ORIGINAL ARTICLE

UK Counter-Terrorism and Multiple and Complex Needs: A Policy-Informed Discourse Analysis

Rita Augestad Knudsen[1] · **Paul Betts[2,3,4]**

Abstract

Of the four work strands of UK counter-terrorism (CT), *Prevent* and *Pursue* are directed towards stopping individuals from becoming involved in terrorism, and investigating and prosecuting those suspected of terrorist crimes. Over the past few years, both these two work strands of UK CT seem to have captured more individuals with Multiple and Complex Needs (MCN), especially people of young age and with mental health issues. This article describes key UK CT discourse on the terrorist threat landscape and its proposed countermeasures, with particular regard to the role of MCN. It considers the extent to which discourse on the threat and set-up of UK CT seems to correspond to academic research, media reporting and other open sources—and is interested in whether the apparent increase of MCN in UK CT (only) reflect real-life developments in the threat landscape, or whether the current structure of UK CT may disproportionately draw in individuals with MCN. It finds that while accurately capturing some recent trends, UK CT discourse overall reifies largely outdated ideas of the role of ideational radicalisation and of there being a sharp distinction between the categories of vulnerability and risk. It also suggests that the emphasis of UK CT seems to increasingly be on the category of *risk* and on the logic of Pursue—also when MCN are involved—rather than proposing a multi-faceted approach to the ever-changing complexity of the threat of terrorism.

Keywords Counter-Terrorism · Preventing violent extremism · UK · Mental health · Security

✉ Paul Betts
p.betts@westminster.ac.uk

Rita Augestad Knudsen
rak@nupi.no

1 Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), Oslo, Norway

2 Westminster Law School, University of Westminster, London, UK

3 University of Birmingham Law School, Birmingham, UK

4 University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia

🌱 Springer

1 Introduction

The UK is widely acknowledged as a leader within European counter-terrorism (CT), with decades of experience combating various forms of terrorist threats.[1] Trends and directions within UK CT are often closely followed and later implemented elsewhere in Europe and beyond.[2] The UK was early in formulating a dedicated post-9/11 CT strategy; its CONTEST strategy, launched in 2003, consisted as it still does of four work strands: Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare. Having since undergone several updates, CONTEST presents the threats facing the UK, and the government's suggested countermeasures. Prevent and Pursue target terrorists and individuals deemed likely to become terrorists: Prevent by intending to stop people from being drawn into terrorism, and Pursue by seeking to capture people committing terrorist crimes. Protect and Prepare, meanwhile, aim to ensure preparedness of institutions, physical and digital infrastructure and population resilience, to minimise the impact of attacks. This article is concentrated on the two actor-focused 'Ps' (Prevent and Pursue) of UK CT, and describes how these articulate trends in the threat landscape and how to address these, with a particular interest in the apparently increasing role of Multiple and Complex Needs (MCN).

Since the earliest version of CONTEST, the nature of the terrorist threat as well as the apparent characteristics of (would-be) terrorists have changed. These changes have been described in depth elsewhere, so a full re-examination is not necessary (e.g. de Roy van Zuijdewijn and Bakker 2016). Suffice to say that in the immediate post-9/11 years, threat perceptions were dominated by a focus on al Qaeda-affiliated networked actors working together, often internationally, on complicated plots with sophisticated means (Nesser 2016). The 7/7 attacks in London in 2005 was but one example of an attack of this kind. Overall, Islamist Extremist actors during these years seemed 'better-functioning' than 'ordinary criminals' in terms of their personal relationships, education, employment, and socioeconomic status (van Leeuwen and Weggemans 2018; Pantucci 2013). At the same time, researchers typologising individual terrorism involvement increasingly highlighted the variety of motivations and 'types' appearing in this space, including 'leaders' and 'protegees'—generally ideologically literate and driven—and 'misfits' and 'drifters', sometimes drawn into terrorism for social, economic or possibly mental health-related reasons (Nesser 2006; Bjørgo 2011). Meanwhile, in the post-9/11 period, UK authorities tended not to categorise extremist right-wing terrorism as terrorism at all. Instead, the UK for a long time conceptualised the right-wing threat as 'domestic extremism'—ignoring

---

[1] Although 'the UK' constitutionally includes Northern Ireland, this has a special and dedicated approach to CT differing to the rest of the UK and is not the focus of this article. 'The UK' will nevertheless be used in the article as has become the academic convention within the field of terrorism research; with this note underlining that the primary reference here is to England, Wales and Scotland, and not Northern Ireland.

[2] For instance, the EU launched its CT strategy in 2005, two years after the UK did the same, with a similarly four-pronged approach apparently inspired by the UK's, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/counter-terrorism-and-radicalisation_en. Also, on the field of terrorism-related risk assessment, the UK has been one of the forerunners.

both the international and terrorism dimension of the phenomenon—and largely left it out of CT strategies; a striking omission in light of both the prehistory and subsequent occurrences of extreme right-wing terrorist violence (e.g. Jupp 2022).

Today, the threat picture and authorities' understandings of it look different than in the immediate post-9/11 era. The so-called Islamic State (IS) declared its 'Caliphate' in 2014 and directed and inspired several terrorist attacks in the West, including in the UK. IS attracted a wide range of individuals from the mid 2010s, including many with a more typical criminogenic profile including previous histories of violence and criminal records (Verwimp 2016; Winter 2016). During the same period, the right-wing terrorist threat grew too, with online and in-person groups, as well as non-organised solo actors. With the proliferation of social media, new technologies and forms of message dissemination, terrorism recruitment and engagement no longer needed real-life interaction. More individuals were acting alone, often using simple methods. Ideology became less clear or prominent in actors' presentation, and media reports of suspected terrorists more frequently cited issues around Multiple and Complex Needs (MCN)—a category to be returned to below but which could include homelessness, experience of the criminal justice system, substance abuse, and/or mental health problems. In sum, the threat picture of today seems more multifaceted than it did in the early 2000s, and so does the range of actors coming into contact with Prevent and Pursue in UK CT.

The main focus of this article is to describe recent key UK official discourse on the terrorism threat and how to address it, and to ask—in light of relevant academic and grey literature, media reporting, and publicly available data—whether this discourse seems to capture real trends, with particular regard to the role of MCN. While neither policy nor scholarship has established an authoritative definition of MCN, third sector organisations (see Duncan and Corner 2012; Cooper and Bailey 2019) use it with reference to often co-existing individual disadvantages linked to age, gender, race, substance misuse, poor mental health, housing, abuse, trauma, violence, and/or exposure to the criminal justice system (APPG for Complex Needs and Dual Diagnosis 2018). MCN have attracted limited scholarly attention, yet both media reports and official data suggests they are appearing more frequently within UK Prevent referrals as well as within Pursue, through terrorism-related arrests and prosecutions. In this context, the term is useful in encapsulating the two most clearly identifiable and growing MCN within UK CT: age and mental health problems— and also draws attention to the likely coexistence of these with each other and with other MCN. This article is interested in whether the apparently increasing prevalence of MCN—and especially young age and mental health problems—within UK CT reflects the actual threat landscape, or whether UK CT discourse and practice disproportionately draws in individuals with MCN, especially ones of young age and poor mental health. It suggests that while UK CT discourse seems to pinpoint some relevant developments, its proposed measures seem lacking, especially in relation to individuals with MCN.

