



# Muslims in the EU:

## Cities Report

**DENMARK**

Preliminary research report  
and literature survey

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## Background

This research paper, focusing on the situation of Muslims in Denmark, was commissioned by the EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program (EUMAP)<sup>1</sup>, of the Open Society Institute (OSI).<sup>2</sup> Similar reports have also been prepared for Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK.

The overall aim of this series of research papers is to provide a comprehensive review of available research and literature on Muslims in each of these countries, including a bibliography covering the most relevant recent publications. Another aim is to facilitate the selection of a number of EU cities for inclusion in a proposed new OSI monitoring project to be initiated in 2007 — “Muslims in the EU: Cities Reports”. This project will address policy on Muslims at the city, or municipal, level, as opposed to the national level, which is the more usual level of analysis for cross-country monitoring. It follows on from previous EUMAP reports addressing the situation of Muslims in Europe, in particular the 2004 report, *Muslims in the UK: Policies for Engaged Citizens*.<sup>3</sup>

Each of the research reports follow the same methodology, to provide comparative information across the countries covered, according to a common methodology prepared by EUMAP.<sup>4</sup> Part I of the report evaluates the availability of data and other information on the situation of — specifically — Muslims in Denmark, in the following areas: population, identity, education, employment, health and social protection, policing and security, and participation and citizenship. Part II addresses the policy context in Denmark, in particular with regard to the perception of Muslims, integration policy and administrative structures. Part III looks more specifically at the potential suitability of three cities in Denmark with significant Muslim populations for inclusion in the OSI “Muslims in the EU” city monitoring project — Aarhus, Copenhagen and Odense.

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<sup>1</sup> Full details on the EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program (EUMAP) can be found at [www.eumap.org](http://www.eumap.org).

<sup>2</sup> Full details on the Open Society Institute (OSI) can be found at [www.soros.org](http://www.soros.org).

<sup>3</sup> The full report, as well as previous EUMAP reports on the situation of Muslims in France and Italy, can be found here: <http://www.eumap.org/topics/minority/reports/britishmuslims>

<sup>4</sup> The methodology for the research papers is available on the EUMAP website ([www.eumap.org](http://www.eumap.org))

## Executive Summary

It is estimated that there are around 175,000–200,000 Muslims in Denmark, including both immigrants and their descendants. Reliable figures are not available, however, as Danish law prohibits the registration of citizens on the basis of their religion and ethnicity. Official demographic data recognises two main ‘ethnic’ categories: Danes, and foreigners and their descendants (this category is further subdivided into those from Western and non-Western countries). Of Denmark’s total population of 5.4 million, 8.4 per cent (452,095 people) are immigrants and their descendants. Muslims constitute the majority of all non-Western immigrants and their descendants, as well as the single largest group among all minority faith communities in Denmark.

Over the last two decades, there has been a significant increase in the diversity of culture, language and customs in the Danish population. Significant levels of Muslim emigration to Denmark began in the late 1960s with the arrival of labour migrants from Yugoslavia and Turkey, as well as a small number from non-European countries (mainly Pakistan and North Africa). From the 1980s, there was a second wave of emigration, mainly of political asylum-seekers. These were mainly from predominantly Muslim countries — from Iran, the Middle East and Africa. There were also many new arrivals through family reunification. During the 1990s a further influx of, mainly Muslim, asylum seekers arrived from the Balkans, following the political disintegration of the former Yugoslavia.

The largest numbers of Muslims are concentrated in Copenhagen County and its sub-districts, followed by Aarhus, the second largest city, and Odense, the third largest. As in other European countries, migrants in Denmark settled mainly in the decaying inner city areas or in newly constructed high-rise suburbs around the larger cities.

During the late 1980s, a number of mayors from Greater Copenhagen County complained about the formation of “immigrant ghettos” and pressured successive governments to disperse immigrant populations more evenly, to reduce the burden on their social services budgets. In the early 1990s, restrictions were placed on new refugees, preventing them from finding housing beyond the municipality allocated to them for a period of three years. These provisions made it possible for the municipalities to refuse to provide housing and social welfare benefits to anyone who did not comply with residential restrictions.

In Denmark there is extensive research and literature on questions of identity, both with respect to ethnic minorities in general and Muslims specifically. Recent research indicates that, in current public, media and political discourse, the terms ‘ethnic minorities’ and ‘immigrants’ are unconsciously associated with Muslims. Furthermore, Muslim identity is often perceived as a binary opposition of everything that is popularly conceived to be ‘Danishness’; according to this logic, one cannot be a Muslim and a Dane at the same time.

There are no exact figures for the number of pupils with a Muslim background attending State-run public schools or higher educational institutions. Most available research on minority education focuses more broadly on differences in educational outcomes between bilingual pupils and children with Danish as their mother tongue. Since the 1980s, there has been a wide range of research on the education of bilingual pupils, covering topics such as cultural background, religion, mother tongue education, acquisition of the second language, gender roles and the structure of a Muslim family. More recent reports have also looked at aspects such as direct or

indirect discrimination in the educational system. In general, studies indicate that Muslim pupils are in a disadvantageous position in the education system, and that this is for a number of reasons, and not merely due to their cultural background, as is often asserted in political and media discourses. There is no particular dress code for Danish public schools and the wearing of the *hijab* (headscarf) is widely accepted in schools.

In Denmark, the majority of ethnic minorities are to be found at the lowest end of the labour market in terms of skills and qualifications. It is only in recent years that the employment situation of ethnic minorities has received due attention from the research communities and the Government, who have acknowledged that labour market participation is the key to integration. However, there is a lack of research looking specifically at the impact of discrimination on ethnic minorities in the labour market, whether with respect to seeking employment or in work situations.

Research indicates that, even in their school years, young people from ethnic minorities have such low expectations for gainful employment that this impacts on their ambitions for further education. Of those who do reach universities, the vast majority study subject such as the natural sciences, IT, engineering and managerial sciences, but very few turn to social sciences or the professional fields that confine job opportunities primarily to the Danish labour market, such as law, sociology and national economics. And even for those with qualifications, there is evidence that ethnic minorities of non-Western origin do not benefit fully from their education and skills, whether obtained in Denmark or in any other country.

Among immigrants, people from predominantly Muslim countries have much higher unemployment rates, particularly those from non-European countries. For example, in 2000 the unemployment rate for people with origins in Somalia, Iraq and Morocco stood above 65 per cent, as compared to about 18 per cent for native Danes. Although the situation has improved slightly since then, due to the upswing in the Danish economy, Muslims still remain among the most marginalised groups in the Danish labour market. Those that are in employment are over-represented in the least attractive and lowest paid job, or in self-employment. Lacking social networks beyond their own communities, many rely on family and friends when seeking employment, which tends to limit their employment to “dead-end” jobs at the bottom of the employment ladder without any career possibilities.

Minorities from non-Western countries — of whom the largest share is composed of households with a Muslim background — are concentrated in the three largest Danish cities: Copenhagen, Aarhus and Odense. The majority live in the Copenhagen area: about 70 per cent in Copenhagen County (of which one third live in Copenhagen Municipality). The remainder of the Muslim population is scattered across the country in relatively small numbers in a range of small towns and cities (notably, Esbjerg, Vejle, Kolding, Frederikssund, Slagelse, Helsingørre and Randers).

Half of the migrant population from non-Western countries of origin live in the social housing built between 1966 and 1980. These residential estates (the majority of which are in the Copenhagen area) account for the largest share of neighbourhoods that can be defined as socially deprived — overrepresented by low-income households, long-term unemployed, single parents, and immigrants. The housing situation of ethnic minorities, including Muslim minorities, is not a well-explored field in Denmark, however.



The settlement patterns of Muslims in Denmark are determined by a number of factors, including their disadvantaged position in the labour and housing market, discrimination, especially in the private rental market, concerns about security and safety, lack of knowledge about the housing market and a lack of resources to move to better dwellings. In fact, given their socio-economic position in society, most Muslim households have little choice in their place of residence and are strongly reliant on the availability of low-rent social housing.

Under Danish welfare legislation, all citizens and resident non-citizens are entitled to equal protection in case of illness and emergency situations. In other words, the universal provision of social security and health insurance applies to all who are residing legally in the country. This, however, does not imply that members of ethnic minorities do not face problems.

Health is another area of research concerning the Muslim minorities that has been under-explored for many years. However, this area is now receiving more attention from both the medical professions and the social sciences, particularly following the recent establishment of an interdisciplinary and independent Institute of Public Health at Copenhagen University. Earlier research in this area was mainly of an anthropological nature, focusing on the traditional Muslim cultures. Today, the focus has turned more to the real-life health problems prevalent among Muslim immigrants and their descendants, covering topics such as complications during birth and maternity, and frequently diagnosed diseases among the immigrant communities (such as diabetes, cardiovascular problems, and risks due to diet and lifestyle).

With the exception of the border control police, in general, minorities report few experiences of discrimination from the police. However, research on this area is limited. There is no specific literature on Muslims and the criminal justice system.

Over the past decade, there has been an exaggerated focus in the mass media and in the dominant political discourse on criminality among young people from minority groups. Tensions between the police and members of ethnic minorities, especially young people, are often a result of police profiling, leading to unwarranted stop-and-search practices, which occasionally resulted in some violent confrontations. Research has indicated, however, that an excessive focus on stereotype profiling of young people from ethnic minorities is itself a contributing source for the deviant behaviour among them. Prejudice against the police among minorities, particularly among young people, is perhaps one of the reasons why, despite the efforts made by the police, few individuals from ethnic minorities have sought a career in the profession. There is evidence that prejudiced views persist among working police officers, but these views are not very different from those of the general Danish population or institutions.

In June 2002, the Danish Parliament passed a package of laws to combat the growing threat of international terrorism, including giving the police greater powers of surveillance that can be used against Muslim groups or individuals. It has yet to be seen how the newly enacted anti-terror legislation has impacted on members of Muslim communities in Denmark.

At the moment, there are three parliamentary members with a Muslim background. Only Danish citizens can vote in national elections, however, since 1989 all immigrants with at least a three-year legal stay in the country have the right to vote in the local elections, and to compete for these elections. Research has focused on the levels of participation of ethnic minorities in local and general elections and, more broadly, in the democratic processes. A poorly explored area is also the performance of the institutions / forums created by the State to include minority

representation in the democratic decision-making processes, at the national and at the local level. These include integration councils at the municipality level and the Council of Ethnic Minorities at the national level.

With respect to the majority population's perception of the ethnic minorities in Denmark, one of the most debated publications was a nationwide survey of the attitude of Danes towards ethnic minorities. This found that 37 per cent of Danes would not like a Muslim for a neighbour, but, interestingly, when the adjective "Muslim" was replaced by "a person from another race", the proportion fell to 18 per cent.

There are two main schools of thought on public perceptions of Muslims in Denmark. The first finds that there has been no significant change in the public attitudes towards the immigrants, and that intolerance towards Muslims is rather a reflection of the fact that Danes are overwhelmingly secularised. By contrast, the other school finds that the situation has deteriorated since the late 1980s and that there has been a change of direction in perception, attitudes and institutional behaviour.

In comparison with other EU countries, much of the research on perception and attitudes in Denmark remains at a rudimentary stage. Nonetheless, it can be concluded that the ways in which Muslims are talked about in the public sphere and the daily media reduces the complexity of the cultural variations among Muslims and reproduces the existing stereotypes of them. Ethnic relations have become much more strained today, and intolerance and right-wing extremism has increased. Public opinion has become more critical towards Muslims, who, in the popular perception, are conceived as a culturally homogenous group of "foreigners" and a binary opposition of all that is Danish. Domestic observers and social science researchers have noted lately that Denmark, with its Muslim population of barely 170,000, has become a staunchly anti-Muslim nation. After some of the most obnoxious xenophobic propaganda during the general elections in November 2001, Denmark attracted a great deal of international criticism

Current integration policy aims to reduce the number of new entrants from non-Western countries, by tightening the legislation on political asylum and family reunification, and to force various measures of economic sanctions upon the unemployed members of ethnic minorities. This is reflected in a number of new policy measures introduced since 2002. Tougher restrictions have also been introduced on acquisition of citizenship through naturalisation. Family reunification has been tightened to such an extent that today it is virtually impossible for the members of ethnic minorities from non-Western countries to be united with their spouses in Denmark, unless a range of conditions are fulfilled by the applicants. In the case of naturalised citizens, they can be exempted from certain restrictions on bringing a spouse from abroad, for instance, the affiliation criteria, but only 28 years after the date of naturalisation. The restrictions apply also for the children of the naturalised citizens, who might even have been born, raised and schooled in Denmark. They must wait until they are 24 years of age before they are eligible to apply for a visa for their spouse.

The only official body to hear complaints against ethnic discrimination is a Complaint Committee at the Institute of Human Rights, but it has a very limited judicial mandate. The Government is in the process of planning to abolish this committee to replace it with a new board of complaints under the Ministry of Social Affairs.

## PART I: RESEARCH AND LITERATURE ON MUSLIMS

### 1. Population

#### 1.1 Muslim population estimates

The total population of Denmark is 5.4 million<sup>5</sup>, of which 463,235 (or 8.4 per cent) are immigrants and their descendants, belonging to various ethno-national groups, faiths or cultures (see Table 1).

The Danish law on registration and databases<sup>6</sup> prohibits the registration of citizens according to ethnic or religious identities. Official demographic data operate with two main ethnic categories: (1) Danes, and (2) foreigners (ethno-national groups) and their descendants — this category is further subdivided into Western citizens and migrants from non-Western countries.

Table 1, below, reflects the latest figures released by the think tank of the Ministry of Refugees, Immigrants and Integration (hereafter, Ministry of Integration), for the immigrant population of Denmark. These data have been calculated on the basis of information from the immigration authorities and the national bureau of statistics, Danmarks Statistik (Statistics Denmark), but they do not account for how many of this population have been granted Danish citizenship.

**Table 1. Immigrants and their descendants (2006)**

	<b>Immigrants</b>	<b>Descendants</b>	<b>Total</b>
Western countries	110,894	15,838	135,732
Non-Western countries	230,542	96,981	327,503
<b>Total</b>	<b>350,436</b>	<b>112,799</b>	<b>463,235</b>

**Source:** Ministry of Integration (2006)

According to the estimates of various research institutions and the Ministry of Integration's think tank, there are about 175,000–200,000 immigrants and their descendants from non-Western countries who belong to the Muslim communities living in Denmark today. These estimates were based solely on the number of immigrants and their descendants from predominantly Muslim countries. The remainder of the non-Western immigrants and their descendants are predominantly Asians from China, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Thailand and the Philippines.

