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Research and Development

Background to jihadist radicalisation in Switzerland

An exploratory study with recommendations for prevention and intervention

Research report

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Summary

Within the scope of this exploratory study, a variety of approaches were chosen to analyse the phenomenon of jihadist radicalisation and the processes by which young people are drawn to it at both the individual and social or community level. A wide range of actors who are likely to come into contact with this phenomenon were questioned about their perception and assessment of the situation, as well as their experience in handling such cases and their need for support. The results show that the stakeholders are generally equipped to deal with youth violence and have established collaborative networks, but lack the background knowledge and orientation required for effective prevention and intervention strategies with regard to this particular phenomenon. There is a need for support and further training in this area, as well as demand for a central point of contact.

1 Introduction

The background to jihadist radicalisation in Switzerland was examined in an exploratory study conducted over seven months (1.1.2015 – 31.7.2015) by an interdisciplinary team under the leadership of Dr Miryam Eser Davolio. The study was funded by three federal offices (State Secretariat for Migration SEM, Directorate of International Law DIL and Service for Combating Racism SCRA). The aim of the study was to analyse the factors behind the processes by which young people come to adopt radical positions in a Swiss context in order to draw up recommendations for prevention and intervention. The eleven-strong interdisciplinary and interinstitutional team, which was set up within a short space of time and worked with great commitment across language barriers, covered the following areas: The report opens with an explanation by Dr Carole Villiger (University of Lausanne) and Dr Ilona Möwe (Zurich University of Applied Sciences) of the theoretical considerations behind the research and definition of the terms used. This is followed by Dr Eva Mey's (Zurich University of Applied Sciences) discussion of the specific conditions faced by young people from a migrant background growing up in Switzerland and the conditions affecting conversion or reversion. Carole Villiger (University of Lausanne) then evaluates an interview with a returnee. Dr Miryam Eser, Milena Gehrig (both Zurich University of Applied Sciences) and Laurent Wicht (University of Applied Sciences Western Switzerland) researched the situation in public institutions, while Dr Dilyara Suleymanova, Dominik Müller (both University of Zurich) and Dr Elisa Banfi (University of Geneva) conducted surveys of Muslim organisations. A young team consisting of Dilyara Suleymanova and Dominik Müller (University of Zurich), Isabelle Steiner (Zurich University of Applied Sciences) and Burim Luzha and Fabian Davolio (both students) tackled the internet study. Dr Brigitta Gerber (Büro Toleranzkultur, Basel) drew up the prevention and intervention measures based on the experiences of other European countries. The whole team contributed to identifying and formulating measures for use in the relevant areas in Switzerland. The individual chapters and parts of the report comprise more than 100 pages of material, which had to be condensed into 20 pages for the final report, with a corresponding reduction in the amount of information presented. The results and recommendations were discussed at a focus group meeting with the federal steering committee and experts (Michaela Glaser of the Deutsches Jugendinstitut, Dr Mallory Schneuwly-Purdie of the University of Geneva, Géraldine Casutt of the University of Fribourg, Monique Eckmann of the University of Applied Sciences Western Switzerland, Ahmad Mansur of the Civil Peace Service, Chalid Durmosch of the Violence Prevention Network, Nils Böckler of Bielefeld University, Dr Andreas Tunger-Zangger and Dr Jürgen Endres of the University of Lucerne, Prof. Hansjörg Schmid of the University of Fribourg, Mohammed Hanel Union of the Islamic Organisations of Zurich/VIOZ), and their feedback has been incorporated into the final report.
As the exploratory study had a short research duration that did not allow the subject to be investigated in greater depth, the background to this phenomenon was explored and the options for action identified in order to gain an overview of this complex and multi-faceted topic and provide guidance in the Swiss context.

2 Methodology

Most current research into the pathways of jihadist radicalisation, its violent forms and the strategies against it tends to focus on combating terrorism (see Herding 2013: 22f.). The following issues are primarily addressed by such research at a) the individual, cause-specific level and b) the community-oriented, reactive level:

a) What individual, psychosocial, sociodemographic and contextual factors and backgrounds play a role in the jihadist radicalisation of adolescents and young adults?

b) What civil society resources exist to prevent and intervene in jihadist radicalisation? To what extent do teaching professionals, youth workers and representatives of Muslim organisations engage with young jihadists and what answers do they put forward? To what extent is there a need for counselling and networking? What approaches are fit for purpose and can be adapted accordingly? If implemented, can they build on existing structures?

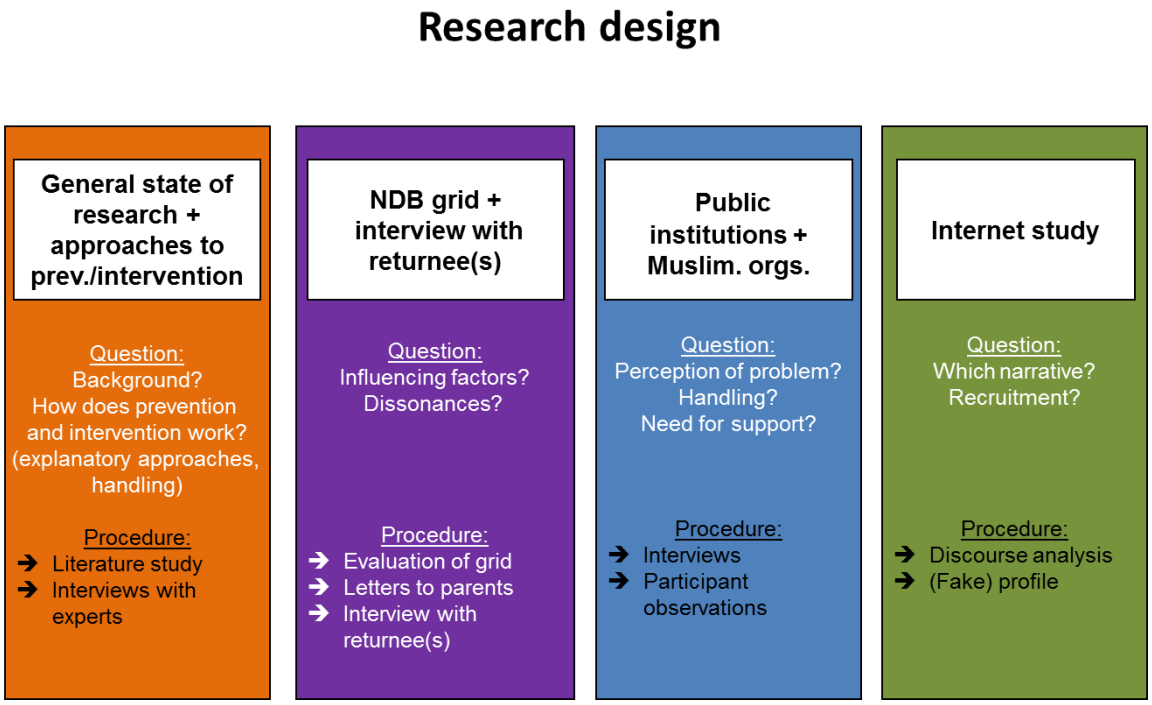

Fig. 1: Research design showing the four parts of the research

A grid for recording the individual characteristics of jihadist-motivated travellers to conflict zones (age, gender, religion, education, access) was developed for use by the Federal Intelligence Service (FIS) and rounded out by interviews with experts on extremism at the Federal Office of Police (fedpol) and the FIS. The latter additionally sent letters in eight languages to those concerned – and, in the case of minors, also to their parents – urging them to get in touch with us. However, we were only able to conduct one lengthy interview with a returnee.

Part of the internet study involved looking at the accessibility of propaganda and its narratives. To determine how the problem is perceived at public institutions throughout Switzerland, interviews were held in the social work and education sector (N=13), with violence prevention and integration agencies (N=10) and in the prison system (N=4). We also spoke to representatives of Muslim organisations (N=33) throughout Switzerland and key persons from ethnic communities (N=8).

