



European Monitoring Centre  
for Drugs and Drug Addiction

# Terrorism and drugs in Europe

Background paper commissioned by the EMCDDA  
for the EU Drug Markets Report 2019

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2019

This paper was commissioned by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) to provide background material to inform and contribute to the drafting of the EU Drug Markets Report (EDMR) 2019.

This background paper was produced under contract no CT.18.SAS.0018.1.0 and we are grateful for the valuable contribution of the authors. The paper has been cited within the EDMR 2019 and is also being made available online for those who would like further information on the topic. However, the views, interpretations and conclusions set out in this publication are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the EMCDDA or its partners, any EU Member State or any agency or institution of the European Union.

**Abstract:** Despite much speculation and conjecture over potential crossovers between terrorists and the drug trade in Europe, no study has examined the issue. This paper fills this gap by empirically examining such crossovers in the European Union between 2012 and 2017. Based on a unique open-source database, two main themes emerge. Firstly, the only area with deep and sustained crossovers is Northern Ireland, where Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries have sought to influence or control the drug trade. The consequences are threefold: conflict with “regular” criminals; internal divisions within paramilitaries; and the potential alienation of the very communities they claim to represent. Secondly, many European jihadists have backgrounds in consuming or dealing drugs, and their radicalisation does not always change this behaviour. Indeed, of the 69 jihadists who carried out an attack in Europe between 2012 and 2017, there is evidence that at least 5 individuals (7% of the total) consumed illicit drugs in the days or hours prior to their attack. This suggests that extremists do not automatically break from familiar, habitual, and possibly addictive patterns, and that radicalisation is no guarantee of an absolute, abrupt, and permanent change in lifestyle.

*The author thanks Johanna Fürst, Mariaelena Agostini, and Gokçe Oztürk for their assistance in data collection and translation, as well as Charlie Winter for his comments on a draft version.*

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background and findings

In the criminal world it is not uncommon for drug dealers to be victims of extortion. Ahmed B., a 25-year-old from France, was involved in one such case in 2016. Alongside his co-conspirators Estéban and Stéphane <sup>(1)</sup>, he planned to 'recover money for a debt incurred during drug dealing'. On 18 August 2016 the trio abducted a man who they claimed owed EUR 1 500 but had refused to pay. The victim was taken to his own home, assaulted, and held for several hours until his girlfriend paid the trio EUR 500. Two days later the group unsuccessfully tried to extort another local dealer using the same tactic (Buhagiar, 2017). For these crimes, Ahmed B. was convicted in December 2017 and sentenced to one-year in prison.

For all his involvement in the criminal milieu, it would emerge that Ahmed B. was also an avowed jihadist. In June 2016, just two months before his kidnapping conspiracy, he had been arrested by Turkish authorities on the border with Syria, after attempting to cross over into the conflict zone. And after his arrest for the kidnapping and extortion case, police discovered photos on his social media profile glorifying the French jihadist Mohamed Merah, with violent propaganda found at his home (Abela, 2017). He had also been given a 'Fiche S' classification by French intelligence on the grounds that he was a threat to national security.

Ahmed is far from the only terrorist to have interacted with the drug trade. Recent claims have even suggested that the two worlds are linked (see, for example, Cohadon, 2014; Hasan, 2015; Kopietz, 2017; Pemberton, 2017). France's former Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve has stated that the drug trade leads to 'illegal activities that seriously threaten public order. I'm particularly thinking of terrorist activities' (RFI, 2015). In Scotland, too, a detective inspector has echoed this, saying that drugs may be 'funding serious and organised crime, human trafficking, and terrorism' (Stirling Observer, 2015).

These connections between terrorists <sup>(2)</sup> and drugs have been noted elsewhere in the world. Since the 1980s, the involvement of insurgents and terrorist groups in the cultivation, manufacture, and trafficking of drugs was observed in Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia (Felbab-Brown, 2005; Piazza, 2011; Omelicheva & Markowitz, 2018). This has typically been to raise funds, either by producing drugs and involving themselves in the supply chain, or by levying 'taxes' on producers or traffickers passing through territories under a group's control.

The European picture, however, is largely unknown. The lack of an evidence base has often resulted in speculative and, at times, sensational reporting, with frequent suggestions of causal links between drugs and terrorism. Popular commentary on the topic includes claims that jihadists 'take drugs such as heroin and cocaine so as to steel themselves' (London Evening Standard, 2015; Sky News, 2015), for example, or that heavy and long-term cannabis use is a 'common denominator' amongst jihadists and explains radicalisation (Hitchens, 2015; Forsyth, 2016).

Much discussion has also concerned the role of amphetamine-type stimulants, often generically referred to as *captagon* <sup>(3)</sup>. This has typically centred on their: production in the Middle East (Reuters,

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<sup>(1)</sup> Surnames unknown.

<sup>(2)</sup> For the purpose of this study, terrorism is understood as symbolic acts of politically motivated violence (Neumann & Smith, 2008, p. 8). Terrorism-related activity is therefore any action that supports or is in furtherance of politically motivated violence, and can include: recruitment, training, propagandising, financing, facilitating, or engagement in terrorism itself.

<sup>(3)</sup> Captagon was the brand name of fenethylamine, a drug combining amphetamine and theophylline, which was introduced by the pharmaceutical company Degussa AG in 1961. Due to its addictiveness, fenethylamine was banned in 1981 by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) alongside other countries, and it has not been legally produced since 1986. Today, the term "captagon" is popularly applied to various amphetamine-type stimulants, irrespective of whether they contain fenethylamine. This paper refers to captagon in this general way, in line with its popular usage.

2014; Al-Imam et al, 2016; Kravitz & Nichols, 2016); their use by belligerents in the Syrian Civil War (Watson, 2014; BBC Arabic, 2015; Clarke, 2017; Gidda, 2017); their potential trafficking through Europe (BBC News, 2017a; AFP, 2017b; The Economist, 2017); and even their possible use by terrorist attackers in Europe (Fond & Howes, 2016).

This paper seeks to answer a number of questions. How do terrorist groups, cells, and individuals in Europe interact with the drug trade, if at all? Are they involved in drug trafficking? Are any terrorists former or active drug users, and, if so, how has this affected their radicalisation and the way they operate? In short, what is the relationship between the drug trade and terrorism in Europe?

This study aims to present an evidence-based understanding of how, between 2012 and 2017, terrorists in Europe have interacted with drugs — either as consumer or dealers—and the dynamics and principles that guide those interactions.

The results fall into two broad themes. Amongst jihadists <sup>(4)</sup> there is no evidence supporting the idea of formal, structural, and inherent links with the drug trade. Instead, we see that many jihadists have a personal background in consuming or dealing drugs, which can have an ancillary, indirect role on their radicalisation process. Drug use can continue after their involvement with extremism, and when this does happen, it tends to mirror their pre-radicalisation drug-related activities. At times this has even continued until the execution of a terrorist attack: indeed, on at least five occasions over the past three years there is evidence that jihadists have taken drugs in the days or even hours before their attacks. In each of these cases, however, it is nearly impossible to say whether that consumption influenced their decision to act. What these cases nevertheless show is that involvement in jihadism and involvement in drugs are not mutually exclusive.

Amongst paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland, there exist dense and longstanding overlaps, where both republican and loyalist groups have sought to influence or control the drug trade, mimicking the territoriality of mafia groups. This has not only led to violent conflict with ‘regular’ criminals, but it has also caused internal tensions within paramilitary groups over the decision to engage in crime and drugs. Furthermore, involvement in drugs has risked alienating the very communities the paramilitaries claim to represent.

Aside from the jihadist scene and republican and loyalist paramilitaries, there are few other examples amongst other terrorist movements, groups, or individuals. There is a notable lack of results from the far-right—with only a handful of instances noted in open sources — yet this may be because the pool of far-right terrorists in Europe is relatively low <sup>(5)</sup>. Other groups, such as the Basque-separatist group ETA (*Euskadi ta Askatasuna*, or Basque Homeland and Liberty) — which declared a ceasefire in 2010 that culminated in the group’s dissolution in May 2018 — rarely feature.

Of note here is the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê*, or PKK), a paramilitary group based in the Middle East — primarily in south-eastern Turkey, northern Syria, and northern Iraq — that has intermittently waged an insurgency against the Turkish state since 1984. While the group’s involvement in organised crime has been noted (Roth & Sever, 2007), there are limited examples of the PKK engaging in the drug trade in the European Union since 2012. This may be because the most relevant information remains in closed sources, or simply because the PKK’s drug-related activities occur outside of Europe — and hence beyond the scope of this study — centering on the heroin trade in the Middle East.

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<sup>(4)</sup> The terms jihadism/jihadists have been contentious ever since they entered into common usage during the late 1990s. One of the most frequent complaints is that they unfairly associate the religious concept of ‘jihad’ with acts of terrorism and extreme violence. This study, therefore, distinguishes between ‘jihadism’, a modern revolutionary ideology, and ‘jihad’, an Islamic concept which means ‘struggle’ and can refer to all kinds of religiously inspired effort — be they spiritual, personal, political, or military. Indeed, the only ones who argue that ‘jihad’ and ‘jihadism’ are identical are Islamophobes (who want to portray Islam as inherently violent) and the jihadists themselves. For more, see Esposito (2002, pp. 26-28), Hegghammer (2009), and Maher (2016).

<sup>(5)</sup> One recent far-right terrorist, Darren Osborne, who killed a Muslim man close to Finsbury Park mosque in 2017, was known to abuse alcohol, if not drugs.

## 1.2 Structure

The paper is structured as follows. It starts with an overview of the methods used in constructing the dataset, before the second chapter analyses how jihadists have been involved in drugs: 1) prior to their radicalisation; 2) after their radicalisation; and 3) in the days and hours before carrying out a terrorist attack. The third and closing chapter then discusses the situation among paramilitary groups, focusing on Northern Ireland, where many republican and loyalist paramilitaries have been involved in the supply, control, or prohibition of illegal drugs.

## 2. Methodology

The empirical basis of this study is a dataset of individuals or events that have a connection to both terrorism — either as members of groups, supporters, facilitators, recruiters, propagandists, or fighters and the drug trade in Europe — either as producers, traffickers, or users. While this does not capture all such individuals or events, the dataset is based on a widespread search of open sources and serves as the foundation for the chapters that follow. This section outlines the methods used to collect and code the data, as well as the limitations of the study.

### 2.1 Data collection

Inclusion in the dataset was contingent upon an individual or event having: 1) prior or present involvement in terrorism-related activity, regardless of ideology; 2) prior or present involvement in the consumption, trafficking, or prohibition of illicit drugs; 3) a demonstrable connection to the European Union, either as a place of residence or as the place an event took place; 4) involvement in terrorism-related or drug-related activity at any point in the six-year period between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017.

Data collection took place between April and October 2018 and was carried out by a multilingual team of researchers: Rajan Basra, Johanna Fürst, Mariaelena Agostini, and Gokçe Oztürk, gathering English, French, German, Italian, and Turkish-language sources. This allowed data to be collected relevant to the EU member states most affected by the recent wave of terrorism, either in terms of the number of attacks or the number of ‘foreign fighters’ who mobilised to Syria and Iraq.

Data was gathered from open sources, such as newspaper articles, court documents, and government or law enforcement reports. In addition to a review of the existing academic literature on the topic, a ProQuest Factiva keyword search was conducted in English, French, German, Italian, and Turkish. The English-language keyword search included sources from across all 28 EU member states, while the French, German, Italian and Turkish-language searches were restricted to sources from their respective countries. This generated approximately 38,000 individual search results.

Each individual search result was then assessed to see if it met the criteria for inclusion. Once ‘false positives’ were excluded from the dataset, supplementary search queries on other platforms were performed. These were necessary due to the limitations of the ProQuest Factiva archive, which excludes, for example, smaller publications such as the *Andersontown News* or *Derry Journal* in Northern Ireland. As these niche titles often contain key information not mentioned in other reporting, further person-specific or event-specific search queries were conducted on additional platforms. Despite this extensive search, it is likely that the data collection process did not capture all available open sources relevant to the issue.

Filtering difficulties arose in determining whether an individual or event had connections to drugs *and* terrorism. Paramilitaries in Northern Ireland, for example, regularly carry out so-called ‘punishment’ attacks, which often — but not always — target to an individual believed to be consuming or dealing

drugs. Yet reports on these attacks typically lack the necessary details to confirm they were drug-related or not. To mitigate this, an event or individual was excluded from the dataset if such doubt or confusion existed.

Similarly, many events initially appeared as though they overlapped with both drugs and terrorism, only for further investigation to rule them out. This was the case with Mohamed R., who on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017 drove wildly through Meir shopping street in Antwerp, Belgium, forcing pedestrians to jump out of the way. He had a history of petty crime and drug use, and was said to be under the influence of either drugs or alcohol when police arrested him behind the wheel. A disassembled riot gun, ornamental dagger, some cutting knives, and a military camouflage vest were found in his car. As the incident occurred just one day after the Westminster vehicle-ramming and knife attack in London, there was speculation the incident was a failed copycat attack; the press even gave him the nickname 'Meirterrorist'. Yet a terrorist motivation was never determined, and the terrorism-related charges against him were dropped in April 2017 (Lefelon, 2018) <sup>(6)</sup>.

