

Chapter 11

Prevention of Radicalization in Western Muslim Diasporas

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This chapter opens with a brief definition of key terms such as “Muslim diasporas,” “prevention of violent extremism” (PVE), “countering violent extremism” (CVE) and discusses the role of Islamophobia in radicalization and its impacts on the prevention of radicalization. The size of the Muslim population in each of the selected five Western countries and the appearance of jihadist, left- and right-wing-groups, as well as the number of attacks resulting from these milieus are briefly discussed at the beginning of the country reports. The main body of this chapter discusses academic, governmental, and civil society approaches to PVE/CVE. For each country, some PVE examples are presented which might be helpful to policymakers and practitioners. A literature review regarding PVE/CVE approaches in each country seeks to provide an overview of the academic state of the art concerning the prevention of radicalization. Finally, a number of recommendations with regard to future PVE initiatives are provided, based on the author’s field research in Salafi milieus in various European countries.¹

Keywords: countering violent extremism (CVE), countering violent extremism policy and practice, extremism, government and civil society responses, Muslim communities, Muslim diasporas, prevention, preventing violent extremism (PVE), PVE recommendations, radicalization, religious extremism, Salafism, terrorism

¹ The following chapter includes extracts from the book: Nina Käsehage (2020). *Prevention of Violent Extremism in Western Muslim Diasporas*, Religionswissenschaft: Forschung und Wissenschaft. Zürich: LIT Verlag.

This chapter seeks to describe the state of research on the prevention of radicalization in Western Muslim diasporas. For this purpose, the following countries were selected: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, and UK.²

First, the main terms used in the title of this chapter will be discussed briefly, focusing on religious extremism.³ The understanding of “radicalization” and “prevention” is not uniform in Western societies. That discussion leads to the question of the definition of Muslim diasporas - a composite term that might also vary, depending on the point of view: Is it used to describe an insider Muslim perspective, or a situation as perceived by Western societies hosting Muslim immigrants?

A person’s perception of the term “Muslim diasporas” might itself lead to grievances. This may make some individuals more susceptible to radicalization, e.g. when Muslims see themselves as citizens of Western countries they are living in (in particular if they were born there or are part of the second or third generation), but are still perceived and treated like “foreigners.”

Secondly, a number of research approaches related to the prevention of radicalization and to current debates within this field will be discussed as they relate to the five Western countries considered in this chapter. In this context, it is important to state that only a selection of the literature and only some of the initiatives related to the prevention of radicalization can be described here.

By discussing the efforts of national governments and local communities, as well as the findings of researchers, some helpful insights on the methods and mechanisms of radicalization prevention can be brought to the attention of policymakers, counterterrorism professionals, civil society stakeholders and others directly confronted with the phenomenon of radicalization. A few examples of good practices and approaches are also presented. Following the conclusions, recommendations are made, based on the author’s personal field-research.

Prevention, Radicalization and Western Muslim Diasporas - Can a Single Definition Fit all Countries?

In order to prevent radicalization in Western Muslim diasporas, it is important to understand the mechanisms and the multiple drivers behind radicalization, in particular those related to *religious radicalization*. According to Vidino, radicalization is “a highly individualized process determined by the complex interaction of various personal and structural factors.”⁴ Lambert and Wiktorowicz argue that religious fundamentalists are cognitive extremists of whom just a minority are likely to turn to militant jihad.⁵ Ravn, Coolsaet, and Sauer underline a very important aspect within this debate when they note that “despite a lack of a scholarly consensus on how to understand radicalisation, a set

²A longer version of this chapter can be found in: Käsehage, Nina, *Prevention of Violent Extremism in Western Muslim Diasporas*. Religionswissenschaft: Forschung und Wissenschaft. Zürich: LIT Verlag, 2020.

³In this chapter, “prevention” and “radicalization” relate solely to religion. It is important to underline this focus, because members of Muslim diasporas can also be radicalized by a secular ideology.

⁴Vidino, Lorenzo, ‘Countering Radicalization in America, Lessons from Europe,’ *United States Institute for Peace. Special Report. Washington*, 2010, p. 1.

⁵Cf. Borum, Randy, ‘Radicalization into Violent Extremism I: A Review of Social Science Theories,’ *Journal of Strategic Security*, 4, 2011, p. 7-35.

of preconceived ideas about the phenomenon is taken for granted in the public discourse.”⁶ Different understandings of radicalization become significant in the context of selecting best approaches to strengthen prevention efforts. If the starting points towards a certain phenomenon differ, efforts to achieve common aims are likely to run into difficulties. Due to this, we should free ourselves from the idea that a mono-causal explanation for radicalization exists which applies to every “radical.” Living in a complex world requires an ability to react in a flexible way. When it comes to prevention, what works in a non-Muslim context might differ in a Muslim-majority country context.⁷

Some terms are “loaded” and if they contain overt or covert elements of discrimination, they are unlikely to open doors to the very group of people which need to be brought back to a peaceful path.⁸ A term like “Muslim diaspora” can be a neutral description of a religious minority, but can also be understood as excluding a *whole* segment of a minority group from society, even those persons who were born in the “West.” This is not the place to discuss the “us” versus “them” implications of such perceptions, but it is something we have to keep in mind when discussing prevention of radicalization. In this chapter, various approaches in the field of the prevention of radicalization are discussed. The existing literature generally distinguishes between preventing violent extremism (PVE) and countering violent extremism (CVE).⁹ According to Daniel Koehler:

“PVE programs can be defined as programs designed to prevent recruitment and radicalisation into violent extremism leading to terrorist actions. These programs can address individuals or groups not at risk of violent radicalisation (primary or general prevention, resilience building), or those already considered to be at risk or in the early stages of a violent radicalisation process (secondary or specific prevention, early intervention). Deradicalisation programs are usually not counted among PVE efforts, but rather belong to CVE (countering violent extremism) methods.”¹⁰

This chapter focuses mainly on PVE approaches that are primarily understood as *prevention of radicalization* of individuals and groups of people to violent extremism and terrorism. Nevertheless, referring to Koehler’s approach¹¹ - deradicalization as a form of CVE - can be seen as being closely linked to PVE approaches.¹²

⁶ Ravn et al., ‘Rethinking Radicalisation: Addressing the Lack of a Contextual Perspective in the Dominant Narratives on Radicalisation’; in: Noel Clycq, Christiane Timmerman, Dirk Vanheule, Ruth Van Caudenberg, Stiene Ravn (eds.), *Radicalisation. A Marginal Phenomenon or a Mirror to Society?* Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2019, p. 27.

⁷ Cf. Githens-Mazer, Jonathan and Robert Lambert, ‘Why Conventional Wisdom on Radicalization Fails: The Persistence of a Failed Discourse,’ *International Affairs*, 86(4), 2010, pp. 889-901.

⁸ Cf. Jenkins, Brian Michael, *Building an Army of Believers. Jihadist Radicalization and Recruitment*. Santa Monica: RAND, 2007.

⁹ Cf. Crone, Manni, ‘Radicalisation reassessed: violence, politics and the skills of the body,’ *International Affairs*, 92(3), 2016, pp. 587-604.

¹⁰ Koehler, Daniel, ‘Preventing Violent Radicalisation: Programme Design and Evaluation’; in: Diego Muro (ed.), *Resilient Cities, Countering Violent Extremism at Local Level*. Barcelona: CIDOB, 2017, p. 91.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Cf. Horgan, J. ‘Deradicalization or Disengagement? A Process in Need of Clarity and a Counterterrorism Initiative in Need of Evaluation,’ *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 2(4), 2008, pp. 3-8.

Although several causes for radicalization to violence exist that do not relate to religion, but to other factors such as economic inequality,¹³ religion is often seen as the most important driver for the current wave of terrorism – more so in the public debate than in scholarly publications.

Cavanaugh calls this mechanism: the “othering” of religion, writing:

“The myth of religious violence helps to construct and marginalize a religious Other, prone to fanaticism, to contrast with the rational, peace-making, secular subject. This myth can be and is used in domestic politics to legitimate the marginalization of certain types of practices and groups labelled religious, while underwriting the nation-state’s monopoly on its citizens’ willingness to sacrifice and kill. In foreign policy, the myth of religious violence serves to cast non-secular social orders, especially Muslim societies, in the role of villain.”¹⁴

The effect of the “othering” of religion in largely secular states, e.g., for purposes related to domestic political debates, can be seen as a key for *some* young Muslims in western diasporas to embrace radical religious thoughts.¹⁵ Although some of these vulnerable Muslims were initially not familiar with fundamentalist religious interpretations of Islam, everyday discrimination due, for instance, to their wearing specific clothes such as the *hijab* or the *jellabiya*, and media reports portraying “the” Islam as a violent religion, can be seen as partially responsible for the radicalization of some young Muslims across Europe,¹⁶ with radicalization (also) being a form of protest.¹⁷

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) as well as the Council of Europe in its Annual Report for 2018 noted:

“Islamophobia is still prevalent ... In public discourse, Islam and Muslims continue to be associated with radicalization, violence and terrorism. There is, generally, only very little positive media coverage of Muslim communities in Europe. Islamophobic hatred is often spread via the

¹³ Cf. Jürgensmeyer, Mark et al., ‘Introduction: The Enduring Relationship of Religion and Violence’; in: Jürgensmeyer, Mark, Margo Kitts, and Michael Jerryson (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Violence and Religion*. (1st ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 1-14.

¹⁴ Cavanaugh, William T., *The Myth of Religious Violence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 4. In contrast to the position of Cavanaugh, Schmid indicates the existence of a type of violence specifically related to Abrahamic religions: Cf. Schmid, Alex P., ‘Religion and Violent Extremism - with a Focus on Islamist Jihadism’; in: Hock, Klaus, and Nina Käsehaege (eds.), *‘Militant Islam’ vs. ‘Islamic Militancy’? Religion, Violence, Category Formation and Applied Research. Contested Fields in the Discourses of Scholarship*. Berlin: LIT-Verlag, 2020, p. 53.

¹⁵ Cf. Khosrokhavar, Farhad, *Radicalisation*. Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l’homme, 2014. See also: Schmid, A. P. “Data to Measure Sympathy and Support for Islamist Terrorism: A Look at Muslim Opinions on Al Qaeda and IS”, The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague 8, no.2 (2017).

¹⁶ The real or imagined discrimination against Muslims in the “non-Islamic world” and abroad is also a strong motivation for converts to Islam to solidarize with the needs of “the” Islam. In cases of radicalization, it can be seen as a push-factor for the recruitment of new activists for violent ideologies. Cf. Kunst, Jonas R., and David L. Sam, ‘Relationship between perceived Acculturation Expectations and Muslim Minority Youth’s Acculturation and Adaptation,’ *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 37(4), 2013, pp. 447-490.

¹⁷ Cf. Kunst, R. Jonas, Hajra Tajamal, David L. Sam, and Pal Ulleberg, ‘Coping with Islamophobia: The Effects of Religious Stigma on Muslim Minorities’ Identity Formation,’ *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 36(4), 2012, pp. 518-532.

Internet. Anti-Muslim sentiments are also regularly manifested in petitions and protest rallies against the construction of mosques. In many member states, a dangerous ‘normalisation’ of Islamophobic prejudice can be observed.”¹⁸

This “normalization of Islamophobic prejudices” and its particular impact on black Muslims (which was addressed by ECRI as well), can be seen as a major push factor for the radicalization of *some* young Muslims.¹⁹

While a recent report on Islamophobia correctly noted that “Muslims are ... the people who suffer the most from terrorism emanating from radicals in the Muslim world as the vast majority of terrorist attacks occur in Muslim-majority countries,”²⁰ the Western public tend to perceive attacks within the West as more cruel than the ones which occur within Muslim-majority countries.²¹

In addition to experiences of everyday discrimination against Muslims in Western countries - which is partly due to how some may negatively perceive their style of clothing and their public expressions of religiosity - another aspect affects the lives of (young) Muslims in the “West”: “a new kind of terror rooted in anti-Muslim racism and white supremacist ideology.”²²

By looking at Western Muslim diasporas, one also ought to look at the subjectivity of some researchers regarding the issue of Islamophobia. Very often, their individual understanding of radicalization and its potential prevention is a result of their own positioning vis-à-vis the religion of Islam and its believers. A good example in this context is the development of Islamophobic incidents within Europe. Some researchers, e.g., Günther Jikeli, try to assess various forms of discrimination such as “racist or xenophobic, anti-Muslim and anti-Semitic acts”²³ on the basis of their numbers, not on account of the level of discrimination. That this argument could be seen as a discriminatory position of the researcher towards a specific group itself, seems to be excluded from his conclusion:

“Anti-Muslim acts do exist and might be on the rise, but they have not supplemented racist manifestations in Europe in recent years, and they stay below the number of anti-Semitic acts. [...] However, there is a growing sense of victimhood on the basis of Islamic belief. Debates on Islamic fundamentalism and increased anti-terror measures are often viewed by Muslims as anti-Muslim bias.”²⁴

¹⁸ European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and Council of Europe ‘Annual Report on ECRI’s Activities Covering the Period from 1 January to 31 December 2018,’ *ECRI and Council of Europe*, 29, 2019, pp. 10ff. Conversely, “Westernphobia” may be discerned in religion related education within radical Islamic milieus among Europe. In contrast to “Islamophobia,” a phenomenon that is measurable in all societal milieus within ‘Western’ societies, “Westernphobia” is solely assessable within a minor field: the radical, religion-related environment.

¹⁹ Cf. Bayrakli, Enes and Farid Hafez, ‘The State of Islamophobia in Europe in 2018’; in: Enes Bayrakli, Enes and Farid Hafez (eds.), *Islamophobia Report 2018*. Istanbul, SETA, 2019, p. 10.

²⁰ Bayrakli and Hafez 2019, Foreword.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Jikeli, Gunther, ‘Discrimination against Muslims and Antisemitic Views among Young Muslims in Europe’; in: Mikael Shainkman (ed.), *Antisemitism Today and Tomorrow. Global Perspectives on the Many Faces of Contemporary Antisemitism*. Boston: Academic studies Press, 2018, p. 104.

²⁴ Ibid.

According to Jikeli, Muslims and Islamic organizations themselves are held responsible for “recent debates about a rise of ‘Islamophobia’ (...) that try to prohibit critical debates about some interpretations of Islam, blur[ing] the lines between such criticism and hatred of Muslims.”²⁵ Although this argumentation might hold true for *some* Islamic organizations, it is widely used as a narrative to suppress critics of discrimination against Muslims, especially among right-wing political parties such as the Alternative for Deutschland (AfD) in Germany, Les Républicains in France, the Progress Party in Norway and the Venstre party in Denmark.

In an article titled *Discrimination against Muslims and Antisemitic Views among Young Muslims in Europe*, Günther Jikeli presented a table, combining data from two surveys, one from the Pew Global Attitudes Project *Unfavorable Views of Jews and Muslims on the Increase in Europe* from 2008, and the second from the Pew Global Attitudes Project *Muslims and Islam: Key Findings in the U.S. and around the World* from 2017. The table, titled *Unfavorable Views of Muslims in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom*, presented data on these countries from 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008 and 2016 in order to highlight that:

“Negative views of Muslims and Islam are prevalent, but contrary to common belief, such views have not increased since 2004, despite the wave of terror attacks in the name of Islam. In spring 2016, 29 percent of the population in Germany (46 percent in 2004), 28 percent of the population in the United Kingdom (31 percent in 2004) and 29 percent (also 29 percent in 2004) [in France] [held such views].”²⁶

However, these “findings” stand in stark contrast to statistics presented in the *Islamophobia Report 2018*, which is based on surveys held in 34 European countries:

“The *Collectif contre l’islamophobie en France* (CCIF) recorded 676 Islamophobic incidents in 2018 against 446 in 2017 (increase of 52%). In the UK, the upward trend in Islamophobic incidents continued in 2017-18 (the typical census period for official government data), with the number of cases recorded in official statistics rising by 17% and religion-specific cases by a staggering 40% (double the figure of 2015/16).”²⁷

Most of the Islamophobic incidents, e.g., in France, were directed against women. In Europe as well as in other “Western” countries, an increased number of attacks on Muslim women who wear a veil-variant has been registered.²⁸ This means that Islamophobia contains a gender-specific discrimination towards female believers. It might be the result of the idea that women are (often) responsible for the “education” of the next generation.

With regard to Islamophobic attacks, for instance in Germany, Younes stated that they

“have to be seen in conjunction with attacks on refugees, their asylum homes as well as NGOs in the services of refugees and their problems. Until

²⁵ Ibid.; Cf. Bruckner, Pascal, *Un Racisme Imaginaire*. Paris: Édition Grasset, 2017.

²⁶ Jikeli 2018, p. 103.

²⁷ Bayrakli and Hafez 2019, p. 12.

²⁸ Cf. Perry, Barbara, ‘Gendered Islamophobia: Hate Crime against Muslim Women,’ *Social Identities*, 20(1), 2013, pp. 74-89.

the end of 2018, around 1,775 attacks on refugees took place, with around 329 adults and 15 children hurt. Overall, we observe a decline in the reporting and/or registration of physical attacks compared to the previous years.”²⁹

This finding underlines the fact that Islamophobia can be both a source of Muslim radicalization and violence, and a cause of reciprocal radicalization by right wing militants. Furthermore, the conflicting outcomes of surveys regarding Muslims, Islam, and the development of Islamophobia can be seen as a result of the use of different terminologies regarding the same phenomenon.³⁰ This mechanism could easily be extended to the discussion of prevention of radicalization. Therefore, it is important to keep this heterodox approach in mind, in terms of the religion of Islam, its believers, and the debate about the prevention of radicalization in Western Muslim diasporas. It might become more visible in the following literature review and in the case studies of prevention approaches in the five Western countries that are discussed in this chapter. In terms of increasing Islamophobia, rising right-wing politics within these Western countries and a fear of Muslim immigrants, who are often blamed for being potential terrorists,³¹ the term radicalization itself is also often stereotyped.³²

With regard to the possible “amount of growth in Europe’s Muslim population” within the framework of “future migration” in 27 European countries, the UK, Norway and Switzerland, the US-based Pew Research Center estimated a growth from 4.6 percent of the whole population in 2015 up to 14 percent (in a high migration scenario), 11.2 percent (in a medium migration scenario) and 7.4 percent (in a zero-migration scenario) in 2050.³³

The estimated “World’s Muslim Population” is likely to increase from 5.9 per cent Muslims in Europe in 2010 to 10.2 percent Muslims in 2050 and from 1 percent Muslims in North America in 2010 to 2.4 per cent Muslims in 2050 in North America. Such projections might serve as an explanation for an increase of negative right-wing sentiments regarding the presence of Muslims in the West.

In addition, it is important to note that next to Islamophobia research, investigations about the “mediating role of acculturation in the relationship between perceived threats and support of violence” among Muslim communities exist.³⁴ In applying the Integrated Threat Theory (ITT), it is evident that perceived threats as well as hostility towards a specific group, such as members of Western Muslim diasporas, could construct

²⁹ Younes, A.E., ‘Islamophobia in Germany: National Report 2018’; in: Enes Bayraklı and Farid Hafez (eds.), *European Islamophobia Report 2018*. Istanbul, SETA, 2018, pp. 379ff.

³⁰ Cf. Sheridan, Lorraine P., ‘Islamophobia Pre- and Post-September 11th, 2001,’ *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 21(3), 2006, pp. 317-336.

