

WORKING WHILE MUSLIM

A Pilot Study of Intersectional Employment and
Labour Market Experiences of Muslims in Canada

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ABOUT THE ISLAMOPHOBIA RESEARCH HUB

The Islamophobia Research Hub is a community-engaged, change-making initiative to combat Islamophobia. Based at the York Centre for Asian Research at York University, the Hub's central role is to find real-world solutions to evolving forms of Islamophobia through community-engaged, academically rigorous research. The Hub's activities in research, innovation, and narrative change drive towards dismantling Islamophobic systems and ideologies. Learn more on our website.

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Office of the
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Combatting Islamophobia



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Salmaan Khan is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Islamophobia Research Hub at York University. Prior to this role he was Assistant Professor (Limited Term Faculty) in the Department of Criminology at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU), and Research Program Manager in the Office of the Chair in Social Justice and Democracy at TMU. Salmaan completed his PhD in the interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Social and Political Thought at York University. His research can be framed along four avenues: 1. The systemic racial and gendered dimensions of the Canadian labour market, with a focus on the experiences of racialized workers; 2. The intergenerational impacts of precarious working conditions; 3. Critical epistemologies and methodologies of the social sciences, with a focus on community-based research practices; and 4. Critical pedagogies and engaged learning practices. His community, academic, and teaching work is underpinned by a commitment to intersectional, anti-oppressive politics, and a desire for social justice.

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Executive Summary

Muslims make up a significant and growing share of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), representing **9.4%** of the population. The community is younger than the average, with nearly **40%** under age 25, and is also highly educated, as **51%** of those aged 25 to 64 hold post-secondary degrees—higher than among non-Muslims. At the same time, a majority (**69%**) of Muslims in the GTHA were born outside of Canada. These characteristics shape the context in which we set out to study barriers to economic well-being within this population.

This study asks:

- 1

Is there an association between religious identity (being Muslim) and employment and labour market experiences of workers in the GTHA?
- 2

In what ways do intersecting social identities (visible minority status, gender, immigration status) shape the employment and labour market experiences of Muslims in the GTHA?
- 3

What are some of the barriers that Muslims face in the workplace, or in the labour market, that may be impacting their economic inclusion and well-being?
- 4

How do barriers that Muslims encounter in the labour market or at their place of work vary depending on intersecting social identities?

Methods

Census of Population, Canada, 2021	Original survey of employment and labour market experiences of Muslims
Public Use Microdata Files (PUMFs)	423 self-identifying Muslims in the GTHA
Statistics Canada Special Interest Profile	Data collected online in collaboration with the Institute for Social Research at York University, and Léger Opinion.
Statistics Canada Data Tables: 98-10-0657-01 and 98-10-0656-01	

The geographic parameters for this pilot study were limited to census metropolitan areas comprising the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Areas (GTHA).

Intersectionality

Where applicable, intersectional analyses were utilized in Part 1 and Part 2 of the study to account for the role of multiple social identities (gender, race, immigration status) that also shape the employment and labour market experiences of Muslims in the GTHA.

Findings

The report's findings are organized in two parts:

1

Measures of Economic Standing of Muslims in the GTHA

This section includes a comparative analysis of the economic, employment, and labour market experiences of Muslims and non-Muslims in the GTHA.

2

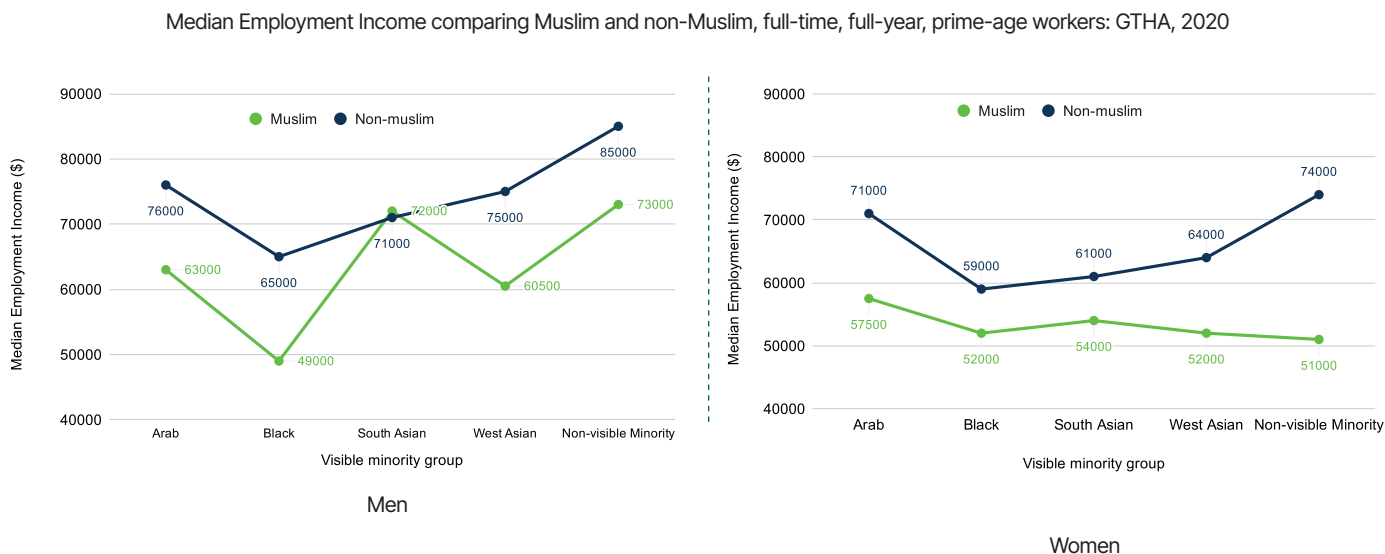
Mapping Discrimination and Harassment at Work

This section focuses on the experiences of Muslims in the GTHA, and investigates the barriers that they encounter in the workplace and while job searching.

Part 1: Measures of Economic Standing of Muslims in the GTHA

Muslim wage gap:

Full-time, full-year, prime-age (25–54 years) Muslim workers in the GTHA had a median employment income of **\$61,000** compared to **\$73,000** for non-Muslims.



Visible minority Muslim women, working full-time, full-year, and of prime working age, made **64 cents for every dollar** earned by full-time, full-year, prime working age White non-Muslim men (Table 11).

As a result of the Muslim wage gap, Muslim workers in the GTHA, their families and their communities experience an aggregate annual income loss of **\$1.2 billion**.



Total household income:

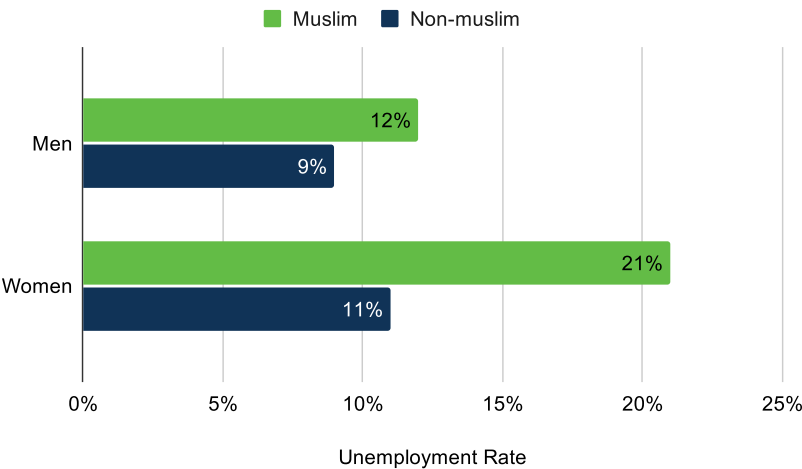
A larger share of non-Muslims **(56%)** have total household incomes at or above **\$110,000** compared to Muslims **(45%)** (Table 4)

Labour force status

The unemployment rate for prime-age workers (25–54 years) in the GTHA was higher for Muslims than non-Muslims.



Muslim men and Muslim women (25–54 years) have higher unemployment rates than their non-Muslim counterparts (Chart 10)



Sectors

Muslim workers in the GTHA are overrepresented in the fields of retail trade, transportation and warehousing, and accommodation and food services (Table 7).

Impoverishment

17% of visible minority Muslims and **18%** of non-visible minority Muslims fall below the low-income threshold (classified as 'low income') compared to **8%** of the white non-Muslim population, and **11%** of the visible minority non-Muslim population.

Part 2: Mapping Discrimination and Harassment at Work

The following inferences about the GTHA Muslim population were calculated using weighted survey data. The weights were calculated using demographic data from the 2021 Census.

Religious accommodation

A majority **(52%)** of Muslims in the GTHA do not feel like their religious practices have been adequately accommodated at their work.

For those who have not had their religious practices adequately accommodated, the most common barriers were:

- No clear work policy for requesting religious accommodations **(28%)**
- Fear of being judged or treated differently **(28%)**

Discrimination at work

Results indicate that **1 in 4 (26%)** Muslims in the GTHA have experienced discrimination or prejudicial treatment directed toward them while working.



About **1 in 4 (25.1%)** Muslims in the GTHA have experienced difficulty socializing with their co-workers at or outside of work.



It is estimated that **more than half (56%)** of Muslim workers in the GTHA have either sometimes or frequently felt isolated or excluded at work.



An estimate of **1 in 5 (20.5%)** Muslim workers in the GTHA believe that they are treated differently at work than their non-Muslim colleagues.



Workplace violence and harassment

Approximately **1 in 4 (26.7%)** Muslims in the GTHA who are active in the labour force have experienced either verbal or physical violence or harassment while working.

Barriers in job searching

An estimate of **1 in 5** Muslims in the GTHA have been asked about their religious identity or religious practices during a job interview, including questions about their:

- political beliefs **(25%)**,
- their ability to fit into workplace culture **(28%)**,
- their religious practices **(45%)**,
- and ability to travel for work **(18%)**.

OVERVIEW OF BLUEPRINTS FOR AN ACTION PLAN

Based on the results of this study, and in consultation with community organizations, we have identified a set of blueprints for an action plan. These blueprints identify key areas of concern and the related questions that warrant further research and exploration in order to develop sustainable, culturally responsive, and actionable solutions to support the economic well-being of Muslims in the GTHA. These blueprints are directed at the municipal, provincial (Ontario), and federal levels.

Below is a brief overview, with a more comprehensive list provided at the end of this report.

Municipal action plan

Developing partnerships with municipal governments in order to design and develop community centred and community informed programming and services to support the economic integration and well-being of Muslims in the GTHA.

- **Services:**
What types of local partnerships can be developed with(in) the Muslim community to assist with culturally grounded programming and education focused on increasing awareness about services to support employment and job-seeking goals?
- **Social Supports:**
What steps can municipalities take to meet service needs such as housing and childcare that our respondents have identified as helpful in supporting employment goals for Muslim community members?

Provincial (Ontario) action plan

Evidence of discrimination-related barriers that Muslims face in the GTHA in employment settings and in job searching demonstrate that more needs to be done to protect Muslim workers' rights and that the existing mechanisms set up to protect workers are not working well.

- **Wages:**

What provincial legislation reforms are needed to provincial legislation, such as the Employment Standards Act, to ensure that Muslim workers, and all workers, are paid a fair wage for their labour, and that wages are keeping up with the cost of living?

- **Benefits:**

What are some of the barriers to Muslim workers receiving full benefits as part of their employment, and how do their experiences fit within the broader call by labour organizers for amendments to the Employment Standards Act relating to equal benefits regardless of employment arrangements (i.e. full-time, part-time, contract, temporary)

- **Unions:**

Given the disproportionately low unionization rate among Muslim workers, in what ways can amendments to the Ontario Labour Relations Act—which governs the process of unionization—benefit Muslim workers in the GTHA?

- **Discrimination:**

How are existing issues related to chronic underfunding at the Ontario Human Rights Commission and Human Rights Tribunal as well as the reliance on a complaint-based model of intervention and enforcement, impacting the way and rate in which issues of discrimination that Muslim workers face are dealt with?

- **Workplace harassment:**

What legislative reforms can help pave the way to better supporting Muslim workers in the face of discrimination and harassment experienced at work at the hands of co-workers, management, and customers/clients?

Federal action plan

The federal government can play an important role in setting standards for labour policy while also supporting improvements in cross jurisdictional research and data collection on the economic well-being and integration of the Muslim community in Canada. Evidence from the report suggests much more needs to be done to develop better funded and tangible interventions.

- **Improving data collection:**

What measures can be adopted to improve data collection on labour market and employment experiences of Muslims in Canada? For instance, Statistics Canada's monthly Labour Force Survey is the best source of information on employment and the labour market in Canada, yet it does not collect information on religious affiliation.

○ **Establishing a national action plan on Islamophobia and employment:**

How can a national study on Islamophobia and employment contribute to the development of an evidenced-based national action plan on improving Muslims workers' economic well-being and integration? What information can we explore through a cross-jurisdictional analysis of provincial legislation and the related adjudicative bodies in protecting Muslim workers' rights?

○ **Reforming process for recognizing foreign credentials:**

What systemic barriers might foreign-born Muslim workers be encountering that are hindering the full recognition of their education credentials, and what reforms are needed to the current process of credential recognition in order to better support the integrations of newcomers and individuals whose highest level of education was attained outside of Canada?

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INTRODUCTION

Despite Canada's promise of celebrating and promoting racial and cultural diversity, empirical evidence points to the ongoing realities of systemic racism, reflected in policies and practices that contribute to the marginalization and disadvantage of racialized groups.¹ More pointedly, within the framework of Canada's multicultural policy, there exists a racially segmented working class that has been described as "colour-coded"² and organized along multiple hierarchies of power, privilege, and influence.

Disparities informed by gender discrimination and migration status further intersect with race and reflect themselves through structural patterns in wage discrimination, occupation and sectoral segregation, racial differences in job retention rates, and barriers faced by workers of colour and racialized immigrants in accessing full-time, stable, and non-precarious forms of employment.

It is within this context of a colour-coded labour market that the question arises of what the experiences of Muslims in Canada—as a racialized group—are like with respect to their economic integration and well-being. What are the employment and labour market experiences of Muslims in Canada, in all their diversity, and in the context of a gendered and racially stratified Canadian workforce?

Islamophobia and economic well-being

The recent Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights³ found that one in four Canadians say that they 'do not trust Muslims'. This mistrust of Muslims in the post 9/11 era, and its impacts on the economic and work experiences of Muslims in Western nations, has received some attention in the existing literature. Factors have pointed to the role of national security discourses and practices, political campaigns and elections, mass media and Hollywood, and select incidences of political violence in Western nations, in furthering Islamophobic narratives and beliefs that portray Muslims as fundamentally different, dangerous, and incompatible with the rest of society.⁴

For example, in their study of post 9/11 backlash and national security rhetoric, researchers in the United States examined incidences of workplace discrimination claims in order to highlight the increase in Islamophobic incidences in the workforce in the form of microaggressions, stereotyping, denials of religious accommodations, and increased scrutiny and exclusion.⁵ Another study carried out in the UK noted a 10% decrease in employment numbers for young Muslim men and a consistent decline in their real earnings and hours worked following what has been documented as the July 2005 United Kingdom Bombings.⁶ On the topic of national security, in their study of Muslims' experiences with the Canadian Security Intelligence Services, another pointed to the concrete implications of state-initiated surveillance strategies in undermining employment situations of Muslim identified individuals, such as making threats to show up to their workplace if they do not cooperate as informants.⁷

Other studies have noted how Islamophobic rhetoric and stereotypes of Muslims during political campaigns in Western nations or in other forms of mass media, such as Hollywood-produced entertainment, seep into the workplace, with ramifications for workplace culture as well as the safety and inclusion, or exclusion, of Muslim workers⁸. What these studies highlight are Islamophobia's transnational dimensions within the context of the post 9/11 era⁹, in addition to the precarity faced by

Muslim workers whose experiences and opportunities are shaped by unpredictable political events. Existing studies on Muslims' employment experiences have also been attentive to the intersectional dimensions of systemic Islamophobia on the work experiences of Muslims in Western nations. For example, recent studies in the Canadian context have pointed to the interplay of gender discrimination and Islamophobia in structuring Muslim women's experiences and opportunities. As both women and Muslim, Muslim women face intersecting barriers in the Canadian workforce with implications for career progression, workplace integration, hiring practices, and basic safety at work¹⁰. These studies identify a "gendered Islamophobia," pointing to examples of government policy such as Bill 21¹¹ in exacerbating employment inequalities by forcing Muslim women to choose between their religious identity and career aspirations¹².

Other intersecting factors that have also been considered include immigration status and country of origin in framing the specific experiences of Muslims in the labour market. One study of employers in five different European labour markets noted differential response rates from employers who were given job applications of identified Muslim applicants from 22 different countries of origin¹³. In a recent report on challenges facing the Black Muslim community, researchers likewise adopted an intersectional approach, noting the specific experiences of Black Muslims who in the face of anti-Black racism and Islamophobia, reported discrepancies in education attainment, labour market experiences, income, and political participation relative to the general Canadian population, the Muslim population, and the general Black population in Canada¹⁴.

Existing research points to the significant insight that is lent through intersectional analyses of the lived experience of Muslims and of the multiple layers of oppression and marginalization that, in addition to religious affiliation, are determined by gender discrimination, immigration status, and visible minority status. Approaching the study of Muslims' employment and labour market experiences in Canada through such an intersectional lens is a significant step toward developing a fuller account of the barriers to economic integration that they face and can help lead to the development of more concrete interventions and policy proposals.

REPORT STRUCTURE AND RESEARCH METHOD

Research design and methodology

Research design

The following study of employment and labour market experiences of Muslims in the GTHA was quantitative, incorporating primary and secondary data. This study was grounded in an intersectional and community-based research framework. Assisting in developing a community framework was the formation and involvement of a convened Community Research Table (CRT) that participated in the research design process as well as in the original survey's design, and helped shape the direction of the data analysis. The CRT comprised a group of 10 stakeholders from within the Muslim community. Criteria for CRT participant selection focused on ensuring a diversity of voices and expertise who could contribute to shaping the project's intersectional commitment. A list of CRT members can be found in the report's acknowledgment section.

- **Census data (secondary data) analysis** drew on publicly available 2021 Census data via Statistics Canada's Public Use Microdata Files (PUMF).
- **Original survey data (primary data)** analysis began with the programming of survey questions on the online survey platform Qualtrics, which was carried out by members of the Institute for Social Research at York University¹⁵. The survey was then distributed over the market research and public opinion firm Léger Opinion to a sample of pre-recruited survey panellists. Individual surveys included 98 questions, with an average completion rate of 20–25 minutes. Not all of the questions were answered by each survey panellist due to the programming of relevant skips throughout the survey that directed each participant to answer only relevant questions. All surveys were completed anonymously and no personal or identifying information was collected as part of this study.

This study was designed as a pilot study to test an exploratory analysis into the employment and labour market experiences of Muslims in Canada. This was the first round through which the original online survey was administered, and part of the analysis strategy included identifying which questions were relevant, and which ones may need to be excluded in any potential roll out. To help manage the time and resources involved in a pilot/test run, the geographic parameters for this study were limited to the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Areas (GTHA). Though the study's results in this study speak to the experiences of Muslims living in Canada, as a pilot study, the results are indicative of only the experiences of Muslims in the GTHA. Some of the study's recommendations include an outline of the next steps involved in extending research into employment and labour market experiences of Muslims in Canada—on a national scale.

Participants/subjects (data sources)

- **Secondary data analysis** relied only on PUMF individual-level microdata files that include anonymized data that reflect a representative sample of **2.7%** of the Canadian population. PUMF data is derived from the long-form Census questionnaire, which is sent for completion to a sample of **1 in 4 (25%)** of Canadian households. To clarify, the PUMF sample itself is a sample made up of **2.7%** of one quarter of the Canadian population. This nevertheless results in a fairly large sample of 980,868 individuals. The analysis was further restricted, however, to only a sub-sample of individuals residing within the GTHA (n=197,702), of which 18,514 in that sub-sample identified as Muslims.

The GTHA is not an official Statistics Canada administrative category and so combined geographic jurisdiction was created composed of three Census Metropolitan Areas that roughly correspond to commonly understood GTHA boundaries¹⁶. These included the Oshawa, Hamilton, and Toronto Census Metropolitan Areas. Data in the 2021 Census reflect information relative to the year 2021, with the exception of any income data that reflects respondents' data from the year 2020.

- **Primary data analysis** relied on a sample (n=423) of Muslim-identifying participants/panellists registered with the Léger Opinion research firm. Survey panellists are pre-recruited by Léger Opinion pre-recruits survey panellists who agree to complete surveys in exchange for points that can be redeemed for gift cards or rewards¹⁷. Sampling was based on a randomized stratified sampling technique that involved the pre-identification of strata related specifically to gender, age, race/ethnicity, and geographic location within the GTHA. Strata and the respective quotas were determined using 2021 Census data of demographic characteristics of Muslims in the GTHA, and were utilized in order to help ensure that the survey sample was representative of the diversity of the GTHA Muslim population. Weighted proportions were assigned following data collection, and in the cleaning and labelling of the dataset, to further adjust the raw sample to more closely match the population parameters. Survey participants were restricted to individuals residing in the GTHA, who identified as Muslim, who were between the ages of 18–69 years, and who were not living in an institution (e.g. penal institution/nursing home/hospital). A demographic breakdown of survey participants can be found in Appendix C.

Procedures (preparation, collection, and handling of data)

- *Study design and preparation:*
 - The study team conducted a literature of current research on employment and labour market experiences and economic integration experiences of Muslims. The geographic scope included studies focusing on Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe, and Australia.
 - A preliminary research draft was developed, along with research materials, including the original survey, consent forms/scripts, recruitment scripts, and an outline of analysis strategies.

- The Community Research Table (CRT) met to discuss the study's parameters and intentions.
- The study materials were finalized and submitted for ethics approval to the York University Office of Research Ethics.

○ *Data collection:*

- Following ethics approval, the Institute for Social Research at York University programmed the survey onto the Qualtrics survey platform.
- A survey test run was conducted with a sample of 23 participants, including CRT members (September 2025).
- The survey was finalized and distributed over the Léger Opinion survey platform for completion by panellists (date range: October 17–30, 2025).
- Secondary data collection involved accessing 2021 Census PUMF individual microdata files through the Canada-based social science data repository ODESI.

○ *Data handling:*

- PUMF microdata files were downloaded, accessed, and organized using R statistical software.
- Once completed, the Institute for Social Research organized the original surveys into single cleaned, fully labelled and weighted data.
- The final survey data set was provided to the research team in SPSS and R format files. Analysis of survey data was undertaken using R statistical software.

○ *Knowledge translation/sharing:*

- The final report was submitted for peer review prior to publication.
- In identifying key recommendations from this study, the CRT was convened and consulted.

Data analysis

Analysis of secondary and primary data relied on estimates calculated using population weights in order to help correct for survey error/bias and to also forward more informed estimations of the population parameter from the sample statistics. Secondary data relied on Statistics Canada weightings for PUMF microdata files. The study's primary data for this study relied on the calculation of weights using 2021 Census data. The Institute for Social Research conducted the calculation and application of weights.

Theoretical framework

Data analysis was informed by intersectional feminist theory¹⁸, critical race theory,¹⁹ and existing research on the racial dimensions of the Canadian labour market. Descriptive analyses relied on bivariate and multivariate analyses that accounted for the role of intersecting identities in shaping employment and labour market outcomes, in addition to the focus on religious affiliation.

Data tables and charts were disaggregated primarily by visible minority status, gender, religious affiliation, and generation status. To account for the impact of age on employment and labour market outcomes, as well as on relative economic standing, much of the analysis of individual income (total and employment) was restricted, at times, to a specific age range, namely the 'prime working age' of 25–54 years²⁰.

Though the specific intersecting facets affecting the lives of individuals are vast and varied, the particular variables of interest that lent to developing our intersectional analysis of the experiences of Muslims in the GTHA were identified based on pre-existing research that highlighted the significance gender, race, and generation status in shaping labour market and employment experiences for workers in Canada. This is not to say that the intersection of these three variables (race, gender, and status), in addition to religious affiliation, reflect a comprehensive account of the intersectional labour market and employment experience of Muslims in the GTHA. Many other factors including disability, sexual orientation, geography, and more also shape Muslims' experiences.

Community-based research practices

Analysis in this study was also shaped by a commitment to community-based research practices. For this pilot study, this involved the participation of a convened community research table (CRT), which assisted with the study's design as well as in the development of an analysis road map. As part of the research process, the CRT met to discuss preliminary results from the completed original survey in order to identify key forms of intersectional analyses to help develop a more nuanced roadmap and to help ensure that otherwise marginalized or invisible experiences were not being excluded from the final analyzed and shared data.

Inferential analyses

- **Secondary data:** Both descriptive/summary and inferential²¹ results were shared using PUMF 2021 Census data. Accompanying the descriptive results were inferential analyses results conducted using log linear analyses methods, analysis of variance tests, and calculations of confidence intervals. Log linear analysis, and ANOVA, were used to test the role of religious affiliation in improving model fit for both data on dwelling type and tenure status as well as labour market distribution by industry sector. Confidence intervals were calculated to allow inference of all calculations of median income (total household income, individual total income, and employment income).

- **Primary data:** Results from the original survey relied primarily on the use of estimates calculated using population weights in order to make inferential estimates.
- **Future reporting:** Not included in this pilot report are results of regression analyses for predictions of employment income. Regression analyses on employment income were performed specifically on the subset of the GTHA population who is employed, but not self-employed. Since, in the Public Use Microdata Files, Statistics Canada rounds reported employment income to protect respondent anonymity, a jittering procedure was applied to create a continuous income variable suitable for regression analysis. Regression analyses controlling for age, weeks of work throughout the year, full-time work status, expected years of education, gender, and visible minority status, revealed that religious affiliation (being Muslim) is associated with a statistically significant reduction in annual employment income ($p < 0.01$). Preliminary testing of interaction effects using a linear model, linear model with restricted income range, and a logarithmic model, found no significant interaction between religious affiliation and either gender or visible minority status in predicting employment income, suggesting that income penalties are additive rather than multiplicative. Nonetheless, further testing adopting an intersectional framework will be conducted through use of main effects analysis focusing on religious affiliation, but with restricted subsamples delineated by gender and visible minority status.

Limitations of the study

Secondary data

Data from the 2021 Census provides the most detailed information from which to explore the economic and demographic make-up of the Muslim and non-Muslim populations in the GTHA²². Though a larger dataset is accessible through Statistics Canada Research Data Centres, this pilot study relied solely, with respect to its secondary data analysis, on PUMF data files. As noted in the methodology section above, the PUMF files represent a **2.7%** share of respondents to the long-form questionnaire (**25% of the Canadian population**). The sample was further restricted in our pilot study through having limited the geographic scope to those individuals residing in the TCMA, HCMA and OCMA.

Though this is a large dataset ($n=197,702$), it still, at times, resulted in relatively small case counts for very specific categories of respondents that voided more nuanced intersectional analyses at certain points throughout this study. In particular, this proved an issue when aspiring to conduct intersectional analyses incorporating three or more independent variables. For example, when wanting to explore median employment income levels while disaggregating by religious affiliation, visible minority status, gender, and generation status, samples were at times too small for robust analysis. In this report, the sections of tables with too few case counts have been left blank. Emphasis has been placed on sharing summary data for variables with at least 30 observations.

In some cases, this problem arose even when looking at combinations of only two independent variables with respect to religious affiliation, since in the PUMF data, there were not sufficient individuals included from specific demographic groups within the Muslim community that would allow the confident sharing of findings. For example, Southeast Asian Muslim men, or East Asian Muslim women, did not have adequate samples in the PUMF micro data to allow confident analysis of those specific groups. Despite the smaller case counts, confidence in the results was supported through inferential analysis modelling. However, due to small case numbers for certain demographic groups, inferential techniques such as the use of confidence intervals to estimate with a 95% level of confidence the range within which the population parameter lies, at times resulted in lower and upper bounds that were very wide. The wide CI's consequently limited the accuracy of the reporting and the confidence in sharing the respective point estimates.

Another limit of the secondary data analysis is that the PUMF files, at their most granular geographic level, only allow insights at the level of the Census Metropolitan Area. This restriction is in place to help ensure respondents' anonymity. However, a consequence for the pilot study was that it did not allow for analysis of the "neighbourhood" effect or an examination of variations in economic standing of Muslims across varying sub-regions within the GTHA²³.

Limitations with the Census data were also encountered with respect to the ways in which data on religious affiliation and visible minority status are collected and understood. As it is designed, Census questionnaires ask individuals to self-identify with their religious affiliation or visible minority status from a predetermined set of categories. However, experiences such as one's religious affiliation are sometimes hard to quantify and can vary in gradations.

An additional limitation in the current secondary data analysis findings is that the data does not accurately account for demographic and economic changes that have developed since the 2020 economic fiscal year, the 2021 year, and our present moment. Numerous events have shaped the trajectory of these moments, from the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, into 2021 and 2022, the continuing rise of far right and Islamophobic policies, and the ongoing impacts of tariffs that the U.S. government has imposed on local industry and employment conditions. Demographic changes owing to migration have not been factored into these numbers, including the resettlement of over 50,000 refugees from Afghanistan across Canada that occurred post-data collection for the 2020 Census. Future research is needed to determine how conditions may have changed since the pandemic year of 2020.

Primary data

Issues of sample size also arose with respect to the results of the original survey where much finer intersectional analyses were not possible. For example, we were unable to assess the interacting effects between race and gender on any one outcome variable. For this reason, most of the analyses of primary data, though drawing attention to the particularities of sub-groups within the Muslim population, does so only with respect to either their race or their gender separately. In short, missing in our primary data analyses is a disaggregated analysis of group race and gender categories such as "Black Muslim women" with respect to all of the outcome/dependent variables of interest.

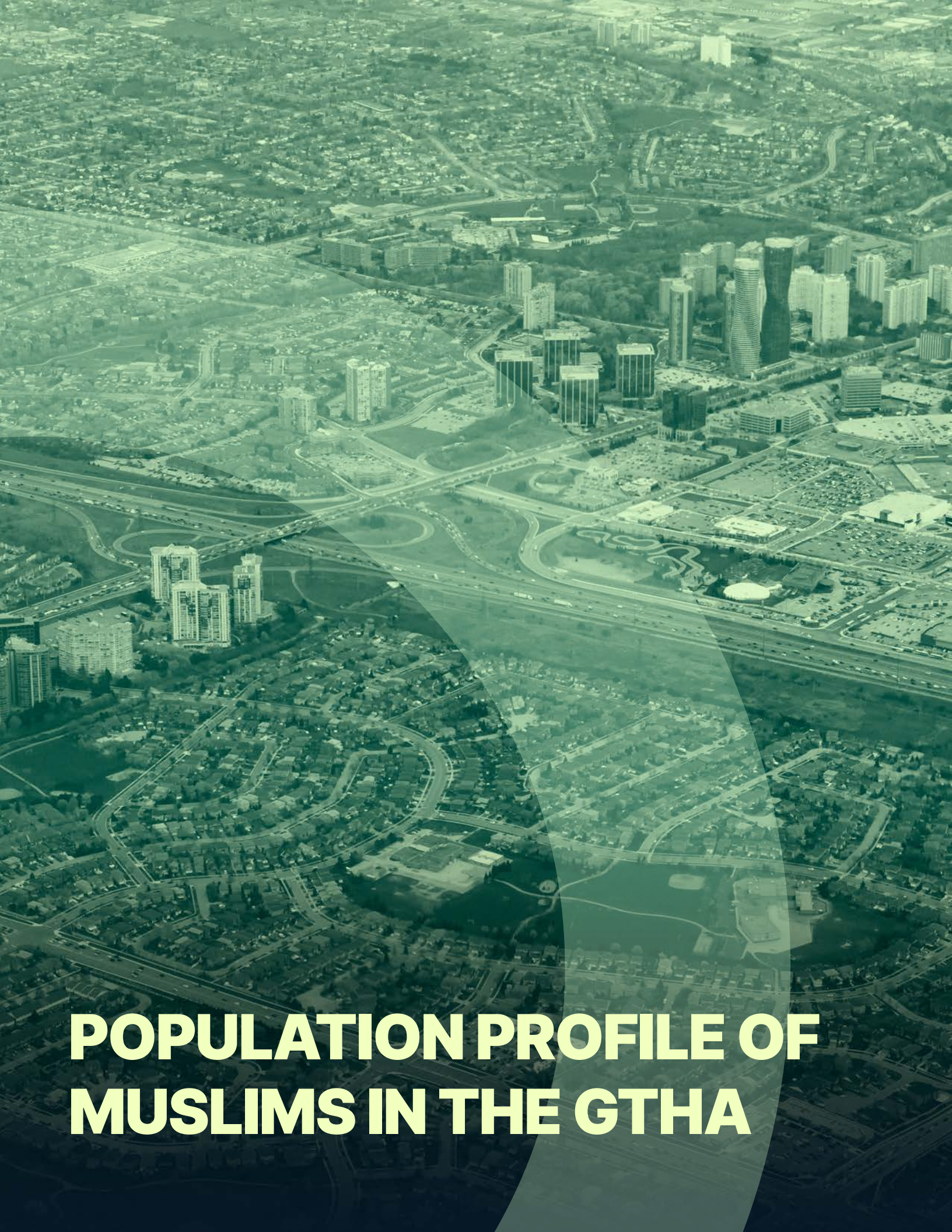
An additional limitation of the primary data in this study is that it does not allow for comparative analyses with non-Muslims. At this pilot stage, the survey participants were limited to just Muslim identifying individuals in the GTHA. The main intention behind this limitation was track response patterns specifically among Muslims: What questions seemed relevant to Muslims? Were there any glaring discrepancies that require further exploration? Can we identify core issues that we can further explore comparatively to non-Muslims?

Finally, given that the surveys were conducted using an online survey platform (managed by Léger Opinion), there is always a risk of panel-based sampling bias as respondents are drawn from a pre-recruited panel sample. Does this mean that their experiences may be systematically different from the population that they are meant to represent? To help account for the potential of panel-based sampling bias, a stratified sampling technique was used to help mirror the population demographic, and questions were included in the survey relative to income, migration status, and education that could be compared to patterns in similar variables analyzed using 2021 Census data. This was done to identify any potential, significant discrepancies between the samples in both datasets. It is important to note that the resulting data from both datasets did not exactly match in their results. For example, the proportion of Muslims with a bachelor degree as estimated from 2021 Census data was 29.7% whereas according to the online survey sample, and with respect to the year 2025, the weighted proportion with a bachelor's degree was 28.5%.

Nevertheless, more general patterns, such as a large proportion of Muslims having higher education credentials, were clear in both datasets. Ensuring the comparability of the samples in both datasets did not make them equivalent, especially given that one is from 2021 and the other was collected in 2025. However, it does add confidence to our ability to draw correlations between the datasets, especially with respect to the contextual and explanatory value lent by the original survey with respect to trying to understand the reasons behind the discrepancies in patterns in relative economic standing between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Error in data collection

Due to an unforeseen error in the "skip logic" in the original survey, individuals who identified themselves as self-employed contractors (freelancers; consultants; gig workers) (n=20) were excluded from answering any of the survey questions on experiences of discrimination, violence, or harassment while working. We nevertheless have gathered data on discrimination and harassment experiences of Muslims working in more standard forms of employment, and future research beyond this pilot study will investigate these problems for non-standard workers.

An aerial photograph of a city, likely the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), showing a mix of urban development, including high-rise buildings, residential areas, and green spaces. A large, semi-transparent green circle is overlaid on the right side of the image. In the bottom left corner, the text "POPULATION PROFILE OF MUSLIMS IN THE GTHA" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font. A large, white, semi-transparent number "1" is positioned in the center of the image, partially overlapping the green circle and the city landscape.

POPULATION PROFILE OF MUSLIMS IN THE GTHA

Clarifying the employment and labour market experiences of Muslims in Canada includes the need for an analytic portrait. For this pilot study, this involved highlighting the presence and the diversity of the Muslim population within the geographic regions of the GTHA.

