

KAJA PRISLAN\*, KRUNOSLAV BOROVEC\*\*, IRENA CAJNER MRAOVIĆ\*\*\*

## The Role of Civil Society and Communities in Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation

### *Abstract*

*Contemporary policies and initiatives aimed at addressing radicalisation and violent extremism aim to facilitate a systematic multi-stakeholder approach that encompasses the incorporation of civil society organisations. Despite the general recognition of various roles and potentials of non-state actors in the area of prevention and de-radicalisation, in practice, many challenges and knowledge-gaps are leading to a situation where civil society still represents an underused resource. This paper presents the potentials and capabilities of civil society and community organisations in countering violent extremism and radicalisation. Through an extensive literature review, we investigated good practices in joint collaborations, as well as practical limitations hindering the establishment of a whole-of-society approach. The central aim of this paper is to provide a clear picture of the current gaps and highlight conditions that need to be addressed in the future to facilitate a comprehensive and coordinated approach to countering violent extremism and radicalisation.*

**Keywords:** *radicalisation, violent extremism, prevention, multi-stakeholder approach, civil society organisations, community organisations.*

---

\* Assistant Professor Kaja Prislán, Ph.D., Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security, University of Maribor, Slovenia.

\*\* Krunoslav Borovec, Ph.D., Police College, Police Academy, Ministry of the Interior, Croatia.

\*\*\* Associate Professor Irena Cajner Mraović, Ph.D., Faculty of Croatian Studies, University of Zagreb, Croatia.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the aftermath of several high-profile terrorist attacks in Western democracies, preventing violent extremism and radicalisation that lead to terrorism [VERLT] has become a priority of the European counter-terrorism strategy. The main objective of contemporary policies addressing terrorism-related threats is to facilitate transnational collaboration and elimination of root causes. Most national and international initiatives pursue a holistic and systematic approach, with participative structures. Hence, collaborative networks and practices that encompass the incorporation of civil society organisations and government programmes are seen as the most effective in countering violent extremism and radicalisation (Korn, 2016).

Among non-state stakeholders involved in prevention strategies, civil society organisations (CSO) are emphasised as a crucial partner on a local level, where radicalisation most likely occurs. Community and grass-root organisations can play a major role in preventing polarisation and violence and intervening into emerging conflicts. Unlike government employees, CSO practitioners find it easier to access even the most vulnerable environments and penetrate the culture and language (European Network of Deradicalisation (ENoD), 2014). CSOs are an integral part of local communities and aware of the problems and possible threats. They have direct contacts and communication with residents, can gather important information, provide narratives for individuals at risk and also support their social inclusion. However, despite the growing role of non-state actors on a political and strategic level, in practice, many limitations are hindering their effective work and collaboration with state agencies and governments. Due to inadequate regulations and coordination, absence of government support, and distrust between stakeholders and communities, CSOs cannot achieve their full potential in countering VERLT. Hence, this arena currently represents an underused resource, the potentials of which should be better exploited (Gervasoni, 2017).

Besides practical limitations, there are also research-related knowledge gaps that limit the understanding of the role of CSOs in countering VERLT. The analysis of research work related to the stakeholders' roles and engagement in addressing the issues of fundamentalism, radicalisation, extremism, violence and terrorism, shows that the main body of that work focuses on government and state agencies, and international policies. At the same time, relatively low attention is given to the role of civil society actors involved in creating pathways to social inclusion. Hence, this is an important area requiring more in-depth investigation and discussion in order to inform researchers, authorities, and policymakers in their understanding of the stakeholders' necessary engagement (Amath, 2015).

In this paper, we investigate the role of civil society and communities in preventing and countering VERLT. By extensively reviewing literature and analysing previous research, we identified not only the potential contributions and capabilities of different civil society agents but also practical limitations hindering their effective integration into existing networks and circumstances impeding the progress in the establishment of a whole-of-society approach. The central aim of this article is to provide a clear picture of the current gaps and highlight the conditions that need to be addressed in the future to facilitate a comprehensive and coordinated approach to countering VERLT in collaboration with non-state agents.

## 2. CONTEMPORARY DIRECTIONS IN ADDRESSING RADICALISATION AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM

As a result of different changes and trends related to security, politics and sociodemography, Europe is facing an increased presence of hate crimes, radicalisation and violent extremist movements (European Network of Deradicalisation (ENoD), 2014; Norwegian Refugee Council, 2017). What is more, the recent migrant crisis has led to the rise of right-wing extremists and right-wing populist forces, and that has indeed created a new challenge for Europe. In many states, the influx of refugees has exacerbated social polarisation and violent outbreaks, which indeed demands adequate intervention (Korn, 2016).

Traditionally, paramilitary units were accounted for reactions to extreme violence. Countering terrorism and violent extremism was based on repressive measures and was a designated task for security sector agencies exclusively (Pickering, McCulloch, & Wright-Neville, 2008; Prislan, Černigoj, & Lobnikar, 2018). After years of policies and measures that often resulted in the opposite effect, it was recognised that the tools of “hard power” alone do not work and, when used outside the regulatory frames, are counterproductive and harmful indeed. For this reason, authorities and professionals have argued that new solutions, means and more of prevention-oriented approaches are necessary to efficiently combat the terrorism threat (De Goede & Simon, 2013).

A review of recent developments in national and international policies addressing terrorism-related threats shows that there are currently two general directions in the field of countering VERLT.

First, in the last decade, alternative paths to counter-terrorism policing that emphasise the significance of soft power and focus on the root causes have been acknowledged as more efficient means to address the threat of terrorism (Halafoff, Lam, & Bouma, 2019). By definition, “soft power” reflects approaches that, instead of coercion, use a mechanism that facilitates attraction that affects individuals and groups in a way to achieve the desired outcomes. Such an approach relies on the resources of culture, values, and policies (Nye, 2008). Namely, in the area of countering terrorism and addressing VERLT, soft power measures include the following activities (Berardinelli & Guglielminetti, 2018):

- disseminating awareness of the processes of violent radicalisation and recruitment;
- countering extremist narratives and propaganda, with the promotion of counter-narratives by civil society;
- enhancing the efforts of the local communities involved, allowing to interrupt the process of radicalisation before an individual engages in criminal activities.

The second trend is reflected in facilitating collaborative approaches with participative structures and programs. Prevention strategies must address diverse factors leading to radicalisation and include a wide array of practitioners from governmental, local and civil society level, as well as consider the social and cultural characteristic of local environments (Prislan et al., 2018). International counter VERLT policies currently emphasise that not only “whole of government” but also “whole of society” efforts are necessary to identify and act on early warning signs of radicalisation at the micro-level. Likewise, they are also needed to address pre-emptively some of the enabling conditions that erode social cohesion and community resilience (Grossman, 2018).

The "frontline professionals" of the whole-of-society approach in countering VERLT include different state and non-state agents. Various community and non-governmental representatives are being regarded as "eyes and ears" of the society and therefore, a significant potential partner to the police and security agencies (De Goede & Simon, 2013). If successful, such a partnership between official authorities and non-state organisations can improve the flow of information to the police, reduce a backlash against state actions and increase the capacity of local communities for countering VERLT (Cherney & Hartley, 2017).

### **3. THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN PREVENTING RADICALISATION**

In the light of research findings that there are no universal profiles and experiences of radicals and extremists, radicalisation is commonly understood as a fluctuating and unpredictable phenomena (Vermeulen & Bovenkerk, 2012). Although there are no comprehensive theories to explain the process of radicalisation, previous work has proven that there are two important characteristics which need to be considered in the development of prevention strategies.

