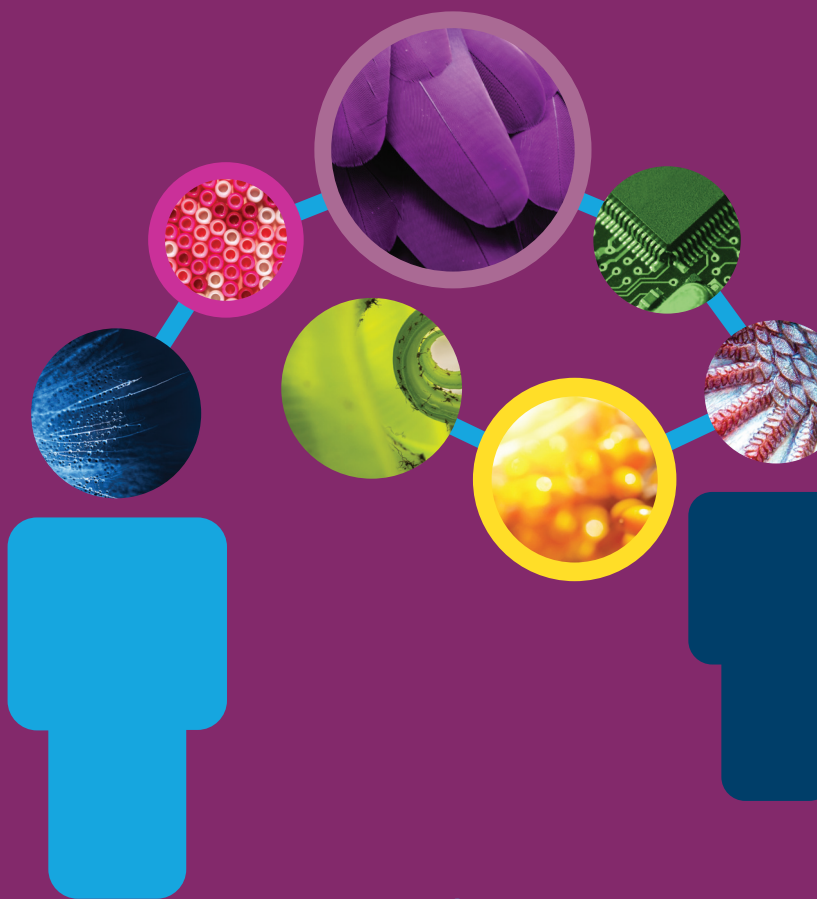


White Book on CVEs

A Collection of Policy Papers

Elodie Reuge, European Organisation for Security
(Ed.)



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A Collection of Policy Papers

Editor

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PREFACE

'Building the new generation of CVE policies', is one of the core objectives of the H2020 project MINDb4ACT. After approximately two years of research activity, in this last stretch of the project's implementation, consortium partners extracted main findings and sought to interpret them to provide with practical recommendations aimed at targeting a wide variety of audiences (e.g. research community, policy-makers and first line practitioners, industry and civil society) integrating the societal and ethical dimension as well as fostering civic engagement. The result of this analytical work is this White Book on CVEs: A collection of policy papers that maps current European preventing and countering violent extremism strategies (P/CVEs) with the aim of advising multi-layered stakeholders and re-orienting existing approaches based on the best empirical evidence available.

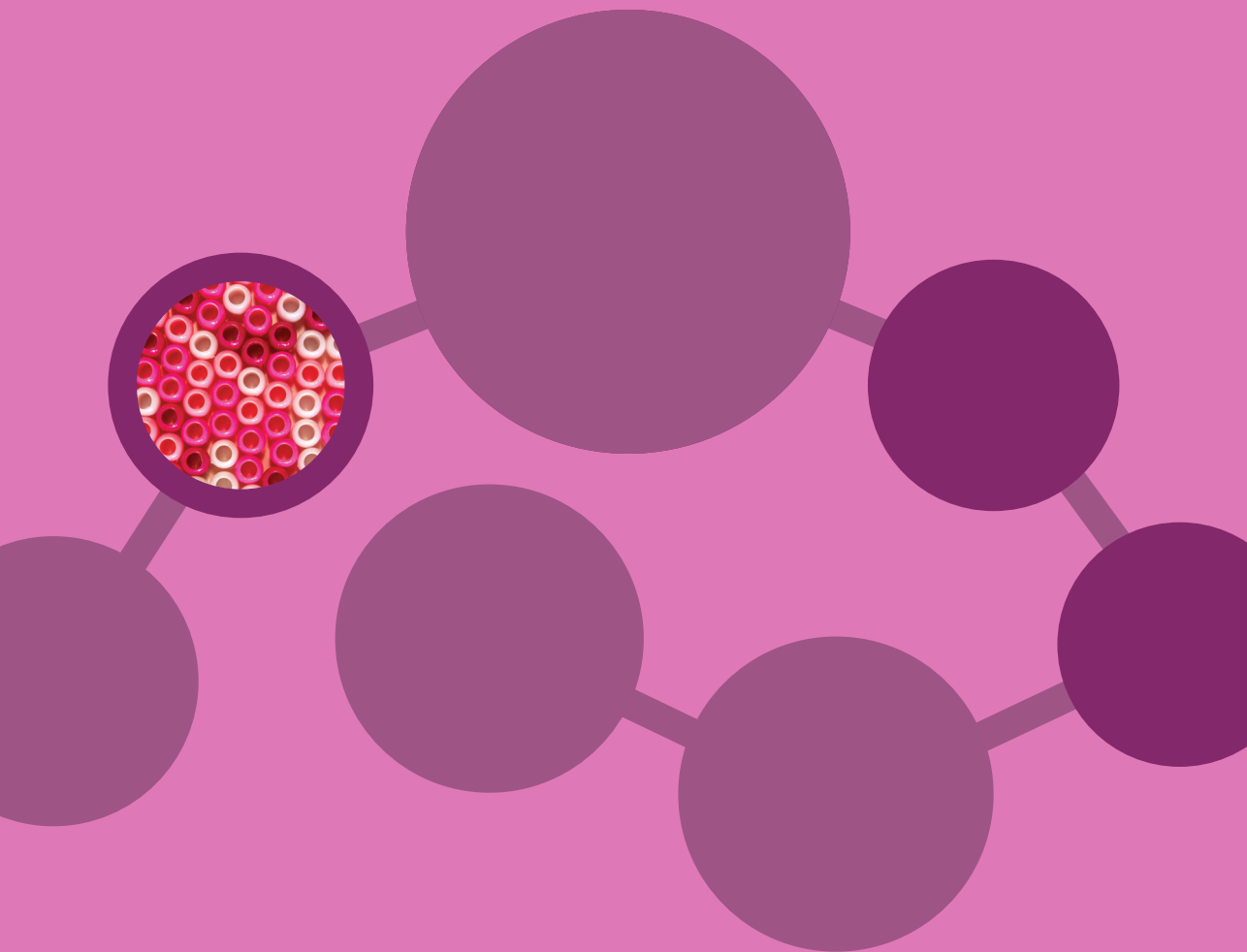
This book was edited following a two-fold method. On the one hand, a set of research questions raised from the interaction and research activity with the project's targeting audience was settled and guided the elaboration of papers. Specifically, reports focused on the new research agenda on radicalisation, the use of technology and innovation to fight against violent radicalisation, and ways to improve the integration of counter-radicalisation policies and practices in the security and ethical context.

On the other hand, given the practical orientation of MINDb4ACT, chapters reflect on policy recommendations for the European Union and Member States at a strategic, policy, coordination and practical level.

Such a methodological approach drove the editor, the European Organisation for Security, to create a two-chapter book, separating publications referring to the European level and National level, reaching a total of 17 policy papers.

CHAPTER 1

Policy Papers



Paper 1.**The state of the art in the European Union**

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1. Introduction

The European Commission's P/CVE projects span eight themes: development of education; media awareness; empowerment of women; youth work; socioeconomic inclusion; governance capacity building; transitional justice; and inter-communal activities including sport and inter-faith dialogue.¹

Moreover, since the beginning, the EU has affirmed the imperative full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the work to counter radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism. All actions must be taken with full respect for these fundamental rights and freedoms and the focus should be on developing dialogue so as to promote mutual awareness and understanding. Stigmatising of any particular group of people must be avoided.

Experiences from the past years have revealed that countering radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism effectively requires a balanced approach between security-related measures and efforts to tackle those factors that may create an environment conducive to radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism².

1 European Commission. (May 2018). High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation (HLCEG-R) Final Report 18 May 2018, p.10

2 Council of the European Union. (2014). Revised EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism. <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9956-2014-INIT/en/pdf>

2. The EU pillars of the EU's P/CVE programming

By looking at the strategies and the policies adopted by the EU institutions so far, we may identify the following pillars of the EU's P/CVE programming:

2.1 Actions on society and education

Promoting inclusive education and EU common values. A multidisciplinary, "whole of society" approach must be adopted, involving a range of actors beyond traditional law enforcement and military services, including public health, mental health and social service providers, parents and families, researchers, education institutions, businesses and the private sector, ministries of education, social welfare and health, municipal authorities and local government, peace builders, correctional and probation officials, human-rights agencies and civil society. The actors will work together to promote an inclusive, open and resilient society and to reach out to young people³.

2.2 Internet and social media

To strengthen capacity and capability of Member States and civil society actors to support and develop alternative or counter narratives to violent extremism *on the internet and the social media*. In addition to the work carried out in the context of the EU Internet Forum and the recently adopted Recommendation on illegal content online, the European Commission calls for action as regards to traditional media and satellite television being misused to amplify the terrorist and extremist divisive narrative, and to promote responsible media reporting.⁴ The Commission also seeks to promote a public/private partnership approach for countering terrorist use of the INTERNET. Since 2010 it has started an ongoing dialogue between LEAs and service providers in order to reduce the dissemination of illegal terrorism-related content on the internet⁵.

Promoting positive staff-prisoner relationships and healthy prison climates is a pre-condition for reducing risk around radicalisation and contributing to rehabilitation and reintegration. One of the best practices to undertake is reducing risk through support: prisons and probation have a duty of care towards individuals in custody,

3 RAN. (2016). Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism

4 European Commission. (May 2018). High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation (HLCEG-R) Final Report 18 May 2018, p.7

5 European Commission. (2010). Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: The EU Counter-Terrorism Policy: main achievements and future challenges.

including care for the vulnerable. Those convicted of extremist offences, and those seen to be at risk of radicalisation, need support at crucial times.⁶

2.4 The principles of 'Do No Harm' and 'Do Maximum Good'

The Principles must frame interventions to ensure they do not cause human rights violations, exacerbate divisions between institutions and communities, or worsen existing grievances. Crucially, however, this should not lapse into the temptations of risk aversion as this may impinge on the strategy's ability to achieve its intended impact.

2.5 International cooperation.

As recommended by the H-LEGR, the importance of having robust external engagement is recognised, in particular in neighbouring regions where the security situation and instability has a direct impact on the EU's internal security. The European Commission supports closer engagement with third countries and international organisations, in accordance with the relevant legal framework.⁷

Additionally, in relation to points 1.4 and 1.5, in 2018 the EU ratified the CoE Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, as well as its Additional Protocol. The convention aims to strengthen the fight against terrorism, while reaffirming that all measures taken to prevent or suppress terrorist offences must uphold the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms.⁸

3. The privileged fields of action of the EU

By looking at the present State of the Art, it can be affirmed that EU has identified some "privileged" fields of action:

3.1 Online propaganda

Online propaganda and networking via social media are still essential to terrorist attempts to reach out to EU audiences for recruitment, radicalisation and fundraising.

6 RAN. (2016). P&P Practitioners' working paper. Approaches to violent extremist offenders and countering radicalisation in prisons and probation

7 European Commission. (May 2018). High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation (HLCEG-R) Final Report 18 May 2018, p.13

8 European Parliament. (2019). The Fight Against Terrorism

As IS's capacities to produce new propaganda material are severely affected by losses of both operatives and infrastructure, the group continues to spread its message to wide audiences, by increasingly redistributing older material by new means⁹

By 2017 over 150 social media platforms were identified as being abused by terrorists for propaganda dissemination. Additionally, file sharing sites are used to store and disseminate terrorist content; messaging and bot services advertise links to such content and social media aggregators store and stream content to other social media platforms.

We must remember that in the EU we have home grown terrorism and online radicalisation. Most of the perpetrators of the attacks on European soil in recent years were European citizens, born in Europe and radicalised without even leaving Europe. The digital environment offers easy ways to radicalise: jihadists use the internet, the dark net and encrypted communication channels such as Telegram for spreading propaganda, training and for recruitment purposes.¹⁰

3.2 Prison and probation

The Commission is involved in strengthening the exchange of best practices and targeted research and is exploring with Member States the organisation of peer reviews of de-radicalisation programmes using the Radicalisation Awareness Network and the High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation (HLCEG-R), set up by the European Commission.

In late 2016, the RAN P&P working group published the paper Approaches to Violent Extremist Offenders and Countering Radicalisation in Prisons and Probation. The RAN updates its collection of promising practices regularly, among which are those related to prison and probation. In this regard, the RAN working group cooperated with EuroPris, the European Organisation of Prison and Correctional Services, to collect training materials developed in European Prison Services dealing with radicalisation issues.

On 27 February 2018, the Commission organised, in cooperation with the Bulgarian Presidency, the European Organisation of Prison and Correctional Services (EUROPRIS) and the Confederation of European Probation, a conference to exchange best practices between judges, prosecutors and prison and probation staff on

9 Europol. (2018). "TESAT." European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2018

10 European Parliament. (2019). The Fight Against Terrorism, p.2

radicalisation in prisons. The Commission will also continue to provide, under its Justice Programme, action grants to support projects in this area, including projects related to the judicial training of judges, prosecutors, prison and probation staff.¹¹

In May 2018, the H-LEGR published its final report, which reaffirmed the priority to intervene in the P&P environment to PVE. Meanwhile, a few international fora had developed guidelines and handbook on the management of radicalised inmates in prison and probation. These include the GCTF Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders (2012), the UNODC Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalisation to Violence in Prisons (2016), and the Council of Europe Handbook for Prison and Probation Services Regarding Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (2016).

Member States would enhance their capabilities and find greater success in dealing with radicalised inmates by mapping existing counter-radicalisation practices in countering radicalisation and supporting rehabilitation and reintegration in prison and probation programs. The H-LEGR called upon the Commission to facilitate a repository of relevant handbooks, in addition to voluntary peer reviews, study visits, further research, and additional funding for exit, rehabilitation, and reintegration programmes.

Awareness about radicalisation in prison is higher than ever, but an ongoing need to consolidate a patchy and scattered knowledge base remains. The radicalised inmate dilemma has been a difficult climb, but one that includes successful examples and—most importantly— lessons learned.¹²

3.3 Education and society

In the last years, the necessity for a new approach to fight radicalisation and violent extremism in the domains of education and formation has emerged in the EU. So, by looking at the experiences and previous results the “Whole Society Approach” confirmed its relevance.

The H-LEGR recommendations are significative and identify the “path” to follow:

- For the Commission in close cooperation with Member States to facilitate further exchanges of experiences and different approaches in Member

11 European Commission. (2018). Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: Thirteenth progress report towards an effective and genuine Security Union, p.4

12 ICF. (4th March 2019). “How to prevent radicalisation in prison.” <https://www.icf.com/blog/policy-and-regulation/preventing-radicalisation-in-prisons>

States, including for instance as regards working with communities, setting up criteria for identifying credible and reliable partners for disengagement programmes as well as interventions tackling extremist ideologies.

- For Member States and the Commission to establish a joint overview of the different approaches and experiences in Member States and explore possible further actions in the relations with religious leaders, communities and institutions, including the training of religious leaders, pluralism, faith related dialogues, funding and monitoring of religious institutions spreading Islamist extremist ideology.¹³

Those actions are fundamental to prevent against the individuals at major risk being subjected to radicalisation (e.g. children, emarginated people, jobless people etc.).

4. EU State-of-the-Art in the P/CVE: measures and institutions

4.1 Formal strategic documents (addressing P/CVE)

The EU adopted its first formal Counter-Terrorism Strategy in December 2005. After the bombings in Madrid on 11 March 2004 the European Council adopted a "*Declaration on combating terrorism*" which both called for the implementation of existing measures as well as the development of new ones. The Declaration was accompanied by an "*EU Plan of Action on Combating Terrorism*", a long table or "roadmap" for the purposes of monitoring implementation and creating an overview, and listing measures, the competent bodies, and deadlines.¹⁴

The EU has then adopted a series of sub-strategies. Perhaps the most important sub-strategies are those on countering radicalisation and recruitment, and countering terrorist finance. A "*Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism*" appeared in 2005 and with updates in 2008 and 2014.

In June 2016, the *Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy of 2016* was presented as a new overarching foreign and security policy framework and reference document for the EU. This paper identifies terrorism as one of the key threats facing the EU and highlights the need to further develop cooperation with the EU's neighbourhood and other regions on countering terrorism and violent

¹³ European Commission. (2018). p.10

¹⁴ European Parliament. (2017). The European Union's Policies on Counter Terrorism. Relevance, Coherence and Effectiveness, p.43.

extremism. Then, within the Council of the EU Conclusions on EU External Action on Counter Terrorism released in June 2017, the Council calls for increased engagement in the field of P/CVE, including at the global level.

Then 2018 was the year of the publication of the European Commission High-Level Experts Group on Radicalisation (H-LEGR) Final Report (May 2018). This document is important because it synthesises the last efforts of the EU institutions towards a new and comprehensive approach to the issue of radicalisation (see next paragraph for H-LEGR mission).

Last but not least, the 2018 Council Conclusions on Strengthening Civilian CSDP similarly emphasises the role of civilian CSDP missions for preventing and countering violent extremism as a component of broader EU responses.

4.2 "Ad hoc" bodies

Furthermore, EU institutions since 2004 have also created *ad hoc* bodies to fight terrorism on all its aspects and "stages" of development: the Counter Terrorism Coordinator (CTC) who regularly reports to the Council on the implementation of counter-terrorism tools at EU level. He also works closely with EU institutions to advance EU efforts to tackle terrorism.

At Europol (European Union's Law Enforcement Agency) it was established the ECTC - European Counter Terrorism Centre which focuses on: providing operational support upon a request from a EU Member State for investigations; sharing intelligence and expertise on terrorism financing (through the Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme and the Financial Intelligence Unit) and online terrorist propaganda and extremism (through the EU Internet Referral Unit).

4.2.1 The RAN

Countering radicalisation and preventing individuals - particularly the young and vulnerable - from joining terrorist groups remains an essential part of EU counterterrorism efforts. It is in this spirit that the European Commission's Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs established the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) in 2011, bringing together a range of different actors, from psychologists to educators, social workers, community leaders, NGOs, police, prison and probation officers, as well as representatives from government ministries. The RAN provides the opportunity for these actors to exchange experiences, pool knowledge and identify best practices in tackling

radicalisation.¹⁵ RAN works daily with people who have already been radicalised, or who are vulnerable to radicalisation. The Network is divided in multiple Working Groups and each of them is focused on specific fields of action to combat radicalisation.

There are ten RAN Working Groups:

- Communication and narratives working group (RAN C&N)
Focuses on the delivery of both on- and offline communication that offers alternatives or that counters extremist propaganda and/or challenges extremist ideas.
- Education working group (RAN EDU)
Bringing together first-line education practitioners throughout Europe to empower them to counter radicalisation. Schools have the objective to provide a safe and respectful environment for their students. It is part of their role to teach democratic and social values, and to help students form their identity.
- EXIT working group (RAN EXIT)
Dealing with the process of moving from a radicalised and violent mindset and/or environment towards mainstream society.
- Youth, families and communities working group (RAN YF&C)
Engaging with and empowering youth, communities and families to support the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism.
- Local authorities working group (RAN LOCAL)
Involves local authorities who are in charge of coordinating practitioners at their local level and organising their multi-agency work and structures.
- Prison and probation working group (RAN P&P)
Supports practitioners in the prison and probation sector who have a role in preventing radicalisation.
- Police and law enforcement working group (RAN POL)
Supports police and other law enforcement officials who are responsible for community related police work.

15 European Commission (& RUSI). (2019). STRIVE for Development. Strengthening Resilience to Counter Extremism, p.50

- Remembrance of victims of terrorism working group (RAN RVT)
Victims of terrorism (both targets of attacks and those who have lost a relative) are involuntary experts on the harm that violent extremism causes to humankind. Victims will be remembered and their voices broadcast to counter radicalisation.
- Health and Social care working group (RAN H&SC)
The key challenge for the health and social care sector is to interpret signs of radicalisation and help those individuals who might be at risk of being radicalised.
- Steering committees
The RAN Steering Committee is chaired by the European Commission and includes all working group leaders and the Centre of Excellence. The Steering Committee usually meets four times a year.
- RAN YOUNG
Young people can provide a valuable contribution to the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism and should be empowered to take an active role in doing so.

RAN's key points and lessons learned from the initiatives carried out are that it is crucial to: 1) *Invest in prevention*, by removing the breeding ground for radicalisation; 2) *Involve and train front line practitioners* as the first professional points of contact for individuals at risk; 3) *Develop multi-agency approaches* to prevent radicalisation and safeguard individuals at risk; 4) *Implement tailor-made interventions* adapted to local circumstances.¹⁶

4.2.2 The H-LEGR

The European Commission, after having established the RAN, has also decided to create a High-Level Experts Group in 2017, which aimed to "picture" the general European situation in terms of CVE/Radicalisation. This Group has produced the European Commission High-Level Experts Group on Radicalisation (H-LEGR) Final Report, published on May 2018. This document is important because it synthesises the last efforts of the EU institutions towards a new and comprehensive approach to the issue of radicalisation, as well as it is the final work of the *ad hoc* group created by the Commission to fight the VE.

16 European Commission (& RUSI). (2019). STRIVE for Development. Strengthening Resilience to Counter Extremism, p.52

The H-LEGR Final Report addresses the trends and the challenges of radicalisation in Europe underlining the fact that all the EU States are confronted with similar concerns such as the use of the internet and social media by terrorist groups or violent extremist organisations for propaganda and recruitment purposes, radicalisation in prisons, and risks of an increasing polarisation.¹⁷

The Final Report can be considered as a strategic document because it reaffirms the multi-dimensional and multi-national nature of the challenge. Consequently, these multi-dimensional challenges require multifaceted responses drawing on all relevant policy areas and involving all relevant actors at local, regional, national, European and international level, with policies aimed at preventing and countering radicalisation. The Group highlights the importance of multiagency responses and support to initiatives on the local level. While Member States' specific needs differ, requiring the development of approaches addressing issues specific to their individual circumstances, there is a shared interest in further enhancing exchanges of practices and experiences and closer cooperation between the different national actors at European level.¹⁸

4.2 The most relevant and effective initiatives

4.3.1 "TERRA" Initiative

TerRa is a European project supported by the European Commission DG Home Affairs.

The objective of TerRa is to reinforce the positive role victims and former terrorists can play in relation to the prevention of radicalisation and providing practical guidance to specific target groups. Target groups and beneficiaries include victims, (potential) terrorists, EU member states and frontline-workers in the field of law-enforcement, rehabilitation, teaching, welfare and social workers, journalists, policy makers, and religious leaders. The project is now in its second phase - TerRa II, initiated in 2014 upon completion of TerRa I.

During TerRa I, tools to prevent and identify radicalisation, to support individuals who want to disengage from an extremist group were designed. These tools are ready for use. For TerRa II, implementing these tools through a training of trainers

17 European Commission. (May 2018). High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation (HLCGE-R) Final Report 18 May 2018, p.3

18 Ibid.

is envisaged so that they can be disseminated amongst and used by European frontline workers.¹⁹

TerRa stimulates knowledge synthesis and exchange throughout the European Union, between groups and between member states. The project builds on the work of the Network of Victims of Terrorism (NAVt) and is complementary to and provides input for the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) as a “network of networks.”

TerRa’s key points and lessons learned with the first and the second tranche of the program are: 1) All activities are based on an initial research phase that aims to advance existing knowledge around processes of radicalisation to feed into the development of new prevention and de-radicalisation programmes; 2) The programme provides target groups with practical guidance, highlighting the positive role that victims and former terrorists can play in improving and establishing de-radicalisation programmes; 3) Results of the programme to date include: network coverage; education packages; manuals for front line workers; and an overview of approaches to recognise signs of radicalisation.²⁰

4.3.2 “Strive for development” (international initiative)

The EU promotes development approaches which contribute to strengthen the resilience of communities to violent extremism around the world. The new brochure entitled *STRIVE for Development: Strengthening Resilience to Violence and Extremism* provides an outline of the most important concepts and presents EU policy for counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism as well as specific projects in key regions.

Under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace, various global P/CVE actions have been launched around the world under the Strengthening Resilience to Violent Extremism (STRIVE) programme. These STRIVE actions aim to facilitate innovative P/CVE projects in collaboration with local communities, to create conditions conducive to development and resilience towards violent extremism.

Since 2013, over €29 million has been allocated to projects in over 20 countries across the globe to prevent and counter violent extremism.

19 TERRA II Project
https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/financing/fundings/projects/HOME_2013_AG_RAD_4000005270_en

20 European Commission (& RUSI). (2019). STRIVE for Development. Strengthening Resilience to Counter Extremism p.54

P/CVE activities cover a wide and expanding geographic area, including West, North and East Africa; the Middle East; and South and Southeast Asia.²¹

4.3.3 ERASMUS+, International Security Fund, HORIZON2020 and the Media & Communication strategy of the Union (EU Programmes with multiples goals)

In the fight to terrorism and counter radicalisation / PVE, the EU is also utilising their most famous programs as a mean to handle the issues. Indeed, the Internal Security Fund, the Erasmus+ program and the H2020 program are exploited also to favour the fight to radicalisation and violent extremism.

The ISF focus is on achieving two specific objectives: 1) Fight against crime: combating cross-border, serious and organised crime including terrorism, and reinforcing coordination and cooperation between law enforcement authorities and other national authorities of EU States, including with Europol and other relevant EU bodies, and with relevant non-EU and international organisations; 2) Managing risk and crisis: enhancing the capacity of EU States and the Union for managing effectively security-related risk and crisis, and preparing for protecting people and critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks and other security related incidents.²²

The Erasmus+ programme supports training programmes in prisons aimed at preventing and tackling radicalisation. The Radicalisation Prevention in Prisons (R2PRIS) Project was launched in December 2015 to help frontline staff (correctional officers, educational staff and psychologists, social workers, etc) to identify, report and interpret signals of radicalisation and respond appropriately. The project is implemented in five countries, (Portugal, Norway, Turkey, Belgium and Romania) and will include 160 training session by August 2018.

The "Secure Societies" Work Programme of Horizon 2020 for 2016-2017 includes a topic on the development of a comprehensive approach to violent radicalisation in the EU. Four projects of total amount of EUR 12 million were recently selected: PERICLES, MINDb4ACT, PRACTICIES and TRIVALENT. The Commission then launched the reflection on the 2018-2019/20 Work Programme where research on anti-radicalisation plays a key role.²³

The Media and Communication Strategy of the EU is another domain in which the issue of CVE is strongly faced. Indeed, in close relation to the Media Communication

21 European Commission (& RUSI). (2019). STRIVE for Development. Strengthening Resilience to Counter Extremism p.20

22 Internal Security Fund - Police. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/financing/fundings/security-and-safeguarding-liberties/internal-security-fund-police_en

23 European Commission. (2017). ANNEX: State of play of implementing the actions set out to the Commission Communication on supporting the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism (Eight Progress Towards a Genuine Security Union).

Strategy are the Check-the-Web project, which the Council agreed to build, the EU Internet Forum launched in December 2015 in close cooperation with the industry, and (most of all) *the Syria Strategic Communications Advisory Team (SSCAT)* with two components: Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and Counter-Terrorism (CT) communication campaigns to be delivered to Member States, and network for Member States to exchange best practices of CVE and counter-terrorism communications. SSCAT is now renamed the Strategic Communication Network).²⁴

5. Conclusion: critical Assessments of the EU radicalisation process

5.1 Difficulty in evaluating the impact and coordinating CVE approaches

Following the opinion stated by the European Court of Auditors (ECA) on the counter radicalisation domain the Commission addressed the needs of Member States, but there were some shortfalls in coordination and evaluation. For example, the EC's overview of EU-funded actions in this area does not include those managed by Member States, which would be useful to make the most of potential synergies. Furthermore, in ECA's point of view the RAN was not used to its full potential to disseminate the results of successful EU-funded projects.

The Commission has not sufficiently developed its framework for assessing whether its support is effective and offers value for money. For example, it has not broken down the overall policy objectives into more specific and measurable objectives, and the funds that the Commission has used are not accompanied by indicators and targets designed to measure success in addressing radicalisation. Moreover, the achievements of specific actions are often measured in terms of amount of activity rather than effectiveness. As a result, there is a risk that useful lessons might not be disseminated or taken into account when the Commission designs actions or develops its policy further.

On the basis of its findings, the ECA recommends that the Commission should:

- Improve the framework for overall coordination of actions addressing radicalisation;
- Increase practical support to practitioners and policymakers in Member States; and
- Improve the framework for assessing results.²⁵

24 European Parliament. (2017). The European Union's Policies on Counter-Terrorism. Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness. pp.169-170

25 European Court of Auditors. (2018). Special Report no.13 of 2018: Tackling radicalisation that leads to terrorism: the Commission addressed the needs of Member States, but with some shortfalls in coordination and evaluation.

Dangers of a blanket approach/ wider geopolitical measures that miss the nuances of the national and local levels (Islamic focused):

"Young Islamists are deeply affected by racism, exclusion and discrimination - discourses that are unsurprisingly the recruiting sergeants for radicalisers who prey on the internet, luring the susceptible. Far right extremists are affected by the challenges of economic change that have left them behind in the race for individual success in a neoliberal economic system that champions competition, maximisation of profits and infinite choice. Their anger is not too dissimilar to that of the Islamists. However, there is little to mollify these groups through a social policy that nullifies the deleterious consequences of capitalism, with its associated interests in far-flung lands in an attempt to maintain some geopolitical order to politics."²⁶

5.2 Difficulty of tackling lone wolves

Religiously motivated lone wolves do represent a substantial proportion of individually conducted attacks. Religious arguments have been made to legitimise these abhorrent deeds. More dangerously, religious texts have been cited that supposedly call on all Muslims to fight against the oppression of Muslims worldwide. Sayare posited that "Weak and desperate young men [become] transfixed by ultra-violence and the promise of self-affirmation it contains", leading them to "mix personal frustrations with extremist ideologies and externally blame their own problems on others."²⁷

These "little losers", as former CIA officer Glenn Carle described them²⁸, no longer need to be recruited by charismatic leaders sent out by terrorist organisations. The internet has transformed terrorist development from a top-down to bottom-up process. The International Peace Institute (2010) noted that the internet "brings willing candidates to fora through which they can participate" where already extreme views are reinforced due to the selection effect "whereby people seek out others with similar beliefs on the internet."²⁹

26 Thair, A. (Januar 2019). London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE), "Countering violent extremism: a left-realist critique of "Prevent".

27 Sayare, S. (2016). "The Ultimate Terrorist Factory. Are French prisons incubating extremism?", Harper's Magazine.

28 Ibid.

29 DOC Research Institute. (2018). Terrorism and counterterrorism in the EU.

Paper 2.

Contribution of international cooperation

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1. Introduction

The phenomena of P/CVE leading to violent extremism, complex by nature, poses a direct threat to all States and all people regardless of their ethnic background, religion or belief. Therefore, in a globalised world such a threat can and should also be countered through international cooperation and influenced national action.

However, though its complex transnational nature implies that no single State can successfully cope with it alone, regarding non-national aspects, violent extremism has local specificities that have to be taken into account, especially as there are actionable counter-measures. In Europe, for instance, violent religious extremism (jihadism in particular) and violent far-right extremism are considered the two main societal issues and threats, although some member states are facing other threats - ethno-nationalist, far-leftist in particular or the so-called single issue terrorism, to use Europol categories.

The European Union (EU) acknowledges that countering and preventing violent extremism is a common European responsibility³⁰ and is actively engaged in the improvement of its current counter and prevent violent-extremism policies. Specifically, the EU encourages intensive cooperation between its Member States (facilitating the sharing of information, good practices, research and increasing

30 European Commission. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/counter-terrorism_en

joint capabilities). The EU also underlines the importance of having external engagement with its neighbours and where the security situation and instability have repercussions on the EU's internal security.

2. EU pioneer role to support research on P/CVE

The EU has been a pioneer in addressing different forms of violent extremism. This is undoubtedly central to the EU's area of competence, between social policy and internal security, two subjects where it has a decisive impact.

The EU originally developed a comprehensive response to the fight against terrorism - the EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy³¹, adopted by the European Council in 2005. It adopted a holistic approach, while respecting human rights and ethical values, around four pillars:

- Reducing vulnerabilities to terrorist attacks.
- Strengthening the judiciary capacities and the fight against terrorist financing.
- Improving coordination, preparedness (capacity building) in response to and management of a terrorist attack (including consideration of victims).
- Preventing people from turning to terrorism/violent extremism and preventing the emergence of new generations of terrorists.

This is of course fundamental to the prevention and suppression of violent extremism. This is a comprehensive and programmatic approach. It was a question of understanding to prevent or counter.

The analysis of the priorities that the EU has gradually defined reveals an approach that is both comprehensive and responsive. In particular, it has been able, over several years, to generate research efforts that have encouraged international exchanges and cooperation (in particular through EU Delegations overseas). From this point of view, it can be said that the EU is the biggest global innovator in understanding, and thus preventing, violent extremism.

31 European Council. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/fight-against-terrorism/eu-strategy/>

Its position above the Member States has given it a non-national focus, which in the case of the different forms of contemporary violent extremism, most often global, i.e. a-geographical, was much more relevant in the first instance, that of upstream research for solutions.

The EU top-down approach was decisive. It has enabled international or inter-European scientific cooperation and encouraged a constant financial effort through multi-year projects and framework programmes. For instance, several projects targeting a better understanding of the drivers underlying violent extremism were launched under the Sixth (FP6)³², the Seventh Framework Programme for European Research and Technological Development (FP7)³³ and later under Horizon 2020 (H2020³⁴), granting the EU a central and crucial role in the frame of P/CVE. In doing so, it has Europeanised science observing violent extremism. A strictly national approach would have favoured only a geographically fragmented approach, and on specific forms of violent extremism, locally rooted or local forms of global violent extremism.

Within this general policy framework, the EU has initiated research funding which has not only had a systemic impact on European research, fostering scientific exchange and cooperation, but has also promoted a constant effort to move from a theoretical basis (what is the radicalisation process leading to violent extremism?), to a successful, robust P/CVE approach with practitioners' feedbacks, evaluation perspectives or adaptation to expressed operational needs.

Moreover, this approach was quickly linked to more preventive aspects, again related to areas of EU activity. As a soft-actor, with no military or police capacity, but central to social policy in Europe, there was by definition both a budgetary capacity and a legitimacy to intertwine - and this was quickly done - P/CVE with social resilience, fostering social inclusion or more generally tolerance (the "EU common values"). By preventing marginalisation of groups or communities, the EU acted, indirectly or directly, on P/CVE through and with the area of education, youth, social inclusion, integration. It also supported preventing and countering terrorist propaganda or prioritised its involvement in preventing recidivism in jail in favor of disengagement.

In the end, an initiative like the Radicalisation Awareness Network, the third generation of which starts this year, makes the EU-supported exchange of practice a reality on

32 The 6th Framework Programme ran from 2002 to 2006

33 The 7th Framework Programme ran from 2007 to 2013

34 H2020 will end in 2020

the ground. This network of first line practitioners working with people vulnerable to violent extremism includes many professional sectors - police, prisons, probation, as well as teachers, social workers, youth workers, health professionals and civil society representatives. It is also a platform for the exchange of information and experience.

In the future, the EU's contribution will remain essential, particularly if new forms of violent extremism emerge or if current forms evolve, including online³⁵.

3. The EU actions: a global influence

The EU is concretely contributing to elevating the scientific understanding of violent extremism and, most of all, it contributes to disseminate robust practices in P/CVE not only in Europe, but in the whole world. This can be done directly, through cooperation and support funds, or indirectly, by the EU's massive production of norms, guidelines and data.

More recently, the EU placed itself as an active player in the area of development aid strengthening its cooperation in Africa, in the MENA regions and in the Balkans while enhancing its dialogue with the United States of America. The EU is for those reasons both an innovative and a normative actor, both domestically and internationally.

An example of this type of Actions is the development of counter-terrorism action plans with Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, including measures to dissuade and disrupt foreign terrorist fighters' travel as well as to manage their return. Attention will also be given to targeted CT/CVE cooperation with the Western Balkan countries.

The terrorist attacks in Paris (January and November 2015) and Brussels (March 2016), perpetuated by both home-grown terrorists and leaders or sponsors coming from Iraq or Syria through refugees' flux have once again highlighted the continuum between EU domestic and external security. Therefore, the EU, as a global actor in the fight against violent extremism, fully recognises the importance of having consistent external engagement in neighbouring regions where the security situation has direct impact on the EU's domestic security³⁶.

35 Europol. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/about-europol/eu-internet-referral-unit-eu-iru>

36 European Commission. (May 2018). High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation (HLCEG-R) Final Report, p. 13

The EU has provided support to counter violent extremism by means of a wide variety of instruments, particularly under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), aiming at fostering stabilisation, security and prosperity in EU's Southern and Eastern Neighbours, and through wider development.

The EU Emergency Trust Fund³⁷ for Africa (EUTF for Africa), launched by European and African partners at the Valletta Summit on Migration in November 2015, is aimed among other objectives to promote conflict prevention. For example, this may include capacity building to support national security and justice. It contributes to prevent and counter radicalisation and violent extremism³⁸. Specifically, "Programmes under the EU Trust Fund for Africa are implemented in twenty six partner countries across three regions of Africa: the Sahel and Lake Chad, the Horn of Africa and North Africa." For instance, in October 2017 the IGAD ³⁹Promoting Peace and Stability in the Horn of Africa Region⁴⁰ was adopted, a project funded with a EUTF contribution of € 40.000.000 that is intended to contribute to achieving sustainable peace and stability for the attainment of economic integration and development of the IGAD region⁴¹.

The EU also acknowledges that the resilience of MENA states is vital to protect EU territory from terrorist attacks. As consequence, developing counter-terrorism action plans starting with Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, including on measures to dissuade and disrupt foreign terrorist fighters' travel as well as to manage their return, is a top EU priority in its external effort to prevent or counter violent extremism⁴². For instance, Morocco and Tunisia have faced problems in handling radicalised individuals and European countries have worked closely with them on security, providing training and equipment for security practitioners.⁴³

Another important contribution in fostering security and prosperity in EU's Southern and Eastern Neighbours comes from aid to development. For instance,

37 European Commission. EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/index_en

38 European Commission. <https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/thematic/improved-governance-and-conflict-prevention>

39 The IGAD region comprises Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda

40 European Commission. https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/region/horn-africa/regional/promoting-peace-and-stability-horn-africa-region_en

41 European Commission. https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/region/horn-africa/regional/promoting-peace-and-stability-horn-africa-region_en

42 European Council. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/02/09/council-conclusions-counter-terrorism/>

43 European Council on foreign Relations. (15th February 2018). The southern front line: EU Counterterrorism Cooperation with Tunisia and Morocco, Dworkin, A. and EL Malki, F.

between 2012 and 2016 the European Commission implemented a programme, the "Taysir microfinance Greenfield", to support and increase financial inclusion and development in Tunisia by improving living conditions and access to loans for active micro-entrepreneurs. Particularly, micro-credit has been provided to target groups in rural areas where no other micro-finance institutions operate.⁴⁴

Moreover, in February 2020 was launched the NUPI-led and H2020-funded research project PREVEX - Preventing Violent Extremism in the Balkans and the MENA: Strengthening Resilience in Enabling Environments (2020-2023). The goal of the project is to investigate cases of occurrence and non-occurrence of violent extremism in the Balkans and the broader MENA region, including the Sahel, through a comparative perspective, thus taking into account the existing similarities and differences between States and regions.

In addition here, the sharing of common values between Europe and the United States leads to dialogue on common problems on their respective territories.

"Europe needs the United States and vice versa. If we are unanimous, we will overcome all the challenges. If we are unanimous, then our partnership is really essential."⁴⁵ Following that path, significant steps have been taken to address to address the threats of extremism, ranging from combatting the funding of the terrorist organisations to judicial and police cooperation.

Recently, at the EU-U.S. Ministerial Meeting on Justice and Home Affairs that took place in Washington D.C in December 2019, the EU and the U.S reaffirmed their strong commitment to foster the Transatlantic Partnership and shared the common belief that fighting terrorism in all its forms remains a top common priority.

4. Conclusions

Given the complex transnational nature of threat the EU is concretely contributing to elevating the scientific understanding of violent extremism and in disseminating robust practices in P/CVE in the whole world. However, if the necessity of a global and generalised worldwide cooperation in the area of preventing or countering violent extremism appears clear, some questions remain crucial in terms of substance.

44 European Commission (& RUSI). (2015). STRIVE for Development. Strengthening Resilience to Violence and Extremism. <https://rusi.org/sites/default/files/mn0115566enn.pdf>

45 Barroso, J. (9th February 2006). Georgetown University.

What can become of the EU's commitment to P/CVE? In the future, everything may depend in part on the development and changes in the field of violent extremism: will violent and political right-wing extremism develop outside the European states that are affected by it? The same applies to other forms of religious violent extremism. Finally, religious violent extremism, which is often a globalised phenomenon, may depend on the geopolitical conditions developing in the MENA region.

Paper 3.

Policy perspectives of P/CVE in Europe

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1. Introduction

This document contains an overview of several key national and European level reviews of existing P/CVE (preventing/countering violent extremism) approaches. This short paper has been written to increase awareness of several essential criteria required to assess the impact of counter radicalisation policies and programmes throughout the EU.

With regards to contemporary and emerging perspectives in P/CVE, the Consortium (specifically EOS and CENTRIC for this paper) has identified four relevant fields of action to counter radicalisation and violent extremism: Extremism, Adaptability, Local Infrastructure and Alignment.

Regarding these four essential criteria for reviewing the impact of P/CVE approaches, this paper analyses the importance of each criteria against EU-wide and several case study national level implementational perspectives. It is important when analysing the impact of EU level policy approaches to consider to what level they are implemented, engaged with and adopted in national countries.

2. Effectiveness

The public debate on the effectiveness of counter-terrorism policies often seems to be obscured by the lack of proper definition of what one is evaluating, lack of properly formulated policy objectives, policies based on assumptions that do not follow from evidence and analysis and good standards applied to value the so-called effectiveness.

A distinction can be made between formal effectiveness and material effectiveness. Ultimately, the objective of policies is to effectively impact reality as it has been assessed prior to the design of the policy. By looking at official EU Parliament documents, formal effectiveness can be achieved if a policy has been adopted (following the right and legitimate procedure), is in line with the powers allotted to the EU organs (according to mandate), does not undermine the principles (including fundamental and human rights principles) of the EU, is subsequently adopted and implemented in the national jurisdictions of the EU Member States, and is coherent and does not undermine any other policies. On the other hand, the material effect - the impact a policy has on reality - could be positive or negative to the underlying objective of a policy. Whether a policy can be considered to indeed possess material effectiveness depends on whether the policy furthermore provides a proper response to the underlying objective of the policy, which is based on a proper evidence-based needs assessment that spurred the adoption of the EU policy in the first place (relevance).⁴⁶

Effectiveness should be deeply addressed on the communications' field. Following the studies conducted by the LIBE Committee (EP), a strategic communications campaign needs a clear and simple-to-understand, overarching central narrative to cohere a thematically diverse messaging over the short, medium and long term. Effective strategic communications require both a clear identification of the target audiences of a messaging campaign and a nuanced behavioural and attitudinal understanding of that audience. The modern communication environment is such that a messaging effort must take into account a spectrum of potential consumers of the message: intended, unintended, supporters, adversaries and neutrals. Of this varied spectrum of potential consumers, priority must inevitably be placed on a primary target audience (e.g. those who may be susceptible to violent extremist propaganda). Inevitably, a strategic communications campaign will want to narrowly focus on a particular target audience while recognising that the individuals who constitute that audience

⁴⁶ European Parliament. (2017). The European Union's Policies on Counter Terrorism. Relevance, Coherence and Effectiveness, pp.26-27.

will likely represent a motivationally diverse range of consumers. It is for this reason that a strategic communications campaign must deploy a thematically diverse range of messaging in order to resonate across a variety of consumers -in short, different target audiences require different messages. Thus, developing the most nuanced behavioural and attitudinal picture of that target audience is crucial for effective strategic communications.⁴⁷ Synchronising CT-CVE strategic communications with actions and events on the ground is essential for amplifying trust, credibility and legitimacy in the eyes of a target audience for oneself and diminishing those sentiments for adversaries. More important than bureaucratic changes are cultural changes within government departments to appreciate the value of strategic communications as central to operational, strategic and policy decisions.

Accordingly, measuring real (formal and material) effectiveness of all P/CVE policies, although very challenging, could be done in the same way the European Parliament suggested for communication campaigns. EU has been trying for long time to make its policies effective. However, it seems that effectiveness is still much more a philosophical aspect rather than a concrete way to act.

In conclusion, effectiveness of policies is of the utmost importance for EU perspectives in counter radicalisation. End-users should take into account the legitimacy of their procedures as a way to measure the actual effectiveness of P/CVE policies.

3. Adaptability

In order to study the adaptability of P/CVE policies, one could consider the very specific RAND Corporation's study on Counterterrorism evaluation.

To achieve its main goal, the study revolved around three interconnected research tasks. The study opened with the production of a CT and PCVE evaluations inventory. This entailed the development of an inventory of evaluations of CT and PCVE strategies, policies and interventions conducted in the Netherlands and abroad since 1 January 2013. This task entailed: (i) the undertaking of a targeted literature review, aimed at defining key project concepts and finalising the search strategy for building the study inventory; (ii) the undertaking of systematic and targeted literature searches on academic databases and grey literature repositories, as well as by engaging experts and stakeholders from the fields at hand (i.e. CT, PCVE and evaluation); (iii) stakeholder elicitation and validation activities conducted

47 European Parliament. (2018). *Countering Terrorist Narratives*, pp.39,41.

through semi-structured interviews and remote, written consultations; and (iv) the production of the study inventory through a multi-step and multi-strand review process. In parallel to this, the study team undertook the development of an analytical framework to be used for assessing evaluations collected in the study's evaluations inventory. The analytical framework was based on a consultation of experts and a targeted literature review.

Lastly, the study team conducted an analysis of the evaluations inventory and reported on findings, results and recommendations stemming from overall study activities. This entailed the analysis of the CT and PCVE evaluations inventory produced at the start of the study through the lenses of the analytical framework previously prepared. Emerging findings and recommendations were subsequently validated and refined through peer review and expert consultations.

3.1 Key Findings

1. The scope, purpose and activities characterising CT have evolved in recent years in parallel with the growth of the PCVE field. This is both a response to changes in the threat landscape and a result of a growing understanding of terrorism and violent extremism. Dutch authorities have designed and implemented a wide array of CT and P/CVE legislation and measures, in recognition of the need for an approach that goes beyond traditional CT measures.
2. The study produced an inventory comprising of 48 CT and PCVE evaluations manuscripts (38 in English, 6 in Dutch and 4 in German). These were analysed through an analytical framework to identify trends, patterns and characteristics of CT and PCVE evaluation.
3. When compared with results from previous reviews, results from this study suggest that a growing volume of CT and PCVE evaluations is being undertaken and that the majority of these rely on primary data from multiple sources, perspectives and methods. Nonetheless, there appear to be limits to the extent to which evaluation practice has advanced and grown evenly across all areas of CT and PCVE work as significant gaps and shortcomings continue to mar a number of evaluations (e.g. evaluations characterised by designs that undermine their ability to draw robust conclusions about an initiative's impact).
4. A number of issues and challenges continue to mar evaluations in the fields of CT and PCVE, not all of them are exclusive to these fields. Lessons

and reflections identified from evaluations reviewed pertain to: (i) inherent complexities of the fields of CT and PCVE; (ii) challenges associated with measuring real-world phenomena; (iii) challenges associated with existing evaluation designs; (iv) practical difficulties of conducting evaluations; and (v) drawbacks and benefits of specific evaluation methods.⁴⁸

3.2 Recommendations

1. Design and implement approaches for providing researchers with access to sensitive information on CT and PCVE initiatives and beneficiaries. While CT and PCVE are fields characterised by significant political pressures and ethical and sensitivity issues, these dynamics are not unique to them. Furthermore, similar constraints should not be seen as insurmountable given the progress that has been made in adopting robust, empirical evaluation approaches in fields with comparable challenges, such as criminology and gangs' desistance.
2. Facilitate the establishment of mechanisms for data sharing among researchers. In addition to the fact that limited empirical research is conducted within the fields of CT and PCVE, challenges in these fields are further exacerbated by the lack of data-sharing platforms among researchers. Research and evaluation commission agencies could consider generating guidelines for standardising data collection and recording procedures with a view to establishing a repository of anonymised data from CT and PCVE evaluations and research. Equally, existing platforms could be used or popularised in the CT and PCVE evaluation environment.
3. Collect regular baseline measurements and identify proxy measures and alternative indicators to mitigate the impact of data gaps. As evidenced by publications reviewed over the course of this study, several CT and PCVE evaluators lament the lack of regular baseline measurements being conducted for metrics and indicators relevant to CT and PCVE goals.¹³⁶ Agencies commissioning CT and PCVE initiatives and evaluations should consider investing in identifying relevant baseline metrics to be recorded quantitatively at regular intervals. While individual programme implementers and evaluators could collect baseline data more systematically as part of their work, there is merit in considering a more

48 RAND Corporation. (2018). Counter-Terrorism Evaluation. Taking Stock and Looking Ahead, p.38

structured and centralised approach for routine data to be collected on a regular basis at a higher level.

4. Develop a framework for measurement in CT and PCVE, and identify alternative metrics and indicators to (i) measure objective goals that may be used as proxies to investigate overall CT and PCVE trends within target populations; and (ii) to contribute towards developing a more consistent approach to evaluation in these fields.⁴⁹

After having looked at the recommendations, in terms of pure perspectives, one can be asking diverse questions. Those may be collected as follows:

- Since counter-radicalisation efforts are likely to fail in the absence of public support, how can we ensure a line between public perceptions and safety in the face of political tensions (e.g. scapegoating particular communities)?
- What measure could be adopted to win cross community support?
- What measures could be taken to ensure the sustainability of this support?

4. Local infrastructure

By developing the third issue of P/CVE future perspectives, one relevant objective for European countries could be the establishment of ongoing study visit programmes and project-based collaboration as a basis to future policies implementation.

In this regard, the H-LCEGR has already addressed the issue, by inviting MS to take measures in order to strengthen the local infrastructure approach potential. The Group recommends Member States consider the possibility of enhanced study visits with a voluntary peer review element and project-based collaboration to facilitate the implementation of further actions. The enhanced study visits aim at facilitating mutual learning, exchange of good practices and receiving feedback on applied approaches as well as identification of transferable elements Furthermore, a project-based collaboration would allow working in smaller groups of Member States sharing a common interest and a joint elaboration of solutions to challenges.

49 RAND Corporation. (2018). Counter-Terrorism Evaluation. Taking Stock and Looking Ahead., pp.69-70

In addition to these optional working methods, the recommendations foresee a number of mapping and comparative analyses in different areas (e.g. existing practices and trainings to prevent and counter radicalisation in the prison and probation context, local multi-agency approaches, expertise in prevention and responses to youth radicalisation) which could build on the identification of promising practices or the elaboration of guidance by the RAN, and call for more transparency and accessibility of the results. The outcome of these activities will support targeted actions.

These endeavours would usefully be complemented by an increased sharing and steering of relevant research projects and findings (e.g. as regards approaches in prisons, radicalisation factors and pathways offline and online, evaluations of approaches and interventions), as recommended by the Group.⁵⁰

These projects and programmes should be directed to the most vulnerable people of the society. One can identify those as young people, emarginated people and, by looking at the recent developments of terrorist attacks and the identity of foreign fighters, women.

In order to better understand the potential of this strategy and to solve the problems linked to it, it could be considered to look at an example. Following the Youth Justice Board's study, called "Process Evaluation of Preventing Violent Extremism Programmes for Young People", project interventions focused mainly on young Muslim males. Several projects included work with mixed groups, but only a minority of projects ran interventions with female-only groups. Practically all of the projects included a focus on the themes of dialogue and debate, identity and belonging, personal social education and supporting multicultural values. The overwhelming majority of the 48 YJB PVE projects worked with young people within the Criminal Justice System, sometimes exclusively so. Reflecting this, reducing offending for volume crime was a priority for the majority of projects. Interventions that were less prevalent across the programme included those aiming to support families or to build the resilience of communities, and interventions providing in-depth theological education and discussion that aimed to support moderate interpretations of Islam. Twenty-six projects implemented at least some interventions which had specific relevance to PVE. In the other 22 projects, interventions closely resembled more general youth inclusion/engagement programmes or community cohesion work and would have looked little different had the objective to prevent violent extremism been removed."⁵¹

50 European Commission. (May 2018). High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation (HLCERG-R) Final Report, p.16

51 Young Justice Board. (2012). Process Evaluation of Preventing Violent Extremism Programmes for Young People, p.9.

4.1 Programme delivery must reflect the local needs and focus on the community-based modes of delivery

- Steps should be taken to move towards a position where PVE projects are delivered through community-based organisations that have a proven track record of delivering PVE-style interventions.
- Only targeted PVE interventions should continue to be delivered in the secure estate.
- PVE interventions in the secure estate should be restricted to those young people most at risk of succumbing to radicalisation, identified through a combination of PVE-specific risk factors.
- Where cases are identified of young people who show signs of radicalisation in the secure estate for children and young people, staff should ensure that PVE work constitutes a core resettlement activity. In such cases, PVE should constitute an additional eighth resettlement pathway, allowing for a systematic PVE-focused follow-up on release.⁵²

4.2 The programme must target and focus a particular target group in order for the PVE activity to lead to the intended results

- Young people should not be referred for PVE interventions on the basis of background offending risk factors, but on a combination of specific PVE-related risk factors (for example, perception of injustice, hatred towards an out-group, frustration, persecution, identity confusion).
- A national assessment and monitoring tool should be developed specifically for selecting young people to participate in PVE interventions and in order to monitor their progress.

4.3 Programme development must contain features that are inclusive, context-specific, and can be delivered with minimal local resources

- Web-based toolkits should be (potentially) developed to disseminate information about promising practice in tackling violent extremism. This should include the hosting of materials that have been developed specifically to tackle violent extremism, and that can be downloaded and shared, and the facility for practitioners to share their experiences in online networking forums.

52 Young Justice Board. (2012). Process Evaluation of Preventing Violent Extremism Programmes for Young People, p.11

- It is suggested that:
 - interventions should be developed that challenge extremist ideology through debate and discussion around theology; these should be delivered in an informal setting through community-led debates
 - interventions should be adopted that incorporate detached outreach work with young people
 - PVE projects should prioritise interventions that help develop critical thinking skills among young people at risk. These give young people the ability to think independently and equip them with the cognitive tools needed to reflect critically upon extremist narratives and where necessary, challenge them directly.
- Work undertaken within PVE projects should maintain a focus on the key objectives of the Prevent Strategy and be clearly distinguishable from other social policy goals such as community cohesion.
- Projects should pay careful attention to the local context prior to making a decision regarding the naming of projects and interventions, and the language used to describe interventions.
- Facilitators and project staff more generally should have a high level of PVE knowledge and competence. Projects need to prioritise the recruitment of highly skilled and knowledgeable staff, and/or the training of staff to equip them with relevant skills and knowledge.⁵³

4.4. Establishing direct connections with local partners

“Those case studies that addressed PVE in the most direct manner tended to have the greatest confidence that their interventions were directly preventing young people from becoming radicalised or sympathetic to radicalised groups. These projects were able to cite specific examples of young people with extremist views who had come to their attention and more intensive work had been undertaken with them. Several projects pointed to the numbers of young people on their programme, and high levels of referral and participation as an indicator of success. Practitioners from five projects commented that the success of their approach lay in reaching young people who were not engaging in any other activities or youth services, building trust

53 Young Justice Board. (2012). Process Evaluation of Preventing Violent Extremism Programmes for Young People, pp.11-12

and providing an opportunity to speak to someone they may not otherwise have spoken to.