³¹Cf. Quillian, Lincoln, ‘Prejudice as a Response to Perceived Group Threat- Population Composition and Anti-immigrant and Racial Prejudice in Europe,’ *American Sociological Review*, 60(4), 1995, pp. 585-611.

³² Cf. Jakobsson, Niklas, and Svein Blom, ‘Did the 2011 Terror Attacks in Norway Change Citizens’ Attitudes Toward Immigrants?’ *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 26(4), 2014, pp. 475-486.

³³ Cf. Pew Research Center, ‘Europe’s Growing Muslim Population. Muslims are projected to increase as a share of Europe’s migration – even with no future migration,’ Pew Research Centre, 29 November 2017, p. 5.

³⁴ Tahir, Kunst, and Sam 2018, p. 2.

negativity and hostility towards an out-group as a result of discrimination against the former.³⁵

For these reasons, the chapter title *Prevention of Radicalization in Muslim Western Diasporas* contains various (individual) implicit assumptions and challenges regarding the prevention of religious related radicalization itself.

Review of Selected Governmental Approaches and Literature about Radicalization and the Prevention of Radicalization in Western Muslim Diasporas

Before turning to national responses, it is useful to recall some key developments on the international (UN) and regional (EU) levels.

In 2015, the UN's *Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (PVE Plan)* was presented to the General Assembly. The PVE concept differs from the CVE approach as it focuses more on root causes leading to violent extremism. In order to strengthen community resilience, the plan includes various recommendations for the prevention of terrorism and violent extremism on the international as well as on the local level.³⁶ In 2017, the UN's Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) released the publication *Preventing Violent Extremism through Education: A Guide for Policy-makers*.³⁷

According to the release *The Council Conclusions on EU External Action on Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism* of 16 June 2020,³⁸ the European Council “recalls that security at home depends on peace and stability beyond the EU's borders” and a “further strengthening of the EU's external counter-terrorism engagement and action in the priority geographic and thematic fields.”³⁹ Threats related to terrorism, a focus for further geographical EU investments and priority areas for action such as the Western Balkans, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, the Sahel region, and the Horn of Africa, as well as the importance of improved international cooperation are emphasized in the European Council report. In addition, the report calls for support of the priority partner countries which are the most impacted by the “returnees” phenomenon, “in order to help them bring perpetrators to justice, address radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism in prisons, and support rehabilitation and reintegration activities, including of family members, as well as

³⁵ Cf. Obaidi et al., ‘Living under Threat: Mutual Threat Perception Drives Anti-Muslim and Anti-Western Hostility in the Age of Terrorism,’ *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 48(5), 2018, pp. 567-584.

³⁶ Although the need for a multidisciplinary approach and the cooperation of governments and stakeholders regarding the prevention of violent extremism followed one key requirement of the *EU Counterterrorism Strategy* from 2005, van Ginkel and Entenmann pointed out, that not all EU member states have adopted comprehensive strategies that include preventive measures (Van Ginkel, Bibi, and Eva Entenmann, Eva, ‘The Foreign Fighters Phenomenon in the European Union. Profiles, Threats & Policies,’ *The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism - The Hague (ICCT)*, 7(2), 2016, p. 65.

³⁷ Cf. UNESCO, ‘Preventing Violent Extremism through Education: A Guide for Policy-makers,’ UNESCO, 2017, pp. 1-72.

³⁸ Cf. Council of European Union, ‘Preventing and combating terrorism and violent extremism: Council adopts conclusions on EU external action,’ Council of European Union, 16 June 2020. Available at: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/de/press/press-releases/2020/06/16/preventing-and-countering-terrorism-and-violent-extremism-council-adopts-conclusions-on-eu-external-action/>, accessed on 20 June 2020.

³⁹ Ibid.

specialised services for returning children.”⁴⁰ The Council underlines the need for compliance to all CVE measures with EU core values such as the rule of law in agreement with international law (international human rights law, humanitarian law and international refugee law).⁴¹

The report highlights the need for a “whole-of-society” approach to prevent and counter violent extremism, and also notes that deradicalization efforts need to address the essential conditions beneficial to terrorism and radicalization; the continuous care for vulnerable groups such as children and women; a gender approach with regard to female empowerment and the support of their resilience toward radicalization, as well as the strengthening of contact to civil society, youth, human rights defenders and victims of terrorism.⁴² It notes that “involving civil society organisations in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism remains of utmost importance for a successful approach. It is also important to continue addressing the spread of violent extremist narratives and to further promote interfaith and intercultural dialogue.”⁴³

Therefore, in the field of CVE and PVE, a continuing support of enhanced EU external actions, e.g., on online platforms - increasingly important areas for violent extremist Islamist ideology of Da‘esh and al-Qaeda, is suggested.⁴⁴ It is also noted that foreign terrorist fighters should be brought to justice and their movements be prevented.⁴⁵

The report further noted that one of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic might be its “potential influence on terrorist activities as well as on the prevention and countering of terrorism...”⁴⁶ In order to prevent radicalization leading to violent extremism and terrorism, the Council suggested “the development of assistance programming, where appropriate, as well as country-specific and regional strategies”⁴⁷ and a multi-stakeholder approach whereby “industry works together with EU and partner-country governments as well as academia and civil society in preventing and countering terrorism.”⁴⁸

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres noted that “terrorism is fundamentally the denial and destruction of human rights and the fight against terrorism will never succeed by perpetuating the same denial and destruction.”⁴⁹ Member states of the UN have reacted in various ways to the common problem of radicalization and the resulting “home-grown” terrorism emerging within Muslim diasporas in their societies.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Council of European Union, ‘*Council Conclusions on EU External Action on Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism*,’ Council of the European Union, 16 June 2020. No. prev. doc.: 8742/20 + COR 1, p. 15.

⁴² Council of European Union 2020, p. 12; Cf. Committee on Women’s Rights & Gender Equality, ‘Radicalisation and violent extremism - focus on women: How women become radicalized, and how to empower them to prevent radicalisation,’ *European Parliament, Brussels*, December 2017. Available at: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/596838/IPOL_STU\(2017\)596838_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/596838/IPOL_STU(2017)596838_EN.pdf).

⁴³ Council of European Union 2020, p. 12.

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 2ff.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 4.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 5.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 10.

⁴⁹ See Guterres, Antonio; in: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (ed.), *Preventing Violent Extremism through Education: A Guide for Policy-Makers*. UNESCO, 28 June 2018. Available at: <https://www.un.org/sg/statements>, accessed on 28 June 2020.

In the following section, developments in five Western countries will be sketched briefly. These lead to various prevention-oriented recommendations. New directions and challenges in the field of prevention of radicalization are addressed, illustrated by references to various national, regional, or subject-specific experiences.

Belgium

In Belgium, 7.6 percent of the total population were Muslims in 2016.⁵⁰ The projected percent of Muslims of the total population in Belgium in the year 2050 is estimated at 11.1 percent (estimate with zero immigration), 15.1 percent (estimate with medium immigration) and 18.2 percent (estimate with high immigration).⁵¹ The Pew Research Center's survey regarding the destination of migrants to Europe placed ranked Belgium with 230,000 migrants (57 percent of whom are Muslims) in the position. With regard to the number of Muslim refugees, Belgium is seventh in Europe, with 40,000 Muslim refugees.⁵²

Molenbeek, a suburb of Brussels, became internationally known as a hot-spot for jihadist radicalization since the attacks of November 2015 in Paris and March 2016 in Brussels, committed by young jihadists from Molenbeek claiming allegiance to ISIS.⁵³ The militant jihadist group *Sharia4Belgium* is the main violent extremist group; it inspired other groups to radicalize, by providing a jihadist infrastructure.⁵⁴ Many of the foreign fighters from Western European countries came from Belgium⁵⁵ and 86 per cent of them were already “known to authorities for offences such as robberies, theft or drug dealing.”⁵⁶

In order to address this rising trend, the Belgian government initiated PVE programs in 2013 and established a taskforce to develop a national counterterrorism and counterextremism strategy in 2015.⁵⁷ In this context, a 12-point action plan against terrorism was created. It included the creation of a new National Security Council, chaired by the Prime Minister, and also involves the domestic deployment of the military whenever the threat level is raised significantly, the development of new deradicalization programs in prisons, and also the strengthening of existing legal frameworks to deal with the phenomenon of foreign fighters.⁵⁸ Furthermore, various CVE initiatives for ten cities in Belgium that faced specific radicalization threats came into existence; these also included PVE approaches, e.g., one focusing on extremist

⁵⁰ Pew Research Center 2017, p. 30.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., p. 20; p. 22.

⁵³ Dechesne, Mark, and Nathalie Paton, ‘Country level report on drivers of self-radicalisation and digital sociability – The Netherlands,’ *DARE: Dialogue about Radicalisation and Equality* (ed.), May 2020, p. 4.

⁵⁴ Kudlacek et al., *Prevention of Radicalisation in selected European Countries. A comprehensive report of the state of the art in counter-radicalisation*. Hannover: Kriminologisches Forschungsinstitut Niedersachsen, 2017, p. 24.

⁵⁵ See van Ginkel and Entenmann 2016.

⁵⁶ Europol (ed.), ‘EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT),’ Europol, 2020, p. 21.

⁵⁷ Kudlacek et al. 2017, pp. 24f.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 31.

messaging on the internet.⁵⁹ According to Pauwels and their co-authors (amongst others), online exposure to extremist messages can promote political violence.⁶⁰

According to an examination of the Belgian State Security Service from 2017, “nearly 5 percent of all prisoners in Belgium – 450 prisoners in all – pose a radicalisation threat.”⁶¹ The report found that European cells “partially fund themselves through crime, such as petty theft, shoplifting, and extortion. Some jihadist preachers have reportedly legitimised such offences if used to finance jihad.”⁶² Such findings suggested that a stronger PVE approach focusing on prisons and probation cases was called for. Apart from the jihadists, groups as well as individuals of the anarchist and left-wing extremist milieu such as some of the participants of the *gilets jaunes* (“yellow vests”) movement, pose a threat to public order in Belgium due to their sometimes violent demonstrations.⁶³

The Belgian far-right⁶⁴ is most visible in the Flemish party Vlaams Blok (Flemish Bloc). It was forced to disband in 2004 as a consequence of its discriminatory statements against immigrants.⁶⁵ After that, many members of the Vlaams Blok regrouped under the umbrella of another less extreme party, Vlaams Belang (Flemish interest). Wallonia, the French speaking part of Belgium - traditionally a strong socialist party base - has witnessed the rise of the Parti Populaire (People’s Party). Its leader Mischaël Modrikamen aligned with various leaders of foreign nationalist parties (e.g., Geert Wilders in the Netherlands and Nigel Farage in the UK) who are known for their Islamophobic attitude.⁶⁶ Some right-wing extremist groups organized anti-Muslim and anti-migrant demonstrations.⁶⁷

Although no terrorist attacks took place in Belgium during 2019, a number of attacks in the planning stages and instances of individuals providing material support to terrorists have been registered but were prevented, partly thanks to the monitoring of over 200 radical individuals.⁶⁸ A total of 89 convictions and acquittals related to jihadist terrorism have been pronounced by Belgian courts in 2019.⁶⁹ In addition to 11 arrests for jihadist terrorism, 86 people have been arrested for non-specified types of terrorism while two people were apprehended for ethno-nationalist and separatist activities.⁷⁰ In addition, “one jihadist-terrorism affiliated attack was foiled.”⁷¹

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Cf. Pauwels, Lieven, and Wim Hardyns, ‘Endorsement for Extremism, Exposure to Extremism via Social Media and Self-Reported Political/Religious Aggression,’ *International Journal of Developmental Science*, 12, 2018, pp. 51-69; Cf. Pauwels, Lieven and Nele Schils, ‘Differential Online Exposure to Extremist Content and Political Violence: Testing the Relative Strength of Social Learning and Competing Perspectives,’ *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 28, 2016, pp. 1-29.

⁶¹ Kudlacek et al. 2017, p. 24.

⁶² Europol 2020, p. 22.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 61.

⁶⁴ Cf. Perrineau, Pascal ‘La montée des droites extrêmes en Europe.’ *Études*, 397, 2002, pp. 605-613.

⁶⁵ Dechesne and Paton 2020, p. 5.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Europol 2020, p. 67; See Dechesne and Paton discussing the impact of social media on Jihadist and right-wing radicalization in ‘Country level report on drivers of self-radicalisation and digital sociability,’ 2020.

⁶⁸ Europol 2020, p. 13.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 26.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 85.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 84.

Governmental PVE Strategies

With regard to the prevention of radicalization, various communities as well as the Belgian government prepared information instruments for schools. One of these is the “Prevention Pyramid,”⁷² a five-level instrument that addresses radicalization at different stages. It is used at the Royal Atheneum of Antwerp, but also by other stakeholders.⁷³

The project “Identity and Communication - Based on the Logical Levels of Bateson” is another training program for teachers addressing identity formation. Due to the increased impact of Sharia4Belgium within schools, it enables pupils to comprehend religion as a system of beliefs that shape individual identities. The courses are based on a four-level training for teachers who face students at risk of radicalization in their classrooms. They are trained to use neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) techniques to counter negative self-images of pupils. NLP is also said to develop their confidence in order to make them more resilient against religion-related radicalization attempts and imparts them with a feeling that their future is not pre-determined by religious laws.⁷⁴

The Athena-Syntax project is an educational project of the European-wide Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN). It provides an interdisciplinary structure for students and teachers, allowing them to exchange views in a horizontal dialogue, focusing on core human values. Artwork is developed under the guidance of professional artists who work with students outside the school. This gives young people a chance to express their emotions, fears, and questions through art so that they channel their anger and frustrations in positive ways.⁷⁵

“BOUNCE” is a training and awareness-raising tool for young individuals at risk due to their social environment.⁷⁶ It provides preventive measures against violent radicalization. It is a program of the European Commission Prevention of and Fight Against Crime (ISEC), “Strengthen Resilience against Violent Radicalisation” (STRESAVIORA).⁷⁷ “BOUNCE Young” has been developed for young people to strengthen their resilience. It also serves parents of vulnerable children as well as frontline workers. It provides recommendations, insights, and exercises for adults in

⁷² The *Pyramid Prevention* model focuses on prevention measures for the well-being of people in a broad social context society (Level 0: Broad, societal context: political, social, cultural, ecological; Level 1: Improvement of the living environment and Level 2: General prevention)” on the one hand. On the other hand, it consists of “urgent, problem-oriented immediate preventive measures (Level 3: Specific prevention and Level 4: Tackling the problem).” - Kudlacek et al. 2017, pp. 28ff.

⁷³ Department Onderwijs and Vorming [Ministry of Education and Training], *Handvatten Voor de Preventie, Aanpak en omgang Met Radicalisering & Polarisering Binnen Hoger Onderwijs en Volwassenenonderwijs*, 2020, pp. 1-19. Available at:

https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/sites/default/files/atoms/files/Handvatten_preventie_polarisering_radicalisering_hogeronderwijs_volwassenenonderwijs_20102020.pdf; Cf. Brussel Preventie & Veiligheid (bps-bpv), & Vlaanderen Verbeelding werkt, *HANDVATTEN VOOR DE PREVENTIE EN OMGANG MET POLARISERING EN RADICALISERING IN BRUSSEL EN DE VLAAMSE RAND*, *Brussel Preventie & Veiligheid (bps-bpv)*, & *Vlaanderen Verbeelding werkt*, 2019. Available at: https://bps-bpv.brussels/sites/default/files/2019-08/Handvatten_preventie_polarisering_radicalisering_Brusseel_Vlaamse_Rand_24062019.pdf.

⁷⁴ Kudlacek et al. 2017, p. 30.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁷⁶ For more information see: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/node/7447_en

⁷⁷ European Commission, ‘STRESAVIORA-Strengthen Resilience against Violent Radicalisation 2013-2015’ Institute for the Department of Home Affairs; *Ibid.*, p. 25.

order to allow them to better understand the social environments of their kids. “BOUNCE Up” is a train-the-trainer tool for frontline workers.”⁷⁸

Selected Belgian Literature on Radicalization and the Prevention of Radicalization

One study with the title “Exploring the discrimination-radicalization nexus: empirical evidence from youth and young adults in Belgium,” observed a potential link between the perceived discrimination and the support for violent extremism among youth and young adults in Belgium.⁷⁹ One of this study’s findings is that “over half of individuals who identified as Muslim (55.6%) reported some kind of discrimination, 19.5% [of the] Muslim[s] were also more likely to report experiencing discrimination in the justice system.”⁸⁰ Such perceived discrimination can sometimes act as trigger for radicalization. The theme of prevention through integration of young adults with an immigration background is therefore prominent within the Belgian literature on radicalization and in recommendations for its prevention.⁸¹ The study “Loss of Identity, Radicalization, and Terrorism. Case Studies in France and Belgium” identified the lack of a (national) identity and a need for belonging as major causes of radicalization leading to an increased interest in terrorism in Belgium as well as in France.⁸²

Other researchers identify psychosocial factors among specific groups, e.g., refugees, within Belgium as possible push factors for radicalization.⁸³ The need for family support for vulnerable young adults emerged in a study by Gielen as key for the prevention of radicalization in Belgium.⁸⁴

There are many governmental and non-governmental efforts to prevent radicalization in Belgium. Three of these stand out:

1. **Theological Pilot Project: theological approach to Islamic radicalism** (Theologisch pilot project: theologische aanpak van islamitisch radicalisme): This theological pilot project developed by imams and Islam-experts in Flanders tries to prevent radicalization by drawing on religious knowledge. Platform of Flemish Imams and Muslim Experts (Vlaams Platform Radicalisering and Platform van Vlaamse Imams en Moslimdeskundigen or PVIM).⁸⁵

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ See Frounfelker et al., ‘Exploring the Discrimination-Radicalization Nexus: Empirical Evidence from Youth and Young Adults in Belgium,’ *International Journal of Public Health*, 64(6), 2019, pp. 897-908.

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 897ff.

⁸¹ Cf. Pulinx, Rienhilde, and Piet van Avermaet, ‘Integration in Flanders, Citizenship as Achievement,’ *J Lang Polit*, 14, 2015, pp. 335-358.

⁸² See Martinez, Magdalena, ‘Loss of Identity, Radicalization, and Terrorism. Case Studies in France and Belgium,’ (Master’s Thesis) University of San Francisco, California, 2016. Available at: https://repository.usfca.edu/thes/195/?utm_source=repository.usfca.edu%2Fthes%2F195&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages.

⁸³ Cf. Ellis, B. Heidi, et al., ‘Relation of Psychosocial Factors to Diverse Behaviors and Attitudes among Somali Refugees,’ *Am J Orthopsychiatry*, 86, 2016, pp. 393-408.

⁸⁴ Cf. Gielen, Amy-Jane ‘Syrië-strijders: liever families ondersteunen dan paspoort afnemen,’ [Syria fighters: rather support families than take their passport] *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Vraagstukken*, Mart, 21. 1, 21 March 2014a, pp. 20-23.