Once the status of current research had been established, around twenty Swiss (N=10) and foreign experts (N=11 from D/F/NL/A/USA/JOR) were interviewed and the experience of other European countries with prevention and intervention measures in a jihadist radicalisation context studied. This enabled us to gain an overview and propose recommendations that could be adopted in the Swiss context. Selected experts and professionals with practical ex-

perience discussed the exploratory study and its recommendations with the federal steering committee behind closed doors at the end of June 2015 and their feedback has been incorporated into the final report.

3 Theoretical considerations and terminology

Manifestations of violence within our modern society interact with political and social processes at every level and have thus become the subject of extensive academic research. *Security studies* and the social sciences in particular focus on this phenomenon. The aim of the former is practical, i.e. it concerns itself with security matters in the interests of reducing the potential for harm from violent groups, whereas the social sciences seek to understand political violence in all its complexity and entirety while taking due account of the political, economic, social and cultural aspects. Those in the social sciences generally accuse those in security studies of concentrating exclusively on security policy and neglecting to look at the underlying causes of violence or question the use of terms such as "terrorism", "extremism" and "radicalisation" (Della Porta 1995, Goodwin 2004, Tilly 2003). Owing to their vague and relative nature, these concepts are, in fact, problematic and leave the door wide open to value judgements (Arendt 1969; Braud 1993; Michaud 1978; Wievorka 2004).

Interest in "political violence" has waned within the social sciences over the last few years and given way to analyses of "radicalisation processes". Research into "terrorism", which includes questions on various aspects of radicalisation, implies an analysis of the political and social dynamics at the international level and consideration of the political significance of this phenomenon. If the focus is placed on the "radicalisation process", the emphasis shifts towards individuals and their subjectivity (Walther 2006; Neidhardt 2006; Wievorka 1988). A lively debate is being conducted at the theoretical level within the social sciences on the importance attached to structures and individual subjectivity in conflict analysis (Goodwin 1997; McAdam Doug/ Tarrow/Tilly, 2007; Tarrow 1988).

As far as *security studies* is concerned, it has been responsible for the majority of academic publications on "terrorism" and "radicalisation processes" that have appeared since 9/11 (Bonelli 2011). Its attention is focused above all on the factors which cause Muslim individuals to support a radical interpretation of Islam that leads to violence – but leaving aside all questions of the context in which this violence occurs. One of the many consequences of this approach is the lack of reference to the role played by Western governments in the conflicts in the Middle East (Kundnani 2012). In addition, the processes by which an individual becomes radicalised are highly complex (Crettiez 2011; Villiger 2014). To understand what drives a person so far that he or she are prepared to resort to violence at any given time, we need to look not only at the historical conditions of each conflict in its totality, but also at the circumstances particular to each territory and the way in which an individual relates to those circumstances.

It is important to be absolutely clear about which phenomenon we are referring to as terms such as radicalisation and Islamism are often nebulous. Starting from Ongering's (2007) definition of radicalisation as "... a process of personal development whereby an individual adopts ever more extreme political or politico-religious ideas and goals, becoming convinced that the attainment of these goals justifies extreme methods", we regard radicalisation as the holding of extreme politico-religious views coupled with the legitimation of violence, and agree with Vidino's (2013) understanding of jihadist radicalisation[1]. Jihadism appears in con-

[1] Borrowing from the study by Lorenzo Vidino (2013), jihadist radicalisation is taken to mean the process of adopting an extreme belief system, which sees jihad and the associated violence against 'infidels' as a method to effect the desired societal change (establishment of an 'Islamic state').

nection with terms such as 'radical', 'radicalised Salafism' or 'fundamentalism', and 'Islamism' and 'terrorism', which require closer definition. The current use of the term radicalisation is relatively new and describes "what goes on before the bomb goes off" (Sedgwick 2010: 479). Most countries in western Europe have set up anti-radicalisation programmes since 2005 through which the term has become established, while Muslim minorities have at the same time been branded as 'suspect communities' (Kundnani 2012).

The word 'radical' points in the direction of 'extremist'[2] and stands in opposition to 'moderate'. It indicates a relative position on a continuum of organised opinion (Sedgwick 2010: 481). Moreover, as the meaning of the term 'radicalisation' varies depending on the contexts in which it is used, such as the security context, the integration context, and the foreign-policy context (ibid.: 485ff.), we have adopted Sedgwick's proposal of using the term in its relative sense. In contrast to activism, radicalism is understood to mean a readiness to engage in illegal and violent political action (see ibid.: 483). According to Al-Lami (2009), a clear distinction must be drawn between religious fundamentalism and conservatism, including Salafism, which rejects militant jihad on the one hand, and violent, militant radicalisation on the other. Kundnani (2012) pleads for a focus on radical jihadism as a political movement, thus shifting attention away from individuals and their deficits towards groups (Schiffauer 2000: 315f.). The phenomenon of jihadist radicalisation extends beyond the problem of jihad tourists as a growing number of sympathisers now tend to advocate violence as a means of achieving their goals (see Frindre et al. 2011). In doing so, they confront society with similar issues as other forms of extremism. Consequently, terrorism research adopts too narrow a focus, uncovering only the tip of the iceberg, whereas an approach aligned with youth research and research into movements also takes the part below the surface into consideration. In this sense, it is crucial to understand what stimulates the processes that drive young people towards jihadist radicalisation and what world views, experiences, needs and problems act as push and pull factors on the radicalisation path.

4 Adolescence of young people from a migrant background in the Swiss context

As a transitional period in their life, young people begin to develop their own life plans during adolescence and start defining themselves in a professional, social and political context[3]. In migration societies especially, gaining a sense of social belonging – not to mention national allegiance – is a key aspect of adolescent (self-) positioning. This is framed by the *dominant societal perception of belonging and non-belonging* (Mecheril et al. 2006).

[2] 'Extremist' generally refers to movements and parties, ideas and attitudes or patterns of behavior that reject the democratic constitutional state, division of power, multi-party system and right to opposition. Extremists replace political opposition with the distinction between friend and foe. As a result, they firmly reject other opinions and interests and believe in certain, allegedly irrefutable politico-social aims or laws (from the Federal Council report on extremism of 14.3.2002: 5019, https://www.admin.ch/opc/de/federal-gazette/2004/5011.pdf).

[3] Puberty is a phase of heightened susceptibility to extreme positions and lifestyles as well as errors in judgement that may cause harm to others (Heinke/Person 2015: 52) as it combines immature cognitive control and forward planning with a greater willingness to take risks. At the same time, the brain is particularly receptive to social and emotional stimuli (see ibid.: 49). This psychosocial state can lead to risky behaviour, across a spectrum up to and including life-threatening risks (see Hurrelmann/Mansel 1991), while also hampering the emotional and cognitive processing of critical life events and loss experiences. Therefore, adolescence can pose the risk of young people being drawn towards extremist positions, regardless of whether or not they come from a migrant background.

Within this general framework of theories on youth, King (2006) and King and Koller (2006) postulate that adolescents with a migration history find themselves in a special situation in the sense that they additionally have to reconsider their relationship with 'family issues' related to migration, e.g. how the family interprets the reasons for migration or reacts to the experience of social marginalisation in Switzerland.

Another reason why this redefining of the relationships between young people and their families – a constitutive part of the transition to adulthood – is so challenging for those from a migrant background is that it takes place in the context of social marginalisation and devaluation (see Mecheril and Hoffarth 2006, Mey and Rorato 2010). Social abasement affects not only the individual in question but the family as a whole, thus making the adolescent process of detachment from close family ties highly complicated and ambivalent: on the one hand, it implies distancing themselves from the stigma of where they come from, on the other it means abandoning the very context they had previously relied on to protect them from painful experiences of social rejection. In view of this twofold transformation challenge and in the context of social marginalisation and discrimination mechanisms, peer contacts – and especially, although not exclusively, those with other adolescents from a migrant background – take on particular importance for young people from migrant families, providing them with an outlet in which joint and often creative strategies for handling the many different challenges can be developed (see, e.g. Bohnsack 1997; Nohl 2001).

