

I S S U E 2

# thewhite papers



M A R C H 2 0 1 5

## Understanding Jihadists

In their Own Words

**QUANTUM**

# **Understanding Jihadists**

In their Own Words

# Introduction

Tackling the question of ISIS necessitates a thorough understanding of the psychology of its fighting force and their state of mind prior to recruitment. Literature on the organization has focused on the “who, when, and how,” leaving much to be desired with regard to the “why,” which, when it is addressed, tends to fall short in terms of personal testimonies of a sizable sample of ISIS fighters. Instead, most published accounts rely on a few isolated and/or unrepresentative encounters with ISIS detainees and defectors at best, or else on generic analyses of terrorism and counter-radicalization experts.

This White Paper edition aims at filling these gaps while also revisiting some of the more dubious narratives on ISIS’ *raison d’être* and *état d’âme*. It does not claim to be absolute or exhaustive of the full realities. Nonetheless, its relevance rests on the breadth and originality of its content. All of the findings are based on one-on-one interviews with ISIS’ and other extremist organizations’ fighters in Syria and Iraq, who are currently either detained, defected or still operating. The interviews themselves were accessed mainly through television programs on Saudi and Iraqi channels, *inter alia*, that were later transcribed into an academic categorization matrix and coding tool from which conclusions were derived.

The forty-nine sampled fighters were profiled into nine categories of seekers and categorized by geographical origin – external fighters, both Western and Arab; and internal fighters, operating in their countries of origin, i.e., Iraqis in Iraq. In addition, factors influencing their livelihood and catalysts triggering their recruitment were compiled based directly on their own testimonies. Finally, the recruitment journey traversed by the fighters was clustered based on repetitive mentions from which common denominators resulted.

The outcomes both corroborate past givens and introduce new ones.

A majority of fighters were identified as “status” and “identity” seekers driven by money and recognition, on the one hand, and by a construct providing a transnational identity or offering a sense of belonging on the other. Geographically, Western external fighters were firstly “identity seekers” and secondarily “thrill seekers” in search of a restyled ‘Call of Duty’ narrative. Arab external fighters were predominantly “thrill seekers,” while internal fighters were chiefly “status seekers” as well as “revenge seekers”, striving to inflict harm on the persecutors of their oppressed grouping.

“Group” and “Ideological” factors were mentioned as the prevailing factors influencing the livelihood of the sampled fighters. These relate to a collective identity and an identification within a group just as they touch on religious worldviews and duty in tandem with the inspiration of influential figures. Likewise, catalysts triggering recruitment across the various categories and profiles of fighters were largely identified as a calling “in defense of Sunnis” and as a path “in the service of Jihad.”

In terms of the fighters’ recruitment journey, a collective diagnosis reveals that external fighters, both Western and Arab, adopt an almost identical path in their enrollment. Such recruitment is primarily initiated at the early stages by “online violent content” and to a much lesser extent by “religious preachers”. Internal fighters, on the other hand, were lured into joining extremist organizations like ISIS from the onset mainly by “inmates” while serving their sentences in Iraqi jails.

Notwithstanding the different drivers influencing the recruitment of external and internal fighters, one point of commonality between them is that both categories adopt Turkey as their “illegal” crossing point into Syria. Turkey as such, becomes an ideal country of transit for Jihadists eying their final destination in Syria and Iraq.

Ultimately, this White Paper edition demystifies some existing theories on ISIS & co. For one, Islam is not the full side of the story. As the wording of the fighters suggest, Islam is a means to an end and not the end itself. Alternative, earthly pursuits seem to be the underlying end for a majority of sampled fighters. Second, ISIS is not a monolithic entity driven by ideology alone. It seems the allure of individual power and riches instigated by a context of marginalization and deprivation overrides the collective rallying behind a self-styled Ummah chronicle.

One hopes that upcoming literature on ISIS (and its cohorts) focuses more on a deeper understanding of the idea behind it, so one can understand, and hence, address it better.

# Glossary of Terms

## Fighter Categories

**Internal:** This category includes fighters who were recruited by a Jihadist organization in the same country where they resided (mainly Iraq) and then conducted operations in that same country.

**External:** This category includes fighters who were residing in countries other than Iraq or Syria upon radicalization and/or recruitment. It is divided into two sub-categories, as follows;

**External Arab Fighters:** Fighters who come from Arab Middle Eastern countries to join Jihadist organizations in Iraq or Syria.

**External Western Fighters:** Fighters who come from the US or Europe to join Jihadist organizations in Iraq or Syria.

**Self:** How the subjects perceive themselves including personal descriptions of their qualities, preferences and positive traits.

**Self-:** Primarily reflects the subjects' own limitations; what they lack (in their perspective) as well as their perceived weaknesses and personal obstacles that keep them from attaining their full potential.

**Non-Self+:** What is perceived by the subjects as a positive value or ideal that is yet to be acquired.

**Non-Self-:** What is perceived by the subjects as a negative value, or an obstacle in relation to others or to the environment.

## Seekers Definitions

**Status Seekers:** See a world that does not understand or appreciate them as they perceive themselves. They want to improve their social standing; their main drives are money, employment and a certain recognition by others around them.

**Identity Seekers:** Need the structure, rules, and perspective that come from belonging to a group, because belonging defines them, their role, their friends, and their interaction with society. They often feel like outsiders in their initial unfamiliar/unintelligible environment and seek to identify with another group. In this context, the “Islamic Ummah” provides a pre-packaged transnational identity.

**Revenge Seekers:** Consider themselves to be part of an oppressed group, and thus want to inflict harm on their oppressors and anyone who might support them (oppressors).

**Redemption Seekers:** Perceive their engagement in Jihadi enterprise as a vindication from previous sinful ways of living.

**Responsibility Seekers:** Value family ties and want to preserve their family’s well being and prosperity by fulfilling the role of the provider/bread winner.

**Thrill Seekers:** Are filled with energy and drive. They want to prove their potential/power by accomplishing an arduous task or surviving a harrowing adventure. They are mostly in it for the opportunity to engage in action while enjoying a certain level of impunity for their acts.

**Ideology Seekers:** Are mainly in search of a certain world view that they can identify with and the “Islamic Ummah” provides a pre-packaged transnational ideology. Unlike the identity seekers who wish to “belong” to a social group, the ideology seekers aim at “imposing” their world view on at least one other group.

**Justice Seekers:** Consider what is happening in the conflict areas as a major injustice and feel they have a certain inner calling to reverse this injustice. Unlike the revenge seekers, the justice seekers’ “raison d’être” ceases to exist once the perceived injustice stops.

**Death Seekers:** Have most probably suffered from a significant trauma/loss in their lives and consider death as the only way out with a reputation of martyr instead of someone who has committed suicide.

*NB: Definitions were directly derived from the 49 interviewed fighters.*

## Factors Definitions

**Personal Factors:** Factors that are directly related to the fighter's own individual context.

- Personal Needs
- Personal Context

**Group Factors:** Factors that are directly related to the individual fighter's identification with a group; an identity in addition to a group dynamics dimension related to recruitment and peer influence.

- Collective Identity
- Peer Network

**Community Factors:** Factors related to the integration of the individual fighter in their original social context; including the social acceptance of the individual's values, norms and way of life as well as the individual's acceptance of the values, norms and way of life of their original society.