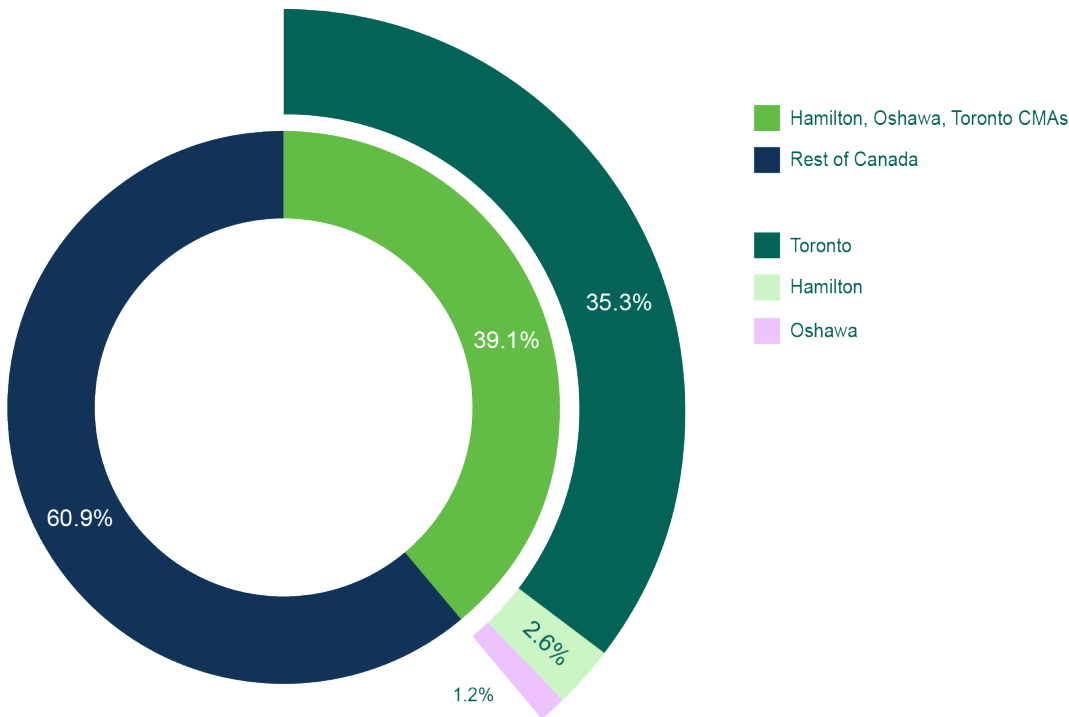
Based on data from the 2021 Census, almost **1 in 10 people (9.4%)** in the GTHA identify as Muslim, with a significant concentration in the TCMA (Table 1). Overall, the GTHA contains a larger concentration of Muslims than the rest of Canada, twice as many, where nationwide estimates for 2021 suggest that Muslims made up **4.8%** of the total population²⁴. In each of the three CMAs, and in Canada, Muslims constitute the largest religious minority group after Christians²⁵ and make up almost **5%** of the total Canadian population.

Table 1	
Percentage of Muslims relative to total population, by region	
Region	Percentage
Toronto Census Metropolitan Area (TCMA)	10.1%
Hamilton Census Metropolitan Area (HCMA)	5.9%
Oshawa Census Metropolitan Area (OCMA)	5.3%
Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA)	9.4%
Canada	4.8%

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File. Calculations by the author

In 2021, the Muslim population in the GTHA, taken as a combination of the Toronto, Hamilton, and Oshawa Census Metropolitan Areas, reached 694,610 people, representing **39.1%** of the total Muslim population in Canada (Chart 1). The Muslim population in the TCMA alone represents **35.3%** of the total Muslim population in Canada, and **90.1%** of the GTHA Muslim population (Table 2). The OCMA comprises the smallest share of the GTHA's Muslim population, with 22,160, or **3.2%** of the GTHA Muslim population.

Chart 1: Distribution of Muslims in Canada by select geographic regions



Source: Special Interest Profile, 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-26-00092021001

With respect to gender, the distribution between men+ and women+²⁶ is even, with Muslim men making up 50.2% of the Muslim population in the GTHA (Table 2).

Table 2				
Population distribution of Muslims in Canada by geographic region and gender				
Region	Men+	Women+	Total	% of total Muslim population
TCMA	314,390	311,620	626,010	35.3%
HCMA	23,085	23,350	46,435	2.6%
OCMA	11,460	10,700	22,160	1.2%
Rest of Canada	555,275	525,835	1,081,105	60.9%
Total	904,210	871,505	1,775,710	100%

Source: Special Interest Profile, 2021 Census of Population.
Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-26-00092021001

The Diversity²⁷ of Muslims in the GTHA

Visible minority status

Existing literature shows us that multiple social locations, whether in terms of race, gender, age²⁸, or migration status, influence economic standing and well-being²⁹. Therefore, highlighting the Muslim population's diversity helps draw attention to the intersecting experiences that frame the lives of individual Muslims and groups of Muslims in the GTHA with respect to their degree of economic inclusion and standing.

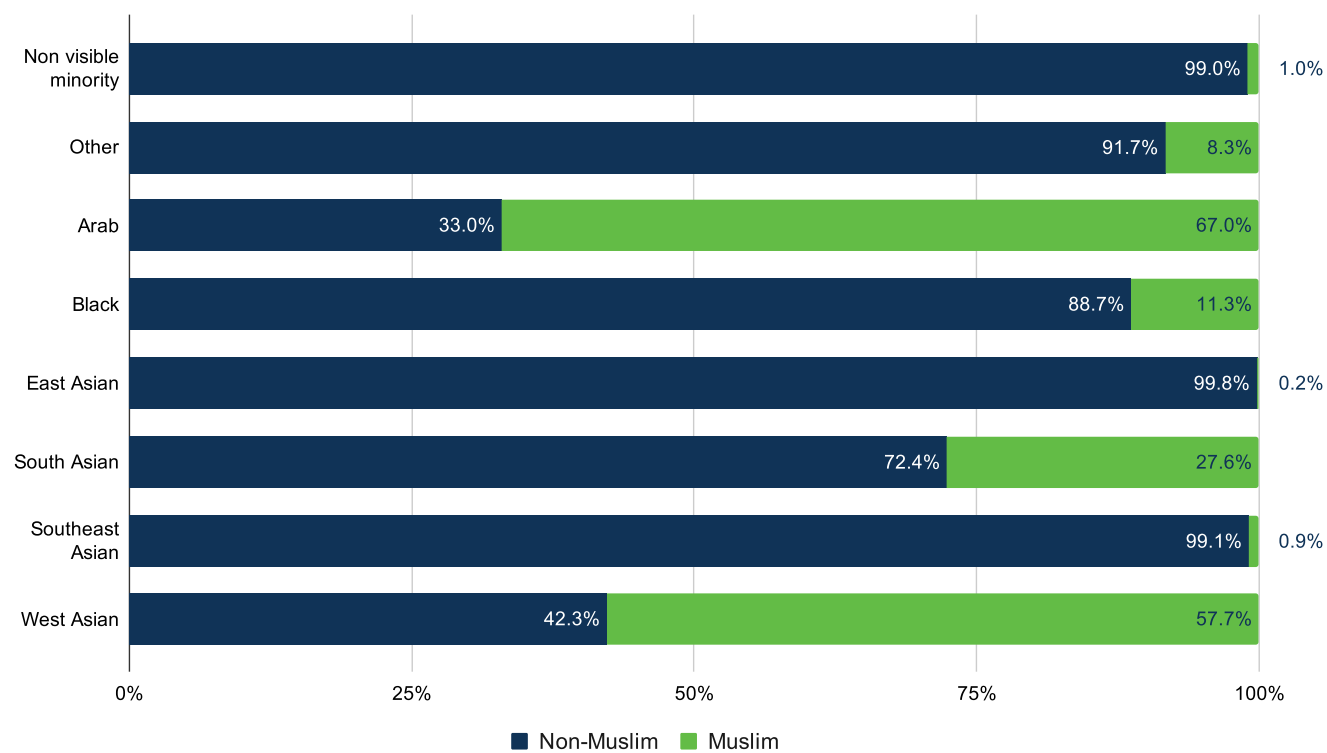
This report relies on the 2021 Census long-form questionnaire for race data that asked respondents to self-report their visible minority status³⁰. Based on the aggregate representation of Muslims in the GTHA within particular visible minority groups, only select categories have been highlighted while others have been collapsed into the category "other"³¹, or into more generalized visible minority group categories (e.g. Southeast Asian, East Asian³²).

In the GTHA, it is estimated that a significant majority (86.4%) of all Muslims identify with one the following four visible minority groups: South Asian (49.9%), West Asian (14.5%), Arab (13.9%), and Black (8.1%) (Statistics Canada, 2023). Those who self-identified as not a visible minority (excluding Indigenous people) constitute 4.8% of the population of Muslims in the GTHA (Statistics Canada). Approximately 8.8% of Muslims in the GTHA identify with groups classified in this report as "other," East Asian, or Southeast Asian.

It is estimated that the distribution of Muslims by visible minority status in the GTHA varies to some degree by CMA. For example, while South Asians constitute the largest share of the Muslim population in the GTHA overall, those Muslims identifying as Arab constitute the largest share (33.5%) in the HCMA, with South Asians coming in second (27.7%)³³. For further reference, see Chart 33: Breakdown of Muslims by visible minority group for each of the three CMAs that comprise the GTHA: 2021 in Appendix A.

Though South Asians make up the largest share of the Muslim population in the GTHA, self-identified Muslims make up a smaller share of the South Asian population (27.6%) when compared to other visible minority groups. For example, 2021 Census data shows us that Muslims make up 67% of the GTHA Arab population, and 57.7% of the West Asian population (Chart 2), while a little over 1 in 10 (11.3%) of the Black population in the GTHA identifies as Muslim (Chart 2).

Chart 2: Muslim population as a percentage of visible minority groups: GTHA, 2021

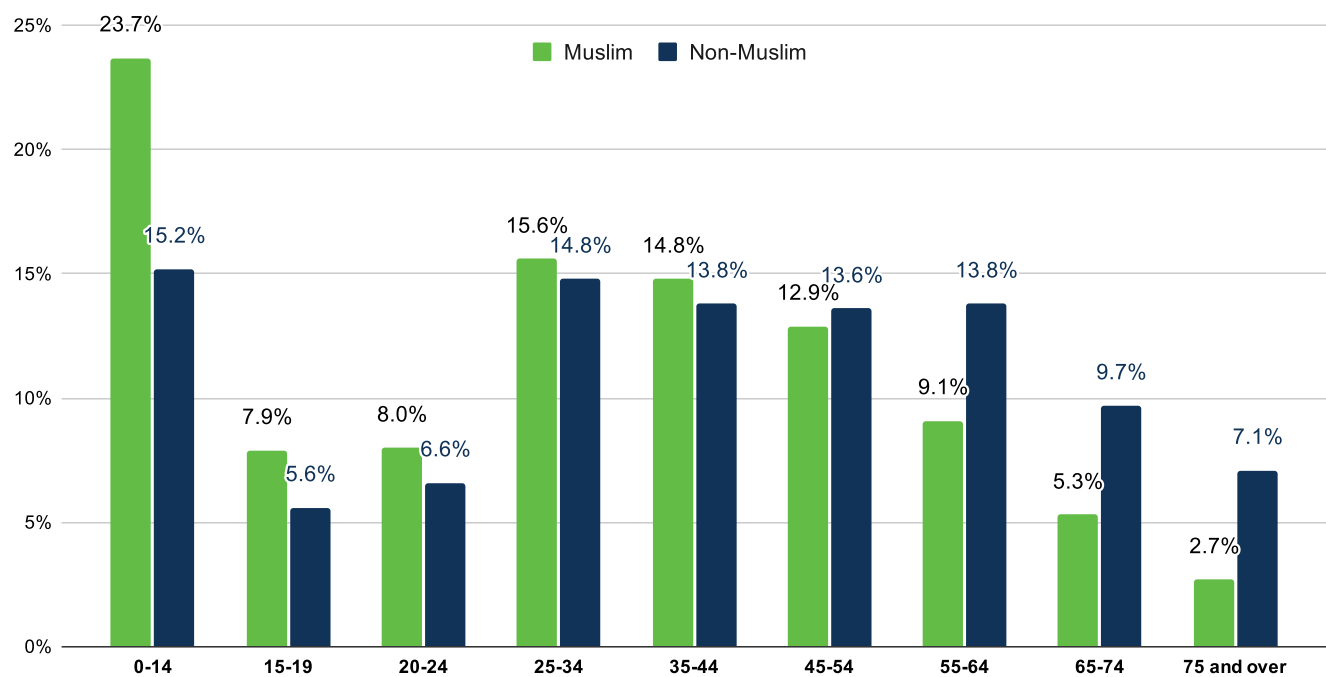


Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File

Age distribution

Data from the 2021 Census paints the picture of a Muslim population that is relatively younger when compared to the non-Muslim population (Chart 3). An estimated majority (55.2%) of Muslims in the GTHA are under the age of 35, compared to 42.2% of non-Muslims. Almost 1 in 3 (31.6%) of the GTHA Muslim population are 19 years and younger, compared to 20.8% of the non-Muslim population (Chart 5). Conversely, 30.6% of non-Muslims in the GTHA are 55 or older, but that proportion is only 17.1% for Muslims. In 2021, the largest share by age-group of Muslims in the GTHA, almost 1 in 4 (23.7%), were between the ages 0–14 years (Chart 3).

Chart 3: Age distribution of Muslims and non-Muslims: GTHA, 2021



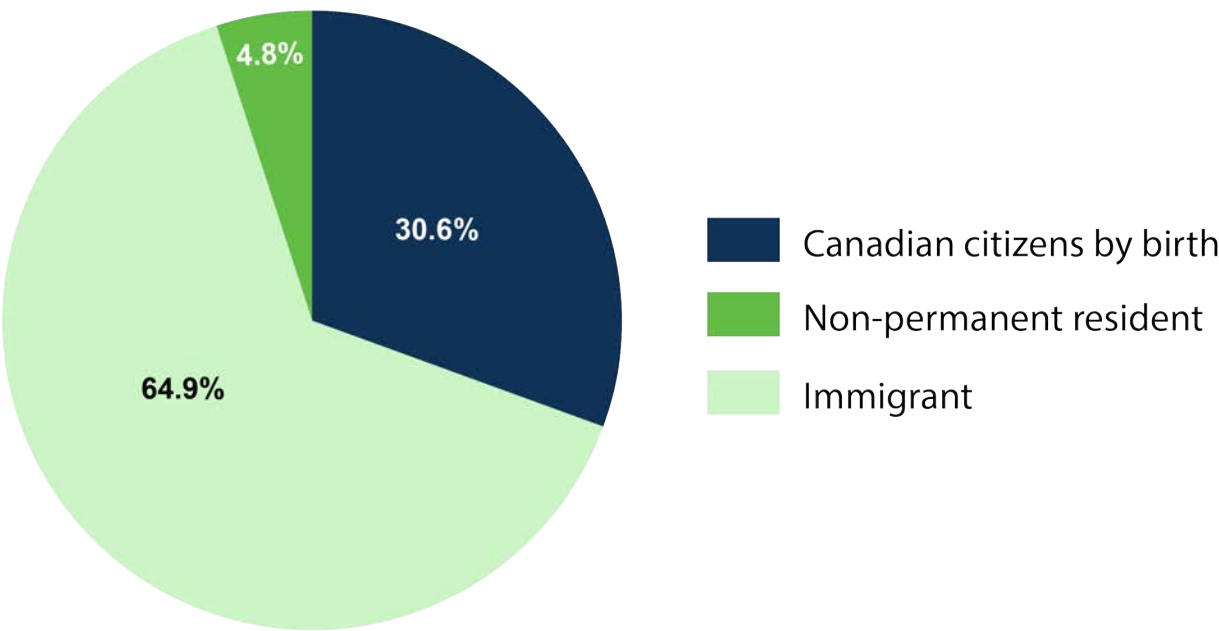
Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File

Citizenship and immigration status of Muslims in the GTHA

A large majority, nearly 4 out of 5 (79%) Muslims in the GTHA, are Canadian citizens either by birth or naturalization. Nevertheless, more than two thirds (69.3%) of Muslims in the GTHA were not born in Canada (Chart 4). Of that percentage, 4.4% are non-permanent residents; a category that can include asylum claimants (refugee status) or those holding non-permanent work and/or study permits³⁴ (Chart 4). Overall, a significant majority of Muslims in the GTHA can be classified as immigrants (64.9%), which includes those who have Canadian citizenship by naturalization (48.4%) and those who are “not a Canadian citizen” (16.5%) (Chart 4).

These percentages varied to some degree depending on visible minority group. For example, it is estimated that 39.9% of Black Muslims were Canadian citizens by birth, but that percentage was 22.4% for West Asian Muslims³⁵, likely reflecting the historical timing of different waves of migration to Canada.

Chart 4: Citizenship and immigration status of Muslims: GTHA, 2021



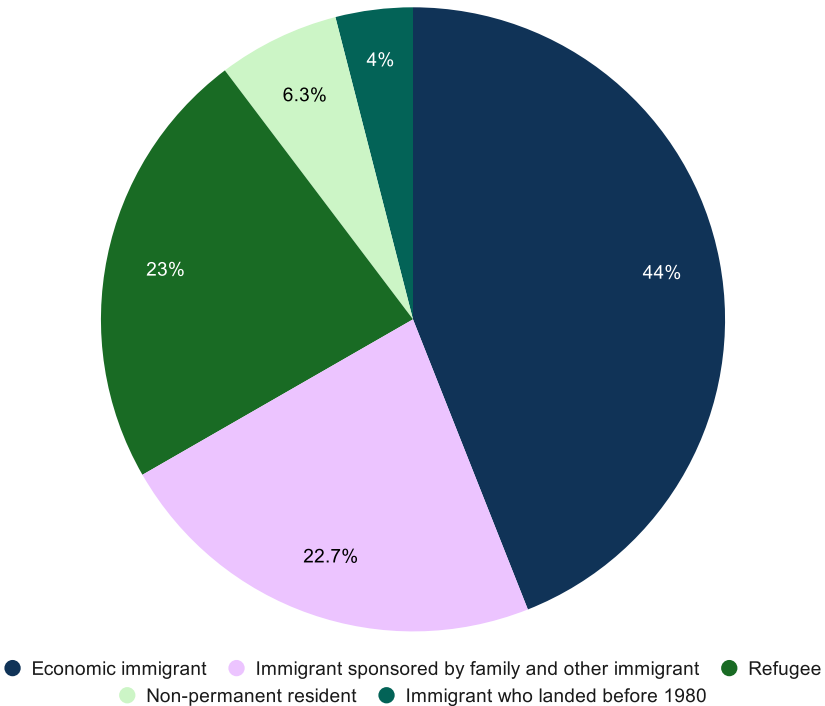
Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

Admission category of GTHA Muslims born outside of Canada

Existing research reveals variations in earnings and labour market outcomes for (im)migrants depending on admission category. For example, refugees tend to fare less well in terms of earnings when compared to family-class immigrants³⁶, while those admitted under the family class or as refugees are predicted to have weaker economic outcomes than economic class immigrants³⁷.

For these reasons, it is noteworthy to include in the analysis of the economic integration of Muslims in the GTHA a relative breakdown of admission categories of those who migrated to Canada. Data and classifications categories from the 2021 Census show that the largest share (44%) of GTHA Muslims can be classified as economic immigrants, followed by refugee claimants (23%), and ‘immigrants sponsored by family and other immigrants’ (22.7%) (Chart 5). The smallest share (4.0%) were immigrants who landed before 1980³⁸.

Chart 5: Admission categories of Muslims who were born outside of Canada: GTHA, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

**PART 1: MEASURES OF
ECONOMIC STANDING
OF MUSLIMS IN THE GTHA**

SECTION 1: HOUSEHOLD AND DWELLING

Existing data support evidence of a correlation between family type³⁹ and calculations of total household income⁴⁰. More specifically, family type has an effect on total household income by virtue of the number of income earners in the household as well as related government supports received for/by family members. Household composition, for example, family size, also plays a factor into calculations of income rankings, such as Statistics Canada's Economic Family⁴¹ after-tax income decile groupings.

For these reasons, gaining insights into the household composition of Muslims in the GTHA can prove helpful in contextualizing household economic standing, and to help inform future research into the economic standing and well-being of Muslim households.

In its exploration of household and dwelling, and of related measures of economic standing, of Muslim households in the GTHA, this section will focus on:

- **Household composition**
- **Total household income**
- **Dwelling type and tenure status (ownership vs. rental)**

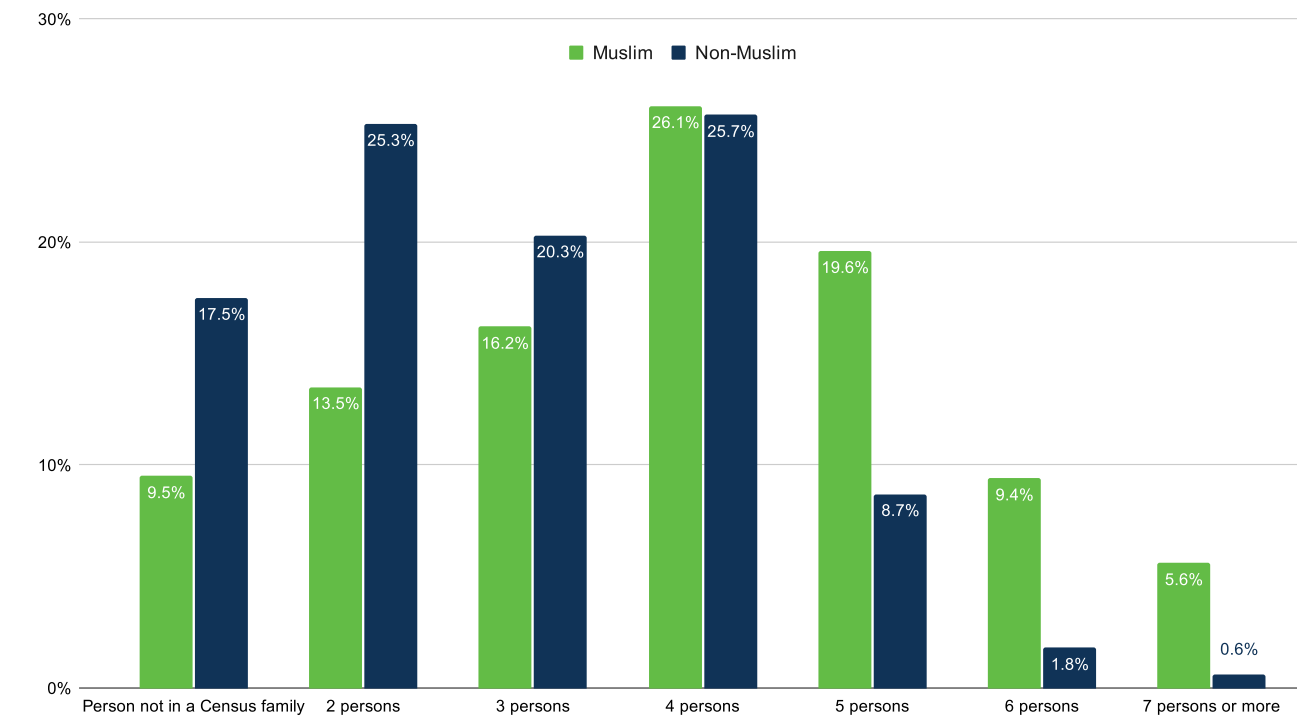
Secondary data from the 2021 Census and primary data from the original online survey is drawn upon to help develop a portrait of household and dwelling characteristics for GTHA Muslims, while maintaining the distinctiveness of both data sources:



Household composition

According to 2021 Census data, a majority (57.4%) of Muslims aged 18 years and over are married, with the remainder either living in a common-law relationship (1.5%) or not married and and not living in a common-law relationship (42.5%)⁴². With respect to households, 2021 Census estimates suggest that Muslims in the GTHA tend to live in larger families when compared to their non-Muslim counterparts. For example, it is estimated that 60.7% of Muslims in the GTHA live in families of four or more, compared to only 36.8% of non-Muslims (Chart 6). Census estimates from 2021 suggest that a larger proportion of Muslims in the GTHA were part of households comprising six or more persons at 15% compared to only 2.4% of non-Muslims (Chart 6).

Chart 6: Family* size distribution among Muslims and non-Muslims: GTHA, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author.

*The variable here is the Statistics Canada classification of a Census Family.

Total household income

According to 2021 Census data, the median total household income in Canada (2020) was \$84,000 and \$91,000 for Ontario⁴³. Estimates of median total household income for the Toronto region (TCMA) were \$97,000⁴⁴, \$102,000 for the Oshawa Census Metropolitan Area (OCMA), and \$91,000 for the Hamilton Census Metropolitan Area (HCMA)⁴⁵. Across the three CMAs that make up the GTHA, median total household income ranged from \$91,000 to \$102,000.

Data from the 2021 Census, with reference to the 2020 fiscal year, indicate that a larger share of the non-Muslim population (61%) had a total household income of \$100,000 and above, compared to 50% of the Muslim population (Table 3)⁴⁶. It is estimated that non-Muslims have not had a substantially higher share of households falling in the total household income category of \$150,000 and above (37%) compared to Muslims (26%) (Table 3 and Chart 7). An estimated 1 in 3 (32%) Muslims in the GTHA have total household incomes at \$74,999 or below⁴⁷.

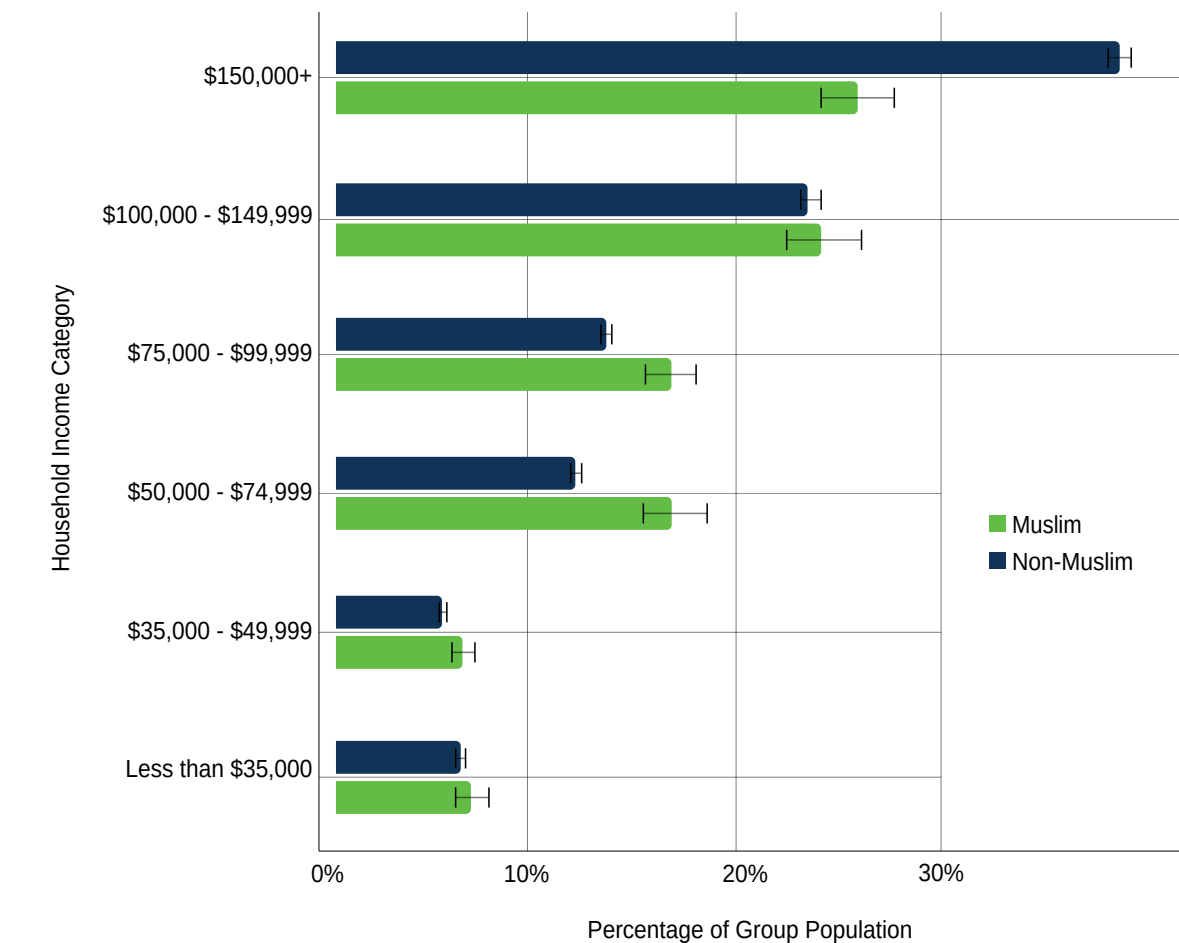
Table 3

Total household income of Muslims and non-Muslims: GTHA, 2020

	Non- Muslims			Muslims		
Household income group	Proportion	95% CI (lower bound)	95% CI (upper bound)	Proportion	95% CI (lower bound)	95% CI (upperbound)
Less than \$35,000	7%	7%	7%	8%	7%	8%
\$35,000 – \$49,999	6%	6%	6%	7%	6%	8%
\$50,000 – \$74,999	12%	12%	12%	17%	16%	19%
\$75,000 – \$99,999	14%	13%	14%	17%	16%	18%
\$100,000 – \$149,999	24%	24%	24%	24%	23%	26%
\$150,000 +	37%	37%	38%	26%	25%	28%

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author.

Chart 7: Comparative total household income distribution between Muslims and non-Muslims, with 95% Confidence Intervals: GTHA, 2020



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author.

Further analysis was conducted to account for the intersection of visible minority status and religious affiliation in relation to total household income. Total household income data in the PUMF is stored as a categorical variable, giving income ranges as opposed to the numerical income values. Calculations revealed that for the three CMA's (what we define here as the GTHA), the median total household income range is \$110–\$119,999. In other words, exactly half of the households in the GTHA fall beneath, and half fall above, the total household income range of \$110,000–\$199,000.

Using this calculated range, we wanted to identify what proportion of Muslims and non-Muslims, disaggregated by visible minority status, fall at or above the \$110,000–\$199,000 range (Table 4). In short, the calculations in Table 4 reveal what proportion of each group have a total household income of \$110,000 and above.

Estimated results indicate that overall, a larger percentage of non-Muslims (56%) have total household incomes at or above \$110,000 when compared to Muslims (45%) (Table 4). When disaggregated by visible minority status, all Muslim groups have lower percentages meeting the \$110,000 total household income threshold compared to their non-Muslim counterparts, though with

some noted overlap in the calculated 95% confidence intervals (Table 4). South Asian Muslims had a share of 52% (95% CI: 49%–55%) above the \$110,000 threshold when compared to 61% (95% CI: 59%–62%) of non-Muslim South Asians, and for Black Muslims, the proportion was 36% (95% CI: 30%–42%) compared to 45% (95% CI: 42%–47%) for the non-Muslim Black population (Table 4). The demographic groups with the smallest share at or above \$110,000 in total household income include East Asian Muslims (32%) and West Asian Muslims (35%) (Table 4).

Table 4

Muslims and non-Muslims, by visible minority status, falling at/above a total household income of \$110,000: GTHA, 2020

Religious Affiliation	Visible Minority Status	Proportion	95% CI (Lower Bound)	95% CI (Upper Bound)
Non-Muslim	All groups	56%	56%	57%
	Non-visible minority	58%	57%	59%
	Arab	45%	37%	53%
	Black	45%	42%	47%
	East Asian	48%	47%	50%
	South Asian	61%	59%	62%
	West Asian	45%	40%	51%
	Southeast Asian	61%	58%	63%
	Other	56%	55%	57%
Muslim	All groups	45%	43%	46%
	Non-visible minority	39%	33%	46%
	Arab	37%	34%	39%
	Black	36%	30%	42%
	East Asian	32%	11%	65%
	South Asian	52%	49%	55%
	West Asian	35%	32%	39%
	Southeast Asian	46%	29%	63%
	Other	45%	41%	49%

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author.

Future research that disaggregates by household size (with interest in the amount of income earners in the household) as well as accounting for geographic region would prove helpful in more pointedly identifying the inferred association between religious affiliation (Muslim vs non-Muslim) and total household income.

Dwelling type and tenure status

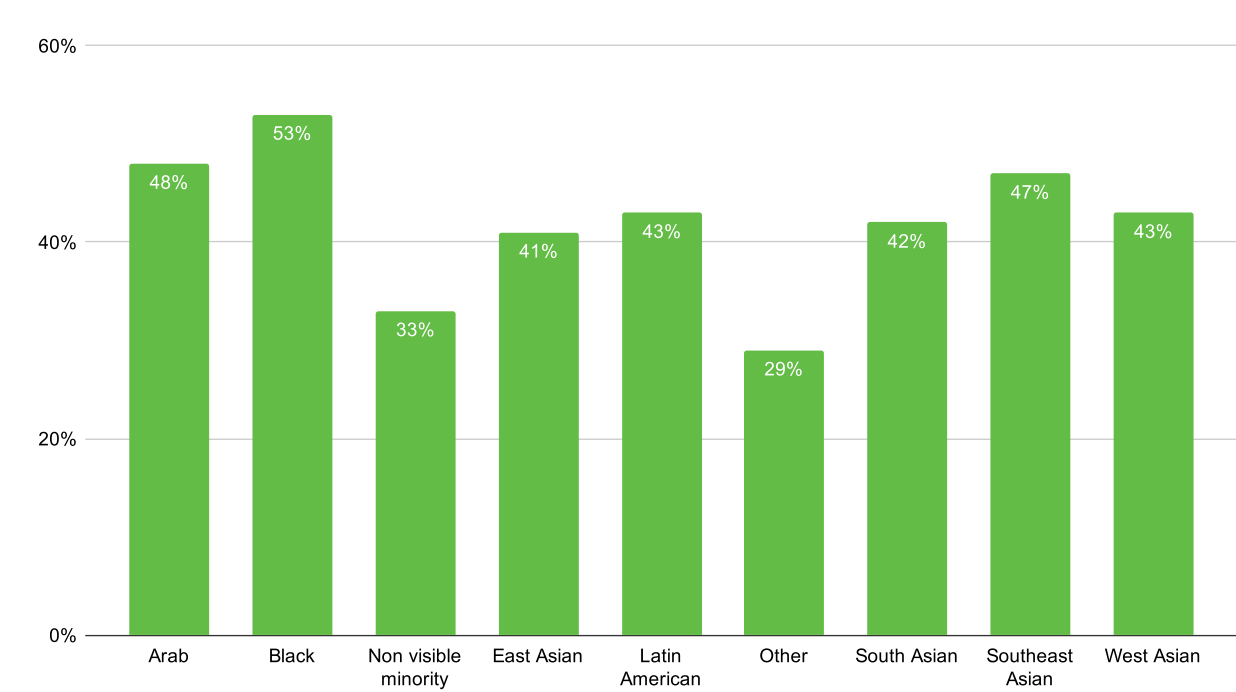
With respect to property ownership, 58.1% of Muslim households in the GTHA own their dwelling (Table 5). This is less than the percentage of non-Muslim household ownership at a proportion of 72.9%, indicating a 14.8 percentage point difference. Inferential analyses using a log linear model further confirmed the statistical significance between religious affiliation (Muslim vs. non-Muslim) and housing outcomes (tenure status and dwelling type) ($p < 0.0001$)⁴⁸. Evidence from the analyses suggest that patterns in housing outcomes as observed in the 2021 Census sample data are highly unlikely to occur as they have, if without the religious affiliation effect..

Table 5				
Dwelling type by tenure status, Muslims and non-Muslims: GTHA, 2021				
	Muslim		Non-Muslim	
	Owner	Not Property Owner	Owner	Not Property Owner
Apartment	11.5%	28.9%	11.3%	19.1%
Single detached home	32.2%	5.9%	47.2%	4.1%
Other dwelling⁴⁹	14.4%	7.1%	14.4%	3.9%
Total	100%		100%	

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author.

