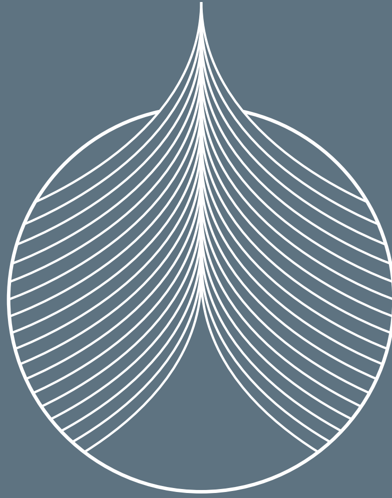

Radicalisation and the Spread of Violent Conflicts

Trends, Developments and Responses in Europe and the Middle East – a compendium of essays

W. Murray and S. Brzuszkiewicz (eds)

'Radicalisation and the Spread of Violent Conflicts: Trends, Developments and Responses in Europe and the Middle East – a compendium of essays'

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Our work is organised under two pillars:

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Radicalisation and the Spread of Violent Conflicts

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Editors' Note

On 28 November 2019 a roundtable meeting was held in The Hague with the participation of experts in the field of radicalisation and violent extremism from Europe and the Middle East, to discuss the global proliferation of radical ideologies leading to violence.

The event was organised by **LINKS Europe** in association with the website and intellectual hub **European Eye on Radicalization**. Participants included war and terrorism journalists; academics specialising in identity, extremism, security and human rights; human security and conflict mediation experts; policy advisors and conflict mediation practitioners; and religious scholars.

In this compendium, we have included essays offered by a number of the roundtable's attendees. The topics represented reflect some of the participants' contributions, raising important and varied considerations over the global rise of radicalisation and how it can be tempered in order to avoid the inevitable slide into violent conflict. The diversity of contributions ranges from Nicolas Henin's account of the paradoxical relationship between revolutions and radicalisation, reflecting on the rise of extremism following the Arab Spring (page 15); to Dr Tommaso Virgili's warning over the unsettling relationship between the extreme left and Islamism (page 19). In other contributions, Seran de Leede and Thalia Malmberg highlight the importance of holistic approaches involving women (page 27) and youth (page 33) respectively, in the alleviation of growing radicalisation within communities, whilst the former warns against formally placing such efforts under the Countering/Preventing Violent Extremism (C/PVE) banner. Andrea Cellino then goes on to describe the work of his organisation, DCAF, at engaging youth and women in the creation of security policy in Tunisia (page 37). Looking at country specific cases, Dr Vasiliki Tsakgroni looks at the cyclical nature of extreme right-wing influence in Greece (page 43), while Ramazan Samadov highlights the value of working with secular Muslim nations, such as Azerbaijan, as bridges between Europe and the Muslim world (page 47). Finally, Guy Van Vlierden warns of the symbiotic growth of the far right and Islamism, and

how draconian policies against returning foreign fighters and their families could alienate Western Muslim communities and exacerbate Islamic radicalisation (page 51).

We hope that this book stimulates discussion – not just within the different groups working against radicalisation, but between them. As one participant of our 2019 roundtable stated, for us to be successful in alleviating radicalisation in all its forms, we must concentrate on the five Cs:

We must instil **courage** in our politicians to make the right decisions even when unpopular, and we ourselves need to be courageous in how we speak out. We must be daring enough to discuss issues that are sensitive with them.

We need to take up our role as **critical** friends of policymakers and those in charge, in order to make sure that they understand these dilemmas and the negative effects that their policies can have.

Similarly, we need to be able to speak the uncomfortable truth when necessary. To do this, we need to be **connected** and reach out to the political level as well as to each other, as policy makers, think tanks, NGOs, and CSOs.

Language is important. Policymakers speak in a different manner than researchers, so it is important to be sensitive to that. We need to be **concrete**, so we shouldn't use overly confusing language and must make that sure we say what we mean. And when someone throws complicated terms at us, we must ask them to clarify what they mean.

We all need to **contribute**. And to be able to contribute, we need funds, we need networks, and we need access. All of those reading this can strengthen relationships and connect each other with the wide range of people out there.

We challenge the readers of this book to think about how best they can instil these five principles within their work going forward, to develop better ways of approaching the complicated issues of radicalisation and the spread of violent conflict.

Sincerely,

William Murray
Editor
LINKS Europe

Dr Sara Brzuszkiewicz
Editor
European Eye on Radicalization

Foreward

Dennis Sammut D.Phil (Oxon) OBE
Director, LINKS Europe

Radicalisation inspired either by political ideology or religious fervour is not a new phenomenon, but when it translates itself into violence and conflict, as it often does, it still shocks us. Europe over the centuries has had its fair share of radicalisation translating itself into extreme political ideologies or religious movements that often were the cause of bloodbaths. It is perhaps because of this that the danger of radicalisation is a well understood concept amongst the wider European citizenry. Mistakenly, however, many people still think of radicalisation in the 21st century as something imported from abroad, usually the Middle East, and something related solely to a convoluted interpretation of Islam. The threat, however, is in fact much wider; it involves religious zealots of all persuasions, as well as political extremists of the far right and the far left.

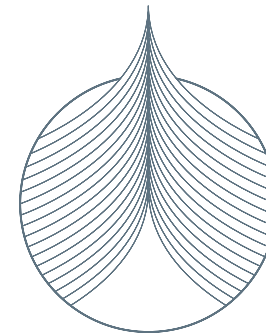
It is correct therefore that we should spend time to think about the threat of radicalisation, its causes and effects, and its direct connection with violence of different forms, from terrorism to war. This publication, and the roundtable held in The Hague in November 2019 which inspired it, is a collaborative effort between LINKS Europe and the Harf and Fasela Foundation in Abu Dhabi, and their intellectual hub European Eye on Radicalization. The exchange and cross fertilisation of ideas at the roundtable and in this publication are examples of good practice on this matter.

It is very easy for a subject like this to be approached from a narrow perspective by people who think they know it all and they know it best. Very often they don't. We approach this issue with more humility. Participants in the round table and contributors to this publication come from very different backgrounds and perspectives: from Europe and the Middle East, from left and right of the political spectrum, from civil society and from state institutions. Yet there is an amazing amount of consensus around some core ideas: first the need to take this issue seriously; second that this is a societal challenge as much as it is a police and security one, and whilst the police need to be left to do their job, societies have a

duty to engage with the challenge also; the third is not to despair because there is a lot that can be done to combat radicalisation, make people – especially young people – less vulnerable to manipulation, and rehabilitate those who fall into the trap; the fourth is the important role of women in this battle and the need to engage them more at all levels; and the fifth is that the best defence is not to build a wall around us but to reach out to like-minded partners in other countries and societies, because this is a transnational and a transcontinental problem that similarly requires an international solution.

We are delighted that both in the roundtable and in this publication, we had input by representatives from the European Commission's Radicalisation Awareness Network. This Network has been a good example of collaborative work to both raise the issue of the risk of radicalisation and coordinate a response to it. There is a need for similar networks, working perhaps more informally, but widening the net of participants.

