



THE ATTITUDES OF MUSLIMS IN BULGARIA - 2016

**OBJECTIVES, SCOPE OF
WORK, SOCIAL IMPACT
AND RESEARCH
ACTIVITIES**

I. BACKGROUND AND SOCIAL RELEVANCE OF THE SURVEY

The timeliness, relevance, and therefore, the priority of the research project are beyond any doubt. Today the topic "*Islam, Islamism and Islamophobia*" is a central one for Bulgaria and Europe.

The Bulgarian Muslims are under the influence of a very complicated situation in the populated by Muslims Middle East and North Africa. The conflicts in the Middle East created a favourable environment for tumultuous political and military expansion of Islamism, which embarked on powerful terrorist attacks in various points round the world. The confrontation of Islamism with the rest of the world has come to be one of the main threats to the world peace and security. All that and especially the terroristic attacks and the refugee pressure resulted as a consequence the growing of the Islamophobia and national-populism in the certain states in Europe. This foreign policy context is influencing the attitudes of the Muslims in the country, as well as the attitudes in the whole Bulgarian society: anxiety is growing; certain groups in the society are seized by anti-Islamic attitudes reaching the levels of Islamophobia.

Internally the Muslim community in the country has for long periods after the fall of the communist regime been torn up by internal fights. The Muslim religious denomination underwent a process of transformation from a status of complete subordination to the communist dictatorship to an adequate religious institution taking care of the spiritual life of the Muslims in a freedom situation. This process was seriously hampered by the uncivil interference of certain Bulgarian governments and political parties in the internal organizational life of the Muslim religious community. The struggle for political control over the office of the Chief Mufti was sanctioned by the Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg with two guilty verdicts against Bulgaria.

Meanwhile in 1998 by force of agreement between the state institutions responsible for religious matters in Bulgaria and Turkey the training of future religious leaders at the Institute of Islam in Sofia and at the three secondary Muslim schools was defrayed by the Turkish state. Overall the funds available to the Muslim religious denomination from own sources and from the state subsidy are insufficient and the financing from Turkey and other Muslim states fills the gap.

On the other hand at the end of the XX and the beginning of the XXI century several dozens of young men, demotivated by the low level of spiritual education in the country, went to study at higher religious education institutions in Muslim countries such as Turkey, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia etc. As a result two groups have formed among the religious Muslim figures in Bulgaria. The first one, the majority, is composed of followers of the Hanafi school, established as traditional over a large part of the territories governed by the Ottoman Empire in the past: this school provides the training content of the religious educational institutions in Bulgaria, Turkey, Jordan, Egypt and other countries today. The other significantly smaller group consisted of religious figures who received their religious education in Saudi Arabia where the Hanbali School has official status.

The briefly described processes outline a complex picture of internal and external influences upon the attitudes of the Bulgarian Muslims. This picture determines the main objectives of the realized survey.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE SURVEY

The main objectives of the Project are:

1. To gather, analyze and generalize actual information about the attitudes in the Muslim community in Bulgaria, paying special attention to the specifics of the main its subgroups – Turks, Roma, and Bulgarian speaking Muslims.
2. To stimulate and activate the discussion in the scientific circles and in the general society for the actual status of the relations between Muslims and Non-Muslims in the country.
3. To suggest policies to the public institutions, political parties, civic society and media, for better mutual understanding and cooperation among the religious communities and for prevention of Islamist as well as Islamophobia propaganda and actions.

The design of the study allows outlining the dynamics in the attitudes of Muslims in Bulgaria in the last five years comparing the survey data with the results of the previous analogical study provided at 2011.

The study gives the opportunity to explore the specifics and respectively - the differences among the attitudes of the group of Turks living preferably in Northeastern Bulgaria and Eastern Rhodopes, the group of the Bulgarian-speaking Muslims living in Rhodopes, and the group of Muslims living in large “Roma” ghettos (ghettos in Plovdiv, Pazardjik, Haskovo, etc.).

The investigation of the attitudes of the Muslims in the ghettos has been a novelty - it was not included in the previous survey and is not done before by any other authors.

Special attention is paid to the formation of new attitudes under the influence of the growing radical Islamism and recent migrant flows to Europe, dominated by Muslims.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

In the framework of the contact with KAF have been realized the following activities:

September 2016:

- Building the project team & fine tuning of the project’s research design;
- Questionnaire design
- Consultations with external consultants

- Sample design according to the NSI data for the distribution of the Muslim population
- Pilot interviews and final revision of the questionnaire
- Briefing sessions with the interviewers and supervisors - The interviewers' team was given a special briefing session before the beginning of the study. They were acquainted with the survey objectives and tasks, the instruction for conducting the interview, the peculiarities of the target population and the questionnaire's structure.

October 2016:

Fieldwork/Interviewing process:

- The fieldwork was conducted by the team of 40 interviewers from Alpha Research. The average number of interviews per interviewer was 30.
- 1200 effective interviews among the target population /30.09.2016 – 15.10.2016/ in 106 different locations;
- Interviewing method – face-to-face interview in the respondents' home
- The interviews were conducted face-to-face at respondents' homes during the following time schedule:
 - On weekdays – between 9.00 and 17:30
 - During the weekend – between 10:00 - 16:00h
- The fieldwork manager in the head office in Sofia was in permanent contact with the regional supervisors. There were no significant difficulties during the survey fieldwork.

November – December 2016

Quality control and logic check

- The supervisors' team did quality control on the interviewers' work from the head office in Sofia. 20% (240 respondents) of the total sample were back checked by phone:
 - 205 respondents were contacted personally and confirmed that they were interviewed.
 - 35 respondents were not available at the time of control, but another member of the household confirmed that the interview was conducted.
 - Consistence and logic check on all completed questionnaires was carried out by the central office staff.
 - No weighting procedures were applied.
- **Data mapping**
- **Data entry**
- **Statistical analysis - according to the requirements of the research team**
- **Preparation of Technical Report**
- **Preparation of Key Findings Report and Presentation of the survey results**

IV. KEY FINDINGS AND SOCIAL IMPACT

1. Social and demographic profile

Statistics from the 2011 census:

Of the overall number of the population 7 364 570, self-identified as Muslims are 577 139 persons (it should be taken into consideration that 27.38% did not declare their confession). This is predominantly **rural population** – two-third lives in the villages (the overall rural population in the country is slightly over a quarter of the total). The age distribution shows **lower birth rates and reduced life expectancy** among the Muslims in the years before the census.

