

# Anti-Radicalisation Measures in the EU



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Radicalisation – both political and religious – presents one of the biggest security threats for European states and their democratic systems. The following analysis focuses at ways how to tackle militant Islamism, which at present seems to be the most serious challenge especially in the Western Europe. However, issues caused by Islamism or by fear of Islamism, do resonate in the Czech Republic as well.

In 2000–2010, it was al-Qaeda that was considered the most dangerous group for Europe and the western world as such. Nowadays one of the most serious threats for the EU is represented by the Islamic State (IS)<sup>1</sup> – and mainly its real and potential members originating from the EU countries, i.e. people who either may have already engaged in a fight or may have “only” accepted its doctrine of replacing democratic constitution with Islamic religious law. Each European country currently uses a different approach in treating IS supporters or supporters of other terrorist organisations and in responding to the radicalisation.

The combat against radicalisation does not apply to conflicts with Islamic radicalism only. Effective measures against the spread of Islamist ideology bring along side effects as well, such as weaker influence of extremist and populist parties, movements and ideologies that are gaining popularity just by targeting the alleged inaction of democratically elected governments. Current policies of European countries concerning radicalisation and the threat of terrorist attacks are threefold:

- **Political**

Attacks on Charlie Hebdo, the Jewish museum in Brussels, Jewish grocery store in Paris or in the holiday resort in Tunisia, all of which are associated with the Islamic State, forced political representatives to adopt stricter policies – especially Prime Ministers Cameron<sup>2</sup> and Valls<sup>3</sup> – and clearly define fundamental values of their countries. This clearly defined position took the well-known wind of the sails of those

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<sup>1</sup> Of all known Islamist groups, which operated in Europe, IS is by far the most successful when it comes to spreading propaganda among European Muslim population, whose members leave for war zones in Syria and Iraq, where they can be subjected to not only deeper indoctrination but above all military training and new military experience.

Charlotte McDonald-Gibson, “How ISIS Threatens Europe”, Time, <http://time.com/3720076/isis-europe-migrants/>

David Cameron literally said: “In Afghanistan, the Taliban were prepared to play host to al Qaeda, the terrorist organisation. With IS we are facing a terrorist organisation not being hosted in a country but seeking to establish and then violently expand its own terrorist state. With designs on expanding to Jordan, Lebanon, right up to the Turkish border, we could be facing a terrorist state on the shores of the Mediterranean and bordering a Nato member.” Anthony Bund, “ISIS pose 'greater threat to Britain than we've known before' and are MORE dangerous than Al-Qaeda”, Mirror, <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/isis-pose-greater-threat-britain-4130657>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/home-secretary-theresa-may-on-counter-terrorism>

<sup>2</sup> David Cameron defined this approach in his speech on 13 May 2015, when he said: “For too long, we have been a passively tolerant society, saying to our citizens: as long as you obey the law, we will leave you alone. It’s often meant we have stood neutral between different values. And that’s helped foster a narrative of extremism and grievance....We will be actively promoting certain values – freedom of speech, freedom of worship, democracy, the rule of law. Equal rights regardless of race, gender or sexuality. We must say to our citizens: this is what defines us as a society.” <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/counter-extremism-bill-national-security-council-meeting>

<sup>3</sup> “This republic must show the greatest firmness, the greatest intransigence towards those who attempt, in the name of Islam, to stifle neighbourhoods, to impose their order against a backdrop of trafficking and religious radicalism, an order in which men dominate women and where faith prevails over reason.”

Manuel Valls, <http://www.gouvernement.fr/en/tribute-to-the-victims-of-the-attacks>

radical populists, who call either for expulsion of Muslims to be performed *en masse*, or for the deprivation of their civil rights, and who promote attacks on Muslims and Islamic institutions.

At the moment, it is not clear, how the November attack in Paris will affect the anti-radicalisation programmes in Europe. The schemes that have been initiated by the European states in recent years will probably expand.

