

# Assessment of the Terrorist Threat to Denmark



## **THE ASSESSMENTS BY THE DANISH INTELLIGENCE SERVICES OF THE THREATS TO DENMARK**

### **THE ASSESSMENT OF THE TERRORIST THREAT TO DENMARK**

by the Centre for Terror Analysis (CTA) determines the national terrorist threat level and describes the terrorist threat to Denmark and Danish interests abroad. The assessment is one out of five recurring assessments of threats in and against Denmark. The other assessments are:

- **ASSESSMENT OF THE ESPIONAGE THREAT TO DENMARK, THE FAROE ISLANDS AND GREENLAND** by the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET), which describes foreign state intelligence activities targeting Denmark, particularly espionage, influence activities and illegal procurement of technology and knowledge.
- **INTELLIGENCE OUTLOOK** by the Danish Defence Intelligence Service (DDIS), which describes the external conditions for Danish national security and interests.
- **THE CYBER THREAT AGAINST DENMARK** by the Danish Resilience Agency (SAMSIK), which describes and determines the national threat levels in relation to cyberespionage, cybercrime, cyberactivism, disruptive cyberattacks and cyberterrorism.
- **NATIONAL RISK ASSESSMENT OF TERRORIST FINANCING** by PET, which aims to map terrorist financing in Denmark and abroad.



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# Preface

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*The Assessment of the Terrorist Threat to Denmark is the overall assessment of the terrorist threat to Denmark and Danish interests abroad by the Centre for Terror Analysis (CTA).<sup>1</sup>*

It is the overall assessment of CTA that the terrorist threat to Denmark remains at the level of **significant**.

In terms of the specific threat categories, CTA assesses that the terrorist threat from militant Islamists remains at the level of **significant** (see p. 13), the terrorist threat from right-wing extremists remains at the level of **general** (see p. 23), the terrorist threat from left-wing extremists is raised from **minimal** to **limited** (see p. 29), and the terrorist threat from anti-establishment extremists remains at the level of **limited** (see p. 33).

## Global developments and trends

The global security situation has deteriorated in recent years, and a number of global developments and trends have caused other actors to play an increasingly important role in the threat landscape. Among other things, some state actors, whose capability is greater than that of e.g. militant Islamist groups, use methods and means that are comparable to terrorism in terms of their nature and effect. The interaction between these actors and the high pace of the developments lead to a more fragmented and complex threat landscape, as further described in the section on p. 8. Although the threat assessment is kept at the level of **significant**, the nature of the threat has thus undergone continuous change over the past few years.

However, terrorist attacks carried out by militant Islamists, right-wing extremists, left-wing extremists and



anti-establishment extremists continue to pose the primary threat to Denmark. More than a year after the escalation of the conflict in the Middle East triggered by Hamas' terrorist attack on Israel on 7 October 2023, the conflict continues to have a spillover effect on the threat landscape in Denmark.

It remains the assessment of CTA that the conflict in the Middle East holds considerable potential for mobilization that may prompt a number of spontaneous or premeditated reactions, including terrorist attacks, from various known and unknown threat actors. The conflict has been the cause of several attacks and foiled attacks in the West, aimed particularly at Jewish and Israeli interests. In 2024, several individuals in Denmark were charged, in two separate cases, under the terrorism provisions of the Danish Criminal Code. In both cases, the targets were Jewish or Israeli interests in Denmark. CTA assesses that individuals and networks who support or have ties to militant Islamist groups involved in the conflict in the Middle East currently affect the threat landscape in parts of Europe, including Denmark.

CTA assesses that the conflict in the Middle East will remain an important driver for the terrorist threat to Denmark and Danish interests, also in the coming year, and that it will be a contributing factor to the continued increased threat to Jewish and Israeli interests in Denmark.

The rapid and accelerating developments in online technologies are reinforcing the capacity of extremists to com-

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- 1) CTA is a fusion centre comprised of staff from four Danish authorities (the Danish Security and Intelligence Service, the Danish Defence Intelligence Service, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Danish Emergency Management Agency) collaborating on analysis of the terrorist threat to Denmark and Danish interests abroad.
  - 2) For more on hybridization, see for example the *Assessment of the Terrorist Threat to Denmark 2023*.






municate with like-minded individuals, spread propaganda, radicalize others, etc. Furthermore, the developments encourage hybridization trends<sup>2</sup>, where extremist ideological, political and religious ideas are mixed with and supplemented by, for example, conspiracy theories, thereby creating new and individualized enemy perceptions. Combined, these developments and trends continue to have a major impact on the terrorist threat to Denmark.

### **Polarization**

The global and the local arena are becoming increasingly interlinked. Conflicts and events in other parts of the world can quickly propagate to Denmark. War, crises and growing global insecurity not only have the potential to influence the terrorist threat, but may also put pressure on Western democracies more generally, also in Denmark. This is accelerated by developments in digital technologies, which, combined with a growing global trend towards autocratization, put democratic principles under pressure.

The pressure on democratic principles can for example manifest itself through declining trust in the political system, but is also reflected in groups of citizens showing increased hostility towards politicians, public officials and other citizens with whom they disagree. Legitimate differences of opinion and a plurality of views in the public debate can quickly turn into polarization and lead to entrenched positions and rigid enemy perceptions, causing some citizens and politicians to shy away from engaging in these kinds of debates. CTA assesses that polarization and rigid enemy perceptions may have inspired the perpetrator behind the attack on the United-Healthcare CEO in the United States in December 2024. The fascination and support for the perpetrator subsequently expressed online may reflect similar tendencies.





CTA assesses that the development outlined above may not only affect the terrorist threat in the short term; it may also lead to a more long-term threat to democracy in Denmark. Unlike the terrorist threat, this long-term threat is less concrete. It presents itself only gradually, but may nevertheless have an appreciable negative effect over time. CTA assesses that the long-term threat to democracy could manifest itself in a gradual erosion of the norms and institutions on which the Danish democracy is built.

Symptoms of the long-term threat to democracy are already visible and tangible. For example, they can be observed through harassment and threats directed at politicians and public officials, politicians withdrawing from the public debate or from politics altogether because of intimidation, especially on social media, and dissemination of disinformation and anti-elite conspiracy theories.

PET regularly launches operations to uncover and prevent potential terrorist threats to targets in Denmark. Terrorist attacks may occur with no prior intelligence indications, even when the perpetrators have previously been known to have extremist sympathies.

The Assessment of the Terrorist Threat to Denmark 2025 is based on intelligence processed before 1 March 2025.

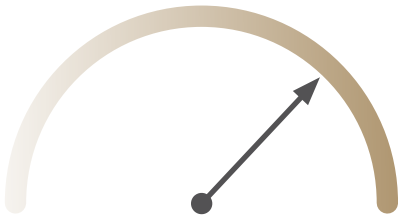
Enjoy the read.  
CTA







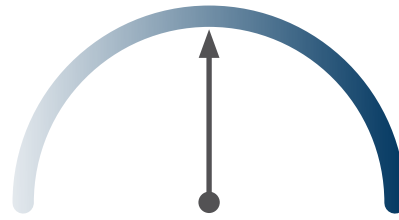
# Definitions



## TERRORIST THREAT LEVEL

CTA uses the following terrorist threat levels (highlighted in **BROWN** in the text):

- **Very significant** · There is a specific threat.  
There is capability, intent, planning and possibly initiation.
- **Significant** · There is a known threat.  
There is capability, intent and planning.
- **General** · There is capability and/or intent and possibly planning.
- **Limited** · There is a potential threat.  
There is limited capability and/or intent.
- **Minimal** · There are no indications of any threat.  
There is absence of intent, capability or both.



## PROBABILITY

CTA uses the following degrees of probability (highlighted in **BLUE** in the text):

- **Highly likely** >90%
- **Likely** 60-90%
- **Possible** 40-60%
- **Less likely** 10-40%
- **Unlikely** <10%

TERM	DEFINITION
Terrorism	CTA defines terrorism in accordance with Section 114 of the Danish Criminal Code.
The West	North America, Australia, New Zealand and Europe, not including Russia, Belarus, Türkiye, Moldova, Ukraine and Caucasus.
Traveller	A private person who has travelled to a conflict zone in order to support one of the parties in the conflict.
Hybridization	A process in which the combination of different ideologies, world views or communities leads to the creation of new extremist narratives and modi operandi among individuals, groups or communities. Not to be confused with hybrid warfare.
Capability	The accessible means of a person or a group combined with their ability (training, skills, logistics, etc.) to use these.
Intent	The will to employ a certain capability against a certain target or target group.
Extremism	The will to engage in or legitimize violent action in order to change existing societal conditions.
Radicalization	A dynamic process in which a person increasingly accepts the use of violence to achieve political, religious or ideological ends.
Lone actor	A person who carries out a terrorist attack on their own, while planning, training etc. may involve other people.
Inspired attack	The perpetrator is inspired by militant Islamism or political extremism and plans the attack on their own.
Supported attack	The perpetrator is in direct contact with one or more people who provide guidance or in other ways support the attack plans.
Directed attack	An attack commissioned or sanctioned by, and planned in collaboration with, people close to the leadership of a terrorist group.