On average, this is **poor population**. In the opinion of the interviewed in 2016 the approximate monthly income of a household member is under BGN 100 for 18% of them and between BGN 100 and 250 for 45%. For comparison, according to data of the National Statistical Institute in 2015 the share of poor people (with an average monthly income below the poverty line – BGN 326) was 22%. Particularly **intense is the poverty of Muslims living in ghettos** - for 74% of them the average monthly income is under BGN 100 and for 16% - between BGN 100 and 250.

The comparison of the data from the 2011 and the 2016 surveys show that regardless of the intense poverty the difference between those who identify as poor and those who believe they are better off has significantly diminished. This general conclusion does not however include the Muslims living in ghettos and the specific group of Muslims speaking Bulgarian.

During the examined five-year period the image of the place they inhabit as **futureless** has increased. In 2016 some 75% think that there is no future for the young people, if they remain in their place of residence. This feeling creates a huge emigration pressure.

2. Emigration attitudes

In 2011 we asked the question about a preferred country of migration. On top of the list of countries where those with a migratory disposition wished to migrate was Germany with 15% and second, but far behind the first, was Turkey with 5%.

In 2016 the research focus was transferred to migration that has already been accomplished. It turned out that 8.5% of the interviewed have children who have permanently settled abroad with their families. Of the young families that have emigrated, 20% live in Turkey, 10% live in Germany. Third comes Belgium at a considerable distance with just 4%. It should be pointed out that a part of the diaspora settled abroad is formed by the big migration wave of 1989 and the first years after the political change at the end of the same year.

During the five-year period the proportion of households generating their income with the contribution of remittances from abroad has **increased two times**. In 2016 some 10% of the respondents reported having received income from abroad, while in 2011 their proportion was 5%.

3. Values

In the value system of the Muslims in Bulgaria the number one of importance remain the **family and kinship ties**, which suggests a preserved traditional model of familial and blood ties. To the question what has a great importance in their lives, in 2016 the largest is the share of respondents who answered “the children” - 97%, followed by those who answered “the family” - 95% (in 2011 “the family” as very important was the choice of 95% and the kin of 80%). In both surveys the percentage of those respondents for whom very important in a family is that the spouses loved and respected each other is very high: in 2011– 99%, and in 2016 – 93%.

The comparison of the data from the 2011 survey and the 2016 survey showed that the role of the parents (the senior) in decisions of great importance for their children is increasing. This leads us to the hypothesis of certain recourse to the patriarchal model in the relationships between the young and the elder in the family.

Second in the value system of the Muslims ranks **work**. In 2016 around 78% of them believe work to be a very important thing in their lives. This corresponds to the recognized image of Muslims in Bulgaria as diligent people.

The third place is occupied by **the country they live in**, however in reducing proportion during the five-year period. In 2011 some 88% of the interviewed underscored the importance of educating children in respect to the country they live in, while in 2016 their share has shrunk to 75%.

Next in the rank is **friendship**. In 2016 the respondents who attribute great importance to the friends in their life form 68%.

Religion is equally viewed by many Muslims in Bulgaria as a very important part of their lives. That was the attitude of 49% in 2011 and of 51% in 2016 (we register a slight increase). It was an important part of life for 81% of the Muslims in 2011 and is such for 86% in 2016 (an increase of 5 percentage points).

A distinctive differentiation was observed in the sub-groups: among the Muslims in the ghettos, the religion is important for 99% (very important for 89%); among the Bulgarian speaking Muslims it is important for 92% (very important for 52%); and among the Turks it is important for 83% (very important for 43%), while among the Alevi Turks it is important for 80% (very important for 47%).

According to a Gallup-International survey of 2009 to the question “Is religion important in your daily life?” the largest number of positive answers was registered in Bangladesh – 99% - which is commensurable with the share of respondents in the ghettos who gave the same answer. The proportion of those Muslims in Bulgaria who said “yes” to the same question in 2016 – 85% - compares to those registered in Malta (86%), Romania (84%), Iraq (84%), and Turkey (82%).

Among the youngest (age 18-30 years) the share of those respondents who attribute great importance to religion has grown by 10 percentage points in 2016 compared with 2011 from 40% to 50%.

The large majority of the Muslims in Bulgaria condemn **terrorism** and in the five-year period their proportion has considerably increased. Those who believe that terrorism

should be unconditionally condemned in 2016 are 89% of the respondents (an increase of 8 percentage points compared with 2011 when the opinion was shared by 80%), and only 1.1% (within the margin of statistical error) hold the opinion that under certain circumstances it could be justified (1.4% in 2011).

4. Religiosity

The share of people who **believe in Allah** (God) is big among the Muslims – 80% in 2011 and 77% (a slight decrease) in 2016; the Agnostics (who assume that God exists but doubt it) have reduced from 6.5% to 4.6 %, and the non-believers have increased insignificantly from 2.3% to 3.6%. Around 11% in 2011 and 15% in 2016 only believe in a supreme power and/or faith, i.e. although of Muslim origin, they do not believe in Allah.

The Muslims in the ghettos differentiate strongly from the rest in this indicator as well. 100% of them said they believed in Allah and there are no agnostics and non-believers among them.

The largest share of atheists was found among the Turks – 6% and 5% of the agnostics.

Religiosity is also high – in 2011, 92% of the interviewed stated their religiosity and in 2016 – 87% (some decrease). In the group of deeply religious people the decrease is more discernible in the five-year period – in 2011 they formed 28%, while in 2016 – 20%.

The largest share of religious Muslims was registered in the ghettos – almost 100% and 45% of them said they are deeply religious.

Religious in the group of Bulgarian speaking Muslims are 93% and deeply religious – 29% - above the level of the entire community by 9 percentage points.

The lowest religiosity level was registered among the Turks – 83% religious, 12% deeply religious. Among them the proportion of the non-religious is the highest – 10%, and 2% are not religious at all.