First, the process of radicalisation into violence is of social nature. Most of the existing knowledge on radicalisation processes indicate that the vast majority of recruits were radicalised through social interaction and this has led to the recognition that the processes of prevention also need to be socially oriented, and account the role of social practices and ties (Day & Kleinmann, 2017; Gervasoni, 2017).

Second, in addressing VERLT, it is important to consider that radicalisation to violence primarily takes place at the local level. Therefore, locally relevant initiatives are central to the success of any strategy. The more communities are aware of potential threats to their security, the more empowered they are to be resilient against it and the better prepared they can be to counter the threats themselves. Hence, there are two main approaches to countering VERLT in the local context: community engagement and community-oriented policing. Both need to focus on building trust with local communities and engaging with them as partners to develop information-driven (i.e. evidence-based) and community-based solutions to local issues (Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), 2013b).

In general, the partnership narrative assumes that three main sectors need to be involved in urban governance and local initiatives related to countering VERLT. These include the public sector segment (i.e. local councils, health and social care agencies, police, etc.); the business segment (i.e. local companies, chambers of commerce, privatised providers of urban services); and the community segment (i.e. non-profit service providers, self-help and community action projects, citizens groups) (Dinham & Lowndes, 2008). Besides the public sector, the community or civil society segment (with its civil society actors, such as community and grass-root organisations, as well as social entrepreneurs in the form of non-profit NGOs) play a significant role in preventing social polarisation and violence, and interventions related to the detection of potentially violent behaviour (European Network of Deradicalisation (ENoD), 2014).

Civil society can be defined as a system of voluntary civic and social organisations and institutions that form the basis of a functioning society as opposed to the structures of the state or the private, economic sector (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2010). It includes a diverse body of civil actors, communities, and formal or informal associations who engage in public

life, seeking to advance shared values and objectives (OSCE, 2018). The processes of societal self-organisation that define civil society make up a relatively autonomous public sphere, which can mediate social life with the state and other formal organisations. The maturity of civil sphere and strong traditions of civic engagement, supported by a more horizontal system of governing are considered vital for the success of democracy and legitimacy of the state and political institutions (Putnam, 1993).

Civil society actors are usually well-positioned, credible and experienced in working with specific groups to help identify and address the grievances that make individuals more vulnerable to the influence of extremist groups (OSCE, 2018). In the broadest sense, the primary role of civil society in countering VERLT is to facilitate and support social inclusion and integration of marginalised individuals into society (Choudhury, 2017; De Goede & Simon, 2013). Social inclusion means that all members of society are able to belong and participate fully and are included in all aspects of a society they belong (United Nations, 2018). The opposite of social inclusion is social exclusion, which is a significant process in relation to VERLT and should be examined to develop successful inclusion policies. Social exclusion is, in fact, an important push-factor for radicalisation because it fuels disaffection on which extremist violence thrives. The process itself is diverse and related to different exclusion factors that lead to positions of inequality (such as social issues, deficits in the quality of life, poverty, unemployment, religion, race, gender, sexuality, lack of accountable governance, etc.) (Lister, 2000; Sajoo, 2016).

Analysing the radicalisation and recruitment process among the members of extremist groups in Kenya, Botha (2014) found that political socialisation also plays a significant role in radicalisation. It namely affects how individuals see the world around them, their self-image, how they form their beliefs and views about the politics and religion and ultimately with whom they identify with. Authors define political socialisation as a process in which society transmits its political culture from generation to generation. This process can preserve traditional norms; however, if secondary socialisation agencies intervene and promote different values, the socialisation process can serve as a means of political and social change. Political socialisation can be mediated by various agencies in a society which can promote and integrate desired attitudinal dispositions and behaviours.

Due to the nature of the processes of social inclusion and political socialisation, effective mediation and interventions mostly depend on the engagement of civil society. CSOs can alleviate social and political marginalisation through addressing political grievances, socio-economic injustices, and power imbalances (Cortright, Millar, Gerber-Stellingwerf, & Lopez, 2012). Research conducted by Halafoff et al. (2019), for example, indicates that educational initiatives by CSOs can assist with addressing religious vilification, religious literacy, discrimination, and interreligious tensions and thereby minimise risks of alienation and vulnerability to extremism.

One of the main reasons why the role of CSOs is increasingly emphasised in countering VERLT and locally oriented initiatives is that civil society actors are seen as the agents that have most close day-to-day contact with people in the community. They are more likely to notice changes in behaviour, attitudes or orientations that may signal heightened risks or raise concerns. Hence, they can provide state and local authorities with valuable information needed to proactively address the potential threats and mitigate risks more effectively (De Goede & Simon, 2013; Grossman, 2018). When investigating reporting issues, concerns and

behaviours amongst community members and counter-terrorism practitioners, Grossman (2018) found that reporting about the signs of concern to authorities is the last resort. The vast majority of respondents suggested that they would primarily use other options, such as direct intervention, seeking support from other family members or friends, local community, religious leaders, or local service providers before going to the police.

Another important position that CSOs have in partnership narratives is also their potential to more effectively reach the communities with anti-extremist messages, information, knowledge, and morals. Belanger & Szmania (2018) investigated strategies of online communication by the government and non-government agents in the US and Canada and emphasise that both actors should work together to produce effective counter-terrorism messages. They found that governments are not able to comprehensively use communications in countering VERT, due to legal barriers. The counter-terrorism communications should also reflect credibility, consider community beliefs, and avoid defensiveness of the target audience. In this case, non-state actors are best for providing credible communication. For this reason, governments need to connect and cooperate with credible individuals and communities able to reach the audiences that are susceptible to propaganda and appeals.

Furthermore, intervention programs that aim to pull a person or group away from violent extremism and change pro-violence beliefs are most effective if delivered through community response and community-based projects (Hirschfield, Christmann, Wilcox, Rogerson, & Sharratt, 2012). For this reason, CSOs are not only crucial for mitigating radicalisation processes but can be important in the prevention and de-radicalisation process as well (Gervasoni, 2017). In the area of de-radicalisation, civil society agents can provide diversionary services to individuals identified as being "at-risk" and most importantly protective and care-based interventions tailored to individuals (De Goede & Simon, 2013; Sarma, 2017).

As noted by Korn (2016), anti-violence or therapeutic initiatives that are unspecific tend to come up short as an intervention measure. Counselling and intervention are necessary measures when dealing with radicalised individuals; however, these support services need to be individually tailored and should provide adequate psychological guidance. Effective de-radicalisation namely depends on dialogues between extremists and de-radicalisation practitioners. It is about creating trust, and if a hostile atmosphere is detected, changes will not succeed. The relationship between the practitioner and the extremist is therefore of crucial importance, and that is why practitioners and agents from communities who understand individuals' position are best suited for establishing trust-based dialogues and atmosphere.

Another important role that CSOs also have is the protection of human rights, which is especially important in practising counter-terrorism laws. An independent civil society is one of the most promising strategies to ensure a state action that will respect human rights standards. CSOs, especially non-government organisations, can challenge authorities who reject democratic and civil activities in favour of violence (Choudhury, 2017). Historical experiences prove that civil society has played an important role in cases of political transitions from authoritarianism to democracy (Molnár, 2016). However, to promote democratic values and protect civil society space, a mature watchdog system and enough social capital need to be guaranteed (Gervasoni, 2017).

