

MONIKA GABRIELA BARTOSZEWICZ

Akademia Finansów i Biznesu Vistula

FORTRESS EUROPE: TERRORIST THREAT IN THE CONTEXT OF ISIS

This article analyses the terrorist threat in Europe in the context of the existence and activities of the Islamic State. The first part of this paper is devoted to the evolution of the terrorist threat in Europe, with particular emphasis on changes in its nature in the context of the Islamic State and the migration crisis. The second part of this article discusses three structural factors determining the level of terrorist threat on the European continent: the Schengen area, no-go zones and the related crime problem. The article then examines how both time and structural factors influence prevention and anti-terrorist strategies that must deal with both external and internal threats not only from organized terrorist cells, whose members have been trained, but also from independent radicalizing lone wolves, who are beyond the control of security services, including converts. Due to its nature, the danger of terrorism affects the whole continent and is present even in countries previously considered to be relatively safe, such as Poland, the case of which is analysed in the final part of this article.

EVOLUTION OF RELIGIOUS TERRORISM IN EUROPE

While, it is beyond the scope of this paper to present a comprehensive evolution of modern religious terrorism in Europe,¹

¹ Interested readers should consult: Benjamin, D., Simon, S. (2002). *The Age of Sacred Terror*. New York: Random House; Buckley, M. Fawn, R. (eds.). (2003). *Global Responses to Terrorism*. London: Routledge; Gilbert, P. (2002). *New Terror, New Wars*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press; Kegley, Jr. C. (1990). *International Terrorism, Characteristics, Causes, Controls*. New York: St Martin's Press; Schmid, A.P., Jongman, A.J., et al. (1988). *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases, Theories and Literature*. Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Co. among others.

in order to explore the current terrorist threat, it is necessary to identify some of the key developments that influenced the nature of the danger. The emergence of Islamic terrorism dates back to 1980s and is marked, as Paul Wilkinson underlies,² by bitter resentment not only to the United States or Israel, but to all Western countries. This recognition is shared by many authors who point towards different political,³ economic,⁴ and socio-cultural⁵ factors feeding into this animosity and maintaining the polarized reality of “the West and the rest”. Bruce Hoffman went as far as to estimate that “the religious imperative for terrorism is the most important defining characteristic of activity today,”⁶ an appraisal consistent with David Rapoport’s theory of the fourth wave terrorism.⁷

Interestingly, very quickly the challenge posed by religious rather than secular terrorist groups was deemed to be more difficult to counter. To invoke Bruce Hoffman again: “terrorism motivated either in whole or in part by a religious imperative, where violence is regarded by its practitioners as a divine duty or sacramental act, embraces markedly different means of legitimization and justification that that committed by secular terrorists; and these distinguishing features lead, in turn, to yet greater bloodshed and destruction.”⁸ The new species of terrorists propelled by faith and motivated by fanaticism (often a key-word in numerous analyses), most closely associated with Islamic terrorist groups approached violence as a divine duty and used religion as legitimizing force. Terrorists themselves were not interested in altering the system, but replacing it with entirely new model; instead of sitting at the table, as James Woesley has famously said, the main aim is “to destroy the table and everyone sitting at it.”⁹

More importantly, the connection between religious fundamentalism and violence, even though not clarified, was noticed by scholars.¹⁰

² Wilkinson, P. (2006). *Terrorism versus Democracy. Liberal State Response*. London: Routledge, p. 33.

³ Scruton, R. (2003). *Zachód i cała reszta*. Poznań: Zysk.

⁴ Barber, B.J. (2001). *Dżihad kontra McŚwiat*. Warsaw: Muza.

⁵ Laqueur, W. (1987). *The Age of Terrorism*. Boston MA: Little Brown.

⁶ Hoffman, B. (1983). *Inside Terrorism*. London: Victor Gollanz, p. 87

⁷ Rapoport, D.C. (1984). “Fear and Trembling: Terrorism in Three Religious Traditions”, *American Political Science Review*, 78:3.

⁸ Hoffman, *op.cit.*, p. 88.

⁹ Morgan, M.J., (2004). “The Origin of the New Terrorism,” *Parameters* 34, no. 1, pp. 30–31.

¹⁰ Bruce, S. (2006). *Fundamentalizm*. Warsaw: Sic!, pp. 15–17.

Very often, this religious zeal presented as something irrational and therefore impossible to prevent, is a typical feature of the academic literature on the subject¹¹ even though the myth of religious violence has been finally dispelled by William Cavanaugh¹² and the normalcy of terrorists has been repeatedly underlined.¹³ As Wojciech Kostecki observed, “usually terrorists are not crazy people unthinkingly opting for a suicidal death.”¹⁴

In the European context, trends in international terrorism in the 1990s clearly place this kind of danger as an external threat. While the Islamic movements were bitterly opposed to the Western countries, the attacks on Westerners were either perpetrated abroad like it was in the case of the Egyptian Islamists attack on a group of Western tourists in Cairo in 1996 or the 1997 Luxor massacre carried out by the Gamat al-Islamiya (Islamic Group) in which 58 foreign tourists died or by groups whose operational base was outside European borders. Perhaps the best example of the latter is GIA (Groupe Islamique Armé aka. al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah al-Musallaha). In December 1994 GIA hijacked the 8969 Air France flight from Algiers to Paris and organised a series of bombings in France (1995 -1996). This wave of attacks in the subway, and public places like markets, cafes or schools, left eight people dead and 180 wounded. By 2000 GIA's external networks in Europe were taken over by the Salafi Group for Call and Combat (GSPC) who established its cells in Germany, Italy, Spain, Belgium, France, The Netherlands, and Britain (where GIA had training camps).¹⁵ Nonetheless, in that period the terrorists attacks on European targets were either

¹¹ The literature on the subject includes Al-Rasheed, M., & Shterin, M. (Eds.). (2009). *Dying for faith: religiously motivated violence in the contemporary world*. IB Tauris; Murphy, A. R. (Ed.). (2011). *The Blackwell companion to religion and violence*. John Wiley & Sons; Appleby, S. R. (1999). *The ambivalence of the sacred: Religion, violence, and reconciliation*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers; Burns, C. (2008). *More moral than God: taking responsibility for religious violence*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers; Selengut, C. (2008). *Sacred fury: Understanding religious violence*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers; Stern, J. (2003, September). Terror in the name of God: Why religious militants kill. New York: Ecco; Juergensmeyer, M. (2005). *Terror in the mind of God: The global rise of religious violence*. University of California Press among others.

