

‘Assessing Irish national security policy as it relates to Islamism’

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SUMMARY

This thesis sets out to examine whether Islamist extremism poses a threat in Ireland and if so, how the Irish state seeks to counteract it. The demographic, sectarian and socioeconomic situation of the Irish Muslim population is analysed in order to assess the vulnerability of Muslims in Ireland to radicalization. The state's institutional response to Islamism is considered by looking at the response of state security agencies to the Islamist threat and by assessing how Irish authorities conduct public relations with Muslim communities. It will be seen that the Irish political establishment was slow to engage with the question of Islam in the years following the 9/11 terror attacks, in spite of some Islamist activity in the country and a rapidly increasing Muslim population. Since then, new counterterror legislation has been introduced, but the issue of non-violent Islamism still proves to be a difficult and complicated issue for state authorities to deal with. This stems from confusion and uncertainty about the nature of Islamism and how state authorities should engage with it. Moreover, this thesis finds that there is considerable uncertainty about the nature of some Islamic organizations in the country and of their role in combating radicalism, possible due to a lack of familiarity on the part of state authorities with the internal politics and religious disputes within Muslim communities.

1. Introduction

In this thesis the Irish national security policy will be analysed and assessed, as it relates to Islamism. A major security threat facing Western Europe in recent years has come from jihadist Islamism, a revivalist religious movement that inspires and carries out violent attacks against Western targets in pursuit of its aim to establish an Islamic state (Tibi, 2007). The threat posed by this kind of terrorism has been declared low by Irish state officials since it first came to prominence in the wake of the 9/11 attacks (Cusack, 2016). In this thesis it will be investigated whether this is an accurate threat assessment and whether sufficient precautionary measures have been taken against all forms of Islamist extremism.

Three major factors that shape a Western state's policy towards Islamist terrorism will be analysed in this thesis: firstly, the nature, demographics, and level of integration of the Muslim population in the country; secondly, the activities of Islamist groups; and thirdly, the operational and historical procedures of state institutions in the face of terrorism.

Muslim community

Firstly, in order to understand a state's approach to jihadist terrorism it is necessary to study the nature and demographics of the Muslim population, the process of radicalization, and the state's interaction with the Muslim population. A wide range of Islamic denominations and groups have settled in the West in recent decades: studying the beliefs, practices and ideology of these groups is relevant because these factors inform a group's attitude to the vexed questions of integration and to extremism. A demographic examination of the Muslim population is relevant to this thesis since the vectors of radicalization suggest that alienated, relatively deprived and second or third-generation Muslims are more likely to turn to jihadism than well-adjusted, well-integrated Muslims (Sageman, 2004). The second chapter will thus examine the Muslim population in Ireland.

Those recruited to join jihad in the West have in recent years tended to come from working-class or lower-middle class Muslim immigrant backgrounds, often with little prior knowledge of Islam (Burke, 2015). Their lack of grounding in a traditional interpretation of their faith makes them vulnerable to manipulation by radical preachers. The kind of threat facing European countries has changed with the rise of terrorist attacks inspired by the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Al Qaeda no longer poses a major threat since the United States launched its 'war on terror' against the group, eliminating its leadership, weakening its

networks and ending its most lucrative financial operations (Burke, 2015). The most active group plotting and inspiring terrorism against Western countries is now ISIS, whose appeal and tactics differ from Al Qaeda in certain ways that have implications for how Western countries deal with Islamic militancy.

Radicalization theory suggests that there are certain key factors that lead towards an individual's radicalization. The three primary factors involved in the radicalization process are: alienation from Western society, social identification with the jihadist movement, and finally the adoption of the jihadist ideology (Sageman, 2004).

One factor causing alienation from Western society is a lack of integration. Many Muslims in the West live at the margins of society in segregated communities with few prospects of employment or economic betterment (Tibi, 2007). In many immigrant enclaves a kind of Islamic counter-culture has developed where hatred of the West is cultivated and self-segregation encouraged (Burke, 2015). It is not necessarily poverty that leaves people vulnerable to radicalization, however. Many jihadists who become radicalized in the West are relatively financially secure but experience spiritual alienation, isolation or loneliness, or live in *relative* deprivation, perceiving themselves at a disadvantage compared to the native population (Sageman, 2004). Jihadists blame this relative deprivation on Western racism or oppression of Muslims. The jihadist ideology appeals to marginalized or isolated young men because, in their eyes, it serves to explain their lack of success in life or alienation from Western society. Jihadist propaganda also draws heavily on the perceived injustices being perpetrated against Muslims in the Middle East. Anti-Western conspiracy theories lay the foundation for the jihadist mind-set: the belief that the West is part of a Crusader-Zionist plot to destroy Islam is a central part of the jihadist narrative (Anonymous, 2016a), as is the depiction of Western iniquity and Muslim innocence and righteousness (Sageman, 2004). In this perspective, the 'war on terror' is portrayed as a war on Islam itself, and all Westerners, including civilians, are said to be implicated in this anti-Islamic project for having elected the governments who are responsible for instigating the war on terror. Thus Western civilians are legitimate targets, in the eyes of jihadists. Moreover, Western society is depicted as decadent, corrupting and threatening to traditional Islamic mores (Anonymous, 2016a).

Social networks play a major role in the radicalization process, as alienated individuals turn to Islamist groups in search of a sense of identity, comradeship and structure. Jihadist groups bestow a sense of certainty and purpose on young men who are torn between their ancestral faith and the Western way of life (Sageman, 2008). ISIS encourages its followers to carry out so-called 'lone-wolf' attacks against their host nations. The seemingly crazed individuals who

execute ISIS-inspired attacks do not become radicalized in a vacuum, however, but typically emerge from a social environment where extremist ideas are common and jihad against the West is seen as a noble pursuit. People tend to become interested in the jihadist ideology through social networks: a friend, family member or acquaintance introduces them to jihadist-sympathising groups – so-called ‘self-radicalization’ is very rare (Burke, 2015). Jihadists seek recognition and reassurance from each other in this process, reinforcing each other’s beliefs and giving each other courage to commit acts of terror. It has been shown that these jihadists frequently become radicalized in prison or have been instructed in the ways of jihad by a mentor (Sageman, 2008).

By applying this theory of radicalization to Ireland in the second chapter, we can examine whether the conditions of the Muslim population in Ireland are likely to produce radicalized individuals.