- **Legal**

The threat of IS veterans returning allowed for new laws to be adopted smoothly, laws that would not stand a chance in parliament only ten years ago. For instance, Great Britain<sup>4</sup> approved the new Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 on 12 February 2015, Austria passed a new law on Islam (Islamgesetz) in January 2015 and on 19 March 2015 a bill entitled *Projet de loi relative au renseignement*, which has been dubbed the “French Patriot Act”<sup>5</sup> was introduced in the French Parliament. Germany is an exception among the west European countries – partially also due to the fact that certain legal provisions that have come into force in other countries in recent months and years (e.g. the above mentioned Islam law in Austria) would be most likely opposed by the constitutional court. Its position in Germany is rather specific and it has quite a lot of power – this is due to a historical experience with the Nazi coup in 1933.

- **Repressive**

German, French, Belgian and British experience is similar in one way: while the efficiency of programmes focusing on prevention of radicalisation among young people in particular (Muslim or not) is questionable (partly due to the fact that efficiency of such programmes is hard to thoroughly analyse)<sup>6</sup>, security forces show significant success as for elimination of the terrorist cells and prevention of terrorist attacks preparation and so on.<sup>7</sup> It's clear however, in the light of the repeated attacks in holiday resorts, that the role of security forces cannot be limited to European territory only. To protect their citizens abroad as well, their scope of competence must be extended. At the moment and in this context, the main security threat is the Islamic State. It took the lead from al-Qaeda and became the most feared terrorist

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/contents/enacted>

<sup>5</sup> The bill passed the French Senate with 252 votes in favour and 67 against and the National Assembly with 438 votes in favour and 86 against. “Lawmakers back spy bill dubbed ‘French Patriot Act’”, France24, 5 May 2015, <http://www.france24.com/en/20150505-lawmakers-back-spy-bill-dubbed-french-patriot-act>

“The French Surveillance State”, New York Times, 31 March 2015,

[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/01/opinion/the-french-surveillance-state.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/01/opinion/the-french-surveillance-state.html?_r=0)

<sup>6</sup> Frank Gardner, “Prevent strategy: Is it failing to stop radicalisation?”, BBC, 6 March 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-28939555>

<sup>7</sup> According to Home Secretary Theresa May, over forty terrorist plots have been disrupted by the British Security Service since the attacks on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July 2005. Since 2010 more than 700 people have been arrested for terrorism-related offences,

138 are behind bars serving sentences for terrorism-related offences and thirteen people, including the radical preacher Abu Hamza, have been extradited after being accused or convicted of terrorism-related offences. Theresa May, “We are engaged in a struggle fought on many fronts and in many forms”, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/home-secretary-theresa-may-on-counter-terrorism>

Tom Whitehead, “Islamist terror plot to target UK foiled”, The Telegraph, 14 October 2013

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/10377268/Islamist-terror-plot-to-target-UK-foiled.html>

organization mainly thanks to its considerable financial resources, military success and successful massive propaganda.

## 1. Deradicalisation of Islamists in the EU countries

In 2003, Great Britain adopted the CONTEST strategy (Counter-Terrorism Strategy) which has four strands aka “4Ps”: Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare. The Prevent strategy focuses on communication and prevents the growth of radicalism within the Muslim community, while supporting integration and pro-democratic tendencies in Muslim communities. Its mission is to provide a counterargument to the ideology of extremist groups, to provide advice and assistance to those who are vulnerable to radicalisation; and to work with institutions in areas where there is a risk of radicalisation (socially excluded groups, schools, prisons).<sup>8</sup> The CONTEST scheme is the most complex strategy to tackle radicalisation that an EU country has ever come up with.

The countries with the highest number of IS recruits are France and Belgium. While France is leading with the highest total number of people leaving to fight for IS, approximately 300 Belgians who fight or used to fight in Syria or Iraq put Belgium in lead with the highest number of radicals per capita.<sup>9</sup> Since 2013, Belgium is preparing preventive measures to put a stop to the increasing number of people leaving for Syria. This programme has essentially the same goals and objectives as the British PREVENT strategy, but its efficiency has already been challenged. Introduced changes are not strictly legislative, but they increase governmental engagement (and funding) in projects associated with the fight against radical and antidemocratic ideologies.<sup>10</sup>