¹² Cavanaugh, W. (2009). *The Myth of Religious Violence*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

¹³ Crenshaw, M. (1981). “The causes of terrorism.” *Comparative politics*, 13(4), 379–399, p. 390.

¹⁴ Kostecki, W. (2012). *Strach i potęga. Bezpieczeństwo międzynarodowe w XXI wieku*. Warsaw: Poltext, p. 47.

¹⁵ Sookhdeo, P. (2007). *Global Jihad. The Future in the Face of Militant Islam*. McLean VA: Isaac Publishing, p. 292.

carried abroad (and usually aimed at tourists) or involved overseas operatives sneaking into Europe and implementing their plans. The apex of such mode of operation were the 2004 Madrid trains bombings directed by an al Qaeda – inspired terrorist cell.

Very quickly this way of preparing and carrying out acts of terrorism was found wanting. Terrorism is an ever evolving, changing and very dynamic phenomenon. Its ability to adapt and adjust in terms of actors, means, goals, tactics and strategies is one of the most constituent characters of this form of political violence.¹⁶ Thus, it should not be surprising that the next terrorist attack after Madrid, the 7 July 2005 London bombings, are characterized by a different *modus operandi*. Of the four men who detonated their backpacks filled with explosives on the metro trains and a bus, three were second generation British Muslims of Pakistani origin and one (Jamaica-born Germaine Lindsay) was a convert to Islam. A new type of terrorist became typical for the second generation terrorism: ‘cleanskins’, term denoting a person hitherto unknown to the police and/or security services and hence not being under surveillance. Mastermind of the London bombings, Mohammad Sidique Khan, is a good example of a cleanskin. While he briefly attracted MI5’s interest, it was decided that he did not pose any threat and therefore his activities were not monitored. This allowed him to operate freely and was a decisive factor for the success of the plot.

Soon it transpired that there is another huge group largely outside the police radar, i.e. European converts to Islam. The specificity of the terrorist threat to Europe, with its home-grown, bottom-up dynamics, drew attention to European converts to Islam who are believed present in terrorist organisations in large numbers, where they occupy key positions.¹⁷ While converts are not a homogeneous group, and cannot be considered *en bloc* as gullible individuals, easy to influence and prone to fall into an outbidding spiral when trying to prove their worth to the new brethren. In some cases, as my research proves,¹⁸ a unique coalescence of rejection and exclusion provide favourable conditions for a totality

¹⁶ Bakker, E. (2006). *Jihadi Terrorists in Europe*. Clingendael Security Paper No. 2. Hague: Clingendael, p. 3.

¹⁷ According to Oliver Roy between 10 and 15 per cent of Al Qaeda activists are converts. Cf. Roy, O. (2008). Al-Qaeda: A True Global Movement. In R. Coolsaet (Ed.), *Jihadi Terrorism and the Radicalisation Challenge in Europe*. Aldershot: Ashgate, p. 106.

¹⁸ Bartoszewicz, M.G. (2013, June): “Controversies of Conversions: The Potential Terrorist Threat of European Converts to Islam.” *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 7(3), pp. 17–29.

of belief which has the potential of resulting in susceptibility towards terrorist violence. Furthermore, two structural factors impede counter-terrorist efforts when it comes to converts. Firstly, because public *shahada* (confession of faith, Muslim conversion rite) is rather optional than obligatory, and the conversion is not preceded by official preparatory courses, the available official registers of converts are incomplete. During my research I have met several individuals in different countries who admitted that they converted independently of any institution and at home, and thus were not included in the official state figures; in other words, they were invisible for the state apparatus. Secondly, as there are no standardised conversion mechanisms that would be approved by Islamic authorities, equally no universal induction period for converts exists. Such induction, directly following the first days and weeks after conversion is extremely important from the security perspective due to its capability is to facilitate and help New Muslims throughout the crucial first period after conversion via proper community mechanism in order to eliminate the danger of radicalisation.

Indeed, in 2007, when Michael Taarnby from the Danish Institute for International Studies announced that al Qaeda and other terrorist groups recognise not only the operational but also the cultural value of converts to Islam,¹⁹ he voiced a concern shared by many experts²⁰ and policy-makers.²¹ By that time European converts to Islam had been active in several terrorist plots on the continent and beyond its borders. These included the clumsy attempt of the shoe-bomber, Richard Reid, and a foiled plot to bomb American targets in Germany masterminded by Fritz Gelowicz and Daniel Martin Schneider. Similar charges were made in Britain against Andrew Rowe who was arrested in the Eurostar with traces of explosives and Omar Abu Izzadeen (Trevor Brooks) arrested for incitement and radicalisation for the purposes of terrorism, as well as the

¹⁹ Whitlock, C. (2007, September 15). Converts to Islam Move Up in Cells: Arrests in Europe Illuminate Shift. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/14/AR2007091402265.html>

²⁰ Benjamin, D. (2008). The Convert's Zeal: Why Are So Many Jihadists Converts to Islam? *The Brookings Institute*. Retrieved from: http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2007/0907terrorism_benjamin.aspx?rssid=benjamind

²¹ Al Qaeda is Biggest Threat to Europe, Says EU Anti-Terror Boss (2007, November 06). *Deutsche Welle*. Retrieved from: <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,2871866,00.html>

alleged provision of financial support for international terrorism; likewise Simon Sulayman Keeler was accused of fundraising for terrorism, while Anthony Garcia aka. Rahman Benouis and several other converts, including Don Steward White, a son of a former conservative politician, were awaiting trial. Abdallah Andersen was soon to be sentenced in Copenhagen and in Sweden the public was shocked to discover that a Swede, who changed his name from Ralf Wadman to Abu Usama el-Swede was recruiting *jihadi* fighters through the internet. In Belgium even further turmoil was caused by the first female convert suicide bomber, Muriel Degauque who went on a mission to Iraq in November 2005.²² Martine van der Oeven, a Dutch convert from the Hofstad group²³ (and former policewoman)²⁴ and French convert Willy Brigitte were found guilty of being engaged in a terrorist enterprise (i.e. planning attacks on nuclear research facility and military installations outside Sydney).²⁵ Finally, several French converts, including the Courtailler brothers David and Jerome, and Christopher Caze,²⁶ all of whom fought in Bosnia were later involved in other jihadist activities.