- Marginality
- Insularity

**Socio-Political Factors:** Factors related to the individual's perception of the different events outside their direct environment; and how these events affect them as well as the group with whom they identify.

- Grievances
- Global Incidents

**Ideological Factors:** Factors that are related to the fighter through which the individual perceives their reality, e.g., world view, religious duty, in addition to influential figures that contribute to the individual's perception and understanding of their reality.

- Exclusive Authority
- Influential Ideologue

**Catalysts:** Catalysts are the triggers and drives that were mentioned by the fighters that led them to decide to join the fighting.

# Scope and Methodology

The methodology used for this study is an ego-ecological psycho-contextual analysis developed by Prof. Marisa Zavalloni. The methodology starts from the premise that whenever words or thoughts about the world are produced or received, something else is activated at the periphery of consciousness as background thinking. And by displaying and analyzing the content of the affective and representational elements that are activated as background thinking, we can construct an approximate model of the individual (self) in transaction with his social ecology.

The specificity and originality of the ego-ecological approach mainly reside in the ability to identify for each individual and group the keywords used to make sense of, interpret and evaluate reality, and then see how these words are re-appropriated and reinterpreted by a person based on a history or a project.

In this study we have analyzed the discourse of 49 extremist fighters by identifying keywords they used to express:

- How they perceive themselves (Self)
- What are their own limits ( Self-)
- What they consider as positive (Non-Self+)
- What they consider as negative (Non-Self -)

18 of those are external fighters divided as follows:

- Western external fighters (9), of whom 1 is a returnee, 2 are still active in Syria, 4 have been caught and 2 are dead (1 suicide bomber and another died in the period following his interview)
- Arab external fighters (9), of whom 8 are returnees and 1 was caught.

The 31 remaining are internal fighters who were all caught prior to their interviews.

The external and internal fighters' interviews are based on one-on-one interviews taken from the following TV shows: 'Houmoumouna' (Arabic for our concerns) همومنا on Saudia 1, 'Fi Qabdat al-Qanoun' في قبضة القانون (Arabic for in the grip of law) on al-Iraqiya, CBS news documentary, 'Ma Wara' al-Hadas' ما وراء الحدث, on the Tunisian channel Wataniya 2, France 2 documentary, The Guardian documentary, Labas on the Tunisian channel G2, Vice News documentary, BFMTV documentary, ABC15 Arizona documentary and BBC Newsnight documentary.

## Number of fighters

49

## Age bracket

18-43 years

## Countries

KSA – Iraq – Tajikistan – Tunisia – France – Netherlands – Denmark – United Kingdom – United States

## Organizations

ISIS – al-Nusra Front – Ahrar al-Sham – Former FSA members

## Overall Time

18h 34min

## Timeframe

2013-2015

## Categories

- Returnee: 9
- Caught: 36
- Active: 2
- Dead: 2

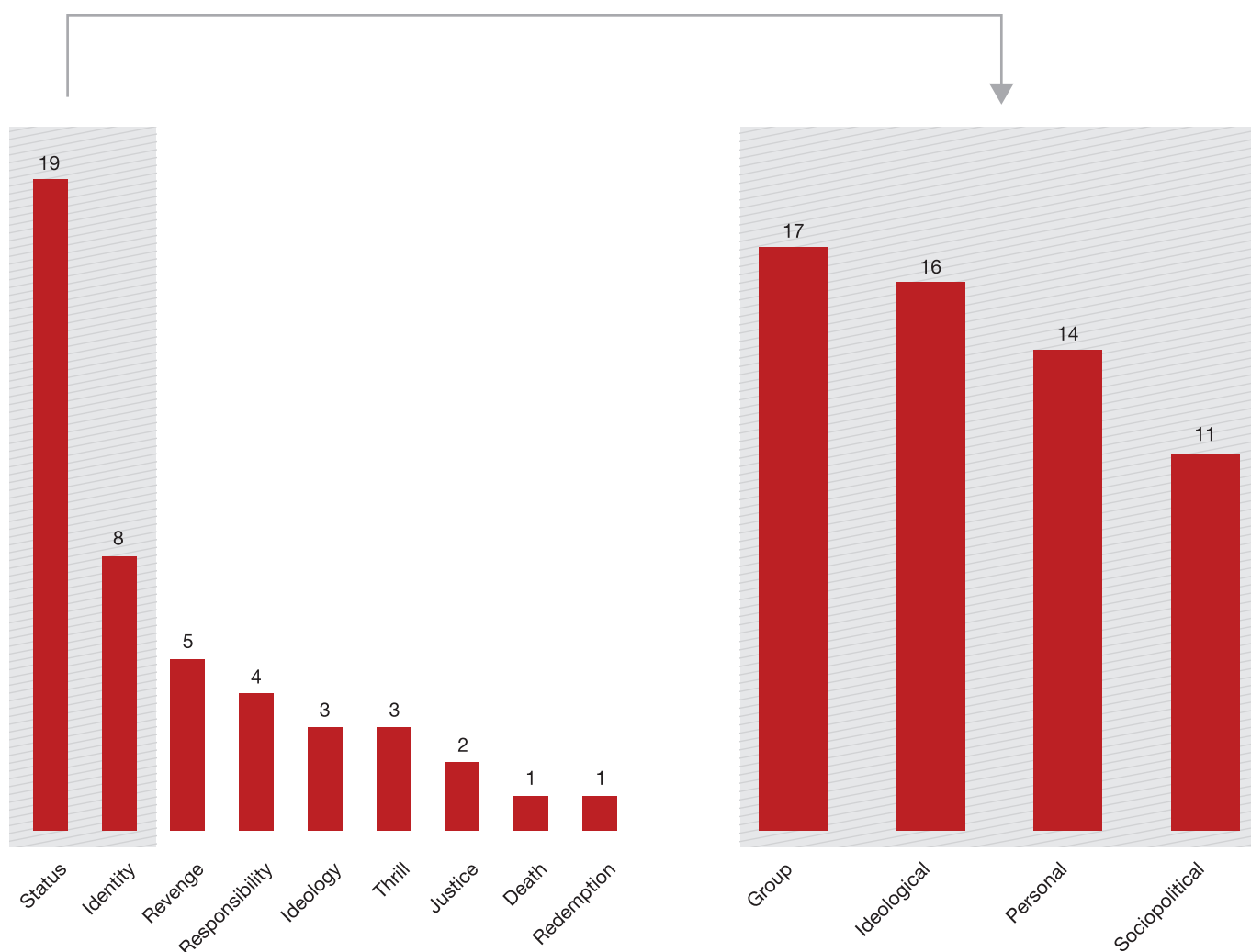
# Key Findings

## 1. Seekers Analysis: Looking to prove themselves

9 profiles of seekers were identified. The majority seek status and identity. This is directly related to their social standing, ranging from social insularity to group marginality.

The factors that affect the lives of status and identity seekers are diverse, but usually group, ideological, and sociopolitical factors overlap with personal factors.