The collected data illustrate religiosity as a more or less stable feature in the recent years, which however shows certain nuances. Thus for example the Muslims living in the ghettos who stated that in the past few years the importance of religion has increased for them from 28%. Among the Bulgarian speaking Muslims this percentage is 11%, which suggests an equally growing trend.

A sensitive indicator of religiosity is the attitude to the readiness for sacrifice in defense of one's religion. Those who find it right for a man to sacrifice his life for his religion were 4.4 in 2011 % and 7.6% in 2016. For the sake of comparison in September 2016 to the same question asked by Alpha Research in a national representative survey a positive answer was given by 7.3% of the Orthodox Christians.

5. Religious practice

Religious practice is an expression of one's inner world and behavioral dispositions.

Overall, the proportion of people who do not respect the religious requirements is high, but during the five-year period there is a clearly discernible trend toward greater abidance by the rules. In 2011 some 59% never prayed while in 2016 the percentage was 54%. In 2011 those who did not adhere to the fast during the holy month of Ramazan were 44% and in 2016 they are significantly less – 30%. No change was registered among the people who do not visit the Mosque - 41% in both surveys, but the proportion of people who pray in the mosque on Fridays has increased by five percentage points in five years – from 9% to 14%. Around 39% do not possess religious books. The proportion of users of concentrated alcoholic drinks is reducing from 37% to 30% and especially of people consuming pork – from 39% to 25%.

The high proportions of families performing circumcision of the boys remain stable (84% in 2016 versus 88% in 2011), as well as of those who do funerals in accordance with the Islamic laws – 96% and 98% in the two surveys respectively. It should be kept in mind that both rituals have a strong symbolic meaning of belonging to Islam.

Regardless of the exceptionally low income of a large part of the Bulgarian Muslims charity is widespread among them and has the meaning of a service to Allah. Those respondents who stated they gave donations (not the mandatory religious tax zakat to assist people in need) are 60%, of which 13% said they did it often.

As regards the broadly publicly discussed topic of wearing head cloths at school, 55% of the Muslims in Bulgaria are against and 30% are without opinion. Disapproving of women going out without having their faces covered (burka, hijab) are 54%, without opinion are 24% and 20% only approve if the woman so desires.

In the answers to the latter question the Muslims living in the ghettos stand out, since 55% approve of women covering their faces if they have the desire and 5% even believe that should be mandatory.

Very indicative is the comparative measurement made in 2016 of the three greatest sins in Islam – apostasy from religion, murder and adultery. The results show that the majority of the Muslims give their preferences to universal (non-religious) criteria of good and evil. To the question which of the above three is the most reprehensible transgression 65% choose murder, slightly below 24% religious apostasy and only 5% adultery.

6. Religious leaders

The expectations to religious leaders are above all to help people with advice in their personal and family lives – 67% and secondly, to instruct them on matters of Islam (teach them about the will of Allah and the prescriptions of the Quran) – 48%. A small proportion of the respondents attribute certain political functions of defending the Muslims to the leaders – 4.4%. Among the Bulgarian speaking Muslims this percentage is higher - 10%. Some 12% of the Muslims also expect from their religious leader to be an arbitrator in case of arguments in the community.

During the five-year period the share of those who think that religious leaders should be spiritually trained in Bulgaria has reduced by 13 percentage points – from 56% in 2011 to 43% in 2016. At the same time the share of those who think that should rather be done in turkey has increased from 7% to 12%. The share of people whose preferences for spiritual training are related with Saudi Arabia has remained more or less unchanged – the downfall is from 7% in 2011 to 6% in 2016.

7. Social distances, religious pluralism

There is some decrease in the level of religious pluralism among the Muslims. While in 2011 those among them who thought that the true religion was only one were 8%, in 2016 their share has increased to 20%. On the other hand the share of those who do not think there is only one true religion and the other widespread religions also contain fundamental truths has shrunk from 58% to 47%. Still, this pluralistic conviction remains popular.

The interpersonal distances to the non-Muslims have preserved at the approximately equal levels. In 2016 around 64% find it very important that the husband and wife come from the same faith, while in 2011 the percentage was 67% (apparently, there is even a slight decrease of three percentage points). In 2016 a marriage between a Muslim man and a Christian woman is approved by 36% of the respondents and between a Muslim woman and a Christian man by 28%.

In 2016 the distance to non-Muslims was measured at the level of friendship. It shows good interpersonal relationships regardless of the religious belonging. The share of interviewed Muslims who have a Christian friend is 74%. There is also considerably smaller group that is closed in the community – 20% said they only had Muslim friends.

A sensitive indicator of distance is the question “should religion be taught at school as a subject?”. In both surveys the shares of respondents who think religion should (should not) be taught as a school subject are nearly equal –50% “yes” in 2011 and 48% in 2016 and 48% “no” in 2011 and 52% in 2016. Of those respondents who wanted religion to be studied at school in 2011, 55% were of the opinion that each child should learn his or her own religion separately, while 44% believed that all pupils together should study the subject. In 2016 the change is significant. The share of people believing that religions should be studied separately has increased to 78%, and the affiliates of the idea all children to study the different religions together and not just their own has reduced to 17%.

A certain increase in the inter-group distance is also indicated by the answer to the question how have the relationships between Muslims and Christians in Bulgaria developed in the past few years. In 2011 the answers for the past three years were as follows: 65%, no change, 26% - in the positive direction and only 1.4% in the negative direction. In 2016 (the answer refers to the last five years) the share for those who see no change has more or less remained stable – 67%, but the share of Muslims for whom the relationships have developed positively fell down by 11 percentage points to 15%, and those who believe they have developed negatively are now 6%.

On the other hand it is indicative that 80% of the Muslims think that the wars in Syria and Iraq did not deteriorated the attitude to them, yet 7% believe deterioration exists.

As regards the distance to the refugees, in 2016 we have outlined two groups. The first one of them (38%) have an extremely restrictive attitude – “Bulgaria should not accept anyone“. The second group, again 38%, consists of people with a more moderate attitude who are in favour of accepting refugees, but in a regulated manner by either applying quotas, determined by the EU or a limited number, determined by the state.

8. The Muslim community and the state

Muslims in Bulgaria are not unanimous about whether or not religion should be separated from the state. They are divided in three groups in their opinions, each forming about a third of the total studied population: adherents to the secularist view that religion and the state should be separate (32%), adherents to the opposite opinion (28%) and 39% without opinion.