According to the report of the French service *Direction Centrale des Renseignements Généraux*, 5 000 Salafis lived in France in 2004 and they have significantly grown in number since then.<sup>11</sup> In pre-IS times, the main core of French Islamists were immigrants (or their descendants) originating from Maghreb<sup>12</sup>,

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<sup>8</sup> The Prevent program has been recently harshly criticised, especially for lack of transparency in finance management and loss of trust among Muslims (the programme is dependent on communication with them). For example, according to Dominic Casciani from BBC, Prevent has significantly shaken the trust of Muslims in state institutions. However, he views the Channel programme as a partial success. Dominic Casciani, “Analysis: The Prevent strategy and its problems”, BBC, 26 August 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-31756755>  
Josh Halliday and Vikram Dodd, “UK anti-radicalisation Prevent strategy a ‘toxic brand’”, The Guardian, 9 March 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/mar/09/anti-radicalisation-prevent-strategy-a-toxic-brand>  
Frank Gardner, “Prevent strategy: Is it failing to stop radicalisation?”, BBC, 6 March 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-28939555>  
Unlike the Prevent programme, Channel is praised as being highly flexible and, above all, financially a lot more effective as it has been using the existing government infrastructure. See Lorenzo Vidino, James Brandon (2012), *Countering Radicalisation in Europe*, page 21.

<sup>9</sup> “It ain’t half hot here, mum. Why and how Westerners go to fight in Syria and Iraq”, The Economist, 30 August 2014, <http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21614226-why-and-how-westerners-go-fight-syria-and-iraq-it-aint-half-hot-here-mum>

As of December 2014, approximately 100 radicals have returned back to Belgium.

“Chaque mois, dix Belges partent faire le djihad en Syrie et en Irak”, *Le Soir*, 3 January 2015, <http://www.lesoir.be/747811/article/actualite/belgique/2015-01-03/chaque-mois-dix-belges-partent-faire-djihad-en-syrie-et-en-irak>

<sup>10</sup> Margaret Coker a Matthew Dalton, “Can ‘Deradicalization’ Stem Flow of European Jihadists?”, The Wall Street Journal, 28 September 2014, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/can-deradicalization-stem-flow-of-european-jihadists-1411958283>

<sup>11</sup> Jean-Luc Marret, *Prison De-radicalization and disengagement: The French case*, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (2009), page 24.

<sup>12</sup> The region of north Africa (Algeria, Morocco, Western Sahara).

whose organisation was, basically, decentralised and lacking leading figures. However, this didn't limit their capabilities to organise logistically complex operations – radicals of European origin (mainly from France and Belgium) participated in terrorist operations in Iraq as early as in 2004.<sup>13</sup>

Austria opted for a specific way of tackling Islamic radicalism. Almost in the spirit of its imperial tradition, it adopted a brand new law stipulating clear conditions for Islamic communities in Austria. The goal of the Islam law is a) to cut off radical groups from financial resources; b) to bring up such Islamic religious authorities that will respect the Austrian constitution and legislation as their own. Austria has been practising this approach towards the non-Christian religions since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (in the case of the Jewish population) and Austria's Minister for Foreign Affairs Kurz stands behind it: "We want an Austrian form of Islam. Every Muslim in Austria should be able to practise his religion properly, but we don't want influence and control from abroad."<sup>14</sup> And it is the "influence from abroad" that turns out to be the greatest challenge of Muslim communities in Western Europe, as fundamentalist organisations such as Hizb ut-Tahrir and others (see below) can impose their influence on these communities.

## I. Deradicalisation programmes in correctional facilities

Great Britain put the Al Furqan<sup>15</sup> programme in place which makes use of the prison imams teaching Islam and questioning statements and views of convicted religious radicals.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Jean-Luc Marret, Prison De-radicalization and disengagement: The French case, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (2009), page 6.

<sup>14</sup> Bethany Bell, "Austria's Muslims fear changes to historic Islam law", BBC, 4 November 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29814688>

<sup>15</sup> The name is based on the 25th sura of Qur'an called Al-Furqan (meaning the Criterion, the Standard), which motivates the sinners to repent and be forgiven (25:70).