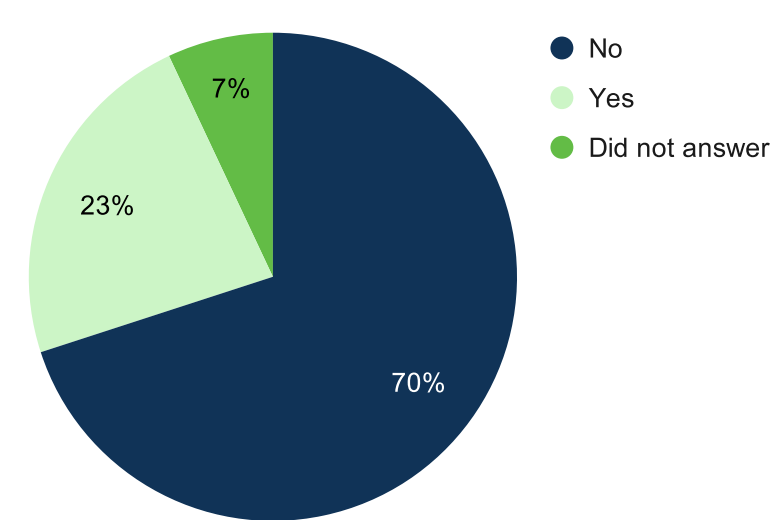
Similarly, estimates from the online original survey suggest that dwelling ownership for Muslims rests just above half the population, at 56%. Results disaggregated by race indicate that when compared to other visible minority sub-groups in the Muslim community, Black Muslims are more likely to live in a rented place of dwelling (53%), followed by Arab Muslims (48%) (Chart 8).

Chart 8: Share of Muslims (18–69 years) by visible minority status who live in a rented dwelling: GTHA, 2025



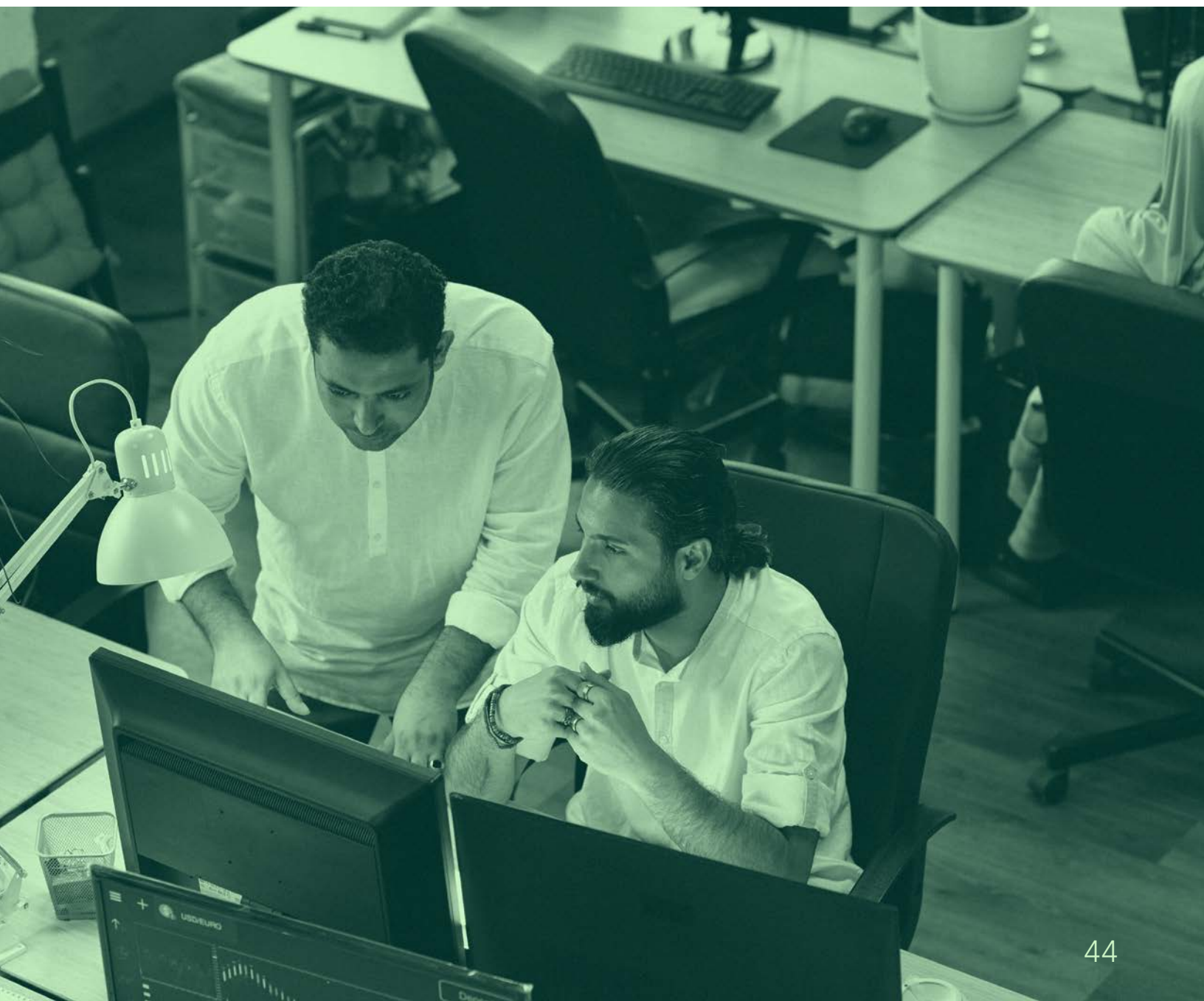
Respondents to the original survey who lived in a rented dwelling were also asked whether their place of dwelling is subsidized. It is estimated that almost 1 in 4 (23%) GTHA Muslims living in rented housing in 2025 reside in subsidized housing units (Chart 9)⁵⁰. The sample size of respondents who rent their place of dwelling and live in a subsidized rental (n=23) was unfortunately too small to conduct any thorough disaggregated/intersectional analyses along lines of visible minority status.

Chart 9: Estimated proportion of Muslims whose rented place of dwelling is subsidized: GTHA, 2025



SECTION 2: LABOUR FORCE STATUS

This section of the report examines primary (reference period: 2025) and secondary (reference period: 2021) data related to the labour force status of Muslims in the GTHA. Secondary data analysis includes a comparative analysis between Muslims and non-Muslims to help better contextualize labour force status rates for the Muslim community. Labour force status incorporates information relative to employment, unemployment, and labour force participation. Secondary and primary data sources will continue to be analyzed separately, though with the intention of providing a composite picture.



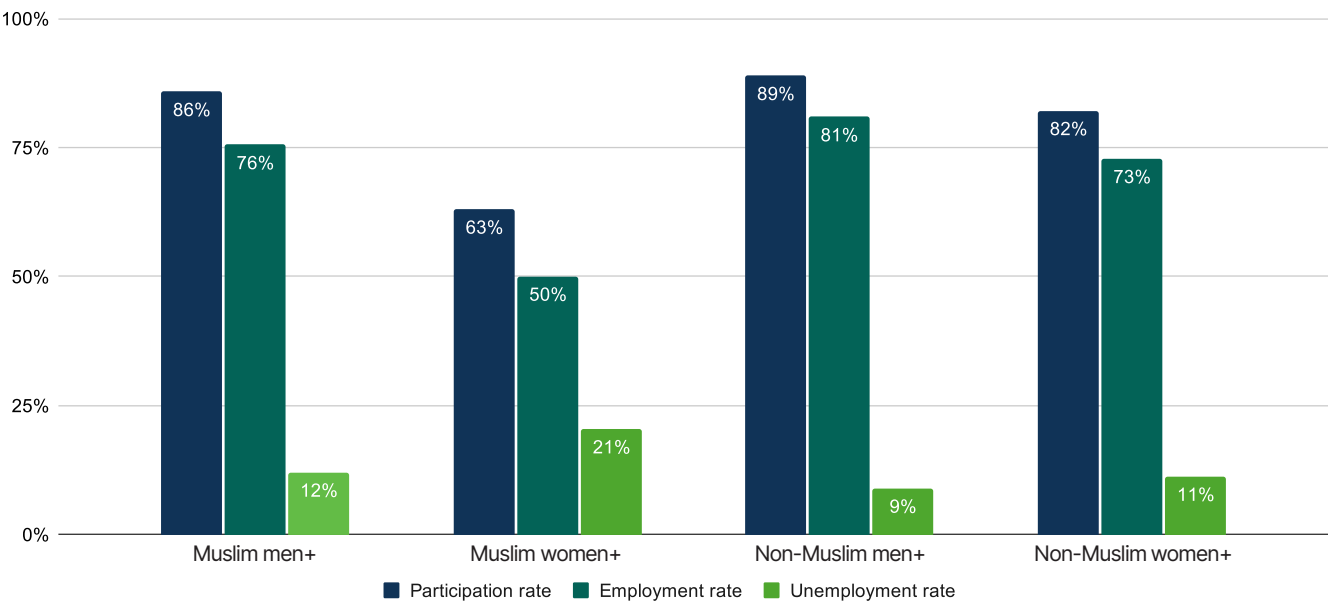
Secondary data⁵¹

Data from the 2021 Census on labour force status has been filtered to include only those individuals who are within “prime working age” or “core age,”⁵² which is 25–54 years old. This “prime age” range is considered the “peak” working-age range in Canada, typically reflecting rates significantly different than youth workers (15–24 years) and older workers (55+). Such filtering allows the analysis to draw more confident correlations between religious affiliation and labour force status while controlling for age variations.

When examining participation, employment, and unemployment rates, keep in mind that:

- The participation rate measures the share of the population group that is active in the labour force (this includes those employed or those unemployed who are actively looking for work).
- The employment rate measures the share of the total population group that is employed.
- The unemployment rate measures the share of the population group active/participating in the labour force that is currently without work and are looking for work.

Chart 10: Labour force status of Muslims and non-Muslims, prime-wage workers (25–54 years): GTHA, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, Table 98-10-0657-01 and Statistics Canada, Table 98-10-0656-01. Calculations by the author.

As indicated in Chart 10, 2021 Census estimates suggest clear differences in labour force participation rates between genders, with men having higher participation rates than women. This difference is markedly larger for Muslim workers, with Muslim men having a participation rate that is 22.8 percentage points higher than Muslim women, compared to a 6.8 percentage point difference between non-Muslim men and women. Overall, Muslim women have the overall lowest participation rate at 63.1%.

It is estimated that Muslim women also have a disproportionately higher unemployment rate (20.5%), which measures those individuals who are active in the labour force, but without work. The lowest unemployment rate was for non-Muslim men (9%) followed by non-Muslim women (11.3%) (Chart 10).

When the 2021 Census data on labour force status is further disaggregated by visible minority status, the lowest estimated participation rates are for Muslim Arab women at 55.3%, followed by Black Muslim women (59.3%) (Table 6). Arab and Black Muslim women also have the highest unemployment rate from all other indicated demographic groups, at 23.8% and 23.2%, respectively (Table 6).

With respect to disaggregated unemployment rates, visible minority Muslim men reported unemployment rates that were higher than all of their non-Muslim counterparts, with the exception of East Asian Muslim men (9.2% compared to 9.7% for non-Muslim East Asian men). Black Muslim men had the highest unemployment rate of any other identified male demographic group at 19.7% which reflects a 5.9 percentage point difference when compared to non-Muslim Black men (13.8%) (Table 6). Non-Muslim Black men had the third highest unemployment rate among all of the identified male demographic groups, after Arab Muslim men (14.0%) (Table 6). The unemployment rate was lowest for non-Muslim, non-visible minority men at 8.5%, which reflects an 11 percentage point difference when compared to the rate for Black Muslim men.

Despite the disparities in gender with respect to shaping labour force status, the overall unemployment rate for non-Muslim women (11.3%) was lower than that for all visible and non-visible minority groups of Muslim men with the exception of South Asian (10.1%) and East Asian (9.2%) Muslim men (Table 6).

Within the Muslim community, both men and women categorized as belonging to a visible minority group had lower employment rates when compared to all of their non-Muslim counterparts. While both Muslim and non-Muslim visible minority groups had estimated employment rates below non-visible minority, non-Muslim men and women (Table 6).

These estimates from 2021 Census data suggest a discrepancy in labour force status rates relative to religious affiliation with prime-age Muslims in the GTHA having overall higher unemployment rates (Chart 11), lower participation rates, and lower employment rates than their non-Muslim counterparts (Table 6).

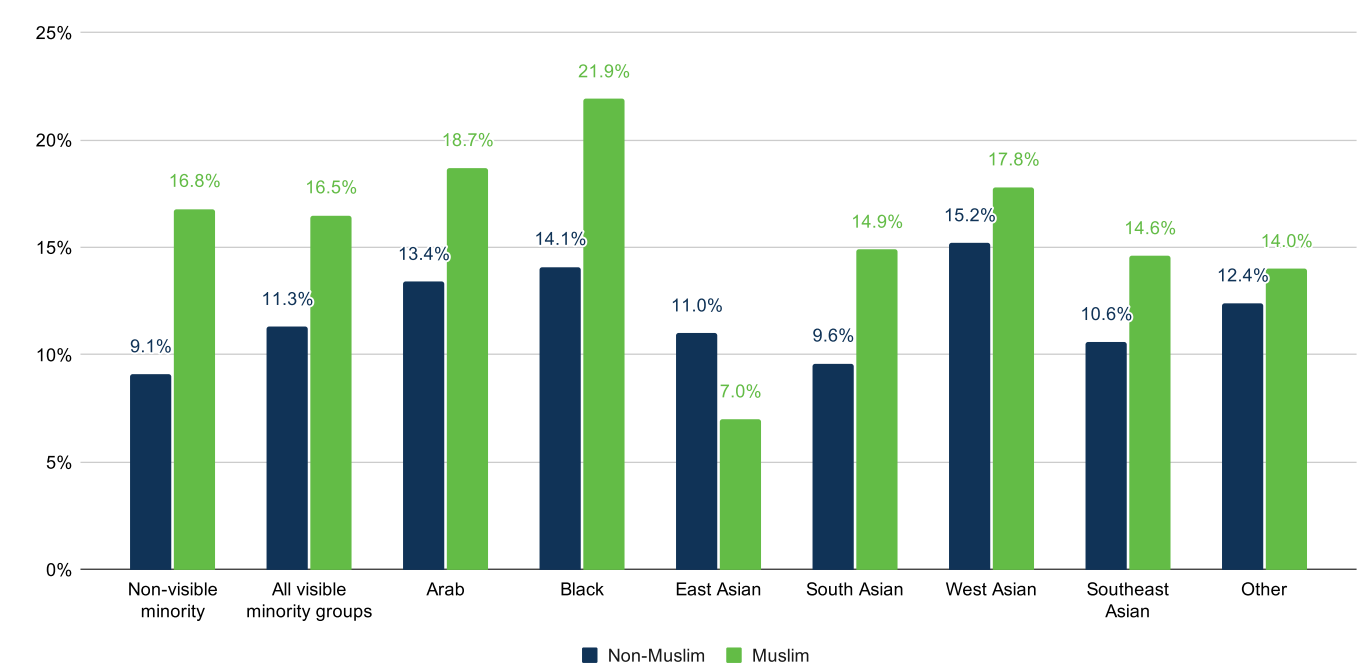
Table 6

Employment, unemployment, and participation rates for Muslims and non-Muslims, by visible minority status, prime-age workers (25–54 years): GTHA, 2021

		Men+			Women+			Total		
		Participation rate	Employment rate	Unemployment rate	Participation rate	Employment rate	Unemployment rate	Participation rate	Employment rate	Unemployment rate
Non-Muslim	Non visible minority	89.7	82.0	8.5	84.3	76.0	9.8	87.0	79.0	9.1
	All visible minority groups	88.4	79.9	9.7	80.3	70.1	12.7	84.1	74.7	11.3
	Arab	85.5	76.0	11.1	72.9	61.4	15.8	79.5	69.0	13.4
	Black	84.4	72.7	13.8	80.5	68.9	14.4	82.3	70.6	14.1
	East Asian	85.7	77.3	9.7	77.3	68.0	12.0	81.1	72.2	11.0
	South Asian	92.1	85.4	7.3	81.5	71.7	12.0	86.9	78.6	9.6
	West Asian	85.7	75.0	12.5	75.3	62.0	17.9	80.5	68.5	15.2
	Southeast Asian	89.4	81.1	9.5	84.6	75.2	11.4	86.7	77.7	10.6
	Other	87.8	78.4	10.7	79.9	68.8	13.9	83.6	73.3	12.4
Muslim	Non visible Minority	84.0	73.7	12.4	63.7	50.3	21.1	73.8	62.0	16.8
	All visible minority groups	86.0	75.7	12.1	63.0	50.1	20.6	74.1	62.5	16.5
	Arab	81.6	70.1	14.0	55.3	42.6	23.2	68.4	56.3	18.7
	Black	78.9	63.3	19.7	59.3	45.3	23.8	68.5	53.7	21.9
	East Asian	86.3	77.9	9.2	64.1	59.7	5.8	71.9	66.1	7.0
	South Asian	89.9	80.7	10.1	64.8	52.2	19.5	77.0	66.1	14.9
	West Asian	82.0	71.3	13.1	63.9	49.9	21.9	72.4	60.0	17.8
	Southeast Asian	88.0	78.1	11.4	72.1	60.4	16.3	77.7	66.6	14.6
	Other	84.0	73.3	12.2	67.3	56.9	15.7	75.3	64.7	14.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Table 98-10-0657-01 and Statistics Canada, Table 98-10-0656-01. Calculations by the author.

Chart 11: Muslim and non-Muslim unemployment rates by visible minority status, prime-age workers (25–54 years): GTHA, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, Table 98-10-0657-01 and Statistics Canada, Table 98-10-0656-01. Calculations by the author.

Primary data

To gain more insight into the employment and labour market experiences of Muslims in the GTHA (18–69 years), participants in the online original survey (n=423) were asked questions that elaborated on their current labour force status. For example, if they have never sought paid employment, what were the main reasons? Have discrimination-related barriers played a role in their job-seeking decisions? If they are currently unemployed, did they lose their job or leave their job? If they are unemployed, in which sectors are they seeking employment in? And if they are not looking to reenter the labour market, why not?

Survey results are shared in two groups:

- Those not active in the labour force
- Those active in the labour force but currently unemployed

Never worked or not seeking reentry into the labour market

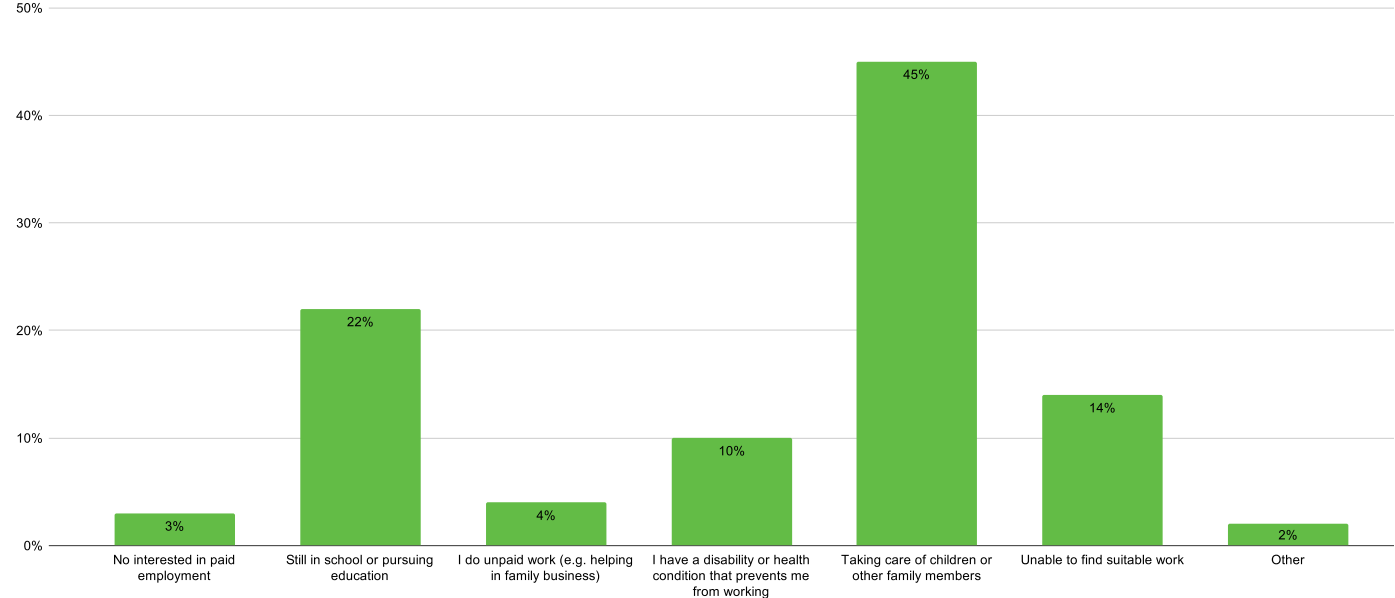
Survey estimates suggest that approximately 10% of Muslims in the GTHA have never worked at a paid job or business. When they were asked to identify the mains reasons, 3% were ‘Not interested in paid employment’ (Chart 12). The largest share of respondents (45%) has never worked because they are ‘taking care of children or other family members,’ followed by still being in school/pursuing education (22%), and the inability to find suitable work (14%).

It is estimated that almost half (49%) are engaged in some form of unpaid labour, whether childcare, caring for other family members, or unpaid work at a family business given as the main reasons for not participating in the labour market (Chart 12). In total, the largest estimated share of Muslims not active in the labour market is due primarily to childcare/family responsibilities, which helps to shed light on the gendered participation rates indicated through the 2021 Census data; childcare and unpaid labour in the home often falls on women's shoulders.⁵³

Our survey fundings support this hypothesis when the responses of those who have never worked, and the main reasons as to why, are disaggregated by gender. Using survey data, we estimate that Muslim women are almost twice as likely to have never worked at a paid job or business (13%) when compared to Muslim men (7%). When exploring reasons for not working with attention to gender, estimates reveal that Muslim women are more likely than men to not hold paid labour due to unpaid childcare and family responsibilities at 68%, compared to 46% for Muslim men.

A pattern related to fulfilling family responsibilities in the home reveals itself through the survey data on reasons that those who are currently unemployed, no longer have a job. Based on responses, unemployed Muslims in the GTHA in 2025 who left their job, as opposed to lost their job, 31% did so in order to care for their own children, while 29% left their job to care for an elderly relative. An estimated 7% left their job for 'other personal or family responsibilities.' When unemployed respondents that were not seeking new employment were asked why, the subject of family care responsibilities once again framed the largest share, with an estimated 51% not seeking reemployment due to either caring for their own children (29%), caring for an elderly relative (12%), or other family responsibilities (10%).

Chart 12: Main reasons for never working at a paid job or business for Muslims in the GTHA (18–69 years): 2025



In addition to identifying some of the main reasons for never having entered the labour market, survey participants who have never worked were also asked whether fear of discrimination or past incidences of discrimination played a role in their job-seeking decisions. Online survey results suggest that among Muslims in the GTHA with no prior work experience, 42% held discrimination-related concerns that continue to influence their workforce participation decisions, with 6% having fears of discrimination as a significant concern, and 36% noting it as having some impact on their decision.

Those active in the labour force but currently unemployed

Estimates from the online survey suggest that approximately 1 in 4 (24%) Muslims in the GTHA were, at the time of survey participation, unemployed. This includes estimates that 36% left their jobs and 41% were either laid off, lost their job, or the job ended⁵⁴. When disaggregated by gender, results indicate that Muslim women were more likely to be unemployed due to job loss (47%) compared to Muslim men (27.8%). Of all of those that lost their job (men and women), an estimated 39% were working in casual, temporary, or contract work arrangements. An estimate of 9% lost their job due to dismissal or were fired by their employer.

Insight into factors compelling workers to leave their jobs, as opposed to losing their jobs, have been shared in the section above, with a large share citing unpaid family responsibilities.

SECTION 3: SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

This section of the report will draw on primary (reference: 2025) and secondary (reference: 2021) data on the sector and occupation characteristics of Muslims in the GTHA. In addition to analyzing the distribution of workers in the GTHA by occupation and industry, the story of the labour force characteristics of Muslims in the GTHA will include a focus on underemployment issues.

Statistical results in this section are separated into three groups:

- Relying on 2021 Census data, an overview of the highest level of education attainment among Muslims in the GTHA aged 25–64 years. This data point is significant to include in our analysis to frame issues of underemployment when assessing the broader sectoral and occupation segmentations of Muslims in the GTHA. Expanding on data relative to highest education will be primary data results from the original survey that help shed light on the potential related barriers experienced regarding credential recognition and the ability to find and hold work in one's field.
- A disaggregated distribution of prime-age workers in the GTHA by occupation with attention to religious affiliation (Muslim and non-Muslim), gender, and visible minority status.
- A disaggregated distribution of the labour force in the GTHA by industry sector, with attention to religious affiliation (Muslim and non-Muslim), visible minority status, and gender.



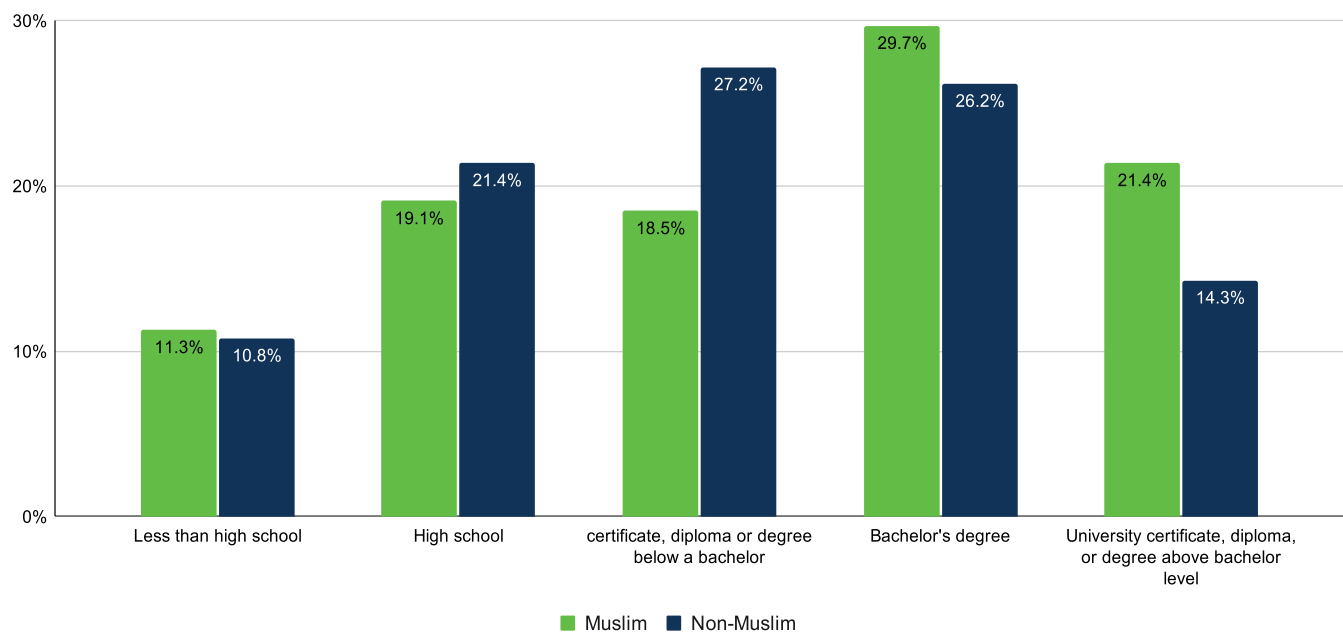
Education levels and credential recognition of Muslims in the GTHA

This sub-section includes secondary (2021) and primary data (2025) (n=423) relative to the education credentials of Muslims in the GTHA.

Secondary data

Census data from 2021 suggests a relatively highly educated Muslim population, with an estimated half (51.1%) of Muslims in the GTHA (25–64 years) holding a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to 40.5% of non-Muslims in the same age range (Chart 13). It is estimated that just over 1 in 5 (21.4%) GTHA Muslims (25–64 years) have a university certificate, diploma, or degree above a bachelor level⁵⁵, compared to 14.3% of non-Muslims (Chart 13). The proportion of Muslims aged 25–64 in the GTHA with a bachelor’s degree or higher (51.1%) is greater than that for either the “total visible minority population” or “not visible minority” populations in each of the three CMAs that make up the boundaries of the GTHA⁵⁶. For example, in the TCMA, the total visible minority population has a percentage proportion holding a bachelor’s degree or higher of 49.2%, and that percentage is 42.9% of the non-visible minority population.

Chart 13: Highest level of education attainment among Muslims and non-Muslims (25–64 years): GTHA, 2021



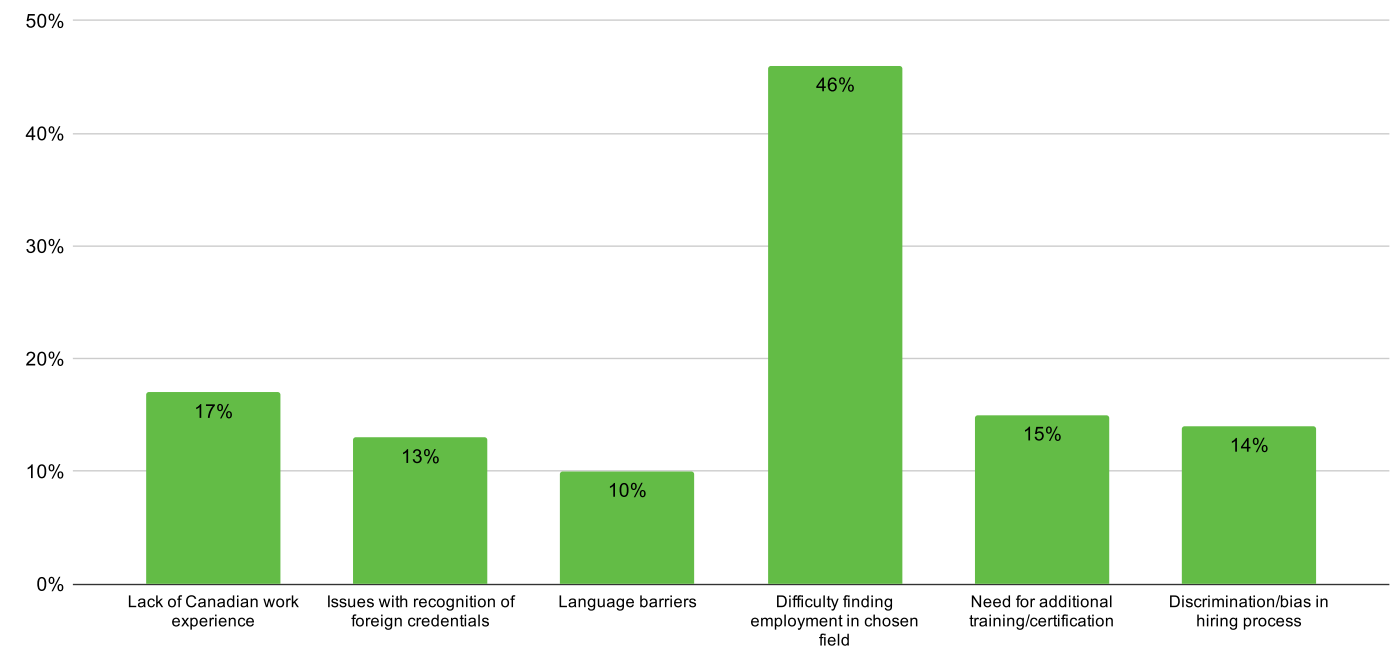
Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File. Calculations by the author

Primary data

Participants in the online survey were asked whether they completed their highest level of education inside or outside of Canada. Estimates suggests that a larger share (55%) of GTHA Muslims completed their education in Canada, and 28% completed it outside of Canada⁵⁷. Of those that completed their highest level of education outside of Canada, just over half (51%)⁵⁸ have had their credentials fully recognized by Canadian employers. For those whose credentials have not been fully recognized, 48% did not submit their credentials for evaluation and 23% did not know the process for credential evaluation/recognition. For 11%, the cost of credential recognition was too high, and 6% are still waiting on a decision. Credentials were submitted and deemed not equivalent to Canadian standards for 24% of those GTHA Muslims whose foreign education credentials were not recognized.⁵⁹

Issues of credential recognition likely account for why it is estimated that almost 1 in 3 (31%) employed Muslims in the GTHA hold forms of employment that do not match their level of education or training. This proportion is higher (57%) for active, but currently unemployed, Muslims in the GTHA (31%) whose previous employment did not match their level of education/training. For those employed whose work does not match their level of education/training, it is estimated that issues with credential recognition play a role 13% of the time, and perceived discrimination or bias in the hiring process was identified 14% of the time. Difficulty finding a job in one’s field was indicated as the most prevalent reason at 46% (Chart 14).

Chart 14: Main reasons why level of education does not match employment for employed Muslims (18-69 years): GTHA, 2025



Distribution of employment in the GTHA by industry

Table 7 describes the composition of employment by industry in order to identify sectors that have an over and/or underrepresentation of select demographic groups. The percentages in the row “all industries” reflects the share comprised of the select demographic group in total employment. For example, visible minority Muslim women make up 3.2% of GTHA employment, while non-visible minority, non-Muslim men make up 23.8% in the same category (Table 7). When interpreting the data, any industry sector that reflects a percentage share lower or higher than the percentage share across all industries suggests either an under or over representation.

The data in Table 7 shows that although Muslim workers make up 8% of employment in the GTHA, they are overrepresented in the following industries: retail trade (9.7%); transportation and warehousing (13%); administrative and support, waste management, and remediation services (8.5%), and accommodation and food services (9.1%). Muslim workers in the GTHA are the most underrepresented in: agriculture, forestry fishing, and hunting (1.4%); mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (3.8%); and arts, entertainment and recreation (3.9%) (Table 7).

When further disaggregated to account for visible minority status and gender, visible minority Muslim men, who comprise 4.4% of employment, are most significantly overrepresented in transportation and warehousing industries⁶⁰ (10.7%), while visible minority Muslim women, comprising 3.2% of the total employment in the GTHA, are most overrepresented in healthcare and social services (5.7%) and educational services (5.1%). These estimates are in line with a gendered organization of employment, with healthcare and social services and education services reflecting an overrepresentation for both non-Muslim visible minority and non-visible minority women as well.

To further validate the findings on labour market segmentation with respect specifically to religious affiliation, an inferential statistical method—a log linear analysis—was used to examine the relationships between religious affiliation (Muslim vs. non-Muslim) and the probability of working within a given industry. An initial baseline (restricted) model was designed to look only at the relationships between gender, visible minority status, and industry, while assuming that religious affiliation is independent from the likelihood of working in a given industry sector. A second, more flexible (unrestricted) model allowed for interaction between religious affiliation and industry, beyond effects of just race and gender. The results of the two different models—one accounting for religious affiliation, and the other not—were compared using an ANOVA (analysis of variance) test where it was determined that the unrestricted model (the one accounting for religious affiliation) provided a significantly better fit to the survey data⁶¹ as opposed to the restricted model (Deviance = 474.7395 $p < 0.0001$). The small p value ($p < 0.0001$) suggests that the pattern in the distribution of Muslims and non-Muslims across industry sectors as observed in the sample data, and when accounting for religious affiliation, is highly unlikely to occur only by chance. In short, even when accounting for race and gender, there is sufficient evidence to suggest an association between religious affiliation and in which industries GTHA Muslims are employed.

Taking note of patterns in industry segmentation is significant in contributing insight into employment and income disparities for Muslims in the GTHA, as certain industries in which Muslims

are overrepresented, such as transportation and warehousing or accommodation and food services, tend to include precarious forms of employment indicative of contract, temporary work arrangements, with typically lower unionization rates, limited job security, and lower salaries. As well, indications of underrepresentation of men and women Muslim workers in certain sectors may indicate the experience of significant barriers to gaining access to employment in those areas, such as public administration (5.8%) or arts, entertainment, and recreation (3.9%)⁶².