### Factors influencing recruitment among the seekers\*



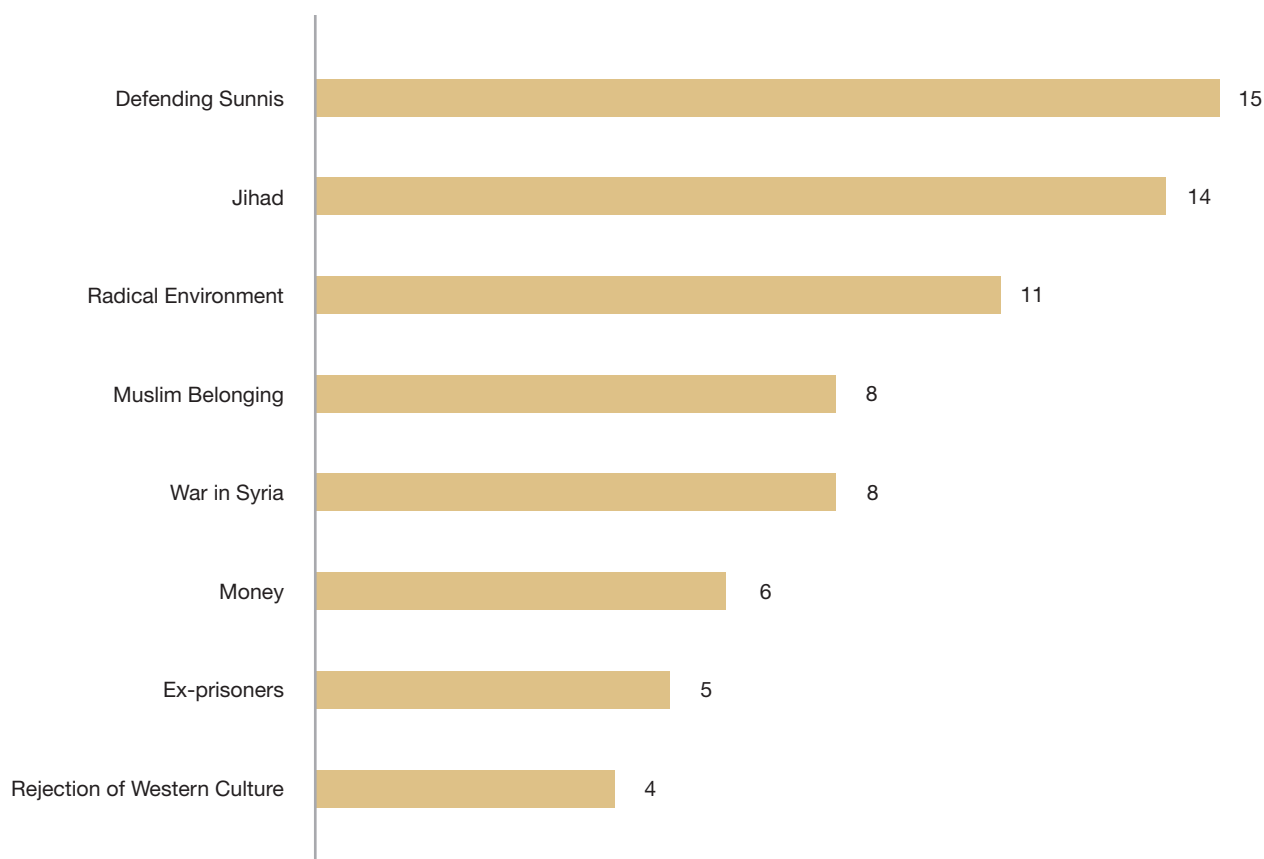
\*Numbers are based on overall mentions where certain interviewed fighters have designated at least one variable that contributed to their recruitment.



## 2. Catalysts: Defensive Jihad

The catalysts or triggers mentioned by fighters are also diverse. They praise their jihadi mission (14 mentions) to defend Sunni Muslims (15 mentions) but also to defend their religious identity (Muslim belonging: 8 mentions) (Muslim belonging: 8 mentions)

### Top Catalysts\*

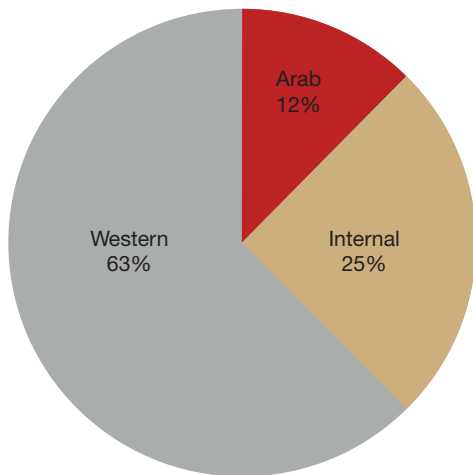


\*Numbers are based on overall mentions where certain interviewed fighters have designated at least one variable that contributed to their recruitment.

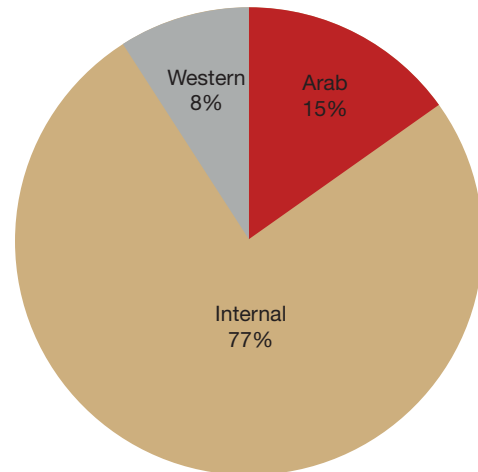
### 3. External and internal fighters want very different things

Most identity seekers are Western external fighters (63%). Most thrill seekers are Arab external fighters who leave their home countries (67%). Status and revenge seekers chiefly comprise internal fighters (77% and 80%, respectively).

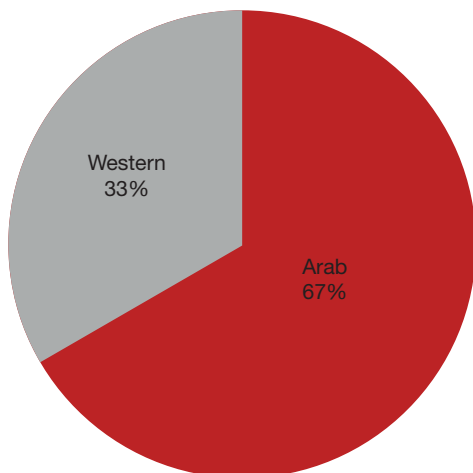
**Identity Seekers**



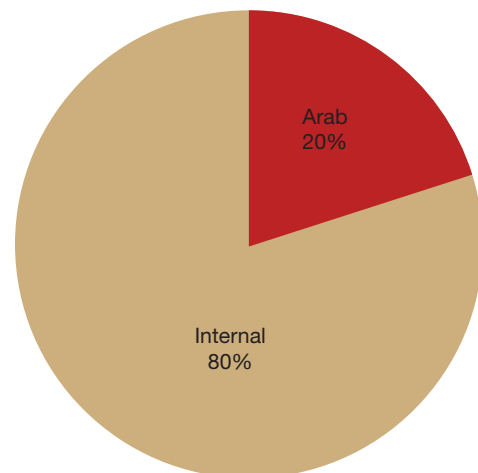
**Status Seekers**



**Thrill Seekers**



**Revenge Seekers**



## Understanding Jihadists

Western

Arab

Internal

# Highlights

### Western External Fighters: Confident naïfs with an axe to grind

#### Self (5 of 9 fighters)

Western external fighters are driven by an emotional context. They make fewer mentions of their own Muslim identity than their Arab counterparts.

