Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 14625
25 September 2018

Radicalisation of migrants and diaspora communities in Europe

Report[1]
Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons
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Summary

While emphasising that migrants should not be perceived as increasing the risk of terrorism, as has been asserted by media and politicians in many countries, this report provides an analysis of the main factors that make migrants vulnerable to the influence of extremist organisations: the social environment, problems of identity, discrimination, economic conditions, cultural marginalisation, influence of the country of origin, etc.

The report also looks at strategies adopted by European countries at local, regional and national levels to prevent the radicalisation of migrants and members of diasporas. It stresses that measures to prevent radicalisation must ensure a balance between the security of the population and respect for the fundamental rights of those at risk from, or who are already subject to, radicalisation. Policies for the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism should focus on ensuring that migrants feel secure in host countries and socially included in societies without being forced to abandon their own cultural identities.

Finally, the report makes concrete recommendations as regards policy planning, preventive strategies and the prevention of radicalisation in prisons and online, as well as proposing preventive measures through education and social inclusion policies.

1. Reference to committee: Doc. 14244, Reference 4279 of 10 March 2017.

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A. Draft resolution[2]

1. The Parliamentary Assembly strongly condemns the recent terrorist attacks in Europe which have provoked intense debate on the infiltration of terrorists among arrivals of refugees and migrants. Whereas it is evident that the overwhelming majority of refugees arriving in Europe are fleeing violence and extremism in their countries of origin and are hoping for a peaceful and secure life, there is a real danger of radicalisation on the way, including in refugee camps and detention centres. Other migrants may be victims of radicalisation when they are marginalised or fail to integrate into their new society and environment, or when they suffer different forms of discrimination and violence on arrival.

2. The Assembly recalls its resolutions calling for action against radicalisation and violent extremism in Europe, including Resolution 2103 (2016) "Preventing the radicalisation of children and young people by fighting the root causes" and Resolution 2221 (2018) on counter-narratives to terrorism, and stresses that the absence of comprehensive migration policies significantly increase the likelihood of the spreading of violent extremism and radicalisation of migrants. However, it is convinced that migrants should not be perceived as increasing terrorism risks, as has been asserted by media and politicians in many countries.

3. The Assembly underlines that preventing and combating radicalisation requires close and co-ordinated collaboration between all relevant stakeholders at all levels of governance (local, regional and national), including with civil society.

4. The Assembly encourages member States to promote policies which underline the benefits of diversity and develop positive self-perception of individual identity free of any inferiority complexes amongst young people, so as to prevent alienation, lack of a sense of belonging, marginalisation and community isolationism from prevailing and providing a fertile breeding ground for radicalisation.

5. The Assembly is concerned about the recent, rapidly spreading phenomenon of radicalisation via the internet and social networks. It believes that a comprehensive approach reaching all users of the internet should be developed, involving all actors, including the internet industry and service providers, State authorities and civil society.

6. The Assembly is convinced that the media has an important role to play in preventing radicalisation. Regrettably, certain media inspired by populist politicians reinforce links between Islam and terrorism. Such negative narratives must be avoided and strongly condemned, and the media must report credibly on the consequences of radicalisation, raising awareness on the causes of violent radicalisation, as well as the ways to prevent it. The media must also give visibility to the positive aspects and benefits of diversity, not only to possible threats.

7. The Assembly stresses the vital role women and women's organisations play in preventing radicalisation in families, but also in communities. They should be encouraged to be more involved in policy making, educational activities and preventive community work.

8. Diaspora communities are essential for efficient counter-terrorism action, as they are best placed to identify and prevent young people from joining extremist organisations to avoid incomprehension and mistrust at local level. They have a unique potential for promoting personal relationships and non-contentious dialogue between peoples of different origins.

9. The Assembly welcomes the implementation of the Council of Europe Action Plan on The fight against violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism (2015-2017) and the adoption of a new Counter-Terrorism Strategy 2018-2022, which includes activities on fighting violent extremism and radicalisation. It encourages member States to support its implementation.

10. The Parliamentary Assembly therefore calls on Council of Europe member and observer States and States whose parliaments enjoy observer or partner for democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly to:

10.1. as regards policy planning:

10.1.1. promote legislative measures aimed at the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism;

10.1.2. co-ordinate preventive strategies and promote the exchange of information on good practices and experience in combating radicalisation;

2. Draft resolution adopted unanimously by the committee on 21 September 2018.

10.1.3. instruct the relevant authorities to compile data and research the mechanisms leading to radicalisation;

10.1.4. develop medium and long-term public policies to prevent radicalisation, in close co-operation with governments, municipalities, police and civil society, including through the participation of young people;

10.1.5. ensure that social and ethnic mixing is pursued in spatial planning policies, as well as in social housing and access to education;