In terms of perspectives:

1. Do the EU strategies reflect the member state requirements sufficiently?
2. How can the EU centralise strategies to minimise the implementation efforts?

Another domain that should not be left unanalysed, when dealing with local infrastructure issues, is the P&P (prison and probation contest) and, mostly, “rehab” processes. De-radicalisation, disengagement and rehabilitation programmes could cover, in particular:

- developing inmates’ social competencies and communication skills;
- education and vocational training for inmates to assist their integration after release;
- cognitive behavioural training (e.g. to modify impulsive and egocentric thinking);
- counselling, therapy and rehabilitation (e.g. treatment for substance abuse, or for violent or criminal behaviour);
- involvement in cultural, social and sporting events
- encouraging inmates to eschew violence in all its forms.

Measurable performance indicators could be defined to assess the effectiveness of de-radicalisation, disengagement and rehabilitation programmes.

Religious representatives who provide spiritual assistance to inmates play a significant role in providing a counter-narrative to violent religious ideologies. They can understand and, when necessary, challenge a terrorist and violent extremist offender’s worldview and theological interpretations. Support for religious representatives - such as specialised training - could be provided, focusing on constructive communication and alternative narratives. To avoid any risk of further radicalisation of inmates, the religious representatives engaging with them -

sometimes employed by prisons - could be subject to a thorough vetting process and selection procedure, before being appointed, in accordance with national legislation.⁵⁴

For the perspectives

Assessing the risk: Specialised staff - individuals trained to observe intercultural differences and recognise signs of radicalisation - employed to monitor the behaviour and affiliations of inmates have proven an efficient method for identifying sources and facilitators of radicalisation. These staff members could also regularly exchange information with other relevant parties, including but not limited to other prison staff, prison and probation services and other competent authorities. Professional risk assessment tools (e.g. VERA-2R, ERG 22), adapted to the needs of each Member State, can be used to inform proportionate risk management, to increase understanding and confidence among front-line staff and decision-makers working with terrorist and violent extremist offenders, and to facilitate and guide effective targeted intervention." An effective assessment, based on clear and operational indicators, could take into account, for example, three dimensions of radicalisation: 1. how committed an individual is to the radical ideology; 2. how likely (s)he is to engage in violence as a result; and 3. how capable (s)he is of doing harm. Risk assessments could be carried out regularly by the prison administration - in cooperation with other national authorities, including judicial authorities and security services - to appraise the risk posed by radicalised inmates.⁵⁵

5. Alignment

For the last (but not least) point of consideration for the future perspectives, it can be identified three "sub-strategies" to follow. One can consider to look at the recommendations made by the European Commission and decide to develop them further. Here are some suggestions.

5.1 Alignment between local and global contexts

A barrier to sustained progress in advancing the "whole-of-society" approach centres around the challenges of aligning the framing of the "global" "whole-of-society" P/

54 Council of the European Union. (2019). Draft Council Conclusions on preventing and combating radicalisation in prisons and on dealing with terrorist and violent extremist offenders after release, 2019, p.11

55 Council of the European Union. (2019). Draft Council Conclusions on preventing and combating radicalisation in prisons and on dealing with terrorist and violent extremist offenders after release, 2019, pp.9-10

CVE agenda more broadly with the priorities and concerns of the CSOs and other local actors that are critical to sustaining it. Among the lessons learned over the past few years are that many (but not all) efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism work best when they are led by local actors, such as municipalities, schools, and civil society since they know the local context and what motivates some people to commit horrible acts. Additionally, the willingness of these local actors to engage, let alone lead, in this space—and the depth of their involvement—is very much linked to how the issue is framed and what terminology is used. Despite the plethora of P/CVE conferences, workshops, action plans, and programs and discussions about how to address the threat posed by violent extremism, the use of P/CVE or “violent extremism” terminology has proven to be counterproductive in certain local contexts, as it can negatively impact actual work on the ground. In certain circumstances, this language can alienate communities by giving the impression that there is something wrong or needs fixing and that the beneficiaries are a threat. Therefore, more attention needs to be given to ensuring the policies and programs aimed at P/CVE at the local level are framed around issues, labels, and discourse that most likely resonate with relevant, grassroots civil society groups and communities. Any appreciation of local priorities and concerns requires governments to consult with and listen to local communities before elaborating policies and programs that involve them.⁵⁶

This is particularly important given the rampant growth of Far Right and Nationalistic ideologies that actively reject supra-national political, legal, and societal campaigns. EU-generic policies for both deploying and assessing P/CVE approaches in countries such as the UK for example, could potentially exacerbate tensions further, whether it is through public rejection from Far Right leaders such as Stephen Yaxley Lennon (AKA Tommy Robinson)⁵⁷, or through a lack of nuance and understanding of extremely specific tensions and historical problems in places such as in Northern Ireland alongside dissident republican and loyalist paramilitary groups.⁵⁸ In this manner, P/CVE training, interventions and programs must consider the level of transparency and approachability they are offering to a variety of audiences. It is crucial also to consider how different audiences will respond and engage with such measures dependent on whether they appear to be backed by an official government, a local or regional police force, a charity or non-governmental organisation, or, through a specific funding sources.

56 RUSI. (2018). A Road Map to Progress. The State of Global P/CVE Agenda, p.24-25

57 Bond, D., Warrel, H.(2019). UK Far Right Extremism: Hate Spreads from the Fringe. Financial Times. <https://www.ft.com/content/6abda90e-70bf-11e9-bf5c-6eeb837566c5>

58 Rios, B. (2019). The EU is a driving force in supporting peace for Northern Ireland. Euractiv. Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/economy-jobs/news/eu-as-a-driving-force-in-supporting-peace-in-northern-ireland/>

Currently, growing scepticism and distrust towards these backing sources (for example, the far rights rejection of George Soros initiatives⁵⁹ and the far left's rejection of the UK Prevent Program⁶⁰), play a significant role in limiting the effectiveness and engagement level of P/CVE approaches and can undermine their legitimacy and authenticity. It is recommended that forward thinking initiatives should take this into consideration and give significant thought to how they may be misconstrued and manipulated from belligerent actors, as well as failing to effectively interact with their target audiences.

5.2 Enhancing information sharing/exchange, by creating stronger networks

*"Taking into account the HLCEG-R scoping paper and the recommendations and findings of the HLCEG-R Interim Report, the Group emphasises the importance of establishing the necessary framework conditions at EU level to facilitate a more systematic exchange and collaboration between the main stakeholders, to enhance capacity building measures and better pool resources, expertise and know how at EU level to effectively support the different stakeholders in Member States. Recognising the potential of existing initiatives, while stressing the need for better coordination between and increased capacity of existing initiatives, the Group favours a gradual approach. To achieve this, the Group recommends as an immediate step to strengthen and foster synergies between existing networks and initiatives facilitating exchanges among relevant stakeholders, while enhancing Member State involvement in the steer of EU activities and initiatives at EU level, referred to as "EU prevent work" in the following fora."*⁶¹

Whilst the search for increased collaboration and information is crucially important, there are several practical challenges that must be considered at the EU and national level. Firstly, there should be a comprehensible understanding of the variety and diversity of different local, regional and national approaches to policing, monitoring, preventing and safeguarding different violent extremist actors and organisations. In the UK for example, violent extremists can be considered an umbrella term that may include terrorist actors as well as domestic extremist organisations, the latter of which is largely considered a local or regional problem for primarily policing oversight of, whereas the former is considered a national security priority threat -

59 Wilson, J. (2018). "Dripping with poison of antisemitism": the demonisation of George Soros. The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/oct/24/george-soros-antisemitism-bomb-attacks>

60 Grierson, J. (2019). Database "reinforces worst fears" about Prevent, says Labour. The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/oct/07/secret-prevent-index-reinforces-worst-fears-about-programme>

61 European Commission. (2018). The Final Report of the High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation, pp.14-15

which in turn is dealt with by specialist police branches, military defence agencies and intelligence services. Where this may be problematic at a wider EU policy level, is that the lines between national approaches, such as the labelling of groups as “prescribed terrorist” or “domestic extremist” can affect the ability to share intelligence and resources. Groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir may be considered a legal, yet, concerning extremist group in the United Kingdom, but in other EU countries such as France and Spain, they have been a prescribed, illegal, terrorist organisation since 2008.⁶² The differences between the allocation and prescription of terrorist organisations can hinder joint-country investigations and operations, particularly, when one nation may classify and silo intelligence based upon a different threat level. Further compounding the problems of a lack of unity and cohesion, is the fact that each of the 28 European Member States feature significant differences in their national approaches towards preventing and prosecuting suspects associated with violent extremist and terrorist organisations. Further compounding this problem is a lack of clarity of the definitive terms of who or what is the appropriate definition of a terrorist actor, with critics such as Cornelia Ernst (from the group European United Left) specifying that the EU counter terrorism objectives are largely flawed due to a lack of clear cut liabilities, aims, objectives, subsequently there are concerns that this could lead to the erosion of liberties and freedoms.⁶³ Contrary to this, other European legislators such as MEP Cecilia Wikstrom (of the Liberals party) argue that more should be done to increase the involvement of member states with mandatory rules for intelligence sharing, Wikstrom stated that there have been known cases where one member state has withheld intelligence on terrorist actors from the other EU countries: “which is a huge problem.”⁶⁴

5.3 Establishing a Steering Board in which Member States can share expertise with relevant EU agencies and bodies (EEAS, EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator etc.), plus creation of a dedicated task force

“The Group underlines the importance of Member States having a more active role. Against this background, it proposes to set up a Steering Board which would advise the Commission on strategic priorities for “EU prevent work”, ensuring that the relevant EU initiatives address the needs, requirements and priorities at EU level of the relevant stakeholders in Member States. It would be composed primarily by Member States and chaired by the Commission. The Group suggests that the EU Counter

62 Filiu, J-P. (June 2008). Hizb ut-Tahrir and the fantasy of the caliphate. Le Monde Diplomatique (retrieved on the 7th October 2019). <https://mondediplo.com/2008/06/04caliphate>

63 EuranetPlus, (2016). Plan “C” - Europe’s new counter-terrorism framework. Youtube. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8Hdybz111k>

64 Ibid.

*Terrorism Coordinator (EUTC) and the European External Action Service (EEAS) should be granted observer status. Other stakeholders offering valuable insights and being instrumental in the implementation of different actions should inform the Steering Board. The Group suggests that the Steering Board adopt annual strategic orientations for EU prevent work in different areas as well as an opinion on the use of EU funding instruments. The Group considers that the strategic steer of the Board should be complemented by a Task Force within the Commission to coordinate and steer actions undertaken at EU level. The Group recommends entrusting the Task Force with a threefold role: Its most prominent responsibility would be to act as a coordination and knowledge hub for activities at EU level. In this function, the Task Force should leverage on the experience, research and analysis resulting from various EU instruments (like the RAN, the EU Internet Forum, European Strategic Communications Network, but also EU funded projects) and other EU networks (such as the network of prevent policy makers or a network of researchers such as the EENeT) to stimulate increased exchanges and collaboration between the different stakeholders, networks and initiatives. At the same time, the Task Force would pool and better disseminate the relevant research findings, expertise and know-how at EU level (including on EU funded projects). The Group underlines the importance of a dedicated Task Force also in terms of an enhanced visibility and coherence, and for the purpose of implementing this report acting as a point of contact for internal and external stakeholders."*⁶⁵

This is particularly relevant due to the increase in terrorism threats that cross traditional sovereign boundaries, from both technological advancements and the prominent cross-border nature of terrorist groups. With particular reference to the internet for example, it is notable that terrorist organisations now have the ability to reach audiences and disseminate content on a global scale, and that future policies will need to address these transitions using innovative approaches that can incorporate the growing globalisation of threats. Creating an EU level Steering Board in conjunction with a task force will improve the synergy between Member States in terms of intelligence sharing, cooperation and risk/threat management. Particularly within an EU context the Steering Board will be able to improve the current knowledge of cross-cultural terrorism threats and ensure that the relevant Member States are informed of the emergence of new threats so the most effective policies can be developed and implemented. This solution could resolve the complications which individual Member States' policies concerning counter-terrorism currently undergo, for example the concept of freedom of speech may vary between one state and the

65 Ibid.

other. Furthermore, by cooperating with EU agencies and bodies the synchronisation between the relevant organisations can be improved through sharing best practices in areas such as interventions, policy making and preventative methods. By acting as a central point of contact the Task Force can help to bridge the gap between Member States, organisations and relevant stakeholders to ensure that communication and knowledge exchanges are maintained.

Although this suggested method could be effective for analysing more generic threats across the EU, the Steering Board would have to be aware of how more specific threats can be more impactful to some Member States over others. However, this is not to say that raising awareness of particular groups such as the Third Path (The III. Path) in Germany and the Golden Dawn in Greece between Member States is irrelevant.^{66 67} By conducting knowledge exchanges the Steering Board will gain substantial knowledge on smaller level threats as well as larger organisations which have increasing presence in multiple Member States.

66 Leigh, A. (2003). "The Rise and Fall of the Third Way." *Australian Quarterly*. 10-15.

67 Counter Extremism Project (2019). Golden Dawn. Available from: <https://www.counterextremism.com/threat/golden-dawn> (Retrieved 10 October 2019).

Paper 4.

Updating a research agenda on radicalisation; contributions from gender, youth, psychological and technology studies

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1. Introduction

Radicalisation is not directly associated with any particular religion, nationality, civilisation or ethnic group.⁶⁸ On the contrary, due to its complex transnational nature, this phenomenon poses threats to the security and fundamental rights of all people regardless of their ethnic background, religion or belief. Radicalisation leading to violent extremism can thus be considered as a multivariate phenomenon and a non-linear process that can lead to different forms of violent extremism and caused the forced diaspora of millions of people around the world.

The exploitation of religion by Islamic extremists to use violence both overseas and at home is one of the gravest dangers facing our contemporary society. Al Qaeda likely represents the most pressing manifestation of this problem as its ideology has spread not only in the Middle East and South Asia but has also subsidiaries in North

68 Unesco. <https://en.unesco.org/ConfQcUNESCO/home>

Africa, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon. Moreover, in the last decade another serious threat has emerged around the world with the rise of the Islamic State (IS), a radical and extremely violent group that represents an unprecedented challenge to the security and sovereignty of each and every state.

However, despite the continuing attention for Islamist extremism, European countries have also been alarmed by some forms of violent political extremism. Right-wing extremism has gained increasing attention in Europe in recent years. In Belgium for example the *Vlaams Belang*⁶⁹ captures massive interest of the population via social media⁷⁰. Although there are issues of contention amongst the different definitions of right-wing extremism, most scholars concur that the concept primarily describes an ideology characterised by specific properties such as nationalism, racism and xenophobia, anti-democratic sentiments, populist and anti-establishment rhetoric.⁷¹ One example of right-wing extremism is the mass murder perpetrated by the radical extremist Anders Breivik in Norway on 22 July 2011. It is also worth noting the existence of left-wing extremists, who support revolutionary Marxist or anarchist ideas and fight for the establishment of a communist or an anarchist society. Particularly, left-wing extremism incites resistance against state structures and institutions such as the rule of law, the police or parliamentary democracy. It is important to highlight that some EU Member States, like France or Spain, still face considerable challenges from the Corsican independence movement and the Basque separatist movement ETA, which, even if they are in decline, could reappear under certain circumstances.

Since violent extremism penetrates a wide range of social aspects and poses direct threats to the security and fundamental rights of all societies, this paper is aimed at updating the research agenda on radicalisation by taking into account contributions from different fields of studies, namely gender, youth, psychosocial and technology studies.

2. Gender diversity and P/CVE perspectives

Women have so far received less effort and attention in P/CVE practice and research than men. Violent extremism often has male-oriented agendas. This should not be a

69 To translate "Flemish Interest." The *Vlaams Belang* is a right-wing Flemish political party in the Flemish Region and in Brussels. *Vlaams Belang* is a rebrand of *Vlaams Blok*, Party condemned for racism and dissolved after a trial in 2004.

70 During the election campaign of 2019, the party spent more on Facebook advertising than all the other Flemish parties combined.

71 Carter, E. (2018). Right-wing extremism/radicalism: reconstructing the concept, *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 23:2, 157-182, DOI: 10.1080/13569317.2018.1451227

surprise considering the low number of women involved in terrorism. More broadly, viewed from criminology and sociology perspectives, violence is rather masculine⁷². This "gender" focus in violent extremism deserves to be examined by forms of extremism, as ideology shapes the role of women⁷³.

Jihadist ideology⁷⁴ limits female militants - the "sisters" -, to a family role. It confines them to a "parenthood" or "wife jihad"⁷⁵. This does not mean that their militant contribution is secondary. Many women (wives or mothers) played an active role in the moral police patrolling the streets of the ISIS caliphate. For instance, the Al-Khansaa Brigade was an "all-women" moral police, based on religion, active in Raqqa and Mosul⁷⁶. This unit was in charge of enforcing hisbah - an individual and collective duty to impose good and forbid wrong to preserve the sharia principles. This experience remained limited.

Possibly, this secondary role for women built on a fundamentalist interpretation led to biases in counterterrorism or P/CVE: This imposed obliteration made women invisible or passive to police and preventive agents. Recently, however, the *muhajirat* (migrant women) became a critical concern for European countries, because of their number. These European citizens emigrated to ISIS or Al-Qaeda (AQ) controlled zones⁷⁷, for a wide variety of reasons: for instance, family breakdowns, radical indoctrination, online recruitment, emotional or love ties, family reunification or existential issues.

Violent right-wing extremism - and in particular the violent skinhead movement -, always viewed women, "drawn into it either because they found the culture, its music, style and violence, appealing or because they started dating a skinhead"⁷⁸. Women's role has been rather limited, because of stereotyped, reserved role in the neo-Nazi culture of violence and beliefs.

By contrast, egalitarian and feminist principles made women's role in violent far-left extremism - for example in the 1970s -, rather active and visible. Female militants

72 American Psychological Association. (2018). Harmful masculinity and violence, Understanding the connection and approaches to prevention. <https://www.apa.org/pi/about/newsletter/2018/09/harmful-masculinity>

73 Bloom, M. (2011). "Bombshells: Women and Terror," *Gender Issues* 28, pp. 1-21.

74 More details will be given below in the analysis focused on the Female Jihadists

75 Lahoud N. (2014) "The Neglected Sex: The Jihadis" Exclusion of Women From Jihad," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 6(5), pp. 780-802.

76 Terrorism Research & Analysis Consortium (TRACT). <https://www.trackingterrorism.org/group/al-khansaa-brigade-islamic-state-female-unit-isisf>

77 Von Knop, K. (2007). "The Female Jihad: Al Qaeda Women," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 30., pp. 397-414.

78 Borgeson K, Maria Valeri R. (2017) "Skinhead History, Identity, and Culture", NY, Routledge, ch.4

became full-fledged players, as, according to their narrative, they specifically fought against "capitalist alienation", that is, for instance, female body merchandising, traditional family values and gender stereotypes⁷⁹. Various political fringes and some pop culture heroised Ulrike Meinhoff or Gudrun Esslin figures, making of it a kind of "terrorist chic." The current far-leftist violence falls short of the member States' terrorism legal definitions. It should not, however, lead us to ignore the danger that some fringes of these networks could gradually fall into terrorist-level violent extremism.

Other forms of borderline or presently almost nonactive ethno-separatist violence - often with a Marxist background - give a major role to women, including in operations: for instance, Kurdish, Basque or Corsican groups⁸⁰.

This variety in violent extremism leads to a diversity of P/CVE answers. A widow or mother returning from Syria, with several children, a posttraumatic syndrome and indoctrination carried out by ISIS has specific needs for disengagement, if it is possible. It may differ from disengaging a neo-Nazi woman who fell into violent extremism in a Northern European rural area and has some social traits of isolation. Solutions are rarely universal when it turns to violent extremist individuals.

There is likely a lack of robust comparative data here, both in research and practice. The radicalisation process may differ significantly or not. The enemy representation may be enrooted in similar negative stereotypes, or not. Some psychological and social profiles may be overrepresented, others non-actionable or almost non-observable here or there. P/CVE with different violent extremism are based on the same preconditions (for instance distantiating efforts, group sessions, anger issue management) and often do not display the same concrete solutions and tools. They are very specialised. In a nutshell, to adhere to open society values requires different efforts and steps for a neo-Nazi and a female jihadist, because their radicality "crystallises" on different hatreds and dislikes.

Such crystallisation can appear and feed on sudden and unpredictable events: the covid-19 effects on violent extremism are still unknown. Some see confinement as the "bourgeois state's" control to settle capitalist totalitarianism, others as "divine punishment", the latter as a conspiracy thought by "a minority."

79 Melzer P. (2015) "Death in the Shape of a Young Girl: Women's Political Violence in the Red Army Faction", New York, NYU Press.

80 Haner, M., Cullen, F. T., & Benson, M. L. (2019). "Women and the PKK: Ideology, Gender, and Terrorism." *International Criminal Justice Review*.

Finally, to further develop guidelines for P/CVE practitioners' interaction with beneficiaries is still critical. A female practitioner may have to dodge beneficiaries' opposition, as she does not have a veil or because of her skin color. Actionable solutions must be sought and promoted here.

As an illustration a specific focus and analysis has been put on Female Jihadists:

Before Islamic State: Serving the Family

The role of women in Islamic terrorism has evolved significantly in recent years from homemakers (e.g. wives, mothers) to frontline combatants as suicide bombers, recruiters, or a part of terrorist groups' official female police force⁸¹.

Each of these roles signifies a purpose and has policy implication. Identifying oneself "as a "bride" or a "mother" assures women of purposeful living, and being a "sister" entails building deep, everlasting relationships with other women in the Caliphate"⁸². Additionally, women are portrayed as the spiritual protector of the faith, shielding their family and homes from the superficiality and falsehood that the world brings. The honour of being a mother is perceived by the jihadist women instrumental to continuing their ideology and activity by generating and socialising new generations of jihadists⁸³.

Women affiliated with IS: A global picture

ISIS attracted large numbers of females from across the globe. Figures demonstrate the five highest recorded national contributors of female affiliates (based on highest estimates) were Russia (1,000), Tunisia (700), France (382), China (350) and Morocco (293), highlighting the regional and ethnic diversity of affiliates. In proportional terms to male affiliates, these figures also prove particularly interesting. The countries with the five highest proportion of female affiliates were Iran (76%), Croatia (57 - 71%), China (35%), Kazakhstan (25 - 30%), and Netherlands (27%). Figures from China highlight 300 "fighters" and 700 "family members" that travelled, demonstrating the diversity of groups travelling, whether single individuals, small groups, friends, family, and so forth. Women increasingly began to travel to Syria and Iraq from June 2014 after the announcement of the "caliphate", but some saw figures for women

81 Gan, R, Seng Neo, L, Chin, J. and Khader, M. (2019) Change is the Only Constant: The Evolving Role of Women in the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), *Women & Criminal Justice*, 29:4-5, 204-220.

82 Ibid.

83 Mekhennet, S., and Warrick, J. (2017). The jihadist plan to use women to launch the next incarnation of ISIS. The Washington Post. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/the-jihadist-plan-touse-women-to-launch-the-next-incarnation-of-isis/2017/11/26/e81435b4-ca29-11e7-8321-481fd63f174d_story.html?noredirect%on&utm_term=.e468bf9aead2 (Accessed 16 April 2020).

peak in 2015 -16 where they represented up to one in three travelling to Syria and Iraq from key countries in Europe like the UK and France⁸⁴.

Women in ISIS played multiple roles and the main ones are discussed briefly below.

As policing officials

In 2014, ISIS created an all-female police unit, Al-Khansaa Brigade, to enforce the strict rules and regulations stipulated by the Caliphate⁸⁵. The unit performed multiple tasks, including: monitoring the wider community, gathering information on people who denounced ISIS, taking charge of the prison camps and recruiting new women⁸⁷. The unit used violent methods in carrying out their duty. For example, the unit severely punished a woman at a market when she lifted her veil simply to inspect the item she was purchasing⁸⁸. In another incidence, the unit used a poisonous metal jaw device to bite a 10-year-old girl who eventually bled to death. The girl was punished for stepping outside of her house unaccompanied while cleaning⁸⁹.

As Recruiters

Female jihadists played an important role in recruiting new members to ISIS. Female jihadists carried out intensive social media campaigns to recruit women, located in Syria or Iraq⁹⁰. The online campaigns would usually be inspirational in nature, containing deep and personal reflections of what it would be like to leave one's family behind to join ISIS⁹¹. Additionally, through online platforms such as Twitter, women would share practical advice including what to bring to the Caliphate, or emotive messages rallying other women to join the group⁹². The female recruiters were instrumental in the global outreach of ISIS; where in the last five years, 13% of 41,490 foreign citizens who joined ISIS were women; 97% were below the age of 18.

84 Cook, J. and Vale, G. (2018). From Daesh to "Diaspora": Tracing the Women and Minors of Islamic State. ICSR. Available from: <https://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ICSR-Report-From-Daesh-to-%E2%80%98Diaspora%E2%80%99-Tracing-the-Women-and-Minors-of-Islamic-State.pdf> (Accessed 16 March 2020).

85 Gan, R, Seng Neo, L, Chin, J. and Khader, M. (2019). Change is the Only Constant: The Evolving Role of Women in the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), *Women & Criminal Justice*, 29:4-5, 204-220.

86 Spencer, A. N. (2016). The hidden face of terrorism: An analysis of the women in Islamic State. *Journal of Strategic Security*, 9(3), 74-98.

87 Ibid.

88 Gan, R, Seng Neo, L, Chin, J. and Khader, M. (2019) Change is the Only Constant: The Evolving Role of Women in the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), *Women & Criminal Justice*, 29:4-5, 204-220.

89 Ibid.

90 Baker, A. (2014). How ISIS is recruiting women from around the world. *TIME*. Retrieved from <http://time.com/3276567/how-isis-is-recruiting-women-from-around-the-world/> (Accessed 16 April 2020).

91 Ibidem

92 Gan, R, Seng Neo, L, Chin, J. and Khader, M. (2019) Change is the Only Constant: The Evolving Role of Women in the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), *Women & Criminal Justice*, 29:4-5, 204-220.

As fighters or suicide bombers in military operations

Women proactively participated in front-line roles such as military combatants and suicide bombers. ISIS issued statements on a global scale, calling on women to perform jihad (Noor, 2017). In 2016, ISIS was reported to have formed an all-female sniper squad⁹³. In 1979, Abdullah Azzam, the Palestinian cofounder of Al-Qaeda issued a fatwa, which stated that women (and children) are required to participate in jihad⁹⁴. Similarly, Hamas anhas increasingly been using female suicide attackers in Israel to provide operational support⁹⁵. Using female military operatives by Hamas has been effective in garnering media attention and achieving four times as many victims as males⁹⁶.

Motivations

Religion/ Ideology

Ideology plays an important role in drawing women who seek meaning in their lives through Islam into terrorist activities⁹⁷. The online extremist materials motivate those who desire to live rightly for Allah to join jihadi groups, leaving their families and lives behind^{98 99}. Most women who have joined radical groups are educated and seek to live as “good Muslim”¹⁰⁰, defying the media portrayal of these women becoming easily influenced by romantic impulses. The women who emigrate to join a terrorist cell decide with conscience informed by religious ideology. These women are aware of the outcomes of their decisions, as well as of the fact that they are leaving their homes behind to enter a war-torn area with conflict and strife, and are prepared to make insurmountable sacrifices in order to receive the promises of the afterlife¹⁰¹.

93 Crouch, H. (2017). ISIS unleashes deadly new all-female sniper gang—as fanatics kill an innocent man for accepting water from Iraqi soldiers. The Sun. Retrieved from <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/3244879/isis-unleashesdeadly-new-all-female-sniper-gang-as-fanatics-kill-an-innocent-man-for-accepting-water-from-iraqi-soldiers/> (Accessed 16 April 2020).

94 Bloom, M. (2017). Women and terrorism. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics, doi:10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.124 (Accessed 16 April 2020).

95 Gan, R, Seng Neo, L, Chin, J. and Khader, M. (2019) Change is the Only Constant: The Evolving Role of Women in the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Women & Criminal Justice, 29:4-5, 204-220.

96 Bloom, M. (2017). Women and terrorism. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics, doi:10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.124 (Accessed 16 April 2020).

97 Dearden, L. (2017a). How ISIS attracts women and girls from Europe with false offer of “empowerment.” Independent. Retrieved from <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/isis-jihadi-brides-islamic-statewomen-girls-europe-british-radicalisation-recruitment-report-a7878681.html> (Accessed 16 April 2020).

98 Gan, R, Seng Neo, L, Chin, J. and Khader, M. (2019) Change is the Only Constant: The Evolving Role of Women in the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Women & Criminal Justice, 29:4-5, 204-220.

99 Dearden, L. (2017b). Former British Isis jihadi claims racism while growing up in London fuelled her radicalisation. Independent. Retrieved from <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/isis-british-supporter-jihadiracism-london-growing-up-radicalisation-tania-georgelas-choudhury-a8042426.html> (Accessed 16 April 2020).

100 Milton-Edwards, B., & Attia, S. (2017). Female terrorists and their role in jihadi groups. Brookings. Retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/female-terrorists-and-their-role-in-jihadi-groups/> (Accessed 16 April 2020).

101 Gan, R, Seng Neo, L, Chin, J. and Khader, M. (2019) Change is the Only Constant: The Evolving Role of Women in the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Women & Criminal Justice, 29:4-5, 204-220.

Alienation and Inequality

One of the strongest “push” factors that drive women to leave their homes to join ISIS is to escape alienation and inequality in their community¹⁰². Many of these women reported injustice and discrimination they faced in their community¹⁰³, and felt becoming trapped in discourses, policies, and practices surrounding extremism or terrorism. These women were targeted by governmental agencies, which did little to protect the Muslim community, and also by locals, who expressed anti-Muslim sentiments¹⁰⁴. Terrorist groups, in turn, target and appeal to those who feel “unwanted” and “discriminated against” within their communities¹⁰⁵. The alienated individuals forge a strong sense of community and belonging with terrorist groups, who promise that by joining them, one would be among sisters who respect and honour them^{106 107}.

Peer influence

Research has shown that most young women are exposed to radical ideologies by scouring through the Internet in their leisure time, as well as when they felt “bored” or “empty”¹⁰⁸. Although the initial socialisation into radical ideas usually starts at a personal level, strong peer support networks many young women forge on the Internet convince them to travel and join terrorist groups¹⁰⁹. Additionally, strong friendships remain one of the most prevalent reasons for joining the terrorist groups, and most of those women who left their homes to join terrorist groups, for instance, ISIS in Iraq and Syria often travelled in groups¹¹⁰.

102 Jaffer, N. (2015). The secret world of Isis brides: “U dnt hav 2 pay 4 anything if u r wife of a martyr.” The Guardian. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/24/isis-brides-secret-world-jihad-western-women-syria> (Accessed 16 April 2020).

103 Gan, R, Seng Neo, L, Chin, J. and Khader, M. (2019) Change is the Only Constant: The Evolving Role of Women in the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), *Women & Criminal Justice*, 29:4-5, 204-220.

104 Petrou, M. (2015). What’s driving teen girls to jihad? Macleans. Retrieved from <https://www.macleans.ca/society/teen-girl-jihadists/> (Accessed 16 April 2020).

105 Jaffer, N. (2015). The secret world of Isis brides: “U dnt hav 2 pay 4 anything if u r wife of a martyr.” The Guardian. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/24/isis-brides-secret-world-jihad-western-women-syria> (Accessed 16 April 2020).

106 Gan, R, Seng Neo, L, Chin, J. and Khader, M. (2019) Change is the Only Constant: The Evolving Role of Women in the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), *Women & Criminal Justice*, 29:4-5, 204-220.

107 Petrou, M. (2015). What’s driving teen girls to jihad? Macleans. Retrieved from <https://www.macleans.ca/society/teen-girl-jihadists/> (Accessed 16 April 2020).

108 Chew, A. (2018). Searching for love online, Indonesian maids vulnerable to being recruited by Islamic State: Documentary. Channel Newsasia. Retrieved from <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/indonesianmaids-recruited-islamic-state-online-10477864> (Accessed 16 April 2020).

109 Huckerby, J. (2015). When women become terrorists. The New York Times. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/22/opinion/when-women-become-terrorists.html> (Accessed 16 April 2020).

110 Holden, M., & Kelland, K. (2015). ISIS is recruiting European fighters with peer pressure more than propaganda. Business Insider. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/r-peer-pressure-not-propaganda-crucial-to-isrecruitment-experts-2015-1/?IR¼T> (Accessed 16 April 2020).

The section discussed the varied and individualised motivations, roles and potential outcomes for communities in which female jihadists are more likely to emerge and work. The section also highlighted the nuanced considerations that underpin the issues associated with female jihadists. The process of radicalisation and engagement into violent extremism is multifactorial. Therefore, future research, practices, and policies dealing with radicalisation must depict the role female jihadists can play in terrorist activities.

Recommendations

- Although the future of terrorist groups, particularly the Islamic State and al-Qaeda, is currently unclear, a number of factors will have important policy implications and should be heeded in future research and practice. The main issues might include:
- Gender-conscious considerations should be reflected in research, practice, as well as in the strategies, policies, and mechanisms aimed at countering radicalisation and extremist violence;
- Research, policies, and practice must include elements of community resilience and include local regional authorities to identify the areas that are at particular risk of radicalisation and ensure the problem is addressed so that it does not frustrate (e.g. through causing backlash) the Muslim communities that are expected to lead the initiatives.
- The issues and risks associated with returnees who are affiliated with terrorist groups such as re-integration, prosecution, or detention must be placed at the centre of all policies that seek to tackle radicalisation or extremist violence. This will help understand the substantial burden returnees place on local institutions such as detention centres and judicial courts.
- Gender and minor-conscious rehabilitative and punitive strategies for returning female jihadists and minors must be given attention in research and policies. This might encourage more families to assist the local authorities in detecting, preventing, and protecting vulnerable and also influential individuals from indulging in acts of terrorism. This could also reduce the burden of local authorities and detention centres.

- National de-radicalisation efforts should be more inclusive of female extremists, minors, and returnees. These efforts must be encouraged and adequately supported to integrate minor and gender-conscious considerations in all policies and processes including legal, judicial, transitional, and recovery.

3. Youth study

Recent terrorist attacks in Europe have underlined the importance of working toward more cohesive societies¹¹¹. This also means ensuring that young people, irrespective of their socio-economic, religious or ethnic background, are included in social and civic life. Radicalisation of youth leading to violent extremism is an urgent problem, considering the rise of young people joining extremist groups of different ideologies¹¹². Such a phenomena can be partially explained by the fact that young people, the most vulnerable group to outreach through fake news and forms of fanaticism on social media, have experienced a deep loss of confidence toward democratic institutions¹¹³.

Within this context, education and youth action have a key role to play in promoting shared values and fostering a culture of dialogue and social cohesion. The European Commission (EC) emphasises the need to broaden prevention efforts in order to foster adolescents and young adults' critical thinking about extremist messages. For instance, young people should be educated "on citizenship, political, religious and ethnic tolerance, non-prejudiced thinking, extremism, democratic values, cultural diversity, and the historical consequences of ethnically and politically motivated violence"¹¹⁴.

On 17 March 2015, the EC and the EU Ministers for Education adopted the so-called Paris Declaration, through which they committed to strengthening their actions to promote social inclusion. Specifically, the aim is to ensure that children and young people acquire social, civic and intercultural competences and enhance their critical thinking, particularly when using the internet or social media. In a similar vein, the Terrorism and Radicalisation project, TerRa, supported by the EC DG Home Affairs,

111 Recent terrorist attacks in Europe encompass the attacks carried out in Paris in January and November 2015, in Brussels in March 2016 and the attacks perpetuated in Barcelona and the nearby town of Cambrils in summer 2017.

112 Aiello, E., Puigvert, L., & Schubert, T. (2018). Preventing violent Radicalisation of youth through dialogic evidence-based policies. *International Sociology*, 33(4), 435-453.

113 Investig'Action. (2nd July 2019). <https://www.investigaction.net/fr/les-jeunes-et-la-tentation-radical/>

114 RAN. (2019). Preventing radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism. Multi-Agency Approach. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-best-practices/docs/creating_counter_violent_extremism_infrastructures_en.pdf

aims to prevent radicalisation among youth and to provide toolkits for people working with youth from different domains, such as teachers, religious leaders, prison and police officers. However, dealing with the growing phenomena of youth radicalisation also requires creative and innovative solutions that use fresh ideas and think outside the box.

An emblematic case of a creative and innovative solution to tackle youth radicalisation is represented by UPSHIFT, a UNICEF initiative started in Kosovo in 2014 and currently operational in 22 different countries (not only in Europe but also in South America, Africa, Middle East and Asia). The project's main aim is to support most marginalised and vulnerable youth become a force for positive social and economic change within their communities. Beside its ultimate aim, UPSHIFT's originality and innovativeness is its modular core content allowing the project to be adapted to different contexts and delivered in different settings - ranging from youth innovation labs to schools and non-formal education centres.¹¹⁵ Ultimately, the project fulfills double objectives: on the one hand, local communities are served in creative, collaborative and altruistic ways; on the other, civic engagement is a tool that allows young people and adolescents to earn respect and better integrate into society. Providing alternatives to hate by working on projects that are beneficial to the community (i.e. painting over offensive graffiti, workshops for youth on the prevention of hate speech, debating competition for youth on cultural diversity etc.) is therefore an effective way to tackle youth radicalisation.

It is also extremely important to ensure that nobody is left behind in their early life. In this regard school- and community-based protective services can play a crucial role. For instance, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention¹¹⁶ in the United-States started in 2019 the Comprehensive School-Based Approach to Youth Violence and Victimization¹¹⁷ program. This program aims "to address youth violence and victimisation through implementing prevention, intervention, and accountability efforts in a school-based setting." The idea here is "to decrease the incidence of school violence, enhance the capacity of communities and schools to address youth violence and exposure to violence, to improve school safety and climate and prevent violence, delinquency, and victimisation in the targeted community."¹¹⁸

115 Unicef. <https://www.unicef.org/innovation/upshift>

116 Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov>

117 US Department of Justice. (2019). <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh176/files/media/document/OJJDP-2019-14964.PDF>

118 Ibid.

Moreover, the trend of youth radicalisation must be seen in light of the increasingly blended off-line and on-line lives, especially of young women and men, which increases the need to address the ICT-related dimensions of youth radicalisation and violent extremism.¹¹⁹ In this regard there is a need for better digital skills and competences to work with youth, and these can be built through targeted training for youth workers.

Finally, in order to deal with youth radicalisation and social exclusion, and to develop effective preventive measures, different environments have to be considered (the school environment, the family environment etc.) and various actors and players have to be involved (teachers, social workers etc.). For instance, opening spaces for dialogue within schools, in which dialogue about extremist messages, violent radicalisation and social exclusion can take place without being judged or ridiculed for their opinions, may contribute to better prepare youth to navigate the societies of the current times, making them resilient to extremist messages and preventing them from drifting to the margins of society.

4. Technology studies

4.1 Framing the problem

Technology has become increasingly acknowledged for its effects on radicalisation processes. Understanding the role of the Internet as an enabler of radicalisation provides important insights into both the methods used by terrorist organisations to exploit technology to conduct activities online and how technology can be used similarly to tackle such threats. Existing studies have begun to recognise technology as a fundamental feature of enabling the radicalisation process leading to violent extremism¹²⁰.

There is an expanding body of literature that assesses how Islamist and right-wing extremist groups have taken advantage of technology to support their radicalisation activities. A particularly important mechanism such groups use to further their activities online is the use of both mainstream (on public platforms) and security-based new media platforms (through private channels) to disseminate extremist

¹¹⁹ Unesco. <https://en.unesco.org/ConfQcUNESCO/home>

¹²⁰ Goertz, S. and Streitparth, A.E., (2019). "New Technology in the Hands of the New Terrorism." In: *The New Terrorism* (pp. 85-115). Springer: Cham.

ideologies as both a method of awareness raising and recruitment¹²¹. On these platforms, extremist groups have developed support networks and echo chambers which reinforce the radicalisation process¹²². It is the use of technology that facilitates the permeation of these ideologies into virtual communities which enables cognitive radicalisation, involving the internalisation of extremist narratives¹²³. These strategies largely resonate towards the younger generations by using references to youth culture through popular new media platforms to raise awareness¹²⁴. This shows how technology is being exploited by extremist groups to normalise radical behaviours and encourages violence towards specific communities or individuals¹²⁵.

4.2 Using Technology to Tackle Radicalisation

Research has shown that the developments and permeation of technology into everyday life is being exploited by extremist groups to encourage the absorption of ideologies which enables the radicalisation process¹²⁶. On the contrary, emerging technologies have been developed by experts to help tackle radicalisation. These technologies outline a number of different methods including, but not limited to, data visualisation, big data analysis, social media analysis, serious gaming and open source intelligence (OSINT) analysis. A selection of these technologies is discussed in more detail to assess their benefit in tackling radicalisation.

The relationship between social media platforms and radicalisation processes is identified as a high priority for tackling radicalisation. By taking advantage of the big data which is continuously added onto these platforms, tools have been developed which detect and preempt online radicalisation through analysing big data¹²⁷. These tools use a range of methods including clustering, semantic analysis, exploratory data analysis (EDA) and keyword-based flagging (KBF)¹²⁸. This can allow experts and law enforcement to identify radicalisation trends and practices conducted

121 Bertram, L. (2016). "Terrorism, the internet and the social media advantage: Exploring how terrorist organisations exploit aspects of the internet, social media and how these same platforms could be used to counter-violent extremism." *Journal for DeRadicalisation*. 7: 225- 252.

122 Allchorn, W. (2019). RRCN Project Workshop. CARR-Hedeyah RRCN Project

123 Hardy, K. (2018). "Comparing Theories of Radicalisation with Countering Violent Extremism Policy." 15: 76-110.

124 Greenberg, K. (2016). "Counter-radicalisation via the internet." *Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Sciences*. 668: 167-179.

125 Hafez, M., & Mullins, C. (2015). "The Radicalisation puzzle: A theoretical synthesis of empirical approaches to homegrown extremism." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*. 38(11): 958- 975.

126 Ibid.

127 Pelzer, R. (2018). "Policing of Terrorism Using Data from Social Media." *European Journal of Security Resources*. 3: 163-179.

128 Camacho, D., Gilpérez-López, I., Gonzalez-Pardo, A., Ortigosa, A., and Urrela, C. (2016). RiskTrack: a new approach for risk assessment of radicalisation based on social media data. In *CEUR Workshop Proceedings*.

through social media¹²⁹. Big data analytics has, however, has provoked several ethical concerns due to its potential to "profile" individuals based on algorithms analysing large amounts of crawled data. On the other hand, some argue that big data analytics has removed the subjectivity of the "human eye" and has improved the objectivity of identifying radicalisation¹³⁰.

The use of OSINT as an investigative technique has been widely adopted by law enforcement and counter-violent extremist experts to proactively highlight and tackle radicalisation processes online. This method involves conducting online investigations using data which is publicly accessible¹³¹. OSINT has proven to be particularly useful in identifying extremist material on social media platforms which can instigate self-radicalisation. A variety of tools including Paliscope, Cosain and IntelTechniques have been developed to support OSINT investigators, some designed specifically for law enforcement use. This can be beneficial in supporting offline and covert investigations, providing a wider and richer understanding of radicalisation trends¹³². The transition of modern societies into a security and data-privacy focused state has led to significant challenges for OSINT. Social media platforms have increased the sheltering of user interactions - for example, Facebook removed the "graph search" tool. Therefore investigators must assess how effective OSINT will be in tackling radicalisation in the future¹³³.

Serious gaming technology is an educational method which aims to provide a more interactive and engaging alternative to traditional training methods¹³⁴. The use of serious games as a resilience building and awareness raising technique to tackling radicalisation has largely permeated into the educational sector¹³⁵. Using serious games within schools and similar institutions aims to reflect on decreasing the vulnerabilities of young people that are exploited by extremist groups through

129 Akhgar, B., Wells, D., and Blanco, J.M. (2019). *Investigating Radicalisation Trends: Case Studies in Europe and Asia*. Springer Nature: United Kingdom.

130 Pelzer, R. (2018). "Policing of Terrorism Using Data from Social Media." *European Journal of Security Resources*. 3: 163-179.

131 Stainforth, A. (2016). "Open Source Intelligence and the Protection of National Security." In: Akhgar, B., Bayerl, S., and Sampson, F. (2016). (eds). *Open Source Intelligence Investigation: From Strategy to Implementation*. Springer: United Kingdom.

132 Ibid.

133 Shu, C. (2019). "Changes to Facebook Graph Search leaves online investigators in a lurch." *Technology Crunch*. [Online]. Available at: <https://techcrunch.com/2019/06/10/changes-to-facebook-graph-search-leaves-online-investigators-in-a-lurch/> [Accessed 27 April 2020].

134 Bosse, T., and Gerritsen, C. (2016). "Towards serious gaming for communication training-a pilot study with police academy students." In *International Conference on Intelligent Technologies for Interactive Entertainment*. Springer: Cham.

135 Menendez-Ferreira, R., Torregrosa, J., Panizo-Lledot, A.P., Gonzalez-Pardo, A., and Camacho, D. (2020). "Improving Youngers' Resilience Through Video Game-Based Interventions." *Vietnam Journal of Computer Science*. 7(3): 1-17.

new media platforms¹³⁶. An example of serious games implemented into schools is "Choices and Voices" in the United Kingdom which encourages young people to discuss influences online through a series of moral dilemmas which are decided on by the students which alters the outcome of the game. Through this "storyboard" method the game emphasises the rippling effect of online actions and consequences¹³⁷.

The use of innovative and diverse technologies by investigators to tackle online radicalisation must frame the development of future policy developments to ensure that their use is fully optimised by investigators. The emergence of nuanced technologies developed for law enforcement and counter-violent extremist experts to tackle radicalisation online has significantly improved the effectiveness and proactive approach of online investigations. Future policies need to reflect the growing variety of technologies that are developed and used by law enforcement and other experts to ensure that radicalisation is tackled effectively within an everchanging online environment which regularly creates unprecedented challenges for investigators. Ethical boundaries in particular must be considered in future policies to set parameters for investigators who use such technologies to ensure that best practices are maintained throughout online investigations.

5. Psychosocial approaches and challenges

The use of psycho-social tools is probably the most obvious of all tools in P/CVE. Practitioners are often psycho-social workers themselves, and for that reason familiar with the subject. Some of the tools displayed in P/CVE are often the same as those used in mainstream social work. P/CVE practitioners daily use such "generic tools." They likely also use, when necessary, some specific tools or approaches, for example in anger or violence management, childhood and adolescence focus, or to deal with youth diaspora or hypermasculinity. These areas are also managed by what may be called "mainstream" psycho-social work.

Evaluation is critical in P/CVE. Psychosocial work offers multiple validation and evaluation means, so that P/CVE programmes with a psychosocial part are easier to evaluate (quantitatively) than interventions with a more delicate ideological disengagement (qualitative variable).

136 Reeves, J. (2015). "Addressing Radicalisation into the Classroom - A New Approach to Teacher and Pupil Learning." *Journal of Education and Training*. 2(2): 2-39.

137 Memarzia, M., and Star, M. (2008). "Choices and Voices." https://playgen.com/wp-content/uploads/images/cv/choices_and_voice_book_contribution.pdf

On the other hand, depending on socio-economic conditions, there will undoubtedly be a principle of reality here: How can a society accept reintegration of individuals who were once violent extremists? While the anonymity of social reintegration offers a satisfactory solution, ex-violent extremists' ability to find reemployment can face significant difficulties - a lack of professional or social skills, behavioural issues, or moral codes that remain hardly compatible with the open society own codes. Similarly, working with beneficiaries who perpetrated terrorist attacks, were involved in plots or fought overseas, requires highly specialised know-how. Normal psycho-social work does not know easily to deal with such level of dangerousness or potential for recidivism.

In its core part, the psychological field provides actionable solutions. The cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) approach is widely used among European P/CVE programmes and provides interesting leverage in the treatment of dysfunctions associated with violence. There are historical reasons: the first programmes appeared in Northern-Europe, where CBT is rather dominant against psychoanalysis. As precursor, it influenced most of other European similar interventions. It is also true that CBT tools are well suited to be incorporated to P/CVE programmes that always have a definite duration.

Cognitive-behavioural based tools for evaluation seems more quantitative, which is essential considering some beneficiaries potential for violence. However, evaluation is still critical, since no actuarial tool seems to be robust enough to give absolute certainties to prevent recidivism.

Similarly, to associate CBT with religious corpus may be of interest. Such mixed approach "works with" cultural and psychological beneficiaries' hybridity. It associates, for instance, the Islamic corpus of anger or frustration management (hadithic in particular) with symmetrical behavioral methods.

6. Conclusion

This paper is constituted of four parts, each of them dealing with a specific domain, and it has attempted to update the research agenda on radicalisation by taking into account contributions from different fields of study.

The first part focuses on gender studies and shows that, even though violent extremism is often associated with masculinity, also women actually play an active

role. This in particular the case in in Islamist terrorism, where the role of women has evolved significantly in recent years from homemakers to frontline combatants and in far-left extremism, where egalitarian and feminist principles made women's role rather active and visible. Within this context, the paper suggests that gender-conscious considerations should be reflected in research, practice, as well as in the strategies aimed at countering radicalisation and extremist violence.

The second part focuses on youth studies and highlights the need of creative and innovative solutions in order for youth to become a force for positive social and economic change within their communities. In particular, it emphasizes the key role education and youth action can play in promoting shared values and fostering a culture of dialogue and social cohesion. There is also a need to better address the ICT-related dimensions of youth radicalisation and violent extremist. This could be done, for example, through targeted training for youth workers.

The third part relates to technology studies and underlines the double role technologies play in the field of P/CVE: technologies can indeed be exploited by extremist groups to encourage the absorption of ideologies which enable the radicalisation process but also to help tackle the process of radicalisation itself. For instance, OSINT, an investigative technique widely adopted by law enforcement and counter-violent extremist experts to tackle radicalisation processes online, has proven to be particularly useful in identifying extremist material on social media platforms which can instigate self-radicalisation. The section concludes by suggesting the need to reflect in future policies the growing variety of technologies developed to tackle radicalisation and to set ethical boundaries for investigators who use such technologies.

The fourth and final part focuses on psychosocial approaches, which offer multiple validation and evaluation means for P/CVE programmes. For instance, the cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) approach, widely used among European P/CVE programmes, provides interesting leverage in the treatment of dysfunctions associated with violence. The section concludes by suggesting to associate CBT with other psychosocial approaches, such as ethnopsychology.

Paper 5.

How to foster knowledge partnership (industry, academia and civil society)

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1. Introduction

This paper aims at underlying the importance of non-state actors' knowledge partnership in the fight against radicalisation and violent extremism. In fact, governments certainly have a role but they are not always in best position as their credibility is often questioned by individuals and by the ideology itself. In a short-term perspective, the paper also aims at providing LEAs and first line practitioners with new practical insights on the contribution of knowledge partnership in countering violent extremism. With knowledge partnership it is intended a situation where individuals and teams from different contexts - for instance, academic and industrial - work together on specific projects and produce common outputs.

In fact, since the threat represented by violent extremism does not exclusively concern the nation-state, knowledge partnership between civil society, academy and industry should be encouraged in order to expand research on the drivers of violent

extremism and to develop inclusive national CVE strategies (empower youth, women, religious leaders etc.). A close collaboration between public and private actors can indeed contribute to better knowing and responding to rapidly shifting threats to public security. For instance, academy and industry may collaborate in order to develop novel knowledge that benefits both the academic and industrial partner, thus creating economies of scale. This interaction can inspire new research directions and, from the academy viewpoint, can provide additional funding. However, this requires bidirectional knowledge sharing to identify relevant problems, share and develop new insights, and the transfer and implementation of knowledge or technology. Most importantly, shared goals are needed to reach a common understanding of the desired output. When shared goals are lacking it becomes in fact more difficult to understand the implications and cause-effect relations of the knowledge developed. Moreover, different goals can also be an obstacle to build trust.

Knowledge partnership between public and private actors is therefore crucial to the extent that the continued collaboration and the development of best practices among different actors can significantly improve the ability to combat violent extremism and the spread of extremist material. Also, by working collaboratively governments, communities, academy and the industry can improve each other's capacities to address the threat at different levels. However, only a partnership-based approach can allow to establish the necessary trust and the full understanding of threats dynamics and solutions by all parties.

2. Knowledge partnership in the industry sector

In the field of P/CVE the interaction between public and private actors can inspire new research directions through sharing and developing new insights and can facilitate the transfer and the implementation of knowledge or technology. In this context, the industry can play a key role in terms of know-how and ability to provide technological solutions to prevent, contain, respond and recover from violent extremism.

For instance, the internet industry is in one of the most powerful positions to counter offensive online content. In this regard, companies should continue to remove illegal material that breaches their terms of service and should use their position to advance debate of the issues. Moreover, where possible, industry should also offer resources and training to staff and civil society organisations on the optimum way to use their services to target those who are at risk of radicalisation, or who would benefit from their messages.

As example, a 2016 report¹³⁸ from the Institute for Strategic Dialogue and the Against Violent Extremism network demonstrated the reach and impact of counter narratives on Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. The report showed that with industry funding and guidance on the use of social media and marketing advertising tools, NGOs were able to increase awareness of themselves and their work, as well as to improve engagement with their counter narratives aimed at preventing extremism.

However, this requires a long-term relationship between industry and public authorities, thus going beyond a pure client-supplier relationship, and bidirectional knowledge sharing to identify relevant problems. Only a partnership-based approach can indeed allow to establish the necessary trust and the full understanding of threats dynamics and solutions by both parties.

Besides a partnership-based approach to CVE, there are other several factors influencing knowledge partnership between industry and public institutions. Cognitive differences, that relate to differences in knowledge background between, for example, the firm and the academics, is one of them. In fact, difference in knowledge backgrounds makes it harder to understand and absorb new knowledge that results from the collaboration. One example of cognitive difference is knowledge ambiguity, which designates a situation where dissimilarities in knowledge result in “inherent and irreducible uncertainty regarding what the underlying knowledge components and sources are precisely, and how they interact”¹³⁹. Institutional factors, such as cultural differences and shared goals, also play an important role. Cultural differences, which indicate a lack of shared meaning and social conventions¹⁴⁰, may complicate collaboration because different languages, opinions, social behaviours, norms and beliefs make the interpretation of behaviour and knowledge more difficult¹⁴¹. For instance, concerning the application of knowledge it can be observed that while academy is willing to share knowledge and to public research results, industrial partners tend to keep knowledge secret. Similarly, when shared goals are lacking, due for example to the different ways in which business and academia benefit from knowledge, it becomes more difficult to understand the implications and cause effect relations

138 Silverman, T. and al. (2016), *The impact of counter-narratives, Insights from a year-long cross-platform pilot study of counter-narrative curation, targeting, evaluation and impact*, The Institute for Strategic Dialogue, available at: https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Impact-of-Counter-Narratives_ONLINE_1.pdf

139 Van Wijk, R., Jansen, J. J. P., & Lyles, M. A. (2008). *Inter- and intra-organisational knowledge transfer: A meta-analytic review and assessment of its antecedents and consequences*. *Journal of Management Studies*, 45(4), 830-853.

140 Tsai, W., and Ghoshal, S. (1998). *Social capital and value creation: The role of intrafirm networks*. *Academy of Management Journal*, 41(4), 464-476.

141 Lane, P. J., and Lubatkin, M. (1998). *Relative absorptive capacity and interorganisational learning*. *Strategic Management Journal*, 19(5), 461-477.

of the knowledge developed, which causes ambiguity¹⁴². Different goals can also represent an obstacle to build trust.

However, knowledge partnership between public and private actors remains crucial. In fact, the continued collaboration and the development of best practices among different actors can significantly improve the ability to counter the spread of extremist material. As a consequence, cognitive and institutional differences that could undermine knowledge partnership must be overcome. One way to deal with these dissimilarities is to organize frequent meetings and deliberation, which are key to recognize and solve differences. The possibility for interactive discussion for the coordination of goals is indeed crucial to keep private and public expectations aligned. Moreover, attributing sufficient time for interaction is important to reap the fruits of the partnership. A good mutual understanding of a partner's needs may also help in overcoming difficulties in knowledge partnership. For instance, it would be interesting to gain more specific insights into what knowledge academics require from firms, to enable them to provide relevant results and manage the knowledge needs of the firm. Eventually, collaboration experience with a specific partner and learning how to deal with differences seems the best way to overcome dissimilarities in logic and goals and therefore to establish a fruitful knowledge partnership.

