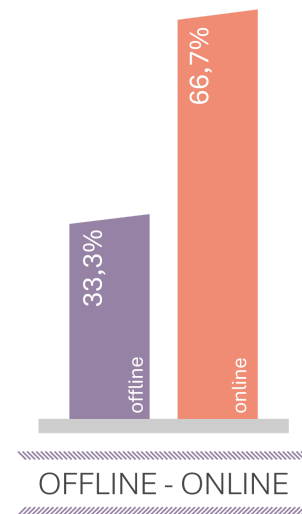


## Anti-Muslim Racism Report 2023

The Documentation and Counseling Center Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Racism (short Dokustelle Austria) is a civil society self-organization for people affected by anti-Muslim racism. The Dokustelle Austria team documents anti-Muslim racism in Austria and carries out media monitoring. In addition, the offers include counseling, conveying of possible courses of action for those affected and empowerment and awareness-raising workshops for people affected by racist discrimination and for people privileged by racism. Through its work, Dokustelle Austria wants to contribute to an equitable life with fair opportunities for all people in Austria. This year it is presenting the **9th Anti-Muslim Racism Report**.

### Annual Overview

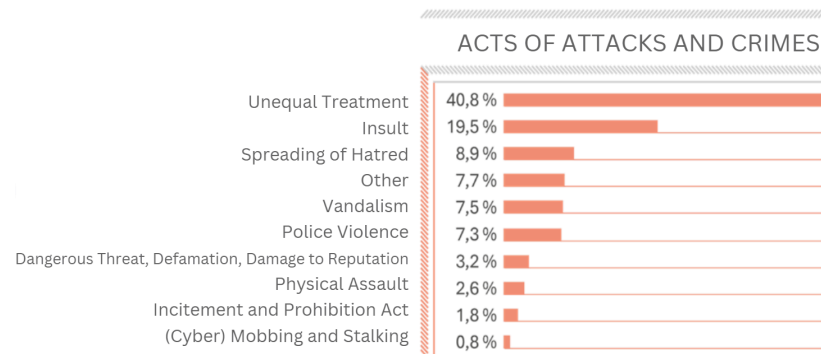
In **2023**, the Dokustelle Austria recorded **1522 cases of racist attacks against Muslims and people perceived as Muslim**. It should be emphasized at this point that the **statistics presented are a snapshot** and are in no way representative of the phenomenon of anti-Muslim racism in Austria as a whole. We assume that there is a large gray area. We want to use our cases to highlight trends in Austria, because every case is one too many. Based on an intersectional understanding of racist structures within a society dominated by the majority, the data collected is gathered and analyzed **taking into account possible multiple discrimination**. A novelty in 2023 is the number of people who have actively reported cases. Up to **507 cases** were reported to the psychosocial and legal counseling team by those directly affected and witnesses. **Compared to 2022**, this is **an increase of more than 100%**. Parallel to that, the Dokustelle Austria monitoring team documented 1015 online cases in 2023. An average of **4 anti-Muslim racist cases per day** were documented over the entire year.



In the months of **May, October, November and December**, drastic increases in the number of reported cases occurred. The increase in May is due to the implementation of a study in the school sector, which affected numerous Muslim students. From **October to December 2023, the Dokustelle Austria recorded more cases than in the months of January to September 2023 combined**. These figures relate to the local impact of global phenomena, such as the increasing violence in Israel/Palestine, the humanitarian catastrophe caused by the ongoing Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip and Austria's prolonged blockade of a ceasefire in the UN Security Council. In addition, the school was one of the first areas in which case reports increased rapidly and took on worrying proportions.

**Acts of attacks and crimes**

The breakdown of the reported offline cases by type of attack shows that the categories of unequal treatment and insult were reported the most. In the category of unequal treatment, the Dokustelle Austria recorded a 10% increase in active reports compared to the previous year.

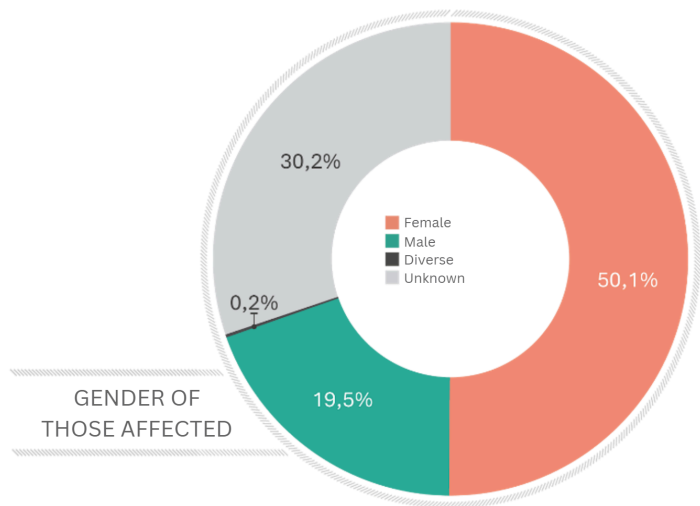


Other recorded offline acts that require special mention are vandalism, police violence, physical assault and other. The category other includes cases of anti-Muslim racism that cannot be assigned to any of the other categories of acts. These include cases of disinviting experts, canceling events that speak of anti-Muslim racism, expert

