

ISLAMIC RADICALIZATION IN NORWAY: *PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS*

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the process of radicalization of Muslims in Norway. The paper begins by outlining the Muslim population, demographics, mosques, organizations, as well as political participation. The paper further presents a theoretical approach to radicalization while looking at the issue of radicalization in Norway. After this section, follows some case studies of Norwegian foreign fighters in Syria and supporters of terrorist attacks in Africa. At last, the government's response to radicalization in Norway is outlined, with a following conclusion that explains the increase of among Norway's population.

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INTRODUCTION

Within Norway, the prevention of radicalization and violent extremism is considered a shared responsibility, rather than an issue the police should tackle on their own. The Norwegian Action Plan provides specific measures in several ministries and is used as a tool for individuals working directly with children and youth. Radicalization is commonly seen as a process in which people increasingly accept the use of violence to achieve certain political goals.¹

Radical communities are emerging in Norway, and an increasing number of Islamic radicals have left Norway to travel to regions of jihad in support of the Holy War (“a war declared in support of a religious cause”).² While the influx of Islamic radicals is a relatively new trend in Norway, radicals have become a significant threat to the country, according to the Norwegian Police Security Servicesⁱ (PST).³ In order to establish effective policies on counter-radicalization, the Norwegian government has drawn on experiences from other, more affected, countries. With that said, the Norwegian government focuses on *preventative actions*.

The following paper aims to analyze the severity of Islamic radicalization as a threat in Norway. Taking the alarming number of Norwegian Islamic radicals in conflict-ridden countries into consideration, the purpose of this paper is to examine the rise of Islamic radicalization amongst Norway’s Muslim. The first section of this paper introduces a demographic overview of the Muslim community in Norway by explaining the structure, socio-economic disadvantages, and political participation amongst Muslims in Norway. The second section details the theoretical approach to radicalization, common trends in the process, and internal or external indicators. The third aspect of the paper will explore case studies of Islamic radicalization and the activities of foreign fighters. The point of convergence of the forth section looks at government responses to Islamic radicalization by considering the Norwegian Exit Project and the Action Plan of 2010 & 2014. The paper will

¹ Meld. St. 21 (2012-2013), ”Terrorberedskapen”, [Terror Preparedness], *Ministry of Justice and Public Security*, March 20, 2013, <http://www.regjeringen.no/pages/38268937/PDFS/STM201220130021000DDDPDFS.pdf> (accessed March 30, 2014): 23.

² Oxford Dictionary, ”Holy War”, *Oxford University Press*, 2014, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/holy-war> (accessed April 10, 2014).

³ PST, *Åpen Trusselvurdering 2013*, [Open Threat Assessment 2913], http://www.pst.no/media/58980/PSTs_tv2013_web.pdf, (accessed February 17, 2014)

conclude by evaluating key findings, and a final assessment on the threat of Islamic radicals in Norway.

PART 1: DEMOGRAPHY

Religion and Norway

Norway, one of the least populated countries in Europe, has a modest population of around 5 million people. Traditionally, Norway is associated with a strong Evangelical Lutheran State Church system with the presence of relatively few religious minorities. However, owing the process of globalization, which ultimately has led to an increase in migration and worldwide mobility, the religious landscape in Norway has changed, and transformed the country into a more multi-faith society with a diversity of religious practices.

Norway has a constitutional freedom of religion; it is illegal to discriminate against people based of their race or religion. After Christianity, Islam ranks as the second largest religion in Norway. Because there is no record of each person's religious faith in Norway; the exact number of the Muslim population is unknown and may vary due to a number of reasons. First of all, individuals may have been registered by their family as a child, and find it easier to continue their membership as a passive representative instead of having to confront their family with a possible withdrawal. Secondly, people associate religion with tradition, and may find it pleasant to be part of a community without necessarily being extremely religious. Thirdly, religious communities receive government support based on the number of members, and thus, do not see the point of removing members from their list. Fourthly, the number of members may be lower than the actual number owing skepticism of registration. This may be because they come from countries where their experiences of being listed in official records of religious affiliations have a negative connotation.⁴

However, there is some knowledge about the population's affiliation. For example, all Religious and Life Stance Communities (the first established in 1996) are entitled to subsidies from the state based on the number of members. The lists with members' identification number are sent to the *Brønnøysund Register Center*ⁱⁱ for regulation purposes. According to law, the lists are to be deleted after being crosschecked.⁵

⁴ Kristiansen, Nina, "Hvor mange muslimer er det i Norge?", [How Many Muslims Live in Norway?], *Forskning.no*, February 4, 2013, <http://www.forskning.no/artikler/2013/februar/347502> (Accessed March 3, 2014).

⁵ Østby, Lars, "Muslimer flertall i Norge", [Muslim Majority in Norway], *Morgenbladet*, August 26, 2011, http://morgenbladet.no/ideer/2011/muslimsk_flertall_i_norge#.Uw77014Te6Z, (accessed February 27, 2014).

Education

In terms of education, the number of Norwegian-born Muslims with immigrant parents has increased over the last seven years. Statistics from 2006 show that educational experience was not widespread. As seen in Table 1 below, in 2006, a little more than 8,500 attended primary education, 4,790 attended high school, and around 4,000 attended higher education/university. Seven years later, these numbers had increased up to 14,765, 9,199, and 8,986 respectively. The two countries with the highest increase in active students are from Pakistan and Somalia respectively. The statistics from Table 1 demonstrates how Norwegian-born with immigrant parents has developed a so-called “educational drive” over the years. Despite graduating with lower marks and weaker results on national tests,⁶ it is far more common among this group to pursue higher education right after high school in comparison with the general population.⁷

Table 1: Number of Norwegian-born with Two Immigrant Parents.⁸

	Total 2006	6-12 yrs.	13-19 yrs.	20 yrs. and over	Total 2013	6-12 yrs.	13-19 yrs.	20 yrs. and over
Pakistan	9402	3228	3047	3127	12705	3133	3293	6281
Somalia	1494	1274	210	10	4226	2912	1094	220
Iraq	795	720	68	7	3909	3143	690	76
Turkey	3227	1561	1025	641	4769	1581	1532	1656
Kosovo	-	-	-	-	2759	1675	831	253
Bosnia- Herzegovina	1149	1051	38	60	2263	1151	1023	89
Iran	1167	748	402	17	2317	1170	736	411

⁶ SSB, Karakterer ved avsluttet grunnskole, 2013”, [Grades after Completion of Primary School], SSB, November 6, 2013, <http://www.ssb.no/utdanning/statistikker/kargrs> (accessed March 9, 2014).

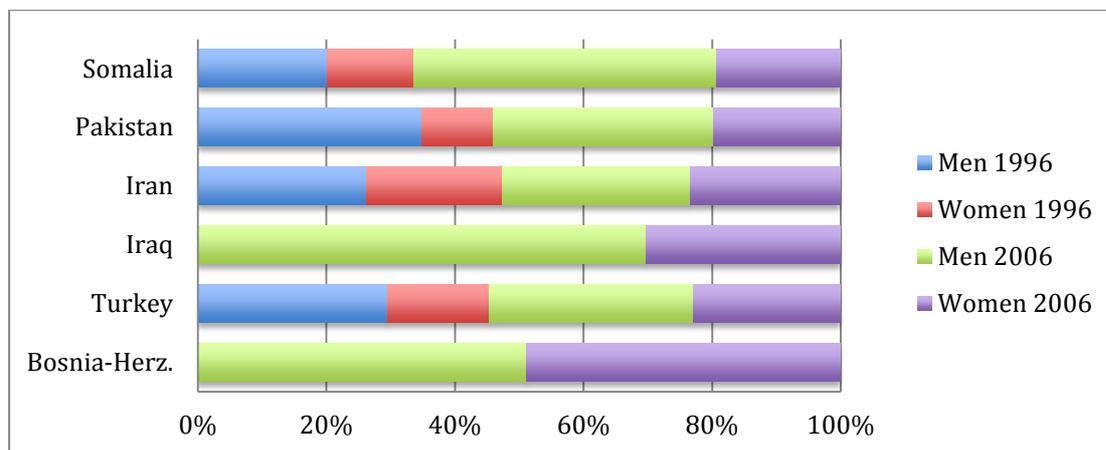
⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Østby, Lars and Henriksen, Kristin, ”Innvandrere og deres barn- og vår kunnskap om dem”, [Immigrants and Their Children- Our knowledge About Them], *Samfunnsspeilet*, May, 2013, http://www.ssb.no/sosiale-forhold-og-kriminalitet/ssp/_attachment/157015?ts=143715dfa88 (accessed March 9, 2014): 5.

Socio-economic Conditions

Despite Norwegian-born Muslims' level of education, the Muslim community is more likely to experience unemployment after completing their degree. 2008 was the first year where statistics on employment had been published. In 2008, approximately 14,000 Norwegian-born people with immigrant parents were employed, versus 18,000 in 2012.⁹ According to Østby and Henriksen, this does not represent even 1 percent of the 2,500,000 people employed in Norway.¹⁰ In regards to paid employment, there are some differences according to country of origin. For instance, people from Bosnia-Herzegovina are among the group with the highest level of paid employment; nearly 67 percent. Somalia and Iraq rank with 36 and 43 percent respectively, and are listed at the bottom.¹¹

Graph 1: Employment Ratio Based on Sex and Country.¹²



By comparing numbers from 1996 and 2006, there has evidently been an increase in paid employment among immigrants. The increase is relatively greater among women. However, divided by sex and country, men from Somalia have the highest increase with 28 percent as shown in Graph 1 above. The degree of employment can be further elaborated in terms of asking whether they are temporarily or full-time employed. Among the percentage being temporarily employed, Somalians had the highest percentage (38%) compared to people

⁹ Henriksen, Kristin, "Levekår og kjønnsforskjeller blant innvandrere fra ti land", [Livelihood and Gender Differences Among Immigrants From Ten Countries], : 6.

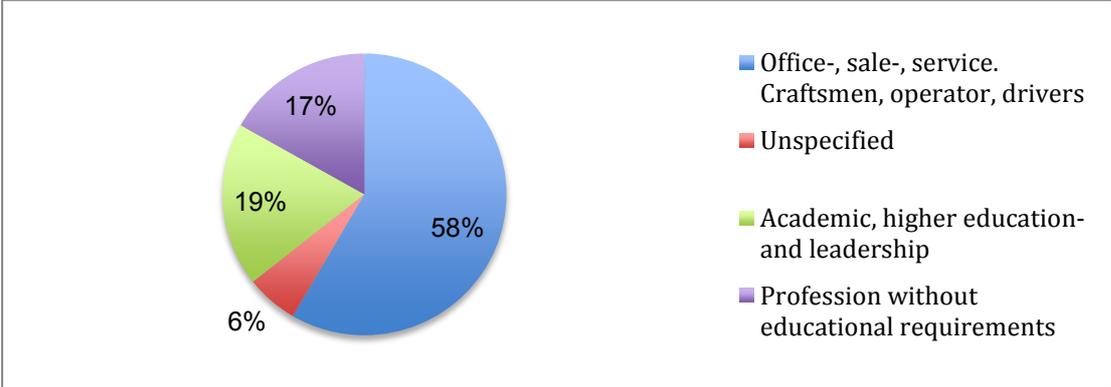
¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Mathisen, Bjørn, "Arbeid", [Employment], in *Levekår blant innvanderere i Norge 2005/2006*, [Living Conditions Among Immigrants in Norway], edited by Blom, Svein and Henriksen, Kristin, SSB, February, 2008, http://www.ssb.no/a/publikasjoner/pdf/rapp_200805/rapp_200805.pdf (accessed March 10, 2013): 76.

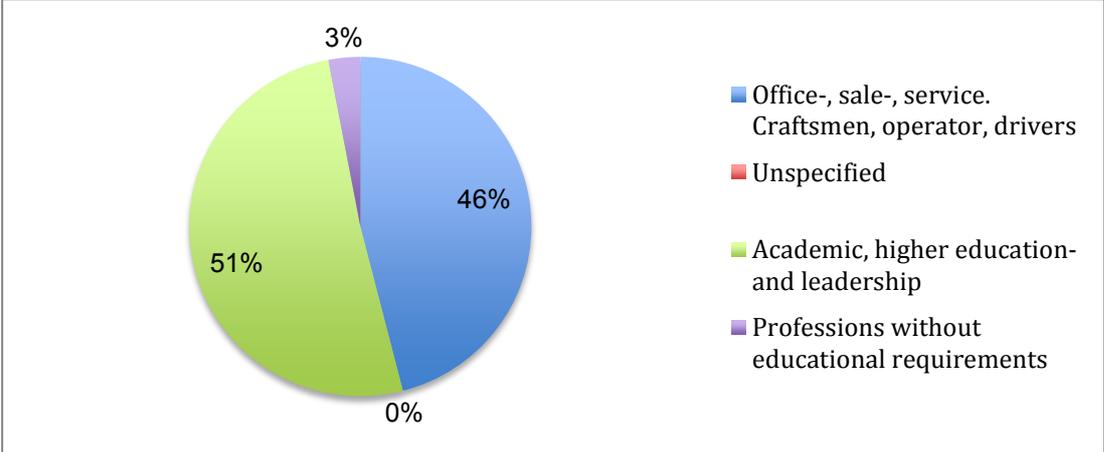
¹² Ibid., 77.

from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Turkey with less than 20%.¹³ However, regardless of Somalians' relatively higher increase in employment, they are still ranked at the bottom of the employment ladder compared to other countries. Less than 50 percent of men and 20 percent of women are employed compared to men and women from Bosnia-Herzegovina (69 and 64 percent respectively). Additionally, double the amount of Pakistani women are employed.¹⁴

Graph 2: Employment Ratio and Profession: Immigrants.¹⁵



Graph 3: Employment Ratio and Profession: Total Population.¹⁶



Looking at the occupational division, there is a clear line between immigrants and the total population. Among the total population, more than half are actively employed within

¹³ Ibid., 77.
¹⁴ Ibid.
¹⁵ Ibid., 78.
¹⁶ Ibid.

academia, higher education and leadership positions. The representation of immigrants in this category is less than every fourth person, as Graphs 2 and 3 demonstrate. The immigrants are, however, overrepresented within occupations without educational requirements and sales-, and service professions. Immigrants seem overrepresented in professions without educational experience (17 against 3 percent). Examples of occupations within this category are cleaners, renovation, and canteen-, and catering assistants.

Statistics Muslim Presence Norway

Muslim presence in Norway dates back to the mid-1960s, although, it was not until the 1980s that Muslim presence was first officially registered as the number exceeded 1,000 people.¹⁷ Muslim immigrants have since continued their arrival in the search for family reunion or political asylum from oppressive countries, among others. For instance, the 1990s welcomed a large number of Muslim refugees to the country due to international conflicts, such as the Gulf War and the Balkan struggles.¹⁸

Table 2: Third-Generation Immigrants from Muslim Countries (2008).¹⁹

Country	Pakistan	Iraq	Somalia	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Iran	Turkey	Kosovo
Number	29 134	22 881	21 795	15 649	15 134	15 003	11 052

The first Muslim immigrants came to Norway from was Pakistan, and arrived at the end of the 1960s. But it was not until 1971, after Denmark’s immigration law on the cessation on foreign labor that Pakistani immigrants increased in Norway.²⁰ According to Mahmona Khan, author of the book *Tilbakeblikk – Da pakistanerne kom til Norge* (translated: “Retrospective-

¹⁷ Daugstad, Gunnlaug and Østby, Lars, “Det flerkulturelle Norge: Et mangfold av tro og livssyn”, [The Multi-cultural Norway: A diversity of Belief and Faith], *SSB*, 15 June, 2009, <http://www.ssb.no/kultur-og-fritid/artikler-og-publikasjoner/et-mangfold-av-tro-og-livssyn> (accessed February, 2014).

¹⁸ Sultan, Shoaib, ”The Muslims of Norway: Islam and Multiculturalism Under Attack”, *Foreign Affairs*, July 26, 2011, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67995/shoaib-sultan/the-muslims-of-norway> (accessed March 3, 2014).

¹⁹ SSB, ”Innvandrere og norskfødte med innvandrerforeldre fra land der islam er hovedreligion”, [Immigrants and Norwegian-born with Immigrant Parents from Countries With Islam as Main Religion], *SSB*, <http://www.ssb.no/a/samfunnsspeilet/utg/200903/03/tab-2009-06-15-02.html> (accessed March 3, 2014).

²⁰ Khan, Mahmona, *Tilbakeblikk – Da pakistanerne kom til Norge*, [Looking Back- When Pakistanis came to Norway], (Pax Forlag AS, 2009): 25 & 29.

When the Pakistani arrived in Norway”), there were different complex reasons for why they immigrated. Some of them are listed below:

- Norway’s membership in the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1960, and an increase in productivity that led to an expansion of the service sector;
- The golden year of Norwegian oil; hence, increase in economic activity and higher demand for labor;
- Immigration stop in West-European countries;
- Pakistan’s rivalry and arms race with India that affected Pakistani development;
- And the threat of war between Pakistan and India in 1971.²¹

Many of the first Pakistani to immigrate to Norway did so based on the desire to improve living conditions, earn money that could be sent back to their family left behind, and encourage other family members to immigrate as well. Community wise, most Muslims live in the populated urban areas of Oslo and Drammen. In Oslo specifically, a relatively high percentage of the total population are Muslims; estimated to around 8 percent.²² The estimated Muslim population in Norway was 144,000 in the year of 2010, which represented approximately 3.0 percent share of the total population. In the 1990s, approximately 54,000 Muslims lived in Norway. The number has continued to grow and was estimated at 93,000 in 2000.²³ Additionally, the Pew Research Center presupposes that the Muslim population is expected to grow and reach 249,000 in the year of 2020 (4.8% of the total population).²⁴

According to the Statistics Norway (SSBⁱⁱⁱ), there was an increase of 8,700 people between 2012 and 2013. In addition, 120,900, or 22 percent, of members in a Religious- and Life Stance community are members of Islamic Life Stance communities. Registered Muslims have increased by 45%, or 37,000 members since 2008.²⁵

²¹ Ibid.,31-41.

