

Welcome remarks: Ideology & Radicalization

Dear friends, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen - welcome all of you to this significant seminar.

For those of you who have worked with issues concerning integration of immigrants into European societies, the term "Muslim Civil Society", may sound familiar.

The reason behind this could be that many organizations that claim to represent Muslims around Europe have the establishment of a Muslim civil society, as one of their most important instrumental aims.

A Muslim civil society, apart from mainstream society.

This idea of cultural separatism is shaped by an ideology originating from the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt - an ideology that is represented in Europe by a wide range of organizations.

These organizations represent what is normally referred to "Islamic activism", "Islamism" or "Political Islam".

So what does this mean?

The ultimate aim for the Muslim Brothers has always been to separate the distinction between religion and politics - in order to establish a religious state or a caliphate.

Why then, has "Islamophobia" become a buzzword among Islamists?

And if segregation, or cultural separation, is the motive behind a separate "Muslim civil society", how do we confront this in order to promote integration and cultural cohesion in our societies?

In order to learn more about the nature of Islamic activism in Europe, we have invited experts and scholars to provide an overview based upon experiences from a national level in Belgium, Sweden, Egypt and Gulf countries.

So, with this short introductory remarks, again welcome to this highly topical seminar on Ideology and Radicalization.