Islamism

The third chapter will explore the nature of Islamist groups, and will investigate whether any such groups are present in Ireland. Most of those who have perpetrated terrorist attacks against Western states over the past two decades have followed a form of political Islam, jihadist Islamism, which promotes terrorist attacks against the West, transforming alienated young men into ‘fanatics yearning for martyrdom and eager to kill’ (Sageman, 2004, p. vii). However, Islamism also takes a non-violent form which shares many of the objectives of jihadism but claims to renounce violence against the West. In discussing this issue it is necessary to make clear definitions to avoid generalizing about Islam: *Islam* as a private, peaceful religion and source of comfort and spirituality to over one billion Muslims must be distinguished from *Islamism*, a form of political Islam that grew out of the anti-colonial struggle at the start of the 20th century, which is promoted by its adherents as an alternative to democracy and serves as an all-encompassing political system (Tibi, 2012). In the eyes of Islamists, Sharia (Islamic law) is supreme and is the remedy to all of society’s ills. Again, that is not to say that all Islamists are in favour of resorting to violence in their quest to institute a Sharia-compliant state. *Institutional* Islamists claim to renounce violence while *jihadists* are willing to use violence to in pursuit of their objectives. It must be borne in mind that only about 10 percent of the Muslim population worldwide is Islamist (Pipes, 1998) but that they exert a disproportionate influence on the Muslim world, both in Muslim-majority countries and in the Muslim diaspora, because of spectacular terrorist attacks, as well as their impressive

organizational capacity, their success in establishing social networks and their considerable financial and intellectual resources (Vidino, 2010).

While examining Islamist groups, it is important to bear in mind the international political climate, as Islamists frequently cite political grievances as a primary motivation for their hatred of the West (Sageman, 2008). Jihadists not only carry out attacks in Europe but also use the continent as a base for operations abroad: Western governments thus have to be mindful of political events abroad that may affect their Muslim populations. Being able to identify non-violent Islamist groups enables Western governments to make informed decisions about whether or not to support or empower them as representatives of the Muslim community (Vidino, 2010). Many governments wish to promote a tolerant kind of Islam that is in keeping with Western norms of democracy, individual liberty and gender equality (United Kingdom Security Committee, 2015), in an effort to counter the appeal of Islamism. The phenomenon of Islamism in the West will be studied in the second chapter because the Islamist ideology has been said to create the conditions for extremism by discouraging integration and promoting anti-Western or extremist ideas (Tibi, 2012). In order to appreciate how Islamism is a barrier to integration and serves to provoke tensions and conflict between Western countries and their Muslim populations it is necessary to look at the history of Islamism and its development in the Middle East, as well as its more recent emergence in Europe. Islamism should be seen as a security problem because of the way in which it promotes anti-democratic and anti-Western sentiments among Muslims, even though many Islamists may stop short of calling for violence against their host societies (Tibi, 2012).

The third chapter will thus examine the origins and history of political Islam in the Middle East, its rise in Europe and its possible presence in an Irish context.

Institutional conventions

The fourth chapter will look at the organization and capabilities of intelligence services, as they are relevant factors in assessing threat level and policy response. They determine the quality of intelligence information and the manner in which counterterror operations are conducted (Foley 2012). Intelligence information from abroad and surveillance at home give an indication as to the level of terrorist activity in the country. Examining a state's response to previous cases of domestic terrorist or subversive groups gives an indication as to the kind of measures that a state tends to take in combating terrorism and subversive activity, and also indicates the kind of institutional and operational structures are in place to counter such threats. Historical routine

procedures and institutional norms and practices exert a long-lasting influence on state policy in this area (Mulqueen, 2009).

In seeking to explain differences in counterterrorist policies between countries, Foley (2009a) highlights the varying historical, institutional and legal legacies of each state in dealing with domestic terrorism. He stresses the importance of interinstitutional conventions in shaping a state's response to the terrorist threat. In his study of the French and British security services, he found that good coordination and cooperation between security agencies is important in facilitating the sharing of intelligence and resources. In France, he found that the proliferation of security agencies and uncertainty over who should lead counterterror operations was the cause of competition and poor coordination (Foley, 2012). In contrast to this, the United Kingdom's counterterrorist agencies have worked closely together to fight terrorism. The UK's police intelligence agency has a clear mandate to take the lead in counterterrorist operations, with other security agencies such as MI5 and MI6 playing a secondary role. This clarity over who is in control helps reduce the risk of letting a terrorist 'slip through the net' as a result of poor coordination, with UK intelligence and police agencies constantly sharing information, not withholding anything from each other.

Counterterrorist legislation targeting terrorist activity is another tool employed by governments to combat the threat of radicalization. Counterterror laws curtailing free speech are part of the strategy to fight the ideology of jihad: 'The global Salafi jihad feeds on anti-Western and anti-American hate speech. Such virulent discourse is a necessary condition for the jihad and provides a justification for it. It is important to eradicate it and encourage civil discourse in Muslim communities' (Sageman 2004, p. 182). The justification used by governments to enforce such counterterrorist laws is that they impose a necessary constraint on free speech as a preventive measure against the spread of radical ideas that could lead to terrorist violence. Anti-terror laws that curtail free speech have been adopted by many Western countries since the 9/11 terror attacks. Ireland has followed suit recently, and the ramifications of this development will be analysed in chapter four.

The fourth chapter will thus explore institutional conventions and the historical legacy of Irish responses to domestic subversive groups in order to assess how these factors influence the country's subsequent response to Islamist terrorism.

2. Muslim community in Ireland

Demographics

Muslim immigration to Ireland is a recent development. Prior to the 1990s, there were only a couple of thousand Muslims living permanently in Ireland, most of whom were either traders or had settled in the country after coming to study medicine or engineering. Other Western European countries took in great numbers of Muslims to satisfy a need for construction workers during the economic boom after the Second World War, but Ireland did not undergo this post-war economic recovery and continued to be a country of emigration for the most part until the 1990s. Since the 1990s, however, there has been a significant increase in the number of Muslims and other religious and ethnic groups coming to work and settle in Ireland. This is partly due to economic expansion, globalisation and improved communications, enabling migrants to avail of opportunities to work, study and claim political asylum in Ireland. According to the 2011 census there were 49,204 Muslims in the country, a rise in 51.2% from 3,875 in 1991 (Scharbrodt, 2015b). This number is said to have grown considerably since then due to high birth-rates and additional immigration, with current estimates indicating that between 80,000 and 100,000 Muslims are now residing in the country (Cusack, 2016). The majority of Muslims are concentrated in Dublin, with various smaller communities dotted around the country (Scharbrodt, 2015a).

In terms of socioeconomic status, in 2011 a smaller percentage of the Muslim population (38.1%)^[1] worked than the national average (50.1%), reflecting the overall younger age of the Muslim population: a higher proportion of Muslims above the age of fifteen are still in education (45.8%), with the national ratio (16.8%) being much lower. There is a certain class divide within the Muslim population: Muslims are over-represented among higher-qualified professional workers and those holding third-level degrees, but in 2011 the Muslim unemployment rate (18.7%) was higher than the national average (11.7%), reflecting a recent influx of unskilled migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. The socio-economic background of Muslim immigrants has thus shifted in recent years: the older well-established Muslims from professional, middle-class backgrounds can be contrasted with recent arrivals tending to come from less privileged backgrounds. This change is of interest because unemployment contributes to alienation, a factor leading to radicalization. Certain well-established Muslims who have been in Ireland for decades lament the increasing focus on the dangers of radical Islam in

¹ All figures in this paragraph are from Scharbrodt, 2015b.