#### Self- (3 of 9 fighters)

They are generally not inclined to self-criticism. Their self-esteem is relatively high as they are going to fight. They share an evident lack of knowledge of their receiving environment, which can make them feel afraid. It is important to expose them to the injustice/atrocities that ISIS is creating so they are less likely to support and, ultimately, join them.

#### Non-Self+ (7 of 9 fighters)

Religion is used as a key justification and pretext for their decision to join the fight. Also, like Arab fighters, they seem to have had religious values from before but only decided they need to act on them in light of the current context.

#### Non-Self- (8 of 9 fighters)

Their argumentation is based on their discomfort with Western values and culture, as well as the killing of innocent people in the conflict areas (receiving countries).

As such, they cannot be addressed as Muslims (through a religious approach) but instead via an approach based on sound reasoning.

#### Self

How they perceive themselves

#### Self-

Own limits

#### Non-Self+

What is perceived as a positive value

#### Non-Self-

What is perceived as a negative value, an obstacle in relation to others or the environment

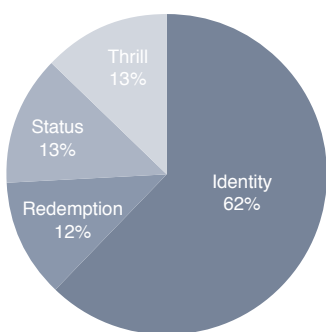
# Understanding Jihadists

Western	Arab	Internal
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## Western External Fighters

There is no one story but, rather, many of them. What draws most aspiring jihadists to Syria is a search for meaning and respect. The majority of them are facing an identity crisis. Some of them are religious, but others are not. The transnational Islamic identity (Ummah) offers them a pre-packaged identity in a context of anti-Western culture. Some are driven by humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people, but others are seeking recognition and thrill or are committed to the ISIS project.

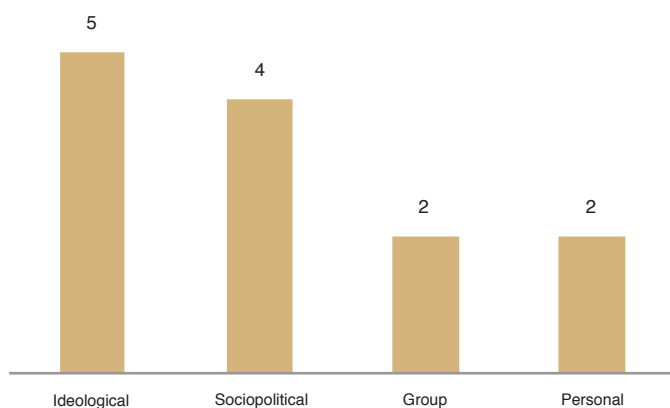
### Seekers Profile



*"I miss the food, hot water, electricity. But the West is filled with hypocrisy"*  
**Yilmaz – Identity seeker**

*"We come here, we live in honor, then why would you go back to prison?"*  
**Amer Deghayes – Identity seeker**

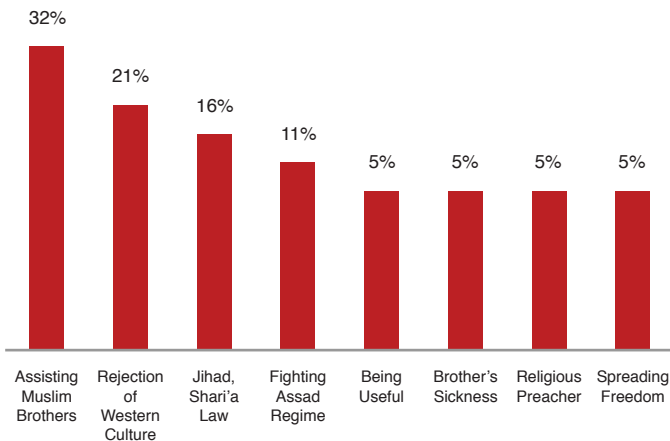
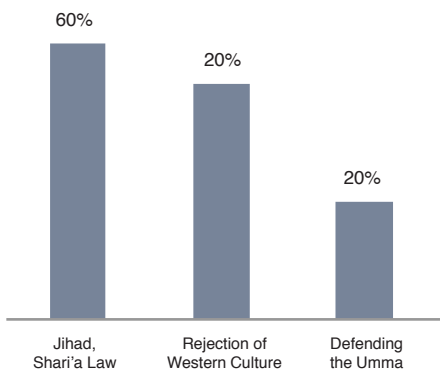
### Influencing Factors\*



### Influencing Catalysts

*"I chose Jihad for the sake of Allah because Almighty Allah ordered us to fight the kuffar [infidels], to fight the fitna [internecine strife], to fight the tawagheet [tyrants] ..."*

**Abu Hureira al- Amriki – Identity seeker**



\*Numbers are based on overall mentions where certain interviewed fighters have designated at least one variable.

## Understanding Jihadists

Western	Arab	Internal
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### Arab External Fighters: Hot-headed defenders of the sect

#### Self (8 of 9 fighters)

The emotional context triggers the sensitivity of Arab external fighters. They mainly perceive themselves as Muslims who have to act accordingly.

#### Self- (4 of 9 fighters)

Despite an awareness of their lack of knowledge of Islam, or the real situation in both Syria and Iraq, Arab external fighters show a high level of readiness to act in a context of uncertainty.

#### Non-Self+ (9 of 9 fighters)

They primarily justify their actions under the pretext of religious duty.

#### Non-Self- (8 of 9 fighters)

"Fitna" (inter-Muslim killing), as well as feelings of being outsiders, are key reasons for their return to their countries.

#### Self

How they perceive themselves

#### Self-

Own limits

#### Non-Self+

What is perceived as a positive value

#### Non-Self-

What is perceived as a negative value, an obstacle in relation to others or the environment

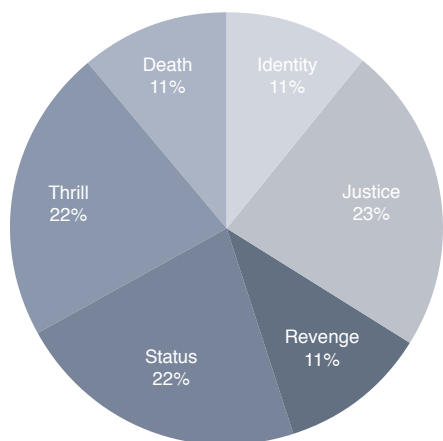
# Understanding Jihadists

Western	Arab	Internal
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## Arab External Fighters

Arab external fighters are mainly thrill and status seekers. They are influenced by sociopolitical and group factors. Assisting Muslim “brothers” and fighting the Assad regime are the most common catalysts (45%) for joining extremist organizations.

