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THE FRENCH COUNTER-RADICALISATION STRATEGY

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Abstract

Since April 2014, France has been developing a three-stage counter-radicalisation model, covering the areas of detection, prevention and de-radicalisation. Little has been said in the English literature on the organisation, the effectiveness and the challenges of this approach. France's centralised tradition led to the implementation of a vertical structure of action dominated by the Interior Ministry. A major difficulty faced by the French authorities is to manage various "profiles" of at-risk individuals, including converts, underage individuals and young women. This illustrates a significant diversification of the groups of population affected by Salafi-Jihadist radicalisation. The French counter-radicalisation strategy is expected to lead the fight against violent extremism, but it remains hampered by divisions over the role of Islam. This bone of contention, which is indicative of the French state and society's complex relationship with religion, substantially affects the consistency of deradicalisation programmes.

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Introduction

Violent or behavioural radicalisation in relation to the Syrian civil war and the organisation known as Islamic State (IS) is a phenomenon to which France is severely exposed. A marked increase of departures of French nationals for Syria/Iraq was observed in 28 months, from 250 citizens and residents present in Syria in January 2014[1] to 650 people in Syria/Iraq in May 2016.[2] At that time, 190 individuals were identified as being in transit between France and Syria/Iraq, while around 250 who had stayed in Syria/Iraq were already back in France.[3] Security challenges associated with these "foreign fighters" have become a priority for the French government, as some of these individuals are likely to be involved in terrorist activities upon their return. The Prime Minister's office announced that an estimated 735 million euros would be devoted to counter-terrorism measures between 2015 and 2018.[4] Showing continuity with a long-standing "hard" approach to counter-terrorism, the French Parliament adopted an act on security in November 2014, followed by the adoption of a law strengthening the resources of intelligence agencies in June 2015.

Emphasis on counter-terrorism is inversely proportional to the attention paid by the French authorities to counter-radicalisation over the last decades. France has significantly delayed the design and the implementation of a counter-radicalisation strategy to prevent radicalisation while also providing disengagement and deradicalisation mechanisms. This is due to the combination of three factors. Between 1996 and 2012, the absence of Islamist terrorist attacks on French national territory brought about a feeling of security that did not encourage the French authorities to focus on counter-radicalisation initiatives. *Laïcité* – a key principle of the French Republic involving the separation between public institutions and religious organisations – made any official links between a national action plan and theological approaches a sensitive issue. As underlined by Francesco Ragazzi, the French individualistic interpretation of citizenship was an additional impediment to the model of community policing favoured by Anglo-Saxon countries.[5]

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[1] LeMonde.fr with Reuters, "La France Adopte un Plan Contre les Filières Djihadistes Vers la Syrie" [France Adopts a Plan Against Jihadist Networks Towards Syria], Le Monde (24 March 2014), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2014/03/24/syrie-paris-adopte-un-plan-contre-les-filieres-djihadistes_4388603_3224.html (accessed 26 August 2015).

[2] Adrien Sénécat, "Qui sont les 1900 Français 'Concernés' par le Djihad en Syrie et en Irak?" [Who are the 1,900 French People 'Involved' in Jihad in Syria and Iraq?], Le Monde (18 May 2016), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2016/05/18/qui-sont-les-1-900-francais-concernes-par-le-djihad-en-syrie-et-en-irak_4921545_4355770.html?xtmc=1900_francais&xtcr=1 (accessed 19 May 2016).

[3] *Ibid*.

[4] M. Pf with AFP, "Plan Valls Contre le Terrorisme: 2680 emplois créés" [Valls' Plan Against Terrorism: 2,680 Jobs Created], Le Parisien (21 Janvier 2015), available at http://www.leparisien.fr/politique/lutte-contre-le-terrorisme-valls-devoile-les-mesures-du-gouvernement-21-01-2015-4465707.php (accessed 25 August 2015).

[5] Francesco Ragazzi, "Vers un 'Multiculturalisme Policier'? La Lutte Contre la Radicalisation en France, aux Pays-Bas et au Royaume-Uni" [Towards a 'Police Multiculturalism'? The Fight Against Radicalisation in France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom], Les Etudes du CERI, n° 206 bis, p. 37 (September-December 2014), available at http://www.sciencespo.fr/ceri/sites/sciencespo.fr.ceri/files/Etude_206.pdf (accessed 26 August 2015).

A first attempt to prevent radicalisation at the government level was initiated in 2013, opening the way for the formulation of a "plan to fight violent radicalisation and terrorist networks" in April 2014.[6] This aligned France with a position shared by many of its European counterparts. The United Kingdom (U.K.), the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway launched their own counter-radicalisation strategies between 2003 and 2010. Comparing the measures implemented in these four countries, Lorenzo Vidino and James Brandon noticed common trends such as: (i) a focus on violent rather than non-violent radicalisation; (ii) the adoption of "secular approaches that are generally aimed at addressing background vulnerabilities rather than theological opinions";[7] and (iii) the exclusion of Islamists and Salafists – which does not prevent "non-empowering engagements"[8] with the latter. These tendencies were closely scrutinised by the French authorities. The then Minister of Justice Christiane Taubira explained in October 2014 that France "looked at what is done in other countries that are impacted [by radicalisation]."[9]

The power of attraction exerted by the Syrian civil war and groups such as IS on young people has shaped a reading grid of radicalisation that is closely associated with Salafi-Jihadism[10] and its impact on teenagers, post-adolescents and young adults. The French Interior Ministry labelled radicalisation as "a process that may lead to extremism and terrorism",[11] adding that "it should not be confused with the practice of a rigorist Islam".[12] Radicalism was further described as "any discourse that uses religious precepts presented as Muslim to lead a young person to self-exclusion and the exclusion of those who are not like him".[13] The second interpretation focuses on ideological dynamics that are put at the heart of "radicalism" and reduces its impact to a single segment of the population. Different

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[6] Compte rendu du Conseil des ministres du 23 avril 2014, "Le Plan de Lutte Contre la Radicalisation Violente et les Filières Terroristes" [The Plan to Fight Violent Radicalisation and Terrorist Networks] (April 2014), Gouvernement.fr, available at http://www.gouvernement.fr/conseil-des-ministres/2014-04-23/le-plan-de-lutte-contre-la-radicalisation-violente-et-les-fi (accessed 3 May 2016).

[7] Lorenzo Vidino. James Brandon, "Countering Radicalization in Europe", International Center for the Study of Radicalisation (2012), p. 71, available at http://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/ICSR-Report-Countering-Radicalization-in-Europe.pdf (accessed 3 May 2016).

[8] *Ibid*.

[9] LeFigaro.fr with AFP, "Djihad: Taubira prône le 'désendoctrinement'" [Jihad: Taubira Advocates "De-indoctrination"], Le Figaro (3 October 2014), available at http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/2014/10/03/97001-20141003FILWWW00381-djihad-taubira-prone-le-desendoctrinement.php (accessed 3 May 2016).

[10] Salafi-Jihadism is the religious ideology adopted by al-Qaeda (AQ) and IS that justifies and promotes terrorist violence, using "religious words, symbols and values to sustain itself and grow", according to Assaf Moghadam. It is commonly considered to be one of the three branches of the Salafi movement, along the 'Quietist' branch, which is apolitical and focuses on preaching, and the 'activist' branch that may advocate the creation of political parties and the involvement of the latter in elections. This article will be based on these definitions and distinctions. See Assaf Moghadam, "The Salafi-Jihad as a Religious Ideology", CTC Sentinel, Vol. 1, Issue 3 (February 2008), available at https://www.ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Vol1Iss3-Art5.pdf (accessed 10 August 2015).

[11] "Prévenir la Radicalisation" [Prevent Radicalisation], Ministère de l'Intérieur, at http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/SGCIPD/Prevenir-la-radicalisation/Prevenir-la-radicalisation (accessed 26 August 2015).

[12] "Se Mobiliser Ensemble" [Getting Mobilised Together], Ministère de l'Intérieur, at http://www.stop-djihadisme.gouv.fr/se-mobiliser.html (accessed 26 Augst 2015).

[13] Soren Seelow, "Les Nouveaux Chiffres de la Radicalisation" [New Figures of Radicalisation], Le Monde (26 March 2015), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/police-justice/article/2015/03/26/les-nouveaux-chiffres-de-la-radicalisation_4602011_1653578.html (accessed 26 August 2015).

counter-radicalisation measures have been adopted as a response, the "relatively experimental"[14] dimension of which was underlined by the Interior Ministry in early 2015.

The first part of this article questions the originality of the French counter-radicalisation strategy by analysing the interactions between entities and actors involved in the detection and the prevention of radicalisation. The specificity of the French model lies in a holistic management approach in which departmental prefects[15] play an essential role of coordination, combined with an explicit focus of the French authorities on Muslim religious leaders to tackle the development of Salafi-Jihadist radicalisation. The second part explores the plurality of paths leading to violent extremism and terrorism by studying the various "profiles" of radicals, as well as the different classifications of early signs adopted by public and private actors of counter-radicalisation. The final section of this article examines the contents of deradicalisation initiatives and assesses their effectiveness. Numerous programmes have been launched, but divisions remain over the use of Islam against Salafi-Jihadism. Difficulty to find common ground hampers the coherence of the French counter-radicalisation strategy and reveals a key tension on religious questions, especially when it involves the religion of Allah.

Organisation

The French counter-radicalisation strategy is led by the *Comité Interministériel de Prévention de la Délinquance* or CIPD [Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Prevention of Delinquency] and the *Unité de Coordination de la Lutte Antiterroriste* or UCLAT [Anti-Terrorist Coordination Unit]. Both structures involve a broad spectrum of ministries, security and intelligence services that reflects the importance granted by the French authorities to a cross-cutting resource mobilisation model. The CIPD carries out actions for prevention through the delivery of training sessions to professionals such as association leaders and public servants from various administrative units (of which 9,000 are expected to be trained before 2017),[16] communication and information campaigns, as well as support measures brought to the prefectures in charge of "young people exposed to the risk [of radicalisation]"[17] and their families. The UCLAT was responsible for setting up an online and phone alert platform managed by the *Centre National d'Assistance et de Prévention de la Radicalisation* or CNAPR [National Centre for Support and Prevention of Radicalisation] in April 2014.