LINKS Europe will continue focusing on this problem going forward as we strive for a strong and secure Europe, in friendship and in solidarity with its neighbours.



Foreward

Mansour Alnogaiden
Director, Harf and Fasela Foundation / European Eye on Radicalization

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Circumstances have evolved considerably since our event in The Hague on the 28th of November 2019, organised by LINKS Europe in association with our intellectual hub, European Eye on Radicalization.

The aim of the conference was to discuss the global proliferation of radical ideologies and the violence they cause. The months since that time have shown us all, once again, how interconnected the world has become; how something that happens in a remote corner of a country can have a huge impact on states and entire continents on the other side of the planet.

This time, we are learning the lesson of interdependence through one of the most shocking events of the contemporary age, the coronavirus pandemic and the economic shocks of the countermeasures. But this lesson is a constant feature of the work we do at European Eye on Radicalization, and it is the common ground we share with our friends at LINKS Europe: the world is interconnected, and this can be used for good or for ill. We chose to be bridges to foster respect, dialogue, and cooperation.

This volume, Radicalisation and the Spread of Violent Conflict, is the product of the tireless effort of researchers from different countries and different back-grounds, who decided to join LINKS Europe and European Eye on Radicali-zation in the aim of assessing the latest trends in radicalisation and their links with violent conflicts worldwide.

We chose to learn from each other about these trends to better handle them – a lesson that is ever-present as we try to work collectively for a vaccine. In these hard times, it is always helpful to be reminded that interconnection is a resource, not an obstacle.

Revolution and Radicalisation

Nicolas Hénin, Former war reporter; Consultant, trainer and writer on counterterrorism and counterextremism

You may recall the large extent to which ISIS was on the verge of collapse on the eve of the Arab Spring following the surge of the Sahwa militia in the late 2000s. I was at the time a reporter – I saw the emergence of the Arab Spring and covered it extensively. I could feel the frustration of the people over the lack of good governance and all kinds of freedoms, and the will of the people for change to their political regimes. My hope, when standing in Tahrir square at the end of Jan 2011, was that there would be no more place for Jihadi extremist groups in the Middle East. There seemed to no longer be a reason for the Arab youth to rebel – they would now have a political means through which to take power and express themselves. But I was wrong. These revolutions, led by mostly secular young people, resulted in a rise of Islamic extremism across the Arab world.

The idea that a secular revolution can turn violently extremist seems somewhat paradoxical, but – as a Frenchman – does not come as a complete surprise. We in France know well that there is a close relationship between revolutions and terrorism. Four years after the fall of the Bastille – the infamous Parisian prison – at the start of the French revolution, we had the 'reign of terror' where the revolution radicalised and started killing its own partisans in huge numbers. Revolutions and radicalisation have a strong connection – just think, how many contemporary extremist groups have revolutionary words in their names.

From the very beginning of the Arab Spring, jihadist groups did the best they could in order to play with the MENA-region revolutions. Al Qaeda's general directives, for instance, are very revealing and show their intention to unite the people against a common enemy; convincing the revolutionaries that after the tyrannical leaders were overthrown, they could negotiate how things would look moving forwards. Doing so, they turned revolutionary rebels into 'jihadi-compatible' actors, allying them with extremist causes and preparing them for full-blown radicalisation.

The following revival of the jihadi current was then facilitated by two main factors. Violent government repression of the revolutions fuelled hatred, which militarised and then radicalised revolutionaries. And the sectarianism of the ethnic conflicts in Libya and the Shia-Sunni rift in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen, allowed Sunni Groups to play on division; claiming to be acting as defenders of Sunnis against offensive Shias. This was very successful, and many Sunnis joined ISIS because of this fear of the Shia.

The current was also exacerbated by the Gulf crisis with divisions between Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar and Turkey. This division terribly weakened the Syrian opposition because the different opposition groups were split between several sponsors. At some points, loyalty to these sponsors became more important than opposition to the Syrian leadership, creating fertile ground for the promotion of various extremist ideologies.

In reality, I don't believe that ISIS invented anything, but it was just very good at market analyses and analysing history – what did work in the past, and how this could be maximised. If there was any breakthrough in the actions of ISIS, it was in the scale of its radicalisation. For the first time in the West, we were concerned about waves of thousands of our own people – not just those from developing countries – being radicalised. We saw an impressive influx of people from all around the world, including large numbers of Westerners, leave the relative comfort of their societies to fight in war zones. Most that left joined ISIS and other jihadi factions, but it is important to also mention the large numbers that joined anti-jihadi groups. Most of them came from the far right or far left, joining the Iraqi and Syrian Kurds, with other Western groups supporting the Syrian regime or some – especially from Christian groups – fighting in Iraq. This is very similar to what we can see on the Islamic side; a sort of 'humanitarian jihad'.

However, the fact that such large numbers of people seized the different conflicts is highly problematic because their readings of the situations were fantasised. They claimed to be fighting for freedom, against sectarian struggles, ethnic divisions, etc, which were enticing narratives that contaminated communities back home. Such narratives expedited radicalisation as they oversimplified the conflicts, playing on grievances to gain people's support for much more sinister agendas.

It is crucial that we consider the ongoing, unstable situations in Syria and Iraq. In Syria, the victory of the regime is to a huge extent due to the Russian military support and diplomatic agility, especially in its spectacular reconciliation with Turkey. But the country is destroyed and ruined, and society is torn apart. In Iraq, where governance is better, the leadership still faces difficulties in addressing the aspirations of the people. Recent violence undermines confidence that the current regime can succeed.

Whilst huge military efforts by a coalition of local and international forces have succeeded in bringing about the caliphate's collapse (because a majority in the region wanted it), there is no consensus of what should come after and this is very dangerous. The main factors that allowed the caliphate to record such impressive successes and gain ground at a vertiginous speed remain: the political and economic frustrations of the people, sectarian and ethnic rifts, and government violence in response to the aspirations of citizens. There are still notable regional and international interferences, which continue to contribute to instability in Syria and Iraq. And in the West, we now must carefully handle the return of foreign terrorist fighters in order to prevent further radicalisation.

For now, the fate of the Idlib pocket remains a question with no good answer. Throughout history and across continents, it's clear that the best environment for terrorism to proliferate is in unsolved conflict. Due to its complexity, it provides fertile ground for the uptake of conspiracy theories and simplistic explanations, through which people can project powerful, binary, global narratives.

'Islamogauchisme': the unholy alliance

Dr Tommaso Virgili, Research Associate,
The Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies

In Europe, references to radicalisation typically evoke in our minds Islamism or the far–right (at times inconsistently, but this is not the subject of this article). We tend thereby to overlook the threat that the far-left, too, poses to our liberal democratic societies, both in its own radical fringes, and in its recurrent collusion with Islamist extremism.

As a necessary premise, this proximity assumes two different shapes.