²² Vidino, Lorenzo and Brandon, James, ”Countering Radicalization in Europe”, *ICSR*, 2012, <http://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/ICSR-Report-Countering-Radicalization-in-Europe.pdf> (accessed February 23, 2014).

²³ Pew Forum, ”The Future of the Global Muslim Population: An Interactive Feature: Norway, The Pew Research Center, 2011, <http://features.pewforum.org/muslim-population-graphic/#/Norway> (accessed February 27, 2014).

²⁴ Ibid.

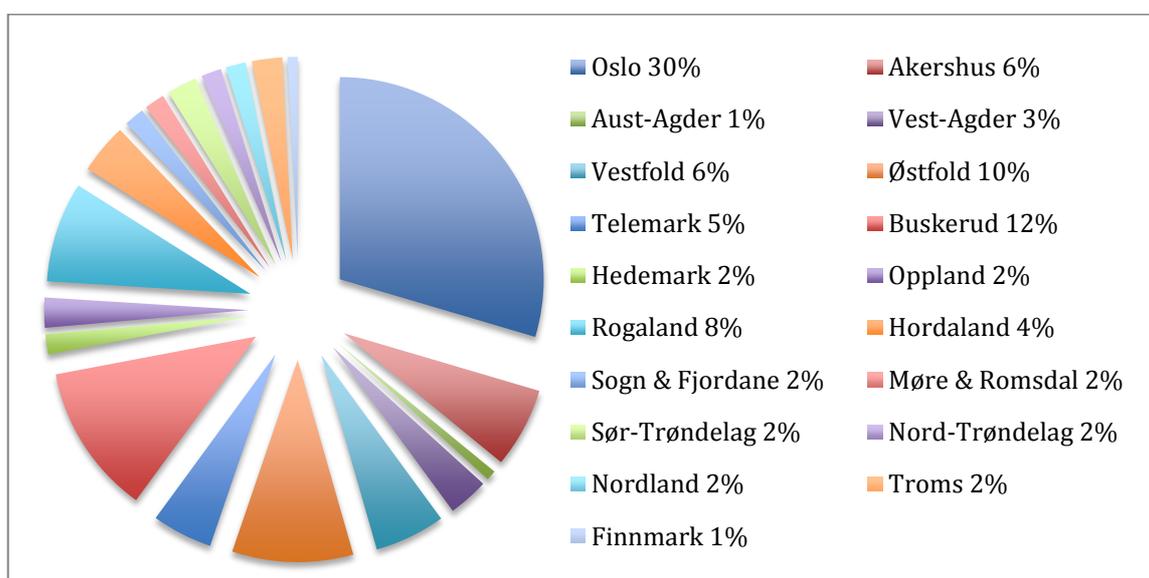
²⁵ SSB, ”Trus- og livssynssamfunn utanfor Den norske kyrkja, 1. Januar 2013”, [Religious and Life-Stance Communities Outside the Norwegian Church, 1st January 2013], *SSB*, December 4, 2013, <http://www.ssb.no/kultur-og-fritid/statistikker/trosamf/aar> (accessed February 27, 2014).

Muslim Community in Norway

Although the exact number of Muslims varies, there are statistics on the number of members of the Religious and Life Stance communities. This statistic shows that the number of members in Muslim communities have increased from 1,000 registered members in 1980 to 84,000 members in the early 2008.²⁶ The Islamic Council Norway (IRN) states that there are approximately 108,000 registered Muslims in Norway as of 2013.²⁷

Some of the largest religious and political-religious groups in the Muslim world are represented in Norway. On their website, the IRN has published a map with an overview over the location of mosques in Norway. As shown in Graph 4 below, a greater share of mosques are located in Oslo (30 %), hence, the inner east (Grønland and Tøyen).

Graph 4: Overview Mosques in Norway by County (2009).²⁸



Native Norwegians, Media, and Opposition to Muslims

The development of Norway as a multicultural society has not gone unnoticed, and this psychological fear has raised some concern among the public. The presence and growth of a

²⁶ Henriksen, Kristin, "Levekår og kjønnsforskjeller blant innvandrere fra ti land", [Livelihood and Gender Differences Among Immigrants From Ten Countries], SSB, February, 2010, http://www.ssb.no/a/publikasjoner/pdf/rapp_201006/rapp_201006.pdf (accessed March 4, 2014): 37.

²⁷ LandInfo, "Pakistan: Muslimske menigheter i Norge- hva kreves for å bli imam?", [Pakistan: Muslim Congregations in Norway- What is Required to Become an Imam?], *LandInfo*, July 17, 2013, http://www.landinfo.no/asset/2457/1/2457_1.pdf (accessed March 6, 2014): 2.

²⁸ Sanden, Jarle, "Norges moskeer", [Norwegian Mosques], *Vårt Land*, 2010, <http://www.vl.no/samfunn/norges-moskeer-1.80227> (accessed March 6, 2014).

Muslim community has led to some friction where non-Muslim Norwegians, for example, question the tradition of circumcision, the appropriate way of slaughtering animals according to Islam, and the issue of hijab for women.²⁹ Furthermore, one is to acknowledge the growth of Muslim suspicion after the 9/11 terror attack. These feelings led to the proposing of banning the broadcast of Islamic call to prayer by a politician from the Christian Democratic Party. Another example is a book released by a former parliamentarian from the Conservative Party in which the birthrate among Muslims was seen as a deliberate increase from the Muslims' side in order to take over the country.³⁰ Above and beyond, politicians from the radical right-wing Fremskrittspartiet (the Progress Party, PP) have vocalized criticism of Islam. Hence, this is not the whole country but a small part that is reacting in fear, and leading to xenophobia. For instance, Kent Andersen, a member of the PP's Oslo board spoke of how he characterizes Islam with Nazism, stating on his blog how he considers Islam as the "*abuse of power, totalitarian thinking, persecution of opposition, legitimizing violence against dissidents, control of society, devaluation of the individual, secret police and executions*".³¹

However, it was the late 1980s that really exposed Norwegians to Islamic values and when the growth of less favorable views of Muslims arose. The reason; the translation of The Satanic Verses into Norwegian and the later publishing of the book by Aschehoug, which led to huge demonstrations of approximately 3,000 people in the streets of Oslo. The demonstrators were saying that "anyone involved with the distribution of the book should be punished", and calling for the withdrawal of the book as well as the killing of the author. Thus, the Norwegian government took the threats so serious and demanded a withdrawal of the book from bookshelves around the country.³² These warnings from the Muslim community became a reality in 1993, when the publisher of the book, William Nygaard, was shot three times and seriously wounded outside his house in Oslo.³³

Between the periods of April 21-27, 2009, Sentio Research Norway AS conducted a survey^{iv} for the HRS. It looked into hostility among Norwegians towards Muslims. It revealed that the majority of the Norwegian population believes in the limitation of both immigration

²⁹ Sultan, Shoaib, "The Muslims of Norway: Islam and Multiculturalism Under Attack".

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Therkelsen, Håvard, "Likestillert islam og nazisme", [Equate Islam and Nazism], *Dagbladet*, February 2011, <http://www.dagsavisen.no/samfunn/likestillert-islamog-nazisme/> (accessed March 4, 2014).

³² The Observer, "Islam i Norge", [Islam in Norway], *Gates of Vienna*, January 08, 2012, <http://gatesofvienna.blogspot.co.il/2012/01/islam-in-norway.html> (accessed April 18, 2014).

³³ AP, "Norwegian Publisher of Salman Rushdie's Satanic Verses' Shot", *Associated Press*, October 11, 1993, <http://www.apnewsarchive.com/1993/Norwegian-Publisher-Of-Salman-Rushdie-s-Satanic-Verses-Shot/id-d1ded62e55c25355c0d15b6a70a0218b> (accessed April 18, 2014).

from non-Western and Muslim countries. Additionally, the survey revealed that a majority of the people interviewed believed that Islam threatens core values such as equality and freedom of speech in Norway. Regarding immigration from Muslim countries, the total of 51 percent believed in a reduction of the immigration process compared to 6 percent who wants an increase in Muslim immigration. Whether Islam threatens core values like freedom of speech or equality, a total number of 47 percent considers Islam a threat, whereas 23 percent disagree.³⁴

The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi)-report 7- 2007 that identifies people's attitude towards the question of integration, discusses issues of immigration, integration, racism, Islam and Muslims, and expectations towards government policies. Several findings in the Integration Barometer indicate that opposition and skepticism towards Muslims among non-Muslims is growing: Regarding the question "one should restrict Muslim immigration to Norway" has increased from 24 percent to 31 percent between 2005 and 2006 respectively.³⁵ Moreover, the percentage reporting "I am more suspicious of people with Muslim background" increased from 16 percent to 22 percent.³⁶ Additionally, the IMDi-report suggests that the youngest age group, i.e. people between 15 and 24 years, show a higher level of skepticism and greater level of negative attitudes towards immigration and integration as compared to the older population group. It is also relevant to mention that people living in the eastern suburban areas of Oslo are more skeptical about immigration and integration compared to the average population.³⁷ On the subject of religious organizations in Norway, 7 out of 10 are skeptical. Likewise, almost half the population is against the building of mosques in Norway. The resistance increases from 51 percent to 57 percent when the questions appertain to the building of mosques in the area where the respondents are living themselves.³⁸ On the other hand, people living in the capital area of Oslo have a more positive attitude towards the construction of mosques, even if it is in their residential area. This may be explained by how people living in Oslo are more exposed to mosques compared to people in the suburban areas.

³⁴ Sentio, "Flertallet er skeptisk til innvandring og islam", [The Majority are Skeptical About Immigration and Islam], *Human Rights Service*, 2009, <http://www.rights.no/2009/05/flertallet-er-skeptisk-til-innvandringen-og-islam/> (accessed March 3, 2014).

³⁵ IMDi, "Integreringsbarometeret 2006", [The Integration Barometer 2006], *IMDi*, March 30, 2007, http://www.imdi.no/Documents/Rapporter/IMDI_Integreringsbarometer_internett.pdf (accessed March 4, 2014).

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

Regarding media and opposition to Muslims, the last couple of years have been characterized by an increase of Muslim proportionality and negative attention towards Islam. A report by the Council of Europe's Commission on racism and intolerance from 2009, reveals a rather growing tendency of associating Muslims with terrorism and violence in the public debate in Norway.³⁹ Accordingly, the IMDi-report 2009 highlights the presence of Islam and Muslims in Norwegian media as an often negative connotation. According to their study, Islam and Muslims have 77,670 hits in the media, which is nearly as much as the former Prime Minister, Jens Stoltenberg (80,000 hits), and more than double the coverage of the Copenhagen Climate Conference (32,574 hits).⁴⁰

The development of negative attitudes towards Norwegian Muslims, and the implication of the situation has led to a number of interfaith dialogue forums. The first was established in 1993 between the Contact Group for dialogue between Christianity and Islam. IRN is part of the Contact Group, and one of its member organizations, al-Rabita mosque in Oslo, represents one of the most active organizations in terms of interfaith dialogues.⁴¹ These interfaith dialogues consist of six stages, namely; listen, take notes, check with the others, give and receive response, document, and conclude.⁴² Hence, it is through these dialogues that Muslims in Norway have been given the right and capability to speak out in public. At present, the IRN represents 43 member organizations across Norway, and these again have more than 60,000 Muslim members. According to the IRN themselves, the purpose of their existence is to: (1) encourage Muslims to live in accordance to the Islamic religion within the Norwegian society, and the build-up of a Norwegian-Muslim society; (2) promote cohesion among Muslims in Norway, and safeguard the rights and interests of member organizations; and (3) perform as a mediator and dialogue partner who aims at creating a mutual understanding and respect between Muslims and non-Muslims in Norway.⁴³ Accordingly, some of the IRN's objectives are the spread of knowledge and understanding of Islam as a religion; the integration and

³⁹ ECRI, "ECRI's rapport om Norge", [ECRI's Report on Norway], *European Commission against Racism and Intolerance*, February 24, 2009, <http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/Norway/NOR-CbC-IV-2009-004-NOR.pdf> (accessed March 5, 2014).

⁴⁰ IMDi, "Innvandrere i norske medier: medieskapt islamfrykt og usynlig hverdagsliv", [Immigrants in the Norwegian Media: Media-created Islamist fear and Invisible Everyday life], *IMDi*, Winter, 2009, http://www.imdi.no/Documents/Rapporter/IMDi_Aarsrapport_2009.pdf (accessed March 5, 2014): 36.

⁴¹ Mårtensson, Ulrika, "Hate Speech and Dialogue in Norway: Muslims 'Speak Back'", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (2013): 236.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 236.

⁴³ IRN, "Om IRN", [About IRN], *Islamsk Råd Norge*, 2012, <http://www.irn.no/om-irn> (accessed March 10, 2014).

valuation of Muslims; keep abreast on societal developments; and present Muslim perception of and suggestions to the government.⁴⁴

Henceforth, it is equally important to mention the media when discussing oppositions to Muslims. According to Hossam Belkilani, leader of Rabitas Youth Norway, media's representation of Islam and Muslims is relatively negative in character; approximately 95 percent of media coverage on Muslims is negative.⁴⁵ This creates hatred and prejudice against Muslim minorities, which in turn partakes in generating an increased frustration among youth. Belkilani refers to the newly released book by Lars Akerhaug called *Norsk Jihad* (equates as Norwegian Jihad) as a contributor to frustration and the start of a radicalization process among youths.⁴⁶

Political Participation

Despite the development of an anti-Muslim stance in Norway, the Government is constantly working on integrating immigrants. It is in favor of promoting dialogue with the Muslim community underlying the inclusion of Muslim presence during policymaking process.⁴⁷ Looking at the level of integration of Muslims, they seem to enjoy their presence and close engagement with other Norwegians and the society as a whole. Additionally, Muslim political participation is increasing. Muslims show engagement in political parties; in fact, a high percentage has closer relations with the Labour Party (AP); owing how AP's policies of socio-economic positions are more beneficial for them compared to other parties' policies.⁴⁸

The representation of immigrants in elected organs show a divergent pattern, as it is more successful locally compared to nationally. People with immigrant backgrounds are rarely elected to Parliament. The first non-native representative in the Parliament appeared in 2001, the second in 2005, and the third in 2009. Locally, the change has been rather positive, and people with immigrant backgrounds are less underrepresented among those elected. Their

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Belkilani, Hossam, "Radikalisering av muslimsk ungdom", [Radicalization of Muslim Youth], *Muslimerinorge.wordpress.com*, October 2013, <http://muslimerinorge.wordpress.com/2013/10/30/radikalisering-av-muslimsk-ungdom/> (Accessed march 4, 2014).

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Sultan, "The Muslims of Norway: Islam and Multiculturalism Under Attack".

representation was actually overrepresented after the 2007 election in some local elections.⁴⁹ After the local elections in 2007, the number of municipal representatives with backgrounds from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Easter Europe increased from 92 up to 140.⁵⁰ However, they are unequally distributed politically. For instance, at the 2007 election, nearly six out of ten candidates with immigrant backgrounds appeared on the lists on the left side. A vast majority of these representatives were also elected for the parties on the left: of those elected, 77 percent appeared on the list for the Labour Party (AP), Socialist Left Party (SV), or Red Party (RV).⁵¹ Furthermore, one problem worth pointing is that immigrants are not particularly represented in the “inner circle” where the real power appears, and are thus not capable of entering the main office or related positions. No immigrants are/have been mayors, and very few are members of the board. As a result, non-Westerns may be well represented in local councils, but less influential regarding political practice.⁵²

Pertaining to Muslim political representation, it was not until the beginning of the 21st century that Norwegian-Muslims became more included and politically involved. In 2009, Hadia Tajik, a Pakistani-Norwegian journalist, lawyer and politician, was elected to Parliament from Oslo as the Minister of Culture in Jens Stoltenberg’s second governmental period. She started her political career as a political advisor in the Ministry of Labor and Social Inclusion (2006), the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, as well as for the Prime Minister (2008). Thus, when Tajik entered the Parliament in 2009, she became the youngest minister in Norway and the first Member of Parliament to be openly Muslim.⁵³ Furthermore, the first Norwegian-Muslim to be nominated at top of a ballot-list for National Parliament election (Akershus Venstre) was Abid Qayyum Raja. Raja was elected to the National Assembly in September 2013 to serve as a second deputy chair of the Standing Committee on

⁴⁹ NOU 2011: 14, ”Bedre integrering”, [Improved Integration], *Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion*, April 30, 2010, <http://www.regjeringen.no/pages/16634493/PDFS/NOU201120110014000DDDDPDFS.pdf> (accessed April 02, 2014): 275.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*, 276.

⁵³ Færaas, Arild, ”Dette er den nye kulturministern- Hadja Tajik”, [This is the New Minister of Culture- Hadja Tajik], *Aftenposten*, September 29, 2012, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/politikk/Dette-er-den-nye-kulturministeren---Hadja-Tajik-6996928.html#.UzvXzMda6vN> (accessed April 02, 2014).

Transportation and Communication in addition to his membership of the Standing Committee on Scrutiny and Constitutional Affairs.⁵⁴

Mosques and Islamic Centers

The increase of Muslim appearance in Norway has led to a rise of mosques, Islamic Center and Koranic schools, notably mostly concentrated in the urban areas. Large shares of Muslim congregations and mosques have developed from the Pakistani community, and it was the Pakistani movement, World Islamic Mission, who built the first mosque in Oslo (1995).⁵⁵ The dominant Pakistani mosque represents different branches of the Barelwi movement, one of the major Islamic revival movements in India from the 1800s, which have deep roots in the Sufi tradition. This movement is represented by its own mosques in Oslo - namely, Jamaat Ahle Sunnat, World Islamic Mission, and Idar Minhaj ul-Quran.⁵⁶

The majority of mosques in Oslo are Sunni Muslim mosques, however, with an exception of seven Shi'ite Muslim mosques (with Iraqi, Iranian, Lebanese, and Pakistani members). Among the Sunni-Muslim organizations and mosques in Oslo there are 12 Pakistani, 6 Turkish, 7 African, 5 Arabic, 2 Kurdish, 1 Kosovo-Albanian, 1 Bosnic, and 1 Tchetchen.⁵⁷ Withal, the majority of mosques in Norway are located in basements, flats, schools, and industrial buildings among others. The majority are Sunni-Muslims, however, there are some Shiite Muslims who started arriving in Norway during the 2000s as Iraqi and Afghan refugees. Also, at least half of the mosques are based in Oslo and Akershus, with some presence in Stavanger, Kristiansand, Drammen, Bergen, Tønsberg, Nord-Trøndelag, and Troms.⁵⁸

Central Jamaat Ahle Sunnat (CJAS)

CJAS is a Pakistani congregation founded in 1976. With over 5000 members, CJAS is represented as the largest Islamic congregation in Norway.⁵⁹ The congregation arose as a result of the need to adapt to prayer, and have a place where the first generation immigrants

⁵⁴ Venstre, "Abid Q. Raja", *Venstre (Norway's Social Liberal Party)*, <http://www.venstre.no/politiker/abidraja> (accessed April 02, 2014).