10.2. as regards preventive strategies:

10.2.1. support the local authorities and municipalities in their crucial role in the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism and encourage the recruitment and involvement of municipality employees and teachers with a migrant background;

10.2.2. promote co-operation between local police and all faith communities to build trust and co-operation in preventing radicalisation and violent extremism;

10.2.3. encourage partnerships between law-enforcement authorities and migrant communities in order to prevent the involvement of persons at risk in extremist organisations;

10.2.4. promote the counter-narratives to radicalisation devised by the leaders of religious communities, scientists and the media, addressing religious understanding and providing a true knowledge of Islam;

10.2.5. promote interfaith dialogue as a tool to combat radicalisation and violent extremism;

10.2.6. promote inclusive, comprehensive, context-specific and demand-oriented education and training programmes as efficient tools to prevent violent extremism;

10.3. as regards prevention of radicalisation in prisons:

10.3.1. ensure that prison staff receive special training on recognising early signs of radicalisation among prisoners and its prevention;

10.3.2. promote and make use of the Council of Europe Guidelines and Handbook for prison and probation services regarding radicalisation and violent extremism;

10.3.3. provide better access to prisons for approved religious representatives, so that prisoners may practise their religion on a regular basis without being forced to seek alternatives, which can lead to radicalisation;

10.3.4. promote a mentoring system in prisons for prisoners who may have adopted violent extremist views and who express the wish to “deradicalise”;

10.3.5. encourage the introduction in prisons of specific gender-sensitive rehabilitation and reintegration programmes;

10.4. as regards the prevention of radicalisation through education and social inclusion policies:

10.4.1. promote social inclusion programmes enabling migrants to preserve their multiple cultural identities and reduce their vulnerability to radicalisation;

10.4.2. develop comprehensive guidance for education actors on the prevention of radicalisation of young people and encourage their disengagement;

10.4.3. promote teacher training on dealing with issues of radicalisation, hate speech and signs of violent extremism;

10.4.4. provide educational programmes promoting tolerance and understanding of different religions, philosophies of life, cultures and traditions;

10.4.5. create well-developed youth involvement programmes, which are essential in preventing involvement in the radicalisation process at an early stage;

10.4.6. create a European mechanism for fostering the social protection of working migrants and their families;

10.4.7. encourage the involvement of migrants and diasporas in social and sport activities as an alternative to involvement in extremist organisations and give visibility to and involve sport role models with a migrant background;

10.5. as regards the prevention of online radicalisation:

10.5.1. ensure co-operation between the internet industry and service providers, State authorities and civil society in order to promote powerful and attractive narratives to counter hate speech and radicalisation online;

10.5.2. create special communication police units tasked with the detection and removal of illegal web content promoting radicalism and terrorism on the internet;

10.5.3. promote the introduction of measures enabling all internet users to block illegal content on the internet and report it to the competent authorities;

10.5.4. develop youth awareness programmes on online hate speech and the risk of manipulation by radical organisations;

10.5.5. develop digital teaching and learning resources to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism, racism, hate speech and anti-Semitism, for use in lower and upper secondary education and teacher training;

10.5.6. encourage and support grassroots initiatives to promote self-regulation of the internet and combat online radicalisation;

10.5.7. organise training for religious representatives on the use of media to provide alternative narratives to hate speech and incitement to violence.

11. The Parliamentary Assembly invites the member States to:

11.1. sign and ratify, if they have not already done so, the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (CETS No. 196) and its additional Protocol (CETS No. 217), as well as other relevant Council of Europe legal instruments.

B. Explanatory memorandum by Ms Sahiba Gafarova, rapporteur

1. Introduction

1. The recent terrorist attacks, in particular those in Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, Istanbul, London, Moscow Nice and Paris, have provoked intense debate on the issue of the infiltration of terrorists into recent arrivals of refugees and migrants. Several media outlets have reported that migrant smugglers claimed to have been contacted by representatives of Daesh. That individual terrorists are exploiting the mass arrivals of refugees and migrants to facilitate their own entry into western Europe with criminal intent represents several risks, in particular the radicalisation of refugees through contact with these extremist elements, further stigmatisation of all migrants, and increasing, if disproportionate, fear and mistrust in destination countries.

2. The overwhelming majority of refugees arriving in Europe are fleeing violence and extremism in their native countries and come to Europe hoping for a peaceful and secure life. Unfortunately, some of them are radicalised on the way, including in refugee camps. Others may be subject to radicalisation when they fail to integrate into European society and suffer different forms of discrimination and violence upon arrival, as described in Mr Andrea Rigoni's recent report on violence against migrants.[3] The internet and social media have become efficient tools in the radicalisation process.

