

The increasing influence of Muslims in the EU

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Abstract: - In the past two millennia, Europe and more recent the European Union had significant interferences with the Muslim world. The first major contact date back to the 8th century, when the Muslim rulers subdued a part of the South-Western Europe, bringing on our continent their cultural, social, economic and technological values. Since then, the contact between the two civilisations has continued, being characterised by conflicts, temporary alliances, peaceful years, culminating recently with the highest wave of Islamic migration towards Europe in history.

Our paper aims at unveiling the main features of the current relations between the two civilisations from three perspectives: historical, demographical and economic. We base our research on the literature, recent developments as presented in relevant journals and the available statistical data.

Keywords: - economy, influence, Islam, Middle East, the European Union, trade

1 History

The Muslim influence in Europe has been constant in the past two millennia. If we look back in history, we see that the western part of Europe was under heavy Muslim influence beginning with the 8th century A.D. Between A.D. 711-715 the Muslim forces subdued most of the Iberian Peninsula. Cuder-Dominguez (2002) argues that the North African Muslims were invited in Spain as allies of the Witizan faction (the sons of King Witiza, who died in 710) in the war against Roderick, Earl of Betica, who was elected as successor of the King Witiza. "In July 711 [Culder-Dominguez] the Muslim leader Tariq, landing with his troops near Gibraltar, defeated and killed Roderick in Gaudaete. Four months later, the North Africans had occupied Toledo, the capital, in central Spain, and then continued to advance northward." The conquered had the choice to convert to Islam; pay taxes and continue practising their religion; to become slaves or be executed. Thus, a civil war for succession between the noblemen of Spain facilitated the first Muslim invasion of our continent. Then the Spanish leaders couldn't reach an agreement and ended up being subdued by the Moors; now Europe doesn't speak with one voice, and invite Muslim migrants again, the consequences, in the long run, being predictable. Southern Spain, also known as Andalusia (a name that derives from the term Al Andalus used by the Arabs) became the heartland of the new Muslim conquest. The time the Andalusian Umayyad dynasty ruled (from 756 A.D. to 1031 A.D) is considered the golden age of Muslim presence in Spain. It was the period when the Emirate of Cordoba was founded, a time that was characterised by stability, prosperity, and evolution, for the Muslim culture. Cordoba was at that point one of the most cultural cities in Europe, with hundreds of Mosques, libraries, schools and other facilities for almost half a million inhabitants.

The advance of the Moors into the heart of Europe was stopped in October A.D. 732 when the army of Abd-ar-Rahmān, the Muslim governor of Córdoba was defeated at Tours¹ by Charles Martel, the king of Frankia, named after the battle, the saviour of the western civilisation.

The decline and fall of Muslim rule in Spain started in the 11th century when the first important Muslim Centre, Toledo, was recaptured by the Christians. Throughout the 12 century, internal rebellions have further shattered the unity of Islamic dominance. In 1492, the Islamic rule lost all of its power in Spain, and by 1502, the rulers of Christianity ordered that all Muslims convert to Christianity.

The Islam resumed its influence in Europe at the beginning of the 14th century through the expansion of the Ottoman Empire in Eastern and Central Europe on one hand, and the migration flows from the colonies of the European powers on the other hand, and as the statistics show, it is here to stay. As Sugar (1993) emphasised "in 1345 the first warriors serving the House of Osman crossed the Dardanelles and a new chapter began in the history of Southern Europe" all with the blessing of John VI Cantacuzene, who was fighting for the Byzantine throne against John V Paleologos and needed their military support. Who says history doesn't repeat itself?

