

**ADDRESSING THE PROBLEMS OF ALIENATION AND RADICALISATION
OF YOUNG BRITISH MUSLIMS**

Applicants:

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Introduction

The British Government presently need to develop a comprehensive strategy to enable them to intervene and prevent young British Muslims from becoming drawn into extremist and terrorist activity. This proposal is designed to address a significant aspect of this problem: opinion formation within communities from which individuals drawn into extremist and even terrorist activity tend to come or are perceived to come.

The government was confronted with a somewhat similar problem in Northern Ireland in the late 1970s. By this time the government felt it had addressed the main issues that had precipitated the outbreak of the troubles in the late 1960s. Nevertheless, its hopes of ‘a return to normality’ after the ending of internment were disappointed. In particular, the Provisional Irish republican Army continued its campaign of violence at a level that prevented any sense of normalisation. That forced the government to face the issue of Catholic alienation both from the policy of direct rule and from detailed policies government was pursuing under this framework. The need to address Catholic alienation was strongly underlined by the hunger strike crises of 1980 and 1981. One element of the government’s response was to attach renewed importance to Anglo-Irish relations. This ultimately culminated in the Anglo-Irish Agreement, which by providing the Republic of Ireland with input into the policies pursued in Northern Ireland gave further impetus to measures to address Catholic alienation. While some of the steps taken were controversial and predictably led to claims that by addressing Catholic alienation the government was simply causing a corresponding degree of Protestant alienation, the approach taken by government can be seen as ultimately laying the basis for the current peace process. Whatever the difficulties of that process it has led to a sharp fall in the level of fatalities as a result of political violence in the last decade.

It is not being suggested that the problems of Northern Ireland in the late 1970s are comparable with the threat arising to the United Kingdom as a result of the existence of the global jihadist network known as al-Qaeda. However, similarities can be drawn between the position of the Catholic community in Northern Ireland and that of the British Muslim community. Both are communities from whom individuals have been or

are being recruited into extremist and even terrorist activity. Furthermore, the methodology of the examination of opinions within these communities to identify sources of alienation that government policies may be able to address without compromising on fundamental principles or commitments is relevant to both situations. How opinion surveys were used in the context of the Northern Irish peace process to overcome difficulties is explained below. That is followed by an explanation of how the methodology successfully used in Northern Ireland might be applied in the case of British Muslims. It should also be noted that the same methodology is currently being applied in another region of conflict, the Balkans.

Applying lessons from the Northern Ireland peace process

Nine surveys of public opinion were conducted in support of the Northern Ireland peace process between April 1996 and February 2003.¹ Critically the questions for eight of these polls were drafted and agreed with the co-operation of party negotiators to enhance the peace process by increasing party inclusiveness, developing issues and language, testing party policies, helping to set deadlines and increase the overall transparency of negotiations through the publication of technical analysis and media reports.

In so far as it was possible the parties were given ‘ownership’ of the research so that they would take the results seriously. Each party to the negotiations nominated a member of their team to work with the facilitator on the polls. Questions were designed to test party policies as a series of options or preferences from across the social and political spectrum. The moderating voice of ‘the silent majority’ was thus given expression while extremist positions were demonstrated to be marginal with little cross community support. All questions, options and preferences had to be agreed as not being partisan or misleading. From the drafting of these questions to sample design, ethics, timing and publication, the programme of research was decided by all the parties and they were

¹ Irwin, C. J., Using Public Opinion Polls to Support Peace Processes: Practical Lessons from Northern Ireland, Macedonia, Cyprus, Israel and Palestine, in Guelke, A. (Ed.), *Democracy and Ethnic Conflict: Advancing Peace in Deeply Divided Societies*, Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke and New York, 2004.

encouraged to take the work in any direction that they believed would be helpful to the peace process.