Ireland, seeing this as a result of the growing numbers of Muslim asylum-seekers in the country (Scharbrodt, 2015c).

Sectarian affiliation

The vast majority of Muslims in Ireland come from a Sunni religious background, with a relatively smaller number adhering to Shia Islam and to some smaller sects, originating from a wide variety of national and ethnic backgrounds. The largest mosque complex in the country is the Sunni Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland (ICCI) in Clonskeagh. Opened in 1996, it provides many facilities and amenities to Muslims, attracting over a thousand Muslims for Friday prayers. The imam of the centre, the Egyptian Sheikh Hussein Halawa, has been residing in Ireland since 1999 (Scharbrodt, 2015b). The oldest Islamic organization in Ireland, the Islamic Foundation of Ireland, dating from the 1980s, is also Sunni in orientation and has a mosque on South Circular Road, Dublin.

There is also a Sunni mosque on Blackpitts road, Dublin, which caters to Pakistanis and attracts 500 people to Friday prayers (Smyth, 2011). This mosque was founded and is still financed by a prominent Pakistani businessman. The imam of the mosque, Ismail Kotwal, endorses the Deobandi interpretation of Islam, which is centred on a strict interpretation of Islam but rejects politics (Burke, 2004).

Sheikh Umar Al-Qadri represents a small South Asian Sufi community which is based in Blanchardstown. Sufism is a quietist version of Sunni Islam that focuses on mysticism and spirituality. Al-Qadri is a prominent voice for Islam in the media, one of the few imams in Ireland having a strong European sense of identity and ability to converse fluently in English (Khan *et al.*, 2015). Al-Qadri has been active in trying to unify Irish Muslims, setting up the Peace and Integration Council to promote community cohesion and promoting anti-extremism measures (Al-Qadri, 2015).

There is a small community of Ahmadis Ireland, numbering about 300 members, mostly with South Asian backgrounds. Ahmadis practice a moderate form of Islam which condemns violence in all circumstances but is considered a heretical movement by mainstream Sunnis and has been banned in its country of origin, Pakistan. The leader of the Ahmadiyya community in Ireland, imam Ibrahim Noonan, is an Irish convert and a prominent voice for his community in the media, often speaking out against extremism (McGarry, 2016).

The main Shia mosque was opened in Milltown, Dublin in 1996. There are around 5000 – 6000 Shiis living in Ireland, most of them from Pakistan, Iraq and other Gulf Arab countries, or from Iran (Khan *et al.* 2015). Before the so-called Celtic Tiger, most Shiis in Ireland were

educated professionals, originally coming to the country for educational purposes. In more recent years, there has been an increase in the inflow of asylum seekers, refugees and unskilled labourers of the Shia Muslim faith. The clerical leader of the Milltown mosque, Dr. Ali Al Saleh says he attracts 300 Muslims to Friday prayers every week (O’Doherty, 2011). The Milltown mosque is independently financed through donations made by local Shiis in Ireland and by wealthy Shiis in the Persian Gulf region (Khan *et al.*, 2015).

There are various smaller Islamic sects dotted around the country but mainly concentrated in Dublin, most of whom are small congregations and keep a low profile.

Vulnerability to radicalization

The process by which an individual moves towards committing an act of jihad is called ‘radicalization’. In this section, attention will be given to assessing how vulnerable Irish-Muslim communities are to radicalization.

The Muslim population has a good reputation among state authorities, with crime among the community lower than the national average (Cusack, 2016). This is significant because of the recent trend for Islamic radicals to be recruited in prison or to have a history of petty criminality or drug abuse (Burke, 2015). Moreover, the proportional Muslim share of the population has been low in comparison to other European countries, and the middle-class professional background of most Muslims residing here has helped integration.

In the past couple of years, however, there has been an increasing focus in the media on the supposed activities of radical preachers operating in Ireland, after several prominent clerics claimed that there was a problem with radical preachers indoctrinating young people (Cusack, 2016). Moreover, since 30 Irish citizens are known to have travelled to Syria in recent years, authorities have become concerned about the possibility of a hardened and trained fighter carrying out an attack on his return to Ireland (O’Keefe, 2016a). However, those who travelled to Syria are not necessarily all jihadists: some may have gone to fight against ISIS or for humanitarian reasons. The level of threat has remained low in spite of these allegations of radical preachers targeting Irish youths and fears of jihadists returning from abroad.

Shaheen Ahmed (2016), spokesperson for the ICCI, says that there is no need for the government to be concerned about radical preachers, as community leaders would know if anything were amiss, given that the Muslim community is so small. Irish politicians have also played down the threat (Ireland, Dáil Debates 2015a).

However, it could be argued that this approach is naïve (Dudley Edwards, 2007). Certain Islamic voices have raised concerns over a lack of engagement on the part of the Clonskeagh

mosque and state authorities in combating extremism. Sheikh Umar Al Qadri, for example, has called on the government to oblige preachers coming from abroad to sign an anti-extremism pledge before being allowed to enter the country. He made the suggestion after it emerged that radical preachers were planning to visit the country to give talks in the South Circular Road mosque. According to Al Qadri: “My concern would be that such people and their ideas radicalize young Muslims. It’s not helpful for the integration of Muslims in this country when foreign speakers espouse positions that the vast majority of Muslims do not share but because they are in a position of trust, they can incite hatred.” (quoted in *Irish Times*: Roche, 2016)

The preachers were permitted to enter the country and carry out their activities, however. Moreover, other Islamic clerics have expressed concerns about the activities of radical preachers in Ireland (O’Doherty, 2011 and McGarry, 2016). State authorities are not overly concerned about this, however. Sergeant David McInerney is charged with the task of cultivating relations with the Muslim population, as head of the Garda’s Racial, Intercultural and Diversity Office. In his view, relations between the state and Muslims have been good: “The Muslim community have been here since the 1950s. I cannot remember any serious incident with the Muslim community here regarding the State. They are a very easy community to police, very respectful. They believe in a peaceful way of living.

“It’s unfortunate they have these extremists within their community, but the Muslims we engage with want the good name of the community upheld and are happy to work with the police.” (quoted in *Irish Examiner*: O’Keeffe, 2016)

Sergeant McInerney says it is not for the Gardaí to police the boundaries of free speech. Asked whether he was aware of Al Qadri’s anti-extremism initiative, he said: “We were aware of that, but it’s a hard one to control. It is a reality. Some might have a hard view, a rigid view, an old-fashioned way, but it’s a hard one to gauge. If we hadn’t got that relationship with the community we wouldn’t have known.” (quoted in *Irish Examiner*: O’Keeffe, 2016).