Studies demonstrate not only the lack of equality for foreigners in Switzerland in educational and occupational terms, but also the specific discrimination faced by non-Swiss young people in gaining access to vocational training and careers based solely on their foreign background and regardless of their social class (see, e.g.Fibbi et al. 2003, Imdorf 2010).

The highly politicised, exclusionary debate regarding national identity in Switzerland is probably of greater relevance to the perception of a lack of social acceptance than inequalities in education and work, as it particularly affects the children of immigrants. The introduction of simplified naturalisation for second-generation immigrants has been rejected in three separate referendums (1984, 1992, 2004). The current revision of the Citizenship Act, which will most likely enter into force this summer (2015), will give young people – particularly those from non-EU states – much easier access to Swiss citizenship (revision has been passed by both chambers of Parliament, no referendum has been called). But even naturalisation is no guarantee of inclusion as individuals often continue to encounter marginalisation and discrimination because of their name, etc. in spite of their Swiss passport (see, e.g. the current debate on the loyalty of 'second-generation immigrants' in the Swiss Armed Forces). As a result, the denial of belonging ("we Muslims are also part of this society") despite a person's best efforts can lead to frustration and resignation – or, in some cases, to the embracing of radical positions.

The anti-minaret initiative, which was put to the vote in 2009, and the associated debates can be seen as an expression of the "Islamisation" of non-belonging, in which Islam as a faith becomes the focal characteristic of non-belonging – transcending and exceeding all issues of foreign origin. "I am a product of the anti-minaret initiative," says one young man who converted to Islam but only decided to take up organised action following the anti-minaret initiative (see Sheikhzadegan 2013: 62).

Exclusionary discourse of this kind and discriminatory social structures – not to mention international conflicts – play an important role in the adoption of Islamic positions that lean towards violence, as experiences are interpreted against this background and instrumentalised by extremist groups through their ideology of victimisation (see Glaser 2015: 6). This is where Salafism captures the attention of young people with its promise of identity and greater recognition, appealing to their sense of justice and conveying the message that they will become part of a large community which claims to follow nothing but the truth (see Dantschke 2015: 46) – although Salafism must not be equated with Islamic movements with claims to power which are willing to use violence. The process by which young people are drawn to fundamentalist Islam can also constitute an expression of protest, an attempt to distance themselves as far as possible from their parents' world view. In such cases, the wearing of Salafist dress should likewise be seen as an attempt to provoke (see ibid.). At the same time,

Dantschke stresses that all young people affected by radicalisation in the German context are alike in being "illiterate in a religious and theological sense" (ibid.: 44), as they generally only encounter religion as a formal family tradition. The majority have not experienced any serious form of religious socialisation or education that would enable them to take a critical view of religious content (see ibid.). In addition to the pathways outlined above, in the case of young women attracted to IS, the following push factors must also be taken into consideration: first, wearing a hijab or niqab makes them stand out, as a result of which they are more frequently exposed to hostility and discrimination. Second, humanitarian motives and frustration at international inaction over the suffering of the Syrian population are often important (see ibid.: 11). On top of this, there are pull factors such as religious duty, a sense of belonging and sisterhood, and romantic notions of an 'adventurous life' in the Islamic State (see ibid.: 16f.).

5 Conversion

In what follows, 'conversion' is taken to mean both conversion from another religion or from an atheist position to Islam as well as reversion (see Wensierski/Lübcke 2012), which describes the turning of a Muslim from a secularised position to a strict or fundamentalist interpretation of Islam. In the case of conversion for spiritual, social or political reasons (token conversion, e.g. following marriage to a Muslim, is not included here), this step will appear irrational if the processes of alienation and frustration experienced prior to the actual conversion are not taken into account. Most of the biographies analysed clearly show that the decision to convert was preceded by a crisis situation (Wohlrab-Sahr 2001: 787). Destabilising problems of this kind can be divided into three realms relating, firstly, to sexuality and gender relations, secondly, to social mobility and failed attempts at upward social mobility and, thirdly, to nationality and ethnicity and problems of belonging (see ibid.). These largely lead to experiences of personal devaluation, degradation and disintegration. Conversion thus offers an orderly and simplified world view and gives meaning to an individual's way of life (see Hendrich 2013: 2); it enables previous role expectations to be thrown overboard and radical new roles to be adopted (Gooren 2007: 351). The new social networks, which are able to establish stronger ties than any previous relationships, also play an important role in this process, but generally only once the individual has already turned in a religious direction (see Gooren 2007: 340).

Conversion to Islam can cause young people with previously aimless and unstructured lives to "lead a more methodical lifestyle" (Wohlrab-Sahr 1999) if they find orientation and structure through a way of life dedicated to Islam (see Sheikhzadegan 2013: 63) linked with remoralisation (Wohlrab-Sahr 2001). Given the stigmatisation of Islam in Switzerland, conversion to Islam may constitute identification with those who are marginalised (see ibid.: 64). This is also referred to as the "inversion of stigma" (Cesari 2004) and can provocatively be understood to mean dropping out of the dominant order as a means of "symbolising within society maximum distance from that society" (Wohlrab-Sahr 2001: 797). The embracing of (political) Islam coupled with the wearing of obviously Islamic clothing is described by Schiffauer (2000, 294ff.) as *outing* ..."the highlighting of differences as a means of demanding recognition for your own way of life." He claims that by converting to Islam individuals find themselves in the middle of a debate that has had a polarising effect for centuries (see ibid.). The interplay between individual factors of this kind must be looked at separately in each conversion process (see Gooren 2007: 351).

Some people refer to Salafism as a sect-like movement when discussing conversion to its extreme view of Islam. There are indeed parallels to be found with certain features that characterise sects in terms of Salafism's world view and image of man (division of the world into good and evil), its claim to absoluteness, promise of salvation and healing with universal recipes for all problems, its unrealistic expectations of what can be achieved and feeling of community allied with the requirement of unconditional loyalty that includes the suppression of criticism from within its own ranks. Its manipulative methods of attracting, indoctrinating and misleading supporters are also similar to those used by sects. However, it would be mis-

taken to reduce this fundamentalist interpretation of Islam with an affinity to violence to the status of a sect (meaning an offshoot of a religious belief system with negative connotations). It is more appropriate to speak about a religious movement that takes over every aspect of people's lives.

The pathway to joining such sect-like Salafist groups is linked to typical marginalisation processes, like the creation of alternative worlds of meaning and belief and the propagation of a black-and-white world view, which can lead to a loss of reality and an undifferentiated perception of differing opinions, not to mention opposition within the group (see Waldmann 2011: 237). This black-and-white thinking is also transposed to the assessment of international conflicts and ultimately leads to a victim ideology that is linked to both virulent anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism (Israel-Palestine conflict) (Steinberg 2014). As a need to establish coherence in thought and action, Jihadist motivation can thus arise from a religious, politico-ideological sense of duty (Eckert 2013). Consequently, young people radicalised in this way see themselves as the avant-garde of a religious revolution with strict social and moral controls (Hamed 2014: 126), who follow a fundamentalist interpretation of Islam, reject all social and political modernisation and aspire to de-westernise the world (Wichmann 2013: 132).

6 The profile of jihadist-motivated travellers to conflict zones

In terms of its overall population, the incidence of jihadist-motivated travel to conflict zones is less pronounced here in Switzerland than in neighbouring European countries: higher numbers are reported for Belgium and the Scandinavian countries in particular, but also for the Netherlands, United Kingdom, France, Austria and Germany. However, such comparisons must be treated with care as these figures merely reflect what the intelligence services have managed to uncover, and not all countries apply the same criteria to collect these statistics.