# A fragmented threat landscape with a variety of actors



Historically, the threat to Denmark has been driven mainly by actors motivated by militant Islamism, right-wing extremism, left-wing extremism or anti-establishment extremism. These remain the key threat actors, but actors that do not necessarily match any of the categories above have in recent years come to play an increasingly important role in the threat landscape. In conjunction with the global developments and dynamics introduced in the preface, these actors contribute to a more fragmented and unpredictable threat landscape where the links between motives and actors are becoming increasingly blurred.

Several of these actors have no clear ideological affiliation. When actors are no longer bound by ideologically rooted norms and enemy perceptions, their target selection and modus operandi become more unpredictable. At the same time, their intent may be unclear, making it difficult for the authorities to assess whether a given act constitutes terrorism.

Below is a description of some of the actors who could potentially commit acts which, subject to a specific legal assessment, may be characterized as terrorism.

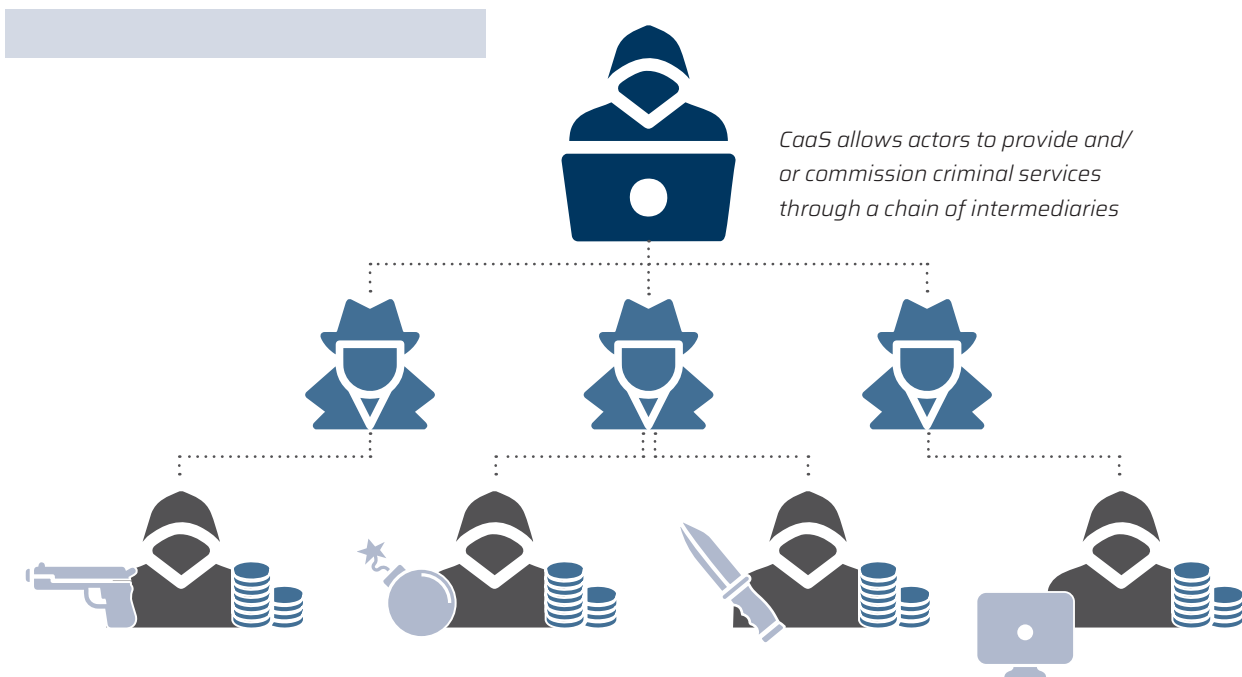
## **Individuals with links to organized crime**

CTA assesses that people involved in organized crime networks in Denmark are still primarily driven by money and personal status. This results in a general reluctance to attract the attention of the authorities through involvement in terror-related activities.

However, individuals with links to organized crime networks may choose to get involved in terror-related activities or be mobilized to support or cooperate with militant groups because of their own personal convictions. Furthermore, examples from abroad show that some organized crime networks can have an independent negative impact on national security by means of their capabilities and readiness to use violence. Moreover, there have been cases of Crime-as-a-Service (CaaS) – a phenomenon known from the world of organized crime – being used in ways that have implications for the terrorist threat.

CaaS allows actors to provide and/or commission criminal services through a chain of intermediaries, usually preserving the anonymity of the actors involved and thereby obscuring the relationship between the actor commissioning the crime and the perpetrator(s) committing





ting it. CTA assesses that, in the context of terrorism, this modus operandi may introduce criminal actors who are not driven by their own personal ideological motivation, but who act as proxies on behalf of ideologically motivated actors. These proxies may be driven by financial gains, the prospect of higher status or they may act under duress.

### State actors


The global security situation has deteriorated in recent years, with growing competition and division between the superpowers, and with the liberal world order being challenged by revisionist states seeking less Western dominance on the international scene. Certain states do not shy away from using violent means to achieve their goals. In the West, there have been examples of certain states not only attempting to assassinate critical dissidents, but also seeking to carry out terrorist attacks, for example on Jewish and Israeli interests.

While for many years the terrorist threat has been driven by non-state actors, such as transnational terrorist groups and their sympathizers, some state actors are thus once again pursuing strategic goals using means associated with terrorism. Compared to e.g. militant Isla-

mist groups, state actors have greater capability to carry out acts associated with terrorism, and can also make use of proxies in the execution phase. The use of terrorism, possibly carried out through proxies, can be a convenient tool for a state involved in a prolonged so-called hybrid conflict, where the state wants to harm an adversary or signal capabilities and range, without necessarily escalating the conflict into actual or further military confrontation.

The use of proxies may also make it extremely difficult to clearly identify the motive behind a specific violent incident. In the West, there have been examples of states using proxies, including in the context of CaaS, to pursue strategic goals in ways that have implications for the threat landscape. Overall, the involvement of state actors in incidents associated with terrorism contributes to a more volatile and unpredictable threat landscape. This development poses a challenge to the authorities in their efforts to monitor, prevent and analyse the terrorist threat.

CTA assesses that, through influence campaigns in both mainstream and extremist online forums, state actors may potentially seek to contribute to polarization, disseminate radicalizing narratives and/or influence ex-



tremists to target their terrorist attacks to serve the interests of the state actors.

### **Single-issue actors**

The threat landscape tends to be increasingly influenced by actors who take violent action based on a specific issue or event. This increases the risk that individuals not previously known in connection with radicalization or affiliation with extremist communities are mobilized spontaneously or at short notice to commit acts of violence. For example, attacks on Jewish targets in the West as well as actions against authorities and businesses perceived as supporters of Israel have been carried out after the escalation of the conflict in the Middle East. There were no clear indications that the perpetrators of these attacks sympathized with militant Islamism or political extremism or acted as proxies.

Climate extremists are another example of actors who may potentially be mobilized around a single issue to commit acts of violence. The term climate extremism covers the acceptance and legitimization of violence in the fight to protect the climate and the environment. CTA assesses that there are currently no climate extremist groups in Denmark, but that climate activists in Denmark experience a growing sense of urgency to take action. CTA assesses that this creates a potential for climate activists in Denmark to use more confrontational methods, possibly including violence, in the short to medium term, taking inspiration from foreign climate extremists or contacts in the left-wing extremist community.

### **Actors fascinated by violence**

The West has seen several attacks in recent years carried out by members of gore communities. The term gore communities refers to transnational online groups that have a fascination with violence and extremely violent material, including material or ideological fragments of

political and religious extremism (see p. 26 for more on the topic of gore). CTA assesses that this kind of attack is often driven by personal motives, including anger towards society.

### **Actors with mental disorders and personal issues**

In recent years, a large number of terrorist attacks in the West have been carried out by individuals acting alone, several of whom were suffering from mental disorders. Furthermore, there have been examples of individuals with mental disorders adopting *modi operandi* known from terrorist attacks, without the acts necessarily having a political, religious or ideological motive.

A person's mental state and any mental disorders they may suffer from can greatly influence the person's behaviour and motivation to act. Research has not established a convincing causal relationship between mental disorders, radicalization and terrorism, but it does show that mental disorders in combination with other factors may have an impact on a person's radicalization and potential extremist behaviour. For some radicalized individuals with a mental disorder, there is a strong synergy between their disorder and their radicalization. For others, the disorder may be a limiting factor in terms of their radicalization or it may be completely disconnected from it.