<sup>16</sup> David Rose, "Inside Britain's terror cells: A chilling insight into how gangs of convicted terrorists recruit prisoners for Al Qaeda - and the courageous men and women sent in to 'turn' them", Daily Mail, 29 September 2012, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2210437/Britains-terror-cells-A-chilling-insight-gangs-convicted-terrorists-recruit-prisoners-Al-Qaeda.html>

Andrew Silke, "Jihadis cannot be turned unless they are ready, professor warns", The Telegraph, 2 September 2014, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/11068834/Jihadis-cannot-be-turned-unless-they-are-ready-professor-warns.html>

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France has taken similar steps. Considering the fact that in France prison population is estimated to be 40–50 % Muslim in some prisons, in Fresnes for example (the second largest detention centre in France) it is up to 65 %<sup>17</sup> – the country plans to increase the number of Muslim preachers in prisons and their task would be to act against radicalisation elements. Muslim state-approved imams have been acting as deradicalisation elements in French prisons since 2006 but their number had been increasing slowly. This has changed after 2009<sup>18</sup> and after the Charlie Hebdo attacks.

Belgium introduced similar measures aiming against radicalisation of detainees as France – Muslim imams and religious authorities were supposed to monitor the situation in penitentiaries even before the Charlie Hebdo attacks. After these attacks, the Ministry of Justice has therefore decided to give them a more significant (if not the central) role in preventing radicalisation among Muslim inmates. They will be more intensely involved in the process of monitoring radicalisation tendencies and their neutralisation.<sup>19</sup>

“Moderate” or “state-approved” imams are the backbone of governmental deradicalisation programmes in prisons. But their position is – to put it mildly – not easy: they must face over-confident radicals who are convinced that their journey is the only and absolutely correct one and distrust of prisoners who often perceive them as traitors or collaborators with the state power. The French governmental preachers faced mistrust and even contempt because of their North African origin as opposed to preachers from countries such as Saudi Arabia or Egypt.<sup>20</sup>

## II. Programmes for the jihadist returnees

Apart from PREVENT, there are also programmes in Great Britain focusing on deradicalisation of Muslims who have already engaged in activities of radical groups, be it in Great Britain or in the IS. The British Prime Minister David Cameron announced a year ago that terror suspects or those suspected of plotting attacks will be forced to attend deradicalisation programmes to reverse their warped

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“Europe to rehabilitate homegrown ISIS militants”, Daily Sabah, 29 January 2015, <http://www.dailysabah.com/europe/2015/01/29/europe-to-rehabilitate-homegrown-isis-militants>

<sup>17</sup> Adeline Hazan, “Contrôleur général des lieux de privation de liberté”, Journal officiel de la République française N° 149 du 30 juin 2015.

Brigitte Giraud, “Adeline Hazan : «En prison, Internet est un outil indispensable de réinsertion»”, Libération, 18 March 2015,

[http://www.liberation.fr/societe/2015/03/18/en-prison-internet-est-un-outil-indispensable-de-reinsertion\\_1223389](http://www.liberation.fr/societe/2015/03/18/en-prison-internet-est-un-outil-indispensable-de-reinsertion_1223389)

According to some estimates, the percentage of Muslim prisoners in France is even higher, see e.g. Harriet Alexander, “What is going wrong in France’s prisons?”, The Telegraph, 17 January 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/11352268/What-is-going-wrong-in-Frances-prisons.html>

Molly Moore, “In France, Prisons Filled With Muslims”, Washington Post, 29 April 2008, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/04/28/AR2008042802560.html>

Rajia Aboukheir, Muslim population in French prisons sparks integration debate, Al-Arabiya, 30 October 2014,

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/analysis/2014/10/30/Muslim-population-in-French-prisons-sparks-integration-debate.html>

<sup>18</sup> Jean-Luc Marret, Prison De-radicalization and disengagement: The French case, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (2009), page 23

<sup>19</sup> Colin Clapson, “Belgium to counter radicalisation of its prisons”, Flanders News, 12 January 2015,

<http://dredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws.english/News/1.2206372>

<sup>20</sup> Jean-Luc Marret, Prison De-radicalization and disengagement: The French case, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (2009), page 23.

brainwashing.<sup>21</sup> Another British programme, Healthy Identities, applied outside of prisons uses the services of psychotherapists who, on a more introspective basis, try to understand the thinking of a radicalised, indoctrinated Islamist and remove triggers that lead to radicalisation.

