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Muslims in Europe: addressing the challenges of radicalisation

Mirjam Dittrich

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MULTICULTURAL EUROPE

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Foreword by Antonio Missiroli

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Foreword

by Antonio Missiroli

When Samuel Huntington first wrote, a decade ago, about a possible "clash of civilisations" between broadly Christian and Muslim states, societies and values as the new defining factor of world politics in the 21st century,[1] criticism was swift and sharp from fellow academics as well as commentators and opinion leaders.

Some objected primarily to his analysis, which offered very little circumstantial evidence and appeared to overstate the case, but most complained that his diagnosis risked becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy. After 9/11, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the terrorist bombings in Madrid and London and, most recently, the uproar caused by the publication of a series of cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad in questionable terms, one is entitled to wonder whether the gloomy prophecy has somehow vindicated the patchy analysis.

Not that there is anything to cheer about. As Gilles Kepel, in particular, has pointed out, there is a perverse convergence between opposite radicalisms (on the Christian right and the Muslim left) as they end up feeding one another, thus leaving the more liberal and moderate tendencies squeezed in between and tragically on the defensive.[2]

Culturally, too, the caricature of "Orientalism" analysed decades ago by Edward Said now has a counterpart in the "Occidentalism" deconstructed more recently by Ian Buruma.[3] This phenomenon of a radicalism based on an "imagined community" and a caricature of the "Other"[4] has recently reached Europe too, exacerbated by acute social and communal problems – as evidenced by the riots in the suburbs of Paris in the autumn of 2005 – which have created a breeding ground for violent behaviour, in turn buoyed up by repressive and discriminatory policing.

Still, there is no reason to despair either. As Mirjam Dittrich argues in this paper, which was conceived within the framework of the European Policy Centre's programme on *Multicultural Europe*, Muslims in the EU – and there are ever more of them – are not a potential "fifth column" of the global *jihad*. Rather, they are mostly peaceful, law-abiding citizens who only care

about their faith and strive for recognition and better social integration (whatever this may mean in specific terms).

On the one hand, it would be unforgivable to ignore the fact that there indeed are Islamic terrorist networks operating in European countries which must be hunted down and dismantled by appropriate means. This has already happened, and will hopefully continue, thanks in part to improved police and judicial cooperation across EU borders and across the Atlantic, as Mirjam Dittrich has already illustrated in a previous EPC paper.[5]

On the other hand, it would be equally unforgivable to equate religious fundamentalism (or just conservatism) with violent radicalism and even terrorism. Much as social marginalisation and alienation, coupled with targeted indoctrination, may have led some individuals to move from one to the other, there is no reason to suspect or, worse, to criminalise entire communities. On the contrary, it is all the more necessary to address the needs and problems of those young European Muslims, in particular, who risk getting caught between failing integration and mounting radicalisation.

This paper explores in some detail the different national realities – their apparent similarities as well as specific differences;[6] highlights the issues that need to be tackled from a strictly legal standpoint (starting with the different status of Islam as a religion in comparison with the Christian and Jewish faiths); gives an overview of the main *loci* and modalities of the recruitment of potential Muslim terrorists in Europe; and, after outlining the various measures adopted at the EU level to address these problems, considers the most recent documents and recommendations published by the Union in this area.

While relevant policies concerning the integration of immigrants and counter-terrorism fall primarily within the competence of individual Member States, it is undeniable that a) implementing them in one country alone is now both impossible and ineffective, because of the increasing permeability of borders and the mobility of people across them; b) the EU can usefully set common operational standards and legal benchmarks, facilitate transnational cooperation and highlight best practices.

Therein lies the specific challenge for EU officials in Brussels: namely, to prove the added value of their policies in terms of comparative analysis and long-term vision, as well as to provide workable packages for joint action. To this end, more coherence across the board (including between the various Directorates-General of the Commission

and the Council) – and, arguably, more initiative – may prove useful.

Still, the radicalisation of specific segments of the Muslim world – inside the EU as well as beyond its borders – may not just be a temporary phenomenon, regardless of the possible consequences of the cartoons "affair" that has focused debate on such diverse issues as freedom of expression, respect for religious beliefs, thresholds of social tolerance, acceptance of satire, political opportunity and EU foreign policy at large.[7]

The root causes of Muslim radicalism run deep and cannot be reduced to a single issue, the disappearance or resolution of which could magically do the trick.[8] This is why the problems of Muslim immigrants in Europe should not be overly "securitised", i.e. driven almost exclusively by the fight against home-grown and/or imported terrorism.

These causes have to be addressed with a wide array of policy instruments, short- and long-term, and with a concerted approach which reaches well beyond national borders.

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Endnotes

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3. I.Buruma and A.Margalit. *Occidentalism: A Short History of Anti-Westernism.* (London: Atlantic Books, 2004). See also the classic Edward W.Said. *Orientalism.* (New York: Random House, 1978).
4. B.Anderson. *Imagined Communities.* (London: Verso, 1983). The starting point of the study was the origin and spread of nationalism, but the approach has proved applicable to most ideologies based on "identity" and artificial diffentiation.
5. M.Dittrich. *Facing the Global Terrorist Threat: A European Response.* European Policy Centre Working Paper No.14 (Brussels, January 2005). See also D.Keohane. *The EU and Counter-Terrorism.* CER Working Paper (London, May 2005); and P.Wilkinson. *International Terrorism: The Changing Threat and the EU Response.* Chaillot Paper No.84 (Paris: EUISS, October 2005).
6. For an overview of recent research in this domain see http://euro-islam.info (which includes also detailed country profiles); S.Silvestri. "The Situation of Muslim Immigrants in Europe in the 21st Century: The Creation of National Muslim Councils", in H.Henke (ed.). *Crossing Over: Comparing Recent Migration in Europe and the United States.* (Lenham: Lexington, 2005) pp.101-129; and J.Cesari, S.McLoughlin (eds.). *European Muslims and the Secular State.* (London: Ashgate, 2005).
7. O.Roy. "Caricatures: geopolitique de l'indignation" *Le Monde*, 9 February, 2006, p.17.
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I. Introduction

By Mirjam Dittrich

The objective of this paper is to provide the backdrop and context necessary to engage in a comprehensive debate on the challenges facing multicultural societies in Europe, especially following the terrorist attacks in London, Madrid and the Netherlands, and the global protests over the cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad.

The paper addresses some of the complex issues surrounding Islam in Europe and the integration of Muslims into European societies, with a specific focus on the negative impacts terrorist attacks have had on Muslim communities. It is also designed to stimulate an initial discussion on – and provide some possible answers to – the questions raised by growing radicalisation among young Muslims in Europe.

While violent radicals are exploiting and misusing Islam as a framework for recruiting terrorists, the overwhelming majority of the more than 15 million Muslims living in Europe today are law-abiding citizens who despise these attacks. They understand and practise their faith for what it is – a religion of peace. Using Islam as a way of justifying terrorism is an abuse of that faith. The attempt to analyse the phenomenon of radicalisation should therefore in no way be understood as equating an entire community with a small militant minority.

The final section of this paper is devoted to the recent efforts made by the European Commission and the Council to address the broader issue of violent radicalisation. The EU is in the early stages of this work and while most policies to combat the recruitment of terrorists and radicalisation are the primary responsibility of the Member States, the Union is playing an increasingly important role in identifying best practices and monitoring implementation.

Since the Iranian revolution of 1978-79, the issue of Islam and the challenge it supposedly poses to the West has become a matter of enduring international concern.[1]

There are some 15 to 20 million Muslims living in Europe today, compared to only 800,000 in 1950 and around 10 million in the US.[2] Given continued

immigration and high fertility rates among Muslim immigrants, the US National Intelligence Council projects that Europe's Muslim population will double by 2025.

Muslim communities have grown rapidly in Europe in recent decades and Islam has emerged as the second religion in many European countries. The role of Islam is therefore no longer only a foreign policy matter, but has also become a domestic issue which needs to be addressed at local, national and European levels.

The aftermath of 9/11, and the Madrid and London bombings, have created an unfavourable climate for many Muslims in Europe and led to misconceptions and inaccurate stereotyping. More recently, the publication of the cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad heightened existing tensions. Whatever the arguments over freedom of speech, few people denied that these cartoons were offensive and provocative: especially the depiction of the Prophet wearing a bomb on his head, which reinforced perceived links between Islam and terrorism.

The intensity of the reaction among Muslims from Europe to Gaza and Jakarta not only caught much of the West by surprise, but also raised concerns that the much-feared "clash of civilisations" could become a reality. At the same time, the demonstrations across Europe against the cartoons remained peaceful, and leading Muslim organisations and Imams throughout Europe successfully called for calm.

Polls conducted in early February 2006 in France and Norway revealed that a majority of citizens believed that publishing the controversial caricatures was wrong and a provocation by the media. Moreover, much of the violence in Syria, Gaza and Lebanon was not spontaneous but rather organised by extremist groups and organisations seeking to exploit the situation to serve their own aims.

Political developments in Muslim countries (in Afghanistan, the Balkans, Iraq and the Middle East) have also had an impact on Muslim communities in Europe and have led European governments to pay greater attention to events in the Muslim world. The EU's decisions to reinvigorate the socio-cultural dimension of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and to open accession negotiations with Turkey – both taken in the autumn of 2005 – further demonstrate the importance of dialogue with, and improved understanding of, Islam.

Terrorism and counter-terrorism policies have not only had a negative effect on the public perception of Islam and Muslims in Europe, but have also had a direct impact on Europe's Muslim communities. Without a proper understanding of this effect, Western policies may in fact reinforce the threats they seek to counter.

Irrespective of their socio-economic background, some – whether expatriate engineers studying in Germany, young Arabs living in the *banlieue* of Paris, or young second-generation Pakistanis living in the UK – find their calling in religious extremism and radicalism.

Terrorism arises out of complex causes, including the pressures of modernisation; cultural, social and political malaise; discrimination; flawed or missing integration policies; and the alienation of young people living in foreign societies. A clear distinction must also be made between the causes of terrorism, which are often of an external and international nature, and background factors, which may be of a socio-economic nature and which may in turn contribute to violent radicalisation.