⁸⁵ Portaal Preventie Gewelddadige Radicalisering en Polarisering [Prevention Portal for Violent Radicalisation and Polarisation], ‘Theologisch pilootproject: theologische aanpak van islamitisch radicalisme [Theological Pilot Project: theological approach to Islamic radicalism]’ Portaal Preventie

2. **KLASSE:** This initiative aims to impart Islamic knowledge to pupils by recognized religious authorities such as Imam Khalid ben Haddou. It seeks to target radicalization as well as the development of Islamophobia in Belgian schools.⁸⁶
3. **S.A.V.E. (Society Against Violent Extremism):** This is an initiative of parents of (former) radical Islamic militants. It aims to impart awareness about radicalization in society from the perspective of affected families. It tries to prevent further radicalization by highlighting the need for psycho-social support of vulnerable persons and their families. It also seeks to strengthen intercultural dialogue and create action plans (*Le Tableau Des Actions*) for the prevention of radicalization through education and mutual assistance.⁸⁷

The main feature of Belgium's prevention approach is its holistic strategy, involving a support and behaviour network from the local educational sector and from welfare organizations, Flemish employment services as well as job centres, schools, health services, police and justice. These are all linked to a Central Help Desk (CHP) that provides support to young individuals at risk at short notice (within one week). The idea of this prevention network is to avoid a pupil's expulsion from school. It enables vulnerable individuals to access the labour market or higher-education in order to strengthen their resistance against recruitment by radical organizations. The city of Antwerp developed an education policy that is applicable to all schools in this area; it maintains cooperation with prevention of radicalization services in 26 European countries.⁸⁸

Given Belgium's multilingualism, namely French, Flemish, German, English and Arabic (in some cases), the exchange and the cooperation between jihadist actors and networks is much more pronounced than in most other European countries. This could also be noticed from the connections between the Paris-attackers and the Brussels-attackers of the year 2016.⁸⁹

Denmark

In Denmark, 5.4 per cent of the total population were Muslims in the year 2016.⁹⁰ The projected per cent of Muslims of the total population in Denmark in the year 2050 is estimated at 7.6 per cent (estimate with zero migration), 11.9 percent (estimate with medium migration) and 16 per cent (estimate with high migration).⁹¹

In 2019, Denmark noted that Islamist and jihadist groups in Iraq and Syria remained the primary recipients of terrorist financing from Denmark-based individuals with ties to Sunni Muslim networks. The amount of the transfers decreased due to the reduced

Gewelddadige Radicalisering en Polarisering. Available at: <https://preventie-radicalisering-polarisering.vlaanderen.be/project/theologisch-pilootproject-theologische-aanpak-van-islamitisch-radicalisme>.

⁸⁶ Klasse, 'Imam Khalid brengt moslims en niet-moslims dichter bij elkaar [Imam Khalid brings Muslims and non-Muslims closer together],' Klasse, 22 June 2017. Available at: <https://www.klasse.be/84485/imam-khalid-benhaddou-islamexpert-moslims-school/>.

⁸⁷ S.A.V.E. Belgium. Available at: <https://savebelgium.org/>.

⁸⁸ Kudlacek et al. 2017, pp. 25f.

⁸⁹ Dechesne and Paton 2020, p. 8.

⁹⁰ Pew Research Center 2017, p. 30.

⁹¹ Ibid.

opportunities for transferring funds to the (declining) ISIS and because of the small number of remaining Danish citizens within the zones of armed conflict.⁹²

With regard to prisons, Europol noted that “Denmark is concerned that radicalized inmates in contact with people from organized crime circles may pose an increasing risk of jihadists gaining access to weapons.”⁹³ Convictions and acquittals for terrorist offences in 2019 in Denmark were related exclusively to jihads. There have been 21 arrests for jihadist terrorism and four convictions and acquittals for jihadist terrorism, while two jihadist attacks were foiled.⁹⁴ In December 2019, arrests were carried out in several locations in Denmark. Seven persons were charged with planning and preparing two separate jihadist attacks in Denmark or another European country.⁹⁵ With regard to the left-wing extremist milieu in Denmark, collaboration between Norway and Swedish groups and other European like-minded groups was observed in 2019.⁹⁶ Danish right-wing extremist movements increased their relations “to like-minded individuals abroad, including on virtual platforms.”⁹⁷ Several anti-Jewish acts e.g., in November 2019, when Danish right-wing extremists “committed acts of gross vandalism and desecration of Jewish symbols and graves,” have been observed.⁹⁸

Governmental PVE Strategies

Following several terrorist incidents, e.g. an attack on a synagogue in Copenhagen as well as the “cartoon crisis,” Denmark has strengthened its PVE efforts by means of an Administration of Justice Act. It postulated a multi-sectional collaboration between agencies, organizations, and institutions⁹⁹ based on local and regional best practice examples.¹⁰⁰

The Danish P/CVE approach goes back to the year 2009 and has become known as the “Aarhus model.”¹⁰¹ It involves a cooperation of state as well as municipal structures and focuses mainly on vulnerable individuals,¹⁰² paying special attention to forms of peer monitoring, and educational and psychological support, which is likely to have a positive impact on individuals in terms of providing them with a clearer understanding of their identity and instilling in them a sense of belonging.¹⁰³ By tackling intolerance,

⁹² Ibid., p. 23; p.41.

⁹³ Europol 2020, p.13.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 83; p. 85; p. 87.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 38.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 61.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 68.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 67.

⁹⁹ Kudlacek et al. 2017, p. 37.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Hemmingsen, Ann-Sophie, ‘An Introduction to the Danish Approach to Countering and Preventing Extremism and Radicalization,’ *Copenhagen Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS)*, 2015. Available at: https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/195784/DIIS_Report_2015_15.pdf.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Agerschou, Toke, ‘Preventing Radicalisation and Discrimination in Aarhus,’ *Journal for Deradicalisation*, 1, Winter 2014/15, pp. 5-22; Cf. The City of Aarhus and East Jutland Police, *Building Resilience to Radicalisation and Violent Extremism: A Multi-agency Approach on Early Prevention*. Aarhus, 19th-20th November 2015.

¹⁰² Cf. Frandsen Finn, and Winni Johansen, ‘Institutionalizing Crisis Communication in the Public Sector: An Explorative Study in Danish Municipalities,’ *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 3(2), 2009, pp. 102-115. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15531180902805460>.

¹⁰³ Cf. Danish Government (ed.), *A common and safe future: An action plan to prevent extremist views and radicalisation among young people*. Copenhagen, January 2009; Cf. The Danish Prime Minister’s

frustration, and other possible push-factors towards radicalization, this approach amounts to an active form of community-based prevention.¹⁰⁴ The plan includes:

“22 initiatives that would strengthen democracy and provide alternatives to extremism. This would revolve around counter-terrorism, efforts against gangs and youth crime, international cooperation on peace, development and democracy, efforts against discrimination and intolerance, education, jobs and opportunities for all, and integration and intercultural dialogue.”¹⁰⁵

The Danish PVE strategy is built on a partnership of major actors in the field of the prevention of radicalization and focuses on three aspects:

1. A prevention and exit strategy;
2. The prosecution of radicalized persons;
3. The prevention and countering of threats to national security.¹⁰⁶

The “Aarhus model” became a conceptual role model for other Western countries with regard to early prevention and exit processes. It aims “to stop or redirect the process of violent radicalisation”¹⁰⁷ and is characterized by the reintegration of radicals into society while downplaying “the ideologies as a cause for recruitment into extremist organisations.”¹⁰⁸

Based on a cooperation of the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (Politiets Efterretningstjeneste, PET), the Department of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences, and various experts from academia, social services, and ministries, the interdisciplinary approach unifies methods from personality psychology, social psychology, societal psychology, social science, and the humanities.¹⁰⁹ The “Aarhus Model” is based on six steps:

1. Information, e.g., from the social environment of an affected individual, regarding his/her potential extremist attitude, is forwarded to the “Info-house” (staffed by the East Jutland Police);
2. Further information is gathered by the police to assess the situation in detail;
3. If the results of these investigations lead to the decision that the individual is showing signs of “pre-radicalization,” an interdisciplinary workshop is organized that provides support or counselling;¹¹⁰
4. In cases of “false positives” or “youth rebellion” signs, social services and other relevant measures will be recommended.

Office (ed.), *Et stærkt værn mod terror [A Strong Defense against Terror]*. Copenhagen, February 2015. Available at: http://stm.dk/multimedia/Et_st_rkt_v_rn_mod_terror.pdf.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Danish Government (ed.), *Prevention of Radicalisation and Extremism: Action Plan*. Copenhagen, 2014; See Hemmingsen 2015.

¹⁰⁵ Kudlacek et al. 2017, pp. 37f.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 39f.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Bertelsen, Preben, ‘Danish Preventive Measures and De-radicalisation Strategies: The Aarhus Model,’ *Panorama Insights into Asian and European Affairs*, 1, 2015, pp. 241-253.

¹⁰⁸ Kudlacek et al. 2017, pp. 39f.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ See Bertelsen 2015.

5. If risk factors of violent radicalization are identified, the “Info-house” will start an assessment and stay in contact with the affected person and involve members from the social environment;¹¹¹
6. Mentors with broad expertise in the field of (prevention of) radicalization will provide social and legal alternatives to resolve personal conflicts.

In 2013 an “exit program” was added to the “Aarhus model” in order to “de-radicalise returning foreign fighters by reintegration efforts that help transition the individual back into society and daily life.”¹¹² Based on the specific needs of the individual returnee, a task force recommends the kind of assistance which should be offered to the returnee and to his/her social network (e.g. family, friends, school) in order to provide the best possible way for his/her reintegration.¹¹³ On the basis of a written “exit-process agreement” between the returnee and those responsible for the “exit program,” specific help suggestions are provided, e.g., with regard to therapy, medical care, employment and accommodation. It is important to note that the “exit program” includes an exception clause regarding its target group: it only accepts foreign fighters who did not commit any criminal acts and are deemed to pose no security risk to Danish society. This seems to be a problem, because it is widely known that most of the Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) already committed (mostly minor) crimes, before they went abroad. In addition, their participation in ISIS (which might have included fighting against others and probably also killing people) is also seen as a crime. Although the position of the “exit program” regarding possible misuse of the “Aarhus Model” by some returnees is clear, the practical application is not.¹¹⁴

In 2014, the Danish government launched the *Prevention of Radicalisation and Extremism: Action Plan*, based on a dozen initiatives, with a focus on increased involvement of local authorities. It focuses on “pre-radicals” who are 18 years or over and involves strategic partnerships with local authorities, skills-enhancement programs, and additional intervention steps.¹¹⁵

An additional focus has been on the development of new P/CVE tools, including:

1. methods for prevention and interventions at an early stage (Initiative 4);
2. increased online presence (Initiative 5);
3. measures regarding recruitment to terrorist groups to participate in armed conflict abroad (Initiative 6);
4. improved exit programs (initiative 7); and
5. closer international partnerships (Initiatives 8 and 9).¹¹⁶

Furthermore, it recommended a larger degree of civil society collaboration with local authorities (Initiative 10) as well as enhanced participation of parents of vulnerable and/or radicalized youth (Initiative 11).

¹¹¹ Kudlacek et al. 2017, pp. 39f.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ See Bertelsen 2015.

¹¹⁵ See Danish Government 2014.

¹¹⁶ Kudlacek et al. 2017, p. 38.

In 2016, a National Action Plan *Preventing and Countering Extremism and Radicalisation*, was made public.¹¹⁷ It covers, inter alia, better coordination of evidence-based prevention approaches, issues related to P/CVE online and prison approaches, greater involvement of local communities and municipalities, as well as strengthening of international cooperation.¹¹⁸

Against the background of concerns regarding detained ISIS fighters who could escape SDF detention as Turkish forces entered northeast Syria, Denmark's parliament passed in October 2019 a bill concerning the revocation of Danish citizenship in the case of dual citizenship of FTFs.¹¹⁹ The new law, which allows citizenship revocation without a trial, states that anyone acting in a manner seriously prejudicial to Denmark's vital interests may have his or her Danish citizenship revoked, unless the person would be rendered stateless.

Selected Danish Literature on Radicalization and the Prevention of Radicalization

Tammikkoa examined the political challenges of community-level PVE practices in Copenhagen and Aarhus. He found, inter alia, that “regarding practices related to Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE): a community-level dialogue was discontinued with an extremist milieu in Copenhagen due to the specific worldview but allowed to continue in a similar situation in Aarhus.”¹²⁰ Furthermore, confusion regarding the new concept of PVE and political issues, the decision-making structures and the development of “coherent PVE practices with a solid understanding of PVE goals on a political level” were seen as major challenges in Denmark.¹²¹

Bertelsen examined the *Danish Preventive Measures and De-radicalisation Strategies* of the “Aarhus model” with regard to its beginning and evolution in view of its exit program. Her article provides important insights on the development of this – in the beginning unique – Danish prevention concept.¹²²

Gielen's articles *Anti-radicalization in Belgium, Denmark and Germany* [*Antiradicalisering in België, Denemarken en Duitsland*]¹²³ and *Syria fighters: Rather support families than take their passport* [*Syrië-strijders: liever families ondersteunen dan paspoort afnemen*]¹²⁴ are highly recommended in terms of providing a deeper understanding of the motives of FTFs and their family backgrounds in Denmark,

¹¹⁷ Cf. Danish Government (ed.), *Preventing and Countering Extremism and Radicalisation: National Action Plan*. Copenhagen, 2016.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Bureau for Counterterrorism, ‘Country Reports on Terrorism 2019,’ US Department of State, 2020, p. 74. Available at: <https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2019/>.

¹²⁰ Tammikkoa, Teemu, ‘The Political Challenges of Community-level PVE Practices: The Danish Case of Copenhagen vs. Aarhus on Dialoguing with Extremist Milieus,’ *Journal for Deradicalization*, 16, Fall 2018, p. 103.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² See Bertelsen 2015.

¹²³ Cf. Gielen, Amy-Jane ‘Antiradicalisering in België, Denemarken en Duitsland’ [Anti-radicalization in Belgium, Denmark and Germany] *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Vraagstukken*, 1, 2014b, pp. 20-23.

¹²⁴ See Gielen 2014a.

Belgium and Germany.¹²⁵ Her work on exit programmes for female jihadists,¹²⁶ her study on the assessment of CVE initiatives,¹²⁷ and her recently published doctoral thesis on the evaluation of CVE deal with various challenges linked to the Danish (re-) integration process of different types of jihadists against the background of practicability and usability of existing P/CVE approaches.¹²⁸

Another commendable report is Koehler's examination of the concept of family counselling, de-radicalization, and counterterrorism, involving a comparison between Danish and German programs.¹²⁹ It addresses the need for and examines the effectiveness of family counselling regarding (pre-)radicalized individuals at a time when Germany was not aware of its importance, offering several insights based on the Danish model.

There are many other governmental and non-governmental efforts to prevent radicalization in Denmark. Three of these stand out:

1. **The Centre for Prevention of Extremism:** This governmental Centre for Prevention of Extremism brings together multiple stakeholders from the whole of Denmark and offers intervention tools for helping individuals who are entangled in extremist circles, as well as providing preventive measures for individuals at risk, while also offering support for children and young adults.¹³⁰
2. **PET Centre of Prevention:** PET also houses a centre of prevention. It coordinates crime prevention networks (SSP - schools, social services and police), PSP (psychiatric sector, social service, and police) and KSP (Danish Prison Service, social service, and police) within its structure. The PET Centre of Prevention offers support for those wanting to leave militant extremism (EXIT) as well as for individuals and groups at risk of becoming radicalized (capacity building) while also addressing certain social preconditions in its outreach activities.¹³¹
3. **VINK [Forebyggelse af ekstremisme og radikaliserings]:** VINK is a prevention initiative of the municipality of Copenhagen that offers general information regarding the prevention of radicalization for affected families and the public at large. It also offers advice and counselling by professionals, and provides coaching and mentoring for families.¹³²

¹²⁵ Cf. Gielen, Amy-Jane, 'Supporting Families of Foreign Fighters. A Realistic Approach for Measuring the Effectiveness,' *Journal for Deradicalization*, 2, 2015, pp. 21-48.

¹²⁶ Cf. Gielen, Amy-Jane, 'Exit Programmes for Female Jihadists: A Proposal for Conducting a Realistic Evaluation of the Dutch Approach,' *International Sociology*, 33, 2018, pp. 454-472.

¹²⁷ Cf. Gielen, Amy-Jane, 'Countering Violent Extremism: A Realist Review for Assessing What Works, for Whom, in What Circumstances, and How?' *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2017, pp. 1-19.

¹²⁸ Cf. Gielen, Amy-Jane, 'Cutting through Complexity. Evaluating Countering Violent Extremism,' (PhD Thesis) Leiden: University of Leiden.

¹²⁹ Cf. Koehler, Daniel, 'Family Counselling, De-radicalization and Counter-Terrorism: The Danish and German Programs in Context'; in: Sara Zeiger and Anne Aly (eds.), *Countering Violent Extremism: Developing an Evidence-base for Policy and Practice*. Perth: Hedayah and Curtis University, 2015, pp. 129-136.

¹³⁰ Danish Centre for Prevention of Extremism, 'The Danish Info-houses,' Danish Centre for Prevention of Extremism. Available at: <https://stopekstremisme.dk/en/prevention/who-does-what-in-denmark>.

¹³¹ Politiets Efterretningstjeneste (PET), 'The Centre for Prevention,' PET. Available at: <https://www.pet.dk/English/The%20Preventive%20Security%20Department/The%20Centre%20for%20Prevention.aspx>.

¹³² Forebyggelse af ekstremisme og radikaliserings (VINK). Available at: <https://vink.kk.dk/>.

While the success of the “Aarhus model” has been widely acknowledged, some critical voices focused on the selection of employees in CVE environments and CVE policies in general.¹³³ Johansen points out that “the Danish case shows, [that] the detection and categorization of the concept of radicalization is not a straightforward process at the front line of the state.”¹³⁴ The responsibility of naming and defining the phenomenon of radicalization is tied to the particular role of the “expert” within the bureaucratic system. However, these “experts” may have been more or less randomly selected for the task.¹³⁵ The ever present “terror threat” could lead into an endless “risk assessment that categorizes risk [on the basis of] second-hand information” to “categorical suspicion.”¹³⁶ According to Johansen, “it is this balancing act between the politics of anxiety and the potential for public moral outrage that I regard as one of the basic elements of current bureaucratic CVE practices in Denmark.”¹³⁷

Similar to the strategy of the British government, the approach towards the question of repatriation of former Danish foreign fighters or the revocation of their Danish citizenship in terms of a dual-national citizenship is questionable with regard to its effectiveness in terms of the prevention of radicalization. On the one hand, it could be seen as a deterrent for others, telling them not to follow the path of violent extremism without risking the loss of links to their places of origin forever. On the other hand, those defectors who only possess one citizenship – Danish citizenship - cannot be stripped of it. That would indicate discrimination against former FTFs of foreign heritage. In this regard, the results of hardliner policies have not been assessed. It is still possible that they could be counter-productive and lead to solidarization effects within the Islamist milieu.

France

In France, 8.8 per cent of the total population were Muslims in 2016.¹³⁸ The projected percentage of Muslims of the total population in France in the year 2050 is estimated at 12.7 per cent (estimate with zero migration), 17.4 per cent (estimate with medium migration) 18 per cent (estimate with high migration).¹³⁹ The Pew Research Center’s

¹³³ Cf. Johansen, Mette-Louise, ‘Navigating the Politics of Anxiety. Moral Outrage, Responsiveness, and State Accountability in Denmark,’ *Conflict and Society: Advances in Research*, 4, 2018, pp. 9-22; Cf. McNeil-Willson, Richard, ‘Between Trust and Oppression: Contemporary Counter-terror Policies in Denmark’; in: Romaniuk, Scott Nicholas, Francis Grice, Daniela Irrera, and Stewart Webb, (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Counterterrorism Policy*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, pp. 419-437; Cf. Frandsen, Johansen and Salomonsen Houlberg, ‘Responding to Institutional Complexity: Reputation and Crisis Management in Danish Municipalities,’ *Scandinavian Journal of Public Administration*, 20(2), 2016, pp. 69-100.