3. The Parliamentary Assembly has adopted several resolutions calling for action against radicalisation and extremism in Europe: Resolution 2011 (2014) on counteraction to manifestation of neo-Nazism and right-wing extremism, Resolution 2031 (2015) "Terrorist attacks in Paris: together for a democratic response", Resolution 2091 (2016) on foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq, Resolution 2103 (2016) on preventing the radicalisation of children by fighting the root causes or Resolution 2147 (2017) on the need to reform European migration policy. In these resolutions, the Assembly stresses that a lack of education and employment opportunities, and restrictions in freedom of movement are the major factors which make migrants more susceptible to radicalisation.

4. The Council of Europe has defined the fight against violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism as a key priority and adopted an action plan.[4] The present report and its recommendations could contribute to the development of further activities of the Council of Europe to implement this action plan.

5. In this report, I will try to address the questions of why migrants and refugees who arrive to Europe are at risk of radicalisation, how it happens and how this dangerous phenomenon can be prevented. However, the facts show that it is not only newly arrived migrants who are at risk of radicalisation, but also citizens of European countries of migrant origin who feel segregated and are facing the loss of their identity and culture of origin.

6. In this context, it is necessary to analyse the entire spectrum of factors that influence the radicalisation process, such as individual factors, social environment, political failures, violence and discrimination, cultural marginalisation, influence of the country of origin, etc.

7. A major part of the present report is devoted to the counter-radicalisation action of different European countries, international organisations and religious communities. In it, I analyse prevention strategies that work with vulnerable groups at the community level, aiming to promote counter-narratives to the propaganda of radical views. Special attention is paid to the use of social media by radical organisations and ways to counteract this dissemination.

8. In my recommendations, I will try to formulate the main principles around which European countries could develop a joint approach to prevent the radicalisation of refugees and migrants, based on the best practices of some European countries. These recommendations will address reception systems for migrants, social inclusion, and anti-discrimination measures.

2. Factors which influence the radicalisation of migrants and diaspora members

9. Several factors make migrants vulnerable to the influence of extremist organisations, such as the social environment, problems of identity, discrimination, economic conditions, cultural marginalisation, influence of the country of origin etc. It is very important to analyse these factors in order to protect migrants from the threat of becoming involved in radical organisations.

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3. Doc. 14066.
4. CM(2015)74-addfinal of 19 May 2015 (adopted at the 125th session of the Committee of Ministers).

2.1. Identity crises and recruitment

10. As I mentioned, it is not only recently arrived refugees and migrants, but also citizens of European countries of migrant origin and diasporas who feel discriminated against and marginalised by the host society, and can thus become highly vulnerable to extremist propaganda. Evidence shows that most of the perpetrators of the recent terrorist attacks in Europe were European Union citizens of migrant origin.[5] It is also worth noting that they are usually young individuals who have lost their sense of identity and purpose in life. This can be especially seen amongst second and third generation migrants of Muslim background, who have neither adopted the Western secular way of life, nor the Muslim identity of their parents. They are seeking to rediscover their religious roots and can be influenced by Salafist Jihadists, who, through extremist ideology, give them the impression of finding a new identity.

11. Contrary to the common belief that the majority of radicalised persons are religious fanatics, different European surveys show that this is not the case. Many of those involved have never read the Quran, nor are they regular visitors to mosques.

12. The majority of attacks appear to have been masterminded and perpetrated by individuals inspired by Daesh rather than those who work with the organisation directly, the Europol report[6] indicates. As an example, the perpetrator of the terrorist attack in Nice (France) in 2016, Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel, had a "clear and recent interest" in radical Islamic movements, even though no evidence was found that he had pledged allegiance to any radical group.

13. The use of migration channels has been attempted by Daesh, but remains very limited: two of the perpetrators of the attacks in Paris on 13 November 2015 were recently arrived migrants.

14. Attempts to corrupt Syrian refugees by local Salafists, as is the case in Germany where these extremists are particularly active in the community, do not seem, for the time being, to have been successful. In France, only a few children of Chechen refugees have been reported to be radicalised.[7]

15. Social media and the internet can accelerate the radicalisation process of individuals. Research shows that recruiters frequently use social media as an opportunity to reach new victims. They can talk and persuade the targets personally through social media, which is why it is highly convenient for them to use these tools for recruitment.

2.2. Marginalisation and vulnerability

16. Many migrants arriving to Europe have misconceptions because smugglers spread unrealistic and spectacular pictures of European cities via social media, as an advertisement for those considering migration. When they arrive in Europe, these false images can cause frustration and disappointment and can even trigger the radicalisation process.