The focus of the research was on problems, solutions and policies for conflict resolution and questions were ‘pitched’ at what most people could understand most of the time NOT at the lowest common denominator. All relevant issues were covered and NO irrelevant issues. All the results were also made publicly available in the local press and on the project web site effectively giving the wider community a ‘seat at the negotiating table’ and exposing the research to the highest standards of peer review and public scrutiny. There was no ‘cherry picking’ of the results. Everyone had to deal with all the issues that were raised as part of what became a ‘pre-negotiation problem solving exercise’.

This activity extended across the political spectrum to all the major parties, civil society and the public at large helped to build support for the Belfast Agreement that led to a 72 per cent ‘yes’ vote in the 1998 referendum and a subsequent period of increasing stability and peace. Through pro-active public diplomacy a consensus was built for the Agreement from the top down and bottom up, from the political centre out and from the polarities in. Consequently, in Northern Ireland, the peace process has remained sufficiently robust to the extent that it could survive several periods of institutional suspension without a return to war.

In an effort to internationalise this work a book ‘The People’s Peace Process in Northern Ireland’ has been published by Palgrave/MacMillan;² numerous papers and reports have been made available on the project web-site at peacepolls.org; a poll was completed in Macedonia³ and feasibility studies undertaken in Cyprus, Israel and Palestine⁴ in 2002

² Irwin, C. J., *The People’s Peace Process in Northern Ireland*, Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke and New York, 2002.

³ Irwin, C. J., Forum Macedonia: An Opinion Poll and its Implications, *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*. vol. 2, no 1, September 2002, at www.ethnopolitics.org.

and the EC are funding a poll in Bosnia in 2004⁵. Clearly the Northern Ireland methods can be applied elsewhere.

Although the main thrust of the Northern Ireland work was to resolve problems and find agreement between parties engaged in a conflict it should be noted that the first in this series of polls dealt with all the key aspects of Catholic and Protestant community relations and policies for peace building.⁶ Similarly the poll completed in Macedonia dealt with the recent conflict there and relationships between the Muslim Albanian community and the Orthodox Christian Serb community. In Bosnia all aspects of their peace process are being dealt with in an effort to move the country along the path to membership of the European Union. Necessarily this poll includes exploring community relations with regard to its populations of Muslim Bosniaks, Catholic Croats and their Orthodox Christian Serbs. When it came to the design of these polls all manner of persons were involved in drafting the questions. Not just politicians but also civil servants, university lecturers, community leaders etc.

It is proposed that the same methods and techniques can be used to explore the demographic profile of radical Muslim groups, their extent, attitudes and values, the social and political problems associated with radicalization and the remedies that can be put in place to mitigate such problems. In this way ‘pools of alienation’ can be identified and steps taken to reverse the process that leads to the creation of groups willing to tolerate, acquiesce, support, encourage or even actively participate in terrorist activity.

⁴ Irwin, C. J., Forum: Northern Ireland – International Negotiation Best Practice: A Reply to Hancock, Noel and Kennedy-Pipe, *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*. vol. 2, no 3-4, March/June 2003, at www.ethnopolitics.org.

⁵ British Broadcasting Corporation World Service Trust and Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, *Our Town, Our Future*, London, Sarajavo and Thessaloniki, 2004 to 2006.

⁶ Irwin, C. J., Chapter 5, ‘Peace Building and Public Policy’ in *The People’s Peace Process in Northern Ireland*, Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke and New York, 2002.

British Muslims and the problems of radicalization – proposals and plan

The programme of research can be conveniently undertaken in four parts around four quarterly milestones starting on October 1, 2004 as follows:

Phase 1, October 1 to December 31, 2004

Start up and identification of interlocutors, detail of issues to be researched and target groups to be studied in-depth

