



# Marshall Center Security Forum 2018

## *Transnational Security Threats*

### *Regional and National Contribution to the Regional Security*



## “Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) in the Western Balkans”

*Vasko Shutarov*



September 19, 2018

## WHAT IS COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM?

Peter R. Neumann:

*„...CVE counters not terrorism but **processes of radicalisation**. It involves no prosecutions, arrests, or threats of force, and seeks to mobilise and **empower actors** that are not traditionally associated with national security, such as **local governments, educators, social workers, youth workers, religious leaders and civil society.**”*



## WHAT IS COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM?

DHS:

*“CVE aims to address the **root causes** of violent extremism by providing **resources to communities** to build and sustain **local prevention efforts** and promote the use of **counter-narratives** to confront violent extremist messaging online.*



# COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM



*“He didn’t buy Blerim a ticket to Syria, but he took him to places where they say him that Jihad is a good idea” – Arieta Heta*




# DID WE SOLVE THE PROBLEM?

New laws – police actions – indictments - court - prison






# NATIONAL STRATEGIES & GOVERNMENT APPROACH



Republika e Kosovës  
RepublikaKosova-Republic of Kosovo  
Qeveria – Vlada – Government  
Zyra e Kryeministrit - UredPremijera - Office of the Prime Minister

STRATEGY ON PREVENTION OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION  
LEADING TO TERRORISM 2015-2020

Prishtina, September 2015



BOŠNJA I HERCEGOVINA  
VUČE MINISTARA

STRATEGIJA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE  
ZA PREVENCIJU I BORBU PROTIV  
TERORIZMA

2015- 2020.

Sarajevo, 2015. godine

\*Uvojesa na 14 sjednici Vijeća ministara BiH dana 08.07.2015. godine

Предлог

На основу члана 45. став 1. Закона о Влади („Службени гласник РС”, бр. 55/05, 71/05 – исправка, 101/07, 65/08, 10/11, 68/12 – УС, 72/12, 71/14 и 44/14),  
Влада доноси

НАЦИОНАЛНУ СТРАТЕГИЈУ  
ЗА ПРЕВЕНЦИЈУ И БОРБУ ПРОТИВ ТЕРОРИЗМА  
за период 2016-2021. година

РЕЗИМЕ

Република Србија препознаје тероризам као претњу по основне вредности на којима почива, као што су владавина права, људска права и демократија, укључујући слободу, мир и сигурност грађана, територијални интегритет, стабилност и безбедност државе и легитимно изабраних власти.  
Политика у овој области заснована је на осуди свих дела тероризма, независно од чиниоца у кавима околности, од стране којих оних, где, када и како су извршена. Истовремено, Република Србија се противи екстремизму тероризма са било којом верском, етничком или другом групом.  
Превенција и борба против тероризма представља значајно питање остваривања спољнополитичких приоритета Републике Србије у настојању да се обезбеди трајна глобална и регионална стабилност и субјекту безбедносне претње које доноси тероризам и друге претње које су са њим повезане.  
Република Србија препознаје универзални карактер тероризма и екстремизма и неопходност континуиране и ширине сарадње држава на глобалном и регионалном плану ради успостављања заједничког приступа, који се приоритетно реализује кроз УН и друге међународне организације. У оквиру безбедносне политике и суочавања са актуелним безбедносним изазовима Република Србија као кандидат за чланство у ЕУ, даје пуну подршку активном учешћу у оквиру европских политика у борби против тероризма, као и на билатералном плану уз поштовање опште прихваћених међународних принципа и стандарда.  
Национална стратегија за превенцију и борбу против тероризма за период 2016-2021. година (у даљем тексту: Стратегија), дефинише основна и трајна одређења, вредности и циљеве политике Републике Србије у области превенције и борбе против тероризма и успоставља стратешко-орјентирани оквир саобављајућег одговора на ову претњу, са нагласком на превенцију могућих напада уз подршку и учешће шире друштвене заједнице.  
Стратегија даје смернице за унапређење истраживања и развој нових метода, мера и instrumenata превенције и борбе против тероризма, са циљем да успостави прописују између обима ангажованих ресурса и степена претње.  
Ова стратегија има за своју заштиту Републике Србије од терористичких претњи по њене грађане, вредности и интересе, уз истовремено поддржавање међународних напора у борби против тероризма. Иако остало, наведеног садржаја било остварено одређеним циљевима и остваривањем мера на доктринарном плану, кроз развој и поддржавање безбедносне културе друштва и промовисање одређених вредности, као и на нормативном и институционалном плану, кроз унапређење капацитета за превенцију и борбу против тероризма, посебно капацитета за супростављање радикализацији и насилном екстремizmu, као све израженијем феномену. Стратешки циљеви на посреду превенције биће остварени мерама за sprečavanje uzroka и ублажавањем фактора који постојећу радикализацију, мерама за јачање континуирану радикализацију, као и мерама превенције од реализације терористичког акта који се планира или

