



Recommendations from the Almaty Workshop on Preventing Violent Extremism

On 11-13 May 2017 the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship with support from the OSCE Transnational Threats Department and the OSCE Programme Office in Astana conducted the workshop *Youth and the Prevention of Violent Extremism: Perspectives from Central Asia* in Almaty. A group of 15 young experts from the wider Central Asia region discussed their role in prevention of violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT), and formulated the following recommendations for policy makers. These recommendations will be presented to OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation at the 2017 OSCE-wide Counter-Terrorism Conference to be held on 23-24 May 2017 in Vienna.

PARTNERSHIPS IN PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VERLT

- Promote disengagement activities provided by local community leaders or councils of the elders as alternatives to repressive action towards persons potentially in the process of radicalization.
- Promote community policing with particular focus on co-operation with religious communities.
- Increase participation of youth representatives in relevant local, regional and national decision making processes. These representatives should be chosen in a transparent way and come especially from communities vulnerable to violent extremism and radicalization.
- Engage businesses to create innovative counter-narratives against violent extremism and radicalization and make use of targeted, big data-driven marketing.

MEDIA & COMMUNICATION

- Continue to work with social media companies to reduce internet content that promotes incitement to violence and hate speech.
- The media should work towards raising their professional standards, by developing Codes of Ethics which also address the issue of reporting on violent extremism in a careful and precise way and avoids sensationalism.
- Encourage young people to share experiences related to preventing violent



extremism in mass media, including in local languages.

- Raise awareness through education on potential risks regarding the misuse of social media to radicalize youth.
- Establish and promote the use of a hotline where individuals could anonymously seek advice on ways to assist persons potentially in the process of violent extremism and radicalization.

EDUCATION

- Enhance objective education in schools and universities by increasing knowledge on preventing violent extremism and radicalization through studying other religions, cultures, philosophy and tolerance.
- Ensure a comprehensive approach to the identification of extremist religious materials through commissions consisting of linguistic, theological and psychological experts.

GOVERNMENT APPROACH

- Governments should efficiently and proportionally use resources to address the root causes of radicalization, including in state actions that may unwillingly accelerate radicalization, and should apply strict compliance with national law and international human rights standards.
- Create a set of criteria for society to identify persons potentially in the process of violent extremism and radicalization based on national and local specificities.

POSITIVE LIFE ALTERNATIVES

- Create leisure time alternatives for youth from vulnerable regions that provide mentoring and volunteering programmes and engage youth in sports and arts. These could be implemented by public-private partnerships.
- Promote artists and intellectuals in order to stimulate the creation of counter-narratives to violent extremism.

PROMOTION OF ETHNIC EQUALITY

- Implement effective measures to address discrimination of ethnic minorities, including by promoting their fair representation in the government, parliament and law enforcement.

ECONOMIC / SOCIAL MEASURES

- Invest into rural areas vulnerable to violent extremism and radicalization in order to boost economic opportunities and enhance access to education.