A certain degree of re-Islamisation of young second- and third-generation EU citizens with a Muslim background has been noted in recent years. However, one must be careful not to confound this development with an increase in radicalisation, since the latter is not necessarily a consequence of the former.

On the whole, distrust between Muslims and other communities is growing, and there have been an increasing number of attacks on Muslims or those thought to be Muslims. The murder of the Dutch film-maker Theo van Gogh in November 2004, in apparent retaliation for a film that harshly criticised the treatment of Muslim women and used language and imagery which many Muslims regarded as offensive, had a significant impact on the public perception of Islam and Muslims in Europe. It unleashed a wave of anger against Muslim communities, led to several attacks on mosques and Islamic schools, and once again reinforced perceived links between Islam and terror and violence, as well as the view of Islam as a problem for the West.

Some commentators have also tried to brand the autumn 2005 riots in France as a religious issue. While it is true that many of the French rioters were of Muslim background, the protests were motivated by socio-economic problems, not religion. In fact, efforts by the Union of Islamic Organisations of France (UOIF) to calm the rioters did not succeed. That said, there is some concern that extremists could exploit the conflict in the longer term.

These events have sparked an intense debate on the role of Muslims in European societies, with recent developments serving as a wake-up call for a Europe that prides itself on its tolerance of other beliefs and ethnic backgrounds. Integration is not a one-way street and communication, dialogue and active understanding between the "host" society and the ethnic communities must be enhanced.

Different meanings are given to the term "integration", but in this paper the term is used in a general way. The European Commission has defined it as a two-way process, based on mutual rights and corresponding obligations of legally resident third-country nationals and the host country, which provides for the full participation of immigrants in society.

This implies that while it is the host society's responsibility to ensure that immigrants have the formal rights they need to be able to participate in economic, social, cultural and civil life, immigrants must respect the fundamental norms and values of the host society and participate actively in the integration process, without having to give up their identity.[3] Both host societies and migrant communities need to actively and consistently engage in this process.

This paper is not, however, about "integration" and the best way to ensure it, but about the risks that can be associated with *failed* integration. It addresses some of the factors contributing to violent radicalisation and examines the policies proposed by the EU to counter this threat.

A long history in a nutshell

Just as there is no unified Muslim society in Europe, there is also no common European understanding of – and policy towards – Europe's Muslim citizens. It is, however, no longer possible to understand the social evolution of Europe without taking account of its Muslim component.[4]

It is difficult to define "Islam" or generalise about it. According to Bernard Lewis, in one sense it denotes a religion, a system of belief and worship; in another, it describes the civilisation which grew up and flourished under the aegis of that religion. The word "Islam" denotes more than 14 centuries of history, 1.3 billion people and a religious and cultural tradition of enormous diversity, extending geographically from Morocco to Indonesia and from Kazakhstan to Senegal.[5]

From the beginning of the 16th century, a new relationship between Islam and the West evolved. Centuries of Muslim rule in Europe ended and the countries of Europe pursued their former masters into their homelands – the Spaniards and Portuguese into Africa and the Russians into Asia, thus launching the process of European expansion which, by the 20th century, had brought the whole world into its economic, political and cultural orbit.[6]

A great change came with the occupation of Egypt in 1798 by Napoleon Bonaparte. This marked the beginning of inter-European rivalry over the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire and the latter's first significant geopolitical loss. These events destroyed the illusion of the unchallengeable superiority of the Islamic world over the "infidel" West.

The end of World War I marked the end of the Ottoman Empire. In 1920, the League of Nations gave the UK mandatory power over Palestine, and France over Lebanon and Syria. It also endorsed the 1918 Balfour Declaration, in which the British declared their support for "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people".

Following World War II, the main powers in the Middle East were the UK and the Soviet Union. By 1947, the British had decided to leave the area, regarding Palestine as too much of an economic and strategic liability. The issue of whether Palestine belonged to the Arabs or the Jews was passed to the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, which recommended that it be split into an Arab and a Jewish state. In 1948, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion declared the State of Israel. Decades of wars and conflict followed.

The first wave of Muslim immigrants into contemporary Europe was predominantly composed of labourers from North Africa, Turkey and Indo-Pakistan. During the reconstruction following World War II, France and the UK turned towards their former colonies in South Asia and North Africa to fill labour shortages, while Germany invited Turkish so-called *Gastarbeiter* to help sustain the *Wirtschaftswunder* (economic miracle).

As a result, there is a shared memory of the colonial past on both sides which is based on inequality: the dominant and the dominated.[7] Jocelyne Cesari writes that Islam first emerged as a social issue between Muslim communities and their host societies in Western Europe when governments began allowing families to join male workers already based on their soil, while at the same time halting further immigration by male workers following the 1972-74 recession.

Families started to gain visibility in society, with the children of Muslim immigrants entering schools and Muslim citizens demanding recognition of their religious practices. As Cesari explains: "While the social status of their fathers or grandfathers was defined by their economic roles, this second generation, born and educated in Europe, forced Western governments and societies to confront the cultural and political consequences of migration."[8]

Today, a disproportionate number of Muslims living in Europe are unemployed and drop out of secondary school without any qualifications. This is largely the result of failed or flawed integration policies, which stemmed in part from viewing Muslim immigrants as temporary "guest workers" who would eventually return to their country of origin. Today, of the 15 to 20 million Muslims in Europe, 5 million live in France,[9] 3.2 million in Germany, and about 2 million in the UK. Significant Muslim communities also exist in Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands and, increasingly, in Italy and Spain.

II. Muslim identities in Europe

II. 1. The debate on a "Euro Islam"

While Muslims in Europe share a common religious belief, they are not a unified community because of their diverse countries of origin, generational differences, and variations in religious practice and political affiliation.

The climate of religious indifference in some European countries has had an impact, especially on young citizens of Muslim origin. Many second- and third-generation Muslims born into secular European societies are re-assessing their identity and religious beliefs. They are creating a new form of Islam; one more reflective of their adopted homelands.

Conservative interpretations of Islam are increasingly challenged by "Western" values of tolerance, democracy and civil liberties. At the same time, young second- and third-generation Muslims feel uprooted, without any clear cultural identity, and experience a kind of cultural homelessness. This can lead some to find their identity within the radical Muslim *ummah*.[10]

This development has provoked important debates within Muslim communities and among Muslim scholars (*ulama*). Consulted on matters such as Islamic law and jurisprudence, these scholars were compelled to re-evaluate their stance in light of new legal opinions shaped by the Western way of life.

Young European Muslims ask themselves whether Europe should be considered (as it was by the *ulama* of the 9th century) as a *dar al-harb* (an abode of war), rather than a *dar al-Islam* (a place where Muslims are in a majority and live in security and according to the law).

Some decided that Europe could no longer be considered as *dar al-harb* because there were too many Muslims who were becoming European. Instead, they felt that Europe was now *dar-ul-ahd* – a "domain of treaty" or peaceful co-existence, a term which implies a certain degree of social and civic responsibility and is not based on a concept of "Us Vs Them".

The Muslim scholar Tariq Ramadan, who advocates an "independent European Islam", responded to this by arguing that Europe should be seen as a *dar ash-shahada*, a "space of testimony", within which "Muslims are sent back to the essential teachings of Islam" so that they can contribute to

"promoting good and equity within and through human brotherhood" by bringing the strengths of the Islamic message to their mostly non-Muslim societies. Ideally, says Ramadan, to be a Muslim in Europe "means to interact with the whole of society".[11]

He offers a "third way" of integrating Muslims into European society, thus breaking up the "Us Vs Them" mentality. The question is "how to be at the same time fully Muslim and fully Western", he says. In his book *To be a European Muslim*, he writes: "Whereas one might have feared a conflict of loyalties, one cannot but note that it is in fact the reverse…loyalty to one's faith and conscience requires firm and honest loyalty to one's country: *Shari'a* (Islamic religious law) requires honest citizenship.[12]

While he argues that Muslims should integrate into – and learn from – European society, he also believes that Europeans must work to accept the Muslims among them. He proposes that Muslims should view Western democracy as "a model respecting our principles, rather than seeing it as 'anti-Islamic'." Some critics have argued, however, that his approach has nothing to offer Muslims who choose not to practise Islam, and that his idea of returning to the essential teachings of Islam could lead to fundamentalism.

Ultimately, a European Islam is expected to emerge. Professor Bassam Tibi, who coined the term "Euro-Islam", insists that the integration of Europe's Muslims depends on the adoption of a form of Islam that embraces Western political values, such as pluralism, tolerance, the separation of church and state, and democratic civil society.

Tibi argues: "There is no middle way between Euro-Islam and a 'ghettoisation' of Muslim minorities."[13] He adds: "Within Europe, we need to share with immigrants a defining culture that is based on a value consensus; outside Europe, we need an international morality. In the first case, the value consensus must be European; in the second, it must be supra-cultural…In the context of religious tolerance, there can be no place in Europe for *Shari'a*."[14] This means that in order to find a consensus and co-exist peacefully in a multicultural society, differences will need to be recognised and discussed openly.

Muslim communities are, however, divided over these issues because there is no single and shared concept of a "Euro-Islam". The European Muslim world is living through a process of extremely rapid transformation, and this is provoking an intense debate on these issues. It will be interesting to see

how Muslim communities restructure themselves when they are no longer ethnic communities arriving from elsewhere. With generational change, they are losing, at least in part, the ethnic characterisation and identification with their countries of origin, yet, at the same time, they are not yet fully unified communities.[15]

A survey published by the French daily newspaper *Le Monde* in October 2002 showed that the religious faith of Europe's Muslims is strengthening as many immigrants turn to religion for support. This tendency towards religiosity should not be a matter of concern *per se*, but it could assume negative connotations if linked to a rise in extremist movements.

The foreign policy context after the September 11 2001 attacks on the US provided a fertile background for groups such as *Hizb-ul-Tahrir*[16] and *al-Muhajiroun*[17] to try to define the political agenda by arguing, for instance, that if you are a real Muslim, you should be engaged in the global *jihad*.[18] Even though they are in a minority, these groups project a negative image of Islam and have caused great damage to Muslim communities.