As it is evident from the review of previous research and professional recommendations, civil society has various potentials and can contribute to more effective prevention of

radicalisation, as well as de-radicalisation. In summary, civil society (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2010):

1. can help to prevent radicalisation by tackling the underlying economic, social, and political drivers of radicalisation;
2. 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;
3. can spot the signs of vulnerability and work upstream to protect individuals from radicalisation through the facilitation of improved parenting, neighbourhood support, and community resilience;
4. can play a role in the de-radicalisation process, with providing practical help and emotional support to the individuals concerned and their families;
5. has a role to play in the prevention of a planned attack by providing information or intelligence that could help the authorities.

The effectiveness of civic and community engagement in countering VERLT depends to a large extent on the maturity of the civilian system and the support it has from the state and local authorities. Achieving the intended impacts requires coordinated action between stakeholders within the system. However, the organisations and agents that make up such a civil society are diverse, which is why a multi-stakeholder approach needs to consider the potentials and abilities of all relevant actors.

### **3.1. Civil society agents and their areas of work**

Generally, there are three aspects of civil society involved in prevention and countering radicalisation and violent extremism: community groups and non-governmental organisations; frontline workers within state and non-state services; and the general public (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2010). According to different sources, these groups include the following actors (Amath, 2015; Berardinelli & Guglielminetti, 2018; Botha, 2014; Gervasoni, 2017; Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2010; Kozmelj, 2018; OSCE, 2018):

- community groups & NGOs: community representatives; adult organisations; women's associations; culture, youth, and sports organisations; religious communities and faith groups; spiritual assistants such as chaplains, imams; networks for religious relations and dialogue; centres for human rights and peacebuilding organisations; intercultural society association;
- state frontline workers and non-state services: representatives of education (schools, universities); researchers and academia; counsellors; sports coaches; trainers; mediators; local government representatives; psychologists; representatives of healthcare and social services; foundations for welfare and education;
- general public: families; peer groups; media and reporters; volunteers; information technology and social media sector; former extremists.

Among these, actors working in environments and dealing with individuals and groups that are of high risk (e.g. prisons, places for religious worship or training, diaspora communi-

ties, families, educational environment and the internet) are of special importance as they are operating in domains where radicalisation is most likely to occur (Vermeulen & Bovenkerk, 2012). Especially youth, women, and community leaders, including religious leaders, are seen as key civil society actors who can provide impactful and lasting contributions to preventing and countering VERLT (OSCE, 2018).

Since religiosity plays an important factor in religious extremism, faith groups and religious communities are increasingly regarded as important participants in countering VERLT from civil society arena. If they are socially responsible, they can provide grounds for civic engagement and volunteering. Faith groups are namely made up of individual citizens and social networks who have common religious identification or affiliation. They are constituted through shared beliefs, values and practices that connect people and also give them a shared sense of belonging, which is essential for social inclusion. They can be formal or informal, whereas some of them arise naturally in response to local needs, while others are government initiated. Faith groups are often linked to social inclusion policies as a route to minority communities that are harder to reach. For example, in some very deprived working-class communities, a professionalised voluntary organisation may be absent, and faith agents are the only representatives of the community (Dinham & Lowndes, 2008).

In like manner, young adults are being considered as one of the most vulnerable groups to radicalisation and susceptible to propaganda related to violent extremism (Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), 2013b). Therefore, youth organisations and professionals working with young individuals, especially in an educational environment, are also one of the most potentially influential partners from civil society (OSCE, 2018). By promoting dialogue and democratic values, youth organisations can help young adults and teenagers to develop social skills and competencies, and facilitate their critical thinking and attitude (Angel, López, & Pašić, 2017). The British Government has, for example, recognised universities as a key site for recruitment into violent extremist organisations and has therefore focused on establishing partnerships with universities and student organisations in its counter VERLT strategy (Choudhury, 2017).

In addition to religious communities and youth organisations, women associations are regarded as a significant partner, either through the promotion of common family values, providing social and psychological help to families or incorporating gender-based perspectives into countering VERLT strategies. Women's status in the field of VERLT is twofold; since they are a foundation of social groups and represent a central role in families, they can prevent or facilitate radicalisation in their family. Women's associations can participate in preventing and countering VERLT by building skills such as leadership and communication and providing education (religious and secular) and vocational training, particularly for immigrant or ethnic minority women (Patel & Westermann, 2018).

Following the risk-based approach, there are also other environments requiring close attention. The prisons are, for example, one of such risk environments, where activities related to the prevention of VERLT are of high significance. If a radicalised prisoner is admitted, de-radicalisation or intervention support is necessary, as well as measures aimed at preventing radicalised prisoners from reinforcing their opinions during their detention period and/or persuading other inmates to join in violent actions (Berardinelli & Guglielminetti, 2018). Likewise, diaspora communities are also potential breeding grounds for radicalisation (De Goede & Simon, 2013). Because of their closed and susceptible nature, the presence and

mediation of already integrated social organisations are of utter importance to facilitate cohesion, prevent conflicts and enable other agents and agencies to integrate into the environment.

The tasks performed by all these organisations and professionals vary considerably in terms of focus, performance, and implementation. What is more, their orientation is generally narrowly focused, covering specific issues. Together, CSOs can form a comprehensive support system for deprived individuals and environments and provide formal institutions with information on threats and problems from various sources.

### 3.2. Target groups and activities

Countering VERLT is most broadly viewed as a three-level approach, comprising of radicalisation prevention measures; interventions with individuals in danger of radicalisation; and de-radicalisation/disengagement activities. These levels differ according to target groups and by stakeholders involved (i.e. different professional fields).

*Prevention efforts* target individuals who might be at risk of religious or political radicalisation at an early stage. Here, intercultural and interreligious dialogue and education to broaden their knowledge of democracy, human rights, and religions, is important. *Intervention efforts* target those who are very likely at risk of becoming radicalised; therefore, their ideological positions and radicalised behaviour should be confronted with pedagogic group training and one-on-one coaching that encourages self-reflection and change. *Deradicalisation efforts*, on the other hand, deal with advanced radicalisation, whereas the so-called exit programmes are effective for those who decide to abandon extremist beliefs. The main objective is to reintegrate such individuals and also to enable them to question their ideological interpretations and foster the detachment process (Korn, 2016).

More specifically, the main objective of countering VERLT programmes and strategies are people who are inclined to prejudice and discrimination, the rejection of unfamiliar norms and those not corresponding to their beliefs. Target groups primarily involve individuals with alterophobic and racist attitudes, religiously inspired fundamentalists, right-wing extremists, and individuals involved with mafia and cults (European Network of Deradicalisation (ENoD), 2014).

According to OSCE (2014), diversion of "at-risk" individuals involves different forms of support, such as providing safe spaces, psychological counselling and mentoring, as well as redirecting people towards positive forms of mobilisation, which includes civic engagement, participation in arts and sports, etc. The main purpose of such services is to help end-users to develop critical thinking and self-reflection to question the violent extremist narratives and ideas that they may be attracted to. ENoD (2014) research among 14 European countries showed that most non-state organisations working in the area of countering VERLT focus on extreme violence. Their methodological approaches are mainly related to conflict management and reconciliation and include political, religious and human rights education, the development of social competencies and one's own identity, and intercultural and youth workshops. These approaches are implemented through training, coaching sessions, mentoring programmes, and mediation.