⁵⁵ LandInfo, "Pakistan: Muslimske menigheter i Norge- hva kreves for å bli imam?" [Pakistan: Muslim Congregations in Norway- What is Required to Become an Imam?]: 2.

⁵⁶ Vogt, Kari, "Islam".

⁵⁷ Leirvik, Odd, "Islam i Norge", [Islam in Norway], *Leirvis's website*, <http://folk.uio.no/leirvik/tekster/IslamiNorge.html#innhald> (accessed March 10, 2014).

⁵⁸ Vogt, Kari, "Islam". *Store norske leksikon*, <http://snl.no/islam> (accessed March 6, 2014).

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 30 & 71.

from Pakistan would gather. Since its establishment, CJAS has undergone large structural and cultural changes. For instance, the first prayers and Quran lectures were conducted either in small apartments or worn down warehouses in Oslo central.⁶⁰ CJAS vision is to promote the practice of religion for Muslims in Norway, while contributing to knowledge and the understanding of Islam and its teaching in the Norwegian society. Furthermore, CJAS as a congregation should purposefully work to motivate immigrants in general, and children and young people in particular to increase their knowledge through education.⁶¹ Daily activities include: five daily prayers; evening school for children; and homework assistance in cooperation with the Norwegian Red Cross. Weekly activities include: Friday prayer (gathering around 700 people), and Quran school for adults. Withal, their yearly activities (for instance Eid ul Fitr, Eid ul Adha, and Wid Milas un Nabi) bring together Muslims from all around the world.⁶²

Regarding radical attitudes, the CJAS has stated its disapproval of and distance from radicalization. According to CJAS' chairman and board member, Ghulam Sarwar, radicalization is non-existing in his congregation, and radical Muslims are banned from speaking and lecturing in the mosque.⁶³ However, what defines a person as radical depends on individual stances, because Ghulam Sarwar also believes that the media power held by Jews is the reason for many Norwegians' negative views on Islam, which could be seen by many as a radical view. A study was carried out in 2002, where Pakistani-Norwegian Jeanette was sent to two central mosques in Oslo with a hidden microphone. The reason for the use of a secret microphone was to see how young Norwegian Muslims through the years have told about the use of scare tactics in relation to the Norwegian society, while the public debate mediates rather liberal and tolerant attitudes among Imams.⁶⁴ The result was appalling. When Dagsavisen (a Norwegian newspaper) asked for the reason why Norwegian media looks at Islam negatively, Sarwar replied "*Because the media has Jewish background. There are Jews*

⁶⁰ CJAS, "Om oss", [About Us], *Central Jamaat Ahle Sunnat*, 2008, <http://www.cjas.no/AboutUs.aspx> (accessed April 12, 2014).

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Hjerpset-Østlie, Nina, "Men hva lærer de selv bort?", [But What do They Teach?], *Document.no*, November 3, 2013, <http://www.document.no/2013/11/men-hva-laerer-de-selv-bort/> (accessed April 13, 2014).

⁶⁴ Storhaug, Hege, "Avslører imamene", [Revealing the Imams], *Dagbladet*, January 3, 2002, <http://www.dagbladet.no/nyheter/2002/02/03/310220.html> (accessed April 13, 2014).

who are behind the media – that has a destroying effect”.⁶⁵ Another question raised by Dagsavisen was why the relationship between Jews and Muslims is haltered. Sarwar replied “it has never been good...Why did the Germans kill them? One reason, because they are troubled people”.⁶⁶ Furthermore, Jeanette also interviewed Nehmat Ali Shah, and her questions put through revealed some of Ali Shah’s extremely prejudiced attitudes towards non-Muslims/native Norwegians and his condemnation of the Norwegian society. For instance, Jeanette told Ali Shah that she was in love with a non-Muslim Norwegian boy that she would like to marry. Ali Shah responded by saying “The most important reason to get married is that you have to be Muslim. Because it is only in Islam that marriages exist. Marriages in other religions are merely cohabitations”.⁶⁷ Jeanette argued that Christian people also do get married, however, Ali Shah stated that there are only Muslims who are properly married, and said “You have to understand that what other people do is a sin. They enjoy forbidden pleasure only for a few days”.⁶⁸

Tawfiq Islamic Center (TIC)

TIC is the largest Somali Muslim driven mosque in Norway. Located in the capital of Oslo, the mosque has approximately 6000 members. The Human Rights Service Norway (HRS) accuses TIC for having an extremist ideology, and explains this by pointing at TIC’s uttering of supporting al-Shabaab as well as their invitations of radical speakers.⁶⁹

On one hand, the TIC has in previous interviews spoken of their stance on taking distance from radicalization. They have declared their refusal of letting radical people speak and lecture in the mosque, and say “Stop recruiting our children! This is unacceptable! We want our youth to distance themselves from radicalization and extremism.”⁷⁰ However, TIC’s

⁶⁵ Dannevig, Kristoffer Gaarder, ”Imam gir jøder skylda for mediedekning”, [Imam Gives Jews the Blame for Media Coverage], *Dagsavisen*, January 17, 2013, <http://www.dagsavisen.no/samfunn/imam-gir-joder-skylda-for-mediedekning/> (accessed April 13, 2014).

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Storhaug, Hege, ”Avslører imamene”, [Revealing the Imams]

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Storhaug, Hege, ”Barth Eides brødre og søstre”, [Barth Eide’s Brothers and Sisters], *Human Rights Service*, October 01, 2013, <http://www.rights.no/2013/10/barth-eides-brodre-og-sostre/> (accessed April 19, 2014).

⁷⁰ Stokke, Olga, ”Oslo moske ut mot radikaliserings, hadde besøk av radikal imam”, [Oslo Mosque Out Against Radicalization, was Visited by Radical Imam], *Aftenposten*, December 07, 2013, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/Oslo-mosk-ut-mot-radikaliserings-hadde-besok-av-radikal-imam-7398308.html#.U1IJxsdiMZI> (accessed April 19, 2014).

officially outspoken views on radicalization is arguably controversial owing the fact that the mosque recently invited Imam Abu Usamah at-Thahabi, an American convert to Islam, to give a lecture in TIC and later expressed their gratitude for his inspiring presentation. Usamah is a believer of death penalty for infidelity saying that “*the one who is married and he commits zina he is stoned to death. The one who is not married and he commits zina he is flogged one hundred times and he is out and expelled from the city for a year. That comes from the sunnah*”.⁷¹ Furthermore, according to a report by the British think tank, Centre for Social Cohesion, Usamah “*advocates holy war in an Islamic state; preaches hatred against non-Muslims; that apostasy and homosexuality are punishable by death; and that women are inferior to men*”.⁷²

Additionally, there is evidence pointing to a connection between TIC and the Westgate terrorist attack in Kenya in October 2013. A Somali-Norwegian Muslim named Hassan Abdi Dhuhulow was one of the terrorist attackers, and he went to TIC for prayers.⁷³ A case study on Dhuhulow will be outlined later on.

Islamic Cultural Centre (ICC)

ICC was founded in 1974, and is one of the oldest Islamic organizations in Norway; the organization works to establish Dawa and serves a Muslim community house. ICC has approximately 4,000 registered members, and aims at developing a basic understanding of Islam among Muslims. According to ICC itself, its focus is on quality rather than quantity, and its leaders believe that by increasing knowledge, misunderstandings will fade, and thus open the door for dialogue and friendship among Muslims and non-Muslims.⁷⁴ ICC consists of a mosque, Madrassa (Islamic school), library, an office and meeting rooms. Accordingly, ICC is a oversea branch of the controversial Islamic political party, *Jumaat Islami* (disciplined party standing for full Islamic revolution worldwide), in Pakistan.⁷⁵

One pin-point criticism regarding ICC is the fact that it offers teaching of a very extreme nature, as has the authorization to give examinations of Islamic Online University

⁷¹ The Islam Far Right in Britain, ”Abu Usamah at-Thahabi”, *TIFRIB*, <http://tifrib.com/abu-usamah-at-thahabi/> (accessed April 19, 2014).

⁷² Storhaug, Hege, ”Barth Eides brødre og søstre”, [Barth Eide’s Brothers and Sisters]

⁷³ BBC, ”Kenya Attack: Westgate Mall Bodies ‘Probably Gunmen’”, *BBC News Africa*, October 18, 2013, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-24577711> (accessed April 19, 2014).

⁷⁴ Administrator, ”Om ICC”, *ICC*, <http://www.islamic.no/> (accessed April 24, 2014).

⁷⁵ Karlsen, Rita, ”To moskeer i Norge: med blick på kvinners status”, [Two Mosques in Norway: An Eye on Women’s Status], *Human Rights Service*, October 09, 2012, http://www.rights.no/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/To_moskeer_kvinnesynt_062006.pdf (accessed April 27, 2014): 8-9.

(IOU).⁷⁶ IUO is founded and run by Bilal Philips, a Canadian convert with the desire of a worldwide Caliphate based on Sharia. The education is free, and has in fact been highly recommended by organizations such as the Prophet's Ummah and Islam Net.⁷⁷ Furthermore, a report by HRS describes ICC as a gender-segregated and pro-hijab congregation, and explains how the ICC's library is rich on Islamic literature with most of it in Urdu, published by Jumaat Islami in Pakistan.⁷⁸ As HRS' report says, and which consultants in HRS have observed, "*the literature justifies gender discrimination and unmistakably alludes to violent Islamic jihad*".⁷⁹ Regarding violent jihad, a book found in the ICC library stated:

"If an Islamic country is attacked by infidels, jihad becomes an obligation for all the people of that country. In case the Muslims of that country are too few in number, too weak, or even too unwilling to wage jihad, then Muslim from neighboring countries shall come forward for the jihad. In case this, too, is not enough, then it is the duty of Muslims from all over the world to bolster that jihad".⁸⁰

Other books proclaim violent jihad as the only right solution to Muslim problems, honors Islamic militant for acts of terrorism, and request for donations.⁸¹ Further observations in their library revealed literature rejecting family planning for the reason that the number of Muslims should grow in order to overthrow the "enemies of Islam".⁸²

Idara Minhaj ul-Quran (IMQ)

Another congregation with similar ideas as ICC is the Idara Minhaj ul-Quran (IMQ) congregation. IMQ is based in Oslo, and has approximately 3900 (as off 2005) registered members.⁸³ IMQ is a branch of Minhaj ul-Quran International movement, and Norway is one

⁷⁶ Estard, Sarah, "Universitetsutdannelse i ekstremisme", [University Degree in Extremism], *Human Rights Service*, January 23, 2013, <http://www.rights.no/2013/01/universitetsutdannelse-i-ekstremisme/> (accessed April 23, 2014).

⁷⁷ Estard, Sarah, "Universitetsutdannelse i ekstremisme", [University Degree in Extremism]

⁷⁸ Karlsen, Rita, "To moskeer i Norge: med blick på kvinners status", [Two Mosques in Norway: An Eye on Women's Status]: 4.

⁷⁹ Ibid: 17.

⁸⁰ Ibid: 31-32.

⁸¹ Ibid: 32.

⁸² Ibid: 35.

⁸³ Ibid: 4 & 20.

out of 92 countries in which Minhaj ul-Quran operates.⁸⁴ Their purpose is to encourage communities to bolster peace and harmony, and revive the spiritual elements based on the true teachings of Islam.⁸⁵ Along with ICC, IMQ is also known for being authorized to give examinations from the IOU. IMQ offers classes on Islam to women and men, and organizes public seminars that are open to media, organizations and authorities.⁸⁶ Consultants from HRS have also observed the IMQ, and observations correspond with the ones of ICC, especially regarding their library, jihad, and women, nurturing a culture of segregation. Their library is stocked up on Islamic literature, however, rather unilateral and patriarchal in nature, and most of the books are in Urdu. Main findings from IMQ library disclosed how the book *Islamic Tarbiyati Nisab*, written by Tahirul Qadri (founder of Minhaj ul-Quran International) is frequently being used by, both male and female members.⁸⁷ The book addresses issues of jihad, and explains how life and death will be rewarded if participation in jihad occurs; if killed, a life in paradise awaits, but if no, the jihadi will have the opportunity to partake in the material riches from the holy war. Additionally, the book states that Muslims refusing to participate and assist in support of jihad are prospective of severe punishment.⁸⁸

Organizations

Both politics and religion are intertwined, and thus, Norwegian Muslim organizations are of growing number. According to IRN, there are 43 member organizations spread across Norway⁸⁹. Although large shares of these organizations are merely involved in running community centers and mosques, there are other organizations that stand out from the crowd, namely the Prophet's Ummah and Islam Net.

The Prophet's Ummah

The Prophet's Ummah, an extreme Islamist group in Norway, made its appearance in 2012. It aims at satisfying Allah (SWT^v), followed by the importance of representing Islam in

⁸⁴ Minhaj ul-Quran International, "Minhaj ul-Quran International Movement", <http://www.minhaj.org/english/tid/3747/Introduction.html> (accessed April 27, 2014).

⁸⁵ Minhaj ul-Quran International, "Minhaj Overseas", <http://www.minhajoverseas.com/en.php?tid=8718> (accessed April 27, 2014).

⁸⁶ Karlsen, Rita, "To moskeer i Norge: med blick på kvinners status", [Two Mosques in Norway: An Eye on Women's Status]: 20.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 33.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 33.

⁸⁹ Islamic Council Norway, "Organisasjon", [Organization], *IRN*, 2012, <http://www.irn.no/organisasjon> (accessed April 13, 2014).

its purest form, as it was taught, understood and practiced by Allah's last messenger, Prophet Muhammad. Accordingly, the group declares its full Baraa (rejection) from all forms of kufr (disbelief), polytheism, and blasphemy, and declares its hatred and hostility towards those who oppose Allah (SWT), Islam and Allah's last messenger.⁹⁰ According to Sylo Taraku, General Secretary for LIM (Network of Equality, Integration and Diversity), the Prophet's Ummah is characterized with people from criminal environments, and is largely based on the Islamist ideology of Islam, but legitimizes the use of violence and terror in the name of Islam – along with a clear and intense hatred against the West.⁹¹

For instance, in mid-February, a 22-year old Norwegian-Pakistani man returned to Norway after having fought together with terrorist organizations like Jabhat al-Nusra and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Syria. He allegedly participated in military actions, murder and other serious acts of violence against the Syrian government forces and other people or groups these groups perceived as infidels.⁹² He is therefore the first Norwegian citizen to be charged under Penal Code section 147 d:⁹³

“§ 147 d: The imprisonment of up to six years shall be imposed on those who form, participate in, recruit members or provide financial or other material support to a terrorist organization, when the organization has taken steps to reach the purpose of illegal means”.

According to information by PST, the radicalization process of the 22-year old partly developed as a result of his contact with key members of the Prophet's Ummah. Other controversial members of the organization are Ubaydullah Hussain, previous spokesperson, Moyheldeen Mohammad, and Arfan Oadeer Bhatti.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Profetens Ummah, ”Om Profetens Ummah”, [About the Prophet Ummah], <http://www.profetensummah.com/om-profetens-ummah/> (accessed April 09, 2014).

⁹¹ Taraku, Sylo, ”Radikaliseringen av unge muslimer”, [Radicalization of Young Muslims], *WordPress*, February 7, 2014, <http://sylo.taraku.wordpress.com/2014/02/07/radikaliseringen-av-unge-muslimer/> (accessed April 14, 2014).

⁹² Hultgreen, Gunnar and Klungtveit, Harald, ”Ble radikalisert av Profetens Ummah”, [Became Radicalized by the Prophet's Ummah], *Verdens Gang*, February 13, 2014, http://www.dagbladet.no/2014/02/13/nyheter/terror/islamist/pst/profetens_ummah/31800958/ (accessed April 09, 2014).

⁹³ Ministry of Justice and Public Security, ”Straffeloven § 147 d (Penal Code)”, *LovData*, January 15, 2014, http://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/1902-05-22-10/KAPITTEL_2-7#KAPITTEL_2-7 (accessed April 09, 2014).

⁹⁴ Thorenfeldt, Gunnar, ”Slik blir YouTube-generasjonen radikalisert”, [Thus, the YouTube Generation Radicalized], *Dagbladet*, November 2, 2013,

Arfan Bhatti is regarded as a high security threat and the most dangerous person in Norway, according to evaluations by PST. In an interview with *Dagbladet*, Bhatti utters his perceptions on terror, religion and the Norwegian society.⁹⁵ For instance, Bhatti is a supporter of transforming Norway into an Islamist state ruled by Sharia-laws. In 2010, Bhatti travelled to Pakistan to fight jihad. During his stay, he posted several provocative pictures of himself with automatic weapons while threatening Norwegian soldiers on Facebook. In the beginning of 2013, Bhatti was reported missing, but was later found imprisoned in a Pakistani prison outside of Islamabad where he had been held for 10 months. Bhatti was later convicted in a tribunal court, sentenced for six years in prison for violation of the Frontier Crime Regulations, section 40, and moved to a prison in FATA.⁹⁶

Ubaydullah Hussain is known for his rather provocative statements. For instance, in 2012, he said that “today, it is we who pay *jizya* (taxes) to them. In reality, they should pay *jizya* to us”.⁹⁷ Ubaydullah Hussain has previously been employed at Fjellinjen, a Norwegian company that deals with toll services. However, in 2012, Hussain quit his job in order to practice Islam on a fulltime basis and engage in activities for the radical Islamist group the Prophet’s Ummah. His extensive knowledge and commitment to the Prophet’s Ummah gives him the status as leader and figurehead, and externally, he is described as the spokesman of the group. Hussain is aware of his status, and makes sure to use it well. Thus, on December 21st 2012, he organized people from the radical extremist environment to demonstrate outside the American Embassy in Oslo; a protest to demonstrate against a film these radicals feel to be an insult to the Prophet Mohammad, and slogans in support of Osama bin Laden were uttered. Supporting slogans of bin Laden has also been voiced in previous interviews of Hussain from his time in prison (based on threats against Norwegian journalists). Furthermore, after his release from prison, Hussain visited Arfan Bhatti in Pakistan.⁹⁸

http://www.dagbladet.no/2013/11/02/nyheter/innenriks/antirasistisk_senter/shoiaab_sultan/ekstremisme/30112591/ (accessed April 13, 2014).

