



The role of civil society organisations in exit work

Authored by **Susanna Z. Papp, Robert Örell, RAN Expert Pool Members & Katharina Meredith, Katerina Papatheodorou, Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh, Helena Brecht, RAN External Experts**

Radicalisation Awareness Network



The role of civil society organisations in exit work

LEGAL NOTICE

This document has been prepared for the European Commission however it reflects the views only of the authors, and the European Commission is not liable for any consequence stemming from the reuse of this publication. More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (<http://www.europa.eu>).

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2022

© European Union, 2022



The reuse policy of European Commission documents is implemented by the Commission Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents (OJ L 330, 14.12.2011, p. 39). Except otherwise noted, the reuse of this document is authorised under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC-BY 4.0) licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). This means that reuse is allowed provided appropriate credit is given and any changes are indicated.

For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the European Union, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective rightholders.

I. Introduction

In recent years, the importance of multi-agency work and collaboration between governments and civil society in exit work has increased significantly. With a growing number of exit programmes in Europe aiming to deradicalise individuals, prevent criminal offences and promote rehabilitation and reintegration into society, the awareness of exit work collaboration has grown. In several European Union (EU) countries, partnerships have extended to different government stakeholders (like prison and probation services, police and other municipal authorities) working with civil society organisations (CSOs) to design and co-implement sustainable exit programmes. In key areas of rehabilitation and reintegration work, both inside and outside prison, governments are making increasing use of the evaluated expertise, skills and knowledge provided by CSOs. The need to strengthen government collaboration with civil society in the context of exit work has been highlighted in the European Commission's 'Strategic orientations on a coordinated EU approach to prevention of radicalisation for 2021.'

In recent years, the terms 'exit work' and 'tertiary radicalisation prevention' have become increasingly popular and relevant in the context of preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE). Following the rise of Daesh and the unprecedented mobilisation of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) to join its ranks in Iraq and Syria, countless organisations – both governmental and non-governmental – have focused on exit work and tertiary radicalisation prevention. However, neither are novel ideas. In fact, for years, countries worldwide and especially in Europe have been developing and implementing programmes to stop individuals from mobilising to violence and help them disengage from violent extremism. For example, in the 1980s and 1990s, European countries including Germany, Sweden and Norway focused on deradicalising and reintegrating violent right-wing extremists such as neo-Nazis and skinheads.¹ The late 1990s saw the signing of the Belfast Agreement (also known as the Good Friday Agreement), between the British and Northern Irish governments regarding the status of Northern Ireland. The accords included demilitarisation, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) schemes for violent political actors such as the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and Loyalist extremists.² These efforts were essentially exit programmes helping violent political actors pull away from terrorism and extremism and successfully reintegrate into society.

Then, in 2001, al-Qaeda attacked the United States on 9/11 and carried out subsequent attacks in Madrid and London in 2004 and 2005, respectively. Apart from resulting in thousands of casualties, these attacks also profoundly affected counterterrorism, which became focused primarily on the threat emanating from jihadist terrorism. With the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011 and with Daesh declaring a caliphate in Iraq and Syria in 2014, the world saw a mass mobilisation of violent extremists to the war-torn region as well as the launching of attacks across Europe. Governments around the world came under pressure to develop and implement responses to the threat posed by returned and radicalised combatants.³ In 2014, the United Nations Security Council urged Member States to establish rehabilitation and reintegration measures for returning FTFs.⁴ The same year, the *Revised EU Counter Terrorism Strategy* recommended that Member States 'consider designing and developing disengagement and exit strategies adapted to the culture and the specific context'.⁵

Since then, deradicalisation and exit programmes have become an important feature of many national as well as European and international counterterrorism strategies.⁶ Several governments have established

¹ Koehler, 2020.

² Rolston, 2007.

³ Koehler, 2020 p. 3.

⁴ United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2178 (S/RES/2178 (2014)).

⁵ Council of the European Union, 2014 p. 11.

⁶ Koehler, 2020. The list of Member States' PCVE strategies is compiled at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/policies/internal-security/counter-terrorism-and-radicalisation/prevention-radicalisation/prevent-strategies-member-states_en online.

deradicalisation programmes that have been implemented primarily in the context of the criminal justice system (for example in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom).⁷ Initiatives have also been set up to facilitate the reintegration of returning FTFs.⁸ Parallel to these advancements, CSOs have responded with developments in the P/CVE field. The spread of state- and CSO-led initiatives in Europe led to the establishment in 2011 of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) by the European Commission.⁹

Despite these advancements, a number of **challenges** remain. The internet has changed the methods and modus operandi of violent extremist groups as well as the way individuals become radicalised. Extremist groups are more active online, using virtual platforms to spread extremist propaganda, recruit and plan attacks. The European Commission's strategic orientations for 2021 have prioritised the online dimension, to support 'policy makers and practitioners in developing their strategic communication capabilities through exchange of expertise and empowering civil society, grass roots organisations and credible voices.'¹⁰

Additionally, multiple Member States face challenges posed by returning FTFs and their families. According to the Egmont Institute, approximately 5 300 EU nationals (chiefly French, German and Belgian citizens¹¹) left their home countries to join Daesh and other militant groups in Iraq or Syria.¹² The European Commission has identified 'inter-European dialogue on prosecuting, reintegrating and/or repatriating FTFs and their families as a key area where further work is needed.'¹³ In particular, the integration of returning children and women requires special attention.

Prison and probation also pose specific challenges. Firstly, the number of terrorist inmates has risen rapidly in the past 10 years.¹⁴ The high case volume in prisons calls for a more systemic approach to issues of risk assessment, rehabilitation and reintegration.¹⁵ Secondly, terrorist offenders serve a wider range of prison sentences, many of them relatively short term.¹⁶ In such cases, the criminal justice system has a limited window of opportunity to affect the process of change.¹⁷ Thirdly, the background of terrorist inmates has diversified, featuring two significant trends: the rising number of right-wing extremist offenders, and the increase in female Islamist perpetrators.¹⁸ Understanding and managing the risks and needs of these diverse prisoner populations throughout the entire detention – prison – and probation continuum is key for successful prevention of recidivism and reintegration.

Exit work in several Member States relies on **collaboration with CSOs**. There is, however, a scarcity in the research and systemic documentation of CSO practices and cooperation forms. The main sources of information are evaluation reports, the RAN database and collection of practices,¹⁹ and some qualitative research.²⁰ Recently published academic typologies of exit approaches²¹ as well as a handbook on the

⁷ Koehler, 2017a.

⁸ See, for example, the work of returnee coordinators in Germany at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran/publications/ran-digital-study-visit-returnee-coordinators-germany-visit-hesse-and-berlin-23-24-june-2020_en online.

⁹ See https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran_en online.

¹⁰ European Commission, 2021 pp. 2-3.

¹¹ See https://www.epc.eu/content/PDF/2020/Foreign_Fighters_DP_v5.pdf online.

¹² See <https://www.egmontinstitute.be/new-figures-on-european-nationals-detained-in-syria-and-iraq/> online.

¹³ European Commission, 2021 p. 6.

¹⁴ Basra & Neumann, 2020.

¹⁵ Basra & Neumann, 2020.

¹⁶ Basra & Neumann, 2020.

¹⁷ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2019 p.5.

¹⁸ Basra and Neumann, 2020.

¹⁹ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2019.

²⁰ For example, Christensen, 2015, 2019; and Costa et al., 2021.

²¹ For example, Koehler, 2017a; Webber et al., 2019.

quality standards of exit work for CSOs²² and the RAN *Rehabilitation Manual*²³ constitute important advancements in the field. The high number of practitioner workshops organised by RAN on exit work also point to an enhanced need for and interest in knowledge exchange. In its 2021 strategic orientations, the Commission identified the importance of consolidating learning on what is required for a fruitful and safe collaboration between CSOs and the state, in exit and reintegration work.²⁴ This paper contributes to the existing body of work facilitating cooperation between CSOs, state agencies and policymakers.

The objectives of the paper are:

- to provide a comprehensive overview of the different functions and characteristics of CSO-led exit interventions in the EU;
- to review areas and forms of cooperation between CSOs and state agencies in exit work;
- to summarise challenges, lessons learned and inspiring practices regarding cooperation with state actors, from the perspective of experienced first-line exit practitioners.

The paper contains five chapters. Following the introduction (Chapter I), Chapter II presents selected examples of CSO-led exit interventions, showcasing the different pathways taken by CSOs implementing exit work in different contexts. Chapter III provides a typology of the various roles and functions CSOs fulfil in tertiary radicalisation prevention. Three core functions are discussed: stand-alone exit interventions, exit support services and family support services. Chapter IV focuses in greater detail on aspects of cooperation between exit work-implementing CSOs and state agencies. It discusses areas and forms of cooperation, highlighting challenges and lessons learned as well as inspiring practices in the following fields: (1) policy formulation, (2) funding and sustainability, (3) capacity-building and knowledge exchange, (4) case referral, (5) case management, (6) post-release reintegration, and (7) cooperation in security-relevant cases. Lastly, Chapter V provides recommendations to policymakers, state agencies and CSOs.

Regarding **methodology**, this paper combines a literature review with primary data collected in the form of interviews and a survey. Interviews were conducted in September and October 2021 with representatives of eight CSOs carrying out exit work. These organisations were selected to represent a variety of geographical locations, implementation settings, length of operation, types of cooperation with the government, and ideological contexts of their primary target audience. Moreover, a questionnaire was distributed via email in September 2021 to an additional 17 exit work-implementing CSOs, 7 of whom responded (response rate: 42 %). The interviews and survey contained questions about the organisation and its approach and activities, as well as the forms and experiences of cooperation with government. Overall, 15 organisations implementing 27 exit interventions from 9 countries (Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, and Sweden) are represented in the combined (interview and survey) data collection. The paper further builds on insights from previous RAN activities on exit and related topics.

Definitions

Civil society organisation (CSO): ‘A civil society organisation (CSO) or non-governmental organisation (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens’ group which is organised on a local, national or international level.’²⁵ They are ‘non-State, not-for-profit, voluntary entities formed by people in the social sphere that are separate from the State and the market.’²⁶ They often operate in social, humanitarian or political causes. CSOs differ from civil society, in that civil society comprises not only NGOs but also ‘actors, communities, and formal or informal associations with a wide range of roles, that [engage] in public life seeking to advance shared values and objectives.’²⁷

²⁵ United Nations. *Civil Society. Who we are*. See <https://www.un.org/en/civil-society/page/about-us> online.

The terms CSO and non-governmental organisation are used interchangeably. In this paper, the term CSO will be used.

Exit work refers to practices and approaches that ‘provide support to individuals wishing to leave a violent extremist group and/or to abstain from radical thoughts.’²⁸ The goals of exit interventions may include facilitating disengagement, deradicalisation, rehabilitation and reintegration of violent extremists.

Participants in exit interventions can be individuals currently involved in violent extremist environments and/or in terrorism-related activities; individuals who have attempted to travel to war zones to join militant extremist groups and returning FTFs; and individuals who have been radicalised in prison as well as those who have made the decision to leave the extremist environment and seek help with disengagement and/or reintegration. The terms participant, client and beneficiary are commonly used to refer to individuals participating in an exit intervention. The term client is commonly used by CSOs to emphasise the voluntary nature of the relationship between the two parties defined as client and service provider.²⁹ Beneficiary is a term used to refer to exit participants mandated by the court or prison to participate.

Tertiary radicalisation prevention entails targeted interventions to those already involved in radicalised environments and violent extremism, to motivate change and to support their exit from violent extremism. The focus of such interventions may be on disengagement, deradicalisation, rehabilitation or reintegration, or a combination of these. Tertiary radicalisation prevention also includes interventions offered to concerned individuals (e.g. relatives and professionals) who are in contact with radicalised individuals and seek advice.

Violent extremists are individuals who support ideas and/or are involved with groups or movements promoting violent means to enforce an extremist ideology. Violent extremism refers to ‘the beliefs and actions of people who support or use violence to achieve ideological, religious or political goals’.³⁰ This can include terrorism and other forms of politically motivated violence.³¹

II. CSOs in exit work in the EU: Different paths in different contexts

CSO-led exit interventions in the EU have become established in a variety of ways. This section presents selected examples to showcase the various trajectories of CSOs implementing exit work in different contexts.

While in-depth analysis of the historical country contexts exceeds the scope of this paper, examples of the establishment and operation of various CSO-led exit interventions are discussed from Scandinavia, Germany, the Netherlands and France. The first CSO-led exit programmes were established in **Scandinavia** as a response to the rise of violent right-wing extremism. The 1990s saw a surge in xenophobic violence and

²³ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2020a.

²⁴ European Commission, 2021 p. 5.

²⁵ United Nations. *Civil Society. Who we are*. See <https://www.un.org/en/civil-society/page/about-us> online.

²⁶ UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework. *Civil society organisations (CSOs)*. See <https://www.ungpreporting.org/glossary/civil-society-organizations-csos/> online.

²⁷ OSCE, 2020 p. 6.

²⁸ van de Donk et al., 2020 p. 28.

²⁹ See, for example, the *RAN Rehabilitation Manual* (2020).

³⁰ UNODC. *The Doha Declaration: Promoting a culture of lawfulness* (2018). See <https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/terrorism/module-2/key-issues/radicalization-violent-extremism.html> online.

³¹ Ibid.

a rapid rise in young people joining racist and right-wing extremist groups and organisations in many European countries.³² Participation in violent acts in these groups was common, sometimes even expected.³³ Research in Norway showed that many of the young people who formed part of these movements found it extremely difficult to disengage, due to fear of retaliation by former group members, societal stigmatisation, and difficulties finding acceptance elsewhere.³⁴ Despite the emerging need for support, child welfare agencies and youth workers were apprehensive about becoming involved with neo-Nazis, and tended to respond with fear and uncertainty when engaging with these young people.³⁵

The first CSO-led exit programme, **Exit Norway**, was established in Oslo in 1997, hosted by the CSO 'Adults for Children' (Voksne for Barn), to meet these challenges and needs expressed by youth workers, police officers, parents and several involved young people seeking help to disengage.³⁶ In its 3 years of operation as a government-funded pilot project, the initiative provided support for young people wanting to leave extremism, established a local parent-support network, trained 700 first-line practitioners and worked together with municipalities and other state agencies. The programme was discontinued after the third year due to lack of funding, but exit activities had become integrated into the work of municipalities and the police. Exit Norway has also inspired multiple organisations across Europe to create their own exit initiatives.