Страна 1

ANNEX 1. ALBANIA: NATIONAL STRATEGY  
FOR COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Fostering a secure environment based on re-  
spect for fundamental freedoms and values

The Albanian nation is founded on democratic values and a tradition of inter-faith coexistence. Our common vision is to cultivate a society based on shared respect for human rights, the rule of law, equality, and fundamental freedoms.

Peace, stability, and prosperity throughout the region are also of strategic importance to Albania. It is in Albania's interest to foster good relationships with its neighbors, based on mutual trust and inclusiveness, where inter-ethnic and inter-religious harmony prevails.


The protection and promotion of such values is increasingly important in our ever-changing world, where the threat of violent extremism recognizes no borders.

Albania's commitment to countering violent extremism and radicalization

Violent extremism and radicalization, in all forms and manifestations, currently constitute the most serious threats to peace and security around the world. As such, the fight against these threats, regardless of where they occur or by whom they are committed, requires government actors to strengthen cooperation at the national as well as the regional and global levels.

In conceptualizing an Albanian response to violent extremism, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy will remain the common platform for all future endeavors. Moreover, Albania will continue to strongly support international counter-terrorism efforts, as well as promote UN counter-terrorism standards, while safeguarding human rights and reinforcing the rule of law.

Albania is committed to making a substantial and tangible contribution to international efforts to counter violent extremism and radicalization:



Влада на Република Македонија  
Национален комитет за спречување на насилен  
екстремизам и борба против тероризам

НАЦИОНАЛНА СТРАТЕГИЈА  
НА РЕПУБЛИКА МАКЕДОНИЈА  
ЗА СПРЕЧУВАЊЕ НА НАСИЛЕН ЕКСТРЕМИЗМ  
(2018-2022)

Скопје  
Февруари 2018 година



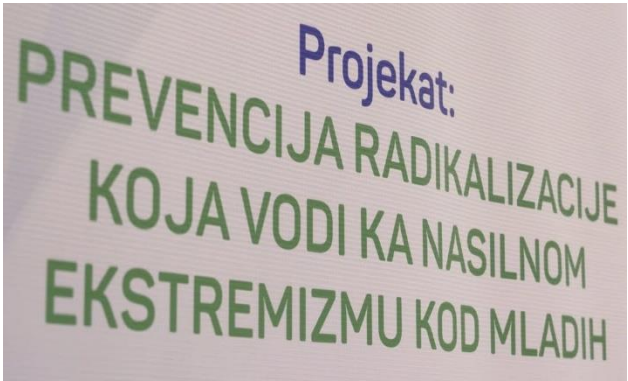


# RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES





# Selected example: IC of Bosnia



12,000 followers on Facebook. Newspaper *Preporod* has 17,000 followers, radio BIR 22,000 followers