UK CT is a well-trodden landscape within terrorism studies, and especially the Prevent prong of CONTEST has received significant attention from scholars critical of the strategy (e.g. Richards 2011; Martin 2014; Lowe 2017). While acknowledging and building on some of this work, this short article does not aim to re-rehearse

these lines of analysis, but simply—in a limited and straightforward way—make use of a discourse analysis lens in qualitatively considering a few selected UK CT policy documents in light of emerging scholarly and grey work, other data, and media reporting (Jacobs 2006; Fairclough 2003). Discourse analysis provides a suitable methodological anchor for approaching and analysing these primary texts (listed below), considering them to both encapsulate and perpetuate the alleged realities (and power hierarchies) in which they are situated (Foucault 1969). The discourse analysis approach utilised here is qualitative and example-based, with a few key documents selected by the authors based on their analysis of their centrality and role in UK CT overall. In avoiding reliance on methodological positivism, this discourse analysis does not, and does not seek to, apply quantitatively oriented methodologies to numeric data sets; neither does it consider quantitative approaches as more objective or 'true' than qualitative ones.

Investigating UK CT discourse in this way both highlights the conceptualisations underpinning official understandings of the terrorism-related threat, and allows for assessing the factual and policy claims of this discourse. The article is especially interested in how the texts present and frame the threat, actors of concern, and the possible role of the MCN. Notably, the article's concern is primarily qualitatively descriptive rather than explanatory, seeking to highlight relevant tendencies identified in discourse and practice, rather than explaining how or why they have appeared. Concretely, the key primary documents considered are the CONTEST strategy (most recently updated in 2023) and the Channel Duty Guidance; together summarising the official UK take on the terrorist threat and proposed countermeasures. The article also relies on examples of media reporting and official releases from, for instance, the Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, the Home Office, Counter Terrorism Policing, as well as the Independent Review of Prevent (IRP 2023), which was tasked and endorsed by the Home Office. The article starts with laying out how key UK CT discourse portrays the terrorism threat, and then turns to its presentation of countermeasures—with a particular interest in MCN. Whereas the role of MCN is central to the article, this will be placed and analysed within the framework of the overall discourse on the threat and countermeasures. The article concludes with some very brief and indicative reflections on the possible implications of its findings.

2 The Threat

Of the many documents and statements setting out the UK's understanding of the terrorism threat and how to counter it, the Government's CONTEST strategy is the most authoritative and ambitious. CONTEST communicates the UK's understanding of the terrorism landscape and how it should be handled, to its home audience and to the world. The UK released the latest version of CONTEST in July 2023, replacing the 2018 version and building on the first CONTEST edition from 2003 and its updates. Summarising the situation, the two latest versions of CONTEST emphasise that '(t)he terrorist threat in the UK today is dominated by individuals or small groups acting outside of organised terrorist networks' (CONTEST 2018, p.

17; 2023, p. 9). The 2018 version was released shortly after the deadly 2017 terrorist attacks in the UK and warned against 'highly accessible, simple methodologies' (CONTEST 2018, p. 17), while the 2023 document warned of an increasing prevalence of 'low sophistication' attacks (CONTEST 2023, p. 17). The 2023 strategy placed an extra focus on technological developments and the online world, considering that this could both complicate detecting and disrupting terrorists and plots, but also represent an opportunity for law enforcement (CONTEST 2023, p. 9).

In this, CONTEST's threat descriptions reflect how scholarship too has analysed recent trends. Academic research on the UK and the West more broadly has noted that terrorist attacks increasingly have come to involve simpler means and have become more operationally individualised, requiring little specialist knowledge, techniques or advanced 'real world' resources (Bouchard 2018). At the same time, terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda, IS and their affiliates persist, and extremist right-wing organisations continue to proliferate. However, the collective abilities of group-based actors to carry out large-scale attacks in the West seem more limited than a decade ago. While the concept of the 'lone wolf' has been largely discarded, the notion that solo actors are important to the threat landscape is widely shared (Schuurman et al 2019). Also in the UK, less networked people seem to be in the majority of those violating terrorism legislation: such actors might engage with others virtually or in real life, but are often operationally by themselves in-situ during an attack. Unpacked below, a growing number of such attacks are also reported to involve MCN (see also Hall 2020; 2022, pp. 1–2): While this may in part reflect increasing awareness of MCNs, official numbers on young age, the explosion in interest within research and practice in understanding the role of mental health in terrorism involvement, combined with the trend towards attacks with fewer people acting with simpler means, suggest MCN are indeed a key part of the CT landscape today.

The concept of 'radicalisation' is of great relevance to CONTEST's portrayal of the threat, its proposed countermeasures (especially those within Prevent) and the possible role of MCN, and thus warrants some unpacking. Especially after the 9/11 attacks, radicalisation became central to many authorities' understanding of the terrorist threat—broadly conceiving it a process of increasingly accepting violence to achieve ideological ends, and framing it as a determinant and necessary precursor of terrorism: Radicalisation is still a disputed notion (e.g. Schmid 2016), with critical terrorism scholars often dismissing its alleged role (see e.g. Silva 2018). The last decades' debates on radicalisation have not resulted in any consensus on the matter (Roy 2004; Kepel 2002; Logan and Lloyd 2019), but early models visualising the concept as the central part of a staircase or pyramid leading towards terrorism have been largely discarded, with present understandings highlighting the plethora of possible ways into and through terrorist involvement (e.g. Corner et al. 2019).

The centrality and focus of Prevent within CONTEST could itself be interpreted as implicitly contributing to these debates on the relevance of ideology and 'radicalisation' to the terrorist threat. CONTEST separates Prevent—which seeks to stop terrorism by addressing ideology and 'radicalisation' through referrals—from Pursue—which involves 'top-down' security and intelligence-led investigation, detection, disruption, and prosecution. With this structure, CONTEST effectively

includes ideology and radicalisation in its threat description as key features to address through CT, and as phenomena appearing before terrorist criminality. It signifies that the terrorist threat involves ideology and 'radicalisation' (addressed through Prevent), as well as criminal behaviour and violations of terrorist legislation (addressed through Pursue). In this setup and logic, radicalisation and ideology are assumed to appear chronologically first in an individual's thinking and motivation, laying the ground for and leading to a terrorist crime. Prevents' focus on radicalisation appears to presuppose that if individuals' relevant ideology is identified and deterred, terrorism will not occur. As an implicit part of CONTEST's threat description, ideological engagement is hence functionally placed as a precursor to terrorist crimes.