¹³⁴ Cf. Maguire, Mark, and Pete Fussey, ‘Sensing Evil: Counterterrorism, Techno-science, and the Cultural Reproduction of Security,’ *Focaal - Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology*, 75, 2016, pp. 31–44.

¹³⁵ Johansen 2018, p. 19.

¹³⁶ Ibid.; Lyon, David, and Kevin D. Haggerty, ‘The Surveillance Legacies of 9/11: Recalling, Reflecting on, and Rethinking Surveillance in the Security Era,’ *Canadian Journal of Law and Society / Revue Canadienne Droit et Societé*, 27(3), 2012, p. 293.

¹³⁷ Johansen 2018, p. 19.

¹³⁸ Pew Research Center 2017, p. 30.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

survey regarding the destination of migrants to Europe ranked France at third place with 530,000 Muslim migrants and ranked sixth in Europe with 50,000 Muslim refugees.¹⁴⁰ In 2019, 202 persons were arrested based on charges related to jihadist terrorism, seven individuals had been arrested for right-wing extremism and 13 persons were detained for ethno-nationalist and separatist terrorism in France.¹⁴¹ Four jihadist attacks, including those on March 25, April 26, and September 23, were foiled in 2019.¹⁴² Three jihadist attacks took place in France, including one in May 2019 in Lyon in a pedestrian zone by a student, and another in October in Paris by an IT specialist working for a police intelligence unit in Paris.¹⁴³

French courts issued multiple convictions (105) as well as several acquittals related to jihadist terrorism in 2019.¹⁴⁴ Between 2018 and 2019, four attacks within French prisons, including one at the Condé-sur-Sarthe prison in March 2019, were foiled.¹⁴⁵ There have also been several female Islamist terrorists imprisoned in France in recent years.

The Children's Court of Paris issued a sentence against a French-Algerian minor charged with participation in a criminal conspiracy involving the preparation of a terrorist act in the name of ISIS against police officers.¹⁴⁶ In another case, the Children's Court of Nancy sentenced three French minor offenders from Belfort for preparing a terrorist act.¹⁴⁷ The close connection between Belgian, Dutch, and French jihadist networks is still an important source of concern. According to Europol:

“In the Netherlands, the District Court of Rotterdam heard the cases of several defendants investigated in relation to the discovery of a large amount of ammunition. The defendants were suspected of having been involved in the supply of (part of) the ammunition found in an apartment in Argenteuil (France) in March 2016 that was used by a transnational network of jihadists from Belgium, the Netherlands and France.”¹⁴⁸

Right-wing extremism in France is characterized by various features “such as structured right-wing extremist movements,” e.g., the neo-fascist *Troisième Voie* (“Third Path”) and the monarchist *Action Française* (“French Action”). These “have lost influence following self-dissolutions in 2014, in an attempt to avoid formal bans following the death of a left-wing activist during an attack.”¹⁴⁹ In addition, the French white supremacist movement *Suavelos* provides an internet platform for white supremacists, whose messages have been exposed and faced deletion on major platforms like Facebook and YouTube in the wake of the Christchurch attacks.¹⁵⁰ Non-structured right-wing extremists in France try to distinguish “original” French natives from those with a Muslim heritage, e.g. by propagating the “Grand Replacement” conspiracy

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 20; p. 22.

¹⁴¹ Europol 2020, p. 85.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 84; p. 37; p. 27.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 87; p. 26.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13; p. 35.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

theory, claiming that Muslims plan to replace the original Europeans and “overrun” Western countries.¹⁵¹

In addition to militant movements, the National Front (Front Nationale) and its “neo-conservative” politics have still influence on many French (voters), using Muslim immigration and refugee politics as well as Islamophobia for gaining votes. Two attacks on mosques in Brest and Bayonne took place in 2019. The latter incident was reported as being the work of a neo-populist fringe group from the right-wing extremist scene.¹⁵² With regard to left-wing extremism in France, several militants engaged in violent acts towards public institutions and agents, targeting, inter alia, the security forces. It is assumed that they have established connections with anarchist terrorist milieus in Italy - the Informal Anarchist Federation (*Federazione Anarchica Informale* or FAI), and Greece – the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire (*Synomosia Pyrinon tis Fotias* or CCF), whose *modi operandi* they partly imitate.¹⁵³

Governmental PVE Strategies

Due to the fact that major terrorist attacks, such as the 2015 Charlie Hebdo incident, and the following year the major incidents in Paris (Bataclan) and Nice took place, and due to the fact that many French foreign fighters departed for Iraq and Syria in order to join ISIS, the French government elaborated since 2014 several counterterrorism plans, including the *Action Plan Against Terrorism* (which was updated in July 2017). This plan was created by the National Coordination of Intelligence and of the Fight Against Terrorism (La Coordination Nationale du Renseignement et de la Lutte Contre le Terrorisme) and is directly supervised by the French president, providing counterterrorism coordination on the highest level.

On an institutional level, the Anti-Terror Coordination Unit (Unité de Coordination de la Lutte Antiterroriste or UCLAT) is seeking to prevent terrorist threats. In contrast to some other democratic countries, France allows UCLAT to conduct surveillance of smartphones of suspected persons and to gain physical admission to their electronic devices. Citizens can report suspects to the National Center for Assistance and Prevention of Radicalization (*Centre National d'Assistance et de Prévention de la Radicalisation* or CNAPR). This initiative led to thousands of calls on suspect activities and persons right from its start; currently data of some 20,000 persons have been collected in a database for the prevention of radicalization, the File of alerts for the prevention of terrorist radicalization (*Fichier des signalements pour la prévention et la radicalisation à caractère terroriste* or FSPRT). More than 11,000 persons have been monitored, with 4,000 of them being given the label “pre-terrorist.” This form of prevention of radicalization has been criticized because of the large number of “persons of interest” in relation to the actual threat level within the country.

Unlike some other Western countries, France’s approach to the prevention of radicalization also contains repressive components. The French parliament passed seven major laws on terrorism since the establishment of ISIS.¹⁵⁴ These laws include,

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 76.

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 66.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 61.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Hecker, Marc, ‘137 nuances de terrorisme. Les djihadistes de France face à la justice’ [137 shades of terrorism. France's jihadists face justice] *Focus stratégique*, n° 79, April 2018. Available at:

for instance, banning convicted jihadists from leaving France, expanded surveillance, the shutting down of jihadist homepages and heavy sentences for participation in terrorist groups, as well as for preparatory acts that might lead to terrorism, with sentences ranging from three to five years in prison for offenders.¹⁵⁵ Since 2018, approximately 1,600 persons have been prosecuted or investigated with regard to jihadist activities.¹⁵⁶ Attempts by French jihadists to join ISIS in Syria can lead to sentences of up to ten years and assistance in ISIS armed operations can bring them sentences of 30 years in prison.¹⁵⁷ In 2018, a governmental plan to create an improved national counterterrorist office was initiated.

Efforts towards the prevention of radicalization in France have, in recent years, moved towards resilience-building directed at the internet, focusing on web content and users.¹⁵⁸ The Inter-ministerial Committee for the Prevention of Crime and Radicalization (*Comité Interministériel de la Prévention de la Délinquance et de la Radicalisation* or CIPDR) coordinates counterradicalization initiatives within France, providing training and supporting resilience-building measures. Until 2016, it invested over €90 million for the support of civil society efforts towards de-radicalization, but was accused of mismanagement by members of the French Senate in 2017.¹⁵⁹ In 2018, CIPDR's efforts shifted from de-radicalization to disengagement. Its new plan focuses on secondary prevention and on community-building, encompassing sports clubs in addition to schools and universities.¹⁶⁰

Selected French Literature on Radicalization and the Prevention of Radicalization

The book *Preventing jihadist violence: The paradoxes of a security model (Prévenir la violence djihadiste. Les paradoxes d'un modèle sécuritaire)* by Romain Sèze addresses French prevention policies since 2014; it is a very good example of critical research. Starting with the question of a proper definition of jihadist radicalization, Sèze discusses the development of various forms of governmental risk management in this area. A very interesting aspect is the author's critical discussion of attempts of the French government to create a French Islam ("*Islam de France*") or a republican Islam ("*Islam*

<https://www.ifri.org/fr/publications/etudes-de-lifri/focus-strategique/137-nuances-de-terrorisme-djihadistes-de-france-face>.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid; Cf. Brisard et al., '*La Justice Pénale Face Au Djihadisme*,' [Criminal Justice in the Face of Jihadism] *Centre d'analyse du terrorisme*, Paris, 2018.

¹⁵⁶ See Brisard et al. 2018.

¹⁵⁷ Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), '*Initiative visant à interrompre le processus de radicalisation qui mène à la violence. Plan d'action pour l'identification et la lutte contre les recruteurs et les facilitateurs des terroristes*' [Initiative aimed at interrupting the process of radicalization which leads to violence. Action Plan to Identify and Combat Terrorist Recruiters and Facilitators] GCTF, 2016, p. 3.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. Ministère de l'Intérieur, '*Plateforme d'harmonisation, de recoupement et d'orientation des signalements*' [Platform for Harmonization, Analysis, Cross-checking and Orientation of Reports] Paris, 11 January 2016. Available at: <https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/A-votre-service/Ma-securite/Conseils-pratiques/Sur-internet/Signaler-un-contenu-suspect-ou-illicite-avec-PHAROS>.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Alava, Séraphin, '*Prévention de la radicalisation: regards sur les expériences internationales*,' *The Conversation*, 26 February 2017. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/prevention-de-la-radicalisation-regards-sur-les-experiences-internationales-73012>.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Sèze, Romain, *Prévenir la violence djihadiste. Les paradoxes d'un modèle sécuritaire [To Prevent Jihadist Violence. The Paradoxes of a Security Model]*. Paris: Seuil, (2019a); Cf. Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), '*Initiative visant à interrompre le processus de radicalisation qui mène à la violence. Le rôle des familles dans la prévention et la lutte contre l'extrémisme violent: recommandations stratégiques et options programmatiques*,' GCTF, 2017, pp. 1-18. [Online document].

républicain”) as an answer to Muslim radicalization.¹⁶¹ Sèze understands radicalization as a broad concept (“*concept extensif*”) that can become a self-fulfilling prophecy if not wisely handled.¹⁶²

Gilles Kepel and Olivier Roy are the most prominent French researchers on militant Islam but their positions are very much opposed to each other. Kepel did field-research in the French suburbs (“*les banlieues*”) since the 1980s.¹⁶³ He identified a combination of poor education, racism-linked deprivation, and economic hardship among Muslim immigrants, making it difficult for them to integrate into French society.¹⁶⁴ Kepel examined the motives for the radicalization of young adults within various (international) radical Islamic movements¹⁶⁵ and Salafist groups.¹⁶⁶ As a result of his field-research in French prisons and in the banlieues, Kepel found that both environments were recruiting-areas for ISIS in France.¹⁶⁷ He describes the Islamist practices of many young French Muslims as a rejection of secular society (“*laïcité*”) and noted their penchant for the use of violence, as illustrated by the many young French Muslims who departed for Syria, attracted by the Islamic State.¹⁶⁸

Like Gilles Kepel, Olivier Roy has observed radical Islamic movements since the 1980s. However, he concludes that young Muslims did not radicalize because of a lack of integration into French society. Rather, he found that radicalization is mainly a form of protest and provocation and part of a process to sever ties with their own parents.¹⁶⁹ For Roy, this phase of youth development among many young Muslims in French diasporas has been responsible for the tendency of a number of them to turn to a fundamentalist version of Islam as a more congenial environment for their situation.¹⁷⁰

According to Roy, phantasies of violence and a suicide-inclination of militant young French Muslims, should be seen as the main drivers for them wanting to join jihadist

¹⁶¹ Sèze 2019a, p. 171; Cf. Sèze, Romain, ‘*Leaders musulmans et fabrication d’un “Islam civil” en France*’ [Muslim Leaders and the making of a “civil Islam”], *Confluences Méditerranée*, 95, 2015, pp. 43-58; Cf. Sèze, Romain, ‘For a Visible Islam? The Emergence of a Protest Speech in French Mosques; in: M. Haskus, N.V. Vinding, K. Haji, and J. J. de Rinter (eds.), *The Imamate in Western Europe. Developments, Transformations and Institutional Challenges*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 2008.

¹⁶² Sèze 2019a, p. 96; p. 89.

¹⁶³ Cf. Kepel, Gilles, *Les banlieues de l’Islam. Naissance d’une religion en France*. [The suburbs of Islam: the birth of a religion in France] Paris: POINTS, 1987.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Kepel, Gilles, *Le Prophète et pharaon. Aux sources des mouvements islamistes*. Paris: Seuil, 1984; Cf. Kepel, Gilles, *Die Rache Gottes. Radikale Muslime, Christen und Juden auf dem Vormarsch*. München: Piper, 1991; Cf. Kepel, Gilles, *A l’ouest d’Allah*. [West of Allah]. Paris: Seuil, 1994.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Kepel, Gilles, *Du jihad à la fitna*. [From jihad to fitna]. Paris: Bayard, 2005; Cf. Kepel, Gilles and Jean-Pierre Milelli, *Al-Qaida. Texte des Terrors*. [Al-Qaida. Text of Terrors]. München: Piper, 2006.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Kepel, Gilles, *Das Schwarzbuch des Dschihad. Aufstieg und Niedergang des Islamismus*. [The black book of jihad. The rise and fall of Islamism] München: Piper, 2002.; Cf. Kepel, Gilles, *Fitna. Guerre au coeur de l’Islam*. [Fitna: War at the heart of Islam] Paris: Gallimard, 2004; See Kepel 2005; Cf. Kepel, Gilles, *Terreur et martyre. Relever le défi de civilisation*. [Terror and martyrdom, taking up the challenge of civilization]. Paris: Flammarion, 2008; Cf. Kepel, Gilles, *Terreur dans l’Hexagone. Genèse du djihad français*. [Terror in France: Genesis of the French jihad]. Paris: Gallimard, 2015.

¹⁶⁷ See Kepel 2012 and 2015.

¹⁶⁸ See Kepel 2015.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Roy, Olivier, *L’Échec de l’Islam politique*. [The failure of political Islam]. Paris: Seuil, 1992.; Cf. Roy, Olivier, *Généalogie de l’Islamisme*. Paris: Pluriel, 1999.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. Roy, Olivier, *La Laïcité face à l’Islam*. [Laïcité in the face of Islam]. Paris: Stock, 2005; Cf. Roy, Olivier, *Der islamische Weg nach Westen, Globalisierung, Entwurzelung und Radikalisierung*. [The Islamic Way West: Globalization, Uprooting, and Radicalization]. München: Piper, 2006.

groups, rather than an Islamist ideology.¹⁷¹ Roy rejects the thesis that the marginalization of young Muslims in the *banlieues* and their discrimination are the main push factors for those who join the jihadist movement. He notes that the majority of the inhabitants of the *banlieues* have remained peaceful.¹⁷² Roy also points to the fact that many of the jihadists have been criminal delinquents before becoming violent political extremists. Their inability to make something positive with their lives produces a kind of self-hate. As a liberation from their criminal past, a catharsis through embracing militant jihad offers many of them a way to gain, or re-gain, self-esteem.¹⁷³ Due to its heterogeneity, Roy subsumes the current Salafistic movement under the term neo-fundamentalism. It includes a conservative wing that is based on a Wahhabi (Saudi Arabian) interpretation of Islam, and a jihadist wing based on militant Salafism.¹⁷⁴ For Roy, the modern Salafiyya seeks to resurrect the former hegemony of Islam, whereas the Wahabiyya is characterized more by its hostility toward the current (modern) world. Roy sees the motivation for the violence of young Muslims from the *banlieues* as being based on their situation of individual hopelessness (e.g., regarding getting a decent job) and labels this process the “Islamization of radicalism” for the “negative heroes” who are challenged by society. Kepel, on the other hand, identifies a “Radicalization of Islam” in the acts of many young French Muslims. Kepel sees their wish to participate in the establishment of a “caliphate” as a result of their fundamentalist understanding of Islam.¹⁷⁵

Next to Kepel and Roy, Farhad Khosrokhavar is another important field researcher. He explores Islamic radicalization in French prisons¹⁷⁶ and also outlines several potentially fruitful approaches to prevention.¹⁷⁷ As a sociologist, he explores changes in the interest of young Muslims for militant jihad in Europe and beyond.¹⁷⁸

McLaughlin’s work *Thinking about political radicalisation in France (Penser la radicalisation politique en France)* provides an alternative approach regarding the roots of radicalization and jihadism (e.g. racial discrimination). He suggests a change of

¹⁷¹ Cf. Roy, Olivier, *Les illusions du 11 septembre. Le débat stratégique face au terrorisme*. [The Illusions of September 11. The strategic debate in the face of terrorism]. Paris: Seuil, 2002a; Cf. Roy 2005.

¹⁷² Cf. Roy, Olivier, *Heilige Einfalt: über die politischen Gefahren entwurzelter Religionen*. München: Pantheon, 2010; Cf. Roy, Olivier, and Schlegel, Jean-Louis, *En quête de l’Orient perdu*. [In search of the lost Orient]. Paris: Seuil, 2014.

¹⁷³ See Roy 2002a; Cf. Roy, Olivier, *L’Islam mondialisé* [Globalized Islam]. Paris: Seuil, 2002b; Cf. Roy, Olivier, *Heilige Einfalt: über die politischen Gefahren entwurzelter Religionen*. München: Pantheon, 2010.

¹⁷⁴ See Roy 2006.

¹⁷⁵ See König, Jürgen, ‘Revolution oder Radikalisierung? Frankreichs Intellektuelle streiten über Terror-Ursachen,’ [Revolution or radicalization? France’s intellectuals argue about the causes of terrorism]. *Deutschlandfunk*, 13 August 2016. Available at: https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/revolution-oder-radikalisierung-frankreichs-intellektuelle.691.de.html?dram:article_id=363033.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Khosrokhavar, Farhad, *L’Islam dans les prisons*. [Islam in prisons]. Paris: Jacob Duvernet, 2004; See Khosrokhavar 2014.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Khosrokhavar, Farhad, *L’Islam des jeunes*. [Youth Islam] Paris: Flammarion, 1997; See Khosrokhavar 2014; Cf. Khosrokhavar, Farhad, David Bénichou, and Philippe Migaux, *Le Jihadsme. Le comprendre pour mieux le combattre*. [Jihadism: understanding it to better combat it]. Paris: Plon, 2015.