# CIVIL SOCIETY







Albanian  
Helsinki Committee



The Norwegian  
Helsinki Committee



Netherlands  
Helsinki Committee



Helsinki Committee for  
Human Rights in Serbia



Together for Life



This project is funded  
from European Commission

## Civil Society Countering Violent Extremism



Terre des hommes

Helping children worldwide, tdh.ch



## Strengthening Civil Society to Build Youth Resilience to Violent Extremism



University College  
BEDER



Powering new  
generations  
against extremism



Centre for  
Common Ground



Terre des hommes

Helping children worldwide, tdh.ch



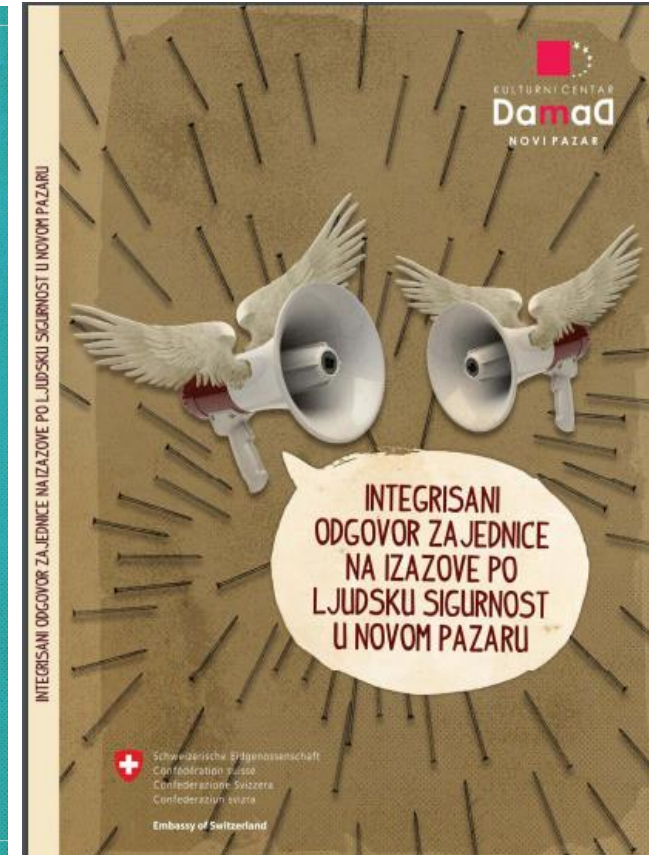
dfr  
Observatory for Children  
and Youth Rights

"Schools as a front line adversaries of Violent Extremism"

Kamëz, Elbasan and Pogradec.













RESEARCH

04/2015

06/2016

02/2017

Report Inquiring into the causes and consequences of Kosovo citizens' involvement as foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq

KOSOVO SECURITY BAROMETER

Special Edition: The citizens' views against violent extremism and radicalization in Kosovo

WOMEN IN VIOLENT EXTREMISM LESSONS LEARNED FROM KOSOVO

USAID

Kosovo's Violent Extremism Policy Document

April 2017 2021

Mapping the state of play of institutional and community involvement in countering violent extremism in Kosovo

Public report on community involvement in Kosovo (CIVICUS)

Public report on community involvement in Kosovo (CIVICUS)

International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism

Special Report

United States Institute of Peace

Adrian Shtati

Dynamics of Radicalization and Violent Extremism in Kosovo

Drivers of Radicalization and Violent Extremism in Kosovo: Women's Roles in Supporting, Preventing & Fighting Violent Extremism

Anne Speckhard, Ph.D. & Anisa Shajkovi, Ph.D.

April 2017

JDPC

Countering the Cultivation of Extremism in Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Case for Comprehensive Education Reform

DPC Policy Note

Series # 10

by Valery Perry

Sarajevo

September 2015

Atlantic initiative

THE NEW LURE OF THE SYRIAN WAR - THE FOREIGN FIGHTERS' BOSNIAN CONTINGENT

by Mado Rahović and Muhammed Jusić

Sarajevo, 2016

Summary

• Bosnia is a country with a long history of religious diversity, but because of ethnic divisions, it has been unable to fully embrace its religious diversity.

• The new lure of the Syrian war has led to a new wave of foreign fighters, who are motivated by a variety of factors, including religious, political, and economic.

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OSCE

Final Report: Countering Violent Extremism in BiH, Tbilisi, Georgia

March 1-3, 2016

Introduction

The Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Tbilisi exercise (TVE), co-organized by the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BSH) and the OSCE Mission to BiH, with the support of the U.S. Government, brought together almost 70 participants from numerous relevant professional sectors across BiH and Albania.

