



European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination

NEWS REPORT

Country:	Denmark
Title:	No ghettos in Denmark by 2030!
Date:	12 October 2018
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<u>Context</u>	
Issue at stake:	New bills to prevent and dismantle ghettos and parallel societies in Denmark
Ground of discrimination:	Ethnic origin
Source:	Legislation
Field:	Housing, education and social services

Content

In May 2018, the Danish government entered into 6 political agreements with various parties in the Parliament. The agreements were based on the government's strategy plan called "A Denmark without Parallel Societies - No Ghettos by 2013".¹

Initiatives in the political agreements included plans to prevent and dismantle so-called ghettos and parallel societies in Denmark. In early October 2018, the government put forward a number of individual bills to implement the agreements. As the bills are all based on majority agreements in the Parliament, they can be expected to pass on a general level.

The bills define marginalized residential areas according to a number of criteria including level of income, number of convicted individuals, level of education, and unemployment rate. Ghettos are furthermore defined by the percentage of immigrants and descendants from third-countries.

The following will describe the various bills in brief:

- Proposal to establish mandatory training for any child over the age of 1 who lives in marginalized residential areas and who is not enrolled in a day care centre. The 25 hours a week training must include the Danish language as well as Danish traditions, norms, and values.²
- Proposal to change the way that young children are distributed to day care centres. The aim is to make sure that not more than 30 % of children in a day care centre come from a marginalized residential area.³
- Proposal to establish mandatory Danish language test in schools with a high

¹ See: <https://www.regeringen.dk/nyheder/ghettoudspil/>.

² Bill No. L 7 of 3 October 2018. See <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=203091>.

³ Bill No. L 6 of 3 October 2018. See: <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=203139>.

percentage of students coming from marginalized residential areas. Passing the language test will be a requirement for the student's promotion to the next class.⁴

- Proposal that will make it illegal for housing associations in marginalized residential areas to assign housing to applicants who receive public integration benefits.⁵ The same prohibition is thought to apply if family members of the housing applicant receive public integration benefits.⁶

Key points of analysis: If adopted, the new legislation will primarily affect ethnic minorities. The bills raise legitimate questions of possible illegal indirect discrimination because of ethnic origin within the areas of housing, education and social services.⁷

⁴ Bill No. L 60 of 4 October 2018. See: <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=203372>.

⁵ Bill No. L 38 of 3 October 2018. See: <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=203288>.

⁶ More than 90 % of individuals receiving public integration benefits have an ethnic minority background and are not Danish citizens. See Ministry of Foreigners and Integration: <http://uim.dk/nyheder/integration-i-tal/integration-i-tal-nr-4-4-januar-2017/hvem-er-integrationsydelsesmodtagerne>.

⁷ See <https://menneskeret.dk/monitorering/hoeringssvar> for hearing statements from the Danish Institute for Human Rights:

- Høring over udkast til lov om ændring af lov om almene boliger m.v., lov om leje af almene boliger og lov om leje (initiativer der modvirker parallelsamfund) (3 april 2018).
- Høring over udkast til forslag til lov om ændring af dagtilbudsloven og lov om børne- og ungeydelse (obligatorisk læringstilbud til 1-årige børn i udsatte boligområder) (7 august 2018).
- Høring over forslag til lov om ændring af lov om almene boliger m.v., lov om leje af almene boliger og lov om leje (nye kriterier for udsatte boligområder og ghettoområder, initiativer til udvikling eller afvikling af ghettoområder, skærpelse af anvisnings- og udlejningsregler, ophævelser af lejekontrakt på grund af kriminalitet m.v.) (22 august 2018).
- Høring over udkast til lovforslag til lov om ændring af lov om folkeskoleloven, lov om friskoler og private grundskoler (29 august 2018).
- Høring over udkast til lov om ændring af straffeloven, pasloven og politiloven (initiativer mod parallelsamfund) (14 september 2018).