Of course, ideological/religious/political/racial intent is a necessary component of the very definition of terrorism in the UK: its legislative framing means that a crime would not be an act of terrorism in the absence of such motivations. Under UK law, the Terrorism Act (TACT) 2000 defines terrorism as the use or threat of action that 'is designed to influence the government (or an international governmental organisation) or to intimidate the public or a section of the public (…) for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause' (TACT 2000). The TACT, however, expresses no requirement for such a motivation being the *only* or even *main* reason for acting, or for it being *the* driving, pre-occurring factor for terrorist criminality. It is also not necessary for categorising something as terrorism that these motivations are coherently or clearly presented or expressed as one recognisable and well-established ideology or religious/racial/political belief.

As CONTEST 2023 also acknowledges, recent variants of us/them mindsets, including violent conspiracy theories and aggressive 'incel' (involuntary celibate) activity, appear to challenge pre-existing ways of thinking about radicalisation, terrorism and what 'ideology' might mean in this context (CONTEST 2023, pp. 13–14). Interestingly, the majority of recently recorded Prevent referrals are now categorised as 'Mixed, Unclear and Unstable' (MUU), not invoking any well-recognised or consistent ideology—rather than, for instance, the conventional categories of Islamist extremist or right-wing extremist (IRP 2023, p. 47). This would seem to complicate Prevent's strategic intent and operational interventions, which are aimed precisely at the ideological/radicalisation domain. The functional role of ideology, and its chronological emplacement in a person's trajectory towards terrorism, might be expected to become even more complicated in cases where MCN, and perhaps in particular mental health problems are involved, and when the lines between mentally disturbed thought and ideological/religious/political/racial motivations might appear unclear (see Augestad Knudsen 2024). Also in cases when the MCN in question is young age, the uncertain ideological component of a referral might mean its emplacement in the MUU category.

Looking beyond the structural assumptions of CONTEST's discursive setup and onto its explicit substance, also of relevance to the possible role of MCN, different versions of the strategy have evoked different ideas of the role of ideology in respectively explaining and addressing terrorism. Early editions openly placed 'ideology' at the heart of how terrorism should be understood and combated in the UK (CONTEST 2006, 2011, 2018), prompting critique of the disproportionate prominence of

'Islamist extremist' ideology in the language of UK CT (e.g. Pantazis and Pemberton 2011). The 2018 CONTEST warned that 'ideology remain(ed) a strong driver' for terrorism, and that 'a broadly consistent set of ideas and narratives is an important factor in motivating terrorist groups of all kinds, including Daesh, Al Qa'ida (sic) and extreme right-wing organisations' (CONTEST 2018, p. 16). At the same time, when fleshing out its threat conception, CONTEST 2018 stated that:

> "there is no single socio-demographic profile of a terrorist in the UK, and no single pathway, or 'conveyor belt', leading to involvement in terrorism. (…) Few of those who are drawn into terrorism have a deep knowledge of faith. (…) several factors can converge to create the conditions under which radicalisation can occur. These include background factors, aspects of someone's personal circumstances, which might make them vulnerable to radicalisers, such as being involved in criminal activity; initial influences, peoples, ideas or experiences that influence an individual towards supporting a terrorist movement; and an ideological opening, or receptiveness to extremist ideology." (CONTEST 2018, p. 32, see also p. 17)

This slight tension in CONTEST's presentation of the role of ideology in the terrorist threat landscape took on a different shape in its most recent version. The 'refreshed' edition of CONTEST came in 2023, shortly after the publication of the controversial Independent Review of Prevent (IRP 2023), commissioned by the UK Home Secretary. While disputed by many scholars and independent analysts, the Home Office's full acceptance of the IRP's recommendations makes it likely that it influenced the discourse of the subsequent 2023 CONTEST. Centrally, the IRP urged Prevent to (re)focus attention and resources onto 'ideology' as the key plank in combatting terrorism: in particular, on radicalisation based on 'Islamism' (strikingly citing this, rather than violent Islamist extremism). Potentially signalling its political orientation, the IRP cautioned against focusing too much on right-wing extremism, and dismissed 'vulnerability'—possibly an implicit reference to MCN—as an important reason for terrorism or as relevant to preventive interventions (IRP 2023, e.g. pp. 38–39; 102–3). The IRP's robustness on these points does not reflect the status of scholarly knowledge on the roles of either ideology or 'vulnerability' in terrorism involvement, as mentioned above.

Endorsing the IRP recommendations, the discourse of CONTEST 2023 then replaced the language of 'vulnerability' with 'susceptibility' and refocused Prevent onto 'ideology' and 'Islamism', with uncertain implications for its understanding of the role of MCN. At the same time, CONTEST 2023 also noted that: 'Within Islamist terrorism in the UK, explicit affiliation and fixed ideological alignment with any one specific international terrorist organisation is diminishing' (CONTEST 2023, p. 9), and that '(w)e now need to manage a wider spread of narratives and beliefs that may be used to motivate and support terrorist violence' (CONTEST 2023, p. 12). And whereas the IRP claimed that 'Incel is not a terrorist ideology' (IRP 2023, e.g. p. 53), CONTEST 2023 stated that incel thinking 'could meet the threshold of terrorist intent or action, should the threat or use of serious violence be used to influence the government, or to intimidate the public' (CONTEST 2023, p. 14). It is worth noting that until now, most 'incel' individuals within Prevent are likely to

have been categorised as MUU, although this could now be changing (Home Office 2023; BBC 2024).

On the overall issue of the MUU category, it is also notable that a much smaller proportion of the Prevent referrals classified as MUU– compared to Islamist extremists and Extreme right-wing actors—are then assessed as genuine CT concerns followed up further within Prevent's Channel programme (to be returned to). According to the IRP's data, many of the 'MUUs' do indeed have MCN, especially mental health problems; and it is indeed possible to imagine that some of the MUU cases are deconflicted away from Prevent and into health or social care due to the presence of either mental health problems or other MCN. The developments above do seem to make it possible that MCN might appear more often in the Prevent population categorised as MUU than in the more recognisable ideological categories. The IRP, however, denounces the 'over-represent(ation)' of individuals with mental health and other MCN within Prevent (IRP 2023, p. 82), which it claims comes at the cost of concentrating on 'ideology' as the *real* driver of terrorism. Urging the redirection of Prevent onto it being a security- and CT/ideology-only endeavour, the IRP calls for 'other issues'—a likely nod to MCN—to be dealt with outside of the CT domain (IRP 2023, p. 63; 106–107; 110). As put by the IRP, the current 'framework unwittingly bestows a status of victimhood on all who come into contact with Prevent, negating individual agency or risk.' (IRP 2023, p. 42).