In the first quarter of the project leading up to the end of the year Dr. Irwin will meet with other researchers working on similar problems⁷ as well as various agencies with different responsibilities for British Muslims. Community and faith leaders will be identified to work with as interlocutors and approached to act as participants in the research project. With their cooperation the broad scope of the programme of research will be identified as it relates to the survey of public opinion in the UK as a whole and with special regard to the specific Muslim communities that will be the focus of in-depth attention. The range of questions will also be discussed and developed into a ‘first draft’ questionnaire. More specifically questions dealing with general problems and solutions will be explored as well as values and attitudes as they relate to these problems from across the social and political spectrum, and from extremism to moderation. Particular care will be taken to develop a comprehensive range of demographic variables that will explore the family, ethnic, social and political background and affiliation of all those to be interviewed so that all variables can be analysed by these criteria. Questions of access to and use of the results will also be agreed along with appropriate standards of research ethics. A first report will be produced detailing the outcome of all this background research by the end of the year with meetings held as may be considered appropriate to review progress before starting on the second phase of the work in the New Year.

⁷ For example Dr. F. Volpi and Dr. J. Weldes of the University of Bristol have offered to extend cooperation between our respective ESRC funded projects held by the applicants as part of the New Security Challenges programme. The title of the Bristol project is: Securitising Islamic Terrorism: policy responses, perceptions and blowback.

Phase 2, January 1 to March 31, 2005

Drafting of questionnaire

The methodology requires inviting participants in the research process to comment on questions to be run in the poll and to ask them to suggest problems and solutions as series of options and preferences as well as encouraging them to raise any other matters that they may consider relevant. After a round of such interviews the questionnaire is rewritten with all of their comments and suggestions included. This process is then repeated until all the parties to the research are satisfied that their concerns are fairly and properly dealt with and that the final questionnaire, when run, will produce the information required to deal with the problems at hand. This qualitative part of the research is the most critical and is the focus of the greatest care and attention to make sure no parties to the project feel left out or that their concerns have been ignored. Only when a consensus is reached with regard to the design of the questionnaire will it be run and it is at this juncture that the parties should regard the project as ‘theirs’ and hopefully take a degree of responsibility for the work and its applied outcomes. This draft of the questionnaire and the dynamics of the interview and drafting process will form the basis of the second report to be submitted at the end of March 2005.

Phase 3, April 1 to June 30, 2005

Piloting, interviews, data collection, processing and preliminary analysis

At the beginning of April 2005 the contractor chosen to undertake the public opinion fieldwork will pilot the draft questionnaire in a selection of sites that will include both the Muslim communities identified for in-depth study and the wider British public.

Adjustments will be made, on the basis of their report, to produce a final questionnaire for the survey proper to make sure all problems of comprehension and understanding are correctly addressed. The sample size has been estimated at 1,500 for the UK as a whole plus a number of ‘booster’ samples of between 300 and 500 each for the Muslim communities identified for in-depth study. On completion of the interviews the contractor will enter the data into a computer and undertake a first analysis to produce a set of cross-tabulations for secondary analysis and the writing up of subsequent reports. At the end of

June a third report will include this first set of analysis from the running of the questionnaire.

Phase 4, July 1 to September 30, 2005

Draft report, feedback and final report

During the early stages of the research decisions will have been made as to the circulation of reports emanating from the public opinion fieldwork. These reports will now be written for the benefit of the relevant agencies and community representatives for whom the programme of research was undertaken. In accordance with their wishes the reports will be circulated, discussed, revised and published so as to initiate the development of policies that can address the problems of radicalization identified. A final report, reviewing the outcomes of this interactive phase of the work will now be published along with copies of all other reports produced by the end of September 2005.

Although there is no wish to pre-judge the outcomes of this programme of research it would be hoped that a clear distinction will be able to be made between real and imagined problems. Real problems, as such, will require real policies to address them. Imagined problems, of which there may be many, can, to a considerable degree, be addressed through corrective communications and more effective public diplomacy. Analysis and discussion of the results of the research should help to make these distinctions clear along with appropriate remedial measures that can be taken in terms of both policy development and public announcements.