Task Force Findings

The TVE model incorporated two detailed case studies, developed by national experts from BiH, each based upon a young individual who, for various reasons, became associated with violent extremist individuals, groups and/or ideas, leading ultimately to the planning and/or perpetration of a violent offense or threat to a foreign conflict zone.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Attitudes on Violent Extremism and Foreign Influence

January 4 - February 3, 2017

CENTER FOR INSIGHTS IN SURVEY RESEARCH

A PROJECT OF THE INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

HELSINKIŃSKI ODBOR ZA LJUDSKA PRAVA U SRBIJI

HELSINKIŃSKA SVETLOŠĆ 35

STAVOVI MLADIH U SANDŽAKU KOLIKO SU MLADI OTVORENI PREMA ISLAMSKOM EKSTREMIZMU

PROF. DR VLADIMIR ILIĆ

SAŽETAK

Od polovine desetih godina prošlog veka do danas, nastao ekstremizam je prvenstveno u potpunosti bio u Srbiji, ali u Srbiji su se pojavili i ekstremizam u pravcu islamizacije i radikalizacije.

PREPORUKE

1. Potrebno je osigurati nastavu o islamu u školama, da se izbjegne ekstremizam i radikalizacija.

2. Potrebno je osigurati nastavu o islamu u školama, da se izbjegne ekstremizam i radikalizacija.

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## Kosovo:

- CVE strategy support
- empower youth, women, CSOs
- social media, internet
- support youth
- Inter-faith dialogue
- hate speech
- multi-sectoral cooperation on CVE
- referral system

## BiH:

- CVE strategy support
- empowering local-level actors
- raise awareness
- Media/internet education
- role of the civil society
- role of education
- multi stakeholder meetings
- youth engagement

## SERBIA:

- CVE strategy support
- community policing
- social cohesion/inclusion
- youth awareness
- youth inclusion
- Internet misuse
- civil society





# REGIONAL CONFERENCES

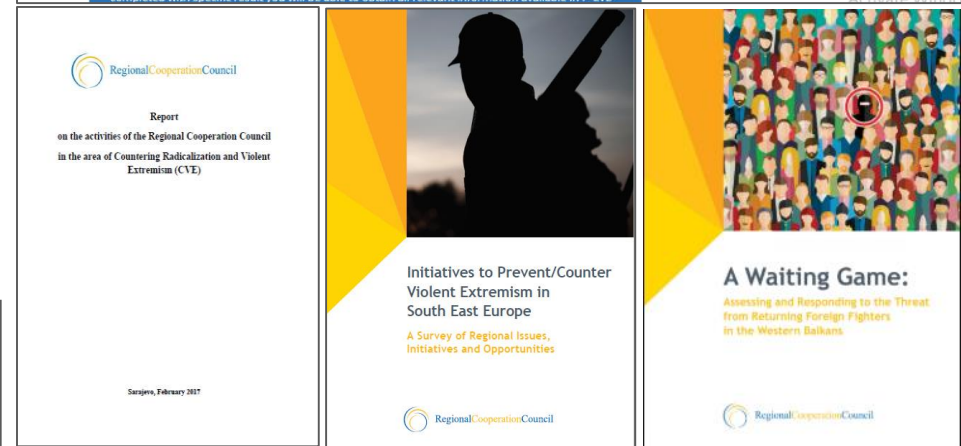
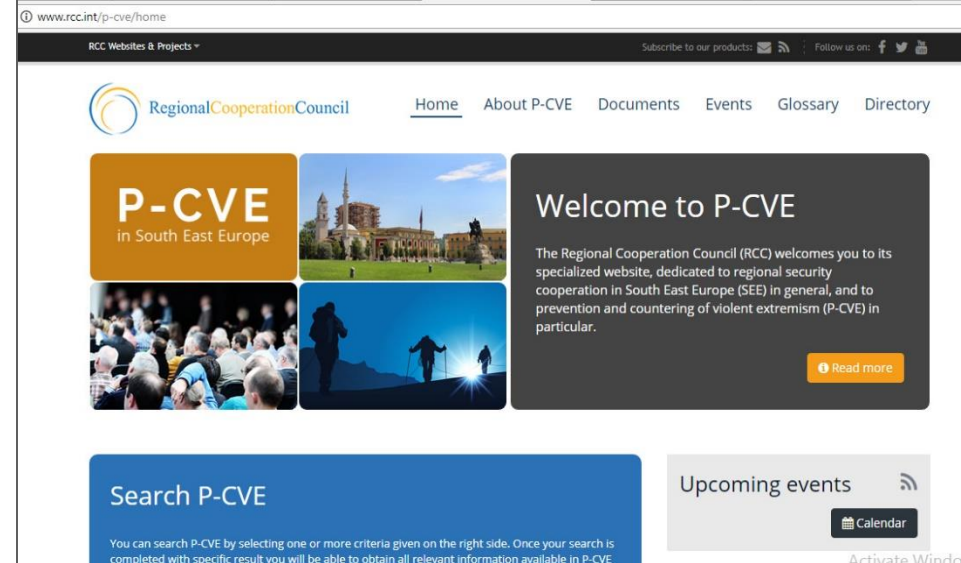