Table 2 below provides a general profile of the ethnically non-Danish population of the country as of January 2001, disaggregated by their country of origin. It is based on data gathered from various official databases, including Danmarks Statistik, as well as the immigration authorities and the local governments.

<sup>5</sup> As of 1 January 2006. Further details available in English on the website of Danmarks Statistikbank (Statistics Denmark), the national bureau of statistics at <http://www.dst.dk/HomeUK.aspx> (accessed on 22 February 2007).

<sup>6</sup> Law no. 429 of 13 May 2000 on Personal Data (*Persondataloven*),

**Table 2. Immigrants and their descendants (January 2001)**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Europe</b>	215,450	Finland	3,840
		France	3,680
		The Netherlands	4,960
		Iceland	6,080
		Italy	3,110
		Former Yugoslavia	41,230
		Norway	14,920
		Poland	12,390
		Romania	2,070
		Former Soviet Union	6,150
		Spain	2,220
		United Kingdom	11,670 <sup>7</sup>
		Sweden	14,570
		Turkey	50,470
		Germany	25,320
Other	12,790		
<b>Africa</b>	38,450	Morocco	8,100
		Somalia	16,210
		Other	14,140
<b>North America</b>	8,010	--	--
<b>South and Middle America</b>	6,850	--	--
<b>Asia</b>	123,50	Afghanistan	4,830
		Philippines	4,120
		India	3,280
		Iraq	18,100
		Iran	13,390
		Lebanon	19,840
		Pakistan	18,140
		Sri Lanka	9,790
		Syria	2,480
		Thailand	5,400
		Vietnam	11,470
		Other	8,980
<b>Total immigrants</b>	392,610	--	--
<b>Total population</b>	5,349,000	--	--

Source: Fakta (2001)

<sup>7</sup> Roughly estimated, about 3,000 of these are British citizens of Pakistani origin.

## 1.2 Muslim migration trends

A relatively large-scale labour migration to Denmark took place in the late 1960s — and for the first time from the outer boundaries of the European political geography — when the expansion of the post-war economy and industry necessitated the import of foreign labour from Yugoslavia and Turkey. This was followed by a small number of arrivals of immigrant workers from non-European countries, mainly from Pakistan and North Africa.

From the mid-1980s, there was a significant increase in the diversity of culture, language and customs in the landscape of the Danish population. This coincided with a structural change in the Danish economy, towards a post-industrial era characterised by high unemployment rates among unskilled workers, a greater mobility of production capital to labour-intensive areas of the expanding global market, and a shortage of high-tech professionals in the burgeoning knowledge-based new areas of economic production. The increasing migration to Denmark during the 1980s did not follow the logic of supply and demand equilibrium in the labour market. This flow has been termed the “second phase of immigration” (Diken, 1998), on the grounds that it was not a labour migration, like the one in the late 1960s, but was composed, rather, of an unexpected influx of political asylum-seekers from various war-torn areas of the Middle East, and Iranians fleeing the Islamic revolution. Another main source of increase in the Muslim population of non-European origin has been new arrivals through family reunification.

The largest groups of immigrants and political refugees arriving in Denmark — with the exception of Tamils from Sri Lanka — came from predominantly Muslim countries in the Middle East and Africa (such as Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, the occupied Palestinian territories and Somalia). Another large contingent of refugees for whom Denmark provided asylum during the 1990s was made up of Bosnian asylum-seekers, fleeing ethnic cleansing in the conflicts that resulted from the political disintegration of the former Yugoslavia. The majority of those granted asylum had a Muslim background.

Thus, among all the various groups of minorities who compose the present Danish population, Muslims are the single largest group among all minority faith communities. Thus, in mainstream Danish discourse, the concept of ‘ethnic minorities’ or ‘migrants’ has come to evoke only associations with Muslims (Hussain *et al.*, 1997; Hussain, 2000b; Hervik, 1999).

The settlement pattern of both the early labour migrants and, to a very large extent, also the political refugees from the 1980s, shows a similar trend to that observed in other Western European countries. They settled either in the decaying inner areas of the larger cities or in the newly built high-rise suburbs, adjacent to the industrial estates around the larger cities.<sup>8</sup> These areas are officially referred to as “ghettos” or “socially deprived quarters”, or simply “the problem areas” (see Årbog om Udlændinge, 2005<sup>9</sup>). For further details on the concentration of immigrants from non-Western countries in specific residential neighbourhoods, see section 5 on housing.

The main Danish cities — Copenhagen, Aarhus, Odense, Aalborg, Vejle, Kolding and Esbjerg — all have a significant population of immigrants and refugees. The largest numbers of Muslims are concentrated in Copenhagen County and its sub-districts, followed by Aarhus, the second largest city, and Odense, the third; there are only a few Muslims in the fourth largest city,

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<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Stephen Castles, *et al.* (1984). For the Danish context, a range of working papers by Jan Hjernø prepared at the Danish Centre for Ethnic and Migration Studies, Esbjerg, point in the same direction.

<sup>9</sup> This is an annual official publication. Ministry of Integration, *Yearbook on Foreigners*.

Aalborg. This settlement pattern reflects the availability of menial job opportunities and cheaper social housing, and is partly also due to retaining a closer network with the community of one's own origin. However, none of the inner city areas or the industrial suburbs is inhabited by a single dominant ethnic or national group; they are, rather, multi-ethnic in their composition.

During the late 1980s, a number of mayors from the suburban municipalities of Greater Copenhagen County began complaining about the formation of the so-called immigrant ghettos, and pressured successive governments to spread out the immigrants more evenly to reduce the burden on their social budgets for schools, extra expenditure on the provision of mother-tongue education for pupils from diverse ethnic groups, social service expenditure, housing subsidies under the welfare provisions and increasing expenditure on social security benefits for the unemployed. (For details, see Schierup, 1993.) Schierup's analysis revealed that within the framework of a general crisis of the welfare State in Denmark, immigrants, and especially Muslims, were targeted as scapegoats, and their culture was blamed for being 'too different' to allow them to be integrated as successful citizens into the residential areas and into the labour market.

In the early 1990s, under pressure from several highly vocal local politicians, successive central Governments began to devise policies to restrict, for three years, new refugees from finding housing beyond the municipality allocated to them by the immigration and integration authorities. These provisions made it possible for the municipalities to refuse to provide housing and social welfare benefits to anyone who did not comply with residential restriction.

### **1.3 Citizenship**

The acquisition of Danish nationality has been made more difficult through a range of new rules introduced by the present coalition Government of Prime Minister Fogh Rasmussen, which came into power in November 2001. The latest amendment was introduced through the Parliamentary Act no. 311 of 5 May 2004, to the Law on Danish Citizenship no. 113 of 20 February 2003. The following is an outline of some of the prerequisites for citizenship according to the amended law on naturalisation, depicting current rules in force.

A child born in Denmark but having both parents with foreign nationality does not have any preferential right to acquire Danish citizenship. However, if one of the parents has Danish nationality, and provided that the child has been brought up and schooled in Denmark, the acquisition of Danish citizenship becomes relatively easier. However, the children of stateless refugees are exempted from this rule. They are eligible to obtain Danish citizenship regardless of their period of stay and schooling in Denmark.

Dual citizenship is not allowed and one has to surrender the previous passport to the authorities, before a Danish passport can be issued after the naturalisation.

Apart from the general formality requiring each applicant to declare solemnly that he or she will remain loyal to the Danish State and society, the applicant is required to declare his or her full criminal record; this includes any court convictions from minor fines arising from traffic violations. However, depending on the criminal record, the central authorities at the Ministry of Interior can decide, whether an application should proceed further. Previously it was not compulsory to mention minor offences that did not entail prison sentences. Furthermore, the required duration of stay in the country has been extended from 7 years to 9 years, calculated from the date of issue of the first residency permit, before an application can be accepted for

consideration — although this period is 8 years for those who have refugee status on their residency permits.

In addition to all this, the applicant must be economically self-reliant, should not have lived on welfare benefits for more than one year during the past five years, and must have no outstanding debts to the State (such as tax dues and unpaid fines), at the time of the application. Moreover, the applicant is required to provide a certificate of proficiency in the Danish language. From 2007 a new rule is in force, requiring all the applicants to pass a compulsory naturalisation test that will ascertain their knowledge of Danish society, its culture and its history.<sup>10</sup>

In Denmark, all the successful applications for nationality, after they have been thoroughly investigated by the police and the Naturalisation Office of the Ministry of Interior, proceed to a bill in Parliament, which ultimately approves the granting of nationality to each applicant by a simple majority vote. The Naturalisation Office does not publicly release figures on the number of applications that are rejected.

It ought to be mentioned at the outset that, although the census data does not classify the population according to the categories of faith and ethnicity, the central registration number that is assigned to each individual residing legally in the country contains a good deal of background information on each individual, such as date and place of birth, gender and national origin. Such information is required to be filled in the application form for obtaining the 10-digit personal identity number. This means that even if a person has become a naturalised Danish citizen, his or her original national, if not strictly ethnic, identity remains traceable. And this can be used to place the citizens and their descendants, albeit on a rough basis, into the category of faith too. For example, the second and the third generation of Pakistani parents, who had become naturalised at a certain point back in time, would still be calculated for analytical purposes as Muslims. However, when aggregated to a faith category, by reference to the national origin of parents and grandparents who migrated from a predominantly Muslim country, there is always a risk of including Christians, atheists or Hindus of Pakistani origin in such estimated figures.

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<sup>10</sup> Source: website of the Ministry Integration ([www.inm.dk](http://www.inm.dk)).

## 2. Identity

The question of identity has been discussed intensively, especially in the critical scientific literature in Denmark. Some recent scientific research has shown that the very concept of ethnic minorities, or immigrants, is unconsciously associated with Muslims in public, media and political discourse. The same can be said about the term ‘ethnic’, which is unwittingly used mainly for the non-white members of the population. Research has shown that even the descendants of non-white immigrants who are born and schooled in Denmark are identified with terms such as ‘second generation immigrants’, ‘immigrant youth’ or simply ‘ethnic youth’. Regardless of generation, and especially in connection with media debates about gender inequality, domestic violence, forced marriages or other social evils, non-white women are talked about as “Muslim women” with connotations such as “subjugated” and “dominated by the clutches of their religion and culture” (see, for example Andreassen, 2005).

The cultural sociologist Necef (1996) examines the role played by acquisition of the Danish language among Turkish young people, in the formation of their self-perception. Anthropologist Mørck (1998) argues that young people live in a double-bind culture and are found in a space of “hybrid culture”, somewhere between the parental homeland and the host society.

Following the research tradition of the Birmingham School of Cultural Studies, Flemming Røgilds, a sociologist, has worked for several years on the theme of “fluid” and “hybrid” identities, especially with respect to minority young people. However, most of his publications are written in a literary style, rather than in the traditional social scientific discourse (see, however, Røgilds, 1995 and 2002). Tufte (2001) examines the role that the national and international media play in the identity struggle of minority young people, and how they react to their portrayal in Danish mass media. Staunæs (2003) explores the intersection between gender and ethnic identity, with empirical reference to Muslim pupils in public schools. Also noteworthy is an unpublished Master’s thesis by Christina Rask (2004), exploring how legal and dominating cultural discourses inscribe ethnic, gendered and religious boundaries around the construction of Danish identity. In this process, the Muslim background of the gendered subject plays a pivotal role.

Hvenegård-Lassen (1996) provides a perspective on the legal-juridical categorisations of citizens and non-citizens; on who belongs to the nation and who is on the fringes of its boundary. Hvenegård-Lassen’s analysis is within a broader perspective of European identity and the nation State. Yilmaz (1999) raised some important questions about identity politics in Danish debate on immigrant issues by pointing out the symbiosis between elite interests and the mass media, which results in an exaggerated *ethnification* of minority representations. For a perspective on integration, and media practice around identity construction and representation of the Muslim minorities, two essays published in international anthologies (Hussain, 2000a; 2000b) can be considered relevant to this line of research on identity politics.

Two discourse analytical studies (Hussain *et al.*, 1997; Hervik *et al.*, 1999) have demonstrated that both in popular discourse and in media discourse the Muslim identity is constructed in an *Us* versus *Them* dichotomy. The anthropologist Peter Hervik thus demonstrated that Muslim identity is (re)produced as a binary opposition of everything that is popularly conceived to be “Danishness”. According to this logic, one cannot be a Muslim and a Dane at the same time.



In addition to those mentioned above, there is a range of other studies and research reports that touch upon the topics of identity, nationalism, citizenship and ethnicity, as well as ethnocentrism, and their direct and indirect influence on exclusionary processes for the Muslims.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> See, for example, the following: Mørck (1998); Mikkelsen (2004); Pakalski, K., & Maria Aarø (2000); Stonor (2000); Tireli (1996); Hervik (2003); Hussain (2003a; 2003b); Schmidt (2003); Landsted (2003); Nielsen (2003); Andreassen (2005); Gundelach (2002).

### 3. Education

Danish law on registration and databases<sup>12</sup> prohibits the registration of citizens on the basis of their religion and ethnicity. This means that no reliable figures can be provided on the exact number of the pupils with a Muslim background attending State-run public schools or higher educational institutions. However, a number of independent reports and field studies, along with the various documents prepared by the educational authorities, think tanks and ministries, provide a profile of Muslims in the educational and vocational fields.

The key concepts through which the concentration, or proportion, of minority children in schools is accounted for are ‘bilingual pupils’ versus ‘Danish pupils’ (children whose mother tongue is Danish). Hence, there is no independent research or survey that can point to the exact number of Muslim children in a particular school, in a certain neighbourhood or in an entire municipality.

Initially, from the late 1970s, when Muslim families with school-age children became a reality for the local governments,<sup>13</sup> a number of measures were taken to adjust primary schools to the new demographic challenges. Among the main actors involved in this task were the teacher training colleges, which are scattered over various municipalities. But the overall responsibility for research on education of bilingual pupils lay with the Ministry of Education, universities and the Royal School of Education — which was also responsible for providing postgraduate training or refresher courses for schoolteachers. Most of the research documents thus stem from these institutions. The central theme, around which much of the research has been conducted, was initially called “education of the foreign-language pupils in Danish public schools”.<sup>14</sup> Over time, the term “foreign-language pupils” was replaced by “bilingual pupils” in the research discourse, as well as in the official documents. A wide range of research on the education of bilingual pupils, covering topics such as cultural background, religion, mother-tongue education, acquisition of the second language (L-2), gender roles and the structure of a Muslim family, was carried out in the 1980s, and has continued ever since. Today there is an independent centre for research in bilingualism, called UC2, located in the outskirts of Copenhagen.