If we look at the demographic profile information made available to us by the FIS grid, it shows that most of the jihadist-motivated travellers to conflict zones are between 20 and 35 years of age, but also include older men up to age 49. In Switzerland to date, only a few women have appeared on the radar – just three, to be exact. We can therefore refer to an almost exclusively male phenomenon. Twelve of the total 66 are converts; half of these are Swiss and the other half are EU-nationals or hold dual Swiss-EU citizenship. The Muslims who are not converts (52 of 66) mainly come from the successor states to the former Yugoslavia and Somalia, followed by Swiss Muslims (10). (Every sixth person recorded has dual citizenship... As far as possible pathways are concerned, around one fifth of this number have direct or indirect experience of war (e.g. from the Balkan conflict) and the same number are members of a Salafist organisation. Internet and friends usually play an important role in radicalisation.

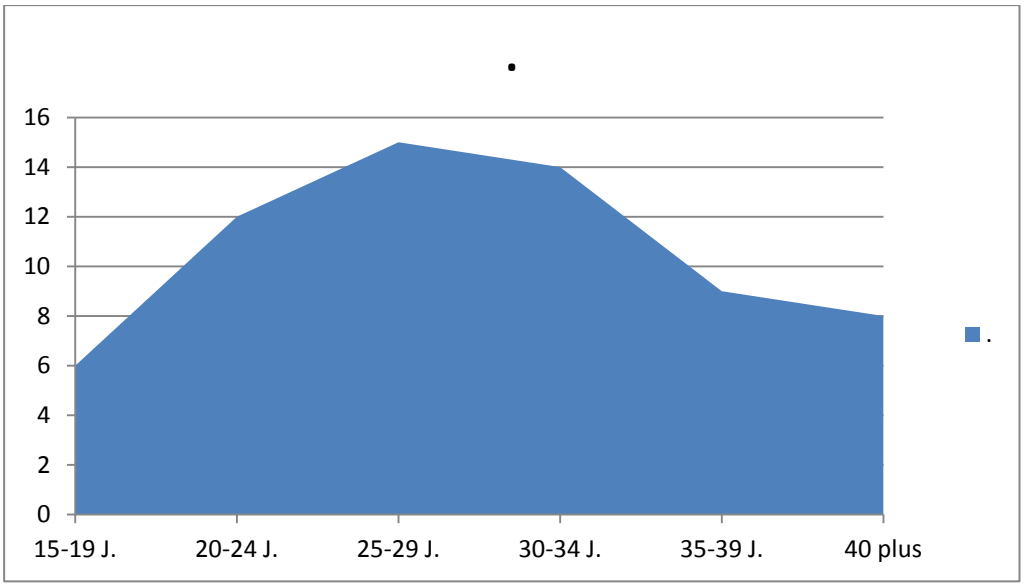

Table 1: Age distribution of jihadist-motivated travellers to conflict zones from Switzerland (N=66), as at March 2015

The grid does not give any details concerning the level of education and the information provided orally by the FIS claims that the spectrum is very broad, ranging from no qualifications to a university degree. As has been shown in other studies, we can see here that jihadists do not fit a 'typical profile' (see Steinberg 2015; Heinke/Person 2015), but are highly heterogeneous in terms of their social background, education, socio-economic status, etc. Mental instability and individual difficulty in integrating do appear to be characteristic of at least some of the jihadist-motivated travellers to conflict zones. This partly indicates a higher degree of fragility and susceptibility, but could also be linked to IS recruitment strategies. Roy (2015: 23f.) postulates that the social level of IS is much lower than that of Al-Qaeda, since IS deliberately recruits *outcasts*. This presumably also depends on the purpose for which they were recruited, whether as fighter or propagandist in the West (cf. 2014: 41ff.) or even engineer or doctor.

The FIS Situation Report on Switzerland's Security (2014: 35) localises the risk of radicalisation among a fringe group of the Muslim population: "Young Muslims from this fringe group who are going through an identity crisis, find themselves in a difficult personal situation and see only unsatisfactory future prospects for themselves could, in the search for greater self-esteem and social recognition, find action for the jihadist cause attractive."

7 Interview with a returnee from Syria

R. travelled to Syria in December 2013, where he stayed in the Islamic State (IS) until March 2014 when he had just turned 30. R. comes from a wealthy, middle-class, secular family. The reasons that led R. to take up cause with IS are many. By his own account, R. was primarily motivated by his determination to do something about the massacre perpetrated by Bashar al-Assad against the Syrian leader's own people, his intention to produce a photo report about the situation on the ground to serve as a form of eye-witness account and his desire to go paragliding in Syria. These three incentives indicate humanitarian goals, the need for social recognition and an urge to experience strong emotions. R.'s support for IS does not come entirely as a surprise. R. had previously been interested in the Israel-Palestine conflict and made several trips to the occupied territories from 2007 onwards, volunteering as an ambulance driver for the Red Crescent. He then converted to Islam at the start of 2013. When R. decided to go to Syria at the end of 2013, he was in a difficult situation: with no qualifications, no work and unable to move following a parachute accident, he spent much of his time in front of a computer screen. He was a regular visitor to social media sites and

came into contact with recruiters via Facebook. Things then started happening very quickly and he set out on his journey a few months later.

When he arrived in Syria, he realised that his intentions did not match those of the others (he refused to take up arms). As he was unable to cope with the reality of war, he announced his determination to return to Switzerland. IS rejected this and put him in prison. R. remained in detention for 54 days before finally being released. He was treated badly during that time.

On his return to Switzerland, R. was punished for participating in and supporting a criminal organisation (Art. 260ter SCC) and for completing military service in a foreign army (Art. 94 MCC). At present, he views himself as a victim of IS, which he now considers equivalent to a sect. This interpretation predominates among Western returnees and is generally shared by those around them, the media and the government authorities (Bouzar 2014, 2015). This kind of understanding simplifies a politically complex phenomenon and points a finger at the manipulative propaganda of IS. However, the fact that an independent choice was made by an individual after weighing up the options at the time in question is ignored.

Although R.'s story has much in common with that of other jihadist-motivated travellers to conflict zones – the stages of his radicalisation process, the role of social media, his social and mental fragility, his perception and interpretation of political factors – it nevertheless remains his own personal experience and it would be hazardous to derive sociological indicators from this one individual case for use in devising a system for the detection of radicalisation processes (Kundnani 2012).

8 The internet study

Analysing the propaganda material on the internet is an extremely complex undertaking, given the abundance and variety of sources and content and the global extent of the phenomenon. In addition, the content is aimed at an international audience and posted in English, French, German, Arabic and Russian, helping to further intensify its global dissemination and consumption.

One focal point of the internet study was access to extremist web content through search terms in the most common social media such as Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Ask.fm, blogs (blogspot; tumblr; WordpPress) and digital archives and storage media (archive.org; sendvid, Google Drive, etc.). As well as taking a direct approach with the aid of specific search terms, extremist material can also be reached by a more circuitous route. Numerous harmless videos can be found on Youtube and Facebook, for instance, dedicated to prayer in Islam or other religious content. These videos are generally the subject of intense discussion in the comments sidebar, addressing issues of orthopraxy or the interpretation of religious content, among other things. The comments section is often used by sympathisers of extremist ideologies as a platform to criticise or delegitimise other interpretations or scholars and to link to further videos or websites with extremist content. Individuals thus also come across content in which they were not primarily interested. According to Schori Liang (2015), IS supporters use popular hashtags, such as that for the football World Cup *#Brazil_2014*, to reach a new audience, linking them to IS messages and posts. In their analysis of 5,384,892 tweets disseminated by IS supporters, Berger & Morgan (2015: 20) discovered that 232,728 hashtags contained IS references. 40 per cent of the top 100 hashtags were made up of IS references. In second place came hashtags used in reference to account suspensions. Moreover, they found that IS supporters are much more active than the average user (ibid.: 28), although the most prolific users run the risk of having their accounts suspended by Twitter.

