrants Care". Even here, however, state initiatives go no further than project funding. The professionalisation of employees working as volunteers is currently not on the political agenda (Question 4: Volunteers, full-time staff, training).

### 3 Netherlands

Due what the Dutch call pillarisation (*verzuiling*), organisations with a religious orientation play a major role in the provision of social services in the Netherlands, for instance along denominational lines (cf. Davelaar et al. 2011). However, this relates only to Christian and Jewish institutions. Muslim institutions have not traditionally provided social services. Private social services are government-funded in a way similar to the German system. With increasing decentralisation in recent years, wide-ranging competencies in social policy-making and funding have been shifted to local level. Since 2015, municipalities have been responsible for child and youth welfare (*Jeugdwet* 2015) and for the care of the elderly (*Wet maatschappelijke ondersteuning*, WMO 2015). As a result, they decide independently on the nature and scope of youth support services. This decentralisation has resulted in potential opportunities for collaboration between municipalities and non-profit organisations, which in some cases have already been exploited (cf. Schalk et al. 2014).<sup>34</sup> The problem for many mosque communities and Muslim organisations is that they often lack the professional structures for the provision of social services and for applying for projects (cf. Davelaar et al. 2009).

#### 3.1 The variety of Muslim social services provided in the Netherlands

As elsewhere, mosque communities and Muslim associations in the Netherlands also focus mainly on religious practice. However, social programmes for children, young people and elderly people are also available. There are scattered professional providers who have specialised in religiously sensitive services for infants and for the elderly. Much like in Germany and Austria, organisations and umbrella organisations exist which represent the interests of mosque communities and Muslim associations. They serve as contact partners for policy-makers, advise their members on funding applications and on attracting and training volunteers, and disseminate information regarding statutory social service schemes. The following section presents some of the Muslim organisations which provide social services in order to highlight the variety – and the limits – of social services provided by and for Muslims in the Netherlands. However, the overview is not conclusive and should be regarded as an example.

In the Netherlands, there is a range of Muslim organisations representing the interests of mosque communities and reflecting the religious and ethnic heterogeneity present in the country. In 2014, [Contactorgaan Moslims en Overheid](#) (CMO) was initiated, also on a government impulse, as a central representation for Muslims in the Netherlands. CMO is an amalgamation of 12 Muslim umbrella organisations<sup>35</sup> which predominantly represent Turkish and Moroccan Sunnis. CMO represents 380, and thus approximately 85%, of the mosque

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<sup>34</sup> The current broader approach taken in youth support of placing the focus less on treating the problem and more on encouraging participation of young people offers potential to new stakeholders to receive funding.

<sup>35</sup> Including Islamitische Stichting Nederland (ISN) – a sister organisation of the German DITIB; Nederlandse Islamitische Federatie (NIF) and Millî Görüs Nederland (MGN) – both belonging to the Millî Görüs movement; Islamitische Vereniging voor Bosniaks in Nederland (IVBN) – a sister organisation of the IGBD; Nederlandse Islamitische Raad (NIR) which also represents five Muslim youth organisations; Unie van Marokkaanse Moskee Organisaties in Nederland (UMMON).

communities in the Netherlands. It serves as a dialogue partner for government institutions. CMO has its own youth department and advises its members in the area of Muslim youth work. Contact Groep Islam (CGI) is the second umbrella organisation which is officially recognised by the state as a dialogue partner. It mainly represents the interests of Ahmadis, Shiites and those Sunnis who do not feel sufficiently well represented by CMO, which is dominated by Turkish and Moroccan Sunnis. The Nederlandse Moslim Raad (NMR) is another umbrella organisation which represents the Sunnis, Ahmadis and Alevi. Unlike CMO and CGI, both of which receive state support, NMR is not officially recognised by the government as a dialogue partner (de Koning 2015: 442f).

As has already been shown, Muslims in the Netherlands, as in Germany and Austria, are represented by different umbrella organisations according to the various religious movements within Islam. The member associations of the Dutch umbrella organisations frequently represent ethnic regional groups. [Samenwerkingsverband van Marokkaanse Nederlanders](#) (SMN) is a national foundation with Moroccan roots that campaigns for cultural distinctiveness to be taken into account in youth work. It makes its members aware of opportunities for child and youth welfare and also of the funding available through municipalities and foundations; it also carries out advisory work for Muslim associations. [Marokkaanse Ouderen Bond in Nederland](#) (MOBiN) is the nationwide special interest group for elderly Dutch Moroccans. Its work includes drawing attention to the specific requirements of elderly Moroccans in terms of dementia and care.<sup>36</sup> As in the case of the German DITB, [Islamitische Stichting Nederland \(ISN\)](#) is part of the Turkish *Diyane*. Besides religious activities, it also works in the areas of education and training of women and young people and has both a young people's and a women's section. The ISN offering includes language courses as well as information about the health and social system.

