THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN COUNTER-RADICALISATION AND DE-RADICALISATION

A WORKING PAPER OF THE EUROPEAN POLICY PLANNERS' NETWORK ON COUNTERING RADICALISATION AND POLARISATION (PPN)

1 Aims of the paper

This paper aims to outline the role of civil society in counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation. It sets out the key terms and definitions and the rationale for civil society involvement, provides a number of case studies from European countries, and summarises some of the key challenges and lessons learned for work in this area.

This is an emerging field of work, and the ISD would appreciate feedback to help refine on-going work in this area. Please send your comments to Rachel Briggs at rbriggs@strategicdialogue.org or Alex Strugnell at astrugnell@strategicdialogue.org.

2 Defining the terms: radicalisation, counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation

The way that radicalisation, counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation are defined and interpreted in practice differs from place to place. This report adopts a series of definitions, but recognises that others may have different approaches.

Radicalisation

The way in which the terms 'radical' and 'radicalised' are used in the context of radicalisation towards violence differs across Europe, and this impacts on the objectives of policy and the focus of programmes and projects. For instance, some countries have tended to focus mostly on Al-Qaeda related and inspired radicalisation and incorporated these policies within their counter-terrorism strategy, whereas others have focused on other forms of extremism, such as far right or far left, and incorporated these approaches within a strategy to tackle political extremism, social polarisation or social protection. Others have taken a mixed approach. This report takes a broad approach in order to encompass all forms of radicalisation, and defines it as **the process through which an individual changes from passiveness or activism to become more revolutionary, militant or extremist, especially where there is intent towards, or support for, violence**. It includes Al Qaeda inspired and related radicalisation, far right and far left violent movements, and animal rights and environmental extremism.

There are many theories about the causes of radicalisation. Most agree that there is **no single pathway**, but instead a mixture of factors that help to contribute towards an individual becoming radicalised. As the European Commission's expert group on violent radicalisation concluded, "The convergence of several possible contributing variables can usually be found at the origin of the radicalisation process." Each observer will stress some factors over others, but pulling together all the relevant ideas and evidence, it is possible to offer a **broad framework of the range of drivers or factors of radicalisation**, which is outlined in Box 1 below.

Type of factor	Factors or drivers of radicalisation
Divisions	Lack of integration, ghettoisation, polarisation, internal community divides, identity crises, isolation, weak community leadership/infrastructure
Grievances	Under-employment, poor education, political/democratic disenfranchisement, discrimination, foreign policy and international conflicts/disputes
Narratives	Political movements, ideologies, faith
Means	Social/family/criminal networks, vulnerable/risky institutions and places, vulnerable individuals, charismatic individuals

Box 1: A framework for the factors or drivers of radicalisation

Counter-radicalisation

The report uses the definition of counter-radicalisation adopted by the United Nations Working Group on Radicalisation and Extremism that lead to Terrorism:[1] "**a package of social, political, legal, educational and economic programmes specifically designed to deter disaffected (and possibly already radicalised) individuals from crossing the line and becoming terrorists**." In other words, counter-radicalisation works upstream to prevent radicalisation by reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience. It is closely linked to 'counter-polarisation' projects, aimed at reducing divisions between different groups within society. In many European countries, **counter-polarisation is an integral part of counter-radicalisation** (whether or not the term itself is used), or is used interchangeably in policy language. This reflects dominant ideas about the causes of radicalisation, as outlined above, particularly that relating to 'divisions' and 'grievances'.

Although there are many areas of overlap between the two, it is useful to understand the distinction between the counter-polarisation and counter-radicalisation. Counter-polarisation is seen as being part of the long-term effort to reduce radicalisation because many of the causes of polarisation are thought to be linked to the radicalisation process. However, to be successful in achieving their aims – integration, a sense of belonging, and improved life chances, for example – **these projects and activities must often be kept distinct from security-related interventions**, which would undermine the very basis of their purpose. The lines between the two are not always clear, which can lead to confusion and a blurring of the lines.

[1] *First Report of the Working Group on Radicalisation and Extremism that Lead to Terrorism: Inventory of State Programmes*, United Nations, available from: http://www.un.org/terrorism/pdfs/radicalization.pdf

There are **differences about when countries consider radical behaviour to become dangerous**, which influences whether they intervene, when and how. Some consider certain ideologies or branches of religion – for instance Salafism – to be inherently dangerous, whereas others focus on the point at which thoughts are translated into violent actions. For some countries, anti-democratic behaviour is tackled, whether or not it is linked to a particular ideology or the use or threat of violence, because it is seen as being a necessary part of the radicalisation process.

De-radicalisation

Like counter-radicalisation, the term de-radicalisation can mean different things to different people.[2] For the sake of clarity this report will adopt the definition offered by John Horgan[3] which has been adopted by the United Nations Working Group on Radicalisation and Extremism that lead to Terrorism:[4] "**programmes that are generally directed against individuals who have become radical with the aim of re-integrating them into society or at least dissuading them from violence**." De-radicalisation seeks to reverse the radicalisation process for those already or partly radicalised or help them to disengage with radical or extreme groups, whether or not they change their ideas. As a result, it tends to work with individuals more than groups and – in contrast to counter-radicalisation – is much further downstream at the point of vulnerability and danger.

It is important to **distinguish between the cognitive and behavioural aspects of de-radicalisation**; in other words, de-radicalisation that seeks to change views versus disengagement which aims to alter behaviour. It is often assumed that one necessarily leads to the other, but research shows that this is not always the case.[5]

3 The role of civil society in counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation

This report focuses on the role of civil society in counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation. **Civil society can be defined as the totality of voluntary civic and social organizations and institutions that form the basis of a functioning society as opposed to the structures of the state or the market.** This report focuses on three aspects of civil society: **community groups** and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), **frontline workers** within state and non-state services, and the **general public**.

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[2] International Crisis Group, "Deradicalisation and Indonesian Prisons," *Asia Report* No. 142, 19 November, 2007, p.1

[3] See John Horgan, "From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on Radicalisation into Terrorism," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science (forthcoming); John Horgan, "Deradicalisation or Disengagement? Perspectives on Terrorism," Volume II, Issue 4; and John Horgan, "Individual Disengagement: A Psychological Perspective," in Tore Bjørgo and John Horgan (eds.), *Leaving Terrorism Behind*, NY (New York/London: Routledge, 2009).