McInerney also says that the Gardaí are mindful of the possibility that publicised incidents such as this could lead to suspicions of the Muslim community and provoke anti-Muslim bigotry, with anti-Islamic groups such as Pegida on the rise in Europe and some signs of it emerging in Ireland too (Roche, 2016a).

Moreover, sergeant McInerney sees no need for an anti-extremism programme in Ireland, because he is satisfied that extremism is not a problem and is confident that community leaders would alert him to any kind of radicalism being promoted within Muslim circles.

In the eyes of jihadists, however, Ireland may be a legitimate target because of its implicit support for the ‘war on terror’, and its deployment of 150 soldiers in the Middle East as part of a peacekeeping operation: any Western army presence on Muslim soil is seen as a violation of Islamic law and is thus seen to be a provocation to jihadists (Burke 2004). The Irish flag was included in a propaganda video denouncing 50 Western countries that form ‘a coalition of devils’ supposedly oppressing Muslims (O’Keefe, 2015). Furthermore, in the eyes of jihadists, Irish society is part of the corrupt and decadent Western world that can only be saved by accepting Islam (Anonymous, 2016a). Ireland hosts various multinational companies, many from America, and has friendly relations with the US, Israel and other Western nations that are designated as enemies of Islam by ISIS. It is for this reason that certain embassies, as well as Shannon Airport and US multinationals have been put under increased security protection recently (O’Keefe, 2016a).

Moreover, there have been jihadist attacks on targets in supposedly neutral countries in recent times. For example, Jewish places of worship have been attacked in Denmark, and prominent critics of Islam have been put under police protection all over Europe as a result of intimidation and death threats by Islamists. Moreover, a plot to blow up the Israeli Embassy in Ireland was uncovered by police in 2005 (Cusack).

Sergeant McInerney’s lack of concern over the issue of Islamic radicalism is also in contrast to the opinion of the journalist Mark Dooley, who claims to have had been informed by inside sources in the Muslim community that Arab militants and extremist preachers have been active in the country, and that they used Ireland as a base from which to preach their jihadist ideology, settling in Ireland to evade strict counterterrorism laws in other European countries (Dooley, 2006). Moreover, the American regime under the Bush administration reportedly asked the Irish government to take legal action against several Arab militants who they believed were exploiting Ireland as a refuge and transit zone, using Irish passports to travel to Iraq to wage jihad against Western troops (Dooley, 2005). Dooley (2016) also claims to have been put under police protection for six months in the period during which he was exposing the problem of jihadist activity in 2006, after Gardaí had been informed of a threat against him as a result of his outspoken criticism of Islamic radicals.

3. Political Islam

(i) *Muslim Brotherhood*

The Muslim Brotherhood is the largest and most prominent Islamist organisation operating in Europe (Vidino, 2010). By analysing and understanding this Sunni Islamist movement, security analysts can identify Brotherhood-affiliated groups in their own jurisdiction. This is important because of the Brotherhood's anti-democratic and extremist tendencies (Tibi, 2008). It can be difficult to recognize Brotherhood-affiliated groups, however: the Brotherhood tends to be a secretive organisation because of its history persecution and suppression in the Middle East and North Africa, where it has been banned and designated a terrorist organisation in several Muslim states (Ehrenfeld, 2011). The secretive nature of the organisation and the stigma attached to it helps explain why its supporters may be hesitant to disclose their membership or affiliation with the Brotherhood. Moreover, official membership of the group is not common in Europe: ideological affiliation is what determines allegiance, not formal membership. Thus it can be difficult for authorities to prove Brotherhood membership, but there are certain signs that indicate affiliation to the Brotherhood's doctrines and beliefs. Vidino (2010) details several indicators of affiliation.

The most obvious indicator of affiliation to the Brotherhood is in a group's past: was it founded or sponsored by a self-avowed or widely known Muslim Brotherhood supporter? This is significant as 'rarely do organizations started by Brotherhood members lose the basic ideological imprint of their founders' (Vidino, 2010, p. 43). Financial ties to wealthy Emirati are also indicative of affiliation, as Emirati have a history of supporting the Brotherhood: the royal families of the Gulf countries have since the 1980s seen it as their holy duty to support the spread of Sunni Islamism throughout the world (Burr, 2006). Arab Gulf States began to generously fund Sunni charities and to set up their own in the wake of the Iranian revolution, which threatened their hegemony in the Middle East by bringing to power Shia Islamists who were determined to export their version of Shia Islam. Thus Sunni royal families took it upon themselves to counter this new threat to their dominance, justifying it in the name of the Islamic tradition of alms-giving, one of the five pillars of Islam (Lewis, 2009). Political differences with the Brotherhood have caused some Arab donors to stop supporting the Brotherhood at home, but this has not affected their willingness to finance the Brotherhood abroad in their outsourcing of radicalism. Saudi and Emirati princes have been accused of promoting extremism by sponsoring education and charity ventures that promote an intolerant or anti-

Western version of their faith. However, according to Islamic practice, it is not the alms-giver's responsibility to decide how his donations are spent by his chosen recipients: this is the justification used by Arab princes to defend themselves against criticism of spreading extremist Islam (Burr, 2006).

Another indicator of affiliation is adherence to the Brotherhood's methodology, heavily focused on the importance of *dawa*, which involves the proselytization and preaching of Islam. While other Islamic trends also value this concept, Vidino (2010) notes that no other trend has such a number of suborganizations devoted to the task of *dawa*, nor have alternative trends reached the level of sophistication and dedication achieved by those linked to the Brotherhood. This is because the vast experience and capabilities that the Brotherhood built up over the years as an opposition movement in the Muslim world have helped them spread and establish themselves as the most prominent grassroots Muslim organisation in the Middle East and more recently in Europe. As Muslims started to immigrate to Europe after the Second World War, the Brothers saw new opportunities to operate without the legal restrictions that they had faced in the Middle East. With scant competition in Europe from other Islamic currents and with local governments hesitant to interfere in the realm of religion, Europe afforded the Brothers new-found freedoms that they had been denied in Muslim countries. The Brotherhood considers Europe *Dar al-Da'wa* (Land of preaching): a territory where Muslims live as a respected minority and have a duty to spread their religion peacefully (Sageman, 2004). Muslim Brothers soon realized that their organizational superiority put them in a position of prominence among European Muslims. They thus immediately embarked upon an ambitious attempt to monopolize Muslim life in Europe.

Vidino (2010) also draws attention to the group's almost obsessive focus on education and on the training and indoctrination of young people. The group's ideology is usually promoted through influencing the content of religious education in state schools to make it conform to Brotherhood ideology or else by campaigning for separate Islamic education.