Table 7

Employment by industry: GTHA, 2021 (per cent)

	Muslim					Non-Muslim			
	Non-visible minority		Visible Minority		Total	Non-visible minority		Visible Minority	
	Men+	Women+	Men+	Women+		Men+	Women+	Men+	Women+
All Industries	0.2%	0.2%	4.4%	3.2%	8.0%	23.8%	22.2%	22.9%	23.0%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, & hunting		0.2%	0.5%	0.7%	1.4%	40.2%	33.1%	14.7%	10.6%
Mining, quarrying, oil & gas extraction			1.9%	1.9%	3.8%	58.5%	8.5%	21.7%	7.5%
Utilities			4.3%	1.4%	5.7%	45.1%	14.1%	24.5%	10.6%
Construction	0.8%	0.1%	4.9%	1.0%	6.8%	52.4%	8.0%	27.0%	5.8%
Manufacturing	0.3%	0.1%	4.4%	1.7%	6.5%	28.2%	11.9%	33.7%	19.7%
Wholesale trade	0.2%	0.0%	3.8%	2.1%	6.1%	31.3%	17.9%	25.4%	19.4%
Retail trade	0.1%	0.3%	4.8%	4.5%	9.7%	20.9%	23.0%	21.4%	24.9%
Transportation & warehousing	0.4%	0.1%	10.7%	1.8%	13%	22.4%	9.1%	40.4%	15.0%
Information & cultural industries	0.2%	0.2%	4.3%	2.3%	7.0%	30.4%	21.5%	23.3%	17.8%
Finance & insurance, management of companies & enterprises	0.1%	0.2%	4.4%	3.1%	7.8%	20.1%	21.1%	23.4%	27.5%
Real estate & rental and leasing	0.3%	0.5%	4.5%	2.1%	7.4%	25.5%	23.7%	22.1%	21.3%
Professional, scientific, & technical services	0.2%	0.0%	5.1%	2.7%	8.0%	24.7%	21.0%	26.1%	20.2%
Administrative & support, waste management & remediation services	0.3%	0.1%	5.3%	2.9%	8.5%	23.6%	17.6%	25.7%	24.6%
Educational services	0.1%	0.2%	2.4%	5.1%	7.7%	17.5%	41.5%	10.9%	22.4%
Healthcare & social assistance	0.1%	0.3%	1.9%	5.7%	8.0%	8.4%	34.0%	10.2%	39.4%
Arts, entertainment, & recreation	0.0%	0.1%	1.8%	1.9%	3.9%	34.8%	29.6%	17.2%	14.4%
Accommodation & food services	0.2%	0.3%	4.6%	4.1%	9.1%	14.6%	19.7%	26.1%	30.6%
Other services (except public administration)	0.3%	0.1%	3.8%	3.6%	7.8%	19.6%	25.3%	18.5%	28.8%
Public administration	0.2%	0.0%	2.9%	2.6%	5.8%	27.0%	31.1%	15.8%	20.4%

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author.

Distribution of prime-age workers in the GTHA by occupation

Data from the 2021 Census offer insight into the distribution of workers by occupation that suggests patterns in occupation segmentation. For example, when focusing on prime-age workers in the GTHA, disaggregated data estimates indicate that 18.9% of visible minority Muslim men in the GTHA are employed in the occupation classification “Trades, transport, and equipment operators and related occupations” (Table 8). This field includes occupations typically within industrial sectors and can include contractors, construction and mechanical tradespersons, operators of transportation and heavy equipment, and trades helpers⁶³. This occupation sector also accounted for over one third (35.8%) of all non-visible minority Muslim men.

Larger shares of visible minority Muslim women worked in sales and services occupations (15.2%), business, finance, and administrative (13.8%), and social science, education, government service, and religion (12.7%). These three occupation sectors also had larger shares of both visible and non-visible minority, non-Muslim women working in them, suggesting an overall gendered distribution by occupation.



Table 8

Distribution of prime-age workers by occupation: GTHA, 2021

	Muslim				Non-Muslim			
	Non-visible minority		Visible Minority		Non-visible minority		Visible Minority	
	Men+	Women+	Men+	Women+	Men+	Women+	Men+	Women+
Business, finance, & administrative	9.0%	12.4%	12.3%	13.8%	10.1%	20.6%	11.1%	19.0%
Health	1.4%	7.2%	3.1%	6.5%	1.9%	8.4%	3.1%	10.9%
Legislative and senior management	0.9%	0.5%	1.0%	0.3%	2.6%	1.0%	1.0%	0.4%
Middle management	10.4%	5.2%	12.5%	5.4%	15.6%	12.1%	10.9%	8.2%
Natural and applied sciences, & related	11.8%	3.1%	15.2%	4.0%	10.4%	3.6%	17.1%	6.3%
Natural resources, agriculture, & related	0.5%		0.2%	0.0%	1.4%	0.3%	0.5%	0.1%
Art, culture, recreation, & sport		3.1%	1.7%	1.8%	4.6%	4.6%	2.6%	2.5%
Social science, education, government service, & religion	5.2%	8.2%	4.6%	12.7%	8.2%	8.7%	4.8%	10.6%
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing, & utilities	1.9%		2.9%	1.7%	3.2%	1.0%	5.0%	3.7%
Sales and service occupations	8.5%	20.6%	14.2%	15.2%	11.3%	14.9%	14.3%	18.1%
Trades, transport, & equipment operators, & related	35.8%	3.1%	18.9%	2.1%	21.8%	1.3%	19.1%	2.3%
Not applicable/Not available	14.6%	36.6%	13.3%	36.5%	9.2%	13.4%	10.4%	17.8%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

*Not applicable/Not available includes a combination of individuals that we don't have this data for, and individuals who did not work when the census data was collected.

**Note: Blank spaces indicate the absence of cases in the PUMF data.

SECTION 4: INCOME INEQUALITY AND THE MUSLIM WAGE GAP

This section of the report focuses on disparities in incomes in the GTHA between Muslims and non-Muslims, with an attention to variations among sub-groups within the Muslim community according to gender, visible minority status, and generation status. Intersectional analyses such as this can allow us to identify potential variations of experiences within the Muslim community, while also accounting for these differences in order to emphasize the overreaching effect of religious affiliation on income.

The following analyses reveal that though racial and gender disparities likewise shape the unique experiences of sub-groups within the Muslim community with respect to their economic standing, there is sufficient evidence to support the suggestion of a “Muslim wage gap” that results in lower total and employment incomes for Muslims in the GTHA.

Analyses in this section will utilize two income variables at the individual level and from the 2020 reference year:

- 1) Calculations of Individual total income. This is a variable of income measure that includes (before income taxes): the employment income from wages, salaries and tips, commissions and net-income from self-employment; income from investment sources; income from employer and personal pension sources; other regular income such as child support, spousal support payments and scholarship; and any income from government sources (e.g., employment insurance, social assistance, and in the case of 2020 total income estimates, COVID support benefits)
- 2) Measures of employment income. This is a variable of income which consist of all wages, salaries and commissions from paid employment.

In addition to a utilization of 2021 Census data for measures of median total and employment income, this section of the report will also include results from the original survey on rate of hourly pay and data on relative financial stability.

This section of the report will be divided into three sub-sections:

- Individual total Income
- Median employment income and the Muslim wage gap
- Primary data findings

Individual Total income:

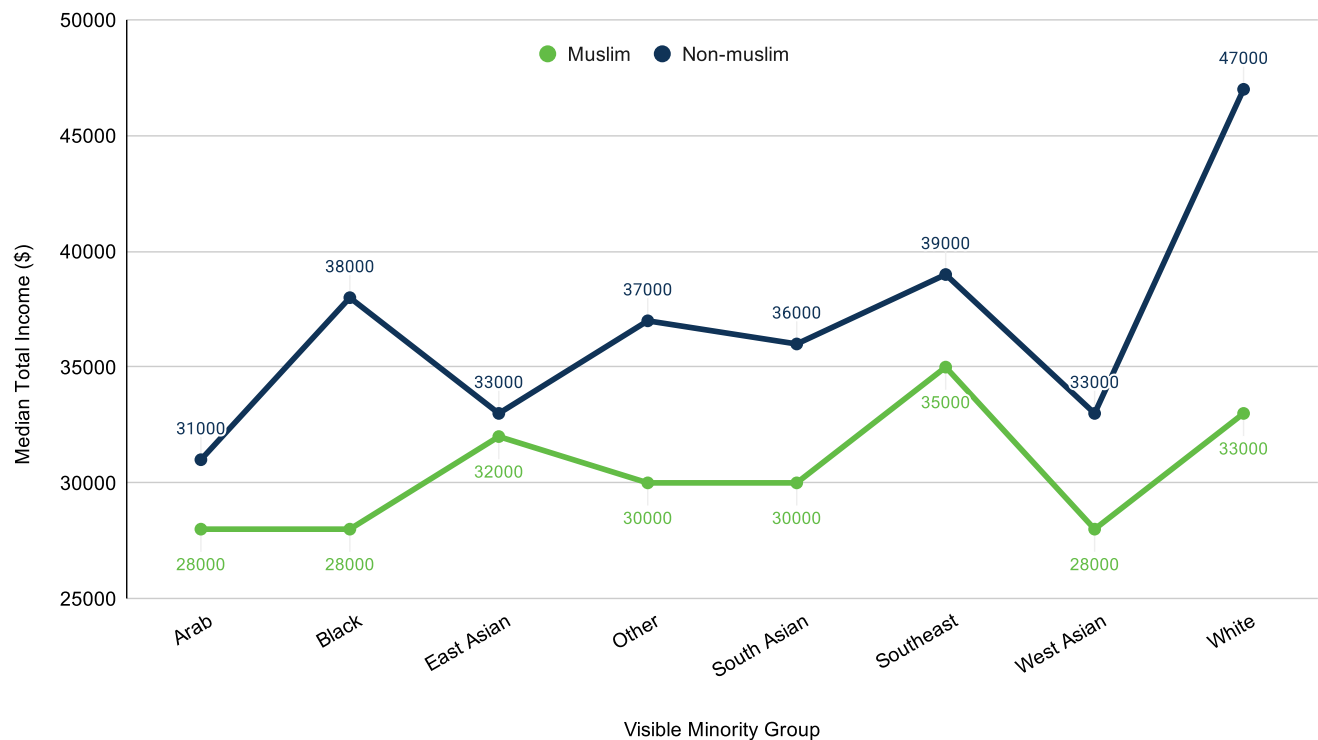
Estimates of median individual total income in the GTHA from 2020 were as follows: For the TCMA, \$39,600; the HCMA, \$42,400; and the OCMA, \$44,000⁶⁴. The data indicates variability afforded by geographic region within the GTHA. However, it should be noted that the following analyses rely on a calculation of median total income that falls within the context of a combined geographic region that is the GTHA, made up of the above three CMAs.

When calculating the median individual total income in the GTHA and disaggregating by religious affiliation (Muslim and non-Muslim) and visible minority status, there are clear disparities in individual total incomes between those identifying as Muslims and those that do not (Chart 15). Supporting the summary analyses of median individual total income in this section are calculations of Confidence Intervals (CI) that allow estimations of both 95% and 80% degrees of confidence as to the range in which the true population values lie. In this case, the range, relative to degrees of confidence of 95% and 80%, within which the true median individual total income is likely to fall.⁶⁵

Calculated estimates from the 2021 Census indicate median individual total income for non-Muslims was \$42,000 (95% CI: \$42,000–\$43,000), whereas for Muslims the median amount was \$29,000 (95% CI: \$29,000–\$30,000). When disaggregated by visible minority status, the results indicate that median individual total income for all groups of Muslims falls below those of their non-Muslim counterparts, though with varying degrees of confidence⁶⁶ (Chart 16).

The highest estimated median individual total income for 2020 was for non-visible minority, non-Muslims at \$47,000, with a 95% CI ranging from \$47,000 to \$48,000. The lowest estimated median individual total incomes were at \$28,000 for Arab Muslims (95% CI: \$26,000–\$31,000), Black Muslims (95% CI: \$26,000–\$32,000), and West Asian Muslims (95% CI: \$27,000–\$30,000) (Chart 15 & 16). These estimates were higher for their non-Muslim counterparts, with median individual total income being \$31,000 for Arab non-Muslims (95% CI: \$30,000–\$35,000) and \$38,000 for Black non-Muslims (95% CI: \$37,000–\$40,000) (Chart 15 & 16).

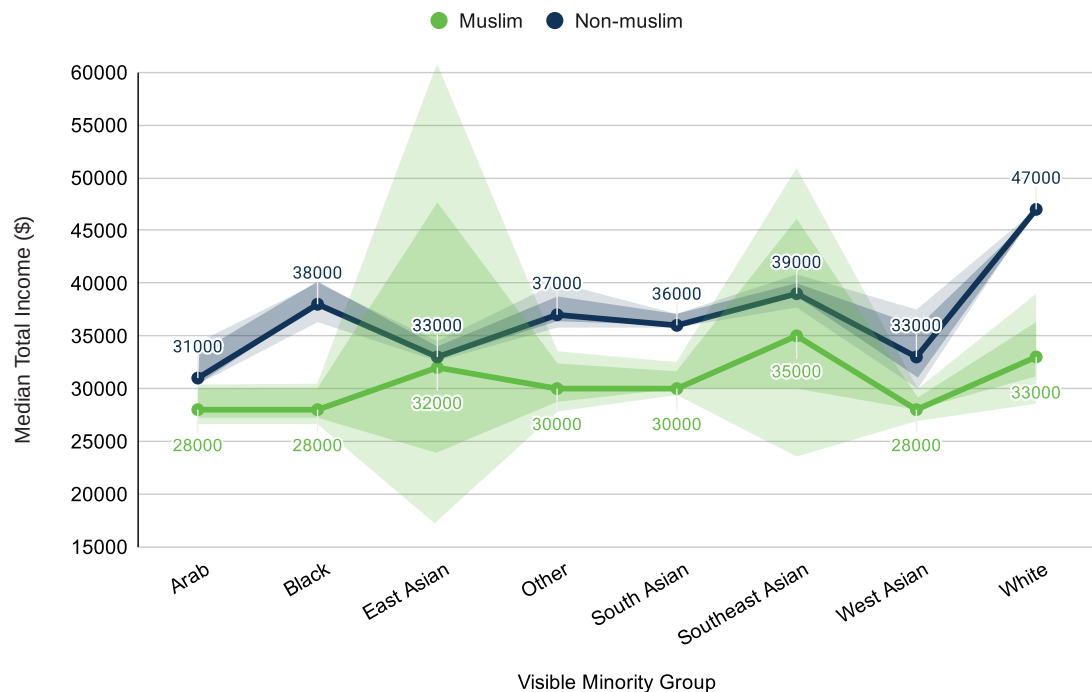
Chart 15: Median total income by visible minority status and religious affiliation: GTHA, 2020



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author
Note: This sample included all individuals of working age, 15 - 85 years.

Chart 16: Median Individual total income by visible minority status and religious affiliation, with 80% and 95% Confidence Intervals: GTHA, 2020

[shaded areas show 80% (darker) and 95% (lighter) Confidence Intervals]



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

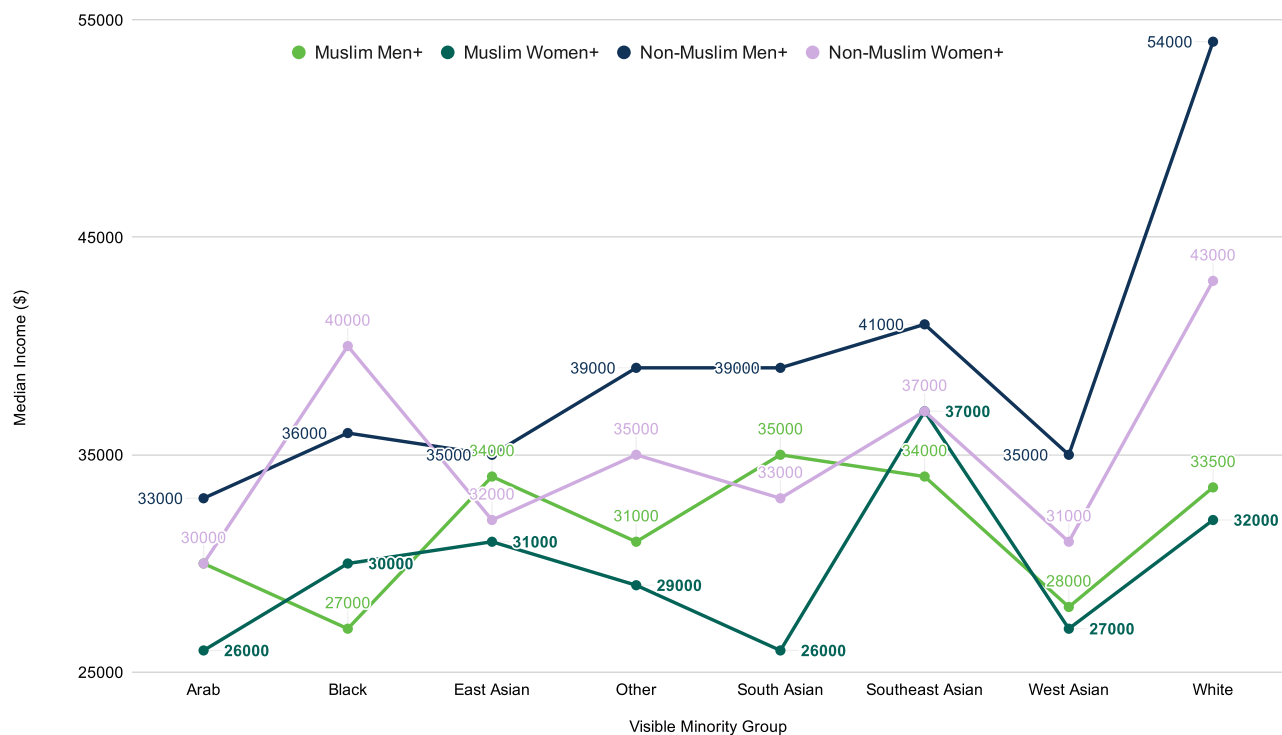
Factoring for gender reveals a similar trend in estimated median total individual incomes between Muslims and non-Muslims, with Muslim men and Muslim women having median individual total incomes at rates below their respective non-Muslim counterparts. Estimates suggest that Muslim men have a median individual total income of \$32,000 (95% CI: \$32,000–\$34,000) compared to \$46,000 (95% CI: \$46,000–\$47,000) for non-Muslim men. Muslim women were estimated to have a median individual total income of \$27,000 (95% CI: \$26,000–\$29,000) compared to \$38,000 (95% CI: \$38,000–\$39,000) for non-Muslim women. When disaggregated by visible minority status and gender combined, all groups of Muslims had lower individual total incomes when compared to their gender counterparts; Southeast Asian Muslim women are the exception (Chart 17).

It is important to note that this estimate of median individual total income (\$37,000) for Southeast Asian Muslim women is calculated based on a relatively small case count in the PUMF data files (only 50 cases). Similarly, Southeast Asian Muslim men have a PUMF case count of 23, and East Asian Muslim men an available case count of 13. These smaller sample sizes have resulted in a significantly wider 95% Confidence Intervals range for these demographic groups with calculated 95% CIs for East Asian Muslim men being \$18,000–\$82,000 and for Southeast Asian Muslim women at \$29,000–\$40,000.

Despite the limitations owing to sample size, a summary of data on median individual total income disaggregated by visible minority status, gender, and religious affiliation proves revealing in terms of gendered and racial wage patterns that shape the experiences of sub-groups within the community of Muslims in the GTHA (Chart 17). It is estimated that South Asian Muslim women and Arab Muslim women had lower median individual total incomes (\$26,000, 95% CI: \$25,000–\$28,000; and \$26,000, 95% CI: \$23,000–\$31,000, respectively) than their non-Muslim counterparts (\$33,000, 95% CI: \$32,000–\$34,000; and \$30,000, 95% CI: \$26,000–\$37,000⁶⁷), suggesting the role of religious affiliation in contributing to total income levels.

Overall, these two demographic groups had lower median individual total incomes than all other indicated demographic groups. These amounts were also well below that of non-visible minority, non-Muslim women who had an estimated median individual total income of \$43,000 (95% CI: \$43,000–\$44,000), which was also above the estimates for all other visible minority groups, regardless of gender or religious affiliation⁶⁸.

Chart 17: Median individual total income by visible minority status, gender, and religious affiliation: GTHA, 2020



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

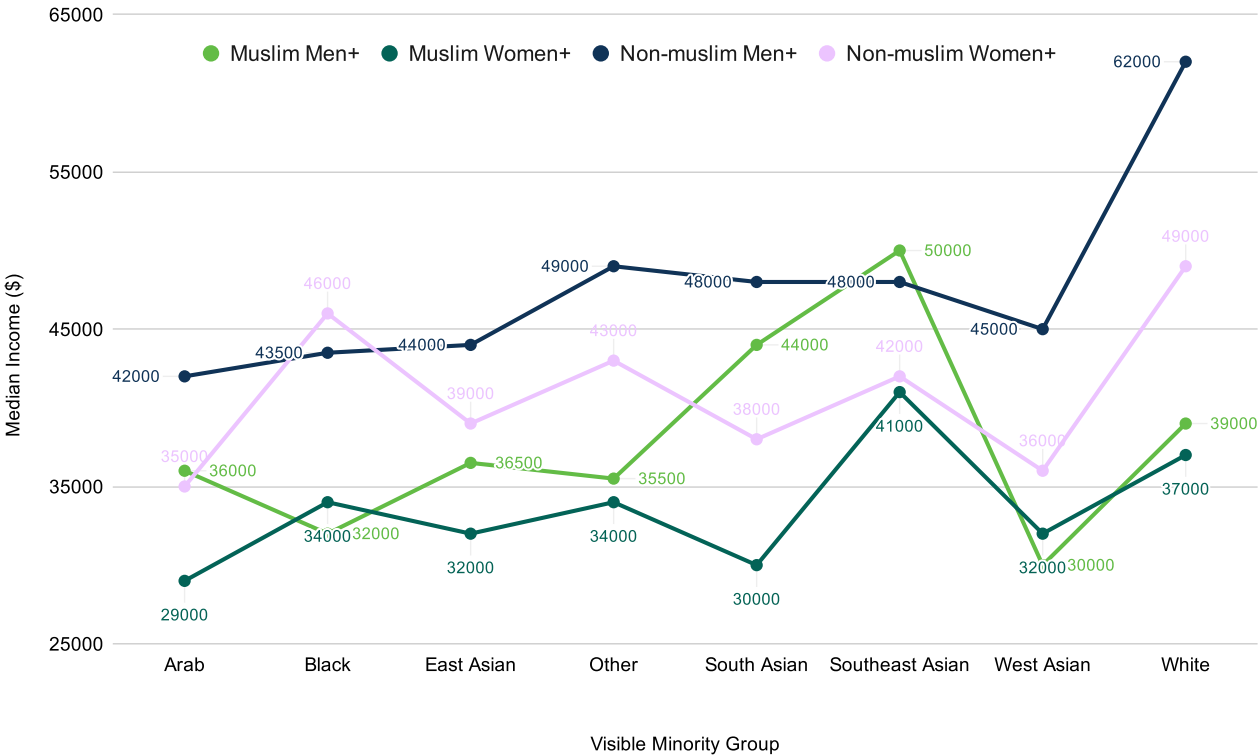
The above results did not filter for age, which can behave as a significant variable when assessing determinants of income. To further verify the patterns identified above, further analyses were conducted in order to restrict for just individuals between the ages of 25–64 years. When restricted for age, there still remains a significant discrepancy in median individual total incomes for Muslims compared to non-Muslims. Muslims in the GTHA between the ages of 25–64 had a median individual total income of \$35,000 (95% CI: \$34,000–\$36,000) compared to \$51,000 (95% CI: \$51,000–\$52,000) for non-Muslims.

Within the restricted age range, and when disaggregating by gender, Muslim men had a median individual total income of \$40,000 (95% CI: \$39,000–\$42,000) compared to \$57,000 (95% CI: \$57,000–\$58,000) for non-Muslim men. Muslim women in the 25–64 age range had a median individual total income of \$33,000 (95% CI: \$32,000–\$35,000) compared to \$47,000 (95% CI: \$47,000–\$48,000) for non-Muslim women. Notably, there was no gendered income benefit for Muslim men when compared to non-Muslim women with respect to median total income levels.

When replicating the disaggregated data plotted in Chart 17, we see in Chart 18 an increase in median individual total income across the board, yet a continued reflection of a similar pattern with respect to median individual total incomes levels for Muslims relative to non-Muslims. The data suggest that after filtering for age, and with the exception of Southeast Asian Muslim men,⁶⁹ there remains a

significant disparity in median individual total incomes between all groups of Muslims and non-Muslims within their respective gender groups, with non-Muslims generally having higher estimates (Chart 18). Estimates of median individual total income for those between ages 25–64 still place non-Muslim, non-visible minority men in the highest range \$67,000 (95% CI: \$66,000–\$69,000). Arab Muslim women aged between 25–64 years had the lowest median individual total income at \$30,000 (95% CI: \$26,000–\$35,000), followed by South Asian Muslim women at \$31,000 (95% CI: \$30,000–\$33,000) and West Asian Muslim men at \$32,000 (95% CI: \$31,000–\$35,000) (Chart 18).

Chart 18: Median individual total income by visible minority group, gender, and religious affiliation (working ages 25-64 years): GTHA, 2020



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

These observed patterns in the distribution of median individual total income suggest an effect of religious affiliation on individual total income levels,⁷⁰ while also drawing attention to the intersecting role of gender and visible minority status in either benefiting or further marginalizing sections of the Muslim population in the GTHA.

Employment income and the Muslim Wage Gap

In this section, an analysis of median employment income begins without limiting this analysis to only full-time, full-year workers.⁷¹ With the inclusion of both part-time and full-time workers of prime working age (25-54 years), calculations indicate a significant income disparity between Muslims and non-Muslims, with Muslims having a median employment income of \$32,000 (95% CI: \$30,000–\$35,000) and the value for non-Muslims being \$51,000 (95% CI: \$51,000–\$52,000). When disaggregated by visible minority status and gender, estimates indicate that Muslim men and women had lower median employment incomes than their respective non-Muslim counterparts (Table 9).

Visible minority Muslim women had a median employment income at \$23,000 (95% CI: \$21,000–\$27,000),⁷² which was lower than that for non-Muslim, visible minority women at \$39,000 (95% CI: \$38,000–\$41,000) and non-Muslim, non-visible minority women at \$52,000 (95% CI: \$51,000–\$54,000) (Table 9).

Compared to earnings of non-Muslim, non-visible minority men, visible minority Muslim women earned 0.33 cents for every dollar earned by the former. Visible minority Muslim men earned a median employment income of \$41,000 (95% CI: \$39,000–\$44,000), which was 0.59 cents for every dollar earned by non-Muslim, non-visible minority men (Table 9). The median employment income for visible minority Muslim men was also less than that for their non-Muslim, visible minority counterparts, at a ratio of 0.82 for every dollar earned by non-Muslim, visible minority men (Table 9).

Table 9

Median employment income comparing Muslims and Non-Muslims, prime-age workers: GTHA, 2020

		Median employment income		Earnings gap: Same gender		Earnings gap: Non-visible minority, non-Muslim men
		Men+	Women+	Men+	Women+	Women+
Non-Muslim	Non-visible minority	\$69,000	\$52,000	1.00	1.00	0.75
	Visible minority	\$50,000	\$39,000	0.72	0.75	0.57
Muslim	Non-visible minority	\$35,500	\$32,000	0.51	0.61	0.46
	Visible minority	\$41,000	\$23,000	0.59	0.44	0.33

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

When disaggregated further to account for different categories of visible minority groups, as was the case with median individual total income, estimates suggest comparatively low income levels for Muslim women aged 25–54 years who identified as Arab (\$19,000, 95% CI: \$14,000–\$25,000), Black (\$23,500, 95% CI: \$15,000–\$35,000), and West Asian (\$17,000, 95% CI: \$15,000–\$21,000) (Table 10). Visible minority, Muslim women in general, between ages 25–54 years earned 0.44 cents for every dollar earned by non-Muslim, non-visible minority women, and 0.33 cents for every dollar earned by non-Muslim, non-visible minority men of the same age range (Table 10)

Except for Muslim Southeast Asian men and women, and Muslim East Asian women,⁷³ estimated median employment incomes for Muslims (aged 25–54 years), regardless of gender or visible minority status, were lower than all of their respective non-Muslim counterparts. Only South Asian Muslim men had a median employment income on par with their non-Muslim counterparts, at \$50,000,⁷⁴ which was nevertheless 0.72 cents earned for every dollar earned by non-Muslim, non-visible minority men.

Table 10

Median employment income comparing Muslims and Non-Muslims by visible minority group, prime-age workers: GTHA, 2020

		Median employment income (\$)		Earnings gap: Same gender		Earnings gap: Non-visible minority, non-Muslim men
		Men+	Women+	Men+	Women+	Women+
Non-Muslim	Non-visible minority	69,000	52,000	1.00	1.00	0.75
	All visible minority groups	50,000	39,000	0.72	0.75	0.57
	Arab	53,500	37,000	0.77	0.71	0.54
	Black	44,000	40,000	0.64	0.77	0.58
	East Asian	56,000	44,000	0.81	0.85	0.64
	South Asian	50,000	37,000	0.72	0.71	0.54
	West Asian	47,000	34,000	0.68	0.66	0.49
	Southeast Asian	49,000	36,000	0.71	0.69	0.52
	Other	51,000	42,000	0.74	0.81	0.61
Muslim	Non-visible minority	35,500	32,000	0.51	0.61	0.46
	All visible minority groups	41,000	23,000	0.59	0.44	0.33
	Arab	33,000	19,000	0.48	0.37	0.27
	Black	28,000	23,500	0.41	0.45	0.34
	East Asian	19,000	51,000	0.28	0.98	0.74
	South Asian	50,000	25,000	0.72	0.48	0.36
	West Asian	26,000	17,000	0.38	0.37	0.25
	Southeast Asian	51,500	38,000	0.75	0.73	0.55
	Other	35,000	32,000	0.52	0.61	0.46

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

Median employment income (with controlling for full-time work)

After filtering for full-time, full-year workers⁷⁵ within prime working age, estimated median employment incomes increase across the board. However, patterns indicating a Muslim wage gap remain consistent. Estimates focusing on full-time, full-year working prime-age workers (25–54 years), suggest that median employment income for non-Muslims was \$73,000 (95% CI: \$73,000–\$74,000) compared to \$61,000 (95% CI: \$59,000–\$65,000) for Muslims. When disaggregated by gender, Muslim men had a median employment income of \$68,000 (95% CI: \$63,000–\$72,000) compared to \$78,000 (95% CI: \$78,000–\$79,000) for non-Muslim men. Muslim women, filtered for full-time, full-year working prime-age workers, had the overall lowest median employment income at \$54,000 (95% CI: \$52,000–\$57,000), compared to \$67,000 (95% CI: \$67,000–\$68,000) for non-Muslim women (Table 18)⁷⁶.

Disaggregating by visible minority status reveals a similar pattern between Muslims and non-Muslims, indicating the persistence of a Muslim wage gap. Muslim South Asian men had a marginally higher median employment income than their non-Muslim counterparts, \$72,000 (95% CI: \$68,000–\$77,000) compared to \$71,000 (95% CI: \$68,000–\$75,000),⁷⁷ and with overlapping confidence intervals. However, all other identified demographic groups indicated lower median employment incomes for Muslim-identifying workers (Table 11 & Chart 19). For example, full-time, full-year, prime-age working South Asian Muslim women had a median employment income of \$54,000 (95% CI: \$50,000–\$59,000) compared to their non-Muslim counterparts (\$61,000, 95% CI: \$58,000–\$64,000) (Table 11). Nevertheless, these comparative results need to be approached with caution given the slight overlap in confidence intervals between both groups.

Visible minority men and women who were full-year, full-time, and prime working age had lower median employment incomes than their non-visible minority counterparts, with the disparity being greater for Muslim workers. Visible minority (as a general group) men made 0.83 cents for every dollar earned by non-Muslim, non-visible minority men, while visible minority Muslim men made 0.79 cents for every dollar earned by non-Muslim, non-visible minority men (Table 11). Visible minority Muslim women (as a general group) made 0.73 cents for every dollar earned by non-visible minority, non-Muslim women and 0.64 for every dollar earned by non-visible minority, non-Muslim men. For non-Muslim visible minority women they made 0.84 cents for every dollar earned by non-Muslim, non-visible minority women, and 0.73 cents for every dollar earned by non-Muslim, non-visible minority men.

Table 11

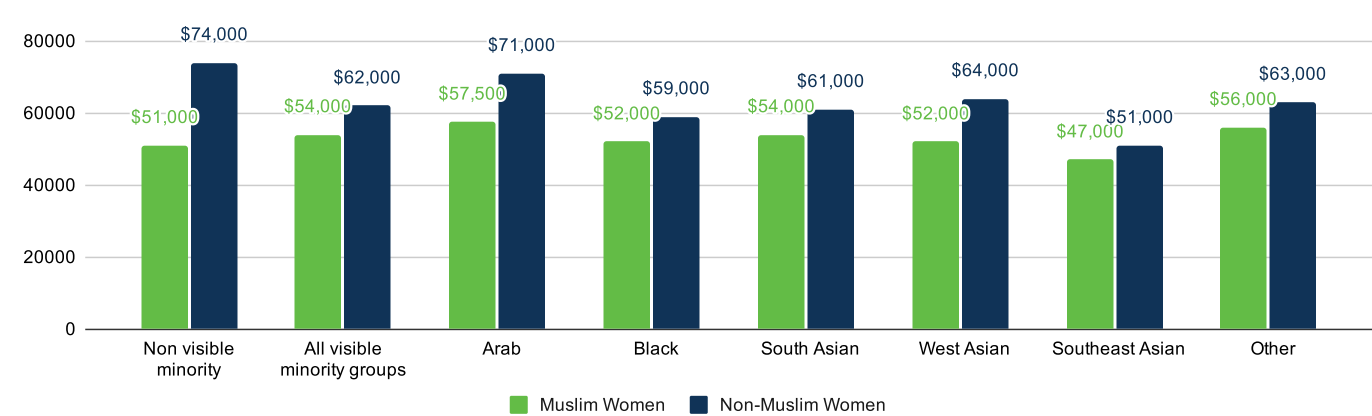
Median employment income comparing Muslims and Non-Muslims by visible minority group, full-time, full-year, prime-age workers: GTHA, 2020

		Median employment income (\$)		Earnings gap: Same gender		Earnings gap: Non-visible minority, non-Muslim men
		Men+	Women+	Men+	Women+	Women+
Non-Muslim	Non-visible minority	85,000	74,000	1.00	1.00	0.87
	All visible minority groups	71,000	62,000	0.83	0.84	0.73
	Arab	76,000	71,000	0.89	0.96	0.84
	Black	65,000	59,000	0.77	0.80	0.69
	East Asian	81,000	72,000	0.95	0.97	0.85
	South Asian	71,000	61,000	0.84	0.82	0.72
	West Asian	75,000	64,000	0.88	0.86	0.75
	Southeast Asian	59,000	51,000	0.69	0.69	0.60
	Other	72,000	63,000	0.85	0.85	0.74
Muslim	Non-visible minority	73,000	51,000	0.86	0.69	0.60
	All visible minority groups	67,000	54,000	0.79	0.73	0.64
	Arab	63,000	57,500	0.74	0.78	0.68
	Black	49,000	52,000	0.58	0.70	0.61
	East Asian					
	South Asian	72,000	54,000	0.85	0.73	0.64
	West Asian	60,500	52,000	0.71	0.70	0.61
	Southeast Asian					
	Other	60,000	56,000	0.70	0.76	0.66

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata Files, calculations by the author

*Blank spaces had case counts of 15 and under, and so would provide unreliable estimates.

Chart 19: Median employment income comparing Muslim and Non-Muslim women by visible minority group, full-time, full-year, prime-age workers: GTHA, 2020



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

The wage gap between Muslim and non-Muslim workers remains consistent even after attending to further controls in addition to full-time/full-year work and prime working age. In Table 12, the narrowed focus to full-time, full-year, prime-age workers is maintained but the analysis of median employment income is disaggregated by generation status along three categories: first generation, second generation, and third generation or more⁷⁸. What the data reveals is that labour market experiences and income disparities, in this case for Muslim workers, are not simply a product of the “immigrant experience” or immigrants needing to “catch up.” Instead, we see income inequality between Muslims and non-Muslims extend beyond the first generation⁷⁹. While income for all included demographic groups improved from first to second generations, the income disparities between Muslim and non-Muslims remained consistent (Table 12 and Chart 20).

As indicated in Table 12 and Chart 20, first-generation, full-time, full-year, prime working age visible minority Muslim women had the lowest median employment income of \$52,000 (95% CI: \$49,000–\$56,000). The highest earnings among the identified demographic groups was for generation non-Muslim, non-visible minority men, with first generation groups estimated to have a median employment income of \$87,000 (95% CI: \$83,000–\$91,000) and second generation at \$87,000 (95% CI: \$84,000–\$91,000). This amounts to employment income earnings that are an estimated \$35,000 more (or 67% more) the income earnings for first generation visible minority Muslim women (Table 12 & Chart 20). Visible minority Muslim men⁸⁰ and Muslim women had median employment incomes below their non-Muslim counterparts, particularly among the first-generation group (Table 12 & Chart 20). Among the second-generation group, full-time, full-year, prime working age visible minority Muslim women still earned less than all other included demographic groups, including first-generation non-Muslims (\$64,000, 95% CI: \$52,000–\$79,000) (Chart 20).