⁹⁵ Hultgreen, Gunnar, “Vi vil at Norge skal bli en islamisk nasjon styrt etter Sharia lover”, [We Want Norway to Become a Nation Ruled by Islamic Sharia Law], *Dagbladet*, February 02, 2012, http://www.dagbladet.no/2012/02/02/nyheter/innenriks/arfan_qadeer_bhatti/pst/20043353/ (accessed April 17, 2014).

⁹⁶ Zaman, Kadafi, “Her fant TV 2 Arfan Bhatti”, [This is Where TV 2 Found Arfan Bhatti], *TV2*, October 06, 2013, <http://www.tv2.no/nyheter/utenriks/her-fant-tv-2-arfan-bhatti-4132805.html> (accessed April 17, 2014).

⁹⁷ Akerhaug, Lars, “Norsk Jihad”, [Norwegian Jihad], 2013: 95.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*: 98-100.

Islam Net

Islam Net is a Norwegian Muslim organization founded by Fahad Qureshi in 2008, and has grown into becoming the largest Muslim youth organization in Norway (around 2000 members). According to Islam Net itself, it operates as the messenger of the prophet, and aims at solving any misunderstandings about Islam as a religion with the purpose of building bridges between Muslims and non-believers.⁹⁹ The organization is the largest and most active Salafi group in Norway. In order to correct any misconceptions about Islam, the organization hosts yearly Peace Conferences, noteworthy, the largest Islamic peace conference in Scandinavia.¹⁰⁰

Despite Islam Net's perception of itself as a moderate Islamic organization, it has been criticized and accused of being reactionary and conservative with the desire of imposing strict Sharia in Norway,¹⁰¹ as well as inviting radical extremists like Khalid Yasin to speak. HRS has devoted their time in researching Yasin. HRS is critical of inviting Yasin to Islam Net's Peace Conferences owing how Yasin incites hate preachers and radical Islamic political views.¹⁰² It has been known that Yasin has been given the "honor" of having inspired Michael Adebawale, one of the two men killing soldier Lee Rigby, and taught him "the purpose of life".¹⁰³ One might say Yasin is ruthless regarding his thoughts of Islam functioning as the key religion. For instance, according to Yasin, men are urged to "beat women lightly", the Taliban are "our brothers", "the delusion of equality of women is foolishness... there is no such thing", as well as his support of death penalty for gay people.¹⁰⁴ Additionally, Yasin has

⁹⁹ Islam Net, "Vår visjon", [Our Vision], <http://www.islamnet.no/om> (accessed April 03, 2014).

¹⁰⁰ Islam Net, "Peace Conference", <http://www.peaceconference.no/om-pcs> (accessed April 03, 2014).

¹⁰¹ Mogen, Trym, "Moderate Muslims hold peace conference in Norway to fight misconceptions about Islam, while supporting stoning for adultery", *Muslim Worldwide*, October 20, 2013, <http://themuslimissue.wordpress.com/2013/10/20/moderate-muslims-hold-peace-conference-in-norway-to-fight-misconceptions-about-islam-while-supporting-stoning-for-adultery/> (accessed April 03, 2014).

¹⁰² Estard, Sarah, "Skal du stoppe sheikenes inntogmarsj, justisminister?", [Are you Preventing the Appearance of the Sheik, Minister of Justice?], *Human Rights Service*, March 12, 2014, <http://www.rights.no/2014/03/skal-du-stoppe-sheikenes-inntogmarsj-anders-anundsen/> (accessed April 07, 2014).

¹⁰³ Layton, Josh and Myers, Russell, "Lee Rigby killer Michael Adebawale reveals hate preacher who inspired him to commit shocking murder of soldier", *Mirror News*, December 30, 2013, <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/lee-rigby-killer-michael-adebowale-2971873#.UsFlrUmQEuE.twitter> (accessed April 06, 2014).

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

previously lectured with the deceased Anwar Al Awlaki,¹⁰⁵ a former leader of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and associated with the “underwear bomb” plot in 2009.¹⁰⁶

The large number of members has been achieved through active missionary activities, “revival meetings” with fundamentalist speakers, like Yasin, and by “teaching” and networking by use of the Internet and social media.¹⁰⁷ According to Lars Gule, researcher on Islam, Islam Net should be characterized as an “*undemocratic, misogynist organization with extreme objectives and values*”.¹⁰⁸ Likewise, according to Shoaib Sultan, previous general secretary in Islamic Council Norway, Islam Net shows a rather intolerance; they “*promote a hateful view of other people*”.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Estard, Sarah, ”Skal du stoppe sheikenes inntogmarsj, justisminister?”, [Are you Preventing the Appearance of the Sheik, Minister of Justice?]

¹⁰⁶ Sacks, Mike, “Anwar Al Awlaki Role in Prepping Underwear Bomber Revealed By Feds”, *Huffington Post*, November 02, 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/10/anwar-al-awlaki-underwear-bomber-federal-court-memo_n_1269703.html (accessed April 07, 2014).

¹⁰⁷ Tarku, Sylo, ”Radikaliseringen av unge muslimer”, [Radicalization of Young Muslims],

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

PART 2: RADICALIZATION IN NORWAY

Theoretical Approach to Radicalization

The term *radicalization* is rather challenging to define, as there are multiple “working definitions” that exist among state intelligence and security services across the world. For instance, the Danish Intelligence Service (PET) defines radicalization as:

“...a process by which a person to an increasing extent accepts the use of undemocratic or violent means, including terrorism, in an attempt to reach a specific political/ideological objective”.¹¹⁰

Accordingly, the United Kingdom’s Home Office, in its CONTEST strategy for counter-terrorism, refers to radicalization as:

“...the processes by which people come to support, and in some cases to participate in terrorism”.¹¹¹

Moreover, the working definition by PST defines radicalization as:

“...a process where a person increasingly accepts the use of violence in order to achieve political, religious, or ideological objective”.¹¹²

According to PST the radicalization process can be characterized as a tunnel. The entrance of the tunnel represents the start of radicalization, meaning that the people reaching the entrance have come far enough to perform politically motivated violence. The people already inside the tunnel are supportive of the use of violent methods and encourage others to commit violent attacks. On the other hand, PST argues that some people only peeks into the

¹¹⁰ PET, “Radikalisering og terror”, [Radicalization and Terror], *Center for Terroranalyse (Denmark)*, October, 2009, https://www.pet.dk/CTA/~media/CTA/Radikalisering_og_terror.ashx (accessed March 11, 2014): 2.

¹¹¹ U.K. Home Office, *CONTEST: the United Kingdom’s Strategy for Countering Terrorism*, July, 2011, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97995/strategy-contest.pdf (accessed March 11, 2014): 36.

¹¹² PST, “Åpen Trusselvurdering 2013”, [Open Threat Assessment 2913]: 4.

tunnel while others stay there for years. However, how fast people move through the tunnel of radicalization, or what they do once inside of it, varies. Additionally, there may be coincidences that drive them farther in the process/ tunnel.¹¹³ Additionally, Hege Hansen and Linda Nymann choose the words of “*from nursery to Syria*” to explain the process of radicalization. Hence, youth are in search for a secure identity by seeking unity, protection from the local community, developing a religious or political engagement, as well as establishing bonds with new networks and distance themselves from the old.¹¹⁴ There are three components of Hansen and Nymann theory to include a:

1. “Young, planning stage, in quest of: ideology, knowledge, community, support, belonging;
2. Centre (inside the tunnel): increasing use of hate rhetoric, ideological convinced, acceptance of violence; and
3. On the way out/ already out of the tunnel: willingness in violent methods”.¹¹⁵

The most important take away from the *nursery to Syria theory* is society awareness and the ability of local communities to notice early signs of hate and aggression as mentioned the first two stages. Additionally, local community, youth teams and child services should collaborate on important aspects such as mapping different networks and life experiences among children and youth; it is vital to interfere as early as possible to prevent the occurrence of stage three, and the involvement of judicial authorities. An example would be a child who shows signs of hate towards others and refuses to participate in activities with other children. These are attitudes attained from home, and should be confronted.

Causes of Radicalization

Individuals become radicalized for a multiple reasons to include seeking a social community and belonging; some have experienced personal assaults or a life crisis; others have already become ideologically convinced and are meeting with mentors who aspire and affect their way of thinking. International events, such as the Salman Rushdie affair in the 1980s, Norwegian contribution in Afghanistan, the “war on terror”, and the controversial

¹¹³ Berg, Roger, “Radikalisering”, [Radicalization], *PST*, May 24, 2012, <http://www.pst.no/blogg/radikalisering/> (accessed March 11, 2014).

¹¹⁴ Storhaug, Hege, ”Prosessen fra kjøkkenbordet til Syria”, [The Process at the Dining Table in Syria], *Human Rights Service*, November 29, 2013, <https://www.rights.no/2013/11/prosessen-fra-kjokkenbordet-til-syria/> (accessed March 18, 2014).

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

Danish Muhammad advertised in the Danish *Jylland-Posten* and the Norwegian *Magazinet*¹¹⁶ may contribute to the radicalization process of Norwegian Muslims. Alongside long-term domestic issues, such as poverty and isolation, are multiculturalism and the failure of integrating immigrants into society.¹¹⁷ The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) stated that radicalization is a higher risk among children of immigrant parents “...who find themselves both trapped and marginalized by the conflict between the traditional world of their parents and the often confusing and contradictory cultural messages of modern western society”.¹¹⁸

PST recognized two points for further radicalization, namely: (1) a cognitive development towards an increasingly one-sided, black-and-white worldview with no room for alternative perspectives; and (2) a progress in which the perception of reality is seen as acute and dramatic, thus, drastic actions are considered necessary and fair- the purpose justifies the means.¹¹⁹

Social Movement Theory

Why, when and how do some people, often well integrated into society, choose to radicalize? At what point are people willing to sacrifice their lives for the support of violent actions aimed at civilians? These are complex questions. In theory it can serve a helping hand when looking for the answers. The Social Movement Theory (SMT) is one among many theoretical frameworks that can be applied to complex questions like the process of radicalization. The SMT has by, Zald and McCarthy, been defined as “a set of opinions and beliefs in a population, which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/ or reward distribution of a society”.¹²⁰ The key factors to draw from the SMT are the focus on larger groups, the relationship amongst individuals, groups and the society in general, and the consideration of social movements and subgroups as “rational actors, driven by a political agenda and a set of political goals”.¹²¹ Although the SMT does not provide an

¹¹⁶ Anderson, John Ward, ”Cartoons of Prophet Met With Outrage”, *Washington Post*, January 31, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/01/30/AR2006013001316.html> (accessed March 11, 2014).

¹¹⁷ RCMP, ”Radicalization: A Guide for the Perplexed”, *Royal Canadian Mounted Police*, June, 2009, <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pubs/nsci-eocrn/radical-eng.pdf> (accessed March 11, 2014): 5.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Berg, Roger, “Radikalisering”, [Radicalization]

¹²⁰ Borum, Randy, “Radicalization into Violent Extremism I: A Review of Social Science Theories”, *Journal of Strategic Security*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (2011): 16-17.

¹²¹ Dalgaard-Nielsen, Anja, ”Studying Violent Radicalization in Europe I: The Potential Contribution of Social Movement Theory”, *DIIS Working Paper* No. 2, 2008: 3.

answer to violent Islamic radicalization, it may contribute in clarifying a rather complex process with many underlying issues. The recruitment process sees its way through strong social bonds and relationships among potential associates, and makes use of information as a recruitment tool and inducements in persuading likely targets in accepting and uniting with their movement.

Radicalization in Norway

Although the number of extremists in Norway is relatively low, PST has identified new cases of radicalization, as a result of the 2014 terror threat picture in Norway.¹²² The Norwegian Action Plan 2010 explains that the largest shares of Muslims are non-Islamists, and most of the Islamists are not followers of violent and political actions,¹²³ and that extreme radical Islamists only represent a small portion of the group. However, in the eastern part of Norway, some individuals support of extreme Islamist organizations abroad, and with its multi-ethnic extremist Islamic environment that consists mainly of young men raised in Norway and is located in the Oslofjord area. This community in the Oslofjord is active in radicalization, recruits and travels to war and conflict zones, and raise funds for extreme actors in conflict-ridden areas.¹²⁴ They also engage in spreading propaganda, identity theft and material provision.¹²⁵

*Table 3: Extreme Islamists in Norway.*¹²⁶

Ubaydullah Hussain	Born and raised in Norway. At his year of 27 he was held in custody for threats against two journalists and the Jewish religious community. Police established in 2012 a lawsuit against him after his posting on the Facebook page of the Prophet’s Ummah regarding the acquisition of an AK-47 type of weapon. Hussain is the spokesperson for
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¹²² PST, “Åpen Trusselvurdering 2014”, [Open Threat Assessment 2014], *Politiets Sikkerhetstjeneste*, March 4, 2014, http://www.pst.no/media/67044/PSTs_tv2014.pdf (accessed March 5, 2014): 4.

¹²³ Ministry of Justice and Public Security, ” Collective Security- a Shared Responsibility”, *Regjeringen*, December 1, 2010, http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/JD/Vedlegg/Handlingsplaner/Radikalisering_engelsk.pdf (accessed March 19, 2014): 9.

¹²⁴ PST, “Åpen Trusselvurdering 2014”, [Open Threat Assessment 2014]: 4.

¹²⁵ Ministry of Justice and Public Security, ” Collective Security- a Shared Responsibility”: 10.

¹²⁶ Zaman, Kadafi, ”Her er de mest ekstreme islamistene i Norge”, [These are the Most Extreme Islamists in Norway], *Tv2*, November 03, 2012, <http://www.tv2.no/nyheter/innenriks/krim/her-er-de-mest-ekstreme-islamistene-i-norge-3916062.html> (accessed April 08, 2014).

	Prophet's Ummah.
Bastian Vasquez	Converted Norwegian. Has been remained in custody and is charged of having made a video threat against the Government with the text asking Allah to destroy them.
Arfan Bhatti	One of the most prominent Islamists in Norway. A Norwegian-Pakistani convicted eight times (everything from stabbing to shooting). Arrested in 2006 after the synagogue of the Jewish community was fired at. Bhatti has been accused of plotting a terror attack against the U.S. and Israeli Embassies, and been charged for the shooting against the Dagbladet journalist Nina Johnsrud.
Avdyli Egzon	Born in the former Yugoslavia. Has been convicted several times for violence, among other things. The police searched Egzon at the age of 24 for attending the hearing of Ubaydullah Hussain.
Wahab Butt	Born in Norway. Has previously arranged a Muslim demonstration in Oslo, and been in prison several times during his teenage years. Was in 2007 convicted, along with his father and two brothers, for having sold 85 kg of hashish (got 5 years and 6 months imprisonment).
Soukene Mahrez	Born in Algeria. Convicted for a case on drugs.

The table above lists Norway's most influential radical Islamists. Some are prominent actors in the Prophet's Ummah. Moreover, in their *2014 Threat Assessment*, PST highlights how key figures in the radical environments in Norway have foreign al-Qaeda sympathizers as mentors, and make use of an al-Qaeda rhetoric, discussed in a Norwegian context, as a tool for recruitment. PST further points at family relations, close friends, and trustworthy individuals as factors in the process of radicalization, and expect it to increase in importance in 2014.¹²⁷

In 2012, the Norwegian government received a highly aggressive letter from the radical Muslim extremist group, Ansar al-Sunnah Army (JAAS), stating a demand for an

¹²⁷ Ministry of Justice and Public Security, "Collective Security- a Shared Responsibility": 10.

Islamic state at Grønland (Oslo), and warning that similar attacks like 9/11 would occur on Norwegian soil in the future. One statement made by the group states:

*“...if Norwegian soldiers can fly to Afghanistan, then Osama and Muhammed can also get on a flight to Norway inshaAllah. Now the government must wake up and take responsibility before this war comes to Norway. Before respondent answers. Before Muslims take the necessary step. Do not confuse the Muslim silence with weakness. Do not force us to do something that can be avoided. This is not a threat...but a warning that the consequences could be fatal...”*¹²⁸

The reason for this threat is JAAS’ desire of a Muslim state, and the letter continues by saying how:

*“...we will not be a part of the Norwegian society. We do not see it as necessary to move from Norway since we are born and raised here. And Allah’s land belongs to everyone. But let us have Grønland. Set up blocks and let us control it as we desire. This is the best solution for both parts. We have no desire living with dirty animals like you”*¹²⁹

JAAS is of Kurdish influence, led by Abu Abdullah al-Shafi (aka Holiri al-Kurdi), and is considered one of most noticeable insurgent groups in Iraq with ties to al-Qaeda.¹³⁰ JAAS targets secular Iraqi Kurds, trains and deploys suicide bombers, and aims at transforming Iraq into an Islamic state without Western influence and culture.¹³¹ JAAS is reportedly an alternative name for Ansar al-Islam, a Kurdish Islamic movement founded by Najmuddin Faraj Ahmad (aka Mullah Krekar) in December 2001.¹³² Krekar is being held in exile in Norway alleged for acts of terrorism within Iraq and funding terrorist organizations from Norway. According to Krekar, money has gone to the armed Kurdish movement led by

¹²⁸ Akerhaug, Lars, ”Etterforsker trusler om terror fra norsk islamistgruppe”, [Investigating Threats of Terror from Norwegian Islamist Group], *Verdens Gang*, August 17, 2012, <http://www.vg.no/nyheter/utenriks/terrorisme/artikkel.php?artid=10067780> (accessed March 17, 2014).

