

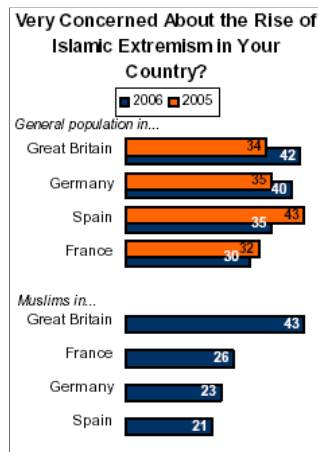
REPORT | AUGUST 10, 2006



# In Great Britain, Muslims Worry About Islamic Extremism

Even before today’s disclosure that authorities in England had thwarted a plot by home grown terrorists to blow up airplanes headed for the United States, there was a high level of concern about Islamic extremism in Great Britain—not just among the full population, but among Muslims living there as well.

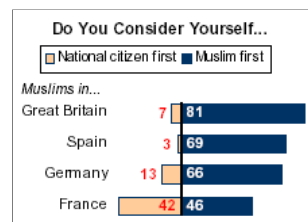
A Pew Global Attitudes Project survey conducted this spring found 43% of British Muslims “very concerned” about the rise of Islamic extremism among Muslims living in that country. That’s twice the proportion that expressed similar fears in Spain (21%) and significantly more than in Germany (23%) or France (26%).



In Great Britain, Muslim worries about Islamic extremism were broadly shared by the general public, which expressed more concern in 2006 than it did in a comparable survey conducted in spring 2005, prior to the London subway bombings on July 7, 2005.

The Pew survey found that British Muslims have a stronger Islamic identity than do Muslims elsewhere in Europe. Fully eight-in-ten (81%) British Muslims think of themselves as Muslims first rather than as British. In France just 46% consider themselves as Muslims first. Primary identification as Muslim is higher in Spain (69%) and Germany (66%) – but still well below what it is in Britain.

Similarly, a greater number of British Muslims (15%) said they see a struggle between moderates and fundamentalists in their country and sympathize with the fundamentalists. Just 6% of French Muslims identified with fundamentalists in France, 7% in Germany and 4% in Spain. However, Muslims in Britain were not more apt than those elsewhere in Europe to say that many or most Muslims in their country supported extremists such as al Qaeda. Some 12% of British Muslims expressed this view while about equal numbers in France (9%), Germany (12%) and Spain (12%) made such reports.



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