

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	Glasgow 2063917 DCU 18114474 Charles 83493618
Dissertation Title	'Countering Islamist Radicalisation: A comparative study of Bulgaria and France's practices, experiences and challenges

INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING

Reviewer 1 Initial Grade Select from drop down list	Reviewer 2 Initial Grade Select from drop down list	Late Submission Penalty no penalty
Word Count Penalty (1-15% over/under = 1gr point; 15-20% over/under = 2 gr points; 20-25% over/under = 3 gr points; more than 25% over/under = 0 fail)		
Word Count: 20, 273 Suggested Penalty: no penalty		

JOINT GRADING (subject to agreement of the external examiner and approval at Joint Exam Board)

Final Agreed Mark. (Following correspondence reviewers should list the agreed final internal grade taking before and after any penalties to be applied).
Before Penalty: B2 [16] After Penalty: B2 [16]

DISSERTATION FEEDBACK

Assessment Criteria	Rating
A. Structure and Development of Answer	
This refers to your organisational skills and ability to construct an argument in a coherent and original manner	
• <i>Originality of topic</i>	Good
• <i>Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified</i>	Good
• <i>Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work</i>	Good
• <i>Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions</i>	Satisfactory
• <i>Application of theory and/or concepts</i>	Satisfactory
B. Use of Source Material	
This refers to your skills to select and use relevant information and data in a correct manner	
• <i>Evidence of reading and review of published literature</i>	Good
• <i>Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument</i>	Good
• <i>Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence</i>	Satisfactory
• <i>Accuracy of factual data</i>	Good
C. Academic Style	
This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• <i>Appropriate formal and clear writing style</i>	Good
• <i>Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation</i>	Good
• <i>Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)</i>	Good
• <i>Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?</i>	Yes
• <i>Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)</i>	Not required

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• <i>Appropriate word count</i>	Yes
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ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

The dissertation is an investigation into the counter radicalization strategies of France and Bulgaria. It applies Lindekilde's theoretical framework to ask three questions:

(1) How can the existing counter-radicalisation policies be improved? (2) What constitutes effective counter-radicalisation policies in the context of Bulgaria and France? (3) Which counter-radicalisation policies can be transposed in the respective countries of comparison?" (P.6); the goal is that of "helping policymakers to better respond to the issues of radicalisation by investigating 'voids' in government policies" and "ultimately produce recommendations contributing to inspire more sharing of counter-radicalisation know-how among Eastern and Western European countries" (P. 6). While there is abundant literature on radicalization and its causes, including literature looking at the case of France, there is little literature on the case of Bulgaria. Therefore, the study had the potential to make an interesting and novel contribution by comparing two such different cases in terms of colonial history, geography, population and politics. The dissertation relies on extensive literature, which is not always scholarly, but draws on several sources (government documents, newspapers, academic articles) and in different languages (French, Bulgarian, English).

While the study is promising and its goals ambitious, the dissertation does not fully answer the questions it raises or fulfil its objectives. The dissertation goes into the analysis with little prior discussion of Lindekilde's framework, why it is suited more than others to engage in such a comparison, and what analytical potential it offers for answering the research questions. There is a mention to Lindekilde's attention to human rights and liberty, but these topics are not observed systematically in the analysis that follows. Therefore, the reader is left quite in the dark with regard to why the French and Bulgarian cases are compared along the 4 thematic areas (Time; Policy Design; Historical Concept; Reception), or how such a comparison helps us to assess whether or how the current policies can be improved. Likewise, the study lacks a discussion of what constitute an effective policy in either of the two cases, and concludes without engaging in a substantial analysis or recommendations with regard to what can be borrowed from each case to improve their current CVE policies. The dissertation presents substantial information on each case, but the lack of a strong overall theoretical framework penalises the analysis and limits the result of the comparative exercise.

Reviewer 2

This is a potentially interesting dissertation both in terms of the theoretical model it offers and a cross-regional comparative analysis empirically. The thesis contains the sequence of standardised research steps, and an explicit outline of a research design and methodology. While novelty is being highlighted, I would have expected more of a discussion of theoretical choices, as well as case justification as the two countries in focus - France and Bulgaria - are not the usual pair of cases one would expect, both generally and here within the counter-terrorism debate. While I appreciate the formulation of three specific research questions, the work only partially answers them, the fact that has a lot to do with a rather weak connection between the conceptual and empirical parts. Also, I think that the first question should have been moved to the third position

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as this is a typical policy-making/problem-solving question. Also, especially for initial navigation and delimitation of originality/niche for this work, I would have expected a broader and deeper discussion of the existing literature, which may not relate to the two countries together but would be relevant, including the possible answering of the so-called null hypothesis. The empirical part is solid while fairly descriptive and contains very limited attempts to feedback the findings into the theory part. Also, the work relies on governmental documents too much not in the sense of empirical material (which would be totally fine) but in terms of structuring devices for the actual analysis. More space between acceptance of these and author's own reasoning would have been welcomed. Finally, the criteria for the actual comparison were to be better specified and empirically fulfilled. These are the main problems which relate to an otherwise solid and interesting work.