An additional issue was verification, especially when an event was the subject of only one newspaper report. For example, in July 2017 a 43-year-old man was arrested in Angers, France after he was found in possession of a firearm and a few grams of heroin. An initial report stated that two Islamic State flags were also found in his apartment, though that report was later updated to exclude any mention of these flags (Ouest France, 2017) <sup>(7)</sup>. In such cases where there was insufficient or inadequate information, the event or individual was excluded from the dataset.

After applying the criteria for inclusion, over 300 individuals or incidents were found relevant to the study and entered the dataset <sup>(8)</sup>. Of these, at least 148 individuals were related to the jihadist scene, with the remainder being events mostly concerning paramilitaries in Northern Ireland.

## 2.2 Coding and limitations

Once the search results had been filtered for inclusion, the data was then coded according to a set of 11 basic variables: name; location; date; terrorist role; terrorist group affiliation; drug role [dealing, consuming, or an unspecified 'possession' of drugs]; drug type; drug amount; frequency of drug-related activity; age of first involvement in drugs [as dealer/consumer]; and whether an offence occurred pre-radicalisation or post-radicalisation. These categories are broad enough to mitigate the limitations of the data, while also providing an overview of drug-terror interactions.

The dataset is skewed towards countries that have a low threshold for intervening against suspected jihadists. Italian authorities, for example, routinely expel foreign nationals from the country for having Islamic State propaganda on their mobile phones, while in France it is illegal to "apologise for terrorism", which can often take the form of one-off social media posts. These low thresholds mean it is probable that a disproportionate number of such cases feature in the sample.

The data has several limitations, often related to the paucity of facts surrounding an individual or any given event. News reports would routinely state, for example, that an individual was arrested for drugs offences, without specifying what those offences were (i.e. dealing or consuming) or the type and quantity of drugs involved. It is very rare for reporting to specify whether drugs were found in pre-wrapped mini parcels (which suggests they were ready to be sold) or in solid blocks (which suggests they were for distribution to other dealers). As a result, it was not always possible to note how a specific incident or an individual's offending fits in to the wider drug market.

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<sup>(6)</sup> At the time of writing, Mohamed R.'s case is still being processed through the Dutch courts. He is facing charges on weapons possession, drug use, and traffic violations.

<sup>(7)</sup> Story published at 19:35 and then updated at 21:03.

<sup>(8)</sup> These figures represent a "bottom level" number of individuals or events, as sources would often state that *multiple members of a group* had engaged in both terrorism-related and drug-related activity, without specifying how many members this applied to. In such cases, to err on the side of caution, only a *single* entry was included in the dataset.



Nonetheless, such detail is not always needed to decide the importance of drugs relative to a terrorist's actions. Take Mohamed Merah, for example, a jihadist who carried out a series of shootings in the south of France in 2012. While the precise details of his drug-taking and dealing are obscured, his own brother has talked about the family situation and Merah's upbringing, a court report on Merah's psychological status is in the public domain, and his associates stood trial in relation to the attacks. These other sources, therefore, give a rich enough picture of Merah's radicalisation process to reasonably determine his radicalisation process and the relative importance of drugs.

It was rarely possible to confirm the diagnosis of mental health disorders. For example, during the trial in Germany of Samir A — over his attempt to join Jabhat al-Nusra in Syria — it was disclosed that he has dissociative personality disorder (DPD), brought upon by cannabis dependence (Röhmel, 2016; WHO, 1992, p. 204). While it is possible that other individuals in the sample have similar diagnoses, the limitations of the available data mean it is not possible to draw conclusions over possible correlations.

Finally, given that this study is based on open-sources, it represents a bottom level of involvement in drugs. Analysis of closed sources, such as police investigative material, would likely yield more thorough and complete results. This was the case with a 2011 study of the closed Dutch police files that revealed jihadists in the country had been involved — albeit rarely — in the production and trafficking of drugs, which overlapped with organised crime groups (de Poot & Sonnenschein, 2011, p. 110).

**Table 1: Simplified version of jihadist-related dataset**

<b>Case #</b>	<b>Relevant EU Countries</b>	<b>Jihadist-related role(s)</b>	<b>Drug-related role(s)</b>
1	France	Recruiter	Dealing
2	Italy	Recruiter	Possession
3	Italy	Supporter	Dealing
4	Italy	Supporter; Would-be attacker	Dealing
5	Spain	Recruiter; Would-be attacker	Dealing
6	Italy	Supporter	Dealing
7	France	Foreign fighter	Dealing
8	Netherlands	Foreign fighter	Consuming
9	Denmark	Foreign fighter	Dealing; Consuming
10	Finland	Attacker	Consuming
11	United Kingdom	Would-be attacker	Possession
12	Germany	Attacker	Consuming
13	France	Would-be foreign fighter	Extorting
14	France	Attacker	Consuming
15	Italy	Supporter	Dealing
16	Denmark	Foreign fighter	Possession
17	United Kingdom	Foreign fighter	Dealing
18	United Kingdom	Foreign fighter	Possession
19	France	Attacker	Dealing
20	Italy	Supporter; Would-be attacker	Dealing
21	Germany	Attacker	Dealing; Consuming
22	France; Netherlands	Supporter	Possession
23	United Kingdom	Recruiter	Consuming
24	Germany	Foreign fighter	Consuming
25	Belgium	Supporter	Dealing; Consuming
26	Germany	Foreign fighter	Consuming
27	Belgium; France; Netherlands; Spain	Attacker	Dealing; Consuming
28	France	Foreign fighter	Dealing
29	Italy	Supporter	Dealing
30	France	Attacker	Dealing

<b>Case #</b>	<b>Relevant EU Countries</b>	<b>Jihadist-related role(s)</b>	<b>Drug-related role(s)</b>
31	France	Attacker	Consuming
32	Italy	Supporter; Would-be attacker	Dealing; consuming
33	Belgium; France	Attacker	Dealing
34	United Kingdom	Would-be attacker	Possession
35	France	Attacker; Would-be foreign fighter	Dealing; Consuming
36	Germany	Foreign fighter	Dealing; Consuming
37	Italy	Supporter; Would-be attacker	Dealing
38	United Kingdom	Foreign fighter	Consuming
39	Germany	Foreign fighter	Consuming
40	Germany	Foreign fighter	Dealing; Consuming
41	Germany	Foreign fighter	Consuming
42	France	Would-be attacker	Consuming
43	Belgium	Recruiter	Dealing
44	United Kingdom	Would-be foreign fighter	Consuming
45	France	Supporter	Dealing
46	Italy	Foreign fighter	Dealing
47	Germany	Propagandist	Consuming
48	Germany	Foreign fighter	Possession
49	Germany	Foreign fighter	Consuming
50	France	Facilitator	Consuming
51	Finland	Foreign fighter	Consuming
52	France	Attacker	Dealing
53	United Kingdom	Would-be foreign fighter	Consuming
54	Germany	Foreign fighter	Consuming
55	Italy	Supporter	Possession
56	United Kingdom	Foreign fighter	Consuming
57	France	Supporter	Possession
58	France	Facilitator	Dealing
59	France	Supporter	Consuming
60	France	Recruiter	Dealing
61	France	Supporter	Consuming
62	France	Attacker	Dealing
63	Italy	Supporter	Dealing

<b>Case #</b>	<b>Relevant EU Countries</b>	<b>Jihadist-related role(s)</b>	<b>Drug-related role(s)</b>
64	Germany	Fundraiser; Would-be foreign fighter	Possession
65	France	Attacker	Possession
66	France	Foreign fighter	Dealing; Consuming
67	France	Supporter	Dealing
68	United Kingdom	Attacker	Dealing; Consuming
69	Italy	Supporter	Dealing
70	United Kingdom	Attacker	Consuming
71	Italy	Supporter	Dealing
72	France	Would-be attacker	Dealing
73	France	Facilitator	Dealing
74	Germany	Attacker	Possession
75	Belgium; France	Attacker	Dealing
76	United Kingdom	Attacker	Dealing
77	United Kingdom	Attacker	Dealing; Consuming
78	Italy	Foreign fighter; Recruiter	Dealing
79	Denmark	Facilitator	Dealing
80	United Kingdom	Propagandist	Dealing
81	Italy	Foreign fighter	Possession
82	Italy	Propagandist; Recruiter	Dealing
83	France	Attacker	Consuming
84	France	Attacker	Dealing
85	United Kingdom	Foreign fighter	Consuming
86	United Kingdom	Would-be attacker	Consuming
87	United Kingdom	Would-be attacker	Possession
88	Italy	Foreign fighter	Dealing; consuming
89	Germany	Foreign fighter; Propagandist	Dealing
90	Netherlands	Foreign fighter	Dealing
91	France	Attacker	Dealing; Consuming
92	Germany	Attacker	Consuming
93	Germany	Foreign fighter	Dealing
94	Italy	Supporter	Dealing
95	Germany	Foreign fighter	Dealing
96	France	Foreign fighter	Dealing; Consuming

<b>Case #</b>	<b>Relevant EU Countries</b>	<b>Jihadist-related role(s)</b>	<b>Drug-related role(s)</b>
97	Belgium; France	Foreign fighter; Would-be attacker	Consuming
98	Germany	Supporter	Possession
99	Italy	Would-be foreign fighter	Dealing; consuming
100	Denmark	Attacker	Consuming
101	Sweden	Foreign fighter	Dealing; Consuming
102	France	Foreign fighter	Consuming
103	France	Would-be attacker	Dealing
104	Belgium	Attacker	Dealing
105	Sweden	Attacker	Consuming
106	Netherlands	Foreign fighter	Dealing
107	Italy	Supporter	Dealing
108	France	Ideologue	Encouragement
109	France	Supporter	Dealing
110	Belgium; France	Attacker	Dealing; Consuming
111	France	Foreign fighter	Dealing
112	United Kingdom	Recruiter	Consuming
113	United Kingdom	Attacker	Consuming
114	Germany	Would-be foreign fighter	Consuming
115	Germany	Foreign fighter	Dealing
116	France	Supporter	Consuming
117	Netherlands	Foreign fighter	Dealing
118	Germany	Foreign fighter	Consuming
119	United Kingdom	Would-be attacker	Dealing
120	France; Germany	Attacker	Possession
121	France	Would-be foreign fighter; Would-be attacker	Consuming
122	France	Would-be attacker	Consuming
123	Germany	Foreign fighter	Consuming
124	United Kingdom	Would-be foreign fighter	Dealing
125	France	Supporter	Possession
126	France	Supporter	Possession
127	France	Supporter	Dealing
128	Germany	Would-be foreign fighter	Consuming
129	France	Facilitator	Dealing

<b>Case #</b>	<b>Relevant EU Countries</b>	<b>Jihadist-related role(s)</b>	<b>Drug-related role(s)</b>
130	France	Supporter	Possession
131	France	Supporter	Possession
132	France	Supporter	Consuming
133	Italy	Supporter	Possession
134	Italy	Supporter	Possession
135	France	Supporter	Dealing
136	France	Would-be foreign fighter	Possession
137	United Kingdom	Propagandist; Recruiter	Consuming
138	France	Supporter	Possession
139	Italy	Foreign fighter	Possession
140	Italy	Supporter	Dealing
141	Italy	Supporter	Dealing
142	Italy	Supporter	Dealing
143	Italy	Supporter	Possession
144	Germany	Would-be foreign fighter	Consuming
145	Germany	Foreign fighter	Dealing
147	France	Supporter	Dealing
148	France	Would-be attacker	Consuming
149	France	Attacker	Dealing; Consuming

### 3. Jihadists

*With [Salah Abdeslam's] brother Brahim, they were heavy drinkers, heavy smokers, but not radicalised ... Salah, it was useless to try to find him before 3 pm. He went out, he slept. He was always a little high. He lived the high life. His thing was drinking the night away, women...*

Youssef, neighbourhood friend of the November 2015 Paris attackers Salah and Brahim Abdeslam (Fache, 2015).

Throughout Europe we have often seen the merging of criminal and jihadist social networks, environments, and milieus, with many jihadists and foreign fighters having criminal pasts (Basra & Neumann, 2016). This also features the drug trade. In Germany, two-thirds of the country's 778 foreign fighters to Syria and Iraq were known to the police prior to their departure: of those, 10% were previously involved in drug offences (BKA, BfV & HKE, 2016, p. 18). In Italy, 19% of the country's 125 foreign fighters were known drug users prior to their departure (Marone & Vidino, 2018, p. 62) (9). A similar pattern is seen in France, where over 40% of individuals convicted for jihadist-related terrorism offences between 2004 and 2017 had criminal records, with drug trafficking being one of the most common offences (Hecker, 2018, p. 21). And community workers have observed similar overlaps in Molenbeek, a Brussels neighbourhood that has been home to jihadist networks (Le Soir, 2017).