As part of this study, access to relevant websites using the Google text and image search function was investigated. The image search even allowed users to find profiles that had been suspended or closed on various social media sites. To test this, three Facebook profiles were created – two female and one male. While the latter barely provoked any reaction, within a few hours the two female profiles had received 300 friend requests from around the world (Indonesia, Syria, Russia, etc.), including a few marriage proposals. One of the female profiles was suspended by Facebook the following day – presumably due to the number of

requests. This experiment proves that young women receive a great deal of attention without having to reveal details of their looks.

A second focal point of the internet research lay in analysing narratives. To this end, the online content was scanned and assigned *keywords*, which were then used to formulate and test hypotheses. Narratives are the key not only to understanding what needs IS is seeking to cover and how people are recruited on the internet but also to formulating preventive measures – in the form of counter-narratives, for example. The appeal to individuals to travel to IS territory and the call to take up arms and become martyrs for the cause are two of the core elements in IS narratives. Both processes are *framed* in religious concepts: while emigration to IS territory is compared with the *Hijra (Hegira)*, armed struggle is described as *jihad*. The use of these religious concepts as a rhetorical device is highly important as it provides a religious "legitimation" for the actions in question and thus appeals to Muslims and their sense of duty at a moral level.

The violence and brutality perpetrated against Muslims by Western military forces features in every propaganda format and is often depicted very graphically. For example, videos or pictures of dead children or rapes are shown. IS sees itself as the defender of the oppressed and calls on all Muslims to join the fight, justifying this as a form of resistance. This "legitimate" violence manifests itself as a narrative in various forms, one of the most gruesome of which is the execution of IS's enemies. In most of the videos it is stressed that the executions were preceded by a trial, which not only serves to legitimise proceedings but is also intended to demonstrate that a fully functioning system of justice exists. However, in addition to violence, IS propaganda material also features a wide variety of everyday or 'normality' narratives that transmit a wide range of messages. The docusoap style is used to show how well the state, social and economic infrastructure is functioning on IS territory, how well people are coexisting and how well, for example, consumer watchdogs are monitoring local markets and products. The everyday narratives signalise that IS is a state which ensures the physical, social and economic security of its citizens, a state where there is a place for everyone and where it is not just about fighting but where you can settle permanently with your family. Narratives of this kind are meant to attract women and professionals especially. The narratives are aimed at a wide audience. Alongside young men, who are the most frequent target group, older fighters and children also appear in these narratives to highlight the fact that people of any age can make a contribution to the struggle and to establishing the Islamic State.

The warrior, *mujahid*, is a central figure in these narratives, appearing in many videos and magazines. This role model offers young people a new identity and a way out of a marginalised, unsatisfactory position. In the professionally authored portraits, cool young fighters (often European converts) tell their life stories. Their past, full of humiliation and meaninglessness, is contrasted with their current life of self-determination within IS. The depictions of these fighters are also aimed at the young women for whom they can be seen as potential partners in marriage.

A further element of the IS narrative that holds great appeal is the image of egalitarian brotherhood, intended to cover the need for recognition, acceptance and solidarity, in which your previous identity and status plays no role. The ethnic diversity of the fighters is celebrated in order to show that discrimination on the basis of origin or skin colour is not an issue within IS – in contrast to Western societies, where "otherness" is omnipresent.

The call to *jihad* appeals to Muslim solidarity and the need to do something about the Syria crisis, and draws on normative sources from the Qur'an. Such narratives are thus used to attract those with humanitarian, idealistic goals who would like to establish a utopian society. In this way, IS presents itself as a state for Muslims, in which people can live by Islamic rules without having to face any discrimination or humiliation owing to their beliefs.

The counter-narratives include the open letter of 120 international and renowned Islamic scholars to Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi in which they adopt Islamic arguments to refute and denounce the ideology and deeds of IS as un-Islamic. In addition, there are a large number of influential Islamic preachers in the German-speaking countries who advise against emigrating to Syria. Thanks to their use of youth-friendly language, their voice is being heard by

young Muslims especially. However, alongside the established Islamic organisations and youth organisations, many young Muslims in particular conduct their own online research in an attempt to find out about IS and its un-Islamic actions. Their reports, comments and general posts can be found all over the social networks, often sparking controversial debates. Cyber activists have also taken up action against IS, such as the global "hacktivism" organisation *Anonymous*, which has declared cyber war on IS and attacked a number of IS Twitter and Facebook accounts (Schori Liang 2015).

However, counter-strategies and counter-narratives are generally not very visible on the internet and there is not much structured knowledge based in Islam being imparted. Access to reliable online sources of Islamic teaching for converts or 'newcomers' to Islam is very risky. First and foremost, Islamic organisations and youth organisations have a role to play here in drawing attention to manipulative content or even disseminating counter-narratives on the various social media platforms.

9 Situation in public institutions in the education and social work sectors

There is generally little awareness of the problem in schools, which tend not to be affected directly by incidences of jihadist radicalisation and also feel equipped to cope thanks to violence prevention programmes, networking, school social work, etc. While threat scenarios have been identified and crisis intervention plans drawn up in individual cases, it has been left up to the teachers themselves to decide, after discussing the matter with the individual in question, whether or not suspicions are substantiated. Depending on the outcome, the student at risk will be given further counselling or the police will be called in.

Conversions/reversions of adolescents to Islam raise questions in some schools, and provocative statements are sometimes made regarding news items (Charlie Hébdo etc.), which need to be tackled. However, teachers are often unsure about how to address such topics and raise them for discussion without producing counterproductive reactions and polarising students. An innovative approach to handling these issues was adopted at one school whose experiences could prove useful for other teaching professionals and head teachers. Similarly, the vocational school in Winterthur at which a female student had left for Syria, found it necessary to discuss this in class in an attempt to come to terms with both the incident itself and its impact on the remaining students. At the preventive level, the subject of "Culture and Religion" or "Ethics" is included in the curriculum: in addition to providing students with a grounding in the individual religions, it also allows openness and tolerance for other religions to be discussed.

The City of Bern runs a "Radicalisation Counselling Service" as part of its range of social counselling services, and this has already worked with several families whose sons demonstrated radicalisation tendencies. The cantons of Basel-Stadt and Basel-Landschaft likewise operate a specialist counter-extremism service, which has also been confronted with cases of this kind. In a further case involving an unaccompanied minor asylum seeker in central Switzerland with a problematic Facebook profile, two exploratory discussions were held with the young person in consultation with the relevant professionals (deputy, teacher, social education worker). The primary objective in all these cases of counselling was to clarify whether radicalisation had in fact occurred or whether the young person was mainly trying to provoke or satisfy other needs. In principle, all social counselling services in Switzerland should offer advice on radicalisation, but only the city of Bern explicitly does so at present, thus also making it the object of enquiries from families outside its catchment area.

In the case of young adults and families with children who intend to join IS and who are unwilling to engage in dialogue there is the option of triggering intervention by the child and adult protection authority (KESB) by notifying it that they represent a danger to themselves and/or others. However, this instrument should be used prudently as the adverse effects of removing children from the care of their Muslim parents in the United Kingdom has shown (Stanley/Guru 2015).