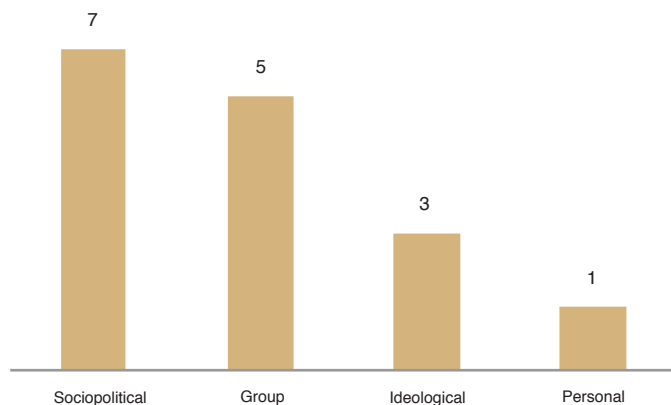
### Seekers Profile



### Influencing Factors\*

*“I wanted to send a message to the world, to come to the aid of the Syrian people who are being massacred”*

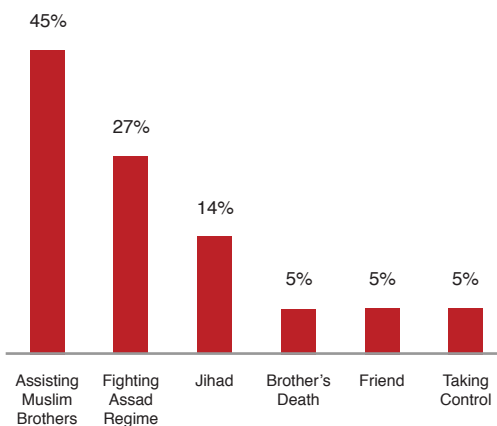
**Abu Qusai – Thrill Seeker**



### Influencing Catalysts

*“I was studying abroad, and following the news through social media. What pushed me to join was my motivation and the desire to help my Muslim brothers”*

**Mohammed Abdallah – Revenge Seeker**

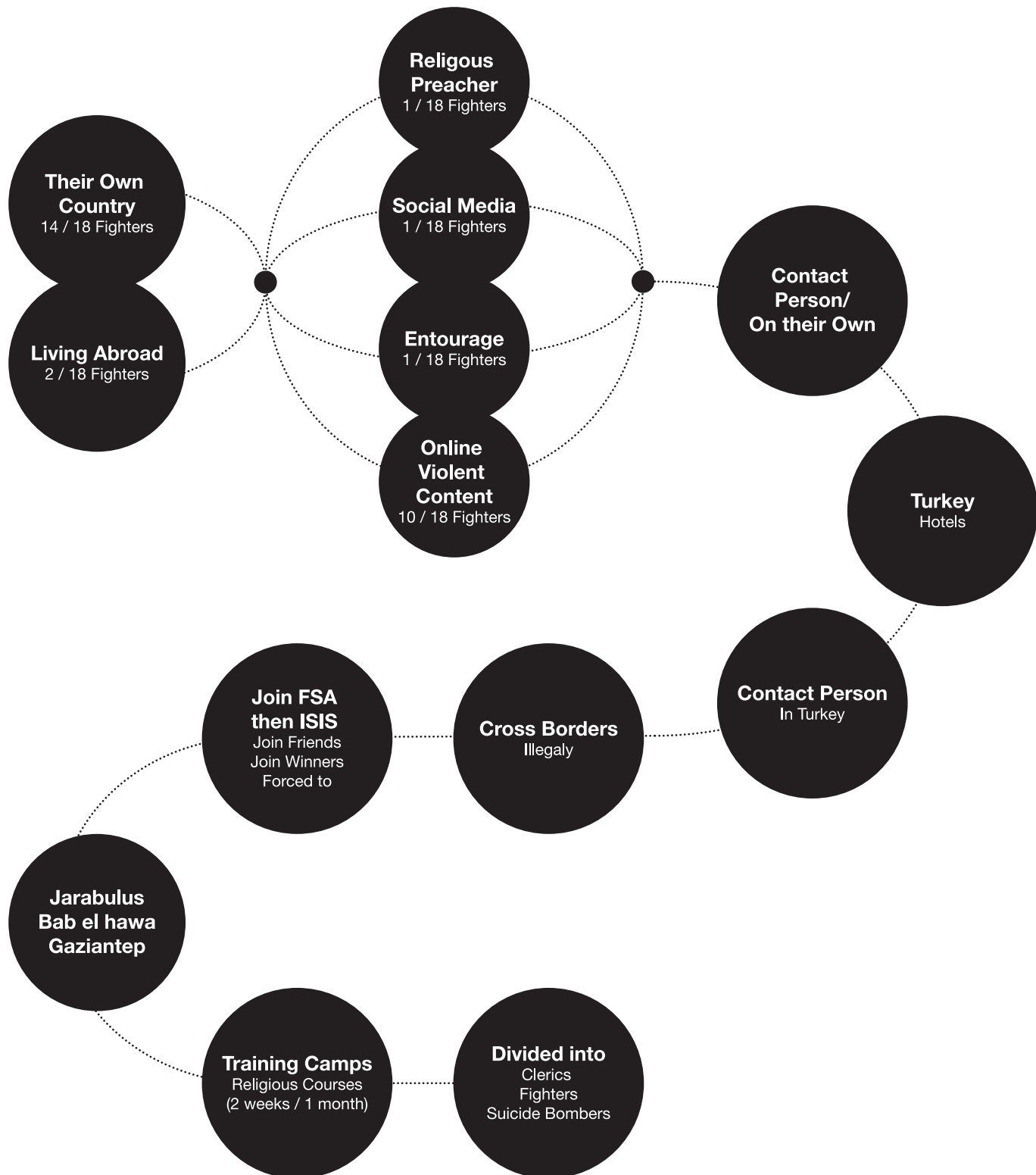


\*Numbers are based on overall mentions where certain interviewed fighters have designated at least one variable.

# Understanding Jihadists

Western	Arab	Internal
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## Recruitment Journey of External Fighters\* (Western and Arab)



*Not all external fighters provided details about their recruitment journey; hence the above numbers add up to less than 18*

## Understanding Jihadists

Western

Arab

Internal

### Internal Fighters: Searching for status and security

#### Self (8 of 31 fighters)

8 of 31 interrogated fighters said that they have strong ideas and beliefs and a high self-esteem. They are sensitive to emotional context.

#### Self- (18 of 31 fighters)

They lack the courage to leave organizations even if they want to. They have a sense of being trapped.

They feel fear and difficulty adapting to their new situation.

#### Non-Self+ (23 of 31 fighters)

They praise their community relations (family, friends and confession) and feel a very strong sense of belonging and integration.

Internal fighters believe they have a mission to defend their community (duty, Jihad) but they also have personal interests (money, staying alive). For them, the solution has to be radical (establishing an Islamic state).

#### Non-Self- (14 of 31 fighters)

For internal fighters, the 'Non-Self -' is not an argumentation that helps to prove an ideal (Non-Self +) but more a conclusion of their experience within the organization.

Knowing that these people were caught and didn't abandon the organization on purpose, the 'Non-Self' reflects more the lessons learned and advice to other youth.