17. According to a report by Qulliam (a counter-extremism organisation),[8] recruiters take the opportunity to preach and proselytise amongst refugees in both camps and mosques. Their propaganda is based on calling on the refugees to wage a jihad against non-believers. Their main goal, as the report states, is to recruit refugees for terrorist activities by provoking hatred for Western values and setting them against the European population. Extremist groups try to take advantage of the vulnerable situation of refugees, especially young people, by offering them food and money. They also seek to inflame negative attitudes toward refugees in Western society by linking them to extremists. The refugee camps most vulnerable to recruitment by Daesh are those in close proximity to military operations (in the same way that the Palestinian camps in Jordan or Lebanon are a breeding ground for recruitment, and the Syrian refugee camps in Turkey are often frequented by the IS to recruit young fighters). This is not the case for the camps in most other countries.

18. In reality, the majority of terrorist attacks are conducted by diaspora members and not refugees. Therefore, it is extremely important that politicians do not link the refugee population with the extremist threat.

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5. www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-38343124.
6. www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/modus_operandi_is_revisited.pdf.
7. Recently arrived refugees and migrants at risk of radicalisation, presentation by Mr Bernard Godard, Research Fellow, Centre of studies in social sciences and religion (CéSor/EHESS), Paris hearing, 2 June 2017, Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons.
8. www.quilliaminternational.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/refuge-pathways-of-youth-fleeing-extremism-executive-summary.pdf.

19. According to different studies, young migrants are more vulnerable to radicalisation than other age groups. The typical profile is: young people (specifically between 16 and 24 years of age) with a history of failure in school, with a criminal record, without work experience, often second generation migrants. This vulnerability can be an outcome of the psychological state[9] of the individual as well as external effects – such as family influence, discrimination or perceptions of marginalisation. Young unaccompanied migrants are more vulnerable to radicalisation if they are separated from their parents. In any case, it should be a priority of policymakers to understand and consider this phenomenon, as most of the perpetrators of terrorist attacks have this type of profile.

2.3. Radicalisation in prisons

20. In many cases, radicalisation takes place in prisons and detention centres. The European Union's Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, Gilles de Kerchove, stated in January 2015 that "[w]e know that prisons are a massive incubator for radicalisation", going on to say that rehabilitation and deradicalisation efforts could be a far more effective means of countering extremism than imprisoning people.[10]

21. There is a lack of information and data on people being radicalised in prisons, as well as on the effectiveness of measures applied to deradicalise imprisoned extremists. However, it is clear that to prevent radicalisation in prisons, prison staff should be trained to recognise signs of radicalisation.

22. Another important element of prevention of radicalisation in prisons is spiritual support to prisoners, which can be provided by chaplains and imams. Unfortunately, in many countries the access of religious representatives to prisons is very restricted. The right to freedom of religion is a fundamental human right and should be ensured for all people without restrictions. Moreover, chaplains and imams could deliver alternative narratives to extremist's propaganda.

23. In some European Union countries, a mentoring system is introduced in prisons for those inmates who want to deradicalise. Some of the mentors are former extremists who share their experience and offer guidance towards an alternative life.[11]

2.4. Economic and social exclusion

24. Another potential reason for radicalisation is economic and social instability. Many migrants live in segregated areas or communities and are surrounded by poverty, social exclusion and dissatisfaction. A survey on migrants' employment status in Germany[12] illustrated that only 13% of recent migrants have found a job, despite the fact that almost 90% of them have sought work. Data from an International Monetary Fund (IMF) report[13] shows that migrants, in general, have more difficulties in entering the labour markets of the host countries than the host population. Unemployment and lack of financial independence may eventually lead individuals to illegal ways of earning, but the recent terrorist attacks have demonstrated that there is no concrete evidence of a causal link between socio-economic factors and radicalisation.

2.5. Insufficient reception facilities for migrants

25. European countries have not been prepared to host such large numbers of refugees and migrants, therefore their reception has often been organised in a rather chaotic way, with minimal or no resources.

26. The mass arrivals of refugees and migrants have only increased the fear of Europeans for their future in terms of security, unemployment and identity. This fear, which has given more and more votes to extremist parties, means that European governments are reluctant to use resources for the economic and security needs of migrants.

27. At the same time, almost no special action has been undertaken or strategies planned by Muslim communities in European countries to facilitate the reception of migrants. Local Muslim associations are active but there has been no intervention by religious representatives at the national level.

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9. www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/may/26/jihadis-muslims-radicalisation-manchester.
10. www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/security/20150316STO34842/eu-counter-terrorism-coordinator-jail-is-a-major-incubator-of-radicalisation.
11. Dealing with radicalisation in a prison and probation context, RAN P&P-practitioners working paper, p. 8.
12. www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-germany-survey-idUSKBN13A22F.
13. www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/sdn/2016/sdn1602.pdf.

