

Institution: King's College London
Unit of Assessment: UoA 21
Title of case study: Terrorism and violent radicalisation
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>The research of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR) has had an impact on approaches to counter-terrorism and de-radicalisation, primarily in the United Kingdom but also in the European Union, United States of America, and Australia. The research has informed stakeholder thinking and aspects of policy in all these countries in relation to both Islamist-related terrorism and other forms of extremism (such as the far-right). It has also informed some specific changes to UK government policy.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Research undertaken by ICSR, under Prof Peter Neumann as its Founding Director since 2008 (employed by King's College London since September 2003), has focused on the policy challenges presented by radicalisation and political violence. This research focus corresponds with the priorities identified in the UK government's 2010 national security strategy, <i>A Strong Britain in an Age of Security: The National Security Strategy</i> (in which Al Qaeda-inspired and Northern Ireland-related terrorism were identified as 'Tier One' threats) and CONTEST – the Government's counter-terrorism strategy – which was revised and updated in June 2011 to encompass Far-Right extremism (ref. b, c, d, e and f below).</p> <p>Since 2005, Western governments – led by the United Kingdom – started implementing counter-radicalisation programmes whose principal purpose was to complement traditional counterterrorism efforts with a preventative component. In publishing several reports on aspects of radicalisation and counter-radicalisation, ICSR made an important contribution to anchoring this new area of policy practice in a body of scholarship and giving it empirical and conceptual grounding. Research by ICSR has helped establish the concept of counter-radicalisation (distinguishing it from counter-terrorism, de-radicalisation, disengagement, community policing, and other related concepts) and create awareness of key dilemmas and trade-offs (for example, the relationship between violent and non-violent extremism, and the dynamics of radicalisation and counter-radicalisation in online environments).</p> <p>The central debate in all the scholarship on Islamist-inspired and Far-Right radicalisation is the nature of the relationship between extreme ideas and violent actions (ref. b). A major concern for policymakers and researchers has been on identifying how, why and when certain individuals make the leap from holding radical ideas into actual acts of violence. ICSR's overall conclusion is that it is futile to search for a precise 'jump off' point between the two. This has been reflected in our policy recommendations for government across all of our reports (ref. a and e) and it is a conclusion now largely accepted by policy makers and civil servants.</p> <p>ICSR's contribution to thinking in this field can be broken down further into a number of more specific areas of focus. These include assessments of: existing theories of radicalisation (ref. a); the role of the internet in facilitating violent radicalisation and what can be done about it (ref. c and e); the problem of radicalisation in prisons (ref. d); Al Qaeda's English-language media strategy (ref. c); strategies used by extremist groups to recruit supporters; and the narratives and networks which underpin the emergence of a new 'Far Right' movement in the UK (ref. f).</p> <p>Growing out of this, another dimension of ICSR's work has been its evaluation of recent and existing government policy. Significant here is Neumann's report on <i>Preventing Violent Radicalisation in America</i> (ref. a and e), which examined British experiences of counter-radicalisation programmes in order to inform the US government's strategy for dealing with this problem. The report emphasised the sharing of best practices to inform the (then) emerging debate</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

about domestic counter-radicalisation in the United States. It contained chapters on European experiences in counter-radicalisation, focusing specifically on the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. The US government's policy, published in August 2011, reflected key conclusions of the report.

3. References to the research

- (a) Peter R. Neumann, 'Options and Strategies for Countering Online Radicalization in the United States', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 36(7) (2013) (in print)
- (b) Peter R. Neumann, 'The Trouble with Radicalization', *International Affairs*, 89(4) (2013).
- (c) Peter R. Neumann and Tim Stevens (Associate Fellow, ICSR), *Countering Online Radicalisation: A Strategy for Action* (ICSR: London, 2009), 55 pp.
- (d) Peter R. Neumann, *Prisons and Terrorism: Radicalisation and De-Radicalisation in 15 Countries* (ICSR in partnership with the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) in the University of Maryland: London, June 2010), 64 pp. £120k grant provided by UK Home Office, Australian Foreign Office, the National Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism Netherlands, and the US Department of Homeland Security.
- (e) Peter R. Neumann, *Preventing Violent Radicalization in America* (Bi-Partisan Policy Center, Washington DC: June 2011), 56 pp. Commissioned by the National Security Preparedness Group of the Bi-Partisan Policy Center in Washington DC.
- (f) Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens and Hans Brun (both PhD candidates and ICSR Fellows), *A Neo-Nationalist Network: The English Defence League and Europe's Counter-Jihad Movement* (ICSR: London, 2013), 72 pp.

4. Details of the impact

The first major report by ICSR, launched in Feb. 2009 on the subject of online radicalisation, helped inform UK government thinking on a new area of concern. On 17 Feb. 2009, Neumann met with the then UK Home Secretary Jacqui Smith to brief her about the key findings. Smith subsequently mentioned the report several times in a speech at the Annual Community Security Trust dinner on 2 March 2009. There was a further briefing with senior civil servants from the UK Home Office on 2 March, and on 12 March there was an Early Day Motion in the House of Commons recommending that the government take up the four main recommendations proposed by ICSR.