¹⁷⁸ See Khosrokhavar 2004.; Cf. Khosrokhavar, Farhad, *Inside Jihadism: Understanding Jihadi Movements Worldwide*. London & New York: Routledge, 2009; Cf. Khosrokhavar, Farhad, ‘Jihadist Ideology: The Anthropological Perspective,’ *Department of Political Science Aarhus University, Centre for Studies in Islamism and Radicalisation, Aarhus*, 2009b; See Khosrokhavar 2015.

prevention policy in France in terms of a larger investment in education, and in enhancing psychological approaches.¹⁷⁹

Laurent Bonelli and Fabien Carrié's work, *The fabric of radicality: A sociology of young French jihadists (La Fabrique de la radicalité. Une sociologie des jeunes djihadistes français)* examined 133 law suits brought against French jihadists in order to identify from the court documents he studied early signals of their initial radicalization and their growing interest in terrorism and in becoming foreign fighters.¹⁸⁰

The study *The Revenants - They had gone to jihad, they are back in France (Les Revenants. Ils étaient partis faire le jihad, ils sont de retour en France)* by David Thomson,¹⁸¹ an expert in the field of French and Tunisian jihadism, provides useful insights in the motivation of French FTFs/returnees and proposes new prevention approaches for this vulnerable group.

There are many governmental and non-governmental efforts to prevent radicalization in France. Three of these stand out:

1. **Artemis Association:** This governmental program tries to prevent pre-school children from falling under the influence of radicalized family members by strengthening their bonds with relatives who still feel a sense of loyalty to French society.¹⁸²
2. **Plateforme d'harmonisation, de recoupement et d'orientation des signalements (PHAROS):** This governmental platform serves to locate and neutralize illegal online Internet content which seeks to glorify violence and engages in hate speech. Citizens are invited to report their observations on inappropriate Internet content to the authorities via *PHAROS*.¹⁸³
3. **Stop Djihadisme:** This governmental campaign was initiated after the attack on the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* in 2015. It provides both online (via Facebook and Twitter) and offline contacts and prepares counternarrative programs for schools and prisons. In 2016, it launched a well-known project called "Toujours le choix" about two young adults on their way to radicalization that offers several exit options for those undergoing a radicalization process.

Many governmental PVE approaches in France adopt the penitentiary point of view of the Penitentiary Administration of the French Ministry of Justice and are lacking in more preventive approaches.¹⁸⁴ Some of the law enforcement measures could be seen as problematic for young Muslims who want to provoke others in their environment, but are not attracted to violence themselves. Giving harsh punishments, such as a prison

¹⁷⁹See McLaughlin, Gilbert, 'Penser la radicalisation politique en France,' [Thinking about political radicalisation in France] *Études internationales*, 50(1), Spring 2019, pp. 147-160.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Bonelli, Laurent and Fabien Carrié, *La Fabrique de la radicalité. Une sociologie des jeunes djihadistes français*. [La Fabrique de la radicalité. A sociology of young French jihadists] Paris: Seuil, 2018.

¹⁸¹ Cf. Thomson, David, *Les Revenants, ils étaient partis faire le jihad, ils sont de retour en France*. [The Revenants - They had gone to jihad, they are back in France]. Paris: Seuil, 2016.

¹⁸² L'Association Artemis. Available at: <https://www.association-artemis.com/>.

¹⁸³ Plateforme d'harmonisation, de recoupement et d'orientation des signalements (PHAROS).

Available at: <https://www.internet-signalment.gouv.fr/PortailWeb/planets/Accueil!input.action>.

¹⁸⁴ Kudlacek et al. 2017, p. 41.

sentence, to young Muslims who speak positively about IS, may lead to "solidarization effects" and further radicalization.

France had not considered the impact of religion in terms of extremism until the 1980s. It would appear that it is still not fully aware of appropriate PVE strategies in cases of religious extremism, due to its constitutional principle, that "religion is excluded from the republican way of thinking in France."¹⁸⁵ This stance which was originally introduced to promote the equality of all French citizens can be an obstacle when it comes to the prevention of radicalization. This is shown e.g. as in one case, when a moderate Rabbi and a moderate Imam were banned from talking to school classes, because they represent religions and wear religious clothing. If schools ban religious education, they surrender the interpretational sovereignty to outside religious leaders, who may, in some cases, be fundamentalists. With regard to religious radicalization, this could be prevented by introducing regular educational workshops on specific religions in French schools, led by teachers rather than clerics, in line with the concept of "*laïcité*."

France appears to have a high number of female Muslims who travelled to Syria to join ISIS: 33 percent of the 1,324 individuals who travelled from France since 2012 were women.¹⁸⁶ The share of young women and even minors involved in terrorist plots in France would point to the need for a larger investment in educational work by schools and communities. Therefore, a larger investment in educational work by communities and schools is required.

Similar to the UK and Denmark, France's returnee policy is inflexible, lacking a deeper understanding of initial radicalization motivations of vulnerable young men and women from diasporas, their subsequent rejection of the jihadist ideology, and their wish to be repatriated. With regard to a long-term PVE policy that is likely to reduce the interest in extremist ideologies, France should therefore be considering changing the current hard-line policy towards the repatriation of FTFs and their children.

German Federal Republic

According to the German Federal Ministry of Interior (Bundesministerium des Inneren or BMI), 5.4 to 5.7 percent of the total population of Germany were Muslims in 2019.¹⁸⁷ The projected percentage of Muslims of the total population in Germany in the year 2050 is estimated at 8.7 per cent (estimate with zero migration), 10.8 per cent (estimate with medium migration) 19.7 per cent (estimate with high migration).¹⁸⁸

Germany was the primary destination country for asylum seekers from the Middle East, receiving 457,000 asylum requests from Iraqis and Syrians between mid-2010 and mid-2016. With hundreds of thousands of more persons seeking asylum in 2015-16, Germany became the top destination for refugees (86 per cent of whom were

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 42.

¹⁸⁶ Europol 2020, p. 40.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Bundesministerium des Inneren (BMI), 'Islam in Deutschland,' [Islam in Germany] .BMI, Berlin, 2019. Available at: <https://www.bmi.bund.de/DE/themen/heimat-integration/staat-und-religion/islam-in-deutschland/islam-in-deutschland-node.html>.

¹⁸⁸ Pew Research Center 2017, p. 30.

Muslim).¹⁸⁹ Nevertheless, the share of people in Germany who hold that large numbers of refugees from countries such as Iraq and Syria pose a “major threat” is among the lowest of all European countries surveyed (28 per cent).¹⁹⁰

In 2018, the German Higher Regional Court of Hamburg sentenced three Syrian nationals to long prison sentences for membership to a foreign terrorist organisation (ISIS) and (attempted) document forgery.¹⁹¹ Furthermore, the Court found that they were “part of an ISIS ‘sleeper cell.’... The Islamic State had arranged for them to travel to Germany with false passports, cash, and mobile phones in 2015, telling them to awaited orders for an attack.”¹⁹² In August of the same year, a 19-year-old Afghan national, who had applied for asylum in Germany, stabbed and severely wounded two American tourists in the Amsterdam central railway station, with a terrorist motive. He was arrested on the spot by police.¹⁹³ In June 2018, a terrorist plot using ricin was discovered in Cologne, Germany. It was planned by a Tunisian citizen who was inspired by ISIS. He had tried to combine ricin with explosives, ball bearings, and bladed weapons.¹⁹⁴

An increasing number of offences against Turkish facilities such as shops and mosques, such as in Lauffen, Baden-Württemberg in 2018, by the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (*Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan* or PKK) affiliated persons were interpreted as revenge acts for Turkish attacks on Kurds in Afrin, Syria. Against this background, collaboration between left-wing extremists and Kurdish organizations increased in various European countries.¹⁹⁵

According to the *EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2020*, 59 arrests were related to terrorist offences in Germany in the year 2018; amongst them 43 for jihadist terrorism, eight for right-wing terrorism, five for ethno-nationalist and separatist terrorism (with ties to PKK), while the background of three remaining offences have not been specified.¹⁹⁶ Two jihadist attacks occurred in the years 2017 to 2018, while another two jihadist terrorist plots were successfully disrupted.¹⁹⁷ Eight attacks were completed but a number of suspects from right-wing terrorism in Germany could be foiled.¹⁹⁸

The German right-wing extremist movement is known for its attraction to weapons, explosives and the formation of neo-Nazi circles such as Comradeship (*Kameradschaften*). There exists also networks of sympathizers from the “intellectual right” as well as right-wing populist/extremist political parties, such as the *Revolution Chemnitz* group and the Empire Citizens Movement (*Reichsbürgerbewegung*).¹⁹⁹ They mobilize discontent against migrants, such as in the case of an attack by members of the *Revolution Chemnitz* in September 2018.²⁰⁰ They target immigration policies as

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁹⁰ Europol 2020, p. 25.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., p. 26f.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 32.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 54.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 69.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 14; p. 68.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 62.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 59f.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 60.

well political opponents, such as in the case of the group *Gruppe Freital* which attacked a left-wing politician and a left-wing party. Members were found “guilty for leadership or membership within a terrorist organization, multiple attempted murders and grievous bodily harm.”²⁰¹ In June 2019, Walter Lübcke, a conservative politician who campaigned for refugees, was shot and killed by a right-wing actor in his own house.²⁰² It is assumed that this “lone wolf” was not alone but part of a larger right-wing network. Ominously, in 2019, a right-wing extremist network was discovered within the German Army (Bundeswehr’s) Special Forces Command (KSK), based in Baden-Württemberg. Several members of the KSK hoarded weapons and explosives and planned an attack. Some of them were members of right-wing extremist groups such as “Hannibal” that seeks to attack Germany’s democratic system. In June 2020, the German Ministry of Defense dissolved the KSK unit. Furthermore, a rise of anti-Semitic attacks such as the one in Halle in 2019, has been attributed to the German right-wing milieu.

There is also a transnational left-wing and anarchist movement in Germany which includes environmental activists. They collaborate with members of violent anti-fascist movements in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, as well as with left-wing and anarchist extremist persons and groups from Greece.²⁰³

Since the start of the Syrian war, “approximately 5,000 individuals from the EU have travelled to join fighting groups in Iraq and Syria. Belgium, France, Germany and the UK are the major EU source countries.”²⁰⁴ Germany appears to have experienced the highest proportion (33 per cent) of its FTFs returning.²⁰⁵ Between 2016 and 2018, the number of violence-prone Islamists grew from 24,400 to 26,560 persons (9 percent).²⁰⁶

Governmental PVE Strategies

In July 2016, a 10 point declaration called “Strengthening of democracy and prevention” (*Demokratie und Prävention stärken*), was launched by the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (*Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend* or BMFSFJ) in cooperation with various municipalities. It seeks to exchange information between social scientists and practitioners within Germany. In addition, in the same year, a governmental strategy with the title “Prevention of Extremism and the Promotion of Democracy” (*Strategie der Bundesregierung zur Extremismusprävention und Demokratieförderung*) was launched by the BMI and the BMFSFJ. It involves the establishment of counselling structures on the local level and is meant to focus on vulnerable individuals. The federal prevention program Live Democracy! (*Demokratie leben!*) sponsors selected prevention ideas for persons at risk, their parents, and families as well as for youth work-related institutions and NGOs. 265 cities in Germany participate in this program, forming so-called Partnerships for Democracy (PfD). In addition, various types of counselling, including for victims, are offered in cooperation with local democracy centres. Specific project ideas on the prevention of radicalization

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 23.

²⁰² Kudlacek et al. 2017, p. 66.

²⁰³ Europol 2020, p. 59.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 40.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 42.

²⁰⁶ Kudlacek et al. 2017, p. 60.

are sponsored by *Demokratie leben!*²⁰⁷ In 2018, it sponsored 47 projects on the prevention of Islamic extremism.²⁰⁸

A National Prevention Program against Islamic Extremism (*Nationales Präventionsprogramm gegen islamistischen Extremismus* or NPP) was launched in 2017. It is run by the BMFSFJ and BMI, with support from other governmental departments such as the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (*Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung* or BMBF) and the representative for Migration, Refugees and Integration (IntB).²⁰⁹ The prevention concept of NPP combines elements of repression and prevention. It is a partnership between civil society organizations and government, with a budget of €100 million in 2018. It identifies locations of prevention such as communities, mosques, and also focuses on prevention and deradicalization in prisons and the probation service, and maintains a network of counselling and information points.²¹⁰

These federal PVE approaches must be seen in relation to the governmental claim for the continuous evaluation of their measures in order to improve quality standards in a fast-changing environment. The National Center for Crime Prevention (NZK) was commissioned to assess this goal by the “Development of Evaluation Criteria for the Prevention of Extremism.” This assessment led to the publication *Evaluation Criteria for the Prevention of Islam- EvIs*. This remarkable document identified 38 indicators to detect potential Islamist radicalization.²¹¹

In addition to government-driven approaches, various NGOs such as Ufuq or Violence Prevention Network (VPN) are working in the area of prevention of radicalization. These NGOs provide workshops, offer training sessions, distribute literature, and develop information programs (e.g. Inshallah Online - How religious extremists use the

²⁰⁷ Cf. BMFSFJ, Leitlinie Förderung von Demokratiezentren zur landesweiten Koordinierung und Vernetzung sowie von Mobiler, Opfer- und Ausstiegsberatung. 25.02.2015. Bundesprogramm „Demokratie leben! Aktiv gegen Rechtsextremismus, Gewalt und Menschenfeindlichkeit“, 2015; Cf. Muth, Iris Alice, and Katharina Penev-Ben Shahr, Radikalisierungsprävention im Bund: „Demokratie leben!“ [Radicalization Prevention in the Bund: Live Democracy!]; in: Eric Marks (ed.), *Gewalt und Radikalität*. [Violence and Radicalism]. Ausgewählte Beiträge des Deutschen Präventionstages 11-12 June in Dresden, 2018, p. 324.

²⁰⁸ Heinze, Franziska, ‘Bewährte Modelle der Radikalisierungsprävention verbreiten’ [Disseminate proven models of radicalization prevention]; in: Erich Marks (ed.), *Gewalt und Radikalität*. [Violence and Radicalism] Ausgewählte Beiträge des Deutschen Präventionstages 11-12 June in Dresden, 2018, p. 275.

²⁰⁹ Cf. BMFSFJ and BMI (eds.) ‘Strategie der Bundesregierung zur Extremismusprävention und Demokratieförderung. 13.07.2016,’ [The Federal Government's strategy for preventing extremism and promoting democracy], *BMFSFJ and BMI*, 2016. Available at: <https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/service/publikationen/strategie-der-bundesregierung-zur-extremismuspraevention-und-demokratiefoerderung/109024>.

²¹⁰ Muth and Penev-Ben Shahr 2018, p. 321f; Cf. Hauff, Yuliya, ‘Prävention von Radikalisierung in NRW-Justizvollzugsanstalten’ [Prevention of radicalization in penal institutions in North Rhine-Westphalia]; in Erich Marks (ed.), *Gewalt und Radikalität*. [Violence and Radicalism] Ausgewählte Beiträge des Deutschen Präventionstages 11-12 June in Dresden, 2018, pp. 261-264.

²¹¹ The 38 indicators are divided in the following five sub-categories: I. INDIVIDUAL; II. COPING WITH CRITICAL LIFE EVENTS; III. SOCIAL STRUCTURES; IV. RELIGION AND IDEOLOGY and V. RELIGION AND IDEOLOGY. See Ulrich et al., *EvIs- Evaluation Criteria for the Prevention of Islamism*. Nationales Zentrum für Kriminalprävention (NZK), Bonn 2020, p. 14.

Internet and what we can do against this, (Inshallah Online - *Wie religiöse Extremisten das Internet nutzen und was wir dagegen tun können*).²¹²

Although there have been a number of evaluations of governmental prevention programs so far,²¹³ there still exists a wider lack of evaluation initiatives within the field of NGO prevention organizations. In order to provide more “best practice cases” for new employees of these organizations and in order to assess which prevention methods work and which do not, it would be good to begin evaluations within these organizations.²¹⁴

In Germany a distinction is often made between *prevention of violence* and *prevention of radicalization*.²¹⁵ The first deals with violent incidents, whereas the second tries to prevent the development of radical ideologies.²¹⁶ Regarding the latter, it is important to enhance the skills of the employees of prevention initiatives, increasing their levels of expertise and to support them with best practice examples of radicalization cases. They also ought to be given better religious knowledge, e.g. by offering them assistance from Islamic theologians who graduated in Germany, in order to strengthen their position.²¹⁷ Some of the major causes for radicalization within Germany are deprivation and prejudices (Islamophobia) since these may cause a loss of a sense of belonging and an intensive search for identity among vulnerable young adults.²¹⁸ For this reason, a psychosocial approach towards the prevention of radicalization is seen as a key element by several German researchers in this field.²¹⁹

²¹² Cf. Nordbruch, Gotz, ‘The Role of Education in Preventing Radicalisation,’ RAN Issue Paper, 12 December 2016.

²¹³ Cf. Heinze et al., ‘Dritter Bericht: Strukturentwicklung bundeszentraler Träger. Programmevaluation “Demokratie leben!” Zwischenbericht 2017,’ Halle (Saale), 2017. Available at: https://www.dji.de/fileadmin/user_upload/DemokratieLeben/Dritter_Zwischenbericht_bzT_2017.pdf; Cf. Institut für Sozialarbeit und Sonderpädagogik e.V. (ISS) and Camino, *Erster Zwischenbericht zum Berichtszeitraum 01.01.2015 – 31.12.2015 der Wissenschaftlichen Begleitung des Programmbereichs „Partnerschaften für Demokratie“ im Programm „Demokratie leben! Aktiv gegen Rechtsextremismus, Gewalt und Menschenfeindlichkeit“*. Frankfurt am Main & Berlin: BFSFJ, 2015; Cf. Leister et al., *Gesamtbild der wissenschaftlichen Begleitung des Bundesprogramms. Initiative Demokratie Stärken*. [General report of the scientific support of the federal program “Strengthen Democracy Initiative”]. Halle (Saale), 2014.

²¹⁴ Cf. Käsehage, Nina, *Die gegenwärtige salafistische Szene in Deutschland. Prediger und Anhänger*. Berlin. LIT-Verlag, 2018; See Hénin, Nicolas, ‘We can’t beat terror, until we understand why it happens,’ *The Guardian*. 29 July 2016. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jul/29/beat-terror-understand-why-explanations-attacks-nice>.

²¹⁵ Cf. Herding et al., ‘Junge Menschen und gewaltorientierter Islamismus - Forschungsbefunde zu Hinwendungs- und Radikalisierungsfaktoren’; in: bpb (ed.), *Infodienst Radikalisierungsprävention*, 2015.

²¹⁶ Muth and Penev-Ben Shahr 2018, p. 319.

²¹⁷ Käsehage 2018, pp. 459-480.

²¹⁸ See Younes 2018.