Furthermore, Western Brotherhood organizations tend to follow a pattern established by Islamist groups in the Muslim world and adopt the paramosque structure. The mosque is thus not just simply a place of worship, but aims to serve as many of the community's needs as possible. This strategy of providing for the needs of the people beyond the religious dimension was cultivated over the years in the Muslim world, where the Brotherhood worked underground and became the most popular opposition movement by winning recruits and supporters through charitable works and supplying vital services to the poor that autocratic, corrupt governments in the region failed to provide. Tibi (2012) says that calling the group

‘radical’ is misguided, as it implies a minority acting on the fringes of society. In reality, however, the Brotherhood is one of the most popular social and political movements in the Muslim world because of its years of activism, having learned to survive in very difficult circumstances in authoritarian states. Although it is estimated that only 10 percent of Muslims is Islamist, they have a disproportionate influence on the Muslim world because of the lack of alternative political movements representing the kind of Muslim identity and activism that appeal to common people. Brotherhood tactics originating in the Muslim world have translated well to a European context. This desire to provide a proliferation of activities and services is not unique to the Brotherhood, but it does ‘reflect their vision of religion as a comprehensive system encompassing all aspects of life’ (Vidino 2010, p.44).

If a Muslim group subscribes to Islamist writers, this is usually an indication of affiliation to the Brotherhood. As Vidino (2010) puts it: ‘In pursuing their goal of the “Islamization of knowledge”, the Western Brothers have devoted particular attention to the translation, publication and extensive dissemination of texts written by Islamist authors’ (p. 45). If Muslim Brotherhood literature is predominant at events or being sold in the bookstore, this is usually a sign of affiliation. The availability of Islamist authors at a certain venue does not automatically make the group selling them part of the Brotherhood, but if an organisation regularly recommends, advertises or subsidizes their publication it is usually a sign of adherence to the Brotherhood.

Another indicator of affiliation is frequent interaction with other Brotherhood organisations. Since the 1970s the Western Brotherhood has created a vast transnational network of activists and affiliated organisations based largely on informal ties, meeting at conferences and talks. Many of these events are notable as religious occasions because they attract large crowds and feature prominent Islamist intellectuals, such as Yusuf Al-Qaradawi or Tariq Ramadan, who have achieved celebrity-like status among Muslims.

Indeed, informal allegiance to Yusuf Al-Qaradawi is seen as an indicator of affiliation. A member of the Brotherhood since his youth, he suffered through its early years of persecution. After graduating as a theologian, he left his native Egypt for Qatar, where he has been based ever since, and has won loyal supporters and financial backers from wealthy Arab Gulf elites. He does distance himself from some aspects of the Islamist movement: he has adopted a more accommodationist position on certain matters than many of his fellow Brothers have done, and prefers *dawa* over jihad as a means to create an Islamic state. However, he is not a ‘moderate’ in the Western sense of the term, as he still condones suicide bombings in certain cases, death for homosexuals and apostates, and promotes conspiracy

theories about Jews (Tibi, 2012). His perceived moderation is based on his tactics to achieve an Islamic state, preferring political activism over violence for the most part. He is moderate only in the sense that he refuses to yield to pressure from still more radical factions within the Islamist movement. He is nonetheless seen as the ‘spiritual figurehead for the Brotherhood’s religious ideology’ (Khan 2015, p. 100). He has done much to spread the Brotherhood’s message: sheltered in Qatar from conflicts in other parts of the Middle East, he has built up an enormous following through his widely-circulated books, speeches, and TV show on Al Jazeera called ‘Sharia and Life’, which has millions of followers.

The previous indicators have been primarily informal telltale sign that the ICCI is affiliated to the Brotherhood. The next indicator, however, reveals a more ‘definitive identification’ (Vidino 2010, p. 50). A superstructure formally uniting all New Western Brotherhood organisations does exist: founded in 1989 with the stated goal of serving all Muslims in European societies, the Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe (FIOE) is the overarching organization for Brotherhood groups in Europe (Vidino, 2010). Its founders and members are quintessentially Brotherhood groups from many European countries, and it has from its inception typified the Brotherhood’s keenness for building institutions, as the founding ideologues stressed the importance of establishing institutions to ensure the durability and effectiveness of the group.

As mentioned above, the Brotherhood has been banned and designated a terrorist organisation in several Muslim states and thus may fear similar measures being taken elsewhere (Ehrenfeld, 2011). A government inquiry conducted into the Brotherhood in the UK in 2015 (UK Security Committee) found that the group propagated an extremist version of Islam. Due to the tradition of freedom of speech in Europe, however, European states are reluctant to ban organisations solely on the basis of their extreme beliefs and not in connection with assisting or planning terrorism.

(ii) *Indicators of affiliation to the Muslim Brotherhood as applied to Ireland*

Financial/ historical ties

In 1992 Sheikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, deputy ruler of Dubai, agreed to sponsor the construction and operation of the ICCI (Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland) mosque and school complex in Clonskeagh, and his foundation continues to finance it to this day. Maktoum's father had previously supported a Brotherhood-affiliated Islamist group in Dubai, *Al Islah*, which was influential in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from the 1960s onwards. As ruler of Dubai from 1958 to 1990, the elder Maktoum donated money towards the establishment of the group's headquarters in his native emirate (Freer, 2015). Arab Muslims in Ireland, aware of the Maktoum family's connections to Ireland through investments, successfully solicited the royal family for funding in the early 1990s, and construction of the Clonskeagh mosque complex was completed in 1996 (Khan *et al.*, 2015).

The central committee in Clonskeagh has appointed imams to various mosques connected to the ICCI. These imams tend to have a history of involvement in the Brotherhood: some of them are living in exile, having been banned in their countries of origin for Brotherhood activities (Khan *et al.*, 2015). For example, the long-term imam of the Cork mosque, Sheikh Salah Faituri Muftah, a member of the Brotherhood, was exiled to Ireland after being persecuted in his native Libya for his role in the Brotherhood. Similarly, Sheikh Khalid Salabi, imam of the Galway Islamic cultural centre, left Libya after a crackdown on the Brotherhood in the 1990s forced him to flee his native country (Khan *et al.*, 2015). These imams found refuge in Ireland thanks to the support of ICCI. Moreover, the influence of the ICCI is felt by mosques that it patronizes even though they may not be fully aligned with it. Khan *et al.* (2015) note: 'The manner of influence of the ICCI, as the sole intermediary responsible for the appropriation of Maktoum foundation funds to respective Muslim organisations, has proved to be questionable' (p. 103). Five other mosque organisations are patronized by the ICCI: the Islamic Foundation on South Circular Road, the Muslim Association of Ireland in Tallaght, and mosques in Cork, Galway and Cavan (Khan *et al.*, 2015). There are concerns that the autonomy of these mosques may be compromised, as they may feel obliged to follow the ideological line of their financial supporters. Furthermore, in addition to the Maktoum foundation, many imams in Ireland are sponsored by the Kuwaiti ministry of Awfaq (Khan *et al.*, 2015).