3. Knowledge partnership in the academic sector

Academia is a crucial actor in producing and delivering CVE knowledge to a number of different societal stakeholders and actors. The contribution by the academic sector cannot be underestimated in the fight against radicalisation and violent extremism. The development of different topics of radicalisation and its continuing evolution as a phenomenon at large, requires tailored approaches and solutions. As such, academia is among the best suited institutions to provide in-depth analysis of particular challenges related to radicalisation and in addition, outline possible solutions for a diverse set of CVE actors.

Academic research in CVE mainly proceeds in two ways: deductively, or inductively, i.e. from theory to practice, or from practice to theory. Both approaches have their pros and cons in terms of applicability and added value in aiding and understanding radicalisation and violent extremism. Deductive research in CVE focuses on empirics in order to find solutions to key issues. Yet most of the time this approach remains wishful thinking rather than standard practice. This is due to the fact that, empirical

142 Partha, D., and David, P. A. (1994). *Toward a new economics of science*. Research Policy, 23(5), 487-521.

approaches require more resources and expertise from academics, such as knowledge of ethnography, linguistics, culture, psychology, or religion, and more importantly - access to stakeholders working in the field. Due to a lack of resources, the inductive method, where knowledge is replicated rather than qualitatively multiplied, is the most common approach in academia and quasi-academic think-tanks.

Deductive research is especially beneficial for CVE. It is through this research approach, which the partnership between academia and first-line practitioners in the form of multi-stakeholder collaboration proves essential. Such partnership help facilitate information exchanges, as well as the sharing of good practices, statistics and practical cases.

Moreover, the multidisciplinary approach towards academic research allows a number of gaps to be researched and answered, resulting in a greater understanding of the most intricate areas of CVE work. As such, practitioners can truly benefit from the diffusion of knowledge and find tailored solutions to specific problems. For instance, when terrorist networks were analyzed through the framework of political psychology, a number of novel ways to understand these networks were developed such as the individual factors steering a person towards terrorism; the group dynamics and their impact on the gradual process of radicalisation; or the moral justification for committing acts of violence and many other analysis¹⁴³.

The academic influence on the development of radicalisation models at the policy level should also be taken into account. For example, Raven S., Coolsaet, R. and Sauer T. argue that academic literature challenges radicalisation models on which counterterrorism policies are based¹⁴⁴. This fact, therefore, provides a path to expand the ongoing discussion and scope of the current theoretical models, while balancing the perception which dominates the world of practice. Indeed, the effectiveness of CVE policies is linked to the quality of the research and analysis produced, which, in turn, helps policymakers to more precisely identify causes and trends within CVE¹⁴⁵. Engagement in regular knowledge exchanges with academia thus proves pivotal in developing up to date, state-of-the-art knowledge on radicalisation and violent extremism, and consequently, aid in formulating well-informed, targeted, evidence-based policies and measures.

143 Fink, L. (2014). Understanding Radicalisation & Dynamics of Terrorist Networks through Political-Psychology. International Institute for Counter-terrorism. <http://www.ict.org.il/UserFiles/UNDERSTANDING%20RADICALISATION.pdf>

144 Raven S., Coolsaet, R., Sauer T. (2019) Rethinking Radicalisation: Addressing the Lack of a Contextual Perspective in the Dominant Narratives on Radicalisation in Radicalisation: A Marginal Phenomenon or a Mirror to Society by Clycq N., Timmerman C., Vanheule D., Van Caudenberg R., and Ravn S. (Eds.). Leuven University Press. Leuven: Belgium

145 OSCE. (2018). The Role of Civil Society in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation that Lead to Terrorism: A Focus on South-Eastern Europe. <https://polis.osce.org/role-civil-society-preventing-and-countering-violent-extremism-and-radicalisation-lead-terrorism>

Moreover, academia has been playing an increasingly important role in research projects, in particular those funded by the European Union and designed to explore specific dimensions of the radicalisation phenomenon - such as the online dynamics of radicalisation, its underlying mechanisms of the process, or de-radicalisation¹⁴⁶. The High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation for the European Commission has identified academia and research institutes as having a key role in supporting the future of the EU Cooperation Mechanism on preventing and countering radicalisation¹⁴⁷. Additionally, the inclusion of academic stakeholders in research projects, also allows the various project partners to gain a number of benefits and expertise such as: enhanced credibility, further partnerships with community stakeholders, access to academic resources which other non-academic stakeholders usually lack (i.e. peer-reviewed journals, symposiums, invitations to international conferences) and other secondary administrative resources such as well-established and up-to-date ethical and privacy guidelines, and budget support expertise.

In addition to research outputs, universities and academic institutions also tend to be static institutions in terms of a physical location, often situated within the boundaries of local or regional communities. As such, academia and academic stakeholders tend to be active participants in the social, cultural and political affairs of their local or regional communities. They are often involved in social actions or community initiatives which help to create a sense of trust and partnership with a number of different community stakeholders. Universities can, and often do become a source of pride and inclusiveness for members of local communities. Insofar, that these communities entrust universities and other academic institutions, with their children's education in the hopes of creating better lives for them, thus helping develop a greater sense of community across the whole-of-society, anchored in the academic institution itself.

Academic institutions may also be trusted to a greater degree than other stakeholders. Whereas some stakeholders might be hesitant to search for answers on radicalisation or violent extremism, via security or municipal actors for fear of being targeted or stigmatized, they might be more willing to ask or talk to those working in academia, usually due to the reputable status which society places upon academics (e.g. professors as wise and unbiased experts). Going forward, this form of stakeholder cooperation and exchange needs to be

146 RAN. (2016). Radicalisation Research - Gap Analysis. RAN Research Paper. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/docs/pages/201612_radicalisation_research_gap_analysis_en.pdf

147 European Commission. (2018). The Final Report of the High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation. <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetailDoc&id=37474&no=1>

prioritized within the field of CVE and is indeed being more widely called for by the broader CVE stakeholder community¹⁴⁸. This approach is particularly important for the evaluation of CVE programs, especially those based on empirical evidence. It then seeks to improve upon or further develop an assessment of the adequacy and effectiveness of policy and interventions. Hence, academia is not only well suited to provide quality research on topics relating to CVE to better inform policymakers in their decision. It also offers a privileged platform where theoretical research outputs and practical research requirements can interface¹⁴⁹. The potential it holds for CVE efforts cannot be overlooked, in terms of the output of knowledge and access to various stakeholders across the local community and the whole-of-society. As such, strengthening the exchange and cooperation with academics and researchers needs to be among the main priorities within the multi-agency cooperation in CVE framework.

4. Knowledge partnerships with civil societies

Globally civil societies have developed into a network of organisations dedicated to conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and have become a prominent figure in the efforts in countering violent extremism¹⁵⁰. To understand how civil societies have and should continue to play a key role in countering violent extremism, this section will explore the previous challenges encountered with CVE strategies and approaches and outline how and why effective knowledge partnerships should be developed to reframe the impact of future CVE approaches.

4.1 previous approaches to countering violent extremism

Previous strategies used by national governments and law enforcement highlights the criticisms of working independently through a government-centric approach without the support of civil societies. The use of generalised and often hard wired strategies has met an abundance of challenges in modern communities, largely due to the misunderstanding of the complex and multifaceted process of the entry and exit from violent extremism. This is particularly recognised within local communities, in which large-scale government strategies often fail to understand violent extremism

148 Wiuff Moe, L. (2017). "The politics of preventing and countering violentextremism. Finding local solutions to global challenges." DIIS Danish Institute for International Studies. https://pure.diiis.dk/ws/files/906100/The_politics_of_preventing_and_countering_violent_extremism_WEB.pdf

149 RAN. (2016). Radicalisation Research - Gap Analysis. RAN Research Paper. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/docs/pages/201612_radicalisation_research_gap_analysis_en.pdf

150 Mirahmadi, H., Ziad, W., Farooq, M., and Lamb, R. (2016). "Empowering Pakistan's Civil Society to Counter Violent Extremism." *Contemporary Readings in Law and Social Justice*. 8(1): 188-214.

on a case-by-case basis. In addition the implementation of such strategies into communities which have high levels of polarisation have proven difficult due to the lack of trust between community members and the government. This is largely due to the perceived overlapping of governments sanction led strategies with a “repressive state” narrative, which further distances vulnerable individuals and communities from society. In cases this can lead to the intensification of an individual’s engagement with violent extremism¹⁵¹.

The past utilisation of civil societies as a key knowledge partnership with governments, law enforcement, academia and other relevant stakeholders is not uncommon. Civil societies have played a significant role in the development and contribution of previous national CVE strategies and approaches. Previous methods however have been critiqued as being government-focused and underestimate the value of civil society inputs. For example in the United Kingdom the Prevent strategy involved the funding of Muslim community representatives within civil societies to be at the forefront of the campaigns. This created uncertainty within local communities regarding the credibility and authenticity of such civil societies, as they transitioned from being advocates for their community to mediators of government narratives¹⁵². Alongside other examples across Europe, governments, law enforcement and other stakeholders have yet to effectively utilise the benefits of civil societies in countering violent extremism. From this several suggestions can be made.

4.2 Developing knowledge partnerships with civil societies as a future approach

Previous strategies have often proven to be ineffective due to their centralised and non-specific approach which underestimates the value of civil societies as a knowledge partner. This often means that strategies are unequipped with effectively countering violent extremism. As future approaches are developed governments, law enforcement and other stakeholders need to establish strong knowledge partnerships with civil societies to develop harmonised approaches, narratives, policies and strategies to better counter and discourage violent extremism¹⁵³.

151 Dalgaard-Neilsen, A. (2016). “Countering Violent Extremism with Governance Networks.” *Perspectives on Terrorism*. 10(6): 135-139.

152 Kundnani, A., and Hayes, B. (2018). *The globalisation of Countering Violent Extremism policies*. Transnational Institute. Amsterdam.

153 Holmer, G. (2013). *Countering Violent Extremism: A Peacebuilding Perspective*. United States Institute of Peace. Washington, DC.

For local governments, councils, law enforcement and academia alike creating knowledge partnerships with civil societies is highly beneficial. Such knowledge partnerships allow stakeholders to better implement national and local CVE strategies and policies, as well as gather insight on future trends and local concerns which can shape the trajectory of strategy and policy development. Civil societies are largely situated within grassroot communities and are often on the frontline of countering violent extremism in areas where law enforcement involvement is counterproductive. For example civil societies have been noted for organising campaigns, rallies, demonstrations and conferences which aim to raise awareness of radicalisation threats and deter local communities and vulnerable individuals away from violent extremism engagement. Through knowledge partnerships civil societies can provide local stakeholders with information on a grass-root level to allow them to effectively tackle the complexities of specific CVE cases in traditionally hard to reach communities. Although such softer approaches taken by civil societies may differ from the harder strategies implemented by governments, adopting this framework can be at times deemed more effective as a long-term solution¹⁵⁴. Through their experiences civil societies have developed numerous softer frameworks which build upon the diversity of communities and provide a more personable alternative to government-centric approaches¹⁵⁵.

Adopting a knowledge partnership with civil societies on a national and local level will allow governments, law enforcement, policy and strategy makers and other relevant stakeholders to rebuild trust with communities that largely mistrust the intentions of CVE approaches. The approach taken to involve civil societies however must represent an equal partnership to avoid previous challenges as reflected on in the United Kingdom¹⁵⁶. The incorporation of civil societies inputs as advocates for local communities, allow institutions to better understand the context and requirements needed to develop an impactful strategy within societies¹⁵⁷. For example youth-based organisations such as United Youth Against Hate and Violent Extremism in Europe provide a wealth of resources, experience and knowledge to encourage disengagement from extremist organisations and

154 Dalgaard-Neilsen, A. (2016). "Countering Violent Extremism with Governance Networks." *Perspectives on Terrorism*. 10(6): 135-139.

155 Mirahmadi, H., Ziad, W., Farooq, M., and Lamb, R. (2016). "Empowering Pakistan's Civil Society to Counter Violent Extremism." *Contemporary Readings in Law and Social Justice*. 8(1): 188-214.

156 Kundnani, A., and Hayes, B. (2018). *The globalisation of Countering Violent Extremism policies*. Transnational Institute. Amsterdam.

157 Ibid.

the appeal of violent extremism^{158 159}. By establishing knowledge partnerships with youth based civil societies for example local and national stakeholders are able to reframe and implement CVE strategies that recognise the concerns of young people, whilst repositioning the perceived authenticity of governing bodies.

Religious based civil societies should be a large focus for future knowledge partnerships, to develop approaches and narratives that better understand and destigmatises religious communities. For example religious-based civil societies in Europe such as the Spanish Gospel Mission and Islamic Relief UK have a large influence in religious communities and from this have a better understanding of what approaches would be most effective¹⁶⁰. Collaborating with such national based civil societies through a two-way partnership which values their input should be encouraged to overcome the criticisms of previous strategies. Through regular knowledge exchanges with civil societies national stakeholders will be able to have an up to date understanding of the general perspective, concerns and potential threats of particular religious communities which can better inform future developments. In parallel civil societies will also be made aware of future approaches, narratives and strategies concerning their communities and will be able to better align their engagement with building community awareness and resilience¹⁶¹. With this in mind, civil societies should be highly valued in allowing national stakeholders to gain insights from traditionally hard to reach communities.

This section has outlined how previous CVE methods can be improved by building effective knowledge partnerships with civil societies. National, local and European wide civil societies are a pivotal asset to strategy and policy development, framing public attitudes and establishing good governance methods. In parallel working closely with local and national governing bodies can better align future approaches to CVE within civil societies. Creating a stable and harmonised relationship between civil societies and local and national institutions is key to developing effective and impactful future approaches to understanding and countering extremism.

158 UNITED. (2020). Civil Society Against Right-Wing Extremism. UNITED. <http://www.unitedagainstracism.org/projects/civil-society-against-right-wing-extremism/> [Accessed 12 May 2020].

159 Dalgaard-Neilsen, A. (2016). "Countering Violent Extremism with Governance Networks." *Perspectives on Terrorism*. 10(6): 135-139.

160 Dalgaard-Neilsen, A. (2016). "Countering Violent Extremism with Governance Networks." *Perspectives on Terrorism*. 10(6): 135-139.

161 Kundnani, A., and Hayes, B. (2018). *The globalisation of Countering Violent Extremism policies*. Transnational Institute. Amsterdam.

5. The role of local communities/actors in CVE

Radicalisation is a complex and multifaceted process which requires robust and dynamic mechanisms to understand and develop effective strategies to counter its growth. The CVE policies must capture the underlying factors that lead individuals or groups into acts of terrorism or incite extremist ideals or ideology. One of the effective mechanisms, which is often overlooked, is the involvement of local communities which rich and dynamic in resources to effectively counter radicalisation. This paper will outline the limitations of previous counter-radicalisation strategies and policies, and highlights the significance of developing coherent knowledge partnerships with local community institutions to better tackle radicalisation. It will end with a set of policy recommendations.

5.1 Countering religious influence and ideologies

Whilst religious ideology as a set of beliefs which shapes individual or collective perspective is debated in terrorism studies, the phenomenon in discourses on the underpinning grounds of radicalisation is often politicised, and at times, misinterpreted to explain an event. This approach in addition to scapegoating the Muslim communities, results in communal antagonism which can mobilise large segments of the Muslim populations to support terrorism or violence. Local institutions (e.g. mosques, social groups, youth foundations) are located at critical junctures to advance alternatives and counter-narratives that can challenge the extremist or perverted interpretations of Islam and helps the Muslim communities to preserve their distinctive local identities in addition to interact and communicate with the broader society. This moderate narrative can undermine the ideas of moral responsibility to participate in extremist ideological acts, leads to positive emotions, and reduces the legitimacy of self-righteousness advanced by the extremist organisations.

5.2 Advancing political participation

Dissidence with the form of governance and the way it treats different layers of a society is one of the main underlying factors in the radicalisation processes. Extremist groups seek to exploit the public grievances appertaining to political systems, which are believed by their citizens to be discriminatory that exclude them from effective participation. A major component of the narratives terrorist groups advance springboard the ideals of challenging national political systems. The local community including the councils, academic bodies, and the media might play a critical role in encouraging the local governments to adopt more empowering and

inclusive political and systems of governance that mirrors the specific features, needs, and legitimate demands of vulnerable and left-behind communities. These actors can also help the local communities to connect to the political processes, opportunities, and access the resources that are available within local political structures such as local and national elections.

5.3 Addressing socioeconomic discriminations

Socio-political deprivation, both in native and host communities, is believed to profoundly impact on individuals or groups and draw them into radicalisation^{162 163 164}. The socioeconomic discriminations that minority communities feel out of real or perceived injustices perpetrated by local or external actors can drive participation in extremist milieus. These discriminations, then, might result in a desire to respond to grievances, with the discriminated communities resorting to violent measures to redress their conditions. Local communities can build partnerships that attract investments in local communities and provide platforms such as employment, educational venues, and cultural activities to mitigate the mistrust between the state and the communities. This partnership can also facilitate the involvement of the vulnerable communities in the design and implementation of these socioeconomic investments. This bridges the gap between different actors and reduces the mistrust and rather prospers common aspirations and perspective that would ultimately benefit the local communities.

5.4 Advancing community resilience

A major strategy of any terrorist organisation has been their infiltration of vulnerable communities, wherein they can muster support and find platform to advance their cause. To counter radicalisation, it is important to heed communities' adaptive capacity and enable them to connect with others inside and outside their "own" communities and exchange experiences. Local actors and the media are particularly instrumental in building and sustaining this connection that provides direction to intercommunal communications and enables the vulnerable individuals or communities to defy extremism the breeding grounds it usually draws in local communities.

162 Silke, A. (2008). "Holy warriors: Exploring the psychological processes of jihadi radicalisation." *European Journal of Criminology*. 5(1), 99-123.

163 Abbas, T. (2018). Implementing "Prevent" in countering violent extremism in the UK: a left-realist critique. *Critical Social Policy*. ISSN 0261-0183. <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/id/eprint/91675> (Accessed 14 May 2020)

164 Horgan, J. (2007). Understanding Terrorist Motivation: A Socio-Psychological Perspective. In Ranstorp, M. (Ed.). (2007). *Mapping Terrorism Research: State of the Art, Gaps and Future Directions*. London: Routledge. pp. 106-126.

5.5 Helping win "Hearts and Minds"

The significance of winning "the hearts and minds" is critical to curbing on the breeding grounds of radicalisation^{165 166}. Terrorist organisations instead of seeking havoc on their enemies try to develop strong recognisable structure and goals, which require the persistent support of different communities. Thus—denying terrorist groups this "micro infrastructure" can play a crucial role in undermining extremist ideals or values that are embedded, for instance, through homegrown terrorists in local practices and institutions. In the majority of communities wherein terrorist organisations are particularly active, in recruitment and radicalisation activities, the local actors play a critical part in protecting the "turned" away individuals or groups¹⁶⁷, and moderate the negative perceptions of different communities regarding the political systems and cultural differences.

5.6 Discussion

The threat to EU's national security posed by radicalisation is being interpreted by the security agencies as the most potent threat. The national government across the continent have devised and implemented different legislations and policies to counter the challenge and protect the vulnerable. Within the current policy and research paradigms, the role of local communities has not been adequately reflected and the mechanism to connect the state institutions and communities that provide grounds for terrorist groups and simultaneously remain prone to exploitation is missing in most of these policies or strategies. In some cases, the communities that are expected to help the fight against terrorism are made scapegoat and treated with mistrust and suspicion, only to exacerbate the situation. So, the nexus of radicalisation, criminal behaviours, and terrorism whilst survives on local communities, it lacks or misunderstands or misinterprets the role local actors can play to supplement the fight against radicalisation.

This paper, therefore, makes the following policy recommendations:

1. Local authorities should partner with civil organisations to strengthen existing structures at local levels. This will help develop cross-community

¹⁶⁵ Egnell, R. (2010). "Winning "Hearts and Minds"? A Critical Analysis of Counter-Insurgency Operations in Afghanistan." *Civil Wars*, 12(3), 282-303.

¹⁶⁶ Egnell, R. (2010). "Winning "Hearts and Minds"? A Critical Analysis of Counter-Insurgency Operations in Afghanistan." *Civil Wars*, 12(3), 282-303.

¹⁶⁷ Milani, M. (2015). "Hearts and Minds: How (Not) to Oppose Radicalisation." *ABC Religion & Ethics*. [viewed 13 September 2018]. <https://www.abc.net.au/religion/hearts-and-minds-how-not-to-oppose-radicalisation/10097726> (accessed 14 May 2020)

relationships, communications, and resilience to stand to extremism. Local authorities must be enabled to understand the resources that are locally available, promote cross-community engagement, provide the necessary equipment and resources. In activities that include CVE, they should engage interfaith groups, the media, and women's groups.

2. Encourage the mainstream media to stereotype specific communities or attribute the acts of terrorism to the Muslim community. Rather the media should be encouraged to challenge stereotypes and provide a platform for the moderate and progressive Muslim groups to advance a counter-narrative that is a crucial component of any successful CVE.
3. Local authorities and businesses should strengthen their engagement with local education providers and support particularly the disadvantaged children to realise their potential. An effective means of achieving this could be helping educational institutions to provide tailored programmes to different categories of learners. These children should also be given specific support in selecting their courses that best suit their aspirations and competence. An incremental and meaningful engagement at earlier stages of the education cycle with schools will help identify and develop soft skills, giving children adequate time and space to nurture their skills. Providing more internships will help develop and enable the recipients to connect with a wider talent pool, and to gain the knowledge and experience needed to gain employment after completing their educational programmes.
4. Local authorities, colleges, schools, and youth clubs must be encouraged and resourced to expand and champion opportunities where young people from different backgrounds can meet, communicate, and share experiences.
5. The media must be provided with a clear guideline and encouraged to accurately report on Muslim communities and strictly avoid any practices that can stereotype, stigmatise, or discriminate against any particular group or community.
6. The national governments across the continent should revise and recalibrate their CVE policies and seek to involve Muslim communities in the design, development, and implementation of their policies to overcome

the current stalemate. More social and women's groups must be included in all CVE activities.

7. The national governments across the continent should take a proactive role in facilitating the integration of different communities through different mechanisms. These mechanisms should take into consideration the sociocultural and religious identities of different communities and, the same time, provide an overarching narrative on the shared EU principles and values such as human's rights, women's rights, and cultural diversity.
8. The Muslim communities must step up their efforts in CVE efforts. These communities can challenge extremist narratives and interpretation of Sharia law by challenging extremist actors or organisations. They should also promote and support moderate actors and provide a counter-narrative that addresses the Muslim communities' demands, expectations, and needs in terms of religious and cultural requirements of life in a modern and diverse society e.g. the EU.

6. Conclusions

This paper aimed at underlying the importance of non-state actors' knowledge partnership in the fight against radicalisation and violent extremism, with a special focus on industry, academia, civil society organisations and local communities. Besides governments, all these actors can indeed play a crucial role in addressing the threats posed by radicalisation and violent extremism characterizing our contemporary society.

Since the internet has become a powerful tool for extremist activities (extremist propaganda, criminal and terrorist funding etc.) the industry plays an increasingly important role due to its ability to provide technological solutions to prevent, contain, respond and recover from violent extremism. However, it is necessary for the industry to establish a partnership-based approach with other key stakeholders to ensure that scientific knowledge is effectively transferred to real products to use on the ground in the fight against violent extremism.

As industry, academia plays a crucial role in preventing and countering violent extremism. The relevance of academia in this field is not only attributable to the quality of the research and analysis produced, which, in turn, helps policymakers

to more precisely identify causes and trends within CVE, but also to the deep involvement of academic stakeholders in the social, cultural and political affairs of their local or regional communities. Indeed, they are often involved in social actions or community initiatives which helps to create a sense of trust and partnership with a number of different community stakeholders.

Similarly, including civil societies on a national and local level will allow governments, law enforcement, policy and strategy makers and other relevant stakeholders to rebuild trust with communities, particularly in areas where law enforcement involvement is counterproductive. Therefore, previous CVE strategies, critiqued as being government-focused, can be improved by building effective knowledge partnerships with civil societies. This would allow institutions to better understand the context and requirements needed to develop an impactful strategy within societies.

Finally, the paper attempted to show the need to involve local communities in CVE policies and strategies and the significance of developing coherent knowledge partnerships with local community institutions to better tackle radicalisation. For instance, the engagement of local institutions such as the councils, academic bodies, and the media might can play a critical role in encouraging local governments to address the needs of the most vulnerable communities. Similarly, local actors and the media are particularly instrumental in building and sustaining community resilience, thus reducing the marge for terrorist organisations infiltration of vulnerable communities.

Paper 6.

Comparative analysis of national decision-making procedures - Making the policy-making procedures in the context of counter-radicalisation: the cases of Belgium, Italy and the United Kingdom

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1. Introduction

Terrorist events in the last few years have shaken Europe in an unprecedented manner following a series of attacks across major cities. Concerns regarding the growth of and support for jihadism at home and abroad have gained momentum. The debates on foreign fighters, returnees, or home-grown terrorists have sparked public and political discourses. As a result, counter-terrorism and counter-radicalisation have been high on the political and public agenda of both the European Union (EU) and its Member States (MS), with existing policies intensified through assessments and new measures developed and implemented^{168 169}. However, countries differ in their recognition of these phenomena, and in their

¹⁶⁸ Countering radicalisation and (violent) extremism is generally embedded within other domains, such as counter-terrorism. The latter grants grounds for the collection of information for an investigation, and advance identification and possible criminal prosecution of individuals posing a risk to public order. In parallel, it also encompasses a preventive dimension through socially-oriented, restrictive and criminal measures (Wittendorp et al 2017).

¹⁶⁹ Wittendorp, S., de Bont, R., de Roy van Zuijdewijn, J. and Bakker, E. (2017). Dealing with jihadism: A policy comparison between the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, the UK and the US (2010 to 2017). ISGA Report. Universiteit ISGA

policies, measures and programs^{170 171}. Previous experiences with terrorism (or lack thereof), constitutional and legal frameworks, security architectures, working mechanisms and national priorities affect the convergence of national counter-terrorism systems¹⁷².

This paper brings into focus two current and one former EU Member State (EU MS): Belgium, Italy, and the United Kingdom (UK). All these nations have significant past experiences in managing terrorist activity and radicalisation. The study highlights different state levels, processes and policy structures, actors involved latest strategies and measures. Hereby, the analysis of the national contexts constitutes a promising point of departure for a comparison of national policy structures and their operations. To provide a comparative overview, the first part of the paper contextualises the issue at hand and briefly delineates the study set-up. The second part then analyses each country, noting inter alia key historical aspects of countries' experiences with violent extremism, as well as mechanisms in place to combat radicalisation and violent extremism. Finally, the conclusion summarises the findings of the overall comparative analysis.

2. Sources and methods

The study primarily draws upon the results of two MINDb4ACT studies, a Macro-survey (D1.4) and an Ethnographic study (D1.1). The examination of "declarative policy", such as policy included in action plans and strategies¹⁷³ as well as actual policy implementation, and national initiatives and assessments through desk-research supplement the analysis. Additional desk-research (qualitative material, primary and secondary sources and documents) is used to discern national contexts and provide a baseline for observations.

As a multi-faceted phenomenon, radicalisation requires multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional responses. In the EU MS there are no "one-size-fits-all" policies and programmes in countering radicalisation and violent extremism, much as no

170 Alati, D. (2020). Countering Radicalisation to Violent Extremism: A Comparative Study of Canada, the UK and South East Asia. *International Journal of Law and Political Sciences*. 14:2, 88-92. <https://panel.waset.org/publications/10011036/pdf>

171 D'Amato, S. (2019). "Cultures of Counterterrorism French and Italian Responses to Terrorism after 9/11." *Contemporary Security Studies*. 1st Edition. Routledge.

172 Maniscalco, M., and Rosato, V. (eds.). (2019). *Preventing Radicalisation and Terrorism in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of Policies* [ebook]. <https://www.cambridgescholars.com/preventing-radicalisation-and-terrorism-in-europe>

173 Wittendorp, S., de Bont, R., de Roy van Zijdewijn, J. and Bakker, E. (2017). *Dealing with jihadism: A policy comparison between the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, the UK and the US (2010 to 2017)*. ISGA Report. Universteit ISGA

overarching single model of policy-making exists. Indeed, prevention of violent extremism or countering violent extremism (P/CVE) approaches should reflect and conform to specific regional, national and local contexts, including capabilities, structures and needs (GCTF undated, 2; UNOCT, undated). As such, an ad-hoc overall model consisting of four main "building blocks", such as: (1) policy development and implementation; (2) information and intelligence gathering; (3) risk assessment; and (4) monitoring and evaluation was applied (see Fig. 1). These interconnected components constitute overall policy-making processes related to counter radicalisation and violent extremism. Policy domains usually denote a field with clearly demarcated sets of problems and actors. In this paper it is intended to reflect a much more complex and broader reality. Efforts dealing with radicalisation are encapsulated in general domains related to countering terrorism and violent extremism.

Figure 1.

Methodological model for policy-making in P/CVE

Policy development and implementation process	Information and intelligence gathering	Risk assessment	Monitoring and evaluation
Developing and implementing P/CVE policies and plans is a central task undertaken by different sub-sets of security actors. The indicator also aims to identify by which actors these key responsibilities are taken care of, how they are carried out, how (and to what extent) the other building blocks feed into this "building block."	Information and intelligence gathering refers to the process and techniques for collecting data on the radicalisation context, drivers, trajectories and conditions and their role in the overall CVE national structure.	Identifies the tools and mechanisms used to determine the potential risks and variables of radicalisation as a hazard.	Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, feed into overall assessments of the policy-making procedure. This includes actors responsible for evaluations, format and frequency and considers if good practices are identified and recommendations on amendments and adjustments are considered.

Source: adapted from UNOCT, "Reference Guide on Developing National and Regional Action Plans to Prevent Violent Extremism" (undated)

The intent is to allow for a better and critical understanding of the current trends and direction(s) in the countries under consideration in their CVE/PVE policies.

Comprehensive, comparative and up-to-date knowledge about the trends and state of counter-radicalisation, de-radicalisation and counter-terrorism policies is essential to improve policy-making and implementation processes in Europe¹⁷⁴. Finally, this paper aims to inform policy-makers and first-line practitioners.

National approaches in Belgium, Italy and the UK are explored with particular attention to the heterogeneity of the terrorism and P/CVE phenomena, and (potential) barriers to sharing information across agencies and actors. It highlights the complex nature of multi-agency working inevitably affecting the formulation of effective responses to radicalisation and violent extremism¹⁷⁵.

The analysis of geographical cases of Belgium, Italy and the UK are based upon the description of (1) Political-strategic, (2) Organisational, (3) Procedural, and (4) Legal arenas (ibid. 14, 15). However, radicalisation leading to violent extremism constitutes a highly complex phenomenon¹⁷⁶, due to its diverse and intertwined causes and drivers at micro, meso and macro levels. National policies and practices are characterised by diversity in approaches and initiatives developed according to specific institutional and political frameworks and understandings of the phenomenon (AGENFOR 2019, 46). Largely, the countries under consideration converge in the employment of a series of multi-actor methods, displaying both securitarian and communitarian traits.

3. Countering radicalisation and violent extremism at the policy level in Belgium

3.1 Background

Belgium has a radicalisation problem, in part due to the social and economic structure of some cities and neighbourhoods and in part due to having the highest ratio of foreign terrorist fighters and homegrown terrorists per capita in Europe¹⁷⁷.

174 Lurczyszyn, J., Liedel K., Pacewicz M., and Piasecka, P. (2019). Report on the Comparative Analysis of European Counter-Radicalisation, Counter-Terrorist and De-Radicalisation Policies. DARE Dialogue About Radicalisation & Equality. http://www.dare-h2020.org/uploads/1/2/1/7/12176018/_reportcounterradicalisationpolicies_d3.2.pdf

175 RAN. (2018a). Multi-agency working and preventing violent extremism I. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/multi-agency-working-preventing-violent-extremism-042018_en.pdf

176 Milo, D. (2014). "Countering Radicalisation and Violent Extremism - a European Perspective", in Majer, M., and Ondrejcsák, R. (eds.), *Panorama of global security environment* (Bratislava: Centre for European and North Atlantic Affairs). <https://stratpol.sk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/panorama2013.pdf>

177 Renard, T. and Coolsaet, R. (2018). Reassessing Belgium's "Failed" Counterterrorism Policy. *Lawfare*. <https://www.lawfareblog.com/reassessing-belgiums-failed-counterterrorism-policy>

Renard, T. and Coolsaet, R. (2018). "From the Kingdom to the Caliphate and back: Returnees in Belgium." In Renard T & Coolsaet R (eds) *Returnees: Who Are They? Why Are They (Not) Coming Back and How Should We Deal with Them?* Egmont Paper 101. http://www.egmontinstitute.be/content/uploads/2018/02/egmont.papers.101_online_v1-3.pdf?type=pdf

The well-known neighbourhoods of Molenbeek, in the heart of Brussels, has the highest concentration of jihadi foreign fighters going to fight in Iraq and Syria in all of Europe and "has for a quarter of a century been seen as the heart of Islamism in Belgium"¹⁷⁸. A series of terrorism-related incidents have led to intense public scrutiny of Belgium's seemingly inadequate counter-terrorism and related counter-radicalisation measures¹⁷⁹.

Homegrown terrorism is the primary focus of security services¹⁸⁰, following the 2016 attacks orchestrated by ISIS. A new series of policy changes across all levels within Belgium required modifications to the country's existing federal and regional structures¹⁸¹. The report of the Parliamentary Investigation Committee (PIC) on the 22 March 2016 attacks identified a number of shortcomings in the Belgian counterterrorism approach. It highlighted the lack of information sharing within and between services involved in counter-terrorism and counter radicalisation effort. Working in silos without effective cooperation and coordination is one of the main barriers to effective policy-making in this area. Establishing committees and structures, in addition to adjusting ways of working, resulted in the recommendation to further develop and formalise the activities of the National Task Force (NTF), Local Integrated Security Cells (LISCs) and local task forces. Belgium introduced encouraging reforms in the counter-radicalisation and counter-terrorism field aimed at connecting not only intelligence, security and police services across different policy levels, but also the broader stakeholders representing different levels of government and civil society¹⁸². Homegrown terrorism is the primary focus of security services¹⁸³¹⁸⁴, following 2016 attacks orchestrated by ISIS. A new series of policy changes across all levels within the Belgium system required modifications to the country's existing federal and regional structures¹⁸⁵. However, little effort has been made to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of current practices in Belgium since this report.

178 Lefebvre S. (2017). "The Belgians Just Aren't up to It": Belgian intelligence and contemporary terrorism. *International Journal of Intelligence and Counter Intelligence*, 30:1, 1-29. DOI: 10.1080/08850607.2016.1230699

179 Van der Vet, I. and Coolsaet, R. (November 2018). The Belgian approach to tackling violent radicalisation: a practitioner's perspective. IES Policy Brief. Issue 2018/02. http://aei.pitt.edu/97398/1/IES_Policy_Brief_2018-2_van_der_Vet_and_Coolsaet.pdf

180 Coolsaet, R. and Renard, T. (2020). <https://www.ispionline.it/en/publicazione/foreign-fighters-and-terrorist-threat-belgium-24663>

181 Starr-Deelen, D. and Pazos, P. (2018). Countering Violent Extremism and Deradicalisation: Comparative study of Spain, Belgium, and the USA. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3201183

182 Ibid.

183 Coolsaet, R. and Renard, T. (2020). <https://www.ispionline.it/en/publicazione/foreign-fighters-and-terrorist-threat-belgium-24663>

184 Europol (2018) European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2018. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/activities-services/main-reports/eu-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report#fndtn-tabs-0-bottom-2>. Accessed 21/05/2019

185 Starr-Deelen, D. and Pazos, P. (2018). Countering Violent Extremism and Deradicalisation: Comparative study of Spain, Belgium, and the USA. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3201183

Overall, the country was accused of leniency and naivety in its Counter Terrorism (CT) approach; some critics even conflating a seemingly failed counterterrorism approach with a supposedly “failed state”¹⁸⁶. Criticism and contestation regarding the new measures are abound in political and public milieus, pointing to a scarcity of reliable empirical data and a tendency to disregard first-line practitioners’ insights. First-line workers and prevention officials are warning that “the conducive environment that allowed for the jihadi mobilisation in Belgium (and in Europe) still exists. The endurance of “a toxic mix of social exclusion and isolation, structural marginalisation of minorities, and cultural and ethnic-religious “wars” will continue to serve as enabler for such mobilisation, providing credible rallying narratives¹⁸⁷.

3.2 Government definition and operating scope

Despite radicalisation having been on the agenda for some time in Belgium, it has taken over ten years before the preventive policy in Plan R, were decentralised and integrated at lower regional levels. No legal definition of “radicalisation” (nor “radicalism”) exists in Belgium. The operational definition of radicalism, however, as elaborated within the revised 2015 Plan-R is understood as a “progress striving to and/or supporting drastic changes in society.”¹⁸⁸.

The working definition indicates that the Plan of Action focuses on any form of radicalism, such as the expression and dissemination of a language of subversive, fundamentalist, racist, anarchist and extremist ideas or concepts (publicly expressed or the incentive to do so). Having radical views or opinions is not actually punishable, contrary to the execution of radical or violent acts¹⁸⁹. This implies that the plan refers to not only the field of jihadist radicalisation, but also to other fields such as those of the extreme left and right¹⁹⁰. This is not fully reflected in reality, as due to the complex administrative structure in which each administrative level develops its own

186 Renard, T. and Coolsaet, R. (2018). “From the Kingdom to the Caliphate and back: Returnees in Belgium.” In Renard T & Coolsaet R (eds) *Returnees: Who Are They? Why Are They (Not) Coming Back and How Should We Deal with Them?* Egmont Paper 101. http://www.egmontinstitute.be/content/uploads/2018/02/egmont.papers.101_online_v1-3.pdf?type=pdf

187 Coolsaet, R. and Renard, T. (2020). <https://www.ispionline.it/en/publicazione/foreign-fighters-and-terrorist-threat-belgium-24663>

188 Radicalisation here is understood as “a process which influences an individual or group of individuals in such a way that the individual or group are mentally prepared or willing to commit terrorist acts” (Belgian Federal Government, 2016: 9).

189 Belgian Federal Government. (2016). *Le Plan R: Le Plan d’Action Radicalisme*. https://www.besafe.be/sites/besafe.localhost/files/u18/brochure_radicalisme_fr.pdf / *PLAN R. The Action Plan Against Radicalism*. http://besafe.jdbi.eu/sites/besafe.localhost/files/u3051/planr_en.pdf

190 Casado, R.B., Fernández, I. B., Sáez M. T., Ortiz Guillen R., and Sánchez L/ (2019). D5.1 - Literature review report. Practices Project Objective H2020-SEC-06-FCT-2016 Research and Innovation Action (RIA) Partnership against violent radicalisation in cities Project Number: 740072

plans, Belgium has several policy documents de facto focusing on the threat posed by jihadism¹⁹¹.

3.3 Policy-making process

Prevention has been a key component of Belgium's CT approach. The country has adopted different policies against terrorism over the years, starting from a heterogeneous point of departure where the actors were less involved and committed. Recently, the main pillar of Belgium's approach to the fight against terrorism has been the alignment of institutions, bodies and members involved in related activities. Here one can clearly see that Belgium chose to go with a holistic, multi-agency approach. Exclusive competence in matters of security lies with the federal authorities. Security together with the intelligence services and the respective ministries dominated the conception of Plan R at the national level. However, as foreseen in Plan R and the Framework Memorandum on Integral Security, socio-preventive and socio-educative approaches feature prominently on the regional and communal levels and form the centrepieces of the regional and communal action plans (AGENFOR 2019).

The 2015 Radicalisation Action Plan (Plan R) revised the original 2005 plan to prevent and counter radicalisation in Belgium. In support of the national level Plan R, Local task forces develop individualised plans - for example, the Brussels Region, the Flemish and Wallonian Communities have individually provided their own action plans carried out at the regional level, and that are coordinated with a national task force¹⁹². Compared to its original version, the latest version of the plan describes the drivers of radicalisation and the mechanisms of interaction between various stakeholders, such as law enforcement and preventive services at various state levels¹⁹³. In order to make sense of the complexity and multiplicity of levels and actors involved in terrorism prevention and repression, the "Kadernota Integrale Veiligheid" (KIW) was formulated in 2016. The text offers a framework of reference for the current Belgian security policy and sketches the integration of the various partners involved.

191 Wittendorp, S., de Bont, R., de Roy van Zuijdewijn, J. and Bakker, E. (2017). Dealing with jihadism: A policy comparison between the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, the UK and the US (2010 to 2017). ISGA Report. Universteit ISGA

192 A portion of the Belgian 30 counter-terrorism measures are dedicated to countering radicalisation. Among those measures, the "Plan Canal" of the Belgian Ministry of Home Affairs focuses on eight municipalities in Brussels and its environs to monitor communities vulnerable to radicalisation. (Counter Terrorism Ethics 2017).

193 Van der Vet, I. and Coolsaet, R. (November 2018). The Belgian approach to tackling violent radicalisation: a practitioner's perspective. IES Policy Brief. Issue 2018/02. http://aei.pitt.edu/97398/1/IES_Policy_Brief_2018-2_van_der_Vet_and_Coolsaet.pdf

Several policy changes in the past two years have accompanied the recent holistic, multi-agency approach in Belgium, largely due to “reactive and event driven in nature” of Belgian policy-making. This process is shaped by “practices, experience and contexts designed to provide a unique response to Belgium’s specific challenges”¹⁹⁴. Despite the lack of empirically demonstrable evaluations of counter-radicalisation policies and practices and the lack of consensus among practitioners and scholars on the processes involved in radicalisation, Belgium’s approach focuses heavily on national and local trends and requirements. This is complicated further by the multitude of drivers for radicalisation and extended number of contexts they touch upon¹⁹⁵.

3.4 Policy development and implementation process – multi-actor approach

Belgium’s decentralised system¹⁹⁶ presents unique challenges and opportunities, as CVE policies remain largely “horizontal and non-hierarchical structure” and “in accordance with the respective competences of different bodies at various policy levels”¹⁹⁷. Belgian CVE design is based on the principle of subsidiarity, rather than a top-down approach. This allows for tasks to be executed by the appropriate at suitable levels¹⁹⁸. Constitutional arrangements state that the federal level is essentially responsible for “hard” security policies through coercive measures, whereas regions are almost exclusively in charge for prevention.¹⁹⁹

The Belgian state structure comprises a wide array of state actors - including local and federal police, two intelligence services, representatives of relevant ministries (Interior, Justice, Foreign Affairs and Finance), representatives of the communities and regions, local administrations, public research institutes, social services, and education system(s). Additionally, non-state actors, such as grassroots organisations or community projects, are increasingly involved at the local municipal

194 Van der Vet, I. and Coolsaet, R. (November 2018). The Belgian approach to tackling violent radicalisation: a practitioner’s perspective. IES Policy Brief. Issue 2018/02. http://aei.pitt.edu/97398/1/IES_Policy_Brief_2018-2_van_der_Vet_and_Coolsaet.pdf

195 Van der Vet, I. and Coolsaet, R. (November 2018). The Belgian approach to tackling violent radicalisation: a practitioner’s perspective. IES Policy Brief. Issue 2018/02. http://aei.pitt.edu/97398/1/IES_Policy_Brief_2018-2_van_der_Vet_and_Coolsaet.pdf

196 “Belgium is a federal state, consisting of 3 Regions and 3 Communities with their own competences, responsible for economy, trade, employment, agriculture, energy and the supervision of their provinces and municipalities. Communities handle issues such as education, culture and youth, social and family assistance. A number of coordination mechanisms between the different actors facilitate the implementation of policies and strategies targeting terrorism and countering Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (CVE)” (cf Starr and Pazos 2018)

197 Van der Vet, I. and Coolsaet, R. (November 2018). The Belgian approach to tackling violent radicalisation: a practitioner’s perspective. IES Policy Brief. Issue 2018/02. http://aei.pitt.edu/97398/1/IES_Policy_Brief_2018-2_van_der_Vet_and_Coolsaet.pdf

198 Ibid.

199 Ibid.

level²⁰⁰. Plan R aims to coordinate the activities of all these different actors involved in the fight against radicalisation and terrorism.

Belgium's holistic approach to combating terrorism, prevention, legal prosecution and rehabilitation have become the key pillars. A prerequisite for this is the close cooperation and coordination between various actors and policy areas, including, but not limited to: the Coordination Unit for Threat Analysis (OCAD/OCAM), Federal and Local Police, Ministry of Defence, intelligence services, Regions and Communities, and Municipalities. While these actors are vastly different and encompass different levels of engagement, their purpose is aligned: protect citizens and infrastructures against terrorist attacks; counter radicalisation and violent extremism; dismantle terrorist networks and combat their financing; prosecute, punish and reintegrate perpetrators of terrorist offences into society; and provide support to victims of terrorist acts²⁰¹. The relationship between prison and radicalisation has also received great attention in Belgium. New prison sections were established to house radicalised detainees to prevent the spread of radical ideas, in addition to training provided to personnel to improve awareness about radicalisation and the efficiency of professional care for those convicted of terrorism related offences²⁰². Belgian practitioners highlight that policy design, development and implementation is slow and, event-driven. This has led to some policy-lag in the case of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) policies - including the integration of returnees, prosecution of women, or radicalisation in prisons²⁰³.

3.5 Information and intelligence gathering

Information gathering and sharing is another crucial element in the country's legal and policy framework²⁰⁴. Overall, the coordination of the various services (from prevention to security) and policy levels (from local to federal) has significantly improved in recent years. Belgian authorities have created common databases on

200 Ibid.

201 Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs. Fight Against Terrorism. https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/policy/policy_areas/peace_and_security/terrorism/fight_against_terrorism

202 Renard, T. and Coolsaet, R. (2018). "From the Kingdom to the Caliphate and back: Returnees in Belgium." In Renard T & Coolsaet R (eds) *Returnees: Who Are They? Why Are They (Not) Coming Back and How Should We Deal with Them?* Egmont Paper 101. http://www.egmontinstitute.be/content/uploads/2018/02/egmont.papers.101_online_v1-3.pdf?type=pdf

203 Van der Vet, I. and Coolsaet, R. (November 2018). The Belgian approach to tackling violent radicalisation: a practitioner's perspective. IES Policy Brief. Issue 2018/02. http://aei.pitt.edu/97398/1/IES_Policy_Brief_2018-2_van_der_Vet_and_Coolsaet.pdf

204 On the topic, more extensively, see for example: European Parliament, Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, *EU and Member States' Policies and Laws on Persons Suspected of Terrorism-Related Crimes*, December 2017, available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/bd1d7d69-fc02-11e7-b8f5-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-71030434>.

cases related to radicalisation and extremism. They have also established new platforms to facilitate the exchange of information across the whole “system” consistently. At the core of the post 2015 Plan R is the principle of “efficient data sharing” between law enforcement, practitioners and the public sector²⁰⁵. Specifically, the information exchange between the advisory bodies of the Plan R (NTF, LTF, working groups) and the local authorities has been improved by the creation of a common and dynamic data base pooling relevant information about various types of extremists. The information flux towards the local authorities also provides a structural connection with the social and prevention services, by means of the Local Integrated Security Cell (Plan R, 8). However, gathering empirical data on radicalised or radicalising individuals is currently limited by data protection principles, restrictions imposed by police and intelligence services, and a habitual lack of cooperation of the individuals concerned.

3.6 Risk assessment

At the federal level, the Coordination Unit for Threat Assessment (OCAD / CUTA) provides strategic or tactical assessments on any threat from terrorism and extremism against Belgian subjects, interests, or critical infrastructure at home and abroad. It leverages expertise from security and police services as experts and external analysts. It coordinates roles of relevant stakeholders and terrorism-financing information in centrally managed databases. The OCAD analyses largely finished products and produces comprehensive assessments depending on the severity of risks. These analyses serve as the basis for the evaluation of a threat against a certain person, location, group or event. In the cases of terrorism, the OCAD uses a quad-tier threat assessment scale and advises regional governments to take appropriate actions accordingly.

3.7 Monitoring and evaluation

Broadly speaking, CVE policy reflects a dynamic reality that requires rapid search and development of deradicalisation methods and tools. Although Belgian federal counter-terrorism policy is not assessed systemically, the intent is to evaluate regional initiatives. In Belgium, at the regional level as noted by Van der Vet and Coolsaet in 2018²⁰⁶, a grid-system of indicators developed in close cooperation with municipalities exists. It aims to evaluate plans and policies through thematic workshops, “in which internal evaluators from the municipalities assess the

205 Ibid.

206 Van der Vet, I. and Coolsaet, R. (November 2018). The Belgian approach to tackling violent radicalisation: a practitioner perspective. IES Policy Brief. Issue 2018/02. http://aei.pitt.edu/97398/1/IES_Policy_Brief_2018-2_van_der_Vet_and_Coolsaet.pdf

policies of the respective last two years." The challenging complexity of the Belgian state structure leaves many questions unanswered due to the diversity of actors, processes and dynamics at play.

National Task Force (NTF) working groups continuously engage with concerned services and develop robust frameworks of knowhow to understand drivers of radicalisation. They feed information to the Coordination Committee for Intelligence and Security, through annual reports on collaboration and assessments of measures and proposals to diminish the impact of radicalisation. Information gathering, and intelligence more specifically, raise questions about indications, warning methodology, and effectiveness of preventive measures to respond to terrorist threats²⁰⁷.

3.8 Belgium and the EU and International context

Belgium cooperates closely with the EU MS and EU institutions. It ratified the largest number of international treaties by the Council of Europe and made the approach to radicalisation and terrorism one of the priorities during its presidency from November 2014 to May 2015. Belgium also adopted a modified version of the Violent Extremist Risk Assessment 2 Revised (VER-2R) tool, co-funded by the European Commission²⁰⁸. International cooperation in the fight against terrorism within the UN framework is of a great importance to Belgium. It actively participates in the global counter-terrorism strategy and the implementation of its relevant resolutions. Finally, Belgium is part of the Global Coalition against Daesh, where it holds membership in its five working groups²⁰⁹.

4. Countering radicalisation and violent extremism at the policy level in Italy

4.1 Background

Unlike Belgium, Italy has a longstanding history of extremism and organised crime. The country reports a significant presence of far-right groups next to jihadist extremist groups, and it is "plagued" by a confrontational dynamic that opposes

207 Lasoen K. L. (2017). Indications and warning in Belgium: Brussels is not Delphi. *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 40:7, 927-962. DOI: 10.1080/01402390.2017.1288111

208 36 questions cover all forms of violent extremism and operates across five domains: beliefs, attitudes and ideology; social context and intent; history, actions and capability; commitments and motivations; and protective indicators, among others. Information assembled under the assessment is used in rehabilitation interventions and programmes (RAN 2018b).

209 Counter Terrorism Ethics (2020). The Belgian Counter terrorism Landscape. http://counterterrorismethics.com/the-belgian-counter-terrorism-landscape/#_Toc495090904

radical right and left²¹⁰. Traditionally, Italy has prioritised its criminal justice system in its approach to counter-terrorism (CT). Now Italian authorities have ample powers to conduct lengthy surveillance operations and pre-emptive raids. In particular, the deportation of foreign suspects has been the cornerstone of its counterterrorism strategy²¹¹. Unlike most Western countries (incl. Belgium and the UK), Italy has not developed any program or strategy aimed to combat radicalisation to date (CREM nd). Nonetheless, traditional pressure tactics are considered by various experts as an important factor in maintaining low levels of radicalisation in the country²¹².

Radicalisation was only introduced to the public agenda in 2015, through the decree on "Urgent Measures to Fight Against Terrorism"²¹³. The implementation of the decree followed the European Commission's Official Communication on the prevention of radicalisation leading to terrorism and violent extremism (European Union, 2014), which featured a series of "symptomatic" crimes, such as instigating terrorism on the Internet or preparing travel to areas with terrorist activities²¹⁴. Further policies aimed at the "non-ghettoisation of migrants", Italy's limited colonial legacy, and primarily first-generation migrant population, are all factors said to contribute to Italy's "exceptionalism" within the European context (Beccaro and Bonino 2020; Berardinelli and Guglielminetti 2018, 30). Some authors warn that "while the threat picture and degree of radicalisation is not as acute as in other European countries, the threat is nonetheless longstanding, serious, and growing. Italy is grappling with considerable societal challenges, which could lead to greater security challenges in the future"²¹⁵.

210 Casado, R.B., Fernández, I. B., Sáez M. T., Ortiz Guillen R., and Sánchez L/ (2019). D5.1 - Literature review report. Practices Project Objective H2020-SEC-06-FC2016 Research and Innovation Action (RIA) Partnership against violent radicalisation in cities Project Number: 740072

211 Two anti-terrorism laws adopted in 2005 and in 2015 expanded the grounds for the administrative deportation of non-EU citizens. Between January 2015 and February 2018, the authorities deported 261 extremists for reasons of state security. In the first two months of 2018 alone, there were 24 expulsions from the country (Marone 2018).

212 Marone, F. and Olimpio, M. (2018). "We will Conquer your Rome." Italy and the Vatican in the Islamic State's Propaganda. ISPI Working Paper. <https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione/we-will-conquer-your-rome-italy-and-vatican-islamic-states-propaganda-19748>

213 The "Decreto-Legge 7/2015, Misure urgenti per il contrasto del terrorismo, proroga delle missioni internazionali iniziative di cooperazione allo sviluppo. "Urgent measures to fight against terrorism, for the extension of international missions and cooperation initiatives for development."

214 Berardinelli, D. and Guglielminetti, L. (2018). "Preventing Violent Radicalisation: the Italian Case Paradox." International Conference. Multidisciplinary perspectives in the quasi-coercive treatment of offenders." The 7th Edition. Groups with special needs in community measures. Filodiritto Editore - Proceedings.

215 Groppi, M. (2017). The Terror Threat to Italy: How Italian Exceptionalism is Rapidly Diminishing. CTC Sentinel, 10:5, 20-28. <https://ctc.usma.edu/the-terror-threat-to-italy-how-italian-exceptionalism-is-rapidly-diminishing/>

4.2 Government definition and operating scope

Measures for the Prevention of the Radicalisation of Violent Jihadist Extremism define "radicalisation" as the individual phenomenon of people who sympathise or subscribe to jihadist ideologies, inspired in the use of violence and political or religious terrorism²¹⁶. This conveys a national and international security connotation, insofar as it involves political and religious terrorism. Social connotations are also apparent, as it refers to an individual, personal and internal phenomenon, implying the integration of social factors in the process²¹⁷. The definition incorporates main elements of the European Parliament's resolution of 25 November on the prevention of radicalisation and the recruitment of European citizens by terrorist organisations, tailoring/adapting it to the specific case of Italy²¹⁸.

Inspired by other European and Western countries, where strategies focused solely on repressing terrorism are considered incomplete, the 2017 "Dambrosio-Manciulli" law - introducing "Measures for the Prevention of Jihadist Radicalisation and Extremism" (act 3558) - brought along significant changes in the national approach to CVE/PVE. Monitoring, investigation, intelligence work, and arrests, which are currently at the heart of Italy's antiterrorism efforts, are seemingly not enough to eradicate terrorism completely, and the Italian State is looking towards a more holistic approach (CREM nd, 1). The issue of extremism and violent radicalisation remain both in the public agenda. Extremism is considered a systemic problem concerning the vast majority of society. It reached the highest priority in 2015 in the formal agenda, justified by the evolution of terrorism at both national and international levels. Mainly, the pressure is external and stems from measures taken by the European Union, thus reaching all levels of public intervention and society, involving the Regional State, and all five political regions (ibid.). The 2017 law implied a fundamental "rebalance" in Italy's overall approach to the issue, insofar as it relies on a broader understanding of the concept and dynamics of radicalisation itself. This starts from the awareness that the participation of the entire society in a *conditio sin qua non* when tackling CVE/CRV and acknowledging that "soft" counter- and de-radicalisation measures would complement the existing set of counterterrorism instruments. These would further strengthen the country's capacity to respond to the terrorist threat²¹⁹.

