EUROPEAN COMMISSION



DIRECTORATE-GENERAL MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS



NATIONAL REPORT SLOVENIA

ALMA MATER EUROPAEA ECM

Slovenska ul. 17

2000 Maribor

www.almamater.si

goran.gumze@almamater.si

Dr. Goran Gumze

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Damir Črnčec





1. Background on National contexts:

The project MATES has started in December 2016, approx. one year after the Balkan migrant path was established in 2015. By that time already 4 foreign fighters have left Slovenia of which two returned, however one was imprisoned in Italy. Once the migrant path was open and after the clumsy statement done by mufti of Slovene Islamic Society on national TV, the opposition of lay public against Islamic immigration has raised significantly.

Even if the media and political debates didn't bring the discussion on the public level, the social relationships and informal attitudes of Slovene population have indicated the resistance. In addition, there were two attacks performed against the property of Islamic society in Slovenia, namely broken windows at Islamic Center in Maribor and laid pig head at the entrance of new Mosque in construction in Ljubljana. The Islamic society has protested modestly, however went silent, distancing from public life in Slovenia, from issues of migration, radicalization and terrorism. The interviewed Imam's have categorically denied any relation between radicalization, terrorism and Islam.

Anti-Radicalisation National Programs and level of implementation.

According to the Intelligence Information there are more than 150 youngsters on the path to radicalisation in Slovenia, however, Slovenia didn't have a national de-radicalisation program, before the start of the project. As we mentioned, also Muslim society has distanced itself from the problem of radicalisation. Slovene Ministry for Inner and the police at that time, were cooperating in development of RAN platform and by the end of the project in 2018 have established the aniti-radicalisation alliance of Western Balkans, addressing the issue of illegal migration and radicalization. Unfortunately, Slovene law on terrorism is based on the law from ex-Yugoslavia. Even if revised 2016 issuing the Law on prevention of money laundry and financing terrorism, (ZPPDFT-1), number 2925, pg. 9391, the law is not taking in consideration modern trends of regulating radicalization, recruitment and terrorism acts.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION DIRECTORATE-GENERAL MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS



There were no security procedures existing in regards to violent radicalisation and deradicalisation and in 2016, only two of the experts in Slovene Police were responsible for countering terrorism and radicalisation. The guards in prisons are adapting procedures ad hoc, having no information about the pedigree of the imprisoned. There are no parole officers controlling youngsters on path to radicalisation or being imprisoned.

While controlling the Slovene borders during the 2015 migrant crisis, Slovenian police has detected and imprisoned more than 40 foreign radicals, that were recruiting migrants to return to Syria and fight against the repression toward Syrian people (they were accused of organising para-militar organisations which in Slovenia is violation of existing legislation). They were all deported to their countries of origin (mostly Germany, France, Belgium). There was only one radical ISIS fighter imprisoned in Slovenia in 2017 and one in Italy. After the performed interviews with Salafists in BiH in 2016, the researchers on Mates project proved the assumptions of the interviewed penitentiary officers that there were many refugees in 2015 from the occupied ISIS territories passing Slovenia with final destination in northern or western Europe. Namely, in 2015 the Russian - Al Assad coalition seriously attacked ISIS, liberating the territories previously under ISIS control. Many of those refugees were also ISIS fighters or supporters. Such information didn't reach the EU public, since the fact that EU is receiving the returners with open arms, is not the part of the main EU discourse on Syrian migration,

At the beginning of the project, no Government Policy was in place in Slovenia, yet Slovenia has implemented various regulatives since 9.11.2001, related to the specific events or states. Newly established Office for Migration is operational from June 1 2017. Joint Action Plan on Counter-Terrorism for the Western Balkans, based on Sofia declaration from May 17th 2018 is to be shaped and implemented in 2018.