Brotherhood's methodology

The ICCI has departments dedicated to education and *dawa* (proselytization). According to its website, *dawa* is one of their core missions:

‘*Dawah* is the overarching objective of the Centre and thus encompasses the core of the Centre’s activities. Call for the straight path of Allah is the duty of everyone, thus, our vision, mission and strategic objectives are all in the service of *dawah*. Through *dawah*, we serve the Muslim community and the wider society of Ireland in any way that the Centre can, particularly to spread Islamic knowledge and tackle concerns or misconceptions held by members of either community.’ (Islam Ireland, 2016)

Another example:

‘Since the day of its inauguration, the Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland has abode by the methodology of the first Preacher Muhammad, peace be upon him; in its invitation to Allah. Allah said: "Invite (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching, and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious"' (016.125 Yusuf Ali Tran). (Islam Ireland, 2016)

It may also be of some significance that Dr. Ali Selim, secretary of the ICCI, has written a book on the topic of Islamic education in Ireland, calling on state schools to accommodate Islamic beliefs and saying that there needs to be ‘an upheaval in Irish educational perspectives’ (quoted in *Irish Times*: McGarry, 2014). Other Islamist authors such as Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi are cited by Dr. Selim (2014) in his book ‘Islam and Education in Ireland’.

Paramosque structure and suborganizations

The ICCI seeks to cater for as many of their community’s needs as possible. It has many different facilities including: barbershop, haircare salon, fitness centre, community welfare office, bookshop, crèche, mortuary, library, restaurant, clothes banks and seminar rooms, with the mosque complex serving as the centre of the community, a forum for political, social, economic and religious engagement (Islam Ireland, 2016). It is the only Muslim organisation in Ireland that provides such a wide range of services and facilities. Many

Muslims who might not know what the ICCI stands for attend events at the centre anyway (Ahmed, 2016).

The ICCI hosts an organisation which was established by Brotherhood activists: the European Council for Fatwa and Research (ECFR). It was set up in order to give Muslims in Europe guidance on how to live as a minority among non-Muslims, it being established by fifteen scholars with a vision to create an ‘authoritative assembly of Muslim scholars for European Muslims’ (Khan 2015, p. 100). This was meant to provide European Muslims with answers to questions and concerns over how to conduct themselves in non-Muslim societies and how to adapt their customs and traditions to a new setting. For this reason, it was seen as important that the council be made up of European-based imams who were familiar with local conditions in Europe and who would thus be in a position to raise and settle issues of concern specifically relevant to European communities of Muslims. However, the council has been dominated by Middle-Eastern-based scholars, bringing into question the extent of the organization’s European orientation (Khan, 2015). Questions have been raised over the council’s commitment to Muslims living in the West for this reason. Many of the leading scholars on the council lack conversational fluency in English, including Sheikh Hussein Halawa, imam of ICCI and an influential figure in the secretariat of the ECFR (Khan, 2015), who needs an interpreter to communicate with the public, despite having lived in Ireland for over fifteen years. The decision to relocate the ECFR to Dublin in 1998 was puzzling, given that Ireland has a small Muslim population in comparison to other European countries. The excellent facilities and staff were co-opted by the ECFR, meaning that the costs of meetings and operations would be provided for by the Maktoum foundation (Khan, 2015).

The ECFR ‘can be seen as an attempt to establish a religious authority capable of complementing its ambitious attempt at becoming the major political representation of Muslims in Europe’ (Khan 2015, p. 99). FIOE groups tend to be controlled by Muslim Brothers from outside Europe, as reflected in the prominence of Middle Eastern scholars on the board of ECFR. The fact that Sheikh Al Qaradawi is the head of ECFR further confirms the organization’s sympathy for the Brotherhood ideology. The FIOE does not refer to itself as the European Brotherhood umbrella organization, and actually disputes such a definition. As explained earlier, however, the stigma attached to the group may help explain why its supporters may be hesitant to disclose their membership or affiliation.

Ideological allegiance

Sheikh Al-Qaradawi is the spiritual director of the ECFR. He used to visit Dublin regularly to give talks and fatwa sessions at the council but was banned from Ireland in 2011 after being banned from several Western countries several years before. Mr Al-Qaradawi was reportedly denied entry to the country after describing suicide-bombing attacks on Israelis as ‘martyrdom in the name of God’ (quoted in the *Irish Independent*: Phelan, 2011). He has also been identified by the US and United Nations as having ties to Hamas and Islamic charities convicted of financing terrorist groups (Burr, 2006). Other Islamist intellectuals invited to give talks at the ICCI include: Sheikh Salman Al Awda, a Saudi imam once considered a spiritual mentor to Osama Bin Laden, and who declared it a religious duty to fight American troops in Iraq (Fitzgerald, 2007) and Wajdi Ghunaim, an Egyptian cleric who is banned from Canada and Switzerland because of his alleged links to Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt (Fitzgerald, 2007). A publication by one modern Islamist author, Faysal Mawlawi, is translated and freely available for download on the ICCI website. Other books available in the Clonskeagh library and bookshop include English translations of Al-Qaradawi’s works and books by Said Qutb, considered to be one of the intellectual founders of the modern Islamist movement.

3. Irish institutional conventions

Overview of intelligence agencies

Security threats are assessed and monitored by counterintelligence agencies. A state's ability to respond to terrorism is determined by the capabilities and structures of its intelligence services. It is widely agreed that intelligence services play a crucial role in combating terrorism by identifying and monitoring suspects, infiltrating terrorist networks, collaborating with police forces in other countries, gathering incriminating evidence for trials and so on (English, 2009). The legal powers that counterterrorist agencies yield in dealing with terrorism vary from country to country, and their strategies and capabilities also differ.

In Ireland the two agencies dealing with counterterrorism are the Garda Crime and Security Branch (CSB) and the security arm of the Directorate of Military Intelligence (G2). Since 9/11, CSB and G2 have worked closely together. CSB has much greater staffing and financial resources than G2 and has primary control over counterterrorism intelligence and surveillance operations in Ireland. G2 acts as a complementary intelligence gathering and analysis service (Mulqueen, 2009). Both agencies are ultimately accountable to the National Security Committee, which includes the Taoiseach, Minister for Justice and Minister of Defence. The security forces in Ireland are thus heavily centralised and each agency knows its role in intelligence operations. Interinstitutional rivalry thus does not impede security efforts. But the security agencies are restricted by financial and political constraints (Mulqueen, 2009). Thus central political control has advantages and disadvantages: on the one hand it promotes cohesion and certainty about the scope and role of security agencies but on the other hand it means that the work of agencies can often be constrained by political decisions.