216 Parlamento della Repubblica Italiana. (2017). Misure per la prevenzione della radicalizzazione e dell'estremismo violento di matrice jihadista AC 3558 - A. <http://documenti.camera.it/Leg17/Dossier/Pdf/AC0573A.Pdf>

217 Casado, R.B., Fernández, I. B., Sáez M. T., Ortiz Guillen R., and Sánchez L/ (2019). D5.1 - Literature review report. Practices Project Objective H2020-SEC-06-FCT-2016 Research and Innovation Action (RIA) Partnership against violent radicalisation in cities Project Number: 740072

218 Ibid.

219 Marone, F. and Olimpio, M. (2018). "We will Conquer your Rome." Italy and the Vatican in the Islamic State's Propaganda. ISPI Working Paper. <https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione/we-will-conquer-your-rome-italy-and-vatican-islamic-states-propaganda-19748>

4.3 Policy-making process

The Italian legal framework on prevention, prosecution and repression of terrorism and violent radicalisation is contained in the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and specific laws (Valiente-Ivañez et al 2019). With an established and consolidated tradition of fighting violent extremism and organized crime, the country has until now applied a centralised and largely security-oriented counter-terrorism and counter-radicalisation approach. It focuses on activities such as (1) intelligence and police investigations and surveillance; (2) monitoring webpages and social media; (3) countering the financing of terrorism; (4) administrative expulsions; (5) personal preventing measures; (6) judicial measures; (7) monitoring and counter-radicalisation programs within prisons²²⁰.

Increasingly, policy makers advocate for non-coercive measures to be included in the toolbox to counter violent extremism, thereby differentiating countering violent radicalisation and extremism from counterterrorism strategies - the purpose being prevention, not response. These measures, similarly to other European countries, aimed at schools, prisons, communities and families of at-risk individuals. However, to date, Italian strategies to prevent violent extremism and radicalisation have lacked a credible multi-stakeholder approach, both in theory and practice²²¹. Additionally, Italy does not yet have a specific strategy for deradicalisation or exit programs. Italian stakeholders report to support the need for such programs as long as they include multidisciplinary actors and transdisciplinary actions. (MINDb4ACT D.1 Macro survey, 7).

The key to the Italian security system's effectiveness has been the gradual move to a more complex formula, balancing repressive and preventive dimensions of counter-radicalisation²²² (Deliverable D1.1 Living Labs context analysis, AGENFOR). Three parallel core elements make up the Italian Counter-Radicalisation and Counter-Violent Extremism nation-specific approach: (1) Security; (2) Rehabilitation; and most importantly, *(3) Rule of Law (represented by surveillance judges and courts).

220 Maniscalco and Rosato (eds.). (2019). Preventing Radicalisation and Terrorism in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of Policies [ebook]. <https://www.cambridgescholars.com/preventing-radicalisation-and-terrorism-in-europe>

221 Ibid.

222 With an exclusive focus with jihadist radicalisation, there have been two instrumental landmarks to underline the shift to prevention: (i) the Memorandum of Understanding with the Union of Islamic Communities in Italy (UCOII) - providing spiritual and moral assistance to Muslim prisoners through access to adequately prepared operators within the prisons; and (ii) the National Pact for an Italian Islam (2017) at the Interior Ministry with representatives of the major Islamic associations and communities... commit[ing] to rejecting all forms of violence and terrorism... strengthen[ing] dialogue and collaboration with the Ministry of Interior administration, continuing efforts to work against expressions of religious extremism and promoting a process in harmony with the principles of the Italian legislation on religious freedoms (Maniscalco and Rosato 2019).

The overarching framework is characterised by the rule of law and the equality of all citizens²²³.

4.4 Policy development and implementation process: multi-actor approach

Italy is a decentralised non-federal state, based around a Regional State that delegates powers to five political regions (North-West, Liguria, Lombardy, Piedmont and the Aosta Valley). The first initiatives addressing violent extremism and radicalisation emerged from the EU, which have since become part of the formal and public agenda of the Regional State, with the president of the Republic as the main agenda setter. Regions retain the autonomy and capacity to develop regional initiatives to fight violent extremism and radicalisation. Initiatives from the Regional State and from political regions are dispersed to remaining social actors, as part of the ambition for a whole of society approach to countering violent radicalisation and extremism. This model adheres to the external initiative approach, encompassing the process by which initiatives from external stakeholders (such as the EU) become established in the formal and public agenda of Regional States of the Italian Republic²²⁴.

Seemingly, no single actor is in charge of the overall formal national agenda as it is transferred from the Regional State to the different Ministries within the Italian government²²⁵. Inter-institutional cooperation and coordination is a hallmark of the Italian approach. Italy progressively developed an effective distribution of competences and capabilities in relation to the diverse nuances of the terrorist fight²²⁶. The involvement of a variety of actors working at different levels with robust and substantive exchange and institutional collaboration among intelligence agencies, armed and police forces, public administrations and organisations providing public utility and related foreign services is fundamental²²⁷.

223 Ibid.

224 Casado, R.B., Fernández, I. B., Sáez M. T., Ortiz Guillen R., and Sánchez L/ (2019). D5.1 - Literature review report. Practices Project Objective H2020-SEC-06-FCT-2016 Research and Innovation Action (RIA) Partnership against violent radicalisation in cities Project Number: 740072

225 Including the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and the Ministry of Education, University and Research (Manciulli 2017).

226 D'Amato, S. (2018). From BR to ISIS. The Italian domestic and international response to terrorism. *European Politics and Society*. 19:4, 416-434. DOI: 10.1080/23745118.2018.1447763

227 For example, Law n. 124/2007 significantly strengthened institutional cooperation relationships, emphasizing the importance of information and intelligence exchange between concerned bodies, and the roles and responsibilities of the armed and police forces, the State and research organisations (Maniscalco and Rosato 2019, xcv).

The measures approved for the prevention of violent jihadist extremism²²⁸ in July 2017, signify the ambition for a new holistic *modus operandi*. The Regional Coordination Centre on Radicalisation (CCR), whose main objective is the implementation of the National Strategic Plan, and the Parliamentary Committee, responsible for monitoring, are also responsible for coordination of measures, under the guidance of the National Centre on Radicalisation (CRAD). The CRAD promotes and develops measures, interventions and programmes for preventing radicalisation and deradicalising individuals. A National Strategic Plan is developed at the local and national level to fulfil a monitoring function²²⁹. Measures are implemented at the local level by the CCR, as they fall under the competence of regional governments. This approach aims to combat the Jihadist message not only through law and order, but also by involving different State organs (i.e. schools) as well as the civil society (primarily Islamic communities), contributing to the idea of a whole-of-society approach (CREM nd).

4.5 Information and intelligence gathering

The Committee for Strategic Anti-Terrorism Analysis (CASA) within the Interior Ministry collates and evaluates intelligence about potential threats to provide early warning. The CASA is composed of representatives of all law enforcement bodies and the secret services. It seeks to break down institutional barriers among these bodies. So that, it appears to be similar to the UK's Joint Intelligence Analysis Centre. Further, the Polizia di Stato (State Police), at both national and provincial level, maintain a specialised counterterrorism unit that has the authority to combat domestic and international terrorism. It is mandated to gather intelligence on terrorism and radicalisation, as well as investigate terrorist organisations. Institutionally, they report to the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior, with specialist departments also reporting to other Ministries, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

4.6 Risk assessment

Risk assessments in Italy focus largely on the risks associated with radicalisation in the penitentiary system. In Italy's penitentiary system, strategic collaboration between the Department of Penitentiary Administration, the Counterterrorism Strategic Analysis Committee (C.A.S.A.) and the National Anti-Mafia and Anti-

228 Parlamento della Repubblica Italiana. (2017). Misure per la prevenzione della radicalizzazione e dell'estremismo violento di matrice jihadista AC 3558 - A. <http://documenti.camera.it/Leg17/Dossier/Pdf/AC0573A.Pdf>

229 Ibid.

Terrorism Directorate is key. The results from analyses and monitoring activities are shared. Effective multidisciplinary cooperation between prison and social workers is required in order to obtain a comprehensive knowledge of a detainee, which is currently not sufficient. There is a need for protocol that specifies the form and method of communication relating to the monitoring and investigation process, which should help involve “useful” actors more effectively. In this case, according to the macro-survey’s first-line stakeholders, it would be especially useful to have the collaboration from religious representatives who could further enhance formal understanding of cultural and religious dynamics.

4.7 Monitoring and evaluation

The main strength of the Italian approach is the exchange of information within institutional paths and among professional bodies authorised by the law. It allows for maintaining clear juridical, operative and socio-rehabilitative differences between the competences of the different public-private actors, unlike in other countries (e.g. UK). The process complies with the EU regulations of data protection and presents a high degree of jurisdictional actions. Depending on the final aim (security or re-integration), each actor involved maintains its own institutional profile within clear hierarchies, procedures and uses. The main weaknesses of the Italian counter-radicalisation system are: (1) the emphasis on religious-inspired extremism (in particular, Islamic extremism); (2) the labelling of single communities that potentially result in backlashes and stigmatisation; (3) the late involvement of the judiciary in the system of preventive administrative measures; and (4) social danger being the basis for administrative and judiciary preventive measures. Overall, however, the Italian system proved a high level of efficacy (AGENFOR 2019, 2020).

4.8 Italy and the EU and international context

In broader context, Italy adheres to the goals and general of the EU’s integrated approach to counterterrorism²³⁰. Following the 9/11 attacks, Italy responded in accordance with the pertinent resolutions adopted within the framework of the United Nations and legislative instruments adopted by the EU, such as the EU CT regulations and is a signatory to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism. The Italian security system has implemented its tools to fight jihadist terrorism with the new-legislation Law No 43 (April 17, 2015) - amending the Penal

230 Investigative surveys, intelligence gathering, political-diplomatic dimension, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, crack-down on financing, transport security, and use of military force where necessary, play an essential and synergetic role; and the war on terrorism must be waged in respect of international law, human rights and international humanitarian law, as well as the rule of law (matching UN “Global Strategy against Terrorism” adopted by the General Assembly in September 2006).

Code with regard to UN Security Council Resolution 2178 to disrupt the flow of foreign fighters.

5. UK policy to counter radicalisation and violent extremism

5.1 Background

The United Kingdom (UK) holds the lengthiest record of domestic counter-terrorism laws among European countries²³¹. Its counter-terrorism laws have provided the template for the European Union and many other Western nations legislations in response to terrorism²³², with its "Prevent" strategy being the key example of a national CVE programme²³³. With a focus on preventing the radicalisation of individuals to terrorism and countering its spread, the UK government introduced the "Prevent" strategy in 2003 as part of an overall post-9/11 counter-terrorism approach, CONTEST. The strategy was adapted in 2011, to address all forms of terrorism and non-violent extremism that could create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism, extremist ideas and ultimately, violent radicalisation. In 2015, the strategy became a Legal Duty for public sector institutions, thus extending its reach deeper into society²³⁴. The CONTEST strategy builds on the 2015 National Security Strategy (NSS) and the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR). These documents identified terrorism as one of the highest priority risks to the UK, and aimed to counter terrorism through an integrated, whole of government approach drawing on capabilities across security, defense, diplomacy and development.

2017 signalled a significant number of terrorist attacks in the UK. Five attacks in London and Manchester resulted in the death of 36 people and injured many more. Since the Westminster attack, police and the security intelligence agencies have foiled a further 12 Islamist plots, disrupted four extreme right-wing plots²³⁵ and are handling over 500 live investigations, involving some 3,000 individuals (MI5 and the Counter-Terrorism Policing). The updated and strengthened 2018 CONTEST strategy for counter-terrorism places greater emphasis on systemic co-ordination

231 Maniscalco and Rosato (eds.). (2019). Preventing Radicalisation and Terrorism in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of Policies [ebook]. <https://www.cambridgescholars.com/preventing-radicalisation-and-terrorism-in-europe>

232 Roach, K. (2006). "The Post-9/11 Migration of Britain's Terrorism Act 2000" in Choudhry, S. (ed). *The Migration of Constitutional Law*. Cambridge University Press. 374-202.

233 Hardy, K. (2017). Hard and soft power approaches to countering online extremism.

234 Qurashi, F. (2018). *The Prevent strategy and the UK "war on terror": embedding infrastructures of surveillance in Muslim communities*. Palgrave Communications. 4:17 <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-017-0061-9>

235 HM Government. (2018). CONTEST- The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism. June 2018. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf

across the public and private sectors²³⁶, while maintaining the strategic framework of four “P” work strands - Prevent, Pursue, Protect, and Prepare. For preventing violent radicalisation and extremism²³⁷, PREVENT focuses on online detection of terrorist materials and building strong counter-terrorist narratives. It aims to develop series of multi-agency pilots for understanding at risk involvement in terrorism to enable earlier intervention, and to build stronger partnerships with communities, civil society groups, public sector institutions and industry.

The 2015 National Security Risk Assessment identified terrorism as a tier one risk, and the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) recognised that the volume and scale of the threat in the UK and overseas was increasing, and that its nature had changed. The number of arrests for terrorism-related offences has risen steadily since 2010. Between 2010 and 2017 there were 2,029 terrorism related arrests in Great Britain. The UK has assessed the threat from terrorism as persistent and constantly evolving. “Globally, terrorist groups and networks of all ideologies continue to develop organically, exploiting social media, technology and science to further their aims and ambitions”²³⁸.

5.2 Government definition and operating scope

The UK government sees radicalisation as a shared societal problem, but not as a single issue for law enforcement and intelligence agencies. Responses to the London and Manchester 2017 attacks highlighted both the challenge of detecting individuals who may be inspired to commit terrorist acts in the UK, and the pace at which plots can move to acts of violence.

Under the Prevent Strategy in 2011, the British Government defines counter-radicalisation as the “activity aimed at a group of people intended to dissuade them from engaging in terrorism-related activity.” In the same document, the Government defines de-radicalisation as an “activity aimed at a person who supports terrorism and in some cases has engaged in terrorist related activity, which is intended to effect cognitive and/or behavioural change leading to a new outlook on terrorism and/or disengagement from it” (Prevent, 2011, 107).

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ In October 2015 the Counter-Extremism Strategy was published, highlighting the UK’s commitment to countering the threat extremism poses to fundamental British values, operating on four fronts: (i) countering extremist ideology, (ii) building a partnership between all actors committed to countering extremism, (iii) disrupting extremists, and (iv) promoting cohesion through the Cohesive Communities Programme (HM Government 2015, Wittendorp et al 2017).

²³⁸ HM Government. (2018). CONTEST- The United Kingdom’s Strategy for Countering Terrorism. June 2018. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf

In 2015, as part of their Counter-Extremism Strategy, the UK developed a series of measures to address the promotion of hatred, spread of intolerance, and isolation of specific communities (cultural, ethnic, religious or otherwise). Protecting British societal values, such as the rule of law, individual liberty, democracy and tolerance, aim to tackle tenets of extremism in all its forms that threaten social cohesion. This approach is based on four interlinked pillars:

1. Countering extremist ideology by ensuring every part of the Government takes action to confront extremist narratives contradicting shared values;
2. Supporting mainstream voices, especially in faith communities and civil society;
3. Disrupting most harmful extremists, using available tools and prosecuting those who break the law;
4. Building cohesive communities by tackling segregation and alienation, which can provide fertile ground for extremist messages.

5.3 Policy-making process

The overall aim of the UK's CONTEST Strategy is to "reduce the risk to the UK and its citizens and interests overseas from terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence"²³⁹. Within this, countering radicalisation and violent extremism rests largely within the PREVENT component of the 4 Ps. At its core, PREVENT aims to safeguard and support vulnerable people, and address conditions conducive for radicalisation (Clancy non-dated, 4). Its main objectives are to: tackle causes of radicalisation and respond to ideological challenges posed by radical ideology; safeguard and support at-risk populations through early intervention, detection and support; and enable de-radicalisation and social reintegration of already engaged individuals and groups.

UK's "soft approach" to counter-radicalisation, aims to win the "hearts and minds" of individuals who are vulnerable and susceptible of falling victim to radicalisation (and eventually violent extremism). The reliance on non-coercive means of engagement has resulted in the UK being regarded as the forerunner in initiating "soft" preventive counter-radicalisation measures involving actors from civil society²⁴⁰. This approach

239 Ibid.

240 Maniscalco and Rosato (eds.). (2019). Preventing Radicalisation and Terrorism in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of Policies [ebook]. <https://www.cambridgescholars.com/preventing-radicalisation-and-terrorism-in-europe>

is contrary to the more aggressive "hard approach" that uses strict judicial processes and prosecution instead of strong community engagement - such as the one in Italy.

The close link between UK's counter-terrorism laws and the Prevent strategy has however generated recurring issues²⁴¹. Albeit praised for its efficiency, the strategy has also attracted fierce criticism. In particular, despite being recognised as a powerful tool in addressing radicalisation causes and narrowing down its breeding spaces, this approach has seemingly aggravated feelings of alienation and discrimination among UK's Muslim communities.^{242 243 244}

5.4 Policy development and implementation process – multi-actor approach

The UK has adopted a multi-agency approach to countering radicalisation, which implies working with a wide range of sectors, including education, criminal justice, faith, charities, the internet, and health (DARE 2018). PREVENT is divided into national and local levels to cater to specific needs of regional areas. This decentralised approach to carrying out CVE relies mainly on local experts and community leaders (Deliverable D1.4 VUB). Prevent delivery is underpinned by an understanding threats and the radicalisation process, by assessments of the threat picture in local areas and through continuous research and evaluation (CONTEST 2018, 31). Prevent heavily relies on local, community and private sector. This softer approach requires specific communities and civil society, local authorities, and educational institutions to support the overall national guidelines for countering radicalisation. These measures include, but are not limited to, delivering locally driven threat analysis in communities, protecting students from radical rhetoric through information provision and policies, and delivering a wide range of projects with schools, families and local actors.

The police also play a critical role in delivering Prevent. They develop local partnerships by bringing together community actors that support local delivery of projects within civil society. They also "provide specialist support and capabilities to manage risk and disrupt those who are of interest to the authorities due to their

241 Hardy, K. (2017). Hard and soft power approaches to countering online extremism.

242 See for example Thomas, P., "Failed and Friendless: The UK's "Preventing Violent Extremism" Programme" (2010) 12(3) British Journal of Politics and International Relations; Arun Kundnani, Spooked! How Not to Prevent Violent Extremism (Institute of Race Relations, 2009).

243 Hardy, K. (2017). Hard and soft power approaches to countering online extremism.

244 Qurashi, F. (2018). The Prevent strategy and the UK "war on terror": embedding infrastructures of surveillance in Muslim communities. Palgrave Communications. 4:17 <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-017-0061-9>

extremist views, or who have links to those engaged in terrorism-related activity"²⁴⁵. At the governmental level, the office of the Commissioner for Countering Extremism supports the "Government, the public sector, civil and wider society to identify and challenge all forms of extremism"²⁴⁶. It provides impartial, external advice on the tools, policies and approaches needed to tackle extremism, in addition to supporting the public sector, communities and civil societies in fighting extremism and promoting liberal pluralistic values.

5.5 Information and intelligence gathering

The government's Channel programme titled Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism (2015) uses a "multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people" by: 1) Identifying individuals at risk; 2) Assessing the nature and extent of that risk; and 3) Developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned (Clancy non dated, 4). For those cases where an individual is assessed to be at risk, a multi-agency Channel panel chaired by the local authority, discuss referral and provides tailored support packages to be offered to individuals. Since 2012, Prevent's voluntary and confidential Channel programme has helped more than 1,500 people considered vulnerable to exploitation from terrorist influences²⁴⁷. The process of identifying indicators and signals of problematic behaviour (i.e. radicalisation) requires the involvement of a variety of actors - among which Government Officials (Home Office, DSTL, NCA, NDES, etc.), Public Health Workers, Teachers and Lecturers/ Educational Support Staff, Intelligence Officers, Police Officers, Researchers and Academics.

Prevent has been criticised as a government instrument for collecting intelligence, rather than a means of confronting radicalisation and extremism²⁴⁸. The declarations following the attacks in London and Manchester in 2017 point to an emphasis on "sharing information more widely" and reference new local multi-level approaches enabling "enable MI5 and Counter-Terrorism Policing to share more information

245 HM Government. (2018). CONTEST- The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism. June 2018. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf.

246 Ibid.

247 Prevent explicitly addresses the threat posed by the far right and extreme right wing. Of the 394 individuals who received Channel support in 2017/18, 179 (45%) were referred for concerns related to Islamist extremism and 174 (44%) were referred for concerns related to the right wing extremism.

248 Wittendorp, S., de Bont, R., de Roy van Zuijdewijn, J. and Bakker, E. (2017). Dealing with jihadism: A policy comparison between the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, the UK and the US (2010 to 2017). ISGA Report. Universteit ISGA

with a broader range of partners, including government departments, Devolved Administrations, and local authorities"²⁴⁹.

5.6 Risk assessment

To detect and analyse the state of radicalisation within Prevent, the UK relies on the "Extremist Risk Guidance 22+ (ERG22) methodology. It presents 22 factors describing individual vulnerability to radicalisation - starting with general feelings of anger and injustice, of insecurity or threat perception, the need for identity and belonging, the need for status, and the need for excitement and adventure. It describes 13 indicators for engagement and proceeds to provide indicators meant to help detect and analyse radicalisation in individuals, leading to the provision of appropriate support. These indicators aim to raise awareness for first-line professionals and provide them with tools for early detection."²⁵⁰

This mechanism has been criticised for lacking valid evidence (Deliverable D1.1 Living Labs context analysis, AGENFOR). Critics highlight methodologically weak indicators used in Channel for setting questionable conceptualisations of radicalisation, and emphasise difficulties in distinguishing ideologically motivated violence from psychiatric illnesses and other personal or societal antecedents of aggression^{251 252}(Deliverable D1.1 Living Labs context analysis, AGENFOR 2019).

5.7 Monitoring and evaluation

Overall, the report of the 2017 National Security Capability Review (NSCR) finds CONTEST to be a well-organised and comprehensive response to terrorism, with strengths in powers, resources, reach and resilience. It however recommended updating the approach within the strategic framework of the four "Ps" (Prevent, Pursue, Protect, Prepare), to increase the country's ability to counter the shift in threat. This included a step-change in the domestic investigative capabilities through implementing the recommendations of MI5 and CT Policing's Operational

249 HM Government. (2018). CONTEST- The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism. June 2018. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB

250 European forum for urban security. (2016). Preventing and Fighting Radicalisation at the Local Level. https://issuu.com/efus/docs/publication_liaise_en-web

251 Knudsen, R. A. (2018). Measuring radicalisation: risk assessment conceptualisations and practice in England and Wales. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*. 2:1, 37-54, DOI: 10.1080/19434472.2018.1509105

252 Qureshi, A. (2016). The "science" of pre-crime. The secret "radicalisation" study underpinning PREVENT. CAGE. <https://cage.ngo/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/CAGE-Science-Pre-Crime-Report.pdf>

Improvement Review²⁵³. The new 2018 Strategy specifies a set of key performance indicators, supplemented by detailed evaluations of specific programmes, to monitor CONTEST. The performance framework draws together the range of evidence used across government to monitor delivery and evaluate success of both overseas and domestic counter-terrorism responses. The collected data is used to monitor progress towards the CONTEST strategic objectives and to make informed decisions (Government 2018, 87). Research and evaluation are key to delivering on Prevent effectively. Academics and leading Government experts in both the UK and overseas play a significant role to ensure that policies, approaches and activities are based on the best available evidence"²⁵⁴. The UK government also collaborates with a several research organisations to evaluate community and local projects²⁵⁵.

5.8 UK and the EU and international context

Despite Brexit, the UK still constitutes a key regional partner for the EU and MS in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. In its CVE and PVE interventions, the United Kingdom strongly endorses and supports the UN Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, which sets out the mutually reinforcing relationship between preventing and countering violent extremism and the protection and promotion of human rights. The UK sees this mutually reinforcing relationship as an essential underpinning of their national approach to the challenge of CVE and PVE²⁵⁶.

6. Conclusion

All three countries have implemented measures increasing and refining repression and prosecution measures, strengthening intelligence, policing activities through increased cooperation and staffing, and tightening existing measures through legislative reforms. The security dimension to counter-radicalisation and counter-

253 HM Government. (2018). CONTEST- The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism. June 2018. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf

254 HM Secretary of State. (2017). "Radicalisation: The counter-narrative and identifying the tipping point." OGL. <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/home-affairs/Correspondence-17-19/Radicalisation-the-counter-narrative-and-identifying-the-tipping-point-government-response-Eighth-Report-26-17-Cm-9555.pdf>

255 HM Government. (2018). CONTEST- The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism. June 2018. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf Maniscalco and Rosato (eds.). (2019). Preventing Radicalisation and Terrorism in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of Policies [ebook]. <https://www.cambridgescholars.com/preventing-radicalisation-and-terrorism-in-europe> 18_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf

256 McKendrick, K. (2019). "Artificial Intelligence Prediction and Counterterrorism." <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/2019-08-07-AICounterterrorism.pdf>

terrorism policies have at times been problematic due to their infringement on fundamental values, such as human rights and freedom²⁵⁷.

Reflecting a broader EU trend in counter-radicalisation policies and measures, the three countries are aligned on the need for: 1) a multi-agency approach to enhance coordination and collaboration among national and local level, law enforcement, civil society and the private sector; 2) increased focus on radicalisation and extremism; and 3) a combination of "hard power" and "soft power" approaches. These trends reflect the effort to broaden conventional security-driven CT approaches, in order to develop more comprehensive policies and tools for the prevention of radicalisation and early disengagement. While policy developments seem promising, overcoming implementation problems remain critical. The review and update of existing policies and measures constitute an important step to start, however consolidation and sustainment over time are necessary.

Italy's "exceptionalism" stands out because of its structural characteristics: a smaller Muslim population, relatively low degree of radicalisation within the Italian Muslim communities, and less resentment over the country's colonial past and foreign policy. Up until today, Italy has not experienced successful jihadists attacks on its soil (despite attempts) and it displays a low number of FTFs. These peculiarities, combined with a well-developed and consolidated CT apparatus, explains why Italy has been lagging behind its European neighbours when it comes to prevention efforts, and why non-coercive preventive measures have only recently come under consideration by Italian policy-makers. Despite the promising "refinement" undergone lately by its predominantly repressive system, Italy still has a long way to go in the field of prevention²⁵⁸.

Belgium and the UK have been developing combating violent radicalisation plans for some years now. With Muslim populations of around 5-6%, both countries initiated their first projects in the early 2000s as community-based deradicalisation programs. These have been revised and updated in the aftermath of the 2016 and 2017 attacks respectively²⁵⁹. In the case of Belgium, complex national governance structures hinder the implementation of policies. The complexity allocates security a

257 Maniscalco, M., and Rosato, V. (eds.). (2019). *Preventing Radicalisation and Terrorism in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of Policies* [ebook]. <https://www.cambridgescholars.com/preventing-radicalisation-and-terrorism-in-europe>

258 Berardinelli, D. and Guglielminetti, L. (2018). "Preventing Violent Radicalisation: the Italian Case Paradox." *International Conference. Multidisciplinary perspectives in the quasi-coercive treatment of offenders.* The 7th Edition. Groups with special needs in community measures. Filodiritto Editore - Proceedings.

259 Maniscalco, M., and Rosato, V. (eds.). (2019). *Preventing Radicalisation and Terrorism in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of Policies* [ebook]. <https://www.cambridgescholars.com/preventing-radicalisation-and-terrorism-in-europe>

federal responsibility, whereas prevention falls to communities at the local level. The layered policy levels throughout regions, municipalities and police zones, all below the federal government, combined with the criminal justice led approach, poses significant challenges²⁶⁰. In the UK, non-governmental actors are actively involved in the policy field²⁶¹. The greatest challenge to its "Prevent" Strategy is the mistrust among Muslim communities who are most at risk of violent radicalisation²⁶².

Further observations drawing on targeted interventions relying on a multi-agency approach based on coordinated support action from multiple actors are evident. Both Belgium and Italy seem to be lacking in this respect. The former due to a lack of participation by the civil society actors expected to contribute, the latter due to the absence of such provision altogether both in theory and in practice (*ibid*). Overall, civil society, including NGOs, religious communities, are increasingly recognized as important players for tackling violent radicalisation. The primary challenge in both countries lies in the cooperation with LEAs (especially in coordination and information sharing), whose organisation and focus differ substantially. The UK's systematic engagement of different services and agencies is a remarkable exception in this respect, albeit still with significant margins for improvement²⁶³.

260 GREASE Religion Diversity and Radicalisation (2019). Country Report Belgium. <http://grease.eui.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2019/10/Belgium-country-report.pdf>

261 Wittendorp, S., de Bont, R., de Roy van Zuijdewijn, J. and Bakker, E. (2017). Dealing with jihadism: A policy comparison between the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, the UK and the US (2010 to 2017). ISGA Report. Universteit ISGA

262 Maniscalco, M., and Rosato, V. (eds.). (2019). Preventing Radicalisation and Terrorism in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of Policies [ebook]. <https://www.cambridgescholars.com/preventing-radicalisation-and-terrorism-in-europe>

263 *Ibid*.

Paper 7.

European Union trends in prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism: experiences of European Stakeholders

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1. Introduction

The last two decades have seen unprecedented acts of terrorism committed throughout Europe. The 2004 Madrid train bombings, the 2005 London bombings, the 2011 Oslo attacks, the 2015 Paris attacks and the 2016 Brussels bombings have all been among some of the deadliest terrorist attacks ever perpetuated in Europe. Additionally, the 2015 European Migrant Crisis saw a significant resurgence of far-right extremism (FRE), with acts of FRE related incidents increasing by 320% between 2014-2019²⁶⁴. Faced with increasing threats from various extremist groups throughout Europe, the European Union (EU) has had to take on increasing responsibilities in assisting Member States in their efforts to counter violent extremism (CVE). In 2005, the EU Institutions developed a number of frameworks such as the EU Counter-Terrorism (CT) Strategy establishing the four-pillar approach: prevent, protect, pursue, and respond (European Council 2005), as well as the EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment also adopted in 2005 and revised in 2008 and 2014. The latter forms a pivotal component of the EU CT Strategies' "prevent" pillar and lays the framework for the involvement of various stakeholders and actors to help counter violent extremism throughout Europe.

264 Institute for Economics & Peace. (2019). "Global Terrorism Index 2019: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism." (November). Accessible from: <http://visionofhumanity.org/reports>

As a result, numerous first-line practitioners and stakeholders (FLiPS) from different sectors of society, such as education, healthcare, civil society, non-governmental and grassroot organisations, and the public sector, have become increasingly involved in CVE strategies. EU Member States themselves have also had to better adapt to the challenges posed by violent extremism, often including FLiPS into their national security and CVE strategies. The inclusion of these new actors into the overall CVE structure is aimed at supporting more traditional actors such as law enforcement agencies, judicial and prison staff, intelligence agencies and other security organisations in their efforts to counter violent extremism. Yet, the challenges that these new and emerging stakeholders and practitioners face in their efforts to tackle violent extremism need to be better addressed and evaluated.

As such, this paper firstly provides an overview of the current EU approaches towards prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism. Secondly, it describes policy mechanisms, trajectories and orientations. Thirdly, it defines major gaps encountered by the EU FLiPS in their daily operations, such as the gaps pertaining to training, capacity building and multi-stakeholder collaboration through the use of insights of FLiPS. More specifically, the paper bridges the current academic discourse on issues relating to CVE through and the perspectives of the EU FLiPS across a number of sectors on CVE.

2. Methodology

The paper is based on the reanalysis of the empirical data collected through the macro-survey and semi-structured interviews and presented in the MINDb4ACT Deliverable 1.4. The MINDb4ACT quantitative macro-survey was conducted by the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) in cooperation with task partners from 8 EU Member States: Belgium, Spain, Italy, France, UK, Austria, Poland and Germany. The survey's aim, was to receive insights from first-line practitioners and stakeholders on their experiences and views in the area of countering violent extremism. The respondents represented various sectors: education and research, judiciary system and prisons, the legal sphere, social work and NGOs. Furthermore, to enrich the macro-survey data and fill in the gaps of the missing data qualitatively, VUB together with task partners also organised semi-structured interviews. For the interviews, focus groups methodology in each participating EU MS was used. The MINDb4ACT macro-survey data was collected from approximately 300 (n=297) stakeholders from the 8 EU MS who took part in the survey and the interviews of up to 15 experts on CVE per each EU MS. For the purpose of this document, the EU perspectives reflect the EU

total in the macro-survey. The data conducted from the expert interviews provided insightful adds-on to specific examples of the practices unfolding in different EU MS. Furthermore, the EU perspectives in this paper are also limited to the geographical scope of countries, which participated in the survey.

Besides utilising the empirical findings from the Deliverable 1.4, the paper is also supplemented by MINDb4ACT Deliverable 1.1 Living Lab Context analyses, which features comprehensive collected findings of CVE infrastructure throughout EU Member States. Alongside those findings, a literature review also serves as the foundation for the data analysis.

3. Framing and solutions for violent extremism

3.1 Key definitions and theoretical models in CVE

Terms and concepts such as radicalisation, de-radicalisation, disengagement, violent extremism, preventing violent extremism and countering violent extremism are often used interchangeably or indifferently. Both in academic and amongst practitioners, there are severe discrepancies and confusion in the understanding of the central concepts involved in counter-radicalisation and CVE.

There is no unified definition on what Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) implies and what practices fall under its scope²⁶⁵. One definition based on a public health approach defines CVE as consisting “of various prevention and intervention approaches to increase the resilience of communities and individuals to radicalisation toward violent extremism, to provide nonviolent avenues for expressing grievances, and to educate communities about the threat of recruitment and radicalisation to violence”²⁶⁶. A second definition also prevalent throughout the literature defines CVE as the “use of non-coercive means to dissuade individuals or groups from mobilising towards violence and to mitigate recruitment, support, facilitation or engagement in ideologically motivated terrorism by non-state actors in furtherance of political objectives”²⁶⁷. A common element among CVE definitions, is that the objectives of CVE programs are centred on preventing individuals or groups, through non-coercive means, from resorting to a particular threshold; that threshold being acts of violence.

265 McCant, W. and Watts, C. (2012). “US strategy for countering violent extremism: An assessment.” Philadelphia, PA: Foreign Policy Research Institute

266 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2017). “Countering violent extremism through public health practice: Proceedings of a workshop.” National Academies Press.

267 Khan, H. (2015). “Why Countering Extremism Fails.” Foreign Affairs.

Similarly, no universal unanimity has emerged as to what radicalisation precisely entails within the current literature, with experts, stakeholder and academics themselves coming up, "with multiple definitions that often lack precision" (Schmid 2013, 17). As to the term radicalisation itself, Sedgwick notes that it gained traction and popularity between 2005 and 2007 which strongly correlated with the "emergence of "home-grown" terrorism in Western Europe, notably the London bombings in July 2005"²⁶⁸. Throughout the CVE literature, radicalisation has generally been understood to mean a process by which an individual becomes an extremist or "adopts an extremist ideology" (Braddock 2014, 62). The European Commission defines radicalisation as, "a phased and complex process in which an individual or a group embraces a radical ideology or belief that accepts, uses or condones violence, to reach a specific political or ideological purpose" (European Commission, n.d., a). Whereas, the UK's Home Office Prevent duty guidance manages to obfuscate radicalisation through the use of several contentious terms and concepts in a single definition, "the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups."

In the academic literature, several concepts regarding radicalisation remain contested or undefined, including whether violence is the end result or end-point of radicalisation²⁶⁹ and if a distinction between radicalisation that leads to violence and radicalisation that does not lead to violence (Bartlett & Miller 2012, 5) should be made. Moreover, the introduction of concepts such as cognitive radicalisation and behavioural radicalisation, also question whether a person becomes radicalised when they begin to have extremist ideas or when they carry out a violent or a physical act of a criminal nature²⁷⁰. First-line practitioners and stakeholders' responses in the MINDb4ACT macro-survey, reflected a clear distinction between non-violent radicalisation and violent radicalisation, with FLiPS also believing violent extremism to be the end outcome of the radicalisation process.

All these different ideas regarding what radicalisation as a process entails, shape and have a direct impact on how different theoretical models attempt to explain an individual's path towards extremism. Theoretical models themselves, play an important role not only in trying to explain a complex phenomenon via practical or systematic methods, but in shaping policy as well. Some of the more common

268 Sedgwick, M. (2010). "The concept of radicalisation as a source of confusion." *Terrorism and political violence* 22, no. 4: 479-494

269 Neumann, P. R., and Kleinmann, S. (2013). "How rigorous is radicalisation research?." *Democracy and Security* 9, no. 4: 360-382. Article Access

270 Ibid.

theoretical models found throughout the CVE literature include, Borum's Four-Stage Model, the NYPD Model, Moghaddam's Staircase to Terrorism, numerous public-health based models, the Aarhus Model, Precht's Model, Koehler's de-pluralisation model and Brandsma's model. Koehler identifies at least four different schools focusing on the complex and diverse factors of the process leading to extremism: "the sociological, social movement, empirical and psychological schools"²⁷¹. While the lack of conceptual clarity surrounding CVE does pose a number of issues, the plethora of diverse theoretical models to choose from and adapt in a highly contextual field could be seen as useful or even necessary.

In regards to FLiPS' adoption of theoretical modes, slightly more than half who were working at the local and municipal levels and another half at the grassroots level did adopt theoretical models in their work. Moreover, FLiPS working in certain sectors such as in the medical, social and education sectors seem to not utilise any theoretical models as a result of either a lack of awareness or a lack of pragmatic use in relation to their work. FLiPS from both the health and education, tended to differentiate much less between radicalised non-violent individuals versus violent individuals, essentially framing all individuals who could be considered as radicals, as violently dangerous. In addition, FLiPS from outside the law-enforcement sector, stated that they were most likely to use "scientific data" in order to enhance their understanding of radicalisation pathways and to further increase the effectiveness of their interventions.

Nonetheless, CVE's lack of overall conceptual clarity continues to present an issue to both researchers and FLiPS, insofar that it risks turning CVE into a "catchall category that lacks precision and focus; reflects problematic assumptions about the conditions that promote violent extremism;"²⁷². This notion is further reaffirmed by Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, who observes that, "the absence of an international definition contributes to the fact that, across the globe, an ever-expanding range of measures fall under that umbrella"²⁷³. In addition, this lack of clarity in regards to CVE practices results in "conflicting or counterproductive programs that are more

271 Koehler, D. (2020). "TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS." *Routledge Handbook of Deradicalisation and Disengagement*: 2.

272 Heydemann, S. (2014). "Countering violent extremism as a field of practice." *United states institute of peace insights* 1, no. 1: 9-11.

273 Aoláin, F. N. (2020). "Report of Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms While Countering Terrorism on Human Rights Impact of Policies and Practices Aimed at Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism." *United Nations. Doc. A/HRC/43/46* 1

difficult to evaluate"²⁷⁴ and "an obstacle to any in-depth examination of the impact of strategies and policies to counter violent extremism on human rights as well as on their effectiveness in reducing the threat of terrorism"²⁷⁵.

3.2 Convergence and divergence of security vs social integration approaches in CVE

There is a lack of clear indication as to the relationship between approaches and programs which fall under the purview of Counter-Terrorism (CT) and those which fall under CVE. One of the key issues which serves to complicate the understanding of CVE (often used synonymously with counter-radicalisation) is the fact that radicalisation is used in at least three different contexts: the security context, the integration context, and the foreign-policy context, each with their own agendas and each with their own operationalisation of the same terms²⁷⁶. Moreover, the conceptualisation of what CVE programs are and are not, are inherently based on how CVE approaches differ from traditional CT approaches. Indeed, views range from CVE and CVE programs being on the one hand a subset of CT or at the soft-end of counter-terrorism approaches, or on the other hand; a paradigm shift in relation to counter-terrorism²⁷⁷; an evolution of CT²⁷⁸; and entirely different to CT altogether. The difference insofar is that CT targets terrorists, whereas CVE is focused on the communities that are targeted by terrorists for recruitment²⁷⁹; or that CVE focuses on preventing an individual from finding or acting out on a motive for committing a crime²⁸⁰. As such, the focus of CVE programs can seemingly be categorised as either falling within hard strategies and approaches (security-oriented) and soft strategies and approaches (social integration-oriented). A conceptualisation which finds its basis on the traditional theories of hard power (security; coercive) approaches and soft power (integration; non-coercive) approaches, whose basis are found within the field of international relations²⁸¹.

274 McCant, W. and Watts, C. (2012). "US strategy for countering violent extremism: An assessment." Philadelphia, PA: Foreign Policy Research Institute

275 Ibid.

276 Sedgwick, M. (2010). "The concept of radicalisation as a source of confusion." *Terrorism and political violence* 22, no. 4: 479-494.

277 Harris-Hogan, S., Barrelle, K. and Sammit, A. (2016). "What is countering violent extremism? Exploring CVE policy and practice in Australia." *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* 8, no. 1: 6-24.

278 Holmer, G. 2013. "Countering violent extremism: A peacebuilding perspective. US Institute of Peace."

279 Neumann, P. R. (2011). "Preventing violent radicalisation in America." Bipartisan Policy Centre

280 U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). (2017). "Countering Violent Extremism: Actions Needed to Define Strategy and Assess Progress of Federal Efforts." GAO-17-300. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Accountability Office. <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-300>.

281 Aly, A., Balbi, A-M, and Jacquesa, C. (2015). "Rethinking countering violent extremism: implementing the role of civil society." *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism* 10, no. 1: 3-13.

The inclusion of security-oriented approaches in CVE could be considered as a contentious point. On the one hand, CVE tends to emphasise the use of non-coercive measures²⁸², while on the other hand, Security-oriented approaches tend to be considered as coercive and reactive. Security-oriented approaches are understood to include measures such as military or specialised police interventions, anti-terrorism surveillance and intelligence and punitive measures through prosecution and conviction^{283 284} emphasises that, "none of the instruments of counter-radicalisation are coercive", promoting police authorities as a "bridge" between CT and counter-radicalisation (CVE) rather than a coercive actor. He places upon the latter the onus of keeping in check that CT, "does not inadvertently - and unnecessarily - undermine community outreach" while at the same time "making sure counter-radicalisation (CVE) remains focused on the terrorist threat, and that law enforcement is present and alert when extremist beliefs turn into criminal action"²⁸⁵. Yet, this nuance is lost on about three quarters of FLiPS who in the MINDb4ACT macro-survey indicated that radicalisation leading to violent extremism is first and foremost a matter of security, while slightly over then half saw it as a societal problem.

As such questions of whether security-oriented approaches and programs fall more in the domain of CVE or CT likely requires further analysis to determine if hard or security approaches have any role within the reconceptualisation or current "evolution" of CVE from its CT antecedents. Consequently, as long as government and national strategies emphasise violent extremism as a security-first issue over a societal problem, FLiPS will most likely be hard-pressed to approach it from the former perspective rather than the latter.

The basis of the EU's prevention work on CVE is the EU's 2005 Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism (CBRT), last revised on 2014. The EU CBRT acknowledges that governments alone cannot single handily meet the challenges posed by CVE and that only through the, "collaboration with communities, civil society, non-governmental organisations (NGO) and the private sector" can the EU be successful in overcoming CVE related challenges. Moreover, the European Commission identifies ten distinct areas in which the EU and MS can take action to address CVE including cooperating more closely with civil society organisations (CSOs) and the private

282 Neumann, P. R., and Kleinmann, S. (2013). "How rigorous is radicalisation research?" *Democracy and Security* 9, no. 4: 360-382. Article Access

283 Sahar F. A. (2017). "Losing the War of Ideas: A Critique of Countering Violent Extremism Programs." *Tex. Int'l LJ* 52: 255-279

284 Neumann, P. R. (2011). "Preventing violent radicalisation in America." Bipartisan Policy Centre

285 Ibidem

sectors, as well as supporting EU MS in developing "exit strategies." As Professor Rik Coolsaet from the University of Ghent observed, the EU realized that it could not ever hope to overcome the challenges associated with violent extremism, "as long as the circumstances by which individuals turn into terrorists are not addressed"²⁸⁶. Since these circumstances are multi-faceted and occurring throughout the various stages of an individual's life experiences and social interactions, the solution in essence requires the involvement of actors where the most common vectors of radicalisation can occur (i.e. schools, religious institutions, prisons, etc.).

Social Integrations approaches and programs have become central to CVE, yet there is no agreement as to what they exactly constitute, as "without a shared understanding of the term "CVE" it is difficult to know which programs can accurately be labelled as such"²⁸⁷. Some of the more common CVE programs or initiatives within this approach include: deradicalisation, rehabilitation, reintegration and community engagement. CVE programs or initiatives themselves can encompass a vast spectrum, focusing on "messaging, such as speeches, television programs, leaflets, and social media; engagement and outreach, such as town halls, roundtables, and advisory councils; capacity building, such as youth and women's leadership initiatives, community development, and community safety and protection programs; and education and training, such as of community leaders, public employees, and law enforcement"²⁸⁸.

Koehler and Fiebig²⁸⁹ present a structured approach to CVE programs, dividing programs into either, prevention-oriented initiatives (i.e., before a person radicalises to the point of using violence) and intervention-oriented initiatives (i.e., deradicalisation and disengagement of a person who is already radicalised to the point of using violence). They further sub-categorise prevention-oriented initiatives as preventing violent extremism, and intervention-oriented initiatives as being under the scope of intervention, counter-radicalisation, de-radicalisation, rehabilitation and reintegration²⁹⁰. It is important to reiterate that no consensus exists as to first, which programs fall into the overall concepts of intervention or prevention and second whether these programs or initiatives should be considered as part of the overarching CVE framework.

286 Coolsaet, R. (2010). "EU counterterrorism strategy: value added or chimera?." *International affairs* 86, no. 4: 857-873.

287 Heydemann, S. (2014). "Countering violent extremism as a field of practice." *United states institute of peace insights* 1, no. 1: 9-11.

288 Neumann, Peter R. 2011. "Preventing violent radicalisation in America." *Bipartisan Policy Centre*

289 Koehler, Daniel, and Verena Fiebig. 2019. "Knowing what to do." *Perspectives on Terrorism* 13, no. 3: 44-62.

290 Ibid.

Among the most common Integration (prevention-oriented) initiatives are those based on interactions with communities. These have been identified as potential targets by extremist actors seeking to recruit members. As such, the concept of community policing has become a pivotal part of prevention efforts. The consensus throughout the CVE field is that community policing has the potential to be a positive element of "generating trust between members of the community and law enforcement officials"²⁹¹. In 2014, the OSCE published a handbook dedicated to community policing providing a series of good practices for law enforcement officials, and emphasising the importance of establishing police-public partnerships. The Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) also published a set of guidelines in regards to Good Practices on Community Engagement and Community-Oriented Policing. Good practice four of the GCTF document states that, community policing tends, "to work best when multiple sectors within a community are involved in the initiative." In addition, over half of the FLiPS surveyed and another third, agreed or strongly agree, respectively, that community policing is a compelling and effective toolkit for preventive activities.

However, there are several risks also highlighted throughout the literature regarding community policing approaches such as, stigmatisation or creation of suspect communities²⁹², further securitisation of society, putting cooperating members at risk, and the crossing or blurring between gathering intelligence and working with the community. Moreover, the differentiation between counterterrorism's role in community partnerships and that of the police's role remains opaque or vague. For example, the OSCE handbook encourages making a clear distinction between counterterrorism operations and community policing, even so far as stating that "Counterterrorism officers and intelligence agencies should not act under the guise of community-policing" furthering specifying that CT officers, "should focus their efforts only against those assessed, based on specific intelligence"²⁹³. Yet, the OSCE handbook blurs the division of roles between CT and community policing by stating that, "a community-policing philosophy can also be applied to counterterrorism operations"²⁹⁴ interjecting CT and intel officers as another group of security actors into communities who are already weary of securitisation policies. One guide recommends avoiding mentioning CVE all together while confucting community policing²⁹⁵.

291 Neumann, P. R. (2011). "Preventing violent radicalisation in America." Bipartisan Policy Centre

292 Ragazzi, F. (2016). "Suspect community or suspect category? The impact of counter-terrorism as "policed multiculturalism"." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 42, no. 5: 724-741.

293 OSCE. (2014). "Preventing terrorism and countering violent extremism and radicalisation that lead to terrorism: a community-policing approach."

294 Ibid.

295 Schanzer, D. H., Kurzman, C., Toliver, J. and Miller, E. 2016. "The challenge and promise of using community policing strategies to prevent violent extremism: A call for community partnerships with law enforcement to enhance public safety." Durham: Triangle Centre on Terrorism and Homeland Security.

As mentioned previously, Neumann²⁹⁶ promotes policing authorities as a sort of “bridge” between CT and counter-radicalisation (CVE). Moreover, community policing recommendations found throughout guides, handbooks and other documents commonly stem from anecdotal experiences. While these insights and experiences are important and valuable, they are very much contextual and based on unique situations or interactions, recounted from the accounts of actors which may be seen as having vested interest in ensuring the success of their efforts. Empirical evaluations of the effectiveness of community policing methods and approaches may also potentially be a double-edged sword. In a field which tends to be highly contextual and lacking any real conceptual clarity, attempts to standardise programs or initiative could potentially lead to unintended consequences or even the opposite of the intended effects (Mastroe 2016, 50).

3.3 Training and capacity building

It goes without saying, FLiPS’ training and capacity building are of pivotal importance in creating successful CVE programs, as well as in preparation of a new generation of practitioners²⁹⁷. Yet, one of the major gaps present in the CVE literature is the lack of insights into the training and capacity building of FLiPS in relation to CVE. In particular, there is a lack of empirical research for identifying practitioners’ needs and evaluating available trainings, with only a limited amount of publications delving into this particular issue.

One publication in 2019, “Knowing What to Do: Academic and Practitioner Understanding of How to Counter Violent Radicalisation”²⁹⁸ by Daniel Koehler and Verena Fiebig reviews the structure and content of practitioners’ trainings. Their publication studied 12 different trainings on counter radicalisation and deradicalisation focusing on their overall structure, content, and methods. From these 12 trainings, they identified 33 different categories of skills or knowledge components.

Moreover, a report titled “Lessons from Strengthening Capacity in Countering Violent Extremism”²⁹⁹ by Nathaniel Wilson and Jeff Krentel of the United States Institute for Peace (USIP) focused on evaluating the outcomes of several trainings by using participants’ feedback. Wilson and Krentel based their evaluation on the post-

296 Neumann, P. R. (2011). “Preventing violent radicalisation in America.” Bipartisan Policy Centre

297 RAN. (2017). “Handbook on CVE/PVE training programmes. Guidance for trainers and policy-makers.”

298 Koehler, D. and Fiebig, V. (2019). “Knowing what to do.” Perspectives on Terrorism 13, no. 3: 44-62.

299 Wilson, N. L., and Krentel, J. (2018). “Lessons from Strengthening Capacity in Countering Violent Extremism.” United States Institute of Peace.

course survey data of a total of 30 key informants which were involved in 9 different CVE capacity building courses, in three different categories which were presented by the USIP over a three-year period. The three categories focusing on the prevention and mitigation of violent extremism were specifically on, “reducing vulnerabilities through education, developing alternative narratives in media and messaging, and working with communities to increase resistance to violent extremists and their ability to recover from successful infiltration”³⁰⁰. The report’s primary aim was to capture specific lessons from practitioners with experience in CVE capacity-strengthening projects to create better informed recommendations for the design of future similar projects. The USIP report provides some insights into training needs and challenges faced by FLiPS through the three-year period.

One other document oriented towards practitioners, is the EU RAN’s main document in regards to the training of FLiPS is the Handbook on CVE/PVE training programmes: Guidance for trainers and policy makers of December 2017. The RAN Handbook provides practical guidance for trainers focusing on the creation of trainings for practitioners rather than any particular analysis of practitioners training and capacity building.

While these three publications make an attempt to tackle the issue of training and capacity building amongst FLiPS, they do not delve into practitioner’s needs or challenges. Furthermore, attempting to conduct empirical research in a field with continuously evolving and shifting practices which are focused on addressing highly contextual challenges, presents a number of challenges for researchers seeking to evaluate CVE programs and accurately identify practitioners needs and gaps.

To meet the goals of the MINDb4ACT pilot projects, the macro-survey provides further insights into a few of the challenges which FLiPS face and the current state of training and capacity building of CVE throughout several EU Member States. Out of 28 questions asked in the MINDb4ACT macro-survey, six were focused on or relevant to FLiPS’ training and capacity building. Amongst the FLiPS surveyed, only slightly over a quarter were satisfied with the CVE training which was currently available or offered to them. In addition, a third of FLiPS wanted an increased number of training sessions, with another third wanting more frequent sessions. An increased amount of trainings, and a more frequent number of trainings may result in significant benefits for FLiPS. The USIP report (2018) found that participants who took two or more courses tended to rate the relevance of the courses they took higher

300 Ibid.

compared to participants who only took one course, most likely reinforcing previous training concepts. Moreover, the USIP report also found that through sustained training engagements aimed at deepening participants' knowledge regarding the CVE field, the likelihood that they would be better suited to address violent extremism in their communities increased. This seems to indicate that frequent training sessions could also potentially have the added value of building FLiPS' confidence, resulting in them taking more initiative than they usually would without any training. Approximately a third of FLiPS in the MINDb4ACT survey also felt the need for better qualified trainers and the need for higher quality training materials. These reflections help highlight the lack of proper quality control and evaluations methods of CVE training courses. This notion is supported by Koehler and Fiebig³⁰¹ who found that only two of the 12 courses they reviewed were certified for quality control. In terms of course evaluation, they found that most of the courses they reviewed relied on internal self-evaluation (9 courses), one was externally evaluated by an independent organisation and another two courses lacked any form of formal evaluation methods altogether.

Moreover, due to a lack of independent and objective evaluation, it is often difficult to ascertain the how and why curriculums for CVE training courses are chosen. Yet, the curriculum or syllabuses for these training if chosen by either the institution in charge of the training or the trainers themselves do not reflect the content currently found in the academic literature. In their evaluation of the 33 components within the 12 trainings, Koehler and Fiebig³⁰² pointed out that many of the course lacked "components with a stiff backing in the academic literature" or those which appeared to be "significant in the literature" were only covered to a minimal degree (Koehler and Fiebig 2020, 53-55). Identifying what they believe to be a significant disconnect between the literature and the trainings. In the MINDb4ACT survey more than a third of FLiPS stated they would like to see more diverse forms of trainings. In terms of attendance, a solid majority of FLiPS surveyed in the MINDb4ACT macro-survey tended to vastly prefer attending in-classroom training as compared to only a fifth which preferred online trainings. As such, through the inclusion and use of content found within the academic literature more diverse components within trainings can be formulated and introduced. Moreover, this preference is seemingly supported by Koehler and Fiebig's own findings which showed that 9 out of the 12 training programmes that they reviewed were based on in-class attendance, two others being fully online and only one using a blended method. The USIP report indicates that all

301 Koehler, D. and Fiebig, V. (2019). "Knowing what to do." *Perspectives on Terrorism* 13, no. 3: 44-62.

302 Ibid.

of their nine training courses were taught in person at the Abu Dhabi based Hedayah Centre, helping to further reinforce the in-class or in-person training preference of FLiPS. While true that online trainings could provide a more cost-effective option for FLiPS, in-classroom trainings may help create a greater sense of trust or even community, among a diverse range of FLiPS by allowing for physical interaction. This in turn could allow for greater exchanges of information between FLiPS in different sectors (e.g. police interacting with grassroots stakeholders), which might not happen in an online setting due to a lack of trust or repertoire among FLiPS present in the training or due to the technical difficulties of interacting online. The USIP report found that 90% of survey respondents learned a lot from other participants with another half of the participants providing specific examples they learned from other participants. In online settings such interaction could be much more difficult to achieve or might be all together missed.

Yet online trainings should not entirely be dismissed, as the cost saved from logistical considerations (i.e. travel, lodging, food, environmental impact), could help in terms of creating additional resources for more tailored trainings for FLiPS, targeting key skills and improving concise knowledge better suited to the FLiPS context, which in turn could lead to greater impact in CVE efforts. Concerning training methods and tools, trainings based on field experience are extremely infrequent among FLiPS with only a quarter undergoing field training. Simulation-based trainings are marginally more common, with slightly over a third utilising this form of training. This finding in the MINDb4ACT survey is supported by Koehler and Fiebig³⁰³ assessment, in which they state that only 4 of the 12 courses utilised any form of simulation-based trainings (case exercises or dummy cases). Training based on mentorship programs were considered useful by approximately a third of the MINDb4ACT FLiPS surveyed, but only a tenth either had access to or used mentorship programs. While seemingly implemented or utilised to some degree by FLiPS in MINDb4ACT survey, no literature was found providing insights or evaluating mentorship programs as a form of CVE training. Joint trainings among FLiPS while utilised to some extent, were among the least popular forms of exchanges of knowledge, whereas trainings presented in the form of working groups focusing on certain thematic were issues even less popular, with about a third of FLiPS opting to utilise these courses.

