

Under-Reporting and Under-Recording of Hate Crimes against Muslim Women in Italy

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Abstract : The present article analyses the root causes of under-reporting and under-recording of hate crimes against Muslim women in Italy. The main findings emerged from the survey conducted between May and September 2022 within the framework of the TRUST project (co-funded by the CERV programme (CERV-2021-EQUAL) of the European Union) with relevant practitioners and members of the Muslim community, including first-generation and second-generation Muslim women residing in Italy. The findings reveal that multiple factors contribute to the low reporting rate as well as to the flaws in recording episodes of intolerance and hatred against the above-mentioned group. Lack of trust in the judiciary or the police may represent one of the main causes of under-reporting; however, the phenomenon is not limited to such aspects, and additional factors and sources of discrimination paving the way to under-recording have been identified during the survey. The significant “tendency” to not report a case of intolerance as the difficulties in identifying the discriminatory nature of the crime are two faces of the same coin and are particularly intertwined; despite this, at first, both issues need to be assessed and analysed separately in order to take their own specificities into duly consideration. By contrast, the potential solution to low recording and reporting trends should be found collectively, namely by involving all the relevant parties and bodies facing the above-mentioned issues. In this regard, a participatory and multi-agency approach may curb the root causes leading Muslim women not to report and, besides this, support law enforcement officials as well as public authorities in providing a more effective service to the victims of hatred, whether offline or online.

Keywords : hate crime, under-reporting, under-recording, Islamophobia, Muslim women

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