Concerning the classical radical left, it shares with Islamism the theoretical similarities characterising all totalitarian ideologies, epitomised in the concepts of utopia, Machiavellianism and polarisation – ie the absolute idea of a sacralised, perfect end-state to attain which every means is legitimate, including the dehumanisation and annihilation of all the foes not espousing it.[1] Clearly, the ideas and principles whereupon the utopia is based may considerably differ between one ideology and the other. Such, in fact, was the case between the classical Marxist left and Islamism, the former being pugnaciously atheist, materialistic and religiophobic – to the point, when in power, of brutally eradicating religions and persecuting believers.[2]

This pivotal hiatus has progressively shrunk among modern leftists (both democratic and not), who are often closing the ranks with Islamists in the name of postcolonialism, anti-imperialism, identity politics and multiculturalism. This is the second form of proximity - what Maajid Nawaz (Muslim ftormer extremist now fighting radicalisation) defines the 'regressive left':

'I call them "regressive leftists"; they are in fact reverse racists. They have a poverty of expectation for minority groups, believing them to be homogenous and inherently opposed to human rights values. They are culturally reductive in how they see "Eastern"— and in my case, Islamic— culture, and they are culturally deterministic in attempting to freeze their ideal of it in order to satisfy their orientalist fetish. While they rightly question every aspect of their "own" Western culture in

the name of progress, they censure liberal Muslims who attempt to do so within Islam, and they choose to side instead with every regressive reactionary in the name of "cultural authenticity" and anticolonialism. […] They hold what they think of as "native" communities— and I use that word deliberately—to lesser standards than the ones they claim apply to all "their" people, who happen to be mainly white, and that's why I call it reverse racism.' [3]

On the same vein, Muslim scholar and human rights activist Elham Manea argues:

'The old radical left, Kenan Malik tells us, slowly lost its faith in secular universalism and Enlightenment ideas of rationalism and humanism. Instead, they began talking about multiculturalism and group rights, decrying those Enlightenment ideas as 'Eurocentric': part of a Euro-American project imposed on other people. For decades, they had argued that everyone should be equal despite their racial, ethnic, religious or cultural differences. Now they pushed the idea that different people should be treated differently precisely because of such differences.' [4]

The example of Belgium, and significantly of its notorious Molenbeek district – epicentre of many terrorist networks involved in recent attacks – is emblematic of this collusion. Its late socialist mayor, Philippe Moureaux, was accused of having built a clientelistic system leaving free rein to radical Islam in exchange for electoral support.[5] This bond was so entrenched that when the Belgian-Moroccan journalist Hind Fraihi released her famous inquiry, 'Undercover in Molenbeek',[6] unveiling an underworld of criminality and extremism, Moureaux, far from addressing those issues, called upon the local imams to join forces against the book.[7] In a similar vein, the author, comedian and free speech activist, Sam Touzani – Molenbeek's native ex-Muslim – reports that Moureaux in person vetoed him from performing in public cultural centres due to his outspoken atheism and criticism of Islamic conservatism and Islamist circles.[8]

This situation is far from being unique. A documentary recently released in France, significantly titled, 'Islamogauchisme. La Trahison du Rêve Européen',[9] portrays many similar episodes. Just to mention one: in the second round of municipal elections in the Parisian banlieue of Sarcelles, the far-left party *France Insoumise* campaigned against the centre-left candidate and in support of Sami Debah,[10] founder of the *Collectif contre l'Islamophobie* and former preacher of the ultra-orthodox Islamist movement *Tabliqh*.[11]

It is particularly interesting to analyse these phenomena in light of the intrinsic contradiction with the supposed leftist values: secularism, feminism, LGBT rights, anti-clericalism, rupture of traditional mores, and so on. For some reason, those seem to stop before the gates of Islam.[12] For instance, Philippe Val, former Charlie Hebdo director, reported that many on the left claimed the real victims to be not the assassinated journalists (massacred by a jihadist commando over satirical pictures of the prophet Muhammad), but Muslims 'stigmatised' by the magazine.[13] Curiously – just to make an example out of many – no analogous accusations were hurled when the same journal published a depiction of a crucified Christ with a penis in place of the nose and testicles covering his eyes.[14]

On the same vein, a march against Islamophobia organised by the abovementioned *Collectif contre l'Islamophobie* (founded by a Salafist preacher, as said, and considered close to the Muslim Brotherhood and to several radical ideologues[15]), witnessed the participation of many far-leftist groups and even feminists,[16] who did not show any particular embarrassment to close the ranks with Islamists of different sorts, including an ultra-conservative imam arguing that a woman should obey her husband, not leave the marital house without his consent, and be sexually available upon his needs.[17] And yet, just a few weeks later, a group of around 50 self-proclaimed 'anti-capitalist anti-fascists' disrupted a living crèche of primary school children in Toulouse, shouting 'stop the fachos'.[18] Regardless of any consideration on who is the fascist here, one could only assume that certain leftists regard kids singing in a Christmas choir as a greater threat to democracy than extremist imams.

The feminist complaisance with Islamism should not be surprising if one just considers that even denouncing sexual abuses, female genital mutilations (sometimes referred to as 'cutting', out of cultural sensitivity[19]), and sharia courts curtailing women's rights, has become an instance of 'Islamophobia' for many left-wing 'progressives'.[20]

When it comes to LGBT rights, the leftist bewilderment is as fascinating. During the 2017 London Pride, the Council of Ex-Muslims of Britain (CEMB) raised placards saying 'Allah is gay'; not only did the police try (unlawfully) to get them down, but the Pride organisers – far from taking the side of those protesting against homophobia in Islamic countries and communities – threatened to ban the CEMB from participating in the next parade, with the following motivation: 'If anyone taking part in our parade makes someone feel ostracised, discriminated against or humiliated, then they are undermining and breaking the very principles on which we exist. […] We will not tolerate Islamophobia.' [21]

All of this happened even as placards reading 'God is gay' and 'Jesus had two fathers' went completely unobserved and unchallenged.[22]

In another occurrence, a gay pride organised by a right-wing journalist in a predominantly Muslim neighbourhood of Stockholm (with the not concealed intent to defy the Islamist occupation of the public space), was condemned as 'provocative and Islamophobic' by LGBT and left-wing activists; a local resident, member of the Social Democrats, even called it 'an insult' against a group.[23] While criticism against the political vested interests of the organisers could have been understandable, less so was disparaging the march itself: it is not a venial sin for civil rights activists to consciously – and selectively – forget that they very nature of such demonstrations is, in fact, to provoke and distress all those not accepting people's rights and diversity.

Someone had already labelled a gay parade a 'provocation' and 'insult' against 'believers and their rights': it was Forza Nuova, the most radical neo-fascist Italian party.[24]

These are just a few anecdotes reflecting a wider phenomenon.

How did it happen that forces having always vaunted to fight bigotry in all its forms found themselves aligned with an antisemitic, misogynist and homophobic religious ideology?

Let us be clear here: the far-right does not show a different level of coherence in its slogans and battles, and it is ready to exploit identitarian or liberal topics with a xenophobic agenda.

And yet, this is but another argument for the adoption of a universalistic moral compass. Disrupting a religious celebration is an act of intolerance, whatever the perpetrator and the religion involved. Invoking the concept of 'provocation' to prevent a gay parade, or censoring religious criticism and satire, are acts of bigotry, no matter the justification and actors involved. Allowing religious courts to curtail Muslim women's rights is more an evocation of the Inquisition tribunals, and an act of racism, than an enlightened demonstration of cultural respect.[25] Allowing crimes for the sake of countering 'Islamophobia'[26] is criminal, racist and offensive for Muslims.