On the other hand the Sharia as a regulator of legal arguments has no supporters among the Bulgarian Muslims. A mere less than 1% of them see it as a normative source of handling the contradictions in the community. At the same time 57% believe that arguments should be solved judicially. The senior citizens are also recognized as an arbitrator by 21%, and another 12% see the religious leader (imam, mufti) in the arbitrator’s role.

To the question what should be the attitude of the state to the Muslim faith 47% say the state should support it financially, but the group is divided in two – 25% think this support must not be accompanied by any interference and 22% assume some interference, provided it is requested. As regards the funding, 26% believe the state should finance the confession and 27% that it should be financed by own sources.

There are also Muslims (12%) who are in favour of a full separation. They oppose to both the state interfering in the life of the confession and supporting it.

Few people are prepared to decide whether the state supports the confession sufficiently – 61% have no opinion on this matter, while among the remaining 10% believe the support to be sufficient, 16% not to be sufficient and 14% believe the state does not provide any support at all.

An overwhelming majority of the Muslims do not perceive themselves as victims of rights violations. Asked whether their rights or the rights of their relatives are being violated, 92% say “no” and only 5% say “yes”. This marks a significant progress compared with the year 2011 when to the same question the share of respondents asserting that their rights had not been violated was smaller by 15 percentage points – 77%, and those of the opposite opinion (that they had been violated) were more by 15 percentage points – 20%.

The asserted violation of rights is focused mostly in the socio-economic field – in 2016 those who declared violated rights pointed out the right of work (58%), of dignified life (12%), of healthcare (8%). Violation of civil and political rights was mentioned by 11%,

where the largest proportion – 8% is formed by people who recognize expressions of racism, bad attitude and distrust as violations of their rights.

In 2011 the picture among those under the impression of having their right violated was similar. Back then violation of socio-economic rights also prevailed, among them the right of work, healthcare and education – a total of 64%. Ethnic or other form of discrimination was mentioned by 6%.

Approval of the Bulgarian state institutions on behalf of the Muslims remains low in September of 2016. The highest approval rate of 22% is given to the army (26% disapproval) and the police (38% disapproval), followed by the presidency with 19% approval and 35% disapproval, and finally the court with 17% approval (41% disapproval) and the government 17% approval again (47% disapproval).

9. Attitudes to the home policy

During the five-year period we have registered considerable decrease in the interest to the political life in the country. While in 2011 some 30% were not interested in politics, in 2016 the share of disinterested respondents has increased by a good 22 percentage points to 52%. The proportion of people actively involved in the political life as party members and activists has remained more or less unchanged: 3.6% in 2011 and 4.5% in 2016. 43% are informed of the political life, while in 2011 the respective proportion was 65%.

In 2016 the Movement for Rights and Freedoms has preserved its electrical support among the Muslims in Bulgaria compared with 2011. At the parliamentary elections it was supported by 55% of them (56% in 2011). At the same time GERB demonstrates growth of votes among the Muslims from 1.4% in 2011 to 10% in 2016. BSP has preserved its relatively insignificant influence of 5.6% in 2016 versus 5.3% in 2011. The new parties relying on potential voters from among the Muslims have small electrical support – 3.4% for DOST (Lyutfi Mestan) and 0.7% for NPSD (Orhan Ismailov).

Asked “*whether a party exists in Bulgaria that is an enemy of the Muslims in Bulgaria?*”, in 2011 the interviewed identified as such *Ataka* – 73%, *VMRO* – 4%, *Order, legality and justice* – 4%, *GERB* – 3% and the *Blue Coalition* – 2% (15% said there was not any such party). These data suggest the feeling of serious political threat back in 2011. In 2016 the tension we observed in the previous survey has significantly dispelled. The number of people saying no such party exists has grown by 26 percentage points and is now 41%, where 40% said they could not tell. *Ataka* occupies the first place again among the parties perceived as opponents, but with a lower percentage this time – 13%. It is followed by *VMRO* with 3% and the *Patriotic Front* with 1%.

10. Foreign policy dispositions and connections with the Muslim world

Although the large majority of the Muslims in Bulgaria are Sunni, most of them are hesitant to declare or affiliate with this. Asked “*which stream of Islam do you belong to*” in 2016 the respondents in their majority (both Sunni and Alevi) said, “*I am simply Muslim.*” (80% in 2016); 11% self-identified as Sunni and just 1% as Alevi.

Those who have an opinion on the Salafists and Wahhabi movements are only a tiny minority: 94% have no opinion of the first and 95% of the second and those who have a negative attitude to Salafists are 4% and to the Wahhabi 4% again.

The disapproval of terrorist organisations is high – Al Qaida (68%) and Islamic State (64%); the approval of both is within the error – for Al Qaida 0.5% and for Islamic state 2.8%, and people without opinion are around one-third in both cases.

A certain percentage of the Muslims rely on relationships with the world Islamic community for support of the Bulgarian Muslim confession. That it should be funded by international Islamic foundation is the opinion of 3%, by Saudi Arabia 3% and by Turkey – 14%.

Only 5% of the respondents think other states interfere with the life of the Bulgarian Muslim community; 49% are of the opposite opinion and 45% are without an opinion. Those who believe there is interference in 85% attribute it to Turkey, 10% to Saudi Arabia and 7% to the USA.

The relationships of the Bulgarian Muslims with Turkey have their deep historical and cultural roots. A large proportion of them have relatives in the neighboring country. Therefore the attitudes to Turkey have a special meaning. As a rule, the confidence in it is enormous. In 2011 the confidence in Turkey was 59% (7% no confidence), and in 2016 it has increased by 9 percentage points to 68%, yet the no confidence has equally grown to 13% (6 percentage points). The president of Turkey Recep Erdogan enjoys high approval rate of 49% and 19% disapproval.

Part of the Muslims in Bulgaria have expectations to Turkey to influence the parties that realize their political representation (MRF, DOST and NPSD). They believe it is important that Turkey trusts those parties - 35% of the interviewed, while 23% believe it not so important.