[4] *First Report of the Working Group on Radicalisation and Extremism that Lead to Terrorism: Inventory of State Programmes*, United Nations, available from: http://www.un.org/terrorism/pdfs/radicalization.pdf

[5] Tore Bjørgo and John Horgan, 'Introduction' in *Leaving Terrorism Behind*, NY (New York/London: Routledge, 2009 p.4. See also Tore Bjørgo, *Racist and Right-Wing Violence in Scandinavia: Patterns, Perpetrators, and Responses*, Oslo: Tano Aschehoug, 1997; John Horgan, *Walking Away from Terrorism: Accounts of disengagement from radical and extremist movements*, London: Routledge, 2009; and Stuart Wright, *Leaving Cults: The dynamics of defection*, Washington DC: Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, 1987

Policy at both national (most European countries, the US and Canada, for example) and EU[6] levels has acknowledged the role of civil society in counter- and de-radicalisation. There are a number of ways in which civil society plays a role in counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation.

Civil society can help to prevent radicalisation by tackling the underlying economic, social and political drivers of radicalisation, which were outlined in the previous section. Governments play an important role in this regard in setting the policy framework, providing funding, and addressing structural issues, but communities also need to play their part for the overall approach to be successful. Government can sometimes struggle to conduct community-level intervention work at the local level, so there needs to be a partnership approach.

Civil society has a role to play in terms of narratives and messages. It can challenge the narratives of radicalisers and extremists and put forward positive alternatives. These counter-messages are often more effective when they come from communities themselves, rather than governments. This often goes hand in hand with work to strengthen citizenship, integration and a sense of belonging, and also that which seeks to create safe spaces for dialogue and discussion of contentious issues, especially among young people, to provide opportunities to explore the concerns that radicalisers seek to exploit. Part of the process of taking on divisive narratives is modelling an inclusive society that listens and responds to the needs and concerns of all citizens.

Civil society can spot the signs of vulnerability and work up stream to protect individuals from radicalisation, through improved parenting, neighbourhood support, and community resilience. Civil society response in this regard will often occur in the normal pattern of everyday life and interactions, rather than specific projects or interventions, but it requires communities to be equipped to play this role and have established intergenerational relationships. There is also a role for frontline workers such as teachers, doctors, social workers, health/mental health professionals, prison officers and probation staff who come into contact with potentially vulnerable individuals and will be in a position to offer support or refer individuals to specialised professionals for further help.

Civil society can play a role in the de-radicalisation process. Some community organisations will play a leading role in the process themselves, because of their specialist expertise, sometimes provided by staff and volunteers who have been radicalised themselves. Other community organisations and members will play a facilitative role, in providing practical help and emotional support to the individuals concerned and their families in the difficult days and months around the de-radicalisation or disengagement process. Frontline workers are also likely to be involved, with a heightened emphasis in recent years on the role of prisons, probation services and mental health professionals.

At the interface between prevention and interdiction or pursuit, civil society has a role to play in the prevention of a planned attack by providing information or intelligence that could help the authorities. A report from the UK government states, "Some of the best local information may be gathered at neighbourhood level by the street cleaners, wardens and housing officers. They may see or hear things that are a departure from the normal routine, but may not understand the relevance to violent extremism or know who to pass it on to in the most effective way."[7] To ensure civil society is prepared to

[6] For example, at the European level in the EU Action Plan on combating terrorism (15358/09) and the Stockholm Programme (17024/09).
[7] HMIC and Audit Commission, 2008

play this role, the community needs to trust the police and support the way in which they are going about dispensing their responsibilities. The authorities will sometimes have to act early or take risks in their responses which may result in mistakes; without prior community trust, this can impact on their ability to operate as communities would be less willing to give them the benefit of the doubt.

The table below summarises the **range of projects, programmes and activities that are incorporated within counter-radicalisation (and counter-polarisation)** across European countries according to the framework of drivers outlined in the previous section. As is obvious, community groups, frontline workers, and the general public feature heavily across all lines of activity.

Factors in radicalisation	Purpose of intervention	Types of activities/projects
Divisions	Create a sense of belonging and shared identity and reduce real and perceived isolation	Citizenship teaching, inter-faith dialogue, cohesion activities, language tuition, anti-discrimination projects, myth busting
	Increase integration of vulnerable communities and reduce isolation	Housing and integration policies, language tuition
	Reduce internal community divisions	Intergenerational projects, female empowerment, promoting leadership of young people
Grievances	Improve educational attainment	Targeted after-school clubs, mentoring and role models, language training
	Improve labour market outcomes	Leadership skills, mentoring and role models, professional networks, training and employment projects, apprenticeships, language tuition
	Reduce experience of discrimination	Anti-discrimination work, myth-busting, inter-faith and inter-community activities, cohesion projects
	Increase political participation and sense of empowerment	Dialogue, discussion forums, democratic platforms, campaigns on voting, use of social media platforms
Narratives	Increase resilience of key institutions vulnerable to radicalisation	Imam training (faith, social, inter-generational), institutional capacity building, training on spotting vulnerable individuals, improving relations between institutions and

		police/social services/other local officials
	Reduce involvement in illegal political activity	Diversionary activities for young people (sports, arts, politics, etc.), dialogue, discussion forums, democratic platforms
	Reduce attraction of extremist groups and their messages	Improving Islamic/political education, diversionary activities (sports, arts, politics, etc.)
Means	Reduced criminality within target group	Law enforcement, diversionary activities (sports, arts, politics, etc.), activities to improve educational attainment, mentoring and role models
	Increased support available for vulnerable individuals	Training for frontline workers, community mapping, information sharing protocols, capacity building for key institutions, prison imams, prison programmes
	Reduced attraction of extremist groups	Improving Islamic/political education, diversionary activities (sports, arts, politics, etc.)

Table 1: Counter-radicalisation projects according to factors in radicalisation and purpose of intervention

De-radicalisation projects take a number of different formats, but broadly speaking they seek to do one or more of the following things:

- Social and economic support for the individual so they have a means of supporting themselves in the absence of their former radicalised network or group;
- Social and economic support for the individual's 'receiving group' (their family and social network) to ensure they can provide adequate support for the individual;
- Psychological support and counselling, some intensive, others longer-term;
- Mentoring and role models;
- Diversionary activities;
- Discussions, dialogue and negotiation;
- Religious or ideological counselling;
- Helping to join up support for the individual from a range of state and non-state services.

4 Case studies of civil society involvement in counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation

This section provides **case studies of a number of counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation projects from across the EU**. Their purpose is to provide basic project information, an account of activities, lessons learned and project contact information in order to spread ideas about practice among

those wishing to engage civil society in this kind of work. They are presented as examples of practice rather than necessarily good practice; each project's success will depend on it being implemented in the right way by the right people at the right time and place, and there has been limited time available to verify and assess the relative impact of each project.

