

PARLIAMENT OF ROMANIA

CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

DECISION

adopting the opinion on the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions supporting the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism COM(2016) 379

Pursuant to the provisions of Articles 67 and 148 of the Romanian Constitution, republished, of Law No 373/2013 on cooperation between Parliament and the Government in the area of European affairs, and of Articles 160 to 185 of the Rules of Procedures of the Chamber of Deputies, republished,

the Chamber of Deputies hereby adopts this Decision:

Sole Article - Having regard to Opinion No 4c-19/1100, adopted by the Committee for European Affairs at its meeting of 28 September 2016, the Chamber of Deputies:

1. Welcomes this Communication since:

- it sets out concrete actions to support Member States in adopting initiatives and policies that will help to prevent and tackle radicalisation and violent extremism within the EU and in third countries;
- the recent terrorist attacks in Europe have shown that prevention of radicalisation is a key aspect of the fight against terrorism; it is one of the three priorities of the European Agenda on Security - a document that provides a clear framework for the EU Member States' collaboration on security;
- the European Commission encourages Member States to make use of the various support measures and cooperation tools at EU level, utilising the recently developed cooperation platforms in their work;
- it refers in particular to how activities at the EU level, which focus on seven specific fields identified by the European Commission, can support the Member States in combating radicalisation; these seven fields represent the result of a combination of actions across several policy areas bringing together competent authorities, and societal and community actors at all levels – local, regional, national and European.

2. Supports this Communication because:

- the research, evidence building, monitoring and networking set up by the Horizon 2020 programme will facilitate the production of concrete tools and policy analysis directly usable by Member States' security practitioners and policy-makers;
- we consider it appropriate and necessary to develop the Radicalisation Awareness Network Centre of Excellence to provide specific support to stakeholders in the Member States in designing comprehensive prevent strategies, setting up multi-agency frameworks and networks and implementing concrete projects.

- promoting research under the Horizon 2020 programme to investigate the complex root causes of violent radicalisation, in order to deliver concrete tools to allow better informed policy interventions;
- considers appropriate and justified the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF) initiatives.

3. Considers that:

- violent radicalisation is a complex phenomenon that constitutes a challenge with many, complex facets;
- efforts must be made to enrich research topics in order to bridge the gap between academia and practitioners in the security field, topics which will include radicalisation and inclusion under the Horizon 2020 programme and the results of which will strengthen the capacity of Member States to fine-tune existing policy approaches and develop new policies and practices;
- financial support must be provided to help Member States to develop risk assessment tools to counter radicalisation in prison;
- inclusive education and EU common values must be promoted to prevent social exclusion and counter radicalisation;
- international organisations must be supported in their work to counter terrorism and additional initiatives must be supported to focus EU's external financial instruments on the prevention of violent radicalisation.

4. We take the view that:

- in the context of the increase in acts of violence, the diversity of such acts and the number of suspects implicated in those attacks – the majority of whom were European citizens, born and raised in Member States – a repository must be established of preventive strategies at national, regional or local level, of networks of practitioners and of national/regional contact points in Member States;
- exchanges of information in this field must be stepped up through networks created at EU level, additional funds must be allocated to develop those networks, and funds and European-scale projects should be better deployed;
- religion can also play a vital role in preventing or countering radicalisation: it binds communities, strengthens the sense of belonging and guides people in a direction that does not generate extreme effects;
- measures must be promoted leading to inclusive, open and resilient societies, young people must be reached out to by promoting social inclusion of disadvantaged groups, the European Voluntary Service must be strengthened, particularly by supporting youth organisations;
- to this end, it is necessary to fund transnational cooperation projects that foster inclusion and promote fundamental values, with the aim of supporting educators and educational institutions;
- to promote a society resilient to extremism, social exclusion and discrimination must be combated, including discrimination based on religious conviction, race or ethnic origin, and measures to secure social protection and justice must be strengthened – a first step in this direction being the adoption of the directive on combating discrimination;

- it is necessary, as part of the Radicalisation Awareness Network, to develop a common platform to flag terrorist propaganda and, from this perspective, to exchange experiences and best practices in enhancing media literacy and critical thinking on the internet, as well as to launch and develop an EU-wide campaign with a view to strengthening resilience against radicalisation online to provide alternative narratives or alternative actions;

- terrorist propaganda and hate speech online must be combated by encouraging collaboration with industry and civil society, using the EU Internet Forum; the narratives could be identified by the EU Internet Referral Unit and access to online terrorist content limited with the assistance of internet companies;

- it is essential to revise the Schengen Information System to improve its added value as well as counter-terrorism law enforcement and, in this respect, the exchange of good practice and information should be stepped up between the Member States and Europol on released convicts suspected of radicalisation or other known radical individuals, in order to ensure close monitoring of those representing a high risk.

5. Highlights the following aspects:

- in addressing violent radicalisation it is necessary to bear in mind the transformations in the characteristics of this phenomenon: new recruitment and communication techniques, globalised targets, extreme ideologies that address new segments of the public (women, very young people from various social backgrounds), determined by a combination of complex drivers;

- the effects produced by social media, which provide connectivity in strengthening feelings of personal or cultural alienation, perceived injustice or humiliation reinforced by social marginalisation, xenophobia and discrimination, limited education or employment possibilities, criminality, personal trauma and other psychological problems, can be used by recruiters who exploit vulnerabilities and it has been found that it determines a shortened period of radicalisation;

- ideological and religious factors are one of many possible drivers of radicalisation, since recruiters and extremist preachers have become adept at exploiting grievances and they abuse religious narratives and symbols to provide justifications for acts of violence;

- greater importance must be accorded to tackling radicalisation in prisons and, to this end, collaboration and the exchange of experience should be stepped up through the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), education programmes for detainees should be intensified as should the exchange of information at Eurojust by specialised prosecutors.

6. Considers that from the perspective of Romania:

- we firmly support the fight against terrorism in all its forms;

- it considers that both the implications and the complex roots of terrorism must be taken into account as they constitute essential elements for preventing radicalisation and the movement towards violent extremism;

- more attention must be paid to improving the socio-economic conditions of persons from communities vulnerable to the phenomenon of radicalisation and recruitment for terrorism;

- political and economic measures must be combined with information measures, particularly as regards the phenomenon of foreign terrorists and that of radicalisation;
- it is essential to combat the financing of terrorism, which can also be linked to other emerging or asymmetrical criminal phenomena in a context in which terrorist groups have demonstrated that they have advanced capacities to attract followers through social media platforms that facilitate recruitment and/or self-radicalisation;
- the fight against this type of emerging or asymmetrical threats, particularly those stemming from virtual media, must be included in the general strategy of the fight against terrorism;
- we are in favour of the idea of creating online security patrols to combat the manifestation of any terrorist phenomena in the virtual media, including radicalisation, as well as other elements involving cybercrime.
- we point out that in enacting the measures proposed, account must be taken of respect for fundamental rights and liberties.

7. We support the Communication because it identifies concrete actions that can assist the Member States in adopting initiatives and policies that will help to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism within the EU and in third countries.

This Decision was adopted by the Chamber of Deputies at its sitting of 4 October 2016 in compliance with Article 76(2) of the Romanian Constitution, republished.

PRESIDENT
CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

Florin IORDACHE

Bucharest, 4 October 2016
No 100