²¹⁹ See Käsehage (2018).; Cf. Sischa, K. (2016). ‘Salafistische Radikalisierung in der Adoleszenz. Identitätstheoretische und psychodynamische Grundlagen der Prävention’, *Unsere Jugend*, 68 (11/12), 477-484.; See Sischa, K., *Was können Psychotherapeuten zur Radikalisierungsprävention und Deradikalisierung beitragen?* 2018. *Ufuq*. Online. URL: <http://www.ufuq.de/was-koennen-psychotherapeuten-zur-radikalisierungspraevention-und-deradikalisierung-beitragen/>; Cf. Berczyk, J., and Sischa, K. (2017). *Hayat Deutschland: Der familienorientierte Interventionsansatz bei islamistischer Radikalisierung in seinem psychosozialen Kooperationsnetzwerk*; in: N. Böckler & J. Hoffmann (Eds.), *Radikalisierung und terroristische Gewalt*. Frankfurt am Main: Verlag für Polizeiwissenschaft, pp. 341-370.; Cf. Ebrecht-Laermann et al., *Analyse im Extrem. Transgressive Dynamiken in der Arbeit mit Menschen aus rechtsextremen und salafistischen Milieus*; in: B. Unruh, I. Moeslein-Teising & S. Walz-Pawlita (Eds.), *Grenzen. Eine Publikation der DGPT. Psychosozial Verlag*

There are many more governmental and non-governmental efforts to prevent radicalization in Germany. Three of these stand out:

1. **Datteltäter:** This civil society initiative was established in 2015 as a humorous response to the rise of ISIS. Its founders are five young Germans who themselves also have ties to Islam or share a migration background. It focuses on prejudices towards Muslims and Islam but also tries to confront and prevent Islamic fundamentalism with the help of satire. Due to its use of various social media platforms and its authentic approach, it has gained several media awards and is very popular among young German adults.²²⁰
2. **German Institute of Radicalization and De-radicalization Studies (GIRDS):** GIRDS focuses on theoretical research as well as practical work. It offers training on de-radicalization and supports other organizations in the development of counterradicalization initiatives and advises these organizations on issues such as re-radicalization while also providing expertise for the evaluation of ongoing projects.²²¹
3. **3. NEXUS:** Nexus is part of a project on *Prävention und Deradikalisierung in Strafvollzug und Bewährungshilfe* [Prevention and De-radicalization in Prisons and Probation Services], and is operated by BMFSFJ, VPN, the NGO *Denkzeit-Gesellschaft*, and the research group *Modellprojekte e.V.* It offers psychological support for prisoners and their families with the help of the union for the prevention of extremism in Berlin.²²²

Islamist extremism and its prevention are targeted by 32 percent of the P/CVE programs in Germany.²²³ Half of all these programs mostly target children and adolescents in critical periods of their lives, in order to help them form an identity and provide them with a sense of belonging, as well as in order to strengthen their resilience against radicalization.²²⁴ Experiences of discrimination such as Islamophobia are high risk factors for radicalization in Germany. Due to the fact that the majority of radical Islamic movements belong to a non-violent puristic social environment, the major aims of 75 per cent of PVE programs in Germany focus on knowledge transfer and educational work and deal with youth, (social) professions and civil society in the context of primary prevention. Only few PVE program providers such as VPN, offer additional secondary and tertiary prevention programs (including de-radicalization and opt-out-programs) such as the Coordination and Advisory Center for the Prevention of Radicalisation (KORA).²²⁵

One of the challenges for many German PVE programs is the lack of external or internal evaluations, as Gansewig and Walsh found in their study about the utilization of “formers” from extremist milieus in PVE projects.²²⁶ It was found that 15 per cent of

2017, pp. 250-257.; Cf. Bohleber, W., Idealität und Destruktivität. Zur Psychodynamik des religiösen Fundamentalismus und zur terroristischen Gewalt; in: W. Bohleber (Ed.), *Was Psychoanalyse heute leistet*. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2012, pp. 211-230.

²²⁰ Datteltäter. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF_oOFgq8qwi7HRGTJSsZ-g.

²²¹ German Institute of Radicalization and De-radicalization Studies (GIRDS). Available at: <http://girds.org/>

²²² NEXUS. Available at: <https://www.extremismus-und-psychologie.de/Projekt-NEXUS/>.

²²³ Kudlacek et al. 2017, p. 69.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 70.

²²⁵ Ibid., 2017, p. 75.

²²⁶ Cf. Gansewig, Antje, and Maria Walsh, *Biographiebasierte Maßnahmen in der schulischen Präventions- und Bildungsarbeit. Eine empirische Betrachtung des Einsatzes von Aussteigern aus*

the German projects did not carry out an evaluation in 2017.²²⁷ Therefore, the NZK recommends the integration of quality guidelines such as the Beccaria Standard,²²⁸ in a project's planning stage.²²⁹

It is notable that family counselling is hardly a focus in German PVE projects though there is a manifest need for such counselling.²³⁰ Germany counts a large number of Muslim communities with ties to Turkey and other Muslim countries such as Morocco. Some of the young adults from these communities do not only participate in Islamist movement but also in ethno-nationalist and separatist movements. Yet others are linked to organized crime. It is important to increase support for the families affected by this and to involve them in PVE strategies to counter extremism.

The United Kingdom

In the UK, 6.3 per cent of the total population were Muslims in the year 2016.²³¹ The projected percentage of Muslims of the total population in the UK in the year 2050 is estimated at 9.7 per cent (estimate with zero migration), 16.7 per cent (estimate with medium migration) 17.2 per cent (estimate with high migration).²³² 43 per cent of recent migrants into the UK were Muslims.²³³ According to a survey of the Pew Research Data, 80 per cent of British people who have a negative opinion of Muslims said that the high number of refugees from Iraq and Syria represent a major threat.²³⁴ However, only 17,000 asylum seekers from Iraq and Syria were counted in the UK whereas 457,000 asylum seekers reached Germany at the same time.²³⁵

According to Europol's *EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report*, 281 terrorism-related arrests between 2015 and 2019 have been reported in the UK (not including Northern Ireland).²³⁶ With regard to right-wing terrorist attacks, one completed attack

extremistischen Szenen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung ehemaliger Rechtsextremer. [Biography-based measures in school prevention and educational work. An empirical consideration of the use of dropouts from extremist scenes with special consideration of former right-wing extremists] Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 2020.

²²⁷ Kudlacek et al. 2017, p. 72.

²²⁸ Cf. Schindler, et al., 'Beccaria-Standards zur Qualitätssicherung kriminalpräventiver Projekte,' [Beccaria standards for quality assurance in crime prevention projects]. Beccaria, 2005. Available at: https://www.beccaria.de/nano.cms/de/Beccaria_Standards1/.

²²⁹ Ulrich et al. 2020, p. 14.

²³⁰ See Koehler 2015a; Cf. Koehler, Daniel, 'Using Family Counseling to Prevent and Intervene Against Foreign Fighters: Operational Perspectives, Methodology and Best Practices for Implementing Codes of Conduct'; in: Middle East Institute (ed.), *Understanding Deradicalization: Pathways to Enhance Transatlantic Common Perceptions and Practices*: Middle East Institute & Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, 2015b; Cf. Koehler, Daniel, and Ehrh, Tobias, 'Parents' Associations, Support Group Interventions and Countering Violent Extremism: An Important Step Forward in Combating Violent Radicalization,' *International Annals of Criminology*, 56(1-2), pp. 178-197; Cf. Yayla, Ahmet S., 'Preventing Terrorist Recruitment through Early Intervention by Involving Families,' *Journal for Deradicalization*, 23, 26 June 2020, pp. 134-188.

²³¹ Pew Research Center 2017, p. 30.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Ibid., p. 20.

²³⁴ Ibid., p. 24.

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 25.

²³⁶ Europol 2020, p. 12.

and three foiled plots were recorded in the UK in 2019 (not including ethno-nationalist attacks in Northern Ireland).²³⁷

Governmental PVE Strategies

Since the 7/7 bombing of 2005 which targeted London transport, the British government has developed four “pillars” that form the UK’s government CVE policy CONTEST:

1. *Prevent* the ideological challenge of terrorism;²³⁸
2. *Pursue* (stopping terrorist attacks happening in the UK and overseas)
3. *Protect* against a terrorist attack in the UK or overseas;
4. *Prepare* to mitigate the impact of a terrorist incident if it occurs.²³⁹

Prevent costs nearly £40m per year and is meant to prevent young people from joining terrorism-related activities or supporting these activities, focusing on the “pre-criminal space.”²⁴⁰ It includes training for public sector workers and frontline practitioners such as nurses, probation officers, doctors, teachers, and university lecturers in order to prevent radicalization.²⁴¹ Through the “Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015,” Prevent became a legal obligation, the frequency of trainings increased, including in the private sector, as in the case of cooperation with the fast food chain McDonald’s.²⁴² Prevent will be discussed in more detail below. When it was initiated its approach was unique among Europe’s PVE strategies; it was also exported to other countries.

Prevent is accompanied by a “Channel Process,” which means a Prevent referral will be indicated, for instance based on a recommendation of a general practitioner²⁴³ whose patient might have shown “signs of radicalisation.” Such a “case will be screened by the Prevent lead within the organisation, often a safeguarding professional.”²⁴⁴ The police will examine whether the person who might be at risk of radicalization is not already part of “an active counter-terrorism investigation” and will check the motivation based on the “3M test” (“misguided, malicious or misinformed”).²⁴⁵

²³⁷ Ibid., p. 18.

²³⁸ Her Majesty’s Government (HMG), ‘Prevent Strategy,’ HMG, 7 June 2011, p. 73. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Cf. Goldberg et al., ‘Prevent: what is pre-criminal space?’ *BJPpsych bulletin*, 41(4), 2017, pp. 208-211.

²⁴¹ Cf. Home Office, ‘Factsheet: Prevent and Channel,’ *London: HMSO*, 5, November 2019c. Available at: <https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2019/11/05/factsheet-prevent-and-channel>.

²⁴² See Hymas, Charles, ‘Free counter-terrorism training offered online by police to all Britons in run-up to Christmas,’ *The Telegraph*, 8 December 2019. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/12/08/free-counter-terrorism-training-offered-online-police-britons/>; See Warrell, Helen, ‘Police enlist companies to spot extremism in workers,’ *Financial Times*, 20 March 2019. Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/45db1d3c-4a64-11e9-bbc9-6917dce3dc62>.

²⁴³ The British National Health Service (NHS) is probably the only healthcare system where healthcare bodies are legally obliged to look out for potential terrorists. Cf. Aked, Hilary, *False positives: The Prevent counterextremism policy in healthcare*. London: Medact 2020, p. 13.

²⁴⁴ Aked 2020, p. 8.

²⁴⁵ https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/prevent_referrals/04-the-3ms.html

After that process, the case might be discussed in a “Channel Panel” meeting,²⁴⁶ a multi-agency assembly that is led by the police who involves various representatives, e.g., from health, education, or local authorities in the decision-making procedure. At this stage, a check regarding specific needs of a “pre-radicalized” person (such as mental health support) would not yet have taken place.

With regard to Prevent and the Channel Process, Aked criticizes the fact that only between five and ten per cent of the total amount of all Prevent referrals led to the “Channel Panel”, whereas between 90 and 95 per cent of the referrals have been marked as “false positives” by the police. Regardless of the fact that some “Prevent cases never reached a Channel Panel, all of the referrals are recorded in a Prevent Case Management (PCM) database, and reportedly stored for seven years.”²⁴⁷

Although over 1,500 individuals have been brought into the Channel program since 2012, the exact content of the program is still kept secret. The BBC compared it with a system of “re-education,”²⁴⁸ while the Home Office calls it “ideological mentoring,” claiming also that participation is “voluntary and confidential.”²⁴⁹

The report *False Positives: The Prevent counter-extremism policy in healthcare* addressed some of the problems found,²⁵⁰ including a suspected correlation between mental health issues of certain individuals and their engagement in violent extremism or terrorism. The report found that:

“the evidence for official claims that people with mental health conditions are more likely to be drawn into terrorism is not robust enough to base policy upon. [...] some mental health specialists believe the claim risks pathologisation and exacerbating stigma.”²⁵¹

In addition, the report criticized the pressure on health workers by authorities “to navigate [and] to comply, and to refer, often without consent.”²⁵² It was reported that many were “deeply concerned about the possibility of a broader erosion of trust and some are concerned about criminalization, in the context of all Prevent referral data being recorded on a police database.”²⁵³ The report concluded that the Prevent policy in healthcare rests on “grey areas, a lack of clarity, conflation of safeguarding with public protection and a failure to distinguish between “vulnerable” patients and patients lacking capacity.”²⁵⁴ The large variation in Prevent referral and false positives rates across National Health Service (NHS) “was considered as problematic.”²⁵⁵ Another

²⁴⁶ The Scottish equivalent to the *Channel Programme* that is applied on pre-radicals in England as well as in Wales is named the *Prevent Professional Concerns Programme*.

²⁴⁷ See Grierson, Jamie, ‘Counter-terror police running secret Prevent database,’ *The Guardian*, 6 October 2019. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/oct/06/counter-terror-police-are-running-secret-prevent-database>.

²⁴⁸ See Nye, Catrin, ‘The man who is being deradicalised,’ *BBC News*, 1 September 2015. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-34073367>.

²⁴⁹ See Home Office 2019c.

²⁵⁰ Aked 2020, p. 6.

²⁵¹ Ibid., p. 9; For assessments on this research-field from disciplines other than the therapeutic field, see for instance, Corner, Emily, and Gill, Paul, ‘Is there a nexus between terrorist involvement and mental health in the age of the Islamic State?’ *CTC Sentinel*, 10(1), 2017, pp. 1-10.

²⁵² Ibid., p. 7.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Aked 2020, p. 7.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

result of the study was that Prevent might contribute to discrimination²⁵⁶ of two groups in the UK: Asian communities and Muslims.²⁵⁷ Asians were referred four times more than non-Asians. Muslims were referred eight times more than non-Muslims.²⁵⁸ In addition, Aked's report on Prevent found that "it stigmatizes people with mental health conditions, and often damages the care they receive. There is also strong evidence that Prevent is damaging presumption of patient consent and confidential medical care, and trust in the medical profession."²⁵⁹

The Prevent training materials include indicators of possible signs of radicalization that are built on elements of the "Extremism Risk Guidance 22+" (ERG22+), also known as Channel Vulnerability Assessment Framework.²⁶⁰ They were based on just one psychological study that identified 22 factors ("Engagement factors," "Intent factors," and "Capability factors") considered as possible radicalization indicators.²⁶¹ Although this framework has been embedded in Prevent since 2011, it was classified until 2015 and the underlying assumptions were never made public, which makes the reliability and validity of it difficult to assess.²⁶²

According to the UN's Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism:

"psychometric systems like the ERG22+ "mix structured forensic analysis models, traditionally focused on mental illness and deviance, with other models of intelligence analysis containing strong ideological and political connotations" and "consistently use ambiguous factors in their application."²⁶³

While the Home Office claimed that 85 per cent of the Channel participants had emerged from the programme without any future interest in radicalization,²⁶⁴ its

²⁵⁶ Cf. Hussain, Feryad, 'The mental health of Muslims in Britain: Relevant therapeutic concepts,' *International Journal of Mental Health*, 38(2), 2009, pp. 21-36. Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41345282?seq=1>; Cf. Kundnani, Arun, *The Muslims are coming: Islamophobia, extremism and the domestic war on terror*. New York: Verso, 2015. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282618922_Arun_Kundnani_2014_The_Muslims_are_Coming_Islamophobia_Extremism_and_the_Domestic_War_on_Terror_London_Verso.

²⁵⁷ Cf. Fitzpatrick, Rob et al., 'Ethnic Inequalities in Mental Health: Promoting Lasting Positive Change,' *Lankelly Foundation, Mind, The Afiya Trust and Centre for Mental Health*, February 2014, pp. 1-32. Available at: <https://lankellychase.org.uk/resources/publications/ethnic-inequalities-in-mental-health/>; Cf. Mental Health Foundation, 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities,' 2020. Available at:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/b/black-asianand-minority-ethnic-bame-communities>.

²⁵⁸ Aked 2020, p. 25; p. 68.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 7.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 8.

²⁶¹ Cf. Qureshi, Asim, 'The 'Science of Pre-Crime': The Secret 'Radicalisation' Study Underpinning Prevent,' *London: CAGE*, 2016. Available at: <https://www.cage.ngo/the-science-of-pre-crime>.

²⁶² Cf. Royal College of Psychiatrists, 'Counter-terrorism and Psychiatry: Position statement PS04/16,' 7 September 2016. Available at: https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pdf/PS04_16.pdf.

²⁶³ Cf. United Nations Human Rights Council, 'Special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism,' (2020, *Human rights impact of policies and practices aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism*, United Nations Human Rights Council, A/HRC/43/46, 8, 2020. URL:

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Terrorism/Pages/SRTerrorismIndex.aspx>

²⁶⁴ See Home Office, 'Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent programme, England and Wales, April 2018 to March 2019,' 19 December 2019a.

efficacy is empirically unverifiable. Several former participants, e.g. the Parsons Green bomber²⁶⁵ who had been flagged to Prevent, or the perpetrator of the London Bridge attack in December 2019, who had completed this program, were clearly not de-radicalized.²⁶⁶

Selected Review of the British Literature on Radicalization and the Prevention of Radicalization

An outstanding study on the development of ISIS-related radicalization in Britain as well as on prevention possibilities, is titled *The Islamic State in Britain. Radicalization and Resilience in an Activist Network* and authored by Michael Kenney in 2018. He suggested that:

“Britain and other Western democracies can continue to deal with the threat of violent extremism without sacrificing the political rights and civil liberties that sustain their own identities as democratic societies. Part of the solution is to allow groups that engage in peaceful protest the room to express their grievances lawfully. This is part and parcel of what makes Britain great.”²⁶⁷

Kenney’s approach aims to actively include British Muslims as citizens of the UK in the process of preventing and countering radicalization – an approach also advocated in other studies²⁶⁸ which do not stereotype members of Muslim diasporas as “enemies” of British values.²⁶⁹ According to Heath-Kelly, the “othering” of British Muslims has been a result of various jihadist attacks in Britain. But this othering leads to a

²⁶⁵ Cf. Kundnani, Arun, ‘Radicalisation: The journey of a concept,’ *Race & Class*, 54(2), 2012, pp. 3-25.

²⁶⁶ See Qureshi 2016.

²⁶⁷ Kenney, Michael, *The Islamic State in Britain. Radicalization and Resilience in an Activist Network*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2018, p. 236.

²⁶⁸ Cf. Muslim Council of Britain, *The Impact of Prevent on Muslim Communities*. London, 2016. Available at: <http://archive.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/MCB-CT-Briefing2.pdf>; See Words heal the world, ‘Love, education, time and attention – words that can prevent radicalisation’ by someone who faced this problem in his own family: an interview with Ahmed Patel,’ Words heal the world, 24 April 2018. Available at: <http://www.wordshealtheworld.com/words-heal-the-world/love-education-time-and-attention-words-that-can-prevent-radicalisation-by-someone-who-faced-this-problem-in-his-own-family-an-interview-with-ahmed-patel/>.

²⁶⁹ Several examples of Muslims being portrayed as “enemies” of UK are for instance discussed in: Evans, Jonathan, Intelligence, *Counter-Terrorism and Trust. Address to the Society of Editors*, Security Service MI5, 5 November 2007. Available at: <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/news/intelligence-counter-terrorism-and-trust>; Cf. Wolton, Suke, ‘The Contradiction in the Prevent Duty: Democracy vs. ‘British Values’,’ *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, 12(2), July, 2017, pp. 123-142; See *the Guardian*, ‘Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill Is a Threat to Freedom of Speech at Universities,’ *The Guardian*, 2 February 2015. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2015/feb/02/counter-terrorism-security-bill-threat-freedom-of-speech-universities>; Cf. Muslim Council of Britain, ‘Concerns on Prevent,’ *Muslim Council of Britain, London*, 2015. Available at: <https://www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/20150803-Case-studies-about-Prevent.pdf>; Cf. House of Commons, Home Affairs Select Committee, ‘The Government’s Counter-Terrorism Proposals: First Report of Session 2007-08,’ *London: HMSO*, 2007. Available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmhaff/43/43i.pdf>; Cf. Home Office, ‘Contest Strategy,’ *London: HMSO*, 2011a; Cf. Home Office (ed.), ‘Prevent Strategy: Equality Impact Assessment,’ *London: HMSO*, 2011b.

solidarization of young Muslims and converts with radical Islamist groups.²⁷⁰ More recent initiatives by the British government indicate a shift from a repressive to a preventive approach, and often include a focus on family counselling to prevent radicalization.²⁷¹

The study titled *I left to be closer to Allah. Learning about Foreign Fighters from Family and Friends* by Amarasingam and Dawson, also emphasizes the need for the involvement of family and friends in prevention and deradicalization approaches.²⁷² Sadek Hamid's work *The Attraction of 'Authentic' Islam. Salafism and British Muslim Youth*²⁷³ discusses the search of young British Muslims for a non-traditional, but "pure," Islam. He underlines the importance of a "shelter" which a (strict) religious community can offer to young adults in the face of daily discrimination while they are torn between familial traditions, societal expectations, political pressure, and individual wishes.