Curriculum Vitae appended for

1. Professor Adrian Guelke
2. Dr. Colin Irwin

Research commitments

Professor Adrian Guelke

1. Commitment to the research: 2 days per month
2. Other Commitments: 18 days per month on teaching and related research

Dr. Colin Irwin

1. Commitment to the research: 10 days per month
2. Other Commitments: 10 days per month on related research

Contingency arrangements

Professor Adrian Guelke and Dr. Colin Irwin will keep each other fully informed about all aspects of the project as it progresses and make all results available to each other.

Similar projects undertaken by the applicants

1. Professor Adrian Guelke: relevant specialisation international terrorism (see cv)
2. Dr. Colin Irwin: relevant specialisation conflict analysis and public diplomacy (see cv)

Queen's University Belfast equal opportunities policy

The Queen's University of Belfast issued its first Equal Opportunities Policy Statement in 1988. This statement, based on the University's Charter, emphasised the commitment of the University to equality of opportunity, and declared the University's intention to implement policies designed to promote equality of opportunity and to reject absolutely unlawful discrimination of any kind.

This statement was reviewed and expanded in 1990 in order to comply fully with the Fair Employment Code of Practice. The expanded statement detailed the University's commitment to review regularly selection and promotion procedures and the provision of training; taking such affirmative action as may be deemed lawful, appropriate and necessary to ensure that all employees and applicants continue to enjoy equality of

opportunity; and set goals and timetables, where appropriate, to measure progress that can be reasonably be expected as a result of affirmative action.

The statement also emphasised that all members of staff have a responsibility to accept their personal involvement in the practical application of the Policy. The Equal Opportunities Policy Statement was revised further in 1998 and 2004 in response to the introduction of new legislation, namely the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order (1997), the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998, and the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2003

In 1986, the University's Senate reiterated its commitment to Fair Employment and agreed to set up an Equal Opportunities Group. Subsequently, the Equal Opportunities Unit was established in 1990. The Unit is currently staffed by an Equal Opportunities Manager, an Equal Opportunities Administrator, an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Officer, and a Unit Secretary.

Further details of Queen's University's equal opportunities policies and procedures are available at: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/eou/>

Price

| Item and Description | Rate per day | No. of Days | Total | VAT @ 17.5% |
|---|--------------|-------------|----------|-------------|
| Personnel to be employed in completing the work | | | | |
| 1. Professor Adrian Guelke ⁸ | 600 | 24 | 14,400 | |
| 2. Dr. Colin Irwin ⁹ | 400 | 120 | 48,000 | |
| Travel and subsistence for Professor Guelke to Home Office meetings ¹⁰ | 296 | 4 | 1,184 | |
| Travel and subsistence for Dr. Irwin to Home Office meetings ¹¹ | 296 | 4 | 1,184 | |
| Travel for Dr. Irwin for UK field work ¹² | 200 | 8 | 1,600 | |
| London subsistence for Dr. Irwin ¹³ | 96 | 20 | 1,920 | |
| Subsistence elsewhere for Dr. Irwin ¹⁴ | 86 | 20 | 1,720 | |
| Other itemized expenses | | | | |
| Mobile phone and consumables ¹⁵ | | | 2,000 | |
| Survey of public opinion ¹⁶ | | | 100,000 | |
| Total | | | £172,008 | £ |

⁸ The cost per day for Professor Guelke is calculated at his gross salary divided by 240 plus an administrative overhead to the university at 46 per cent to arrive at £500 per day for 2 days a month for 12 months.

⁹ The cost per day for Dr. Irwin is calculated at 50 per cent of a salary plus university overhead at 46 per cent or an annual salary divided by 240 to arrive at £300 per day for 10 days a month for 12 months.

¹⁰ This item is calculated at £200 for airfare, trains and taxis plus £96 for a one-night stay in each of the four quarters of the project.

¹¹ This item is calculated at £200 for airfare, trains and taxis plus £96 for a one-night stay in each of the four quarters of the project.

