Old Threat, New Approach: Tackling the Far Right Across Europe

GUIDE FOR POLICY MAKERS

INSTITUTE *for* STRATEGIC DIALOGUE

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About this report

From 2012 to 2014, the Swedish Ministry of Justice and the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) are partnering on a pan-European project aiming to enhance understanding of what works in preventing and countering far-right extremism in 10 countries (Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovak Republic, Sweden, the UK). Over the course of the two-year project, the partnership has carried out research and country visits to identify measures taken at the policy level and by civil society, and gather best practices. This report is the second in a series of publications to share the key challenges, and lessons learned about what works in tackling far-right extremism. The project will also develop an online tool to provide practical training for practitioners, and will seed a long-term network of experts and practitioners working to counter far-right extremism.

About the author

Vidhya Ramalingam leads ISD's programme of work on far-right extremism and integration and diversity. In addition to this project aiming to enhance European cooperation in tackling far-right extremism, she runs a cross-European study of what works in integration policy and practice. Her recent publications include *Integration: What works?* and *Far-Right Extremism: Trends and Methods for Response and Prevention*. Her work on far-right extremism has been featured in the Guardian, Huffington Post, the New Statesman, and international press. Vidhya holds an MPhil in Migration Studies from the University of Oxford, and a BA in Anthropology and Inequality Studies from Cornell University.

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Cover photo: A screen shot from a YouTube video uploaded by a German far-right extremist movement called The Immortals. The Immortals use text messaging to organise spontaneous flash mobs, wearing black clothing and white masks.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The threat from the far right in Europe

Several recent events have focused attention on the growing dangers posed by the far right in Europe. In October 2013, Ukrainian born Pavlo Lapshyn was convicted of racially-motivated murder and for plotting a campaign of terror against mosques in the UK. In May 2013 commenced the trial of Beate Zschäpe, the only surviving member of the National Socialist Underground (NSU), a far-right terrorist group which has been linked to a series of murders of immigrants, the murder of a policewoman and the attempted murder of her colleague, the 2001 and 2004 Cologne bombings and 14 bank robberies. In August 2012, Anders Behring Breivik was convicted for the murder of 77 people in twin terrorist attacks in Norway. Security agencies such as Europol have documented heightened levels of right-wing extremist activity across a number of countries in Europe.[1]

While such high-profile and high impact events hit the headlines, the bulk of the threat posed by the far right is felt through smaller-scale localised harassment, intimidation and bullying by extremists targeting minority communities. The dichotomy between national security and community safety means that, as a result, far-right extremism tends to be relegated to a second tier security threat, even though its impact is felt on a daily basis by individuals and communities across Europe.

Far-right extremism takes a number of forms. There are four main types of agents: youth gangs, white power and skinhead groups; terrorist cells and lone actors; political movements and paramilitary groups; and nativist, identitarian and anti-Islam movements. They engage in a wide range of activities: spontaneous hate crime, vandalism and hooliganism; street demonstrations; shock tactics; hate speech and incitement; and planned hate crime and terrorism.

Though often rooted in its local context, far-right extremism has impacts across borders. Groups and methods in one country are often mirrored elsewhere, and online connectivity is making this more common. There is also evidence of cooperation between national groups and the pooling of knowledge and expertise.

About this report

While there has been considerable attention devoted to the growing threat posed by the far right, this has mostly been nationally specific. To date, there has been extensive research on the problem but very little on the response. This is one of the first cross-European comparative studies of solutions to far-right extremism. This report aims to address both these shortcomings by documenting policy responses to the far right in 10 European countries: Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovak Republic, Sweden, and the UK. It involved interviews with over 100 inspirational individuals, from those

writing National Action Plans to counter extremism to frontline professionals carrying out one-on-one interventions with far-right supporters. This report is the second in a series of publications to share the key challenges in tackling far-right extremism across Europe, and lessons learned about what works from policy through to civil society. In 2012, a volume of country reports was published to set out the history, existence and varieties of far-right extremism across the 10 countries.[2] A third report will be aimed at practitioners.

Government approaches to far-right extremism

The weight given by governments to far-right extremism varies across Europe; many states are only recently transitioning away from the assumption that far-right extremism is simply a normal male youth issue, and some countries and many local authorities remain in denial of the problem at all. Across the 10 countries, governments tend to take one of four broad policy approaches to tackling the far right.

General crime prevention and social policy approach: Countries like Denmark have built their extremism work into general crime prevention structures, with a focus on preventing risk behaviours across different forms of extremism. The benefits of this approach are that preventative measures are not siloed, but build on existing frameworks and social structures, engaging with those actors already coming in contact with vulnerable individuals.

Securitised approach: This approach sees police or even intelligence agencies leading on response to the far right, as has been the case in Hungary. The challenge with this approach is that the problem is viewed exclusively through a security lens, which can lead to mistrust and suspicion between social services, civil society and security services. This approach also tends to result in an under-investment in broader preventative measures. Some countries, like Slovakia, are in the process of moving from a securitised approach to a more holistic one.

Social integration-linked approach: Linking integration strategies with the fight against far-right extremism can be beneficial as it widens the concept of integration beyond measures for ethnic minority communities to those for a society resilient to extremism and intolerance. In Denmark and the UK, the same government departments are responsible for integration policy and the fight against far-right extremism. In many ways, the prevention of far-right extremism needs must also focus on ensuring that members of the 'majority' community are achieving on integration outcomes.

Multi-agent and multi-level approach: Some countries, such as Germany, take a multi-actor approach. This ensures a holistic strategy, but creates significant challenges of coordination and information sharing across ministries and regions and between government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Underneath the policy frameworks, there are a small number of policy content and delivery areas that constitute responses to the far right. Each country prioritises these policies according to a number of factors, such as its understanding of the problem, historical context, or government-community dynamics. The key policy areas are: legal and repressive measures, public order management, prevention, deterrence, Exit programmes, data gathering, public communications, and training and capacity building.

Challenges to implementation

Several challenges have hampered the development and implementation of responses to far-right extremism.

● **Definitions:** Many countries still lack a clear definition for far-right extremism or struggle with ill-defined terminology with respect to legal definitions of hate crime.

● **Poor data:** The actual threat posed by far-right extremist movements is challenging to assess; data collection is patchy and dogged by under-reporting; there is often more 'talk' than 'do' within the far right, so it is hard to know when words will turn into actions; more needs to be done to understand the link between calls for violence in the online space and real-world attacks; and in nearly every country there is a data gap between intelligence, government, academics, and civil society.

● **Lack of awareness by first-line responders and the general public:** Many European countries struggle with a general lack of awareness of signs and symptoms of extremism among police and key influencers (individuals who come into daily contact with vulnerable individuals, including teachers, social workers, mental health practitioners, and others). The general public can also be a powerful force in prevention and intervention efforts, and low public awareness about the nature and scale of the threat has hindered communities from self-regulating far-right extremism where possible.

● **Public debates on immigration and national identity impact on the problem and on our ability to tackle it:** The issue of far-right extremism is embedded in and impacted by a wider public discourse on immigration, integration, diversity and national identity. Given sensitivities to these issues, politicians are sometimes reluctant to speak out.

● **Working together – who does what?:** Responding to the far right necessitates cooperation between governments, police, intelligence agencies, frontline workers, NGOs and community activists. Many countries are still struggling to work out who does what and how to work together effectively.

● **Securitisation of the issue:** Though far-right extremism deserves to be taken seriously as a security concern, in some countries the securitisation of the problem has contributed to measures that have hindered rather than helped.

● **Balancing democratic values and regulation:** Managing ideological extremism of any nature comes with the inherent challenge of ensuring that democratic rights and freedom of speech are upheld. There is evidence to suggest that banning movements can lead to unintended and counter-productive outcomes. Governments must raise the barriers to participation in far-right activities, while maintaining freedoms of speech and protest.

● **Responses are out of touch with modern developments:** Many of the methods being employed are outdated and do not make good use of modern technology, popular culture, and other trends appealing to the target audiences.

Policy recommendations

This report makes 10 key recommendations for policy makers:

1 Responses to the far right need to be underpinned by a strong legal framework

A sound legal framework is the bedrock of any response to far-right extremism and laws need to be visible, consistent and be accompanied by a communications plan.

- At a bare minimum, all countries should have a clear legal instrument on hate crime. This should be underpinned by strong anti-discrimination laws. The EU should adopt a comprehensive framework on hate crime.

- National governments need to put in place legal recognition for victims groups across all prerequisites of discrimination. These prerequisites need to be based on historical and current evidence, as well as anticipate future targeted identities. The EU should prepare a directive on victims' rights specifically targeted to victims of hate crime.

- Governments need to resource awareness and capacity building activities with police and NGOs to ensure the appropriate implementation of the law.

2 Public agencies and communities need to work together to deliver robust and effective public order management responses

Public order disturbances are the most common expressions of far-right extremism across Europe. Good public order management can minimise the impact of protests on local communities, build trust between those who need to work together to tackle the far right, and reduce the daily misery experienced by those who are targeted by right wing extremists. Some of the most effective methods have gotten community members involved in local policing initiatives, involved real-time tension monitoring, or engaged in dialogue with movements themselves before and during activities. National governments, municipalities, police and NGOs need to share good practice on what works in public order management responses, including both online and offline efforts.

3 Governments need to make serious long-term investments in preventive measures

It is essential that governments invest in substantive prevention programmes to tackle the far right in both the short and long-term. This needs to cover a number of bases.

- Governments should support programmes for young people to build lasting relationships with others from diverse backgrounds. They should also invest in the resources needed for this work, including film testimonials and online resources, to act as counter-narratives and guides for practitioners. These resources need to make better use of technology.

- Governments should also fund tension-monitoring work and then deploy preventive programmes in areas with potential for far-right extremism.

- Governments, the police and NGOs need to work together to take on the difficult conversations with the hard to reach in all communities.

4 **Governments need to put in place national Exit programmes to help individuals to leave far-right movements and groups behind**

Many individuals who want to leave far-right groups and movements end up trapped because they struggle to find jobs, housing and social support outside these extremist networks. This report advocates that all countries set up a national Exit programme. These programmes tend to be more effective and credible when they are independent of government, though they are likely to only be sustainable through government or statutory funding.

5 **Governments need to fund a variety of attractive deterrence activities to keep young people away from far-right influences**

Governments need to support activities to divert young people from attending and participating in far-right movements and activities. During key times, such as far-right marches, they need to work with 'key influencers' to deter young people from taking part.

6 **Governments and NGOs need to work together to enhance public understanding of the threat from the far right, underpinned by clear and decisive political messages**

There is a real need for political leadership on the issue of the far right. Politicians need to be more courageous about making public statements denouncing far-right ideologies, intolerance and hatred. Governments need to have in place dedicated media strategies focused on responses to the far right.

7 **Governments need to put in place national strategies and action plans for tackling the threat from the far right**

There are many different approaches to tackling the far right across Europe, but whatever the preferred focus, it is vital that governments have a national strategy and action plan to coordinate efforts. This may fall within a broader strategy to counter violent extremism, or may stand alone.

8 **The EU, governments, police and NGOs need to work together to improve and streamline data gathering on the threat from the far right**

There are significant improvements required to data collection.

● States need to make better use of and pool existing data. Governments need to move beyond police data, given its limitations. The EU could help to ensure that data is collected systematically by formulating reporting requirements as a part of an EU framework on hate crime.

● Governments need to support research and testing on ways in which new media can support the collection of data on far-right extremism.

● Governments should work to ensure more data on the problem is made publicly available, and weighty academic studies are translated into digestible formats for policy makers.

9 **Major capacity building initiatives are needed to enhance the ability of frontline workers to spot and respond to the signs of radicalisation towards the far right**

The effectiveness of legal instruments and policy frameworks is limited by the capacity of frontline workers. Governments should fund training and capacity building programmes for police, municipalities, teachers, NGOs, community and youth workers, and elected officials. These are most effective when they are developed and delivered

in partnership with civil society, involve human stories and testimonials, and make good use of modern technology.

10 **Governments must adopt long-term funding arrangements to make responses to the far right more sustainable and effective**

Finally, one of the recurring themes of the report has been the frustration with short-termism in relation to responses to the far right. Legal and policy frameworks will help to tackle the far right, but those working at the street level to tackle extremist groups and movements need the stability and long-term funding to be able to put in place measures to not just tackle today's problems, but prevent their recurrence in the future.

INTRODUCTION

Europe has been confronted repeatedly with the grim reality of right-wing extremism over the past several years. In October 2013, Ukrainian born terrorist Pavlo Lapshyn was convicted for racially-motivated murder and for plotting a campaign of terror against mosques in the UK. Lapshyn confessed these attacks were motivated by racial hatred, and were done with the aim of sparking a race war. In August 2012, far-right terrorist Anders Behring Breivik was convicted for the murder of 77 people in twin terrorist attacks on Norwegian government buildings and on the island of Utøya, the deadliest attack in Western Europe since the 2004 bombings in Madrid. Before the attack, Breivik distributed a compendium of texts entitled *2083: A European Declaration of Independence*, setting out a world view borrowed from authors around the globe, in which he argued for the violent annihilation of 'Eurabia' and multiculturalism.

Meanwhile, a mounting campaign of harassment and violence against asylum seekers, ethnic and sexual minorities has presented itself in various forms across Europe. In the past five years, Hungary and Sweden were both hit by a string of serial killings of Roma and people of immigrant background. The problem of far-right extremism has been a persistent one, and exists in every European country to varying degrees. Far-right extremist groups have tended to be less well organised than other extremist movements. But in countries where there is a low volume of group activity within the far right, there is often a greater risk of individuals carrying out incidences with potentially high impact.

Where the far right has been better organised, marches and demonstrations have been featured in headlines, from English Defence League demonstrations to the 11 November march on Polish Independence Day. Community organisations representing victim communities, including Muslims in the UK and LGBT communities in Poland, shared stories of fear and intimidation by far-right activists, from smashed office windows to personal threats. The impacts of these demonstrations on communities cannot be ignored.

It is a challenging problem to deal with, not least because it is intertwined with public and political debates on immigration and integration, national identity, and national security. Far-right extremists may even be riding on narratives that are actually accepted by large sections of the mainstream population, or ideologies advocated by mainstream politicians. Far-right extremism is often reactionary, playing off current affairs and traumatic events to mobilise supporters around hateful messages. One need not look further than the dramatic rise in online support (from approximately 25,000 supporters to over 100,000 within days) for the English Defence League (EDL) in the days immediately following the murder of Lee Rigby in Woolwich in London in 2013.[3] Governments and communities need to be front footed and anticipatory with responses to far-right extremism.

Far-right extremism has always been international in nature, but is increasingly so online. These movements are operating beyond country borders,

whether through the development of spin-off movements like the Defence League model initiated in Britain and replicated in the Nordic countries, or through copy-cat violence, like the arrest in Poland of a man who allegedly had been inspired by Norwegian far-right terrorist Anders Behring Breivik to plan to bomb the Polish parliament building in Warsaw.[4] The challenge of far-right extremism is, and should no longer be, one that can be siloed in individual states' policy and civil society responses. International cooperation is needed to develop an understanding and transfer knowledge about the nature of these movements, and how we can respond across borders.

