



Muslim European Engagement Programme (MEET)

A European Muslim Civil Leadership Development Initiative In partnership with Kristiansand commune (Norway) and its development partner Faith Associates. The project will be launched during the 3rd European Conference on Democracy and Human Rights, hosted by the City of Kristiansand in cooperation with the Council of Europe (COE), Cultiva Foundation, ARKIVET Peace and Human Rights Centre, Kilden Performing Arts Centre, SKMU Sørlandet's Museum of Art and University of Agder.

The MEET programme will be a convening body that will initially bring Norwegian Muslim voices together with senior European voices for the Democracy Week in May 2022 at the University of Agder.

Why Kristiansand (Norway)?

The situation for freedom of expression and media freedom in Europe was a main theme of the European Conference in Kristiansand 2021. The issue continues to be a major concern in Europe. In fact, we witness even a worsening of the freedom of expression and media freedom in Europe, dramatically illustrated by events such as the hijacking of a plane over Belarus and subsequent detention of dissident Roman Protasevich, and the shooting of prominent Dutch crime reporter Peter de Vries. Cultural expression is under pressure, and freedom of expression is exposed to technological challenges at an unprecedented scale. The 3rd European Conference on Democracy and Human Rights, securing democracy and human rights in the digital age, to be held in Kristiansand again in 2022, is an ideal backdrop to bring influential Muslim voices from Norway and wider Europe together. Many of the issues to be discussed at the 3rd European conference on 5th May 2022 directly affect Muslim communities in Europe. The topics discussed at the Council of Europe (COE) conference will dovetail into the following day's conference on 6th May hosted by the University of Agder, where the challenges faced by Muslim communities will be unpacked further. An agenda for the 6th May event is given below.



Addressing the Challenges of Islamophobia in the light of European Democratic Values

- Venue: University of Agder: Auditorium 46 277, Sigrid Undsets hus, Campus Kristiansand
- 09:00 Welcome speech: Sunniva Whittaker, Rector, University of Agder.
- 09:15 'What is the MEET programme and vision? - Setting the scene'
- Shaukat Warraich, CEO Faith Associates.
- 09:30 The Norwegian Government's 'Action plan to combat discrimination and hatred towards Muslims'
- Nancy Herz, Secretary of State, Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion
- Chair: Imam Akmal Ali, Al Taqwa Mosque Kristiansand / Muslim Council Agder.
- 10:15 'Hate Speech against Muslims on Norwegian Social Media'
- Professor Anna Birgitta Nilsen, Oslo Metropolitan University
- Chair: Dr Abidah Ashraf (Denmark)
- 10:35 'Inspiration to identify and tackle online hate - experiences from Nordic cities'
- Jeppe Albers, Executive Director, Nordic Safe Cities.
- Chair: Abdassamad El-Yazidi (Germany)
- 11:00 Break
- 11:15 'Reflections on the sessions so far: Understanding the challenge of Islamophobia in Europe – Conflagration in Sweden'
- Alve Hogman (Sweden)
- Dzemat Sibljakovic (Austria)
- Nejra Kadic Meskic (Croatia)
- Dr Alioune Bah (France)
- Alen Delic (Sweden)
- *To be confirmed* (Norway)
- Chair: Pia Jardi (Finland)
- 12:30 Lunch (available from University of Agder canteen) & Jumma Prayer (University will provide a room to pray in)



- 14:00 'Search for Common Purpose. Responding to the challenges: perspectives from various European states'
Muslim leaders from across Europe share their experiences and approaches:
- Shaykh Dr Umar Al-Qadri (Ireland)
 - Amanda Figueras (Spain)
 - Abdullahi Mohamed Alason (Norway)
 - Katri Kuusikallio (non-Muslim, Finland)
 - Dr Haythem Badawy (Luxembourg)
 - Mabrouka Rayachi (Austria)
 - Chair: Naveed Baig (Denmark)
- 15:15 Break
15. 30 'Next Steps 2022-23: Role of MEET'
Facilitated discussion involving select panellists and contributions from the floor. Goal is to identify steps that can achieve MEET's goals, drawing on experiences and approaches from across Europe.
- Facilitators: Shaukat Warraich
Dr Amjad Mohamed Saleem (Switzerland)
- 16.30 Conclusion / End – Back to the Hotel
- 18.00 'Shared Eid Democracy Festival' – Muslims and non-Muslims come together to enjoy Eid Festival/Concert and celebrate Democracy Week. In Kristiansand Town Square, City for All
- 21:00 End of programme

Registration

Participation is free, but please register to attend this event by completing the following form:

<https://uia.pameldingssystem.no/meet>

MEET website

For details of speakers please see MEET website:

<https://meetprogramme.eu/>