CNAPR consists of eight part-time police reservists, assisted by two policemen and a psychologist. It centralises reports emanating from police and gendarmerie forces, as well as the networks of

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[14] Sylvain Mouillard, "Jihad Français: Mieux Vaut Prévenir que Guérir" [French Jihad: Prevention is Better than Cure], Libération (20 February 2015), available at http://www.liberation.fr/societe/2015/02/20/jihad-francais-mieux-vaut-prevenir-et-guerir_1206839 (accessed 27 August 2015).

[15] There are around 250 regional, departmental and specially appointed prefects. Prefects appointed to a region or department apply public policies and oversee various administrative services.

[16] Anne Vidalie, "Contrer la Radicalisation, une Mission Impossible?" [Countering Radicalisation: An Impossible Mission?], L'Express (02 July 2015), available at http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/societe/contrer-la-radicalisation-une-mission-impossible_1695194.html (accessed 28 August 2015).

[17] "Comité Interministériel de Prévention de la Délinquance" [Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Prevention of Delinquency], Ministère de l'Intérieur, at http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/SGCIPD (accessed 28 August 2015).

individuals deemed to go through a process of radicalisation (family, friends, colleagues, teachers, etc.). A total of 3,645 individuals were identified between April 2014 and October 2015,[18] to which an additional 2,226 individuals were pinpointed from July 2014 to June 2015 by prefectural services.[19] The overall figure of 5,871 refers to people who were singled out as significant cases of radicalisation by the authorities.[20] It covers a wide variety of situations that are not all associated with the "endpoints" of violent extremism and terrorism. The majority of phone calls come from family members, mainly parents. As explained in a parliamentary report, some cases are given particular attention when (i) "the individual shows objective signs of radicalisation"; and (ii) "his/her implication in a *Jihadist* network is potential or proven".[21] Information given by callers is used to diagnose the "degrees" of radicalisation, as rated on a scale of 1 to 4. Case files of individuals suspected to be credible threats are subsequently forwarded to internal intelligence services and departmental prefectures.

Working in close coordination with prosecutors, departmental prefects (i) assess the danger posed by reported individuals and inform mayors of individuals' places of residence in order to implement support and prevention measures for families (suggested activities for re-socialisation include participation in youth camps, educational trips and humanitarian missions abroad); and (ii) create and lead monitoring cells. These cells are comprised of members of the police and the gendarmerie forces; representatives of the National Education Ministry that inform the cell of cases of radicalisation detected in middle and high schools; child protection and social services; city halls; employment centres; family and youth associations.[22] These mixed organisations attended to more than 1,000 individuals and 500 families by October 2015.[23] Government services are predominant in the composition of the monitoring cells, but their multi-disciplinary nature is reflective of a spirit of partnership between public and private actors. Illustrative of this duality is the special attention placed

[18] Anne-Aël Durand, "'Stop Djihadisme': 40% de Femmes Parmi les Radicalisations Signalées" [Stop Jihadism: 40 per cent of Women Among Reported Radicals], Le Monde (24 November 2015), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2015/11/24/stop-djihadisme-40-de-femmes-parmi-les-radicalisations-signalees_4816710_4355770.html (accessed 1 December 2015).

[19] Sébastien Pietrasanta, "La Déradicalisation, Outil de Lutte Contre le Terrorisme" [Deradicalisation, a Tool to Fight Terrorism], La Documentation Française, (Juin 2015), p. 12, available at http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/var/storage/rapports-publics/154000455.pdf (accessed 24 August 2015).

[20] This figure rose to 8,800 in May 2016. See Alfred de Montesquiou, "Déradicalisation: les Défis du Préfet Pierre N'Gahane" [Deradicalisation: Prefect Pierre N'Gahane's Challenges], Paris Match (03 May 2016), available at http://www.parismatch.com/Actu/Societe/Deradicalisation-les-defis-du-prefet-Pierre-N-Gahane-961366 (accessed 18 May 2016).

[21] Eric Ciotti, President, Patrick Mennucci, Rapporteur, "Rapport Fait au Nom de la Commission d'Enquête sur la Surveillance des Filières et des Individus Djihadistes" [Report Drawn Up on Behalf of the Commission of Inquiry on the Surveillance of Jihadist Networks and Individuals], Assemblée Nationale (June 2015), p. 118, available at http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/pdf/rap-enq/r2828.pdf (accessed 28 August 2015). The definition of "objective" is not provided.

[22] Ministre de l'Intérieur, Circulaire INTK1405276C sur la Prévention de la Radicalisation et l'Accompagnement des Familles [Circular INTK1405276C related to the Prevention of Radicalisation and Family Support], Légifrance (29 April 2014), p. 3, available at http://circulaire.legifrance.gouv.fr/pdf/2014/05/cir_38287.pdf (accessed 28 August 2015).

[23] Le Courrier des Maires et des Élus Locaux, "Guide de Prévention de la Radicalisation" [Guide to Prevent Radicalisation], Ministère de l'Intérieur (October 2015), p. 22, available at http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/SGCIPD/CIPD/Actualites/Prevention-de-la-radicalisation-un-outil-pour-les-maires-a-telecharger (accessed 05 November 2015).

on the "religious dimension of radicalisation", which, according to the then French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve, "cannot be ignored" and need to be addressed through "trustworthy religious leaders."[24] Steered at the national level by the CIPD, the French system draws its impetus from three complementary levels of authority, i.e. the state, its department representatives and partners involved at the local level.

Since 65.04 per cent of reports deemed credible by the CNAPR were made by telephone by June 2015,[25] officials emphasised the impact of the anti-radicalisation hotline that they considered to be a success. Prefect Pierre N'Gahane, Secretary General of the CIPD, highlighted the increase of phone calls which doubled after the January 2015 attacks[26] and the wider socio-economic diversity of callers.[27] The Interior Ministry assessed that seventy to eighty individuals had been prevented from leaving for Syria between May and November 2014,[28] adding in July 2015 that "almost all cases detected did not go to [the Syrian conflict zone]".[29] The growing involvement of French society in voluntarily reporting suspected cases of radicalisation, especially in the aftermath of terrorist attacks, highlights a greater awareness of the potentially dramatic consequences of inaction. Travel plans to Syria of a number of individuals reported to the CNAPR were effectively stymied, due to the confiscation of their passports and identity cards.[30] However, these security measures do not necessarily entail the rejection of physical violence from those prevented from leaving, nor do they imply the decision to renounce violent extremist beliefs and convictions. This raises the question of how effective precautionary measures are in deterring people from adopting radical views.

The prevention of radicalisation relies at the government level on the *Service d'Information du Gouvernement* or SIG [Information Service of the Government], a public relations agency placed under the authority of the Prime Minister, and a triennial budget of 60 million euros to cover the period 2015 – 2018.[31] A key step was the launch of an official website in January 2015 to promote awareness among the public by providing information on the terrorist threat; counter-terrorism measures; Salafi-Jihadist propaganda and radicalisation. Additionally, an anti-radicalisation video clip was released with

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[24] *Ibid*.

[25] Pietrasanta, "La Déradicalisation" [Deradicalisation], p. 12.

[26] Marion Garreau, "Un Numéro Vert Contre la Radicalisation Djihadiste" [A Toll-Free Number Against Jihadist Radicalisation], Le Monde (12 February 2015), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/m-actu/article/2015/02/12/un-numero-vert-contre-la-radicalisation-djihadiste_4574897_4497186.html (accessed 29 August 2015).

[27] Mouillard, "Jihad Français" [French Jihad].

[28] Garreau, "Un Numéro" [A Toll-Free Number].

[29] Pascale Tournier, "Les Enfants Perdus de la République" [The Lost Children of the Republic], La Vie (1 July 2015), available at http://cdn.nathaliegoulet.fr/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/CDLV-djihad.pdf (accessed 29 August 2015).

[30] "Jihadisme: Six Français Prêts à Partir en Syrie Privés de Leurs Passeports" [Jihadism: Six French People About to Leave to Syria Deprived of Their Passports], Le Parisien (23 February 2015), available at http://www.leparisien.fr/faits-divers/six-jihadistes-presumes-interdits-de-sortie-du-territoire-23-02-2015-4553657.php (accessed 29 August 2015).

[31] "La Lutte Contre le Terrorisme" [The Fight Against Terrorism], Gouvernement.fr, available at http://www.gouvernement.fr/action/la-lutte-contre-le-terrorisme (accessed 29 August 2015).

a goal to deconstruct the recruiting arguments of Salafi-Jihadist movements.[32] The fictions of heroism; the founding and raising a family in Syria; humanitarian involvement to help the Syrian population and religious authenticity are debunked through the juxtaposition of videos used by groups such as IS with real footage of the civil war. Discrediting Salafi-Jihadist propaganda can be effective in influencing vulnerable audiences, but it will not persuade hardliners who are highly unlikely to be receptive to a preventive message emanating from the government, especially if the latter conveys a spectacle of raw violence that may fascinate some individuals.

Despite its wide scope, the involvement of state institutions and local authorities is also limited by three factors. First, the UCLAT and the prefectural administration belong to the Interior Ministry, which is in charge of the National Police and, along with the Ministry of Defense, the National Gendarmerie. Proximity between these varied services tends to blur the distinction between counter-terrorism and counter-radicalisation.[33] This may compromise the latter by perpetuating a damaging state of confusion between "hard" and "soft" approaches. As noted by Pierre Conesa and Jean-Pierre Sueur, former official of the French Ministry of Defense and Senator, respectively, families may be reluctant to report their relatives to members of the law enforcement community for fear of the legal consequences.[34]

Second, the low number of competent associations to deal with radicals and the request for an increase of human resources by public services involved in counter-radicalisation reveal a significant lack of private and public capabilities.[35] The dearth of field partners is alarming, as such structures act as a key link between authorities and families, especially in the area of psychological support that is not covered by security forces and the CNAPR.[36]

Third, mayors have complained about a lack of information from state services, a shortage of training sessions on the detection of radicalisation and poor coordination between the national and the local levels.[37] This highlights a significant contrast between the stakes at play, the French ambition of a whole-of-government approach and the means available. The latter are used in different contexts of

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[32] "Stop-Djihadisme: Ils te Disent…" [Stop Jihadism: They Tell You…], YouTube, available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ke3i9-7kkQM (accessed 15 October 2015).