The case studies provided are:

- EXIT programme, Sweden;
- STREET (Strategy to Reach, Empower and Educate), UK;
- Violence Prevention Network, Germany;
- CoPPRa (Community policing and the prevention of radicalisation), Belgium;
- Channel, Supporting individuals vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists, UK;
- The Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism project to tackle hate speech on the Internet, Belgium;
- Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, US;
- Rewind, UK;
- The RecoRa Institute, UK;

Project name: EXIT, Sweden
Aims/objectives: To help individuals leave White supremacy groups, and to support them in establishing new lives with economic and social support structures to make their new lives sustainable.
Target audience: Set up to target former Neo-Nazis, but new sister programme targets those seeking to leave organised criminal groups.
Description/activities: EXIT was established in 1998, and is based on the notion that individuals join white supremacist movements not because of ideology, but due to social reasons and the search for status, identity, support and power. Individuals normally enter these movements when they feel excluded or unaccepted by society or have experienced a deep sense of insult. The majority of EXIT staff are former members of white supremacist groups, although they are complemented by others, including a physician and psychotherapists. The projects has a number of activities: • Work with individuals to help them leave behind these groups and forge sustainable new lives; • Work with the families of Neo-Nazis to enable them to support young people engaged in or involved with white supremacist groups; • Education for those frontline workers who engage with young people to enable them to spot

vulnerable young people and provide help and support.

EXIT's work with individuals is based on long-term cognitive treatment, helping individuals to disengage with white supremacist groups and reintegrate into society. It only works with those who have voluntarily come to the programme as it is important that the individual wants to change. Staff engage them in a number of ways, through direct discussions, taking them out for a coffee or to do an activity together, in order to build a good interpersonal relationship. Staff do not talk directly about ideology or try to challenge the ideas of the white supremacist movement, partly because the programme is based on the idea that young people enter these movements for other reasons, but also because the movements school their members with all the relevant counter-arguments so this can be a futile approach to take and simply put the young person into a defensive mode. This work is always conducted confidentially, as former members and their families are often threatened by the movements.

In the early days, staff are on hand 24 hours a day as the young person may need help at any moment and often won't have anyone else to turn to as they have probably broken ties with family and friends when they entered the movement.

They can be offered a range of different types of support: counselling; specialist help from a psychologist or psychiatrist; help re-establishing contact with friends and family; training in social skills; learning how to manage set-backs, how to trust others, and deal with conflict in non-violent way; safe-housing; and help finding a new job and re-establishing their new life. The nature and length of support offered is tailored to the individual, but on average individuals will be involved in the programme for 6-9 months, although the longest involvement has been 8 years.

EXIT also coaches the relatives of Neo-Nazis, helping them to develop parenting skills and work through what the family has experienced; they can convene meetings between the family and a range of service providers, should the family request that; and they can assist with police contact and protection where the family has been threatened by the group.

EXIT also conducts educational work with professionals working with young people (schools, social services, and police, for example) helping them to understand how the movement is organised, how to reach and influence individuals in these movements, and provides counselling in how to conduct case work. It conducts 200 school visits per year.

The programme believes its approach is relevant to individuals in other kinds of coercive movements, and has just started a sister project for individuals exiting organised crime groups.

Key points about the project:

- It only works with individuals who have referred themselves to the programme so are motivated to change;
- It is mainly staffed by individuals with direct personal experience of white supremacist movements;
- It is based within a youth centre, Fryshuset, which provides social support and leisure facilities for young people. This means it is not isolated, has the backing and support of a larger organisation, and is integrated within a wider youth project;
- To focuses on the emotional and social causes rather than ideology;
- It recognises the importance of re-establishing support structures and social networks;

- Has become well-known and so is seen as an enemy by the white supremacist movement – this helps to raise its profile among EXIT's target audience.

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Project name:

STREET (Strategy to Reach, Empower and Educate), UK

Aims/objectives: STREET aims to reach and engage young Muslims who are outside mainstream institutions, including mosques, in order to provide alternative and safe environments and, where necessary, targeted interventions.

Target audience:

The project is targeted at young Muslims in the local area.

Description/activities:

Located in Brixton South London, STREET is an outreach project which provides easy and direct 24-hour access for a significant number of young Muslims in south London, many of whom are regarded by extremist and terrorist groups as recruitment targets.

Its work is divided into four types of activities:

- Outreach, including football, boxing, and recreational and educational field trips;
- Youth HQ, including the delivery of thematic curricula, education, after-school programmes and social engagement events;
- Counselling, including self-referrals, links to youth offending and probation services, career development guidance, and other projects;
- Counter-propaganda, including media work, deconstruction of messages, internet work, and STREET in-house media.

The project is a Muslim community initiative designed to counter the adverse impact of extremist and terrorist propaganda in a section of the community that is susceptible to it – the Salafi community. The project also receives recently released prisoners who might be vulnerable to recruitment and will establish informal relationships with the local police and specialist units, such as the Metropolitan Police's Muslim Contact Unit.

Conventional activities conducted in the area of outreach attract the largest number of participants and provide an opportunity for young people to get to know STREET and its staff in relation to safe and familiar activities (In the financial year 2009/10, 7,738 individuals were involved in STREET in this capacity, up from 4,600 the previous year). As a result of their involvement with the project, young people seek out STREET staff with their troubles and concerns because they have built up a trusted relationship. This might include anything from the normal social problems encountered by young people to issues relating to religious interpretations.

Young people are referred to other work streams within STREET depending on the nature of the issues

raised, and are offered counselling specific to their needs.

The project is heavily dependent on the fact that its staff and leadership are individuals who are trusted by the local community, and have credibility with the young people who use the services.

Key points about the project:

- It is a grassroots organisation, set up by the community for the community;
- Individuals involved are trusted by the community and have credibility with the young people they are trying to reach;
- It provides a safe environment for young people, from which specific and individual issues can be dealt with as and when they arise;
- It uses staff with specific training and experience;
- It focuses on religious issues alongside social and political ones

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Project name:

Violence Prevention Network, Germany

Aims/objectives:

This project works with individuals in prison convicted of violent crimes linked to far right extremism to reject their past, move away from extremism, and forge new lives. It has also recently begun to work with individuals who are religiously radicalised.

Target audience:

The project was set up to target far right extremists, but has recently been extended to work with religiously radicalised individuals.

Description/activities:

The Violence Prevention Network runs a project working with individuals in prison who have been convicted of violent crimes linked to far right and – more recently – religious extremism. It has been running for over 10 years. The Violence Prevention Network is funded by the Federal Agency for Civil Education, which is part of the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs, but the project is run on an entirely independent basis.

