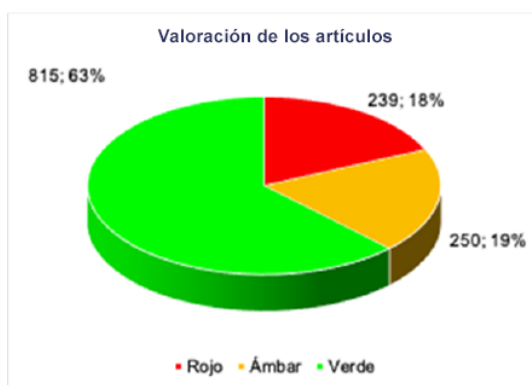


## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In its third consecutive year of work, the Observatory of Islamophobia in the Media presents its report to go on highlighting the public debate about Islam, assessing the impacts of good and bad practices in the media, and raising awareness of Islamophobia as a form of racism in our society and media.

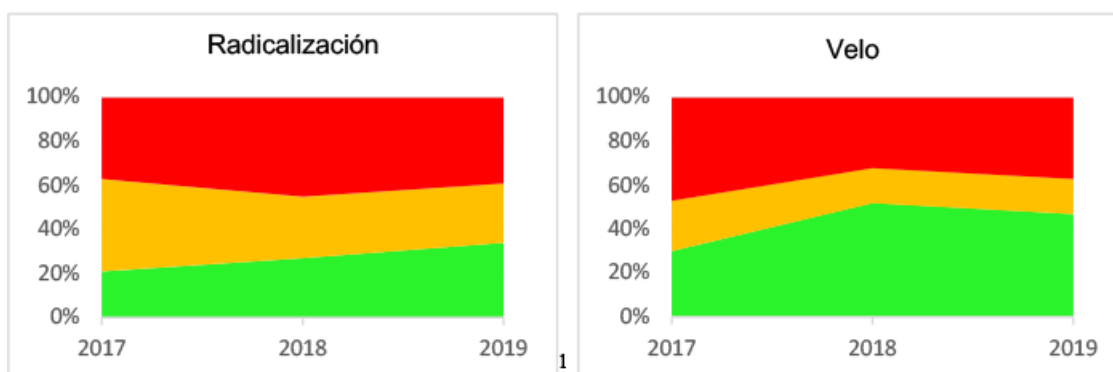
As in previous years, a methodology of qualitative and quantitative analysis of articles related to Islam and Muslims has been followed in the digital version of the newspapers *El País*, *La Razón*, *El Mundo*, *La Vanguardia* and *eldiario.es* through the Islamophobia Traffic Light. The main change this year is the analysis of comments on these articles by readers.



For 2019 the results of the Traffic Light reflect that the assessment of non-Islamophobic articles in the media was 63% compared to 57% in 2018 and 38% in 2017. However, this improvement does not change the fact that 37% of articles remain Islamophobic. In addition, there are no significant changes in active Islamophobia (red) and passive/structural Islamophobia (amber), which dropped one point between 2018 and 2019.

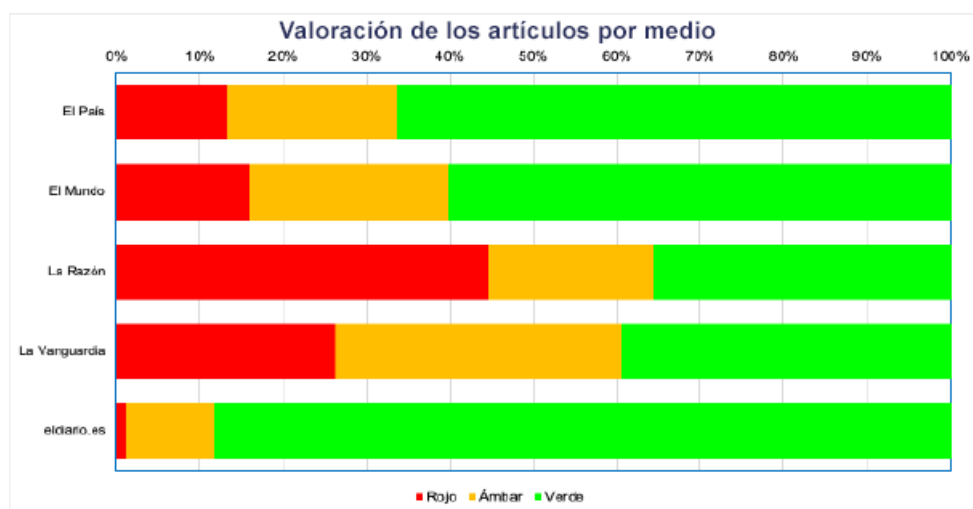
The data shows that the difference is still treated as negative. Islam continues to be negatively associated with issues such as radicalisation, with 66% of Islamophobic news, or terrorism, with 60%, figures similar to the 2018 analysis. Thus, it contributes to perpetuating associations of ideas and connotations in the collective imagination that foster the most deep rooted prejudices of passive Islamophobia since they end up linking Islam and Muslims with violence.

