

EU-CoE HELP Radicalisation Prevention Project - Project Brief

Background and goal

In recent years, the European Programme on Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP; www.coe.int/HELP) of the Council of Europe has widened its scope developing courses as a response to societal challenges, including the surge in extremist violence that Europe faces. Radicalism towards terrorism has materialised in the last three years, with EU terrorist acts in several places in Europe (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Spain, UK). Indeed, countering terrorism and radicalisation – among CoE priorities - is urgent on EU soil. One of the major threats highlighted in the April 2017 annual report by the Secretary General “Populism - How strong are Europe’s checks and balances?” is the surge in extremist violence that Europe faces, showing the damaging effects of hate speech, incitement to hatred and most particularly of Islamophobia. The SG highlighted the importance of human rights education as a “fundamental component of any measure taken to address discrimination, prejudice and intolerance, thus preventing and combating violent extremism and radicalisation in a sustainable and proactive way”.

Addressing radicalisation¹ leading to terrorism and violent extremism is a common priority for both the the CoE and the EU. Therefore, joining forces and with EU funding, a Project on Radicalisation Prevention has started at the end of 2017 targeting those countries most affected by the phenomena of terrorism and radicalisation. The focus will be in the development and implementation in targeted EU countries of a comprehensive (e-learning) **HELP course on criminal justice response to prevent radicalisation** leading to terrorism and violent extremism with common and distinctive modules suited for different audiences and with different levels of accessibility, complemented with a module on collection and use of evidence in counter-terrorism cases (the latter module funded under the EU-CoE Project “HELP in the EU”). The intervention will also promote mutual learning and exchanges through the organisation of the **European Seminars** and strengthening of relations of concerned EU National Training Institutions (NTIs) of the HELP Network. Synergies with other areas of work of the CoE (legislative, monitoring and executions) will be sought.

Project summary

Objectives

- General: To **improve the criminal justice response** in the EU to prevent radicalisation leading to terrorism and violent extremism
- Specific: To **increase capacities** and mutual trust of primarily justice practitioners dealing with radicalisation prevention (RP) through training, inter-agency and cross-border cooperation

¹ While there is no universally agreed definition of radicalisation, the Council of Europe Guidelines for Prison and Probation Services regarding Radicalisation and Violent Extremism, adopted some terminology for the purpose of the guidelines, including radicalisation and violent extremism. According to them, “radicalisation represents a dynamic process whereby an individual increasingly accepts and supports violent extremism. The reasons behind this process can be ideological, political, religious, social, economic or personal.”

Results:

- Development of a new HELP course on Radicalisation Prevention and at least 4 national adaptations
 - o Basic module(s) (for all) for consistency and cross-profession
 - Specific module for prosecutors and judges (on prison oversight and on gathering and use of evidence in counter-terrorism cases)
 - Specific module for prisons and probation staff
- Training of Trainers (ToT) for 12 participants (from 5 EU MS)
- 2 Cross-border courses launched for 3 EU MS each (for 180 participants)
- 3 European Seminars (for 180 participants):
 - exchanges on **risk assessment tools**
 - implementation of **de-radicalisation actions**
 - best practices - counseling and development of **counter narratives**

Budget: €621.000 (80% EU, 20% CoE) - **Duration:** 24 months as of October 2017

The HELP Course on Radicalisation Prevention

The course will be developed by HELP Programme of the Council of Europe with EU funding and in cooperation with key strategic HELP partners (i.e. European Judicial Training Network and National Training Institutions from relevant EU MS) by using the HELP methodology (<http://www.coe.int/en/web/help/help-training-methodology>). The free online course will be primarily addressed to legal professionals such as judges and prosecutors, but also prison and probation officers. It can also be used by other actors involved in radicalisation prevention. The course will be launched in at least 4 EU countries throughout 2018 and 2019. If you are interested in contributing to this project as an expert or participating in any of its seminars, please send an e-mail to Ana-Maria.Telbis@coe.int

Project Implementation Progress

Currently, preparations are ongoing for the organisation of the first of the three thematic seminars, on the topic of Risk Assessment Tools. The Seminar is the first of a series of three to be organised under the Project, aiming at **mutual learning, exchange of good practices and cooperation**. It will focus on (penitentiary and judiciary) risk assessment tools, mainly to evaluate practices and use.

The Seminar is planned to be organised in Strasbourg in **March 2018** and will gather core actors in the field of radicalisation prevention from several Member States (MSs) with a view to exchanging on the issue of structured professional judgment and use of risk assessment tools evaluation prior to sentencing (pre-sentence report) and follow-up through the execution of the sentence for each person, with particular attention to ensure communication and collaboration from prison to probation.

The event will be organised for approximately **60 participants** and will benefit from the expertise of several key experts in the field and representatives of relevant departments of the CoE dealing directly or tangentially with the issue (criminal law cooperation and penological cooperation units, counter terrorism unit, etc.)

The Seminar will also serve as a very useful forum for gathering feedback on the structure of the future online course and may constitute a useful platform for confirming the most suitable experts for the development of the HELP online course on radicalisation prevention.