

news"COMBERAD: Foreign Fighters and European Security. Psychosocial parameters of Radicalization"

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Since the beginning of the war in Syria, the number of combatants of European origin or residence who have moved to that country to fight alongside the insurgency has alarmed the authorities of the Member States of the European Union.

Foreign fighters are not a new phenomenon, and the motives that lead them to travel thousands of kilometers to fight in a foreign conflict may have religious or political bases, so Islamist narrative is only one part of a larger phenomenon.

However, if we take as a reference the numbers of foreign Islamist fighters in conflicts that have taken place in the last three decades, the fact is that the number of fighters who have moved to Syria in the last three years is unprecedented.

For European states and European Union authorities the main concern lies in the intentions of individuals once they return to their countries, especially when the motivations that led them to a radicalisation process did not end when they were recruited.

That is the beginning of a life cycle that does not end when the fighter arrives on the battlefield, but continues, entering into a spiral of radicalization that makes him especially dangerous when he returns to the state of which he is a national or resident.

From there, the fighter will develop other activities that could further undermine European interests. Based on the analysis of the origin, nature and scope of the phenomenon of foreign fighters, specifically fighters of European origin and radical Islamist ideology, this project seeks to identify the psychosocial parameters that determine their process of radicalisation and its continuity once they return from conflict zones.

In this way, we will be able to provide the authorities of the EU Member States and institutions themselves with data that can contribute to the development of technologies and innovations that strengthen information for intelligence, surveillance and recognition, as well as the bases for legislation and policies capable of dealing with this phenomenon, from the prevention phase, through the stages relating to the identification and treatment of individuals intending to travel from European territory to conflict zones and their subsequent treatment and reintegration.

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