2.6. Discrimination against certain populations

28. Although in theory the law protects all European citizens from any form of discrimination, the facts reveal a different reality for long-term migrants: inequality in education opportunities, in finding employment, obtaining a house, facial recognition control in certain urban areas; all of which migrants are confronted with regularly. All of these issues resulted in the events in 2005 in France, when young people from disadvantaged urban suburbs set cars on fire and destroyed shops to vent their frustration at not being included in a society in which they felt segregated. However, their appeal was not heard, leading to much more serious consequences that we are witnessing now.

29. The discriminatory acts of police and anti-Muslim media messages are perceived by Muslim communities as being unfair and prejudiced and are very often used by jihadists to illustrate European societies as oppressors who discriminate against Muslims. Therefore, it is very important to strike a balance between adequate policies and community responses.

3. European prevention strategies

30. A number of measures have been taken by European countries at local, regional and national levels to prevent the radicalisation of migrants. The measures focus on early identification of persons who are targets for radicalisation, as well as strengthening and empowering communities which are vulnerable to radicalisation. Special measures for promoting the social inclusion of migrants and diaspora members as well as counter-narrative activities are particularly important in preventing radicalisation. We should also stress the vital role of education in providing necessary intercultural and religious knowledge to everyone.

31. Several European countries have adopted counterterrorism action plans or strategies for the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism (including Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom).[14] Some countries, like Finland[15] and France,[16] have created special permanent mechanisms, which develop interdisciplinary expertise in the prevention of violent extremism and radicalisation.

3.1. Social inclusion

32. The social inclusion of migrants is paramount and is the best defence against radicalisation, providing it takes into account cultural and religious aspects. A migrant should know his identity and his history, as well as that of the host country. The basis of different religions should be a part of common knowledge and their shared messages of peace, love, and compassion should be widely disseminated by the media.

33. The practices of many countries show that only when migrants are involved in society as equals and are not placed in ghettos or targeted as a special risk group, do they have a feeling of being part of society and feel secure.

34. Sport, especially football, could help a lot in the inclusion of young migrants and the prevention of radicalisation. The Council of Europe's project "Integration through Sport", sponsored by the German Federal Ministry of the Interior and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees supports different sports clubs and federations, encouraging them to create projects for the better involvement of migrants and refugees.[17]

35. Social security for migrants is very important for the process of their social inclusion and can be considered as a very good investment for the economic development of the country concerned. European countries should think about the creation of a European mechanism for fostering social protection of working migrants and their families.

3.2. The role of religious communities

36. Religious communities have a key role to play in tackling the problem of radicalisation of vulnerable populations. In France for example, in comparison to Belgium, Muslim religious bodies are closely linked to foreign countries. Many imams in France are trained outside its territory.

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14. Inventory of the best practices on de-radicalisation from the different member States of the EU, TerRa Project.
15. http://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/article/-/asset_publisher/1410869/suomessa-tehdaan-systemaattista-tyota-vakivaltaisen-radikalisoitumisen-ja-ekstremismin-ennalta-ehkaisemiseksi.
16. https://mt.ambafrance.org/Security-in-France-Action-Plan-Against-Radicalization-and-Terrorism-PART.
17. www.coe.int/en/web/sport-migrant-integration-directory/integration-through-sport.

37. In some European countries, governments have decided to co-operate with selected organisations, which in fact are not representing religious communities or diaspora. Building resilient communities and stronger social ties may play an important role in reducing the risk of radicalisation, especially of young people, and may help to neutralise the appeal of terrorist propaganda.

38. Religious representatives can play an important role in helping people in prisons to find their true path through religious expression and resist fundamentalist theories. However, not all countries give religious representatives access to places of detention and there is a substantial lack of imams in Europe to exercise this important role.

39. Some European countries have launched special projects encouraging the involvement of religious representatives in activities for the prevention of radicalisation. In France, the prefect office of the Bas-Rhin region in co-operation with the Protestant Theology Faculty of the University of Strasbourg developed a training programme for the representatives of the Muslim religious associations to instruct them on how to prevent radicalisation of young people.[18]

40. A more effective reorganisation needs to be considered on a national and European level, in which different religious bodies could come together and agree on joint efforts to promote peaceful coexistence.

3.3. Positive examples

3.3.1. Norway

41. Norway was one of the first European States to introduce, in 2010, an Action plan to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism. Since then the plan has been developed and has enjoyed broad support. The main focus is on preventive efforts. For this purpose, a SalLTo model for co-ordination of local crime prevention measures in the municipalities has been developed. Five measures of the plan are focused on the prevention of radicalisation and recruitment through the internet. In addition to this action plan, the Norwegian Government has adopted a Strategy against hate Speech 2016-2020 and an action plan against anti-Semitism 2016-2020.

