

The objective of the project is to contribute to the efforts of civil society and central and local authorities in the Western Balkans to prevent radicalization, recruitment and inspiration of individuals to violent extremist ideologies and groups. The project reinforces and supports the implementation of the broader strategies for Counter Terrorism and the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism.

PART A - Alternative and Counternarratives to Prevent Violent Extremism in the Western Balkans.

The online landscape of violent extremist messaging and propaganda is fast paced and ever-changing. At the same time, capacity of government institutions and the civil society to design and implement relevant and highly reactive content is limited. As supposed to directing resources on institutions and organizations with limited resources and interest of a sustained engagement in online alternative and counternarrative creation, the project seeks alternative, resource-efficient and sustainable methodologies for creating and spreading alternative and counternarratives. Implemented in all six Western Balkan countries, Part A of the project will:

- **Reinforce already existing and successful alternative and counter-messages by redirecting online users looking for violent extremist content to such alternative and counter messages.** Capacitate civil society, journalist and media partners to pilot the Redirect Method – a method developed by Moonshot CVE¹ and Google using available online advertisement tools to redirect internet users attracted to violent extremist messages to YouTube-playlists with positive video content, which discredit or undermine violent extremist messages;
- **Empower and build the capacity of the civil society to produce effective social media campaigns to provide alternatives to divisive and conflict-inciting narratives.** Reinforce existing credible voices from civil society organizations and NGOs with a track record of long-term engagement in alternative and counter-narrative creation, human rights and/or reconciliation and conflict prevention strengthening their capacities in campaign messaging, social media photo and video campaign creation and graphic design. They will also be capacitated to use online and social media tools for audience targeting, tracking and performance monitoring, methods for measurement and evaluation.
- **Engage interfaith and multi-confessional platforms to use modern technology and the social media to raise awareness and dispel myths and misconceptions about religion and radicalization.** Build on existing initiatives by single religious or interreligious institutions covering areas of reconciliation, peacebuilding, promotion of tolerance and interfaith dialogue, explore potential forms of engagement and partnerships between interfaith institutions and local start-up communication- and tech companies, strengthening local capacities in messaging and social media communication to dispel myths and misconceptions about religion and religious radicalization.

¹ Moonshot CVE is a project partner in the implementation of Part A. It is a startup that provides digital capacity building and support to design and implement counter-messaging campaigns, with a strong focus on data. More information is available at <http://moonshotcve.com>.



PART B: Operationalization and implementation of national strategies and action plans for the prevention of violent extremism in Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Governments and civil society actors in the Western Balkans region are now working to operationalize and implement National P/CVE Strategies and Action Plans. Part B of the project will focus on building sustainable institutional capacity with key government and relevant civil society actors in support of implementation of national P/CVE strategies and action plans in Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Key activities implemented in Part B include:

- **Support the offices of the National Coordinators for P/CVE in Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia through the secondment of officials and provision of subject-matter expertise.** Technical support in the area of strategic budgeting, M&E, administration, outreach, or other fields as needed, will be provided through dedicated personnel seconded to the office of the National CVE Coordinators. They will assist in taking action-oriented steps to carry out priorities identified in the action plans. Besides the daily assistance provided through the secondees, the project will also bring in specific subject matter expertise of organizations and P/CVE experts.
- **Organize specialized agency-specific and inter-agency trainings in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.** Develop specialized training programmes and deliver trainings to selected government agencies within specific areas/professions, e.g. early detection for professionals within the education sector, or key issues related to the reception, reintegration and assistance to returning foreign fighters and their families. Trainings will be limited to priority areas, filling gaps of other donor-funded initiatives. Additionally, the project envisages the need for multi-agency trainings addressing challenges related to inter-institutional cooperation, referrals.
- **Support the Albanian National Coordinator for P/CVE in establishing Local Security Councils with a P/CVE mandate and build their capacities to fulfill this role.** The project will complement previous efforts of the National Coordinator in the establishment of additional Local Security Councils (LSCs) covering all twelve regions of the country. Technical support to further build capacities of the LSCs members to improve the design and delivery of local prevention-oriented measures. The workshops will introduce key concepts of P/CVE, roles, responsibilities, and local prevention strategies.
- **Support the government of Albania to develop a strategy for receiving and addressing the immediate reintegration and resocialization needs of family members of foreign fighters.** The strategy will outline the specific priorities and actions needed to ensure appropriate reception and reintegration of foreign fighter family members. It will define necessary steps and the minimum standards in terms of security and vetting procedures; longer-term risk-assessments; child-specific assessment; mental health and psychosocial support; humanitarian assistance; medium-term financial assistance/income generation support; legal aid; and community stabilization.