II. 2. Muslims in Europe and the limits of tolerance

For a long time, the presence of Muslims in Europe was rather discreet and there was no awareness that Islam had any relevance to Western societies. That has now changed. While seeking social integration, many Muslims also wish to retain their cultural and religious traditions, and thereby become more visible as distinct communities.

Unfortunately, since a greater consciousness of Islam has emerged, it has manifested itself mostly as "Islam versus the West", and the relationship has often been seen in a context of conflict and confrontation.[19]

Non-Muslims in Western societies are often unaware of the difficulties that Muslims experience living as minorities in a dominant culture. They are familiar with the international issues relating to the Arab world, but not with the domestic problems Muslims face. Besides broader socio-economic problems – such as high unemployment – Muslims are concerned, as John L. Esposito puts it: "About the preservation and practice of their religious faith in societies based upon Judeo-Christian or secular values, as well as about empowerment in the politics and culture of the majority society."[20]

Belgium

Four per cent of the Belgian population is believed to be Muslim, with more than 300,000 of Moroccan ancestry and over 160,000 of Turkish background. The rest include Balkan Muslims, South Asians and some non-Moroccan Arabs.

Although there are no figures for Muslim employment levels, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) says the unemployment rate amongst the "foreign born" is more than twice as high as among indigenous Belgians. And while Islam was recognised in Belgium in 1974, Imams – unlike the officials of other officials – still do not receive state grants.

In January 2005, authorities in the Flemish region decreed that mosques would in future be required to meet certain conditions to receive public funding. These included using the Dutch language, except for in Arabic rituals, tolerance for women and homosexuals, and no preaching of extremist ideas.

Limited progress has been made in relation to political representation, with six Muslims serving in the national parliament and one in the European Parliament after the 2003 elections. However, the statistics show that those of foreign origin still face discrimination in employment, housing, access to public services and in contacts with the police. The Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism (CNTR), an independent government body, received more than 2,500 complaints concerning race discrimination in 2003.[21]

If this is the condition of Muslims in Europe, how then are they perceived by the average EU citizen? When looking in more detail at the way Europeans regard diversity in their societies, a contrasting picture emerges. Opinion polls show that 75% of Europeans welcome the development of a multicultural society and 86% oppose any discrimination based on race, religion or culture. However, one third of Europeans also admit to being quite or very racist, and a majority of Europeans believe that minority groups tend to abuse the social benefit system and that their presence is a source of insecurity.

A majority of Europeans are also convinced that the presence of minority groups increases unemployment (63%), although about the same number believe that minorities do the jobs nobody else wants to do. According to the 2005 *Transatlantic Trends Report*, 51% of Europeans will feel personally affected by immigrants and refugees in the next few years.

France

In France, statistics on racial, ethnic, or religious background are not collected, in keeping with the national ideal that all citizens are equal. The French government promotes the concept of assimilation, expecting immigrants to adapt to the norms of French society. However, acceptance by Muslims of the "republican ideal" does not necessarily lead to their assimilation into French society: unemployment is high, there is widespread discrimination and education levels are lowest among Muslims.

Few Muslims are visible in French politics, the media, business or the civil service.[22] Overall, the Muslim community is not well integrated into French society. The government, however, seems reluctant to adjust its policies despite the autumn 2005 riots, which were a clear reaction to the dire socio-economic situation of many Muslims in France.

Germany

In 2000, Germany joined the ranks of European countries in which citizenship is granted according to birthplace instead of ancestry (*ius solis* instead of *ius sanguinis*). The new German law has opened the road to citizenship for all Muslims in Germany.

With 160,000 new Muslim citizens a year in Germany, the number of Muslim voters could total 3 million within a decade. At the same time, controversial new laws have been introduced which could easily lead to discrimination, such as those in Baden-Württemberg (one of the German *Länder*), where immigrants applying for a German passport will have to answer 40 questions about society and politics if they come from a Muslim country. These questions include whether a man would find it acceptable to prevent his daughter or wife from leaving their home or whether they would agree to be treated by a doctor of the opposite sex.

Spain

The Muslim community in Spain is growing rapidly. After the 11 March attacks in Madrid and José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero's election victory, the new government moved to legalise about 700,000 illegal immigrants, including 85,000 Moroccans. This was a major change from the policies of the old government and was justified on the grounds that it would enhance security by bringing these workers into the open. The focus of the current

government, despite the Madrid bombings, is to integrate Muslims into Spanish society rather than to implement security measures aimed at a small minority of the Muslim population.[23]

The Netherlands

In the Netherlands, 5.7% of the population is believed to be Muslim. There are at least 400-500 Muslim places of worship, with traditional mosques being built in the major cities. Of these, nearly half are mainly Turkish and some 90 are mainly Moroccan. The killing of film-maker Theo van Gogh in November 2004, by a young Dutch-Moroccan, Mohammed Bouyeri, had a profound impact on Dutch society and a country that has traditionally prided itself on its liberalism, openness and tolerance. Many politicians declared publicly that the integration of Muslims into Dutch society had "failed" and, in response, traditionally liberal immigration policies were tightened. Overall, a sharp increase in Islamophobia and general scepticism toward Muslims has been observed.

United Kingdom

In contrast to the Muslims resident in other Western European countries, the vast majority of those living in the UK are British citizens, equal before the law, and with an equal voice and vote in the political arena. However, a recent poll indicated that 69% of them felt that "the rest of society does not regard them as an integral part of life in Britain".[24]

II. 3. The role and status of religion

One of the main issues for conservative Islam in Europe is that the Koran does not only handle spiritual matters, but is also perceived as a kind of "constitution" for a Muslim's daily life. This means that for many Muslims, the separation of state and religion is almost impossible, and this makes it more difficult for many of them to adapt to life in Europe.

European politicians have repeatedly emphasised the need for Islam to be adjusted to take account of the legal and social parameters of particular societies. This implies that Muslims should organise themselves in line with the prevailing church models in their respective countries.[25] Some intellectuals like Bassam Tibi advocate the French system, where there is full separation of state and religion and the latter is almost

completely left to the private sphere. He rejects the German system of cooperation between state and recognised religious groups on the grounds that Islam is a non-hierarchical religion which cannot be organised like the Christian church.

Muslims in Europe are not organised on the basis of a "universal" Islam and therefore find it difficult to negotiate seriously with the EU or individual European governments. An internal dialogue among Muslims is needed to formulate clear views on difficult issues and present these to European governments and the EU itself. The Austrian government took a first step towards developing such a dialogue by convening a meeting to foster coordination among Imams in Europe and to help them articulate their views.

However, Islam is not endowed with the same rights in relation to religious practice as Judaism and Christianity across Europe. For example, the wearing of the *hijab* (headscarf) by Arab women is seen differently from Jews wearing the *yarmulke*, and the legislation governing this varies across the EU.

Younger Muslims appear keen to play a more active role at both national and European level. In many cases, they do not want to abandon Islam altogether but do not want to be marginalised either. Instead, they hope to legitimise the presence of Islam in the public sphere.

II. 4. The role and status of Imams

Many Imams in Europe have been "imported" from the Muslim world and often do not understand the culture or even speak the language of their host country. Mosques tend to be set up by local communities, which collect the money required to bring Imams from their country or region of origin.

These Imams are mostly inadequately trained to deal with either today's modern European culture or with the problems that arise from their interaction with Western societies. Many are not credible interlocutors for the younger generation because they were trained in their country of origin and simply cannot communicate with youngsters because of language difficulties. This is a particular problem for Arabic-speaking Imams, as the linguistic link with the country of origin remains stronger within the Turkish, Pakistani and Bengali communities.

This means that many young people do not identify with the discourse of traditional Imams and feel estranged from the religious services they provide, underlining the need for "home-grown" Imams. Moderate European Muslim leaders and European governments should work to establish programmes for training Imams within the host country to ensure that they also understand the values and the culture of the country in which they live and work.

In the UK, for example, there are only about 30 Imams who have been educated in Britain, plus about 1,000 who were brought in from abroad – most of whom do not speak English. France has established institutes for some official religions such as Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Christianity, but Islam is not recognised or funded. In Germany and Sweden, the training of Imams is supported by institutes and universities. Islam has been recognised in Belgium since 1974, but requests from the country's Muslim community for the provision of training for Imams have fallen on deaf ears. Imams do not receive state grants, even though funds are provided for other religious officials.

Across Europe, Imams are very poorly paid, receiving an average monthly salary of just 500-1000 euros. They often have to endure very difficult living conditions and are heavily dependent on their mosque management committee, which can limit their freedom. Efforts are, however, being made to improve the situation in some EU Member States.

In the Netherlands, a government-sponsored programme has been set up to provide courses on Dutch values for Muslim clerics. These seminars are part of a government programme for newly-arrived immigrants, which includes special courses for religious leaders. In Spain, the government has taken several steps to tackle issues associated with the teaching and preaching of Islam. For instance, it plans to give financial aid to mosques to try to ensure that Islamic communities do not seek financial support from donors and governments abroad. The decision by the Spanish government to allow the teaching of Islamic subjects in Spanish schools for the first time is also significant.

In the current context, one has to be careful not to associate religious conservatism automatically with radicalism. Addressing the issue of mosques and Imams is important for both integration purposes, and for preventing extremists from preaching in mosques. However, European governments should not "securitise" these issues, but rather address them with the aim of helping to build a credible Muslim minority.

II. 5. European Muslims in the public sphere

Many Muslim immigrants are struggling to integrate better into European societies. These challenges confront large groups of Muslims of Turkish descent in Germany, North Africans in France and Pakistanis in the UK. Until now, the different Muslim communities in the EU have not been coordinated or united in a single structure, nor do they have an accepted common leadership with authority to speak on their behalf. Instead, they have tended to focus on local rather than national or European problems.

Most have also found it difficult to exercise influence in the public sphere, largely because of their weak socio-economic situation. European Muslim communities mostly consist of labourers – there is only a small elite, although a stronger middle class is developing in some European countries, starting with the UK.