The first and the biggest obstacle in Slovenia executing the research on radicalisation and terrorism, is the lack of imprisoned radicals. There is no official basis for radicals Watch list. The cooperation on Government level is in place and hopefully will be synchronized by the end of 2018. Even that the agency for penitentiary sanctions refused to cooperate at the beginning of the research in 2016, claiming that they have all the procedures



elaborated, all necessary know how and that they cooperate with other international agencies, the interviewed penitentiary officers claimed the opposite.

Terrorism Law and Law Enforcement

As mentioned, several regulations were amended to the Slovene penalty law where terrorism and related crime is regulated in the articles 108 -111. Yet at the web page of Ministry of Foreign Affairs is written: "Slovenia condemns in the strictest terms terrorism in any form. There is not and cannot be any justification for terrorism. The interdependence of members of the international community and the indivisibility of international security have never been so pronounced as at the present time of openness and globalisation. Openness and transparency can potentially have negative effects, i.e. they may facilitate terrorism and international organised crime. This means that the widespread involvement of democratic states in counter-terrorism activities is required. Respect for values, such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law, constitutes the most effective long-term measure against terrorism. Enhanced security should not affect the generally accepted standards for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms". However, Slovene law on terrorism and money laundry, that replaced the before mentioned Articals in penalty law, is from 2007, reviewed in 2016. This Act lays down the measures, competent authorities and procedures for identifying and preventing money laundering and terrorist financing pursuant to Directive 2005/60/EC of the European. Parliament and of the Council on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing (OJ No L 309, 25.11.2005, p. 15; hereinafter: Directive 2005/70/ES), Commission Directive 2006/70/EC of 1 August 2006 laying down implementing measures for Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the definition of "politically exposed person" and the technical criteria for simplified customer due diligence procedure and for exemption on grounds of financial activity conducted on an occasional or very limited basis (OJ L No. 214 of 04.08.06, p. 29), and Directive 2007/64/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2007 on payment services in the internal market, and amended Directives 97/7/EC,



2002/65/EC, 2005/60&EC and 2006/48/EC and repealing Directive 97/5/EC (OJ No. L 319 of 5.12.07, p. 1; (hereinafter: Directive 2007/64/EC).

Slovenia didn't change the anti-terrorism laws in accordance to stricter EU measures and new laws, implemented after terrorist attacks in 2015, Therefor the Law and Law enforcement is not as strict as in other EU countries.

Special units in place

At the Ministry of Inner 2 Police specialists are responsible for the issues of radicalisation and terrorism. One of them was appointed to Brussels in 2018. Also Slovene Intelligence is gathering data on potentially radicalised youth and sharing the info with other Balkan countries. The Western Balkan Counter-Terrorism initiative (WBCTi) and platform have been established in 2017.

Probation systems and intervention approaches with young persons in probation

Slovenia does not (yet) have a single organized "umbrella" probation service. However it does have a strongly developed, decentralized and interlocking system of de facto "probation" activities and community sanctions, carried out by public prosecutors, Social Service Centers (pre-trial, trial and after care, community service), mediators (pre-trial) and prisons (social work in prisons). Penal legislation determines which organizations carry out individual probation activities or measures. These duties are defined in the Criminal Procedure Act, the Criminal Code, The Enforcement of Penal Sanctions Act and individual executive regulations. Some activities (ie. supervision of house imprisonment) are carried out by Court and the police. Various NGOs are also involved in different capacities. As notable, there is no central authority in Slovenia to take overall national responsibility for the area of probation, to develop it, to supervise the implementation of sanctions and measures and evaluate existent practice. In addition, related to terrorism and radicalization, prisons do not have protocol for terrorists and recruiters, even if according to the Slovene secret service data, there are around 150 persons on the path to radicalization. In Maribor prison for example, there were more than 40 radicals imprisoned in 2015, that were recruiting among the Syrian migrants at Balkan migrant route. There is



a lack of coherent information about the activities or past activities of prisoners. The issue of human rights in prison is preventing efficient prevention of radicalization and recruitment in Slovenian prisons. Even if secret service provided some information on potential radical youth, there is unknown number of radicalized prisoners in Slovenia.