The IRP and 2023 CONTEST's invoking of MCN in UK CT is rather new: earlier CONTEST versions did not address this as prominently. The rise on the agenda of the role of MCN in UK CT seems to have happened in response to actual casework, and in partial dialogue with a burgeoning body of literature now probing the relationship between terrorism and especially the MCN that has received the most attention thus far: mental health problems, as well as in part, neurodiversity. However, whereas scholars have been eager to establish whether there is a causal link between terrorism involvement and different mental health issues, no convincing evidence for such causality is established (see e.g. Sarma, Carthy and Cox 2022). As CONTEST 2023 also acknowledges: 'there is limited evidence to support a direct causal link between mental ill-health or neurodivergence and an individual's terrorist threat or susceptibility to radicalisation'; 'mental ill-health is no more prevalent among terrorism cases than the general population'; and mental health issues could either 'contribute to the radicalisation of some individuals, act(…) as a risk factor, while in other cases it may act as an inhibitor.' The strategy, however, also refers to mental health issues as 'additional risk factors' which could 'complicate risk assessment and management' (CONTEST 2023, p. 15).

While recent scholarship and grey literature have highlighted the presence of the MCN of ill mental health in UK CT, it is notable that both this and young age are also frequently cited in media reports on terrorism related cases (see BBC 2018a, b; The Guardian 2019, 2021, 2022; The National 2021; Saadallah 2021; Counter Terrorism Policing 2021). While reporting should be expected to focus on the most sensational aspects of cases, these reports do seem to correspond to the overall threat picture sketched out above. At the same time, uncovering the actual prevalence of MCN in CT casework is complicated by the lack of official hard data on other factors than age. Young age is itself a MCN calling for distinct follow-up and support, and

from media reporting it would seem that other MCN can co-occur among the young coming into contact with UK CT. Official UK data shows that the proportion of young people either referred to Prevent or investigated, arrested or prosecuted within Pursue have been rising since data was first released: among the 6,406 Prevent referrals during the year to 22 March 2023, most came from the education sector (2305, rounded to 36%); and 29% (1829) were under 15, an increase from previous years (Home Office 2023). Numbers from CT Policing covering Pursue show that in the year to 31 December 2022, 32 of the 166 total terrorism offences arrests in the UK were children under 17, representing 19% of the total and a 3% increase from the previous year (CT Policing 2022). Notably, the data does not include 17-year-olds, who are also children as per UK law (Childrens Act 1989). The UK's Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation Jonathan Hall has expressed concern over the growing number of children in the UK CT system: 'Being a 'convicted terrorist' is not a status to be wished on children if reasonably avoidable' (cited in CONTEST 2023, p. 14; also Hall 2022).

Despite the lack of hard data, all this then seem to make it reasonable to assume that the proportion of individuals with MCN—and especially mental health issues and young age—is indeed significant, and growing, within UK CT. While the scholarly focus so far has been on whether mental health issues or neurodiversity might increase individuals' likelihood for terrorism involvement—and has not found that it does—a more pertinent question now seems to be whether UK CT discourse, practice, policy, and law is set up in a way that disproportionately captures individuals with MCN. To be sure, MCN are by-definition both multiple and complex, and there might be considerable variation in how these needs could interplay or counteract with individual terrorism involvement. Concrete cases involving MCN might entail very young vulnerable children groomed into extremism by older influencers, or vulnerable and dangerous adults with histories of violence, substance abuse or homelessness recruiting others, or any combination of these.

One recent real-life case widely covered by journalists could serve to exemplify some of the issues involved. In 2022, Rhianan Rudd was, at 15, the youngest girl charged with terrorism in the UK. She was a 'looked after child'—a responsibility of the state—with a history of self-harm, suicidal ideation, and a diagnosis of autism (BBC 2023a). She was referred to Prevent having downloaded a bomb making manual, but any further Prevent follow-up was discontinued once she was charged with terrorism under Pursue. She took her own life in May 2022. After her death, it was revealed that she had been the victim of exploitation and grooming online by adult men, involving Nazi ideology and sexual abuse (The Telegraph 2023a, b). Subsequent reports found that authorities' knowledge of this did not halt her prosecution for terrorism until 4,5 months later (The Telegraph 2023a). Several other cases from the last few years invoke similar issues of overlapping MCNs including young age, neurodiversity or mental health issues, and apparently missed opportunities for broad-based, needs-oriented follow-up (BBC 2023a, b).

While the next section of this article will turn from UK CT's discursive threat presentations to the proposed countermeasures, it is worth pausing at the fact that the Rudd case demonstrates how a terrorism charge, in this case involving MCN, until recently barred individuals from (further) Prevent follow-up. Recent discourse

and practice meant that if charged with terrorism under Pursue, an individual, no matter how vulnerable, would ipso facto be classified as a 'threat' rather than 'in need of support', and deconflicted away from Prevent: 'The police screen all referrals to check that the individual is not already or should be part of a terrorism investigation, as these individuals are not appropriate for Channel support.' (Home Office 2023). Hence closing the door to the Channel programme's better positioning (than Pursue) of possibly assisting with someone's mental health issues, education, or housing, criminal prosecution seemed to be left as the only follow-up avenue. The UK's Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation has long asked whether this setup unnecessarily pushed vulnerable individuals into the criminal justice system, and has recommended alternative measures such as civil injunctions or therapeutic interventions (Hall 2020).

3 Countermeasures

In this context of UK CT discourse on the threat, and amidst increasing awareness of MCN in Prevent and Pursue casework, this part of the article turns to some of the UK's proposed countermeasures within these two work strands. Overall and somewhat simplified, UK CT aims to prevent, prosecute and limit the damage from violations of the country's terrorism legislation. The law is hence core not only to how terrorism is defined, but also to the formulation, operationalisation and scope of CONTEST's countermeasures. Moreover, the law helps determine the boundaries between Prevent and Pursue: Pursue targets actors for alleged violations of terrorism law, while Prevent mainly targets individuals in the 'pre-crime' space (a wording much-criticised and now formally abandoned); those who have not committed a TACT offence (yet)—as well as those having finished serving TACT sentences (see Goldberg et al. 2017; CONTEST 2023). Before exploring some of the UK's core proposed CT measures, with possible implications for the role and understanding of MCN, it is worth looking briefly at some recent relevant changes to the legal framework of these measures.