In general, it can be said that in the past terrorists from outside of Europe needed to get past through the border and/or migration control in order to operate from within, whereas those who were born and raised in Europe, when radicalised tended to leave for jihad elsewhere, be it Chechnya, Afghanistan or later Iraq and Syria. Presently, standard is the schematic model of foreign fighter radicalization developed by Daniel Byman and Jeremy Shapiro²⁷

²² Soares, C. (2007, October 16). Gang Accused of Recruiting Europe's First Female Suicide Bomber Go On Trial. *The Independent*. Retrieved from: <http://news.independent.co.uk/europe/article3063821.ece>.

²³ There were also other converts in The Hofstad Group including the Walter brothers involved in a foiled terrorist plot in November 2004.

²⁴ Rotella, S. (2006, January 10). European Women Join Ranks of Jihadis. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from: <http://articles.latimes.com/2006/jan/10/world/fg-women10>

²⁵ France Jails Man Over Ties to Sydney Terror Plot, (2007, March 15). *Reuters*. Retrieved from: <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSL1520123620070315>

²⁶ Christopher Caze, a 25-year-old former medical student who travelled to Bosnia as a hospital medic and returned to France as a radical Islamist only to lead the so called Roubaix Gang with links to GIA. In March 1996, when the leaders of the Group of Seven industrialized nations, including French President Jacques Chirac were to meet in Lille, near Roubaix, Caze's group filled a Peugeot with explosives and compressed gas and parked it three blocks from the meeting site. French police defused the bomb and raided the group's hideout in Lille. Four of the terrorists were killed there and Caze, who managed to escape, was stopped the next day at a roadblock and shot during an attempt to ram his way through the blockade.

²⁷ Byman, D., & Shapiro, J. (2014). "Be afraid. Be a little afraid: the threat of terrorism from western foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq." *Brookings Policy Paper*, 34.

with individuals undergoing the cycle of deciding (becoming motivated to fight) – travelling to foreign country – training and fighting, gaining skills, experience and networks of connections – returning home – in order to plot terrorist attack or recruit others. Furthermore, not only the three types of the terrorist production system function concomitantly, but also the three crucial structural factors determining the dynamic of the potential terrorist threat in Europe must be taken into consideration: ISIS strategy, reality of Schengen in the context of migration crisis, and the archipelago of no go zones across the continent.

ISIS STRATEGY

What is known about the Islamic State resembles a precarious mixture of a wartime propaganda, social media newsfeed, and secret service operational files. Our ignorance of ISIS is partially explicable for academic research in this area is impossible, and majority of analyses rely on speculation or extrapolation. We know ISIS existed as one among many Islamist groups operating in the Middle East long before it captured attention of global media and world politicians. It is confirmed that the self-proclaimed caliph, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, has been its leader since May 2010. In the summer of 2014 ISIS seized vast swaths of territory, including cities like Mosul and Ramadi, and, as Graeme Wood noted²⁸ “even though nobody expected them to last longer than three months, ISIS already rules an area similar to that of the United Kingdom”. Wood’s thorough analysis of the group suggests that ISIS “rejects peace as a matter of principle; that it hungers for genocide; that its religious views make it constitutionally incapable of certain types of change, even if that change might ensure its survival; and that it considers itself a harbinger of apocalypse—and headline player in—the imminent end of the world.” In other words, religion is an essence, an axis of the *modus vivendi* as well as *modus operandi*, and the strategic goals of the group to this extent that one could claim ISIS to be a unique case of using politics for furthering religious agenda rather than the other way round. As Ryszard Machnikowski reminds us, while survival is the basic aim of the Islamic State, the prognoses and analyses

²⁸ Wood, G. (2015, March). What ISIS really wants. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from: <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/03/what-isis-really-wants/384980/>

stipulating that ISIS is interested primarily in local operations hence its existence does not significantly increase the terrorist threat in regions as far as Europe, were proved to be false.²⁹

To the contrary, ISIS conducts systematic and worldwide recruitment and propaganda, mainly on the Internet and social media with many initiatives (videos, magazines, blogs, etc.) directed especially at Western Muslims.³⁰ The estimates vary between 12.000³¹ to over 20.000³² foreign fighters in Iraq and Syria (plus 5.000 jihadis in Libya).³³ These fighters are trained and prepared for conducting terrorist operations in the countries of their origin. In January 2015, an article, “Libya: The Strategic Gateway For the Islamic State,” by ISIS supporter Abu Irhim Al-Libi was published online.³⁴ Al-Libi listed several advantages of operating in Libya, including Libya’s strategic location which he termed as a strategic gateway to neighboring African countries and Europe. According to MEMRI’s Jihad and Terrorism Threat Monitor, Al-Libi notes how easily illegal immigrants reach the “southern [European] Crusader countries” and suggests that with careful strategic planning, ISIS can turn those countries to “hell.”³⁵ Indeed, ISIS operative quoted in the media claimed more than 4,000 trained ISIS gunmen have already been smuggled into Europe – hidden among innocent refugees.³⁶ Similar

²⁹ Machnikowski, R.M. (2016). Dobra zmiana? Dezintegracja porządku regionalnego w obszarze Europy oraz Bliskiego Wschodu i Afryki Północnej. *Kwartalnik Bellona*, vol. 685, no. 2/2016, Warsaw, pp. 11–18.

³⁰ Ryan, M.W.S. (2014, August). Dabiq: What Islamic State’s New Magazine Tells us about their Strategic Direction, Recruitment Patterns and Guerrilla Doctrine. (*The Jamestown Foundation Hot Issues*). Retrieved from: [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/hotissues/single-hot-issues/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=42702&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=61&cHash=96be5e421a55fb15bec8cddb3117985](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/hotissues/single-hot-issues/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=42702&tx_ttnews[backPid]=61&cHash=96be5e421a55fb15bec8cddb3117985)

³¹ Basit, A. (2014, October). “Foreign Fighters in Iraq and Syria – Why so many?” *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis*, 6(9), 4-8. Retrieved from: <http://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/CTTA-October14.pdf>

³² Perešin, A. (2015). “Fatal Attraction: Western Muslimas and ISIS.” *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 9 (3).

³³ Moore, J. (2015). 5,000 Foreign Fighters Flock to Libya as ISIS Cal for Jihadists. *Newsweek*. Retrieved from: <http://europe.newsweek.com/5000-foreign-fighters-flock-libya-isis-call-jihadists-310948?rm=eu>

³⁴ Abu Irhim’s writings can be found on his blog libi4.blogspot.com and on Twitter account, @jihad_liby5.