As far as youth work is concerned, a written survey of eight teams at the open youth work organisation in Zurich revealed no or few evident problems. This is attributed mainly to the healthy apprenticeship market in the Zurich area, which means that few young adults lack a structure to their day, thus making youth work "easier". However, this does not apply to the French or Italian-speaking parts of Switzerland, where it is claimed that youth unemployment leads to exclusion, particularly among young people from a migrant background. The survey among streetworkers and socio-cultural animators (N=4) in the Geneva area revealed the following:

Although the conversion of young non-Muslims and the reversion to religious practices of young Muslims is a phenomenon that has been observed for some years now by youth workers, the professionals in question have seen these tendencies increase in recent months. What strikes them most is the speed with which young people are being drawn to religion, *"from one day to the next"*, as if the religion had literally *"fallen from the skies" (animator)*. These transformation processes appear to be particularly visible, almost as if they were a new fashion trend among young people: *"It's fashionable to be Muslim"* (Streetworker2). In each district in which they work, the professionals encounter small, identifiable and visible groups. And each district has its own diffuse figure of a young person who has a particular influence on other young people. The professionals note that a climate of insecurity prevails among young people: *"There is a feeling of emptiness – an emptiness that needs to be filled"* (Streetworker1). In some cases this figure of a young person who wants to persuade others to convert is pretty vague, so that it would actually be more correct to speak about a rumour. All the survey participants agree that the blame lies with the problematic social situation in which these young people find themselves and which can largely be characterised as precarious, given the highly fragile nature of the process of social and career integration. The connections they establish through their religion help them find recognition within a collective as well as protection through the expression of mutual solidarity within this small group, not to mention a way in which to explain and understand their situation. The social workers emphasise this dimension – which they see as "inner peace" and which they claim has been found precisely by young people with turbulent or blocked transitions to adult life. They agree that this represents fertile soil for recruiting young people to potential radicalisation processes, whatever form the latter may take.

"It's amazing to see them become abstinent and super strict in their everyday lives practically overnight, but it also adds to their rebellious spirit – and they openly flaunt that mindset with their beards and everything they say: 'Have you seen how Muslim I am?' It's just like punks and their Mohican hairstyle." (Streetworker2)

"Security" coordination agencies have been set up in the districts concerned to bring together the relevant executive authorities and representatives of the cantonal and city police. Social workers take part in these meetings insofar as their function allows. The risk of radicalisation also features as a topic on the agenda of these coordination meetings. In this respect, due account needs to be taken of both the security aspect, which falls within the remit of the police, and the "social cohesion" aspect, which is the responsibility of the social workers.

The observations made by participants at two youth work events in Ebikon on Islam and radicalisation (as part of the 'Islamic discussion club' project run by youth worker Tugba Schussmann) showed the interest of those taking part in questions of faith as well as a distancing from IS and radicalisation.

Throughout interviews in the criminal justice system, it became evident that the spiritual needs of the Muslim inmate population are being well catered for by imams. While processes of categorisation as Muslim/non-Muslim exist, these do not cause any major problems. The number of imams providing spiritual care is sufficient to keep the group dynamic under control and can be changed and managed if need be. Conditions such as those in French prisons are therefore impossible. But at the same time, it must be noted that inmates tend to adapt to the norms and fit in with existing social structures in the prison system, which are currently strongly geared towards assigning inmates into Muslim and non-Muslim groups. In

addition, particularly in Geneva, some of the inmates have already been held in other prisons abroad and espouse a certain position (see also Schneuwly-Purdie 2011). To date, little consideration has been given to potential plans for dealing with returnees in the prison system. There is a clearly identifiable need for further staff training on Islam/radicalisation and returnees in relation to the question of how to differentiate between highly devout inmates and Islamically radicalised ones. The SAZ (Swiss Training Centre for Prison Staff) is in the process of designing a training course specifically for this purpose.

10 Muslim organisations

Mosques fulfil a wide variety of functions, depending on their financial and human resources and scope for action, and offer a range of religious services (e.g. Friday prayers, funerals) as well as special activities aimed at women, children and young people. While the social function of a mosque at commune level ranges from marriage counselling and parenting advice to help with filling out tax returns, its engagement at civil-society level encompasses spiritual care in hospitals and prisons and participation in Muslim organisations[4] and interreligious dialogue or cooperation with communal and cantonal offices.

Because Islam is not an officially recognised religion in Switzerland, mosques are generally organised along ethnic lines as *cultural associations, mosque associations* or foundations. They are mostly funded through donations and contributions from active members of the community – and hence often find themselves in a very difficult financial situation – and much of their work is done on a voluntary basis. Official recognition would make it possible to regulate funding.

Youth organisations and mosques are aware of the phenomenon of radicalisation – though not in their own immediate environment – and maintain that adolescents and young adults are largely seduced and radicalised by individual online content that has been plucked from the Qur'an and instrumentalised. At the same time, they feel the effects of hostility towards Islam, contrasting with the fact that the majority of Muslims who lead a normal life barely receive any media coverage. All those interviewed (N=33) perceive growing hostility in the public sphere towards Muslims based on the simplified equation that Islam equals radicalisation, and complain about increasing discrimination, especially of women and young people who they claim suffer from unemployment and a lack of prospects, particularly in French and Italian-speaking Switzerland. *"By stigmatising the Swiss Muslim community, you encourage Muslims to take refuge in Islamism"* (representative of the Union of Muslim Associations of the Canton of Vaud UVAM).

All the representatives of mosques interviewed feel that the very public discussion on jihadist radicalisation and attacks made in the name of IS put them under constant pressure to justify themselves. Such pressure is not easy to contend with as the representatives often carry out their work at the mosque alongside their main occupation and the various Muslim umbrella organisations are not able to speak on behalf of all Muslims in Switzerland. They often feel unable to cope with the many media enquiries. They are also confronted with questions on these issues by the faithful, who seek guidance.

The interviewees from mosque associations and youth groups are largely agreed that jihadist radicalisation results from a combination of different factors and that the phenomenon cannot

[4] A distinction can be made between at least three different types of Muslim organisation in Switzerland. There are associations operating at the national level such as FIOS (Federation of Islamic Organisations in Switzerland) and KIOS (Coordinated Islamic Organisations in Switzerland), at the regional level some cantons have cantonal umbrella associations such as VIOZ (Union of Islamic Organisations in Zurich), the Basel Muslim Commission or DIGO (Umbrella Organisation for the Islamic Communities of Eastern Switzerland), and various mosque associations have been established at the local level.

be traced back to any *one* cause. Young people who join the jihad movement are usually not part of the youth organisation or mosque networks. It is first and foremost outsiders with difficult family or social backgrounds who become radicalised through the internet or contact with other extremists. At the same time, most respondents named the lack of acceptance of Muslims in society as an important factor that can lead to radicalisation.

Talks with young Muslims reveal that their initial exposure to the religion is a crucial point in time at which they can be led in the wrong direction. Many of them were motivated to take an interest in their religion by identity and generational conflicts as well as the search for meaning in their lives. Gaining access to reliable sources of Islamic teaching can be highly difficult for converts or "newcomers" to the religion, especially as not all of them go through their local mosque. Young new practitioners and converts alike are often unable to identify with the mosques, which are organised by ethnicity and where the native language of the first generation of worshippers is largely spoken. Around one third of the young interviewees were converts and the Islamic Central Council of Switzerland (ICCS) was their primary point of contact, which is why most of them are still active within it today. The internet represents another important source of information for these young people as it enables information on various aspects of their faith to be found quickly and easily, especially in German and often in a multimedia form (videos, lectures). Most of them take a critical view of the internet or even consider it dangerous since online material can be mistaken for the sole "truth" by those who lack knowledge and understanding.

Independent youth organisations and youth groups play a large role in the quest for knowledge and information. They can attract young people in this way, providing them with the required information and knowledge while simultaneously offering them a community. In relation to the internet, several young people reported having looked at online preachers and content with greater caution following discussions in the youth group or organisation. Imams are repeatedly confronted with the fact that young people tend to pick up religious knowledge from Youtube and Facebook and therefore try to make members of the community aware of dangerous content at Friday prayers or as part of lessons as well as sensitising them on how to treat the diverse sources available. Individual interviewees speak of an increasing politicisation of the way in which young people identify with Islam, which is not conveyed in this manner in the mosques.