42. Extremism, if it does not lead to violence, is not outlawed in Norway. In recent years, extremist organisations have gained more popularity, probably because of the anti-migrant rhetoric of some right-wing politicians. However, Norway is not confronted with large-scale radicalisation in society, as it has developed a very successful integration mechanism for migrants. The Norwegian education system could be a model for other countries as regards prevention of radicalisation and promotion of tolerance: democracy and human rights are integrated into the learning environment. In the new core curriculum, “Democracy and Citizenship” is one of three cross-cutting themes to be integrated into all relevant subjects. The Ministry of Education has also initiated the development of *digital teaching and learning resources* to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism, racism, hate speech and anti-Semitism, for use in lower secondary school and in upper secondary education and training (dembra.no). In 2016, The Center for Research on Extremism (C-REX), a cross-disciplinary centre for the study of right-wing extremism, hate crime and political violence was established.

43. In addition, under the direction of the European Wergeland Centre, a project has been launched with the objective of preventing hate rhetoric, discrimination and undemocratic attitudes on the internet. It has been closely linked with the national campaign “Stop hate speech on the internet”, which in turn has been a part of the Council of Europe’s “No Hate Speech” campaign. The project has translated and adapted the instruction package that the Council of Europe created for schools and used it as the basis for a training course for teachers and others in the school system. The manual, developed by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe as part of the No Hate Speech Movement campaign, consists of 21 activities tailored for a classroom setting. The aim of these activities is to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for young people to become active democratic citizens online.

44. I also found very useful the introduction in Norway of the special school subject “Knowledge of Christianity, religion, philosophies of life and ethics”, which provides basic knowledge of different religions and philosophies of life.

18. À Strasbourg, des imams formés à la prévention de la radicalisation, Julienne Paul, 27 June 2017, *Urbi & Orbi*.

3.3.2. Italy

45. A draft law on measures to prevent radicalisation and jihadist extremism, initiated by Italian parliamentarian Mr Stefano Dambruoso, is a forward-looking legislative initiative which could be used as a good example for other European countries. This law foresees the establishment of a National Centre on Radicalisation, targeted at radicalised individuals, and a number of regional co-ordination centres, which should be responsible for implementation at the local level.[19]

46. The draft puts special emphasis on the importance of specialised training for police and military forces, penitentiary administration staff and ombudsperson, teachers and directors of schools and universities and social and health-care workers. The proposed preventive strategy foresees measures in the fields of education, social work, employment, health and social care, disengagement and rehabilitation programmes, training for staff, and countering of extremist narratives on social media, and interreligious dialogue.

47. To my great regret, the Italian Senate did not manage to pass this draft at the end of 2017 and its adoption is pending due to the recent parliamentary elections in Italy.

48. Aside from this legislative initiative, Italy has advanced in the development of a culture of hospitality, coexistence and peace. The Ministry of Education adopted an approach on preventing radicalisation through positive integration in schools and social inclusion of migrants. In 570 schools in Italy, foreign students account for more than 50% of students. The positive approach in education provides that all students are treated equally, without any segregation. An institution of mediators has been introduced to help foreign students with different cultures and languages to adapt to Italian society.

49. In Italy, migrants actively participate in voluntary work, providing assistance to elderly people. Another very good initiative in Italy is the commemoration of the migrant victims who died in the Mediterranean. October 3rd, the day on which 400 migrants died in Lampedusa, is now a day of remembrance in Italy: this is a very good example of the promotion of a spirit of solidarity.

3.4. Counter-narrative action

50. While talking to police officials working on combating radicalisation and violent extremism, I learnt that radicalised young people do not have a good knowledge of Islam. The recruiters present them with a distorted interpretation of this religion and in the absence of different opinions, young people tend to believe them. Therefore, the counter narratives presented by the leaders of Islam communities, scientists and mass media, addressing religious understanding and providing a true knowledge of Islam should be a key element in preventing radicalisation.

51. The media also has an important role to play. Very often the media encourages the links between Islam and terrorism, portraying Muslims as a threat to Europe. Such destructive narratives should be avoided and strongly condemned, and in some cases even punished.

52. I believe that the engagement of young Muslim leaders and politicians in public affairs is very important to challenge the radical interpretation of Islam and to give a better image of the Muslim community.

53. Muslim communities should be particularly proactive in countering the narrative of radical Islam. Imams, parents and associations could promote statements from moderate Islamic figures or persons who have left extremist groups.