Muslim politicians active in national political life are a rarity throughout the EU. According to a report by the German *Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung*, there are less than 30 elected members of national parliaments representing the 15 million Muslims living in Europe.[26] The Netherlands has seven Muslim MPs (with a Muslim population of 800,000) and the UK has six Muslims in the House of Lords and four in the House of Commons. France prides itself as being a country of *égalité* (equality), but none of the 555 deputies in the National Assembly are Muslim. Germany, with a population of 82 million, is home to 3.5 million Muslims, but there are only two people of Turkish descent among the 603 members of the German parliament. However, most of these MPs campaign on an ethnic rather than a religious basis and Muslim participation in local politics has expanded in recent years.

Some Muslim leaders believe that one of the reasons for the paucity of political representatives of Muslim descent is the failure to involve members of their communities in politics at an early age through, for example, youth organisations. According to some observers, this is partly because the established political groups are fearful of a backlash from voters if Muslims are appointed to political office and promoted to leadership positions, even in youth groups.

The issue of representation also raises other difficulties. EU policy-makers often lament that they often do not know who they should be talking to in the Muslim community. Who, in other words, is entitled to speak for them:

those chosen by some EU governments as their interlocutors, or others?

To address this issue several European Member States have supported the creation of Muslim Councils, which act as the representative voice of the Muslim community. These Councils include elected and/or appointed representatives. Some are playing an increasingly important political role nationally and are acknowledged by their respective governments as the Muslim communities' legitimate interlocutors. However, those who gain or receive their legitimacy from governments are not always considered as genuinely representative by their own communities.

Belgium

In 1998, the Belgium government organised elections to a Muslim Council and a smaller Executive Committee (Executive) to represent the Islamic faith. In late 2004, Justice Minister Laurette Onkelinx called new Muslim Council elections and, in response to growing concern about radical fundamentalism and links to terrorism in Belgium, proposed that candidates for the Executive should be subjected to vetting by the state's security services. In response, only 45,000 registered voters turned up at the polling stations because of an election boycott organised by several mosques and outgoing Muslim Executive members, who encouraged their largely ethnic North African Arab constituents not to vote. The election resulted in a landslide victory for ethnic Turkish Muslims, who won 40 of the 68 Council seats. The ethnic Moroccan community won only 20 seats, even though they make up a substantial majority of the Muslim population.[27]

Despite all these difficulties, Muslims are beginning to operate as a more cohesive force in Europe. Their local and federal organisational capacity is growing, and there are ever more Muslim umbrella organisations that interact with local and national authorities. This reflects, in part, the need of European governments to have legitimate interlocutors in the Muslim communities in order to address relevant issues more effectively.

France

The French equivalent of the UK's Muslim Council was created in 2002, when the then Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy persuaded the country's three main Islamic organisations to settle their differences and work together.

The French Council for the Muslim Religion (CFCM) is headed by Dalil Boubakeur, the moderate rector of the Paris mosque. It was established to represent the more than 5 million Muslims living in France, but does not in fact represent all streams of Islam in France. Dalil Boubakeur's two deputies belong to the tougher-talking groups – the Union of Islamic Organisations of France (UOIF) and the National Federation of French Muslims (FNMF). This "division of labour" was considered the best way to bring all parties on board, with a moderate voice at the head of the organisation.

There have been reports that governments in some of the French Muslims' countries of origin, anxious to maintain influence over their diaspora, urged mosques and Imams not to participate in the CFCM and the regional councils.[28]

Germany

There are many Muslim organisations in Germany which run mosques and support their members' religious needs. On the whole, however, only a small proportion of the country's 3.2 million Muslims are members of an organised club or association. For this reason, none of the existing organisations can really claim to represent Islam or the majority of Muslims. The largest Muslim non-profit-making organisation, with a number of member associations, is the Turkish Islamic Union of Establishments for Religion (DITIB). Muslim organisations united to form the Islamic Council for the Federal Republic of Germany in 1986 and the Central Council of Muslims in Germany in 1994. Although the Islamic Council, with more than 30 member organisations, is dominated by *Milli Görüs*, an Islamic community which is regarded as extremist, its 19 Central Council members represent a wide range of nations and attitudes. The Islamic Council itself only embraces 200 mosques.

Spain

The Islamic Commission of Spain (CIE) was created in 1992, bringing together two major Islamic organisations: the Federation of Spanish Islamic Entities (FEERI) and the Union of Islamic Communities in Spain (UCIDE). CIE signed an agreement with the Spanish government which, among other provisions, recognised Muslim holidays. However, as the Muslim population of Spain has increased significantly since 1992, the Islamic Commission represents only a portion of the country's registered Muslim organisations.

The Netherlands

There are currently about 700,000 million Muslims in the Netherlands, mostly from Morocco and Turkey; and the Dutch government is engaged in a dialogue with two recognised Muslim groups which serve the Muslim community. The largest of these is the *Contactorgaan Moslems en de Overheid* (CMO), which represents 500,000, mainly Sunni, Muslims. The second, the *Contact Groep Islam* (CGI), represents 115,000 Muslims with an Alevite, Lahore Ahmadiya, Sunni and Shia background.

United Kingdom

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) was formed in May 1996 and now has 480 affiliated organisations, many of which are national bodies with their own branches across the country. The MCB is recognised by the government and other religious bodies. By the mid-1990s, there were at least 839 mosques and 950 Muslim organisations in the UK.[29]

III. The challenges of terrorism and violent radicalisation

III. 1. The effects of terrorism and counter-terrorism measures

The terrorist attacks in Madrid and London and the killing of Theo van Gogh have reinforced perceived links between Islam and terror and violence, as well as the view that Islam is a major "problem" for the West. Following these events, Muslims are under particular scrutiny and face latent mistrust, while counter-terrorism legislation has not always struck a fair balance between security and fundamental rights.

The lesson of the 7 July 2005 bombings in London is that strong, coordinated action by all stakeholders can be effective.

After the attacks, the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) commissioned a study to collect data and information on the immediate reaction to the attacks, focusing on the initial response from the government, police forces, the Muslim community and the media. The study found that while there were some attacks on members of the Muslim community and their properties, these tended to be sporadic and isolated. This was possibly thanks to the swift response from government, politicians and opinion-formers, supported by the police, who made strenuous efforts to draw a clear distinction between the bombers and Islam as a whole.

There was also a strong and immediate reaction from Muslim representatives, who unequivocally condemned the bombers, and the EUMC study concluded that the media in all Member States played an important role during the week following the bombings, and generally went to great lengths to appear balanced.[30]

Following the September 11 2001 attacks in the US, the EUMC launched a reporting system on potential anti-Islamic reactions in the then 15 EU Member States. Its findings showed that since 9/11, Islamic communities had become targets of increased hostility. Existing prejudices were exacerbated and these fuelled acts of aggression and harassment in many EU Member States.[31]

In all countries, latent Islamophobia found expression in acts of physical and verbal abuse. Several reports (from Austria, Germany, the Netherlands,

Portugal and Sweden) suggested that Muslims felt themselves to be under a cloud of suspicion. Furthermore, increased attention from the media and the police fuelled a growing sense of insecurity among minorities.[32]

The report also analysed the impact of politicians on the public's attitudes to Muslims. It found that public statements by leading political figures had contributed to bringing xenophobic, racist and Islamophobic views into mainstream politics. Such statements have had a particularly significant impact in countries like Denmark and Italy.

In an ICM poll taken after the London attacks, about two-thirds of British Muslims said that they had questioned their future in Britain after the outrage, with 63% (equivalent to up to half a million) saying they had considered leaving the UK.[33]

An overwhelming majority of those surveyed rejected the use of violence, with nine out of ten saying it had no place in any political struggle. Almost the same proportion said Muslims should help the police to arrest extremists in the Islamic community. However, nearly eight out of ten Muslims believed the UK's participation in the invasion of Iraq had been a factor behind the bombings. More than half (57%) also cited the failure of Muslim leaders and Imams to root out extremists as a cause. Finally, nearly two-thirds of Muslims identified racist and Islamophobic behaviour as a factor.[34]

Turning to the role of the police, UK Home Office figures revealed a 302% rise in the number of Asians who were stopped and searched by the police in 2002/2003. This has been interpreted by many as confirmation of the impression that since 9/11, Islamophobia has been "institutionalised". The figures also revealed that only 13% of those who were stopped and searched were arrested. Iqbal Sacranie, Secretary-General of the MCB, declared that: "Just as an entire generation of young black people were alienated through stop-and-search practices, we are deeply worried that the same could now be occurring again, this time to young Muslim men."

In response to these events, in September 2004 the MCB launched a new Pocket Guide for British Muslims entitled *Know Your Rights & Responsibilities* and distributed half a million copies across the UK.

The Guide contains information for Muslims on what to do in case of unwarranted arrests, detention at ports, or house searches by the police. It also

contains advice on how to help increase educational achievement levels among Muslim children, and urges British Muslims to participate in mainstream political parties. It also gives the police Anti-Terror Hotline number and describes averting possible terrorist attacks as "an Islamic imperative".

Yet many Muslims, especially in the younger generation, feel that they are merely being treated as a security issue: money that has not been invested in education or youth centres is now being spent on them in the context of security.

III. 2. External factors

International events such as the Iranian Revolution of 1979, the Salman Rushdie affair in 1989, the rise of the Taliban, and the continuing Israeli-Palestinian conflict have heavily influenced perceptions of Islam in Europe. More recently, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have had a particular impact on Muslim communities in Europe.

Following the London attacks, the UK government tried to deny that they had anything to do with British involvement in Iraq. However, when talking to young Muslims, it is clear that the war in Iraq and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have had a strong impact on their thinking. This has not turned them into radicals, but it has led to frustration with the government and increased their sense of alienation.

During the 1990s, domestic and foreign policies became increasingly linked. It was, for example, in the context of the Kosovo crisis that British Prime Minister Tony Blair held a high-profile public meeting with representatives of the Muslim community in the UK, hosted by the newly formed MCB, for the first time. In Germany, Turkish Muslims rejected the Christian Democrats because they did not support Turkey's bid for EU membership. However, it remains difficult to estimate to what extent primarily domestic considerations will influence European countries' future foreign policy decisions.

The southern and eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East are areas of essential importance to the EU. The Union's proximity policy towards the Mediterranean region is governed by the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, launched at the 1995 Barcelona

Conference between the EU and its now 12 Mediterranean Partners.