Technical capabilities are increasingly becoming an important part of intelligence efforts. The Gardaí claim to be monitoring the online activity of suspected jihadists living in Ireland (O'Keeffe, 2016b). Frances Fitzgerald plans to introduce new legislation for the modernisation of interception laws after the head of Europol, Rob Wainright, advised her to do so (Bardon, 2016). Because the size of the Muslim population is small and not particularly prone to radicalism, however, the task of Irish security services in the face of Islamism is much less demanding than that of many of their European counterparts.

History of domestic terrorism

There are certain precedents in Irish history that may shape the present-day Irish security response. The Irish constitution has robust anti-subversion laws. Despite the liberal provisions of the constitution of 1937, emergency legislation was adopted over time to enable the government to prosecute subversive activity by the Irish Republican Army (IRA), a revolutionary group that did not accept the legitimacy of the newly-independent Irish state and sought to bring it down through force of arms. The Offences Against the State Act (OAS) and other emergency acts were passed in 1939, introduced as European war loomed to protect the state against IRA subversives who were suspected of sympathizing with the Nazis. The OAS was the most significant act, allowing for the establishment of juryless special criminal courts of five military officers. Moreover, the act was far-reaching:

‘It also prohibited a range of seditious or potentially seditious activities, including membership of proscribed organizations, possession of treasonable documents, obstruction of the government or its servants, and the holding of certain meetings. In addition, it greatly increased the state’s powers of search, arrest, and of detention, enabling recourse to the familiar device of internment without trial’ (O’Halpin 1998, p. 201).

The existence and use of such drastic measures apparently enjoyed a high degree of public tolerance; they were seen as a proportionate response to the dangers of subversion at the time (O’Halpin, 1998). OAS remains on the statute books to this day. The Minister of Justice hinted that it could be revived against Islamist terrorism if necessary: in an interview about allegations of jihadists using Ireland as a training base she maintained that the OAS was still available for handling terrorist-related activity (O’Halloran, 2015). In spite of this, however, additional counterterrorism legislation was introduced in 2015 to deal with the more specific threat of Islamist training, recruitment and incitement, as the OAS was not considered sufficient to deal with these offences. The existence of robust counterterror legislation such as OAS indicates that the state has a legacy of using drastic measures to thwart terrorism. During the Troubles, a censorship law was used to prevent the IRA and its political wing at the time, Sinn Féin, from doing interviews on national television. This was done in an attempt to deny a platform to any subversive groups promoting violence. Similarly, in the present-day struggle against Islamism, France has adopted some censorship laws targeting jihadist propaganda (Marlowe, 2016). Whether the Irish government chooses to adopt such laws or to revive old ones in the fight

against transnational terrorism will most likely depend on future threat perception and future trends in the spread and extent of Islamic militancy.

State-Muslim relations

Whereas during the era of republican terrorism, the Garda Síochána and security services were familiar with the tactics, personnel and organizational structure of the IRA, the nature of Islamist terror groups is different and security forces have had to adapt themselves to meet this new reality. As seen in the second chapter, the Irish Muslim population is on the whole not prone to radicalization, and the Gardaí have been satisfied with a low-key community policing approach to the Muslim population. But conditions conducive to radicalization could take hold in future if sufficient precautions are not taken against that happening. Possible areas of future vulnerability are in segregated immigrant communities in North-West Dublin and commuter belts around Dublin where Gardaí have not established a presence (Mulqueen, 2009). This is a cause for concern as ethnic ghettoization of Muslim communities has been identified as a factor contributing to alienation and thus to radicalization in other European countries (Sageman, 2008, and Duncan 2015). The Gardaí are aware of shortcomings in this area, however, as they have recently taken on ethnic liaison officers fluent in the languages of the Muslim communities (O’Keefe 2016a), with the idea that these officers will act as a bridge between the state and Muslim communities by developing close relations with community leaders who can alert the Gardaí to instances of extremism within the community.

Kundnani (2012) criticises the community-policing approach to countering violent extremism, however, arguing that it is ineffective and at times counterproductive. First of all, he argues that the notion that ‘community leaders’ can detect and report radicalization to the authorities is misguided, as Muslim populations in the West are so heterogeneous and diverse that it is wrong to suppose that designated community leaders can monitor the activities or ideologies of the whole Muslim community or even parts of it. In this era of easy access to Islamic material online and digital communications it is nearly impossible for Islamic clerics to know what kinds of radical material their congregations are accessing online. Furthermore, increasing the powers of security services to monitor online activity risks eroding civil liberties. There are ways to circumvent such surveillance in any case, and it is almost impossible for authorities to keep track of all the people accessing potentially ‘radicalising’ material at any one time. Radical preachers can easily operate clandestinely and radical Islamic groups can keep their activities secret. Moreover, Kundnani (2012) criticises the ‘community policing’ approach for criminalising radical views on the assumption that holding such views pave the

way for terrorist violence: this approach runs the risk of penalizing devout but non-violent Muslims for holding very conservative or anti-Western views. Kundnani also criticises Western governments for putting certain ‘moderate’ Muslims in the awkward position of having to virtually work as informers on their fellow Muslims, which he says creates an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion in the community.

Political rhetoric

Government ministers have revealed their positions on the matter of Islamic extremism in statements after terrorist atrocities abroad. For example, in the wake of the 2015 Paris massacre in which Islamist gunmen killed over one hundred people, the government’s spokesperson on Defence at the time, David Stanton, said: ‘Islam is a peaceful religion in the main. What we see occurring is a vile corruption of it - total evil, total terror and totally at variance with everything we believe in’ (Ireland, Dáil Debates 2015b).

Jimmy Deenihan, Minister for the Arts, expressed the following views:

‘It is extremely important at times like this that entire communities are not stigmatised because of the actions of a few. The vast majority of people in our minority communities are entirely peace loving and the appalling actions of a small number of extremists in Paris do not reflect the views of the Muslim community in this country, or in other states’ (Ireland, Dáil Debates 2015b).

These statements were typical of other Teachtaí Dála on this occasion. For politicians and security forces Islamist extremism is a sensitive topic: when talking about Islamist terrorist atrocities they need to bear in mind the danger of offending Muslim sensibilities by insulting their religion (English 2009), as many Muslims refuse to accept that their religion should be blamed for terrorist atrocities, given that political grievances or a misinterpretation of Islam is what motivates terrorists, in their view (Al-Qadri, 2015). Moreover, separating the terrorists from their communities and cultivating good relations with those Muslims who condemn terrorism is a vital concern in this context, and politicians thus tend to downplay the role of Islam in violent extremism or avoid mentioning Islam altogether (Richardson, 2007). The members of parliament quoted above have taken a very conciliatory approach to this issue in their public pronouncements, and this is typical of other Irish public representatives. They seek to reassure the public that there is no cause for alarm in Ireland and that the Irish Muslim community will self-regulate. From the evidence above, it is clear that government officials refrain from blaming Islam for terrorism or criticising the Muslim community for not doing

enough to combat extremists in their midst in order to ensure harmonious community relations. In Richardson's view (2007), this is a wise approach, as publicly blaming Islam and singling out the Muslim community for criticism may have counterproductive effects by alienating ordinary Muslims, making them feel under scrutiny by being portrayed as a suspect community.