On the 29th of May 1453, Constantinople fell under the Ottoman siege and again, the Christian Europe had to face the Muslim expansion plans. At its peak, the European possessions or vassal countries of the Ottoman Empire included: Greece, Bulgaria Albania, Serbia, Hungary, Transylvania, Wallachia, Moldavia. This East-West expansion ended on the 12th of September 1683 under the walls of Vienna, the capital of the Holy Roman Empire when the Ottoman army was defeated by the Polish, German and Austrian forces led by King John III Sobieski of Poland and Lithuania. After the battle of Vienna, the Ottoman Empire started to lose its power gradually, ending up as "the sick man of Europe" at the beginning of the Great War. The trend reversed in 1798 when Napoleon Bonaparte conquered Egypt marking the beginning of the European imperialism in the Muslim World.

Table 1: The Colonial Powers in the Islamic World

Colonial Power	Muslim Countries
United Kingdom	Egypt, Sudan, Northern Somalia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, South Yemen, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, Malaysia, Brunei
France	Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania, Mali, Senegal, Guinea, Syria, Lebanon, Djibouti
Italy	Libya, Eritrea, Eastern Somalia
the Netherlands	Indonesia
Russia	Azerbaijan, Chechnya, Dagestan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan
Spain	Northern Morocco, Western Sahara

Source: Oxford Bibliographies, 2016

The massive immigration of Muslims in Europe of our times is a consequence of the guest-worker programmes in the wake of the World War II, the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria, and the Arab Spring. As Leiken (2005) argues that "backed by friendly politicians and sympathetic judges, foreign workers, who were supposed to stay temporarily, benefitted from family reunification programmes and became permanent."

2 Demographics

The Muslims haven't always come to Europe as conquerors. After the World War II, many migrants, most of them from Turkey, Middle East were recruited by governments and companies to work in Europe. Germany, for example, accepted workers from Turkey, France and Belgium from Morocco and Algeria, the United Kingdom from India and Pakistan. That is why, over the last decades, the Muslim population presence in Europe, mostly Germany and France, has seen significant growth, its dynamic representing a matter of concern for the Christian heritage of our continent. At present, many Europeans "see Islam as incompatible

¹ Also known as the Battle of Poitiers

with the West” (The Economist, 2016), especially in light of the terrorist attacks attributed to Muslim radical organisations in the last decades that increased the animosity between the two sides.

Table 2: Selected Islamist terror attacks in Europe

Date	Location	Dead	Injured
Mar 11 th , 2004	Madrid, Spain	192	2000
Jul 7 th , 2005	London	52	770
Mar 2 nd , 2011	Frankfurt, Germany	2	2
Mar 11 th , 2012	Toulouse and Mountauban, France	7	5
Jul 18 th , 2012	Burgas, Bulgaria	7	30
May 22 nd , 2013	Woolwich, Britain	1	0
May 25 th , 2013	Paris, France	0	1
May 24 th , 2014	Brussels, Belgium	4	0
Dec 20 th , 2014	Joue-les-Tours, France	0	3
Dec 22 nd , 2014	Dijon, France	0	11
Jan 7-9 th , 2015	Paris, France	17	11
Nov 13 th , 2015	Paris, France	130	368
Mar 22 nd , 2016	Brussels, Belgium	30	200

Source: The Economist (2016), International Business Time (2016).

The impact of these terrorist attacks on the psychology of Europeans has been reflected in an article in The Economist (2016) stating that “European publics wildly overestimate the proportion of their populations that is Muslim: an Ipsos-Mori poll in 2014 found that on average Belgian respondents thought 29% of their compatriots were Muslim. The actual figure is closer to 6%”. Kettani (2010) suggests that “while the total European population increased from 281 million in 1870 to 547 million in 1950 to 742 million by 2020, the related Muslim population rose from 2% in 1870 and 1950 to 6% by 2020. Also, the fraction of World Muslims living in Europe has been between 2% and 3% since 1950. The total population of Europe increased from 548 million in 1950 to 744 million by 2020. The related Muslim population rose from 2% in 1950 to 6% by 2020.” Still, the perception of the Muslims in the EU varies from one country to another as shown in the next table.

Table 3: How Europe views Muslims
(% of each country who have views on Muslims)

Unfavourable	Muslims in	Favourable
19	United Kingdom	72
24	France	76
24	Germany	69
61	Italy	31
56	Poland	30
42	Spain	52

Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitude Survey, Pew Research Centre.

