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Restrictions on Women's Religious Attire

More countries restrict women's ability to wear religious symbols or attire than require women to dress a certain way

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Restrictions on Women's Religious Attire

More countries restrict women's ability to wear religious symbols or attire than require women to dress a certain way

In many countries around the world, women's choices about their attire and appearance are restricted to some degree by government laws, policies or regulations. In recent years, most of these countries have had laws or policies that ban women from wearing religious attire in public places or limit their ability to do so in some circumstances. By comparison, far fewer countries require women to wear particular types of attire (such as headscarves or long dresses) for religious reasons.

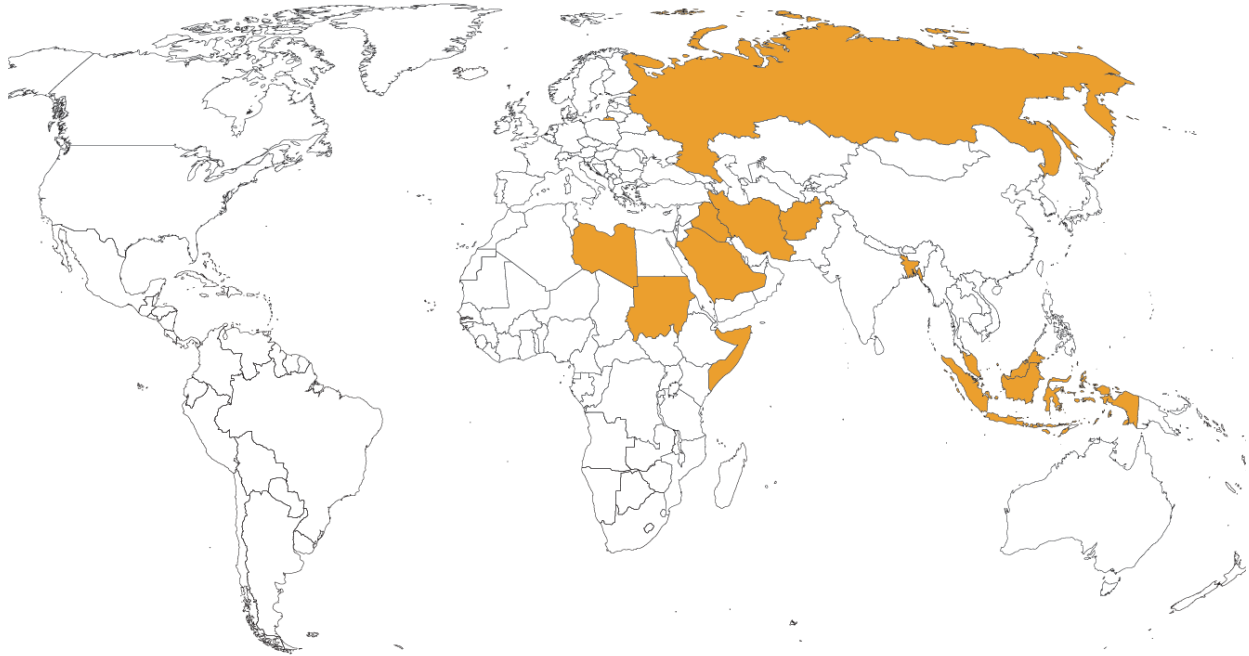
As part of its annual study on government restrictions on religion and social hostilities involving religion, Pew Research Center tracks the number of countries where some level of government – national, provincial or local – regulates “the wearing of religious symbols, such as head coverings for women and facial hair for men.”¹ Looking at only those laws, policies or regulations that apply specifically to women, the Center finds that 50 of the 198 countries and territories included in the study had at least one law or policy regulating women's religious attire in 2012 and 2013, the two most recent years for which data are available. About three-quarters of those countries (39 of the 50, or 78%) had a law or policy *limiting women's ability* to wear religious attire, while about a quarter (12 of the 50, or 24%) had at least one law or policy *requiring women* to wear particular attire. Some of these laws or policies applied nationwide, while others were imposed at the provincial, state or local level. One country – Russia – had policies forbidding women from wearing religious attire (in the territory of Stavropol, where Muslim headscarves, or hijabs, were banned in public schools) as well as policies requiring women to wear religious attire (in Chechnya, where women were required to wear hijabs in all public buildings).²

¹ For more details, see Pew Research Center's February 2015 report “[Latest Trends in Religious Restrictions and Hostilities](#).”

² See U.S. Department of State. July 28, 2014. “Russia.” 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom. Also see Barry, Ellen. March 18, 2013. “[Local Russian Hijab Ban Puts Muslims in a Squeeze](#).” The New York Times.