Our societies need a collective effort against extremism of all hues and colours.

The leftist ideological and political acquiescence to Islamism is not rendering a good service to the liberal and progressive voices within the Muslim communities, who are currently fighting the same battles that once constituted the left's greatest pride.

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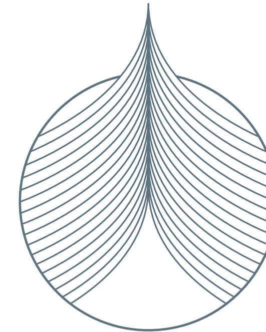

Women, Women's Organisations and Countering/Preventing Violent Extremism

Seran de Leede, Independent Researcher; Associate Fellow at the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism

The following is a subtract from the author's contribution to the NATO Science for Peace and Security Series Vol. 144 'Enhancing Women's Roles in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE)', edited by Sara Zeiger, Rogelio Alonso, José Herrera and Lilah el Sayed.

Countering the rise of violent extremist groups is one of the top priorities on the international security agenda. Violent extremism – defined here as the willingness of non-state actors to use violence to further beliefs of a political, social or ideological nature[1] – is understood as a highly complex, multi-layered and clustered phenomenon. So, while short-term security or military measures are critical in preventing imminent attacks, countering and preventing violent extremism (CVE/PVE) in the long term requires a broader approach that tackles conditions deemed conducive to the rise of violent extremism. These conditions can include, but are not limited to economic, political and social marginalisation, situations where human rights are violated and where good governance is ignored, prolonged unresolved conflicts and ethnic, national and religious discrimination. This broader approach requires international cooperation on different levels and between various fields such as development, civil society and security.[2] Women's organisations can play a valuable role in this wider approach for different reasons.

First of all, by working on improving human rights and gender equality, by combatting discrimination and gender-based violence, by mediating in local conflicts and by promoting tolerance and inclusive societies, they contribute to the creation of stable societies and in effect connect to or overlap with CVE efforts. This alone makes them CVE relevant. In addition, women's organisations, like most civil society organisations (CSOs), typically have close ties to their communities and can operate in areas where state-control is limited. They are often well aware of lives in their communities, what the grievances are, if and in what form CVE/PVE-related programmes could work and how to best

implement them. This makes them key partners in developing effective CVE/PVE programmes. By extension, local women's organisations can help raise awareness of the risks of radicalisation and violent extremism among women that are difficult to reach, for example in communities where women engage less in the public domain.[3]

Furthermore, women have historically been successful in community-based peacebuilding and local mediation efforts.[4] Their experiences, contacts and position can contribute to optimising CVE/PVE efforts. Also, improving women's rights can potentially have a positive impact on preventing violent extremism. Explorative studies argue there is a relation between the improvement of women's rights and gender equality to circumstances favourable to CVE/PVE such as economic development and political diversity.[5] They argue educating girls boosts development, as educated women generally have fewer children, provide better nutrition, health and education to their families and generate more income than women with little or no schooling. And, women are, according to these studies, more likely to reinvest money into the family.[6] In addition, women who work have a chance of gaining financial independence, which potentially gives them a stronger voice in family situations and in society as a whole.[7] Subsequently, improving women's rights contributes to the creation of more stable societies that prove generally to be more resilient to violent extremism.[8]

While women's organisations can be powerful allies in combatting violent extremism, there are serious concerns and challenges that need to be taken into account when linking women's efforts to the security agenda. There is a risk for example that women's organisations are becoming legitimate targets in the eyes of violent extremists who might retaliate against them.[9] Also, there is a risk that only those objectives that serve the security agenda will be used instrumentally, without a broader commitment to other objectives such as equality, autonomy and discrimination against women.[10] Furthermore, women's empowerment could become a tool to curb violent extremism instead of an objective in itself, which could open up the possibility of women's rights being bartered away for short-term security gains.[11] Furthermore, in certain contexts, the relationship of trust between women's groups and local communities may be compromised if their programming is believed to be serving an externally imposed (Western) security agenda.[12]

And finally, programming aimed at including women in CVE/PVE efforts often focus on the role of women as mothers, working from the assumption that women are ideally situated to recognise early warning signs of radicalisation and to transfer ideals of inclusion to the next generation. While these programmes can be effective, through a gender lens, this emphasis on women as mothers is problematic, as stereotyping women primarily as mothers is a setback for gender equality that goes against the very core objective of many women's rights organisations. It confines women's role to that of concerned family member, suggests women are a homogenous group and reinforces the assumption that women are inherently more peaceful than men. This is not to say that women cannot be important partners in CVE/PVE efforts. As women can experience war and conflict differently than men, a female perspective can optimise efforts aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism. Women should therefore be represented in all levels including policy-shaping, community-engagement, education and law-enforcement.[13]

Taken the above raised concerns seriously, women and women's organisations can prove powerful allies in countering and preventing violent extremism. Their objectives and programming, which should be acknowledged as important in their own right, can contribute to, or overlap with, countering and preventing violent extremism on the long term. Women and women's organisations' experiences, perceptions and positions can bring forward different perspectives on security issues that may help optimise CVE/PVE efforts and should for this reason alone be taken seriously in any peace and security related debates and decisions.

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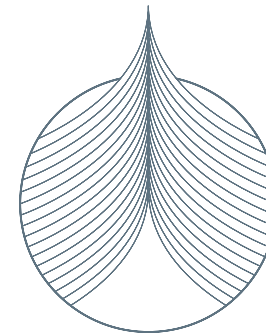


Youth Leadership Approach to Preventing Violent Extremism

Thalia Malmberg, Programme Officer, Human Security Collective (HSC)

Adapted from HSC's handbook, 'Time to Engage with Youth at Centre Stage: The Human Security Collective Approach to Youth Leadership on Preventing Violent Extremism'

Violent Extremism

Current knowledge on Violent Extremism (VE) is influenced by radicalisation theories developed by social scientists. These theories explain ways in which individuals radicalise through an interplay between so-called push and pull factors. Drivers that push individuals to ultimately join violent extremist or terrorist groups may include structural conditions such as poverty, and grievances, such as lack of access to justice or political processes. Individual psychological and emotional conditions, such as the need for belonging and the validation of one's identity, and trauma or feelings of displacement can also be push factors. Additionally, the continuation of cycles of violence brought on by wars, chronic conflict and the absence or failure of the state in addressing the underlying causes of conflict can also be push factors. Pull factors may include the influence of socialisation and the group dynamics of family, peers, schools and religious institutions and leaders, and exposure to charismatic recruiters and their extremist ideas and narratives.

The way that push and pull factors intersect can impact the appeal of VE ideology, but none of these factors are determinative, and even within communities, the reasons for individuals joining these groups can vary dramatically. There is no single profile in terms of who is vulnerable to VE, or a clear-cut pathway to VE, or even a consistent set of factors driving people to VE.

