



Ramadan: Its value to British Society and the Economy

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Ramadan - A British Holy Month

Religion has long been woven into the fabric of British life, not merely as a matter of private faith, but as a cornerstone of culture, law and identity. From the chime of church bells on a Sunday morning to the parliamentary prayers that still precede political debate, the echoes of faith persist even in an increasingly secular society. This report examines the evolving role of the annual Islamic month that is Ramadan - its role in public life, exploring its social, economic and policy implications to inform decision-making in an increasingly diverse and pluralistic Britain.

To understand how religious observance intertwines with the wider social fabric, one need only look to the past. Lent, in the historical life of the British Isles, was more than a spiritual discipline. It was a rhythm of the land, a season that bound faith, food and society together. In an age when belief was inseparable from daily life, Lent was not merely observed but lived. It shaped diets, with the absence of meat and dairy giving rise to traditions like Shrove Tuesday feasting, or, as we fondly call it, Pancake Day. It shaped the economy, as fishmongers thrived while butchers fell silent. Lent was a metaphor for life itself: hardship met with patience, discipline yielding eventual joy.

Today, in Britain this spirit of 'fasting' remains as significant as ever. The ninth month of the Islamic (lunar) calendar is significant not just for British Muslims in their spiritual life, but increasingly, for Britain as a whole. Much like Lent is to Christians, for Muslims, it is God who prescribes fasting in the month of Ramadan, 'as it has been prescribed for those before, to attain God-consciousness' (Qur'an, 2:183).

In this short report we look at the economic impact of Ramadan serving as a catalyst for positive change, renewal and social cohesion in British society. By recognising and supporting the diverse needs and contributions of the Muslim community, policymakers, businesses and public institutions can harness the full potential of Ramadan to promote inclusivity, well-being and prosperity for all. The recommendations outlined in this report provide a roadmap for maximising the economic impacts of Ramadan to enrich British society as a whole.

Key Findings

- **Ramadan’s total economic impact in Britain is estimated to be between £800m and £1.3bn.**

This figure accounts for retail spending, charitable donations, supermarket sales, Eid shopping, volunteering, and more.

- **We estimate that approximately 2.6 million British Muslims (4% of the UK) fast in the UK during Ramadan.** Ramadan has a significant impact and related economic contribution, even before considering its wider social and spiritual benefits.

- **Supermarkets generate approximately £228m to £342m in Ramadan sales.** This represents a 2 to 3 fold increase from 10 years ago, driven by the growing British Muslim population, greater availability of culturally tailored food products, and evolving dietary preferences of younger Muslims.

- **Supermarkets and independent food retailers invest an estimated £159m to £274m in the Ramadan value chain.** This estimate reflects the investment needed to source goods and manage logistics to meet the increased Ramadan demand. The true investment is likely to be much higher, as it does not account for spending on clothing, Eid gifts and other non-food items.

- **British Muslims spend an estimated £200m to £300m on clothes, gifts and travel during Ramadan and Eid.** High street retailers, independent shops, and pop-up souks and bazaars see a significant increase in spending on Eid celebrations and Ramadan-related purchases. As retailers expand their inclusive product offerings and the British Muslim middle class continues to grow, this figure is expected to rise significantly over the next decade.



- **Mosques across Britain serve approximately 3.8 million free iftar meals during Ramadan, worth an estimated £15m. Each day, around 125,000 iftar meals are provided at British mosques, costing an estimated £0.5m daily.**

This has a direct impact on the local economy, as mosques source food and supplies from supermarkets and independent retailers, supporting local businesses.

- **Ramadan drives a charitable contribution of £238m to £359m through donations, volunteering, and social cohesion activities.**

Ramadan inspires giving, from fundraising for food banks, to looking after vulnerable children, to sustainable development initiatives and large-scale poverty relief campaigns both at home and abroad. This significant economic and social impact strengthens community engagement and charitable networks across the UK and expands the UK's charitable footprint abroad, helping to maintain its developmental soft power, at a time when the UK Aid Budget is being reprioritised to other areas.



The Shah Jahan Mosque in Woking, a historic landmark, and the first purpose-built mosque in Britain (1889).

The earliest records of Ramadan in Britain

- Early references of Muslims fasting in the UK date back to the 16th or 17th century, when Muslim sailors, known as lascars, arrived on British shores through trade routes established by the East India Company. These sailors, primarily from South Asia, would have observed Ramadan while working on British ships and residing in port cities such as London, Liverpool, and Bristol.

- Records from 1641 note a small Muslim community in London, who would have observed Ramadan.

- One of the earliest accounts of Ramadan in English literature dates back to the 18th century, found in Miss Tully's Letters from Tripoli (1783), which was written during a ten-year stay in Tripoli (in modern-day Libya). Believed to be the sister of Richard Tully, a British consul in Tripoli at the time, Miss Tully provided a vivid depiction of the religious and socio-cultural life in Ramadan as observed in June 1783.