Besides the umbrella organisations, other Muslim organisations operate at a national level – often in the legal form of a foundation – providing social services and advising associations, projects and communities. A small selection follows.

[Islamisch Instituut voor maatschappelijke activering](#) (IHSAN) is a nationally active organisation which regards itself as a platform for the support of social infrastructures in mosque communities and Muslim associations. Their work focuses mainly on supporting voluntary work, in particular for young people and families. IHSAN helps recruit and qualify Muslim volunteers. To this end it provides training and publishes handouts. IHSAN collaborates with non-Muslim partners in the context of projects, for example with Nederlands Jeugd Instituut and Movisie<sup>37</sup>, and in this way contributes towards intercultural opening.

The non-profit [Stichting Platform Islamitische Organisaties Rijnmond](#) (SPIOR) represents 66 mosques and Muslim youth and women's associations in the region of Rotterdam. Voluntary work in a peer-to-peer approach is central to the work of SPIOR. The volunteers who imple-

<sup>36</sup> [Netwerk van Organisaties van Oudere Migranten](#) (NOOM) is a network of migrant organisations representing elderly people from different regions of the world, including MOBiN and Turkse Ouderen Federatie (representing Turkish elderly).

<sup>37</sup> Dutch centre for social development, a government-funded NGO.

ment the programmes are of a similar background to the target groups (ethnic, Muslim, age and social background). This ensures that the target group identifies with the volunteers, that barriers are removed and that the target groups are reached more easily than via (non-Muslim) statutory provision. For example, the “[Ouderdom komt met vragen](#)” (Age brings questions) project has been in existence since 2015. Volunteers support elderly people as “friends” and are there to answer questions. The volunteers speak the language of their target group and have a Muslim background. The aim here in particular is to prevent loneliness among elderly Muslims. The project is based on the awareness that regular care services have not so far catered sufficiently for the requirements of elderly from migrant backgrounds and therefore little use is made of these by Muslims. SPIOR also uses the peer-to-peer approach in youth work, for example in order to raise awareness among Muslim boys regarding gender equality. It also runs projects supporting (employment) capacity building and participation of women who are hard to reach with statutory programmes. Working Muslims support the projects using their networks and their experience. Besides charitable donations, SPIOR receives funding from the Rotterdam municipality and from the social and employment ministry.

In the Utrecht area there are several Muslim foundations that work mainly with young people and women. [Stichting Educatie Centrum Utrecht](#) (SECU) which is part of the Gülen movement, [Oranje Horizon](#), which belong to the Turkish training organisation Educatieve Centra Nederland (ECN), and [Stichting Al Amal](#) offer homework support and extra coaching for children and young people. In cooperation with municipal housing associations, SECU and Al Amal offer sheltered forms of housing for young people with school problems and places for girls to meet. Educational concerns are common to all three foundations. The aim is to reduce school drop-out rates and school problems among young people from migrant backgrounds. For example, Oranje Horizon works locally with schools, municipal education authorities and other education and training associations. It relies on volunteers who, in most cases, are young people from similar backgrounds. The work of the three foundations described here receives financial support from the municipality of Utrecht.

[Nederlandse Bond voor Oudere Migranten](#) (NISBO) is an organisation in Utrecht which looks after the concerns and interests of elderly people from migrant backgrounds. It provides consultation for this target group on a daily basis. Furthermore information on health and education issues as well as debt counselling is being offered, operating within (Turkish and Moroccan) women’s groups. NISBO is active in municipal bodies in an effort to draw attention to the need for culturally sensitive care. It also receives financial support from the municipality of Utrecht.

Besides associations and foundations, there are meanwhile some (commercial) care providers who have aligned their offerings so as to be culturally sensitive, or more specifically who have specialized in services for people from migrant backgrounds. [MOB](#) is an in-patient and out-patient service provider in the region of Rotterdam with an explicit culturally sensitive focus. It mainly employs people from migrant backgrounds. It has specialist care teams staffed by people of Turkish and Moroccan origin. Some offerings are provided entirely in clients’ native languages. [Sensa Zorg](#) is another provider of care for the elderly and support

for children with mental disabilities. This provider also focuses on people from migrant backgrounds, for example by hiring personnel with language skills and cultural knowledge and by establishing Muslim prayer rooms.