With regard to the focus of this present overview, the most prolific research and publications come from the research programme “Copenhagen Studies in Bilingualism” at the Royal School of Education. However, not all these publications are directly related to the schooling and learning of migrant children. Some of those related to the education of immigrants, both adults and children, with regard to the acquisition of the Danish language.<sup>15</sup>

There is also a range of studies that look at some other aspects of learning and education for minority adults, pupils and students, dealing with a wider spectrum of problems that ethnic minorities face in schools or other institutions of learning. The topics with which they deal range

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<sup>12</sup> The Law on Personal Data (*Persondataloven*).

<sup>13</sup> In Denmark, primary and secondary schools are run and administrated by the local governments of the municipalities, pre-university colleges and other vocational colleges by the regional governments of the county, and institutions of higher learning by the central Government (i.e. the Ministries of Science and Education). However, despite the decentralised educational system, the overall educational policy is devised centrally by the national Government.

<sup>14</sup> It should be noted that there are also a number of private schools in Denmark, which have to meet certain basic judicial requirements set by the Ministry of Education.

<sup>15</sup> These include the following: Boyd *et al.* (1998); Gimble, J. (1998); Hetmar, T. (1991); Holmen *et al.* (1999); Holmen (2001); Holmen (2002); Horst, C. (1999); Jakobsen, V. (2002); Nielsen, J. C. (1997; 1998).

from, for example, the non-recognition of their educational achievements from the country of emigration, to discrimination faced during finding apprenticeship vacancies in Danish workplaces, or frequent absence from school among some migrant children.<sup>16</sup>

It should be mentioned here that since 2002, under the new legislation on public schools<sup>17</sup>, the provision of mother-tongue education for minority children has been rendered optional for the municipalities, whereas it had been mandatory until this amendment of the law.<sup>18</sup>

There is hardly any research-based publication or unpublished report that addresses the problem of direct, or formal, discrimination against ethnic minorities in the educational system, or discrimination against Muslims specifically. A rare survey of its kind, in which the four large Muslim ethno-national groups were asked about their own experience of discrimination in various spheres of life, 8 per cent of Bosnians, 12 per cent of Lebanese, 17 per cent of Turks and 26 per cent of Somalis reported that they felt discriminated against in schools and other educational institutions (Møller & Tøgeby, 1999). The survey does not elaborate, however, on the ways in which such discrimination was perceived by the respondents.

Some studies do indicate an indirect discrimination in the educational system, due to institutionalised practices, that undermines ethnic diversity and emphasises Danish language and identity as the “norm” (see, for example Kofoed, 1993 and Horst & Lund, 1994). Jensen (2000) demonstrates that applicants from ethnic minorities often fail to pass the admission test for the Danish School of Journalism, since the aptitude tests are designed in a manner that disregards alternative qualifications, and knowledge of languages and culture other than Danish.

A number of recent reports provide useful information regarding indications of indirect discrimination at various levels and in various areas of the educational system, or the disadvantaged position of pupils with language deficiencies or a lack of familiarity with the mono-cultural educational system.<sup>19</sup> These factors can have an important impact on Muslim pupils, such as with respect to their school drop-out rate or future job opportunities. A general conclusion that can be drawn from these studies is that, in comparison with the native Danes, Muslim pupils are to be found in a disadvantageous position in the education system, and that this is for a number of reasons and not merely due to their cultural background, as is often asserted in political and media discourses.

With regard to assessing discrimination in the overall educational system, two recent reports by the EUMC’s Raxen programme, National Focal Point for Denmark (2004); (2005) are the most comprehensive sources to date. These reports, as well as the Ministry of Integration’s Think Tank reports (2004); (2006) and Uni-C Statistik (2005), along with an interview-based survey by Mikkelsen (2001), also provide an overview of ethnic minorities’ educational attainment and, to a certain extent, general trends in educational choice.

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<sup>16</sup> The most recent among these studies and surveys include: Mehlbye, J., *et al.* (2000); Mørkeberg, H. (2000); Nielsen, J. C. (1996); PLS Rambøll Management (1996); PLS Rambøll Management (2002); Rosholm, M., *et al.* (2002); Seeberg, P. (1995); Gundresen, Mette *et al.* (2003). A detailed review on each theme included in the titles above, however, is beyond the scope of this overview.

<sup>17</sup> Circular no. 618 of 22 July 2002, issued with reference to paragraph 5, Art. 7 of the Law on Public Schools.

<sup>18</sup> Until this new legislation, State-run schools were obliged to arrange teaching of the mother tongue alongside the Danish language, if a class could be established for up to 12 pupils belonging to the same language group. If there were fewer than 12, the pupils were enrolled in such a class in the nearest school.

<sup>19</sup> See: Bundgaard & Gulløv (2005); Christensen & Sloth (2005); Colding (2005); Dahl (2005); Dahl & Jacobsen (2005); Egelund & Rangvid (2005); Krejsler *et al.* (2005); the Ministry of Integration’s Think Tank (2005).

It should perhaps also be mentioned here that there is no particular dress code for the public schools. As such, the wearing of the *hijab* (headscarf) has been widely accepted in schools, despite the heated debate in the press. Some problems had been reported on the question of separate shower and swimming facilities for the Muslim pupils, especially the girls, at some schools, but these have been solved locally by the school and the municipal authorities, in dialogue with the Muslim parents. The Muslim teachers at all levels of educational institutions do not assert their separate Muslim identities, and it is only the teachers of the public schools that have organised themselves around the association of mother-tongue teachers.

#### 4. Employment

State agencies dealing with employment issues do not distinguish between the ethnicity or faith of the unemployed, as this is prohibited by law. This includes the national bureau of statistics (Danmarks Statistik), the local and regional labour exchanges, State-subsidised unemployment insurance associations (A-Kasse) and labour unions

However, a number of research projects in the jurisdiction of State institutions, such as the Ministry of Integration's think tank, as well as other independent research institutions, do calculate the employment rates for the Danes and the non-Danish members of the labour force. But here also it is national origin, not religious identity, which is used as a criterion.

In principle, all immigrants with a work permit, regardless of their national origin, are entitled to the right to work and to become members of their respective labour unions.

The majority of ethnic minorities are to be found at the lowest end of the labour market in terms of skills and qualifications. For those with qualifications, the research literature suggests that ethnic minorities of non-Western origin do not benefit fully, on an equal footing with the rest of the population, from their education and skills — whether obtained in Denmark or in any other country (see, for example, Rezaei & Goli, 2005).

Tranæs & Zimmerman (2004) demonstrate that, while education, training and language skills are determinants of the kind of jobs that the immigrants hold, ethnic identity also plays a role. That is, discrimination is also a crucial factor. However, the questions of how crucial, and in which job situations and for which ethnic groups, still remain an unexplored terrain across the plethora of publications that have emerged in the past decade.

A further factor in explaining labour market disadvantage, one that has gained increasing attention from labour market experts in recent years, is the network relations within the national and ethnic groups, and across the ethnic boundaries and in the wider society (for example, Mikkelsen, 2001; Dahl & Jacobsen, 2005; Jagd, 2004).

This shift in understanding the higher unemployment rate among Muslim or ethnic minorities through the network theory is captured in the National Focal Point report on education (National Focal Point for Denmark, 2004: 14):

Most studies in labour market relations have been inspired by human capital theory, operationalised and measured by education, training and job experience. An alternative way of looking at labour markets, matching processes and barriers is social capital theory, where social resources are resources accessed through an individual's social connections.

These social connections or social networks give different access to the labour market and to different positions within the job hierarchy. Thus, recent studies of entrance into the job market show that the native population, in general, use a mixture of weak and strong ties, whereas immigrants mainly had to rely on strong ties, that is, information on vacancy from close relatives, friends and family members. These jobs were so-called dead-end jobs at the bottom of the job ladder without any career possibilities.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> The observations here draw a great deal on Ejrnæs (2003).

However, before reviewing academic research, along with other official and semi-official documents, on the labour market situation for the Muslim minorities, this is an appropriate place to introduce some recent data on the situation.<sup>21</sup>

**Table 3. Employment rates for the economically active age group from selected predominantly Muslim countries (1 January 2005)**

Country of origin	Employment rate (%)	
	Male	Female
Turkey	62	42
Iraq	37	14
Lebanon	37	13
Bosnia-Herzegovina	54	44
Pakistan	63	32
Former Yugoslavia	60	46
Somalia	27	11
Iran	54	40
Afghanistan	24	13
<b>Immigrants and descendants — total</b>	55	41
<b>Native Danes — total</b>	81	75

Source: Ministry of Integration (2006)

The figures in Table 3 are from the Ministry of Integration’s think tank report. They were derived by operationalising the categories “native Danes” and “immigrants and their descendants from non-Western countries”. The figures provided for Vietnamese (a non-Muslim group) indicate that their rate of employment stood at 67 per cent for males and 53 per cent for the females, a figure that is significantly higher than any group from Muslim countries.

What is also noteworthy in the above table is the fact that the risk of being unemployed becomes greater if the Muslims have their background in the least developed countries and if their phenotypic appearance, dress, and so on, deviate from the typical European look. Thus, light-skinned Bosnian men and women, who are indistinguishable from the rest of the Europeans, apparently, face less discrimination in the employment market, although their level of education and skills do also play a part in this.

It should be noted that the above figures stem from a period when the Danish economy is booming and at present has reached almost full employment and is struggling with a bottleneck problem in some sectors of the economy.

Another way to look at the employment situation for Muslims would be to go back in time to see the difference between various national groups. Thus, in 1996, the percentage for the various categories, both male and female included, was recorded as Native Danes (7 per cent unemployed), Nordic Citizens (13 per cent), Former Yugoslavians (24 per cent), Turks (41 per cent), Africans (37 per cent), Americans (16 per cent), Pakistanis (40 per cent) and the rest,

<sup>21</sup> Although the data presented here concern migrants from predominantly Muslim countries, there is also a tiny minority of non-Muslims among these national groups, such as Christians from Pakistan and Lebanon, or Bahais from Iran. It is matter of common observance that the nationals from these predominantly Muslim countries with a non-Muslim background are seldom found unemployed. Because of their small percentage in the group, statistically their number remains insignificant, yet it does provide a clue to the claim that a Muslim name, in addition to national origin and ethnic identity, renders access to the ordinary labour market more difficult.

including Palestinians and Arabs (37 per cent) (Larsen, 1999:57). Four years later, in 2000, the overall picture for Muslims, as compared to other immigrants from non-Western countries and native Danes, remains the same. For example, the unemployment rate for Somali, Iraqi and Moroccan groups (male and female combined) has been recorded as above 65 per cent, but the figure was less than 40 per cent for immigrants from Thailand and Vietnam, and about 18 per cent for native Danes (Ministry of Integration, 2002:31).

Although the situation has improved slightly due to the upswing in the Danish economy over the last 2–3 years, the Muslim minorities still remain among the most marginalised citizens of Danish society, with regard to the employment market. Those that are in employment are either self-employed in branches such as grocery shops or newspaper kiosks, taxi-driving and ownership, or they work in the least attractive and low-paid job markets, such as in private cleaning firms or hotels, restaurants and catering (Ministry of Integration, Yearbook, 2005); (Rezai & Goli, 2004); (Mikkelsen, 2001).

A survey-based research by Mehlbye *et al.* (2000) has demonstrated that expectations for gainful employment among young people from the ethnic minorities are already so low in their school years that this might have some effect on their ambitions for further education. Most of them expect to be unemployed when they reach their mid-twenties, whilst the native Danes, on the other hand, envisage themselves as studying for higher education by that age. Husted *et al.* (2000) have calculated that compared to the native Danes, the economic pay-off of higher education for the ethnic minorities is much lower in the Danish labour market. Perhaps it is no surprise, then, that a vast majority of the students who do manage to reach universities are to be found studying natural sciences, for example medicine, IT, biology, engineering and managerial sciences, but very few turn to social sciences or the professional fields that confine job opportunities primarily to the Danish labour market, such as law, sociology and national economics.<sup>22</sup>

According to a research review on integration, carried out on behalf of the Ministry of Integration (2002), it is a common assertion that some ethnic groups such as Pakistanis or Turks are often found to be self-employed, because they have a “natural aptitude for entrepreneurship”. However, this claim is refuted by some other studies (Jensen *et al.*, 2001; Rezai, 2002) on the grounds that these groups of immigrants face difficulties in finding a job in the regular labour market (Ministry of Integration, 2002:38).

By the late 1990s, an experimental study, undertaken by Hjarnø & Bager (1997), had shown that the chances of an applicant being called for a job interview varied at a ratio of 1:32, depending upon whether the individual had a native Danish name or a typical “immigrant name”, respectively, in situations in which both the applicants had the same formal qualifications. The study was based on 439 telephone calls to different firms seeking young recruits. The callers introduced themselves both with typical Danish names and alternatively Turkish, Arab and

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<sup>22</sup> This observation is based on personal experience of the Muslim community by the author of this report as well as insight from the university as a teacher and supervisor for graduate papers in social science. No rigorous study on the choice of subjects for higher education among the minority groups has come to the surface so far. Only a few years ago there were some media reports stating that many well-educated members of the ethnic minorities leave for the UK, the USA and elsewhere for jobs after completing their education in Denmark. These included, reportedly, medical doctors, dentists and engineers. This topic of a “brain-drain” due to discrimination was taken up once again in the weekly newsletter of the Federation of Labour Organisations (LO), entitled “A4”, in spring 2006.

Pakistani names. Another survey — initiated and financed by the 13 associations of highly qualified professions (such as engineers, psychologists, dentists, college lecturers, etc.), and conducted by a reputed private company, Vilstrup Research, in 2000 — demonstrated that every fourth personnel chief in private firms and in the public sector expressed prejudiced views about professionals belonging to ethnic minorities, and thus would prefer a “real” Dane in a hiring situation.