- As Muslim populations grew in the East End during the 19th century, Bengali sailors and Yemeni traders continued the tradition. By the early 20th century, larger communities from British India were fasting and celebrating Eid, the festivals marking the end of Ramadan and Hajj, in places like Cardiff and South Shields.

- The earliest documented public celebration of Eid al-Fitr in Britain, marking the end of Ramadan, occurred on 28 May 1922 at the first purpose-built mosque in Britain - the Shah Jahan Mosque in Woking (1889).²

Ramadan Economy

As noted in Equi's groundbreaking report of September 2024 'The Economic Contribution of British Muslims to the UK's Growth and Prosperity' British Muslims generate £70 billion a year for the UK economy, 30% of which is business contribution (£24.7 billion). We conservatively estimate that Ramadan-related activities generate a boost of between £800m to £1.3bn to the UK economy. This is driven by:

- 1)** Consumer retail spending, including food and drinks from supermarkets and independent shops, Ramadan/Eid souks and bazaars, Eid and Ramadan clothing, 'Eidhi' cash gifts for children, and gifts bought from small and large retailers, and expenses related to Eid travel, among other things.
- 2)** Retail marketing spend, with increased investment by retail and charity brands for Ramadan

and Eid campaigns, including content creation, channel engagement, aisle branding etc.;

- 3)** Growth in the value chain across various sectors to meet the uptick in demand, including manufacturing of products specific to Ramadan (food items, clothing, decorations, gift merchandise), delivery services (e.g. Deliveroo, Just Eat, Amazon Prime); e-commerce and online services, retail fashion, supply-chain logistics, and the food industry;
- 4)** Charity and social cohesion activities through public and private iftar events across organisations including mosques, and associated volunteering. Charitable donations that indirectly stimulate the local economy through increased engagement and funding for social services in the UK, and humanitarian and poverty-relief work abroad.

Contribution type	Brief description	Amount
1) Retail spend	Food and drink, Eid clothes, Eid and Ramadan gifts, travel	£428m - £642m
2) Retail marketing spend	Marketing campaigns to promote Ramadan, including in-store promotions	£5m - £25m
3) Business value chain investment	Production and supply-side investments in products, services and delivery	£159m - £274m
4) Social cohesion & charity	Public iftar events, community engagement, interfaith iftars, volunteering, charitable donations for zakat and non-zakat	£238m - £359m
Total		£830m - £1300m

Table 1: Estimate of Ramadan-driven contribution to UK economy³

Evidence from Muslim countries shows a significant uptick in spending, with up to 51%-67% of the population in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region for example spending more money in Ramadan.⁴ Remittance and international money transfers from the UK to friends and family abroad spikes as much as 16% in Ramadan, as seen in 2022.⁵

These trends highlight the growing Ramadan economy as a global phenomenon, which has firmly established itself in the UK. In fact, in a landmark report, 'Great British Ramadan' by Oglivy Noor in 2018, highlighted that 62% of British Muslims feel underserved by consumer brands, yet 78% express interest in companies that offer products for Ramadan and Eid.⁶ In a survey by Nano Interactive in 2023, 44% of British Muslims described themselves as brand loyalists - typically purchasing brands they know and love.⁷

We expect further significant growth in the coming years, with a growing British Muslim population, rising socio-economic mobility and evolving tastes and cultural influences of younger generation British Muslims.

1. Retail

In recent years, retail brands have shifted their focus in Ramadan towards products, services and marketing designed to genuinely build connections and foster loyalty within British Muslims. These initiatives reflect the broader trend of brands moving beyond token gestures, aiming instead to authentically engage diverse audiences by offering relevant products, creating meaningful campaigns, and supporting community activities.

1.1 Supermarket spend

Ramadan injects a substantial boost in supermarket spending across the UK, with both major chains and independent retailers benefiting from the heightened demand for food and related products. The Ramadan diet differs from the regular year-round diet due to the fasting schedule and the emphasis on traditional and high-energy foods. Moreover, Ramadan encourages more conscious eating, family gatherings, and cultural traditions. Visiting friends and family for Eid celebrations also adds to differences in the food consumed during this time of the year. Outside Ramadan, meals are spread throughout the day with no restrictions on



when or what to eat, provided the food is halal. We estimate that currently supermarkets in the UK make approximately £228m-£342m in Ramadan

sales.⁸ This represents at least a 2 to 3 fold increase from 10 years ago. In 2015, Tesco reported that in some areas Ramadan was 'bigger than Christmas'

