



Henning Kaiser/AFP/Getty Images

## German Muslims Seek to Double Number of Mosques

Muslims are promising more mosques in Germany, despite resentment among many native Germans.

- Trumpet Staff
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Earlier this month, Germany's Islamic Institute stated that the nation's Muslim community plans to double the number of public mosques in the country. This provocative announcement flies in the face of statements of some German politicians, including Edmund Stoiber, who has remarked recently that there are too many Islamic minarets [marring Europe's skyline](#).

Referring to 184 new mosque-building projects, Salim Abdullah of the German Institute of Islamic Archives [said](#), "We are talking here about buildings with a dome and a minaret, which are clearly recognizable from the outside, and not the 2,600 prayer areas housed in various buildings throughout the country."

Presently, the majority of Germany's 3 million Muslims commune in 1,200 institutions known as "backyard mosques." Hidden to the public, these mosques are simply rooms inside of average buildings. A further 184 public mosques with conspicuous minarets to the 159 already in Germany would raise the profile of Germany's Muslim community.

The big question, however, is whether old Germany, home to so many staunch Catholics, is ready to embrace such a bold move.

In Cologne, at least, the answer is no. Far-right politicians and Christian leaders alike have resolutely opposed plans to build what would be Germany's largest mosque.

Moreover, ordinary Germans share a resistance toward Islam. In May 2006, the *Jerusalem Post* and Deutsche Welle reported on a survey conducted by Germany's *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* which found that 71 percent of Germans polled considered Muslims intolerant and 83 percent associated Muslims with fanaticism; only 8 percent described Islam as peaceful. The results had experts proclaiming their fears of new conflicts between the Western world and Islam.

New mosques on the German skyline reflect a Muslim community growing more bold. In the face of increasing resistance within their host country, German Muslims are proving themselves unwilling to back down. This announcement appears specifically tailored to aggravate anti-Muslim sentiment among Germans. If that is what Muslims seek, we can expect that—as Germans view a changing skyline with chagrin—they're going to get just what they're looking for. ■

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