The European ‘No-Go’ Zones give another negative influence on the perception of Muslim communities. Leiken (2005) pointed out that “unlike the American Muslims, who are geographically diffuse, ethnically fragmented, and generally well off, Europe’s Muslims, who gather in bleak enclaves with their compatriots: Algerians in France, Moroccans in Spain, Turks in Germany, and Pakistanis in the United Kingdom.”

According to Kern (2015), “the No-go zones are Muslim-dominated neighbourhoods (especially in the suburbs) that are largely off limits to non-Muslims due to a variety of factors, including the lawlessness and insecurity that pervades a great number of these areas. Host-country authorities have effectively lost control over many no-go zones and are often unable or unwilling to provide even basic public aid, such as police, fire fighting, and ambulance services, out of fear of being attacked by Muslim youth”. In his article, Kern underlines there are over 750 areas of lawlessness where the French law no longer applies.

Table 4: Few of the No-Go Zones in France, country that has the largest Muslim community in the EU

City	Suburb
Paris	Évry
	Grigny
	Trappes
	Barbès
	Clos Saint-Lazare
	Seine-Saint-Denis (Aubervilliers)
Amiens	Fafet-Brossolette
Toulouse	Les Izards
Avignon, Béziers, Bordeaux, Clermont-Ferrand, Grenoble, Lille, Lyon, Marseilles, Montpellier, Mulhouse, Nantes, Nice, Paris, Perpignan, Strasbourg, Toulouse and many others.	

Source: Kern, 2015.

Millière (2015) suggests that according to some polls, a majority of Muslims living in Europe want the application of sharia law and clearly reject any idea of assimilation. He also underlines that the sense of guilt among the Europeans for oppressing the Muslims during the colonial days favoured the lack of criticism and tolerance to Muslim enclavisation in the heart of the EU.

Table 5: Muslim population in selected urban areas

Urban area	Country	% of total	Muslim Population	% of Muslim Population in the country (2010)
Amsterdam	Netherlands	24.0	180,000	5.80
Bradford	United Kingdom	16.0	75,000	4.0
Birmingham	United Kingdom	14,3	143,000	4.0
Brussels region	Belgium	17.0	160,000	6.0
Île de France	France	10-15	Up to 1,7 m	10.0
Greater London	United Kingdom	8.5	625.000	4.0
Marseille	France	20.0	350.000	10.0
Rotterdam	Netherlands	13.0	80,000	5.80
Vienna	Austria	8.0	120,000	4.22

Source: The Economist, 2008, Kettani, 2010

Analysts of The Economist (2008) argue that in some of these urban areas the tensions between "Muslims, non-Muslims and authorities are creating political opportunities for the far right," as happens in France and other European countries. Table 5 reveals that in the great urban areas of the EU the percentage of Muslim population exceeds the state average (four-fold in Amsterdam and Bradford, over three-fold in Birmingham and Brussels region, and two fold in Greater London, Marseille, Rotterdam, and Vienna).

Table 6: Estimate of the Muslim population in Europe from 1950 to 2010

Rank by (%) of total population	Country	1950	1970	1990	2010	% of Muslim population in 2010 according to Pew Research Centre	% increase of Muslim population in 40 years (1970-2010)
1	Russian Federation	6,131,337	9,205,661	12,067,315	14,233,169	-	54.61
	%	5.97	7.06	8.15	10.14		
2	France	230,075	1,980,067	3,978,941	6,263,258	7.5	216.31
	%	0.55	3.90	7.00	10.00		