The main goal of the Barcelona Declaration is to establish a common Euro-Mediterranean area of peace and stability based on fundamental principles, including respect for human rights and democracy. The partnership also aims to speed up economic development and democratisation in the region in an attempt to foster political stability and limit the flow of immigrants into Europe from North Africa. The Barcelona process has, however, been widely criticised for not achieving the goals set out in the Declaration.

The Middle East peace process has long been a political priority for Europe's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). As a member of the "Quartet," the Union has been an active sponsor of the Road Map and allocated considerable resources to supporting the Arab-Israeli peace process. Recently, it sent an EU Mission consisting of 60 policemen and custom officials to the Gaza-Egypt border. However, the prospects for any peace settlement remain uncertain and the Middle East conflict is a key factor behind political radicalisation in Muslim countries. It has also, as mentioned before, had a significant impact on Muslim communities in Europe.

Finally, the EU's decision to open accession talks with Turkey has sparked a debate on Islam in Europe. There are many who argue that a Turkey integrated into the EU could play an essential role in bridging political and cultural divisions. Others believe that it could exacerbate existing difficulties and is incompatible with European history and values. The very fact that Turkey's accession has sparked a cultural and political debate demonstrates the wide gulf that still exists. The likely accession of new Member States from south eastern Europe in the years ahead will also bring some countries with a significant Muslim population into the Union.[35]

III. 3. Violent radicalisation and its prophets

There is much discussion among experts, officials and the media about "radicalisation" and what inspires an individual to become a terrorist.

Efforts have been made to understand the causes and underlying contributing factors by looking at external factors such as the war in Iraq, the revelations about the mistreatment of prisoners at Abu Ghraib, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and domestic issues such as the headscarf

debate, the socio-economic situation of young Muslims and, more generally, the failure of integration policies.

Terrorists and suicide bombers come from all walks of life and have recently also included ethnic Europeans and Muslim women, making it increasingly difficult to develop theories about the pattern of recruitment and to design an appropriate response.

The London bombings have added a new dimension to the contemporary terrorist threat. For the first time in Europe, "home-grown" terrorists – young British-born Muslim men – committed suicide attacks. Some of the terrorists involved in the Madrid attacks were also seemingly well-integrated into the Spanish community and appear to have been radicalised while living in Europe. It appears that within Europe, an increasing number of young Muslims are finding a spiritual home within the most radical forms of Islam.

Attacks in Casablanca, Riyadh and Istanbul have shown that Muslims themselves are increasingly the victims of *jihadist* terrorism. The attacks in Casablanca were carried out in the name of religious purity. Those in Istanbul were partly anti-Semitic, with attacks on synagogues, and partly a reaction to the Iraq war, with the attack on the British embassy. That in Riyadh was politically motivated and aimed at American forces in Saudi Arabia. References to Islam were made in the wake of all these attacks, but there was some variation in the terrorists' motives.

The issue of radicalisation is a real one, especially in some of the large EU Member States, and needs to be addressed. In order to counter radicalisation, more needs to be done to understand the background factors that can turn people into radicals.

An increase in self-radicalisation has been noted recently, and social exclusion and a sense of alienation can feed into this process. International events all too often act as a stimulus and inspiration. Many young Muslims view the "war on terror" as a war on Islam, and claim common cause with suffering brethren in the Palestinian territories, Iraq, Chechnya and elsewhere.[36]

Marc Sageman, who has studied terror networks, argues that a three-pronged process is at work: i) social affiliation with the *jihad*[37] accomplished through friendship, kinship, and discipleship; ii) progressive

intensification of beliefs and faith leading to acceptance of the global *Salafi jihad* ideology; and iii) formal acceptance of the *jihad* through direct links to it. Relative deprivation, religious predisposition and ideological appeal are necessary but not sufficient on their own to account for the decision to become a *mujahed*. Social bonds are the critical element in this process and precede ideological commitment to the cause.[38]

The diaspora has been identified as particularly important for the global *Salafi jihad*, with 80% of recruits joining and becoming radicalised in this way.[39] One Dutch Imam has stated that many young Muslims in Europe are not familiar enough with Islamic doctrine to filter out the radical messages they hear.[40] Studies have found that many who have become radicalised have little knowledge of either Arabic or Islam; what knowledge they do have has either come from "recruiters" seeking to radicalise youngsters or from radical Internet sites.

The Nixon Center Study of 373 *mujahideen* in Western Europe and North America between 1993 and 2004 found that more than twice as many of them were French than Saudis and there were more Britons than Sudanese, Yemenites, Emiratis, Lebanese or Libyans. A quarter of the *jihadists* listed were from Western Europe.

The Internet plays a key role in the radicalisation process and has become one of the most important tools for Al-Qaeda to spread its message and recruit young Muslims for the global *jihad*. It has created a sense of belonging to a global, virtual *umma*. There are vast numbers of *jihadi* websites with videos and pictures of terror attacks and kidnappings, guidelines on how to build and use bombs, and information on where to buy explosives, as well as handbooks on Al-Qaeda's strategies.

According to the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, the number of extremist websites has increased from 12 to 4,500 over the last eight years. The Bavarian State Office of Criminal Investigation and the State Office for the Protection of the Constitution have employed experts on Islam to evaluate the content of radical sites and chat rooms, with alarming results. According to conversations in chat rooms, for instance, it appears that young Muslims in Germany are increasingly open to being recruited for suicide missions.[42] Given the sheer amount of propaganda material on the web and the increasingly sophisticated know-how of those distributing the material, it has become virtually impossible to take effective counter-measures.

It is difficult to determine how many "radicals" exist in Europe but, according to counter-terrorism officials, their number is growing. *Time Magazine* reported that in 2004, the French police found that 150 of the 1,600 mosques and prayer halls in the country were under the control of extremist elements, and 23% of the French converts to Islam identified themselves as *Salafists*. There are apparently as many as 20 different hard-line Islamic groups operating in the Netherlands and, in recent years, the UK has supposedly been home to as many as 3,000 veterans of Al-Qaeda training camps.

In Germany, according to the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, approximately 30,600 people are members of Islamist organisations, of whom an estimated 300 are regarded as "dangerous" because of their contacts with terror organisations and around 3,000 are considered willing to use violence but have no proven links to terrorist activities so far.

After 9/11, in a move against 20 religious groups, the German government, conducted more than 200 raids and banned three radical Islamic organisations (i.e. *Kalifatsaat*, *Al-Aksa e.V.* and *Hizb-ul-Tahrir*).[43] Even more alarmingly, an ICM poll in the UK published in March 2004 found that 13% of British Muslims surveyed would "regard further attacks by Al-Qaeda, or similar organisations on the US as justified".

III. 4. Different ideologies

In recent years, a stronger emphasis on religious "identity" has been observed. The *Salafist* movement, which advocates a rigorous doctrine, has seen its influence grow among Muslim communities in Europe.

According to Olivier Roy, research director at the Paris-based *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (CNRS), the radicalisation of mosques is a result of the growing *Salafist* movement, which attracts young people who feel rejected by Western societies. The number of such radical mosques in France has increased significantly in the last year, according to the study by undercover police forces reported in *Le Monde* in February 2004,[44] which revealed that there were 32 mosques largely under the control of *Salafists* – ten more than the previous year.

Salafists are not necessarily supporters of violence, however, they tend to prefer to stay out of the political process. *Salafists* advocate a pure

interpretation of the Koran and the word "*Salafi*" itself means fundamentalist in the sense of a close adherence to the original texts of Islam. *Salafists* are primarily a manifestation of religious fundamentalism.

This does not necessarily make them a security issue, but Jocelyne Cesari argues that even if *Salafi* doctrine bears no direct relation to terrorist activity, it provides a similar religious framework to that used by radical groups such as Al-Qaeda and may contribute to the sense of familiarity or proximity that potential terrorists experience when they join radical groups. Furthermore, while *Salafi* Islam is not the only interpretation of Islam in Europe, it has played a central role in determining how Muslims deal with their religious tradition in the West.[45]

It is essential to make a distinction between fundamentalism, or religious conservatism, and violent radicalisation. Fundamentalism can be problematic for the integration of Muslim communities because it can make them reluctant to interact with other communities (the *Salafist* movement is a case in point). Violent radicalisation is mainly a security problem and needs to be dealt with as such.

For example, the *Salafist* Group for Call and Combat (GSPC) is a splinter faction of the Algerian-based Armed Islamic Group (GIA). According to Italian investigators, the GSPC had taken over the GIA's external networks across Europe and North Africa by 2000 and was moving to establish an "Islamic International" under the aegis of Osama bin Laden – clearly a cause for concern for Western authorities.

The GSPC aimed to recruit new terrorists from among the ranks of the disenfranchised Algerian youth in Europe's cities, especially in France. Many of these new supporters were involved in petty crimes such as car theft, credit-card fraud, and document forgery in their host and home countries, with their earnings now being channelled into financing terrorist operations.[46]

Sympathisers of the Muslim Brotherhood appear to be making strenuous efforts to take the lead in European Islam. While this does not necessarily pose an immediate security threat, the Brotherhood does have some violent factions. It has, in turn, generated a number of more militant and violent organisations, such as *Hamas*, *Gama'a al-Islamiya*, and *Islamic Jihad*. However, some analysts argue that the mainstream Muslim Brotherhood has no contact with these groups in Europe, except for *Hamas*, where the situation is more ambiguous.

The Saudi effort to spread *Wahhabi*[47] extremist ideology throughout Europe's Muslim communities has also raised concern. Writing about the role of the Saudi state and *Wahhabism* in fostering Islamic extremism around the world, Bernard Lewis argues: "Oil money has enabled them to spread this fanatical, destructive form of Islam all over the Muslim world and among Muslims in the West. Without oil and the creation of the Saudi Kingdom, *Wahhabism* would have remained a lunatic fringe in a marginal country."

Many Saudis reject the term "*Wahhabism*" as derogatory and regard Wahhab's ideas as Islam itself, while others refer to it as *Salafism*. It is also the school of thought that shaped Osama bin Laden's beliefs.

