

Working with Faith Groups – Feedback from Muslim Charities

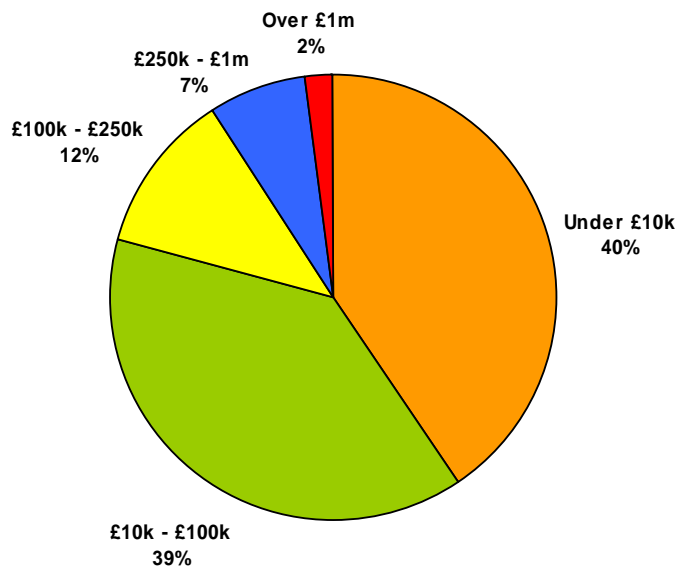


A picture of Muslim charities in England and Wales:

Muslims are the second largest religious group in Britain after Christians, and there are 1,373 Muslim charities on the Central Register of charities, with a combined income of £218.5 million.¹

Breakdown of Muslim charities by income band:

Almost half of Muslim charities have an income of less than £10,000 a year, and only 2% of registered Muslim charities have an income of over £1m.



The rate at which Muslim charities have been registering:

- 379 Muslim charities have registered with the Charity Commission in the last five years, with an average of 76 registrations per year.

The largest registered Muslim Charity

Islamic Relief Worldwide

Islamic Relief Worldwide registered with the Charity Commission in 1989 and has an annual income of more than £35 million. It is an international relief and development charity, which aims to alleviate the suffering of the world's poorest people. As well as responding to disasters and emergencies, Islamic Relief Worldwide promotes sustainable economic and social development by working with local communities regardless of race, religion or gender. For further information about the charity's work, please see: www.islamic-relief.com

¹ The statistics are based on information taken from the Register of Charities in England and Wales October 2007.

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The Charity Commission's consultation with Muslim charities:

The consultation events:

5 events were held around England and Wales between November 2005 and June 2006, in total 212 delegates attended these events representing 128 organisations. Delegates represented a huge variety of organisations from International household names such as Islamic Relief to regional organisations such as Voice East Midlands.

Key issues raised at the events:

The issues that delegates raised with us broadly fell within five common themes:

On communication:

- delegates expressed a preference for face-to-face communication and a call for more events hosted by the Commission;
- delegates felt that language could be a serious barrier and suggested that guidance in plain English would be welcome as would more publications in different languages.

On fundraising:

- delegates believed the Commission should give more guidance on fundraising regulations and more information about gift aid;
- delegates would like clearer guidance on application of funds overseas.

On trusteeship:

- delegates called for capacity building sessions for trustees, to increase the confidence and knowledge of trustees.

On Commission staff:

- delegates thought that the Commission should have a faiths adviser with knowledge of the context within which Muslim charities are operating.

On safeguarding public trust and confidence in charities:

- delegates said that the Commission has a role in disseminating best practice among Muslim charities;
- delegates expressed concern about the way that Muslim groups are often reported in the press and believed the Commission had a role in presenting a more positive image about the work Muslim charities do.

Feedback from delegates at the event:

"This meeting is beneficial to all Muslim charitable organisations"

"Very informative"

"A good opportunity for charities to meet on an independent platform with an independent facilitator."

"We need similar type of activity on a regular basis."