



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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C(2017) 16 final*

*Mr Liviu Dragnea  
President of the Camera  
Deputaților  
Palace of the Parliament  
Str. Izvor nr. 2-4, sector 5  
RO – 050563 BUCHAREST*

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion on the Communication supporting the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism {COM(2016) 379 final}.*

*This Communication reflects the Commission's holistic approach to the prevention of radicalisation. This approach encompasses both the security and the broader societal dimension of the phenomenon and activates the different policy instruments available at local, regional or national as well as the European and international level. In line with the ambitious goals identified in the European Agenda on Security<sup>1</sup>, the Communication sets out how the EU intends to support Member States in their efforts with the ultimate objective of enhancing the overall effectiveness of preventive actions throughout the EU. The Commission attaches particular importance to the implementation of the proposed key actions and is closely monitoring progress, in particular through its monthly progress reports.*

*The Commission welcomes the feedback of the Camera Deputaților on all the important aspects of the Communication, among others on the role of research in identifying the roots of radicalisation and in bridging the gap between academia and practitioners in this field, on the need to create networks at a local, regional, national and international level inter alia with the creation of a repository of national strategies and contact points for Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), and on the importance of inclusive education and EU common values in the fight against social exclusion and prevention against violent radicalisation. A report of the EU expert group on the role of youth work for prevention of violent radicalisation will be issued in early 2017; it will include a toolkit providing advice to youth workers and policy recommendations for public authorities.*

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<sup>1</sup> COM(2015) 185 final.

*The Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) and its Centre of Excellence are key partners in pursuing the ambitious objectives in several areas highlighted in the Communication and in your Opinion. To further strengthen their work, the Commission has earmarked EUR 25 million over a period of 4 years starting at the end of 2015. In addition to providing a platform for practitioners and policy makers to exchange experiences and identify best practices, the RAN Centre of Excellence is providing tailor-made support services to Member States, inter alia for developing and implementing prevent strategies and establishing multi-agency frameworks. The Commission notes that Romania has benefited already from two such support services. The Commission encourages both policy makers and practitioners from Romania to take full advantage of all activities and services offered by the RAN so as to equip practitioners, experts and civil society organisations with the required skills and insights to tackle radicalisation more effectively.*

*The Commission would like to reassure the Camera Deputaţilor of the importance it attaches to tackling radicalisation in prisons and in the probation sector. In line with the Communication but also the Council Conclusions on Criminal Justice of 20 November 2015, the RAN Working Group on Prison and Probation develops and provides support to practitioners and authorities, through the exchange of best practices, the formulation of recommendations, practical guidance and training. Furthermore, the Commission has provided EUR 8 million in 2015 and 2016 to implement the Council conclusions, providing funding for the development of rehabilitation and de-radicalisation programmes inside and outside prisons, risk assessment tools and training of professionals.*

*The Commission is grateful for the broad support expressed in the Opinion for the efforts undertaken against online terrorist propaganda and more specifically the work within the EU Internet Forum. The EU Internet Forum focuses on reducing the availability and impact of terrorist propaganda online by, on the one hand, ensuring the swift removal of such content on the Internet and in social media and, on the other hand, supporting civil society in developing counter or alternative narratives. A new technology, database of hashes, has been presented by IT companies during the second edition of the IT Forum on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016. That would enable a swift removal of re-uploaded content online. In this context, the Commission is pleased to see Romania's support for the Internet Referral Unit within Europol, backing up efforts to flag terrorist propaganda to Internet service providers and social media with a view to its swift removal. Work on the development of counter or alternative narratives is undertaken also within the RAN and more specifically within its Working Group on Communication and Narratives. The RAN and its Centre of Excellence will play a vital role in supporting the planned Civil Society Empowerment Programme announced in the Communication. This Programme aims to equip civil society partners with the technical skills and training required to provide positive alternative narratives to that of the violent and divisive terrorist narrative.*

*As regards the security dimension of radicalisation, the Communication of the Commission adopted on 6 April 2016 on Stronger and Smarter Information Systems for Borders and*

*Security<sup>2</sup> referred to the forthcoming proposal for a revision of the Schengen Information System on return of irregular migrants and entry bans, the use of facial images for biometric identification, and the creation of new alerts for wanted unknown persons, which will improve the added value of the system for law enforcement purposes. In addition, operational, technical and legal changes will also be addressed as a result of the overall evaluation of SIS II, which will reinforce the use of the system for counter-terrorism purposes.*

*The Commission is fully aware that the adoption of the Communication on Radicalisation is only a first step towards a more effective and comprehensive approach to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism. It will depend on the joint efforts of all national and EU-level actors, including both public authorities and civil society partners, to respond to the emerging societal challenges, overcome the threats of terrorism and create an area of security and freedom for all citizens.*

*The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Camera Deputaţilor and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Frans Timmermans  
First Vice-President*

*Julian King  
Member of the Commission*

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<sup>2</sup> COM(2016) 205 final.