Sarah Marsden, in her book *Terrorist Recidivism: Deradicalisation and Reintegration* underlines the need "to focus on addressing perceived misinterpretations of religion, or attempting to modify emotional responses to perceived injustice to encourage people to pursue those same goods in pro-social ways."²⁷⁴ She recommends a "Good Lives Model"- a concept that contains both values and personal agency, in order to combat terrorism - and to pay closer attention to individuals in their social and political context in order to secure better outcomes.²⁷⁵

In British literature there is a major focus on prevention within educational settings, based on "the idea that access to quality education for all students, regardless of gender, culture, faith, nationality or ethnicity, is the starting point for PVE."²⁷⁶ A fine account on this is in Taylor and Soni's *Preventing Radicalisation: a Systematic Review of Literature considering the Lived Experiences of the UK's Prevent Strategy in*

²⁷⁰ Cf. Heath-Kelly, Charlotte, 'Counter-Terrorism and the Counterfactual: Producing the "Radicalisation" Discourse and the UK PREVENT Strategy: Producing the Radicalization Discourse,' *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, 15(3), 2013, pp. 394-415.

²⁷¹ Cf. Her Majesty's Government (HMG), 'CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism, Cm 9608,' London: HMSO, 2018. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorism-strategy-contest-2018>; Cf. House of Commons, Home Affairs Select Committee, 'Prevent Violent Extremism,' London: HMSO, 2009; Cf. House of Commons, Home Affairs Select Committee, 'Roots of Violence Radicalisation. Nineteenth Report of Session 2010-12,' London: HMSO, 2012; Cf. Houses of Parliament, 'Addressing Islamic Extremism,' *Houses of Parliament*, 2016. Available at: <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/POST-PN-0526/POST-PN-0526.pdf>; Cf. Home Office, 'Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales,' Home Office, 10 April 2019b. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>; Cf. Home Office, 'Channel Duty Guidance Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism,' London: HMSO, 2015.

²⁷² Cf. Amarasingam, Amarnath, and Lorne L. Dawson, 'I Left to be Closer to Allah. Learning about Foreign Fighters from Family and Friends,' *ISD*, London, 2018.

²⁷³ Cf. Hamid, Sadek, 'The Attraction of 'Authentic' Islam. Salafism and British Muslim Youth'; in: Roel Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism. Islam's New Religious Movements*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 384-403.

²⁷⁴ Marsden, Sarah, *Reintegrating Extremists: 'Deradicalisation' and Desistence*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, p. 6.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Club de Madrid - World Leadership Alliance, 'Education for Preventing Violent Extremism' (EPVE)* - Working group paper,' *Hedayah - Countering Violent Extremism*, n. y., pp. 1-17.

Educational Settings.²⁷⁷ Afia Ahmed Chaudhry's dissertation *Resisting Radicalisation: The Impact of the Prevent Duty on Teacher-Student Relationships* is field-research based and raises pertinent questions with regard to the usefulness of prevention initiatives in schools or by teachers. Chaudhry observes: "it is perhaps important to note the way teachers engage with this topic because it encourages the need for critical and honest debate, spearheaded by those directly impacted by government policy."²⁷⁸

With regard to the prevention of radicalization within schools and universities, there are a number of notable studies.²⁷⁹ There has been a growth of Islamic NGOs which claim to be able to prevent and de-radicalize their fellow believers, which, in turn, has led to criticism from others in Muslim communities.²⁸⁰ Many Muslims do not see the benefits of a pedagogical approach,²⁸¹ with some of them viewing this as a new form of governmental surveillance of Muslims in so-called "safe spaces," with racist implications.²⁸² Indeed, there have been a few cases identified where teachers or social workers have been unmasked as counter-terrorism officers.²⁸³ This has led to a higher level of mistrust towards such education-based initiatives, and, possibly, also contributed to radicalization.²⁸⁴

There are many governmental and non-governmental initiatives to prevent radicalization in the UK. Three of these stand out:

²⁷⁷ Cf. Taylor, Laura, and Anita Soni, 'Preventing radicalisation: a systematic review of literature considering the lived experiences of the UK's Prevent strategy in educational settings,' *Pastoral Care in Education*, 35(4), 2017, pp. 241-252.

²⁷⁸ Chaudhry, Afia Ahmed, 'Resisting Radicalisation: The Impact of the Prevent Duty on Teacher-Student Relationships,' (MA Thesis) London: King's College, 2018, p. 52.

²⁷⁹ Cf. Saeed, Tania, and David Johnson, 'Intelligence, Global Terrorism and Higher Education: Neutralising Threats or Alienating Allies?' *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 64, 2016, pp. 37-51; Cf. Muller, Chandra 'The Role of Caring in the Teacher-Student Relationship for at-risk Students,' *Sociological Inquiry* 71(2), 2001, pp. 241-255; Cf. Murray, Christopher, and Kimbra Malmgren, 'Implementing a Teacher-Student Relationship Program in a High-Poverty Urban School: Effects on Social, Emotional, and Academic Adjustment and Lessons Learned,' *Journal of School Psychology*, 43(2), 2005, pp. 37-152.

²⁸⁰ See Muslim Council of Britain; 2015 and 2016; See Prevent Watch, 'What is Prevent?' *Prevent Watch*. Available at: <https://www.preventwatch.org/joint-statement-on-prevent/>.

²⁸¹ Cf. Zhou, M., 'Ethnicity as Social Capital: Community-based Institutions and Embedded Networks of Social Relations'; in: Loury, Glenn, Tariq Modood and Steven Teles (eds.), *Ethnicity, Social Mobility and Public Policy: Comparing USA and UK*. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2005, pp. 131-159.

²⁸² Cf. Kyriacouet et al., 'British Muslim University Students' Perceptions of Prevent and its Impact on their Sense of Identity,' *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, 12(2), 2017, pp. 97-110; Ramsey, Peter, 'Is Prevent a Safe Space?' *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, 12(2), 2017, pp. 143-158; See Sherwood, Harriet, and Pidd, Helen, 'Muslims at Mosques linked to Khalid Masood fear Anti-Islam Backlash,' *The Guardian*, 24 March 2018. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/mar/24/westminster-attack-khalid-masood-anti-muslim-backlash-mosques-east-london-birmingham>.

²⁸³ See Moaveni, Azadeh, *Guest House for Young Widows - Among the Women of ISIS*. New York: Random House, 2019, p. 92; See Batty, David, Prevent strategy 'sowing mistrust and fear in Muslim communities'. *The Guardian*, 2016; Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/feb/03/prevent-strategy-sowing-mistrust-fear-muslim-communities>.

²⁸⁴ See Galey, Patrick, 'UK racist's two-tier citizenship,' *Politico*, 21 February 2019. Available at: <https://www.politico.eu/article/britains-shamima-begum-double-standard/>, accessed on 7 July 2020; See Halliday, Josh, 'Ofsted accused of racism over hijab questioning in primary schools,' *The Guardian*, 2017. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/nov/28/ofsted-accused-racism-hijab-questioning-primary-schools>; See Hirsch, Afua, 'The root cause of extremism among British Muslims is alienation,' *The Guardian*, 19 September 2014. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/sep/19/british-muslims-driven-to-extremism-alienated-at-home>.

1. **The Active Change Foundation (ACF):** This initiative was led by its founder Hanif Qadir, a former radical-Islamic activist, and his team from 2005 until 2019.²⁸⁵ It aimed to empower young Muslims and to prevent them from being attracted by radical Islamist ideas. One well-known initiative of the ACF was its campaign *#NotinmyName*. Like some other groups, the ACF has been accused by some members from Muslim communities of conducting surveillance for the intelligence service²⁸⁶ and many participants became mistrustful and left the foundation.²⁸⁷
2. **Project Generation Global** (the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change): This project offers training for teachers to facilitate dialogue in the classroom in order to create “safe spaces.”²⁸⁸ It tries to connect classrooms across the globe and helps students to navigate their problems in a positive way.²⁸⁹
3. **Imams online:** This initiative tries to prevent radicalization through imparting Islamic knowledge by recognized religious authorities.²⁹⁰

Ahmed Patel, the brother-in-law of the former London 7/7 bomber Mohammed Siddique, is an excellent example of a British Muslim who stood up against religious radicalization.²⁹¹ From an outside observer’s perspective, it would appear that people like Patel are authentic actors in the field of prevention work and should therefore be included to a greater extent in British (non-) governmental PVE approaches.

According to Lloyd and Dean, guidelines for assessing risk in extremist offenders are necessary in order to prevent recidivism.²⁹² Although it would appear that the Home Office has changed its strategy toward elements of the program,²⁹³ in the case of Prevent, many elements are still unknown and may remain so for some time. This lack of transparency, in combination with the terrorist attacks by former participants in this program, does not increase trust in its efficacy.

²⁸⁵ <https://www.activechangefoundation.org/>.

²⁸⁶ Cf. Khan, Khalida, ‘Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) & PREVENT: A Response from the Muslim Community,’ *AN NISA Society*, 2009; Cf. Krebs, Ronald R. ‘Rethinking the Battle of Ideas: How the United States Can Help Muslim Moderates,’ *Orbis*, 52(2), 2008, pp. 332-346; Cf. Kundnani, Arun, *Spooked! How Not to Prevent Violent Extremism*. London: Institute of Race Relations, 2009; Cf. Ross, Dennis, ‘Counterterrorism: A Professional’s Strategy,’ *World Policy Journal*, 24(1), Spring, 2007, pp. 19-31; Ross noted that governmental partnerships in Western countries with moderate Muslims could undermine their legitimacy in the Muslim community and therefore become counterproductive. Muslim organizations which collaborate with the authorities are often perceived as “willing to join hands with the government against the interests of the majority of Muslims”; Yasmeen, S “Dealing with Islam” in Australia: After the London Bombings,’ *The Sydney Papers* (Winter/Spring), 2005, p. 39, as cited in: Eddine Minerva Nasser- Bridget Garnham, Katerina Agostino and Gilbert Caluya, ‘Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Literature Review’; in: *Counter Terrorism and Security Technology Centre DSTO Defence Science and Technology Organisation* (ed.). Edinburgh South Australia, March 2011, p. 64.

²⁸⁷ Moaveni 2019, p. 92. Since 2019, Hanif Qadir is working as a consultant for *The International Institute for Justice and Rule of Law (IIJ)* for the rehabilitation and reintegration of terrorist fighters. He has strongly criticizing governmental plans to save money by closing Youth Centres, where vulnerable young adults can be prevented from being radicalized.

²⁸⁸ <https://www.activechangefoundation.org/>.

²⁸⁹ Club de Madrid, n. y., p. 9.

²⁹⁰ <http://imamsonline.com/>

²⁹¹ See BBC Asian Network, ‘Interview with Ahmed Patel, 7/7 bomber’s former brother-in-law: ‘There were no signs’,’ *BBC*, 9 September 2016. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p047bv99>.

²⁹² Cf. Lloyd, Monica, and Dean, Christopher, ‘The Development of Structured Guidelines for Assessing Risk in Extremist Offenders,’ *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 2(1), 2015, pp. 0-52.

²⁹³ See Home Office 2019b.

Lessons Learned

In the following, a selection of outstanding national PVE approaches will be discussed. These could be applied, or at least helpful, for the improvement of such approaches in other countries.

A good example for a promising PVE approach is DERAD, a project of eight institutions from six European countries aimed at the prevention of radicalization in prisons.²⁹⁴ It supports imprisoned political offenders as well as officers guarding them, warning the latter about the risks of jihadist recruitment in general and individual radicalization processes in particular. As a large-scale program with a broad online menu, it supports prison and probation officers as well as officials from judiciaries, translation services, law enforcement agencies, and other stakeholders. Furthermore, DERAD provides recommendations based on court decisions across Europe and offers advice regarding social rehabilitation. One spin-off of DERAD is HERMES,²⁹⁵ a platform for interactive training for CVE-activities.

Two other good examples in the field of CVE and PVE deserve to be mentioned. The first is the European Commission's Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)²⁹⁶ which was established in 2011 and currently includes several thousand stakeholders from academia, government, and civil society, including many social workers. RAN offers a broad range of workshops and activities for the exchange of good practices among participants.

One of the main participant groups of RAN are consultants involved in preventing and countering radicalization that leads to violent extremism, especially on the municipal level within Europe. RAN organizes working groups related to specific topics or professions such as prison and probation workers. Such groups meet on- and offline and exchange information about challenges and new approaches. Their experiences and recommendations are gathered in reports and so-called "Collection of practices" - a selection of best practices which are freely available on the internet.

One of the best studies about female radicalization with regard to ISIS in Europe and abroad, is the book "Guest House for Young Widows - Among the Women of ISIS" by Azadeh Moaveni.²⁹⁷ It highlights the fate of several girls from their initial radicalization in their countries of origins, to their departure for ISIS and their escape from the terrorist organization. In addition, it sketches a critical picture of their social and political circumstances as well as their interest in religion. The different reasons for girls and young women from the "West" and the "East" for radicalization are identified, without losing sight of the individuality of decision-making by these female jihadists. One key finding of the book with regard to the prevention of radicalization is the fact that Muslims, who are socially and religiously conservative, should not automatically be

²⁹⁴ Cf. DERAD (European project towards the prevention of the escalation of radicalization in prisons). URL: <https://www.agenformedia.com/international-projects/derad> .

²⁹⁵ Cf. HERMES. Available at: <https://www.traininghermes.eu> .

²⁹⁶ See RAN, 'Ex Post Paper. Guideline Evaluation of PCVE Programmes and Interventions,' *Brussels: RAN Centre of Excellence*, 2018. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/ms_workshops_guidelines_evaluation_of_pcve_programmes_and_interventions_july_2018_en.pdf;

²⁹⁷ See Moaveni 2019.

viewed by governments as extremists and treated as such. Otherwise, the alienation of Muslims which is often based on the absence of a self-determined life perspective, might make them even more vulnerable to radicalization.²⁹⁸

Conclusion

This overview of various efforts towards the prevention of radicalization in Western Muslim diasporas in five countries has shown that over the years there has been a shift from CVE to PVE. The initial, more repressive, CVE approach was the result of a series of terrorist attacks in Europe and North America and was meant to restore a sense of security among citizens. Strict law enforcement and the frequent stereotyping of members of one religion as potential “enemies” did not bring about a decline in radicalization or a greater identification of diaspora members with the cultural and political values of Western societies. Rather, it led to a new wave of clashes with the host country’s traditional values, and to new forms of radicalization and further attacks, partly driven by growing Islamophobia, and partly driven by a continuing search for belonging which the former “Islamic State” initially seemed to satisfy.²⁹⁹ The old truism that “violence begets violence” became true again, e.g., in France, where various special armed police units such as the *Sentinelle*, while meant to restore public security, were also seen as provocation by some members of Muslim communities. Furthermore, their presence did apparently not significantly reduce the number of attacks in France, or lead to a decline in numbers of radicalized French citizens and residents. Terrorist attacks in Britain could not all be prevented by the extensive public surveillance put in place, but seemed to “provoke” or - even worse - to “attract” some social media “addicted” jihadists who wish to see themselves being video-taped during their attacks in order to become “famous” in the online Jihadi scene.

The idea of monitoring one section of the public and inviting citizens to report on their neighbours’ activities leaves a bitter taste, especially in those countries which experienced Fascist rule in the not so distant past. While the idea to prevent terrorist attacks with the help of civil society involvement and citizens’ awareness of radicalization symptoms in their neighbourhood is based on good intentions and can be made to work, as exemplified by the Danish “Aarhus model,” it is a double-edged sword as it can also lead to greater mistrust between host society and diasporas, fan religion-based prejudices, and provoke vigilantism in the form of right-wing racist actions.

In recent years, it has become quite clear that a long-term solution for the problem of radicalization has to be sought in preventive approaches³⁰⁰ at various levels. An example of this could be the initiative of the European Commission “EU Cities against Radicalisation.”³⁰¹ Radicalization does not come out of the blue but is, in the majority

²⁹⁸ Moaveni 2019, p. 271.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., p.151.

³⁰⁰ The ‘prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism’ (short: “prevention of radicalisation” or “prevent work”) is based on the *EU Counter Terrorism Strategy* of 2005 (Council doc. 14469/4/05) and further refined, e.g. by the *European Agenda on Security* and the Council’s *Internal Security Strategy* 2015-2020. Cf. Council of the European Union, ‘Revised EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism,’ *Council of the European Union*, 9956/14. 19 May, 2014. Annex, par. 9; Cf. Council of the European Union 2020.

³⁰¹ The purpose of the European Commission’s initiative “EU Cities against Radicalisation” is to offer support in terms of the development of cooperation among European cities, by providing a platform for the development of effective approaches towards the prevention of radicalization at the local level. Cf.

of cases, the result of persistent discrimination, deprivation, and the absence of societal and political participation. Vulnerable persons have to be approached by others who do not judge them beforehand, but are willing to listen and help them to discover the various pull and push factors behind their attraction to extremist ideas.³⁰² Professional assistance, based on psychosocial approaches, appears to be the way forward to show vulnerable people how to make something of their own lives without feeling the need to destroy the lives of others to feel empowered themselves.³⁰³

Successful PVE approaches are usually based on the cooperation of experts from academia with practitioners such as street workers.³⁰⁴ In addition to skilled social workers and trained psychologists, such combined efforts can also include individual police officers who are well-known and trusted within the community.

The CVE approach became for a while “big business” in some of the countries discussed.³⁰⁵ However, many initiatives were often mismanaged and less than sensitive to the actual needs of the targeted groups. According to Johansen, many CVE “experts” have been randomly selected for the task. In some cases, they were chosen because of their skills to manage risk in different domains, such as youth crime prevention, protection of children’s well-being, or the prevention of substance abuse among homeless and mentally disadvantaged groups.³⁰⁶

This review of the P/CVE-approaches in the five Western countries highlights that in reality, several of the initiatives in the field of CVE were not able to provide adequate help. It is important not to repeat the same mistakes in the growing field of PVE.

The key element of PVE should be the willingness to understand the real needs of vulnerable individuals and groups in diasporas so that adequate assistance can be provided. PVE approaches should be able to challenge fundamentalist religious narratives in various spheres of life - such as schools, families, sport clubs, mosques, and on the internet - and try to offer constructive and persuasive alternative religious and non-religious narratives. This can only be achieved when and where credible narratives are provided by authentic “role models,”³⁰⁷ whether these are (quietist)

European Commission, Conference ‘EU-Cities against Radicalisation.’ Brussels: EC, 2019. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/20190226_conference-cities-against-radicalisation_en.