Exit Sweden was established in 1998 under the umbrella foundation Fryshuset, with similar goals but different implementation.³⁷ One of the key characteristics of the government-funded Swedish model is the prominent role of former right-wing extremists (also referred to as 'formers') both as staff and in the leadership of the organisation. This significantly increased the programme's credibility for the target group, but also posed challenges due to the lack of competence in organisational management and staff administration.³⁸ Its professionalisation began in 2002, when a therapist joined the group of formers, opening the path to standardisation of methods and processes. Since 2006, the programme has employed a multidisciplinary team of case workers including therapists, social educators and social workers who work alongside former members of neo-Nazi movements. The intervention offers psychosocial support and facilitates the reintegration of right-wing extremists. Since 2020, the programme has also provided support for returning FTFs. Similar exit programmes have since been established in several countries, for example in Germany (in 2000), the US (in 2015), Slovakia (in 2015), Poland (in 2018) and Finland (in 2020).³⁹

In **Germany**, the promotion of democracy and the prevention of radicalisation have been a major policy priority since WWII, something which is also reflected in the provision of government funds. As a result, numerous state- and CSO-led interventions have been established on all levels – primary, secondary and tertiary – of radicalisation prevention.⁴⁰ In Germany, the diverse landscape of violent right-wing, Islamist and left-wing environments presents a wide variety of exit needs. As a result, there is a diversity of state- and CSO-led exit practices and models responding to those needs. These practices often complement each other as regards their geographical scope, target audiences, types of services and methods used.

The first exit programme in the country was **Exit Germany**, established by the CSO Centre for Democratic Culture (ZDK, Gesellschaft Demokratische Kultur gGmbH). Similarly to Exit Sweden, this programme also

³² Bjørgero, van Donselaar, Grunenberg, 2009.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Fangen, 1995; Bjørgero, 2002 cited by Bjørgero, van Donselaar, Grunenberg, 2009.

³⁵ Bjørgero, van Donselaar, Grunenberg, 2009 p. 135.

³⁶ The information for this paragraph on Exit Norway is based on Bjørgero, van Donselaar, Grunenberg, 2009.

³⁷ Bjørgero, van Donselaar, Grunenberg, 2009.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ More exit-inspired pilot projects had been established that were short-lived: two in the Netherlands in 2007 and one in Finland (Radinet) in 2000.

⁴⁰ The Extremismuspräventionsatlas is an interactive database that catalogues both state- and CSO-led interventions operating on the primary, secondary and tertiary radicalisation prevention levels. See https://www.handbuch-extremismuspraevention.de/HEX/DE/Angebote/Angebote_suchen/angebote_suchen_node.html;jsessionid=3390D4A192116B47465CE68CA9520554.live602 online.

employs former right-wing extremists as case workers alongside other professionals. They offer psychosocial support as well as help with functional and social reintegration nationally to individuals wishing to leave right-wing extremist environments. In 2012, the CSO established a new intervention, Hayat Germany, to provide counselling services to family members of violent Islamist extremists. Later on, they began to offer support directly to violent Islamist extremists, as well.

In 2004, the CSO **Violence Prevention Network (VPN)** was founded to provide exit services to right-wing extremists. Today the CSO operates 10 regional offices and runs several prison programmes across the country.⁴¹ The CSO began to offer interventions to detained adult criminals with terrorist backgrounds in 2011, and in 2014 this work was systematically expanded to include returning FTFs and people highly radicalised in violent Islamist extremism. Having recognised the importance of gender-specific roles and structures in radicalisation, women and girls have also been part of the CSO's target group for several years.⁴² In 2015, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth commissioned the VPN to develop structural measures for deradicalisation in correctional facilities.⁴³ Since then, the VPN, together with other cooperating partners, has been 'coordinating the joint development of nationwide standards and quality criteria for radicalisation prevention and deradicalisation in correctional facilities and the probationary system.'⁴⁴ The nationwide training programmes have three focal points: (1) early detection/diagnosis of radicalisation, (2) prevention of radicalisation processes targeting young people in criminal detention, and (3) the initiation of and assistance in deradicalisation and disengagement processes.⁴⁵ Disengagement assistance services are implemented in penal facilities, young offender institutions, and offices of the Judicial Social Service (Ambulanter Justizsozialdienst) across Germany.

Another example of systemic cooperation between the German government and multiple CSOs in this field is the establishment of the Advice Centre on Radicalisation. After the first jihadist attack to have fatal consequences in Frankfurt in 2011, and in view of the increasing threat levels, the Federal Office of Migration and Refugees (BAMF, Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge) was commissioned to establish and operate 'a counselling centre for relatives of radicalised Muslims.'⁴⁶ As a result, the BAMF Advice Centre on Radicalisation was set up, officially opening with a toll-free, national helpline on 1 January 2012. Together with the helpline, a nationwide referral system was established, made up of a network of local CSO partners including the VPN and the ZDK. The helpline, operated by the government, is designed to have low entry thresholds and few bureaucratic needs. It provides basic information on matters such as radicalisation, Islamism, Salafism and jihadism, and their legal and criminal aspects. Importantly, one function of the helpline is to assess if a given case needs further secondary or tertiary prevention measures. If so, the case is referred to a qualified CSO partner operating in the same geographical area. This approach efficiently combines governmental and CSO resources to make early detection and needs assessment possible on a large scale, while also providing local, in-depth interventions to activate a deradicalisation process, if necessary.

In 2012 in **the Netherlands**, the first disengagement and deradicalisation programme, Terrorism Extremism Radicalisation (TER), was set up by the government to improve the reintegration of extremist offenders.⁴⁷ In 2014, however, due to the rise of the terrorism threat level in the country, an Action Programme for an Integral Approach to Jihadism was created that prescribed new measures declaring that 'all citizens affected must

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² See <https://violence-prevention-network.de/extremismus/deradikalisierung/?lang=en> online.

⁴³ See <https://violence-prevention-network.de/extremismus/intervention/?lang=en> online.

⁴⁴ See <https://violence-prevention-network.de/extremismus/intervention/?lang=en> online.

⁴⁵ See <https://violence-prevention-network.de/menschen/justizvollzug-bewaehrungshilfe/?lang=en> online.

⁴⁶ Order of the Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI) of 13 December 2011 cited by Uhlmann, 2017 p. 26.

⁴⁷ Van der Heide & Schuurman, 2018.

be able to count on support.¹⁴⁸ The goals behind the new measures were to provide exit support to individuals outside the criminal justice system as well as to help concerned individuals such as families with relatives planning to travel or having travelled to war zones. It was decided that ‘the most appropriate way to conduct this service was to separate it from government.’¹⁴⁹

As a result, the CSO Fier (‘Proud’) was selected and approached for cooperation. Fier is a national mental health provider with considerable expertise in the treatment of domestic violence, child abuse, honour-related violence, human trafficking, sexual violence and traumatisation of children and adults.⁵⁰ Fier was selected as the most suitable party for several reasons: it had experience of work at the intersection of the healthcare and security sectors; it had considerable expertise in providing mental health services to a wide range of population groups; it had a research department; and it had already operated under various government funding systems.⁵¹ The organisation was willing to take on the task and two units were created: the exit programme Forsa and the Family Support Centre.

The two departments were later incorporated into the **National Support Centre Against Extremism** (LSE, Landelijk Steunpunt Extremisme) that operates as a department in Fier. The Family Support Centre offers advice on dealing with radicalised or radicalising family members, while Forsa provides disengagement and deradicalisation assistance nationwide.⁵² The majority of participants in the exit programme are referred by municipalities or directly from (families of) citizens engaged in extremism.⁵³ Individuals in prison can also participate in the exit programme. The difference for the latter participants compared to the state-led TER programme is that the LSE operates on the basis of voluntary participation, which means that clients are not assigned mandatory oversight by a judge, as is the case with TER.⁵⁴

France has traditionally taken a security-centred approach to the fight against terrorism.⁵⁵ As the country started to see a dramatic increase in the number of terrorist offenders, it began to explore the possibilities of establishing disengagement programmes within prisons and on probation. In 2020, 558 prisoners were in custody for terrorist-related offences (93.5 % of them being jihadists),⁵⁶ and about 120 radicalised and terrorist offenders were released between 2019 and 2021.⁵⁷ Another 130 are expected to be released by 2024.⁵⁸ An additional challenge is posed by the wider range of prison sentences.⁵⁹ With a large share of short-term sentences, the criminal justice system has a limited window of opportunity to affect the process of change. To address these challenges systemically, the French prison administration put in place a new radicalisation risk management process and multidisciplinary intervention programme in prison.⁶⁰ In parallel, the government also explored the possibility of creating interventions to support post-release reintegration. In 2016, an experimental programme called Research and Intervention on Extremist Violence (RIVE) was launched in Paris. After the project period ended, a new tender was put out by the government to continue,

⁴⁸ Andersson Elffers Felix, 2018 p. 10. See <https://www.landelijksteunpuntextremisme.nl/mediadepot/1702325ce56c/EvaluationofForsaandtheFamilySupportCentre.pdf> online.

⁴⁹ Andersson Elffers Felix, 2018 p. 8. See <https://www.landelijksteunpuntextremisme.nl/mediadepot/1702325ce56c/EvaluationofForsaandtheFamilySupportCentre.pdf> online.

⁵⁰ See <https://www.fier.nl/over-fier> online.

⁵¹ Andersson Elffers Felix, 2018 p. 8. See <https://www.landelijksteunpuntextremisme.nl/mediadepot/1702325ce56c/EvaluationofForsaandtheFamilySupportCentre.pdf> online.

⁵² Van der Heide & Schuurman, 2018.

⁵³ Van der Heide & Schuurman, 2018.

⁵⁴ Van der Heide & Schuurman, 2018.

⁵⁵ Hecker, 2021.

⁵⁶ Basra and Neumann, 2020.

⁵⁷ The Radicalisation Awareness Network (2022) cites figures provided by the French Ministry of Justice.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Basra and Neuman, 2020.

⁶⁰ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2022.

expand and further improve the provision of post-release services. The tender was won by two CSOs, Artemis and Groupe SOS Solidarités, that joined forces to create the **Individualised Support and Social Reaffiliation Programme (PAIRS programme)**⁶¹ in partnership with the prison administration in 2018.

Groupe SOS Solidarités is an umbrella organisation that employs 21 500 people in 600 member organisations.⁶² It is a large social enterprise with 35 years of experience fighting social inequalities (addiction, homelessness, disability, child protection, youth care, health, digital illiteracy, etc.). Artemis is an organisation that develops and runs educational projects to tackle radicalisation, foster dialogue between cultures, fight prejudice and deconstruct conspiracy theories.⁶³

The PAIRS programme was established as a government-funded, 3-year pilot project, with a centre opened in Paris and Marseille in 2018, and subsequently in Lyon and Lille in 2019. The main focus of the intervention is to provide long-term support with post-release reintegration to terrorist and radicalised offenders on probation. The programme employs an individualised, multidisciplinary approach, offering a 20-hour-per-week intervention for up to 1 to 1.5 years, and combining individual and group activities. The programme has three pillars: psychological support, religious mediation and functional reintegration measures. The intervention is seen as a complementary service to the prison and probation programmes, and the implementing CSOs are considered partners working towards the same goal.⁶⁴

These **selected examples** show that CSOs play different roles in exit work in diverse contexts. Some CSOs established their intervention programme using a bottom-up approach, recognising and responding to a challenge that emerged in their communities (e.g. Exit Sweden, Exit Germany, Exit Slovakia, and the Finnish Exit 2020). These programmes are able to respond to the needs of violent extremist individuals who are often reluctant to turn to state agencies for support. Additionally, these CSOs also provide counselling services for concerned family members.

More recently, as governments recognise the importance of exit services, examples of top-down interventions are growing. Governments can commission CSOs to develop and operate exit programmes within prison (e.g. the VPN's and the LSE's prison interventions), or on probation to facilitate reintegration (e.g. PAIRS). They can also contract CSOs to provide services outside the criminal justice system, to radicalised individuals and to concerned family members (e.g. the LSE's Forsa programme and Family Support Centre). In these settings, the work of CSOs complements government services, bridging knowledge and capacity gaps by providing specialised expertise and skills in tertiary radicalisation prevention.

III. The role of CSOs in tertiary radicalisation prevention: a typology

Tertiary radicalisation prevention entails providing targeted interventions to those already involved in radicalised environments and violent extremism, with the goal to motivate change and support their exit process. The focus of these interventions may be disengagement, deradicalisation, rehabilitation or (social and functional) reintegration, or a combination of these. In several Member States, CSOs operate in the field of tertiary radicalisation prevention. They may be embedded in a country's broader set of P/CVE architecture

⁶¹ Programme d'Accompagnement Individualisé et de Réaffiliation Sociale (PAIRS).

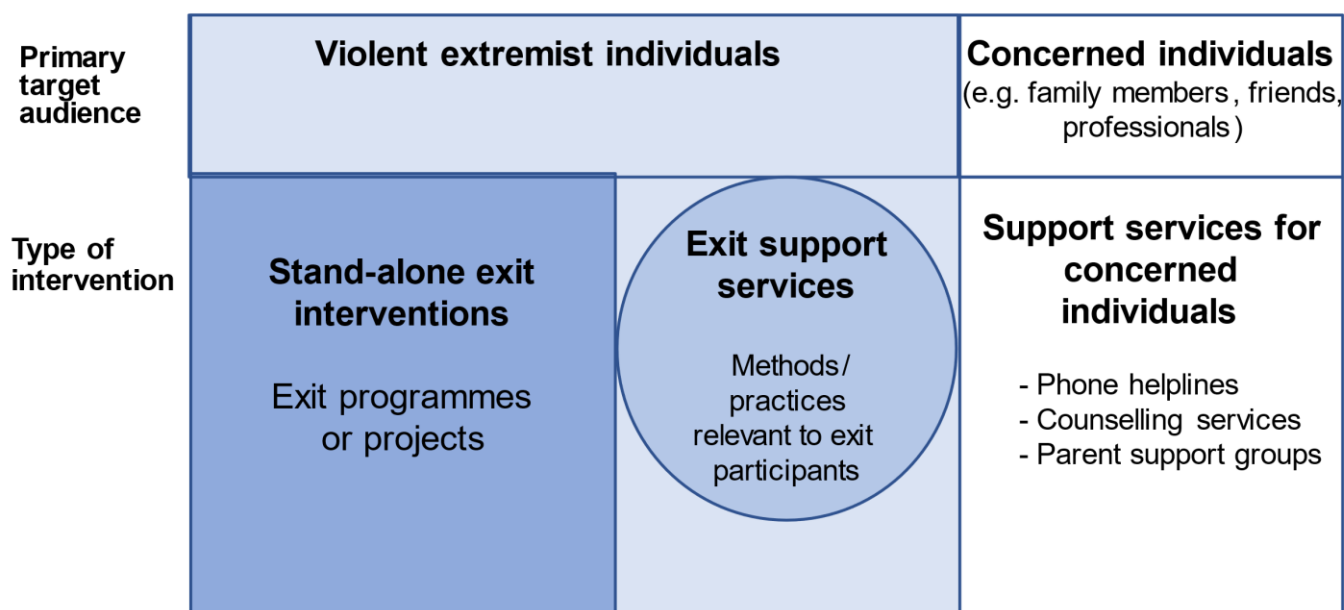
⁶² Information about the organisation is taken from their website: see <https://www.groupe-sos.org/le-groupe/qui-sommes-nous/> online.