Food	Estimated Quantity	Notes	Typical price	Estimated Budget Cost	Estimated Premium Cost
Dates	3 - 4 kg (about 100g per person per day)	Traditionally eaten at iftar, but also used in cakes and nourishing drinks at iftar.	£3.99 - £12.99 per kg	£14	£45
Rice and flour	10 - 15 kg of rice + 5 kg flour	Used for main meals and chapatis/bread.	Rice: £19.75 per 10kg Flour: £0.50 - £1.00 per kg	£27	£34
Cooking oils	5-7 litres	Used for frying, cooking, baking etc.	£1.20 - £1.50 per litre	£6	£11
Meat (chicken, beef & lamb)	10 - 20 kg	Used in curry dishes, samosas etc.	£5 - £18 per kg depending on meat	£50	£360
Sweet and treats	1 - 2 kg of sweets/ desserts	Baklava, cakes, mithai, chocolates etc.	£5 - £15 per kg	£5	£30
Spices	Varies (0.5kg - 1kg each)	Essential for cooking (salt, pepper, turmeric, cumin, etc.)	£10 - £20 per kg	£5	£20
Sauces	Varies (0.5kg - 1kg each)	Used for flavouring.	£1 - £4	£0.50	£4
Fruits & vegetables	40kg - 70kg	Used for hydration, meals, fillings in samosa's etc.	Fruits: £4 - £7 per kg Vegetables: £3 - £4 per kg	£80	£150
Frozen foods (samosas, kebabs, puff pastries, etc.)	90 pieces (1-2 per person per day)	Often consumed as appetizers during iftar.	£0.50 - £1.00 per frozen food	£45	£90
Drinks (fruit juices and traditional)	60 - 90 litres	For rehydration and refreshment.	£1.20 - £1.70 per litre	£72	£153
Total cost				£305	£897

Table 2: Illustration of a typical Ramadan month shopping basket for a four-person fasting household. This table outlines key items essential for iftar and suhur meals over the entire month of Ramadan, ensuring a well-balanced and culturally relevant selection. Quantities and prices are indicative.



for sales. The growth is being driven by the expanding British Muslim population, increased availability of culturally tailored food products in supermarkets, and evolving dietary preferences of younger generation Muslims.⁹

Against this backdrop, UK supermarkets have adapted their stores to make them more inclusive, both in terms of products on sale and branded aisles and promotions.¹⁰ Ramadan also plays a catalyst role in encouraging supermarkets to stock a wider variety of halal-certified products, from fresh meat and poultry to ready-made meals and snacks throughout the year. All of these changes require supply chains to adapt accordingly, necessitating significant investment by supermarkets in sourcing, logistics, and infrastructure.

Independent shops like cash and carry and convenience stores also benefit significantly from Ramadan spending. In 2020, British Asians owned

44% of the UK's nearly 47,000 convenience stores, making them a popular choice among British Muslim shoppers. Their reputation for authenticity, alongside a diverse selection of halal and culturally relevant products strengthens their appeal during Ramadan.¹¹

However, in recent years, the cost-of-living crisis has dampened the growth in spending. According to a survey by Nano Interactive, in 2023, 48% of all British Muslims altered their Ramadan spending habits due to the cost-of-living crisis.¹²

1.2 Inclusive product offerings

Inclusive product offerings help brands drive revenue as they expand their reach, build customer loyalty, and improve reputation by catering to diverse communities. By recognising cultural events like Ramadan and Eid, brands can connect meaningfully with Muslim consumers and tap into key shopping periods. In recent years, many brands have been

stepping up their engagement, recognising there is 'an ongoing exploration of cultural expressions that speak of a confident, immersed and indigenised sense of being Muslim in the British Isles.'¹³ Product owners and brands who understand this dynamic appear to stand the best chance of success, and this can be achieved if they 'stay in touch with Muslims and keep speaking to them.'¹⁴

Clothes retailers like Asos curated a modest fashion edit featuring influencer Shahd Batal, acknowledging the demand for stylish yet modest clothing during Ramadan. Others like Argos, Harvey Nichols, and Next¹⁵ introduced Eid gift listings, recognising the importance of gift-giving during the festive period. M&S have introduced clothes collections.¹⁶ Eateries such as Nando's have embraced opportunities to engage Muslim customers by offering 'Iftar at Nando's.'¹⁷ The drive to expand into new communities is not just limited to major brands. We have also seen the start of more niche retailers taking an interest. Cardology, a boutique card seller, has introduced highly curated Eid cards, catering to the growing demand for culturally relevant products.¹⁸

Some retailers such as Next now consistently engage through the year with products and online marketing, rather than one-off campaigns, which has the best chance of ultimately setting brands apart and build lasting trust with British Muslim consumers. In 2025, IKEA¹⁹ introduced a Ramadan-themed home collection in the UK, marking the first time a furniture retailer has invested in Ramadan shopping, including its new product line GOKVÄLLÅ. The collection features decor, furniture, and cooking utensils to create warm, inviting spaces for iftar and suhur, making Ramadan feel even more special at home. Overall, we are only beginning to see the potential of this growing phenomenon across all retail market segments.

While big-brand retailers are increasingly developing inclusive products, many British Muslims buy traditional cultural clothing from Asian clothing shops, which are often local, family-owned and independent. They offer choice, authenticity and specialised clothing that reflects traditional styles, such as abayas, hijabs, kurtas, sarees, salwar kameez, and jubbahs. Traditional styles and sizes available at these shops also tend to be broader compared to high street retail stores. In the run-up to Eid, these shops typically offer discounts and 'Eid sales,' with prices that can often be haggled.