This is borne out by data from the Italian Interior Ministry, which has been deporting foreign nationals since 2014 due to national security reasons, whether for suspicions of planning terrorist attacks, recruitment for jihadist groups, as well as more general offences such as sympathising or supporting jihadist groups. Deportees were often also involved in 'regular' criminality, including drug offences. Of the 109 individuals deported between August 2014 and June 2018, the majority (57 people, or 52% of the total) were already known to the police for non-extremist crime (see Appendix I) (10). A quarter were involved in drug offences (26 people, or 24% of the total): 20 people (19% of the total) were previous or active drug dealers, with an additional 6 individuals involved in unspecified drug offences (i.e. dealing or possession). While the Italian ministry data do not specify the type or quantity of drugs, or when the offences took place (i.e. before or after their involvement with extremism), it is clear a substantial minority were involved in drugs.

In such cases the question remains: how do jihadists interact with the drug trade? The process of radicalisation — that is, the personal circumstances, experiences, narratives, networks, and other factors that explain an individual's involvement in extremism and their mobilisation into violence (for a discussion on definitions, see Neumann, 2013) — is a complex one that defies simple explanations. This is especially the case when drugs are involved, given their potential to alter mood, behaviour, and lifestyle.

In our dataset, jihadists have interacted with the drug trade in several ways. First, they often have a history of consuming and/or dealing drugs, which can have an ancillary, indirect role on their radicalisation process. Second, this involvement with drugs can continue long after their initial engagement with extremism. And finally, in a handful of cases jihadists have even consumed drugs directly before carrying out terrorist attacks, thereby contradicting the stereotypes of their universal piety and religious observance. In short, involvement in drugs and involvement in jihadism are not mutually exclusive.

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<sup>(9)</sup> This is based on official Interior Ministry data relating to 125 foreign fighters. 24 of them (19.2% of the total) had prior drug use.

<sup>(10)</sup> As the Italian Ministry of Interior does not publish details on everyone it deports, the total number of deportations for terrorism is likely to be much higher. Data taken from the Italian Ministry of Interior website, from 05/08/2014 to 30/06/2018. The annual breakdowns of deportations are: 2014 (1 person); 2015 (11 people); 2016 (27 people); 2017 (31); and 2018 (29). One individual deported in 2018, Atef Mathlouthi, had also previously been deported in 2015.

### 3.1 Consuming and dealing drugs prior to radicalising

Of the jihadists within our dataset, we consistently see involvement with drugs prior to their radicalisation process — insofar as the ‘start’ of that process can be demarcated — as either users, dealers, or both.

For two thirds of the sample, drug consumption was historical behaviour, often occurring many months or even years prior to their radicalisation, while for the remainder it directly preceded or overlapped with it. This ranges from occasional recreational use to routine compulsive drug-seeking behaviour, dependence, and addiction. The sample involves a variety of drugs, with the most common being cannabis herb and cannabis resin (hashish). Cocaine, heroin, and ecstasy use occurred less often. Drug taking was rarely isolated behaviour; it often coincided with alcohol use, and — albeit to a lesser extent — the misuse of prescription drugs, as well as other personal difficulties involving relationships, employment, and money.

Jihadists’ pre-radicalisation drug use seems to generally align with the wider European picture, where more than one-quarter of 15 to 64-year-olds have tried illicit drugs in their lifetimes (EMCDDA, 2018a, p. 41). Our sample features predominantly young adults, and over the past year in the EU, 14.1% of young adults have used cannabis, 1.9% have used cocaine, 1.8% have used ecstasy/MDMA and 1% have consumed amphetamines (EMCDDA, 2018b).

The drug dealers within our sample typically handled small quantities of drugs, which suggests their roles were as low-level, street dealers selling directly to consumers. Examples of large quantities are exceptional: in 2015 Mesa Hodzic, a member of the jihadist group Millatu Ibrahim in Denmark, was found to be in possession of 48 kg of cannabis, 2.7 kg of ‘skunk’ (powerful strains of cannabis), and more than 1 800 joints (AFP, 2016). Similarly, the leader of a cell behind two attacks in Spain in August 2017, Abdelbaki Es Satty, had been caught in 2010 attempting to smuggle 121 kg of cannabis resin from Morocco via the port of Algeciras, Spain (El Mundo, 2017). Other than these, however, there is only sporadic evidence of dealer-to-dealer distribution or of wholesale drug importation.

Engagement with extremist ideas and networks can lead to abrupt changes in behaviour. This was seen in the case with Italian foreign fighter Monsef El Mkhayer, who smoked hashish, drank alcohol, and dealt drugs prior to his radicalisation. Following a three-month stay in San Vittore prison in 2014, El Mkhayer adopted extremist ideas and rapidly changed his lifestyle to one of abstinence (Biondani, 2016). Such an abrupt change is a recurrent but not a uniform feature of the dataset, and often coincides with disassociation from friends and family. In such cases, religious engagement appears to offer structure and discipline, with a clear system of acceptable and forbidden behaviour, which can appeal to individuals looking for direction in their lives <sup>(11)</sup>, or to those who experience shame over their drug use (RAN, 2018) <sup>(12)</sup>.

The Islamic State itself has implicitly acknowledged this connection with drugs. In the group’s ‘Failing Your State 2’ video released in December 2017, a voiceover narrates how its supporters often come from communities where ‘deviant behaviour’ is commonplace. The narration outlines three categories of people: those that choose ‘life’s pleasures over worshipping God’ (at which point the video features a short montage of cocaine being chopped and snorted); those who do the basic religious practices; and finally, those whose only priority in life is to always obey God (Khayr Wilayah, 2017) <sup>(13)</sup>.

The video implies that Islamic State supporters may have engaged in such behaviour before redeeming themselves by joining the ‘righteous’ cause (for more on this ‘redemption narrative’, see

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<sup>(11)</sup> This echoes the findings from a study by C.J. de Poot and A. Sonnenschein of twelve criminal investigations for jihadist terrorism in the Netherlands between 2001 and 2005 (de Poot & Sonnenschein, 2011, pp. 137-139).

<sup>(12)</sup> Radicalisation Awareness Networking (RAN) EXIT and Health and Social Care (HSC) joint meeting, Vienna, 7 November 2018, held under the Chatham House rule.

<sup>(13)</sup> Cocaine use shown at 02:12 into the video. Beyond this, however, there are no mentions of drug usage in any of the group’s media, which generally focuses on its recruits’ post-radicalisation behaviour.



Basra & Neumann, 2016), or that they joined the group as a conscious rejection of such a hedonistic lifestyle. This was the case with a group of would-be foreign fighters from the United Kingdom, who travelled to the Turkish-Syrian border in February 2015 to join Islamic State. Staying in a safe house in Gaziantep before their planned travel to IS territory, the friends stated ‘there would be no drink, drugs or temptations’ in the so-called Caliphate, thereby offering a pure and utopian society to its followers (R v Kahar & Ors, 2016, paragraph 120).

Yet within the sample there are no clear cases where involvement in drugs alone played a direct and decisive role in an individual’s radicalisation. Instead, consuming or dealing drugs formed part of the overall personal circumstances, experiences, narratives, and other factors that influenced the trajectory towards extremism. Certainly, involvement in drugs appears manifestly less influential than socialisation amongst extremists, the jihadist worldview and ideology, and/or perceived personal and political grievances.

If anything, the indirect role of drugs can be observed in those cases of prison radicalisation, whereby drugs were the reason an individual was in prison, which in turn was the place that facilitated their radicalisation. In such cases the key point is not necessarily the criminal offence behind their conviction — be that for drugs or not — but the circumstances within prison that led them to engage with extremist ideas and networks.

A clear example of this was the radicalisation of Mahiedine Merabet, who was sentenced for drug offences in October 2013 after being arrested in Lille (La Voix du Nord, 2013). Police discovered EUR 1 500 in small denominations on his person, and in his room found 1 563 g of cannabis, EUR 5 595 in cash, and weighing scales. Merabet claimed he was dealing drugs to pay off his debts: ‘I’m under threat, I have to pay off debts because I was robbed, and the thieves took away a lot of cannabis and money. They stole 500 g and EUR 8 900 from me’ (ibid.). It was his twelfth conviction. While in Sequedin prison in 2015, Merabet met Clement Baur, a convert to Islam who had been involved with radical networks since 2007, and who himself was convicted for using fraudulent documents. The pair formed a friendship after sharing the same cell for two months, and Merabet radicalised, in part mentored by Baur. Their commitment to jihadism continued after their release, culminating in a plan to carry out an attack in France that was disrupted in March 2017, a week before the French presidential election. In a Marseille apartment used by the pair, police discovered an Uzi submachine gun, 3 kg of the explosive triacetone triperoxide (TATP), a homemade grenade, a wearable video camera, and an Islamic State flag (Le Journal du Dimanche, 2017).

### **3.2 Simultaneous involvement in drugs and extremism**

Other jihadists in our sample continued their involvement with drugs long after their radicalisation. In almost every case this mirrored their pre-radicalisation activity, representing a relapse of earlier drug taking or a reoffence of previous drug-dealing <sup>(14)</sup>. This suggests that extremists often do not break from familiar, habitual, and possibly addictive behaviour, and that radicalisation is no guarantee of an absolute, abrupt, and permanent change in lifestyle.

One prominent example of this is the British couple Mohammed Rehman and Sana Ahmed Khan, who in 2015 were planning a bomb attack to coincide with the ten-year anniversary of the 7 July 2005 London bombings. Throughout their attack planning, Rehman was a routine user of cannabis and cocaine, with gloomy personal circumstances: he had few academic qualifications, was unemployed, and was not living with his then-wife Khan due to disputes with his parents-in-law (The Times, 2015). He was enabled by Khan, who paid him more than GBP 12 000 over 17 months, which went towards maintaining his lifestyle — including, presumably, his drug habit — and manufacturing the homemade explosives (ibid.).

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<sup>(14)</sup> This echoes the findings from analysis of the more general criminal-turned-jihadist population, as discussed in Basra & Neumann (2016), pp. 35-36.

Curiously, Sana Ahmed Khan appealed against the length of her sentence by claiming her own drug use precluded her from being a jihadist. Her lawyer stated that ‘she was taking drugs at the time of offending — which is strictly prohibited within the Muslim religion and suggests very strongly that she was not a committed radical Islamist’ (R v Kahar & Ors, 2016, paragraph 174). The judge was not convinced, instead declaring that her choosing ‘to adopt certain tenets of radical Islam without adopting others [does not] indicate any diminution of her commitment to furthering the aims of radical Islam’ (<sup>15</sup>).

Indeed, within the dataset there are numerous examples of behaviour that contradicts stereotypes of a pious Islamic radical. Emblematic of this is Mohammed Lahouaiej Bouhlel, who killed 86 people in July 2016 by driving a truck into crowds celebrating Bastille Day in Nice. Bouhlel ‘drank alcohol, ate pork, and used drugs’, according to Paris prosecutor François Molins (Atchouel, 2016). His pre-attack behaviour and lifestyle prompted debates over the extent of his ideological commitment to jihadism (Reuters, 2016), including the interplay between his radicalisation and apparent mental health conditions (Nossiter et al, 2016) (<sup>16</sup>).

Involvement with drugs post-radicalisation is seen across the entire range of actors within the jihadist context, from supporters and recruiters to foreign fighters and attackers. One of the United Kingdom’s most prolific radicalisers, for example, is addicted to heroin (Secretary of State for the Home Department v LG and others, 2017, paragraph 28) (<sup>17</sup>). Since June 2016 the extremist — referred to only as ‘LG’ in court documents — has been subject to a Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measure (TPIM) notice, which sets restrictions and requirements on where he stays overnight and with whom he can associate. In an appeal against his TPIM, LG stated that his relocation away from his family ‘had caused him to be depressed and to revert to an addiction to heroin’ (ibid.) (<sup>18</sup>). A medical note confirmed that LG was using a heroin substitute (ibid., paragraph 131), and that his dependence on the drug was ‘being appropriately managed’ (ibid., paragraph 134d) (<sup>19</sup>).

This, undoubtedly, would have consequences for any deradicalisation or disengagement efforts, where it is broadly understood that the use of drugs can prove a complicating factor (RAN, 2018). Yet there have been no studies looking at this relationship, and the exact contours of this area are unexplored.

Why does involvement with drugs continue after radicalisation? There are several tentative explanations. Firstly, jihadists may justify it on theological grounds, by arguing that the use of cannabis has precedence in hadiths and that it is not expressly prohibited in the Quran as an intoxicant. This is the line of reasoning adopted by Islamic State ideologue and propagandist John Georgelas (other known as Yahya Abu Hassan), as shown by Graeme Wood’s (2017, pp. 150-151) investigative work. However, our dataset shows no signs that jihadists in Europe have explicitly justified their drug use on such grounds. The Islamic State has published photos of the group *incinerating* drugs (<sup>20</sup>).