⁶³ See <https://www.association-artemis.com/qui-sommes-nous/> online.

⁶⁴ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2022.

in a variety of ways. Figure 1 presents a typology⁶⁵ of the roles CSOs play in tertiary radicalisation prevention, based on the primary target audience of their services and the type of intervention provided.

Figure 1: Typology of CSO roles in tertiary radicalisation prevention in the EU⁶⁶



The primary target audience of a CSO-led intervention in tertiary prevention may be violent extremist individuals or concerned individuals such as relatives, friends or professionals worried about radicalised or radicalising persons. The interventions CSOs offer to violent extremists can be categorised as stand-alone exit interventions and exit support services. For concerned individuals, CSOs provide phone helplines, counselling services or support groups. These different types of interventions are discussed in greater detail in the following sections.

CSO-led stand-alone exit interventions

A large part of the exit services aimed at violent extremist individuals take the form of stand-alone⁶⁷ exit interventions, as shown in Figure 1. The interventions discussed in this section refer to stand-alone exit programmes or projects. A **programme** is defined as ‘a ready-made “package” of know-how, concepts and measures and an organisational structure which can be implemented locally’⁶⁸ and is reproducible. A **project** is defined as a ‘stand-alone initiative established to solve a specific problem’⁶⁹ and ‘may be inspired by ideas, methods and aspects of other projects, and is put together as the organisations see fit.’⁷⁰

One key difference between the two interventions is that projects are usually time limited. They are set up as a pilot, to observe how the intervention works and whether it matches the needs of the target audience. At the end of the project period, an evaluation is carried out that helps determine if the project should continue and/or if modifications are needed. Stand-alone exit interventions have the objective(s) to disengage and/or deradicalise and/or reintegrate violent extremist individuals or those who have made the decision to leave

⁶⁵ The typology is based on Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2017; Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2019.

⁶⁶ The typology is based on Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2017; Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2019.

⁶⁷ The term has been used by Koehler, 2020 and Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2017 p. 2.

⁶⁸ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2017 p. 2.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

(or have already left) the extremist environment and seek help. As shown in Figure 2, CSO-led exit interventions have been identified in 10 of the 27 EU Member States, namely Belgium, Germany, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden.⁷¹

Figure 2: EU Member States with CSO-led exit interventions⁷²



Legend

- Blue:** EU countries with CSO-led exit interventions
- Dark grey:** EU Member States where no CSO-led exit interventions have been identified
- Light grey:** Non-EU countries

In 7 of the 10 countries, one CSO-led exit intervention is known to be operating.⁷³ In Austria and Finland, two CSO-led exit programmes were identified. In Germany, over 20 CSOs are estimated to operate more than 30 programmes.⁷⁴ Regarding the geographical scope of their operations, CSOs work with participants at local, regional and national level. Some CSOs work internationally. For example, the Centre of Expertise and Advice for Prevention and Intervention of Radicalism and Extremism (CEAPIRE) is a CSO based in Antwerp that implements exit work in two countries, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Participants

Some organisations specialise in providing services to individuals exposed to a specific ideological context, while others offer services independent of the ideological affiliation. The interviews and survey information indicate that CSOs specialised in offering services to violent right-wing extremists exist in Germany, Poland and Slovakia; to violent Islamist extremists in Germany, France and Austria; and to both groups in Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria and Finland. At least one CSO offers services specifically to violent

⁷¹ Figure 3 was created by reviewing practices listed in the RAN collection of practices database as well as the interventions listed as 'exit strategies' in the *RAN Collection of Approaches and Practices* (2019). The RAN Collection of Practices database can be found at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran/collection-inspiring-practices/ran-collection-search_en online.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ The following database contains the German state- and CSO-led primary, secondary and tertiary radicalisation intervention programmes: https://www.handbuch-extremismuspraevention.de/HEX/DE/Angebote/Angebote_suchen/angebote_suchen_node.html;jsessionid=3390D4A192116B47465CE68CA9520554.live602.

left-wing extremists in Germany. Further CSOs reported providing support to extremists regardless of their ideological affiliations in Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria and Finland. CSOs reported having worked with persons exposed to eco-fascism, animal rights extremism, conspiracy theories or paramilitary groups financed by Russia.

Of the 15 interviewed or surveyed organisations that carry out stand-alone exit interventions, 10 reported having worked with returning FTFs in Germany, France, the Netherlands, Austria, Finland and Sweden. Some practitioners report that a new emerging target group is returning female FTFs. One CSO reported having worked with undocumented individuals.

While the primary target audience of these stand-alone exit programmes is radicalised individuals, the majority reported offering services to family members, friends or concerned professionals who contact them for advice.

Nature of participation

Programmes may be joined either voluntarily or in an involuntary fashion. The vast majority of interventions (operating both in and outside prison) work on a voluntary basis and emphasise the importance of their clients joining their programme voluntarily. In the context of the EU, involuntary participation means that the court mandates the individual to participate in the exit programme as part of his or her sentence, or participation is a condition for probation or early release.

In the French PAIRS programme, for example, the majority of participants are mandated by court order to participate and a minority are assigned the participation while in custody. Failure to comply with the programme requirements puts the individual at risk of having the measure revoked and being placed in custody.⁷⁵ Importantly, the programme can also be joined voluntarily by prisoners.

Implementation setting

CSO-led exit programmes in the EU are implemented in different settings, in and outside the criminal justice system. The implementation setting influences a variety of factors: for instance, how CSOs reach their target audience (contact approach) and in what ways they cooperate with state agencies. The majority of CSOs operate in an open setting, which means they can provide services both to individuals who are not part of the criminal justice system and to those who are. Other CSO-led programmes are specifically designed for participants in the criminal justice system (in detention, in prison or on probation). Some CSOs operate programmes in both settings, for example the Austrian DERAD, the Dutch LSE, the German Advice Centre Hesse, and Respect.lu in Luxembourg. No practice has been identified in tertiary prevention within the EU that provides exit work exclusively online, although there are efforts to develop web-based approaches (such as the Prisma Online pilot project in Germany⁷⁶).

CSO-led exit programmes that work in an open setting may have participants from both in and outside the criminal justice system. Since CSOs work independently from state agencies, they have the advantage of attracting individuals who are reluctant to approach state institutions for support. Exit interventions that work in an open setting rely on prospective participants initiating **first contact** with them or clients being referred to them. This means that they work with clients who are at least willing to consider the idea of leaving the extremist group and have initiated the first step to establish contact with the organisation.⁷⁷ An advantage of this approach is that such interventions are less likely to undergo severe resistance from participants and may see a higher degree of commitment, compared to interventions that use an active contact approach or

⁷⁵ Hecker, 2021.

⁷⁶ See <https://prisma.online/ueber-uns/> online.

⁷⁷ Koehler, 2017a.

where participation is mandated. It is important to note, however, that participants' motivations often fluctuate, even in cases when they are the ones initiating contact. Availability and a quick response from the part of CSO workers are therefore crucial for reinforcing these individuals' initial motivation to leave extremism.

CSOs that work in an open setting have to make themselves and their work visible and known in the community, especially to potential clients and so-called multipliers such as police, social or youth workers, who can refer clients.⁷⁸ CSOs use various strategies to create **visibility**, by advertising their services in the community, online, or by word of mouth. Other strategies include cooperating with local media outlets to create awareness-raising events and media campaigns, or collaborating with tech companies to create targeted advertising on social media platforms.

Exit Sweden, for example, appeared regularly in the local and national media in the first 10 years of their operation.⁷⁹ The local media featured news content about events the CSO held for radicalisation prevention in schools, where former members of extremist groups made life story presentations to students. In the national media, formers shared their own experiences to raise public awareness and reach prospective clients. Exit Germany has implemented multiple campaigns targeting right-wing extremist environments as well as the general public. Some received international media exposure thanks to the creativity of their design.⁸⁰

Additionally, CSOs working in an open setting may also rely on **referrals** to access clients. These referrals may come from teachers, employers, healthcare providers and social workers as well as police officers, prison and probation staff. First-time arrests or imprisonment of radicalised persons can be of particular importance for the intervention. Those entering custody or prison can also be experiencing a personal crisis that may offer the possibility to reflect on life choices. This may provide a cognitive opening⁸¹ that can eventually lead to deradicalisation. That is why it is important for police officers and prison staff to harness the power of such vulnerable situations by informing potential clients about exit services. Communication events and awareness-raising training specifically for professionals can help build relations and visibility for potential referrals. The German Legato programme, for example, holds informal networking events and discussion groups for prison and probation staff weekly, to increase awareness, foster help- and advice-seeking and build trust.

Examples of exit interventions that work in an open setting include the Belgian CEAPIRE, the Finnish Aggredi and Exit 2020, the Polish CODEX, Exit Slovakia and Exit Sweden. In Germany, examples of such programmes include advice centres operated by the VPN, Exit Germany, Hayat Germany, JUMP, Bidaya and ExLex, among others.

Some CSO-led exit programmes are designed for participants **within the criminal justice system**. They differ from CSOs working in an open setting because these programmes are created specifically to operate within the criminal justice system, with their participants being prisoners convicted of terrorism-related crimes, individuals on probation, or more rarely, pre-trial detainees. In this setting, there is usually closer cooperation between the CSO and the relevant state agencies in referring and managing cases together. For example, in case-based cooperation, a professional network and communication channels are in place for information exchange and services. In a more systemic form of cooperation, the CSO providing exit services works

⁷⁸ Koehler (2017a) refers to this strategy as a passive contact approach.

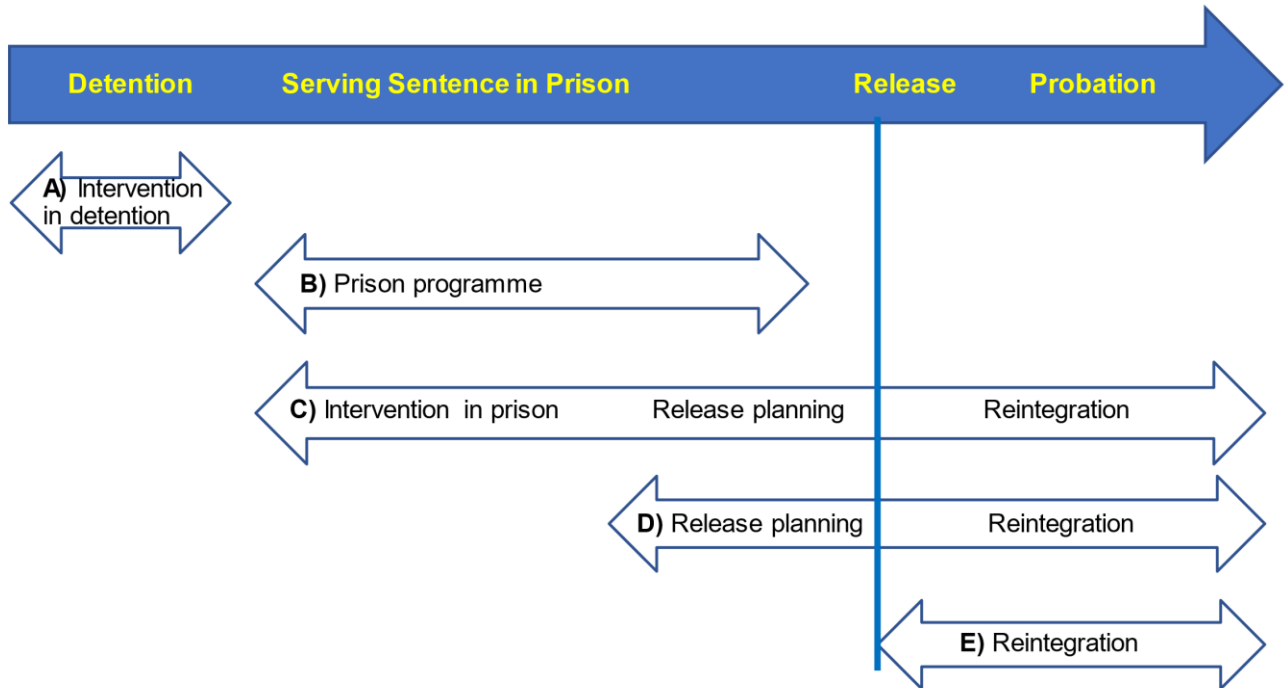
⁷⁹ Personal communication with Robert Örell, former director of Exit Sweden on December 5, 2021.

⁸⁰ See <https://www.exit-deutschland.de/projekte/> online. One campaign titled the 'Trojan T-shirt' handed out T-shirts at a neo-Nazi concert in Germany. The T-shirt had a print with the text 'Rebel.' Once the T-shirt was washed, the first layer of print was removed, to reveal text stating: 'If this T-shirt can change, so can you.' In another campaign, titled 'Nazis against Nazis', local companies sponsored Exit Germany with a certain amount of money for each step taken during a neo-Nazi march. This way, the neo-Nazi groups actively contributed to sponsoring Exit Germany for every step they took during the marches. An online version of the campaign collects a donation of EUR 1 to organisations helping refugees, for each hate comment on social media. See <https://www.exit-deutschland.de/english/> online.

⁸¹ Koehler, 2017a.

closely together with the state institutions. CSO case workers are then part of multi-agency teams that manage cases of violent extremist offenders. CSOs usually contribute to multi-agency teams with their knowledge and expertise on radicalisation and exit work, and with their methods, skills and experience in working with violent extremist offenders. In many contexts, they bring the psychosocial and educational perspective to the table that complements the security-based approach. Figure 3 below shows the variety of ways CSO-led exit interventions operate on the detention-prison-probation continuum.

Figure 3: Types of CSO-led exit interventions within the criminal justice system



A few CSO-led interventions offer services to individuals detained for ideologically motivated crimes (**Type A**): the Austrian NEUSTART, the French PAIRS programme and the German VPN. NEUSTART offers an intervention called social net conferencing to individuals held in pre-trial custody. Meetings are organised by the CSO's coordinator, where the detainee works together with their social network on a plan that is presented to the judge at trial. The plan is an additional consideration for decision-making on the sentence.⁸²

Although most state-led programmes are implemented in prisons, there are also some CSO-led interventions specifically designed for inmates (**Type B**). The Austrian DERAD works in multiple settings, one of which provides individual intervention talks as well as group interventions for convicted terrorists, FTFs or supporters of terrorist organisations in prison. The goal of the interventions is to facilitate deradicalisation using 'counter- and alternative narratives focused on the political ideology of Salafism, which can lead to violent extremism or terrorism.'⁸³ The organisation also offers assessment for possible radicalisation of inmates in prisons and other institutions, and it holds group sessions for prisoners to prevent radicalisation.

