

No Uniformity to Hijab Ban in Kyrgyz Schools

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Although state education officials in Kyrgyzstan generally frown on girls wearing Islamic headscarves, IWPR reporter Khalida Ergesheva found that schools in the capital Bishkek take varying approaches to the issue.

Some insist on pupils wearing the prescribed uniform – effectively banning “hijab” or Islamic dress – while others have informally adopted a more tolerant policy.

In the second report in this package, journalist Saltanat Kaldybaeva highlighted the case of an ethnic Kyrgyz family from eastern Turkey who have settled in Kyrgyzstan for the last five years but are still finding it hard to win citizenship, schooling and land rights. Nurmuhammed Dolunay, 83, and his family belong to a group of Kyrgyz living in the Wakhan corridor of northeast Afghanistan who fled before the Soviet invasion of 1979 and were eventually resettled in Turkey.

Meerim Narykova reported on the controversy surrounding plans to close or at least curb the widespread phenomenon of casinos and gaming halls in Kyrgyzstan. Some say gambling is a curse that destroys many lives, although owners argue that the tax they pay benefit the government. President Roza Otunbaeva, who is for a ban, says the gambling industry is known worldwide as a way of laundering money for organised crime.

The audio programme, in Russian and Kyrgyz, went out on national radio stations in Kyrgyzstan, as part of IWPR project work funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Location: [Kyrgyzstan](#)
Focus: [Central Asia Radio](#)

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