³⁵ Articles By ISIS Supporter: Libya Is ISIS’s Strategic Gateway To Europe, (2015). *The Middle East Media Research Institute*. Retrieved from: <http://www.memrijttm.org/articles-by-isis-supporter-libya-is-isis-strategic-gateway-to-europe-french-military-intervention-in-libya-is-inevitable.html>

³⁶ A BuzzFeed article titled, „ISIS Operative: This Is How We Send Jihadis To Europe,” which featured an ISIS operative who claimed 4,000 militants have quietly infiltrated Europe,

statements have been made through unconfirmed ISIS Twitter accounts and on the propaganda videos.

SCHENGEN ZONE IN THE REFUGEE CRISIS

While these claims might be dismissed as empty propaganda and media hype, ISIS strategy finds its confirmation in the official UN data and statements issued by the security services. The official demographic statistics of the United Nations in the first months of the crisis indicated that 75% refugees arriving in Europe are male and only half of them come from Syria.³⁷ Similarly, the European law enforcement and security services warned about the growing number of *jihadis* coming to Europe disguised as refugees. Rob Wainwright, head of Europol, said that up to 5,000 Europeans have returned to the continent after being trained in terrorist camps.³⁸ The awareness of the danger started to permeate the public opinion when Osama Abdul Mohsen, a Syrian man who made international news after being tripped by a Hungarian camerawoman, was accused of being a member of the al-Qaeda-linked Al-Nusra Front by the Syrian Kurdish Democratic Union Party.³⁹ When it transpired that Osama Abdul joined the rebel group in 2011 and committed crimes against civilian minorities, including Kurds, he already enjoyed a refugee celebrity status and was offered employment in Spain.⁴⁰ These concerns were doubled when it became apparent that it is impossible to track refugees

was published January 29, 2015. More information can be found at Kaplan, M. (2016, July 9). Extremists Exploit Refugee Flow, Waiting To Launch Attacks, Militant Operative Says. *International Business Times*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ibtimes.com/refugee-crisis-isis-fighters-europe-islamic-state-extremists-exploit-refugee-flow-2085787>

³⁷ The UN Refugee Agency official data available is available at: <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php>. It should be noted that the numbers fluctuate and thus in July 2016 the percentage of males went down to 49 while children (gender unidentified) increased to 32%. This might also be potentially troubling especially in the light of the increasing number of asylum frauds. For instance, a recent survey in Denmark showed that 72% of asylum-seeker „children” were actually adults (Source: <http://www.mx.dk/nyheder/danmark/story/10542201>).

³⁸ Warning Of 'Up To 5,000 Jihadists In Europe' (2016, February 19). *SkyNews*. Retrieved from: <http://news.sky.com/story/1645171/warning-of-up-to-5000-jihadists-in-europe>

³⁹ Full statement available at: <http://pydrojava.com/>

⁴⁰ Thalen, M. (2015, September 21). 'Refugee' Tripped by Journalist is Member of Al-Nusra Terror Group, Kurds Claim. *InfoWars.com*. Retrieved from: <http://www.infowars.com/refugee-tripped-by-journalist-is-member-of-al-nusra-terror-group-kurds-claim/>

movement once they are admitted to Europe with tens of thousands individuals missing from their supposed place of residence⁴¹ and found its peak shortly after the November 2015 Paris attacks when it transpired that Paris attackers were registered as refugees on a Greek island of Lesbos in October 2015, and managed to travel freely across the continent.⁴²

This further fueled a debate over the apparent lack of security measures needed to keep terrorist groups out of the Schengen zone. External borders of the European Union that exist only theoretically and simultaneous lack of internal borders mean that the activities (or lack of thereof) of one EU member state can endanger the rest of the community. A situation aptly summarized by Sharon L. Cardash et al. that the whole EU will be only as strong as its weakest link.⁴³ Current response to the refugee crisis comes down to nearly unconditional acceptance of people whose identity and background is either impossible (false documents or no documents at all) or too costly to check.⁴⁴ In the present situation terrorists arrive in Europe using false identities and posing as refugees exploit freedom of movement guaranteed by the Schengen agreement. Upon arrival to Western Europe they vanish off the radar, often with the help of already established networks and cells operating in many countries from within the no go zones.

NO-GO ZONES

In Europe we usually speak of no-go zones in the context of Muslim-dominated neighborhoods that are off-limits to non-Muslims due to a variety of factors, including the lawlessness

⁴¹ Huggler, J. (2016, February 26). Germany admits 130,000 asylum seekers 'lost' raising fears over crime and terrorism. *The Telegraph*. Retrieved from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/germany/12174803/Germany-admits-130000-asylum-seekers-lost-raising-fears-over-crime-and-terrorism.html>

⁴² Greece: Syrian terrorist passed through country as migrant, (2015, November 14). *Times of Israel*. Retrieved from: <http://www.timesofisrael.com/greece-syrian-terrorist-passed-through-country-as-migrant/>

⁴³ Cardash, S.L, Cilluffo, F.J. & Marret, J-L. (2013, August 12). "Foreign Fighters in Syria: Still Doing Battle, Still a Multidimensional Danger." *Fondation pour la Recherche Strategique*, nota 24/12, p. 3.

⁴⁴ Refugee background checks 'unaffordable' – German police union chief (2016, June 3). *RT*. Retrieved from: <https://www.rt.com/news/345361-germany-refugees-checks-terrorism/>

and insecurity that pervades a great number of these areas.⁴⁵ In many of these places host-country authorities have effectively lost control and are often unable or unwilling to provide even basic public aid, such as police, fire fighting and ambulance services, out of fear of being attacked by Muslim youth.⁴⁶ Because for a very long time the European no go zones were considered an urban legend, it is difficult to obtain official data. Nonetheless, according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in France there are 751 Sensitive Urban Zones (*Zones Urbaines Sensibles*, ZUS), inhabited by some 5 million Muslims. A list of the ZUS can be found on a French government website, complete with satellite maps and precise street demarcations.⁴⁷ In October 2011, a landmark 2,200-page long report, “*Banlieue de la République*” (Suburbs of the Republic),⁴⁸ prepared by Gilles Kepel together with five other French researchers, showed how the problem is being exacerbated by radical Muslim preachers. These imams promote social marginalization of Muslim immigrants in order to create a parallel Muslim society in France that could be ruled by Sharia law. In Sweden, which has some of the most liberal immigration laws in Europe, according to the *En nationell översikt av kriminella nätverk med stor påverkan i lokalsamhället report*⁴⁹ there are 54 no go zones in the country. In Germany, Chief Police Commissioner Bernhard Witthaut, in a newspaper interview revealed that Muslim immigrants are imposing no go zones in cities across Germany at an alarming rate.⁵⁰ The terrorists who struck Paris on November 13, 2015 had organized their attacks from Molenbeek and Salah Abdeslam, one of the organizers, had been able to live there for four months before he was apprehended by the police. While Molenbeek has recently become an icon of a no go zone, in the