The majority of CSO-led interventions fall under Type C, D and E categories. **Type C** interventions offer services throughout the entire prison-probation continuum and often beyond. For example, in the VPN's⁸⁴ prison programmes in Germany, the case manager appointed by the CSO is the main contact for the

⁸² Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2019.

⁸³ The description of the practice is based on the following description (last updated in 2019): see https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran/collection-inspiring-practices/ran-practices/de-radicalisation-prisons_en online.

⁸⁴ Besides Fokus Islex and KOGEX Hessen, in certain cases, multiple CSOs operate these interventions alongside the VPN. JUST X Berlin operates in collaboration with Denkzeit and Projekt Nexus. Prisma Sachsen is implemented together with Outlaw.

programme participant, from the time the client serves his or her prison sentence through release-planning and post-release. The case manager is responsible for the coordination of the various interventions at different phases of the process, and he or she may lead or participate in multi-agency case conferences. Inside prison, the VPN provides both individual and group interventions, and it plays an important role in release-planning. After release, the CSO provides intensive support to facilitate both functional and social reintegration (providing help with transportation, housing, employment, financial aid, as well as (re-)connecting with prosocial networks). The VPN provides high-intensity support within the first 6 to 12 months after release (sometimes longer), then gradually reduces the contact frequency. However, they remain available long term, so that clients know that they can turn to them in times of high stress or difficulties.⁸⁵

Examples of Type C programmes in Germany include Fokus ISLEX, KOgEX Hessen, JUST X Berlin, Prisma Sachsen, Kick-off and PraRaDEX. In the Netherlands, the LSE's Forsa programme has two full-time employees in prison and probation providing exit services to violent extremist offenders, while the rest of the programme works in an open setting.

The Austrian NEUSTART's social net conferencing is an example of **Type D** interventions. NEUSTART is a CSO that provides probation nationwide services in Austria. They offer social net conferencing to soon-to-be released regular offenders, violent extremist offenders and pre-trial detainees.⁸⁶ The goal of this intervention is to prepare for the release of extremist offenders by involving a wide range of participants in face-to-face encounters, to create a realistic, binding and sustainable release plan that will be presented to the judge determining parole. The conference is prepared and organised by two coordinators where the prisoner works together with their social network (family members and relevant community members) as well as professionals to create the release plan. The method benefits radicalised individuals by helping them develop a strategy or plan that focuses on, among others, the organisation of their daily life, work, housing and so on, post-release. The method encourages the offender to take ownership of their actions, strengthen family bonds, share responsibility in implementing the release plan, and develop family- and community-based solutions. The process addresses factors that may inhibit successful implementation as well as factors leading to reengagement or recidivism. A follow-up conference is held 6 months later, and the implementation of the release plan is supervised by the probation officer.

Type E interventions focus on the post-release reintegration of former offenders who are, for the most part, on probation. An example of Type E intervention is the French PAIRS programme. The programme is provided to former violent Islamist offenders on probation. It is built on three pillars: a social, a psychological and an ideological component.⁸⁷ The first component relates to functional and social reintegration and is run by social workers. It entails practical help with housing, administrative errands (arranging health insurance, bank accounts, financial support, etc.), finding employment through job centres, and (re-)learning life skills after many years in prison (e.g. using public transportation, shopping, cooking and managing a budget).

The second component focuses on mental health-related needs since a minority of participants have addiction or other mental disorders. In addition, psychologists also organise group activities together with social workers and religious educators. These include religious and sport activities, cultural visits, volunteering, professional workshops and so on. They provide opportunities for participants to discuss and reflect on relevant topics and improve their social skills. The third pillar, relating to ideology and religion, is called cultural and religious mediation. Religious mediators (e.g. Islamologists) hold a wide variety of activities like inter-religious debates, visits to mosques or Islamic bookstores as well as theological

⁸⁵ InFoEx Webinar, 2020: Deradicalization Work and Recidivism. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-JkDoMhkH0> online.

⁸⁶ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2019.

⁸⁷ The paragraph is based on Hecker (2021).

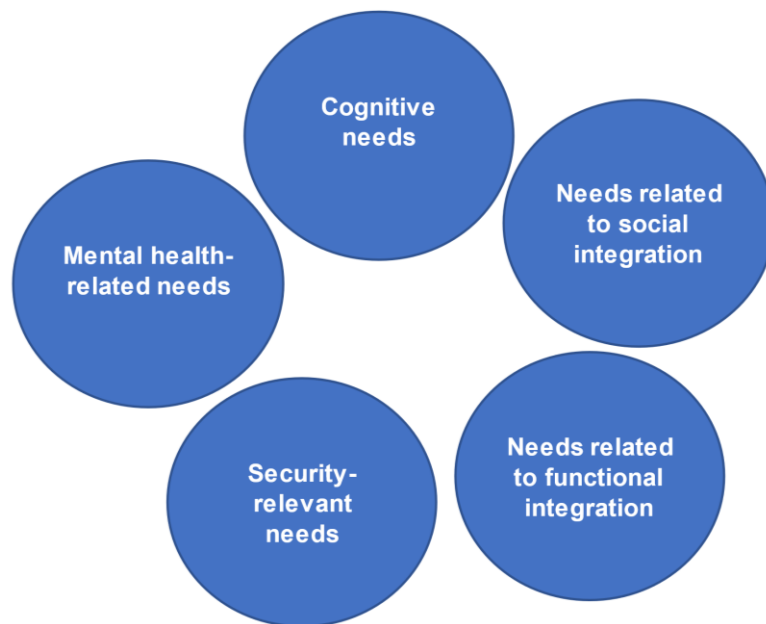
discussions involving the study of sacred texts and historical contextualisation. Programme participants meet with their probation officer monthly and the PAIRS staff provides quarterly reports.⁸⁸ Combined, these sources provide a regular qualitative assessment of the participants' progress. It is worth noting that CSOs working in an open setting most often fulfil similar functions of Type D and E categories when working with clients in prison or on probation. They help clients plan their release while in prison and facilitate functional and social reintegration after release.

Methods and approaches

Exit interventions across the EU work with a wide variety of methods and approaches. On the one hand, this is an advantage, as different methods and approaches are vital for meeting the diverse needs of the target audiences. On the other hand, this diversity makes it difficult to achieve and hold equal standards.⁸⁹ The evaluation report on the Advice Centre on Radicalisation in Germany in 2017 concluded that CSOs providing counselling and exit services had different understandings of what constitutes a case and how success is defined,⁹⁰ and they followed their individual philosophy on how exactly counselling should be carried out.⁹¹ Although there is a wide variety of methods applied by CSOs in exit work, they all share the foundation of communication principles, that is, to hold each encounter in a non-judgemental and non-confrontational fashion, respecting human rights and dignity.

Based on the interviews and survey information, the majority of the CSO-led stand-alone exit interventions work with participants **individually**. Most of them provide a multidisciplinary intervention, tailor-made to each participant's needs. The initial phase of the work includes building rapport and an assessment of the participant's needs in a variety of dimensions, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Exit participants' needs explored and managed by multidisciplinary, CSO-led exit interventions



⁸⁸ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2022.

⁸⁹ Koehler, 2015.

⁹⁰ Uhlmann, 2017.

⁹¹ Koehler, 2015.

The following needs are explored and managed by exit interventions employing a multidisciplinary approach.

- **Mental health-related needs:** the need for mental health treatment by exploring the presence of substance abuse, trauma or post-traumatic stress, or other mental health issues.
- **Cognitive needs:** may include the need for discussing questions regarding the violence-promoting political or religious ideology, the need for strengthening critical thinking skills, etc.
- **Needs related to functional reintegration:** need for housing, education, employment, financial aid, tattoo removal, relocation, help with administrative errands, etc.
- **Needs related to social reintegration:** may include the exploration of past and present prosocial networks for potential (re-)connection, exploring and strengthening family bonds (when the family is identified as a positive factor in the reintegration process). It may also include the identification of obstacles to social reintegration: e.g. exploring levels of isolation and stigmatisation, as well as exploring social skills, anger- and conflict-management skills, etc.
- **Security-relevant needs:** assessing whether the participant is under threat (e.g. from former group members) and if he or she poses a threat to others.

Based on the results of the needs assessment, a tailor-made **multidisciplinary intervention plan**⁹² is created and a case manager or mentor is appointed. The intervention plan may include both tangible/material and intangible services.⁹³ Tangible services encompass the provision of instrumental help such as providing transportation, helping with relocation, arranging housing, facilitating employment, organising tattoo removal and helping with administrative errands. Intangible services include psychosocial support, counselling, skill-development training and so on. The case manager is the key contact person for the programme participant and is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the intervention plan. The case manager is also responsible for managing resources and connecting the participant to the necessary services. If a need cannot be met by the programme's internal resources, the case manager organises contact with external service providers. He or she oversees the entire process and collects and manages all case-related information. Most exit service providers work in a multidisciplinary team of case workers which may include a variety of professions such as social educators, social scientists, psychologists, systemic counsellors and social workers.⁹⁴ If the organisation works with violent Islamist participants, the team might include religious or political scientists, theologians or Islamist scientists. Some programmes also employ former violent extremists as mentors.

CSO-led exit interventions provide various **intangible services**, applying a wide range of methodological approaches. These approaches differ in how the extremist ideology is addressed. In some exit interventions, the **ideological component** plays a central role, potentially encompassing measures to foster critical thinking, reflection, media literacy and so on. In cases of religiously motivated violent extremists, the intervention may additionally include religious counselling, theological discussions involving the study of sacred texts and historical contextualisation, inter-religious debates and so on. The goal of these interventions is to support participants in their efforts to distance themselves from polarised narratives and violence-promoting political or religious views. The Austrian DERAD, the Belgian CEAPIRE, and the French PAIRS programmes are examples of such interventions. Other CSOs either do not include an ideological component in their interventions, or they provide it based on individual needs, often involving external resources (e.g. experts, religious leaders or organisations to provide theological counselling or guidance.) In a report reviewing 13 state-funded exit interventions in Germany, practitioners emphasised that discussing ideology is 'always part of the work,' but sometimes taking care of basic needs comes first.⁹⁵

⁹² In the interview and survey, exit practitioners often used the terms 'systemic' or 'holistic' approach to refer to a comprehensive assessment of needs and resources as well as a multidisciplinary intervention plan.

⁹³ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2019.

⁹⁴ Costa et al., 2021 and primary data collection for this paper (interviews and a survey).

⁹⁵ Figlesthler and Schau, 2021 p. 33.

As mentioned above, most CSO-led interventions work with exit participants in an individual setting. Some CSOs, however, offer **group interventions** as well. Educational measures and skill-development trainings are often held in a group setting. Educational measures may include civic education and teaching about democracy.⁹⁶ Skill-development training may include anti-aggression training,⁹⁷ conflict-management training, and training improving non-violent communication or social skills. For example, besides individual intervention talks and other services, the Austrian CSO DERAD holds group discussions on human rights and civic education with convicted violent Islamist terrorists and FTFs in prison.⁹⁸

The methods most often mentioned by CSOs working with participants in an individual setting include counselling, mentorship, motivational interviewing and biographical work. One-on-one **counselling** was the most frequently mentioned method. The different types of counselling include psychological, psychosocial, psychotherapeutic and systemic. **Mentorship**, guidance or coaching were also reported to be commonly applied methods in the interviews and survey responses.

Some interventions (e.g. the Dutch LSE, the Finnish Aggredi and Exit 2020, Exit Germany and Exit Sweden) employ former extremists as mentors to help foster trust and serve as role models. Exit Sweden, for example, works with clients in a triangular setting. A team of two consisting of a professional (e.g. social worker, psychologist or social educator) and a trained former extremist work in tandem with the client; one of them adopts the role of the contact person and case manager. This approach combines the benefits that both parties bring to the table: professional expertise and skills on the one hand, and credibility and knowledge of the extremist environment and dynamics, on the other. The non-judgemental atmosphere of the first meeting, the shared past with the former extremist mentor, and the informal dialogues were reported by exit programme participants as key elements that facilitated a change for the better.⁹⁹

Of the 15 CSOs interviewed/surveyed from Germany, Sweden and Finland, 5 reported using **motivational interviewing** in their work with clients. Motivational interviewing is an evidence-based practice,¹⁰⁰ 'a directive, client-centred counselling style for eliciting behaviour change by helping clients explore and resolve ambivalence.'¹⁰¹ In the context of exit work, it is favoured for those 'who are ambivalent to change as well as those who are more resistant, angry or reluctant to change.'¹⁰²

Biographical/narrative work is used both in and outside the prison context. The Austrian Kompass project, Exit Germany and the German VPN reported working with this method. Although there are differences in how practitioners in these organisations carry out the biographical analysis, common elements include facilitating the construction of a coherent life narrative that integrates the participant's extremist past, encouraging reflections on (and taking responsibility for) past actions with regard to joining and being active in the extremist movement, and planning a constructive future. In Exit Germany, the biographical work is facilitated by the possibility to make videos, take photos or write articles to aid individuals to reflect and structure thoughts. The VPN has developed its own method of working in prisons, called the 'Education of Responsibility' (Verantwortungspädagogik®).¹⁰³ Based on acceptance, this non-confrontational approach aims to facilitate the understanding of past actions and explain past decisions without justifying them.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁶ Costa et al., 2021.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ The organisation's website: see <https://www.derad.at/> online. The description of the practice is based on the following description (last updated in 2019): see https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran/collection-inspiring-practices/ran-practices/de-radicalisation-prisons_en online.

⁹⁹ Christensen, 2015.

¹⁰⁰ Clark, 2019.

¹⁰¹ Rollnick and Miller, 1995.

¹⁰² Clark, 2019 p. 47.

¹⁰³ See <https://violence-prevention-network.de/extremismus/intervention/?lang=en> online.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

It also includes working on life goals and identifying positive social relationships. Depending on the needs and characteristics of the offender, the intervention is offered on an individual basis or in a group setting.

Exit support services and emerging practices

Exit support services, as shown in Figure 1, refer to ‘specific methods and strategies’¹⁰⁵ that may be relevant to the rehabilitation or reintegration of certain violent extremist individuals, based on their individual needs. For example, some clients may need mental health services such as **addiction or trauma treatment**. Others may benefit from further **education or vocational training**. These support services can be offered by both CSOs and state agencies. If a specific method or intervention is not part of the exit-provider organisation’s regular toolkit, the client in need can be referred to an external organisation or provider.