#### Self

How they perceive themselves

#### Self-

Own limits

#### Non-Self+

What is perceived as a positive value

#### Non-Self-

What is perceived as a negative value, an obstacle in relation to others or the environment



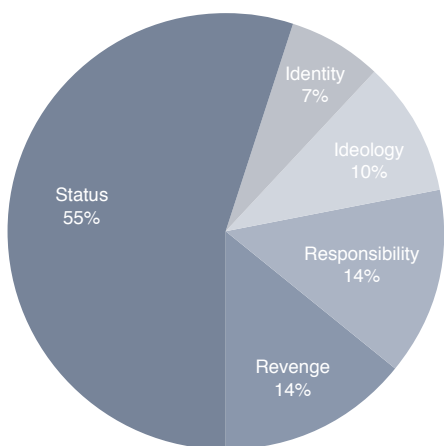
# Understanding Jihadists

Western	Arab	Internal
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## Internal Fighters

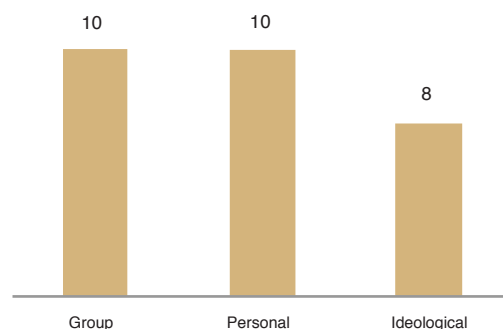
Internal fighters who operate in their own countries are primarily status seekers (55%). They are affected by group and personal factors which lead them to praise money, Jihad and social network (friends, prison, and family).

### Seekers Profile



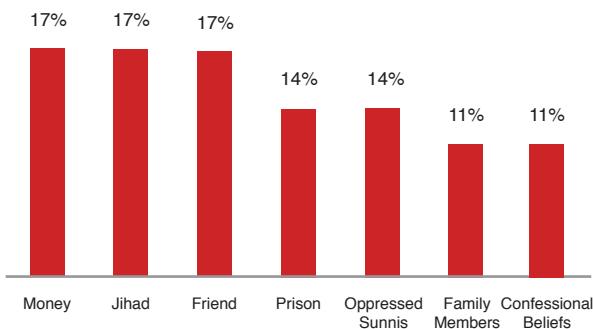
### Influencing Factors\*

*"He convinced us; he said come and see what will become of you marginalized Sunnis, and his words won over our emotions"*  
**Ahmad Chukri – Revenge Seeker**



### Influencing Catalysts

*"He asked me why don't you join us... your work... leave your work and consider me your financier"*  
**Samim Sleiman – Status Seeker**

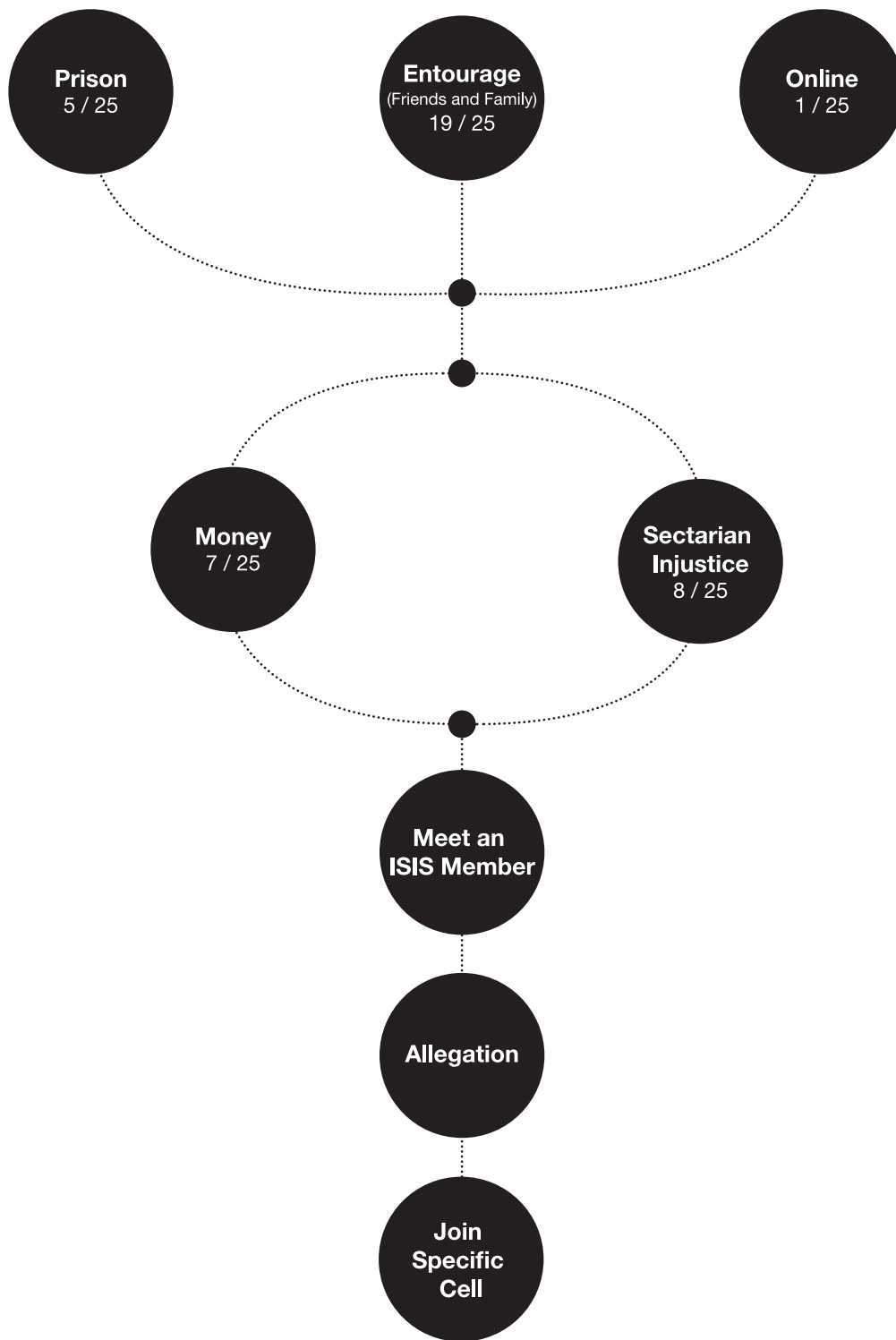


\*Numbers are based on overall mentions where certain interviewed fighters have designated at least one variable.

# Understanding Jihadists

Western	Arab	Internal
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## Recruitment Journey of Internal Fighters\*



\*A total of 25 internal fighters (out of 31) provided details about their recruitment journey.