The failed attempt at a coup in July 2016 in Turkey has increased the interest to Fethullah Gulen and his supporters. According to the survey data Gulen is not influential among the Bulgarian Muslims. He enjoys 9% approval and 39% disapproval and his affiliate movement Hizmet only has 2.9% approval and great disapproval of 43%.

We also asked the topical question “*what is your opinion of the events going on in Turkey?*”. More than half of the respondents held back their evaluation and preferred to state they had no opinion (52%). The victory over the coup organizers was defined as an expression of the unity of the Turkish people in defense of the rule of law and democracy by 18%, and 11% thought the dangerous influence of Fethullah Gulen was liquidated.

In the geopolitical perspective in 2011 and 2016 we measured trust to specific countries. The greatest trust after Turkey, which was already indicated, is attributed to Germany. What is more, in the five-year period the trust to Germany has increased by five percentage points from 57% (5% distrust) in 2011 to 64% (13% distrust) in 2016. Next in line in terms of trust is Russia with 49%, 6% distrust in 2011 and 52% trust (increase by 3 percentage points), 21% distrust in 2016. The trust to France in 2011 was 45% (6% distrust) and 47% (21% distrust) in 2016.

Considerably lower and at the same time falling down is the trust to USA, which suggests a greater distance to this country. In 2011 it stood at 26% (17% distrust), and fall down by 9 percentage points to 17% trust in 2016, combined with very high level of distrust – 45%.

More than half of the respondents rejected an assessment of Saudi Arabia – they could not tell in 54% in 2011 and 53% in 2016. The trust to it was 17% in 2011 and 13% in 2016 and the distrust was 22% in 2011 and 33% in 2016.

In 2016 the countries' approval rate question was combined with the approval rate of several state leaders. The highest approval rate after that of Recep Erdogan goes to Angela Merkel – 44% positive attitude and 24% negative. At a short distance behind her is Vladimir Putin with 43% approval and 16% disapproval. Far behind remains Barak Obama with 23% approval and 28% disapproval.

We also asked the respondents about Pope Francis and it turned out that the overwhelming majority (77%) of them did not engage with an opinion; 14% expressed a positive attitude and 9% negative.

V.APPENDIX

Tables with the answers of the questionnaire - full results from the survey

		Col %
Your origin is:	Muslim	100.0%

First of all, what are the material circumstances of your household?		No answer	Good	Medium, neither good nor bad	Bad
		%	%	%	%
At the moment			17.0%	55.6%	27.3%
How do you expect your material circumstances to change in 2-3 years?		3.7%	19.3%	57.7%	19.3%

		Col %
In your opinion, do young people have the chances for a good life, having and raising children in your town/village?	Yes	16.6%
	No	75.0%
	I cannot tell	8.4%

		Col %
Have you ever travelled abroad?	Yes, only once	18.5%
	Several times	39.7%
	No	41.8%

		Col %
What was the purpose of your travel?	An excursion	24.3%
	Work	16.6%
	Hajj	0.1%
	To study	0.1%
	To meet with true Muslims	0.7%
	To see my friends and relatives	23.3%
	Other	0.1%
	I have never travelled abroad	41.8%

		Col %
If you have married children, the families of how many of them have moved permanently abroad?	No answer	9.7%
	1	6.0%
	2	2.3%
	3	0.2%
	None of them	41.9%
	I do not have married children	40.0%

		Col %
In which country(ies) do they live?	Turkey	20.2%
	Germany	10.5%
	Belgium	3.7%
	England	2.3%
	Spain	2.0%
	The Netherlands	1.3%
	Greece	1.2%
	France	0.9%
	Austria	0.4%
	Italy	0.3%
	Denmark	0.2%
	USA	0.2%
	Norway	0.2%
	Cyprus	0.2%
	Western Europe	0.1%
	Sweden	0.1%
	China	0.1%
	Scotland	0.1%
Switzerland	0.1%	
Czech Republic	0.1%	

		Col %
Does any part of your family's income come from work abroad (yours or your relatives')?	No answer	18.8%
	Yes	10.0%
	No	71.2%

		Col %
Do your relatives get more religious when coming back from abroad?	They are more religious	1.6%
	There is no difference	57.1%
	On the contrary, they are less religious	3.7%
	I cannot tell	37.5%

		Very important	Important	Not important	Not important at all	Without opinion
		%	%	%	%	%
Please tell us how important are in your life:	Work	77.7%	18.4%	2.0%	0.2%	1.7%
	Children	97.4%	1.4%	0.1%	0.2%	0.8%
	The family	95.9%	3.7%	0.2%		0.2%
	Friends	68.2%	26.9%	3.4%	0.4%	1.1%
	Your relatives	79.7%	15.1%	3.6%	0.2%	1.4%
	Politics	6.0%	13.0%	37.5%	38.0%	5.6%
	Religion	51.0%	34.9%	9.1%	2.2%	2.7%

		Very important	Somewhat important	Not so important	I cannot tell
		%	%	%	%
We are talking about the family, so let's talk about:	The elderly	94.2%	5.1%	0.5%	0.2%
	The country they live in	74.8%	17.9%	5.3%	2.0%
	The man in the family	88.4%	8.6%	2.2%	0.9%
	The woman in the family	86.5%	11.3%	1.2%	1.0%
	Religion	64.1%	24.7%	9.5%	1.7%

		No answer	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	The family is generally not important to me
		%	%	%	%	%
How important for the family do you think are the following aspects:	That the spouses love and respect each other	0.7%	93.3%	5.5%	0.5%	
	That the spouses are healthy		98.0%	1.9%	0.1%	
	That the spouses come from the same religion		64.0%	22.3%	13.4%	0.4%
	That the spouses come from the same nationality (ethnic group)	0.8%	58.0%	25.4%	15.3%	0.5%
	That the spouses come from the same social group/ have similar material situation		34.2%	28.7%	36.3%	0.7%
	That the spouses are with equal education		25.9%	31.7%	41.7%	0.7%
	That the spouses have similar interests	0.9%	39.5%	31.9%	27.4%	0.2%