Secondly, it may simply be a matter of habit and addiction. Taking drugs was a routine activity for many in our sample, and overcoming drug dependence is often a difficult challenge with substantial physical and psychological symptoms (RAN, 2018). It is entirely foreseeable, therefore, that this would continue post-radicalisation. Simply put, it can be difficult to change habits. Furthermore, they

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(<sup>15</sup>) Nevertheless, the appeal judge did quash the minimum term of 25 years, substituting it with a minimum term of 23 years.

(<sup>16</sup>) For more on mental health and terrorism, see Corner and Gill (2015), and Corner, Gill, and Mason (2016).

(<sup>17</sup>) The recruiter, ‘LG’, cannot be named for legal reasons.

(<sup>18</sup>) ‘LG’ also requested that the public judgment be redacted to remove reference to his heroin addiction.

(<sup>19</sup>) Incidentally, in October 2017 a jihadist was jailed for 16 months for breaching his TPIM order, after he had twice met with someone, without Home Office approval, with the aim of buying Class A drugs. The court heard how the man, who was living apart from his wife and children, had a renewed craving for drugs as a way of dealing with his isolation (Press Association, 2017); it is unknown if this man is “LG”.

(<sup>20</sup>) For instance, see ‘Incinerating a shipment of hashish drugs in Nangarhar’, *Khurasan Province Media Office*, 5 December 2018.

may have seen their involvement in jihadism as absolving them of their drug-related sins, thus paradoxically giving them a licence to continue their drug use.

Thirdly, those involved in drug dealing may see the crime itself to be a form of jihad (Basra et al, 2016; Basra & Neumann, 2017). While jihadists in Europe have mostly used legal means to finance their plots <sup>(21)</sup> — such as salaries, welfare benefits, sale of property, and loans — the use of criminal fundraising has also been a recurring feature amongst foreign fighters, plotters, and the wider jihadist scene (Normark & Ranstorp, 2015, pp. 15-18; Ranstorp, 2016). Robberies, theft, fraud, and — to a lesser extent — drug dealing, have been used as means of financing jihadist activity, and also waging ‘war’ against Western societies (Basra et al, 2016; Basra & Neumann, 2017).

Large-scale transactions are rarely seen, with most post-radicalisation drug-dealing being small in scale and ambition. For example, in February 2015, Noussair Louati was arrested for dealing heroin in Ravenna, Italy: he had 3 grams in his possession. Louati himself was a drug user, with a history of domestic violence, and was homeless at time of his arrest. He was planning to use the proceeds to fund his travel to Syria, yet he had only saved EUR 40 (ANSA, 2015). There is not always such a clear connection, however, between someone’s post-radicalisation drug dealing and their jihadist activities (see *Case Study 1: Nourdeen Abdullah*).

### **Case study 1: Nourdeen Abdullah**

On Wednesday 26 July 2017, officers from the Metropolitan Police searched the car of 36-year-old Nourdeen Abdullah in London. Inside they discovered a single 27.4gram lump of crack cocaine, double wrapped in plastic. If this was divided into 0.1gram wraps and sold at the street price of GBP 10 per wrap, this could have amounted to GBP 2 740. Yet police had ostensibly come to arrest Abdullah for publishing terrorist material online: for months he had been posting Islamic State content as well as homemade propaganda videos on his social media profiles. He was thus arrested and charged with what, at first sight, may appear as two paradoxical offences: possession of Class A drugs with intent to supply; and the dissemination of terrorist publications <sup>(22)</sup>.

This was not Abdullah’s first offence. In 2006 he was convicted for a Class A conspiracy — involving heroin — for which he was sentenced to six-and-a-half years, of which he served four in prison. This followed, in his own words, an early life characterised by a ‘broken home’ which he left as a teenager (social media post, 22 October 2016). He became estranged from his parents and involved in crime, ‘living what some rap and talk about’, being ‘100% bout this street life’ (social media post, 12 August 2016).

It was inside prison that he ‘became a man in a cage filled with rage’ (social media post, date unknown). He was drawn to extremism after being ‘able to study with *mujahids* [militant jihadists]’ and realising that he was living in ‘*jahiliyyah*’ (ignorance) despite already being a Muslim convert (social media post, 12 August 2016). His words suggest that ideas and face-to-face socialisation were both important in his radicalisation process, more so than the circumstances of his conviction.

While it is not uncommon for inmates to adopt extremism only to disengage upon release, Abdullah’s extremism persisted outside of prison. A year after his release he created a channel on a social media platform under the name ‘Abu Siddiq Al-Ghaarib’ and began posting his homemade propaganda videos.<sup>23</sup> These featured lectures from the Jamaican extremist Abdullah el-Faisal, as well as three ‘question and answer’ videos with pre-existing audio clips of Anwar al-Awlaki, the influential Al-Qaeda

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<sup>(21)</sup> For the financing situation from 1994 to 2013, see Oftedal (2015, pp. 3, 26); for the financing situation from 2014 to 2016, see Nesser, Stenersen, and Oftedal (2016, p. 15).

<sup>(22)</sup> All information presented here was gathered during the attendance of Nourdeen Abdullah’s court hearings (11 August and 7 September 2017 at the Old Bailey Central Criminal Court, and April 26<sup>th</sup> and June 8<sup>th</sup> 2018 at Woolwich Crown Court), as well as from analysis of Abdullah’s online social media footprint, which has been archived by the author. His case has not been covered in the media.

<sup>(23)</sup> His YouTube profile has since been removed. An archive has been preserved by the author.

ideologue, propagandist, and recruiter. The channel was not widely viewed, and no video had more than 2 000 views in the seven years his channel was online.

Following this, Abdullah's involvement in jihadist propaganda — at least online — paused. In 2013 he began a streetwear clothing company, officially registering it in June 2014. And while he had been estranged from his parents for many years, he had also started a new family, finding a wife. It was only in the summer of 2015 that he began posting jihadist content again, which would continue until his arrest in July 2017. In those two years, his radicalism was flagged to the authorities, and he was referred to Prevent (a counter-extremism programme in the United Kingdom) in October 2016, but it is unknown if he decided to engage with the service. He also routinely messaged a friend called 'Abu Hijar', who had travelled to Syria in December 2016. The pair remained in contact until February 2017; it is unknown if Abdullah himself thought of travelling.

Crucial details about his drug dealing remain unclear. We do not know if his involvement in crack cocaine was a one-off repeat offence or whether he had discreetly been dealing drugs for months if not years before. In a handwritten letter, delivered in court to the judge on the day of his sentencing, Abdullah maintained it was the former. We also do not know his exact role, that is, whether he was distributing ounces of crack cocaine to street-level dealers, or if he himself was dividing ounces into individual wraps to sell personally to customers.

This adds to the opacity of the connection — if any existed at all — between his drug dealing and his support for the Islamic State. Was he using the proceeds from the drugs to finance jihadist activities in any way — whether to send money to jihadists abroad or fund his own extremism-related future plans? This is unclear, and nothing of the sort was suggested during his court proceedings. In any case, Nourdeen Abdullah pleaded guilty to four counts of disseminating terrorist publications and one count of possession with intent to supply Class A drugs. He was sentenced to five years and three months.

### 3.3 Taking drugs before an attack

Just as drug use can continue after an individual's radicalisation, it can continue — or even intensify — up to the point of carrying out an attack. On at least five occasions over the past three years<sup>(24)</sup>, there is evidence that jihadists have taken drugs in the days or even hours before their attacks. This was the case with: the December 2016 Berlin Christmas market attack; the March 2017 Orly Airport attack (see *Case Study 2: Ziyad Ben Belgacem*); the July 2017 Hamburg supermarket attack; the October 2017 Marseille stabbing; and the March 2018 Carcassonne and Trèbes attacks. This represents 7 % of the total 69 perpetrators of jihadist attacks between 2012 and 2017. Each of these attacks merits closer examination.

In each instance, drug use appears to have been a continuation of habitual usage, and it alone does not appear to be an explanation for why they carried out their attacks. While the use of captagon has been subject to much speculation, no case involved the drug (Laniel, 2017, p. 29).

#### *Anis Amri — December 2016, Berlin*

The most high-profile example is that of Anis Amri, who on 19 December 2016 shot a truck driver in Berlin and used the truck to drive into a Christmas market in the city, before making an escape. In total he killed 12 people. Amri was involved in criminality in his native Tunisia (Connolly & Stephen, 2016), which continued after his 2011 move to Italy, where he reportedly radicalised during a four-year prison stay in Sicily (Faiola et al, 2016; Winter, 2016). Arriving in Germany in July 2015 as an asylum seeker, he used multiple identities and was reported to the authorities for his extremism as

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<sup>(24)</sup> One of these attacks, carried out in March 2018, falls outside of the 2012-2017 scope of this study, but is nevertheless included here.

early as October 2015, with his online searches in December 2015 showing an interest in attack planning (Bombosch et al, 2017). He associated with extremists in Germany as well as jihadists abroad, the latter of whom he had messaged before and after shooting the truck driver (Mascolo, 2017; Heil, 2017). Despite failing in his asylum bid, he was never deported from the country.

Placed under surveillance, Amri was observed not only dealing drugs but also taking cocaine and ecstasy. He was a small-scale dealer trading around Schlesischen Tor and Kleine Tiergarten park in Berlin (Steinke, 2017). This factored into German police deciding that he was no longer a priority threat (Heil, 2017). In short, police considered Amri to have permanently crossed over into the criminal milieu, and that he was simply a drug dealer (Steinke, 2017; BBC News, 2017b). Surveillance was thus halted in September 2016, three months before his attack (Bombosch et al, 2017).

Four days after his attack, Amri was shot and killed by police in Milan. He had pledged allegiance to Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and his attack was claimed by the group. Amri's post-mortem showed habitual drug use, with traces of cocaine and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC, a cannabinoid) in his system (ANSA, 2017; Mascolo, 2017). While Italian prosecutors said it was not likely that he had consumed drugs on the day he was killed, they could not rule out the possibility that he had taken drugs on the day of the attack (ANSA, 2017).

#### *Ahmed Alhaw — July 2017, Hamburg*

On 28 July 2017, Ahmed Alhaw carried out a knife attack in a Hamburg supermarket: after entering the store, he picked up a 20-cm knife from the shelves and proceeded to indiscriminately attack people around him, killing a 50-year-old man. Alhaw, a Saudi-born Palestinian, had been living in Germany since his arrival in the spring of 2015 after rejected asylum applications in Spain, Sweden, and Norway. His application in Germany was also denied, and while there were no plans to deport him, before his attack it appeared as though he would voluntarily return to the Gaza Strip (Backes et al, 2017).

During his time in Germany, periods of abstinence and social withdrawal would punctuate his alcohol and cannabis use, with signs of emotional disturbance and psychiatric instability. Despite concerns over Alhaw's mental health, specialist psychiatric services never met him. He was twice reported to the police for signs of radicalisation: once in April 2016 after he had asked for advice on travelling to Syria, and again in November 2016. Following his knife attack, he told police that he wanted to die as a 'martyr'; a blood test showed he had traces of cannabis in his system (ibid.). In March 2018 he was sentenced to life in prison. His attack was not claimed by the Islamic State.

#### *Ahmed Hanachi — October 2017, Marseille*

On 1 October 2017, 29-year-old Ahmed Hanachi stabbed two women to death with a kitchen knife outside Saint-Charles Station in Marseille. He then ran knife-in-hand to a group of soldiers, shouted '*Allahu Akbar*' ('God is greatest'), before they shot him dead (Ceilles, 2017). He had previously been arrested seven times in France, using a different identity each time (20minutes, 2017). His radicalisation trajectory is unknown, though his brother, Anis, is known to have fought in Syria for Islamic State (Dumont, 2017). French authorities were initially unsure over any terrorist motivation, though they eventually reported the case to Europol as a jihadist attack. The Islamic State, for its part, claimed the attack.

Hanachi had lived in Italy between March 2010 and May 2017, where he married an Italian woman — the couple later divorced — and fathered a daughter. He had been arrested twice in the country: once for a drug case and once for a robbery, though it is unknown exactly what the drug offence involved (AFP, 2017c). Both his ex-wife and father recounted Hanachi's alcohol and drug addiction (Battistini, 2017), and friends in Tunisia said that during his adolescence Hanachi was known for taking 'all

drugs', including the opioid Subutex (buprenorphine) (AFP, 2017d). Two days before the attack, Hanachi had been arrested in Lyon for shoplifting, and under questioning said he was homeless, divorced, unemployed, and a 'consumer of hard drugs'. He was released the following day. According to a toxicology report, Hanachi was under the influence of cannabis during the attack (Le Progrès, 2017).