## Mapping the Jihadists' Journey and their Countries of Origin



**External**

<b>Westerners</b>	<b>9</b>
US	2
Britain	2
France	2
Netherlands	1
Denmark	1
Tajikistan	1

<b>Arabs</b>	<b>9</b>
KSA	7
Tunisia	2

**Internal**

**Iraq 31**

# APPENDIX

## Coding Sample of External Western Fighter Matrix

### Information



**Name:** Abderozzack Benarabe  
**Nationality:** Danish Moroccan  
**Age:** 38  
**Personal Traits:** Gangster and drug dealer  
**Organization:** Ahrar al-Sham

**Date:** July 08, 2014  
**Length:** 30:07 min  
**Source:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_mA8J2U88hw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mA8J2U88hw)

### CAUGHT IN COPENHAGEN

#### SELF

- Wants to make a difference
- Sensitive

#### SELF-

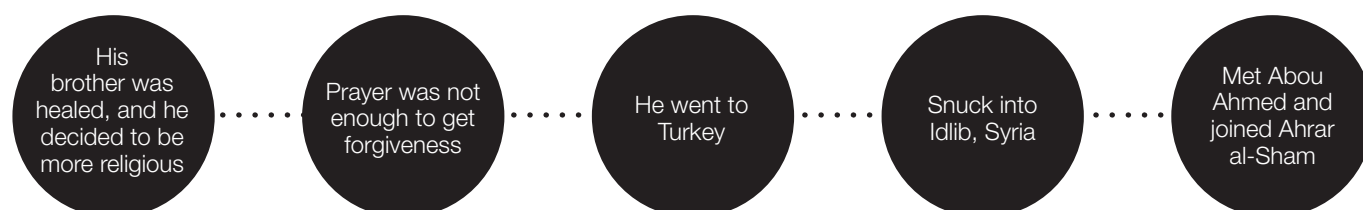
- Feeling of guilt
- Seeking forgiveness
- Lack of knowledge about what is happening in Syria

#### NON-SELF+

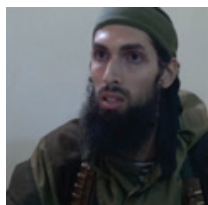
- Importance of religion
- Fighting Assad army
- Redemption

#### NON-SELF-

- Terrorism and attack on civilians



## External Western Fighters Identity Cards



**Name:** Yilmaz  
**Nationality:** Dutch  
**Age:** 26

**Identity seeker**  
**Active**



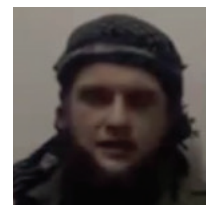
**Name:** Amer Deghayes  
**Nationality:** British  
**Personal Trait:** Student  
**Age:** 20

**Identity seeker**  
**Active**



**Name:** Iftikar Jaman  
**Nationality:** British  
**Age:** 23

**Identity seeker**  
**Died in the period**  
**following his interview**



**Name:** Abu Hureira al-Amriki  
**Nationality:** United States  
**Age:** 22

**Identity seeker**  
**Suicide bomber**



**Name:** N/A  
**Nationality:** French  
**Age:** N/A

**Identity seeker**  
**Returnee**



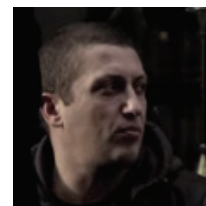
**Name:** Eric Harroun  
**Nationality:** United States  
**Age:** N/A

**Thrill seeker**  
**Caught**



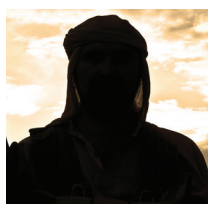
**Name:** Mehdi  
**Nationality:** French  
**Age:** 22

**Status seeker**  
**Returnee**



**Name:** Abderozzack  
Benarabe  
**Nationality:** Danish Moroccan  
**Age:** 38

**Redemption seeker**  
**Caught**



**Name:** N/A  
**Nationality:** French  
**Age:** N/A

**Identity seeker**  
**Caught**

## Coding Sample of External Arab Fighter Matrix

### Information



**Name:** Bandar Mechy

**Nationality:** Saudi

**Age:** N/A

**Organization:** N/A

**Date:** Oct 13, 2014

**Length:** 17:58 min

**Source:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZTvFkBpMbm0>

## RETURNEE

### SELF

- Helping the “brothers”
- Believer
- Muslim

### SELF-

- Limits to his religious knowledge

### NON-SELF+

- Not killing Muslims (as a Muslim)
- Fighting the Assad regime

### NON-SELF-

- Killing innocents in Syria
- Displacing innocents in Syria
- Raping women in Syria
- “Fitna”
- Sufism expansion
- “Takfir”
- Judgment day

Online violent  
content

Motivated  
to help

He left to Syria  
for 10 months

## External Arab Fighters Identity Cards



**Name:** Mohammad Abdallah Othman al-Itebi  
**Nationality:** Saudi  
**Personal Trait:** Student abroad  
**Age:** 26

**Revenge seeker**  
**Returnee**



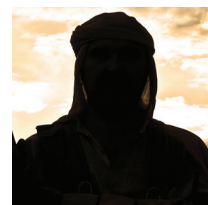
**Name:** Sleiman al-Sbeii  
**Nationality:** Saudi  
**Age:** 25

**Death seeker**  
**Returnee**



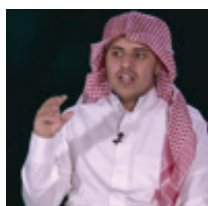
**Name:** Mofareh Abed al-Rahman al-Khas'amy  
**Nationality:** Saudi  
**Age:** 23

**Identity seeker**  
**Returnee**



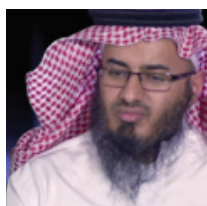
**Name:** Abu Qusay  
**Nationality:** Tunisian  
**Age:** 30

**Thrill seeker**  
**Returnee**



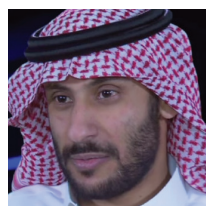
**Name:** Abdallah al-Omry  
**Nationality:** Saudi  
**Age:** 22

**Status seeker**  
**Returnee**



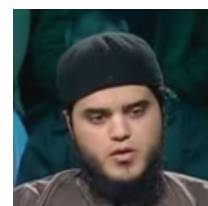
**Name:** Bandar Mechy  
**Nationality:** Saudi  
**Age:** N/A

**Justice seeker**  
**Returnee**



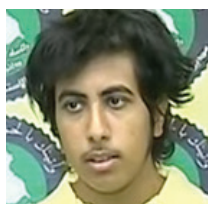
**Name:** Sleiman Issa Sleiman al-Fifi  
**Nationality:** Saudi  
**Age:** N/A

**Justice seeker**  
**Returnee**



**Name:** Hamza  
**Nationality:** Tunisian  
**Age:** N/A

**Status seeker**  
**Returnee**

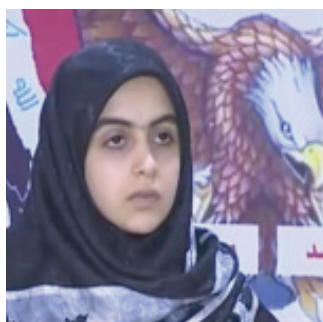


**Name:** Hamad Abdulrahman  
**Nationality:** Saudi  
**Age:** 18

**Thrill seeker**  
**Caught**

## Coding Sample of Internal Fighter Matrix

### Information



**Name:** Yasmin al-Akidi  
**Nationality:** Iraq  
**Age:** 23  
**Personal Trait:** Student in Islamic religion  
**Organization:** ISIS