One important legal change came in 2006, with the UK's TACT of that year. That legislation criminalised a number of preparatory acts—such as propaganda-, material-gathering-, and training-related offences, encompassing early stages of an individual's terrorism involvement and going beyond direct partaking in plots or attacks (TACT 2006). Several offences were non-violent, many did not require real-life contact with others or formal affiliation with terrorist groups, nor allegiance to conventional ideologies. In consequence, TACT 2006 led to the imprisonment of terrorism offenders with different profiles from those convicted of terrorism before 2006 (see also Lloyd and Dean 2015; Augestad Knudsen 2020), and with it, the range persons of interest to Prevent and Pursue practitioners was broadened too.

Another key addition to UK CT's legislative framework came in 2015, with the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (CTSA). This Act created two statutory duties related to Prevent; the Prevent Duty and the Channel Duty. The Prevent Duty is a mechanism for referring people to Prevent by imposing a legal obligation on professionals in key sectors—notably including education and health—to pay 'due regard

to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'; in practice, requiring them to refer to Prevent individuals considered vulnerable to 'radicalisation' (Home Office 2021). From its inception, both Prevent and the Prevent Duty have been criticised for disrupting the delivery of non-security state services and for 'securitising' sectors intended for welfare and care (Aziz 2017; Millett and Ahmed 2021); for being built on debunked ideas of terrorism engagement's linearity starting from identifiable 'radicalisation' (Heath-Kelly 2013, 2017); for having discriminatory and racist effects (Qurashi 2018); and for operating with untested and under-evaluated interventions (Romaniuk 2015). Meanwhile the Channel Duty required local authorities (municipalities) to operationalise delivering Prevent through Channel, established as the core delivery mechanism of Prevent (Channel 2015).

Within this legal framework and in the context of UK CT discourse, Channel remains positioned as the key measure within Prevent. While the 2023 CONTEST strategy offers limited details about the programme, it does place Channel at the heart of Prevent delivery, and of UK CT as a whole (see e.g. CONTEST 2023, p. 64). Channel is operationalised through multi-disciplinary 'Channel panels' comprised of professionals who should follow up individuals reported to Prevent. The Channel panels should go through each case and offer appropriate interventions in a wide range of areas intended to steer individuals away from committing terrorism crimes. Being set up as voluntary, Channel is predicated on the assumedly at risk-individual engaging with it. From 2022–2023, Channel processed 1,486 cases (Home Office 2023; CONTEST 2023, p. 64; also CONTEST 2018, pp. 37–38). The anatomy of Channel was outlined in the 2020 Channel Duty Guidance, which still applies (Home Office 2020, p. 6). That document describes Channel as the principle delivery mechanism for Prevent, aimed at bringing together local partners in offering relevant interventions supporting people considered at risk of engaging with terrorism. In line with the UK CT discourse described above, the 2020 Guidance stated that Channel is:

"adopt(ing) a multi-agency approach to identify and provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism. There is no fixed profile of a terrorist, so there is no defined threshold to determine whether an individual is at risk of being drawn into terrorism. However, signs that extremist views are being adopted can be used to assess whether the offer of early support should be made." (Home Office 2020, p. 6)

This foregrounding of 'extremist views' serves as yet another reminder of the centrality of logics around ideology and (ideational) radicalisation in UK CT discourse; it also raises questions around how practitioners are to establish the presence of such views and what the appropriate response might be to their identification. With the increase within Prevent of both the MUU category and of people with MCN including young age and mental health issues, pinpointing and appropriately responding to 'signs of views' might become even more tricky. Moreover, neither this section nor other parts of the document clarifies what happens if an individual with or without MCN does not want 'support' from the formally voluntary Channel programme.

Without citing 'MCN' directly, concepts of vulnerability and safeguarding have long been engrained parts of the UK's discourse and operationalisation of Channel

(e.g. Home Office 2020, p. 5). While the IRP in 2023 led to the substitution of the language of 'vulnerability' with 'susceptibility' in UK CT (apparently less associated with agency-less victimhood, IRP 2023; CONTEST 2023), 'vulnerability' was the lingo of the 2020 Channel Guidance, explaining:

> "Individuals can receive support before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those who want them to embrace terrorism, and before they become involved in criminal terrorist-related activity. Cases adopted onto Channel should have a vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism. Cases should not be held in Channel where no such vulnerability exists." (Home Office 2020, p. 7)

The Guidance also stated that: 'Clear distinction should be made between individuals who present with a 'terrorism vulnerability', requiring Channel support, and those who pose a 'terrorism risk requiring management by the police.' (Home Office 2020, p. 29) However, the boundaries between 'vulnerability' and 'risk' were not consistently clear in either the 2020 Guidance or in UK CT overall, with the Guidance also stating: 'The *risk* relating to the individual's terrorism *vulnerability* is held by the Channel panel. This involves ensuring the *risk* posed to the individual from being drawn into terrorism or from wider *safeguarding* harms is addressed and reduced' (Home Office 2020, p. 32, added emphasis, see also Augestad Knudsen 2020).

During the year to 22 March 2023, 33% (2,127) of Prevent referrals were removed from Channel for having 'vulnerability present, but no ideology or CT risk' (Home Office 2023), with this 'vulnerability' likely translating to one or more MCN. This both shows UK CT's association between ideology and risk, and the primacy of risk rather than vulnerability—MCN or otherwise—in prompting preventative, Prevent and Channel 'safeguarding' action. Distinguishing between which vulnerabilities are, or could become, CT relevant—which according to UK CT discourse would seem to mean ideologically determined—in the face of the prevalence of MUU and MCN among the cohort of concern would seem like a considerable challenge; especially so for the police and local authority Prevent practitioners with limited training or experience in either risk assessment, social care, psychology or health.

To such professionals or indeed to analysts seeking to understand UK CT, the 2020 Channel document did not really provide guidance on how to conceptualise or act on either risk or vulnerabilities including MCN within Prevent. For several years, the *Vulnerability Assessment Framework* (VAF) was used in part for this purpose, as an assessment tool to identify individuals suitable for Prevent follow-up. The VAF, however, was a wholesale transfer of the 22 indicators of the Extremism Risk Guidance 22+(ERG 22+), a risk assessment tool developed within the UK Prison and Probation Service based on TACT (and hence by definition high-risk) offenders imprisoned more than 15 years ago (Lloyd and Dean 2015; Augestad Knudsen 2020). Given their serious offence record, these individuals were likely to have had a very different risk, vulnerability and overall profile than the non-offending young people and individuals with MCN picked up by Prevent several years later. Moreover, scholarship is increasingly pointing out the uncertain viability, validity and implementability of terrorism-related risk and vulnerability tools as such (Sarma 2017; Cooke and Logan 2021; Augestad Knudsen 2018; Borum et al.

2023; see also Lucraft 2021, p. 20), calling instead for contextual, holistic and life-path type of analyses (e.g. Corner et al. 2019; Bouhana et al. 2016).

