

ONLINE JIHADIST PROPAGANDA: 2019 IN REVIEW

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[Press Release](#)



Today, Europol publishes the second edition of its annual report on online Jihadist propaganda. The report by the [European Union's Internet Referral Unit \(EU IRU\)](#) at Europol covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2019 and highlights the major trends and developments in propaganda of the most prominent Sunni jihadist organisations. This review aims to analyse how these organisations have shaped their online message to respond to shifting political and operational realities and overcome setbacks. It further identifies the dominant themes exploited by the groups during this period.

So-called Islamic State (IS)

- The start of 2019 saw a dip in the release of official IS propaganda. This was accompanied by steady dissemination of supporter-generated content and recycled material.
- IS was able to leverage its regional outposts, from West Africa to the Philippines, in a number of major media campaigns that distracted from its struggles in Syria and Iraq but more importantly portrayed it as still expanding to new territories.
- In a number of short videos and campaigns, IS supporters emphasised the role of women and children.
- The [takedown action coordinated by EU Member States and Europol on 21 and 22 November](#) resulted in the severe disruption of pro-IS accounts, channels and groups on Telegram.

Al-Qaeda: Al-Qaeda has succeeded in strengthening its network over the years via the

implementation of a “flexible administration, i.e. setting the overarching aims but delegating responsibility regarding tactics to its regional branches.

Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS): Although HTS continues to pursue a jihadist agenda, its focus is local. HTS has put significant effort in strengthening its communication strategy by multiplying the production of statements, videos, and opinion articles. In disseminating its propaganda, HTS relies on ostensibly independent institutions, both online and offline.

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