Monitoring radicalisation risks in Central and Southeast Europe

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Center for the Study of Democracy
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Addressing Radicalisation in Southeast and Central Europe

**Thematic Focus**
- Right and left wing radicalisation
- Islamist radicalisation
- Football Hooliganism

**Objectives**
- Baseline review of threats and trends; identified risk factors (BG, EL, CZ)
- Review of institutional needs and gaps in monitoring and countering radicalisation
- Tailored monitoring tools for practitioners, based on transferrable EU good practices
Islamist radicalisation – a new threat for CEE/SEE?

External Threats

▶ Terrorist activities by international Islamist groups (EL, BG)
▶ Transnational terrorist fighters in TRANSIT (BG, EL, CZ)

Home-grown threats (highly debated)

Old Muslim minorities - 12 % (BG); 1,3 - 0.7% (EL) - Hanafi Sunni tradition
Immigrant Muslims - 0.01% (BG and CZ); 1,8 – 2.8% (EL)
▶ Salafi influences (foreign emissaries, charitable aid, own preachers)
▶ Residents with links to Jihadist groups (200 in EL)
▶ Non-violent acts of approval of terrorist organisations (BG)
▶ Logistical support for FTFs (BG)
Radicalisation as a new policy issue in CEE/SEE

- **History** of right-wing and left-wing extremism (EL, CZ)
- Emerging external and internal risks of **Islamist radicalisation** (BG, EL, CZ)
- Institutional response dominated by **national security** considerations (mostly repressive)
- **Lack of rigorous monitoring and evaluations** of radicalisation factors and risks; early warning mechanisms
- **Lack of reliable data and diagnostic mechanisms** impede evidence-based formulation of measures
- **Prevention** not part of the overall strategic approach or the mandate of key practitioners
A monitoring toolkit model

Extremist activity
- **What**: spread, nature, trends and threats of extremist acts and actors
  - **How**: criminal statistics, events, intelligence data, open source

Moving towards extremism
- **What**: risk and vulnerability indicators - meso and micro level (behaviour, events, appearances)
  - **How**: first-line practitioners, community actors, trained professionals

Vulnerable individuals and groups
- **What**: Social polarisation vs cohesion, trust, social tensions and conflicts
  - **How**: surveys, opinion polls, media, socio-economic indicators

All members of society

Situational Report on Extremist Trends

Radicalisation Risk Assessment Framework
Situational Assessment of Extremist Trends
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**All members of society**

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**SITUATIONAL REPORT ON EXTREMIST TRENDS**

**RADICALISATION RISK ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK**
Situational Assessment of Extremist Trends (2)

National significance

Active threat

1. Crimes (spread)
   - Incidence (crimes)
   - Share of crimes of interest in violent criminal activity
   - Share of crimes of interest in overall criminal activity
   - Proportion of specific crime types

2. Crimes (nature)
   - Number of notable events
   - Average number of participants in notable events

High risk

3. Actions (spread)
   - Events by type
   - Violent attitudes represented

4. Actions (nature)

Potential risk

5. Approval/social penetration

- Membership in extremist and support organizations
- Share of people willing to provide active support beyond electoral
- Share of people willing to provide electoral support only
- Share of people admitting general agreement with essential ideas
Situational Assessment of Extremist Trends

Core Indicators (quantitative)
- Criminal activity (active threat)
- Actions / notable events (high risk)
- Social penetration (potential risk)

Supplementary and thematic indicators
- Right-wing extremism
- Left-wing extremism
- Islamist extremism

Trend analysis
- Short term
- Medium term
- Long term
Application of the situational tool (BG, EL, CZ)

- Develop clear **definitions and guidelines for statistical recording** and classification of crimes of interest (police, prosecution, courts)
- Introduce a **unified institutional mechanism** for reporting, collection and analysis of relevant data
- Need for regular **sociological surveys on attitudes and victimisation** to measure supplementary indicators
- Assessment of available evidence and trend analysis should become the primary source of **strategic and operational decision-making**
Monitoring radicalisation: A Framework for risk indicators for first line officers
AIMS

To monitor:

- Radicalisation processes and risk factors that have not yet led to violence
- Individuals or groups that are vulnerable to or moving towards extremism but have not yet committed criminal acts

To flag:

- Risks and vulnerabilities (not identify radicalised individuals) for the purposes of early prevention
A framework of radicalisation risk indicators
* to be applied only in combination
* to be assessed in light of the local context/ individual circumstances
Risks of Islamist Radicalisation in the case of the Iztok Neighbourhood of the City of Pazardzhik, BG
The Salafi community

- 100 – 600 members
- Mainly Turkish Roma (less converts)
- Labor migration to WE countries (AT, DE)
- Salafism penetrates since late 1990s
- Transnational community
- Average social status within the Iztok quarter
- Stratification
- Own mosque (2002)
- Presently – younger age of followers (families)
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Recommendations: monitoring of radicalisation risks and prevention in CEE/SEE

**Develop institutional infrastructures**
- Central coordination body
- Multi-agency structure at local level
- Clear division of roles

**Early warning and referral mechanisms**
- Framework of indicators
- Risk/vulnerability assessment methodology
- Referral to tailored prevention measures
- Community engagement

**Build knowledge, capacities and expertise**
- Train frontline practitioners; integrate prevention in daily tasks
- Expertise among key professionals
- Bridge academic knowledge and policy
## Ways forward

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<th>National governments CEE</th>
<th>Civil society, academia</th>
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| • Consider the context specifics of CEE/SEE countries in formulating transferable best practices (indigenous communities vs migrant background) | • Develop CVE infrastructures  
• Develop knowledge, capacities and expertise  
• Put in place reliable diagnostic tools to guide policies  
• Involve communities | • Awareness raising of local specifics  
• Generate sound evidence and policy advice based on research findings  
• Advocate for community involvement in prevention |
Further reading: www.csd.bg
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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