[33] See Pierre Conesa, "Quelle Politique de Contre-Radicalisation en France?" [What Counter-Radicalization Policy in France?], Fondation Res Publica (9 March 2015), available at http://www.fondation-res-publica.org/Quelle-politique-de-contre-radicalisation-en-France_a875.html (accessed 29 August 2015).

[34] *Ibid*. Sylvain Mouillard and Willy Le Devin, "Lutte Contre les Filières Jihadistes: le Rapport sans Concession du Sénat" [The Fight Against Jihadist Networks: the Uncompromising Report from the Senate], Libération (8 April 2015), available at http://www.liberation.fr/societe/2015/04/08/lutte-contre-les-filieres-jihadistes-le-rapport-sans-concession-du-senat_1236909 (accessed 29 August 2015).

[35] Pietrasanta, "La Déradicalisation" [Deradicalisation], pp. 30-31.

[36] Caroline Piquet, "Que se Passe-t-il Après un Signalement au Numéro Vert Antidjihad?" [What Happens After People Call the Toll-Free Number to Report a Case of Radicalisation?], Le Figaro (28 October 2014), available at http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2014/10/28/01016-20141028ARTFIG00248-que-se-passe-t-il-apres-un-signalement-au-numero-vert-antidjihad.php (accessed 29 August 2015).

[37] Manon Rescan, "Les Maires Cherchent Leur Place dans la Lutte contre la Radicalisation" [Majors Look for their Place in the Fight Against Radicalisation], Le Monde (1 June 2016), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2016/06/01/les-maires-cherchent-leur-place-dans-la-lutte-contre-la-radicalisation_4930646_3224.html (accessed 2 June 2016)

action as the management of prison radicalisation has simultaneously become the focus of new initiatives.

A series of measures related to the detection and the conditions of detention of prisoners "who are deemed radicalized"[38] was announced shortly after the Charlie Hebdo attacks. An identification programme was launched in January 2015,[39] coupled with a project aimed at concentrating and separating "inmates involved with Islamist terrorism, except the most radical individuals" from the rest of the prison population in five detention facilities established in four prisons.[40] The government pledged to support the 70 public servants in charge of the prison administration's intelligence service with 66 new recruits.[41] These analysts were tasked with monitoring 850 prisoners in January 2015.[42] Among the 283 individuals detained for criminal association for the preparation of terrorist acts on the same date, 152 were labelled "radical Islamists" by the French Ministry of Justice.[43] Related to an overall prison population of 66,270 in January 2015,[44] these figures reveal that a very low number of prisoners were clearly identified as Salafi-Jihadists by the French authorities.

However, radicalisation in prison does not only involve people singled out as "radical islamists". Cases of ordinary criminals who adopt violent extremist views in jail and engage in terrorist activities upon their release are common. In addition, the French judicial system is confronted with multiple instances of returning foreign fighters, homegrown terrorists as well as people involved in networks of recruitment. Seven hundred and twenty-five individuals were targeted by 220 legal proceedings related to terrorism in January 2016.[45] The number of inmates who will require close attention from

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[38] "Fight against terrorism - Handling of the terrorist attacks of 7-9 January 2015 - Communiqué issued following the Council of Ministers' meeting – excerpts", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at http://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/vues/Kiosque/FranceDiplomatie/kiosque.php?fichier=baen2015-01-15.html (accessed 29 August 2015).

[39] "La Lutte Contre le Terrorisme" [The Fight Against Terrorism]. A grid of detection of radical behaviours in jail was released in 2010. An updated version is to be delivered after end-December 2015. See "Rapport Fait au Nom de la Commission d'Enquête sur la Surveillance des Filières et des Individus Djihadistes", pp. 128-129.

[40] Paule Gonzalès, "Radicalisation en Prison: un Plan Fourre-Tout" [Radicalisation in Jail: a Catch-All Plan], Le Figaro (19 February 2015), available at http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2015/02/18/01016-20150218ARTFIG00429-radicalisation-en-prison-un-plan-fourre-tout.php (accessed 29 August 2015); Jean-Baptiste Jacquin, "Terrorisme: la France met en Place des Quartiers pour Détenus Radicalisés" [Terrorism: France Creates Special Units for Radicalised Detainees], Le Monde (14 January 2016), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/police-justice/article/2016/01/14/terrorisme-les-objectifs-ambitieux-des-quartiers-dedies-aux-detenus-radicalises_4847214_1653578.html (accessed 2 June 2016).

[41] "La Lutte Contre le Terrorisme" [The Fight Against Terrorism]; AFP, "Le Renseignement Pénitentiaire, ou le Petit Frère qui Prend du Galon" [Intelligence in Prison, a Division that Steps Up], L'Express (28 January 2015), available at http://www.lexpress.fr/actualites/1/styles/le-renseignement-penitentiaire-ou-le-petit-frere-qui-prend-du-galon_1645484.html (accessed 29 August 2015).

[42] Ibid.

[43] "Lutte Contre la Radicalisation en Prison" [The Fight Against Prison Radicalisation], Ministère de la Justice, at http://www.justice.gouv.fr/la-garde-des-sceaux-10016/lutte-contre-la-radicalisation-en-prison-27787.html (accessed 30 August 2015).

[44] LeMonde.fr with AFP, "La Population Carcérale a Légèrement Diminué en 2014" [Prison Population has Decreased Slightly in 2014], Le Monde (31 July 2015), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2015/01/31/la-population-carcerale-a-legerement-diminue-en-2014_4567220_3224.html (accessed 30 August 2015).

[45] Lefigaro.fr with AFP, "Terrorisme: le Nombre de Procédures Explose" [Terrorism: the Number of Procedures is Skyrocketing], Le Figaro (18 January 2016), available at http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/2016/01/18/97001-20160118FILWWW00351-terrorisme-le-nombre-de-procedures-explose.php (accessed 23 January 2016).

prison authorities should thus be expected to rise significantly over the coming years.

Organisations and actors involved in the identification of radical prisoners include the *Mission Interministérielle de Vigilance et de Lutte Contre les Dérives Sectaires* or MIVILUDES [Inter-ministerial Mission of Vigilance and Fight Against Sectarian Abuses], members of the prison administration, researchers and associations.[46] Their task is challenged by the contrasts between different manifestations of radicalisation in prison, as pointed out by then Minister of Justice, Christiane Taubira, who referred to detainees as "at odds with the institution" and those "in an attitude of confrontation".[47] Similarly, sociologist Farhad Khosrokhavar distinguished between the "hardened *Jihadists*", those who are "traumatised by the war and easy to manipulate" and the "repentants".[48] These disparities highlight the crucial need for an individualised approach to detection. What remains unclear is whether the various signs involved will be accurately reflected in the identification grid being prepared, and if this grid will adequately address the widespread practice of concealing radical beliefs and convictions commonly referred to in arabic as *taqiya* [dissimulation]. Detecting radical views from people who hide their true opinions is equally difficult among individuals who are not in custody. Practitioners of identification programmes are both required to go beyond the surface and avoid the trap of a cursory understanding of violent radicalisation that would, for example, be over focused on religious practises at the expense of other potential early signs.

The project for concentrating and separating radical prisoners was first implemented in the prison of Fresnes (Val-de-Marne) where 24 prisoners labelled *Pratique Radicale de l'Islam* or PRI [Radical Practice of Islam] were detained in a specialised unit beginning in April 2015.[49] Hardliners were excluded from the initiative, reflecting the decision to keep a separate detention area for the most dangerous individuals.[50] Placed under constant surveillance, prisoners were held in both individual

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[46] RTL with AFP, "Attentats en France: le Problème de la Radicalisation en Prison à Nouveau Soulevé" [Attacks in France: The Issue of Prison Radicalisation is Raised Again], *RTL* (11 January 2015), available at http://www.rtl.fr/actu/societe-faits-divers/attentats-en-france-le-probleme-de-la-radicalisation-en-prison-a-nouveau-souleve-7776171831 (accessed 30 August 2015).

[47] AFP, "Radicalisations en Prison: l'Expérience de Fresnes Étendue" [Prison Radicalisation: The Fresnes Experiment to be Extended], Libération (3 February 2015), available at http://www.liberation.fr/societe/2015/02/03/radicalisation-en-prison-l-experience-de-fresnes-etendue_1194585 (accessed 30 August 2015).

[48] Sylvain Mouillard, "Les Prisons, Sas Sous Pression" [Prisons, a Gate Under Pressure], Libération (20 February 2015), available at http://www.liberation.fr/societe/2015/02/20/les-prisons-sas-sous-pression_1206837 (accessed 30 August 2015).

[49] Ciotti, Menucci, "Rapport Fait au Nom de la Commission d'Enquête sur la Surveillance des Filières et des Individus Djihadistes" [Report Drawn Up on Behalf of the Commission of Inquiry on the Surveillance of Jihadist Networks and Individuals], p.138. The judicial criterion of PRI, which excludes prisoners detained for common law offences, was used in the context of the pilot project. Authors mentioned that this criterion was chosen to avoid the reliance on "a subjective criterion that could be contested". However, they also acknowledged that the population of radical detainees exceeds the numbers of PRI prisoners. The updated identification grid of radical inmates will lead to assign common criminals to these detention facilities.