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Kohlmann, Evan, ”Ansar al-Sunnah Acknowledges Relationship with Ansar al-Islam, Reverts to Using Ansar al-Islam Name”, *Counterterrorism.blog*, December 16, 2007, http://counterterrorismblog.org/2007/12/ansar_alsunnah_acknowledges_re.php (accessed April 21, 2014).

¹³¹ Gregory, Kathryn, ”Ansar al-Islam (Iraq, Islamist/Kurdish Separatist), Ansar al-Sunnah”, *Council of Foreign Relations*, November 05, 2008, <http://www.cfr.org/iraq/ansar-al-islam-iraq-islamistskurdish-separatists-ansar-al-sunnah/p9237#p3> (accessed April 21, 2014).

¹³² Kohlmann, Evan, ”Ansar al-Sunnah Acknowledges Relationship with Ansar al-Islam, Reverts to Using Ansar al-Islam Name”.

Krekar himself. He has told, “I started to travel around and collect money. I collected at reception centers, conferences, and seminars”, and “we had no problem moving around, as the secret services were not paying us any attention what so ever”.¹³³ Furthermore, his radical Islamic interpretation has strengthened his influence. In 2007 by the Supreme Court of Norway, he was ordered a deportation back to Iraq, but Norwegian law prohibited this decision as the environment in Iraq is unsafe, as well as the possibility of an inflicted death penalty if he returns.¹³⁴ In 2012, Krekar was arrested and sentenced to 5 years in prison for death threats. His arrest has further increased his influence and is seen as symbol of how Norway attacks Islam.¹³⁵

According to Fafo^{vi}-researcher, Olav Elgvin, who has studied the process of radicalization, the key reasons for radicalized Norwegian Muslims are: (1) some Muslims feel as though they are being attacked; (2) Muslims are viewed with suspicion in the media; and (3) not feeling a sense of belonging anywhere.¹³⁶ Yousef Assidiq, a previous affiliate of a radical environment in Norway with foreign fighters in Syria, converted to Islam five years ago, and explains in an interview with NrK why he believes people join radical environments. Assidiq is certain that one requests the yearning of a clear identity. In a society with critical and negative attitudes towards Islam, or families with less religious ties, some are on a constant search for a brotherhood that provides a feeling of security and belonging says Assidiq.¹³⁷

As the SMT mentions, the radical environment makes use of strong social bonds and relationships when recruiting new associates. Equally, Assidiq argues how extreme radical environments “exploit” the classic negative Islamic worldview assumption and individual’s feeling of being misrepresented in society. From personal experiences he says, “the extremist environments are adept in recruiting youths with the lack of belonging and who needs a new home”.¹³⁸ As with the case of Assidiq, who experienced both neglect and bullying at school

¹³³ Akerhaug, Lars, ”Norsk Jihad”, [Norwegian Jihad]: 147.

¹³⁴ Gregory, Kathryn, ”Ansar al-Islam (Iraq, Islamist/Kurdish Separatist), Ansar al-Sunnah”.

¹³⁵ Akerhaug, Lars, ”Norsk jihad”, [Norwegian Jihad]: 140.

¹³⁶ Strand, Tormod, ”Derfor radikaliseres norske muslimer”, [The Reason for Radicalization Among Norwegian Muslims], *Nrk*, November 25, 2013, <http://www.nrk.no/norge/derfor-blir-de-radikale-1.11378450> (accessed March 17, 2014).

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

and did not feel comfortable either at home or in society. However, among the radical Muslims he felt as if he was an asset to the community, and gained belongingness.¹³⁹

PART 3: CASE STUDIES

Overview

According to the Threat Assessment 2014, the effort in hindering people of Norwegian origin in becoming involved in terror attacks abroad is the most important task that PST has to encounter in the coming year.¹⁴⁰ As pointed out in the Assessment, the number of Norwegian Muslims travelling to foreign countries with the purpose of fighting with militant Islamist groups has never been higher. On a larger scale, it is estimated around 3,300 and 11,000 foreign fighters in Syria from 74 different countries between 2011 and 2013, according to the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization (ICSR). The table below illustrates the variations between countries in Western Europe.

*Table 4: Foreign Fighters in Western Europe.*¹⁴¹

Country	Low Estimate	High Estimate	Per Capita*
Australia	1	60	7
Belgium	76	296	27
Denmark	25	84	15
Finland	4	20	4
France	63	412	6
Germany**	34	240	3
Ireland	11	26	6
Italy	2	50	1

¹³⁹ Solberg, Erna, “Å se de usynlige”, [Seeing the Invisible], *Aftenposten*, October 30, 2013, <http://www.aftenposten.no/meninger/kronikker/A-se-de-usynlige-7356285.html#.UyltWF6T6vO> (accessed March 19, 2014).

¹⁴⁰ PST, “Åpen Trusselvurdering 2014”, [Open Threat Assessment 2014]: 2.

¹⁴¹ Zelin, Aaron, Y. ”Up to 11,000 Foreign Fighters in Syria; Steep Rise Among Western Europeans”, *International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation*, December 17, 2013, <http://icsr.info/2013/12/icsr-insight-11000-foreign-fighters-syria-steep-rise-among-western-europeans/> (accessed April 24, 2014).

Luxembourg	1	1	1
Netherlands	29	152	9
Norway***	33	40	8
Spain	34	95	2
Sweden**	39	87	9
Switzerland	1	1	0
United Kingdom	43	366	6

*Up to: Per million of population. **Updated: 17/12/2013. ***Statistics from 2011-2013.

In Western Europe the number is estimated to range from 396 to 1,937, which is representative for 18 percent of the total number of foreign fighters in Syria. Amongst Western European countries, France (63-412), Britain (43-366), Germany (34-240), Belgium (76-289), and the Netherlands (29-152) are those with most recruits.¹⁴² The estimated number of foreign fighters in Norway has increased since the ICSR study. As far as PST knows, approximately 40-50 people associated with the radical environment close to the Oslofjord area have travelled to Syria, and it is estimated that ten of these foreign fighters are native Norwegians converted to Islam.¹⁴³ Several of them are affiliated militant groups. Some are still in Syria, while others have been there for years. Additionally, characteristics of Norwegian foreign fighters are young men and women with no connection to Syria.¹⁴⁴ The recent examples of Norwegian foreign fighters are two sisters travelling to Syria, and a man co-responsible for the Westgate shopping centre terrorist attack in Kenya.

Norwegian Foreign Fighters in Syria

Since the start of the Syrian Civil War three years ago, the country has turned into a battlefield, and foreign Jihad sympathizers have joined and seized to silence the fighting. A recent example from Norway was revealed in October 2013. Last year, two Norwegian-Somali teenagers, 16 and 19 years old, left Norway for Syria with the aim of “fighting as good

¹⁴² Zelin, Aaron, Y. ”Up to 11,000 Foreign Fighters in Syria; Steep Rise Among Western Europeans”.

¹⁴³ PST, “Åpen Trusselvurdering 2014”, [Open Threat Assessment 2014]: 2.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

Muslims”.¹⁴⁵ The Norwegian newspaper, *Verdens Gang* (VG), has been accessed an email sent from the sisters to their father explaining their reason for travelling to Syria:

“It is a fact that many Muslims are being attacked far and wide and we must do something. We really want to help the Muslims, and the only way we can accomplish this is by being with them in their sufferings and joys. It is not sufficient to sit at home and send money. With this in mind we have decided to travel to Syria and offer our help to the best of our capabilities”.¹⁴⁶

The sisters have supposedly travelled from Oslo to Istanbul with Turkish Airways, stayed overnight in the city, taken a domestic airline to Adana and further to Hatay where they have crossed the Syrian border.¹⁴⁷ Their father travelled to Turkey in hope of finding his children, and managed to get in contact with the oldest one on the phone. He tried to persuade them in coming back home, but the only answer he got was “*Dad, just forget it. It is too late. We are willing to die here*”.¹⁴⁸ Early December, the father managed to find his daughters in Syria. He is back in Norway, but his daughters are to wait for their return until the 16-year old has recovered from a severe leg injury.¹⁴⁹ However, there are no recent news articles indicating their return to Norway. The father said in an interview with the British newspaper *The Telegraph* how the oldest sister became more aware of herself and her practice of Islam, which resulted in the wearing of a full black niqab in public.¹⁵⁰

But what turned the teenage sisters’ view and led to their decision in joining Syrian militant fighters in Syria? It has become known that the sisters were active within Islam

¹⁴⁵ Ighoubah, Farid, “Frykter norsk 16-åring kriger i Syria”, [Fear of 16 Year Old Norwegian in Syria], *Nrk*, October 20, 2013, <http://www.nrk.no/verden/frykter-tenarringssostre-er-i-syria-1.11308928> (accessed March 31, 2014).

¹⁴⁶ Hopperstad, Morten and Widerøe, Rolf, ”Slik reiste søstrene mot Syria”, [This is How the Sisters Travelled], *Verdens Gang*, October 21, 2013, <http://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/syria/slik-reiste-soestrene-mot-syria/a/10152892/> (accessed March 31, 2014).

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ NTB, ”Savnede søstre sier de er villige til å dø i Syria”, [The Missing Sisters are Willing to Die in Syria], *Verdens Gang*, October 23, 2013, <http://www.vg.no/nyheter/utenriks/syria/savnede-soestresier-de-er-villige-til-aa-doe-i-syria/a/10127401/> (accessed March 31, 2014).

¹⁴⁹ Strand, Tromond and Elster, Kristian, ”Fant døtrene i Syria”, [Found the Daughters in Syria], *Nrk*, December 05, 2013, <http://www.nrk.no/verden/-fant-dotrene-i-syria-1.11400031> (accessed March 31, 2014).

¹⁵⁰ Sherlock, Ruth, ”A Father’s Heartbreak as his Daughters Leave Norway to Join Jihad in Syria”, *the Telegraph*, October 27, 2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/10406351/A-fathers-heartbreak-as-his-daughters-leave-Norway-to-join-jihad-in-Syria.html> (accessed March 31, 2014).

Net.¹⁵¹ As mentioned above, Islam Net strives to function as the messenger of the prophet, and aims at solving misinterpretations of Islam. Regardless of their supposedly charismatic nature in public, it has been criticized for its link with radical extremists abroad, and for inviting them to their Peace Conferences; with Khalid Yasin being one of them. As outlined above, Yasin’s hat preachers and radical political Islamist views calling for the lightly beating of women, the HRS regards some of Islam Net’s work as unfortunate. Especially, taking into consideration Yasin’s links with the deceased Anwar Al Awlaki.¹⁵² Thus, inviting guest speakers like Khalid Yasin (Peace Conference 2013) and others is not seen as a desirable gesture according to HRS, especially when several of them are denied access to a number of countries due to their link with both terrorism and the Holy War. It may play part in radicalizing Norwegian-Muslims even further.¹⁵³

Table 5: “Credible” Speakers Listed by Islam Net.¹⁵⁴

Haitham al-Haddad	Supporter of suicide bombing and Jihad (“The final stage is to fight everyone until they establish the law of Allah”). ¹⁵⁵
Abu Usamah at-Thahabi	Women, unbelievers, whip punishment and stoning (“Allah has created the woman”, “Her intelligent is incomplete”; “Take that homosexual man and throw him off the mountain” and “Kill the one who does it and the one who it’s being done to”; “We love the people of Islam and we hate the people of kufr. We hate the kuffar”). ¹⁵⁶
Bilal Philips	Defends suicide-bombing, and acted as an inspiratory for the Stockholm bomber Taimour Abdulwahab al-Abdaly
Assim al-Hakeem	Sexual slavery, Jews and women (“he has the right to have as many slave females as he

¹⁵¹ Johnson, Nilas, et al., ”Syria-søstre var aktive i Islam Net”, [The Syria-Sisters were Active in Islam Net], *Verdens Gang*, October 29, 2013, <http://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/syria/syria-soestrene-var-aktive-i-islam-net/a/10136376/> (accessed April 03, 2014).

¹⁵² Estard, Sarah, ”Skal du stoppe sheikenes inntogmarsj, justisminister?”, [Are you Preventing the Appearance of the Sheik, Minister of Justice?]

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Steigan, Pål, “Radikalisering- hvilken radikalisering?”, [Radicalization- What Radicalization?], *Dagsavisen*, January 02, 2014, http://www.dagsavisen.no/nyemeninger/alle_meninger/cat1003/subcat1010/thread291961/#post_291961 (accessed April 07, 2014).

¹⁵⁵ The Islam Far Right in Britain, “Haitham al-Haddad”, *TIFRIB*, <http://tifrib.com/haitham-al-haddad/> (accessed April 07, 2014).

¹⁵⁶ The Islam Far Right in Britain, ”Abu Usamah at-Thahabi”, *TIFRIB*, <http://tifrib.com/abu-usamah-at-thahabi/> (accessed April 07, 2014).

	wishes”; “If I’m coming into a building and he is a Jew or Christian, I should not open the door”). ¹⁵⁷
Khalid Yasin	Supporter of death penalty for gay people (“We Muslims have been ordered to do brainwashing because the kuffar they are doing brain defiling”...“your children come out of the house as Muslims and come back as kuffars”). ¹⁵⁸

Table 5 above lists certain names by which Islam Net finds credible, and whom they encourage their members to listen to when learning about Islam. It provides an overview of English speakers that Islam Net believes are reputable in the sense that they strive to follow Islam in accordance with Allah, and how it was understood by the first generations of Islam.¹⁵⁹ In an email from the founding father of Islam Net, Fahad Qureshi, it is revealed that at one of the organization’s 3-day seminar during Easter 2010, seven people converted to Islam; a seminar where foreign ideologists with a contentious view on Islam were flown in.¹⁶⁰ Present were speakers such as Sheikh Hussain Yee from Malaysia (defends that husbands can discipline their wives by force) and the British convert Abdurraheem Green (accused of encouraging and inspiring Muslims to die in Holy War).¹⁶¹ The Left Wing politician, Abid Q. Raja utters how he consider Islam Net to “*drag Norway towards a dangerous direction; an extremist and radicalizing direction aiming at taking ownership of how Muslims think and act*”.¹⁶²

An additional example of Norwegian foreign fighters points to Mohyeldeen Mohammad, a twenty-five year old Islamic radical from Larvik, Norway who, in 2012, travelled to Syria to fight the civil war. Mohammad presents himself as a leader in the radical Islamic community in eastern Norway. In 2009, he created a Facebook-page on which he

¹⁵⁷ The Islam Far Right in Britain, “Assim al-Hakeem”, *TIFRIB*, <http://tifrib.com/assim-al-hakeem/> (accessed April 07, 2014).

¹⁵⁸ The Islam Far Right in Britain, “Khalid Yasin”, *TIFRIB*, <http://tifrib.com/khalid-yasin/> (accessed April 07, 2014).

¹⁵⁹ Islam Net, “Troverdige engelsktalende foredragsholdere om Islam”, [Credible English Speaking Lecturers About Islam], <http://www.islamnet.no/om-oss/foredragsholdere/2344-troverdige-engelsktalende-%20foredragsholdere-om-islam> (accessed April 07, 2014).

¹⁶⁰ Johnsen, Nilas and Haugsbø, Frank, “Rekrutterer etniske nordmenn til omstridt islam”, [Recruits Ethnic Norwegians for Disputes on Islam], *Verdens Gang*, July 10, 2010, <http://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/tro-og-livssyn/rekrutterer-etniske-nordmenn-til-omstridt-islam/a/10001480/> (accessed April 08, 2014).

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

stated the decapitation of infidels and the honoring of Osama Bin Laden, among other Islamists.¹⁶³ On his Facebook-page he announced his celebration of the killing of Norwegian soldiers in Afghanistan saying “*Allah Akbar! Norwegian terrorists killed in Afghanistan! Alhamdulillah, praised be Allah, this will be celebrated!*”¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, he has been charged for threat videos on YouTube against the former Prime Minister, Jens Stoltenberg, Royals, and other governmental officers.¹⁶⁵ The video shows, for instance, images of Crown Prince Haakon, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre (AP), and former Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg (AP) during various visits to the Norwegian troops in Afghanistan. The following texts scroll across the screen (translated from Norwegian):

“To Jens Stoltenberg Kafir enemy of Allah, mass murder and terrorist. Pull troops out of Afghanistan. Allah will punish you for your misdeeds, you had to burn forever in Hell”;

“Oh Allah, destroy them, and let it be painful”;

*“Oh Allah, destroy them. Oh Allah, destroy them and let it be painful and turn their Almighty into ashes. Oh Allah, show revenge to the transgressors as they ignored and did not appreciate you on the Top, as the Greatest of them all”.*¹⁶⁶

It is not only Islam Net that has been accused of radicalizing young men and women. The fundamentally extreme Islamist organization, Prophet’s Ummah, has faced similar accusations, and the most recent example is the 22-year-old Norwegian Pakistani man who recently returned to Norway after having fought with the terrorist organization Jabhat al-Nusra and the ISIL in Syria. As mentioned earlier, the Prophet’s Ummah is considered a radical Islamic organization, and this is prominent if one looks at their website. For instance,

¹⁶³ VG, ”Mohammad hyller bin Laden”, [Mohammad Praises bin Laden], *Verdens Gang*, February 18, 2010, <http://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/muhammed-tegningene/mohammad-hyller-bin-laden/a/581703/> (accessed April 22, 2014).

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Akerhaug, Lars, ”Her poserer Mohyeldeen Mohammad med våpern”, [Mohammad Poses with Weapons], *Verdens Gang*, October 15, 2012, <http://www.vg.no/nyheter/utenriks/her-poserer-mohyeldeen-mohammad-med-vaapen/a/10054469/> (accessed April 08, 2014).