All of the mosques visited run a large number of youth activities, including workshops, youth camps and excursions as well as weekly activities outside the mosque (e.g. football matches). This is highly welcomed by the young people and establishes a relationship of trust with the imam. At the same time, the imams also emphasised that many of their colleagues are not able to offer such a broad spectrum of youth work owing to a lack of financial or human resources (see also Endres et al. 2013). This is consistent with the criticisms voiced by the Muslim youth organisations interviewed.

La-Chaux-de-Fonds provides one example of how Muslim organisations can practice concrete deradicalisation work in partnership with the authorities. The Association Culturelle des Femmes Musulmanes de Suisse (ACFMS, Cultural Association of the Muslim Women of Switzerland) was tasked by the child protection agency with mentoring a young female convert, including in-depth reading and discussion of the Qur'an, to make clear to the young woman that her radical understanding of Islam does not correspond to what is written in the Qur'an.

11 Experiences from prevention programmes in other European countries

Project experience in countries that have been implementing programmes and action plans for some time has shown that, in addition to national aspects of intervention, local knowledge of the situation substantially boosts the power and persuasiveness of prevention and intervention programmes. The consolidation of **expertise**, in the form of specialists, counselling and advisory services that are familiar with the ideology of the scene, its symbolism and

codes, is equally important. Therefore, in searching for concrete programmes of action, various good and best practice models and the experience gained through them in other contexts must be transferred to different situations.

Model	**Context**	**Target audience**	**Organisational features**
GB: CONTEST package of measures: prevent – pursue – *protect* - prepare	From low threshold to high threshold (advisory to outreach)	Owing to the breadth of extremist organisations, stigmatisation cannot be excluded	Aimed at reducing the terrorist threat and increasing national security. Projects in defined problem areas
DK: Mentoring programme and Aarhus model	Low threshold	Reintegration and inclusion in local society	Not much repression partly due to liberal legislation
NL: Action plan focusing on individuals willing to use violence	Low threshold in breadth, focal point: high threshold	Stigmatisation of the Muslim population as criminals to be avoided	National, but with local intervention measures / focus on community level
D: Varied, multidimensional programme. From the threat of attraction to prevention and intervention programmes	Low threshold to high threshold (advisory/outreach); with involvement of Muslim organisations	Broad impact, discursive and public, various anti-discrimination programmes	National actions (exit assistance), recourse to experience in non-state sector with right-wing extremism

Table 2: Comparison of jihadist radicalisation prevention and intervention programmes in four countries (GB, DK, NL and D).

This raises the question of whether religious fundamentalism should also be combated as a transmitter of jihadist radicalisation or used as a bulwark against violent extremism (Bürkli 2011: 42). Experience in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom (see ibid.: 69) and to a certain extent in Denmark with the Aarhus model shows that there is a risk of such fundamentalist forces pursuing a double strategy, making them doubtful intervention partners in deradicalisation work. On this subject, Rabasa et al. (2010) comment that European countries need to be careful when looking for prevention and intervention partners among the Muslim associations and ensure that they speak with an authentic voice, enjoy *grassroots support* and do not espouse anti-democratic values.

12 Recommendations

It can generally be stated that the incidence of jihadist-motivated travel to conflict zones (see Chapter 6) is less pronounced in Switzerland than in neighbouring European countries (in

relation to the overall population) and poses less of a problem. However, at present there is also a lack of civil-society strategies (including targeted prevention and intervention measures), counselling services equipped to deal with this topic, actors with specific background knowledge of the processes that result in young people being drawn towards jihadist radicalisation and expertise and experience in counselling those affected. Specific measures of this kind could mostly build on existing public-sector structures and agencies at cantonal and commune level, which generally have good collaborative networks and professional expertise for dealing with violence prevention issues, youth work etc. To help these public institutions adopt a more preventive and interventionist approach to susceptibility to extremist positions, we recommend the following strands of action at the level of both **universal and selective prevention**:

- **Social work sector / family and youth counselling:** Declared and visible range of radicalisation-specific counselling to be provided by social counselling services. Ascertain whether the case in question is actually one of radicalisation or merely involves provocation and other needs. If the adolescents or young adults concerned refuse counselling and personal dialogue in a crisis situation and the situation is sufficiently urgent, notifying the authorities that they represent a danger to themselves and/or others should be considered and the child and adult protection authority (KESB) called in. Work together with Muslim organisations to address the religious needs of young people. Mentors trained in social pedagogy (with intercultural and language skills) are also needed to support young people. They could receive instruction and further training from experienced mentors in Germany, for example. When discussing measures with counselling agencies or as part of the juvenile justice system, experience in Austria with the "Social Network Conferencing" project has also shown the expediency of including other important figures from the lives of the young people as well as their parents in agreeing a framework with the young people that gives them stability and orientation.

- **Schools:** General prevention through education in politics and history, democratic empowerment and discussion of democracy (should refer to the minaret initiative, for example), Muslim religious education[5], awareness-raising and sensitisation through preventive lessons on violence, jihadist radicalisation and IS propaganda, deliberately address and discuss current events related to jihadism and the discrimination of Muslims, and encourage an exchange of views on successful projects through the platform; media education and how to handle social media, set up a network of experts that can be involved in school lessons and exchanges, ascertain potential for radicalisation of individual at-risk adolescents – whether it is merely a matter of provocation and other needs – and introduce appropriate measures in cooperation with school social workers, violence prevention agencies, police, etc.; however, care should be taken in submitting (protection) reports to the authorities and potential overreactions avoided.

- **Open youth work/street work:** broad-based prevention work in relation to identity formation, role models and socialisation, peer relationships, coping with conflicts and violence; build relationships with and provide support to young people going through

[5] The call for Muslim religious education to be integrated in the curriculum at all schools is motivated in part by the preventive effect of greater knowledge of Islam (see Kaddor 2015). On the other hand, such a move could be criticised by secularised Muslims who support the clear division of state and religion and do not wish to see a conservative religious picture of society further disseminated in Western societies (see also Hamed 2014: 194). It is therefore crucial that free discussion and critical thinking become a part of religious education. Religious studies must not serve merely to pass on a ready-made set of truths.

difficult life phases (e.g. transition from school to vocational training); platform with projects for generating knowledge and sharing experience; further training on handling religious orientation; handling of social media; instrumentalisation of violence and IS propaganda (incl. conspiracy theories); consult with experts on how to handle religious issues (list of proven and trustworthy experts); peer consultation for 'critical incidents'.

- **Counselling services for extremism/youth violence:** Advice and support for parents and adolescents/young adults from institutions and professionals in the field right through to investigation (such as through the two Basel cantons' specialist counter-extremism service, which has long-standing experience but is now to be discontinued in 2015 owing to budget cuts) of whether radicalisation is actually involved, or merely provocation and other needs. Work together with Muslim organisations to address the religious needs of young people.