We estimate that British Muslims spend between £200m - £300m in Ramadan on clothes and gifts across high street retailers, independent shops and pop-up souks and bazaars. As retailers grow their range of inclusive product offerings over time, and with the emergence and growth of British Muslim middle class, we expect spending to grow significantly over the next 10 years.



Collecting meaningful data on Muslim consumers in the UK is essential for consumer brands and retailers to tailor their offerings effectively. Many mainstream brands have historically overlooked or misrepresented Muslim consumers. By collecting meaningful data, brands and businesses can create more authentic, inclusive campaigns and develop relevant products and services that yield brand loyalty. For example, data can help identify emerging trends, such as Muslim Gen Z's preference for environmentally friendly halal products, including cosmetics, which aligns with the broader shift towards conscious consumption among younger demographics.²⁰

2. Culturally relevant marketing campaigns

For a number of years now, almost all major supermarket chains have run some form of Ramadan ad campaign that, according to Arif Miah, strategy director of Mud Orange, 'try to create a brand moment around the festive month.' A notable example, in 2022, Tesco launched the 'Together this Ramadan' billboard campaign,²¹ that showed an array of empty plates by day, which filled up with delicious

food by the time the sun set. Similarly, Morrisons' 'Ramadan essentials' box was according to, Asad, Dhunna, founder of The Unmistakables, 'a brilliant piece of innovation ... [an] example of marketing going beyond just communicating difference and thinking about product adaptations too.'²²

Such innovative marketing intuitively speaks to the daily experience of Muslims fasting, driving much more intensely the sense of inclusion and belonging in society, inasmuch as, loyalty to brands. Retailers that do not run marketing campaigns risk losing ground with Muslim shoppers, but this can be quickly reversed, as demonstrated by Sainsbury's in 2024, who launched a focused Ramadan campaign which resulted in a 21% increase in sales compared to the previous year.²³

Similar to supermarket brands, several prominent clothes retailers have launched advertising campaigns and special collections to engage with Muslim consumers during Ramadan. In 2025, H&M launched a TikTok campaign to market Ramadan and Eid collection featuring elegant, modest fashion



Ramadan Streets, organised by Soul City Arts and supported by the UK Government, Birmingham City Council and Arts Council England, was held in Birmingham between 12 and 16 March 2025. The hugely successful initiative attracted large crowds.

designed to elevate wardrobes for the festive season.²⁴ Asos unveiled a Ramadan collection that included stylish and easy-to-wear pieces, catering to the modest fashion preferences of many British Muslim consumers.²⁵

In line with broader changes to viewing habits in Britain (moving away from broadcast TV to IP-based screens),²⁶ personalised ads on connected TV's (smart TVs and streaming devices like Roku, Amazon Fire Stick, Apple TV) with YouTube and ad-supported FAST channels (free, scheduled ad-supported content) are becoming increasingly prominent platforms for advertisers aiming to reach viewers during Ramadan.²⁷ They offer personalisation, measurability, and creative flexibility, making them an attractive option for brands seeking to engage with Ramadan audiences effectively.

In addition to these digital shifts, radio and satellite TV channels remain crucial mediums for reaching British Muslim audiences, particularly in Ramadan where viewership and listenership increases.²⁸ Many Muslims during Ramadan become more mindful of their habits and make effort to consume more Islamic educational and spiritually uplifting content. Many community radio stations such as Inspire FM in Luton and Ramadan FM across many towns and cities once started as temporary stations but have now become permanent. Other notable examples of radio stations include Unity FM, and Radio Dawn, among 21 such stations identified in 2023.²⁹ Many of these stations have special programmes for iftar and suhur when they are often on in the background in kitchens and on the move in cars.

Similarly, Muslim TV channels in the UK such as Islam Channel, British Muslim TV and IQRA TV, offer a mix of religious lectures, entertainment, Islamic learning, and charity appeals, which draw significant viewership in the month of Ramadan. Al-Khair Foundation, a sister charity of IQRA TV, estimates

that a significant portion of its annual charitable donations comes from its Ramadan appeals broadcast on IQRA TV channels in Urdu, English, and Bengali. There are also many ethnic channels that also devote a large part of their programming to Ramadan. Altogether, whether radio or TV, these stations highlight the rich diversity and vibrancy of British Muslim broadcasting and provide brands with a direct and culturally relevant way of engaging Muslim audiences during Ramadan and beyond through tailored advertising, sponsorships, and community-driven campaigns.

3. Business value-chain investments

During Ramadan, demand surges for staple foods such as dates, rice, lentils, meat, dairy, and drinks, as well as specialty products like halal sweets and treats. This demand arises as families prepare hearty iftar meals, with dietary changes not only to accommodate fasting but also to embrace culinary traditions.