The complex and context-specific nature of the drivers to VE also reinforces the important role of community members, whose unique insights into their communities are vital in understanding and overcoming grievances. Though they may be difficult to reach, it is vital that their

perceptions and analysis on grievances and structural conditions conducive to VE are taken into account. This always forms the entry point in our approach to Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE).

Youth Leadership

The recognition and inclusion of youth is a crucial part of our philosophy to building sustainable Human Security within communities. Young people often have in-depth knowledge of the issues at stake in their communities, yet are poorly involved in the design of policies and in practice to tackle root causes that lead to violence, such as a sense of alienation or a lack of future prospects. A Human Security approach is participatory in nature and starts from the assumption that youth are capable of bringing about positive change. It recognises youth as a valuable ally and therefore includes them as stakeholders in the design, development and implementation of our programmes.

Youth have a unique and important outlook on the issues at stake in their communities, which is critical for policymakers to understand in order to build more resilient communities. They often have better access to and credibility in the eyes of their peers, especially those that are hard-to-reach for public authorities. They also have specific knowledge and expertise, such as knowledge of the dynamics, customs and cultural references of a group/community. They can act as an intermediary or bridge for communication and dialogue between public officials, and individuals/groups reluctant to engage with, or hostile to, for instance, the police. Our reasoning is that further understanding of why young people are willing to take the path of VE is something that young people living in marginalised communities understand best.

Applying Human Security principles to a Youth Leadership programme on PVE

A Human Security approach is people centred, beginning at the grassroots, starting with individuals in communities and garnering their perceptions on the drivers of VE. It allows for a comprehensive viewpoint on the drivers of VE and may include aspects that security stakeholders do not acknowledge as having a direct causal relationship to VE. Our Human Security Approach to Youth Leadership on PVE seeks to strengthen communities to overcome systemic drivers of polarisation, marginalisation and disenfranchisement so as to prevent people from taking the path that leads to VE. More importantly, it contributes to robust communities as an end in itself. It acknowledges that youth, women and communities are

essential when it comes to analysing and identifying solutions to overcome issues they are facing in their communities. It highlights the fact that young people are equal partners, and that it is about working 'with' young people, not working 'on' them. It takes into consideration the contexts and experiences needed to work with youth effectively.

Multi-Stakeholder Engagement and Facilitated Dialogue

When working to address the issue of VE, different sectors of public policy such as education, health, and economic and social development need to be engaged with in a way that does not further exacerbate perceived or real discrimination or marginalisation. It is, therefore, imperative that programmes that work to address VE show sincere interest in the issues identified by young people themselves, rather than only focus on narrowly defined 'PVE'-labelled outcomes. In addition to those governmental actors, civil society plays a crucial role as it is often the more credible actor and also usually more knowledgeable on local dynamics. Civil society can help identify and work to address grievances as well as help bridge the gap between government authorities and communities, bringing different parts of the whole system together.

As an interdisciplinary concept, Human Security acknowledges the need for a dialogue between the security apparatus and citizens. On the one hand, this means citizens need to understand strategies, policies and programmes developed at the local, national, regional and international levels. On the other, it means that policymakers need to be kept well-informed by citizens on the issues that they perceive as contributing to their insecurity. Lack of safety in communities is not simply a security issue but has deep social and economic roots and consequences. A better understanding of these perceptions of safety often needs to be a facilitated process, given the critical need to rebuild trust between citizens and the government in many communities. Only by bridging this gap can we work towards a more effective approach to enhance safety in our communities. If government authorities are serious about PVE, their approach must take seriously the voices of young people.

It is therefore useful to reiterate that the entry point is to work on the local conditions that young people from the neighbourhood themselves identify as possible push and pull factors, and that they themselves are passionate about changing. It recognises young people in their capacity to contribute to Human Security and youth resilience in their neighbourhood.

Fostering Youth and Women's Engagement in Security Policies: a PVE approach in Tunisia

Andrea Cellino, Head of North Africa Desk, the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF)

The author wishes to thank Alizée Henry and Roberta Maggi for their help in preparing and finalising this contribution

Tunisia has the highest national per capita rate of foreign fighters worldwide in the last decade. Although Tunisians' involvement in foreign jihadi movements predates 2011, several internal and international factors transformed this into a national phenomenon after the revolution, leading thousands to join Jabhat al-Nusra (JN) or the Islamic State (IS) in Syria as of 2013. According to Tunisian authorities, approximately 3000 young Tunisians joined jihadi movements. Recent studies seem to confirm these official figures: around 27000 Tunisians tried to join jihadi movements, but only 2900 actually made it to the conflict zones, initially in Syria and Iraq, then in Libya.[1]

In the words of Aaron Y. Zelin, the reasons for such a phenomenon can be traced to several factors, the strongest ones being internal: 'many Tunisians became disillusioned with post-revolution politics, especially well-educated youths, who experienced unemployment at extremely high rates. Despite the gradual political progress in Tunisia over the past eight years, economic rewards have yet to emerge, spurring some to radicalise.' Moreover, 'to atone for perceived past sins, some individuals with criminal pasts joined jihadist groups to redeem themselves.'[2]

In addition, after 2014, an increased number of returnee fighters (up to 1000, according to the President of Tunisia's National Counter-Terrorism Commission, Mokhtar Ben Nasr) started posing significant national security and socio-economic threats to the country. Whilst this triggered huge public concern, it has not been properly tackled by the authorities, who have failed to adopt a clear return and social reintegration policy for disenfranchised youth, women and minors in what remains a difficult social environment.

Tunisian authorities tend to view the issue of violent extremism mainly through a security lens, which

translates into heavy reliance on the police and military, often casting holistic measures of prevention aside. Such an approach presents two inherent dangers: firstly, 'soft' initiatives against extremism might be neglected and, secondly, human and civil rights run the risk of being marginalised in a securitised setting. One example for this are in fact Tunisian prisons: while the government acknowledges the need to address the difficult conditions therein, isolation and tougher security measures remain the go-to practice.

The Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF), an organisation working in countries in transition to support governments' efforts in Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Governance (SSG), has been present in Tunisia since 2011 and works with the authorities, independent institutions, and civil society on reform programmes.[3] As SSR contributes to strengthening both state legitimacy and public service provision, it can also serve the purpose of preventing violent extremism by addressing some of its many root causes.

Several international organisations are working with Tunisian youth on preventing violent extremism (PVE). DCAF has chosen a more inclusive approach, seeking to engage youth in SSG considerations without starting from a narrow PVE/CVE perspective: contributing to holistic youth policies with the aim to prevent and reduce youth crime as a potential road to violent behaviour, and strengthening public institutions with a youth protection mandate are the priorities of DCAF's Youth and Security Programme.