# REGIONAL APPROACH



**DCAF**  
a centre for security,  
development and  
the rule of law



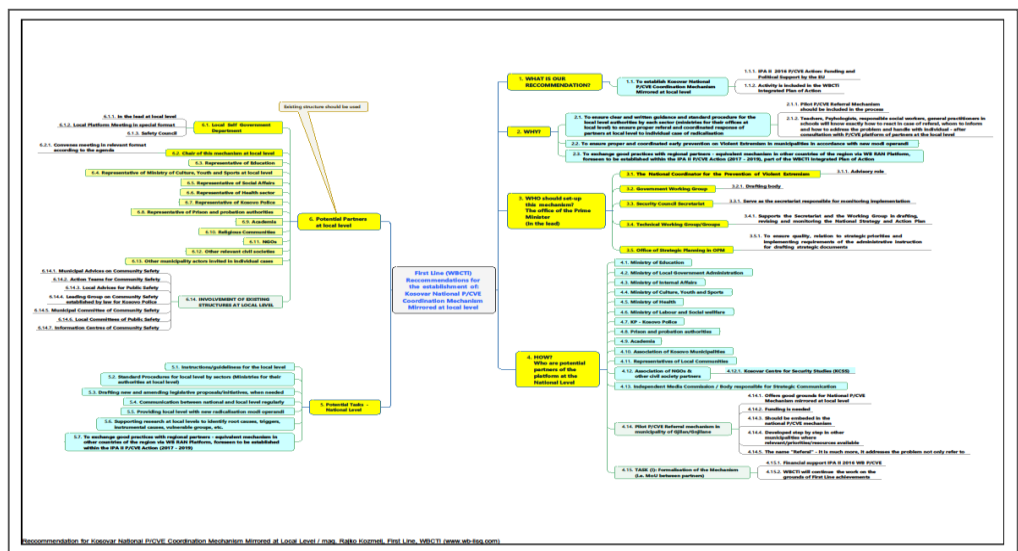
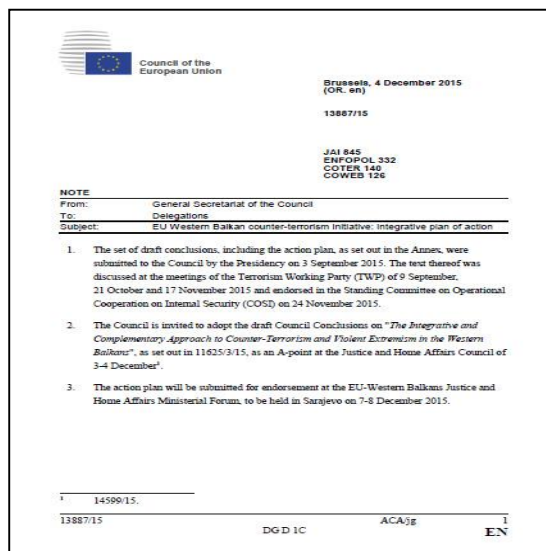
The “Prevent–Refer–Address” Mechanism (P-R-A)

Regional EU-supported “First Line” Project

WB *national* P/CVE coordination mechanisms

foreseen to be established

by autumn 2019 (WB RAN platform)