		No answer	Quite acceptable	Acceptable	Not acceptable	Not acceptable at all
		%	%	%	%	%
Life is changing and some people accept some things but not others. In your opinion, how acceptable are the following phenomena in contemporary life?	Divorce	0.3%	12.8%	27.2%	39.5%	20.2%
	Cohabitation without a marriage	0.3%	14.0%	23.2%	35.0%	27.5%
	Life as a married couple of minors (under 18 years)	0.3%	3.2%	6.9%	25.2%	64.5%
	Birth of a child without marriage	0.4%	8.7%	16.4%	27.2%	47.3%
	Abortion	0.6%	5.2%	15.9%	36.0%	42.3%
	The man does the household work together with the woman	0.7%	33.1%	33.1%	25.3%	7.7%
	The man takes care with the children together with the woman	0.2%	53.3%	30.6%	14.4%	1.6%
	A woman raises a child by herself	0.7%	4.7%	15.1%	39.9%	39.6%

Do you find it appropriate for people to do the things listed below, if their parents/the adults disagree?	Yes	No	It depends, I have no specific opinion
	%	%	%
Getting married	21.2%	52.2%	26.6%
Going abroad	23.4%	46.8%	29.7%
Proceeding with one's education	38.4%	33.0%	28.7%

	Col %
And do you believe:	
in Allah (God)	76.9%
that a supreme power exists	21.0%
in faith	16.2%
perhaps Allah (God) exists, but I doubt it	4.6%
I do not believe in any of the above	3.6%

	Col %
Which statement is closest to your opinion?	
Islam is the only true religion	20.5%
Islam is the true religion, but Christianity and Judaism (Israelism) contain some basic truth	19.0%
There is no only true religion; all major world religions contain some basic truths	47.3%
There is no true religion	2.6%
I cannot tell, I don't know	10.5%

	Col %
Do you think religion should be separated by the state or not?	
It should be separated by the state	32.5%
It should not be separated by the state	28.3%
I cannot tell, I don't know	39.2%

	Col %
What would you say about yourself as a person? That you are	
deeply religious	20.2%
religious	66.9%
not religious	6.6%
not religious at all	1.2%
I cannot self-identify in terms of religion	2.2%
I cannot tell, I don't know	2.8%

	Col %
Has religion become more important to you in the past few years?	
it has become more important	9.6%
there is no change	79.3%
it has become less important	4.0%
I cannot tell	7.1%

	Col %
What do you think is the reason for that?	
Religion has not become more important in my life	44.2%
A family member, relatives and acquaintances	6.7%
another reason	4.7%
the religious books I have been reading	3.2%
People who have come to our town/village to talk about Islam	0.4%
The new imam who studied abroad	0.2%
the Quran school	0.2%
When I worked/lived abroad, I met people who are knowledgeable of Islam	0.2%

	Col %
If you go to the mosque, how often do you do that?	
No answer	0.2%
every day	2.5%
on Fridays	13.6%
for Bayram	24.9%
from time to time	17.5%
I do not go to the mosque	41.3%

	Col %	
If you practice Salah, how many times a day do you usually do that?	no answer	0.8%
	1	1.4%
	2	1.8%
	3	0.1%
	3	6.1%
	4	0.5%
	5	8.8%
	8	0.1%
	I don't practice every day, only occasionally	26.8%
	I don't practice it	53.6%

	Col %	
Do you do the Ramazan fast?	No answer	1.7%
	Yes, always	35.4%
	Yes, sometimes	33.3%
	no	29.7%

	Col %	
Do you make donations to people in need?	No answer	6.5%
	Yes, often	13.4%
	Yes, sometimes	46.8%
	no	33.3%

	Col %	
Which of the following food and drinks do you consume?	coffee	84.4%
	beer	46.8%
	rakia	30.9%
	wine	25.9%
	pork	25.4%

	Col %	
Are the boys in your family circumcised?	no answer	0.2%
	they all are	84.5%
	most of them are	13.0%
	most of them are not	1.6%
	they are not	0.7%

	Col %	
Do you have religious books at home?	no answer	2.2%
	only the Quran	37.0%
	the Quran and other religious books	21.7%
	we don't have any	39.1%

	Col %	
How do you make the funerals in your family?	no answer	0.1%
	with clothes and a coffin	1.8%
	according to the Muslim religion	98.1%

	Col %	
If necessary, should a person sacrifice his life to defend his religion?	Yes, that is how it should be	7.6%
	Only in extraordinary circumstances	15.8%
	No, life should not be sacrificed for religion	63.1%
	I cannot tell	13.5%

		Col %
How should people who do not hold on to their belief be punished?	Allah should decide	46.3%
	with a death penalty	2.0%
	they should not be punished	25.4%
	I cannot tell, I don't know	26.3%

		Col %
Which of the following do you find the most condemnable and the greatest sin for a true Muslim?	no answer	0.2%
	committing a murder	64.8%
	committing an adultery	5.4%
	worshipping other gods than Allah	24.3%
	none of those	5.2%

		Col %
Do you have close friends who are:	Christians	74.0%
	non-believers	32.1%
	I only have Muslim friends	20.4%
	Jews	3.7%
	I do not have any close friends	0.1%

Do you approve of?		I approve	I disapprove	I don't know, it depends on the circumstances
		%	%	%
	a marriage between a Muslim and a Christian woman	36.5%	32.6%	30.9%
	a marriage between a Muslim and a non-believer	36.0%	32.3%	31.7%
	a marriage between a Muslim woman and a Christian man	28.2%	40.0%	31.8%
	a marriage between a Muslim woman and a non-believer	32.7%	32.5%	34.8%

		Col %
Do you think religion should be studied at school?	yes	48.3%
	no	51.7%

		Col %
And how should it be studied?	Everyone should study their own religion /Muslim children should learn the Quran and Christian children the Bible	77.8%
	All the children should study all religions together, not just their own	17.2%
	I cannot tell	5.0%

		Col %
Should the wearing of a hijab be allowed at school?	No, it should not be allowed	54.9%
	It should be allowed for all pupils from 1 to 12 grade	9.7%
	It should only be allowed in the higher college grades	5.2%
	I cannot tell	30.1%

		Col %
Do you approve of Muslim women's covering their faces (with a niqab or burqa)?	Yes, they must be covered	1.6%
	I approve if the woman so wishes	20.7%
	I disapprove	53.5%
	I cannot tell	24.3%