⁴⁵ In an interview for the Radio Télévision Suisse, Fabrice Balanche from the University of Lyon speaks of this problem at length. Available at: <http://www.agoravox.tv/tribune-libre/article/des-mini-etats-islamiques-en-46961>

⁴⁶ Trémolet de Villers, V. (2002). *‘Les zones de non-droit’ dans la République Française, mythe ou réalité?* Unpublished doctoral thesis, Université Paris II. Retrieved from: http://www.drmcc.org/IMG/pdf/TREMOLLET_DE_VILLERS.pdf

⁴⁷ Le ministère de la Ville, de la Jeunesse et des Sports, Atlas des Zones urbaines sensibles (Zus). Available at: <http://sig.ville.gouv.fr/Atlas/ZUS/>

⁴⁸ Full findings of the report including methodology and bibliography can be found at <http://www.banlieue-de-la-republique.fr/#!/enquete>.

⁴⁹ *En nationell översikt av kriminella nätverk med stor påverkan i lokalsamhället* (2014, October). Stockholm: Rikskriminalpolisen.

⁵⁰ Interview with Bernhard Witthaut in: *Problemvierteln fürchtet sich sogar die Polizei*, (2011, August 1). *Der Westen*. Retrieved from: <http://www.derwesten.de/politik/in-problemvierteln-fuerchtet-sich-sogar-die-polizei-id4926287.html>

Belgian capital of Brussels (which is 20% Muslim), several immigrant neighborhoods have become no go zones for police officers, who frequently are pelted with rocks by Muslim youth. According to the Gatestone Institute experts already in 2011 in the Kuregem district of Brussels police were forced to patrol the area with two police cars: one car to carry out the patrols and another car to prevent the first car from being attacked.⁵¹ Additionally, in many places the radical mosques in no go areas have been used as weapon depots, do it was discovered in France in the wake of 2015 Paris attacks⁵² or recently in Germany.⁵³

While many of the above issues can be attributed to organized crime, it needs to be noted that high criminality rates in the no go zones and among the Muslim communities is another variable that should be factored into analyses. In 2004, French sociologist Farhad Khosrokhavar published “Islam in Prison”, a study devoted to Muslim inmates in French prisons.⁵⁴ It is estimated that over half (up to 70%)⁵⁵ of French convicts are Muslim, which far exceeds the 10% share of the general population. This overrepresentation of Muslims in prisons is a common trend across Europe, from Spain (70% of those in Spanish jails are Muslims in contrast to about 5% of the Spanish population as a whole)⁵⁶ to the United Kingdom. In 2013 11,200 Muslims were sentenced to prison in England and Wales, what amounts to about 13% of the prison population. It is noteworthy that the number jumped to 11,248 in 2012, up from 3,681 in 1997 (over 200%

⁵¹ Kern, S. (2011, August 22). European ‘No-Go’ Zones for Non-Muslims Proliferating. *Gatestone Institute*. Retrieved from: <http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/2367/european-muslim-no-go-zones>

⁵² Samuel, H. (2015, November 16). Paris attacks: Rocket Launcher and weapons found after raids across France. *The Telegraph*. Retrieved from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/11998277/Paris-attacks-Rocket-launcher-and-weapons-found-after-raids-across-France.html>

⁵³ NRW: Waffenlager mit „schweren Kriegswaffen“ nahe Moschee ausgehoben (2016, June 19). *Epoch Times*. Retrieved from: <http://www.epochtimes.de/politik/deutschland/nrw-waffenlager-mit-schweren-kriegswaffen-nahe-moschee-ausgehoben-a1337983.html>

⁵⁴ Khosrokhavar, F. (2004). *L’islam dans les prisons*. Paris: Balland.

⁵⁵ Moore, M. (2008, April 29). In France, Prisons Filled with Muslims. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/04/28/AR2008042802560.html>

⁵⁶ Spain: Muslims in prison allowed performing congregational prayers (2008, May 16). *Dubai Government, Islamic Affairs & Charitable Activities Department*. Retrieved from: <http://www.webcitation.org/query?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dicd.gov.ae%2FvEnglish%2Fdetailnews.jsp%3FarticleID%3D6387%26newsType%3D4%26pageFlag%3D0&date=2011-03-15>

increase).⁵⁷ Scholars⁵⁸ and practitioners⁵⁹ agree that British prisons are becoming hotbeds for Islamic radicalization what proves difficult to counter. According to leaked information from Whitehall⁶⁰ every single senior jihadist jailed in the UK in recent years has refused to engage with the British government's counter-terrorism strategy, 'Contest'. Instead they spread propaganda, recruit new members, and in result many individuals leave prisons more radical than before. Richard Reid or the members of the Roubaix Gang illustrate this pattern. Also, two of the three terrorists who attacked "Charlie Hebdo", Chérif Kouachi and Amédy Coulibaly, met for the first time in the biggest jail in France and radicalized under the influence of an Al Qaeda affiliate.⁶¹

EUROPEAN CHALLENGE

European approach to counter-terrorism considers this form of political violence a crime rather than an act of war (more typical for the American response). Crime requires monitoring and surveillance as basic tools of prevention as it bases on an 'innocent until proven guilty' premise. Characteristic features of the contemporary terrorist threat in Europe discussed above render eliminating terrorism extremely difficult, bordering on impossible. In the first place there are far too many suspects, a realization voiced by Manuel Valls who said that "We note the power of the threat, a threat level [France] has never before known."⁶² Indeed, the incessant monitoring of suspected individuals only in France presents an insurmountable challenge. According to the official report that was leaked to the

⁵⁷ Frean, A. & Syal, R., (2006, July 4). Community divided on terrorism and security. *The Sunday Times*. Retrieved from: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,22989-2254738,00.html>

⁵⁸ Khosrokhavar, Farhad (2013): Radicalization in Prison: The French Case. *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, 14(2), 284–306; Awan, Imran (2013): Muslim Prisoners, Radicalization and Rehabilitation in British Prisons. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 33(3), 371–384.