The project has three elements:

- A 23 week programme in the prison with a small group of prisoners;
- One year dedicated support once the individual has been released from prison;
- Support for the individual's family before and after release.

The work with individuals is conducted on a voluntary basis; those taking part are free to leave at any time. Individuals are brought together into small groups of approximately 8 for a 23 week programme, which amounts to an average of 0.5-1 day per week. The unique approach of the training programme is the fact that it brings together social work with civic education in order to disentangle the individual's sense of anger and hatred from their political view of the world, and help in tackling both the factors driving their anger and also re-educating them in the ways of democratic society and alternative ways of expressing and answering their concerns. The programme talks about a 'hierarchy of needs' – first is self-responsibility and leaving violence, and second is leaving the ideology. Both are important, but if you attack the ideology first, you leave the individual with nothing and no sense of meaning or worth. In a very few cases the training was in danger of failing because it has been too quick to focus on ideology.

During the training they cover a number of discussion points, with the aim of helping them to reflect on their crime, understand what motivated them to engage in violence linked to extremism, help them identify alternative responses, and offer civic education to help reintegrate them into the ways of democratic culture. They also receive help in alternative ways of handling conflict without resorting to violence. It will involve discussions, role playing, social work, and other activities. Counsellors also work with the individual to prepare them for life outside of the prison and institutional structures.

Individuals receive dedicated support for one year after their release, although in many cases there is contact longer than this. The individual has the name, address and phone number of their mentor (the same person they have dealt with in prison to provide continuity); they meet every month with their mentor, more often if they need to; their mentor helps to find them accommodation and employment, although the latter is becoming more difficult in the current economic climate; and the mentor arranges 3-4 meetings with the individual's family.

The programme also works with the individual's family and social networks to help prepare them for the individual's release, and to better understand the context into which the individual will return. In many cases, the individual is returning to a violent setting; either in the family, or wider social scene. This is especially the case in cities and towns, rather than rural areas. It is important to be realistic about this, and build the programme and support around the individual to deal with it, as it can be dangerous to teach individuals simply to avoid conflict and violence if they are actually daily realities for the on the outside world.

The project is seen as successful; initially, there were problems getting participants, but the programme is now well established with a good track record, only 5% of those who have been through it return to prison, and the drop-out rate from training is just 2%. The project has not been formally evaluated; project staff are keen to spend their funding on delivering the service (which costs 8,000 Euro per person) and the Federal government has not offered additional funding for evaluation. It is limited to those who are held within the youth justice system, but staff would like to extend it to young adults, too. It has recently been extended to those who are religiously radicalised.

Key points about the project:

- It is a voluntary project so individuals are motivated to take part;
- It only works with individuals convicted of violent crimes linked to radicalisation;
- The programme is scheduled for as close to the individual's release date as possible;
- It is seen as being independent from 'authority' which is vital for its credibility and in gaining the

trust of individuals involved;

- Programme workers take the individuals and their ideas seriously;
- Contact is consistent and long-term – individuals work with the same person inside and outside of prison so have a trusted relationship;
- It is vital to work with families, although this can be the most challenging aspect of the programme.

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Project Name:

CoPPRa (Community policing and the prevention of radicalisation), Belgium

Aims/objectives:

The project aims to improve the capacity of frontline police officers to prevent radicalisation.

Target audience:

Frontline police officers working to prevent all forms of radicalisation

Description/activities:

CoPPRa is a project funded by the EU with co-funding from the Belgian Federal Police. It rests on the assumption that regular frontline police officers – community police officers – have an important role to play in preventing radicalisation because they work on the ground, understand their local communities, and tend to have good community links. This means they are well-placed to spot the signs of radicalisation and work in partnership with local communities to prevent or tackle it. However, such police officers do not always have a good understanding of radicalisation, know the warning signs, or understand what to do in response. This project has aimed to help plug those gaps through the spread of knowledge and training.

The project has three areas of activity:

- The creation of a practical, user-friendly tool to support frontline police officers in detecting signs of radicalisation at an early stage. It has taken the form of a 'pocket guide' which includes guidelines on community engagement, brief information on the indicators that officers might see, and logos, symbols and tattoos used by the full range of groups operating across Europe. It is highly visual and written in a basic and accessible style. The guide is available free of charge, and will be made available in electronic format in December 2010.
- The development of a common curriculum for training frontline officers in how to use the tool in their daily work. This takes the form of a longer manual for training, which can be used by police schools or the individuals responsible for training within individual police forces. It includes information on the full range of groups and movements, allowing trainers to tailor the

training to the local threat context. It includes material on terminology, the radicalisation process, indicators, case studies, how to build community relations, legal frameworks, and group profiles. The manual is available free of charge, and will be made available in electronic format in December 2010.

- The identification and exchange of good practice on how to stop the spread of radicalisation in close partnership with other local partners. A number of examples are provided in the training manual, and ideas were exchanged at a recent EU-wide conference organised as part of the project.

The project has a steering committee and experts group made up of country representatives and subject experts from the participating EU countries and the Council of Europe. The international composition of these groups has helped to ensure that a wide range of expertise can be used and the end products will be applicable in the different national contexts. The project has also been presented at the EU's Terrorism Working Group meetings, which has helped to disseminate information to all EU countries.

There are plans for a second phase of CoPPRa, which would include the roll out of a web portal to house the guide and training manual, and act as a depository for good practice. The products will be updated, and more examples of good practice will be compiled. It is also hoped that both products will be translated into all 27 languages of the EU.

Key points about the project:

- It has a very specific target audience so is able to tailor its products to their needs;
- It seeks to provide information in a practical and usable way, though grounded in expert understanding;
- It has clearly defined goals and those running it have avoided the temptation to go broader which has enabled them to deliver and on time;
- It has involved considerable liaison with target audiences in each of the countries to ensure the products are relevant in each of the local contents.

Contact information:

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Project Name:

Channel: Supporting individuals vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists, UK

Aims/objectives:

The Channel process aims to provide support to individuals at risk of being drawn into violent extremism. It has three objectives:

- To identify individuals at risk of being drawn into violent extremism;
- To assess the nature and extent of that risk;
- To develop the most appropriate support for the individuals concerned.

Target audience:

The principal target audience for the Channel process is those individuals vulnerable to recruitment to Al Qaeda affiliated, influenced and inspired groups. However, it recognises that the principles that underpin in are equally relevant to those who may be targeted by other violent extremist groups, and as such, the process may be used locally for all vulnerable individuals.