Rank by (%) of total population	Country	1950	1970	1990	2010	% of Muslim population in 2010 according to Pew Research Centre	% increase of Muslim population in 40 years (1970-2010)
3	Belgium	8,628	125,222	446,987	641,855	5.9	412.57
	%	0.10	1.30	4.50	6.00		
4	Netherlands	5,057	143,424	613,062	965,894	6.0	573.45
	%	0.05	1.10	4.10	5.80		
5	Sweden	701	16,086	102,706	499,965	4.6	3,008.07
	%	0.01	0.20	1.20	5.38		
6	Germany	20,513	1,172,539	2,462,424	4,283,364	5.8	265.30
	%	0.03	1.5	3.10	5.22		
7	Switzerland	2,346	16,071	148,393	323,528	-	1,913.11
	%	0.05	0.26	2.21	4.26		
8	Austria	8,324	8,959	156,478	353,952	5.4	3,850.79
	%	0.12	0.12	2.04	4.22		
9	United Kingdom	101,232	667,958	1,488,175	2,475,971	4.8	270.67
	%	0.20	1.20	2.60	4.00		
	Romania	29,360	42,530	58,017	65,689	0.3	54.45
	%	0.20	0.22	0.25	0.31		
	Europe	10,765,329	19,918,426	31,939,389	42,052,753	6.0	290.63
	%	1.97	3.04	4.43	5.74		

Source: Kettani, 2010, Hackett, 2015 and our calculations.

Table 6 reveals that in 2010, the highest percentage of Muslims in the EU was recorded in France (10.00%), followed by Belgium (6.00%), the Netherlands (5.80%), Sweden (5.38%) and Germany (5.22%).

In just forty years, during 1970-2010, the Muslim population of Europe increased by 290.63%. Austria and Sweden registered the highest growth (3,850.79, respectively 3,008.07). According to a Pew Research Centre analysis, by 2030, the Muslims are projected to make up 8% of Europe's population.

Millière (2015) emphasizes that people less than thirty years old account for only 16% in the EU, while in the Arab countries plus Iran and Turkey for 70% of the population. Hackett (2015) argues that "the median age of Muslims throughout Europe was 32, eight years younger than the median for all Europeans (40)."

Analyzing the fertility rates of the seven major religious groups in the world, Hackett, and Lipka (2015) found out that each Muslim woman has an average of 3.1 children while each non-Muslim woman has an average of 2.3 children.

An Eurostat report on demographic projections suggests that the high fertility rate of the Muslim population (above four children) could reflect that most of them are recent migrants in the EU. "Many of these migrants come for marriage reasons (which can inflate fertility), and many come from countries with relatively high fertility. Over time, with a longer duration of stay and increased integration, the fertility of this groups is likely to at least partially converge to the levels of the rest of the population, which would be in line with empirical findings from Germany, the UK, and Canada" (Eurostat, 2010).

Table 7: Muslim and Non-Muslim Fertility Rates by Region, 2010-2015

Region	Non-Muslim	Muslim	Difference
Sub-Saharan Africa	4.5	5.6	1.1
Middle East –North Africa	2.6	3.0	0.4
Asia-Pacific	2.0	2.7	0.7
North America	2.0	2.6	0.6
Europe	1.5	2.1	0.6

World	2.3	3.1	0.1
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Source: PEW Research Centre, 2015.

The migration issue got back on the European Community agenda after the Arab Spring, referring to the Arab revolutions that started in Tunisia in late 2010. The movements that took place during the past years in the Middle East led to the expansion of existing terrorist groups, the establishment of groups such as the Islamic State, and to an increase of failed states, all of these contributing to the alarming increase in the number of refugees.

International experts consider the Syrian conflict as the most important determinant of the current wave of migrants. The Civil war in Syria, having its origins in anti-government protests in March 2011 led to the deaths of more than 250,000 Syrians so far while more than 11 million Syrians have lost their homes. Of these, 4.5 million have left Syria, most finding refuge in Turkey (2.5 million people), Lebanon (over 1 million people) and Jordan (about 635,000 persons), and almost 500.000 in EU (Oehler-Şincai, 2016).