As part of the field research for this project, over 100 inspirational individuals were interviewed across 10 countries (Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovak Republic, Sweden, the UK), from those writing National Action Plans to counter extremism to individuals carrying out one-on-one interventions with far-right supporters. This report is the second in a series of publications to share the key challenges in tackling far-right extremism across Europe, and lessons learned about what works from policy through to civil society.

There has been a high volume of chatter and concern about the far right among mainstream governments, civil society and the media, but there has to date been a low volume of strategic and planned action to tackle these groups. More action is visible in some countries, like Germany, where the problem has existed on a large scale for decades and continues to grow. Where there is a higher volume of action, there is bound to be a higher volume of mistakes to learn from. Some of the best initiatives often go undetected, as frontline professionals are simply getting on with their work rather than speaking about it. This report seeks to

amplify those voices and experiences. Achieving more cooperation at the European level and promoting cross-border exchange allows us to learn faster, encourages innovation, and means that those with less experience can learn from those with more.

Chapter One sets out what we know about far-right extremism and how it impacts communities at the local and national level. It presents a typology of the four main agents of far-right extremism across the countries surveyed here, and the types of activities they engage in. These are: youth gangs, white power and skinhead groups; terrorist cells and lone actors; political movements and paramilitary groups; and nativist, identitarian and anti-Islam movements. It also paints a picture of how the wider context of a country's history, immigration and demographics, public attitudes, and the presence of a strong radical right political force can also impact far-right extremism.

Chapter Two presents the current state of government responses to far-right extremism, setting out four structures of government policy on this issue: general crime prevention and social policy approach; a securitised approach; a social-integration linked approach; and multi-agent and multi-level approach. Within these structures, there are a number of methods which broadly fall into seven categories: legal and repressive measures; public order management; prevention; deterrence; Exit programmes; information and public communications; and training and capacity building. This chapter discusses the importance and limitations of these approaches, and how they are applied to varying degrees across the 10 countries surveyed.

Chapter Three highlights the challenges that have hampered the development and implementation of

sound responses to the far right across these countries. These include: definitions; poor data; lack of awareness by first-line responders and the general public; the impact of public debates on immigration and national identity on the problem and on our ability to tackle it; lack of cooperation and understanding where responsibility lies; securitisation of the issue; balancing democratic values and regulation; and that responses are out of touch with modern developments. This report recognises the challenges facing European governments in dealing with far-right extremism.

However, the far right has been persistent and flexible, and can have a potentially high impact. Governments need to put aside political differences and demonstrate a clear commitment to tackling this issue.

Chapter Four presents a series of detailed recommendations to improve design and implementation of European policy to tackle far-right extremism. This report makes 10 key recommendations for policy makers.

10 key recommendations for policy makers

1 Responses to the far right need to be underpinned by a strong legal framework

2 Public agencies and communities need to work together to deliver robust and effective public order management responses

3 Governments need to make serious long-term investments in preventive measures

4 Governments need to put in place and support national Exit programmes to help individuals to leave far-right movements and groups behind

5 Governments need to fund a variety of attractive deterrence activities to keep young people away from far-right influences

6 Governments and NGOs need to work together to enhance public understanding of the threat from the far right, underpinned by clear and decisive political messages

7 Governments need to put in place national strategies and action plans for tackling the threat from the far right

8 The EU, governments, police and NGOs need to work together to improve and streamline data gathering on the threat from the far right

9 Major capacity building initiatives are needed to enhance the ability of frontline workers to spot and respond to the signs of radicalisation towards the far right

10 Governments must adopt long-term funding arrangements to make responses to the far right more sustainable and effective.

CHAPTER 1
DEFINING THE PROBLEM

Europol defines far-right terrorist groups as those that 'seek to change the entire political, social and economic system on an extremist right-wing model,' whose ideological roots 'can usually be traced back to National Socialism.'[5] Far-right extremism is a much broader concept encompassing a diverse range of groups with different ideologies, ranging from less ideological youth street gangs to neo-Nazi terrorist cells, to anti-Islam activists and registered parties seeking to affect change through the political system. There are, however, some defining features: racism, xenophobia, ultra-nationalism, and authoritarianism, more often than not manifesting in anti-democratic, or anti-liberal democratic, means.[6]

It is important not to overstate or exaggerate the threat. In several countries, security services have deemed the threat from far-right extremism to be minimal, and even on the decline.[7] In Norway, far-right violence and hate crimes have decreased since the mid-1990s.[8] The estimated number of far-right extremists in the Netherlands has declined from 600 individuals in the year 2007 to 300 people in 2010 and approximately 100 individuals today.[9]

The assessment of the threat as relatively weak in some places is often attributed to the far right's inability to form a coherent social movement, a lack of public support, and the effects of law enforcement or legal restrictions. Far-right movements tend to struggle from disorganised organisational structures, often fraught with in-fighting and ideological differences between members. Leadership tends to be weak in some groups, leading to eventual fragmentation or decline. This has often meant that the threat of organised crime is low, as groups lack the capacity to carry out large scale planned attacks. They often lack capacity even to carry out marches and demonstrations, as emphasised by the low turnout at Defence League marches in 2012 as the EDL model was exported to the Nordic countries and the Netherlands.[10]

However, there are reasons to be concerned about how the problem might develop. Estimated figures of participation in movements are not often solid indicators of the threat. Even in countries where intelligence reports minimal numbers, most experts contend that far-right extremism is simply a 'hidden' phenomenon, less visible due to a strong penal code and social stigma against these groups, and increasingly active online.[11] There is a high level of chatter in the online space, and less is known about the relationship between talk and action. Worryingly, Europol confirms that many members of the extreme right-wing scene have been found in possession of a significant amount of firearms, ammunition or explosives, and informants referenced numerous examples, from the Netherlands to Slovakia, of far-right groups providing training in combat techniques and target practice.[12]

The perception that far-right extremism is not a major threat is also driven by a tendency to look at these groups as irrelevant to inquiries into national security and terrorism. However, lower-level hate

crime, spontaneous attacks and intimidation are regular occurrences in most countries and have a significant impact on community safety. Some states have acknowledged that far-right extremism poses a significant threat at the local level. The Finnish Ministry of Interior's public *Situation Overview* on violent extremism notes that right-wing extremism poses the biggest threat to Finland at the local level.[13] The UK has focused on empowering local authorities to deal with the far right, with much of its work delivered through the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Some countries have recorded higher numbers of far-right extremist supporters in recent years. In Germany, the Federal German Intelligence (*Verfassungschutz*) estimated the number of far-right extremists in 2013 to be 21,750, including approximately 9,500 who are potentially violent.[14] In Sweden there is known to be two to three thousand active and well-organised far-right extremists, as compared with less than 200 in Norway and Denmark.[15] The National Independence Day march in Poland, which brings out large swaths of far-right supporters, saw its largest turnout in 2013 with 66,000 individuals involved across Warsaw, according to police estimates.[16] Countries like Poland have also seen a rise in hate crimes of 25 percent from 2009 – 2010 to 2011 – 2012.[17]

Large numbers within the far-right scene may not de facto correlate with a strong capacity for violence. This can often depend on the control that groups themselves, or even radical right political parties which have a tendency to attract extreme right individuals, impose over far-right supporters. Some Hungarian experts attribute a lower level of organised extreme right violence to the tight control the radical right party Jobbik retains over its members and supporters.[18] In the Netherlands, extremist nationalist and neo-Nazi movements have declined in size and intensity of activities as the Party for Freedom (Partij voor de Vrijheid) has gained at the polls. Though there remains little evidence to prove a correlation, interviews in the Netherlands revealed a strong sense that the success of this party has served as a 'safety valve,' channelling the frustrations of violent movements into the democratic system.[19] However, the risk remains that far-right movements are unable – or unwilling in some cases – to control their members and denounce violence. Though most individuals affiliated with far-right movements do not go on to commit acts of violence, history shows that many individuals convicted on terrorist charges have passed in and out of organised movements or parties at various points in time.

Though often rooted in local contexts and issues, far-right extremism also has pan-European elements and impacts. Methods in one country may often be found mirrored in others, and in an age of increasing connectivity online, these trends are becoming all the more common. For example, trends often beginning in Germany transpire to the Czech Republic, and are subsequently seen in Slovakia (as is the case with 'Autonomous Nationalists' movements).[20] Norwegian experts have noted that the Norwegian neo-Nazi movement has become more organised as a result of inspiration and assistance from the Swedish far right.[21]

Events which tend to draw international participants from across Europe, such as the commemoration of Rudolf Hess (which was officially held in Germany until its prohibition in 2005, but remains celebrated across Germany and Scandinavia) and National

Independence Day in Poland, and even the Finnish Defence League flags found flying at English Defence League marches, demonstrate the potential for international mobilisation.[22] Even the movement of convicted terrorist Pavlo Lapshyn, who was known to Ukrainian authorities after an explosion in his apartment, to the UK to carry out a series of attacks begs the question whether cross-border attacks may become more common.

Agents of far-right extremism

There are broadly four types of far-right extremism across the countries surveyed in this project: youth gangs, white power and skinhead groups; terrorist cells and lone actors; political movements and paramilitary groups; and nativist, identitarian and anti-Islam movements. Though these are distinct categories with different levels of importance attached to ideology, there are overlaps between them, often in terms of personnel and personal ties. This is not meant to be an exhaustive typology, but rather to make sense of the diverse set of actors which fall under the term far right. Together they form what has been called the 'tip of the iceberg,' the visible agents of extremism, which are underpinned in each country by a complex infrastructure (history, socio-economic context, public attitudes, and politics) which contribute to the challenge in their own way.[23]

Youth gangs, white power and skinhead groups
This is a very diverse grouping, ranging from less-ideological youth gangs to strongly ideological white power and neo-Nazi movements. Youth gangs are often locally-based, consisting of young people (under-18s), loitering and engaging in harassment of local individuals and businesses. These groups are often based on petty racism and prejudice, rather than fully formed ideologies, and may unite around popular far-right symbols, the wearers of which may not even know their history or meaning.[24] These groups often lack strong leadership and organisational capacity. There is often a high turnover rate as individuals grow out of the scene, or leave the area.[25]

White nationalism is an ideology which advocates a racial definition of national identity for white people, and it is underpinned by the notion of white supremacy – the belief in the supremacy of the white race and inferiority of all other races. In nearly every country in this study, a small core white supremacist or neo-Nazi movement exists. Those movements which remain the most persistent and have achieved the most international reach include Blood & Honour and Combat 18. Though these may be small and organisationally weak locally, individuals may be part of a mass merchandising empire which links them globally. These movements are often intertwined with subcultures, including skinheads, football hooligan groups, and alternative music scenes like black metal.

Terrorist cells and lone actors
This category encompasses individuals and small groups carrying out pre-meditated acts of violence, motivated by far-right ideologies. Individuals may be affiliated with groups, or have passed through a number of groups, on their ideological journey. Anders Behring Breivik was a lone actor that had passed through several political parties and movements and was underpinned by an online network of ideologues and bloggers, before carrying out the largest act of right-wing terror in Europe in decades. Pavlo Lapshyn is an example of a lone actor radicalised individually. Some have argued that the lone actor phenomenon is particularly salient

in far-right extremism, where there is ideological buy-in to the notion that individuals should gather weaponry and prepare for an inevitable race war.[26] Some have claimed that the concept of a lone actor is a myth, given that individual perpetrators are often shaped and influenced by a range of other individuals and groups.[27]

Small groups of individuals may form terrorist cells, which may be independent or linked in some way to broader organisations. The National Socialist Underground, a far-right German terrorist group uncovered in 2011, is a prime example of one which operated undetected for decades, carrying out a series of murders of immigrants, bank robberies, and bombings.

Political movements and paramilitary groups

Far-right political parties and movements attempt to organise locally and nationally, and influence local and national politics. Though groups with neo-Nazi affiliations can often be controlled by the penal code in some countries, they tend to be versatile and work around bans to function under the law. Political groups are also fluid; movements which begin with neo-Nazi and skinhead followings can transform over the course of decades to more moderate radical right parties.

Paramilitary groups are increasingly forming and are often allied with political movements and parties in Central and Eastern Europe. In Poland and Slovakia, these have been modelled on the success of the Hungarian Guard, which was dissolved by Budapest Tribunal in 2009. Such civilian militias claim to defend the population in the 'absence' of any defence by the government. Additionally, in nearly every country in this study, paramilitary training has been carried out by small groups of individuals (often no more than 10 – 15 people) as an informal social activity or structured boot camps.[28] Larger groups are active as well; for example, the Slovak Conscripts is estimated to have 200 or 300 members.[29] Key activities of groups like this include target practice, in many cases on visual representations of the 'enemy,' ethnic minorities, mainstream politicians and others.[30]

Nativist, Identitarian, and anti-Islam movements

This category of movements is a more modern development within the European far right, broadly based on the preservation of ethnic and cultural identity, and opposition to immigration and multiculturalism. It thus advocates for the identitarian defence of Western or national values against several enemies and infiltrators, which may include asylum seekers, Islam, multiculturalism and those who advocate for them. Identitarian movements with roots in France are appearing in the Netherlands, Germany, and the Nordic countries. Anti-Islam movements largely gained momentum after September 11, and are internationally aligned across Europe and North America. Prominent anti-Islam ideologues like Pamela Gellar and Robert Spencer are engaged in cross-border dialogue and partnerships with European groups like Stop the Islamization of Europe. In the UK, the EDL has struggled considerably with individuals from white power and neo-Nazi movements attempting to use it as a platform for more extreme means. This has led to the splintering and fragmentation of the movement, including the recent departure of former EDL leader Tommy Robinson from the group.[31]

These agents engage in a wide variety of activities, outlined in the table below.