On an open-ended question on “What do you think is the reason behind the relatively high rate of unemployment among highly educated members of ethnic minorities?” the personnel chiefs interviewed came up with the following responses:

**Table 4. Employers and ethnic minority recruitment (2000)**

Responses of employers to the question: “What do you think is the reason behind the relatively high rate of unemployment among highly educated members of ethnic minorities?”	Proportion of employers (%)	
	In private firms	In public organisations
Language deficiency	52	54
Prejudice among employers	25	29
Cultural difficulties (with minorities)	24	26
Uncertainty about their education	11	11
Regard of employed (Danish) staff	7	7
Regard of (Danish) customers	6	5
Lack of skills (ethnic minorities)	5	5
Lack of flexibility (ethnic minorities)	4	3

Source: (AC, 2000)

The regular labour market in Denmark is perhaps one of the most bureaucratized areas of laws, rules and directives on entitlement to unemployment benefits, compulsory job training and job-activation,<sup>23</sup> membership requirements for unemployment insurance schemes, the rights of employees to take leave with compensation, for instance, during pregnancy or after a death in the near family, rights of the employers to hire and fire with minimal interference from the State or the union, and so on. However, on the other hand, it is also known as one of the most flexible labour markets in Europe. At least one PhD thesis in law (Justesens, 2000) has lately explored all these complex rules and regulations, to ascertain if they discriminate, directly or indirectly, against ethnic and cultural minorities, and thus proposes some concrete legal instruments to eliminate ethnic and cultural discrimination in the labour market to safeguard the equality principles with reference to human rights. Among other proposals, Justesen emphasised the necessity of a statistical database for the labour market based on the ethnic division of labour, in order to ascertain job-discrimination. She also proposed an independent complaints office to deal with allegations of direct and indirect discrimination against ethnic minorities in the labour market.

The following is an overview of some selected titles from the recent literature on the employment market: Ministry of Employment (1999); Ministry of Employment (2000a; 2000b);

<sup>23</sup> The job-activation refers to a range of activities (such as hedging and grass-mowing in public parks, attending courses on how to write a job-application and a CV) that every client in the working-age, receiving social-welfare, is forced to undertake by the social authorities of a municipality. The idea is that you the individual should not sit idle at home until he or she find a proper job.



Hummelgaard, H. *et al.* (2002); Mogensen & Mattiessen (2000); Pedersen (2002); Thomsen & Moes (2002); Sultan (2000).

There is a lack of any systematic study that explores discrimination against ethnic minorities during on-the-job situations, such as career advancement opportunities, pay and task differentials, behaviour of colleagues and managerial staff, and so on. However, one exception is a report prepared for the Association of Social Workers. Based on a questionnaire survey among employees, the report claims that social workers from a minority ethnic background experience ethnic-specific differential treatment in their on-the-job environment (Ghosh, 2000).

The employment situation of ethnic minorities has only received some concentrated attention from the research communities and the government in the past 7–8 years, even though their unemployment rate was high throughout the 1980s and 1990s. The belief that labour market participation is the key to integration is a driver for this focus.

## **5. Housing**

### **5.1 Settlement patterns**

Tables 7, 8 and 9, in Part III of this report, detail the distribution of immigrants and their descendants with backgrounds from non-Western countries in the three large cities, where the largest part of the Muslim communities, or national groups, are residing today: Copenhagen, Aarhus and Odense.

The majority of the minorities from non-Western countries — of whom the largest share is composed of households with a Muslim background — live in the Copenhagen area. About 70 per cent live within the geography of Copenhagen County, of which one third live within the limits of Copenhagen Municipality.

The rest of the ethno-national groups of Muslims are scattered across the country in relatively small numbers in a range of small towns and cities, notably, Esbjerg, Vejle, Kolding, Frederikssund, Slagelse, Helsingøre and Randers.

After Copenhagen, Aarhus, Odense and Aalborg are, respectively, the next largest cities in Denmark. However, few people from non-Western countries, or from Muslim countries, like to stay in the relatively remote provincial city of Aalborg up in north Jutland. One reason could be the fact that the region has been hit by a long-term recession and thus offers limited job or business opportunities for the migrant population. Another factor might be its relatively conservative and provincial atmosphere, which offers little space for acceptance of cultural diversity. A survey from Aarhus University's Department of Psychology has also contended that negative attitudes towards minorities are much more pronounced in the remote provincial towns than in the ethnically mixed urban environments (Petersen *et al.*, 1999). However, there is no clue to be found in the existing literature on the housing and settlement preferences of migrants that could explain this phenomenon, except for this general view that new arrivals, as asylum-seekers, prefer to settle in areas that are already populated by migrant groups with the same cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

### **5.2 Housing conditions**

According to the research group of the Ministry of Integration (2002), half of the migrant population from non-Western countries of origin live in the social housing built between 1966 and 1980, and these residential estates account for the largest share of neighbourhoods that can be defined as socially deprived — overrepresented by low-income households, long-term unemployed, single parents, alcoholics and immigrants (Ministry of the Interior, 2001).

Seen at the entire country level, the largest part of the residential quarters that are officially defined as socially deprived areas are also to be found in the Copenhagen region; they are inhabited by 3.6 per cent of the population overall, but by 25 per cent of the minorities. By contrast, one third of the total population resides in the country municipalities, while the minority share is only 7 per cent. In other words, two thirds of the minority population are concentrated in municipalities that have only a 10 per cent of the total population (Ministry of Integration, 2002).

Hummelgaard & Husted (2001) and the Association of Housing Societies (BL, 2001) have been reported to have registered that the concentration of socially marginalised groups of people, as well as immigrants, has only increased during the past decades.

Another statistical analysis, Graversen *et al.* (1997), has shown a general tendency that the probability of a minority family moving out from a certain residential area decreases with an increase of newcomers from the same ethnic group in the area, and the probability of native Danish households moving out rises as the number of immigrants in the area increases.

The housing situation of ethnic and Muslim minorities is not a well-explored field in Denmark, despite the fact that already in the late 1980s, a number of mayors from the industrial suburban municipalities of the south-eastern fringes of Copenhagen began to raise concerns about the creation of ghettos and what they called the “Khomenisation” of their residential quarters (Schierup, 1993). Pressured by these local politicians and by media campaigns, the then government, headed by the Social Democrats, appointed a national housing committee in the first half of the 1990s, which in 1994 came up with a number of proposals to lift up the socially deprived neighbourhoods, through various regeneration programmes. Although the declared aim was to make various neighbourhoods attractive for the resourceful native Danish families who were moving out of these stigmatised areas, an implicit objective was also to spread ethnic minorities more evenly in different localities. However, these objectives have not been achieved, due to a number of factors (Koch-Nielsen & Christensen, 2002).

Central to the failure of this policy is the socio-economic position of the minority ethnic communities and the low pace of upward social mobility. In fact, there was rather a trend of downward mobility for the minorities from non-Western countries during the recession of the 1980s, and the accompanying widespread unemployment among the unskilled labour.

The areas that were being dubbed “ethnic ghettos” in the mainstream media and political debates mainly comprised low-rent social housing, in which the poor segments of Danish households, living on welfare benefits, as well as the majority of the migrant groups, could afford to live. Nevertheless, in the media and anti-immigrant political campaigns, the Muslim culture — as epitomised in the aforementioned expression, “Khomenisation” — was held responsible for the alleged “ghettoisation”. It was in the framework of such heated debates in the press that Boerresen (2000) set out to write her seminal PhD thesis in sociology, for which she explored various aspects of the residential or housing patterns and preferences of the two large Muslim groups, the Turks and the Pakistanis. Boerresen (2002) argues that the housing choice of the minorities was not always a choice based on their own preferences, or culture for that matter, but was influenced by a range of socio-economic factors and socio-structural circumstances. According to Boerresen, discrimination in housing and jobs was one of the most conspicuous factors. Another was a desire for ontological security in a hostile environment, to be achieved by living in close social networks.

In the light of the literature reviewed, it is safe to conclude that the patterns of settlement of Muslims in various cities, city districts and neighbourhoods are determined by a number of factors, and not merely by the Muslim or immigrant culture *per se*. As Boerresen (*op. cit.*) has also demonstrated through her empirical research, a number of factors all play their role in the choice of residence, including a disadvantaged position in the labour and housing market, general discrimination, especially in the private market of rental, fear of being isolated from those with whom one feels secure and protected, and lack of knowledge about the housing market and lack of resources to move to better dwellings. In fact, for most Muslim households, the choice of residence seems not to be a choice, but rather, given their socio-economic position in society, is very often a compulsion under a combination of factors as outlined above, and

thereby a heavy reliance upon the low-rent social housing, very often in the socially deprived neighbourhoods of the urban and ethnically mixed areas.

Regarding the discrimination in housing experienced by ethnic minorities, as in other areas, a private research institute, Catinént, frequently conducts telephone interviews among the various ethno-national groups, predominantly Muslims. The research report released for the first half of the year 2004 revealed that 62.6 per cent of respondents did not experience discrimination, while 27 per cent answered in the affirmative (Integration Status, 2004). Compared to similar surveys for the previous four years, these figures show a decreasing tendency in housing discrimination, although it is still experienced by about one quarter of respondents. However, the similar report released for the first half of 2005 claims that it has increased slightly. The complaints about discrimination are mostly concerned with bypassing an applicant on the waiting list of a private housing society, on the grounds of the applicant's ethno-national background. But discrimination is also reported to take place in day-to-day life in the neighbourhood. One such publication that addressed this particular question through field study is Hahnemann (1998).

Discrimination in the housing market has also been highlighted in ECRI's second Country Report on Denmark (2000). In the Danish version of the report it states the following:

About 54 per cent of the dwellings in the Danish housing market are privately owned [...] but only 13 per cent of the refugees and 18 per cent of immigrants in the age group 15–66, compared to 67 per cent of the rest of the population, own a private dwelling. Members of the ethnic minorities residing in Denmark in the meantime meet difficulties in renting a dwelling because of the market conditions, housing restrictions and indirect discrimination. The minority members can get access only to *public housing*<sup>24</sup> in less attractive residential quarters in the larger cities, which results in the fact that many first- and second-generation immigrants are clustered around in certain areas. (ECRI, 2000:19)

Møller & Togeby (1999) state that 9 per cent of Bosnians, 22 per cent of Lebanese and Palestinians, 22 per cent of Turks and 36 per cent of Somalis said that they have been discriminated against during contact with housing societies and cooperatives. The questionnaire-base survey does not elaborate further on the nature of discrimination.

Other relevant publications from the State organs<sup>25</sup> can be named; Andersen (2005); Regering (2004); Regering (2005). These reports deal with the issues of general developments in the public housing sector and concentration of ethnic minorities in the socially deprived areas, as well as the national government's strategies and goals aimed at reducing the number of unemployed migrants and Danes in the "ghettos".

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<sup>24</sup> The term *almennyttig bolig*, translated here as "public housing", refers to apartments owned by private companies, but the municipalities have a legal right to distribute a certain share of these at their own discretion, according to an assessment of needy citizens. Some larger municipalities also have their own apartments for needy citizens, which are called social housing, equivalent to council housing in the UK.

<sup>25</sup> For an overview of legal cases filed against housing discrimination in recent years, see National Focal Point Reports on Denmark at [www.eumc.int](http://www.eumc.int)

## 6. Health and Social Protection

Health is another area of research concerning the Muslim minorities that has been under-explored for many years. But it is now receiving more attention from both the medical professions and the social sciences. Following the recent establishment of an interdisciplinary and independent Institute of Public Health at Copenhagen University, more funds and resources are being allocated to the field and, unlike the situation in the past, the research now being undertaken seems to be much more coordinated and systematic at the newly established institute. From 2006, the institute has also maintained an electronic database exclusively on “Health and the Ethnic Minorities” to update medical research and publications on the health situation of ethnic minorities.

As far as social protection is concerned, under Danish welfare legislation, all citizens and resident non-citizens are entitled to equal protection in case of illness and emergency situations. In other words, the universal provision of social security and health insurance applies to all who are residing legally in the country. This, however, does not imply that members of ethnic minorities do not face problems.

These problems can range from lack of adequate interpretation facilities at hospitals for those who are not well-versed in Danish, to sporadic racial taunts by nursing staff, adverse attitudes on the part of patients of a majority background towards medical personnel with minority ethnic backgrounds, differential treatment at the social security offices in the municipalities, and so on. However, no systematic research has been conducted to verify such allegations brought forward by the minority ethnic clients, patients or employees in the social and health sectors.<sup>26</sup>

A few social science studies concerning health from the 1980s were mainly of an anthropological nature, focusing on the traditional Muslim cultures and covering topics such as the traditional Muslim culture’s encounter with modern Danish hospitals, superstitious belief systems about illness and health among Muslims, the use of amulets among immigrants against the “evil eye”, the concepts of “hot” and “cold” food and beverages, believed to influence the body, and so on (see, for example, Elverdam (1991) and its bibliographical references).

Today, the focus has turned more to the real-life health problems prevalent among Muslim immigrants and their descendants, covering topics such as complications during birth and maternity, and frequently diagnosed diseases among the immigrant communities, such as diabetes, cardiovascular problems, risks due to diet and lifestyle, and so on. A good deal of medical research is already in progress at various medical faculties and research institutes across the country.

For an overview of this medical research and other related social scientific research, Schläger *et al.* (2005) is probably the most comprehensive and reliable source for an overview. It provides a schematic overview over all the scientific works, both published and unpublished, on ethnic minorities with backgrounds in non-Western, mostly Muslim, countries. The Danish National Institute for Public Health is currently developing a separate electronic database on the relevant literature on ethnic minorities, which at the moment is only available in Danish; see Hansen (2006).

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<sup>26</sup> Such complaints have often been brought fourth in the meetings and seminars arranged by various migrant organisations, in the media articles by the minority spokespersons - as well as complaints registered by the Documentation and Advisory Centre on Racial Discrimination in the 1990s.

The study by Jeppesen & Nielsen (1998) indicated the positive effects of having female health visitors for mothers from minority communities. These female health visitors, according to the study, are very often a window onto the surrounding society and its institutions for many migrant families; they are a resource for information about matters such as how to secure a place in a nursery or apply for a better dwelling after the extension of the family. Assessing the municipal health visitor programme, Nielsen (2002) has demonstrated furthermore that the health visitor arrangement has also been beneficial for ensuring the timely vaccinations of the minority babies and children, and has helped to reduce their levels of hospitalisation, which otherwise had been relatively higher than for the population overall.

Through an experimental exercise in the Norrebro district of Copenhagen, which has a high concentration of Muslim families (see section III.1), Flachs & Meldgård (1999) have illustrated that the contact between minority families and the health system can be positively enhanced with by sending a postcard of invitation to the families for their children's periodic checks-up and timely vaccination. Communication between the system and the minority patients — or rather the lack of it, due to language difficulties — is also a problem area that Nielsen (2002) has examined. She recommends provision of qualified interpreters by the municipal social services and hospitals, as this can reduce the levels of unnecessary hospitalisation of the minority patients.

Jeppesen (1994) found that the dental health of children from minority communities suffers setbacks due to food habits, over-consumption of sweets and irregular visits to the dentist. Tümer (1992) indicated that minorities were in need of orientation about genetics, as a relatively higher number of children with disabilities were being born among this group.