Individuals who appear to be primarily motivated by personal issues and negative experiences may perform acts of violence which, subject to a specific legal assessment, could be characterized as terrorism. This is referred to in research as lone actor grievance-fuelled violence. These individuals may use political, religious or ideological references and/or *modi operandi* known from terrorist attacks. ■









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# Militant Islamism

## DEFINITION

Militant Islamism is an interpretation of Islamist ideology which legitimizes and accepts the use of violence to achieve political, religious or ideological ends.





## SUMMARY

CTA assesses that the terrorist threat to Denmark from militant Islamists remains at the level of **significant**. Since 2023, Islamic State has shown an increased intent to carry out attacks against the West, and the conflict in the Middle East has led to radicalization and mobilization of militant Islamists, including not only well-known threat actors such as Islamic State and al-Qaida, which have tried to take advantage of the conflict in their propaganda and incited revenge attacks in the West, but also actors that have not previously influenced the threat to Denmark. Several of the successful and foiled militant Islamist attacks in the West in 2024 were triggered by the conflict.

CTA assesses that the momentum of well-known threat actors combined with the emergence of new threat actors are causing increased uncertainty in the threat landscape in Denmark and that this will continue in the coming year. However, the militant Islamist threat still emanates mainly from Islamic State and its sympathizers. At the same time, perceived insults to Islam came to play a less significant role for the threat to Denmark in 2024 compared to the year before, and no negative attention was directed specifically at Denmark in this context. Overall, this means that the threat remains at the level of **significant**.


It remains the assessment of CTA that networks on various online platforms are key to militant Islamists in the West in connection with radicalization, recruitment and communication with like-minded individuals.

The most likely militant Islamist terrorist attack in Denmark remains an attack carried out by a lone actor or a small group.

Militant Islamist target selection does not follow a consistent or predictable pattern. The target may change during the planning phase, and selection may be influenced by factors such as militant Islamist propaganda, current agendas, copycat effects, personal networks as well as the capability of the attack planner. CTA assesses that the most likely targets of a militant Islamist terrorist attack in Denmark, in no particular order, are large public gatherings, authority targets, Jewish/Israeli targets, targets associated with perceived insults to Islam and LGBT+ targets. CTA assesses that, as a spillover effect of the conflict in the Middle East, there is currently an increased threat to Israeli and Jewish targets.



## 1.1 Developments abroad



CTA assesses that the number of attacks and foiled attacks in the West has increased since 2022, following a general downward trend since 2020. Islamic State has support networks and sympathizers in many countries in Europe, and several of these have ties to Islamic State networks outside Europe. Islamic State remains an inspiration and point of reference for the majority of the perpetrators of attacks and foiled attacks in the West.

Although al-Qaida does not have the same influence in the West as Islamic State, the group still has networks that aim to support attacks in Europe and revitalize propaganda focusing on the West.

CTA assesses that the conflict between Israel and several regional actors, which escalated after Hamas' terrorist attack on 7 October 2023, and the resulting renewed focus on the Palestinian cause, which has historically been an important narrative in militant Islamist groups, have mobilized militant Islamists worldwide and will continue to do so in the coming year.

CTA assesses that the recent developments in Syria currently have no direct impact on the terrorist threat to Denmark. However, the conflict may have negative consequences for the regional stability, strengthen militant Islamist groups in the vicinity and potentially attract militant Islamists from the West. A stronger Islamic State in Syria may affect the terrorist threat to the West, including Denmark, in the future.

Militant Islamists abroad, especially in countries neighbouring Denmark, may pose a threat to Denmark. For example, individuals or small groups may travel to Denmark with the purpose of committing terrorist attacks inspired, supported or directed by a militant Islamist group.

The use of refugee and migrant routes has previously been a key element of Islamic State attack planning against targets in Europe, and it is **likely** that militant Islamists still intend to exploit available routes. ■

### **THE THREAT TO THE WEST FROM MILITANT ISLAMIST GROUPS ABROAD**

The Danish Defence Intelligence Service (DDIS) assesses in its **Intelligence Outlook 2024** that the terrorist threat has increased since 2022. This is due in part to the war in Gaza and more recently the war in Lebanon, which have contributed to further radicalization of militant Islamist networks inside and outside Europe. DDIS further assesses that groups like Islamic State have the capability to launch coordinated high-casualty attacks close to Western Europe. In the past few years, Islamic State has made several attempts to remotely direct terrorist attacks in Europe through encrypted messaging apps. In 2023 and 2024, the Islamic State subgroup in Afghanistan, ISKP, in particular, repeatedly mobilized, called on and directed individuals to launch terrorist attacks in Europe. In the coming years, there is a risk that Islamic State and other terrorist groups in Syria will be able to exploit the sudden power vacuum triggered by the collapse of the Assad regime in late 2024 to grow stronger again. This entails the risk that Islamic State in Syria could re-establish itself as a serious terrorist threat to Europe.

DDIS further assesses that, in the years to come, terrorist groups will continue to use online platforms to recruit and facilitate attacks, mobilizing lone actors or small groups of individuals in and near Europe into carrying out simple attacks on their own.

**Intelligence Outlook 2024** is available on the website of DDIS.

### **THE THREAT TO DANISH INTERESTS IN NON-WESTERN COUNTRIES**

CTA assesses that Danish diplomatic representations and other Danish presence in non-Western countries, including employees of Danish companies, may be perceived as symbolic targets providing an opportunity to harm Denmark without carrying out an attack in Denmark. CTA is not aware of threats specifically targeting Danish interests or Danes in non-Western countries in 2024.

## 1.2 Propaganda and narratives

Militant Islamist propaganda continues to radicalize and inspire individuals in Denmark and other Western countries. Propaganda from Islamic State and al-Qaida generally encourages attacks and often singles out targets and directs the modus operandi. The propaganda may be official propaganda produced and distributed by media outlets dedicated to for example Islamic State and al-Qaida, as well as propaganda produced by affiliated groups and other sympathizers. Earlier propaganda, e.g. from the time when Islamic State controlled large areas in Syria and Iraq, is still being used. Whereas the earlier propaganda was more strategic, contemporary propaganda is largely driven by current agendas and recent terrorist attacks.

In 2024, the main focus in Islamic State and al-Qaida propaganda was on the conflict in the Middle East, with the West, Christians, Jews and random civilians being singled out as targets of terrorist attacks, whereas perceived insults to Islam received less focus than in 2023. Yet, the latter focus area remains one of four dominant narratives in the propaganda: Western support for Israel, Western military presence in the Middle East, perceived insults to Islam and the perception of the West as a representative of un-Islamic values and way of life. These narratives bolster the groups' legitimization of terrorism against the West, criticize local regimes in the Middle East and shame Muslims in the West who do not act as militant Islamists.

Both Islamic State and al-Qaida have long focused on Israel and Jews as enemies, and they are now seeking to capitalize on the conflict in the Middle East in their propaganda. CTA assesses that, in conjunction with the conflict's general radicalization and mobilization potential, this contributes to increasing the threat against Israeli and Jewish targets in the West, including in Denmark.

CTA assesses that perceived insults to Islam may still play an important role for militant Islamists, and that exposure of new cases of insult may quickly bring renewed focus on Denmark, individuals in Denmark and Danish interests abroad as prioritized targets. Moreover, reactions to perceived insults may occur with a considerable delay.

In 2023, Quran desecrations, mainly in Denmark and Sweden, renewed the perception of Denmark as a prioritized target for militant Islamist groups, resulting, among other things, in threats against Denmark, individuals in Denmark and Danish interests abroad. In 2024, militant Islamists were less concerned about perceived insults to Islam. Furthermore, CTA is not aware of any actual attack planning against Denmark, individuals in Denmark or Danish interests abroad caused by perceived insults to Islam in 2024.

The killing in Sweden in January 2025 of Salwan Momika, who staged several Quran desecrations in Sweden in 2023 and 2024, brought renewed attention to perceived insults to Islam in militant Islamist propaganda.

CTA assesses that the killing has not triggered an immediate response in the form of a negative focus or concrete threats aimed specifically at Denmark, individuals in Denmark or Danish interests abroad in relation to perceived insults to Islam. However, a renewed focus on individuals in Denmark associated with perceived insults to Islam may shed a more negative light on Denmark in the short term and revive the perception of Denmark as a prioritized target. ■



### 1.3 Implications of the conflict in the Middle East for the threat landscape

The conflict in the Middle East has brought new actors and dynamics into the threat landscape. Several attacks and foiled attacks in the West were triggered by the conflict and aimed at Jewish and Israeli interests.