There are two common ways to categorise programmes and activities performed by CSOs; by type (awareness building, training, strategic communications, etc.) or by function (prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation). However, some types of activities may fall under more than one functional area (OSCE, 2018). Intending to gain a more detailed insight into operational activities, the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (2010) has investigated and summarised the range of projects, programmes, and activities that are incorporated within countering VERLT across European countries. It was found that community groups, frontline workers, and the general public feature heavily across all lines of activities. Respectfully, the following tasks and projects were identified as most common types of work and methods that CSOs perform or are involved in:

- citizenship teaching and empowerment, language tuitions, promotion of leadership among young people, democratic platforms, campaigns on voting;
- facilitation of religious and political education, inter-faith dialogues, religious leaders' training;
- anti-discrimination, anti-violence, intergenerational, and myth-busting discussions and forums;
- development of vocational skills and communication competencies, improvements in school curricula;
- cohesion activities, community mapping, housing and integration policies, training, and employment projects;
- diversionary activities for young people (sports, arts, etc.), targeted after-school clubs, mentoring and role models, apprenticeships, training on the use of social media platforms;
- strengthening relations between institutions (the police, community and social services, local officials), institutional capacity building, development of information sharing protocols, training for frontline workers, training on spotting vulnerable individuals.

The maturity of these efforts in practice depends on the priority action areas determined in the strategic frameworks of governments. The types of approaches and programmes are influenced by different factors, among other things, the nature of the threats, prevalent social norms, political circumstances, governance structures, resources, capacities, risk assessments and traditions (OSCE, 2018).

In addition to the service provision for communities and their members, one of the important activities that non-state stakeholders operating on a local level are engaged in is also screening potentially relevant information and assessing the nature and extent of the risks. According to the P-R-A mechanism intended to enable beneficiary stakeholders to prevent, refer and address individuals vulnerable to VERLT, civil society agents should be included in the process of developing an action plan in individual cases and participate in reaching an agreement on monitoring the action plan for a vulnerable individual (Kozmelj, 2018). For this purpose, the UK government has developed the so-called Channel vulnerability assessment framework, primarily to help local partnerships (e.g. staff in the education and health sectors, local authorities, and youth services) identify individuals at risk of being targeted by terrorist and radicalisers. It includes factors indicating that someone might engage with a terrorist group or their ideology and develop the intent or capability to cause harm (HM Government, 2012).

Likewise, in the Netherlands, there is a government-funded project called Nuansa, which is a training and knowledge gathering group for frontline practitioners. The Nuansa programme offers a checklist to assess whether individuals are in the process of radicalisation. On this basis, civil society workers can be more alert and make judgments concerning interventions or reports. Nuansa distinguishes four categories of individuals at risks: a) ordinary resilient people; b) vulnerable or impressionable people; c) radicalising people; and d) actual radicals and extremists. The training emphasises that civil society workers should focus on and target the second group. What is more, the Dutch created the so-called Information houses in major cities that serve as centralised points and where the reports of concern to frontline professionals are collected, aiming to collect and register the signs of concern in early stages (De Goede & Simon, 2013).

Considering the broad arena in which countering VERLT takes place, as well as all possible stakeholders and activities, certain cases and collaborations have proved to be more successful and effective. Due to the current conditions and state-of-support, certain players are more involved in operational networks, while others still need additional impetus and recognition. In the following section, we first present some of the good practices and demonstrate the main barriers that hinder the realisation of the "whole of society" approach in countering VERLT.

#### **4. GOOD PRACTICES IN JOINT COLLABORATION**

The review of practical experiences of civil society service provision in countering VERLT shows that in many EU countries activities performed by faith-based and religious groups are being recognised as one of the utmost efficient diversion activities targeting individuals at risk. They are also regarded as the most active and engaged non-state agents in countering VERLT networks and activities.

Namely, faith groups and religious communities offer an arena in which citizens of different backgrounds can exchange views, debate, and arrive at common positions. They are linked by a search for better community intelligence about extremist threats within minority faith communities. Moreover, they are seen as key agents in facilitating community cohesion and have an important role in the delivery of urban services – whether through stimulating and supporting social care and projects in minority communities, volunteering, or other projects related to education and community development (in the area of homelessness, racism, health, drug and alcohol abuse, skill development, culture). They also participate in urban partnership networks, whether on a level of strategic governance of a city, or a neighbourhood level aiming to tackle antisocial behaviour (Dinham & Lowndes, 2008).

There are many different practical examples of such religiously based civil society engagement in countering VERLT. As an illustration, in the UK, one of the oldest Muslim society organisation is FOSIS, which operates as an umbrella body that represents Muslim students and includes Islamic student societies operating in British schools and universities. Activities include networking between Muslim students, charitable and humanitarian work, engaging in conferences and workshops, lobbying, advocating, and protesting on issues arising from the religious needs of Muslim students, most notably in relation to university policies that impact religious practices (Choudhury, 2017). In West Africa, religious and peacebuilding NGOs

participate in creating educational materials and conducting workshops on interfaith dialogue and interreligious peacebuilding. They also perform training for teachers aimed at strengthening their practical classroom skills and capacity to develop learner-centred pedagogical skills to enable critical evaluations of educational content (Abu-Nimer & Nasser, 2017).

Similarly, in Australia, MCSOs (Muslim civil society organisations) aim to provide the members of Muslim communities with pathways to be fully included in society, to not only improve their own lives but to locate legitimate ways to contribute to the community in which they live. Their programmes focus on four thematical issues related to social inclusion: supporting participation in education and training; facilitating participation in employment and voluntary work; connecting the community with other people and resources; and assisting with advocacy (Amath, 2015).

Another practical example is a Singapore public policy that aims to regulate religious anxiety in multicultural and multiracial societies. The objective is to manage increased religiosity in hard to reach Muslim communities, their perception of being under siege, as well as the apprehension, fears, and misunderstandings of the general public. For this purpose, the state has developed a broad-based community approach in advancing inter-religious tolerance and promoting moderation, including the engagement of Muslim civil society agents. The emphasis is on organisations seeking to address the perceived exclusivism within the Muslim community and engage civil society in dealing with religious extremism, ignorance, and prejudice through inter-faith dialogue, confidence-building and the establishment of desired norms. The Government also formed new mechanisms for better inter-ethnic understanding. For this purpose, Interracial Confidence Circles were formatted, comprising of leaders of various racial, religious, social, educational and business groups and organisations, to build trust and confidence among different races and develop a mechanism to deal with racially or religiously related problems in communities. Those are complemented with the so-called Harmony circles that operate in schools, workplaces and social organisations (Tan, 2007).

Apart from these individual examples, the experiences from different European member states report that in recent years there has also been a progressive development of efficient joint collaboration projects that report on good practices connecting state and non-state stakeholders in countering VERLT.

For instance, the European Commission set up the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) in 2011. The objective of RAN is to connect and bring together experts from different fields, namely practitioners, policymakers and academics, to support member states in developing their strategies to countering terrorism and radicalisation. For this purpose, teachers, police officers, court and prison employees, social workers, psychologists, disengagement practitioners, and terrorist attack victims from Europe meet regularly to share experiences and insights into how the growing problem of radicalisation is being combated. Furthermore, the goal is to transfer this shared knowledge to regional and local levels with formulating recommendation for decision-makers (Korn, 2016). Also, following the RAN model, a project entitled FIRST LINE (Practitioners Dealing with Radicalisation Issues - Awareness Raising and Encouraging Capacity Building in the Western Balkan Region) has been carried out by project partners from Central Europe and Western Balkan countries. The rationale behind the project is the recognition of Western Balkan countries as highly susceptible to radicalisation, while coordinated strategies and systemic approaches to countering VERLT and terrorism

are yet to be developed (Kozmelj, 2018; Prislan et al., 2018). The project aims to raise awareness of first-line practitioners, transfer knowledge, experiences and good practices and help Western Balkan partners in creating appropriate conditions for identifying main threats, challenges, impacts, as well as opportunities independently, and strengthening cooperation and capabilities of all relevant national stakeholders (i.e. police and other law enforcement agencies, prison and probation authorities, healthcare and education sector, NGOs, etc.). (Ministry of the Interior; Slovenian Police, n.d.).