Where women's religious dress was required

Countries where some level of government required women to wear religious attire in certain circumstances in 2012 or 2013



Americas

None

Asia-Pacific

Afghanistan
Bangladesh
Brunei
Indonesia
Iran
Malaysia

Europe

Russia

Middle East-N. Africa

Iraq
Libya
Saudi Arabia
Sudan

Sub-Saharan Africa

Somalia

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Laws or policies limiting women’s ability to wear religious attire were particularly common in Europe, where 18 of the region’s 45 countries (40%) had at least one such restriction in 2012-2013.³ Several European countries effectively banned certain types of religious garb in public places. In France, for example, authorities continued to enforce a law passed in 2010 that prohibits people from covering their faces in public places, including government buildings, public transportation and venues such as restaurants and movie theaters. Those who did not comply with a police officer’s request to uncover their face could be fined or ordered to attend a citizenship class.⁴ A similar policy was in effect in Belgium, where police continued to enforce a 2011 federal law banning people from wearing clothing that covers the face, or large parts of it, in public places. Violators could be fined and/or detained for up to seven days.⁵ In December 2012, Belgium’s Constitutional Court upheld the ban, ruling that it was necessary to protect public safety, ensure equality between men and women and preserve “a certain conception of ‘living together’ in society.”⁶

³ For background, see Human Rights Watch. Dec. 21, 2010. “[Questions and Answers on Restrictions on Religious Dress and Symbols in Europe.](#)”

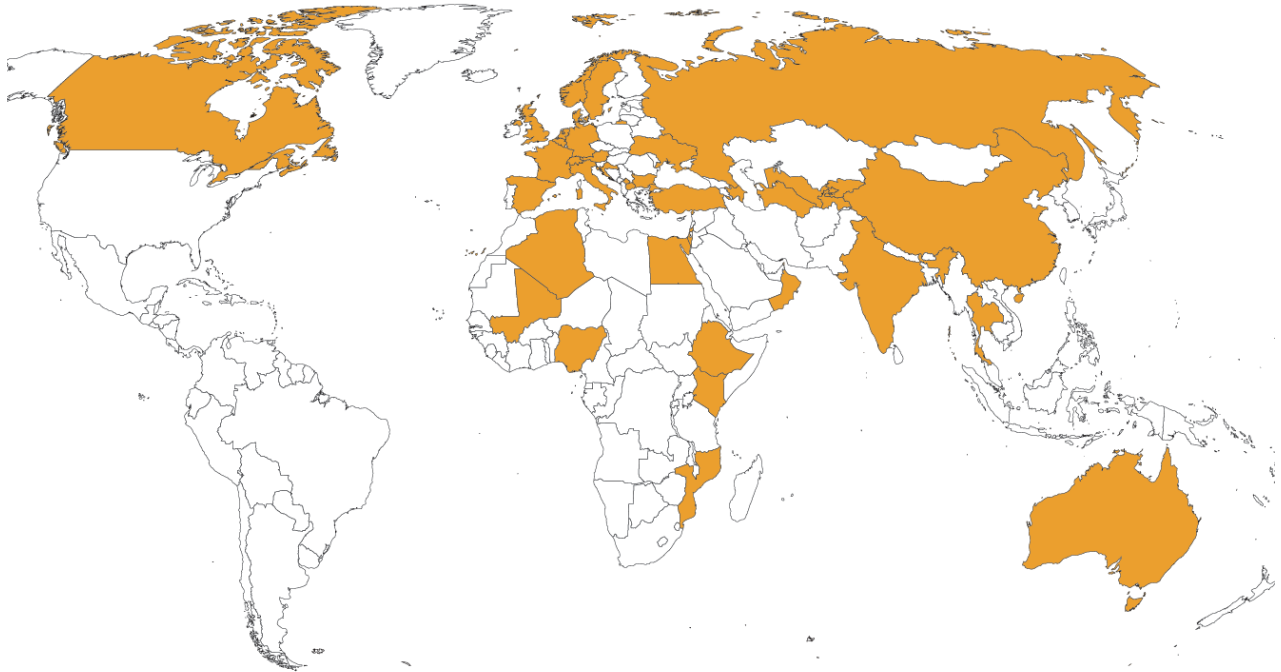
⁴ See U.S. Department of State. July 28, 2014. “France.” 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom. According to the State Department’s 2012 Report on International Religious Freedom: “The policy of the police is not to enforce the law in private locations, or around places of worship, where the law’s application would unduly interfere with the free exercise of religion. ... If an individual refuses to remove the garment, police may take the person to the local police station to verify his or her identity. However, an individual may not be questioned or held for more than four hours.” Also see Willsher, Kim. July 1, 2014. “[France’s Burqa Ban Upheld by Human Rights Court.](#)” The Guardian.