Perhaps even more fundamentally, whereas the discourse and operationalisation of Channel strives for a clear distinction between cases involving *either* vulnerability *or* risk, real-life—as already mentioned with regard to MCN—is usually more complex. With actual people, vulnerability and risk often co-exist, shift over time and call for different interventions at different points. Perhaps in an attempt to achieve clarity, the Channel Guidance states along the lines of what was also indicated above: 'The terrorism vulnerability and risk for the case is kept under review by police and the case may be removed from Channel if the risk escalates to a level that police believe cannot be safely managed by the Channel panel' (Home Office 2020, p. 29); 'Should there be an escalation of risk, the police may remove a case from Channel if appropriate' (ibid p. 6; also p. 32)—'these cases may be adopted for management in the police-led partnership or escalated into the Pursue space.' (ibid p. 20). Also other UK CT documents suggest transferring a case away from Prevent to Pursue only if deemed to involve high risk or suspicion of a terrorism crime, as also happened in the Rudd case above (Home Office 2023; see also Home Office 2020, p. 29).

While practice on this is now shifting and Prevent cases are no longer automatically discontinued if also appearing within Pursue, UK CT discourse still demands emplacing an individual in the *risk* rather than *vulnerable* category, away from Prevent/Channel and onto Pursue, if under a terrorism-related investigation (Home Office 2020, p. 6; Fig. 2.5 p. 38), even if involving a MCN. The 2020 Channel Guidance refers to 'Police-led partnerships' that should manage those 'not suitable for Channel, but which have identified Prevent-relevant issues requiring support or mitigation,' (Home Office 2020, p. 29), but without further detail, this could equally likely mean covert security-led management as supporting people's needs. The legislative movement outlined above of expanding the range of terrorism offences in effect significantly broadened the scope of Pursue and the type of people captured by UK CT, placing within Pursue more people with non-conventional criminogenic profiles, sometimes with MCN including young age and mental health issues. Pursue seems to be even further enlarged in CONTEST 2023, with its emphasis of 'disruption' of pre-offence activity (CONTEST 2023, p. 35). Together with the discourse of not allowing vulnerable people within Pursue access to Prevent/Channel's theoretical possibilities for support, this appears to lock people with MCN into the criminal justice system without formal avenues to address their needs.

While the discourse of CONTEST 2023 seemed to partly acknowledge that the boundaries between Prevent and Pursue thus far have been too sharply drawn—and called for closer cohesion between the different P's—proposals for actual synergies were largely absent, including for cases involving MCN. Also in the language of CONTEST 2023, the directionality of UK CT was positioned as being from Prevent to Pursue—not really permitting either simultaneity or bidirectionality, or for instance referrals from Pursue into Prevent. This seemed to miss an opportunity indicated by the official reports after the 2017–2020 UK terrorist attacks, which suggested that also individuals identified by intelligence or other parts of Pursue, perhaps especially ones with MCN, might benefit from

broad-based prevention follow up (see e.g. Saunders 2023, p. 95; Lucraft 2021, p. 35). Research has also long proposed that prevention, rehabilitation, and risk management for terrorism- and non-terrorism- crimes alike will be more effective and just if involving interventions beyond pure law enforcement and criminal justice sanctions (Logan and Lloyd 2019; Cherney and Belton 2021). Also general UK guidance on risk management and public protection call for a balance between enforcement and support, regular reviews and appropriate sequencing (MAPPA 2023; IOM 2015; Stephenson et al. 2013)—approaches which do not seem fully echoed in current UK CT discourse on countermeasures. Instead, and despite its acknowledgement of the rise in the prevalence of MCN, this discourse still seems to demand *either* follow-up of vulnerable people through Prevent/ Channel, *or* escalating them into arrest, investigation and prosecution though Pursue.

In fact, while the discourse of CONTEST 2023 promises to 'transform(…) counter-terrorism', it rather seems to perpetuate the overall trend of focusing countermeasures on ever-earlier stages of a presumed chronology of terrorism involvement. The direction of travel appears to be less towards long-term, comprehensive or pro-social transformative approaches to prevention, than a reactive and ever earlier acceleration of individuals into the criminal justice system, with conventional law enforcement interventions. While implicitly invoking MCN with its reference to 'complexity', the language of CONTEST 2023 describes the suggested transformation as entailing to:

> "Ensure that counter-terrorism investigations draw on an increased range of expert advice and non-law enforcement interventions to mitigate the evolving terrorist threat. We will better connect the counter-terrorism system with expertise in healthcare, education, social services and the criminal justice system to respond to the complexity of terrorist threat. This will include access to a broader range of interventions which can be employed to divert people away from terrorism or mitigate the threat posed by a potential terrorist. Where necessary we will change legislation, data access and government policy, working across local, devolved, and national partners to enable more effective counter-terrorism operations." (CONTEST 2023, p. 47)

The transformation that recent UK CT discourse proposes, then, seems to be to involve ever more domains of society in supporting Pursue outcomes, likely also capturing cases with MCN including young age and mental health problems: facilitating wider possibilities of intelligence collection and aiming for early-stage 'disruption', effectively drawing also the vulnerable/susceptible into a framework of criminal justice interventions. In cases with or without MCN, this discourse of increased involvement of non-security societal sectors also raises questions on legal and ethical information sharing, as well as issues of privacy, confidentiality, and discrimination in following up individual cases (see also Heath-Kelly 2024). However, rather than heeding to such concerns with any particular view to the apparent increased prevalence of MCN in casework, recent UK CT discourse seems to have simply transferred a Pursue-tinted logic onto the domain of Prevent.

4 Conclusions

The evolving complexities in the actor-centred parts of the UK CT landscape poses an ever-changing challenge to anyone seeking to understand or act on it. UK CT discourse seems to accurately capture several actual trends established by scholarship, media and official data, as involving less organised actors engaging in low-sophistication terrorism-related activity, sometimes without a conventional ideology, and seemingly increasingly involving MCN especially including young age and mental health problems. At the same time, however, both the threat description and proposed countermeasures of UK CT discourse seem to reify largely outdated conceptualisations of the centrality of ideational radicalisation, and of the notion of a sharp distinction between the vulnerable needing support—and the dangerous and high-risk needing investigation, surveillance and jail. Together with the legislative developments expanding the reach of Pursue, and the widening of Pursue through enlisting ever more non-security sectors of society in aiming for early disruption, it would seem that most individuals caught up within UK CT system—including ones with MCN—almost by default end up in the 'risky' side of this binary. In real life, however, individuals, and perhaps especially ones with MCN, may be simultaneously risky and vulnerable in ways that shift over time, with or without a CT related—but not always coherently expressed—ideology.