Historically, the threat to Denmark from militant Islamists has mainly come from al-Qaida and Islamic State as well as their sympathizers. CTA assesses that, as a result of the conflict in the Middle East, the threat to Denmark is currently also affected by individuals and networks who support or have ties to other militant Islamist groups involved in the conflict. CTA assesses that some of these individuals are affiliated with organized crime networks in Denmark.

It is **likely** that, should the individuals mentioned above be planning a terrorist attack, they will focus on targets related to the conflict in the Middle East rather than random civilians. CTA assesses that these individuals may be willing to use modi operandi known from organized crime, including Crime-as-a-Service (see p. 8-9 for more on this topic).

CTA assesses that in the coming year the conflict will continue to have a potential to mobilize and radicalize militant Islamists. At the same time, CTA assesses that a significant de-escalation of the conflict in the longer term will lead to a de-mobilization of individuals who have primarily been mobilized by the conflict. However, it is also **likely** that some individuals or small groups have become so radicalized that, regardless of how the conflict develops, they will stay on a militant path, possibly finding motivation in other militant Islamist agendas. It is **unlikely** that a de-escalation of the conflict will have an impact on Islamic State and al-Qaida sympathizers. ■

#### DIFFERENT MILITANT ISLAMIST IDEOLOGIES

Considerable differences exist between the ideologies of militant Islamist groups, which means that their supporters in Denmark may have widely differing views on key areas.

While Islamic State and al-Qaida aspire to create a global caliphate, the declared goal for Hamas is to establish a geographically defined Islamic nation state in the area that they consider to be Palestinian. As a political party and provider of social services to Lebanese citizens, Hezbollah seeks to represent Shia Muslims, and as a militant group, it aims to fight Israel. These differences between the groups affect their enemy perceptions and targets: Islamic State and al-Qaida consider the West as a whole to be their enemy, whereas Hamas and Hezbollah see Israel as their number one enemy, followed by any country which, in their view, supports Israel. Thus, Islamic State and al-Qaida have posed a real threat to the West for a number of years, while Hamas and Hezbollah have so far mainly posed a threat within their own region.

Both Islamic State and al-Qaida are Sunni Muslim groups and see themselves in opposition to Shia Muslims<sup>3</sup>. This applies to Islamic State in particular, as they consider Shia Muslims as a threat to Islam on a par with Jews and Israel, who are considered major enemies by all the groups. Hezbollah is a Shia Muslim group; Hamas is Sunni, but has links to a number of Shia actors, including Hezbollah and Iran. This means that Islamic State perceive both Hamas and Hezbollah as enemies.

Both Islamic State and al-Qaida are Salafists, which means that they have a very literal interpretation of Islam and actively strive to emulate the life of the first generations of Muslims in the 7th and 8th centuries. Neither Hamas nor Hezbollah are Salafists; they interpret Islam in a modern context, and this may affect the norms, behaviour and appearance of their sympathizers.

3) *Approximately 90 percent of the world's Muslims are Sunni, while some 10 percent are Shia. Sunni and Shia Muslims share many fundamental views of Islam, for example in terms of the Quran, Allah and the Prophet Muhammad. The primary difference between the two is their view on who they consider eligible to lead the Muslim community. While the Sunni faith emphasizes compliance with the traditions of the Prophet, the Shia faith emphasizes kinship with the Prophet.*

#### RADICALIZATION AND EXTREMISM IN PRISONS ETC.

CTA assesses that radicalized inmates in Danish prisons may pose a terrorist threat, both during and after their imprisonment. The group of radicalized inmates in Danish prisons includes individuals convicted of terror-related offences and others who legitimize or are ready to use violence, and who start or continue a radicalization process while in prison.

Although militant Islamists still make up the largest proportion of terror convicts, the group of terror convicts and radicalized inmates has become more diverse, with greater variation in their capability, network, ideological affiliation, mental vulnerability, age and gender.

Over the coming years, the authorities will therefore have to counter threats from a more complex group of terror convicts and radicalized inmates, both during and after their imprisonment.

#### 1.4 Communities and activities in Denmark

CTA assesses that Islamic State and al-Qaida remain the primary militant Islamist threat actors in Denmark. Militant Islamists in Denmark sympathizing with Islamic State or al-Qaida are still active both offline and online. CTA assesses that the in-person groups and networks are typically small, gender-segregated and multi-ethnic groups, mainly based in and around the major Danish cities. The members of the groups engage in social and religious activities, online and in-person teaching, sharing of militant Islamist propaganda material, etc. CTA assesses that individuals on the periphery of the in-person groups in Denmark or individuals who for various reasons have been excluded or turned away from the groups may pose a threat. While it is **less likely** that key figures in the in-person groups in Denmark present a direct threat, CTA assesses that they invariably seek to attract and radicalize new members who may potentially pose a threat to Denmark.

CTA assesses that, in addition to this, there are Islamic State and al-Qaida sympathizers in Denmark who take part in militant Islamist forums and activities online, but are not affiliated with any in-person groups. These may potentially pose a threat to Denmark.

Militant Islamist online networks are often transnational and cut across age, ethnicity and nationality. They are present on various, sometimes encrypted, online platforms, and are used for sharing propaganda, recruitment and communication with other sympathizers. Furthermore, online platforms provide an opportunity to communicate with Islamic State sub-groups in non-Western countries who guide, inspire and support potential perpetrators in the West. The militant Islamist online community is often fleeting and changeable in nature. This allows for the constant emergence of new online groups and networks, influenced by current agendas that may be dictating potential targets and enemy perceptions.

CTA assesses that the average age of those involved in militant Islamist online forums is typically lower than in in-person groups. In part, this stems from the fact that online forums tend to offer a high degree of anonymity,

which makes it possible to participate without being judged on physical appearance, and that any geographical barriers that may exist in in-person groups and networks are eliminated. Furthermore, CTA assesses that children and young people are at particular risk of becoming exposed to militant Islamist material online, because the material is accessible on both niche and mainstream platforms, for example gaming platforms that mainly cater to children. In that respect, CTA assesses that vulnerable young people, who often struggle to cope in in-person militant Islamist communities, have turned to militant Islamist communities online. Moreover, around one third of the attacks and foiled attacks in the West in recent years involved individuals under the age of 19. CTA assesses that this trend will continue.

Online platforms make it easy for militant Islamists to move freely and quickly between several different communities and engage in informal relations, thus enabling them to find the communities that best suit their current world view and preferences. Militant Islamist online networks are therefore no longer as firmly based as they once were on clearly defined ideological frameworks, which means that potential perpetrators may have more vague ideological affiliations. CTA assesses that this also opens up the possibility that individuals who mainly have a fascination with violence find their way into militant Islamist networks, or that individuals in militant Islamist networks find their way into gore communities (see p. 26 for more on this topic).

Historically, there have been examples of militant Islamists sympathizing with Islamic State or al-Qaida using their personal contacts in criminal networks for capability building and terrorist attack planning. CTA assesses that relations still exist between individuals from the criminal networks and the militant Islamist community sympathizing with Islamic State or al-Qaida. Such relations, which most commonly build on a shared past or family ties, may enhance the capability of militant Islamists to carry out terrorist attacks in Denmark using firearms and explosives.

With regard to adopting the Crime-as-a-Service model (see p. 8-9) in connection with a terrorist attack in Denmark, CTA assesses that Islamic State and al-Qaida will be less inclined to use this modus operandi in the short term. One of the reasons for this is that it would be a substantial break with the groups' insistence on perpetrators being motivated by religion.

It is **highly likely** that militant Islamists in Denmark help finance militant Islamist groups or individuals in non-Western countries. CTA assesses that terrorist finan-

#### REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

Radicalized individuals may enter Europe and Denmark, and refugees and migrants who are facing difficult life circumstances may be particularly susceptible to radicalization. For example, the knife attack in Solingen, Germany, in August 2024 was committed by a rejected asylum seeker.

It is **possible** that there are foreigners with exceptional leave to remain in Denmark sympathizing with militant Islamism who potentially pose a terrorist threat. At Departure Centre Kærshovedgård, there is a concentration of released terror convicts and other radicalized ex-prisoners who have been sentenced to deportation.

It is **likely** that terror convicts and militant Islamist sympathizers who are subject to deportation orders will seek to establish new networks or strengthen existing networks of like-minded individuals during their stay at Departure Centre Kærshovedgård. Contact is not necessarily driven by an interest in militant Islamism but could also be motivated by a shared past and/or similar life circumstances. CTA assesses that individuals at the departure centre may be particularly susceptible to radicalization and influence from militant Islamist agendas.

cing from individuals in Denmark is mainly channelled to militant Islamist groups or individuals in Syria, Iraq, Somalia, Türkiye, Afghanistan, Lebanon and the Palestinian self-rule areas. CTA assesses that while terrorist financing channelled from Denmark to countries abroad has no direct impact on the terrorist threat to Denmark, the activities help strengthen and support militant Islamist organizations and individuals abroad, thereby indirectly maintaining the threat to Denmark.