# REGIONAL INITIATIVES ON CT/CVE



Macedonian president at UN  
requires Balkan CT Center, 09/2014

## EUROPE

### REGIONAL ENTITIES

**Balkans Regional CVE Initiative** was announced on the margins of the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly in September 2015. It is anticipated that the Government of Albania will lead this Western Balkans regional CVE initiative to build regional capacity and cooperation on CVE issues, in particular through supporting front-line CVE practitioners, civil society, and local communities, developing national CVE strategies, and promoting research, education, and counter-messaging. No relevant publications or organizational structure has been put in place yet. For more information, see [whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/09/29/fact-sheet-leaders-summit-counter-isil-and-violent-extremism](https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/09/29/fact-sheet-leaders-summit-counter-isil-and-violent-extremism)

Albania proposed CVE center



Serbia proposed to EU to establish a  
Regional center for de-radicalisation



# REGIONAL RESEARCH



Austrian National Defence Academy

## Violent Extremism in the Western Balkans

Policy Recommendations<sup>1</sup>  
Study Group Regional Stability in  
South East Europe

31<sup>st</sup> RSSEE SG WORKSHOP - Belgrade, Serbia  
27 - 29 September 2015

Belgrade  
Centre for  
Security  
Policy



RS Cooperation of  
Institutions and  
Security Studies  
Initiatives

- Focus public policies on prevention rather than sanction.
- Work on eradicating the root causes of violent extremism.
- Strengthen moderate voices among religious communities as a preventive measure to counter extremism.
- Differentiate between different categories of returnees among foreign fighters.
- Foster education as a tool for reconciliation and social progress.
- Promote critical thinking, civic engagement and media literacy.
- Encourage the media to improve understanding and raise awareness instead of fostering prejudices.
- Adopt stricter regulations regarding transparency of foreign charities.
- Enhance countering of extremist messages in social media.

### Situation Analysis

For more than a decade, the Western Balkans was considered to be a region slowly recovering from the conflicts of the 1990s and on the way of consolidating peace and stability. In spite of occasional setbacks, democratic backslides and sluggish reforms there has

been a dependable expectation that conflicts will be resolved or at least managed peacefully. Nonetheless, recent events demonstrated that the region is still vulnerable. A recent chain of serious security incidents casted a dark shadow over such an image of the region. On 27 April 2015, a radical Islamist attacked a police station in Zvornik, Bosnia and Herzegovina, killing



one policeman and wounding two others. Two weeks later, the town of Kumanovo in northern Macedonia was hit by a "weekend war" leaving eight policemen and fourteen terrorists dead. Finally, in June 2015, the Islamic State invited Balkan Muslims in a video message to "either join, or kill over there". The video had a very powerful resonance across the region and most mainstream media reported about it in a dramatic fashion. Many downplayed the importance of the



## Initiatives to Prevent/Counter Violent Extremism in South East Europe

A Survey of Regional Issues,  
Initiatives and Opportunities



## What About the Women? Understanding and Addressing the Problem of ISIS Female Recruitment in the Western Balkans

Eric Mietz

## BETWEEN SALVATION AND TERROR: RADICALIZATION AND THE FOREIGN FIGHTER PHENOMENON IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