Both programmes (Al Furqan and Healthy Identities Intervention) tackle extremists on an individual basis – which is the main strength of these programmes because they attempt to remove the individual from an environment where radicals can mutually cement their beliefs.

Denmark has the second highest number of its citizens in the IS per capita. The Danish Security and Intelligence Service PET (*Politiets Efterretningstjeneste*) states that more than hundred people left Denmark in order to fight for the IS (or other Islamist groups) of which at least 15 died in combat.<sup>22</sup> Denmark has been witnessing radicalism for some time now – in this context, Denmark hit the headlines in 2005 when the Muhammad cartoons were published in the Jyllands-Posten daily. This has served as one of the turning points in the polarization of Danish society. The Hizb ut-Tahrir movement (The Party of Freedom, or Liberation) has rather strong base in Denmark. It is a global Islamist network focusing on the implementation of Islamic law into everyday life, the re-establishment of caliphate and the da'awah, i.e. proselytising Islam among non-Muslims.<sup>23</sup> Another Salafi organisation, Millatu Ibrahim, moved to Denmark after it had been banned in Germany on 29 May 2012.<sup>24</sup> The mosque in Grimhøj street in Brabrand, the centre of jihadi Muslims also caught media attention. The Danish approach is quite exceptional in Europe – IS veterans returning to Denmark do not automatically face criminal prosecution as is the case in France, Great Britain or Germany, but they can join the reintegration programme supported by the Danish government.<sup>25</sup> Deradicalisation schemes for Muslims are based on programmes such as “Exit”, which work for example in Germany<sup>26</sup>, and have been in existence in

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<sup>21</sup> Tom Whitehead, “British jihadists to be forced to attend deradicalisation programmes, says Cameron”, The Telegraph, 1 September 2014, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/11068878/British-jihadists-to-be-forced-to-attend-deradicalisation-programmes-says-Cameron.html>

<sup>22</sup> Developments in the Threat from Foreign Fighters from Denmark in Syria, 26 June 2014, Truslen fraudrejste personer fra Danmark til Syrien, PET, <https://www.pet.dk/English/CenterforTerrorAnalysisCTA/~media/Engelsk/UK20140626TruslenfraudrejstepersonerfraDanmarktilSyrienENGversionFINALpdf.ashx>

<sup>23</sup> Elisabeth Braw, “Inside Denmark’s Radical Jihadist Rehabilitation Programme”, Newsweek, 17 October 2014, <http://www.newsweek.com/2014/10/24/denmark-offers-returning-jihadis-chance-repent-277622.html>

Hizb ut-Tahrir was established in 1953 in Eastern Jerusalem by Islamic lawyer Taqiuddin an-Nabhani as a Pan-Islamic (and strongly anti-Israel) organisation. Although his organisation was banned by the Jordan authorities almost as soon as it was established, it managed to spread to more than 50 countries. It is ironic that while the organisation is banned in many Muslim countries, it can exist in Europe without being disturbed, although it did face accusations of anti-Semitism in Great Britain and Germany as it spread its ideology under the name “Stop Islamophobia” at some British universities.

Ali Hussain, “‘Stealth’ Islamists recruit students”, The Sunday Times, 16 October 2005, <http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/Migration/article152359.ece>

<sup>24</sup> Florian Flade, Martin Lutz, “Razzia gegen Salafisten – Friedrich verbietet Netzwerk”, Die Welt, 14 June 2012, <http://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article106591960/Razzia-gegen-Salafisten-Friedrich-verbietet-Netzwerk.html>

<sup>25</sup> This however doesn’t mean that Denmark gave up on repressive measures. If criminal activities are proven, the Danes will be imprisoned and the resident permits will be taken from asylum seekers or immigrants. “Denmark presents new anti-jihadist strategy”, The Local, 19 September 2014, <http://www.thelocal.dk/20140919/denmark-presents-new-anti-jihadist-strategy>

<sup>26</sup> For example, EXIT Deutschland, Violence Prevention Network and others. The EXIT programme has been also used by Muslim families or families of converts who fear radicalisation of their family members.