Protestante Zorggroep Crabbehoff is an example of intercultural opening by a non-Muslim professional provider in the care sector. Since 2011, this protestant institution, which provides both out-patient and in-patient care services, has been working with a local platform consisting of several Turkish organisations (Platform Turkse Dordtenaren) to provide religiously and culturally sensitive care to elderly Turkish clients. This project focuses in particular on people with dementia of Turkish origin. In 2013, a housing unit was created specifically for this target group. The institution has hired employees with knowledge of Turkish culture and language and has provided training to ensure that the existing staff are religiously and culturally sensitive in their approach. A flyer in Turkish provides information about what the institution offers.

There are approximately 50 *Basisschools* (preschools and primary schools) in the Netherlands which are run by Muslim institutions. They are government-approved and therefore –on par with normal private schools – in most cases religiously affiliated – which are equivalent to state schools and receive state funding. *Basisschools* are attended by children from the age of four. Children from one to four years of age are catered for in so-called *Peuterspeelzaal*. Some Muslim *Basisschools* also offer *Peuterspeelzaal* care. Forty-one of these Muslim institutions are organised within Islamitische Schoolbesturen Organisatie. ISBO employs full-time staff. It advises the institutions on education and training concepts as well as on legal issues and school development. It also represents the interests of its members in dealings with education authorities, government and the general public.

### 3.2 Government approach to Muslim social services in the Netherlands<sup>38</sup>

The basic aim of the Dutch government is that social services should be available and accessible equally for all citizens. This means that Muslim institutions that are open to all population groups and meet certain quality standards, e.g. in childcare or elderly care, can qualify for statutory financing of those services. Specific support for Muslim organisations and programmes thus contradicts the principle of universal improvement to access to and quality of social services and, consequently, no such specific support is offered. Under pressure from the increasingly popular right-wing populist party PVV, the Rutte government (since 2010) has recently introduced wide-scale cuts in the general grants available for migrant umbrella organisations and therefore also for Muslim ones.<sup>39</sup> Only the official dialogue partners CMO and CGI still receive funding.

Decentralisation as a result of the reform of WMO and Jeugdwet has meant that funding of social services has been shifted to local level (see above). Municipalities receive national

<sup>38</sup> The results are partly based on personal communication with employees of the Verwey-Jonker institute.

<sup>39</sup> General support is available for non-profit organisations which are exempt from VAT due to the so-called ANBI status and which receive other taxation benefits (similar to the support for non-profit status in Germany). Many of the Muslim associations and organisations analysed have ANBI status.

funding which they can then allocate independently. National funding is therefore indirect and has largely no steering impact on the provision of social services. This development means that the religiously and culturally sensitive organisation of social services has been (consciously) removed from the influence of the national government. WMO, which was reformed in 2015, actually mentions that social service providers should take into account the ethnic and religious backgrounds of their clients. However, up to now, no specific measures have been taken, and there has been no demand for them. In the past, the government has also called for intercultural competencies to become established as part of training in social work occupations. However, currently this demand is being neither addressed nor supported. Besides state funding, social projects and services are increasingly being supported by private money, for example from foundations. The government is therefore currently working on new regulations for privately funded organisations that provide social services. The goal is to ensure quality standards. The professionalisation of personnel is also an issue, though not the focus. Currently, however, there is no prospect of financial support for this. It can generally be said that the national government does not offer funding with the intention of organising social services in a manner which is religiously and culturally sensitive.

In some cases, municipalities are more active in supporting Muslim organisations and projects providing social services to specific target groups. As a result of their increased responsibility after decentralisation, which also includes the responsibility for funding social services, municipalities play an important role in supporting Muslim social services. They are able to favour providers with specific ideological backgrounds (i.e. also religious providers) in the tendering and contracting of social services (cf. TransitieBureau WMO 2015). This also means that municipalities have some control over support for associations or institutions providing culturally sensitive services or forms of cooperation. The current research includes information about new approaches involving municipal cooperation networks. With the financial support of municipalities, such form of cooperation e.g. between Muslim and migrant associations, established providers of social services – for example in elderly care or youth work – and housing associations are able to organise religiously and culturally sensitive services at local level. There are of course clear differences between the municipalities. The municipality of Utrecht, for instance, has long been regarded as a model for the integration of Muslim associations in municipal affairs such as youth work. A council specifically set up for this purpose integrates Muslims and Muslim organisations into municipal structures and discussions. It would seem that this council is about to be dissolved. In Rotterdam, on the other hand, there is a specific migrant policy, but it focuses primarily on problems such as youth criminality and places the safety aspect at the forefront of its integration efforts.