[50] *Ibid*. Christiane Taubira specified that some of the "most radicalized individuals" are held in solitary confinement. They may also be subject to the DPS (*Détenu Particulièrement Signalé*, Specially Reported Detainee) procedure. These individuals' cells are searched on a regular basis, and they are frequently transferred to other cells and prisons. See AFP, "Radicalisation en prison: l'Expérience de Fresnes Étendue" [Prison Radicalisation: The Fresnes Experiment to be Extended].

and collective cells.[51] Separation from the rest of the prison population applied only to strolls, worship and outdoor sports.[52] Authors of two parliamentary reports expressed a favourable opinion of this practice but stressed the need for better identification of the detainees that should be assigned to these areas.[53] This last point was highlighted by France's Chief Prison Inspector Adeline Hazan, who underlined the shortcomings of the selection process and the risk of detaining different kinds of radicals in one place.[54] As Farhad Khosrokhavar explained, separating some detainees from other prisoners will reduce the influence they may have on the latter, but it will also "strengthen the links between them."[55] Such a process of socialisation could limit the "contagion effect", while at the same time, turn sympathisers into hardliners and lead to the creation of structured networks. This second argument seems to have influenced new Minister of Justice Jean-Jacques Urvoas' decision to drop the project in October 2016. However, plans are still under way to create six specialised assessment units. These sections will host prisoners for four months, including returnees from Syria/Iraq, to determine their "degrees" of radicalisation.[56]

In the words of the then French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve, prospective prison, army and hospital chaplains of all religions will be expected to hold a university diploma of *laïcité,* related to "the fundamental principles of the Republic".[57] Such a strategy aims at regulating the training of religious

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[51] Contrôleur Général des Lieux de Privation de Liberté, Avis du 11 Juin 2015 sur la Prise en Charge de la Radicalisation Islamiste en Milieu Carcéral, NOR CPLX1515216V, [Opinion of 11 June 2015 related to the Management of Islamist Radicalisation in Prison Setting, No CPLX1515216V], (11 June 2015), p. 2, available at http://www.cglpl.fr/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Journal-officiel-de-la-République-française-N°-149-du-30-juin-2015.pdf (accessed 01 September 2015).

[52] Ciotti, Menucci, "Rapport Fait au Nom de la Commission d'Enquête sur la Surveillance des Filières et des Individus Djihadistes" [Report Drawn Up on Behalf of the Commission of Inquiry on the Surveillance of Jihadist Networks and Individuals], p.138. This mixed system was implemented to avoid the creation of a full-fledged detention regime, the legal foundations of which are lacking. See Frank Johannès, "Le Regroupement des Islamistes en Prison Jugé 'Potentiellement Dangereux'" [Gathering Islamist in Prison is Assessed to be 'Potentially Dangerous'], Le Monde (30 June 2015), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2015/06/30/la-controleure-des-prisons-defavorable-au-regroupement-des-detenus-islamistes-en-prison_4664339_3224.html (accessed 01 September 2015).

[53] Ciotti, Menucci, "Rapport Fait au Nom de la Commission d'Enquête sur la Surveillance des Filières et des Individus Djihadistes" [Report Drawn Up on Behalf of the Commission of Inquiry on the Surveillance of Jihadist Networks and Individuals], pp.139-140. Nathalie Goulet and André Reichardt, Co-presidents, Jean-Pierre Sueur, Rapporteur, "Rapport Fait au Nom de la Commission d'Enquête (1) sur l'Organisation et les Moyens de la Lutte Contre les Réseaux Djihadistes en France et en Europe" [Report Drawn Up on Behalf of the Commission of Inquiry (1) on the Organisation and the Means of Combating Jihadist Networks in France and Europe], Sénat (01 April 2015), p. 252, available at http://www.senat.fr/rap/r14-388/r14-3881.pdf (accessed 01 September 2015).

[54] Contrôleur Général des Lieux de Privation de Liberté, "La Prise en Charge de la Radicalisation Islamiste en Milieu Carcéral" [The Management of Islamist Radicalisation in a Prison Setting], Contrôleur Général des Lieux de Privation de Liberté (11June 2015), p. 30, available at http://www.cglpl.fr/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/rapport-radicalisation_final.pdf (accessed 01 September 2015).

[55] Cécile Chambraud, "En Regroupant les Radicaux, on Renforce leurs Liens" [By Bringing Together Radicals, we Strengthen Their Bonds], Le Monde (13 January 2015), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2015/01/13/en-regroupant-les-radicaux-on-renforce-leurs-liens_4555043_3224.html (accessed 01 September 2015).

[56] Jean-Baptiste Jacquin, "Radicalisation en Prison: le Gouvernmenet Abandonne les Unités Spécialisées" [Radicalisation in Prison: the Government Abandons Specialized Units], Le   Monde (25 October 2016), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2016/10/25/detenus-radicalises-le-ministre-de-la-justice-annonce-la-fin-des-cinq-unites-dediees_5019978_3224.html (accessed 20 November 2016).

[57] This programme is designed for students, civil servants, religious leaders of all religions as well as people professionally involved in religious and cultural institutions and associations. Muslim prison chaplains do not receive specific training. See Le Monde.fr with AFP, "De Nouveaux Diplômes Universitaires de Laïcité Vont

leaders through a strong emphasis on the founding principles of France's institutional identity. It illustrates a voluntarist approach of the French State in the management of religious affairs, especially when the latter is closely associated with counter-radicalisation initiatives. This is reflected in the hiring of 60 Muslim prison chaplains between 2015 and 2017,[58] which will bring their total number to 242.[59] The growing figure of chaplains is consistent with a tendency noted by Senior Fellow Jean-Luc Marret in 2009 to "regularly [call] upon [moderate *imams* – Muslim religious and community leaders] to fight or counter radical Islam in jails".[60] It falls within the context of the prevalence of Islam among religions practised by prisoners[61] and feelings of discrimination commonly experienced by Muslim detainees.[62] However, critics have deemed that relative to the needs involved, the new wave of recruitment is insufficient.[63] Precarious working conditions also make it difficult to attract valuable candidates that could effectively oppose the radicalising influence of inmates acting as *imams*.[64] The exchange of religious arguments might have a positive impact on vulnerable detainees, but its overall value is questionable. The variety of direct and indirect factors that contribute to the processes of radicalisation in prison, including dynamics of group protection, prison overcrowding, understaffing, psychological and psychiatric disorders makes a perspective relying exclusively on religion limited, if

être Créés" [New College Diplomas on *Laïcité* to be Created], Le Monde (4 March 2015), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/campus/article/2015/03/04/de-nouveaux-diplomes-universitaires-de-laicite-vont-etre-crees_4586727_4401467.html (accessed 02 September 2015); Bernadette Sauvaget, "Islam en Prison: les Aumôniers à la Peine" [Islam in Jail: Chaplains are Struggling], Libération (14 June 2015), available at http://www.liberation.fr/societe/2015/06/14/islam-en-prison-les-aumoniers-a-la-peine_1329598 (accessed 02 September 2015); Benoît Fauchet and Marc Preel, "Coup d'Envoi de l'Instance Créée Pour Relancer le Dialogue Avec l'Islam" [The Institution to Resume Dialogue with Islam is Kicked Off], Yahoo Actualités (15 June 2015), available at https://fr.news.yahoo.com/actes-antimusulmans-cazeneuve-veut-encourager-dépôts-plainte-151705261.html (accessed 02 September 2015).

[58] "La Lutte Contre le Terrorisme" [The Fight Against Terrorism].

[59] "Lutte Contre la Radicalisation en Prison" [The Fight Against Prison Radicalisation]. In comparison, there were 760 Catholic chaplains, 377 Protestant chaplains and 75 Jewish chaplains in French prisons in January 2015. See "Pratiques et Organisation du Culte en Détention" [Religious Pratices and Organisation of Worship Services in Detention], Ministère de la Justice, available at http://www.justice.gouv.fr/prison-et-reinsertion-10036/la-vie-en-detention-10039/culte-12002.html (accessed 02 September 2015).

[60] Jean-Luc Marret, "Prison De-radicalization and Disengagement: The French Case", Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (20 October 2009), p. 23, available at https://www.frstrategie.org/barreFRS/publications/dossiers/2011/aqmi/doc/fjd.pdf (accessed 02 September 2015).

[61] Ethnic and religious statistics are forbidden in France. However, Farhad Khosrokhavar estimated in 2004 that the proportion of Muslim detainees fluctuated between 50 and 80% in prisons located next to sensitive neighborhoods. This estimate was still considered to be valid in 2015. See Claire Chartier, "L'Islam Majoritaire Dans les Prisons" [Islam is a Majority Religion in Prisons], L'Express (15 March 2004), available at http://www.lexpress.fr/culture/livre/l-islam-majoritaire-dans-les-prisons_819458.html (accessed 02 September 2015); Bernadette Sauvaget, "Islam en Prison: les Aumôniers à la Peine" [Islam in Jail: Chaplains are Struggling].

[62] Ciotti, Menucci, "Rapport Fait au Nom de la Commission d'Enquête sur la Surveillance des Filières et des Individus Djihadistes" [Report Drawn Up on Behalf of the Commission of Inquiry on the Surveillance of Jihadist Networks and Individuals], pp. 234-237.

[63] Emeline Cazi, Ariane Chemin, "Il Faut au Minimum un Aumônier Musulman par Prison pour Protéger les Détenus les Plus Radicaux" [There Must be at Least one Muslim Chaplain in Each Prison to Protect the Most Radical Detainees], Le Monde (04 February 2015), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/religions/article/2015/02/04/il-faut-au-minimum-un-aumonier-musulman-par-prison-pour-proteger-les-detenus-des-plus-radicaux_4569501_1653130.html (accessed 02 September 2015); Bernadette Sauvaget, "Islam en Prison: les Aumôniers à la Peine" [Islam in Jail: Chaplains are Struggling].

[64] Bernadette Sauvaget, "Islam en Prison: les Aumôniers à la Peine" [Islam in Jail: Chaplains are Struggling]; Anna Villechenon, "Aumôniers Musulmans et Surveillants Démunis Face à la Radicalisation en Prison" [Muslim Chaplains and Prison Wardens Poorly Equipped to Deal With Prison Radicalisation], Le Monde (23 January 2015), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2015/01/23/surveillants-et-aumoniers-musulmans-demunis-face-a-la-radicalisation-en-prison_4561589_3224.html (accessed 02 September 2015).

not entirely inappropriate.