		Col %
Do you approve of a BAN of covering the face in public places?	Yes, because this is not our tradition	41.3%
	I cannot tell	34.2%
	I don't approve because there should be freedom of confession	15.4%
	Yes, because it is a threat to the national security	10.0%
	I don't because it means a new "regenerating" process	2.4%

		Col %
You said at the beginning that you were a Muslim. Which of the main trends of Islam do you affiliate with?	I am a Sunni	10.9%
	I am an Allevi	1.3%
	other	0.5%
	I am simply a Muslim	79.5%
	Does not understand, cannot tell	7.8%

What is your attitude to:		Positive	Negative	I have no opinion
		%	%	%
	the Salafi movement	1.9%	4.1%	94.0%
	the Wahhabi movement	1.2%	3.7%	95.2%
	Al Qaeda	0.5%	68.4%	31.1%
	The movement of Fethullah Gulen Hizmet	2.3%	42.9%	54.8%
	Islamic State	2.8%	64.3%	32.9%

		Col %
In your opinion how did the relationships between Christians and Muslims develop in Bulgaria in the past five years?	Positively	15.3%
	There is no change	67.2%
	Negatively	6.3%
	I cannot tell	11.2%

		Col %
Can you feel a change in the attitude to the Muslims in Bulgaria as a result of the wars in Syria and Iraq and the refugees?	The attitude to the Muslims became extremely negative	0.6%
	The attitude to the Muslims has grown more negative	6.9%
	There is no change	80.9%
	The attitude has grown more positive	0.7%
	I cannot tell	11.0%

		Col %
Should Bulgaria accept refugees?	It should accept everyone	4.7%
	It should only accept a certain number, defined by the state	22.6%
	It should accept the EU quota	16.7%
	It should not accept anyone	38.5%
	I don't know, I cannot tell	17.5%

		Col %
What should be the role of an Islamic religious leader?	To teach people about Allah's will and what the Quran says	48.1%
	To advice people when they have personal and family problems	66.7%
	To support the politicians who defend the Muslims	4.4%
	To aspire to make Islam the leading religion	2.2%
	I don't know	11.3%

	Col %	
Where do you think the spiritual persons (imams) in the Muslim confession should be trained?	In Bulgaria	42.9%
	In Saudi Arabia	5.6%
	In Turkey	12.1%
	In Western Europe	0.4%
	In other countries	0.2%
	I cannot tell	38.7%

	Col %	
How should the Muslim confession be funded?	I cannot tell	39.1%
	From its own sources	27.0%
	By the Bulgarian state	26.1%
	By Turkey	14.3%
	By international Islamic foundations	3.3%
	By Saudi Arabia	3.2%
	From other sources	1.0%

	Col %	
What should be the attitude of the state to the Muslim confession?	Support it financially without interfering	24.8%
	Support it financially and only interfere if it turns to it for assistance	22.1%
	Neither support, nor interfere	12.3%
	I cannot tell	40.8%

	Col %	
Does the state support the Muslim confession sufficiently?	Yes, it support sufficiently	9.7%
	It support it, but not sufficiently	15.7%
	It does not support it	14.0%
	I cannot tell	60.6%

	Col %	
Do other states interfere in the life of the Bulgarian Muslims?	Yes	4.9%
	No	49.5%
	I cannot tell	45.6%

<i>*among those who gave a positive answer</i>	Col %	
Do other states interfere in the life of the Bulgarian Muslims?	Turkey	84.7%
	Saudi Arabia	10.2%
	USA	6.8%
	Syria	5.1%
	Iran	5.1%
	Western Europe	1.7%
	Spain	1.7%
	Libya	1.7%
	Iraq	1.7%
	From the East	1.7%

	Col %	
Who should resolve the disputes in your community?	the court	57.3%
	the senior members	21.5%
	God/Allah will tell who is right	16.6%
	the imam, the mufti	12.0%
	I cannot tell	10.7%
	as the Sharia says	0.7%
	It depends on the disputes	0.6%
	we resolve them ourselves	0.2%
	the police	0.1%

		Col %
Terrorism is mentioned in the news every day. In principle most people are against it, but differences of opinion exist. Which of the following statements do you agree with?	Terrorism can be justified under certain circumstances	1.1%
	Terrorism should always be condemned	89.0%
	Neither of these	1.9%
	I don't know, I cannot tell	8.1%

		Positive	Negative	I have no opinion, I cannot tell
		%	%	%
What is your attitude to the following institutions?	The Parliament	16.5%	45.1%	38.4%
	The Government	17.3%	47.4%	35.3%
	Prime minister Boyko Borisov	22.4%	44.7%	32.9%
	The Court	17.3%	41.3%	41.4%
	The President	19.0%	35.4%	45.6%
	The police	22.1%	37.7%	40.2%
	The army	21.8%	26.5%	51.7%

		Positive	Negative	I have no opinion, I cannot tell
		%	%	%
What is your attitude to the following politicians?	Ahmed Dogan	49.1%	24.2%	26.7%
	Korman Ismailov	14.0%	37.9%	48.2%
	Mustafa Karadaya	41.7%	18.7%	39.6%
	Lyutfi Mestan	20.5%	46.3%	33.1%

		Positive	Negative	I have no opinion, I cannot tell
		%	%	%
What is your attitude to:	Barack Obama	23.0%	28.2%	48.8%
	Angela Merkel	44.5%	23.8%	31.7%
	Recep Tayyp Erdogan	48.8%	19.0%	32.2%
	Pope Francis	14.3%	9.0%	76.7%
	Abdullah Gulen	8.7%	38.8%	52.5%
	Vladimir Putin	42.6%	15.8%	41.6%

		Yes	No	I have no opinion, I cannot tell
		%	%	%
Do you think the following states can be trusted?	Russia	51.8%	20.6%	27.6%
	USA	17.2%	45.2%	37.6%
	Germany	64.4%	17.1%	18.5%
	Turkey	68.4%	12.7%	18.9%
	Israel	7.4%	36.4%	56.2%
	Saudi Arabia	13.4%	33.3%	53.3%
	France	47.1%	20.6%	32.3%
	Iran	9.6%	33.6%	56.7%