In regards to training providers, under half of all trainings attended by FLiPS were provided by the stakeholders' respective organisations (internal trainings), particularly for the MINDb4ACT FLiPS in the judicial and law enforcement fields,

303 Ibid.

most likely owing to judicial and investigative protocols and issues regarding state secrets. Whereas only slightly over a quarter of trainings were provided by external services, with the education sector being the largest beneficiary among FLiPS benefiting from external trainings. Of some concern is that certain groups of FLiPS working within the CVE field, particularly FLiPS in the social, health and corporate sectors, stated that they had not had any form of trainings organised for them.

The importance and impact that trainings have on CVE efforts cannot be overstated. There is an increasing emphasis placed on the empirical evaluations of CVE programs, as such training and capacity programs offer an important starting point and indicator of empirically measuring the current state of the field, as well as which conceptual ideas or approaches are currently prevalent throughout the CVE field. Nevertheless, the limited scope of evaluations and quality control regarding CVE trainings makes it difficult to distinguish how effective and meaningful these trainings are in practice.

3.4 EU Stakeholders views on transfer of knowledge and collaboration with experts: multi-agency support and multi-partner approach

A "whole-of-society" approach to countering violent extremism and radicalisation, primarily through non-coercive means, has become a focal point of the national strategies of several EU Member States. A whole-of-society approach towards CVE envisions a role for multiple sectors and civil society actors in prevention, intervention, and deradicalisation/disengagement and rehabilitation programmes³⁰⁴. The majority of MINDb4ACT FLiPS also agreed that in order to achieve successful results, there should ideally be a diverse set of stakeholders working together to address and implement CVE programs and strategies. In addition, the GCTF's Ankara Memorandum on Good Practices for a Multi-Sectoral Approach to Countering Violent Extremism recognises that, "CVE requires a multi-faceted approach, as various factors can drive violent extremism. The prerequisite of an effective, results-oriented CVE policy is to comprehend the complexity of violent extremism; this requires a joint effort at the local, national, regional, and international levels"³⁰⁵. Yet, the breaking of silos across a significant number of actors throughout all governance levels is still an obstacle in ensuring the successful and effective prevention of violent extremism.

304 OSCE. (2018). "The Role of Civil Society in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation That Lead to Terrorism: A Focus on South-Eastern Europe." (2018). Osce.Org. <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/400241>.

305 Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF). (2013b). "Ankara Memorandum on Good Practices for a Multi-Sectoral Approach to Countering Violent Extremism."

Communication is pivotal to success of CVE strategies. It leads to cooperation and exchange of knowledge among FLiPS; thus, it is a matter of strategic importance for implementing effective and impactful CVE policies. Concerning the diffusion of EU policies and strategies towards countering radicalisation and extremism among stakeholders, less than half of FLiPS surveyed stated that they had received any information regarding EU CVE policies. In order to address this lack of communication, the creation of centralised platforms or tools to exchange good practices, policies and strategies at both an EU level and at a Member State level are required. In 2018, a report by the High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation (HLCEG-R)'s included several recommendations in regards to establishing a centralised EU wide system to address Member States' CVE needs, requirements and priorities at an EU level. The HLCEG-R principal recommendation, suggests the establishment of a "Cooperation Mechanism" guided by a steering board which would establish a task force responsible for coordinating various networks, in addition to serving as a knowledge. This task force would go on to create structured networks aimed at improving coordination between policy makers, practitioners, and civil and private organisations, which would be complemented by supporting actions such as research, EU funding and CVE capacity building.

The EU's RAN considers that key to the multi-agency and multi-partner approach is the creation of, "infrastructures to ensure that people at risk are provided with early-stage support from different authorities and organisations across multiple levels"³⁰⁶. Yet, one of the issues identified through the MINDb4ACT survey analysis, was the tendency of a preferential bias towards inter-sectorial collaboration. The MINDb4ACT survey highlighted that the education sector tended to cooperate with other schools or educational institutions more than any others group of FLiPS including law enforcement. Similarly, law enforcement and intelligence agencies tended to cooperate with FLiPS from the same sector more than any other FLiPS. Inter-sectorial collaboration between security actors is most likely due to the fact that security stakeholders already have well established ties and working structures requiring daily interactions, tend to be the first to response to acts of extremist and have an easier time exchanging material of a sensitive or classified nature. Following the education and law enforcement sectors, about half of FLiPS stated that they tended to cooperate most commonly with public authorities at local, regional and national levels and with social workers and civil society organisations on a daily basis. Meanwhile, a considerable portion of FLiPS felt that juridical actors and mental health professionals, both key actors in radicalisation efforts, were often missing from CVE dialogues. FLiPS considered stakeholders from law enforcement agencies, the juridical sector and public administration, to be the

306 RAN. (2016). "Study visit Ex-ante paper 22nd and 23rd November 2016, Paris."

most important stakeholders to collaborate and cooperate with in order to acquire and exchange new knowledge and expertise. In comparison, academia, schools and NGOs were ranked lower by other FLiPS when it came to the exchanging of knowledge and expertise. Moreover, a solid majority of FLiPS would like to see an increase and broadening of international cooperation. In terms of how this knowledge and information sharing occurred, another majority of FLiPS, exchanged information outside structured training methods via informal contacts.

3.5 Ethics, human rights and rule of law in CVE

In 2020, the UN Special Rapporteur observed that the population which falls under the scope of prevention and countering of violent extremism efforts tends to be much broader than those which traditionally fall under the purview of counter-terrorism initiatives³⁰⁷. As such, a wider range of human rights considerations must be taken into account. Indeed, failure to uphold democratic principles and norms, can result in the stigmatisation and alienation of communities, violate key principles such as “do no harm”, undermine trust and the legitimacy of CVE interventions and result in further propagation of grievances against the state and its institutions. Moreover, one of the challenges regarding CVE initiatives is adhering to the different rights and ethics regimes, such as conflicting professional ethical standards³⁰⁸, the fundamental and human rights regimes found in regional and international legal systems and the rights found within national legal structures. Exploring and understanding the challenges these standards pose, is made all the more difficult due to a lack of access, evaluation and literature on ethical standards and protocols utilised in CVE efforts.

Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of FLiPS who were working on CVE related issues, did abide by professional ethical and human rights standards in their day to day routines. In particular, FLiPS from Germany, Belgium, Poland, UK and Austria, highlighted data protection and privacy standards as being the main ethical and human rights considerations they encountered in their professional routines. FLiPS working in law enforcement agencies, the judicial sector, education sector, social work sector and healthcare sector, all stated that they had ethical and human rights safeguards included or in place in their operational guidelines and protocols. Moreover, about three quarters of law enforcement agents, social and health care worker and half of judicial professionals, stated that they had undergone special trainings related to ethical matters. The fact that obligatory institutional ethics standards and training

307 Aoláin, F. N. (2020). “Report of Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms While Countering Terrorism on Human Rights Impact of Policies and Practices Aimed at Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism.” United Nations. Doc. A/HRC/43/46 1

308 Hadjimatheou, K. (2017). Ethical Considerations in Counter-Radicalisation, PERICLES project.

placed upon FLiPS who directly come in contact with at-risk individuals, explains why the training figures among these FLiPS is relatively high. Yet, how precisely tailored or relevant these ethical and human rights safeguards and trainings are towards CVE issues, requires further evaluation and mapping. Nonetheless, the need for ethics training among FLiPS remains significant, as the close to half of FLiPS who responded in the MINDb4ACT survey indicated that they had not undertaken any form of ethics training. The FLiPS from local, municipal and regional administrations, the health sector, corporate and research sectors, represented the sectors with the least likely to have ethic or human rights guides or protocols out of all the FLiPS who responded.

Upholding ethical standards, human rights and the rule of law in CVE programs and initiatives is a significant factor in the success and effectiveness that they will have. Moreover, the ethical and human rights standards must be followed by FLiPS working throughout the various sectors contributing to CVE efforts to not only uphold democratic norms, but protect the at-risk individuals they interact with on a daily basis.

4. Conclusions

More than ever the insights and perspectives of EU stakeholders in the countering of violent extremism are needed. A number of important responsibilities have been entrusted upon on them and as such, support must be given to ensure that they are able to meet those responsibilities and expectations. CVE as a field remains continuously progressing and expanding, often times without pausing or taking the time to seriously define or discuss key concepts and ideas, paradoxically resulting in a lack of conceptual clarity which continues to plague it. This lack of conceptual clarity in turn affects stakeholders in several ways from creating doubt of theoretical models or findings in the academic literature, to creating a disconnect between what is found in practice and in theory. More thought must be given to ensuring that both academics and practitioners understand what the other is doing. EU Stakeholders themselves are interested in contributing to the field, but still require better forms of cooperating, and collaboration mechanisms to exchange ideas and good lessons. They also require better quality and diverse trainings, which can teach them skills that will be vital in achieving a meaningful and practical impact on the field as well as better preparing them in their professional routines. Lastly, ethics, human rights and the rule of law must be upheld, not only because of the fact that they are central to the success of CVE programs and initiatives, but also because they form the central basis of our own democratic societies. Failing to uphold our own principles, while expecting others to do so only serves to create a narrative which undermines CVE efforts down the road.

Paper 8.

Ethical & Social Dimension of CVE Policies in Europe

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1. Abstract

Within the scope of this report, ethical and social implications linked to CVE policies in Europe are investigated, taking into account the experience of national programs, criticisms and controversial profiling issues, through an analysis of several different impacts related to the research question: What is the Impact of Preventive Measures in the Absence of Crime?

2. The conundrum of the pre-criminal space

Over the last decade, academia and lawmakers have been debating the so-called pre-crime space and questioning to what extent preventive measures in absence of crime may be considered legitimate. The term pre-crime was likely coined by American science fiction novelist Philip K. Dick, to describe a predictive policing system dedicated to apprehending and detaining people before they have the opportunity to commit a crime³⁰⁹. While this idea may sound like a fictional tool, it has been applied to counter terrorism policy, in order to prevent radicalisation to violent extremism.

The pre-crime theory was developed following different patterns in each country or organisation. Some approaches have promoted interventions aimed at counselling

309 Dick, P.K. (1956). The Minority Report.

and supporting vulnerable people at risk of radicalisation. In such cases, actions undertaken by CVE stakeholders tend to avoid the criminalisation of those involved and focus on prevention strategies. Under other circumstances, the interventions concentrate on tackling a possible threat posed by the radicalised individual through close monitoring and repression. Also, the meaning of pre-crime may refer either to a potential crime or to an inevitable one. It should be noted though that, even when pre-crime measures are built on prevention and friendly assistance, the beneficiary is not obligated to comply with them and may refuse. The phenomenon of pre-criminal interventions has seen increasing popularity with the broadening of the criminal threshold, which expanded in several European legislations to the extent that the expression of radical views online may lead to terrorism-related charges. The risk is to establish what Erhard Denninger defined as the preventive State, in which people deemed potentially dangerous are apprehended, and have their freedom restricted, before being able to commit a crime³¹⁰. This trend has spread across Europe and is being criticised by numerous human rights non-governmental organisations. It is not always simple to define what may be considered criminal in terms of hate speech and propaganda, as opposed to a radical but legitimate exercise of the freedom of expression. When democratic countries intervene in this field, they may jeopardise the rule of law and criminalise opinions. Again, fictional words such as “thoughtcrime” and “crimethink” were coined by English novelist George Orwell in Nineteen Eighty-Four to describe this concept³¹¹. The limit between freedom of speech and criminal behaviour can be very controversial and is related to cultural traditions and political context as well.

3. The ethical consequences of profiling

Many CVE programs have adopted mechanisms to classify individuals in order to detect early signs of radicalisation. Some of the PVE and CVE strategies are tailored to specific communities such as Muslims or Arabs, but there are rising concerns and complaints about targeting a social or ethnic group as a whole, instead of individual interventions. According to some scholars and human rights activists, the activity of profiling based on ethnic background, religion or ideology may lead to discrimination and social stigma, because the entire community is identified as pre-criminal. Stigma occurs when an individual is disqualified from full social acceptance and in the criminal justice context entails stereotypes, discrimination based on the personal status, labelling and separation from the community. According to some

310 E. Denninger, *Der Präventionsstaat*, 1988.

311 Orwell, G. (1949). *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

research, such stigma may become structural when the marginalisation of groups is institutionalised through policies. Stigmas can also be based on the social attitude of the public and can even manifest as self-stigmatisation when the discriminated individual accepts stereotypes as true. The unintended consequences of profiling may contribute to a self-fulfilling prophecy, if vulnerable people at risk of radicalisation feel they are on the radar of law enforcement or intelligence agencies and oppressed just because they belong to a certain community. Since discrimination is one of the pull factors of violence, labelling an individual or even a community as pre-criminal might have the counterintuitive outcome of increasing the risk of crimes and violence committed.

The social identity theory developed by social psychologists Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner to explain the intergroup behaviour may help to understand the risk of profiling. People tend to categorise themselves and others as members of competing social groups, the so-called in-group of people sharing a common identity, the group to which one belongs. The out-group consists of people excluded from a specific group. When vulnerable people from a community labelled as pre-criminal feel discriminated and monitored by PVE/CVE programs, they may perceive this gap as benign due to their affinity with a single identity and sharpen the conflict between the in-group and the out-group. The CVE measures intended to prevent, and tackle radicalisation, could in fact turn to be counterproductive. Despite some courts in Europe and the US have ruled that profiling under some circumstances may be unconstitutional or unlawful, it is still a widespread practice in several counterterrorism and CVE strategies. When this approach is not implemented in line with the rule of law, the right to privacy and the GDPR, the principles of non-discrimination and equality, it may lead to unethical practices and disastrous results. The language adopted in the implementation affects the ethical dimension of CVE strategies as well. For instance, when programs borrow from other sectors terms such as “suspect” (taken from the crime sector) even if the profiled individuals did not yet commit a crime, or when concepts from the medical sector are extended to preventive measures. When an individual’s mental health is assessed, the scientific procedure is strict and meticulous; this is not the case when determining degree of radicalisation because there is not yet a consolidated framework of evaluation. Some practitioners expressed concern about pathologising elements that are not scientifically validated and applying them to political or religious ideologies. To some extent, even the indicators of early radicalisation used by CVE strategies may be controversial or not fully reliable.

4. Controversial profiling in the french policy

The French case is emblematic about the ethical implications of profiling, when it comes to radicalised individuals. Following the establishment of the Fiche S and Fiche SPRT (signal for prevention of terrorist radicalisation) - the latter was created in 2015 - law enforcement from the Interior Ministry and Intelligence agencies have been flagging many thousands of individuals as potential violent extremists. Even in absence of crime or ongoing investigation, being in the S list allows surveillance measures, including wiretapping and placement of GPS-tracking, of those deemed to be dangerous. The degree of severity ranges from level S01 to S15 (1 being the highest, 15 the lowest), that indicate the measures law enforcement should take in dealing with the individual. The level is updated every two years. These systems give the French National Police and the Coordination Unit of Counterterrorism (UCLAT) powers to designate an individual as a suspect, with broad discretionary evaluation and scarce judicial control. The French Council of State, questioned by former President Hollande, ruled out the possible internment of people from the S list. The retention of radicals in ad hoc structures (a so-called French Guantanamo), outside any penal procedure, is unconstitutional and unlawful. Being on the Fiche S list provides no grounds for detention or deportation. This situation poses further challenges since thousands of potential radicals stay at large and must be monitored constantly.

In 2016 Guy Lefrand, the Mayor of the French town of Evreux in Normandy, demanded information about people from the S list living under his administration. Lefrand said he could not trust some of the public servants and municipality employees because he was deprived of this intelligence, so he requested details on the S list residents, but the local prefect refused to provide such information. He contested the refusal saying it was absurd that the Minister of Education is allowed to access the S list, but mayors are not. Lefrand noted that due to the state of emergency it was the Prime Minister's responsibility to issue a decree giving local mayors access to "Fiche S" files, to tighten security. In 2018, Lefrand insisted on accessing the data and proposed to create a specific "T list" for terrorist suspects³¹². The risk of providing local mayors with personal data of S list residents implies possible discrimination or even dismissal from the administration on a discretionary basis, since the list is drafted and updated by law enforcement and intelligence agencies, out of judicial control.

312 Paris-Normandie. (26th of March 2018). <https://www.paris-normandie.fr/actualites/politique/le-maire-d-evreux-cible-la-menace-terroriste-HF12602225>

It is true that certain PVE/CVE programs across Europe involve local administration and police in the community-based approach to tackle radicalisation, but these efforts are part of a consensual process with all the other stakeholders. In the French case, however, that may have led to a social and political stigmatisation of individuals, to isolate them from the rest of the community and undergo surveillance measures. French counterterrorism legislation, namely the state of emergency (état d'urgence) and later the law adopted in October 2017, has been harshly criticised by human right groups such as Amnesty International, whose report denounces the abuse of administrative control measures in the context of counterterrorism in France³¹³.

5. Controversial profiling in the british policy

Likewise, the British strategy against radicalisation has been widely criticised and is still controversial due to its secrecy and non-transparent mechanisms. "Contest", the counter-terrorism strategy of the United Kingdom, was first created and developed by the Home Office in 2003. "Contest" is split into four work-streams that are known within the counter-terrorism community as the four P's: Prevent, Pursue (stopping terrorist attacks happening in the UK and overseas), Protect (strengthen protection against a terrorist attack in the UK or overseas), and Prepare (mitigate the impact of a terrorist incident if it occurs). The stated purpose of Prevent is to safeguard vulnerable people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, by engaging with people who are vulnerable to radicalisation and protecting those who are being targeted by terrorist recruiters. According to its statutory guidelines, Prevent deals with all forms of terrorism, including Islamist and extreme right wing, and does not focus on any one community. The Channel program is part of Prevent and is designed to mentor those identified as at risk of radicalisation. Participation in the Channel program is voluntary and confidential. It is a multi-agency process, involving partners from the local authority, the police, education, health providers, and others. Referring possible cases of early stage radicalisation works in a similar way to safeguarding processes designed to protect people from gang activity, drugs, and physical/sexual abuse. A Prevent referral can come from anyone who is concerned about a person they know who may be at risk of radicalisation, whether a family member, friend, colleague or from a wide range of partners: social services, children and adult services youth offending teams, health, police, education establishments,

313 Amnesty International. (2018). Punished without trial - The use of administrative control measures in the context of counter-terrorism in France. <https://www.amnesty.nl/content/uploads/2018/11/Punished-without-trial-The-use-of-administrative-control-measures-in-the-context-of-counter-terrorism-in-France.pdf?x68103>

and places of worship and community organisations. The Prevent Duty came into force in 2015 and ensures that specified authorities have to pay due regard to the need to prevent people from radicalisation. All referrals are carefully assessed by the police and the local authority to see if they are suitable for the Channel program or may require another intervention such as mental health support.

The indicators for extremism are detailed in the Channel Duty Guidance, the government's guidelines on how to report suspicious behaviours. In the guidance, 22 broad-ranging criteria that may indicate a student's likelihood to be drawn into terrorism are identified. These criteria have been strongly criticised by part of the academic community and student unions. Some referrals have led to several cases of false accusation. In 2015, a postgraduate student in Staffordshire University, was profiled and questioned for simply reading an academic textbook called *Terrorism Studies*, in the college library³¹⁴. A study titled: "What does terrorism look like? University lecturers' interpretations of their Prevent duties and tackling extremism in UK universities" interviewed 20 university lecturers from institutions across the UK and examined their reactions to their new counterterrorism duties³¹⁵. According to this study, the academic community was nervous and sceptical about the duties imposed upon them by the government. Dal Babu, who was a chief superintendent with the Metropolitan police, said that Prevent has become a toxic brand and is widely mistrusted by most Muslims, who are suspicious of the scheme and see it as a tool for spying on them³¹⁶. In 2019, the British Home Office announced an independent review of the Prevent strategy and appointed Lord Alex Carlile as the reviewer. This choice received further criticism from the public as Lord Carlile has in the past declared his "considered and strong support" for Prevent³¹⁷. The terms of reference of the review ruled out looking at the "past delivery of Prevent." Indeed, based on the terms, the review will consider the present delivery of Prevent and recommendations for the future, rather than past delivery of Prevent. The Muslim Council of Britain and the opposition have commented on the terms of the review, saying that it is not possible to analyse Prevent without looking at the evidence of how it has operated in the past³¹⁸.

314 The Guardian. (24th of September 2015). <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2015/sep/24/student-accused-being-terrorist-reading-book-terrorism>

315 Awan, I. And Whiting, A. "What does terrorism look like?: university lecturers" interpretations of their Prevent duties and tackling extremism in UK universities. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17539153.2017.1396954>

316 The Guardian. (9th of March 2015). <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/mar/09/anti-radicalisation-prevent-strategy-a-toxic-brand>

317 The Guardian. (18th of August 2019). <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/aug/18/appointment-of-biased-lord-to-review-prevent-strategy-breaches-guidelines-rights-groups-claim>

318 The Guardian. (16th of September 2019). <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/sep/16/prevent-review-branded-superficial-as-past-decisions-overlooked>

At the same time, an investigative report published by The Guardian newspaper, including documents provided by the human rights group Liberty, revealed that the counterterrorism apparatus has been running a database containing details of thousands of individuals referred to Prevent. The National Police Prevent Case Management (PCM) database is managed centrally by the UK Counter Terrorism Policing and is accessible to all police forces across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, as well as the Home Office, including the MI5 intelligence service. According to The Guardian, each Prevent referral received is added to the PCM database by individual police forces, including personal details and reasons for the referral, but the person is not notified. Other agencies are able to request information held on the database. More than seven thousand people were referred to Prevent in 2017-18, most of them through the education sector or police (around five thousand), the remaining by local authorities, health service, the community or family, and prison service. From the total, 3,096 (42%) left the process requiring no further action and 3,466 left the process and were signposted to alternative services, while only 394 were escalated to Channel. The Metropolitan police stated that referred individuals may challenge the decision and have their details removed, but the challenge may not always be successful depending on the circumstances. However, the Police did not elaborate on how that would be possible, given that individuals are not aware their details are entered on the database. This situation of police profiling out of judicial control poses several ethical questions regarding the accountability of law enforcement, individual officers and those who submit the referral. Also, the PCM database opens a further challenge in terms of data protection and privacy in the pre-criminal space, as the vast majority of those included in the database are not under criminal investigation for terrorism-related charges.

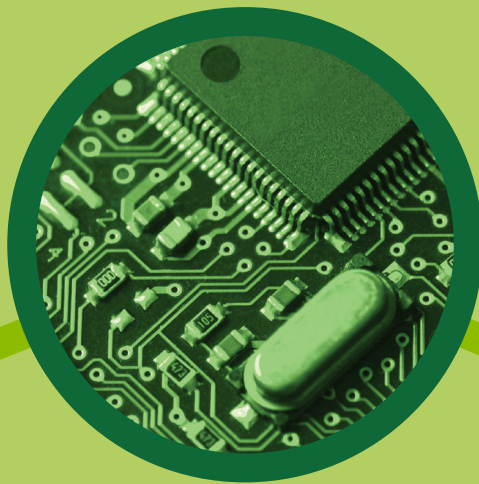
6. Conclusion

The discourse among scholars and policymakers about the pre-criminal space is evolving. As mentioned before, it remains a controversial topic as to what extent preventive measures in absence of crime can be considered legitimate and proportionate. The approach undertaken by CVE practitioners may be based on counselling and individual support, as well as on social monitoring and repression. In any case, in absence of crime or mental illness, the beneficiary cannot be obliged to comply with the measures or programs. That is why in some cases the criminal threshold was broadened to allow institutions to intervene with judicial measures and limitations. This approach, however, may prove to be counterproductive. Moreover, as stressed in the British case, the indicators of radicalisation and the signs of

criminal tendencies are not unanimous. The institutions in charge of monitoring and intervention may criminalise a radical but legitimate exercise of the freedom of expression or jeopardise the rule of law through disproportionate measures. As described, the activity of profiling based on ethnic background, religion or ideology may lead to discrimination and social stigma, because the entire community is identified as pre-criminal. The ethical and social impact of preventive actions in the absence of crime can be significantly disruptive and harmful. When developing and implementing PVE and CVE strategies, institutions should always take into account the implications of invasive measures, the full compliance of national and EU legislation on civil rights as well as the GDPR and privacy laws.

CHAPTER 2

National Level Policy Papers



Paper 1.**Austria***Niklas Hamann - Junior Researcher, SYNYO GmbH**Florian Huber - Senior Researcher, SYNYO GmbH***1. Introduction**

In general, Austria is described by literature as having experienced comparatively low levels of terrorism in recent times, in relation to other Western European countries^{319 320}. Nevertheless, according to a study, terrorism was perceived as the third biggest threat to Austrians, with 71% of those between 18 and 29 regarding it as a threat³²¹. This risk perception, in combination with several criminal cases related to terrorism and the indirect effects of terrorism in other countries, has created a high public and governmental focus on the issues of terrorism and radicalisation.^{322 323 324}

"Austria is an interesting case of a country not being directly affected by terrorism but still become increasingly active in the field of deradicalisation and the prevention of extremism."

(Götsch, 2017).

319 Vetschera, H. (2007). "Terrorism in Austria: Experiences and responses" Terrorism and Political Violence; Vol. 4, No. 4

320 Götsch, K. (2017). "Austria and the Threats from Islamist Radicalisation and Terrorist Involvement: An Overview of Governmental and Non-Governmental Initiatives and Policies"

321 Market Institute "Was den Österreichern Angst macht!!" [Online] Available at: <https://www.market.at/market-aktuell/details/was-den-oesterreichern-angst-macht.html>

322 Seeh, M. "Terrorismus-Strafverfahren: Sahlen erreichen Rekordhöhen" [Online] Available at: <https://www.diepresse.com/5116847/terrorismus-strafverfahren-sahlen-erreichen-rekordhohen>

323 Prinzjakowitsch, W. (2017). "The preventive role of open youth work in radicalisation and extremism" Journal of Open Youth Work, Issue 1

324 Schmidinger, T. (2015). "Jihadismus. Ideologie, Prävention und Deradikalisierung" Vienna. Mandelbaum Verlag

According to Petraeus (2006) counter-terrorism is an ongoing experiment, with each encounter producing new insights about one's opponent and the value of one's own strategy. However, with the recent Austrian context lacking such encounters, at least on a larger scale, Austria's approach is largely influenced by two major factors: history and experiences of other countries:

For instance, Austria's domestic intelligence service, the "Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz und Terrorismusbekämpfung" was established, through the integration of existing services, as a reaction to the 9/11 terror attacks in the USA. Prior to this, the Munich hostage crisis had a significant impact on Austrian policy and further encouraged the creation of special police forces, like COBRA³²⁵.

On the other hand, the importance of history in the Austrian context has been pointed out, as writers such as Vetschera (1992) state that an analysis of the Austrian response to terrorism: *"will of necessity emphasize the historical dimension."*

Austria has indeed experienced various forms of terrorism over the course of its history, which have significantly shaped the Austrian counter-terrorism approach. For instance, Austria's "Verbotsgesetz", on which grounds the NPD was banned in the aftermath of WW2, enshrined in the 1955 "staatsvertrag", which remains active to this date³²⁶, building the ground for 138 convictions in 2018 alone³²⁷.

"According to the (Verbootsgesetz) of May 8, 1945, the NSDAP was banned and Nazi activity forbidden, thus giving the Austrian Constitution a strong anti-Nazi character. Up to the present day the main instrument in combatting neo-Nazi activities is a legal one"

(Bailer-Galanda, Neugebauer, 1996)

Similarly, Austria's historic experience is also used by critics as explanatory factor for perceived present-day short fallings in Austria's approach. For instance, Hartleb (2011) sees this anti-Nazi rather than anti-extremist character of the Verbootsgesetz as having shaped Austria's political culture, leading to a neglect of left-wing extremism, seen according to him as not antidemocratic in nature. However, as a look at Austria's past reveals, terrorism from the left, with a few notable exceptions, was rare especially in comparison to the neighbouring Germany and was rather caused through this geographic proximity than through the domestic context, as the

325 Riegler, T. (2010). "Vom Gendarmeriekommando Bad Vöslau zur COBRA" JIPPSS, Vol. 7, No 1

326 Hartleb, F. (2011). "Extremismus in Österreich" Wiesbaden: Springer VS

327 Kurier (2019). "NS-Wiederbetätigung: Sahl der Verurteilten gestiegen."

RAF and other German left-wing extremist and terrorist organisations used Austria as logistical hub. *(This role as logistical and financial hub is a reoccurring issue for Austria, having for instance also been used in the 1990th by jihadist fighters in Bosnia to transfer money and weapons³²⁸.)*

The current Austrian left-wing scene is significantly fragmented, in which the loosely organised autonomous-anarchistic scene is the most active one³²⁹. However, in comparison to right-wing extremism the overall reported criminal cases associated with left-wing extremism are low and have been significantly decreasing, with a drop from 518 cases in 2017 to 374 cases in 2018¹⁰. Criminal cases of right-wing extremism, on the other hand, have slightly increased from already significant levels, with the number of reported cases increasing from 2571 in 2017 to 2664 in 2018¹⁰. The jihadist scene has also gained increasing attention, especially since creation of DAESH. It is estimated that around 200 to 300 individuals from Austria travelled to Syria and Iraq to join violent extremist groups³³⁰. While this number may appear small in comparison with the overall 27.000 to 31.000 foreign fighters, Austria nevertheless has one of the highest per-capita shares, in comparison with other EU countries.

"(...)it can be said that before the year of 2014, the phenomenon of Islamist radicalisation was not present in Austria (...), either in public discussion or in scientific dispute."

(Götsch, 2017).

As reaction to these threats, a number of initiatives, programs and organisations have emerged or dedicated themselves to counter extremism, radicalisation and hate. Austria can look back at successful enlightenment programs, implemented after WW2, to counter the growing violence of right-wing extremists, caused by the South Tyrol conflict as well as border and minority conflicts³³¹. However, as observed by Götsch (2017): *"so far, no comprehensive overview on NGOs and public initiatives in this field in Austria exists."* While Götsch (2017) already begun to address this gap, through a non-exhaustive overview, it was focused on stakeholders and initiatives addressing jihadism. The following report will aim to further close this gap by broadening Götsch's initial overview to address the full spectrum of left- and right-wing extremism as well as jihadism.

328 Addendum. (2017). "Wien als Drehscheibe für Terror-Gelder" [Online] Available at: <https://www.addendum.org/terrorismus/terrorismus-finanzierung/>

329 Bundesministerium Inneres (2019 "Verfassungsschutzbericht 2018" Vienna: BMI

330 Hofinger, V. (2020). "Muhajirin" from Austria. Why they left to join ISIS and why they don't return" Journal for Deradicalisation, No. 22

331 Bailer-Galand, B. and Neugebauer, W. (1996). "Right-Wing Extremism: History, Organisation, Ideology Vienna: Stiftung Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes

Thus, the report will first outline the project, initiative and network landscape in Austria, followed by a summary of the Austrian Strategy for the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism and De-radicalisation and conclude with a brief analysis and policy advice.

2. Project and initiatives landscape

The following chapter will provide a non-exhaustive collection of projects, initiatives and networks dealing with violent extremism, radicalisation or terrorist propaganda in Austria. These are roughly divided into (2.1) State initiated projects; (2.2) Austrian youth programs; (2.3) the Safer Internet Centre Austria; (2.4) KIRAS funded projects and (2.5) Bottom-up-projects (2.6) selected networks. For each project a short description is provided, followed by a brief outline of its methodology and target group.

2.1 State initiated projects

The Austrian government and its agencies have initiated and participate in several projects to address extremism and radicalisation. These focus on the exchange of knowledge and the connection of existing projects and stakeholders, with persons at risk of radicalisation often being indirect targets.

- **EXIT Europe**

Description: The project is led by the Austrian domestic intelligence service in a consortium involving other European partners. Funded by the "Internal Security Fund - Police" of the EU, the project runs from January 2019 until December 2020, focusing on exit programs for those involved in extremist organisations. The project aims to increase the connection between existing exit programs in Europe and beyond as well as to develop methodologies for these exit programs. Furthermore, the project will establish an ongoing evaluation mechanism of the effectiveness of the exit programs through the establishment of local groups consisting of independent experts.

Method: EXIT Europe aims to counter extremist organisations by providing their members opportunities to leave these groups. Additionally, the project will establish independent expert groups to measure the effectiveness of these programs.

Target Group: The project focuses on exit programs on a local and European scale, as well as relevant stakeholders, like security practitioners and experts, aiming to connect all of them.

- **Werkstatt.Wien**

Description: Werkstatt.Wien has been launched by the "Netzwerk Demokratie Kultur und Prävention" and is closely connected to the City administration of Vienna. Werkstatt.Wien is an educational platform, hosting lectures, expert rounds and best practice examples on the topics of politico-religious extremism, deradicalisation and prevention. The program is directed towards employees of public institutions. Each session is tailored towards a different topic and supported by experts, who facilitate discussions with the participants after a lecture on the respective topics. The discussions are aimed to familiarise the participants with practical prevention work, using best practice examples as well as to jointly develop solutions for the presented issues.

Method: Werkstatt.Wien aims to advance the knowledge of its participants in the area of politico-religious extremism, deradicalisation and prevention as well as to develop solutions to these issues. Hereby, the project connects experts with members of public institutions to develop concepts that account for all perspectives and knowledge, and through this also aim to facilitate knowledge exchange between them.

Target Group: The offers are focused on members of public institutions, like the city administration, who are connected with experts. The thematic focus rests on politico-religious extremism as well as deradicalisation and prevention.

2.2 Austrian youth programs

The "Bundeskriminalamt", the Austrian federal crime police authority, has placed a strong focus on youth-prevention work. Focus is hereby placed on the age groups of 13 to 17 and is conducted by over 400 prevention officials. All of the programs are characterised by their focus on 13 to 17-year-old pupils, but also involves the teachers and parents or guardians. Moreover, they are uniformly implemented over at least 12 school units over the course of a year. The youth prevention efforts in the area of violent and drug related crime are combined in the so called "Under18" concept, which is made up of three initiatives: "All Right-Alles was recht ist", "Click & Check" and "Look@your.Life."

- **All Right-Alles was Recht ist!**

Description: "All Right-Alles was recht ist!" is a violence prevention program focused on providing legal information of potential importance for 13 to 17-year-old pupils and on the encouragement of and education on civil courage and non-violent conflict resolution mechanisms. The program also hosts a special session on political and religious violence. In total the program is made up of a one-hour session for teachers as well as parents or guardians respectively and 10 one-hour sessions for the pupils. The program aims to create resilience, provide alternative solutions to violence and encourage civil courage.

Method: The program is structured into different thematic sessions, covering topics such as criminal law or extremism. It provides a mix between the provision of educational and informational material and active training and testing of methods related to civil courage or non-violent conflict resolution.

Target Group: The main target group are 13 to 17-year-old pupils, while the program also addresses partners, guardians and teachers, to a lesser degree.

- **Click & Check**

Description: Click & Check aims to inform of the dangers and responsible use of social media and the internet in general. The program follows an identical structure to "All Right- Alles was Recht ist!" while the individual topics are focused on the legal situation, potential dangers and prevention efforts with regards to the internet. Beside the thematic focus the only major difference is the option for courses tailored towards a younger audience of 10 to 12-year olds, given the increase in online activity by this age group.

Method: The program follows the same mixed approach as "All Right-Alles was Recht ist!", but with a focus on the online-sphere.

Target Group: Similar to the other programs the main target group are 13 to 17-year-old pupils, while the program also addresses partners, guardians and teachers, to a lesser degree. However, Click & Check also addresses 10 to 12-year-old pupils.

- **Look@your.Life**

Description: Look@your.life is a prevention program intended to create critical self-reflexion on the life and behaviour of 13 to 17-year-old pupils in class, the web, at parties, their free time, in school and with their families. The program differs from the already outlined programs as it spans a total of 19 one-hour sessions, of which 2 are focuses on teachers or parents and guardians respectively. The program also aims to establish better links between all participants.

Method: The program follows the same method as the other two, however more emphasis is placed on teachers, parents and guardians as well as the connection between all of them, including the pupils.

Target Group: The main target group are 13 to 17-year-old pupils, while the program places more emphasis on partners, guardians and teachers in comparison to the already outlined programs.

2.3 Safer Internet Centre Austria

Austria is a member of the European Insafe internet network. Insafe was founded under the Safer Internet Program of the European Commission, focused on the protection and education of children, teenagers and young adults with regards to their behaviour and the dangers of the internet, such as violent or extremist content. The national education centres usually include a helpline, hotlines and youth panels. In Austria this role is performed by the Safer Internet Centre Austria, which is made up of the saferinternet.at platform, the Stopline Österreich and the 147-Rat auf Draht emergency hotline.

- **Saferinternet.at**

Description: Saferinternet.at involves several Austrian Ministries as well as parties from the private sector, such as Facebook, and is coordinated by the Austrian Institute for applied telecommunication. The initiative consists of a platform that provides links and news as well as guidelines and advice for the safe use of the internet. Covering topics from cyber-mobbing to viruses and spam, the platform also features a section on dangerous content online, such as extremist or violent content. For each topic tools, news, FAQs, educational and informational material as well as tips are provided.

Method: Providing guidelines, tips and news and other informational and educational content the platform aims to increase the resilience against

and awareness on dangers arising from the use of the internet, like extremist propaganda. The platform links to support hotlines to provide practical support.

Target Group: The project focuses on seniors, educators, parents, teenagers and youth workers.

- **Stoplevel Österreich**

Description: Established in 1998 by the Austrian Internet Service Provider (ISPA), the main goal of Stoplevel is the quick and unbureaucratic removal of content related to the sexual exploitation of minors and national socialism under the already mentioned "Verbootsgesetz" and the so called "Abzeichengesetz", the latter referring to the use of illegal symbols or uniforms. Once such content is reported it is first verified by an employee of Stoplevel and if illegal in nature a report to the ministry of interior is made, while the responsible internet provider is contacted.

Method: Stoplevel aims to remove illegal content quickly by working as an intermediate organisation between authorities, internet providers and general public. It receives and verifies complaints and reports made to it before contacting the relevant authorities to facilitate and initiate the removal of illegal content.

Target Group: The initiative has a narrow and legal focus on content violating either §207a, the "Verbootsgesetz" or the "Abzeichengesetz." It also connects internet providers and public authorities to facilitate information exchange and enable a quick reaction to illegal content.

- **147-Rat auf Draht**

Description: Having its origins in a TV show covering problems of relevance to children and teenagers, since 1993 147-Rat auf Draht has developed into an emergency hotline for teenagers and children. The hotline is part of the European umbrella organisation "Missing Children Europe" and since 2014 has been managed by the SOS- Kinderdorf. Beside a hotline 147-Rat auf Draht also offers a website, where it covers topic such as violence in schools and extremism, as well as more "everyday" topics such as addiction or love. The hotline provides advice and guidance, while the website offers additional information material and chat functions.

Method: 147-Rat auf Draht aims to support children and teenagers in situations of crisis or with general problems, while also providing information material and guidance for parents. Radicalisation and extremism are however only some of the many topics covered by the hotline.

Target Group: The hotline is specifically designed for kids and teenagers but also provides information and guidance for parents on how to address the problems and issues of their kids or teenagers.

2.4 Selected projects (National Security Research Programme KIRAS)

KIRAS is the Austrian funding program for security research and supports national research projects aiming to increase the safety of all members of society. The program for 2019/2020 had a budget of 9 Million Euros, and in 2019 24 projects were funded, as each year the numbers of funded projects has increased, from the original 9 in 2006. In most cases the projects combine research efforts with the development of new insights or materials for practitioners.

- **AWID**

Description: The AWID project brings together a consortium of nine partners and will run from April 2018 until March 2020. The project addresses and analyses propaganda and recruitment efforts of religious and ideological institutions targeting juveniles, with a particular focus on social media and schools. As practitioners and teachers are often not adequately equipped and trained to react to these issues, AWID creates praxis orientated, exemplary and multimedia concepts and develops flexible models and interactive material concepts and suggestions for preventive lessons and interactions. The developed concepts and materials will be transferred into train-the trainer concepts and tested in three iterations.

Method: Based on an in-depth research and active involvement of practitioners, AWID aims to create new insights on and concepts to address the phenomena of propaganda and recruitment.

Target Group: The project focuses on practitioners, educators and teachers in direct contact with juveniles, especially in schools and the phenomena of propaganda and recruitment, especially with regards to social media. Thus, the project indirectly focuses on juveniles, whose risk

for radicalisation the project aims to reduce by increasing the capacities of schools and stakeholders in this area.

- **Counter Stories**

Description: Since November 2019, SYNNO has been coordinating the Counter Stories project, which focuses on the early prevention of radicalisation through alternative narratives. In close cooperation with the Austrian Ministry of the Interior the project develops novel instruments and materials for the police-driven early prevention efforts to counter radicalisation. Grounded in an analysis of alternative narratives in a national and international context and expert interviews, the project develops alternative narratives and videos as well as additional material and exercises to support and drive early prevention efforts. The developed concepts and materials are then piloted and their implementation supported through a prevention roadmap and guidelines on the sensibilisation of the public.

Method: Counter Stories focuses on early prevention to increase resilience and prevent radicalisation before it can manifest itself. The project aims to achieve this through the development of new counter narratives and materials tailored and tested in the Austrian context.

Target Group: The project focuses on young people, by providing crime prevention police officers videos and material for prevention work in schools.

- **#UnitedAgainstHate**

Description: Coordinated by the Institute for Sociology of the University Vienna #UnitedAgainstHate has been initiated in 2019. The project is analysing how online mobilisation and networking strategies can be used to support and facilitate teenagers online when dealing with digital violence or hate speech, by inspiring civil courage through educational and trainings concepts as well as information material. The project is designed to promote civil courage online, especially against hate speech and will be made available to relevant practitioners and teenagers.

Method: The project aims to encourage teenagers to counter hate speech by inspiring civil courage, based on an analysis of mobilisation and networking with regards to online activism. In order to increase civil courage online and facilitate mobilisation and networking of teenagers,

the project will develop materials and strategies. These will be presented to practitioners to teenagers directly via a peer to peer platform.

Target Group: The project aims to directly address 14 to 18-year olds by providing strategies and educational material for them via a peer to peer platform. Moreover, the project will also provide these materials to stakeholders actively engaged in youth work.

- **StratEX.**

Description: StratEX is coordinated by the Austrian "Verein für Rechts- und Kriminalsoziologie" and begun its activities in 2019. The project focuses on the influence of extremist organisations in Schools and their usage of own educational offers to spread their ideology and attract new members. StratEX aims to counter their influence by strengthening schools in the area of primary prevention. This will be achieved through workshops, bringing together those active in resilience and prevention work in schools and facilitating multi-agency cooperation.

Method: The project aims to provide educational material and increase the cooperation and exchange between stakeholders active within primary prevention in schools. Through this the project hopes to increase the capacities and abilities of schools in the area of primary prevention.

Target Group: The project indirectly addresses schoolkids through the vehicle of the school. To achieve this the project engages and connects schools and practitioners of relevance to primary prevention within them. It's primary focus of analysis rests on extremist organisations active in schools or providing their own educational offers.

- **Cyber Heroes**

Description: Cyber Heroes was initiated in 2018 by the Institute for Sociology of the University Vienna. The project focuses on hateful, racist, violent and extremist content online to which especially teenagers are exposed. To create counter-narratives to this content and influence the discourse-norms online, the project aims to mobilise 14 to 18-year olds to take action by engaging in counter speech, meaning to challenge and invalidate for instance extremist content online. Through this approach persons potentially at risk of radicalisation, should be exposed to and positively influenced by counter narratives from their peers. Those mobilised by the project and referred to as cyber heroes.

Method: By providing best practice examples and through activities like online role plays the project aims to mobilise and educate teenagers on how to challenge hateful, racist, violent and extremist content online. The so mobilised teenagers are meant to influence the discourse norms of their peers and provide alternative narratives to positively influence at risk teenagers.

Target Group: The project focuses on 14-18-year olds and aims to mobilise them to engage in counter speech. These so-called Cyber Heroes are meant to create a spill over effect by influencing the discourse norms of their peers, especially those at risk to engage in violence or extremism.

- **E-YOUTH.works**

Description: Beginning in 2016, the project was led by the Austrian "Institute für Rechts- und Kriminalsoziologie." E-YOUTH.works aims to increase the resilience of teenagers when exposed to radicalising propaganda online and to advance open youth work by developing sustainable strategies on how to enrich existing offers with a stronger emphasis on new media. This is done via the concept of e-youth work, which combines online and offline interventions to increase the critical thinking of teenagers regarding extremist content online. Thus, it aims to strengthen the youth work engagement especially online.

Method: The project aims to increase the resilience of teenagers by advancing existing youth work offers. Workshops and information gained by the project were made available to practitioners to familiarise them with the potential of e-youth work and provide guidelines for the potential implementation of the concept. By adding a stronger emphasis on new-media and the online sphere as a whole, to combine offline and online offers, practitioners aimed to increase their reach and efficiency.

Target Group: The project indirectly focuses on teenagers, especially those engaged in activities online. The target group is reached by advancing the abilities of practitioners and existing youth work offers by promoting and developing guidelines on the implementation of the concept of e-youth work.

- **Darknet Analysis**

Description: Led by SBA Research, Darknet Analysis was initiated in 2016. The project focuses on the use of the darknet by terror groups like Daesh

and also criminal organisations to spread propaganda, facilitate their recruitment efforts and aid the organisation of communication in hidden forums as well as the exchange and trade in illegal goods and services. Based on the insights of its research the project developed techniques to aid the understanding and analysis of the use of the darknet by political or criminal groups or individuals.

Method: The project aims to provide authorities with a better understanding and tools for the analysis of the activities, methods and usage of the darknet by political extremists or criminal individuals or organisations. Based on the research conducted the information on, for instance, the flow, pricing and exchange of illegal goods was derived.

Target Group: The project focused on political extremists and criminal individuals and organisations to provide insights on the trends, usage and procedures on the darknet to the Austrian Government.

2.5 Bottom-up-projects

A number of projects addressing violent extremism, radicalisation or hate speech have also been developed by initiatives of practitioners, social scientists or the private sector in Austria. They focus on a number of topics and follow diverse approaches often employing novel concepts or technology.

- **Jamal al-Khatib**

Description: Jamal al-Khatib was initiated in 2016 by "Turn", an Austrian network of social workers, movie producers, Islamic scientists, pupils and students. Turn produced a series of videos featuring Jamal al-Khatib, a young former detainee and extremist. The fictional character integrates various bibliographic elements of existing extremists. Additionally, Jamal al-Khatib established a set of pedagogic guidelines and tools for offline streetworkers. The goal of the campaign was to reach individuals at risk of radicalisation or sympathetic to jihadist narratives and propaganda.

Method: Through the creation of videos featuring the narrative character of Jamal al-Khatib the project aims to provide counter- and alternative narratives for teenagers but also others at risk of radicalisation or extremism. Facilitated by the videos but also offline resources for streetworkers, the project aims to encourage critical self-reflection and provide alternative approaches to extremism.

Target Group: The project focuses on teenagers at risk of radicalisation by or sympathetic to jihadist narratives and propaganda. Additionally, the project relies on its narrative character of Jamal al-Khatib, thus adding a stronger emphasis on males and their experiences than women.

- **Witness of History**

Description: The project was founded by the Austrian NGO "Women without Borders" in 2008. Launched in response to the medias handling of the aftermath of the 2008 Mumbai attacks, focusing on the perpetrators rather than on the victims, the project aims to create counter narratives to combat violent extremism by providing the survivors and witnesses of terror a platform to share their side of the story. In this regard, the project is inspired by the educational approach of having Holocaust survivors visiting schools to talk about their experiences. Witness of History aims to promote a reconciliatory approach and provide victims of terrorism with a platform to share their stories, emphasising the potential consequences of extremist ideologies.

Method: The project focuses on the victims rather than the perpetrators of terrorism. By providing these witnesses and victims of terrorism a platform, in the form of videos featuring interviews, the project aims to highlight the negative consequences of violent extremism.

Target Group: Witness of History appears to have several audiences it aims to address. Firstly, those at risk of violent extremism or radicalisation, by highlighting the negative outcomes and impacts their actions can have on others. Thus, the project also targets victims and witnesses of terrorism, providing them with a platform and empowering them. Finally, through the approach taken, Witness of History also attempts to cause a change in media coverage of terrorist incidents, aiming to shift the focus away from the perpetrators and towards the victims.

- **Mother / Father Schools - Parenting for Peace**

Description: Since 2013 "Women without Borders" has offered a new project, focusing on a perceived missing link in combatting the spread of violent extremism: Mothers. The project aims to implement so called bottom-up "Motherschools" to provide mothers with the skills and capacities to address and identify potential signs of radicalisation or extremism of their children.

As to date more than 2000 mothers have participated in a “Motherschool.” Driven by the success of this initiative Women without Borders initiated a similar project this time focused on fathers.

Method: The Mother or Father schools aim to close a perceived gap in the fight against violent extremism, by strengthening the capacities of the parents to detect and address signs of radicalisation.

Target Group: The projects are focused on mothers or fathers to provide them with the capacities to intervene in the initial radicalisation process of their children.

- **Dialog statt Hass**

Description: “Dialog statt Hass” was initiated in 2017 by NEUSTART, which, with 1.500 employees, is one of the largest Austrian social science NGOs. The project focused on hate speech and posting online in violation of Austria’s §283. Thus, the project is operated in close cooperation with prosecutors and judges and aims to create self-reflection, highlight the legal boundaries online and confront perpetrators with the perspectives of their victims. Designed in modules, the project places emphasis on creating social media competence and by mid-2019 119 individuals had been referred to the project by judges.

Method: By confronting perpetrators with the perspective of their victims, the project aims to create critical self-reflection to reduce hate posts and speech online, supported through close cooperation with the justice system.

Target Group: Individuals who have violated §283 online.

- **Counter-Bot**

Description: Since the beginning of 2020 the Ludwig Boltzman Institut is developing a so-called “Counter-bot” in Austria. The goal of the project is the creation of a bot, that automatically produces effective counter-narratives and speech against racist posts online. As a first step, the project is currently analysing hate posts gathered by the SARA Advisory Centre to enable the bot to identify hate posts. The project will then analyse the gathered hate posts and will develop effective counter narratives to inform the counter-hate speech ability of the bot.

Method: By creating the Counter-Bot the project aims to combat racist speech and posts online and automatically provide counter-narratives. These will be derived from an analysis of hate speech posts to enable their identification as well as an informed response by the bot.

Target Group: The project targets racist posts online.

- **DECOUNT**

Description: The DECOUNT project has been funded by the European Commission's Internal Security Fund Policy to run from 2018 until 2020. The project focuses on extremism prevention by targeting juveniles through a website (extremismus.info), which is divided into three main sections: a video game, a movie addressing the topic of extremism and equality, and a collection of educational materials on the topic. The outcomes have been developed based on interviews with (former) radicalised individuals.

Method: DECOUNT targets extremism through the provision of material and short movies and mainly through the video game that the project has developed. This allows users to familiarise themselves with the impact decisions can have on radicalisation and the related tactics and issues, by allowing them to make decisions in a safe environment.

Target Group: DECOUNT targets juveniles, with its video game featuring a balance of females and males and focuses on right-wing extremism and jihadism. It also provides educational material for educators and other actors engaged with juveniles, for instance on how to use the game.

2.4 Selected networks

In addition to the outlined projects, Austria's counter-extremism and radicalisation landscape is also significantly influenced by a number of networks. Thus, this report will provide a non-exhaustive list of major networks. State-initiated networks play a major role, as they aim to connect existing projects and stakeholders to facilitate knowledge-exchange and establish a more coordinated approach to extremism and radicalisation. Additional initiatives of practitioners have also created networks in Austria and are offering ongoing services to help prevent extremism and protect vulnerable groups.

Bundesweites Netzwerk Extremismus-prävention und Deradikali-sierung (BNED)	<p>BNED was initiated in 2017 by the Austrian Ministry of the interior and is coordinated by the Austrian domestic intelligence service. It connects practitioners from Austria's federal ministries, public sector, the federal states and the civil society. In its regular meetings the members share experiences and insights and discuss the prevention of extremism and deradicalisation work. The overall aim of the network is the bundling and connection of all the individual initiatives and stakeholders in the area of extremism and deradicalisation in Austria. In the future the network is meant to develop new initiatives and programs and ensure their initiation and implementation in a coordinated and unified manner in all of Austria. In order to fulfil its mission, the BNED developed and launched the Austrian Strategy for the prevention of Extremism and Deradicalisation in 2018. The initiative was hailed as a milestone in the coordination and development of a coherent Austrian strategy, connecting all the smaller initiatives and providing a central direction (see below).</p>
Netzwerk Demokratie Kultur und Prävention (WNED)	<p>Launched in 2014 by the Vienna city administration, WNED is a network of existing institutions and structures responsible for the care, advice and education of kids, teenagers and young adults. The WNED focuses on anti-democratic sentiments and group related devaluation ideologies. The project aims to facilitate a quick and effective reaction to these issues by creating a close cooperation of the various stakeholders involved, especially those involved in education, care and advice of kids, teenagers and young adults. Moreover, the WNED also aims to produce new solutions and insights as well as to professionalise and sensitise its members on the outlined issues, while also acting as an advice and care facility for those affected by group related devaluation ideologies or anti-democratic sentiments.</p>
DERAD	<p>"DERAD - Netzwerk Sozialer Zusammenhalt für Dialog, Extremismusprävention und Demokratie" is a network of German and Austrian practitioners and scientists. Newly founded in 2015, it focuses on deradicalisation and prevention work. DERAD is also part of the European level RAN - Radicalisation Awareness Network - and is an active consultant for international organisations. Since 2015, in Austria DERAD is, on behalf of the Austrian federal ministry of justice, responsible for the extremism prevention of those incarcerated but also freshly released and the training of corrections officers within Austria's prison system. Additionally, DERAD is also conducting enlightenment and intervention talks on behalf of private persons or institutions. Amongst other projects DERAD is also organising seminars, workshops and lectures designed to educate, raise awareness and prevent the spread of extremism. DEARD has received significant positive feedback, being listed in the "RAN best practices collection" and mentioned in a 2017 OSCE report as an effective anti-terrorism project.</p>
Beratungstelle Extremismus	<p>The "Beratungstelle Extremismus" - advice centre extremism - was founded in 2014 by the federal network for open youthwork - bOJA on behalf of the Austrian federal ministry for family and youth, the latter financing the "Beratungstelle Extremismus." The organisation acts as an advice centre for any questions related to extremism by either the general population, practitioners and persons at risk of radicalisation or in need of advice on how to address this topic. For this a special extremism-helpline has been set up, managed by a team of psychologists, social workers and social scientists, providing confidential advice in seven languages, while additional translators are also available. The "Beratungstelle Extremismus" provides educational material but also conducts its own prevention work by organising workshops and seminars on the topic of extremism.</p>

3. The austrian strategy for the prevention and countering of violent extremism and de-radicalisation (summary)

The "Austrian Strategy for the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism and Deradicalisation" aims to pool the experiences and practices of stakeholders (such as researchers and first-line-practitioners), who have been working on PVE/CVE and de-radicalisation towards a common, overall strategy that informs future policy making, funding programs and actual initiatives. The strategy acknowledges that the involvement and awareness of the overall society for preventing and countering violent extremism is crucial. Further, it stresses the need for better co-operation of stakeholders.

The strategy is built on international and EU recommendations such as the "United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy" from 2015, the EU directive "Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Strengthening the EU's Response" from 2014 and the "Radicalisation Awareness Network" (RAN) policy paper on the "Development of a local prevention framework and guidelines."

