

Changes in religious practices

In the late 1970s, a phenomenon emerged: mosque-related associations. Like cafés, they played a role in promoting solidarity. If someone lost their job, they would sometimes raise funds to help them. The first generation – who wanted to earn money then go back to their country of origin – put their religion on the back burner when they had to, although this was also a matter of age according to personal accounts from the time. Religion was not their main priority, but with age, it became a more important part of their lives. There were no mosques back then. Those who felt the need to pray did so in their homes.

Islam only started to become visible when people gave up on the idea of returning home and immigration became more of a family affair. The first places of worship were created by the faithful themselves, who carried out painting work or provided mats. Islam was officially recognised in Belgium in 1974.