There is promising evidence that certain methods and practices not widely used with violent extremist individuals could be relevant in rehabilitation and/or reintegration. In recent years, there has been increased interest in investigating the potential of **restorative justice** practices in cases of violent extremism and terrorism.¹⁰⁶ Restorative justice interventions have been held with terrorist offenders in Italy, the Basque Country and Northern Ireland, in the form of victim-offender encounters, victim awareness programmes with prisoners and community-based interventions.¹⁰⁷ Some CSOs are also involved in implementing restorative justice practices with violent extremist clients, e.g. the Finnish Exit 2020 programme operated by the Deaconess Foundation.¹⁰⁸

Another field of increasing interest is **online interventions**. As online (self-) radicalisation and recruitment present a growing challenge, innovative solutions and new methods are needed. Some CSOs have begun to provide services online offering counselling over chat and email. This is based on the understanding that these communication channels may be preferred by certain target audiences. Other initiatives aim to actively reach young people who are radicalised or may be at risk of radicalisation and offer them support.

For example, the German Streetwork@online is a web-based initiative whose target audience is adolescents and young adults in the Berlin area who may be at risk of Islamist radicalisation.¹⁰⁹ The programme is active on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok, and creates content related to current events or topics that may be of interest to the target group. Young people can reach out to the organisation on the various online platforms via chat, and the programme also has a proactive strategy of participating in discussions in the comment threads. The initiative’s practitioners use a systemic approach as a basis for their conversations with the target audience, and encourage users to reflect on their own perspectives and actions. If necessary, the programme can refer individuals to further services.

Another example of online initiatives is the German Prisma Online that, in its 5-year project period, aims to develop and test web-based methods to ‘initiate an ideological distancing process among sympathisers and actors who describe themselves as new right or who show an affinity for the new right through their behaviour.’¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2017 p.2.

¹⁰⁶ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2020c.

¹⁰⁷ Biffi, 2021.

¹⁰⁸ This information was collected by the primary data collection for this paper (survey).

¹⁰⁹ See <https://www.streetwork.online/> online.

¹¹⁰ See <https://prisma.online/ueber-uns/> online.

Support services for concerned individuals

Another important field in secondary and tertiary radicalisation prevention where CSOs play an important role across Europe is providing support services to concerned individuals (as shown in Figure 1). The target audience of this support is the parents or relatives of individuals who are on the way to becoming radicalised, are already part of a violent extremist group, or have engaged in (violent) extremist acts.¹¹¹ This includes families whose children are self-radicalising on the internet, are being recruited by domestic or foreign terrorist organisations or are planning to or have travelled abroad to join militant groups, as well as those families whose children have died as a result, or have returned from abroad. In addition, support services are also offered to those having peer or professional relationships with radicalised individuals (e.g. teachers, sport coaches and youth workers).

In a typical case, a family member may reach out because they are concerned about a relative being radicalised. In these cases, the main **objective** of the support services is to empower the family to facilitate disengagement. In other words, the aim is to help family members and friends become 'effective mentors for guiding the person back to a path towards healthy choices,'¹¹² thus facilitating the exit process in an indirect way. The intervention can take place individually or in a group (e.g. parent support groups) and can use a variety of methods, most commonly family counselling.

The objectives of **family counselling** depend on the specific context and may include the following.

- Providing psychoeducation to relatives to increase their understanding of the radicalisation process in general and the concrete context where the radicalisation occurs (ideological context, forms of recruitment online and offline, online self-radicalisation, etc.).
- Providing information on legal statutes, if applicable (e.g. if the relative has committed a crime).
- Providing psychosocial support to reduce stress, feelings of helplessness and possible feelings of stigmatisation.
- Preventing the escalation of conflict between family members and the radicalised individual, teaching communication skills and strengthening the relationship between them.
- Mobilising the family to identify and involve positive social networks, with the goal of initiating disengagement or preventing radicalisation.
- Identifying underlying obstacles that make the family vulnerable or hinder the intervention process. These obstacles may include destructive family dynamics, grievances, socio-economic challenges, and a lack of employment, education and social networks.¹¹³

Communication with the radicalised relative is of paramount importance. Counselling, therefore, usually includes psychosocial support and education to promote non-confrontational communication and strengthen listening skills, as well as an authoritative parenting style. This parenting style promotes a healthy balance between being responsive to the needs of the radicalised young person, and at the same time, setting and maintaining boundaries.¹¹⁴

The Competence Centre for Parents on Right-Wing Extremism,¹¹⁵ based in Saxony-Anhalt in Germany, offers counselling services to parents whose children are at risk of radicalisation or have been radicalised by violent right-wing extremist groups. The aim is to facilitate disengagement and prevent children and young

¹¹¹ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2019.

¹¹² Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2019 p. 462.

¹¹³ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2019.

¹¹⁴ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2019 p. 468.

¹¹⁵ The name of the practice in German: Kompetenzstelle Eltern und Rechtsextremismus.

people from entering the violent right-wing scene. The organisation's website stresses that the services are free, confidential and independent of state authorities.¹¹⁶

The German Hayat Advice Centre offers free and confidential counselling services nationwide to family members whose relatives are at risk of radicalisation, have been radicalised by Salafism, or want to join or have joined militant Islamist movements.¹¹⁷ The aim of the service is to support relatives and to provide possibilities for deradicalisation. The advice centres operated by the VPN in Bavaria, Berlin, Saxony and Hesse also provide counselling services for concerned individuals.

CSO-led family support interventions typically work in a framework where **first contact** is initiated by the concerned family member. Organisations, therefore, advertise their services in a variety of ways to reach their target audiences on the internet and in the local, regional or national media. Setting up and advertising a toll-free **helpline** that serves as a first contact point has also been an increasing practice. Common characteristics of these helplines include offering toll-free and confidential counselling, an assessment of needs, and referrals. Some helplines are specifically targeted towards religiously motivated contexts (e.g. in the Netherlands and in Germany) while others are open regarding the ideology (e.g. in Sweden).

A community-based organisation, the Partnership of Moroccan Communities in the Netherlands,¹¹⁸ operates a nationwide helpline for concerned parents, offering counselling and if necessary, referral to care institutions or other agencies.¹¹⁹ In Sweden, the nationwide Concern Hotline (Orostelefonen) was established in 2017 by the CSO Rädta Barnen (Save the Children)¹²⁰, offering guidance and referrals to partner organisations. In Germany, several CSOs operate a direct helpline for family members and extremist individuals.

Another important target group of support services are affected **professionals** (e.g. teachers, social workers, police officers, prison staff and probation officers). Many CSOs working in this field offer case consultations, informational events and training for practitioners. For example, besides family support and exit work, the German CSO Legato provides case counselling, discussion groups and informal networking events for prison and probation staff.¹²¹ Upon request, they hold training sessions for prison and probation workers that are tailor-made to their specific needs.

Inspiring practice

Exit Sweden, Sweden: The Exit Sweden organisation was included as an example in the country's national action plan (2010-2011). According to the former director, the organisation was also invited to contribute to an expert committee convened to address radicalisation and violent extremism in the country.¹²² They were able to explain to policymakers advocating for the banning of racist organisations that doing so would only embolden them, as the CSO had seen first-hand, through their work with clients and in the communities. Such insight can be highly beneficial when policymakers create policies to address violent radicalisation.

¹¹⁶ See <https://www.miteinander-ev.de/kompetenzstelle-eltern-und-rechtsextremismus-ker/> online.

¹¹⁷ See <https://hayat-deutschland.de/hayat/> online.

¹¹⁸ Samenwerkingsverband van Marokkaanse Nederlanders, SMN.

¹¹⁹ RAN Collection of Practices: see https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran/collection-inspiring-practices/ran-practices/smn-helpline_en online.

¹²⁰ See <https://www.raddabarnen.se/rad-och-kunskap/foralder/orosteledonen/> online.

¹²¹ See <https://legato-hamburg.de/> online.

¹²² Personal communication with Robert Örell, former director of Exit Sweden on 1 December 2021.

IV. Areas and forms of cooperation between CSOs and state agencies in exit work

CSOs implementing exit work cooperate with state agencies in a number of ways. This chapter focuses on the areas where CSOs implementing stand-alone exit interventions cooperate with state agencies. It describes some of the key areas and forms of cooperation, highlighting challenges, lessons learned and inspiring practices. The following areas of cooperation are discussed: (1) policy formulation, (2) funding and sustainability, (3) capacity-building and knowledge exchange, (4) case referral, (5) case management, (6) post-release reintegration, and (7) cooperation in security-relevant cases.

(1) Policy formulation

The cooperation between CSOs and government is viewed as a desired and effective approach in exit work, at national level and within the EU.¹²³ This cooperation is essential, as the threat of violent extremism is fluid and policy changes must be made accordingly. However, policymakers are faced with an overwhelming amount of information on a large variety of issues. Prioritising P/CVE means competing with many other policy areas or programmes that require funding and take precedence. CSOs can play an important function in informing policy, laws, serving as **early warning mechanisms** and shaping the future of exit interventions. In addition, CSOs can provide valuable feedback on the **technical feasibility** of proposed programmes or projects and the on-the-ground implications of proposed changes in the law.

Inviting CSOs to present their work may be helpful, as is CSOs initiating contact with policymakers, sharing their views on current events and identifying future needs. CSO staff have operations on the ground, meaning they know and work together with communities, building long-lasting relationships. They are well-positioned to be among the first to identify and assess new potential and emerging threats, such as the rise of new violent ideologies. Therefore, CSOs can be first to signal new challenges to policymakers; they are also able to identify resources lacking in communities that policymakers might be able to provide.

One of the most pressing issues stressed by CSO practitioners that needs to be addressed on a more systemic, policy level is **information-sharing**. For both CSOs and law enforcement, a policy framework, regarding easier and safer sharing of information, is of the highest priority. The vast challenges around legal issues differ from country to country and directly affect cooperation between CSOs and state agencies. Other concerns that were mentioned include immunity of witnesses, agreements of data use and disclosure, and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). In addition, online recruitment and online terrorist content constitute a broader concern.¹²⁴

(2) Funding and sustainability

Stable, long-term funding, when available, allows CSOs to focus on developing and improving programmes that help communities and society as a whole. Unfortunately, many CSOs struggle to get consistent funding. Due to the nature of the work, staff often operate outside convenient work hours, and the work can sometimes be physically and mentally strenuous. The inconvenient working hours and low wages can lead to high staff turnover.¹²⁵ As exit work is a long-term endeavour that requires specialised knowledge and skills, losing experienced staff can affect work efficiency.

¹²³ Korn, 2016.

¹²⁴ European Commission, 2021.

¹²⁵ Hecker, 2021.

In European countries, private donations are seldom sufficient to fund an exit programme. Instead, most CSOs providing exit work are **funded partially or entirely by the government**. This can include funding from different levels of authority (local government or state, or in Germany, local, state and federal levels) and from different departments (such as the department of justice, social welfare or youth welfare). CSOs may additionally receive funding outside government, for example, EU funds. While funding from multiple sources can be beneficial, it can also create tension when government priorities differ from those of the external funding source. Some CSOs have created other closely related services as a source of income such as training and education services, research and publications.¹²⁶

It is important to note that increased funding can also come with additional requirements for paperwork, external evaluations or other efforts for increased accountability. In some cases, this can lead to a decrease in **programme flexibility**. As a CSO practitioner observed, when funding is dependent on specific services being supplied, rather than providing a budget to be used at the CSO's discretion, flexibility suffers and changing demands by clients cannot always be sufficiently addressed.

In addition, CSOs' reliance on state funding may compromise the perception of neutrality and independence from government. Organisational **transparency** and the duty to report to the sponsor conflicts with the principle of **confidentiality**, such as the CSO's legal and moral obligations to protect its programme participants' data.¹²⁷ Some communities might even be sceptical of exit programmes, not being willing to accept support from government-funded programmes at all. Being transparent with both client and state sponsor is key in addressing this issue.

Exit work is a long-term process, with support provided to clients by exit organisations potentially lasting years. This is compounded when CSOs suffer from uncertain funding cycles which hinder **long-term planning and financial security**.¹²⁸ In the surveys and interviews, several CSOs reported struggles with sustainability. One CSO practitioner noted that funding is the most important aspect for CSOs if they are to be able to conduct their work strategically. They need to constantly adapt to reach clients/target groups where they are active, which sometimes clashes with the preferred political focus.

Another practitioner highlighted that funding based on hours billed for projects rather than a flat fee makes the work unnecessarily difficult. A positive example was put forward to illustrate how once this frustration was shared, changes were made to better accommodate the workflow of the organisation.

The excessive **administrative workload** was also mentioned by multiple CSOs. The amount of time and effort spent gaining and renewing funding contracts was spotlighted as another challenge which detracts time and resources better spent directly on the target audience.

In addition, in Germany, where many CSOs apply for funds, the **competition** may reduce cooperation between them. In reality, however, CSOs often complement each other's services effectively, and therefore cooperation should be encouraged.

At the same time, policymakers often do not know which CSO partners to choose and fund, and how to ensure they are trustworthy, credible and reliable. Funding is therefore often conditional on certain accountability criteria, which may hamper the flexibility and autonomy of CSO-led exit programmes.

The process and criteria for selecting partnering CSOs can vary across different contexts. **Transparency and accountability** are important for CSOs. They need to be transparent about their operations and the structural features of their programmes (e.g. sources and use of funding, affiliations, working methods and

¹²⁶ Koehler, 2017a.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Figlestahler & Schau, 2020.

work experience).¹²⁹ Employing an independent expert or body to evaluate the organisation's work can be a source of reference, highlighting the achievements and quality of work and clarifying the areas of competence. According to Koehler (2020), 'transparency of processes, financing, personnel structures and other aspects of a programme is crucial to winning the trust not only of prospective participants but also of financial sponsors and ultimately the wider public, leading specialists and the local authorities, all of which are indispensable partners for the successful implementation of the programme.'¹³⁰

(3) Capacity-building and knowledge exchange

Capacity-building, 'the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organisations and communities need to survive, adapt and thrive in a fast-changing world'¹³¹ allows organisations to be sustainable. State agencies are more likely to rely on stable funding, but might need other resources such as skills or connections to local communities in order to be effective in tertiary radicalisation prevention. At times when the government lacks the capacity but needs help with exit intervention, they can commission CSOs with relevant knowledge and experience in other related fields (such as reintegration of former prisoners, youth work, social and humanitarian work). CSOs can bridge the knowledge and capacity gaps and complement the services offered by state agencies. Practitioners reported that collaboration with state partners is successful when state agencies view CSOs as equal partners. This can result in a sustained and respectful cooperation.

With regard to **generating and sharing knowledge** in the field of radicalisation prevention, both CSOs and state agencies play a key role. Since CSOs often have a smaller scope of either priorities or target audiences, they become specialised in what they do. The proximity to the target group gives CSOs more practical and on-the-ground knowledge. CSOs are often aware of trends in radicalisation long before the trends reach policymakers and state agencies. As a CSO practitioner put it, 'reactiveness' is the CSOs' strong suit, as they are able to quickly identify, name and react to an emerging problem. In addition, CSOs can add a different perspective, a psychosocial and educational approach to what would otherwise remain merely a security or legal perspective.