Throughout the analyses of median total and employment incomes, a consistent pattern continues to suggest that Muslim women, and in particular visible minority Muslim women, have income levels below the other identified demographic groups. Even after accounting for level of education and generation status separately as well as full-time, full-year employment, we continue to see the persistence not only of a Muslim wage gap, but of a potential gendered Muslim wage gap that speaks to the realities of what researchers have described as gendered Islamophobia. This gendered Muslim wage gap persists despite the fact that, according to results from the original survey, those participants working in healthcare and social services job sectors were more likely to belong to a union (35%) when compared to Muslims working in any other sectors. Healthcare and social services also tend to be the sectors in which Muslim women are more overrepresented, according to 2021 Census data, than in any other industry sectors. The disparities for visible minority Muslim women, between being overrepresented in an industry sector that has a high rate of unionized employment, while also reporting lower median income levels across the board, warrants further exploration.⁸¹

Table 12

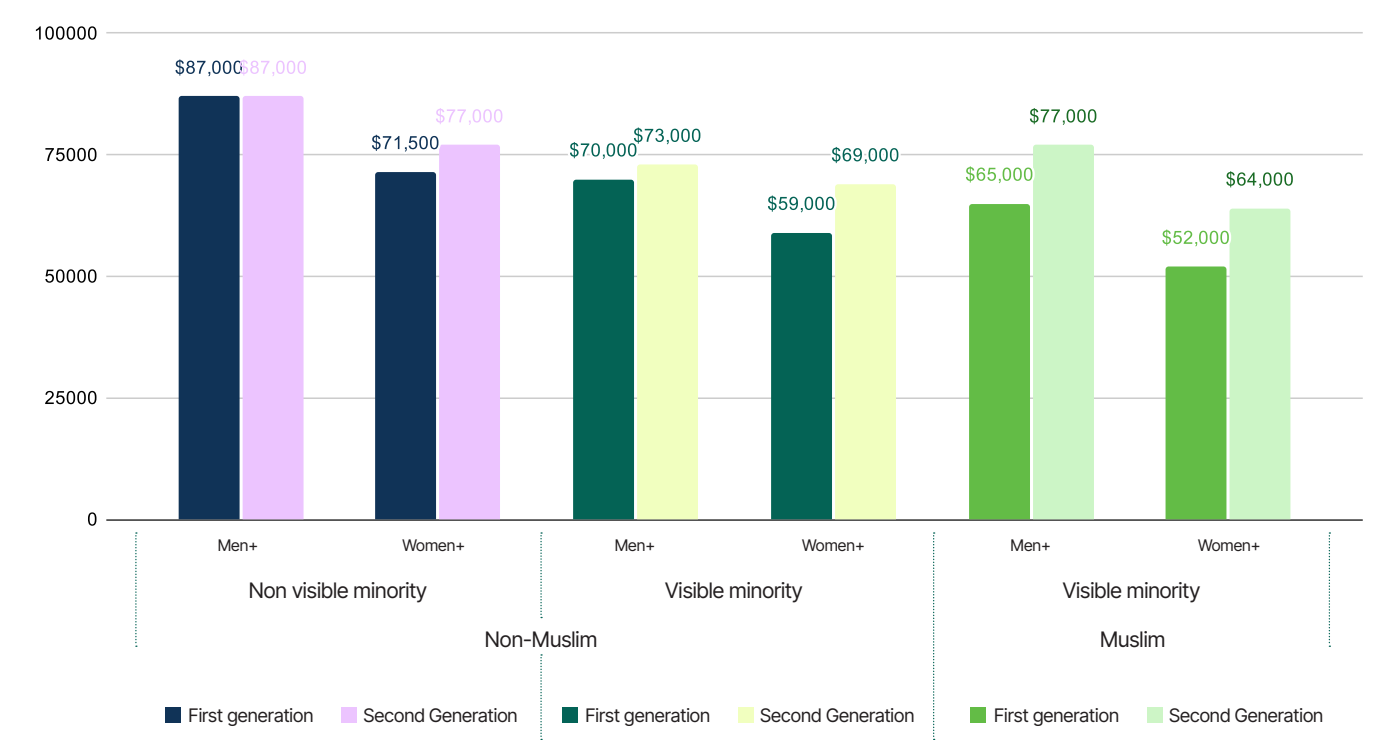
Median employment income for Muslims and Non-Muslims, by generation status and visible minority status, for full-time, full-year, prime-age workers (25–54 years): GTHA, 2020

	Non-Muslim					Muslim				
	All groups	Non-visible minority		Visible minority		All groups	Non-visible minority		Visible minority	
		Men+	Women+	Men+	Women+		Men+	Women+	Men+	Women+
First generation	67,000	87,000	71,500	70,000	59,000	60,000	70,000	51,000	65,000	52,000
Second generation	78,000	87,000	77,000	73,000	69,000	72,000			77,000	64,000
Third generation +	78,000	83,000	72,000	71,000	60,000					

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

*Blank spaces had case counts of 10 and less

Chart 20: Median employment income by generation and visible minority status for Muslims and non-Muslims, full-time, full-year, prime-age workers: GTHA, 2020



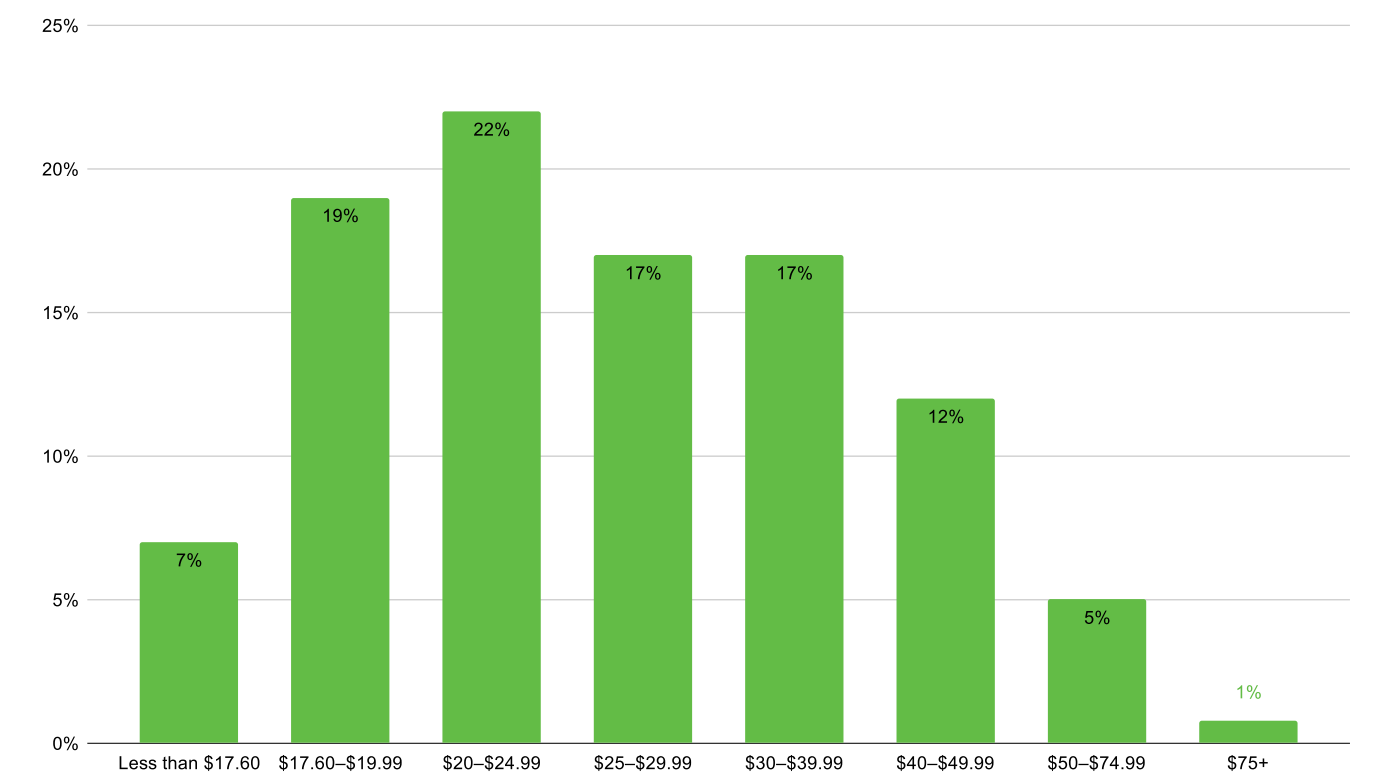
Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File. Calculations by the author

Overall, when comparing median employment incomes between Muslim and non-Muslim, full-time, full-year, prime age workers in the GTHA, we are able to identify a \$12,000 earnings gap. In addition, this study utilized a survey-weighted regression analysis of employment income of employed individuals in the GTHA. Using an unrestricted linear regression model that controlled for age, weeks worked, full-time status, expected years of education, gender and visible minority status, the results indicated that religious affiliation (being Muslim) was associated with a statistically significant reduction of \$7,009.08 in annual employment income ($p < .01$). The regression coefficient of \$7,009.08 can be understood as a wage penalty faced by Muslim workers in the GTHA, which results in an estimated aggregate annual income loss of \$1.2 billion.

Primary data findings

Results from the original survey offer additional context to these findings on employment income for Muslims workers. Using survey data, it is estimated that almost 2 out of 3 (67%) of employed Muslims in the GTHA get paid by the hour. Of that 67%, approximately 1 in 4 make less than \$20 an hour (Chart 21). The estimates of hourly rates are significant when keeping in mind that GTA estimates for a “living wage” in 2025 are \$27.20 per hour and \$22.60 per hour for Hamilton⁸².

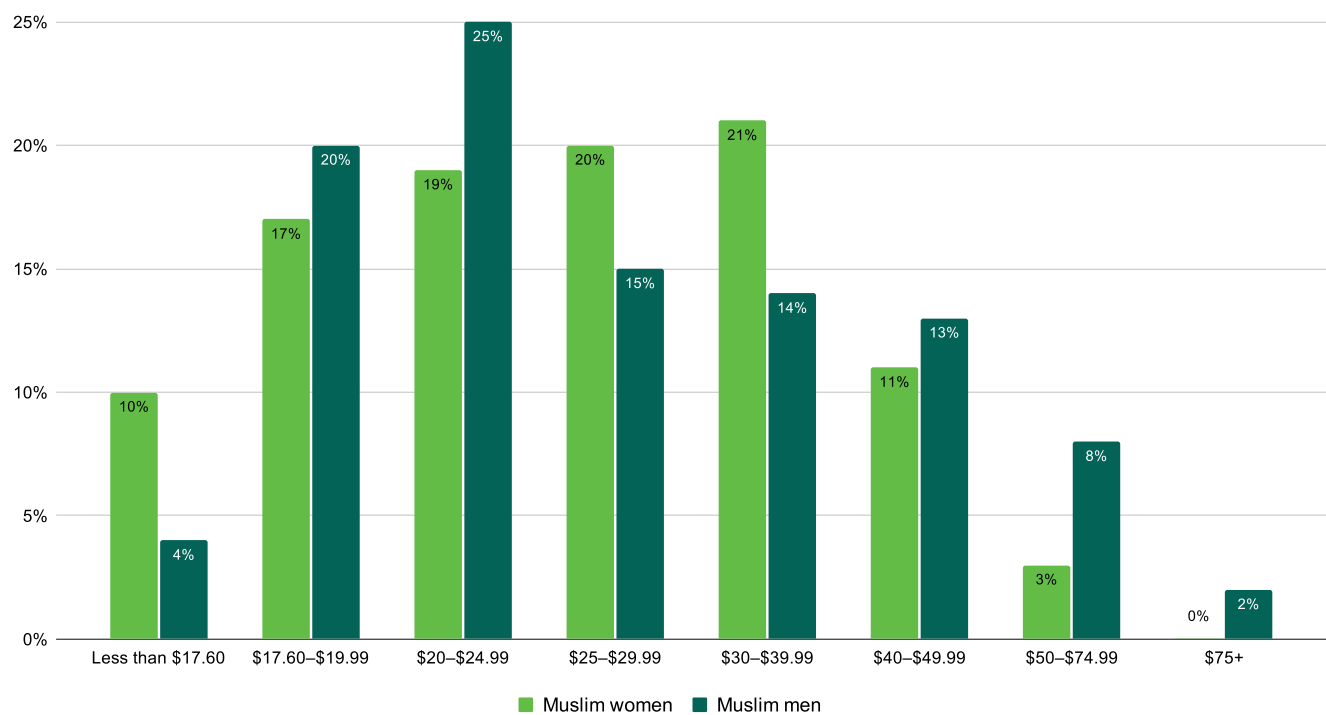
Chart 21: Hourly rate of pay for employed Muslims (18–69 years) who are paid by the hour: GTHA, 2025



Intersectional analyses that account for the gender of employed Muslims, and whether they are paid by the hour, reveals no disparity in likelihood of either gender group in the Muslim community being paid by the hour over the other. Muslim men were only slightly less likely (66.5%) than Muslim women (68.5%) to be in forms of employment that were characterized by hourly pay.

However, when applied to hourly rate, it is estimated that Muslim women are more likely (37%) to be paid an hourly rate of pay less than \$19.99 compared to Muslim men (24%) (Chart 22). Muslim men are more likely (23%) to be paid an hourly wage of \$40 and above compared to Muslim women (14%). The discrepancies in hourly wage point to the effect of a gender wage gap in partly framing the employment incomes of Muslim women.

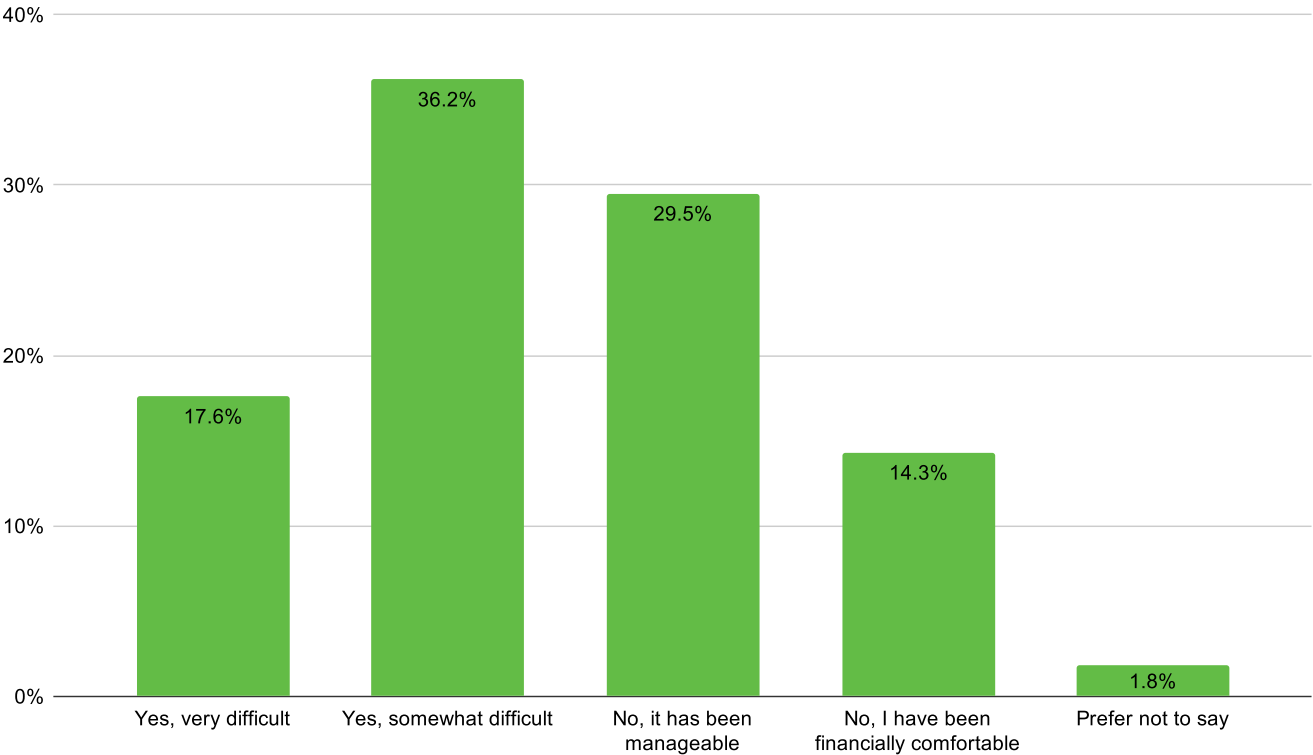
Chart 22: Hourly rate of pay for employed Muslims (18–69 years) who are paid by the hour, by gender: GTHA, 2025



Precarious work, precarious lives

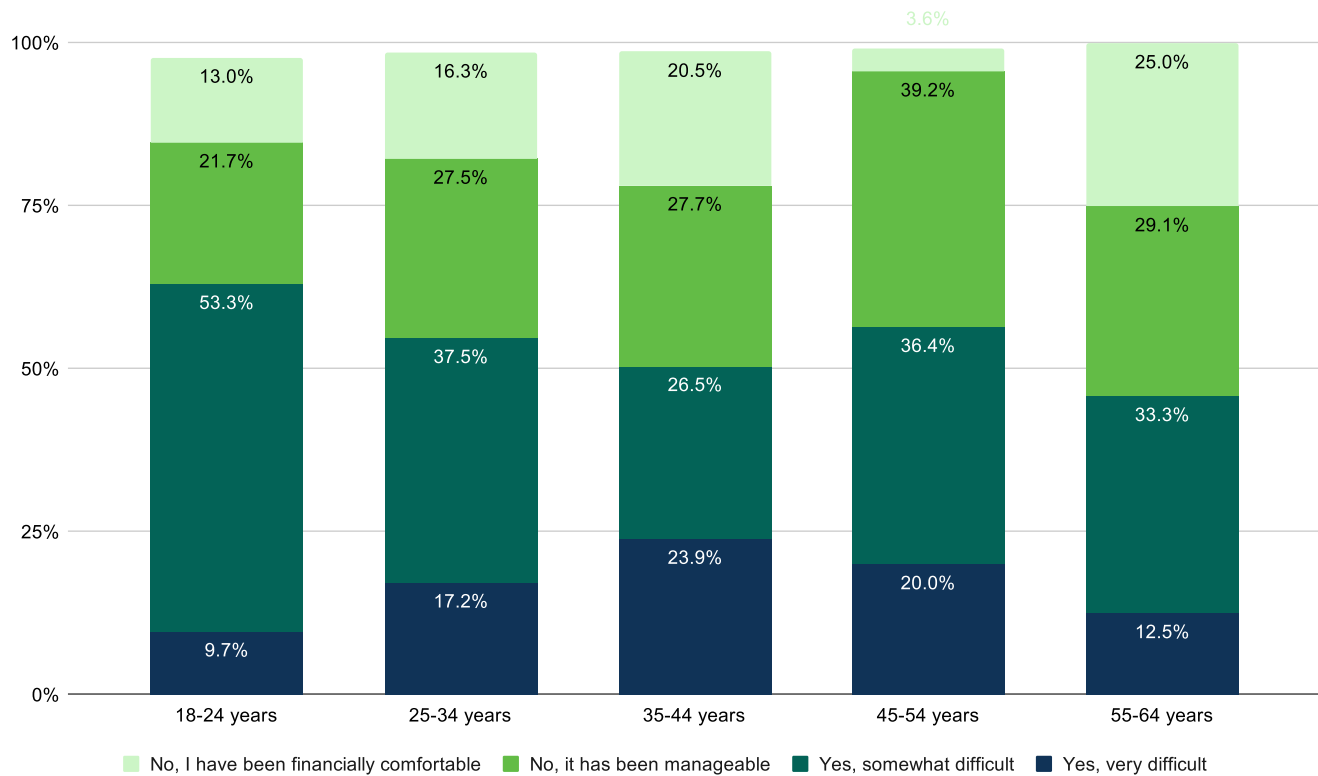
As part of the survey, participants were asked to respond to whether in the past year they have found it difficult to make ends meet financially. An estimate of only 14.3% of Muslims in the GTHA were financially comfortable in 2025 while a majority (53.8%) found it very to somewhat difficult to make ends meet (Chart 23).

Chart 23: In the past year, have you found it difficult to make ends meet financially? Muslim (18–69 years) in the GTHA, 2021



When the results are further disaggregated by age group,⁸³ estimates indicate that Muslims between the ages of 18–24 years are more likely (63%) to find it difficult to make ends meet financially than any of the other age groups, followed by those between the ages of 25–54 years (54.7%) (Chart 24). Muslims in the age range of 35–44 years are more likely to find it ‘very difficult’ to make ends meet financially, and those most financially comfortable/secure are Muslims in the GTHA aged 55–64 years (Chart 24). Though younger GTHA Muslims are estimated to be most likely to be experiencing financial difficulty, the comparison is not very stark when compared to GTHA Muslims in their prime working age range.

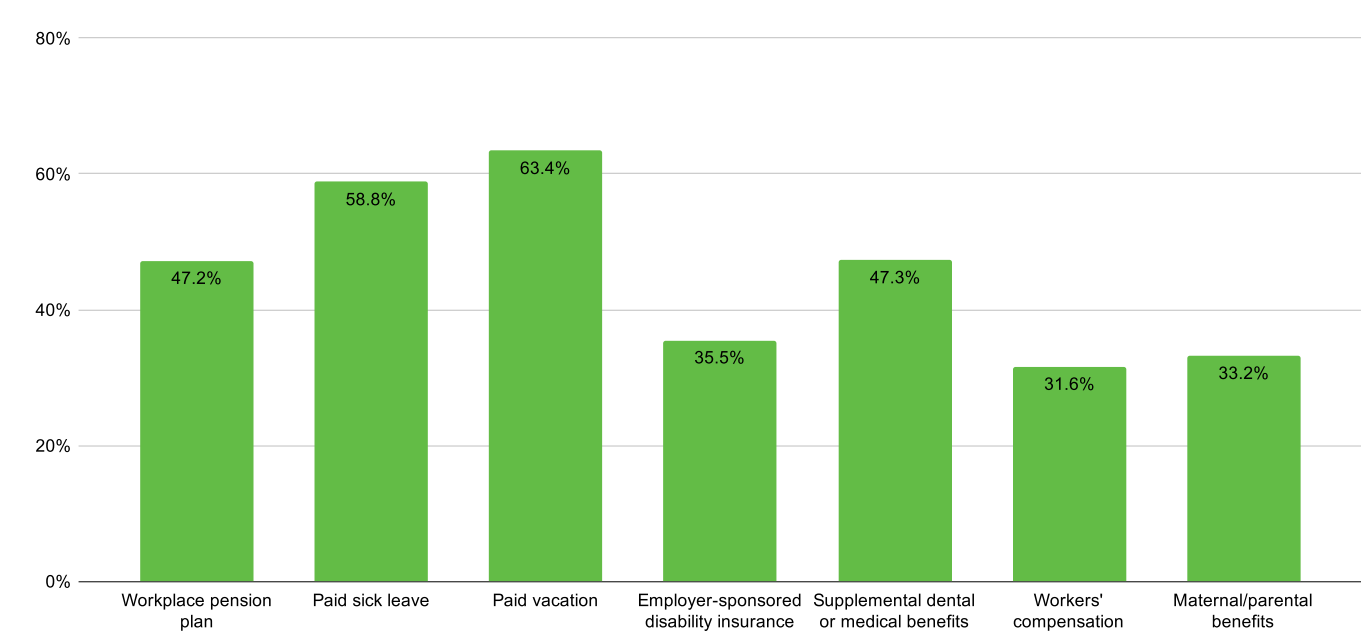
Chart 24: Difficulty to make ends meet financially, by age bracket: Muslims (18–69 years): GTHA, 2025



These results, in addition to the data on income disparities, compared to non-Muslim groups, and the estimates of hourly wage, indicate a degree of precarious employment for Muslim workers, some more than others. In addition to a large share receiving low hourly wages, all employed respondents were asked whether their total hours of work tend to vary from week to week, which speaks to another aspect of precarious employment—the lack of a stable and predictable work schedule. Estimates suggest that the total number of work hours for 57% of employed Muslims in the GTHA vary from week to week.

Additionally, participants who were currently employed were asked to identify which benefits they have access to as part of their work arrangement. An estimated 47.2% are covered by a workplace pension plan and just over half (58.8%) have access to a paid sick leave benefit (Chart 25). While all employees in Ontario are entitled to a minimum of two weeks of paid vacation, only 63.4% of employed Muslims responded that they have paid vacation benefits as part of their employment. One reason for this discrepancy could be that employers are not obligated to provide paid vacation leave benefits to contract or short-term employees⁸⁴. An estimated 47.3% have supplemental dental or medical care benefits through their work. These estimates indicate employment conditions for Muslims in the GTHA where not all workers have access to benefits that are otherwise necessary to support the well-being of themselves and their families.

Chart 25: Benefits Muslim workers (18-69 years) have access to as part of their employment arrangement: GTHA, 2025



SECTION 5: WEALTH AND CALCULATIONS OF POVERTY

In spelling out the impacts of racism and discrimination on economic outcomes for racialized workers, previous studies have extended their analyses beyond the labour market and related measures of employment income and included an attention to income generated from wealth⁸⁵. Attention to the accumulation of wealth can help contribute to a broader political-economic context within which “racialized economic inequality”⁸⁶ in Canada persists. Consistent data on wealth ownership disaggregated by race, gender, and other categories is difficult to obtain. However, data are available from the Census on certain forms of income from wealth, including capital gains and other investment forms.

Therefore, in order to add the wealth dimension to our portrait of the economic well-being on Muslim workers in this report, 2021 Census data was drawn upon for comparative insight on income from assets. There are, of course, limitations in drawing conclusions from one year of data,⁸⁷ especially during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the resulting estimates were nevertheless suggestive of a consistent pattern in income and wealth inequality between Muslims and non-Muslims in the GTHA.

This section of the report is divided into two parts:

- An analysis of relative income from wealth in the capital gains and investment income, comparing Muslims and non-Muslims in the GTHA
- Measures of relative poverty and economic standing for Muslims in the GTHA



Income from wealth

Income from wealth can help contribute to economic standing by way of offering flexible, financial support in times of illness or job loss as well as the ability to support family members in times of need. Estimates from the 2021 Census, drawing on information from a sample of individuals who are over 15 years of age, suggest both a racialized gap in income from capital as well as a gap between Muslims and non-Muslims. Estimates suggest that on average, 15% of the non-visible minority, non-Muslims in the GTHA reported capital gains with an average of \$24,503 (95% CI: \$21,361–\$27,645) compared to an estimated 9% of visible minority, non-Muslims who reported capital gains with an average of \$14,918 (95% CI: \$10,325–\$19,511). The percent reporting capital gains was much lower for Muslim visible minority groups, at only 5%. Their average gain was \$14,486, though with a fairly wide calculated 95% confidence interval, due to a smaller sample of \$3,719–\$25,254 (Table 13).

Investment income averages showed a similar pattern with both non-visible minority and visible minority Muslims reporting investment incomes at lower percentages, of 13% and 14%, respectively, compared to 31% of non-visible minority and 23% of visible minority non-Muslims. Interestingly, the average dollar amount for investment incomes was higher for Muslims than their non-Muslim counterparts in the GTHA (Table 13). However, while non-visible minority, non-Muslims reported an average investment for the 2020 fiscal year of \$13,905 (95% CI: \$12,995–\$14,815), the average investment dollar amount for visible minority Muslims was almost half at \$7,939 (95% CI: \$6,320–\$9,558) (Table 13).

Table 13

Income from capital: GTHA, 2020

	Capital gains				Investment income			
	Non-Muslim		Muslim		Non-Muslim		Muslim	
	Non-visible minority	Visible minority	Non-visible minority	Visible minority	Non-visible minority	Visible minority	Non-Visible minority	Visible minority
Per cent reporting	15%	9%	7%	5%	31%	23%	13%	14%
Average (\$)	24,503	14,918	23,526*	14,486	13,905	7,662	17,537*	7,939

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

*The 95% confidence interval ranges for non-visible minority Muslims is quite broad, suggesting either a smaller sample size or significant variation within that sample demographic. For average amount in capital gains, the 95% CI was \$13,697–\$60,749 and for average amount in investment income it was \$6,734–\$41,809. Given the width of these ranges, these estimates must be interpreted with caution.

Measures of relative poverty and economic standing

In measuring the economic standing and well-being of Muslim families in the GTHA, this report used Statistics Canada's after-tax economic family⁸⁸ income deciles, which account for family size as well as all incomes, taxes, and transfers. In Table 12, the relative proportions of the identified demographic groups have been arranged by the decile level. Decile 1, labelled as "bottom decile," indicates the lowest level of family income, while decile 10, or "top decile," indicates the highest.

Utilizing data from the 2021 Census, it is estimated that 66% of non-visible minority Muslim families and 63% of visible minority Muslim families in the GTHA are in the bottom half of economic family income deciles, and 37% are in the top half. Comparatively, only 36% of non-visible minority, non-Muslims are in the bottom half while 64% are in the top half of economic family income deciles (Table 14). The rate for Muslims in the GTHA, whether visible minority or non-visible minority, that are in the bottom half is higher than either visible minority (49%) or non-visible minority non-Muslims. While 51% of visible minority non-Muslims were in the top half, only 37% of visible minority Muslims were in the top half.

Table 14

Distribution of the Muslim and non-Muslim population, by visible minority group and by economic family deciles: GTHA, 2020

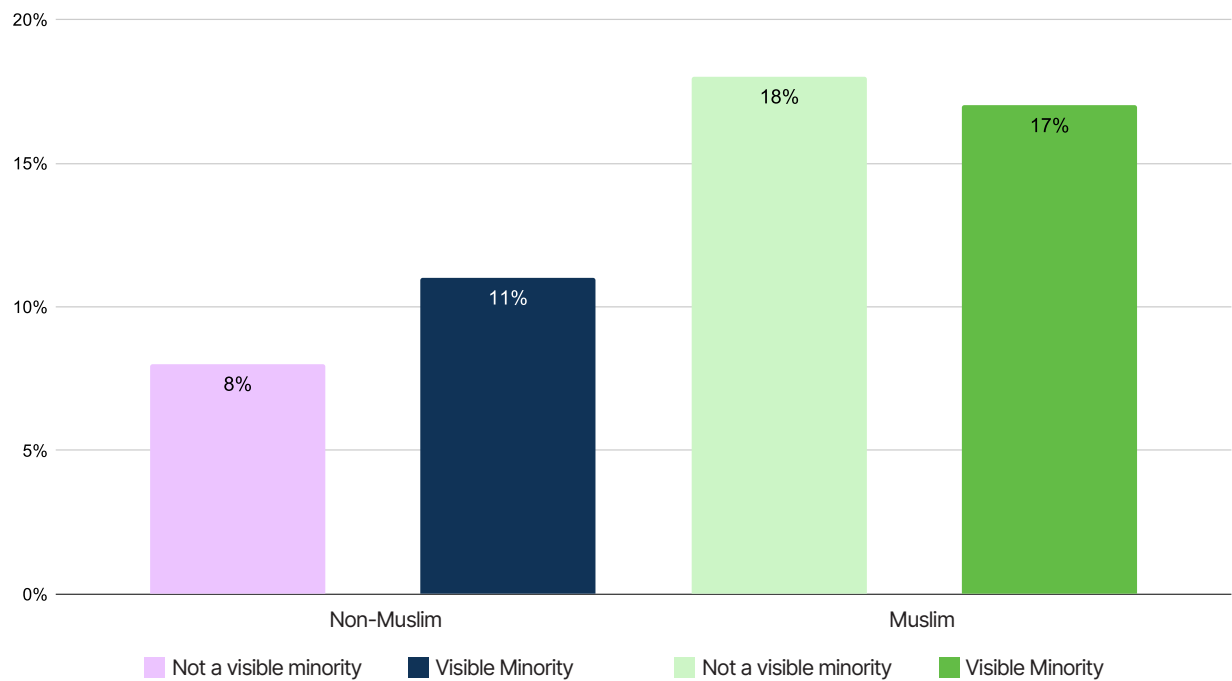
	Muslim		Non-Muslim	
	Non-visible minority	Visible minority	Non-visible minority	Visible minority
Bottom half	66%	63%	36%	49%
Bottom decile	13%	14%	7%	11%
Second decile	15%	15%	7%	9%
Third decile	18%	13%	7%	10%
Fourth decile	11%	11%	8%	10%
Fifth decile	8%	10%	8%	10%
Top half	34%	37%	64%	51%
Sixth decile	8%	9%	9%	10%
Seventh decile	8%	8%	10%	10%
Eighth decile	9%	7%	11%	10%
Ninth decile	4%	7%	14%	11%
Top decile	5%	6%	19%	10%

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

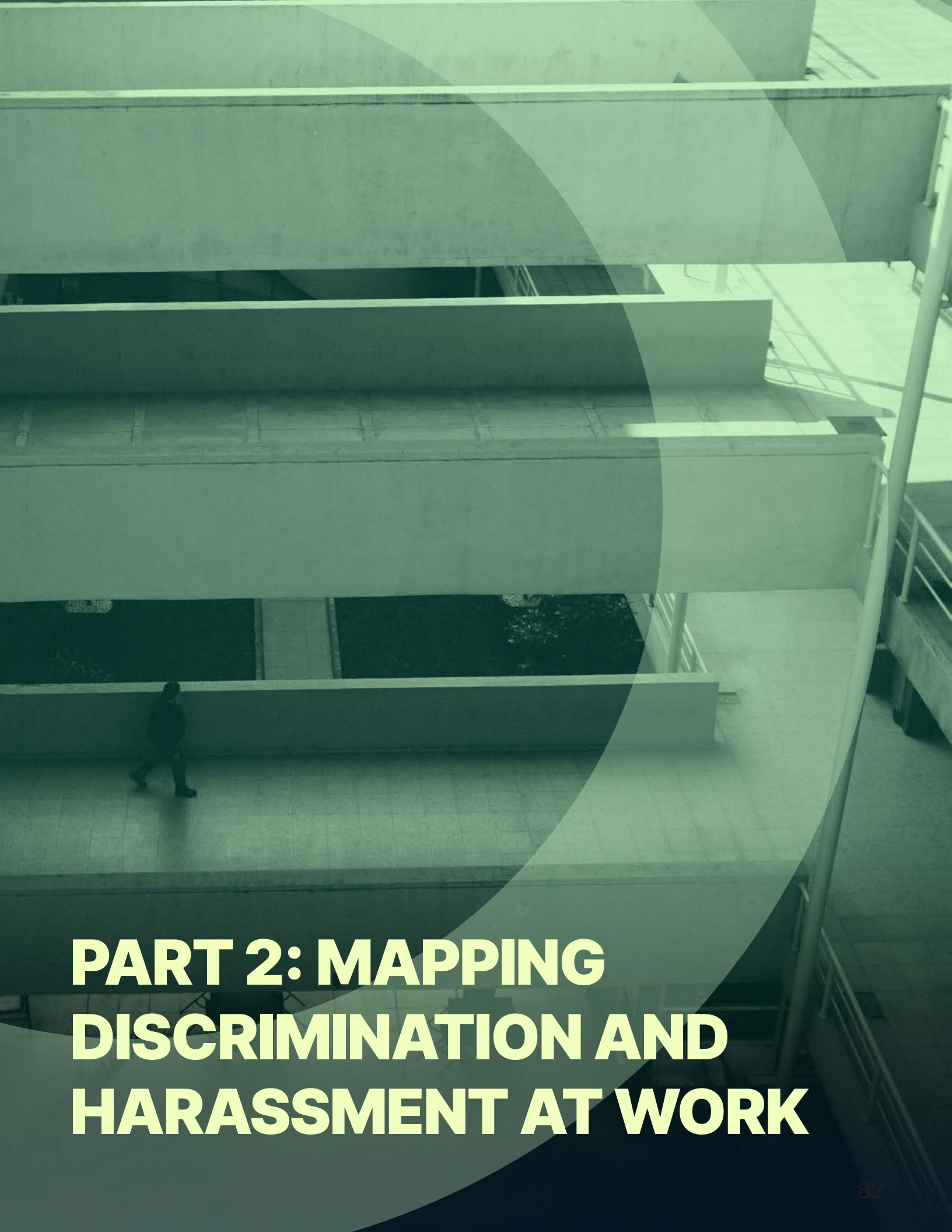
Another useful measure of inequality and economic standing is Statistics Canada’s Low-Income Measure-After Tax (LIM-AT). The LIM-AT is a poverty indicator that measures the number of people who are living on an income that is less than half the median after-tax income for the entire population, adjusted by household size.