⁵ See U.S. Department of State. July 28, 2014. “Belgium.” 2013 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices. Also see July 23, 2011. “[Belgian Ban on Full Veils Comes Into Force.](#)” BBC News.

⁶ See U.S. Department of State. May 20, 2013. “Belgium.” 2012 Report on International Religious Freedom. Also see Chaib, Saila Ouald. Dec. 14, 2012. “[Belgian Constitutional Court says Ban on Face Coverings Does not Violate Human Rights.](#)” The Strasbourg Observer.

Where women's religious dress was restricted

Countries where some level of government prevented women from wearing religious attire in certain circumstances in 2012 or 2013



Americas

Canada

Asia-Pacific

Australia
Azerbaijan
China
India
Kyrgyzstan
Singapore
Tajikistan
Thailand
Turkey
Turkmenistan
Uzbekistan

Europe

Austria
Belgium
Bulgaria
Croatia
Denmark
France
Germany
Italy
Kosovo
Neth.
Norway
Macedonia
Russia
Spain
Sweden
Switzer-
land
Ukraine
U.K.

Middle East-N. Africa

Algeria
Egypt
Israel
Oman

Sub-Saharan Africa

Ethiopia
Kenya
Mali
Mozambique
Nigeria

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In the Middle East and North Africa, four countries – Iraq, Libya, Saudi Arabia and Sudan – had laws requiring women to wear religious attire. Authorities in Saudi Arabia, for instance, continued to require women to wear an abaya (a loose-fitting black cloak) in public.⁷ Four Middle Eastern countries (20%) – Algeria, Egypt, Israel and Oman – had policies limiting women’s ability to wear religious attire in at least some situations. In Egypt, for example, the government banned female employees of the national airline from wearing hijabs at work until 2012.⁸ Security forces in Israel prevented some Palestinian women prisoners from wearing hijabs during interrogations.⁹ In Algeria, female government workers were allowed to wear headscarves and face-covering Islamic veils (niqabs), but authorities discouraged certain employees from doing so if it would “complicate the performance of their official duties.”¹⁰ Oman allowed women to wear headscarves in official photographs, but it did not allow them to wear face-covering veils.¹¹

In the Asia-Pacific region, laws or policies requiring women to wear religious attire were found in six of the 50 countries (12%). In Indonesia, for example, 79 local bylaws required women to wear a hijab in 2013,¹² while Iranian women were required to cover their hair and wear loose-fitting clothing in public places.¹³ Laws restricting women’s ability to wear religious attire were present in 11 of the 50 countries in the Asia-Pacific region (22%) in 2012-2013. In India, some schools and colleges in certain areas banned Muslim female students and teachers from wearing headscarves, citing uniform dress codes.¹⁴ Singapore, meanwhile, prohibited some public-sector employees, including nurses, front-line military officers and employees of certain schools, from wearing hijabs in the workplace.¹⁵

In sub-Saharan Africa, laws or policies requiring women to wear religious attire were present in one country – Somalia – where the Islamic extremist group al-Shabaab required women living in areas under its control to be veiled while in public in 2012.¹⁶ Laws or policies restricting religious

⁷ See U.S. Department of State. May 20, 2013. “Saudi Arabia.” 2012 Report on International Religious Freedom. Also see S.B. Jan. 28, 2015. “[Saudi Arabia’s Dress Code for Women](#)” The Economist.

⁸ See Human Rights Without Frontiers Newsletters. 2012. [Egypt](#). Also see Nov. 11, 2012. “[EgyptAir Stewardesses Begin Wearing Hijab](#).” Agence France-Presse.

⁹ See U.S. Department of State. July 28, 2014. “Israel and the Occupied Territories – the Occupied Territories.” 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom. Also see Badarni, Hadeel. July 2013. “[From the Testimony of a Palestinian Woman Prisoner](#).” The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel.

¹⁰ See U.S. Department of State. May 20, 2013. “Algeria.” 2012 Report on International Religious Freedom.

¹¹ See U.S. Department of State. May 20, 2013. “Oman.” 2012 Report on International Religious Freedom.

¹² See Human Rights Watch. 2014. “[World Report 2014: Indonesia](#).”

¹³ See U.S. Department of State. May 20, 2013. “Iran.” 2012 Report on International Religious Freedom. Also see Erdbrink, Thomas. Oct. 5, 2015. “[Cautiously, Iranians Reclaim Public Spaces and Liberties Long Suppressed](#).” The New York Times.