		Col %
Is there a party that is an adversary of the Muslims in Bulgaria?	There isn't	41.5%
	I cannot tell	40.5%
	Ataka	12.7%
	VMRO	3.2%
	Patriotic Front	1.4%
	NFSB	1.0%
	Reformers' Block	0.7%
	GERB	0.7%
	BSP	0.2%
	Fatherland Front	0.2%
	Rasate's party	0.1%

		Col %
Speaking of politics, what would you say of yourself?	No answer	0.7%
	I am a member of a party	2.3%
	I am a party activist involved in political activities	2.2%
	I am interested and observing the political news and events without being directly involved in political activities	42.7%
	I am not interested in politics	52.1%

Do you trust the following parties?		I trust it	I don't trust it	I have no opinion, I cannot tell
		%	%	%
	MRF /Mustafa Karaday/	49.8%	20.8%	29.3%
	DOST /Lyutfi Mestan/	15.7%	54.4%	29.9%
	NPDS /Korman Ismailov/	9.3%	51.9%	38.8%

		Col %
Is the trust of Turkey to the parties, representing the Muslims in Bulgaria important to you?	It is important	34.6%
	It is not important	22.8%
	I cannot tell	42.5%

Do you think Turkey trusts the following parties?		It trusts it	It does not trust it	I have no opinion, I cannot tell
		%	%	%
	MRF /Mustafa Karaday/	37.8%	12.5%	49.8%
	DOST /Lyutfi Mestan/	23.3%	14.8%	61.9%
	NPDS /Korman Ismailov/	9.1%	17.3%	73.7%

		Col %
What do you think of the events going on in Turkey:	I have no opinion	52.3%
	The Turkish people have united in defence of the rule of law and democracy	18.1%
	Human rights have been violated	11.7%
	There is repression of the political adversaries of the ruling	11.6%
	The dangerous influence of Abdullah Gulen and his affiliates is being suppressed	11.1%
	Europe does not understand the Turkish people	4.5%

		Col %
Do you think your rights or the rights of your relatives are being violated at the moment?	No answer	2.1%
	Yes	5.4%
	No	92.5%

		Col %
If they are, which rights?	The right of work, unemployment, difficulties in finding a job	58.5%
	Normal life, decent life	12.3%
	Healthcare	7.7%
	Racism, bad attitude, lack of trust	7.7%
	Freedom	1.5%
	A party	1.5%
	Social assistance	1.5%

		Col %
If there were parliamentary elections next Sunday, who would you vote for?	No answer	2.6%
	BSP	5.6%
	GERB	9.9%
	DSB	0.3%
	ABV	0.3%
	Reformers' Block	0.7%
	MRF	55.4%
	National Party Freedom and Dignity	0.7%
	DOST	3.4%
	Other party	5.4%
	I would not vote	15.6%

		Col %
What TV channels do you watch most often?	Bulgarian	61.5%
	Turkish	56.6%
	Others	4.1%
	I do not watch television	0.7%

		Col %
Region:	Blagoevgrad	8.3%
	Burgas	6.6%
	Varna	1.7%
	Dobrich	3.4%
	Kurdzhali	20.8%
	Pazardzhik	5.8%
	Plovdiv	6.6%
	Razgrad	9.1%
	Ruse	2.5%
	Silistra	5.0%
	Sliven	0.8%
	Smolyan	10.0%
	Stara Zagora	0.8%
	Targovishte	8.3%
	Haskovo	2.7%
	Shumen	7.5%

		Col %
Type of settlement:	District center	18.5%
	Small town	20.8%
	Village	60.7%

		Col %
Age:	No answer	1.0%
	18-30	23.9%
	31-40	19.3%
	41-50	17.6%
	51-60	17.4%
	Over 61	20.8%

		Col %
Sex:	No answer	0.8%
	Male	48.9%
	Female	50.2%

		Col %
Education:	No answer	2.7%
	Higher	6.7%
	College	2.2%
	Secondary	45.5%
	Basic	35.1%
	Lower	7.7%

		Col %
Social group:	No answer	0.7%
	Student	2.9%
	Worker in industry, construction, transport	14.7%
	Worker in the service sector	17.3%
	Agricultural worker	8.7%
	Employee	6.8%
	Free lance professional/intellectual	1.0%
	Business owner	3.7%
	Unemployed	25.2%
	Retired	17.7%
	Other	1.4%

		Col %
Type of settlement:	District center	18.5%
	Small town	20.8%
	Village	60.7%

		Col %
Marital status:	No answer	5.5%
	Married	68.9%
	Single	16.6%
	Divorced	1.9%
	Co-habitation without marriage	1.8%
	Widow(er)	5.2%

		Col %
How many members are you in your household?	No answer	1.2%
	1	5.9%
	2	20.7%
	3	18.5%
	4	32.8%
	5	12.4%
	6	6.1%
	7	1.4%
	8	0.4%
	9	0.2%
	10	0.2%
	11	0.1%
	15	0.1%

		Col %
Number of children under 18 in the household?	No answer	56.2%
	1	25.3%
	2	16.1%
	3	1.7%
	4	0.3%
	5	0.1%
	6	0.1%
	8	0.1%

		Col %
Which is your mother tongue?	No answer	0.8%
	Bulgarian	21.8%
	Turkish	76.9%
	Roma (Gypsy)	0.4%

		Col %
How do you self-identify your ethnic origin?	No answer	0.2%
	Bulgarian	1.3%
	Turkish	33.2%
	Roma	1.2%
	Bulgarian Mohammedan	12.0%
	Muslim	44.1%
	Bulgarian Muslim	0.4%
	Pomak	4.0%
	Bulgarian Turkish	0.4%
	Mohammedan	0.6%
	Muslim Turkish	1.4%
	Bulgarian pomak	0.1%
	Gypsy	0.1%
	Muslim Roma	0.7%
Gypsy Muslim	0.2%	

		Col %
The sector you work in:	No answer	0.8%
	Public - state, municipal	10.7%
	Private	40.7%
	I don't work	47.8%

		Col %
Approximate monthly income of a member of your household:	No answer	2.2%
	Under BGN 100	17.7%
	BGN 101-250	44.8%
	BGN 251-500	30.0%
	BGN 501-800	4.7%
	BGN 801-1000	0.5%
	Over BGN 1000	0.2%