Based on 2021 Census data, and using income data from 2020, estimates suggest that 17% of visible minority and 18% of non-visible minority Muslim households in the GTHA fall below the low-income threshold (Chart 26). This is almost double the proportion for the non-Muslim population, with the proportion for non-visible minorities falling in the category of “low income” being 8% and that for visible minority, non-Muslims being 11% (Chart 26).

Chart 26: Percentage of Muslims and non-Muslims, by visible minority status, categorized as “low income” according to the Low income Measure-After Tax: GTHA, 2020



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author



PART 2: MAPPING DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT AT WORK

The relative measures of economic standing described in Part 1 of this report identify inequalities in the labour market experiences and economic standing of Muslims in the GTHA. These discrepancies suggest the role of systemic and intersecting forms of marginalization that are shaping the economic standing and integration of the Muslim community in the GTHA. The analysis in Part 1 focused on measuring household indicators such as dwelling type and tenure status, total household income, rates of employment, unemployment and labour force participation, labour force segmentation, and degrees of income inequality evidenced in measures of both individual total and employment income. The evidence suggests that the Muslim population does not experience the same degree of economic well-being as their non-Muslim counterparts. Additional measures of poverty, such as comparative measures of economic family income deciles and low income measures (after-tax), indicate that the GTHA Muslim population is experiencing higher rates of poverty than their non-Muslim counterparts.

Where Part 1 provides us with insight into the economic realities of the GTHA Muslim population, Part 2 engages in analysis of data that:

- 1) offers insights into the concrete work experiences of Muslims in the GTHA;
- 2) helps answer the 'why' question: why are GTHA Muslims faring worse, economically, than their non-Muslim counterparts?

Part 2 will draw solely on results from the original survey (n=423) of Muslims in the GTHA (18–69 years). The discrimination-related questions and the bulk of the results in Part 2 measure responses only by those survey participants who were active in the labour force (n=349), which included those employed, or unemployed and actively looking for work, at the time of survey completion.

Sub-sections focus on issues related to religious accommodation at work and barriers encountered that related to one's religious identity; experiences of discrimination at work and the perceived barriers/disadvantages experienced whether in terms of feelings of safety at work, inclusion in the workplace, or career advancement; incidences of workplace violence and harassment; and barriers experienced in seeking and retaining work. In short, this part of the report seeks to provide insight into what it is like to be working as a Muslim in the GTHA.

The analysis in Part 2 will proceed as follows:

- Section 6: Religious accommodation
- Section 7: Discrimination at work
- Section 8: Workplace violence and harassment
- Section 9: Barriers in job searching

SECTION 6: RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

Survey participants who identified as active in the labour force were asked a series of focused questions on the interaction between their religious identity and practices and their current or previous work environment.



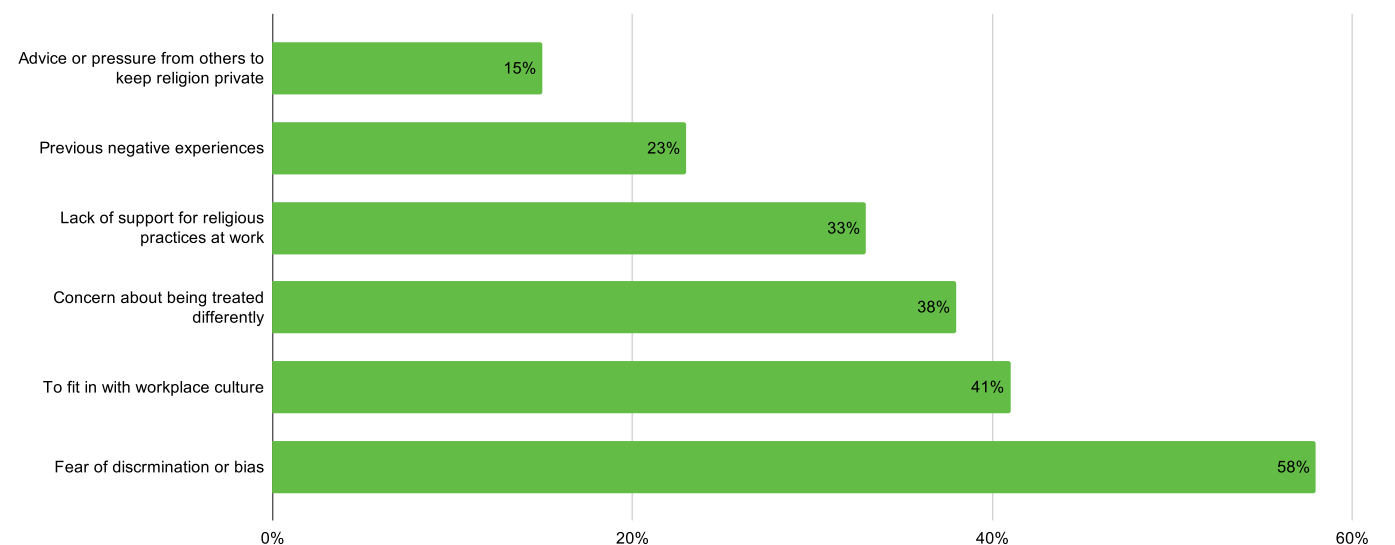
Being Muslim at work

Of respondents, 69% identified their visibility of being Muslim as moderately to very visible. Religious identity was perceived to be not visible at all for only 14% of respondents. When disaggregated by gender, results indicate that significant Muslim men and Muslim women were equally as likely to perceive their religious identity to be moderately to very visible (75% of Muslim men and 63% of Muslim women). Estimates further suggest that Muslim women are slightly more likely to perceive their Muslim identity to be ‘very visible’ (32%) compared to 26% of men.

Respondents were also asked whether they have ever felt the need to conceal their religious identity at work⁸⁹. Results indicate that 17.5% of participants who were asked this question felt the need to conceal their religious identity at work, while 6.6% responded as ‘not sure.’ Muslim men were slightly more likely than Muslim women to feel the need to do so at 19.5% for Muslim men and 15% of Muslim women.

For those that did report the need to conceal their religious identity at work, they were asked to identify the main reasons from a list of provided options⁹⁰. Results indicate fear of discrimination or bias as making up the largest share of the reasons why (58%), followed by needing to fit in with workplace culture (41%) (Chart 27).

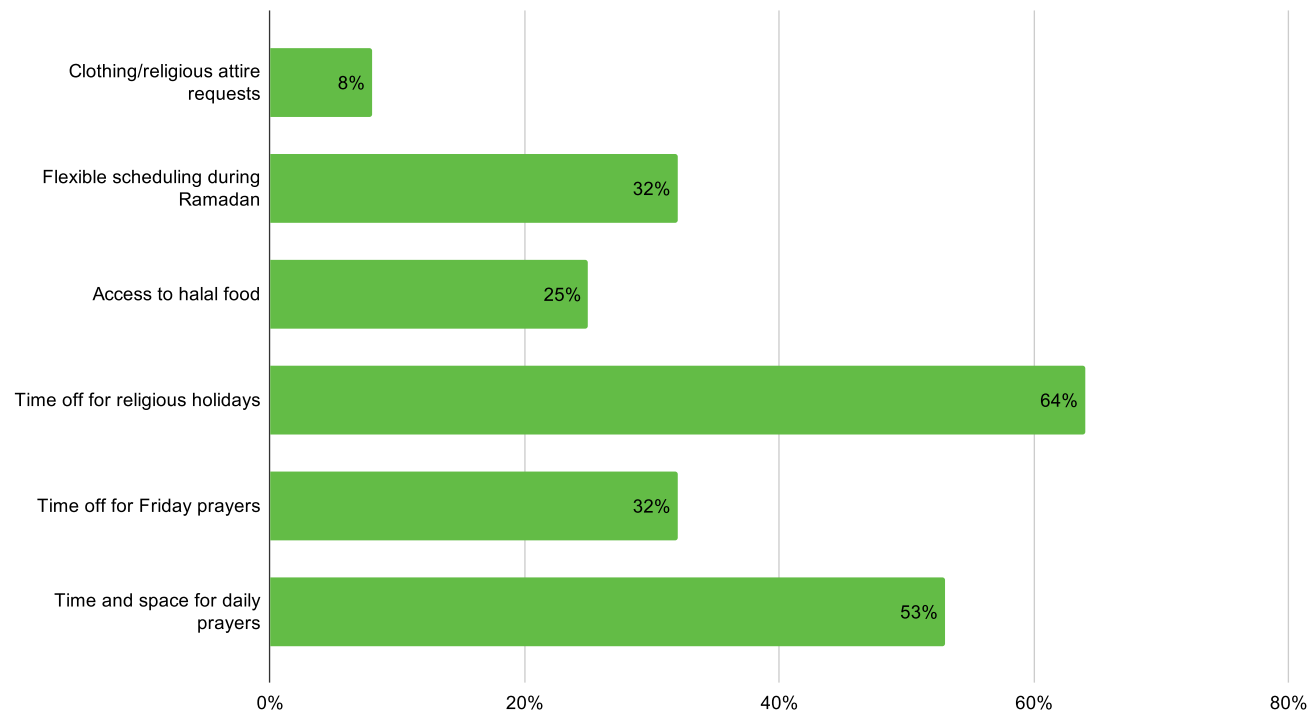
Chart 27: Reasons as to why survey respondents have felt the need to conceal their religious identity at work: GTHA, 2025



Religious accommodation at work

It is estimated that about 1 in 3 (32%) of employed/unemployed Muslims in the GTHA have made a religious accommodation request at work. Of type of request made⁹¹, the most common was requesting time off for religious holidays (64%) followed by time and space for daily prayers (53%) (Chart 28).

Chart 28: Types of religious accommodation requests made by Muslims (18–69 years) who are active in the labour force: GTHA, 2025



Estimates further suggest that slightly more than half (52%) of Muslims in the GTHA do not feel that their religious practices have been adequately accommodated at their workplace. For those who have not had their religious practices adequately accommodated, some of the barriers cited included:⁹²

- No clear work policy for requesting religious accommodations (28%)
- Fear of being judged or treated differently (28%)
- Limited flexibility in work schedule (e.g. for prayer or fasting) (20%)
- Fears based on job security or retaliation (18%)
- Lack of support from their employer (14%)
- Issues of fairness at work (11%)
- Restrictions on choice of clothing (9%)

SECTION 7: DISCRIMINATION AT WORK

Data from Canada's Quality of Life Framework indicate that half of racialized people in Canada have experienced discrimination or unfair treatment in the past five years⁹³. Based on responses, the framework determined that the work environment was the most common context within which discrimination and unfair treatment was experienced (41%). Discrimination in Canada is alive and well, and the workplace proves itself to be a common location where racialized groups encounter biases and unfair treatment. It is a form of violence and a barrier that is created for racialized individuals in the environment where they earn their livelihood.

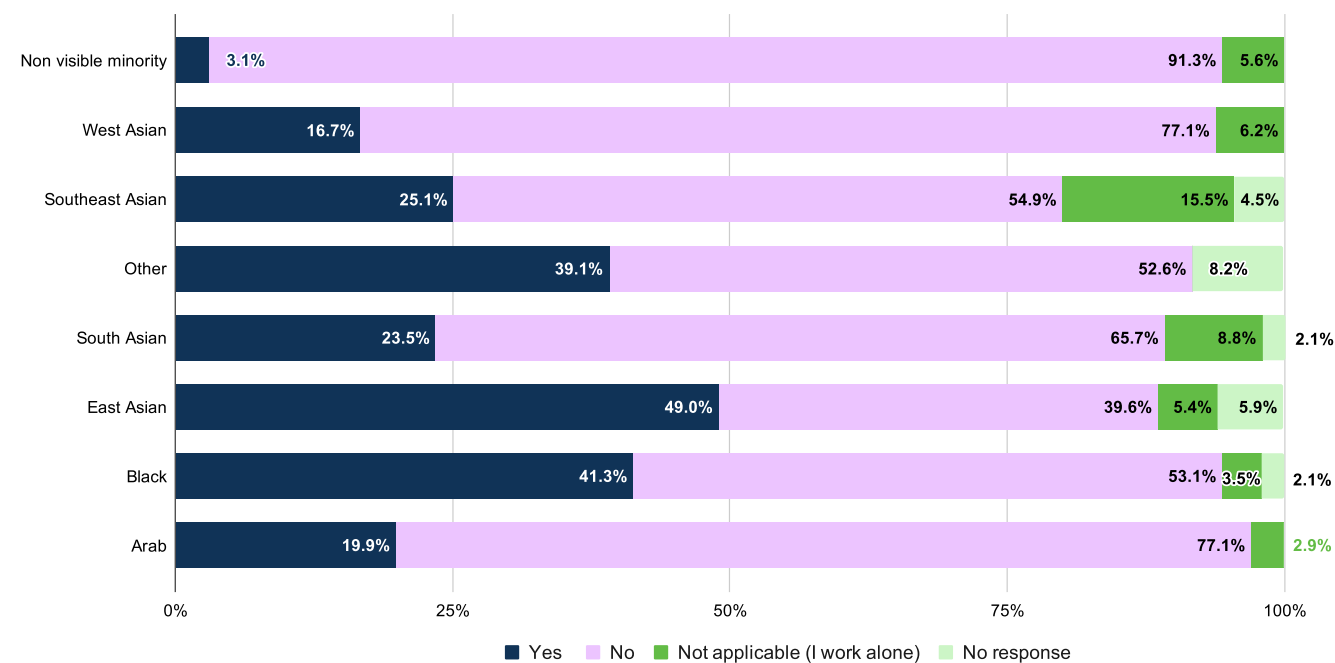
Survey respondents who were active in the labour force (n=349) were asked a series of questions on experiences of discrimination at work, past and present, any recourse in responding to these incidences at work, and whether/how discrimination and social exclusion has affected their relations with their co-workers.



Experiences of discrimination while working

Estimates suggest that 1 in 4 (26%) of Muslims in the GTHA who are active in the labour force, have experienced discrimination or prejudicial treatment directed toward them while working⁹⁴. Estimates suggest that East Asian Muslims are more likely to have experienced discriminatory treatment while working (49%), followed by Black Muslims (41.3%) (Chart 29). The least likely Muslim groups to report having experienced discriminatory treatment at work include Muslims that do not belong to a visible minority group (3.1%) and West Asian (Iranian, Afghan) Muslims (16.7%).

Chart 29: Muslims (18–69 years) who are active in the labour force, by visible minority status, on whether they have experienced discrimination or prejudice directed toward them while working: GTHA, 2025



*Note: In this disaggregated breakdown, the visible minority group 'Latin American' has been grouped with 'other' due to the relatively small case count in the survey sample.

These estimated percentages, particularly the relatively large share of Black Muslims having had experienced discrimination while working, parallel reports from Canada's Quality of Life Framework where it was suggested that Black people are more likely to experience discrimination or unfair treatment in a workplace setting (48%) when compared to other racialized groups⁹⁵.

Those respondents who reported having experienced discrimination or prejudicial treatment while working were asked to select from a list of options to describe the experience(s)⁹⁶. The largest share of incidents were about the individual's race or ethnicity (46%), with religious identity also being a significant factor 38% of the time. Approximately 15% of respondents who were discriminated against at work also identified their gender (15%) and sexual orientation (15%) as well as age (11%). The

variations in these identified reasons help to highlight key factors informing forms of discrimination experienced by Muslim workers in the GTHA and draw attention to the intersectional experiences of Muslim workers who can and do face barriers informed by multiple other sites of marginalization, in addition to their religious identity, whether based on their gender or age.

Based on data from respondents that experienced discrimination or prejudicial behaviour directed toward them while working, it is estimated that these incidences are reported only 64% of the time. Of those incidences of reported workplace discrimination, only an estimated 16% of cases are dealt with completely.

Of those incidents of discrimination at work that are not reported (36%), it is estimated that for 27% of these incidents, the reason for not reporting was fear of negative consequence, including retaliation, while 21% (1 in 5) of cases were not reported because the individual did not know what to do or who to ask⁹⁷.

Other identified reasons for why the impacted workers did not report incidents include:

- Job change (23%)
- Resolution of issue without outside intervention (23%)
- Concerns about the formal complaint process (17%)
- The behaviour stopped (12%)
- Advised not to report the incident (7%)⁹⁸

Feelings of isolation and social exclusion

It is estimated that 56% of Muslims in the GTHA have either sometimes or frequently had feelings of isolation or exclusion at their place of work. Among groups disaggregated by visible minority status, estimated percentages suggest East Asian Muslims and Black Muslims are the most likely to report feeling isolated or excluded at their place of work (27.4% and 23.4%, respectively). Muslims who do not belong to a visible minority group are the least likely to report feeling isolated or excluded at their place of work (9.1%). These results suggest the intersection of religious affiliation and visible minority status in informing feelings of exclusion or isolation at work.

When respondents were asked⁹⁹ to choose (from a list of options) what they believe were the main contributing factors to feeling isolated or excluded at work, the two primary categories were the respondents' race/ethnicity (41%) and the respondents' religious identity (29%). Language barriers and/or having an accent was identified as a factor 9% of the time, and immigration status 14% of the time.¹⁰⁰

Participants (n=349) were also asked more directed questions relative to their religious identity such as whether they feel that they are treated differently at work than their non-Muslim colleagues, with 1 in 5 (20.5%) responding 'yes.'¹⁰¹ Additionally, it is estimated that 1 in 4 (25.1%) GTHA Muslims have experienced difficulty socializing with their co-workers at or outside of work. Of those who have experienced difficulty socializing with co-workers, 43% of the time this was due to work social

events involving alcohol; 40% of the time respondents do not feel comfortable socializing with their co-workers; and 38% selected 'my coworkers don't include me in social activities.' Almost 1 in 4 (24.6%) respondents identified experiencing negative judgements from their coworkers as a contributing factor informing their difficulty cultivating social relationship with colleagues at or outside of work.

Barriers created

An estimate of 22.2% of GTHA Muslims who are active in the labour force feel like they have been disadvantaged in advancement opportunities specifically because of their religious identity¹⁰². Of this share, some of the identified reasons include:

- Discrimination or bias from supervisors or coworkers (44%)
- Lack of religious accommodations (38%)
- Being overlooked for promotions due to perceived lack of "fit" with company culture (29%)
- Exclusion from informal networking or social events due to religious practices (28%)
- Hostility or microaggressions in the workplace related to beliefs (16%)
- Penalization for wearing religious attire or symbols (10%)

Respondents were also asked whether they had experienced issues travelling for work because of their religious identity, with an affirmative response estimate of 14.7%. This finding is especially significant when paired with data on whether respondents have ever been asked about their religious identity during a job interview. For those that have been asked about their religious identity in a job interview, 18% of the time the topic of their religious identity was raised out of concerns regarding their ability to travel/cross a national border for work¹⁰³. These findings draw attention to the potential impacts of Islamophobic national security policies on the livelihoods and employment opportunities of Muslim workers in Canada.

SECTION 8: WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

An estimated 1 in 4 (26.7%) Muslims in the GTHA who are active in the labour force have experienced either verbal or physical harassment or violence while working¹⁰⁴. Muslim men were more likely to report having experienced verbal/physical harassment or violence in the workplace than Muslim women: 31.9% for Muslim men compared to 21.3% for Muslim women.

Of those who have experienced workplace harassment and violence, 66% of incidences involved a form of non-sexual harassment/violence. While 22% of incidences involved a form of sexual harassment/violence, the remaining 15% of respondents preferring not to say/disclose. We estimate that Muslim women are more likely to report an incidence of sexual harassment/violence at work (68%) when compared to Muslim men (31%).



All respondents who reported having experienced some form of physical/verbal harassment or violence while working were asked to identify its source. Of those, large shares identified the following:

- 41% identified the source as customers or clients.
- 38% identified supervisors or those in management positions.
- 32% identified co-workers and colleagues.

In attempting to identify the motivations behind the incidences of workplace violence/harassment, respondents were asked¹⁰⁵ to select from a list of options what they believe the incident was related to. Among respondents who had experienced workplace violence/harassment, they identified the following as what the incident was related to/informed by their:

- Race/ethnicity: 47%
- Religious identity: 26%
- Language or accent: 20%
- Gender identity: 18%
- Sexual orientation: 15%
- Age: 12%
- Immigrant status: 7%
- Disability or health: 7%

Of all respondents that experienced workplace violence/harassment, just over half (57%) reported the incident, with only 35% of the reported cases having been dealt with. These results suggest that even though most cases of workplace violence/harassment are reported by Muslim workers in the GTHA, a smaller percentage are actually dealt with. Of all reported cases, an estimated 40% were not dealt with, and 14% of the time, respondents were 'not sure' of the outcome. In the survey, 11% of respondents skipped this question.

SECTION 9: BARRIERS IN JOB SEARCHING

As part of the exploration into the work experiences of Muslims in the GTHA, and of the potential barriers that systemic forms of discrimination create, the original survey also asked respondents questions related to their job search experiences. These included questions related to accessing services such as employment, community and settlement services with respect to respondents' job searches and employment goals as well as more direct questions about whether respondents' religious identity or practices have ever been raised during the interview process.



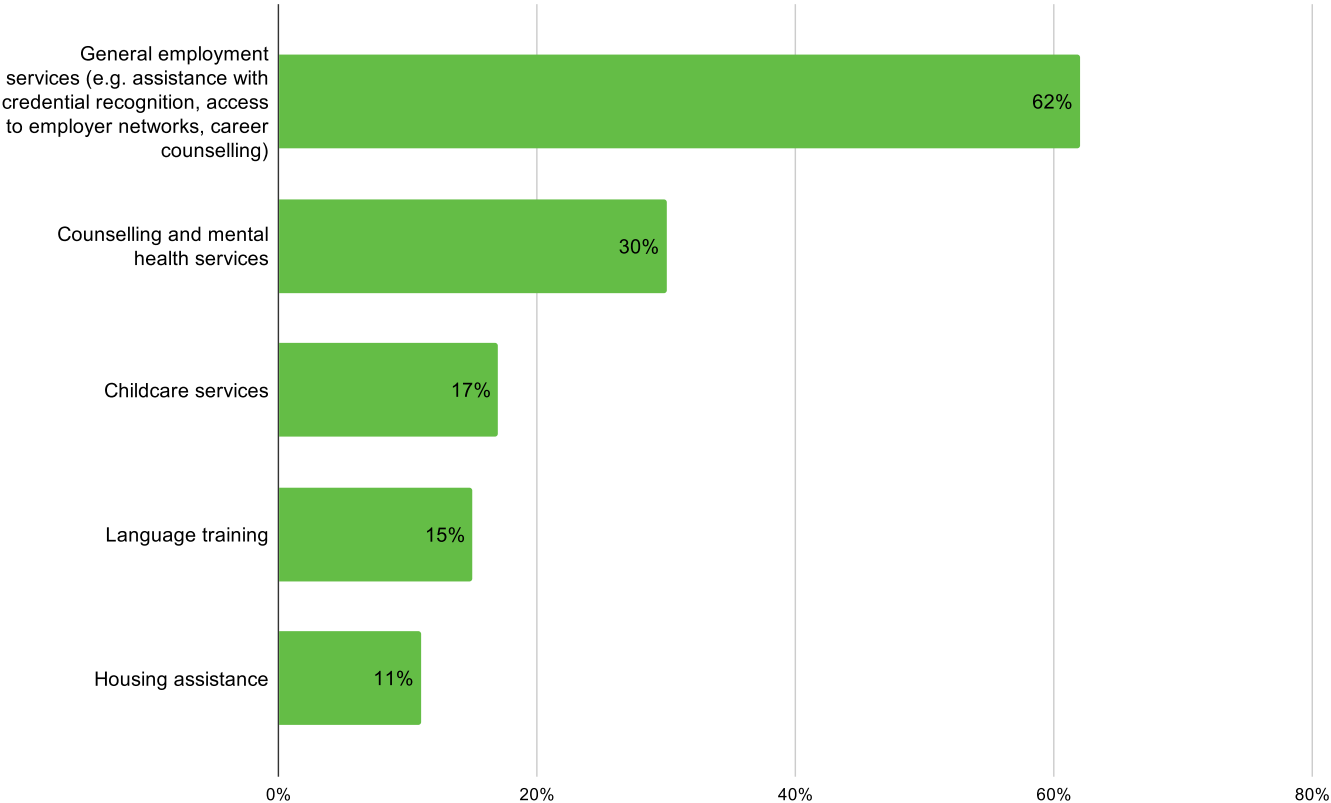
Accessing employment, settlement, and community services:

Respondents, regardless of employment status or labour force participation, were asked a series of questions related to accessing employment, settlement, or other community services in their job search and in relation to their employment goals. Of those that have never worked, an estimated 42% have accessed such services in their job search and in relation to their employment goals. Despite never working, 49% of those who had used such services had accessed and found useful employment services, while 46% had found counselling and mental health services to be useful.

For those respondents who were active in the labour force at the time of the survey, an estimated 36% had previously accessed employment, settlement, or community services in their job search and in pursuing their employment goals.¹⁰⁶ When disaggregated by status, estimates suggest that those classified as refugees or protected persons were more likely to access such services (85%), while temporary residents were the least likely (31%). GTHA Muslims who were active in the labour force and who were born in Canada were slightly more likely to access such services (35.5%) when compared to naturalized citizens (28%) and permanent residents (35%).

Of all participants who are active in the labour force, and who accessed these services, the following services were found to be most useful in their pursuit employment and in their job search:

Chart 30: Services found to be most useful in pursuing employment and in the job search: GTHA, 2025



Of the estimated 64% of GTHA Muslims who are active in the labour force, but who have never accessed employment, community, or settlement services in their pursuit of employment, approximately 44% did not know that these services existed. About 14% did not think that they were eligible to access these services. Results indicate that only 2% did not access these services for cultural or religious reasons.

Barriers in the hiring process

Estimates from survey data suggest that 1 in 5 (20%) Muslims in the GTHA have been asked about their religious identity or religious practices during a job interview¹⁰⁷. Disaggregated analyses reveal that Muslim men are slightly more likely to be asked about their religious identity during a job interview (20%) when compared to Muslim women (18%).

Those respondents who had been asked about their religion in a job interview were asked¹⁰⁸ to identify from a list of likely options what the questions were about. Online survey results indicate that for Muslims in the GTHA who have been asked about their religious identity in an interview, the question was raised in relation to:

- Their religious practices (45%)
- Their ability to fit in to workplace culture (28%)
- Their political beliefs (25%)
- Their ability to travel for work (e.g. crossing the border) (18%)
- Their ability to serve a diverse clientele (17%)

When prompted with a question on whether they have ever been directly told that they were not getting a job because of their religious identity, an estimated 8% responded 'Yes'.



CONCLUSION

As a pilot study examining the role of systemic Islamophobia in shaping the economic well-being of Muslims in Canada, this report focuses on the employment and labour market experiences of Muslims within the geographic context of the GTHA.

Secondary data analysis of 2021 Census of Population data was used to build a demographic profile of the GTHA Muslim population. Key economic indicator variables were also drawn on from the 2021 Census to conduct a comparative analysis of the economic standing and well-being of Muslims compared to non-Muslims in the GTHA. These key variables include data on labour force status (employment, unemployment, and participation rates), total household income, calculations of median individual total and employment incomes, employment segmentation by occupation and industry, and income from wealth and related assets.

A commitment to an intersectional framework informed this report's analyses, and intersecting sites of marginalization were drawn upon to clarify the unique effects of religious affiliation within a matrix of overlapping social categories in shaping Muslims' employment and labour market experiences. In doing so, this study highlights the unique experiences of sub-groups within the Muslim community whose intersecting identities play a role in shaping their economic experiences, whether related to their gender or visible minority or generation status, in addition to religious affiliation.

In addition to secondary data analysis of 2021 Census of Population data, this study also commissioned an original online survey that collected disaggregated demographic information on economic standing, and experiences with forms of discrimination, social isolation, and harassment and violence in the workplace or while searching for work. The original survey drew from a sample of 423 self-identifying Muslim respondents in the GTHA.

The results from the original survey helped to contextualize the patterns observed through the 2021 Census data analysis and offered further insights into the systemic barriers that Muslims in the labour force face that impact their work experiences and employment and career trajectories.

Both datasets were utilized and relied upon in a complimentary way in order to help provide a much fuller picture of GTHA Muslim's employment and labour market experiences. The reports' results have confirmed Muslim's disparate experiences in employment and in the labour market when compared to their non-Muslim counterparts. It has shed light on systemic barriers that have contributed to the lower overall economic integration and well-being of Muslims in the GTHA.

Based on the study's results, this report has identified, through consultation with community members, several action items at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels that can help respond to, and counter, the effects of systemic and intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization affecting the economic well-being and integration of GTHA Muslims.

The background is a dark green to black gradient. It features a complex technical drawing in white lines. On the left, there are two large interlocking gears. A large, semi-transparent white arrow curves from the top left towards the bottom right, passing behind the title. The drawing includes various circles, some with cross-hatching, and a grid of lines. In the lower-left area, there is a small box containing the number '98'.

BLUEPRINTS FOR AN ACTION PLAN

In this report, analysis of data from the 2021 Census and the original survey identified systemic issues and discrepancies in the labour market and employment experiences of Muslims in the GTHA. Based on these findings and our consultations with community organizations, we propose blueprints for developing action plans for federal, provincial, and municipal levels. These blueprints highlight key areas where intervention is needed and identify key questions to help guide the creation of sustainable solutions. Overall, we recommend developing innovative, culturally responsive solutions in these areas in close partnership with impacted communities to support the economic well-being of Muslims in Canada.

Municipal action plan

Municipalities play a meaningful role in community development and service delivery, whether related social assistance, health, or housing. Municipalities can also promote social and economic well-being and development by partnering with local, community, and faith-based organizations to support advocacy, raise awareness, and in essential service provision. Partnering with community legal clinics, supporting the design and delivery of educational resources and workshops around workers' rights, and maintaining dedicated offices to handle human rights-related issues, including discrimination and harassment claims, are just some examples.

Local governments are in a meaningful position to help better identify and monitor appropriate program design that meets impacted communities' needs. Designing and developing community-centred and community-informed action plans in partnership with local municipal governments can help in the creation of appropriate programming and interventions to support GTHA Muslims' economic integration and well-being of Muslims in the GTHA. Consider the following:

- A majority of Muslims (18–69 years) in the GTHA (64%) who are active in the labour force have never accessed employment, community, or settlement services. Of that 64%, an estimated 44% did not know that these services existed and 14% did not think that they were eligible.
 - What kinds of local programming can be developed to increase awareness and education among members of the Muslim community about the availability of such services that can support them in their job search and in pursuit of their education goals?
 - What partnerships can be developed with culturally grounded and local community institutions such as mosques or cultural centres to assist with access to, and education on, employment services, financial literacy, and newcomers' economic integration?
- For Muslims who accessed employment, community, or settlement services in support of their pursuit of employment or for their job search, in addition to general employment services, an estimate 11% found housing assistance to be most useful, suggesting that the availability of stable and affordable housing can play a meaningful role in the employment practices and economic integration of GTHA Muslims. Data from the survey also estimate that of the 44% of GTHA Muslims who rent their place of dwelling, 1 in 4 (23%) live in subsidized housing units.

- What housing needs, or specific forms of housing assistance, can municipalities invest in and help develop to better support the economic well-being and employment goals of Muslim community members?
- It is estimated that 10% of Muslims (18–69 years) in the GTHA have never worked at a paid job or business. Muslim women are almost twice as likely as Muslim men to have never held paid employment (13% vs. 7%), and almost half (45%) of those who have never worked have not done so due to childcare or other family responsibilities. Survey data also estimate that the largest share (31%) of unemployed Muslims in the GTHA who left their job, as opposed to lost their job, did so to care for their own children or to care for an elderly family member (29%). Muslim women were more likely than Muslim men to report never working or leaving their job due to family responsibilities.
- What programs can be developed in partnership with local and community organizations to support Muslim women in workforce reentry?
- In what ways can childcare and related family support initiatives shape employment practices of Muslim workers, and Muslim women workers in particular?
- How can municipal governments better support the availability of and finding for affordable childcare¹⁰⁹ as well as before/after school programs through local schools and/or community organizations?

Provincial (Ontario) action plan

Rights and protections for workers in Canada fall under the regulation of the provinces/territories. In Ontario, existing legal frameworks that govern workers' rights include the Ontario Human Rights Code; Employment Standards Act; Occupational Health and Safety Act; and Workplace Safety and Insurance Act. Adjudicative bodies such as the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario and the Ontario Labour Relations Board are in place to enforce the laws and adjudicate complaints and disputes.

Existing research has drawn attention to limitations in existing forms of legislation and tribunals, including:

- Limitations in wage regulations in protecting workers' wages as well as stipulating fair wage standards that keep up with the cost of living¹¹⁰
- The need for legislation requiring employers to provide equal pay and access to benefits for all types of employees (full-time, part-time, contract, temporary) that do the same work¹¹¹.
- Issues with the current reliance on a complaint-based enforcement system on employment protections since it places the onus on effected workers and requires them to take the risk to come forward¹¹².
- A lack of systemic accountability mechanisms that place the responsibility on employers to create workplaces that are free from bullying or harassment.
- Issues with the chronic underfunding of existing tribunals such as the Ontario Human Rights Commission and Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario that have made it hard for workers to find relief from workplace violations due to backlogs, delays, and understaffing¹¹³.

Data collected specifically on discrimination-related barrier that GTHA Muslims face in employment settings and in their job searches demonstrate that more needs to be done to protect the Muslim workers' rights and that the existing mechanisms set up to protect workers are not working well. Consider the following:

- **Wages:** Approximately 2 out of 3 (67%) Muslims (18–69 years) in the GTHA are paid by the hour. Of those, 1 out of 4 (26%) make less than \$20 per hour. Almost half (48%) have an hourly wage of \$24.99 per hour and below, which is below the calculated threshold for a living wage in the GTA and approximates the threshold set for Hamilton¹¹⁴. The data also indicate that an estimated 7% make below the official minimum wage (\$17.60 per hour) in Ontario.
 - Given the identified patterns in wage levels for GTHA Muslim workers, what reforms are needed to provincial legislation, such as the Employment Standards Act, to ensure that Muslim workers, and all workers, are paid a fair wage for their labour, and that wages keep up with the cost of living?
- **Benefits:** Estimates from survey data suggest that not all Muslims (18–69 years) in the GTHA have access to benefits as part of their employment package.. An estimated 41% do not have access to paid sick leave benefits and an estimate of only 47% have supplemental dental or medical care benefits as part of their employment.
 - Further research and analysis need to be carried out to better identify exactly which employed Muslims are not receiving full benefits as part of their employment, and whether their experiences fit within the broader call by labour organizers for amendments to the Employment Standards Act that would require all employers to provide equal benefits and pay for all workers regardless of employment arrangements (i.e. full-time, part-time, contract, temporary).
- **Unions:** It is estimated that only 22% of employed Muslims (18–69 years) in the GTHA are union members. This is below the overall unionization rate for employees in Canada (30.6%) and for Ontario (26.3%)¹¹⁵ for the 2025 reference year. Lower unionization rates for Muslims are significant to note given the role that unions can play in protecting workers from harmful or precarious working conditions as well as providing workers with the support and avenues they need to address grievances.
 - In what ways can calls for amendments to the Ontario Labour Relations Act – which governs the process of unionization – benefit Muslim workers in the GTHA? What are the documented differences in employment experiences and overall economic standing of Muslims workers in the GTHA who belong to a union compared to those who do not?
 - Are there sector specific considerations given that Census data from 2021 indicate that employed Muslims in the GTHA are overrepresented in certain fields such as the retail trade, transportation and warehousing, and accommodation and food services?