#### *Redouane Lakdim — March 2018, Carcassonne and Trèbes*

In March 2018 <sup>(25)</sup>, Redouane Lakdim carried out a series of attacks in the towns of Carcassonne and Trèbes in southern France. Lakdim, a 25-year-old French-Moroccan, first hijacked a car in Carcassonne by shooting the two occupants, and then drove to a police barracks where he fired at a group of officers and attempted to run them over. He continued to a supermarket in nearby Trèbes, where he held people hostage and demanded the release of Islamic State terrorist Salah Abdeslam from French custody. The three-hour standoff that followed ended with police storming the supermarket and shooting Lakdim dead. In total, his attacks killed four people and injured over a dozen more. He had a history of small-time drug dealing, with two one-month prison stays in 2015 and 2016 for drug offences (La Rédaction, 2018). A toxicology report revealed that Lakdim had consumed cannabis the day of the attack (M6, 2018).

#### **Case study 2: Ziyad Ben Belgacem**

On 18 March 2017, Ziyad Ben Belgacem would be involved in a series of events that would culminate in him putting a gun to the head of a soldier in Orly Airport and saying: 'I am here to die for Allah, and in any case, there will be deaths'. He would be shot dead by two other soldiers at the scene.

The episode started at 06.55 when the 39-year-old Tunisian's car was stopped by a police patrol in Garges-lès-Gonesse, north east of Paris. Belgacem was not only driving above the speed limit, but his headlights were off. Upon inspecting the car, police saw a bullet hole in the bodywork. While the police officers were inspecting his papers, he fired at them with a 9-mm Flobert shotgun and fled (Vilars, 2017). At the time Belgacem was on probation relating to a breaking and entering crime from March 2016, and the prospect of a likely return to prison may have factored into his violent response.

After that incident he called his father, at 07.16, asking for forgiveness and saying: 'I have done some bullshit ... Goodbye, dad' (Vincent, 2017). He then returned to a bar that he had visited just the night before (on 17 March) in Vitry-sur-Seine in the south of Paris. There, he made threats, discharged his weapon four times without injuring anyone, and left (ibid.). Belgacem then drove for approximately 5 km before he abandoned his car, hijacked a passing Citroën C4, and drove to Orly Airport, arriving at the car park at 08.06. At 08.22, Belgacem put the gun to the soldier's head, and threatened two other soldiers at the scene. Following a brief tussle for control of a soldier's weapon, Belgacem was shot dead.

Like many other attackers in Europe, Ziyad Ben Belgacem had a history of crime, with nine entries on his criminal record and multiple prison stays (Le Figaro, 2017). In 2001 a Val-de-Marne assize court sentenced him to five years in prison for armed robbery. And he was also involved in drug dealing: in 2009, Créteil criminal court sentenced him to three years for a drugs offence, and after reoffending the same court gave him a five-year sentence in 2011. It was during this ultimate stay in prison that he was flagged for radicalisation, though he was never deemed a sufficient threat to be classified as a 'Fiche S'. A search of his house in 2015, following the November Paris attacks, reportedly revealed no signs of his connection to the jihadist milieu (Vincent, 2017).

Following his attack it emerged that Belgacem was a frequent cocaine user, and police found a machete, foreign currency, and a few grams of the drug in his home. His own father confirmed that

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<sup>(25)</sup> While from 2018, and therefore outside the 2012-2017 scope of this study, this case is nevertheless included in this section.

Belgacem frequently drank and took cannabis, which he saw as being the reason behind his son's actions: 'My son was never a terrorist. He never prayed and used to drink. Here is the result of the effects of alcohol and cannabis' (AFP, 2017a). A post-mortem showed he had a blood alcohol level of 0.93 mg/ml (above the French driving limit of 0.5 mg/ml) and the presence of cannabis and cocaine in his system (Dumont, 2017).

Family members, for their part, often see such drug and substance abuse as an explanation for their relatives' acts of violence. The wife of suicide bomber Brahim Abdeslam, for example, stated: 'I have no explanation ... It's possible it was the cannabis, anything is possible', even though she had separated from him for two years before the attacks (Perrie et al, 2015). Such statements could be a result of being caught totally unaware by their relative's radicalisation. Moreover, it may be comforting to see their relatives as victims of drug abuse rather than individuals responsible for their own actions.

In each instance of a perpetrator taking drugs, we neither know the exact quantity of drugs within the attackers' bodies nor the precise effects this had on their decision making and behaviour. While drug use has been linked to violence and aggression — either directly (by consuming stimulants) or indirectly (through drug-induced psychosis, or during withdrawal) — every person reacts differently, with effects dependent on a host of personal, psychological, medical, and situational factors (RAN, 2018). In each case, drug use seems to be a continuation of routine behaviour that was simply part of the attackers' lifestyles, and *alone* it appears to offer an insufficient explanation as to why they carried out their attacks. Other factors appear more important, such as ideological commitment, socialisation with extremists, their perceived grievances, or the situational opportunity. It is possible that drug use contributed on some level — such as lowering inhibitions — though this is almost impossible to know <sup>(26)</sup>.

Irrespective of this, most jihadist attacks in Europe have *not* been carried out by a perpetrator who had recently taken drugs, and there does not appear to be an explicit, pronounced, and automatic link between drug use and perpetrating a terrorist attack. These examples do, nevertheless, demonstrate that the stereotype of jihadists as uniformly pious and religiously observant is outdated and inaccurate.

### 3.4 Other instances

A further three instances (one of which took place outside of Europe), are widely seen as examples of terrorists acting under the influence of drugs, and so also merit attention. The first is the 26 June 2015 firearms attack in a holiday resort in Sousse, Tunisia, which killed 38 people. A post-mortem was carried out on the body of the perpetrator, Seifeddine Rezgui, revealing he had consumed a drug which causes 'feeling of exhaustion, aggression and extreme anger that leads to murders being committed. Another effect of these drugs is that they enhance physical and mental performance' (HM Coroner, 2017, p. 34). The exact drug, however, was not specified (ibid.).

The second instance is the series of attacks in Paris on 13 November 2015 carried out by an Islamic State network, which killed 130 people. The aftermath of the attacks featured speculation that syringes and needles — possibly to inject a drug — were seen in a room used by the perpetrators before their attacks (Zemouri, 2015) <sup>(27)</sup>. Yet this turned out to be equipment used by the police investigation team and, moreover, the post-mortems of the attackers' bodies showed no signs of either drugs or alcohol (Laniel, 2017, p. 27).

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<sup>(26)</sup> For how drugs have been used in warfare throughout history, see Łukasz Kamiński (2017), *Shooting Up: A History of Drugs in Warfare* (London: Hurst).

<sup>(27)</sup> There were also reports that Salah Abdeslam looked as though he was on drugs during the attacks (Guiguitant & Duplessy, 2017).

The third instance relates to 20-year-old Ismail Tomasso Ben Youssef Hosni, a homeless man who stabbed a police officer and two soldiers in Milan Centrale train station in May 2017. The officials had asked to see his identity papers; though no-one was killed, the police officer lost a litre of blood (Galli & Giuzzi, 2017). It is unclear to what extent jihadism motivated the stabbing, if at all. Hosni had posted Islamic State nasheeds on social media — once with the caption: ‘The most beautiful nasheed of the Islamic State, the most beautiful I have listened to in my life’ (Corriere della Sera, 2017) — and it appears as though he was, at least at one point, a sympathiser of the group (Galli & Giuzzi, 2017; Vidino & Marone, 2017). However, Italian prosecutors did not pursue terrorism-related charges, and instead Hosni was convicted in March 2018 for attempted murder (Corriere della Sera, 2018).

Hosni claimed the attack was not motivated by jihadism, and that his memory, in any case, was blank: ‘I remember I was at the station, but I do not remember anything about the attack, when I woke up I had blood on my hands. That day I had taken cocaine’ (Giuzzi & Regina, 2017). This was confirmed in a toxicology test (ibid.), and a psychiatrist’s report said that the drug use would have affected his ‘already fragile mental balance’ (Corriere della Sera, 2018). Furthermore, Hosni — who had a conviction for drug dealing — was also found in possession of cocaine, which he was selling from a nearby shop (Giuzzi & Regina, 2017).

One driver behind this phenomenon of jihadists using and dealing drugs is the merging of criminal and terrorist milieus, which has blurred the boundaries between the two. This has been acknowledged, in its own way, in the defence used by Marouane El Bali when charged with membership of an Islamic State cell. On 15 January 2015 police raided an apartment in Verviers, Belgium, used by an IS cell in advanced stages of attack planning. Two jihadists, Khalid Ben Larbi and Sofiane Amghar, were shot dead in the raid, and police discovered four assault rifles, four handguns, ammunition, and explosives. Marouane El Bali was arrested at the scene and later convicted for his role in the cell (La Libre, 2017). His defence was that he was at the apartment for a drug deal and was therefore in the ‘wrong place at the wrong time’ (Waterfield, 2015). Such a defence implicitly acknowledges the overlaps between the criminal and extremist milieus.

Overall, however, there is little evidence to suggest that the drug trade has an *inherent* connection to jihadism in Europe. Even when jihadists have become involved with drugs — either through consuming or dealing — there is little to suggest their activity is exceptional. Instead, it forms *part* of an individual’s overall personal circumstances, experiences, narratives, networks, and other factors that, collectively, can help explain their involvement in extremism and their mobilisation into violence.



## 4. Paramilitaries

*It's no longer acceptable for the UDA/UFF to continue to pollute our communities with drugs and be involved in extortion, intimidating, and wrecking the lives of so many families ... These gangsters' days are up and it is time for them to fade into obscurity. We cannot let the prevailing situation go on any longer.*

Statement by loyalist ex-prisoners to the leaders of the West Belfast UDA, February 2016 (Morris, 2016).

Beyond the jihadist context, there exist dense and longstanding crossovers between the drug trade and paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland, where a crime-terror nexus has manifested for decades (Silke, 1998; 2000; Horgan & Taylor, 1999; 2003). Since the conclusion of the Northern Ireland Peace Agreement (Good Friday Agreement) in 1998 and the official end of many paramilitary campaigns, several groups have intensified their involvement in criminal activities while paying lip service to their political programmes <sup>(28)</sup>. Some of these groups exist as 'hybrid' criminal-terrorist groups, while others have transformed into organised crime groups altogether (Makarenko, 2012, pp. 36-37).

A kaleidoscope of groups is involved in criminality. These include so-called 'dissidents' — groups that are unwilling to accept the terms of the peace agreement — such as the:

- *Continuity IRA* (CIRA)
- *Irish National Liberation Army* (INLA) (disbanded in 2013).
- 'New' IRA (NIRA) (formed in 2012 when the Real IRA and RAAD merged; otherwise simply known as 'The IRA')
- *Óglaigh na hÉireann* (ONH) (declared a ceasefire in 2018)
- *Real IRA* (RIRA) (merged into the 'New' IRA in 2012)
- *Republican Action Against Drugs* (RAAD) (merged into the 'New' IRA in 2012)

As well as Loyalist paramilitaries such as the:

- *Loyalist Volunteer Force* (LVF)
- *South East Antrim Ulster Defence Association* (SEA UDA) (distinct from the UDA, which it split from in 2006)
- *Ulster Defence Association* (UDA)
- *Ulster Volunteer Force* (UVF)

Involvement in crime — which is not limited to drug dealing — by republican and loyalist groups has three consequences. First, it creates conflict with criminals, who paramilitaries seek to either eradicate (through so-called 'punishment' attacks) or accommodate (through extortion or the imposition of 'taxes'). Second, it leads to tension within groups, where internal feuds can result from the decision to engage in crime and whether this reconciles with their political ambitions. The autonomy many paramilitary leaders have over their operations can compound these internal divisions. And third, it potentially alienates the very communities that paramilitaries claim to champion.

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<sup>(28)</sup> This process of "transformation" between terrorist and criminal motivations was first hypothesised by Dishman (2001), and further developed by Makarenko (2004).

## 4.1 Drugs as one crime of many

Guaging paramilitary involvement with drugs is difficult for several reasons. The trade itself is inherently opaque, where limited information is in the public domain. In addition, the clandestine actors involved are often unwilling to divulge information or even unaware of the entirety of a criminal conspiracy. Moreover, even when those involved have spoken publicly, they are typically met with accusations and claims made by rival groups, factions, or individuals. When former UDA member Chuck Thompson, for example, spoke of the UDA's involvement in robberies and drug dealing, the group accused Thompson of selling cocaine and ecstasy (Barnes, 2012).