Counterterrorist legislation in Ireland

Counterterrorist legislation was introduced in Ireland in 2015, creating three new offences: public provocation to commit a terrorist offence, recruitment for terrorism and training for terrorism which carry potential sentences of up to ten years in jail (Roche, 2016). In the period leading up to the introduction of this legislation, there was increased media focus on allegations of Ireland being used by jihadists as a base for shelter, training and recruitment because of the country's lax counterterrorism laws (Williams, 2015). Thus new legislation was brought in to allay fears of the government complacency, and also to bring Ireland into line with common EU practice (Cusack and Ryan, 2015). In the eyes of some, this kind of legislation was long overdue, as American security officials had been calling on the Irish government for years to implement tougher counterterror legislation to thwart the activities of Arab militants who were allegedly using Ireland as a base for operations against American forces in Iraq (Dooley, 2005). The Minister of Justice Frances Fitzgerald has taken a strong line on the need for counterterrorist legislation, saying that the state needs to do all it can to ensure that potential terrorists are being monitored closely and that the state will do everything in its power to ensure that terrorists are deported (Fitzgerald, 2016). The new counterterror legislation was used to deport a Jordanian man who 'facilitates travel for extremists prepared to undertake violent action' (Anonymous in *Irish Times*, 2016b). His applications to bring an appeal before the Court of Appeal and European Court of Human Rights were refused, indicating a willingness on the part of the Irish courts to deal sternly with terrorist suspects.

As Foley (2012) notes, societal norms, values and expectations will influence the manner in which a state responds to the terrorist threat and what measures it take to reduce the risk of terrorism. In this context, it is significant that there was no media opposition to the new counterterror legislation in Ireland. This may signal acceptance of the need for such legislation, or it may indicate a lack of knowledge about the implications of such legislation for free speech. As noted above, however, certain journalists had been alert to jihadist activity and had been calling on the government and Gardaí to take action against them for years (Dooley 2016). The Dáil vote on the passage of new counterterror legislation in 2015 was closely contested and

debated, however. Two Deputies, Mick Wallace and Claire Daly, sought to make amendments to the counterterrorism bill, and gave lengthy accounts on their reasons for doing so (Ireland, Dáil Debates, 2015a). Wallace argued that the level of threat in Ireland was too low to justify such anti-terror laws, and that the laws should not have been introduced without a thorough public debate about their function and usefulness. In his view, the counterterror legislation is vaguely worded, intrusive and could be used to encroach upon the civil liberties of the whole population. Citing an academic he claims that these laws are pre-emptive rather than preventive, and involve taking action against potential threats based on at best mere suspicion. In Wallace's view, such measures have been ineffective in other countries, citing the case of France which has some of the stiffest anti-terrorism decrees in Europe and yet continues to suffer from some of the worst terrorist atrocities on the continent. He also questions the competence of the Gardaí in enforcing such laws, as he fears they may abuse them to clamp down on political dissent. Clare Daly (Ireland, Dáil Debates, 2015a) says that the legislation is an unnecessary and disproportionate response to an exaggerated threat, with the threat of Islamic fundamentalism being exploited by political establishments to curtail freedoms and abuse human rights. She also raises the issue of Shannon airport being used by the American military, arguing that the government would be better advised to address this issue if it wishes to reduce the risk of jihadists targeting Ireland.

Thus the necessity and effectiveness of these laws have been questioned by Wallace and Daly. Their arguments are similar to those made by academic sources, who argue that governments tend to make hasty and misguided laws when under pressure to protect their citizens from a seemingly imminent terrorist threat (Brysk and Shafir, 2007). State ministers may justifiably feel a need to take action to protect their citizens and to appear to be taking the threat seriously in times of terrorism, but emergency legislation often turns out to be counterproductive and difficult to repeal later on. Tsoukala (2006) asserts that the practice of adopting liberty-curtailling laws in response to terrorism has not been an effective way to combat the threat as these laws serve merely to alienate Muslims by making them feel that they cannot speak openly for fear of state prosecution. For example, anti-Western or anti-American discourse could be seen as a kind of incitement against the West. This may serve to delegitimize peaceful protests or dissent. Thus radical Muslims who do not necessarily condone violence have their views criminalized, and may refrain from taking part in free and open debates. In this way, people keep extremist opinions to themselves and miss the opportunity of hearing their ideas refuted or ridiculed by others. Discouraging the open expression of anti-Western or extremist opinions does not make these opinions go away, but merely pushes them underground where they may

acquire an even keener rebellious or anti-establishment edge, which makes them even more appealing to those living at the margins of society (Thomas, 2012). Moreover, free speech advocates point out the double standard involved in allowing non-Muslims express opinions that may see a Muslim prosecuted on terrorism offences (Thomas, 2012).

Conclusion

Overall, it has been seen that the level of risk of a direct jihadist attack on Irish soil can still accurately be described as low, and has been low since 9/11. Given this low threat, and given that the Irish Muslim population is relatively small, the state security apparatus can be considered to be fit for purpose: the legal tools and institutional capabilities necessary for prosecuting terrorist-related offences have been shown to be adequate for dealing with jihadist activity, and Irish security agencies are well-coordinated, thanks to a clear hierarchy of command and centralised powers.

For several years after 9/11, criticism had been levelled against the state for not taking seriously the activities of jihadists in the country. But this was a reluctance on the part of political leaders to address the problem, and was more a result of a low level of threat perception than any structural or operational deficiencies within the state security agencies. In more recent years, political leaders have shown more initiative in tackling the jihadist threat, as a rise in spectacular terrorist attacks in Europe and increased attention given to Islamist activity in the media have provoked a response: additional counterterrorist laws have been introduced and more resources have been allocated to counterterror efforts. This response was motivated by a desire to allay concerns about government complacency in relation to jihadist activity rather than in fear of a direct jihadist attack on an Irish target. The government can no longer be accused of complacency on this issue, and has now even been accused of going too far in adopting a harsh stance on counterterror legislation.

Going forward, however, it would make sense for state actors who are dealing with Muslim communities to develop a better awareness of the different strands of the Islamic faith. Integration can be encouraged by empowering Muslim leaders who promote tolerance and acceptance of Western norms and by undermining the authority of those who take an equivocal attitude towards extremism and integration. It would thus be advisable for state authorities to become familiar with the tenets and aims of Islamism: this would enable them to separate Islamists, who have a political agenda, from non-Islamists, who have none. This is because, as the Muslim population grows and diversifies, the challenges of integration may become more pronounced and with them the threat of radicalization. By becoming familiar with Islamism, state officials could foresee potential problems and conflicts that may arise from the Islamist political demands.

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