¹⁴ See U.S. Department of State. May 20, 2013. “India.” 2012 Report on International Religious Freedom. Also see July 17, 2012. “[Hijab May Affect Academic Process, Make Others Uncomfortable](#).” The Express Tribune.

¹⁵ See U.S. Department of State. July 28, 2014. “Singapore.” 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom. Also see Nov. 13, 2013. “[Singapore: Campaigners Bid to Overturn Hijab Ban](#).” BBC News.

¹⁶ See U.S. Department of State. May 20, 2013. “Somalia.” 2012 Report on International Religious Freedom. In 2013, Pew Research Center changed the way it coded government restrictions in Somalia. In 2012 and earlier years of the study, researchers coded actions by al-Shabaab as government restrictions, largely because the group effectively controlled large swathes of Somali territory. The extent of al-Shabaab control over Somali territory decreased in calendar year 2013, so researchers did not code their actions as government restrictions

attire were present in five countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Women in Mozambique were not allowed to wear headscarves in official photographs for identification documents, and girls were prohibited from wearing face-covering veils or body-covering burqas in public schools.¹⁷ In Kenya, some government schools prevented girls from attending classes if they wore headscarves or other religious attire. This policy affected not only Muslims but also members of the Akorino group, which combines Christian and traditional African styles of worship; its followers, both men and women, usually cover their heads.¹⁸

The sources used for this study did not detect any countries in the Americas that required women to wear religious dress in 2012-2013, but one country – Canada – restricted women’s religious attire. Candidates for Canadian citizenship had to remove any face-covering veils when taking the oath of citizenship so that authorities could verify that they had recited the oath.¹⁹ In April 2013, a judge in the Canadian province of Ontario ruled that a Muslim woman had to remove her face-covering veil in order to testify in a sexual assault case. The Canadian Supreme Court had ruled in 2012 that presiding judges should make such decisions on a case-by-case basis.²⁰

Regulation of religious dress is one of 20 items that make up Pew Research Center’s annual index measuring the extent of government restrictions on religion around the world. To track this and other indicators of government restrictions on religion, researchers comb through more than a dozen publicly available, widely cited sources of information, including the U.S. State Department’s annual reports on international religious freedom and annual reports from the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, as well as reports from several independent, nongovernmental organizations and a variety of European and United Nations bodies.²¹ If an incident is mentioned in one of these sources, researchers may search newspaper articles or other sources for additional details to flesh out the anecdotes used to illustrate the restrictions.

The Center’s studies on religious restrictions are part of the Pew-Templeton Global Religious Futures project, which analyzes religious change and its impact on societies around the world. This project is jointly funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts and the John Templeton Foundation.

but rather as social hostilities. This contributed to a drop in Somalia’s score on the Government Restrictions Index in 2013, even though actual practices by the government did not change appreciably.

¹⁷ See U.S. Department of State. July 28, 2014. “Mozambique.” 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom; and Freedom House. 2013. “Mozambique.” Freedom in the World 2013. Also see Aug. 9, 2011. “[Muslims Protest Against the Veil Ban.](#)” The Economist Intelligence Unit.

¹⁸ See U.S. Department of State. July 28, 2014. “Kenya.” 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom. Also see Namlola, Juma. March 25, 2015. “[Muslim Leaders to Appeal High Court Ban on Veils in Schools.](#)” The Nation.

¹⁹ See U.S. Department of State. July 28, 2014. “Canada.” 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom.

²⁰ See U.S. Department of State. July 28, 2014. “Canada.” 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom.

²¹ For more details on the index and the sources, see the Methodology for Pew Research Center’s February 2015 report “Latest Trends in Religious Restrictions and Hostilities.”

Women also faced harassment over religious dress

Even in countries that do not officially regulate women's attire, women sometimes face social pressure to conform to local customs or societal norms concerning religious dress. Failure to comply can lead to harassment or acts of hostility directed at women by private individuals, organizations or social groups. This includes cases in which women are harassed for wearing religious dress, as well as cases in which they are harassed for perceived violations of religious dress codes. Pew Research Center's latest study on religious restrictions and hostilities finds that more than 50 countries had at least one incident involving this type of harassment in 2013.²²

Harassment of women over religious dress is one of the 13 measures that make up Pew Research Center's annual index measuring the extent of social hostilities involving religion across the world.²³ To track harassment of women over religious dress, researchers at the Center comb through the same information sources used to track government restrictions on religion.

