

Denmark becomes latest European country to ban full Islamic face veil in public spaces



Women in niqab at Christiansborg Palace in Copenhagen after the vote banning face veils was passed CREDIT: REUTERS

The Danish parliament on Thursday passed a law banning the Islamic full-face veil in public spaces, becoming the latest European country to do so.

“Anyone who wears a garment that hides the face in public will be punished with a fine,” says the law, which was passed by 75 votes to 30.

Presented by the centre-right government, the legislation, which is to take effect on August 1, was also backed by the Social Democrats and the far-right Danish People’s Party.

Wearing a burqa, which covers a person’s entire face, or the niqab, which only shows the eyes, in public will lead to a fine of 1,000 kroner (£118).



Women in niqab are pictured after the Danish Parliament banned the wearing of face veils in public, at Christiansborg Palace in Copenhagen CREDIT: MADS CLAUS RASMUSSEN/REUTERS

Repeated violations will be fined up to 10,000 kroner.

It is not known how many women wear the niqab and burqa in Denmark.

“I don’t think there are many who wear the burqa here in Denmark. But if you do, you should be punished with a fine,” Justice Minister Soren Pape Poulsen was quoted as saying by Ritzau news agency in February.

At a glance | Where burkas are banned

Full burka and niqab ban

- France, since 2004
- Belgium, since 2011
- Chad, since 2015
- Cameroon, in five provinces, since 2015
- Diffa, Niger, since 2015
- Brazzaville, Congo, since 2015
- Tessin, Switzerland, since 2016
- Denmark, introduced in 2018

Burkini ban

- Around 30 French coastal towns had issued bans, but France's highest court ruled against them on 26th August, meaning that burkini bans are now illegal.

Partial burka and niqab ban

- The Netherlands: women cannot have their faces covered in schools, hospital and on public transport.
- The Italian town of Novara: women were told to stop wearing a full veil in 2010, but there is no established fines system.
- Parts of Catalonia, Spain: The country's Supreme Court ruled against a ban in some areas in 2013, however those areas which brought their cases to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) have continued with the ban - supported by an ECHR ruling in their favour in 2014.
- Turkey: a full ban was abandoned in 2013. Now, women are only barred if they work in the judiciary, military and police.

The European Court of Human Rights last year upheld a Belgian ban on wearing it in public.

France was the first European country to ban the niqab in public places with a law that took effect in 2011.

Source: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/05/31/denmark-becomes-latest-european-country-ban-full-islamic-face/>

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