The French authorities attempted to respond to the threat of violent radicalisation by a wide-ranging mobilisation effort involving different stakeholders. Impetus from the central government is not specific to France, as Ministries of Interior and Justice are usually tasked with driving and coordinating national counter-radicalisation strategies. However, the French three-stage structure of action, which is based on a synergistic approach among the Interior Ministry, the prefects and a diverse range of local players, appears to be more unusual. It is both the product of a strong public service tradition, as well as the will of the French State to rely on pre-existing power and administrative networks rather than creating new institutions. The temporary interest that the French authorities showed in a combined approach involving the concentration and the partial separation of prisoners singled out as radicals is also not uncommon, since similar policies have been applied to convicted terrorists in other European countries such as Spain and the U.K.[65] The identification of "profiles" and the detection of early signs remain nevertheless, a key challenge, both inside and outside the prison environment.

"Profiles" and Early Signs

In a post-*Charlie Hebdo* context marked by a high risk of confusion between Islam and Salafi-Jihadism, the French government is confronted with two major challenges. First, long-standing issues related to the representation of French Muslims and the practice of Islam in France, such as the building of new mosques and the status of Muslim religious leaders, need to be addressed in compliance with the line of partition between political and religious spheres.[66] Second, the stigmatisation of the Muslim "community" must be avoided as it would exacerbate tensions within French society during a critical period of increased security threats. The non-involvement of the French Muslim elites in the national counter-radicalisation policy could trigger this stigmatisation, as emphasised by Pierre Conesa.[67] However, it could also be seen as a product of the fusion of questions related to the place of Islam in France and non-violent/violent radicalisation. These matters tend to be treated as distinct issues,[68] although trained *imams* are expected to both embody an "Islam

[65] See Peter R. Neumann, "Prisons and Terrorism: Radicalisation and De-radicalisation in 15 Countries", International Center for the Study of Radicalisation (2010), p. 18, available at http://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/1277699166PrisonsandTerrorismRadicalisationandDeradicalisationin15Countries.pdf (accessed 3 May 2016).

[66] See Cécile Chambraud, "L'Etat Pose les Bases du Dialogue Avec l'Islam" [The State Lays the Foundations for Dialogue with Islam], Le Monde (10 June 2015), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/religions/article/2015/06/10/l-etat-pose-les-bases-du-dialogue-avec-l-islam_4651029_1653130.html (accessed 04 September 2015).

[67] Pierre Conesa, "Quelle Politique de Contre-Radicalisation en France?" [What Counter-Radicalisation Policy in France?], L'Opinion (December 2014), p. 74, available at http://www.lopinion.fr/sites/nb.com/files/2014/12/rapport_favt_decembre_2014-12-14_def.pdf (accessed 04 September 2015).

[68] During the launch of a new "forum for dialogue with Islam of France" in June 2015, the Interior Ministry explained that "putting [radicalization] on the agenda during the first meeting of the forum would send a wrong message to the French people and the Muslim community". See Ève Taraborrelli, "Le Gouvernement Présente Son 'Instance de Dialogue avec l'Islam de France'" [The Government Presents its 'Institution for Dialogue with Islam of France'], Le Monde Des Religions (15 June 2015), available at http://www.lemondedesreligions.fr/actualite/le-gouvernement-presente-son-instance-de-dialogue-avec-l-islam-

of France"[69] on the one hand, and act as counter-radicalising agents on the other.[70] The re-organisation of Islam in France requires Muslim religious leaders to be at the forefront of reforms promoted by the government. However, "proper" preaching delivered in mosques will not address the growing role of the Internet as a key vector leading some people to embrace violent extremism, nor will it necessarily reach the categories of individuals that should be targeted as a priority.

There are three distinctive features related to the gender, age and social environment of French people suspected to be radicals or singled out as such. First, the representation of women is significant, comprising 35 per cent of the 3,142 individuals reported to the authorities between April 2014 and March 2015.[71] Second, minors account for 24 per cent of these cases, making them an equally important segment. Third, a high proportion of detected individuals come from middle-class backgrounds. The *Centre de Prévention Contre les Dérives Sectaires Liées à l'Islam* or CPDSI [Centre for the Prevention of Sectarian Abuses Linked to Islam], an association that works on counter-radicalisation with the French authorities, assessed that low, middle and upper class socioeconomic backgrounds represented 16 per cent, 67 per cent and 17 per cent of 160 families of radicals it used as a sample, respectively.[72] Similar estimates were noted by Farhad Khosrokhavar who observed a substantial flow of young people from the middle class that he deemed to be motivated by a "sense of profound injustice".[73] The involvement of women, underage and middle class individuals is not specific to France, but it illustrates the increasing outreach of Salafi-Jihadism to groups of population that did not traditionally constitute a major recruitment base. This process of expansion is further illustrated by a high share of Muslim converts.

New believers account for 37 per cent of the cases of individuals deemed to be "at risk" by the authorities in May 2016.[74] Described by Pierre N'Gahane as "not com[ing] from a family of Arab-

de-france-15-06-2015-4754_118.php (accessed 04 September 2015).

[69] Nathalie Bensahel, "Formation des Imams: à l'École de la Laïcité" [The Training of Imams: Learning *Laïcité*], Le Nouvel Obs (20 June 2015), available at http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/societe/20150617.OBS1008/formation-des-imams-a-l-ecole-de-la-laicite.html (accessed 05 September 2015).

[70] Julia Pascual, "Islam: des Formations Civiques pour Lutter Contre la Radicalisation" [Islam: Civic Trainings to Fight Radicalisation], Le Monde (22 September 2015), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2015/09/22/islam-des-formations-civiques-pour-lutter-contre-la-radicalisation_4766778_3224.html (accessed 25 September 2015).

[71] Seelow, "Les Nouveaux Chiffres de la Radicalisation" [New Figures of Radicalisation]. Identical figures were reported in November 2014. See Marina Messina, "Qui Sont les Français sur la Piste du Djihad?" [Who Are the French People on Their Way to Jihad?], Le Monde (19 November 2014), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2014/11/19/qui-sont-les-francais-sur-la-piste-du-djihad_4524774_4355770.html (accessed 30 September 2015).

[72] Dounia Bouzar, Christophe Caupenne, Sulayman Valsan, "La Métamorphose Opérée Chez le Jeune par les Nouveaux Discours Terroristes" [How New Terrorist Narratives Transform Young People], Centre de Prévention Contre les Dérives Sectaires Liées à l'Islam (2014), p. 9, available at http://www.cpdsi.fr/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/LA-METAMORPHOSE-OPEREE-CHEZ-LE-JEUNE-PAR-LES-NOUVEAUX-DISCOURS-TERRORISTES-DEF.pdf (accessed 30 September 2015).

[73] Ciotti, Mennucci, "Rapport Fait au Nom de la Commission d'Enquête sur la Surveillance des Filières et des Individus Djihadistes" [Report Drawn Up on Behalf of the Commission of Inquiry on the Surveillance of Jihadist Networks and Individuals], p. 45.

[74] De Montesquiou, "Déradicalisation: les Défis du Préfet Pierre N'Gahane" [Deradicalisation: Prefect Pierre N'Gahane's Challenges].

Muslim culture",[75] Muslim converts highlight diverse origins and a mixed influence of ideological dynamics. High-profile cases such as Maxime Hauchard and Mickaël Dos Santos, two recruits of IS who transitioned from a Catholic education to the Quietist and the Jihadist branches of Salafism over a period of three to four years,[76] show that some specificities of the convert experience are likely to play a leading role in adopting extremist views. Sociologist Samir Amghar identified among French converts a severe lack of religious modelling and cultural references.[77] These gaps would be filled by the adoption of new theological and cultural standards, leading to a radical escalation that would generally culminate with the choice of an "ultra-Orthodox Islam".[78] The latter may act as a precursor to Salafi-Jihadism, as illustrated by the pathways followed by Hauchard and Dos Santos. The permeability between the Quietist and the Jihadist branches of the Salafi movement is nonetheless a highly contested phenomenon. Followers of each movement are bitterly opposed, which does not mean that the Quietist discourse would not favour the transition to Salafi-Jihadism in some cases.[79]

Different situations of disadvantage have been observed on multiple occasions among radicalised people from low social backgrounds. These underprivileged contexts of life are caused by a difficult home environment, a poor educational background, a low level of employment and a criminal record. The latter factors are reflected in five of the six "dominant characteristics"[80] shared by thousands of radicals, according to a report from the French National Assembly.[81] Authors of a Senate report also noted the "predominance" of individuals coming from underprivileged districts among French nationals

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[75] BFMTV and AFP, "Départs Pour le Jihad: Plus de Femmes que d'Hommes en Mars" [Departures for Jihad: More Women than Men in March], BFMTV (15 April 2015), available at http://www.bfmtv.com/societe/departs-pour-le-jihad-plus-de-filles-que-de-garcons-en-mars-877623.html (accessed 28 September 2015).

[76] Caroline Politi, "Pourquoi y a-t-il Tant de Convertis Parmi les Djihadistes Français de l'Etat Islamique" [Why are There so Many Converts Among French Jihadists Who Joined Islamic State"], L'Express (21 November 2014), available at http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/societe/pourquoi-y-a-t-il-tant-de-convertis-parmi-les-djihadistes-francais-de-l-etat-islamique_1624282.html (accessed 1 October 2015).

[77] Ibid. It can be assumed that individuals, who "rediscovered" Islam, represented in significant numbers alongside converts, followed similar pathways. See AFP, "Jihadistes Français en Syrie: 'Pas de Phénomène de Masse'" [French Jihadists in Syria: no Mass Phenomenon], France 24 (18 June 2015), available at http://www.france24.com/fr/20150618-depart-francais-jihad-syrie-surveillance-filiere-ciotti-menucci-rapport (accessed 2 October 2015).