¹² Air, train and taxi travel is allowed for at £200 for 2 trips per quarter for fieldwork in the London area and elsewhere as may be required.

¹³ 20 days of fieldwork in the London area at £96 per day.

¹⁴ 20 days of fieldwork in areas other than London at £86 per day.

¹⁵ This item is to cover the cost of a mobile phone, printer cartridges and photocopying for reports.

¹⁶ The subcontract cost of the public opinion poll is estimated at £100,000 for a 1,500 sample of the UK as a whole plus a number of booster samples of between 300 and 500 each for a total sample of about 3,000. This item is subject to further development, design and revision as may be required as well as local tendering in London, Birmingham and elsewhere. See annex below.

ANNEX – PUBLIC OPINION POLL QUOTATIONS

As can be seen from the notes copied below four companies who Dr. Irwin has worked with in the past were asked to provide some estimates for the cost of the public opinion poll. Normally a sample of 1000 in Northern Ireland would cost between £15,000 and £20,000 so a budget of £60,000 was initially allowed for this item. But the quotations given have come in at between £150,000 and £200,000. These prices seem to be excessive, perhaps, in part, because the details of the survey work are not yet precisely enough defined. With all these points in mind it is recommended that local polling companies in Birmingham and London, for example, will be asked to tender for this subcontract towards the end of Phase 1 of the project when the details are better known and that a budget of £100,000 should be allocated for this part of the research.

Reply-To: c.irwin@qub.ac.uk
From: [Colin Irwin <cjirwin@fujin.qub.ac.uk>](mailto:Colin.Irwin@fujin.qub.ac.uk)
To: colin.mcilheney@uk.pwcglobal.com , info@mrni.co.uk ,
susan.hunter@morimrc.ie , rmoore@ums-research.com
Cc: a.guelke@qub.ac.uk
Date: 28 Jul 2004 17:55:16 +0000
Subject: Re: UK Muslim Communities Poll

Susan Hunter
MRC Ireland
susan.hunter@morimrc.ie

Alan Leitch
MRNI
info@mrni.co.uk

Colin McIlheney
PWC
colin.mcilheney@uk.pwcglobal.com

Richard Moore
UMS
rmoore@ums-research.com

Dear Colleagues,

I asked you all to bid on some polling I was doing in Northern Ireland in 2002/3. As you may recall MRNI put in the lowest bid and got the contract on that occasion.

Professor Adrian Guelke and I have now been asked to tender on a contract to explore the attitudes of the various Muslim communities in the UK. I am proposing to use the same methods that I have used in Northern Ireland in the past. However, for this piece of research I think we will need a general sample of the UK as a whole of about 1,500 plus a number of 'booster' samples in different Muslim communities of between 300 and 500 each for a total sample of about 3,000.

It will be difficult to be more specific than this until we get started on the research. But we have to put a tender in and if we are successful I would expect to be conducting the poll early next year. With all these points in mind could you or your partner companies in England be so kind as to give us a rough estimate of the costs for such a sample for, say, a 40 minuet interview.

We would also require piloting of our draft questionnaire, data entry and cross tabulations.

Many thanks,

Colin.

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<http://peacepolls.org>

From: [MRNI <INFO@mrni.co.uk>](mailto:INFO@mrni.co.uk)
To: [Colin Irwin <c.irwin@qub.ac.uk>](mailto:c.irwin@qub.ac.uk)
Date: Fri, 6 Aug 2004 12:40:58 +0100
Subject: Fw: UK Muslim Communities Poll

Colin

Sorry to be the bearer of bad news but it looks like the MRUK price wasn't that mad after all!!

I don't really know where this leaves you.

I'm off next week but please let me know how you get on

Regards

Alan

----- Original Message -----

From: "Vicki Hough" <Vicki.Hough@fieldworks.co.uk>
To: "MRNI" <INFO@MRNI.CO.UK>
Sent: Friday, August 06, 2004 11:45 AM
Subject: RE: UK Muslim Communities Poll

Hello Alan,

Without knowing the actual subject matter it is fairly difficult to confirm our cost. For example, could it be a subject that Muslims might feel unhappy talking to a non-Muslim about? i.e. the War - who is to 'blame' etc etc?