Since Slovenia doesn't have the probation system as other consortium countries do have, the approaches with young radicalized cannot be the same as for example in Italy and Germany. Such problematic youngsters can only be addressed by the social workers and the members of community in which they live and operate. Therefor the need to cooperate with local communities and in case if Islamic radicalization also with Islam communities and Imams is huge in Slovenia.

2. Assessment activities:

a) Description of activities

After assessing the formal situation in Slovenia regarding radicalization and terrorism through profound research of existing documents and domestic literature from the field, AMEU ECM team has decided to empirically approach the issue. Namely, there were few information on disposal in this regards and those existing were incoherent and dispersed between different state departments. The team has focused on north-east part of Slovenia, where most of interviews and focus groups were performed. After preliminary research AMEU ECM has detected following state of art in Slovenia:

6 (4) Radicalized Youth - Foreign Fighters from Slovenia

2 Died, 2 Returned, 2 Unknown Whereabouts

1 Returned lives in Ljubljana, 1 Imprisoned in Italy

No Special Programmes for returnees

Unknown number of Radicalized Youth in Slovenia (cca. 150 on the path to radicalisation)

Salafist Community around 100 persons Description of activities.





In continuation AMEU ECM team has executed 2 focus groups with penitentiary officers and mixed audience of lay public and some relevant experts (psychologists, teachers, members of Muslim society – number of participants 9 and 12). Most important and relevant information was collected in 3 interviews with Salafis in BiH and the journalist, that is following Salafism in BiH for the last 15 years. In addition, we have executed:

Interview with NSS agents (2), Pre-Interview with Head of the Office for Migration, Interview within Police (3), Interview within Administration for CP&DR, In Depth Analysis of Media and Social Media reports. Further, we have concluded 8 interviews with members of Muslim society and penitentiary officers of which:

2 interviews with Imams

- 2 interviews with penitentiary officers
- 4 Interviews with members of Muslim society

The comparison of empiric data with existing literature on radicalization, terrorism, youth crime, gangs and related topics was performed in continuation.

We can emphasize the following findings:

- 1. ISIS is a digital state of revolted youngsters, geographically emerging in black-hole states or destabilized territories, however structurally and administratively functioning on web.
- 2. The basic pillar of Islamic state is religion that motivates the actions and gives the higher purpose to acting, even if violent or monstrous.
- 3. Radicalization is a manner of identification and initiation; thus it cannot be perceived as radicalization.
- 4. Religious radicalization is in progress due to repression of politico-economic secular system of Western countries.
- 5. Islam and terrorism are not the same, however most of modern terrorist acts are performed by Salafists. Consequently, the current situation in Europa and sensationalistic media reports caused the suspicions against Muslim society in general.



- 6. Terrorists did not exclusively come with migrants in 2015. Although most of migrants came from liberated ISIS territories, so the integration of Muslims from Syria or other Arab countries coming in masses will be difficult if not impossible. Namely, Bosnian Muslims are culturally much closer to Slovenian catholic or Serbian orthodox than to Arab Muslim. As one of interviewed claimed: *"They are not as Bosnian Muslim, they do not agree with our way of life, consequently we do not agree with theirs"*.
- Terrorists are hopeless European youngsters, raised in Islam but without enough knowledge and education to comprehend it. They are disappointed about the European values, therefore recruitment through charismatic Imams is rather quite easy.
- 8. Recruiters are offering radical solutions for those youngsters who would probably join any radical group or want to revolt the system.
- Media reports caused a lot of damage, even within Muslim society. Correlation between Islam and terrorism is overemphasized. Isis is a sect and not following the good practices of Islam and Qur'an.
- 10. The Muslim society distanced themselves from the problem, yet with awareness that something needs to be done. The decision was done by responsible Mufti in Slovenia, after the clumsy interview at one of popular television, where his statement was interpreted wrongly.
- 11. Real Muslim, can not be radicalized, as he is following the good practices of Allah and holly books.
- 12. Problematic are charismatic recruiters, mostly Salafists, wide spreading violent aspects of Jihad, without any correlation to Quran. (They are so called Imams, as Islam doesn't have elaborated clergy as some other religions.). Violence is a solution promoted by those spoiling the Islam.
- 13. The biggest problem is silent complaining within the family, which distances the youngster from family and Muslim society.
- 14. Muslim societies doesn't have the resources to confront radicalization and recruitment performed by fake Imams and financially supported by Arab countries.