Despite such pronouncements, it is known that paramilitaries are 'heavily engaged' in organised crime (OCTF, 2012, p. 23; OCTF, 2013, p. 27; OCTF, 2014, p. 23), as outlined by the Organised Crime Task Force (OCTF) — a multi-agency partnership which includes the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). The task force's annual reports outline the range of crimes that paramilitaries are involved in. Dissident republicans engage in fuel laundering, smuggling, armed robbery, extortion, money laundering, drugs supply, burglary, insurance fraud, counterfeit currency, and intimidation (OCTF, 2013, p. 27). Loyalist groups, meanwhile, are also involved in extortion, money lending, robbery, contraband, drugs, burglary, thefts, and money laundering (ibid.).

Paramilitaries see the drug trade, therefore, as one criminal opportunity amongst many, which routinely overlaps with their other illicit activities, especially extortion. Euphemistically labelled as 'taxation', extortion targets legitimate businesses as well as criminals (ibid.; OCTF, 2016, pp. 12, 25; OCTF, 2017, p. 29). Threats of violence are central, as a victim explained: 'I sold up my business because I was fed up having to deal with them. They were constantly hassling for protection money and wanting favours. You can't go to the police about it ... You either fall into line with what they want or get out' (McAleese, 2015). In this way the crime is likely to be underreported due to the unwillingness of victims to speak to the police (OCTF, 2018, p. 49), for fear of paramilitary reprisals.

Groups take advantage of areas they control — mimicking the territoriality of mafia groups — by charging drug dealers a 'premium' to operate on their turf (OCTF, 2013, p. 37). It is unknown whether this varies according to the drug that is dealt, or whether some drugs are totally forbidden. Labelled 'bad on bad' extortion, it is carried out by loyalist and republican paramilitaries alike (OCTF, 2016, p. 25), and can involve large amounts of thousands of pounds, as well as relatively small sums of money: the UVF, for example, is reported to charge drug dealers GBP 30 per week to operate in its areas of control in East Belfast (McAleese, 2015). In this way the paramilitaries can shift the risk of importation and distribution to drug traffickers, while still profiting from the drug trade.

Extortion will often be carried out in the name of a paramilitary group, though it is not always clear if senior members have sanctioned the act (OCTF, 2013, p. 36). In 2016, PSNI Assistant Constable Will Kerr stated that involvement — at least among dissident republicans — occurred more on an individual level than as a group-sanctioned practice: 'Organisationally, [republicans] are not involved to the same extent but individually, some of them undoubtedly are. It's probably not to the same extent as loyalist paramilitary groups are involved in organised crime: extortion, violence, robbery, drug dealing in the North. But undoubtedly some individual members are' (Lally, 2016).

This therefore makes attribution difficult. For example, a group of five blackmailers — known as the 'Lemonade Brigade' — were convicted in 2013 for attempting to extort GBP 10 000 from an alleged drug dealer (Brown, 2013; Erwin, 2014a). The group told their victim that they were from the UDA, though it is unknown what actual connections the quintet had to the loyalist paramilitary. In this way criminals may seek to exploit the feared reputation of paramilitaries for their own ends.

In turn, criminals can also straddle the divide between groups, working with both loyalists and republicans<sup>(29)</sup>. This was seen during the 2014 trial of Declan Gallagher, charged with 17 drugs-related counts related to the importation of cocaine into Northern Ireland, which revealed that Gallagher worked with both republican and loyalist paramilitary groups, with no group aware of his other customers (Erwin, 2014b). The factors behind a criminal's decision to work with terrorist groups, however, are largely unknown, and the topic is under-researched.

## 4.2 'Punishment' attacks and conflict with criminals

When Irish paramilitaries involve themselves in the drug trade, conflict with 'regular' criminals often results. Involving clandestine actors used to operating outside of the law, this can be volatile, deadly, and prone to retaliatory and escalatory cycles of violence (see *Case Study 3: Alan Ryan*).

Conflict frequently manifests in so-called 'punishment' attacks. These are vigilante assaults carried out by paramilitaries on individuals within their areas of control, for the purported reason of punishing 'anti-social' behaviour such as consuming or dealing drugs<sup>(30)</sup>. With victims typically warned beforehand — at times paramilitaries have published lists of names — they face the conundrum of being assaulted at a time and place arranged in advance or risk an unannounced and potentially more dangerous attack<sup>(31)</sup>. The severity varies from forcing an individual to leave town, to beatings, non-fatal shootings in the limbs, and even murder.

Such attacks were a common occurrence during the Troubles, and that they persist over twenty years after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 demonstrates just how embedded paramilitaries are in Northern Ireland. Between 2012 and 2017, there were 564 such attacks in Northern Ireland (PSNI, 2019), with most shootings attributed to Republican groups (see *Table 2: Number of vigilante attacks in Northern Ireland, 2012-2017*). An unknown number of victims were also threatened but not subject to an assault. Drug dealers and users are not the only victims, as individuals unconnected to the trade have been targeted, alongside those with whom paramilitary members harbour grudges (BBC Spotlight, 2012). Even those with a history of personal involvement in paramilitaries — such as former IRA members — and those with family ties to the republican movement have been targeted (ibid.).

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<sup>(29)</sup> See, for example, the case of Hugh McGeough, a leading criminal reported to have worked with both the Continuity IRA and loyalists in Belfast (Sunday Life, 2015c).

<sup>(30)</sup> For more on this theme, see John Lindsay (2012), *No Dope Here? Anti-Drugs Vigilantism in Northern Ireland* (Londonderry: Yes Publications), Colin Knox (2011), "The 'deserving' victims of political violence: 'Punishment' attacks in Northern Ireland", *Criminal Justice*, Vol 1, Issue 2, pp. 181-199.

<sup>(31)</sup> The 2017 film 'A Mother Brings Her Son to Be Shot' examines this issue, and centres on a Derry family who had been victim to a vigilante attack.

**Table 2: Number of vigilante attacks in Northern Ireland, 2012-2017 <sup>(32)</sup>**

Year	Shootings by Loyalists	Shootings by Republicans	Assaults by Loyalists	Assaults by Republicans	Total Casualties
2012	1	29	27	13	70
2013	7	19	34	4	64
2014	3	28	37	12	80
2015	6	20	49	13	88
2016	1	19	53	12	85
2017	3	25	57	16	101

The prospect of vigilantism has led to suspected drug dealers being denied bail *for their own safety*. This was due to paramilitary attacks on those the authorities charged — and therefore publicly named — with drug offences. For example, ten days after the arrest of Kevin Davison for cannabis dealing in April 2012, masked men entered his mother’s home in Belfast demanding to know where he was. In response the judge decided that releasing him on bail would expose him to ‘inhuman or degrading treatment’ (The Irish News, 2012a). This protection was then further extended to judges granting anonymity to those accused (see, for example, McDonald, 2012c; The Irish News, 2012b): 22 individuals were granted anonymity in Northern Irish courts in 2012 (Rutherford, 2013), albeit not all were for drug offences.

The most prominent group in recent years was Republican Action Against Drugs (RAAD). Formed in 2008 by ex-Provisional IRA members, it was a reincarnation of Direct Actions Against Drugs (DAAD), the anti-drugs vigilante group that served as a front for the Provisional IRA in the 1990s. Most of RAAD’s actions were in Derry/Londonderry, with the group also operating in Strabane and across the Irish border in County Donegal (Jackson, 2012; McFonald, 2012c). The group also gained notoriety for publishing a photo of its members — wearing military fatigues, balaclavas, and holding various weapons — with an alleged drug dealer who were hooded and bound, alongside drugs that it had purportedly seized (Strabane Chronicle, 2013).

Despite RAAD’s 2012 merger with the Real IRA to form the ‘New’ IRA, stand-alone vigilante groups still exist. In September 2017, an unnamed group issued a threat to local drug dealers in the Omagh area, stating that:

*We are an organisation taking action against all drug dealers. At this point we are not willing to disclose the organisation we are acting on behalf of, but we are taking it upon ourselves to put an end to the drug dealing with our community. The drugs that are in circulation are destroying young peoples (sic) lives and are the ruination of our community. In order to stop this we are willing to go to extreme lengths such as integrations (sic), knee capping and executions if necessary (McAleer, 2017).*

Accompanying the text was a photo of three men in military fatigues and balaclavas, with a shotgun, pistol, and ammunition on a table. The message appeared to have been in response to a fatal

<sup>(32)</sup> Republican or Loyalist attribution is as perceived by PSNI. Note that this table does not include attacks that resulted in death. For more on classification, see Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) (2015), ‘User Guide to Security Situation Statistics Northern Ireland’, *PSNI Statistics Branch*, January; Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) (2018), ‘Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics Northern Ireland – Casualties as a result of Paramilitary Style Attacks in Northern Ireland’, *PSNI*, 17 May, available at: <https://www.psni.police.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/security-situation-statistics/>

overdose — involving a mixture of alcohol, diazepam, and ecstasy — that had occurred in Omagh less than a fortnight before (The Irish News, 2017) <sup>(33)</sup>.

Paramilitaries have been careful to present their actions as calibrated, with themselves as guardians of the community. When they have publicised lists of drug dealers, they have framed them as resulting from long ‘investigations’, aimed at benefiting local families. When ONH publicly distributed a list of 54 alleged drug dealers in 2013, for example, they included the relatively benign message: ‘Those who come forward and admit [their involvement in drugs] will receive a sympathetic ear and the help they need to break free from their suppliers’ (Ryan, 2013). Similarly, vigilante groups frequently emphasise — when they have spoken publicly — that their actions are demanded by their community, that the violence is not indiscriminate, and that their victims are forewarned.

Yet there is more to ‘punishment’ attacks than simple vigilantism. They occur in a post-Good Friday Agreement context; whereby sectarian groups have agreed to disavow violence, and there is limited popular support for an armed struggle (O’Doherty 2015). For those left in the wake of the political process and unable to transition from wartime to peacetime, ‘punishment’ attacks are not only a means of staying relevant, feared, and in control of communities; they also serve to undermine the Good Friday Agreement and the Northern Ireland Assembly. It is for that reason that paramilitaries have, in their public pronouncements on vigilante attacks, also threatened police, army, and political targets.

There have been accusations, meanwhile, that vigilante groups are themselves involved in the drug trade, and simply target those drug dealers that refuse to be extorted. PSNI Assistant Chief Constable Stephen Martin has stated that: ‘Frequently we see actions being taken against people who they would allege, often wrongly, would be involved in crime. Yet those very organisations are gaining money from the same crimes they allege their victims are involved in’ (Sunday Life, 2015b).

### 4.3 Internal divisions over drugs

Involvement in drugs has also led to conflict *within* groups, with members disagreeing over its congruence with their ideological and political aims. Loyalist groups are particularly affected here. In a joint October 2015 statement, the UVF, UDA, and Red Hand Commando threatened exclusion for loyalists involved in crime: ‘If there are those who attempt to use current or past associations with our organisations to further criminality they will be disowned and should be aware that they will not be permitted to use the cover of loyalism’ (Press Association, 2015). Yet their pledge to ‘eschew all violence and criminality’ — in addition to establishing a Loyalist Communities Council to oversee disputes — was not uniformly adopted, as the North Belfast UDA was not involved in the statement (ibid.). Such tensions even led to loyalist ex-prisoners calling for the leadership of the West Belfast UDA to be replaced in February 2016, due to the group’s descent into criminality (Morris, 2016). What results are factions that are not only uncooperative, but also potentially in conflict with each other, thus undermining a movement’s broader strategy and aims.

Conflict can be just as violent as when paramilitaries clash with criminals (see *Case Study 3: The murder of Alan Ryan*). One such example concerns Georgie Gilmore, who over the course of 2016 and 2017 became involved in increased tensions with the South East Antrim UDA brigade in Carrickfergus. The dispute centred on drug dealing, and was exacerbated by personality clashes: Gilmore, a former UDA commander who found allies among veteran loyalists, objected to the group’s involvement with drugs, while the group had made death threats against him (McDowell, J., 2017). He taunted the group in a March 2017 social media post: ‘The days of the UDA putting people out of

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<sup>(33)</sup> After the data collection for this study, a new group emerged in April 2018. Calling itself the Irish Republican Movement (IRM), they stated they will target drug dealers and criminals operating in nationalist communities. The group included a photo of five men in military fatigues and balaclavas, with two assault rifles, a bomb, handguns, and a revolver (Morris, 2018).

[Carrickfergus] are over' (Preston, 2017). The following day Gilmore was fatally shot in the neck at point blank range.

Internal conflict is possible because paramilitaries are not monolithic, unitary groups. The Ulster Defence Association (UDA), which emerged as a federation of local defence committees in the early 1970s, was once the largest paramilitary group in Northern Ireland (Bruce, 1992). However, its size and loose organisation meant that the group's leadership have always found it difficult to implement coherent political and military strategies. Although political representatives of the UDA participated in the Belfast peace negotiations, parts of the group have rejected the peace agreement, formed their own organisations, and/or become full-time criminal groups. Today, factions of the UDA are heavily involved in drug dealing and other crimes.