⁵⁹ Shaw, D. (2015, March 11). Why the surge in Muslim prisoners? *BBC News*. Retrieved from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-31794599>

⁶⁰ White, M. (2014, January 2). Jailed Terrorists Refuse to Change Beliefs. *Sky News*. Retrieved from: <https://uk.news.yahoo.com/jailed-islamist-terrorists-reject-rehabilitation-031251012.html>

⁶¹ Chrisafis, A. (2015, January 12). Charlie Hebdo attackers: born, raised, and radicalized in Paris. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/12/-sp-charlie-hebdo-attackers-kids-france-radicalised-paris>

⁶² France Arrests 3 Planning ISIS-Style Beheading in Commando Base (2016, July 16). *The Associated Press*. Retrieved from: <http://www.haaretz.com/world-news/1.666381>

media⁶³ the number of radical Islamists increased dramatically. While in March 2015 there were 4,000 of such individuals known to the law-enforcement agencies, at present the estimates doubled. 70% of the suspected Islamist radicals were male (in addition to women, minors were a separate category in the report). According to the probe, it means constant surveillance of the 1,730 individuals ready to strike⁶⁴ and meticulous monitoring of their close associates and wider networks because majority of identified radicals followed the kinship-worship-friendship pattern of direct radicalization identified by Marc Sageman.⁶⁵ Worryingly, this number includes also police officers⁶⁶ and military personnel.⁶⁷

In fact, certain *en bloc* radicalisation of the European Muslim community poses a counter-terrorist challenge on its own. Up to 15% of French Muslims have a positive attitude towards ISIS (27% among people aged between 18 and 24)⁶⁸. An ICM poll conducted in 2015 showed that that 1.5 million of British Muslims (i.e. nearly half of the whole community), can be identified as supporters of ISIS.⁶⁹

⁶³ Cornevin, C. (2016, February 2). Islamisme: 8250 individus radicalisés en France. *Le Figaro*. Retrieved from: <http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2016/02/02/01016-20160202ARTFIG00368-islamisme-8250-individus-radicalises-en-france.php>

⁶⁴ Isis: French suicide attackers 'ready to strike' France (2015, June 18). *ANSAMED*. Retrieved from: http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/sections/generalnews/2015/06/18/isis-french-suicide-attackers-ready-to-strike-france_bbca92d3-4eb1-4e1b-b8a1-6ad297d22939.html

⁶⁵ Sageman, M. (2004). *Understanding terror networks*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

⁶⁶ A leaked confidential memo from the Department of Public Security published by Le Parisien details 17 cases of police officers radicalized between 2012 and 2015. Pelletier, E. (2016, March 9). Radicalisation : la police n'est pas épargnée. *Le Parisien*. Retrieved from: <http://www.leparisien.fr/faits-divers/radicalisation-la-police-n-est-pas-epargnee-09-03-2016-5610617.php>

⁶⁷ There are no statistics for the number of Muslim soldiers in the French armed forces but already in 2013, during the fifth national security parliamentary conference, Colonel Pascal Rolez, adjunct to the assistant director of the counter-intervention unit of the Defense Security Protection Department, declared, "We are witnessing an increase in radicalization among the French military, notably since the Merah affair." Mohammed Merah, a young French Muslim, murdered three French soldiers in Toulouse and Montauban. The post conference report is available at: <http://www.defense-et-strategie.fr/images/stories/securite/securite2013/progsecu2013.pdf> On January 21, 2015, the radio station RFI announced that about 10 French soldiers deserted and joined the Jihadist fight in Syria and Iraq.

⁶⁸ The poll was conducted in July 2014 among 1,000 people aged over 15 years by ICM Research for the Russian news agency Rossiya Segodnya. 15% of French people back ISIS militants, poll finds (2014, August 18). *RT*. Retrieved from: <https://www.rt.com/news/181076-isis-islam-militans-france/>

⁶⁹ Sommerland, N. (2015, July 7). Muslim leader: 'ISIS-supporting Brits may be disenfranchised by Tory cuts'. *Daily Mirror*. Retrieved from: <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/muslim-leader-isis-supporting-brits-disenfranchised-6018357>

According to BBC 45% of British Muslims agree that clerics preaching that violence against the West can be justified represent mainstream Islam.⁷⁰ Moreover, U.S. diplomatic cables revealed by WikiLeaks⁷¹ divulge that one third of Muslims on UK campuses believe killing in the name of religion is justified. Similarly, the research carried out by the Motivaction Group in Amsterdam showed that 80% of Muslims saw nothing wrong in *jihad*, or holy war, against non-believers.⁷²

According to the “European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2014”,⁷³ 152 terrorist attacks were carried out in EU member states whereas one year later, the number stood at 201.⁷⁴ Both reports confirm that the number of foiled plots is much higher and concerns high profile places. The threats both from the outside and from the inside, ranging from lone wolves attacks encouraged by official propaganda⁷⁵ to coordinated plots prepared by trained operatives, from DIY devices to possible attempts of acquiring weapons of mass destruction⁷⁶ only exacerbate the feeling that Europe is becoming a besieged fortress. More importantly, the trends are not only present in the Western but also in the Central and Eastern part of Europe; the case of Poland being a prime example of the latter.

⁷⁰ ComRes interviewed 1,000 Muslims living in Britain aged 18+ by telephone between 26th January and 20th February. Data were weighted to be representative of the known population. The methodology and results of the poll can be found at Muslim Poll. Telephone Fieldwork (2015, January 26 – February 20). ComRes. Retrieved from http://www.comres.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/BBC-Today-Programme_British-Muslims-Poll_FINAL-Tables_Feb2015.pdf

⁷¹ UK Muslim Demographics (2009, January 6). Cable from the American Embassy in London to the Secretary of State (C-RE8-02527). Retrieved from: https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09LONDON27_a.html

⁷² Nederlandse moslimjongeren en de Arabische Herfst, (2014, November). Instituut Voor Multiculturele Vraagstukken. Retrieved from: http://www.motivaction.nl/downloads/FORUM_-_Verkenning_Nederlandse_moslimjongeren_en_de_Arabische_Herfst_05-12-2014.pdf

⁷³ European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (2014). *Europol*. Retrieved from: https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/europol_tsat14_web_1.pdf