In recent years, there have been a number of convictions for violation of the terrorist financing legislation in Denmark.

For more on the topic of terrorist financing, see the National risk assessment of terrorist financing from 2024, which is available on PET's website. ■

## 1.5 Travellers and returnees

The recent developments in Syria may once again, at short notice, attract militant Islamists from Western countries, including Denmark, who want to join a militant Islamist group. In particular, a stronger Islamic State in Syria could be an attractive destination for Islamic State sympathizers in the West.

There are frequent examples in the West of individuals being arrested and prosecuted for attempting to travel to non-Western countries to join militant Islamist groups. CTA assesses that individuals who are prevented from travelling or who are otherwise unable to leave may pose a threat to the West. CTA assesses that there are militant Islamists, also in Denmark, who are interested in travelling abroad. In the period from 2012-2016, a substantial number of individuals travelled from Denmark to the conflict zone in Syria/Iraq. CTA assesses that there are currently no destinations that have the same appeal as Syria/Iraq had during that period.

All adults who have returned to Denmark from the conflict zone in Syria/Iraq since 2016 have either been convicted or are being prosecuted for crimes committed in connection with their stay in the conflict zone. In October 2024, a woman and her child were evacuated to Denmark from the Roj camp. The woman has been charged with violation of the terrorism provisions of the Danish Criminal Code. Furthermore, a woman who returned to Denmark before 2016 was indicted in February 2025 on charges of violating the terrorism provisions of the Danish Criminal Code.

Some of the individuals from Denmark who have been to the conflict zone in Syria/Iraq may pose a threat to Denmark or Danish interests abroad. Whether this is the case is subject to a specific assessment of the individual's possible intent and capability.

The threat from travellers, including children of travellers, who return to Denmark may be affected by how they are received by the Danish authorities, for example whether they are offered preventive social support. ■







A nighttime photograph of a city street scene. In the foreground, a dark, wet surface reflects the lights from a building and a bridge. A concrete bridge with a metal railing spans the upper part of the frame. Below the bridge, a multi-story building with many lit windows is visible. The scene is dimly lit, with the primary light sources being the building's interior lights and streetlights, creating a moody, urban atmosphere.

# 02

# Right-wing extremism

## DEFINITION

Right-wing extremism is a generic term covering various political views on the far right of the political spectrum which legitimize and accept the use of violence to achieve political and ideological ends.





## SUMMARY

CTA assesses that the terrorist threat to Denmark from right-wing extremists remains at the level of **general**. This is partly due to the fact that Danish right-wing extremist communities have strengthened their transnational connections, online as well as offline, in the past year and that there is a trend towards a growing readiness for violence, which is further aggravated by targeted recruitment in violent communities. In recent years, the number of Danish youth and minors radicalized in right-wing extremist online forums has been on the rise, and it continues to grow. At the same time, there is an increasing trend towards hybrid online networks with elements of right-wing extremism, but with no formal leadership, membership or organizational culture, which makes the threat from right-wing extremists more fragmented and volatile than previously. Yet, Denmark has seen no right-wing extremist attacks, and the number of attacks in the West has stagnated in recent years, which contributes to keeping the threat at the level of **general**.

The most likely right-wing extremist terrorist attack in Denmark is an attack by a lone actor radicalized online or a small group. Further, CTA assesses that a threat may emanate from individuals on the periphery of established right-wing extremist networks who are susceptible to radicalization and who may find identity, inspiration and a sense of belonging within the right-wing extremist community.

Right-wing extremist target selection does not follow a consistent and predictable pattern. The target may change during the planning phase, and selection may be influenced by factors such as propaganda, copycat effects, personal networks and preferences as well as the capability of the attack planner. CTA assesses that the most likely targets of a right-wing extremist terrorist attack in Denmark, in no particular order, are public authorities, infrastructure, LGBT+ targets as well as individuals, locations and/or events associated with Jews and Muslims that are considered a threat to white population groups.

## 2.1 Developments in the West

The terrorist threat in the West from right-wing extremists remains closely linked to online dynamics, and lone actors radicalized online continue to pose the largest threat. Radicalization of youth and minors also remains a dominant trend in the West. This trend is closely connected to the online dissemination of right-wing extremist propaganda, which often serves as the rallying point in online forums that also include youth and minors. In addition, the threat landscape in the West is affected by macro trends, such as social polarization, conspiracy theories, online dissemination of false narratives and right-wing populist agendas.

An example of macro trends directly influencing the right-wing extremist threat was seen in the summer of 2024, when a 17-year-old British citizen attacked a dance studio in Southport, United Kingdom, stabbing three girls to death. Although the attack could not be attributed to any ideology, it sparked violent riots, with right-wing extremists among the rioters, after misinformation was spread online about the identity of the attacker. Moreover, the incident was tied to polarization and social unrest driven by conspiracy theories and by right-wing populist and extremist radicalizers. In addition to the mobilization potential of the above-mentioned trends, the riots in the United Kingdom also illustrate how real-world events and discussions online influence and reinforce each other.

In line with the trend seen online, an increasing number of people in the West are joining right-wing extremist in-person communities. These are typically not centred around traditional established right-wing extremist groups, but rather around new communities that are more loosely organized.

CTA assesses that the right-wing extremist threat in Europe is more fragmented and complex than previously. Today, individuals with ideological convictions are part of communities that also include people whose ideological motivation is less evident, such as young people who are vulnerable or fascinated by violence. At the same time, individual and local agendas are mixed with macro trends in patterns that are often unpredictable and have an impact online as well as offline. ■

### POST-ORGANIZATIONAL ONLINE NETWORKS

A growing number of right-wing extremist online networks have no formal leadership, membership or organizational structure and can thus be described as post-organizational. Often these networks comprise a core of leading figures who are involved in coordinating the network's activities. For the majority of users, however, networks such as Terrorgram<sup>4</sup> are more like a "brand", uniting individuals in a dynamic and anonymous online community. How much status and influence the individual user has within the network is determined by factors such as their control over the network's communication channels and their history and level of activity within the network. CTA assesses that post-organizational networks facilitate and amplify the threat from lone actors, as the structure of these networks is based on anonymity and promotes individual action, for example through online libraries containing extremist material. For these reasons, CTA assesses that post-organizational networks will increase the complexity of the right-wing extremist threat in future.

## 2.2 Communities and activities

The right-wing extremist community in Denmark comprises a number of online and in-person networks and groups. Their degree of hierarchy, structure and membership requirements ranges from fixed admission procedures and established leadership structures to informal and leaderless communities.

CTA assesses that Danish right-wing extremist organizations have strengthened their international connections, which may lead to the exchange of experience and further radicalization. Another growing trend among Danish right-wing extremists is their readiness for violence, which manifests itself in the form of an increased focus on capability building and dissemination of material inciting terrorism. This is for instance seen in online communi-



ties glorifying right-wing extremist perpetrators; in so-called Active Clubs, centred around martial arts and right-wing extremist narratives; and in relation to right-wing extremists setting up or engaging in “paedophile hunter” groups that seek out and assault individuals labelled as paedophiles.

CTA assesses that, when Danish right-wing extremists engage in communities focusing on violence, it pushes the boundaries of their acceptance of violence as a political means and increases their capability for using violence, thereby potentially raising the terrorist threat to Denmark.

CTA assesses that Denmark has also seen a rise in recent years in the number of Danish youth and minors radicalized in right-wing extremist online forums, and that this trend continues. These youth and minors often have social, mental and/or psychiatric issues and find a sense of meaning and community in right-wing extremism. Nevertheless, there have been no right-wing extremist attacks or identified attack planning in Denmark in recent years.

#### “IT WAS JUST FOR FUN”

Public officials working with cases involving young people often hear the argument that the young person’s affiliation with extremist online communities is just for fun and has nothing to do with the real world. CTA assesses that affiliation with such communities can rarely be reduced to being only for the fun of it or for real, but will typically contain elements of both. CTA also assesses that there is rarely a clear separation between the real world and the online world, as actions in one of these domains often have an effect on the other. In some cases, individuals with extremist sympathies may deliberately try to mislead the authorities by claiming that their statements were just for fun.

For example, an 18-year-old American right-wing extremist wrote in a school paper that he wanted to kill someone. When the authorities confronted him with his statement, he explained that he only meant it as a joke. He subsequently wrote in his private notes that the statement was not meant as a joke, but that he was in fact contemplating committing the acts described. On 14 May 2022, he shot and killed ten people and injured another three at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York. Whether statements made online are punishable under the terrorism provisions of the Criminal Code is always subject to a specific legal assessment.