In this framework, an initial project, implemented in 2017 and 2018, consisted of mapping security perceptions and needs of youth between 15 and 29 in six Tunisian municipalities (Tataouine, Metlaoui, Kasserine, Monstair, Ariana and Bizerte). Together with a youth NGO (Réseau Alternatif des Jeunes – Youth Alternative Network), DCAF conducted a survey touching upon all aspects of human security. It also probed the degree of satisfaction with public services; reasons for the lack of trust in public security providers; problems they see in their functioning; and the solutions young people would envisage to fix them. A number of young volunteers (seven from each municipality) were recruited and trained on SSG/R issues and survey techniques to interview more than 2500 young Tunisians. The data collected was analysed and discussed in a series of focus groups with different samples of young people in the same six pilot-municipalities, in order to cross-check the validity of the quantitative findings. Finally, a report in Arabic and English, summarising, analysing and cross-referencing the results of both quantitative and qualitative surveys, was submitted to the authorities at both local and national levels.[4] The recommendations on youth priorities for their own security and on how to build trust with public authorities, including security forces, stimulated the government's interest in developing a national and comprehensive policy framework for youth crime prevention, including violent extremism. A series of conferences were organised by the Presidency of the Republic on precisely such youth-related issues. In addition, the Tunisian government has acknowledged the need to improve local governance to prevent youth crime and has requested DCAF's support to address the matter.

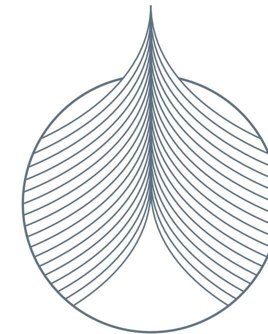
In parallel, DCAF has launched a support program for the General Child Protection Delegate (DGPE), whose mandate consists of assisting endangered minors and offering mediation as an alternative to penal justice for minors in conflict with the law. DCAF's support to DGPE is twofold. On the one hand, DCAF works on increasing the visibility of this institution and its protection prerogatives amongst the population. On the other, DCAF builds the capacity of child protection delegates who are in charge of conducting oversight visits of detention centres for minors. Difficult relations with public authorities, particularly security forces, are considered one of the root causes of radicalisation in Tunisia. Therefore, strengthening access of minors to restorative justice mechanisms as well as improving the detention conditions of those who are already incarcerated may contribute to building trust between youth and public authorities.

The drivers that perpetrate violent extremist acts (whether within or outside terrorist groups), the roles performed, the impacts of violent extremism and terrorism, and state responses to them across time, region and ideology vary across genders. Accordingly, integrating a gendered perspective is a pre-requisite for successful PVE, coupled with Counter Terrorism (CT) measures that do not violate fundamental human rights. Moreover, these efforts can be designed and implemented to reinforce the UNSCR 1325 Women, Peace and Security Agenda by amplifying women's voices and participation. In fact, in Tunisia, DCAF supports the implementation of UN SC Resolution 2242 which, building on Resolution 1325, recognises the need to engage with women on PVE. The resolution emphasises empowering women, to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism (para. 13).[5]

In cooperation with the Centre for Research, Studies and Documentation on Women (CREDIF) – placed under the authority of the Tunisian

Ministry of Women, Family, Childhood and Seniors – DCAF organised a national workshop on 'Promoting a gender approach in preventing violent extremism activities'. The objectives of this workshop were to discuss the links between domestic violence, gender-based violence and violent extremism and to initiate reflections about the role that families, especially women can play in preventing radicalisation. DCAF and CREDIF submitted a list of recommendations to the Tunisian government. The two organisations also signed of a memorandum of understanding in September 2019 to contribute to a global project, in partnership with the University Monash in Australia, in order to identify causes and motivations that lead young people to radicalisation and violence. In this framework, workshops will be organised with youth organisations and CSOs in Tunisia.

Ultimately, aside from the doctrine one adheres to when it comes to PVE's scale, it is undeniable that youth and women need to be included in the process if we wish to move past this period of radicalisation. It is the first step towards improving social equity and, as a result, Tunisia's social fabric.



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2. Ibid., Zelin, 2018
3. SSR is the political and technical process of improving state and human security by making security provision, management and oversight more effective and more accountable, within a framework of democratic civilian control, rule of law and respect for human rights. The goal of SSR is to apply the principles of good governance to the security sector. For DCAF definitions of SSR and SSG see: https://www.dcaf.ch/about-ssgr
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The Greek Extreme Right: a vicious circle in history

Dr Vasiliki Tsagkroni, Assistant Professor of Comparative Politics
at the Institute of Political Science, Leiden University

Was the rise of Golden Dawn really a thunderbolt, or was it something that was always there and managed to come to the surface?

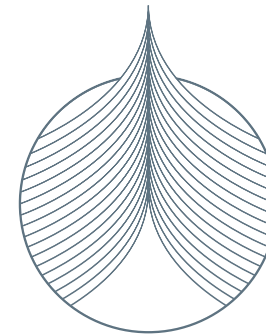
The story of the Greek Extreme Right dates back to 1920s, when the first fascist organisations started to emerge in various forms, operating mostly on a local level, without a national breakthrough. In 1936 the dictatorship of Ioannis Metaxas was imposed, followed by censorship, terrorism and arrests, and many of these organisations were banned. In the period of the occupation, the security battalions initiative appeared. Founded in 1943 by the occupation government, they cooperated with the occupation army against the resistance. After the war, in the 1960s, some new groups emerged like the National Student Social Organisation or the Sacred Tie of Greek Officers, preparing the ground for the imposition of the dictatorship of Georgios Papadopoulos in 1967. The dictatorship lasted for 7 years (1967-1974) and ended with the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, which did not leave much room for extreme right organisations to act. After the dictatorship, the junta's nostalgia was never lacking, but for many years it did not gain significant support. As pointed out extensively by researchers focusing on the Greek case, the relatively recent experience of military dictatorship and the memories that are a living legacy for a numerically significant part of the electorate created a shield of protection against such extreme choices. However, over the years these memories fade, and in the 1990s, Macedonian immigration and the issue of identities proved that there was again a potential for the emergence and consolidation of extreme right ideas.

The contemporary rise of the extreme right was signalled by the strengthening of LAOS (Popular Orthodox Rally) by G. Karatzaferis and his involvement in Papademos's government (November 2011). LAOS took advantage of the fact that some democratic parties did not isolate it in a timely manner, and instead decided to cooperate with it for reasons of interest. The party of LAOS is the first successful political establishment in this area.

But Karatzaferis's decision to support the Papademos government proved to be fateful for the future of the party, which saw his supporters fleeing away towards Golden Dawn. The party since its emergence in the 1980s has been associated with practices of violence and persecution groups and has been controlled under the 'leader's principle'. With the entrance of Golden Dawn in the Greek parliament, a sense of risk of the quality of democracy started to appear, reflecting not just on the established political system but also to the country's core democratic framework.

The Golden Dawn is neither an unexpected nor a new phenomenon, but it is part of a historical continuum of extreme-right manifestations in Greece. In order to comprehend the main reasons for the rise of Golden Dawn we need to look closer to the socio-economic context; the turndowns and changes that created a window of opportunity for the party to emerge (the economic crisis, the political crisis which created space for a deregulation of political and ideological initiatives, and the refugee crisis). Golden Dawn managed to reflect the frustration against the rulers and political establishment parties and protest the Troika's imposed austerity measures along with building on fear and rage, empowering the party's anti-immigration rhetoric of hate. The party lost its support, but the Extreme Right scene in the country didn't. At present, the Greek Solution party stands strongly in the parliament representing the extreme right family, building on similar arguments of nationalism and anti-immigration as its predecessors.

