

RECRUITERS BEHIND BARS

Prisons have proven to be key drivers in the terrorist radicalization and recruitment process. For example, *Charlie Hebdo* attacker Cherif Kouachi and kosher supermarket gunman Amedy Coulibaly met in France's Fleury-Mérogis prison, where they were reportedly radicalized and cultivated by fellow inmate and failed terrorist plotter Djamel Beghal.

As a result, officials are taking action to disrupt and isolate incarcerated recruiters. Moroccan recruiter [Khalid Zerkani](#), for example, was isolated from the rest of Belgium's prison population in April 2016 after it was revealed that he had ties to at least 22 terrorism-linked individuals. Before Zerkani's 2014 arrest, he had reportedly groomed notorious terrorist recruits, including the November 2015 Paris attacks suspects [Abdelhamid Abaaoud](#) and [Salah Abdeslam](#), as well as March 2016 Brussels bomber [Najim Laachraoui](#) and suspect [Mohamed Abrini](#). British-based [Anjem Choudary](#), convicted on charges of supporting terrorism, is reportedly linked to at least 80 people implicated in terrorism-related offenses.

These cases underscore the fact that the danger posed by terrorists does not always end upon their arrest. Extremists such as Zerkani and Choudary pose an ongoing risk to their fellow inmates and, through them, the general population.



Khalid Zerkani is a Moroccan recruiter, facilitator, and propagandist serving a 15-year terror sentence in Belgium. Among Zerkani's suspected terrorist recruits are November 2015 Paris attackers [Abdelhamid Abaaoud](#) and [Salah Abdeslam](#), as well as March 2016 Brussels bomber [Najim Laachraoui](#) and suspect [Mohamed Abrini](#).

For more on Zerkani, see CEP's [Khalid Zerkani](#) report.

Anjem Choudary is a British cleric and lawyer, and the founder of the banned terror group al-Muhajiroun. In July 2016, British authorities convicted Choudary and his associate [Mohammed Mizanur Rahman](#) with promoting support for [ISIS](#) and sentenced them each to five-and-a-half years in prison. Choudary is reportedly tied to more than 80 terrorist-related cases in the United Kingdom and Europe. Due to U.K. probationary law, Choudary is scheduled for release in October 2018, only halfway through his sentence. British authorities have declared that Choudary will be subject to heavy surveillance upon his release.



For more on Choudary, see CEP's [Anjem Choudary](#) report.



Mohammed Mizanur Rahman is a U.K.-based propagandist for [ISIS](#). In July 2016, British authorities convicted Rahman and his associate [Anjem Choudary](#) with promoting support for [ISIS](#) and sentenced them each to five-and-a-half years in prison.

For more on Rahman, see CEP's [Mohammed Mizanur Rahman](#) report.

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PROPAGANDISTS, RECRUITERS, AND SPOKESPERSONS

Abu Izzadeen, born Trevor Brooks, is an Islamist propagandist and radical cleric who has been imprisoned in the United Kingdom for inciting and fundraising for terrorism, and for his association with radical Islamist groups Al Ghurabaa and al-Muhajiroun. Izzadeen has used Twitter to praise [ISIS](#) and support well-known jihadists such as [Abu Rumaysah](#) and [Omar Bakri Muhammad](#).

For more on Abu Izzadeen see CEP's [Abu Izzadeen](#) report.



Musa Cerantonio is an Australian Islamist preacher who has inspired numerous foreign fighters to join jihadist groups in Syria. According to the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR), Cerantonio is “an outspoken cheerleader for ISIS” and one of two English-speaking “spiritual authorities” influencing Westerners to fight abroad. Australian police arrested Cerantonio and four others in May 2016 for allegedly preparing to sail to Indonesia with the intent of reaching Syria.

For more on Cerantonio, see CEP's [Musa Cerantonio](#) report.

Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, real name Assem Barqawi, is considered one of the most prominent Salafist figures in the world. Al-Maqdisi, who has been in and out of Jordanian prison, was a mentor to deceased al-Qaeda in Iraq leader [Abu Musab al-Zarqawi](#). Al-Maqdisi was released from Jordanian prison in February 2015, and is today believed to maintain support for the [Nusra Front](#).

For more on al-Maqdisi, see CEP's [Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi](#) report.