3 Economics

The European Union has always had good commercial ties with Muslim countries, especially in the last decade. Although the trade is based mostly on two industries (mineral fuels and machinery and transport equipment), there is a lot of scope for developing it further. In 2015, the total trade flows in goods between the *EU and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA)* reached €1.8 billion, down from €3.8 billion in 2014, mostly due to the decrease in international oil price. Nevertheless, the economic relations between the two partners have been prosperous over the past ten years. In 2005, bilateral trade in goods reached €3.8 billion, almost half of the current value. In 2015, the EU imported from KSA mineral fuels of €1.5 billion and exported to the Arab country mostly manufactured goods (€0.3 billion), thus registering a positive trade balance (€1.7 billion). By comparison, the trade in goods of the U.S. with KSA reached €37 billion in 2015, the American trade balance being negative (€2 billion) according to the European Commission – DGT (2016).

The EU also has good economic ties with *United Arab Emirates (UAE)* and *Qatar*. In 2015, the total trade in goods between EU and the UAE reached €7.8 billion, up from €0.8 billion in 2014. The trade balance (in goods) with UAE is impressive (€3.6 billion), resulting from the EU exports of manufactured goods (machinery and transport equipment). In 2015, the total trade in goods between the EU and Qatar reached €7.9 billion, up from €5.9 billion in 2014 and €4.5 billion in 2005. The EU imports fuels and mining products of €6.5 billion and exports to Qatar manufactured goods of €9.3 billion. The numbers show that the European Union imports from the Middle East, mostly fuels and mining products, exports mostly manufactured goods.

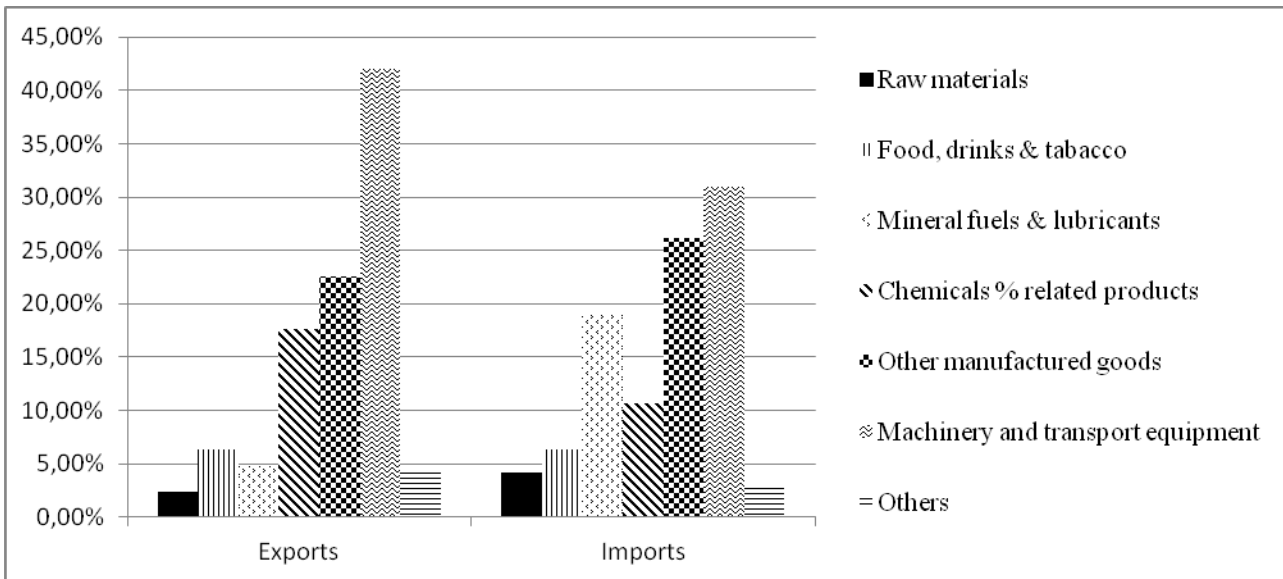
‘The Gulf Cooperation Council² is the EU's fifth largest export market (€7 billion of exports in 2014), and the EU is the grouping's biggest trading partner, with trade flows totalling €152 billion, or 13% of the GCC's global trade (European Union External Action, 2016)

In 2014, the EU imported goods and services of €5,632 billion; the imports of energy represented almost 20% of the total imports (European Economic Forecast Winter, 2016). “The EU imports 90% of its crude oil and 66% of its natural gas. **Egypt** is the sixth largest supplier of gas to the EU. The EU and Egypt share a mutual interest in developing a comprehensive joint initiative aiming at increasing the security of gas supplies through, inter alia, the promotion of utilization of renewable energies in Egypt” (EU, 2008).

