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interactive**

Verein zur interkulturellen Bildung
und Gewaltprävention e.V.

CEE Prevent Net

Central and Eastern European
Network for the Prevention of
Intolerance and Group Hatred

Gender and Advocacy in Preventing Intolerance and Group Hatred in Central and Eastern Europe and beyond

RadPol2020 Webinar RadPol Conference on Radicalisation in CEE Countries

Gefördert vom



Bundesministerium
für Familie, Senioren, Frauen
und Jugend

im Rahmen des Bundesprogramms

Demokratie **leben!**



Bundeszentrale für
politische Bildung

My takeaways from the previous RadPol2020 sessions:

“Shift from nationalism to social conservatism – from ethnicity to sexuality”
(Lenka Bustikova) >> Gender / womex.org

„Mainstreaming extremism“ (Jacek Purski)
There is no such thing like a “lone actor” really

We should „depolitize“ (Jacek Purski)
PVE needs to be cross-partisan! Otherwise we do harm!

We need self-reflection & systemic view:
How may **WE** be part of the problem?

Hence, we, EU/ RAN, national governments may be a problem.
RadPol2020 webinar may become a problem – and may do harm.

EU/ RAN and national governments = part of the problem

What was the problem (in one RadPol2020 webinars):

Aleksandra Wesoly, EU DG Home: In her first PPP slide, first line:

„Jihadist terrorism and extremism - the main threat“

Then Aleksandra repeatedly spoke about „lone actors“ (in RWE)

Later on RAN's Steven Lenos discussed the „violent extremist elements of the Black Lives Matter Movement“

Why is this harmful?

Especially harmful for Central and Eastern Europe (CEE)?

EU/ RAN and national governments = part of the problem

In CEE countries, the EU prevent policy **SUPPORTED** extremism, instead of preventing it (since 2011):

- EU prevent policy has largely equated extremism with Islamism – and widely underrated right-wing extremism
- The concept of extremism=Islamism was then also propagated in CEE;
- Right-wing (extremist) governments in CEE were happy about this: they then equated refugees and Roma with Islamist terrorists
- Hence, EU prevent policy (involuntarily) supported xenophobia, Islamophobia and right-wing extremism in CEE

We can help:

Training in advocacy – and good practice in PVE policy making.

EU/ RAN and national governments = part of the problem

The scandal: In CEE countries, the EU prevent policy **SUPPORTED** extremism, instead of preventing it (since 2011):

References:

“Prevention of group hatred and right-wing extremism in Germany and Central and Eastern European...” (2018) <http://cultures-interactive.de/de/fachartikel.html>

Shorter:

- “The EU’s ‘Islamism’ bias and its ‘added damage’ in Central and Eastern Europe” (ebda). Also published 26 Nov 2019 on <https://www.opendemocracy.net>
- “‘Added damage’? -the Islamism bias and special damage in Eastern Europe”, in: The Radicalisation Awareness Network/RAN – concept and reality....” (2018) (ebda)

“Good practice principles of PVE policy making and program design” (ebda)

Women/ Gender in Extremism and Prevention – womex.org

Some key observations:

- Extremist groups have gender-specific ideologies and strategies
- Pre-modern gender roles shape right-wing extremist, Islamist and Christian fundamentalist ideologies
- How young men and women participate in extremist groups is gender-specific
- Girls and women are not recognized or taken seriously as politically active extremists. This makes it easier to use them strategically whether for community and public relations work or for terrorist attacks

Women/ Gender in Extremism and Prevention – womex.org

- “Men have gender, too!” (cf. CI publications)
- Conflict-ridden gender identity issues are often a reason why young men and women turn to extremist scenes
- “Toxic masculinities – toxic femininities”
- Sexism, homophobia and ideas about the inequality of women and men are a key part of right-wing extremist, Islamist and Christian fundamentalist ideology
- Polarisation between the two sexes may well be the key psychological cause for extremism and group hatred
- Gender identity issues lend themselves well for pedagogic work with young people (often better than religion/ ideology/ history!)



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What is and why do we need new forms of advocacy? –

Advocacy means:

Finding words/ a language to talk about Prevention, Gender etc. with all sorts of people - cross-partisan.

Speaking to actors from all sectors of the political spectrum – especially those people who are at the opposite end of it.



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The CEE Prevent Net project – on Advocacy

”Recommendations for advocacy work for preventing intolerance, discrimination, and group-focused enmity of youth”

ceepreventnet.eu/

>> We all do Advocacy all the time anyhow, whether we like it or not!!

No need to speak about: extremism/ terrorism/ security, ...
... not even: democracy, human rights, Europe !

Rather:

- safeguard young people in Central and Eastern Europe
- support their personal development
- to enhance young people’s wellbeing and skills;
- thus support tomorrow’s societies!



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The CEE Prevent Net project – on Advocacy 2

”Recommendations for advocacy work... “

- support youth welfare
- avert the numerous risks which young people are facing today (violence, hatred, drugs, criminality, dependencies, self-destructiveness etc. ... also VE, but not only!)



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The CEE Prevent Net project – on Advocacy 3

”Recommendations for advocacy work... “

- foster young people and the families they come from
- support the local communities in which young people/ families live,
(particularly rural and small town areas)
- young people should feel confident to stay in their local communities and
don't feel pressed to move away from their country;
- they should have a chance to become a factor for the communities' peace
and prosperity



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The CEE Prevent Net project – on Advocacy 4

”Recommendations for advocacy work... “

- to improve the youngsters’ skills of dialogue and tolerance, among similar skills – and prevent them from becoming intolerant, withdrawn and anxious
- dialogue and tolerance are key skills for young people to develop their full potential and be healthy
- (empirical research shows: Tolerant people are healthier, get smarter/ more productive – and live longer)



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CEE Prevent Net – some advocacy principles 1

”Recommendations for advocacy work... “

- building strong individual, personal relationships;
- earn and keep trust in these relationships
- use informal channels of communication – but in ethical and transparent ways (no string-pulling)
- for instance, liaising with a number of members from one organization – transparently

CEE Prevent Net – some Advocacy principles 2

”Recommendations for advocacy work... “

- Work bottom-up; i.e. first discuss with low- or mid-level officials (they tend to be closer to ordinary citizens’ concerns and less partisan politically motivated)
- focus on measures on the local and communal level rather than national level
- create a broader advocacy network among NGOs and community groups
- do so with neighboring countries with similar opportunities and challenges; such as the Visegrad states



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Advocacy/dialogue – is a basic attitude, frame of mind

”Recommendations for advocacy work... “

- openness for relationship
- dialogue with anyone
- honesty / respect / confidentiality
- narrative mode / share personal experiences
- self-reflective, admit mistakes
- appreciate and learn from your interlocutors



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