a) Assessment of Probation services

As we have already mentioned, Slovenia doesn't have unique standardized probation service. Different institutions are involved in the probation process like police, social workers, NGO's. Probation is also executed on different levels like: weekend relief from the prison, domestic prison, conditional relief, regular counseling with social workers or NGO's.

- Profile of target group.

Target group in Slovenia are youngsters on the path of radicalization, mostly with Muslim background or converted to Islam. Youngsters are the second or third generation migrants from Bosnia and Hercegovina. Therefore, Muslim societies must be addressed and involved in Multi-Agency approach toward deradicalization and prevention of radicalization.

- Intervention strategies with vulnerable young people

In Slovenia there are no intervention strategies developed for young in probation, neither for radicalized youngsters. Social workers are the ones responsible to work with individuals on probation. In the case of radicalized individual, the psychologists would be introduced into the re-socialization process.

- Sensitivity/awareness about the risk of radicalization

All the participants at the testing events were aware of risk of radicalisation, yet mostly didn't correlate Islam, migration and radicalisation. After going through material of propaganda and recruitment, many have stated that the risk of radicalisation and terrorism is raising with intensive migration flows. Slovene Muslim community was not perceived as sensitive to radicalisation, whereby many participants were shocked once we provided the info about potentially radicalised youth in Slovenia. All were surprised about the lack of information on



topic and the lack of strategies and procedures to prevent radicalisation in Slovenia.

- Information and training needs

After focus groups the following suggestions regarding training and access to information were emphasized:

Unlimited access to the EU police, secret service and other personal data of the prisoners.

Toolkits how to approach the radicalized and terrorists in prisons. E-learning toolkits on radicalisation and de-radicalisation.

Special isolated prisons for radicalized, recruiters or terrorists.

Domestic prison and control after being released from the prison also for radicalised youth, to enable smooth re-socialisation.

Interdisciplinary approach toward the radicalisation.

Trainings and seminars about radicalisation also for the members of Muslim community.

- Have multiagency strategies been revisited to work with radicalized people?

The multiagency strategies have been revised, yet the comments were not to encouraging, since in Slovenia there is a general lack of cooperation between different agencies in all regards, also on the field of justice, probation and resocialisation. The participant of Pilot testing pointed out that even if coordination will be achieved on the institutional level, cooperation with local society will be problematic due to limited resources for tackling the topic of radicalization in Slovenia.



b) Counternarrative approach targeting individuals:

- What is the message we are countering?

There are two main messages the professionals and community should counter to prevent violent radicalism, namely that this is the legit manner to cope with frustration exclusion and marginalization and secondly that so called radicalisation is just one of several identification models modern digital society is offering. Radicalisation is seen as anti-establishment movement of youngsters in the digital world.

However, lack of identification, intergenerational conflicts, colonization and other geo-political happening may not influence the individual's decision to commit the crime against innocent. God and religion may be important features of cultural and individual identification processes, yet religion should not promote violence and notion of martyrs.

- Who are the messengers? Which are the channels?

By countering radicalisation, we have to consider that ISIS state is the digital state of youngsters and represents the anti-establishment movement. Since the state propaganda and logistic operates in the digital space, it is not limited to geographical region but rather global virtual space.

Islamic radicalisation messages – particulary of ISIS movement – are addressing the problems of exclusion, exploration, colonization, generational conflicts, social conflicts. Countering such message is difficult, since it requires also action and socio-economic and political changes.