A part of recognised international partnerships dealing with VERLT are also ENOD and EPEX networks. The European Network of Deradicalisation (ENOD) is a platform of practitioners from NGOs engaged in de-radicalisation and the prevention of hate crimes. The platform aims to connect NGOs, develop practitioners knowledge and skills, establish relationships with academia and policymakers, and promote the transparency of quality standards and methodological issues (European Network of Deradicalisation (ENoD), 2014). Similarly, the EPEX project (Practice exchange on de-radicalisation) aims at establishing a network of practitioners from European NGOs dealing with radicalisation and recruitment to militant Islamic extremism. The objective is to organise a cross-border knowledge, experiences, and lessons learned exchange as well as to enable activity-based peer-learning, connecting practitioners and first-liners (King Baudouin Foundation, 2019).

Another such example of a joint programme connecting different stakeholders is RecoRa ("Recognising and Responding to Radicalisation"). This EU funded project brought together counter VERLT practitioners to share best practices between frontline professionals (De Goede & Simon, 2013). It explored the factors that restrict front line workers from proactively engaging in work to prevent VERLT and the approaches most likely to enable street-level workers to engage with government and security agencies in order to support vulnerable young people. Within the project, a training programme was developed and subsequently tested with teachers, neighbourhood police officers, youth workers, elected officials, policymakers and senior managers, Muslim women activists, Muslim young people, Imams and teachers in Islamic schools, and Muslim community activists in the UK, the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2010).

Even though the collaboration between state and non-state agents has improved in recent years and the body of good practices is growing, these cases are mainly project-based collaborations and the results of EU initiated and financed programs. On a strategic level, the role of CSOs in countering VERLT is generally recognised; however, more detailed analysis of the current knowledge and practitioners' reports shows that partnerships are not always efficient in practice. The commitments often remain on paper only, but in reality, they do not materialise, due to different issues and practical limitations, mainly deriving from the inadequate mentality of leading state authorities. Research of practical experiences showed that in delivering their services, CSOs mostly work in partnerships with local communities, schools, and youth organisations, while cooperation with the institutions of political decision-makers is not common (European Network of Deradicalisation (ENoD), 2014).

For a partnership between all state and non-state actors to be effective, there must be a commitment on all sides. When either party is reluctant or unconvinced of the merits of working collectively, this undermines trust and willingness for cooperation. For this reason, governments will need to make a significant shift in thinking and practice, especially in the broad realm of

security, since this is an area where states are used to leading a top-down approach. Working collaboratively, on the other hand, requires new ways of working that are antithetical to existing organisational cultures, and new types of practical working arrangements related to information sharing and decision making (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2010).

#### **4.1. Challenges and practical limitations**

The fundamental issue that inhibits the effective work of CSOs are restrictions imposed by international and state measures that restrain the space of civil society. Civil society actors are not always provided with the necessary political and legal latitude to work effectively (OSCE, 2018). According to the Barcelona Declaration, in the name of fighting terrorism, many states adopted special legislative controls that curtail political freedoms. Restrictive measures make it more difficult for civil society actors to promote human rights and tolerance as an essential element in the prevention of VERLT (Observatory to prevent extremist violence (OPEV), 2017). The said was proved by research among civil society groups, donor agencies, research centres and governments in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America (Cortright et al., 2012). It found that overly restrictive counter-terrorism policies hinder the work of non-governmental organisations. Many of the organisations that work against VERLT are themselves often being labelled extremist and are facing constraints on their ability to operate. In many countries, regulatory measures related to the prevention of financing and support to terrorist groups make it more difficult for civil society actors, especially NGOs and activists, to operate freely and effectively. The most significant impact of such constraints is reflected in the acquisition of financial resources, government support and the exclusion in the decision-making and planning processes.

Analysing the mechanisms and practice of social inclusion policy in Australian communities, Amath (2015) noted that despite many available pragmatic solutions on how to enable social inclusion, these suggestions tend to focus mainly on government responsibilities while neglecting the potentials of CSOs. With interviews conducted among representatives of civil society organisations, she found that they are proactively engaged and their work and efforts to be of high visibility and in-line with social inclusion policy. However, their agenda was not set by the government, rather it was self-motivated. She concluded that there is a lack of genuine recognition of the role of communities and civil society in addressing issues related to social exclusion.

Generally, these issues are a consequence of a too narrow top-down approach, which results in the depreciation of civil society and their exclusion in many counter radicalisation and violent extremism activities. As observed by Grossman (2018), there is little meaningful engagement of civil society actors at the disengagement end of the VERLT spectrum. Involving civil society has been conceptualised internationally as almost entirely in terms of prevention and early intervention. By contrast, disengagement has become institutionalised by law enforcement and clinical practitioners, lacking the emphasis on mobilising community-based resources to facilitate successful reintegration. This means that former violent extremists are largely denied the support and social engagement that could help re-build their sense of social connection, whereas communities, in turn, have been left without the resources to support and defend reintegration processes.

Stereotypic and conservative outlook on non-state actors is observable in other areas as well, namely in relation to specific organisations. Patel & Westermann (2018) argue that this is specifically the case of woman associations addressing gender differences and helping females who are in danger or in a position of control and power to affect individuals at risk. They note that women are still being treated extremely polarised and stereotypically (as either victims or dangerous warriors). Likewise, current initiatives emphasise women's roles in the prevention domain almost exclusively as mothers and wives, arguing that female maternal qualities provide 'unique' perspectives to spot radicalisation early. However, initiatives should be 'empowering', but instead, they come across as patronising, limiting the role of women to the domestic sphere, and neglecting the possibilities of their participation in broader public initiatives. As a result, caution needs to be exercised when making assumptions about the role of mothers (and indeed of families more generally) in countering VERLT. Families and their members have a powerful role to play in shaping their children's resilience and sense of social wellbeing. All of these stereotypes, regardless of which end of the social spectrum they fall on, dismiss or downplay the complexity of civil society influence and experience by either trivialising or romanticising their status and their impacts (Grossman, 2018).

In addition to regulatory constraints, stereotypical views and a lack of common views, there are also other practical limitations affecting joint collaboration and integration of civil society into the system of preventing and countering VERLT.

First, time and budget constraints are both often a circumstance that CSOs deal with. Since strategies and policies anticipate fast results, this may limit the level of time-engagement with civil society to superficial consultations after the drafts have been compiled. Moreover, filed representatives report that often neither donor patience nor funding is adequate. This is primarily the reason of the generally short-term nature of most funding timelines, with "CSOs often facing three to six-month implementation periods for work that requires a long-term commitment to establishing relevance (OSCE, 2018).

Second, to build social and community resilience, it is crucial to improve trust flows between Government and communities. However, lack of trust and confidence between communities, law enforcement personnel, and state institutions persists and impedes the resilience needed to develop meaningful, sustainable partnerships to identify and prevent VERLT (Grossman, 2018). Research shows that lack of trust is generally a result of two issues, namely distressing experiences with law enforcement and their way of imposing repression, as well as the unfavourable narrative of state policies and regulations.