⁷⁴ Europol European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (2015). *Europol*. Retrieved from: https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/p_europol_tsat15_09jun15_low-rev.pdf

⁷⁵ Cf. Ryan, M.W.S. (2014, August). *Op. cit.* Full repository of Dabiq is available at: <http://www.clarionproject.org/news/islamic-state-isis-isil-propaganda-magazine-dabiq#>

⁷⁶ Vick, K. (2016, March 25). ISIS Attackers May Have Targeted Nuclear Power Station. *The Time*. Retrieved from: <http://time.com/4271854/belgium-isis-nuclear-power-station-brussels/>

THE CASE OF POLAND

Poland remains a periphery of the European Union, and is an ethnically homogenous country without colonial history. At the same time, while the Muslim community in Poland is considerably smaller than in the Western member states of the EU and in an overwhelming majority relatively well assimilated (particularly when it comes to Polish Tatars), the structural factors discussed above affect also Eastern flank of the European Union. Whereas no go zones do not exist in Poland, both ISIS strategy and vulnerabilities of the Schengen zone should be taken into consideration.

Poland has been engaged in the Global War on Terror coalition since the 9/11 attacks and even though the involvement has been minimal, deployment of Polish forces to Iraq and Afghanistan meant that the name and location of this country started circulating in the *jihadi* circles. This trend has been strengthened by two factors. Firstly, closure of the investigation into the CIA prisons in Poland. The investigation which started in 2008, aimed to determine whether Polish authorities agreed to set up American prisons on the territory of Poland and whether any abuse occurred in them. In 2014 the US Senate prepared a report confirming that in some prisons CIA agents have used illegal practices such as crush, waterboarding and sleep deprivation. The explanatory memorandum is the first document officially confirming that the CIA prisons were established in Poland.⁷⁷ This places Polish detention centre next to Guantanamo and *Abu Ghraib* and thus seriously impinges on national security. The latest decision of sending troops to join the fight against the Islamic State in exchange for the increased NATO presence in Central and Eastern Europe⁷⁸ further enhanced the danger. While the threat is not as pronounced as it is in case of Germany or France, *jihadis* noted that Poland exists and already promised attacks against it.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Śledztwo w sprawie więzień CIA w Polsce zostanie umorzone? Słabe dowody i kontrowersyjne uzasadnienie (2016, March 16). *TVPInfo*. Retrieved from: <http://www.tvp.info/24451631/sledztwo-w-sprawie-wiezien-cia-w-polsce-zostanie-umorzone-slabedowody-i-kontrowersyjne-uzasadnienie>

⁷⁸ Watkinson, W. (2016, February 11). War on Isis: Poland to join fight against Daesh in exchange for more Nato troops. *International Business Times*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/war-isis-poland-join-fight-against-daesh-exchange-more-nato-troops-1543139>

⁷⁹ Poland was mentioned in the Dabiq magazine as a member of the American-led coalition fighting against ISIS. The first message against Poland dates back to October

Low numbers of Muslims in Poland (15–25,000)⁸⁰ eliminate the challenge posed by no go zones. From the operational point of view, on the one hand it is difficult to blend in, on the other, it is easier to plot and prepare attacks in an environment where no one expects such things to happen. Law enforcement agencies usually downplay Polish motifs on the grounds of low probability, which in turn can be carefully used by the jihadists. So far the few Polish *jihadis* were second generation migrants, usually converts, like aforementioned Fritz Gelowicz or Christian Ganczarski, for many years bin Laden's informal ambassador to Europe, linked to the 2002 Djerba bombings.⁸¹ More recent examples include Maximillian R. and his sister Karolina (residing in Germany) both associated with the Islamic State. The former supposedly died fighting, the latter was accused of providing operational and financial support to ISIS. Another convert, Jacek S., born in Poland later also migrated to Germany and acquired German citizenship, the carried out a suicide attack in Iraq on June 13 2015 killing 11 and injuring further 27 people.⁸² Finally, Adrian al N. (aka. Abu Bakr Al Sham) born in Germany, son of a Polish mother and a Palestinian father, joined ISIS for six months.⁸³ Overall it is estimated that 15–20 Poles or people of Polish origin could have joined ISIS. However, due to the secrecy of meetings of the Parliamentary Committee for

2015. It stated: "Allah Akbar! God is Great! Pray, Black Friday in Orzysz is at hand. The dirty American and Polish dogs will burn up in the Sacred Fire. Death to American and Polish soldiers. Victory to the State of Islam!" At the time of its circulation in Bemowo Piskie / Orzysz Land Forces Training Centre Dragon-15 international manoeuvres involving Polish, German, British, and American troops were conducted. The message was sent to the media from the caliphate.poland@op.pl email address affiliated to Polish portal onet.pl. Another wave of threats appeared on the social media in June 2016 after Poland had join the Inherent Resolve operations against ISIS. The ISIS-linked twitter accounts promised that "Poles will crawl and howl in pain" and that "the next attacks will be on Poland" or that "Polish planes will fall".

⁸⁰ In the report on Poland's demography prepared in 2011 by the Central Statistical Office of Poland words like 'Islam' or "Muslims" did not appear and this religious minority was classified as 'Others'. 0,15% of Polish population belongs to this category. Cf. *Ludność. Stan i struktura demograficzno-społeczna. Narodowy spis powszechny ludności i mieszkań 2011 (2011)*. Warsaw: Zakład Wydawnictw Statystycznych.

⁸¹ 18 Years for Al-Qaida Member: Paris Court Finds German Guilty of Tunisian Attack (2009, June 2). *Der Spiegel*. Retrieved from: <http://www.spiegel.de/international/0,1518,605911,00.html>

⁸² Urodzony w Polsce Jacek S. terrorystą Państwa Islamskiego. Wysadził się w samobójczym zamachu (2015, August 12). *Dziennik.pl*. Retrieved from: <http://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/swiat/zdjecia/497657,1,jacek-s-z-polski-islamski-terrorysta-panstwa-islamskiego-dzihadysta-wysadzil-sie-samobojczym-zamachu-zdjecia.html>

⁸³ Interview with Abu Bakr al Sham. Gadowski, W. & Król, M. (2015, August 5–11). Zginiecie jak wszyscy niewierni. *ABC Tygodnik*, pp. 15–17.