- **Equity:** An estimated 1 in 4 (26%) Muslims (18–69 years) in the GTHA have experienced prejudicial treatment directed to them while working. Though 64% of individuals reported the discriminatory incident, only 16% report that the cases were dealt with. Of the 36% who did not report the incident, 27% did not do so out of fear of retaliation, and 22% did not know what to do or who to ask for assistance. The data suggest that only a small number of cases involving discrimination or prejudicial treatment experienced by Muslim workers are dealt with when reported, and some of those who do not report it either do not know where to look for assistance or are afraid of coming forward.
 - In what ways do these experiences speak to broader issues with the complaint-based enforcement system and the Ontario Government's reliance on employers to voluntarily comply with ESA and Ontario Human Rights Code standards?
 - How do identified issues with chronic underfunding of the Ontario Human Rights Commission and Human Rights Tribunal, and related delays and backlogs, factor into the small percentage of cases of discrimination and prejudicial treatment against Muslim workers that are dealt with?
- **Recruitment:** An estimated 1 in 5 (20%) Muslims (18–69 years) in the GTHA have been asked questions about their religious identity and practices during a job interview.
 - What additional measures can be enforced to better protect Muslims during the job search process and ensure the employers' abidance to Ontario Human Rights Code standards that protect prospective employees from unfair hiring practices?
- **Religious accommodations:** The Ontario Human Rights Code protects workers' rights to religious accommodation (up to a limit of undue hardship) in their employment. Estimates from survey data suggest that slightly more than half (52%) of Muslims (18–69 years) in the GTHA feel that their religious practices are not, or only somewhat, accommodated in their workplaces. Of those who have not had their religious practices/beliefs fully accommodated at work, 28% indicated that there was no clear workplace policy, another 28% indicated 'fear of being judged or treated differently,' and 18% identified the reason being a fear for their job security or of retaliation.
 - What reforms can be instituted for Muslim workers in Ontario to ensure that they feel informed, able, and safe to exercise their rights to religious accommodation?
- **Workplace harassment:** An estimated 27% of Muslims (18–69 years) in the GTHA have directly experienced verbal/physical harassment or violence while working. The sources of these incidences were co-workers and colleagues 32% of the time, supervisors or management 38% of the time, and customers or clients 41% of the time. Despite the Ontario Government's introduction of the Occupational Health and Safety Act that require employers to develop workplace harassment policies and to ensure workplaces are free from harassment and bullying, the results generated from the original survey indicate the prevalence of an ongoing issue affecting Muslim workers.

- What measures can be taken to ensure that employers take the steps necessary to prevent harassment and bullying in the workplace, between co-workers, between workers and supervisors/management, and between workers and customers/clients?

Federal action plan

The federal government's reach and resources can play an important role in setting standards for labour policy while also supporting improvements in cross jurisdictional research and data collection to support the economic well-being and integration of diverse communities, including the Muslim community in Canada. The federal government, through offices such as Immigrant, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) also play a key role in ensuring the distribution resources and funding meant to support with the settlement of newcomers through programs that can support with credential recognition processes, employment services and professional/skill development, and language training programs.

Despite resource availability, much more needs to be done to develop better funded, more meaningful, and tangible interventions to assist the economic well-being and integration of Muslims in Canada. Consider the following:

- **National scale:** This pilot study on labour and employment experiences of Muslims in the GTHA reveals significant discrepancies in labour market outcomes and relative economic standing between Muslims and non-Muslims. To better contextualize GTHA Muslims' experiences and to further clarify the economic and employment experiences of Muslims in Canada, further research is needed that incorporates Census data and a comparative survey on workplace experiences between Muslims and non-Muslims, on a national scale.
 - How can a national study on Islamophobia and employment contribute to the development of an evidenced-based national action plan on improving the economic well-being and integration of Muslims?
 - What can we learn from cross-jurisdictional analyses of provincial legislation and the related adjudicative bodies about protecting Muslim workers' rights?
- **Data:** Results from the pilot study reveal the role of religious affiliation in shaping labour market and employment experiences.
 - How can amendments to Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS), particularly the inclusion of religious affiliation as a variable of interest, contribute to improving data collection on the employment conditions of Muslims in Canada?
 - How would such an amendment to the LFS contribute to improved tracking and analysis of the role of religious affiliation, and of systemic forms of discrimination such as Islamophobia, in shaping Muslims' employment conditions?

- **Foreign Credentials:** An estimated 49% of Muslims (18–69 years) in the GTHA who completed their highest level of education outside of Canada have not had their credentials fully recognized. Of those, almost half (48%) simply did not submit their credentials for evaluation, 24% submitted their credentials but they were deemed not equivalent to Canadian standards, and 23% did not know the process for credential evaluation.
- In what ways can the process of credential recognition be reformed to better support the integration of newcomers and individuals whose highest level of education was attained outside of Canada?
- What systemic barriers might foreign-born Muslim workers be encountering that are hindering the full recognition of their education credentials?

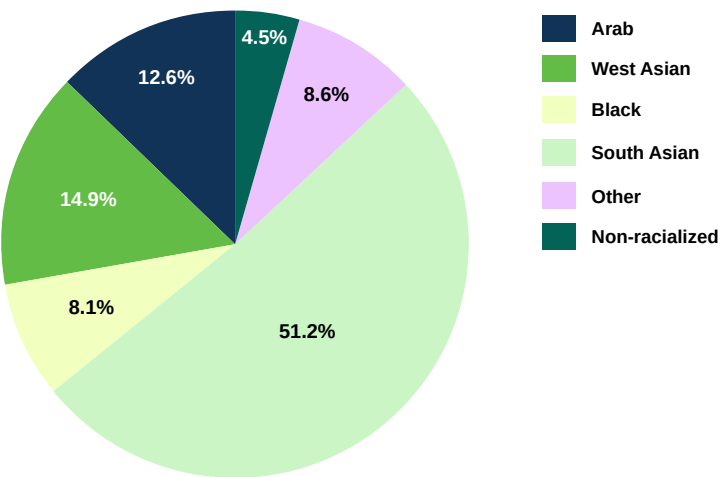


APPENDICES

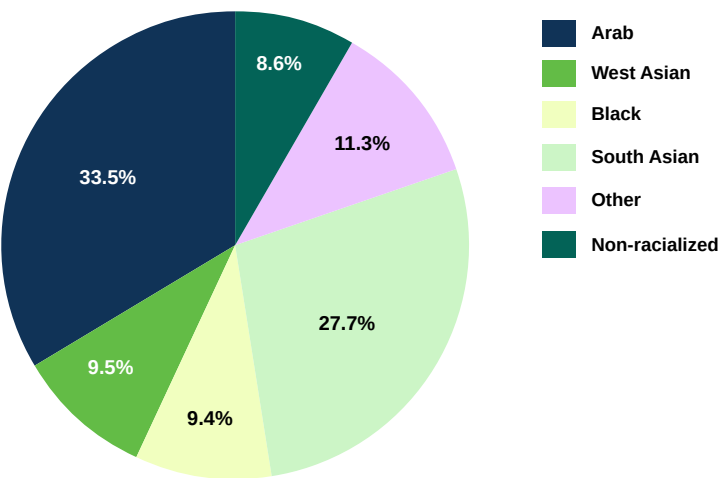
APPENDIX A: ADDITIONAL CHARTS/TABLES

Chart 31: Breakdown of Muslims by visible minority group for each of the three CMA's that comprise the GTHA: 2021

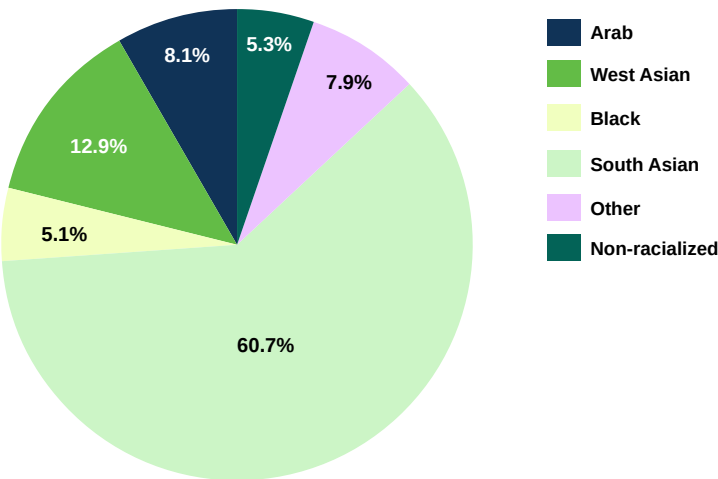
Composition of Muslims in the TCMA, by racialized group



Composition of Muslims in the HCMA, by racialized group

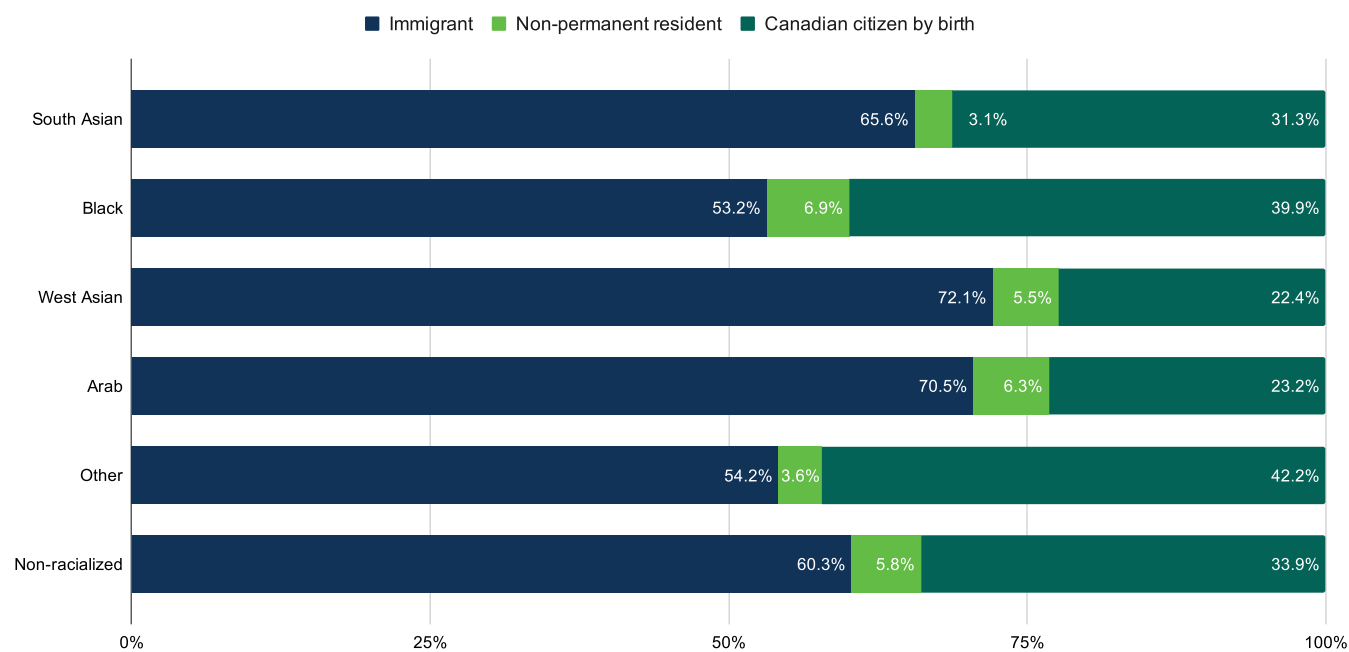


Composition of Muslims in the OCMA, by racialized group



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

Chart 32: Citizenship and immigration status of Muslims in the GTHA, by visible minority group



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

Chart 33: Family size of Muslims (18–69 years): GTHA, 2025

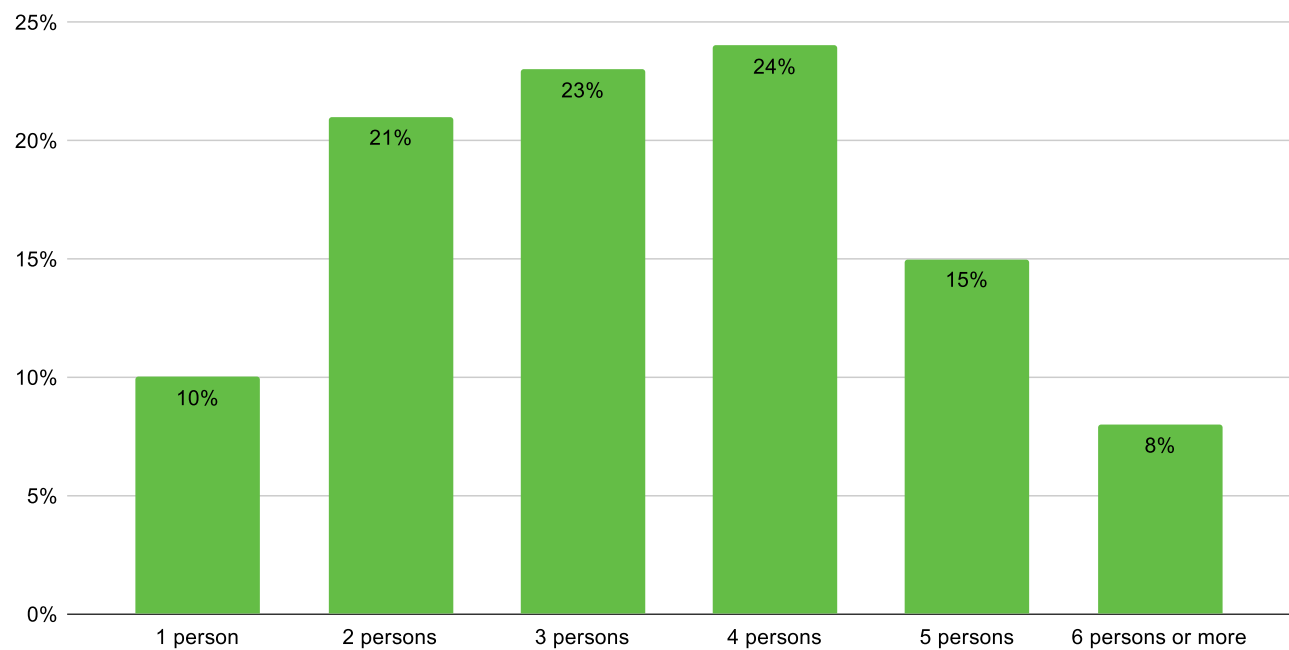


Chart 34: Annual total household income for Muslims (18–69 years): GTHA, 2025

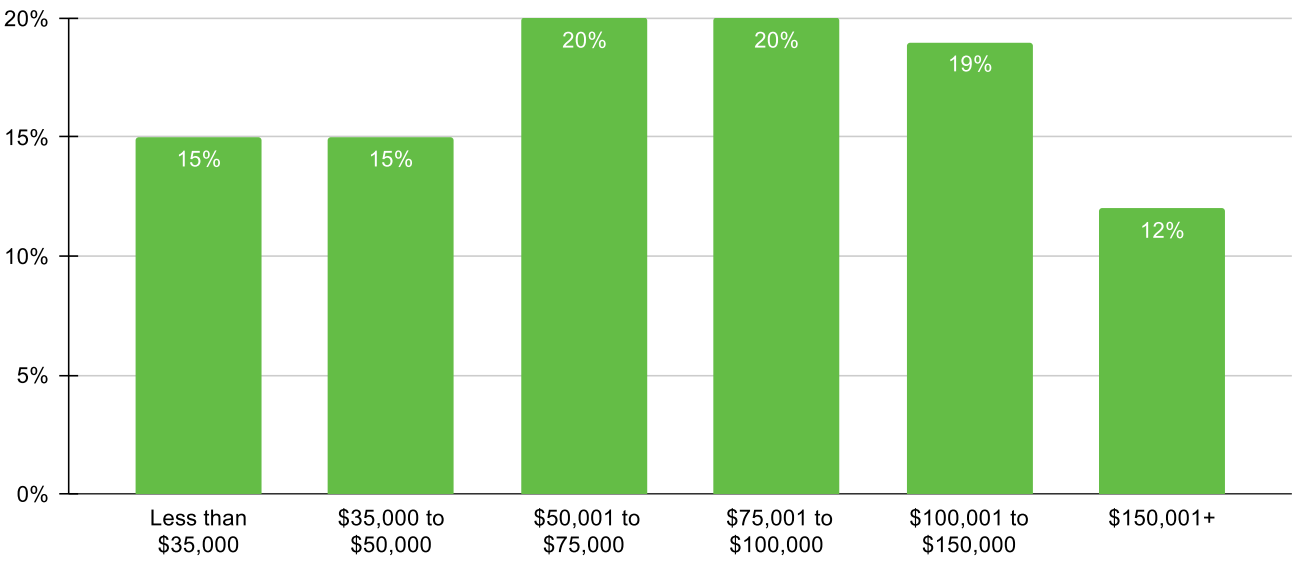
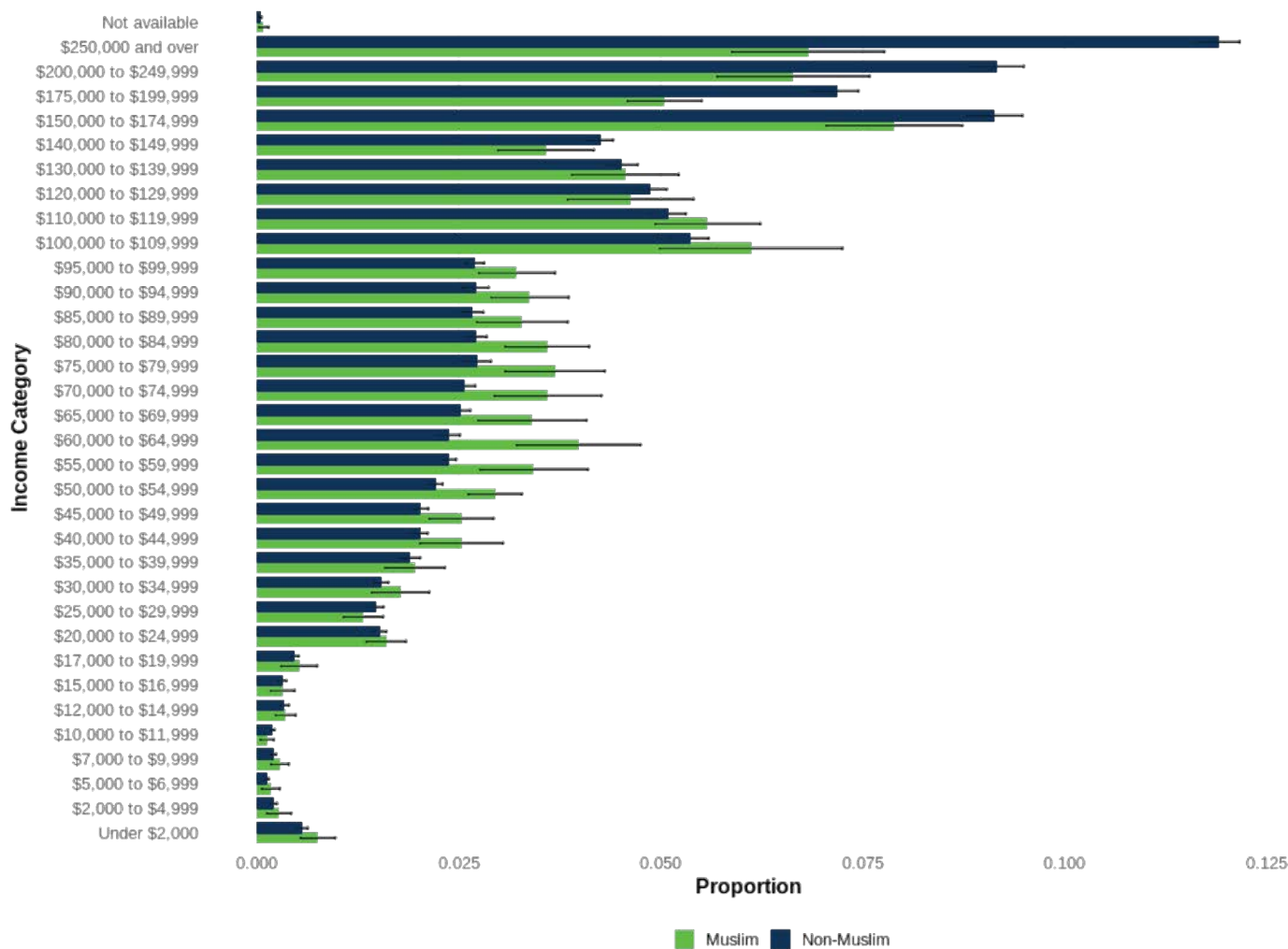


Chart 35: Proportion of Muslim and non-Muslim population per total household income bracket: GTHA, 2020



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

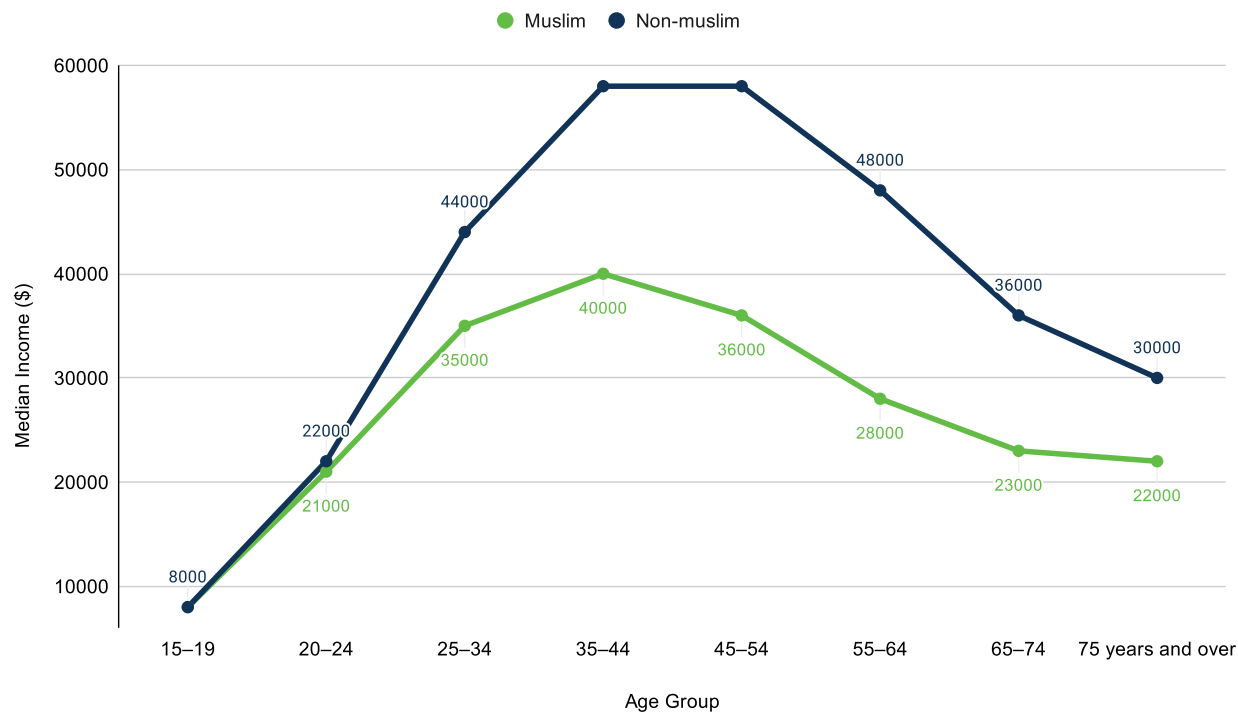
Table 15

Employment by industry: GTHA, 2021 (collapsed categories)

	Muslim					Non-Muslim			
	Non-visible minority		Visible minority		Total	Non-visible minority		Visible minority	
	Men+	Women+	Men+	Women+		Men+	Women+	Men+	Women+
All industries	0.2%	0.2%	4.4%	3.2%	8%	23.8%	22.2%	22.9%	23.0%
Arts, culture, and information	0.1%	0.1%	3.3%	2.2%	5.7%	32.2%	24.7%	20.9%	16.5%
Education and health	0.1%	0.2%	2.1%	5.4%	7.8%	12.1%	37.0%	10.5%	32.5%
Goods-producing sectors	0.5%	0.1%	4.5%	1.4%	6.5%	39.5%	10.8%	30.0%	13.2%
Hospitality, support, and consumer services	0.2%	0.2%	4.6%	3.5%	8.5%	19.0%	20.6%	23.8%	28.1%
Information and business/financial services	0.2%	0.2%	4.8%	2.7%	7.9%	23.2%	21.4%	24.7%	22.9%
Public administration	0.2%	0.05%	2.9%	2.6%	5.75%	27.0%	31.1%	15.8%	20.4%
Retail trade	0.1%	0.3%	4.8%	4.5%	9.7%	20.9%	23.0%	21.4%	24.9%
Wholesale trade and transportation	0.3%	0.1%	8.0%	1.9%	10.3%	25.9%	12.5%	34.5%	16.7%

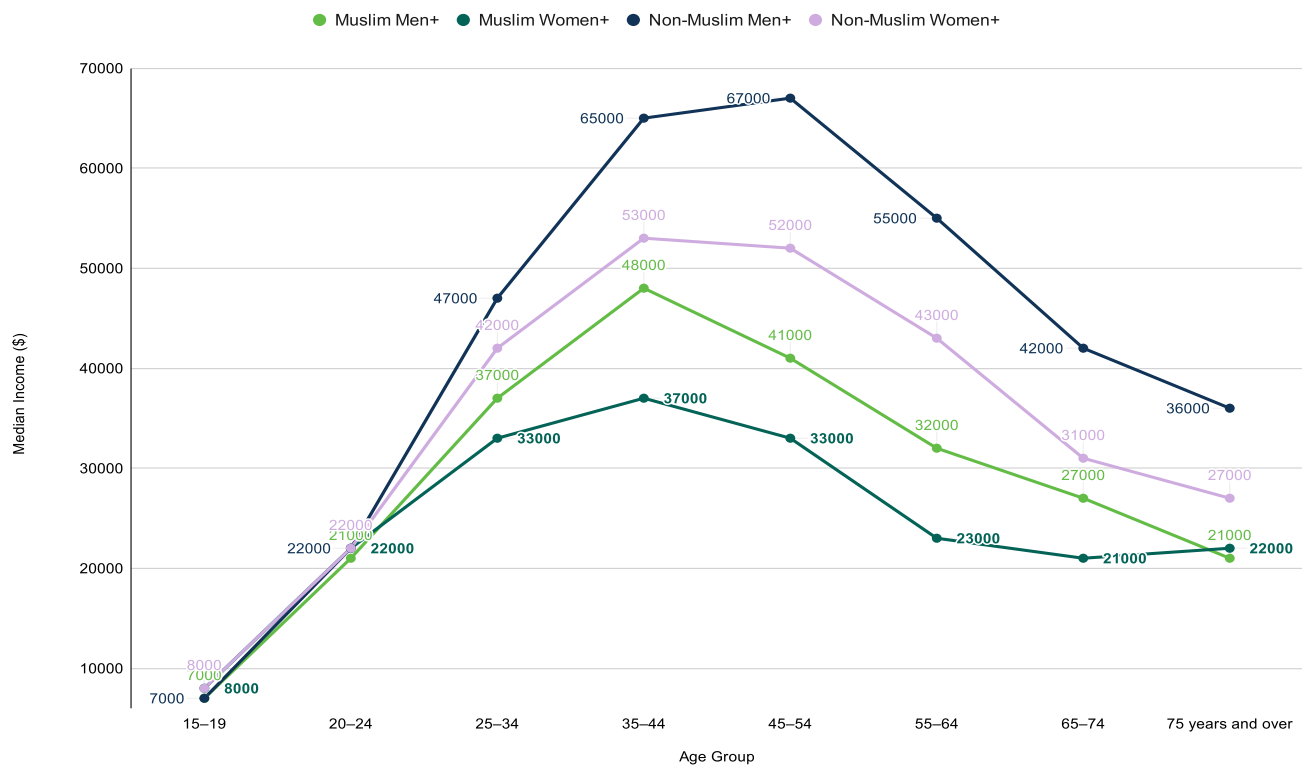
Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

Chart 36: Median total Income by age group and religious affiliation



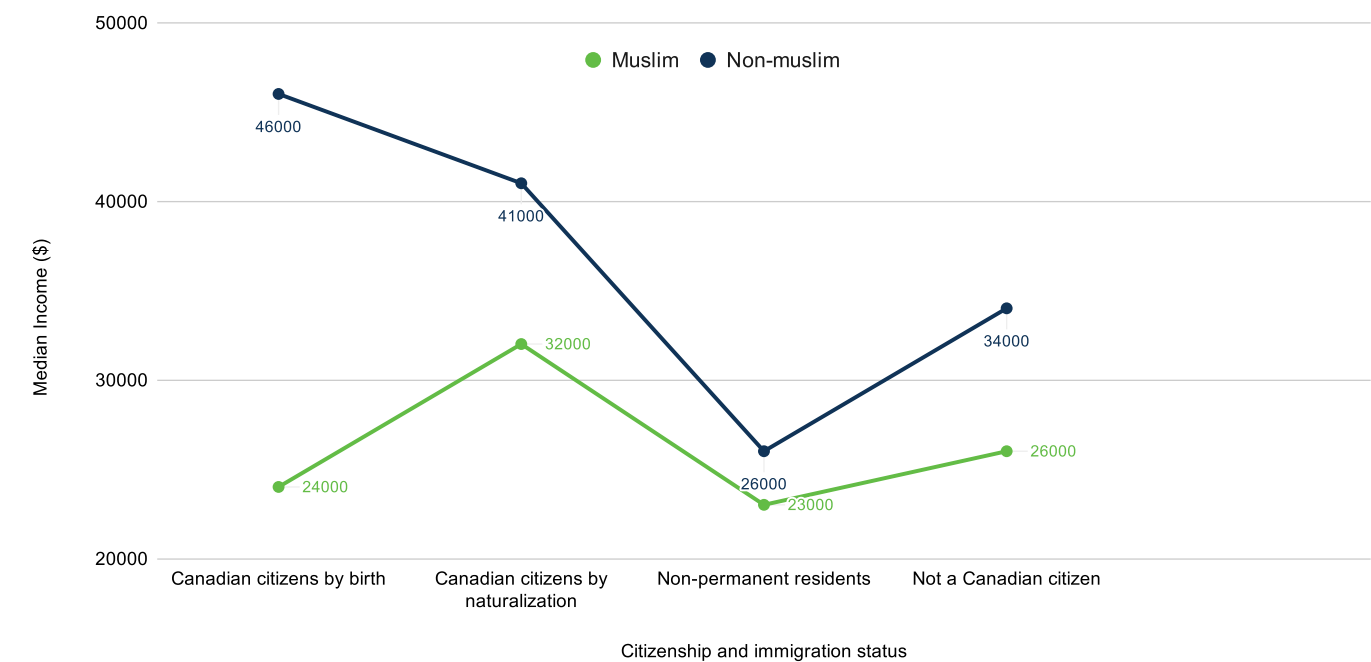
Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

Chart 37: Median total Income by age group, gender, and religious affiliation



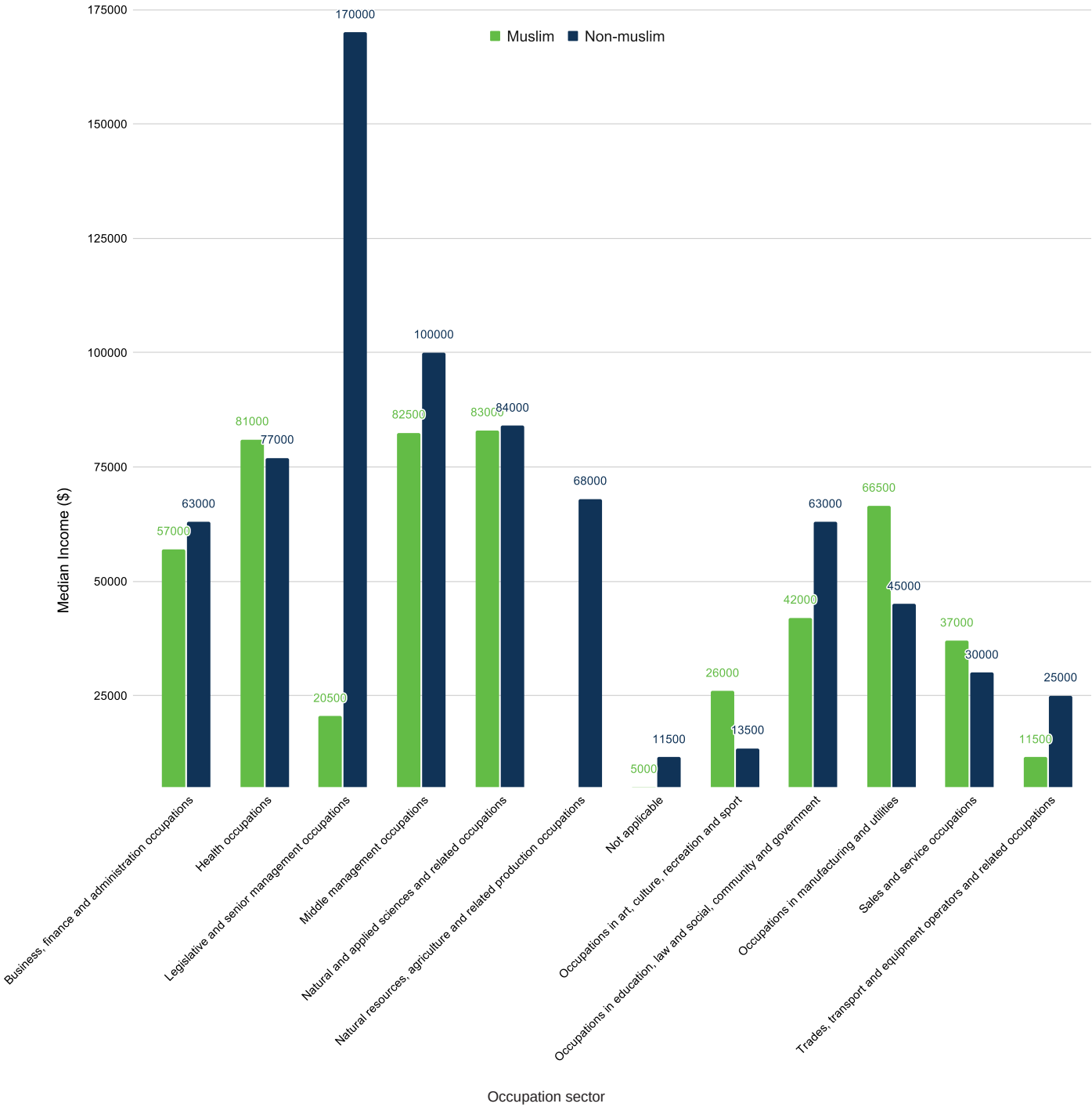
Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

Chart 38: Median total Income by citizenship/immigration status and religious affiliation



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

Chart 39: Median Employment Income by Occupation (University certificate, degree or diploma above a bachelor level; South Asian; Male)



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

APPENDIX B: ADDITIONAL INFERENTIAL ANALYSIS RESULTS

Table 16

Median Individual total income by visible minority status, gender, and religious affiliation with 95% Confidence Intervals (CI): GTHA, 2020

		Men+			Women+		
		Median individual total income	95% CI (lower bound)	95% CI (upper bound)	Median individual total income	95% CI (lower bound)	95% CI (upper bound)
Non-Muslim	Non-visible minority	\$54,000	\$53,000	\$56,000	\$43,000	\$43,000	\$44,000
	Arab	\$33,000	\$30,000	\$39,000	\$30,000	\$26,000	\$37,000
	Black	\$36,000	\$35,000	\$38,000	\$40,000	\$39,000	\$42,000
	East Asian	\$35,000	\$34,000	\$37,000	\$32,000	\$31,000	\$34,000
	South Asian	\$39,000	\$38,000	\$41,000	\$33,000	\$32,000	\$34,000
	Southeast Asian	\$41,000	\$40,000	\$44,000	\$37,000	\$36,000	\$39,000
	West Asian	\$35,000	\$30,000	\$44,000	\$31,000	\$29,000	\$35,000
	Other	\$39,000	\$37,000	\$43,000	\$35,000	\$34,000	\$37,000
Muslim	Non-visible minority	\$33,500	\$27,000	\$43,000	\$32,000	\$29,000	\$36,000
	Arab	\$30,000	\$28,000	\$34,000	\$26,000	\$23,000	\$31,000
	Black	\$27,000	\$24,000	\$33,000	\$30,000	\$26,000	\$34,000
	East Asian	\$34,000	\$23,000	\$60,000	\$31,000		
	South Asian	\$35,000	\$33,000	\$38,000	\$26,000	\$26,000	\$27,000
	Southeast Asian	\$34,000	\$18,000	\$82,000	\$37,000	\$23,000	\$40,000
	West Asian	\$28,000	\$27,000	\$30,000	\$27,000	\$26,000	\$29,000
	Other	\$31,000	\$26,000	\$38,000	\$29,000	\$28,000	\$32,000

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

Table 17

Median individual total income by visible minority status, gender, and religious affiliation with 95% Confidence Intervals (CI): GTHA, 2020

		Men+			Women+		
		Median individual total income	95% CI (lower bound)	95% CI (upper bound)	Median individual total income	95% CI (lower bound)	95% CI (upper bound)
Non-Muslim	Non-visible minority	\$69,000	\$68,000	\$71,000	\$52,000	\$51,000	\$54,000
	Visible minority	\$50,000	\$49,000	\$52,000	\$39,000	\$38,000	\$41,000
Muslim	Non-visible minority	\$35,500	\$20,000	\$54,000	\$32,000	\$21,000	\$41,000
	Visible minority	\$41,000	\$39,000	\$44,000	\$23,000	\$21,000	\$27,000

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

Table 18

Median employment income for Muslims vs non-Muslims, full-time, full-year, prime-age workers (25–54 years) by gender: GTHA, 2021

Religion	Gender	Median employment income (\$)	95% CI (lower bound)	95% CI (upper bound)
Muslim	Man	\$68,000	\$63,000	\$73,000
	Woman	\$54,000	\$52,000	\$57,000
Non-Muslim	Man	\$78,000	\$78,000	\$79,000
	Woman	\$67,000	\$67,000	\$68,000

Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File, calculations by the author

APPENDIX C: WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY?