Description/activities:

The work of Channel is organised by the Channel Coordinator who is often a police officer working at the local level. Their role is to establish and maintain a multi-agency panel to enable risk assessment and decision making, and develop strong relationships with partners locally. It is vital that they understand the communities they serve.

The main work of the Channel process is conducted through the multi-agency panel. It is usually chaired by the local authority and includes statutory and community partners along with the Channel Coordinator. Depending on the nature of the case, the panel may include: police; local authority Prevent lead; schools, colleges, and universities; youth offending services; health services; UK Border Agency; social workers; housing; prisons; probation; and local communities, voluntary organisations and charities. Local areas can decide whether to have a single Channel panel for all cases, a bespoke panel for each case, or to work through an existing panel or group with the right mix of representation.

Channel is not a process for gathering intelligence, but does require the sharing of information about people at risk. Information sharing is governed by UK legislation and is guided by principles of necessity, proportionality, and consent (where possible).

Referrals are first screened by the Channel Coordinator to ensure they are not malicious or misguided, that the person's engagement with the process would not compromise with an ongoing investigation, or that the individual is not vulnerable. In these cases, the individual does not enter the Channel process. As long as this is not the case, the preliminary assessment process begins, where the Channel Coordinator, their line manager and senior statutory partners assess the risk. Then a needs assessment is carried out to determine the kind of support that is needed by the individual.

Key points about the project:

- Local areas are encouraged to tailor the process to their local needs;
- It can deal with individuals vulnerable to radicalisation linked to all forms of threat;
- Local areas are able to integrate the process into existing frameworks if they choose;
- It provides a multi-agency response to ensure all relevant support structures are brought to bear.

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Project Name:

The Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism (CEOOR), Belgium

Aims/objectives:

The Centre aims to promote equal opportunities and fights any type of discrimination, exclusion, restriction or preferential treatment based on race, skin colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital status, birth, wealth, age, religion or ideology, present or future state of health, disability, or physical characteristics. It also works to maintain the fundamental rights of foreign nationals, promotes the struggle against human trafficking, and reports on the nature and scope of migration flows.

Target audience:

The Centre's target audience is the government, the public, and the minority communities on whose behalf they work (as defined above).

Description/activities:

Training for public servants to ensure they are aware of the needs of minority groups and understand how discrimination can occur. Training is conducted with police, judges, teachers, and civil servants.

The migration monitoring service monitors and analyses migration and associated services to ensure that the fundamental rights of foreigners are maintained. Related areas of study include visas, access and equality of the approval process for refugees, detention centres, extradition processes, and access to education and emergency medical help.

The Centre has developed a specific programme to tackle hate speech on the Internet. It includes:

- A hotline;
- Awareness raising activities;
- Advice and recommendations for policy makers and practitioners.

The hotline receives calls and emails from those who have observed hate speech on the Internet, and receives approximately 10 such complaints each week (550 per year) which come from a variety of people rather than one specific group. Staff examine each complaint, looking at the online content to decide whether it constitutes a breach of the law. If it does, staff contact the author, host, webmaster, or contact point to request that they remove the content. If they refuse to, staff have the option to file a complaint with the police. Complaints have risen from 100 per year four years ago to 550 per year today. The Centre does not have the resource to proactively search the Internet for material that intends to incite so relies on complaints from the public.

The Centre also conducts awareness raising workshops in schools to debate the limits of freedom of speech, the effects of hate speech, legal action, and individual responses. They run 30-50 such workshops per year, and have also – on request – run them for newspapers and webmasters. For the latter, workshops focus more on the law surrounding hate speech on the Internet and how a moderator should intervene.

The Centre also advises the authorities on how to carry out their responsibilities in relation to hate speech on the Internet. It monitors developments in other countries to ensure local and national authorities are

kept up to date on latest legal, policy and practical developments.

Key points about the project:

- The Centre is a publicly funded and constituted body so has the authority and legitimacy to act in the area of equalities and discrimination;
- As well as working to remove hate speech on the Internet, the project also works proactively with school children to prevent the occurrence of hate speech in the future;
- It also works with those creating and maintain web content to ensure they recognise hate speech, understand the law and know what they have to do to fulfil their responsibilities.

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Project Name:

Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL), Department of Homeland Security, US

Aims/objectives:

To conduct public outreach and engagement with Arab, Muslim, Sikh, South Asian, Somali, and Middle Eastern communities as part of wider efforts to protect America.

Target audience:

Ethnic and Religious Minority communities (as defined above) as well as the wider American public.

Description/activities:

CRCL is engaged in a number of activities.

It has hosted community roundtables in the key cities where it is active: Washington, DC; Houston, Texas; Chicago, Illinois; Los Angeles, California; Boston, Massachusetts; Detroit, Michigan; Columbus, Ohio (and other metropolitan areas of Ohio); and Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota. They provide an opportunity for communities to share information and listen to community concerns.

It has hosted four roundtables with young Leaders on the theme, 'Roundtables on Security and Liberty: Perspectives of Young Leaders Post-9/11' with representatives from the Arab, Muslim, Sikh, South Asian and Middle Eastern American communities.

CRCL manages an 'Incident Community Coordination Team' that allows CRCL to engage with key community leaders in the aftermath of any potential international threat or homeland security incident. The team was officially convened following the London arrests in August 2006, the Ft. Dix and JFK arrests in June 2007, the London and Glasgow terror attacks in late June 2007, the release of the National Intelligence Estimate in July of 2007, the Ft. Hood incident in November 2009, the attempted bombing of Northwest Airlines Flight #253 in December 2009, and most recently after a series of

suspected hate-crimes in September 2010

Based on recommendations from key communities, CRCL has worked to improve the cultural competency of DHS and other federal, state, and local law enforcement personnel through training. Discussion topics include: misconceptions and stereotypes of Arab and Muslim cultures; effective policing without the use of ethnic or racial profiling; and a best practices approach to community interaction and outreach. In addition, CRCL has widely distributed its training posters on common types of Muslim and Sikh American head coverings, developed a training DVD on basic aspects of Arab and Muslim cultures, and has created a training poster on the Kirpan, a Sikh article of faith.

One significant aspect of CRCL's engagement effort is the promotion of the civil service at job fairs, conferences, and in media outlets serving ethnic and religious communities. As a result, community leaders have begun encouraging young people in their communities to put aside scepticism and seek employment with the Federal government. The National Security Internship Program, a partnership between the FBI and DHS, has brought almost 2 dozen Arabic speakers into the intelligence divisions during the summer of 2009.

Officials from CRCL are also engaged in various efforts to promote international cooperation.