³⁰² Cf. Abu-Nîmer’s approach “From instrumentalisation to integration”: Abu-Nîmer, Mohammed, ‘Alternative Approaches to Transforming Violent Extremism. The Case of Islamic Peace and Interreligious Peacebuilding,’ *Berghof Foundation* (ed.), 2018, p. 7. Available at: https://www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Handbook/Dialogue_Chapters/dialogue13_Abu-Nimer_lead.pdf.

³⁰³ Cf. Yakeley, Jessica and Richard Taylor, ‘Terrorism and Mental Disorder, and the Role of Psychiatrists in Counter-terrorism in the UK,’ *Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy*, 31(4), 2017, pp. 378-392. Available at:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02668734.2017.1368694?journalCode=rpps20>;

See Sischka 2016; Cf. Yakeley, Jessica, *Working with Violence: A Psychoanalytic Approach*. London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010.

³⁰⁴ Lynch, Orla, ‘Ex Post Paper, Methods of evidence-based approaches: assessment and CVE/PVE’ *RAN Centre of Excellence*, 21 December 2018, p. 9.

³⁰⁵ Cf. Schmid, Alex P., ‘Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review,’ International Centre for Counter-Terrorism - The Hague (ICCT), 2013. Available at: <https://www.icct.nl/download/file/ICCT-Schmid-Radicalisation-De-Radicalisation-Counter-Radicalisation-March-2013.pdf>.

³⁰⁶ Johansen 2018, p.19.

³⁰⁷ Cf. Hanif Qadir and his former approach ‘Not born radical’; URL: <https://www.activechangefoundation.org>; Cf. Käsehage 2018, pp. 477f.

religious authorities,³⁰⁸ peer-group members with street credibility, or highly-regarded individuals from local communities. The best PVE initiatives respond to actual needs by combining religious, social, psychological, academic, and criminological expertise. Such approaches ought to be based on a “living-together” approach³⁰⁹ that includes the “Good Lives Model” for everyone in society.³¹⁰

With regard to the various (non-)governmental approaches of prevention within the five countries that have been briefly discussed in this chapter, it might be wise to abandon the idea that it is possible to invent a *national Islam* (be it French or German) or a Euro-Islam. It should be accepted by Western democracies that religious affiliation and practice, freedom of thought, and belief is a private matter and a human right. The inalienable rights of religious freedom and freedom of speech should be granted to everyone, regardless of their religious affiliation. Conservative religiosity is not synonymous with fundamentalism nor is it linked to terrorism. Not every statement of young Muslims about ISIS should necessarily be seen as “real” sympathy for violence, but might just be a form of youth “rebellion” against their social environment.

In this context, we should also ask ourselves whether the term ‘Western Muslim Diasporas’ is not already a form of “othering,” implying that Muslims could never be “real” citizens of Western countries because their “real” loyalties lie elsewhere.³¹¹ The othering of Muslims who in their majority have become Western citizens makes them more vulnerable to radical recruiters. This vicious circle can only be interrupted by strengthening the national ties of citizens with Islamic roots towards their Western homelands and through the support of their feeling of belonging to a specific Western society. According to Yasmeen, “the underlying rationale for the strategy is not to implicate all Muslims as terrorists,”³¹² because this assumption “unintentionally perpetuates the myth of an antagonistic relationship between Islam and the West. The very act of identifying Muslims as the “other” that needs to be engaged creates the space for those who are predisposed to viewing Islam and Muslims in negative terms.”³¹³

Another term is also problematic: “Islamist.” It is widely used in the fields of P/CVE. On the face of it, “Islamist” seems to be a suitable description for radical, fundamentalist, extremist, and terrorist approaches associated with the religion Islam, because the term seems to cover all of this. However, the use of this term might actually support recruiters for radical Islamic movements because it associates an entire world religion with terrorist attacks and implicitly criminalizes all believers - although most of them would never dream of getting involved in violent extremism or perpetrate terrorist attacks themselves. Lawyer and Islamic theologian Hamideh Mohagheghi sees an implicit combination of crime and religion in the term “Islamist,” one that is

³⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 468.

³⁰⁹ This approach supports a diverse range of religions, cultures and life-models that are living together in harmony. See, for instance: Bérubé, Maxime, *Implementing Montreal's Centre for the prevention of radicalization leading to violence: Insights from the 2015 TSAS Summer Academy*. Université de Montréal, October 2015.

³¹⁰ The “Good Lives Model” assumes that the main aim of an individual is to live a good life without major problems. Therefore, every society should enable citizens to achieve this and thereby avoid being attracted to negative goals. See Marsden 2016.

³¹¹ Doyle, Natalie J. ‘Islam, depoliticisation and the European crisis of democratic legitimacy.’ *Politics, Religion & Ideology* 14(2), 2013, p. 265.

³¹² Yasmeen 2005, p. 38.

³¹³ Nasser-Eddine et al. 2011, p. 65.

negatively influencing public perception of a particular religion.³¹⁴ One wonders why such a link between a crime and a religious affiliation is not applied to acts of terrorism perpetrated by members of other religions, such as Christianity. In the US, a number of perpetrators of terrorist acts have been Christian fundamentalists, but nobody calls this phenomenon “Christianism” or their attacks “Christianistic.”

Within Europe, there is no common *legal* understanding of radicalization and extremism. This has led to diverse penalties for those considered radicalized and extremists. This has social and political consequences, such as when it comes to the “resocialization” of “formers” into their societies. For this as well as for other reasons, and in accordance with the EU’s “External Action on Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism” from June 2020, the cooperation between the different (EU) countries regarding the internal and external dimensions of counterterrorism and prevention should be strengthened in order to build more effective synergies between these countries.³¹⁵ It might be wise to consider the implementation of “uniform” PVE strategies and laws on (at least) a European level. By following a common strategy, without “regional or local exceptions,” the (sometimes) misleading approaches and effects that result from dissimilar P/CVE approaches could be avoided and the positive effects of PVE measures in each country could be increased. This would be in line with a recent recommendation of the Council of the European Union regarding the use of strategic communication “to enhance EU efforts to prevent terrorism and violent extremism” and to “contribute to national and regional efforts to address terrorism and curtail the radicalisation and recruitment that bolster extremist groups.”³¹⁶

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³¹⁴ Mohagheghi, Hamideh, *Frauen für den Dschihad. Das Manifest der IS-Kämpferinnen*. [Women for Jihad The manifesto of the IS fighters] Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2015, p. 8.

³¹⁵ Council of European Union 2020, p. 16.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

Appendix: Seven Recommendations

Based on the research of the PVE strategies within the selected five European countries of this chapter and the author's own experiences in the field of prevention of jihadist radicalization, the following recommendations are offered with regard to the improvement of the effectiveness of future prevention of radicalization efforts and existing PVE approaches:

1. Resilience Assessment Tools

With regard to the debate of the possible repatriation of former foreign fighters and other returnees such as children, it might be wise to develop Resilience Assessment Tools for first- and second-line practitioners e.g., probation, social and youth workers, teachers, university lecturers who have to deal with vulnerable individuals in order to prevent recidivism to the jihadist milieu.³¹⁷

In addition, Resilience Assessment Tools have to be developed in a multi-disciplinary collaboration of religious scientists, law enforcement agencies, criminologists, and ethnologists with regard to the specific needs of the vulnerable returning groups.³¹⁸ According to Orla Lynch, “trauma training should be a key component for interventionists/practitioners. This should involve a self-care component as well as awareness of trauma in clients.”³¹⁹

Currently, insufficient psychological support is provided to former foreign fighters and returnees in Europe.³²⁰ In addition, there is a shortage of polyglot therapists who are aware of the specific radicalization content and the experiences of the members of jihadist groups. Therefore, it might be helpful for the reintegration of these individuals into their society to provide therapists who are able to talk to their clients in their mother tongues in order to provide a secure climate of communication.

Furthermore, it must be guaranteed that only female therapists will talk to female individuals who experienced violence by men, or refuse to talk to male therapists for religious reasons. The provision of specific therapies for traumatized children with a parental background of religious extremism is also essential.

The Resilience Assessment Tools could be used e.g., in terms of the evaluation³²¹ of reintegration programs for former foreign fighters, returnees and their children, in order

³¹⁷ Käsehage 2018, pp. 478f.

³¹⁸ Cf. RAN and H&SC, Ex post paper, ‘PTSD, trauma, stress and the risk of (re)turning to violence,’ RAN and H&SC, 10-11 April 2018/2. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/ran_h-sc_ptsd_trauma_stress_risk_re-turning_violence_lisbon_10-11_04_2018_en.pdf; Cf. also Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), ‘Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Training for first-line practitioners,’ RAN, 2018/3. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-best-practices/docs/training_for_first_line_practitioners_en.pdf accessed on June 28, 2020.

³¹⁹ Lynch 2018, p. 9.

³²⁰ In this context, one should be aware of the negative experiences that resulted from insufficient treatment of post-traumatic-stress disorders (PTSD) of combat veterans. Cf. Sayer et al., ‘Reintegration problems and treatment interests among Iraq and Afghanistan combat veterans receiving VA medical care,’ *Psychiatric Services*. 61(6) June 2010 pp. 589-597.

³²¹ Cf. Ulrich et al. 2020, pp. 16-19.

to assess their effectiveness and sustainability and to recommend modifications, if necessary.³²²

2. Create Support Groups for Formers and Returnees

Apart from psychological, pedagogical, and law enforcement approaches regarding formers and returnees, the development of support groups – led by repatriated and re-socialized formers or returnees – can be seen as an authentic approach to get in touch with these vulnerable persons and make sure that they feel understood.³²³ In contrast to professional support situations with clearly defined roles such as “therapists” and “clients”, a low threshold connection between individuals who experienced similar radicalization processes or experienced fascination for violence themselves, could enable formers and returnees to open up, exchange information with each other on their daily frustrations and experiences, and talk about their fear of recidivism due to their ongoing links with their previous networks. Such support groups for formers and returnees are important and well-suited for the prevention of re-radicalization.

3. Support Groups for Parents and Siblings of Radicalized Individuals

There is also a need for the establishment of support groups for parents and siblings of (former) radicals in order to empower these, both for themselves as well as for their brothers, sisters and children. In contrast to family counselling that is often led by professionals or experts in these fields, this approach may be more likely to be successful if it could provide a “private sphere” or “protected places” for parents and siblings of radicalized individuals. There they could find some respite away from media attention, to exchange information, if they want to, and find others who experienced the same as they did.³²⁴ From this author’s perspective, this concept is comparable to the Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) groups where churches or public buildings provide places for AA to meet and where they can find a mentor who has “recovered.”

4. Invest in Family Counselling

According to Koehler, “family matters far more in de-radicalization and counter-terrorism work than typically realized. (...) The social environment and within it more specifically close friends and family, is arguably one of the spaces in which violent radicalization takes place and becomes visible in early stages.”³²⁵ According to one study on lone actor terrorists, family as well as friends recognized the future perpetrator’s increasing interest in terrorism “in 63.9% of the cases because the offender verbally told them.”³²⁶ With regard to future PVE approaches in the field of jihadist radicalization, family counselling programs could be very useful for “pre-radicals,” because the family as a social unit and the internal family dynamics and individual

³²² Cf. Scarcella et al. ‘Terrorism, radicalisation, extremism, authoritarianism and fundamentalism: a systematic review of the quality and psychometric properties of assessments,’ *PLoS One*, 11(12), 2016. Available at: <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0166947>

³²³ Käsehage 2018, pp. 479f.

³²⁴ See Koehler and Ehrh 2018.

³²⁵ Koehler 2015a, p. 129.

³²⁶ Gill, Horgan, and Deckert 2014, p. 429.

driving forces behind violent radicalization can be visualized and targeted.³²⁷ In compliance with Koehler's recommendations, various quality standards,³²⁸ should be introduced for family counselling programs in the PVE environment.³²⁹ Furthermore, families should be treated "as partners in early prevention and even intervention work" and "not be seen as a source of intelligence and information for the authorities."³³⁰

5. Research on the Physical and Mental Health Impacts of Prevention Programs on their Clients

As has been pointed out by Aked, this area is seen as "chronically under-studied" and needs "further evidence," especially with regard "to people with mental health conditions, [...], BAME [Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic] groups, and children and young people."³³¹ It might be useful to adopt a strategy of "proportionate universalism"³³² instead of focusing on specific individuals and to avoid the pathologization as well as discrimination against certain groups. In addition, funding for research on prevention programs appears to be a good step towards a more effective strategy based on justice and equality.

6. Greater Awareness of the Terminology in PVE Programs

With regard to PVE programs and projects, appropriate terminology is crucial. Currently, it seems to be quite "trendy" to integrate the term "religious related extremism" in the title of PVE approaches. Several projects have been funded that include this terminology. Critics from the Muslim community point out that "religious related extremism" is just a cloak for Islamic extremism. In fact, a large number of these projects cannot hide the fact that their main interest lies in countering Islamic radicalization and they are solely interacting with Muslim communities but not with any other religious community. One example of this practice is the German federal government's working committee *Religious Related Extremism (BAG RelEx)*, that was established in 2016 as an association with 26 civil society partners. In 2018, it still concentrated on Islamic-related extremism."³³³ This exclusive focus raises suspicions within the Muslim communities. Some also fear potential cooperation of these PVE approaches with security services, e.g., in terms of providing personal data from members of Muslim communities or groups.

³²⁷ Koehler 2015a, p. 133; See Horgan 2008 and 2009.

³²⁸ Cf. Koehler, Daniel, 'Family Counselling as Prevention and Intervention Tool Against 'Foreign Fighters' The German Hayat Program,' *JEX Journal EXIT-Deutschland. Zeitschrift für Deradikalisierung und demokratische Kultur*, 3, 2013, pp. 182-204; Cf. Koehler, Daniel 'Contrast Societies. Radical Social Movements and their relationships with their target societies. A theoretical model,' *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, 2014, pp. 1-17. See Koehler 2015b.

³²⁹ Koehler, 2015a, p. 134.

³³⁰ Ibid., p. 133.

³³¹ Aked 2020, p. 65.

³³² Ibid. This term indicates a broader approach of the study in terms of patients affected by physical or mental health issues in an appropriate relation to its appearance.

³³³ Hamm, Rudiger Jose, 'Prävention im Bereich des religiös begründeten Extremismus: Herausforderungen für zivilgesellschaftliche Träger Prevention in the area of religious extremism: Challenges for civil society organizations]; in: Erich Marks (ed.), *Gewalt und Radikalität [Violence and Radicalism]. Ausgewählte Beiträge des Deutschen Präventionstages*, 11 - 12 June, Dresden, 2018, p. 253.

7. The Integration of Quietist Salafi Preachers in PVE Approaches

In Germany, another gap in the field of prevention of radicalization is the refusal of governmental PVE approaches to integrate Quietist preachers from the Salafi milieu in prevention projects. In the view of this author, this is short-sighted. This author found that a number of quietist/puristic Salafist preachers they interviewed did very good prevention work in their local environment, managing to dissuade a number of ISIS-sympathizers who wanted to become foreign fighters in Syria, thanks to their religious reasoning skills. They were certainly more successful and more interested in the needs of young Muslim adults than many imams from other Muslim associations such as for instance The Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DITIB), the largest Islamic Union in Germany, controlled by the powerful Turkish authority for religious affairs Diyanet, that “services” more than 900 communities and affiliates in Germany. Based on the author’s own experiences with many Quietist preachers, they would recommend their integration into PVE approaches, because they are often more aware of the specific needs of the target groups who are at risk for jihadism than anyone else, but deny violence as “un-Islamic” themselves.

The decision to include puristic Salafist preachers within prevention or de-radicalization work should certainly be decided on a case-by-case basis. With regard to this decision, Western societies should keep in mind that these preachers have great knowledge of Islam that could be very helpful in view of theological “debates” with radicalized individuals. The puristic Salafist preachers wouldn’t need a specific religious education, because they are already familiar with Islamic theology and sources – although their interpretation can certainly not be seen as “liberal.” But for the first step: avoiding teenager’s and (young) adult’s death in the name of Islam, most of the puristic Salafist preachers could be seen as strong partners, because they see jihadist movements such as ISIS as evil and describe them as anti-Islamic, due to ISIS’ focus on violence and “wrong” Islamic sources.

In addition, the trust of governmental P/CVE approaches in the work and the respect in terms of the Islamic knowledge of puristic Salafist preachers could turn them into strong allies of the Western societies and divide them from jihadist Salafist preachers. That is important, because the puristic Salafist preachers are often threatened themselves physically by jihadist Salafist preachers and their followers, because – in contrast to the jihadist Salafist preachers - they stand up against violence in the name of Islam. Though this peaceful attitude of the puristic Salafist preachers is often not visible to the public, it would become visible by official acceptance by the government which would support the daily prevention work of these Salafist preachers. Based on this author’s field-research within nine European countries, they are aware of the fact that various puristic Salafist preachers try to achieve respect for their prevention work within so called “secular” mosques whose imams they often support in terms of “de-radicalization.” In reality, they often don’t receive any personal or monetary credits for their Islamic “de-radicalization” and prevention work. This disrespect frustrates them a lot. If the governmental P/CVE approaches officially included the puristic Salafist preachers in their programmes, this would on the one hand strengthen their own bond to Western societies and values. On the other hand, this feeling of governmental respect and belonging to a “good cause” would surely be transferred into the P/CVE work of puristic Salafist preachers and the vicious circle of Muslim or Islam related discrimination - as one of the major motives for radicalization in Western societies - could be interrupted.

Therefore, the integration of puristic Salafist preachers into governmental P/CVE approaches could be seen as valuable for both youth at risk and Western societies as a whole.

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Web-Resources

In the following, a selection of web-resources with regard to the *Prevention of Radicalization in Western Muslim Diasporas* is listed.

- Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization leading to Violence (CPRLV)
Available at: <https://info-radical.org/en/>
- Combating Terrorism Center (CTC) at Westpoint
Available at: <https://ctc.usma.edu/>
- Council of Europe (HELP Radicalisation Prevention)
Available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/help/help-radicalisation-prevention1>
- Counter Terrorism Group (CTG)
Available at: <https://www.counterterrorismgroup.com/>
- DERAD (European project towards the prevention of the escalation of radicalization in the prison)
Available at: <https://www.agenformedia.com/international-projects/derad>
- FHAR (Hybrid Training with Religious Community Leaders)
Available at: <https://initiatives.asso.fr/faculte-libre-detudes-politiques-economie-solidaire/formations-hybrides-avec-des-acteurs-religieux-fhar/>
- German Congress on Crime Prevention (GCOP)
Available at: <https://www.gcop.org/>
- Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF)
Available at: <https://www.thegctf.org/HERMES>
Available at: <https://www.traininghermes.eu>
- International Crisis Group (ICG)
Available at : <https://www.crisisgroup.org>
- International Centre for Counter-Terrorism - The Hague (ICCT)
Available at: <https://icct.nl/>
- International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence (ICRS) Available at: <https://icsr.info>
- (European) Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)
Available at:
https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network_en
- PHAROS
Available at: <https://www.internet-signalement.gouv.fr/PortailWeb/planets/Accueil!input.action>
- START (Global Terrorism Database)
Available at: <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>
- Youth Counselling Against Radicalisation (YCARE)
Available at: <https://www.ycare.eu>