Hizb-ul-Tahrir (HT, the Party of Liberation) is a transnational movement – sometimes referred to as "three men and a fax machine" – that has served as radical Sunni Islamism's ideological vanguard. Since 9/11, it has increasingly developed into a pan-European movement. According to a recent article by Zeyno Baran in *Foreign Affairs*, HT is not in itself a terrorist organisation, but can be thought of as a conveyor belt for terrorists because it indoctrinates individuals with radical ideology, priming them for recruitment by more extreme organisations where they can take part in violent operations.

According to Baran, HT's membership is estimated to number in the hundreds in European countries, while it is banned in most of the Muslim world as well as in Germany and Russia. Until early 2006, the group was allowed to operate freely in the UK, (on the grounds that it was not, in itself, a violent organisation) and played a major role in the radicalisation of disaffected Muslim youths.[48]

III. 5. Target groups and sites

European converts to Islam have also become a cause of immense concern for the security services. The threat they could pose was highlighted by the arrest of Richard Reid, a British citizen who converted to Islam and was found guilty of attempting to blow up a flight from Paris to the US in 2002.

An increasing number of young Europeans from working-class backgrounds are converting to Islam. As Gilles Kepel writes: "Even if *jihadist* militants make up a tiny minority of this fresh group of enthusiasts, converts are of great concern to security services, because insurgents who choose not to

display their faith overtly can easily elude authorities. For this reason, the security services have begun focusing attention on converts."[49]

Olivier Roy argues that converts do not turn towards fundamentalism because of the Iraq war, but because they feel excluded from Western society (this is especially true of the many converts from the Caribbean islands, both in France and the UK). "Born again" Muslims, or converts, are rebels looking for a cause. They find it in the dream of a virtual, universal *ummah*, in the same way that the ultra-leftists of the 1970s (the Baader-Meinhof Group and the Italian Red Brigades) justified their terrorist actions in the name of the "world proletariat" and "Revolution" without really caring about the end results.[50]

The recent case of a Belgian woman (Muriel Degauque, the first Western female convert to Islam to carry out a suicide bombing) could also be an indicator of a new trend: namely, male-dominated terrorist groups increasingly recruiting Muslim women to join the global *jihad*. While women have carried out suicide missions in Palestine and Chechnya for some years, it was only recently that conservative and religiously motivated terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda began using them.

However, Farhana Ali argues that the "liberal" door that now permits women to participate in operations will probably close once male *jihadists* attract new recruits and notch up a few successful attacks, and that the sudden increase in female bombers over the past year may be a short-lived phenomenon.

In the short term, male fighters could encourage Muslim women to join their organisations, but there is no indication that these men would allow the *mujahidaat* to gain authority and replace images of the male folk-hero. There is also no evidence that Muslim female operatives have contact with senior male leaders, except to receive their orders for carrying out attacks.[51]

European converts are often involved in integrating Islam into their host country. While they tend to be more rigid and radical in the interpretation of their faith, it is difficult to judge whether this particular group poses a more serious security threat than others.

Robert A. Pape carried out a study of every suicide bombing and attack around the globe between 1980 and 2003, and found little evidence of a connection between suicide terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism. Rather,

what nearly all suicide terrorist attacks have in common is a specific secular and strategic goal: to compel modern democracies to withdraw military forces from territories that the terrorists consider as their homeland. Pape further argues that religion *per se* is rarely the root cause, although it is often used as a recruiting tool by terrorist organisations and serves broader strategic objectives.[52]

State prisons in Europe have also been identified as potential recruiting grounds for terrorists. However, it is difficult to judge the extent to which radicalisation occurs in prison. The Imam is not necessarily held in high regard in a prison's Muslim community and radicalisation may depend on whom a prisoner shares a cell with.

There is great concern about the messages which religious leaders deliver in European mosques, especially since 9/11, following the discovery that certain mosques (the Finsbury Park and Baker Street Mosques in London and the al-Quds Mosque in Hamburg, among others) had been used to spread extremist views. Also, as mentioned above, the number of radical mosques in France has increased significantly in the last year. This is, however, the exception and the vast majority of worshippers resent any association between worship and extremist ideology.

It is also the case that extremists increasingly withdraw from their local mosques because they are either under surveillance, were expelled because of their radical views, or left voluntarily because they felt the Imam was not teaching their extremist interpretation of Islam. They move instead to private places to meet and pray, making their activities much harder to monitor.

There is concern that countries of origin still seek to exert control over the main Muslim institutions in Europe by, for example, financing major mosques. Countries like Saudi Arabia and Egypt regularly send delegations of Muslim scholars to Europe who often take a very traditional approach to teaching that does not necessarily reflect the realities of life in European countries.

For some years now, Riyadh has offered an increasing number of free training courses in Saudi Arabia. The first students to benefit from this assistance have returned to Europe and have since been championing a sectarian mode of living. By promoting a literal reading of the holy texts, they reject integration, oppose involvement in host societies and tend to regard Europe as a world naturally hostile to Islam from which they must stand apart in every aspect.[53]

There are some groups, such as the *Tablighis* and the *Salafists*, who argue that Muslims in Europe should not become involved in politics. They tell their followers that they must concentrate on remaining Muslims. Other groups accept that they are under the supervision of their community of origin and do not want to promote an independence that could leave them cut off.

There are signs that this is changing, as second- and third-generation Muslims have fewer ties with their countries of origin and an increasing number of Muslim organisations accept financial assistance only if it is given with no strings attached. More efforts have also been made across Europe to restrict the activities of radical Imams who incite violence through militant sermons.

An increasing number of recruits from European countries are carrying out attacks in Iraq. *The New York Times* recently reported that Sheikh Omar Bakri Muhammad, a Syrian-born cleric in London, had urged young Muslim men to support the Iraq insurgency.[54] He has repeatedly referred to the terrorists who carried out the 9/11 attacks as "the magnificent 19" in his sermons.

There is also great concern about radical clerics in Germany. Before 2001, the authorities were not allowed to monitor what was going on within mosques, but new anti-terrorism laws have closed some of these legal loopholes, revoking the immunity of religious groups and charities from investigation or surveillance.

According to a report by the Congressional Research Service,[55] part of the difficulty in fighting Islamic extremism in Spain stems from the relatively small number of mosques, with many Muslims worshipping in informal prayer rooms. Experts estimate that there are now hundreds of such "garage mosques" headed by Imams whose political ideologies are unknown, making it difficult for the authorities to monitor places of worship in their efforts to track down *jihadist* supporters.

The terrorists involved in the Madrid attacks were mostly "home-grown" Islamist militants and the authorities proved a connection between these militants and places of worship that advocated *Wahhabi* Islam. Most of these terrorists were Spanish residents leading seemingly ordinary and even socially well-integrated lives. As Giles Keppel says: "Without undergoing indoctrination or brainwashing or deprivation in an Afghan training camp. they suddenly became activists bent on waging a *jihad* of terror, assisted by a few experienced militants who blended into the multivariate Spanish social landscape."[56]

IV. European Union agendas

IV. 1. Guidelines, standards and principles

The specific issue of Islam and Muslims in Europe was placed on the EU agenda at the December 2004 European Council, when heads of state and government agreed that the Union should conduct a study on radicalisation and terrorist recruitment. They also reiterated their conviction that in order to be effective in the long run, the EU's response to terrorism must address its root causes.

This led to the adoption, in December 2005, of an EU "Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism". This builds on the European Commission's Communication on "Terrorist Recruitment: addressing the factors contributing to violent radicalisation", published in September 2005. This Strategy, in turn, is part of the broader EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Action Plan adopted in December 2005.

The EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy is based on four pillars: Prevent, Protect, Pursue and Respond:

Strategic commitment: To combat terrorism globally, and make Europe safer, allowing its peoples to live in freedom, security and justice, within a framework that respects human rights.

Prevent: To prevent people turning to terrorism by tackling the factors and root causes which can lead to radicalisation and recruitment, in Europe and internationally.

Protect: To protect citizens and infrastructure, and reduce our vulnerability to attack, including through improved security of borders, transport and critical infrastructure.

Pursue: To pursue and investigate terrorists across our borders and globally; to impede planning; to disrupt support networks, cut off funding and bring terrorists to justice.

Respond: To prepare ourselves to manage and minimise the consequences of a terrorist attack, by improving capabilities to deal with the aftermath, the coordination of the response and the needs of victims.

In addressing the policy issues falling under the first pillar of the EU counter-terrorism strategy, the EU "Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism" outlines a range of measures which Member States should implement to address the problem of radicalisation. In addition to the Strategy, an Action Plan has been drawn up for implementing these measures. This goes into greater detail than the Strategy, but is still not very specific, in light of the ongoing effort to understand radicalisation better.

The issue of radicalisation will need to be addressed primarily by the individual Member States, as the EU does not have the competence to introduce the social, educational, and economic policies that can foster equality and inclusion within each society. However, the Union can provide a framework for Member States to coordinate their policies and share information about best practices. The Council can also exercise peer pressure on Member States which are slow in implementing the agreed measures. But the Union's competence stops here.

In comparison to the previous Commission Communication, the Council Strategy goes further in addressing some of the issues raised by radicalisation and, on balance, puts more emphasis on the "harder" aspects of security.

However, the Strategy is part of the "soft" side of the EU's counter-terrorism measures. The Commission and the Council are well aware of the sensitivities involved in addressing this issue and do not want to stigmatise a particular community any further. For instance, the Strategy underlines that the vast majority of Europeans, irrespective of their beliefs, do not accept extremist ideologies.

The EU's Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER) will continue to focus on this issue and is likely to produce a first assessment report in the second half of 2006. The implementation of the Action Plan will also be a priority for the Austrian and Finnish Presidencies of the Union.

Below are some of the measures the EU is committed to undertake to counter radicalisation and terrorist recruitment:[57]

1. **Disrupt the activities of the networks and individuals who draw people into terrorism**: There are practical steps an individual must take to become involved in terrorism. Such behaviour must be spotted by, for

example, community policing, effective monitoring of the Internet and travel to conflict zones. National assessment and analysis should be exchanged. It is necessary to limit the activities of those playing a role in radicalisation, including in prisons, places of education or religious training and worship, and to examine issues relating to the admittance and residence of such individuals. The right legal framework to prevent individuals from inciting and legitimising violence needs to be put in place and ways to impede terrorist recruitment via the Internet need to be examined. The EU will pursue political dialogue and target technical assistance to help others outside the Union to do the same.