The messengers should be the members of Muslim society, principally the peers of those at the path of radicalisation. Additionally, Imams are holding very important role in the process of de-radicalisation and even prevention. The most important channels are personal communication and all digital media social networks like Facebook, Instagram, official web sides and YouTube.



- The most important actions and measures suggested and problems emphasized:

How to de-radicalise the one who doesn 't perceive himself radicalised?

Extreme versus main stream among youngsters on the path of radicalisation.

Change in agenda at internet and in other media to construct different EU narrative.

Migrants and incoming Salafists don't want social help but rather the same opportunities in society.

Controled internet and contents.

Unique EU toolkits and databases to work with radicalised youth in prisons, on probation and during the process of re-socialisation.

- Countermessage

The main counter message should be the EU values, namely, democracy, human rights, equal chances on labor market and in society, mutual respect and co-habitation in EU. EU should also build on the additional EU values that can "compete" with those being imposed by religion.

The main message that EU could promote is that important EU value is balanced co-existence of triangle between Economy, politics and religion.

Countermessage should consider the main suggestions and information gathered throughout the field work and empirical research. Here are some most important statements:

"If you call the terrorist the one fighting against technologically and military superior oppressor with all affordable means, then I am the terrorist. But if you refer to monstrosities committed by youngsters in Europe, killing innocent people, then I am not."



"Why do you make the heroes out of those youngsters killing innocent people on the streets? Why do you show this in media and on internet? How come that you are not in conditions to block dangerous contents on internet? "

"You cannot fight the radicalism with counter radicalism. I think you will have to accept us; the way we are."

"The Muslim society is throwing us out of the mosques, claiming that we are spoiling the Islam and the accepted rituals. We were accused of recruiting people just because of money, however they are the one who are getting politically involved and are seeking for more and more money from the believers. "

"SIPA (Bosnian Intelligence) has cut our channels of financing, so now we are financed mostly by the humanitarians in cash. "

"The whole families have left BiH for Syria. Through constant bombing and attacks many have been slaughtered. Since the situation Syria is getting confused and it is just a question of time when all foreign fighters where either die in the battle or come back to Europe looking forward for revenge. "

"Europe has to realise that we have a common enemy which is the state of Israel and USA."

"Even in Quran is written that the Christians and Muslims will fight together against the common enemy."



3. Pilot site selection and Testing phase

- a) The AMEU ECM team selected the Slovenian army headquarters and facilities of AMEU ECM, as the pilot sites to test the learning materials and toolkits. General Army headquarters and officers were selected because the army commanders were on missions in Muslim countries and therefor have a relevant understanding of the Arabic culture. In Slovenia, army is also involved in intelligence activities and is helping to control the borders in the case of raised migrant flow. The officers gave us the important comments and suggestions on qualitative and quantitative features of the toolkits. AMEU ECM headquarters were selected due to pre-readiness of Muslim society to participate at the educational activities at the university, whereby they suggested the Imam should perform the lecture on Muslim religion and culture as well.
- b) The participants on first pilot testing were army officers and one penitentiary officer. At the second pilot testing the participants were from different professions like social workers and university professors. Representative of Iranian Islamic community was present as well.
- c) It was difficult to coordinate the date that will suit to all of the participants. The main problem was how to involve the Muslim community into the pilot testing of the toolkits. At the first pilot testing none of the representatives was present, fortunately, the representative of the Iranian Muslim society was present at the second pilot testing at AMEU ECM.
- d) The participants at the both events have participated as potential participants of the education on de-radicalization and Multi-agency approach to it. They have had a lecture using the toolkits and were asked to make the comments during the lecture, afterwards the assessment questioner was distributed to the participants.



e) The main criticism of the material was that is to comprehensive and that contains to many information to be absorbed during the e-learning process. The slides are not readable since the text is to small and to many. Only the most important info should be in the toolkits, everything else is appendix. The main techniques and samples of good practice of de-radicalization processes should be considered. Photos should be real photos and not just random downloaded photos, in many cases not even completely coherent with the text.

