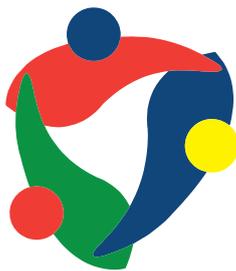


Anti-terrorism



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OSCE

United in Countering Violent Extremism

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (the Mission) promotes a comprehensive and co-operative approach to CT and P/C VERLT, providing policy guidance and expertise, conducting tailored capacity-building, and facilitating exchange of good practice. Human rights-based and whole-of-society approaches are applied to strengthen co-operation, non-criminal interventions, and rehabilitation and re-integration programmes.

CT and P/C VERLT Challenges in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Terrorism and the different forms of VERLT pose a serious threat to the security and stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), engendering fear and mistrust whilst undermining social cohesion and reconciliation.

As a result of sustained efforts to prevent VERLT and terrorism, BiH has not experienced a terrorist attack since 2015, and there has been a cessation of departures of its citizens to foreign battlefields. However, the latest US Counter-terrorism Report on BiH indicates that “extremist ideology and regional nationalist groups remain potential sources of terrorism in BiH”.

The complex and fragmented governance structure, resource gaps, and inadequate communication and co-ordination continue to hamper implementation of the *Strategy of BiH for Preventing and Combating Terrorism* (CT Strategy). CT co-ordination bodies at all levels of authority require greater inclusion of non-security sector actors to complement the expertise of security, law enforcement, and intelligence agencies.

Authorities in BiH are increasingly focused on addressing the return of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and their family members, as well as FTFs leaving the prison system. Shortfalls in their integration into society carries a significant security risk, including the spread of radicalization. According to a *2018 National Risk Assessment on Money*

Laundering and Financing of Terrorism, BiH also faces the challenge of terrorism financing through non-profit organizations (NPOs), and the risk of terrorists exploiting weaknesses in immigration management and border security.

The energy sector is deemed highly vulnerable to terrorist attacks from cyber space, and the resilience of critical energy infrastructure is inadequate. According to the *2019 Cybersecurity Capacity Review for BiH*, cyber security of critical infrastructure (CI) is still in its infancy in BiH, and there is no accepted definition of national CI at the State level nor formal categorization of CI assets. Moreover, in 2018, the UNDP assessed chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) incidents as being among the foremost hazards in BiH.

The role of the OSCE Mission to BiH

Guided by the OSCE's *Consolidated Framework for the Fight against Terrorism* and the BiH CT Strategy, the Mission provides policy advice and support entailing multi-stakeholder engagement, awareness raising, and capacity building. Given the complex nature of terrorist threats, it also promotes improved implementation of international legal frameworks, travel document security, capacities to counter the financing of terrorism, and the resilience of critical energy infrastructure. The Mission also supports an assessment of the current State-level CT Strategy and the development of a new one for the upcoming period - with priority on incorporating the do-no-harm principle and a whole-of-society approach.

The Mission assists with the development and implementation of CT and P/C VERLT strategic documents at all levels of authority in a way that ensures respect for human rights and the rule of law. This involves advocacy for the inclusion of non-security sector

actors. Mission assistance contributed to the Government of the Federation of BiH establishing an inclusive inter-sectoral group. The Mission applied a similar approach to its support of a draft *BiH Plan of Civil-Military Co-operation and Standard Operating Procedures in Case of an Act of Terrorism* – a key document that, once adopted, will ensure an improved response to the threat of terrorism and more adequate measures for preventing a terrorist attack and minimizing its consequences.

The Mission is helping improve co-operation between the security and financial sectors in countering the financing of terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction - toward implementation of Financial Action Task Force Recommendations on targeted financial sanctions. Building on prior results, Mission assistance aims to disrupt terrorist movements, prevent misuse of non-profit organizations to finance terrorism, and mitigate CBRN threats.

The Mission assists authorities to successfully receive, rehabilitate, and reintegrate

FTFs and their family members returning from foreign war zones, including by supporting development of operational procedures for their treatment as well as effective and appropriate R&R policies and programmes. The Mission also partners with social protection and health authorities in developing specialized trainings to prepare receiving families and train case workers directly providing support to the returnees.

The Mission's systemic promotion of a whole-of-society approach to CT and P/C VERLT has enabled a wide range of actors at all levels in BiH to address these complex issues in a coordinated manner and through greater inclusion of civil society, religious communities, women and youth. The interactive table-top exercise modality is used to bring together relevant stakeholders and develop joint responses to scenarios in which an individual's path veers to radicalization and violence. In view of the susceptibility of young people to VERLT and their vital role in countering it, the Mission also works closely with the education sector.

With Mission support, the Islamic Community in BiH developed and delivered specialized workshops for imams that helped increase their capacity in P/C VERLT. To date, the workshops have benefited more than 1,100 imams across the country. Support to develop media literacy capacities of imams has yielded an online learning platform comprising modules on non-discrimination, hate crimes, and P/C VERLT.

Recognizing the key role of the media in shaping public opinion and building resilience to VERLT, the Mission supported the BiH Council for Press and Online Media to develop guidelines for professional and responsible reporting on terrorism and VERLT.

The Mission is implementing the OSCE's flagship initiative *Leaders against Intolerance and Violent Extremism (LIVE)*, which includes practical and interactive examples and workshops that equip youth to lead P/C VERLT efforts. The support includes the development and implementation of contextualized initiatives to assist local communities in promoting human rights and building resilience to VERLT.

Follow OSCE Mission to BiH



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