In 2015, mineral fuels and lubricants stood for 19% out of total imports in the EU.

Chart 1: Main exports and imports, EU-28, 2015 (% share of extra EU-28 exports imports)

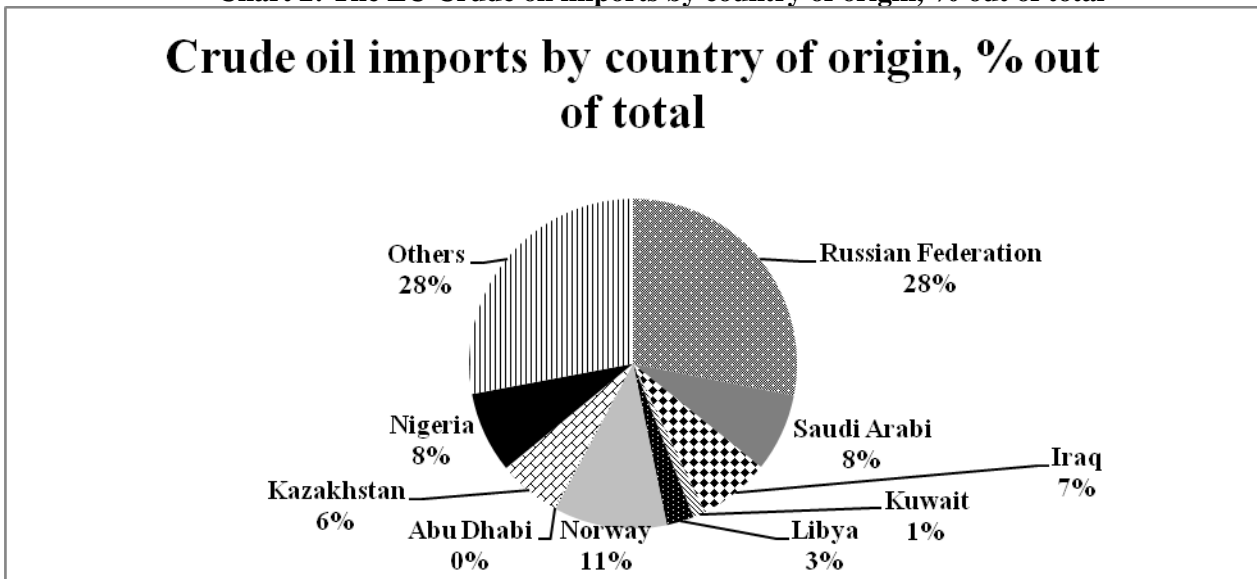
² Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates



Source: Eurostat, 2016.

According to the European Commission – Directorate-General for Energy (DGE) the EU imports of crude oil from the following countries: 7.02 % from Iraq, 7.69% from Saudi Arabia, 1.2% from Kuwait, 2.68% from Libya, and 0.18% from Abu Dhabi. The major oil supplier remains the Russian Federation (28.11%), followed by Norway 11.13%, Nigeria 7.98%, and Kazakhstan 6.06%. The Middle East countries provide almost a quarter of crude oil imported by the EU, less than the Russian Federation alone.

Chart 2: The EU Crude oil imports by country of origin, % out of total



Sour

ce: European Commission, DGE, 2016.