CSOs **share their knowledge** in various ways with actors such as state agencies, communities and research organisations. Some CSOs have established expertise centres and collect and disseminate knowledge in a systemic fashion (in the form of reports and publications, for instance). Unfortunately, not all CSOs have sufficient personnel to gather findings, disseminate them and make them accessible. Therefore, when designing grants, funders should include straightforward and supporting elements for generating and sharing the gained knowledge, and support the building of national or local **knowledge and practice exchange networks**. Examples include the RAN model at EU level or the National Committee on Religiously Motivated Extremism (BAG ReEx)¹³² at national level in Germany. In addition, making online and offline publications and websites accessible in English helps practitioners access and exchange information internationally.

A common way for CSOs to share knowledge is through **training for professionals** who might encounter radicalised individuals in their work. Several CSO practitioners observed that some **social workers** are not equipped to work with former violent extremists, to the point of being afraid to work with them, often passing such clients on to colleagues or not engaging with them. Increased training and collaboration between CSOs and state agencies might help address this obstacle. For example, in some countries like the Netherlands,

¹²⁹ Koehler, 2017b.

¹³⁰ Koehler, 2020 p.72.

¹³¹ United Nations, n.d. *Capacity-Building*.

¹³² See <https://www.bag-relex.de/en/homepage> online.

increased training opportunities were provided for social workers in the area of radicalisation and violent extremism, which led to an expansion of service providers. This in turn created the need for the development of standards in training and practice to ensure quality.

Similarly, some **prison and probation officers** may find it challenging to work with violent extremist offenders and can benefit from training in understanding and responding to this target group.¹³³ CSOs can provide staff training and train-the-trainer actions, which are crucial for prison and probation contexts as well as reintegration initiatives.¹³⁴ This training includes topics such as awareness, understanding, communication strategies, violent extremist environments, rationale, cultural competency and practical approaches. Ideally, specialists working for state agencies or adjacent fields will build on their general knowledge with more advanced training on radicalisation and desistance.¹³⁵ Several CSOs offer training to professionals in the field of primary and secondary radicalisation prevention, as well.

Teacher training and knowledge at broad community level is useful for raising awareness about the topic and recognising the early signs of radicalisation.¹³⁶ **Local actors and elected officials** can benefit from online access to practical guidance and training.¹³⁷

In conclusion, CSOs and state agencies can share knowledge and build on each other's skills. They have different strengths and can complement each other's efforts well. Generally speaking, state agencies tend to acquire and process knowledge in more systematic processes (e.g. via symposiums and large or longitudinal studies), which are also slower. They may have the resources for a research department, work with academics, or hire evaluators, for example. On the other hand, CSOs may include fewer stakeholders, function 'on the ground,' independently, and can create and disseminate knowledge faster, albeit often with a smaller reach. The majority of CSOs provide hands-on training to a wide range of professions in awareness-raising and skill development in primary, secondary and tertiary levels of prevention.

Examples of inspiring practices

Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF, Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge), Germany: a German network for knowledge-sharing published [Standards in counselling for the social environment of \(potentially\) radicalised Islamist individuals](#), a document providing classifications and standards in counselling approaches for violent Islamic extremists.

Journal Exit-Deutschland, Germany:¹³⁸ Exit Germany created a comprehensive and regularly published journal in 2008 with the goal to promote interdisciplinary knowledge exchange of academics and practitioners on deradicalisation, extremism and democratic culture. The journal is divided into two areas: the scientific-theoretical line where academics and researchers publish, and the practitioners' line where first-line practitioners are invited to share their experiences. In addition, the journal also shares former violent extremists' reflections on their past, often based on a biography/narrative intervention provided by the CSO.

Landelijk Steunpunt Extremisme (LSE), Netherlands: LSE set up an expertise centre and puts special emphasis on collecting and disseminating knowledge, as well as providing up-to-date services to other institutions. The experience and knowledge they have acquired throughout the years of their operation feeds into research and practice, contributing to the development a comprehensive methodological approach.

¹³³ Williams, 2016; Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2018.

¹³⁴ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2018.

¹³⁵ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2018.

¹³⁶ Koehler, 2017a.

¹³⁷ European Commission, 2021.

¹³⁸ See <https://journal-exit.de/jahresbericht-2021/> online.

Fryshuset, Sweden: A case example for building a network for cooperation:

The Swedish CSO Fryshuset, which hosts Exit Sweden, carried out a 3-year project focusing on gathering knowledge from practitioners working with different extremist groups (including violent extremists, gangs, cults, hooligans and other destructive groups). Part of the project focused on creating cooperation between the CSO and the different stakeholders involved in P/CVE, especially with a view to supporting disengagement amongst its participants. The stakeholders included authorities and public bodies, private actors and other CSOs. A network was successfully formed, with meetings held bimonthly to build joint knowledge and facilitate networking between the participating organisations, institutions and agencies. The meetings were organised around specific thematic, current and relevant topics. During the meetings, different thematic presentations, video screenings, theatre plays and inspiring practices were presented. The number of participants ranged between 25 and 70. During the network's events and meetings, informal relations and bonds were created. By addressing and discussing relevant topics through different experiences, participants had the opportunity to reflect and share their professional and institutional approaches and understanding, as a result a joint knowledge base was formed. This helped the group learn how other institutions and organisations operated, under what frameworks different actors acted, and what opportunities and resources were available. Professional relations were formed that made it easier to contact each other for advice or cooperation in specific cases, and an increased institutional understanding emerged between the different participating partners.

(4) Case referral

CSOs working in an open setting may cooperate with a wide variety of state agencies. They often receive clients through referrals from state institutions and they can also refer participants to state agencies for certain services. In many contexts, this cooperation takes place in an ad hoc fashion, which means that there are typically no established systems or platforms of cooperation. The coordination of the work is driven by the needs of each case as they emerge. Naturally, over time, professional relationships and networks are often formed based on the experiences of previous collaboration, which can make working together easier.

CSOs can receive case referrals from a variety of state actors such as law enforcement officials or prison and probation staff. In some cases, prosecutors refer individuals who have entered the criminal justice system. In other cases, schools, municipalities, social and welfare agencies or mental health providers note the need for support and provide referrals.

CSOs can also refer clients to state agencies. The case manager is responsible for assessing the participant's needs and finding external providers for services that cannot be met using the internal resources of the organisation. The case manager helps establish the link with state providers and monitors the process. State institutions are well-equipped to provide services relevant to functional reintegration. Social and welfare agencies help with organising financial aid and housing. Mental health institutions help with addiction and trauma treatment, as well as with the assessment and management of other mental health-related needs. Public employment agencies, job centres and education facilities promote employment.

In order to facilitate the referral process, state agencies need to be made aware of the services of the CSO. CSOs can achieve this through different strategies, for example, by raising awareness of the problem and of their expertise and building a good reputation. Another strategy is to approach relevant state agencies and establish good working relationships with them. By obtaining knowledge about each other's roles, expertise, resources and modus operandi, smoother cooperation is likely. Good communication between parties and clear expectations from each organisation is key, as is providing state agencies with an understanding of exit work and their respective role in clients' exit processes.

Even in cases of ad hoc cooperation, it is important that the CSO is granted a **mandate** by the state institution where they carry out exit work. For example, if an individual currently in prison contacts the CSO for exit support or is successfully referred to them by prison staff, the CSO needs to be granted access to the client and a mandate to work with them in the prison setting. Lack of awareness or understanding of CSO work can hinder work efficiency. A practitioner shared an example: the CSO representatives had to visit the client in prison at the weekend, during the time dedicated to family members, because the prison had no previous experience or protocols for working with CSOs. Informing practitioners in prison about the CSO's work and building professional relations can help overcome such obstacles.

Several CSO practitioners highlighted that cooperation with local state agencies can be challenging when there is a high staff turnover. Even when staff change positions within a state agency, which they are likely to do in their careers, this affects cooperation. Establishing **relationships and trust** between a CSO and a contact person within a state agency takes months, if not years. When a new staff member fills a position, valuable knowledge and time invested in the cooperation might be at least partially lost. CSO practitioners also remarked that the human factor is important for cooperation. While processes can be written on paper, educating someone to understand the needs of a former violent extremist client requires an open mind and dialogue between organisations. Additionally, CSOs have different limitations than state agencies, and there might be frustration over the collaboration if it involves a high level of bureaucracy or moves slowly.

(5) Case management

CSO-led exit programmes designed specifically to work in the criminal justice system usually have the permission and mandate by the relevant state institutions to carry out exit work. Furthermore, several of the CSO-led interventions have become an integral part of the prison and/or probation infrastructure of exchanging information about cases, even taking part in decision-making processes and case management. Therefore, cooperation between CSOs and prison and probation is often close and can be more systemic. In a **case-based cooperation**, communication channels, protocols and professional networks are in place between the relevant organisations to exchange information and services. In an even closer, more systemic cooperation, multi-agency teams work together to assess and manage cases. In a **multi-agency cooperation**, the exit-provider CSO representatives work together with the security services, prison and probation staff, prison psychologists and social workers to map the risks and needs of participants and make decisions jointly to reduce risks and facilitate rehabilitation and reintegration.

The difference between a set of mutual ties between organisations and cooperation within multi-agency settings is that in the latter, networking partners share a joint contact, a coordinated effort and a framework of cooperation when it comes to assessing a case and deciding how to intervene.¹³⁹ In practice, multi-agency work may entail regular meetings such as case conferences or round tables. **Case conferences** are platforms of multi-agency case management involving all professionals working with a case, that are held regularly.

One advantage of multi-agency work is the ability to discuss a case from different perspectives, something which can increase the quality of the diagnosis and provide better solutions.¹⁴⁰ The CSO contribution in this multi-agency setting is knowledge, expertise and skills working with violent extremist offenders in facilitating disengagement/deradicalisation and reintegration. CSOs provide the psychosocial and educational perspective that can complement a purely security-focused approach. In some cases, the CSO case worker

¹³⁹ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2016; Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2019.

¹⁴⁰ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2016.

has the most frequent contact with the programme participant, and can be responsible for organising the case conferences.

Multi-agency cooperation, however, is not without its challenges. It requires certain conditions, such as structural and legal frameworks as well as efficient mechanisms of collaboration and trust among different organisations. Participating organisations and professions in multi-agency work have different focuses and priorities (e.g. security vs reintegration) that are sometimes conflicting. Therefore, **clarifying the roles, competencies and expectations** of each organisation is important. Understanding each organisation's contribution and boundaries enhances work efficiency and creates a basis of trust. A key aspect, for practitioners, is building relations between professionals based on mutual respect and **trust**.

Information-sharing is another important area where challenges can arise. Clear legal frameworks for information-sharing between state agencies and CSOs are necessary to ensure that all actors have all the information they need to carry out their work, as well as the legal protection necessary for working in a sensitive context.¹⁴¹ CSO practitioners consider client confidentiality important. 'In some cases, security authorities may ask for more information than can possibly be shared with them'¹⁴² – this is especially challenging when sensitive information is being discussed. In some cases, one practice is to involve the client in the cooperation, either by having them participate in meetings or by asking for permission to share sensitive information. This ensures their perspectives are heard, and their participation and cooperation are more likely to be included in the process. Practitioners also highlighted the importance of discussing how data protection regulations (such as the GDPR) are followed in exit work. Practitioners also need to be clear on what their legal duties are with regard to the disclosure of information (what type of data must be shared and under what circumstances).

Inspiring practice: case conferences

Violence Prevention Network (VPN), Germany: multi-agency case conferences are held in and outside prison (in the latter case, the CSO works together with municipalities). In both contexts, all professionals working with a case are involved in the meetings. Case conferences are held to decide if an individual poses a security risk, for example, or to agree on and monitor progress on a set of intervention measures, to facilitate rehabilitation and reintegration. In some settings, it is the CSO who organises the case conferences; in others, the security services or the prison initiate the meeting. The CSO's caseworker may bring the case to the conference anonymously, and the case is disclosed only if the team concludes that the individual in question poses a security risk. The advantages of these conferences and teams are that there are clear roles and responsibilities (who does what) and the agreements are made jointly, taking all professionals' perspectives into consideration. The CSO's case manager discusses the goals of the case conference with the client, who participates in its preparation. This way, transparency is ensured, while also offering clients the opportunity to reflect on their actions from multiple perspectives.

(6) Post-release reintegration

As discussed in previous chapters, the number of released violent extremist and terrorist inmates will increase in the coming years. This means that in many affected countries, post-release probation and reintegration services need to be addressed on a more systemic level. The European Commission recognises this issue; in 2021, it highlighted the need for Member States to improve the continuity of services

¹⁴¹ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2020a.

¹⁴² Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2020b p. 3.

on the prison-exit continuum.¹⁴³ The areas of focus include continuity in information-sharing, risk assessment, and the provision of rehabilitation and reintegration services.

Regarding the risk of reoffending, the first year after release is critical.¹⁴⁴ This is why providing **intensive care** within this period, especially within the first 3 months of transition is of utmost importance. 'Even seemingly small miscommunications or omissions may have serious consequences. For example, releasing an individual on a Friday afternoon, forgetting that many of the allocated supportive contacts will be unavailable until Monday could result in the individual turning instead to the same support networks in the extremist scene they had relied on before being imprisoned. In order to prevent such impulses, probation workers, social workers and P/CVE specialists managing the rehabilitation process must be available 24/7. Even if everything goes according to plan, the first few hours or days are the most crucial, as individuals are particularly vulnerable.'¹⁴⁵ The success of the transition depends largely on the preparations made in prison. Key aspects of this process include efficient interagency information-sharing, building trust with the offender and the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the process.

As described in Chapter III, several CSOs focus on release-planning and post-release reintegration. One of the benefits of CSOs working in this field is that their operational flexibility allows them to move along with the client between institutional settings (from prison to release). Since CSOs have a smaller organisational structure, they are able to act at short notice without the constraints of complex bureaucratic procedures. This includes their **availability** at inconvenient hours as well as the provision of intensive care, when needed. It is documented that CSO employees often work in the evenings or weekends in order to provide support to clients in sensitive periods.¹⁴⁶ CSO case workers are often also able to dedicate more time to building rapport with the inmate, compared to state-employed probation officials. A **personal connection** between the case worker and the client is an important retaining force. Thanks to this personal relationship, it is possible to recognise even smaller behavioural changes that might signal a risk of reengagement.

CSOs also have some advantages as regards social reintegration. Since they are embedded in the communities they serve, they can **access affected communities** and gain their trust for cooperation. They are well-positioned to involve all relevant stakeholders, especially significant family and community members, in the release-planning and reintegration process, thus helping create sustainable solutions. CSO workers are also prepared to provide **practical assistance** such as helping with transportation and accommodation, and running practical errands. In some contexts, the offender's only **stable contact point** is the CSO case worker throughout the entire prison-probation continuum (see Type C and D models of implementation in Figure 3).