The recommendations of the strategy put a focus on the following core 8 pillars for prevention:

Security, The Penal System and Resocialisation	<p>For this pillar, the strategy emphasises that it is crucial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -to have national authorities effectively and proactively react to possible offences, so that the desired effect caused by extremist offences cannot be brought about; • -to continue adopting the preventive macrosocial solution approach already initiated in Austria as well as practical methods offering individuals a way out of extremist environments.
Politics and Democratic Culture	<p>For this pillar, the strategy emphasises that it is crucial to strengthen democracy and democratic awareness, support the interest in social matters and provide possibilities to take part in social processes for creating a feeling of belonging to an open and democratic society.</p>
Co-operation and Resources	<p>The strategy emphasises that it is crucial to continue with networking and co-operation on an international and national level. This includes mutual solidarity and co-operation between the federal government, the federal provinces, the cities and the communities as well as dialogue between all relevant players. More concretely, the strategy considers the implementation of a central point of coordination against radicalisation and extremism as effective.</p>
Education, Labour Market and Resilience	<p>The strategy understands education in a broader sense since it offers the possibility to mitigate inequalities and to promote social inclusion. Through education, social security and social integration is strengthened, which reduces marginalisation and therefore the risk of radicalisation.</p>
Social	<p>As radicalisation is often rooted in societal and structural inequalities, the strategy emphasises the importance to specifically focus on all societal, social and health aspects as part of the prevention work.</p>
Science and Research	<p>The strategy acknowledges that it is crucial to establish systematic and interdisciplinary extremism research. The strategy furthermore provides useful steps such as setting up a publicly accessible data base on extremist organisations and relevant results in this context. Furthermore, an independent, scientific competence centre could be established to coordinate research activities and to use scientific resources and resources available to the authorities more efficiently.</p>
Internet and the Media	<p>The strategy acknowledges the role of media and the internet. It emphasises that international networks are required and research is needed for ensuring that measures can take effect. In addition, the respective authorities and internet service providers need to interact in order to create standardised regulations.</p>
Gender	<p>The strategy emphasises that societies with higher gender equality are more resilient to extremism. However, this issue has not been in focus for many years and therefore more efforts are needed in the future.</p>

4. Analysis & recommendations

Having provided a brief overview of the counter-radicalisation landscape of Austria, the report will now engage in a short analysis to complement the descriptive outlined of the projects, initiatives and networks.

The Austrian spectrum of initiatives and programmes dealing with prevention, intervention and deradicalisation efforts is a heterogeneous mix of private, non-governmental bottom-up and official government initiatives alike.

(Götsch, 2017)

These initiatives have, as in other European countries, started on an ad-hoc basis and have for some time reminded isolated efforts³³². Thus, in 2017 Götsch still remarked that:

"While other European countries that have been confronted with actual terrorist attacks such as Germany, the United Kingdom or France are already far more advanced in developing a comprehensive strategy and facilitating partnerships amongst governmental agencies, non-governmental initiatives and academia, this effort is still in its infancy in Austria."

However, as shown, the Government focus has shifted to establish coordination and connections between the various projects and stakeholders to provide guidance and establish a more coherent overall approach. Early examples of this can be seen in the creation of the Netzwerk Demokratie Kultur und Prävention in 2014 or DERAD in 2015 and have since then be continued through networks like the Bundesweites Netzwerk Extremismusprävention und Deradikalisierung initiated in 2017, which by 2018 had developed a coherent and unified Strategy for the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism and Deradicalisation. On the European level, Austrian government agencies have become active in projects like EXIT Europe to establish networks and facilitate an ongoing information exchange. Furthermore, efforts to increase the understanding and capacities of employees of public institutions have been launched, like the Werkstatt.Wien. This trend has also been continued on a regional level through for instance the Extremismus präventionsstelle Steiermark.

332 Koehler, D. (2017). "Structural quality standards for work to intervene with and counter violent extremism. A handbook for practitioners, state coordination units and civil society programme implementers in Germany." German Institute on Radicalisation and De-Radicalisation Studies

The timing of these initiatives also hints towards the accuracy of Götsch (2017) observation, that 2014 initialised a change in the perception and priority of Austrian public authorities towards the prevention of violent extremism. The prominent case of two Viennese school girls, having joined DEASH and left for Syria in 2014 is hereby described as having had a major influence on this trend.³³³ This case may also explain the direct or indirect focus on juveniles and schools within several projects.

However, despite the **Austrian Strategy for the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism and Deradicalisation** including a variety of important domains and fields for prevention as well as overall directions for prevention work in Austria, the strategy and the related network has several weaknesses:

- First, the strategy remains on a very general level by defining mainly the core pillars and the overall frame. Large parts of the documents should therefore rather be understood as a memorandum of understanding than as a strategy.
- Second, there has not been any activity by the network since the strategy was launched. Originally, it was intended that dedicated working groups develop practical guides and action points for each of the eight main pillars of the strategy. However, there has not been any output so far or the activities haven't been communicated, which leaves the impression that the network is generally inactive.
- Third, although the strategy suggests the implementation of a "central point of coordination against radicalisation and extremism", such a coordination office has not been implemented yet. Such a coordination office would not only be crucial to push the development of the action points for each of the core pillars of the strategy, but it would also be important in communicating the activities of the network, to keep key players on board by coordinating the activities, to integrate new players for extending the network and to host a repository or knowledge base of resources and contacts.
- Fourth, while the strategy considers interdisciplinary research on radicalisation and extremism as important, there are only few interdisciplinary efforts in this field. While the strategy remains quite vague in most points, it provides two concrete suggestions to bundle and

333 Kröll, A. (2014). "Starb Wiener Schülerin im Dschihad?" [Online] Available at: <https://www.sn.at/politik/innenpolitik/starb-wiener-schuelerin-im-dschihad-3188959>

support and boost research efforts: by establishing a publicly accessible database on extremist organisations and relevant results, and by establishing a scientific competence centre. However, also such efforts need commitment by the public authorities as well.

Recommendations:

- Establishment of an independent network coordination office for supporting the specification of the strategy, the implementation of the action points and the communication of the activities as well as for managing, coordinating and increasing the multi-stakeholder network and the working groups.
- Set-up of a scientific competence centre either within an established institution such as a university or the Austrian Academy of Science to provide an overview of all research activities, create cooperation between different institutions, collect and provide resources (such as data, results, projects etc.) as well as research coordination through the related calls of the KIRAS program.
- Increase the funding for transdisciplinary research projects on radicalisation and violent extremism through the KIRAS program
- Support projects specifically aimed at preventing radicalisation and countering extremism online through new methods and approaches such as VR-trainings, serious gaming and state-of-the-art videos.
- Encourage the Austrian Ministry of Interior to participate more often in European research and innovation projects in the domain of radicalisation and violent extremism by providing it with an administrative framework that allows to claim costs for hiring project staff and set up a dedicated project office.
- Foster critical media consumption, which are crucial for radicalisation prevention, by introducing media literacy as a dedicated subject in schools.

Paper 2.

Belgium

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1. Introduction

It has been four years since the 2016 Brussels attacks occurred, resulting in the deaths of 32 people and injuring another 340. Following the 2016 attacks, Belgium has managed to make some important strides in addressing policy issues relating to radicalisation and the countering of violent extremism (CVE), such as the development and final implementation of the Federal Framework Memorandum on Integral Security 2016-2019, the National Security Plan for 2016-2019 and the greater involvement of the regional governments in prevention efforts following the Sixth State Reform (La sixième réforme de l'Etat)³³⁴. Nevertheless, there remains significant room for improvement in implementing policies aimed at countering violent extremism and radicalisation.

As such, the aim of this paper is to provide key policy recommendations primarily based on the MINDb4ACT project findings, in relation to Belgium's general strategy on the prevention and countering of violent extremism (CVE) and radicalisation. Belgium's general CVE strategy and approach is primarily based on the Action Plan Against Radicalism (Plan R), and encompasses both the Federal Framework Memorandum on Integral Security and the National Security Plan. Furthermore, rather than following a thematic approach tailored towards specific stakeholders or sectors, the policy recommendations are directed towards the competent Belgian authorities and bodies in charge of decision-making and implementation of CVE

334 Brussels Prevention and Security. (2020c). "À Propos | Bruxelles Prévention & Sécurité." Bps-Bpv.Brussels. <https://bps-bpv.brussels/fr/propos>

policies. The policy recommendations are further divided into coordination and communication-based recommendations and include the body or authority with the overall competency to implement them. By tailoring specific recommendations towards the different bodies throughout the Belgium governance structures which are capable of implementing direct change, this paper hopes to create a greater incentive for the policy recommendations to be considered among those specific bodies.

2. The Belgium governance structure in regards to CVE

Belgium's governance and administrative divisions create several challenges when it comes to its decision-making procedures regarding CVE and counter-radicalisation policies. First, Belgium's administrative decision-making hierarchy and governance structure includes the Belgium Federal Government, the Regional Governments of Wallonia, Flanders and the Brussels Capital Region, and 10 different provinces including three Brussels-Capital Region Community Commissions. Additionally, at the municipal and local level over 581 Communes (19 alone in Brussels-Capital itself) exist throughout Belgium³³⁵. As a result, Belgium's complex governance structure and approach to CVE is often widely criticised as being reactive in nature, dysfunctional and unable to effectively tackle key issues.

Second, in addition to an already complicated governance structure, Belgium's main approach to countering-radicalisation and violent extremism, PLAN R, also encompasses a complex hierarchy of agencies, bodies and actors across all governance levels with differing responsibilities. Plan R was initially created in 2004 and further revised in 2015, with the revised 2015 Plan R defining two main objectives. First, it seeks to map out individuals and groups with a radicalising effect on their environment and second, it aims at reducing the impact of the drivers of radicalisation³³⁶. Moreover, the Framework Memorandum on Integral Security for 2016-2019, further outlines which actors are responsible for executing the different CVE related measures within Belgium³³⁷.

Each section of this paper will briefly present the main actors present throughout the governance hierarchy and subsequently provide policy recommendations aimed at increasing the effectiveness of CVE actions among the various bodies involved in countering and prevention efforts throughout Belgium.

335 Committee of Regions. (2020). "Cor - Belgium Introduction." Portal.Cor.Europa.Eu. <https://portal.cor.europa.eu/divisionpowers/Pages/Belgium-Introduction.aspx>.

336 EFUS PREPARE. (2019). "Belgique: une approche intégrée mise en oeuvre à chacun des trois niveaux de gouvernement." https://efus.eu/files/2019/04/2019_PREPARE_-Belgium-FR.pdf.

337 Belgium Federal Government. (2016). "Note-cadre de Sécurité intégrale 2016-2019." Besafe.Be. https://www.besafe.be/sites/default/files/2018-05/2016-06-07_note-cadre_de_securite_integrale_fr_1.pdf.

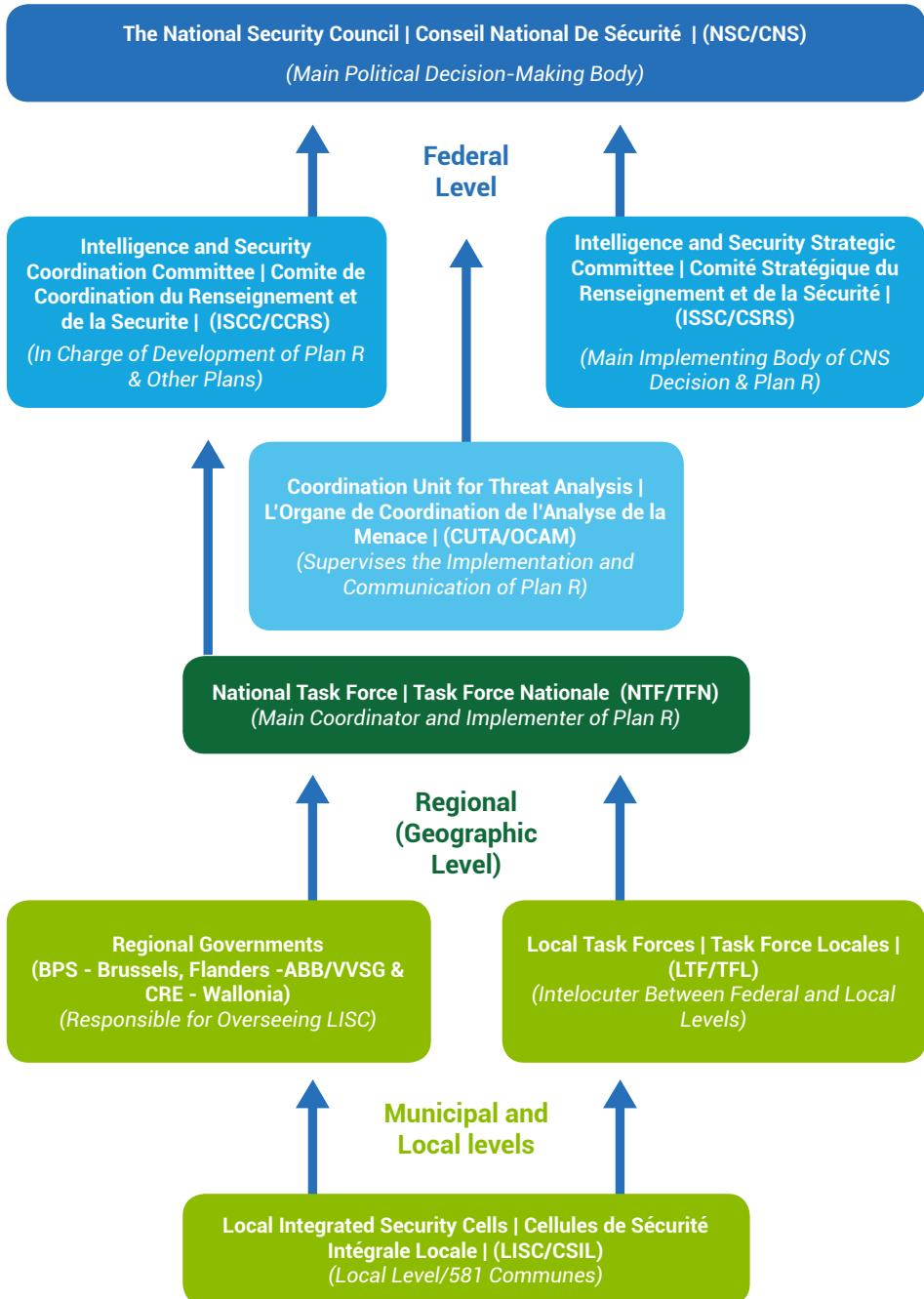


Chart 1. Overview of Actors and Bodies Responsible for Implementing CVE Policies

3. Actors and bodies at the federal level

There are four main actors which can be identified as primarily operating at the federal level that play a vital role in the decision-making and implementation process of prevention and counter-radicalisation policies and strategies.

The highest authority at the federal level responsible for decision-making in regard to all security matters including CVE policies is the National Security Council (CNS), which was established in 2015³³⁸. The CNS is a political decision-making body composed of high-level government officials and is chaired by the Prime Minister and includes the Vice-Prime Minister and Ministers from the Interior, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Justice³³⁹. It may also invite several other key officials from the various security bodies including the administrator of the State Security Service (VSSE), Directors of the OCAM and the National Crisis Centre (NCCN) and the Federal Prosecutor to its deliberations and meetings³⁴⁰.

The Intelligence and Security Coordination Committee (CCRS) is the main policy-making body tasked with submitting multi-agency (coordinated) proposals to the CNS³⁴¹. It also develops plans of actions for each of the CNS security priorities (such as Plan R) and proposes potential new priorities to the CNS. In addition, The Strategic Committee (CSRS) is the main body in charge of implementing and analysing the decisions of the CNS among the various other services and task forces. The CSRS is usually presided over by a representative of the Prime-Minister's Office, representatives of several ministries and the chair of the CCRS³⁴².

Lastly, the Coordination Unit for Threat Analysis (OCAM) is a federal counterterrorism fusion centre focusing on security priorities relating to terrorism and extremism³⁴³. OCAM is under the joint authority of the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of

338 National Crisis Centre. (2015a). "AR 28/01/2015 - Conseil National De Sécurité." Centre De Crise. <https://centredecrise.be/fr/legislation/ar-28012015-conseil-national-de-securite>.

339 State Security Service. (2018a). "Le Conseil National De Sécurité." VSSE. <https://www.vsse.be/fr/notre-fonctionnement/cadre-legal-et-administratif/le-conseil-national-de-securite>.

340 Ibid.

341 National Crisis Centre. (2015b). "AR 2/06/2015 - Comité Stratégique Et Comité De Coordination Du Renseignement Et De La Sécurité." Centre De Crise. <https://centredecrise.be/fr/legislation/ar-2062015-comite-strategique-et-comite-de-coordination-du-renseignement-et-de-la-securite#:~:text=Le%20Comit%C3%A9%20strat%C3%A9gique%20est%20charg%C3%A9,par%20le%20Comit%C3%A9%20de%20coordination>

342 Ibid.

343 Renard, T., and Coolsaet, R. (2018). "Returnees: Who are they, Why are they (not) Coming Back and How Should we Deal With them." Assessing Policies on Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters in Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands. Egmont-The Royal Institute for International Relations.

Interior³⁴⁴. Its legal framework outlines three primary mission objectives: the centralisation and coordination of information flows between different security and law enforcement agencies; the assessment of the threat environment; and supervising the implementation of Plan-Rcr (2005)³⁴⁵. OCAM itself is neither an intelligence agency nor a police service and as such depends on eleven different support services to acquire relevant data and intelligence on terrorism and extremism³⁴⁶.

3.1 Policy recommendations for bodies and actors operating at the federal level coordination

- a. Ensuring continuity at the highest political levels of ongoing strategies and programs, in the case of administrative turnover or political changes. **(CNS)**
- b. Creation of a knowledge management unit focused on radicalisation and violent extremism priorities of the CNS and accessible to all federal and regional actors. **(CCRS)**
- c. Evaluation of the use of new and emerging technology in countering and preventing online extremism, radicalisation and hate speech for the development of future tools to be used by authorities. **(CCRS)**
- d. Creation of a cloud-based software and standardised guideline for the evaluation of prevention and counter extremism programs which derive funding from the Federal Government. This would necessitate the funding of projects and research focused on creating an evaluation of previous and ongoing CVE programs. **(CCRS)**
- e. Creation of a regime of federal laws tailored towards countering and prevention of violent extremism and radicalisation rather than strictly using existing terrorism laws as a panacea to violent extremism and radicalisation. **(CNS)**

344 Standing Intelligence Agencies Review Committee. (2020). "What Is The Coordination Unit For Threat Assessment?." Comiteri.Be. <https://www.comiteri.be/index.php/en/39-pages-gb/306-what-is-the-coordination-unit-for-threat-assessment>

345 Van der Vet, I. and Coolsaet, R. (November 2018). The Belgian approach to tackling violent radicalisation: a practitioner's perspective. IES Policy Brief. Issue 2018/02. http://aei.pitt.edu/97398/1/IES_Policy_Brief_2018-2_van_der_Vet_and_Coolsaet.pdf

346 Van der Veer, R., Bos, W., and Van der Heide, L. (2019). "Fusion Centres in Six European Countries: Emergence, Roles and Challenges." International Centre for Counter-Terrorism.

- f. Greater emphasis on the radicalisation-crime nexus with the various identified extremist group, throughout Belgium and with special attention given to at-risk individuals currently in the prison system when formulating CVE programs or policies. (CCRS)
- g. Formalisation or incentivisation of the relationships of officials between the differing bodies through formal trainings, workshops and informal gatherings (teambuilding). (OCAM)

3.2 Communication

- a. Creation of a Classified Federal Online Platform (cloud-based) to incentivise and promote communications exchanges between different agencies and officials such as:
 - general questions relating to administrative procedures and policies;
 - soliciting other security bodies for intelligence and profiles of at-risk individuals, eventually following up through formal administrative procedures;
 - creation of informal working groups among various civilian and military officials and security and intelligence agencies;
 - exchange of contacts across all governance level, including stakeholders and practitioners at the municipal and local levels;
 - collection of human rights, fundamental rights and ethical resources, as well as guidelines and case studies for officers to utilise, study and reference;
 - exchange of legal and judicial procedures to ensure avoidance of potential breaches of criminal judicial procedures;
 - possible inclusion of select international partners for the purpose of international cooperation and initial formation of joint investigation teams (JITS)
 - and the sharing of tips, methods and means by officials of different security and intelligence bodies. (CCRS/OCAM)

- b. Physical meetings between the various communications and public outreach officers across all bodies for the strict purpose of building and establishing repertoires and trust amongst each other. **(OCAM)**
- c. Creation of a joint quarterly internal bulletin (classified) among the various Federal agencies and bodies for the purpose of communicating ongoing initiatives and proposals. Responsibility for posting the bulletin would be on a monthly rotating basis with the primary aim of promoting outreach and internal communication among various agency officials. **(CCRS)**

4. Actors and bodies at the regional Level

Whereas the Federal decision and policy-makers have competency over coercive security measures, the regions tend to be almost exclusively in charge of prevention measures³⁴⁷. The National Task Force (TFN) is the principle actor in charge of the general management and coordination of Belgium's, PLAN R³⁴⁸. While the TFN is presided over by the OCAM it is directly accountable to the CCRS via the transmission of an annual reports on the progress of its working groups. Furthermore, the TFN permanent members meet on a monthly basis^{349, 350}. The members originally included the local and federal police authorities, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Justice and Interior, the National Crisis Centre (NCCN), and the Belgian Financial Intelligence Unit. As of 2015, the representatives from the communities and regions (e.g. Brussels, Flanders & Wallonia), the Public Prosecution Service and the Directorate General of Safety and Prevention (SPF Interior) were also included. The inclusion of the communities and regions further reflects and signifies their increasing competencies in the area of counter-radicalisation and CVE.

Moreover, the TFN structure is based on several permanent, thematic and ad-hoc working groups. The permanent working groups deal with radicalisation on the Internet, in prisons, on the radio and on television as well as with prevention. The theme based working groups deal with the various type of extremism such as right- and left-wing extremism, "salafism" and other trending or emerging

347 Van der Veer, R., Bos, W., and Van der Heide, L. (2019). "Fusion Centres in Six European Countries: Emergence, Roles and Challenges." International Centre for Counter-Terrorism.

348 State Security Service. (2018a). "Le Conseil National De Sécurité." VSSE. <https://www.vsse.be/fr/notre-fonctionnement/cadre-legal-et-administratif/le-conseil-national-de-securite>.

349 Federal Public Service Interior. (2020a). "Plan D'action Radicalisme « Plan R .''' Besafe.Be. <https://www.besafe.be/fr/themes-de-securite/radicalisme/plan-daction-radicalisme-plan-r>

350 Belgium Federal Government. (2015). "Plan R The Action Plan Against Radicalism (English version)." Besafe.Be. https://www.besafe.be/sites/default/files/2019-06/planr_en.pdf

forms of extremism. The ad-hoc working groups seek to deal with “problematic” radicalisation such as hate preachers and Asylum and Migration³⁵¹. Lastly, the most recent working group (2015), is the working group on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) created as a result of a Memorandum between the Ministries of Interior and Justice regarding the information exchange and monitoring of Belgian FTF³⁵².

Furthermore, In Belgium the three regions (Flemish Region, the Brussels-Capital Region and the Walloon Region) have traditionally had autonomy and competency in areas dealing with economic and territorial affairs³⁵³. Following the Sixth State Reform (Sixième Réforme de l'Etat) (Brussels Region 2020b), the regional governments have taken on a greater and more direct role in security and prevention efforts as a result of the transfer of competencies granted to them by this reform.

In the Brussels Capital region, CVE activities now fall under the purview of the Brussels Prevention and Security (BPS) created in 2015 as a Public Interest Organisation (Organisme d'intérêt Public) (OIP)³⁵⁴. The BPS was responsible for drafting the Global Security & Prevention Plan (GSPP) and coordinating its implementation. The GSPP, which was initially drafted in 2017, is structured around 10 topics which include Polarisation and radicalisation (topic 2), as well as five cross-functional objectives which also include an objective on an integrated security approach and one on image, monitoring and evaluation³⁵⁵. In relation to the overall national strategy on radicalisation, the BPS is tasked with coordinating with the Local Integrated Security Cells (CSIL) and reporting back to the NTF³⁵⁶.

In 2015, the Government of Flanders, through the Flemish Minister for Local and Provincial Government, Civic Integration, Housing, Equal Opportunities and Poverty Reduction, drafted an action plan for the prevention of radicalisation processes leading to extremism and terrorism. The Flemish action plan stipulates that the Flemish approach to radicalisation is placed at the hands of the Local and Provincial Government Agency, (Agentschap Binnenlands Bestuur) (ABB) (Flemish

351 Ibid

352 Ibid

353 Brussels Region. (2020a). “The Regional Competences – Région Bruxelloise - Brussels Gewest.” Be.Brussels. <https://be.brussels/about-the-region/the-regional-competences>.

354 Brussels Prevention and Security. (2018). “Vade-mecum à l'attention des communes bruxelloises.” Bps-Bpv.Brussels. https://bps-bpv.brussels/sites/default/files/2020-03/Vade_Mecum_Bruxellois_1.pdf

355 Brussels Prevention and Security. (2017). “Le Plan Global de Sécurité et Prévention 2017.” Bps-Bpv.Brussels. <http://www.veiligheid-securite.brussels/fr/plan/plan-global-securite-prevention/version-integrale>.

356 Van der Vet, I. and Coolsaet, R. (November 2018). The Belgian approach to tackling violent radicalisation: a practitioner's perspective. IES Policy Brief. Issue 2018/02. http://aei.pitt.edu/97398/1/IES_Policy_Brief_2018-2_van_der_Vet_and_Coolsaet.pdf

Government 2015, 4). The ABB acts as a central contact point for local authorities, services or organisations seeking to reach the proper channels. In addition, the Flemish Community Commission (VGC) and the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG) will ensure the follow-up and evaluation of the action plan (Flemish Government 2020). The VVSG in particular, will work in the development of expertise and the sharing of knowledge, as well as creating further collaboration with local stakeholders in support of the CSILs³⁵⁷.

In 2019, the Government of Wallonia also presented a plan of action with 10 concrete measures, including the creation of a Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) analogous to the BPS and the ABB/VVSG (Government of Wallonia 2019). Moreover, in January 2016, the Government of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation established the Network tackling violent extremism and radicalisation. The two main services associated with the network are the Resource and Support Centre (CREA) and the Help and Support Centre for people affected by Violent Extremisms and Radicalism (CAPREV) (Government of Wallonia 2020a). In addition, the Network also includes the Mobile Compulsory Education Service focused on students who have dropped-out of the education system and are considered at-risk of committing acts of violence or delinquency³⁵⁸.

4.1 Policy Recommendations for Authorities Operating at the Regional Level Coordination

- a. Mapping and identification of overlapping responsibilities of the different actors across the seven action plans against radicalisation, and in particular the three regional action plans. **(TFN)**
- b. Creation of working groups at a regional level to determine cross-regional administrative procedures to avoid information gaps and overlaps of resources among the three regions. **(TFN)**
- c. Full utilisation of already available regional resources such as universities and think tanks for the purpose of creating sound policies based on academic and empirical research. **(Regional Actors)**

357 Flemish Government. (2015). "Ministry for Local and Provincial Government, Civic Integration, Housing, Equal Opportunities and Poverty Reduction's Action plan for the prevention of radicalisation processes that can lead to extremism and terrorism." https://www.fdfa.be/sites/default/files/atoms/files/actieplan_radicalisering_eng.pdf

358 Government of Wallonia. (2020b). "Le Service Des Équipes Mobiles De L'enseignement Obligatoire." Réseau De Prise En Charge Des Extrémismes Et Des Radicalismes. <https://extremismes-violents.cfwb.be/a-propos/service-des-equipes-mobiles/>.

- d. Cross-Regional exchange of good practices and case studies gathered from a local context within the differing regions, including those relating to the area of youth, integration, education and interfaith dialogues. **(Regional Actors)**
- e. Agreed upon methodological basis and guidelines for monitoring and evaluating CVE projects and initiatives across the different regions. **(Regional Actors)**
- f. Greater harmonisation, complementarity and synergy of security measures and socio-preventive measures among the regional and municipal and local levels. **(TFN)**
- g. Development of standardised ethical and professional guidelines at the regional level to be implemented by actors at the local and municipal levels. **(Regional Actors)**

4.2 Communication

- a. Creating formal cross-regional channels between the new and emerging regional organisations and bodies in charge of promoting counter-radicalisation and extremism policies either through the TFN or directly with one another. **(Regional Bodies/TFN)**
- b. As the regional governments take on an increasing role in managing and supporting the CSILs, clear communication guidelines between CSIL to their own regional body, CSIL to other CSILs, and CSIL to other regional bodies, CSIL to TFL and finally TFL to TFN, should be developed. **(TFN)**
- c. Creation of a regional online communication platform for the CSILs to exchange information and deal with other administrative procedures relating to radicalisation and extremism. **(Regional Bodies)**

5. Actors and bodies at the municipal and local levels

Lastly, the Local Task Force (TFL) and the Local Integrated Security Cells (CSIL) are responsible for bridging the gaps between the federal level actors and those at the municipal and local levels. They serve as information exchange platforms among the different security actors (TFL) and the social and preventive actors (CSIL). For

the TFL these actors are usually limited to security and intelligence actors within a geographical area, including the State Security Service (VSSE), whereas with the CSIL a number of diverse local actors are included³⁵⁹. The TFL's responsibilities include adding further entries to the Joint Information Box (JIB), an electronic working document containing information on at-risk youth as well as to the Foreign Terrorist Fighters Database³⁶⁰. Additionally, the TFL offers support to non-specialised police units who encounter or are dealing with radicalisation or extremism in their work. In terms of approaches, the TFL focuses on more traditional approaches such as monitoring potential security risks, while the CSIL takes a more hands on approach and focuses on supporting at risk individual through socio-preventive actions. The CSIL were not originally included in in PLAN R and were subsequently established as result of a mayoral initiative³⁶¹. As of July 2018, all (581) communes throughout Belgium are required to establish a CSIL

5.1 Policy recommendations for bodies and actors operating at the municipal and local levels coordination

- a. The vast number of communes and subsequent CSIL can potentially create serious issues both in terms of data overload and information handling. As such, there needs to be a structured system in place that is able to efficiently parse useful information gathered through the CSIL. Moreover, this system must be able to cross-reference and access existing information across all CSILs throughout Belgium in order to prevent the fragmentation of information and gaps as previously seen. (TFL/TFN/OCAM)
- b. Information gathered from CSILs will most likely be highly contextual and require in-depth analysis and if necessary, followed up on a case by case basis. As such, this places a greater strain on already overtasked and overburden system in terms of human resources and funding. The addition of trained personal managing a TFN/Regional hotline dedicated to CSILs, could help reduce the pressure on those responsible for managing or in charge of CSILs. (TFL)

359 State Security Service. (2018c). "L'approche De La VSSE." VSSE. <https://www.vsse.be/fr/que-faisons-nous/menaces/terrorisme/lapproche-de-la-vsse>.

360 Belgium Federal Government. (2015). "Plan R The Action Plan Against Radicalism (English version)." Besafe.Be. https://www.besafe.be/sites/default/files/2019-06/planr_en.pdf

361 Renard, T., and Coolsaet, R. (2018). "Returnees: Who are they, Why are they (not) Coming Back and How Should we Deal With them." Assessing Policies on Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters in Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands. Egmont-The Royal Institute for International Relations.

- c. Basic training on radicalisation and violent extremism must be provided to the different mayors or fonctionnaires in charge of managing the CSIL throughout each commune or police zone. This further requires hiring qualified trainers or consultants and creating training curriculums and possibly the creation of a certification course. (TFL/CSIL)
- d. Potential issues regarding ethics consideration, professional secrets, state secrets, human rights and fundamental rights must be mapped out and fully address. Failure to do so jeopardises the use of information gained through CSILs in judicial proceedings and may result in lengthy judicial reviews to determine legality of the use of this information. (TFN/TFL/CSIL)
- e. Guidelines to prevent CSIL from overlapping with commune structures dealing with members of the local community which are already in place and work just as effectively or better than the proposed CSIL structures. (TFL)
- f. Creation of informal working groups between officers in charge of CSILs and radicalisation units of the different nearby communes for the purpose of feedback and support. (CSIL)

5.2 Communication

- a. Establish a narrative regarding CSILs which makes it clear that socio-preventive measures are the main focus of CSILs rather than CSILs being another securitisation instrument. (TFL/CSIL)
- b. Ensure that each commune website has easy to access CSILs section, with information tailored towards the general public on the nature of CSILs. Commune functions, such as communal meetings and gatherings should also address CSILs as a useful resource at the community's disposal. (CSIL)

6. Conclusion

The aim of this paper has been to provide policy recommendations tailored towards the various bodies and actors responsible for implementing counter-radicalisation and violent extremism policies across all governance levels throughout Belgium.

By framing the policy recommendations towards two key areas (coordination and communication), which have traditionally been seen as weak points in Belgian implementation of CVE strategies, this paper strives to provide impactful and practical solutions which can be implemented in the short, medium and long term by the various Belgian bodies highlighted. Indeed, if future CVE policies are to succeed, improvements must be made in coordination and communication among the different actors. The Brussels Prevention and Security serves as an excellent and promising example of how the regions can better tackle radicalisation and extremism by improving upon the communication and coordination of various regional prevention and security entities.

Paper 3.

Denmark

By Manni Crone - Senior Researcher, Danish Institute for International Studies

1. The Danish P/CVE approach: an overview

The Danish approach to P/CVE gained worldwide attention in 2014 when the Danish municipality of Aarhus had success in preventing people from travelling to Syria and Iraq as well as their less aggressive stance on receiving returnees from these countries³⁶² (Hemmingsen 2015: 7). From 2013-2014, the number of people who left the city of Aarhus to go to Syria and Iraq dropped significantly. The model focuses on the collaboration between several actors in the police, the educational system, the health care system and social service providers, and thus it is building upon already existing structures and initiatives originally developed for other purposes. The local police, in close collaboration with the municipality, not only stopped people from going, they also developed a program with the municipality of Aarhus to tackle returnees from conflict zones. This model was known as the Aarhus model after the major, Jacob Bundsgaard, presented this approach at a White House summit to help counter extremism in Washington. In the context of foreign fighters on the international agenda, political leaders looked towards Aarhus for preventive measures.

Danish P/CVE efforts go back to 2007, when Denmark - in the aftermath of the London and Madrid bombings (2004 and 2005) - started developing a preventive approach as a supplement to the new terrorist legislation. The Danish P/CVE-approach, which took inspiration from pioneering efforts in Holland and the UK, was developed over the years in three national action plans adopted in 2009, 2014 and 2016 respectively. Each action plan appeared as a response to specific events: 1) London bombings

362 Hemmingsen, A. (2015), "The Danish approach to countering and preventing extremism and radicalisation", DIIS Report, 2015:15. https://pure.diis.dk/ws/files/470275/DIIS_Report_2015_15_2_ed_.pdf.

and the related appearance of “homegrown terrorism”; 2) to deal with people traveling to Syria and Iraq; and 3) after the first actual terrorist attack in Denmark in February 2015. Over the years, the vocabulary to describe the forerunner of the terrorist threat itself has evolved to be increasingly preoccupied with “extremism” instead of “radicalisation” – as appears from the current denominations of P/CVE, preventing and countering violent *extremism*³⁶³.

In 2008, the Danish intelligence Service³⁶⁴ (for the first time ever) established a preventive department, Danish Centre for Prevention of Extremism³⁶⁵, which, in collaboration with a new “Democracy Office” in the Ministry of Integration, was one of the drivers behind the establishment of a now extensive Danish P/CVE-network. Today, the web of efforts spans a variety of actors, including the intelligence service, the ministry of justice, the ministry for foreigners and integration, 12 police districts, almost 100 municipalities, the Prison and Probation service, teachers, social service providers, psychiatrists, asylum centres as well as civil society organisations. A main feature of the Danish model is this ramified web of prevention networks and the high level of cooperation and information sharing between public authorities³⁶⁶. Though the Danish approach involves many actors, this paper takes particular interest in the role of local actors such as municipalities and police in current P/CVE efforts because they are the main implementers of the antiracialisation initiatives and closest to the citizens involved.

1.1 The role of municipalities and the local level

Despite the adoption of three *national* action plans, local actors such as municipalities and local police are at centre stage of the Danish P/CVE-approach when implementing these plans. The intelligence service and the ministry of integration, which are national entities, are of course pivotal in defining and implementing *national* policies. Yet in Denmark, municipalities benefit from a large degree of local self-government, and the denomination “the Danish model” in reality glosses over a host of different approaches and practices that have grown out of local contexts. Irrespective of differences, municipalities and local police are considered to be close to the citizens and should therefore, ideally, be in a privileged situation to detect problems at an early stage.

363 The Danish Government (2016) “Preventing and countering extremism and radicalisation.” <https://uim.dk/publikationer/preventing-and-countering-extremism-and-radicalisation>.

364 Politiets Efterretningstjeneste (PET)

365 Nationalt Centre for Forebyggelse af Ekstremisme.

366 Danish Centre for Prevention of Extremism (last modified 15.03.2017) “Who does what in Denmark?.” <https://stopekstremisme.dk/en/prevention/who-does-what-in-denmark>.

Although the intelligence service created a preventive department in 2008, and the first national action plan was adopted the year after, the bulk of the Danish P/CVE efforts builds to a large extent on pre-existing local “prevention networks” that were established back in the 1970’s to prevent regular forms of crime. It is indeed a specificity of the Danish P/CVE-approach that it grows out of regular crime prevention. Pushing the argument to extremes, radicalisation and extremism are considered to be forms of crime on a par with other types of crime³⁶⁷. They are not essentially different; nor are their causes. This perception of terrorism and extremism implies that in comparison to P/CVE-models in many other countries, the religious dimension of the phenomenon has been somewhat downplayed. As public authorities do not consider religion as a root cause, the Danish approach has abstained from producing religious counter-narratives or from systematically involving religious actors, although local authorities have at some occasions engaged with religious personalities. The municipality of Copenhagen’s antiradicalisation unit, VINK, works together with the local mosques to provide courses on countering radicalisation (Municipality of Copenhagen n.d.).

1.2 The prevention triangle³⁶⁸

While the specific role and responsibilities of municipalities will vary, the activities of local actors can be broken down according to the prevention triangle (see figure 1). The prevention triangle is a tool to assess the severity of a case and subsequently refer the case to the relevant authorities. As the Danish P/CVE-approach consists of a widely ramified network of actors, a clear division of labour is required. The intelligence service and law enforcement agencies are preoccupied with cases at the very top of the triangle; municipalities and local police districts intervene at the middle level; while both municipalities, civil society organisations, and the preventive department of the intelligence service can intervene at the general level at the very bottom of the triangle. Below, the triangle’s different approaches are broken down in terms of different types of intervention.

“Direct Intervention” (red): Direct interventions are concerned with individuals who are already active in extremist groups, or who are assumed to be able to perform violence or other criminal acts. The intervention level is as mentioned the responsibility of the intelligence service in collaboration with law enforcement agencies. At this level, the responsible agencies work at the individual level. Hence, their intervention will target

367 Hemmingsen, A. (2015), “The Danish approach to countering and preventing extremism and radicalisation”, DIIS Report, 2015:15. https://pure.diis.dk/ws/files/470275/DIIS_Report_2015_15_2_ed_.pdf.

368 The prevention triangle is a part of the Danish Centre for Prevention of Extremism’s prevention approach.

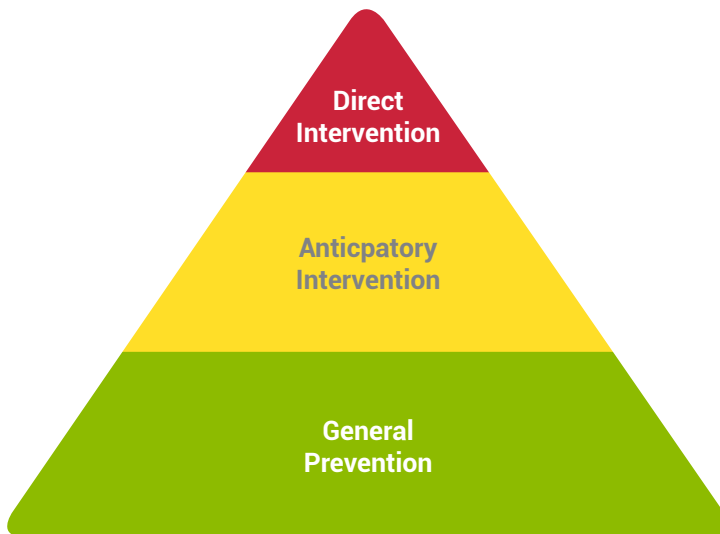


Figure 1: The Prevention Triangle, source: Nationalt Centre for Forebyggelse af Ekstremisme (<https://stopekstremisme.dk/forebyggelsesindsats>)

a specific, identified individual who is active in extremist milieus, and who is at risk of acting violently or of traveling to a conflict zone abroad. At this level, the police or the intelligence service can confiscate passports or engage in “preventive talks” with the individual in order to disrupt a course of action that could lead to a criminal act. Alternatively, they can start monitoring a person or initiate an investigation in view of indicting the suspect. The intelligence service can call upon the social service providers of the municipalities to support their preventive intervention.

“Anticipatory Intervention” or “youth at risk” (yellow): The anticipatory level is the responsibility of municipalities and local police, and it is precisely this level, which most significantly distinguishes the Danish approach from other approaches. In contrast to the direct intervention at the top of the triangle, which is common to many countries, anticipatory interventions can target one or several individuals who are assessed to be at risk of radicalisation but who are not yet part of a criminal/extremist milieu. While interventions at the top obey a security logic, the anticipatory level is underpinned by the so-called “service law”³⁶⁹ that is not about security but about “well-being.” It is not the aim of anticipation to disrupt a criminal act but merely to ensure that individuals at the fringes of society are reintegrated back into society in order to thrive. Anticipatory interventions are permeated by a welfare state logic.

369 The Service Law (Serviceloven), see <https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lt/2019/798>.

In order to prevent citizens from further engaging with extremist milieus, a municipality can provide a person at risk with social services such as education, mentor-service, housing and job in view of ensuring their social well-being. All interventions at this level are voluntary. Apart from the mentor-system, most of these welfare state provisions were not initially conceived to tackle the problem of radicalisation; the parameter of radicalisation was merely added to a pre-existing list of risk behaviours that were to be handled by social service providers in the municipality. The logic underlying these initiatives is that by improving the well-being of an individual and allowing the person to get in contact with new environments, extremist milieus can lose their attraction.

It is at this anticipatory level of risk assessment that the establishment of municipality networks is particularly useful. They can be effective in providing training to "frontline workers" on early warning signs; receive referrals of early concerns and design and provide appropriate programmes of support. Obviously, there is no guarantee that this 'soft' approach will work. If a person pursues an evolution towards extremism (the red intervention level of the triangle) and refuses to cooperate with the local authorities, the intelligence service can decide to step in and take over the case.

"General Prevention" (green): The general preventive level at the bottom of the triangle has a constructive and wide-ranging preventive aim of building or enhancing societal resilience. As such, it does not target specific individuals or groups but broader environments and audiences. The main purpose is to develop young people's social skills, their capacity of critical thinking and some sense of responsibility. In practice, the preventive department of the intelligence service can for instance participate in public outreach-meetings or in closed seminars with civil society organisations or opinion makers.

1.3 Local multi-agency cross-sector networks: organisational features of danish P/CVE

A cornerstone of the Danish P/CVE-approach is the "Info-houses" in each of the 12 police districts in Denmark. An info-house is a cooperation-structure between various authorities; i.e. a network of information sharing. As mentioned, this multi-agency approach builds on already established networks of crime-prevention and, in particular, the **SSP-network**, which is a collaboration between Schools, Social Service providers and Police to prevent minors from getting involved in crime or drug abuse. Within the last decade, radicalisation has been added as yet another risk-parameter on a par with other forms of potential crimes. As the SSP-networks include both teachers, police and social service providers, a holistic approach enables them on

the one hand to assess specific concerns, while, on the other hand, being capable of coordinating possible forms of intervention (i.e. mentoring, exit-programmes, social welfare). The Danish Ministry for Integration and Social Affairs has published an overview of 14 specific cases of prevention³⁷⁰.

Apart from the SSP-cooperation, other collaboration-forums can be involved, depending on the specific case. The **KSP-network** is a cooperation-structure involving social services, police as well as the Prison and Probation Service, while the **PSP-network** includes psychiatric institutions on top of social services and police. If a young person of school age is considered "at risk" of becoming involved in extremist milieus, SSP would likely be the most relevant cooperation-network to activate. If the person "at risk" is to be released from prison, the KSP-structure will look into the case (Prison and Probation Service); and finally, if the case has a psychiatric dimension, the PSP-network will be called upon. An info-house is in other words the entry point of each reported case. This organisational structure allows local authorities to get a centralised overview of all the cases in a specific police district and to include different forms of professional knowledge (police, social workers, psychiatrists) before referring the case to the most relevant authorities.

Cases can come to the knowledge of authorities in two ways: either through the "open" system or through the "classified" one. A wide range of actors can report cases of radicalisation through the open system: front-line staff, teachers, relatives, employees in prisons or asylum centres (who now have an obligation to report eventual cases of radicalisation). These actors can communicate their concerns through incident reports, via a national hotline or directly to the info-house. Apart from this open information system, the intelligence service can also get classified information about people at risk through surveillance, informers etc. If the intelligence services receive information about a person at risk of getting involved in extremism - and thus situated at the yellow anticipatory level - they can decide to hand over the case to the info-house thus referring it to social services, psychiatry or the police.

1.4 Dilemmas of information-sharing

The many stakeholders involved in the Danish P/CVE-approach imply a vast amount of information-sharing between authorities. The right of public authorities to exchange information is of course highly regulated. In 2009,³⁷¹ the law regarding

370 Social- og Integrationsministeriet (2011), Forebyggelse af ekstremisme. En håndbogsserie. 14 eksempler fra arbejdet med radikaliserings file:///Users/mannicrone/Downloads/14-eksempler-fra-arbejdet-med-radikaliserings.pdf

371 The law was changed in 2016 to include not only persons released from prison but also other custodial institutions. Source: <https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/ft/201512L00078>.

the public administration of justice was amended, and two important clauses were introduced. On the one hand, the amendment stipulates that in cases of extremism, the authorities involved in the SSP/KSP/PSP-cooperation can exchange sensitive information about a citizen without the knowledge or accept of the person in question. The Danish way of working with regular crime prevention has grown out of a context characterised by a high degree of trust between the Danish population and law enforcement agencies. This wide-ranging sharing of personal information is indeed one of the features that poses a particular challenge, when attempting to transfer parts of the Danish approach to other countries.

2. Focus area: overlapping extremism and psychiatry

From focused meetings and interviews with P/CVE policy planners and national and international subject matter experts, it became apparent that the inclusion of mental health as a P/CVE theme was an area deserving of attention as well as the development of practices to include the mental health sector into extremism prevention activities. On the one hand experts identified practical and conceptual challenges and sensitivities, such as concern around potential stigmatisation, on the other, they pointed to potential benefits of outlining examples of best-practice and drawing lessons from the challenges encountered by Danish municipalities in the ongoing development.

During the background study, international experts consulted - for instance Marc Sageman³⁷² - highlighted how mental health had been absent from P/CVE conceptualisations and activities. Recently, however, it was returning, due to a perceived uptick in terrorist offenders with mental health issues and in some cases diagnoses such as autism spectrum disorder, bipolar disorder or paranoid schizophrenia. Such overlap has been registered both in the case of "home-grown" terrorist offenders such as Omar Marteen, perpetrator of the Orlando nightclub attack and Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel, the Nice Bastille Day celebrations assailant, as well as foreign fighters joining the Islamic State terror organisation³⁷³. National P/CVE stakeholders and policy planners noted that on the national level the theme had particularly gained traction since the 2015 terror incident in Copenhagen perpetrated by Omar el-Hussein, who reportedly was struggling with mental health issues.

372 Marc Sageman is psychiatrist and has a long-standing experience with terrorism and extremism. He happened to be in Copenhagen when we were in the initial phases of the pilot

373 Paulussen, C. et al. (2017). "Mental Health and the Foreign Fighter Phenomenon: A Case Study from the Netherlands", International Centre for Counter-Terrorism - The Hague, Report March 2017.

Since mental health was included into the National Action Plan (the Danish Government 2016) as an attention point, key policy planners had identified that stakeholders had reacted with varying degrees of concern. As an example, The Danish Competence Centre for Forensic Psychiatry notes in a 2018 Working Paper how lack of data, conceptual confusion, diagnostical vagueness etc. made theorising the relationship between mental health issues and radicalisation complicated³⁷⁴. Another example was the challenges experienced by local P/CVE practitioners to do with structural and practical questions of collaboration and information sharing barriers between the municipality and regional level.³⁷⁵

With a point of departure in these initial meetings with P/CVE policy planners, it was agreed that the pilot project would conduct a case study of a Danish municipality's experience of developing practices to include the mental health sector into extremism prevention activities. The municipality was selected as a case study because it has devoted significant resources to develop its P/CVE policies. Moreover, the municipality has a well-established collaborative network of first line practitioners with relevant experiences for this study. It was assumed that conducting a case study in this municipality could be taken to reflect current state-of-the-art on this area in Danish P/CVE.

Insights from representatives have been amalgamated into a set of recommendations that reflect how challenges have been experienced, which lessons they have given rise to, and what best-practice recommendations may be derived on their basis. These lessons and insights are presented jointly to secure anonymity, and because of how they arise from engagement in collaborative network activities across sectors. These insights and recommendations may serve as the basis for further studies, or for municipalities with similar challenges to further develop practice and collaborative networks.

3. Recommendations

This lessons-learned study, including practical guidelines, follows up on the Danish government's 2016 National Action Plan for Prevention of Extremism recommendation that the mental health sector is increasingly included in extremism prevention activities (P/CVE). It is based on a case study of experiences of including the mental health sector into a Danish municipality's P/CVE collaborations and results

374 Møllerhøj, J. (2018). Radikalisering, terrorisme og psykisk sygdom, KRF Arbejdspapir, 1/2018

375 Interviews with key stakeholders and practitioners.

in a set of recommendations that reflect how challenges have been experienced, which lessons they have given rise to, and what best-practice recommendations may be derived on their basis. Given the outcome of the study, the recommendations are as followed:

To support the practice of the main P/CVE actors and mental health centres referring individuals to each other, institutional leadership may appoint contact persons to supervise referral assessing potential referral cases and communicating this appointment to staff. This way, the staff is not burdened by making these assessments themselves, intra-institutional trust is utilised, and courses and training can be targeted to relevant contact persons.

If mental health continues to be a focus area in the national action plans, resources may be introduced, such as a designated and funded coordination role could be designated.

Communication-gaps may occur in cases when clients involved in the municipality's P/CVE activities are being admitted to psychiatric hospitals, in the care of the police or the prison and probation services. In cases when cross-sectional communication lines are inactive, the possibilities, challenges and desirability of extending communication lines to follow citizens/patients across sectors could be explored further.

The challenges placed on the collaboration and coordination between CVE-initiatives and mental health centres by structural, legal and ethical limitations on mental health centres' sharing of information about patients, could be clarified by mental health institution leadership as well as the National Centre for Prevention of Extremism.

A lack of representatives from mental health centres and psychiatric competence in the P/CVE- coordination unit can be a challenge in cases where the assessment of extremism includes mental issues. It could therefore be considered whether to include psychiatric competencies into the P/CVE coordination unit.

Institutional leadership from each collaboration partner in the P/CVE-coordination unit may consider whether to elaborate formal guidelines for the role and task of the staff in the coordination unit. The aim of the guidelines is to ensure institutional backing to the staff. The guidelines should be agreed upon and communicated to staff or to a potential intra-institutional contact person.

Paper 4.

France

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1. Introduction

France has several characteristics that make its P/CVE policy unique compared to other European countries. France adopted prevention programs later than many other member-States. Currently, due to a significant effort - mostly state-centric, top-down and secularist, France no longer seems to be a "late" adopter compared to its partners.

There were reasons for such tardiness. France had and still has a very active foreign and defense policy throughout the world - which is often challenged by religious forms of violent extremism, especially jihadism. This is certainly what may be called a "polarising" activism which fosters a certain extremism "of resentment." The violent jihadist radicalisation in France cannot, however, be explained by this fact alone. Indeed, it is known that this is a non-linear and multivariable process that can affect everyone, especially among Sunni diaspora populations.

Long-term French counterterrorism successes against domestic and Maghrebian Salafis/jihadism was diluted domestically when the jihad became individualised (Merah case). A second tension arose with the growth of ISIS, leading to hundreds of French nationals to join the Caliphate and many bloody attacks on French national territory (for instance Charlie Hebdo, Bataclan). Added to this, France has the largest Muslim community in Europe. By simple effect of proportion, such a characteristic creates a breeding ground for radical Islamism that is, in demographic proportion, larger than in other Western countries. France needed complementary measures:

successive CT laws were adapted the changing security context that France was facing, leading to the gradual emergence of a P/CVE policy.

Numerous terrorist attacks and plots led to various adaptative reactions. For historical and societal reasons, P/CVE responses have largely been state-led, most often from a centralised and top-down perspective. Despite having started after other European countries, France has to a large extent caught up and can bring specificities and certain experiences to other EU Member States (and MENA countries), noticeably on jihadism, in a unique continuum “security-to-prevention.”

2. Emergence and characteristics

Historically, between 2002 and 2004, France was reluctant to develop domestic prevention tools, in particular for political and diplomatic reasons:

2.1 Early reluctance and mistakes

Then, French executive was keen to avoid association with US efforts towards re-engineering Middle Eastern political regimes. Preventing religious extremism was then perceived as a “neo-con” attitude towards Arab countries, an unacceptable interference. It should be remembered, however, that some European countries allied with the United States in the war against Iraq and accompanied their external military interventionism with a preventive policy of accompaniment at home (Denmark, Netherlands).

It was also domestically considered as contradicting free speech, as guaranteed by the 5th Republic Constitution and domestic human rights protocols derived from the 1789 Revolution. This rhetoric was gradually abandoned because of the presidential political changeovers and in view of the domestic problem’s scale.

One single low-level action must be noted, however - a trilateral first-generation, and still classified, tool to detect Islamic radicalisation in jail, based on visible - and rather basic - indicators, in partnership with Austria and Germany (2006).

Later on, while research and operational initiatives emerged in Northern Europe, or through the decisive EU FP7 funding process, France was again rather inactive, although domestic expertise existed.

Some CVE programs appeared at the end of the 2000s or early 2010s, in UK, Germany - often stemming from violent rightwing extremism P/CVE -, in Netherlands, Denmark (as previously said) and Scandinavian States. The French authorities only started to fund a broader, ambitious prevention plan when the number of French citizens involved in the Syrian jihad was worrying enough to become a general domestic and political concern.

This first national plan was thus twofold:

- It adapted legal means that became a new anti-terrorist law against jihadism and its networks (Nov. 13th, 2014).
- On an administrative level, it organized what it may be called a first-generation State capacity to ease the detection, early as possible, of radicalising or radicalised individuals.

On April 20th, 2014, the Interior ministry created a dedicated red line (*Centre national d'assistance et de prévention de la radicalisation* - CNAPR)³⁷⁶, under the umbrella of the national antiterrorism coordination Unit (*Unité de coordination de la lutte anti-terroriste* -UCLAT).³⁷⁷

In a typical French way, this centralised structure managed and still manages individual notices on people showing signs of radicalisation. It also offered, although not 24/7, a counselling capacity to concerned families and eventually, some psychological support.

Here again, through a typical top-down approach, the Government displayed, on every *Préfecture* level - the most local central state representative entity - a local dedicated structure, often composed of already known or selected NGOs and first line practitioners, to take over monitoring of radicalising or radicalised individuals.

By an administrative order from the Interior ministry (April 29th, 2014), *Préfectures* were incited to create locally "security headquarters" (*Etats-majors de sécurité*), and "family counseling and support units." Made of security services members, *Etats-majors de sécurité* must evaluate signaled³⁷⁸ individuals' dangerousness and monitored them.

376 Préfecture du Cher. Stop Djihadisme. <http://www.cher.gouv.fr/Politiques-publiques/Securite/Prevention-radicalisation/Stop-djihadisme-N-vert-du-CNAPR>

377 Ministère de l'Intérieur. <https://www.police-nationale.interieur.gouv.fr/Organisation/Entites-rattachees-directement-au-DGPN/UCLAT>

378 By the national red line.

On their side, the family support units stemmed from - but often rebranded - older public social policies, to manage radicalised or radicalising individuals', through existing means. On top of this, as an umbrella organisation, a National Office (*Secrétariat général du Comité interministériel de prévention de la délinquance*, recently renamed into *Comité interministériel de prévention de la délinquance et de la radicalisation* (SG-CIPDR)³⁷⁹ -, provided and still provides, strategic and intergovernmental coordination.

The 2015 terrorist acts further polarised the public debate and required policy makers to adapt and improve, with a certain degree of improvisation, as underlined by a senatorial report³⁸⁰, e.g. reactively, a new national plan against terrorism (*Plan de lutte contre le terrorisme* - PLAT):

- It provided new means and financial supports to operational services, for instance to support judiciary services, or to develop penitentiary intelligence and prevention, which led to develop penitentiary dedicated units in jail and some CVE/PVE programs, such as the AMAL Program, that we (Foundation for Strategic relations) created and managed. 60 Million Euros, over three years, were officially given for radicalisation prevention.