The Greek case teaches us that despite being a pariah for decades, despite the inner conflict and variations (structural, ideological and expressive), the Extreme Right had and maintained a strong internal power – something that led many of its representatives to the national parliament. Their presence in the country's political scene indicates that the narratives of the extreme right still appear to appeal to the electorate that continuously provides them with a platform of visibility. In contrast, counternarratives seem to be failing to tackle the core in a society that finds shelter in the Extreme Right and to create an essential framework of defence against them. With constant changes in the society, the vicious circle that makes the Extreme Right a factor in the Greek case, one thing is for sure: there is still a long path to understand and reflect on this evolving phenomenon.



Azerbaijan Has Much to Contribute to Relations Between Europe and the Muslim World

Ramazan Samadov, an Azerbaijani intellectual living in Europe

For a Muslim-majority country in a neighbourhood that includes Russia, Iran and Turkey, effective foreign policy in Azerbaijan is necessary for basic survival as well as an essential tool for capitalising on regional opportunities. Located at the crossroads of the major trade and energy routes between East and West, North (Russia) and South (Iran), and maintaining the secularity of a state with a Muslim heritage, Azerbaijan is a natural bridge between Europe and Asia, the Muslim and Christian worlds, and a gateway to energy and international transportation corridors for its region. As the world attempts to tackle the global rise of radicalisation, Azerbaijan, as a Muslim-majority secular state, could be a valuable partner for Europe in looking at how to tackle radical Islam.

Despite more than 90% of the Azerbaijani population being Muslims, people prefer not to be labelled as such. Azerbaijan is a member of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) as well as a member of the Council of Europe. The people of Azerbaijan have been Shamans, Christians, Sunnis, and Shias during different periods of their history, which has been a good tool to protect themselves from external threats. When Russia gets too close, they would say they are Muslims; when Turkey does so, they say they are Shia; and when Iran approaches them, they are Turks. Another fact which is interesting to mention is that, according to a recent Gallup Poll, Azerbaijan is one of the most irreligious countries in the Muslim world, with about 53% of respondents indicating the importance of religion in their life as being little or none. The same poll indicates that only 20% of respondents has attended religious services.

One of the spiritual fathers of Azerbaijan, Mirza Fatali Akhundov – the son of a mullah turned atheist playwright-philosopher – was one of the first notable people to start pushing forward secular ideas in Azerbaijan during the 19th century. To understand the scale of his role in our region, he is held in a similar regard as Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Voltaire in the West, and has even been referred to as the 'Molière of the Orient'.

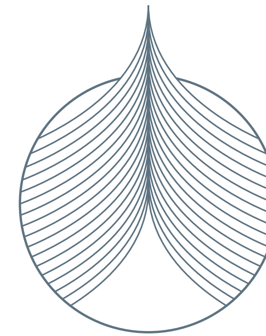
Akhundov sought to reform the country and develop a secular culture. A few decades after his birth, Azerbaijan had its own theatres, opera houses, newspapers, and even a magazine, called Molla Nasraddin – perhaps the world's first Charlie Hebdo, which published jokes and satirical cartoons of Islam and mullahs. These were all historic firsts for the Muslim and Turkic world. This occurred over a hundred years ago, and yet, no one was attacked.

Secularity in Azerbaijan has continued along this trajectory. It is even reflected in the Azerbaijani language – 'dunyəvi', the Azerbaijani word for secularity, literally translates as 'this-Worldliness'. In 1918, during the first Azerbaijani republic, there was a discussion about the country's national emblem – the flag. The Muslim faction of the Azerbaijani parliament wanted the colour green to appear at the top of the flag to represent the country's strong Islamic heritage. However, the majority-secular parliament decided against this, and while respecting that Islam is a part of Azerbaijan, argued that the green colour should be at the bottom of the flag. Above it, the blue represents the country's Turkic heritage, and the red, a symbol for the progress of Azerbaijani culture. This continues to serve as a good reflection of who Azerbaijanis are – the secular aspects of their national identity come before religion.

Azerbaijan was one of only two Muslim-majority countries to send troops to Iraq to support the US-led coalition during the Second Gulf War, and also contributed to the international effort against the Taliban in Afghanistan. It has also participated in NATO's Partnership for Peace programme and has had an Individual Partnership Agreement with that organisation since 2005.

Azerbaijan is well-placed to play a bridging role between the EU and its eastern neighbourhood; not only in the military, economic and energy contexts, but in adding its valuable understanding of Islam to European efforts to counter and prevent violent extremism.

Despite having its own experience of extremist factions – notably, pockets of Salafist radicals in the north of the country – prevention measures and counter radicalisation policies have generally been effective alongside the promotion of secular government institutions, showing Azerbaijan to have a solid immune system when it comes to religious radicalisation. All of these factors strengthen the argument that Azerbaijan – and secular states like it – could be a loyal and effective partner in combating Islamic radicalisation because of its resilience, and its experience of managing core problems related to the role of religion in society.



The Vicious Circle of Polarisation: how the West is creating the next wave of jihadist radicalisation

Guy Van Vlierden, Journalist, Het Laatste Nieuws - DPG Media, Antwerp

The West appears to be at a crossroads in terms of radicalisation. It is extremely hard to predict which kind will be the major threat for years to come – jihadism or the extreme right – but it is crystal clear that both are reinforcing each other. There are reasons to believe that the early success of far-right political parties in some countries contributed to the unprecedented number of foreign terrorist fighters. Similar to that, the way in which a possible return of foreign fighters and their relatives is handled now may become a breeding ground for the next wave of radicalisation among Muslims in the West.

If the aim of terrorism is to undermine a society in a grave manner, then the so-called Islamic State has succeeded to a great degree. The fear of its atrocities has largely contributed to the polarisation that is palpable today. Many Western countries see a rise of far-right political parties, fuelled by a mix of terrorism and migration issues – which are often, rightly or not, intertwined in the debate. In many countries, centrist parties also adopt a tougher line, not only in security matters, but also on identity, citizenship, and – let's be frank – their policy towards Islam.

According to the recently published 'Global Terrorism Index', the number of arrests linked to right-wing terrorism has increased in Europe for the third year in a row.[1] It is more than likely that the threshold of violence in that camp has been lowered by the fact that even respected political parties have started to support some of their ideas, with an increasingly aggressive tone.

The most worrisome factor is that principles held sacrosanct for decades are now called into question – and not only by fringe extremists. In Belgium, the second largest political party on the Dutch speaking side – the far-right 'Flemish Interest' – is currently campaigning against the repatriation of foreign terrorist fighters, contending that they don't belong in Belgium, but on the gallows in Iraq.[2] And in the Netherlands, even the party of the Prime Minister

appears to condone the execution of its own citizens.[3]

That is quite an accomplishment for a terrorist group, and in terms of influence on a society, more disturbing than the casualties it has made. The so-called Islamic State has tasked itself explicitly with creating this polarisation – or 'eliminating the grayzone', in its own words.[4] While it is clear that extremisms from both ends are mutually beneficial for each other, we should be worried about a vicious circle.