In addition to its official website, www.dhs.gov/crcl, CRCL recently launched a website that highlights its outreach engagement work and provides access to many of our training and cultural competency tools: www.dhs.gov/crcloutreach.

CRCL has no operational role in disrupting terror plots and its engagement activities do not involve source development or intelligence collection.

Key points about the project:

- Meetings and roundtables provide safe spaces for the exchange of information, learning and discussion;
- The fact that government organises this work highlights to these communities its willingness and desire to work in partnership with communities;
- Community engagement occurs across government, but CRCL provides a point of focus for this kind of work;
- The ICCT is a practical and real time means of partnership.

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www.dhs.gov/crcl; www.dhs.gov/crcloutreach

Project Name:

Rewind, UK

Aims/objectives:

To provide generic anti-racism awareness sessions for young people and staff. And to provide support to those vulnerable to recruitment to far right groups, and help to those in influencing positions, such as teachers.

Target audience:

Professionals, community groups, young people and children in relation to anti-racism work; and young people at risk of recruitment to far right groups.

Description/activities:

Rewind conducts bespoke intervention work with white young people and adults who are at risk of becoming involved/are already involved in Far Right activity and ideology. In some cases, this is delivered one-to-one.

They also do it through sessions for small groups of around 12 people which are conducted over a prolonged period of a few months. They tend to be very racist individuals, and staff/volunteers work to build their trust and cement relationships that are on their level. Rewind staff focus on listening and letting the young people open up and share their views, challenging them without judging them.

They also run Peer Education training courses where participants learn delivery techniques and also in-depth knowledge around issues of 'race', racism, identity, belonging and extremism. In their sessions, they have a range of resources they can use: DVDs, PowerPoint presentations, discussion based debate and the sharing of the personal stories of those involved with Rewind to provide a safe space for discussion without judgment. They are also able to conduct a DNA test to provide participants with their genetic lineage for up to 20,000 years. This helps to undermine the idea of "race" purity. As well as challenging the ideas of the far right, sessions like this have also been shown to increase self-esteem and self-confidence, which can sometimes be underlying issues behind their behaviour patterns.

Rewind organises educational field visits to places such as Liverpool International Slavery Museum, Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre, and Auschwitz and other death camps in Poland. They have also developed early years' interventions for nurseries and primary schools, and are involved in training staff at a number of football clubs.

The project is based in Sandwell, West Midlands, but works nationally. Satellites of the project have been established in six other areas of the UK, and the project has also worked outside the UK in Austria, the Netherlands, France and Poland.

Key points about the project:

- Some of those working with Rewind are former members of far right extremist groups, so have firsthand knowledge and understanding of the issues and can relate to the young people Rewind works with;
- It focuses on listening and non-judgement which helps young people to open up and engage in the project's work – young people need safe spaces that are blame-free;
- It is housed within the Sandwell primary care trust (West Midlands), but works nationally/internationally;
- Rewind relies heavily on project funding rather than core funding, which raises issues of ongoing sustainability – it would be better for it to be mainstreamed;

- It takes a systematic approach involving all those who can help.

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Project Name:

The RecoRa Institute, UK

Aims/objectives:

To embed expertise on recognising and responding to ideologically based violence within and across government agencies and community based organisations.

Target audience:

Principally concerned with young people vulnerable to radicalisation towards global Jihadist and extreme right wing ideologies, but also working on training related convicted terrorists and gang violence.

Description/activities:

The RecoRa programme emerged from an EU-funded project 'Recognising and Responding to Radicalisation' which explored the factors that restrict front line workers from proactively engaging in work to prevent violent extremism, and the approaches most likely to enable street level workers to engage with Government and security agencies in order to support vulnerable young people. The project worked across six cities (Amsterdam, Utrecht, The Hague, Rotterdam, Essen and Birmingham) and the final report offered new insights and recommendations for improving policy and practice.

These included the recommendation to develop a training programme, which was subsequently tested with teachers, neighbourhood police officers, youth workers, elected officials, policy makers and senior managers, Muslim women activists, Muslim young people, Imams and teachers in Islamic schools, and Muslim community activists in the UK, Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark. These modules were used to develop the series of training programmes collectively called The RecoRa Prorgamme and The RecoRa Institute – a pan-European partnership – has been launched to continue this work. Within the UK, the development of the RecoRa Progamme was led by the Government Office for the West Midlands, supported by the then Department for Children, Schools and Families.

The Recora Institute uses training as a tool to build colloborative partnerships within and across government agencies, and with community based organisations. Their overall aim is to embed expertise on recognising and responding to the processes that encourage individuals to support or engage in violence justified by ideology. Their objective is to reduce the reliance such bodies invest in external experts in order to enhance the speed and depth of mainstreaming violence reduction practice.

The RecoRa programme has two key features : a process for embedding expertise utilising the training programmes and tools developed; and a set of direct interventions aimed at disengaging young people

from the radicalisation process. Its activities include:

Training programmes for strategic managers, policy makers, frontline workers and community activists, including 2-5 day courses, master classes, modules, and residential courses. Modules covered include information about the radicalisation process and the groups/networks involved, safeguarding children and young people, developing a solution matrix, outcome management, designing interventions, managing convicted terrorists, recognising and responding to the narratives of the new extreme right, and mentoring young people.

The Institute has a process for embedding expertise which supports local municipalities, police and security services, and not for profit community groups, to cascade The RecoRa Programme throughout their organisation. This is enabled through 'graduating' key staff that are provided with secure online access to the RecoRa materials. This 'graduate site' is used to encourage on-going professional development, and to provide resources so that they then train others in what they have learned, and to encourage a network for mutual support and sharing good practice.

Organisations, who become Associate members through a licence, receive on-going support through their graduate member of staff and receive mentoring to cascade the learning within their organisation – creating a Europe-wide network of cities and agencies linked together through their graduates. In some areas, RecoRa is developing and coordinating regional networks.

The RecoRa Institute also supports local areas to develop a direct intervention aimed at disengaging cohorts of young people from the radicalisation process. The intervention known as Journey of the Soul is one of the few interventions that have had a longitudinal impact assessment. The intervention uses a theory of change that draws on lessons from recidivism, faith based mentoring, spiritual well being, and community based learning theories. The intervention involving young people in a service learning programme, supported by individual and community based mentoring, culminates in a spiritual journey using Islam as a protective factor. The intervention is currently being retested in three cities within the UK.