The frequency of psychological problems is reported to be high among the members of ethnic minorities. This is partly explained by the fact that a large section of the population had fled wars and torture. However, other studies indicate how language barriers and communication problems make it difficult to diagnose and treat the patients (Nielsen, 2002); (Skytte, 2002a); (Barfod & Leimand, 1996); (Barfod, 1997); (Barfod & Persson, 2000). Staunæs (1998) has explored the treatment methods and outcomes of drug-abusers among minority ethnic communities.

Skytte (2002a) explored the various aspects of traumas and tragedies faced by children and their parents from foreign (including Muslim) cultures, when the municipal social authorities take children away from troubled families and place them in the custody of a Danish family. She also explores the situation of the most vulnerable sections of the minority ethnic communities, such as the elderly in need of social protection and care (Skytte, 2002b).

In a quantitative survey among various ethno-national groups of immigrants, it was claimed that about 12–16 per cent of respondents from Bosnia, Turkey, Lebanon and Palestine had experienced hostile and adverse attitudes in the health systems (Møller & Togeby, 1999). The same survey also reveals that 14 per cent of Bosnians, 19 per cent of Turks, 24 per cent of Lebanese and Palestinians and 38 per cent of Somalis have had an experience of “racial” discrimination during encounters with the social services of their municipalities, the primary contact points for social protection. And thus, among all the institutional domains undertaken in the analysis, this was the highest percentage recorded for discrimination against the Muslim groups in the standard questionnaire-based enquiry by Møller & Togeby (1999).

## 7. Policing and Security

In the survey by Møller & Tøgeby (1999) of minorities' own experience of discrimination, the police came second to trade unions as the institutions from which Muslims reported the lowest levels of discrimination. However, the picture changes when the border-control police are taken into consideration, with over one third of the Turkish immigrants in the survey sample reportedly experiencing discrimination.

Literature on police behaviour and the justice system is sparse and sporadic. As far as the police are concerned, there are only two research projects and one police training project in Denmark that can be drawn on to gain an overview over literature on policing concerning minorities.

There is no rigorous research in Denmark to provide an indication of the treatment of Muslims or ethnic minorities by the justice system. Some case studies about the performance of the courts and police prosecution, in cases in which the minorities themselves have been the victims of crime and racial discrimination, may help to gain an insight. For this purpose, the National Focal Point reports by DACoRD (available at [www.eumc.int](http://www.eumc.int)) are probably the best sources.

Between 1997–1999, an EU-funded project, “NGOs and the Police against Prejudice” (NAPAP) carried out research in nine EU Member States including Denmark. After the basic pilot research, based on face-to-face interviews with police representatives and the minority community representatives to ascertain the situation, a training module, named *Policing in a Multicultural Society*, was developed and delivered to around 200 police officers from the metropolitan police of Copenhagen. Most of the material produced during the training remains unpublished and thus available only manually at the archives of DACoRD, Copenhagen, the NGO that hosted and managed the Danish part of the NAPAP project.<sup>27</sup> The project was monitored by both a national evaluator and a transnational evaluator at the European level. Two evaluation documents are also available in the manual archives.<sup>28</sup> There have also been some papers that discuss the literature produced as a reflection over the experiences from the police training project mentioned (see: Tinor-Centi & Hussain (1999); Hussain (1998) Hussain & Monnier (2004a) and Hussain & Monnier (2004b)).

Some of the findings in the literature referred to suggest that a great many prejudiced views persist among working police officers. However, the views held by police officers about Muslims are not very different from those of the general Danish population or institutions. Notes taken during the training sessions suggested that prejudice against Muslim minorities by police officers was based on individual experiences of a few criminals, along with the media-mediated stereotypes about Muslims.

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<sup>27</sup> The documents available include the following: Mustafa Hussain and Jean-Marc Monnier (project coordinators), *The Progress Report on Training Courses in Denmark*, paper presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> trans-national workshop, Bologna, 2-6 June 1999; Eric Tinor-Centi, Mustafa Hussain and Jean-Marc Monnier, *State of the Art Report: Policing in a Multicultural Society*, submitted to NAPAP October, 1999; Documentation and Advisory Centre on Racial Discrimination, “Here in Denmark we eat with a knife and fork”, proceedings from the closing seminar on NAPAP Police Training Project for the Copenhagen Police, 21 March, 2000, Copenhagen.

<sup>28</sup> Dr Robin Oakley, Independent Consultant, *Trans-national Evaluator's Report on the Second Year of the NAPAP Project*, London, Autumn, 1999; and Dr John Wrench (national evaluator) and Lulu Hjarnø (Assistant), *Evaluation Report, Copenhagen Police Training Project*, submitted to NAPAP, Danish Centre for Migration and Ethnic Studies, South Jutland University, Esbjerg, April 2000.

The research also suggests that the tensions between the police and members of ethnic minorities, especially young people, are also a result of police profiling, leading to unwarranted stop-and-search practices, which occasionally resulted in some violent confrontations. Two academic research projects, one based on field observations by an anthropologist, Holmberg (1999), and an enquiry based on qualitative interviews with young people from ethnic minorities by Ansel-Henry & Jespersen (2003), testify to the insights gained from the NAPAPS's police training project for the Copenhagen Police. They show that an excessive focus through stereotype profiling of young people from ethnic minorities is itself a contributing source for the deviant behaviour among them. A Master's thesis presented at Roskilde University (Lassen & Tranekjær, 2003) critically assessed the very methodology implicit in the police training courses from a social-psychological perspective on stability and change in attitudes.

Over the past decade, there has been an overexposure of minority youth criminality in the mass media and in the dominant political discourse (Hussain *et al.*, 1997); Hjarnø (2000); Bay (1999); Rohleder (1997) and Crime Preventive Council (1998).

Kysgaard (1996; 2001) makes a critical assessment of the crime rate and seemingly unintended manipulation of the crime statistics regarding ethnic minorities (see also Hussain & Monnier, 2004a; 2004b).

The office of the Director of the Copenhagen Police frequently circulates internal instructions to all the police districts under its management and jurisdiction on how to behave and operate, in the true spirit of professional standards, among the ethnic minority communities, under the title "Police Director's Orientation for the Copenhagen Police in relation to the Ethnic Minorities". In practice, however, these guidelines are not adhered to or followed by police officers.<sup>29</sup>

Prejudice against the police among minorities, particularly among young people, is perhaps one of the reasons why, despite the efforts made by the police, few individuals from ethnic minorities have sought a career in the profession. As a consequence is no literature on inter-ethnic relations within the police departments.

There is no specific literature on Muslims and the criminal justice system. However, archives at the Documentation and Advisory Centre on Racial Discrimination (DACoRD) provide a record on a range of individual court cases, as well as police prosecution processes, in the light of which it is concluded that the complaints of racial and ethnic discrimination filed by members of ethnic minority groups are not always taken seriously by the police authorities.<sup>30</sup> However, some outstanding examples on this subject are routinely reported by the DACoRD in the annual National Focal Point reports to the EUMC. These reports are also an informative source for ascertaining how the criminal justice system, as such, can indirectly have discriminatory consequences for Muslims and other members of ethnic minorities.

In June 2002, the Danish parliament passed a package of laws, called L35, to combat the growing threat of international terrorism. The law gives police authorities greater powers of surveillance, which can be used against Muslim groups or individuals. The law broadened the powers for, for example, telephone tapping and monitoring of emails, without a prior permission from a magistrate, and increased resources for the police to use secret informants in the Muslim

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<sup>29</sup> It came to light, during the police training project for the Copenhagen Police, that not many officers were aware of the otherwise very sober and professional content of these so-called PD-Orientations.

<sup>30</sup> Personal communication with the Director of the Centre, Mr. Niels-Erik Hansen, 13 July 2006.



communities. The law also requires telecommunication companies and the providers of internet-services to keep record of all the communication flows on mobile telephones and internet traffic. It has yet to be seen how the newly enacted anti-terror legislation will impact on the members of Muslim communities in Denmark.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> There are at least three separate cases under the new legislation on terrorism in the police prosecution and investigation process at the moment in Denmark.

## 8. Participation and Citizenship

In 1989, the Danish Parliament passed a bill that gave all immigrants the right to vote for the local elections for the city and regional councils of the municipalities and the counties, and to compete for these elections. The minimum requirement was, as it still is, a three-year legal stay in the country. However, for the election of the national Parliament, voters have to be Danish citizens. At the moment, there are three parliamentary members with a Muslim background sitting in the single-chamber national legislative body, the *Folketinget*, the one representing the Socialists, the other the Radicals and the third, Social Democrats.

In the debates on citizenship rights in social sciences, since the seminal work of the British scholar T. H. Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class*, scholars have debated the various dimensions of these rights, from formal legal rights to cultural citizenship, that is, the recognition of cultural parity in the State institutions, or in other words, citizenship in a multicultural society, that is, the recognition by the State institutions that the society is *ipso facto* multi-ethnic and multicultural. Seen from the formal and legal perspectives, Muslim immigrants in Denmark enjoy all those universal rights on the dimensions of civic or social, political and economic citizenship that are considered vital for a vibrant democracy in a modern welfare state. There is no restriction on practising any faith or religion. Yet it is cultural citizenship that has been one of the core issues on the agenda, ever since the labour migrants of the 1960s began to organise themselves on political, national or cultural platforms in the mid-1970s (Hussain, 2002a; Mikkelsen, 2002; 2003). During these early stages, Danish NGOs, professional associations and intellectuals extended a helping hand to the labour migrants in the latter's initial struggles to organise themselves, and thus to exert their democratic right and voice in the local and national governments' decision-making processes. A thorough analysis, from a broader historical and transnational perspective, of these early ethno-national and cultural associations, and the emergence of mature transnational federations of immigrant organisations and movements, is undertaken by Mikkelsen (2006).

The participation of ethnic minorities in local and general elections is analysed by a number of social scientists, but most consistently, and from a broader perspective of participation in the democratic processes, by Togeby (2002; 2004). Hammer & Bruun (2000), Kehlet (2000), Hussain (2002a) and Mikkelsen (2002) have questioned whether the ethnic minorities in the current state of political affairs have any real influence on their own situation, partly because the current arrangements raise the question of a truly democratic representation, and it is claimed that these arrangements lead to co-opting by the State of those members from the minorities who cooperate with State policies at the expense of the genuine interests of the minority communities, and partly on the grounds that it is the ideologically biased media, not the minorities, that decide who is the expert on minority issues and thus exert power over wider political consensus and decision-making on such issues. Hedetoft (2002) challenges this claim of "no influence", and insists that the representations of minorities do have their voices heard and are heeded in the democratic decision-making process.

A poorly explored area is also the performance of the institutions or forums at the national and at the local level, erected by the State, to include minority representations in the democratic decision-making processes, including integration councils at the municipality level and the Council of Ethnic Minorities at the national level. These are consultative bodies to the government, but lack both the human and the material resources to play their role efficiently. Hussain (2002a) and Græm (2003) take a critical stance towards such institutions' real impact, if

any, on policy-making on the grounds that unlike other consultative bodies to the government they lack both the expertise and a truly democratic representation of various minority groups and communities. But see also Togeby (2003) for alternative views and Mikkelsen (2006) for a general assessment of their structure and performance. The latter are of the view that despite their marginal influence on political decision-making, they nonetheless provide an opportunity for socialisation in democracy and political participation.

Looking at the rate of participation in the formalised arenas of the civic sphere among ethno-national groups with a Muslim majority, Schmidt & Jakobsen (2000) have calculated the percentage of the population of ethno-national groups who are members of one or another ethnic or national association or society. This reveals that 23 per cent of Turks, 13 per cent of Pakistanis and 24 per cent of Former-Yugoslavians were associated with civic activities, and men were relatively more active than women.

## PART II: Policy Context

### 1. Perception of Muslims

It is a dismal fact that Denmark today is one of the most closed societies of the world. According to opinion polls, the Danes are extremely intolerant towards other religious communities, and the legislative and the administrative practice in a number of areas are on the brink of confrontation with human rights, laid down in the international conventions. (Carsten Fenger-Grøn, Kamal Qureshi and Tøger Seidenfaden 2003)<sup>32</sup>

This section addresses the question of how Muslims are viewed both by the wider society, in political discourse and in the media, and also by integration policy.<sup>33</sup>

There are two dominant paradigms in Danish research on the perception of Muslims in the wider society. The first is dominated mainly by a school of political scientists, who rely mainly on statistical opinion-polling data, and analyses of these, through an array of pre-assumed causal variables, such as age, gender, education and party affiliation. According to this research, and seen through a historical trajectory, public perception and opinion about the visible minorities have, despite periodic fluctuations, remained constant and ambivalent. One of the most prominent proponents of this school of methodical conservatism is Professor Lise Tøgeby and her colleagues around two important research programmes in Denmark, the Power Enquiry (*Magtudredningen*) and the Academy of Migration Studies in Denmark (AMID)

One of the most debated publications about the perception of the ethnic minorities has been a survey by Gaasholdt & Tøgeby (1995). In the book, based on a through countrywide survey of the attitude of Danes towards ethnic minorities, the authors demonstrated that 37 per cent of Danes would not like a Muslim for a neighbour and 64 per cent would not want a close family member to marry a Muslim. Interestingly when the adjective “Muslim” was replaced by the generalised expression “a person from another race” in the battery of questions, the percentage of social distance expressed by the respondents declined. Now, only 18 per cent of Danes were reluctant to have neighbours “from another race” and 36 per cent would not like see a “person from another race” married into their nearest family (Gaasholdt & Tøgeby, 1995, p 37). See also, for instance, Hussain (2000b:95).

In the final report to the Danish Parliament on the Power Enquiry, Tøgeby reasserts her perspective and her conclusion that, in the long run, there has been no significant change in the attitudes towards the immigrants (Tøgeby *et al.* 2003). The Ministry of Integration (2002) in its Chapter 6 (contributed by the AMID), leaves a similar impression. Thus, Andersen and Tobiasen (2002), the Ministry of Integration (2000) conclude, for instance, that the intolerance towards Muslims is rather a reflection of this fact that Danes themselves are not religious and are overwhelmingly secularised, and therefore they harbour a general scepticism towards any religious practice in a secular society. This raises two interrelated questions: first, how the

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<sup>32</sup> The quote is taken from the introductory chapter to a recent anthology on the minority situation in Denmark, co-edited by the editor of Aarhus University Publishers, the parliamentary member from the Socialist People’s Party, and the editor-in-chief of a major liberal daily, *Politiken*, respectively.