[78] Ibid.

[79] According to Farhad Khosrokhava, Islamic fundamentalism acts as a barrier to radicalisation "in the overwhelming majority of cases" and only a "tiny minority" of individuals adopts a fundamentalist version of Islam before radicalising or joining "small religious groups that are much more violent". This opinion is shared by Samir Amghar for whom "it is very difficult for a Quietist Salafi to switch towards violent radicalisation". By contrast, the CPDSI assessed that "many young people" are receptive to the discourse of Salafi radical Islam before turning to Salafi-Jihadism. See Matthieu Stricot, "Quiétistes, Politiques, Djihadistes: Qui Sont les Salafistes?" [Quietists, Political, Jihadists: Who Are the Salafis?], Le Monde des Religions (30 November 2015), available at http://www.lemondedesreligions.fr/actualite/quietistes-politiques-djihadistes-qui-sont-les-salafistes-30-11-2015-5122_118.php (accessed 1 June 2016); Centre de Prévention Contre les Dérives Sectaires Liées à l'Islam, "Rapport d'Activité Annuel 2015 du CPDSI, Bilan d'Actions et Partage des Retours d'Expérience" [2015 Annual Activity Report of the Centre for the Prevention of Sectarian Abuses Linked to Islam, Assessment of Initiatives and Feedback-Sharing], CPSDI (10 February 2016), pp. 43-44, available at http://www.cpdsi.fr/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/rapport_activite_annuel-2015_CPDSI.pdf (accessed 1 June 2016); Farhad Khosrokhavar, Radicalisation (Editions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 2014), p. 151.

[80] Ciotti, Menucci, "Rapport Fait au Nom de la Commission d'Enquête sur la Surveillance des Filières et des Individus Djihadistes" [Report Drawn Up on Behalf of the Commission of Inquiry on the Surveillance of Jihadist Networks and Individuals], p. 46.

[81] Ibid.

who joined IS.[82] Various forms of non-violent and violent radicalisation thrive on the humiliation and frustration generated by self-perceptions of second-class citizens to whom opportunities appear to be denied. Feelings of political abandonment and socioeconomic exclusion are strong within certain communities and among young people living in underprivileged suburbs of major French towns. Some of these districts are mainly comprised of diverse minority groups, including populations of Northern and sub-Saharan African descent whose origins are linked to France's colonial history and recent waves of immigration. Perceptions of discrimination and racism, which are far from uncommon in these neighbourhoods, tend to fuel a concomitant sense of "victimisation" that may increase receptivity to radical narratives.[83]

Two elements show that these different categories of individuals are less exclusive from each other than one would think. First, psychological fragility appears to be a common thread. All individuals reported to the authorities were portrayed by the latter as people suffering from "a loss of reference points and a state of dissociation with their environment".[84] This interpretation appears to be particularly relevant for young age groups who were described by a member of the phone alert platform as "often impressionable…in search of meaning and capable of making life-altering decisions overnight."[85] Second, the lack of a stable sense of identity transcends socioeconomic differences between individuals. Referring to young people from poor districts, Pierre N'Gahane mentioned that "a number of French youth lives with…the feeling that they do not belong to the national community…Some of them wear a beard and religious clothing only to get out of anonymity".[86] Similarly, Farhad Khosrokhavar assessed that an "identity malaise"[87] was one of the key factors in the radicalisation of young people from middle class background. Common situations of emotional vulnerabilities and troubled identities put into perspective the notion of clear-cut profiles, as these characteristics cover the wide spectrum of individuals which authorities strive to identify at the earliest possible stage.

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[82] Goulet and Reichardt, Sueur, "Rapport Fait au Nom de la Commission d'Enquête (1) sur l'Organisation et les Moyens de la Lutte Contre les Réseaux Djihadistes en France et en Europe" [Report Drawn Up on Behalf of the Commission of Inquiry (1) on the Organisation and the Means of Combating Jihadist Networks in France and Europe], p. 44.

[83] On the notion of 'victimisation' see Farhad Khosrokhavar, Radicalisation, p. 111.

[84] Seelow, "Les nouveaux Chiffres de la Radicalisation" [New Figures of Radicalisation].

[85] Marie Boëton, "La Lutte s'organise Contre le Djihadisme" [The Fight Against Jihadism is Getting organised], La Croix (8 July 2015), available at http://www.la-croix.com/Actualite/France/La-lutte-s-organise-contre-le-djihadisme-2015-07-08-1332699 (accessed 2 October 2015).

[86] Seelow, "Les nouveaux Chiffres de la Radicalisation" [New Figures of Radicalisation].

[87] Farhad Khosrokhavar, interview by Anne Châteauneuf-Malclès, "La Sociologie de la Radicalisation: Entretien avec Farhad Khosrokhavar" [Sociology of Radicalisation: Interview with Farhad Khosrokhavar], ENS Lyon (10 January 2016), available at http://ses.ens-lyon.fr/articles/la-sociologie-de-la-radicalisation-entretien-avec-farhad-khosrokhavar-291659 (accessed 18 June 2016).

Methodologies that have been developed to detect radicalisation are based on the convergence of distinct early signs. Two sets of complementary indicators are supposed to reflect a graduation towards violent extremism. The CNAPR applies a six-point protocol focused on:

1. Appearance (change of clothing, beard for men, no coquetry for girls, new first name);
2. Strategy of adhesion/dissimulation (use of different aliases on social networks);
3. Profile (situation of social and affective vulnerability, psychological fragility and/or criminal record, specific skills such as computer knowledge and aircraft handling);
4. Environment (family conflicts, depressed or suicidal parents, traumas such as physical abuse or rape);
5. Behaviour (hyper-ritualised religious practices, disengagement with relatives);
6. Theories and discourse (literalist and stereotyped comments, conspiracy theories, anti-Western and anti-Jewish rhetoric).[88]

In contrast with this holistic perspective, the CPDSI favours a focus on social isolation and withdrawal among young people. Four different kinds of disruptions, either simultaneous or successive, progress into more isolation that culminates in the departure for Syria. Discontinuities include the refusal to socialise with friends, ending sports and recreational activities, dropping-out of school, and severing ties with family members.[89] While voluntary self-exclusion is not unusual among teenagers, the high frequency and the combination of these behaviours are considered alarming.

Early signs regarding religion and culture are included in the assessment system adopted by the CNAPR, but they are not considered to be decisive criteria. These indicators are put into perspective by the authorities as radicalised individuals may avoid behaviours or actions that would likely trigger suspicion from people around them. Furthermore, low levels of religious affiliation were observed among people who left for Syria.[90] According to Tareq Oubrou, rector of the Bordeaux Mosque, "[individuals radicalised online] are very far from the mosque…They don't have beards, they don't wear hijabs, they don't even do their five prayers regularly. They're just delinquents".[91] This reading grid resonates with the differentiation policy adopted by Pierre N'Gahane according to whom "the phenomenon of radicalisation…is not about converting to Islam but [converting] to radicalism, even for Muslims".[92] The French authorities deny any causal patterns between religion and violent radicalisation while attempting to closely associate Muslim religious leaders with counter-

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88 For the detailed list of these sub-indicators see Pietrasanta, "La Déradicalisation" [Deradicalisation], p. 26.

89 Christophe Cornevin, "Près de 400 Djihadistes Potentiels Signalés Depuis fin Avril" [More than 400 Potential Jihadists Reported Since End April], Le Figaro (26 September 2014), available at http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2014/09/26/01016-20140926ARTFIG00322-pres-de-400djihadistes-potentiels-signales-depuis-fin-avril.php (accessed 05 October 2015).

90 See Edith Bouvier, "Leur Arme Contre le Jihad: la Parole" [Their Weapon Against Jihad: Words], Le Parisien (10 July 2015), available at http://www.leparisien.fr/magazine/grand-angle/leur-arme-contre-le-jihad-la-parole-09-07-2015-4931445.php (accessed 10 October 2015).

91 Elizabeth Bryant, "In France, Lessons in Secularism to Confront Radical Islam", DW (14 April 2015), available at http://www.dw.com/en/in-france-lessons-in-secularism-to-confront-radical-islam/a-18380166 (accessed 28 September 2015).

92 Seelow, "Les Nouveaux Chiffres de la Radicalisation" [New Figures of Radicalisation].

radicalisation initiatives. The use of Islam against Salafi-Jihadism is not particularly controversial in French prisons where the religious demand among Muslim inmates is high. However, it remains much more contested outside the prison environment.

Deradicalisation and Religion

Several deradicalisation programmes aiming at leading individuals to relinquish militant views have gradually been developed and implemented. These procedures reflect three specific but not necessarily exclusive approaches that focus on (i) family and psychotherapeutic support; (ii) religious arguments; and (iii) civic education. Illustrative of the first perspective, the CPDSI embraced a programme of mentoring that rules out rational arguments and religious counselling with teenagers in favour of an emotion-driven approach.[93] Personal information related to young people's backgrounds are gathered from relatives to remind the individuals about happy memories of their lives such as birthdays celebrations and family holidays.[94] The interventions of parents affected by the radicalisation of their children and repentant foreign fighters are then used to favour a "cognitive dissociation",[95] i.e. raising awareness of the gap between the recruiting arguments of Salafi-Jihadist groups and their actual practices. As confrontation with reality can engender severe trauma such as anxiety attacks,[96] individuals are closely monitored and encouraged to share their own experiences during group sessions.

The CPDSI claimed that 1,046 families had contacted it between April 2014 and December 2015.[97] Two hundred and thirty-four young people were reported to experience this empirical method in 2015, as opposed to hundreds of monitored individuals who were said to request more specific procedures (preventive monitoring, psychiatric therapy, etc.).[98] The programme adopted by the CPDSI is based on the careful observation of young people to detect the reasons and the factors that may explain and favour their radicalisation. A number of potential shortcomings can nevertheless be identified. First, age groups older than teenagers and post-adolescents might be less responsive. Second, it can be

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[93] Catherine Vincent, "Comment 'Retourner' un Djihadiste" [How to 'Turn' a Jihadist], Le Monde (18 April 2015), available at http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2015/04/16/comment-retourner-un-djihadiste_4617434_3224.html (accessed 20 October 2015).

