

WOMEN IN ISLAMIC STATE PROPAGANDA

Report

Europol Specialist Reporting



Roles and incentives

IS is not the first jihadi movement to attract female followers. Many of its predecessors — including al-Qaeda — also had their share of female supporters. Yet the meteoric rise of IS appears to have brought about a leap in the nature and extent of women’s roles within jihadi groups. Alternatively, one could suggest that the increased assimilation of women into the organisation in itself contributed to IS’s swift ascent.

What is certain is that women have become indispensable to IS, both in conflict areas and in the West (including in the European Union). They play their role in the organisation’s state-building enterprise, produce and disseminate propaganda and have seemingly been granted more proactive roles on the ‘battlefield’. The worry is that this increase in the involvement of women could pave the way for potentially major changes in the role of jihadi women in the future.

The report aims to shed light on how IS — a group that espouses a patriarchal authority par excellence — could appeal to women. In so doing, the research will explore the doctrinal dialectics put forward by IS regarding women and the role(s) they are expected to play in jihad. It will also focus on how the organisation uses Islamic jurisprudence to mould the role of women within jihad.



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propaganda [3.98 MB]

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