Evidently, divisions between a group's leadership and its foot soldiers can result. This is especially the case concerning engagement with the peace process and organisational reform. While the PSNI have assessed that the leadership of groups such as the UDA and UVF 'want to move the groups forward' to a legitimate political status, many of their foot soldiers continue to engage in crime (Lally, 2016). This hierarchical break was echoed in 2014 by then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Theresa Villiers (Emerson, 2014). Yet even the leaders of groups can be involved in crime, including drug trafficking: James Hamilton, who was the leader of the UDA in Scotland during the Troubles, was convicted for his part in a heroin trafficking ring in 1999, for example (Silvester, 2016).

Divisions rarely appear between the armed wing of paramilitaries and their associated political groups. Involvement with drugs and crime can be politically disastrous, yet public-facing representatives have solved this dilemma by simply distancing themselves from such activities. The response of Jackie McDonald from the Ulster Political Research Group — linked to the UDA — is prototypical: 'There is no such thing as a loyalist drug dealer. They can be a loyalist, or they can be a drug dealer, but they can't be both' (ibid.). A similar approach is to assign blame on individual members rather than on the collective, as seen with the comments of Billy Hutchinson, the leader of the UVF-linked Progressive Unionist Party: 'The UVF do not sell drugs, but there may be members of any paramilitary organisation, including republicans, that do' (BBC News, 2013).

Beyond causing division *within* a group, criminality can strain the *broader* political movement. This is apparent amongst mainstream Republicanism, which has characterised dissidents as more criminal than ideological in motivation. Faced with Action Against Drugs (AAD) issuing threats against drug dealers, for example, Sinn Féin councillor JJ Magee accused the dissidents of merely being criminals: 'It is known locally that many of those making threats and hiding behind anti-drug messages are heavily involved in extorting money from the same drug dealers they claim to oppose' (Short, 2014). Martin McGuinness, Stormont's former Deputy First Minister and a former leader of the Provisional IRA, has gone at lengths to criticise dissidents in this respect:

*What you have to understand is that if you support these people, you are effectively supporting people who are swimming in a sea of criminality and drugs, dressing it up on occasions in a flag of political convenience and you shouldn't be under any illusions about that ... People need to get real. They need to recognise the danger that a tiny number of people can represent to human beings and they need to recognise that the world has changed, that over the course of the last 15 years we have built something, all of us together, which we can be very proud of. And we are not going to let it go, to anybody, certainly not to a ragbag of people who have inspired themselves and others for their own purposes, to fill their own coffers, to engage in criminality and to extort money from drug pushers and drug barons — effectively becoming themselves part of the drug problem on the island of Ireland (Belfast Telegraph, 2012b).*

### **Case study 3: The murder of Alan Ryan**

Alan Ryan, a leading figure for the Real IRA in Dublin, was shot dead in broad daylight on 3 September 2012 in the city. His funeral featured a paramilitary showing, with a volley of shots fired over his casket, and in the aftermath of his killing, the 'New' IRA — formed by a merger of the Real IRA and Republican Action Against Drugs (RAAD) — issued a statement that the murderers 'will be hunted down and dealt with in an appropriate manner' (Young, 2012b).

The 32-year-old had been a member of the Real IRA since his teenage years, eventually becoming a leading figure in the dissident group. His role was primarily in fundraising: after a seven year stay in prison on two consecutive firearms-related convictions, he began to use criminal means to raise money for the group after his 2005 release. Ryan ran a gang based in Donaghmede area of Dublin heavily involved in crime; it established itself in the pub and club door security business and was known to extort other criminal gangs — typically demanding a 20 % 'tax' — for their drug trafficking and robbery proceeds (The Irish Examiner, 2012b). Yet the Gardaí estimated that less than 10 % of his 'fundraising' actually went to the dissident group, with the remainder instead pocketed by his gang (Irish Independent, 2012). This reflects the broader situation, where it is not always clear how much of criminal fundraising is used to fund terrorism, and how much is simply for personal gain (OCTF, 2013, p. 37).

To date his murder remains unsolved, though several crime groups were suspected due to their apparent frustrations with his extortion attempts (The Irish Examiner, 2012c). There was a history of conflict: Ryan was reported to have previously clashed with criminal gangs, such as Eamon Dunne's notorious crime group based in Finglas in the north of Dublin, and had even escaped an attempt on his life in August 2009 when Gardaí intercepted a hitman (*ibid.*; Cusack, 2012). In the months leading up to his murder it was reported that Dublin drug bosses placed a hit on Ryan, though the contract went unfulfilled (Young, 2012a).

What followed was a combination of Real IRA infighting, as well as skirmishes with Dublin's criminal underworld. In November, a Real IRA associate of Ryan, Nathan Kinsella, was shot in the leg in a 'punishment' attack over suspicions of having stolen or withheld extortion money from his Real IRA bosses. He had been found in possession of a note detailing financial transactions made by Ryan's gang involving sums of EUR 20 000, EUR 60 000, and EUR 120 000, in addition to the text: 'I understand that I went against army orders by not going to my OC [Commanding Officer]' (Kavanagh, 2014). Kinsella was later imprisoned for IRA membership, and in a sign of the infighting, was housed in a separate wing from other dissidents in Portlaoise prison (Foy, 2014).

More violence followed, demonstrating the potential for conflict to rapidly escalate. In December, Dublin crime boss Eamonn Kelly was killed by Real IRA member Sean Connolly (Irish Time, 2015), and in January 2013, another Ryan associate, Declan Smith, was subject to a 'punishment' shooting in Saggart, South Dublin (Smith would later be murdered in March 2014). The following month Real IRA leader Kevin Braney murdered another member of the group, Peter Butterly, in Gormanston, Co Meath (Brady 2013; Morris, 2019).

Ryan's murder brought renewed attention on dissidents' role in the drug trade. The 32 County Sovereignty Movement, a republican movement of which Ryan was a member, therefore publicly distanced Ryan from drugs, stating he was shot 'on the streets where he grew up, streets where he had worked tirelessly to tackle the scourge of drugs which he had always opposed with every fibre of his being' (Young, 2012a). These claims were rejected by Alan Shatter, the Republic of Ireland's Justice Minister (Robinson, 2012).

The episode and its fallout demonstrate how paramilitaries can exist as 'hybrid' groups, merging their ideological affiliations and criminal endeavours, making it difficult to gauge their motivation and political commitment (for more, see: Dishman, 2001; Makarenko, 2004).

#### 4.4 Damaging community relations

Paramilitaries involving themselves in the drug trade — whether to prohibit or profit from it — run the additional risk of damaging community relations. This is especially the case with vigilantism, as paramilitaries are essentially attacking their own communities. Attacks can cause long-lasting physical and mental damage, with victims suffering from depression, avoidance behaviour, emotional numbing, and increased anxiety, all consistent with the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Ironically, victims have even taken to substance abuse to assuage their anxieties over a repeat attack (BBC, 2018). Their families — who are often involved in the decision to acquiesce to paramilitary demands — are also affected, with the parents of those shot having spoken of their feelings of guilt (RTÉ News, 2012). Donna Smith, the mother of RAAD murder victim Andrew Allen, explained the effects of vigilantism in Derry/Londonderry:

*I actually know of young boys who are sleeping with hammers and baseball bats at the side of their beds because they are so terrified. I know a mother that has a big piece of wood barricaded against her door because her son is under a death threat as she is afraid at night that they will come in (McDonald, 2012).*

Furthermore, recruitment may be jeopardised by activities seen to be unwarranted or disproportionate, especially as vigilantism targets the very demographic and community they recruit from. The chairman of a community group within a republican neighbourhood emphasised this in 2012, saying: ‘People in the area have described those behind this [punishment] attack as having the IQ of goldfish, and I agree ... The type of people they are targeting are young people in working class areas, council estates, who have nothing, and local people are left wondering, who is next’ (McDaid, 2012a).

A public backlash due to those very reasons occurred following RAAD’s February 2012 murder of Andrew Allen in County Donegal, Ireland. RAAD insisted Allen was murdered because of his involvement in drugs, yet in response there were several public rallies condemning the group and the threats they had made (Lindsay, 2012, pp. 308-312). Its April 2012 death threat against Raymond Cole — who had already been shot and wounded by the group two years prior — led to local families in Derry/Londonderry rallying for the threat to be lifted (McKinnery, 2012). In response to such pressure, RAAD did, at times, withdraw threats made against specific individuals, while on other occasions it simply reasserted the need to remove drugs from republican neighbourhoods (Lindsay, 2012, pp. 311-313).

Despite such issues, it is likely that vigilante groups have a base of support within local communities, though there are no reliable proxy indicators of this. For example, while a community’s reluctance to provide police with information on vigilantes can be interpreted as tacit approval, it is likely more indicative of fears of reprisal attacks as well as a general culture of silence (Belfast Telegraph, 2012a). For their part, paramilitaries emphasise how they are acting in response to local demands, providing a service that the police are unable to (see, for example, BBC, 2018).

Loyalist paramilitaries, meanwhile, have received intense criticism for their role in the drug trade (The Irish News, 2013; Belfast Telegraph, 2013; McDowell, L., 2013; Feeney, 2014). This was especially high in 2013, after eight people died from overdoses of drugs reportedly supplied via loyalist channels. Indeed, the deaths highlighted the open-secret of paramilitaries dealing drugs, with the Northern Ireland First Minister Peter Robinson stating that ‘[police] need to pursue [the perpetrators], because it is well-known who is dealing drugs in east Belfast’ (Moriarty, 2013; McKittrick, 2013). UDA drug dealing in the Lower Shankill area of Belfast has also led to criticism from within loyalist communities (<sup>34</sup>), thus increasing the pressure to challenge paramilitary crime.

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<sup>(34)</sup> See, for example, Tracey Coulter’s conflict with the group (Barnes, 2013).



The authorities in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have acknowledged — and taken steps to address — the severity of the issue. The 2015 ‘*A Fresh Start*’ Stormont Agreement included commitments to ‘challenge all paramilitary activity and associated criminality’, and — recognising the cross-border nature of organised criminal activity — to also establish a Joint Agency Task Force, led by officers from the PSNI, An Garda Síochána, the Revenue Commissioners, and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) (Northern Ireland Executive, 2015, p. 15). Similarly, the Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF) was also established in October 2017, which includes PSNI, HMRC, and the United Kingdom’s National Crime Agency (NCA). Over the 2017/18 financial year, the PCTF seized an estimated GBP 58 000 worth of drugs (OCTF, 2018, p. 68), though it is unknown how much of this was directly related to paramilitary activity, or what the quantity or types of drugs were.

The Northern Ireland Executive has similarly acknowledged the convergence between paramilitaries and organised crime <sup>(35)</sup>. Its 2016 Executive Action Plan followed on from the Fresh Start Agreement and emphasised the need to support individuals who desire to move away from paramilitary activity — including criminality — as well as the need to tackle those that persist in crime (Northern Ireland Executive, 2016, p. 5). The plan urged the PSNI to prioritise investment in its investigative capacity, as well as to work with other law enforcement agencies (ibid., p. 17). The plan even went as far as saying that tackling organised crime should be an ‘integral part’ in the fight against Northern Ireland-related terrorism (ibid., p. 18).

Overall, this demonstrates that the strong and consistent overlaps between paramilitary activities and the drug trade — and more broadly, other forms of crime — have been noted in Northern Ireland. Criminality is a central feature of how many paramilitary groups operate, thus blurring the distinctions between what is political motivated and what is for ‘purely’ criminal ends. This presents challenges that are unlikely to disappear in the coming years.

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<sup>(35)</sup> This body exercises executive authority on behalf of the Northern Ireland Assembly, and is made up of the First Minister, deputy First Minister, two Junior Ministers, and eight department ministers.

## 5. Other groups

Several other terrorist groups and movements in Europe have also been accused of involvement in drugs. Of particular note are two separatist groups, the Basque *Euskadi ta Askatasuna* (Basque Homeland and Liberty, or ETA), and the Corsican *Front de Libération Nationale Corse* (National Liberation Front for Corsica, or FLNC). With both groups abandoning violence — ETA declared a definitive cessation of armed activities in 2011, and the FLNC ended its armed campaign in 2016 — the potential exists for its members to ‘transform’ into organised criminal activities (for more, see: Dishman, 2001; Makarenko, 2004), in a process similar to that seen amongst paramilitaries in Northern Ireland.

There are indications that this potential has already been realised. After 2.2 tonnes of cocaine were seized from a yacht close to the French West Indies island of Martinique in April 2015, it emerged that one of the suspected traffickers had been linked to ETA. A French customs officer stated that: ‘It’s a profile we come across from time to time, former terrorists who turn to smuggling’ (BBC Monitoring, 2015). It is likely that many more individuals have made a similar transition.

Although rarely seen in our sample, it also affects far-right terrorists. In March 2012, the Italian Emanuele Macchi Di Cellere, formerly associated with the armed Italian neo-fascist movement in the 1970s and 1980s, was arrested in possession of 165 kg of cocaine (ANSA, 2014). The haul had been imported from the Dominican Republic and was to be sold in Italy. Rather than demonstrating systematic, long-term, or formal collaboration between terrorist *groups* and the drug trade, these cases show how *individuals* can shift between these two worlds.