Choudhury (2017) examined the experience of British civil society organisations and noted that willingness of the public to cooperate with the police in countering VERLT is strongly linked to the evaluation of the legitimacy of the police, especially with the perceived procedural justice. It is essential that the police execute their powers consistently and transparently, based on objective information and criteria. He argues that perceived fairness and equal treatment are vital for cooperation; however, in reality, this is undermined by the aforementioned legal restrictions and policy frameworks which generate perceptions of discriminatory and arbitrary state actions. The danger is that the broad discretion afforded to the state in the application of counter-terrorism laws has the potential for discriminatory practices. In the UK this, for example, has led to the situations where no suspicion stop-and-search is allowed, and social welfare activities and activism of Islamic societies can be interpreted as an indicator of radicalisation. The said is also the reason why community members and civil

agents face significant obstacles in coming forward to authorities. Often they do not want to cause trouble for community or family members. The result is often delayed reporting, beyond the point at which early intervention or diversion would be an option. This damages not only efforts to counter or prevent terrorism, but also family and civil society willingness to come forward in future because of the trauma they experience when things have reached crisis point for someone they know. What is more, many of the agencies and community groups that constitute strong entry-points for civil society activism are often fearful of either being stigmatised or of losing existing clients and funding support if they are overtly identified as providing intervention and support services (Grossman, 2018).

Exploring the Muslim countries' experience with reforms in the area of preventing VERLT, Abu-Nimer & Nasser (2017) found that not only the imposition of repression and criminal procedures but also top down-driven approaches lead to limited success and the withdrawal of civil society. By their observations, such an approach creates a resistance at the community level, which is often a result of fear of hidden agenda among communities, imposition, losing local culture or values. They found that organisations and agents outside of the communities are often unable to build a relationship of trust with community leaders and authorities because reforms failed to adapt to cultural context and work with existing mechanisms and local institutions.

As observed in the previous sections, governments and state agencies are most united when it comes to the importance of CSOs in information gathering and heavily rely on their ability to integrate and provide an insight into hard-to-reach communities. Consistently, many projects address the methods and training of frontline practitioners, including NGOs and CSOs in risk assessments. However, risk identification and assessment that are expected from CSO agents represent yet another issue. The most concerning is the lack of knowledge and awareness of where to turn to for help, advice, and support when trying to "read" or interpret concerning behaviour or attitude changes (Grossman, 2018). Civil society workers must be offered knowledge frames for signalling polarisation and radicalisation, and toolkits for possible intervention in cases of concern. Therefore, training, workshops, and interactive debates through specific cases are necessary to facilitate their skills and knowledge. However, knowledge and experience sharing comes up short in reality (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2010). Sarma (2017) argues that lack of knowledge and experience can lead to poor predictions and ethically, it can lead to the labelling of an individual who is not on a trajectory toward violence as being "at-risk". Not only in the absence of knowledge, but in general, risk assessments in the context of preventing and countering VERLT are fraught with difficulty, primarily due to the variable nature of the phenomenon, the low base-rate problem, and the shortage of strong evidence on relevant risk and resilience factors. Training indeed has the potential to improve knowledge of the hazard and associated risks, analytic skills, and confidence in completing risk assessments. Nevertheless, there remains a dilemma that agents involved do not have any experience of, or expertise in, formal risk assessment. If clear information and support pathways, mechanisms and opportunities for families and civil society actors are not provided, then they will respond in ways that have little grounding in reality, which creates a series of risks for those who come forward. If we are to strengthen the role of CSOs in this area, then they must be constantly in close cooperation with other trained professionals and involved in trainings that include the latest knowledge and examples tailored specifically to their work situations.

Despite a growing body of research and literature dealing with the issues that limit the success and involvement of civil society and community agents in countering VERLT strategies, there is also a different, a more negative side to their role, which must be considered if one is to understand the rationale and fundamentals of the existing issues. In analysing the nature of VERLT, Molnár (2016) notes that contrary to the widely held beliefs that weak civil society enables the growth of illiberal politics, in some situations civil society has indeed provided fertile grounds to the spread of radicalism and xenophobia. His research deriving from the example of Hungary shows that CSOs played an important role in the right-wing radicalisation. Conservative civic organisations have, through symbolism and public vocabulary, facilitated the spread of nationalism in contemporary Hungarian public life. Such experiences are not uncommon, especially in times when societies are facing an increased inflow of refugees and migrants, which is why transparency and ethical conditions must also be examined and considered when interpreting the issue of exclusion or stereotyping of CSOs.

In summary, there is a wide range of challenges and dilemmas associated with civil society role and engagement in countering VERLT. Short-term and unstable funding horizons, the turnover of staff and shifting political priorities can make long-term partnerships difficult to achieve in practice. Moreover, the imperative for the government to take the overall responsibility because of its public accountability is also not encouraging. There is a need for a cultural shift within the security system, traditionally not accustomed to working in partnership, towards greater openness, information sharing, and joint decision making. There are also other sensitivities surrounding partnerships coming from all sides, including a reluctance of communities or frontline workers to stray into counter-VERLT work, resistance to this work coming into contact with other agendas such as cohesion and community relations, and a general lack of mutual trust and commitment. Beyond question, resolving these issues and achieving balance is difficult, especially if we consider that there are situations where partnerships might not be appropriate at all (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2010). In this perspective, the establishment of effective partnerships primarily requires adequate and clear policies, while actions of state authorities need to be calibrated with community organisations (Choudhury, 2017). Moreover, government plans for action and cooperation with civil society in addressing the threats to national security should not neglect the existing gaps and issues.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Due to realisation that repressive measures alone are not effective for the prevention of terrorism-related threats, more of preventative and socially oriented approaches emphasising the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach are being developed and implemented. As noted by Grossman (2018), we are entering a new phase of developing policies and models for dealing with extremism and radicalisation, where the involvement of civil society in prevention and intervention efforts, as well as disengagement and reintegration processes, is the next vital frontier. This paper examined the role of civil society and communities in countering VERLT, intending to identify relevant stakeholders and their areas of work to present a clear picture of the potentials and positions of non-state agents. Development of a comprehensive system and network of stakeholders in countering VERLT should consider and address current limitations. For this reason, we presented an overview of previous work related to the practical experiences, good practices and existing gaps limiting the progress.

Experiences reveal that a cooperative and constructive dialogue between civil society and government agencies, including at the municipal level, is a prerequisite to success in countering VERLT. Government agencies should provide an environment that allows different parts of society to collaborate in the development of programs and strategies. While the government's role is crucial, a comprehensive VERLT strategy should involve a "whole-of-society approach that empowers civil society," rather than an approach limited solely to government actors (Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), 2013a). It is also evident that top-down initiated strategies failed to reach desired results, which is why locally tailored approaches are seen as crucial. Changes must be commenced within the environmental context to provide higher sustainability of reforms. Interventions in the local environment can only be successful if they gain public acceptance; thus the context should be thoroughly examined and projects and organisations closely linked to community leaders and partners on a local level (Abu-Nimer & Nasser, 2017).

Following the recognition that radicalisation is a social process that occurs in local environments and closed communities, civil society and community agents have already been acknowledged as an essential partner in preventative and bottom-up driven initiatives. Nevertheless, currently, many bottom-up approaches are still self-initiated, while governments' commitment to cooperation frequently exists only in theory. The review and analysis of the civil society arena showed that it covers a wide range of possible agents working with individuals at risk, which can indeed facilitate their social inclusion, empowerment, conflict reconciliation, tolerance and promote democratic values in at-risk communities. Furthermore, they also proved to be a significant partner in de-radicalisation and exit programmes. In practice, however, their role is mostly limited to the prevention activities.