After the November 13th 2015 terrorist attack, extra means were given again to create a "Security Pact" (*Pacte de sécurité* - PDS)³⁸¹. This Pact appeared to be more holistic than the previous ones - the society as a whole was now officially concerned by radicalisation phenomenon. In other words, it covered new area, such as private sectors as *lieu* of radicalisation, between religious prescriptions and entrepreneurial requirements. Some mobile units were also created to support local practitioners.

However, beyond all of these signs of State voluntarism, radicalisation prevention in reality faced, at first, some very paradoxical aspects:

- The French choice to base its first generation tools on "exit cult" only, promoted by the MIVILUDES (Mission interministérielle de vigilance et de lutte contre les dérives sectaires, i.e. "Interministerial Mission for Monitoring and Combatting Cult Deviances") was highly and in many ways

379 Comité Interministériel de prévention de la délinquance et de la radicalisation. <https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/SG-CIPDR/Accueil>

380 Sénat. (2016-2017). « Désendoctrinement, désenbriguement et réinsertion des djihadistes en France et en Europe », https://www.senat.fr/rapports-senateur/benbassa_esther11033f.html

381 Sénat. (2018). *Projet de loi de finances pour 2018 : Sécurités* (gendarmerie nationale ; police nationale). <http://www.senat.fr/rap/117-108-328-1/117-108-328-11.html>

debatable. It was also criticized by various actors, in particular, before long, by high-level civil servants, community researchers, and intelligence services.

- This narrow and limited “exit cult” approach, today abandoned, both semantically and operationally, biased trainings provided by State to selected first line practitioners: some potentially actionable variables were ignored or put aside, such as developmental psychology, anthropology or psychiatry.
- To promote some “deradicalisation figures” collapsed into legal prosecution, for instance for embezzlement of public money,³⁸² or even sexual harassment.
- Some well-known failures raised skepticism on radicalisation prevention: the Osny Jail CVE program infuriated penitentiary staffers, when two of them were stabbed by an inmate.³⁸³ The centre of “deradicalisation” of Pontourny, an open reception centre that worked with volunteers, but remained empty of beneficiaries, is another costly example.³⁸⁴

2.2 Lessons learned and P/CVE emergence

Recently, however, some positive reorientations have been displayed, based on rare positive success (like AMAL program) - to incorporate Child protection as a new community player for instance.

A foreign audience should also not dismiss or ignore the growing positive role of the domestic private sector. Some concerned citizens networks played an outstanding role in countering online ISIS propaganda, in particular on Twitter. A private initiative like *Katiba des Narvalos* is reputed to have contributed to delete more than 100,000 pro-ISIS Twitter accounts in the French speaking online world³⁸⁵. Some regional or local NGOs have also now a solid operational culture.

382 La Croix. (14th of March 2017). Sonia Imloul, une des figures de la « déradicalisation » condamnée. " <https://www.la-croix.com/France/Justice/Sonia-Imloul-figures-deradicalisation-condamnee-2017-03-14-1200831688>

383 RTL. (the 7th of September 2016). "Agression à la prison d'Osny : les unités de déradicalisation sont "une absurdité" ." <http://www.rtl.fr/actu/justice-faits-divers/agression-a-la-prison-d-osny-les-syndicats-se-levent-contre-les-unites-de-deradicalisation-7784771493>

384 Liberation. (28th of July 2017). http://www.liberation.fr/france/2017/07/28/fermeture-de-l-unique-centre-de-deradicalisation-de-france-a-pontourny_1586763

385 France Inter. (January 2017). https://www.francetvinfo.fr/economie/medias/charlie-hebdo/katiba-des-narvalos-rencontre-avec-une-armee-d-internautes-qui-fait-la-chasse-aux-jihadistes-sur-internet_2004741.html. See : <https://twitter.com/katnarv?lang=en>

Mid-February 2018, a new plan was officially launched following a massive and visible strike of penitentiary staffers:³⁸⁶

- The creation of 1,500 new places in jails - a critical challenge in France, a country which lack of penitentiaries, was announced, including 450, in full-closed corridors for radicalised inmates "before the end of 2018."
- The number of Radicalisation Evaluation jail wing raised from 3 to 7.
- This plan also intended to open some "Aarhus style" centres for Syria returnees. Conspiracy theories become a new priority public target, in the domestic school system, and specifically, in the full-private schools, often with a religious curriculum, that can "flirt" with radical ideology.
- In a decisive step, the French state allowed itself to detect and expel from the civil service, (military included), civil servants that might contradict or fight against laicity or religious neutrality. The French army paid attention to this issue around 2015 and strengthened its capacity to detect violent radicalisation in its ranks. At the same time, because of Syria, the military had to better understand the "foreign fighters" phenomenon (sometimes French) they were facing here or there.

3. The main players

French P/CVE policy is in many ways similar to other older and more "mainstream" domestic public policies.

3.1 Organisational culture

France uses familiar organisational mechanisms and logics. It has thus associated different actors, often already involved in prevention or sectoral actions, for example with regard to youth or social integration:

Prefectures, which play a central role, as mentioned above, and which are equipped with two operational units: one, within the framework of the prefects' security staffs, in charge of evaluating and monitoring radicalisation situations; the other, a

386 Le Point. (February 2018). http://www.lepoint.fr/politique/le-nouveau-plan-du-gouvernement-contre-la-radicalisation-23-02-2018-2197262_20.php

multidisciplinary monitoring unit, which takes care of radicalised persons or persons in the process of radicalisation and their families.

- Local and regional authorities, including municipalities and county councils, which are responsible for crime and child welfare and increasingly for the prevention of radicalisation (reintegration);
- The major players under ordinary law, in particular: the academic directorates of the national education services or the regional directorates of the Judicial Protection of Youth (PJJ); the penitentiary integration and probation services, representatives of penitentiary establishments or job houses.
- In particular, the major associative networks present throughout the country. This aspect has certain advantages, for example to standardise practices. It also has drawbacks (advantages given to large NGOs capable of lobbying or aggressive PR).

3.2 The judge and the “préfecture”

Within the limited scope of this paper, the idea is to emphasise here in detail the role of two actors: the judge and the prefecture. It is indeed around them that the other actors in action revolve -- the police, the cities, the prison administration, probation or social integration or youth support NGOs:

France was and is still severely affected by terrorism. Thus, its law included gradually what some may call a “normalisation of the emergency”³⁸⁷.

In situation of tension between civil liberties vs. security, French domestic law itself is put under tension, since the highest legal standard of the constitutional bloc stipulates that the safety (security) of citizens is a right guaranteed in the same way as free speech or private property.

It appears that the various and numerous antiterrorist laws (since 1986) are determined by two main drivers:

- a. The various terrorist attacks and the resulting societal consequences: greater demand from citizens for more security; greater political stakes

387 Conseil Constitutionnel. <https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/nouveaux-cahiers-du-conseil-constitutionnel/juger-le-terrorisme>

for a more active executive power than simply an executive figure (France has a presidential regime).

- b. The needs expressed by antiterrorist public services to adapt as best as possible to perceived changes in the threat.

Without going as far as extra-ordinary legislation (*extra ordinem*), France over time has developed a rather specific body of legislation.

In France, the investigative judge plays an important role within CT multi-agency cooperation. Here, and in countering violent extremism, the antiterrorist judge acts before the judgement, when presumption of innocence still prevails, before the conviction or release of a person. The principle of double jurisdiction applies to him/her: everything that a democratic judge does can be appealed. In this situation, the question of his actions in compliance with the law is both sensitive and fundamental. Any democratic right requires that the law strikes a balance between security and freedom. The French antiterrorist judge works with an antiterrorist law that derogates from general law, but at equal distance from the interests of the prosecution, the defense and any victims, and with the judicial police to guarantee an adversarial procedure³⁸⁸.

The prefecture, embodied by the person of the Prefect, is an institution set up by the French revolution for the local implementation of the French revolution ideas. It has become, over time, the most local State body, not in a decentralisation movement, but of State's "de-concentration."

At that local level, an evaluation group operates under the authority of the Prefect, made up of all the security services (territorial intelligence, General Directorate for Internal Security (DGSI), judicial police, national gendarmerie, prison administration, Ministry of Defense intelligence services). Information can be shared easily and effectively. At national level, a prefectural monitoring unit for the prevention of radicalisation and support for families consists of members from the state services (police, education, judicial protection of young people, unemployment office), local authorities and civil society. Under the authority of the prosecutor, it puts in place specific measures based on the profiles of people undergoing radicalisation, including their families, in order to prevent violent acts³⁸⁹. All other things being

388 This descriptive analysis is taken from our RAN paper: Marret (et alii), "Dealing with violent extremist and terrorist offenders: Formalising cooperation among police, prison, probation and prosecution", EX POST PAPER RAN POL - P&P December 2018.

389 Marret et alii. (December 2018). RAN POL

equal, this is the French version of fusion centres, local multi-actor bodies which in many Member States have a fundamental operational role.

3. Conclusion

Although France, in its own way, has developed a public policy on P/CVE, after initial reservations and errors, which now corresponds more or less to what is being done in other European countries, the fact remains that it faces greater problems than elsewhere. As the country with the most Muslims in Western Europe, it is also the country with the most radicalised prisoners and the country with the most attacks on prison staff, meaning that there are many emerging issues that require attention. Although violent right-wing extremists are rarer than in other countries, particularly in northern Europe, it is still very much a possibility as well as the rise of extreme left-wing fringe violence. Finally, like all countries, France also has a great challenge in terms of evaluation: evaluating the performance of P/CVE programmes and public policy, assessing the dangerousness and reintegration potential of their beneficiaries.

As a recommendation, the following perspectives should be highlighted:

Like most other countries, France does not have the assessment tools that would enable it to have at least minimal certainties, concerning the danger and risks of recidivism of certain individuals. Actuarial tools such as Vera2-R have certain interests, which this article cannot present, but they arouse scepticism, even opposition, from many practitioners. A national effort should therefore be made to develop a French assessment tool, as exists in Great Britain or Germany.

An analytical effort, including in prisons, should be made to gain a better understanding of the radicalisation process leading to the violent far left.

Paper 5.

Germany

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1. A general overview

P-CVE can be described as “measures to prevent and combat a rejection of the system of values of the Basic Law and the democratic constitutional state and also, in this context, to safeguard the security of citizens.”³⁹⁰ An important aspect of the German context is not to narrow the understanding of extremism (and the prevention efforts associated with it) to extremism expressed in violent behaviour only. In fact, prevention efforts include every form of extremist, anti-democratic thinking, regardless of whether or not violence is involved. According to a comprehensive survey of Gruber and Lützing in 2016, a total of 721 projects aim to prevent extremism or politically motivated crime, including measures of political education and deradicalisation³⁹¹. From the projects identified, about 47% are carried out by state actors in direct contact with a target group. Approximately one third of the projects are implemented at the state level, while 20% are each carried out on a national, regional and municipal level³⁹².

Since 1992, the Federal Government has been supporting programmes and measures to prevent extremism. On 13 July 2016, Germany adopted a comprehensive *strategy for the prevention of extremism and the promotion of democracy*. It is the first

390 The Federal Government. (2017). *Strategy to Prevent Extremism and Promote Democracy*. Berlin, Germany: Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

391 Gruber, F. Lützing S. and Kemmesies, U.E. (2016). *Extremismusprävention in Deutschland - Erhebung und Darstellung der Präventionslandschaft*. Bundeskriminalamt

392 Hessische Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung. https://www.hsfk.de/fileadmin/HSFK/hsfk_publicationen/prif0918.pdf. P.14

cross-departmental strategy in this area and is based on joint actions by the federal government, the Laender and local authorities, as well as civil society.

According to this strategy, the prevention of extremism encompasses measures to prevent and combat a rejection of the values of the Basic Law and the democratic constitutional state and thus ensures the security of citizens. This also includes measures to prevent any repetition of the phenomena and to impede the recurrence of violent and other criminal activities. The strategy follows a strong cross-sectoral approach. By doing this, it understands prevention work as a cooperation between local government, regional, national and international levels and explicitly relies on non-governmental organisations to develop and implement activities on site. As reflected in the name of the strategy, prevention of extremism and promotion of democracy strongly interact, but are also very complex and require the involvement of the state and the society as a whole. The federal government is therefore strongly collaborating with the Laender, the local authorities and with civil society. The fundamental objectives and target groups are based on the following areas of action:

- Political education, intercultural learning and democracy work
- Participation in civil society
- Counselling, monitoring and intervention
- Media and internet
- Research
- International cooperation³⁹³

One of the key objectives is to contribute to a democratic, secure society through the prevention of radicalisation and violence. Another focus is to strengthen the protection of and the respect for human dignity and social cohesion in a society characterised by diversity. The strategy aspires to use wide-ranging advisory structures to support those who advocate for democracy on a local level, who need help for themselves or their relatives and who wish to escape from extremist structures. Finally, by promoting participation, civil courage, and the ability to face conflict, democracy and its values are strengthened.

The *National Prevention Programme against Islamist Extremism* (NPP), adopted in 2017, ties in with existing prevention measures and builds on the *Strategy for the*

393 The Federal Government. (2017). *Strategy to Prevent Extremism and Promote Democracy*. Berlin, Germany: Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

Prevention of Extremism and Promotion of Democracy. Based on the unanimous assessment that coping with Islamist extremism is a task for society as a whole, requiring both repressive and increasingly preventive approaches or measures, it was agreed to continue the programme. In order to prevent radicalisation in the first place, particular emphasis is put on places that are crucial for the prevention of extremism including municipalities, clubs and associations, schools, mosque communities, as well as many other places frequently visited by young people. At the same time, the federal government aims to increase its online presence, to raise awareness and to effectively counter extremist online propaganda. In addition, prevention and deradicalisation in prisons and probation services is strengthened, social integration and participation as well as the network of counselling and information centres are further boosted and expanded.³⁹⁴

To meet these objectives, a great part of the strategy is the cooperation with external actors and NGOs. One of these NGOs is *Ufuq.de*, that receives financial support from various state, EU and private grants. *Ufuq.de* works at the interface of education, science and public debate, especially with young people from Muslim and/or immigrant backgrounds. Its aim is to promote a sense of belonging and to strengthen them against the phenomenon of Islamism and ethnic-nationalist ideologies.³⁹⁵

Another example of a comprehensive and coherent government support is the *Violence Prevention Network (VPN)*. It is a group of experienced specialists that has been engaged in combating violence and preventing extremism as well as the de-radicalisation of extremist criminals for several years. Since 2001 VPN has been working in the field of reducing ideologically and religiously motivated serious acts of violence committed by young people. It is supported by a number of state institutions, including the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Ministry of Justice, the Bavarian State Ministry of the Interior and the Bavarian Federal Police, as well as a number of other federal ministries.³⁹⁶

At the interface between NGOs and LEAs, the *Competence Centre for Deradicalisation* is of particular importance. The centre is part of the Bavarian Criminal Police and the Bavarian Network for Prevention and Deradicalisation. The team consists of

394 Federal Ministry of Interior, "Nationales Präventionsprogramm gegen islamistischen Extremismus" (https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/downloads/DE/veroeffentlichungen/themen/sicherheit/praeventionsprogramm-islamismus.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2)

395 UFUK. <https://www.ufuq.de/en/homepage/>

396 Violence Prevention Network. <https://violence-prevention-network.de/?lang=en>

police officers as well as experts from various fields including theology, politics, psychology, and sociology. One of the main tasks of the centre is the implementation of risk and threat assessments as part of case management. In this regard, an important part of the work is the organisation of support from third bodies with the respective expertise. For that purpose, the centre carries out a needs assessment and coordinates the service of third bodies/ organisations (e.g. Ufuq.de or VPN).³⁹⁷

Further to this, intensified co-operation between intelligence and police institutions was established following the 9/11 attacks in the United States. Germany improved its counter-terrorism legislation and operational capabilities and established the *Joint Counter-Terrorism Centre* (Gemeinsames Terrorismusabwehrzentrum or GTAZ) in 2004. The Centre functions as a joint co-operation and communication platform consisting of 40 internal security agencies. As the centre is not an autonomous authority, its founding did not require a new legal basis. The centre identifies potential terror threats and initiates deradicalisation efforts and other relevant actions. GTAZ involves the following agencies cooperating on an equal level, each acting on its own authority and according existing regulation:

- Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz
- Bundeskriminalamt (Federal Criminal Police Office)
- Bundesnachrichtendienst (Federal Intelligence Service)
- Generalbundesanwalt (Federal Public Prosecutor General)
- Bundespolizei (Federal Police)
- Zollkriminalamt (Central Office of the German Customs Investigation Service)
- Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees)
- Militärischer Abschirmdienst (Military Counterintelligence Service)
- Landesämter für Verfassungsschutz (intelligence services of the federal states)
- Landeskriminalämter (criminal police offices of the federal states)³⁹⁸

397 Bayerische Polizei. <https://www.polizei.bayern.de/schuetzenvorbeugen/index.html/232038>

398 Verfassungsschutz. <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/de/arbeitsfelder/af-islamismus-und-islamistischer-terrorismus/gemeinsames-terrorismusabwehrzentrum-gtaz>

2. An overview of an area that was identified as a weak part in Germany's model

Despite the comprehensive strategy of the *Prevention of Extremism and the Promotion of Democracy and the National Prevention Programme against Islamist Extremism*, the complex nature of police work across the Laender and the very real obstacles to the exchange of information between authorities is often insufficiently considered and must be overcome. The Federal Republic of Germany is divided into 16 Laender, each with its own state police. Since police competencies fall within the legislation of the Laender as laid down in Germany's Constitution, each state police might be organised differently. The only policing carried out on the national level lies with the Federal Police and the Federal Criminal Police Office. Due to this federal organisation, the exchange of information faces legal and procedural obstacles. Also, the lack of clear guidelines for practice and the long-standing competition between authorities need to be understood and must be overcome in order to achieve optimal police work across the Laender.³⁹⁹ The *Competence Centre for Deradicalisation* is part of the police force and thus can access all police files relating to a case. Provided there is a legal basis, the Centre may share information with other state authorities. For instance, if it serves the protection of children, legal regulations allow the sharing of information. However, there is no regulation which explicitly permits the inter-governmental exchange of information for the purpose of *preventing* violence and radicalisation.

In addition, the division of accountability between civil society, state actors and security authorities reinforces the selective exchange of information. Deradicalisation and the prevention of extremism is largely based on lessons learned from previous cases in other areas of the phenomenon. The aims and objectives of the actors in this field, however, naturally diverge. In fact, practitioners, scientists, politicians and security actors do not agree on the meaning of deradicalisation in practice as a uniform definition or procedure is still missing. To ensure sustainable success, the objectives need to be coordinated as far as possible which, at the very least, requires a common definition accepted by all relevant actors.⁴⁰⁰

The fight against international terrorism and the investigation of related crimes has created enormous pressure for the improvement of coordination at the operational level. It calls for improved awareness-raising in the area of terrorist offences, the standardisation of definitions for extremist incidents and the reduction of

399 RAN. (2019). https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-h-and-sc/docs/ran_hsc_policy_mawr_report_sarma_26032019_de.pdf

400 Hessische Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung. https://www.hsfk.de/fileadmin/HSFK/hsfk_publicationen/prif0918.pdf.

jurisdictional problems, competence struggles and difficulties of coordination between the national and local levels as well as between LEAs, judiciary and secret services. Despite first successes in coordinating the harmonisation of police laws and the service regulations of the *Laender*, there are still differences between the police forces and individual states regularly claim exceptions for themselves. In this context, it is important to underline that information exchange does not necessarily equate to full disclosure of information, but can be limited to the release of the information needed to determine what measures are required and to implement those measures.

Nonetheless, without an understanding of the complexity of radicalisation and extremism as well as without overcoming the problem of competencies between the federal states, responses will inevitably lack the precision needed to effectively combat violent extremism.

3. Recommendations to this specific area

Radicalisation processes are always dependent on individual biographies. Strengthening personal resilience by promoting tolerance and comprehensive prevention measures are the most promising means in the field of deradicalisation.

The federal government significantly strengthened its preventive work countering violent extremism inter alia with its *Strategy for the Prevention of Extremism and Promotion of Democracy*, the *National Prevention Programme against Islamist Extremism* and by strategically linking the fields of action.

In addition, the following recommendations for action can be highlighted:

Investment in regulatory structures

To prevent negative developments at an early stage, it is particularly important to expand and enhance regulatory structures, especially in institutions such as schools, youth welfare, prisons, and probation services. It is the education and training of relevant employees in dealing with radicalisation and people at risk of radicalisation that creates sustainable competence. Staff and other personnel in the education sector must therefore constantly receive further training in line with current requirements.⁴⁰¹

401 Ibid.

Coherence and transparency

In order to strengthen the work of practitioners, Laender and state authorities should ensure a coherent classification of certain political, religious and cultural organisations with regard to their loyalty to the constitution and possible "degree of extremism." Furthermore, it is recommended to disclose the classification criteria in a transparent manner and to develop guidelines based on the Federal Data Protection Act indicating the point at which the transfer of knowledge to security authorities for the purpose of risk prevention is required.⁴⁰²

Linking science and practice

While in recent years, civil society organisations have gained considerable practical expertise in the field of extremism prevention and deradicalisation, research institutions have been mainly engaged in the causes of radicalisation, regardless of the challenges faced by practitioners in dealing with radicalised people. As a result, there is little focused research on radicalisation and the implementation of new approaches to deradicalisation, based on both practical and scientific evidence. In addition, research results are often only available years after the emergence of new practical challenges.

It is therefore necessary to link science and practice in order to develop approaches that are always as up-to-date as possible as well as to question and, if necessary, adapt the corresponding practical actions. The successful prevention of extremism and deradicalisation needs a theoretically and scientifically sound basis on which to build the approaches and practice. However, in order to keep this basis as up-to-date and realistic as possible, the knowledge gained from practical work is also needed. For this reason, the exchange between science and practice must be improved to increase mutual understanding and thus develop successful strategies to counter extremism and to prevent radicalisation.⁴⁰³

Long-term financing

The strategy for the prevention of extremism and the promotion of democracy and the current coalition agreement both underscore the need for state and civil society actors to work on an equal footing in the field of deradicalisation. However, current one-year project funding cannot do justice to the great variety of challenges facing organisations involved in the prevention of extremism and deradicalisation. In fact,

402 Ibid.

403 Ibid.

the current model of project funding, based upon annual re-application, precludes any sustainable, effective and resilient work, not least because the support and supervision of individuals usually lasts longer than one year and also needs to include a long-term follow-up. Existential fears of entire organisations as well as individuals and employees working in this field are not only unreasonable, but in view of the quality required in this area, also highly counterproductive.⁴⁰⁴

Combining security and prevention

To successfully combat anti-Semitism, radicalisation, racist and antidemocratic structures and right-wing extremism, security and prevention must go hand in hand. Especially in the early stages of radicalisation, individuals often accept and trust civil society organisations more than they accept and trust security authorities. Therefore, it is necessary to develop and implement a holistic approach by involving state authorities as well as civil society organisations and fostering the exchange of information as well as the collaboration between NGOs, the education sector, police and judiciary.⁴⁰⁵

Improving the legal basis

In the context of deradicalisation and the prevention of anti-democratic structures, legal aspects that have not yet been clarified must be taken into account. Uncertainties, in particular regarding data protection, hamper the efficient exchange of information between NGOs and LEAs. For this reason, the federal government of Germany has stated in its "Strategy to Prevent Extremism and Promote Democracy" the intention to improve the legal basis for the prevention of extremism and thus to strengthen the certainty in action of the several authorities and civil society organisations. Nevertheless, further consolidation of measures and their transfer to regulatory structures as well as an improvement of the legal basis for the work of civil society organisations is indispensable for successful prevention and deradicalisation work.⁴⁰⁶

Improving networking and expanding collaboration

The exchange of information is generally difficult in any inter-agency cooperation, not only in the area of extremism that leads to violent tendencies. However, it is known that problems, including the inefficient information exchange, can be reduced by an increase in cooperation experience. Jointly organised conferences

404 Ibid.

405 The Federal Government. (2017). Strategy to Prevent Extremism and Promote Democracy. Berlin, Germany: Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

406 Ibid.

and meetings could be used to exchange experience and good practice. In addition, the promotion of democracy and the associated prevention of radicalisation must be seen as a common, central educational task that affects all areas of life, from day-care centres to universities. Furthermore, deradicalisation in prisons must be standardised and intensified, and the work with recently released prisoners must be strengthened. For this reason, the Laender must organise their counter-strategies jointly. In combating and preventing violent extremism and radicalisation, it is important to make cooperation between local and national authorities more efficient and transparent.

The cooperation between the individual authorities and civil society organisations must be intensified by promoting the exchange of expertise and the transfer of knowledge on radicalisation or deradicalisation. For instance, local bodies can provide management, coordination and services, while national bodies can provide local actors with their expertise on good practice. Nevertheless, to strengthen cooperation, stakeholders should be provided with training to raise awareness on obstacles and to build trust. Furthermore, it is important that a standardised system of risk and threat assessment is implemented and used in all Laender. This system must be designed in such a way that it takes the respective interests of the various authorities into account and allows the implementation of different measures. This not only includes service measures as a form of early prevention but also security measures. It is important to create awareness, knowledge and skills in the field of information exchange within and between authorities as well as civil society organisations.⁴⁰⁷

In any case, the work of preventing radicalisation and combating extremism should not contribute to the social polarisation and stigma of certain groups. For this reason, relevant programmes should generally be implemented in the respective local context and implemented with the support of local partners in order to take into account the local political, social and cultural characteristics.

407 Ibid.

Paper 6.

Italy

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1. A general overview of the Italian P/CVE

To combat the terrorism phenomenon, a complex, information-based prevention activity has been put in place, aimed at preventing threats to democratic institutions. Prevention activities were taken more forcefully in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks in the USA. In Italy, the phenomenon approximately began at the end of the sixties, after the “years of lead”, as the media termed the period. Alongside terrorism of a political nature, in the context of the Cold War along with the strategy of tension, it is important to also consider terrorism imputable to organised crime; the mafia-like, of the Camorra matrix and of other matrix, which has bloodied Italy, through the work of organisations such as Cosa Nostra, Camorra, “Ndrangheta and Sacra Corona Unita. The policies on the subject provide, in addition to the internal contrasts, which the Ministry of the Interior and intelligence service oversee in Italy, common strategies at the European Union and international level. With Law 438/2001 urgent measures have been adopted for the prevention and combating of crimes committed for international terrorism purposes and the new criminal case of association for international terrorism has been introduced (article 270 bis of the Penal Code). Contrast policies also aim to hit the so-called financial terrorism. A special Financial Security Committee has, since 2001, worked in the Ministry of Economy and Finance, with the aim, among other aspects, to prevent infiltration of the Italian financial system by terrorist organisations.

The EU-wide prevention strategy includes the Action Plan against terrorism, which contains a wide range of measures to be taken in various crucial areas of the fight

against terrorism (judicial and police cooperation, transport security, border control and document security, fight against financing, political dialogue and external relations, defense against biological-chemical-radiological-nuclear attacks etc.). The European Union has also adopted a Directive for the granting of compensation to victims of criminal acts, which also covers cases of victims of terrorism. In Italy, for the victims of terrorist acts, benefits of an economic nature are also foreseen, pursuant to the law of August 3, 2004, n.206.

Another prevention front is the security of documents: there are numerous States, including Italy, which have decided to introduce biometric data on passports and other travel documents, to prevent possible counterfeiting. Also, in the EU area new technologies are applied to travel documents, in order to establish common lines and standards.

Lastly, on May 6, 2004, the procedures and organisational and operational guidelines of the National Plan for the management of terrorism events and the methods of operation of the Crisis Unit were issued. For the implementation of this plan, in order to ensure the completeness of the information circuit and the assessment of the terrorist threat, as well as to manage the emergency to ensure the protection of public order and security, the Ministry of the Interior avails itself of the Crisis Unit and the Strategic Counter-Terrorism Analysis Committee (C.A.S.A)

1.1 Balancing security with fundamental rights

The Italian approach can be seen as combining three parallel elements: 1) security, 2) rehabilitation, and 3) rule of law (represented by surveillance judges and courts).

Respect for the different duties, responsibilities and functions of the penitentiary police (or national police and "Carabinieri" and Finance Guard), as well as the rehabilitation bodies (educators, psychologists, experts, civil society in general) under the supervision of surveillance judges, grants an appropriate level of independency, equality, proportionality, and complementarity to counter radicalisation policies. This limits as far as possible administrative decisions on matters concerning the rights of inmates and their equality before the law, regardless of the religion, faith or ideology they profess.

1.2 Information on the activities to prevent radicalisation in Italian Penitentiary Institutions

There are three types of information resulting from prison observation: the effectiveness of security prevention depends on cooperation between the intelligence agencies and police forces. The effectiveness of investigations (including judiciary preventive measures) depends on cooperation between judges and judiciary police. The effectiveness of rehabilitation and social integration depends mainly on cooperation between the prison staff and the private cooperatives and NGOs working within and outside the prisons.

Security Information

Preventive Security (which is specific branch of prevention at large) is the result of the professional activities of police forces and Intelligence. At the top of the information flows that characterise security prevention is the Committee of Counter Terrorism Strategic Analysis (C.A.S.A.), which was established in 2004 by a Decree from the Ministry of Interior as part of the National Plan to Counter Terrorism, within the framework of the Crisis Unit (Decree 83/2002). The C.A.S.A. is a permanent Committee, which brings together all four law enforcement agencies (LEAs) and the intelligence services (in particular DIS, departments of internal-AISI- and external security-AISE) under the premises of the Central Office of Preventive Police (Ministry of Interior). C.A.S.A. meets weekly to assess information on the internal and international terrorist threat to activate the necessary prevention and counter measures.

The Department of Penitentiary Administration, using the Central Investigation Unit (C.I.U - NIC in Italian) for the collection of information, also deals with activities related to the risk of violent radicalisation in prison and like all other police forces contributes to compose complex informative puzzles from a security point of view. The Penitentiary Police, which is a proper civil police force of military tradition, provides data concerning intramural life and contacts with the outside of the detained person; this information comes from the Directions of Prison Institutes and are obtained through observation of the inmates. Therefore, it is qualitative security information, which is NOT part of the prisoner's file and therefore not accessible to their lawyers or the suspects. This data cannot be exchanged with other public or private bodies, unless a judiciary measure is taken by a judge to authorise it.

The data analysis produces a very specific individual risk assessment based on three levels of classification: 1. High - Monitoring; 2. Medium - "Attentioning" (from the

Italian word for “attention”); 3. Low - Reporting. The analysis conducted by the NIC on the radical and terrorist subjects is then channelled to the CASA, if appropriate.

The following principles are central to the monitoring activities carried out by the Italian authorities for radical inmates:

- The flow of behavioural, non-forensic and non-judiciary information with security relevance is kept separate from the treatment element: the two elements are complementary but do not influence each other as all prisoners are equal in front of the law and have the right to access the same services. In line with the L.354/75, only surveillance judges can approve and modify rehabilitation programs, not LEAs or intelligence services;
- To this end, data from monitoring is only gathered, used and shared with a preventive aim, from the security perspective;
- The monitoring does not only cover critical events, but also the inmate's daily routine, including fixed and codified procedures;
- Information and output from central analysis (by the C.I.U. or C.A.S.A.) does not flow back to the local level, unless there is a request for closer monitoring or for the application of specific surveillance measures;
- All penitentiary staff have a duty to provide information concerning radical phenomena (non-forensic and non-judiciary data) from the prisons to the prison director, who will convey the information to the competent central offices.

The leadership in the area of security information depends upon police and intelligence services.

Judiciary Information

Conversely, information concerning potential crimes (forensic and judiciary information that form the basis for investigations) are transmitted by the judiciary police department of the penitentiary police to the competent judiciary authorities. This information may provide inputs for investigations, an activity which is well regulated by the Italian law, with several guarantees for the suspects. When security information concerns Third Country Nationals representing a threat to national security, administrative procedures under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Interior

are usually applied (expulsion), while security information concerning EU citizens requires the intervention of judiciary authorities.

The leadership in judiciary information lies in the hand of the judiciary power at different levels.

Behavioural Information

Behavioural information framed within multi-agency analysis, resulting from multidisciplinary observations, informs the individual rehabilitation programs and measures its advancement. This information is accessible to several parties, including the civil staff, director, prison police, prisoners and the surveillance judges, and is the object of different coordinated multi-agency activities aimed at implementing the individual rehabilitation programs.

The leadership of these actions lies in the hand of the surveillance judges and prison staff.

- The key to the system is the correct understanding of the interaction between different pieces of information, that arrive from the multiple information flows, within the framework of the Italian constitutional architecture. It is also crucial to balance fundamental rights with security through respecting different roles and competences;
- The overarching framework is represented by the rule of the law and the equality of all citizens in front of the law. All citizens, including detainees and prisoners, have the right to a just process.

1.3 Main Actors of the security pipeline

Counter Terrorism Strategic Analysis Committee (C.A.S.A)

- It is a body that performs general tasks of analysis and evaluation of particularly relevant reports relating to domestic and international terrorism;
- A permanent forum chaired by the Central Director of the Prevention Police and in which are taking part the Police, the "Carabinieri", the Financial Police, the Department of Prison Administration and the Agencies of Internal and External Security.

The Central Investigation Unit (C.I.U.)

- The C.I.U. shall analyse the data concerning the intramural life and contacts with the outside of each inmate to undergo an analysis;
- The C.I.U. has analysed more than 4.500 reports from II.PP, which have resulted in 44% of cases, the monitoring of prisoners and allowed the execution, at the time of release, of different expulsions for security reasons.

Magistrates and Prosecutors

- When security information concerning EU citizens passes from the pre-crime to the forensic area, the main role is played by judiciary powers, which coordinate formal investigations, appointing judiciary police for the operative investigations.

1.4 Main tools of the security pipeline

Several procedures are in place to ensure coherence and consistency in the management of information:

- **"Situation Room"**

Created in 2003, the so-called "situational room" is a cyber-link that is also available in the form of an application, connecting the periphery and the centre, with the main aim of registering all critical events. These include, for example, non-forensic and non-judiciary data coming from the prison observation and information received from the local penitentiary institutions, conveyed and analysed in real-time at the central level. As events have evolved, a special category has been created for critical events linked to proselytism and radicalisation.

- **Modification of Indicators**

In 2016 the Department of Prison Administration simplified its previous system based on classical "indicators of radicalisation" as foreseen in the old EU "Manual on Violent Radicalisation." The new strategy mostly focuses on two main indicators: "change" and "isolation" and requires the proactive participation of all prison staff.

- **Integration of observation with ICT Tools**

Periodic behavioural reports for inmates at risk of radicalisation are managed through the system SIAP/AFIS 2.0. They connect local and

central levels. Requests concerning the level of classification of inmates from external administration (DIGOS, ROS, etc.) need to be authorised by the Judiciary Authority, but are also available through the backdoor of SIDET WEB 2, available for both, Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and Ministry of Interior (Moi).

- **Training Activities in Italy**

At the Italian level, the Department of Penitentiary Administration, has since 2005 considered fundamental the Training of the staff of the Penitentiary Police Corps, which operates daily in the detention sections and has organised several courses on violent radicalisation and proselytism within prisons. Subsequently, the Training was also addressed to officials and managers. This has been done in accordance with the recommendations from the EU.

In addition to training, the aforementioned C.I.U. supports and implements the activities that each individual Directorate carries out in its own Institute. The continuous mutation of the terrorist phenomenon has required, in addition to training activities, the issuing of a series of specific provisions (more than 20) by the Central Department, starting since 2014.

In June 2012 the Superior Institute of Penitentiary Studies (ISSP) published a book "The radicalisation of Islamic terrorism-elements for a study of the phenomenon" which was followed by other initiatives. The Directorate of "Triveneto" integrated the Training with other courses between 2015 and 2017.

1. Meetings at a central level in Rome: between C.I.U. and all the Regional Commanders (since August 2017, the figure "Responsible for the activities of the Directorate" no longer exists, but has been replaced by the "Commander of the Regional Investigative Unit");
2. Directorate-level meetings: between Regional Commanders and all Departmental Commanders and local referents for monitoring;
3. Itinerant meetings at local level: between the Regional Commander and individual operators of the Institute of the district.
4. Training www.traininghermes.eu: an online training platform, jointly developed by the Italian, Latvian and Romanian Ministries of Justice, in cooperation with Hochschule für den Öffentlichen Dienst in Bayern,

Guardia Civil, Spain, and Agenfor International, is available to train all staff on different aspects of radical phenomena within prisons and probation. The LMS contains seven modules for blended delivery and a complete manual. More than 2000 prison staff have been trained through this LMS, which is managed by 50 EU trainers.

1.5 Prison situation in Italy

- Prevention measures adopted by the Department of Penitentiary Administration;
- Analysis of the radicalisation phenomena and proselytism in prison under the responsibilities of the Central Investigative Unit;
- Monitoring of those inmates with international terrorism related crimes;
- Monitoring of those inmates involved in proselytism and violent radicalisation activities.

Penitentiary Order: the treatment in the Italian model

The key points on which penitentiary treatment is based in Italy will be summarily indicated, specifying that all prisoners, regardless of whether they belong to those who adhere to the jihadist ideology, participate in the treatment activities.

- Law 26° July 1975, no. 354: introduction of the Penitentiary treatment, inspired by the principles of humanity and dignity of the person;
- INDIVIDUALISATION of the treatment: it responds to the needs of the personality of each subject, through the elaboration of a "treatment pact" which includes initiatives and shared opportunities that are calibrated to the individual;
- SCIENTIFIC OBSERVATION OF THE PERSONALITY: progressive detachment from the medical "paradigm", in favour of an analysis that emphasises the psychological and behavioural profiles; ensured by teams composed of: Director of the institute, legal and educational official, social service official, experts on former and the Penitentiary Police. The scientific observation results are shared with the Judiciary of Supervision and collected in a document called a "summary Report" of the personality;

- The "treatment plan" is approved by the Supervisory Magistrate;
- Treatment tools: instruction, employment, relationships with family, sports, cultural and recreational activities and the role of external community, religion.

Recommendation CM/REC (2012) Committee of the Ministries of Foreign Countries on Inmates from other Countries.

- Inmates have the right to practice or change their religions and beliefs and are protected from any kind of constraints;
- Penitentiary authorities should give to foreign inmates access to accredited representatives of their religion;
- Inmates have the right to participate to the rituals of their religion, they have to be compatible with security conditions and they should not be contrary to law. Inmates can display in their room or in their private space, images and symbols.

Radicalisation and treatment / Triveneto (2017)

- Monitoring of the treatment activities in which inmates monitored for supposed Jihadist ideology, participate in;
- About 30% employed in cooperatives or companies with productions inside the penitentiary institutions;
- About 45% participate in training courses and/or laboratories (cooking, editing, IT, gardening, crafting, tailoring, maintenance);
- About 30% participate to school courses (elementary, post-elementary and high school);
- About 40% assigned in rotation to jobs managed by the Penitentiary Administration.

2. An overview of an area that was identified as a weak part in the Italian model

There are four main weaknesses of the Italian system, which otherwise proved a high level of efficacy:

1. Radicalisation is too often confused with religious-inspired extremism, particularly Islamic extremism, while the phenomenon is much broader;
2. The labelling of a single community may result in a backlash and produce false positive and negative results;
3. The system of preventive administrative measures, with the late involvement of the judiciary, works mainly with third country nationals, while the number of converts or nationals exposed to the risks of radicalisation is growing;
4. The definition of social danger, the basis for administrative and judiciary preventive measures, needs to be reshaped after the intervention of the ECHR in this matter.

However, an area that was identified as one of the weakest in the Italian model refers to that fact that Italy, to date, does not have a specific model of de-radicalisation. The social context appears to be very different from many European countries: the presence of people of Muslim faith is still in the first generation and regulatory actions are underway that include, among other aspects, specialised personnel training (including knowledge of foreign languages) and the adoption of a national plan for the re-education and de-radicalisation of prisoners and interns on regulation by the Ministry of Justice. In fact, one of the main issues in countering the Islamic radicalism or in the more general observation of the religious phenomenon on the part of the prison workers is that the linguistic barrier does not allow the relational dynamics among prisoners to be accurately understood by those in the immediacy. Counter-terrorism officials have long expressed the need to introduce this kind of approach linked to counter-radicalisation or de-radicalisation strategies in Italy, but practical efforts lack any kind of strategy or legal foundation. As such, Italy does not do any kind of substantive preventive work. Instead, it has taken isolated initiatives in prisons and school systems. For example, prison authorities (DAP) attempted to establish programs with select Imams in the penitentiary system. However, these initiatives suffered various setbacks and only a few are implemented in specific prisons. Italian authorities also introduced programs, albeit timidly, aimed at preventing radicalisation in select school systems in specific municipalities.

Though, efforts have been one-off and isolated and activities have not exclusively focused on radicalisation but more broadly on integration, critical thinking, and inter-religious dialogue. On a couple of occasions, Italian courts, at the request of prosecutors

and law enforcement agencies, included de-radicalisation and rehabilitation provisions in convictions of Italian citizens accused of terrorism-related charges. In 2017, for example, a court in Bari ordered an Italian convert to undergo a rehabilitation program upon release. The program generally consisted of interactions with academics to discuss the secular nature of the Italian state and relationship between religion and politics. However, critics of this method highlighted a lack of ideological focus in the program, especially if ideology played a role in the radicalisation process. Moreover, such court orders are largely left to the "inventiveness" of individual magistrates and prosecutors. No clear legislation or guidelines exist to support them.

3. Recommendations to that specific area

The need to complement the current approach with CVE activities is felt by most officials, who fully understand that the current approach leaves several "blind spots" and is likely to fall increasingly short in the coming years. They are keenly aware that the number of radicalised Italian citizens and minors -both categories that cannot be expelled - is on the rise. They understand that support from "untraditional" partners - be it other governmental actors like the school system or the national health system or civil society - would allow them to conduct a variety of activities, from better detecting cases of individuals in the early stages of radicalisation to attempting to de-radicalise specific individuals. At this stage, most of these activities are not being implemented, and if they are, it is on a very small scale. There is an apparent disconnect between the needs of the Italian counter-terrorism community and the policymaking community on this issue. This disconnect derives from political instability within both the executive and legislative bodies, which prevents policy makers from focusing on issues not perceived as of paramount urgency or politically advantageous. Given the lack of a large radicalisation problem or significant terrorist attacks, radicalisation prevention is not perceived by a sizeable percentage of the public as an urgent matter requiring intervention. In substance, the lack of an emergency status makes both the general public and policymakers complacent and uninterested in developing a long-term strategy for what the country's counter-terrorism community identifies as a pressing need for the near future. The P/CVE strategy in Italy should be multidisciplinary and trans-disciplinary, that is characterised by the involvement of a plurality of public actors (law enforcement, intelligence, magistracy, etc) and private (world of voluntary and associations, Islamic communities, families, etc). The aim should be to defuse individual processes that lead to violent extremism, not only to increase collective security, but also because such processes are dangerous to the individual that is targeted by them.

Paper 7.**Poland**

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1. Overview

The problem of radicalisation, which can lead, through violent extremism, to acts of terror, is not sufficiently recognised in Poland. There is a lack of knowledge about the phenomenon of radicalisation and the resulting coherent, comprehensive prevention and counteracting radicalisation systems - both at the central and local levels. Extremist organisations active in Poland are mainly far-right organisations (e.g. the National Radical Camp (ONR)) of an Islamophobic, anti-Semitic, anti-Ukrainian, anti-German and homophobic nature, often referring to fascist organisations active in Poland before World War II.

The major drivers for the national approach towards radicalisation, defined by Polish stakeholders, are the political agenda of the government and the media as a source of its interpretation. The political agenda has been reflecting the societal processes since 2016-2018. According to Polish LEA's, radical activism has been on the rise, exposing the country to violence through marches of independence, football hooliganism, and activities of right-wing groups using terror/violence in order to achieve their own purpose. The media shapes both public opinion and even policy trends by making politicians react without any clear structural programme and definitions.

There are no national CVE / PVE programmes in Poland, as are common in other countries. The main Polish strategic document on radicalisation and violent

extremism is an Act on anti-terrorist activities⁴⁰⁸ (10/06/2016, Dz.U.2019.796) that indicates and sets the directions of strategic programmes. Another document worth mentioning is the National Anti-terrorism Programme for 2015-2019, although the programme's assumption was to determine the necessary state actions to strengthen the anti-terrorist system in Poland, and thus increase readiness for possible terrorist threats. There is no publicly available information about the programme for the coming years.

In turn, Polish agencies have many initiatives to monitor and prevent discrimination and possible radicalisation. Such initiatives are not sufficiently integrated at a national level, but rather are disintegrated at the regional level. Moreover, they do not directly touch upon the matter of radicalisation of extremism but instead focus on cross-border topics such as hate speech or migration. It is worth adding that, as part of the Polish Internal Security Agency (ABW), the Terrorism Prevention Centre of Excellence (TPCoE) was established, which is a unit of the ABW, broadly dealing with terrorism prevention. The mission of the TPCoE is "shaping the security culture by building CT awareness in society"⁴⁰⁹. The current Polish practice confirms that the most effective method of counteracting extremist terrorism threats is to react early to the first symptoms of radicalisation in society. The above can only be provided by a properly designed and efficient operating system of preventive impact measures, the purpose of which is to increase knowledge and thus awareness.

The formulation of a standardised approach to radicalisation has been ongoing since 2015. There are single mechanisms and initiatives, such as those coming from schools or police but it is not a model nor represents a comprehensive approach. Also, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are trying to carry out PVE/CVE initiatives, consuming a lot of their scarce resources. It is worth adding at this point that in Poland, the cooperation of institutions mainly happens inside the sector, with, for example, educational institutions collaborating only among themselves. Public authorities' cooperation is on a minimum level, although single-joint activities are present. NGOs in Poland are more active in establishing international contacts and partnerships, for instance through cooperation with the Radicalisation Awareness Network, or EU-funded projects. Even if stakeholder groups work together, there are often insufficient results. Also, there is not enough knowledge sharing between them and the experience gained is not used. Moreover, based on the MINDb4ACT research and information obtained, it follows

408 The anti-terrorist activities Act, <https://sip.lex.pl/akty-prawne/dzu-dziennik-ustaw/dzialania-antyterrorystyczne-18318898>

409 Terrorism Prevention Centre of Excellence, <https://tpcoe.gov.pl/cpe/about-us/107/The-Terrorist-Prevention-Centre-of-Excellence-is-a-unit-of-the-Internal-Security.html>

that the Polish institutions are not aware of any exit programmes, nor do they have knowledge of specific programmes in the EU.

In relation to the Polish judgments in the radicalisation field, cases are mainly concerned with hate crimes and hate speech. Unfortunately, the Polish case-law, at least in these cases, is very poor. Despite the large number of criminal proceedings being instituted, very few are sent to court. This can be seen in the statistics on hate crimes and hate speech. Out of 1415 criminal proceedings conducted in 2017, only 258 indictments were sent. In addition, criminal proceedings often end with a referral for the application of punishment without a hearing (when the prosecutor agrees a penalty with the suspect) or the discontinuance of the proceedings, provided that the perpetrator does not commit a similar crime for a given period. In such situations, however, judgments are passed, but they do not contain any justifications that could be analysed (justification is developed when the perpetrator is going to submit an appeal). The low number of court decisions leads to a low number of cases being examined by the higher courts, the constitutional court and, as a consequence, a low number of judgments relating to the issue of human rights.

2. Findings

Based on the activities carried out under the MINDb4ACT project by the Polish Platform for Homeland Security (such as ethnographic studies, focus group interviews, pilot projects, etc.) the following findings are presented:

2.1 Lack of national and local CVE/PVE policies and strategies in the field of radicalisation

At the European level, there are currently many strategic documents directly pointing to the need for the Member States to take PVE/CVE radicalisation measures. An example is the European Parliament Resolution of 25 November 2015⁴¹⁰ on preventing radicalisation and recruitment of European citizens by terrorist organisations (2015/2063 (INI)). Meanwhile, in Polish law, the Act of 10 June 2016 indicates that anti-terrorist activities should be understood as activities of public administration bodies operating for the prevention of terrorist events, but does not further mention the need to take actions in the area of social prevention

410 European Parliament resolution. (25 November 2015) on the prevention of radicalisation and recruitment of European citizens by terrorist organisations (2015/2063(INI)), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52015IP0410&from=EN>.

of these events⁴¹¹. In Poland, this is the only documented mention about PVE/CVE interventions. However, this is not a national approach to radicalisation. This strategic approach is also not noticeable at the local level.

2.2 Low awareness about the phenomenon of radicalisation resulting in the lack of an appropriate response to the growing problem of far-right ideologies and nationalisms

In Poland, the power of right-wing radicalism has been noticeable for several years. This tendency is evidenced by social moods and the results of democratic elections to the Parliament and the Presidential one, in which far-right parties are gaining more votes. Radicalisation incidents are published in media discourse, but in a positive light that justifies this approach. What is more, representatives of local institutions lack full understanding and awareness about this phenomenon, its features and symptoms, which would allow them to objectively assess whether specific actions are associated with radicalisation. As a consequence, the problem of right-wing ideologies and nationalism increases when central and local actors do not react or cannot react properly. The consequence of this lack of understanding that extreme nationalism is a manifestation of radicalisation is a real threat that is intensifying in Poland, and even legitimises extremely radical views and behaviours.

2.3 Insufficient knowledge and ability of local institutions to recognise signs that children and young people are radicalising

In Poland, radicalism is still understood mainly as terrorism, which is why there is a general view that it does not pose a threat to Poland. Therefore, there is insufficient ability to recognise signs that young people are becoming radicalised. In schools, even teachers seeing various stickers, graffiti, distinctive clothing etc. often do not associate it with the first signs of radicalisation. That is why they treat it as the innocent antics of young people, not signs of radicalisation. There is also insufficient knowledge that radicalisation is an individual process based on risk factors (causes) analogous to processes leading to other negative behaviours.

2.4 Trainings in the radicalisation field are not popular in Poland and there are few institutions that offer it

Due to the still low awareness of the problem posed by radicalisation in Poland at present, among the institutions there is little interest to increase their competences

411 Law on Counterterrorism of 10 June 2016 (Ustawa z dnia 10 czerwca 2016 r. o działaniach antyterrorystycznych) Journal of Laws 2016 item 904.

in this field. Trainings in this subject are not very popular, hence few institutions in Poland offer it.

2.5 Low level of knowledge about evidence-based approach in preventing and countering radicalisation

Polish research funding bodies do not stress the needs of research related to radicalisation. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence-based research and knowledge in the field of radicalisation in Poland. There is also an insufficient amount of reliable analysis prepared by entities performing tasks in the field of CVE/PVE and research in Poland.

2.6 The cooperation of institutions at the national and local level in counteracting radicalisation is very limited.

Due to the fact that awareness of the phenomenon of radicalisation, as such, does not exist in the minds of representatives of local institutions, it follows that there is no appreciation of the need for cooperation in this regard. At the moment, there is no noticeable organisation of such cooperation between these institutions. Of course, the terminology of hate speech, racism or xenophobia is officially known, but radicalism in the minds of representatives is still not associated with attitudes that can lead to or that are a signal. If local cooperation in practice does not exist or is rare, it means there is limited access to both national and local PVE/CVE activities, and therefore the lack of national "good practices" in preventing radicalisation of other countries that could be implemented in local level institutions.

2.7 Lack of proper understanding and acceptance for diversity in Polish society. This can lead to radicalisation resulting in discrimination and hate speech.

The growing lack of understanding of otherness has been visible in Poland for several years. The most common occurrence is the lack of understanding of different nationalities, racism, as well as low acceptance of gender diversity and the role of women in society.

3. Recommendations to policy and decision makers

1. Development and implementation of national CVE/PVE policy strategies in the field of radicalisation. It would be worth establishing a central multidisciplinary team to highlight a general line of a national approach.

2. In the national strategy and media discourse it is needed to take into account the broad range of ideologies and behaviours that radicalisation encompasses. Moreover, highlighting extreme nationalism as a manifestation of radicalisation is also one of the important points, because such a manifestation is currently a present threat in Poland.
3. The crucial factor in terms of PVE/CVE is to focus on the local community level. Regarding this, it is recommended to develop a local multi-agency approach when designing and implementing prevention and counter-radicalisation policies, taking more specific consideration of issues and radicalisation roots (causes, pathways) at the local level. The CVE/PVE policies should be transversal, across policy fields, including individuals and the need for tailor-made solutions. Also, it is worth considering the creation of a network of experts and a system of direct response to crises. Impact assessment measures should also be developed to evaluate the effectiveness of PVE, CVE and de-radicalisation policies.
4. A commitment to communities and strengthening communities exposed to radicalisation and establishing trust-based relationships with authorities, as well as institutional support for families of people susceptible to radicalisation and those who have been radicalised.
5. Developing, communicating, promoting and implementing good practices from national and international experiences. It is necessary to create a space for exchange of knowledge and best practices, e.g. yearly local government forum.
6. Support schools and NGOs in promoting civic non-violent activism, the use of democratic institutions and the understanding of civic values to empower young people to actively, and critically engage in improving the democratic system.
7. It is necessary to increase education efforts, e.g. strengthening competences in the field of peaceful conflict solving, building and developing social dialogue, building civil society, developing critical thinking skills, sensitise individuals to social diversity, denounce fake news; fight against conspiracy theories, strengthen anti-discrimination education in schools.

8. Good quality trainings for first-line practitioners to raise awareness of people working directly with people or groups at risk of radicalisation. Also, investing in training programmes for schools, teachers, police officers and security practitioners to work at the community level.
9. Increasing national funds for academic research related to the radicalisation phenomenon in Poland. Evidence-based knowledge will allow a reliable analysis of the diagnosis of radicalisation causes and pathways, that is adapted to the local context. In addition, radicalisation-related local indicators and measurements can be developed based on research.
10. It is crucial to properly punish the perpetrators of hate crimes to give a clear signal to crime victims that these matters are taken seriously.
11. Developing de-radicalisation programmes to reintegrate violent extremists and withdrawal programmes to deter them from violence.

Paper 8.**Spain**

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Theme

Though the global phenomenon of jihadism and jihadist terrorism has existed since the founding of Al-Qaeda in 1988 and became a threat in Western Europe shortly thereafter, Spain's response to this menace was very limited until the 11 March 2004 Madrid train bombings, or 3/11 attacks, took place. Yet, measures intended to prevent violent radicalisation leading to terrorism were not included as part of Spain's approach to jihadism and jihadist terrorism until 2015, seven years after the European Union (EU) first adopted the European Strategy for Combatting Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism and more than three years after the onset of an internal war in Syria prompted, from 2012, unprecedented levels of international jihadist mobilisation that in particular affected a number of Western European nations. Difficulties in the implementation of a P/CVE national strategy arose from four main considerations: a very top-down approach, the highly decentralised nature of the Spanish state, lack of specific budget and resources, and the still limited participation of civil society.