2. **Ensure that voices of mainstream opinion prevail over those of extremism**: The EU needs to empower moderate voices by engaging with Muslim organisations and faith groups that reject the distorted version of Islam put forward by Al-Qaeda and others. It needs to encourage the emergence of European Imams and enhance language and other training for foreign Imams in Europe. It needs to correct unfair and inaccurate perceptions of Islam and Muslims, and develop a non-emotive lexicon for discussing the issues in order to avoid linking Islam to terrorism. It must ensure that its own policies do not exacerbate division.

3. **Promote security, justice, democracy and opportunity for all more vigorously**: The structural factors supporting radicalisation both within and outside the Union must be eliminated. As part of the response, inequalities and discrimination must be targeted where they exist, and inter-cultural dialogue and long-term integration promoted. Outside Europe, good governance, human rights, democracy and education and economic prosperity must be promoted, through political dialogue and assistance programmes.

For its part, the Commission Communication of September 2005 on “Terrorist recruitment: addressing the factors contributing to violent radicalisation” defines “violent radicalisation” as the phenomenon of people embracing opinions, views and ideas which could lead to acts of terrorism as specified in Article 1 of the Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism.[58]

The actions and recommendations presented in the Communication are a combination of “soft” measures (for example, inter-cultural exchanges among young people) and “less soft” measures (for example, the banning of satellite broadcasts inciting terrorism), and are complementary to current national efforts.

The Commission believes that at European level, the EU – with its spectrum of policies in various areas that could be used to address violent radicalisation – is well placed to gather and spread the relevant expertise that is being acquired by the Member States in addressing this problem. The core areas considered are: the broadcast media, the Internet, education, youth engagement, employment, social exclusion and integration issues, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, and inter-cultural dialogue.

The Commission Communication acknowledges the sensitivity and intricacy of this issue and takes a rather cautious approach. It is regarded as a first step in trying to understand the complex issue of radicalisation, and stops well short of offering comprehensive solutions. The Commission will provide 450,000 euros for further studies, including one on the social science aspects of radicalisation. It is also in the process of setting up a network of experts who will guide the policy-making process.

Key points in the Commission Communication on "Terrorist recruitment: addressing the factors contributing to violent radicalisation" include:

1. **Broadcast media**: European law already prohibits incitement to hatred on grounds of race, sex, religion or nationality in broadcast media. Member States are responsible for its implementation. A conference will be held on the media's role in relation to violent radicalisation and terrorism.

2. **The Internet**: The use of the Internet to incite people into becoming violently radical, or as a vehicle for terrorist recruitment, is extremely worrying in view of its global reach, real-time nature and effectiveness. The objective of removing terrorist propaganda from the Internet can be taken into account in the e-Commerce Directive.[59] The Commission encourages Member States to make use of the enabling provisions in the Directive in the most effective way to address violent radicalisation in Europe. The Commission will gather best practices to examine whether there is a need to adopt a guidance document.

3. **Education, youth engagement and active European citizenship**: The promotion of cultural diversity and tolerance can help to stem the development of violently radical mindsets. The Commission supports several Youth and Culture Programmes, and has recently launched a proposal to adopt a new programme "Citizens for Europe" to promote active European citizenship.

4. **Encouraging integration, inter-cultural dialogue and dialogue with religions**: The Commission is committed, under the framework of The Hague Programme, to taking action to promote more vigorous integration policies within Member States, based on the implementation of the Common Basic Principles on Integration adopted by the Justice, Liberty and Security Council in November 2004. The Commission will launch a proposal to establish 2008 as the Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

5. **Law-enforcement authorities and security services**: Schemes should be considered which involve the police and law-enforcement authorities engaging more with young people at the local level. Those Member States which promote the recruitment of people from different backgrounds should also encourage other countries to do the same by sharing best practice. More preventive work in the area of counter-terrorism should be encouraged across the Member States, along with further cooperation between the operational, intelligence and policy levels. The Commission will gather and assess best practice in the Member States and consolidate them into periodic guidelines for all Member States.

6. **Experts networks**: The Commission will allocate funds to establish a network of experts, which will submit a preliminary contribution in the beginning of 2006. The Commission will also launch a public tender for studies in this area.

7. **External relations**: Dialogue and technical assistance to third countries and regional partners has to be an integral part of the approach to addressing violent radicalisation and terrorist recruitment. The EU Action Plans in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) include a number of anti-radicalisation measures.

IV. 2. The EU agenda on terrorism

The international dimension of terrorism has grown significantly, mostly as a consequence of globalisation, the increasing use of mass media, the spread of international banking systems and the cyber revolution.

International terrorist networks present a particular threat. Al-Qaeda is specific: it has developed from simply being an organisation into an ideological movement and has, as such, become more dangerous. For example, several terrorist groups, such as the one responsible for the Istanbul bombings in 2004, are not directly linked to Al-Qaeda's network

but share its motivations and aims, and claim to act in its name.

Combating terrorism has become one of the EU's greatest challenges. In the aftermath of September 11 and the Madrid and London bombings, new EU-wide anti-terrorism measures were adopted. The European Council endorsed the revised EU "Plan of Action on Combating Terrorism" on 18 June 2004. This is regularly updated to monitor implementation of the range of initiatives and measures identified, and the European Council reviews progress on the action plan every six months.

These measures aim to increase cooperation in fields ranging from intelligence sharing to law enforcement and the control of financial assets, including the introduction of a European Arrest Warrant, efforts to strengthen the role of Europol, and the appointment of an EU counter-terrorism coordinator. Finally, as outlined earlier, a broader EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Action Plan was adopted during the UK Presidency in December 2005 to streamline agreed measures into a single framework based on a four-pronged strategy: prevent, protect, pursue and respond.

A first step towards improving intelligence sharing was taken with the agreement to expand the Joint Situation Centre within the Council. This will help the Union to develop an integrated analysis of the terrorist threat by bringing together experts from both the intelligence services and the security services both outside and inside the EU. An European Borders Agency was recently created in Warsaw to help border authorities in Europe cooperate more closely and share experience and best practices.

Further priorities for 2005 included information sharing and law-enforcement cooperation; combating the financing of terrorism; civil protection and the protection of critical infrastructure; addressing the causes of radicalisation and the recruitment of Muslims by terrorist groups; and mainstreaming counter-terrorism activities in the EU's external relations. Moreover, the European Security Strategy (ESS), drafted by the EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana and approved by the European Council on 12 December 2003, clearly identifies international terrorism as a key threat. It states that "terrorism poses a growing strategic threat to the whole of Europe" and that "Europe is both a target and a base for terrorism".[60]

IV. 3. The EU agenda on integration

The other side of the coin is the EU agenda on integration. In the past few years, the Union has begun to take the issue of migrant integration more seriously, partly because of the growing recognition that the social exclusion faced by foreign-born populations in Europe is a problem with wide-ranging implications, not least for security.

A range of tools have been employed to combat immigrant social exclusion, such as the anti-discrimination legislation passed in 2000; the inclusion of third-country nationals and immigrants as a target area for the European Employment Strategy; and the creation of a network of National Contact Points on Integration to exchange information and best practice.

Most significantly, in November 2004 the European Council adopted the Common Basic Principles (CBPs) on Integration as a foundation and reference point for national integration policies. These principles identify the main parameters of a successful integration policy, including the need to safeguard the practice of diverse cultures and religions, as guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights (Principle 8). In practical terms, however, the CBPs offer very little of substance on the practicalities of implementing an effective integration policy. In addition, they are not legally binding on the Member States – they are just guidelines and standards for action.

To remedy this, the Commission published its "Communication on a Common Agenda for Integration: Framework for the Integration of Third Country Nationals" in September 2005. It states that the "cornerstones of such a framework are proposals for concrete measures to put the CBPs (Common Basic Principles) into practice, together with a series of supportive EU mechanisms".

The first half of the Communication is a list of measures grouped by Common Basic Principle that Member States can use as a "check list" to improve their integration programmes. Approaches to integration policy vary greatly amongst the EU-25, and their success often depends on the specific demographic and cultural mix in each country.[61]

IV. 4. Ways ahead

There is no single recipe for countering radicalisation as *jihadists* find ways to penetrate all social classes. Terrorists come from all walks of life,

including seemingly well-integrated and highly educated young men (and sometimes women). The French analyst Olivier Roy argues that Western-based Islamic terrorists are a lost generation, adrift from traditional societies and cultures and frustrated by a Western society that does not meet their expectations. Their vision of a global *ummah* is both a mirror of – and a form of revenge against – the globalisation that has made them what they are.[62]

Still, a few common themes can be identified and general recommendations made:

A long-term strategy is needed

Today, violent radicalisation and terrorist recruitment are key government concerns, which need to be addressed through policy. What Europe needs, aside from better coordination in security and intelligence, is a long-term strategy to tackle the root causes of terrorism. This includes encouraging better integration policies and addressing radicalisation. It also requires a more coherent European strategy towards the Middle East in general, and, most importantly, a renewed effort to find a solution to the Israel/Palestinian conflict.

External political factors also play a role, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have contributed to recruitment efforts in Europe, with many young Muslims regarding the fight against terrorism – and especially the US "global war on terror" – as a "war" on Islam. Europe needs to think more systematically about its own strategic relationship with the Islamic Arab world.

Integration policies should be pursued for their own merit

There is growing awareness that factors such as discrimination, social and economic deprivation and alienation can make some Muslims, especially young second- and third- generation immigrants, more vulnerable to extremist ideologies. A lack of integration is relevant to radicalisation, but policies to overcome this should be pursued for their own merit and not only as a response to security concerns.

It is clear that while an approach based only on integration is not enough, it would be wrong to "securitise" integration. This could exacerbate existing problems and raises difficult questions about the delicate balance between security and civil liberties. One of the key challenges in this context is

to what extent democratic societies in Europe should tolerate individuals who deliver radical messages in the name of free speech.

The EU does have a role to play

The Union has very little competence in this area, and efforts to create common policies on integration and combat radicalisation can be hampered by Member States' different histories, political contexts and priorities.

