

## **Abstract**

This dissertation examines the migration of Western women to ISIS-held territories, aiming to evaluate which strategies and narratives ISIS has exploited to convince them to make this decision. After tracing the phenomenon of radicalisation and women's participation in jihadi organisations, the research employs critical discourse analysis and qualitative content research to examine the language used by ISIS in its magazines, namely Dabiq, Rumiya, and in the Manifesto for Women. The research highlights that there are three gendered narratives exploited by ISIS to recruit women and make them migrate. First, women are solicited to perform hijrah because it is honourable and because women's help in building the Ummah is fundamental. Secondly, women are called to hijrah to carry out violent jihad and to help in the establishment of the Islamic State. The third gendered entails leveraging women into the conviction that living in the Caliphate will allow them to escape from the corruption of the Western world and to live a pious and pure Islamic life. Migrating to ISIS-held territories is therefore fundamental to make women pure again, and to distance them from the ideas of emancipation and freedom. Thanks to the single case study in the framework of policy analysis, it is clear that the importance of Western women's migration to the Islamic State has not been intercepted by the UK's counterterrorism strategy, which deals with ISIS and its multifaceted tactics, but which does not address the radicalisation of British women who joined the ranks of ISIS. Likewise, the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security provides good insights into the gendered tactics used by violent extremist organisations, but it does not cover the migratory flux of British women or their potential return to the UK.