Denmark since 2007. These programmes have been both praised as well as criticized. Their supporters argue with statistics – in 2012–2013, 31 men left Aarhus, whereas in 2014 it was only one.<sup>27</sup> The Danish authorities are in touch with the returnees from Syria – some have made use of the offered help already, others suffer from an overall disillusion from IS, a portion of them, however, continues to visit groups close to the mosques where radicalisation happens. The opponents say that the programme is naïve and that religious fanatics have other than rational-psychological motives. According to the former al-Qaeda member and PET's and CIA's co-worker Morten Storm, the whole idea of the reform of the returnees is ridiculous. He therefore suggests much harsher steps, such as freezing jihadists' bank accounts, revoking their passports which, in his opinion, the veterans only use as a tool to travel wherever they want without feeling loyal to Denmark or their Danish citizenship<sup>28</sup>. Many opponents in the Danish People's Party share this view as well and the above mentioned approach is criticised as a sign of weakness of the Danish society – instead of punishing the culprits, they are given all the advantages of a welfare state.<sup>29</sup>

## 2. Results and success rate of deradicalisation programmes

As early as in 2009, the *Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique* report stated that France is successful in its attempts to tackle jihadist cells but it also warned against the lack of coordination of state units when it comes to deradicalisation of Islamists, which – as it then seemed – France had almost given up and relied purely on punishment and incarceration of the culprits. The report ended with a chillingly precise forecast, according to which only two things will lead to the change of mind-set and the re-evaluation of the importance of deradicalisation programmes: either a successful and brutal terrorist

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"German Program Helps Families De-Radicalize Members Prone To Extremism", NPR, 13 March 2015,

<http://www.npr.org/2015/03/13/392845800/german-program-helps-families-de-radicalize-members-prone-to-extremism>

Apart from this proven programme, in 2010 BfV initiated a phone line called HATIF (meaning "telephone" in Arabic and it is also an acronym for "Heraus Aus Terrorismus und Islamistischem Fanatismus") focusing specifically on Islamic radicalism. Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, BfMF) has been also running its own phone line since 2012 entitled Beratungsstelle Radikalisierung (Advisory Centre for Radicalisation). Individual cases are dealt with in one out of four BfMF centres in Berlin, Bremen, Bochum and Stuttgart. The most serious cases are regardless of location directed to the Hayat advisory centre in Berlin run by ZDK Gesellschaft Demokratische Kultur gGmbH, where investigation methods and tactics used in programmes such as EXIT are combined. See [www.exit-deutschland.de/Startseite/Islamismus/-/Ultranationalismus/HAYAT/Beratungsstelle-HAYAT-K381.htm](http://www.exit-deutschland.de/Startseite/Islamismus/-/Ultranationalismus/HAYAT/Beratungsstelle-HAYAT-K381.htm)

<sup>27</sup> Jon Henley, "How do you deradicalise returning Isis fighters?", The Guardian, 12 November 2014,

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/nov/12/deradicalise-isis-fighters-jihadists-denmark-syria>

The programme supporters also emphasise that the participation in the programme doesn't mean exemption from criminal prosecution. If there is a reason to believe that criminal activity was committed or plotted, prosecution will immediately commence.

Bharati Naik, Atika Shubert, Nick Thompson, "Denmark offers some foreign fighters rehab without jail time – but will it work?", CNN, 28 October 2014, <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/10/28/world/europe/denmark-syria-deradicalization-program/>

<sup>28</sup> Elisabeth Braw, "Inside Denmark's Radical Jihadist Rehabilitation Programme", Newsweek, 17 October 2014,

<http://www.newsweek.com/2014/10/24/denmark-offers-returning-jihadis-chance-repent-277622.html>.