It is important to note that the coding of this measure simply reflects the presence or absence of harassment in a particular country, not the extent of the harassment. A country that had a single incident of harassment is coded the same as one that had widespread harassment. It is also very likely that the sources do not capture every incident of harassment in a particular country, especially incidents that occurred within families. In addition, the definition of harassment used in the sources is very broad, covering everything from name-calling to physical assaults. The sources do not attempt to differentiate between the types of harassment or determine the severity of the harassment. However, the sources are particularly likely to take note of very serious incidents of harassment and high-profile incidents that result in media coverage. Therefore, the coding of this measure gives a general sense of how widespread such harassment is around the world and how it may contribute to the climate of human rights and religious freedom in particular countries.

As noted above, the question included in the Social Hostilities Index ("were women harassed for violating religious dress codes?") does not differentiate between harassment of women for wearing religious attire or for not wearing religious attire. For this report, researchers went back and recoded the data from 2012 and 2013 to determine how many countries had reports of each type of harassment.

During this two-year period, women were harassed for wearing religious dress in 33 of the 198 countries (17%). By contrast, women were harassed for not abiding by religious dress codes in 23

²² See Pew Research Center's February 2015 report "Latest Trends in Religious Restrictions and Hostilities."

²³ For more details on the index, see Pew Research Center's February 2015 report "[Latest Trends in Religious Restrictions and Hostilities](#)."

of the 198 countries (12%). There were relatively few countries in which both types of harassment occurred in 2012 and 2013 (five countries, or 3%).

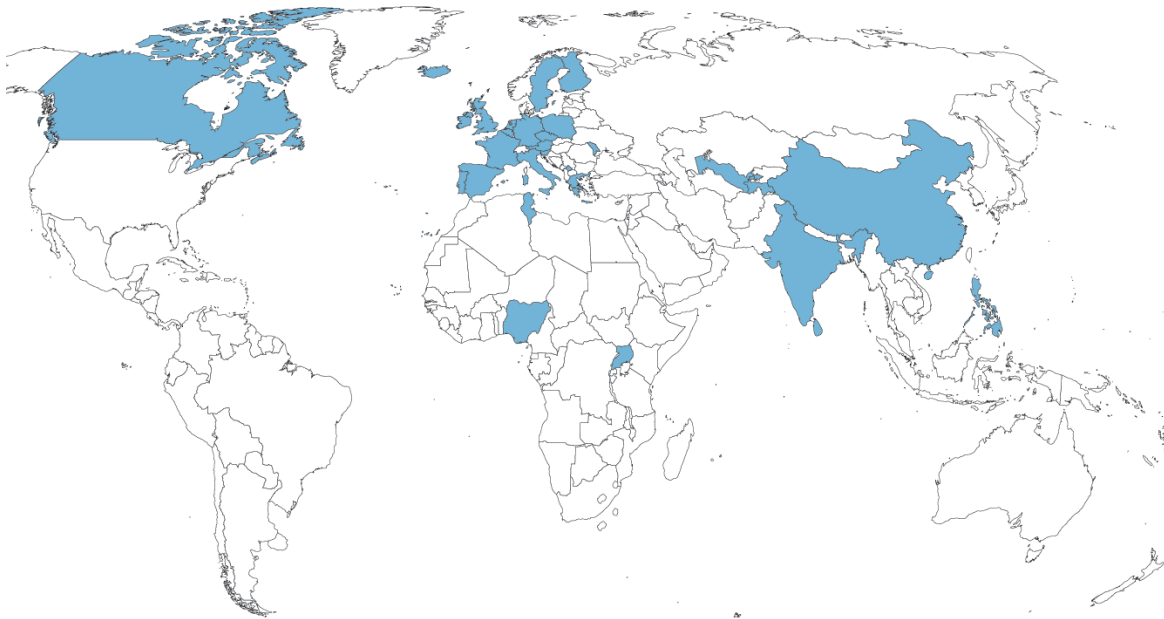
In general, harassment of women over religious dress was in line with government laws, policies or regulations. For instance, in the 39 countries that restricted women's ability to wear certain kinds of religious attire, two-thirds of all incidents of harassment involved women who were wearing such attire. And in the 12 countries that mandated some form of religious dress, all the incidents of harassment reported in the study's sources involved women who failed to abide by the dress codes.

Type of harassment women faced over religious dress varied by region

When it comes to reported incidents of harassment, Europe stands out in one key respect: In nearly half of the region's countries (21 of 45), there was at least one report of women being harassed for wearing religious attire in 2012-2013. This is a higher percentage than in the four other regions included in the study.