54. As many experts' analyses prove, radicalisation is now mostly taking place via the internet and social networks. In some countries, like Italy, a special postal police unit was created to deal with all online offences, including identifying the recruiters and those who disseminate jihadist propaganda. The United Kingdom and France have agreed to launch a bilateral campaign to tackle online radicalisation by imposing fines on information technology companies which fail to remove extremist content.[20]

55. But these measures are not sufficient and a more comprehensive approach reaching all users of the internet is needed. Ordinary internet users should be involved in the process of fighting radicalisation. European governments could encourage grassroots initiatives, which could help promote self-regulation of the internet and combat online radicalisation.

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19. Italy's Draft Law on the prevention of radicalization: a Missed opportunity?, Francesca Capano, Istituto affairi Iinternazionali, Roma, December 2017, p. 4.
20. Countering online radicalization, Stefan Soesanto and Fosca D'Incau, 19 July 2017, European Council on Foreign Relations.

3.5. Role of education

56. Both primary and higher education have a crucial role to play in preventing radicalisation, confronting misconceptions and promoting mutual understanding. Teachers are often the first to notice the signs of radicalisation and their reaction might be decisive in shaping students' views and behaviour. Therefore, prevention of radicalisation should be a regular part of professional training for all teachers.[21] They should be trained to accept differences and to be aware of cultural and religious differences. Islam and the migration process from different countries are ignored in many school curricula in European countries. A comprehensive reform of the curriculum is needed to build up a more tolerant mentality.

57. Knowledge of different religions, their history and their role in contemporary life should be conveyed in different subjects, including history, literature, social sciences and the arts. The modern curricula and textbooks should reflect the diversities in society, address controversial issues and represent histories of migration as "standard" facets of modern European history. Young generations in Europe should be given detailed and objective information about Islam and migrant societies.

58. Children should be taught democracy and human rights on an everyday basis. They should learn how to become responsible citizens and be actively involved in social life. The modern education system should give each student the opportunity to be heard and to express their views and interests.

3.6. Role of diaspora communities

59. The results of police work on counter-radicalisation suggest that diaspora communities are essential for efficient counter-terrorism efforts. The local communities offer important sources of information and intelligence about potential terrorist acts and people at risk. Diaspora communities could be very helpful in spotting and preventing young people from entering extremist organisations.

60. The best way to prevent radicalisation is to explore the potential of diaspora communities to work with those who hold radical views and to counter these views. Society and the authorities can only do part of the job – diaspora associations can help to remove misunderstandings and distrust at the local level and promote personal relationships and dialogue between people of different origins.

3.7. Role of women

61. Women and women's organisations play an important role in preventing radicalisation. Women, as mothers, can be the first to identify signs of radicalisation and their voice, as a counter narrative to the radicalisation process, could be decisive. However, their role should not be limited to the family environment and they should be encouraged to be involved in policy shaping, educational activities and community work on the prevention of radicalisation.

62. Women are also vulnerable to radicalisation and recruitment, as many extremist organisations are targeting women and girls by exploiting their grievances and lack of inclusion. Therefore, it is very important to develop special programmes targeting women's and girl's needs.[22]

63. As some studies point out, women who have been involved in violent extremism and stepped into the role of mentor of troubled young people have achieved a lot of success in the de-radicalisation process. Their inclusion in de-radicalisation programmes could be very profitable for society.

64. Women's organisations are actively involved in counter-extremism narratives and working with vulnerable youth. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), such as "Cultures Interactive" in Germany, work in prevention and first-line de-radicalisation with at-risk young people who engage in, or have shown to be susceptible to, violent right-wing extremism or religious fundamentalism, as well as to racist, and other forms of hateful behaviour.

3.8. European organisations' response

65. In 2006, the European Council adopted a European Union Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism. In view of the changing nature of the threat and better understanding of the issue, the Strategy was revised in 2014 and complemented with a set of guidelines, last updated in 2017. In this

21. The role of education in preventing radicalization, RAN issue paper, Gotz Nordbruch, p. 3.
22. Radicalisation and violent extremism – focus on women: How women become radicalised, and how to empower them to prevent radicalisation, Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, European Parliament, December 2017.

context, on 7 March 2017, a Directive[23] was adopted by the European Council to help prevent terrorist attacks by criminalising acts such as undertaking training or travelling for terrorist purposes, as well as facilitating such travel.[24]

66. The European Commission has established a Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)[25] which unites more than 4 000 practitioners across Europe working with radicalised people and those at risk. The task of this network is to strengthen exchanges between practitioners, policy makers and researchers and to facilitate the implementation of best practices.

67. In 2015, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted an Action Plan 2015-2017 on the fight against violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism with two major objectives: to reinforce the legal framework against terrorism and violent extremism and to prevent and fight violent radicalisation through concrete measures in the public sector, in particular schools and prisons, and on the internet.[26] In the framework of this Action Plan a Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (CDC) was developed as an instrument at the disposal of the member States with a view to preparing a holistic response to radicalisation through education. The Committee of Ministers also adopted Guidelines on the protection and promotion of human rights in culturally diverse societies. This document could also be very useful for the member States in their national strategies for the prevention of radicalisation.