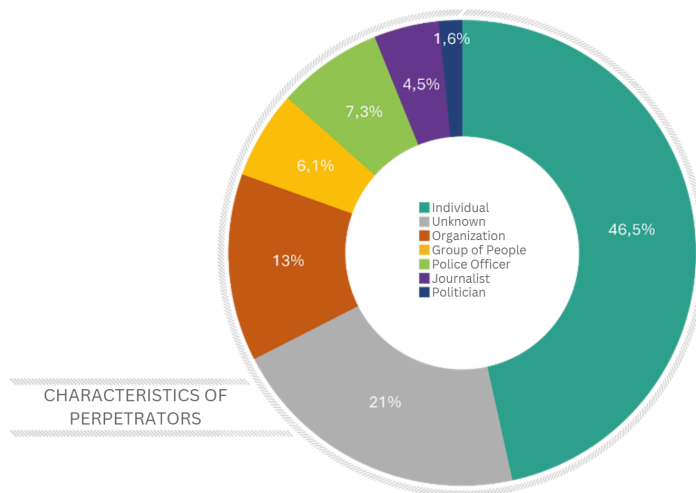
assessment reports that use anti-Muslim racist narratives, the removal of the headscarf due to experiences of racism or the deliberate concealment of anti-Muslim motives of perpetrators in the media.

**Gender of those affected (offline cases)**

According to the gender analysis category for actively reported cases, most cases affected girls and women. Among those affected whose gender is known, the female category accounts for around 50%. For years, the Dokustelle Austria has been pointing out that anti-Muslim racism is very often paired with sexism and that intersectionality is necessary as an analytical tool. In 2023, forms of intersectionality such as gender, ethnicity, national affiliation, sexual orientation, age and disability as well as characteristics of appearance such as headscarf, beard and skin color were included in the documentation of anti-Muslim racism for the first time.



## Perpetrator characteristics



The perpetrators fall into the following categories: civilian individuals, larger groups of people and organizations, politicians, journalists and police officers. By identifying the groups of perpetrators it is emphasized that their involvement in anti-Muslim racist acts allows for significant power dynamics and far-reaching repercussions. Cases that reach us regarding police violence include the disproportionate use of violent means, the intimidation of witnesses during the interrogation of Muslims and the unlawful distribution of administrative fines. Recorded

cases perpetrated by journalists most often contain prejudiced, divisive and generalizing attributions that spread a problematic image of Muslims. The acts perpetrated by politicians include statements that use anti-Muslim narratives, fuel the spread of fear and hatred towards Muslims and cause the approval of discriminatory political measures.

## Online monitoring and analysis

In 2023, we carried out intensified online monitoring in order to highlight the high number of racist statements against Muslims on the internet. The documented cases include both content relevant to criminal law such as insults, spreading hate or incitement to hatred, as well as legally 'compliant' statements that can clearly be classified as violent.

- 883 of the 1015 online monitoring cases (87%) fall under the category of spreading of hatred.
- It should be emphasized that the categories of gender and wearing of a headscarf account for the majority of recorded cases.
- More than 7.8% of all online monitoring cases involve incitement to hatred. Under the incitement to hatred category cases are documented that fall under the Prohibition Act, including comments in which commentators use National Socialist ideas and strategies.
- In the context of Austrian media coverage general suspicions about Muslims are being normalized.
- There has been a particular increase in online comments on social media that equate Muslims with propensity for violence and terror. Muslims are dehumanized, subjected to animal comparisons that violate their human dignity and portrayed as “ready to murder”. Islam, and therefore Muslims, are described as “inherently incapable of peacefulness.”

- Many of the posts placed the sole responsibility for anti-Semitism in Austria on people with a Muslim background. We increasingly recorded comments in which anti-Muslim, racist and anti-Semitic narratives were reproduced and disseminated simultaneously.

### **Report focus on anti-Muslim racism in education**

Looking back, schools were one of the first areas in which case reports rose rapidly and reached worrying proportions in October 2023. Compared to previous years, more cases occurring in the school sector were reported to us. Thus, this year's report focuses on the education sector. To this end, we have invited several experts to make guest contributions and share their experiences in their professional practice with us. These contributions are, furthermore, part of a multiplier document on multilingualism and anti-Muslim racism in education, which will be published separately in June 2024. Specific forms of multilingualism combined with anti-Muslim resentment are repeatedly recognizable in the cases recorded by the Dokustelle Österreich. In the school system in particular, a spectrum of different perceptions and categorizations of multilingualism and the privileges that may or may not go hand in hand with it can be seen.

### **The Dokustelle Austria demands:**

1. a comprehensive recognition of anti-Muslim racism.
2. the recognition and consideration of an intersectional understanding of anti-Muslim racism.
3. the implementation of racism-critical educational work in all educational institutions.
4. the promotion and expansion of independent contact points with a focus on psychosocial counseling.
5. comprehensive protection from emotional and financial stress in criminal proceedings.
6. the protection of those affected ("victims") at a legal level. This means evaluating the consequences of investigations into racist crimes. This can identify weaknesses and protect those affected.
7. ensuring security policies that comply with human rights.
8. the protection against discrimination and safeguarding religious freedom.
9. the establishment of independent monitoring bodies for the executive and security services.
10. the promotion of taking responsibility, community work and solidarity against racism.
11. ensuring the protection of non-governmental actors' spaces for action (civic spaces) and freedom of expression.