Where women were harassed for wearing religious dress

Countries that had at least one incident of this type of harassment in 2012 or 2013



Americas

Canada

Asia-Pacific

China
India
Maldives
Philippines
Sri Lanka
Tajikistan
Uzbekistan

Europe

Austria
Belgium
Czech Rep.
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Iceland
Ireland
Italy
Kosovo
Liechten.
Malta
Moldova
Neth.
Poland
Portugal
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
U.K.

Middle East-N. Africa

Tunisia

Sub-Saharan Africa

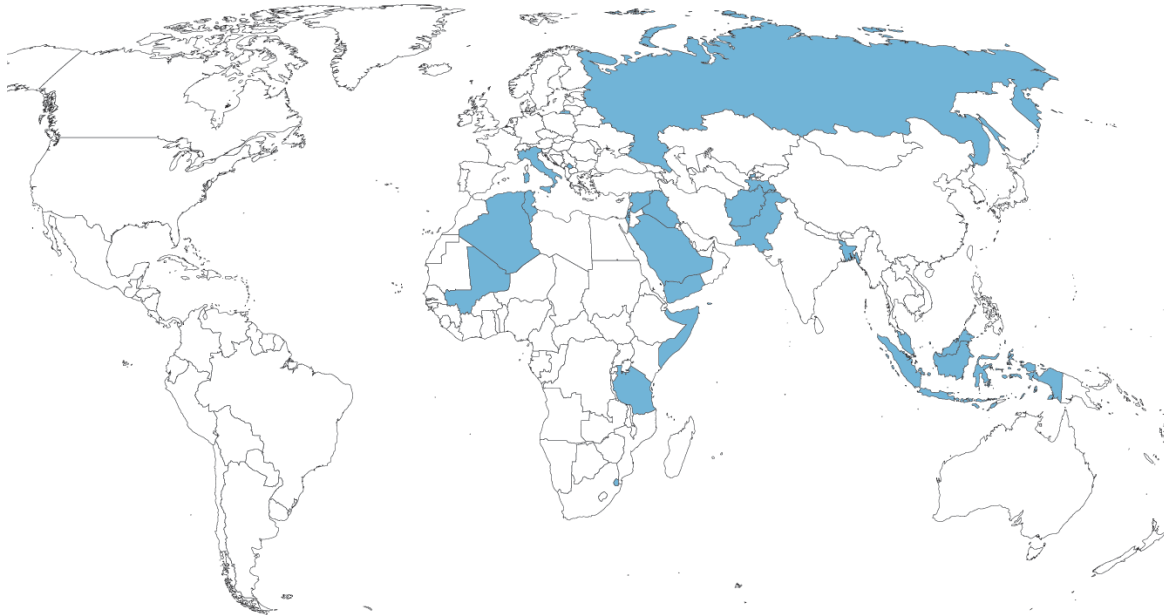
Mauritius
Nigeria
Uganda

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Where women were harassed for NOT wearing religious dress

Countries that had at least one incident of this type of harassment in 2012 or 2013



Americas

None

Asia-Pacific

Afghanistan
Bangladesh
Brunei
Indonesia
Malaysia
Maldives
Pakistan
Tajikistan

Europe

Italy
Kosovo
Russia

Middle East-N. Africa

Algeria
Iraq
Israel
Palestinian territories
Saudi Arabia
Syria
Tunisia
Yemen

Sub-Saharan Africa

Mali
Somalia
Swaziland
Tanzania

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Virtually all of the incidents in Europe reported in the study's sources involved Muslim women.²⁴ One of the cases involved a young Muslim woman in Spain who finished near the top of her university class in pharmacology but found it difficult to find a job because she did not want to remove her veil.²⁵ In France, two men attacked a pregnant Muslim woman in the Parisian suburb of Argenteuil on June 13, 2013, kicking her in the stomach and attempting to remove her headscarf and cut her hair; she subsequently suffered a miscarriage.²⁶

Relatively few European countries (three of the 45, or 7%) had incidents in which women were harassed for not wearing religious attire. One country that did was Russia. Women in the Russian republic of Chechnya were pressured to wear headscarves in public places as part of President Ramzan Kadyrov's so-called "virtue campaign," and in the Chechen capital of Grozny, several women were attacked with paintball guns when they appeared in public without wearing headscarves.²⁷

²⁴ For a complete list of the sources, see Pew Research Center's February 2015 report "[Latest Trends in Religious Restrictions and Hostilities](#)." Pages 38-40.

²⁵ See Spital'szky, Andrea. 2013. "[National Shadow Reports 2012-2013: Spain](#)." European Network Against Racism.