<sup>33</sup> These two apparently different themes are being treated together, on the assumption that perception of Muslims cannot be separated from the dialectical relationship between the perception of and attitudes towards Muslims on the one hand and the integration policy being devised by the government on the other. The policy thus also reflects the popular perception of the Muslim immigrants. This section is substantiated further by the international criticism of and concern about the Danish policy and the public attitudes towards Muslims and ethnic minorities.

picture of the Muslim religious practice is diffused in the society and what the main source of that picture is, and second, what the Muslim practice is in that picture, which is produced by the dominant social and cultural institutions of Danish society, and whether that picture has some affinity with the real life and practice of the Muslims in Denmark, or whether it is an ideological construction of Muslim reality.

The epistemological controversy as to why these opinion-poll-based surveys alone are inadequate to measure and explain the shift in attitudes towards and perception of the ethnic “others” in Denmark is discussed briefly in Hussain (2004a).

The second school, whose epistemological approach to ascertaining ethnic and social reality adheres to the ideals of diversity in methods of investigation, holds mainly the opposite view of Danish popular perception of Muslims. According to this paradigm of interdisciplinary research methods, things have deteriorated since the late 1980s. Both the media discourse and the anti-immigrant rhetoric in the Parliament have become harsher towards Muslims. Studies that point to this change of direction in the perception, attitudes and institutional behaviour (such as legislation about migration and integration, representation and portrayal in the mainstream media, political rhetoric about Islam and Muslims, or their depiction in the popular culture, such as television fiction, film and drama) are undertaken mainly within a broader spectrum of social and human science disciplines, including anthropology, sociology, history, communication sciences, cultural studies and critical discourse analysis.

In comparison with other EU countries, much of the research on perception and attitudes in Denmark, seen and measured through discourse and communication about Muslims in the public sphere, remains at a rudimentary stage. Nonetheless, it can safely be concluded from existing studies, that the ways in which Muslims are talked about in the public sphere, the daily media and the press as an institution, and other channels of mass communication, such as the Internet, reduces the complexity of the cultural variations among Muslims and reproduces the existing stereotypes of them.

The non-scientific and anecdotal books that help in cementing such Muslim stereotypes are highlighted by the mass media, while genuine scientific literature is ridiculed and downplayed. Populist literature on Islam and the Muslim culture, on the other hand, especially if it has been authored by writers belonging to the ethnic minorities, such as Khadar (1996) or Rashid (2001), tend to be overexposed in the mass-mediated communication on Islam and the Muslim culture(s).<sup>34</sup>

There is ample evidence that ethnic relations have become much more strained today. Intolerance and right-wing extremism has increased, and public opinion has become qualitatively more critical towards Muslims, who, in the popular perception, are conceived as a culturally homogenous group of “foreigners” and a binary opposition of all that is Danish. These studies, involving a range of methodologies across the disciplinary boundaries — such as discourse analyses, narrative analyses, quantitative and qualitative content analyses, case studies and rhetoric — illustrate the fact that, in the reproduction of exclusionary discourse and practice,

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<sup>34</sup> See, for example, Hervik (2002), chapter 9, “Ethnic diffusion of religious insight: Rushy Rashid and Nasar Khadar”, about the much-publicised authors of the two populist books on Islam and the Muslim culture(s). And on how the national television and the commercial press make use of those co-opted, and the overexposed media-created, ethnic experts on Islam and the Muslims from within the Muslim communities in legitimating the former’s own anti-Muslim agenda, see also, for instance, Hussain (2003a).

and in the process of their institutionalisation, the dominant media play an important role (Hussain *et al*, 1997); (Hussain, 2000b; 2002b; 2003b); (Hervik *et al*, 1999); (Slot, 2001); (Hervik, 2003); (Madsen, 2000); (Andreassen, 2005).

Subtle forms of ethnic differentiation and discrimination have become more and more institutionalised, and normalised, in mass communication, in the debates in the public sphere, and also in the policy area under the broader rubric of integration through strategically devised restrictive legislation. This concerns, for example, restrictions on family reunification and naturalisation, a reduction in social security benefits for refugees, the abolition of the mandatory mother-tongue education for minority children, and so on.

To legitimise these restrictive policy instruments, the representatives of the government of Mr Fogh Rasmussen, a coalition of the Liberals and the Conservatives, adopted, from the very beginning of the general elections in 2001, an anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim rhetoric. However, the exclusionary discourse on Muslims predates the 9/11 tragedy and the ensuing international events that affected all Muslims across Europe and in the world at large.

Muslim minorities in Denmark have been constantly under pressure, from both the media and politicians from a wide spectrum of political ideologies, since late 1989, as noted by several observers.<sup>35</sup> The body of laws concerning citizenship and the human rights of the minority communities was already being tightened in the 1990s under the Social Democrat-led government of Paul Rasmussen (1994–2001). The following excerpts from his New Year’s television address to the nation, at the turn of the Millennium 2000, exemplifies the discourse on (visible) minorities and the rhetoric on a value-divide between “us” and “the others”, which continues to the present day in political speeches within and outside the Parliament: “It is really a problem if the Danes begin to feel strangers in their own neighbourhood”. He also added that “everyone should adapt Danish values”.<sup>36</sup>

The former Minister of Integration from his cabinet, Karen Jespersen, had earlier publicly expressed her fears about a multicultural society in the following manner: “I could never under any circumstances live with (the idea of) a multicultural society in which the cultures are positioned equally”, and explains further which cultures she is referring to by adding that “in my opinion it is wrong to juxtapose Muslim values with Danish values”.<sup>37</sup>

In Spring 2001, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI, 2000) released its second periodic report on Denmark. The report presented its critical assessment of various domains, for example, the anti-discrimination laws and regulations, political discourse and media practice, the labour market, housing and education. The report contained a number of well-documented critical remarks about the Danish situation and recommended a range of measures to eliminate day-to-day, as well as institutionalised, discrimination against ethnic minorities. The report came up with its particular concern with the issues related to a general

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<sup>35</sup> It is on record that as far as the change in the media’s attitudes towards the Muslim immigrants and refugees is concerned, some of the early criticism against this new form of journalism came from the media profession’s own quarter, i.e. journalists, editors and managers of media organisations. Today, one of the few professional journalists who still keeps on reminding his colleagues about professional ethics is Eric Values, former Chief of Documentaries in the Danish Broadcasting Corporation’s DR- Radio. For the reference to his latest criticism of the media practice around ethnic minorities and the Muslims, see Valuer (2004).

<sup>36</sup> DR-TV, 0101.2000.

<sup>37</sup> The daily newspaper *Berlingske Tidende*, 6 September 2000.

climate of public opinion, as well as discrimination in access to public services, the labour market, housing and public places. Thus, in its executive summary, the ECRI report described the general situation of ethnic relations and public policy in the following words:

Problems of xenophobia and discrimination persist, however, and concern particularly non-EU citizens — notably immigrants, asylum-seekers and refugees — but also Danish nationals of foreign backgrounds. People perceived to be Muslims, and especially Somalis, appear to be particularly vulnerable to these phenomena. Most of the existing legal provisions aimed at combating racism and discrimination do not appear to provide effective protection against these phenomena. Of deep concern is the prevailing climate of opinion concerning individuals of foreign backgrounds and the impact and use of xenophobic propaganda in politics. Discrimination, particularly in the labour market, but also in other areas, such as the housing market and in access to public places, is also of particular concern.

It is interesting to note that both the dominant political establishment, including the Social Democrats, as well as the largest section of the press, downplayed the authenticity and validity of criticism in the report. The government ignored its recommendation to improve the situation, by declaring its results to be too old to pay any heed to. Ironically, though, both the current real policy and media practice have become ever more xenophobic, ruthlessly Islamophobic and neo-racist (see, for example, Hervik & Jørgensen, 2002; Fenger-Grøn et al 2003; Hervik, 2003; ECRI, 2006; Larsen, 2006a; Larsen, 2006b).

Domestic observers and social science researchers have noted lately that Denmark, with its Muslim population of barely 170,000, has become one of the most staunchly anti-Muslim nations in the community of “civilised societies”. See, for instance, Andersen *et al.* (2006). A veteran writer and intellectual, Klaus Rifberg, had already hinted in 2000, in his essay appearing in a journal published by the Nordic Council of Ministers, that “the shrieking of Nazi slogans has become normal practice in the Danish political megaphones”.

Likewise, after some of the most obnoxious xenophobic propaganda during the general elections in November 2001, Denmark attracted a great deal of criticism from the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Amnesty International, the European Networks against Racism (ENAR) and the spokespersons of Social Democrats in Sweden, as well as the Liberals in both Norway and Sweden. Some international and national scientific journals have also carried substantial critical papers and essays on the increasing intolerance and neo-racism of this country. These include *Current Sociology*, *Ethnicities*, the Norwegian *Sosiologi i Dag*, *Dansk Sociologi*, *Lov og Ret*, and *Sociale Kritik* (Hussain, 2003a; Larsen, 2006b).

Thus, a critical article based on the findings of a PhD dissertation by a Danish scholar in cultural geography claimed that there was widespread cultural racism in the country directed particularly towards the Muslim groups long before the 9/11 tragedy (Wren, 2001). In the aftermath of 9/11, the aforementioned European Monitoring Centre (EUMC) in Vienna released a provisional report on the plight of Muslim minorities in Europe. Once again, Denmark was at the top of the list amongst countries where a sudden increase in racial attacks on, and abuse of, the coloured minorities, and incidences of arson to their property were outstanding.<sup>38</sup> The newly elected

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<sup>38</sup> For details and comparison among the 15 EU- countries, see: EUMC, *Islamophobia in the EU after September 11*, EUMC, May 2002, available at [http://eumc.europa.eu/eumc/index.php?fuseaction=content.dsp\\_cat\\_content&catid=3fb38ad3e22bb&contentid=3fb4f8d82d72a](http://eumc.europa.eu/eumc/index.php?fuseaction=content.dsp_cat_content&catid=3fb38ad3e22bb&contentid=3fb4f8d82d72a) (accessed 7 May 2007).

government never even bothered to comment on the report. Likewise, it was mitigated or simply ignored by several media.

By Spring 2002, the United Nations Standing Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), went through the 15<sup>th</sup> Country Report on Denmark, to ascertain progress in the introduction of the International Convention on Racial Discrimination into Danish legislation. The CERD, in its conclusion, expressed great concern over increasingly racialised expression in Denmark and referred to the Durban Declaration from the World Conference on Racism in South Africa in 2001. It expressed concerns that,

policies and practices such as the housing dispersal policy, the quota system for the admission of minority children to certain crèches and nurseries, and the reported prohibition of the use of the mother tongue in some of these establishments may, although aimed at facilitating integration, lead to indirect discrimination against minorities and refugees.

This criticism of Danish policy was also ignored by the Danish mass media.

Finally, a brief quote from the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, from its report (A/57/38: Part II) of autumn 2002,

The Committee regrets the introduction in new legislation of an increase in the age limit for spousal reunification from 18 to 24 years of age in order to combat forced marriage. The Committee urges the State Party to consider revoking the increase in the age limit for family reunification with spouses and to explore other ways of combating forced marriages.

These laws and policies, introduced by the present coalition government of the Liberals and the Conservatives with backing from the populist Danish People's Party, since the 2001 elections, have left a negative impact on rights to citizenship and human rights of the minorities. On these legislative restrictions, see for example, Hansen (2003), Justesen (2004), Ejrnæs (2001) and the annual Focal Point Reports to the EUMC (*op. cit.*) and the latest report on Denmark by CERD (2006).

Quite recently, a doctoral thesis defended at the Dept. of Communications, University of California, San Diego, provides a somewhat detailed picture of the communicative mechanisms behind the shift of Danish discourse to the far right in Denmark. The defendant illustrates that the playing of the "Muslim card" in political discourse on immigration issues has been the causal factor behind this dramatic shift (Yilmaz, 2006).

Another comprehensive source, however, on the recent development in perception of Muslims and immigrants from non-Western countries, seen through the political discourse and rhetoric of the present government, is provided by Stenum (2005). The main thrust of the current integration policy, as Stenum's analysis reveals, is to reduce the number of new entrants from non-Western countries by tightening the legislation in the laws covering political asylum and family reunification, and to force various measures of economic sanctions upon the unemployed members of ethnic minorities, for instance, the introduction of a ceiling on social security benefits, or the withholding of benefits in cases of absence from job activation programmes or the language courses that are enforced upon any recipient of social welfare benefits.

Some main characteristics of the new policy measures introduced since 2002 are outlined below:



The laws and rules on family reunification have been tightened to such an extent that today it is virtually impossible for the members of ethnic minorities from non-Western countries to be united with their spouses in Denmark, unless a range of conditions are fulfilled by the applicants. For example, both the applicant and the spouse must be at least 24 years of age to become eligible for the visa application for the spouse. The applicants should submit a bank-guarantee of ca. 50,000 Dkr (equivalent to €6,710) before the application can be accepted. They should also provide documentation of their monthly earnings, showing that they may be considered sufficient for the living expenditure for the couple, along with documentation of a dwelling that is considered appropriate by the authorities. The applicants must also prove before the authorities that the marriage had taken place with the consent of the couple, without compulsion from the family or the parents, as a safeguard against forced marriages. To be united in Denmark, the couple should provide evidence to the authorities that their overall affiliation to Danish society is greater than it is to the country of emigration of the spouse. That is to say that more members of the couple's family already live in Denmark and the spouse for whom the visa is applied speaks and understands Danish.

In the case of naturalised citizens of the Danish State, they can be exempted from certain restrictions on bringing a spouse from abroad, for instance, the affiliation criteria, but only 28 years after the date of naturalisation. The restrictions apply also for the children of the naturalised citizens, who might even have been born, raised and schooled in Denmark. They must wait until they are 24 years of age before they are eligible to apply for a visa for their spouse.

The present government has also introduced tougher restrictions on acquisition of citizenship through naturalisation since 2002. The gist of the present government's integration policy is to restrict further immigration from non-Western countries and in the meantime to reduce unemployment among the ethnic minorities through compulsory job activation programmes. As far as the former is concerned, the government has achieved much success, but the overall anti-Muslim rhetoric and consensus in the country, and the ubiquitous terror-threat and Islamophobia, seem to present significant hurdles in the way of achieving the latter objective.

As far as meeting the needs of Muslims or adopting measures against the discrimination is concerned, the government has shown reluctance in acknowledging that discrimination is a social and institutional phenomenon. This is quite obvious from the way in which both the domestic and the international criticism, such as that from ECRI, CERD and UNHCR, has been resisted and even ridiculed by the governmental representatives. For instance, commenting on the latest report from ECRI (2006) the Prime Minister called it botched up job not be paid any attention to.<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, the Police Intelligence Bureau, *Politiets Efterretningstjeneste* (PET), in its latest annual report (PET, 2006) has acknowledged that racially motivated violence has been on the rise, but it does not appear adequately in the crime statistics because the victims of the racially motivated violence do not believe that it helps to report to the local police stations. The PET has thus decided to start a campaign among the minority ethnic communities to convince them to report such violence and discrimination to the police. On the positive side, one must add here that the Muslims for the first time, in the month of September 2006, have been able to establish their own cemetery after many years of struggle.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> The Prime Minister's remarks were reported in several news-media in May 2006.

