

## POLICY BRIEF • UPR DENMARK 2021 • REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

Over the last 20 years, Danish policy on refugees and migrants has undergone a constant change, amending the Alien Act hundreds of times. Human rights for this group are increasingly undermined. The goal for the present government is 'zero' refugees arriving in Denmark, and assimilation of the foreigners living in the country.

A fundamental change was the passing of the so-called '**Paradigm Shift**' bill in 2019. It turns refugee policy upside down, so that the aim of durable, long-term solutions and effective integration has been changed to temporary permits of 1-2 years, constantly reassessed, with a focus on returning refugees as soon as the situation allows for it.

A new law proposal has been presented in February 2021. It lays out the idea of a **Danish asylum centre outside Europe**, probably in Africa. This centre is supposed to accommodate and process applications of asylum seekers arriving to Denmark. The Danish state will finance it and compensate the host country for taking care of the persons after the legal process – either issuing a residence permit or returning the person to his home country.

UNHCR Northern Europe and all Danish human rights organisations are deeply concerned with the development in Denmark regarding refugees and migrants and has warned against each step. We have listed the most serious issues below:

### **37: Temporary stay + 40: Revocation of residence permits**

Residence permits based on asylum or family reunification are only granted for 1 or 2 years at the time and can be revoked at any time. The criteria for obtaining permanent residency are impossible for many to meet. The attachment to Denmark is no longer considered when revoking the permits, and the principle of durable solutions for refugees is not respected.

***Recommendation:** Secure durable solutions for refugees by ensuring long-term protection for them and their families. For cases about revocation of residence permits, ensure that the assessment is in accordance with international human rights standards and that proper consideration is given to attachment to Denmark and with emphasis on durable solutions for refugees.*

### **39: Low social benefits for refugees**

Social benefits are reduced to approximately half for people who have been less than ten years in Denmark. This leads to serious poverty among refugee families, and it is in practice discrimination due to ethnic origin, as only 2% of the people who are targeted have Danish origin.

***Recommendation:** Increase substantially social benefits for refugees, granting them the same benefits as Danes and abolish the graduated benefits for children.*



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