¹⁶⁶ Ege, Rune Thomas, et al., ”Mohyeldeen løslates etter hatvideoarrestasjon”, [Mohyeldeen Released After Hate Speech Video], *Verdens Gang*, February 03, 2012, <http://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/terrorisme/mohyeldeen-loeslatt-etter-hatvideo-arrestasjon/a/10077610/> (accessed April 08, 2014).

the organization has listed 44 ways to support Jihad, with the first one stressing the importance of having the right intention.

“Whoever dies without having fought, or (at least) had the intention to wage war, dies a hypocrite death”.¹⁶⁷

A certain sign of their right intention is by preparing themselves for Jihad, and if a person is financially capable, he ought to offer support financially because Mujahedeen is more in need of money than men (the third way).¹⁶⁸ It is not enough to offer money from your own savings. You are supposed to encourage others in doing the same (the fourth way), as well as inspire others to fight Jihad (the fifteenth way).¹⁶⁹ Mohammad has not only participated in the Syrian civil war, he is also reportedly active in funding and raising funds for the Islamist rebels in Syria, in conjunction with members of the Prophet’s Ummah. Mohammad has, in cooperation with Al Furqan Relief Norway, collected money on the streets and outside mosques in Oslo to raise money for Syrian refugees. Approximately 100,000 NOK (\$15,5000) has been collected. The question raised among people and government officials is the liability regarding their purpose. Suspicions have been supported by the fact that Al Furqan Relief is not registered in *Innsamlingsregisteret* (collection register) created to ensure that donors can be assured that their money given is used for the stated purpose.¹⁷⁰ The registration is only voluntarily. Thus, customs at the airport have no legal rights in preventing people carrying large sums of money, supposedly collected under the auspices of humanitarian work, from travelling to conflict ridden countries. A report by TV2 reveals how two Kurds managed to transport a larger sum of money from Norway to an intermediary in Turkey. This money was later given to an al-Qaeda group in Syria.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁷ Profetens Ummah, ”Jihad”, <http://www.profetensummah.com/jihad/> (accessed April 22, 2014).

¹⁶⁸ Profetens Ummah, ”Jihad”.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Persen, Kjell, ”Mohyeldeen samler inn penger til Syria i Oslo”, [Mohyeldeen Collects Money for Syria in Oslo], TV2, August 10, 2013, <http://www.tv2.no/nyheter/innenriks/mohyeldeen-samler-inn-penger-til-syria-i-oslo-4100246.html> (accessed April 22, 2014).

¹⁷¹ Zaman, Kadafi, ”Slik frakter norske kurerer penger til Al-Qaida-gruppe”, [This is How They Transport Money to al-Qaeda Groups], TV2, December 12, 2012, <http://www.tv2.no/nyheter/innenriks/slik-frakter-norske-kurerer-penger-til-alqaidagruppe-3945916.html> (accessed April 22, 2014).

Al-Shabaab Norwegian Fighters

The Somali extremist environment in Norway is relatively closed and secretive. It is known to hold a broad support for al-Shabaab, and many of the sympathizers are from TIC. However, the Somali community in Norway is less resourceful compared to other immigrant groups. It is also characterized by civil strifes between clans that are in conflict with each other in Somalia, and has brought the feuds with them to Norway.¹⁷² Thus, for frustrated and left-out youth al-Shabaab can be seen as an alternative to their clans and their demanding disputes.

Abdirahman Abdi Osman is one among the Somali community in Norway who is involved in al-Shabab. He came from Somalia to Norway in 1999, and was granted residency based on humanitarian causes. Osman got married, had four kids, and became chairman of a Sunni-Muslim centre in Oslo. It was during his pilgrimage to Mecca in 2006 that opened up for contact with several people who later became leaders of al-Shabaab, the Islamic Court's Armed Branch. Osman later explained that the reason for his involvement with al-Shabaab was his wish and duty to defend Somalia.¹⁷³ Evidence from the police, a nineteen pages collection of contact between Osman and al-Shabaab leaders, proves that between August 2007 and February 2008, Osman took part in and made business of the Hawala-system^{vii}. After prolonged surveillance the police arrested him based on the claim of Osman's collection of 200,000 NOK (\$38,900). This capital was later sent to people in al-Shabaab, such as Aden Hashi Ayrow, Fuad Mohammed Khalaf, and Mbu Mansoor, for the support of their terrorist activities.¹⁷⁴ His arrest and the investigation of him became known as "Operation Hunter", Norway's first investigation of the support of Islamic terror.¹⁷⁵ However, regardless of the accusation of Osman's supporting terrorism activities, he was acquitted in the financing of terrorism, partly because al-Shabaab was not listed as a terrorist organisation at that time. Osman's contact with radical al-Shabaab leaders were not enough to get him convicted.¹⁷⁶

Another example of Norwegian al-Shabaab fighters is Rashid Ali; also known as Norway's first martyr. Rashid came to Norway in 1994, only ten years old. His childhood was not representative of something that could potentially have led to a radical behavior. He got ethnic Norwegian friends, played football, attended school, and was never in trouble. After

¹⁷² Akerhaug, Lars, "Norsk Jihad", [Norwegian Jihad]: 235 & 236.

¹⁷³ Ibid.: 238.

¹⁷⁴ OTIR, 2013: 2.

¹⁷⁵ Akerhaug, Lars, "Norsk Jihad", [Norwegian Jihad]: 239.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.: 240.

graduating from high school, Rashid joined the Norwegian Army and did military service in his Majesty the King's Guard. However, at the age of 26, Rashid left the safe sounds of Norway as his determination to fight for al-Shabaab had awakened. The pushing factor in Rashid's case was an email sent from al-Shabaab, inviting him to join their terror activities in Somalia.¹⁷⁷ Why did al-Shabaab choose Rashid Ali as an ally? You can say that his military experience and extensive knowledge of weaponry was seen as a vital factor. This leads to his position as the leader of the intermediate management of al-Shabaab with the responsibility of training other recruiters. However, his life came to an end in March 2011 during crossfire between al-Shabaab and the Ethiopian government forces in Mogadishu.¹⁷⁸ Norway's first martyr is dead.

Westgate Terrorist Attack 2013

Some radicals travel to Syria to fight, while others travel to Somalia. Never before have so many left Norway for the sake of fighting with militant Islamist groups in conflict ridden areas, some of which are associated with or inspired by al-Qaeda. They represent a substantial risk in terms of influencing Norwegian extremists in doing the same.¹⁷⁹ The recent example is pointed at the Somali-born Norwegian and the Westgate terrorist attack in Kenya.

On September 21 2013, al-Shabaab militants stormed Westgate shopping mall; a four-day siege killing 67 people. One of the suspected terrorists was the 23-year-old Hassan Abdi Dhuhulow from Norway.¹⁸⁰ Dhuhulow and his family fled from Mogadishu to Norway in the 1990s, however, he returned to Somalia in 2009 where he allegedly merged with al-Shabaab. According to the militant group itself, Dhuhulow attended a training camp in El-Bur (central Somalia), was active within al-Shabaab's operations in Mogadishu and Kismayo, and was a recognised member within jihadist-circles.¹⁸¹ Furthermore, it is known that Dhuhulow frequently attended the TIC in Oslo. Research of his Internet activities demonstrates his gradual radicalization process, and his acquaintances with the Prophet's Ummah.¹⁸² For instance, ten of the network names he operated under since 2006 have been traced. By

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.: 241-242.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.: 243.

¹⁷⁹ PST, "Åpen Trusselvurdering 2014", [Open Threat Assessment 2014]: 5.

¹⁸⁰ BBC, "Kenya Attack: Westgate Mall Bodies 'Probably Gunmen'".

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Persen, Kjell and Lunde, Andreas H., "Slik var den terrormistenkte nordmannens (23) hemmelige nettliv", [The Life of the Norwegian (23) Terror Suspect's Online Life], TV2, October 17, 2013, <http://www.tv2.no/nyheter/innenriks/krim/slik-var-den-terrormistenkte-nordmannens-23-hemmelige-nettliv-4138762.html#.UzwCXMda6vM> (accessed April 22, 2014).

tracking down his nicknames and postings it has been verified that since his early teens he clearly expressed a desire of fighting for al-Shabaab in Somalia. One of the names employed by Dhuhulow in 2008 led to an al-Shabaab website that was shut down by U.S. authorities in January 2009 after the discovery of the website being used to recruit suicide bombers. Additionally, Dhuhulow's Internet activity shows that from 2009, he was active on an al-Shabaab web forum, which according to a UN report served as part of al-Shabaab's propaganda apparatus.¹⁸³

According to an investigation performed by PST, Dhuhulow was evidently an acquaintance of Abdulkadir Mohamed Abdulkadir (aka Ikrimah), an al-Qaeda affiliate's external chief¹⁸⁴ regarded as one of the most dangerous commanders in al-Shabaab.¹⁸⁵ A CNN profile of the al-Shabaab commander refers to Ikrimah as the lead-off person between al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and al-Qaeda in Somalia, in addition to his allegedly involvements with the "White Widow", Samantha Lewthwaite, who partook in the unsuccessful Mombasa attack in 2011.¹⁸⁶ CNN further delineates on the intelligence gathered from a leaked Kenyan intelligence report revealing several terror plots Ikrimah allegedly was involved in. For instance, he was "*directing an attack targeted at Mandera airport between 25th and 28th April 2013*" while "*being assisted by Liif, an al-Shabaab explosive expert*" the report says.¹⁸⁷ It is also known that Ikrimah was the target of U.S Navy SEAL's raid in the Somali town of Barawe in October 2013, but Ikrimah believably escaped when the heavy crossfire started.¹⁸⁸

Discussion

Young radicals returning from conflict areas represent a long-term threat to Norwegian security in terms of influence. The struggle against the Syrian regime appeals to many

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Gordon, Jerry, "Somali Norwegian Al Shabaab Suspects Revealed in Nairobi Westgate Mall Attack", *The Counter Jihad Report*, October 18, 2013, <http://counterjihadreport.com/tag/abdulkadir-mohamed-abdulkadir/> (accessed April 22, 2014).

¹⁸⁵ Cruickshank, Paul and Lister, Tim, "U.S. Target in Somalia: An Inside Story on an al-Shabaab Commander", *CNN*, October 07, 2013, <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/10/07/world/africa/somalia-al-shabaab-commander/index.html> (accessed April 22, 2014).

¹⁸⁶ Elbagir, Nima and Smith-Spark, Laura, "Norwegian May Have Been Involved in Westgate Mall Attack, Kenya Sources Say", *CNN*, October 21, 2013, <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/10/18/world/africa/kenya-norway-mall-attack-suspect/> (accessed April 23, 2014).

¹⁸⁷ Cruickshank, Paul and Lister, Tim, "U.S. Target in Somalia: An Inside Story on an al-Shabaab Commander".

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

extreme Islamists in Norway as recent examples have demonstrated. More people are expected being drawn towards the idea of battling with militants according to PST's recently published Threat Assessment. Influentially, returned radicals with combat experience and familiarity in travelling to conflict ridden countries can help others in facilitating both the trip abroad, as well as arranging contacts and meetings with militant groups in foreign land. These arrangements are likely to be carried out by radicals in Norway, along with people residing abroad.

The problem of radical Muslims deciding to become foreign fighters in the Syrian civil war has become a serious headache for Western nations. According to Thomas Hegghammer, the director of terrorism research at the Norwegian Defence Research Institute (FFI) in Oslo, the challenges Norway faces regarding radicalization might be a larger problem in comparison with other countries. Hegghammer says:

“... the number of European foreign fighters in Syria is alarmingly high and historically unprecedented. Moreover, France, Germany and the U.K. may have the largest foreign fighter contingents in Syria, but Denmark, Norway, Belgium and Austria have contributed a much higher proportion of their population. Given that police resources are limited, these countries may have a larger problem on their hands than do their bigger European neighbours”.¹⁸⁹

Now, if one looks at figures from Table 4 on foreign fighters in Western Europe, the study by ICSR correlates with Hegghammer's statement taking into account population size. Norway ranks low regarding the low and high estimation of foreign fighters. However, Norway is a relatively small country, and by looking at its population, Norway is the fifth (out of the fifteen listed) most heavily affected country in Western Europe with 8 foreign fighters per million. These numbers undoubtedly increase the fear of terrorist threats on national soil due to different factors. For example, Norwegian nationals fighting with opposing forces of the Bashar Assad regime are bound with the possibility of becoming experienced radicals, as are likely the supporters of militant groups in Somalia. When returning from countries like Syria or Somalia, the chances of radicalization and traumatisation have intensified, and their network has widely expanded nationally as well as internationally. Their exposure to an anti-Western mentality, and their closer connection with the radical ideology of al-Qaeda groups

¹⁸⁹ Kern, Soeren, "European Jihadists in Syria: More and Younger", *Gatestone Institute*, January 23, 2014, <http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/4139/european-jihadists-syria> (accessed April 24, 2014).

might build up upon an already existing hatred and lack of relationship with the Norwegian society.

One can neither deny people in advocating nor actively spreading ones ideology. Neither denying them physical access to land is successful and has no direct effect owing the development of the Internet. However, more transparency in, for instance media, will help spreading knowledge on radicalization nationally and locally, while simultaneously raise the possibility of attaining more information from the population. Thus, if transparency, as a first attempt, is denied, the freezing of financial support for Muslim organizations and mosques conveying hostile ideology could work as a second attempt. Norway's FrP (Progress Party) withstands this argument. According to FrP, the Norwegian government has been sleeping while people have entered the tunnel of radicalization, and the fact that Muslim mosques and organizations have been funded with taxpayer's money has aided the systematic spread of radical Islamism.¹⁹⁰ A suggestion forwarded by FrP on how to stop radicalization is to deprive people their Norwegian citizenship if they participate in war- and acts of terrorism abroad.¹⁹¹ Similar counter-radicalization measures have been implemented in the United Kingdom, among others. Individuals with dual-nationality are having their British citizenship terminated according to the British Nationality Act because "citizenship is a privilege, not a right". Thus, since mid-2010, 37 people have had their UK citizenship terminated according to statistics from the Bureau of Investigative Journalism.¹⁹² Deprivation of one's dual-citizenship as a consequence of joining militant forces in acts of terrorism will hopefully act as a deterrent factor, according to FrP. On the contrary, Hadja Tadjik is rather critical to this proposal. Tadjik argues that terminating someone's citizenship will have an adverse effect, in which people are forced to "*remain in a country that can enhance their qualifications to carry out terrorist attack*", which again might lead to the risk of "*an even more heightened threat against Norway*".¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰ Tørrissen, Erik, "Stopp kilden til radikalisering", [Stop the Source of Radicalization], *FrP*, March 06, 2014, <http://www.frp.no/nor/Aktuelt/Stopp-kilden-til-radikaliseringen> (accessed April 27, 2014).

¹⁹¹ Sandvik, Siv, et al., "Oslo Frp vil la domstolene gjøre norske Syria-krigere statsløse", [Oslo FrP Wants the Courts to Make Norwegian Syria Fighters Stateless], *Aftenposten*, April 22, 2014, <http://www.nrk.no/norge/truer-med-tap-av-statsborgerskap-1.11676254> (accessed April 27, 2014).

¹⁹² Ross, Alice and Galey, Patrick, "Citizenship Revoked", *The Bureau of Investigative Journalism*, December 23, 2013, <http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/2013/12/23/rise-in-citizenship-stripping-as-government-cracks-down-on-uk-fighters-in-syria/> (accessed April 27, 2014).

¹⁹³ Sandvik, Siv, "Tadjik om Frp-forslag:- Kan føre til skjerpet terrortrussel mot Norge", [Tadjik On FrP-Suggestion: - Can Lead to Heightened Terror Threat Against Norway], *Nrk*, April 22, 2014, <http://www.nrk.no/norge/tadjik-advarer-mot-frp-forslag-1.11677457> (accessed April 27, 2014).

Prominent leaders of organizations and mosques in Norway do argue that radicalization is non-existing within their four walls. However, hidden microphones, interviews and observations conducted have revealed their rather contentious ideology and views about society. They regard themselves as conservative. However, unaware, they appear in the media expressing threat and hatred towards Norwegians and Jews while distancing from democracy, the West and our values. They also travel overseas to fight and show support for their nation. Reports and observations by consultants from HRS do evidently demonstrate the hidden radicalization process within mosques and organizations in Norway. For instance, both the ICC and IMQ are branches of worldwide religious political parties. These parties work for Islamic world domination based on a two-nation theory, with Muslims as the leading nation (the Community of Faith) controlling other nation's non-Muslims under Sharia laws.¹⁹⁴ Following a point made by right-wing politician Abid Raja, it is necessary to take a closer look at the "mother's milk" being provided in mosques and organizations around in Norway. Mosques and organization might alienate themselves from radicalization. They opt for an educational method to teach young and old the importance of Islam and its meaning in life, as well as to build bridges between Muslims and non-Muslims. However, taking a closer look at the methods employed, when educating, in terms of for instances library books and conferences organized, there is clearly a "hidden" indoctrination of radical and violent extremist rhetoric happening within their four walls.

¹⁹⁴ Karlsen, Rita, "To moskeer i Norge: med blick på kvinners status", [Two Mosques in Norway: An Eye on Women's Status]: 37.

PART 4: GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO RADICALIZATION

Overview

As can be drawn from the definitions previously outlined, radicalization is a process in which a person increasingly accepts the use of violence to achieve their political goals. It is not prone to one specific ideology, but can transpire in all types of beliefs, political agendas, and ideologies. Radicalization and recruitment to radical environments are happening worldwide. In Norway, there is a clear trend of young Norwegian-Muslim citizens supportive of an extreme and violent ideology. Some have a polarized worldview, while others seek these environments on search for belongingness in a society they feel left out from.

Norway, despite its low level of threat, is still in need of a pre-cautionary approach to collective security. Some of its fundamental values stress popular sovereignty, freedom of expression and speech, among others. Given the law on how everyone shall be heard regardless of a person's identity, no one should force his or her views on others via force. Seeing a world in rapid change due to both domestic and international events, there is no guarantee that serious state of affairs will arise. There is a need to prevent undesirable behavior, such as radicalization and violent actions. The Norwegian approach will be outlined below, in accordance with Norway's Exit-Program, public-civil cooperation, and others.

