

## Wilders in Power in The Netherlands: What does it mean for the Muslims?

### News:

Far-right Geert Wilders announces new Dutch government deal.

### Comment:

Geert Wilders has negotiated the formation of a new coalition government in The Netherlands, comprising his Party for Freedom (PVV), the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), the New Social Contract (NSC), and the Farmer-Citizen Movement (BBB). While Wilders himself will not serve as Prime Minister due to his harsh stance, his party will have significant influence over the coalition's policies.

This new shift to the far right in the Dutch government under the leadership of Wilders brings concerns about the future of Muslims in The Netherlands due to his history of blatant attacks against Islam, the Quran, the Prophet Muhammad (saw), and Muslims. Even though he assured the other parties, in order to form a coalition, to tone down his harsh rhetoric against Islam, the first thing he did after the formation of the new coalition was to post a despicable caricature of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) on X, which he retracted right away.

However, when looking into the policies of the Dutch government over the past three decades, it's not hard to conclude that the proposed anti-Islam measures by Wilders are just an extension of previous policies enacted by other "liberal" parties. Throughout the years, Wilders expressed his hatred against Islam, and the ruling parties enacted policies reflecting that sentiment. This shows that the real problem is the liberal secular framework of the Dutch government that has taken the path of assimilation and problematizing the existence of Muslims in their society.

Besides this, the coalition's formation indicates a continuation of hardline stances on immigration and assimilation, reflecting broader European trends towards right-wing populism. Wilders' coalition partners, such as the VVD, have previously supported stringent immigration policies, indicating that the new government's approach may not significantly deviate from past practices.

Thus, while Wilders' coalition marks a shift towards more explicit right-wing populism, the core principles of the Dutch liberal secular system and the continuity of anti-Islam policies suggest limited substantive change in governance dynamics. This development underscores ongoing tensions in Dutch politics regarding the treatment and assimilation of Muslim communities within a proclaimed liberal framework. The only thing which differentiates Wilders of the previous governments is that he chooses a harsher and more denigrating style towards Islam and Muslims.

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