Far-right extremist activities	
Activity	**Manifestation**
Spontaneous hate crime, vandalism, hooliganism	▸ Loitering and harassment of shopkeepers and community members ▸ Spontaneous physical attacks against visible minorities, such as assault and spitting ▸ Desecration of Jewish cemeteries and mosques ▸ Graffiti depicting far-right phrases and symbols ▸ Violent altercations with groups supporting alternative or counter ideologies ▸ Football hooliganism
Street demonstrations	▸ Racist or xenophobic chanting, often under the influence of alcohol ▸ 'Peeling off' of smaller groups of protesters determined to commit acts of violence (which often impact local communities more than demonstrations themselves) ▸ Promotion of racist or inflammatory literature or video content to stoke inter-community tensions ▸ International attendance, often at annual gatherings ▸ Occupation of public spaces or key buildings (e.g. government offices) ▸ Display of inflammatory banners and flags ▸ Violent clashes with counter-protesters ▸ Mobilisation through online and offline social networks
Shock tactics	▸ Quick and spontaneous mobilisation of activists for protests or demonstrations (increasingly difficult for law enforcement to detect or control) ▸ Tactics often videoed and uploaded to YouTube, which are easily exported and act as an inspiration for others ▸ Flash mobs at events or at public buildings for maximum exposure and media coverage ▸ Engaging and exciting for young people and new members ▸ Public campaigns and mainstreamed propaganda, including through the use of guerrilla tactics
Hate speech and incitement	▸ Hate speech and provocative blogging on popular blog sites or forums ▸ Using social media to harass and abuse members of the public and known individuals on the basis of race, religion, gender or culture ▸ Uploading provocative or controversial images and video that target another religion or culture ▸ Dissemination of training materials and how-to instructions for carrying out acts of violence ▸ Spontaneous use of racist, xenophobic or discriminatory language or narratives to individuals in the street ▸ Planned hate speech by political leaders, celebrities and leaders of movements
Paramilitary training	▸ Informal social activity (target practice) ▸ Structured boot camps carried out in remote locations ▸ Training in advanced military combat techniques and familiarisation with automatic weaponry ▸ Vigilante groups maintaining a visible presence (often donning uniforms) in areas with a large presence of the conceived 'enemy' (i.e. Roma, migrants, asylum seekers)
Planned hate crime and terrorism	▸ Arson, Molotov cocktails, bombs and explosives used against government, minorities, left wing activists and other 'enemies', often with the intention of igniting a race war or sending a message of fear ▸ Shooting campaigns against 'enemy' targets ▸ Pre-meditated murder of counter far-right influencers ▸ Attacks carried out 'in the name' of a group, but difficult to track incitement

A significant amount of effort goes into identifying and disseminating media stories and information to underpin the far-right narrative, keeping movements informed and in an information silo. Organised far-right movements also do a significant amount of data gathering and intelligence. This might involve gathering information on outsiders who engage with the movement, like police officers and social workers.[32] In many cases, names and details of enemies (e.g. left-wing activists, local politicians or minority leaders) are distributed online.[33]

Far-right groups also provide social activities for (in some cases unsuspecting) young people and adults, exposing them to their belief system. Practitioners in Poland noted that the far right (particularly linked to football associations) organises community service activities, collecting donations and providing social care for the disadvantaged in the community, or recruit particularly in socially vulnerable areas.[34]

Finally, the far right is also adept at marketing and merchandising. Whether through guerrilla marketing tactics to lure individuals in without direct contact (e.g. stickers, flyers, leaflets, magazines and advertisements); concerts and promotion of white power music; the sale of literature, music and merchandise; or illegal trade of weapons, substances, and other goods.[35]

Governments would do well to look at the methods the far right employs to build members' sense of belonging – the rewarding elements of membership in a far-right movement. In his research on the EDL, academic Joel Busher notes that collective acts of protest bring feelings of *empowerment*, of 'doing something,' or 'making a stand', and fighting for your community.[36] Given that supporters are known to

have particularly high levels of pessimism regarding their futures, elements like this are an important draw; these 'offers' need to be understood in order to provide meaningful alternatives.

Social and political context

Far-right actors and their activities are underpinned by social and political contexts which can in some cases offer a more fertile environment or pose barriers to their success. This infrastructure can strongly shape the nature of far-right extremism, its manifestations, as well as responses that are and can be deployed. There are three key characteristics that carry particular weight: legacies of the Second World War and the Soviet regime, the history of immigration and demographic change, and wider public attitudes. As mentioned earlier, the presence of a strong radical right political force can also play a role.

Legacy of the Second World War and Soviet Regime

Experiences and memories of the Second World War have profoundly shaped the narratives of modern far-right extremists, as well as the manner in which the wider public engages with it. Particularly in countries which had strong resistance movements during the Second World War, like Norway, Denmark, and the Netherlands, social stigma against traditional neo-Nazism has been unfailingly strong. Dutch experts and policy makers call this 'societal resilience' to right-wing extremism.[37] However, even in countries with high stigma against expressions of far-right extremism, there may be high levels of anti-immigrant sentiment or particular forms of prejudice.[38] In these countries, nativist, identitarian and anti-Islam movements have even incorporated narratives of the resistance movement into their own

ideologies, for example by comparing the role of Islam in Western societies to the Nazi occupation.

In Central and Eastern Europe, the shape of far-right extremism has undoubtedly been coloured by the fall of communism and transitions to democracy. Practitioners noted that the history of the Soviet Union has had a long-lasting impact on the mobilisation of civil society. Polish informants noted that before the fall of communism, volunteering was seen as a euphemism for collaboration with the Soviet regime, and there is a lingering inclination to oppose this sort of civic engagement.[39] German practitioners noted that the new German states see less spontaneous civil society responses (e.g. communities coming together to respond to the far right), which have occurred more frequently in West Germany.[40] Yet others discussed the positive changes that came with the transition to democracy, for example the increased opportunity to openly explore Jewish history and culture in Poland, and a more fertile environment for Jewish people to be open about their religion.[41]

History of immigration and demographic change

Immigration, integration and demographics also play a role. Countries like the UK, Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands have been characterised by long histories of migration, and tend to have higher levels of ethnic and religious diversity. In these cases, far-right groups have shifted the targets of their hate dramatically over the decades from 'classical' target groups (e.g. Jewish, Black and Asian communities) to Muslim, Roma and even Eastern European communities. Countries like Hungary and Slovakia are largely homogenous, with small immigrant populations and large Roma populations. In these countries, Roma populations are marginalised and discriminated against, live in poor socio-economic conditions, and are over-represented in

unemployment and crime statistics.[42] There are significant socio-economic integration challenges which need to be addressed and which also feed into negative perceptions of these groups, advocated by the far right. Far-right movements in these countries tend to be mainstreamed, enjoy more complicity from the general public and even mainstream political leaders, and the targets of their hate have remained more constant over the decades (often Jewish, Roma, Central Asian and LGBT communities).[43]

Wider public attitudes

Across Europe, far-right extremist attitudes are far from confined to the margins of society, but can increasingly be found in the mainstream. Research has reinforced the fact that far-right activists are in many cases 'perfectly normal people, socially integrated, connected in one way or another to mainstream groups and ideas.'[44] One study by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung found that far-right extremist views were widespread in Germany, among all social strata, regions and age groups.[45] In the UK, recent surveys confirm that large portions of the population (31%) would feel 'bothered a lot' by the presence of an Islamic institution in their community, and 37% of voters would be more likely to support a party that promised to reduce the numbers of Muslims in the country.[46] In Central and Eastern Europe, research has shown high levels of public support for far-right ideologies. Recent research in Hungary has demonstrated that over 80% of young people would not sit next to a Roma child in the classroom.[47]

However, more societal openness to far-right ideologies (and less social stigma) does not necessarily translate into greater capacity for high impact violence. In societies where far-right ideologies are more publicly acceptable, like Poland, Hungary and Slovakia,

there is some evidence to suggest that established far-right movements may exert more control over supporters.[48] This means that propensity for lower-level spontaneous hate crime may be higher, but the potential for high impact terrorism and organised crime may be lower. In places where far-right movements are publicly unacceptable and pushed underground, it might mean that there is higher risk of individuals and small groups planning high impact events to confront mainstream suppression of their ideologies.[49]

One of the major challenges to tackling far-right extremism is that the narratives of these movements often have resonance with public emotions. In some ways these groups are filling a gap, touching upon subjects that have not been discussed in a frank way by mainstream politicians or local leaders – including identity, immigration, and local concerns. As this report will discuss in more detail, far-right supporters are not always anti-social 'outsiders'; in some places they are integral parts of the community.[50] The modern European far right is far from a marginalised youth problem, but rather a societal and community problem in many cases.

The far right has reinvented a politics that is fit for purpose in the 21st century, and unlike mainstream community leaders and political leaders, they are agile, flexible, and able to move with the times. They make good use of modern technology, keep up with modern trends, and touch on issues that are most salient with their target groups. We would do well to study what far-right groups do best, how they engage their constituencies and sustain commitment. Governments and civil society are faced with the difficult task of developing offers to citizens that rival theirs.

CHAPTER 2
GOVERNMENT APPROACHES TO FAR-RIGHT EXTREMISM

General differences in approaches to far-right extremism

Government responses to the threat from far-right extremism vary across Europe. Events like the July 22 attacks on Oslo and Utøya and the discovery of the National Socialist Underground in Germany certainly pushed most European governments to increase monitoring and evaluation of the threat. In some countries, local domestic cases have pushed politicians to devote new attention to this issue. For example, a string of racist attacks in Bialystok in Eastern Poland caused both the Mayor and Minister of the Interior to speak out.[51] Some countries, like Norway, have re-assessed the threat and concluded whilst persistent, it is still low.[52] Countries, such as the UK, see it as important but a lower order magnitude to Islamist violent extremism.

Many states are only recently transitioning from the assumption that far-right extremism is not a serious problem or that it is just a normal male youth issue. Some places remain in denial of the problem. Where local authorities refuse to accept there is a problem, there is often little that national governments can do to persuade them to act. Government officials in Finland and the Netherlands have experienced difficulties in persuading local authorities to take advantage of the support provided nationally, and in Hungary, there is currently no government department or ministry which holds responsibility for the issue of far-right extremism.[53]

The international nature of far-right groups has led some countries to work closely with other governments to share data and develop solutions, like the solid cooperation among the Nordic countries, the Slovak and Czech governments, and among the Dutch, Belgian and German police. However, practitioners noted that this international context has also allowed national governments to avoid responsibility by placing the blame on other countries, as has occurred in the past with Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary.[54]

Policy on far-right extremism has to be seen through the context of general policy on extremism and terrorism. National action plans and strategies on countering extremism have been put in place in the Nordic countries and the UK. In 2006, Slovakia developed its first Concept for Combating Extremism, and a second in 2011; this is largely implemented by the police – one of the few countries in Central and Eastern Europe to develop a coordinated framework on these issues.

Within national action plans, the emphasis placed on far-right extremism varies. The latest assessment by the Slovak Ministry of Interior confirms that in 2013, crimes labelled as 'extremist crimes' were mostly related to far-right extremism, and thus the Concept for Combating Extremism focuses largely on the far right. The Danish Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and Integration prefers not to distinguish between different forms of extremism in its approach to tackling extremism, but rather to focus holistically on the prevention of anti-democratic and violent extremist

groups in general. This is underpinned by the idea that extremisms of different forms are fuelled by the same underlying social issues and root causes, and thus can be addressed by holistic measures.[55]

Some governments make a distinction between responses that are local and national. For example, the Finnish Ministry of Interior's main focus is local, responsible for tackling social problems at the level of the individual and community, while the Finnish Security Intelligence Service (SUPO) leads on national security, where the greatest threat comes from Islamist extremism. The UK's approach on far-right extremism is delivered largely through the Department for Communities and Local Government with the explicit aim of empowering local authorities.

Some countries split responsibilities for different elements of the problem across corresponding government departments and agencies. For example, the Dutch General Intelligence and Security Service's threat assessments incorporate antidemocratic movements, while the Danish Security and Intelligence Service's threat assessment only deals with violent groups and not antidemocratic movements, which is the remit of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and Integration. The UK Department for Communities and Local Government deals with far-right extremism as it impacts community relations, while the Home Office is responsible for managing far-right terrorism.

Policy frameworks for tackling the far right

Taking into account these differences in approaches, there are four broad structures through which far-right extremism is dealt with by the European governments studied as part of this report:

General crime prevention and social policy approach

Countries like Denmark have built their extremism work into their general crime prevention structures, with a focus on preventing risk behaviours across different forms of extremism. Its policy is delivered through the Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and Integration, which policy makers noted makes it easier to access and use the social system, social means, social language and social legislation.[56] In Finland, where the last decade has seen the development of a broad crime prevention policy, the National Action Plan for Preventing Violent Extremism explicitly aims to expand the traditional criminal policy perspective to include extremism.[57] As in Denmark, Finnish officials noted that this approach is based on the recognition that those vulnerable to right-wing extremist ideologies are often vulnerable to other socially deviant behaviours, like petty criminality and domestic violence.[58]

There are challenges associated with seeing extremism as a social policy issue. Danish officials noted that it has taken years to integrate extremism into the existing crime prevention structure, and there has been resistance from social workers who are hesitant to 'diagnose' extremism in the clients they work with. They are also reluctant to elevate extremism when they see it as a small problem in comparison to the wider and deeper social challenges experienced.[59] However, the benefits of this approach are that preventative measures are not siloed. Instead, they build on existing frameworks and social structures, engaging with those actors already coming in contact with vulnerable individuals.

Securitised approach

In Hungary, far-right extremism and terrorism is managed entirely by the police and the Counter Terrorism Centre (TEK), which was founded in

2010. In Slovakia, until recently, the Slovak Police were responsible for coordinating and implementing the National Concept Framework for Combating Extremism. Following changes in ministry structures in 2012, the Ministry of Interior is now responsible for policy and coordination. However, although this approach has been implemented by the police, the main goal of the framework is the elimination f the root causes of far-right extremism, working in cooperation with the Ministries of the Interior, Defence, Justice, Foreign Affairs, European Matters, Culture, Education, Social Matters and the General Prosecution of the Slovak Republic. The Ministry of Interior is also in the process of setting up a Committee on Prevention and Eradication of Racism, Xenophobia and Anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance to act as an advisory body engaging with national and local government, NGOs and experts. Slovakia, like several other countries in this study, is in the process of moving from a securitised approach to a more holistic one.[60]

The challenge with a securitised approach is that the issue is seen exclusively through a security lens, and can contribute to a sense of mistrust and suspicion between social services, civil society and security services. This approach often results in under-funding of broader preventative measures that tackle root causes.

Social-integration linked approach
In Germany, local government actors responsible for integration issues, like the Commissioner for Integration and Migration of the city of Berlin, are also responsible for work to tackle far-right extremism. In Denmark, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and Integration handles issues related to extremism as well as integration policy. The UK is unique in that tackling far-right extremism has been

built into the national integration approach. The 2012 publication 'Creating the Conditions for Integration' by the UK Department for Communities and Local Government includes 'tackling extremism and intolerance' as one of five key factors listed as contributing to integration, with a particular focus on far-right extremists.[61]

One of the key benefits of linking integration strategies with the fight against far-right extremism is that it can widen the concept of integration beyond one for ethnic minority communities to one for a society resilient to extremism and intolerance. In many ways, the prevention of far-right extremism is about ensuring members of the 'majority' community are achieving on integration outcomes. Danish officials have also noted that the title change in 2011 from the 'Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs' to the 'Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and Integration' has made it easier to explain to the general public that this Ministry does not only target militant Islamism or extremism related to integration of ethnic minorities, as some had previously assumed, but all forms of extremism as a social problem.[62]

Multi-agent and multi-level approach
Countries like Germany have adopted a multi-agent and multi-level approach. The Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution is broadly responsible for legal and repressive measures, while the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth is responsible for funding preventative measures and the Federal Agency for Civic Education carries out a range of measures to strengthen democracy and resilience against extremism.

There are good reasons for this disaggregation of control and responsibilities, including the complex relationship between the federal and länder levels, and

the size and scale of the problem of far-right extremism in Germany's many states. But this approach is hampered by the significant challenges of coordination and information sharing across ministries and regions. Germany has recently come under scrutiny for oversights and lack of data sharing and communications in the build up to the NSU discovery and trial.[63]

Main areas of policy

Within these various government structures, there has been a range of policy approaches that have been taken across Europe.

