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**Austria bans full-face veils – 3rd October, 2017**

## **Level 0**

Austria said Muslim women cannot wear full-face veils in public. They must show their face from the hair to the chin. Austria wants to protect its values. Muslim groups said the law is unfair. It is against human and religious rights. Officials say the law might damage Austria's economy, because Muslim tourists might not visit.

France and Belgium banned the veil in 2011. Holland is working on a ban. Germany's leader said the full-face veil should be banned, where possible. Muslims in Austria said the law was unfair. They said it makes veiled women "criminals". They have to stay in their home. However, a woman said all Austrians must show their faces.

## **Level 1**

Austria has banned full-face veils. Muslim women cannot wear a full-face veil in public. Their face must be showing from the hair to the chin. Austria said the law is to protect its values. Muslim groups said the law is unfair. It is against human rights and religious freedom. A small minority of Austrians wears full-face veils. Officials say the law might damage Austria's economy. Many Muslim tourists might decide not to visit Austria.

Other European countries banned the veil. France and Belgium had bans in 2011. Holland is working on passing a ban. Germany's leader said the full-face veil should be banned, "wherever it is legally possible". The Islamic community in Austria said the new law was unfair. It said veiled women in Austria are now "criminals". They have to stay in their home. A supporter of the ban said: "It's not right that those living here don't show their faces."

## **Level 2**

A law in Austria has banned full-face veils. Muslim women cannot wear a full-face veil in public. The law says faces must be visible from the hairline to the chin. The government said the law is to protect Austrian values. Muslim groups said the law is unfair because it is against human rights and religious freedom. Only a small minority of Austrian Muslims wears full-face veils. The groups say the number is about 150. Officials say the law will damage Austria's economy. Many Muslim tourists might decide not to visit Austria.

Austria is the third European country to ban the veil. France and Belgium introduced bans in 2011. Other European countries could follow. Holland is working on passing a ban. Germany's Angela Merkel said the full-face veil should be banned, "wherever it is legally possible". The Islamic Religious Community in Austria talked about the unfairness of the new law. It said the "handful" of veiled women in Austria are now "criminals" and have to stay in their home. A supporter of the ban said: "It's not right that those living here don't show their faces."

## **Level 3**

A new law in Austria means there is now a ban on full-face veils. This means Muslim women will not be allowed to wear a full-face veil in public in the country. The new law says faces must be visible from the hairline to the chin. The government said the law is to protect traditional Austrian values. The law bans Muslim veils such as the burka or niqab. Muslim groups have said the law is very unfair because it goes against human rights and religious freedom. They say that just a tiny minority of Austrian Muslims wears full-face veils. They put the number at around 150. Officials say the law will damage Austria's economy. They say many Muslim tourists will decide not to visit Austria.

Austria is the third European country to ban the wearing of the veil. France and Belgium introduced similar bans in 2011. Other countries in Europe could follow. The Dutch government is currently working on passing a ban and German Chancellor Angela Merkel has said that the full-face veil should be banned in Germany "wherever it is legally possible". Carla Amina Bhagajati of the Islamic Religious Community in Austria talked about how unfair the new law is. She said the "handful" of fully veiled women in Austria are now "criminalized" and "restricted to their homes". A supporter of the ban Emma Schwaiger said: "It's not right that those living here don't show their faces."