<sup>40</sup> Though it is noteworthy, that it has been vandalised twice since its inception by anti-Muslim elements.

The only official organ (established under the pressure from the EU) to hear complaints against ethnic discrimination is the Complaint Committee at the Institute of Human Rights, but it has a very limited judicial mandate.<sup>41</sup> The Government is in the process of planning to abolish this committee to replace it with a new Board of Complaints under the Ministry of Social Affairs, which will be mandated to hear complaints against not only the ethnic discrimination, but would also address discrimination against women, homosexuals, people with disabilities and the elderly.

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<sup>41</sup> For details, see [www.humanrights.dk](http://www.humanrights.dk).

## 2. Administrative structures

The Danish State administration and democracy has traditionally been built on the principles of decentralised local governance, with maximum autonomy for the municipal and regional bodies. The country is divided into 14 counties and 275 municipalities.<sup>42</sup>

Prior to 1999, the laws under which the various aspects of immigration and the migrant situation in the country were regulated fell under the jurisdiction of different ministries, such as the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Justice. In 1999, under the new structure of the central government, the Ministry of the Interior was handed the task of overall integration of ethnic minorities and the first ever package of laws on integration (*Integrationloven af 1999*) was passed in the Parliament. This body of laws has since been exposed to various restrictive amendments, in areas such as the right to political asylum, family reunification, naturalisation, and mother-tongue education for the minority children in the state-run schools.

After the change of government in November 2001, one of the first dramatic changes that the present government introduced through a bill in the Parliament was to abolish, among several other advisory bodies financed by the State, the Board for Ethnic Equality. A great many of the migrant organisations used to get annual subsidies from the State for their activities to improve the situation of ethnic minorities, but all these funds were frozen as early as January 2002. Some other Danish NGOs, which used to receive State help for the improvement of integration conditions and qualifications of minorities, were also taken off the budgets of the totally new Ministry of Integration, separated from the Ministry of the Interior. After weakening of the civil society organisations, the government presented its revised bill on integration law, coming into force in July 2002.

These drastic changes and the national and international reaction to it have been described in the previous section. Perhaps the most dramatic change was the introduction of the 24-year rule and other demands connected to a residence visa for the spouse, which were strategically targeted to the goal of reducing immigration from Muslim and non-Western countries.

The following points describe briefly the administrative structure of the State, along with an outline of the new integration policy and the philosophy behind it, which according to the government will enhance the integration:

- *Reduction in new immigration from non-Western countries:* the administration of the laws emerging from the new policy rests with the central immigration authorities, under the Ministry of Integration.
- *Reduction in the number of unemployed migrants, living on social welfare benefits:* the policy is executed through new legislation, in the employment market and social sector, by putting a ceiling on the maximum amount to which an unemployed family can be entitled. This is administrated by the local governments, the municipalities.
- *Start-help package for refugees:* this is far less in amount than social security benefits or unemployment benefits, which are set in accordance with the minimum living expenditure for each person. It has a two-pronged aim: to keep the so-called economic refugees away

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<sup>42</sup> This structure, however, is undergoing a reform process to be put in effect from the next year. It will reduce the number of municipalities by submerging smaller municipalities. Also the structure of counties will be transformed into regional councils, lesser in number but covering more area.

from Denmark, and to push those who are already granted asylum to the low-paid service jobs in the secondary labour market, and away from social welfare benefits. Only after a period of 7 years is a person with refugee status eligible for the ordinary social welfare benefits. The municipalities in which the refugees are placed by the immigration authorities take care of their integration through language teaching and job consultancies and training courses.

- *Strict administration of job activation courses and language and culture classes for the unemployed immigrants:* otherwise no social welfare benefits could be paid to the absentees. The regional labour exchanges and the municipalities are responsible for this labour market integration in cooperation with private enterprises.
- *Danish language learning:* a push for Danish language learning from the start for the children and no more subsidies for mother-tongue education in the state-run schools that are administrated by the municipalities. The assumption is that the sooner they learn Danish the better they will be integrated in schools and society.
- *Integration:* establishment of an integration team of experts at the Ministry of Integration to help the local government's institutions to implement the policy. In addition, the funds that were previously channelled to the civil society organisations for the integration projects are now solely controlled centrally by the Ministry. This has resulted in the fact that only those integration projects and research that are in harmony with the government's ideology and vision about integration are supported. The free research in the best academic and scientific traditions that was carried out by the Board of Ethnic Equality at its own discretion has almost vanished from the scene.

The overall trend is towards a neo-liberal workfare regime – shifting away from passive reliance on welfare incomes. This has entailed a great many economic difficulties for many families, especially those Muslims who have fled wars and torture and in several cases are suffering from a range of psychological disabilities and thus unable to work and learn new skills demanded by the labour market. And it equally applies to many middle-aged women and men from the cohort of those who were previously called guest-workers, who are suffering fatigue and health problems such as diabetes and heart trouble. At present, the Ministry of Integration is running a campaign focused on medical doctors to observe restraint in the issuing of medical certificates to migrant women. To avoid indiscriminate compulsion from the municipal authorities and the labour exchanges, many have chosen to stay away from getting themselves registered as unemployed, and thus do not draw any social welfare or unemployment benefits.

Cutting down the allowances for the refugees has meant that instead of being socially and culturally integrated into the society, which the government emphasises that they should become as soon as possible, they have become more isolated from the surrounding society, as they and their children do not have the means to afford to take part in social and cultural or sports activities, or to buy a birthday gift, for example, for their children's playmate in the vicinity of their neighbourhood (see Ejrnæs, 2001, and Nielsen, 2004).

In the present structure of the State, the overall integration policy is devised by the government, and since it has an absolute majority in the Parliament, it has succeeded in getting some of the toughest bills through. In the last analyses these impinge upon the quality of life of the ethnic minorities from non-Western countries, and the vast majority of them are Muslim immigrants.

Much of this policy concerning the labour market, housing, public schools and adult learning of Danish, maternity and primary childcare, care centres for the elderly, and so on, is the

responsibility of the local government. At the regional level, there are 14 counties that basically are responsible for the secondary health sector, such as the running of hospitals, and the maintenance of some roads, and higher secondary educational institutions or colleges.

However, the relative autonomy of the local government does not seem always to function, when it comes to implementing the ideology and policy on integration of the central government. One example that is ongoing at the time of writing, concerns the headmistress of a public school in the inner city of Copenhagen, who decided to divide the classes of its pupils into two groups; one for the indigenous Danish children and the other for all the “bilingual pupils”, that is, the children of Somali, Turkish, Arab and Pakistani parents. The headmistress took her decision when faced with the threat by the Danish parents to take their children out of the school if the demand for ethnic segregation of classes was not met by the school. However, the municipal authorities of Copenhagen intervened in the matter and warned the headmistress that such a step would be in contravention of the existing anti-discrimination laws and regulations. The headmistress announced that she would take back her decision, declaring that she would negotiate with the Danish parents about the legality of such a step. However, then the Minister of Education, Bertel Haarder, intervened in the matter, supporting the idea of separate classes and promised a revision of the law and regulation, so that they do not stand in the way for going ahead with plans of segregated classes. The municipal authorities find themselves helpless in the situation, (the daily newspaper, *Politiken*, 9 June 2006).<sup>43</sup>

As far as law and order and policing are concerned, it is the task of various police districts, headed by a police commissioner, and a district may have more than one municipality in its area of operation. The police commissioner of each district is responsible to the Head of State Police under the Ministry of Justice. Unlike the situation in many other EU countries, in Denmark there is only one police force for maintaining law and order and for the security and safety of citizens in their respective administrative districts. There are no accountability structures at the city or municipality level in which the concerned citizens can be involved in policing practice or policy. Only the capital area of Copenhagen has its own Director, presently Ms Hanne Bech Hansen, and thus the various sub-districts are under her administration.

The Police Intelligence Bureau (PET), works under the scrutiny of a parliamentary committee, but administratively under the Ministry of Justice. Despite the fact that the Muslim communities are exposed to more surveillance after the terrorism threats and anti-terror legislation, the PET’s image, in contrast to that of the ordinary police, among Muslims seems to be excellent and full of trust, according to the representatives of different immigrant organisations. The PET also holds frequent meeting with representatives of the Muslim communities and prayer leaders or imams, to reduce the potential threat of terrorist activities among the ranks of disillusioned Muslims, especially the youth.

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<sup>43</sup> It should be noted that each public school has its own elected board of parents whose voice is listened to by the school’s management, but not many Muslim parents are represented in such advisory bodies, neither at the schools, nor at the municipal level.

## **PART III: CITY SELECTION**

### **1. Selection criteria**

The majority of Muslim households are to be found in low-rent public housing, in the urban areas of the three largest cities: Aarhus, Copenhagen and Odense (see also section I.5 on housing).

For more than a decade, some of the residential areas in these cities have been portrayed on the political agenda and in media stories as “ethnic ghettos”, with all possible associated negative connotations. The negative attributes that are usually associated with these neighbourhoods include a high rate of unemployment and greater reliance on the social welfare benefits as a source of income, a lack of social integration with the surrounding society, a high rate of youth crime and violence, religious fundamentalism, thefts and burglaries, a high rate of school drop-outs, the parallel society, low motivation among the residents to find a job, and domestic violence and oppression of women.

The mainstream media and television have been reporting about these “ethnic ghettos” since the end of 1980s, when Per Madsen, the former mayor of Ishøj Municipality (on the outskirts of Copenhagen), launched his campaigns and claimed that his municipality was being run down by a “Khomenisation” of the residential areas. He claimed that the Muslims were a difficult group to integrate in his municipality and society at large, because they stuck to those old traditions that they had brought in suitcases from their homeland (Shierup, 1993).

Since the 1990s, however, the focus has shifted to some other municipalities and residential quarters. Three such neighbourhoods — which are at the top of the list of areas that have earned the name of ethnic ghettos, problem areas, socially deprived neighbourhoods, and so on, by the media, politicians, municipal and social authorities, schools and police authorities — are the following:

- **Vollsmose** (in Odense municipality);
- **Gellerupparken** (in Aarhus municipality)
- **Mølnerparken** (in the Nørrebro sub-district of Copenhagen Municipality).

These three areas would all be interesting to include in the new OSI monitoring project “Muslims in the EU: Cities Reports”. A fourth neighbourhood that may be of interest to include in the OSI project is **Tåstrupgård** (Høje Taastrup Municipality) on the outskirts of Copenhagen. This neighbourhood has earned the name of a ghetto area because of a high concentration of immigrants of jobless ethnic minority communities. In contrast to the three other localities, which are characterised by the presence of many refugees from the Middle East and other Muslim countries, who came to Denmark from the mid-1980s onwards, Tåstrupgård is inhabited mainly by many “guest-workers” and their descendants from the late 1960s, especially Turks.

The OSI monitoring project “Muslims in the EU: Cities Reports” could focus on all or any one of these four sites. Although the population of these four selected areas is multi-ethnic, representing ethno-national groups from several Muslim and non-Muslim countries, in the popular discourse they are usually implicitly, and sometimes also explicitly, referred to as “the Muslim areas”.

These four residential areas have been on the agenda of a number of NGO integration projects, and on the desks of researchers and experts of urban planning, and have attracted a good deal of attention on the part of the students and scholars of social sciences. All four selected areas are subject to the policy adopted by the elected local bodies (councils) of their respective municipalities (i.e. Copenhagen, Odense, Aarhus and Høj Taastrup). These are elected by the citizens every fourth year. Almost all of these have some elected council members with a Muslim background, affiliated to different political parties.

Compared to the country as a whole, the proportion of children or young people is much higher in these areas. This has a range of implications for how the integration of Muslim pupils and young people is addressed, for instance in schools, sports facilities by the various municipal policies in these areas.

Table 5 below provides an overview of the share of indigenous Danish and non-Danish population in these four residential quarters,

**Table 5. Number of Danes and of people with origins from non-Western and Western countries, in the four selected residential areas (2005)**

<b>Residential areas</b>	<b>City/ Municipality</b>	<b>Immigrants</b>	<b>Descendants</b>	<b>Danes</b>	<b>Total</b>
Gellerupparken	Aarhus	2,875	2,260	911	6,046
Mølnerparken	Copenhagen	1,059	979	154	2,192
Tåstrupgård	Høj Taastrup	1,033	750	698	2,481
Vollsmose	Odense	4,008	2,388	3,297	9,693

**Source:** Ministry of Integration, Yearbook on Foreigners (2005)

Looking at the socio-economic profile of the residents of these areas, it becomes clear that the largest number of people residing in these areas is dependent on social security benefits, as the vast majority of those in the economically active age group (18–64) are unemployed (see Table 9 below). In all four selected areas, the unemployment rate among the ethnic minorities with a Muslim background is significantly higher than the average unemployment rate among the minorities at the country level, which was recorded 15 per cent of the total migrant population of the country (as of 1 January 2004).

**Table 6. Number of Danes and of people with origins from non-Western countries, on welfare benefits (Welfare Transfer Incomes, WTIs) in selected residential areas.**

Type of income	Proportion of people with origins from non-Western countries, who access WTIs (%)				Proportion of Danes on WTIs in the areas (%)
	Mjølnerparken	Tåstrupgård	Vollsmose	Gellerup.	
Nil WTI <sup>44</sup>	24	33	18	19	33
Pensions <sup>45</sup>	6	13	12	12	11
Daily allowance <sup>46</sup>	9	25	12	11	17
S.S. Benefits <sup>47</sup>	34	17	35	43	16
Job activation allowance <sup>48</sup>	24	10	29	13	9
Disable/Edu <sup>49</sup>	2	1	2	2	2

Source: Ministry of Integration, Yearbook on Foreigners (2005)

These four sites can also be used to explore how integration policy at the national level is executed in practice in the various municipalities. This could be monitored not only through the employment market initiatives, but also the facilities and arrangements in various municipal institutions, which either pay respect to the cultural diversity or execute a rigid nationalist and mono-cultural policy.

Perhaps the most absurd example of such an attitude among the municipal authorities and the previous Ministry of the Interior and Integration Affairs during the 1990s was the fact that they funded a project for Muslim parents, carried out in Gellerrupparken, on how to bring up their children in Denmark according to Danish norms, with the aim of reducing juvenile delinquency.