Legal and repressive measures

Legal frameworks form the bedrock to any government approach to far-right extremism. Many experts attribute the minimal presence of far-right extremist groups in places like Norway and the Netherlands to the legal barriers they face, often accompanied by strong social norms denouncing involvement.[64] Some countries like the UK have been historically strong on anti-discrimination measures and are much newer to targeted legal frameworks on extremism. Others, like Germany, have strong legal frameworks on extremism, but are historically weak on anti-discrimination.[65]

In many countries, there has been a history of what some have termed 'legal fetishism'; a tendency to manage the problem exclusively through frequent adjustments to the penal code.[66] In countries like Finland and Slovakia, there has been a conscious shift away from this approach.

The law can also be used to impose mechanisms of control that help to minimise social, economic and logistical disruption. Repressing far-right activities

or demonstrations has often been made easier by provisions granting legal powers to police. For example, in the UK, according to Public Order Act of 1986, police can impose limitations on the route of a march or the location or duration of a rally in order to prevent riots or other serious public disorder, damage to property, or serious disruption to the life of the community.[67]

Legal provisions to ban far-right groups and associations exist in different forms across Europe. Article 13 of the Polish Constitution prohibits organisations whose programmes are based on Nazism or fascism, and whose activities sanction racial or national hatred. However, this provision has rarely been used in practice, even in relation to the most extreme groups, with only one organisation having been banned in 2009.[68] In Germany, a multitude of associations and labels have been banned on the basis of extensive legislation against right-wing extremism, though there are great legal hurdles to outlaw political parties.[69]

There are limits to the power of repressive measures, and some research suggests that repression on far-right structures in Germany led to groups becoming increasingly autonomous, organised around the concepts of 'comradeships' and 'coalitions for action,' much looser associations than might be restricted under the law. It has been argued that this has not led to a reduction in the far-right scene but has rather promoted stronger European and international alignment, and even relocation of some activities abroad.[70] Likewise, in 2006 Slovak authorities banned the party Slovak Togetherness, which contributed to the disappearance of the group for several years, but it resurfaced in 2008 through a Supreme Court overruling with a new look and a new agenda, focused on an anti-Roma platform more so than the anti-Semitic one of the the past.[71]

- **Banning (groups, symbols, public displays):** This has been done via constitutional powers and legal frameworks to ban groups associated with fascism, Nazism and totalitarian/ authoritarian ideologies.
- **Right to limit protest:** Rights have been granted to the police and local government, for example to force far-right protests outside the city centre or away from areas with high concentrations of ethnic minorities. Civil society has engaged in this by for example, denying far-right organisations the right to use their venues.[72]
- **Implementation of hate crime legislation:** Hate crime legislation has in some cases been accompanied by professional training to increase the skills and knowledge of police, prosecutors and judges.
- **Empowering victim groups**: Providing minority communities with information about their rights and explaining legal frameworks on hate crime.[73]
- **Online take downs/removal of public displays:** This includes government take-downs of illegal content, and provision of reporting functions on sites like Facebook and Twitter. It also includes community mobilisation to remove stickers, posters andand graffiti.[74]
- **Anti-discrimination law:** A legal framework to protect people from discrimination in wider society, as well as in specific contexts like the workplace.

A legal framework is also only as good as its enforcement. Practitioners across Europe have noted the challenge of ensuring that police enforce the law and prosecutors follow through. Despite the limitations of using law and repression as a solitary device to combat the far right, the power of existing legal frameworks cannot be understated. Law certainly has the power to shape social norms, and is thus an important first step in shaping a society resilient to far-right extremism. A strong criminal justice framework to tackle far-right extremism and hate crime can raise the confidence of affected communities, and can provide incentives for key actors to take action.

Public order management

Public order disturbances are the most common expressions of far-right extremism across Europe, ranging from lower level harassment and vandalism to high profile demonstrations. These activities can significantly undermine social cohesion and inflame community tensions. Dealing with this issue is often the responsibility of the police, but governments and communities play a key role. Good public order management can minimise the impact of protests on local communities, build trust between the police and community representatives, and provide an important platform for dialogue between all the different actors working to tackle the far right.

Prevention

European states have implemented a range of upstream measures to prevent radicalisation and extremism by reducing vulnerability among specific groups and increasing community resilience. These measures often have long-term aims of promoting a democratic culture, tolerance and improved opportunities, and life chances. Preventative measures taken by states include the development of school curricula on racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia; intercultural and inter-religious learning; and citizenship, identity, democracy and tolerance education.

- **Diversion:** Methods to divert supporters attendance at far-right events include raising awareness of the penal code, and active communication to those who are at risk of getting involved; liaising with key influencers (e.g. social workers and teachers) to encourage them to discourage individuals from attending; and diversionary activities planned to coincide with the far right event.

- **Reclaiming public spaces:** This involves ensuring that extremists have minimal impact on the community, keeping demos away from areas with high concentrations of ethnic minorities and migrants, community businesses declaring themselves zones where extremists are not welcome,[75] and rapid community responses to paint over graffiti or clean streets after protests.[76]

- **Smart policing/management of demonstrations:** This might involve tension monitoring, communication of the march route to the public, and real-time communications about the progress of the event and smart use of social media. It may also involve getting the community engaged in management of the demonstration.[77]

The target groups for preventative work often focus on youth, though in some cases there are strong examples of preventative work carried out with adults. Projects within this category also target wider communities, aiming to build a strong civil society, promote democratic consciousness and political participation, provide spaces for engagement across communities, and mobilise communities against the far right, racism, and racist violence.

An important feature of prevention work is to offer alternative activities and lifestyle choices, empowering individuals to make considered choices about their future. In some countries preventative work is an important, tried-and-tested part of the strategy to tackle the far right. The Danish approach has centred largely on prevention, with three main focal points: a mentoring scheme, the use of role models and promotion of tolerance in schools, and targeting parents and parent support. [78]

In other countries, prevention has been either limited or non-existent. It is important to note that

preventative work may also be hidden in the daily activities of public institutions, and there is a wide variety of ways in which mainstream policy can impact the drivers of far-right extremism.

Deterrence

A necessary feature of intervention work is also attempts to deter individuals from carrying out extremist actions. Deterrence is the implementation of certain measures or programmes that both increase the social and material costs of being in, or associated with an extremist group, while reducing their appeal and excitement. Measures along these lines are best carried out by community members and institutions, and can have a cumulative effect largely on individuals in the periphery of movements rather than the ideological core.[89]

Deterrence also includes attempts to engage directly with potential offenders to deter them from carrying out particular actions. For example, this method was tested in Germany by the Special Commission on Right-wing Extremism (Soko Rex), which

- **Contact:** Programmes to connect individuals across community divides, which might be implemented through informal social networking, sports clubs,[79] professional mentoring. It might also involve community dialogue programmes to bring together individuals to discuss community grievances in a frank way.[80]

- **Building purpose:** Activities to ensure that at-risk individuals are empowered citizens and have a sense of goals and achievement. This might include one-to-one mentoring (professional or social), peer leadership programmes, and engagement through activities designed to empower – sports and music programmes.[81]

- **Diversion:** Dealing with youth street movements can be as simple as the provision of alternative social activities for susceptible youth, involving football, extreme sports, and outdoor activities, in some cases led by individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds.

- **Education:** A key feature of early prevention are educational programmes, including Holocaust education and religious education, or more targeted programmes teaching people about the multicultural history of a place and the plight of refugees.[82] This might also include positive messaging in formats that appeal and reach younger people, including comic books.[83]

- **Capacity building with key influencers:** This includes training and support for teachers and school staff, social workers and healthcare practitioners, as well as measures to engage with parents on this issue, for example through instituting parents support groups.[84] Some governments have involved first-line responders and key influencers in government working groups and government programmes to counter extremism.[85]

- **Public awareness:** Raising public awareness of the problem through public statements by politicians and local leaders, and public communications of government threat assessments and strategy documents, but also through creative messaging and pop culture, like public concerts, art installations and sporting events.[86] It also includes myth-busting stereotypes about particular ethnic and religious groups through campaigns and creative messaging.[87]

- **Taking on hard issues:** This is an area of prevention that is less often tackled, but all the more needed. It might be done through peer education programmes to train individuals to have hard conversations with peers who may exhibit extreme views,[88] or public dialogue forums on tough and divisive issues, including foreign policy, immigration, and employment. It also includes programmes that engage directly with far-right extremists, rather than simply talk about them.

communicated directly with potential offenders before far-right events to highlight to them the consequences of additional criminal offences.[90]

Exit programmes

Intervention is one of the most important and effective ways to have an impact on existing movements, although it is often left out of national strategies and action plans against violent far-right extremism. Intervention includes de-radicalisation programmes that generally aim to re-integrate individuals that have become radicalised back into society, or at least to dissuade them from violence. These programmes also aim to reverse the radicalisation process for those partly or already radicalised, and may be distinguished

- **Maintaining a visible presence:** Measures that have been tried include street patrolling and reconquering the "territory of the extremists", by police and even by parents' groups.[91] It might also include public statements denouncing far-right groups by celebrities, local and community leaders, and other prominent individuals respected by vulnerable individuals.[92]

- **Emphasising the consequences:** This is often a feature of intervention work, but some countries are also working with convicted terrorist offenders and criminals in and outside of prisons to prevent further radicalisation.[93]

- **Increasing the social costs associated with being in extremist movements:** Measures might include local businesses, shops and pubs declaring themselves racism and extremism-free zones, or inclusive zones, or spaces frequented by extremists (like pubs) closing during marches. It also includes clever methods like removing toilet access during demonstrations.[94]

- **Provision of alternative activities:** This includes provision of alternative activities, like adventure and thrill-seeking activities for those seeking excitement.[95] It might also include support with re-locating, gaining employment, or finding a partner.[96]

from disengagement activities, which aim to help individuals leave violent movements. De-radicalisation seeks to change views, while disengagement aims to alter behaviour. This work is often carried out by frontline workers, including former far-right extremists. In some countries, like Sweden, this work is actively supported and promoted by the government.

Intervention measures include social and economic assistance for individuals so they have a means of supporting themselves in the absence of their former radicalised network or group, as well as social and economic support for the individual's 'receiving group' (their family and social network).

Engagement and communication directly with movements has been tested by some civil society organisations, namely Exit Germany, which develops

creative ways to interact with German far-right groups so that individuals in these movements are aware of and given the support they need to leave. In some places, like Sweden, civil society is leading on intervention programmes, and in others, like Germany, there is a mix of government and civil society organisations carrying out this work. In Norway, preventative police are the main actors engaging in intervention regularly. Finland does not have any established Exit programmes, but the Intelligence Service does interventions, talking to particularly concerning individuals, in cooperation with local police. An NGO programme called Aggredi carries out interventions based on referrals by the police, probation services and prisons. Interestingly, Finland has initiated a pilot programme involving 'internet police officers', who maintain a visible presence in online spaces largely to offer help to young people who might seek it, but also engage in some dialogue with extremists.

● **Exit programmes, 1-2-1:** Exit programmes have experimented with different methodologies, but many involve intimate conversations with individuals to demonstrate the consequences of involvement, and empower the individual to identify ambitions and achieve them. Some methods involve directly dealing with the ideology and undermining it.[97] Talks may be accompanied with psychological support, counselling, and offers to establish new social networks and continue schooling or facilitate employment.

● **Group interventions:** Some countries have run successful initiatives to leave the core of a far-right movement intact, but to engage in dialogue with all those actors on the periphery to pull them away. These measures have dissolved whole youth street groups in Norway, Høje-Taastrup, Denmark and Zoetermeer, the Netherlands.[98]

● **Online engagement with the far right:** This has been done less, but some civil society organisations and individuals are experimenting with carrying out one-to-one conversations with extremists online. Some police forces are beginning to experiment with this as well.[99]

The methods in the box above have been tried and tested by civil society actors across many of the countries, and some strategies come through as particularly successful, such as conversations focused on the empowerment of individuals.

Information and Public Communications

Data gathering and public communication are key features of some governments' approaches of managing far-right extremism, however it is far from ubiquitous and often governments are doing one or the other. Ensuring there is quality data to fully understand the problem of far-right extremism is the first step to shaping appropriate responses.

In some countries civil society is doing the bulk of solid monitoring work. In countries like Hungary, official data on right-wing extremist acts has been deemed by experts as 'almost totally unreliable.'[100] In the past some German regions have faced criticism for altering statistics on right-wing extremism, for example

in 2007 and 2008, Saxony-Anhalt was accused of having changed the statistics criteria for right-wing extremists' criminal acts and not recording offenses.[101]

Government can play a key role in active monitoring and can fill in the gaps between police, media, and civil society monitoring. In countries like Poland, monitoring far-right extremism and hate crime forms the major bulk of the Ministry of Interior's responsibility on this issue, carrying out independent monitoring of media, press, victims organisation statements, and NGOs. However, they also make good use of the NGO Never Again Association's data collected in the publication 'Brown Book,' following up on the NGO's monitoring and cross-referencing.[102]

Some countries face more challenges than others in passing data between social services, intelligence, government and civil society. Some analysts in Finland note that in order to better understand the threat, there is a need for stronger legislation to

permit sharing of information between social workers or doctors and intelligence. Conversely, in countries where there are restrictions on the public availability of intelligence analyses, for example in Finland, the Ministry of Interior has functioned as a mediator to pass information between intelligence and NGOs and organisations that can use it.[103]

However, data on far-right extremism is only as useful as its public availability, and public awareness of the problem, both by the general public and key influencers, is critical. Public involvement in the monitoring process can also be valuable, surveying the opinion of members of the local community can be vital to understanding the threat of the far right and the particular fears and grievances of those that are affected.[104] It can also give a voice to the victim communities who are often 'silenced'. Government and the media can play a vital role in broadcasting these voices to provide an alternative perspective to prevailing narratives.

Effective and powerful media and public communications strategies can provide the public with a deeper understanding of these issues and can empower the public to act on what they see – thereby encouraging citizen engagement to counter the far right. The Finnish Ministry of Interior has paved the way for improvements in this domain by including a comprehensive media strategy as part of its national action plan to counter extremism. An effective communications strategy is perhaps most valuable during and after traumatic incidences.

Training and capacity building

Experts across all countries included in this study reported a lack of awareness by relevant actors who might come into contact with vulnerable or radicalised individuals. This is in some cases as simple as knowing the symbols associated with movements, which might appear on clothing, or more complex understanding of the signs of radicalisation. This often means that they

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Information and public communications

- **Data gathering on a problem:** This includes mapping exercises, joint analysis groups, and systematic monitoring of hate crime and collation of data from police, media, and civil society, as well as consultations with NGOs and victims groups.[105]

- **Public engagement and political leadership:** This includes public debates on divisive issues and local dialogue initiatives to ensure communities have a space to air grievances and hear from their political leaders. It also includes public campaigns and initiatives to highlighting positive/alternative narratives, and to bust myths about particular groups. Most importantly, it also includes crisis communications following traumatic incidences.

- **Victim recognition:** This includes political and media attention to incidences of hate crime, and public recognition of the problem, as well as initiatives to involve victims perspectives to shape training programmes on hate crime and this policy area.[106]

- **Awareness raising of a problem:** Methods to raise awareness of far-right extremism locally and nationally and to improve identification and reporting of far-right incidences and hate crime to the police.[107] This includes establishing clear lines of communication about where to go for help, for different communities.

lack the capacity to identify individuals and lack a clear understanding of what to do.