- **Muslim organisations**: Umbrella associations to release immediate statements in the event of jihadist incidents; targeted, free training measures for imams; create platforms for sharing views and discussing current topics and encourage dialogue within the Islamic community; conduct targeted youth work in partnership with public agencies and foster non-religious projects for young people; offer careers advice; create point of contact for Muslim youths (including new practitioners and converts), disseminate knowledge of Islam and offer religious education; differentiate religious practices from radicalism and raise the topic at Friday prayers and in class; individual dialogue, tend to emergency spiritual needs (with radicalisation hotline); offer German or French courses to various groups (e.g. women); become more active on the internet/blogosphere; deradicalisation work employing argumentative and psychological methods to bring young people back into society instead of banishing them from the mosque (requires mandate from public authorities to avoid risk of being labelled 'traitors'), networking with official agencies

- **Network/competence centre**: Collate, bundle and network existing knowledge and make it accessible; create separate networks for French-speaking Switzerland/Ticino and German-speaking Switzerland; the two should meet at least twice a year to exchange experiences. Services to be offered: advice, targeted further training courses and research (in particular, evaluations of prevention and intervention programmes, development of counter-narratives) for all specialist areas: schools, youth work, social work, prison system as well as: journalists – discussion of handling and dynamics of public debate – and judges, youth lawyers, probation officers and integration agencies

- **Internet** (young people, teamers, etc.): Social work on the internet including creation of alternatives, online interventions with counter-narratives by engaged young Muslims (teamers) with monitoring and supervision (owing to mental stress from viewing horrific IS images), formulation of counter-narratives, e.g. by former jihadist-motivated travellers to conflict zones[6], as they generally have greater street credibility than state-sponsored agencies.

- **Interreligious dialogue:** Discussion platform at cantonal and federal level like the former 'Muslim Dialogue' that was held in the wake of the anti-minaret initiative of November 2009 to facilitate an exchange of views between the federal authorities and Muslims in Switzerland and which, according to the Federal Council report of May

[6] For instance, the descriptions of German returnee Ebrahim B of the cruelty shown to its own supporters and the godlessness of IS (Süddeutsche Zeitung "Einer packt aus", 17.7.2015).

2013, was concluded when the Muslim participants and three federal offices agreed at the end of 2012 to return to the 'courant normal', i.e. to hold talks locally if and when required and to seek specific solutions at the level at which any conflicts should arise. The heterogeneity within Muslim organisations and umbrella associations makes it difficult for state actors and institutions to find dialogue partners who can speak on behalf of the majority of Muslims in Switzerland. Efforts to establish dialogue within the Muslim community should therefore be supported in the interests of a mutual exchange. A platform for exchange between the state and Muslims similar to www.albinfo.ch could be set up. Create more understanding, tolerance and acceptance of religious practices and for conservative values, especially among professionals with a liberal and secularised mindset. Furthermore, a clear difference should be drawn at societal level between religious practice, conservative attitudes and fundamentalism and radicalism, and awareness should be raised regarding Islamophobia and hostility towards Islam.

For the indexed levels of prevention:

- Varied reporting structure and civil-society agencies offering counselling so that everyone affected (family, teachers, young people etc.) can turn to a single contact point that they trust and that offers services addressing their needs (help line and counselling services via Social Services, police reporting office, crisis hotline run by Muslim organisations etc.)

- Cooperation between Muslim organisations and youth protection/integration agency to support at-risk young people through mentoring and generally strengthen social education work with such young people thus enabling them to experience a feeling of community and hold discussions on the meaning of life at a different level.

- Develop deradicalisation programmes for working with radicalised young people and adults and train and support mentors (supervision and intervision), long-term resocialisation of convicted returnees, further training for probation officers, exit programmes and moderated discussion groups for returnees. Programmes of this kind should work on the biographical issues that triggered the process of being drawn into radicalisation, in a similar manner to resocialisation programmes for right-wing extremists (Eser Davolio & Gabriel 2014: 101).

Overview of prevention levels

Level	Target group	Objective	Where to be implemented	Measure
Universal level	All societal groups	Strengthen liberal-democratic attitudes, consolidate knowledge of history and religion Stabilise the living conditions of young people	Schools, youth organisations, Muslim organisations, community policing NGOs	Prevention work - geared to existing resources and aimed at participatory initiation/stabilisation of positive development processes. Awareness-raising/sensitisation
		Reduce structural risk factors	Social, education and labour policy support measures	Protection against discrimination and combating hostility towards Islam
Selective prevention level	People whose environment is "problematic" and who display defined "risk factors"	Monitoring/ assessment/ support	State agencies, public institutions, civil-society organisations	Classic prevention models similar to addiction, violence and crime prevention
		Engagement and mentoring	Street working, mentoring, Muslim organisations	Direct action aimed specifically at target person
		Support for environment	Social work, school, police, Muslim organisations	Indirect action aimed at key persons, multipliers
			Counselling services, family counselling	Indirect action for family members of "at-risk" young people, plus social work by teachers
Indexed prevention level	People with "manifest problems"	Deradicalisation/mentoring Prevention of extremism Long-term resocialisation of offenders	Juvenile justice system Muslim organisations as cooperation partners	Exit assistance programmes Work with offenders Continuing development of professionals, networking of various help systems

Table 3: Prevention levels borrowing from model of Ceylan/Kiefer 2015: 109ff., based on Susanne Johannson 2012

13 Conclusions and further deliberations

As this exploratory study has shown, the public institutions in the social work and education sectors have practical knowledge and experience in dealing with violence and risk behaviours among young people. They are frequently also networked with further actors in the security services. However, in most cases, specific subject-matter expertise and practical skills in handling the phenomenon of jihadist radicalisation and the processes by which people are drawn into it are lacking.

The two proposed networks/competence centres in German and French/Italian-speaking Switzerland could support the collating and bundling of knowledge and its dissemination, as has already happened to a certain extent through this exploratory study, which established contacts between various agencies and institutions throughout Switzerland.

The majority of recommendations made can be implemented at cantonal and communal level. However, the advisory help lines and deradicalisation programme would have to be set up at intercantonal level (intercantonal agreement)[7], as these tasks would need to be carried out by centralised agencies given the small number of cases involved and the expertise required. In addition, the Confederation can put incentives and requirements in place for combating Islamophobia and raise the issue of the discrimination of young Muslims when looking for apprenticeships etc. by promoting targeted anti-discrimination work through the cantonal integration programme (CIP).

As the above recommendations make clear, Muslim organisations have many tasks to perform at the level of universal and selective prevention. At the same time, they have the least resources of all the stakeholders listed and can only take on these additional tasks if they receive additional funding. This issue is related to the question of recognition in Switzerland. Official recognition under public law, which can only take place at cantonal level, would both alleviate the lack of resources and facilitate access to public institutions (army, prisons, cemeteries, etc.). However, a number of developments still need to take place both on the part of the Muslim minority (coming together under one umbrella organisation, dialogue between Muslim communities) and mainstream society (Islamophobia, mistrust) if there is to be any chance of such recognition being achieved.

We therefore endorse the recommendations of Davis & Stähli (2013), which call for CVE programmes (Countering Violent Extremism) for Switzerland and partnerships between state security, judicial authorities, youth workers, members of political and religious groups and various community-based NGOs. The key point in this context would be to build on CVE programmes that have already been evaluated, only a few of which exist, however (see Naureen et al. 2013). It is important to remember that we want to win over radicalised individuals and return them to society, and not strengthen them in their beliefs by thoughtlessly stigmatising them and creating scandal (Taylor 2009: 6). The influence of the media has a crucial role to play in this respect: it can create a dynamic that puts those who intervene under additional pressure, unsettle them or play them off against each other (ibid). The manufacturing of scandals in this way also boosts hostility towards Islam and increases polarisation within society. This in turn reinforces the victim mindset of the minority and encourages people to think in terms of enemies. Mutual recriminations trigger a heightened confrontation between majority and minority, which can lead to the ethnicisation of enmity (see Eckmann 2005: 64f.). It thus becomes apparent that the ability of individuals and communities to avert and resist violent extremism at international and national level is very complex (see Davis & Stähli 2013) and possible interactions and unintended effects must be taken into consideration. It follows from these considerations that caution, differentiation and level-headedness are im-

[7] The Federal Council can support preventive measures in these areas (financially) on the basis of Art. 386 of the Swiss Criminal Code.

portant qualities for dealing with this phenomenon, while the promotion of inclusion, dialogue and constructive partnership with the Muslim population, its organisations and public institutions is necessary to enable the problems to be addressed jointly at the level of civil society.

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