There are reasons to believe that the early success of far-right political parties in some countries contributed to the disproportionate number of their nationals involved as foreign fighters in the Syrian-Iraqi conflict.[5] In Belgium, burdened with the highest per-capita figure in Western Europe, that position is mostly explained by the presence of two highly-active recruitment organisations when the Syrian war began.

But why were these recruiters so successful? How could they attract many hundreds of young people, of whom dozens have joined the fight? No obvious difference seems to exist with neighbouring countries like the Netherlands in terms of socio-economic background of its Muslim population – and the once-held belief that integration went much smoother in the Netherlands has now definitely been abandoned.

One thing that differs, however, is that Belgium has a far-right political party that became influential already more than a quarter of a century ago. Back then known as 'Flemish Bloc', it tripled its share of the vote in 1991 – enlarging its presence in the federal parliament from 3 to 17 seats – and reached its peak of almost 25 percent in the regional elections in Flanders in 2004.

Although this 'Flemish Bloc' – reinvented as 'Flemish Interest' in 2004 – has never governed until now, it has already had a major impact on the debate about migration and Islam for decades. As a result, there's an entire generation within the Belgian Muslim community for whom the message that they are unwanted has always been omnipresent – spread on billboards throughout their cities, printed on leaflets dropped in their mailboxes, and proclaimed on national television.

When we listen to the jihadist recruiters themselves, it is clear that the sense of rejection with which this generation grew up, was a tremendously powerful tool. 'For more than 50 years now, Muslims are humiliated and forced to beg for simple rights, such as places to pray and locations for ritual slaughter.' That's what Fouad Belkacem, the founder of Sharia4Belgium, told his followers. 'Even when a Belgian Muslim speaks both official languages fluently, he constantly risks being treated like his grandfather back in the seventies', he continued.[6]

It is needless to say that the climate hasn't ameliorated during the past few years. And while we can hope that the boundless cruelty of the Islamic State has now chased away a significant part of its potential followers, in terms of rejection, the picture is bleaker than ever. We should realise how important it is, at a time when the immediate terrorist threat in the West has somewhat subsided, to handle the aftermath in a way that doesn't make things worse.

The main issue nowadays is the eventual return of foreign fighters and their relatives. Most specialists declare that for our own security, the least dangerous option is to repatriate and prosecute at home – while the moral argument that children should be taken out of harm's way is beyond any reasonable discussion.

Still, many Western governments refuse to act, seeking all kinds of excuses to keep these people – children included – away. As predicted a long time ago, their ostrich policy is resulting in a terrible chaos with people detained for more than a year now escaping, valuable sources of information disappearing again, and security services losing their sight on hundreds of potentially still dangerous individuals.

Apart from ethics and security, there's another – rarely mentioned – argument to bring these people back. By not doing so, we are emitting the signal that we really have second class citizens, to whom normal principles and procedures do not apply. By denying these children the mere right to live, and the adults the right to fair and just prosecution, we do confirm that they never have been full members of our society.

What do we think that will radicalise the next generation of potential jihadist recruits the most? That they are not allowed to wear a headscarf, or can't build a decent mosque, like the previous generation? Or the fact that we have let their five-year-old nephews and nieces die like animals, and excluded their brothers and sisters from our holy resistance against capital punishment? 'I know how terrorists are made', a former head of Denmark's State Security recently wrote. 'I know how hate is created, and the desire for revenge. And that is exactly what we do promote.'[7]

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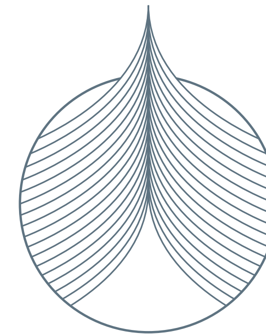


List of Participants of the Roundtable

The Hague, 28 November 2019

Kamel Al-Khatti	European Eye on Radicalization
Mansour Alnogaidan	Harf & Fasela Media Foundation
Rimoun Beshay	Harf & Fasela Media Foundation
Dr Sara Brzuszkiewicz	European Eye on Radicalization
Jonne Catshoek	Elva Community Engagement
Andrea Cellino	DCAF
Riyad Hassan	European Eye on Radicalization
Nicolas Henin	Former War Reporter; Consultant, Trainer, and Writer on Counterterrorism and Counter-extremism
Mahmoud Hussein	Harf & Fasela Media Foundation
Olivia Kearney	NextGen 5.0
Seran de Leede	Independent Researcher; ICCT
Thalia Malmberg	Human Security Collective
William Murray	LINKS Europe
Sara Naitbach	Harf & Fasela Media Foundation
Rob Out	RAN Expert Pool; Counter Terrorism Extremism and Radicalisation, National Police, Netherlands
Kyle Orton	European Eye on Radicalization
Amanda Paul	European Policy Centre
Dr Amal Sakr	Harf & Fasela Media Foundation
Ramazan Samadov	EU Solutions
Dr Dennis Sammut	LINKS Europe
Hanan Shafey	Harf & Fasela Media Foundation
Dr Vasiliki Tsagkroni	Leiden University
Renske van der Veer	ICCT
Dr Lorenzo Vidino	George Washington University
Dr Tommaso Virgili	Wilfried Martens Centre
Guy Van Vlierden	Het Laatste Nieuws - DPG Media

THE HAGUE

CONVERSATIONS ON CONFLICT

The roundtable, Radicalisation and the Spread of Violent Conflicts, on 28 November 2019, was followed by a public event at The Hague Humanity Hub as part of the series The Hague Conversations on Conflict.

The public event featured presentations by three of the roundtable's participants:

- Amanda Paul, The European Policy Centre (EPC), presented the findings of a book that she co-edited, Guns and Glory: Criminality, imprisonment and jihadist extremism in Europe. She discussed push and pull factors leading to Islamic radicalisation in Europe, and the specific issue of Islamic radicalisation in prisons.

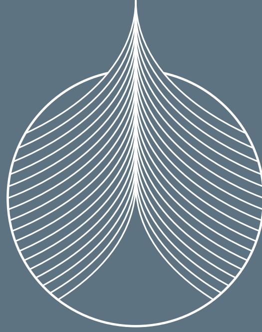
- Kamel Al-Khatti, European Eye on Radicalization, brought attention to the issue of Shia Islamic radicalisation. He gave a historical summary of radical Shia movements in Saudi Arabia from the 1950s to the present day.

- Jonne Catshoek, Elva Community Engagement, addressed the rift between development programming and security policy. Giving examples from the Sahel region, he argued that it essential to build trust between local communities and their security providers or risk perpetuating the cycle of radicalisation.

A summary of the roundtable discussion alongside a transcript of the public event is available online at:

https://commonspace.eu/uploads/Radicalisation_Extremism_and_violent_conflict.pdf

PARTICIPANTS OF THE ROUNDTABLE, RADICALISATION AND THE SPREAD OF VIOLENT CONFLICTS, IN THE HAGUE ON 28 NOVEMBER 2019



LINKS Europe
Fluwelen Burgwal 58
2511 CJ The Hague
The Netherlands