[94] Pietrasanta, "La Déradicalisation" [Deradicalisation], p. 39.

[95] Centre de Prévention Contre les Dérives Sectaires Liées à l'Islam, "Bilan Pédagogique Annuel, Association Loi 1901 'Centre de Prévention Contre les Dérives Sectaires Liées à l'Islam' dit 'C.P.D.S.I', du 16 avril au 31 décembre 2014" [Annual Educational Assessment, Association under the law of 1901, 'Center for the Prevention of Sectaria Abuses Linked to Islam' aka 'C.P.D.S.I.', 16 April-31 December 2014], CPDSI (n.d.), p. 13, available at http://www.cpdsi.fr/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/SYNTHESE-BILAN-PEDAGOGIQUE-ET-FINANCIER-2014-CPDSI-2.pdf (accessed 20 October 2015).

[96] Caroline Piquet, "Djihad: les Parents Démunis Face au Désendoctrinement de Leur Enfant" [Jihad: Parents Are Helpless with the De-indoctrination of Their Children], Le Figaro (18 November 2014), available at http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2014/11/08/01016-20141108ARTFIG00005-djihad-les-parents-demunis-face-au-desendoctrinement-de-leur-enfant.php (accessed 20 October 2015).

[97] Centre de Prévention Contre les Dérives Sectaires Liées à l'Islam, "Rapport d'Activité Annuel 2015 du CPDSI, Bilan d'Actions et Partage des Retours d'Expérience" [2015 Annual Activity Report of the Centre for the Prevention of Sectarian Abuses Linked to Islam, Assessment of Initiatives and Feedback-Sharing], CPSDI (10 February 2016), p. 13, available at http://www.cpdsi.fr/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/rapport_activite_annuel-2015_CPDSI.pdf (accessed 1 June 2016).

[98] *Ibid*., p. 12

inferred that non-physical exposure to the war is an important factor for success, leaving open the question of returning individuals to whom involvement in Syria acted as a catalyst of radicalisation.[99] Third, the cornerstone of the programme is based on the remembrance of positive events associated with the young person and his/her family's history, but this approach may be difficult to implement for individuals who have been deprived of a stable life environment.

The *Maison de la Prévention et de la Famille* or MPF [House of Prevention and Family), an association that was initially supported by the Interior Ministry and the Police Prefecture of Paris before being accused of a lack of transparency in management and the results achieved,[100] adopted an identical view. Similar to the CPDSI, the MPF worked with relatives to detect psychological traumas that could explain why the processes of radicalisation took hold among some individuals and to preserve bonds between the latter and the people around them as an antidote to violent extremism.[101] Discussion groups involving ex-foreign fighters were favoured, just as the importance of social, school or professional reinsertion and follow-up were both acknowledged by Dounia Bouzar and Sonia Imloul, heads of the CPDSI and the MPF, respectively.[102] In addition, Sonia Imloul relied on an educator close to the Quietist branch of Salafism to deal with "the most radicalized individuals".[103] Applied to cases of radicalisation involving young people at risk of delinquency, this programme was reported to be successful in seven cases out of 12 young people engaged by the MPF between October 2014 and February 2015.[104]

The debate surrounding a religious perspective of deradicalisation is twofold. First, the diversity of radicalised individuals make the latter unlikely to be influenced by theological arguments in similar ways. A primary issue is thus, to determine which individual could be receptive to religious counter-arguments and the most appropriate phase of the process of radicalisation during which religion should be involved. Managers of a deradicalisation structure called *Centre d'Action et de Prévention*

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[99] It could also be argued that witnessing the atrocities of war may act as a "salutary" wake-up call. See AFP, "Tombée Dans le Piège de Daesh en Syrie, une Jeune Française Témoigne" [In the Trap of Daesh in Syria, a Young French Woman Tells her Story], Le Point (24 June 2015), available at http://www.lepoint.fr/societe/tombee-dans-le-piege-de-daesh-en-syrie-une-jeune-francaise-temoigne-24-06-2015-1939507_23.php (accessed 24 October 2015); Arièle Bonte, ""Dans la Nuit de Daech: le Récit d'une Repentie" [In the Night of Daesh: the Story of a Repentant], Le Figaro (11 January 2016), available at http://madame.lefigaro.fr/societe/sophie-kasiki-confession-une-repentie-daech-110116-111677 (accessed 20 January 2016).

[100] Carole Sterlé with G.B., "Une Cellule de Déradicalisation Met la Clé Sous la Porte" [A Deradicalisation Cell Goes Out of Business], Le Parisien (21 November 2015), available at http://www.leparisien.fr/espace-premium/actu/une-cellule-de-deradicalisation-met-la-cle-sous-la-porte-21-11-2015-5298505.php (accessed 25 November 2015).

[101] Chine Labbé and Nicholas Vinocur, "La France Cherche son Modèle de 'Déradicalisation'" [France is Looking for its Model of 'Deradicalisation'], Reuters (26 November 2014), available at http://fr.reuters.com/article/topNews/idFRKCN0JA1NR20141126?pageNumber=2&virtualBrandChannel=0&sp=true (accessed 25 November 2015).

[102] Catherine Vincent, "Comment 'retourner' un Djihadiste" [How to 'Turn' a Jihadist].

[103] *Ibid*; Anne Vidalie, "La Religion Contre les Fous d'Allah" [Religion Against Allah Fanatics], L'Express (5 February 2015), available at http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/societe/la-religion-contre-les-fous-d-allah_1647826.html (accessed 25 November 2015).

[104] Sylvain Mouillard, "Deux Visages de la Déradicalisation" [Two Faces of Deradicalisation], Libération (20 February 2015), available at http://www.liberation.fr/societe/2015/02/20/sonia-imloul-mediatrice-des-familles-deux-visages-de-la-deradicalisation_1206834 (accessed 25 November 2015).

contre la Radicalisation des Individus or CAPRI [Centre of Action and Prevention Against the Radicalisation of Individuals] identify individuals suffering from psychological or psychiatric vulnerabilities, people "under mental manipulation" and those whose radicalisation proceeds from "a rational choice".[105] Theological arguments may be used in the latter case that includes groups of jobless individuals who feel discriminated.[106] This assessment contrasts with the approach adopted by the CPDSI, which considers dialogue on Islam to be ineffective as a deradicalisation technique, but a potentially useful method of prevention or follow-up.[107] Substantive divergence over the ways religion should be tackled remains a key factor of differentiation between associations like the CPDSI, the MPF and the CAPRI.

The second element of the controversy is related to the legitimacy, credibility and reliability of religious counsellors. The risk of doing more harm than good is at the heart of the concerns that have been raised by observers. According to Dounia Bouzar, "the radicalized individual has a binary worldview where all those who do not adhere to its ideology are part of a conspiracy".[108] Ombudsmen who would use theological arguments within the framework of a deradicalisation programme would be likely to be considered as impostors by people they would engage. This might confirm radical beliefs and convictions rather than neutralise them. A further difficulty is to single out competent and trusted religious counsellors, as illustrated by the reform introducing stricter rules in the recruitment of chaplains. Moreover, the government is confronted with a plurality of choices between the different schools of Islamic thought that could be used against the Salafi-Jihadist ideology.[109] This methodological dilemma excludes the Quietist branch of Salafism, which is considered by the authorities to be a form of non-violent radicalism and a fundamental threat to the values of the French Republic.[110]

The establishment of "prevention, insertion and citizenship centers", a third initiative made official in May 2016, was first inaugurated in July 2016. Twelve of these structures will equip the French metropolitan regions before the end of 2017. Each centre is envisioned to host around 30 people for a

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[105] Stéphanie Lacaze, "Un (Discret) Centre Anti-Radicalisation Islamiste Lancé à Bordeaux" [A (Low-Profile) Anti-Radicalisation Center Launched in Bordeaux], Libération (9 January 2016), available at http://www.liberation.fr/france/2016/01/09/un-discret-centre-anti-radicalisation-islamiste-lance-a-bordeaux_1425364 (accessed 10 June 2016); Xavier Ridon, "Le CAPRI Contre Les Caprices de la Radicalisation" [The CAPRI Against the Whims of Radicalisation], Rue89 Bordeaux (10 January 2016), available at http://rue89bordeaux.com/2016/01/capri-contre-caprices-radicalisation/ (accessed 10 June 2016).

[106] *Ibid*.

[107] Eve Taraborrelli, "Dounia Bouzar: 'Le Registre de la Raison est Inefficace Pour Parler à un Jeune Embrigadé'" [Using Reason is Not Effective to Talk to a Young Indoctrinated Person], Le Monde des Religions (22 Septembre 2015), available at http://www.lemondedesreligions.fr/actualite/dounia-bouzar-le-registre-de-la-raison-est-inefficace-pour-parler-a-un-jeune-embrigade-22-09-2015-4987_118.php (accessed 10 June 2016).

[108] Catherine Vincent, "Comment 'retourner' un Djihadiste" [How to 'Turn' a Jihadist].

[109] European Union Delegation To Singapore, Roundtable on Deradicalisation, Prefect Pierre N'Gahane, "Deradicalisation Efforts in France" (27 January 2016).