The toolkits should be on a joint EU platform that would contain different learning materials and previous good practices from the field of de-radicalization.

Otherwise the material was interesting, the findings were corresponding the information available to army and intelligence

4. Dissemination activities

Dissemination of the project and its objectives was ongoing activity performed throughout the whole course of the project, however mingled by the resistance of Muslim community to get involved in the project at the first stage and initial involvement of public authorities. It was rather a difficult task to convince the specialist that the topic of radicalisation and terrorism in Slovenia is a relevant problem. Therefore, constant communication about the project and its objectives was needed on different levels and with different stakeholders. For purposes of ongoing and event based dissemination activities among lay and not professional public AMEU ECM has printed out 2000 MATES brochures and 200 bags with MATES logo. Dissemination activities in Slovenia were performed from March 2017 till September 2018. The main dissemination events were AMEU ECM annual scientific conference, where project MATES was presented at the round table on Migration in 2017 and again at the section for Humanities in 2018. The AMEU ECM MATES researcher Goran Gumze has further present the project and project results during the XXIII. International Summer University – Europe in the Vortex of Change in Köszeg, Hungary, between 25th of June and 6th of July 2018. https://www.almamater.si/xxiii-mednarodnapoletna-sola-europe-in-the-vortex-of-change-n383



Dissemination event at the AMEU ECM facilities was organised on 26th of June to which the relevant stakeholders from professional public, Muslim society, education and community were invited. Also the representative of the Iranian Muslim society was present at the event. <u>https://www.almamater.si/predavanje-na-ameu-o-salafizmu-nasilnem-</u> <u>radikalizmu-in-terorizmu-n380</u>

Final dissemination event was at the European conference for integrative medicine in Ljubljana in September 2018, co-organised by AMEU ECM, where the final results of the project were presented to the audience and promotion material of the project (bags and flayers) was distributed to participants and other guests.

https://www.almamater.si/uspesno-zakljucen-11-evropski-kongres-integrativne-medicine-vorganizaciji-alma-mater-n415

News on final conference MATES in Brussels published on AMEU ECM web and facebook.

https://www.almamater.si/v-bruslju-zakljucki-s-projekta-mates-n392

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Pre-interview no.1	Pre-Interview with Head of	
	the Office for Migration	
Interview no.1	Imam of Maribor Islam	
	community	
Interview no.2	Student, members of Islam	
	Community in Maribor	
Interview no.3	Student, Muslim but doesn't	
	frequent the prayers	
Interview no.4	Second Imam of Maribor	
	Islam community	
Interview no.5	Interview with police officer	
	Maribor	
Interview no.6	Interview with police officer	
	Ljubljana	

6. List of Interviews

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Interview with police officer Ljubljana Interview with penitentiary officer Maribor Interview with penitentiary officer Maribor	
Interview with penitentiary officer Maribor Interview with penitentiary	
officer Maribor Interview with penitentiary	
Interview with penitentiary	
officer Maribor	
Member of Islam Society	
Ljubljana (45 years)	
Member of Islam Society	
Maribor (60 years)	
Interview with NSS agents	
Interview with NSS agents	
interview with Salafi in BiH	June 2017
(40 years)	
interview with Salafi in BiH	June 2017
(55 years)	
Interview with the journalist	June 2017
researching Salafism and	
radicalisation in BiH	
Penitentiary officers Maribor	March 2017
mixed audience of lay public	
and some relevant experts	
(psychologists, teachers,	
members of Muslim society	
	Ljubljana (45 years) Member of Islam Society Maribor (60 years) Interview with NSS agents Interview with NSS agents Interview with Salafi in BiH (40 years) Interview with Salafi in BiH (55 years) Interview with the journalist researching Salafism and radicalisation in BiH Penitentiary officers Maribor mixed audience of lay public and some relevant experts (psychologists, teachers,