Countries like Finland, the Netherlands, and Slovakia, have devised training manuals and lectures to improve police understanding of hate crime and radicalisation (in some cases these have been developed wholly by, or in partnership with NGOs). In some countries, like Poland, civil society organisations have carried out bespoke trainings for police officers. Specific measures taken include the development of courses and trainings for elected officials, police officers, lawyers, prosecutors, prison and probation officers, and for future school teachers. These trainings do exist across Europe, but the question is how to scale up work that tends to be done on an ad-hoc basis. Training programmes to inform these relevant stakeholders about far-right extremism – and sensitise them to it – may need to be implemented systematically and regularly in order to have a longer-term effect they may.

Some areas which require significant training and educational programmes include identifying symbols linked to far-right extremism; methods of engagement with far-right extremists; guidance on the legal framework and innovative ways to implement it; and technical courses on using social media and the internet.

Training and capacity building

● **Identifying right-wing extremism/symbols:** Many countries are experimenting with training courses and training manuals on symbols and images associated with far-right groups, and on signs of radicalisation. These are delivered to police, prosecutors and judges, and in some cases 'key influencers' like teachers.

● **Attitudinal shift with key frontline services:** In some countries there have been measures taken to promote tolerance within the police force, whether through added examination and courses on human rights at police academies,[108] or training for officers, prosecutors and even teachers and politicians.

● **Building relationships:** Some countries have specific policing roles designated to build relationships with the community, or with civil society, and have invested in these roles. Some have designed networks to link government, police and civil society to improve relationships between all actors confronting extremism.[109]

● **Engaging with right-wing extremists:** Training is required for social workers, police, and key influencers to be able to confidently engage with extremists, face-to-face and in the online space. Methods employed here are important, as saying the wrong thing can lead to counter-productive effects.

● **Understanding the law:** Police, prosecutors and judges in particular need strong understandings of the law, and how it can and should be applied in their work when it comes to extremism and hate crime.

● **Social media and online:** This is an emerging space with less ongoing work, often on an ad-hoc basis. Police and civil society in particular require training on the uses of social media in monitoring and countering extremism.

CHAPTER 3
CHALLENGES TO IMPLEMENTATION

Across Europe, there are numerous good measures and positive approaches worth replication. In some countries, however, individuals within government, civil society, and the police face considerable barriers to carrying out their work and seeing results. Several challenges have hampered the development and implementation of sound responses to far-right extremism. This chapter sets out those which all 10 countries in this study are currently facing.

Definitions

In many countries, there is still no clear definition of far-right extremism. The definition of far-right extremism remains under construction in countries like Slovakia and the Netherlands. It is clear that Anders Behring Breivik's attack in Norway in 2011 had an impact, and some countries are now making the transition from understanding far-right extremism in a 'classical' sense, to a broader definition which might encompass some anti-Islam movements.[110] Some governments are inviting experts and civil society to be a part of internal discussions to reshape their definitions of the far right.

The term extremism itself has been controversial in Germany, given the implementation in 2011 of the *extremismusklausel* (Extremism Clause), which requires all federally-funded associations to sign a declaration of allegiance to the German constitution and accept the same definition of extremism as the domestic intelligence agency (*Verfassungsschutz*) – a

definition which has been heavily disputed by civil society organisations.[111] In Slovakia the penal code defines hate crime as 'crime with extremist intent,' thereby conflating it with extremism. Among Slovak practitioners, there is a strong sense that crimes like defamation of race, nationality or religion, or incitement to hatred by a member of the general public are less likely to be pursued by the police and prosecutors because they don't see these perpetrators as 'extremists.'[112] There is thus a risk that 'extremism' is used too broadly and loses its meaning.

Many countries struggle with ill-defined penal codes on hate crime. Danish law determines hate crime to be one that is 'motivated by prejudice and hatred based on the victim's race, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation or similar.'[113] Danish practitioners have contested the meaning of 'sexual orientation or similar' as too vague and left open to interpretation.[114] Given this vague terminology, Danish hate crime laws do not explicitly cover transgender victims of hate crime, and practitioners also noted difficulties in prosecuting anti-Muslim hate. In some cases, key victim groups are not covered under hate speech and hate crime laws. In Poland, there is no mention of gender or sexual orientation in hate crime laws, despite the fact that LGBT communities are among the most common victims of far-right harassment and violence.[115] Where effective laws do exist, they can help to create a framework within which cases can be more easily identified and data better collected.[116]

Poor data

The threat posed by the far right is challenging to assess, particularly given that there is often more 'talk' than 'do' within these movements. There is little known on the relationship between threats and calls for violence in the online space and real-world violence. However, the harassment, intimidation, and violence towards Muslim communities that ensued after Facebook was overridden with hate speech and calls for violence in the aftermath of the murder of Lee Rigby in Woolwich, UK,[117] among other similar waves of violence, indicate that there are reasons to be wary.

In nearly every country there is a considerable data gap between intelligence, government, academics and civil society. This is due in part to privacy laws, but also largely due to lack of trust between these actors. Academics have also been slower to translate their research into digestible formats for policy makers and practitioners to find useful.[118]

Public debates on immigration and national identity impact on the problem and on our ability to tackle it

The issue of far-right extremism is embedded in and impacted by a wider public discourse on immigration, integration, diversity and national identity. One of the major challenges to tackling the problem is how public attitudes impact the ability of state to take the problem seriously. In countries where the general public harbours xenophobic attitudes, political incentives are not always there to challenge these sentiments.[119] Practitioners across Europe noted that the political debate on

immigration and national identity often undermines the work they do. One Danish informant referred to these variables as the 'three Ps: politicians, the public and the press,' which can change the course of the wind at any moment.

Attitudes within the police were identified as particularly problematic, with some concerted efforts in Poland, Sweden, and the UK to better understand police attitudes and promote acceptance of difference within forces as well as improve relations between the police and minority communities. Concerns about prosecutors with far-right biases were reported by practitioners in countries like Poland, where controversy recently arose over a prosecutor ruling that graffiti depicting a Swastika on an immigrant family home was a Hindu symbol of peace, rather than an act of hate.[120]

Policies themselves can also have an impact on the issue. Officials in Denmark noted that 'multiculturalism' and specific measures for ethnic minorities can feed into far-right extremist narratives of preferential treatment. Across Western Europe, the attention devoted by politicians to Islamist extremism, and the public discourse on this issue, has been used by far-right anti-Islam groups as justification for their ideologies. Furthermore, in countries like Hungary, where there has been a lack of integration and community development measures for groups like the Roma, it becomes more difficult for projects seeking to bust myths or build tolerance (as Roma remain overrepresented in crime and unemployment statistics).[121] Incidences when ethnic minorities are involved in crime or terrorism (e.g. Islamist extremists, or perpetrators of what has been termed 'gypsy crime' in Hungary and Slovakia) can trigger responses from the far right. The far right

is adept at communicating on current affairs, which means that media reporting and government communications on these issues matter.

Lack of awareness by first-line responders and the general public

Many European countries struggle with a general lack of awareness of signs and symptoms of extremism among frontline workers. At the European level, a number of toolkits and resources designed to facilitate learning on the symptoms of extremism have been published in the past few years, like those developed by the EU-funded project Community Policing and the Prevention of Radicalisation (CoPPRa).[122] However, there was little awareness among interviewees of these resources.[123] There is good reason to believe that such tools may need to be nationally-specific to be of use, and governments like Slovakia have developed nation-wide training manuals for police.

Beyond police, there is also a lack of awareness among key influencers. These are individuals who come into daily contact with vulnerable individuals, including teachers, social workers, mental health practitioners, and others. In some countries, government officials expressed more ease working with police than with social workers, who may be hesitant to label their clients as extremists or terrorists.[124]

Practitioners and officials in Finland and Poland reported that limited awareness among the general public of far-right extremism was a concern.[125] Yet others in Germany highlighted the potential dangers of raising more awareness of far-right extremism than on broader underlying issues of racism and discrimination.[126] The general public can also be a powerful force in prevention and intervention efforts, and low public awareness has hindered communities from self-regulating far-right extremism where possible.

Working together – who does what?

Where municipalities have a high level of autonomy, there have been considerable challenges to push them to recognise the problem and devote resources to tackling far-right extremism. In some countries, officials noted that there are even challenges convincing those tasked with prevention of extremism that it is a legitimate problem. Local government has to be convinced they have something to gain from tackling a problem of far-right extremism in a community. Finnish officials noted that it can be easier for national government to impact through directives to (or work with) the police rather than local authorities.[127] However, persuading police to take on preventative work with ideological extremists can be a challenge in some contexts. This kind of preventative work is done more systematically in countries with preventative police coordinators, such as Denmark and Norway.

Even when the problem has been acknowledged, questions remain concerning who is responsible, and at which point interventions should be made by each actor. Norwegian practitioners noted that municipalities often mistakenly believe that extremist youth gangs are a responsibility solely of the police rather than local authorities. In some contexts it was noted that social workers, teachers, and other key influencers *are* aware of their responsibility to prevent

extremism, but when they encounter individuals already radicalised, they lack a basic understanding of how to proceed and notify police or intelligence rather than engaging with the problem themselves and contacting police as a last resort.[128]

Finally, the responsibilities and will to deal with far-right extremism often rely on one or several 'key individuals,' a contact or link within government or the police who enables cooperation. Practitioners and police noted that when a key individual leaves their role or is away from their post, coordinated efforts tend to fall apart. One Finnish practitioner noted that it is essential that government structures to tackle far-right extremism are not 'houses of cards, where if you remove one card the entire system collapses.'[129]

Securitisation of the issue

Though far-right extremism deserves to be taken seriously as a security concern, the securitisation of the problem has contributed to measures that can hurt rather than help. In countries like Sweden and Finland, where intelligence and police play a significant role in tackling the far right, some noted that communities are hesitant to speak to police, due to a lack of trust. Informants in Denmark and Finland noted that there is often reluctance from social workers, teachers, and other key influencers to share information, for fear that it could undermine their relationships if seen to collude with security services.[130]

Additional challenges arise when government and security services engage with and get close to groups to get data. Experience from Germany shows that when the security service forms instrumental relationships with individuals in extremist groups,

it can risk a situation where it becomes impossible to criminalise individuals due to the nature of these relationships.[131]

Countries like Finland and Slovakia have made a concerted effort to move away from a securitised approach. There are, however, challenges to moving from a securitised approach to more of a balance between security and a 'social' approach. Social workers and municipalities must recognise and accept their own role in the process of intervention, if this transition is going to happen.

Balancing democratic values and regulation

Managing ideological extremism of any nature comes with the inherent challenge of ensuring that democratic rights and freedom of speech are upheld. The struggle over whether or not to ban groups and associations has also been fiercely debated across and within European countries. In some cases, as in Slovakia and Germany, banning groups appeared initially successful, however these groups have been adept at re-shaping themselves to fit within the boundaries of the penal code. The far right also has a history of using alleged 'state censorship' as a potent argument against European liberal democracy. The online space has seen more concerted efforts in recent years to take down extremist content and institute reporting mechanisms for the public to contribute to take downs. While it is important for governments to enforce the law, there are limitations to this approach due to the speed with which new content is generated by groups and individuals, and the limited capacity of law enforcement agencies and online platforms like Facebook and Twitter.

Some countries, like Denmark, have long histories of liberal approaches to publishing of far-right material, and the regulation of far-right propaganda has been limited. One practitioner noted that the key challenge here is finding the right balance of 'push-pull mechanisms'.[132] Governments must make it as unpleasant as possible to be in far-right groups, but at the same time, they must uphold freedom of speech and also leave the back door open so individuals can find help to exit movements.

Responses are out of touch with modern developments

Banning and restricting right-wing extremist 'associations' is in many ways becoming an old fashioned method of dealing with the problem. Particularly as more people are now connecting on the internet and through social media, increasingly without formal membership or 'associations' as such, bans will have little impact.

The struggle for governments and civil society, and indeed the police, is that many of the methods being employed are outdated and do not make good use of modern technology, pop culture, and other things appealing to young people. There have been less creative uses of technology and branding to rival the creativity of far-right propaganda. Numerous practitioners also noted a lack of suitable activities for young people to do at the local level, as available activities supported by government have been outdated and unappealing to youth of today.[133]

In the online space, there is also limited capacity (human resources and know-how) for authorities to intervene and act in online discussions. Police across

Europe noted that often one individual will push for training in the Force and will have an impact, but systematic change has been difficult. Civil society and former extremists have experimented with online intervention in some countries, like Germany, but this is often done by individuals, and has yet to be scaled up.

Old Threat, New Approach: Tackling the Far Right Across Europe

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

There can be no one-size-fits-all approach to policy in response to the far right; approaches need to be determined by the nature of the threat, the existing policy and legal frameworks, the strength of grassroots anti-racist organisations, and the existence of effective partnerships between government and civil society. There are, however, a number of key policy bases that must be covered, and overall it is vital that governments have a national strategy in place, underpinned by an action plan, to make their approach explicit and coordinate the various different actors that need to be involved in the response. This is also essential in helping to take a long-term view of the problem, and needs to be accompanied by long-term funding mechanisms.

Legal framework

A sound legal framework is the bedrock of any response to far-right extremism. The 10 countries in this study are at different levels of legal maturity; some have a framework that just needs fine-tuning, others have nothing at all. A sound legal framework has a number of components.

As a minimum, all countries should have a clear legal instrument on hate crime. Although legislation is only one part of the answer to the problem of hate crime, in combination with other tools it can be a powerful catalyst for changes in social attitudes. It must also be underpinned by strong anti-discrimination laws. Though such frameworks should not be designed to stop extremism, the knock-on impact they can have through shaping public norms and acceptable behaviour can be beneficial.

National governments also need to offer better legal recognition to victims. In some countries, some of the most targeted groups are missing from the legislation. For example, Polish hate crime laws make no mention of sexual orientation and in Denmark, vague terminology has meant that laws do not explicitly cover transgender victims, and practitioners note difficulties in prosecuting anti-Muslim hate. This could be tackled by extending legal protection for hate crimes by prerequisites of discrimination which take into account patterns of victimhood. This means hate crime laws that are evidence-based, on historical patterns of discrimination but also anticipatory about potential future victim groups. This should be underpinned by more government funding for research on victim communities and their needs. For example, the UK Department for Communities and Local Government offered seed funding to the Tell MAMA (Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks) project, which has sought to enhance the evidence base on anti-Muslim hate speech and crime in the UK through more innovative ways of reaching victim communities, like through social media.

This also means ensuring that higher penalties are applicable across all prerequisites of discrimination, not just a select few. The EU could pressure governments more to develop stronger legislation and offer protection to victims by preparing a directive on

victims' rights specifically targeted to victims of hate crime. The EU should also create framework on hate crime, which can provide pressure for national governments to act. Many of those interviewed as part of this study emphasised the impact that a comprehensive EU framework on hate crime could have on those states that are lagging behind in their development of policy and legislation. [134]

There is precedence in this regard; for example, protection against discrimination through the legal framework was strengthened in Germany in 2006, only after the implementation of EU directives. Practitioners in Hungary noted the impact that the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies had on national policy.[135] While they can assist, EU directives are not always the answer. For example, despite formal adoption of Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA, many countries like Germany have yet to increase penalties on the basis of racist and xenophobic motives.