In addition to intensive care, CSO-led programmes are designed to provide **long-term support** lasting between 1 and 2 years, or sometimes even longer. As the client becomes more established outside prison, the contact frequency is gradually reduced. However, case workers remain available long term, so the client can reach them during difficult periods. Personal crises (such as family conflicts, losses and financial challenges) can make the individual vulnerable to returning to their old ways and networks of coping. Strengthening resiliency is the goal of the intervention at this point. This type of availability is often beyond the means of state officials.

Challenges in interagency cooperation during this phase can occur in many areas. Sometimes the **information flow** between the prison administration and the CSO is disrupted.¹⁴⁷ A CSO reported that since

¹⁴³ European Commission, 2021.

¹⁴⁴ Renard, 2020.

¹⁴⁵ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2020a p. 68.

¹⁴⁶ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2020a.

¹⁴⁷ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2022.

most prison information is confidential, they receive very little or no information on the released individual. Some CSO workers expressed their preference to work this way, without bias or information overload about their clients.¹⁴⁸ Other case workers, however, prefer to have some information so they can tailor their intervention from the outset. In addition, clear protocols are needed with regard to risk management (as is discussed further in the next section).

(7) Cooperation in security-relevant cases

Cooperation in security-relevant cases is one of the more sensitive and complicated areas of exit work. Cooperation between CSOs and security agencies can be initiated by either party as needed when identifying security-related concerns. CSOs are not equipped to act in the security sector, and therefore when identifying security-related risks, they refer to the relevant authority. CSOs can turn to the relevant state agencies when they are concerned that their client poses a risk to the safety of others, but also when are concerned for the safety of the client (e.g. due to possible retaliation from former extremist group members).

Moreover, **risk assessment** is integrated into exit and rehabilitation work for both state agencies and CSOs. However, different organisations use different risk assessment tools, and the goals of the assessment process may differ too: a strict security focus vs a broader reintegration focus. Therefore, it is paramount that cooperating organisations create a shared language and understanding of what assessment processes entail and what measures are used.

From a security perspective, another area of significance is the **post-release period**, especially when a former prisoner is considered high risk for reoffending. In this case, authorities need to monitor the person in question more closely and they might ask CSOs to provide information on the participant's progress or activities. This could conflict with data protection and client confidentiality. Security services and CSOs have to establish clear frameworks of cooperation and clear expectations on what type of information must be shared and under what circumstances. From the client's perspective, cooperation or even the perception of collaboration with law enforcement or intelligence agencies can undermine trust for the CSO, with an attendant risk of losing credibility and alienating the target population they intend to serve. Transparency, therefore, is important for both clients and state agencies. Programme participants need to understand the legal framework under which the CSO operates (e.g. what circumstances the CSO is legally obliged to report).

The resocialisation and reintegration of **returning FTFs** involves a complex interplay of factors between state agencies and CSOs as well as family members. The factors identified as crucial to meeting this target audience's needs, while dealing with security-related issues, are sharing information with all actors involved (e.g. potential threats to national security) and involving families in the return of the fighter at all stages, when applicable.¹⁴⁹ Practitioners observed that 'when minors are involved, there is a high risk of deceptive behaviour amongst parents, i.e. in order to avoid losing their child's custody.'¹⁵⁰ Therefore, thorough assessment is key in these situations. Conflicts can arise between different organisations (e.g. youth services and security agencies) regarding what information to share, potentially leading to an unwillingness to cooperate.¹⁵¹ 'The issue of data sensitivity should be discussed thoroughly amongst all actors involved in the management of returnees (...).'¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2022.

¹⁴⁹ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2020b.

¹⁵⁰ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2020b p. 4.

¹⁵¹ Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2020b.

¹⁵² Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2020b p. 3.

V. Recommendations for policymakers, state agencies and CSOs

In conclusion, CSOs fulfil diverse roles and functions in exit work across Europe. They can bridge knowledge and capacity gaps that government actors lack and can provide support to target audiences that otherwise may not receive help. They have accumulated knowledge, expertise and skills in working with violent extremist clients and concerned individuals. CSOs provide exit services both within the criminal justice system and in society, using diverse approaches and methods. Their independence from government enhances their credibility and legitimacy in the eyes of their target audiences and promotes trust among affected communities. Due to their smaller organisational structure, CSOs have a great deal of operational flexibility and a wide window of availability, allowing for the provision of intensive care in sensitive periods. Many CSO-led interventions are designed to provide long-term, continuous support.

The previous chapter summarised challenges, lessons learned and inspiring practices in the cooperation between CSOs and state agencies in the exit field. Based on this work, the following recommendations can be formulated for policymakers, state agencies and CSOs.

Recommendations for policymakers

Cooperating with CSOs on policy formulation

- Support the development of professional quality standards for exit work, including basic universal principles such as confidentiality, relationship- and trust-building, transparency, core philosophy, methods and steps in the counselling process, safety and security, ethical and legal obligations, data protection and privacy, the skills and professionalism of exit workers, quality assurance and supervision.
- Ensure the involvement of relevant CSOs and first-line practitioners when creating or reviewing a national P/CVE strategy and/or action plan.
- Fund research and field studies to identify emerging threats and trends that can inform policy.¹⁵³
- Create a clear legal framework for information-sharing between different actors managing exit cases, based on clearly defined mandates.
- Provide guidelines on how data protection regulations (e.g. GDPR) apply in exit work.
- Work with RAN Policy Support that assists with implementing key policies at EU level.¹⁵⁴
- Ensure that sustainable and flexible funding for CSOs involved in exit work is included in the policy framework, striking a proper balance between CSOs' accountability and autonomy.
- Encourage CSOs to meet basic transparency criteria. Create clear reporting obligations that ensure CSO transparency and professionalisation.

Cooperating with CSOs on funding and sustainability

- Ensure long-term, stable funding for CSOs providing exit work.
- Facilitate the reduction of CSOs' administrative workload regarding grant applications and management.
- When providing funding, allow for some flexibility in the budget so that the CSO's work can be adjusted to reflect real-world changes in target audiences or their needs.
- When designing grants, secure additional sources for generating and sharing the gained knowledge.

¹⁵³ See specifically the Ankara Memorandum on Good Practices for a Multi-Sectoral Approach to Countering Violent Extremism, Good Practice 2 (2013); and the Abu Dhabi Memorandum on Good Practices for Education and Countering Violent Extremism (2014), Good Practice 5.

¹⁵⁴ European Commission, n.d. RAN Policy Support.

- When designing grants, foster cooperation between CSOs; they can complement each other's work.

Cooperating with CSOs on capacity-building

- Assess the existing state capacities and resources and identify gaps to be bridged. Consider whether CSOs can meet these needs.
- When setting up partnerships in exit work, identify and build on existing structures and organisations, to save time and resources.
- When setting up partnerships in exit work, create standards and structural requirements to assess potential CSO partners. Put in place transparent basic vetting procedures.
- If there are no CSOs with expertise in exit work, consider training a CSO having considerable experience in adjacent fields (youth work, offender reintegration, social work, humanitarian work, etc.).

Cooperating with CSOs on knowledge exchange

- Create platforms for knowledge exchange between CSOs, state agencies and policymakers.
- Fund knowledge creation and dissemination, to create more evidence-based programmes.
- Check in regularly with CSOs and state agencies to identify new developments on the ground. Invite them to present their work.
- Engage in thematic working group meetings, webinars and new forms of collaboration (e.g. practitioners' exchange programmes).¹⁵⁵

Cooperating with CSOs in case referrals, case management and security-relevant cases

- Oversee the regulations and protocols for information-sharing across state agencies, stakeholders and CSOs.
- Establish systems or platforms of cooperation between involved state agencies and CSOs. Provide the structural and legal frameworks for multi-agency cooperation and case referrals.

Recommendations for state agencies

Cooperating with CSOs on capacity-building

- When possible, involve CSOs in policy or programme development: explore what capacities they have and what resources they need to participate in or cooperate with the programme.
- Create evaluation standards to assess which CSOs are suitable for partnership. Assess potential partner organisations based on their capacity, staff and funding as well as transparency and credibility.
- When cooperating with CSOs in exit work, be transparent: clearly define the aims of the intervention, who the target audience is and what services are offered. Define capacity areas such as leadership and development, staff and quality assurance.¹⁵⁶
- Find community gatekeepers to provide information on each community's needs and resources, to build capacity to meet those needs.
- Support the development of basic universal principles of cooperation, including aspects such as confidentiality, relationship- and trust-building, transparency, safety and security, ethical and legal obligations, data protection and privacy, quality assurance.

¹⁵⁵ European Commission, 2021, *Strategic orientations on a coordinated EU approach to prevention of radicalisation for 2021*.

¹⁵⁶ Koehler, 2020.

Cooperating with CSOs on knowledge exchange and relationship-building

- Ensure staff at state agencies are familiar with CSOs in the field and are willing to consult them. Foster connections between offices that transcend individual relationships to prevent knowledge loss when staff change jobs.
- Promote dialogue and hold regular face-to-face meetings and networking events to foster relationships between CSO staff and state employees working in the exit field (e.g. prison personnel, social workers and educators).
- Commission relevant CSOs to train staff in order to raise awareness and increase understanding of radicalisation processes. Commission relevant CSOs to train staff who work with violent extremists in order to develop knowledge and skills on how to work with these groups effectively.

Cooperating with CSOs on case referrals

- Inquire which CSOs can take referrals from state agencies (police, prison, probation and municipalities) when exit work is needed, and keep employees informed of them. Establish contact points and information channels to facilitate referrals of violent extremist cases to CSOs.
- Provide mandates and access to clients for relevant CSOs to carry out exit work in state institutions (police, prison, probation and municipalities).
- Maintain active partnerships with CSOs offering exit services, to ensure continued collaboration and client referral.

Cooperating with CSOs on case management in a multi-agency collaboration setting

- Clarify the roles, competencies, expectations and contributions of each actor participating in multi-agency case management.
- Provide time and space for collaborating partners to get to know each other and each other's work, in order to facilitate relationship-building and trust.
- Establish platforms, communication channels and protocols and professional networks as a basis for multi-agency case management.
- Make it possible to hold regular meetings (e.g. case conferences) with all practitioners (CSO and state employees) working on the same case.
- Provide clear guidelines and routines on information-sharing among the involved practitioners, to ensure efficient cooperation and confidentiality for the programme participant. Ensure that information collection is carried out in an ethical and standardised manner.
- Synchronise the risk and needs assessments from each institutional partner to ensure a joint understanding of assessment measures and processes.

Cooperating with CSOs on post-release reintegration

- Ensure the continuity of post-release support by involving relevant CSOs to provide exit services.
- Involve exit-providing CSOs in the release-planning stage, to ensure a smooth transition from prison to probation.
- Develop standards for post-release follow-up and support, preferably created jointly with partner CSOs, to establish routines and protocols for post-release assistance.
- Establish and maintain trust and transparency in the post-release period between prison, probation and CSO staff by holding meetings and providing relevant information.

Cooperating with CSOs on security-related cases

- In multi-agency case management, ensure a mutual understanding of the risk and needs assessments from each institutional partner.

- In multi-agency case management, discuss what roles, responsibilities and boundaries CSOs have in relation to signalling and managing security-relevant cases.
- Establish communication channels and protocols that CSOs can use to signal security concerns. Provide consultation, security assessment and management, if needed.
- Cooperate with CSOs on cases where the programme participant needs protection (e.g. from retaliation of former extremist group members) as well as on cases where the individual poses a potential security risk to others.

Recommendations for CSO practitioners

Cooperating with policymakers on policy formulation

- Reach out to local and state policymakers, state agencies and other stakeholders to create connections and opportunities for collaboration.
- Inform policymakers and state agencies about the CSO and its services and approach. Provide materials showcasing the CSO's work (e.g. flyers, short visuals and websites).
- Meet policymakers at national level for information exchange on related current events and challenges.

Knowledge exchange and relationship-building with state agencies

- Consider investing time and effort to formalise the gained knowledge by creating publications, providing training or otherwise disseminating theoretical and practical knowledge.
- Familiarise state agencies with the CSO's work by proactively creating opportunities for knowledge exchange (e.g. networking events and training). Provide an overview of the CSO's professional and institutional background to demonstrate your capacity and services to other stakeholders.¹⁵⁷
- Map the needs of state agencies and provide them with tailor-made training.
- Consider using train-the-trainer approaches to better equip state agencies such as prisons or social workers to deal with violent extremism.

Cooperating with state agencies on case referrals

- Make strategic efforts to create awareness of the CSO's work and to build relationships with state employees who could refer violent extremist clients.
- Ensure a structured introduction and handover is in place, in case of changes in staff/positions.
- Educate state agencies that may provide referrals for exit work about the exit work and their role and contribution.

Multi-agency cooperation

- Clarify roles, competencies, expectations and contributions of each actor participating in multi-agency case management.
- Provide time and space for collaborating partners to get to know one another and each other's work, to facilitate relationship-building and trust.
- Establish platforms, communication channels and protocols and professional networks as a basis for multi-agency case management.
- Make it possible to hold regular meetings (e.g. case conferences) with all practitioners (CSO and state employees) working on the same case.
- Provide clear guidelines and routines on information-sharing among the involved practitioners, to ensure efficient cooperation and confidentiality of programme participants. Ensure that information collection is ethical and standardised.
- Ensure mutual understanding of the risk and needs assessments from each institutional partner.

¹⁵⁷ Emser, Rupp, Uhlmann, 2019.

Cooperation on post-release follow-up

- Establish and maintain trust and transparency with both client and state employees in the post-release period, through relevant information-sharing and regular contact between prisons, CSO staff, social workers and other personnel working on each case.

Cooperation on security-related cases

- In multi-agency case management, gain mutual understanding of the risk and needs assessments from each institutional partner.
- In multi-agency case management, discuss the roles, responsibilities, and legal/professional boundaries and obligations for CSOs, to signal and manage potential security risks.

Further reading

1. Koehler, D. (2017). *Structural quality standards for work to intervene with and counter violent extremism*. Counter Extremism Network Coordination Unit (KPEBW) http://girds.org/file_download/23/final-handbook-quality-standards.pdf
2. Radicalisation Awareness Network. (2017). *Setting up an exit intervention*. Ex post paper. RAN Exit. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/document/download/ed8d2edd-98a9-4fcb-9c17-fdec22e60673_en
3. Radicalisation Awareness Network. (2020). *Rehabilitation Manual: Rehabilitation of radicalised and terrorist offenders for first-line practitioners*. RAN. <https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/document/download/cdd4f566-f433-4>

About the authors

Dr Susanna Z. Papp is a psychologist, lecturer and trainer. She holds a Ph.D. in psychology and has contributed to the work of the RAN Rehabilitation Working Group since 2013.

Robert Örell is an independent expert, former director of Exit Sweden and programme director of Exit USA, with two decades of experience in the field of disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration. He has been co-leader of the RAN Rehabilitation Working Group since 2012.

