

## **Erasing Muslim Communities: An Analysis of Denmark's 'Ghetto' Policies**

### **Abstract**

This paper examines Denmark's 2018 parallel society policies – popularly known as the ghetto policies – as an expression of structural Islamophobia enforced through local governance. It analyses these policies in terms of their ethnonationalist roots, as well as their framing of Muslim communities as threats to Danish social cohesion. These policies discriminate by design, as a mechanism to manage and surveil Muslim communities in public housing estates.

The ghetto policies have support across the right/left political divide. This paper argues that when it comes to the Danish ethnonationalist policies, there is in fact ideological unity across the political spectrum in the vilification of Muslim community. Indeed, urban policies directed at Denmark's Muslim population reflect a coloniality enacted through public housing policies, aiming to banish and erase Muslim communities from their neighbourhoods. Ultimately, I contend that Denmark's housing policies serve as tools of social control, used to manage its Muslim population, erase their spatial history, and dismantle community life within housing estates.

The paper offers insights into how contemporary public housing policies can become an expression of structural Islamophobia in its political aim to manage Muslim social, urban and community life.

### **Short bio:**

Amani Hassani is an urban ethnographer working at the intersection of sociology, anthropology, and human geography. Her research explores the connection between racialisation and spatialisation, focusing on Muslim populations in the Global North. She has written widely on racialisation, Islamophobia, and Muslim experiences in academic and public domains.

She is currently a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at Brunel University London, leading the research project "The Other's Right to the City: a comparative ethnography of Denmark's ghetto policy." The project examines how processes of racialisation, Islamophobia, and hostile immigration policies shape national and urban politics, manifested through urban renewal policies.