Laws on their own are not the answer; they need to be visible and consistent and combined with good training for those responsible for enforcing them. National governments need to provide training for and information to police and prosecutors, victims, the general public, and potential perpetrators to ensure they have a sound understanding of the police and prosecutorial procedures accompanying hate crime proceedings. These trainings need to be institutionalised. These are most effective when they are developed and delivered in partnership with civil society, involve human stories and testimonials, and make good use of modern technology. For example, Lambda Warszawa in Poland creates training videos for the police on how to engage with minority communities that are particularly targeted by far-right extremists.

Of course, legislation is not an end in itself and is limited in a number of ways:

● Far-right groups are often adept at working around the law, whether by forming as informal 'comradeships' rather than organisations, or by changing their public platform to avoid sanction.

● Banning groups can be counter-productive because it feeds into the far-right narrative that governments are censoring the voice of the people. However, the symbolism of banning can be important, in terms of both the message it sends to far-right activists and the general public.

● Legislation is only as good as its enforcement, and many European countries struggle with police enforcement and prosecutor decisions, pointing to the need to raise awareness among these professional groups.

● Public knowledge and awareness of the law is paramount, and research on underreporting of hate crime shows that victims often don't know that what they have experienced is illegal.

● Though legal instruments can in the long run shape social norms, this is not inevitable and can take a long time. Legal responses need to be visible, consistent, and employed with smart targeting and publicity, both among the general public and among first responders.

Public order management of far-right incidents

The management of far-right marches, demonstrations and incidents is not only important

in its own right because it reclaims public spaces for the law abiding majority, but it sends a symbolic message that extremism cannot win.

It also provides a real-time opportunity for local authorities, police and the community to work together; public order management is not something done *to* communities, but *with* communities, exemplified by the Active Citizens Programme in Rochdale in the UK. Rochdale Police identified 30 individuals from across the community in order to get a cross-section of views and perspectives and then brought them together to explain legislation and tactical strategies relating to the policing of EDL demonstrations and gather community feedback. During demonstrations, each 'active citizen' was paired with a police officer or mediator to patrol the community and act as a communication link to those directly affected by the march.[136] Experience across all 10 countries covered in this study shows that communities are keen to get involved in claiming back public space from extremists. For example, practitioners in Poland noted that small citizen groups have spontaneously organised to paint over hateful graffiti as soon as it appeared.[137]

Police need to be made aware of how they can use the penal code effectively to engage with extremists, and what the limitations are in balancing the democratic right to protest. Police in the UK raised questions about how recent anti-social behaviour orders may be used, and whether legislation devised for an entirely different purpose can be applied to extremist ideologues in the streets. There are many examples of police using smart strategies to contain the impact of marches and demonstrations, while upholding the right to protest. For example, police in Luton and Tower Hamlets have explored the limits of their powers under the Public Order Act of 1986 to

impose conditions on EDL demonstrations, such as fixed start and end times or keeping them on the outskirts of high impact areas. In Hungary, a new criminal code came into effect on 1 July 2013 with a clearer definition of 'incitement against a community.' Security services noted that might make it easier to police events, such as Pride Parade, and prevent disorder by providing an opportunity for police officers to initiate dialogue with protesters beforehand to demonstrate the legal implications of their actions.[138]

Initiating dialogue and ensuring there are solid relationships between far-right activists and the police have also proven to be effective in managing public disorder. The Swedish Dialogue Police aim to initiate dialogue with protesters before and during demonstrations to identify individuals within the group who may be key to preventing other individuals from using violence at events, and engage with them to control the broader group.[139]

It is also important to have an effective media strategy for use in the aftermath of far-right incidences or events that could trigger a far-right backlash such as that following the killing of soldier Lee Rigby in Woolwich in 2013. The Finnish Ministry of Interior has developed a strategy s part of its National Action Plan to Prevent Extremism, the first media strategy of its kind across Europe.

Prevention and deterrence

At the heart of efforts to tackle the far right must be programmes and activities to prevent and deter those vulnerable to radicalisation from engaging in far-right extremism.

The first aim of preventive efforts should be to change attitudes, which is achieved through contact, education and raising public awareness. Governments should support programmes that expose young people to others from different backgrounds, through for example, mentoring programmes across different communities, mixed-ethnicity sports clubs or work experience initiatives, and the promotion of role models from minority communities. Positive examples of this can be found in mixed-ethnicity football matches organised by preventative police coordinators in Denmark, or an initiative to bring Mamed Khalidov, a Polish mixed martial artist of Chechen descent, to meet with Polish skinheads who admire fighters, to shake their prejudices about Chechens. Governments should consider instituting a minimum number of hours of teaching into their national curricula on religion, history and victim groups. It is also vital to raise the public's understanding of far-right extremism within their own community and country; the public can become a powerful tool to tackle extremism if made aware of the problems.

Second, preventive efforts should tackle the root causes of extremism. This is often best achieved through deterrence measures that offer alternative activities that both divert young people from participating in far-right activities and also help to build a sense of purpose and self-worth. At one end of the scale, this could simply entail providing budgets to allow social workers to take vulnerable kids snowboarding or playing an extreme sport, which have proven to have a real impact in Norway. At key moments, such as during far-right marches, governments need to work with 'key influencers', like parents, teachers and youth workers, to offer alternative activities that will be more attractive than taking part in the march.

For obvious reasons, prevention has tended to be carried out with young people; youth commit the overwhelming number of right-wing related violent crimes.[140] However, adults are also susceptible to far-right ideologies and activism so there is a need to widen the focus for preventive efforts. Danish policy makers noted this as one of the limitations of their own approach, which is delivered through the SSP structure, a network of schools, social services and the police. They are looking at how to widen the net to adults, through, for example, working more closely with drug centres and psychiatric services and organising a series of pilot public discussions with the Minister of Foreign Affairs on divisive foreign policy concerns, to offer citizens a space to discuss grievances with politicians in a frank way. Similarly, the Slovak NGO, Centre for European and North Atlantic Affairs (CENAA), organised a set of public roundtables with citizens of two towns with high levels of anti-Roma sentiment.

Far-right extremism is a constantly changing phenomenon. Preventive work therefore must not just be conducted in areas with historically high levels of far-right sympathies; it must also prioritise areas where there is the potential for future problems. Governments need to invest in tension monitoring and attitudinal studies to identify these places. They must also be ready to act on this data. For example, the Centre for Research on Prejudice in Poland presented to a subcommittee in the Polish parliament the results of a 2009 nationwide survey showing that the region of Bialystok had particularly high indicators of prejudice. The government failed to act, and in 2013 Bialystok flared up as the site of a series of violent attacks on minorities.[141]

The effectiveness of preventive measures will in part depend on them utilising the right tools and methodologies: credible leaders, good stories (for example, the stories of former extremists or their victims can be especially powerful), strong messaging, use of youth culture, youth-led and designed, locally relevant and incentivising participation. For example, Exit Fryshuset in Sweden has developed a play called 'The Voice of Hate,' which brings the personal stories former Swedish far-right extremists to young people in schools. Some organisations have experimented with developing mobile phone applications which aim to challenge racist ideologies, or targeted YouTube video campaigns strategically placed in certain online spaces.[142]

For those programmes targeting adults, it is vital they are timetabled around working hours. Programmes are able to deliver at scale when they are mainstreamed into existing structures rather than ad-ons, and this is particularly important in Central and Eastern Europe, where efforts to tackle the far right are often missing from government policy.

Governments need to make the necessary investments. For example, they need to invest in individuals within police and social services who have built strong and trusted relationships with individuals within and on the peripheries of the far right. In the current financial climate, these kinds of roles are often vulnerable to cuts. They also need to bring resources up to date, for example through the use of technology, popular culture and the latest activities crazes. Governments and civil society are competing with extremists and their pitch needs to be compelling.

Exit programmes

Hard end interventions are vital, but rare. Governments shy away from them for many reasons, but not least because such programmes can be risky. However, evidence from countries with Exit programmes shows that they work and can also provide important insights into far-right recruitment and operating strategies that in turn inform and improve responses across the policy spectrum.

Exit programmes exist in only a minority of the countries included in this study. In some places interventions have been carried out by intelligence agencies, often through direct approach to individuals in order to engage in one-to-one dialogue. The German Ministry of Interior runs an Exit programme, but it functions for very few cases of individuals seeking identity changes or protection. The NGO Exit Germany is one of the longest standing Exit programmes in Europe, and has had varying levels of support from various government departments over the years. A long-established and successful government-funded Exit programme exists in Sweden that focuses on disengagement. Such practical help with routes out of movements is vital; evidence shows that where this assistance is available it is well used. This report advocates that all countries set up a national Exit programme, or a national intervention strategy.

Such programmes tend to be more effective and credible when they are independent of government, though given the nature of these activities they are likely to only be sustainable through government or statutory funding. Ideally, a national Exit programme would be a loose cooperation between government agencies and

civil society organisations, with civil society leading and government supporting where necessary, such as helping an individual with a new identity or personal protection after leaving a movement.

There is also a need for greater understanding of how interventions can be done in the online space. There are only a handful of examples of this in practice, but we need to map what is being done and facilitate more learning about how this can be scaled up and enhanced.

The main challenge in implementing Exit programmes and the more acute interventions is securing long-term funding. In some countries, such as Germany, interventions have been offered seed funding for up to three years, with the expectation that they will find independent funding to ensure their sustainability. This expectation is unrealistic, and governments need to commit to long term funding to see results in the intervention space.

Data collection

Across all countries in this study, there are significant improvements required on data collecting. States differ in the information they record and publish on bias motivations, which makes comparison difficult. Official data collection mechanisms on hate crime often fail to capture the real situation on the ground. Monitoring and measuring far-right extremism is non-negotiable and a number of changes are necessary. Governments need to make better use of existing data and also look for opportunities to pool it. They need to move beyond police data, which is limited by various factors, such as the tendency to rely on self-reporting by victims or poor decisions by individual police officers unable to recognise crimes as being hate-based. They also need to support research to understand how new media could

support data collection, such as tracking content on Facebook and Twitter through social media analytics or using social media platforms to engage with victims to gather richer data. The EU could play a role in ensuring that data is collected systematically through formulating reporting requirements as part of an EU framework on hate crime.

However, it is important that measures to improve reporting on far-right extremism and hate crime does not simply incentivise over-reporting, as happened in Slovakia in 2010.[143] To avoid this, measures must be accompanied by awareness raising |and training for police officers to ensure they understand what constitutes a hate crime and how to categorise it.

It is also important to increase the amount of publicly available data. Where there are concerns about extremist movements using this data for their own ends, more rigorous methods for sharing data privately between government, police, civil society, and 'key influencers' should be instituted. There is also a strong appetite among policy makers and practitioners for academics to translate their research into digestible summaries. Governments are testing out new ways to engage with academic experts on far-right extremism and intolerance, for example through the secondment of academic experts to the UK Department for Communities and Local Government to facilitate 'knowledge exchange' on the issue of far-right extremism.[144]

Public awareness and political leadership

There is a real need for political leadership on this issue, and politicians need to be more courageous

about making public statements denouncing far-right ideologies, intolerance, and hatred. This is especially important surrounding traumatic incidences of hate crime or extremism, but should not be limited to these occasions.[145] Governments should carefully consider the evidence before devising communications strategies on this issue. For example, in 2007, the German Minister of Interior announced that Islamist terrorism posed the greatest threat to Germany, while the government report accompanying the speech had twice as much attention devoted to right-wing extremism.[146] In Finland, there has been a conscious decision by the Ministry of Interior to communicate that the greatest threat to security at the local level is far-right extremism. These kinds of public statements need to be normalised in order to have an impact. Practitioners supporting LGBT victims in Poland, for instance, noted the impact that political support from two Members of Parliament has had on their work, both in receiving funding as a result of the political attention received by the issue, but also in normalising support for the cause.[147]

Governments, political leaders and the police also need to be much smarter with their use of technology, and overall communications with the constituencies they serve when it comes to issues related to far-right extremism and hate crime. German officials, for example, noted a need for a website which clarifies for the public where to go for help for different issues related to far-right extremism, as lines of communication on the issue are not currently clear. Some NGOs have stepped up where governments are lacking on clear data sharing and information on far-right extremism. In Hungary, for example, the Athena Institute has developed interactive online maps tracking data on far-right extremist groups with differing levels of

activity.[148] The German NGO Apabiz continues to develop an online map called *Rechtes Land* for the general public to key in their postal code to see a snapshot of far-right extremist crimes and activity ongoing in their local areas, with the aim of improving public involvement in how their areas are policed.[149]

Capacity building

Legal and policy frameworks rely for their implementation on individual practitioners within national and local government, police forces, prosecutions, schools, social services and community members being able to identify and act on far-right extremism whenever they encounter it. Training on the recognition of hate crimes and far-right extremism, ability to engage with victims of hate crime and extremism, and diversity and tolerance education more broadly need to be instituted at a large scale and mainstreamed into police university curricula.

Programmes are needed to connect the right people to help municipalities recognise and solve problems. For example, the Inter-disciplinary Advisory Service for Local Action against Racism and Xenophobia in Norway was a mobile task force that could be called in by municipalities dealing with issues of right-wing extremism. A small group of experts would convene a two-day seminar to map and analyse the local problem and explore what actions should be taken. These sessions involved youth workers, teachers, outreach workers, local police, and even concerned young people. Though no longer formally in existence, the networks initiated by the Advisory Service have remained intact and those who were involved continue to serve as contact

points for concerned municipalities.[150] Partnership between government and NGOs is key to success. Officials in some countries, such as Denmark and Finland, conceded that they had not previously worked with civil society, but this is now a feature of their approach. In order to assist with similar transitions, the Slovak Ministry of the Interior has organised study visits for police and civil society to areas particularly affected by extremism with the aim of improving relations between them.[151]

Governments can build networks to enhance problem solving over the longer-term, including through preventive efforts. For example, Denmark and Finland have action networks on extremism, with the Danish model focused on connecting social workers, teachers, and police, and the Finnish networks regionally based in several cities. The Department for Communities and Local Government in the UK has funded a partnership between Luton Borough Council and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council to map far-right extremism locally and collect best practice at the local level across the UK.

Internal planning and communications networks have been instituted in numerous countries. They are most effective when they are free from institutional red tape, empowering local people to assess needs and devise solutions that will work in their areas.

Finally, training for elected officials should not be overlooked given the importance of political messages. For example, the Dutch National Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Security ran a simulation programme with mayors from several municipalities with the aim of improving capacity to recognise the problem and act on it sensibly and sensitively.[152] In

some cases, there has been a tendency to downplay the problem of the far right. Where this occurs, it can be helpful to use cost-benefit analyses to show the benefit of taking a sustained and long-term approach to tackling the far right. The Tolerance Project in Sweden and Aggredi in Finland have both experimented with this approach.[153]

This report has set out what we know about the diverse phenomenon of far-right extremism across Europe, and what governments are doing to confront this issue. Far-right extremism exists in low volumes in some countries, but can have a potentially high impact. There are countries facing more significant volumes of far-right supporters, and given the agility of the far right, there are reasons to believe that new forms of the phenomenon may emerge in the years to come.