While recent UK CT discourse proposes a 'transformation', it does not quite deliver on appropriately addressing what the complexity of the situation it describes seems to call for. Instead perpetuating the primacy of the logic of Pursue within UK CT, this discourse has not yet properly revised the relationship between Prevent and Pursue, or provided for meaningful and just follow-up of individuals with MCN outside of the CT system, enabling, for instance broadbased follow-up and assistance with housing, employment, abuse, substance abuse, mental health, or other issues, even if under a Pursue investigation. Such a revision would by necessity also entail legal, accountable and ethical forms of information sharing and risk ownership—and competence building on MCN among CT practitioners, and on CT within health and other sectors. To be sure, such transformations would require systemic, cultural and conceptual changes to UK CT discourse and practice; whereas current discourse alludes to such changes, it does not yet provide them.

References

All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Complex Needs and Dual Diagnosis (2018) People powered. Recovery: Social action and complex needs. https://www.turning-point.co.uk/_cache_9d98/_themesdelivery/turningpoint23/assets/downloads/people_powered_recovery_-_complex_needs_and_social_action_-_jan_18-5090910000043352.pdf

Augestad Knudsen R (2020) Measuring radicalisation: risk assessment conceptualisations and practice in England and Wales. Behav Sci Terrorism Polit Aggress 12(1):37–54. https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2018.1509105

Augestad Knudsen R (2024) Mental health exemptions to criminal responsibility: between law, medicine, politics and security. Exchanges Interdiscip Res J 11(2):29–54. https://doi.org/10.31273/eirj.v11i2.1369

Aziz SF (2017) Losing the "war of ideas:" A critique of countering violent extremism programs. Texas Int Law J 52(2):255–279. Retrieved from https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/losing-war-ideas-critique-countering-violent/docview/1923658801/se-2

BBC (2018a) Lloyd Gunton locked up for Bieber terror plot. www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-43257323. Accessed 11 Sept 2023

BBC (2018b) Parsons Green attack: Iraqi teenager convicted over Tube bomb. www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-43431303. Accessed 11 Sept 2023

BBC (2023a) Rhianan Rudd: MI5 had evidence teen terror suspect was exploited. www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-63736944. Accessed 11 Sept 2023

BBC (2023b) Right-wing Washington terror plotter Luke Skelton jailed. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tyne-66163679. Accessed 11 Sept 2023

BBC (2024) Misogyny to be treated as extremism by UK Government, 18 August 2024. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c15gn0lq7p5o. Accessed 20 Aug 2024

Bjørgo T (2011) Dreams and disillusion: Engagement in and disengagement from militant extremist groups. Crime Law Soc Chang 55(4):277–285. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10611-011-9282-9

Bouchard JP (2018) Profile of the perpetrator of the Nice terror attack that took place on 14th July 2016: A terrorist whose modus operandi may have been imitated in other European attacks. Annales Médico Psychologiques 176(6):607–612. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amp.2018.04.002

Bouhana et al (2016) PRIME: Risk Analysis Framework. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/jill-dando-institute/sites/jill_dando_institute/files/prime_d3.1_risk_analysis_framework_public.pdf. Accessed 4 September 2023

Cherney A, Belton E (2021) Evaluating case-managed approaches to counter radicalization and violent extremism: an example of the proactive integrated support model (PRISM) intervention. Stud Conf Terrorism 44(8):625–645. https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2019.1577016

Childrens Act (1989) https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents

CONTEST (2006) Countering International Terrorism, The United Kingdom's Strategy.

CONTEST (2011) The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97994/contest-summary.pdf. Accessed 30 August 2023

CONTEST (2018) The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf. Accessed 24 August 2023

CONTEST (2023) The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1171084/CONTEST_2023.pdf. Accessed 24 August 2023

Cooke D, Logan C (2021) Violent extremism: The practical assessment and management of risk. Terrorism Risk Assessment Instruments. IOS Press, pp 99–115

Cooper B, Bailey O (2019) People not problems. Politicians respond to five experiences of severe and multiple disadvantage. The Fabian Society, Fabian Policy report. https://e9a68owtza6.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/People-Not-Problems-Report-Fabian-and-CSJ.pdf

Corner E, Bouhana N, Gill P (2019) The multifinality of vulnerability indicators in lone-actor terrorism. Psychol Crime Law 25(2):111–132. https://doi.org/10.1080/1068316X.2018.1503664

Counter Terrorism Policing (2021) New stats reveal the number of children arrested for terrorism offences is highest since records began. www.counterterrorism.police.uk/new-stats-reveal-the-number-of-children-arrested-for-terrorism-offences-is-highest-since-records-began/. Accessed 11 Sept 2023

Counter Terrorism Policing (2022) Statistics show continued rise in youth arrests for terrorism offences. www.counterterrorism.police.uk/statistics-show-continued-rise-in-youth-arrests-for-terrorism-offences/. Accessed 24 Aug 2023

Duncan M, Corner J (2012) Severe and multiple disadvantage: a review of key texts. Lankelly Chase Foundation, London

de Roy van Zuijdewijn J, Bakker E (2016) Analysing personal characteristics of lone-actor terrorists: research findings and recommendations. Perspect Terrorism 10(2):42–49. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26297552

Fairclough N (2003) Analysing discourse: textual analysis for social research. Routledge, London

Foucault M (1969) The Archaeology of knowledge. Routledge, Oxon

Goldberg D, Jadhav S, Younis T (2017) Prevent: What is pre-criminal space? Bjpsych Bulletin 41(4):208–211. https://doi.org/10.1192/pb.bp.116.054585

Hall JKC (2020) Terrorist risk offenders: independent review of statutory multi-agency public protection arrangements. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/913983/supervision-terrorism-and-terrorism-risk-offenders-review.pdf. Accessed 30 August 2023

Hall JKC (2022) Terrorism content: children need more protection than adults. Response to first OFCOM consultation re Online Safety Bill. https://terrorismlegislationreviewer.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/IRTL-OFCOM-Response-1.pdf. Accessed 27 August 2023

Heath-Kelly C (2013) Counter-terrorism and the counterfactual: producing the 'radicalisation' discourse and the UK PREVENT strategy. Br J Polit Int Relations 15(3):394–415. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856X.2011.00489.x

Heath-Kelly C (2017) The geography of pre-criminal space: epidemiological imaginations of radicalisation risk in the UK Prevent Strategy, 2007–2017. Critical Stud Terrorism 10(2):297–319. https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2017.1327141

Heath-Kelly C (2024) Unhealthy liaisons? Medact, London

Home Office (2020) Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting People Vulnerable to Being Drawn into Terrorism. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/964567/6.6271_HO_HMG_Channel_Duty_Guidance_v14_Web.pdf. Accessed 24 August 2023

Home Office (2021) Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales. Accessed 30 Aug 2023

Home Office (2023) Official Statistics: Individuals Referred to and Supported Through the Prevent Programme, April 2021-March 2022. https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/individuals-referred-to-and-supported-through-the-prevent-programme-april-2021-to-march-2022/individuals-referred-to-and-supported-through-the-prevent-programme-april-2021-to-march-2022. Accessed 24 Aug 2023