Countering Radicalization: National Action Plan 2010

The first action plan to be published in Norway was “Collective Security- a Shared Responsibility” (Dec. 1st 2010), and stressed the importance of countering radicalization and violent extremism. The plan consists of thirty steps grounded within these four key pillars:

1. Increased knowledge and information;
2. Strengthening authority co-operations;
3. Strengthen dialogue and increased involvement; and
4. The support of vulnerable and at-risk individuals.¹⁹⁵

Five days after launching the Action Plan, the Norwegian government introduced a website called, *Radikalisering.no*, as a tool to encourage the population in reporting signs of prospective radicalization, and give advice and knowledge on radicalization and violent extremism. Additionally, it is useful for employees of municipalities, schools, child welfare or police and young people themselves, as well as for others who work closely with youth and parents.¹⁹⁶ PST has noted that the threat picture in Norway has developed in the course of increased radicalization among young Norwegian-Muslims willing to support extremist Islamic ideology. The main challenge in a prosperous country as Norway is not the lack of resources, in order to prevent and tackle radicalization and extremism, however, to pull out knowledge on what to do and how to counter radicalization. Owing the lack of challenging episodes of radicalization, Norway has had look at counter-radicalization experiences in neighboring countries, like the UK, Denmark and the Netherlands, in furtherance of composing Action Plan 2010. Furthermore, the plan is under supervision by the Ministry of Justice and the Police.¹⁹⁷

Thus, the government has recognized the need for an inter-sectorial plan, with a focal point on *preventative actions* in the early stages, and in cooperation with different sectors. Hence, prevent rather than repair after the occurrence of an event. Knowledge is the fundamental pillar and prerequisite tool to ensure effective and targeted preventative actions. This knowledge ought to be available for authorities for them to fully understand radicalization, and for measures against, and awareness of, target groups to be based on

¹⁹⁵ Ministry of Justice and Public Security, ”Collective Security- a Shared Responsibility”: 7.

¹⁹⁶ Ministry of Justice and Public Security, ”Radikalisering: informasjon fra departementene”, [Radicalization: Information from the Ministries], *Regjeringen*, <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/sub/radikalisering/forside.html?id=663759> (accessed March 27, 2014).

¹⁹⁷ Vidino, Lorenzo and Brandon, James, ”Countering Radicalization in Europe”: 61.

informed knowledge.¹⁹⁸ A relatively large part of society is affected by the complexity of radicalization and violent extremism. Thus, responsibility is not given solely to one Ministry but distributed equally within both state and municipal levels. Strengthened and constructive dialogue among charitable, cultural and religious organizations, and minority as well as majority cooperation are key elements in countering radicalization.¹⁹⁹

As stated above, the Action Plan consists of a number of steps that are to be undertaken by the different ministries. For instance, the Ministry of Justice and Police ought to “establish a resource group made up of researchers”, to set up an inter-sectorial co-ordination group to supervise the continuation of the Action Plan”, and to “further the police preventative talks”.²⁰⁰ Moreover, the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion is assigned the responsibility for organizing a “training course in Norwegian social sciences and democratic understanding for recently arrived immigrants”. Additionally, the Ministry of Education and Research ought to perform measures that will make the completion of secondary school education among people higher.²⁰¹ Along these lines, it is apparent how the Action Plan aims towards a diversity of goals with ministries, where some focus more on institutional interpretation of radicalization and its challenges, while others are more attentive on the promotion of integration and inter-sectorial co-operation.

Empowerment Conversations

The cornerstone of Norway’s counter-radicalization strategy is its *Empowerment Conversations*, which are managed by the local police forces. It is aiming at an individual guiding of young people involved in political extremism and violence back en route for the mainstream, as an alternative for being prosecuted.²⁰² The advantages of these conversations are early intervention and their influence in preventing the development of unsolicited or criminal behavior.²⁰³ Furthermore, the individuals eligible for preventative talks may possibly be identified by police officers, teachers, council workers, religious leaders, youth clubs, or concerned local citizens.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁸ Ministry of Justice and Public Security, ” Collective Security- a Shared Responsibility”: 7.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid: 8.

²⁰⁰ Ibid: 26.

²⁰¹ Ibid 26.

²⁰² Vidino, Lorenzo and Brandon, James, ”Countering Radicalization in Europe”: 62-63.

²⁰³ Ministry of Justice and Public Security, ” Collective Security- a Shared Responsibility”: 16.

²⁰⁴ Vidino, Lorenzo and Brandon, James: 63.

The conversations degenerate with the police officers having to describe possible consequences of his/ her respective actions and the outcome of the chosen path (jail, sentences, poverty, disrespect from the populace, unemployment, and drug addictions), while further explaining likely losses, such as social status, stability, money and health. Hereafter, he/ she is asked to name friends that are having negative influences over them, as well as encouraged to distance him-/herself from extremist ideology and seek positive influence.²⁰⁵ There will be regular check-ups of the individual's progress in addition to regular meetings at the police station.²⁰⁶

The Action Plan points to the preventative talks made during the Gaza demonstrations 2008/2009 as a successful example of the *Empowerment Conversations*. Talks were systematically used in order to prevent any negative developments.²⁰⁷ The total number of 194 people (of which a large share of them were under 24 years old, and 72 were under the age of 18) were called in due to violence and threats towards the police and military forces, and for their refusal of removing themselves from the area of demonstration.²⁰⁸ Gro Smedsrud, Chief Inspector at Manglerud police station in Oslo, argues that:

*"...the experiences we have made following the Gaza demonstrations is that police crime prevention officers and professional groups who work with children and young people are now visibly present at demonstrations. Being recognized by local police crime prevention officers or youth workers has a preventive effect. Officers' knowledge of individuals can also be used to develop the right strategies prior to planned demonstrations".*²⁰⁹

Along these lines, preventative talks are performed to determine the situation and networks among youth; localize offenses made; and the risk for any repeat of crime. Moreover, making youth accountable for their performance is further emphasized, in addition to discussing preventative actions of criminal development.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid: 64.

²⁰⁷ Ministry of Justice and Public Security: 16.

²⁰⁸ Kristofersen, Ove, "SaLTø årsmelding 2009", [SaLTø Annual Report 2009], *Oslo kommune and Oslo Politidistrikt*, 2009, http://www.salto.oslo.kommune.no/getfile.php/Salto%20%28PROSJEKT-SALTO%29/Internett%20%28PROSJEKT-SALTO%29/Dokumenter/salto_aarsmelding_2009_reduced.pdf (accessed March 24, 2014): 19.

²⁰⁹ Ministry of Justice and Public Security: 16.

Exit-Program

In the mid-1997, Tore Bjørgo, police officers and concerned parents of previous members of racist groups collaborated in order to initiate the Exit-Program; a three-year project funded by Norwegian Ministries and hosted by the non-governmental organization, *Adults for Children*. The focal points were:

- “Aiding and supporting young people who want to disengage from racist or other violent groups;
- Supporting parents with children in racist or violent groups, establishing local networks for parents; and
- Developing and disseminating knowledge and methods to professions working with youths associated with violent groups”.²¹⁰

The Exit-Program has given support to people who seek help to withdraw from extreme environments by offering individual guidance, group sessions with other pre-radicals, and provide them with the help in establishing new social networks and relations with government agencies.²¹¹ The work, previously included in the Exit-project, has been transferred in the ordinary counter-radicalization work of the police and other agencies. The *Empowerment Conversations* mentioned above are an example of this work.

Trust-Building Work

Besides the *Empowerment Conversations*, Norwegian counter-radicalization strategy is also attentive to cooperative efforts with Muslim communities and religious organizations. The strategy aims at diminishing the development of prospective local grievance among the locals, driving back the flowering of extremist ideology within respective communities, and building trust and relationships with Muslim groups. The local police mediate with mosques on a regular basis, and discuss questions related to crime, drug and alcohol use, and anti-social behaviour among others.²¹² Yngve Carlsson, Special Advisor at the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities, states, “...the government regularly creates

²¹⁰ Bjørgo, Tore, *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement* (Park Square and New York: Routledge, 2009): 136.

²¹¹ Thoresen, Jan Erik, ”Radikalisering og ekstremisme”, [Radicalization and Extremism], *Kvinnens Frivillige Beredskap*, No. 2, 2013, http://www.kfb.no/Images/File/TS_2-13%20KFB.pdf (accessed March 24, 2014): 17.

²¹² Vidino, Lorenzo and Brandon, James: 65.

*dialogue between churches, atheists and immigrant groups. People talk easily across religious boundaries and so conflicts are few”.*²¹³

Civil Society Cooperation

It is a fact that young Norwegian Muslims are being recruited to radical environments. Tina Shagufta Kornmo, Chairman of LIM, argues that the fight against radical ideas can only succeed if each and one of us engage with a certain attitude, calling attention to parents of both ethnic Norwegian and immigrated children.²¹⁴ By the same token, the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Police contends that preventing radicalization and violent extremism is a shared responsibility, and something the police alone is not capable of. According to the Ministry:

“Various stakeholders ought to be involved in the early stages of prevention. Prevention is an important local responsibility, because it is the local actors who are closest to identify warning signs and take early control of the problem before it develops further”.²¹⁵

Managing a functioning cooperative system between police and other local stakeholders is key to prevent marginalization. Schools, childcare, healthcare, NAV (Norwegian Labor and Welfare Service), local authorities, and youth workers are examples of local stakeholders who should be included, and work together to prevent early stages of radicalization. In accordance to the society as a whole, immigrants themselves are also responsible for their level of integration. Hence, their attitudes, desire for understanding and acceptance are factors for them to consider in order to be socially accepted. Language is a vital factor in the process of employment and the building of a social network.²¹⁶ If lacking these factors, it is easy to feel disconnected, isolated and left behind. Consequently, the rest of society is to engage themselves through tolerance, patience and the willingness to help. Mutual respect, openness and understanding are key factors in the attempt to bridge the cultural differences, and leaving the mind-set of “that does not concern me” behind.

²¹³ Ibid: 66.

²¹⁴ Thoresen, Jan Erik, ”Radikalisering og ekstremisme”, [Radicalization and Extremism]: 15.

²¹⁵ Ministry of Justice and Public Security, ”Forebygging av radikalisering and voldelig ekstremisme”, [Preventing Radicalization and Violent Extremism], *Regjeringen*, September 20, 2012, <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/sub/radikalisering/om-forebyggende-arbeid/forebyggende-av-radikalisering-og-voldel.html?id=663830> (accessed March 25, 2014).

²¹⁶ Thoresen, Jan Erik, ”Radikalisering og ekstremisme”, [Radicalization and Extremism]: 16.

Norwegian Muslims are not a homogeneous group. They come from various countries with different backgrounds and religious affiliations. Some families live isolated from Norwegian society, their parents are unfamiliar with the Norwegian language, and perform strict parenting compared to ethnic Norwegians. Their children might feel vulnerable, frustrated and lose their sense of identity, which again makes them fragile and exposed to radical environments according to the theory of social movement outlined above. Thus, preventative strategies performed locally are vital. Owing this, Norway has included the importance of cooperation forums in local communities between the police and SLT (coordination of local substance abuse and crime prevention).²¹⁷

SLT started in the 1990s as a project within seven counties in order to strengthen the coordination between government agencies, educational professionals, and voluntary organizations.²¹⁸ At present, around 200 counties are organized in accordance to the SLT-model, and approximately 13 million NOK (approximately \$2,000,000) are earmarked for drug- and crime preventative work.²¹⁹ It represents the model of cooperation on local and preventative measures against drugs and criminality, and aims at coordinating knowledge, expertise and resources already existing between local government units and the police. Furthermore, it includes two key parts of the community; hence, business and non-governmental organizations.²²⁰

Civil society cooperation and the private sector may help stimulating critical thinking among youth, which could make them capable of questioning extremist propaganda. This is a central element in the Norwegian Action Plan. It is of value that young people, for instance in school, attain the knowledge needed about cultural diversity, democratic values, stereotyping and extremism, in order to raise critical questions about the information they encounter. According to Kornmo, identity is a complex phenomenon. Religious values ought not to overshadow everything else, however, young people should learn that being critical of attitudes in their own environments is not the same as to renounce from their Muslim identity.²²¹ Furthermore, areas of importance in securing well-established preventative strategies are the educational – and health sectors. As stated in the Action Plan, it is about offering students proficient knowledge, let them face demands and challenges that stimulate

²¹⁷ Ibid: 17.

²¹⁸ Meld. St. 21 (2012-2013), ”Terrorberedskapen”, [Terror Preparedness]: 32.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ KRÅD, ”Dette er SLT”, [This is SLT], *Det Kriminalitetsforebyggende Råd*, <http://www.krad.no/slt/modellen/hva-er-slt> (accessed march 25, 2014).

²²¹ Thoresen, Jan Erik: 17.

for further learning. Considering the above mentioned as the key responsibility of the educational sector, it is equally important to prevent marginalization that can partake in the process of youths' involvement in criminal environments.²²² During spring 2010, a working group for awareness-raising activities within the school system was initiated. It aimed at observing how schools can work systematically and comprehensively against racism, discrimination and anti-Semitism; encourage for stronger cooperation between school and parents/ guardians as to influence values and attitudes among children; and examine the tools employed in deterring undesirable behavior among both students and teachers.²²³ A collaborative relationship between the educational system and parents will benefit counter-radicalization work by taking advantage of parents as next of kin and their position as observers of possibly opposing children. Likewise, the educational system may help parents in confronting difficult and conflicting children. Hence, they complement each other in different ways.

On the other hand, PST is faced with rather complex threats, and as stated, the most serious threat comes in the form for politically motivated violence, such as extreme Islamism. Efforts to prevent people, with ties to Norway, involved in terrorist attacks are regarded as the key in counter-terrorism work, owing that the emergence of an active Islamist environment could possible contribute to increased polarization between different groups in Norway. Thus, this polarization may eventually become one of the main reasons for a more serious threat from right-wing extremism in Norway, with the result of another 22nd July terrorist attack.

Terrorist Attack in Norway: July 22nd 2011

Two sequential attacks, performed by right-wing extremist Anders Behring Breivik, struck Norway on July 22nd 2011, an attack that claimed the lives of 77 people. The first, a car bomb, exploded in the executive government area, *Regjeringskvartalet*, killed 8 and injured more than 200 people. The second, occurred at Utøya, Tyrifjorden, at a youth camp organized by AUF (division of the ruling Norwegian Labour Party AP), where Breivik himself subsequently opened fire and killed 69 people, in addition to 110 injured. According to Sentio (market research and public opinion, Norway), every fourth person in Norway knew someone

²²² Ministry of Justice and Public Security, "Collective Security- a Shared Responsibility": 21-22.

²²³ Ibid: 22.

who was affected by the terror attack.²²⁴ A year later, on August 24th 2012, Breivik was sentenced to 21 years of preventive detention.²²⁵ The terrorist attacks obviously scared a whole nation, however, what was the effect on the Muslim community and the Norwegian public at large?

The Effect on Norwegian Public at Large

The core target of Breivik's attack was aimed at Norway's democracy and political system. However, it was also an attack on the public society, as in the appreciation of Norway's open society and against politically active youth. Instead of entering the stage of division and conflict, the public at large emerged into a more mobilized, trusting and engaged civil society. Kari Steen-Johnsen, Guro Ødegård and Dag Wollebæk released a study regarding the consequences of the terrorist attack on the civil society. According to their study, dimensions of attitudes and behavior of relevance for civil society, such as trust and the role of social media are prominent factors for discussion.²²⁶ By measuring the effect by the use of trust as an element, their study revealed that whether people can be seen as trustworthy had increased to 52 percent, while only 23 percent were mistrustful.²²⁷ The level of trust had a clear increase among youth and the middle-aged. Also, many of the younger generation had reportedly become more trusting, but they had the largest share of the mistrusted population. Additionally, the terrorist attack seemed to have had a more momentous experience on the younger generation in comparison with the older age groups. The level of trust regarding people you interact with in everyday life, such as friends, family and neighbors, was unchanged. At last, confidence in the unknown and people of little acquaintance had increased.²²⁸

When it comes to the role of social media, the study revealed that its role matter. As part of the mobilization of *rosetoget* (huge amount of people lining up with roses) on Monday 25th 2011, many organizations and individuals used Facebook as a tool to inform the civil

²²⁴ Skjeseth, Alf, "1 av 4 kjenner rammede", [1 in 4 Knows Affected Ones], *Klassekampen*, August 19, 2011, <http://www.klassekampen.no/59186/article/item/null/-av--kjenner-rammede> (accessed October 11, 2014).

²²⁵ Lewis, Mark, and Lyall, Sarah, "Norway Mass Killer Gets the Maximum: 21 Years", *The New York Times*, August 24, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/25/world/europe/anders-behring-breivik-murder-trial.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 (accessed October 10, 2014).

²²⁶ Wollebæk, Dag, et.al., (2011), "Hva gjør terroren med oss som sivilsamfunn?", [How Does the Terror Affect Us As A Civil Society?], *Centre for Research on Civil Society and Vountary Sector*, <http://www.sivilsamfunn.no/Ressurser/Publikasjoner/Notater/2011-009> (accessed 13.10.2014): 8.

²²⁷ Ibid:73.

²²⁸ Ibid: 73.

society about events across Norway. The survey displayed that 33 percent of the respondents asked participated in *rosetoget* after the attack. Furthermore, many of the participants had previously participated in demonstrations and actions of political nature, however, as many as a quarter had not. These “debutants” were, on average, younger than other participants- 45 percent of them were under the age of 40. In conjunction with this, 43 percent reported that they first heard about the event on Facebook, 30 percent said traditional media, while 21 percent via personal contact.²²⁹ Hence, as an effect of the terrorist attack, a new form of grassroots mobilization via social media has become a mainstay in Norwegian society.

The effect that July 22nd had on the civil society in Norway has been prominent in the form of the awareness around valuing and appreciating people we meet, and encounter engagement with trust instead of fear. The attack intended to spread fear and distrust within society, however, the attack actually brought people closer together. In spite of this, what was the effect on the Muslim population?