<sup>29</sup> Martin Henriksen (Danish People's Party MP) also said that soft approach to young people is not an issue in itself. The problem is that this approach is becoming the rule rather than the exception. Kelly Cobiella, "Denmark De-Radicalization Program Aims to Reintegrate, Not Condemn", NBC, 24 May 2015, <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/isis-terror/denmark-de-radicalization-n355346>

attack directly in France or a conclusion that the monitoring of released Islamists by secret services is more expensive and less reliable than investments into their deradicalisation.<sup>30</sup>

To evaluate the results of the deradicalisation programmes is – based on the statistics – relatively difficult. On one hand it is undoubtedly a success if only one person left for IS in Denmark in 2014, but despite this, opponents object that many other factors come into play – the problems that IS is facing, testimonies of some returnees and refugees, current shortage of radicals or repressive measures against radical groups.

If the effectiveness of these schemes were evaluated based on the number of committed or plotted terrorist attacks or criminal offences, the statistics for Denmark, for instance, would be far less favourable. Two terrorist attacks from the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of February 2015 and the murder of Tina Römer Holtegaard by her step-daughter after the girl had watched IS videos<sup>31</sup>, made 2015 one of the bloodiest years in the modern Danish history when it comes to terrorist or religious radicalism motivated acts.

However, the deradicalisation programmes where the mentor and the client meet on an individual basis are considered rather successful – the Channel programme has been considered a success for a long time.<sup>32</sup> For example former Islamic fundamentalists Ed Hussain and Maajid Nawaz who were for some time linked to Hizb ut-Tahrir are presented as symbols of path to a successful deradicalisation. When Ed Hussain and Maajid Nawaz left the extremists, they founded the anti-extremist think-tank *Quilliam Foundation*. According to some extremism experts, their autobiographical books are the very material that can be used to target potential jihadists or returnees from Syria, disillusioned about the ideal caliphate.<sup>33</sup>

According to Arie Kruglanski, the co-director of the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism at the University of Maryland and one of the leading experts on the psychology of the terrorist movements, the motives of radicals, who are often the 3<sup>rd</sup> or even the 4<sup>th</sup> generation immigrants, are not exclusively religious. And this is why it would be a mistake to focus on deradicalisation only from the theological point of view – most of the young radicals don't know religion at all or they only have a superficial idea about it. The common denominator for radical movement members – which is, according to Kruglanski common for neo-Nazi, far-left, or Islamist radicals – is the need of order and coherence of one's world views and opinions and mainly a desire to “achieve something”, to feel significant and have an important status in the society. For those who are prone to the two above mentioned tendencies, it is extremely alluring to become a well-recognised fighter or a saint and ideally – both of them. Radical ideology offers a simple, black and white answer. It is actually

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<sup>30</sup> Jean-Luc Marret, Prison De-radicalization and disengagement: The French case, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (2009), page 6. <https://www.frstrategie.org/barreFRS/publications/dossiers/2011/aqmi/doc/fjd.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> Richard Orange, “Danish teenage girl stabbed mother to death after watching Isis videos with Islamist boyfriend”, The Telegraph, 15 September 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/denmark/11867138/Danish-teenage-girl-stabbed-mother-to-death-after-watching-Isil-videos-with-Islamist-boyfriend.html>

<sup>32</sup> “500 terror suspects 'deradicalised' by Home Office”, BBC, 26 March 2013, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-21940899>

<sup>33</sup> Jonathan Gornall, “Inside the world of deradicalising extremists”, The National, 6 November 2014, <http://www.thenational.ae/arts-lifestyle/the-review/inside-the-world-of-deradicalising-extremists#full>

possible to exploit this effort to stand out and “give deeper meaning to someone’s life” for the benefit of deradicalisation efforts as he shows on the example of Hussain and Nawaz – to use their desire to become heroes and their quest for significance and to turn it around, to literally, “change the black knight into a white knight.”<sup>34</sup>

While the effectiveness of “mandatory” deradicalisation as proposed by Cameron can be doubted already, Kruglanski’s psychological approach, which is much more time-consuming and demanding in terms of finding the appropriate “deradicalisators” could be, in the long term, a lot more successful.

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<sup>34</sup> Jonathan Gornall, “Inside the world of deradicalising extremists”, The National, 6 November 2014, <http://www.thenational.ae/arts-lifestyle/the-review/inside-the-world-of-deradicalising-extremists#full>

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