There is also evidence that an organised crime group, with suspected links to Hezbollah, has used Europe to launder the proceeds of criminal enterprises, including drugs (Europol, 2017, p.16). The group would gather money raised from cocaine sales in Europe, which was then used to purchase luxury goods — such as watches and cars — which were in turn sold in Lebanon. Using a *hawala* (an informal money transfer system) network, the group would then transfer the proceeds to the Latin American cartels that trafficked the drugs to Europe (Kabisch, Strozyk & Strunz, 2018). The group was disrupted in 2015 and 2016 as part of the US Drug Enforcement Agency’s (DEA) *Operation Cedar*, with arrests taking place in France, Germany, and Italy. While those involved in the money laundering were labelled as ‘Hezbollah-affiliated’ by the US Treasury (US Treasury, 2016), Hezbollah’s exact role — and the amount of revenue it potentially generated for the group — is unclear.

The Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), meanwhile, is frequently accused of being involved in the drug trade in the Middle East, Turkey, and Europe. The group is active in a known trafficking corridor in south-eastern Turkey, and its strongholds sit along the strategic heroin trafficking route which extends from Afghanistan, via Iran and Turkey, to Europe. The PKK has been reported to not only ‘tax’ this trade, but also to directly involve themselves in the logistics of smuggling the drug into Europe (Roth & Sever, 2007, pp. 907-909). The group has engaged in other forms of criminality, including extortion and human trafficking (Roth & Sever, 2007), and given that it operates in Europe (Eccarius-Kelly, 2012, p. 238), it has been speculated that the group is also engaged in the drug trade in the EU.

Commentary in this area is often alarmist in tone. In 2017, a Turkish police report claimed the PKK controls 80 % of the illicit drugs market in Europe, and that the group generates USD 1.5 billion in annual revenue alone from heroin production in Northern Iraq (Hürriyet, 2017). That same year, then Prime Minister of Turkey Binali Yıldırım also stated that ‘the PKK deals in drugs: it peddles heroin and cocaine to the European youth, that’s how they make money’ (Sengupta, 2017). When a Danish court fined a Kurdish TV channel in 2012 — rather than close it down — for disseminating propaganda for the PKK, Turkey’s then EU Affairs Minister Egemen Bağış similarly stated that this will mean ‘more

Danish youth will face the risk of being poisoned by illicit drugs sold by the terrorist organisation' (Today's Zaman, 2012).

There is some open source evidence which suggests PKK involvement in the drug trade. An intelligence report by the United Kingdom's Metropolitan Police, for example, highlighted how the Tottenham Boys, a Kurdish gang based in London, were 'involved in protection rackets/extortion, where they target local Kurdish businesses and use extreme violence to raise money for the Kurdish terrorist organisation the PKK'. The report states the gang employ men from other gangs to sell Class A and B drugs on the street, and that they have 'committed a number of fatal and non-fatal shootings throughout north London'. In turn, these proceeds are laundered as part of an organised crime operation (Simpson, 2015). Similarly, in 2012 the US Treasury named three Moldova-based men — Zeyneddin Geleri, Cerkez Akbulut and Omer Boztepe — as key figures in the PKK's alleged drug network, for producing and trafficking heroin and marijuana. Geleri was also accused of being a member of a Romania-based drug trafficking group as well as a 'high ranking member' of the PKK (AFP, 2012). It is unknown whether this was sanctioned by the group's leadership.

Beyond these two instances, however, there are few open-source examples of PKK-related individuals involved in the trafficking and dealing of drugs in Europe. In 2013 a Kurdish drug dealer by the name of Hamit Uslu was arrested in France and accused of trafficking a thousand ecstasy tablets between the Netherlands and Turkey. During an appeal hearing, his lawyer stated that he should not be extradited to Turkey 'as he has activities related to the PKK' (Barrère, 2014). The extent of those connections is unclear, however, and there is no evidence available in the public domain confirming the alleged drug trafficking was connected to the PKK. It is possible that more evidence exists in closed sources.

## 6. Conclusion

As this paper has shown, terrorism in Europe overlaps with the drug trade in two primary arenas: amongst jihadists, and with paramilitaries in Northern Ireland. In the European jihadist context there appear to be no formal, structural, or inherent links to the drug trade. Many jihadists do, however, have a background in either consuming or dealing drugs, which can have an ancillary, indirect role on their radicalisation process. This involvement can continue long after they begin engaging with extremist ideas and networks. Where this does occur, post-radicalisation behaviour generally mirrors pre-radicalisation usage.

In a handful of cases, there is evidence that jihadists have taken drugs in the days — or possibly hours — before carrying out a terrorist attack, although it is unknown exactly how drug taking influenced their decision to act. None of these cases involved Captagon, counterfeit captagon, or amphetamine-type substances. At the most basic level, these examples show how it is important to re-examine easy and outdated assumptions about how jihadist radicalisation automatically correlates with religious behaviour, as there is no dichotomy between commitment to jihadism and involvement in drugs.

Amongst paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland, meanwhile, dense and longstanding overlaps with the drug trade have been observed, where republican and loyalist groups have sought to either eradicate or accommodate the drug trade. This has caused conflict between criminals and paramilitaries, internal tensions within paramilitary groups, and risks alienating the very communities these groups claim to represent.

Overall, however, there are no inherent, automatic, or ubiquitous crossovers between terrorists and the drug trade. Crossovers do exist, but in specific places and circumstances, showing how the boundaries between criminality and extremism are often blurred. Drugs are but one aspect of that. This presents a challenge to many EU states that are unaccustomed to dealing with this combination. As a French intelligence official stated regarding the terrorist attacks by the criminal-turned-jihadist Mohamed Merah: 'We were [used to] dealing with Islamists, not delinquents' (Durang-Souffland, 2017). Yet many EU member states still have a functional separation between their anti-drugs and counterterrorism agencies, which can potentially lead to overlooking such crossovers (EMCDDA, 2016, p. 24). Adapting to this reality is key in understanding an important aspect of the terrorist threat in Europe.

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## APPENDIX

**Table 3: Deportations from Italy for national security reasons, January 2014 to June 2018**<sup>36</sup>

Case #	Deportation	Nationality	Location	Involvement in crime
1	05/08/2014	Moroccan	Venice province	
2	04/04/2015	Moroccan	Imola	
3	11/04/2015	Tunisian	Verona	
4	11/04/2015	Tunisian	Verona	
5	16/07/2015	Moroccan	Savona province	
6	08/08/2015	Tunisian	Perugia	Drug dealing
7	23/11/2015	Moroccan	Bologna	
8	23/11/2015	Moroccan	Bologna	
9	23/11/2015	Moroccan	Bologna	
10	23/11/2015	Moroccan	Bologna	
11	24/11/2015	Tunisian	Brianza province	Drug dealing; Theft
12	26/11/2015	Moroccan	Milan	Drug dealing
13	21/12/2015	Moroccan	Bologna	Drug dealing
14	29/12/2015	Moroccan	Monselice	
15	13/01/2016	Macedonian	Treviso province	
16	04/03/2016	Albanian	Pozzo d'Adda	
17	04/03/2016	Tunisian	Padova	
18	05/03/2016	Tunisian	Padova	Drug offences
19	02/04/2016	Moroccan	Oristano	Drug offences; Murder
20	08/04/2016	Moroccan	Potenza	
21	20/05/2016	Moroccan	Varese province	
22	20/05/2016	Moroccan	Varese province	
23	25/05/2016	Moroccan	Pisa	Drug offences
24	02/08/2016	Pakistani	Milan province	
25	04/08/2016	Tunisian	Catania	
26	04/08/2016	Tunisian	Catania	
27	07/08/2016	Tunisian	Padua	Drug dealing
28	10/08/2016	Albanian	Ferrara	
29	13/08/2016	Tunisian	Andria	
30	19/08/2016	Tunisian	Turin	Drug dealing
31	20/08/2016	Tunisian	Turin	
32	03/09/2016	Tunisian	Ferrara	
33	03/09/2016	Moroccan	Novara	
34	06/09/2016	Indian	Scoglitti	Kidnapping
35	08/09/2016	Moroccan	Treviso province	
36	15/09/2016	Moroccan	Savona	Drug dealing
37	23/09/2016	Moroccan	Perugia	
38	02/10/2016	Macedonian	Ronchi dei Legionari	

<sup>36</sup> This table only contains the deportations listed on the Interior Ministry website. As not all deportations are listed on the website, this is not an exhaustive list. In 2015, there were a total of 66 deportations for national security reasons; in 2016, there were 66; in 2017, there were 92; the figures for 2018 have yet to be released. Atef M. was deported twice, on 24/11/2015 and 06/03/2018.

<b>Case #</b>	<b>Deportation</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Involvement in crime</b>
39	11/10/2016	Algerian	Bergamo province	Drug dealing
40	23/12/2016	Tunisian		Common crimes
41	29/12/2016	Tunisian	Brescia province	
42	13/01/2017	Tunisian	Ancona	Common crimes; Theft; Violence
43	19/01/2017	Tunisian	Palermo	Common crimes
44	20/01/2017	Pakistani	Olbia	Migrant trafficking
45	25/02/2017	Tunisian	Perugia province	Drug dealing
46	28/02/2017	Moroccan	Catania	Common crimes; Violence
47	04/03/2017	Tunisian	Milan and Monza	Drug dealing; Drug offences
48	07/04/2017	Moroccan	Rome	Common crimes
49	29/04/2017	Egyptian	Brindisi	Common crimes
50	26/05/2017	Tunisian	Milan	Common crimes; Drug dealing
51	30/06/2017	Tunisian	Novara	Common crimes
52	08/09/2017	Tunisian	Milan	Drug dealing
53	22/09/2017	Pakistan	Teramo	
54	24/09/2017	Albanian	Riccione	Violence
55	30/09/2017	Egyptian	Milan	
56	06/10/2017	Moroccan	Perugia province	Violence
57	11/10/2017	Moroccan	Southern Italy	
58	19/10/2017	Algerian	Turin	
59	19/10/2017	Moroccan		Common crimes
60	21/10/2017	Pakistani	Naples	
61	25/10/2017	Albanian	Bari province	
62	25/10/2017	Macedonian	Bari province	
63	28/10/2017	Moroccan	Rome	Drug dealing
64	06/11/2017	Tunisian	Milan	
65	09/11/2017	Egyptian	near Milan	Drug dealing
66	19/11/2017	Tunisian	Perugia	Drug offences
67	19/11/2017	Moroccan	Turin	
68	21/11/2017	Moroccan	Milan	
69	06/12/2017	Albanian	Lucera	Human trafficking
70	15/12/2017	French	Cuneo province	Petty crime
71	17/12/2017	Tunisian	Florence	Petty crime
72	28/12/2017	Kosovan	Bolzano province	
73	05/01/2018	Moroccan	Trapani	Fraud
74	20/01/2018	Algerian	Padua	Drug dealing
75	24/01/2018	Moroccan	Milan	
76	24/01/2018	Egyptian	Parma	Violence
77	26/01/2018	Macedonian	Venice	
78	29/01/2018	Tunisian	Palermo	Drug offences
79	01/02/2018	Egyptian	Turin	Common crimes
80	05/02/2018	Tunisian	Rimini	Drug dealing
81	06/02/2018	Pakistani	Rome	
82	15/02/2018	Moroccan	Milan	Sexual violence
83	16/02/2018	Tunisian	Ravenna	
84	17/02/2018	Moroccan	Milan	Crimes against the person; Violence



<b>Case #</b>	<b>Deportation</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Involvement in crime</b>
85	22/02/2018	Moroccan	Reggio Emilia	Drug dealing; Common crimes
86	24/02/2018	Tunisian	Rome and Turin	Human trafficking; Fraudulent doc.
87	06/03/2018	Tunisian	Vimercate	Drug dealing; Theft
88	14/03/2018	Moroccan	Alessandria	Common crimes
89	04/04/2018	Moroccan	L'Aquila	Drug dealing
90	18/04/2018	Moroccan	Reggio Emilia	
91	19/04/2018	Moroccan	Mantua	Drug offences
92	01/05/2018	Moroccan	Biella	Crimes against the person
93	02/05/2018	Tunisian	Varese	Common crimes
94	09/05/2018	Moroccan	Milan province	Crimes against the person
95	15/05/2018	Egyptian	Udine	Common crimes; Violence
96	22/05/2018	Moroccan	San Salvo	Drug offences
97	04/06/2018	Egyptian	Trapani	Human trafficking
98	06/06/2018	Moroccan	Piacenza	Common crimes
99	12/06/2018	Moroccan	Turin	Drug dealing
100	26/06/2018	Moroccan	Sollicciano	Common crimes
101	30/06/2018	Tunisian	Verona	Common crimes