

Press Release

## Research Shows Tax Authority Treats Ethnic Background as Risk Factor

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2022 NRC-handelsblad Newspaper published an article on the alleged malpractices of the Tax Authority. The House of Representatives hired research bureau PwC to investigate the conduct of the Tax Authority. The research shows that people with a foreign background and nationality are considered a risk.

The alleged conduct of the Tax Authority was not limited to mere incidents. According to the research there was a structural way of working whereby people with a foreign surname were suspected of fraud prematurely. This mentality did not only occur within the department of surtaxes it also occurred in the department that handles applications.

Secretary Marnix van Reij (CDA) responded by saying that they will invest in discussions with the Tax Authority as to prevent these issues in the future. According to a previous statement from the Tax Authority the ethnicity of the applicant was only collected if it was necessary for the application. However, the investigation conducted by PwC showed that several officials were guilty of various prejudicial and racist remarks about people with an ethnic background.

The double standard of the secular system is obvious in the scandals surrounding the Tax authority. It is expected of Muslims and other ethnic minorities to either conform to Dutch norms and values or to 'depart to their home country'. At the same time Muslims and ethnic minorities are subjected to structural injustice of which the impact is noticeable for years and not only from a financial point of view.

The question remains: which Dutch norms and values does the Dutch state expect Muslims to conform to? The institutions of the state itself are already unable to uphold these values. The Dutch institutions have shown by their statements that they do not believe in their own secular creed. There is no 'neutral' position towards the inhabitants of the state. Nor is there a prosecution or any form of consequence for the unjust within the institutions that committed violations. This is clear from the silent and weak response of government officials in response to the report.

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 in The Netherlands**