Key points about the project:

- It is part of government, but independent of it;
- It positions itself at the interface of government, community, policy and research in order to draw on all that these different worlds have to offer;
- The graduate network seeks to ensure mutual support and ongoing learning among professionals working on these issues;
- It enables systemic change through a focus on small changes, as this is the level at which change is sustainable;
- It works through individuals rather than organisations as personal commitment is essential to the success of the work.
- It focuses on building shared narratives and therefore trains mixed audiences rather than specific disciplines.

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5 Challenges and lessons learned

A good deal has been written about the role of civil society in counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation as it has become an accepted part of public policy responses to radicalisation. Drawing on this literature and the case studies in the previous section, it is possible to outline a number of lessons learned and good practice about how to engage civil society effectively in both counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation activities. But although this work is often referred to as the 'soft' end of the spectrum, it is certainly not the easiest. Getting civil society engagement right in practice is notoriously difficult and raises a number of dilemmas for government and communities alike. This section **highlights what we know about good practice but shows where difficulties may arise**.

A project's success will rest to a large extent on the **quality of inter-personal relationships** between those involved from both government and civil society as well as at the level of project-client interface. Counter- and de-radicalisation are risky and difficult areas of work, so **trust is vital** and this is created more substantively at the personal rather than institutional level. Trust enables better communication and an appetite for openness and sharing of ideas and resources, which in a new and exploratory area of policy such as this is critical to ensuring the right lessons are learned and applied.

The long-term sustainability of an intervention is vital. So often projects are limited in what they can achieve because **funding is unpredictable or short-term**, or funding decisions are delayed due to political concerns or other contingent timetables. In a similar way, a **regular turnover of staff can be disruptive**, especially for intensive client-facing work. This can favour the **mainstreaming of services**, whereby a project is core funded through mainstream budgets so its continuity can be assured over a longer period of time, allowing project staff to think longer-term. Mainstreaming is not without its own challenges, though; some worry it potentially allows those reluctant to engage in these agendas to sideline the work, or conversely taints other work such as cohesion or equalities. There are also questions about how close government should be to some of these kinds of projects, as their involvement can undermine the project's credibility among the intended community.

Personal credibility of the individuals involved is important. It can be helpful for the person running a project to be able to relate to the potential clients to put them at ease so they open up and get involved. This might mean being of a similar age, race or ethnic origin, being the same sex, coming from the same area, or having had similar life experiences. It is also important, especially in work with young people, to have **'street credibility'**, which brings respect which can encourage young people to remain involved and hear hard messages in the right way. This is inherent rather than learned, and for project commissioners out of touch with the client base can be a difficult thing to gauge.

Some of the projects highlighted have **staff or volunteers who have been radicalised themselves**. This can be helpful because they have a good understanding of the client group – what drives them, what they have experienced, and importantly what they need in terms of help and support. It is obviously especially important in de-radicalisation projects working with individuals with acute problems. However, most agree that projects need a mixture of those with direct experience alongside professionals with other skills, such as psychologists, social workers, and health practitioners, for example. This blended approach brings a more holistic response. For ethical reasons, it is also important that projects provide support for staff and volunteers who are former radicals themselves, as exposure to radicals may have harmful effects on them by opening up old wounds.

For partnership work to be effective, there must be commitment on all sides to making it work. When either side is reluctant or unconvinced of the merits of working collectively, this becomes all too obvious and undermines the work and breaks down trust. It can be helpful for both government and civil society actors to make – and be seen to make – extra efforts to engage with partners, especially in the early days. For governments, this requires significant shifts in thinking and practice, especially in the broad realm of security; this is an area where government is used to leading in a top down way, which means that working collaboratively – let alone being the secondary partner in some cases – can be difficult. It requires new ways of working that are antithetical to existing organisational cultures, and new types of practical working arrangements relating to information sharing and decision making. At the same time, the state does bear ultimate responsibility for activities in which it is involved, so has a special concern to oversee the process.

A lack of information sharing inhibits an effective response, at both a strategic level and also within frontline service delivery. It is important that information gathered by the police and state security services can be shared (even if in a watered down version) with and between frontline workers and local partners who need the information to help create a comprehensive local picture of vulnerability and threat to ensure that their responses are tailored to the local need. In the area of security, the traditional approach has been to distribute information on a strictly 'need to know' basis, which means the default position is one of relative secrecy rather than openness. This can be problematic in two ways. First, on a practical level it can mean those most able to respond do so without sight of the full picture, which hinders their effectiveness. Second, it can breed mistrust and undermine partnerships if one side feels the other is needlessly withholding information. That is not to say that there are not also good and important reasons for information to remain classified or restricted.

There are often also sensitivities on the part of communities about working in partnership with government. In some European countries, there have been objections to the counter-radicalisation policy agenda which is seen by some as divisive and instrumentalising of communities, and also undermining efforts to enhance integration and a sense of belonging or strengthen democratic freedoms. Others worry about the fact that it stigmatises certain communities as 'problems' or 'security threats', or that government engagement is done solely through the prism of radicalisation rather than the full range of community concerns. Some have expressed concerns that engagement with the authorities will lead to co-option and is done partly for the purposes of intelligence gathering, which discourages participation and erodes trust. Certain marginalised communities traditionally have poor relationships with the government and authorities which can mar attempts to work together from the beginning. When communities do engage, they are often keen to maintain a safe distance from the authorities, guard their independence, and might be supportive of some but not all policies and interventions. The communities that governments need to partner will often be both their greatest allies and also their most fervent critics, which means these relationships are far from straightforward to maintain and are certainly not 'cosy'.

The CoPPRa project (outlined in the case studies in the previous section) has established six principles of good police community engagement, which are relevant across all forms of partnership:

- Attentiveness: the police should attend to their citizens' problems and 'be present';
- Reliability: there needs to be a degree of predictability about what the police do;
- Responsiveness: the police should provide a client-centred service that is reassuring to the public;
- Competence: the public respects a police organisation that can get the job done and where this cannot be done, the public respects a police force that clearly and honestly explains why;

- Manners: far more significant than what the police accomplish, is how they treat people on an interpersonal basis;
- Fairness: the police should treat all people fairly.

Governments need to have distinct approaches to engagement for counter-polarisation and counter-radicalisation purposes. While efforts to tackle polarisation are likely to have a positive long-term impact on radicalisation, their success will be inhibited if they are conducted through the lens of security. This immediately reinforces the uneven power dynamic between government and citizens, which can hamper efforts at partnership and risk leaving communities more marginalised and fragile rather than empowered and included. **Governments must also be mindful of *who* engages communities and citizens on counter-polarisation work.** Heavy involvement of the police and intelligence agencies/officers in integration work, for example, is not only inappropriate, but reinforces suspicions on the part of communities that they are under surveillance and undermines government messages about 'partnership'.

