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Preventing Radicalisation

Role of the European Commission

The European Commission is tasked with working to build an open and safer Europe. It manages policies that aim at ensuring that all activities necessary and beneficial to the economic, cultural and social growth of the EU may develop in a stable, lawful and secure environment.

The EU Counter Terrorism Strategy of 2005 sets out guiding principles for the EU's contribution to countering terrorism. This strategy is built on four pillars, one of which is preventing radicalisation towards terrorism. The EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment ('EU Strategy on Radicalisation', adopted in 2005, and revised in 2008 and 2014) lays the foundations for an enhanced involvement of civil society in tackling and countering radicalisation.

While it recognised that actions against radicalisation fall primarily within the competences and responsibilities of Member States, the EU Strategy on Radicalisation stressed the importance and added value of an EU framework for Member States to coordinate their policies, share information, determine good practices and develop new ideas. The Commission was called upon to support Member States in their efforts.

In 2011, the Commission established the Radicalisation Awareness Network ¹ (RAN), an EU-wide umbrella network connecting key organisations and networks of local actors involved in preventing radicalisation to terrorism and violent extremism, including first-line practitioners and field experts, such as social and health workers, teachers, civil society organisations, including victims' groups, as well as policy makers, local authorities, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, security officials, counter terrorism specialists, think tanks, institutes, and academics. To date, RAN has

1 http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/index_en.htm



developed into a network of stakeholders representing over 700 organisations and around 1 000 participants from all 28 EU Member States.

The Commission has also asked RAN to gather a collection of relevant, existing best practices from around the EU. This collection of approaches ², lessons learned and best practices presents a set of eight practitioners' approaches in the field of radicalisation prevention, each of them illustrated by a number of select practice and project examples.

Built on the experience within RAN, including recommendations formulated at the occasion of the first High Level Conference (HLC), on 15 January 2014 the Commission adopted a Communication on 'Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Strengthening the EU's Response' ('Prevent Communication'). The Commission identified 10 areas where Member States and the EU could reinforce their actions to prevent radicalisation and recruitment (including for instance the recommendation to set up national prevention strategies and national networks of practitioners). At the same time, the Communication sets out how the Commission will support Member States and relevant stakeholders in their prevention efforts. Operational support measures announced by the Commission include, in particular, the deployment of RAN expertise to Member States for developing and implementing exit strategies and projects and the development of training programmes.

In June 2014, the Council adopted a revised EU Strategy on preventing radicalisation and recruitment ('Revised EU Strategy on Radicalisation'). This strategy on radicalisation recognises the importance to involve or draw on the experience of RAN as regards the development of:

- awareness raising programmes and sector specific training modules for first line practitioners;
- the involvement of and drawing on resources and expertise within civil society and the private sector to build resilience;
- the exchange of best practices and experience with a view to developing exit programmes;
- acquiring know-how and re-integrating former terrorists;
- steering research to understand the phenomenon of radicalisation in an ever evolving context;
- ensuring coordination between inter alia academics and first line practitioners; and
- informing future policy decisions, including in the area of exit strategies and programmes.

The Commission has also provided financial support in the form of grants to various projects supporting prevention of radicalisation and recruitment.

2 http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-best-practices/index_en.htm



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PROJECTS >3<

Specific objectives and expected deliverables of these projects are the following:

- to **strengthen networks** between the practitioners and policy makers.
 - » **Project example:** European Network of Deradicalisation.
www.european-network-of-deradicalisation.eu
- to **provide practical guidance** such as the development of recommendations and guidelines.
 - » **Project example:** Formers and Family – a project which endeavours to develop policy guidelines on how to involve families and formers in prevent initiatives.
- to **develop practical tools** such as training modules/programmes and e-learning material and tools.
 - » **Project example:** CoPPRa I and CoPPRa II – projects for the development of training material and programmes as well as e-learning tools.
www.copprra.eu
 - » **Project example:** Improving Security by democratic participation – a project which offers training packages to detect and react to signs of radicalisation.
www.isdep.eu/content/462/what-is-isdep
- to **develop audiovisual material** such as films with counter narratives.
 - » **Project example:** Victim's counter-terrorism gathering: The voice of the survivors against radicalisation.
 - » **Project example:** Counternarration4Counterterrorism.
 - » **Project example:** European Platform of de-radicalisation narratives – an audiovisual project that also involves the development of training material, collection of good practices, and establishment of a data base of narratives.
- to **create online hubs** for the purpose of exchange and search facilities on policy, research, case studies and best practice sharing.
 - » **Project example:** Formers and Family – a project for the establishment of an online hub facility for families, as organised through RAN.
 - » **Project example:** European Policy and Practices Exchange Portal.
www.counterextremism.org

In the period of 2014-2020, projects related to prevention of radicalisation will be funded under the Internal Security Fund (ISF) by its ISF-Police instrument. For the 2014-2020 period, just over EUR 1 billion is available for funding actions under the ISF Police instrument, of which EUR 662 million will be channelled through shared management and EUR 342 million through direct management >4<. Under the shared management, the Commission strongly encourages Member States to use available funds to support projects and measures to prevent radicalisation. As far as direct management is concerned the Commission plans to spend up to EUR 12 million to support relevant initiatives.

3 http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/projects/index_en.htm

4 Further info: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/security-and-safeguarding-liberties/internal-security-fund-police/index_en.htm