### 3.3 Conclusion

In general, the fact remains that social services taking the requirements of Muslims into account in the Netherlands are largely delivered on a project basis and therefore only receive short-term funding. Municipal funding is heavily dependent on local politics and also often on individual people in the administration.

The services available include mainly offers of counselling and training. Muslim umbrella organisations provide their members with institutional counselling, for example relating to funding applications and project development, or the recruitment and training of volunteers. At an individual level, mosque communities, associations and foundations provide information on the Dutch social and healthcare system, the education of children, or offer debt counselling. It is also interesting to note that in the Netherlands there are organisations specifically for the representation of elderly people from migrant backgrounds. Besides the umbrella organisations, which primarily operate in an advisory capacity, the majority of the services are delivered by foundations and associations.

In addition to counselling and information, youth work makes up a large part of the Muslim social services offered in the Netherlands. Unlike in Germany and Austria however, there is no explicit Muslim youth organisation within the national youth organisation, the *Nationale Jeugdraad*. However, cooperation between municipal youth support and migrant organisations exists in a large number of cities. The variety of social services in Muslim associations also includes programmes for girls and women, the aim of which is their emancipation. As in Germany and Austria, volunteer work is central to most of these programmes. Muslim associations and mosque communities are not only contributing to the provision of social services; they also open up volunteering opportunities among young people in particular.

The volunteers work mainly with young people and women and often have a similar background to the target group in terms of origin, religion, age, gender, etc. One strength of the Muslim organisations and associations is that they are therefore better able to reach the target group through this peer-to-peer approach than non-Muslim and state institutions. This offers great potential for cooperation between Muslim organisations, public authorities and non-Muslim institutions, which helps identify gaps in the social security scheme. As has been shown, such cooperative arrangements, funded by the municipalities, are already taking place at local level to some extent.

Besides associations which are reliant on voluntary work, a number of professional providers of care services and childcare have specialised in programmes for Muslims and people from migrant backgrounds. The intention is that culturally sensitive care should be provided by persons with a (Muslim) migrant background. Muslim childcare (and school education) is increasingly being offered and can be easily integrated within the system of private (religiously affiliated) state-funded education institutions in the Netherlands.

It was not possible to identify an overarching government strategy for the funding of Muslim social services in the Netherlands. This was also not anticipated due to the decentralisation. Municipalities are largely responsible for the structuring and funding of child and youth welfare as well as elderly care, and they fund Muslim projects and forms of cooperation in a variety of ways.

The following picture emerges in relation to the five questions: Due to decentralisation in the areas of child support, youth support and elderly care, there is plenty of scope at municipal level to focus on and therefore to fund religiously sensitive social services. There are already a few migrant and Muslim-specific services available on the social welfare market that are

financed via the statutory system (Question 1: Funding). There are also no overarching government funding measures in place for information and counselling services. However, because many of the organisations analysed offer this type of counselling for both project providers and individuals, this may be a potential area for municipal funding, which is, in part, already being exploited via project funding (Question 2: Information and counselling). Support at municipal level is often accompanied by the integration of Muslim organisations into local networks or forms of cooperation with Muslim and non-Muslim providers as well as with the administration. Potentially there are steering effects by municipal action (Question 3: Cooperation and participation). In terms of personnel and the recruitment and training of volunteers, it should be noted that there are Muslim organisations such as IHSAN that provide advice regarding the recruitment and training of volunteers. The potential for municipal support and funding also exists here (Question 4: Volunteers, full-time staff, training).

## 4 Overall conclusion

This working paper shows that a broad variety of Muslim social services exists in both the Netherlands and Austria. However these do not exhibit anything like the scope and professionalisation of the Christian-based and secular social services. Due to the exploratory nature of this study and the fact that it was not possible to conclusively and comprehensively research the variety of services offered, a comparative consideration of the member states examined is only partially possible. However, initial statements concerning trends and common features may be made.