The most important crude oil imports are: Germany with 14.95% of the total crude oil imported by the EU (5.95% from the Russian Federation), Italy 11.98% (2.19% from Azerbaijan, 1.51% from the Russian Federation, 1.11% from Kazakhstan, and 1,05 from Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of), Spain 11.82% (1.84% from Nigeria, 1.51% from the Russian Federation) and France 10.86% (1.85% from KSA, 1.62% from Kazakhstan and 1.25% from Nigeria). The top two importing countries from KSA are France and Belgium (countries with high percentages of Muslim population), with 1.85% and, respectively, 1.63%, out of total crude oil imports in the EU28. The top two crude oil importing countries from the Russian Federation are Germany with (5.95%) and Poland (4.41%) out of the total (European Commission – DGE, 2016)

Table 8: Imports of crude oil by country destination into EU28 in 2015, % of total

Country	Imports of crude oil (% of total)
Austria	1.66%
Belgium	5.81%
Bulgaria	1.14%
Croatia	0.41%
Denmark	0.78%
Finland	2.09%
France	10.86%
Germany	14.95%
Greece	4.23%
Hungary	1.18%
Ireland	0.57%
Italy	11.98%
Lithuania	1.60%
Netherlands	10.17%
Poland	5.00%
Portugal	2.63%
Romania	1.19%
Slovakia	1.12%
Spain	11.82%
Sweden	3.30%
United Kingdom	7.51%

Source: European Commission, DGE, 2016.

As shown in Table 9, the value of extra-EU exports, by leading partners (20), was in 2015, €1.382 bn. In 2015, the USA remains the main partner with a share of over 20.6% in EU total exports. In the Top 20 of the EU most important export partners, there are only four Muslim countries: Turkey, €79 billion (4.4% of total exports); UAE, €48 billion, Saudi Arabia, 40 billion (2.2%) and Algeria, 22 billion (1.2%). Out of the total of the first 20 export partners of the EU (€1,382), the Muslim countries represent only (€189 billion).

Table 9: Extra-EU27 trade, by main partners, total product. Exports in 2015

Country	Million of Euro	Share in %, out of total
USA	370,601	20.6
China	170,323	9.5
Switzerland	150,691	8.4
Turkey	78,969	4.4
Russia	73,688	4.1
United Arab Emirates	48,473	2.7
Saudi Arabia	40,197	2.2
Algeria	22,264	1.2
Top 20 Countries	1,382,689	76.9

Source: Eurostat, 2016.

In 2015, the EU registered a positive trade balance, a surplus of €76 billion with all the Muslim countries in the Top 20 (Table 10). This surplus, though, represents about 63% of the trade surplus the EU has with the USA. On the negative side, the EU registered deficits with the Russian Federation and China (of €61.5 billion and €179.5 billion respectively).

Table 10: Extra-EU27 trade, by main partners, total product. Trade balance 2015

Country	Million of Euro
USA	122,618
United Arab Emirates	39,106

Country	Million of Euro
Saudi Arabia	18,754
Turkey	17,581
Algeria	1,382
Russia	-61,596
China	-179,510

Source: Eurostat, 2016.

In 2015, the EU registered deficits in the trade with mineral fuels with most of the Muslim countries. The total value of these deficits reached €61 billion, down from €84 billion in 2014.

Table 11: The Extra-EU27 trade of mineral fuel, by main partners. Trade balance 2015 and 2014, in Million of Euro

Country	2015	2014
Algeria	-18,454	-27,248
Saudi Arabia	-14,695	-22,211
Iraq	-12,023	-11,454
Azerbaijan	-10,125	-12,747
Libya	-5,958	-10,665

Source: Eurostat, 2016.

The stock of FDI attracted by the EU increased over the last ten years (Table 12). The Gulf countries increased their FDI in the EU over 436% from 2001 to 2012, a similar trend (453%) being recorded in the countries of Western Asia (including Iran), Northern Africa (303%) and in Turkey (313%). Egypt, by far, registered the largest increase in direct investments in the EU from 2001 to 2012, with an impressive 1,552%.