[110] AFP, "Valls Lance un Avertissemet sur l'Ascendant 'Idéologique et Culturel' des Salafistes en France" [Valls Warns Against the 'Ideological and Cultural' Ascendancy of Salafis in France], L'Express (4 April 2016), available at http://www.lexpress.fr/actualites/1/societe/valls-une-minorite-salafiste-en-train-de-gagner-la-bataille-de-l-islam-en-france_1779431.html (accessed 07 June 2016); Alfred de Montesquiou, "Déradicalisation: les Défis du Préfet Pierre N'Gahane" [Deradicalisation: Prefect Pierre N'Gahane's Challenges]

ten-month period, allow for the latter to do a two-month internship and visit their families during weekends, provided that relatives do not play a role in their radicalisation.[111] "Radicalised" and "radicalising" individuals are expected to be housed in different locations. "Radicalised" people, which include individuals who returned from Syria/Iraq, will test a programme of disengagement.[112] By contrast, preventive measures are applied to "radicalizing individuals" who are confronted with acts of discipline such as wearing military-looking uniforms and hearing the French national anthem early in the morning.[113] Religious leaders of different religions are also involved with this second category of individuals.[114] Psychiatrists, psychological counsellors, educators and social workers pursue a first objective of "de-indoctrination" through psychotherapeutic follow-up and activities such as "dialogues around citizenship and the Republican sentiment". A second goal of "reinsertion" involve tackling issues such as dropping out from school and the lack of vocational training.[115]

"Radicalised" people could be forced by a judge to join the centres as an alternative to detention, contrary to "radicalising" individuals who will not be constrained.[116] Free adherence suggests that individuals engaged in a process of radicalisation at an early stage are likely to be receptive to deradicalisation measures. The outcome is much more uncertain with coerced people, the deradicalisation of which does not seem to be considered achievable by the authorities. "Disengagement" applies to individuals whose radicalisation has been stopped and who started to "turn back",[117] as explained by Pierre N'Gahane. This expression is generally used to refer to the abandonment of physical violence, which does not involve a change of worldview. The French government thus appears to base its approach on the idea that turning "radicalised" individuals into non-violent radicals would be an acceptable result by way of default. It is questionable in two

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[111] Sylvain Mouillard, "Lutte Contre la Radicalisation: Fourre-Tout ou Consolidation Ambitieuse?" [Fight Against Radicalisation: Catch-All or Ambitious Consolidation?], Libération (9 May 2016), available at http://www.liberation.fr/france/2016/05/09/lutte-contre-la-radicalisation-fourre-tout-ou-consolidation-ambitieuse_1451453 (accessed 10 May 2016); Marc-Antoine Bindler, "Début de Polémique Après l'Annonce d'un Centre de Déradicalisation en Indre-et-Loire" [Controversy Over the Establishment of A Deradicalisation Center in Indre-et-Loire], I-Télé (10 March 2016), available at http://www.itele.fr/france/video/debut-de-polemique-apres-lannonce-dun-centre-de-deradicalisation-en-indre-et-loire-156829 (accessed 18 March 2016).

[112] Premier Ministre, "Plan d'Action contre la Radicalisation et le Terrorisme, Dossier de Presse" [Action Plan Against Radicalisation and Terrorism, Press Release] (9 May 2016), p. 46, gouvernement.fr available at http://www.gouvernement.fr/sites/default/files/liseuse/7050/master/index.htm (accessed 7 june 2016)

[113] Marc-Antoine Bindler, "Le Premier Centre National de Déradicalisation Ouvrira à Beaumont-en-Véron, Près de Chinon" [The First National Center of Deradicalisation Will Open in Beaumont-en-Véron, Near the City of Chinon], I-Télé (10 March 2016), available at http://www.itele.fr/france/video/info-itele-le-premier-centre-national-de-deradicalisation-ouvrira-a-beaumont-en-veron-pres-de-chinon-156748 (accessed 18 March 2016); Interview with Olivier Chasson, Director of France's First Center of Prevention, Insertion and Citizenship(24 November 2016).

[114] Ibid.

[115] Marc-Antoine Bindler, "Le Premier Centre National de Déradicalisation Ouvrira à Beaumont-en-Véron, Près de Chinon" [The First National Center of Deradicalisation Will Open in Beaumont-en-Véron, Near the City of Chinon]; "Les Centres de Déradicalisation Français, une Première Mondiale" [The French Deradicalisation Centers, A World First], Europe 1 (8 January 2016), available at http://www.europe1.fr/societe/les-centres-de-deradicalisation-francais-une-premiere-mondiale-2647375 (accessed 25 January 2016).

[116] Premier Ministre, "Plan d'Action contre la Radicalisation et le Terrorisme, Dossier de Presse" [Action Plan Against Radicalisation and Terrorism, Press Release], p. 46

[117] Alfred de Montesquiou, "Déradicalisation: les Défis du Préfet Pierre N'Gahane" [Deradicalisation: Prefect Pierre N'Gahane's Challenges].

respects. "Radicalised" people could pretend to reject the use of force or give the impression that they renounce physical violence, which does not preclude a deliberate change in their behaviours at the earliest opportunity. Furthermore, radicals and extremists who would not engage in violent activities or endorse the latter might encourage other individuals to do so by fostering a climate of sectarianism and intolerance within society.

While France's recent interest in deradicalisation initiatives makes it premature to identify good practices and lessons learned, a number of contextual observations can be made. Arguments in favour of and against the religious aspect of deradicalisation take a particular dimension in France where the successes and the failures of minority integration are the subject of fierce debates. *Laïcité* further adds to the complexity of the French case. This policy of secularism is open to different and conflicting reading grids. Issues surrounding the interpretations and the application of *laïcité* are primarily related to the place of religion in the public space. The potential radicalising influence of a strict model of *laïcité* has nonetheless been pointed out by Farhad Khosrokhavar who warned that "a 'fundamentalist' version of *laïcité* could lead to radicalisation, those who otherwise would stick to [Islamic] sectarian fundamentalism".[118] Countering violent radicalisation by improving feelings of national belonging is a potentially fruitful option, as illustrated by the importance granted to the notion of Republic in the recruitment of chaplains and the process of de-indoctrination adopted in prevention, insertion and citizenship centres. However, such efforts could be clearly jeopardised by the distorted use of *laïcité* as an instrument of religious and cultural intolerance rather than the tool of societal harmony it was originally purposed to be.

Conclusion

The French counter-radicalisation strategy is a work-in-progress with mixed results. Authorities initially focused on upstream rather than downstream solutions. Standard procedures of detection were successfully established, but organisational and capacity challenges persist. The discrepancy between the determination displayed by the government and the difficulties faced by frontline actors of counter-radicalisation, such as the transfer of information that mayors have described as having room for improvement, reveals significant limits of the French model. The latter is nonetheless based on an effective combination of top-down and bottom-up processes. The Interior Ministry issues instructions and recommendations to departmental prefects who act as major providers of guidelines and initiatives. However, the identification of individuals suspected to be radicals relies primarily on family reports, which makes the success of this approach heavily dependent on the authorities' ability to create relationships of trust and cooperation with the public. Requirements are different in prison where the authorities are still working to refine the methods of detection and management of radicalisation. The increasing use of Muslim chaplains, who are considered to be the silver bullet for prevention and de-radicalisation, adds to the uniqueness of the prison environment.

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[118] Farhad Khosrokhavar, Radicalisation, p. 152.

Profile characteristics reveal that overlapping categories of populations have become key targets of Salafi-Jihadist radicalisation in France. These groups include young women, minors and converts, with an important proportion of middle class individuals. By contrast, the high representation of people from disadvantaged backgrounds is far from being an unusual feature. Nevertheless, the great deal of appeal exerted by IS on people who feel excluded and discriminated because of their low social and economic status, ethnicity and religion, bears no comparison with the recruitment success of al-Qaeda among that population in the past. As in other Western countries, this has intensified the discussion over the integration of the Muslim "community" and the place of Islam in French society. A major consequence is the tendency to conflate three distinct but not necessarily exclusive topics: (i) Salafi-Jihadist radicalisation; (ii) Islamic fundamentalism; and (iii) the organisation of Islam in France. The departure of hundreds of individuals for Syria thus led the authorities to redouble efforts toward a clearer structuring of the French Muslim landscape. This appears to be a positive move, even if the benefit of this approach has more to do with transparency than counter-radicalisation *per se*.

While country specificities make it hazardous to transpose counter-radicalisation strategies, some components of the French blueprint could be transposed to other national contexts. Prevention, insertion and citizenship centres are a noteworthy innovation that might be emulated, provided that these structures of disengagement and deradicalisation turn out to be a successful initiative and not the "Jihadist academies" that some fear it will become.[119] Conversely, the debate surrounding the use of Islam against Salafi-Jihadism seems to be as related to efficiency issues as much as it is to France's rules of secularism and the implicit decision to avoid reducing violent radicalisation to a single ethnic group (French people of Arab descent and Muslim religion or culture) and urban area (the poor suburbs of French towns). These legitimate concerns appear to be less sensitive in neighbouring states such as the U.K., where some critics have identified the clear focus of British authorities on Muslim communities to be counter-productive.[120] Mechanisms of detection, identification and deradicalisation are crucial weapons in the fight against violent radicalisation, but the ability to adapt to specific cases will be a major condition for progress. Flexibility in addressing the wide range of factors that play a role in the processes of radicalisation will be a litmus test for counter-radicalisation strategies to be successful over the short and long term, both in France and other countries affected by the dramatic rise of violent extremism and terrorism.

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[119] Timothée Boutry, "Le Plan Antidjihad de Manuel Valls" [Manuel Valls' Plan Against Jihad], Le Parisien (9 May 2016), available at http://www.leparisien.fr/politique/le-plan-antidjihad-de-manuel-valls-09-05-2016-5779249.php (accessed 13 July 2016); Jérôme Collin, "Près de 150 Personnes Manifestent à Chinon Contre le Centre de Déradicalisation" [Around 150 People Demonstrate in Chinon Against the Deradicalisation Center], France Bleu (28 May 2016), available at https://www.francebleu.fr/infos/faits-divers-justice/pres-de-150-personnes-manifestent-chinon-contre-le-centre-de-deradicalisation-1464432532 (accessed 13 July 2016).

[120] For example, Maina Kiai, the UN's Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, declared in April 2016 that the strategy of counter-radicalisation implemented in the UK known as the Prevent programme was "dividing, stigmatising and alienating segments of the population". See Damien Gayle, "Prevent Strategy 'Could End up Promoting Extremism'", The Guardian (21 April 2016), available at http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/apr/21/government-prevent-strategy-promoting-extremism-maina-kiai (accessed 13 July 2016).

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