The survey sample (n=423) used a stratified sampling method where strata/quotas relative to age, geographic distribution within the GTHA, gender, and visible minority status were incorporated into a randomized sampling technique. This was done to ensure, as much as was possible, the representativeness of the survey sample. Relevant strata were calculated using 2021 Census data on Muslims in the GTHA.

Ensuring the representativeness of the sample and incorporating the diversity that exists in the Muslim community has helped to ensure a better estimated representation of the realities facing members of the Muslim community as well as sharpen the analysis of survey results through an allowance for disaggregated intersectional analyses.

Below is a summary of unweighted counts and weighted percentages of the survey sample that are compared to the respective 2021 Census point estimates:

Table 19 Demographic Characteristics of Survey Sample (2025) Compared with 2021 Census Estimates: Muslims in the GTHA				
Demographic	Category	Unweighted counts (n=423)	Weighted %	Census % (2021)
Visible minority status	Arab	58	14.0%	13.9%
	Black	40	9.8%	8.1%
	South Asian	173	45.3%	49.9%
	West Asian	28	7%	14.5%
	Non-visible Minority (white)	56	6.3%	4.8%
	Other (Southeast Asian [17]; East Asian [29]; Latin American [7]; 'Other' [15])	68	16.8%	8.8%
Age	18–24	46	18.3%	16%
	25–34	125	23.2%	24%
	35–44	126	20.6%	24%
	45–54	75	20.1%	19%
	55–64	42	13.6%	13%
	65–69	9	4.3%	4%
Citizenship and immigration status	Canadian citizen by birth	178	38.5%	30.6%
	Immigrant	203	51.8%	64.9%
	Non-permanent resident	41	8.7%	4.4%
Admission category (foreign born)	Economic immigrant	68	16.4%	44%
	Immigrant sponsored by family	81	21.0%	22.7%
	Refugee	29	7.4%	23%
	Non-permanent resident	36	8.2%	6.3%
	Other immigrant*	31	8.5%	

Source: Original online survey and Statistics Canada, 2021 Census Public Use Microdata File (calculations by the author).

*Indicate categories unique to the original online survey

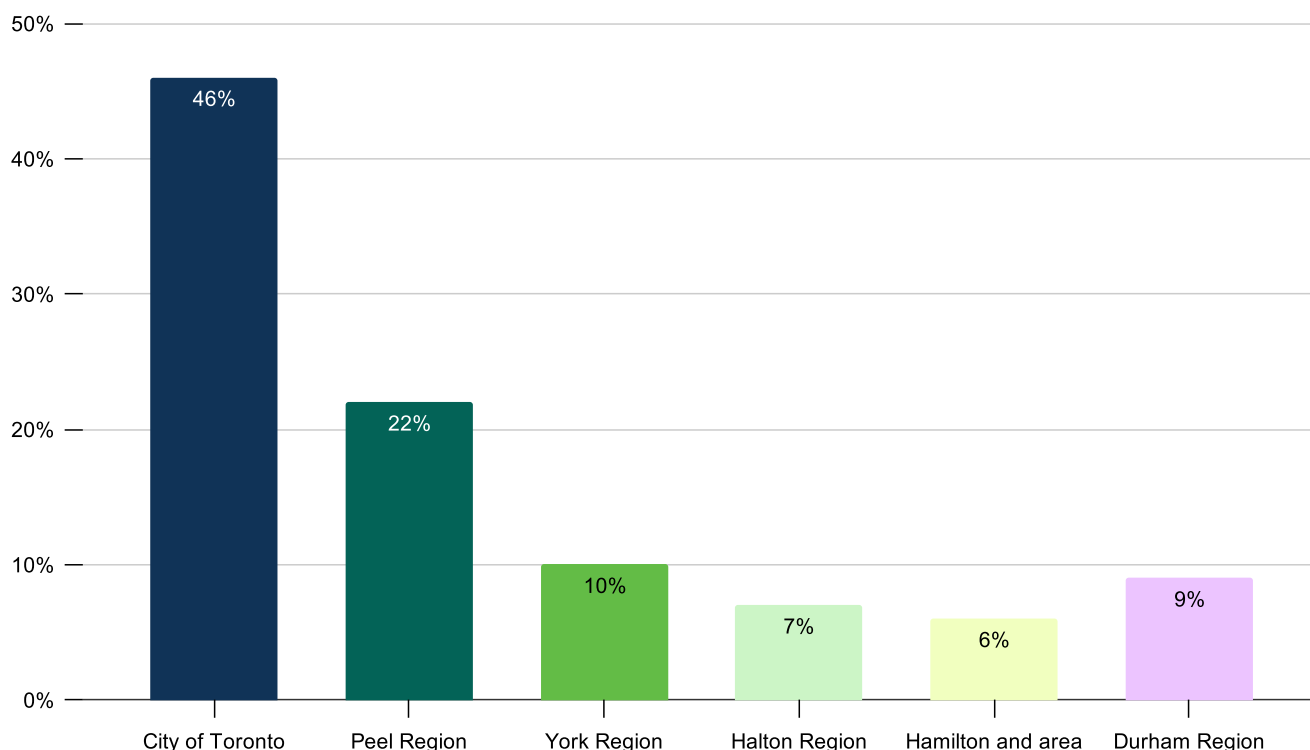
Gender and Sexual Orientation

The representation of survey participants along gender lines was consistent with the population estimates indicated through 2021 Census data. Weighted estimates from the survey results resulted in a percentage breakdown of 52.3% female and 47.5% male. According to 2021 Census data, Men+ make up 50.2% of the GTHA Muslim population, with Women+ making up 49.8%.

Survey respondents were also asked 'Do you identify as a member of the LGBTQ2IA+ communities?' About 8% of respondents (32 cases) answered 'yes', 89% answered 'no', and 3% selected 'prefer not to answer'.

Geographic distribution

Chart 40: Geographic distribution of survey respondents



Survey strata for geographic region were specified at the level of Census Divisions (CD), which with respect to the general boundaries of the GTHA, included: City of Toronto (46%); Peel Region (22%); York Region (10%); Halton Region (7%); Hamilton and area (6%); and Durham Region (9%). These units are different than those accessible through the PUMF 2021 Census files, which in this report have been shared only at the level of Census Metropolitan Area.

Nevertheless, we can approximate the boundaries of each of the three CMAs through combinations of the Census Divisions used here, though not with exact precision. For example, Durham Region contains eight municipalities (Ajax, Brock, Clarington, Oshawa, Pickering, Scugog, Uxbridge, and Whitby) while the OCMA (Oshawa Census Metropolitan Area) includes only three: Oshawa, Whitby, and Clarington. The remaining five municipalities (Ajax, Brock, Pickering, Uxbridge, and Scugog) that make up Durham Region fall within the TCMA (Toronto Census Metropolitan Area).

Despite the inconsistency in geographic parameters between the publicly available 2021 Census data and the original survey, general patterns in geographic distribution between the two do not show us any significant bias in the representativeness of the sample. For example, 6% of survey respondents are from our geographic specification of 'Hamilton and area', and according to 2021 Census data, the Hamilton Census Metropolitan Area is home to 6.7% of the GTHA's Muslim population. The choice of using CDs instead of CMAs in the survey was because CDs are more commonly understood whereas the category of CMA may not be.

ENDNOTES

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- 2 S. Block, G.-E. Galabuzi, and R. Tranjan, *Canada's Colour Coded Income Inequality*. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives/ Centre canadien de politiques alternatives, 2019), <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/wp-content/uploads/attachments/Canada%27s%20Colour%20Coded%20Income%20Inequality.pdf> .
- 3 Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights, *Combatting Hate: Islamophobia and its Impact on Muslims in Canada* (Ottawa: Senate of Canada, 2023), <https://sencanada.ca/en/info-page/parl-44-1/ridr-islamophobia/> .
- 4 N. Meer and T. Modood, T., "Islamophobia and the Racialisation of Muslims," in *The Routledge International Handbook of Islamophobia*, 1st ed., (Routledge, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351135559>; S. Razack and Project Muse, distributor, *Nothing Has To Make Sense: Upholding White Supremacy through Anti-Muslim Racism* (University of Minnesota Press, 2022)
- 5 B. G. Mujtaba and F. J. Cavico, "Discriminatory Practices against Muslims in the American Workplace." *Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics* 9, no. 1 (2012): 98–117; S. Malos, "Post-9/11 Backlash in the Workplace: Employer Liability for Discrimination against Arab- and Muslim-Americans Based on Religion or National Origin or National Origin," *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 22 (2010): 297–310.
- 6 F. Rabby and W. M. Rodgers, *The Impact of 9/11 and the London Bombings on the employment and Earnings of U.K. Muslims* (IZA Discussion Paper No. 4763, 2010), <https://research.wou.edu/c.php?g=551307&p=3785486>.
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- 8 N. Jaber, "Arabs and Muslims in the Workplace: Media's Conflation with Terrorism and Ramifications in Workplace Culture," *Consulting Psychology Journal* 77, no. 1 (2025): 73–83, <https://doi.org/10.1037/cpb0000278>; A. Mondon and A. Winter, *Creating a Crisis: Immigration, Racism and the 2024 General Election* (The Runnymede Trust, 2024), <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/publications/creating-a-crisis-immigration-racism-and-the-2024-general-election>.
- 9 W. Alexander and M. Mansfield, "Discrimination in the Labour Market: Exposing Employment Barriers for Muslim Jobseekers in Australia," *Issues in Social Science* 1 (2013/2014): 53–73.
- 10 G. D'Amato and F. Colom Gonzalez, *Multireligious Society: Dealing with Religious Diversity in Theory and Practice*, 1st ed., (Ashgate, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315407586>; J. A. Selby, L. G. Beaman, and A. Barras, *Beyond Accommodation: Everyday Narratives of Muslim Canadians*, 1st ed., (University of British Columbia Press, 2018); S. Selod, "Gendered Racialization: Muslim American Men and Women's Encounters with Racialized Surveillance," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 42, no. 4 (2019): 552–569, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2018.1445870>; S. Shah, *Still Overqualified and Underemployed? Canadian Muslim Women's Experiences of Employment Barriers and Facilitators* (Canadian Council of Muslim Women, 2024).
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- 15 A copy of the survey is available upon request. Where applicable, the respective survey questions have been shared in the endnotes for reference.
- 16 Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, "Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) Boundary [Digital vector dataset]," *Scholars Geoportal*, 2012, http://geo.scholarsportal.info/#/details/_uri@=339101130.
- 17 Léger Opinion, "Frequently Asked Questions," Léger Opinion, February 10, 2026, https://www.legeropinion.com/en/?utm_source=chatgpt.com.
- 18 Intersectional feminist theory is a framework that stresses the need to consider the ways in which multiple social locations and identities (e.g. based on lines of race, gender, sexual orientation, status, etc.) 'intersect' or combine and result in distinct forms of discrimination and marginalization. Sources: B. T. Dill and M. H. Kohlman, M. H. (2014). "Intersectionality: A transformative paradigm in feminist theory and social justice," in *Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis*, 2nd ed., (Sage Publications, 2014); Public Health Agency of Canada, *How to Integrate Intersectionality Theory in Quantitative Health Equity Analysis: A Rapid Review and Checklist of Promising Practices* (Government of Canada, 2022), <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/science-research-data/how-integrate-intersectionality-theory-quantitative-health-equity-analysis.html#a1.1>.
- 19 Critical race theory (CRT) offers a framework for research that emphasizes historical and contemporary ways in which race and process(es) of racialization operate to further the marginalization of racialized populations. CRT emphasizes the structural dimensions of racism and white supremacy and seeks to integrate analysis of race/racism/racialization into analyses of the social, economic, political, and legal structures of society. For further reference, see: T. Yosso and D. G. Solórzano, "Conceptualizing a Critical Race Theory in Sociology," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Inequalities* (Blackwell Publishing, 2005).
- 20 P. Mahboubi and T. Zhang, 2024 *Labour Market Review: Challenges, Trends, and Policy Solutions for Canada* (C.D. Howe Institute, 2025), <https://cdhowe.org/publication/2024-labour-market-review-challenges-trends-and-policy-solutions-for-canada/>; City of Toronto, "2021 Census: Families, Households, Marital Status and Income (Backgrounder No. 9877). *City of Toronto*, 2022, <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/9877-City-Planning-2021-Census-Backgrounder-Families-Hhlds-Marital-Status-Income.pdf>.
- 21 Descriptive statistics summarize the data from a specific data subset (a sample of the population) whereas inferential statistics/analyses utilize the sample data to make inferences or predictions about the larger population.
- 22 Data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) reflects the most updated information on employment trends in Canada and of workers in Canada, however, in its current form, the LFS does not track for religious affiliation.
- 23 G. R. Bauer, S. M. Churchill, M. Mahendran, C. Walwyn, D. Lizotte, and A. A. Villa-Rueda, "Intersectionality in Quantitative Research: A Systematic Review of its Emergence and Applications of Theory and Methods," *SSM – Population Health* 14 (2021): 100798, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2021.100798>.
- 24 The proportion of Muslims relative to the total population in Canada has more than doubled since 2001 (2.0%). Source: Statistics Canada, "Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census of Population," Government of Canada, 2023, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/as-sa/fogs-spg/page.cfm?topic=10&lang=e&dguid=2021A000011124>.
- 25 Statistics Canada, "Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census of Population," Government of Canada, 2023, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/as-sa/fogs-spg/page.cfm?topic=10&lang=e&dguid=2021A000011124>.
- 26 In line with adaptations made by Statistics Canada in 2022 to publishing data on gender, this report uses the categories of "Men+" and "Women+." The "+" symbol signifies the inclusion of "non-binary persons" who are included in one of the respective gender categories.
- 27 Though Muslims comprise 0.3% of the Indigenous population in the GTHA, excluded from analyses in this report are individuals belonging to the First Nations, Metis, or Inuit communities.
- 28 Statistics Canada, "Income Explorer, 2021 Census," Government of Canada, 2023, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/dv-vd/income-revenu/index-en.html>.

- 29 M. Brophy, J. Lahey, K. Lynch, and A. Swersky, *Persistent Inequality: Ontario's Colour Coded Labour Market* (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives/ Centre canadien de politiques alternatives, 2019), [https://www.policyalternatives.ca/wp-content/uploads/attachments/Persistent inequality.pdf](https://www.policyalternatives.ca/wp-content/uploads/attachments/Persistent%20inequality.pdf).
- 30 Rather than use the modified (preferred) term "racialized group," this report will use "visible minority" to maintain the analytic distinction between "Muslim" (as a racialized category) and varying ethno/racial categories (e.g. Black, South Asian, Arab, etc.) to which Muslims also belong.
- 31 In this report, "other" as a visible minority category includes: Latin American, visible minority n.i.e [not included elsewhere], and multiple visible minorities.
- 32 Filipino (a distinct visible minority category in the 2021 Census) has been grouped with "Southeast Asian" and Korean, Japanese, and Chinese have been collapsed into "East Asian."
- 33 For a breakdown of Muslims by visible minority status according to the three Census Metropolitan Areas, please refer to Appendix A, Chart 33: Breakdown of Muslims by visible minority group for each of the 3 CMA's that comprise the GTHA: 2021.
- 34 Statistics Canada, "Non-permanent Resident Type, Dictionary, Census of Population, 2021," *Government of Canada*, 2022, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/ref/dict/az/Definition-eng.cfm?ID=pop236>.
- 35 For further reference, see Appendix A, Chart 34: "Citizenship and Immigration Status of Muslims, by visible minority group: GTHA, 2021."
- 36 G. Picot, Y. Zhang, and F. Hou, Labour Market Outcomes among Refugees to Canada (Analytical Studies Branch Research Paper Series no. 419) (Statistics Canada, 2019), <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/11f0019m/11f0019m2019007-eng.htm>.
- 37 G. Picot and F. Hou, *Citizenship and the Economic Outcomes of Immigrants in Canada* (Economic and Social Reports no. 36-28-0001) (Statistics Canada, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.25318/36280001202500600003-eng>.
- 38 Immigrants who arrived before 1980 are not included in existing admission categories as they predate the current classification scheme.
- 39 For example: couples with or without children in the same household; single parent families with one or more child; individuals not in census families.
- 40 For reference, see: Statistics Canada, "Distribution of total income by census family type and age of older partner, parent or individual" (Table 11-10-0012-01), *Government of Canada*, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.25318/1110001201-eng>.
- 41 According to Statistics Canada, "economic family" refers to a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law union, adoption or a foster relationship. Source: Statistics Canada, "Economic Family", 2021, <https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Var.pl?Function=Unit&Id=33863>.
- 42 Statistics Canada, "2021 Census of Population [Canada] Public Use Microdata File (PUMF): Individuals File," *Government of Canada*, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.5683/SP3/UIHWYC>.
- 43 See Figure 6 and Map 3. Source: City of Toronto, "2021 Census: Families, Households, Marital Status and Income," *City of Toronto*, 2021, <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/9877-City-Planning-2021-Census-Backgrounder-Families-HHlds-Marital-Status-Income.pdf>.
- 44 City of Toronto, "Toronto at a Glance," *City of Toronto*, <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/data-research-maps/toronto-at-a-glance/>.
- 45 CensusMapper, "Household total income (2021 Census)," *Government of Canada*, 2021, <https://censusmapper.ca/maps/3348?index=2>.
- 46 The original survey asked respondents to disclose their estimated before-tax annual household income through selecting between a similar range of income categories as made available through the 2021 Census data. Weighted results suggest that an estimated half (50%) of GTHA Muslims (18–69 years) live in households with a total gross income of \$75,000 or below, for the year 2025. Of this range, weighted estimates suggest that 30% of GTHA Muslims (18–69 years) have total gross household income of \$50,000 and lower. For further reference, see Appendix A, Chart 36: Annual household income for Muslims (18–69 years): GTHA, 2025.

- 47 For a finer breakdown of total household income for Muslims and non-Muslims using small range categories, please see Appendix A, Chart 37: Proportion of non-Muslim population per total household income bracket: GTHA, 2020; and Chart 38: Proportion of Muslim population per total household income bracket: GTHA, 2020.
- 48 An initial baseline (restricted) model was designed to look at tenure status and dwelling while assuming that religious affiliation was independent of these characteristics. A second tenure model allowed for interaction between religious affiliation and tenure, and a third (dwelling model) allowed for interaction between religious affiliation and dwelling type. A final model (unrestricted model) was then constructed to account for both interactions simultaneously, allowing religious affiliation to relate to both tenure and dwelling type beyond the effects of the structural relationship between the two housing variables themselves. The results of these different models were compared against the baseline using ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) tests to determine if the inclusion of religious affiliation significantly improved the model's ability to represent the data. The comparison of the tenure model against the baseline confirmed that accounting for religious affiliation significantly improved the model's fit (Deviance = 1702.822, $p < 0.0001$), suggesting that Muslim identity is not independent of whether an individual owns or rents their home. Similarly, the dwelling model showed a highly significant improvement in fit over the restricted model (Deviance = 1206.801, $p < 0.0001$), indicating a robust association between religious affiliation and the type of building inhabited. Finally, the unrestricted model provided the most comprehensive fit (Deviance = 2039.89, $p < 0.0001$), representing a massive departure from the null hypothesis of independence. The extremely small p-values across all tests ($p < 0.0001$) suggest that the discrepancies in the distribution of Muslims and non-Muslims across ownership categories and building types observed in this sample data are highly unlikely to occur if religious affiliation does not affect housing outcomes in the GTHA population. In short, there is overwhelming evidence to suggest that religious affiliation is significantly associated with both the probability of home ownership and the kind of dwelling GTHA residents inhabit.
- 49 Other dwelling includes semi-detached houses, row houses, or other single attached houses or moveable dwellings.
- 50 For comparative estimates on individuals living in subsidized housing in Canada, please see: Statistics Canada, "A look at subsidized housing in Canada," *Government of Canada*, May 19, 2023, <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/o1/en/plus/3646-look-subsidized-housing-canada>.
- 51 The data on labour force status was calculated by querying publicly available 2021 Census data from Statistics Canada and generating custom tables. Although point estimates that are generated from a fairly representative and substantial sample of the population are publicly available, the variance estimates (e.g. standard errors) that would otherwise be relevant to the long-form census data of 25% of the population are not accessible without applying for special access. For this reason, and for a pilot study, only point estimates are shared here, but not, for example, inferential statistics such as confidence intervals that would have allowed us to generate an estimate range within which the population parameter (e.g. the range of values within which the actual unemployment or participation rates of Muslims in the GTHA is likely to fall).
- 52 Government of Nova Scotia, "Labour Market Information," *Government of Nova Scotia*, <https://lmi.novascotia.ca/labour-force>.
- 53 W. Gu, *The Value of Unpaid Childcare and Paid Employment by Gender: What are the Impacts of the Low-fee Universal Childcare Program?* (Economic and Social Reports) (Statistics Canada, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.25318/36280001202200700003-eng>.
- 54 A weighted percentage of 22.6% identified an "other" reason for not being employed, and some of the open-ended responses in the survey included: "moved in Canada"; "Kids are young"; "pregnancy"; "retired"; "STUDENT."
- 55 This includes, for example: Master's degree, M.A. M.Sc., M.Ed., MBA; degree in medicine, M.D., D.D.S.; doctoral or professional degree, Ph.D., J.D.,
- 56 Individuals aged 25–64 with a bachelor's degree or higher:
 –TCMA: "total visible minority population" (49.2%); "not visible minority" population (42.9%)
 –HCMA: "total visible minority population" (47.0%); "not visible minority" population (30.5%)
 –OCMA: "total visible minority population" (43.3%); "not visible minority" population (22.8%)
 Source: Statistics Canada, "Highest level of education by visible minority, selected sociodemographic characteristics and the census year: Canada, geographical regions of Canada, provinces and territories and census metropolitan areas with parts" (Table 98-10-0641-01) [Data set], Government of Canada, 2024, .
- 57 17% of survey participants did not answer this question.
- 58 Participants were asked: "What are the main reasons your previous education has not been fully recognized in Canada? (select all that apply)." Percentages for responses do not add up to 100% because participants had the option of selecting more than one response.

59 Due to limitations owing to sample size, a disaggregated analysis of credential recognition by visibly minority status or country of origin would not yield confident results.

60 This industry sector incorporates a sub-category of “taxi service” under which falls ride-share workers such as Uber drivers or workers in other ride-hailing services.

61 In order to run the inferential analysis, we needed to collapse the industry categories into eight groups as opposed to the 19 individual categories as listed in Table 11. For reference, the distribution of labour force by industry within the collapsed eight categories is available in Appendix A, Table 15: Labour force by industry (collapsed categories): GTHA, 2021.

62 For a recent report focusing specifically on the experiences of Muslims employed in the arts see: Inspirit Foundation, *Muslim Artists Live Here: Representation and Economic Conditions for Muslim Creatives in Canada* (Inspirit Foundation, 2025), <https://inspiritfoundation.org/app/uploads/2025/11/Muslim-Artists-Live-Here-3.pdf>.

63 Statistics Canada, “National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2016 Version 1.0,” Government of Canada, June 26, 2018, <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/subjects/standard/noc/2016/index>.

64 <https://censumapper.ca/maps/3348?index=0#7/44.005/-79.442>

65 Beyond there potentially being a strong degree of variation within specific demographic groupings, a more likely contribution to wide confidence interval ranges in the estimations of median total individual income is the available sample size (raw case count) for select demographic groups as accessed through PUMF data. For example, the calculated confidence intervals are narrower for non-Muslims overall because these cases exist in higher numbers in the available data, and so allow for greater degrees of inference. More uncommon groupings such as East Asian Muslims result in smaller case counts available in the PUMF sample data, and so have resulted in fairly wide ranges of confidence with respect to identifying the lower and upper bounds within which, with a 95% or 80% level of confidence, the true population value is likely to fall. For reference, see Chart 13.

66 The degrees of confidence are limited in some cases due to smaller case counts that are available through the PUMF sample.

67 It should be noted here that this analysis should be approached with caution since there is some overlap in the confidence intervals for non-Muslim Arab women and their Muslim counterparts.

68 Please refer to Appendix B, Table 16: Median individual total income by visible minority status, gender, and religious affiliation with 95% confidence intervals: GTHA, 2020 for a detailed breakdown of 95% confidence intervals for calculations of median individual total income by visible minority status, gender, and religious affiliation as summarized in Chart 14.

69 In these estimations, Southeast Asian Muslim men have a median individual total income of \$50,500 with a 95% confidence interval of \$23,000–\$96,000. This very broad range within which there is a 95% chance that the actual median is likely to fall is partly explainable by the case count of 20 individuals. East Asian Muslim men, in the GTHA and between the ages of 25–64, also have a small case count of only eight individuals and subsequently have a wide 95% confidence interval of \$31,000–\$55,000.

70 As part of the exploration into median individual total income, we ran several analyses factoring other variables in addition to religious affiliation in order to identify patterns of income disparity between Muslims and non-Muslims: 1) An analysis of religious affiliation and age group, with results paralleling the disparities those depicted in Charts 12 to 15; 2) An analysis of age, religious affiliation, and gender demonstrating a similar disparity for Muslim women who are at the lower rung of the total individual income ladder; 3) An exploration of median individual total income by citizenship and immigration status, in addition to religious affiliation. Please see Appendix B, Chart 36: Median total income by age group and religious affiliation: GTHA, 2020; Chart 37: Median total Income by age group, gender, and religious affiliation: GTHA, 2020; Chart 38: Median total income by citizenship/immigration status and religious affiliation: GTHA, 2020.

71 “We have not limited our analysis to full-time, full-year workers because labour market discrimination includes access to full-time employment, hours worked, and the frequency and duration of unemployment. Comparing the income gap for all workers captures these differences in access to employment as well as the differences in employment income.” Source: S. Block, G.-E. Galabuzi, and R. Tranjan, *Canada’s Colour Coded Income Inequality* (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives/ Centre canadien de politiques alternatives, 2019), [https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National Office/2019/12/Canada%27s Colour Coded Income Inequality.pdf](https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2019/12/Canada%27s%20Colour%20Coded%20Income%20Inequality.pdf)

72 For a breakdown of 95% confidence intervals, see Appendix B, Table 17: Median individual total income by visible minority status, gender, and religious affiliation with 95% confidence intervals: GTHA, 2020.

- 73 It is important to note that the median employment incomes for Muslim Southeast Asian men and women and Muslim East Asian women, within the GTHA and within the age bracket of 25–54 years, reflect only a few cases.
- 74 Muslim South Asian men (95% confidence interval: \$46,000–\$55,000); non-Muslim South Asian men (95% confidence interval: \$48,000–\$53,000)
- 75 “The term ‘full-year, full-time workers’ refers to individuals aged 15 years and over who worked 49 to 52 weeks, mostly full time, in 2020 for pay or in self-employment. Source: Statistics Canada, “Dictionary: Census of Population, 2021,” Government of Canada, 2021, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/ref/dict/az/Definition-eng.cfm?ID=pop224>.
- 76 For further reference, see Appendix B, Table 18: Median employment income for Muslim vs. non-Muslim, full-time, full-year, prime-age workers (25–54 years), by gender: GTHA, 2020.
- 77 Given the uniqueness of this particular comparison between Muslims and non-Muslims, we decided to run an exploratory analysis measuring the comparative median employment incomes by occupation, for just South Asian Men+ (Muslim and non-Muslim) with a university certificate, diploma, or degree above a bachelor’s level. Summary results suggest that in most occupations, non-Muslim South Asian men as a demographic group have higher median employment incomes when compared to their Muslim counterparts. Results of this analysis can be found in Appendix A, Chart 39: Median employment income by occupation (university certificate, diploma, or degree above a bachelor’s level; South Asian; male).
- 78 For further comparative analysis using Census 2021 data, and allowing controls for generation status, visible minority status, age, geographic location, and highest level of education, see: Statistics Canada, “Average and median employment income by visible minority, selected socio-demographic characteristics and the census year: Canada, geographical regions of Canada, provinces and territories and census metropolitan areas with parts” (Table 98-10-0642-01), Government of Canada, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.25318/9810064201-eng>.
- 79 Limitations in PUMF data samples resulted in relatively small case counts for Muslims in generations ‘third or more’ and so they have been excluded from the analysis here.
- 80 Second-generation, visible minority Muslim men are estimated to have a slightly higher median employment income than their non-Muslim counterparts (visible minority, non-Muslim men). However, given the relatively small sample size in the PUMF data (183 cases), the 95% confidence interval for this data is quite broad with a lower bound of \$68,000 and an upper bound of \$91,000. The 95% confidence interval for median employment income of visible minority, non-Muslim men (\$73,000) is \$69,000–\$78,000.
- 81 For a recent study on the issues related to the full transfer of union benefits for all workers that are covered by a union or collective agreement, see: S. Khan, W. Ng, and J. Stanford, *The Importance of Unions in Reducing Racial Inequality: New Data and Best Practices* (Centre for Future Work, 2024), <https://centreforfuturework.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Union-Advantage-for-Racialized-Workers.pdf>.
- 82 Ontario Living Wage Network, “Updated 2025 living wage rates,” *Ontario Living Wage Network*, 2025, https://www.ontariolivingwage.ca/updated_2025_rates.
- 83 The age group of 65–69 was excluded due to too few case counts in response to this question.
- 84 Statistics Canada, “Employees with low pay, 2024,” *Government of Canada*, August 18, 2025, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/14-28-0001/2025001/article/00004-eng.htm>.
- 85 S. Block, G.-E. Galabuzi, and R. Tranjan, *Canada’s Colour Coded Income Inequality* (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives/ Centre canadien de politiques alternatives, 2019), <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/wp-content/uploads/attachments/Canada%27s%20Colour%20Coded%20Income%20Inequality.pdf>.
- 86 S. Block, G.-E. Galabuzi, and R. Tranjan, *Canada’s Colour Coded Income Inequality* (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives/ Centre canadien de politiques alternatives, 2019), <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/wp-content/uploads/attachments/Canada%27s%20Colour%20Coded%20Income%20Inequality.pdf>.
- 87 S. Block, G.-E. Galabuzi, and R. Tranjan, *Canada’s Colour Coded Income Inequality* (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives/ Centre canadien de politiques alternatives, 2019), <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/wp-content/uploads/attachments/Canada%27s%20Colour%20Coded%20Income%20Inequality.pdf>.

- 88 According to Statistics Canada, "economic family" refers to a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law union, adoption or a foster relationship. Source: Statistics Canada. (n.d.). Variable 33863: [Variable name]. In Data Dictionary: Survey/Study name (Catalogue number if available). Retrieved February 10, 2026, from <https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Var.pl?Function=Unit&Id=33863>
- 89 Participants were asked: "Have you ever felt the need to conceal your religious identity at work?"
- 90 Participants were asked: "What were the main reasons you felt the need to conceal your religious identity at work? (select all that apply)"
- 91 Participants were asked: "Which of the following religious accommodations have you request at your workplace? (select all that apply)"
- 92 Participants were asked: "What barriers or challenges have you experienced in having your religious beliefs and practices accommodated at work? (select all that apply)"
- 93 Statistics Canada, "Half of racialized people have experienced discrimination or unfair treatment in the past five years (The Daily)," *Government of Canada*, May 16, 2024, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/240516/dq240516b-eng.htm>.
- 94 Participants were asked: "Have you ever experienced discriminatory or prejudicial behaviour directed toward you while working?"
- 95 Statistics Canada. "Half of racialized people have experienced discrimination or unfair treatment in the past five years (The Daily)," *Government of Canada*, May 16, 2024, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/240516/dq240516b-eng.htm>.
- 96 Participants were asked: "If you have experienced discriminatory or prejudicial behaviour directed toward you win your workplace, what was it about? (please select all that apply)"
- 97 Other results for why the incident was not reported include: You changed jobs (23%); You resolved the issue on your own (23%); You had concerns about the formal complaint process (17%); The behaviour stopped (12%); Someone told you not to report it (7%).
- 98 Participants were asked: "Why did you not report the behaviour? Would you say: (please select all that apply)"
- 99 Participants were asked: "If you have ever felt isolated or excluded at work, what do you feel contributed to those feelings? (please select all that apply)"
- 100 Other results include: My nationality/country of origin (26%); My age (13%); My gender (9%); My sexual orientation (5%).
- 101 For this question, 12% were 'not sure' and 67% did not feel like their colleagues treated them differently than their non-Muslim co-workers.
- 102 Participants were asked: "Do you feel like you have ever been disadvantaged in advancement opportunities because of your religious identity?"
- 103 For more on this, see Section 11: Barriers created in job searching.
- 104 In their answers to the question, "Have you ever experienced any verbal/physical harassment or violence at any of your workplaces?" participants were instructed with the following message: "Harassment is normally a series of incidents, but it can be one severe incident that has a lasting impact on the individual. The next set of questions ask about harassment or violence in the workplace. Remember that all information provided is strictly confidential. Your responses are important whether or not you have had any of these experiences."
- 105 Participants were asked: "If you have experienced verbal/physical harassment or violence in your workplace, was it related to any of the following? (select all that apply)"
- 106 Participants were asked: "Have you ever used employment, community, or settlement services to support your job search or employment goals?"
- 107 Participants were asked: "Have you ever been asked questions related to your religious identity or practices during a job interview?"
- 108 If participants selected 'yes' to being asked about their religious identity or practices during a job interview, they were asked: "If yes, were these questions about: (please select all that apply)"

- 109 Though childcare in Canada is primarily a provincial/territorial responsibility, municipalities play a crucial role in managing, financing, and operating services.
- 110 Workers' Action Centre, *From the Front Lines: An Urgent Agenda for Decent Work* (Workers' Action Centre, 2022), <https://workersactioncentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/WAC-From-the-Frontlines-web.pdf>.
- 111 Workers' Action Centre, *From the Front Lines: An Urgent Agenda for Decent Work* (Workers' Action Centre, 2022), <https://workersactioncentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/WAC-From-the-Frontlines-web.pdf>.
- 112 C. M. Mitchell and J. C. Murray, *The Changing Workplaces Review: An Agenda for Workplace Rights* (Ontario Ministry of Labour, 2017), https://files.ontario.ca/books/mol_changing_workplace_report_eng_2_0.pdf.
- 113 Workers' Action Centre. *From the Front Lines: An Urgent Agenda for Decent Work* (Workers' Action Centre, 2022), <https://workersactioncentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/WAC-From-the-Frontlines-web.pdf>.
- 114 The Ontario Living Wage Network calculated the 2025 living wage thresholds for the Greater Toronto Area to be \$27.20 and for Hamilton at \$22.60. The 'living wage threshold' is calculated with reference to calculations for 'basket item' expenses that include food, shelter, utilities, clothing, transportation, etc. For more information please see: <https://www.ontariolivingwage.ca/documentation>.
- 115 Statistics Canada, "Union Status by Geography" (Table 14-10-0129-01), *Government of Canada*, —year—, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=1410012901>. For a more thorough comparison, future research will need to look at unionization rates at the Census Metropolitan Area level to better gauge the experiences of Muslims versus non-Muslims with respect to union coverage rates.