68. A pedagogical toolkit was prepared in 36 languages for local and regional authorities, bringing together guidelines to combat radicalisation at grassroots level, as well as 12 Principles of interreligious dialogue. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe set up a Summit of Mayors of the "Alliance of Cities against Violent Extremism". Another important document adopted by the Committee of Ministers is Guidelines for prison and probation services regarding radicalisation and violent extremism. It provides a legal and structural framework on how the work of prisons should be organised to prevent and deal with radicalisation.

69. As regards counter-narrative actions, the Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) adopted the General Policy Recommendation No. 15 on Combating Hate Speech. The Council of Europe has also implemented the "No Hate Speech Campaign" and the Parliamentary Assembly has launched the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance to raise awareness and encourage co-operation among parliamentarians and civil society against hate speech, racism and intolerance.[27] In addition, a number of measures fostering mutual understanding and respect are foreseen in another Council of Europe Action Plan on Building Inclusive Societies (2016-2019). The activities proposed focus on education, combating intolerance and discrimination and support for effective integration policies. However, despite their great relevance, both action plans are heavily under-funded by the member States and their efficiency therefore undermined.

70. The "NoHateNoFear" campaign launched by a former President of the Parliamentary Assembly to combat terrorism is a good example of a common European response to the attempts to divide people and promote fear and hatred. Elimination of radical discourse and fighting segregation and discrimination against migrants, close co-operation with migrant communities and providing more education and employment opportunities should be included in measures aimed at preventing radicalisation.

4. Conclusions

71. The main conclusion I have arrived at during the preparation of this report is that the fight against radicalisation should not become an outlet for anti-Islamism. Radicalisation affects many countries and several religions and should not be linked only to Islam. It is very important to stop anti-Muslim rhetoric, which reinforces Daesh's anti-Western messages addressed to migrants and young people in Europe. Measures to prevent radicalisation must ensure a balance between the security of the population and respect for the fundamental rights of those at risk from, or who are already subject to, radicalisation. Policies for the

23. Directive (EU) 2017/541 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on the fight against terrorism and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA and amending Council Decision 2005/671/.
24. EU strengthens rules to prevent new forms of terrorism, European Council, 7 March 2017.
25. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network_en.
26. CM(2015)74-addfinal, 19 May 2015.
27. "Fight against violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism" – Implementing the Action Plan, Final Report of the Secretary General, Information Document, SG/Inf(2018)7, 25 April 2018.

prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism should be more focused on how to ensure that migrants feel secure in host countries and socially included in societies without being forced to abandon their own cultural identity.

72. Public policies to prevent radicalisation must be planned on a medium to long-term basis and, as far as possible, shared and supported across political divides. The relevant authorities should be responsible for data gathering and research on the process of radicalisation.

73. Combating radicalisation and violent extremism requires close and co-ordinated collaboration between a whole range of stakeholders (governments, municipalities, law-enforcement authorities, individuals and civil society), at all levels of governance (local, regional and national) and with civil society. All efforts should lead to the protection of human rights values and rejection of violence as a way of self-expression.

74. European countries should develop strategies to rehabilitate the fighters who come back to Europe from Syria, including special rehabilitation programmes in prisons.

75. Action to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism must ensure that the root causes (often social) that make a particular section of society vulnerable to radicalisation are addressed, not just the ideologies.

76. Public policies must promote the development among young people of healthy and strong identities free of inferiority complexes so as to prevent alienation, lack of a sense of belonging, marginalisation and community isolationism from gaining the upper hand and providing a fertile breeding ground for radicalisation. As the best European practises show, highly-functioning child protection services and well-developed youth involvement programmes are essential in preventing involvement in the radicalisation process at an early stage.

77. Social and ethnic mixing must be pursued in spatial planning policies, as well as in social housing and access to education.

78. There is still much to be done in Europe as regards the creation of opportunities for all religious communities to practise their religions. It is important that all religions have their places of worship. Another important problem is access of religious representatives to prisons, so that prisoners may practise their religion on a regular basis, without looking for alternatives, which can lead to radicalisation. Interfaith dialogue in all European countries should be promoted as a tool to counter violent extremism and radicalisation.

79. The role of local authorities and municipalities is crucial in the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism. More people of migrant origin should be involved in the local police and municipalities. Cooperation and co-ordination of efforts between municipalities, police and civil society is very important. Teacher training on how to deal with issues of radicalisation, hate speech and signs of violent extremism should be promoted.