RADICALISATION TRENDS IN BULGARIA, THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND GREECE

Round table
Sofia, 8 December 2015

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Background Review

Four forms of radicalization

- Right-wing radicalisation
- Left-wing radicalisation
- Islamist radicalisation
- Football hooliganism

Ideas
Actors
Manifestations
Root causes
Institutional responses
Background Review
Methods and sources

I. Expert interviews (50)
• 18 interviews with law enforcement, intelligence, prison officers, prosecutors;
• 32 interviews with experts, journalists, football club fans, right, left wing activists.

II. Desk research:
• secondary literature;
• media coverage;
• normative documents;
• court case proceedings
Islamist Radicalisation

External Threats

- **Terrorist activities** by international Islamist groups (EL, BG)
- **Passing transnational fighters** (BG, EL, CZ)

Home-grown threats (highly debated)

*Old Muslim minorities* - 12% in BG; 1.3 - 0.7% in EL

*Hanafi Sunni tradition*

*Immigrant Muslims* - 0.01% in BG and CZ

1.8 – 2.8% in EL

- **Salafi influences** (foreign emissaries, charitable aid, own citizens preaching Salafism)
- **Residents with links to Jihadist groups** (200 in EL)
Islamist Radicalization - External Threats Manifestations

- Imported international terrorism originating in Muslim countries in EL *(hijackings, kidnappings, mortal attacks at civilians 1973 -1991)*;

- Greece is presently used as logistical, recruitment and support basis by international Muslim terrorist groups;

- Terrorist act in Burgass, BG, July 2012;
- Passing transnational fighters (BG, EL, CZ)
(Potential) home-grown threats of Islamist radicalization - Manifestations

- Acts of approval of radical Islamist organizations (non-violent) (BG);
- Logistical support to passing transnational fighters (BG, EL);
- Proselytizing Salafi interpretations of Islam (purist in BG and EL);
- Professing Salafi interpretations of Islam (change in clothing and some rituals) (BG, EL)
- No transnational fighters who are own citizens (BG, CZ, EL)
Islamist Radicalization - Institutional Response

External threats (BG, EL)
- arrests of foreigners suspected of terrorism-related activities, being transiting foreign fighters

Home-grown threats (BG)
- Predominated of law enforcement actors: surveillance, police raids, arrests, court trials

**NEED for:**
- more institutional actors;
- soft measures and prevention;
- shared expertise on Islamist radicalism, Muslim Communities;
- Involvement of the Muslims themselves.
Understanding Islamist Radicalisation

Root causes of adoption of Salafism
- some knowledge about Pomak communities
- no knowledge about Roma communities/ local Muslim population in Greece

Charitable Islamic aid tied with proselytism of Orthodox Islam (*pull*)

Identity dynamics/ weak Muftiate/ low level religious education/ economic conditions (*push*)

Signs of Islamist radicalisation and potential for growing into violence
- factors; social meanings

Factors for resilience of local Muslims to Islamist radicalisation