However, one young Danish right-wing extremist affiliated with Feuerkrieg Division was sentenced, in May 2023, to five and a half years in prison for attempting to recruit another person to a terrorist organization and for facilitating terrorist activities. In March 2025, the Supreme Court issued its final judgment in the case and reduced the sentence to five years’ imprisonment. Most recently, a 29-year-old man was arrested in December 2024 on charges of promoting the terrorist organization Terrorgram through the online platform Telegram. ■

4) *Terrorgram is a right-wing extremist online network that produces, gathers and disseminates right-wing extremist propaganda online, including propaganda and material relating to right-wing extremist terrorism. Terrorgram takes inspiration from the SIEGE culture and accelerationism.*

### 2.3 Ideologies and cultures

Danish right-wing extremists take inspiration from different political and ideological agendas as well as conspiracy theories. CTA assesses that Denmark and other Western countries are home to right-wing extremist individuals and organizations operating within clearly defined ideological frameworks, including classic National Socialist organizations. In addition, there are groups, especially online, that are founded on ideologically consistent right-wing extremist beliefs but include elements that are not based on right-wing extremist ideology. One example is the so-called SIEGE culture.<sup>5</sup>

The ideologically consistent beliefs are increasingly mixed with individual, often hybrid, beliefs and communities such as the so-called gore communities. ■

#### GORE: FASCINATION WITH VIOLENCE AS A MOTIVATING FACTOR

The term gore is often used in research to describe extremely transgressive content with highly graphic depictions of real-life acts of violence, mutilation or humiliation. Thus, gore communities is a collective term for transnational online groups, networks and forums that have a fascination with violence. Gore communities are often driven by a mix of personal and ideological motives and are typically based on a world view inspired by misanthropy (hatred of humankind) and nihilism (the notion that life is meaningless). This typically manifests itself in a desire for societal collapse combined with an explicit fascination with violence, collectively resulting in transgressive actions.

In recent years, there have been a number of incidents in the West where people from gore communities have encouraged vulnerable individuals to inflict self-harm or commit suicide, or have committed sex-tortion or called for terrorist attacks.

CTA assesses that a number of gore communities share ideological beliefs and have organizational overlaps with e.g. accelerationist<sup>6</sup> right-wing extremist groups, which also strive for societal collapse. Thus, some gore communities buy into right-wing extremist ideology, while others only refer to right-wing extremist material because of its shocking effect. For the same reason, material from other extremist communities, such as decapitation videos from Islamic State, may also occasionally circulate among gore communities. In this way, gore communities exemplify the hybridization of the terrorist threat, which is blurring the distinctions between traditional categories of extremism. Communities centred around the incel culture<sup>7</sup> or school attacks are other examples of communities that are fascinated by violence and may contain ideological elements.

5) The neo-Nazi SIEGE culture believes that a total collapse of society is a necessary step towards achieving political change. This destructive mindset leads the SIEGE culture to accept a broader range of targets than traditional right-wing extremists, and the culture maintains a particular focus on using terrorism as a weapon.

6) Accelerationism is a key concept in modern right-wing extremism. The concept encapsulates the idea of saving "the white race" by accelerating societal collapse and provoking a race war using terrorism as a tool to destabilize society.

7) The term incel is an identity label adopted by a certain group of people to describe their feeling of living in involuntary celibacy. Incels gather in various online communities to share this experience.







# 03

# Left-wing extremism

## DEFINITION

Left-wing extremism is a generic term covering various political views on the far left of the political spectrum which legitimize and accept the use of violence to achieve political and ideological ends.



## SUMMARY

CTA has raised the level of the terrorist threat to Denmark posed by left-wing extremists from **minimal** to **limited**. According to CTA's terrorist threat level definitions, this is a change from "no indications of any threat" to "a potential threat". The main reason for this change is the revival of the pro-Palestinian agenda as a common cause, providing a platform for concrete action and radicalization across different factions of the Danish left-wing extremist community. In addition, left-wing extremists have in recent years been responsible for a number of violent incidents in the West. CTA assesses that the support for the pro-Palestinian agenda in parts of the population combined with a perceived need for immediate action may further legitimize acts of violence among left-wing extremists.

The threat to Denmark from left-wing extremists continues to emanate mainly from small groups inspired by anarchist and anti-fascist narratives and a core of members who are action-oriented and ready to use violence. However, hybrid communities and loose network structures centred around the pro-Palestinian agenda and the climate agenda also have a growing impact on the threat landscape. The link between current agendas and traditional left-wing extremist narratives, such as anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism, serves to expand the traditional enemy perception within the community. While previously only those perceived as right-wing extremists were regarded as the enemy, this perception has now come to include Danish politicians and businesses, which are heavily criticized in relation to the conflict in the Middle East. This makes the threat from left-wing extremists more unpredictable.

The pro-Palestinian agenda has increased mobilization and international cooperation in relation to anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist narratives across left-wing extremist communities in Europe. CTA assesses that the level of left-wing extremist activity in Europe has generally increased. Combined with more international activity relating to the pro-Palestinian agenda, this may help maintain and strengthen the left-wing extremist community in Denmark.

The most likely left-wing extremist terrorist attack involves extensive sabotage carried out by a small group, inspired by international agendas, against critical infrastructure, businesses or symbolic targets.



### 3.1 Developments in the West

In European countries with a history of considerable left-wing extremist activity, left-wing extremist violence of a more serious nature is currently on the rise. Germany has for instance seen an increase of around 20% in the number of violent incidents committed by left-wing extremists, mainly against the police. In recent years, however, politically motivated left-wing extremist violence in the West has caused no fatalities.

CTA assesses that European left-wing extremists have become more intent on targeting critical infrastructure, causing a substantial financial and economic impact. So far, this development has resulted in two major left-wing extremist attacks on critical infrastructure in Germany and France in 2024. On 5 March, an electricity pylon was set on fire in Grünheide, Germany, which had significant financial implications. On 26 July, a series of coordinated acts of sabotage were carried out against the TGV rail network in France in connection with the Paris Olympics opening ceremony. Both attacks were allegedly motivated by anarchist and anti-capitalist narratives.

In addition, international left-wing extremist narratives remain focused on anti-capitalism and anti-fascism. In line with trends in Denmark, there has also been a stronger focus on climate narratives in recent years and, after 7 October 2023, especially on the pro-Palestinian cause.

The latter has further promoted anti-imperialist and anti-war narratives among European left-wing extremists and increased mobilization and international cooperation across left-wing extremist and activist communities. CTA assesses that transnational left-wing extremist activities are generally on the rise. ■


### 3.2 Narratives and enemy perceptions

CTA assesses that the current level of public attention in Denmark to the climate agenda and the conflict in the Middle East has caused a shift in the dominant narratives of the left-wing extremist community and given momentum to the community, which has historically been devoted to both causes.

For a number of years, the community has mainly been focusing on anti-fascist and anarchist narratives, specifically in the form of actions targeting perceived right-wing extremist individuals and organizations in Denmark. However, CTA assesses that Danish left-wing extremists are, at the same time, increasingly focused on the climate agenda and the pro-Palestinian agenda. For some activist groups, the ideology of the left-wing extremist community aligns with the fight to protect the climate and/or the fight for Palestine, and these causes consequently merge with traditional left-wing extremist agendas, such as anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism. This dynamic may provide left-wing extremists with better access to activist communities engaged in legal political activities, where the extremists can use their organizational capability.

Thus, the above-mentioned causes mutually reinforce each other, thereby raising the overall potential for mobilization on the left-wing extremist scene. At the same time, the traditional enemy perceptions of the left-wing extremist community are supplemented by anger towards the government and specific private businesses, which are heavily criticized in relation to the conflict in the Middle East.

Further, CTA assesses that the pro-Palestinian agenda has played a role in uniting different factions of the left-wing extremist community and has created a platform for concrete action and radicalization.



CTA also assesses that the link between the above-mentioned causes will reinforce the legitimacy of the left-wing extremist community in certain parts of the population in the short to medium term. In the longer term, it is **possible** that the current mobilization and radicalization relating to the pro-Palestinian agenda could leave the left-wing extremist community in Denmark strengthened, with focus shifted to traditional ideological agendas, such as anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism. ■

### 3.3 Communities and activities

CTA assesses that the core of the left-wing extremist community in Denmark includes small groups who are ready to use violence and willing to take action on the basis of anarchist and anti-fascist narratives. The left-wing extremist community has a strong organizational capability, enabling them to dox and threaten political opponents and to quickly mobilize large groups for demonstrations and actions.

CTA assesses that the left-wing extremist community in Denmark increased its public presence in 2024 as a result of the attention given to the conflict in the Middle East. CTA also assesses that activities relating to this agenda have mainly been organized through large online networks that include both extremists and activists, have no clear structure or hierarchy, and bypass the traditional organizations in the left-wing extremist community.