For example, dates are a staple for breaking the fast. Other foods like samosas, sweets, juices, and desserts become high-demand, as British Muslims look forward to opening their fasts at iftar. Many families prepare home-cooked meals featuring halal-certified meat, poultry, lentils, and dairy, driving up food sales. Additionally, many families stock up on essential grocery items to avoid frequent trips to shops during Ramadan. Supermarkets often respond with special discounts and promotions, further encouraging bulk purchases. Families host large iftar meals, inviting relatives, friends, and neighbours. Toward the end of Ramadan, shopping increases again as families prepare for Eid al-Fitr.

The combination of higher food consumption, social gatherings, culinary traditions, and promotional campaigns drives a significant spike in supermarket and independent shop sales during Ramadan. To meet this heightened demand, retailers must

expand their inventory, introduce special discounts, and optimise their supply chain for efficiency. However, managing this surge effectively requires strategic investment in the entire value chain, ensuring that products are sourced, stocked, and delivered in a seamless manner.

Using gross costs (at 70% and 80%) as a proxy for the investment needed to meet demand during Ramadan, we estimate that the supermarket and independent shops' value chain investment to be in the range of £159m - £274m. The true investment is likely to be much higher as we have not factored in non-supermarket demand such as clothes and Eid gifts.

4. Social cohesion & charity

Public iftar events and interfaith gatherings play a significant role in fostering intercultural exchange and social cohesion in Britain. Initiatives like the Ramadan Tent Project's 'Open Iftar,' community-led 'Big Iftar' and various other public iftar events in mosques, churches, and public institutions from sports clubs to local councils, invite people of all backgrounds to share in the Ramadan experience, transforming public spaces into inclusive areas of dialogue and unity. These large-scale gatherings, hosted in iconic locations and local towns alike, provide a platform for dialogue, cultural exchange, and community spirit. Funded by charities, donors, and volunteers, these events highlight the spirit of compassion and togetherness, with more than approximately 300 such large scale iftars taking place. The widespread nature of these interfaith iftar events underscores the potential for religious and cultural traditions to serve as a foundation for social cohesion.

Ramadan also fosters charitable giving, community service, and family bonding, with millions of iftar meals provided in mosques and homes across the UK. Mosques such as the East London Mosque

serve 1000-1200 iftar meals daily, funded entirely by donations from local businesses and individuals, demonstrating the scale of communal generosity. Conservatively, we estimate that around 125,000 iftar meals are provided across British mosques every day throughout the 29 or 30 days of Ramadan, at an estimated cost of £0.5m per day. This equates to around 3.8 million meals at a cost of £15m in the month.³⁰ All of this goes straight back into the local economy, with daily purchases and large deliveries from supermarkets and independent retailers. Moreover, Ramadan inspires individuals to engage in charity, from raising money for local foodbanks to creative fundraising initiatives for poverty-relief campaigns. In total, across all social cohesion activities, volunteering and charity donations, we estimate £238m - £359m contribution to the UK economy in Ramadan.



Conclusion

Ramadan plays an increasingly significant role in shaping British economy, contributing up to £1.3bn. With 2.6 million British Muslim adults observing the fast every day, the month drives changes in consumer spending, retail trends, and charitable giving, while also strengthening social cohesion through community and interfaith initiatives. Businesses and policymakers have a unique opportunity to engage with this growing economic and cultural force by fostering inclusive workplace policies, and culturally relevant market strategies. Recognising and supporting the contributions of British Muslims during Ramadan will not only enhance economic growth but also promote a more inclusive and cohesive society.

With British Muslims increasing their spending during Ramadan, particularly on food, gifts, and fashion, businesses that align with their values and shopping preferences can unlock significant economic benefits. The rise of the Ramadan economy in the UK is an underappreciated phenomenon. With these increases in spending and changes in focus already prevalent, they present an unfulfilled opportunity to channel these shifts into strengthened local supply chains, boost small businesses, and encourage more sustainable consumer habits.

Small businesses must recognise Ramadan as a key retail moment and adapt their offerings to cater to both cultural and religious needs. Encouraging local purchasing, such as sourcing organic halal food from British farms, supporting Muslim-owned businesses, and investing in sustainable and ethical products, not only enhances community well-being but also ensures that Ramadan spending has a lasting impact on the UK economy.

Despite its growing significance, the Ramadan economy remains an underexplored area in policy discussion. Targeted government support can help realise the Ramadan economy's full potential, whether through supporting Muslim-owned enterprises, integrating Ramadan-sensitive policies into local economic strategies, or promoting sustainable and ethical consumer habits through arm's-length bodies.

'Buy British' should apply both to Muslim consumers in Ramadan, as well as to procurement bodies engaging in the Ramadan economy, buying from local Muslim businesses too. Strengthening local supply chains, encouraging public sector procurement from Muslim-led businesses, and ensuring regulatory support for halal food production are key steps in embedding the Ramadan economy into the UK's wider economic framework, in a way that recognises the contributions of British Muslims to the economy and creates a more inclusive economy, for the benefit of all citizens.