Edited by Vlado Azinović

Foreword by Peter R. Neumann



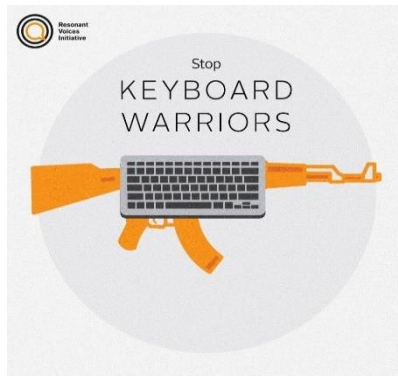
SCHOOL OF  
POLITICAL  
SCIENCES

ATLANTIC  
INITIATIVE





**Resonant  
Voices  
Initiative**



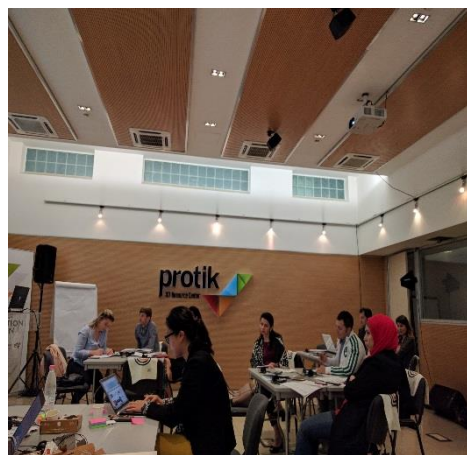
Tirana



Durres



Skopje



Tirana



Prishtina



Belgrade



Sarajevo



# BALKAN INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING NETWORK



[Home](#) [About BIRN](#) [Network](#) [News and Events](#) [Contact us](#)

## BIRN Launches Balkan Extremism Reporting Project

December 1, 2015

BIRN Hub began a new project focused on online reporting on extremism in the Balkans with two days of training for journalists from across the region.

The two-day training session for 11 journalists from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia was held in Belgrade from November 21-22 as part of Balkan Investigative Reporting Network's new project, 'Strengthening Media Reporting and Public Understanding of Extremism in the Western Balkans'.

The journalists heard lectures from Secunder Kermani, a BBC Newsnight reporter and producer, and Shpend Kursani, a researcher at the Kosovo Centre for Security Policy.

Kermani lectured on various aspects of Islamic theology, and presented an overview of



## Balkan Jihadists

### The Radicalisation and Recruitment of Fighters in Syria and Iraq

March 2016

BalkanInsight

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## ISIS IN THE BALKANS

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### Bosnia Urged To Protect Clerics From ISIS Threats

Bosnian presidency member Bakir Izetbegovic has called on Bosnian institutions to protect the country's Muslim clerics - after ISIS recently issued

#### News

Bosnia Urged To Protect Clerics From ISIS Threats

Romania Detains Suspected Islamic State Militant

Religious Extremism Has Grown in Kosovo, UN Study

Russia's Strategic Plans Failing in Balkans, IISS Says

Balkans Remains Key Route for Terrorists, EU Warns

ISIS Threatens Terror Campaign in the Balkans

Kosovo ISIS Leader Killed, Media Reports

#### Analysis and Opinion

Bosnia Ponders Terror Threat as Interpol Seeks Suspects

Danijel Kovacevic

Experts Tackle Religious Radicalisation of Young Bosnians

Igor Spaic

No Deradicalisation Schemes for Bosnian Terror Convicts

Denis Dzidic

Balkan Jihad Warriors Remain Safe on the Net

Fatjona Mejdini, Marija Ristic, Denis Dzidic, Ervin Qafmolla, Sinisa Jakov Marusic, Natalia Zabatin

Albania Failing to Address Threat From Syria Returnees



# STRONG CITIES NETWORK



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**BIH:** Bjelina, Centar/Sarajevo, Doboj, Prijedor, Srebrenik, Doboj, Tuzla

**SERBIA:** Bujanovac, Presevo, Novi Pazar, Tutin,

**MACEDONIA:** Cair/Skopje, Gostivar, Kicevo, Kumanovo, Struga, Tetovo

**ALBANIA:** Elbasan, Tirana

**MONTENEGRO:** Gusjine, Ulcinj



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# PROMOTION OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE AND PEACE



Edi Rama  
@ediramaal



Mirenjohje te kater perfaqesuesve te klerit shqiptar qe sot mahniten Parisin dhe e ngriten Shqiperine ne pedestal!



9:29 AM - 11 Jan 2015



## Reisu-l-ulema čestitao Vaskrs

Objavljeno petak, 03 Maj 2013 12:20



10



Sarajevo, 3. maj 2013. (MINA) – Reisu-l-ulema Husein ef. Kavazović uputio je mitropolitu dabrobosanskom Nikolaju i Njegovom Preosveštenstvu Episkopu Zahumsko-Hercegovačkom i Primorskom Grigoriju čestitku povodom pravoslavnog blagdana Vaskrsa.

U čestitki Reisu-l-uleme se kaže:

-Vaša Eminencijo,

U povodu nastupajućeg Vaskrsa upućujem Vama i svim pravoslavnim vjernicima u Bosni i Hercegovini čestitke sa željom da ga provedete u miru i zadovoljstvu.

