



# Values, Equality and Differences in Liberal Democracies. Debates about Female Muslim Headscarves in Europe.

## Fact Sheet

### Project Information

VEIL

Grant agreement ID: 28555


Start date  
1 March 2006

End date  
28 February 2009

Funded under  
FP6-CITIZENS

Overall budget  
€ 1 204 440

EU contribution  
€ 1 204 440

Coordinated by  
**UNIVERSITAET WIEN**  
 Austria

## Objective

The VEIL Project focuses on the debates, conflicts and regulations concerning head- and body coverings of Muslim women in the public sphere, particularly in public institutions such as schools, universities and the courts. As a highly visible symbol of religious difference and conflicting values the Muslim headscarf has been the subject of heated debates across Europe and subjected to legal regulations in some European countries.

One of our assumptions is that in debates about the headscarf fundamental values and norms of liberal democracies are not only re-negotiated but also collective identities re-constructed within the European integration process. Moreover, the issue reveals the gendered nature of values and norms that widely prevail in liberal democracies in Europe. VEIL compares policy and media debates in eight European countries and the European Union. The aims of the project are: first, to map out and compare the fundamental values and political principles of the main actors in the

compare the fundamental values and political principles of the main actors in the headscarf debates and second, to explain the differences and similarities in the conflicting values as expressed in the policies on Muslim headscarves.

The project suggests a gender-critical frame analysis of policy documents (e.g. court verdicts, laws, parliamentary debates, media articles) using a comparative perspective for encoding values and norms. The project will also incorporate a comparative analysis, which focuses on citizenship regimes and immigration policies, on gender regimes and the relationship between the state and religious communities or institutions. The innovative potential of this interdisciplinary study of religious and cultural value systems consists in its policy-oriented social science approach and its gender-sensitive analysis of identity-building processes. Finally, the project will draft recommendations for national and European policymakers for

dealing with cultural and religious diversity.

## Programme(s)

## Topic(s)

## Call for proposal

FP6-2004-CITIZENS-5

## Funding Scheme

STREP - Specific Targeted Research Project

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