The government should also ensure that workplace policies accommodate Muslim employees during Ramadan, with clear guidance for public and private sector organisations. Investing in research to better understand the economic impact of Ramadan and incorporating these insights into policy decisions will be crucial in fostering an inclusive and dynamic economy and tackling the UK's productivity crisis. Recognising and supporting the Ramadan economy, and the contributions of British Muslims during Ramadan, is not only an economic imperative but also a vital step towards building a more cohesive and equitable society.

Recommendations

For Government & Local Government

1) Department for Business and Trade (DBT), HM Treasury (HMT), Office for National Statistics (ONS) & Local Authorities: Integrate the Ramadan economy into national and local economic strategies, underpinned by robust data and research. Despite its growing significance, the Ramadan economy remains largely absent from mainstream economic planning. National and local authorities should embed targeted support for Muslim-owned enterprises, retail supply chains and high street regeneration into broader economic development strategies. This must be underpinned by improved government support for data and research on Ramadan-specific economic trends, including spending patterns, productivity, energy use, supply chain dynamics, and faith-based consumer behaviour. Improved data around religious holidays and periods of religious observance will provide valuable insight into shopping habits, lifestyle choices and cultural preferences. This evidence base can help reduce waste, increase sustainability, inform more responsive economic planning, and unlock new economic opportunities in communities across the UK.

2) Cabinet Office, DBT, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and the Financial Conduct Authority: Strengthen the Muslim-led economic ecosystem through procurement, financial inclusion and enterprise support. Government should prioritise British-based Muslim-led businesses in public sector procurement, particularly in halal food production, strengthening domestic supply chains and reducing reliance on imports. 'Buy British' should include 'British Halal' produce, with investment in sustainable domestic certification able to boost confidence among Muslim

consumers and support local producers. In parallel, the government should improve access to Sharia-compliant finance, including interest-free loans and fintech solutions for zakat. These measures will support business growth, charitable giving, and local economic resilience.

3) Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) & Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS): Ensure sustained engagement with Muslim communities beyond Ramadan and Eid. To avoid a sense of tokenism within Muslim communities, engagement with Muslims, across mosques, umbrella and grassroots organisations, should not be limited to Ramadan or iftars alone. The government should work with businesses and civil society to ensure faith-sensitive engagement is embedded throughout the year. These efforts should be integrated into wider community cohesion and social impact policies.

4) Department for Work and Pensions (DWP): Provide clear guidance for employers on reasonable adjustments to work practices during Ramadan. Currently, there is a lack of central guidance on best practice, with scattered recommendations from within the NHS, third sector and community organisations. The government should issue official guidance to public sector employers on flexible working arrangements, break policies and inclusive workplace practice during Ramadan, while encouraging private sector employers to adopt these guidelines to maximise productivity and employee well-being.

For the Business sector

5) Invest in culturally relevant marketing and inclusive development. Muslim consumers are

seeking authenticity and meaningful connection. Brands should ensure campaigns reflect Muslim lived experiences, especially around values like family, charity and spirituality. Beyond marketing, this should include expanding modest fashion ranges, inclusive sizing and collaborating with Muslim designers to offer culturally sensitive collections.

6) Position Ramadan as a major retail moment with tailored promotions and in-store visibility, partnering with Muslim-owned businesses. This includes dedicated in-store Ramadan sections,

bundle offers, loyalty schemes and digital visibility across online platforms.

7) Champion ethical, environmentally sustainable (tayyib) products and services. Tap into the sensibilities of younger Muslims who, like the broader society, increasingly demand ethical and sustainable products. Procure and promote artisan Ramadan & Eid gifts, encourage ethical and sustainable shopping. This can include supporting independent bookshops and Muslim authors to offer Ramadan-themed books for children and families.



End Notes and References

Appendix 1: Estimating total cost of Ramadan Spending in the UK:

Contribution Type	Economic Value	Assumptions	£ lower range	£ higher range
1	Supermarket spend	Based on various sources that report supermarket spend of £100m in 2015 ³¹ and £200m in 2018 ³² , we value supermarket spend to be higher in 2025 using a bottom-up build of a typical Ramadan shopping basket, see Table 2. We have factored 25% of the lower range to be substitutional. We estimate the higher range to be 50% higher than the lower range.	£228,375,000	£342,562,500
1	Non-supermarket spend e.g. new clothes, gifts, items at Ramadan souks, ethnic clothing	We estimate there are 1 million Muslim households in the UK, based on a 4 occupancy household size. This is higher than the UK average and in line with Muslim occupancy across Europe. ³³ We estimate households spend £200 - £300 to buy Eid clothes and gifts, give 'Eidhi' cash gifts to children, hosting family and guests, and travelling to visit friends and family across the UK etc.	£200,000,000	£300,000,000
2	Retail marketing spend	We assume there are at least 50 brands across retail and charity sectors, and each spending an average of £100k - £500k, including store aisle branding, content creation, as well as billboards, radio ads, brochures, social media ads. Due to lack of data, we have taken a conservative view, as evidenced in accounts of charities like NZF which spent £600k on raising funds in 2023 with a significant portion of this spent in Ramadan ³⁴ . Applying this logic to other charities and retail would suggest a much higher marketing spend. Moreover, for supermarkets to have a dedicated Ramadan section with elaborate displays, and signage throughout the store across multiple stores, it could easily range from £50,000 to £100,000 or more, depending on the number of locations involved and the design complexity.	£5,000,000	25,000,000