U nadi nam je svima na srcu mir i blagostanje, primite izraze mog poštovanja.



## Toleranca ndërfetare një ndër vlerat më të rëndësishme të shtetit tonë

Presidentja Jahjaga e uroi Igumanin Janjiq dhe të gjithë besimtarit ortodoks për Festën e Pashkëve Ortodokse dhe tha se toleranca fetare në Kosovë është vlera më madhe e shoqërisë në vend.

Zmadho fotografinë



Presidentja e Republikës së Kosovës, Atifete Jahjaga vizitoi sot Manastirin e Deçanit për Festën e Pashkëve Ortodokse.

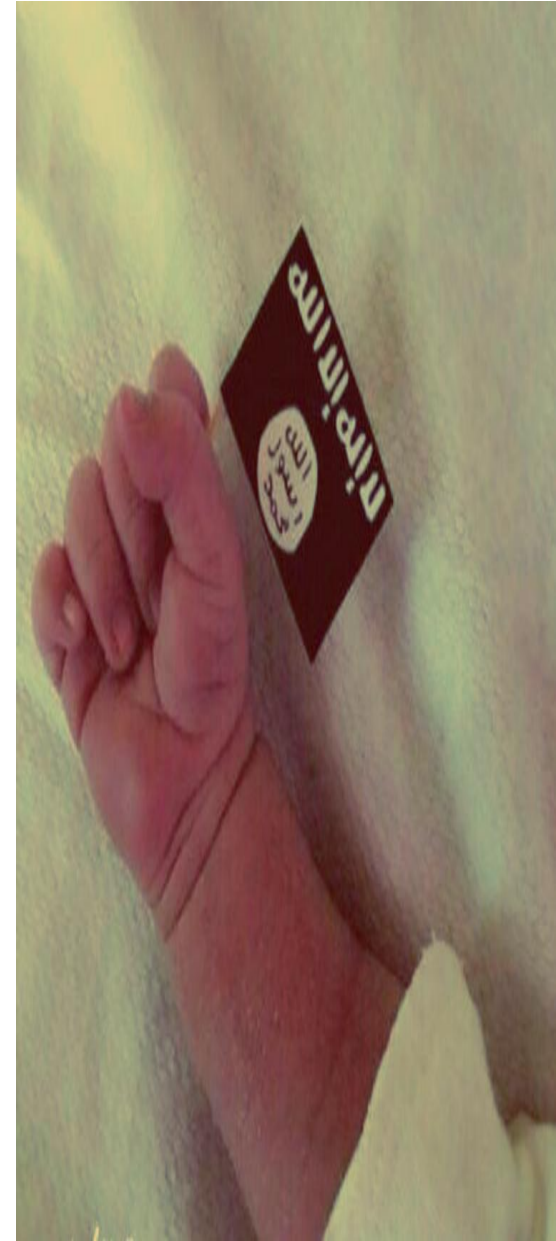


Courtesy Photo



# CONCLUSIONS

- The concept of CVE in the WB region is mainly understood in the context of countering religious extremism and the FTF phenomena
- Governments have well done CVE/CT strategies, not yet implemented
- Mostly conferences, workshops, research
- Different level of project implementation
- Lack of training for frontline workers
- Limited engagement of the religious communities
- Lack of national, regional and international level coordination
- Lack of regional projects and cooperation platforms
- Lack of community programs
- Online propaganda, prisons radicalization as future challenge





*“Violent extremism begins where societies of common values cease and vice versa.  
Where societies of common values move strongly towards the future, violent extremism ceases”*

- Zlatko Lagumdžija



THANK YOU ON YOUR ATTENTION



# RECOMENDATIONS

- To empower civil society/CSOs, youth, women, teachers
- To furtherly promote community based activities
- To consider rehabilitation, resocialization, reintegration, prisoners
- Coordination of activities - regional approach - cooperation
- Coordination of foreign donations/funding & projects
- CVE should be broadened to all types of extremism
- Focus on inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue as part of CVE
- Use local tradition as strategic communication
- More government led initiatives
- CVE should be a permanent policy beyond FTF phenomena