A much more serious example occurred in 2001 when five young people from one of these areas were convicted of the gang-rape of a young Danish girl. This crime led to a media debate that lasted several months in the press and national television channels. The gang-rape was attributed to lack of respect for women in the Muslim culture. The focus was not on individual responsibility, instead the entire Muslim culture, was held responsible for the crime. During the general election, November 2001, in its pre-election campaign, the Liberal Party used a picture of these five boys coming out of the court on its electoral banners, with a portrait of the present Prime Minister, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, above it, conveying the message “Time for a Change!” In the same area, and quite recently, a whole family has been given notice of eviction from their rented apartment by the housing cooperative, simply because one boy from the family had taken part in some mugging activities.

Other reasons for the selection of the four proposed sites are that there are numerous projects in progress on cultural, social and employment market integration in these areas, and some reports

<sup>44</sup> Nil WTI: people not on social welfare benefits, who earn their own living through jobs or business.

<sup>45</sup> Pensions: for the retired or early-retired senior citizens.

<sup>46</sup> Daily allowance: payment to patients unfit for work, job activation or course.

<sup>47</sup> S.S. Benefits: social security benefits. Like the “dole” in English, to which anyone with no means of subsistence is entitled until sent for job activation, or courses, pensions, etc.

<sup>48</sup> Job Activation allowance: equivalent to social security benefits, which an unemployed person receives when sent to some courses or training by the municipal authorities. Social security benefits and job-activation allowance is actually the same thing, but classified differently for administrative purposes.

<sup>49</sup> Disable/Edu: allowance for the disabled or people with minor handicaps for their rehabilitation.



have already been prepared on topics, ranging from ethnic crime to job training and finding new ways to keep the youth off the street. These sources and resources, even if some of them tend to be of a dubious quality, or based on stereotypical images of Muslims and Arabs, can be gainfully brought into the OSI monitoring project.

In addition, these areas are also under the focus of urban regeneration programmes, on which many social researchers, architects, urban planners, sociologists on poverty and marginalisation, and many other experts are engaged. One large scale multi-faceted project (which has the working title SLIB —“Segregation, Local Integration and Employment”), which includes all four proposed areas, is being carried out at the Roskilde University’s Department of Social Science and Business Economics, in cooperation with National Building Research Institute (SBI). This could be advantageous for the network relations required for the case studies, for approaching the Muslim population for data gathering, and not least for developing a common methodology for the monitoring process and comparative analysis of the integration situation, policy and the social reality of the day-to-day life of Muslims across European cities.

The following sections outline some of the more important features of these neighbourhoods, and suggest why precisely these locations could be appropriate sites for inclusion in the OSI project.

## 2. Copenhagen

Copenhagen County is home to the majority (about 70 per cent) of the minorities from non-Western countries in Denmark, of which one third live within the limits of Copenhagen Municipality. The largest share of the minorities from non-Western countries is composed of households with a Muslim background. Copenhagen Municipality has a population of just over 503,000. The number of migrants with origins in predominantly Muslim countries in Copenhagen Municipality is as shown below:

**Table 5. Number of migrants with origins in predominantly Muslim countries in Copenhagen Municipality (Jan 2003)**

Country	Copenhagen Municipality
Turkey	8,205
Pakistan	8,739
Former Yugoslavia	7,918
Iraq	4,762
Somalia	3,766
Total from all non-Western countries	<b>63,279</b> (12.6% of the city population)

**Source:** Website of Aarhus Municipality, [www.Aarhus.dk](http://www.Aarhus.dk)

Copenhagen Municipality is divided into 15 City Districts. The City Government consist of a finance committee and six standing committees, each with its own area of responsibility. The city's supreme political authority is the City Council. It consists of 55 members, each elected for a four year period. At least 7 elected members of the present City Council have a minority background and 6 of these carry a Muslim name. None of them, however, holds an executive position (such as a mayor or head of a committee).

### *Norrebro*

The Nørrebro sub-district consists of two of the 15 City Districts in Copenhagen Municipality: Indre (“Inner”) Nørrebro and Ydre (“Outer”) Nørrebro.

Ydre Norrebro sub-district has a population of 41,000, of which 11,000 (27 percent) are immigrants and their descendants — 7,600 of these have a foreign nationality, the remainder are Danish citizens. The Norrebro sub-district has (like Vollsmose in Odense) been on the media’s news agenda for more than a decade now. There are several Muslim prayer- houses in Norrebro, run by various Muslim groups divided on the ethno-national and sectarian lines. The first ever public protest against the publication of the Prophet’s cartoons in Denmark’s largest newspaper, *JyllandsPosten*, took place also in Norrebro.

Within Ydre Norrebro the neighbourhood of Mjølnerparken, has the population with the highest percentage of immigrants and their descendants. The name refers to a set of housing blocks built in 1987, situated on the outer fringes of Norrebro. This housing complex consists of 559 apartments of various sizes inhabited by a total of 2,500 residents. In Mjølnerparken, 93 per cent of the people living there have a minority background; the rest are indigenous Danes, mostly elderly people. Most people living in the area have origins in Lebanon and Palestine (37 per cent), and there is also a high proportion of people with origins in Turkey and Pakistan and about half of the minority population is under the age of 18. At average, in Mjølnerparken only a few have a duration of stay under 5 years or more than 15 years.

The Muslims here are predominantly refugees of the mid-1980s, who had fled various wars. A large number of these refugees are Palestinians from southern Lebanon’s refugee camps, who had been exposed to violence and war, even massacres, during the 1982 invasion by Israel. Interestingly, neither the media nor the hundreds of projects that have been carried out in these areas in the name of integration have looked thoroughly at this aspect of mental health or psychological traumas to explain the high crime rate among the youth in this area. The media especially have solely concentrated upon their Muslim and Arabic culture as an explanation for the phenomenon.<sup>50</sup> Some medical research has drawn attention to it; for example, a report by the Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims, Copenhagen, states that a third of these households have at least one member of the family who suffers from a psychological disorder, mainly post-traumatic syndromes. These families face difficulties in playing their parental role in a normal way. However, both the mainstream media and the politicians who merely react to the media stories on the so-called ethnic crime in these problem neighbourhoods have a tendency to downplay such facts and overemphasise the “Muslim culture” as a causal factor for all types of oddities.<sup>51</sup> After an outbreak of repeated cases of arson in the housing complex towards the end of 2004, the whole residential quarters is now installed with 230 close-circuit cameras and remains under a constant surveillance and frequent police patrolling.

### **3. Aarhus**

Aarhus is the second largest city in Denmark. Aarhus Municipality has a total population of 294,273 (as of July 2006), of which migrants make up 37,062, or 12.6 per cent of the total population. Of these, 26,797, or 9.2 per cent of the total population, are from non-Western countries, as shown below:

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<sup>50</sup> See, for example, Hussain *et al.* (1997).

<sup>51</sup> This was also the overwhelming attitude among the police officers who attended the Police Training Project by NAPAP (see the Section 7. Policing and Security in Part 1) and who have had experience in fighting crime in these areas.

**Table 6. Number of migrants with origin in predominantly Muslim countries in Aarhus Municipality (Jan 2003)**

Country	Aarhus Municipality
Lebanon	4,151
Turkey	3,843
Somalia	3,139
Iran	2,152
Total from all non-Western countries	<b>26,797</b> (9.2% of the city population)

**Source:** Website of Aarhus Municipality, [www.Aarhus.dk](http://www.Aarhus.dk)

The City Council comprises of 32 elected members and at least 7 of these can be said to have a Muslim background, mostly with Turkish background.

The city of Aarhus has a range of prayer houses of Muslims belonging to various congregations. Under the umbrella of the Federation of Mosques and Islamic Cultural Centres ([www.moskeen.dk](http://www.moskeen.dk)), are putting forward plans for a purpose built mosque in the Gellerupparken (see below). However, this proposal is facing a great deal of resistance from various political groups of native Danes, as well as from some members of the City Council.

#### *Gellerupparken.*

In Aarhus the largest concentration of immigrants and their descendants is to be found in **Gellerupparken**. Gellerup is a western suburb of Aarhus city. Gellerupparken itself is a large housing estate. The total population of the sub-district, Brabrand-Gellerup, where Gellerupparken is located has been recorded at 19,357 in July 2006, of whom 8.200 (or roughly 46 per cent) have origins in a non-Western country.

In Gellerupparken, immigrants and their descendants make up 85 per cent of the total residential population (January 2004). The majority are from Lebanon (46 per cent), followed by Turkey. The largest share of immigrants in Gellerupparken has a duration of stay of between 10 and 15 years in Denmark, on average. The unemployment rate here is 22 per cent for men and 30 per cent for women.

Gellerupparken has earned a name of ghetto in the media and political discourse, because of its high concentration of Muslims. High rates of chronic unemployment and youth criminality have been characteristic of the area for many years, and there is widespread tendency among the native Danes to move out of Gellerupparken as soon as they get the chance. Almost all the apartments in these multi-stories blocks are low-rent housing owned by private housing associations. To reduce the chronic unemployment, the municipality of Aarhus has constructed a special shopping hall, called Bazar, where the residents of the area can open their own shops, restaurants, grills and grocery stores. This attracts many tourists and other residents of the city to get an “exotic” experience. However, the area has also witnessed a rare case of an expulsion of a whole family from their apartment, because one young person of the family had been repeatedly convicted of burglary and muggings.

#### **4. Odense**

Odense is located in the south of Denmark and is famous for being home of the author of fairytales, H.C. Andersen. It is the third largest city in Denmark, with a total population of

186,595 (as of July 2006). The migrants residing in the city have representing 150 different nationalities. Those from non-Western countries make up 10.66 per cent of the city population, as shown below:

**Table 7. Number of migrants with origin in predominantly Muslim countries in Odense Municipality (Jan 2003)**

Country	Odense Municipality
Turkey	2,292
Lebanon & Palestine	2,211
Somalia	1,670
Iraq	1,258
Bosnia & Herzegovina	1,184
Total from all non-Western countries	<b>19,650</b> (10.66% of the city population)

Source: Website of Aarhus Municipality, [www.Aarhus.dk](http://www.Aarhus.dk)

The city has 29 members on the City Council, including two with an ethnic minority background (one of these has a typically Muslim name).

#### *Vollsmose*

In **Vollsmose** residential area, 66 per cent of the population (total 10,000) are from minority ethnic groups, the majority of them being from Turkey and Lebanon, followed by Somalis. In the residential blocks of Vollsmose, the largest share of the immigrants and their descendants fall into the group whose average stay in the country is less than 5 years. Vollsmose has the highest unemployment rate among all the four areas under consideration for inclusion in the OSI monitoring project (see section III.1). Here, 37 per cent of men and 46 per cent of women were unemployed in 2004. However, under the current upswing of the economy has lead to a high labour demand, which has resulted in a fall in the overall unemployment rate in the area, to 23 per cent (as of June 2006).

Vollsmose in Odense has been on the media’s news agenda for more than a decade now. There have been recurrent reports of clashes between the police and migrant youth in the district. Although the phenomenon has subsided considerably during the last 3–4 years, after a number of projects were initiated to “tame” these young people by involving parent groups from ethnic minorities, the stigma still lingers on in the public memory.

In its efforts to integrate the residents of Vollsmose into the mainstream society, the municipality has established a specific office, Vollsmose Secretariat, which solely concentrates on the social issues, unemployment and integration problems of the residents of the area.

As in Gellerupparken in Aarhus, Odense Municipality is also establishing a Bazaar in the vicinities of the residential quarter that will have about 65 shops to be rented out to the members of ethnic minorities. This is due to be inaugurated by HRH Prince Joachim of Denmark in April 2007.

Vollsmose area once again hit the media headlines quite recently, as the police have arrested 4 young men from the area for conspiring to an act of terrorism. One of these has been released after the initial hearings, but the other three are waiting for the trial in courts under anti-terrorism

legislation. A mosque in the area has also been ransacked on similar suspicion, but no charges were levelled against the imam or other members of the mosque committee.

## 5. Høj Taastrup

Høj Taastrup is small town located at a distance of about a half hour drive south-east of Copenhagen. The town has a total of 45,519 residents, of which 7,671 (17 per cent) are from an ethnic minority background (defined by the municipal statistics as immigrants and their descendants). The City Council comprises 21 seats, of which 4 are held by counsellors having a Muslim background.

### *Tåstrupgård*

In the housing blocks of **Tåstrupgård**, 72 per cent of all the residents are from a non-Danish background. The majority of these are Turks (58 per cent), but there are also many Pakistanis and a mix of others with national origins in Muslim countries. In Tåstrupgård the population of a non-Danish background has lived in Denmark for more than 15 years. The unemployment rate in Tåstrupgård is different from that in other neighbourhoods, and can be explained by the fact that the vast majority of the residents in that area belong to the category of earlier arrivals of migrant workers and their descendants, and as such have had a longer duration of stay in the country and thus a better insight into Danish society and culture, better language skills and relatively well-established social networks. Nonetheless, a comparatively high level of unemployment is also conspicuous among those who are from a Muslim background; that is, the Turks. The literature reviewed, especially that produced by the governmental agencies, only barely recognises discrimination as a causal factor behind the lack of integration in the employment market.<sup>52</sup>

Compared to the three other selected residential areas, the profile of Muslims is somewhat different in composition in Tåstrupgård. They are not refugees from war-torn areas, who suffered a traumatic experience, but are mainly Turks and Pakistanis who came as ‘guest-workers’ in the late 1960’s. This district could therefore be included in the OSI monitoring as a “control” variable in assessing the overall integration of Muslims in Danish cities. Another good reason for this selection is the fact that, while all the three other areas have been in the limelight of the Danish press for many years as “ethnic ghettos” and breeding grounds for criminality, juvenile delinquency and violence attributed to Muslim culture or Arabic identity, Tåstrupgård has more or less escaped such predicates and prejudiced stereotypes.

The Tåstrup municipality was at the centre of a media storm some years ago, as it was perhaps the first municipality that allowed for the hanging of curtains in the schools’ swimming facilities so that the Muslim pupils could take part in the compulsory swimming training. This was debated in the press as a sign of an erosion of Danish cultural values under Muslim pressure. On the other hand, there are also cases of ethnic discrimination in the allotment of apartments from the same municipality some 8 years ago.

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<sup>52</sup> In its latest report, from 2006, the Ministry of Integration’s think tank has, unlike in all its previous reports, for the first time emphasised discrimination in the employment market. In the past, the explanations have been always sought in terms of deficiencies among the minorities. It should be acknowledged in this regard that the present Minister for Integration has taken notice of this and has announced a sum of 20 million Dkr. for campaigns against prejudice among the employers who hesitate to employ ethnic/Muslim minorities.

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