Muslim **youth work** is the area which is most developed both in Austria and in the Netherlands, and it is somewhat comparable to non-Muslim programmes. Nationwide structures of youth work associations are in evidence in Austria in particular. In both countries, programmes for young people (homework supervision, help with school problems, leisure activities, continuing education in a range of courses, meetings, training for mentors, etc.) are predominately provided by volunteers within Muslim associations and organisations. This makes the programmes possible in the first place, and at the same time it actively encourages volunteering among mainly young (Muslim) people.

Muslim social services in the area of **childcare and care for the elderly** can only be found in a few cases. The need for such programmes exists and presumably will increase further. A few providers do exist in both countries, mainly in the area of children care, and in Austria mainly in Vienna. The institutions are often state-approved and therefore also benefit from national and municipal statutory funding structures. In the area of care for the elderly, there is an increasing demand for religiously and culturally sensitive care in both countries. In Austria, this is acknowledged on the part of the government in official documents. It remains to be seen how political stakeholders will cope with this demand, whether funds are made available, whether (further) changes will be made to training courses or whether quality requirements for care providers are changed in this regard.

With regard to **funding** for Muslim social services, it must be noted that in Austria youth work is mainly integrated within institutional funding structures, whether this is via the funding of the youth organisations MJÖ and AJÖ or via project funding, although the latter is often short-term and not ongoing. The state-approved childcare facilities in Vienna are also (partially) supported by municipal funding structures. However, there is still a clear dependency on project funding. This is also often the case in the Netherlands. Here, whether or not organisations offering Muslim social services are funded depends on local politics and often also on individual people in the administration. It is still unclear how the decentralisation introduced in early 2015, which shifted competencies for child and youth welfare and elderly care to municipal authorities, will affect funding structures. Support is unlikely to come from the national Dutch authorities, as funding for access to social services for specific target groups is something which is currently rejected in the Netherlands.

**Information and counselling** is a central concern of Muslim associations, mosque communities and umbrella organisations and, at the same time, it is also a focus of interest for government and municipal stakeholders. Umbrella organisations advise their member organisations and associations on how to apply for project funding and on the recruitment of volunteers. Individuals are also informed regarding social system benefits, educational issues and debt counselling. In both Austria as in the Netherlands, Muslim associations operating in youth and counselling work primarily use the peer-to-peer approach. Deploying volunteers with similar backgrounds (age, religion, origin, language) to the target group creates low-threshold services. Communication among equals creates trust and identification with the providers. This is one of the strengths of Muslim social service provision, which enables barriers to accessing (statutory) social services to be removed, such as lack of information, communication problems and cultural misunderstandings. This area offers great potential for **cooperation** between Muslim communities and associations on the one hand and public authorities or non-Muslim institutions on the other. Attempts are being made in Austria to integrate Muslim associations within cooperation projects with the Austrian Federal Association of Non-Statutory Welfare Services (BAG). One example is the joint training of mentors. From this perspective, BAG organisations may be regarded as intermediaries sharing their knowledge and structures. The contribution made by Muslim associations to the cooperative arrangement is access to the target group. These cooperative arrangements are partially supported by government project funding. In Austria, the MJÖ and AJÖ youth organisations are also integrated in the structures of the Austrian Youth Association and collaborate with other youth organisations in providing support services for children and young people. In the Netherlands, Muslim associations are occasionally integrated within municipal structures, and cooperation projects for providing services such as culturally sensitive elderly care are supported by municipalities.

In terms of the **specialist and organisational training** of personnel in Muslim associations and mosque communities, most of them working in a voluntary capacity, only a few approaches were identified in the countries studied – from both a government and civil society perspective. In the Netherlands, IHSAN provides support with funding applications and with the recruitment of volunteers. In Austria, although public authorities recognise the need to

train care personnel in a manner which is sensitive to clients' religion and to recruit personnel from migrant backgrounds, hardly any specific measures are in place.

Finally, it may be concluded that Muslim social services in Austria and in the Netherlands are offered for the most part in the child and youth sector, but largely on a voluntary basis. The demand for Muslim services in elderly care has certainly been identified, but there is (still) little provision to date. Government approaches to and public funding of Muslim social services often does not extend beyond project funding. There has been hardly any change to statutory funding structures, for example in terms of requirements for the intercultural and religiously sensitive training of personnel or for language skills among personnel. The discussion regarding Muslim childcare institutions in Vienna shows that political stakeholders still need to develop and adopt suitable concepts in managing the increasing demand and potential requirements, also with regard to funding structures. This will soon become more pressing than ever with the influx of refugees from predominantly Muslim-majority countries.

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