3	Value chain investments by supermarket and independent shop retailers e.g. sourcing, supply of goods, delivery etc.	We use the gross cost of supermarket sales, at 70% and 80% for lower and higher ranges, respectively, as a proxy for the investment by supermarkets and independent shops. Gross cost is a good proxy as it assumes the cost of sourcing goods and logistics. Note that gross operating costs for UK supermarket is typically 85%-97%, so the values used here are conservative, and especially as they exclude clothes shopping.	£159,862,500	£274,050,000
4	Iftars in mosques	We conservatively assume there are around 1900 permanent mosques in the UK, based on the most complete and up-to-date data source, MuslimsInBritain.org statistics page. ³⁵ Data for mosque capacity taken from Statista. ³⁶ We assume mosque attendance for the early evening prayer (Maghrib) increases by 25% in Ramadan compared to outside. We assume 75% of those that attend for Maghrib also have iftar at the mosque vs 100% of those that go specifically in Ramadan. Based on these assumptions and data points, we estimate between 13 to 1200 people eat iftar in mosques, reflecting the size of the mosque and their congregations at Maghrib. The cost of each iftar conservatively taken to be £4, including 200ml water bottle, dates, fruits and a meal pack. Higher range estimated to be 50% higher than lower range, taking into account the conservative data points used for the lower range.	£15,059,639	£22,589,459
4	Volunteering at mosque iftars	We estimate across 1900 mosques there are 25,000 volunteers for iftar (an average of 13 volunteers per mosque) who spend an average of 2 hours each day for 30 days for volunteering. Age profile likely to be 21-80, and minimum wage £11.44. For the higher range, we assume 3 hours of volunteering.	£17,160,000	£25,740,000
4	Volunteering at public iftars	We estimate there are 300 public iftar events, which require on average at least 10 volunteers (conservative estimate), giving 3,000 volunteers across the UK - average time 3 hours each day for 30 days at minimum wage of £11.44. Many of these volunteers are likely to be professionals which could mean the per hour value is higher, and so for the higher range we have used £20 per hour value.	£3,088,800	£5,400,000

4	Volunteering for charitable donations and activity	There are around 2700 Muslim charities in the UK from very small to very large ones with international operations. ³⁷ 900 of these have an income of >£100k, and we estimate will be actively fundraising during Ramadan in some shape or form. We assume that at least they will have on average 20 volunteers fundraising through Ramadan. This equates to a total of 18,000 volunteers. We conservatively estimate these volunteers spend 15 hours in Ramadan fundraising (30 minutes a day). We have used the minimum wage of £11.44 for the economic value of their time. Many of these volunteers are likely to be professionals which could mean the per hour value is higher, and so for the higher range we have used £20 per hour value.	£ 3,088,800	£5,400,000
4	Donations to British Muslim charities	£145m-£152m was reported to have been donated to Muslim charities in 2022 ³⁸ , which we expect to have increased by at least 35% to 100%, lower and higher range, respectively, owing to growth in Muslim population, improved digital journeys and marketing campaigns, and in response to humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza.	£200,000,000	£300,000,000
TOTAL			£831,634,739	£1,300,741,959

1 Miss Tully, *Letters Written During a Ten Years' Residence at the Court of Tripoli, 1783-1795: Published from the Originals in the Possession of the Family of the ... and Turks (Travellers in the Wider Levant)*, <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Letters-Written-Residence-1783-1795-Travellers/dp/1843821974>.

2 <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1264438?section=official-list-entry>.

3 Range estimated using past sources, as well as the latest available data, including the assumption of 1 million Muslim households in the UK based on an average of 4 person occupancy, which is in line with European estimates. We used the same methodology as previously used in Equi's Economic Contribution report to estimate the economic value of volunteers during Ramadan, for iftar at mosques and in public.

For food and drinks spend, we have used the estimated budget cost from Table 4 and assumed 25% being substitutional. The higher range for food and drinks spend was estimated assuming a 50% increase to the estimated budget cost (£228), which works out to be £342 for a 4 person fasting household at the higher end.

For clothes and gifts spend we have assumed a range of £200-£300 for a 4 person household. Value chain investment was estimated by taking the gross cost of the supermarket spend, at 70% and 80% for lower and higher ranges, respectively. Note that gross operating costs for UK supermarkets are typically 85%-97% depending on the size of store, so the values used here are conservative.