The far right has been persistent and flexible, and tactics which appear today in Sweden and Germany today are likely to appear in the Netherlands and Slovakia tomorrow. Governments need to put aside the debates over definitions of the far right and political differences, and demonstrate a clear commitment to tackling this issue. They need to be front footed and anticipatory, rather than waiting for tensions to flare up and violence to escalate.

This report makes 10 key recommendations for policy makers:

1 Responses to the far right need to be underpinned by a strong legal framework

A sound legal framework is the bedrock of any response to far-right extremism and laws need to be visible, consistent and be accompanied by a communications plan. At a bare minimum, all countries should have a clear legal instrument on hate crime, and this should extend legal protection from hate crimes to all prerequisites of discrimination.

These prerequisites should be based on historical and current evidence, but also anticipatory of potential future victim groups. To reinforce the importance of such legislation and put pressure on those national governments that are lagging behind, the EU should adopt a comprehensive framework on hate crime.

A legal framework on hate crime needs to be underpinned by strong anti-discrimination laws. Though they should never be designed to stop extremism, anti-discrimination frameworks help to set the tone of public norms around acceptable behaviour, which can have a positive knock-on effect.

National governments need to put in place legal recognition for victims groups, and in support of this the EU should prepare a directive on victims' rights specifically targeted to victims of hate crime, to formalise these protections and pressure governments to include it in legislation.

Legal instruments are only effective if they are properly and consistently implemented. They must therefore be accompanied by awareness and capacity building activities with police coming into contact with extremists and NGOs fighting extremism and supporting victims.

2 Public agencies and communities need to work together to deliver robust and effective public order management responses

Public order disturbances are the most common

expressions of far-right extremism across Europe, ranging from lower level harassment and vandalism to high profile demonstrations. Good public order management can minimise the impact of protests on local communities, build trust between those who need to work together to tackle the far right, and reduce the daily misery experienced by those who are targeted by right wing extremists. Smart policing means strong communication with the local community to get them informed and involved in a positive way during demonstrations, and smart use of social media and technology.

National governments, municipalities, police and NGOs need to share good practice on what works in public order management responses, including both online and offline efforts. This would be done most efficiently through the EU's Radicalisation Awareness Network, which seeks to share lessons learned among practitioners tackling radicalisation and violent extremism.

3 **Governments need to make serious long-term investments in preventive measures**
It is essential that governments invest in substantive prevention programmes to tackle the far right in both the short and long-term. This needs to cover a number of bases.

Governments should support programmes for young people to build lasting relationships with others from diverse backgrounds. They should also consider instituting a minimum number of hours of teaching into their national curriculums on religion and the diverse history of the community and country, as well as historical education with a focus on victims.

Governments should also fund tension-monitoring work and then deploy preventive programmes in areas where there is a potential for far-right extremism or hate to take hold.

Governments, the police and NGOs need to work together to take on the difficult conversations with the hard to reach in all communities. Unacknowledged grievances left to fester can lead to more extreme manifestations of violence, so it is essential that issues are not 'off the agenda'.

Acknowledging the problem is essential, so governments and NGOs need to continue to work to raise the public's understanding and knowledge of far-right extremism within their community and country.

While governments are often not the best actors to deliver far-right interventions at the community level, they should invest in the resources needed by local players, such as police, NGOs and community activists. This might include filmed testimonials of former extremists or their victims to act as counter-narratives, educational resources, 'how-to' guides for practitioners, and so forth. It is also vital that these resources make better use of new technologies and popular cultures to ensure they are attractive and credible with their target audiences.

4 **Governments need to put in place national Exit programmes to help individuals to leave far-right movements and groups behind**
Many individuals who want to leave far-right groups and movements end up trapped because they struggle to find jobs, housing and social support outside these extremist networks. This report advocates that all countries set up a national Exit programme, or a national intervention strategy to provide a route out for those who want to leave. Ideally, this would be a loose cooperation between government agencies and civil society organisations.

There is also a need for greater understanding of how interventions can be done in the online space.

5 **Governments need to fund a variety of attractive deterrence activities to keep young people away from far-right influences**

Governments need to offer activities to divert young people from attending and participating in far-right movements and activities. During key times, such as far-right marches, they need to work with 'key influencers', like parents, teachers and community workers, to deter the individuals they engage with from attending by making them seem unattractive or costly or providing interesting alternative activities.

6 **Governments and NGOs need to work together to enhance public understanding of the threat from the far right, underpinned by clear and decisive political messages**

There is a real need for political leadership on the issue of the far right. Politicians need to be more courageous about making public statements denouncing far-right ideologies, intolerance, and hatred, especially – but not limited to – around traumatic incidences of hate crime or extremism. Governments need to have in place dedicated media strategies focused on responses to the far right.

7 **Governments need to put in place national strategies and action plans for tackling the threat from the far right**

There are many different approaches to tackling the far right across Europe, from those that are legally-led or securitised, to those that take a whole-of-government approach. What is clear, though, is that multiple departments, agencies, and actors will be involved in responses, so it is vital that governments have a national strategy and action plan to coordinate efforts.

8 **The EU, governments, police and NGOs need to work together to improve and streamline data gathering on the threat from the far right**

There are significant improvements required on data collecting; monitoring and measuring far-right extremism is a non-negotiable part of an effective response. A number of measures are required.

States need to make better use of existing data, and pool this data across regions. Governments need to move beyond police data, as there are numerous limitations linked to these sources.

Governments need to support research and testing on ways in which new media can support the collection of data on far-right extremism.

Governments should work to ensure more data on the problem is made publicly available, and weighty academic studies are translated into digestible formats for policy makers.

Finally, the EU can play a role in working to ensure that data is collected systematically by formulating reporting requirements as a part of an EU framework on hate crime.

9 **Major capacity building initiatives are needed to enhance the ability of frontline workers to spot and respond to the signs of radicalisation towards the far right**

The effectiveness of legal instruments and policy frameworks is limited by the capacity of frontline workers to spot the signs of radicalisation and understand how to respond. Governments can make a significant contribution by funding training and capacity building programmes for police, municipalities, teachers, NGOs and community, and

youth workers. Training can also be implemented for political leaders to help them improve their response to extremist events.

Governments can also use their power of convening to enhance partnership working among the key players. Long-term trusted relationships can significantly improve responses to extremist events.

10 **Governments must adopt long-term funding arrangements to make responses to the far right more sustainable and effective**
Finally, one of the recurring themes of the report has been the frustration with short-termism in relation to responses to the far right. Legal and policy frameworks will help to tackle this, but those working at the street level to tackle extremist groups and movements need the stability and long-term funding to be able to put in place measures to not just tackle today's problems, but prevent their recurrence in the future.

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3. Vidhya Ramalingam and Ross Frenett. (2013) 'Woolwich Attack: Should we expect a violent response?' Huffington Post. 25 May 2013.

4. Ben West (2012) 'Mimicking Breivik in Poland,' *Security Weekly*. Stratfor. 29 November 2012. See also, Polskie Radio (2013) 'Terrorism charges for 'Polish Breivik,' [Available online: www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/141871, Terrorism-charges-for-Polish-Breivik].

5. Europol. (2013) TE-SAT 2013 EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report. European Police Office.

6. Political scientist Cas Mudde noted in 1995 that there are at least 26 definitions of right-wing extremism, mentioning at least 58 features, with only five of these (nationalism, racism, xenophobia, anti-democratic sentiment and a call for a strong state) mentioned by more than half of the authors. See: Cas Mudde (1995) 'Right Wing Extremism Analyzed,' *European Journal of Political Research* 27(2): 203-24.

7. Interviews, Norway (March 2013), Finland (April 2013), Netherlands (June 2013).

8. Interview, Norway (March 2013).

9. Rob Witte (2012) *The Netherlands*. in Ramalingam, Glennie and Feve (Eds.) 'Preventing and Countering Far-Right Extremism: European Cooperation, Country Reports'. Institute for Strategic Dialogue, Swedish Ministry of Justice. London, UK. pg. 37; Interview, the Netherlands (June 2013).

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11. Interviews, the Netherlands (June 2013), Finland (April 2013).

12. Europol. (2013) TE-SAT 2013 EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report. European Police Office; and Interviews, the Netherlands (June 2013), Slovakia (September 2013).

13. Ministry of Interior, Finland. (2013) *Violent Extremism in Finland – Situation Overview* 2/2013. Available online: www.intermin.fi/download/47383_Violent_extremism_in_Finland_-_2_2013.pdf?f09cac 994591d088

14. Though the total number of far-right extremists decreased from 30,000 in 2008, the tendency for violence has grown in the far-right scene. For more information, see: www.worldbulletin.net/?aType= haber&ArticleID=126869

15. Yngve Carlsson (2006) 'Violent Right-Wing Extremism in Norway: Community Based Prevention and Intervention.' in Peter Reiker, Michaela Glaser and Silke Schuster (eds.) *Prevention of Right-wing Extremism, Xenophobia and Racism in a European Perspective*. The Center for the Prevention of Right-wing Extremism and Xenophobia. Halle, Germany.

16. Monika Rebala (2013) 'Nationalists, arson and rioting: Another dark Independence Day in Poland' *The Christian Science Monitor*. 21 November, 2013. Available online: www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2013/1121/Nationalists-arson-and-rioting-Another-dark-Independence-Day-in-Poland

17. Interviews, Poland (October 2013).

18. Though, experts noted, with this relationship changing, the capacity for violence could change.

19. Interviews, the Netherlands (June 2013).

20. Interviews, Slovakia (September 2013).

21. Interviews, Norway (March 2013).

22. Vidhya Ramalingam, Twitter feed photo, 7 September 2013: pic.twitter.com/2PzyHCafpl

23. Ehud Sprinzak, "Gush Emunim: The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism" Jerusalem Quarterly 21 (1981): pp. 28-47.

24. The skinhead subculture had its origins in Britain, originally based more on fashion, music and lifestyle, though skinheads has also come to define more ideological movements and individuals today.

25. Interviews, Denmark (April 2013) and Norway (March 2013).

26. Raffaello Pantucci (2013) 'From Ukraine with Hate: What Pavlo Lapshyn Conviction Says about the Far-Right Extremism' RUSI Analysis, 25 October 2013.

27. See discussion in Gerry Gable and Paul Jackson. (2010) 'Lone wolves: myth or reality' Searchlight report.

28. Interviews, the Netherlands (June 2013), Finland (April 2013), Slovakia (September 2013), Poland (October 2013), Hungary (September 2013).

29. Interview, Slovakia (September 2013).

30. Interview, Netherlands (June 2013).

31. Press Conference, Quilliam, 8 October 2013.

32. Interview, Denmark (April 2013).

33. Interview, Finland (April 2013), Norway (March 2013), Germany (April 2013), Denmark (April 2013).

34. Interviews, Poland (October 2013), Denmark (April 2013).

35. Informants mentioned much of the trade of arms and substances in countries like the Netherlands and Germany are done without intent to use. Interviews, the Netherlands (June 2013).

36. Joel Busher (2013) 'Grassroots Activism in the English Defence League: Discourse and Public (Dis)order,' in (Eds.) Taylor, Currie and Holbrook, *Extreme Right Wing Political Violence and*

Terrorism. London: Bloomsbury.

37. Interviews, the Netherlands (June 2013).

38. A recent survey by the Centre for Studies of Holocaust and Religious Minorities in Norway revealed that 12.5 percent of the population harbours prejudices against the Jewish population. Another survey by the Living History Forum in Sweden revealed nearly 30 percent of young people in Sweden believe the Holocaust has been overblown in European history.

39. Interviews, Poland (October 2013).

40. Interviews, Germany (April 2013).

41. Interviews, Poland (October 2013).

42. Dena Ringold, Mitchell A. Ornstein, Erika Wilkens. (2005) Roma in and Expanding Europe: Breaking the Poverty Cycle. *The World Bank*.

43. See country reports on Slovakia, Hungary and Poland in *Preventing and Countering Far-Right Extremism: European Cooperation, Country Reports*. Institute for Strategic Dialogue and Swedish Ministry of Justice, London, UK.

44. B. Klandermans and N. Mayer. (2005) *hrough the Magnifying Glass: Extreme Right Activists in Europe*. Routledge.

45. The study examined six themes: attitudes towards dictatorship, national chauvinism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, social Darwinism and Nazism. See: Decker et al. (2010) Die Mitte In Der Krise. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. Germany.

46. Matthew Goodwin and Jocelyn Evans. (2012) *From voting to violence? Far-right extremism in Britain.* Hope not Hate and YouGov. London, UK. And Extremis Project. (2012) 'Europe at the extremes? Public concerns and the generational divide.' Extremis Project. [Available online: extremisproject.org/2012/09/europe-at-the-extremes-public-concerns-and-the-generational-divide/.]

47. Interview, Hungary (September 2013).

48. For more information, see: Vidhya Ramalingam (2012) 'The Rise of the Radical Right in Europe', in *The New Radical Right: Violent and Non-Violent Movements in Europe*. Institute for Strategic Dialogue.

49. This is a speculative claim based on the theories of policy makers, law enforcement and practitioners interviewed in this study. More research is needed to draw firm conclusions.

50. In the UK, the Luton Borough Council noted that individuals within the leadership of the EDL were born and raised within their community, well known there, and part of the fabric of their local community. Likewise, practitioners noted in communities in Eastern Poland with high levels of hate crime, like Bialystok, Lubiin, and Rzeszow, policemen often are 'buddies or mates' of perpetrators or their families, oftentimes having gone to school together and grown up together, adding another layer of difficulty for lower level police officers pursuing their acquaintances. Practitioners in Germany discussed that the far-right scene represents a cross-section of society, with well-established individuals across mainstream professions like law, medicine and indeed the police.

51. Interview, Poland (October 2013).

52. Interview, Norway (April 2013).

53. Interviews, Finland (April 2013), Netherlands (June 2013).

54. Interviews, Hungary (September 2013), Slovakia (September 2013).

55. Interviews, Denmark (April 2013).

56. Interviews, Denmark (April 2013).

57. Ministry of Interior, Finland. (2012) 'Towards a Cohesive Society: Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism.' Helsinki 2012. 33/2012. Available online: www.intermin.fi/download/ 36330_332012.pdf ?240e405ca3b4d088

58. Interviews, Finland (April 2013).

59. Interviews, Denmark (April 2013).

60. Interviews, Slovakia (September 2013).

61. Department for Communities and Local Government. (2012) 'Creating the conditions for integration.' February 2012. Available online: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/a ttachment_data/file/7504/2092103.pdf

62. Interviews, Denmark (April 2013).

63. Interviews, Germany (April 2013).

64. See country reports on the Netherlands and Norway in *Preventing and Countering Far-Right Extremism: European Cooperation, Country Reports*. Institute for Strategic Dialogue and Swedish Ministry of Justice, London, UK.