Of course, the FDIs in the EU of each Muslim country are not as large the ones of the U.S. or Switzerland, but, together, Western Asia (including Iran), Gulf Arabian Countries, Turkey, Northern Africa and Egypt, make up to €164 billion which exceeds the US FDI in the EU (€154 billion), giving them a synergic leverage. Therefore, the Muslim countries play an important role in the economy of Europe.

Table 12: EU direct investment inward stocks by extra-EU investing country, Million Euro

Country	2001	2012
USA	704,815	1,543,635
Switzerland	144,700	500,187
Western Asia (including Iran)	16,197	89,621
Gulf Arabian Countries	10,035	53,797
Russia	3,969	75,190
Turkey	2,295	9,496
Northern Africa	1,624	7,562
Egypt	230	3,801

Source: Eurostat, 2016.

In the world GDP ranking (Table 13), the first Muslim country is Turkey, ranked the 18th country with a GDP at current prices of \$734 billion (almost 5% of the EU GDP). The first sixty states, ranked by their GDP in 2015, include only six Muslim countries: Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran, UAE, Egypt, Qatar, Iraq and Kuwait. Their combined GDP reaches €2,921 billion, which would place them among the first five entities in the World.

Table 13: World GDP Ranking 2005 and 2015, current prices, billion USD.

Country	2015	2005
1. USA	17,947	13,094
2. EU	16,220	14,312
3. China	10,983	2,291
4. Japan	4,123	4,572

Country	2015	2005
5. India	2,091	834
6. Brazil	1,773	892
18. Turkey	734	483
20. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	653	328
29. Iran	388	218
31. UAE	345	181
32. Egypt	331	94
51. Qatar	181	44
52. Romania	177	99
57. Iraq	169	50
58. Kuwait	120	80

Source: IMF database, 2016 and IndexMundi (EU, 2005).

The economic relations between the EU and the Muslim countries are nevertheless improving year by year, Turkey being one of the 5th most important trading partners of the European Block. Even though more than 15% of the total EU imports of mineral fuels come from the Muslim countries of the Middle East, the European block has succeeded to register a positive trade balance with these countries by exporting impressive value-added machinery and other transport equipment. Nevertheless, if we take into consideration the economic value of the relations with these countries, in total, they are less important than the ones with the USA or China and even in regards of mineral fuels trading the relations are not very notable by comparison with the Russian Federation or Norway. Overall, the statistics present a surplus in EU's trade balance, year over year, therefore, the EU could try to sustain and develop this trend through a bigger presence in the Muslim countries of the Middle East.

4 Conclusion

As we emphasized, along millennia, the relations between Christianity and Islam have registered ups and downs, each party registering victories and defeats. The armies of Islam were stopped in their march to Europe, and during the colonial times, the European powers, especially The United Kingdom and France controlled most of the Muslim regions of the world. The World War II had an undesired consequence, namely the beginning of large-scale Muslim migration in Europe, through the guest-worker and family reunification programs. Thus, what they could not get by force, they could get in a quieter manner, with the help of demographics and enclavisation. "The old get old, and the young gets stronger. May take a week, and it may take longer. They got the guns, but we got the numbers" (Jim Morrison, Five to One). Step by step the Muslims can get political leverage as happened already in some European cities (Rotterdam, London) and a voice in the decision-making process.

If we analyse the Muslim countries, individually, we might tend to say that they do not have such a significant role in EU's economy, but if we combine the major Muslim countries we observe that their role as an economic partner for the EU has increased. The Muslim interests in EU are based on economic, social and demographic factors. These economic relations present many advantages, but also disadvantages. The outward investments from Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states have historically been directed towards North America and Europe. Also, since 2006 the EU has benefitted from substantial amounts of investments from the GCC, which have provided liquidity to European markets, especially after the financial crisis in 2007/2008. Nevertheless, threats are present such as the sharp decline in oil prices to pre-financial crisis levels, growing of the share of the Muslim population, and more important the fear of Islamic fundamentalism in the EU countries.

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