Based on the above, CTA assesses that there is an increased risk of spontaneous acts of violence by left-wing extremists, for example during demonstrations that turn

into confrontations with political opponents or the police. Moreover, a perceived need for immediate action in relation to the pro-Palestinian agenda may intensify the readiness for violence in the community, also among individuals on the periphery, and may prompt acts of sabotage inspired by events abroad. In the short term, however, CTA assesses that Danish left-wing extremists will be less likely to target attacks at people.

CTA assesses that Danish left-wing extremists increasingly take inspiration from international agendas. Concrete cooperation with violent foreign left-wing extremists may increase the level of radicalization and readiness for violence among Danish left-wing extremists and enable recruitment of such foreign individuals for actions in Denmark.

CTA assesses that the left-wing extremist community will continue to use the climate agenda for mobilization and recruitment purposes, although the main focus is currently on the pro-Palestinian agenda. ■





# 04

# Anti-establishment extremism

## DEFINITION

Anti-establishment extremism refers to a non-ideological and often conspiracy theory-driven community that fully or partially rejects existing national and international institutions of authority, and that legitimizes and accepts the use of violence to achieve political ends.





## SUMMARY

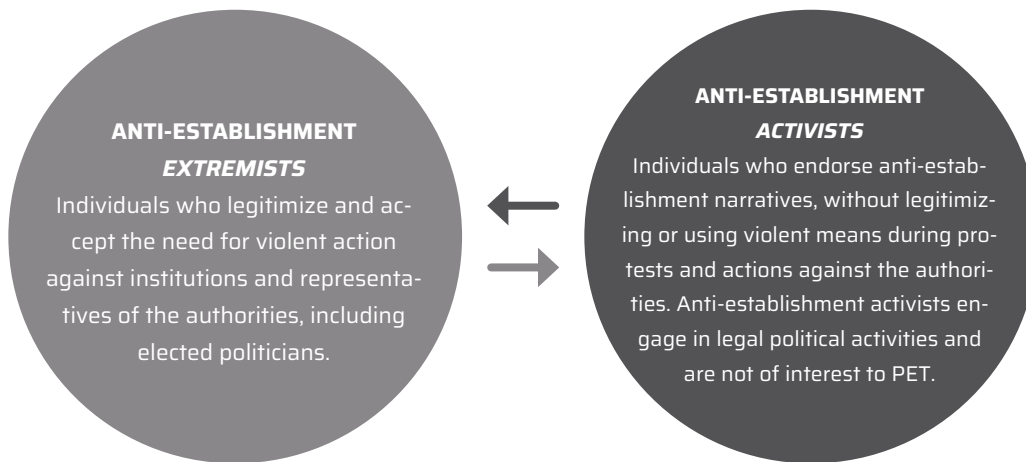
CTA assesses that the terrorist threat to Denmark from anti-establishment extremists remains at the level of **limited**. This is mainly due to the anti-establishment extremist community's strong online structures and radicalized individuals who may potentially be mobilized for violent action on the basis of conspiracy beliefs coupled with topical issues in Danish society.

The Danish anti-establishment community is currently dominated by a number of influential figures, or radicalizers, who are inspired by conspiracy theories and have a large number of followers on mainstream online platforms, such as Facebook and X. These radicalizers seek to act as informal leaders of the community and are not necessarily ready to use violence. Nevertheless, they use their position to continuously create and disseminate threat-inducing narratives. These narratives may, in the short term, influence susceptible individuals to commit acts of violence and, in the long term, they may undermine democracy and social cohesion.

Although issues relating to the COVID-19 pandemic continue to serve as points of reference, the community takes an opportunistic approach in terms of finding new causes and focus areas. These are all based on a strong distrust of the authorities and the belief that a secret elite is seeking to gain control over and exploit the population. Such conspiracy beliefs have increasingly led to sect-like tendencies within the Danish anti-establishment community, resembling the behaviour previously seen in the so-called sovereign citizen movements. These tendencies manifest themselves in an increased interest in creating parallel societies, being self-sufficient and legally acquiring firearms. CTA assesses that these tendencies may increase the threat to public officials who approach radicalized individuals at their homes and/or their perceived preserves.

CTA assesses that, due to the opportunistic behaviour of anti-establishment extremists, the threat from and activity level in the anti-establishment community may be affected by a wide range of international and national events. The fragmented nature of the community has traditionally been a mitigating factor, and CTA assesses that it will continue to be so in the coming year.

The most likely form of terrorist attack in Denmark by anti-establishment extremists is an attack carried out by a lone actor or a small group influenced by threat-inducing narratives. CTA assesses that the most likely targets are individuals such as politicians, public officials and experts, or institutions exposed in a threat-inducing narrative.



Since both groups take an interest in the same narratives, there is some level of interaction and overlap between them. CTA therefore refers to both groups collectively as **THE ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT COMMUNITY**

### 4.1 Developments in the West

CTA assesses that the number of anti-establishment extremist attacks in the West declined from 2023 to 2024. The attacks carried out in the last two years share some common characteristics, as all of them targeted perceived public officials and were motivated by conspiracy beliefs about the abuse of power by the authorities. The targets of the attacks reflect a growing trend in the West towards politicians, public officials and experts being subjected to intimidation and threats. Moreover, a number of people associated with the Dutch sovereign citizen movement were arrested in the Netherlands in April and July 2024 for planning acts of violence against specific politicians.

In addition, 2024 saw multiple violent protests in Europe triggered by discontent over matters such as EU climate laws and a perceived unjust financial pressure on farm-



ers. Although these movements hold broader appeal than the anti-establishment extremist community, the community seeks to use the momentum and media coverage of these protests to promote anti-elite conspiracy theories about the state and an evil elite. This elite is claimed to include international organizations, such as the UN and WHO, and national authorities, which are jointly attempting to enslave and oppress the population. Anti-establishment extremists often refer to these conspiracy theories as a class struggle between “the people” and “the elite”. CTA assesses that the community seeks to exploit this dynamic in all areas with potential for conflict between groups of citizens and the authorities.

CTA assesses that trends abroad, especially in the United States, have the potential to influence the developments in the anti-establishment community in Denmark. ■

### POLARIZATION AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES

In recent years, there has been a growing trend towards increased polarization in the West. A concrete example is the deepening political divide in the United States, where people are showing more readiness and sympathy for political violence; a trend that is mirrored in two Danish surveys on politically motivated violence from 2023 and 2024<sup>8</sup>.

This creates a situation where political disagreement can lead to the perception of fellow citizens, including politicians and public officials, as enemies that must be fought. Conspiracy theories appeal to this line of thinking, as such theories divide the world into good and evil, thereby further increasing polarization.

The Danish anti-establishment community is continuously influenced by political trends in the United States. One reason for this is that people in the anti-establishment community are keen users of alternative international, often American, news sources due to a general distrust of public authorities and traditional news media. This provides the basis for an echo chamber fostering an “us versus them” mentality among Danish anti-establishment extremists, potentially leading to the legitimization of violence.

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8) The Finn Nørgaard Association, “Barometer for Politisk Vold 2023” and “Barometer for Politisk Vold 2024” (only available in Danish).

## HARASSMENT OF POLITICIANS

Harassment of politicians, both in person and online, remains a dominant trend in the West. Some of this harassment comes from people with serious mental disorders, whose extreme obsession with a specific cause or public figure may lead to acts of violence.

In this context, CTA assesses that when politicians are threatened in public or physically confronted, also in their private sphere, this is a contributing factor to the spread of threat-inducing narratives. Threat-inducing narratives are narratives that indirectly legitimize violence, for example by referring to the government as illegitimate, indicating that it must be punished by “the people”. These narratives can be characterized as extremist as they have the potential to incite the use of violence.

Threats and harassment of politicians thus have a short-term threat potential, as susceptible individuals may consider it legitimate to resort to violence against the relevant politician and politicians in general. The scope and nature of threats may trigger behavioural changes in the victims of the threats, who may choose to engage less in the public debate or even withdraw from politics altogether.

Harassment and threats to politicians may thus pose a long-term threat to democracy, as elected politicians may be deterred from taking on public duties and engaging in open debate for fear of the consequences; a phenomenon known as a “chilling effect”. Other public officials and experts may experience similar issues in performing their duties.

## 4.2 Communities and activities

CTA assesses that the anti-establishment community in Denmark, a few organized groups aside, can be characterized as a loosely structured network of individuals with a very low level of formal organization. The community is currently dominated by a number of radicalizers, whose seniority and high activity level in the community, online as well as in person, allow them to set the agenda. These radicalizers are not necessarily ready to use violence, but they use their position to continuously create and spread threat-inducing narratives that indirectly legitimize violence and that may thus indirectly impact the threat. An indirect threat impact means that there is no explicit incitement to violence. However, the total amount of threats and substantial negative exposure on social media may potentially serve to single out individuals as targets of attack.