²⁶ See U.S. Department of State. July 28, 2014. "France." 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom. Also see Erlanger, Stephen. June 18, 2013. "[Muslim Woman Suffers Miscarriage After Attack in France](#)." New York Times.

²⁷ See Human Rights Watch. 2013. "[Russia. World Report 2013](#)." Also see Human Rights Watch. 2012. "[Virtue Campaign on Women in Chechnya Under Ramzan Kadyrov](#)."

The Middle East and North Africa was the region that had the highest percentage of countries where women were harassed for not wearing religious dress. Eight of the region's 20 countries (40%) had such incidents in 2012 and 2013. In July 2012, for example, Islamist rebels occupying a neighborhood in Aleppo, Syria, issued a fatwa, or religious edict, requiring all Muslim women to abide by conservative standards of dress, including prohibitions on tight-fitting clothes and makeup.²⁸ In Tunisia, a female journalist reported being attacked in Tunis in May 2013 for wearing a sleeveless summer dress.²⁹ Not all of the victims of this type of harassment were Muslims, however. In Israel, for instance, a group of ultra-Orthodox Jews (also known as Haredi Jews) assaulted a woman in Ramat Beit Shemesh in January 2012, smashing her car windows and hitting her in the head with a rock because they thought she was dressed immodestly.³⁰

The Asia-Pacific region had roughly equal shares of countries where women were harassed for wearing religious dress and not wearing religious dress (14% in the first case, 16% in the latter). Both types of harassment often involved Muslim women. For instance, a private Catholic college in the Philippines caused a controversy in August 2012 when it banned Muslim students from wearing headscarves, before reversing the policy under pressure from students and the local National Council on Muslim Filipinos.³¹ In Malaysia, women reportedly faced strong social pressure to wear the Tudung, a local form of dress that involves a headscarf.³²

Harassment of women over religious dress occurred in less than 15% of the 48 countries in sub-Saharan Africa in 2012 and 2013. Women were harassed for wearing religious dress in three countries in the region (6%) and for not wearing religious dress in four countries (8%). Women in southern Nigeria, for example, were said to have faced employment discrimination for wearing headscarves, particularly in positions requiring interactions with customers, such as those in the banking industry.³³ And women in Mali who did not wear full-face veils were subjected to beatings, floggings and arbitrary arrest at the hands of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, which occupied the northern part of the country throughout much of 2013.³⁴ In Swaziland – where nearly 90% of the population is Christian – women were told not to wear pants and miniskirts in some areas of the

²⁸ See U.S. Department of State. July 28, 2014. "Syria." 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom. Also see Solomon, Erika. July 1, 2013. "[Islamists in Syria's Aleppo Ban 'Provocative Dress' for Syria's Women](#)." Reuters.

²⁹ See Human Rights Watch. 2013. "[Tunisia. World Report 2013](#)."

³⁰ See Rosenberg, Oz. Jan. 25, 2012. "[Woman in Beit Shemesh Attacked by Ultra-Orthodox Extremists](#)." Haaretz. For context, also see U.S. Department of State. July 28, 2014. "Israel." 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom.

³¹ See U.S. Department of State. May 20, 2013. "The Philippines." 2012 Report on International Religious Freedom. Also see Aug. 5, 2012. "[Philippine School Bans Students from Wearing Hijab](#)." Agence France-Presse.

³² See U.S. Department of State. July 28, 2014. "Malaysia." 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom.

³³ See U.S. Department of State May 20, 2013. "Nigeria." 2012 Report on International Religious Freedom.

³⁴ See Human Rights Watch. 2014. "[World Report 2014: Mali](#)." Also see Nossiter, Adam. June 2, 2012. "[In Timbuktu, Harsh Change Under Islamists](#)." New York Times.

country, including areas under the jurisdiction of “traditional authorities” and around the residences of tribal leaders.³⁵

In the Americas, there were reports of women being harassed for wearing religious dress in one of the region’s 35 countries, Canada. After Quebec’s ruling political party, Parti Québécois, introduced a controversial “charter of values” in 2013 that would have prohibited government employees from wearing “conspicuous” religious symbols, women’s centers in the province reported an increase in verbal and physical attacks on Muslim women.³⁶ The sources used for this study cited no reports of women being harassed in the Americas for not wearing religious dress in 2012 and 2013.