Research and practice show that the work and participation of CSOs in anti-radicalisation networks is still limited and faced with many restrictions, generally arising from stereotypical views, and restrictive regulation, which in turn leads to a lower willingness of the communities and their representatives to cooperate with state professionals and law enforcement. One of the main concerns is related to the lack of mutual trust and confidence. To ensure effective joint collaboration, governments and state institutions need to build trust with communities, civil society agents and develop positive image among community members. Cooperation in counter-terrorism policing could be efficient only when communities are confident that legislation and policies are not implemented in a discriminatory fashion.

The analysis of the previous work presented in this paper also showed that despite general obstacles and the fact that many CSOs struggle to strengthen their impact, many good practices do exist, and joint collaboration projects are being carried out, which implies that slow progress is being made. As found by Korn (2016) who investigated approaches to combat radicalisation and violent extremism on different levels, comprehensive prevention measures are common to approaches among the European states. She concludes that a system of shared values exists and forms the foundation for dealing with VERLT. Still, the current situation of agreed but non-obligatory measures and actions provided by the EU creates a state where countries' strategies differentiate, while a coordinated, concerted and systematic approach is missing.

Consistently with these conclusions drawn, the observations from the Barcelona Declaration note that civil society currently represents an underused resource that needs adequate support and protection to make a more constructive contribution to confront VERLT

(Observatory to prevent extremist violence (OPEV), 2017). Most of the shortcomings described occur due to inadequate understanding of the potential of CSOs and traditional outlook on security provision. Although the impacts of community engagement are less visible as opposed to hard measures in responses to VERLT, it should be considered that this is one of the most difficult types of intervention to establish. It is dependent on strong interpersonal relationships, a high degree of commitment to partnership working, long-term sustainability, the involvement of credible actors, locally-specific responses sensitive to broader influences, and the involvement of well trained and confident professionals (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2010).

In order to overcome existing gaps and limitations and help facilitate locally-relevant approaches, the members of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) (2013b) have identified several good practices on community engagement in countering VERLT. First, community engagement and community-oriented policing must be planned as long term and sustained strategies, with assessment metrics put in place. Approaches need to be comprehensive and supported by research to understand local problems so that communities are not targeted for security reasons but engaged for their benefit. A holistic approach means that all sectors of society are engaged, and all ideologically motivated crimes countered, not only specific forms. Furthermore, it is necessary to establish methods to build trust in the community. Practitioners and officials should be honest and transparent in their efforts to engage the community, respect the community traditions and culture, listen to their grievances and conduct their work with integrity and professionalism. For developing a trust-based relationship, it is also crucial that engagement efforts are broad-based and inclusive of all members and ideologies. Communities need to be empowered to develop a counter-narrative to the violent extremist one and to amplify the alternative messages. Besides formal community leaders, also informal influencers should be included in engagement plans, as well as women and youth networks, former violent extremists, and victims of terrorism. From a policing perspective, it is advisable that a specific individual, such as a community liaison officer, be appointed to represent a person engaging with the community. This agent should focus on developing programs that build trust with the community and ensure that law enforcement officials are aware of any violent extremism reported in a community.

For establishing sustaining and genuine relationships among stakeholders, the relations and alliances need to be clearly defined. According to OSCE recommendations (2014), inter-agency coordination can be facilitated and effective only if there is a clear division of the areas of responsibility and accountability among all agencies. For this, mutual awareness of the distinct roles and competencies must be established, as well as the transparency and oversight of inter-agency coordination arrangements. Moreover, protocols for a lawful and human rights-compliant sharing of information, especially confidential information, need to be put in place and clear decision-making procedures on joint action defined.

All stakeholders involved in joint collaboration, especially state authorities, need to recognise the potentials and role of CSOs, their ability to access even the most vulnerable environments and build relationships based on respect. It is not enough that such recognition exists only in documented form; it needs to be accomplished through changed mentality, working practices, and adequate support. It is important to consider that to fulfil their tasks, civil society agents need adequate support in the form of professionalisation, exchange of good practice, and a more stable relationship with governmental bodies, so that their knowledge, skills, and services can be systematically maintained, further developed and mainstreamed into ongoing work (European Network of Deradicalisation (ENoD), 2014).

To conclude, the future success of the civil society and community members' engagement in countering VERLT will mostly depend on governments and security organisations and their readiness to change their positions and how they work, as well as to take into account the proposals of non-state actors and respond to their needs. The said will only be done when all agencies and stakeholders involved do realise that imposing a response to radicalisation or extremism based on security measures reflects unsuccess. As noted by Gervasoni (2017), using hard security measures means there has been a failure in dealing with factors leading to extremism and violence.

## REFERENCES

1. Abu-Nimer, M., & Nasser, I. (2017). Building peace education in the Islamic educational context. *International Review of Education*, 63(2), 153–167. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-017-9632-7>
2. Amath, N. (2015). Australian Muslim civil society organisations: Pathways to social inclusion. *Journal of Social Inclusion*, 6(1), 6–34.
3. Angel, M., López, G., & Pašić, L. (2017). Youth work against violent radicalisation: Theory, concepts and primary prevention in practice. Retrieved from <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/7110668/YW-against-radicalisation-web.pdf/90a7569d-182d-0b0c-ce5d-9a0fe111ec91>
4. Belanger, P., & Szmania, S. (2018). The Paradox of Source Credibility in Canadian and US Domestic Counterterrorism Communications. *International Journal of Communication*, 12, 1459–1480.
5. Berardinelli, D., & Guglielminetti, L. (2018). Preventing Violent Radicalisation: the Italian Case Paradox. In M. Tomita (Ed.), *Groups with special needs in community measures - the 7th edition. International Conference: Multidisciplinary perspectives in the quasi-coercive treatment of offenders* (pp. 28–33). Timisoara: Filodiritto. Retrieved from [https://www.academia.edu/37811617/Preventing\\_Violent\\_Radicalisation\\_the\\_Italian\\_Case\\_Paradox](https://www.academia.edu/37811617/Preventing_Violent_Radicalisation_the_Italian_Case_Paradox)
6. Botha, A. (2014). Radicalisation in Kenya: Recruitment to al-Shabaab and the Mombasa Republican Council. *Institute for Security Studies, Paper 265*, (September), 1–28.
7. Cherney, A., & Hartley, J. (2017). Community engagement to tackle terrorism and violent extremism: challenges, tensions and pitfalls. *Policing and Society*, 27(7), 750–763. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2015.1089871>
8. Choudhury, T. (2017). Campaigning on campus: Student Islamic Societies and Counterterrorism. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 40(12), 1004–1022. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2016.1253986>
9. Cortright, D., Millar, A., Gerber-Stellingwerf, L., & Lopez, G. A. (2012). Friend, Not Foe: The Role of Civil Society in Preventing Violent Extremism. *Notre Dame Journal of International & Comparative Law*, 2(2), 238–256. Retrieved from <http://scholarship.law.nd.edu/ndjicl>
10. Day, J., & Kleinmann, S. (2017). Combating the Cult of ISIS: A Social Approach to Countering Violent Extremism. *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, 15(3), 14–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15570274.2017.1354458>
11. De Goede, M., & Simon, S. (2013). Governing Future Radicals in Europe. *Antipode*, 45(2), 315–335. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8330.2012.01039.x>