65. B. Schellenberg (2009) "Country Report Germany" in Bertelsmann Stiftung (ed.) 'Strategies for Combating Right-Wing Extremism in Europe'. Gütersloh, Germany.

66. Interviews, Hungary (September 2013), Slovakia (September 2013).

67. Public Order Act 1986 is available online: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/64 For more information on this Act in practice, also see Manchester City Council, Report to Communities Scrutiny Committee, 11 December 2013. www.manchester.gov.uk/download/ meetings/id/16106/6_demonstrations_and_policy _communities_scrutiny_report

68. Interviews, Poland (October 2013). Read Article 13 in The Constitution of the Republic of Poland here: www.sejm.gov.pl/prawo/konst/ angielski/konse.htm

69. B. Schellenberg (2009) "Country Report Germany" in Bertelsmann Stiftung (ed.) 'Strategies for Combating Right-Wing Extremism in Europe'. Gütersloh, Germany.

70. Ibid.

71. Interviews, Slovakia (September 2013). See also: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. (2011) 'Right-wing Extremism in Central Europe: An Overview.' Available online: library.fes.de/pdf-files/ id-moe/08840.pdf. More information also available in: Sergej Danilov and Tomas Nociar (ed.) 'Loved and Hated: Commonalities and Differences between the Slovak and Hungarian Far Right. Institute for Intercultural Dialogue. Available online: www.ipmd.sk/wp-content/uploads/ 2012/06/loved-and-hated1.pdf

72. The UK has seen pubs frequented by EDL supporters close on the date of demonstrations to indicate that the movement is not welcome.

73. Examples include the Hungarian Civil Liberties Program in Hungary, which provides training for Roma communities on victims' rights, the

Association for Legal Intervention and Lambda Warszawa in Poland.

74. Informants in Poland and Germany noted examples of rapid community mobilisation to paint over far-right extremist graffiti and re-claim public spaces.

75. Both Norway and Poland have seen areas designated as 'Racism Free Zones' (Never Again Association ran this during Euro 2012, based on the archetype of a Norwegian initiative).

76. Police in the UK have reduced the possibility for conflict surrounding EDL demonstrations by setting strict perimeters for EDL routes, specifically designed to prevent the movement from passing through areas largely populated with Muslim communities, for example, the EDL's demonstration on Tower Hamlets was confined to the outside borders of Tower Hamlets.

77. Rochdale Police have experimented with successful ways on engaging the local community in policing of EDL demonstrations, through for example its Active Citizens initiative.

78. Interviews, Denmark (April 2013).

79. In Poland, interviews highlighted a programme run by the Mixed Martial Arts Club to engage skinheads interested in fighting clubs and train them in martial arts. The programme is run by a Chechen, and Chechen people have often been victims of far-right hate crimes in Poland. The Center for Research on Prejudice and the Museum for the History of Polish Jews in Poland have run social activity programmes for youth susceptible to far-right extremism, including football matches. Preventative Police coordinators in Denmark have run multi-ethnic football tournaments, specifically connecting young people involved in Islamist and far-right extremist gangs.

80. The Center for European and North Atlantic Affairs (CENAA) in Slovakia has partnered with a local NGO to carry out a series of dialogue initiatives to bring together members of the local community to discuss grievances.

81. Preventative police in Norway have shaped a methodology around the 'Empowerment

Conversation', designed to help young people identify their ambitions, discuss the consequences of their actions, and empower them to achieve them to achieve their goals. The importance of sport and adventure activities in helping young people in far-right youth gangs find alternative sense of belonging and purpose has been demonstrated in Norway as well. Cultures Interactive in Germany uses youth cultural activities to engage with vulnerable young people.

82. In Poland, the Jewish Community Center Krakow runs educational programmes in high schools and Sunday Schools to teach youth about Jewish life and culture. The Forum for Dialogue Amongst Nations in Poland runs an educational project to deliver workshops in schools with heightened levels of anti-Semitism, to highlight the Jewish heritage of the places where students live. Anne Frank House also does educational work on anti-Semitism and the Holocaust using Anne Frank's life story as a medium to disseminate their message.

83. The German Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution in North Rhine-Westphalia created a comic book series called 'Andi,' specifically tackling issues related to far-right and Islamist extremism.

84. Denmark has led on initiatives to provide support networks for parents – working with parents is a key feature of the Danish approach to tackling extremism.

85. Finland and Slovakia have involved frontline professionals in government networks addressing extremism, or racism and xenophobia. The Danish SSP system has also sought to involve and raise awareness among 'key influencers.'

86. Political statements at the ministerial level against far-right extremism have been made in the UK for example, with Security Minister James Brokenshire delivering a major speech on far-right extremism in March 2013. At the local level, recent events in Bialystok, Poland, led to the mayor stepping up to make public statements denouncing violence against minorities. In terms of communications of threat assessments, Finland has

led on this, with a media strategy featuring as part of the national action plan on extremism.

87. People Against Racism in Slovakia has run creative campaigns using clever infographics to bust myths about Roma communities. These graphics have featured in Slovakia's biggest newspaper.

88. The Amadeau Antonio Stiftung in Germany has run a number of youth peer leaderships programmes to support young people who want to counter right-wing extremism within their own communities. The Tolerance Project in Sweden has brought together young people susceptible to the far right alongside high-achieving students in a Holocaust education programme, while also giving students a chance to engage in the difficult conversations with peers on these issues. On the political level, the Finnish Ministry of Interior appoints several youth goodwill ambassadors to take an active stance against racism in Finland.

89. Interviews, Denmark (April 2013), Norway (April 2013).

90. For more information, read the Soko Rex case study in Vidhya Ramalingam (2012) 'Policy Briefing: Countering Far-Right Extremism'. Institute for Strategic Dialogue. Available online: www.strategicdialogue.org/PPN_Working_Paper_-_Countering_Far_Right_Extremism _FINAL.pdf

91. Norwegian municipalities initiated the Night Raven's initiative, which pushed parents and adults to patrol the streets in the evening to make the local area an undesirable spot for youth gangs.

92. Examples of this often go undocumented, but can reach wide audiences when they occur. One example was a tweet by London-born rapper Professor Green (who has 1.97 million followers), posted on the evening of the murder of Lee Rigby in Woolwich, stating 'why are idiots running around attacking mosques? why are edl [sic] supporters taking to the streets? to kill more innocent people?' The post was re-tweeted over 7,500 times, over-reaching even the most re-tweeted EDL tweets. More information available here: internationalsocialist.org.uk/index.php/ 2013/05/how-the-far-right-are-using-twitter-edl-and-the-woolwich-attacks/

93. Violence Prevention Network in Germany carries out this kind of work in prisons. Preventative Police in Oslo Municipality are also visiting prisons and discussing individuals' post-prison plans, with the aim of ensuring they do not fall back into extremist groups once they are released. In Denmark, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and Integration runs a mentoring programme in prisons, working with inmates serving sentences for terrorism or extremism.

94. Removing toilet access is a method that has been tried by police in the UK, with some success given that it lowers the appeal and comfort of attending a demonstration. Some police in the UK claim that this simple method lowers the numbers of those attending demonstrations in the future. For a blog post on removal of toilet access and 'kettling' of an EDL demo, see: blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/archives/27763

95. Preventative Police in Oslo Municipality have run snowboarding and adventure activities with young people involved in neo-Nazi street groups, in some cases pushing entire groups to 'trade their pilot jackets for snowboard jackets.' (Interview, Norway, April 2013). The municipality invested in snowboard gear, and individuals were not allowed to join the trip with pilot jackets (a far-right youth trend).

96. This kind of support is provided by intervention professionals in the Netherlands, who have noted that re-location, employment, and relationships are the key changes that can help an individual fully leave a far-right extremist or hooligan group.

97. Rewind UK focuses largely on undermining ideology, even running DNA tests with individuals to undermine their understanding of their own racial and ethnic background.

98. Interview, Norway, March 2013; Interview, the Netherlands, June 2013. For an article on this method in Norway, see: Tore Bjørgo and Yngve Carlsson, 'Early Intervention with Violent and Racist Youth Groups,' Norwegian Institute of International Affairs. Available online: www.nupi.no/content/download/965/27043/version/6/file/677.pdf

99. Civil society organisations in Germany are experimenting with online engagement with the far right, for example the work being done by Amadeu Antonio Stiftung to train young people how to react when encountering neo-Nazis online (no-nazi.net/). A handful of individual former right-wing extremists are carrying out this work on a personal level across Europe and North America. Finnish Police are experimenting with 'Internet Policing,' where designated officers fulfil patrol duties on the internet, maintaining a visible presence and chatting with concerned individuals.

100. Peter Kreko (2012). 'Hungary' in 'Preventing and Countering Far-Right Extremism: European Cooperation, Country Reports'. Institute for Strategic Dialogue, London, UK.

101. B. Schellenberg (2009) "Country Report Germany" in Bertelsmann Stiftung (ed.) 'Strategies for Combating Right-Wing Extremism in Europe'. Gütersloh, Germany.

102. For Never Again Association publications, see www.nigdywiecej.org/303-78

103. Interviews, Finland (April 2013).

104. Some civil society organisations are working to involve the public in active monitoring of the threat, including Open Republic in Poland, which works to raise public awareness of the threat and amplify cases that have not received adequate media attention. Open Republic also advocates for local leaders to act. Apabiz in Germany is creating an online mapping tool so the general public can find information on cases of right-wing extremism in their local areas, and who to contact if they are worried or see something worrying.

105. Norway's Inter-Disciplinary Advisory Service was a unique initiative to connect experts and municipalities in need, and offered a two-day analysis session, involving experts, youth works, social workers and victim communities. The service was provided free for municipalities, and funded by the Norwegian government. The Danish government in 2013 ran a major mapping exercise to collect data on existing extremist movements, across ideologies. The Polish Ministry of Interior include monitoring as a cornerstone of its work on extremism and hate crime, following up on data collected by the NGO Never Again Association.

106. Lambda Warszawa is developing video training materials in partnership with the Polish police, on engaging with LGBT communities, particularly victims of hate crime.

107. The Hungarian Civil Liberties Union develops video testimonies of witnesses of hate crime incidences and publishes them online to both raise public awareness, and to push authorities to use victims' testimonies in legal proceedings. There are strong indications that many far-right sympathisers watch these videos, so they may also serve as counter-narratives in their own right. The "Stop Hate Crime" in Denmark has sought to raise public awareness of hate crime through creative

108. A human rights education element has been added to the Polish police core education, all trained officers must now pass a human rights test. Handbooks on discrimination and equal treatment have also been distributed across the Force.

109. Denmark and Finland in particular have instituted action networks in different forms: the SSP network in Denmark linking social workers, schools, and the police; and local action networks across four cities in Finland.

110. Interviews, Netherlands (June 2013).

111. Interviews, Germany (April 2013).

112. Interviews, Slovakia (September 2013).

113. Hate crime is defined in the Danish penal code in Article 81, No. 6.

114. Interviews, Denmark (March 2013). It is unclear whether this definition of hate crime covers for example hate crimes against transgender individuals. See Danish Institute for Human Rights report for more information: www.equinet europe.org/IMG/pdf/ hadforbrydelser_- _abstract.pdf

115. Interviews, Poland (October 2013).

116. For guidelines, see OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). (2009) Hate Crime Laws: A practical guide. Warsaw, Poland. Available online: www.osce.org/odihr/36426?download=true

117. Tell MAMA reported a spike in reported hate crime and hate speech against Muslims in the days following the Woolwich incident. For more details, see: tellmamauk.org/woolwich-murder-200-islamophobic-incidents-since-lee-rigbys-killing

118. Interviews, Poland (October 2013), Denmark (April 2013), Finland (April 2013).

119. Interview, Denmark (April 2013).

120. Interviews, Poland (October 2013).

121. Dena Ringold, Mitchell A. Ornstein, Erika Wilkens. (2005) Roma in and Expanding Europe: Breaking the Poverty Cycle. The World Bank.

122. Resources from CoPPRa are available here: www.counterextremism.org/resources/details/id/117/coppra-community-policing-and-the-prevention-of-radicalisation

123. Interviews, Finland (April 2013), Poland (October 2013), Slovakia (September 2013), Germany (April 2013), United Kingdom (October 2013).

124. Interviews, Denmark (April 2013)

125. Interviews, Finland (April 2013), Poland (October 2013).

126. Interview, Germany (April 2013).

127. Interview, Finland (April 2013).

128. Interviews, Denmark (April 2013).

129. Interview, Finland (April 2013).

130. Interviews, Denmark (April 2013), Finland (April 2013).

131. For more information on the debates about German Intelligence's large network of far-right informants, see: www.spiegel.de/international/germany/german-police-document-says-informants-fuelled-far-right-extremism-a-865461.html.

132. Interview, Norway (April 2013).

133. Interview, Denmark (April 2013), Norway (April 2013)

134. Interviews, Poland (October 2013), Hungary (September 2013). Adopting an EU Framework on 'right-wing extremism' will be impossible for numerous reasons, not least the struggle over definitions, and the political sway from countries with a strong far-right political presence. Terminology is important here, and focusing on hate crime for an EU framework would be more feasible.

135. Interviews, Hungary (September 2013).

136. Interview, United Kingdom (April 2013).

137. Interviews, Poland (October 2013).

138. Interviews, Hungary (September 2013).

139. For more information, see: polisen.se/Global/www%20och%20Intrapolis/Informationsmaterial/01%20Polisen%20nationellt/Engelskt%20informationsmaterial/Dialogue_bok100630Webb.pdf

140. Reiker, Glaser. (2007) Prevention of Right-wing Extremism Among Youth. German Youth Institute.

141. Interviews, Poland (October 2013).

142. All Together Now in Australia has developed Australia's first anti-racism mobile phone application, called 'Everyday Racism,' which immerses the individual in racist texts, tweets, images and videos to challenge their understandings of racism and how to react. More information available here: alltogethernow.org.au/news/campaigns/everydayracism/

143. Incentives were offered to police recording hate crimes in Slovakia in 2010, which led to an over-reporting of hate crime for that year. (Interviews, Slovakia, September 2013).

144. Dr. Matthew Goodwin was seconded to the Department for Communities and Local Government in 2013, and led on a series of knowledge exchange workshops aiming to connect researchers with policy makers responsible for this area of work.

145. Ministerial announcements about the threat of far-right extremism have an impact; the UK saw a surge in headlines and public debate following Security Minister James Brokenshire's major speech on the threat of far-right extremism in March 2013.

146. B. Schellenberg (2009) "Country Report Germany" in Bertelsmann Stiftung (ed.) 'Strategies for Combating Right-Wing Extremism in Europe'. Gütersloh, Germany.

147. Interviews, Poland (October 2013).

148. The Athena Institute's tools are available online here: www.athenainstitute. eu/en/europe/map

149. For more information on this mapping tool, see: www.spiegel.de/international/ germany/german-ngo-to-launch-interactive-map-of-neo-nazi-activity-a-880303.html

150. Interviews, Norway (April 2013).

151. Interview, Slovakia (October 2013).

152. Interview, Netherlands (June 2013).

153. Interviews, Sweden (April 2013), Finland (April 2013).

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