

TASK FORCE ON SCIENCE AT UNIVERSITIES IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

A STATUS FACT SHEET*

- Only three (3) scientists belonging to the countries of the OIC have received Nobel Prizes in the sciences. These include Prof. Abdus Salam from Pakistan (1979), Prof. Ahmed Zewail from Egypt (1999) and Aziz Sancar from Turkey (2015). All of these lived and did the work that won them the Nobel Prize in countries outside the Muslim World.
- Fewer than a dozen universities of the Muslim world are in the top-400 and none in the top-100 of various world rankings such as QS World Rankings and Times Higher Education Rankings, etc.
- While representing nearly 25% of the world's people, the Muslim world contributes only 6% of the world's academic publications, 1.6% of the world's patents, and 2.4% of the global research expenditure.
- Muslim countries on average invest less than 0.5% of their GDP on R&D. Only Malaysia spends slightly more than 1% (the world average is 1.78%, while most advanced countries spend 2–3%).
- Muslim-majority countries have on average about 600 researchers per million of population, and only Tunisia and Malaysia present solid and increasing numbers, at about 2,000. For comparison, Brazil has 1,000, Spain has 4,000, and Israel has 9,000.
- From the period 1996–2005 to 2006–15, most Muslim countries doubled or tripled their production of science papers with some countries showing far more striking increases such as: multiples of 7.7 (Qatar), 7.6 (Iran), 6.5 (Pakistan), and 5.8 (Malaysia and Iraq), even though numbers remain below the average of countries with similar GDP per capita.
- Papers from the Muslim world are cited less frequently than those from other nations. The average was 5.7 citations per paper for 2006–15, compared with 9.7 for South Africa and 13.8 for Israel. This may reflect lower quality or financial and reputational barriers to publishing, or both.
- A list of the 100 most-cited papers since 1900 published by Nature earlier this year had none with a lead author from a Muslim-majority nation.
- Students from the Muslim World on international pre-university Math and Science tests fare very poorly, scoring well below average, sometimes alarmingly so (see Report). Most countries have made no progress at all over the last decade or so, except for Qatar, Turkey, and to some extent Iran, though they all have remained well below average. In fact Jordan and Malaysia register considerable declines.
- Though there is considerable variation, large proportions of students from Arab Muslim world opt for Masters degrees in the sciences (as many as 60-80 of all Masters degrees in countries like Jordan, Algeria, and Egypt) showing a preference for science careers.
- Muslim World has made a lot of progress on parity between gender for science enrollments with several Muslim countries having significantly more women than men enrolled in tertiary education (such as Qatar 7:1, Bahrain 2:1, and Algeria 1.5:1). In this Muslim countries leave behind several OECD countries such as US and UK, etc.

* Source: Task Force Report, available at:

<http://www.muslim-science.com/Science-at-Universities-of-Islamic-World>