Since threat-inducing narratives are often posted in mainstream online forums, they have a wide reach and a short-term potential to influence susceptible individuals to commit acts of violence. In the long term, they may undermine the fundamental pillars of democracy and social cohesion.

In addition to the wider anti-establishment community, small sovereign citizen movements are also found in Denmark. Sovereign citizen movement is a collective term for groups and individuals who, for different reasons and with different motives, refuse to recognize the legitimacy and authority of the state and the authorities. Consequently, they feel no obligation to abide by the law, and they produce their own legal documents, such as passports and driving licences. CTA assesses that the terminology and behaviour of sovereign citizen movements have increasingly spread to the wider anti-establishment community, which may contribute to legitimizing acts of violence.



Today, the extremist part of the anti-establishment community in Denmark is primarily active online, where most recruitment and mobilization activities take place. However, CTA assesses that the community will increasingly attempt to create in-person groups as a supplement to its online activities. One reason for this is that physical manifestations are seen as more effective, because they serve as tangible proof of the community's existence and thus the discontent of "the people". At the same time, it is a way to avoid the censorship that the community believes is practised on mainstream social media.

In parts of the anti-establishment community, focus on offline activities evolves into sect-like behaviour and a desire to create parallel societies, separated from the rest of Danish society. Many anti-establishment extremists believe that a collapse of society is imminent and feel the need to be able to mount resistance in a crisis situation due to their lack of trust in the abilities of the authorities. This desire for resistance manifests itself in so-called defensive prepping, focusing on matters such as self-sufficiency and getting a hunting licence.


The Danish authorities encourage prepping in response to international instability. Prepping in itself is not problematic, but combined with a conspiratorial view of the world, CTA assesses that it may in some cases contribute to the creation of parallel societies and capability building, e.g. in the form of acquiring firearms.

CTA assesses that sect-like tendencies in conjunction with capability building may increase the threat to public officials, such as police officers, whose work requires them to approach the individuals concerned at their homes and/or their perceived preserves. ■

#### ANTI-SEMITISM AND HYBRIDIZATION

Parts of the anti-establishment community remain focused on conspiracy narratives regarding the existence of a Jewish elite. The ongoing conflict in the Middle East has, in some segments of the anti-establishment extremist community, exacerbated anti-Semitic enemy perceptions involving Jewish elites controlling the world, thus creating overlap with right-wing extremism. Nevertheless, the two communities maintain differing focuses, as anti-Semitism among right-wing extremists is mainly rooted in issues of race.

For this reason, CTA assesses that anti-Semitic views may pave the way for some anti-establishment extremists to join right-wing extremist communities or hybrid communities with right-wing extremists, but without the two communities merging. It is **possible** that, in connection with the conflict in the Middle East, anti-Semitism among anti-establishment extremists may serve as a bridge to pro-Palestinian groups and individuals.



**05**

# The terrorist threat to Greenland and the Faroe Islands





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## 5.1 The terrorist threat to Greenland

The terrorist threat to Greenland remains at the level of **minimal**. CTA is not aware that derived effects of the conflict in the Middle East have had an impact on the terrorist threat to Greenland over the past year. Moreover, CTA is not familiar with any other matters that have affected the terrorist threat to Greenland over the past year.

It is **likely** that the trend in recent years towards hybridization of the terrorist threat, increasing online activity in extremist communities and a growing number of young extremist actors may affect the threat landscape in Greenland in the same way that it affects other parts of the Danish Realm.

However, CTA assesses that violent extremism is less widespread in Greenland than in Denmark. Yet, extremist propaganda may still influence individuals in Greenland to commit acts of violence.

CTA assesses that the easier access to weapons and explosives in Greenland, compared to other parts of the Danish Realm, might increase the risk of an individual carrying out a high-impact attack. ■

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## 5.2 The terrorist threat to the Faroe Islands

The terrorist threat to the Faroe Islands remains at the level of **minimal**. CTA is not aware that derived effects of the conflict in the Middle East have had an impact on the terrorist threat to the Faroe Islands over the past year. Moreover, CTA is not familiar with any other matters that have affected the terrorist threat to the Faroe Islands over the past year.

It is **likely** that the trend in recent years towards hybridization of the terrorist threat, increasing online activity in extremist communities and a growing number of young extremist actors may affect the threat landscape in the Faroe Islands in the same way that it affects other parts of the Danish Realm.

However, CTA assesses that violent extremism is less widespread in the Faroe Islands than in Denmark. Yet, extremist propaganda may still influence individuals living in or travelling to the Faroe Islands to commit acts of violence. This may be triggered by political single issues, such as animal welfare. ■

# Modus operandi

CTA assesses that terrorists' choice of modus operandi is determined by a number of factors, including trends in propaganda and on online platforms, the perpetrator's capability and access to resources, the intended target and inspiration from other attacks. The capability in extremist communities may be enhanced through recruitment or radicalization of key figures with legitimate access to facilities, resources or information.

The following sections describe the modi operandi that CTA assesses to be most likely in connection with a terrorist attack in Denmark.

## 6.1 Easily accessible means, firearms and improvised explosive devices



Terrorist attacks with easily accessible means can be carried out spontaneously or following a very short planning phase. In Denmark, easily accessible means mainly include bladed weapons, bludgeons, incendiary devices and vehicles. Attacks with easily accessible means may cause major harm.

CTA assesses that there are extremists in Denmark with access and capability to use firearms in terrorist attacks. However, their access to firearms is subject to a number of barriers.

According to CTA's assessment, there are extremists in Denmark with the capability to make small improvised explosive devices and use these for terrorist attacks. Instructions and manuals on how to make various explosives and improvised explosive devices are available online and can be used by people with no prior training.

Production of improvised explosives is subject to a number of barriers, including restrictions on the sale of substances used to manufacture the explosives.

Some criminal networks in Denmark have contacts that enable procurement of factory-made explosives. Increased availability of such explosives may ease the production of improvised explosive devices for potential terrorist use.

CTA assesses that radicalized individuals who have received weapons training in a conflict zone such as Syria, Iraq or Ukraine, or who have knowledge of weapons from military service, shooting clubs, criminal networks or elsewhere will be able to carry out high-impact attacks. ■

## 6.2 Improvised firearms



Developments in 3D printing technology have made the manufacturing of improvised firearms far more accessible than previously. This has made it possible to bypass traditional barriers set up to control the access to firearms. Several online communities focusing on this topic have emerged. In these communities, files and instructions are developed, designed and shared. With these files and commercially available 3D printers, people can manufacture their own firearms and/or components for factory-made firearms. The shooting of the UnitedHealthcare CEO in the United States in December 2024, where the perpetrator used a home-made and partially 3D printed firearm, is the most recent example of this trend.

Despite the files and instructions circulating online, CTA assesses that certain barriers still exist that prevent individuals from manufacturing and using improvised firearms, including the acquisition of ammunition. However, CTA assesses that the continuous technological development in this area will gradually make it easier and cheaper to acquire and use improvised firearms. ■

## 6.3 Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)



For a number of years, weaponized UAVs have been used in and around conflict zones such as Syria, Iraq, Ukraine, Yemen, Lebanon and Gaza, and militant groups in these areas have demonstrated proficiency in the use of UAVs in attacks.

CTA is not aware of any terrorist attacks in the West carried out with weaponized UAVs, but CTA has information about foiled attacks in the West potentially involving the use of UAVs. In Denmark, final judgment was passed in 2021 against three individuals who were sentenced to imprisonment for ten years, four and a half years, and three years, respectively, in a case concerning shipment of UAV equipment to Islamic State in Syria.

Weaponizing a UAV for use in a terrorist attack in the West requires financial resources, technical know-how and access to explosives. However, CTA assesses that the continuous technological development in this area will gradually make it easier and cheaper to acquire UAVs with the aim of weaponizing them. ■



## 6.4 Chemical and biological agents



CTA assesses that there is limited capability among extremists in Denmark to weaponize biological agents or carry out chemical attacks using means other than unprocessed substances. However, various extremist propaganda publications have recurrently focused on the use of chemical agents, and militant Islamists in the West have occasionally attempted to manufacture various chemical substances. CTA assesses that there are extremists in Denmark who would be able to produce certain toxins suitable for use in a simple biological attack. However, the execution of an attack would also require insight into efficient means of dispersion of the agent.

In 2023, a person was arrested on suspicion of attempting to carry out a militant Islamist attack in Germany using ricin and cyanide. This illustrates the continued interest from militant Islamists in carrying out attacks using chemical and biological agents. However, CTA is not aware of such agents having been successfully used to carry out terrorist attacks in the West. ■



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