1. Introduction

In Spain, the presence and activity of jihadist actors can be traced back to a decade before the 2004 Madrid train bombings or 3/11 attacks.⁴¹² Over the nine years

⁴¹² On the origins and evolution of jihadism and jihadist terrorism in Spain in the decade between 1994 and 2004, see chapter 1 in Reinares, R., *Al-Qaeda's Revenge. The 2004 Madrid Train Bombings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).

following 3/11, 90% of all jihadists convicted in Spain were still foreigners, mainly from Morocco, Pakistan and Algeria.⁴¹³ Seven out of every 10 resided in or around the metropolitan areas of Madrid and Barcelona.⁴¹⁴ Many of the individuals were radicalised at least in part inside Spain, though this also took place outside the country.⁴¹⁵ Their radicalisation typically took place in top-down or to a lesser extent in horizontal processes, which in a majority of cases started between the mid-teens and the late twenties. Private homes, business shops or places of worship were the main radicalisation settings. Prisons also played a role, as did the immediate influence of charismatic or religious figures and previously existing kinship, friendship, or neighborhood ties.⁴¹⁶

Since 2013, however, jihadism in Spain can no longer be overwhelmingly associated with foreigners. As data on jihadists who were convicted or deceased in the country between 2012 and 2018 shows, four out of every 10 were Spanish nationals and four out of every 10 were born in Spain.⁴¹⁷ Though most of the rest had Morocco as their country of nationality and birth, these findings, coupled with a predominance of second generation individuals, born or raised in Spain but having immigrant parents, prove the rise of homegrown jihadism in the country.⁴¹⁸ This homegrown dimension of the phenomenon has its main focus among Moroccan descendants residing in the North African cities of Ceuta and Melilla.⁴¹⁹ However, the autonomous region of Catalonia became the leading jihadists environment in Spain, with the province of Barcelona becoming a particularly salient area of jihadist activity in the whole country.⁴²⁰

Yet, there are other facets of jihadism in Spain which denote continuity with respect to the previous periods, and with respect to processes of violent radicalisation. For example, a large majority of all the jihadists arrested or deceased in the country

413 Reinales, F. and Garcia-Calvo, C. (2013). *Los yihadistas en España: perfil sociodemográfico de condenados por actividades terroristas o muertos en acto de terrorismo suicida entre 1996 y 2012*, Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano, DT 11/2013, http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_es/contenido?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_es/zonas_es/terrorismo+internacional/dt11-2013-reinales-garciacalvo-yihadistas-espana-perfil-sociodemografico-1996-2012

414 Ibid.

415 Garcia-Calvo, C. and Fernado Reinales. (2013). "Procesos de radicalización violenta y terrorismo yihadista en España: ¿cuándo? ¿dónde? ¿cómo?", Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano, DT

416 Ibid.

417 Reinales, F., Garcia-Calvo, C. and Vicente, A. (2019). *Yihadismo y yihadistas en España. Quince años después del 11-M* (Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano), chapter 1, http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_es/publicacion?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_es/publicaciones/yihadismo-yihadistas-espana-quince-anos-despues-11-m

418 Ibid.

419 Ibid.

420 Reinales, F. and Garcia-Calvo, C. (2017). "Actividad yihadista en España, 2013-2017: de la Operación Cesto en Ceuta a los atentados en Cataluña", Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano, DT 13/2017, http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_es/contenido?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_es/zonas_es/dt13-2017-reinales-garciacalvo-actividad-yihadista-en-espana-2013-2017-operacion-cesto-ceuta-atentados-catalunya

between 2013 and 2017 radicalised jointly with other people, following a path during which in person, face-to-face interaction with a radicalising agent and pre-existing friendship, kinship and neighbourhood bonds with relevant others who were already radicalised, became key factors in the processes. Mixed radicalisation environments, that is at the same time offline and online, or basically offline radicalisation environments, prevailed.⁴²¹ Ripoll cell members, including those who executed the August 2017 vehicle ramming attacks in both Barcelona and Cambrils, even if they had far more ambitious plans, reflected these features of jihadism in Spain.⁴²²

2. Radicalisation, social problem and political agenda

At the time of the 3/11 attacks, Spain was equipped with well-developed internal security structures that were highly efficient in the fight against Euskadi ta Askatasuna (ETA, Basque Homeland and Freedom), the terrorist organisation forced to give up violence in 2011⁴²³. But these internal security structures were not as well equipped to dealing with a different kind of terrorism, the kind related to the so-called global jihadist movement.⁴²⁴ Soon after the 3/11 attacks, a wide-ranging governmental counterterrorism plan was adopted, centred on the threat from jihadist terrorism. Reforms included the strengthening of central units and local brigades, belonging to both the Cuerpo Nacional de Policía (CNP) and to the Guardia Civil (GC), to be focused on jihadist terrorism;⁴²⁵ also, the Centro Nacional de Coordinación Antiterrorista (CNCA, National Centre for Counterterrorism Coordination) was established within the Ministry of the Interior.⁴²⁶

Only two years after the 3/11 attacks, 16% of Muslims living in Spain exhibited positive attitudes toward suicide terrorist attacks in the alleged defense of Islam or toward Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden.⁴²⁷ Yet, radicalisation was neither defined as a social problem nor incorporated to the political agenda beyond broad statements about intercultural dialogue, the socioeconomic integration of Muslims living in Spain or

421 Reinares, F., Garcia-Calvo, C. and Vicente, A. (2017). "Differential Association Explaining Jihadi Radicalisation in Spain: A Quantitative Study", CTC Sentinel Vol.10, Issue 6, pp. 29-34.

422 Reinares, F. and Garcia-Calvo, C. (2018). "Spaniards, You Are Going to Suffer:" The Inside Story of the August 2017 Attacks in Barcelona and Cambrils", CTC Sentinel Volume 11, Issue 1, pp. 1-11.

423 Following a terrorist campaign that lasted over forty years. Reinares, F. De la Muerte, P. (2011). Por qué han militado en ETA y cuándo abandonan, sexta edición. Domínguez, F. (2017). Las claves de la derrota de ETA

424 Reinares, F. (2008). "Tras el 11 de marzo: estructuras de seguridad interior y prevención del terrorismo global en España", pp. 103-139 in Charles T. Powell and Fernando Reinares (eds.), Las democracias occidentales frente al terrorismo global.

425 Ibid., 110-115.

426 Ibid. 116.

427 Pew Global Attitudes Project. (2006). "The Great Divide: How Westerners and Muslims View Each Other. 13-Nation Pew Global Attitudes Survey", Washington, DC: Pew Research Centre.

the fostering of official relations with the country's Islamic entities.⁴²⁸ In reality, the government of Spain didn't go beyond intensifying and improving exchanges with leaders of the Comisión Islámica de España (CIE, Islamic Commission of Spain). This was mainly done through the Ministries of the Interior and Justice. As part of this latter department, the Fundación Pluralismo y Convivencia (Pluralism and Coexistence Foundation) was created, in October 2004, with the aim of becoming instrumental in the regulation of Islam inside Spain, particularly with respect to the myriad of small and unregistered worship places which existed at the time.⁴²⁹

All in all, the action that the government of Spain has taken against jihadist terrorism since 3/11 is both multifaceted and multi-departmental and goes beyond the measures adopted in the internal security sector, the legal framework and the relations with Muslim communities.⁴³⁰ But police and other counterterrorism measures that fight the terrorism threat related to global jihadism are conditioned, in the rule of law context of a liberal democracy, by existing legislation. The Spanish antiterrorism legislation, modified in December 2010 to comply with the amended EU Council Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism, approved on November 2008, provided for the criminalisation of certain individual and group activities related to violent radicalisation, terrorist recruitment, and terrorist training.⁴³¹ However, the most unique and distinctive feature of Spain's antiterrorism policy over the past two decades undoubtedly corresponds to the development of an advanced model to acknowledge the moral and political significance of the victims of terrorism and effectively protect their rights and the rights of their families in the case of dead victims, including material compensation.⁴³²

428 See, for instance, "Texto aprobado por el Pleno del Congreso de los Diputados, en su sesión del día 30 de junio de 2005, resultante del Dictamen de la Comisión de Investigación sobre el 11 de marzo de 2004 y de los votos particulares incorporados al mismo", *Boletín Oficial de las Cortes Generales, Congreso de los Diputados, VIII Legislatura*, no. 242, 14 July 2005, pp. 103-104.

429 Still, dialogue between Muslim leaders and authorities was bounded by deficits of representation and internal cohesion among Islamic entities articulating the interest if Muslims living in Spain, often as a consequence of interferences from outside the country.

430 A survey carried out by Elcano Royal Institute in June 2006 showed that, on the whole, the adoption of these measures enjoyed a great deal of public support among Spaniards. Fernando Reinares, "¿Coinciden el Gobierno y los ciudadanos en qué medidas adoptar contra el terrorismo internacional?" Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano, ARI 78/2006, http://realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/ut/p/a0/04_Sj9CPyKssy0xPLMnMz0vMAfGjzOKNg318fEKcHX1NTZz9QgKNXI0NDSBAvyDbUREAbg0KqW!!/?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/wps/wcm/connect/elcano/elcano_es/zonas_es/ari+78-2006

431 Ponte, M. (2003). "La reforma del código penal en relación a los delitos de Terrorismo", Granada: Grupo de Estudios Estratégicos (GESI), Análisis GESI 3/2003, <http://www.seguridadinternacional.es/?q=es/content/la-reforma-del-c%C3%B3digo-penal-en-relaci%C3%B3n-los-delitos-de-terrorismo>. A law against the financing of terrorism was also approved in 2010. See, "Ley 10/2010 de prevención del blanqueo de capitales y de la financiación del terrorismo", *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, 29 April 2010, <https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2010-6737>.

432 By the end of 2016, EU countries with specific legislation on victims of terrorism were limited to Spain, France and Italy. See Pagasaurtudua, M. (2017). http://www.institutoatlanticodegobierno.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Libro_Blanco_Negro.pdf; also, see *Ley de Reconocimiento y Protección Integral a las Víctimas del Terrorismo (Act on The Recognition and Comprehensive Protection of Victims of Terrorism)*, <http://www.boe.es/buscar/pdf/2011/BOE-A-2011-15039-consolidado.pdf>

However, even when other European and Western countries have been formalising integrated, national strategies to deal with this issue, in Spain's case the need to deal with two simultaneous terrorist threats --ETA on one hand and terrorism related to Al Qaeda on the other-- was an actual obstacle to developing a national and comprehensive strategy. It was not until 2010, with ETA in real decline, that the government of Spain, approved an *Estrategia Integral contra el Terrorismo Internacional y la Radicalización* (EICTIR, Integrated Strategy against International Terrorism and Radicalisation), that was ratified in 2012, after ETA had declared a ceasefire. The issue of radicalisation appeared as a distinctive one in the context of a much broader antiterrorist strategy. A Plan intended to Prevent Violent Radicalisation followed three years later.

3. Advancing towards the prevention of violent radicalisation

As the unprecedented wave of jihadist mobilisation started with the onset of the war in Syria in 2012, the basic features and dominant style of Spain's counterterrorism remained, though a few adaptive developments became particularly relevant. At the same time, though, a shift in Spain's official approach to jihadism and jihadist terrorism was observed. Concerning the until then dominant counterterrorism scheme, the Centro Nacional de Coordinación Antiterrorista (CNCA, National Centre for Counterterrorism Coordination), created shortly after the attacks of 11 March 2004 in Madrid, it merged with the existing Centro de Inteligencia sobre Crimen Organizado (CICO, Centre for Intelligence on Organized Crime), also within the Ministry of the Interior, to establish, in 2014, the new Centro de Inteligencia contra el Terrorismo y el Crimen Organizado (CITCO, Centre for Intelligence against Terrorism and Organized Crime). The merger decision was justified by the authorities as the reality of a nexus between terrorists and other type of criminals, as well as from functional considerations.

Provisions on terrorism offences in Spain's Criminal Code were likewise revised once again, in the light of new or vigorously reemerging facets of the jihadist terrorism phenomenon but also according to decisions adopted both in the framework of the United Nations and at the level of the European Union. This time, changes in antiterrorist legislation aimed at, among other goals, criminalising previously unspecified illegal behaviours ranging from self-radicalisation, with the purpose of joining or supporting terrorist organisations, or traveling to a conflict zone as a foreign terrorist fighter (FTF). The legal reform was introduced in March 2015, three years after the Syria-related jihadist mobilisation started,

a mobilisation which had a significant impact over Muslim communities in Spain.⁴³³

But, aside from new counterterrorism developments in the areas of internal security, legal framework and international cooperation, Spain's approach to jihadism and the threat of jihadist terrorism exhibited, since 2012, a remarkable shift from essentially a counterterrorism approach, within which all these developments took place, to one incorporating a prevention of violent radicalisation scheme. This shift happened as corollaries of the already mentioned worldwide jihadist mobilisation became evident inside Spain, even if the country's population as a whole or its Muslim population in particular were not affected as intensely as those of other nations within the same Western European context. This is likely due to the comparatively different composition of the Muslim population in Spain, within which first generation migrants largely prevail, as opposed to those of other nations within the same region where Muslim populations are predominantly made out of second generation cohorts, considered to be particularly vulnerable to current processes of radicalisation and recruitment.⁴³⁴

In this context, Spain's Government approved, on 30 January 2015, a Plan Estratégico Nacional de Lucha Contra la Radicalización Violenta (PEN-LCRV, National Strategic Plan to Fight Against Violent Radicalisation).⁴³⁵ Nearly eleven years had passed since the Madrid train bombings claimed by Al-Qaeda and almost four after ETA announced the end of its decades-long campaign of domestic terrorism. The PEN-LCRV was however elaborated over a two-year period, during 2013 and 2014, under the coordination of the Ministry of the Interior's already mentioned CITCO, and in line with European Union guidelines.⁴³⁶ As many as twelve ministries, plus the Centro Nacional de Inteligencia (CNI, National Intelligence Centre), and entities such as the Fundación Pluralismo y Convivencia (FPC, Pluralism and Coexistence Foundation, linked to the Ministry of Justice) or the Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias (FEMP, Spain's Federation of Municipalities and Provinces) participated in the drafting of the PEN-LCRV. The PEN-LCRV followed the guidelines established

433 Ponte, M. (2015). "La reforma de los delitos de terrorismo mediante la Ley Orgánica 2/2015", Granada: Grupo de Estudios de Seguridad Internacional, Universidad de Granada, Análisis GESI 11/2015, <http://www.seguridadinternacional.es/?q=es/tags/derecho-penal-y-terrorismo-0>

434 Reinares, F. (2017). "Jihadist mobilisation, undemocratic Salafism, and terrorist threat in the European Union,"; Rabasa A. and Benard C. (2015). *Eurojihad. Patterns of Islamist Radicalisation and Terrorism in Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), ch. 5; Neumann, P.R. (2016). *Radicalised. New Jihadists and the Threat to the West* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), ch. 4-5.

435 Full text (in Spanish): <http://www.interior.gob.es/web/servicios-al-ciudadano/plan-estrategico-nacional-de-lucha-contra-la-radicalizacion-violenta/plan-estrategico-nacional>

436 The PEN-LCRV follows, in particular, the 2005 European Union Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the European Strategy for Combatting Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism, first adopted in 2008 and subsequently revised in 2014.

in both the 2005 European Union Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the European Strategy for Combatting Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism, first adopted in 2008 and subsequently revised in 2014. The PEN-LCRV was built upon the previously existing EICTIR. Even when predicated to deal with every kind of violent radicalisation, it is based on the assumption of jihadist terrorism as one of the main sources of terrorism threat to Spain and Spaniards.⁴³⁷

4. Areas of action, local groups coordination and oversight

The PEN-LCRV indicates where and how to act by establishing a basic distinction between broad domains of action and functional areas of action. It contemplates three broad domains of action: domestic, meaning the whole territory of Spain; external, outside Spain and concerning the External Action of the State on the matter and that of the Armed Forces deployed abroad; and, finally, the cyberspace, referring to sources and contents of radicalisation on Internet.⁴³⁸ On functional areas of action, the plan likewise separates between the acting before (*Prevenir*, literally prevent), during (*Vigilar*, meaning monitoring) and after (*Actuar*, undertake action properly) processes of violent radicalisation, indicating which particular action is relevant in any of these phases.⁴³⁹ The PEN-LCRV also specifies who has the responsibility to develop actions, once again distinguishing between the Administration, collectives considered to be vulnerable or at risk, and civil society.⁴⁴⁰ It establishes a national structure of interdepartmental nature that is centrally coordinated from the Ministry of the Interior by means of the Grupo Nacional de Lucha Contra la Radicalización Violenta (GN-LCRV, National Group for the Fight Against Violent Radicalisation).⁴⁴¹

This GN-LCRV is endowed with the coordination of the Grupos Locales de Lucha Contra la Radicalización Violenta (GL-LCRV, Local Groups to Fight Against Violent Radicalisation) established across Spain.⁴⁴² These local groups are composed of delegates from the corresponding local police, competent autonomous regional police when appropriate, City Hall officials, judicial authority if existing, schools,

437 Ministerio del Interior, Secretaría de Estado de Seguridad, CITCO, "Plan Estratégico Nacional de Lucha Contra la Radicalización Violenta (PEN-LCRV). Un marco para el respeto y entendimiento común", <http://www.interior.gob.es/documents/642012/5179146/PLAN+ESTRAT%C3%89GICO+NACIONAL.pdf/d250d90e-99b5-4ec9-99a8-8cf896cb8c2f>. See also: DNS, "National Security Strategy 2013." Pp. 23, 25 and 32, <http://www.dsn.gob.es/es/estrategias-publicaciones/estrategias/estrategia-seguridad-nacional>.

438 "Plan Estratégico Nacional de Lucha Contra la Radicalización Violenta (PEN-LCRV)", p.7.

439 Ibid., p. 8.

440 Ibid., p. 9.

441 Ibid., p. 17.

442 Ibid., p. 17.

social affairs, social entities and collectives at risk in the designated local zone. A specific system for the information exchange connects the local and the national levels. The PEN-LCRV details three different types of situations to be dealt with.⁴⁴³ The first situation refers to a concrete incident observed in a given municipality, to be communicated to the FEMP. Advice will then be provided by the GN-LCRV. A second situation comes when a reported incident affects a vulnerable collective, in which case the incident is to be communicated to the Fundación Pluralismo y Convivencia, again to receive advice from the GN-LCRV. A third situation relates to the detection of a possible radicalisation issue, individual or collective, by any member of a GL-LCRV, so that the local group itself is expected to deal with the case. If the issue is not solved, the possibility exists for the case to be dealt with at the provincial or regional level. Should the problem spread, its treatment will then become a direct responsibility of the GN-LCRV.

The mechanisms of oversight and control incorporated to the PEN-LCRV are regulated by means of annual management plans, which identify specific types of threat and the people likely to be affected from a national security risk perspective, as well as the measures to be given implementation priority. As established, the PEN-LCRV is meant to be revised on a yearly basis and aims at being under continuous evaluation of procedures, objectives and impact, although the methodology of evaluation is not yet developed.⁴⁴⁴ Finally, the PEN-LCRV does not count with its own budgetary resources for its implementation and is therefore dependent on contributions from the governmental departments involved.⁴⁴⁵ Despite its emphasis on acting at the local level, throughout the formula of the GL-LCRV, the PEN-LCRV remains, and is widely perceived as, a top-down initiative. This is not in itself a problem, but it may become so in a highly de-centralised country such as Spain. Moreover, the PEN-LCRV is designed to be nationwide in scope yet regional plans have been adopted in autonomous communities like Catalonia or the Basque Country.⁴⁴⁶

Since the Ministry of the Interior, the central institution in Spain's antiterrorist policy, is the coordinating institution of the PEN-LCRV, municipalities and actors concerned --especially those from the civil society-- may sometimes assess negatively the securitisation scheme of the plan, a factor which, combined with a notable degree of officially imposed secrecy over its actual development, is likely to affect the trust

443 Ibid., p. 10.

444 Ibid., p. 26.

445 Ibid., p. 26.

446 Vasco, G. (November 2017), "Plan de Actuación del Gobierno Vasco frente al terrorismo internacional de pretexto religioso." https://www.irekia.euskadi.eus/uploads/attachments/10561/PLAN_frente_al_Terrorismo_Internacional_2017.pdf?1511173607

needed to adequately implement its provisions on the different domains and areas of radicalisation prevention. The actual number of municipalities where a GL-LCRV has been established was still very limited by the Spring of 2018, which means the pace of PEN-LCRV implementation is slow. In February 2018, some 20 municipalities in Spain have constituted its own GL-LCRV. Málaga --a coastal city located in the southern region of Andalusia-- was designated, in this context, as pilot city for the implementation of the plan.⁴⁴⁷ Nevertheless, a reconsideration of municipalities as the site of GL-LCRV may be advisable, particularly when it comes to smaller towns or contiguous localities.

5. From institutional programs to civil society initiatives

The most visible outcome of PEN-LCRV has been a concrete program known as Stop Radicalismos (Stop Radicalisms).⁴⁴⁸ This program was launched in December 2015 with four basic tools --namely, a website, an email address, a free telephone number, and a cellular phone application-- aimed at providing safe and confidential channels for citizens or residents of Spain to collaborate with the authorities in helping to detect, prevent and neutralise cases of violent radicalisation taking place inside the country. The Stop Radicalismos program is managed from the Centro de Coordinación de Información sobre Radicalización (CCIR, Centre for Coordination of Information on Radicalisation), in turn articulated inside the CITCO and therefore, once again, within the structure of Spain's Ministry of Interior. Its results are held as very satisfactory by the Ministry of the Interior authorities. From December 2015 to January 2018 a total of 5,590 communications were received (2,368 through the website; 1,300 by means of the telephone line; 1,239 by email, and 693 via app)⁴⁴⁹. About one third of these communications on violent radicalisation were considered "of interest" for law enforcement purposes.⁴⁵⁰

The GN-LCRV is also connected to authorities in charge of penitentiary institutions, on the issue of preventing radicalisation among inmates.⁴⁵¹ In Spain there are

447 In the case of Malaga, this Local Group is made up of representatives of the City Council, Social Services Department, Local Police, schools, social organisations, risk groups and the University of Malaga. Other institutions and civil society entities are expected to be added in the next future. See "I Plan Transversal por la Convivencia y la Radicalización Violenta en la Ciudad de Málaga 2017-2020" <http://www.interior.gob.es/documents/642012/5179146/I+Plan+Transversal+por+la+Convivencia.pdf/b62bc722-c8f6-4677-9c3f-5841aa51ea40>

448 Stop Radicalismos Program. <https://stop-radicalismos.ses.mir.es>.

449 24 January 2018.

450 Ibid.

451 "Plan Estratégico Nacional de Lucha Contra la Radicalización Violenta (PEN-LCRV)", p. 16.

two specific programs for the prevention of violent radicalisation in prisons. One such program corresponds to the Ministry of Interior which, through a General Secretariat, manages most of the penitentiary system in Spain. It carries out its duties throughout the country, with the exception of the autonomous community of Catalonia. Competences over penitentiary organisation and execution were transferred to the Catalanian Autonomous Government (Generalitat de Catalunya) in 1984, under the principle of subsidiarity. In that way, not only the Spanish Ministry of the Interior but also the Justice Department of the Autonomous Government of Catalonia has developed its own penitentiary policy, thus being applied to penitentiary action dealing with violent radicalisation. Concerning penitentiaries under the general administration, national authorities introduced in 2014 a specific program to prevent radicalisation which initially emphasised monitoring but was developed in 2016 with a greater focus on intervention and supplemented in 2018 with a risk assessment tool. In February 2018, it was estimated that 79 individuals, incarcerated as a consequence of common criminality, had initiated processes of jihadist radicalisation inside prisons under the state general administration.⁴⁵² This is roughly one third of the total number of inmates being monitored at that time for actual or potential jihadist radicalisation in these same domain. In turn, the Justice Department of Catalonia's autonomous government has developed its own program on violent radicalisation inside penitentiaries located in the region.⁴⁵³

Independent of the mentioned programs, it is widely believed among penitentiary system practitioners that, the experiences of undergoing arrests and being imprisoned, may in themselves have an effect on the disengagement and perhaps even the deradicalisation of jihadist detainees. An indicator would be the fact that nearly half (actually, 45) of the 92 individuals arrested in Spain between 2013 and 2017 as a result of their participation in activities related to jihadist terrorism who already faced trial by May 2018 (most of the remaining 145 detainees were then awaiting trial, though several arrested jihadists had already been expelled or extradited), received convictions after defendants and attorneys reached a plea agreement.⁴⁵⁴ Still, it is among the relatively small number of jihadists who, as juvenile offenders, were

452 Previous known figures are 59 inmates in 2014, 59 in 2015, 95 in 2016, and 76 in 2017. Secretaría de Estado de Relaciones con las Cortes, (684) Pregunta escrita Senado, *Respuesta del Gobierno 684/40518* of 21 February 2018.

453 The main characteristics of this Catalanian program were presented by Roca M. (2016), Head of the Area of Information and Security, Directorate General of Penitentiaries Services of the Catalanian Government, at the 4th Elcano Forum on Global Terrorism, "Prevention of Violent, Radicalisation, De-radicalisation and Terrorist Rehabilitation", held in Madrid on 15 November 2016, http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/web/rielcano_es/actividad?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_es/calendario/actividades/4-foro-elcano-terrorismo-global See from 00:02:48 to 00:26:00.

454 A similar number, that is 43, were convicted in the absence of agreement; only 4 individuals, of the 92 who detainees who had faced trial by 6 May 2018, were absolved.

placed during the same five-year period under individualised treatment by order of a special judge for juvenile offenders within the Audiencia Nacional, that experiences of disengagement and, in particular, deradicalisation, seem particularly promising. Of the 11 convicted by March 2020, at least six had shown signs of cognitive and behavioural deradicalisation.⁴⁵⁵

Also, radicalisation prevention efforts from Spain's civil society are starting to become visible, having been developed in connection to official frameworks or independently. These efforts include activities on the part of the different associations of victims of terrorism, in schools as well as in other public settings, which contribute to raising awareness on radicalisation and to preventing radicalisation as a result of their focus on the promotion of democratic values, the defense of human rights and the support of victims of terrorism⁴⁵⁶. Another initiative, established on October 2017, is known as "Somos Más, contra el odio y el radicalismo" (We are More, against hatred and radicalism). Part of a global move present in other Western European countries, this initiative aims at preventing radicalisation among children and adolescents in schools and among the wider society. The project, promoted by YouTube, involves, in Spain, organisations such as the Red AWARE (Alliance of Women Against Radicalisation and Extremism), FeSP-UGT and Jóvenes y Desarrollo, and is supported by several Ministries⁴⁵⁷. Another interesting experience is that of the Fundación Al Fanar (Al Fanar Foundation), known as "Kif-Kif", which aims at "fomenting interculturality and the integration of Muslim communities and fighting against Islamophobia and jihadist radicalism" by means of creating educational tools, using the format of comics, that can be used in schools across Spain. This initiative has been welcomed in high school of the autonomous region of Catalonia, Madrid's metropolitan area as well as the cities of Ceuta and Melilla.⁴⁵⁸

6. Dealing with difficulties: problems and constraints

Though the global phenomenon of jihadism and jihadist terrorism has existed since the founding of Al-Qaeda in 1988 and became a threat in Western Europe shortly thereafter, Spain's response to this menace was very limited until the 11

455 Information shared with the authors by Álvaro Vicente, a colleague from the Program on Global Terrorism at Elcano Royal Institute.

456 All these associations, which bring together victims of ETA terrorism, victims of jihadist terrorism, and victims of other ethnonationalist, leftwing or rightwing expressions of terrorism, are incorporated into the Fundación de Víctimas del Terrorismo, established in December 2001. See <http://fundacionvt.org>

457 About the "Somos Más, contra el odio y el radicalismo" initiative, see: www.somos-mas.es

458 On the project by the Fundación Al Fanar, see: <http://www.fundacionalfanar.org/presentacion-kifkif-comics-por-la-inclusion>

March 2004 Madrid train bombings, or 3/11 attacks, took place. Both the political priority consistently given by consecutive central governments to combatting of ETA terrorism as well as an underestimation of the Islamic extremism threat explains the previous relative narrowness of such an approach to jihadism in the case of Spain. Since the Madrid train bombings, however, and despite a lack of political consensus on the matter, which took over one decade to be built, counterterrorism institutions and agencies were adapted to include significant innovations, to better fight jihadism and combatting the jihadist threat. These reforms took place mainly, though not exclusively, in the domains of internal security and legal provisions, thus adapting institutions and measures in line with the classical Western European criminal policy approach to counterterrorism.

Yet, measures intended to prevent violent radicalisation leading to terrorism were not included as part of Spain's approach to jihadism and jihadist terrorism until 2015, seven years after the European Union first adopted the European Strategy for Combatting Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism and more than three years after the onset of an internal war in Syria prompted, as from 2012, unprecedented levels of international jihadist mobilisation with affected in particular a number of Western European nations. Spain was also significantly affected by this more recent wave of worldwide jihadist mobilisation. The already described PEN-LCRV, formally approved in 2015, three years after the beginning of this latest wave of jihadist mobilisation, certainly evidenced a shift in Spain's approach to jihadism and jihadist terrorism. However, it was more the result of the influence of intergovernmental initiatives adopted at the European Union level than from a national debate on radicalisation inside representative institutions and concerned entities within the civil society.

This background would explain a number of functional problems and resources constraints in the design of the PEN-LCRV, having some negative assessments of its actual implementation. In addition to difficulties arising from the lack of specific financing and the inadequate position in the state bureaucracy of the body endowed with coordinating the PEN-LCRV, its implementation has been particularly difficult in municipalities of interest where local authorities, often uninformed and unknowledgeable about the issue, tend to be concerned that public knowledge about the creation of a local group to prevent violent radicalisation may arouse alarm among people or unease within Muslim residents, not to mention the perceived costs when the actual or potential number of cases to deal with is very limited. The same background would also explain why the ECTIR has been awaiting revision since 2015,

until a new Estrategia Nacional Contra el Terrorismo (ENCT) was approved in 2019.⁴⁵⁹ Even if survey data shows that awareness with respect to violent radicalisation does exist within Spain's public opinion.⁴⁶⁰ This social awareness is not adequately matched with political determination at different levels of government. Despite a recent shift in Spain's approach to jihadism, heavy reliance on the counter terrorism scheme adopted and developed post 3/11 contrasts with weak implementation of initiatives aimed at the prevention of violent radicalisation.

7. Recommendations

In this context, five years after the approval of the first national strategy for preventing and countering violent extremism in Spain, it lacks adequate implementation to serve as a basis for a review of affective impact and measured results. In order to solve some of the identified problems affecting the proper implementation of a P/CVE strategy in Spain, we propose the following set of practical recommendations.

- The need of a whole society approach: The de-securitisation of the current Spanish approach, with the Ministry of the Interior as a central institution, through the CITCO being the actual body in charge of coordination, is highly recommended. In order to ensure a whole of society P/CVE approach, the central institution should rather be a government department devoted to social affairs and citizenship, a special commissioner or similar figure under the Presidency of the Government or a Vice-presidency, even if a prominent role has to be reserved for the Ministry of the Interior.
- The coordinating agency or body of a national P/CVE should be placed at an adequate level in the Administration, ensuring functional capacities to perform its mission.
- Budget: Provide the P/CVE national strategy with its own resources would demonstrate the authorities' commitment to this policy and facilitate the incorporation of new stakeholders and actors into the system.

459 Orden PCI/179/2019 de 22 de febrero, por la que se publica la Estrategia Nacional contra el Terrorismo 2019, aprobada por el Consejo de Seguridad Nacional" Boletín Oficial del Estado, no. 49, 26 de febrero de 2019, Sec. I, pp. 17942-17966.

460 According to an Eurobarometer survey conducted on April 2016, one year and four months ahead of the August 2017 Barcelona and Cambrils attacks, 39% of Spaniards considered the chances of a terrorist attack in Spain to be then of a "High risk" and 49% of "some risk", but 44% thought about "the fight against the roots of terrorism and radicalisation" as the most urgent measure to fight against terrorism. Special Eurobarometer of the European Parliament, "Europeans in 2016: Perceptions and expectations, fight against terrorism and radicalisation", Brussels: European Parliamentary Research Services, 2016, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/atyourservice/en/20160623PVL00111/Europeans-in-2016-Perceptions-and-expectations-fight-against-terrorism-and-radicalisation>

- Ownership at the local level: As Spain is a highly de-centralised country, any P/CVE strategy at the national level should take into consideration the particularities derived from its three-level Administration (local, regional - Autonomus Communities - and national. Most of the competences regarding education, health or social services, among other relevant for P/CVE purposes, are provided in Spain under the principle of subsidiarity at the local level. So, in order to ensure the actual ownership of the Strategy by actors at the local level in charge for implementation it would be advisable to incorporate the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias (FEMP), in Spanish), an association that brings together and represents all the local entities to which we refer.
- Victims of Terrorism: the associations of the victims of terrorism, articulated and active in the civil society like in no other EU member states, should be granted a more prominent role in radicalisation awareness, preventing radicalisation, and building resilience, as they are a unique asset in the case of Spain

Paper 9.

United Kingdom

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1. Overview of UK P/CVE approach

Prior to 2018, the United Kingdom (UK) was subject to a number of high-profile terrorist attacks including the Westminster attack (March 2017), Manchester Arena bombing (May 2017) and the London Bridge attacks (June 2017) (Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament, 2018). Following this unprecedented increase in attacks (aligned with the increase across Europe) the UK's threat level from terrorism was raised by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) to SEVERE in 2018, concluding that an attack is highly likely⁴⁶¹. The UK Government also reviewed the existing counter-terrorism strategy and as a result developed a third iteration of the UK CONTEST strategy, developed by the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism sector within the Home Office. The strategy involves an in-depth focus on addressing the grassroot threats of terrorism and violent extremism to counter both imminent threats and long-term factors which can facilitate the emergence and growth of terrorist and extremist groups⁴⁶².

A well-known strand of CONTEST, which reflects the UK's approach to preventing or countering violent extremism, is the Prevent strategy (first introduced in 2011). This aim of Prevent is to intervene and stop at-risk individuals, from an early

461 HM Government. (2018). CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism. [Online]. London: Crown copyright.

462 Ibid.

stage, supporting extremism or becoming an extremist themselves⁴⁶³. To meet this aim Prevent has three key areas objectives: 1) to counter extremist led ideologies that can accelerate or encourage the radicalisation process 2) to work with at-risk individuals with advice and support 3) to work with and provide guidance to institutions identified as a hotspot for radicalisation to occur and spread⁴⁶⁴. Within Prevent is the multi-agency approach Channel which represents a program that identifies and assesses individuals at risk and develops early stage intervention support plans⁴⁶⁵.

The Prevent strategy has been implemented across the UK and continues to be the main approach to preventing violent extremism through pre-crime interventions, rehabilitation with at risk individuals and risk assessments⁴⁶⁶. The perceived impact of the Prevent strategy can be illuminated with statistics: in the year until March 2019 there were 5,738 referrals made for 5,531 individuals who were deemed most at-risk of becoming radicalised, the majority of these referrals came from educational (33%) or police (29%) institutions, overall from these referrals 49% were signposted to other services and 23% were discussed at a Channel panel⁴⁶⁷. These statistics reflect the national impact of using the Prevent strategy which has become embedded into institutional and grassroots levels of societies as a legal duty to prevent violent extremism⁴⁶⁸.

The Prevent strategy has been at the epicentre of national debates around the UKs approach to preventing or countering violent extremism. These debates have demonstrated a social and political divide in the perceived success of the strategy alongside its national impact. This paper aims to evaluate the success of the UK Prevent strategy by exploring some of the key debates in current literature. In discussing these debates several key themes will be unravelled which underline contemporary discussions. These themes are key to understanding the socially perceived success of the strategy and how Prevent situates within wider societal debates around privacy, national security, gender and community cohesion. To

463 Home Office. (2019a). "Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales." Gov.UK. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales> [Accessed 9 June 2020].

464 Ibid.

465 HM Government. (2015). Channel Duty Guidance. [Online]. London: Crown copyright.

466 Heath-Kelly, C. (2017). "The geography of pre-criminal space: epidemiological imaginations of radicalisation risk in the UK Prevent Strategy, 2007-2017." *Critical Studies on Terrorism*. 10: 297-319.

467 Home Office. (2019b). Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent programme. Home Office Statistical bulletin (32/19). Crown copyright.

468 Qurashi, F. (2018). "The Prevent strategy and the UK "war on terror": embedding infrastructures of surveillance in Muslim communities." *Racism in counter-terrorism and surveillance discourse*.

conclude this paper will provide a set of policy recommendations, based on the findings of the debates. These recommendations will aim to provide a positive trajectory for future developments of the Prevent strategy.

2. Community engagement and community targeting

The Prevent approach is largely focused on identifying and mitigating against radicalisation risks on a local level as a “bottom up” approach. For this approach of Prevent to be successful there needs to be an effective level of community engagement, as the approach relies on the reporting of community members⁴⁶⁹. Therefore, by using a community engagement approach, this can correlate to an increase in the number of reports and improve the current understanding of existing and emerging threats within local communities. As an overt counter-terrorism methodology the first iteration of Prevent was praised as a public facing and transparent approach which can be beneficial in building trust amongst local communities and subsequently encouraging public engagement with Prevent officers⁴⁷⁰.

On the other hand, literature has also shown how past iterations of Prevent have been critiqued as a reflection of the national transition from a community focused to community targeting approach⁴⁷¹. The pre-criminal measures enforced by the Prevent duty has been critiqued for its regressive nature by instigating the ethnic and religious profiling of individuals and local communities⁴⁷². Much of the literature discusses Muslim communities as a key example, concluding that the Prevent strategy was culturally designed by the UK governments prioritisation of Islamist extremism as a key threat. This has resulted in a counter-productive impact, as scholars’ critique that Prevent marginalizes the communities of which should be at the centre of effective community engagement strategies⁴⁷³. As a consequence of the Prevent strategy being associated as a regressive and community targeted approach, tensions have emerged within local communities who have become wary

469 Richards, N. (2019). “Better Reporting to Prevent Radicalisation, Extremism and Terrorism.” University of Leeds.

470 Innes, M., Roberts, C., and Innes, H. (2011). “Assessing the Effects of Prevent Policing.” Universities” Police Science Institute. Cardiff University.

471 Taylor, J.D. (2018). “ ‘Suspect Categories,’ ” Alienation and Counterterrorism: Critically Assessing PREVENT in the UK.” Terrorism and Political Violence. 32(4): 851-873.

472 Heath-Kelly, C. (2017). “The geography of pre-criminal space: epidemiological imaginations of radicalisation risk in the UK Prevent Strategy, 2007-2017.” Critical Studies on Terrorism. 10(2): 297-319.

473 Taylor, J.D. (2018). “Suspect Categories,” Alienation and Counterterrorism: Critically Assessing PREVENT in the UK.” Terrorism and Political Violence. 32(4): 851-873.

of the Prevent strategy and as a result the police⁴⁷⁴. This has directly impacted the success of the Prevent strategy, as local communities have in cases become unengaged with Prevent initiatives, leading to concerns that at-risk individuals will remain unidentified and allows threats to manifest behind closed doors. This has caused several challenges for counterterrorism officials to understand upcoming threats within grassroot communities and mitigate against such threats⁴⁷⁵.

Publications which assess the most recent iterations of the Prevent duty do show that improvements have been made to develop a more successful community engagement approach. The Home Offices' assessment of Prevent in 2017/2018 demonstrates how Prevent has developed a multi-agency approach, involving the collaboration between civil societies, Prevent coordinators and statutory partners (within the fields of health, education and policing)⁴⁷⁶. This strive in involving local community experts suggests a positive shift in the development of a more successful community engagement approach, however further steps could be taken to dissolve what remains of the negative stigma surrounding the Prevent duty. Furthermore, the 2017-2018 statistics from the Home Office contradicts previous literature that the Prevent duty specifically targets Muslim communities as a result of Islamist extremism being a key threat to the UK. The statistics show that of the individuals who received Channel support through Prevent 45% were referred for concerns relating to Islamist extremism and 44% were referred for right-wing concerns. These almost equal referrals highlights Prevents aim to "deal with all forms of terrorism, including Islamist and extreme right-wing" and opposes critiques that it largely targets Muslim communities⁴⁷⁷. This supports Mastroe's identification of the change in the 2011 iteration of Prevent, which outlined that priority areas were chosen based on the extremism threat level within a local authority as opposed to population statistics⁴⁷⁸.

The data suggests that future iterations of Prevent will be more successful in reinforcing a community engagement approach. Despite these changes, in the year ending March 2019 was documented as the lowest number of referrals in a year since

474 Qurashi, F. (2018). "The Prevent strategy and the UK "war on terror": embedding infrastructures of surveillance in Muslim communities." *Racism in counter-terrorism and surveillance discourse*. 4.

475 De Leede, S., Hauptfleisch, R., Korolkova, K., and Natter, M. (2017). *Radicalisation and violent extremism - focus on women: How women become radicalised, and how to empower them to prevent radicalisation*. (PE 596.838). European Parliament.

476 Gov.UK. (2019). "Factsheet: Prevent and Channel." Gov.UK.. Available at: <https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2019/11/05/factsheet-prevent-and-channel/>.

477 Gov.UK. (2019). "Factsheet: Prevent and Channel." Gov.UK.. Available at: <https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2019/11/05/factsheet-prevent-and-channel/>.

478 Mastroe, C. (2016). "Evaluating CVE: Understanding the Recent Changes to the United Kingdom's Implementation of *Prevent*." *Perspectives on Terrorism*. 10(2): 50-61.

data began being collected ⁴⁷⁹. This suggests that there remains a tainted public perception of Prevent which has impacted its success in receiving engagement from local communities. Community engagement stemming back to the negative overshadows of Prevent therefore remains a key challenge which continues to hinder the success of the approach.

3. Privacy against national security

Another key debate which can be used to understand the success of Prevent is the perceived understanding of the duty as either a national security necessity, or as an intrusion of public privacy which should be protected. Understanding the extent that Prevent is accepted into societies through this debate is important to assessing its success. This debate has raised some crucial discussions as to whether national security should superimpose individual privacy, which will be explored further.

In 2015 the Counterterrorism and Security Act was passed, in parallel with a second iteration of Prevent. This Act placed responsibility on local authorities to engage with Prevent including mainstreaming the strategy into policies and procedures, reflecting the Government's aim to centralize and standardize Prevent within both priority and non-priority areas. These changes have led to an increase in the compliance of Prevent which shows to an extent its success for specific experts. For example, Mastroe concluded that the centralisation of Prevent has aided Prevent coordinators and officers, who previously have found difficulties in implementing the strategy into local institutions⁴⁸⁰. Furthermore, Elwick and Jerome found that within education institutions the centralisation of Prevent has opened new opportunities and agency for teachers as a safeguarding technique. A benefit discussed was that Prevent allows teachers who may be inexperienced in discussing sensitive and challenging topics to take an arms-length approach which would be dealt with by designated Prevent experts⁴⁸¹. These conclusions suggest that there are some successes stemming from the centralisation of Prevent.

With the Government taking a conformity-based approach to implementing Prevent amongst communities, it is expected that a large proportion of literature discusses

479 Home Office. (2019b). Individuals referred to and supported through the **Prevent** programme. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/853646/individuals-referred-supported-prevent-programme-apr2018-mar2019-hosb3219.pdf

480 Mastroe, C. (2016). "Evaluating CVE: Understanding the Recent Changes to the United Kingdom's Implementation of **Prevent**." *Perspectives on Terrorism*. 10(2): 50-61.

481 Elwick, A., and Jerome, L. (2019). "Balancing securitisation and education in schools: teachers' agency in implementing the Prevent duty." *Journal of Beliefs and Values*. 40(3): 338-353.

the limitations to the strategy. Much literature concludes that the Government has been unsuccessful in implementing Prevent on a local level, as using a securitisation approach has created a series of misconceptions and criticisms of the strategy⁴⁸². Mastroe argues that there is the misconception amongst local communities that Prevent is an intelligence gathering and surveillance technique⁴⁸³. As Prevent identifies extremist beliefs and speech as the key indicator in inciting terrorism, critiques of the strategy argue that this has led to the denial of human rights and subsequently caused social divisions. This has led to concerns about the restrictions the strategy imposes upon the freedom of speech within academia, the household and online⁴⁸⁴. Particularly for young people, Parker et al.⁴⁸⁵ argue that Prevent criminalizes the discussion of terrorism within trusted spaces such as schools and the household which are essential to raising awareness and creating resilience of existing and emerging threats. This securitisation approach has also created concerns amongst parents who are reluctant to report individuals at risk of or who are becoming radicalised due to fears that other family members or friends will be arrested as a result⁴⁸⁶.

Therefore, some scholars argue that the standardisation and centralisation of Prevent has removed the option of successfully receiving community support. For example, some local institutions may view this approach as a reflection of the Governments lack of trust in their ability to effectively implement Prevent independently⁴⁸⁷. Furthermore, the success of Prevent has been limited, as the development of a perceived "surveillance society" has discouraged young people to discuss sensitive topics with traditionally trusted individuals, groups or institutions. Consequently, this can leave extremist views unseen and unchallenged by Prevent officers and coordinators. This can force the debate outside of safe spaces and increase the vulnerabilities and risks of young people becoming involved with extremist groups⁴⁸⁸. Despite this, in the year ending March 2019 individuals aged 20 and under continued to make up the majority of referrals since the year ending

482 Ibid.

483 Mastroe, C. (2016). "Evaluating CVE: Understanding the Recent Changes to the United Kingdom's Implementation of *Prevent*." *Perspectives on Terrorism*. 10(2): 50-61.

484 Stanford, B., and Ahmed, Y. (2016). "The Prevent Strategy: The Human Rights Implications of the United Kingdom's Counter-Radicalisation Policy." *QIL* 24: 35-58.

485 Parker, D., Chapot, D., and Davis, J. (2019). "The Prevent Strategy's Impact on Social Relations: A report on work in two local authorities." *Feminist Dissent*. 4: 160-193.

486 Parliament.uk. (2016). "The Governments approach to countering extremism." Parliament.uk. Available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmhaff/135/13506.htm>.

487 Mastroe, C. (2016). "Evaluating CVE: Understanding the Recent Changes to the United Kingdom's Implementation of *Prevent*." *Perspectives on Terrorism*. 10(2): 50-61.

488 O'Toole, T., Meer, N., Nilsson DeHanas, D., Jones, S., and Modood, T. (2016). "Governing through prevent? Regulation and contested practice in state-Muslim engagement." *Sociology*. 50(1): 160-177.

March 2016 alongside discussions at panel and Channel cases⁴⁸⁹. These statistics suggest that Prevent has been successful in recognizing the vulnerabilities in young people. However, the results do not measure the impact of the referral system in building trust amongst young people, as discussed in previous literature. Therefore, more research needs to be done to understand the impact of Prevent amongst hard to reach communities, to add to the ongoing debate between the prioritisation for privacy in CVE approaches.

4. Considering gender

Gender is a lightly discussed but important theme within contemporary debates and should be considered when evaluating the success of Prevent. Existing literature has debated the success of Prevent in successfully implementing gender within its approach and understanding the diversity and relationship between gender and violent extremism.

In particular scholars have measured the success of Prevent by its inclusion of women, who should be considered as a fundamental partner in developing resilient communities. Experts have critiqued that the early iterations of the strategy have failed to correctly teach Prevent officers about the links between gender and violent extremism. Some literature argues that the context around Prevent does not effectively include women, as the Government's discussions around women implies that they are simply a "means of social engineering" and fails to empower women through the strategy⁴⁹⁰. This removes the recognition of women as vulnerable or at risk and reflects the hegemonic identity of women as peacemakers and caregivers⁴⁹¹. On the other hand, experts have reached conclusions which shows an alternative success of Prevent which contradicts the large amount of criticisms, which shows that Prevent can be a space which can empower women. For example, in interviewing Muslim women Pearson found that women use strategies such as Prevent to exert agency and oppose government and local patriarchies. She found that women use PCVE sessions to express their frustrations and discuss contemporary political issues which has influenced future iterations of Prevent, such as having a wider focus on right-wing extremism⁴⁹².

489 Home Office. (2019). Individuals referred to and supported through the *Prevent* programme. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/853646/individuals-referred-supported-prevent-programme-apr2018-mar2019-hosb3219.pdf

490 Gupta, R. (2017). "Is PREVENT too toxic for feminists?." *Feminist Dissent*. 2: 176-188.

491 OSCE. (2019). *Understanding the Role of Gender in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation That Lead to Terrorism*. Vienna: Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

492 Pearson, E. (2020). "What can (not) work in Women-Centric P/CVE Initiatives?" [Webinar]. RUSI.

This suggests that strategies such as Prevent can be successful when gender is understood and approached equally.

A key criticism raised by scholars is that Prevent creates a gendered assumption within local communities and institutions which stereotypes an at-risk individual as an “angry young man”⁴⁹³. The male-centred focus of Prevent may be justified by the reflection in the number of referrals made through Prevent (2018-2019), in which 87% were male⁴⁹⁴. Although these statistics show that men are heavily involved in the Prevent and wider Channel roadmap, the percentage shows that women are still a focus of the program. Due to the increased focus of understanding women in the emerging extremist threats of violent extremism⁴⁹⁵ within the scope of academia, future iterations of Prevent and statistics may be more aligned to match these changes. The discussion of gender diversity and the understanding of gender as a driver towards violent extremism within Prevent raises several areas which should be discussed in more detail. This suggests that understanding gender in the context of CVE is important and has many factors which may contribute towards the success of a strategy such as Prevent.

Overall, the current debates surround Prevent can be used as key indicators to measure to what extent the strategy has been successful. The debates have shown that understanding and measuring the success of CVE strategies is a complex process and there are several factors such as gender, societal acceptance and public perceptions which can either contribute towards or limit its achievements. The conclusions found within contemporary literature shows how Prevent began as a tainted strategy, however as further iterations have been implemented the perceived benefits have increased. The debates show that there are some successes which Prevent can be praised for achieving, such as empowering hard to reach communities and engaging with local communities. However there remains several criticisms which continue to overshadow the successes of Prevent. To improve the effectiveness of Prevent in future iterations, approaching such key themes as discussed in this paper will be essential for its success.

493 Parliament.uk. (2016). “The Governments approach to countering extremism.” Parliament.uk. Available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmhaff/135/13506.htm>.

494 Home Office. (2019). Individuals referred to and supported through the *Prevent* programme. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/853646/individuals-referred-supported-prevent-programme-apr2018-mar2019-hosb3219.pdf.

495 Pearson, E. and Winterbotham, E. (2017). “Women, Gender and Daesh Radicalisation.” *The RUSI Journal*, 162(3): 60-72.

5. Recommendations

Building upon the conclusions of the debates raised in this paper, several recommendations can be made to contribute towards further iterations of P/CVE strategies to better counter violent extremism at a local level.

1. Future iterations of strategies such as Prevent need to re-emphasize and prioritize a community engagement approach at the epicentre of the design process. This will have a number of benefits which will increase the success of future strategies:
 - Local institutions such as schools, local councils, youth services and households need to be rebuilt as safe places for individuals such as young people to exercise their freedom of speech. For example, sessions should be developed within classes which aim to talk to young people in an open forum about sensitive issues such as extremism. This will help to rebuild the trust between local authorities and young people, which will subsequently increase the level of community acceptance and resilience of CVE strategies.
 - Using a community engagement approach should involve the increase of engagement and cooperation amongst local institutions. For this to be successful future strategies need to give local institutions the agency to implement Prevent through their own methods and strategies. This will allow institutions to independently contribute towards the development and sustainability of strategies which are more effective and diverse to accommodate for the unique challenges each institution may face. This will be beneficial in rebuilding trust within local institutions and the Government and will encourage a multi-agency approach, rather than a conform and centralized approach.
 - Through a community engagement approach experts and local institutions will also be encouraged to collaborate with each other. This will reinforce a more united approach and overall resilient local communities.
2. Local level experts should be included in the design of P/CVE strategies. Taking this approach will give trusted experts more involvement in understanding the aims and vision of the strategies. This will also

encourage experts to be better equipped to challenge and discuss sensitive and challenging subjects, moving away from an “at arms-reach” ideology. This will also have a rippling effect in building resilience amongst local communities.

3. P/CVE strategies in the UK such as Prevent should also better incorporate gender into their design and implementation process. By involving women within grassroots communities in the design and development of the Prevent process will allow individuals to take local ownership of the programs which they are involved in. This will encourage women to have a stronger connection with their local community. This can also be implemented within wider communities, to reinforce a collaborative approach amongst such communities and security professions and to break down the existing tensions surrounding UK counter violent extremism approaches.

There will be an independent review of the Prevent strategy in 2020-2021. It will be interesting to see how concepts such as gender, age, religion and culture are assessed and implemented into the next iteration of the UKs Prevent approach. By considering these recommendations it is clear that the future trajectories of the Prevent strategy must encourage a better understanding of radicalisation as a fluent and non-discriminative process which cannot be solved by created generalisations.

6. Conclusions

This paper has aimed to explore the current debates surrounding UK counter-violent extremism strategies. In particular it has focused on the UK Prevent duty, as a strategy which has been at the centre of many academic discussions around the impact of P/CVE approaches. To provide context, this paper has summarized the key aspects of Prevent, including its vision and proposed objectives. It has then discussed three key debates which have arisen in academic research which have been used to measure the extent of the strategy’s success. The conclusions of these debates have shown that Prevent continues to be a highly debated and in parts contested strategy. Particularly on a local level there remains a clouded pre-conceived judgement of Prevent amongst community members and institutions which has significantly limited its success parameters, despite the number of iterations which have aimed to overcome these challenges. Despite

this, the results show that there are areas of Prevent which are successful and should be recognized when developing future iterations. In shining light on these areas of success whilst acknowledging the current limitations, the conclusions of the debates show that developing P/CVE approaches is a complex process. To conclude this paper has developed a series of policy recommendations, aimed to aid future iterations of Prevent and more generally provide focus areas for wider strategies. By considering these recommendations, strategies such as Prevent can become more effective in building resilient communities against violent extremism, particularly on a local level.

CONCLUSION

The deliverable aims to underline the importance of the analysis of the concept of P/CVE in all its forms, from the state-of-the-art to the specific study of national approaches. Most of the Policy Papers gathered within this White Book establish clear recommendations on the wide variety of the sub-subjects addressed within.

For example, it appears clear that a joint overview of the different approaches and experiences in the Member States of the EU could give the opportunity to explore further actions related to P/CVE such as awareness of gender and minor-conscious considerations. These should also be reflected in research and practice, as well as in the strategies, policies, and mechanisms aimed at countering radicalisation and extremist violence. This could also include elements of community resilience or the use of innovative technologies which must frame the development of future Policy developments to ensure the optimisation of their use by investigators.

Although thorough, this document does not claim to be exhaustive in the analysis of the concept of P/CVE as comparative and in-depth research must be constantly engaged on this very specific and sensitive subject.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABB	Agentschap Binnenlands Bestuur in Belgium
AQ	Al-Qaeda
BNED	Bundesweites Netzwerk Extremismus-prävention und Deradikali-sierung
BPS	Brussels Prevention & Security
CAPREV	Help and Support Centre for people affected by Violent Extremisms and Radicalism
CBT	Cognitive-behavioral therapy
CASA	Italian Committee for Strategic Anti-Terrorism Analysis
CCRS	Belgian Intelligence and Security Coordination Committee
CIA	US Central Intelligence Agency
CIU	Italian Central Investigation Unit
CNAPR	Centre National d'Assistance et de prévention de la radicalisation in France
CNCA	Centro Nacional de Coordinación Antiterrorista
CNS	Belgian National Security Council
CRAD	Belgian National Center on Radicalisation
CREA	Belgian Resource and Support Centre
CSIL	Local Integrated Security Cells (in Belgium)
CSRS	Belgian Intelligence and Security Strategic Committee

CT	Counter Terrorism
CTID	Belgian Financial Intelligence Processing Unit
DG	Directorate General
ECA	European Court of Auditors
ECTC	European Counter Terrorism Centre
EEAS	European External Actions Service
ERG	Extremist Risk Guidance
EU	European Union
EU MS	European Union Member State
FLiPS	First-line practitioners and stakeholders
FTF	Foreign Terrorist Fighters
GC	Guardia Civil
GCTF	Global Counterterrorism Forum
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GSPP	Global Security & Prevention Plan in Belgium
JTAC	Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre in the UK
HLCEG-R	High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LEA	Law Enforcement Agency
LISC	Local Integrated Security Cell
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MIVILUDES	Interministerial Mission for Monitoring and Combatting Cult Deviances in France

NCCN	National Crisis Centre in Belgium
NGO	Non Governmental organization
NPD	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands
NSCR	National Security Capability Review
NSS	National Security Strategy in the UK
NTS	National Task Force
OCAD	Belgian Coordination Unit for Threat Assessment
OCAM	Belgian Coordination Unit for Threat Analysis
OSINT	Open Source INtelligence
P/CVE	Preventing/countering Violent extremism
PDS	Security Pact in France
Plan R	Action Plan Against Radicalisation in Belgium
PLAT	Plan against terrorism in France
SDSR	Strategic Defence and Security Review in the UK
SPRT	Signal for Prevention of terrorist radicalisation
RAN	Radicalisation Awareness Network
TFL	Local Task Forces in Belgium
TFN	National Task Forces in Belgium
VGC	Flemish Community Commission
VSSE	State Security Service
VVSG	Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities
WNED	Netzwerk Demokratie Kultur und Prävention
WP	Work Package

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The MINDb4ACT Project ("Developing skills and opportunities to develop ethical, innovative and effective actions against violent extremism") is a Horizon 2020 research project led by the Spanish think tank Real Instituto Elcano (ELCANO) and funded by the European Commission. It brings together seventeen partners from nine European countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, United Kingdom) to research the phenomenon of radicalisation in Europe. By adopting an innovative participatory method known as Living Lab, the project will test existing prevention and counter practices in the field of violent extremism to detect possible gaps and advance with effective actions. The project expands over 2017-2021 and has a total budget of €3 million. The four domains around which the project will revolve are prisons, schools, local initiatives and the Internet and media.



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