It is important that **responses are designed in a manner appropriate to the local problem and wider context.** If radicalisation is a social and political phenomenon – which is implied by the range of factors outlined earlier in the paper – then responses need to be tailored to the local setting. This means that projects successful in one area might not work elsewhere, which challenges the policy maker's tendency to roll out national programmes. It also means that evaluation of projects can be difficult, as so much is contingent rather than controllable. At the same time, **local areas are subject to a range of wider influences at national and international levels** which means that projects need to take account of these factors, too.

If frontline workers and community organisations are to play their role, they need the right skills and confidence. The RecoRa report (mentioned in the case study of the RecoRa Institute, above) draws on extensive consultation with teachers, neighbourhood police officers, youth workers, elected officials, policy makers and senior managers, Muslim women activists, Muslim young people, Imams and teachers in Islamic schools, and Muslim community activists. [8] It outlines a number of their messages and concerns, such as the need to focus on 'signalling concerns' rather than 'spotting radicals'; focus efforts on care-based interventions distinct from counter-terrorism; move away from the idea of the state promoting 'moderate' versions of religious and ideological beliefs; and a need to enhance understanding of what works. **While some individuals are naturally well-placed to do this work, there are skills and knowledge that can be taught or enhanced through training.**

Research shows that many frontline workers are concerned about their ability to recognise the signs of vulnerability and distinguish between radical or extreme views and dangerous intent. There is no profile or set of characteristics for someone vulnerable to radicalisation, and even the so-called 'experts' cannot agree on the causes and drivers. Alongside better information and training, therefore, frontline workers also need trusted contacts with which they can discuss concerns to decide whether or not a particular individual is in need of additional support.

[8] Yousiff Meah and Colin Mellis, *Recognising and Responding to Radicalisation: Considerations for policy and practice through the eyes of street level workers*, RecoRa: http://www.recora.eu/documents.html

It is also important to engage the right people to do the right things; just because someone is effective at youth activities does not necessarily mean they will be well placed to deliver safe spaces projects, and although someone delivers a good de-radicalisation programme they might not be able to operate upstream within the counter-radicalisation sphere. It is also important that those without organisational or bureaucratic skills are offered the support they need.

There are sensitivities around who government should work with. Those who believe that certain religious views or political ideologies are intrinsically dangerous would argue that government should never partner with these groups as to do so extends them legitimacy and also funding. Others focus more on behaviours than ideas, and advocate working with those who can have an impact, sometimes precisely because of their proximity to the problem. In some European countries, the political climate is such that these decisions are loaded and political risk aversion can set in. This leaves policy makers and practitioners in a difficult position where strong political leadership is lacking.

Partnership will not be appropriate in all circumstances. There are areas where government involvement is problematic, such as in the training of religious instructors or attempts to reengineer community structures. There is an inevitable imbalance of power towards government, and the authorities need to be mindful of this in their interactions with civil society. There are also areas where civil society involvement needs to be carefully regulated. For instance, it is right for governments to encourage citizens to report suspicious behaviour, but this can also lead to malicious use of these systems, and communities should also not be encouraged to 'spy on their neighbours' in a way that would be harmful to community relations or anti-democratic. There will also be limits to what communities can deliver in terms of time, capacity, and skills.

A number of additional specific lessons emerge relating to de-radicalisation projects. Experience shows that these projects are more effective when they are voluntary, as personal commitment is vital. They need to be tailored to the individual, and support needs to be consistent and long-term. In most cases, individuals have broken ties with family and friends as they became radicalised, which means it is important for programmes to seek to re-build these relationships and address a participant's social as well as individual needs through family and social networks. It can help for projects to be locked into wider support systems rather than stand alone initiatives in order to provide a more holistic and person-centric response, but it is also often important for them to be seen as being independent of the state because of the views of the target client base.

5 Conclusions and way forward

This report has highlighted the **importance of civil society engagement in counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation**, which is now an accepted part of policy across most EU countries as well as key partners, such as the US and Canada. It is also enshrined within EU policy and guidance. Radicalisation, counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation are defined differently depending on the local context, but this report has taken a broad approach in order to be widely applicable. Broadly speaking, counter-radicalisation efforts seek to tackle divisions, grievances, narratives and means, and de-radicalisation projects are aimed at influencing both cognitive (ideas) and behavioural (actions) aspects. There is a wealth of projects across EU countries, and the report sets out a small sample of the types of activities that are on-going.

Civil society is now an integral player in counter- and de-radicalisation, encompassing community organisations, frontline workers, and the general public. Its contribution is vital because it can tackle many of the underlying drivers of radicalisation, can take on the narratives and messages of extremists, is well placed to spot the early signs of vulnerability, is a necessary element of the de-radicalisation process to ensure the individual has the right ongoing support structures, and it is of course important that government and state authorities work with the backing of the communities they are there to serve.

Community engagement is often described as sitting at the 'soft' end of the spectrum in terms of responses to radicalisation and violent extremism, but it is one of the most difficult types of intervention to get right. It is dependent on strong and trusted interpersonal relationships, a high degree of commitment to partnership working, long-term sustainability, the involvement of credible actors, locally-specific responses sensitive to wider influences, the involvement of well trained and confident professionals to ensure individuals receive the right kinds of support, and an appropriate distinction between counter-polarisation and counter-radicalisation work.

There are a wide range of challenges and dilemmas associated with civil society engagement. Short-term funding horizons, the turnover of staff and shifting political priorities can make long-term partnerships difficult to achieve in practice. There is a need for a cultural shift within security ministries not as accustomed to working in partnership, towards greater openness, information sharing, and joint decision making in some areas, while there is still an imperative for government to take overall responsibility because of its public accountability. This can be a difficult balance to achieve. There are also sensitivities surrounding partnership on all sides, including a reluctance of communities or frontline workers to stray into counter-terrorism and counter-extremism work, a resistance to this work coming into contact with other agendas such as cohesion and community relations, and there are areas where partnership might not be appropriate at all.

The centrality of civil society in efforts to tackle radicalisation is now accepted and underpinned by policy across the EU. Over time, as projects are trialled and lessons are transferred, we are learning more about what works, the challenges and dilemmas and how to forge effective partnerships between governments, communities and frontline workers. But as this is an emerging area of policy and practice, this report seeks to set out what we know so far and is cognisant of the limitations of knowledge. **Much more work is needed to enhance the knowledge base, share case studies, apply lessons learned and transfer good practice. The ISD and PPN work towards this goal, and would welcome feedback, ideas, additional case studies and reflections to continue this process of learning and exchange.**