IOM (2015) Integrated Offender Management: Key Principles. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/406865/HO_IOM_Key_Principles_document_Final.pdf. Accessed 30 Aug 2023

IRP (2023) Independent Review of Prevent, Shawcross, W. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1134986/Independent_Review_of_Prevent.pdf. Accessed 24 Aug 2023

Jacobs K (2006) Discourse analysis and its utility in urban policy research. Urban Policy Res 24(1):39–52. https://doi.org/10.1080/08111140600590817

Jupp J (2022) From spiral to stasis? United Kingdom counter-terrorism legislation and extreme right-wing terrorism. Stud Conf Terrorism. https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2022.2122271

Kepel G (2002) Jihad - the Trail of Political Islam. I.B. Tauris, London

Lloyd M, Dean C (2015) The development of structured guidelines for assessing risk in extremist offenders. J Threat Assess Manag 2(1):40–52. https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000035

Logan C, Lloyd M (2019) Violent extremism: A comparison of approaches to assessing and managing risk. Legal and criminological psychology 24(1):141–161. https://doi-org.bham-ezproxy.idm.oclc.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/lcrp.12140

Lowe, D. (2017) Prevent strategies. Studi Conflict Terrorism, 40(11), https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1253941

Lucraft KC, HHJ (2021) Inquests arising from the deaths in the fishmongers' hall terror attack; Regulation 28 Report On Action To Prevent Future Deaths. https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Fishmongers-Hall-Inquests-Prevention-of-future-deaths-report-2021-0362_Published-by-Chief-Coroner.pdf

MAPPA (2023) Multi-agency public protection arrangements: guidance. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-public-protection-arrangements-mappa-guidance. Accessed 30 August 2023

Martin, T. (2014) Governing an unknowable future. Critic Stud Terrorism, 7(1), https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2014.881200

Millett K, Ahmed F (2021) Echoes of terror(ism) the mutability and contradictions of countering violent extremism in Québec. Echoes of Terror(ism): International Contemplations and Reflections On 9/11, 52(2): 52–67. https://doi.org/10.29173/css25

Nesser P (2006) Profiles of Jihadist Terrorists in Europe. In: Cheryl B (ed) A future for the young, options for helping Middle Eastern youth escape the trap of radicalization. RAND, Washington, pp 31–49

Nesser P (2016) Islamist terrorism in Europe: a history (online edn, Oxford Academic, 20 Oct. 2016). https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190264024.001.0001. Accessed 25 August 2023

Pantazis C, Pemberton S (2011) Restating the case for the "SUSPECT COMMUNITY": a reply to greer. Br J Criminol 51(6):1054–1062. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23639912

Pantucci R (2013) We love death as you love life. Hurst, London

Qurashi F (2018) The Prevent strategy and the UK 'war on terror': embedding infrastructures of surveillance in Muslim communities. Palgrave Commun 4(17). https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-017-0061-9

Richards, A (2011) The problem with 'radicalization'. Int Affairs 87(11), https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2011.00964.x

Romaniuk P (2015) Does CVE Work? lessons learned from the global effort to counter violent extremism. Global Center on Cooperative security, Sept, 2015

Roy O (2004) Globalized Islam, the search for a new Ummah. Hurst, London

Saadallah K (2021) Sentencing remarks of The Honourable Mr Justice Sweeney. www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/R-v-Khairi-Saadallah-Sentencing-Remarks.pdf. Accessed 11 September 2023

Sarma KM (2017) Risk assessment and the prevention of radicalization from nonviolence into terrorism. Am Psychol 72(3):278–288. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000121

Sarma KM, Carthy SL, Cox KM (2022) Mental disorder, psychological problems and terrorist behaviour: a systematic review and meta-analysis. Campbell Syst Rev 18(3). https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.1268

Saunders J (2023) manchester arena inquiry volume 3: radicalisation and preventability, Report of the Public Inquiry into the Attack on Manchester Arena on 22nd May 2017. https://files.manchesterarenainquiry.org.uk/reports/2023/MAI-Final-PDF-Volume-3.pdf

Schmid AP (2016). Research on radicalisation: topics and themes. Perspect Terrorism 10(3):26–32. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26297594

TACT (2000) https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/section/1. Accessed 13 July 2023

Schuurman B, Lindekilde L, Malthaner S, O'Connor F, Gill P, Bouhana N (2019) End of the lone wolf: the typology that should not have been. Stud Conf Terrorism 42(8):771–778. https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2017.1419554

Silva DMD (2018) Radicalisation: the journey of a concept revisited. Race Class 59(4):34–53

Stephenson Z, Harkins L, Woodhams J (2013) The sequencing of interventions with offenders: an addition to the responsivity principle. J Forensic Psychol Pract 13(5):429–455. https://doi.org/10.1080/15228932.2013.850318

The Guardian (2019) Oxford Street terror plotter tells court MI5 tried to recruit him. www.theguard-ian.com/uk-news/2019/jan/03/lewis-ludlow-oxford-street-terror-attack-plotter-16-meetings-prevent-officers-court-hears. Accessed 11 Sept 2023

The Guardian (2021) 'Staggeringly high' number of autistic people on UK Prevent scheme. www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jul/07/staggeringly-high-number-of-people-with-autism-on-uk-prevent-scheme. Accessed 11 Sept 2023

The Guardian (2022) 14-year-old boy one of youngest in UK to be convicted of terror charges. www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/jan/19/14-year-old-boy-one-of-youngest-in-uk-to-be-convicted-of-terror-charges. Accessed 11 Sept 2023

The National (2021) Man facing terror charges diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome, court told. www.thenational.scot/news/national/19395998.man-facing-terror-charges-diagnosed-aspergers-syndrome-court-told/. Accessed 11 Sept 2023

The Telegraph (2023) MI5 knew UK's youngest female terror suspect was groomed, investigation finds. www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/01/03/mi5-knew-uks-youngest-female-terror-suspect-groomed-investigation/. Accessed 11 Sept 2023

The Telegraph (2023a) MI5 'contributed' to exploited teenage terror suspect Rhianan Rudd taking her own life, family claim. www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/05/23/rhianan-rudd-terror-suspect-suicide-mi5-police-contributed/. Accessed 11 Sept 2023

van Leeuwen L, Weggemans D (2018) Characteristics of Jihadist terrorist leaders: a quantitative approach. perspectives on terrorism 12(4):55–67. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26482978

Verwimp P (2016) Foreign fighters in syria and iraq and the socio-economic environment they faced at home: a comparison of European countries. Perspect Terrorism 10(6):68–81. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26297707

Winter C (2016) An integrated approach to IS recruitment. ASPI, Sydney