12. Dinham, A., & Lowndes, V. (2008). Religion, resources, and representation: Three narratives of faith engagement in British Urban governance. *Urban Affairs Review*, 43(6), 817–845. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1078087408314418>
13. European Network of Deradicalisation (ENoD). (2014). *Final Report*. Berlin: Violence Prevention Network. Retrieved from <http://www.violence-prevention-network.de/projekte-mainmenu-37/edna>
14. Gervasoni, L. (2017). Building a Bridge: Engaging Civil Society in Preventing All Forms of Violent Extremism. In *8th Euromed Survey: Violent Extremism in the Euro-Mediterranean Region*. (pp. 40–47). Barcelona: Euro-Mediterranean Policies Department (IEMed).
15. Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF). (2013a). Ankara Memorandum on Good Practices for a Multi-Sectoral Approach to Countering Violent Extremism. Retrieved from [https://www.thegctf.org/documents/10162/72352/13Sep19\\_Ankara+Memorandum.pdf](https://www.thegctf.org/documents/10162/72352/13Sep19_Ankara+Memorandum.pdf)
16. Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF). (2013b). Good Practices on Community Engagement and Community-Oriented Policing as Tools to Counter Violent Extremism. Retrieved from [https://www.thegctf.org/documents/10162/159885/13Aug09\\_EN\\_Good+Practices+on+Community+Engagement+and+Community-Oriented+Policing.pdf](https://www.thegctf.org/documents/10162/159885/13Aug09_EN_Good+Practices+on+Community+Engagement+and+Community-Oriented+Policing.pdf)
17. Grossman, M. (2018). The Role of Families and Civil Society in Detecting Radicalisation and Promoting Disengagement from Violent Extremism, (2017).
18. Halafoff, A., Lam, K., & Bouma, G. (2019). Worldviews education: cosmopolitan peace-building and preventing violent extremism. *Journal of Beliefs & Values*, 40(3), 381–395. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13617672.2019.1600113>
19. Hirschfield, A., Christmann, K., Wilcox, A., Rogerson, M., & Sharratt, K. (2012). Process Evaluation of Preventing Violent Extremism Programmes for Young People. Retrieved from [dera.ioe.ac.uk/16233/1/preventing-violent-extremism-process-evaluation.pdf](http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/16233/1/preventing-violent-extremism-process-evaluation.pdf)
20. HM Government. (2012). Channel vulnerability assessment. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-vulnerability-assessment>
21. Institute for Strategic Dialogue. (2010). *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)*. Retrieved from <https://www.counterextremism.org/resources/details/id/115/channel-process>
22. King Baudouin Foundation. (2019). European Practice Exchange on Deradicalisation (EPEX). Retrieved from <http://www.europe-kbf.eu/en/projects/migration/deradicalisation-network>
23. Korn, J. (2016). European CVE Strategies from a Practitioner's Perspective. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 668(1), 180–197. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716216671888>
24. Kozmelj, R. (2018). Prevent-Refer-Address concept as a multi-stakeholder response to radicalisation in the Western Balkans. In G. Meško, B. Lobnikar, K. Prislan, & R. Hacin (Eds.), *Criminal Justice and Security in Central and Eastern Europe: From common sense to evidence-based policy-making: Conference Proceedings* (pp. 87–102). Maribor: Maribor University Press.
25. Lister, R. (2000). Strategies for social inclusion: promoting social cohesion or social justice? In P. Askonas & A. Stewart (Eds.), *Social Inclusion: Possibilities and tensions* (pp. 37–54). Basingstoke: Macmillan.
26. Ministry of the Interior; Slovenian Police. (n.d.). Project FIRST LINE - Awareness raising and prevention of radicalisation. Retrieved from <https://www.policija.si/eng/764-international-cooperation/disbursement-of-eu-funds/95775-project-first-line-awareness-raising-and-prevention-of-radicalisation>

27. Molnár, V. (2016). Civil society, radicalism and the rediscovery of mythic nationalism. *Nations and Nationalism*, 22(1), 165–185. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12126>
28. Norwegian Refugee Council. (2017). Countering Violent Extremism and Humanitarian Action. Retrieved from [https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/position-papers/170622-nrc-position-paper\\_cve-and-humanitarian-action---fv.pdf](https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/position-papers/170622-nrc-position-paper_cve-and-humanitarian-action---fv.pdf)
29. Nye, J. S. (2008). Public Diplomacy and Soft Power. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616(1), 94–109. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716207311699>
30. Observatory to prevent extremist violence (OPEV). (2017). Barcelona Declaration: Plan of Action of the Euro-Mediterranean civil society to prevent all forms of violent extremism. Retrieved from <http://opev.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/EuroMed-PVE-Plan-of-Action-ENG.pdf>
31. OSCE. (2014). Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach. Retrieved from <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/111438?download=true>
32. OSCE. (2018). *The Role of Civil Society in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation that Lead to Terrorism: A Guidebook for South-Eastern Europe*. Vienna: OSCE. Retrieved from <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/400241?download=true>
33. Patel, S., & Westermann, J. (2018). Women and Islamic-State Terrorism: An Assessment of How Gender Perspectives Are Integrated in Countering Violent Extremism Policy and Practices. *Security Challenges*, 14(2), 53–81.
34. Pickering, S., McCulloch, J., & Wright-Neville, D. (2008). *Counter-terrorism policing: Community, cohesion and security*. New York: Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-76874-8>
35. Prislan, K., Černigoj, A., & Lobnikar, B. (2018). Preventing Radicalisation in the Western Balkans: The Role of the Police Using a Multi-Stakeholder. *Revija Za Kriminalistiko in Kriminologijo*, 69(4), 257–268.
36. Putnam, R. D. (1993). *Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
37. Sajoo, A. B. (2016). The fog of extremism: Governance, identity, and minstrels of exclusion. *Social Inclusion*, 4(2), 26–39. <https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v4i2.541>
38. Sarma, K. M. (2017). Risk assessment and the prevention of radicalisation from nonviolence into terrorism. *American Psychologist*, 72(3), 278–288. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000121>
39. Tan, E. K. B. (2007). Norming "moderation" in an "iconic target": Public policy and the regulation of religious anxieties in Singapore. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 19(4), 443–462. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546550701590610>
40. United Nations. (2018). Social Inclusion. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/development/desa/socialperspectiveondevelopment/issues/social-integration.html>
41. Vermeulen, F., & Bovenkerk, F. (2012). *Engaging with violent Islamic extremism: local policies in Western European cities*. The Hague: Eleven International.

Sažetak

---

**Kaja Prislan, Krunoslav Borovec, Irena Cajner Mraović**

### **Uloga civilnog društva i zajednica u suzbijanju nasilnog ekstremizma i radikalizacije**

Aktualne politike i inicijative usmjerene na suzbijanje radikalizacije i nasilnog ekstremizma potiču sustavan međuresorni pristup koji uključuje i organizacije civilnoga društva. Unatoč generalnom prepoznavanju različitih uloga i potencijala civilnog društva u području prevencije i deradikalizacije, u praksi je ipak puno izazova i neznanja što dovodi do toga da civilno društvo ostaje neiskorišteni resurs. U ovome radu prezentiramo potencijale i sposobnosti civilnog društva i njegovih organizacija i zajednica u suzbijanju nasilnog ekstremizma i radikalizacije. Kroz ekstenzivni pregled literature istražujemo dobre prakse u kolaboracijama, kao i ograničenja koja ometaju razvoj holističkog pristupa i angažmana cijelog društva u suzbijanju nasilnog ekstremizma i radikalizacije. Glavni je cilj ovoga rada pružiti jasnu sliku aktualnih propusta i uputiti na probleme koji se moraju rješavati kako bi u perspektivi bilo moguće postići sveobuhvatan i koordiniran pristup u suzbijanju nasilnog ekstremizma i radikalizacije.

**Ključne riječi:** radikalizacija, nasilni ekstremizam, prevencija, međuresorni pristup, organizacije civilnog društva, zajednica.