There were no reports in the study’s sources of women being harassed over religious dress in the United States in 2012-2013. However, it is important to note that the data collection process for the U.S. is slightly different than for the rest of the world since one of the primary sources used for the study – the U.S. State Department’s International Religious Freedom Report – does not cover the U.S. To make sure events in the U.S. are not overlooked, researchers examine reports from the U.S. Department of Justice and the FBI, as well as those primary sources that do include data on the United States, including reports by the Anti-Defamation League, the United Nations, Human Rights Watch, the International Crisis Group and the United Kingdom Foreign & Commonwealth Office. Overall, the U.S. has moderate levels of both government restrictions on religion and social hostilities toward religious groups, ranking somewhere in the middle range of nearly 200 countries analyzed in Pew Research Center’s most recent report on religious restrictions and hostilities worldwide.³⁷

³⁵ See U.S. Department of State. July 28, 2014. “Swaziland.” 2013 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices. Also see Aug. 3, 2013. “[Swazi Chief Bans Miniskirts and Trousers for Women](#).” Agence France-Presse.

³⁶ See Human Rights Watch. 2014. “[World Report 2014: Canada](#).” Also see Peritz, Ingrid, and Les Perreux. Sept. 10, 2013. “[Quebec Reveals Religious Symbols to be Banned from Public Sector](#).” The Globe and Mail. The proposed “charter of values” died the following year, after Parti Québécois was defeated in Quebec’s 2014 general election. See Séguin, Rhéal. April 7, 2014. “[Marois to Step Down in Wake of Stunning Defeat at the Hands of Liberals](#).” The Globe and Mail.

³⁷ See Pew Research Center’s February 2015 report “Latest Trends in Religious Restrictions and Hostilities.” Also see Pew Research Center’s March 25, 2015, Fact Tank post, “[How the U.S. compares with the rest of the world on religious restrictions](#).”

Methodology

This report is based on the methodology used in the Pew Research Center’s ongoing study of government restrictions on religion and social hostilities involving religion. The goal of the study was to devise quantifiable, objective and transparent measures of the extent to which governments and societal groups impinge on the practice of religion, and to track changes in these measures over time.

As part of its religious restrictions study, the Pew Research Center developed two indexes – the Government Restrictions Index (GRI) and the Social Hostilities Index (SHI) – that are used to gauge the level of religious restrictions and hostilities in nearly 200 countries and self-governing territories. The GRI is based on 20 indicators of ways that national, provincial and local governments restrict religion, including through force and coercion. The SHI is based on 13 indicators of ways in which private individuals and social groups infringe on religious beliefs and practices. The indicators in both indexes are framed as a battery of questions similar to a survey questionnaire.

To answer these questions and construct the two indexes, a team of data coders goes through more than a dozen widely available, frequently cited sources of information involving religion around the world and records which types of religious restrictions and hostilities were present in each country. These sources include reports from U.S. government agencies, several independent, nongovernmental organizations and a variety of European and United Nations bodies. Coders look to the sources for specific, well-documented facts, not for opinions or commentary.

Because the study relies on these government and NGO reports – instead of relying on newspaper articles or other media accounts – there is a delay between when events occur and when Pew Research Center releases its religious restrictions reports. Most of the primary source reports come out months after the year they cover, because it takes time to collect and analyze the information; the Center’s coding analysis also takes time. There are benefits to this approach, however. By relying on a consistent set of well-regarded sources, Pew Research Center is able to make year-to-year comparisons on its measures of government restrictions on religion and social hostilities involving religion.

More information on the study’s methodology, including a look at potential information biases in the sources, is available [here](#).

Analyzing restrictions and hostilities involving women’s religious attire

This report expands the coding for one question from the Government Restrictions Index and one question from the Social Hostilities Index. The first question is GRI.Q.10, “Is the wearing of religious symbols, such as head coverings for women and facial hair for men, regulated by law or by any level of government?” The second question is SHI.Q.11, “Were women harassed for violating religious dress codes?” Researchers reviewed the examples coded for each country on these two questions and disaggregated them into four measures concerning women’s religious attire.

To disaggregate question GRI.Q.10, researchers first separated examples of government restrictions on women’s religious attire from government restrictions on unisex or men’s attire. These examples were then further separated according to whether the law, policy or regulation *required* women to wear certain religious attire or *restricted* women from wearing religious attire.

SHI.Q.11 focuses on harassment of women over religious dress. Researchers separated examples of harassment into two groups: those involving harassment of women *for wearing* religious attire and those involving harassment of women *for not wearing* religious attire.

These disaggregated questions served as the basis of the analysis for this report. The report combines data from 2012 and 2013; incidents happening in either year are included. Combining two years of data helps to address potential information bias in the sources, as individual indicators can be affected by one-time events or temporary circumstances.

Data for 2014 were not available when the information was being collected and analyzed.