Our cost would be around £152,000 if the subject matter was of interest to the respondent and there are no qualifying criteria.

This does not include open ended questions which are an additional £650 for each one.

The cost of the 'real time' pilot, conducted in home also, would be £3,500.

This would involve face to face interviewing, with interviewers briefing individually beforehand and debrief at the end of the pilot to give feedback.

We also offer 'Dynamic Pilots' - this is in a central location where respondents are pre-recruited, attend at a specified time - once there they are interviewed and we ask the respondent's opinion as well as interviewer's. This way the Client can be present and see for themselves how well the questionnaire flows. Any issues that may be brought up can

be dealt with at the time, changes can be made tested on the next 'set' of respondents. We would interview between 9 - 12 respondents on one day. The cost of this would be £1,600 and may be something you/your client may want to consider?

I hope that this is sufficient for the time being, please do not hesitate to get in touch with any queries that you may have.

Kind regards,
Vicki

From: colin.mcilheney@uk.pwc.com
To: c.irwin@queens-belfast.ac.uk
Cc: amanda.ohara@uk.pwc.com
Date: Fri, 6 Aug 2004 18:08:20 +0100
Subject: Re: UK Muslim Communities Poll

Colin-I hope you are well. As you know we have a large fieldforce for local NI work and we also have a very strong international telephone survey call centre.

The Belfast office is now the sole centre of excellence for survey work globally for PwC- so the decisions on our whole research strategy rest here in Belfast

We do sometimes undertake surveys with a partner who does the fieldwork for us in England/Wales etc but to be honest we need significant design and analysis fees to make it worthwhile for us-otherwise the fees go exclusively to the partner

That's why in this case we have decided not to bid for the work

We are keen however to still bid for opinion and attitude polling work in NI in conjunction with yourself going forward

All the best

Colin

From: MRNI <INFO@mrni.co.uk>
To: [Colin Irwin <c.irwin@qub.ac.uk>](mailto:c.irwin@qub.ac.uk)
Date: Thu, 5 Aug 2004 12:22:11 +0100
Subject: Fw: UK Muslim Communities Poll

Colin

Pricing from our sister agency in England attached.SORRY!

Alan

Dear Alan

Further to your email of 29th July and our subsequent conversations, I am writing to give you outline costs for undertaking this project.

I am also providing separate costs for conducting a pilot of 15 interviews in each population group.

Population
Sample size
Quotas
Cost (ex-VAT)

UK
15 (pilot)
Representative of UK population
£ 750

Muslim
15 (pilot)
Between 3 and 5 interviews per Muslim community (3-5 such communities)
£ 975

UK
1,500
Representative of UK population
£ 66,000

Muslim
1,500
Between 300 and 500 interviews per Muslim community (3-5 such communities)
£ 85,500

TOTAL COST (ex incentives)
£153,225

These costs are fully inclusive except for VAT and respondent incentives. MRS Guidelines now prohibit interviewers carrying cash or vouchers and therefore respondents are sent a cheque following the interview. There is an administration charge attached to issuing these cheques which means that a £10 incentive will cost the client £12. The additional charge for incentives therefore is $£12 \times 3,030 = £36,360$, giving a total project cost of £189,585 + VAT.

These costs are based on the following assumptions:

- a.. All interviews conducted in English
- b.. An incentive of £10 will be offered to respondents (as above)
- c.. You will design the questionnaire
- d.. The interviews will be conducted in-home and be no longer than 40 minutes in length
- e.. We will conduct all coding, data processing and analysis
- f.. You will be provided with a maximum of 3 sets of statistical tables to your specification

I hope that this is helpful to you. Please come back to me if you have any queries.