4 <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1552212/mena-ramadan-spending-behavior-by-country/>

- 5 <https://www.pymnts.com/news/cross-border-commerce/cross-border-payments/2023/ramadan-boosts-remittances-and-ecommerce-retail-sales-amid-inflation/>.
- 6 <https://www.gouldstudio.com/insights/designing-for-ramadan-2025>.
- 7 <https://nanointeractive.com/how-will-cost-of-living-impact-eid-and-uk-muslims-buying-habits/>
- 8 Estimate based on an average 4 person household using prices and quantities in a typical food shopping basket to serve the month of Ramadan, see table 2. See also, <https://www.gouldstudio.com/insights/designing-for-ramadan-2025>.
- 9 *Ramadan boosts supermarket sales of rice, chapati flour, dates and meat as Muslims stock up for festival 'bigger than Christmas,'* The Independent, June 2015, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/ramadan-boosts-supermarket-sales-of-rice-chapati-flour-dates-and-meat-as-muslims-stock-up-for-festival-bigger-than-christmas-a16566.html>.
- 10 <https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/analysis-and-features/what-are-british-muslim-shoppers-buying-from-the-supermarkets/690087.article>.
- 11 Increased availability of ethnic food products in mainstream retail outlets Read more at: <https://www.credenceresearch.com/report/united-kingdom-ethnic-food-market>.
- 12 <https://www.performancemarketingworld.com/article/1817035/almost-half-uk-muslims-altered-ramadan-spending-habits-due-cost-living-crisis>.
- 13 <https://www.gca.cards/eid-the-opportunity-for-greeting-card-retailers-and-publishers/>.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 <https://www.next.co.uk/shop/promotion-eid-0>.
- 16 <https://www.ladyleadmag.com/ramadan-2024-collection-by-marks-spencer/>.
- 17 <https://www.nandos.co.uk/explore/blog/ramadan>.
- 18 <https://cardology.co.uk/>.
- 19 <https://www.ikea.com/sa/en/campaigns/how-to-prepare-for-ramadan-pubbe6a2d70/>
- 20 <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/jjima-07-2022-0202/full/html>.
- 21 <https://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/tesco-together-ramadan-bartle-bogle-hegarty/1751608>.
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- 23 <https://mediacat.uk/how-inclusive-media-revived-sainsburys-ramadan-credentials>.
- 24 <https://www.tiktok.com/discover/hm-ramadan-collection-2025-uk>.
- 25 <https://www.thenationalnews.com/lifestyle/fashion/stylish-and-easy-to-wear-how-ramadan-fashion-has-evolved-over-the-years-11004183>.
- 26 <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/research-and-data/multi-sector/media-nations/2024/media-nations-2024-uk.pdf>.
- 27 <https://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/ctv-new-primetime-advertisers-during-ramadan/1908406>
- 28 <https://mediacat.uk/how-inclusive-media-revived-sainsburys-ramadan-credentials>.
- 29 <https://muslimnews.co.uk/newspaper/ramadan/ramadan-radio-listing>.
- 30 Based on 1900 mosques in the UK and their relative size from *Number of mosques in the United Kingdom (UK) in 2017*, by capacity, Statista, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/753720/masjids-in-uk/>. Assumed 25% increase in mosque attendees during iftar/early evening prayer Maghrib (conservative figure).
- 31 <https://www.thetimes.com/travel/destinations/uk-travel/england/london-travel/ramadan-brings-100m-surge-in-grocery-sales-vl8xrv0pcd9>.

- 32** <https://www.retail-insight-network.com/news/ramadan-spending-worth-200m-uk-economy-study-finds/>.
- 33** <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1091048/average-size-muslim-households-worldwide-region>
- 34** <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/5038187/full-print>.
- 35** <https://www.muslimsinbritain.org/>.
- 36** <https://www.statista.com/statistics/753720/masjids-in-uk/>.
- 37** <https://charityclassification.org.uk/data/ukcat/RL104>.
- 38** According to Givebrite, British Muslims donated £145m-£152m to charities in Ramadan 2020, during the Coronavirus lockdown: <https://blog.givebrite.com/uk-muslims-donate-3500-per-minute-in-lockdown-ramadhan/>.

About the Author



Dr Mamnun Khan is a fellow at Equi, and is the author of *Being British Muslims: Beyond Ethnocentric Religion and Identity Politics*. He is a British Muslim thinker and writer who explores identity, Islam, and the social integration of Muslims in contemporary Britain. His work critically examines the challenges and opportunities faced by British Muslims, advocating for a balanced God-centred approach that transcends ethnocentrism and ideological extremes. In his spare time, Mamnun advises a number of UK organisations on projects and strategy. He has over 20 years of experience in corporate management and strategy in the science and tech sector.

About Equi

Equi is a pioneering think tank. An independent, non-partisan organisation whose mission is to develop and promote new public policy ideas for a just and prosperous society for all. Born from a recognition that British Muslims are not included in the crucial arena of public policy formation, it has been driven by a desire to contribute more fully to the health and wellbeing of our nation bringing into play our dearly held values and ethics of public service. Outcomes will be driven by British Muslims, but not simply for British Muslims.

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