Thus, for example, in *radicalisation*, the data in amber between 2017 and 2018 reduced from 42% to 28%. However, in 2019 it dropped only 1 point, a symptom of the structural rooting of these prejudices.



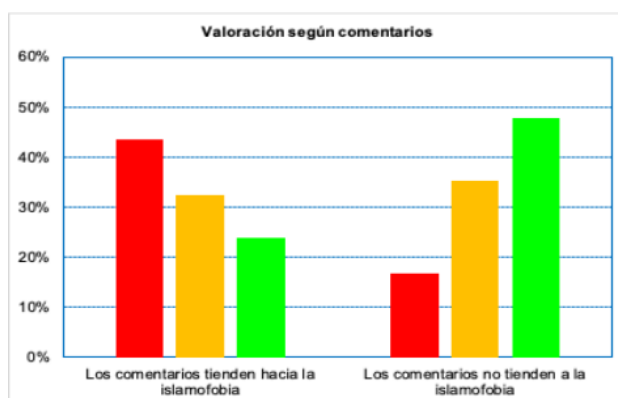
Although the issue of women has improved significantly since 2017, with 58% of articles in green compared to 50% in 2018, the *hijab* continues to be the focus of Islamophobia related to Muslim women, with 37% of articles in red and 16% in amber. Despite 47% of non-Islamophobic articles about the *hijab*, the data in amber has not changed much in these three years. Thus, in 2017 with 23% Islamophobia, amber decreased to 16% in 2018, and still accounted for 16% in 2019

Moreover, although the negative tone stills persists, 50% of the negative news is without any sign of Islamophobia. As shown by some media, the quality of the news is not at odds with the frequent negativity of "newsworthiness" or with a critical spirit or freedom of expression. There are two newspapers that stand out among the attempts for a more ethical and responsible journalism: *eldiario.es*, with 88%, followed by *El País* with 66% of non-Islamophobic news.



For the first time this year, data on the analysis of readers' comments on the news shows that the less Islamophobic the article is, the less Islamophobic the comments are, and vice versa. This confirms the chain of transmission that occurs between news and public opinion.

<sup>1</sup> Graph of areas snatched with % by year and colour "Assessment of the articles by topic " 2017 and "Assessment of the news by topic" 2018 and 2019 on *radicalization*.



### Main conclusions on the subjects covered:

- The narratives about Muslim women have increased and are more plural, but when it comes to the *hijab*, they tend to lack elements of contextualisation and fall into Islamophobic stereotypes.
- The eternal confusion between religion and politics or the association between Islam and violence persists.
- The Muslim population continues to be foreignised: not reflecting the daily life of Muslim communities in Spain makes them exotic and establishes a distance from the reality they experience and share with other citizens.
- There are still very few positive topics related to Islam or Muslims.

After three years of work, the Observatory notes a significant level of awareness on the part of the media when it comes to reporting events related to Islam and Muslims. However, passive Islamophobia, amber, is still a concern and shows no clear symptoms of evolution, which perhaps reflects its structural and systemic nature, and the enormous difficulty of making it visible given the severity of the still very persistent active Islamophobia (red). Continuing to correct this active Islamophobia and at the same time laying the foundations to raise awareness about the structural nature of passive Islamophobia will be the challenges facing the Observatory in 2020.

### Observatory Recommendations

- Use terminology and figures and data correctly
- Pay attention to the Islamophobia of sources to avoid reproducing them.
- Make journalism more inclusive, giving a voice to the subjects of the news in particular.
- Contextualise the information and opinion in the news.
- Balance positive narratives about Islam and Muslim people.