**Date:** Jan 30, 2015  
**Length:** 52:43 min  
**Source:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4E\\_cOvXctnU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4E_cOvXctnU)

## CAUGHT

### SELF

- Curious
- Trust in religious figures and their interpretations
- Importance of family ties

### SELF-

- Scared
- Fear of parents
- Feeling of loneliness
- Disappointed

### NON-SELF+

- Religion
- Jihad
- Martyrdom
- Revenge

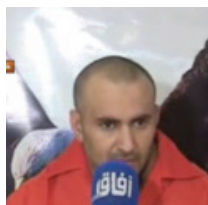
### NON-SELF-

- "Fitna" and brainwashing
- Moral pressure and threats
- Lies
- Wrong application of the religion
- Palestinian conflict



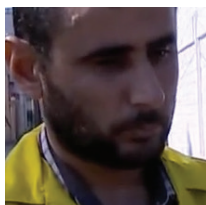


## Internal Fighters Identity Cards



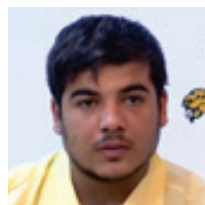
**Name:** Mohammed Yassin Ahmed  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 37

**Status seeker  
 Caught**



**Name:** Amjad Haydar Abd  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** N/A

**Status seeker  
 Caught**



**Name:** Haydar Ali Matar Abbas  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 21

**Status seeker  
 Caught**



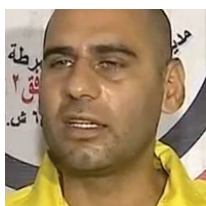
**Name:** Alla Razak Dalef  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** N/A

**Status seeker  
 Caught**



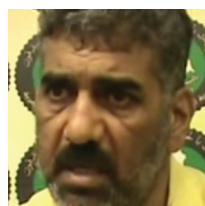
**Name:** Salman Hamed aka Hayyawi  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** N/A

**Status seeker  
 Caught**



**Name:** Samim Sleiman  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** N/A

**Status seeker  
 Caught**



**Name:** Qassem Daoud Salman  
 Aka Abu Mhammad  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 43

**Status seeker  
 Caught**



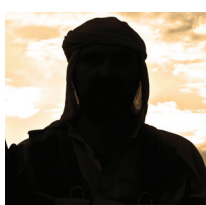
**Name:** Nael Mohamed Karim  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 32

**Status seeker  
 Caught**



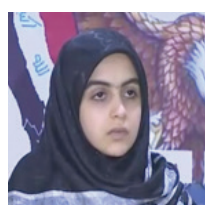
**Name:** Hamzah  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** N/A

**Status seeker  
 Caught**



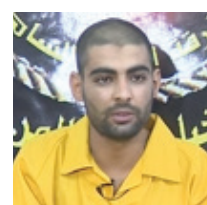
**Name:** Hussein  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** N/A

**Status seeker  
 Caught**



**Name:** Yasmin al-Akidi  
**Nationality:** Iraq  
**Personal Trait:** Student in Islamic religion  
**Age:** 23

**Identity seeker  
 Caught**



**Name:** Ihab Ahmed Ali  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 25

**Identity seeker  
 Caught**

## Internal Fighters Identity Cards



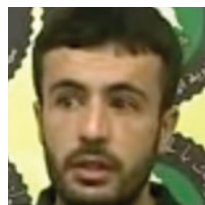
**Name:** Haydar Youssef Ali  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** N/A

**Status seeker  
Caught**



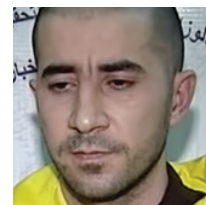
**Name:** Alaa Ahmad Ghanem  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 33

**Revenge seeker  
Caught**



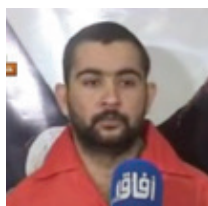
**Name:** Anas Ahmad Shaker  
Aka Abu Tibah  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 25

**Revenge seeker  
Caught**



**Name:** Ahmad Shukri  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 32

**Revenge seeker  
Caught**



**Name:** Anwar Al-Janabi  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 24

**Responsibility seeker  
Caught**



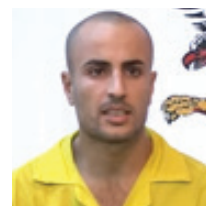
**Name:** Yasser Ali Matar  
Abbas  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 26

**Responsibility seeker  
Caught**



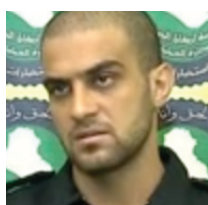
**Name:** Mohammed Abed  
Al-Jabbar Saloumi  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** N/A

**Responsibility seeker  
Caught**



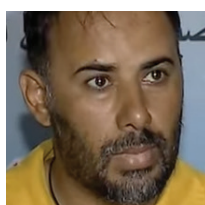
**Name:** Mohannad Mohamed  
Karim  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 24

**Responsibility seeker  
Caught**



**Name:** Ahmad Khalifa  
Saleh  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** N/A

**Ideology seeker  
Caught**



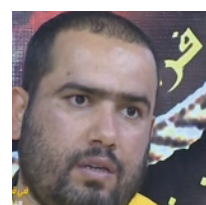
**Name:** Abu Abdallah  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** N/A

**Caught**



**Name:** Salam Mohamed  
Khalaf  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** N/A

**Caught**



**Name:** Rahim Khalil Hussein  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 33

**Caught**

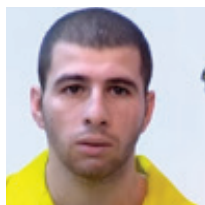
*Deriving a seeker profile for 10 of the 31 internal fighters was not possible for lack of substantive information provided by the fighters in their respective interviews.*

## Internal Fighters Identity Cards



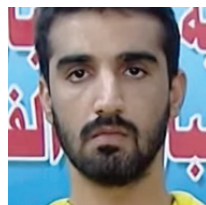
**Name:** Nasser Taleb Nasser  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 33

**Caught**



**Name:** Taha Sabah  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 22

**Caught**



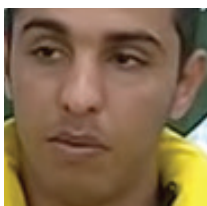
**Name:** Omar Mohammad Rashid  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** N/A

**Caught**



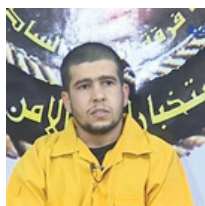
**Name:** Tahsin  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** N/A

**Caught**



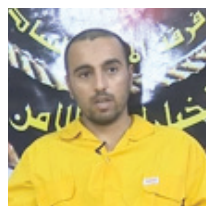
**Name:** Youssef Yaaacoub  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** N/A

**Caught**



**Name:** Ghazi Mechref  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 24

**Caught**



**Name:** Mohamed Abdallah Nassif  
**Nationality:** Iraqi  
**Age:** 26

**Caught**

*Deriving a seeker profile for 10 of the 31 internal fighters was not possible for lack of substantive information provided by the fighters in their respective interviews.*