



Preventing and fighting radicalisation leading to violent extremism

The central role of local authorities

In front of radicalisation and violent extremism, repressive responses are not enough. In order to fight these phenomena, it is primordial to act preventively. In addition to policing and justice policies, the prevention policy must mobilise local crime prevention partnership schemes in order to strengthen the resilience of both individuals and groups to the risks of radicalisation.

Because it is by nature close to citizens, the local level is strategically positioned to put in place such preventive actions and to mobilise all the relevant local stakeholders.

Integrating the fight against radicalisation into a global European prevention strategy

The phenomena of violent extremism validate the importance of the approach promoted by Efus - a combination of prevention, sanction and social cohesion -, which seeks to solve security problems by tackling underlying causes. Since the risk factors of radicalisation are similar to those leading to crime, the prevention of violent radicalisation must be part of a global prevention strategy. Consequently, local authorities must be able to respond to the specific problem of violent, radicalised individuals while at the same time integrating the strategy for the prevention of radicalisation within the local and integrated security policy.

Acting against radicalisation leading to violent extremism

> *“Local Institutions Against Extremism - LIAISE” - European project (2014-2016)*

Since September 2014, Efus is leading, with financial support from the European Commission, an exchange project aimed at helping local authorities to put in place local measures for the prevention of violent radicalisation. Titled “Local institutions against extremism” (LIAISE), this project gathers 10 cities from six countries – Augsburg (DE), Brussels (BE), Düsseldorf (DE), L’Hospitalet (ES), Liege (BE), Malmö (SE), Montreuil (FR), Reggio Emilia (IT), Sarcelles (FR), Vilvoorde (BE) – as well as the UK-based think tank Institute for Strategic Dialogue, which is specialised in the phenomenon of extremism, and the German association for intercultural exchange Ufuq. The German association Cultures Interactives and the Belgian Forum for Prevention and Urban Security are also associated.

The objective of the LIAISE project is to create a training programme tailored to the needs of local stakeholders. This programme encompasses both the prevention of radicalisation and the processes of disengagement or de-radicalisation. The programme includes four two-day sessions on the following topics:

- > raising awareness among actors on the ground;
- > drafting a local strategy involving different stakeholders;
- > the local approach to disengagement and de-radicalisation;
- > local communications strategy and counter-narratives;
- > support to families;
- > resilience and prevention in schools..

The training modules created as part of the project will be published in 2016. These educational resources will be a set of tools aimed at European local authorities.

> *“Local Institutions Against Extremism II - LIAISE 2” - European projet (2016-2018)*

In June 2015, the European Commission accepted the proposal to prolong the LIAISE project (LIAISE 2) in order to strengthen and broaden the existing partnership. From January 2016 onwards, LIAISE 2 will gather 28 partner institutions from 11 countries (BE, CZ, DE, ES, EL, FR, GB, IT, NL, PT, SE), representing 17 cities, three regions, four national Forums and four thematic NGOs: Augsburg, Alexandroupoli, Bagneux, Bologna, Bordeaux, Brno, Brussels, Düsseldorf, Essen, L’Hospitalet de Llobregat, Liege, Malmö, Paris, Reggio Emilia, Rotterdam, Sarcelles, Setubal, The Hague, Toulouse, Vilvoorde; the State of Bavaria, the Generalitat (autonomous government) of

Catalonia, the Belgian, French, German, and Italian Forums for Urban Security, Ufuq, and the Confederation of European Probation (CEP).

The objectives of LIAISE 2 will be to:

- > create a European network of local authorities for the prevention of violent radicalisation;
- > offer training sessions to local authorities and their partners (200 local stakeholders);
- > support the implementation of local strategies for the prevention of radicalisation that are integrated in the crime prevention strategies;
- > implement pilot initiatives in the 17 partner cities;
- > issue political recommendations for the local, national and European levels.

> ***“Towards an alliance of European cities against violent extremism”- Initiative with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (Since September 2015)***

Efus signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe “with a view to implementing the Congress Strategy to combat radicalisation and on issues related to urban violence,” on 14 September, in Strasbourg (France).

In accordance with the Resolution 381 (2015) and Recommendation 371 (2015) on “Combatting radicalisation at grassroots level: the role of local and regional authorities”, the Congress “decided to build on existing co-operation established with relevant networks such as the European Forum for Urban Security to implement its strategy through joint activities involving local authorities.”

The aim of the agreement is to create a framework for cooperation between the Congress and Efus on all the issues related to security and the fight against violence that fall within the mandate of local authorities in Council of Europe member States. “The objective is to address urban safety, human rights and citizen participation issues, bringing together the political action of the Congress and the technical expertise of Efus” through joint activities, which may include common initiatives and the organisation of conferences (*see below*).

> ***Conference of local authorities on the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism, 18 November 2015, Aarhus, Denmark***

The local authorities’ conference on the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism was held on 18 November 2015, in Aarhus, Denmark, Hosted by the Mayor of Aarhus and the Mayor of Rotterdam, this conference, was organised by Efus and the Congress as part of the initiative “Towards an

alliance of European cities against violent extremism” (*see above*) in partnership with the Strong Cities Network.

About a hundred mayors, local elected officials and local representatives of 22 European countries adopted a common declaration. Through this final declaration, they call for the mobilisation of local authorities in close cooperation with national governments, as part of an alliance of European cities to counter the rise of radicalisation and the subsequent acts of extreme violence. A European summit will be held in 2016 within the framework of this initiative. Visit www.citiesagainstextremism.eu

> *Partnership with the international Strong Cities Network*

Following the “Countering Violent Extremism” summit organised by the White House in Washington in February 2015, and the European summit on the same theme organised in Oslo in June, a group of cities and municipalities working on the prevention of all forms of violent radicalisation was created, the Strong Cities Network. This initiative is managed by the British think tank Institute for Strategic Dialogue, with which Efus is partner. As such, Efus took part in the launch of the network in New York, in September 2015. Several Efus member cities were represented at this event and are also part of the Strong Cities Network steering committee.

> *Partnership with the general secretariat of the French Inter-ministerial Committee for Crime Prevention*

Efus cooperates with the French Inter-ministerial Committee for Crime Prevention (*Comité interministériel pour la Prévention de la Délinquance*) to help French cities prevent radicalisation. The objectives are to help cities to better assess the problem and the role of local authorities, to inform them about existing schemes, and to support them so that the issue of radicalisation is included in their local crime prevention strategies.

Efus organises training sessions on radicalisation for French cities in cooperation with the French Forum. This training aims to provide local and regional authorities with knowledge to understand the process of radicalisation and to help them to integrate this issue within their security and crime prevention strategies.

> *Partnership with the Belgian Forum for Urban Security and the Belgian Ministry of the Interior*