At the same time, however, there is a need to understand – and find solutions to – the issue of radicalisation, and the EU institutions are struggling to come up with ideas.

Many of the underlying issues are of a global and trans-boundary nature, and a broad and transnational response is necessary, not least because of Europe's large and open borders. The EU can provide an important framework for Member States to coordinate their policies, share information about best practices and, whenever necessary, put peer pressure on Member States which are slow to implement agreed measures.

Muslim leaders must play their part

Muslim leaders and Muslim representatives in Europe need to condemn terrorism strongly and visibly, and clearly set Islam apart from extremist movements. A positive example in this respect was set by Spain, where the Islamic Commission of Spain recently issued a *fatwa* against terrorism in general and Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden in particular.

Dialogue is essential

A close dialogue and partnership with Muslim communities and moderate Muslim representatives in Europe is crucial to address the factors leading to radicalisation and to implement some of the agreed measures. In this context, more needs to be done to support and strengthen moderate Muslim leaders. The EU Strategy states that Al-Qaeda and those inspired by it will only be defeated by engaging the public, especially Muslims, in Europe and beyond. Yet some criticism has been voiced by Muslim representatives that they have not been consulted on these issues so far.

A strategy is needed to assess and establish whether individuals who are considered by the authorities as "moderates" – and with whom they are

keen to interact – really do represent their communities. If one of the root causes of radicalisation is lack of access to the "political space", then excluding more fundamentalist-minded individuals from dialogue might only reinforce the sense of alienation.

The EU must reach out to young Muslims

While the EU programmes may look great on paper, it is difficult for young people from disadvantaged minorities to benefit from them. Those in need have to be reached.

Radicals seeking to recruit young people to their cause often spend a great deal of time befriending individuals, supporting them and taking care of every aspect of their lives – giving them a sense of belonging. To counter these efforts, more must be done at grass-roots level to reach out to young Muslims. This could include developing programmes to help create a strong Muslim civil society.

Strategies must take a holistic approach and be tailored

By proposing so many scattered initiatives under each Common Basic Principle, the EU's integration policy initiatives offer little "guidance" to Member States. They do not distinguish between migrant communities, which may have differing integration needs, and are of scant use to those countries focused on integrating a particular group, such as Muslims. Little distinction is made between target groups, either in terms of newly arrived versus second- and third-generation migrants, economic versus humanitarian migration, or long-term versus short-term immigration.

Strategies should not only take a *holistic* approach, incorporating all aspects of social, economic and political life, but should also be tailored to address the various types of migration in each EU Member State, particularly as migrants increasingly move around the EU once they are within its borders. At present, no such guidance exists.

Measures are needed to bring Muslims in "from the cold"

Many immigrants in Europe still remain on the margins of society without a real prospect of becoming part of it. A disproportionate number of Muslims are unemployed and fail to complete secondary school. More needs to be done to improve access to jobs and education,

and focus on upward social mobility, through quotas and/or affirmative action. The EU's Equality Directives should be implemented in full, as this would lead to better access to employment and housing, and would help to fight discrimination at all levels. Many Member States have not yet implemented the Directives and only meet the minimum legal requirements.

Muslim communities also need to be protected from increasing Islamophobia. Strategies could be developed to deal effectively with the possible backlash in the immediate aftermath of a terror attack. Failure to do this is one of the root causes of the social distress and loss of dignity that can be significant factors in the radicalisation of young people.

Islam must be treated in the same way as other religions

The sensitive points in the inter-cultural dialogue will need to be addressed. For example, the perceived lack of balance in religious rights, which means that Muslims do not feel that they have the same rights as Jews and Christians in Europe, must be tackled.

In order to give Muslims the opportunity to play an active role in their wider national communities, cooperation should also be extended to areas of mutual interest beyond religious issues, such as environmental, educational, and public health issues, the economy and, most importantly, participation in politics.

There is great concern about the messages and ideologies being advocated within mosques in Europe. As noted above, places of worship are not necessarily a fertile recruiting ground for terrorists: extremists often withdraw from their local mosque either because they are under surveillance or because they do not feel that the Imam is teaching their extremist interpretation of Islam. There are, however, known links between terrorists and radical mosques, and there is growing pressure on local Islamic leaders to counter religious extremism and ensure that mosques are not being used to recruit terrorists or plan attacks.

More restrictions are needed on radical Imams

Greater efforts are needed to clamp down on radical Imams who incite violence, and the issue of radicalisation in places of worship must be

addressed in close partnership with the Muslim community. In the UK, for example, a new national advisory council of Imams is setting rules and educational standards to help create more "home-grown" religious leaders. This should also help to prevent mosques being used by extremists and reduce their reliance on "imported" religious ministers from abroad. Professional structures could be established to arrange financing for mosques and improve the situation of Imams in Europe.

The role of the media must be analysed

Over the last two years, much has been said about assuring Muslims that the fight against terrorism is not a war on Islam. As a result of certain media coverage, many Muslims find it almost impossible to free themselves from these preconceived links between Islam and radicalism. In its Communication, the Commission has also expressed concern that the media could be misused as a messenger by the terrorists, and has therefore launched further studies on the media's role in relation to violent radicalisation and terrorism. Some critics have, however, voiced concerns that this could lead to restrictions on freedom of speech.

The authorities must work closely with Muslims

It is crucial that the government, police and security services work closely with local Muslim communities to improve the flow of information from them to the police about suspected terrorist activities and to help identify those who promote radical ideas and violent activities.

The confidence of the Muslim community in policing is crucial. If individuals feel that they cannot trust the police, they are less likely to seek dialogue and cooperate with them. Discriminatory and racist police practices, especially in France, have greatly damaged relations with the Muslim community. Greater efforts should therefore be made to recruit more local police officers from different ethnic backgrounds.

Jihadists are constantly finding new recruiting tools, increasingly using the Internet, online chat rooms and the distribution of "recruitment" DVDs to attract supporters. The Internet plays a key role in the recruitment process as it facilitates a fast and anonymous flow of information and has given many disenfranchised individuals a sense of belonging to a global, virtual *ummah*.

The Commission has proposed self-regulation of the industry and the use of the enabling provisions in the e-Commerce Directive to address this issue. However, given the quantity of propaganda material and the increasingly sophisticated know-how of those distributing it, it has become virtually impossible to implement effective counter-measures.

V. Conclusion

The Al-Qaeda-inspired international terrorism that we are confronted with today is likely to remain with us for some time to come.

There is no easy, one-size-fits-all solution to the problem of radicalisation, and common and coherent approaches have to be pursued. Policy-makers will have to find ways to guarantee the rights and liberties of their law-abiding populations while ensuring their security.

Muslims and non-Muslims must work together to win the battle for hearts and minds. EU Counter-Terrorism Co-ordinator Gijs de Vries was right when he stated that: "Moderate Muslims hold the key. We need to engage with them on the basis of the values we share: respect for human life, respect for democratic standards, respect for individual liberty and dignity. This means that our policies to combat terrorism must respect the rights and values we have pledged to defend, including the rights of prisoners."[63]

Appendix

Estimates of the number of Muslims in Europe[64]

There are no precise figures for the number of Muslims living in Europe today, since there is no central registration of residents by religion in most countries. These statistics are based on estimates of the number of migrants from countries where Islam is the most important religion.

	Total population	Muslims
Austria	8,102,600	300,000
Belgium	10,192,240	370,000
Denmark	5,330,020	150,000
France	56,000,000	4,000,000 – 5,000,000
Germany	82,000,000	3,040,000
Greece	10,000,000	370,000
Italy	56,778,031	700,000
Netherlands	15,760,225	695,600
Portugal	9,853,000	30,000 – 38,000
Spain	40,202,160	300,000 – 400,000
Sweden	8,876,611	250,000 – 300,000
UK	55,000,000	1,406,000

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Executive summary

Terrorism arises out of complex causes, and some find their calling in religious extremism and radicalism irrespective of their socio-economic background.

To understand and tackle violent radicalisation, we must also look beyond security issues. While no cause justifies terrorism, the issues that lie behind it must be addressed. In this context, a distinction should be made between the causes of terrorism, which tend to be of an external and international nature, and background factors that contribute to violent radicalisation, which may be of a socio-economic nature.

This Working Paper addresses some of the factors which contribute to violent radicalisation and the risks that can be associated with failed integration. It examines the policies proposed by the European Union to counter violent radicalisation and the recruitment of terrorists.

It also outlines some of the complex issues surrounding Islam in Europe and the integration of Muslims into European societies more generally, especially following the terrorist attacks in London in July 2005 and the global protests in early 2006 over the cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad.

It must be stressed at the outset that while violent radicals are misusing Islam as a framework for recruiting terrorists, the overwhelming majority of the more than 15 million Muslims living in Europe are law-abiding citizens.

Most policies to combat radicalisation and terrorist recruitment are the primary responsibility of the Member States. The EU is in the early stages of addressing this issue, but could potentially play an important role in identifying best practices and monitoring implementation of agreed measures.

To counter radicalisation, governments must work closely with Muslim communities and moderate Muslim representatives. In turn, Muslim leaders in Europe need to send a strong and visible message condemning terrorism and clearly set Islam apart from any extremist movements.

More must also be done to reach out to young Muslims, especially at the grass-roots level. A disproportionate number of Muslims are unemployed

and fail to complete secondary school. Access to jobs and education must be improved, possibly through quotas and/or affirmative action. Muslim communities also need to be protected from possible backlash in the aftermath of an attack and from increasing Islamophobia.

While places of worship are not necessarily a fertile recruiting ground for terrorists, there is concern about the messages and ideologies being advocated within mosques in Europe. There are some known links between terrorists and radical mosques, and local Islamic leaders must ensure that mosques are not being used to recruit terrorists or plan attacks.

The overall role of the media must also be analysed, including the way it is used by terrorists, with the Internet playing a especially significant role as it facilitates a fast and anonymous flow of information.

Furthermore, it is essential for the Muslim community to have confidence in policing, and governments, police and security services need to work closely with local Muslim communities to help identify those who promote radical ideas and advocate violence.

There is no easy, one-size-fits-all solution to the problem of radicalisation, and Muslims and Non-Muslims need to work together to prevent the feared “clash of civilisations” becoming a reality.

Mission Statement

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