The Effect on the Muslim Population

In the hours between the attacks and the announcement of the perpetrator, some Muslims had to face invectives and name-calling. The Norwegian Centre Against Racism was asked to perform a survey on the attitudes among civil society in the hours prior to the announcement. They were in contact with 60-70 people and interviewed about 16, and some disturbing stories were revealed. For instance, a young Somali woman told she had some of her hair pulled, a Kurdish man experienced violence on a bus, and a Muslim man overheard a conversation in which youths discussed their desire to taste Muslim blood.²³⁰

Historically, Islamic threat in Western Europe has been minor. However, looking at the world in general, 25 percent of all terrorist attacks are related to extremist Muslims, according to American’s annual report on terrorism in 2007.²³¹ Additionally, the threat picture after the 9/11 attacks, the Mohammed cartoons controversy, and Norwegian military contribution to international conflicts, has changed. This is why some concluded that the July 22nd attacks were Islamic acts of terror. “The Muslim terrorist” of thought was incorporated in

²²⁹ Ibid: 74.

²³⁰ Norwegian Centre Against Racism, “Årsrapport 2012”, <http://www.antirasistisk-senter.no/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Antirasistisk-senters-%C3%A5rsrapport-2012-web.pdf> (accessed 14.10.2014): 5.

²³¹ Østli, Kjetil, ”Jakten på rasistvolden etter 22. Juli”, [The View on Racist Violence After July 22nd], *Aftenposten*, January 28, 2012. <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/Jakten-pa-rasistvolden-etter-22juli-6751209.html> (accessed 14.10.2014).

people's mind-set; even Muslims whom Aftenposten (Norwegian newspaper) interviewed that day thought jihadists were behind. Prejudice, through racist slander and physical violence against Muslims, in particular, was visible.

However, whether this prejudice is true or not, is debatable. There are 27 police districts in Norway. According to the police log for assault, harassment and violence against immigrants, there had not been registered any cases. Even the police in Oslo had not had any registrations of recorded violence against Muslims in the hours after the attack.²³² Moreover, a study released by Statistics Norway, "Attitudes Towards Immigrants and Immigration in 2011", reveals that Norway has become more friendly towards immigrants in recent years, especially after July 22nd. The share of who agree that immigrants enrich cultural life of Norway rose with 9 per cent after the terrorist attacks. The most promising difference was seen in response to the statement "immigrants are a source of insecurity in society", where 48 per cent disagreed prior to the attacks, while 70 percent disagreed after.²³³ Abid Raja expressed his views on the attacks in an interview with Aftenposten. Raja underlined the ugliness of Breivik's attacks, and believed that the outcome and every-day for Muslims would have become difficult if the attacker was named Mohammed rather than Anders.²³⁴ The article in Aftenposten, highlights further that, in general, the view of Muslims in the country has changed, and that Muslims no longer are seen as a homogenous group.

Ultimately, as stated in the Norwegian Action Plan, civil society cooperation and the private sector are key components for stimulating critical thinking. Broad and coordinated efforts across organizations, agencies and professions, both nationally and locally within each county, is important. Thus, it is equally important to emphasize the involvement of immigrants in the preventative work.

National Action Plan 2014

The government is currently in the process of crafting a new Action Plan that will be published sometime during the spring. The table below illustrates key differences.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Blom, Svein, "Holdninger til innvandrere of innvandring 2011", [Attitudes Towards Immigrants and Immigration 2011], SSB, December, Rapport 41/2011, http://www.ssb.no/a/publikasjoner/pdf/rapp_201141/rapp_201141.pdf (accessed 14.10.2014): 25.

²³⁴ Sandvik, Siv, "Mindre muslimhets etter 22. Juli", [Less Muslim-hate After July 22], *Aftenposten*, September 22, 2011, <http://www.nrk.no/norge/-mindre-muslimhets-etter-22.-juli-1.7802926> (accessed 14.10.2014).

Table 5: Differences Between Action Plan 1 & 2

ACTION PLAN 2010/2013²³⁵	ACTION PLAN 2014 -²³⁶
Increased knowledge and information	Increase knowledge and competence
Strengthening authority co-operation	Strengthen co-operation for early preventative measures
Strengthen dialogue and increased involvement	Prevent the growth of extreme environments
The support of vulnerable and at-risk individuals	Prevent the use of Internet as an arena for recruitment and radicalization
--	Strengthen international co-operation

In order to set up a specific plan of action that works, the government has decided to create working groups based on different areas of expertise. The involved ministries ought to propose ways and actions that the working groups are assigned to consider. Furthermore, the working groups present their results on how to best prevent radicalization and violent extremism to Anders Anundsen, the Minister of Justice and Public Security. The focal points, of which the working groups are to take into consideration for Action Plan 2014, are listed above. According Anundsen, a vital factor of consideration is the use of the Internet. The world is continuously “shrinking” due to communication via Internet. People are able to communicate across borders, with a speed that have no intention of haltering. Hence, according to Anundsen, the key factor to examine is “the fight against challenges created by the Internet”.²³⁷ Additionally, owing Norway’s lack of experience and data gathering on radicalization and violent extremism, Anundsen points to a strengthened international cooperation with the aim of improving Norway’s knowledge acquisition.²³⁸ A broader knowledge of different actors, conditions and explanations are an absolute necessity in countering the process of radicalization and violent extremism. Relevant knowledge and

²³⁵ Ministry of Justice and Public Security, ” Collective Security- a Shared Responsibility”.

²³⁶ Ministry of Justice and Public Security, “Ny handlingsplan mot radikalisering”, [New Action Plan Against Radicalization], *Regjeringen*, November 5, 2013, Press Release No.:106, <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/jd/press-center/pressemeldinger/20131/ny-handlingsplan-mot-radikalisering.html?id=745025> (accessed March 27, 2014).

²³⁷ Anundsen, Anders, ”Ny strategi for å forebygge og bekjempe radikalisering”, [New Strategy to Prevent and Combat Radicalization], *Ministry of Justice and Public Security*, November 4, 2013, Live broadcast, http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/jd/lyd_bilde/nett-tv/nett-tv-strategi-radikalisering.html?id=744959 (accessed March 10, 2014).

²³⁸ Ibid.

expertise can be obtained from social groups and actors, as well as academic fields.²³⁹ Thus, a close collaboration across sectors is key for a successful counter-radicalization performance.

International Cooperation

For the sake of Norway and its lack of experience with radicalization, its participation in international forums will prove as a highly useful method for monitoring the work against radicalization; to gain experience and knowledge from other countries' struggle with radical Islamists. Thus, Norway is more likely to be ensured a wider supply of information as if Norway was to depend their radicalization efforts based on own experiences.

Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN)

In September 2011, Norway partook in the European Commission's initial meeting for the RAN network: an umbrella network for local actors and practitioners working on radicalization and violent extremism.²⁴⁰ The intent idea behind the network is the sharing of practical work experiences in addition to composing recommendations to policy makers. The areas of which are being covered are: prison and probation, de-radicalization, the Internet and social media, victims of extremism and inner/ outer dimensions, police, health, and foreign-oriented work.²⁴¹

Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

FATF is the leading inter-governmental organ for the combat of money laundering and finance of terrorism, and aims at promoting "effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating...threats to the integrity of the international financial system".²⁴² FATF has developed 40 recommendations directed towards the 180 Member States that lay down the minimum measures for countries to undertake in order to prevent terrorists, and their supporters from accessing the international financial system. For instance, the identification of customers and the reporting of suspicious transactions is a requirement for the financial institutions.²⁴³ FATF's mandate was renewed in 2012, and on July 1st the same year, Norway took over the Presidency for a period of one year.²⁴⁴

²³⁹ Meld. St. 21 (2012-2013), "Terrorberedskapen", [Terror Preparedness]: 33.

²⁴⁰ Ibid: 41.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² FATF, "Who We Are", <http://www.fatf-gafi.org/pages/aboutus/> (accessed April 23, 2014).

²⁴³ Meld. St. 21 (2012-2013): 42.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

Police- and Security Services (PSS) Internationally

The government in Norway has stressed the importance of actively sustain and expand the international PSS cooperation that Norway engages in. International agreements on police and judicial cooperation on combating terrorism is on the agenda, as well as collaborating agreements on counter-terrorism between PSS in the Nordic countries.²⁴⁵ Norway's PST participates in several forums for PSS, such as the 'Club of Bern' (between the EU, Switzerland and Norway); the EU's "Counter Terrorist Group"; NATO's "Civilian Intelligence Committee"; and the "Police Working Group on Terrorism", a forum for security services of the police.²⁴⁶ Furthermore, Norway is a member of Interpol and signed a cooperation agreement with Europol in 2001, and has two liaison officers stationed at Europol's headquarters.²⁴⁷

Nordic Cooperation on Radicalization

Young radicalized men and women travel to fight the Syrian civil war while others go to fight with militant groups in Somalia. This has inspired Nordic countries to cooperate on the fight against extremism and radical Islamists. Anders Anundsen is Norway's new Minister of Justice, and the first initiative performed by Anundsen was to process a new National Action Plan (as outlined above), which pointed out the importance of cooperation between countries in pursuance of benefiting from other's knowledge. Norway faces the same challenges and problems as its neighboring countries. Thus, "*cooperation and coordinative efforts against radicalization and extremist violence is a key to better fight the forces that employ violence and terror*", Anundsen said in an interview with Dagbladet.²⁴⁸

Upon Return

According to Martin Bernsen, PST's chief of information, an individual assessment of returning citizens are made with the actions taken depending on their different backgrounds, both ethnically and socially, ranging from indictment to individual follow-up in the person's local municipality. Additionally, Bernsen explains that some are assisted back to education or

²⁴⁵ Ibid: 56.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ibid: 57.

²⁴⁸ Hultgreen, Gunnar, "Nordisk kamp mot terror", [Nordic Fight Against Terror], *Dagbladet*, January 14, 2014, <http://www.dagbladet.no/2014/01/13/nyheter/terror/radikalisering/norden/31262502/> (accessed April 23, 2014).

work; some receive treatment for their traumatic experiences, while others return to their criminal career.²⁴⁹

The Eastern part of Norway has been mostly affected by radicalization, and Østfold has become Norway's most radicalized county. However, the Empowerment Conversations have proven successful in countering radicalization. Chief of police in Østfold, Beate Gangås, stresses that the approach among the police in Østfold is broad and opens to the challenge of radicalization of young people travelling to these countries, pointing out that each individual who has travelled, or who are at risk, are individuals who require individual attention. Gangås further points at the work of the local police in making themselves available by cooperating closely with schools, municipalities, and mosques, while simultaneously raising the awareness about radicalization in the police, as important preventative measures.²⁵⁰ As stated in Meld.St 21 (2012-2013), the countering of radicalization and violent extremism is not primarily a government responsibility alone, but equally important an individual and community based responsibility.²⁵¹ The wide range of instruments held by the different fields of expertise ought to be shared in order to help maintaining an inclusive society that values diversity, allows for an open and critical public debate, and protect democratic public values. As a counter measure to radicalization is dialogue. What we as a society can do is demand transparency. More transparency in, for instance media, will help spreading knowledge on radicalization nationally as well as locally, while simultaneously raising the possibility of attaining more information from the population. Gangås confirms this, and underlines that the focus on transparency has given the police more input from society, and led to an increase of Empowerment Conversations with several young people, including minors as young as 14-15 years-old whose alarming behavior has dissolved.²⁵²

Key Lessons

²⁴⁹ Stokke, Olga, "PST: Flere islamister har kommet tilbake fra Syria etter nyttår", [PST: Islamists have Returned from Syria After the New Year], *Aftenposten*, April 04, 2014, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/PST-Flere-islamister-har-kommet-tilbake-fra-Syria-etter-nyttar-7527021.html#.U11dAseT6vN> (accessed April 27, 2014).

²⁵⁰ Stokke, Olga, "Har hatt bekymringssamtaler om ekstremisme med tenåringer", [Have Had Empowerment Conversations with Teenagers About Extremism], *Aftenposten*, February 28, 2014, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/Har-hatt-bekymringssamtaler-om-ekstremisme-med-tenaringer-7485480.html#.U1z3w8eT6vN> (accessed April 27, 2014).

²⁵¹ Meld.St 21 (2012-2013): 31.

²⁵² Stokke, Olga, "Har hatt bekymringssamtaler om ekstremisme med tenåringer", [Have Had Empowerment Conversations with Teenagers About Extremism].

Table 7: Main Points of Norway’s Counter-radicalization. ²⁵³

Reform rather than punishment	To guide young individuals away from potential radical ideas and negative influence; inspire the accomplishment of mainstream course; Judicial alternative is last resort; prosecution might be deferred if help and support is accepted.
Non-theological approach	Counter-radicalization approach is non-religious and highly secular. It underlines the importance of obtaining practical solutions to problems, social exclusion and failure. Ordinary Norwegian civil servants perform most work, however, with assistance from schools, housing associations, and police officers.
The adoption of Norwegian values	Encircle the importance of helping and guiding potentially radically exposed individuals back on the right track according to Norwegian values.
Counter-radicalization is police-led	The work is predominantly police-led, although, in co-operation with a diversity of Ministries and departments. Key is community policing.
Importance of winning community trust	Radicalization work relies on government and police co-operation, and the hearts and minds of Norwegian Muslims and Norwegian Muslim organizations. Key is dialogue with Muslims.

²⁵³ Vidino, Lorenzo and Brandon, James: 68.

PART 5: CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

This paper has looked into Islamic radicalization in Norway. Radicalization has been defined as “...a process where a person increasingly accepts the use of violence in order to achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives”.²⁵⁴ According to PST, Norway has been exposed to a growing number of Norwegian citizens supporting an extreme and violent ideology. However, mainly situated in the eastern part of Norway and the Oslofjord area. A violent multi-ethnic Islamist environment has aroused, in which young people socialize. Some have a polarized view of the world, while others actively seek towards these extreme environments. The majority of the Muslim population in Norway is peaceful; however, there are Muslim supporters of radical ideologies and violent extremism. An argument forwarded by this paper is that radical Muslims have been/continue being influenced by radical ideologies of preachers during conferences, lectures, social media groups, and literature provided by different mosques and organizations. Worth highlighting are TIC’s uttering of supporting al-Shabaab and their invitation of radical speakers. Accordingly, the ICC and IMQ’s offering of examinations by the OIU, and their libraries rich on Islamic literature, justifying gender discrimination and alluding to violent Islamic jihad. There, as well as the Prophet’s Ummah’s preaching of Islam clearly have an influence, seeing the case studies where foreign fighters and supporters of terrorist attacks in Syria and Somalia respectively have been active within Norwegian Muslim congregations.

Countering radicalization is part of the Norwegian government’s strategy against terrorism. Thus, better knowledge on radical individuals/groups, framework conditions, and explanations of factors that lead young people into the tunnel of radicalization, accompanied by research and data-gathering are key actions to work on

²⁵⁴ PST, “Åpen Trusselvurdering 2013”, [Open Threat Assessment 2913]: 4.

to counter the growth of radicalization. Preventing radicalization and violent extremism ought to be based on a wide spectre of instruments. Noteworthy, government ministries, security services, individuals, and the society in general are to cooperate, and make sure their efforts lead to the protection of collective beliefs and values that reject violence as a political weapon. Government efforts are to facilitate equal rights for all citizens irrespective of social or ethnic origin, accompanied by good living conditions, day care, quality education for all, high employment and comprehensive welfare systems, among others. On the individual level, the ability of early intervention to hinder any negative development among children and adolescents should be present, as well as the ability to prevent people from taking the nearest exit when they experience lack of belongingness in the society. Looking at the process of integration as a whole, it is about, both the individual responsibilities amongst immigrants themselves, and the society they are aiming to be integrated in to. It is about attitude, willingness and friends, hence, building a network. If one lack a social network, ignorance and isolation are likely to occur.

Among other things, what is required are high-functioning child protection services and well-established follow-up programs of youth and adolescents with behavioral challenges, which is preeminent in order to capture individuals inside to tunnel of radicalization. Thus, government efforts are demanded to strengthen the cooperative relationship between police, municipal authorities and other local actors; improve the base of knowledge; criminalize threats over Internet; and enhance and include the use of dialogue within preventative efforts. Of particular importance is obstruction of groups or communities from developing worldviews and ideologies that might legitimize and encourage violence, and at worse, acts of terrorism.

Research and data-gathering on the process of radicalization and terrorism is important. Research that will assist in building bridges that promote integration, a sense of equal belongingness and mutual respect, and thus, reduce the risk of Muslim youth in Norway from entering the tunnel of radicalization. The government is in need of additional knowledge within this field of research, and one way of attaining this knowledge is through dialogue. Listen to and take notes when Muslim youth in Norway utter their thoughts, feelings and experiences. By learning each other better knowing, mutual trust will develop. At last, this paper argues that the fight against Islamic radicalization can only succeed if the society can come together as one and

cooperate together. This would enable each one of us to take a clear stance on this multi-faced topic.

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ENDNOTES

ⁱ PST, or the Police Security Service, is the domestic intelligence service in Norway, and is considered a branch of the police service.

ⁱⁱ Brønnøysund Register Center is organised under the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and administers Altinn, Coordinates data in the public sector, and provides advisory services for business and industry. See www.brreg.no/english for more information.

ⁱⁱⁱ Statistics Norway (SSB) is the Norwegian statistics bureau.

^{iv} The survey by Sentio Research Norway AS consisted of a sample of 1,000 people over the age of 15, of which represented 493 and 507 men and women respectively. Sentio conducted phone interviews over the period 21-27 April 2009. With a survey of 1,000 people, it was estimated a margin error from 1,9 percentage points on a 10/90 split to a margin error of 1,3 percentage points on a 50/50 split. They also included the weighting of gender, age, and geography.

^v SWT translates as ”Glorified and Exalted”, and is always said after the mentioning of Allah.

^{vi} Fafo: International Institute for Applied International Studies.

^{vii} The Hawala-system is an informal system of transferring money across the world, and is often used to support illegal financing of terrorist activities.