Special Services these calculations should be taken with extreme caution.⁸⁴

While Polish citizens engage in *jihadi* activities abroad, Polish territory can be a place where Western European jihadists will attempt to acquire weapons and explosives. Such was the case of three Dutch citizens of Arab origin who tried to buy Kalashnikov rifles and a machine gun in a military shop in Gdynia. Upon their arrest it transpired that they had repeatedly been listed by the Dutch police for possession of firearms, violent robberies and theft.⁸⁵ In Bydgoszcz police apprehended Ali I., Lebanese citizen, living in Poland for several years, who was frequently visiting friends in Germany, spoke about his desire to join ISIS and fight for Allah.⁸⁶ Operation "Sword" by Polish Internal Security Agency (ABW) carried out in 2003 and made public in 2014 confirmed that Poland is not any longer merely a transit zone, of special interest only to those travelling from Chechnya or the Caucasus region as well as those coming as students or spouses of Polish citizens from North Africa or the Middle East.

In this context monitoring of immigrants is not an excessive luxury but a bare necessity. Report prepared by the supreme Audit Office in Poland (NIK) concludes that Poland is not ready to manage requests for refugee status. According to the report officials already have no knowledge what is happening with immigrants in Poland. NIK studied 429 cases of people who have been refused the refugee status and received an order to leave the country. Only 154 people complied (36%), the rest simply disappeared and nobody knows whether they still reside in Poland or moved beyond its borders. Furthermore, in 2014, Polish Border Guard detained over 4.8 thousands foreigners trying to illegally cross Polish borders.⁸⁷ Bearing in mind the Schengen zone reality and the refugee crisis, it should be assumed that this number will only increase in the coming years.

⁸⁴ ABW wie o 6-8 Polakach w szeregach dżihadystów. „Grożniejsi mogą być ci, o których służby nie wiedzą” (2015, February 26). *TVPInfo*. Retrieved from: <http://www.tvp.info/18455450/abw-wie-o-68-polakach-w-szeregach-dzihadystow-grozniesi-moga-byc-ci-o-ktorych-sluzby-nie-wiedza>

⁸⁵ Gdynia: areszt dla Holendrów arabskiego pochodzenia (2016, March 17). *TVN24*. Retrieved from: <http://www.tvn24.pl/pomorze,42/gdynia-areszt-dla-holendrow-arabskiego-pochodzenia,628029.html>

⁸⁶ W Bydgoszczy zatrzymano islamistę za próbę morderstwa (2016, March 18). *Nie dla islamu w Europie*. Retrieved from: <http://ndie.pl/juz-sa-polsce-zatrzymany-islamista-bydgoszczy/>

⁸⁷ Udzielanie przez organy administracji ochrony cudzoziemcom przebywającym na terytorium Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (2016). KPB-4114-002-00/2014. Warsaw: Najwyższa Izba Kontroli. Retrieved from: <https://www.nik.gov.pl/najnowsze-informacje-o-wynikach-kontroli/nik-o-udzielaniu-ochrony-cudzoziemcom-w-nbsp-polsce.html>

CONCLUSIONS

Contemporary terrorist threat in Europe is dominated by religiously motivated Islamic groups and evolved from an external threat whereby the terrorists attacks on European targets were either carried abroad (and usually aimed at tourists) or involved groups whose operational base was outside European borders with overseas operatives sneaking into Europe and implementing their plans. Quickly, the threat was internalised insofar as the second and third generation of European Muslims as well as European converts to Islam joined the terrorist organisations. In spite of the home-grown, bottom-up dynamics of the phenomenon, majority of radicalised individuals were leaving their countries of origin in order to travel for *jihād* elsewhere without explicit intentions to return. This changed again when the Islamic State called for global *jihād* and through their recruitment and propaganda effort reached out to Western Muslims who were encouraged to travel to Syria and Iraq, and having gained combat experience, return home in order to plot terrorist attacks in Europe and/or recruit others. The migration crisis enabled a growing number of *jihadis* to enter Europe disguised as refugees.

Instrumental exploitation of the dramatic migration flows into Europe has been exacerbated by the realities of Schengen zone. Porous external borders and lack of internal borders allow terrorists to arrive in Europe using false identities and posing as refugees. Once admitted, they exploit freedom of movement guaranteed by the Schengen agreement and vanish off the radar, often with the help of already established networks and cells operating in many countries from within the so called no go zones. High criminality rate in the no go zones and among the Muslim communities is another variable that should be factored into the analyses, especially that in many European countries prisons have become hotbeds of radicalisation.

European approach to counter-terrorism, considers this form of political violence a crime rather than an act of war (more typical for the American response). Crime requires monitoring and surveillance as basic tools of prevention as it bases on an 'innocent until proven guilty' premise. Characteristic features of the contemporary terrorist threat in Europe discussed above render eliminating terrorism extremely difficult, bordering on impossible due to the number of possible suspects (both internal and external), free movement of

people, and radicalisation of the European Muslim communities in many countries. These trends are not only present in the Western but also in the Central and Eastern part of Europe as demonstrated in the Polish case study analysis.

Latest attacks in Paris and Brussels demonstrated how lethal is the combination of factors identified in this paper. A prolonged state of emergency in France proves that existing solutions in the field of combating terrorism are outdated. Also recent counter-terrorist activities in Belgium and Germany confirm this diagnosis. In view of the above, it seems that each country must be ready for reintroduction of checks at their borders not only in episodic situations (like the NATO summit in Warsaw), but also in the long term. Current terrorist threat highlights the need to redefine the rules of border integrity also against the non-military threat. Tools allowing for proper control of the state borders, both in terms of manpower, material resources, communication and data-sharing systems are necessary.

Simultaneously, these efforts cannot be fixated only on Western Europe. While Muslim communities in Central and Eastern Europe are considerably less numerous, the structural factors render them similarly vulnerable. Where on the one hand it is difficult to blend in, on the other, it is easier to plot and prepare attacks in an environment where no one expects such things to happen. For this reason monitoring of mosques, religious organisations and charities, visiting imams, students and other short-term migrants is necessary. Careful observation of finance flows and individuals leaving for scholarships or religious retreats to countries with active terrorist connections is also crucial. Perhaps in this context it would be desirable to create a platform for cooperation among countries in the region, primarily on the basis of the extended Visegrad Group. Finally, converts to Islam, both residing in the country of origin and those who migrated abroad, should also be taken into consideration when assessing the potential terrorist threat. All of the above require time and resources, but most of all a nuanced understanding that comes only from research, study and analyses indispensable for determining the radicalising and deradicalising patterns. Only policies based on informed scholarship can transform Fortress Europe back into the European home.