Katharina Meredith is a Ph.D. student at Georgia State University, studying exit from violent extremist groups, and is currently working on prevention, intervention and evaluation efforts. She is the executive director of Stronger After.

Katerina Papatheodorou is a psychology PhD student at Georgia State University, where she works in the Violent Extremism Research Group (VERG) under the supervision of Dr John Horgan. Her research focuses on the psychology of terrorism and extremism.

Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh is a researcher and university lecturer in understanding and responding to radicalisation at the Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po) in Paris, France. She has worked as consultant to the UN on counterterrorism and P/CVE, and led the development of the OSCE Guidebook for Central Asia *A Whole-of-Society Approach to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism*.

Helena Brecht is a master's student in international security at the Paris School of International Affairs, Sciences Po. She has previous experience with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Bibliography

- Andersson Elffers Felix. (2018). *Evaluation of Forsa and the Family Support Centre. Evaluation on behalf of the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism (NCTV)*. Utrecht: Andersson Elffers Felix. <https://www.landelijksteunpuntextremisme.nl/mediadepot/1702325ce56c/EvaluationofForsaandtheFamilySupportCentre.pdf>
- Basra, R., & Neumann, P. (2020). *Prisons and Terrorism: Extremist Offender Management in 10 European Countries*. International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation. https://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/ICSR-Report-Prisons-and-Terrorism-Extremist-Offender-Management-in-10-European-Countries_V2.pdf
- Biffi, E. (2021). *The potential of restorative justice in cases of violent extremism and terrorism*. Radicalisation Awareness Network. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/document/download/61c13fce-08f4-435c-bee4-14bf722bd3be_en
- Bjørge, T., van Donselaar, J., & Grunenberg, S. (2009). Exit from right-wing extremist groups: Lessons from disengagement programmes in Norway, Sweden and Germany. In T. Bjørge & J. Horgan (Eds.) *Leaving Terrorism Behind. Individual and collective disengagement*. Routledge.
- Christensen, T. W. (2019). Civil actors' role in deradicalisation and disengagement initiatives: When trust is essential. In S. J. Hansen & S. Lid (Eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Deradicalisation and Disengagement*. Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9781315387420/routledge-handbook-deradicalisation-disengagement-stig-jarle-hansen-stian-lid?refId=0fd513e2-c92d-401f-abaa-f60058334fdf&context=ubx>
- Christensen, T. W. (2015). *A Question of Participation – Disengagement from the Extremist Right: A case study from Sweden*. Roskilde: Roskilde Universitet. [https://pure.au.dk/portal/da/persons/tina-wilchen-christensen\(574ffbfd-37e0-418d-81f1-58f8e069c7e3\)/publications/a-question-of-participation--disengagement-from-the-extremist-right\(73fc3dd3-1b8d-414a-a792-78996fa99202\)/export.html](https://pure.au.dk/portal/da/persons/tina-wilchen-christensen(574ffbfd-37e0-418d-81f1-58f8e069c7e3)/publications/a-question-of-participation--disengagement-from-the-extremist-right(73fc3dd3-1b8d-414a-a792-78996fa99202)/export.html)
- Clark, M. (2019). Motivational Interviewing for Deradicalization: Increasing the Readiness to Change. *Journal for Deradicalization*, (20), 47-74 <https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/245>
- Costa, V., Liberado, P., Esgalhado, G., Cunha, A. I., & das Neves, P. (2021). One size does not fit all: Exploring the characteristics of exit programmes in Europe, *Journal for Deradicalization*, (28), 1–38. <https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/487>
- Confederation of European Probation. (n.d.). *Neustart Austria: private organization in public probation*. CEP. Retrieved April 25, 2022, from <https://www.cep-probation.org/neustart-austria-private-organization-in-public-probation/>
- Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers. (2021). *Recommendation CM/Rec(2021)7 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on measures aimed at protecting children against radicalisation for the purpose of terrorism*. https://search.coe.int/cm/pages/result_details.aspx?objectid=0900001680a4397d
- Council of the European Union. (2014). *Revised EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment*

to Terrorism. Council of the European Union. <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9956-2014-INIT/en/pdf>

Emser, C., Rupp, T., Uhlmann, M. (2019). *Counselling work in tertiary prevention of Islamist extremism – challenges and approaches*. International Expert Workshop, Berlin, 19-20 March 2019. Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF, Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge) https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Forschung/workshopdokumentation-qualifizierungslehrgang-tertiaerpraevention.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=5

European Commission. (2021). *Strategic orientations on a coordinated EU approach to prevention of radicalisation for 2021*. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/system/files/2021-02/2021_strategic_orientations_on_a_coordinated_eu_approach_to_prevention_of_radicalisation.pdf

European Commission. (n.d.). *RAN Policy Support*. Retrieved April 25, 2022, from https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/networks/ran-policy-support_en

Figlesthler, C. & Schau, K. (2020). Zwischen Kooperation und Grenzziehung – Aushandlungen von Sicherheitsbehörden und Akteur*innen Sozialer Arbeit in der Radikalisierungsprävention. (Between cooperation and the drawing of boundaries—negotiations of security-related actors and actors of social work in the prevention of radicalisation). *Soziale Passagen*, 12(2), 421-439. Springer Link. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12592-020-00356-z>

Figelstaher, C., Schau, K., Bischoff, U., & M. Rosenkranz (2021). Schwerpunktbericht 2020: Entwicklungen, Handlungspraxen und Herausforderungen im Feld der Austiegs- und Distanzierungsarbeit – Wissenschaftliche Begleitung Handlungsberiech Land im Bundesprogramm „Demokratie leben!“ in der Förderphase 2020 bis 2024. *Deutsches Jugendinstitut e.V.* https://www.dji.de/fileadmin/user_upload/DemokratieLeben/Schwerpunktbericht_2020_%20Ausstiegs-und_Distanzierungsarbeit.pdf

Global Counterterrorism Forum. (2014). *Abu Dhabi Memorandum on Good Practices for Education and Countering Violent Extremism*. GCTF. https://www.thegctf.org/documents/10162/159880/14Sept19_GCTF+Abu+Dhabi+Memorandum.pdf.

Global Counterterrorism Forum. (2013). *Ankara Memorandum on Good Practices for a Multi-Sectoral Approach to Countering Violent Extremism*. GCTF. https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Good%20Practices%20for%20Multi-Sectoral%20Approach%20to%20CVE-GCTF%20Report_0.pdf

Hecker, M. (2021). *Once a Jihadist, Always a Jihadist? A Deradicalisation Program Seen from the Inside*. Focus stratégique, No. 102 bis, February 2021. Security Studies Center (Ifri). https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/hecker_once_a_djihadist_always_a_djihadist_2021.pdf

Koehler, D. (2020). *Stand-Alone De-radicalisation Programme Evaluation Tool for Stakeholders*. Dialogue about Radicalisation and Equality. https://www.dare-h2020.org/uploads/1/2/1/7/12176018/dare-de-radicalisation_evaluation_tool.pdf

Koehler, D. (2017a). *Understanding Deradicalization: Methods, Tools and Programs for Countering Violent Extremism*. Routledge.

Koehler, D. (2017b). *Structural quality standards for work to intervene with and counter violent*

Extremism: A handbook for practitioners, state coordination units and civil society programme implementers in Germany. Counter Extremism Network Coordination Unit.

http://girds.org/file_download/23/final-handbook-quality-standards.pdf

Koehler, D. (2015). Family Counselling, De-radicalization and Counter-Terrorism: The Danish and German programs in context. In S. Zeiger, A. Aly, P. R. Neumann, H. El Said, M. Zeuthen, P. Romaniuk, M. Y. Omelicheva, J. O. Ellis, A. P. Schmid, K. Lucas, T. K. Samuel, C. R. Jones, O. Lynch, I. Marchand, M. Denov, D. Koehler, M. J. Williams, J. G. Horgan, W. P. Evans, & S. Weine (Eds.) *Countering violent extremism: Developing an evidence-base for policy and practice.* Hedayah and Curtin University.

<https://apo.org.au/node/57458>

Korn, J. (2016). European CVE Strategies from a Practitioner's Perspective. *The annals of the American academy of political and social science*, 668(1), 180-197. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716216671888>

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. (2020). *A Whole-of-Society Approach to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization That Lead to Terrorism: A Guidebook for Central Asia.* OSCE. https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/a/7/444340_0.pdf.

Radicalisation Awareness Network. (2022). *RAN Study Visit to Paris on 'Effective management of the prison-exit continuum'*. Conclusion paper. RAN. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/whats-new/publications/ran-study-visit-paris-effective-management-prison-exit-continuum-online-event-07-08-december-2021_en

Radicalisation Awareness Network. (2020a). *Rehabilitation Manual: Rehabilitation of radicalised and terrorist offenders for first-line practitioners.* RAN. <https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/document/download/cdd4f566-f433-4>

Radicalisation Awareness Network. (2020b). *Digital study visit – Returnee coordinators in Germany: visit to Hesse and Berlin.* Conclusion paper. RAN. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/document/download/a366e1a4-003e-4ac0-b945-89832ed0bf35_en?filename=ran_conclusion_paper_study_visit_returnee_coordinators_en.pdf

Radicalisation Awareness Network. (2020c). *The role of restorative justice in preventing and responding to violent extremism.* Ex post paper. RAN RVT and RAN EXIT. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/pages/page/ran-rvt-ran-exit-role-restorative-justice-preventing-and-responding-violent-extremism-dublin-03-04_en

Radicalisation Awareness Network. (2019). *RAN Collection of Approaches and Practices: Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism.* RAN. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-best-practices/docs/ran_collection-approaches_and_practices_en.pdf

Radicalisation Awareness Network. (2018). *The challenge of resocialisation: Dealing with radicalised individuals during and after imprisonment.* Ex post paper. RAN. https://www.rcc.int/swp/download/docs/ran_pp_dealing_with_radicalised_individuals_06_112018_en.pdf/5a73d4d75500ff766f25b0729d926249.pdf

Radicalisation Awareness Network. (2017). *Setting up an exit intervention.* Ex post paper. RAN Exit. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/document/download/ed8d2edd-98a9-4fcb-9c17-fdec22e60673_en

Radicalisation Awareness Network. (2016). *Working group meeting – Multi-agency cooperation*. Ex post paper. RAN P&P. [ran_p-p_multiagency_cooperation_around_radicalised_offenders_stockholm_24-25022016_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/ran/p-p-multiagency-cooperation-around-radicalised-offenders-stockholm-24-25022016-en.pdf) (europa.eu)

Renard, T. (2020). Overblown: Exploring the gap between the fear of terrorist recidivism and the evidence. *CTC Sentinel*, 13(4), 19-29. <https://ctc.usma.edu/overblown-exploring-the-gap-between-the-fear-of-terrorist-recidivism-and-the-evidence/>

Rollnick, S., & Miller W.R. (1995). What is motivational interviewing? *Behavioural & Cognitive Psychotherapy*, 23(4), 325-334. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S135246580001643X>

Rolston, B. (2007). Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants: The Irish Case in International Perspective. *Social & Legal Studies*, 16(2), 259-280. DOI: 10.1177/0964663907076534. SAGE Publishing. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Bill-Rolston/publication/237968124_Demobilization_and_Reintegration_of_Ex-Combatants_the_Irish_Case_in_International_Perspective/links/56d9acfc08aeb4638bb9416/Demobilization-and-Reintegration-of-Ex-Combatants-the-Irish-Case-in-International-Perspective.pdf

Uhlmann, M. (2019). *Strategic Enhancement of Deradicalisation / Disengagement Approaches within a Comprehensive Framework of Preventing and Countering Violent Islamist Extremism and Violent Right-Wing Extremism*. Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community. https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/downloads/EN/publikationen/2021/strategic-enhancement-deradicalisation.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2

Uhlmann, M. (2017). *Evaluation of the Advice Centre on Radicalisation. Final Report*. Research Report 31. Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. https://www.beratungsstelle-radikalisierung.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/broschuere-fb31-evaluationsbericht-pdf.pdf;jsessionid=A339FB2FBF64E3748EE503F67799836E.intranet232?__blob=publicationFile&v=3

United Nations. (n.d.). *Capacity-Building*. Retrieved April 25, 2022, from <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/capacity-building#:~:text=Capacity%2Dbuilding%20is%20defined%20as,in%20a%20fast%2Dchanging%20world>.

UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework. (n.d.) *Civil society organisations (CSOs)*. Retrieved April 25, 2022, from <https://www.ungpreporting.org/glossary/civil-society-organizations-csos/>

United Nations. (n.d.). *Civil Society. Who we are*. UN. Retrieved April 25, 2022, from <https://www.un.org/en/civil-society/page/about-us>

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2018). *The Doha Declaration: Promoting a culture of lawfulness. Radicalisation and Violent Extremism*. UNODC. <https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/terrorism/module-2/key-issues/radicalization-violent-extremism.html>

van de Donk, M., Uhlmann, M., & Keijze, F. (2020). *Peer and Self Review Manual for Exit Work*. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/system/files/2020-04/ran_exit_peer_self_review_manual_for_exit_work_en.pdf

Van der Heide, E. J., & Schuurman, B. W. (2018). Reintegrating terrorists in the Netherlands: Evaluating the Dutch approach. *Journal for Deradicalization*, (17), 196-239. <https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/179>

Violence Prevention Network. (2020). *Standards in counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals: Manual by the Advice Centre Network of the Advice Centre on "Radicalisation" at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)*. 2nd extended version. VPN. https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Forschung/deradikalisierung-standardhandreichung-2020.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=4

Webber, D., Chernikova, M., Molinaro, E., & Kruglanski, A. W. (2020) Psychological approaches to terrorist rehabilitation: Direct and indirect mechanisms of deradicalization. In S. J. Hansen & S. Lid (Eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Deradicalisation and Disengagement*. Routledge. New York.

Williams, R. J. (2016). *Approaches to violent extremist offenders and countering radicalisation in prisons and probation*. RAN P&P Practitioners' working paper (2nd ed.). Radicalisation Awareness Network. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/document/download/41571a60-4f08-43a0-baf0-1e4c52521e5c_en

FINDING INFORMATION ABOUT THE EU

Online

Information about the European Union in all the official languages of the EU is available on the Europa website at: https://europa.eu/european-union/index_en

EU publications

You can download or order free and priced EU publications from: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publications>. Multiple copies of free publications may be obtained by contacting Europe Direct or your local information centre (see https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en).

EU law and related documents

For access to legal information from the EU, including all EU law since 1952 in all the official language versions, go to EUR-Lex at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu>

Open data from the EU

The EU Open Data Portal (<http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en>) provides access to datasets from the EU. Data can be downloaded and reused for free, for both commercial and non-commercial purposes.

Radicalisation Awareness Network



Publications Office
of the European Union