ICSR's research has also informed parliamentary scrutiny of government policy. On 1 June 2010, ICSR launched a report on prison radicalisation which was jointly funded by the UK Home Office, Australian Foreign Office, the National Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism Netherlands, and the US Department of Homeland Security. On 30 November 2011, Richard Pickering, Head of the Security Group in UK Prisons, was questioned extensively at a UK Home Affairs Select Committee Inquiry on the Roots of Radicalisation about the findings of the ICSR report on prisons, and the problems that it highlighted. On 6 December 2011, Neumann also gave evidence before the same Home Affairs committee about the report.

ICSR's research was prominent in the review and revision of the UK official strategy for Preventing Radicalisation that was undertaken by the government in 2011. In June 2011, both ICSR's reports on online radicalisation and on prison radicalisation were cited in the revised official strategy for Preventing Violent Radicalisation, alongside an earlier report co-written by Neumann and ICSR Associate Fellow Brooke Rogers on *Recruitment and Mobilisation for the Islamist Militant Movement*.

Our impact has also been notable outside the UK. Peter Neumann presented the findings of the

report on online radicalisation at a meeting with the German Federal Criminal Office (BKA) in Berlin on 25 February 2009 and then at a Council of Europe Conference on Terrorism and Cyber Security in Madrid on 16 April 2009 (after which the report's findings were included in the resolutions of the conference). Our 2010 report on prison radicalisation informed: a review of procedures for holding terrorist prisoners in the Dutch prison system (Dr. Hans van Miert of the Dutch National Counterterrorism Coordinator stated it was 'influential we were considering changes to our detention system for terrorist prisoners in 2010-2011'); the US State Department's outreach and training for foreign partners on de-radicalisation and prison radicalisation (Michael Jacobson of the U.S. State Department Bureau of Counterterrorism stated it was 'helpful in shaping my thinking on the subject'); and the Australian Dept. of Justice's Intervention Programmes to deal with radicalised prisoners (Australian Ambassador for Counter-Terrorism, Bill Paterson stated it had been 'used by the State Government of Victoria in the development of rehabilitation programs for convicted terrorists currently in detention in Victoria' and circulated to other state authorities).

An important aspect of ICSR's work has been to draw on the UK example to inform efforts by other governments to develop prevent strategies for violent extremism. In late 2010, Neumann was commissioned by the Bi-Partisan Policy Center in Washington DC to write a policy report on *Preventing Violent Radicalization in America: blueprint for a national strategy in the United States*, alongside Lee Hamilton and Thomas Kean, former Co-Chairs of the 9/11 Commission. Following the report's publication, Neumann testified before the US House Select Subcommittee on Terrorism on 27 July 2011 and most of the recommendations made in the report were incorporated in the US government's subsequent *Strategic Implementation Plan for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States*. This included recommendations on the structure and scope of counter-radicalisation efforts, their organisation within government, and the separation between community policing and counter-radicalisation, which the ICSR strongly emphasised. Indeed, we were subsequently informed by Arif Alikhan, former Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security, that the ICSR report was important in helping to 'adjust' and 'fine tune' the Department of Homeland Security's policy on counter-radicalisation.

Finally, as concerns about Far Right extremism have also grown in recent years, ICSR's pioneering work in this area has received attention from government. In March 2013, ICSR's report, *A Neo-Nationalist Network: The English Defence League and Europe's Counter-Jihad Movement*, was launched by the Home Office Minister for Crime and Security, James Brokenshire MP. In his address, he noted that 'the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation has a first class reputation in the field of counter-terrorism studies'.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact: available on request.

(i) Early Day Motion, House of Commons, 12 March 2009. ICSR report on internet radicalisation recommended as government policy: 'That this House recognises the growing concern at the role the internet plays in radicalising extremists; welcomes the report on Countering Online Radicalisation published by the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence at King's College London, in partnership with the Community Security Trust; and calls on the Government to take up the four main recommendations proposed by the report authors, which are to deter producers of illegal material, empower online communities, reduce the appeal of extremist messages and promote positive messages online.'

(ii) Council of Europe Conference on Terrorism and Cyber Security in Madrid on 16 April 2009. Recommendations presented by ICSR's report included in the resolutions of the conference (available on request).

(iii) References to four publications by Peter Neumann and three by ICSR in official review of UK Government's Review of Prevent Strategy (June 2011), pp. 87, 112-3.
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/counter-terrorism/prevent/prevent-strategy/prevent-strategy-review?view=Binary>

(iv) Peter Neumann's testimony before the US House Select Subcommittee on Terrorism on 27

Impact case study (REF3b)

July 2011, available at <<http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/300738-1>>

(v) *House of Commons Home Affairs Committee on the Roots of Radicalisation*, 22 November 2011. Richard Pickering, Head of the Security Group in UK Prisons, was questioned about the findings of the ICSR report on prisons, available at

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmhaff/1446/11112201.htm>

(vi) *House of Commons Home Affairs Committee*. Peter Neumann gave evidence before the committee on a number of issues relating to radicalisation. See *Home Affairs Committee – Nineteenth Report: Roots of Violent Radicalisation* (published 31 January 2012).

(vii) Private correspondence with: the Dutch National Terrorism Coordinator; the former Australian Counter-terrorism Ambassador; the Senior Advisor, US State Department Bureau of Counterterrorism.

(viii) On Wednesday 13 March, the Home Office Minister for Crime and Security, James Brokenshire MP, delivered a keynote address at an ICSR conference to launch ICSR's latest report on the far-right at which he said that 'the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation has a first class reputation in the field of counter-terrorism studies', available at

<http://icsr.info/2013/03/home-office-ministers-speech-at-icsr/>